

DRAYTON CHRONICLE

Issue Editor: Derek Pooley

Volume 35 No. 1

January/February 2012

A NEW FACE in the HALL

Eve Sharp

Drayton Wives is an active group with over fifty members. We enjoy monthly meetings to which we invite interesting speakers, coffee mornings, whist evenings and our walking group, led by Josie Midwinter, is very popular.

The year 2011 has been particularly busy for us because it has been our 50th Anniversary, and to mark this milestone, we were pleased to present a new clock to Drayton Village Hall. The photograph shows, from the left, Drayton Wives Ann Hutchings (programme secretary), Eve Sharp (chair), Daphne Barrand and Betty Biddle presenting the clock to Ann Webb and Shirley Thomas from the Village Hall Committee.



OLD PLANES in the SKY

Colin Smith

Make a note in your diary that the 13th annual Abingdon Air and Country Show – no longer sponsored and organised by the RAF but by volunteers - takes place on Sunday 6th May, at Abingdon Airfield. Amongst confirmed participants in the flying displays are two WWII veterans; a P51 Mustang ⇨ and a Hurricane ↓, the latter owned by Peter Vacher and hopping over from its base at North Moreton, Didcot.



The show is one of the region's larger charity events and helps raise funds for the local Thames Valley & Chiltern Air Ambulance Trust. The 2011 event raised over £8,000 for the Trust, making

£23,000 since 2007, which followed £14,000 for the Helen & Douglas House Respite Centres between 2001 and 2006. Advance Tickets will be on sale from 1st February at the Abingdon Visitor Information Office in the Town Council Building and online from our website, <http://www.abingdonfayre.com>.

Historical Note: The most iconic aircraft of World War II, for the British at least, is the Spitfire. It was certainly a brilliant and beautiful design that could run rings round anything else in the European skies at the time except the Messerschmitt 109, an equally brilliant if less beautiful aircraft. That the Spitfire ...

Continued on page 8 ⇨

Also in this issue:

- P3: Has Drayton found the Equation of Life?
- P3: Jean joins the Chronicle team again
- P6: Want to run the London 10,000?
- P8: 52 Things to do in the Vale!
- P9: Ready for the Darby and Joan Club?
- P10: Fancy a Drayton Discussion Group?
- P10: More on the School Bus Campaign
- P11: More delightful Jazz in the Hall
- P13: A new Royal British Legion Secretary
- P15: The British sense of Humour wins out!

VACANCY FOR TREASURER

Drayton Village Hall Committee



invites anyone interested in becoming the Treasurer to contact:

Ann Webb - Committee Chair

on 01235 531418



Recruitment to our Young Leaders Project



LOTTERY FUNDED

The Abingdon DAMASCUS Youth Project has piloted a successful Young Leaders' project in which four young leaders undertook support work with younger people in their communities. An important part of this vision is to open up the opportunity to participate, to all young people (aged 16 to 19) living in the DAMASCUS villages. If you are interested, please email

rita.atkinson@googlemail.com or
garyhibbins@hotmail.co.uk,

or phone Gary on 07766014676 or 01235 848694

Deadline: Wednesday 8th February 2012.

Interview Date: Saturday 11th February 2012

CHRONICLE INFORMATION

The next **Chronicle** will be the **March** issue:

Editor: **Tony Holmes, 53 Whitehorns Way (531180).**

Distributors: **Eve & Barry Sharp, 25 Steventon Road (526939),**

Deadline for advertisements: **17.00 on Friday, 10 February 2012**

Deadline for other contributions: **17.00 on Monday, 13 February**

Printed copies available: **Friday, 24 February 2012**

Key dates for the subsequent three Chronicles:

Issue for	Deadline for contributions: 17.00 on Monday:	Printed Chronicles available on:
April	19 March 2012	30 March 2012
May	16 April 2012	27 April 2012
June	14 May 2012	25 May 2012

NOTES for CONTRIBUTORS

Contributions to and advertisements in the Chronicle are most welcome. Please be sure **always to include your name**, address and (in case clarification is necessary) telephone number. Without names we will usually not print an item at all.

However, please also note that the editor has to ensure that each Chronicle fits exactly into an even number of printed pages. The editor therefore reserves the right to place, edit, shorten or even reject contributions as required to achieve this.

A contribution or advertising request can be sent to us in one of three ways:

1. The best is by **email** to **editor@draytonchronicle.net**. Your contributions should either be embedded in your email as **plain text** or attached as a **rich-text** or **Microsoft Word** document!

Requests for advertisements should not be emailed to the editor but to **advertising@draytonchronicle.net**. Please note that they eventually need to be in Word format, 9cms wide and, for a single block advert, about 4.5cms high

Please head your email and label any attachments with a name distinctive to you, not just 'Chronicle'. Also, make sure the editor or advertising manager acknowledges your email within a few days.

2. If you cannot send your contribution by email, send us a **good quality paper version**, using fairly large, **simple** black typescript, without underlining on white paper, A4 or smaller.

3. Finally, we do accept **hand-written items**. However, in this case **please write the names of people and places in capital letters**. This does save a lot of mistakes.

Paper contributions should either be placed in the Chronicle letter box (outside Vickery's shop on Drayton Green) or posted to Vickery's at 5 The Green, Drayton, Abingdon, OX14 4JA.

After the deadlines listed at the top of this page, only urgent items will be considered for inclusion and then only if emailed or delivered directly to the **Editor's** house by the Wednesday following the Monday deadline.

ADVERTISING RATES

Charge for a single Block Advert (about 9cms x 4.5cms)

--- Number of Inserts ---

Advertiser Category:	1	3	6	12
Drayton Resident	£5.00	£14.00	£25.50	£48.00
Non-Drayton Resident	£6.00	£17.00	£31.50	£60.00

Double-size adverts are charged at **twice** the above rates.

All advertising MUST be paid for up-front, either in cash or via a cheque made payable to 'The Drayton Chronicle' and placed in the box at or sent to Vickery's.

If you wish to discuss your requirements please phone **Stephen Fearnley**, the Chronicle's Advertising Manager, on 531347 or email him at **advertising@draytonchronicle.net**.

CHRONICLE LOTTERY

Jean Barton, Hon Promoter

RESULTS OF THE JANUARY LOTTERY

Prize	Ticket	Winner	Agent
£25	493	Mrs Pointer, 47 Sutton Wick Lane	Keith Clough
£20	803	Simon Brooks, 8 Church Lane	Susan Brooks
£15	2143	Jean Brown, 14 Lesparre Close	Amanda Drysdale
£10	1235	Alan Bourne, 70 Steventon Road	Jacky Walker
£10	1653	Pam Lacey, 15 Whitehorns Way	Trudi Buckner
£10	633	Verity Parker, 46 Abingdon Road	Jennie Stevens
£10	665	Lisa Burbank, 52 Abingdon Road	Jennie Stevens
£10	508	Mr McDaid, Sutton Wick Lane	Keith Clough
£10	1815	Will the holder of this ticket please contact Andrew Bax for their prize	Andrew Bax
£10	748	B Clarke, 4 Church Lane	Susan Brooks

We no longer issue counterfoils with lottery tickets. Instead, the winning numbers are generated randomly using a computer, as for national premium bonds and in the national lottery

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Fascias cleaning; Gutters Unblocked & Cleaned out

DISCLAIMER: This Journal is published in good faith and great care is taken in its compilation. The organisers of the DRAYTON CHRONICLE, and its Agents, therefore accept no responsibility for OPINIONS EXPRESSED, nor for the validity of any ADVERTISEMENT, nor for any EFFECTS ARISING WHATSOEVER from the publication.

YOUR LETTERS

The Equation of Life?
Generosity + Gratitude = Happiness

Dear Editor

I went to the race night at the School on 3 December 2011, a fundraising event for a family in the village where money would make some difference to their difficult circumstances. We should be grateful to all the people who made this possible.

