

Upton News



Vol 5 No.33 April 2019

St. Mary's Church Services

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Sun 7th April 9.00am | Sung Eucharist.* |
| Sun 14th April 9.00am | Sung Eucharist. |
| Sun 21st April 9.00am | Easter Day Eucharist. |
| Sun 28th April 10.30am | All Age Service*, celebrating St George. |

*Refreshments served after these events

Please see porch notice for weekday services.

Upton 50 Club

Prize Winners in the March draw were as follows:-

| | | |
|-------------|--------|----------------|
| 1st £25 | No.173 | Ben Mallet |
| 2nd £20 | No.174 | Emma Watts-Lay |
| 3rd £15 | No.140 | Kenny Shaw |
| 4th £10 | No.177 | Hilary Powell |
| Lesley Shaw | | |

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 April are the 11th and the 25th.

Christian Aid

This year Christian Aid Week runs from Sunday 12th May to Saturday 18th May. Envelopes for a House to House Collection will be delivered as usual, unless anyone has a bright idea that will raise £500 with less effort. The special theme this year is for the training of new Health Workers in Sierra Leone - many perished in the last Ebola outbreak.

Please also add to your diaries the following Christian Aid events.

A Plant Sale at Chilton Village Hall on Saturday 11th May 10.00am—12.00 noon and a Coffee Morning at Didcot Methodist Church on Saturday 18th May also 10.00am—12.00 noon. More details next month.

A Christian Aid Service will be held at St. Peter's Didcot on Sunday 12th May at 6.00pm.

Elisabeth and Malcolm Wright

Parish Council

Roll up, roll up for the Annual Parish Meeting

Date change: The APM will now be on MONDAY 29th APRIL at 7.15pm in the Village Hall. We have delayed it to avoid the Easter holiday in the hope that as many villagers as possible will attend.

It will be a little different this year. The main purpose of the meeting is for villagers to find out what has been happening in the parish and talk to councillors about what you would like to see done.

We want this year's event to be a chance for villagers old and new to get to know each other; share information about the many social and interest clubs in Upton; promote businesses run by Uptonites; and hear from people who have time or skills they might be willing to volunteer.

In a break with tradition, the annual reports will not be read out. They will be published on the Upton Village website, and displayed on the walls of the Village Hall during the APM. I

Instead, we have something important to discuss.

The future of the recreation ground

The big thing we need to talk about is the village recreation ground. Do we want to revamp it? And if so, how?

The reason for discussing this now is that the slide in the toddlers' play area needs to be replaced. One option is simply to put a new one in its place (at an estimated cost of £5000). But we could take this opportunity to make larger changes.

Please come with your ideas.

Here are some possibilities:

- Leave the toddler play area where it is; replace equipment as and when necessary.

- Move the toddler play area closer to the older children's play area, and find a new use for the toddler play area.

Suggested alternative uses for the toddler play area:

- Extra car parking.

- An 'adult play area' with outdoor exercise equipment, and/or a boules court, and/or picnic tables. (This could also be created elsewhere on the Rec.)

Pump track

We also need to decide what to do with the pump track. The current surface is beaten earth, but it's worn down and needs re-doing. Would you prefer it to stay as is, which requires regular maintenance? Or should we tarmac it?

Cont.

New blood

Stuart Fraser and Karen Marshall are stepping down as councillors, and we need two new volunteers. The Parish Council exists to promote parishioners' interests, promote the well-being of the village, look after the Rec and playgrounds, and feed back to the District Council on planning applications.

This is your chance to help make the village the place you want it to be.

Meetings are held every two months, with occasional extras to meet planning application deadlines. Councillors need no special qualifications, but must be over 21 and have no criminal record. There's no pay, but there is job satisfaction! It's important the Parish Council stays quorate (there need to be three voting members at a meeting) otherwise we will lose our local voice, and decisions will be made at the level of the District Council.

If you have any interest in joining the team, please let one of the councillors know (names below); email Liz at parish.clerk@uptonvillage.co.uk - or tell us on the night.

The plan for the evening

The Hall will be open from 6.45pm for people wishing to read the reports and look at some basic designs for the Rec.

The main meeting will begin at 7.30pm, with a brief introduction by Stuart Fraser, the outgoing chair of the Parish Council; parishioners' questions; and a discussion about the future of the Rec. We will then ask for a show of hands to see if there is a clear preference for any of the Rec options, which we can then pursue and get fully costed.

