

Upton News



Vol 5 No.22 May 2018

St. Mary's Church Services

Sun 6th May 9.00am	Sung Eucharist.*
Sun 13th May 9.00am	Sung Eucharist.
Sun 20th May 9.00am	Sung Eucharist.
Sun 27th May 10.30am	All Age Service.*

*Followed by refreshments.

The church is open every day from 10.00am to 4.00pm for personal prayer.
Please see porch notice for weekday services.

Christian Aid Week

This year Christian Aid Week runs from Sunday 13th May until Saturday 19th May. But you may care to support the Plant Sale at Chilton Village Hall on Saturday 12th May from 10.00am to 12.00 noon.

We haven't been able to find collectors for all roads in Upton this year, but if you do have an envelope through your door, please give as generously as you feel able. If you would like to contribute but don't have an envelope, there will be some on the font in St Mary's or you could call on us at Karibu, High Street.

Elisabeth and Malcolm Wright

Upton 50 Club

Prize winners in the April draw were:-

1st	£25	No 159	Dawn Thackray
2nd	£20	No 147	Neil Hubbard
3rd	£15	No 17	Gill Napper
4th	£10	No 9	Dermot Padden

Jessie West

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 12.00 noon. Dates for May are the 10th and the 24th.

Rectors Note



Something we can all do.

Here's a question for you: what do human beings need to thrive? There are certain basics, of course: food, clothing, shelter. But we need more than this if we are to flourish. We need to feel that we are loved, and have worthwhile work to do, whether paid or unpaid. We need a source of hope and purpose in our lives. In short, we need to look after the whole of our needs, spiritual as physical.

I think one of these spiritual needs is the need for encouragement. Encouragement gives us the strength to learn new skills, and the resilience to endure the stresses and strains of life. If we are lucky, we receive plenty of encouragement from our families and our teachers. But generally, as soon as we become adults, the supply of encouragement often dries up, and we are left on our own. Again, if we are lucky, we will have friends who encourage us during the ups and downs of adult life. Again, if we are lucky, we will have an encouraging work colleague or an encouraging boss. But I think many people today have to face the challenges of life and work without any significant encouragement from others.

Looking back at my school days, I can remember very fondly those teachers who both encouraged me and challenged me. Challenge by itself can be a bit overwhelming; encouragement by itself can provide little incentive for growth and the development of new skills. But challenge and encouragement together: what joy!

You might wonder why I am writing about the value of encouragement. Well, at this time of year, many Christians are reading a book of the bible called The Acts of the Apostles. It tells the story of the early Church, from Jesus's resurrection from dead, in c.30AD or so, to the time when St. Paul arrived in Rome, in c. 60AD or so. The book is full of stories of how Jesus encouraged the early Christians, both in his own person and through the Holy Spirit.

So encouragement is very much on my mind at present. We owe so much to the men and women who have encouraged us, both in the past and in the present. I wonder: who are we encouraging? Encouragement is something we can all do. It costs little, but its value is beyond words!

Fr Jason

Wine Appreciation Club

Spanish Wines - not just all about Rioja!

This month we were extremely lucky to welcome Abingdon's Majestic Ben to present a selection of Spanish and Iberian wines. This so happens to be a specific area of interest for Ben and that really came across in his very drinkable and excellent value choices.

Spain, in particular, has undergone a wine revolution over the last couple of decades and now produces some brilliant wines. It's not just all about Rioja! And for us it was a good opportunity to pair with some popular tapas dishes.

First, a lovely fruity complex Cava with some delicious salted roasted almonds and olives as aperitif. We then enjoyed a selection of light, balanced and very refreshing fruity wines from Spain and Portugal paired with some delicious garlic prawns and Spanish tortilla. Wines included a white Rioja, a crisp Albariño and a young Portugese Vinho Verde. They were perfect wines for a very sunny evening.

Next, we enjoyed a selection of very interesting drinkable reds from some great producers. Of course, there was a knockout Rioja Reserva and some very complex and rich reds including a noble Pétalos Bierzo, a moreish Douro red and a deep, dark, intensely fruity oaked Ribera del Duero. Spanish meatballs and delicious chorizo were our tapas choices.

We also managed to squeeze in a quick review of the recent Wine Club survey results and to hold the prize draw (well done to our winner!) We are obviously happy that members seem to overall love the club but we're always interested in feedback and will revisit the suggestions at next month's meeting.

Speaking of next month's meeting, our next one is Member's Wines. We are excited to see what wines will be presented by our own members. Please come along on Wednesday 16th May for this popular event!