However, the overpowering impression from sharing this evening with something over 100 other residents was the spectacular spirit of generosity which lies within this village. While the future is very uncertain, I was humbled and encouraged to know that, when 'push comes to shove' there are so many people in the village who are able to put self interest to one side and pull together.

Daniel Scharf

Dear Editor,

A few Sundays ago my buggy broke down on Drayton Road.

I wish to thank my rescuers; an unknown young man on a bike who brought me a blanket, a hot water bottle and a flask of tea - most welcome and appreciated; Peter, who rang the rescue service for me; John & Kate, who took me to their home for tea and cake whilst we waited for the rescue service - not to mention five cars that stopped to ask if I was OK!

Many thanks to all of these kind people.

Mary Burgess

PS I have no phone number for the young man so cannot return his blanket and hottie to him.

Dear Editor

As a resident of Chiers Drive, I would like to thank our Parish Council for organising the installation of the splendid road sign which appeared recently at the beginning of the Drive. Having had to direct deliveries and visitors to my home on numerous occasions, it is a delight now to have the name of the Drive clearly marked whereas for a very long time we have been anonymous. I understand that a number of other road signs in Drayton have been similarly placed.

Thank you so much. I felt I must show my appreciation.

Margaret Long

More letters opposite ⇨

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⇨ Dear Editor

We would like to thank the cooks, drivers and helpers for all their support for the Friday Club during 2011; also to Sally, Margaret and Brenda for making it another wonderful Christmas lunch, and especially to Brian for entertaining us again.

Sylvia Bond and Beryl Dawson

Dear Editor

Together with Andrew's partner Carol, we would like to thank all relations, friends and neighbours for their cards and condolences at the sudden death of our much-loved wife and mother, Vera.

Raymond and Andrew White

Dear Editor,

Can I say a big public 'thank you' to Fred Stevens, from all the children and parents at toddler group and preschool, for coming to see them at Christmas.

See you next year . . . Ho Ho Ho



Vicky Cotterell

Yet more letters on page 11 ⇨

CHRONICLE NEWS

We're delighted that Jean Barton, back in Drayton after a spell in the North, has re-joined the Chronicle Team. She is our new Lottery Promoter, replacing Daphne Samworth who retired at the end of 2011, and will be helped by Trudi Buckner. Many thanks to Jean and Trudi for taking on this job, absolutely essential for the Chronicle's finances.

Thanks also to Michelle Ainscough, Karen Foreman and Shirley Schofield who have either just become Chronicle agents or have taken on bigger rounds.



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Curate Rev'd Rosie Bruce525284
Churchwardens Mrs Val Cross535183
Mr Colin Arnold531923
Organist Robert Legg

REGULAR SERVICES

Sunday 8.00 am Holy Communion (Common Worship - Traditional)
10.00 am Sung Eucharist (CW), except 3rd Sunday when there is a non-Eucharistic Praise Service
Mon - Fri 8.30 am Morning Prayer (CW) in Lady Chapel
Thurs 9.30 am Holy Communion (CW) in Lady Chapel.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

Wed 10.30 am Pebbles (term time only) Church Room
Monday 7.45 pm Bell Ringing Practice Bell Tower

CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY

Tues 6th 3.00 pm First Tuesday Connections Church Room
Wed 22nd 7.30 pm Imposition of Ashes (Ash Wednesday)

LENT LUNCHES:

A soup lunch will be served in the church room during Lent, see advert on page 14. If you would like to come and join us please contact Victoria Griffiths on 531463

CHURCH REGISTER

Baptism:

4th December Thomas Robert Randle

Funeral:

23rd November Dennis Walter John Glead

YOU STAY - WE PRAY: FEBRUARY

29th January to 11th February: Lockway, Whitehorns Way.
12th to 18th: Corneville Road, Crabtree Lane, Lesparre Close.
19th to 25th: Drayton Road, Milton Road, New Cut Mill, Fisher Close, Marcham Road, Meads Close, Rippington Court, Stone Hill.
26th to 3rd March: Steventon Road, Eastway, Eastway MHP

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LETTER FROM ST PETER'S

Dear Friends,

At the start of this New Year many people take time out to pause, to reflect on the previous year and to think of what the coming year will bring. It is a time to remember what we value most, the important things and not necessarily the urgent. For me it's God, friends and family that matter most, and it is these relationships that need to be at the top of my to-do list and not the bottom.

The season of Lent starts with Ash Wednesday on 22nd February and there will be two lent groups in the village, which all are welcome to come to explore what it means to be church today and how we grow in our relationship with God. Please do contact me on rev.stpetersdrayton@gmail.com if you would like to come.

As we start out this New Year, let us not be anxious about work and how much there is to do, but learn to give things up to God, who is more than able to cope with all the things we bring to him and will give us the things we need to follow him in our lives.

A prayer to help us this New Year...

Come, Holy Spirit,

Spirit of the Risen Christ, be with us today and always.

Be our Light, our Guide, and our Comforter.

Be our Strength, our Courage, and our Sanctifier.

May this new year be a time of deep spiritual growth for us,

A time of welcoming your graces and gifts,

A time for forgiving freely and unconditionally,

A time for growing in virtue and goodness.

Come, Holy Spirit,

Be with us today and always. Amen.

God Bless

Rebecca Peters



Suzy Willis & Associates

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BAPTIST CHURCH

Church Secretary: Mrs Jayne Henderson.....Tel. 522161

REGULAR SUNDAY SERVICES

11.15 am Presently only one morning service per month.
A Family service on the first Sunday
6.00 pm Evening Service. Traditional format.

EVERYONE IS MOST WELCOME

LOCAL METHODIST WORSHIP

High Street, Milton
Sunday Service: 10.30 am

Local contacts: Geoff or Jean Caudle, 531409

FIRST TUESDAY CONNECTIONS **Jean Hager**

Are you feeling lonely, isolated or in need of some friendly company? Why not come along to our monthly tea and chat afternoons. They are held on the first Tuesday of the month in St Peter's Church Room from 3.00 pm to 4:30 pm and you are invited to drop in during these times. The teapot is always at the ready and you can be sure of a warm welcome. Our next two dates are **07 February** and **06 March**. If you need transport or further information please give me a call on 531558.



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NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWS

We extend a warm welcome to Karen & Chris Boydell & family, who have moved into Steventon Road from Didcot.

HALL MANAGEMENT MEETING **Ann Webb**

We were joined at our meeting on 16th January by Gary Hibbins from the Football Club and Laurence Zipson from the Parish Council. It was very pleasing to see these two gentlemen, thank-you for coming!

After covering the matters arising section of the last meeting we moved on to a very interesting discussion about the future of the Hall. Clearly the hall costs are at the moment not covered by the fees charged but the fees, if raised too high, will cause us to lose some of our loyal patrons. Mr Zipson has offered to look into this problem. An extra meeting will be held in two weeks to discuss the raising of the fees. Our finances remained steady but not enough to cover outgoings, even with the grant from the parish council. We are regarded as a commercial venture by all services and as such we are charged at a commercial rate for them.

We have had a letter of resignation from our financial lady who has decided that her family and home commitments are now at a point that she has not the time to commit to us fully. We are so sorry to lose her, but we understand. This means we must now look for someone to take her place. For anyone with a knowledge of finances and works with figures we would appreciate your help. There is a small financial incentive, for your costs, but the big reward would be our gratitude.

Following this we listened to Mr Hibbins who explained to us the future plans of the football club and how they wish to improve the building, for all users, in the future. We do have a few concerns about this which were voiced at the meeting, something which will need to be thought about by all users on both sides. Mr Webber brought us up to date concerning the Lockway field and its future plans. Thanks were again expressed to the Wives group for their gift of a very imposing clock for the main hall, It has been both greatly admired and appreciated. Thank-you from us all. Happy New Year to all patrons old and new.



