

The Villager

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell

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Items for the next edition should be sent to the Editor by 1 Sept 2014.

The Villager is published every other month and delivered free to all households in the village.

Editorial

It has been a busy last few months in the village as you will read in this issue of your *Villager*. Starting with the Church Spring Fair in May through to BrightFest, the Summer Concert and the lovely Village Fete and Produce Show last Saturday, the sun shone (at least most of the time). A big thank you to all the many volunteers who put in so much of their own time and effort to make these events so enjoyable.

Jason and his team have been busy writing the Community-led Parish Plan Report, which is being printed as we go to press, so a copy will be coming through your door in early August. One action in the Report is about encouraging younger people to get more involved in village life and so to help with this, I am looking to appoint a junior reporter to work with me on *The Villager*. It will be just for one year to start with, that's six issues, and then someone else can take over. If anyone aged 11-18 living in the parish would like this opportunity, please get in touch with me and I can give you more details of what I had in mind.

We have two enclosures with this issue (we normally only have one at a time, but both were felt to be important to get out to you now). One is about the Community Orchard, which recently had the go-ahead and will be planted this Autumn (see also article on page 14); and the second is about the first of the new Defibrillators to be installed in the old telephone boxes around the Parish, by the Parish Council. Their article on page 5 also has important news about changes (again) by SODC to local plans relating to housing which they want to draw your attention to.

Some of you have told me how you like reading about village life in the past and so I am re-printing a piece about life here in the 20s and 30s which was first published in *The Villager* in 1995. I find it really fascinating, hope you do too. I am planning to mark the centenary of World War I over the next four years with a series of articles about what happened here then, who gave their lives and how life changed in the parish. I have already collected some remembrances but if any of you have any personal stories you would like to contribute, please do get in touch (at the villagerbcs@gmail.com).

And finally, if your overhanging branches or hedges make it difficult for people walking along the pavements in the village, could you give them a prune. It would be much appreciated, especially for those with buggies or in wheelchairs.

Helen Connor

Letters

Thank you Brightwell-cum-Sotwell

I would like to thank everyone who attended BrightFest and donated to the charities by purchasing one of our grills. The team who served you all travelled from London for the day and the one thing that they all agreed on was how very friendly and welcoming everyone was. We all hope that BrightFest will live on and look forward to another 'pop-up' next year. The total donation made was £2199.53, an odd sum but then the two young boys who only had £3.53 between them did negotiate a small discount!

A special thanks to Lains Barn for trusting us with their very expensive new grill.

*Neil Worham,
Covent Garden Grill*

Community Association

Village Fete

Once again we enjoyed a beautiful Fete in the sublime setting of David and Jenny's lovely garden, many thanks to them once again for their kind hospitality. Despite the changeable weather it was a pleasure to see so many visitors. I am very pleased to say that our takings were up again this year to £4092. A big thank you to everybody who helped make this event such a success and one of the highlights of the Brightwell year, without all your hard work and generosity it could not happen. I am especially grateful to our Secretary Laura who co-ordinated the whole event so well.

Profits now get split between different village organisations, which bid to meet a specific funding need. All groups that want to apply for funds and haven't received an application form should contact our Treasurer, Susannah Mangion (tel 833757). While the rules are not hard and fast, we do try to favour organisations that have made big efforts to support the Fete and other fundraising events during the year.

Any comments and suggestions for the Fete in the future will be well received. Why not use the Villager to express your ideas.

American Bingo, Sat 18 October – Village Hall

Our next event will be an American Themed Bingo night, which will be lots of fun for all the family. It's not just a question of getting the numbers in a line but a whole range of different ways to win a prize. So come along and bring the whole family. Tickets are limited so if you would like to make an advanced booking please email our Secretary Laura at stardust_199@hotmail.com.

Annual General Meeting, Tues 23 September, 7.30pm – Village Hall

Please come to the AGM of the Community Association and enjoy a glass of wine and a chat with the Committee.

James Davys, Chairman

Flower and Produce Show 2014

We like to think we're not a panicky lot on the Produce Show Committee, but this year was definitely a test. By 6 pm on the Wednesday before the fete, we had half our usual number of entries – with only two for the junior section. Cue panicked email to the school, and lots of chivvying of friends and neighbours. The end result made up in quality what it lacked in quantity, but we'd like to give particular thanks to Tania Bevis, to the Allsorts team for their entries and to Hilary Rogerson who coaxed a wonderful couple of trays of colourful mosaics from the Beavers.

The show has traditionally been one of the highlights of the Fete, but it may be that there are newcomers to the village who don't know about it, or others who somehow think it's not for them. If this applies to you, think again. Or, better still, come and join our committee and tell us what classes you would like to see on the schedule. We will be rethinking the way we do things – including moving the deadline for entries from Wednesday to Thursday, when hopefully people find it easier to plan for the weekend.

Jenny Dobbin has said she wants to step down from the committee this year. We would like to thank her very much for all her help.

Sally Dugan

******* See Results Pages 11-13 *******

Parish Council

Local Plan 2031

Our District Council are undertaking an initial consultation on a Local Plan 2031 for South Oxfordshire which is effectively a new Core Strategy, even though it's only two years since the Core Strategy looking at development in South Oxfordshire was finalised. In Stage 1 of this process, SODC are suggesting options for where and how the housing could be allocated, issues and scope. This document is available on line at www.southoxon.gov.uk/newlocalplan. We would encourage you to tell us your views and participate in the consultation.