Lastly as we approach the end of this season, please don't forget to book tickets (£10 - adult, £5 - 5-16 year olds) to this year's grand finale, the Picnic in the Park on 30th June - Please note all villagers are welcome! It promises to be a great afternoon and evening and a little different from previous years. Ticket sales are already holding up very well in anticipation of what hopes to be a wonderful summer party. We really look forward to you joining us. Please email Ian Langley ian.langley@yahoo.co.uk if you would like to come along.

For more details of any of the above including Ben's wines, please see the Upton wine website at <http://www.uptonwineclub.com/>

Happy drinking!

Ros

Theatre Group

In March, 15 members of the Upton Theatre Group visited the Watermill Theatre near Newbury to be entertained by a performance of Richard Brinsley Sheridan's play, *The Rivals*.

This was Sheridan's first play, written in 1774 when he was just 23 and, being recently married, in need of a little ready cash. After an inauspicious first night and some hasty rewriting it became a great success and set Sheridan on a course to be not only one of the best-known playwrights of his generation but also a theatre-owner and MP.

The play is set in Bath in the 1770s, when that city was a hot-house of fashion, society and scandal. Driven from Dublin by debt, Sheridan's family had settled in Bath in 1770 and as a young man-about-town, Sheridan would have had first-hand knowledge of the foibles of contemporary society. A comedy of manners, it's a throw-back to the Restoration comedies of a century before. Beth Flintoff's skilful adaption included a new prologue to transport us in rhyme back to 18th century Bath and back to 21st century Berkshire at the conclusion.

To set the scene.....Jack Absolute, a dashing army captain, is in love with Lucy Languish, but adopts the disguise of the impecunious Ensign Beverley, pandering to Lucy's fanciful notions of a lifetime of romantic penury. His father Sir Anthony, in the meantime, is doing his level best to arrange a suitable marriage for Jack and as luck would have it has chanced upon Lucy as a suitable candidate via her guardian, the moralistic Mrs Malaprop. Jack forcefully spurns his father's suggestion, blissfully unaware that his beloved and his father's proposed bride are one and the same....

Thus we embark on a romp of comic misunderstanding and mayhem, incorporating secret notes, unbridled passions and even a duel, or at least a coward's attempt at one, but readers will be relieved (though probably not surprised) to hear that it all ends happily ever after.

This was my first visit to the Watermill which, for those who have not yet had the pleasure, is an absolute delight. The theatre has been built within the old mill building and is an intimate space seating 200 in a small stalls area and a gallery. The stage apron spreads generously into the auditorium and literally to the very feet of the Upton contingent, for whom Malcolm had secured seats in the front row. Hearing aids and glasses were quite superfluous! From such a vantage point we were able to observe the cast in close-up; woe betide anyone who might have briefly dozed after the splendid meal we enjoyed in the Watermill's restaurant before the play began.

In a strong cast, Ncuti Gatwa was an ardent, impassioned Jack Absolute while Julia St John hammed up the gift of a role as the Mrs Malaprop - she was absolutely encouraging, or should I say incolourable? Daniel Abelson was memorable in the role of the hapless Bob Acres, up from the country and outwitted by his urbane companions, while who from Upton could have failed to observe the startling similarity between Jack's chum Faulkland (James Mack) and the Rev. Jason St John Nicolle?

All returned to Upton thoroughly amused and exceptionally well fed - a splendid night out!

Paul Batho

Village Produce Association

Well, the weather has improved a little bit and now I might be able to retrieve my wellie boots which, over the Easter period, got stuck in my allotment when my hens were flooded.

Have you picked up your copy of the Summer Show Schedule yet?? It's in the Blewbury post office or you can get it online by emailing Eileen on vpa.in.bl.up@gmail.com or by ringing Margaret in Upton on 01235 850126.

Don't forget our day trip to West Green House Gardens near Hartley Witney in Hampshire on Saturday 16th June, it is a beautiful corner of North Hampshire. The National Trust garden is an 18th century house surrounded by a series of walled gardens. It is a garden of contrast and inspiration created by acclaimed garden designer and writer Marylyn Abbott. It is one of England's finest manor house gardens, marrying traditional style with contemporary design.

If you are interested, to get full details - please contact: Karen at the Blewbury Post Office, Eileen on 01235 510095 or Margaret in Upton on 01235 850126. We will be travelling in cars, so if you need transport, please let us know. Pick ups will be from Blewbury Village Hall and Upton Village Hall at 9.30am.

