

UPTON NEWS

May 2011

Vol 3 No. 51

ST MARY'S CHURCH

St Mary's Services for May

1st May 0900 - Sung Eucharist, followed by refreshments

8th May 0900 - Sung Eucharist

15th May 1000 - Family Service - details to be confirmed

22nd May 0900 - Sung Eucharist

29th May 0900 - Sung Eucharist

Services Every Tuesday:

Holy Eucharist 10.00 am,

Evening Prayer 5.30 pm,

"Exploring Silence" 6.00 pm, reflective music followed by quiet contemplative prayer (in total 30 minutes). Everyone welcome

SPRING LINE METHODIST CHURCH

Services for May start at 10.30 a.m.

1 st	Local Arrangements	
8 th	Upton	Martin Smithson (Local Preachers Sunday)
15 th	Blewbury	Dr David Rankin (Christian Aid Sunday)
22 nd	Upton	Rev Richard Bittleston (Holy Communion)
29 th	Blewbury	Brenda Boyer

Looking Ahead

Saturday June 11th: this is the first day of Blewbury Festival 2011, and we will be running a children's Tombola at the Family Day event. We need plenty of toys, especially cuddly ones. If you have any nice toys your children or grand children have finished with or don't use, please pass them on to any member of the Methodist Church for the Tombola.

THEATRE GROUP

Nothing suitable has yet been discovered for our projected June/July outing. Do let the committee know if you find something.

But we are already booked for "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at the NEW Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford on Thursday 27 October at 7.15 pm. Door to door transport is included in the price of £41.50. There are now just six seats left. If you are interested, please get cash or a cheque to me as soon as possible; for this trip I won't be trying to get extra tickets for latecomers!

The Group, incidentally, is not exclusive. Anyone who lives in the village (and some beyond) may join. Let me know if you want to be included on the advance mailing list.

Malcolm Wright

850705

SHORT MAT BOWLS

The first partial winter season of short mat bowling concluded with the session on 27th April. The first four months of SMB in Upton has brought together a group of new players who, together with some experienced players, could provide the nucleus of an Upton SMB Club for next winter season 2011/2012. Following a full seasons bowling, entry into one of the Oxfordshire County SMB

Association (OCSMBA) leagues should be sought for the 2012/2013 winter season.

The next OCSMBA winter season will commence late September / early October and it is planned for bowling sessions at Upton to resume in September and will again be at 7.45pm on Wednesday evenings. A schedule of evenings will be posted in the August issue of the Upton News.

Tony Durbin

RECTORS REFLECTIONS



A Precious Gift

How are you when it comes to choosing gifts for other people? I often find it quite difficult to think of an appropriate gift – and I also tend to leave getting the gift to the last moment! And then there's the problem of cost - what do you get someone when you're on a tight budget? A tricky one, especially if you haven't got much money. When I was at theological college, I had very little money. Valentines' day was coming up, and so I thought I would give something to my wife. I had a clean white pipe cleaner, and used it to make a heart, which I proudly presented to her, together with a card. Well, there's thrift- and there's thrift!

Of course some of the best gifts we can give are indeed free. We think, for example, of the gift of love. The gift of love can come in many different forms, and there's one particular gift of love which I would like to mention. It's the gift of freedom - allowing someone else the freedom to be the person they are, rather than the person we want them to be, the freedom to live their lives in the way they want to live them, rather than according to our own agenda.

Sometimes it is right for us to limit another person's freedom - for example, a father or mother limits the freedom of their children, while they are still children, until they have reached adulthood. But there are times when, as adults dealing with adults, we are simply too controlling. We do not allow another person to be themselves, without our interference.

Giving the gift of freedom is often a frightening experience. But this is how we grow as human beings - we grow through having the freedom to make our own decisions, and to learn from our own mistakes. Looking back over my own life, I have not always used the freedom I have been given wisely, but I am profoundly grateful for having been given the gift of freedom, and the opportunities it has given me to grow and become the person I truly am.

Freedom is very much on God's agenda. The Bible is full of stories about God's gift of freedom to individuals, societies and whole nations. Sometimes this freedom takes the form of freedom from political and economic oppression. Sometimes this freedom operates at the level of the individual human being, taking the form of freedom from those aspects of human nature that get in the way of our living the lives we would truly want to live. The truest, deepest, and most fulfilling freedom comes from outside

ourselves. It is a gift - a gift to us from God. It is given to us by God because he loves us, and wants the best for us, not only as individuals but also as communities.

Are we prepared to receive God's gift of freedom?
Are we prepared to give this gift to another?

Fr Jason

VPA

After a few dark mutterings, I have removed the shrub that bit the dust during the winter, but just what shall I plant there instead? There is now a huge space just waiting to be filled with new planties, woo hoo! I am now greenhouse-less, but I now have a "sun deck", with loungers, parasol, planters and the barbeque, and a little mini greenhouse that is filling up nicely with seedlings!