The Government says that housing numbers must be based on up to date evidence of requirements and not the South East Plan numbers, which has resulted in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). This states that there is a need for between 14,500 and 16,500 new homes in South Oxfordshire between 2011 and 2031. It provides a new evidence base for these numbers but not a final number of homes required.

The current Core Strategy states 10,540 homes are needed in this period, so the likely number of additional houses required, based on SODC's published data, is between 4,000 to 5,960 although this is not final and may increase. The implications of this are that it could force parishes to review their Neighbourhood Plans to increase the numbers they are planning for.

In their Local Plan 2031, SODC are suggesting there are 8 possible distribution options but that they are also open to other ideas. They are inviting people to challenge the numbers in the SHMA and are aiming to produce a Preferred Options Plan by the end of 2014 followed by a formal consultation period.

The public consultation period for individuals and councils to respond to the Local Plan 2031 ends on 23 July. However, this is not a hard ending and the Parish Council is requesting an extension. As a parish, it is imperative that we participate in this process, both as a council and individuals in order to ensure that the views of our community reflect our Parish Plan.

Defibrillator

As previously reported, the Parish Council are seeking to install a Public Access Defibrillator (cPAD) in one of the telephone boxes and possibly at one or two other locations in the parish. We are well on the way to being able to realise the first installation from funding raised by donations from a

number of local businesses and institutions (more details in enclosed leaflet).

Parish Path Wardens

Oxfordshire Ramblers, with the support of OCC Countryside Services, are seeking a path warden for every parish in the county. The role includes helping to keep the local paths accessible by regularly walking them and working with the parish council to report and resolve problems. If you would like to help, please contact Parish Clerk Lucy Dalby on 01491 826968 or bcsparishcouncil@googlemail.com.

Lucy Dalby, Parish Clerk

The Villager AGM 2014 – Chairman's report

The year has generally gone smoothly. We were glad to see Gerard return to the print team and that his health is getting progressively better.

I would like to welcome two new recruits to the teams. Susanne Tuffrey joined us last year and has become a stalwart of the print team. She has mastered the computer/printer link up for the text – a great asset. Martin Dix is to join Trevor with the Advertising management and as Trevor was away, delivered the advertising report. There have been a few changes of distributors but we still have a full team covering the whole village and surrounds.

We have been experimenting with a change of time for assembly as it clashed with the Pub Quiz on the last Monday of the month. So far the early afternoon time is working, but time will tell.

Betty has indicated that she would like to step down as Treasurer and suggested it would be a good idea to have another in place well before the next end of year in March 2015. We would all be delighted if anyone on the committee would like to step up; but if not we would welcome a suitable candidate.

I would like to thank the committee for their continued support and the various teams: production, printing, and distribution for their efforts which produce the magazine, not forgetting of course the scores of assembly and distribution volunteers who give their time, and also Paul Grainge our auditor.

Anne Brooker, Chairman

Parish Church

It has been a season of six weddings and not a few funerals, but a dearth of baptisms; so if you're hiding your babies from the vicar just let Janice know – her 'cry at the font' rate is better than mine!

In all seriousness, it is a pleasure to have something to offer into the highs and lows of disparate peoples' lives. When I stop to think about it, it makes me wonder at the immeasurable richness of life. At the black moments, when encountering suicide, it is well for us all to hang on, literally for dear life, to this richness we saw in life once but, for whatever dread reason, can now see no longer. The Psalms, God's own Glastonbury Festival, can sometimes help us make sense of the heights and depths. One line speaks volumes - it is simply the line 'darkness and light are both alike to Thee'. If you can find out which Psalm it comes from, I'm offering a prize.

As I come around with various thoughts, and pleas for more resources, I'm always conscious that your 'presence' is much more valuable than your 'presents', but that the two aren't unrelated either. So...come when you can, get involved when you can, and give when you can; but do please think carefully about these things, and together as church and village we will gradually make better sense of our lives, the heights & depths of them.

An advert, a query and several thanks, before I head for the Lakes...

- Harvest Festival is on 21 September, all welcome.
- Does anyone have a sit-on mower they are under using at the mo?
- Thank you to all involved in the Summer Concert - from Nick Cave to Mrs Beamish, and especially Alec.
- Thank you also to the Salisburys and to Simon for taming the yew trees in St James churchyard, and to Trevor for dealing with the practicalities, in memory of Anne Jones.

Jeremy Goulston

Brightwell Bell Ringing

Have you ever fancied to learn a new hobby? Why not try the great British tradition of bell ringing!

We are a friendly group of campanologists who meet at St Agatha's church on Tuesday evenings at 8.00pm. No experience is necessary and age is not a barrier – 10 to 80 years is very acceptable! All you need is enthusiasm, energy and a good sense of humour. Please contact Roy Thorpe, our tower captain on 837334 or Sue Hunt on 835787 for more details or to sign up for a hobby you are sure to enjoy.

