

# **The Mouthpiece**

## **Culham's Newsletter No 307**

### *Village Diary for June 2009*

*8<sup>th</sup> Parish Council Meeting, The School, 7.30 pm*

*8<sup>th</sup> Deadline for July/August Mouthpiece (Please Note Earlier Date)*

*12<sup>th</sup> Mobile Library, The Glebe, 1.40 pm – 1.50 pm*

*14<sup>th</sup> Family Communion, St. Paul's Church, 10 am*

*21<sup>st</sup> Evening Prayer, St. Paul's Church, 6 pm*

*26<sup>th</sup> Mobile Library, The Glebe, 1.40 pm – 1.50 pm*

<b>Services of Worship</b>	<b>June 2009</b>
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Date	Time	Place	Service
<b>SERVICES AT CULHAM</b>			
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Culham	Family Communion
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup>	6 pm	Culham	Evening Prayer
<i>Join us for coffee and a chat after Sunday morning services at Culham Church! All welcome.</i>			
<b>OTHER SERVICES</b>			
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup>	8 am	Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion
	10 am	Long Wittenham	Family Service
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup>	8.30 am	Little Wittenham	Holy Communion
	10 am	Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup>	10 am	Long Wittenham	Holy Communion
Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup>	2.30 pm	Long Wittenham	Pram Service
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Clifton Hampden	Family Communion & Baptism
	6 pm	Long Wittenham	Evening Prayer

<b>Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2009</b>	<b>St. Paul's Church</b>
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This meeting took place after the Family Communion on Sunday 10th May. Brian Bracher retired after completing six years as Churchwarden and was thanked for all his hard work. There should be two Churchwardens and for the last two years Brian has been the only Churchwarden at St. Paul's.

Charles Reichardt was elected as Churchwarden but stated that he wished to hold the post for one year only — having already retired as Churchwarden in 2007 after 20 years service.

All members of the PCC were re-elected at the APCM. Some have served the Church for many years and are not getting any younger.

If St. Paul's is to remain open for worship, including Harvest Festivals, Carol Services, school services, marriages, funerals and baptisms, involvement by other younger villagers in the work of the village church will sooner or later become essential. Any offers to help with cleaning, flower arranging, opening the church etc. will be most welcome. Anyone interested in joining the Parochial Church Council or in becoming a Churchwarden should contact any member of the PCC or our vicar.

The PCC would like to thank the Friends of St. Paul's, Culham, for their invaluable financial support for the maintenance and fabric of the village church.

<b>Village News</b>
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**The Mouthpiece**

As the holiday season is approaching, please could we have your contributions to the July/August issue of The Mouthpiece a week earlier than usual, i.e. **8th June**? Thank you.

**Plant Sale & Church Fete****Janet & Brian Bracher**

We are very pleased to say that the amount raised at the Plant Sale and Fete this year was approximately £1000 (exact figure next month!) – a big “Thank You” to all those who helped in so many ways to make this day such a success.

**Pot Sale at the Pottery****Charlotte Storrs**

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June from 2.00 pm to 6.00 pm.** Before my Winchester exhibition in July I am holding a sale of old stock, slight seconds and seconds at 8 The Green, Culham. Prices from £2.

Charlotte Storrs, Stoneware, tel/fax 01235 520395

[www.charlottestorrs-stoneware.co.uk](http://www.charlottestorrs-stoneware.co.uk) ~ email [pots@charlottestorrs-stoneware.co.uk](mailto:pots@charlottestorrs-stoneware.co.uk)

<b>Rector's Letter</b>	<b>Sue Booy</b>
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Greed is in the news as I write and it doesn't look like going away in a hurry. We've had greedy bankers and now we have greedy MP's. On a radio interview the other morning an interviewee said “This isn't a political issue, it's an ethical issue”: true; but then greed always is. After all, it is one of the ‘seven deadly sins’ identified by the medieval church and as such is secretly immortalised in the *sedilia* to the south of the High Altar in the Abbey. The desire to accumulate resources and “stuff” - money, possessions, food - seems to be part of our humanity. It is indeed human and part of the drive to survive that we should be able to feed, clothe and protect ourselves. The question, therefore, is not whether, but how and perhaps how much?

