

The Villager

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell

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

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

Editorial

It feels odd to be writing about Autumn and even Christmas when we are still enjoying some balmy end-of-summer days at the moment. Kicking off village Autumn events is our great Apple Day at the Red Lion on Sunday 12 October, see page 4. In November, work is due to begin on the planting of the new Village Orchard below the Swan Allotments, which is good news.

In the centre pages (12-14) is a special feature to commemorate the centenary this year of the outbreak of World War 1. It gives details of local events, including an exhibition in St Agatha's, a documentary and photographic tribute to the 25 village men who gave their lives in World War 1. This opens on Saturday 11 October and continues till the end of November. We have printed also a personal remembrance of what life was like during the War here in Brightwell by Isabel Colquhoun who was a young girl at the time (a copy will also be available to read in the exhibition). They are a reminder of the way that the War touched everyone from the home front to those back at home, and changed the way of life for many here. Well worth a visit.

You should all have received by now your copy of the Community-Led Parish Plan 2014-2024, which was distributed to all households in August. It is an excellent document that encapsulates your views on many different aspects of life in the Parish, presented in a colourful and easy to read way. Plenty good ideas and actions are there. David Fox, Chairman of the Parish Council, writes on page 3 about how it will be used in formulating our Neighbourhood Plan. This will focus mainly on housing development here but unlike the Parish Plan, has legal force. More consultations, questionnaires and meetings I'm afraid but worthwhile if we get the kind of development here that the community wants.

Also this summer, we have had the establishment of the new village Tennis Club and the erection of a new Pavilion at the Kings Meadows courts. A big thank you to all those involved with this, especially Tony Windsor. It is a great asset to the village and means (like the Church) there is now a toilet there! This enabled the Club to run two successful tennis camps for youngsters in the summer, both oversubscribed.

And finally – would anyone like to provide a Christmas picture for the December issue of the Villager? Open to all ages. Closing date, 5 November. Send to me, at thevillagerbcs@gmail.com.

Helen Connor

Letter

Wellsprings Pond – a ‘thank you’ from residents

On behalf of the small band of local residents who look after Wellsprings Pond I'd like to express thanks to all the villagers and visitors who in recent years have thanked us for the time and effort we've put in, and told us how much they enjoy this lovely part of the village.

Not everyone will know that a formal agreement with the Parish Council in 2007 entrusted Wellsprings Residents with lead responsibility for practical management of the pond and surrounding area and the Environment Group with recording and monitoring, working in partnership. For over six years we (residents from Wellsprings and nearby) have carried out all of the practical conservation and management work, including weeding, wildflower planting, sowing, mowing, cutting, clearing leaves, removing silt and so on. The Parish Council has covered our expenses on projects such as renewing the timber footbridge, building stone retaining walls and repairing a collapsed culvert, but the effort has always been voluntary.

The partnership agreement set us two clear objectives: ‘maximising the wildlife value of the pond and its immediate surrounds’ (the environmental objective) ‘whilst improving and maintaining its visually attractive appearance’ (the community objective). This recognised the need to strike a sensible balance. We knew we could not expect to achieve everyone's ideal, but comments we've received suggest that you feel the balance is now about right. I do hope that's the case, but please keep up the feedback! So, a big ‘thank you’ to all who have supported and encouraged what we do. I'm personally looking forward to many more years of trying to help ensure that the area remains both a sanctuary for wildlife, ‘one of the loveliest parts of the village’ and a ‘magical place’, as people often say it is.

PS The areas that we look after are of course public spaces, there for everyone to enjoy. The stream is a great place for children and dogs to play. But since the pond itself and soft banks are havens for wildlife, they are more fragile, especially during the nesting and spawning seasons. So it's important not to disturb their tranquillity. Happily, there's been very little such problems, and no recent vandalism. Sadly though, earlier this year, a rampaging spaniel drove moorhens from their nest and killed a nesting duck - and we obviously don't like to see wild flowers trampled. So, dog owners and parents particularly, please do keep this in mind while enjoying this lovely place. Thanks again!

Martin Dix martindix@btinternet.com

Apple Day – Sunday 12 October

Do you have an apple tree? What about making some juice with your apples? Come along to Apple Day at the Red Lion from 12 noon to see the village press in action and join in the fun. You can bring bags or boxes of apples and don't forget to bring some bottles.

Paul Chilton will be putting on an impressive show of some of the 78 different heritage varieties in the village and there will be plenty of different ones to taste. Have you met Annie Elizabeth, James Grieve, Charles Ross, Arthur Turner, George Cave or William Crump? They can all be found somewhere in gardens in the village.

Do you have a favourite recipe for an apple pudding or cake? Are you willing to share it? It would be fun for people to try each one and declare a winner. Bring them to the pub on the day or drop them off at Jean Johnson's, Dannebrog, Church Lane - 836014.

We will be launching the Community Orchard at Apple Day so come along to hear all about it and see the plans.

Alison Bloomfield.

www.brightwellorchards.blogspot.co.uk

Parish Council

Community Governance Review

The final decision was made on the Boundary review at the full Council meeting at SODC on 17 July 2014, to make the boundary between Brightwell-cum-Sotwell and Wallingford the verge on the Wallingford side of the by-pass.

