

The Mouthpiece

Culham's Newsletter No 303

Village Diary for February 2009

- 6th Mobile Library, The Glebe, 1.40 pm - 1.50 pm*
- 7th Church Cleaning & Flower Arranging, 2 pm*
- 8th Family Communion, St. Paul's Church, 10 am*
- 9th Parish Council Meeting, The School, 7.30 pm*
- 15th Deadline for March's Mouthpiece*
- 15th Evening Prayer, St. Paul's Church, 6 pm*
- 19th Police Surgery, The School, 6 - 7 pm*
- 20th Mobile Library, The Glebe, 1.40 pm - 1.50 pm*

Services of Worship	February 2009
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Date	Time	Place	Service
SERVICES AT CULHAM			
Sunday 8 th	10 am	Culham	Family Communion
Sunday 15 th	6 pm	Culham	Evening Prayer
<i>Join us for coffee and a chat after Sunday 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			
Sunday 1 st	8 am	Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion
	10 am	Long Wittenham	Family Service
Sunday 8 th	8.30 am	Little Wittenham	Holy Communion
	10 am	Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion
Sunday 15 th	10 am	Long Wittenham	Holy Communion
Sunday 22 nd	10 am	Clifton Hampden	Family Communion
	6 pm	Long Wittenham	Evening Prayer
Thursday 26 th	2.30 pm	Long Wittenham	Pram Service

Village News

St Paul's Church – Cleaning & Flower Arranging for February**Janet Bracher**

Please come along to the Church at **2 pm** on **Saturday 7th February** if you are able to help. Everyone welcome – the more the merrier! Thank you to all those who helped in December. The church looked lovely for all the Christmas Services and the flowers and greenery have lasted through to January!

Christmas Services at St Paul's**Culham PCC**

We were delighted to see so many people in Church at the Carol Service on 21st December and at the Christmas morning service as well. The church resounded with the sound of so many voices and we would especially like to thank both Andrew Churchill Stone and Keith Glenny and their families for leading the singing so ably – and, of course, David Haylett and all the readers for helping to make these such happy occasions.

Plant Sale – Preliminary Meeting**Brian & Janet Bracher**

Anyone who is interested in helping with Culham Plant Sale this May is invited to a preliminary meeting (with snack lunch) at **12 noon** on **Saturday 21st February**, at 25 High Street, Culham. New helpers & new ideas welcome!

Yesterday at lunch with Abbey ladies I discovered an auspicious fact – 2009 is a Jubilee year for Dorchester – it's 50 years since the Drains were put in!! This led me to wonder what else reached a Jubilee this year – and believe me there's something for everyone. It's 50 years since ... the revolution in Cuba... the Ping Putter... the State of Alaska... the Triumph Bonneville Motorbike... and the first meteorological satellite! Oh and Cliff Richard and the Shadows are doing a Jubilee tour this year too – how many of us does that move into the 'older than middle aged' category?

What's special about a Jubilee? Like many concepts that we take for granted and don't associate with religion or faith, Jubilee is an ancient word from Jewish Law that is wholly concerned with re-creating balance in the world. It's an occasion to 'go back to the base-line'; a time for letting go of un-payable debts. It was about the granting of forgiveness and a new start – but in a sweeping and practical way. Every fiftieth year the trumpets were sounded and this signalled the beginning of a Universal redemption. All prisoners and captives obtained their liberties, slaves were declared free, and debtors were absolved. In addition every inheritance throughout the land was restored to its original owner. The expression Jubilee gained currency at the beginning of our new century with the instigation of the movement Jubilee 2000 which has now developed into Make Poverty History. One plank of the original Jubilee 2000 campaign was the evening out of the world economy by the remission of those third world debts that were deemed to be 'un-recoverable'. Entirely practical or airy fairy liberal nonsense?

