

Contents

Editorial	2
Letters	3-4
Save the Children	4
Parish Council / Open Gardens	5
Brightwell Parish Church	6-7
Art Haus Club	7
Community Association/ Colour & Clay exhibition	8
Party in the hall / Allsorts Preschool	9
Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Primary School	10
Brightwell School's 175 th birthday / Village Stores & Post Office	11
In memory of Ron Wood	12-13
Beating the Bounds 2017 / Lambing weekend at the Earth Trust	14
Deckchair Cinema / Short Mat Bowls Club / BSR AGM	15
News from the Bach Centre / Vehicle theft	16
Go Active Gold / A day for all photographers	17
Red Lion	18
Brightwell Bees	19
Environment Group	20
Corn Exchange roof appeal	21
Corn Exchange barn dance	22
In brief – round & about	22-23
Village diary	24

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Editorial

There is something lovely about watching Spring unfold and this year we seem to have a lot of colour early – daffodils and hyacinths, pussy willows, pink and white blossom, purple aubrietia and yellow forsythia to name a few out now. The bees are buzzing and out foraging in our hedgerows. Thank you Steve Moll for giving us our cover picture and also Viv for her article on Brightwell Bees on page 19.

Coming back to the village after a few weeks away on the other side of the world made me appreciate why I feel blessed living here as Spring had definitely ‘sprung’ while I was away. While we accept that the character of the village is likely to change in the years ahead as more development takes place in response to pressure for new housing in our region, we are grateful to the work being put in by our Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan Committee to try and preserve it and ensure development happens in the way we want it to. The individuals involved have to give up a lot of their free time on our behalf at the moment and we really appreciate this.

It was so sad to hear about the death of young Alistair Govan and our condolences go his family. We lost also one of our oldest residents in January, Ron Wood, who grew up in Brightwell and regularly posted articles on life as a boy here. In memory of Ron, we have re-printed in the middle pages an extract of a piece he wrote in 2002 on the village school. And talking about the school, did you know it was 175 years old this year? There is going to be a birthday picnic on Saturday 24 June (see page 11) so put it in your diary if you are an ex-pupil, parent or teacher.

Lots of other social activities are going on too in the next few months as you can read inside. Village social life seems to have come to life after winter slumbers. Something for everyone – from Safari Supper on Saturday 13 May (see insert) to Colour and Clay exhibition (weekend of 13/14 May), Open Gardens on Sunday 21st, Party in the hall on 21 April and Church Spring fair on 20 May. And looking further ahead there is Brightfest 17 on 3 June and Beating the Bounds on 24 June. Plus, of course, all the church events around Easter (see page 7).

Helen Connor

**** **Late news -- Tuesday 4 April 7pm** Meeting in village hall organised by those wishing to develop site known as Bosley's Orchard. Come along, especially if living nearby, to give your views and have some input to final design. ****

Letters

Alistair 'Ali' Govan

On Friday 24 February we held a funeral for our beloved son Alistair at St. Agatha's, before burying his body in the churchyard. He had taken his own life just two weeks previously at his home in Birmingham.

When we started to think about planning the funeral the family quickly came to the conclusion that, if at all possible, we would like to lay Alistair to rest in Brightwell. That was where he grew up and the place he always regarded as home.

The church was packed for the funeral service, with many people travelling considerable distances. People from every chapter of Alistair's life were represented, including a large numbers of young people from the local area, and others from his time at Cardiff University. Work colleagues and former teachers were well represented. There were also many, many friends and former neighbours of his and ours in attendance. We, along with his sisters and his brother are grateful to every single person who was able to be there, and to all the many others who sent us such kind messages of support and condolence. The extent of the love and affection shown for Alistair and extended to us touched our hearts and gave us comfort at a time when we thought such a thing was impossible.

We are grateful to Revd. Kevin Beer for agreeing that Alistair's funeral could take place at St. Agatha's, and for conducting the funeral with such care and compassion. We would also like to thank Derek for playing the organ, Rosemary for arranging the church flowers, and the choir for kindly donating their services.

Finally, we would like to thank the community of Brightwell-cum-Sotwell. The African proverb tells us that it takes a village to raise a child. Brightwell certainly helped us raise Alistair and graciously welcomed him home to his final resting place, albeit so much sooner than any of us would have wished.

Thank you all.

Chris and Russell Govan

If anyone would like to make a donation in memory of Alistair, we would be grateful if they could do so to St. Agatha's Church.

Richard Mason's funeral 27 January 2017

Joyce, Ruth-Ann, Thomas and family wish to thank everyone for their kind words, cards and generous donations received for St Agatha's Church and Watlington nursing home in memory of Dick.

Please accept this as our personal acknowledgement.

Kind regards, *Thomas*

Save the Children

As we all look forward to spring and lighter evenings, the major charities move towards holding their annual collection weeks. Save the Children week is 23-29 April when we will be carrying out our usual house to house collection in the village.

