

# Upton News



Vol 4 No.33 October 2014

As editor of Upton News and chair of UVHAT I sometimes find myself forgetting what has been said where... It has been brought to my attention that in last month's edition while welcoming our new treasurer I omitted to pay tribute to our departing one... I would therefore like to take this opportunity to correct this and apologise to Ros Caffyn for my oversight.

Ros was our treasurer for 3½ years during which time she worked hard to modernise our accounting systems and controls. . Despite her resignation at the end of the last financial year, she continued to manage the accounts thereafter to her usual high standard and then handed over the reins to first Margaret Maytham and subsequently John Haworth.

Ros has also been an enormous support and valuable source of advice to myself following my election as chair of the trust, for which I am personally grateful.

On behalf of all the trustees of UVHAT, many thanks Ros!

*Brian Rippon*

## Youth Club?

Would anyone in Upton be interested in running a Youth Club? We have been offered advice and lottery funding by Oxfordshire Youth who are helping to establish youth clubs for 8 - 18 year olds, but we can only take advantage of this if we have some committed volunteers within the Village.

We will be canvassing junior residents more closely for the new Parish Plan but there is a deadline for this funding of six months, so if there is interest we should try to take advantage of it. Please respond to Upton Parish Council <[parish.council@uptonvillage.co.uk](mailto:parish.council@uptonvillage.co.uk)>.

## Aldi Moves Closer

Excitement mounts among shoppers as Aldi's plans for a new store in Didcot go before planners this month...



## Upton Short Mat Bowls Club (USMBC)

Each winter season the USMBC play every Wednesday evening except the third week of the month from September to mid April. USMBC started in September 2011 soon after the Village hall extension was completed and have been playing each winter since then. Since forming, the group of members have mostly been Upton villagers with only a few members from the surrounding villages.

Each evening bowling session is two hours from 7.45pm giving us a minimum of 90 minutes bowling. Many of the members of this friendly group of bowlers had not played short mat bowls before and prospective newcomers to the game are always very welcome and given every encouragement to enjoy the game and progress. Two of the members have recently joined Joan and me at the Harwell SMBC to play more often and competitively in the South Oxfordshire League. The other members could also readily play in this league if they had the time or fewer alternative interests and commitments.

For the first two sessions the mat fee of £3 per session is waived for beginners. We always have spare bowls for absolute beginners to use until they decide they like the game and wish to play regularly. We can often locate sets of second hand bowls (4) which can be purchased. Players need to bring flat smooth soled shoes to wear when playing.

With one new addition this season our current membership is 12 although the number of new recruits since 2011 has not quite matched

our loss of members. Each season the total has slightly reduced mainly through players retiring from the game on account of injury, not from bowling! This loss sadly includes two inaugural members Austin Maytham and Brian Simpson. Austin was an enthusiastic beginner whilst Brian was a bowler with Harwell who as an active member of UVHAT ensured the village hall extension would accommodate a SM bowling facility and looked to see the formation of an Upton club and perhaps eventually playing in the SO League. The number of members playing each session also fluctuates and similarly those members attending each session in a month varies because they have other commitments. We are in need of additional members and are advertising in Upton, Blewbury, Didcot and the surrounding villages. Over the past three seasons we have rarely had more than 10 players attending a session and in the main only used one mat for the session.

The club has two mats and with two teams on each mat of 4, 3 or 2 players can provide an enjoyable evenings bowling for 4 and up to 20 players (10 per mat). Above 16 is readily achieved with a 5th player in a team (of 4). Each of the 4 players in a team take turns to sit out for two ends and their place is taken by the 5th player for two ends. In an evening we bowl between 12 and 16 ends. With average attendances at around 70% there is plenty of scope to increase our numbers and allow members to enjoy a full evening's bowling.

*Tony & Joan Durbin 01235 850035*

## ***Save the Hare?***

From [www.savethehare.co.uk](http://www.savethehare.co.uk)



“The Hare at West Hendred has been put up for sale by its current owners Greene King. There is a very real possibility that it could be sold to become a Tesco's Express, a Chinese Restaurant or be purchased by a residential developer and become another 'North' Hendred.

