

Parish of Whitchurch on Thames

Whitchurchonthames.com

Summary of the meeting of the Parish Council On 8th March 2010

Present: Cllr Harry Butterworth (chairman), Cllr Vincent Aldridge (vice chairman), Cllr Nigel Grove, Cllr Elizabeth Robinson, Cllr Dr.Keith Brooks, Cllr Lindsay Austin, County Councillor Dave Sexon

Apologies were received from Cllr Dr. Matilda Oppenheimer, District Cllr Pearl Slatter

Also present: Richard Wingfield representing the Traffic and Roads Group, and Stephen Trinder representing the Village Hall Management Group.

Allotments

Cllr Keith Brooks kindly offered to be the parish council allotment representative.

Sports Field update

The final plans will be drawn up by the architect and sent around soon. The target date for this is end March 2010.

Planning

Cllr Elizabeth Robinson reported that no new planning applications received.

County Councillor report

The consultation on the Oxfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan is coming to an end. The plan includes recommendations for the parish (taken from the Parish Plan):

- Speed indicator devices
- 20mph limit
- Removal of certain white lines in High Street
- Mini roundabout at Manor Road
- Introduction of kerb pavements
- Marked crossing points, especially near the Toll Bridge

These recommendations may not be carried out because of feasibility and funding issues. The Parish Council Roads & Traffic Committee will continue to discuss these further with Oxfordshire County Council.

Oxfordshire County Council are busy filling potholes around the county. A recent press survey reported Oxfordshire County Council as being the best at responding to potholes.

Village Hall matters

Stephen Trinder provided an update on the village hall work. The electrical re-wiring is completed and certified.

The Oxfordshire Rural Community Council sent a representative to inspect the village hall and concluded that the hall compares favourably to others. There will be a modest programme of improvement over the next three years.

Traffic and Roads matters

Richard Wingfield provided a report on the group's activities. He expressed considerable concern about potholes and damage to kerbs, which are extensive. There is further detail elsewhere in this issue.

Environmental matters. Dr Keith Brooks said that new litter bins had been ordered and should be in position shortly. Four "doggy" bins are also on order and are expected to be put into their places at the same time. The defunct street light near the toll bridge is to be replaced. The new lamp will be sited further away from the bridge to improve lighting along that part of the road. There is further detail elsewhere in this issue.

The meeting closed at 9:30

Our Web Site

www.whitchurchonthames.com

Check the site for local news items

Some larger items such as the recent correspondence between the Whitchurch Bridge Company and the Parish Council are also posted there

Annual Village Assembly

Tuesday April 13th

The Parish Council invites all residents of the Village of Whichurch on Thames to the 2010 Annual Assembly which will be held in the Village Hall on the evening of April 13th.

There will be reports from the Parish Council, our District Councillor and our County Councillor.

Local groups will be invited to report their activities over the past year.

The meeting will commence at 8 p.m.

Refreshments will be served from 7.30 p.m.

For further information contact the Parish Clerk at
www.wotparishclerk@aol.com

Information from the Parish Council.

The PAWS (Pangbourne and Whitchurch Sustainability) group have discovered that recent legislation regarding planning applications for solar energy collectors such as photovoltaic arrays appears to be ambiguous. As a result there has been some confusion about what does and what does not require planning consent. We now have a definitive reply from SODC which will be available on the web site.

The recent letter from the Whitchurch Bridge Company and the Parish Council's reply are now available on the web site.

Some people may be interested to know that the Chairman of the Light Aircraft Association is Roger Hopkinson of The Orchard, 3 Westonbirt Drive, Caversham, Reading RG4 7EN

It is hoped that many events relating to the Community Sports Field and in particular the SODC planning meeting may now happen before the next issue of the Bulletin. As information becomes available it will be posted on the web site. Please watch this space!

www.whitchurchonthames.com

WHITCHURCH SOCIETY AGM

Friday 14th May 2010

at the Whitchurch Village Hall AT **7.30 pm**

Following the AGM at **8.00** there will be a talk by

Sir Julian Rose

entitled

Taking control of our lives

To celebrate his new book “Changing course – for Life”