In May we have two major fund raising events:

- **On 13 May** the annual plant stall in the Square is being held between 10am and 12 noon;
- **On 21 May** we are providing teas for the Open Gardens. We will be serving the teas in the garden of South Cottage, just a few houses down from the two beautiful open gardens in Sotwell Street. Please come and enjoy a cup of tea and piece of cake; and we will also have plants for sale.

Good news - following on from more than a year of campaigning by Save the Children, the government has heard the message. They have announced plans to boost the number of early years' teachers in nurseries. Save the Children has been able to demonstrate, through its work in some of the most deprived areas of Britain, that early intervention can have a massive impact on young children's lives and futures.

Celia Collett, Chairman - Wallingford & District Branch

Parish Council

Again, the majority of the Parish Council time since the last *Villager* has been spent working on the Neighbourhood Plan. At last we have entered the next phase, Reg16, with yet more consultation. The Neighbourhood Plan is now on the SODC website and villagers are encouraged to comment on the Plan and it's supporting documents during the six week consultation period running from Thurs 16 March to Fri 28 April at 5pm, either by using this online survey <http://survey.southandvale.gov.uk/s/BcSconsultation/?m=22588413kqvsk>, or if you prefer, emailing planning.policy@southoxon.gov.uk or by post to Planning Policy, South Oxfordshire District Council, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Abingdon, OX14 4SB.

The police would be very keen to know if anyone saw anything related to the smashing of the glass in the bus stop on the High Road some time during the weekend of 4 March. If you do have any information, please contact Lucy, the Parish Council Clerk (details below) or ring 101 to speak to the police.

We would like to remind those living in a conservation area that if they wish to prune (or do any work to) a tree on their property that has a girth of more than 75 mm diameter, they must firstly apply for a 'notice of intent' from SODC.

If you are interested in reading the minutes of the Parish Council meetings, they are available on the public notice boards by the village hall and by Longwall. Sometimes, however, there are too many pages to fit on the notice board or they get damaged or removed, If this happens, you can access them also on the Parish Council website (www.brightwellcumsotwellpc.org) or by contacting Lucy (Parish Clerk) who can email or post them to you. Her email is bcsparishcouncil@googlemail.com.

We have had a few problems with builders' lorries damaging property and verges recently. If you see this happening please will you tell Lucy (details above) or Sue on 0790 5493690 as we can't do anything about it unless it's witnessed.

Open Gardens

Two gardens will be open on Sunday 21 May from 2-5pm in Sotwell Street at Dobsons and next door, at The Priory, under the NGS (yellow book) scheme. Teas will be provided nearby at South Cottage in aid of Save the Children.

Anne Salisbury and Trish Scroggs

Brightwell Parish Church – St Agatha's with St James'

Spring is the season of new life. You don't need to be a gardener to notice the buds, blossom, shoots and flowers – 'Now the green blade riseth' as the Easter anthem goes and our gardens spring to life. This reminds me of the importance of gardens as the backdrop for Holy Week and Easter... on the night when he was betrayed, Jesus prayed in the garden of Gethsemane. John the Gospel-writer informs us that at the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden and in the garden a new tomb. On the third day, Mary Magdalene, glimpsing Jesus through her tears, at first mistakes him for the gardener.

The Biblical story, from beginning to end, can be told as the story of three gardens. It begins in the Garden of Eden where the first humans succumb to temptation and reject God, 'not God's will, but ours be done.' Humanity is banished from this garden to the wilderness of a fallen world, paradise lost. The next garden is the olive grove of Gethsemane where Jesus is tempted to save himself and abandon God's plan for redemption. But Jesus resists temptation with the prayer not my will, but thine be done; 'a second Adam to the fight and to the rescue came.' Lastly, there is the garden of resurrection. The 'garden tomb' in which the body of Jesus was laid at sundown on Good Friday becomes the empty tomb of Easter Day. It is there that the angels announce to the women, 'He is not here, he is risen'; and there that Mary sees Jesus before returning to the others exclaiming, 'I have seen the Lord!'. Over the next forty days many more see Jesus, touch him, eat with him and, through their testimony and the witness of the Holy Spirit, the presence of the risen Jesus begins the long slow task of transforming the wasteland back into God's garden, paradise regained; a work that will come to completion when God brings in his new heaven and new earth (Revelation 21, 22) - behold, I make all things new!

As spring comes, I look forward to spending more time outdoors. Hopefully I can keep the vicarage garden in a reasonable state, although my gardening skills mainly involve pushing a lawn mower! Whether you will be gardening or not, I hope that, like me, you will find time to reflect on this story of the three gardens and what it means for us and for our world.

