

Upton News



Vol 5 No.30 January 2019



Happy New Year!



St. Mary's Church Services

Sun 6th Jan 9.00am	Sung Eucharist*
Sun 13th Jan 9.00am	Sung Eucharist
Sun 20th Jan 9.00am	Sung Eucharist
Sun 27th Jan 10.30am	All Age Service* - Christingles will be made, and a collection taken for the Children's Society.

*Refreshments served after these events

Please see porch notice for weekday services

Upton 50 Club

The UVHAT Trustees are pleased to announce that there are 3 additional prizes for the Christmas Draw. Prize Winners are as follows:

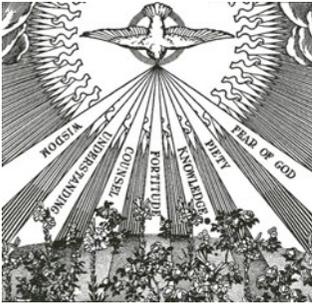
1st	£25	No 91	Dave Warren
2nd	£20	No 85	Pauline Stewart
3rd	£15	No 110	Ian Sykes
4th	£15	No 124	Charmian Whitmell
5th	£15	No 70	Arthur Fenn, Blewbury
6th	£10	No 7	Lisa Morgan
7th	£10	No 138	Mr Strawson

Thank you all for your support during 2018—*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 January are the 3rd, 17th and the 31st.

Rectors Note



An Interesting Idea

Well, Christmas is over, and the New Year has begun. Christmas probably seems a long time ago! I wonder if you can remember any of the gifts you received or gave over the festive period? Some gifts stay in our memory, but others are soon forgotten.

We think of gifts as something we give to others, and which others give to us. But have you ever thought of God as the giver of gifts?

There are several passages in the Bible which explore the idea that God has given each one of us a skill or skills, which we are to use to benefit others. These skills are gifts from God, and we are accountable to God for their right use.

Why does God give us these gifts? Because he loves and cares for us and wishes to work through us for the good of all. One way in which we can live fulfilled lives as human beings is by using the particular skills which God has given to us. It's not just a matter of receiving these skills in a passive way; we are also to make the most of any opportunity we may have to develop them further.

The start of a new year can be a good time to reflect on the skills which God has given us. What would we say are our particular skills? How are we using them? Are we simply using them selfishly, merely for our own benefit? Or are we benefitting the wider community, as well as ourselves?

And of course, there's another aspect to this idea of our skills as a gift from God. A gift involves not only a willing donor, there also needs to be a willing recipient. God is a generous God, who wishes to transform our lives and our communities for the better. But God chooses to work in partnership with us human beings. This means that he doesn't force things on us. That's not his way. God's generosity is a patient generosity, one which respects our freedom to prevaricate, and our freedom to say no. And he doesn't mind if at first we say no, but later change our mind!

I wonder what gift you and I might seek to develop during the year ahead? Is there a fresh gift which God might be wishing to give us?

Fr Jason

Swap Shop

A free-standing harmonium in very good condition, free to a good home.
Angela Burt, White Cottage Fieldside.

Bake Up

There was a whole new format for December's meet - a live cooking demo with Upton's answer to Nigella, Nadiya et al - Ros C. Her mission was to expand our repertoire for the party season, replacing the standard pigs in blankets and mushroom vol-au-vents with some really lively canapes.

With enviable ability to cook, field questions and direct her willing assistant Frances all at the same time, Ros guided us through 3 recipes, starting with gruyere profiteroles. There are 2 golden rules to successful choux, we learned. Sift the flour 3 times and when you shoot it into the pan, beat like a madman until it's incorporated, but no longer!

Tips like these came thick and fast through the session - my personal favourite of these was how to fill an icing bag with batter using a jug as a holder. Never again will I end up with gloop on my hands, clothes, ceiling and the dog.

While the profiteroles were baking we moved on to gyoza dumplings, delightful crescent-shaped pork-and-cabbage steamed savouries. Here we discovered another essential chef skill: really powerful biceps. Because it's important to get as much of the moisture out of the cabbage as you can, you first salt it, then wring it out in a tea towel. When her audience volunteers had barely managed to dampen the cloth, Ros took over and squeezed out a whole torrent of liquid!

Volunteers also had a go at filling and pleating the dumplings, a deceptively difficult task. But the hardest part of all was waiting for them to cook as wafts of sesame and sake-scented steam filled the hall. Verdict: outstanding flavour, though the ponzu dipping sauce may not suit your cream carpet.

The third canape was an Asian take on that wonder of food alchemy, ceviche. Instead of using heat, you 'cook' the fish by marinating it in citrus juice. Ros' tip for the seafood - she used huge fresh Scottish scallops - is to freeze for a day, then thaw, thus eliminating any unwanted nasties. Combining yuzu (a fruit that tastes a bit like lemon crossed with mandarin, says the Great British Chefs website), mango, chilli, coconut cream and coriander with the marinated scallops made this a fantastically exotic, zingy mouthful.