His talk will present his views on better ways of living in society

There will be time for questions from the floor

***At the AGM there will be an opportunity to
nominate and elect new committee members.***

WHITCHURCH & GORING HEATH HISTORY SOCIETY

Programme 2010 – 2011

All meetings held at 7.45 for 8pm

At Whitchurch Village Hall

April 25th Members Forum

At Goring Heath Parish Hall

May 20th The Air Transport Auxilliary, illustrated talk by Bill King

Outings, for members only

June 17th Hardwick House

July 15th Green Woodworking & guided woodland study

At Goring Heath Parish Hall

Sept 16th The Changing Face of Reading – Alan Copeland

Oct 21st Nabobs of the Thames Valley, illustrated talk by Clive Williams

Nov 18th Treasures of the Deep –illustrated talk about the Thames Conservancy
Collection at Reading Museum

At Whitchurch Village Hall

Jan 20th Members Evening

Woodcote Library

March

Springtime brings thoughts of gardening, travel and home improvement and we have books on all of these. Or instead chose a novel or poetry book to suit your mood.

The Dagger in the Library display is there for those who like crime fiction. Let us know at the desk if you would like to nominate an author for an award - we can put forward three writers who we have particularly enjoyed, and the organisers are looking for less well known crime writers. Jan Clegg will again be providing a fine display of her quilts, all individually designed by her. Do come in and see - they are an inspiration.

April

At the end of the month Jan Clegg's wonderful quilts will come down, and there will be a display of work by Pam Hobbes' art class - also wonderful. Each year there is something different to admire in the paintings of gifted amateurs.

Storytimes for the under fives continue at 2.15 on Tuesday afternoons and there will be Springtime pictures to colour - ask at the desk.

Easter closing is Friday 2nd April to Monday 5th April including Easter Saturday, and return dates will be adjusted accordingly. There is a letter box in the back door for items you would like to return when we are closed.

WotHabs.

Jubilee Walk Trees in Hardwick Road

A team of workers including volunteers have been busy taking care of these trees. The result is probably that most people travelling along it won't notice that an estimated two tonnes of overhanging material is no longer there. Drivers of high vehicles should appreciate the change though and regular users of the footpath will find they don't have to duck so often but are still within a tunnel of branches. The operation is a good example of a joint Parish Council + volunteer project.

BP/Castrol and PEAS!

WoTHabs is grateful for new support, both in the form of volunteer work and an offer to boost our funds, from BP/Castrol, whose green group called PEAS, Pangbourne Environmental Action Squad, held a recent charity sale aiming to help local organisations which benefit the community.

The Violets Walk has been called off - partly on account of the continuing wintry weather – but make **Cowslip Walk a firm date for your diary, Sunday, May 2nd** - as usual at Chalkhills (formerly Boze Down Vineyard).. Many thanks to those of you who contacted us. You will help make the day a success.

Gill Goodwin

A note on “Doggy Bins” from the Environment Group

Not only is allowing a dog to foul a pavement very anti-social it is technically an offence. Dog owners and dog walkers are asked to ensure that they clean up after their dogs.

There are to be four new “doggy” bins in positions distributed around the Village.

They will be there to be used!

WHITCHURCH & GORING HEATH
TWINNING ASSOCIATION



VISIT TO FRANCE 1st – 3rd May 2010

The Twinning Association is visiting La Bouille, a pretty riverside village known as “The Pearl of the Seine”, 6 miles from Rouen.

Reasons for joining us

Coach Luxury Coach, everything arranged

Company Young, Old, Middling from the two villages

Cordiality Welcome guaranteed, Staying with French Families

Children Just started French or need total immersion? This is the best way to learn

Cheap You have only to cover travel costs

Chat What do the French people think about things? Is it really better here or there?

Excursion Join in a visit to a historic site, a chateau or town with a guided tour

Cuisine French food and wine

Ca va? French not essential

Whitchurch has been twinned with La Bouille for over 30 years – Why not join us this time?