The idea is to set up an investment vehicle part funded by those in the village and surrounding area, who would like to own a share in our local pub and augmented with some debt and grants.

The company, e.g. “The West Hendred Pub Company Ltd”, will buy the freehold, meaning that the pub is no longer tied to any brewery and we own the land and building outright. Your investment is therefore in the bricks and mortar of the pub and surrounding land. You will not be expected to know anything about running the business. As the village would then own the building we can reserve the right to keep a valuable local amenity to be run as it should be, a successful local pub.”

## **Village Clubs & Organisations**

### **Blewbury WI**

Karen Brooks 850219  
[karencbrooks@gmail.com](mailto:karencbrooks@gmail.com)

### **Calor Gas Syndicate**

Lesley Shaw 07739 047688

### **Drop In Sessions**

Yvonne Collins 850989

### **Short Mat Bowls Club**

Tony Durbin 850035

### **Table Tennis Club**

Bob Lott 851222

### **Tea Birds WI**

Jo Christie [tea-birdswi@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:tea-birdswi@hotmail.co.uk)

### **Theatre Club**

Malcolm Wright 850705

### **Upton Oil Syndicate**

Colin Batchelor 01491 672444

### **Upton Village Hall**

[www.uptonvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.uptonvillagehall.co.uk) 887129

### **Village Produce Association**

Eileen Bracken 510095

### **Wine Appreciation Society**

Kevin Jacklin 851404

Do you run a village club or organisation? Please let us have your details and we will add them to the list.

Submissions for *Upton News* should be sent to [news@uptonvillage.co.uk](mailto:news@uptonvillage.co.uk).

Deadline for the November edition is Friday 31st October.

## ***Jack and the Beanstalk– the Blewbury Pantomime***

Oh yes it is! It's the long awaited Blewbury Pantomime, our version of *Jack and the Beanstalk*, David brought face to face with Goliath by horticulture, a moral tale for all ages. Bring your kids, bring your granny, cheer the goodies, boo the baddies, groan at the jokes, have a thoroughly good time and raise money for the Blewbury village hall refurbishment.

There will be four evening performances in the Village Hall from Wednesday 28 January to Saturday 31 January, with a matinee performance on the Saturday.

We have a script, written by Steve White, with Blewbury in mind, Jo Laugharne will be our Director and Elphin Lloyd Jones our Designer.

Rehearsals will start with a read-through on 19 October, but there will be a two week break for Christmas and we will have a clear rehearsal schedule so that people will know exactly when they are wanted.

For those wanting to take part, there will be auditions on the afternoons of Saturday 11 October and Sunday 12 October. There are singing parts, non-singing parts, chorus parts, the back and front end of a cow, a goose, a magic harp/ guitar/flute (name your instrument) and parts for children at secondary school (Year 7 and above). All are welcome, whether or not you have done anything on stage before. To book an audition, contact Steve White on 850539 or by e-mail at [stephen.white@bridusmead.co.uk](mailto:stephen.white@bridusmead.co.uk).

We will see you there, won't we, boys and girls.

## **Dates for your diary**

Thu 2 Oct	Drop In, Village Hall
Sat 4 Oct	Friends of St Mary's Pizza and Quiz Night
Wed 8 Oct	Short Mat Bowls
Sat 11 Oct	3pm-4pm, Have Your Say meeting, VH
Wed 15 Oct	Wine Club
Thu 16 Oct	Drop In, Village Hall
Wed 22 Oct	Short Mat Bowls
Tue 28 Oct	Tea Birds WI
Wed 29 Oct	Short Mat Bowls
Thu 30 Oct	8.30pm, Upton Jam Session, G&D
Thu 6 Nov	Coven, 7pm, G&D

## ***PCSO News***

Villagers may see more Police vehicles coming through the village and this is nothing to be alarmed about. We are presently stepping up patrols to prevent thefts from farmlands and outbuildings. And of course to prevent hare coursing and catch those who are involved in this illegal activity. Police have made a number of arrests in the area recently and seized vehicles as well as dogs used by these offenders.

