



# The Mouthpiece

*Culham's Newsletter No 323*

*Village Diary for February 2011*

*4<sup>th</sup> Mobile Library - The Glebe, 1.40 - 1.50 pm*

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

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

*15<sup>th</sup> DEADLINE FOR MARCH'S MOUTHPIECE*

*18<sup>th</sup> Mobile Library - The Glebe, 1.40 - 1.50 pm*

*20<sup>th</sup> Evening Prayer - St. Paul's Church, 6 pm*

*25<sup>th</sup> "Have Your Say" Police meeting, Car Park, 6.00 - 6.45pm*



## Church Services in February

DATE	TIME	PLACE	SERVICE
<b>SERVICES AT CULHAM</b>			
Sunday 13th	10.00 am	Culham	Family Communion
Sunday 20th	6 pm	...	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>			
<b>SERVICES ELSEWHERE</b>			
Sunday 6th	8.00 am 10.00 am	Clifton Hampden Long Wittenham	Holy Communion Family Service
Sunday 13th	10 am 6 pm	Clifton Hampden Long Wittenham	Holy Communion Evening Prayer
Sunday 20th	10 am	Long Wittenham	Holy Communion
Sunday 27th	8.30 am 10.00 am	Little Wittenham Clifton Hampden	Holy Communion Family Communion

## Village News

### **Christmas at St Paul's - Culham PCC**

We were delighted to see so many people at our Christmas Services - in fact, we had record numbers at both (over 100 at the Carol Service!), despite all the snow and ice. Special thanks are due to Andrew Churchill Stone's superb choir and also to Revd David Haylett for battling through the snow to make both services such a success.

Every January we have to tell the Diocese how many people attended our services throughout the previous year. Sadly, our normal attendances do not match the Christmas ones – they average 17 people for Sunday mornings and just 7 for Sunday evenings. If you enjoyed our Christmas celebrations, why not try a 'normal' service? You'd receive a warm welcome!

### **In Memory: Norman Evans (1923 to 2010) – Charlotte Franklin**

Norman was born in 1923. He was educated at Rydal School, North Wales and Christ's College, Cambridge. He had a distinguished war in the Royal Navy. In 1946 he married Rachel Margaret Knight Reynolds, a fellow student from Norfolk and they had three children - Richard, Harriett and Mark.

The Evans Family came to Culham in 1967 from Kent. Norman had been appointed Director of Professional Studies at Culham C of E Teacher Training College which was flourishing at that time. The three children went to local schools in Abingdon and Oxford. They tastefully modernised Kiln Cottage, not losing its character as a house built for the

foreman of the old Brick Works, and gradually a good vegetable garden appeared. They cleared the stream and created a home both intimate and suitable for entertaining.

In 1970 Norman was appointed Principal of the C of E Teacher Training College at Derby. The family kept their house by Culham Lock and Rachel was active in the village, meeting people, full of gossip, warm and friendly to everyone, and involved in Labour politics while running her book business from home. The family enjoyed a cottage in Corfe for holidays.

Meanwhile Norman had a distinguished career in a new field, the furthering of "Experiential Learning". For this he travelled the world, attended Conferences and wrote books. His expertise was assessing life skills for acceptance as academic training. As he was often away from Culham, he had an apartment in London and he only really returned to Culham permanently to nurse Rachel in her final illness.

He too enjoyed village life and knew what was going on but was never quite the same after Rachel's death. He volunteered for Help the Aged, read to a blind friend, joined a watercolour class at Christ Church, attended Evensong at New College, went once a week to a Cinema and liked to have a meal at the Fish in Sutton Courtenay. He was a great family man, visited Mark in New Zealand and stayed with his children in London. His four granddaughters were a pride and joy to him. He was an exemplary grandfather sharing a warm rapport with the young.

Latterly I enjoyed swapping books with him as he was a great reader and discerning critic. He also had a nice unexpected hobby of making wine from his own Dorset grapes.

As he became more incapacitated he was quite amazing in managing his journeys, travelling alone to go sailing with his friend in the South of France or visiting California with the aide of NHS equipment. He persuaded me also to apply for a three and a four wheeler, and also showed me where to go in that warren of an industrial Estate in Abingdon, and it has transformed my life.

