

The Mouthpiece

Culham's Newsletter No 318

Village Diary for July-August 2010

- 9th Jul Mobile Library - The Glebe, 1.40 - 1.50 pm*
- 11th Jul Family Communion - St. Paul's Church, 10 am*
- 12th Jul Parish Council Meeting, The School, 7.30 pm*
- 18th Jul Evening Prayer - St. Paul's Church, 6 pm*
- 23rd Jul Mobile Library - The Glebe, 1.40 - 1.50 pm*
- 24th Jul Culham's Big Lunch, Notice board for details*
- 6th Aug Mobile Library - The Glebe, 1.40 - 1.50 pm*
- 8th Aug Family Communion - St. Paul's Church, 10 am*
- 15th Aug Evening Prayer - St Paul's Church, 6 pm*
- 15th Aug Deadline For September's Mouthpiece*
- 20th Aug Mobile Library - The Glebe, 1.40 - 1.50 pm*
- Coming Events ...*
- 4th Sep Church Concert, 7.30 pm*
- 11th Sep Ride & Stride - St. Paul's Church*

Date	Time	Place	Service
<i>SERVICES AT CULHAM - JULY</i>			
Sunday 11th	10 am	Culham	Family Communion
Sunday 18th	6 pm	Culham	Evening Prayer
<i>OTHER SERVICES – JULY</i>			
Sunday 4 th	8 am 10 am	Clifton Hampden Long Wittenham	Holy Communion Family Service
Sunday 11 th	10 am 6 pm	Clifton Hampden Long Wittenham	Holy Communion Evening Prayer
Sunday 18 th	10 am	Long Wittenham	Holy Communion
Sunday 25 th	8.30 am 10 am	Little Wittenham Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion Family Communion
<i>SERVICES AT CULHAM - AUGUST</i>			
Sunday 8th	10 am	Culham	Family Communion
Sunday 15th	6 pm	Culham	Evening Prayer
<i>OTHER SERVICES - AUGUST</i>			
Sunday 1 st	8 am 10 am	Clifton Hampden Long Wittenham	Holy Communion Family Service
Sunday 8 th	10 am 6 pm	Clifton Hampden Long Wittenham	Holy Communion Evening Prayer
Sunday 15 th	10 am	Long Wittenham	Holy Communion
Sunday 22 nd	8.30 am 10 am	Little Wittenham Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion Family Communion
Sunday 29 th	10.30 am	Warborough	Team Communion

I don't about you but I find it quite incredible that I have been asked to provide a "Vicars Letter" for the July Magazines. It seems like only yesterday that the temperature was minus 10 and the ground covered in snow. Where has 2010 gone?

I guess that this is the time of year when many of us are preparing for our annual holiday. When I was in full time paid employment I always used to



look forward to our annual family holiday. I have many happy memories (and some less happy too if I am honest) of setting off with Janet and the boys and the camping gear. It is very reassuring too, that ten or more years since the last of those family holidays the boys still talk about the things we did and the places we saw, and now do similar things with *their* children.

I know that I am someone who needs a break from my usual surroundings and a chance to relax and rest and recuperate. I also need a hefty dose of sunshine! We are fortunate in that we have been able to set ourselves up with a mobile home on a site on the edge of Swanage. We can sit on the beach and watch the waves, we can walk up the hill behind the site onto the Downs and the South West Coast Path which winds its way along the cliffs.

I can also use it as a retreat place. OK it's not the same as staying at a monastery, priory or convent and joining in the Daily Office with the monks or nuns, but it is a chance to "get away from it all", but yet get back in a couple of hours if I need to.

There is good Biblical precedent for taking time to be quiet and gather your thoughts and talk with God. When Jesus heard of the death of John the Baptist, Matthew tells us that, "Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself." Unfortunately the crowds knew where he had gone and followed him and he ended up having to feed 5,000.

