

The Mouthpiece

Culham's Newsletter No 274

Village Diary for April 2006

2nd Family Service, St Paul's Church, 10am

3rd Parish Council Meeting, The School, 7.30pm

8th Issue of Travel Tokens, The School, 10 - 12 am

13th Mobile Library, The Glebe, 12.05 - 12.20 pm

15th Deadline for May Mouthpiece

16th Easter Day Communion, St Paul's Church, 10 am

27th Mobile Library, The Glebe, 12.05 - 12.20 pm

29th Village Lottery Draw, The Lion

VILLAGE NEWS

New Bus Pass Scheme

Bob Griffiths

If you are aged over 60 or disabled you are entitled to a free bus pass. This will allow you to travel free anywhere in South Oxfordshire, Reading and Oxford City. It will also entitle you to travel to Abingdon, Aylesbury, Princess Risborough and High Wycombe and destinations on the way. If you are over 70 or disabled, you may choose to have the travel tokens instead of a bus pass.

Travel Tokens

Bob Griffiths

Travel tokens will be issued at the School on **Saturday 8th April from 10 o'clock until noon**. Please bring along evidence of qualification and residence. For those unable to make it on that day, there will be another issue in May. The qualifying age for tokens has this year been raised from 60 to 70. Application forms for bus passes will also be available.

The Lion

Jackie Carpenter

We would like to thank everyone who supports us here at the Lion, and make everyone aware that we have applied to change our licensing hours. They are being displayed on the tree and the window at the front of the pub. If anybody has any queries please feel free to come in and chat.

Culham Village Lottery

Lynn Hancock

Congratulations to Sue Halliwell, winner of the February draw. Most collections for 2006 have now been done, but if anyone else wishes to join, please contact me on 523778. Good luck to all taking part for 2006.

CCRC - Call for new committee members

Toby Price

The CCRC committee has for many months been chronically short of members. This situation cannot go on for ever and if things do not change, will result in the winding down of this organisation. The committee has substantial funds available for suitable projects & just needs some new people with some fresh ideas & the interest to put something back into the village. Surely a village of the size of Culham can rise to such a challenge or should it be renamed Apathy-on-Thames?

A Water Supply for St Paul's Church

The Churchwardens

On top of their normal duties, the Churchwardens have spent some time during the last year or so, planning for a water supply to the Church. This was complicated by the fact that the water is coming through a burial ground into a Grade II Listed building in a Conservation Area, and the Church of England - quite rightly - is very strict about changes to their historic buildings.

Under the guidance of the Oxford Diocesan Advisory Committee, planning involved contacts with Thames Water, a specialist builder and architect, our insurers, English Heritage, an archaeologist, and local government at Parish, District and County levels. Notices about the proposed changes were posted for 28 days both inside and outside the Church. The Diocese has now granted a "Faculty" (ie. planning permission) for this work. The water will enter the church at its North West corner, leading to a sink and kitchen unit in the rear vestry.

In order to maintain and improve our church, the Parochial Church Council (PCC) would welcome suggestions concerning fund raising events and involvement in them. This can be done through the PCC or The Friends of St Paul's. *We would also welcome some help with clearing out the vestry ready for the installation of the water supply when the contractors are ready for this. If you can help, please contact one of the Churchwardens on 525885 or 520534.*

Village Website

John Storrs

Culham Village has a gleaming new website at www.culhamvillage.org.uk. You can now read Parish Council minutes and The Mouthpiece online, find out what the Friends of St Paul's are doing to improve the church, look at Culham History Society records, and view your home from a satellite. Please visit the site and tell me what you think of it and where you would like it to go.

John Storrs (js@storrs.demon.co.uk)

For your Diary - Culham Plant Sale

This will be held on **Saturday 20th May** from 2 pm to 4 pm at St Paul's Church, in aid of Church funds. Donations for the various stalls will be gratefully accepted: contact names and phone numbers are given below.