Sue Hunt

Summer Concert

The summer concert has now become a regular feature in the village calendar. This year's event, the sixth, took place on 22 June and a good time was had by performers and audience alike. St Agatha's provides the ideal auditorium for an event of this kind and a lovely sunny evening meant there was the added benefit of interval drinks being served in the picturesque setting of the churchyard.

The musical side of the programme was lead by our 'Village choir' a combination of the church choir and other villagers who join up for the summer concert and for the Christmas carol service. If there are any readers who like to sing why not give the village choir a try? We'd be very pleased to see you. On this occasion, the choir started the evening with the well known African-American spiritual 'When the saints' followed later by a medley from the musical 'Carousel', Faure's 'Cantique de Jean Racine' and Rutter's 'A Clare Benediction'. We are indebted to Derek Nightingale for waving his baton and to John Musgrove on the piano.

The Barbershop Boys performed to their usual high standard, while Myron Edwards, Stanley Glendinning and Jasper Lynch all brought their guitars to add to the mix. Olive Sutcliffe, courtesy of Robert Stilgoe's Mrs Beamish, provided some amusing observations on the C of E. Those in the village in 2002 may recall a performance of Village People's 'YMCA' at the Rec to mark the Queen's Golden Jubilee. Three of the original cast, Andy Lewis, Bob Devey and Anthony Finn teamed up with John Linton and David Hedley in a re-run of this classic. A memorable moment! Another musical highlight was given by Flora McGivan with 'Magnificent and holy' from her gospel choir repertoire.

The summer concert combines music with poems and sketches of the humorous kind. Knighted for the occasion, Hugh Roderick as an investment banker was put under the spotlight by Guy Peach, while Robert Clive did a similar job on Andy Lewis's Nigel Farage. The wonderful Roger McGough's work figured prominently, one highlight being his 'At Lunchtime' read by Michael Drury. Lesley and Eric Dore provided a romantic moment which everyone loved; John Rodda summed up the frustrations of golf in response to a piece by John Betjeman; David Treadwell gave 'Mrs Worthington' a piece of his mind! Many thanks to all the other readers: Jeremy Goulston, Jim Sanger, Anne Hedley, Ann Linton, Sue Robson, Helen Connor, Margot Shawyer, Anthony Finn, Wendy Roderick and Amanda Potter. Finally huge thanks too to John

Burdass, Chris Baines and Janita Clamp without whom we 'd never put on the show.

Here's looking forward to next year. Let me know if you'd like to take part!

Alec McGivan

BrightFest 2014

We can't believe so much time has passed already since BrightFest – it was a fabulous day, and we were so lucky with the weather, despite the most amazing storm the night before which kept several of us awake worrying about all the equipment that had already been set up! Luckily, apart from one brief shower, the rain stayed away and the sun came out. The festival made around £6,000 (we don't have an exact figure as at the time of writing as we are still waiting for an invoice to arrive). This is a fantastic sum that will be split equally between our two charities, Help Helen to Help the Philippines and Save the Children.

We think this year's BrightFest was definitely the best yet, largely because the range of music worked so well. For this we have to say a massive thank you to Angus Devey-Robson who chose all the bands as well as planning, ordering and putting up the most incredible stage, lighting and sound systems. There can't be many village festivals that have such a professional set-up. There is no way we could have done it without him and his volunteer crew. Apart from the pre-planning, it took three days of hard work to set it all up, and then take it all down again - all unpaid. Thank you so much, Angus. The presence of the Covent Garden Grill pop up restaurant was also a great addition to BrightFest. Huge thanks to them for so generously giving ALL the money they made to the cause, which was over £2,000. Thanks also to all our sponsors, musicians and helpers - too many to mention here - but so important to the success of the event.

Most people already know that we are not going to be organizing another BrightFest, but we do hope someone will be inspired to take it on. We feel that after seven years it's time to let someone else have a go. We can hand over all our contacts details etc. and we look forward to 'passing on the baton'. Do let us know if you are interested (sooner rather than later as funding needs to be sought fairly well in advance!).

Thank you for all your support over the years. Only one complaint about the noise in seven years really can't be bad!!

Sue Robson & Helen Baines

Brightwell School

We have been busy here at Brightwell. The children from year 3, 4, 5 and 6 have produced a wonderful rendition of Midsummer Nights Dream performed in the school grounds. All the children took part in a fabulous Brightwell World Cup, sporting tie-dye football tops to compliment the international teams. Many children have also been representing our school in various sporting events this term. We are all looking forward to fun and games at the Brightwell Summer Fair on 17 July organised by our gallant and ever supportive parents. We are excited and looking forward to our new ball wall arriving during the summer and new play and discover resources for the early years. We really enjoyed meeting our new reception children and their families. Although we are sad to see our oldest children leave we know they are off on the next exciting step of their learning career. We wish all those who are leaving us, including staff members, a very happy farewell and to you all a relaxing and rejuvenating summer holiday.

Rachael Bentovim

Save the Children

We have had an amazing two months raising money for Save the Children. At the end of April, our team of helpers collected £615.87p in Save the Children week.

The Plant Stall (thanks to our band of growers) and the coffee morning in Ann Hedley's garden raised over £649.40p, despite the 24 May weather.