According to both Mark and Luke, when Jesus called his disciples, "He went up the mountain and called to him those whom he wanted, and they came to him." Mountains, especially in the Old Testament were places where you met God. (For example Moses received the Ten Commandments from God on the mountain top.) I can understand this, my first-ever trip to a foreign country was a school trip to Switzerland at the tender age of 15. Being amongst the peaks of the Bernese Oberland was a truly awe-inspiring experience and one which I have tried to repeat whenever I can. The Purbeck Hills are not quite the Alps or the Rockies, but they do have their charm!

Wherever you plan to go this summer, have a restful time, travel safely, and look for God in the places you visit.

County Council issues	Lorraine Lindsay-Gale
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I am afraid the financial picture is pretty gloomy both in terms of the state of the national economy and, because of the national position, for all of local government, including Oxfordshire County Council. I need to report to you on four aspects of our finances.

Firstly, you will remember that we announced towards the end of last calendar year that we were expecting some very tough times ahead as the government was forced to cut spending, regardless of the outcome of the general election that we knew was in the offing. We took over £100 million of savings over the five year medium term plan; we re-invested two thirds of it in services where we expect the highest pressure and the remaining one third – a bit over £35 million represents real cuts we will have to make over the five years from 2010/11 to 2014/15. We are now implementing those budget savings.

Secondly, you will know that the national coalition government announced in-year savings of £6.5 billion of which £1.2 billion was cuts in funding to local government. I cannot remember a time when government imposed cuts in this way after the budget had been set and the financial year had started. We are starting to get details of how much of the £1.2 billion is coming our way and it looks like a little under £11 million. We are working hard to identify how we will deliver those cuts and make them work as quickly as we can. The longer we leave it, the harder it will be. Remember we spend almost a billion pounds a year in revenue.

Thirdly, it is clear that public capital spending is going to be very tight because of the huge financial deficit the government has inherited. The County Council has been spending a little more than £100 million per year on capital schemes. These comprise schemes for schools, highways, libraries, museums, day centres and a whole host of other service areas. The capital programme is funded

from a combination of borrowing, government grants, asset disposals and developer contributions from large housing schemes. It is very clear that we are going to have a lot less from all of these sources over the next five to ten years. We have therefore instituted a comprehensive review of all of our capital spending that is not already committed. We are going to face some very tough decisions, including some spending planned locally as well as the rest of the county. Final decisions will not be taken until we set the capital programme in February 2011 but we must put on the brakes early if we are to “turn round the super-tanker”.

Fourthly, the government will conduct a Comprehensive Spending Review later this year, reporting in the Autumn. This will determine our financial allocations for the next three years. As I said at para 9 above, we have already made a lot of savings but we have no idea whether they will be enough. My best guess is that they will not be and we will be scouring our service areas to see what more we can do.

It is quite worrying but I do need to reassure you that the County Council is much stronger than many because we took early decisions to get ahead and stay ahead. There will be considerable public consultation and I will keep you and my other Parish Councils posted.

Apart from this, it is relatively quiet at County Hall!

Parish Council Notes – June 2010	Clerk's Report
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Clerk's report

The costs for repairing the playing field shed have been agreed and the work will be carried out soon.

The question of dogs being allowed onto the playing field will be taken up by the local PCSOs who will be increasing their patrols. They now have the authority to issue on-the-spot fines for this transgression.

The CCRC has been closed as a charity and this has been agreed with the charity commissioners. A payment of £350 was agreed to the organisers of a 'big lunch' party on The Green this July. The money was specifically for a pig roast.

The affordable housing scheme survey is on hold whilst the actual area of proposed land for the houses is agreed.

Finally: CPC would like to remind householders to please keep their hedges trimmed back from the footpath to allow clear passage.

Next meeting: Monday 12 July 2010 at 19:30 at the school.

Thames Valley Police Update	Sarah Talbot
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Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) Rebekah Kent and PCSO Sarah Talbot are glad to report that, although crime in the neighbourhood is still rated as average, the average number has decreased from 61.3 to 40. This is a 34.8 percent decrease and is much larger than the comparable period last year (January to March).

