

The Mouthpiece

Culham's Newsletter No 313

Village Diary for February 2010

- 5th Mobile Library - The Glebe, 1.40 - 1.50 pm*
- 8th Parish Council Meeting - The School, 7.30 pm*
- 14th Family Communion - St. Paul's Church, 10 am*
- 15th Deadline for March's Mouthpiece*
- 19th Mobile Library - The Glebe, 1.40 - 1.50 pm*
- 21st Evening Prayer - St. Paul's Church, 6 pm*
- 24th Police Surgery - The School, 6 pm - 7 pm*

Date	Time	Place	Service
SERVICES AT CULHAM			
Sunday 14th	10 am	Culham	Family Communion
Sunday 21st	6 pm	Culham	Evening Prayer
<p><i>Join us for coffee and a chat after Sunday morning services at Culham Church! All welcome.</i></p> <p><i>Come along for informal prayers with Revd Anne Ilsley at Culham Church on Thursday mornings, 8.15 - 9.00 am.</i></p>			
SERVICES ELSEWHERE			
Sunday 7th	8 am	Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion
	10 am	Long Wittenham	Family Service
Sunday 14th	10 am	Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion
	6 pm	Long Wittenham	Evening Prayer
Ash Wednesday 17th	9.30 am	Berinsfield	Holy Communion with ashes
Sunday 21st	10 am	Long Wittenham	Holy Communion
Sunday 28th	8.30 am	Little Wittenham	Holy Communion
	10 am	Clifton Hampden	Family Communion

Village News

Christmas Services at St Paul's

Culham PCC

We were delighted to welcome so many people to the Annual Carol Service last month, and also to Holy Communion on Christmas Day. If one of these was your first visit then we hope you will come to more of our regular services: a warm welcome will await you!

New Advertiser

Thirtyforty

This month we welcome a new advertiser, "Thirtyforty" (see page A4). A family-based business, they have been offering IT services and support since 2000, and can offer over 30 years' combined experience. Originally the firm was established mainly to serve the home user, but they soon found that their expertise would benefit both small and large organisations alike. Thirtyforty pride themselves on being able to offer affordable advice and support.

The 1981 Culham Calendar

Brian Bracher

Last September we published a set of notes from Cliff Rowe Evans describing pictures in the 1981 Culham Calendar, & the following month we printed a picture as supplied by John Storrs. Having asked if anyone could provide any more information, we were pleased to learn from Sally Bainbridge (in Minehead) that she and her husband Mike were responsible for producing the calendar. Mike was a churchwarden here for many years, Sally was a Parish Councillor and the picture was drawn by a local art teacher. We have put the pictures and text on a notice board just inside St Paul's Church so that others can enjoy them.

Home-Start Valuation Day**Lynn Hancock**

For your Diary - Bonham's Valuation Day in aid of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire - **24th March 2010**, from **10 am to 1 pm** at Didcot Civic Hall, Britwell Road, Didcot. Dig out your treasures and bring them along for valuation by Bonham's - auctioneers and valuers since 1793. The cost of valuing 2 items is £5.00 and £1.00 per subsequent item. Refreshments are also available. **For more information, please contact Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire on 01235 511152**

The Mouthpiece – Help!**Brian Bracher**

One of our editors, Michelle Thresh, has found that she can no longer help with **The Mouthpiece** owing to pressure of work. Michelle has been helping us since late in 2006, and we have been very grateful for her expertise.

How much do you value your **Mouthpiece**? As we are losing Michelle, we need some occasional help with editing the newsletter. If you can use Microsoft WORD and Email on a PC, then you could do it. For more information, please contact Brian on 525885, and help to keep your Village Newsletter going.

A World of Difference**Rev. Marcus Braybrooke**

'A Celebration of Difference' was how one of the organisers described the Fifth Parliament of the World Religions held in the brand new Convention Hall in Melbourne, Australia from 3rd to 9th December 2009. A Sufi Whirling Prayer Ceremony, Deep chanting by Tibetan monks, Plainsong and Gospel Music, Traditional Song and Dance by Australia's First People and much more were, for example, all part of a Concert of Sacred Music.