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YOUNG PEOPLE

YOUNG LEADERS PROJECT **Rita Atkinson**

The Abingdon DAMASCUS Youth Project has piloted a successful Young Leaders' project in which four young leaders undertook support work with younger people in their communities. It provided an excellent opportunity for the young leaders to develop and grow their communication and leadership skills at the same time as making a valuable contribution to their community. The younger people gained immensely as it helped build a positive support network for them within the community.

We believe strongly in developing inclusive, vibrant and sustainable communities in which young people have opportunities to be significant contributors. An important part of this vision is to continue our young leaders program by opening up the opportunity to participate, to all young people (aged 16 to 19) living in the DAMASCUS villages. If you are in that age group and would like to be part of it please get in touch with us. **The deadline for applications is Wednesday 8th February 2012; the interview date Saturday 11th February.**

We will expect flexibility to do evening work; an enjoyment in working and communicating with younger people (aged 11 to 13) and willingness to work as part of a team. We provide training and support, and a small remuneration to compensate for missed opportunities to do other evening work. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and we expect all volunteers and staff to share this commitment and undergo appropriate checks and provide references.

For more details, contact rita.atkinson@googlemail.com or garyhibbins@hotmail.co.uk. or phone Gary on 07766014676 or 01235 848694

DAMASCUS THANK YOU **Gary Hibbins**

Thank you very much indeed for the tremendous response to our appeal to support DAMASCUS Youth Project in its endeavour to win the Natwest Community Forces competition in our area.

The effort of several young people who politely delivered leaflets and requested people to vote is a huge testimony to their commitment to the project. They are some of our finest future young community leaders.

We polled the highest number of votes in our area – the finish was very close and there were many nail-biting moments when we wondered whether we would make it. The money will be used to enhance and expand our young leaders' project.

If you would like to help with the work of the youth project we would love to hear from you. Call me on 07766 014676

LONDON 10,000 **Rita Atkinson**

The Bupa London 10,000 is presented by the London Marathon and is run on the course likely to be used for the 2012 Olympic Marathons. The 2012 race will be held on Sunday 27th May, starting at 11am. The DAMASCUS Youth Project has secured 8 places (awaiting confirmation at time of going to press). If you would like to run the course, and raise funds for the project, please get in touch with me ritaatkinson@googlemail.com or 01235 848694 as soon as possible.

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DRAYTON 1ST BROWNIES **Paula Harper**

A Happy New Year to all in Drayton from the Brownies.

After a very busy time leading up to Christmas we had a break until the 18th January 2012. The Brownies really enjoyed going to the Oxford Playhouse to see the pantomime Mother Goose before Christmas. They then became stars themselves performing in the Crib Service at St Peters Church on Christmas Eve.

This term we have some exciting evenings planned, working towards gaining our Designer badges.

Meetings are held at Drayton village Hall, on Wednesdays during school term time 6.15pm – 7.45pm. Meetings are open to all girls aged between 7 – 10 years old.

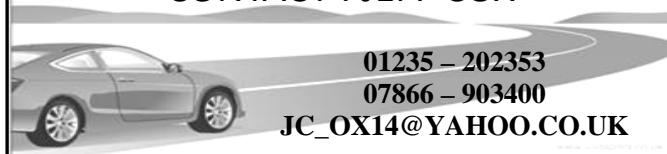
Further details are available from:-

Ruth Hudson	BrownOwl	205111
Esther Deabill	Tawny Owl	528502
Paula Harper	Friendly Owl	534166
Annette Mitchell	Barn Owl	555216

STEWART'S DRIVING SCHOOL

COMPETITIVE RATES

CONTACT : JEFF COX



01235 – 202353

07866 – 903400

JC_OX14@YAHOO.CO.UK

BABY AND TODDLER GROUP **Vicky Cotterell**

Well, we had a very busy end of term with Christmas activities, sticking, colouring, card calendar and stocking making! We had a great party and a very special visitor came to see us all!

The mums and carers all enjoyed their night out – another one is being planned for end of February.

The photos and handprints all arrived in time for present giving and, thanks to the orders, we raised £140 to help cover the cost of the hire of hall and insurance.

We have started back now and are looking forward to another year of fun and play with our friends and to snacks, thanks to Joy

We are open in term time in the village hall Thursday 9.30-11.30 all welcome. Please call me on 07779 243290 if you want more information.



PRE-SCHOOL PLAYGROUP **Debbie Bargus**

We hope everybody had a great Christmas and that the New Year has started well. We would like to welcome the new children who have joined us this term, we hope they enjoy the time they spend with us.

Our topics this term will be learning the Elmer story, this will help develop the children's understanding of colour, Chinese New Year and materials. We will be sorting colours, decorating Elmer and making models, learning dance and music, food tasting and exploring natural resources.

We had quite an exciting time in the run up to Christmas, making lots of goodies. We also had a Christmas party and the children had the chance to get some last minute requests to Santa. We hope they all enjoyed themselves

Many thanks to everyone who helped with the Children's Christmas party and donated to the Raffle. We would also like to thank the following people for their donations: Blenheim Palace, Farmer Gows, My Beauty Room, Didcot Wave, Ikiz Activity Club, The Living Rain Forest, Snakes and Ladders, Cotswold Wildlife Park, Beale Park, Oxford Wine Company, Milletts, Tesco, Skinny Hippo, McDonalds and The Nursery Shop

Do you have a child who is approaching 2 1/2yrs. We are happy to put younger children onto our waiting list. Please do keep supporting us, the children have great fun and are always learning new things. Please contact Preschool on 01235 536094 or draytonpreschool@btconnect.com for a welcome pack or to visit.

There is an easy way to help our fundraising, if you order goods via the internet, you can register at www.easyfundraising.org.uk You choose a charity, we are on the list, then when you buy online from major companies like Amazon, Next, Play.com, Churchill Insurance, AA, Ebay and The Book People. They give a percentage to us at no extra cost to you.

Dates: Term 3 ends on Friday 10th February 2012

Term 4 begins on Monday 20th February 2012

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DRAYTON SCHOOL

Dawn Waddup

The school community wishes everyone a very Happy New Year. We hope you all had a good Christmas. Christmas events all went well at school; well done and thank you to the staff, pupils, parents and Friends of Drayton School Association (FODSA) for all their hard work and support with the various activities.

During the end of term carol service, the staff, pupils and governors gave Revd Josie their best wishes and thanks for all her dedication and support she has given as governor and chair of governors over the past few years. She was a very valuable and committed member of the governing body whom we are all going to miss! We wish Josie all the very best with her future plans. We look forward to her visits and stories in the future.

Well done to all the children for taking part in the whole school Cross County Challenge on Friday 13 January.

Classroom News:

Reception and Year 1 pupils in the **Robins** Class have an intriguing topic this term – “A Rumble and a Roar behind the Classroom Door”. They will be looking at different environments from Antarctica to the Rainforests – so no doubt there will be a variety of rumbles and roars coming from their end of the school!

Ravens Class (Years 1 & 2) are focussing on two stories in literacy, “The Lighthouse Keeper’s Cat” and “The Lighthouse Keeper’s Catastrophe”. In history they will be creating a toy museum and in geography, they will be following the world trip of Barnaby the Bear. Design and technology will involve making puppets, taking inspiration from Pinocchio.

Red Kites (Year 3) are having delicious time learning all about chocolate. Having watched “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory”, the children have designed their own chocolate machines. They are especially looking forward to making their own mouth-watering chocolates and putting them into hand made pots and boxes.

Kingfishers (Years 4 & 5) have started work on their Pirate topic. Well done to the children who prepared for this with their holiday homework - the work that came in on the first day of term was amazing. It got the topic off to a great start. Pirate ships were made through the first three days of term and are on display in the foyer area.

Eagles (Years 5 & 6) are studying “The Jabberwocky”. They have made some fantastic models and “Wanted” signs can also be seen on display in their classroom. It is interesting to see the different interpretations of the creature.