On 14 June, the brilliant BrightFest split the money raised between Save the Children and the International Disaster Volunteers. This amounted to a staggering £3,000 for each Charity. Thanks go to Sue, Helen, Angus, Matt, Mark, Neil, all the sponsors and countless other people who gave cakes, their time and money to the day. A marvellous achievement for everyone involved.

It didn't end there; the Brightwell Cricket Club and Red Lion held a Charity match on 20 June and gave us £235.50.

Save the Children can't thank the village enough for their generosity, the money will help the work being carried out in the UK, where unfortunately child poverty is rising. Plus, the ever-increasing needs of the children caught up in the conflict in the Middle East and around the world.

Thank you so much,

Celia Collett

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Flower and Produce Show 5 July 2014 - Results

TROPHIES

The Chilton Cup Simon Irving

The Win Glendenning Memorial Salver Charlotte Woods

The Talbot Rose Bowl Muriel and Ken Templeton

The Talbot Cup Paul Chilton

The Joan Sheard cup for the best under-16 entry in an adult class.

Natasha Zalinski

Junior Trophies

(9-12) Theo Costello and Jamie Zalinski

(5-8) Milly Homann

The Swan Allotments Cup for the best-kept allotment

Steve and Viv Moll

Flower Arranging, judged by Mrs Fay Crabbe

1. A miniature flower arrangement: 1. Sue Myatt 2. Rosemary Greasby 3. Janice Chilton
2. A hand tied bunch of flowers for a footballer's wife or girlfriend: 1. James Davys
3. An arrangement to commemorate the centenary of the First World War: 1. Charlotte Woods 2= Sally Dugan and Rosemary Greasby
4. A bowl of floating flowers: 1. Paul Chilton 2. Rosemary Greasby 3. Caroline Annets
5. Under-16s - an arrangement of garden flowers: No entries.
6. Men only - an arrangement on a football theme: 1. David Greasby 2= James Davys and Tony Debney

Flowers and Vegetables, judged by Sandra Halstead

7. Top Gardener - a vase of garden flowers and a box of fruit and/or vegetables 3-5 varieties: 1. Katherine Hutchinson
8. A Vase of Cottage Garden Favourites: 1. Paul Chilton 2. Mary Dunn 3. Janita Clamp

9. Most scented flower, single or small bunch of up to 5 stems. 1. Katherine Hutchinson 2. James Davys 3. Paul Chilton
10. A rose, Hybrid Tea – 1 stem: 1. Muriel & Ken Templeton 2. Mary Dunn 3. Caroline Annets
11. A rose, multi-headed – 1 stem: 1. Margaret Smith 2. Paul Chilton 3. Madeline Sanger
12. Three stems flowering shrub, not rose: 1. Jason Debney 2. Marie Connell 3. Mary Dunn
13. Most unusual potted plant, flowering or foliage: 1. Sarah Wintle 2. Helen Varley 3. Paul Chilton
14. Dish of soft fruit of one kind: 1. Paul Chilton 2. Margaret Smith 3. Paul Chilton
15. 3 sticks of rhubarb: 1. Simon Irving 2. Paul Chilton 3. Katherine Hutchinson
16. Box of vegetables – 3 varieties: 1. Paul Chilton 2. John Rodda 3. Katherine Hutchinson
17. Box of salad vegetables: 1. Katherine Hutchinson 2. Rosemary Greasby
18. 3 courgettes: 1. Paul Chilton 2. Tony Debney
19. 6 potatoes: 1. John Rodda 2. John Arbuckle 3. Rosemary Greasby
20. 6 pods broad beans: 1. Rosemary Greasby 2. John Rodda 3. Paul Chilton
21. 6 pods peas: 1. John Arbuckle 2. Paul Chilton 3. Annabel Toms
22. 4 named herbs in jars: 1. Jill Brooks 2. John Rodda 3. Sarah Wintle
23. 4 onions: 1. John Rodda
24. 6 hen's eggs: 1. Alison Hedges 2. Rosemary Greasby

Cookery, Judged by Ann Caister

25. A jar of chutney: 1. Alison Bloomfield 2. John Rodda 3. Kirsty Homann
- 26 A jar of marmalade: 1. Charles Hunt 2. Irene Lascelles 3. Alison Hedges
27. A jar of any jam: 1. Irene Lascelles 2. Alison Bloomfield 3. Janice Chilton

World War One Bake-Off

28. A loaf of bread, brown or white: 1. Rosemary Greasby 2. Alison Zalinski
29. Any cake from a vintage recipe: 1. Alison Hedges 2. Irene Lascelles 3. Caroline Annets
30. Men only: 4 biscuits (vintage recipe) No entries.
31. Ladies only: 4 biscuits (vintage recipe) 1. Alison Hedges 2. Claire Lynch 3. Caroline Annets

Drinks, judged by Nick Zalinski

32. A bottle of beer or cider: 1. Alison Bloomfield
33. An alcoholic fruit drink: 1. Alison Bloomfield 2. Tony Debney 3. Lawrence Gray
34. A non alcoholic fruit drink: 1. Alison Bloomfield 2. Paul Chilton

Photography, judged by Fliss Hoad

35. 'Water, water everywhere': 1. Chris Paynter 2. John Rodda 3. Dave Hurley
36. A set of four photos on any theme: 1. Natasha Zalinski 2. Sharon Daly 3. Jed Smith
37. 'Architecture.': 1. Tom McGivan 2. John Rodda 3. Jessica Lynch
38. 'Make us smile': 1. Kate Barnes 2. Alec McGivan 3. John Rodda