Celebrating the rich diversity of religious beliefs and practices is more important than it may sound. Still today, as in past centuries, ethnic and religious differences are a cause of mistrust, hostility and even massacre. Several programmes were devoted to 'Respecting the Other.' Not all difference, however, is to be respected. As Katherine Marshall of World Faiths Development Dialogue insisted, religions need to challenge the economic injustices, which allow the few to live in plenty and millions to subsist in abject poverty. Religions have a vital role in working for peace and reconciliation and in protecting the environment. As the Dalai Lama insisted, the root cause of the world's problems is the failure to recognise that this is a moral universe.

With about six thousand participants and more than six hundred programmes – lectures, seminars, religious observances, concerts, films and much more – there was certainly plenty of variety. No one could do more than sample the rich banquet. Like the Wimbledon Tennis Tournament, where there are perhaps twelve matches on court at the same time, one can only watch one of them. Melbourne, which gave visitors a warm welcome, is itself a very varied and vibrant multi-cultural and multi-religious city. The state of Victoria is home to people from more than 200 countries of origin, speaking more than 230 languages and dialects, following more than 110 faith traditions.

At the Parliament, Mary led a session on 'Older People: Revered or Redundant,' which was a very personal and inter-active sharing. She also was a member of the panel at a session on 'The religious situation in Europe.' I arranged an interfaith service on 'Respect for the Earth,' and, with Sister Maureen Goodman of the Brahma Kumaris, lead a half-day retreat on 'The Inner Voice of Peace: Interfaith, a Life Changing Experience.' We were both asked to moderate other sessions.

In Melbourne I was asked to preach at a United Methodist and Presbyterian Church. In Australia we also attended a lively evangelical Community Church, whereas in New Zealand we were good Anglicans going to an inspiring sung communion service at Christchurch Cathedral and a small church in Wanaka, where the welcoming congregation invited us to a

retreat held in a beautiful garden. So we have indeed celebrated difference, although also recognising again a deeper unity with others as we share experiences of the universal love of God.

If anyone would like to hear more about the Parliament of World Religions please join us at our home, 17 Courtiers Green, Clifton Hampden on Tuesday 9th February at 7.30 p.m.

News from Culham Parochial School	Steph Fawdry
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Happy New Year from Culham Primary! We all hope that you had a lovely Christmas break. It was lovely to see so many of the local community in school on the last week of the Christmas term to join in with our Christmas festivities which included eating mince pies of course!!

As usual, the holiday whizzed by and it was soon ready to return back to school. It was wonderful to see the children coming back to school on the 4th January with big beaming smiles after their Christmas break although the recent snow has hampered the start to the term as we had to close the school for two days as it was unsafe to ask parents and staff to come in to school in those conditions. I noticed that there have been some fantastic additional members of the Culham community that have suddenly appeared in people's gardens and on the street which sadly are now disappearing in the thaw. Hopefully we will be back to 'normal' soon (fingers crossed!!). I would like to thank Mr Burchill and Mr Epps who came out with their shovels to remove the snow from the school car park so that some staff could park on that making the road clearer for vehicles to pass.

We are also having the inside of the school painted this term to replace the tired walls with a bright and fresh look! We hope you can come and visit when it is finished to see what you think of our new colours!

Finally, I am going to conclude with some fantastic news. Two members of staff who were on maternity leave have both had their babies. December was a very special month as Mrs Holliday gave birth to Georgina at the beginning of the month and Mrs Bown gave birth to William at the end - both mothers and babies are doing very well and I ask you to keep the health and happiness of both families in your prayers. We have an exciting term ahead of us and I will get the School Council to let you know what has been going on in the next issue.