That will be followed by a game of skittles for anyone who is up for it.

Importantly, there will be free wine and nibbles to keep us going.

If you run a club or business...

Any village clubs or businesses that wish to have a table in the hall to draw attention to your wares, take questions, sign up new members or customers - please let Jo know in advance at jekfidgen@yahoo.co.uk or drop a note into Old Stream Cottage at the Frogalley end of Stream Road.

We hope to see you there.

The Upton Parish Councillors - Stuart Fraser, Stuart Norman, Brendan Henaghan, Karen Marshall, Ian Sykes and Jo Fidgen.

The Annual Litter Pick was a great success. We had our highest turnout in recent years - 28 people collected dozens of bags of rubbish from the village and surrounding roads and footpaths. A huge thank you to everyone who came, and especially to Rob Traynor, who marshalled the troops with panache. (Pictures Page 11).

The Wine Club

Carrying on the popular theme of wine with food, we had another great wine and cheese evening this month with some outstanding cheeses and very drinkable wine combinations.

We started with a lovely, high quality and drinkable Prosecco with a delicious Gran Padano cheese followed by a crisp, dry yet very aromatic and pleasantly floral Greek white with some melted halloumi. A lightly oaked yet bright and fresh Chardonnay paired well with a beautiful creamy brie and a fragrant and full-bodied Viognier with a very indulgent creamy and complex Delice de Crème!

On to reds and we enjoyed a very fruity rich Sangiovese with Taleggio: Typically a mild creamy cheese with an unexpected pungent aroma. Then a very drinkable fruity Grenache from the Barossa valley in Australia. It was brilliantly paired with a hard goat's cheese affectionately named "Rustic Rachel" after a lovely lady who apparently shared personality traits with this cheese (sweet, curvy and slightly nutty - wish we could meet her!) and topped with a dark cherry to match the notes of the wine. A 100% Cabernet Sauvignon from Argentina made from grapes grown in the very sunny region of North Mendoza went very well with a delicious mature Cornish Quartz cheddar.

We rounded off the evening with a tawny port paired with a robust Barkham Blue, a lovely classic combination leaving us wanting even more despite having had SO much!

Thanks to the Committee for pulling together some delicious and well matched combinations. All in all it was a very sociable and relaxed evening. It's great to see both regular and new faces at Wine Club. If you're new to Upton and you would like to meet some friendly village folk over a drink and a chat or would just like to try it out, please get in touch or just come along to our next meeting on Wednesday 17th April at 8.00pm. It's very relaxed and down to earth and you really don't need to know anything about wine (just enjoy drinking it). We would love to see you!

Lastly, don't forget the Wine Club logo competition! Entries to Ian in time for May's meeting.

Any enquiries about Wine Club, please contact Ian at ian.langley@yahoo.co.uk

Ros

For more wine and meeting details please see Twitter @UptonWine

Rectors Note—Space to be Ourselves



Do you ever find yourself returning to a familiar story, and perhaps noticing something which you'd never seen before? Every year, Christians find themselves returning to the familiar stories in the Bible. At this time of year, we are re-reading the stories associated with the celebration of Good Friday and Easter. The stories are familiar and yet is often the case that on a re-reading we notice something

that we hadn't really noticed before.

It seems that during the days before Good Friday, Jesus spent his time in Jerusalem, and especially in the Temple. But he didn't spend the night in the city. He went out of the city to a neighbouring hillside, called the Mount of Olives. He then returned to the city early the following morning.

This is a detail which I had never really thought about before, and I've been wondering why Jesus did this. I'm sure he could have found somewhere to stay in the city if he had wished to do so. So why did he spend the nights on the Mount of Olives? Did he need some place of quiet away from the hustle and bustle of the city, away from the demands of his followers? A place where he could sit and think and pray and sleep and simply be himself?

I think we all need to find a space in which we can be ourselves. Families and workplaces can put a lot of pressure on us to be the person that others want us to be, rather the person we truly are. And the world of social media can add to this pressure. The other day I heard a talk about the pressures facing young people today, and one of the points being made was that maintaining a successful presence on social media can come at a huge cost to psychological well-being. Social media encourages us to be always comparing ourselves to other people and always thinking about what other people are thinking about us. For many of us, there's very little opportunity simply to be ourselves - to say, in effect, "Hello, this is me, the real me, warts and all!"