Governors:

The Governing Body of Drayton Community Primary School is looking to appoint an LEA (Local Education Authority) Governor and a Parent Governor. If you have an interest in the well-being of children and their education; are seeking to support the school and raise standards; have an understanding that becoming a governor requires commitment of time for meetings, sharing the workload and visiting the school in school hours then we look forward to hearing from you!

For further information please contact Caroline Evans (Chair), 01235 550418, carolinaevans@hotmail.co.uk.

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THINGS TO DO

52 THINGS TO DO

A new book, '52 things to do far from the madding beaches' featuring the work of more than 50 individuals from the Vale of White Horse community, is now on sale, and is the perfect present to treat yourself or someone else. The idea behind the book was to come up with, and promote, a vast array of things that people could do, visit, look at or explore in the Vale of White Horse which would encourage them to come back to the area time and time again or explore their local community a bit more. By coming up with 52 suggestions the book is designed to give readers one idea for each week of the year.

Trudy Godfrey

madding beaches'



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MELLOW YELLOW

Anne Hendry

Winter Jasmine (*Jasminum nudiflorum*) is a thoroughly generous plant, producing an abundance of bright yellow flowers from juicy pink buds. These emerge mid-winter along the vibrant green, twiggly branches. This slender, deciduous shrub is robust enough to survive cold British winters (including 2010/11) and rewards dormant gardens with a welcome burst of golden yellow on the gloomiest of days.

This hardy and prolific plant was brought to the UK from northern China in 1844 by the renowned plant hunter Robert Fortune. It was named for its flowers which appear before its leaves, *nudiflorum* meaning naked flower.

The name 'jasmine' is derived from the Persian 'yasmin' meaning 'a gift from God'. Recent research has found that the sweet smell of jasmine is as effective as Valium for calming the nerves. Interestingly, essential oils of jasmine are a key ingredient in an iconic brand of French perfume which may go some way to explain its enduring popularity. Winter Jasmine however is much less fragrant and has been described as smelling slightly mossy.

Unlike other, less-hardy jasmines, Winter Jasmine does not twine and therefore needs training if vertical growth is required. Although not actually a climber, the arching, rambling stems of this beautiful plant can grow up to 5 metres in length. It looks amazing when trailing down from a high retaining wall or rock ledge. Alternatively, it can be trained up a trellis or pergola or be grown as a shrub albeit a bit lax in habit. Because it readily roots, Winter Jasmine is often used as a soil stabilizer on steep banks.

Winter Jasmine succeeds in any well-drained soil but also tolerates a variety of poor conditions, whether they be acid or alkaline, including clay. It's fast growing and tolerant of sunny sites, shady situations, woodland settings, even north-facing walls. It's also an ideal plant for the urban environment, putting up with pollution of all sorts yet giving a cheerful display of green and yellow amidst a concrete jungle.

A vigorous plant, it's easy to maintain and responds well to severe pruning every three to four years. Left unpruned, plants tend to become woody and matted with dead stems so some maintenance is required. Otherwise, lightly prune every year immediately after blooming to ensure flowers emerge the following spring.

Flowers can be damaged in very severe winters but new flowers are usually produced once the weather warms up. Help it along with a regular feed of fertilizer such as Fish Blood & Bone. It will repay in winter when little else is in flower in the garden. Winter Jasmine is hardy to -15°C, probably more, and is really a tough yet very forgiving plant. An all-round winner really.

ABINGDON AIR SHOW

continued from page 1

...the Spitfire could match or beat the performance of the superb 109 was crucial to success in the Battle of Britain, and certainly undermined Luftwaffe confidence; their aircrews were soon heard warning each other by radio, 'Achtung - Spitfeuer'.

Fortunately for the British, the alarmingly accurate and psychologically terrifying Stuka dive bomber proved easy meat for both Spitfires and Hurricanes, so that the Nazis had to withdraw this valuable weapon from the battle almost immediately. →

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WOODEN SPOON RECIPE

Lois Rennells

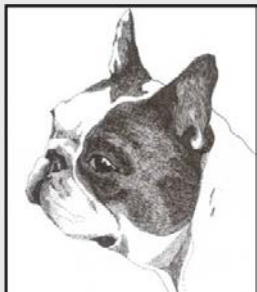
No.44 from October 2004

Chicken with lemon and walnuts

4 chicken breasts, 40 g (1½ oz) butter or margarine, 2 tablespoons chopped spring onions, 1 tablespoon flour, 1 teaspoon ground ginger, ¾ pint beef stock, 1 tablespoon black treacle, grated rind of 1 lemon, 2 tablespoons lemon juice, 50 g (2 oz) walnut pieces, freshly ground black pepper and salt.

To garnish: Julienne strips of lemon rind, walnut halves and parsley sprigs.

- Set oven to 180 C (adjust for fan oven), gas mark 4.
- Sprinkle the chicken with salt and pepper. Melt the fat in a pan and fry the chicken until browned all over. Transfer to a casserole.
- Fry the onions in the same fat until soft. Stir in the flour and ginger and cook for 1 minute. Gradually add the stock and bring to the boil for 1 minute.
- Stir in the black treacle, lemon rind, juice and walnuts. Pour over the chicken and cover the casserole.
- Cook in a preheated oven for 1 hour. Spoon off any excess fat from the surface and adjust the seasoning.
- Garnish with lemon rind, walnuts and parsley.



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⇒ But it was the Hurricane (because not enough Spitfires were available) which did most of the work which really won the battle for Britain, i.e. destroying so many German bombers (with the certain capture or death of their experienced crews) that the Nazis had to give up daylight bombing. At night the British fighters couldn't find the German bombers, but neither could the latter find any worthwhile targets! The Hurricane is usually upstaged by its more glamorous sister, but not in Abingdon in May!

Eventually, even the Spitfire and Me109 were eclipsed in their turn, by the P51 Mustang. Designed and built in less than 120 days by North American Aviation under contract from the RAF, the Mustang, when eventually fitted with the Rolls Royce Merlin engine which powered the Spitfire and Hurricane, proved a world beater. The Mustang was faster, more manoeuvrable and with a longer range than any other fighter of its day and gave the Allies total dominance of the skies in the latter years of the war. When faster British and German jet fighters eventually appeared, in the dying days of WWII, they were far too late and far too few to influence the outcome of the conflict. The Mustang will also be flying again over Abingdon in May!

THE DARBY & JOAN CLUB

'Aches and Pains from Head to Toe'

by Doggerelle

Each week I go down to my club
It's called Darby and Joan,
It's rather cheaper than the pub,
And we all go there to moan.
Over sixty most of us
And many there are ailing,
Some are even ninety plus
And most of them are failing.

Old Albert has a dreadful head,
It aches from morn till night;
Blocked sinuses are troubling Ted
He never feels quite right.
Annie finds it hard to hear,
She can't tell what you say,
And Mary's sight is bad I fear,
She can't tell night from day.

Bill's skin is very prone to itch,
He's plagued by allergies,
He's rather like his brother, Mitch –
Grass pollen makes *him* sneeze.
His teeth are troubling poor old Dave,
They're bad and sometimes break,
And old Aunt Edith's very brave
Though neck and shoulders ache.

Dear old Sam is very bent,
His backache gives him gyp,
And Henry's not at all content –
Arthritis in his hip.
The organ Sarah used to play
But fingers now are stiff;
Digestive problems bother May
With pain in her midriff.

It's Mildred's knees that worry her,
Inertness really rankles,
She commiserates with Fleur
Who suffers with her ankles.
With bunions now old Colonel Ben
No longer goes on marches,
He sympathises with old Fred's
Flat feet and fallen arches.

So every week we gather there
And have a moan and chat.
We have a bun and cup of tea
And talk of this and that.
We don't just moan but laugh and smile
And all feel better for it,
Forget our aches and pains awhile,
Old age? – we just ignore it!

