

Upton News



Vol 5 No.17 December 2017



We wish you all a very Merry Christmas!



St. Mary's Church Services

Sun 3rd Dec. 9.00am	Sung Eucharist*
Sun 10th Dec. 9.00am	Sung Eucharist
Sun 17th Dec. 9.00am	Sung Eucharist
Sun 24th Dec. 9.00am	Christmas Eve Sung Eucharist
Sun 24th Dec. 4.00pm	Crib Service*
Mon 25th Dec. 9.00am	Christmas Day Eucharist
Sun 31st Dec. 9.00am	Sung Eucharist

*refreshments served after these events.

Please see porch notice for weekday services.



Carol Service

Friends of St. Mary's Christmas Carols
St. Mary's Church, Upton
Saturday 16th December
at 4pm.



We would love to see as many Uptonians as possible, young and older, to enjoy a good sing of some familiar carols interspersed with seasonal readings. Mulled wine, soft drinks and mince pies will be provided at the end to soothe the vocal chords. No charge, just a collection for a local charity.

Rectors Note



17 for Christmas

You're probably thinking to yourself: 17 what? 17 around the table for Christmas Dinner?

Well, in the paper today I've read a report of the results of a poll conducted by Amazon. The paper didn't report the sample size, or the date and circumstances in which the data was collected. So the figures are doubtless to be taken with a touch of salt. But according to the poll, 17 is, on average, the number of gifts which an adult will

buy at Christmas. And, of course, as well as giving gifts, we receive them - but what do we do with unwanted presents? Apparently, 47% of people living in London are likely to repackage the gift and give it to someone else. And what do we say to the person who has given us the unwanted gift? Well, it appears that in some parts of the country, 81% of us are likely to pretend that we like the gift. Little white lies make social interaction so much smoother, and I'm sure in most cases they do little if any harm.

Christmas gift giving can be a very stressful experience. We can feel under pressure to spend more than we can afford, assuming of course we can afford to spend anything at all. Then there is the hassle - or the joy - of choosing appropriate presents. What will he or she like? What did I get them last Christmas? Should we give a physical gift at all, or would it be better to make a donation in their name to a charity of our choice?

Gift giving is hard enough for us humans, but what about for God? If you were God, what present would you give to us human beings? What do you think human beings need?

For Christians, Christmas is about celebrating God's decision to give a gift, and not just any old gift. God decided to give the gift of his own self. He did this by becoming a human being, taking a human body, spirit and mind, in Jesus Christ. God chose to do this so that he might share his life with us, so that his love and light, and joy and peace may shine in us and through us.

What a gift! May the wonder and joy of this gift be ours this Christmastime and always!

Fr Jason

Drop In

The Drop-In is an informal gathering to enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and a pleasant chat. Meetings take place in the Village Hall on Thursdays from 10.30am to 12.00pm. Dates for December are the 7th and the 21st.

Theatre Group

All tickets are now sold for “The Play That Goes Wrong” in January. I’m hoping next to get tickets for “The Rivals” at The Watermill for March or April. If anybody is interested but not on our mailing list, do let me know your e-mail address.

The Village Hall wasn’t available any day that would have made sense for the promised reading of “The Boy Who Was Christmas” (My fault for not booking in time). I’m sorry to disappoint our fan(s) yet again, remind me to check the calendar in good time for 2018 - and maybe we should try something, but less ambitious, in the summer as well.

Malcolm Wright

Village Produce Association

Well, it’s almost the end of another year!! The VPA Committee was disappointed that no-one other than the committee attended our Annual General Meeting on the 1st November. The Members of the Committee conducted the business and all agreed to continue to run the VPA for another year. However, we do need the support of the Blewbury and Upton villagers, remember as residents you are automatically members of the VPA and there is no subscription.

Tickets are still available for our Annual Social which takes place on Saturday 2nd December 7.00pm to 10.00pm at Upton Village Hall. Delicious home made food (dietary requirements catered for), quizzes, games and fun. We have some special entertainment!! Tickets have been held at last year’s price of £9 per person. Contact Karen at Blewbury Post Office or ring Margaret Maytham in Upton on 850126 or contact Eileen on 510095.

