

# Upton News



Vol 4 No.35 December 2014

A personal and very sad bereavement has delayed this edition of Upton News.

My mother was, however, the eternal optimist, so let me take this opportunity to ask you to raise a glass to absent friends, and to wish all our readers a very merry Christmas and a happy new year.

*Brian Rippon*

---

## ***Village Carols***

Start your Christmas with some well-loved carols and light-hearted Christmas readings at a new event being held by the Friends of St Mary's.

The date is Saturday, 13 December and the time 4.00pm, in St Mary's church. It's not a money-raiser, but a fun and festive village event for all Friends of St Mary's, for friends of Friends and indeed for everyone! All we ask for is a donation of £1.50 at the door to cover the cost of mulled wine, mince pies and other refreshments which will be available to restore you after a hearty sing.

Please contact Gloria (850683) or Jessie (851206), or simply turn up on the day.

We look forward to seeing as many as possible, and to raising the roof an inch or two with some rousing choruses!

## ***Children's Christmas Party 2014***

The Upton Children's Christmas party will be held on Monday 22nd December 16.00-18.00.

There will be fun with Carl Pettman children's entertainer, games, bring and share picnic and finally a visit from Father Christmas.

All children ages up to 11 inclusive.

If you wish to come please let Emma know at 2 Fieldside, 07796 771773.

We need your child's name age, a contact telephone number and what you are able to bring for the picnic.

Hope to see you there,  
Happy Christmas

---



The Blewbury pre school Christmas nativity this year saw Upton children Millie Bunston and Ewan Evans cast as lead roles Mary and Joseph.

# Parish Council News

This month sees a revival of a section that was previously included in Upton News where the Parish Council provide an update on what has been going on within the parish. As this is the first update for a while, we're very keen to hear from you the kind of topics that you want to hear about (contact details below).

## Parish Council Meeting

The parish council meeting was held this month on Tuesday 18th November at the village hall which was also attended by Councillor Shelley from Vale of the White Horse DC.

Councillor Shelley brought welcome news that grants from Vale of the White Horse DC had been approved for improvements to the gents toilet in the village hall, and a grant towards audio visual equipment. The Village Hall is a great asset for Upton and the parish council are grateful for the partnership and contribution from VoWH DC.

## PCSO Report

We received a report from the PCSO stating that vehicles in the area had been broken into and work tools stolen. The police have been successful in making arrests and the parish council reminds residents to make sure valuable items are removed from cars, and outbuildings are secured. Arrests have also been made in relation to hare coursing and poaching and the police are committed to acting to discourage this illegal activity.

## Stream Road and Flooding

There has been much discussion and activity in relation to Stream Road and the risk of flooding. The parish council thanks residents from Stream Road for contributing information and suggestions. Stream Road is particularly prone to flooding and the misery this brings. There have been positive developments. The current proposal is that a shallow ramp of tarmac is installed from the bottom of the culvert and angled to divert surface water back into the stream, and possibly sandbags placed at the barrier section to increase the capacity of the stream. The parish council have been working on these plans with VoWH DC and Oxfordshire CC and the hope is that any contribution from both should be cover the costs of these improvements. The parish council will make sure all Stream Road residents are consulted as plans progress.

In the event of leaks coming from the main road (A417) or on Stream Road outside South Springs, or any sewer flooding, residents should continue to contact Thames Water.

## Parish Plan

Rob Traynor and a committee of residents have been working on a questionnaire to solicit the views of Upton residents on what we should consider for inclusion on our Parish Plan which will be updated next year. The questionnaire early next year will be distributed both electronically and in paper format

## ***From Your County Councillor – Stewart Lilly***

for those who receive Upton News in hard copy, and this is an early call out to please make sure you respond to the questionnaire so we have a comprehensive set of ideas and views for consideration in the parish plan.

### **Emergency Planning**

Duncan Reid is working on updating the Upton Parish Emergency Plan which is designed to make sure we are able to respond effectively to emergencies such as widespread utilities outages (such as prolonged power cuts) and extreme adverse weather conditions. The ability to respond effectively requires that we're able to call on the goodwill and skills of people in the village during such events, such as people filling sandbags or clearing snow covered for neighbours less able to do so. Such is the strength of community spirit in Upton that this has never been a problem in the past and will continue to be part of the updated Emergency Plan.

### **Contacts**

All information relating to the parish council can be found on the Upton Village website including a list of council members with contact details, and parish council meeting dates. If you have any ideas or suggestions please contact any of the council members, or simply email

[parish.council@uptonvillage.co.uk](mailto:parish.council@uptonvillage.co.uk).

