

WHITCHURCH-ON-THAMES BULLETIN

www.whitchurchonthames.com

NOVEMBER 2007

Meeting of the Parish Council

A Parish Council meeting was held on Monday 5th November 2007 at 8pm in the Village Hall.

In attendance were the Chairman Matilda Oppenheimer and Councillors Nigel Grove, Vincent Aldridge, Harry Butterworth, Elizabeth Robinson and Nigel Cabeldu.

Also present was the Parish Clerk Joanne Wheeler, District Councillor Pearl Slatter and County Councillor John Farrow.

Parish Clerk

The new parish clerk, Joanne Wheeler, has been appointed. The parish clerk email address is clerk@whitchurchonthames.com

Whitchurch Bridge Company

Representatives from the Whitchurch, Pangbourne, Goring Heath and Woodcote Parish Councils meet the Bridge Company twice a year for updates about the Bridge reconstruction project, any proposed Toll increases and discussion about the Toll Bridge and how it affects the surrounding Villages.

At the last meeting in September 2007 we were informed that the reconstruction project is underway and an Architect has been chosen. Planning permission will be sought from SODC in the next few months and details such as costing and timing should be in place in the next 6 months.

We were also informed that the **Regulated Cash Toll (20p) will most likely be increased in 2009.**

The extent of the increase will be determined by the finalised costs for the reconstruction of the bridge.

However the **cost of the card will also increase in February 2008** so that the £5 top up will purchase 40 crossings and not 45 as at present. This means that the cost per crossing for those using a card will increase to 12.5p per crossing from 11p. As previously any remaining crossings on the card on the change date will be honoured. Despite requests from the Parish Council there is no plan to have any discount differentiation for local residents.

Village Hall

The Parish Council is looking for a volunteer to take over as treasurer and licensee of the village hall. Please contact the parish clerk for more information.

Traffic calming

Oxfordshire County Council have agreed to lay white 'no parking' lines on Hardwick Road to prevent parked vehicles in the road stopping residents accessing their drives.

Swanston Field and Hardwick Road

Emergency repair work has started on the Swanston Field/Hardwick Road alleyway to improve the footpath.

Parish plan

Support has been growing for the parish plan and the working group met on the 6th November to begin planning. Further updates will be included in the bulletin.

Planning

Applications:

P07/E1260/LB - the New Rectory - partial rebuilding of two areas of boundary wall plus a new section of foundation - NO STRONG VIEWS

Decisions received:

P07/E1033 – Cliff Cottage, Hardwick Road, Whitchurch on Thames – Erection of single storey outbuilding to side of house – GRANTED

P07/E0870 – Coach House, High Street, Whitchurch on Thames – Change of use from store/coach house to church meeting room and formation of parking area
GRANTED

P07/E0879/CA – Milverton House, High Street – Partial demolition, rebuilding and repointing of brick and flint retaining wall – GRANTED

P07/E0876 – Milverton House, High Street – Erection of 1.5 metre high picket fence set 1 metre back from boundary wall – GRANTED

P07/E0877 – Milverton House, High Street – Remove and rebuild sections of brick and flint retaining wall – GRANTED

Finances

The following cheques were agreed for payment.

RM Weavers	July/August grass cutting
Nova Press	Bulletin costs
Newbury Weekly News	Job advertisement
Z Net Ltd	Domain name and hosting packages
Environment Agency	Accommodation charge for frontage
NSALG	Allotment rent
NSALG	Affiliation fees
	Wreath
Jo Wheeler	Clerk salary

Next Meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be on Monday 3rd December in the Whitchurch Village Hall at 8pm. An agenda will be posted on the Parish Council notice-board opposite the Greyhound before the next meeting.

Jo Wheeler Clerk

A Message from Your Local P.C.S.O. Mark Bell

First I must apologise for my absence from duty, this is due to a knee injury that I received while on holiday. At present I am on light duties working from the Sonning Common Station, as I am due to have surgery on my knee towards the end of November.

I am pleased to report that I should be back at work for full duty in January 2008, with your new community P.C. Barbara Taylor, to whom I am sure you will give a warm welcome. Our new office for Woodcote should be completed soon and ready for the New Year. This is good news for all the communities in the local area.