Rev Kevin Beer

Email: teamvicar@wallingfordcofe.org.uk

Tel: 01491 599873 (day off Monday)

www.wallingfordcofe.org.uk

Special Parish Events

- **Palm Sunday 9 April:** Gather at 10.15am at St James to walk with a donkey to St Agatha's for a dramatised reading of the Passion story from St Matthew's gospel, followed by a picnic lunch (weather permitting).
- **At 6pm on the same day** our augmented choir will sing Stainer's "Crucifixion" (St Agatha's).
- **Maundy Thursday 13 April:** 'The Lord's Supper' – a shared fellowship meal at St Agatha's
- **Easter Sunday 16 April:** Festival Family Communion, 9.30am at St Agatha's
- **Annual Parish Church meeting:** 7.30pm Thursday 27 April (St Agatha's)
- **Spring Cleaning St Agatha's :** Saturday 29 April, from 9.30am
- **Safari Supper:** Sat 13 May 7pm
- **Spring fair:** Sat 20 May 2pm
- **Rogation Sunday 21 May:** Team Service - 10am at Highland Farm, followed by a picnic lunch (weather permitting).

Art Haus Club

Graphic designer Natalie Bright started the Art Haus Club over three years ago, developing classes and workshops for children to discover the world of arts and craft. 'Art helps encourage freedom, expression and relaxation. The children can get messy and explore new ideas, inspired by their own imaginations' Natalie states on her website www.arthausclub.co.uk. Natalie moved to the village recently and is starting classes for two age groups at the village hall, both with a party atmosphere and some learning along the way.



Super Sundays Prepare to get messy! Painting and craft activities 10-11.30am on 16 April, 21 May, 18 June, 16 July, 20 Aug, 17 Sept, 15 Oct, 19 Nov, 17 Dec, for children aged 5-13 years. £8 per child. Each session will cover a different theme with two activities.

Magical Mondays For children aged 18 months -5 years, 10-11am on Mondays 15 May, 22 May, 19 June, 26 June. £5 per child.

Contact Natalie for more information on arthausclub@gmail.com.

Community Association

Village quiz evening – Saturday 11 March at 7.30pm

Congratulations to the Staggerers who won a very close contest, and a big thank you to the Red Lion team who set the questions. It was nice that so many teams took part in this wonderful village event, we are grateful to all who attended and look forward to seeing you all next year.

Safari Supper- Saturday 13 May at 7pm

This successful event is being run again this year in conjunction with St Agatha's. To book a place please use the form in this month's *Villager*. If you have any queries please contact Lynn on 01491 833009.

Village fete – Saturday 1 July at 2pm - Moreton House

Once again we are grateful to Jim and Madeline Sanger for allowing us to use their lovely garden. Please book 1 July in your diaries, and ensure all holiday plans are changed. Look out for more details about the event and the schedule and entry forms for the Flower and Produce Show in the next edition of *The Villager*.

Fun Run – 24 September

The Community Association is again organising a Fun Run starting at the Island Farm Donkey Sanctuary at the end of September with the emphasis on the fun aspect and everybody enjoying the delightful scenery of our village. More details will follow next time.

AGM 26 September 7.30pm

James Davys, Chairman

COLOUR and CLAY exhibition returns to St. Agatha's on Saturday 13 May 9.30am-5.30pm and Sunday 14 May 10.30am-5.30pm.

Amazing pots, bright palettes and textiles.

Tea and cake and original cards will be sold in aid of the Children's Society.

Please visit to see creations from Anne, Jennie, Marion, Roger and Rosemary

Party in the hall

Ten, twenty or even thirty years ago the village hall hosted many more social events, parties, and dare I say disco dances! It would be good to try and kick start a few of those social activities again? They are quite informal and a great place to meet new friends in the village. To mark getting the Stewart Room back again as a function room, the hall is hosting a party on 21 April, from 8pm; it is also the Queen's Birthday, another very good reason to celebrate. It will be an opportunity to get together with other villagers. We will provide light nibbles, like crisps and nuts, but it is up to you to bring your own drinks of choice and any other food, a sort of BYO. Admission will be only £5 each, which will go towards much needed and urgent repair work to the village hall.

For more information or tickets please contact Shena Luck on 01491 834543 or shenaluck@btconnect.com.

If this event is successful, we would like to try the next one later in the year with live music!

Shena Luck

Allsorts Preschool

The children have enjoyed doing lots of baking this term whilst thinking about healthy choices. They have made - and eaten - carrot soup, jam tarts, rock cakes, pizza, fruit smoothies, mini-quiche, to name a few. The children served their friends in the Allsorts Cafe as part of the same theme. We have made a theatre in the play room, where our budding musicians and actors can perform in front of their friends.

Our wild learning opportunities are starting again this term and the children have been taking pictures of the signs of Spring. They will also be painting the daffodils, exploring the park for blossom and finding items to display on our nature table. The children enjoyed their visit to Highlands farm, where the weather didn't dampen the spirits of our little explorers as they watched the lambs, climbed on tractors and splashed in muddy puddles. All good preparation for our annual Welly Walk in March, where we raise funds to keep Allsorts the vibrant place that it is. We will also be talking about the life-cycles of plants and animals as we move forward into Easter.