Plants	Linda Youthed	(01491) 835927
Raffle	Carole Sutcliffe	(01235) 528764
Books & videos	Brian Bracher	(01235) 525885
Cakes	Mollie Jennings	(01235) 523714
Bring & Buy	Jean Diggins	(01235) 520540
Tombola	Kath Pearce	(01235) 555073

In addition, we would be grateful for the loan of tents or gazebos in case of wet weather. Please contact Ingrid Reichardt on 520534 if you can help.

FROM THE TEAM RECTOR

Rev. Sue Booy

A week ago I paid a visit to the studios of Radio Oxford. I was to be interviewed about the activity days in Dorchester Abbey to celebrate the Gulbenkian Prize listing. During the playing of a record I was escorted into the studio for a pre-interview conversation with Anne Diamond. We talked about the Cloister Gallery and the activity weekend and she mentioned that she had just been reading about the 10th anniversary of the Dunblane tragedy. She spoke honestly about her initial reaction being one of relief that her own children were safe. I recalled the proximity of the original event to Mothering Sunday and talked about the impact on mothers that I knew. On air these conversations were repeated and then I was asked 'As a vicar don't you find that these kind of events make you doubt your faith in God?' You probably won't be surprised to hear that I can't remember exactly how I replied. Though I do remember wanting to get across the message that for me God is a repository for pain rather than blame.

I was reminded of that conversation this week when I read the newspaper reports about the Bristol vicar whose daughter died in the London terrorist bombings last July. Unable to forgive her daughter's murderers she feels unable to live and preach a Christian message of forgiveness in her parish. She has taken up other work within the Church, remaining a priest but taking time out of her pastoral ministry. Forgiveness is a real challenge when we are faced with such terrible actions and these two incidents focussed in my mind an important question about whom we forgive and how we forgive them. The Bristol vicar cannot forgive her daughter's killers. The question I was asked seems to me to be rather different – in essence it was 'Can you forgive God?'

As we approach Easter this is a demanding question. On the cross Jesus asked 'O God O God why have you forsaken me?' This question seems to be the one that lies at the heart of all questioning or denial of God. Two common ways of questioning God seem to me rather contradictory. One of these claims its roots in human intellect and logic. Some people say that because we now understand that the world cannot have been created in the way the Bible describes there is no longer a reason to believe in God. The second argument runs thus: If God is responsible for creation then anything that goes wrong in the world is his responsibility and therefore a God who is creator cannot be a God of love and justice.

The first argument relies on our freedom to use our own thought processes and actions to reach conclusions and take independent action. The second refuses to accept any kind of responsibility for things that are wrong with the world. I can understand a creator God (although I regard the creation account in Genesis as a parable – a story that is trying to communicate a truth). I can understand a creation that is flawed and in which disasters can happen. I can also cope with a God who wants me to take responsibility – but is it fair to make God take the blame when I, or other human beings, use that responsibility disastrously?

In the life of Jesus Christ God demonstrated a commitment to humanity by living the truth that hope lies in loving your neighbour. In Jesus' death God offers hope not because bad things can be prevented but because they can be lived through. The challenge at Easter may be to answer these questions:

Can I forgive God for allowing the outrage that a person who lived a life full of compassion and healing love should die an ugly and unjust death? Can I believe in a God who by living through the despair of that ugly and unjust death points the way to hope in the most desperate circumstances?