DID YOU KNOW ? By 2006 the UK Water Industry had 1,584 boreholes, 666 reservoirs and 602 river abstractions. Two thirds of our water comes from surface water and one third from groundwater.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) said "The good rain, like the bad preacher, does not know when to leave off."

Happy Gardening

Eileen

Post Office News

We have some really nice "Re-introduced Wildlife" stamps at the moment, Ospreys, Large blue butterflies and Sand lizards etc! baby "Owls" stamps are out on the 4th May and adult "Owls" are on sale on the 11th May.

We will be closed on Saturday 12th May, another girly guide event.

Please note that we do not accept "click and drop" tracked 24 or 48, these are available online (usually eBay) and are cheaper, but you have to take them to a designated Royal Mail office, probably Didcot, we have yet to find out. Just to confuse us, we can accept "Click and Drop" signed for.

We understand that customers with a POCA (Post Office card account) are receiving letters telling them they have to have their allowances paid into a bank account, not quite true, they can still have their POCA, until 2021.

Our little shop is what keeps us going, we have cards, sweets, ice-cream, caddy bags, envelopes, sticky tape, dog poo bags, string, and glue etc, without a shop, there will be no post office!

Karen and Maggie

Upton Village Car Boot Sale (weather permitting!)

Date: Monday May 28th (Bank Holiday) from 10.00am to 2.00pm (so not getting up at the crack of dawn!)

Prices: For Villagers, £5 a pitch and for non-residents £8.00 - so tell all your family/friends about it too.

We are considering arranging a car boot sale in the village on the recreation ground to raise funds for the village hall. This is an initial notice to see how much interest there is in the village before we go ahead. The idea came after we had a chat about 'Vide Grenier' in France, where most villages hold a 'loft clearing' event. If it works, it could become an annual event.

We would also like to offer tea, coffee and cake so if you don't fancy doing a car boot any offer of help in the kitchen will be gladly received and donations of cake too. We thought Muffins, Cupcakes, Traybakes, Fruit loves ... anything that is easy to slice and eat with just a napkin!

Please contact Sarah or Giulia by Sunday, May 9th if you are interested as for us to go ahead we would need an initial interest of at least 10 people.

sahanben55@gmail.com

giulia@rippon.net

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Sarah and Giulia

Bake Up

The next Bake Up event is on 4th May at the new start up time of 11.30am.

The theme for this baking social is 'Spain'. So if you'd like to recreate your favourite tapa or construct a fabulous torta, now's your chance.

Sarah Carter is kindly providing the venue: Fieldfare, off Church St (turn down beside the church and it's the red brick house at the end of the drive on your right).

Kieron

Astons Online

An invitation is extended to all the residents of Upton to the next Astons Online free-of-charge drop-in workshop on Tuesday 22nd May 10:00am to 12:00 noon in Aston Tirrold and Aston Upton Village Hall (OX11 9EQ). Astons Online is the place to bring problems involved in using PCs, tablets, smartphones, email or in browsing the Internet.

There will be a 10 minute talk "Social Networking" at 10:30am during this workshop.

You will find a warm welcome at our event where the atmosphere is friendly, engaging and inclusive. Further information at www.astonsonline.uk

Blewbury W.I.

Hello again to everyone. I am back from an absolutely wonderful month in Australia, with my Daughter, visiting family and friends. A vote of thanks to Karen for standing in for the April News. The weather here is not very Springlike, hopefully the month of May will bring us some nice warm, sunny days to get our gardens into shape? The Blewbury WI is holding the following events during May and any new Members will be made most welcome to join us.

Wednesday, May 2nd at 9.30am - Lyn's Walk. Meet at the Village Hall for a local walk with coffee afterwards - probably.

Friday, May 4th at 7.00pm - Craft evening at Liz's. Please ring beforehand.

Tuesday, May 8th at 10.30am Coffee at Style Acre.

Thursday, May 10th at 7.30pm - Scrabble at Rosemary's. Please ring beforehand.

Friday, May 11th at 1.30pm - Talking Science Lecture at RAL Harwell.

"How to build a star - nuclear fusion on Earth " Sarah Fell.

Wednesday, May 23rd at 7.30pm - WI monthly meeting in the Vale Room.

"The Wonders of Aromatherapy" Speaker, Janice Nicholls.

Mah Jong sessions are on hold during the Croquet Season.

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.

Didcot U3A

Calling all individuals who are retired or semi-retired, if you have a yearning to continue learning then the Didcot and District University of The Third Age (U3A) could be the very organisation for you!