The crime categories are: burglary (60.6 percent decrease), robbery (no change), vehicle crime (73.9 percent decrease), violence (13 percent decrease), anti-social behaviour (ASB), (52 percent decrease).

Culham Parochial Primary School	Steph Fawdry
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Hello from all at Culham! We have exciting times ahead of us this term as we celebrate our 160th Anniversary. We have a tea party planned for Friday 16th July and all villagers, past pupils and teachers are welcome to attend. Please confirm attendance to Caroline Evans in the school office or email office.3190@ocnmail.net.

We are also looking for people to help us with remembering how the school used to be. If you have pictures of the school over time or are willing to come and speak with children about what the school used to be like please do get in touch. Also if there are any cake bakers out there who would be willing to make a celebratory 160th anniversary cake please also get in touch as we would be extremely grateful for any help to make the celebration so special.

We continue with the creative curriculum this term with children in Class 1 looking at Oceans. Lily Bennett and Emma Harris explain what Class 2 has been up to.

"We did a topic on the weather and we did some experiments on wind. The year 3 and 4 children had 5 pieces of different materials and they hung them on a washing line for their experiment and they tested how far the wind blew each one of them back. The year 5 and 6 had to design and make their own boat and they tested how far the wind blew the boats across the tub of water.

This term we have started a topic on Dorchester on Thames. We have designed a crest out of string and stuck it onto card using PVA glue. We used a paint roller to cover the string in red, blue, orange or yellow. Then we printed it on our posters which had facts about Dorchester on Thames written on to it. Also this term two of our pupils represented the school in a gymnastics competition. They did really well and we are proud of them."

I do hope that you are able to join us for our celebrations on **16th July** and I look forward to seeing you then

With very best wishes
All the children and staff from Culham.

Newington Nurseries: A Cayman Islands Garden	Anne Hendry
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Where are the Cayman Islands? We were frequently asked this question whilst exhibiting at the Chelsea Flower Show. Well, they're situated 180 miles south of Cuba and 195 miles north-west of Jamaica. And the highest point on the island is a grand 30 feet! So gardening here is a challenge as plants and gardens have to contend with the hurricane season from May to October and a dry, sunny period from November to April. But the islanders have created beautiful gardens, overcoming the vagaries of a demanding climate and the typical garden seen today is the Sand Garden.

The gardens are called Sand Gardens because of their use of white sand that is used to act as a mulch. The sand is usually swept once a week, removing any debris that has fallen from plants, using brooms made from the Small Leaf Rosemary Bush. So that the islanders can enjoy a 'White Christmas', a fresh layer of white sand is applied just before Christmas Day! The pathway to the front door is made from dead bits of coral that have been collected from the beach and this acts as a 'doorbell' – visitors' footsteps on the coral create a scrunching sound as they walk towards to the front door. The pathway is typically lined with conch (pronounced 'conk') shells, large and beautiful pastel-pink shells.

The focal point of the Sand Garden is the traditional Caymanian cottage, a wooden structure with a tin roof, modest in size and painted in traditional pastel colours. The garden itself is typically bordered between road and garden by a dry stone wall made from the island's limestone. White picket fences are used to mark the boundary between neighbours' properties. Usually, a wooden arch is positioned at the entrance to the garden and a climbing Rose or a Jasmine can usually be found twining its way up through the woodwork.

Cayman Island terrain consists mainly of limestone with thin layers of extremely well-drained alkaline soil dotted here and there. This is another challenge! As a result, the plants used in Sand Gardens

are those that have to cope with what is above and below ground. There is usually a mix of ornamental and crop plants and the ornamental plants used are those that require very little water.