Contact: Wendy Ferguson 01189 841262

Vicky Jordan 01189 843260

Website: www.whitchurchtwinning.org.uk

Village Hall

The Village Hall Management Committee met on 26 January and a full report of its proceedings can be found on the WOT website: www.whitchurchonthames.com

Of most significance was the replacement in January of the main switchgear and circuit breakers at a cost of £ 1,500, paid for by the Parish Council. This and other minor works ensured the certification of all the hall's electrics and appliances.

ORCC's village hall adviser said on a visit in February that our facilities now compared favourably with other villages of comparable size. The Committee is considering a three-year plan of further improvements.

A suggestion has been made that anyone self-employed in Whitchurch may like to use the Committee Room for meetings with clients, rather than in their own home. Would an internet connection in the hall be helpful in this respect? Indeed it might provide a useful venue for a small group of those working from home to meet informally to discuss matters of mutual concern - VAT/other tax returns, local advertising experience, debt collection and joint purchasing of stationery for example. Would there be any interest in this idea?

Stephen Trinder, Chairman

Report of the Environmental Group.

Suddenly things are happening. No really, we have actual progress that has been made!

Ok so it's down to the hard work of the environmental group but if we didn't push things forward who would? As you walk around our pretty little you may notice changes for the best.

For instance great work has been done to the Jubilee walk to ensure that it remains a pleasant and safe place for everyone to enjoy rather than a battle against nature. This has involved removing some 2 tons of overgrown and out of control vegetation. Photographic evidence is available on the village website showing the stalwart tree surgeons cutting and shredding and the results are splendid. This was all organised by John Southey and it should be emphasised that it also means that traffic using Hardwick Road in that area will also benefit from the absence of branches and boughs sticking out which could cause damage if hit at speed so it is safer! This brings me on to the concerns further along the road where the vegetation is actually impinging on the road and causing traffic to have to move to the centre of the road to avoid it. This is in the area between the two Swanston field junctions and has been reported to OCC. We have had assurances from Dave Sexon that this matter is in hand and will soon be cleared.

Another thing which will soon appear are some new lights one to replace the defunct one by the toll bridge booth which will actually be repositioned for greater efficiency as it is currently very close to the one on the bridge and at present there is a 'dark' patch. The other will be at the junction of the High St and Manor Road and will replace the one tacked on to a telegraph pole. This has been made possible by Parish Council funding. Both new lights are very smart and not at all like the present green ones and we anticipate that with time all the lights in the High Street can be replaced.

Bins – new bins should soon appear also courtesy of the Parish Council with the open mish mash collection of bins replaced with smart covered new ones. We also will be installing dog waste bins at strategic points around the village since there seems to be a minority of dog owners who ignore our signs and refuse to pick up their animal's mess. If we provide bins maybe this will encourage them.

There are other outstanding issues such as weeds growing on pavements causing damage to kerbs, flooding in Eastfield Lane is also an issue and we need to get the drains by the school cleared, and the drainage channels cleared further along the road. I understand that the area around the High Street and Eastfield Lane has a lighting problem so this is an area which we will be looking at.

I hope you are all looking forward to Spring I have planted some bulbs at the end of Hardwick Road by the seat and cleared up the leaves and it is looking good – for everyone to enjoy.

Dr Keith J Brooks

Thames Vale Singers
present

Music from the
Court of Elizabeth I

Including:

*William Byrd's 'Mass for Four Voices' and
a selection of light hearted madrigals*

at 8pm on

Fri 23rd April 2010 and Sat 24th April 2010

at

*St Mary's Church
Church Lane
Tilehurst
RG30 3TG*

at

*St Catherine's Church
Wittenham Avenue
Burghfield
RG31 5LN*

*Tickets: £7 Adults £6 Concessions
Telephone: 0118 957 2307
or 0118 942 1481*

Traffic & Roads Group

A meeting of the Group was held on 3rd March 2010. The main points are:

- 1. Traffic speeds.** Preliminary discussions have shown that OCC is not likely to fund an extension of Pangbourne's 20mph limit into the village any time soon. To allow Whitchurch to get properly into the queue for a lower limit, the group will prepare a written case so that the PC can consider it in May.
- 2. Ferryboat narrows.** Planning consent has been granted for the new church hall with a condition that the pedestrian refuge on the corner will be built. The group has recommended installation of dropped kerbs here and suggests OCC are asked to include this in their current programme of works.
- 3. Weeding of pavement edges.** It appears that OCC will no longer pay for this maintenance and that other parish councils are deciding to do it themselves. An environmentally acceptable weed killer is required. The group suggests that WoTHabs and/or the Environment group be asked to recommend a treatment and try it out.
- 4. Crossing the High Street.** The group considers that white lines to create further parking restrictions are not the preferred solution. Progress on a 'lollipop lady' will require coordination with the primary school and the group is taking this forward.
- 5. Give Way sign.** OCC should be asked to replace the Give Way sign at the lower narrows (damaged and removed on 4th January) as a matter of urgency.
- 6. Potholes.** Effort is needed to make sure Whitchurch is prominent in OCC's backlog of urgent repairs.

The Group continues to bear in mind that in the 2008 questionnaire survey, 85% of residents cited traffic speed and pedestrian safety as the most serious problem in the village.

WHITCHURCH PRE-SCHOOL

Here at Whitchurch Pre-School we have just enjoyed a fabulous visit to Rushall Farm, where we visited the newborn lambs (not to mention the calves, piglets and donkeys)! We even got to hold and bottle-feed a few lambs and had a tour of the farm by tractor. The boys in particular relished climbing up and pretending to drive a combine harvester and various tractors. We're now looking forward to our Easter celebrations and an Easter egg trail around the Pre-School garden.

We have also just welcomed our new Chair, Melanie Taylor, and would like to say a very big thank you to Kate Rosen, our out-going Chair, for all her hard work and tireless energy over the last year.

If anyone has any children they wish to register for Pre-School, please contact Vanessa Saunders on 984 5692 or Annette Robinson on 984 4516.

Whitchurch Churches raise money to help Haitians

The sum of £1150 was raised for the relief of people in earthquake-devastated Haiti at a tea-and-cakes event held in the village on 27 February. Stalls were set up in the village hall selling cakes, cards, plants, clothes and bric-a-brac. Winning ticket holders in the raffle chose from a table full of donated items.

Church treasurer Tony Voysey said that it was a successful and enjoyable afternoon. Many people had come together to help contribute to the Haiti Relief Fund. Thanks were due to Yvonne Kerevan and Wendy Ferguson for organising the event, to the many stall holders for helping and to the village hall management committee for waiving the booking fee.

A cheque has been sent to Mary's Meals, a charity already working in Haiti.

The Whitchurch Society

Spring Walk 25 April 2010

The circular route will be via the Alms Houses at Goring Heath

About 6 miles, taking just over 2 hours

There will also be a shorter alternative of about 2½ miles

**Meet at the Maze for departure at
10.45 am or 11.00 am from the
Black Gates**

Walk ends at the Greyhound at about 1.00 pm for soup and roll in return for donation to Whitchurch Society

Police Report for Whitchurch

Crime levels in the area remain low, as do levels of anti-social behaviour. However there have been a couple of incidents of car crime reported since the beginning of February 2010. While this is still a low figure, we would ask residents to be vigilant about their car security and to report anything they believe to be suspicious.

The Henley Rural Neighbourhood Team is also aware that residents may have their own issues or concerns that they would like to raise. As part of an on-going consultation process across all rural parishes, you can download a consultation form from South Oxfordshire District Council website at:

<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/content/corporate-support/community-safety/neighbourhood-action-groups.en>

The form is a questionnaire which allows you to highlight any problems and also what you believe the solutions could be. These forms can either be e-mailed to: HenleyRuralNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk or posted back to the team at the following address Henley Rural NHPT, Henley Police Station, 4 Greys Road, Henley on Thames, Oxon, RG9 1RY.

As a Neighbourhood Team, we are committed to the safety of the community where you live. Therefore, this is your opportunity to raise any issues of concern, no matter how small you feel they are.

In addition to this, there is the opportunity to attend the Have Your Say Meeting which is being held on Friday 16 April outside the Corner Shop, Station Rd, Shiplake between 10am and 11pm. As from 1st March 2010 the PCSO for your area will no longer be Mark Bell and PCSO Kathy Brooks is now responsible for the area.