Saffron Nowinska

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Primary School

The Department for Education has now approved Brightwell School's academy conversion with Wallingford School. The conversion process is likely to take about 6 months but this does mean that the links between the schools will become still stronger during the second part of this academic year and will be on a formal basis. In particular, the handover of headship will take place as planned with Mrs Fin Lewis taking over full time from Easter.

Work at school continues. The topic for Bramley Class (reception and year1) and Russet Class (year 1 and 2) is 'Chocolate'. It's Year 1's turn to go to Forest School this term. In Worcester Class (Year 3/4) the children are continuing with their Roman topic. Discovery Class (Year 5/6) are basing their English work around 'Welcome to Nowhere' by local author Elizabeth Laird, a book about Syrian refugees. They are also finding out about Food Miles and will visit Odds Farm in High Wycombe.

The children benefit from the weekly visit of a Sports Coach, Mark. This term, he and his colleague Charlotte are teaching the children Street Dance – it's good to see children learning a new skill and becoming more confident in expressing themselves. We also have a violin teacher every Monday morning who works with year 3/4 children. They are going to put on a concert at the end of term!

Our focus for Wednesday afternoons is "Stories of Spring". As well as myths from Egypt and Greece, we will also spend time working on the Easter story with the help of the Reverend Kevin. Kevin will preside over our end of term Easter Service in church on Friday 7 April.

A highlight of the term so far has been English week which coincided with World Book Day. There was the chance for story writing, reading in unusual places, reading with parents and with students from Wallingford School, a visit to Wallingford School library and of course a chance for some imaginative dressing up. We were lucky that on World Book Day itself, Ali Manning from Wallingford Bookshop came along with boxes of the £1 books so that children could exchange their tokens.

As usual, if you want to find out more about the school, do look at our website <http://www.brightwell.oxon.sch.uk> and our Facebook page!

David Burrows and Fin Lewis, Headteachers

Brightwell School's 175th birthday

Brightwell School is celebrating its 175th birthday this academic year and to mark the occasion we will be organising a picnic on the school playing field to take place on the afternoon of Saturday 24 June. Past pupils, future pupils, teachers and parents are all invited along. We are still finalising the event so put the date in your diary and spread the word; all are warmly invited. More details to follow; if you would like to help contact Alison Debney.

Village Stores & Post Office

Recently a resident from a nearby village came into the shop to use the Post Office. Not an unusual occurrence, we have quite a few people who prefer to come to us to post their letters and parcels or draw some cash rather than go to Wallingford or Didcot.

However, as a new customer they could not get over the little gem we had tucked away behind the village hall. She commented on the choice and variety of goods, the range of services on offer and the friendly staff and volunteers. Leaving she said she wished she lived in Brightwell as her village had none of these.

We are very pleased to offer these services; and we are increasing our stock all the time and will always try and get what our customers want. New and old customers receive a warm welcome and there is always the opportunity to become involved in many different ways. Here are just a few:

- Become a member for a minimum donation of £1
- Join our team of volunteers
- Be an advocate

Or just enjoy coming to the shop and Post Office to use our services, this will enable us to continue to provide them for you.

Lastly, our Easter opening hours for shop and Post Office are as follows:-

- Good Friday – open 9am-12 noon
- Easter Saturday – open 9am-1pm
- Easter Sunday – closed
- Easter Monday – closed

Celia, Chairman Management Committee

In memory of Ron Wood

Ron Wood, who died earlier this year, was a regular contributor to *The Villager* in the early 2000s, providing reminiscences of the village he knew as a boy in the 1930s, which everyone loved to read about. He took us back in time to the days when the population was only half what it is today, when horses and carts but no cars or lorries were in the Street, and most of the land around the village was permanent meadow. He introduced us to 'characters' like Zonk the road sweeper (Mr George Barlow) and Mr Stanley Kew the baker who gave children 'Tommy Loaves' from his cart; and to the ways the village children amused themselves at the time – playing whipping tops and long rope skipping, kite flying, sailing 'boats' down the stream along Brightwell Street, lighting fires in the woods as well as of course football and cricket on the Rec.

In his memory, we have re-printed some extracts from one of these below. More of his school day memories can be found on the village website www.brightwellcumsotwell.co.uk.

Brightwell School 80 years ago

The first bell rang from the school tower at ten minutes to nine. This was to warn those children still sailing sticks and leaves on the stream running down the side of Brightwell Street that they had better be at school by five minutes to nine, when the bell would ring again.



The school, now the village hall of course, looks very much the same today apart from the recent additions at the rear. The interior was very different. The large room you enter into the hall today held four classes of children, from 5 to 14 years old, in only three classrooms.

The infants' teacher, Mrs Sutton, had a small classroom nearest to the road. The poor infants, when they needed to be excused, had to go out through the heavy main door of the school, if they could open it, then walk, or run, depending upon the degree of urgency, all the way along the side of the school to the unheated bucket lavatories by the playground, then back of course, even if it was pouring with rain.

