

The Mouthpiece

Culham's Newsletter No 284

Village Diary for April 2007

- 2nd Parish Council Meeting, The School, 7.30 pm***
- 6th Mobile Library, The Glebe, 2.15 pm – 2.25 pm***
- 8th Easter Communion, St. Paul's, 10 am***
- 15th Deadline for May's Mouthpiece***
- 15th Evening Prayer, St. Paul's 4pm, followed by
Annual Parochial Church Meeting at 5 pm***
- 18th Mobile Library, The Glebe 2.15 pm – 2.25 pm***
- 26th Culham Parochial School Music Hall,
Sutton Courtenay***

SERVICES OF WORSHIP

April 2007

DATE	TIME	PLACE	SERVICE
SERVICES AT CULHAM			
Easter Sunday, 8th	10 am	Culham	Holy Communion
Sunday 15th	4 pm	Evening Prayer, followed by refreshments and Annual PCC Meeting at 5 pm	
<i>Join us for coffee and a chat after morning services at Culham Church! All welcome.</i>			
<i>Come along for informal prayers with Revd Anne Ilsley at Culham Church on Thursday mornings, 8.15- 9.00 am</i>			
SERVICES AT CLIFTON HAMPDEN, THE WITTENHAMS & DORCHESTER			
Palm Sunday, 1st	8 am	Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion
	10 am	Long Wittenham (with Culham)	Family Service with donkey
Maundy Thursday, 5th	6.30 pm	Dorchester	Joint service with Bridge Churches
Good Friday, 6th	10 am	Long Wittenham	Devotion
	11 am	Clifton Hampden	Devotion
	1 -3 pm	Dorchester	Devotion
Saturday 7th	7 pm	Dorchester	Confirmation
Easter Sunday, 8th	8 am	Little Wittenham	Holy Communion
	10 am	Long Wittenham	Holy Communion
	10 am	Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion
	6 pm	Dorchester	Songs of Praise
Sunday 15th	8 am	Dorchester	Holy Communion
	10 am	Long Wittenham	Holy Communion
	10.15 am	Dorchester	Family Service & Baptism
Sunday 22nd	8 am	Dorchester	Holy Communion
	10 am	Little Wittenham	Family Communion
	10.25 am	Dorchester	Sung Eucharist
Thursday 26th	2 pm	Long Wittenham	Pram Service
Sunday 29th	8 am	Dorchester	Holy Communion
	10.30 am	Long Wittenham	Team Communion
This year it is Long Wittenham's turn to celebrate Palm Sunday by following a donkey to church and Culham residents are warmly invited to join them.			

VILLAGE NEWS**Culham Village Lottery**

Congratulations to Beverley Mason - winner of the February Draw.

This was the final draw of the lottery year and as you may have read in last month's Mouthpiece, I am stepping down as organiser. I would like to say a huge "Thank You" to Jane

Lynn Hancock

Lay, Bernadette Houet and Lea Allmond who have assisted me in collections for many years, and to all the collectors before them. Finally, thank you to all the villagers who supported the cause. Many thanks, Lynne

Annual Plant Sale

Ingrid Reichardt

The Annual Plant Sale in aid of Church Funds will take place on **Saturday 19th May**. Now is the time to sow a few extra seeds ready for the Plant Sale, and to sort out some books, videos and items for bric-a-brac. Anyone interested in helping is invited to telephone Ingrid or Charles on 520534.

Parish Council Elections

Andrew Steele

This year sees the election of Parish Councillors for Culham. We currently have 5 Councillors and are allowed a maximum of 6. All but one are intending to stand for re-election but, of course, if you are interested in applying please contact any current Councillor or the Clerk for details and an application form. Elections will take place in May.

Annual Parochial Church Council Meeting

This will be held in St Paul's Church on 15th April at 5.00 pm following Evening Prayer at 4.00 pm and tea and coffee. All are welcome to attend.

Our 150-year-old church needs constant financial support, and we need help throughout the year - **especially this summer** - for our regular pattern of services. If you can help in any way (eg. opening up the church, switching on lights and heaters, light cleaning, flower arranging, etc), please come to this meeting, contact our Vicar Anne Ilsley (on 01865 407605) or one of the Churchwardens (on 525885 or 520534).

Holiday Rubbish Collections

District Council

Usual Date	Revised Date
Easter Monday 9th April	Tuesday 10th April
May Day Monday 7th May	Tuesday 8th May
Bank Holiday Monday 28th May	Tuesday 29th May

Travel Tokens

District Council

If you are disabled or aged over 70, you may choose between £20 worth of travel tokens or a free bus pass, but not both. Disabled residents and their companions are also eligible for travel tokens. If you are aged 60 or over and a permanent resident in our district, you may apply for a free bus pass.

Up to now, people have had to collect travel tokens from our Parish Council. Under a new system from 1 April 2007, National Transport Travel Limited will send travel tokens direct to people's homes. SODC hopes that this will help people who live in rural areas or are disabled.