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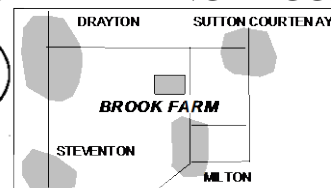


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SOLVING PROBLEMS

A DRAYTON DISCUSSION GROUP? **Chris F-D**

We live in difficult times, with many challenging issues which are not going to go away. If you are not one for putting your head in the sand, there is much to talk about in a very much more positive way than by scapegoating and railing against the banks. It could be argued that we have an imperative responsibility to do so.

If you enjoy, and would like to increase your opportunities for, communicating, and are of a mind to engage in constructive conversation which could well be in a much more general context than in the consideration of the troubles of our times, you are welcome to get in touch (01235 531606)

Should there be sufficient interest, there could be a case for arranging a very informal meeting for a group of comfortable size, where all would be encouraged to share their views in discussion, tempered by the principle of attempting to ensure ordered and respectful exchange of views, characterised by suitably constrained contributions.

While I don't anticipate a big response, should there be more than adequate interest, I believe we should ensure that any group would be small enough for comfortable communication.

Chris Fursdon Davis.

PHONING THE POLICE **Karen Brown**

If you need to call Thames Valley Police, but the call is less urgent than a 999 call, you now need to use the new national non-emergency number 101. It replaces the 08458 505505 and you should use 101 to report less urgent crime or disorder and for general police enquiries. For example:

- if your car has been stolen
- if your property has been damaged
- when you suspect drug use or dealing
- to report a minor traffic collision
- to give the police information about crime in your area
- if you want to speak to your local police officer.

When does 101 work?

The service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

What will it cost to call 101?

Calls from landlines and mobile networks will cost 15 pence.



⇒ Can you use 101 if you're deaf, hard of hearing, speech impaired, or if English is not your first language?

Yes. If somebody is hard of hearing or speech impaired they can text-phone 18001 101. If a person has difficulty speaking English, their local police can access interpreters who can translate.

For more information, visit www.police.uk/101 but remember

In a real emergency, always call 999.

THE DRAYTON SCHOOL BUS **Jacquie Cook**

There has been free school-bus transport for all children from Drayton who attend John Mason School in Abingdon for as long as anyone in our village can remember, until now ...

As many of you will be aware, we are appealing against Oxfordshire County Council's decision to withdraw free bus travel from some Drayton school children. It affects those living under the 3 miles statutory walking distance from the catchment school, JohnMason. The reason is because the route has been reassessed by OCC Road Safety Teams and declared a "safe walking route to school". As OCC only have to provide transport for eligible children, (those entitled to free transport), there is also a danger that we might lose one of the two buses, thus leaving no available concessionary seats for children living under 3 miles (cut off point is Eastway).

We would like to thank everyone who signed our petition back in the summer, and let you know we collected over 400 signatures. This has been useful and added to the pressure we have been putting on OCC by way of phone calls, letters, emails and involving the local media. Due to this pressure, affected children were allowed to have a free bus pass whilst a further reassessment took place, giving them free travel up to the end of December 2011. To our dismay OCC reassessed the route as "safe" again, parents were then faced with the dilemma to either pay £80 straight away (the full cost of a concessionary seat is £240 per year), or find another way to get their child to school.

We attended a meeting with OCC representatives on 6th January to discuss and ask questions. OCC defended their policy and route assessment relentlessly. The problem is that their route assessment guidelines are so biased towards the Council it would seem any route anywhere could be declared "safe". The fact that they would be walking in the dark along an unlit 50mph road which is slippery on icy mornings plus numerous other considerations is considered "safe". The narrowest part of the path is 1.2m which is meant to allow 2 cyclists to pass without any problem. On that part of the route (by the sandbags) there is nowhere to get out of the way, and remember it is dark, will a cyclist see a small child walking along in the dark?

The next stage is our appeal. We are hoping to appeal as a village rather than the Council hearing the 20 appeals that have been lodged. Here we can appeal on humanitarian grounds, rather than compliance with policy and inadequate route assessment guidelines. We are in touch with The Campaign for Better Transport and Cllr Sarah Osborne who is fronting the National Campaign dealing with this very issue (this is not just happening in Drayton). Conservative MP Nicky Morgan raised a debate in the House of Commons on 10th January on this issue, and there are a growing number of MP's and Ministers who are beginning to have grave concerns about the reckless behaviour of local Councils who are in reality putting their budgets before our children's safety.

We are very grateful to our MP Ed Vaizey for walking the route with us on Saturday 14th January. His intention was to gain a better understanding of the nature of the route and our concerns. He, like us regards the Council's route assessment guidelines as inadequate as they do not address the real safety issues of the route. He is going to do what he can to help us.

We will keep you posted, Karen and Jackie.

You can contact us on jackie_cook1@btinternet.com or mark_karen.sharman@tiscali.co.uk

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ENJOYING JAZZ

JAZZ AT THE HALL

Barrie Sharp

Back in November Drayton enjoyed a brilliant evening of jazz and swing, given, to help raise money for PACE, by our local stars, Boulevard Swing with their 'big band'. A sell out event was testament to the popularity of this band and to the regard with which PACE is held in the community. The performance along with a raffle of many generous prizes raised a creditable amount of money for the charity. Boulevard Swing seem always to find the right mix for each event, but this does not mean they are not prepared to try out new (for them) numbers.

Jazz fans will therefore have been pleased with the opening number - It's Only a Paper Moon, written in 1933 by Harold Arlen, but made universally popular in the 40's by versions from Ella Fitzgerald and Nat King Cole. Brian Thompson himself also turns his hand to writing, and we were treated to a highly amusing composition commissioned for a member of the audience. Two medleys of good old standards including Bye Bye Blackbird and My Old Man got the audience singing along enthusiastically.

All in all, a great evening's entertainment.



More Letters:

Dear Editor,

May I thank all the people from Drayton and surrounding areas who attended our Charity Concert at Drayton Village Hall on Saturday 19 November. We had a wonderful response to the evening. Two hundred people were entertained by Boulevard Swing, a fantastic local group with the accomplished vocalist Pat Giles.

Our thanks to Brian Thompson whose hard work and enthusiasm made the whole show such a success. The magnificent sum of £1,715 was raised for the charity reliant Pace Centre. The money will be put to good use and help provide intensive programmes for children with severe physical disabilities. Thank you also to all those who so generously donated many lovely raffle prizes.

Our fund raising Spring Coffee Morning will be held at The Caudwell Day Centre on Thursday 19 April; we hope that many of you will be able to come along.

Rosemary Barlow

Dear Sir

I'd like to add my thanks to Boulevard Swing for their wonderful concert on Nov 19th on behalf of PACE (Positive Achievement through Conductive Education). Thank you also to the people who donated but were unable to come. PACE are so grateful to Drayton people, who in the last 7 years have contributed over £17,000 through quizzes, sales, shop boxes, the Red Lion, the WI, Drayton Wives, etc.

Eric Cripps, who has been compiling the PACE quizzes which I have been selling, is moving – never fear! He will pass them on to me, and Vickery's will kindly have them for sale, spring &

autumn, so look out for them, usual £1 to buy, and the £10 & £5 prizes for the lucky winners.

PACE is in Aylesbury, distant from Drayton, but it's only through people like you, raising awareness and funds, that it will gradually move to other counties. There are three children from this area who go to PACE, 2 or 3 times a week, 26 miles each way, and it's an amazing place.

An update on our grand-daughter:

Natalie (born at 24 weeks in 1999) is still the same delightful, happy, funny, mischievous child who dreams of walking, and loves PACE school. Since she had the double hip replacement three years ago, she has developed scoliosis of the spine, which has degenerated to 70%, a huge amount.

