

THE OXHILL NEWS



No. 405
August 2008

ZIMBABWE

As I am sure everyone is aware Zimbabwe is going through a dreadful crisis under rule of Robert Mugabe. Things are desperate there with inflation running in the millions, acute food shortages, no fuel, telephones work sometimes, electricity shedding and now the water is turned off on a daily basis.

People are suffering, but none more so than the elderly and the pensioners. They are struggling to just pay for their monthly prescriptions, if of course they can get their medication at all. Pensions are worthless by today's Zimbabwe Dollar rate which makes life extremely difficult to even purchase small amounts of food, if, indeed they can get any.

I am Zimbabwean myself and therefore working closely with the Edith Duly Nursing Home, which is a frail care home in Bulawayo, my home town. I promised to help them and ask for donations to send to South Africa where the money will be spent on food etc and taken by road up to Bulawayo.

I am asking anyone in the village if they would be kind enough to donate to this cause. Any sum, however small, will be gratefully accepted.

Please contact me, Sue Hutsby, on 01926 640309 or by email at: inthecountry@nolandsfarm.co.uk.

Sue Hutsby

SEPTEMBER ISSUE

Please could I have all copy for the September issue by Midnight on **Monday, 25th August? This is the Bank Holiday Monday, so if you are going away for the weekend please think ahead!** 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. 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

The winning team at the Boules are congratulated by Janet Gardner. Photo courtesy of Josh Collins.

REFUSE AND RECYCLING COLLECTIONS

You will have noticed that our collection service is due to alter, and that the new system will be based on three wheelybins with different coloured lids.

There seems to have been a certain amount of confusion as to how the new system will operate, though the latest edition of Stratford Council's 'Your Review' (which should have reached you by now) explains it pretty clearly. Assuming that the new bins reach us on time it will go like this:

You will have three bins:

The green bin is the one you have had for some time and is for compostable garden waste – grass cuttings, plants and weeds, small prunings. No soil or turf in this one. Each house is now only allowed two of these – and they will not be collected at all in November, December, January, February or March. Apparently no-one gardens then.

The grey bin with a blue lid is for general dry recyclables – plastic bottles, paper, cardboard (all types), glass (not sheet glass), metal and cartons such as fruit juice cartons (washed).

The all grey bin is a replacement for the old black plastic bags and contains anything that you cannot put into either of the other two. This should include soft plastics and wrappers and aluminium foil. Alternatively you could take these to Tesco, who at least claim that they can deal with them – at least they have a bin labelled 'Mixed Plastics'.

Collection day remains Tuesday (presumably with a swap to Wednesday when there are Bank Holiday problems). The first new-style collection should be on Tuesday August 5th. I have put the collection arrangements into the 'What's On' section on the back page.

Oxhill is in Zone 2, which means that only the grey rubbish bins will be collected every week, on the Tuesdays in the white bars on the Council's calendar. Every two weeks the two recycling bins will also be collected – on the black weeks.

All bins should be on the kerb by 7 a.m. So either get up early or do it on Monday.

If you have difficulties in getting bins to the kerbside then talk to Stratford Council – they will organise help for you.

Editor

URGENTLY NEEDED

Oxhill Church is in need of a part-time organist to share the duties with our present one. If anyone can help out with this we would be most grateful. Anyone who can play a piano will find it relatively easy to play the organ.

Please telephone Carol Fox, Churchwarden, on 01295 680223.

ST. LAWRENCE'S CHURCH, OXHILL SERVICES IN AUGUST

All are warmly welcome

Sunday 3rd	Trinity XI	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion (ML)
Sunday 10th	Trinity XII	8.30 a.m.	Holy Communion (ML)
		6.30pm	Evensong (ML)
Sunday 17th	Trinity XIII	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion (ML)
Sunday 24th	Trinity XIV	9.30 a.m.	Family Service (NM)
Sunday 31st	Trinity XV	11.00 a.m.	United Benefice Communion at St. Lawrence's (NM/ML)

VICARAGE NOTES

Oberammergau 2010

Every 10 years, the villagers of Oberammergau in Bavaria perform an internationally renowned Passion Play. Back in 2000 a small group from Brailles went and it proved to be a marvellous occasion within a longer holiday. I have details from a number of tour companies including Inter Church Travel (now a subsidiary of Saga!) and if anyone is seriously interested, please have a word with Martin or myself. The cost of an 8-day half board holiday by air including tickets and full board in Oberammergau for 1 or 2 nights will be about £1200.