These meetings are an ideal opportunity for local residents to speak to their local police officers and PCSO's about any local issues, no appointment is necessary just turn up and speak to your local officers.

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

Letter from Whitchurch Bridge

The Whitchurch Bridge Company (the Company) submitted its well publicised Toll Application to the Department for Transport (DfT) in October 2008 for an increase in the cash toll from 20p to 40p. The subsequent well attended Public Inquiry held in June 2009 scrutinised the evidence very carefully and cross examined the Company on the reasons for the proposed reconstruction of the bridge in 2013, its history of financial management and provision for funding the project, its current financial situation and its financial projections to 2023.

The Toll Application and the Public Inquiry process validated both the reasons for the reconstruction and the careful and professional way in which the Company manages its finances. The Inspector's recommendation that the Toll increase be granted was accepted by the Secretary of State for Transport.

The cash toll was increased to 40p in October 2009, which should enable the Company to proceed with the reconstruction of the Bridge in 2013-2014, albeit that it is likely that the Company will still have a financial shortfall to fund.

The Company recognises that any increase in the tolls is unwelcome, but its obligation to provide a safe crossing over this point of the river is its priority. This was well understood at the Public Inquiry.

Whilst the Company is not obliged under its legislation to offer discounts it nevertheless offers these to users by way of Bridge Cards - these offer savings for regular users and efficiency benefits for the Toll collecting operation.

The discounted rate for crossing has increased from 13.89p to 20p with effect from 1st March 2010. This increase has been done in one step rather than as a phased increase because of the delay

of some 4 months in being able to implement the new cash toll of 40p. This delay was the result of the number of objections to the Toll Application and the time taken by the DfT to set up and hold the Public Inquiry in June 2009. The loss of revenue over this period was some £60,000 and the Inquiry itself cost the Company some £40,000 – a total cost to the Company of some £100,000.

Although the new concessionary Bridge Card Toll of 20p gives a substantial 50% discount on the cash Toll, the Company wishes to limit further the impact of the concessionary rate on frequent users of the Bridge, including, particularly, local residents who need to use the Bridge several times each day. Therefore the Company has introduced a Frequent User Scheme which will allow any Bridge Card user an unlimited number of crossings for a fixed price of £18 per month, which is less than 60p or 3 crossings per day.

Neither the cash toll or the Bridge Card toll will be increased again until 2013 at the earliest, unless another Toll Application is submitted by the Company and approved by the Secretary of State.

The Company plans to submit its Planning Application for the reconstruction of the Bridge in early 2011. Discussions have been held with Planning officers from South Oxfordshire District Council and the Company believes that its proposals will fulfil the Planning requirements for this Grade 2 listed Bridge. However, the Company is aware that the Planning process and any additional requirements could add delay and cost to the reconstruction of the Bridge.

There is more detailed information on the Company website at www.whitchurchbridge.com which is the Company's principal means of communication to users of the Bridge and the general public.

Finally, on a personal note I would like to thank our Bridge users for their courtesy towards our Toll Collectors during the last year.

Geoff Weir

The Parish Council's response to Geoff Weir's letter of pages 15 and 16

The Whitchurch Parish Council strongly object to the recent increase in the concessionary toll fee to 20p.

The Inspector's report correctly records the undertaking of the WBC, which they put in writing after the inquiry, not to increase the toll beyond 20p before 1/1/13.

The Inspectors made the following comments in his report

"it will be possible to reduce the impact on regular users by only gradually increasing the concessionary toll to a level of 20p by 2012"

" Furthermore the company proposes a gradual increase in the concessionary tolls charged"

" While the Company retains some flexibility in determining its revenue through its control of the concessionary element of the tolls, it has made significant commitments on the discount".

The WBC has raised the card toll to 20p within a year of the Inquiry and offered frequent users a toll discount which we suspect no one will take up as few people can use the bridge often enough to justify this. We would be grateful if you could supply us with your figures which show how many people use the bridge often enough to benefit from this.

