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Editorial

It's the usual bumper summer issue of *The Villager* but this one seems even fuller than ever. A big thank you to everyone who has sent me contributions (and on time this month!). I have tried to include as much as possible.

June kicks off with BrightFest on Saturday 3rd and ends with a full weekend of activities – David Dugan's 'Mutiny' talk on Friday 23rd (in aid of BSR), Brightwell school's birthday party and beating the Sotwell bounds on Saturday 24th and the summer concert at St Agatha's on the evening of the 25th. Then, the following weekend is the village fete and flower and produce show (Saturday 1 July). As usual, the schedule and entry forms are printed in our middle pages. It caters for both novices and old hands, so why not enter for something. Then, on Saturday 15 July we have the return of the deckchair cinema showing, by popular request, *Mama Mia*. So quite a busy few weeks!

A familiar figure to many who will be missing from all of these events this year sadly is Cecil Western who died a few weeks ago just short of her 100th birthday. She has been involved in many aspects of village life for over half a century. We are grateful to Jill Brooks who has compiled an obituary on page 3 and send our condolences to her family and friends.

Turning to other news, the latest on the Parish Neighbourhood Plan is that it is now nearing completion. It will then be up to you to vote on the final version probably in July/August. Many of you will be aware that several planning applications for a considerable amount of new housing have recently been registered with SODC. Further information on their progress, and also other planning applications in the village, can be found at the Planning Portal of SODC's website.

We have a new feature in *The Villager* – 'In the Spotlight' – which I hope will become a regular one. The idea is to get to know some of our more famous residents. This month, Alec McGivan has interviewed the opera singer, Claire Booth on page 15. She will be performing again for us in Brightwell on 23 September, so save the date now.

Finally, *The Villager* will be celebrating its 250th issue later in the year and plans are in progress to mark the occasion. If any of you would like to contribute to the birthday issue or have any reminiscences that you would like to share, please contact me on 01491 834754 or at *The Villager* email thevillagerbcs@gmail.com before the end of August.

Helen Connor

Notices

It is with sadness that we report the deaths of two of our older residents who have lived here for over 50 years, Andrew Saunders who died on 20 April aged 86 and Cecil Western who died on 4 May aged 99 years.

Andrew Saunders

Andrew (Andy) and Joan Saunders moved to High Banks, Bell Lane in January 1964 and had two daughters, Lindsey and Angela. Over the years Andy had several allotments in the village and between 1999 and 2012 was a regular visitor to Allsorts preschool and Brightwell School taking and collecting his two grandchildren, Laura and Alex. On one occasion he was accompanied by his cat, Benji, who had climbed into the back of Dad's car without his knowledge. Dad often did odd jobs around the school for the then head teacher Roger Grant. His final job before retiring was working for Angus and Patricia Dart and this was the job that gave him the most enjoyment.

Lindsay Bettison

Anna Cecilia (Cecil) Western

Cecil was born in Gerrards Cross on 28 July 1917 and died peacefully at home in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell on 4 May 2017.

During the war, Cecil was a radar mechanic for the REME. In 1955 she obtained a BA in History at London University and in 1969 a BSc from Oxford. She was involved in many archaeological excavations in this country, Jordan and Jerusalem. Her expertise was ancient wood and charcoal. She worked in museums in Manchester and London. In 1957 she was appointed Chief Conservator at the Ashmolean and moved to Holly Lodge (The Old Rectory) with her friend Nancy. They moved in 1982 to Wongalee (named after the place in Australia where Nancy was born).

In 1955 Cecil and Nancy converted a landrover and undertook a road trip through Europe and Asia to the tip of India, then by boat to Ceylon (Sri Lanka). After boarding a ship, they continued their travels across Australia.

Cecil was very knowledgeable about plants having gained a certificate from the RHS in 1937, so her garden was always a delight. She had many friends in the village and lots of visitors. Cecil supported many charities and village organisations.

She attended St. James's church and was PCC secretary for many years. The flowerbed near St James' door was designed and planted by Cecil. She supported the weekly coffee morning, always bringing a contribution to the food bank box.

She joined the Art Club when it started in 1994 and was still attending regularly in her wheelchair until weeks before she died. She enjoyed painting, watercolours being her preference, and while she mainly painted landscapes or buildings, these sometimes reflected her career and travels as an archaeologist. Cecil could never be persuaded that her work would appeal to others, always downplaying her talents.

For many years she was a member of the WI. The last time she attended was last year at the summer party in the pavilion. It was not very warm and Cecil arrived well wrapped up and sat at the back drinking Pimm's and enjoying crowd watching.

Cecil was a revered member of *The Villager* committee and 'Chief Boner' until six years ago when she retired. Later she asked if she might be reinstated, as she missed it. She helped as a proof reader until about a year ago, something she did with her customary attention to detail.