If there are any issues you may have, please call our non emergency number 08435 8 505 505 and ask for myself or Barbara Taylor.

The Village Plan

Before each Parish Council meeting I check the SODC web site for new planning applications. At the meeting we all examine every new application carefully. We then make our recommendation for the SODC planners. Then I wonder why we bother.

The planners told us they have a little book and they only go by the book. So I still wonder why we bother.

Recently we heard that several villages have made Plans, and they did help. The message was that the planners seem to take at least some notice of them. So the Parish Council started to think about one.

At first everyone thought that this was just another chore. Then the mood changed. This is *our* village, and *we* want to control its future. What about traffic, the school, housing, the bridge, toll increases, the Village Hall when the Village owns it? What will happen to the old Rectory? Should we hold a summer party for the children in our super new playground? Will Eastfield Lane be flooded again next summer? Clearly we do need to plan.

Moreover, other villages have found that work on such a Plan helps to bring the community together and it is the community spirit of our Village which is a major reason why so many people want to live here.

Suddenly interest in a Village Plan blossomed. We now have the *Whitchurch on Thames Village Plan Steering Committee* with some remarkably able members and lots of ideas. The Oxford Rural Community Council have offered substantial financial support. Already several events are being planned. Of course there is much to do and so lots of help will be needed.

But I think everyone will have fun. So come and see us at the Village Exhibition. At least tell us what you think about YOUR village, past, present or future.

Better still, join the party!

Harry Butterworth

IT WENT ALL RIGHT ON THE NIGHT
Mr Toad's Village Premiere

When I arranged the premiere for "Mr Toad's Village" at the end of September I naturally had no idea how many people would come. I knew that it was possible the audience might comprise only a handful. In the event, I need not have worried and I was overwhelmed by the attendance which completely filled up the Village Hall. If any more people had come we would have had to stick them on the walls.

I was also deeply touched by the many kind comments I have received about the production and truly delighted by the number of DVDs that have been sold. Profits from both the premiere and these sales which have been donated to Helen & Douglas House Hospice in Oxford are now over £650.

Whilst this was an important by product of this venture it is the success of the documentary that pleases me most. When one works on a film or video so closely for a long period of time, it is all too easy to lose any sense of whether it is good, bad or indifferent. The final arbiters of this must be the audience so it is a considerable relief that the response has been so positive. One reaction that I certainly did not expect were the many people who said they were actually moved by the documentary.

I am very grateful to Sally and Peter Woolhouse and family who worked so hard to make the premiere a success. The same goes for Don Curry and the Reading Video & Film Makers who took a great weight off my shoulders by projecting the videos.

I certainly hope that I have also inspired many other budding film and video makers in the village to embark on their own productions. The real lesson of all this is that anyone with a video camera and a computer can produce very good films both easily and cheaply. I hope that anyone who wants some advice in this respect will not hesitate to contact me.

As for the future, Kate Preston has made the interesting suggestion to use the Village Hall for a film club embodying both the showing of both commercial films and providing workshops about video making.

It would also be interesting to know if there is widespread support for a Village film and video competition.

For the moment I am simply glad to have created a lasting record of an English Village in the early Twenty - First Century. Thank you Whitchurch.

Nick Brazil

Whitchurch Bridge

Planning for the reconstruction of the Bridge in 2013 is proceeding in accordance with a Project Plan drawn up and managed by Oxfordshire County Council on behalf of The Whitchurch Bridge Company. Architectural and detailed design work is being undertaken by Jacobs in Reading, and is well advanced. The Company expects to submit a Planning Application and obtain Planning Approval by the end of 2008 – this will help the Company to firm up on the costs of the works and enable it to plan with more certainty. The Planning process will also bring into the public domain the details of the Company's proposals for the reconstruction of the Bridge, and provide an opportunity for anyone to submit comments.

During the next few months two surveys will be undertaken - a topographical survey (to obtain accurate data on levels on and around the Bridge and approach roads) and a geotechnical survey (to assess ground conditions under the Bridge for the new piles). The latter survey will be undertaken from waterborne craft and will involve drilling to depths of up to 30 metres under the river.