From where I stand there's something practical about concentrating on what your debtor might be able to pay rather than sticking out for the impossible. This works for the present – you get at least some of what you are owed now – and I suspect for the future – the debtor with his or her burden released and a new start will be a good friend and a better future business associate than the no-hoper who is struggling under a massive debt. I don't pretend to be an economist and I know that we are living in a much larger society than the tribal one of the Old Testament. It is nevertheless true that we are all – through experience – learning that small and personal offers better results and greater satisfaction than the faceless global and multinational situation we have become used to.

Something else I heard yesterday (listening to a Radio review about a book called 'Affluenza') is that the richer you are the more likely you are to suffer from addiction, personality disorder and depressive illness. In fact it is also true that those who live in real poverty are also victims of addiction and depression. Perhaps Jubilee's not such a bad idea then – a new start every fifty years – that humanity made out of choice rather than political or economic necessity. One that is based on personal relationships in communities we know. Maybe those ancient people of faith had something after all.

Figures for the traffic survey in Tollgate Road (1st – 5th Oct 2007) are available. A few details are given here.

The survey data were recorded over 24 hours on each day. The maximum recorded speeds were 6 vehicles in the range 51-56 mph Southbound and 6 in the same range Northbound. Possibly the same ones, but impossible to tell from the data available. Southbound they were all between 07:00 and 20:00 whilst Northbound they were between 05:00 and 07:00 and 22:00-00:00. Six vehicles is 0.2% of the total number.

Northbound 483 vehicles (14%) and Southbound 871 (24%) were in speed bands above the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) guidelines. The guidelines allow for speed limit +10% +2 mph therefore 14% and 24% respectively were above 36mph. Of these 137 (4.1%) Northbound and 126 (6.3%) were above 41 mph.

During the survey period 3323 vehicles went northbound and 3621 southbound – a straight

average of 27 and 30 vehicles per hour respectively.

OCC has used these results and other data to show that there was no 'extensive' or 'excessive' speeding and therefore the area is not suitable for major traffic calming measures. However CPC will ask OCC to remove some of the white lines on the roads in the immediate area of Tollgate/High Street (a suggestion made by OCC) which may help to slow vehicles. Also a second survey has been requested both on Tollgate Road and High Street.

The trees on the corner of The Glebe are available for planting and will be planted by OCC in the new year.

The access roads around the burial ground have been levelled with a 60 ton delivery of aggregate from Hansons. Morrells' estate agents, Adkins, have agreed to pay £300 towards the cost of the material.

The tractor shed refurbishment is complete.

Trees overhanging the High Street at and around the bus stop at the west end have been trimmed back allowing free passage for the busses.

From the District Councillor

From October new planning rules concerning domestic house extensions came into force. In some instances formal planning may not be needed. You can access this information at www.planningportal.gov.uk/uplodas/hhg/housingguide.html, also from the District Council website or from a Planning Enquiry Officer (01491 828372/823663).

There is a new search facility on the SODC website called *My South Oxfordshire*. This is designed to make it easier to find out details about a particular property, such as rubbish collection days and planning application history all in one place.

Potholes can be reported by using the online form at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/potholes or by ringing **0845 310 11 11**. The more information about the location, size and severity that can be supplied, the better.

Parish Council Notes Meeting	January 2009
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There is nothing further to report on traffic calming. PCC is awaiting the results of a new traffic survey yet to be carried out by OCC and the removal of some of the white lines on the local roads.

The matter of Burial Ground access was raised. It was agreed that CPC would look into improving the access up the internal grass banks of the Burial ground and provide a ramp, steps or both. Possibly this will be of the 'reinforced grass' type rather than tarmac.

A contractor was appointed to prune an oak tree on the playing field.

As the CPC requires a new auditor it was agreed to approach the auditor currently carrying out those for Sutton Courtenay.

A donation of £100 to the school for special equipment was agreed.

Although the school's Head Teacher Mrs Andrews has been in the post of Acting Head for some months her permanent appointment has to go through the full appointments procedure. This is now in hand.

News from OCC

There is a plan to provide free school transport for all 4 year old children. More details will be forthcoming. In a bid to help the local area during the 'credit crunch' OCC will be using local firms where possible and will ensure a rapid payment of invoices. Job Clubs will also be set up.

