

The Mouthpiece

Culham's Newsletter No 305

Village Diary for April 2009

- 3rd Mobile Library, The Glebe, 1.40 pm - 1.50 pm*
- 12th Easter Sunday Communion, St. Paul's Church, 10 am*
- 15th Deadline for May's Mouthpiece*
- 17th Mobile Library, The Glebe, 1.40 pm - 1.50 pm*
- 19th Annual Parochial Church Meeting, St. Paul's Church, 5 pm
(followed by Evening Prayer)*
- 20th Annual Parish Meeting, The School, 7.30 pm*

Services of Worship	April 2009
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Date	Time	Place	Service
SERVICES AT CULHAM			
Sunday 12 th	10 am	Culham	Easter Day Communion
Sunday 19 th	5 pm	Culham	Church AGM & 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 ELSEWHERE			
Sunday 5 th (Palm Sunday)	8 am	Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion
	10 am	Long Wittenham	Family Service
	11.30 am	Little Wittenham	Baptism
Thursday 9 th (Maundy Thursday)	6.30 pm	Dorchester Abbey	Supper Service
Friday 10 th (Good Friday)	10 am	Long Wittenham	Family Service
	11 -12 am	Clifton Hampden	Meditation
Sunday 12 th (Easter Day)	8.30 am	Little Wittenham	Holy Communion
	10 am	Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion
	10 am	Long Wittenham	Holy Communion
Sunday 19 th	10 am	Long Wittenham	Holy Communion
Thursday 23 rd	2.30 pm	Long Wittenham	Pram Service
Sunday 26 th *	10 am	Clifton Hampden	Family Communion
*	<i>Long Wittenham evening service delayed until 3rd May</i>		

Letter from our Vicar	Anne Ilsley
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As I write this I have this week been surprised by the sudden flowering of daffodils and the apparent arrival of Spring. I don't know why I should be surprised by this annual event, but it's a heartening sight, which tells us that Easter and warmer weather are coming!

We are fast moving through Lent when the churches are kept quite bare, but this means that we can look forward to when they prepare themselves to greet the risen Christ in the most spectacular manner, bedecked with the most wonderful displays of flowers. For the clergy we prepare material for meditations and services during Holy Week and while Revd David Haylett will lead a quiet service for all the family at St Mary's Long Wittenham at 10.00 am, I shall lead a quiet service in 3 parts at St Michael's Clifton Hampden, from 11.00 am – 12.00 noon. This year I was

inspired by Bishop John's talk at Dorchester Abbey to try to lead the meditations so that people can experience some of the different ways of praying from the bible that he spoke about.

It is possible to arrive at Easter morning and the resurrection in such a rush, that we hardly realise how we get there. For me, preparing material for Holy Week helps me to approach the resurrection through the necessary pain of the Cross. There will be meditations at Dorchester Abbey during Holy Week to help others do the same. On Thursday the Bridge Group of Churches shall join Dorchester Abbey's congregation at the Abbey to remember the Last Supper in a simple meal together, which will take the form of a service. For those who wish to stay, this culminates in Holy Communion with the stripping of the altar.

On Friday our services will take us to the foot of the cross, leaving behind those, like the disciples, who were too frightened to watch, or those like Pilot, who wanted to disassociate himself from the scene. We go with Mary, the mother of Jesus, and John the beloved disciple. With the Roman soldiers and the thieves who died either side of Jesus, to experience their responses and to witness Jesus' incredible expressions of concern for those who witnessed his death that day.

'Dear Woman, here is your son...': 'Father forgive them – they know not what they do': 'Today you will be with me in paradise'.

On Easter Sunday morning we will gather again, this time up The Clumps, before we continue our Easter celebrations in our various churches, including St Paul's, taking the Easter light and discovering again the final drama that the tomb was empty and Jesus is risen.

Dorchester Team Lent Talks

The final talk in Dorchester Abbey on **Sunday 5th April** is **"The Bible and Salvation"** by Revd Canon Prof. Martyn Percy (Principal of Ripon College, Cuddesdon, Canon Theologian of Sheffield Cathedral, Chair in Theological Education, King's College, London). Evensong at **6 pm** will be followed by refreshments with the talk starting at **7 pm**.

St Paul's Church – cleaning and flower arranging for Easter

Please come along to the church at **2 pm on Saturday, 11th April** if you are able to help. Everyone welcome.

Village News

Lent Lunch

Come and enjoy a 'Soup Lunch' with us and support two very worthwhile charities – Style Acre, Wallingford (for people with learning disabilities) and Associated Country Women of the World (offering women worldwide friendship and practical help). Lunch will be available from 12 noon to 2 pm on **Wednesday, 8th April** at 25 High Street, Culham. A suggested minimum donation is £2.50 per person and there is no maximum charge!

Janet & Brian Bracher

Annual Parochial Church Council Meeting

This will be held in St Paul's Church at **5 pm on Sunday 19th April**. If you want to keep your village church open and available for services, then you will be very welcome at this meeting. Our one & only churchwarden retires this year – volunteers to fill this gap are badly needed.