Community Led Plan

The Action Plan was discussed and approved at the July Parish Council meeting. The Parish Council are extremely grateful to Jason Debney and the steering group for the huge amount of hard work they have put in to the plan. All agreed that it was an excellent plan and will be extremely helpful as we move forward with the Neighbourhood Plan (see David Fox's article).

Planning meeting on Sunday 10 August

The Parish Council thanks all those that attended the planning meeting to determine the P.C. planning committee's views of the planning

applications for Deacons House and Old West End Nursery. The meeting was well attended by over 40 parishioners whose participation and contributions were very helpful.

Celia Collett

Why a Neighbourhood Plan?

After a huge amount of work and wide consultation, the Parish's second Community-Led Parish Plan (CLP) has now been issued. This followed hard on the second Parish Conservation Plan published in 2013, so some are asking why we need yet a third plan, a Neighbourhood Plan?

Well, Section 21 of the CLP gives a pretty good explanation and I doubt I can improve on it. I urge everybody to read it. But to give a little background, it was the CLP steering group who first appreciated that the CLP on its own would not be sufficient for the Parish's needs. The SODC Core Strategy and the latest (2014) Strategic Housing Market Assessment are putting unprecedented pressure for increased housing all around us, pressure which is bound to change the environment in which we live. This is inevitable.

Change of itself is neither good nor bad, but a Neighbourhood Plan is the best hope we have of ensuring that the essential character of the Parish is preserved and that change is so far as possible for the better. A Neighbourhood Plan, once adopted, has legal force and means that the development desired by the community - our community - will have the best chance of coming to fruition. We will be able to put in place enforceable policies to help ensure we preserve a proper balance between our own needs and the needs of the wider community.

A Neighbourhood Plan needs to go through some essential stages: consultation, preparation, independent examination, and finally democratic approval. The CLP has given us an excellent start in understanding what we want and need, but some questions remain. This autumn will see a further round of consultation and questionnaires to make sure we have the soundest base possible when we move onto the preparation stage. We need your views and thoughts. And if you feel you have the time and inclination to play an active part in the process as a member of the working group you will be very welcome

David Fox, Chairman of the Parish Council

Brightwell Stores News

Most of you will know by now that Steph left the shop at the end of July to take up a new job near where she now lives. We wish her every success for the future and thank her for setting up the shop four years ago and leaving us in a good trading position.

Margot and Mandy, assisted by Carol, are very ably running the shop and look forward to welcoming you whether you are a regular or new shopper, or just visiting the Store. If you haven't visited us before come and see our fantastic range of local products: cakes, juices, meat, free range eggs, flour and cereals, honey, wine, fruit and vegetables, many of the latter being donated by villagers who find they have a glut. For comfort and reassurance, we also stock Bach Rescue Remedy and Rescue Cream, Brightwell-cum-Sotwell's internationally famous local success.

Keep an eye out for new products in the shop; recent new lines added to the Field Fare frozen goods are croissants and new vegetable lines. Let us know what you would like us to stock. If we can we will.

The Community-Led Plan indicated that the Village Store was the third facility most used at least once a week (by 41% of residents) and the third most used or valued facility overall. Your custom and volunteer help can ensure the Village Store continues to offer this vital support to residents of Brightwell-cum-Sotwell and visitors.

Management Committee

Brightwell Art Club Annual Exhibition

As I am writing this in August, it seems extraordinary to be reminding everyone of our Annual Exhibition on SATURDAY 6 DECEMBER. But if you could put the date in your diary and come along and support your local Art Club, that would be great. There will be some new exhibitors as the Art Club has had some new members this year. But there will also be all the local artists that you already know and love with some new works of their own. The Exhibition will be in the Village Hall, as always, from 10am until 1pm. with refreshments, local arts and craft stalls (some new ones this year) and a cracking raffle in aid of charity. Do come along and see us and do some Christmas shopping at the same time!

Susan Ganney, Club Secretary

Community Association

A US Themed Night with American Bingo. 18 October, 7.30 PM

Our Team have been busy planning this event for all the family, come along on Saturday 18th. We ran an evening like this a few years ago and it was very popular. It is NOT a typical bingo game. Squares are themed (famous names, cartoon characters, articles of clothing, local sites etc) and will be open to all ages and with fun prizes. Tickets are £10, which included a Tex-Mex themed supper, and are on sale at the Red Lion and the Village Shop or by telephone on 01491834195. There is a limited number of tickets available so early booking is advisable

Secretarial Post

Our wonderful secretary Laura is leaving the Community Association (for a very good reason) and we need to recruit a replacement. Would anybody like to join our friendly group in this role and help us raise money for worthwhile causes in the village and have some fun too. If you are interested please contact me for further details.

Fete funds distribution

This year's Fete profits have been distributed to the following organisations in response to their requests for help with capital projects and other funding:

Brownies	- £ 40	Orchard Group	- £ 50
Environment Group	- £100	FOBS	- £400
Football Club	- £200	Lunch Club	- £ 64
PCC	- £400	Pre School Group	- £250
Scouts	- £750	Toddlers	- £150
Tennis Club	- £150	Village Hall	- £250
WI	- £150		

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

As I am writing this slightly in advance, a big thank you to everybody who came to the AGM of the Community Association, more details in the next edition.