She has the padding in her chair changed monthly, but has constant pain in her knees and back. In December Clare and Jeremy took her to see the specialist, who explained the dangers, but the prognosis is not good. They could put a rod down her spine, or a new development for children, one rod halfway from the top, and one halfway from the bottom; the two rods operation is meant to be less dangerous, the single rod is likely to cause significant blood loss. Natasha has epilepsy, migraines, and has a 'shunt' to prevent spinal fluid leaking into her brain; also she has a feeding tube, so can eat but is very thin. The odds are stacked against her. Please pray for Clare & Jeremy, and Natasha, who is so special.

Sincerely

Judy & Derek Henman

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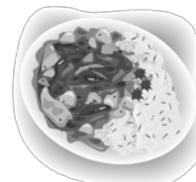
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ALL AROUND

W.I.

Brenda Malin

With crocus and aconites blooming in the garden, it is difficult to realise that Christmas was just a few short weeks ago.

The ladies of the W.I. enjoyed a very happy December evening of entertainment. One member brought along her hand bells, and amidst much laughter, we gave a fair rendition of several carols followed by tasty party food. January saw us ladies, resplendent in tiaras and bowers and, I hasten to add, our usual party clothes, dining out to celebrate Drayton W.I. 91st anniversary, another very happy evening.

Our February meeting is a talk about the Arboretum at Nuneham Courtenay. We welcome any ladies who would like to dip a toe, so to speak, and see what the Women's Institute is all about in the twenty first century. We meet on the second Thursday in the month at 7.30pm at the Caudwell Day Centre.

DRAYTON WIVES

Gwen Price

We had a busy festive time in December. We visited Aston pottery which was beautifully decorated for Christmas. A very good lunch was enjoyed and some Christmassy goods were purchased. Our Christmas party was enjoyed by all and everyone had fun participating in the party games. Thanks to everyone who made it a very happy occasion.

Dates for your diary in February:

- Fri 10th Swyncombe Downs snowdrop walk.
Meet at 10.30 at Drayton Green
- Mon 13th COFFEE: Jackie, Josie M, Ann
- Mon 20th WHIST Trudi
- Wed 29th Lunch in the Village Hall 12 noon for 12.30.

*Margaret welcomes you to Sabina's
for your next hair appointment*

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BOWLS CLUB

Roll up

We ended the year with finals day, when 8 finals were played, with around 40 members in attendance. It was a grand end to the year, with results as follows.

Friendly Fours inter club competition – Drayton: Jean Mullins, Chris Bramwell, Olive Brown & Bryn Jones. John Berry Fours internal League - Jim Bray, Fred Long, Jan Cook & Ian Norris. Rose Bowl Triples internal League - Tony Wright, Jan Cook & Ian Norris. Henry Bunce Handicap Pairs - June Hyde & Bryn Jones. Don Alexander Pairs - Jack Mitchenson & Ivy Harrison. Wally Weightman Triples - Tony Mullins, Avril Holmes & Anna Bartlett. Beryl James Triples - Jack Mitchenson, Jan Cook & Eileen Long. Doreen Jones Never Won Trophy - Doug Rich. Derek Messenger Ladies Singles - Jean Mullins. Didcot Windows open Singles - John Goodacre.

At the half way stage in the county leagues 'The Wasps' top the afternoon triple league, with 'The Rollers' mid table and 'The Hammers' in the bottom half. In the evening league 'The Dynamos' are in the top half. All in all a very good first half to the season lets hope we can improve our positions in 2012.

TABLE TENNIS CLUB

John Gould

A happy New Year to all who read this!

The Table Tennis league campaigns have reached their halfway points and our 8 teams are settled into the trials and tribulations of ping pong. The star turn is the G team that lies top of Division 5 with 7 wins. This is a 100% record. The team is only 3 players, having lost two players early on. The three are James Cooper, Harry Jones-Locke and Kavan Warrender. Aged 15, 14 & 13 respectively, they are proving to be a good team and we have high hopes for the season. They have played all the other teams in the Division so it looks very promising.

The A team, B team & D team lie second in Divisions 1, 2 and 4. The D team have lost club coach Matt Wicks for the rest of the season whilst he travels through Africa but Martin Honey has stepped in so hopefully the team will maintain their promotion push. The only strugglers are the C team that are just above the drop zone in Division 2 but with a recent improvement in form the team should avoid the drop.

The Bidmead Cup team has reached the semi-final of the competition. This is a 'club' rather than team competition that we have won in the past, so again hopes are high. Kavan Warrender, with father and son Kevin & Matt Davies are the team who have reached the penultimate stage.

I have mentioned above that Matt our club coach is away and in his place Geoff Cherrill has stepped into the coaching role. Geoff is a UK Level 2 coach and well able to continue the good work that Matt started. Our players continue to benefit from the correct advice and especially the younger players are quickly becoming good players. The future looks rosy.

Finally the club is holding a Quiz Night at the school on Friday 9th March 2012. A 7.30 pm start time. The cost is £12 per team of 4 persons maximum. If you would like to enter a team please ring 01235 531328 for more details.

Anyone wishing to have a go at table tennis should also ring this number.

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ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

Paul Francis

I would like to introduce myself as the new Secretary of the local Branch, having taken over from Pearl Stanbridge at the last AGM. As many of you will know, Pearl had been Secretary for the last 30 years and I would like to record my thanks, and the thanks of all of our members, to Pearl for the tremendous effort and dedication that she has given to the Legion. She will be a hard act to follow but I am pleased to say that she has promised to be on hand to provide me with help whenever I need it.

The British Legion has an association with the servicemen from the first and second world wars. It is obvious why this should be the case as the Legion is now in its 91st year but there is far more to the Legion than that. It is very much at the forefront of caring for and providing practical assistance for the service men and women and their families who need such support today. Providing practical care, advice and support to the Armed Forces family is at the heart of everything that the Legion does.

The Legion has been the voice of the Armed Forces community since its creation in 1921. It has a dedicated campaigning team pressing politicians throughout the year to improve the lives of Service people and their families. It is also the nation's custodian of Remembrance, ensuring people remember those who have given their lives for the freedom we enjoy. They are responsible for the Two Minute Silence on Remembrance Sunday and 11th November and also organise the Festival of Remembrance and assist with the march past at the Cenotaph.

Each year the nation expresses its unequivocal support for the Legion's work through its generous support of the Poppy Appeal, raising over £36 million in 2010, which goes towards its vital welfare work. Part of The Royal British Legion family of charities, the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire, provides a living and lasting focus for Remembrance for those who have lost their lives or suffered in the Service of their country. It is also home to the Armed Forces Memorial.

Whatever views are held on the decisions taken by politicians to send our armed forces into conflict, it should be the duty of us all to support those individuals, and their families, who require support as a result of serving their country.

It is one of the UK's largest membership organisations. 360,000 members support the work undertaken and enjoy friendship through the worldwide network of branches. Membership is open to everyone, not just those with a link to the services, and currently costs just £12 a year. Simply by becoming a member you are helping the work of the Legion and directly supporting the people of our armed services.

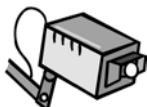
You can find out more about the Legion's current work on the internet by visiting www.britishlegion.org.uk and you can join on-line. Alternatively, if you would prefer to join at local level, please contact me directly (by email to francisoxo@aol.com, or by phone on 848215) and I will be pleased to provide further information and a membership application form for you.

Your local branch meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at the North Star in Steventon at 8.00p.m. If you are interested in helping with our local activities, or should you just wish to join us for a social drink, please come along and meet the committee members. We will be pleased to talk to you about the Legion in general, and your local branch in particular.