Thought for the month

Just a short note to wish all travelling on holiday - journey safely and return refreshed! It is a special pleasure to travel and have the opportunity to see new places and meet people from different cultures. Encourage new friends to look at the Oxhill website to read about the life of the village and its beautiful setting in the Warwickshire countryside.

Best wishes and God bless,

Nicholas Morgan, 01608 685230

FOOTPATHS AND DOG WALKING

Warwickshire County Council have advised us that it is not in our best interests to allow walkers to continue using the field behind "Brook House", Kineton Road, where it is not marked footpath, as an unofficial right of way. Their reasoning is that The Ramblers Association have taken legal action forcing landowners to grant access on new footpaths where there is a history of regular unofficial use.

We do not wish to stop the dog-walkers of the village using the field, but it must be done with our permission. Please call Paul Heritage on 07980 823381 or 01295 688058 to do so.

Heritage Farms

NOTES OF A MEETING OF OXHILL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 8TH JULY 2008 AT 8.00 P.M. IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Apologies were received from Hugh Rowse and Tom Heritage

MATTERS DISCUSSED

Planning

Application for all weather surface to paddock at Church House returned with no objection. Application for extension to rear of Struan returned with no objection. Application for change of use of isolation unit at Church Farm was discussed. No planning objections were raised but a request would be made that the Planning Dev. Right be removed so that no further change of use can be applied.

Finance

£29.30 had been received for Vat reimbursement. A payment of £30 was made for carrying out the internal audit for the year ended 31 March 2008.

Barbara and Mick Shepard as First Responders for the West Midlands Ambulance Service have agreed, when possible, to respond to emergency medical situations in Oxhill. As a result of this the Parish Council have agreed to pay £100 towards the cost of insuring their medical equipment.

Grants for Communication Projects

We would see if the Oxhill News could benefit from such a scheme.

Highways

Gilks Lane seems to have been missed for road re-surfacing and drain clearance. The cattle grid on Nolands Road is collapsing and needs attention. The large pot hole at the junction by the Village Hall needs filling in. These would be highlighted to the Highways Department.

Post Office Closures

A letter would be sent to the Post Office Network supporting non-closure of rural Post Offices in particular Tysoe.

Refuse & Recycling – New Bin Rota

Collection Day	Tuesday	Tuesday
Start Date	5th August	12th August
Which Bin	Grey Bin	Grey Bin, Blue lid Bin, Green Bin

Meeting closed at 8.35 p.m.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 9th September 2008 at 8.00 p.m. in the Village Hall

Angela Kean, Clerk

NATURE NOTES FOR AUGUST

Let's hope August brings us some hot days – we certainly deserve some warm weather. However, gentlemen who are of a thin thatch, like myself, should always wear a hat, although you could try this cure from Edward Potter's Phisicke Book (1610) "*To remedy baldness of the head. Take a quantity of Southernwood (Artemisia Abrotanum) and put it on kindled coal to burn; and being made into powder, mix it with the oil of radishes and anoint the bald place, and you shall see great experience.*" Hmm – definitely worth trying for the 'great experience'.

Some weeks ago we were having a drink with some friends in a pub garden at Wichford, and just a couple of feet away from us was a fir tree. My friend suddenly said "Oh look, is that a mouse". Something very small was moving in the lower branches just feet away from us, and then we saw it, a Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*. Gold-crested wren, Golden wren, Tidley finch, Wood titmouse, Miller's thumb, all are local names that make reference to its diminutive size. Along with the Firecrest, it is the smallest bird to be found in the British Isles; in fact the smallest across the whole northern hemisphere. It is a mere nine centimetres and there are at least four adult Goldcrests to the ounce (28 g). It is a very pretty little bird with distinctive head markings: orange-yellow in the male; lemon yellow in the female, offset by a line of black. This insectivorous bird spends most of its time in conifer forests. They tend to prefer the canopy and you will hear groups of them moving from tree to tree, but can rarely see them. W.H. Hudson describes the song as "the smallest of small songs, two notes, almost identical in tone, repeated rapidly without variation, two or three times, ending with a slight quaver, scarcely audible on the last note". On a personal level I am pleased I can still hear these little birds because it is said that the call notes are "a useful standard to test one's hearing, as it is said to be the first song that old age loses". They also nest quite high in the fir trees; apparently the nest is a tiny couplet of moss and spiders' webs, regularly overtopped with a layer of tiny insulating feathers, and is considered to be one of the most beautiful nests made by any British bird.