James Davys, Chairman

Parish Church

There's no denying that these are difficult times for those of us who see religion as a good thing, and faith as something to nurture. How do we, who may account for our perseverance as believers because of having a love for the peace that a deep faith can bring in turbulent times, react when confronted by the sickening wickedness of those who claim to follow religious teaching but are prepared to commit atrocious acts in its name, and even in the name of God?

There is a difference between the angry and ferocious religion of the extremist, and the nourishment and trust which true religion brings to those who practise it and to those around them. We have been slow to differentiate between healthy and unhealthy religion. The calamities we witness because of conflict between religious people are rooted in the presumptuous certainty that they are in the right, and by implication, everyone else is not ignorant or innocent, but in error. This is unhealthy religion. When people are bound together in the certainty of their own rightness, the notion of grace is crushed; and, when religion has little room for grace, it imperils empathy, energises scapegoating, and results in unholy solutions. We know this from history – that's why Remembrance and re-mem-bering, in every sense of that word, can be a real antidote for unhealthy religion and false ideologies of all kinds. For Christians, the key point of re-mem-bering is the eucharist. That's why, however boringly repetitive gathering together Sunday by Sunday may seem, it is in fact restorative and creative in 'deep down things'. I get nervous when I see white words on black headbands in the same way as I do when I see people with sandwich boards or bullhorns pronouncing that 'the end is nigh'. I want to ask what end, and who is it near? In other words we need to contextualise our faith with our lives. And we need to keep things in perspective.

Healthy religion (like good baking?) deepens empathy, teaches wisdom, enlarges the imagination, and thus opens people to new possibilities. Furthermore, it does not indoctrinate, but encourages people to think for themselves. It is essentially humble and aware of the capacity to get things very wrong. Importantly, healthy religion does not focus on what it is against, but rather on what it is for.

Jeremy

PS If you want an example of healthy remembrance, I commend the display which Chris, Olive, Rosemary, Annie & others are helping put together in church for WW1 (see page 12)

Sunday Service Times at the Parish Church

- 5 October 8am St James, Holy Communion (said BCP)
 9.30am St Agatha's , Holy Communion (sung)
- 12 October 8am St James, Holy Communion (said)
 10am St Agatha's ,All Age Worship
 A short service for all the family, no communion
- 19 October 8am St James, Morning Prayer
 9.30am St Agatha's , Holy Communion (sung)
- 26 October 8am St James, Holy Communion (said)
 9.30am St Agatha's, Baptism & Family Communion
- 2 November 8am St James, Holy Communion (said BCP)
 11am Team Service, St. Mary Magdalene' Crowmarsh.
 All Welcome
- 9 November 10.45am Remembrance Day Service
- 16 November 8am St James, Morning Prayer
 9.30 St Agatha's, All Souls Service (remembering those
 who are dead, particularly those who died in the last
 year)

Friends of Brightwell School (FOBS)

Brightwell School Summer Fair

The Summer Fair was a tremendous success, making a total of £1830.97. Parents, teachers and children all worked very hard to make it such a wonderful event. This included the planning before the day, setting up in the afternoon and running the stalls in the evening. Thanks are also due to villagers who lent us items such as gazebos and games, and donated prizes. The generosity of the local community was evident with the high value of the items donated to the silent auction and the raffle. Additionally, the following local businesses very kindly sponsored stalls: The Red Lion in Brightwell, Lesters, Gutsi Executive Transfer, Colliers of Crowmarsh and AV Smith and Sons. As well as a bouncy castle, go karts, a bar, a

fantastic barbeque, which Jackie Ollenbuttel from the school kitchen very kindly ran with parents, the usual bottle raffle (always very successful), the silent auction, external vendors and a second-hand toy stall, each class also ran a stall which they had chosen themselves. Particular thanks are due to Emma Smith, Claire Plant, Deborah Ayling, Paula Moulton and Carrie Hammond for giving up so much of their time to make it such a success.

This was a wonderful example of FOBS, the school and the local community working together to achieve something very impressive indeed, which was thoroughly enjoyed by everybody who attended.

Library

Over the summer holiday we put some of FOBS' funds to very good use indeed. The old Discovery classroom was transformed into a library. The outside was jet washed and painted. The inside was painted and new furniture bought, assembled and secured in place ready for the start of term. We are also in the process of applying for grants to fund the purchase of more books and two Apple Macs for the library. It is fantastic that the children now have a proper library rather than just the corner of a room as they had in the past. Thank you very much to the Moulton, Jenkins, Barringer, Smith, Frost and Williams families and to Ray Kimba for all their hard work bringing the library to life.

If you have any questions about FOBS or any fundraising ideas or comments please do not hesitate to contact us at brightwellfobs@gmail.com.

.Mark Hawkins FOBS Secretary

Folk Concert featuring Three Pressed Men

This talented trio promise to perform wonders with their voices and various instruments including multiple concertinas. Praised at folk clubs and festivals for their range of styles and sounds, 'Three Pressed Men' will be performing at Wallingford Methodist Church at 7.30 pm on Saturday 18 October. The audience can expect a mixture of a cappella harmonies, sensitive ballads, lively dance music and rousing choruses. Also featuring will be a musical family, The Fensoms. Tickets cost £8.50 and include light refreshments in the interval, available from artatwmc@gmail.com or Tourist Info office.