Cecil also tried her hand at keep fit in her eighties! She did the class with her stick. Health and safety issues were abandoned and she was given plenty of room to swing her arms up to clap.

As one of the founders of the Environment Group she served on the committee until 2004. Cecil took part in a number of surveys, including the Garden Bird Survey and Traffic Survey and in 1998 contributed to the first edition of the Parish Conservation Plan.

A member of the History Group for many years Cecil was definitely the most qualified. She was a stickler for accuracy and provenance and spent hours deciphering local ancient wills for the group.

Cecil was an intrepid, interesting, wonderful, kind person who has now become an invaluable piece of village history and will always be remembered with love.

Compiled by Cecil's friends

Thanks to Roger Symes for the cover picture of some of our talented village artists' creations on show at the Colour & Clay Exhibition at St Agatha's in May.

Neighbourhood Plan Update

Our Parish Neighbourhood Plan is moving towards its final stages. During April, its final round of consultation (known as Regulation 16) was carried out by the District Council (SODC). The submitted Plan and all the comments received can be found on SODC's website. On the homepage, click 'Services and Advice', then 'Planning and Building', 'Planning Policy', 'Neighbourhood Plans' and finally 'Brightwell-cum-Sotwell'.

An independent examiner is now examining the Plan. We liaised with SODC on who should carry out the examination and the process started during the first week of May. As I write, we have no idea on how long this examination will take but it is anticipated to be complete by the first week of June, so hopefully around the time you receive *The Villager*. The examiner can take out or change anything that he feels is appropriate, the process is out of our hands. Once the examination has been completed the Plan moves to its next stage – agreement by SODC. By now it is considered to have a lot more weight in the planning process. Anyone who wants to build in the parish or extend an existing house needs to consider what the Neighbourhood Plan has to say in just the same way that any other planning policy document would need to be accounted for.

Finally it is down to all of us to agree it. This will be through a Parish Referendum carried out in exactly the same way as any other election. If a simple majority of parishioners agree to the Plan then it is considered 'made' and has full weight and becomes part of SODC's Local Plan. It is anticipated that the Parish Referendum will be in July or August. We know that this will be the third time that you will have voted in just three months but the importance of it cannot be underestimated. The Plan is an expression of how the parish wants to change over the next 15 years including what should be built, how to build, why we should build and where we should build. Without the Neighbourhood Plan, it would be down to SODC and developers to decide our fate.

The process that has led up to our referendum began in 2012 when we started writing the BCS Community Led Parish Plan, the final report setting out a series of objectives to be followed in the Neighbourhood Plan. Two and a half years of consultation followed before the final Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to SODC last year. Once the examination is complete we will hold a public meeting to let you know what the final plan includes. Details will be on the parish website, village Facebook page and telegraph poles!

Jason Debney

Parish Council

As many of you will know, and can read about in more detail on page 5, Brightwell- cum-Sotwell's Neighbourhood Plan has finished the consultation stage with SODC and the Council's preferred examiner has been appointed. After his work is complete we anticipate there will be a Referendum in July or August. Many apologies for the need for yet more voting! However, postal votes can be obtainable and we urge as many as possible to take the opportunity to have their say. The exact date will be publicised as soon as it is known.

By the time you read this, the Annual Parish Meeting will have been held involving presentations by several village organisations. We hope many will have been there to hear about the proposals to improve the play areas at Kings Meadow and the Recreation Ground providing much needed recreation for our young people and their parents! Any comments about the plans are welcome and should be made to Lucy Dalby, our Parish Clerk.

Further information about the activities of the Parish Council will be available at the village fete on 1 July so do please come and let us know your views.

Sarah Jackson

Save the Children

This year's house to house collection in the village raised £677.57. We are very grateful to our band of collectors and everyone for their generosity.

On 13 May, we held our annual Plant Stall in the Square. Many thanks to all the green fingered people who donated all the plants and everyone who came along and brought them. We raised a total of £710 on the day. This year we will miss Cecil Western who always came along before she went to Art in the village hall. Cecil was very generous and kind hearted, a very special lady who will be sadly missed at so many of the village events.

We are manning the tea tent at BrightFest again this year, so please join us for tea and cakes; hopefully the weather will be kind.

Celia Collett
Chairman, Wallingford & District Branch



It's BrightFest time again, so get ready for a wonderful day of music, food, drink and fun, right on your doorstep. Saturday 3 June sees our village charity music festival, taking place on the Rec from 12.00pm until late.

This year we have 15 bands of all ages and styles, there is definitely something for everyone's musical taste this year. In addition to the music stage we will be running a **five-a-side football tournament**, so start picking your team. Look out for details of how to enter on the website, Facebook page and at The Red Lion.