Culham PCC

Culham Plant Sale & Church Fete

This will take place on **Saturday 16th May** from **1.30 pm to 4.00 pm** outside the church (stalls inside if wet!) As well as plants we shall be selling home-made cakes, bric-a-brac, books / videos / DVDs, etc. You will also be able to try your luck on the tombola and raffle as well as other stalls, such as welly-wanging!

Brian Bracher

We would be very grateful for donations of plants, cakes, bric-a-brac and books/videos/DVDs and these can be brought to the church between **2 pm and 8 pm on Friday 15th May** or on the

Saturday morning. Please can you name your plants if you know what they are! We look forward to seeing you there.

Culham Parish Council Notes	March 2009
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The two remaining vacancies on the CPC have been filled by Jon Woodley-Shead and Paul Gibbs who were co-opted onto the Council at the meeting. Their appointment follows the usual procedure of calling for a possible election and advertising the posts.

After discussing proposals for the burial ground slope to be reinforced with plastic matting, it was agreed that a series of steps would be safer and more appropriate. CPC will investigate the costs of installing steps opposite the gate.

The overhanging tree on the playing field has been trimmed.

A donation of £100 has been made to the school after a request for funds for specialist equipment was made.

CPC has agreed to include the cutting of the grass verge by the Church in its monthly cutting regime.

After a petition was presented by Paul Gibbs on behalf of the village to the Oxfordshire County Council opposing the siting of an incinerator at Sutton Courtenay, it was agreed that CPC will draft a letter to OCC along the same lines opposing the project. (The original petition was prior to Mr Gibbs' application to join the CPC).

CPC is still awaiting the traffic surveys on the High Street and Tollgate Road to be carried out after the enhancements to the white lines in the village were made.

The Glebe road was re-surfaced on 9th March.

Several possible areas of the village where early morning street lights could be turned off, without causing difficulties in the village, were identified by CPC for SODC. These were mainly at the Station approach and close to the Abingdon football ground. No residential areas were selected.

From the County Council (OCC)

OCC has been rated '3 star' by the Government. Next year it expects to be '4 star' (Top rating) when it implements its children and young people's services.

£300,000 has been allocated for refurbishment of the County Hall in Abingdon

£300,000 has been allocated for refurbishment of the museum in Abingdon.

£5.4m has been allocated for improvements to the exterior of Didcot Parkway rail station.

The Abingdon-Didcot bus route is to be improved.

Didcot and Wallingford libraries will undergo refurbishment.

The OCC section of the Council Tax will increase by £40.85 to £1130.60 in 2009/10

News from SODC

The changes to the waste pick up in SODC area will start in June but the new bins are likely to be distributed towards the end of March. However we are not sure when Culham will get theirs. Bags will be available for those who find it difficult to cope with (up to) 4 waste bins.

On the 19th March in Abingdon and 28th March in Oxford, there will be displays and talks about the Oxford Flood Risk Management Strategy.

SODC Council Tax will increase by 2.9% in 2009/10.

Next meeting

There will be the Annual Parish Meeting at the school on **Monday 20th April at 7:30 pm** (delayed as Easter is the second Monday of April), followed by a short Council meeting.

Thames Valley Police	Sarah Talbot
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First we would like to thank everyone who attended the Police Surgery in Culham on 19th February. The main issue raised was speeding along Tollgate Road and vehicles which are over the weight limit using the road and mounting the kerbs close to the bridge. We have assessed the roads in Culham and have found suitable areas to carry out SID (Speed Indication Device.) This is a free standing speed device monitored by Police or PCSO's that tells the driver and police the speed of each vehicle. Details are gathered and the offending drivers will receive a warning letter. Three or more letters may result in a prosecution or Speed Awareness Course. The Benson and Berinsfield team are carrying out SID throughout the month. Updates will be posted in the next article and/or Police Surgery.

PCSO C9790 Becky Long and PSCO Sarah Talbot C9904. Tel: 08458 505505

Culham Pre-School	Lee Allmond
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The Children have been very busy this term they have been decorating plant pots and planting sunflower seeds; we will then have a competition to see whose flowers grow the tallest. We have also been planting violas for Mothering Sunday and making our own wrapping paper as well as beautiful cards for all the mothers.

Age Concern 'Seamless Relocation'	Charmian Boyd
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Age Concern Oxfordshire, in association with Seamless Relocation Ltd, are pleased to offer older people residing in the county, an innovative new service to help with the physical and emotional aspects of moving home. Launched in May 2008, the service has helped people with all aspects of moving - searching for a more appropriate place to live, buying or selling a property, sorting out and getting rid of unwanted goods and settling in on moving day. A free consultation and quotation gives you ideas and options available if your old home is not right for you.

The need for such a service was recognised following the award winning Rural Needs Survey carried out by Age Concern Oxfordshire last autumn. Mary Daniel, Chief Executive said 'It was apparent from many of the respondents that they wanted to move to somewhere more suitable but just couldn't face the thought'.