Date of next meeting: Monday 9th February, 7:30 pm at the school.

Thames Valley Police

Sarah Talbot

New Beat Officer

Culham's new Area Beat Officer is PC **Paul Webber 5578**. He is stationed at Wallingford Police Station and can be contacted on **07973 535836**.

Police Surgeries

The Berinsfield and Benson Neighbourhood team have arranged several Police Surgeries for February 2009. The officers covering them will be PC Paul Webber, PCSO Becky Long and PCSO Sarah Talbot. The **Culham** 'Surgery' will be on

Thursday 19th February 2009, at Culham Primary School from 6 pm to 7 pm.

Times and venues of other police surgeries are given below:

Berinsfield: Monday 9th February 2009: Sports Pavillion, 1230 – 1330 hrs & Church Hall, Wimplestraw Road, 1800 – 1900 hrs

Benson: Tuesday 10th February 2009: The Village Hall, Sunnyside (downstairs lounge), 1230 – 1330 hrs & 1800 – 1900 hrs

Culham Parochial School

Anne Andrew

January often seems to be rather a dead time but as we look forward to the year ahead we are also looking back to see where we have been successful and where we need some improvements in order to continue to offer the highest quality education. Already the staff have been working on the Government's new initiatives for IT, spending a very cold day in school at the start of the term, with the IT advisor. We have also been working with our Diocesan advisor to help us think about the collective worship we both offer and participate in.

Collective worship covers a whole range of activities from our daily morning assemblies to the services we hold in the Church. Sometimes our assemblies are of a religious nature and at other times we simply celebrate the enjoyment we experience as a community. We have recently had a member of the SSNAP team talking to the children about the work done by the Special Babycare Unit at the JR Hospital to help the children understand what they are fundraising for this year. On another occasion we had a local karate coach in to demonstrate some of the skills used in karate and to encourage the children to keep fit and healthy. David Fleming from Abingdon Baptist Church has also given an assembly for us.

We thank all of these people who help our children to make sense of the world in which they live, through their own enthusiasm and encouragement.

Culham School is part of the village community and as such is sometimes used for meetings. Our Police Community Support Officers, Sarah Talbot and Becky Long, will be holding a Surgery in school on Thursday 19th February from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. They would like anyone with any questions or queries to drop in and discuss their issues with them.

Culham Pre-School

Lee Allmond

Hello to you, and may we wish you a "Happy 2009" from all at Pre-School. This term the children will be looking at the theme of winter - how it affects animals, insects and the different types of weather we can expect. We will also be celebrating St. Valentine's Day, making heart-shaped cakes and biscuits. At the end of term we shall be taking a trip to Snakes and Ladders in Abingdon for a fun filled activity day.

Something new for Abingdon – Cancer Research UK Relay For Life

A small group of volunteers are seeking to establish a first 'Relay For Life' event in Abingdon in the summer of 2009. This promises to be a very different experience for most people, including

established Cancer Research supporters. And before you run away at the thought of vigorous exercise, it's a fun event suitable for all ages and abilities and no running is necessary (unless you want to).

The event is held over a 24 hour period on a weekend. It draws on the community in Abingdon and South Oxfordshire: it combines lots of fun activities from face painting to singing and dancing (and you can participate or just watch) with the more serious side of remembering those that have been touched by cancer, celebrating the survivors, and most of all, being positive about the successes that future research is certain to bring. It's a group event meant for family, friends and colleagues who between them carry out the Relay.

Let's be honest, this is about raising funds for charity, but there's never been a more fun filled or rewarding way to get involved. If you want to know more, or how to get involved, you can call Paul on 07757713314 or email abingdon.relay@btinternet.com. There's also info on the web: www.cancerresearchuk.org/relay. We'd love to hear from you.