We have the most amazing **Never Never Land**, a Peter Pan themed Kids Zone to keep the younger festivalgoers happy. This year it will include: theatre games and stage fighting workshops, face painting, wild play crafting, bouncy castles, ride-ons, giant games, mini badminton, sweet stall, craft area and chill-out zone. All money raised will go towards Brightwell's very own Allsorts Preschool. To keep the older festivalgoers happy we have our pop-up pub beer tent run by The Red Lion, a pop-up restaurant run by Porters, along with the Save the Children tea tent.

Entrance, as always, is by voluntary donation in exchange for a snazzy wristband.

Please do support your local village charity music festival. It takes a heck of a lot of organising each year and the money raised goes to such worthy causes – this year Save the Children and the village playground. We are still in desperate need of helpers for setting up on the morning and clearing up on the morning after. Please either see Mark Brock at The Red Lion, or contact any committee member through the website or Facebook page:

www.brightfest.org.uk www.redlion.biz
www.facebook.com/BrightFestOxon/

Finally, a huge thank you to our sponsors, supporter and helpers without whom, BrightFest wouldn't be possible.

Matt Allen

Community Association

Safari Supper

Thank you to everybody who supported this event; I hope that you all made some new friends. We are very grateful to our hosts that were generous enough to open their home and provide a warm welcome and wonderful food. Many thanks to Lynn Burrigde and her team for organising it.

Village Fete – Saturday 1 July, 2-4.30pm at Moreton House

This year's fete will be in the lovely gardens of Moreton House, kindly hosted again by Jim and Madeline Sanger. Our plans are well advanced and I am sure that the weather will be perfect again this year.

As usual, the fete works as collaboration between groups in the village. Each activity is managed by a separate group or individual (the PCC run the teas, for example). The Community Association collects the funds from each activity. Then the CA invites groups to submit requests for grants from our coffers (which usually includes other money we have collected at events during the year). We are always looking for volunteers to help with the set up before this event, which is one of the highpoints in the Brightwell calendar.

Look out for the schedule and entry forms for the Flower and Produce Show elsewhere in *The Villager* (pages 11-14). The show appeals to all ages of course, and we try to ensure the fete always has a good balance of activities.

As well as the tried and tested stalls and games (the white elephant stall, coconut shies, teas, tombola, books, brass band etc) look out for something different. Committee members will be collecting contributions to the white elephant, book and bottle stalls during the week before the fete, so now is a good time to start thinking about what you are planning to discard. Please remember that we can't take any electrical goods to sell, because of liability in case of accidents, and all donations (especially toys) must be in good working order. They simply won't sell otherwise.

Autumn 5K Fun Run Sunday 24 September 2017

Following on from last year's success, plans are being drawn up to stage another five kilometre fun run around the village. We hope that it will appeal to all ages and abilities with the emphasis as much on fun as athletic ability. More details will appear in the next *Villager*.

James Davys

Flower and Produce Show 2017

If you are an Archer's fan (or even if you're not), you'll know all about flavoured gin. This year's Flower and Produce Show gives you a chance to rival Ambridge's alcoholic creations with some tipples of your own (Class 30). There are the usual mix of cookery, handicraft, flower arranging, fruit and vegetable classes. If you're a novice baker, you can have a go at Class 28, chocolate brownies (after all these years, we decided Men and Ladies-only baking classes needed to be dragged into the 21st century). Nine to twelve - year olds can design their name in street art, create a sports kits for Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, or produce a painting of a Minecraft character (Classes 40 to 42). Five to eight-year olds can find an unusual shaped vegetable, craft a miniature garden or pick a jar of weeds (Classes 43 to 45). Under fives can enter the weeds contest too, or make a collage of their favourite animal (Classes 46 and 47). So: something for everyone (see the Schedule on pages 12-13).

Paul Chilton has announced that he wants to stand down as chairman. In fact, having planned his holidays for years around the village fete, this year's earlier date caught him by surprise so he will be unable to be there. His dedication and enthusiasm have been a vital part of the show ever since he took over from Colonel Talbot 23 years ago, and we hope his wonderful fruit and vegetable entries will continue to grace the show benches.

Sally Dugan

Hall party success!

The Trustees would like to thank all who supported our village hall party on 21 April. 48 people attended, raising a profit of £235. We all had a great time and due to its success, we are having another party on 9 June, with music provided by the jazz band, 'Short Notice'

It will be the same format: entrance £5, and you are welcome to bring nibbles and drinks of your choice, along with a suitable glass. The party will start at 8pm and if you are on your own or want to organise a few friends, book your ticket by contacting me on 01491 834543 or email shenaluck@btconnect.com. I look forward to seeing you there!

Shena Luck

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Primary School

Parents, staff and children bade a fond farewell to David Burrows at Easter. David has ended his interim headship at the school and, as planned, Fin Lewis is now leading the school through the academy conversion process and beyond. Links between Wallingford School and Brightwell are understandably strengthening with specialist science teachers recently delivering lessons as guest teachers to Discovery (Year 5/6) and Worcester (Year 3/4) classes.