With no fewer than 35 Interest Groups (too numerous to list here!) you are sure to find at least one that would entice you to meet with like-minded people starting with the monthly meeting on the third Tuesday of each month in the Didcot Civic Hall! Meetings commence at 2.00pm (early arrival advised!) providing updates on the various Groups followed by a guest speaker giving a personal insight of their own professional careers. On the 22nd May we have the Memoirs of a Royal Footman - Ian Scott-Hunter will talk about his life of working with the Royal Family.

You will be most welcome to come 'try before you buy' and join your local U3A, making new friends and gaining new interests? For further information feel free to contact one of the following:

Shirley Rouse - chairman@didcotu3a.org , Chris Jones - secretary@didcotu3a.org
or Bob Ashby - membership@didcotu3a.org

Looking forward to seeing you there.

Parish Council

The Parish Council held it's Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 15th April in the village hall.

It was disappointing that only four people from the village came along, but a good discussion was had on the state of the main road through Upton, footpaths, play areas, and the amount of rubbish that is left on the recreation ground. The good volunteers of the village are working hard to keep the rec and play areas in a good state of repair, but it seems they are facing an uphill struggle to keep the areas free of detritus. It is known that this problem is not necessarily caused by the good people of the village! However, can you please ensure that anything you bring with you to the recreation ground is also taken home or binned. Thank you.

Next Parish Council Meetings:-

Annual General Meeting, Monday 14th May 2018, 7.30pm in the village hall meeting room.

Regular Parish Council meeting, Monday 16th July 2018 in the village hall meeting room.

Please see the village noticeboard and village web site for agendas of upcoming meetings and for minutes of previous meetings when they are approved for publication.

Parish Clerk 28.4.18

Citizens Advice

If you have recently had your Personal Independence Payment (PIP) reduced after a reassessment and need help to get it restored, your local Citizens Advice Office will be pleased to help you.

The first thing to try is the process known as "mandatory reconsideration", which involves asking the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to take a second look at your assessment decision.

You'll normally need to contact the DWP within a month of your assessment decision being issued, and it's best to do so in writing. Your letter should list all the reasons why you think your PIP award should not be reduced.

Once the DWP has looked again at your assessment decision, you'll receive a Mandatory Reconsideration Notice, which states whether your request has been successful or not. If it is successful, your original award will be reinstated and your payments backdated.

If you are unsuccessful, you could appeal against your assessment reconsideration by taking your case to tribunal. For help filling in the tribunal form and preparing for your hearing, contact Citizens Advice.

Already in 2018 Citizens Advice South Oxfordshire and Vale has helped at least two clients to win appeals against the reduction or cessation of their PIP benefits.

For further information on subjects covered by Citizens Advice, visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk or telephone Adviceline on 03 444 111 444 or drop in to your nearest Citizens Advice Office. For locations and opening hours see www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/oxfordshire-south-vale

Wildlife Surveys

If you are a wildlife enthusiast you have the opportunity of helping out the People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) by taking part in two surveys that they are currently running.

The National Water Vole Monitoring Programme is an annual event that this year is running from 15th April to the 15th July.

Affectionately portrayed as Ratty in childhood favourite *Wind in the Willows*, water voles were once a common sight along UK riverbanks and waterways. However, over the last century water voles have experienced the most severe decline of any wild mammal in the UK as they face threats from invasive mink, habitat loss, agricultural intensification and river pollution.

Volunteers are asked to survey one of the nearly 900 pre-selected sites across the UK, recording all sightings and signs of water voles along a 500m length of riverbank once during the course of the two-month period. Sites that are already being surveyed can also be registered with the NWVMP. Though no prior experience is required, volunteers will need to learn how to identify water vole field signs. A survey pack, including clear instructions on how to do your survey and a field signs ID guide, will be provided.

To find out more, or to take part in PTES's 2018 National Water Vole Monitoring Programme, visit: www.ptes.org/watervoles

Stag beetles are Britain's largest land beetle with males reaching up to 7.5 cm in size. They are also one of the most spectacular looking insects, with a males' huge mandibles (antler-like jaws) making them easy to spot!

Between June and July, PTES is asking for families, individuals or groups of friends in the UK to record sightings of stag beetles, as part of an ongoing European study into these impressive, yet endangered beetles. Taking part in the *European Stag Beetle Monitoring Network* couldn't be easier; all volunteers need to do is walk 500m, six times during June and July on warm, summer evenings, counting and recording any stag beetles they see. So whether you're on your evening dog walk, a post-work jog, popping to the shop or walking to your local pub, you can help!

The *European Stag Beetle Monitoring Network*, are keen to hear from more people in the UK, so to take part please visit: www.stagbeetlemonitoring.org.