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GARD UPDATE

Nick Thompson

The Thames Water final draft Water Resources Management Plan for 2009 (dWRMP09) has finally appeared for further comment by the public. It contains no great surprises. We had previously been told that there would be no small Abingdon reservoir in this plan, and the direction from Defra, following the Public Inquiry, was clear that Thames Water had to do a lot of work on options which they had failed to study properly. This additional work is being monitored closely by GARD and its experts. The final dWRMP09 includes a number of small schemes to cover the modest supply deficit agreed up to 2035. GARD is commenting in detail on minor problems it sees in this plan, and will do its best to ensure that the work and the plan for 2014 provides a fair unbiased set of proposals to meet any increased demand figure for 2040.

GARD AGM will be held at Stocks Lane Farm, Steventon on Monday 12 March 2012 at 7pm.

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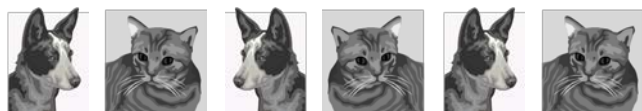
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PARISH COUNCIL

Richard Williams



Report of the meetings held on Monday 5th December 2011 and Monday 9th January 2012.

The issue of school transport from Drayton was discussed at length in both meetings. Drayton residents may be aware of the various steps that councillors and parents have taken in order to publicise this matter, including interviews on Radio Oxford and local TV. South Today also filmed a number of children and their parents one school

morning as they walked the designated route from Drayton to John Mason School. More recently, concerned parents met with a number of officers from OCC to discuss the withdrawal of subsidised travel for all children in Drayton living inside the 3-mile limit. OCC's argument remains that the route has been assessed as being 'safe', and that decisions made in the past to provide free transport for all Drayton children were a 'mistake' or an 'anomaly'.

The Parish Council, along with the parents, believe that the methodology used in the risk assessment is flawed, and that the stretch of path north of the Oday Hill turn-off to Preston Road is narrow, directly adjacent to busy traffic, and ill-lit – in fact, far from safe. Secondly, the risk assessment is based on the assumption that the children will be accompanied by a responsible adult. The PC believes that, in practice, no child will actually walk 6 miles on a daily basis (3 miles each way), much less will any adult walk 12 miles each day (to drop them off and pick them up), so that, in a sense, the safety audit is irrelevant. Furthermore, the PC consider it disingenuous of OCC to maintain that past practice was a 'mistake'; there is no evidence to suggest that this was the case, and it seems far more likely it was the result of sensible discretion being applied.

The withdrawal of subsidy from some Drayton children is divisive – it means that some families will have to pay while others in the next street (or across the road) will not- and it is, in the view of the PC (though denied by OCC), quite clearly a change in policy. If it proves to be the latter, then proper consultation is required, and this has not taken place. Obviously, local authorities up and down the country have been affected by similar changes designed to save money, but this particular policy appears to have been poorly thought through – not least in respect of the probable increase in local traffic it will cause as more parents take their child to school by car. The PC will continue to pursue this subject with OCC.

Local authorities are required to have plans in place for a 5-year supply of new housing. Due to delays on certain large scale housing projects, the Vale finds itself currently with a backlog of approx 1000 homes on that 5-year figure. It therefore intends to bring forward those 1000 homes to address the shortfall. In an attempt to restore the housing land supply, the Vale have introduced an Interim Housing Supply Policy (IHSP). As a result of the IHSP, it is expected that in the spring of 2012, developers are likely to submit a number of schemes aimed at meeting the housing shortfall. These will be subjected to a screening process by the Vale planners, who have promised to liaise closely with parish councils to consider local housing needs, suitability of sites, and so on. Housing targets, which, if not absolute, are certainly based on current population sizes and estimated population growth, have been assigned to individual villages throughout the Vale. As an example of the sort of speculative development that may well be put forward, regular readers of the Chronicle will be interested to note that the Earl of Plymouth Estates have put on hold for the present any further consideration of offering up the field at the back of Lockway to the Parish Council as part of a deal

to proceed with the Manor Farm development. Instead it would appear they intend to submit the field to the screening process as a possible site for housing.

Still on the topic of housing, several Parish councillors and the Parish Clerk recently met with officials from the Vale and from ORCC (Oxfordshire Rural Community Council) to discuss the possibility of carrying out a Housing Needs survey in Drayton. This would involve distributing a questionnaire to all households, and although the content, format and timetable are yet to be approved, it is hoped more information will be available at the next full Parish Council meeting.

This will be on Monday 6th February 2012, at 7.30pm, in the Caudwell Day Centre in Gravel Lane. As always, all are invited to attend.

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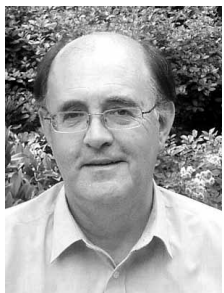
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DISTRICT COUNCIL

Richard Webber



Season of Hope and Good News?

Just recently, it seems as if nothing is going right. Not for anyone. Europe's gone mad and can't/won't save the Euro and the City is under threat; at least we showed some 'bulldog spirit' – better to cut ourselves free. Or, if you prefer, we have just cut ourselves off from most of the important decisions which need to be taken, so we are on our own and most of the world's largest economic block (I understand it is still Europe!) now dislike us and mistrust us, bulldog spirit? – more Dunkirk than D-Day, I fear. The trouble is it is either Bad news or Dreadful news – there is no good news. We ourselves are in more debt than most, unemployment is rising – particularly amongst young people, benefits and services are being cut, and costs are rising, we are all going to have to work longer for smaller pensions. It really is looking pretty bleak.

Last week I had a fascinating conversation with a Scottish Nuclear Physics Professor who has been working in Berlin for the past 5 years. We may think we Brits are a stalwart lot – ready to face adversity and come back all the stronger - but surely, we have to hand it to the Germans – they've survived two world war defeats, an economic slump and rampant inflation and yet there they are, Europe's best (only?) chance of avoiding an economic catastrophe. 'How do the German's do it?' I asked the professor? '

Apparently, the German's work hard, they work longer and they are proud to do so. Work for the German is a badge of honour – a measure of self-esteem. In Germany, having a high status job, and therefore having some power to get things done, is what matters, not what a German earns. The range between the lowest and highest salaries is much narrower than in the UK. Top CEOs earn substantially less than CEOs elsewhere. German Bankers earn less than half that of Bankers in the UK. What motivates the German CEO and Banker is not his/her salary, but their status and their power. So passionate are the Germans about work, that not having a job is to be avoided at all costs – *any* work, however menial, is better than no work, even unpaid work.'

'Look,' I said, 'I need some good news for Christmas. Is there *anything* we do better than the Germans? Isn't there *some* way that we can say we are better?' 'We laugh more,' said the professor. 'We have a sense of humour.'

Which reminds me: a couple of weeks ago, I had to wait in the centre of Oxford for a bus back to Drayton for nearly an hour whilst the Public Sector Pension Protest March came up the High Street and into Cornmarket. I wish I could say that I was there to support them, or that I was there to express my disapproval of such a display of self-interest. I am afraid I was there to buy Catherine a birthday present and had forgotten about the protest. With an hour to kill, I watched the procession. The stony, angry faces of UNITE, of UNISON, and of Unions I have never heard of came past waving angry banners and hurling abuse at the Government. In the middle of a group from the Socialist Workers Party, I spotted a banner painted with the words 'I hate crowds!'. As the banner came past, on the other side was painted 'They said there'd be biscuits!'

Feeling much better, I eventually caught my bus home.

Maybe having a sense of humour gives us a bigger advantage over the Germans than we might expect. I hope I'm right, because good news is quite difficult to find at present, and I want to start the year on an optimistic note. We are, in the end, a robust nation. We've faced hard times and come through them before, so here's hoping that 2012 offers us all plenty to laugh about.

I must try to find something to laugh about in the VWHDC budget!