Newington Nurseries – 'Perfect Start'	Anne Hendry
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Once the decorations have been packed away for another year, it's time to get your gardening head on again. Early season planting is a great way of getting everyone in the family into the spirit of the growing year. If you can, get to work outside, otherwise spread some newspapers out on the floor and get ready to plant. Visit the nursery for containers, compost and some beautiful plants for potting-up. Children will love the idea of 'indoor gardening' and planting containers will be a fun and rewarding activity for them if the weather is against you.

Erica, or Heath, is the ideal choice of plant. It's an evergreen shrub, similar to Heather (*Calluna*). However, unlike Heather, many species and varieties of *Erica* will tolerate both acid and alkaline conditions, allowing them to be used in a wider variety of garden situations. And if you want to grow them in containers, you can manage the soil conditions to suit those species that must have acid soil. Check when you buy and get the right plants for your situation.

Erica carnea (Alpine Heath or Winter Heath) is an excellent choice for getting maximum benefit right now. Flowers may be reddish-purple, pink or white, and foliage is generally mid to dark green but can also be yellow, golden or even orange-red. Look out for *Erica carnea* 'Ann Sparkes' with its rose-pink flowers and dark golden foliage or 'December Red' with its pink to purplish flowers. The flowers of 'Springwood White' are fabulous as is its bright green foliage. 'Foxhollow' is another winner - the colder it gets, the more interesting its foliage becomes. During mild winter weather, foliage is yellow with bronze tips but as temperatures drop, it becomes orange-red.

In their native habitat, *Ericas* grow on sunny slopes bordering pine forests but they are also tolerant of deep shade. Growing them in full sun however enhances their foliage colour. They are extremely hardy, being able to grow in extremely cold and snowy conditions, their flower shoots popping up through blankets of snow. Aftercare is easy. The plants should be pruned immediately after flowering. This can be carried out by lightly trimming with a pair of shears. Simply cut back the flowered stems. This will ensure compact bushy plants.

Heaths make excellent partners for dwarf conifers, either in borders or in large containers. Alternatively, grow them with others of their own kind for a delightful display. They're easy to care for and will give years of enjoyment. Establishing evergreen shrubs and conifers is also a fantastic way of doing your bit to improve air quality. Evergreens have been proven to be effective at removing particulates so that's another powerful reason to get planting.

Colourful, tough and even potentially beneficial to our health (Heaths are very pollution tolerant), evergreen shrubs certainly earn a rightful place in our gardens. The weather can throw anything at us but we all want to kick-off the New Year with some colour and fun. *Erica* is just the plant for this.

For further inspiration and advice, visit us at Newington Nurseries, Newington, Nr Stadhampton, Oxon, OX10 7AW. Tel: 01865 400533. www.newington-nurseries.co.uk

Out & About

Thames Consort at Dorchester Abbey

The Wallingford based ensemble, *The Thames Consort* will be giving a concert in Dorchester Abbey on **Saturday 7th February at 7-30 pm**. The programme will include The Western Wind Mass by the Tudor composer John Taverner, being the oldest music ever performed by the consort. Other vocal music by Byrd, Tallis and Sheppard will contrast with violin music by Bach and Corelli (La Follia) played by Sharon Warnes, and flamboyant North German organ pieces by Buxtehude and his pupil Nicolaus Bruhns played by Abbey organist Jeremy Boughton. Tickets on the door are £7 and proceeds from the concert will go to the Friends of Dorchester Abbey.

Rutherford Appleton Laboratory "Talking Science" Lecture Series:

Friday 6th February 2009: 1:30 pm & 7:00 pm : 'Fusion Star Power' by Dr Kate Lancaster
This fascinating lecture will lead us into the world of fusion, how it was responsible for life on Earth and how scientists plan to harness the incredible power of the stars as a future energy source here on Earth. (Audience: 16+)

To reserve seats for any Talking Science - Rutherford Appleton Laboratory Lectures please either email stftalkinciscience@rl.ac.uk or telephone the talking science booking line 01235 445959.

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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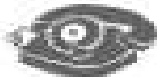
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