Our next talk is on 4th May, 7.30pm, when we have Eunice Cooper coming to talk and give a demonstration about Shetland Sheepdogs, and this is at the Vale room, Blewbury Village Hall, I wont be taking Monty along, although technically he is a sheepdog, he is not from Shetland! Refreshments served too! Ring if you need a lift, 850219.

I give prior warning about our trip to Lime Kiln Gardens in Drayton on June 1st, this garden has a wonderful Iris display, if you haven't booked yet, ring Eileen on 510095, £5 each. We will sort out lifts for those who need them beforehand!

The new Show Schedule will be ready for the May meeting and in Blewbury Post Office from then too, come and collect your copy, or download from www.uptonvillagenews/vpa The show is on August 6th, so plenty of time to plan your entries!

Happy Gardening

Karen Brooks

UPTON OIL SYNDICATE

The next order is scheduled to be placed on Monday 16th May. To be included, I need to have your orders by Saturday 14th May at the latest.

My contact details are (preferably by e-mail) colin.batchelor@eggconnect.net or by telephone 01491 672444 (after 7.00pm).

Colin Batchelor

UPTON WINE APPRECIATION SOCIETY

At the April meeting of the Wine Club Derek Whitmell presented a talk on the Wines of Australia and compared the present situation with that of three years ago. He had researched the current prices of some of the wines he selected for the 2008 meeting and had found that they were now between 13% and 35% dearer. It appears that most of the Australian wine, sold in the U.K., is produced by three very large companies, using a variety of labels and is shipped in bulk and bottled here for the supermarkets, which have 70% of the market. This wine is often referred to as "industrial wine". Derek expressed his preference for wines made and bottled on site by small producers and had obtained these both from The Wine Society and also from Waitrose.

The first of the whites was a Semillon from Peter Lehmann in the Barossa Valley. This was only 10.5% alcohol and had a good clean taste. At £9.95 a bottle it was not cheap but would make an excellent aperitif especially if served in the garden on a sunny summer's day. This was followed by a "blind tasting" of two chardonnays, the first was an oaked Australian wine and the second an unoaked one from the Macon-Vergisson area of France. It would have been easy to believe that these were from two totally different grape varieties such was the influence of the oak and it was enlightening to taste the one against the other. The final white was an excellent Pinot Grigio made by Brown Brothers and bought from Waitrose at £7.99.

The red wines started with another "blind tasting" between a Grenache/Syrah blend from Vacqueras in the Southern Rhone and a very similar one from Australia's McLaren Vale. These were followed by a Shiraz/Cabernet from the Margaret River area of Western Australia – a powerful wine that needed to be drunk with food. Lastly we had a 2008 Icarus Shiraz from McLaren Vale purchased from The Wine Society at only £5.50 – an excellent wine which sold out within the first few weeks of being listed.

We are indebted to Derek for all his hard work and for providing us with such an enjoyable evening.

Mike Collins

DROP IN

The next three Drop-in Sessions are scheduled for: 12th May, 26th May and 9th June.

Yvonne Collins 850989

WOMENS INSTITUTE

Blewbury WI next meets on Wednesday May 25th in the Vale Room of the Blewbury Village Hall. The topic will be "Owls - History, conservation & rescue work". Fascinating creatures! Of course you have all read that the Blewbury WI (which of course welcomes members from nearby villages) is much more than just that monthly meeting. Coming up in the near future are a visit to the Royal Pavilion at Brighton, "Sugar and Spice" - a flower-arranging demonstration, the ballet 'Cinderella' at the New Theatre, walks, Scrabble and much more. If you need a lift or have any questions please call Judy on 850381.

The Vicar of Dibleys comes to Dibleys ?

Part of the Blewbury Festival is an exciting evening called "Only Joking, the Vicar of Dibley and other Comedy writing". We are thrilled to have Paul Mayhew-Archer with us telling us all about his role as co-writer of numerous comedies including 'The Vicar of Dibley' and 'Two pints of lager and a packet of crisps'. The evening will be Wednesday 22nd June at 1930 in the Blewbury Village Hall. Tickets cost £10 each and will include one (or two?) portions of dessert made by the Blewbury WI plus a glass of wine or soft drink.

Tickets for the event will be on sale with the other Festival events at the Festival Box office on Saturday 21st May in the Vale Room between 10 - 12noon. After that, tickets will be available from Blewbury Post Office only. A great night out!

CHRISTIAN AID

Christian Aid week this year is 15-21 May. Envelopes will be delivered and collected personally, but if you think you've been missed, any contributions will be gratefully received at Karibu, High Street. This year's particular focus is community work in South America, where farmers are learning to adapt to changes in climate and environment, planting coffee instead of cotton for example, and communities are working their way out of poverty.