At the northern end of the room was another very small classroom. There was just enough room for Mrs Reynolds and her blackboard and easel at the front of the class. The large middle room held two classes. The younger children, aged 9, 10 and 11, teacher Miss Steel, had the northern half, while Mr Rowe, the headmaster, had a class of 12, 13 and 14 year old children. Most children stayed in this one room for five or six years. The two classes, all children facing east, were separated by a well-worn curtain strung partly across the room. If you sat by the curtain and had good hearing, you could almost choose which lesson to listen to - but woe betide you if you couldn't answer later questions. As the curtain didn't stretch all the way across, Mr Rowe was able to observe both classes and also, he could hear practically every word Miss Steel spoke, as she was only a few yards away from him. How this good lady ever stood the strain of teaching under such conditions, I shall never know. No teacher today would countenance such a situation. Not for one moment.

The dinner 'hour' was a long one from 12 till 1.30 pm to allow the children living in Sotwell and at the bottom of Mackney to get home for something to eat and drink. I think the Mackneyites cut across the Haycroft then along 'Witches Walk' and into the lane. The children then had two journeys to school each day regardless of the weather.

As for discipline at the school, the cane was in the background, but its use was almost non-existent. Mr Rowe had a much better remedy. He made it known to the older boys, where any serious misbehaviour would come from, that anyone over-stepping the accepted level of indiscipline, would have to miss his next gardening lesson on the allotment and stay at school and sing with the girls. I don't think this punishment was ever carried out; the mere threat of it was enough to curb even the most likely candidate.

On Friday afternoons, there was just time for a quick drink at the fountain in front of the school before running after friends, and so make plans, no doubt, for that magical day, called Saturday.

Ron Wood (First printed in The Villager June/July 2002)

Beating the Bounds 2017

Saturday 24 June: Meet 11.00am opposite The Red Lion (at the Red Phone Box Gallery)

It is a few years since we beat the parish bounds. Last time, we walked the full parish boundary, with a hearty crew of 20 or so making the entire journey. We marked our crosses at key points and said goodbye to Slade End Fields (that had been part of Brightwell since the founding of the parish in 854 AD but were destined to be swallowed up by Wallingford). We even managed to throw a small boy across a boundary ditch and beat many a poor boundary tree with our hazel sticks! There is tradition behind this strange event – a Brightwell custom that we know goes back into the mists of time.

The modern parish of Brightwell-cum-Sotwell is made from four separate estates that were themselves all part of a larger Saxon Brightwell manor. In 2017, we will be beating the Sotwell Bounds – or at least the boundary as it was immediately before Sotwell and Brightwell were re-joined in the 1940s.

Meeting at the Red Phone Box Gallery (opposite the Red Lion) we will make our way over the Hill to the Thames before returning to the village. On entering the village we will follow the exact boundary (its route will astound you!). As the boundary passes straight through the middle of one old cottage (through the back door and out of the garage door at the front), we are fortunate that the owners have agreed to let us preambule through their home just as it was done in the past. We will then make our way to 'The Evils', before turning north on Mackney Lane to join the school for their 175th Birthday festivities at 3.00 pm. There will be opportunity to walk the whole route or just some of it; more details later. It should be great fun!

Jason Debney

Lambing weekend at the Earth Trust

Come and see us down on the farm during one of our annual lambing weekends - Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 April, 11am-4pm.

Meet lambs, piglets, goats and more; and craft activities and refreshments will be available. £7 adult, £3 child, £17 family (discount for online bookings), FREE for Earth Trust Friends.

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Deckchair Cinema

Saturday 15 July Slade End House

After the success of last year's open-air cinema we will be hosting another evening of film under the stars in the wonderful surroundings of Slade End House. The format will be the same as last year. Doors open at 7.00 pm for picnics and drinks, with the film starting around 9.15 after the sun goes down. Tickets will be on sale at the shop. There is just the question of what film to show.

We asked for suggestions for a good film. All 26 suggestions have been placed on an online voting page. To vote (you will only be allowed one vote) go to <https://goo.gl/mdhMTc> and make your choice. Hurry though as the link does not last forever. All profits go towards the refurbishment of the children's play equipment on the Rec and at Kings Meadow.

The Deckchair Cinema Team

Brightwell Short Mat Bowls Club

Would anyone like to try short mat bowling? Our village club meets every Wednesday evening and Thursday afternoon in the village hall for approx one and half to two hours.

We need new members to give the club a boost. If you have not played before, don't worry, plenty of helpful advice is available and we are there for pleasure rather than competition,

Please phone Adrian on 837617 or Roger on 837175 for Wednesday evenings, or Brian on 824667 for Thursday afternoons - a chance to meet new people in a friendly atmosphere.

Adrian Collett

Brightwell Supporting Refugees AGM

BSR, which is now registered as a charity, will hold its first AGM in the Church Room on 10 May at 7.30pm. All are welcome to attend and share their thoughts on the group's activity and future direction.