For many people there is another kind of greed - the desire for respect that can become an obsession with importance for its own sake. When this form of greed is allied to the desire for resources the lust for power, a greed that is responsible for much evil in the world, is born. The more important a person is the greater the temptation to exploit their position, the greater the danger that they will be overtaken by the extremes of greed and the greater the effect their greed will have on others.

So the person who said that this was an ethical question is right on target.

There is nothing wrong with wanting to provide for our needs and the needs of our families, wanting the respect and good opinion of our neighbours, being paid an appropriate wage for a task; not even anything wrong with being rewarded above the going rate by a generous employer. There is nothing wrong with claiming appropriate expenses. One of the difficult things about expenses in general and this case in particular is the definition of appropriate. The chorus that expenses claims were ‘within the rules set down’ has been uttered by politician after politician and whilst some may have been stretching the rules it seems that some of the rules, at the very least, need some questions asking about them.

The other issue raised by politicians has been that biblical issue of a fair and appropriate reward. There seems to have been a sense that whilst it would be difficult for MP's to be paid more, it is alright for them to recover the costs of doing their jobs. This seems to be where all the difficulties begin and not least because it leaves politicians themselves to make their own judgements about appropriate expenses, according to their own lives and expectations. An imprecise science if ever there was one!!

What makes this a sensitive subject? The question of MP's remuneration is bound to be sharper in a time of recession. Media pressure undoubtedly spins some things beyond reality. However, there is another, underlying factor – and that is the connection we feel with Members of

Parliament. We call them our 'representatives'. If we are represented by this behaviour then it is uncomfortable in more ways than one. We do not wish to be represented by people whose integrity is called into question but what if they are representative in a different sense? Perhaps we are disturbed by a realisation that greed is not a respecter of persons; this current news highlights the fact that the tendency to desire wealth and power is embedded in our society in such a way that many of us need to take a long look at ourselves and say ... "may he or she that is without sin cast the first stone..." or even "there but for the grace of God..."

<b>Sutton Courtenay Local History Society</b>	<b>Mary Thompson</b>
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The History Society has been in existence for a year, having been formed as a result of the successful History Weekend in which Sutton Courtenay and neighbouring villages participated in the summer of 2007. The Society has enjoyed talks on a variety of topics including family history and the amazing archaeological discoveries unearthed from the landfill site. We also visited the Woodstock Museum and had an extensive tour of the Bodleian Library.

Some of the talks are of a general nature and not specific to Sutton Courtenay and we always welcome visitors.

Next Meeting: **Thursday June 4<sup>th</sup>, The Abbey, Sutton Courtenay at 7.30pm (entrance £2)**  
**"A Step Back in Time – Understanding Medieval Buildings like the Abbey" by David Clark**

This illustrated talk will explore the medieval house, particularly those buildings built in timber as in the Vale of White Horse, how they were built and used and how they can be dated. David Clark is actively engaged in historic buildings research and teaching and recently retired as director of the vernacular architecture course at Rewley House.

If you would like more information please contact: **Mary Thompson Tel: 01235 848527**

<b>Culham Parish Council Notes</b>	<b>April/May 2009</b>
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Glenn Bartley volunteered to continue and was re-elected as chairman of the council.

After representations from a member of the public, CPC will ask OCC to make sure that the grass in front of the Lion pub is cut during the 5 annual cuts within the village.

Discussions concerning the best method of improving access to the burial ground are continuing. It is likely that either steps or a strengthened, less slippery slope will be installed opposite the gate.

The shed on the playing field has been cleared out and tidied up with a skip full of rubbish being removed. A selection of tables and chairs were retained and are available for village use.

It was agreed to look into the costs of repairing the tractor with a view to using it to cut a larger area of the field than presently undertaken.

There were no reports from either the SODC or OCC representatives.

CPC would like to remind residents that should they have trouble taking their new wheelie bins to the kerbside, then SODC offers a collect and return service. More on this can be obtained from SODC on 03000 61010 or on the SODC website [www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk).

There has been an increase in dog fouling along the footpath between the lock and the bridge. Dog mess can carry *toxocara canis*, which is a roundworm found in dogs, and can easily be picked up by young children. This causes stomach upsets, sore throats, asthma and in rare

cases, blindness. The eggs can remain active in the soil for many years, long after the dog mess has weathered away. Please take your dog's mess away with you and place in one of the three bins provided in the village.