Nicky Lidstone

What's on at the Red Lion

Up and coming Events include:

October:

Mon 6 – Jazz Jam

Sun 12 – Apple Day followed by music from Nikki Loy in the evening

Sun 26 – Live jazz from the Stanley Moon Trio

Mon 27 – Quiz for Save the Children

November:

Mon 3 – Jazz Jam

Mon 24 – Quiz for Oxfam

Sun 30 – Live jazz from the Stanley Moon Trio

Our **Fish Fridays** will also be continuing through the coming months, serving fresh fish on Friday evenings.

The **Christmas menu** is now complete (see website www.redlion.biz) and will be running from 1 December up until lunchtime on Wednesday 24 December. Bookings: ring 01491 837373.

W I

Our annual garden party on 10 August took place in the lovely garden of Linda Dixon at Moulsoford. It was well attended and well provided for as members had been asked to bring one plateful of food for sharing. There was a wonderful tasty assortment and most of it disappeared, washed down with refreshing glasses of Pimm's carefully prepared by committee members. The only disappointment was that the lovely weather had departed that night and we had to leave the garden and huddle inside. Nevertheless we all had a good time finishing off the Pimms.

Our next meeting on 9 September was an open meeting when Valerie Sheldon talked about 'An Afternoon at the Fostering Panel'. Our October meeting, October 14, is entitled 'Tudor Masquerades' and will be presented by Martin Sirot-Smith. Sounds intriguing! We will then be into Christmas countdown as our November meeting is all about seasonal crafts, a hands-on opportunity to make a Christmas cracker or a tree decoration. We welcome all women to our regular meetings. We ask for just £3.00 as a donation when you attend as a visitor. Refreshments are provided.

Margaret Smith



In Commemoration of the Outbreak of WW1

Exhibition in St Agatha's

Thomas Barlow, Frederick Batten, Arthur Brooker.....

Every year we gather round our village war memorial and listen with bowed heads as the names of the young men who were killed in two world wars are read out loud. For most of us in the village today, that's all they are – just names. But back then they were the husbands and sons of village families.

This being the centenary year of the start of World War 1, we have tried to gather together as much background as we can for each of the 25 men who died between 1914 and 1918 – their service records, where and how they lost their lives, plus any overseas cemetery or memorial details. Added to this, using our excellent Village History Group's records, and websites, family details and photographs, we have gained an insight into those men's lives and an idea of what everyday village life was back then.

All of this is going to be on display in St Agatha's Church, starting Saturday 11 October when tea and cake will be available in the Church Room between 2.30 and 4.30. This tribute to the village men of WW1 will then remain in church until the end of November (10am-5pm), allowing plenty of time for people to just visit whenever they wish. St Agatha's is open every day until dusk. Sundays from 11am.

NB: Anyone coming from a distance should check on (01491) 836661, 836063 or 836943 to avoid weddings or funerals.

Olive Sutcliffe

Kitchener's Supper

On Saturday 1 November a supper will be held as part of the World War 1 commemorations, please join us for a memorable evening. Tickets will be available in October from the Village Shop or Clive & Celia Collett. Proceeds will be split between the Royal British Legion and Oxfordshire 14/18 Centenary Appeal.

Remembrance Parade

Starting from the Red Lion at 10.30am, Captain Paul Rodwell of 2ic Nivelles Company Oxfordshire (The Rifles) Battalion Army Cadet Force has very kindly agreed to lead the Parade once again this year.

Celia Collett

War Time in the Village (Brightwell) by F I Colquhoun

I remember my father opening his paper (the Daily Mail) on August 4 1914 and exclaiming "Well Great Britain has declared war on Germany". Of course there was no radio or TV in those days, so the press were first with the news. At that time no-one seemed particularly perturbed. After all wars involved soldiers and sailors; no-one else need worry.

My first shock came early on when I went with my shopping bag and a golden half-sovereign to do the weekly shop at Tarry's shop. I was ten years old then. Always the first item on the list my mother gave me was 6lb white sugar at 2d a lb. Why we needed 6lb I can't think, but in those days people were not concerned with slimming and I had a very sweet tooth. Imagine my surprise when, on presenting my usual shopping list, Mr Tarry said "You can't have 6lbs of sugar, you can only have 2lbs. "Why" I said "I've brought the money to pay for it." That was the first of many shocks we were to suffer in the matter of food, or lack of it.

Food rationing was not introduced for some time and the normal supplies became fewer and fewer. I remember on one occasion when the only fat in Tarry's shop was 'cocoa-butter', something we villagers had never heard of before. There was neither butter, margarine, lard nor dripping. Perhaps one day someone would come back from a trip to Wallingford with the amazing news that Walker's store in Castle Street was allowing anyone $\frac{1}{4}$ lb of margarine. What luxury! We immediately got on our bicycles and tore into Wallingford to queue up for $\frac{1}{4}$ lb of margarine!

Thank goodness that most villagers had gardens and allotments, so most of us became enforced vegetarians. However I remember that Mr A D Wells of Sinodun, a farmer, arranged to have a pig killed periodically and frequently all his employees were allowed to buy a piece of bacon each week. Of course many men kept a pig in a sty at the bottom of their garden. There were no restrictive laws in those days. I well remember the horrific screams when someone was killing his pig.