For most of the County- and most of those residing in my division - the private car is still the preferred mode of transport for a large majority. Some areas are seeing an increase in cycling, but many of our roads are not appropriate. In this area, compared with other parts of Oxfordshire, we do have a relatively successful bus network. Most are run commercially and let us all hope that continues, especially as a review of bus subsidies, I fear, will not be good news as our budgets for such things, are cut further by Central Government. So do think "could I use the bus today instead of the car?"

Some of you may know that at OCC we have the legal responsibility for child protection. I am always saddened by the circumstances of children needing protection throughout this county. (Towns & Villages) We have several hundred children who are lovingly cared for by Foster Parents & others. As the festive season becomes closer please read this small piece below. Can you help to give a child a Happier Christmas?

Christmas is a time for family... for some children... that's a Foster Family...

"Playing with my foster sister is the best part of being a foster family. It makes me feel really good about myself I just feel really happy".

Foster children vary in age from babies to teenagers. Every child's story is different, but what they all

need is security, stability and the opportunity to achieve their full potential. These children need the security of ordinary family life until they can return to their parents or if this is not possible to live with either an adoptive family or foster family in their forever home.

Foster carers work closely with parents, social workers and other professionals supporting families, rebuilding relationships and shaping children's lives. All foster carers receive allowances and an excellent support and training package to enable you to provide the best quality care to vulnerable children.

Thinking about adoption - Some children may miss out on adoption - older children, children with disabilities and brothers and sisters, we are looking for adoptive families who can be flexible about their wishes for adoption. You will receive training and support to help you prepare for adoption and this support is continued for as long as you feel it is needed.

This New Year do something amazing fostering and adoption changing children's and many families lives. Could you shape a child's life? If you think YOU could help and feel you need to find out and know more - Tel: 0800 783 5724 or email [fostering@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:fostering@oxfordshire.gov.uk) or [adoption@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:adoption@oxfordshire.gov.uk) [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/fostering) [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/adoption](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/adoption)

2015 will see OCC delivering more necessary infrastructure. As The Vale of The White Horse are taking steps to increase the local population, we as the County are obliged to modify the infrastructure

based upon their decisions as to where building is to go. I do know from my emails that people have very mixed feelings, but please understand that OCC is only a consultative authority; when it comes to planning decisions for new development; it is the District Council alone that takes that final decision.

Next year will see many tasks commencing. So our local highways will be changing, and with it will be some disruption of varying degrees. I can only apologise in advance, but these works are essential and doing nothing is not an option.

On the A34, the Highways agency has allowed us to commence work on the Chilton Northern Slip roads. That will start early in the year, as will the necessary modifications to the Milton interchange. The A417 between Blewbury and Ardington has a programme of modifications to aid cycling and also steps to slow down the traffic flows at peak times. Featherbed Lane is to be widened and improved. My personal ambition should see the commencement of the Harwell relief road commencing later in the year ahead. YES - it will be a difficult time, but when completed traffic can move more easily. So always allow extra time - just in case.

May your families have a Happy Christmas, and I do hope that these road works will not spoil 2015 too much!

*Stewart Lilly*

## **A34 Chilton to Milton Drainage Maintenance Scheme**

The Highways Agency will be carrying out essential maintenance works to the drainage system along the A34 between the A4130 Milton Interchange and A4185 Chilton Junction. This scheme aims to reduce the risk of future flooding and supports Oxfordshire County Councils proposed improvement schemes at Chilton and Milton.

Work is scheduled to start in early-December 2014 and is expected to be completed by the end of May 2015.

**Traffic Management:** For the safety of the workforce and our customers, 24 hour narrow lane running with a temporary 50mph speed limit will be in place for the duration of the scheme.

There will also be occasional full overnight closures of the A34 between the two junctions with traffic diverted via the A4185 Reading Road/A4130 Abingdon Road - this route is 4.5 miles and the expected journey time will be a minimum of 10 minutes. Confirmation of the closure dates will be displayed in advance on black and yellow signs along the A34.

Scheme Webpage: [www.highways.gov.uk/a34didcotdrainage](http://www.highways.gov.uk/a34didcotdrainage)

## **Highways Planned Project Dates**

Milton Interchange: Dec 14-Jan 16

A34 Chilton North Facing Slips: Jan 15-Dec 15

A34 Harwell Link Road Phase 1: Aug 15-Feb 17

A417/A34 Haarwell Link Road Phase 2—Hagbourne Hill: Jan 15-Nov 15

A4185 Harwell Oxford Entrance: Jul 15-Jul 16

A417/A4130 Rowstock Roundabout: Feb 16-Sep 17

---

## ***Christmas is coming!***

The United Charities can share some goodwill this season...

