

THE OXHILL NEWS



February 2007

TYSOE MARIONETTE GROUP

The group will be presenting its dramatised burlesque of

The Cat That Walked by Himself

(after the “Just So” story by Rudyard Kipling)

in the newly refurbished Barn Theatre

(now seating 28)

on

Friday 27th April at 7:30pm

Saturday 28th April (matinee) at 2:30pm

and

Saturday 28th April (evening) at 7:30pm

Children £3 Adults £5

(proceeds given to charity as usual)

For tickets, contact:

Jon and Ann Beeny on **Tysoe 680431**, or Email: JonandAnn@annbeeny.f9.co.uk

Job vacancy! Volunteer Stage Lighting Operator wanted

MARCH ISSUE

Please could I have all copy for the March issue by Midnight on Sunday, 25th February? If you normally prepare your material using a computer, it would make my life easier if you could submit your offering in electronic form, though paper is, of course, fine. If you do use electronic form, the best would be a Word file with the page size set to A5 and margins of 1.5 cm all round. The News is currently set in Garamond 10 pt, with headings in Lucida Sans Unicode 14 pt bold. This may, of course, change, possibly without warning.

My ‘official’ e-mail address is **news-editor@oxhill.org.uk** if you wish to send me stuff that way.

George Adams, 680286

COVER PICTURE

Continuing the French theme, we offer the Abbaye de Pontigny in Burgundy. The Abbaye, a splendid place, was founded in 114 and is still complete. If you visit in the summer you could attend one of the concerts of ancient music that take place there.

Editor

THE PEACOCK CHANGES HANDS

I'm sure that most of you are aware that the Peacock has changed hands and there are some renovations afoot.

Whilst we have met some of you in person over the last few weeks we thought we would take the opportunity to introduce ourselves and tell you all a little bit about our plans.....

My name is Chris and my wife is Ellen. I am originally from Rayleigh in Essex whilst Ellen is from Coventry. This is our first pub and we feel lucky to have found it in such a beautiful little village as Oxhill. I will run the pub whilst Ellen will continue to work at Coventry Airport, where she is an Air Traffic Controller.

We have both always been passionate about good pubs and have enjoyed seeking out some of the best ones across the country. We plan to bring the best qualities of these pubs to the Peacock. These include a welcoming atmosphere, a decent pint or glass of wine and quality traditional food. We believe that the pub should remain at the heart of the village and look forward to hosting many village events over the years to come.

To spruce up the old bird we have to close the doors to you for a few weeks in order for us to try and bring out her best, and during this time we welcome you to pop in to meet us and see what we are up to. The plan is to be closed until the 1st March, when we would like to hold the opening evening inviting everyone from the village to the big event. During the coming weeks we will deliver invites to the event and an update on progress.

Looking forward to meeting you all,

Chris and Ellen Joel

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

I am afraid it is one of the failings of old age that I forgot to write in the January Oxhill News to thank the Village Hall Committee and their helpers for the wonderful lunch they gave the elderly among us just before Christmas.

It was a lovely occasion, and I am sure that all of us who attended will have happy memories.

Janet Gardner

ST. LAWRENCE'S CHURCH, OXHILL

SERVICES IN FEBRUARY

All are warmly invited to our services

Sunday 4th	Septuagesima	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion (NM)
Sunday 11th	Sexagesima	8.30 a.m.	Holy Communion (Rev Bill Rolfe)
		6.30 p.m.	Evensong (Canon George Warner)
Sunday 18th	Quinquagesima	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion (ML)
Wednesday 21st	Ash Wednesday	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion at Tysoe
Sunday 25th	Lent I	9.30 a.m.	Family Service (NM)

VICARAGE NOTES

Helen and Douglas House Hospice

There is a moving series of programmes currently on BBC 2 about the wonderful work of this hospice for children and young people in Oxford. There will be an opportunity to support this work through "Lent Boxes" - which for the hospice means labels for your own jars or envelopes! The boxes can be linked to Lent lunches or used simply for coins saved over the weeks until Easter. Labels are available in Church. Please hand in the jars or envelopes during Eastertide.

Deanery Lent Services

The usual services will be taking place on Tuesday evenings at various churches around the Deanery, and full details will be on flyers in Church. The first evening is on February 27th. Do come if you can.

Thought for the month

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday Feb. 21st and in its "40 days and 40 nights" the Church has an annual opportunity for reflection on faith and the Christian response to God's call - a spiritual audit if you like. Although Lent was traditionally a time for fasting, hence the continuing custom of "giving up", it is more positive to think about "taking on", which may mean anything from prayer and Bible Study to supporting a special charity. The challenge is there!

