

The Mouthpiece

Culham's Newsletter No 300

Village Diary for October 2008

- 3rd Mobile Library, The Glebe, 1.40 pm – 1.50 pm*
- 12th Family Communion, St. Paul's Church, 10 am*
- 13th Parish Council Meeting, The School, 7.30 pm*
- 15th Deadline for November's Mouthpiece*
- 17th Mobile Library, The Glebe, 1.40 pm – 1.50 pm*
- 19th Village Pond Clearance, 10 am*
- 19th Evening Prayer, St. Paul's Church, 6 pm*
- 31st Mobile Library, The Glebe, 1.40 pm – 1.50 pm*

Services of Worship	October 2008
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Date	Time	Place	Service
SERVICES AT CULHAM			
Sunday 12 th	10 am	Culham	Family Communion
Sunday 19 th	6 pm	Culham	Evening Prayer
<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 - 9.00am.</i>			
SERVICES AT CLIFTON HAMPDEN & THE WITTENHAMS			
Sunday 5 th	8 am	Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion
	10 am	Long Wittenham	Family Service (Harvest)
Sunday 12 th	8.30 am	Little Wittenham	Holy Communion
	10 am	Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion
Sunday 19 th	10 am	Long Wittenham	Holy Communion
Thursday 23 rd	2 pm	Long Wittenham	Pram Service
Sunday 26 th	10 am	Clifton Hampden	Family Communion
	6 pm	Long Wittenham	Evening Prayer

Talking Point	Dorchester Abbey Team
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I wonder if you like me have been intrigued by the experiment going on in Switzerland. As my scientific studies ended when I left school, it is a minor miracle that such interests have been reawakened. The scale of the experiment leaves me awestruck about the capabilities of humans. The LHC or Large Hadron Collider occupies a tunnel over 17 miles long, 100m beneath the ground near Geneva. Streams of protons are fired at each other at very high speed from opposite ends of the tunnel in an effort to replicate the moments which immediately followed the Big Bang, the birth of the universe. The hope is that when the protons crash into each other, matter may be created as it was at the beginning of the world. The object of the exercise is to discover why some particles like the protons have mass and others do not, why some objects are heavy and others are not (some would say a matter close to every woman's heart!). Why am I so fascinated? Because the theory goes that central to this scientific mystery is a particle called the Higgs Boson, also nicknamed the 'God' particle. Will it be possible to discover hidden in creation the particles that made it all possible? Furthermore if the 'God' particle exists will it disprove or confirm the existence of God?

Firstly I am awestruck – a piece of apparatus the size of the London Underground Circle Line, and protons whizzing around it 11,254 times a second. Quicker than the tube but possibly just as chaotic! It all gets very hot and one website suggests the cooling apparatus needed could keep 140,000 fridges full of sausages at a temperature just above absolute zero or minus 273 degrees Centigrade. There have been some scare stories abounding that if the experiment succeeded it would mean a black hole that we

all get sucked into and the end of the world. At that point my scientific knowledge fails me and I feel a prayer coming on.

Secondly rather than negating my belief in God, I would find such a discovery confirms it. I know God is not a bearded man sitting on a throne up in the sky, but I don't find the thought of God as a formless spirit totally satisfactory either. Thank God, I am surrounded by a very solid world in which I can gain real glimpses of Him and my fellow humans through my senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell and all the feelings of emotions that go with them. Thank God, He intended it to be that way.

One last thing, there is a competition to think of a new name for the rather clumsily named 'Large Hadron Collider'. What might you call it?

Good and exciting news!

In the Dorchester Team we have been asked to train two curates who will join us from July 2009. They are a married couple, David and Hannah Cleugh, who will live in Berinsfield and be attached to specific parishes and also work across the Team in the way that all our Team Clergy do. The Diocese trains and pays curates but we have to house them. Plans are under way to find and finance a house but I shall be asking for help with this! We recently celebrated 30 years of team Ministry here and the provision of an additional ministry base in Berinsfield for the Team will be an excellent way of investing for the future of Christian Ministry in our parishes.

More questions than answers.