If Jesus went out of the city every evening to find the space to be himself, I wonder where we might go to find the space to be ourselves?

Fr Jason

Harwell Rainbows

Harwell Rainbows are celebrating their 25th anniversary having had their first meeting in April 1994. All former members are invited to join them at Harwell School Hall on Friday 26th April 6.00pm - 7.00pm. If you plan to attend or if you want more information about the Harwell Rainbows please contact lynn.nickerson.holywell@gmail.com

Upton Village Hall

At a meeting of the Upton Village Hall Amenities Trust (UVHAT) on Tuesday, February 26th, the trustees unanimously agreed to proceed with the refurbishment and upgrading of the main village hall. This has been on our agenda for quite sometime, and after consultation with the various user groups we now have a modest plan of upgrades and refurbishments.

The ceiling lighting will be replaced with energy efficient LED lighting as will the wall lights. More electrical sockets will be added at strategic places round the room. All the fire safety/exit lights will be upgraded and also the wall heaters replaced with more modern, energy efficient ones. Acoustic panels will be placed on the ceiling to help reduce reverberation time making it less harsh when there are a lot of people in the hall. The walls will be covered with thermal insulation plasterboard and plastered and wainscoting will be added on the lower half of the walls to protect the wall from scuffs and smudge, this will also help to insulate the hall even more. The hall will then be painted. The floor will be repaired where necessary and various boards replaced. It will then be stripped and the various different wood areas will be re-matched together, sanded and sealed. Finally all the old pelmets and curtains will be removed and replaced by wood painted blinds on all windows. We believe that these improvements will make the main hall a more pleasant, lighter and brighter environment to be in. Work will hopefully start in early July and maybe stretch a little into August. It still may be possible to use the hall while some of the works are going on but there will be two periods when it will have to be closed completely. The little meeting room may be still available in extremis. We hope to have the hall ready again for the church/village fete at the beginning of September.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Lesley Shaw, who is leaving UVHAT, for all her hard work as a trustee over many years, and most recently looking after our Upton 50 Club which raises vital funds to keep our hall maintained. Jacqui Reid will now be looking after the Upton 50 Club.

Upton Village Hall Trustees

Computer Advice

Free IT advice for Upton computer users is available on Tuesday 23rd April from 10:00am to 12:00pm in Aston Tirrold and Aston Uphorpe Village Hall (OX11 9EQ). At about 10:30 there will be a short presentation “*All about email*”.

Astons Online helps people be confident, effective and safe users of email and the Internet. Our free-of-charge events cater for all types of computer and user issues in a friendly and informal atmosphere, see www.astonsonline.uk for more information.

Tell us that you’re coming if you can, especially if you want one-to-one help. (theastonsonline@gmail.com or phone 07780 958249)



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Peter Gardiner

It was with great regret that we learned of Peter's death; he had been a good neighbour, kind, obliging and convivial, when he and Juliet lived at Willows, in Stream Road, across the stream from us.

Peter, we soon found out, was another English teacher, and had actually taught a friend of ours when he was at Charterhouse. Such are the concatenations of coincidence, even in a small village. And his love of English Literature showed in so many ways. He master-minded a number of Readings on a theme, and I always marvelled at the breadth of his sources; in their new home in Goring, he spoke of a group who met to discuss poetry, even when Parkinson's was taking its toll. He acted with Blewbury Players, too.

Other contributions to the village were pieces of historical research in local record libraries, his civic-minded litter collection on his regular walking of the footpaths, his service as the transport representative for the village - he and Juliet rarely used their car and set a great example by using the bus to shop and even to visit the dentist, along with suggestions for planting the circuit of the Recreation Ground.

He cared for his garden in his headmasterly way: everything was strictly under control. But he had a genuine love and knowledge of plants, too. We had many interests in common, so conversation was always easy. We even did the same crosswords - and we also agreed they were getting harder by the year. He was an impeccably courteous and convivial host, an ardent environmentalist, a much missed asset to the village community, and we in Upton who remember him send Juliet and their family our deepest sympathy in their loss.

Malcolm Wright, with some help from Margaret Maytham.