If you received travel tokens in 2006/07, SODC will send you a simple renewal form to sign and return to them. The tokens will be sent to your home by recorded delivery. If you are applying for travel tokens for the first time, you will need to complete an application form and supply evidence of residency and age or disability, if relevant. For further information please contact Julia Leppard, Team Administrator on 01491 823124 or email julia.leppard@southoxon.gov.uk.

PARISH COUNCIL NOTES	March 2007
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From John Howell

The audit commission has rated the OCC as 'excellent'

OCC has concluded there is 'no case' for the proposed Thames Water reservoir at Marcham.

The Oxford City Unitary Council bid is going forward on March 27th to the next stage of bidding along with numerous others from around the country.

There is currently a £100-150m backlog of road repairs within the county. The council is following government guidelines on the repair of roads as and when they are required.

From John Stimson

SODC has agreed a zero rate increase in the Council Tax for 2007/8. Increases for the County Council and Thames Valley Police are 4% and 4.99% respectively. The Parish precept is up by 3.09%, giving an overall increase of **3.71%**

The future of the JET site was debated at the EU school on 17 February, with regards to its future use. A consultation report is due on 12th March.

Other business

A replacement fence for the play area was discussed - options for the type of fence were circulated and a decision will be made at a future meeting.

Change of Address

Bernadette Cannings, the Clerk to Culham Parish Council, has changed her address to 51 Edwin Road, Didcot, OX11 8LQ. Telephone & email contacts are 01235 511898 and b.cannings@btinternet.com

NB.- SODC have been working by night recently to clear the footpath along the Burycroft. The hedge is now trimmed back and the footpath has been cleared to its original width.

FROM OUR VICAR	Anne Ilsley
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Amazing Grace

This was the title of a popular hymn by John Newton, and now of a film about the life of William Wilberforce and his fight for the abolition of the Slave Trade. Newton, himself an ex-slave trader, had influenced Wilberforce, persuading him that he should serve God through his position as an MP, rather than by entering the Anglican ministry.

*Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.*

The words reflect Newton's wonder at what he received from God through his belief in what his Saviour, Jesus, had done for him on the cross. God's undeserved favour, shown to the man who made his living trading slaves (which he continued to do until convinced by the abolitionists argument, even though he had become a committed Christian).

These same words reflect my own sense of wonder; though they might seem sentimental. This theme of God's grace has come through loud and clear as we have done our Lent studies in Ephesians. As we realise how undeserving we are of being repeatedly forgiven, we become better prepared to approach Holy Week, Good Friday and Easter Sunday with the sense of awe that John Newton reflects. I hope that many of you will want to enter into the Story in the varied ways that are available to us through The Dorchester Team Services over the period.

I'm thinking in terms of The Dorchester Team and the quality and variety of resources that the team offers to us. I'm thinking in terms of The Bridge Group, where we find a supportive Christian community drawing members from our parishes and I'm thinking in terms of The Village, slowly building up knowledge and connections. The major festivals are a time when we particularly want to have services in each village. This means that I can't be with you all on Easter Sunday. For those of you whom I don't see, I shall miss you! If you are unable to come to church and would like to have Holy Communion in your home, please speak to me or David Haylett about this.

In our increasingly complex world, we already learn to live in multiple circles, but this isn't easy. I'm sure that when people see David and I together at a service, they think; 'Why couldn't there be a service in my village church?' but in a large suburban church this would be expected. Sharing ministry together, it's important for clergy colleagues, and churches, which are part of a group, to worship together as one community. For this reason I would not propose to split us more often into our individual churches. April is the month for our Annual Parochial Church Council Meetings. See above for the date in Culham. Everyone who is on the Parish Church electoral role (not the same as the voters role for general elections) is entitled to speak and vote at this meeting.

Looking toward the end of the month, The Bridge Group will host the team service on 29th April when we will be celebrating The Abolition of the Slave Trade 200 years ago as well as our own sense of God's undeserved favour towards us.

CULHAM PAROCHIAL SCHOOL	Cathy Gray
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The children have been practising for the Victorian Music Hall that they will be presenting on **Thursday 26th April**. This will be held at Sutton Courtenay Village Hall and as numbers are limited because of health and safety regulations admission will be by ticket only. We will be offering these to the parents and relatives of the children first, but any spares can be obtained from the school office after the Easter holidays. We hope that the audience will join in with the spirit of the occasion by dressing in appropriate costumes and joining in with the community singing.

We have recently held a Literacy Workshop for parents to keep them informed of changes to the curriculum and the children enjoyed wearing 'something big' for Red Nose Day. This was the first of two fund raising events held in school, the second being the Skipathon for the British Heart Foundation.

We are pleased to say that all available places have been offered and accepted for the Foundation Stage next year, although year groups further up the school still have spaces as a number of children have recently moved out of the area. However, as we near the 1st birthday of the Foundation Stage Partnership with Culham Pre-school it is encouraging to see that many parents have expressed a wish to enrol their children in the two settings and that the partnership seems to be off to a good start.

SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS
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*The Mouthpiece has received **two 8-page 'Town & Parish Digests'** from the District Council. They include a calendar of Council meetings for the period May 2007 - May 2008, guidance for Councillors in the forthcoming election period, etc. If you really want to, you can have emailed copies from brian@thebrachers.com or better still, consult www.southoxon.gov.uk. Relevant highlights appear below.*

South Oxfordshire Outburst is an online magazine website featuring short video clips of news and information about council matters. See www.southoxon-outburst.co.uk

Travel Tokens

SODC are changing the way they distribute travel tokens (**See VILLAGE NEWS**). For further information please contact Julia Leppard, Team Administrator on 01491 823124 or email julia.leppard@southoxon.gov.uk.

Hedgerows

Hedgerows are important as wildlife habitats and for farming, landscape and archaeological reasons, but over the last 50 years, many have been lost through removal and neglect. The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 were introduced to protect the important hedgerows of England and Wales. A hedgerow is considered to be important if it is at least 30 years old, longer than 20 metres and meets a number of criteria. These are based on the historical value

of the hedge, the number of species within it, its archaeological value and the number of associated features such as banks or ditches. If a hedgerow is to be removed, the Council's consent is required, and its removal without permission could result in an unlimited fine and/or the requirement to replace the hedgerow. The regulations applying to individual hedgerows are quite complex and you are therefore advised to contact the Countryside Section for advice and guidance on this issue.

For more information please contact Dominic Lamb, Countryside Officer on 01491 823133 or email dominic.lamb@southoxon.gov.uk

Local elections, May 2007

Elections are scheduled to take place on Thursday, 3 May 2007 for all 48 district council seats and all parish council seats. Nomination papers for these elections must be submitted between Tuesday, 27 March 2007 and noon on Wednesday, 4 April 2007.

If you want to vote you need to register by 18 April 2007. To check whether you have registered to change your details contact the elections team on 0800 389 5560.

On 3 May, polling stations will be open from 7 am to 10 pm. If you want to vote, but will not be near your polling station on the day, you can apply to vote by post or proxy. The last day for the receipt of postal vote applications is 5 pm on Wednesday, 18 April. The last day for the receipt of new applications to vote by proxy is 5 pm on Wednesday, 25 April.

For further information phone 0800 389 5560 or visit our website at www.southoxon.gov.uk

AGE CONCERN	Alex Ivy
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Phone Link Service

Are you lonely? Do you have little contact with the outside world? On the Phone Link service, our trained volunteers phone housebound and isolated older people for a friendly chat once or twice a week, free of charge.

Users have commented: *"The Phone Link has given me something special to look forward to during the day", and "It is a lifeline. I don't know what I'd do without it"*

If you think you - or someone you know - might benefit from this service, please contact Alex Ivey at Age Concern Oxfordshire on 01235 849400.

NEWS FROM NEWINGTON NURSERIES	Shape up for spring
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Topiary, as shaped trees and hedging plants are generally known, is definitely the height of style (again). Back in Roman times owners of large houses included a topiarius on their staff whose function was the maintenance of ornamentally clipped bushes and trees known as topia.

Renaissance Italy saw a massive upsurge of interest in the form which has waxed and waned up to the present day. Now, topiary is viewed as an imaginative and creative way to bring evergreen structure as well as wit and fun to the garden.

Box (Buxus), yew (Taxus) and laurel (Laurus) are the main species used in this country for ornamental clipping but others can respond well too. These three have the advantage of being evergreen, which provides effect year-round, as well as being readily available in shaped forms.

Of the three, yew is the toughest, tolerating acid or alkaline soil conditions, sun or shade, dry conditions and urban pollution. However, all parts of the plant are toxic if eaten. Box is happy as long as it doesn't have to cope with full sun and dry soil in which case leaves become dull or scorched. Laurel is only happy down to -5°C and is best kept out of cold winds. In regions with harsher winter conditions, keep laurels in large containers and move them into a

greenhouse over winter.

The main options for bringing topiary to your garden include formal hedging (try cutting battlements along the top for a castle theme) and geometric shapes or life-like impressions crafted from the living plants. Container growing adds to the flexibility of this approach and makes it possible to adorn steps, patios or drives. You can choose between ready-grown specimens or take the DIY route and teach yourself as you go. Either way, to maintain a topiary shape you'll need to become proficient with the clippers.

Topiary is a great aspect of gardening to get into. We're lucky in this country to have some wonderful examples of historic topiary collections to visit. From Hampton Court Palace in the south to Levens Hall in the north and plenty in between, make a trip this spring to see some wonderful examples of this horticultural art form.

For further inspiration and advice, visit us at Newington Nurseries on the A329 near Stadhampton. Newington Nurseries Ltd, Newington, Wallingford, Oxon. OX10 7AW. Tel: 01865 890283. www.newington-nurseries.co.uk

OUT AND ABOUT IN APRIL

Oxfordshire Touring Theatre Company

The OTTC presents "The Falling Sky" by Brendan Murray - a play that follows five characters as their stories unravel over the course of a year in the fictional Oxfordshire village of Shepton. The production mixes live music, humour and strong emotions from a multi-talented cast! The following performances are scheduled for April.

Friday 13 April	Witney Corn Exchange	7.30 pm	01865 249444
Saturday 14 April	Harwell Village Hall	7.30 pm	01235 832802

ENDPIECE

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

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