The excuse given for increasing the toll to 20p now is the delay caused by the public inquiry in introducing the 40p toll. This is unacceptable as you knew perfectly well that a public inquiry was likely to be held - an inquiry has to be held if there are objections, and WPC was not only perfectly entitled but effectively obliged to object given the feelings in the village. WBC should therefore have anticipated this and made the application for the toll increase sooner than they did.

The WBC should not have made an undertaking at the Inquiry that the very existence of the Inquiry itself made it impossible to grant due to WBC having to pay for the Inquiry. The WBC must have known at the time that they made the undertaking that they would be unable to abide by it.

More information on correspondence between the Parish Council and the Bridge Company can be found on our web site

www.whitchurchonthames.com

Adult Education Opportunities After Easter at Langtree

All courses will be subject to a fee. For and more in depth details regarding the courses can be found on website www.langtree.oxon.sch.uk/community. Also leaflets are available from Langtree School or the Woodcote Library. Alternatively, contact the Art College Co-ordinator on 01491 680514 Ext: 227

Why not try one of our daytime classes or workshops in:

Water Colour Classes

Basic Computer Classes

Digital Photography

Or an evening class or workshop in:

Adult Choir

Adult Tap Beginners & Intermediate Classes

Ballroom Dance

Basic Computer Classes Evening

Jewellery

Langtree Sinfonia

Life Drawing

Pottery

Langtree Fashion Show 2010

Tuesday 30th March 2010

Animal Farm - Performed by Langtree Drama Club

Thursday 13th May 2010

For both performances:-

Tickets £3.00 each available in advance from the Art College Co-ordinator on 01491 680514 Ext: 227

Please be sure to purchase your tickets early as we can not guarantee that tickets will be available on the door

Doors open at 6.45pm

Show to start at 7pm Main Hall

Refreshments Available

PANGBOURNE HERITAGE GROUP EXHIBITION

Following our very successful 'Pangbourne at War' exhibition five years ago, we are embarking on a new project. On 15 and 16 May in Pangbourne Village Hall, we will be displaying the amount of new research that has been undertaken in recent months, with the title 'Pangbourne - a Snapshot of a Century of Change 1830 to 1930'.

The dates are not arbitrarily chosen; during recent months we have been looking at how Pangbourne grew as a village, from the time when the Breedon family as landowners were influential in every aspect of land use and commercial development, to the break up of the estate in 1894, and the diversity of community life in the 1920s and 30s, as the whole country recovered from the First World War.

What is really exciting about this project is that no one has researched these years in detail before, and the pieces of the jigsaw are gradually being fitted together. We have used the word 'Snapshot' because that is what we have endeavoured to show; aspects of village life in film, photographs, maps, mementos and much more. The WI are providing a tea room throughout both days of the exhibition, which will be an attraction in itself. Come and support our village venture; the hall will be open from 11am to 4pm on both days, and there will be plenty of people on hand to show you around. One of our hoped for outcomes is that many of you will have your own memories to share with us.

Lesley Crimp (for further information please contact Rosie Nurick on 0118 9842565)



**The Whitchurch &
District Theatre Club**



Organiser: Christine Martin
“Sonia”, Goring Heath Road, Whitchurch
Hill, RG8 7PG
Tel: 0118 9844252 e.mail
c_nmartin@tiscali.co.uk

The Whitchurch & District Theatre Club
takes you to musicals, plays, classical
concerts etc. once a month.

Chichester, Bath, Oxford and Richmond,
amongst others, are often visited.

Also major London productions.

Mainly matinees but sometimes evening
performances.

Tickets purchased at group/concessionary
rates.

Subscriptions £5 per annum.

Coaches leave from Pangbourne.

‘The Glory of the Garden’ Goring Chamber Choir

presents a concert of floral winners from a musical Gardeners' Question Time. Their programme focuses on seasonal springtime flowers, from Mary, the Rose, and an Easter Garden through to midsummer, exploring how young lovers sigh and wander amongst the birds, the bees and the beauties of nature. The music includes Mascagni's Easter Hymn from *Cavalleria Rusticana*, carols, traditional songs such as ‘Down by the Salley Gardens’, and music by Finzi, Holst and Quilter, as well as piano music played by Janet Pound and topical poems.