Do you know anyone who might need some help this Christmas? Anyone having difficulty making ends meet or who knows of someone in need, be they an elderly neighbour or struggling young family, please contact us. All applications are treated in confidence and are discretionary. As well as small monetary gifts, we are 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. Amounts will vary depending on levels of need.

Remember we cannot help if we don't know.

For self referrals or nominations, please contact the Clerk: Alison Palethorpe, Holly Tree Cottage, South St, Blewbury. Tel 851609.

## *Upton Wine Appreciation Club*

### October 2014 “Quality of Wine”

The object of this meeting and the November meeting presented by Will is to try and identify the factors in the vineyard (grape yields, terroir etc.) and winery (quality of oak, length of time in oak / bottle etc.) which contribute to “quality” by tasting pairs of wines.

The October meeting saw us tasting pairs of wines in different styles.

The first White wines at the October meeting were a McGuigan Blanc de Blanc Non-Vintage Sparkling (Tesco, £9.99) and a Hidalgo “La Gitana” Manzanilla Sherry. The Blanc de Blanc developed a fine mousse when poured but fell away quickly. A deep straw colour with slightly sweetness finish a reasonable length but not too complex with minimal depth. There was a distinct contrast with the next wine. Hidalgo, La Gitana Manzanilla Sherry (Tesco, £10.00). A fresh, dry, yeasty sherry with green apple and salty flavour. Despite the Hidalgo, La Gitana Manzanilla Sherry being considered a better quality wine the sparkling McGuigan Blanc de Blanc was easily the most preferred by the majority of members. Perhaps the contrast between the two styles of wines was a major factor with the sparkling being an easy drinking aperitif whereas the Sherry is a much more acquired taste (which I actually really liked).

Two more Whites, a Spanish Torres Vina Sol white (Tesco, £6.99) was then compared to an Australian Jacobs Creek Classic Chardonnay (Tesco, £7.49). The slightly cheaper

Vina Sol made from the Parellada grape was crisp and fruity but not too much so with fresh citrus, green fruits and light bodied. The Chardonnay possibly benefited from being oaked which produced slightly more body and a longer finish. Again a pleasant fruity wine giving way to a light fresh acidity to the finish.

To sum up the Whites it was generally agreed that although not offensive they were also nothing special.

Onto the Reds. A Shiraz again from the Australian McGuigan winery (Tesco £7.99) and an “ARC” Cotes du Rhone Villages (Waitrose £8.99) a blend of unoaked Grenache, Syrah (the Australians call this grape Shiraz) with a touch on Carignan. The Shiraz was jammy (as is usual from the warm climate of South Australia) and fruity. The characteristic of the Shiraz, black pepper came though as well as the oak but the finish was a little short. The Cotes du Rhone had a nice balanced damsony fruit. Smooth with slight pepper from the Syrah and pleasant tannins on the finish.

The final two wines were a Ruby Port (Waitrose £7.49) and a Duke of Clarence Madeira produced by Blandy’s (Waitrose £12.99). The Ruby Port is the entry level of Port stored in stainless steel (or even concrete tanks) then blended to suit its market. A pleasant taste but a little harsh and basic. Not very balanced. The Madeira made by a unique process, the wine is heated to temperatures as high as 60°C and

deliberately exposing the wine to oxidation. Due to this unique process Madeira can last a long time even after being opened. This wine is full bodied, smooth with a bitter caramel taste.

*Kevin Jacklin*

---

### ***Carl Davis***

On 22nd November Carl and I travelled to Glasgow for Carl to complete in the UKTA England Taekwon-Do team. Matched against Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, England were victorious in all three disciplines - Patterns, Fighting and Power Tests.

Carl won both his fights against very strong and good opponents. To finish off a great performance he won the Power Test by breaking a house brick with a punch. Carl runs a very successful Taekwon-Do school in Wantage for all abilities. Anyone interested can just knock on my door – 16 Fieldside – and I will give you all info you will need to join.

Keep Up The Success Carl.

*Neil Davis*

---

### ***Macmillan Coffee Morning***

Just thought I would let you know that £308.00 was raised at my coffee morning last week. My heartfelt thanks to all who attended and helped.

*Mandy Dawson*

## **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 January edition is Friday 2nd January.

## ***Blewbury Tennis Open Day***

Blewbury Tennis Club is hosting an open day for both existing and potential new members at 10.30am on Sunday 4th January 2015.