Our full programme for 2018 will be circulated in the Upton News but in the meantime, please pop the following dates in your 2018 diary.

16th June - Visit to West Green House Gardens, Hartley Witney, Hampshire

7th July - Annual Summer Show, Blewbury Village Hall

11th August - Visit to Royal Horticultural Gardens, Wisley, Surrey

2nd November - Annual General Meeting, Vale Room, Blewbury Village Hall

8th December - Annual Social, Upton Village Hall

On behalf of the Committee Members of the VPA, may I wish you Season’s Greetings and very best wishes for the coming New Year.

And finally,

Did You Know? *George Bernard Shaw wrote: “Be like the sun and meadow, which are not in the least concerned about the coming winter.”*

Happy Gardening
Eileen

Parish Council

A regular parish council meeting was held on Monday 27th November.

Planning:

Three planning applications have recently been received: -

P17/S3518/FUL Little Acorns, Main Street, West Hagbourne

P17/V3062/HH Alden Farmhouse, Aldens Lane, Upton

P17/S4097/FUL Horse and Harrow Public House, Main St, West Hagbourne

Further details can be found on the VoWH web site - planning section. A parish council planning meeting is being organised for Thursday 7th December to discuss the applications, please check the noticeboard and web site for confirmation.

Expressway:

The Chair made a statement on the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway, which put in to context previous information. The Chair's statement will be published on the village website www.uptonvillage.co.uk. coupled with the draft minutes of the meeting in the next few days.

Recycling:

Do not put batteries in your recycling bin as this can cause fires to break out in the recycling vehicle. Please recycle your batteries separately.

Recreation Ground:

Areas of the Recreation Ground continue to be monitored by the P.C. If areas are taped off this will be for a good reason, so please do not enter the taped area or remove the tape. Various minor repairs/replacements are to be undertaken shortly.

Next Meeting:

The next regular meeting of the Parish Council is on Monday 15th January at 6.00pm in the village hall meeting room. Please see the village noticeboard and web site for agendas of upcoming meetings and for minutes of previous meetings once they are approved for publication.

Parish Clerk 30.11.17

Swop Shop

Items

15) Upright Piano - Excellent tone and touch, complete with stool and sheet music - Free - Brenda Arnold, 850354

16) A Victorian Wardrobe - Free - Malcolm Wright, 850705.

17) A home-made set of (book) shelves - Free - Malcolm Wright, 850705.

18) Two glass-fronted display cabinets, ex MFI? - Free - Malcolm Wright, 850705.

Blewbury W.I.

December is upon us! We will all be busy with card writing, present buying and Christmas festivities. But, all new members will be very welcome to join us at the following events in December. I would like to wish everyone a joyous Christmas time and a happy, healthy 2018.

Friday, 1st December at 7.00pm - Craft Evening at Liz's. Please phone first.

Tuesday, 5th December at 10.00am - Lyn's Walk. Leave from the Village Hall for a local walk/stroll, weather dependent.

Wednesday, 6th December at 7.30pm - Scrabble at Graeme's. Please phone first.

Friday, 8th December at 1.30pm - Talking Science lecture at RAL Harwell. Building a time machine: The engineering of the James Webb Space Telescope and its Mid-Infra Red Instrument. Paul Eccleston.

Monday, 11th December at 12.30pm. - WI Christmas Lunch at the Red Lion.

Monday, 18th December at 10.30am. - Coffee and mince pies at Maggie's.

Every Monday (except the 25th) at 2.30pm - MahJong

For more details of any of our events, or if you wish to join us, please ring Karen on 850219 or visit our web page, <http://blewburywi.wordpress.com> where you will find more information.

Cilla

Thank You

On behalf of all the Upton parishioners a very big thank you to Simon Powell, John Dickens, Derek Vockins, Diane Rabbetts, John Lightfoot, Mike Collins, Rob Traynor, Stuart Fraser, Bob Lott, Paul Batho, Richard Clayton, Kieron Humphrey, Nick Thackray, Carl Pettman and team leader Graham de Wilde for their efforts in maintaining the Recreation Ground and several of our footpaths in such good order throughout another summer.