For further details please contact Charmian Boyd of Seamless Relocation on 020 86213553 or Age Concern Oxfordshire on 01235 849400.

See also www.seamlessrelocation.com (Tel 020 8621 3553) and www.ageconcernoxon.org.uk (Tel 01235 849400)

Rhododendrons – Large and Small

When you look closely at a Rhododendron flower, it is truly an amazing piece of work. And not only the detail of the flower itself but the way it sits amongst the foliage gives the impression of real plant perfection. Rhododendrons have been a familiar sight in this country since the middle of the nineteenth century when the Victorian collectors and plant hunters began bringing back specimens predominantly from China, Japan, and the Himalayas. Yet they retain their exotic beauty and still make a great impact wherever you come across them.

Anyone who has wandered through a spring garden bursting with Rhododendrons in flower must want to enjoy a slice of that glory on their own patch. The good news is that anyone can. At its simplest, dwarf Rhododendrons can be enjoyed in containers on a patio or balcony. The Yakushimanum (otherwise known as 'Yak') hybrids grow slowly and with the right feeding and watering will put on glorious displays of flowers year after year without ever out-growing their space. Container growing allows all the benefits of being able to get the soil conditions just right (acid soil is a must although the RHS has been running long-term trials on lime-tolerant varieties) and you can relocate your plants as the fancy takes you. Handy if you're moving house.

If you've got more space and the soil is right you can make them a bigger part of the garden. Combine them with ferns, perhaps in the dappled shade of mature trees. Hostas make great partners too. Try matching the sumptuous *Rhododendron* 'Blue Peter' for example with *Hosta fortunei* to get maximum value from the lilac flower heads of the Rhododendron. A worthwhile guideline to bear in mind is that the more floriferous the variety, the less suitable it will be for naturalistic settings. For this reason, the really showy examples, like *Rhododendron* 'Linda', with its vivid cerise flowers, are best nearer the house. Even 'Linda' however can be moderated by planting in combination with cooler flowers, for example bluebells.

Bigger Rhododendrons have the potential to provide useful screening against eyesores or for protection from a busy road. Hardy hybrid or 'iron-clad' evergreen Rhododendrons are perfect for these situations. *Rhododendron* 'Cynthia' is one such variety, reaching a height and spread of 20m in ideal circumstances and would be effective in this situation. Equally however there are dwarf alpine varieties that are perfect in rock gardens, for example 'Dora Amateis' which bears lovely white flowers in spring and achieves a maximum height and spread of only 60cm.

The wonderful world of Rhododendrons brings colour and interest for much of the year but it is in spring that the greatest glories occur. Make your selection for your situation and as long as you give them a helping hand as they become established, they will bring you joy for many years to come.

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

Out & About

OXFORDSHIRE THEATRE COMPANY presents '**River's Up**' by **Alex Jones** at **7.30 pm** on **Thursday 2nd April, Lains Barn, Nr Wantage**. Tickets: £8 adult, £6 concession.
Call 01865 249444

As married couple Sally and Tom watch the river rising around them their only hope is to take to the water with little more than a bottle of water and a can of beans. Cast adrift in an open boat, it becomes a voyage of discovery which, instead of causing them to despair, succeeds in drawing them closer than ever.

ABINGDON DRAMA CLUB presents 'Lies on their Lips': The Abingdon Murders by Joel Kaye and Gwilim Scourfield (based on the Abingdon Turnpike Murder by Mark Davies), at the UNICORN THEATRE, Medieval Abbey Buildings, Abingdon.

Wed 1st to Sat 4th of April at 7.30 pm. Tickets: £7 (concessions £6.00) from The Bookstore, Abingdon Precinct or from Ticketline on 01235 524538.

NORTHMOOR TRUST EVENTS

Monday 6th to Thursday 9th April, 10 am – 3 pm: Clumps Club. Fun activities & adventures around the Wittenham Clumps for 8 – 12 year olds. See www.northmoortrust.co.uk for details.

Saturday 11th April, 11 am. Wallingford Castle History Walk: meet at Wallingford Museum, £3. Pay on the day, proceeds to the museum.

Easter Saturday 12th April, 10 am - 4 pm. Chicken & Egg Fest at Hill Farm, Little Wittenham. Find out which came first; meet our brood of rescue battery hens, see a peep of chicks & join in the fun of our eggy games and activities. Activities from £1.

FOR YOUR DIARY:

Dorchester Festival 1st May – 10th May 2009

This third Dorchester Festival has almost 40 brilliant events over 10 days with something for all tastes and ages. This year our profits will be split equally between Dorchester Abbey and Seesaw, a local charity which supports bereaved children. See our website www.dorchesterfestival.com for more details or ring 0300 030 3003

RAL "Talking Science" Lecture Series.

'Rock Guitar in 11 Dimensions' by Dr Mark Lenwey on **Friday 8 May 2009** at 10.30 am, 1.30 pm & 7.00 pm. *What causes the revolutionary, history-changing sound of rock guitar, and how does it help us to understand the nature of the stuff we're made of?*

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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