God bless, Nicholas Morgan, 01608 685230

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

BAPTISMS Welcomed into the Lord's Family

Dec.24th 2006, Samuel Oscar Crowley

NOTES OF A MEETING OF OXHILL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 9TH JANUARY at 8.00 P.M. IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Apologies received from Carol Taylor. All other Councillors were present.

MATTERS DISCUSSED

FINANCE

A grant of £600 was paid to the P.C.C. towards mowing the churchyard 2006 season.

The precept for the year 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008 was discussed. We would continue to support mowing the churchyard, mowing the grass by the Village Hall, cost of producing the Oxhill News and allow for established charges e.g. insurance, internal and external audit fees, clerk's expense. As no formal requests had been received for funding during the above financial year the precept was set at £700.

HIGHWAYS

A letter would be sent to the Highways Department to repair the footway on the left hand side of the Whatcote Road which is getting slippery due to grass and weed growing through the tarmac. Also the signpost at the top of Green Lane on the Whatcote Road needs fixing in place to stop it swinging round.

PLANNING

Permission had been granted for extensions at Willow Brook

Permission had been granted for replacing cement capping and infill panels at The Hollies.

VILLAGE WELCOME PACKS

Doug Nethercleft the Village Liaison Officer is working with the Council for Voluntary Service to produce a Village Welcome Pack for the benefit of new people moving into the community. This we feel is a very worthwhile project.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 13th March 2007 at 8.00 p.m. in the Village Hall.

Angela Kean, Clerk

NATURE NOTES FOR FEBRUARY

February from the Latin Februum – purgation – the month of purification. The Dutch call it Sprokkelmaand – vegetation month; the Anglo-Saxons called it Solmonad – mud month (very true at the moment); the French revolutionaries renamed it Pluviôse – rain month so not much going for it you would think, but wrong, it's my birthday month! Also just as we move into February something I have been long anticipating. I was travelling between Hatton and Honiley in the early morning when it was just getting light. I could see coming towards me a large bird being pursued and dive bombed by a single crow. My first thoughts were "oh, another Buzzard" (now apparently more common than the Kestrel), but then I noticed that the wings were slightly longer, slender with upturned fingers at the two extremities and then as I drew level I saw the V-shaped forked tail, the rust red colour just visible in the morning light – a Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*). Its languid mastery of the air soon left the crow returning for home. The Red Kite's rarity has conferred upon it an additional layer of glamour and I have long awaited their arrival in Warwickshire.

Back in the seventies I made a special trip to central Wales and was taken out by a bird warden in the hope of seeing one of the few remaining pairs in the British Isles. From that mere handful the numbers have now risen to several thousand and surely is among the great success stories of modern conservation. Apparently experts say that this bird has been hugely successful in helping to reconnect people with the landscape and encouraging a greater interest in wildlife. In a recent RSPB poll it was ranked with the Golden Eagle and Song Thrush in the nation's list of favourite birds.

The dramatic increase in numbers does not originate from the Welsh birds, but has hinged on a reintroduction scheme which covers six sites in England and Scotland. The introduced Kites were originally taken from Spain and more recently Sweden. The first English releases used just six pairs located along the ridge of the Chilterns in 1989 and when these had reached a healthy, stable population (some of the early introductions were poisoned), subsequent introductions were made in Northamptonshire in the 1990s. Altogether there are now around 3,000 Kites in Britain, with the Chilterns population topping 1000 and their breeding success well exceeds the productivity of the Welsh Kites. In 1903 a species that had once been considered as "common as the Carrion Crow" was down to just five breeding pairs. In the same year the British Ornithological Club formed a "Kite Committee" in a last ditch effort to avert extinction. Enduring for 90 years and "without parallel in the annals of bird protection anywhere in the world" the committee was central to the birds' recovery

Red Kites are not great hunters – the odd mouse, rabbit, or wounded pheasant could fall prey, but it is predominantly a scavenger. Ironically Kites were never birds of the countryside or woodland; they were the common bird of Medieval townscapes, their

status “hovering between valued scavenger of edible refuse and annoying opportunist snatching titbits from baskets and stalls”. In Tudor times there are accounts of Kites snatching food from children’s hands. They also had a penchant for pieces of paper and linen which they would line their nests with. There is a Roman account in London of a Kite taking hair from a man’s head to line its nest! By Tudor times the London population of Kites was protected by statute for its valuable service of refuse disposal.