As you read this, Year 6 children will have completed their end of key stage tests (SATs) and Year 2 children will be completing their assessments, but work continues in all classes. A new term brings new topics with Bramley (Reception/ Year 1) and Russet (Year 1/2) discovering 'Hot and Cold' and Worcester's work linked with 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. That can only mean one thing.....a trip to Cadbury World! Year 5 has been creating their own country, including a national anthem and flag whilst Year 6 now look forward to a transition day at Wallingford School and several celebrations to mark the end of their Brightwell career. Don't worry, there will be plenty of work going on too.

In sports news, the Year 3/4 football team were runners up in the County Tournament and we are grateful for the support of Mr Plant and Mr DiMasssa. The children in KS2 have thoroughly enjoyed the cricket coaching provided by the 'Chance to Shine programme' with a KS1 club coming up in Term 6. We have been making use of the tennis courts next door with our specialist sports coach and we look forward to the Tennis Festival at Wallingford School in June so that we can show off our skills. Thank you to Tony Windsor for providing some additional support with the coaching too.

The last day of term saw our traditional Easter church service at St Agatha's led by Reverend Kevin, some of the children sharing the Easter gardens they had created and Friends of Brightwell School (FOBS) providing an EGGtastic Easter egg hunt. This was all in the same week as the KS2 sleepover at school!

We are looking forward to celebrating our 175th birthday and hope you will be able to join us at 3pm on Saturday 24 June. The BYO picnic celebration is open to past and present students, staff, parents or villagers and there will be activities for the children, BBQ, bouncy castle, bar and bands. We hope you can join us.

More information about our school is on our Facebook page and website.

Fin Lewis, head teacher

BRIGHTWELL-CUM-SOTWELL FLOWER AND PRODUCE SHOW



AT THE VILLAGE FETE



SATURDAY 1 JULY, 2017

TO BE HELD IN THE GROUNDS OF MORETON HOUSE
By kind permission of Madeline & Jim Sanger

Entries received 9–10.30am. No late entries after 10.15am. Judging starts at 11am.

Entrance Fee: 25p each adult entry – 10p each junior entry. **Entries after 6pm on Wednesday 28 June charged double.**

The show will open to the public at 2pm. Exhibitors are asked to collect exhibits and prize cards at 4pm.

TROPHIES

The Chilton Cup is awarded for the best exhibit in the fruit and vegetable classes.

The Win Glendenning Memorial Salver is awarded for the best flower arranging exhibit.

Two trophies are awarded in memory of Gilbert Talbot. **The Talbot Rose Bowl** is awarded for the best rose exhibit. **The Talbot Cup** is awarded on a points system, but may not be won by the same person for two years running.

The Joan Sheard cup will be awarded for the best under-16 entry in an adult class. Trophies will also be awarded for the top two junior classes.

The Swan Allotments Cup is awarded for the best-kept allotment. Judging takes place during the week before the show.

THE SCHEDULE

To be judged by popular vote: Best Entry in Show

Prize: £10 voucher for the Village Stores.

Flower Arranging *Height is unlimited, except for miniature arrangements*

1. A miniature flower arrangement. Max 4" x 4" x 4" (10cm x 10cm x 10 cm)
2. A circular arrangement for an anniversary (accessories allowed). Max 15" x 15" (38 cm x 38 cm)
3. A bowl of floating garden flowers
4. **Men Only** An arrangement in an unusual container. Max 15" x 15" (38 cm x 38 cm)

Flowers and Vegetables

5. A vase of cottage garden favourites - 9 stems, one variety or mixed
6. Most scented flower, single or small bunch of up to 5 stems
7. A rose, Hybrid Tea – 1 stem
8. A rose, multi-headed – 1 stem
9. Three stems flowering shrub, not rose – one variety or mixed
10. Most unusual potted plant, flowering or foliage
11. Dish of soft fruit of one kind
12. 3 sticks of rhubarb
13. Box of vegetables – 3 varieties, box not to exceed 16" x 12" (40cm x 30.5 cm)
14. Box of salad vegetables, box not to exceed 16" x 12" (40 cm x 30.5 cm)
15. 3 courgettes
16. 6 potatoes (named variety)
17. 6 pods broad beans
18. 6 pods peas (can be normal peas or mangetout)
19. 4 named herbs in jars
20. 6 hen's eggs

Cookery

21. A jar of chutney – min. weight 12 oz (350g)
22. A jar of marmalade – min. weight 12 oz (350g)
23. A jar of any jam – min. weight 12 oz (350g)
24. A jar of any preserved fruit or vegetables – min. weight 12 oz (350g)
25. A loaf of speciality bread
26. 4 cup cakes
27. A cake containing fruit or vegetables
28. **NOVICE CLASS** (Open to anyone who hasn't won a baking prize in the show before): 4 chocolate brownies