In particular a big thank you to Graham who has always made sure that petrol is available for the mowers, that the mowers are maintained, that the garage keys are in the right hands and that each person knows when their services are required. In addition Graham with help from Rob Traynor has spent many hours beavering away on manual tasks in and around the Recreation Ground and the Village Hall keeping the whole area neat and tidy and a credit to the village.

Wine Club

Eight generously proportioned “tastings” of gorgeous Italian wines, oodles of delicious nibbles and all while learning about the origins of screw cap bottles and the most pungent chemical known to humankind. What more could you want for only £5 per head!

In case you’re wondering, this was the great night out experienced by all those devotees who came along to the Upton Wine Club on Wednesday 15th November at the Upton Village Hall, where Brian Rippon of Strictly Wine (our friendly neighbourhood wine merchant) gave a first class evening of practical education on all things Italian wine.



The wines tasted came from all over Italy, covering a range of wine types from chilling-in-the-sun-with-friends whites, through lively sparkling wines, award winning, mouth watering reds, to a succulent but light (5%) wine to go with Italian desserts of all kinds.

Brian also took us on an exhilarating tour of the country and the vineyards, explaining the techniques used at each, the grape varieties grown (of which there are several hundred), the terrain (stunning) and the history. We also had a whistle-stop tour of what causes a wine to taste corked and how different bottle stopping methods have been invented in attempts to improve how well wines keep in the bottle, together with what effects this year’s adverse weather conditions around the globe have had on levels of wine production (stock up!).

The wines tasted during the evening were:

Colomba Bianca Zibibbo Vitese 2016, Pignoletto Colli d’Imola Frizzante 2016, Falanghina Albente Feudi di San Gregorio 2016, Pinot Grigio Alto Adige 2016, Tramin Montepulciano d’Abruzzo Feudi d’Albe 2015, Bove Tenuta di Castiglioni Toscana 2014 Frescobaldi, Collezione Cinquante San Marzano Vino Rosso, and Michele Chiarlo Palás Moscato d’Asti 2016. *More details of these great wines appear in the Wine Club section of the village website.*



A lively and fun evening was had by all and all for the price of a glass of plonk at the local.

The next event will be on 13th December at 8.00pm, in the Village Hall, where we will be attempting to offer suggestions for wines to help make it through the joys and the tribulations of Christmas Day, from breakfast to nightcap. The price will be £10 per head (these will be goood wines) and you can reserve your place(s) by using the flyer that dropped through your letterbox recently or by contacting Ian Langley on 850793 or ian.langley@yahoo.co.uk

See you there! *Nick Thackray.*

Post Office News

We have a special post box in the post office for letters and cards to Santa, the address is Santa or Father Christmas, Santa's Grotto, Reindeerland, XM45HQ, they must be here by 9th December.

The silly season is now in full swing, we are expecting some disruption from Royal Mail strike action, so try to post early.

The last posting dates for Air Mail are:-

2nd Dec. for Africa and Middle East.

6th Dec. for Far East, Asia and Eastern Europe.

7th Dec. for Caribbean, Central and South Americas.

9th Dec. for Greece, Australia and New Zealand.

13th Dec. for Czech Republic, Germany, Italy and Poland.

14th Dec for America, Canada, Finland and Sweden.

15th Dec. for Austria, Denmark, Iceland, Portugal, Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, Spain and Switzerland.

16th Dec. for Belgium, France, Ireland and Luxembourg.

The last posting dates for Inland Mail are:-

20th Dec. for Second Class.

21st Dec. for First Class and Special Delivery.

22nd Dec for Special Delivery (Saturday Guaranteed).

All airmail must have a blue AIRMAIL sticker attached, and any non-printed paper to non EU destinations, must have a customs label filled in BEFORE you come to the counter please. (Printed paper to Japan and Canada also needs a customs label, they are quite pernickety). All parcels need to have a senders name, house name or number and post code, please also tell us what's in your parcel, as sometimes we have to put special stickers on some items, and some items will not be allowed to be sent at all. (Lists are on the Royal Mail website and on posters in PO, and on leaflets).

The Blewbury Garden Market continues in the Post Office on Saturdays, bread and cakes, eggs available most days.

We will be open on the Saturday morning before Christmas, closed on the Monday and Tuesday, open Wednesday morning, Thursday and Friday, closed on Saturday before New Year, and the Monday.