Another amazing thing about this tiny bird is its endurance and capacity to cross the North Sea during migration from Northern Europe. This migration starts towards the end of Autumn, and on the Yorkshire coast it is said to precede the Woodcock migration by just a couple of days, which gave rise to its local name of Woodcock Pilot. The name Tot o'er Seas comes from the coast of East Anglia and there are records of these tired little birds landing on people and instead of flying away in surprise, proceed to pick among the fabric of their clothes for any tasty morsel. We watched our Goldcrest for about five to ten minutes as it flitted about picking insects off the lower branches just feet away from us, with no sign of fear, a real treat to watch.

You may recall me writing about unimproved grasslands and watching a Barn Owl hunt, catch and eat a rodent, up to seven Roe deer grazing and lying up – these meadows are

now becoming a thing of the past, a rarity. They are a rich source of fauna and flora and very important to our eco system. I am talking about one of my favourite fields, halfway between Oxhill and Whatcote on the right. Earlier this year, the beautiful mellow yellow of the cowslips carpeted that field – well now it's totally a flat dull brown, no green, no wild flowers, no eight or nine different grasses, no insects, no birds, certainly no Barn Owl courising the grass tops, no deer, just dead - sprayed with weedkiller. I want to weep!

On a cheerier note, August 5 is “Oyster Day” – definitely one of my favourite foods, although Samuel Johnson wrote *“Twas a brave man that first ate an oyster”*.

Greengrocers rise at dawn of sun
August the fifth – come haste away
To Billingsgate the thousands run
Tis Oyster Day! Tis Oyster Day!

Every-Day Book 1829

Those who believe that oysters should only be eaten when there is an “r” in the month prefer to wait until 1 September. It was formerly though anyone who ate an oyster on August 4th would not lack money for the rest of the year. I must try it.

Grenville Moore

BOULES IN OXHILL

God was exceedingly good to us on Bastille Eve, turning off the taps and shutting down the wind machines just for the one day so that the good folk of Oxhill could sport on the village green. Seriously though, very many thanks to the large number of you who turned out at the village hall, sipped wine and beer, ate bread, cheese and paté and took part in the inaugural Oxhill Boules Tournament. It was chaotically organised but that did not seem to detract from the fun at all. Despite the vulgarity of their team name, and their dubious tactics of importing a ringer for at least one round, the Gardner Cup was eventually won by Angela and Brian Emmerson. They wouldn't have made it without the assistance of their opponents, of course. Knocking the other side's ball into a scoring position when they are just about to lose is not a winning gambit in any sport.

Thank you to all those who worked to lay the event on, in whatever capacity. There was a small profit for the Village Hall, but that was not what we were aiming at this time. As far as I could tell a good time was had by all, and that was the point of the exercise.

George Adams

GARDEN ART EXHIBITION

AT HOPKIN HOUSE
LOWER TYSOE
WARWICKSHIRE

BY
HAZEL ROBINSON

FROM AUGUST 30TH
– SEPTEMBER 14TH INCLUSIVE

10AM – 4.30PM

MORNING COFFEE AND
CREAM TEAS IN AID OF
WARWICKSHIRE AIR AMBULANCE



TWO NOTABLE MUSICAL EVENTS

Stour Singers' forthcoming 33rd season commemorates the 50th anniversary of the death of Vaughan Williams this year and the 200th of that of Haydn in 2009. The Advent concert on 6 December in St. Edmund's, Shipston, is a joyous blend of Christmas Music including the Fantasia on Christmas Carols and the contemplative Five Mystical Songs both by Vaughan Williams in which the baritone solos will be sung by the distinguished Australian baritone, Simon Thorpe. There are plenty of carols too for audience & choir.