Drinks

- 29. A bottle of beer or cider
- 30. Any other alcoholic drink
- 31. A non alcoholic drink

Photography, Arts and Crafts *Max size – 7” x 5” – 17.5 cm x 12.5 cm, except where otherwise stated*

- 32. Photograph, unmounted: a village event
- 33. Photograph, unmounted: history in the making
- 34. A set of four photos, b/w or colour, on any theme. Overall size max. A4
- 35. Photograph, unmounted: ‘Make us smile’. Amusing, with or without caption
- 36. A cartoon with a caption. Max size A5
- 37. A hand-knitted or crocheted item
- 38. A poem, unsigned (can be serious or funny). Max A5
- 39. Any other handicraft

Junior Section - *Exhibits should be children’s unaided work*

9-12 year olds

- 40. Your name in street art
- 41. Design a sports kit for Brightwell-cum-Sotwell
- 42. A drawing or painting of a Minecraft character

5-8 year olds

- 43. A jar of weeds
- 44. An unusual shaped vegetable
- 45. A miniature garden

Under fives

- 46. A jar of weeds
- 47. A painting or collage of my favourite animal

ENTRY FORM

Please complete and return, with money, to one of:

The Village Stores; Sally Dugan The Woodman; Ann Linton Waterman’s Cottage, Church Lane; Brian Smith Stonybank, Church Lane; Alison Hedges Bramleys, High Road, Helen Satchell The Old Barn or Claire Lynch The Croft, Sotwell Street. Queries to sally.dugan@gmail.com

Name:

Age (for under 16’s):

Class No.	No. of Entries	Fee	Class No.	No. of Entries	Fee	Class No.	No. of entries	Fee

Name:

Age (for under 16’s):

Class No.	No. of Entries	Fee	Class No.	No. of Entries	Fee	Class No.	No. of entries	Fee

Name:

Age (for under 16’s):

Class No.	No. of Entries	Fee	Class No.	No. of Entries	Fee	Class No.	No. of entries	Fee

TOTAL FEES: _____

Address:

In the Spotlight - Claire Booth

Take a trip down Mackney Lane these days and it is quite possible you will hear a soprano voice going through her daily singing exercises, preparing for her next operatic performance or concert. Claire Booth moved to the village five years ago from Hampstead with her husband Christopher, a research analyst at Morgan Stanley. They have three children. 'We love it here', she says, 'We've made lots of friends'. The village provides the perfect contrast to the pressures of public performances at home and abroad. At the moment Claire is preparing to perform at the Aldeburgh Festival at the end of June. Born and brought up in East Yorkshire, Claire went to boarding school in Windermere where she developed a great love of the Lake District. 'I still go back to walk the fells, when I can find the time. It is something of a passion of mine', she says with a smile.

As a teenager Claire was an accomplished pianist and at one stage it looked as though she might pursue a musical career on the piano. But while reading history at Trinity College Oxford, her interest turned to singing and it soon became clear that this was where her destiny lay. While at Oxford Claire also became a keen rower. 'I love a challenge' she says 'And I'm very competitive'. A testimony to this is her membership of the 1998 crew, victorious over Cambridge. Her 'blue' is proudly on display at home.

Oxford was followed by four years at the Guildhall School of Music and then a further five years of postgraduate study. Claire demonstrates none of the pretensions often associated with musical and theatrical stage performers. Far from it. Indeed, on arriving at the Guildhall School of Music she walked in on a discussion about Mozart's Marriage of Figaro. 'Surely', said Claire to the assembled throng 'that's the theme tune to the film, Trading Places, or at least that's how I know it'.

Claire's singing career has flourished. In the 2015-16 season alone her diverse schedule included Haas' Atthis in her latest collaboration with Netia Jones in the groundbreaking multi media production at the Royal Opera House. Other operatic highlights include Elcia in Rossini's Mose in Egitto, Elle in Poulenc's Voix Humaine for Welsh National Opera, and the title role in Janacek's Cunning Little Vixen for Garsington Opera which met with widespread critical acclaim.

Her numerous concert appearances have resulted in close associations with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the BBC Proms, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Aldeburgh and Holland Festivals and other recent debut appearances with both the Berlin Deutsche Symphonie, Boston

Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. There was also, of course, that famous evening in February 2014 at St Agatha's Church in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, still being talked about three years on.

She recalls vividly her first Prom at the Royal Albert Hall with the BBC Symphony Orchestra. 'An evening I will never forget' she says. She is proud too to have performed under the baton of the late French composer and conductor Pierre Boulez. 'I feel very privileged to have done that' she enthuses. Interestingly Claire's repertoire has involved singing in at least five different languages, the latest of which is Japanese.