Allowances will be paid early on the Friday as usual.

Karen and Maggie

Poppy Appeal

A huge thank you to everybody for your generous donations to the recent Poppy Appeal. We collected a record amount in Upton, £531.88, which is an amazing amount for a small village. None of this would be possible without the band of collectors, who brave all weathers to cover as many houses as possible, a very special thank you to each and everyone of you.

Helen Weston. (Poppy Appeal Organiser, Upton)

Oxford to Cambridge Expressway

Last month, largely based on information given to me by the CPRE (Council for the Preservation of Rural England), I was pessimistic about the possibility of part of this Expressway coming through our parish. During the last four weeks Stuart Fraser, on behalf of the Parish Council, and myself have been beavering away to find out a lot more information about the proposal and I sent out an update to most of you two weeks ago.**

To add to that information the NIC (National Infrastructure Commission) have just issued a further 90 page update which can be found at: <https://www.nic.org.uk/publications/partnering-prosperity-new-deal-cambridge-milton-keynes-oxford-arc/>

Having waded through all the information now available I am very pleased to report that in my opinion there is a very much reduced chance of this road coming our way. Whilst no proposed routes are likely to be available until the summer of 2019 in his comments on the latest report, Lord Adonis (Chairman of the NIC), has urged the government to work with local councils to deliver new and improved infrastructure to unlock opportunities to deliver one million new homes and jobs by 2050 - including the country's first new towns in 50 years - tackling the area's housing shortage, improving local transport connections and creating new jobs.

He has highlighted that these measures can be taken while at the same time protecting and enhancing the natural environment of the area, and without making changes to existing Green Belt protections.

I am not sure about the number of new houses in the area but his comment on the environment is very relevant as I cannot see if they aim to protect the natural environment that they will propose part of the route to run through our area of outstanding natural beauty.

In their report to Stakeholders, given in early November, Highways England put forward their proposed program for the Expressway:

- Central corridor selection July 2018 (the corridors are possible areas for the central section of the Expressway)

- Proposed route within selected corridor July 2019

- Shortlist of route options selected for Public Consultation Autumn 2019

- Preferred route announcement Autumn 2020.

As you can see no further information is likely to be available for a long time so I am not expecting to mention the Expressway again for many months but if either Stuart or myself become aware of anything significant to report I will keep you informed.

** This update was sent out by email to the 112 households registered with me to receive important village news that crops up away from the normal Upton News publication dates. If you want a copy of this update or future important news items please let me have your email address such that I can add you to the list.

Editor



Feet First



A Mobile Foot Clinic for
Upton

Treatment provided in your own home for
Routine Foot and Nail Care
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Contact Jill Allen DipFh MCFHP MAFHP
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Upton 50 Club

Prize Winners for November

£25 – No 81 Mary Hetherington

£20 – No 26 Clive Holmes

£15 – No 171 George Paxton

£10 – No 182 Francis Burrow

Lesley Shaw

Wreath Making

Visit Earth Trust at Little Wittenham to make a beautiful festive wreath for your home or to give as a gift. All materials are provided but feel free to bring along any additional foliage or decorations you would like to include. If children would like to take part please book on to Wreath Making for Families at 3.45pm. Price includes a hot drink and a mince pie! £20 per wreath; booking essential: book online (incurs a fee) or call 01865 407792 during office hours.

Friday 1st and Friday 8th December at 1.00pm and 2.00pm and at 3.45pm for families.

For more information visit www.earthtrust.org.uk.

Help with your Heating

South Oxfordshire and Vale Citizens Advice is working to help any disadvantaged people in our communities who are in difficulties with heating their homes this winter. The national charity is urging people to take action, to cut their bills by checking that they have signed up for the best possible deal, or to take up offers of help to insulate their homes.

You could benefit from savings of up to £320 a year from energy efficiency measures, an average of £100 by paying by direct debit, and up to £200 a year by shopping around for the best deal.

The Citizens Advice website contains a lot of useful energy advice, information and links to price comparison tools. Visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply to find out how you could benefit.