Parish Council Notes, December 2009	Andrew Steele
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The Council received a report from Anna Kennedy on behalf of the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council regarding affordable housing in Culham. The proposal is to undertake a 'housing needs' survey, in conjunction with the CPC and residents, with a view to assessing the requirement for such housing. The initiative has been triggered by the Oxford Diocese who owns land within the Parish but the process will be Parish-led. The ORCC works in conjunction with housing associations (e.g. SOHA and Sovereign) to construct and let affordable housing on appropriate land subject, of course, to planning requirements. The main criteria for allocation of housing is first, those who live or have lived within the village within the last 5-8 years; second, those who have parents or children living in the village; and thirdly, those who work in the village. This will be an agenda item at the next CPC meeting.

Two local PCSO's (Rebekah Kent and Sarah Talbot) attended the meeting and reported that apart from problems of parking and speeding, Culham was considered to be a very low crime area. They are planning a parking initiative scheme in conjunction with the school, possibly based on a poster campaign, in the New Year.

The European School has been found to be in breach of planning regulations with the construction of the fence along the A415. SODC have indicated the school had 28 days (i.e. the 24th December 2009) to respond to their enforcement letter.

No further progress with the burial ground as the two companies approached for quotes have not responded.

CPC will investigate the costs of repairing or replacing the climbing frame in the play area after recent concerns about its medium-long term safety.

Planning consent for the petrol station close to the Railway Inn and a, separate, proposed extension to the Railway Inn, have both been refused.

Parish Council Notes - January 2010

From SODC

The bin collections in early January were stopped as crews were diverted to snow clearance duties. (The service should be back to normal by the time the Mouthpiece is distributed.)

Furze Bank, behind JET, has applied for a change of use to extend the outdoor adventure activities it carries out but they will be contained within the woodland area.

From OCC

Viridor, the company applying to build the incinerator at Ardley, are going to appeal against the decision not to go ahead with their proposal. They will be supported by OCC. The planning inspectorate will deal with this in a couple of months.

The latest gravel extraction plans within Oxfordshire are due to go to consultation. There is a meeting on 17th March which CPC councillors will attend. The first decision will be which of the proposed areas within the county will be used for extraction. The OCC will decide the final scheme.

Clerk's report

There will be an early consultation on traffic developments within the village but this is unlikely to lead to any action.

The burial ground slope improvement is ongoing as contractors are still being consulted for a quote.

CPC will request that a survey on an affordable housing scheme within the village is carried out.

Next meeting: Monday 8th February 2010 at 7:30 pm at the school.

Thames Valley Police Update (December 2009)

Sarah Talbot

The Benson and Berinsfield neighbourhood also covers the parishes of Nuneham Courtenay, **Culham**, Clifton Hampden, Dorchester on Thames, Shillingford, Warborough, Berrick Salome, Benson, Ewelme and Brightwell Baldwin. The level of crime in this neighbourhood is rated as average, the average number of crimes having **decreased** from 52 to 48.3 (7.1%) which is good news. This is compared with the same three month period last year.

The crime categories are: burglary (10% decrease), robbery (increased by one victim), vehicle crime (45.5% decrease), violence (18.2% increase), anti-social behaviour (ASB) (18.3% increase).

Parking is an issue for many neighbourhoods. It has also been identified in our Neighbourhood, with particular problems surrounding the schools and shop areas. In January PCSOs Talbot and Kent will be visiting **Culham Primary School** and Berinsfield Primary School alongside the Neighbourhood Action Group to tackle the issues surrounding parking and involve the children! Watch this space for more information.

Please can I remind all road users parking illegally and/or causing an obstruction is an endorsable fine of £30 or the cost of having your vehicle removed.

Next meeting in Culham: Culham Primary School, High Street, on **Wednesday 24th February 2010 from 6 pm to 7 pm**. These meetings are an ideal opportunity for local residents to speak to their local police officers and PCSO's about any local issues. No appointment is necessary - just turn up and speak to your local officers. Further surgeries will be publicised locally and on the force website at www.thamesvalley.police.uk.

PC 5578 Paul Webber & PCSO Sarah Talbot C9904. Telephone your Local Officers on 0845 8 505 505.