Arts and Crafts, judged by Kate Malenczuk

39. A postcard from Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, designed or drawn by the entrant: 1. Louise Paynter
40. A hand-knitted item: 1. Helen Connor 2. Alison Bloomfield
41. Any piece of sewing: 1. Cynthia Hurley 2. Caroline Annets 3. Lizzy Bloomfield
42. Any other handicraft: 1. Louise Paynter 2. Sally Dugan 3. Louise Paynter

Junior Section, judged by Andrew and Jenny Reid

9-12 year olds

43. A model of a football stadium: 1. Theo Costello 2. Benji Davys
44. A mosaic: No entries
45. 4 jam tarts: 1. Jamie Zalinski

5-8 year olds

46. A model of a football stadium: 1. Freddie Barringer 2. Thomas Debney 3. Freddie & Finlay Dimassa
47. A mosaic: 1. Milly Homann 2. Joshua Tinsey 3. Naomi Coupland
48. 4 jam tarts: 1. Milly Homann 2. Honey Harvey

Under fives

49. A painting or collage of a fruit or vegetable I have grown: 1. Annabel Toms 2. Annabel Toms 3. Olivia (Allsorts)
50. A picture of my family: 1. Annabel Toms 2. Tabitha Tapping 3. Jasper/Alexander (Allsorts)
51. A toy made from recycled material: 1. Annabel Toms

The Village Orchard Group

We are pleased to announce that a Community Orchard will be planted this autumn and we hope you will be a part of it. In the Parish Plan questionnaire, almost 90% of respondents (that is almost 70% of Village households) said that the orchard was a great idea, and that the small “glade” between the allotments and the wild woodland area next to the Rec where children play, would be the perfect place. This was the proposal put forward by Dr Stephen Head, retired Director of the Northmoor Trust (now the Earth Trust) in his ecological assessment of the site kindly commissioned by Claire Lynch. The full report is on our website - www.brightwellorchards.blogspot.co.uk.

But what will the Community Orchard be like? The small half-acre strip will be surrounded by the mature hedges and 35 apple and pear trees will be planted in rows in the middle. The orchard will be open to everyone and grow varieties that villagers may remember from their youth or apples children have never tasted.

But why Brightwell - we have lots of trees? We have 76 apple varieties in this village but all are in private gardens, most are old and many are just one remaining tree. Did you see the abandoned orchard near the Bach Centre being destroyed and burned this winter? We want to continue the unique history of fruit growing in the village.

We have already received grants from Oxfordshire County Council and the Tree Council, as well as donations from the Parish Council and local businesses. The Earth Trust has kindly agreed to oversee the preparation of the site, ensuring every care is taken to preserve and enhance the bio-diversity of the new orchard. In return, we have agreed to support The Earth Trust's own local food production project and we are delighted to be part of that.

We will be launching the Community Orchard at Apple Day on Sunday 12 October at the Red Lion. The orchard will be planted during the Tree Council's National Tree Week – between 29 November and 7 December 2014. Come along and join the fun!

We have included a form with this Villager so you can say how you would like to help or be kept up to date with progress or make a donation. Your contribution will pay for the apple and pear trees, preparing the land, building the shared allotment compost bins, maintaining the orchard each year, and commissioning an information board.

Put the dates in your diary. It would be really good if you could join the group and take part in Apple Day and plan the festivities for the coming year.

Robert Field, Chairman

Allsorts Preschool

From windmills to safari, the customs and cuisine from other countries have recently been the focal point of the children's learning at Allsorts. Over the last two terms, the children have sampled and cooked culinary delights, made craft items and sung songs from France, Holland, South Africa, Australia, England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland – countries chosen as having a family connection for certain preschool children. Foreign and local specialities featured heavily in the theme with the children trying South African biscuits, Welsh cakes, brie and croissants, and making shortbread, pain-au-chocolat, and fruit kebabs. Other activities included creating a large Eiffel Tower picture out of straws, learning Frere Jacques, making May posies, dancing to African music, and pretending to go on planes with make-believe passports.

The international theme extended to the end-of-year excursion to Beale Park, with the children trying to spot animals from Australia. The children, and those accompanying them, had a lot of fun on the trip. A second end-of-year trip in the first week of July took us to Patricia and Angus Dart's farm in Mackney – a big thank you for inviting us back again. The children had a wonderful time looking round, including going on a tractor and trailer ride and seeing the milking parlour, new-born calves and farm equipment.

As we approach the end of the school year (as we write this), staff at Allsorts and Brightwell School have been working together to prepare the older children for moving into reception class. The Allsorts children joined the current Brightwell School reception class on a weekly basis to do PE, and then took part in a sports day together in June. The Allsorts children were very happy to join in with the races and seem to be settling well into their future environment. Since the sports day, the reception class teacher and teaching assistant, and head teacher have visited Allsorts, and the children are now beginning a series of settling-in visits to school.