The Spring Concert on 9 May 2009 is devoted to Haydn's great oratorio 'The Creation'. The fine team of soloists are: Stephanie Corley (soprano), Nicholas Mulroy (tenor) and Aidan Smith (bass). In both concerts Stour Singers is partnered by The Cherwell Orchestra.

This 60-strong choir, which draws singers from a wide area around Shipston, always welcomes any new member but for this season the particular need is to boost the bass section. So, gentlemen please take note! Skill in sight reading can be readily acquired from practice CDs specially made by Richard Emms, director of Stour Singers. There are no auditions. Enthusiasm & stickability are the keys to choral enjoyment. School students are welcomed into the choir free of charge. Rehearsals are on Thursday evenings starting on 18 September 2008 at 7.30 p.m. in Shipston Primary School.

For further details please contact Vic Twyman Tel 01608 664215 and visit the website: www.stoursingers.co.uk.

GARDEN CLUB NEWS

Amazing weather and glorious gardens heralded summer for gardening enthusiasts on the day trip to RHS Wisley. There was so much to see and inspirational ideas to bring home. The gardens were at the height of perfection, although I was disappointed to find the rose garden being redesigned – something to look forward to for a future visit? The herbaceous borders were a forest of colour and the Glass House showed us all those exotic tropical species that were beautiful, weird and wonderful. There was much to wonder at – how do they mow the grass in such symmetrical patterns, how do orchids survive on just air, why are all the vegetables more advanced than mine?

There were just enough spare seats on the coach to fill up with plants on the return journey. A good day was had by all and a big thank you to Lilian for her organization! There are still a limited number of places available for the evening visit to “Pettifers”, Lower Wardington, on Thursday August 21st. The price is £12 to include a meal afterwards at a local pub. Please see Myrtle Knight for more details (680555).

Ann Saxton

WEEKDAY WALKERS

Our walks for August are as follows:

Friday 8th August

Ratley to Hornton, a 7 mile walk with 373 feet of ascent. Lunch will be at “The Dun Cow”. We will leave Oxhill at 10:00 a.m.

Friday 22nd August

Agdon Spinney to upper Brailes, a 8 mile walk with 130 feet of ascent. Lunch will be at “The Gate Inn”. We will leave Oxhill at 10:00 a.m.

Please contact Jim Saxton 01295 680613 or saxton@tiscali.co.uk before Thursday prior to walk.

COFFEE MORNING

and

HANDBELL CONCERT

There will be a coffee morning at St. Peter’s Church, Kineton on Saturday October 4th starting at 10 a.m.

The event is to raise fund for the augmentation of the ring of bells at St. Peter’s from six to eight. Mugs, shopping bags, draw tickets and Christmas cards will all be on sale, and the ‘Charmborough’ ring of bells will be on show in the Church together with a display on bells and English change ringing.

That evening, at 7.30 p.m. in Kineton Village Hall, the Inn Ringers will be giving a handbell concert, twelve ringers using 116 handbells.

Tickets are £6 each (£4 under 18’s) and are available in advance from Graham on 01926 641812 or Nick on 642589. There is limited space so pre booking is advisable.

SHIPSTON HOME NURSING

Armscote Manor Lecture Series

Monday 6th October - James Kerr, landscape and architectural photographer; Shakespeare's Scenery, a photographic journey of Warwickshire and the North Cotswolds

Tuesday 7th October 2008 - Graham Dillamore; The Gardens of Historic Royal Palaces

Wednesday 8th October 2008 - Dr Paula Henderson PhD, FSA; The Tudor House and Landscape

Thursday 9th October 2008 - Val Bourne; The Winter Garden

Friday 10th October 2008 - Maggie Cole with Harriet Walter & Guy Henry (subject to availability); The Scandalous Mrs. Woodhouse - Violet Gordon Woodhouse; a performance in words and music

The lectures start at 7 p.m. with a glass of wine. Sponsored by Bablake Wines Limited
For tickets please contact Deborah Williams or Madeleine James at Armscote Manor, Armscote, Warwickshire CV37 8DA, Tel: 01608 682 375, deborah.williams@armscotemanor.co.uk

Please make cheques payable to Shipston Home Nursing and send applications for tickets with a self addressed stamped envelope.