So there were no cases of actual starvation in the village, but diet was certainly not luxurious. Bread became very 'doubtful' in quality and taste.

However our dull life was suddenly enlivened by the arrival of the 'London Yeomanry'. In those days there were large barns adjoining The Priory at Sotwell, reaching out to the Croft path. What fun we children had watching the soldiers grooming and feeding those beautiful horses in the barns with opened doors.

The troops were billeted in 'Rosedale', now Blackstone House. Whilst we were short of food, they had more than enough. Soon we children were invited and encouraged to visit 'Rosedale' at certain times when we were given lovely large tins of plum and apple jam and delicious large really white loaves; manna indeed, not from Heaven but from the Army.

In those days it was the custom that when a villager died, the church bell was tolled once a minute for half an hour. Then the question round the village, "who's that for?" As time went on and news came through that yet another young man had been 'killed in action' the bell tolled out its sad message.

Monday night at 9.00pm was a special time. The CEMS met in their little meeting room (annex to Vine House) not far from the Post Office, presided over by Mr A D Wells. At the end of the meeting the men would come out, a large sheet was erected and illuminated by some kind of lamp. On it were written the words of a hymn composed by the Rector and sung (unaccompanied) to the tune of No 595 in hymns Ancient and Modern. The Rector's words were those appropriate to the times. A large number of villagers, both men and women and some children, joined the CEMS and sang this hymn, followed by 'Oh God our help in ages past' – a simple but satisfying way of remembering those in peril.

F I Colquhoun

Copyright Brightwell History Group

Just Fighting? A series of discussions to consider the ethics of fighting – then and now.

Sunday 12 October *Just war thinking: what is it and how is it Christian?*

Key speaker: Professor Nigel Biggar, Regius Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology, Christ Church, Oxford and Director, McDonald Centre for Technology, Ethics and Public Life. Author of *In Defence of War*.

Sunday 9 November *What we would fight for? What would three 17 year-olds give their lives for today?*

Key speakers: Wallingford Sixth Formers.

Both in St Mary's Church, Wallingford at 3.30 pm. Open to all.

David Rice, Team Rector



Allsorts Pre-School

Last year finished with a bang – literally – as the children bashed their home-made pinatas at the end of term party. There was also a presentation ceremony for those leaving to go to school, which included some lovely singing by the children. We wish our leavers all the best for primary school.

On the last Saturday of term, Allsorts held its Sports Day when children and their families met for a barbeque and some races. The event raised £425 and was a fun, sunny end to the year. We would like to say a big thank you to Mark from the Red Lion who donated the burgers and the sausages, and to all our other generous sponsors for the wonderful raffle prizes. The money raised will go towards our garden revamp project.

As we return to pre-school after the summer break, we are welcoming eight new starters to Allsorts. Two more will join after the October break. The children will begin the term by talking about their summer holidays. Forest school will continue to be held on a Tuesday afternoon with excursions around the village. We are also open on a Wednesday afternoon, as well as every morning. Some sessions are already very popular, so please do get in touch soon if you may wish to reserve a place for your child later in the year. To do so, contact Julie Carr, manager, on 826387 or email allsortsadmin@btinternet.com.

Most of our members of staff are still with us this year, but we have said a sad goodbye to Karen O'Hanlon as a permanent member of staff. She has left because of family commitments but promised to return on a voluntary basis. Many thanks to Karen for all her hard work and extremely valuable input. Natasha Fuller who has worked at Allsorts on a temporary contract for two terms has also not returned this year as she has left to train in special educational needs. Thank you too Natasha. Rachael Hill joined the team permanently in September, as deputy supervisor, having worked on a temporary contract for two terms. Nic Frost, who was also on a temporary contract, will increase her hours and become a permanent member of staff.

Our members of staff are continually training to improve their childcare knowledge. Last term, Karen Stevens and Sarah Stevenson received their results for their latest early years qualifications this term. Karen S passed her foundation degree and Sarah her level 3.

Team Allsorts

Environment Group

Moths (contributed by Tony Raynor, Cholsey)

It was about two years ago that the County Moth Recorder announced that there was one notable “Black Hole” in the county. i.e. a place from which no records had been submitted to him. This “Black Hole” was the village of Brightwell-cum-Sotwell! As a resident of nearby Cholsey, I felt that this dire situation had to be rectified. In 2013 the Environment Group agreed to try to improve this situation by organising a session to trap moths, but only a single mothing session proved possible, due to bad weather on the chosen nights.

So it was on the evening of 2 August and morning of 3 August that the Environment Group met at Fairthorne, the home of Paul Chilton. The ground-breaking field guide to moths by local wildlife illustrator Richard Lewington had been studied to see what might be caught in this early August, and to demonstrate the variety and beauty of these insects. The previous night had been cooler than of late, and the lack of cloud cover provided less than ideal conditions for moths to emerge. However the catch of 27 species proved to be better than expected. As the egg boxes were lifted one by one out of the trap, every new species was identified and admired. We were pleased that Richard was able to join us on Sunday to help with identifying those moths we had caught.