The children who remain at Allsorts next year and new starters can look forward to some exciting changes in the preschool's garden. Fundraising this year has gone very well, and staff and parents are starting to work on how exactly to spend the money to revamp the garden. Jason Debney kindly voluntarily led a visioning exercise during which parents and staff

put forward their ideas of how the area should be developed. The next step is to transform the ideas into a plan to present to a landscape architect.

Until the garden transformation takes place, we have invested in a canopy to provide some shade in the garden. 'Save the Children' also kindly donated to us the plants left over from their plant sale – many thanks – and we have added them to the garden. Recent outdoor activities have included taking rubbings of the different outdoor surfaces, making grass 'soup', pouring water, using enormous cardboard boxes in various imaginative ways, and playing football in Kings Meadow.

We are a preschool run by a voluntary committee made up of parents and community members. The current co-chairs are standing down in September 2014 and we are seeking new chair(s) and other committee members. If you may have time to volunteer on our committee, you can find out about roles on our website: www.allsortspreschool.org. If you would then like to know more, please email chair@allsortspreschool.org

Team Allsorts

Brightwell Art Club

Brightwell Art Club has been enjoying a really successful summer with new members for the Club and exhibitors in the Annual Art Exhibition held in Wallingford at the Methodist Church in April. Several members exhibited and sold their work and one member, Sue Longworth, was voted Best in Show by the public for her wonderful portrait of her dog, Freddie, a Weimaraner!

Later in the summer our Annual Workshop will be a "Japanese Inspired Mixed Media" day which will, amongst other things, involve blowing ink and paint through a straw! If the great weather continues, we will also be going to Anne Hedley's beautiful garden to paint outdoors and, as usual, having our end of term drinks and lunch in the garden of The Red Lion.

If you like the sound of all this and want to try your hand at painting with the help of professional tutors, then please give Susan Ganney, the Club Secretary, a call on 01491 824228 or email brightwellartclub@gmail.com. All are welcome. It doesn't matter if you have no experience at all - we were all beginners once!

Susan Ganney

Environment Group - Photo Voltaic (PV) Solar Panels Survey

Many readers will be aware of the Group's initiative in presenting the case for PV some years ago. We felt it would be useful to review the local installations and to look at the performance of the systems. Performance not only means how much electricity is being produced but also how this compares with estimates provided before the installation. We also were curious to find out how much the reduction in Feed In Tariff (FIT) had made to the return on investment. We were interested in the service provided by the various installers prior to the installation, how well the work was carried out and how any after sales issues were dealt with.

The dozen fully completed surveys also looked at the service provided by a number of different energy companies to see if there were any common issues that might be worthy of note. FIT rates are set by the Government so the only competition is really the level of service offered and it was evident that the average performance was indeed average. It is proposed that a more detailed analysis of the data will be compiled and made available to anyone interested, but there are some broad brush conclusions worth sharing with everybody. The first is that the technology works and is improving steadily. Costs are generally coming down but then so is the FIT, so one can generalise and say that if you intend to be in your home for ten years, you would be unlucky not to see a return on your investment. In some cases, it will be less. The other common factor was that every household was pleased they had made the investment and were delighted with their various installers. The installations are remarkably trouble free and the estimates of how much was expected to be generated was either very accurate or exceeded the values given. The orientation or location of the panels makes less difference than you might think so even if you don't have a south-facing roof, don't be put off.

On a related subject, if you have installed any of the following since 2009 you may qualify for the Renewable Heat Incentive: Biomass boilers, Solar Thermal Panels, Air or Ground Source heat pumps. The scheme was finalised in April this year and you have 12 months to register. For more information look at www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-programmes/domestic-renewable-heat-incentive.

Chris Hollibone

WI

On June 10th, we heard Judy Gibbons talk about the work of the Island Farm Donkey Sanctuary. She joined the charity in 2009 and only 2 weeks later was elected chairperson of the organization. The sanctuary was started in 1983 by John McClaren, who is still the current manager. In 2000, it became a registered charity which today cares not only for rescued donkeys but also for sheep, goats, chicken and even a pot-bellied pig. There is also an Adopt a Donkey scheme. To learn more about the sanctuary, look out for the article by Margaret Smith in the next issue of *The Villager*.

Upcoming meetings and events: The 12 August meeting is our annual garden party and on 9 September we have an OPEN meeting (men welcome) when Valerie Sheldon will talk about 'An Afternoon at the Adoption Panel'. On 1 Sept, the WI Annual Science Lecture will be held at the Didcot Civic Hall, 7 – 9.30pm when Dr Susan Jebb will be speaking on Food for a Fitter Future and on Sept. 4th, Helen Connor will lead a Pitt Rivers Museum Trail from 2 -4 pm. Women visitors are always welcome to our meetings. We ask for a donation of £3 to attend.

Eastlyn Horsfield

Bach Centre

When Dr. Bach came to live in Baker's Lane in 1934 he found an unfurnished house and an overgrown garden. He enjoyed the challenge of building his own furniture and turning the jungle into a wild-flower haven. It was Dr. Bach who scattered the seeds of many plants we still see coming up each year.

The house and garden haven't changed very much since then. The house was extended a little out the back to make a workroom for Nora, and we added outbuildings in the 1970s and 1980s, but they didn't encroach on the flower areas at all. And the garden remains semi-wild, by nature and design - although it does need looking after to keep the more vigorous plants from taking over. Over the years several gardeners have come and gone, notably Tom Huggins who built the older fishpond for Nora Weeks; Pete Moon who managed the grounds for about twelve years after Tom; and of course, before them, Nora Weeks, who came to live at Mount Vernon in 1934 and was still weeding borders by hand well into the 1970s.