Citizens Advice offers confidential, impartial advice and information on many day-to-day issues. For further help visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk, call Adviceline on 03444 111 444 or drop in to your nearest Citizens Advice Office. Locations and opening hours of Citizens Advice offices in South Oxfordshire and Vale can be found on <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

Astons Online

The December free-of-charge drop-in workshop will be part of the Astons Café Christmas Fair on Tuesday 5 December. Anyone living in this area is invited to the workshop and the Fair from 10:00am to 12:00pm in Astons Village Hall.

Astons Online is the place to bring problems involved in using PCs, tablets, smartphones, email or in browsing the Internet. You will find a warm welcome at our event where the atmosphere is friendly, engaging and inclusive. Please tell anyone you know who might be interested in coming along.

Didcot U3A

As we reach the end of 2017, we are pleased to confirm the Didcot and District U3A is heading into it's 5th year with an ever expanding number of interest Groups and Membership! The tireless energy and enthusiasm of the committee has ensured this relatively new U3A branch of a nationwide organisation has clearly attracted those in retirement who wish to continue to expand their knowledge, socialise with likeminded people and, most importantly, have fun!

On December 19th we have our monthly meeting which will include our traditional Christmas Lunch (ticket entry only) followed at about 2.00pm by humorous entertainment by 'Two Blokes and a Piano', this duo have previously presented Flanders and Swan sing-a-longs, what will be in store for us this year?

Going into 2018 the momentum does not appear to be fading:

16th January is a real bonus for fans of Downton Abbey the topic is:

The Real Downton Abbey and the speaker none other than Lady Carnarvon, the real Downton Ladyship! (Books will be on sale!)

20th February the subject is; SERV - Service by Emergency Rider Volunteers (Rapid Response medical transport service) - Guest Speaker Captain Kamran Irani

The above presentations must surely whet the appetite, so, if you have, or are about to, retire and would like to live, learn and laugh! then come along to the Monthly Meetings held at the Didcot Civic Hall on the third Tuesday of every month, or for more details on all U3A matters you can Google: Didcot and District U3A. Alternatively contact via email:

Chairman - Shirley Rouse chairman@didcotu3a.org or

Secretary - Chris Jones epsecretary@didcotu3a.org or

Members Secretary - Bob Ashby membership@didcotu3a.org

A Happy Christmas and New Year. We hope to see you all there in 2018

Care Workers Needed

The county's ageing population is growing at twice the average, so there is an urgent need for more caring, friendly and reliable care workers to support older, frail people in their own homes, in nursing and residential homes or in community hospital settings. If you can help please contact naomi.slade@oxfordshire.gov.uk or 07584481222

Bake Up

How exciting can 10 types of bread be? Extremely, thanks to the ingenuity of the bakers at November's meet-up. From rolls to sticks to loaves (not forgetting a phenomenal pudding) everyone's efforts rose to the occasion beautifully. Lots of homemade goodies - jam, chutney and terrine - made sure we didn't overdough-se on carbs.

Yvonne kindly wore the hosting hat this time so she's chosen the theme for January's meeting - it's finger food! Details in the January edition.

Kieron

Police Advice

The Wantage and Grove Neighbourhood Police team are able to offer a free crime prevention survey on your property and are able to give advice on suitable products and tips, to reduce the chances of being a victim of burglary. If you would like a survey please call the non-emergency number: 101 and ask to speak with someone from the Neighbourhood Police team.

The festive season can mean burglary season. At this time of year you can be so busy it's easy to forget things and become distracted. Don't leave presents in your vehicle it takes seconds for someone to grab them from your vehicle, never leave your keys in the car. Keep presents out of sight in your home, displaying them under the tree could attract an opportunist thief.

If you are going away do not advertise an empty house on Facebook or other similar sites. If you're not at home during the hours of darkness you may be at an increased risk of burglary. If no light is on in your home, curtains are not drawn, and no car is in the drive, it's an obvious sign to an opportunist burglar that nobody is at home. Use timer switches on lights and ask a neighbour to keep an eye on your place or even park their car on your drive.

Over the festive season, drink sensibly and if you are out, stay in touch with your friends, keep your belongings with you and your valuables out of sight. Do not drink and drive.

Submissions for *Upton News* should be sent to news@uptonvillage.co.uk.

Deadline for the January edition is
Wednesday 27th December