Although the Company has substantial reserves set aside for Bridge reconstruction, an increase in annual Toll income will nevertheless be required each year to help build up sufficient funds for the planned works. Toll income will be increased initially by reducing the discount given to users of Bridge Cards. The Company last reduced the discount on Monday 13th November 2006, and a further change will take place on **Monday 18th February 2008**. As from that date the discounted rate will rise from 11.1p to 12.5p - ie £5 of crossings credit will give 40 crossings instead of 45 crossings as now.

The 20p cash Toll is regulated and cannot be increased until the Company successfully applies for permission from the Department for Transport. The Company's current position (which may change if circumstances change) is that it will not apply for an increase in the regulated Toll until it has applied for and obtained Planning Permission for the reconstruction of the Bridge and has obtained more accurate costings for the reconstruction works.

There is more information about the Bridge reconstruction and Tolls on our website at www.whitchurchbridge.com .

Geoff Weir
Company Secretary

The Whitchurch Society

New Year's Day Village Walk

Start the New Year with an invigorating and informative walk
led by Eric Hartley, author of
'A Guide to the Walks around Whitchurch-on-Thames'

Meet at the Greyhound for 11am start and rendezvous back at the
Greyhound for 1.30pm

Walk routes will be suitable for all ages

Everyone welcome!

Details to follow



Parish of Whitchurch 2nd Annual



Children's Christmas Party

After last year's success, Father Christmas has agreed to visit us again this year.

So Children mark your diaries for

Sunday 2nd December

At

Goring Heath Parish Hall

Party one: pre school: to run from 1.30 to 3.00

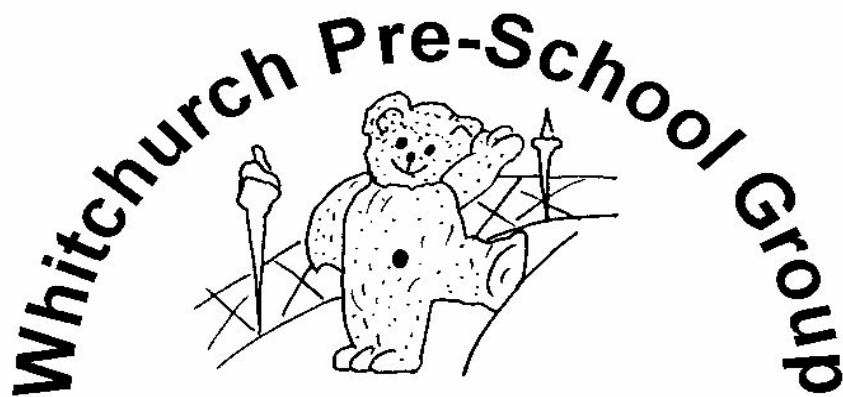
Party two: juniors: Start at 3.00 to run to 5.00



All admission to be booked in advance by ticket only – just so Father Christmas knows how many presents to bring along!

For tickets please call :

Val Kearney 0118 984 2437 or Catherine Tibbs 0118 984 2318



Learning Through Play

This term we have welcomed several new starters and said a fond goodbye and good luck to a number of our rising fives who have left us to take up their places at primary school.

Our pupils have enjoyed focussing on a diverse number of activities related to the weekly theme. Last half term we covered topics such as summer holidays, Ramadan, birthdays, weddings and harvest and farming. This half-term we'll explore the themes of Halloween, Bonfire Night and Diwali, Autumn and Thanksgiving and Christmas activities, amongst other things.

Pre-school enjoyed a highly successful sponsored trike ride in October. As well as being great fun for both children and parents, the children raised £340 for additional pre-school resources.

We also enjoyed our very own Spooky Dory Halloween party. The children came in wonderful fancy dress outfits, had their faces painted and had a fabulous afternoon of fun and games.

Another fun fund-raising activity was our Grannies Attic back-yard sale on November 10th.

For Christmas we're planning to hold a Christmas party for the children and Christmas drinks for mums and dads, as well as putting on a Nativity play.

As you can see, a packed term of fun and learning through play. If anyone has any younger children they wish to register for pre-school, please contact Kathy Aitchison on 984 4462.

Garden helpers needed!

We are looking for volunteers to help us maintain and develop our pre-school garden. Nestled in a lovely corner of the village, the garden is a green haven of play for our pre-school children but to keep it special we need some help.