Norman Evans was a modest man who made a great contribution to the lives of probably thousands of people who could receive higher education because of his work. I find one of the happiest ways of remembering friends is with plants from their gardens, and we have a lovely souvenir of Norman: some flourishing globe artichoke plants, with beautiful leaves like Corinthian columns to admire for much of the year and then delicious petals to eat. I and many other friends will miss Norman greatly.

## **Parish Council Notes - Glenn Bartley**

### **13th December Meeting**

Much of the public participation at this month's meeting was concerned with the potential closure/future of Culham School. Although the CPC is not the lead organisation in the campaign to save the school, we would like to state that we are fully behind the proposal to save the school from closure and fully support the local residents (Save Culham School Action Group) and Board of Governors who are pursuing various non-closure options. A number of useful contacts/options were raised at the meeting and CPC believes the residents present at the meeting will be pursuing those potential routes. The Culham Village Website should also be hosting various links to allow residents to keep up with developments in this important village event, so please take a look at this site ([www.culhamvillage.org.uk](http://www.culhamvillage.org.uk))

### **SODC**

Information from the District Councillor includes the news that the Council's Core

Strategy stands as per the strategy review although the legality of the document is being challenged. More on the Strategy can be found on the SODC website.

The expansion of Didcot to the north is going to an inspector's review although it is not clear what set of rules covering this will be in force at the time of the review.

### **Other items**

Representatives from CPC met with the affordable housing trust and agreed a possible location for the proposed extra houses at the top of the Glebe. CPC has suggested that the village-wide consultation process for these houses should now go ahead.

CPC is awaiting a quote for the costs of ground stabilisation of the slope in the burial ground and a third quote for refurbishment of the play area surface.

The Remembrance Day service in St Paul's was fairly well attended and a wooden cross for each of the villagers named on the memorial was placed by children from the school along with various wreaths. It is hoped to make this an annual event.

CPC attended meetings about the Core Strategy at SODC and will continue to lobby for changes, particularly on the grounds that the traffic to the north of Ladygrove will adversely affect the village.

A letter has been received from Adkins, acting on behalf of Morrell's Estate. The main paragraph of their response is given below.

"Having undertaken a significant amount of research, they (the Estate Solicitors) have reported that the law relating to Common Land imposes the responsibility for maintenance on the person or persons utilising the area and causing wear and tear. As you will be aware, the Estate only owns the property known as 7 The Green and this is let as part of the Zouch Farm holding to Bernard Wallis. There are clearly a number of other properties not owned by the Estate that take access along this road and it would therefore appear that it is not the Estate's responsibility to undertake the maintenance of this road or the tracks around and across The Green"

CPC is continuing to look into this matter.

### **10th January Meeting**

The OCC Councillor's report should be available soon on the Village Website.

The ORCC will carry out the village survey on affordable housing at the end of January. The survey will include the Culham Science Park.

Rubbish dumped along the Burycroft had been collected.

The finalising of materials for the proposed slope refurbishment in the Burial Ground is ongoing. A cellular paving block will be used.

CPC is awaiting further quotes for the cost of infilling the bark in the play area.

CPC's response to the Didcot expansion consultation has been sent in.

The consultation on Culham School is ongoing. The Governing Body is due to meet with the Local Authority in the next few days.

Quotes for the noticeboard refurbishments are being sought.

According to OCC, Church Road is a bridleway only and therefore subject to maintenance requirements to allow the passage of horses along the central area only, without disruption.

Applications from Citizens Advice Bureau and South Vale Carers were received and a £100 donation to each was agreed.

The precept for 2011-2012 has been agreed and set at £15,160, a 3.5% increase on last year's budget.

**Next meeting: Monday 14 February 2011 at 19:30 at the school.**

## **Talking Point - Revd Nigel Hawkes**

### **"It's all about LOVE"**

Our retail culture this month moves on to the next topic – LOVE. They've done the cutesy Baby Jesus theme and are looking forward to the chocolate festival that is Easter (crème Eggs have been in the shops since Boxing Day), and now for a little light relief they are doing 'LOVE'. If I am sounding a little cynical and jaded, perhaps I can be forgiven, as we are all swept along on a tide of commercialism and risk losing sight of the reasons behind the festivals that punctuate our year.