**Next meeting: Monday 8th June 2009, 7:30 pm at the school.**

<b>Thames Valley Police Update</b>
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<b>Sarah Talbot</b>
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Police Community Support Officers from the South Oxfordshire area have all received training on environmental issues such as dog fouling and littering. In the coming months we will receive the equipment which will enable us to issue £80 fixed penalty notices for the above offences. Please think twice before dropping litter or failing to pick up after your dog!

I would like to take this opportunity to make you aware of the increase in burglaries in the South Oxfordshire area. Please read the information below in order to combat this raised concern.

- You can take some simple and cost-effective steps to tighten your home security and dramatically reduce your chances of becoming a victim of burglary. The same applies if your home has been broken into before – please address any weaknesses in your home security.
- Thames Valley Police's 'Safer Homes' campaign aims to raise awareness among householders about what you can do to prevent and reduce burglary.
- At least 80% of burglaries are committed by amateur opportunists who take advantage of open or vulnerable doors and windows, keys left in insecure 'hiding places', and unlocked side gates, for example.
- In around 25% of break-ins, particularly those that take place in the spring and summer, entry is gained through insecure doors and windows, especially at the rear of the property.
- Further information can be found on the Thames Valley Police Website or please contact the Wallingford Neighbourhood team.

*PC 5578 Paul Webber, PCSO C9790 Becky Long & PSCO Sarah Talbot C9904.  
Tel: 08458 505505*

<b>Culham Pre-School</b>
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<b>Lee Allmond</b>
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The children have been very busy looking at the theme of growing and have made beautiful displays of various insects, animals and themselves. We have also grown caterpillars into butterflies and released them into the garden.

This month we shall be out and about with visits and walks around the village.

<b>Culham Parochial School</b>
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<b>Anne Andrew</b>
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At last I feel as though I am 'back to normal' and have managed to catch up on most of the jobs I should have done when I was unable work with a broken wrist. Thank you for all your good wishes during this time.

The school year is rapidly nearing its end and will hopefully bring some sunshine, enabling us to spend more time out of doors. The children in Year 6 are completing their SATs papers as I write and will be joined with the Year 5 children in June for their residential trip to Yenworthy before moving on to secondary school in September. These children are maturing into the type of enthusiastic and sensible young adults that we pride ourselves on sending out into the community.

Thinking about the children who will be joining our school in the future we have started to run some 'drop-in coffee sessions' on Monday afternoons from 2:30 to 3:15 p.m. These are part of our plans for reaching out into the local community to bring families with young children into our school community. If you are a grandparent or childminder you are also welcome to join these groups. Our outreach worker, who works closely with local services, such as health visitors, runs the sessions and provides toys and games for pre-school children. It is an ideal opportunity for you to meet with other people like yourself or to chat with the outreach worker on issues such as parenting skills, local services for families etc. Please do come and join us at these sessions if you can.

<b>Newington Nurseries – Big Beautiful Blooms</b>	<b>Anne Hendry</b>
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This is the time of year to make a splash with big, beautiful flowers. Peony (*Paeonia*) is a stylish perennial that's perfect for delivering fabulous blooms where you want them and when you want them. There's an exciting range of colours to choose from: shades of pink and strong reds predominate, plus there are white and yellow options too, with many shades in between. Flower forms are varied and interesting with singles, semi-doubles or doubles in cup-shaped, bowl-shaped or anemone-form on offer.

Peony is another of those plants that owes its popularity to the Victorians but found itself sidelined by the gardening public in the middle years of the twentieth century. Now things have changed and there is even a Peony Society dedicated to telling us all how special these plants are and what a wonderful range there is from which to make a selection.

The flowers really are breath-taking – brightly coloured and beautiful in form, they develop on the tips of stems, sometimes several to a stem. They're a fantastic addition to beds and borders, thriving in deep, fertile soil. Most cultivars are bred from *Paeonia lactiflora*, a very popular herbaceous species, bearing big, single white or pale pink blooms. Look out for *Paeonia* 'Bowl of Beauty', *Paeonia* 'Krinkled White', the pale or rose pink *Paeonia* 'Avant Garde' or *Paeonia* 'Globe of light', the flowers of which are soft pink with creamy white centres.

