

Upton News



Vol 5 No.42 January 2020



Happy New Year!



St. Mary's Church Services

Sun. 5th January 9.00am	Sung Eucharist*.
Sun. 12th January 9.00am	Sung Eucharist.
Sun. 19th January 9.00am	Sung Eucharist.
Sun. 26th January 10.30am	Christingle, All Age Service* in aid of Children's Society.
Sun. 2nd February 9.00am	Sung Eucharist*

*Refreshments served after these services.

Please see porch notice for weekday services.

Upton 50 Club

Prize Winners in the December draw were as follows:-

1st £25	No. 64	Frankie Jacklin
2nd £20	No. 112	Stuart Fraser
3rd £15	No. 56	Sarah Whatmore
4th £10	No. 14	Heather Saysell

Congratulations to the winners and a Happy New Year to you all. Prize money for this draw will be distributed in the first week of January.

Jacqui Reid

Drop In

The Drop-In is an informal gathering to enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and a pleasant chat, meetings take place every other Thursday from 10.30am to 12.00pm. Meetings this month are in the Village Hall on the 2nd, 16th and the 30th, please come along and join us.

Parish Council

The Parish Council held a meeting on 28th November 2019 where, we are pleased to report, a new councillor was co-opted.

Cllr David Beckels has lived in Upton for many years and has previously served on the parish council.

The Parish Council is progressing with plans for an overflow car park at the village hall, which will alleviate parking problems when the hall is in use.

Upton Parish Council is joining forces with the parish councils of Blewbury and Harwell in the purchase and use of speed watch equipment. Details of how this may be used and training of volunteers will follow in due course. If you would like to be a part of the Speed Watch team, please contact the parish council on parish.clerk@uptonvillage.co.uk.

The Parish Council would like to extend its appreciation and thanks to Graham de Wilde who is stepping down as chief volunteer in the upkeep of the village greenery. Graham has worked for some years in keeping the recreation ground in particular in good order with all the hard work that involves year-round. Thanks also go to those other villagers who help out from time to time with whatever needs doing to keep the village looking good. Thank you all for your time and effort.

The next planned Parish Council meeting is on Thursday 16th January at 7.30pm in the meeting room of the village hall.

The Parish Council hopes all Upton residents have enjoyed the festive season and wishes them all the best for 2020.

Parish Clerk

Blewbury Bridge Club

In the next few weeks Blewbury Bridge Club are planning to start bridge lessons for new players and anyone who has not played for many years and would like to restart.

The Club also runs friendly Friday evening duplicate bridge. If you have already played bridge at home, or with friends, or at the Golf Club you might like to give these sessions a go. There are no time pressures, plenty of time to chat and an experienced player to call on to give advice.

If you would like more information about the sessions please contact Michael Allen on 01235 851870 or by email: michael.allen47@btinternet.com

Astons Online

Free IT advice will be available at our friendly and informal event to be held on Tuesday 21st January from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon in Aston Tirrold and Aston Upthorpe Village Hall, OX11 9EQ. There will be a short discussion about the termination of Windows 7 support.

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

Wine Club

By the time you read this note, another Christmas will have come and gone! All the preparation, last minute running around, leading up to the “big day” where there is usually someone dashing around to get everything out in time! Why do we put ourselves through this? Well, for us at the wine club, whilst the Christmas meeting involved all of the above, the memory of such a great evening will stay with us for many years to come!

We held the December meeting early in the month, which, if it hadn't already, really kick-started the festive season. The new hall layout really helped set the mood and as last year was such a success, the committee set themselves the challenge of delivering a full Christmas dinner, with wine to match for nearly 40 members! (complete with 40 handmade recyclable crackers!)

It was fantastic to see so many villagers at the meeting and with so much help to make the evening a success. To welcome everyone, and match the entrée's we had a glass of Olivier Baudin Brut Champagne whilst everyone chatted. Our first course was a classic prawn cocktail, which was matched by a fresh glass of Esprit de Chablis.

The main course was the full turkey dinner, complete with roast potatoes, bread sauce, pigs in blankets and of course brussels sprouts (the marmite of the vegetable kingdom!) We matched this with three different wines, Paul Mas Estate Marsanne, Catena Barrel Fermented Chardonnay and a red from Bordeaux called Chateau St Martin.

For dessert, we had Sticky toffee pudding and some mince pies, both were matched with “Christmas in a glass” or Lustau Pedro Ximenez, a rich dark sherry that tastes of Christmas pudding!

Throughout the evening, there were spot raffle prizes, which momentarily interrupted the hum of conversations down the table. Sadly, the night was over all too soon and it was time to head back home. For me, wine is an accompaniment to a social event. It enhances the occasion but is not the star of the show. That is left to the people you share your drink with and where wonderful memories are created!