Most of us have more questions than answers about God, Church and religion than we have answers. During the autumn starting on October 13th we shall be running a series of Monday evenings during which we shall look at some of these questions and answers. The evenings will be based on a course called the Emmaus Course. On the road to Emmaus on Easter morning, two disciples were heading out of Jerusalem and away from the awful spectacle they had witnessed. On that journey they met a man who helped them understand themselves and their experiences – it wasn't until they invited him to stay and break bread with them that they recognised him as Jesus. Our experiences of God are often as intangible as theirs and the Emmaus Course offers the opportunity both to share experiences and listen to others as we explore the meaning of God for us.

Please pick up an invitation in the Abbey – we shall be offering supper on October 13th so do let us know if you can join us!

Village News

Damage to Church

Recently, one of the protective grills over the church windows slipped down, and almost immediately someone damaged the window by throwing a stone through it. Recent inspection of all the windows has revealed further damage by air gun pellets. The resulting repair bill is over £1100. Please help us to keep an eye on our Village Church and if necessary report any suspicious behaviour to the police.

Parochial Church Council

Pond Clearing Sunday 19th October

Volunteers are needed to help clear the reeds on the Village Green side of the pond on Sunday 19th October, starting at about 10 am. The reeds have not been cut back for a couple of years, and the pond is no longer visible from the Green. Wellies or waders are recommended as footwear, and additional garden forks and wheelbarrows would be welcomed. Contact Bob Cragg at 1 Manor Farm, Culham (Tel: Abingdon 532565).

Bob Cragg

News from Thames Valley Police

We now receive regular newsletters from the Thames Valley Police. Readers may like to see their comments on the nearest area to Culham:

"The Wittenhams: Also an area that has been rather quiet, through the school times we combated the problem of parking and spoke to a number of parents about parking issues. We would also like to make you aware of damage to boats within the area. For more information about your local neighbourhood team, visit www.thamesvalley.police.uk or call 0845 8505505.

At September's meeting Erma Bage told us about the theory behind Feng Shui. We learnt how our home environment and even ornaments can have an effect on our relationship with others and our general well being.

During September, several of our members attended an evening with Anne Widdecombe at Oxford Town Hall. It really made a refreshing change to hear a straight talking politician!

Other events lined up for October and November include a visit to Clandon Park and Hatchlands Park, both National Trust properties. There's a fun table tennis tournament, and another morning of "singing for pleasure" plus an American Thanksgiving "Oxfordshire Style" Day.

Our next meeting is once again on the third Tuesday of the month on 21st October, in Sutton Courtenay Village Hall at 7.30 pm, and we are pleased to have Nick Brazil who will be giving us a talk entitled "A Journey with Ghosts". Just in time for Halloween. As usual visitors are always given a warm welcome at our meetings, so feel free to pop along.

Our chosen charity this year is the Oxford Cancer and Haematology Centre and several of our members are taking part in the 3 mile sponsored walk around Oxford University Parks on 26 October. It is part of a campaign to raise £2 million for the new Centre. This event is open to everyone and if you would like to take part please contact Janet on 01765 743443 to find out more details.

Thames Valley Local Food and Farmers Markets, now online.

Local farmers' markets have become a huge success across the country, and have re-established the connection between producer and consumer. One downside is that markets are only held on certain days, but now there is a 24 hour-a-day option. The 1st September saw the launch of **www.blackberrybarn.co.uk**, a nationwide online farmers' market, initially focussing on the Thames Valley. The Local Food Group for the area (**www.local-food.net**) is encouraging members to sign up with Blackberry Barn to increase their sales. This is not the only website that allows producers to sell online, but it is different, having been built in consultation with actual farmers and local food group organisations.

Until now, the main problem for farmers and producers has been the overheads of setting up websites and arranging couriers. Andy Tee, Director of Blackberry Barn, explains that they take care of the whole process by setting up web pages for producers, looking after all orders and organising national couriers. Producers just need to check their orders twice weekly, pack them and await their collection. Consumers know which day their order will arrive and are even emailed when it has been collected from the farmer. They don't have to worry about cold or frozen produce such as meat and cheeses, as special recyclable packaging with ice pockets ensures that everything arrives ready for their fridges and freezers.

The new site, **www.blackberrybarn.co.uk**, already has producers signing up from all over the country, and more will be added. It permits 24-hour sales from both local and national customers, which producers cannot do on their own. For consumers the choice will be enormous, and they can find out where their produce comes from. If you'd like to know more about Blackberry Barn, either as a producer or a consumer, log on to **www.blackberrybarn.co.uk**, ring Andy Tee on 0845 116 1484 or email **info@blackberrybarn.co.uk**.