Learning from a passionate professional and tasting her superb cooking was a rare privilege and great fun. Huge thanks to Ros for inspiring us; and apologies to the rest of South Oxfordshire for the shortage of yuzu, gyoza wrappers and gruyere over Christmas!

Kieron

See Picture Supplement

Didcot U3A

The University of the Third Age (U3A) offers the opportunity to share your knowledge, experience and talents with other like-minded individuals with over 35 Interest Groups to choose from! In addition, and to whet your appetites further, we always have a guest speaker to give an interesting presentation.

This month's meeting is on the 15th January at 2 o'clock in the Didcot Civic Hall. The speaker is Angela Panrucksr speaking about the Order of the Garter - learn about the mysteries of the highest Order of Chivalry founded by King Edward II in 1348!

Film Club.

The next showing is scheduled for Friday 25th January in the Village Hall, as usual the doors open at 7:30 and drinks will be available, with the film starting approximately 8:00. Refreshments will be served during the interval and at the end of the showing.

We are starting the New Year off with our first musical - Mama Mia! Here We Go Again - the sing along version!!!

Get ready to sing and dance, laugh and love all over again. Ten years after Mamma Mia, you're invited to return to the magical Greek island of Kalokairi in an all-new original musical based on the songs of ABBA. With the film's original cast returning and new additions including Lily James, Andy Garcia and Oscar winner Cher.

Entry £5.00 on the door, see you there.

Film Crew

Thank You

A very big thank you to Simon Powell, John Dickens, Derek Vockins, Diane Rabbetts, John Lightfoot, Mike Collins, Rob Traynor, Peter Head, Stuart Fraser, Bob Lott, Paul Batho, Richard Clayton, Kieron Humphrey, Nick Thackray, Mike Brown and team leader Graham de Wilde for their efforts in maintaining the Recreation Ground and several of our footpaths in good order throughout another summer. A special thanks to Graham who with help from Rob Traynor has spent many hours beaver away on manual tasks in and around the Recreation Ground and the Village Hall keeping the whole area neat and tidy and a credit to the village.

This year turned out to be a very unusual one for the cutting of the main recreation ground. Everything was going okay until the first week in June and after that it was not cut again until a few days before the village fete in early September. As a result of the reduced number of cuts some of the mowing group didn't get to cut at all but a big thank you for "being there" if required. The small children's playground was cut more often and has been helped by the thinning of the trees in the area allowing more light into the area which is helping the grass.

Blewbury Players

Blewbury Players are delighted to announce that Sebastian Palka has agreed to return to Blewbury for the summer of 2019 and will be directing The Crucible at Orchard Dene 17-20th July. If you would like to take part, auditions for males over 16 and females over 14 will take place over the weekend 26-27th January. For more details or to book an audition go to blewburyplayers@gmail.com or ring 01235 850537.

The Wine Club – A Christmas Tipple

This month's Wine Club meeting centred around wines to go with each and every course of Christmas Dinner: from a bone dry Cava with the canapés to a delicious tawny port for the stilton and nuts. To highlight the Christmas Dinner theme an enormous dining table was laid out in the village hall and a small-but-perfectly-formed Christmas meal, including turkey with all the trimmings, was served to every person at a very popular meeting!

The first wine of the evening was a Cava: "Cava Conde de Haro Brut 2016" (supplied by The Wine Society). This is a seriously good Cava from Muga in Rioja, fermented in bottle and aged for two years just like Champagne. As already mentioned, it was a bone-dry wine and went very well as an aperitif with the canapés.

Next up was a Riesling: "Stepp Riesling (Trocken) 2017" (supplied by Naked Wines). This is a very clean and crisp wine from Pfalz in Germany and complemented the prawn salad perfectly. The vineyard has a high limestone content resulting in high calcium content in the grapes, leading to a delicate but persistent minerality. It's also dry and very fruity, packing "a punch of fresh flavours" according to one reviewer.

The next two wines, one white and one red, were both served with the turkey and there was much debate as to which accompanied it best! These wines were:

"Domaine Coche-Bizouard, Meursault Ormeau 2013" (supplied by The Wine Society). This is a lovely dry white Burgundy produced in the Côte de Beaune sub-region. There's definitely some peach flavours in there and also hints of oak and vanilla. We also found out that even though this one was around £30 a bottle (it is for Christmas dinner, after all), it offers very good value for money as similar wines usually cost around 50% more!

"Savigny-lès-Beaune Premier Cru Lavières, Domaine Camus-Bruchon, 2008" (supplied by The Wine Society). This is a medium-bodied pinot noir wine from the Burgundy region of France. It went very well with the turkey which isn't a strongly flavoured meat and so needs a delicate wine which won't overpower it. This wine is nicely mature (as shown by the orange colour at the rim), the fruit has sweetened on the nose, and the tannins are beginning to soften on the palate. Gorgeous!