A massive thank you to all who made the night possible. January's meeting (on the 15th) will be an eclectic array of wines chosen and discussed by the committee, with the loose theme of finding some New Year bargains to see in 2020! It's open to all, so if you would like to come along and try out an evening, please visit our website (www.uptonwineclub.com) or contact the Chairman, Ian (ian.langley@yahoo.co.uk).

Hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and have a Happy New Year!

Ian

Village Produce Association

Well, the VPA concluded its 2019 programme on Saturday December 7th with its social at Upton Village Hall. The evening was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone, with good food and plenty of fun and games. Not only did we have residents from Blewbury and Upton but we were supported with residents from Chilton, Harwell and Didcot. The teams were pretty competitive when it came to the quizzes and games with Upton being the winners, well done Upton.

We are now looking forward to 2020 and making plans for the annual Summer Show being held on Saturday 4th July. It is hoped that the refurbishment of Blewbury village hall will have been completed and we will be exhibiting in a newly refreshed building. If not, then it will take place next door in Blewbury School, so whatever happens it will still take place.

If anyone would like an electronic copy of the Schedule, it is available now, contact the VPA via the following email address: vpa.in.bl.up@gmail.com

Paper copies will be available early in the new year at Blewbury Post Office or by contacting Margaret Maytham in Upton. We want everyone to have plenty of time to study the Schedule and decide what they would like to exhibit.

If you read last months news you may recall I mentioned my allotment in Didcot, together with my hens, and said I would keep you posted via my aimless ramblings. There's not a lot to say about the allotment other than its very wet and I have a few leeks and brussels sprouts which I dig up as and when I need them. I have onions and potatoes stored at home. The onions are very tasty but not particularly large. My potatoes did really well despite the hot dry summer and I have some which are amazingly large and are delicious as jacket potatoes - nice and fluffy. I pickled some of my beetroot, red cabbage and shallots which I have been enjoying over the past few weeks. I managed to get most of the plot cleared before the heavy rains came and have some purple sprouting broccoli growing well for the spring. We have so many pigeons lurking around who enjoy them for breakfast that I have had to make sure I keep them netted. I also said I would tell you about my hens, unfortunately I've run out of space this month, so I'll tell you how I got involved with my hens next month.

On behalf of the VPA Committee may I wish all the residents of Upton a Peaceful New Year.

DID YOU KNOW? *Percy Bysshe Shelley (1819 - 75) wrote: "If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?" and Anne Morrow Lindbergh (1906 - 2001) wrote: "Perhaps I am a bear or some hibernating animal underneath for the instinct to be half asleep all winter is so strong in me."*

Happy Gardening

Eileen

Rector's Note



A Two-Faced Character

I'm sure if someone called you two-faced, you would probably not take it as a compliment. But looking in two different directions at once can have its advantages. In Roman mythology, there was a god called Janus, who was the god of beginnings and transitions. He was usually depicted with two faces, each face looking in an opposite direction, and it was Janus who gave his name to the first month of the year.

It can be helpful when we reflect on our lives to look in two directions: to look backwards, on what has happened in the past, and to look forwards, to what the future might have in store. If you were to take a moment to look back, I wonder what was the most important event in your life during the last 12 months? And looking ahead, I wonder what might be on your mind as you consider the next 12 months? As you look ahead, are you feeling hopeful or anxious? As you look back, are you feeling happy and thankful? Or have the last 12 months been times of sadness and regret?

This sense of the need to live our lives in two directions is found throughout the Bible. Yes, we should look back to the past, in order to thank God for the benefits we have received and to ask God's forgiveness for the mistakes we have made. But we should also look to the future, trusting that God's goodness to us and our world is continuous, and that He is so much bigger than our fears and anxieties. The idea that we can and should trust God for the future is summed up in one word: Hope.

Hope is profoundly liberating, but it does not always come easily to us. Sometimes it can be very difficult for us to face the future with hope. Sometimes the challenges we face are simply overwhelming, and despair gets the upper hand. But here again the Bible challenges us: it says that while we may despair, God does not. We might be unable to change a situation; but God is able to bring about a new beginning. God is always at work, bringing new life and new hope. I wonder how God will bring about a new beginning in your life in the year ahead.

Fr Jason

Karate

A beginners class will be starting on Sunday January 5th at 1.00pm in the Village Hall. All ages from 4 upwards are welcome to come along to give the sport a try, the first two lessons will be free. Karate is an ideal activity for the whole family. For more information please go to www.tiskakarate-abingdon.co.uk or contact John Hogan on 07548-784929 or johnhogan67@icloud.com

Local Ancient Paths

The Ridgeway, possibly the most ancient road in England, passes a few hundred yards south of our Parish boundary. For at least 5,000 years travellers have used the path that provided a reliable trading route to the Dorset coast and to the Wash in Norfolk. The high dry ground across the Berkshire Downs made travel easy and provided a measure of protection by giving traders a commanding view, warning against potential attacks.