Crop plants take priority and these include Coconut Trees, Bananas, the Silver Thatch Palm (endemic to Grand Cayman and used for making rope, baskets, hats and shoes), Mango, Papaya, Plum, Cherry, Breadfruit, Tamarind and Cassava as well as smaller but equally important foodstuffs such as Sweet Potatoes, Yams, Okra, Corn, Plantains and Pumpkins. The large palms and fruit trees provide shade for the small plants underneath.

The ornamental plants include Hibiscus, Croton, Jasmine and Bromeliads (for example, the Air Plant), and some of these are placed near to windows and doors so the fragrance and colour produced by the flowers can be enjoyed. Orchids are also to be found in the gardens and around the house and the two endemic species are the Wild Banana Orchid and the Ghost Orchid.

Despite the varying climate, Caymanian gardens are filled with wonderful plants and lush vegetation that is both edible and ornamental. A bit like many UK gardens really!

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

Out and About

Abingdon Drama Club

Wednesday 14th - Saturday 17th July at| 7.30 pm, Unicorn Theatre, Thame Street, Abingdon - "An Experiment with an Air Pump" by Shelagh Stephenson.

This tension-filled and emotionally powerful play is inspired by the painting "An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump" by Joseph Wright. Two groups of characters are in the same house but two hundred years apart. In 1799 on the eve of a new century, the house buzzes with scientific experiments, furtive romance and farcical amateur dramatics. In 1999 in a world of scientific chaos, cloning and genetic engineering, the cellar of the house reveals a dark secret buried for 200 years. This humorous play explores changes in gender roles and the moral questions surrounding scientific breakthroughs. It is also a fantastic detective story with a heartbreaking sting in its tail.

Tickets: £8 (Conc. £7) from The Bookstore, Abingdon Precinct. See website for more booking details: www.abingdon-drama-club.com

LONG WITTENHAM CHURCH FETE

August Bank Holiday Monday (**August 30th**)

In the grounds of The Plough

Doors open **2pm**

Stalls and fun for all the family!

The Parish has to raise some £200,000 for essential repairs to St Mary's and St Peter's Churches and pay the normal bills, so please come and support us.

Village News

Mouthpiece

Thank You

Lois Lee wishes to say thank you to everyone who came to John's funeral and sent condolences and for their kind and sympathetic wishes. Their thoughts and support are much appreciated.

Culham's Big Lunch

On **Saturday 24th July**, Culham's new Women's Group will be supporting "The Big Lunch" on the village green. It is a nationwide event giving communities the opportunity to get together to eat! It will be a great opportunity to meet together and there will be some fun activities / games for the children. For further information, please look on the village notice board.

Mary Rickford

Advance Notice - Concert**St Paul's Church**

Pandemonium, the Wantage-based Folk and Ceilidh band, will be performing their particular brand of music, poems and jokes in aid of St Paul's PCC and the Friends of St Pauls on **Saturday 4th September at 7.30pm** in the church. As well as traditional music Pandemonium will offer their own light-hearted interpretations of well-known and modern songs. Refreshments will be provided. Information about tickets etc will be made available later in the summer. However, please make a note in your diary now for what promises to be a fun evening.

Ride and Stride**Jean Diggins**

The annual "Ride & Stride" event, which raises money for the Oxfordshire churches, takes place on **11th September** this year. Each cyclist or walker aims to visit as many churches as possible in a day, and their sponsorship money is shared between the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust and the church of their choice. We have just received a generous £2,000 grant from the Trust towards the maintenance of our own church in Culham, so support for this event is greatly appreciated.

So - please think about getting on to your bicycles or into your walking boots and visiting as many churches as possible on the 11th September. Previously we've received really good support from the Rockall and Lever families and the many people who sponsored them. Unfortunately they cannot participate this year, so if any of you want to 'have a go', please contact Jean Diggins on (01235) 520540.

Also, help in 'manning' St Paul's Church on the day, to greet visiting cyclists and walkers, would be much appreciated. Again, please contact Jean Diggins for information.

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 September issue of The Mouthpiece by August 15th please, to:

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