Olive Prior

We are sorry to report the death of Olive Prior, formerly of Upton, at the age of 91. Olive and Harry Prior lived for many years at Wychwood on the corner of Newmans Close and Fieldside. Olive was initially a lively and active member of the community who took a great interest in her fellow villagers. Unfortunately life became more difficult for her when she was in her 80s, and following Harry's death in 2015 Olive moved to a care home in Newbury. Despite various health problems and failing eye sight Olive was settled and generally contented there but on 22nd March she was admitted to hospital where she died peacefully a few hours later.

Judy Robertson

Friends of St Mary's Good Friday Walk

A quick announcement to say that the Good Friday walk, which has proved popular over the past five or so years, will take place again on Friday (naturally!) 19th April. We will start at 2.00pm from the church and aim to get back there by about 4.00 for some hot cross buns and tea.

Last year a goodly number of Uptonians braved the wind and rain and had a splendid time, defying everything nature could throw at us. This year, things can only get better!

If you could let Paul (851251) or Jessie (851206) know you're planning to come along that will allow us to calculate roughly how many hot cross buns to buy. But if you're not sure, just turn up anyway - we have never run out yet!

Paul Batho

Blewbury Post Office

Royal mail will put their prices up on Monday 25th March, standard 1st will be 70p, 2nd class 61p, they have broken their price cap set by OFCOM, and they will be fined, which will go to "Action for Children". Other prices jump too, Europe rate will be £1.35 and £1.55 for the rest of the world (under 20g).

The confusion over Brexit means that for travellers abroad, passports need to be at least 6 months before expiry and if you are intending to drive abroad, you will need an international driving licence. The nearest office to get one is Didcot post office.

We will be closing for Good Friday, Easter Saturday and Easter Monday, pensions and allowances will be paid on the previous working day, emergency gas, electricity or parcel collection can ring my mobile 07825154842.

Marvel Comic Superhero stamps are on sale now, and the new Birds of Prey stamps will be on sale from the 4th April.

Cadbury creme eggs are in stock now! We have honey, eggs and preserves on a regular basis, and cakes to raise money for one of my girly guides off on an international trip to Switzerland!

Happy Easter

Food for the Journey

Young People- teens and pre-teens - your local church is keen to find out how we can support you: in life, at school, with family and friends, coping with stuff and how faith fits in. Come to brunch and discuss all this on Saturday 6th April 11.00am to 12.00 noon.

Look forward to seeing you, but if you can't make it let Rev. Louise know - 07837 009 730 - and she will keep you in the loop.

Village Produce Association

Well, what about that March wind!! On my allotment, one shed was blown over and two people lost (not literally) their walk-in poly tunnels - they were crumpled up with the force of the wind. Two polycarbonate panels of my greenhouse blew out, but fortunately didn't break, so I got them back in with loads of clips. I was surprised how well my over-winter broad beans survived - I now have flowers on them! At home I'm still waiting to see if my red acer has survived from the heat of last summer - the leaves were burnt and fell off. I can't see any buds at the moment. It seems as though everything else has survived and my Daphne and Viburnum have bloomed and smell beautiful. Anyway enough of my personal ramblings.

We have an updated programme available in Blewbury Post Office and with Maggie Maytham in Upton. It gives you the details of our event in August and also gives the correct date for the June outing - apologies for the previous error.

Don't forget to look on the back of the programme for the tools we have available to hire for a donation. You might find them useful when you really get going in your garden or allotment. Our Mantis rotavator is up and running and is lightweight enough to make it so easy to use.

Karen is our Show Secretary now and is in the process of preparing the Schedule for the Summer Show - hopefully it will be in the Post Office soon and Maggie in Upton will also have copies. So, we can get our exhibits ready - there is a great variety of categories which cover gardening, cookery, handicraft, photography, there must be something you can enter.

DID YOU KNOW ? *"Raspberries can be grown anywhere from the Arctic to the Equator. Strawberries were considered an aphrodisiac in the Middle Ages and a soup of strawberries, borage and cream was traditionally served to newly-weds for breakfast."*

Happy Gardening
Eileen

Submissions for *Upton News* should be sent to

kameki39@btinternet.com

Deadline for the May edition is

Saturday 27th April

Pictures from the Annual Village Litter Pick



Some of the 28 volunteers at the assembly point preparing for the task



Team Work—Jamie Ross with mum Alison clearing the stream bed next the George and Dragon



The resultant pile of rubbish