Ticket prices: 1 lecture £14.00, 2 lectures £26.00, 3 lectures £33.00, 4 lectures £44.00, 5 lectures £53.00. Tickets not available on the door.

PROGRESSIVE SUPPER

This is your advance notice of the forthcoming 'Indian Summer' progressive supper to be held on 27th September.

For those of you unsure of the format, revellers will meet at the village hall at 7.00 p.m. for aperitifs. We will then 'progress' in small groups of 4 to 10 to a home within the village for Starters. Thereafter we progress in a different group to another home within the village for a Main Course. Finally we all return to the Village Hall for our desserts, cheese and biscuits and coffee.

If you would like to participate in the progressive supper please telephone Tracey Hackett on 01295 680366 or 07813 978917 to confirm whether you would prefer to host a Starter, Main Course or bring a selection of puds and/or a cheese plate, (minimum of 3 selections per 2 diners please).

If you are unable to host a course or contribute to the Desserts, there will be a small number of tickets available at a cost of £15.00 per head.

Tracey Hackett

CHERNOBYL'S CHILDREN COFFEE MORNING

A massive thank you to our wonderful team of helpers, everyone who gave produce or prizes and, of course, all those who attended.

Thank you also to those who made donations but were sadly unable to join us on the day and to the villagers who kindly put their scarecrows out on display again. The children do like to see the scarecrows.

We raised just over £1,100 (including donations) which is a fantastic start towards covering the costs of next year's trip.

We hope to announce our next fundraising event in the near future.

Thank you all again for all your support.

Angela Emmerson, Anne Marshall

VILLAGE HALL

The next event planned for the Hall will be the Progressive Supper on September 27th. On October 31st the Non-Hallowe'en Dinner will be Indian-themed, and there will be a New Year's Eve Party on, appropriately enough, New Year's Eve. We do try.

The lead that was stolen from the roof earlier this year has now been replaced and plans are in hand to repair the damaged roof supports. We expect new 'mood lighting' to be installed in the near future and are actively looking into the somewhat thorny problem of redecoration. More on this later.

Your committee (plus Dot Richards) has been cleaning the hall for the last year or so, but would welcome any assistance that you would care to offer. If you are willing to help push a broom round a few times a year, please contact Una Hill on 680519.

George Adams

COUNTRY CAR BOOT SALE

In aid of Shipston Home Nursing

SUNDAY 7th SEPTEMBER

Gates open at 9.00 a.m.

In the Idyllic parkland of the Honington Estate

By kind permission of Lady Sarah Wiggin

Car booters by application only

Please call Rebecca on 01608 674929

Public entry fee £2 per head, maximum £5 per car

Food and refreshments available

WHAT'S ON IN & AROUND OXHILL

AUGUST

Tuesday 5th		Grey, blue and green bin collection
Friday 8th	10.00	Weekday Walkers – see inside for details
Tuesday 12th		Grey bin collection only
Tuesday 19th		Grey, blue and green bin collection
Thursday 21st		Garden Club – visit to Lower Wardington
Friday 22nd	10.00	Weekday Walkers – see inside for details
Monday 25th	23.59	Copy deadline for The News
Tuesday 26th		Grey bin only collection (beware Bank Holiday)

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday 2nd		Grey, blue and green bin collection
Sunday 7th	9.00	Honington Hall – Shipston Home Nursing Car Boot
Tuesday 9th	8.00	Village Hall – Parish Council meeting
Sunday 21st		Village Hall – Treasure Hunt & Pig Roast
Saturday 27th	7.00	Progressive Dinner – see inside for details

OCTOBER

Saturday 4th	10.00	St. Peter's, Kineton – Coffee Morning
	7.30	Kineton Village Hall – Handbell Concert
Monday 6-Friday 10		Armscote Manor – Lecture series – details inside
Friday 10th		Armscote House – Harpsichord recital
Friday 31st		Village Hall – Non-Hallowe'en Indian Dinner

DECEMBER

Wednesday 31st		Village Hall – New Year's Eve Party
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