The LOVE theme, of course, is centred on St Valentine's Day, 14th February, which has for many years been associated with lovers pledging themselves to each other, or declaring their love with anonymous messages. But Valentine himself seems to add little but his name to this festival. He was a Christian Priest who was martyred in the year 269 AD and we know very little more about him. His feast day happens to be close to the pagan Lupercalia festival which was a sort of spiritual spring-cleaning to promote health and fertility, so perhaps that is the link to romance?

The difficulty with Valentine's Day is that some people feel excluded from the warm feelings of love. They may be longing for the love of another human being, but for whatever reason, are disappointed. Or they may be suffering loss of one sort or another and the celebration of love, which is inescapable at this time, can seem to rub salt into the wounds.

Christians celebrate love all the time – the Gospel of Jesus Christ is all about love. God showed the depth of his love for all of us by being born as one of us and living and suffering as one of us. Jesus redefined love and gave us the perfect example of what it means to love – putting the needs of the other completely and wholly before your own. Few people get this right all the time, but all of us have the capacity to love, and if we all worked at it a little more we might find that we don't need a special day to send a card to say 'I love you'.

May you feel the love of God at work in you, and be inspired to love others in God's name.

## **Culham Parochial School – Caroline Evans**

The start of a new term means the start of a new topic for each Key Stage group. KS1 will be studying dinosaurs, whilst KS2 will be looking at the various aspects of rain forests. We will keep you updated of the children's studies as they get underway.

The classrooms have now been transformed into exciting new learning areas and our teaching staff have many exciting activities to share with the children as the term progresses.

The children continue to visit the Abbey Centre at Berinsfield every week for swim/gym lessons. Pupils from Yr 1 – Yr 6 are taught water confidence and stroke technique and are presented with certificates for their achievements. All the children enjoy the extensive equipment in the gym together with team games and ball skills etc.

Later on in the term the KS1 children will benefit from a visit by the Wild Waste Bus and also a visit from the Community Police. We will let you know all about their experiences later on!

During February the children will be taking part in a partnership performance – ‘The Peace Child’. The children will be performing this at Sutton Courtenay School. It is always lovely to join up with our neighbouring schools for various activities and later on during the summer term we will be taking part in partnership outdoor sports events.

Please watch this space – we will be continuing to keep you updated on all our exciting news and events.

## Local Police Report – Rebekah Kent

### Have Your Say online

You can now send non-emergency messages to us using the online form that is available on the Thames Valley Police website. A number of people have already sent their concerns using this method. For you to do that please follow the link:

[www.thamesvalley.police.uk/yournh/yournh-about-nh-pol/yournh-tvp-pol-area-n114-hys](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/yournh/yournh-about-nh-pol/yournh-tvp-pol-area-n114-hys). Please allow some time for us to get back to you as we do check our mail box only at certain times of the day.

If you want to see an officer in person, we will be holding a “Have Your Say” meeting on **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> February** at the Culham Lock car park from 6pm to 6.45pm with PCSO Sarah Talbot. We would like to thank all of those who attended our Have Your Say meeting on the 11th December in Wallingford Market Place. It was a very successful day and we hope to hold another one in March. These meetings are an ideal opportunity for local residents to speak to their local police officers and PCSOs about any local issues. No appointment is necessary - just turn up and speak to your local officers. Further meetings will be publicised locally and on our website [www.thamesvalley.police.uk](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk).

If you want any advice or would like to contact the neighbourhood team you can call us on the police non emergency number 0845 8 505505 or email [WallingfordAreaNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:WallingfordAreaNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk). Please note this email address cannot be used to contact Thames Valley Police to report crimes or for any urgent matters. Alternatively you can visit the force website at [www.thamesvalley.police.uk](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk) to view information on your neighbourhood.

## Oxfordshire Travel Advice Line

You can seek advice on local travel by telephoning 01865-323738 or by email, [oxtail@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:oxtail@oxfordshire.gov.uk), Monday to Friday between 9.00am and 5.00pm. This includes health appointments, shopping, social events and visiting friends.

## Newington Nurseries: 'Winter Performer'- Anne Hendry

The short days of winter may not be prime gardening time but there's one plant that will catch the eye. It's the *Skimmia* and one of the finest winter-flowering evergreens for the garden, providing spot colour in otherwise dreary parts of the winter border. Because of its compact habit, it's also perfect for containers and jardinières.