All of which is by way of noticing that our current gardener has been with us for twelve years this year. Emma Broad came to us at a time when we had been without a permanent gardener for some time. She did a wonderful job of restoring Dr Bach's garden to its former glory. She has also become a great favourite with visitors, as she can usually be persuaded to do a quick guided tour, especially in the summer months.

Here's to many more years, Emma, and thank you for all you do!

Stefan Ball

Knit - knatters

Once upon a time in the far away village of Wallingford, dear sister Kay hurried to her friends, the fairy godknitters.

What could this be?

They peered into a small brown paper bag.

Oh my.

Oh no.

This can't be good.

What is it?

I do believe, said the wise sister Kay, that it is a hamster collar.

Oh, said the fairy godknitters, we can fix this.

They waved their magic needles over the bag and POOF! The hamster collar turned into a beautiful red wool cowl for a lovely woman's birthday!

And they saw it was good.

And from the far away mountains in Colorado, the lovely woman's mother, who will never attempt to knit again, saw that it was REALLY good.

The mother is profoundly grateful to her dear sister Kay and to the fairy godknitters.

(And the mother apologizes for the tardiness of this thank you).

This poem was sent to the Brightwell Knitting Group by one of its members, Kay Saunders. It made us smile.

If any of you are interested in joining the Group, it meets fortnightly. Get in touch with Anne Brooker at knittingbcs@gmail.com. You don't need to be a good knitter, all are welcome, and lots of tips and help around if you want to get started on something new to do this winter.

Village Tales

This is part of an article that first appeared in The Villager in 1995. Almost 20 years on, it was thought worth repeating for its first-hand recollections of village life in the 1920s and 30s. It will be continued next issue.

What's the link between Little London, The Black Hat Gang and Juno?

Answer: Geoff Brooker.

There were a few generations of Geoff's family in the village and apart from the war years, Geoff lived here all his life. Just sit down for a chat with him and a store of anecdotes about village life and some of its characters came flooding out.

Those of you who were at the opening ceremony of our 50th Anniversary VE Celebrations will remember seeing Geoff's mother, Mrs Jessie Brooker, doing the honours and cutting the ribbon. Geoff's father, Albert, was born in one of two thatched cottages (now one and called Pound Cottage), down Bell Lane. After working for Henry Wells, the brewery owner who lived at Sotwell Hill House, Albert was in the Royal Horse Artillery during the 1914-18 war. Like many other local men after the war, he ended up working at the Didcot Ordnance Depot. Geoff said that when Brightwellian wives heard the steam hooter go at Didcot, they knew to put the kettle on as about fifty men would be cycling home to Brightwell, Wallingford and Benson.

Born in 1922, Geoff first lived with his mother and father in Little London – the old name for an area along the High Road where a group of cottages once stood – roughly where the Green Lane Flats and garages are now. At that time, of course, there were no Greenmere or King's Orchard houses – just meadows and fruit orchards. The broad leafy track (or Roman Road) which ran from the Four Corners straight up through Little London, and continued up and over the hill, was known as The Green Mere. Geoff recalled it as a sunken, quite wide lane, very leafy with overhanging trees – the haunt of red-backed shrike. Nowadays there's scarcely room for two people to walk side by side over the hill and the shrike are long gone. While Geoff was still very small, the family moved into one of the Grove Cottages and his brother Alan was born there.

As a grown-up, he was once puzzled to be asked by a village friend, Jack Garlick, if he ever suffered from butterflies in the tummy. The story goes that Elsie and Jack Garlick, (brother and sister to Mrs Edna Rudman who still lives in the village) had baby Geoff in his pram for a walk when Jack

caught a butterfly and showed it to young Geoff who promptly popped it in his mouth and ate it!

At the village school (now the Village Hall, for those of you whose history doesn't go back that far) children from 5 to 14 years old found the headmaster, Mr Rowe (nicknamed 'Fishy'), to be a strict disciplinarian. There were only three teachers to some 80 or so pupils. One of Geoff's abiding memories was of 'Fishy' Rowe in the wintertime, sitting on the guard rail round the one and only pop-bellied stove while everyone else froze. Most of the children left school at fourteen – very few achieved scholarships in those days – but they did get a good basic education in the three Rs, plus quite a lot of gardening! There was a school allotment, where bungalows now stand next to the graveyard, and also a flower garden around the school itself which needed tending. The headmaster was very keen on these projects and sometimes the older boys would be kept hard at it on the allotment all day!

In the late 1920s Brightwell must have been a wonderful place for children to play and explore and Geoff and his young pals seem to have this to the full. Nowadays we fear to let small children out of our sight but back then they were able to enjoy a freedom for which we can only yearn.