'Traffic calming' and what we can do to improve the situation has been on the agenda for some months awaiting the OCC Councillor (John Howell) to attend. Since he is now unlikely to return to the meetings, CPC will ask one of the OCC planners to attend a meeting to advise on what actions we can take as a village to reduce the traffic problem. CPC has some money available for this but we need to know the most appropriate areas of expenditure.

There has been an offer of funds from the old Culham History Group for the planting of trees in the village. The costs of replacing/planting four replacements will be investigated, probably for The Green and the corner of The Glebe/High Street by the school.

It is likely that next Spring will see the re-surfacing of the Glebe by OCC Highways.

A quote for the refurbishment of the tractor shed has been accepted. This will include a new roof, doors and making the building secure and watertight.

A quote for the repainting of the playing field gate and some of the play equipment has been accepted.

The planning application for the waste incinerator at Sutton Courtenay will be presented to VoWH in late September. Culham PC agreed to write to Sutton Courtenay PC expressing their support for the council in their actions over the siting of the incinerator on the existing waste disposal site.

The planning application to convert The Lion into a residential dwelling was submitted in August. CPC wrote to SODC re-iterating their concern about a loss of this village amenity whilst appreciating that its long term viability was limited. CPC asked that consideration be given to compensating the the village for its loss.

Culham Pre School	Lea Allmond
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We are settled back into pre-school after our enjoyable summer break and have welcomed the following new children; George, Abi and Liv. We hope they have a happy time with us. We have said goodbye to Martin, Jamie, Plen, Johny and Ben and wish them 'good luck' in their new schools.

Pre school continues to have a very healthy role and waiting list and we would like to remind those interested, to send details of their children as soon as possible so that we can make arrangements for them to have a secured placement with us.

Culham Parochial School	Cathy Gray
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From our new headmistress, Mrs Anne Andrew

I am writing this as I come to the end of my second week at Culham Parochial C of E Primary School. I feel a great sense of excitement and opportunity along with the exhaustion that starting a new job inevitably creates. The staff, children and parents here are fabulous and have made me feel very welcome.

On leaving my primary school, a very small village school in Northamptonshire, I attended the girls' grammar school in the local town of Wellingborough. This led me to taking up a career in teaching; one which I never regretted. My training took place in Liverpool and I undertook my first post teaching in a secondary school in Salford - a million miles away in every respect from Culham you may think. In actual fact, as I continued to gain experience in other schools in Lancashire and Oxfordshire I began to realise that children have similar needs and expectations of their teachers wherever you meet them. My last teaching post was as Assistant Head at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Oxford where I spent many very happy years before deciding that it was time to move on to a headship.

Term has started well at school. On Friday 12th September we held a Toy Sale, organised by the children, in aid of SSNAP (Support for the Sick Newborn And their Parents) which we have chosen as our Charity of the Year. £60 was raised. Mrs Keymer's (one of our TAs) twin grandsons were born prematurely earlier this year and spent a considerable amount of time in the Special Care Bay Unit at the John Radcliffe Hospital. This unit could not exist without the help of SSNAP. The school has followed the twins' progress with her and on Sunday 14th September she, together with her husband and some friends, undertook a 52 mile sponsored cycle ride to raise funds for the charity.

Anne Ilsley will be leading our assembly on Thursday 25th September and we will also be taking part in the annual Harvest Festival in Church on September 28th.

I look forward to meeting more of you in the near future and sharing some of our experiences.

News from Newington Nurseries

Effective Borders

The humble hedge is a garden feature that makes living in high-density urban situations much more comfortable because they give us privacy and security. What is increasingly recognized is that they also protect us against harmful pollutants in the air – they can actually improve air quality in our home spaces.

Scientific studies have shown that year-round, conifers are effective at removing harmful particulates from the air, making them a great choice for a boundary if you live near a busy road. Being evergreen, you also get the benefits of privacy, shade and shelter for twelve months of the year. Hedges also provide background texture and complementary colour for other plants in addition to being wildlife havens for small mammals, birds and insects. Hedges are a great investment because they live for years and, although they do need trimming to keep them in shape, they'll never need painting and are highly unlikely to blow down. They definitely win against fences!