On my foot patrol around the village last week I did notice that there are a number of builders working in the village. This of course brings with it large vehicles and vans. If anyone has a problem getting out of their driveways or down the street I'm sure the builders will be happy to resolve the problem. However, if it can't be resolved then please contact the Police on 101 and either I or another officer will be happy to help.

*PCSO Mike Clayden*

## **Post Office News**

There are some really nice "Seaside Landscape" stamps on sale Sept 18th, and the stamp release for October is "British Prime Ministers" Nat West & RBS customers can now deposit cheque and cash, and get cash out, so that's all major banks covered (just Santander & Coutts are being difficult!).

Two of the Blewbury post boxes will cease to have a 5pm collection - Besselslea & Dibleys will have their last collection at 2pm, the others will still be the same, Royal Mail tell us that it's to save time for their posties! Even the posties think it's insane! We are not sure when this will come into force, but think it's sometime in October!

We haven't been told of the last posting dates for a certain big day in December, but we are sure that for surface mail to Australia, New Zealand and far flung areas it will be early to mid-October!

*Love from Karen & Angela*

---

## **Didcot & District University of the Third Age**

DIDCOT & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 2pm at Didcot Civil Hall. Visitors are welcome to come to a meeting as a taster before joining.

The September meeting will be held on Tuesday 21st October 2014 at 2pm at Didcot Civil Hall when Heather Shoot will talk about Medical Detection Dogs.

For further information contact:

Anne Hales, Chairperson D & D U3A on 07804159993

Email: [didcotdistrictu3a@virginmedia.com](mailto:didcotdistrictu3a@virginmedia.com)

Website: <http://u3asites.org.uk/didcot>

## Postcards of Upton



None of these postcards are dated. If anyone would care to hazard a guess at their respective ages—or even the identity of the shadowy figure on the motorbike at The Crossings! —please contact [news@uptonvillage.co.uk](mailto:news@uptonvillage.co.uk).



## ***Rector's Reflections***

### **The Lord of the Dance**

Here's a question - do you enjoy dancing? Do you feel confident on the dance floor? Perhaps dancing is not your thing at all - "two left feet" and all that.

Over the Summer I have enjoyed attending various local festivals. There's been plenty of live music and dancing, enhanced by the wonderful summer weather.

We often think about dancing as a purely secular thing, but historically it has often been closely associated with worship. Even today, the hymn "The Lord of the Dance" is often sung at services, and before you know it the congregation will be clapping and swaying to the music.

But the religious significance of dancing is not just limited to worship. Dancing has also been used to give us a picture of our life with God. Here's a quote from an American monk, Thomas Merton. Thomas Merton lived a fascinating and surprising life, and his autobiography, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, became a post-war best-seller.

The quote is as follows:

"God is the lead dancer and the soul is the partner completely attuned to the rhythm and patterns set by the partner. She does not lead, but neither does she hang limp like a sack of potatoes."

I wonder whether you've ever thought of our life as a dance with God? God takes the lead, and we respond. Sometimes our response is confident and joyous; sometimes it is cautious and reluctant. At times we feel that the dance is going well; at other times we feel awkward and perhaps a bit embarrassed. Sometimes we feel that we know the dance and what's going to happen next. At other times, we feel that our partner is sweeping us into a future which is uncertain, mysterious, and perhaps frightening.

What might God be feeling about the experience of leading us humans in the dance of life? The words of the Hymn "Lord of the Dance" are an attempt to give God's perspective:

I danced in the morning when the world was begun,  
I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,  
I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth,  
At Bethlehem I had my birth.  
"Dance then, wherever you may be,  
I am the Lord of the dance" said he,  
"And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,  
And I'll lead you all in the dance" said he.

And the best thing about God leading us in the dance? He doesn't mind if we have two left feet!

*Fr Jason*



## ***The United Charities***

The two main functions of The United Charities of the Ancient Parish of Blewbury, Upton and Aston Upthorpe are firstly to help people of all ages, who live in these parishes and who may need financial help and/or may have fallen on hard times and secondly to be responsible for the maintenance of the two alms-houses in Blewbury.