Combining with other plants in the border can help to bring out the best of the peony. For example a combination of *Paeonia lactiflora* 'Albert Crousse', *Rosa* 'Gertrude Jekyll' and *Allium aflatunense* will allow the colours of each to harmonise and their forms to contrast. Another interesting combination that challenges expectation is that of *Paeonia lactiflora* 'Auguste Dessert' and the upright yellow-flowered stems of yellow *Loostrife*. For the more conservative, delphiniums or lupins would make a subtler blend.

Peony is widespread in many regions of the world, but probably most treasured in China where it narrowly missed becoming the national flower in 1994. It wasn't that another flower was more popular – it just proved impossible to reach a final decision!

The European name derives from mythology when Paeon, the physician to the Gods obtained the plant from the mother of Apollo. Interestingly, in Japan the root of peony has long been held to have medicinal powers, including the ability to calm convulsions. For us however, peony is simply a wonderful addition to the early summer garden, sometimes fragrant and always visually delightful.

*Newington Nurseries, Newington, Nr Stadhampton, Oxon, OX10 7AW*  
 Tel 01865 400533 ~ [www.newington-nurseries.co.uk](http://www.newington-nurseries.co.uk)

<b>Out &amp; About</b>
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**Friday 12 June 2009** RAL "Talking Science" Lecture - '**Robot Exploration on land, at sea and in the air**' by Dr Mark Neal (Aberystwyth University) at **10.30 am, 1.30 pm & 7.00 pm.**

*This talk will explain some of the problems encountered when trying to use robots in unpredictable and changeable real world environments, and present some ways of dealing with the problems. Examples of research work being carried out using robots to map rugged terrain, for marine monitoring and for aerial photography will be illustrated using live demonstrations and static robot displays.*

To reserve seats for any RAL Talking Science Lectures please either ring 01235 445959 or email [stfctalkinciscience@rl.ac.uk](mailto:stfctalkinciscience@rl.ac.uk)

**Wed 24th to Sat 27th of June at 7.30 pm: ABINGDON DRAMA CLUB presents 'Betrayal' by Harold Pinter at the UNICORN THEATRE**, Medieval Abbey Buildings, Abingdon. Tickets: £7 (concessions £6.00) from The Bookstore, Abingdon Precinct or from Ticketline 01235 524538.

### **Northmoor Trust Events**

*The Northmoor Trust aims to demonstrate the link between land, people and ecology. A registered charity, it engages in sustainable farming and land management; inspirational education to change hearts and minds; practical forest and conservation research; enhancing biodiversity and responding to climate change*

*For the latest opening times and events see our website [www.northmoortrust.co.uk](http://www.northmoortrust.co.uk) or ring 01865 407792. Most events are suitable for families. Depending on weather conditions, some areas may be unsuitable for pushchairs and buggies. **No Dogs Please***

*It may be necessary to cancel events in unforeseen circumstances, so please check our website before attending any event. Events will be signposted. Please note that suitable clothing and footwear are advisable.*

**Saturday 13th June: 2pm - 4pm: Wonderful Wildlife and Outstanding Orchids.** Mowbray Fields Nature Reserve, Didcot - See the glorious display of common spotted and marsh orchids. Adults £5, Friends & under 16s free

**Wednesday 16th June: 6.30pm - 9pm: Hedgerow Management.** A walk around the Northmoor Trust estate looking at various hedgerow management options. Adults £5, Friends Free. Sorry, not suitable for children.

**Saturday 27th & Sunday 28th June: 10am – 6pm: Children's Food Festival, Northmoor Trust Estate.** A celebration of food and cooking, fronted by Raymond Blanc & Sophie Grigson. See [www.childrensfoodfestival.co.uk](http://www.childrensfoodfestival.co.uk) for details. Entrance will not be via Northmoor Trust offices.

### **Endpiece**

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

**Please could we have contributions earlier than usual in June as the editors' holiday season is upon us!**

**Contributions to the July/August issue of The Mouthpiece by JUNE 8TH please, to:**

Michelle Thresh, 33 High Street, 01235 534202 or email: [michelle.thresh@btconnect.com](mailto:michelle.thresh@btconnect.com)

Rosemary Waters, 2 The Willows 01235 559010 or email [therisenpheonix2@btinternet.com](mailto:therisenpheonix2@btinternet.com)

Brian Bracher, 25 High Street, 01235 525885 or email [brian@thebrachers.com](mailto:brian@thebrachers.com)

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