Oxfordshire Artweeks

As part of Oxfordshire Artweeks two studios will be open in Aston Tirrold from 11.00am to 6.00pm Saturday May 19th, Sunday 20th, Saturday 26th, Sunday 27th and Monday 28th.

Six artists will exhibit a wide range of work, with three painters from Aston Tirrold, two from Chilton and a jeweller from Oxford. These Oxfordshire Artweeks exhibitions have free and open entry for everyone so you'll be very welcome to drop in and look round, without feeling you should buy. More details are available on www.artweeks.org and www.astonsartists.uk

Ken Messer, Lin Kerr and Susanna Brunskill will be at Twitten, Aston Street, OX11 9DQ. Helen J Young, Peter Lancaster and Victoria Goddard will be at Springfield House, Baker Street, OX11 9DD. Sites will be signposted.

Film Club

The next film showing will be on Friday 25th May. As usual doors open at 7:30pm for drinks and a chat with the film starting at 8:00pm.

The film showing will be *The Greatest Showman* (P.G.)

Inspired by the imagination of P. T. Barnum, *The Greatest Showman* is an original musical that celebrates the birth of show business and tells of a visionary who rose from nothing to create a spectacle that became a worldwide sensation.

Stars Hugh Jackman, Zac Efron and Michelle Williams.

If you have not been to a showing yet, they are open to anyone. We have a nice big screen and a professional sound system. Wine, beer and soft drinks are available - why not give it a try?

Film Crew

Almshouse Vacancy

United Charities of the Ancient Parish of Blewbury give notice that No. 2 Almshouses, Church Road, Blewbury is soon to be available for residency. Applications are invited to fill the vacancy from persons who have resided in the area of the Ancient Parish for more than two years. The Ancient Parish consists of the present day civil parishes of Blewbury, Upton and Aston Upthorpe. Applications should be made in writing to Miss S Donne, Clerk to the Trustees at Godwins, Bridus Way, Blewbury, Oxfordshire, OX11 9NW, by Friday 25th May 2018. Applicants should state their name, address, date of birth and occupation, if any, and be prepared to provide evidence of their qualification for appointment as resident, responsible for the upkeep of the property which includes a garden. Details given in the letter will be of considerable help to the Trustees in making an appointment. Preference will be given to those with low income and those who have resided longest in the Ancient Parish. Short-listed applicants will be asked to attend for interview by the Trustees. Applications from those without the prescribed qualification will be accepted for consideration should there be none from persons with the required qualification.

Journey Saver

Join the Upton Journey Saver WhatsApp group in order to save making unnecessary journeys, to cut down on fuel costs and emissions and to help your neighbours.

Use the group to offer a lift, go halves on a trip to the tip or get someone to pick you up a pint of milk.

To join, send your name and mobile number to Kieron - 07971009603.

Kieron



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Tel. 01235 850549 or 07753635038

Email: uptondogdays@hotmail.com

Facebook: Upton Dog Days



Planning Appeal

Many of you will recall that in October 2017 there was a planning application to build a housing estate on the field on your right as you drive into Didcot from West Hagbourne. The proposal was turned down by South Oxfordshire District Council Planning Committee, but the developers have appealed and a public inquiry is to be held in Upton Village Hall from 22nd to 25th May, starting at 10.00am on Tuesday 22nd. The inquiry is open for anyone to attend, in whole or in part. The Planning Inspector will open the proceedings by presenting the agenda and asking who wishes to speak during the inquiry. It will be very disappointing if the appeal is upheld as the field is an important part of the green barrier between Didcot and villages in this direction. The field forms part of the Green Gap advocated in the Didcot Garden Town Plan so development is not supported by that plan. It is one of the rare fields where you can still see the remains of the old ridge and furrow farming method and everything possible must be done to protect it from the relentless Didcot sprawl.

Full details of the proposed development, the council's original verdict and the developer's appeal can be seen on the SODC website by searching under the planning reference number: P17/S1965/O."

If you can lend your voice in opposition to the application please do so.

Editor

Keep Fit Classes

Go Active Gold, a Vale of the White Horse District Council initiative for improving the fitness of the over 60s are starting up Keep Fit classes in Upton Village Hall from 11.00am to 12.00 noon, beginning on Wednesday May 2nd. The cost of each class is £5

To book please contact: Annalie Thomasson on 07766991487 or annalie.thomasson@southandvale.gov.uk

Submissions for *Upton News* should be sent to

kameki39@btinternet.com

Deadline for the June edition is

Sunday 27th May