The charity has the care and upkeep of the alms-houses in the Church yard which is one source of the charity's income plus some wise investments from the sale of land gifted to us over the years. For the past 18 months you will have noticed that we have undertaken significant work on these two properties. Following this extensive work, we are delighted that both properties are occupied.

Whilst the United Charity's origins date from the 1600's, it aims to remain current with the needs of those within the villages who may require assistance and also to make everyone aware of the valuable work it does close to home in the community we all share. Anyone needing help, or who knows of someone in need, should get in touch with the Trustees. We also take self-referrals. We are able to give financial gifts to more people than currently request help. It may be that sometimes people are reluctant to ask for help or do not want to be seen as 'charity' cases. However, all applications are treated in confidence and are also discretionary.

As well as small monetary gifts at Christmas the Charity is able to help in other circumstances such as assisting with transport costs for frequent hospital visits, breaks for carers, items to help cope with disabilities and many other instances where people are having difficulties paying for essential items such as school uniforms as well as unexpected events. We also provide emotional support and can in many cases give advice on dealing with a range of issues such as finding tradesmen or carers. All applications are at the trustees' discretion and looked at entirely on a case by case basis. Amounts will vary depending on levels of need.

**IF THE TRUSTEES DO NOT KNOW - THEY CANNOT HELP**

If anyone wishes to make any type of gift or bequest to the charity to enable us to continue way into the future, that would be most welcome.

The existing trustees are:

Blewbury: Sheila Loy (Chairman), Mark Palethorpe (Vice Chairman), Ann Dendy, Audrey Long and Jackie Maguire

Aston Upthorpe: Louise Brimacombe, [loubrimacombe@mac.com](mailto:loubrimacombe@mac.com)

Upton: Liz Hardy, Sign of the Crown, High Street

Clerk: Alison Palethorpe, Holly Tree Cottage, South St, Blewbury. Tel 851609

## ***Notes from the Allotment***

The growing season is gradually winding down at the allotment, with potatoes and squashes being gathered in. My maincrop potatoes are still very small, I suppose because I didn't water them (who wants to water potatoes?) but it's still nice to dig your own. I read recently that the reason that even waxy potatoes fell apart in the water was the excessive rain earlier in the year - why can't the weather be more accommodating?

There's a lot of produce still to come, with serried ranks of leeks and brassicas growing strongly now. Runner beans are winding down and going a bit stringy, so best to cut your losses with these. It's almost time to start thinking about sowing broad beans to over-winter and also onion sets and garlic.

The green manure that I sowed (mustard) sprouted very quickly and is now covering what was the potato patch, so should keep the weeds to a minimum and put some good back into the soil when I dig it in (before it seeds!).

The allotments are currently strewn with what look like giant mole hills, which turn out to be horse manure! However, if you have a Dalek type composter, don't forget to turn it out and spread the finished compost at the bottom; there should be a goodly amount if you have been filling it up all season. Fork out the good stuff and then refill the bin with the un-composted waste matter.

The nights are drawing in now so I am less inclined to visit the

allotment; fortunately a friend has kindly offered to help and it is amazing what a difference an extra pair of hands makes! And I'm happy to share the produce.

I didn't bother to plant any tomatoes or courgettes at the allotment this year - they are just too likely to get blight, and also, out of sight out of mind - one forgets to crop them and ends up with too many at one time. I've had a good crop from my tiny greenhouse though, just yards away from my back door!

The fruit harvest is turning out to be very mixed; some people are bemoaning the total lack of apples on their trees, others have loads; but it does seem to be a good year for plums, if the wasps and birds leave you any, so lots of plum jam. Yum!

*Angela Hoy (angela.hoy@sky.com)*

## ***Village Produce Association***

Yet another month has passed us by - but what a great summer we've had. Plenty of sunshine and a few heavy! showers. Now is the time to think about putting the allotments and gardens to bed. Hopefully bulb planting will be going on this month, for wonderful displays next spring. You'll be pleased to hear that we still have a very busy programme and below are some important dates for your diary.

Wednesday 1st October - 7.30pm in the Vale Room at the Village Hall, Blewbury. Our talk is about The Oxford University Gardens with Jean Warr.