The concert is at St Thomas' Church, Goring on Saturday April 24 at 7.30pm. Tickets are £10 and £8 for concessions and are available from members of the choir or ‘Inspirations’ in Goring.

Come and celebrate the long awaited arrival of Spring.

Langtree Sinfonia Spring Concert

The Spring concert of the Langtree Sinfonia will be held in Dorchester Abbey, Dorchester-on-Thames on Sunday May 9th at 7.00pm.

The evening starts with Sibelius's tone poem ‘The Swan of Tuonela’ and then Nils Franke will perform Schumann's Piano Concerto in A minor.

The evening will be rounded off with Schumann's evocative 3rd Symphony, the so-called ‘Rhenish’ Symphony.

Paul Cox conducts.

Tickets Available at the door or 0118 9415498
Also at ‘Inspiration’ The Arcade, Goring
Adults £8.50 Patrons £7.50 Students £4.00

WE ALL HAVE A STORY TO TELL

Part One

Every year countless numbers of books are published in the British Isles. But you will not find any of them gracing the shelves of Waterstones or Smiths. There is no chance that these publications will provide any competition for the latest effort by a celebrity chef or “ghosted” memoir of a supermodel.

For I refer to those underrated local books that often tell us a great deal about the area we are either visiting or inhabiting. Usually self-published in print runs of about 200-500 copies, these books can often be found in bookshops in the town where they are produced. I always try and purchase a copy of these books for research as much as anything. Over the years, my little collection has yielded a significant amount of material for the books and documentaries I have produced.

In this respect, Whitchurch has a particularly rich store.

“Whitchurch on Thames” by J. H. Baker and Rickman Godlee’s book on the history of Whitchurch are two early examples of this genre. Both have been out of print for many years and have already achieved quite a rarity value. There is also Richard Hughes’ book on the History of St Mary’s church and Eric Hartley’s excellent evergreen “[A Guide to the Walks around Whitchurch-on-Thames](#)”.

In 2001, the late Robert Noble’s many articles for the Bulletin and talks were published in a book called “Footprints and Cyphers” edited by Peter Hawley. More recently, The Whitchurch and Goring Heath History Society have published “Relics and Monuments” which is a collection of essays by Peter Hawley about our village’s surprisingly rich history. For anyone who has any interest in our beautiful village, this book really is a must.

Over the years, the trickle of local books and publications throughout the UK has become a torrent. This is thanks to rapid developments in digital and computer technology that has brought self-publishing within the grasp of anyone with a p.c. For anyone who has yearned to publish a book, they should grab this opportunity with both hands. By anyone of course, I mean all of

Whether your story is about your own life or that of a remarkable relative ("*The African War of Pvlte Alfred Spinks*" – you know the sort of thing), it deserves to be written down for future generations. There is also a good chance that some of these books will come to be internationally recognised as classics. What better example of this than "Lark Rise to Candleford".

When Flora Jane Thompson wrote that original trilogy of essays about rural Oxfordshire in the 1930s she can hardly have imagined that it would reach an audience of millions seventy years later. It is a fair bet that there are many modern day Flora Thompsons waiting to be discovered. It would be good to think that there is one in this parish!

Many people might be frightened away from publishing their story because they think it is too complicated and expensive. I am pleased to report that this is a myth. In the next article I will show you how easy and satisfying it is to get your own masterpiece into print.

Nick Brazil

NIGHT BLOSSOMS

by Nick Brazil

Harrassed mothers rushing to school
At village parties are much more cool,
Exotic night blossoms one and all,
Ladies of quality walking tall.

DIARY DATES

Contributions welcome for this column if anyone knows of a date that would be of interest to the village.

April

13th Village Annual Assembly

15th History Society

25th Spring Walk

May

1st-3rd Twinning visit to La Bouille

2nd Sunday Cowslip Day at Chalkhills

10th Parish Council Meeting

14th Whitchurch Society AGM

THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN

will be published in MAY 2010.

Please send your contributions **preferably by e-mail to**
Sarah.pongo@talktalk.net by 13th May 2010

Views of individual contributors
are the views of those contributors,
and are not necessarily the views of the Parish Council,
or the editor.