Angela Lewis

News from the Bach Centre

Before he settled in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell in 1934, Edward Bach spent four years travelling around southern Britain, finding and testing plants as he built up the number of remedies.

The spring and summer he might be in Wallingford, Wales or Surrey, but most winters he would end up in Cromer in Norfolk. One of the addresses he lived in when in that town was 4 Brunswick Terrace, a small terraced house close to the sea. He also found some of the early remedy plants in the countryside nearby.

We were pleased to learn recently that the local council in Cromer unveiled a blue plaque on the house on 25 February, to commemorate Dr Bach's association with the town. It was part of an ongoing programme they have, which aims to install three blue plaques per year.

The honour in 2017 also went to Priscilla Buxton, who lived in Cromer in the 1820s and 30s and was active in the campaign to abolish slavery; and to Clement Scott, the theatre critic and travel writer.

Dr Bach loved Cromer and we're sure he would have been surprised and touched to know that he is still remembered there.

Stefan Ball

Vehicle theft

We have seen a rise in vehicle thefts over the past few months and strongly advise that you remove tools from vans and cars overnight. Be aware of who is watching you and of vehicles following you home. When visiting beauty spot car parks do not leave anything on show - if you do, expect it to go! Do not think it is safe in the boot. Thieves will smash the back window and parcel shelf to access your boot area. They are quite often watching from a distance to see if you place handbags etc in the boot. Be mindful not to leave door keys in the car. Quite often there is something in the vehicle with your address on and you would need to change the locks on your home.

If you see anyone acting suspiciously please dial 101 (non-emergency number) or if you think a crime is being committed 999.

Police Community Support Officers Sue Harris and Marie Davenport

Go Active Gold

This project funded by Sport England to support exercise for the over 60s in rural villages has the following new activities taking place in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell:



Nordic Walking: Wednesdays at 9.30 am from outside the village hall; free (6 weeks). Starts 22 March;

Strength and Balance: Thursdays at 12.15–1.15pm in the village hall. £4. Starts 24 March;

Yoga (seated as an option): Fridays at 1.00–2.00 pm in the village hall. £4. Starts 31 March.

To register your interest email Conor.Grogan@southandvale.gov.uk or call Conor on 07717 326660.

These activities are targeted at 60+ but anyone over 55 is welcome to come along.

Keep on swimming...

Also available, an exclusive offer for unlimited swimming during April for £5 to senior residents living in rural villages aged 60+. Call 01235 422226 or complete the online registration form **before 1 April** at www.getoxfordshireactive.org/go-active-gold.

Conor Grogan

A day for all photographers

Wallingford Photographic Club is hosting a major photographic event at the Corn Exchange Wallingford on Saturday 22 April. Melvin Nicholson, one of the UK's top landscape photographers, will be conducting a full day of lectures and demonstrations. This is a chance to see and hear how a top professional goes about his craft and learn how to improve your own landscape photography. Tickets £15 at the Corn Exchange box office or on line, www.cornexchange.org.uk.

Eric Dore

The Red Lion

As we finally say goodbye to winter and head into spring, we'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for supporting us during what is traditionally the quietest time of the year.

Running a pub in a small village, in the depths of January or Banuary as everybody calls it nowadays, can be very difficult. The bills still come in, but sometimes the customers don't. But you did, so a very, heartfelt thank you from myself and all the staff for your continued loyalty. Like all small rural businesses, we can only survive with your support and patronage.

What we try to do, is create something for you to enjoy, to experience and to make you want to keep coming back. Every Friday and Saturday we are now offering two Gourmet Specials on top of our regular menu. Why not treat yourself to something you wouldn't normally cook – if you love it, I'm sure chef will happily give you the recipe!

We are also continuing with our popular live music events. There's one virtually every Sunday, from jazz to rock, to open night and who knows what!

The last Monday of each month is Pub Charity Quiz Night where we raise money for good causes. Are you involved with a good cause? If you want to run a quiz and raise some money, just speak to Mark. We don't charge anything and we provide the famous Red Lion chilli for free for you to sell on the night, so every penny raised, goes to your good cause.

The Brightfest17 Charity Music Festival date has been set at Saturday 3 June, so keep that day free and look out for more details in the near future.

For other pub related information, check out our Facebook page and brand new website, (due to launch shortly) for full details of what's going on. If you haven't signed up to our regular email, then please do so, as the information comes straight to you.

One last point to note; in a recent survey, we were the cheapest pub/restaurant around! Please do let us know if there is anything we don't do that you think we should...within reason!

Mark Brock and The Red Lion Team

Brightwell Bees

It has been an amazing 11 years since we started our beekeeping journey. Whoever thought that a chance conversation with Viola Crowe who had been keeping bees in the village for a great many years would bring such a change to our lives? We started out with one beehive and now have over 70!