As far back as the Bronze Age saw the development along the path of Uffington White Horse and the stone circle at Avebury. During the Iron Age, inhabitants took advantage of the high ground by building hillforts along the path to help defend the trading route and following the collapse of the Roman empire it was used by the invading Saxon and Viking armies. In medieval times and later, the Ridgeway was regularly used by drovers, moving their livestock from the West Country and Wales to markets in the Home Counties and London.

In 1972 an 87 mile section of the Ridgeway between Overton Hill, within the Avebury World Heritage Site, and Ivinghoe Beacon near Tring, was designated a long-distance National Trail, one of 15 in England and Wales.

The Icknield Way is an ancient trackway that ran from Norfolk to Wiltshire. It is one of the oldest roads in the country where the route can still be traced and is believed to be one of the few long-distance trackways to have existed before the Romans occupied this country. The Icknield Way was one of four highways that appear in the literature of the 1130s. Henry of Huntingdon wrote that the Ermine Street, Fosse Way, Watling Street and Icknield Way had been constructed by royal authority and that royal protection was to be given for all travellers on these ways. The route runs through the upper part of our village, but its course has been slightly diverted from our present day roads - it originally followed the road from Blewbury and ran from its junction with The Lynch Way, behind what is now Maslina and through the rear gardens of houses in Chilton Road to meet with the present day road at the northern boundary of the Rectory. It then went up the hill, crossed Portway, another ancient road which is now the road from West Hagbourne to Chilton, and on across Hagbourne Hill following the present cycle track towards the Hendreds.

The Lynch Way and Alden Farm Road are two very ancient tracks leading from the village up to the Downs. Both are quite deeply cut in the hillside, forming Hollow Ways in part of their course. Hollow Ways were supposed by some to have been purposely constructed so that movement of men to higher ground could not be observed from a distance but it is more likely that the Upton examples were man-made to create easier access for wheeled traffic and the tracks have been continuously deepened by the daily passing of men and animals over many years.

Editor—Something to fill an otherwise blank page.



Foot Care



A Mobile Foot Clinic for
Upton

Treatment provided in your own home for
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Hatha Yoga

For Strength and Flexibility, Mixed ability.
Monday 9.30am-11.00, Upton Village Hall
and 7.15pm-8.30pm, Blewbury School.

Therapeutic Yoga

Gentle self healing practice.
Wednesday 9.30am-11.00, Upton Village Hall
Private sessions also available.
Contact Cath Watsham
Yoga teacher/therapist, Dip.
Tel. 07786210177



Upton Dog Days



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Christmas Reading

The Upton Christmas readers gathered again on 30th November to perform an adaptation of the Frank Capra classic Christmas film, 'It's a Wonderful Life'. The assembled cast this year contained some familiar and some new voices; Malcolm Wright, Hilary, Simon, Fred and James Powell, Carl Pettman, Paul Batho, Jane Pitt and Daisy Tibbetts were joined by newcomers Eloise and Suzanne Norman and Tracey Garnham. A notable and sad absence from the cast list was the talented and much-missed Charmian Whitmell, to whom the performance was dedicated.

'It's a Wonderful Life' is set in a small American town in 1946, and much discussion took place during rehearsals about whether to move it to England or attempt American accents. In the end, Bedford Falls became a small town in America inhabited by English people, with one or two Americans appearing here and there.

The play is full of both comedy and pathos, and the cast brought the inhabitants of Bedford Falls, and their triumphs and tribulations, to Upton Village Hall marvellously. A highlight of the performance was Paul Batho's delivery of the ambitious sound effects in a frantic combination of recorded snippets mixed with shoes, glasses, a large bucket of water and even a cabbage!

The refreshments were provided by Jessie West, and Gloria and Alan Hancock organised the raffle. The evening raised just over £250 for the St. Mary's Church building fund. We look forward to seeing everyone next year for the theatrical event which is now an Upton Christmas tradition!

Jane Pitt

Didcot U3A

This month's U3A meeting is on Tuesday January 21st in the Didcot Civic Hall. Start time is 2.00pm, early arrival is recommended. The guest speaker will be Peter Cholerton - Overlord: The Oxford Connection.

Missing Stunt Drone

The maiden flight of my son's "stunt drone" was not a success. It flew off from the recreation ground in the direction of the church and wouldn't respond to commands to return "home". If you find it please could you ring 07905 502125 or return it to Station House.

Richard Clayton

Submissions for *Upton News* should be sent to

kameki39@btinternet.com

Deadline for the February edition is

Monday 27th January