Saturday 11th October - 1.00pm to 3.30pm at the Red Lion Pub, Blewbury. We have a huge Cake and Plant Sale.

Wednesday 5th November - 7.00pm in the Vale Room at the Village Hall, Blewbury. Our Annual General Meeting starts at 7.00pm this year with a glass of wine and nibbles. After the VPA business we have Chrissie Harper giving a talk on her work with owls and there will be a live owl display!! Everyone is welcome, including children.

Saturday 13th December - 7pm at Upton Village Hall. We have a great Christmas Social planned and the whole family is welcome. More information next month. Please note the date has changed from that shown in our Programme.

Well, they say variety is the spice of life - I hope you will find something of interest in our programme above during the coming months.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Queen Victoria and Prince Albert encouraged their children to garden. At Osborne House on the Isle of Wight they were each given their own vegetable and flower plot and their own personally monographed wheelbarrow and tools that had been scaled down to the right size!

Happy Gardening  
*Eileen*

## ***Blewbury WI***

The season of “mists and mellow fruitfulness” is upon us once again, I have made lots of plum jam, and runner bean pickles, some fruit liqueurs, and am now feeling smug! A friend has promised a box of crab apples to be turned in to jelly, but heaven knows where I am going to put them all when I have finished! I expect Joan will have some, as not all WI members have the inclination to make jam!

Monday 29th September; outing to Mary Rose & Historic Dockyards.

Wednesday 1st October, Lyn’s walk, 10am, Village Hall (all welcome)

Wednesday 1st, Quilted Christmas Bell workshop 2-4pm

Monday 6th, “Tales from Television” an evening with George McGavin, Village Hall, 8pm, Tickets from Post Office £10 inc a glass of wine, with all proceeds going to the Village Hall refurbishment fund.

Monday 13th, scrabble at Judy’s

Tuesday 14th, Ribbon Christmas card making

Monday 27th, an evening with Michael Portillo in Oxford

All our love to Ann, for a speedy recovery!

For more detail of any of our events, or to join the Mah Jong or Scrabble group, or if you wish to join us, please ring Karen on 850219.

*Love from Karen*

## Theatre Group

Eighteen of us went to see “*Last Confessions of a Scallywag*” at the Mill at Sonning on 18 September. Read Celia’s review on this page.

Our next planned outing is to see “*One Man, Two Guv’ners*” on 23 February at the New Theatre Oxford. I must have confirmation that the reserved seats are needed - i.e. payment! - by the end of November. I had thought people were keen to go, but sales so far have been slow. The cost, including minibus transport, is £30.

I’m happy to add new members to the mailing list; just ring 850705 or email [malcolmwright@f2s.com](mailto:malcolmwright@f2s.com) if you are interested. I’m always open to ideas for future excursions, too, though we do often find it hard to please even some of the people some of the time!

*Malcolm Wright*

---

## Owlscoote on the market

“An attractive Grade II Listed property with substantial development potential set in the sought after village of Upton”

<http://www.adkin.co.uk/property/owlscoote-manor-farm-upton/>

## *Last Confessions of a Scallywag*

The Upton Village Theatre Group recently enjoyed another of their regular outings, this time to the Mill at Sonning. The Mill is a superb small theatre seating 215 people very comfortably, and all seats in the amphitheatre have a perfect view of the stage.

First they had an excellent two course buffet supper served by local sixth formers, who were most attentive. All food was home-made and really delicious, representing good value for money while the atmosphere in the beautiful old Mill was most convivial. Even the programmes were complimentary.

After the tasty supper they watched the highly acclaimed production by Dwina Murphy-Gibb (who was actually sitting in the audience that evening).

This was a hilarious comedy detailing the escapades of the loveable rogue Patrick Lynch who is now on his death bed. His final wishes are to make amends with his fellow villagers before he passes away. Problems follow when he doesn’t actually die.

The play only had a cast of six, but was brilliantly acted out with the audience in stitches on many occasions.

Thanks, once again, to Malcolm for booking and organising another memorable evening.

*Celia Davies*