Moths are at their brightest when freshly emerged and fine examples were a Rosy Rustic, a Small Square-spot and a Straw Underwing, as well as two species of the Swallow and the Pebble. Several of the English names caused amusement – examples included Shuttle-shaped Dart and Setaceous Hebrew Character. The most numerous were the Common Rustics, Riband Waves and Lesser Broad-bordered Yellow Underwings. There were also several of the brilliant yellow Brimstones, plus a Yellow-barred Brindle and Crescent. A Waved Black proved to be the rarest specimen captured, although this species seems to be expanding its range.

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell is especially rich in good habitat, so with further trappings it should be possible to demonstrate it to be a moth hotspot and no longer a black hole.

SODC Draft Air Quality Action Plan

In July the Group sent its comments to SODC on the draft. These comments were generally critical. One point was that the Plan dealt only with monitoring for NO_x in the centre of Wallingford and two other towns:

there was virtually nothing about other pollutants such as ozone, particulates and CO2. Measures for reducing air pollution from vehicles were considered, then most of them were dismissed. Although Brightwell-cum-Sotwell appears to have relatively clean air, its quality is influenced by the emissions from vehicles on the A4130. The increasing traffic means that this quality will decline in the future

Autumn Talk

Steve Moll, a well known resident of Sotwell, is to talk on "The incredible world of the honey bee". This will be on Tuesday 28 October in the Village Hall at 8pm. Please come along.

John Rodda

Come to The Races!!!

Support your village junior football club and have a great night out. AFC Brightwell are running a RACE NIGHT at the Village Hall on SATURDAY 15 NOVEMBER from 7:30pm. There will be food, drink and loads of fun. Please save the date in your diary. Call Arthur on 07808 061191 for more details or look out for posters around the village.

Lynda Moore

Wallingford Volunteer Centre Home Visiting Scheme

The Volunteer Centre is well known in the town as a community transport scheme and now, in response to requests for help with tasks other than driving we have decided to launch a Home Visiting Scheme.

This Scheme is for elderly, vulnerable or isolated people who need help with tasks such as letter writing and form filling (non legal), using computers, light one-off gardening tasks, basic DIY, collecting prescriptions and shopping. We have volunteers who will visit on a regular basis for a chat over a cup of tea. We can also help people who have a temporary problem brought about by their own ill health or that of a relative. The volunteers are a friendly group of local people who are all DBS (CRB) checked and carry ID cards.

In this first year the service will be restricted to clients living in Wallingford, Crowmarsh Gifford and Brightwell-cum-Sotwell. In time we hope to be able offer the service to people living in the surrounding villages. If you think you would benefit from the support and friendship of one of our

volunteers or want to know more about the scheme, please contact me, the Scheme Manager, on 0744 3533 243, or email wvc.homevisiting@gmail.com.

Marie Carvell

Island Farm

At the end of our village toward Didcot is an island. This is not your regular expectation of an island, as it is not surrounded by water, at least not all of the time. This is a particular kind of island in that it is a Sanctuary, a safe home, for one of the most loved four legged friends, the donkey. Many of us will have happy memories of donkeys in our growing up years but for these little donkeys, life was not so happy. So with the help of a little money and generous support of a team of people, John McLaren started the sanctuary on the piece of land known as Frog Island. Like the water, frogs are not always around, but the donkeys are, and for every day of the year, except Christmas Day, you can go and visit them. Entry is free.

Once you are there you will quickly be aware that these are special donkeys, some well known and others not so. Pollyanne is a star - of London opera and many Palm Sundays at local churches. She has become so famous that a book has been written about her which is for sale in the very nice shop. But there are other creatures that have joined the throng at Island Farm, all with personalities of their own.

The kind people at the sanctuary find it hard to say No to animals in distress, and along with the 130 donkeys they now have a pot-bellied pig called Percy, a goat called Betty, two sheep Buttercup and Daisy, of course, and lots of lovely chickens running about around your feet. Oh and I almost forgot, a goose and a gander. No one is turned away.

The sanctuary, like all charities, is run on a shoestring and various improvements have been made to make visitors comfortable and encourage them along to meet the donkeys. A new Visitors Centre opened this year where you can find out more about the donkeys, how you can help, and where you can get a nice cup of tea. You can even adopt a donkey if you fall in love with one and maybe learn how to look after them in grooming and feeding.

I have been to the Island Farm on a number of occasions and found the volunteers very knowledgeable and helpful. I am always surprised just how near it is to our village - just a short walk away.

Margaret Smith

Wallingford Country Market

Every Friday, Regal Centre 8.30 – 11.15 am.

PREPARATIONS FOR CHRISTMAS BEGIN on:

3 October - Christmas Craft Display (ongoing)

24 October - Mince Pie Tasting

31 October - Orders commence

Last Market 2014 – Friday 19 December, re-opens 9 January 2015.

All our usual items on sale: Home-Baked, Home-Grown, Home-Crafted.

Do come and visit us soon, you never know what you may find!

Enquiries to the Market Manager – Tel: 01865-890649

Gwen Strong

Clifton Hampden Patient Participation Group (PPG)

A reminder of who we are: We are a group of patients who represent the full list of about 3500 Clifton Hampden Surgery patients living in the surrounding area including a number from Brightwell-cum-Sotwell and nearby. We meet regularly one evening every two months, with two Practice representatives present, to discuss and suggest possible improvements in the services provided by the Practice for patients at large.