The penultimate wine saw the appearance of the long-promised "wine to go with chocolate" by Debbie Paul. To meet this challenge Debbie introduced us to a Greek dessert wine, "Samos Anthemis", from the island of Samos. Luscious and sweet, this rounded muscat had sumptuous hints of honey and baked-orange aromas. On the palate it's sweet with apricot, caramel and nutty flavours. Perfect with tarte tatin, blue cheese or chocolate!

And finally, there was the "Oscar's 10 Year Old Tawny Port" (supplied by Naked Wines) to go with the selection of cheeses on offer. This is an elegant, intense, long and delicious tawny port.

We meet every month so if you are interested in coming along for a pleasant evening of tasting then look at our website (<https://uptonwineclub.com>) or contact our chairman (ian.langley@yaoo.co.uk)

Hope to see you all on 16th January for the first Wine Club meeting of 2019.

Nick

A Boy Called Christmas

About 30 people went along to the Village Hall on Saturday 1st December to enjoy Upton's third Christmas Reading. This year Malcolm Wright and Jane Pit had produced an adaptation of A Boy Called Christmas from the book by Matt Haig.

The story is set in a remote part of Finland where Young Nikolas lives in a small hut with his father who agrees to go off with two others in search of the elves who are supposed to live in the far north of the country. After several months of being looked after by a terrible aunt, Young Nikolas sets off in search of his father. Many adventurous moments and several weeks later Nikolas finds himself actually in the village where the elves live but his reception is hostile as a young elf has recently been kidnapped by his father's group. Nikolas is able to escape from the village with help from his friendly reindeer called Blitzen and manages to locate the missing elf. With some help from his father who turns against the rest of his group he rescues the young elf and returns him to his village. Unfortunately his father does not survive the journey.

This time Nikolas is welcome in the village and decides to stay there for ever which if you are an elf means forever, though elves stop growing older when they reach their ideal age which for Nikolas was 62. In elf land if you wish for something and you are full of good it will happen and after being elected as leader of the elves and given the title Father Christmas he made his wish that presents should go out to all children at Christmas. With help from Blitzen and the other reindeers he made it happen and as we all know it is still happening today.

The two narrators Malcolm Wright and Charmian Whitmell kept the story ticking along in a very professional way and there were notable performances from 10 year old Jamie Ross in the role of Young Nikolas and from 12 year old Daisy Tibbetts as a young elf. Paul Batho produced some interesting sound effects as well as reading the parts of Anders the hunter and Old Nikolas, while Sarah Tenant Flowers premiered some apt and witty music composed especially for the occasion. Mike Brown was totally convincing as the kindly, elderly elf, Father Topo, and the multi talented Carl Pettman and Jane Pit took 5 parts between them; Nikolas's misguided father, the horrible Father Vodel, the wicked Aunt Carlotta, the kidnapped elf and Nikolas's pet mouse.

A fantastic spread of refreshments during the interval was provided by Jessie and Celia. Gloria Smith organised a successful raffle which together with the ticket sales made a profit of £215 which has been donated to Friends of St Mary's.

It is intended to make a Christmas Reading an annual event in the village calendar so if anyone has any ideas of a story that could be adapted for 2019 please contact Malcolm Wright on 850705.

Ian Ross



Foot Care



A Mobile Foot Clinic for
Upton

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Blewbury W.I.

Let's hope we can all look forward to a Happy, Healthy and Peaceful 2019.

If anyone would like to add us to their New Year resolutions lists we would be happy to welcome them as new Members. Our January activities are:-

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

Monday, 7th at 10.30am. - Coffee at Karen's. Please ring beforehand.

Monday, 7th at 2.30pm. - Mah Jong at Graeme's. Please ring beforehand.

Wednesday, 9th at 7.30pm. - Scrabble at Cilla's. Please ring beforehand.

Friday, 18th at 1.30pm. - Talking Science lecture at RAL Harwell -
"Chemistry and Computers: simulating the machines of life" William Glass.

Wednesday, 23rd at 7.30pm. - Blewbury WI monthly meeting in the Vale Room. - Speaker, Kevin Little. " Donkeys, Dolphins, Foxes and Fish."

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.

Village Produce Assosiation

Our Annual Social took place on the 8th Dec and everyone had a very enjoyable evening. The theme was France with French themed quizzes and a game of 'Pin the flag on the Eiffel Tower'! It culminated in a 'snowball' fight - I think the ladies proved to be better throwers than the men!

A few dates for our 2019 programme:-

8th June - A visit to The Vyne (National Trust).

13th July - the Annual Summer Show at Blewbury Village Hall

A date in August - a visit to a garden in Upton and Tea in Maggie's garden.

6th November - VPA Annual General Meeting.

7th December - Winter Social at Upton Village Hall.

Our programme is being finalised and we may have some more events planned. Details will be in the next Upton News.

From all the Committee members of the VPA have a Peaceful New Year and we look forward to seeing you at our 2019 events.

Eileen

Submissions for *Upton News* should be sent to

kameki39@btinternet.com

Deadline for the February edition is

Saturday 27th January