The *Skimmia*'s native habitat is the Himalayas, Asia and Japan and this gives some indication as to the plant's hardiness, something to bear in mind in view of the recent cold winters we've had. *Skimmias* tolerate temperatures of down to -20°C and are not easily damaged by the weight of snow.

Their dark green, leathery leaves are the perfect foil for their showy flowers and berries. Throughout the winter, *Skimmia* plants are covered in large clusters of red or white flower buds which open into strongly-scented flowers in spring. The flowers will eventually form bright red berries. In fact, all parts of the plant are aromatic when crushed.

Individual *Skimmia* cultivars are either male or female so if you want berries, one of each will have to be planted together to ensure pollination. A nice example of a female plant is *S. japonica* 'Nymans' and this can be planted alongside the male *S. japonica* 'Rubella'. 'Nymans' produces tiny white flowers which are followed by masses of red berries in late spring. 'Rubella' provides very dark, red-margined, green leaves and cherry-red flower buds.

However, if space is at a premium in the border or you want to plant in pots, go for the hermaphrodite *S. japonica reevesiana*. This lovely low-growing plant produces clusters of fragrant white flowers, often tinged pink or red, in spring. Flowers are followed by deep crimson berries that last well into the autumn, even the winter.

Because *Skimmias* are slow-growing and mound-forming, they are the perfect container plant, only reaching an eventual height of around a metre. If you are going to plant in a pot, make sure it's at least 35 - 40cm in width and height. Once planted into a good-sized pot, they won't need to be moved on which is a bonus. Make sure you plant in ericaceous compost however and provide an ericaceous liquid or soluble feed during the growing season.

If you want to plant in a border instead, *Skimmias* combine really well with ferns and hostas. They can also be planted with the acid-loving *Pieris*, *Azalea* and *Rhododendron* as their preferred soil conditions are neutral to acid. They don't like chalky soil so if that's your garden environment, either plant in a pot or incorporate lots of acid-rich matter into the soil. *Skimmias* are tolerant of both shady and sunny conditions alike.

Another plus-point is that they require minimal pruning, if any. In fact, it's best not to prune at all but simply remove any dead wood. There are some 50 year old *Skimmias* in the National Trust's Bodnant Gardens in Wales which are still only just over a metre in height yet have never been pruned.

Anne Hendry, Newington Nurseries, Newington, Wallingford, Oxon, OX10 7AW  
[www.newington-nurseries.co.uk](http://www.newington-nurseries.co.uk)

## Out and About - Northmoor Trust Events in February

**Saturday/Sunday 5th/6th, 9.30am - 4pm. Introduction to Hedge Laying** - A two-day hands on course getting to grips with the traditional skill of hedge laying. All tools and

equipment provided, but sturdy boots and appropriate clothes are required. Adults £75 (Friends £60)

**Sunday 6th, 10am - 4pm. Basket Weaving Workshop** - Come and weave your own truly unique basket. Please bring secateurs and a penknife if you have them. Adults £50 (Friends £40)

**Saturday/Sunday 19th/20th, 9.30am - 4pm. Advanced Hedge Laying** - A two-day, hands-on course, for people wanting to tackle a more challenging hedge. Suitable for people with some previous experience of hedge laying. Adults £75 (Friends £60)

*Booking (with payment) is required for all events unless specified: it can be completed by telephoning **01865 407792** or emailing [admin@northmoortrust.co.uk](mailto:admin@northmoortrust.co.uk). Please meet at Hill Farm, Little Wittenham for all events unless otherwise stated.*

## 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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### Advertisements to:

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

Issues of the Mouthpiece are published on the village web site, [www.culhamvillage.org.uk](http://www.culhamvillage.org.uk)

*Please note that the "Who's Who in Culham" page is being omitted this month owing to a lack of space.*

**newington nurseries**  
ORCHID SHOW DURING  
FEBRUARY AND MARCH

**newington nurseries—a haven for plant lovers**    **newington nr stadhampton OX10 7AW**  
[www.newington-nurseries.co.uk](http://www.newington-nurseries.co.uk)    tel 01865 400533    closed on Mondays except Bank Holidays