WESTMINSTER

Ed Vaizey



As many of you know, the Great Western Rail Franchise is going to be renewed in 2013. This means that the current provider of our rail services, First Great Western, will compete against other train companies to run the service for the next few years. Theresa Villiers (Minister for Transport) has begun a consultation process, asking passengers and stakeholders in the Thames Valley and Southwest regions how their services could be improved. This gives all of us who use the railway an opportunity to demand a few changes. The more that do so, the more likely bidders will include plans in their proposals. The focus of the consultation will be on increasing service and retail quality but will also look at ways to improve the information to customers, particularly when there are delays or disruptions. If you'd like to respond to the consultation please visit www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/dft-2011-36.

January saw Big Energy Week, a nationwide campaign run by the Citizens Advice Bureau to help you reduce your fuel bills this winter. According to Citizens Advice, around 4 in 10 people worry about how to pay their next fuel bill, but many still haven't been made aware of the simple and cheap (or sometimes free) steps they can take that can make serious savings. It's important to shop around for a better deal, or move to the tariff best for you and check your eligibility for free insulation - Citizens Advice now estimate that a third of us still haven't looked into cheap or free insulation. The CAB campaign organised hundreds of workshops and advice centres where customers could bring along their fuel bills and get some expert advice on how to make savings. In the constituency, Wallingford Portcullis Club and the Cornerstone Arts Centre in Didcot gave over their space for workshops, joining hundreds of public spaces up and down the country. But people in this country are still paying more than they need to, so visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk/bigenergyweek if you haven't yet looked at the savings you can make on your energy bill.

Can I also make you aware of the UNIQ Summer Schools programme, which provides a great opportunity for talented state schools students who want to study at Oxford or Cambridge. The week-long intensive course at Oxford University equips students with all they need to know for the infamous Oxbridge application process. UNIQ summer schools have an especially high success rate for students at schools that don't have a history of achieving Oxbridge entries. Of those students who undertook the 2010 UNIQ summer programme, over 40% were made conditional offers by the University – more than double that of their peers. There are 750 places for the 2012 course and applications are open. For more info please visit www.ox.ac.uk/uniq.

As ever, please feel free to contact me at the House of Commons, SW1A 0AA, at vaizeye@parliament.uk or on 020 7219 6350. Surgery details can be found at www.vaizey.com.

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DRAYTON DIARY

FOR FEBRUARY

All events are at Drayton Hall unless stated otherwise
(To book Drayton Hall call Ann Webb on 531418)

Regular Events are listed opposite

Sat	4	all day	Spirit of Destiny Physic readings	
Mon	6	7.30 pm	Parish Council	<i>Caudwell Day Centre</i>
Mon	13	9.15 am	Chronicle Lottery deadline	<i>Vickery's</i>
		5.00 pm	Chronicle copy deadline	<i>Vickery's box</i>

ST PETER'S CHURCH

Lent Lunches

Soup lunch will be served in the church room from 12 noon to 2 pm on these Wednesdays during Lent:

29th February; 7, 14, 21, and 28th of March.

There will be a bowl for voluntary contributions to our Lent project (to be decided)

You are welcome to come and join us.

BEETLE DRIVE

Caudwell Day Centre

Sunday 26th February at 2.30pm

Homemade cakes with a cup of tea and a Raffle

Family fun for everyone

Tickets £3 for an adult £1.50 for a child under 14

Tickets available from Vickery's

And Val Cross 535183 or Sally Dixon 531547

Proceeds to St Peter's church

BADMINTON

We are looking for people to play fairly gentle badminton on Wednesday afternoons.

£2 a session.

We meet at the Village Hall for a two-hour session from around 2:15pm.

Would anyone who is interested please contact:

Margaret Armstrong 01235 531122

PILATES

Due to the success of our first class in Drayton we are now able to offer three classes (including a morning class)!

Don't miss this opportunity!

Please ring Gillian Frost for details:

01235 814299 or 07981 362867

REGULARLY OCCURRING EVENTS

Weekly in Drayton Hall unless stated otherwise

MONDAYS

9.00 am	Pre-School Playgroup (in Term)	<i>School Ground Bldg</i>
10.00 am	Pilates	
2.00 pm	Short Mat Bowling Club Session (for 3 hours)	
5.45 pm	Beavers (Boys / girls, 6-8 yrs, Tel. 512834)	<i>Steventon Hall</i>
6.30 pm	Youth Zone (except Bank Holidays)	
6.30 pm	Novice Table Tennis Coaching	<i>School</i>
7.00 pm	Scouts (Boys/girls, 8-10 yrs, Tel. 512834)	<i>Steventon Hall</i>
7.15 pm	Drayton Wives Whist (3rd Monday)	<i>Caudwell DC</i>
7.30 pm	Junior and Adult Table Tennis	<i>School</i>
7.30 pm	Parish Council (1st Monday)	<i>Caudwell DC</i>
7.45 pm	Drayton Drop In (except Bank Holidays)	
7.45 pm	Bell-ringing	<i>St Peter's</i>
8.00 pm	Senior and Social Table Tennis	<i>School</i>
8.30 pm	Badminton (Private Group)	

TUESDAYS

9.00 am	Pre-School Playgroup (in Term)	<i>School Ground Bldg</i>
1.45 pm	Drayton Art Group (until 4 pm)	<i>Caudwell Day Centre</i>
3.00 pm	First Tuesday Connections (1st Tuesday)	<i>Church Room</i>
3.00 pm	Junior Netball (for 1 hour)	<i>School</i>
5.45 pm	Zumba Class	
6.00 pm	Ladies' Netball (for 1 hour)	<i>School</i>
7.00 pm	Pilates Class – also at 8.00 pm	
7.30 pm	League Table Tennis	<i>School</i>

WEDNESDAYS

9.00 am	Pre-School Playgroup (in Term)	<i>School Ground Bldg</i>
11.00 am	Mobile Library (Fortnightly, for 15 min)	<i>Haywards Rd</i>
11.20 am	Mobile Library (Fortnightly, for 20 min)	<i>The Cross</i>
11.45 am	Mobile Library (Fortnightly, for 15 min)	<i>Lyford Close</i>
12.00 am	OWLS Group	
2.00 pm	Whist – now each week	<i>Caudwell Day Centre</i>
2.00 pm	Drayton Wives (last Wednesday)	
2.15 pm	Badminton	
6.15 pm	Brownies	
6.15 pm	Cubs (Boys / girls, 8-9 yrs, Tel. 512834)	<i>Steventon Hall</i>
7.00 pm	Short Mat Bowling Club Session (for 3 hours)	
7.30 pm	League Table Tennis	<i>School</i>
7.30 pm	Bingo Session	<i>Caudwell Day Centre</i>

THURSDAYS

9.00 am	Pre-School Playgroup (in Term)	<i>School Ground Bldg</i>
	followed by lunch club and afternoon session	
9.00 am	Foot Clinic (First Thursday)	<i>Caudwell Day Centre</i>
9.30 am	Holy Communion	<i>St Peter's Lady Chapel</i>
9.30 am	Parent & Toddler Group (in Term)	
11.00 am	Weight Watchers (until 11.30am)	
2.00 pm	Short Mat Bowling Club Session (for 3 hours)	
7.30 pm	League Table Tennis	<i>School</i>
7.30 pm	W.I. (2nd Thursday)	<i>Caudwell Day Centre</i>
7.30 pm	Sequence Dancing. Tel: 531701	

FRIDAYS

9.00 am	Pre-School Playgroup (in Term)	<i>School Ground Bldg</i>
11.00 am	Friday Club (fortnightly) 202466	<i>Caudwell Day Centre</i>
10.30 am	Creation Station	

SUNDAYS

8.00 am	Holy Communion	<i>St Peter's</i>
10.00 am	Sung Eucharist (Praise Service 3rd Sunday)	<i>St Peter's</i>
11.15 am	Family Time	<i>Baptist Church</i>
6.00 pm	Evening Worship	<i>Baptist Church</i>
7.30 pm	Zumba Class	

www.drayton-near-abingdon.org

Don't forget that you can look up past issues of the Chronicle, as far back as the start of 2004, by visiting the village web-site.

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