Newington Nurseries: Winter Blooms using Hellebores	Anne Hendry
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Our gardens are probably looking a little sleepy at this time of year so how about injecting a little brightness and beauty with some eye-catching Hellebores? Appearing to strike through the surface of the ground when all else is dormant, Hellebores make an arresting sight. Their beautiful flowers, white, cream, pink, purple or green and sometimes with lovely detailing, are a great sight during the winter. Plant in groups, ideally in threes or fives, so as to create greater impact. Even though their winter beauty provides a welcome contrast to murky skies, being evergreen, they provide structure and interest throughout the year. Plants of the woodland margin, Hellebores are happiest where they can enjoy both sun and shade. Plant near trees in a woodland setting or in a mixed shrub border. They're tolerant of a range of soils, but prefer moist, fertile, humus-rich soils and will get off to a flying start if you improve the soil at the time of planting with leaf mould or compost.

Some classic choices for hellebores are *Helleborus niger* 'Potter's Wheel' with its large white flowers and green-eyes or *Helleborus x ballardiae* 'December Dawn' which has big white flowers (6-8cm across), flushed pink-purple. *Helleborus foetidus* (Stinking Hellebore) is called so because the leaves give off an unpleasant smell if crushed but the flowers are a fabulous green and often have the exquisite detail of being purple-margined. *Helleborus foetidus* 'Miss Jekyll' contradicts the name of 'stinking' by having lovely fragrant flowers. As a final suggestion, look out for the much loved *Helleborus hybridus* 'Peggy Ballard' with its gorgeous deep pink flowers.

These stars of the winter garden are easy to establish and require little maintenance in return for a wonderful show.

Plus, did you know?

Helleborus has a rich if shady history as a 'medicinal' plant. The ancient Greeks apparently used it as an early chemical weapon. Scholars discovered that they used parts of the plant to poison the wells of their enemies. It often appears naturalised around the ruins of mediaeval European monasteries also. One interpretation of this is that the monks used it as a herbal treatment for ailments. According to English folklore, crushed hellebore leaves were used as a treatment for intestinal worms in country districts. The dosage had to be correctly administered as the leaves are known to contain alkaloids and other chemicals that could lead to poisoning (think of the Greeks). *Helleborus* was also used in the Middle Ages to ward off evil influences thought to be lurking in the house. In contrast, *Helleborus* was said to be used in witchcraft to summon undesirable spirits.

Finally, don't forget about the birds. You may have recently read the RSPB's report indicating that this recent cold, snowy snap will have a detrimental impact on our bird population. Frosty nights and/or long spells of rain cause birds to lose their condition. If you've been feeding them, make sure that you keep feeders clean and full. If you haven't, why not invest in some modern, hygienic bird feeders? You'll be helping populations of both local and over-wintering birds with the bonus of getting to enjoy the fun of bird table politics – so much more entertaining than the human kind.

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

Out & About

The **NORTHMOOR TRUST** has an exciting range of traditional craft workshops this coming spring. Please meet at Hill Farm, Little Wittenham for all events. Booking is required for all events except for our lambing weekends. To reserve your place phone 01865 407792 or email admin@northmoortrust.co.uk

Saturday 13th February: 10am – 4pm: Hurdle Weaving Workshop

A one-day practical workshop making traditional hazel hurdles to take home. Whether you want to camouflage a compost heap, disguise a dustbin or make an interesting trellis, this course is for you. Adults £75, Friends £60

Saturday 20th February: 10am – 5pm: Introduction to Landscape Photography

Join professional landscape photographer David Hall for an enjoyable day to improve your landscape photography. Please bring your own camera. Adults £45, Friends £36

27th and 28th February: 9:30am – 4pm: Advanced Hedge Laying Workshop

A two day, hands-on course suitable for anyone who has previously been on a hedge laying course and would like to learn how to tackle a more challenging hedge. All specialist tools & equipment supplied. Adults £75, Friends £60

Endpiece

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

Contributions to the MARCH issue of The Mouthpiece by FEBRUARY 15th please, to:
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