Whether a garden novice or expert, if you have a few hours to spare to help with planting, trimming and the usual gardening odd jobs, or are able to provide some gardening tips, we would love to hear from you.

Please contact Kellie Collier, Whitchurch Pre-school Parents Committee, on 0118 984 1793.

DEVELOPING YOUR PICTURE POWER

A WORKSHOP ON DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY BY NICK BRAZIL

Saturday 24th November 2007

10:00 a.m – 4:00p.m.

WHITCHURCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Come and find out how to make the most of your digital camera, take better pictures and work on them in your p.c.

£20:00 per head

FOR BOOKING FORMS CONTACT

Nick Brazil, The Garden Flat, Hardwick Road, Whitchurch-on-Thames

Tel: 01189841602

e-mail: nicholasbrazil@btinternet.com

WOODCOTE LIBRARY

We'll be holding a Silver Surfers morning from 10am to 12 noon on Friday 14th December. Anyone who would like to learn how to use our computers is invited to come - just book a slot at the desk. In the past we have enabled people to exchange e-mails with grandchildren travelling abroad, search the web for details of battlefield visits or look for holiday hotels. You may just want to "have a go" to see what everyone else is doing and we can offer informal help to start you off, at no cost.

Christmas closing this year is from Monday 24th December to Wednesday 2nd January. We re-open at 9.30 on Thursday 3rd January 2008. You can of course use the library service web site and the 24-hour renewal line during this time, and Central Library in Oxford is open December 28th to 31st for visits or phone enquiries. Happy New Year!

WoTHABS (Whitchurch-on-Thames Habitat Study Group)

Garden Ponds

Please return by email, or hard copy to 1 Swanston Field, any records you have kept this year of comings and goings in or near your garden pond. We will be pleased to hear from you whether or not you have been keeping records on the official forms, which were distributed in spring, or simply have noticed interesting pond-related visits. Have you seen many/any frogs, newts and if so any great-crested ones, grass snakes, many dragonflies – or larvae (until the newts came along), unexpected/unusual birds, etc. I will write something about your sightings for the January 2008 bulletin.

Working Parties

We are having a working party (Sun 11th November from 1.30) to clear surplus nettles along the allotment footpath and do some additional clearing around the school pond. You may be too late for that one, but very welcome if you are able to offer help next time, so look out for future dates.

Other Work

We are planning to get WoTHabs 'online' by joining the Oxnet initiative (Oxfordshire Network of voluntary & community organisations) - they offer free websites to groups like us. If you would be interested in helping us with the design of the webpages, we would love to hear from you. A good practical project for a student perhaps?

Money for Bird Food

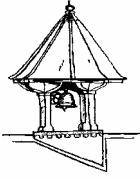
Help the school buy more bird food by remembering to take your aluminium waste to the school collection point. (Cans and foil go in separate bins, so bag up separately.) It's not just good energy-saving: money from its sale goes towards bird food, which is especially important now the weather is getting colder.

Thames Valley Fungus Group are holding a **Fungus Foray** at Chalkhills, (see below) 11 am Saturday 17th November.

WoTHABS next meeting: Wednesday 9th January, 8.00 pm at **Chalkhills** (formerly Boze Down Vineyard).

gill_goodwin@yahoo.co.uk

Tel. 9842934



Regd. No 1056772

Goring Heath Parish Charity

On Friday 23rd November at 7pm, especially for children.

“The Tin Soldier” presented by the Storey Box Company,

“A little boy is given a present of twelve tin soldiers on Christmas Day.

One soldier is very different to the rest”....So begins the story

OF A SPECIAL TOY AND HIS EXTRAORDINARY JOURNEY. THIS HAUNTING

PRODUCTION RETAINS ALL THE MAGIC OF ONE OF

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN’S BEST-LOVED TALES.

Tickets are already on sale, £7 for adults, £5 for children and concessions.

CONTACT :- THERESA ELSOME ON 0118 9842056

In February, it’s the turn of the adults and teens.

Friday 1st February at 8pm -- Instant Wit.

Barking Productions are back with more jokes, more hilarity and more audience participation. You can join in or just sit back, enjoy the show and let others do the work!

Tickets can be booked now, contact the above phone number.