Back in Brightwell Claire has agreed to do another fundraising concert for St Agatha's. 'I am very pleased to support St Agatha's and St James' by putting on another concert. The church is a very important part of village life often providing much solace to a wide range of people. We would be lost without it. Originally, we were planning the concert for 16th September. I was then asked to perform at the Barbican so we have moved the Brightwell event to 23rd September. I hope people understand.' We certainly do! After all, what more could we ask – the Barbican one week and Brightwell the next!

Claire's latest CD 'Percy Grainger: Folkmusic' is now on sale at the Village Stores.

Alec McGivan

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Primary School 175th Birthday

Brightwell Primary School was founded in 1841 and will be celebrating the end of its 175th academic year on 24 June at 3pm with a birthday party at the school. Everyone is welcome who has any connection with the school and/or preschool - whether a parent, past student, present student, parent of a past student, staff member or villager.

The school will be open for you to look around and an afternoon of fun is planned, with a bar, BBQ and a band. An old school alumni club will be launched and a tree planted with a time capsule, followed by some short speeches and the singing of 'Happy Birthday'. We will also be looking to the future as Brightwell School moves towards a new phase in its history.

You are being asked to spread the word. It would be lovely to get as many people associated with the school together as possible and this needs you to let

people know it is happening; by word of mouth, Facebook and email. Already classes from the 1940s, 1960s and 1970s have started to gather their former classmates. Do any of you have any memorabilia that can be used in a display? Any photos can be sent electronically, larger items can be brought in on the day. We still need a few more volunteers to help run the event on the day such as helping out on the bar and BBQ, decorating the playing field and organising activities. If you would like to help or have any ideas or old photos, contact Alison Debney.

Allsorts Preschool

This term the children have looked out for signs of spring. Easter was enjoyed with a spring parade and egg hunt. There has been a trip to the allotments to see what we could identify growing. We looked at life cycles of plants, butterflies and frogs, did butterfly paintings and collages, and planted seeds.

There has been a strong focus on our community this term with the children making May Day posies and looking at May Pole dances on the iPad; going on a walk to look at our community and identifying missing gaps on the map; making maps and identifying places of interest in our village, self-portraits, and 3D model villages; and baking rhubarb crumble and rhubarb fool. We will be going to St James' Church one Thursday in May as part of our community theme.

The children gain a great deal from meeting people from their village so please can we also ask for volunteers from the community to come and read, bake or do other activities with the children? Ideas welcome! If you are interested please contact Sarah or Natasha on 01491 826387 at Allsorts or email allsortsadmin@btinternet.com.

The summer holidays will come round quite quickly after half term and preschool are pleased to announce they will be running a holiday club. It will run for two weeks from Monday 24 July to Friday 4 August, and is aimed at children from 3-8 years old. Themes to look forward to include "Pirates and Princesses", "Hawaiian (water play)" and "Prehistoric Adventure". For more info and to book go to www.allsortspreschool.org.

Saffron Nowinska

Summer Concert Sunday 25 June 7pm

Yes it's that time of year again. Time for the summer concert! By 25 June the General Election will be over and we will all be looking for a bit of light relief. Well look no further. As we speak, performers are toiling away in rehearsals to bring you the finest in village entertainment. The extended choir has started its rehearsal schedule too.

As regulars know this annual event is more than a concert. Besides the musical items there are individual readings and sketches designed to make you laugh and this year there are one or two surprises among the cast list. It is all in aid of a good cause too with half the proceeds going to Brightwell Supporting Refugees, the other half to overseas projects supported by Christian Aid. Tickets are £10 each (under 18s free), available from the Village Stores or on the door. The venue is St Agatha's church, 7pm. Included in the ticket price are drinks and canapés served in the lovely setting of St. Agatha's churchyard. Please come along for what is sure to be a great evening's entertainment.

Alec McGivan



The year is going so quickly and we are well established in our new programme having had Graham Harrison talking about 'Poisons as medicines in Victorian times' in April and 'Tall Ship sailing for the handicapped' in May.

Decisions have been made on the NFWI resolutions for the coming national AGM and more locally we have had a change of officers in our village team. Helen Connor has agreed to take on the role of President whilst Anne Brooker remains as Vice and Gill Dexter has taken over the management of refreshments from Jane Hawker.

We have attracted a few new members but welcome more, so if you can manage the second Tuesday of the month at 7.15 for 7.30pm in the village hall, do come along and join us. We have a good programme this year; see our website brightwellcumsotwellwi.com. At our June meeting Anne Sharman is coming to tell us of her experiences in attending a 'Wedding in Delhi', whilst in July we are having some 'Circle Dancing' with Lily Sell.

You can find out more about our activities past and present on our website.