By the mid-seventeenth century the birds has reached such levels that bounties were put on their heads, and by the eighteenth and nineteenth century when sporting shooting reached its peak, huge numbers were killed and poisoned. They are still prone to poisoning by taking dead “bait” put out for foxes and rats, but thankfully that’s quite rare – so look to the skies over Oxhill. I would love to hear from anyone who makes that first sighting. It is easily recognisable, with long slender wings reaching a span of five feet with reddish plumage, white wing patches, and of course that large forked tail.

If hard weather continues, beware of taking cold: protect your provisions from hungry mice. *To drive away Mice. If the dried brains of a Weasel be sprinkled upon cheese or any other meat whereto the Mice do resort, they not only forbear to eat thereof, but also to come nigh to that place.* The History of Four Footed Beasts, 1607.

Grenville Moore

VILLAGE COFFEE MORNING

The Village Coffee Morning on Wednesday 7th February from 10.15 a.m. will be held at Oxbourne House, Whatcote Road, Oxhill as the pub will be closed. We all enjoyed meeting at The Peacock in January and hopefully we will be able to return there when it re-opens.

All are very welcome (gentlemen included!) – if you need a lift, or have any other queries, please let me know!

Posy McDonald 688202

FAITH IN ACTION

Everyone is welcome to the annual Lent Services organised by the Shipston Deanery, with guest preachers, on Tuesdays at 7.45 p.m. at the following churches:

27th February	Preston on Stour, St. Mary.
6th March	Halford, Our Blessed Lady.
13th March	Great Wolford, St. Michael.
20th March	Shipston on Stour, St. Edmond.
27th March	Cherington, St. John the Baptist.
3rd April	Tysoe, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, where the celebrant and preacher will be the Venerable Michael Paget-Wilkes, Archdeacon of Warwick.

Elizabeth Ashworth

OXHILL FESTIVAL CHOIR

I would just like to say thank you to all the ladies and gentlemen who sang in the Choir at the Carol Service. Several of our long-standing members were committed elsewhere on that evening and it was touch and go as to whether there would be a Choir for the Carol Service at all. However, we persuaded various 'volunteers' from far and wide to join us and we are most grateful to them. I am also extremely grateful to Jill Tucker who, despite her very busy timetable, helped and guided us through all our rehearsals. Jill, we could not have done it without you. I would also like to thank Rev. Nicholas Morgan who took over the helm of our valiant little ship at the final rehearsal and steered us serenely through to our final harbour.

Thank you to everyone in the choir for their hard work and effort over several weeks to ensure that the Carol service maintained its reputation as a lovely musical event.

Gaynor Van Dijk

On behalf of the choir I would like to thank Jill Tucker for helping us with our practices and Gaynor for her hospitality in sharing her house with us for them and for the party after the Carol Service.

Ros Henry

GARDEN CLUB

The Garden Club began the year with a talk by Gillian Hawtin, our local florist from Kineton. Gill's background is as much in horticulture as in floristry since she did a large part of her training at a garden centre and this was most evident from her knowledgeable talk on "Winter Colour in the Garden". Gill brought samples of plants and shrubs to the meeting which were in flower. It was certainly surprising to see how much colour could be found in the garden at this time of the year. Whilst the seasons are so unpredictable these days you are never quite sure what and when you will find things in flower. It is always a pleasant surprise to find something in full flower that should not be showing its head and one just hopes that a frost will not come along and destroy it.

A workshop has been arranged for Saturday the 14th April and with sufficient support there will be two sessions, one in the morning and a further one in the afternoon. Peter Dodd, who spoke to us in the Autumn on Asters will be demonstrating on how to revitalise pot bound plants, so look out those hidden plants lurking behind the greenhouse that you have forgotten about, or last seasons end of year bargain plants which looked a little dishevelled when you purchased them. Bring them along with you to give them another chance this year. Peter will also show how to take basal cuttings from perennials such as penstamons and tip cuttings from shrubs. If you wish to use hard wood shrubs such as Forsythia or Choysia then these should be tip cut and left in water for a good 24 hours before the workshop. If you think this workshop might be for you or just wish to try your hand at gardening then ring Anne Nethercleft on 01295 680041 to secure a place.

Our next evening meeting will be Thursday 15th February and the speaker, Mrs Thorpe, will be talking on Hellebores and Companion Plants.

Anne Nethercleft

ST. PETER'S CHURCH WHATCOTE

Christmas Pudding Sales 2006

Again we have had a very successful Christmas Pudding Sales which has totalled £544.88p towards our Church funds. Many thanks to all our regular and new customers. We hope they were all enjoyed over the Christmas and New Year celebrations.

Several puddings went to various corners of the UK and several left these shores for France, Finland and America.

On behalf of the Churchwardens and Members of the Parochial Church Council, a Happy and Peaceful New Year.

June Wreford, Secretary to PCC.