How you can help? First of all, by joining the PPG as a supporter and by attending meetings. Secondly, by using and promoting the online service (<https://patient.emisaccess.co.uk>) by which patients can book appointments and renew prescriptions which can often be difficult to do by telephone. Thirdly, by donating, and encouraging friends to donate, towards the proposed emergency defibrillator which will be placed outside the Surgery. Fourthly, by making suggestions on any matter that might come within the PPG's scope.

The PPG Summer Newsletter gives details of the work that has been achieved over the last year and can be seen on the Surgery website (www.cliftonhampdensurgery.co.uk) but if you would like to receive a copy or, as a patient of the Surgery, become a supporter of the Group and attend meetings, or if you would like to make suggestions on non-clinical matters, please contact Roger Mitchell by email at rogermmmit@aol.com.

Roger Mitchell, Secretary

Village Tales - Part 2

Continuing the recollections from Geoff Brooker about village life as a boy in the 1920s and 30s which we started in the last issue. Read about the antics of the Little London and Black Hat gangs and some of the village characters at that time.

The open stream along the village street was another good place to play. It's still there, under the pavement and road, running from Wellsprings, along the street, appearing briefly at the top of the (then) Everex's farm drive (was *opposite Brightwell garage*) before disappearing underground again and flowing into Brightwell Manor moat. The water in the stream was used for drinking and there was a particularly deep bit by the present Rectory where water could be drawn by bucket. (*This is now 'The Old Rectory' but St Agatha's original Rectory is 'Fairlight House'. Confusing!*)

On the south side of the street, on land now occupied by Celandine Cottage and Sunnybank but standing farther back, there was a row of five two-storey cottages, known as Pump Row on account of the old water pump which stood at the front and served them all. Geoff recalled some of the residents of Pump Row as being Edwin and Mary Harvey and their children (including Phyl, later 'Everex', Matty Warwick the chimney sweep, and John Batten).

No. 1 Meadow View (next to The Rectory) was a police house, occupied in those days by PC Benstead – an old-fashioned bobby if ever there was one! He would regularly be waiting outside the school when children came out and woe betide anyone caught riding a bike without lights after dark. Petty crime was non-existent in BcS in those days.

Boys will be boys however, and PC Benstead's patience must have been well and truly tried on occasions by two gangs of small boys. The Little London Gang consisted of Sid Moody and the three Clark brothers, while the Black Hat Gang – Bill Thorne, Ernie and Fred Harvey, and Geoff – looked upon West End as its territory. Daring night raids were carried out on each other's camp and the Black Hats came up with a fiendishly clever surveillance system to keep guard on their territory – an old car headlight fixed to a swivelling stand and coupled to a bicycle dynamo with some one pedalling like fury to keep the 'searchlight' working. Geoff remembers Bill Thorne hiding up a tree along Watermans Lane with a sack of really mushy rotten potatoes to drop on the unsuspecting Little Londoners.

The Black Hats used to meet in Ernie Harvey's Dad's garage. 'Cuff' Harvey had a fried fish shop – the black shed which is still there by the cottages at the bottom of Church Lane. Potato fritters were his speciality. The fish shop and Harry Eggleton's cycle repair shed on the end of the house, both lit by oil lamps, were real village meeting places where people lingered to chat and hear the latest gossip.

Harking back to the police presence in Brightwell, Geoff told of a time one winter when the local men had been paid to shovel and clear the roads of snow after a very heavy fall. The resulting piles of snow at the roadsides had provided one deep enough for Geoff and his pals to dig out a cavern – a hidey-hole. Another constable of the time, PC Appleton, apparently cycled past totally unaware of the boys in their dug-out. Geoff says he has no idea what could have possessed him, but Frank Blake, on some mad impulse, dashed out of the cave and hurled a snowball at the retreating bobby. Unfortunately it was a direct hit and actually knocked off the PC's helmet. But by the time the furious bobby had gathered himself and helmet together, Frank was back in the snow hole with the others and there they stayed, absolutely quaking with fear, until the constable – unable to see who or where the snowball had come from and not realising they were almost under his feet - left on his bicycle.

The baker of the time was called Butler and it was he who started the custom of using up spare pieces of dough on Tuesdays to make 'tommy' loaves (small rolls), giving them to the lucky children who were first to the bakehouse after school. Stan and Norah Kew continued the happy custom right up to the bakery closing down.

Dr Bach (pronounced Batch by the locals) also figured in Geoff's childhood. He sponsored the men's football team – which played on a meadow where the Greenmere houses now stand – and bought them proper football shirts. Geoff painted a picture of an eccentric but kindly figure with long hair tied back, old long coat belted with thick string, who lived in The Wellsprings and was often seen pushing an old pram along to The Swan public house (bottom of Church Lane) where he enjoyed playing the piano and leading the singing. His now world famous remedies were well used by the villagers and Geoff recalled the Wallingford doctor eventually refusing to treat anyone who was also accepting treatment from Dr Bach.