There is a range of options for you to choose from in terms of hedging conifers. *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*, or Lawson's Cypress, is a good starting point. Lawson's Cypress will quickly develop into a bushy hedge that is easy to maintain. Leyland Cypress (*Cupressocyparis leylandii*) is fast growing which makes it great for establishing quickly but you will need to keep on top of trimming. Both produce sprays of beautiful blue-green foliage. *Thuja plicata* 'Atrovirens', as well as *Thuja occidentalis* 'Smaragd' and 'Brabant', are very well suited to hedging. The foliage of the *Thuja* is dark green and lustrous. Yew (*Taxus baccata*) although not strictly a conifer, is an evergreen and makes a great hedge. Unlike many conifers, it is shade tolerant, responds well to hard pruning and is also slow growing.

Most garden soils with reasonable drainage will be suitable for establishing conifers hedges. The actual procedure for planting is straightforward. Mark out the run of your hedge with a string line, allowing at least 50 cm in width for the hedge to grow. Dig a trench approximately 50 cm wide. Cultivate the soil along the line and work in compost/soil improver. Put plants in the ground approximately 1 metre apart and firm down with your boot. Water well until they are established, especially if conditions are dry. It is good manners to explain to neighbours what your plans are with hedging and that you will be keeping the hedge to an acceptable height (around 1.8m is reasonable in most situations).

Maintenance is a key element in establishing a successful hedge. Prune when the risk of frost is past, ideally at least twice through the growing season. Check for nesting birds though before you start pruning. Trimming the hedge regularly will minimize the effort in cleaning up the cuttings (though catching them in an old sheet spread on the ground works a treat). Put hedge clippings in your green waste bin.

Newington Nurseries, Newington, Nr Stadhampton, Oxon, OX10 7AW - Tel 01865 400533
www.newington-nurseries.co.uk

Out and About

NORTHMOOR TRUST EVENTS IN OCTOBER**Sunday 5th October: Fungus Foray**

Find the fabulous fungi that are fruiting in the forest, at Hill Farm, Little Wittenham, 10:30am - 1pm.
Cost: Adults £4, Friends & children free. Booking essential, please call 01865 407792

Sunday 26th October: Apple Day Scrumping

Scrump in the Northmoor Trust orchard at Hill Farm, Little Wittenham, 10am - 5pm;
Cost: Activities individually priced. No booking needed, just turn up!

Sunday 26th October: Basket Weaving Workshop

Weave your own truly unique basket at Hill Farm, Little Wittenham, 10:30am - 4:30pm
Cost: Adults £40, Friends £32; Booking: Please call 01865 407792 to book your place.

A Musical Banquet

Concert in aid of the Friends of Dorchester Abbey on 1st November 7.30pm
Early Vocal and Instrumental music by Dowland, Purcell and their contemporaries, interspersed with period anecdotes. featuring Countertenor, Harpsichord, Viola Gambia and Baroque Guitar.
Tickets £10 from Susan Jupp 01865 341066, information www.musical-banquet.co.uk

Acoustic Triangle's Tour is Hotting Up! Dorchester Abbey 18th October 2008

Catch this remarkable group in concert while you still can! For tickets and information please ring 01235 528066

When Acoustic Triangle perform in Dorchester Abbey in October it will be their third visit. The group offers an innovative blend of melodic modern jazz and contemporary 'classical' music. Their first tour of Cathedrals and Churches were part of our first festival and their second CD 'Resonance' was recorded at that performance in Dorchester Abbey. During the summer the group is performing their adventurous new Concert in Cathedrals and Minster or Abbey Churches across the country and in the autumn you will have the chance to hear them in Dorchester again. By the time they play here Gwilym Simcock, their pianist, will also have played his first prom.

This tour is already attracting national interest and acclaim as Acoustic Triangle takes its musical exploration of inspiring buildings to new heights in 2008. The acclaimed trio, joined by six world-class string players including the Sacconi String Quartet, is touring the UK's Cathedrals and Abbeys in a celebration of sound and inspiring architecture.

Award-winning composers Tim Garland and Gwilym Simcock have written new music for this tour. Each performance will be a unique three-dimensional interpretation dependent on the building. Musicians will appear from all around – their sounds echoing, developing and surprising. Regular visitors to Dorchester concerts will appreciate what a treat a concert that takes the architecture and acoustics of the building, and makes it an integral part of the performance, will be.

Endpiece

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

Contributions to November's Mouthpiece by October 15th please, to:

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