SERVICES OF WORSHIP IN THE BRIDGE GROUP

April 2006

DATE	NAME	TIME	PLACE	SERVICE
Sunday 2nd	Lent 5	8 am	Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion
		8 am	Dorchester	Holy Communion
		10 am	Long Wittenham	Family Service
		10 am	CULHAM	Family Service
		10.15 am	Dorchester	Morning Service
Sunday 9th	Palm Sunday	8 am	Little Wittenham	Holy Communion
		8 am	Dorchester	Holy Communion
		10 am	Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion
		10 am	Dorchester	Sung Eucharist
Thursday 13th	Maundy Thursday	7.30 pm	Clifton Hampden	Eucharist
Friday 14th	Good Friday	10 am	Long Wittenham	All-age Service
		1-3 pm	Dorchester	Devotion
Sunday 16th	Easter Day	8 am	Dorchester	Holy Communion
		8 am	Little Wittenham	Holy Communion
		10 am	Long Wittenham	Holy Communion
		10 am	CULHAM	Holy Communion
		10 am	Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion
		10.15 am	Dorchester	Holy Communion
		6 pm	Dorchester	Evensong
Sunday 23rd	Easter 2	8 am	Dorchester	Holy Communion
		10 am	Little Wittenham	Holy Communion
		10.15 am	Dorchester	Sung Eucharist
Thursday 27th		2 pm	Long Wittenham	Pram Service
Sunday 30th	Easter 3	8 am	Dorchester	Holy Communion
		10.30 am	Stadhampton	Team Communion

PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

Notes from the March meeting

News from John Stimson

A file has been opened by the SODC on the advertising hoardings on the A415. The advertising boards close to the Abingdon Town football club were reported to John for action on their removal.

A recent District Council meeting approved the proposed Council Tax rates for the district.

The budget approved for the proposed wheelie bin scheme for garden waste has been called in by the Chairman for examination given the discrepancies in the operational procedures. The scheme is on ice at the moment.

The Bus Token System run by SODC has not been retained past 1st April.

Other news

Under a Government funded initiative concerning road safety issues, the school is to investigate a travel plan. Local bodies (including the Parish Council) have been asked to assist.

The village web site is now live and details should appear elsewhere in the Mouthpiece. The Council minuted a vote of thanks to John Storrs for his efforts in setting up the site.

Date of Next Meeting:

Monday 3rd April 2006 – following the Annual Parish Meeting

CULHAM PAROCHIAL SCHOOL NEWS

Cathy Gray

This term the children have enjoyed several literary and drama events including a visit by to Larkmead School to see 'Oliver', workshops with well known children's authors as part of the Oxford Literary Festival and a performance of 'Piper at the Gates of Dawn' by the Silhouette Theatre Company in school. After the Easter break both key stages will be beginning new topics: 'Oceans' in the infants and 'Tudor Exploration' in the juniors.

We have recently taken delivery of the sports equipment ordered with Tesco sports vouchers and would like to thank all of those who donated their vouchers to the school. We are currently collecting Tesco Computer vouchers, Sainsbury's 'Active Kids' vouchers and Nestle cereal box tops.

We are now in the final stages of the Foundation Stage building project and the finishing touches are being put on the inside of the building. All being well, Culham Pre-school should start using the facilities after the Easter break and the extra space will be a welcome resource for our own KS1 children. The Easter holidays should see the removal of the temporary building at the rear of the school and then work will begin on the secure play area.

CULHAM PRE-SCHOOL NEWS

Lea Allmond

This month is a very exciting time for us as we begin to move into the new Foundation Stage classroom at Culham School. We hope to be up and running after the Easter Holidays, and when the Elliot building is removed work will begin on our new garden.

The children have enjoyed having real "Bob the Builders" on site and we have had some great times re-creating what they have seen going on.

Oxfordshire Advocacy Development Group

Keith Pye

Perhaps we've all had times when we needed the help of a friend or colleague to get our voice heard, either when we have felt too unwell to fight our corner or just not sure what our rights were. Many people all over the county need of this kind of support and often have no-one to help them. That's when they may ask for the help of an advocate.

Advocates are people just like that 'friend or colleague' who are willing to put their own agenda to one side and support someone to say what it is they want, and to be listened to by those who have the power to change things. It is a rewarding and enjoyable role, helping people to speak up for themselves instead of sinking deeper and deeper into difficulties.

Oxfordshire Advocacy Development Group (OADG) runs two advocacy schemes using volunteer advocates (and a third, ADAPt, which is staffed by a paid advocate). You could become part of this growing team, working either on short term advocacy (OSTAS – Oxfordshire Short Term Advocacy Scheme) or with people with learning disabilities (CAPOLD – Citizen Advocacy for People of Oxfordshire with Learning Disabilities).