Another character was Shady (Shadrach) Wilcox. Only five foot tall, Geoff described him as a thin wizened little man, quite scruffy and unwashed in appearance but well educated. He regularly played the organ at St James' Church and lived in the right hand side of The Barn cottage, which was

then two dwellings. When war broke out, Shady took in two evacuees from London who, in return, took Shady in hand and – as Geoff put it – ‘kept him clean for the duration’! Across the road from Shady’s was the Stewart Memorial Hall with two rooms given over to the Young Men’s Club. It boasted a half-size billiard table, darts and dominoes as its attractions for 3d. per week.

An important annual event was the Brightwell Flower Show held at Rush Court, then a private house and estate. Geoff had memories of Teddy Hornblow taking part in motorcycle racing and also of Col. Nesbitt of Vine House and Col. Cornish of Moreton House organising the Cavalry to come and give a display which involved the soldiers removing tent pegs whilst mounted. The Flower Show was always well attended by villagers; allotments and gardens were such an important part of just existing in those days. The old-style Flower Show seems to have died out just before the war, in 1939.

Geoff was seventeen when war broke out and he was called up. He did a stint with the Home Guard first, along with 30 other village chaps. Then he was sent with the Royal Berkshires to Aldeburgh on the east coast. To someone who’d previously only been as far as Reading, it seemed like the other side of the world. This was small beer though compared to his D-Day landing on Juno beach. But that’s another story.

But sadly, that story was never recounted as Geoff died in 1998.

Olive Sutcliffe

Brightwell-cum Sotwell Post Office

Open at the back of the Village Hall Monday to Friday 9.00 – 13.00 and Saturday 9.00 – 12.00. Last Collection by Royal Mail at the Post Office is 11.05 am. The full range of facilities available at Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Post Office is on www.postoffice.co.uk or www.brightwellcumshotwell.co.uk. These include travel insurance and money, bill payments, banking and parcel sending and collection. You may now arrange for your parcels to be collected from Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Post Office rather than the Royal Mail Delivery Office in Wallingford.

Mike Powell

Round and About – In Brief

Earth Trust:

- Autumn Water Festival Sunday 5 October, 11am – 4 pm.
A celebration of Autumn, harvest and water! Something for the whole family to enjoy... water play, mini raft making competition, apple pressing, rushlight making, foraging walk, pumpkin hunt, bug exploration walk, charcoal making, cricket bat willows display... plus live music and refreshments. £5 adults, £2 children, £12 family (2 adults, 2 children).
- Heritage Skills Taster Session: Natural Dyeing at Riverside Meadows, Wallingford Saturday 11 October, 1pm-4pm
Learn the basics of natural dyeing, using plants commonly found in gardens and hedgerows. A free taster session – drop in and have a go at learning this traditional skill.

More information of other events on our website www.earthtrust.org.uk. All events take place at the Earth Trust, Little Wittenham, OX14 4QZ, unless otherwise stated. Booking usually essential.

Wallingford Gardening Club

- 9 October Meeting: Richard Thornton will be following in the footsteps of George Forrest one of the first explorers of China's remote south western province of Yunnan, generally regarded as the most biodiverse province in the country..
- 13 November Meeting: Butterflies and Orchids of the upper Thames region, a talk by Malcolm Broadsword
Ridgeway Community Church, Wallingford at 7.30pm. Visitors very welcome £2.

Wallingford Museum

- POW Sketchbook - Will Wilder's original 1942-45 drawings of life in a Japanese prison camp - Additional exhibition opens at Museum Tuesday 14 October
- A Night at the Museum II - experience a night in wartime Britain, Thursday 30 Oct.

Wallingford Quiz Night: Friday 17 October, in aid of Friends of St Mary and St Leonard's Church, Masonic Hall, Goldsmiths Lane. Tables of 6, Cost £10 including Supper. Served at 7.15; quiz starts at 8pm sharp. For tickets phone Belinda 836223.

VILLAGE DIARY

October

7	Quilting Group	VH	9.30-1
11	Opening of Exhibition on WW1	St Agatha's	2.30-4.30
12	Apple Day	Red Lion	12 noon
14	WI Meeting 'Tudor Masquerades'	VH	7.30pm
18	American themed Bingo	VH	7.30pm
21	Quilting Group	VH	9.30-1
27	Quiz Night in aid of Save the Children	Red Lion	8pm
28	Environment Group: <i>Steve Moll 'The incredible world of the honey bee'</i>	VH	8pm

November

1	Kitcheners Supper	VH	??
4	Quilting Group	VH	9.30-1
8	Save the Children Fund Christmas cards and Coffee Morning	Red Lion	9.30-11.30
9	Remembrance Parade	The Street	10.30am
11	WI Meeting 'Christmas crafts'	VH	7.30pm
15	AFC Race Night	VH	7.30pm
15	Wantage Male Voice Choir	St Agatha's	7.30pm
18	Quilting Group	VH	9.30-1

Advance Notice:

6 December	Annual Art Club Exhibition	VH	10-1
16 December	Carol Service	St Agatha's	6pm
24 December	<i>Save the Children</i> Carols around the Christmas Tree		
4 January	Wassail (at just before dusk)		

Refuse Collection: Food waste each week

Grey bins: 9, 23 Oct 6, 20 Nov
Green bins: 2, 16, 30 Oct 13, 27 Nov

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