Margaret Smith

Celebrating Birthdays

Do you enjoy celebrating birthdays? Are there particular ways you celebrate a birthday? Chances are that if you are in a family with young children, birthdays will be very important and you may do some particular things to celebrate, for example: decorate the room with balloons; make a themed birthday cake with the appropriate number of candles; sing the special birthday song; and chances are there will be some presents too! For those of us who are past 21, we tend to count decades and have even bigger celebrations when the first digit changes. Whatever our age, birthdays are a way of marking the importance of someone in our lives, a way of saying how special they are to us and to remember the passing of years in our lives.

In June, we will have the celebration of Pentecost (also known as Whit Sunday), the 'birthday of the Church' when we remember God's Spirit descending on the disciples who were gathered together. Pentecost (from the Greek pentekoste, 'fiftieth' of fifty days of celebration) has its roots in the Jewish Feast of Weeks, which was completed on the fiftieth day after Passover. For Christians on the fiftieth day after Easter we recall the empowering of the Church by God's spirit in order that the Church might proclaim the message of the risen Christ to the world. This message was entrusted to the Church Universal and has been proclaimed for nearly 2,000 years – that is a lot of birthdays!

We also mark the significant birthday of our own Church School in the village as it reaches the grand old age of 175 years. Like the church, the building may change over time, but it is the community that meets in it which makes it special - it may undergo changes to its governance and structures, but the original ethos remains the same in providing a good education for our children, supported by our Christian values, beliefs and practices.

I hope you'll join us to celebrate these significant birthdays: Pentecost on Sunday 4 June and the School's Birthday Celebrations on Saturday 24 June.

Rev Kev

The Revd Kevin Beer, email: teamvicar@wallingfordcofe.org.uk

Tel: 01491 599873 (day off Monday)

The Villager AGM

The AGM of *The Villager* will be held on Wednesday 31 May at 8.30 pm in the village hall. All welcome.

Anne Brooker

Environment Group

Weather: The prospect of a drought this summer looms larger as the dry weather continues. Both Angus Dart and Rosemary Greasby recorded about 7mm of rain for the month of April compared to an average of about 50mm. And this is after low rainfalls for the previous 6 months which gave South East England about 80% of normal amount. Farmers could be hit hard, while gardeners will need spend a lot of time watering.

Water vole survey: On 8 April members of the Group carried out a water vole survey, starting at South Moreton and walking along the Mill Brook, where water voles had recently been recorded. Graham Scholey from the Environment Agency explained the habits of the water vole and what to look for – burrows, feeding, droppings etc. Plenty of evidence could be seen along the Mill Brook and importantly along the lower part of Kibble Ditch showing that water voles are present in our parish. It is intended that we will do surveys along other ditches in the parish at a future date.

Millennium Wood: Work on the wood has been carried out over the last weeks by a professional forester. Stunted and damaged trees have been cut down and the path around the south side re-opened. A new gate has been hung at the entrance to replace the ill-fitting one installed when the original gate was stolen some time ago.

Spring Talk and General Meeting of the Group: At very short notice, Steve Capel Davies gave an interesting talk about Ways to Wallingford, describing the history of the road, rail and river links to the town, bringing in RAF Benson and how the airfield had developed. Steve replaced Tim Allen of the Oxford Archaeological Unit who has been rescheduled to give his talk in the autumn.

After a lengthy period in office, John Rodda and Betty Price both resigned, as Chairman and Secretary of the Group respectively. They were thanked for their efforts for the Group, John being presented with a bottle of champagne and Betty a large bouquet. The meeting then elected Steve Capel Davies and Lizzie Rhymes to replace them. Josie McCarthy also resigned from the committee which was otherwise re-elected as follows: Steve Capel Davies, Lizzie Rhymes, Trevor Wintle, Paul Chilton, David Evans-Roberts, Sue Robson, Annabel Rodda, John Rodda, Chris Hollebhone.

John Rodda

Brightwell Supporting Refugees

Our next event will be a talk: **Mutiny: A Survival Story - David Dugan and Luke Kane reveal what happened behind the scenes** on Friday 23 June at 7.30 pm. Tickets £10 - all proceeds to Brightwell Supporting Refugees.

Channel 4's 'Mutiny' placed nine men in an open boat to follow Captain William Bligh's 4000 mile voyage across the Pacific Ocean after the Mutiny on the Bounty. This was an epic test of endurance that not everyone completed. Using behind-the-scenes film clips and highlights from the series producer, David Dugan and the boat's doctor, Luke Kane will tell the story of how this challenging TV series was made.

Do come along for what will be a very enjoyable evening.

Ann Linton

Village Stores/Post Office

At the beginning of May we gave a warm welcome to Sam Reeve as the new manager. Sam has taken over from Nic who has stepped down as manager due to additional family commitments. We are so pleased that Nic is continuing to be part of the team on reduced hours.