In Chilton there will also be a Plant Stall at the Village Hall on Saturday 14 May 10 – 12.30. Coffee and biscuits and a cryptic quiz (price £1) will also be available.

On Sunday 15 May at 6 pm there will be a United Benefice Christian Aid Service in St Michael's, Blewbury.

Elisabeth and Malcolm Wright

IMPROVED UPTON PLAY AREA

With Spring well and truly upon us and everyone enjoying this beautiful weather, the Upton playground and playing field has once again become a focus for the people of Upton. As reported previously, the Upton Playground Committee is trying to raise money to provide a new and improved play area and with your help and support it would be great to think that we could achieve this in the near future.

After a very useful and informative meeting with Nicole O'Donnell from the Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association, we will be continuing with our grant applications; in the current financial climate, funding is more difficult to secure and therefore our applications will be regarded much more favourably if we can provide evidence of the support we have from Village residents, of all age groups. We will be circulating information about a short 'photo shoot' that we will be holding on Sunday 8th May from 10.00 am at the playground. We would love as many children, parents and grandparents as possible to come along so that we can use the photos to support our applications.

We will also be holding a drop in day, open to everyone, on Saturday 25th June from 11.00 am, where you will be able to find out more about the ideas and plans that have been collected and also to contribute any further thoughts or suggestions you and your children may have. We would be very grateful to anyone who can spare a little time to come along and support us.

Sketches that we have received can be found on the village website and will also be on show at the 'open day' so please keep them coming. If you would like to send a sketch or comments by email you can send it to uptonplayarea@gmail.com.

Katharine Langley 01235 85093
kat_langley30@hotmail.com

BLEWBURY SCHOOL

The Iron Age

The Blewbury School children chattered excitedly as they climbed onto the bus, their doorway to travel over 2,000 years back in time to the Iron Age. They were greeted, on arrival at the Danebury Fort, by the leader of a fierce Celtic tribe, clad in battle dress and armed with both sword and spear.

The children were soon seated on the hard mud floor in the warrior's round house, a large single-room structure with wattle and daub walls and a thatched roof. They coughed a little from the smoky fire and wrinkled their noses at the sweaty smell of the animals which had overwintered there. Invited to weave wool, grind grain or decorate pottery, their eager hands flew up.

Suddenly a warning shout called out; a challenging band of warriors was approaching. The children lined the wooden fence which crowned the defensive ramparts, hurling spears and rocks at the attackers. But the enemy could not be repulsed and soon burnt the gates.....

We can only be glad that we do not live in that uncertain and often violent world, where our children would really have been at risk. But for a few short hours we were whisked to that faraway place and I learnt that nothing could create a better learning environment than the "real thing".

Andrea Brown

PARISH COUNCIL

May 5th Election

On May 5th there will be a contested election for the post of District Councillor but there will not be an election for the Parish Council. Six parishioners have expressed a willingness to be Parish Councillors for the next 4 years. They are Stuart Norman, Stuart Fraser, John Dickens, Lesley Shaw, Bob Lott and Ben Shaw. Their first meeting will be on 17th May at 8.00pm in the village hall. All parishioners are invited to attend and express their views and opinions in the Villager's Forum.

Annual Parish Meeting

The attendance at this year's Parish Meeting was disappointing with just 5 parishioners coming along to express their views to the council which hopefully means we have a lot of parishioners who are satisfied with the council's efforts over the last 12 months. Matters discussed included plans for new children's play area, the state of the roads and verges, future of the Upton News, and a proposal to update the Parish Plan. Minutes of the meeting are posted on the village website.

Mike Brown 850135

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

The next Have Your Say meeting with your local PCSO for Upton is on Wednesday 4th May 2011. It is between 17.45 - 18.45 pm in the meeting room in the village hall.

All discussions are treated in confidence.

A digger was stolen from a building site in Church Street, Upton on the evening of 5th April 2011.

If anyone has any information regarding this theft please contact Thames Valley Police on 0845 8505505 or myself on 850684.

Celia Davies

DIARY DATES

Sponsored Cycle Ride

There will be a sponsored cycle ride from Radley to Upton and back, approx 25 miles, on **Sunday 15th May**, in aid of Maggie's Cancer Caring Centre in Oxford. The event will be stopping at Upton Village Hall for light refreshments, tea and cakes, plus a raffle and other fund raising ideas.

If you would like to take part in the event which is for a very worthy cause please contact Wendy Hunter on 01235 512876 for further details.

Cyclist will be arriving in Upton between 11.00am and 2.00pm.

The Annual Pimms, Pate and Pudding Event

will be held on **Sunday 14th August 2011** at 12.30pm on the patio at the village hall.

All newcomers to the village are most welcome so please make a note of the date in your diaries as tickets will be limited to 70.