Attractions on the day:

- Ladies, mens and mixed doubles tournaments on the day
- Meet club members and coaches
- Serve practice sessions and speed gun timings
- Mulled wine and mince pies!

Players of all standards are welcome.

For more information and directions to the club: [www.blewburytennis.co.uk](http://www.blewburytennis.co.uk)

## ***Blewbury WI News***

As I write this, I am still whizzing about, trying to get everything bought, wrapped, sent, ordered, packed away or prepared! But by the time you read this, it will all be done, and time for the festivities to begin! We will be kicking off the New Year, at the dance in the Village Hall, (call into Post Office for tickets,) if you don't want to sit on your own at home, come and join our tables, everybody welcome of course! January is quite a quiet month for us, we will join the New Year's Day walk to Aldworth, and will be planning the coming year's talks, outings, workshops and other events! It's the WI's centenary year in 2015, so lots of special events lined up!

Ctd on page 9...

### **Dates for your diary**

Sat 13 Dec	Village Carols
Sat 13 Dec	VPA Christmas Social
Wed 17 Dec	Short Mat Bowls
Thu 18 Dec	Last 2nd Class post
Fri 19 Dec	Mobile Library
Sat 20 Dec	Last 1st Class post
Mon 22 Dec	Children's Christmas Party
Mon 22 Dec	Blewbury WI
Sun 4 Jan	Blewbury Tennis Club Open Day



Coffee & Mince Pies, Thursday 22nd December at Chapel Orchard, 10.30am (in aid of Village hall fund)

Mah Jong; Every Monday 2.30pm, ring Judy for venue! (New players always welcome, non WI too, a lovely way to spend a wintery afternoon!)

Coffee at Style Acre Tearoom's, 7th January, 10.30am, with Joan

Scrabble; 14th January at Lyn Page' house.

Monday 19th; Lunch at Style Acre Tearoom's, 12 noon.

January 28th; Tara Hunter, a presentation on "Abingdon Operatic Society", 7.30pm at Blewbury School. Visitor's very welcome.

For more details 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.

We wish you all a wonderful Christmas and a happy new year!

*Love from Karen*

---

## ***Jack and the Beanstalk***

**Wednesday 28th January -  
Saturday 31st January**

The Blewbury Players' winter production this year will be Jack and the Beanstalk - a pantomime written by Steve White, directed by Jo Laugharne and designed by Elphin Lloyd-Jones. A real Blewbury production - featuring a Blewbury cast! The Pantomime will be staged at Blewbury Village Hall and any profits from this production will go

to the Village Hall Refurbishment Fund. Doors and Bar will be open beforehand and we hope you will support the Bar.

After tickets for the Friends of the Blewbury Players have been allocated we accept postal bookings. For postal bookings, which are opened in order of receipt, please fill in the form below and send it, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope and a cheque/cheques made payable to The Blewbury Players, to The Box Office, Little Cleve, South Street, Blewbury, Oxon, OX11 9PR Telephone: 01235 851495.

The Box Office opens on Saturday December 6th 2014 at 10.00 am until 12 noon in The Clubhouse, Blewbury Recreation Ground.

After this date tickets may be purchased from Savages on The London Road (A417) Monday to Friday 9.00am till 6.00pm and from 10.00 - 12.00 on Saturday mornings (cash or cheque only). Please note that the Box Office at Savages will be closed Monday December 23rd - Friday December 26th. Tickets are also available online with a link from the Blewbury Players website [www.blewburyplayers.co.uk](http://www.blewburyplayers.co.uk) on a best available seat basis. Seat allocation will be advised weekly. A specific allocation of tickets is also available from Cornerstone (credit/debit card or cash) in Didcot (Telephone: 01235 515144).

To join the Friends of the Blewbury Players and become eligible for priority booking please contact Tracy Silverthorne, Friends Secretary, Blewbury Players, 19 Bridus Mead, Blewbury OX11 9PJ.

## ***Village Produce Association***

I hope by the time you read this, those of you who bought a ticket, will have enjoyed yourselves at the Xmas Social. If you couldn't make it, on behalf of the VPA Committee, may I take this opportunity to wish everyone in Blewbury and Upton - **HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A PEACEFUL AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.**

2014 was a really good year for the VPA, with lots of interesting talks and a great Summer Show. Most people I've spoken to have also had a good year in their gardens, veggie plots and allotments. I'm still eating vegetables off my allotment and looking forward to home grown Brussels Sprouts with my Christmas lunch.

The first quarter of the VPA 2015 programme is confirmed and the following dates are for your diary:

January - No Meeting.