Also, Amanda and Donna have decided to move on to pastures new, and we wish them luck in their new jobs. You will see Donna from time to time in the shop as she is continuing to support us on the voluntary basis.

Our wonderful team of bank staff - Annette, Carol, Caroline and Anna, now joined by Marie - are continuing to support us. Their help and commitment are essential to ensure we give our full service to the community. We are in the process of appointing a new member of the part time staff.

We are sad that we have lost one of our oldest and most loyal customers, Cecil Western. Cecil came into the shop at least once a week right up to a few weeks ago. She was always a delight to serve and at 99 still made many of her own choices. We always tried to make sure we had a good supply of her favourite fudge. Life in our village is made so much richer with characters such as Cecil; we were lucky to have her with us for so long.

Celia Collett, Chairman of the Management Committee

Beating the Sotwell Bounds 24 June

Meet at the Red Phone Box Gallery (opposite the Red Lion) at 11am. We will make our way over the hill to the Thames (bring a picnic lunch) before returning to the village at Slade End. On entering the village we will follow (as far as possible) the exact boundary before making our way southwards to Tadsey Brook, before turning north on Mackney Lane to join the school for their 175th Birthday festivities at 3pm. There will be the opportunity to walk the whole route or just some of it – walkers can join us / leave us at Slade End for example. It should be great fun!

Jason Debney

Wallingford Volunteer Centre

Do you need help with transport? The Volunteer Centre was set up 29 years ago to offer help and support to people living in Wallingford and local villages, including Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, who don't have their own transport and are unable to use public transport because of health or mobility problems.

The Centre can offer to help people who need to attend the hospitals in Oxford or Reading, the local GP surgery or for those wishing to visit relatives and friends in hospital. Other tasks undertaken include shopping or visits to the hairdresser, dentist and optician. This list is not exhaustive; anyone who needs help is welcome to make a request providing the destination is within a 20 mile radius of Wallingford. Our volunteers are local people who are friendly, discreet and helpful and will stay with you at your destination and bring you home again. There is a small mileage charge to cover the cost of fuel etc.

Although last year we responded to over 1500 requests for transport, we now have the capacity to offer help to more people. If you think we could help you or someone in your family please do give us a call or drop in for a chat during office hours. If you're not sure about any aspect and would like to speak to me, leave a message in the office and I'll come back to you. We are based in the Methodist Church in St Leonard's Square between 9.30 and 11.30 each weekday, tel 01491 836345.

Sylvia Wear, WVC Manager

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Deckchair Cinema

Saturday 15 July Slade End House - your choice of film is **Mama Mia!**

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 7pm for picnics and drinks, with the film starting around 9.15pm as the sun goes down. Fancy dress – optional. Tickets will be on sale at the Village Stores.

All profits go towards the refurbishment of the children's play equipment on the Rec and at Kings Meadow.

The Deckchair Cinema Team

In Brief round and about

Earth Trust

Lots of activities organised for June – forest school, bats of the Clumps, natural dyeing, wildlife photography. More information at www.earthtrust.org or ring 01865 407792.

Wallingford country market

Friday 30 June – 'The Great British Biscuit Bake', to include the Windsor Collection (with tasting), Regal Centre between 8.30am–12 noon, every Friday.

Fairmile walks

Saturdays 10 and 17 June at 2.15pm. Meet at the Fair Mile Cricket Pavilion. Led by Ian Wheeler, author of Fairmile Hospital: a Victorian Asylum. £3. Booking essential call 01491 652295 or email ina@cholsey.com.

Wallingford Festival of Cycling

Sunday 16 July, several roads in and around Wallingford will be closed for these prestigious national junior men and women road races. See website for other activities in the festival: www.wfoc.co.uk.

VILLAGE DIARY

June

3	BrightFest 17	Rec	12noon
4	Pentecost service	St Agatha's	9.30am
9	Village hall party	VH	8pm
13	WI talk Anne Sharman 'A wedding in Delhi'	VH	7.15pm
23	'Mutiny' by David Dugan & Luke Kane (in aid of BSR)	VH	7.30pm
24	Beating the Sotwell Bounds (from the red phone box)		11am
24	BcS Primary School 175 th Birthday	School	3pm
25	Summer Concert	St Agatha's	7pm

July

1	Village Fete at Moreton House		2pm
11	WI meeting: Circle Dancing with Lily Sell	VH	7.15pm
15	Deckchair Cinema (Slade End House)		7pm
24	Preschool holiday club (2 weeks)		

Advance Notice

23 September	Claire Booth Concert
24 September	Autumn 5k fun run

Refuse Collection (Food waste each week)

Grey bins	Friday 2 June, Thursdays 15 & 29 June
	Thursdays 13 & 27 July
Green (& brown) bins	Thursdays 8 & 22 June
	Thursdays 6 & 20 July

Village website

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