Further details to follow next month.

Celia and Maggie.

MURDER AT UPTON CIDER

Don't panic if you see strange happenings at Upton Fruit Farm during May.

Bentley Productions are using the orchard to film part of an episode of "Midsomer Murders".

Val and Robert Fitchett

LOCAL TWINNING ASSOCIATION

Are you aware that Didcot and its associated villages have close links with towns in France and Germany? Last year Twinning Association celebrated the 10th anniversary of our official twinning with the town of Meylan, near Grenoble in SE France and recently we have been developing links with the town of Planegg in Bavaria, Germany with a view to a formal twinning in the future.

Visits take place every year, alternating between Meylan or Planegg and Didcot. When our guests come to Didcot we need families to host them. This involves looking after one or two people for the weekend, providing some meals and, ideally, accompanying them to various activities. When we visit Meylan and Planegg we are warmly welcomed as guests by families and have to pay only our travel costs. For more details about the twinning activities and to find out what is coming up either go to our village website or go to www.didcotwinning.org.uk

If you would like to join the Twinning Association the membership fee is just £5 per year for a family or £10 per year for an association. If you would like to take part in one of the visits or just know more please contact the Secretary of the Association, Geoff Oldham (01235 816602; geoff.oldham@talktalk.net) or go along to the AGM on 22 June at 7:30pm in the Cornerstone.

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY COFFEE MORNING

Many thanks to so many of you who supported the coffee morning and made donations totalling £427. This was an excellent result, thank you.

Clare Lightfoot

THE UPTON COVEN

The Upton Ladies Coven will meet at the usual time of 8pm on Thursday 5th May in the George and Dragon Pub - everyone welcome.

Lesley

Items for inclusion in the June issue to be sent to kameki39@btinternet.com or handed in to Cathy or Mike by Wednesday 25th May .

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Delivery organised by Jessie West

SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS BY OUR YOUNG PARISHIONERS

Over the years that I have been editing the village newsheet I have often had the pleasure of recording the outstanding academic achievements of so many of our young parishioners. This time I am delighted to record some outstanding sporting achievements. In such a small village it is great that we should have 3 young people who have been chosen to represent their country in their chosen sports and a fourth one who we hope will soon follow. The village is rightly proud of our young residents and having got to know some of the even younger residents I am sure we can look forward to many more outstanding achievements both sporting and academic in the future. The four who have achieved outstanding sporting success are:

Carl Davis

Carl who I hope won't mind being referred to as a young resident has lived in the village all of his 23yrs. He has just passed his Masters Degree in Sports Therapy & Sports Massage. Carl is a 4th Dan black belt in Tae Kwon Do and has been a member of the England team for a number of years now. In February of this year he was part of the team that brought back gold medals from Estonia in the special technique category. He is at the moment English, Welsh and Scottish Champion in his weight division.

Alex and David Murphy

Life in the Murphy household revolves around swimming training. Alex (15yrs) and David (12yrs) don't have a normal life because life revolves around their training. Swimming training is relentless, resting miss a week it can take a month to get back to where you were. It is also anti social as much of it takes place at times when most of us are resting. The hard work of both lads has paid dividends with a host of medals and high rankings. David holds County and Regional age records for 50 metres fly and 50m breaststroke. Alex holds County, Regional and National records and has just recently broken the British and English 50m breaststroke record that was held for 15 yrs by Darren Mew – ex Olympian.

Both boys swim for the Oxfordshire County Team.

Alex has just represented England at the Secondary Schools internationals in Dublin where he won gold and broke the Championship record for his 100m breaststroke. He has qualified for the Youth Nationals in July and for the Open Nationals in June.

Brodie Miller

This year Brodie, age 14, has had another very successful badminton season and has again been selected to represent England. The team has played well and were only narrowly defeated by Danish opposition in both the Danish Junior Cup and the 8 Nations tournament, securing the silver medal position in both. There were chances to win the latter event (something that has only ever happened once before) losing only narrowly 5-4 in the final.

Brodie has also been successful locally winning the Oxfordshire Restricted Senior event and has naturally been chosen for the Oxfordshire first team when she has been available and where incidentally she has partnered Alison Ross who spent her early years living in Upton.

Brodie has again enjoyed being sponsored by Yonex this year and they provided a real highlight when she was allowed backstage at the All England badminton tournament in Birmingham. Here she (and her support team of Mum and Dad) were able to experience the atmosphere and mingle with the World's best as they prepared for their matches. This was inspirational and showed that all of those hours on the road or on the court can really be worthwhile.

We wish all four of them continued success and acknowledge the enormous effort and sacrifices that have to be made, not only by them but by their parents in their support. We must not put any pressure of expectation on them but who knows where there successes may take them. My thanks to the parents for the information.