4th February - A Fireside Evening with Seed Catalogues at Karen's. Come round to 'Tadcombe', Besselslea Road, Blewbury at 7.30pm

for hot drinks and cakes to have a look at a great variety of seed catalogues and discuss gardening plans for 2015.

4th March - Didcot & District Woodturner's Club are giving a demonstration in the Vale Room at 7.30pm. They will demonstrate what they can produce from a 'lump of wood'. They will also have products for sale.

1st April - 'How do I Enter?' Karen and myself will be giving our entertaining presentation about the Annual Show which takes place on the 11th July 2015.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Grasses and cereals are wind-pollinated plants so they don't have the colourful flowers or distinctive scents that other plants need in order to attract insects. Grasses and cereals produce an enormous amount of pollen, which explains why pollen allergy has come to be known as Hay Fever.

Happy Gardening  
*Eileen*

## Sheila Rippon

1924-2014

My mother was born and educated in Middlesbrough, where she was sent to elocution lessons to avoid any chance of growing up with a regional accent...! Towards the end of the war and still just 20 she graduated with a languages degree from Manchester University (put to good use in her teaching career) and was employed at Bletchley Park.

She didn't reveal this fact to the family for many years; she had signed the Official Secrets Act, of course. She was typically self-deprecating of the part she played there, dismissing the work as something that "any intelligent child of 14 could do"...although she obviously had quite an interest in code-breaking. For many years she enjoyed the Daily Telegraph cryptic crossword, and in later years she and my father engaged in a painstaking investigation into their respective family histories, where her ability to find patterns in large amounts of information was not only an asset but a source of great satisfaction.

A naturally quiet, even shy, individual, Sheila was uncharacteristically enthusiastic about amateur dramatics in capacities of both actress and producer, in productions first for the Townswomen's Guild, then the Broadstairs Dickens Players and latterly the Blewbury Players.

Although never keen on sports, it didn't stop her from taking up skiing in her 40's. Despite being told early on by one Austrian instructor "Madame, I sink for you skiing is kaput", she persevered and continued to ski every year with my father until she fell on the slopes and broke her hip at the age of 75. Her skiing formed just part of her travels abroad. In later years, my parents enjoyed many exotic trips and intellectually stimulating cruises, and she kept a list of the many countries they had visited.

My parents moved from Broadstairs to Upton in the 90's to be closer to the family, and they very much enjoyed living in the area. After my father's death, my mother, no longer driving, took to her mobility scooter on which she used to travel to Drop In meetings at an alarmingly high speed.

Sadly in later years she suffered from dementia, and was cared for in a private retirement home near my brother in Somerset.

*Brian Rippon*



## **Chilton Road to remain open....**

I am writing to inform you that following completion of the responses to the consultation on this scheme and considering options for Chilton Road, it has been decided to keep Chilton Road open. We will carry out advance signing, regrading and high friction surfacing to improve safety on Hagbourne Hill on the approaches to the Chilton Road junction.

I will update you on progress with the Chilton Slip Roads scheme when we have obtained a programme from the contractor.

Patrick Mulvihill

Major Projects Commercial Delivery  
Oxfordshire County Council

**The Parish Council is as yet unaware of the basis for OCC's change of mind on this.**

---

### ***Post Office News***

The "silly season" is well and truly upon us, the queues are out of the door, usually held up by someone who hasn't put a customs label on, or who wants something complicated! Please bear with us, we are going as fast as we can!

Pensions and allowances are paid on the 24th, if they are normally due on 25th, 26th and 29th December, whilst payments due on 1st and 2nd January, are paid on the 31st December. Apparently, family allowance is not included in this, don't know why!

On Christmas Eve, we are closing at 12 noon, the last collection is probably around 10am, including the post boxes, we will be closed on 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th December, and re-open on Monday 29th, Tuesday 30th as normal, and Wednesday 31st is a half day! We are closed on the 1st January, and open as normal on the 2nd!

Emergency gas and electric top-ups (cash only) may call Karen on 07825 154842, (I am home all Christmas) please don't sit in the dark or get cold!

Last dates for posting;

- 18th Dec; 2nd Class and Signed For 2nd
- 20th Dec; 1st Class and Signed For 1st
- 22nd Dec; Parcelforce Worldwide Express 48
- 23rd Dec; Special Delivery and Parcelforce Worldwide 24

We are noticing several children and adults, cycling (or walking) around the village, and sometimes on the way into town, with no lights or high viz jackets, it is incredibly hard to see them on these dark and gloomy days, we would hate to hear of an accident.

A very merry Christmas to you all, and a very happy new year!

*Love from Karen & Angela*