Spring is an exciting yet anxious time for beekeepers as we inspect our hives on mild sunny days to see how our bees have fared over winter. We check inside the hives to make sure they have a viable queen, lots of worker bees and plenty of food stores. The bees have been busy foraging for nectar and pollen, building up their numbers so that the hive colonies are strong and ready to go out and pollinate our crops. At the time of writing they are foraging on the early hedgerow blossom such as the white flowered cherry plum and pussy willow.

We are always asked by people how they can help bees. Planting flowers which bees love is a good start. If you have space, easy things to grow are spring bulbs such as snowdrops, aconites and crocus. In the summer, bees love herbs such as marjoram, thyme, mint and lavender. In late summer they adore sedum and asters. In the autumn, a very important late source of nectar and pollen is ivy. In fact for one type of solitary mining bee, *Colletes hederæ* (Ivy bee) this is their sole food source. Of course ivy berries have the added bonus of being an important food for our birds in the winter. The RHS have an excellent Perfect for Pollinators plant list on their website. We are very fortunate that Brightwell-cum-Sotwell has wonderful gardens, lovely ancient hedgerows and wild uncut areas. All make a perfect habitat for bees.

During the spring and summer, we have a lot of calls from people concerned about various bees and wasps in their garden. There is usually nothing to worry about and the following websites have a great deal of information which covers most questions: www.bumblebeeconservation.org for anything about bumblebees and www.bwars.com for other types of bee and wasps. www.bbka.org.uk for honeybees.

Finally, I collect bee related poems and quotations and would like to leave you with this by Jonathan Swift (1667-1745)

Honey and wax furnish mankind with the two noblest of things which are sweetness and light.

Viv Moll

Environment Group

Talk and the Group's General meeting on 25 April

Tim Allen of the Oxford Archaeological Unit is going to give the group's Spring talk. His subject is "The Prehistory and History of the Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Area". Tim has taken part in digs on the Wittenham Clumps and should have a lot to tell us on finds and what they reveal about the past in our and neighbouring parishes. The General meeting of the group will also be held to consider reports from officers and to elect a new committee. Village hall, 8pm.

Millennium Wood

The group manages the Wood on behalf of the Parish Council who were gifted the land by the District Council. For several years, advice on its management has come from the Oxfordshire Woodland Group whose members visited the wood in February. Following discussion about a long-term management plan, seats and an information board were suggested. It was agreed that thinning of stunted and dead trees will continue and the tidying of the undergrowth. The ill-fitting gate at the entrance is to be replaced.

Weather and Climate

December, January and February have been dry months with Rosemary Greasby recording less than half the average rainfall. Should this trend continue into the summer, crops will suffer stress and gardeners will need to use a lot of water.

On 9 March 2017, the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere measured at Mauna Loa Observatory, Hawaii was 405 part per million (ppm), the highest concentration reached in modern times. Pre-industrial revolution levels were about 270 ppm. The UK government is committed to reduce levels to 80% of 1990 (about 350ppm) levels by 2050. There are just 33 years to 2050 but national, county and district levels of government seem to be uninterested in meeting this target. Indeed many of their actions seem to be promoting CO2 increases.

John Rodda

Our next meeting on Tuesday 11 April at 7.30 pm will be an open meeting where guests are welcome. The speaker is Graham Harrison on 'Poisons for medicine in Victorian times'.

Helen Connor

Corn Exchange roof appeal

As many of you will have heard by now, a great deal of work is needed on the historic and much loved Corn Exchange in Wallingford. Currently, around £250,000 has been raised towards a target of £500K

The public's awareness has been enhanced by a video set in the auditorium of the Corn Exchange. In little over a week, it was seen globally on YouTube by 13,154 people. Audiences have been shown it before film screenings helping to prompt donations as they leave. Head of the fundraising sub committee John Warburton, who features in the video, said: *"Our thanks to everyone who has donated so far. We still have a way to go but we are confident we will be able to raise the total amount for this major project. We have a team of highly motivated people, all volunteers, who are spending an incredible amount of time identifying ways to raise the cash and writing applications. The Corn Exchange is a vital community asset and what we are doing will ensure its long-term future."*

Replacement of the 160-year-old roof, which is leaking, together with other important infrastructure will begin in June. Cracked glass roof panels will be replaced with zinc sheets. While this is being done, the roof itself will be raised a few inches to allow extra insulation and which, in turn, will reveal more of the attractive cast iron arches and the currently hidden wooden glazing bars. Work will also take place to replace or improve on-stage facilities, lighting structures, gantries, auditorium heating and ventilation.

*Donations can be made at www.just-giving.com/sinodun-players, by cash at the Corn Exchange box office or by sending a cheque (payable to Sinodun Players) to John Warburton, Corn Exchange, Market Place, Wallingford OX10 0EG.

Carol Evans



Barn dance for Corn Exchange appeal

As part of the fundraising for the Corn Exchange new glass roof (see above) a barn dance is being held on Saturday 29 April 2017 at the Corn Exchange. There will be a bar and light supper. £12.50 a head or a table for 10 costs £100. Tickets available from the Corn Exchange Box Office. More information from Lynn Burrige (07989 270605).