The meadows between Brightwell Street and Mackney were water meadows and Geoff remembered them as being full of peewits and snipe in the summer – the air alive with the birds and their calls. Mackney Brook, which rises in Blewbury, was a great place to swim – deep enough in places and very clean. Beyond the Brook was Mackney Common; a large area of rough grasses and small trees providing a fabulous playground for small boys. Geoff and his friends would disappear into this wilderness to play for the whole day, taking some food with them and – say this in a whisper – occasionally pinching moorhens' eggs to hardboil over a small fire. Sadly, Mackney Common is no more. The owner of the land (Geoff thought probably from Moreton) had it ploughed up just before the war. Then, during the war, German PoWs were put to work altering the Brook itself. Gone were the trout, the willows and the swimming holes, and in their places – a very tidy ditch.

To be continued next issue.....

Olive Sutcliffe

Next Village Lunch

The Autumn lunch will be on Tuesday 30 September at 12.30 in the Village Hall. All welcome but please telephone Jacqui on 836018 or Belinda on 836223 if you want to know more about it.

Belinda Lee-Jones

In Brief - Round and About

Wallingford Hockey Club is always looking for new members of all abilities, and currently offering half price senior membership fees for new members for the 2014-15 season. To find out more, and to keep up to date with training times, social activities and matches visit www.wallingfordhc.org.uk. The Wallingford Hockey Club's Club Day - will be held on Sunday 7 September and is open to everyone with hockey, food, drink and other entertainment provided throughout the day.

Be 'AMAZED' by what's happening at your library this summer! From 12 July until 13 September, children across Oxfordshire can join the 'Mythical Maze', this year's summer reading challenge, at any of Oxfordshire's libraries. Contact Wallingford Library about this and other activities on 01491 837395 or at wallingford.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

Didcot Urban Race, Bank Holiday Monday 25 August 10-12.30 - try orienteering around Ladygrove, newcomers welcome. www.tvoc.org.uk

Public Access Day at Rutherford Appleton Laboratory on Thursday 21 August, a fantastic chance to see behind the scenes and to talk to the scientists and engineers who work there about the research they're doing. Tours, talks and demonstrations, and plenty of activities for children. Registration starting at 9.00 and 13.30, for morning and afternoon session. Booking essential, at visital@stfc.ac.uk

The circus is coming to North Moreton on Sunday 28 September. Circus Bezercus, at the Barn, North Moreton House, 3pm, to raise funds for playground equipment.

Earth Trust Summer activities – Clumps Club for 8-12 year olds, 4-8 August; Sunday Volunteer Group meets on 10 Aug and 14 Sept, 10-4pm; Blackberry day on 7 Sept, 10-2pm; and lots more at earthtrust.org.uk.

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Post Office

Your Post Office is open in the Village Hall at the following times: Monday to Friday 09.00 to 13.00. Saturday 09.00 to 12.00. The Last Collection Time at the Post Office by Royal Mail is 11.05 am. The full range of facilities available at Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Post Office is on www.postoffice.co.uk.

Telephone Services: Is there anyone in the village without a telephone service? If so the Post Office is offering to arrange a telephone service without the usual £60.00 connection fee. Additionally, if you sign up for Broadband and a Telephone you receive a £50.00 Credit. If you only want the Telephone service the Credit on offer is £25.00. These are very good offers I think you will agree. Do come for a leaflet. No number change.

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Post Office can offer:

Travel Insurance and Money: Classic Single trip cover from £2.69 per day. Some very good rates for over £500 on any currency and Euros over-the-counter. Do come for a quote. All currencies available within 24 hrs. Travel Money Card Plus is available in 8 currencies, can be used in shops, bars and restaurants just like a Master Card.

International Payments: No Fee payable with competitive exchange rates. Bank account to Bank account. Transfer from £250.00 upwards. Available on line or over the Phone. A Standing Order can be arranged with a fixed exchange rate. 34 currencies available.

Insurance Policies: The Post Office has available policies for Car, House, Van, Motorcycle, Pet, Over 50's Life and Life Insurance. Before signing renewal policies for any of these, do please come and study our leaflets.

Banking: I am still surprised how few customers take advantage of our ability to process their cheques for most major Banks and Building Societies. Do try our service. Free cash withdrawals with any of the Banks or Building Societies using the Post Office Counter Pin Pad.

Post Office Credit Card: The Post Office rate is 0.7% fee and is available for customers up to the 31 Jul 14. This card also gives 18 months 0% introductory offer on balance transfers, There are no fees on overseas purchases by using this Credit Card.

Mike Powell

VILLAGE DIARY

August

12	WI summer party		6pm
12	Quilting Group	VH	9.30-1
26	Quilting Group	VH	9.30-1

September

4	Autumn Term begins at Brightwell School		
9	WI Meeting 'An afternoon at the Adoption Panel'	VH	7.30pm
21	Harvest Festival	St Agatha's	9.30am
23	Community Association AGM	VH	7.30pm
30	Village Lunch	VH	12.30pm

Advance Notice:

Apple day	Sunday 12 October	Red Lion
American Bingo	Saturday 18 October	VH

Refuse Collection:

Food waste, each week

Grey bins: 14, 29 Aug 11, 25 Sept

Green bins: 7, 21 Aug 4, 18 Sept

Reminder to distributors of The Villager: Please ensure that you have a replacement distributor for when you are on holiday and then inform Keith Brooks (839044) of your arrangements.

For information on Brightwell-cum-Sotwell visit the village website:
www.brightwellcumsotwell.co.uk