People with learning disabilities are often not offered choices or helped to have a say in decisions made about them. Advocates can help them to speak up and say what they want. It can be a wonderful experience to help someone become part of a decision-making process and to see the change it makes to their life when that decision is followed through. You could be involved in making this happen. All our advocates are trained, supported, supervised and paid expenses. You can also do an accreditation through us with the Open College Network. There is follow-up training throughout the year for established advocates and opportunities to work with other schemes provided by OADG. All our advocates are checked by the Criminal Records Bureau.

If you are interested in helping, please contact Helen at CAPOLD (01865 741293 or capold@btopenworld.com) or Jenny and Naomi at OSTAS (01865 250102 or ostas@btopenworld.com)

NEWS FROM NEWINGTON NURSERIES

Spring is here!

This is the month to turn thoughts into action in the garden. Gearing up for spring is great fun, made even better by the choice of shrubs on offer that will give sure-fire colour in the coming weeks.

Pieris japonica is a real winner. This compact shrub is one of the hardiest and easiest pieris to grow. It produces lovely, glossy evergreen foliage and fabulous flowers that develop in gorgeous clusters at the tips of shoots in early spring. Planting in combination with colourful early perennials is an effective way of setting off the white pieris flowers. For example, spring bulbs and heathers make good companion plants. The great thing about pieris is that the evergreen foliage offers structural benefits all year round, particularly in winter and early spring when beds and borders can look bare. Great in a shrub border or a woodland garden, *Pieris japonica* comes from an acid-loving family. However, its compact size means that if you don't have acid soil, container growing in ericaceous compost is a practical way of bringing the benefits of pieris to your garden. This plant is also very well suited to smaller gardens. The best results in terms of flowering will come if you're able to plant in a sunny position but it will be happy enough in dappled shade. Moist soils are ideal with moderate levels of fertility. Fully grown, *Pieris japonica* can reach a height and spread of 4m and 3m respectively. Maintenance couldn't be simpler – a light trim following flowering to remove any untidy shoots is all that's required.

There are few things better than being outside during the glorious afternoons we sometimes get around now. The blackbirds and thrushes keep us company with their songs and squabbles, glad to

leave winter behind. Make a promise to yourself to enjoy as many of these times as you can – and plant some spring flowering shrubs as well!

For further inspiration and advice, visit us at Newington Nurseries on the A329 near Stadhampton.
Tel: 01865 400533 ~ www.newington-nurseries.co.uk

OUT & ABOUT IN APRIL

Saturday 1 April at 7.30 pm: Abingdon Drama Club presents Shakespeare's "Macbeth" in the Unicorn Theatre, Medieval Abbey Buildings, Abingdon. Tickets £7, concessions £6 from Dawsons Music, High Street or Ticketline on 01235 524538.

Sunday 2 April at 7.30 pm: All Saints Singers Choral Society, with chamber orchestra and six soloists, will perform the St John Passion in **Sutton Courtenay Parish Church**.

Tickets are available by phoning 01235 848205 or 848719. Unsold tickets will be sold at the door. Ticket prices are: £10 adult, £8 concessions, and £20 family ticket. Our website www.allsaintssingers.org provides further information about the choral society as well as features about the forthcoming concert.

Saturday 8 April at 7.30 pm, Dorchester Abbey. John Lubbock conducts the OSJ Voices in a stunning concert of sacred pieces in preparation for Easter.

The selection includes the haunting Miserere by *Allegri*, *Bruckner's* passionate *Locus iste* and *Lotti's* sombre and beautiful Crucifixus. Tickets £22, £17 and £10 from **01865 305305**.

FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 14 May : BBONT and Friends of Wychwood Sponsored Walk. The walk will start and finish at Blenheim Palace and there will be different lengths of walks ranging from 3 miles up to a major 37 mile hike along the entire Wychwood Way. Contact the Wildlife Trust for further information on 01865 775476.

ENDPIECE

Please note that any opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the editors.

Contributions for the May 2006 Mouthpiece by April 15th please, to:

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