In brief – round and about

Sinodun Players

17-20 May Sinodun Players' present **Return to the Forbidden Planet**, a thrilling, energetic, high-octane, jukebox musical, based on The Tempest by William Shakespeare. Tickets and more information from box office or on 01491 825000 or www.cornexchange.org.uk.

Wallingford Country Market

Have you visited recently? Open each Friday morning in the Regal Centre between 8.30 am–12 noon. The gardening table is looking great at the moment with spring bulbs, colourful primroses and polyanthus and delightful small posies of spring flowers. Bakers are busy producing freshly cooked items each week. Why not treat yourself to a delicious cake this Easter? Orders can be placed for most items on sale. The Easter Market will be on Maundy Thursday, 13 April, 2017, replacing our Friday Market.

Wallingford Museum

New exhibitions for this season are '**Pettits: past to present**', a history of Wallingford's department store, and a little about the family who ran it from its beginning in 1856 to the present day; '**Wallingford Castle - the Inside Story**', a closer look at different parts of the castle based on recent research; and '**Ways to Wallingford**' describing how Wallingford has been an important crossing point on the Thames since the Saxon times.

Guided Historical walks

8 April 11am, a castle history walk, and 2.30pm a town history walk, both guided by local historian Judy Dewey and lasting 2 hours - £6.

Full details of these and other Saturday walks over the summer at www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk.

Wallingford Gardening Club

13 April The club's prestigious annual 'Bill Baker Memorial Lecture' will be given by Timothy Walker, former Director of the University of Oxford Botanic Garden & Harcourt Arboretum - 'Bordering on Insanity' - creating an all-year-round border'. **11 May** – The Lavender Story: (Tim Butler), Visitors welcome - £3, Ridgeway Community Church, Contact Isabelle Darby on 01491-836867. **13 May** – the Club's Annual Plant Sale in Wallingford Market Place.

Wallingford Science Exchange

23 May 7.30pm – A talk & Q&A by Roel Verhoeven, the Culham Centre for Fusion Energy on 'Nuclear Fusion: An Engineer's View' at Wallingford School. Contact Amanda Holland on amanda.holland1@ntlworld.com.

Style Acre

This local charity that supports adults with learning difficulties would welcome villagers at their events:

Woofs & Wellies walk around Blewbury ending at their tea room – 1 April;

Race Night at the George Hotel hosted by Mayor Ros Lester – tickets £10 including ploughman's dinner – 5 May;

Access All Areas – a day of activities, workshops and fun for people with learning difficulties at Cornerstone Arts, Didcot – 19 May.

Contact Chris Burrows via <http://styleacre.org.uk> or 01491 82759.

Dorchester Festival 28 April - 7 May 2017

This 7th festival in Dorchester Abbey is raising money for the Abbey and Sue Ryder, Nettlebed Hospice. The programme of 55 events includes past treasures such as The Tallis Scholars and Out of the Blue; family events such as Science Mad afternoon, a scarecrow trail, a dog show and the Food & Gift Fair; a Big Band Bond Night and jazz singer Cate Cody, plus Showstopper!, an improvised musical and Olivier award winner for Best Family Show which has sold out 7 consecutive years at the Edinburgh.

www.dorchesterfestival.com.

VILLAGE DIARY

April

4	Bosley's Orchard developer's meeting	VH	7.00pm
9	Palm Sunday walk from St James to St Agatha's		10.15am
9	Concert – Stainer's Crucifixion	St Agatha's	6.00pm
11	WI Open Meeting	VH	7.30pm
13	"The Lord's Supper" – a shared fellowship meal	St Agatha's	7.00pm
16	Easter Sunday family service	St Agatha's	9.30am
21	Party in the hall	VH	8.00pm
23	Save The Children week		
25	Environment Group General talk & meeting	VH	8.00pm
27	Annual Parish Church meeting	St Agatha's	7.30pm

May

10	Brightwell Supporting Refugees AGM	Church RM	7.30pm
13/14	Colour & Clay exhibition	St Agatha's	9.30&10.30
13	Save the Children plant sale		10.00am
13	Safari Supper – starting with drinks at St Agatha's		7.00pm
20	Spring Church fair – Brightwell Manor		2.00pm
21	Open Gardens with teas – Sotwell Street		2.00pm
21	Rogation Service at Highlands Farm		10.00am

Advance Notice

3 June	Brightfest 17
24 June	Beating of the Bounds & Brightwell School's 175 th birthday
25 June	Summer concert at St Agatha's
1 July	Community Association village fete – Moreton House
15 July	Deckchair Cinema

Refuse Collection (Food waste each week)

Grey bins	Thursday 6 & Friday 21 April Friday 5 & Thursday 18 May
Green (& brown) bins	Thursdays 13 & 27 April Thursdays 11 & 25 May (+ additional garden waste 25 th)

Village website

For more information about Brightwell-cum-Sotwell visit the village website: www.brightwellcumshotwell.co.uk.