Then on Sunday April 6th it’s the Spring Gardening Show

The titles for the photographic section are:

1. Spirit of place.
2. The garden in spring.
3. Crowds.

Maureen Millard has cleaned Goring Heath Parish Hall for the past number of years but she has now left us to enjoy some well-earned leisure time. The Trustees of

Goring Heath Parish Charity would like to thank Maureen, very much, for all her hard work in looking after the hall so well during this time.

Whitchurch Hill- Christmas Village Fayre - 1 December 2007

If you are looking for a relaxing environment in which to do your Christmas Shopping, visit the Whitchurch Hill Christmas Fayre on Saturday 1 December 2007, between 10.30am – 3.30pm.

Goring Heath Parish Hall (opposite St John's Church) will host stall holders selling quality gifts, stocking fillers, cards and cakes. Light refreshments will also be on sale. All organisers' profits will be donated to Goring Heath Parish Hall.

Rosamund Heath
984 2358

Inspired

Jacquie Piper and Elisabeth Napier-Munn
Are taking part in a mixed media exhibition
Showing work of 12 Artists and Craftsmen

At

The Old Fire Station Gallery,
Market Place, Henley-on-Thames.

From

11th – 24th November

Open every day 10am until 5.00pm.

Get some different presents this Christmas

Glass, Handbags, Baskets, Stitched Textiles, Ceramics,
Weaving, Jewellery, Felt, Watercolours, Prints, Painted &
Dyed Silk Scarves.

South Chiltern Choral Society

Christmas Concert

A Feast for Christmas by Alan Bullard
and other festive offerings !

There's a real treat in store for concert-goers this Christmas, when the SCCS performs a work freshly composed by Alan Bullard. Those with good memories will recall us singing *Mr Lear* (by the same composer) a few Christmases ago and how enjoyable that was!

A Feast for Christmas is a collection of 8 songs, each one describing a different aspect of Christmas, for instance *Christmas Pudding*, *Christmas Crackers*, *Christmas Feast* – this one has an amazing recipe for filling a turkey in a very elaborate way that even Delia would be envious of ! The piece ends with audience participation, but then these concerts *always* end like that.

Joining us is a children's choir and the accompaniment is a brass band, *Chiltern Brass*. Further, the *Chiltern Edge Players* will be providing narration and entertaining illustrations.

In contrast to this main work we will be singing amongst other things two contrasting settings of *Ave Maria* – both beautiful, and plenty of carols for the audience too!

Dates and times : **Saturday 15 December 7.30pm**
Sunday 16 December 2.30pm

Venue : **Chiltern Edge School, Reades Lane, Sonning Common**

Tickets : **£10 Adults £5 Under 18's including interval drink**

Available from Judy Griffiths tel. 0118 9345746

Emma Sieling – publicity tel. 0118 9471966

The choir is looking for new members to boost numbers- friends are always welcome to try a rehearsal out on any Monday night, in term time-time, at the same venue as the concerts.

RECYCLING

Aluminium Foil	Bottle tops & Foil	
	Cans - Clean & Crushed	Primary School
Mobile Phones		
Inkjet & Toner Cartridges	tel 984 2828	Primrose Cottage
Stamps		Help the Aged
Glass Bottles and Jars		The Village Hall Car park
Spectacles		Boat House Surgery or Alison Michael
Cardboard, papers, plastics (not polystyrene), tins & cans		Green Box on dustbin day
Cans, bottles, books, clothes, magazines, shoes etc		Savacentre Car Park

The Refuse Centre at Oakley Wood, Crowmarsh Gifford, has facilities for the disposal of: household items, metal, plastic, bottles, paper, batteries, engine oil and green waste.

Any queries call Public Amenities on tel:- 01491 823416

DIARY DATES

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

NOVEMBER

15th History Society Meeting

17/18th Art and Craft Exhibition – Village Hall

24th Digital Photo Workshop

DECEMBER

1st Whitchurch Hill Christmas Fayre Goring Heath Hall

2nd Whitchurch Children's Christmas Party

15th & 16th S.C.C.S. Christmas Concert

BANK HOLIDAY DUSTBIN COLLECTION DATES.

Collections on 27th December and 3rd January 2008 will be as normal

THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN will be published in JANUARY 2008.

Please send your contributions preferably by e-mail to

Sarah.pongo@talktalk.net by 10th JANUARY 2008

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