THANK YOU

We would like to say how kind everyone has been to us from the month of April until after Christmas, with lots of flowers, cards and good wishes.

Bert says "Don't forget to thank everyone for helping us all to get to and from Warwick hospital every day, and thank you for the many cards received on my ninetieth birthday". Christmas Eve - what a day to have a birthday!

Joy, Bert and Heather Bloxham

FLOWER ARRANGING

The South Midlands Area of the National Association of Flower Arrangement Societies (NAFAS) are holding a Floral Art Show and Flower Arranging Competitions on Sunday 4th March 2007 from 10.00 a.m. until 4.30 p.m. at The Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon.

Entrance will cost £1. There will be Sales Tables, Refreshments and a Raffle.

Anne Netherclef

WI REPORT

January 2007

We had a turnout of nineteen despite the miserable, squally weather. Inside, one member had an indulgent treat as our speaker, Sheila Jones, used Forever Living Products to cleanse and moisturise her face. This showed us how Aloe Vera could be used to nourish and improve the quality of the skin. Sheila gave examples of dreadful burns and pain being controlled by the use Aloe Vera, and its complementary role in improving disordered immune systems.

Members were able to sample from the impressive range of products on display.

After refreshments, provided by Ann Beeny and Philippa Robinson, we welcomed Pauline Brace (vice county chairman) who as county archivist and link trustee was interested to share plans for our 90th anniversary celebrations.

Lyn Hicks was hostess. Flower of the month: 1st Ann Beeny (hebe); 2nd Sue Price (clematis)

The quiz team was confirmed; arrangements for judging the Spring Show discussed; and our entry (photographs and wine recipe) for the 2007 calendar displayed.

Future meetings:

February 7th: To Santiago de Compostella by bike Mr W. Davies

March 7th: Postman's Knock (History of Warwickshire post) Mr A. Godfey

April 4th: 90th Birthday Celebration; afternoon exhibition; evening dinner with entertainment

You are most welcome to join us.

B. Keep

Shipston Home Nursing

invite you to a

Complementary Therapies Day

on

Saturday February 24th 2007

10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

at

Lower Farm Barn, Great Wolford

Come and talk to holistic therapists to explore the benefits of Massage, Bowen Technique, Hypnotherapy, Indian Head Massage, Reflexology and Meditation.

Enjoy a tranquil experience to improve your well being.

£10 per head to include healthy refreshments and home made food

Please call Rebecca on 01608 674929 to book

ESPANA, POR FAVOR

We have heard, from a normally reliable source, that sun-seekers could be accommodated in a two bedroom, two bathroom luxury apartment on El Peñoncillo Beach, near Nerja. It has access for the disabled as well as central heating.

If interested in renting for a week or two, talk to Judy and Brian Badger on 01295 688010, or visit their website at www.brianbadger.com.

Editor

WHAT'S ON IN OXHILL

February

Wednesday 7th	10.15	Oxbourne House – Village Coffee Morning
	7.30	Tysoe Village Hall – W. I.
Thursday 15th	7.30	Village Hall – Garden Club
Saturday 24th	10-3	Lower Farm Barn, Great Wolford – Shipston Home Nursing
Sunday 25th	23.59	Copy deadline for Oxhill News March edition

March

Thursday 1st		The Peacock – Re-opening spectacular
Sunday 4th	10.00	Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon – Floral Art
Wednesday 7th	7.30	Tysoe Village Hall – W. I.
Tuesday 13th	8.00	Village Hall – Parish Council meeting
Thursday 15th	7.30	Village Hall – Garden Club A.G.M.

April

Wednesday 4th		Tysoe Village Hall – W. I. Birthday celebrations
Saturday 14th		Garden Club workshop
Friday 27th	7.30	Barn Theatre, Tysoe – Marionette show
Saturday 28th	2.30	Barn Theatre, Tysoe – Marionette show
	7.30	Barn Theatre, Tysoe – Marionette show

May

Thursday 10th	7.30	Village Hall – Garden Club plant sale
18th – 20th		Garden Club trip to Normandy

TWO BELATED CHRISTMAS THANK YOUS

I am sure I am not alone in wanting to thank the Village Hall Committee for beginning the celebrations once more by providing the Ancient Britons of Oxhill with a splendid Christmas repast (in spite of having no help from the Fire Brigade!).

My second thanks go to Posy and Graham McDonald for inviting the village at large to coffee in their home in early December, and closing the Festivities with another very welcome get-together in the Peacock at the very first opportunity in 2007. A lovely start to the New Year. I am sure many of us will look forward with eager anticipation to the first Wednesdays as each new month comes along.

Thank you all so much,

Myrtle Knight