

# THE WHITCHURCH on THAMES BULLETIN

**whitchurchonthames.com**

So now 2012 is behind us. I think we can look back on it as a very successful year for our Village. At long last our Village Green started to operate as a Village Green should. Cricket on Saturday afternoons in the Summer, of course. A lovely spot for an afternoon stroll at any time. And then there were the Village Parties!

This village can certainly put on a great show when it puts its mind to it. The Jubilee Party was a resounding success and the Village fête, although a different sort of function, was just as memorable. This was made possible by the hard work of many volunteers. Without them nothing would have happened.

By the time you read this another volunteer driven operation will have taken place. The agreement which gave us the Village Green requires that the car park shall have a hedge round it and a number of trees shall be planted. Luckily we have the expertise of WoTHabS who persuaded the SODC planners to change some plant types to ones that are more typical of our locality. They then went on to research the acquisition of the best plants at the best prices. This was hundreds of plants. And then they organised the planting sessions which had to manage an army of volunteers in wellies and get every plant into its rightful place.

Some trees already have been sponsored in memory of a departed friend or loved one. For example Christine Minton is sponsoring a tree in memory of her husband Peter. A few trees remain and anyone interested should contact our Parish Clerk Jenny Welham at [clerkwhitc@btinternet.com](mailto:clerkwhitc@btinternet.com).

There is also a proposal to provide chairs and benches in a similar way. Many older residents will remember my Mother, and will understand why I shall sponsor a bench in her memory. Again Jenny is the contact for anyone with similar ideas.

And now we move on into 2013. No doubt the worst of the winter is yet to come. At least TaPAG have managed to get the High Street upgraded so that it gets high priority when the gritting lorries are out. We found last year that this made a big difference: once gritted and open the traffic kept it open. TaPAG have also organised salt bins on Manor Road, on the Hardwick “hump” and on Hillside.

Later this year the fête will once again be on our own Village Green, and I have a hankering after a “Jubilee Plus One” party. But the big event later in the year will of course be the bridge closure.

Although the bridge cannot close until the Autumn there has already been much activity in the background. In particular our County Councillor Dave Sexon has been working on traffic problems. Now most people are thinking about how the closure will affect them.

One suggestion is that the Village Hall should have some sort of Saturday Market, perhaps with Pangbourne shops joining in. So far this is just an idea, although a small group is being formed by Stephen Trinder to look at it in more detail. Ideas will be very welcome and *pro tem* can be sent to me or to Jenny. Once that group has formed we will pass them on.

On a less hopeful note, I have to remind everyone that the recent spate of burglaries in Henley has caused a police crackdown there, and it appears that incidents are being reported as time goes on from progressively further away. So please remember to keep doors locked, and valuables out of sight. That is particularly the case for car keys.

Finally, I must complement our Village web site for keeping everyone informed about Village activities and about factors that will affect our Village. The pictures of the New Year’s Day Walk, in itself a resounding success with a turn out in the region of a hundred, appeared almost immediately. The link to the Environment Agency showed clearly the current level of the River and how that related to previous maximum levels. It also indicated height and location of flooding that could be expected.

*To everyone, on behalf of all the members of the Parish Council :*

*A Very Happy and Prosperous New Year!*

## **NYD walk**

Under pressure from our Editor I have been asked to give a brief résumé of the walk on New Year's Day. The turnout was reminiscent of our first such walk in 2008 when I thought people emerged from every point in the village and I counted about 100.

So I was thrilled to see a similar turnout on what was a beautiful day. We counted 96 before we reached the black gates and others met the throng there.

We used a series of the recently opened permissive paths entering and passing through Bottom Wood on the Hardwick Estate. The paths twist and turn to reach one of the best views of the Baulk and then along to pass the Bear Pit and traverse the top side of the wood and then the valley floor below on the return.

Everyone appeared to enjoy the route of about 5 miles despite, at times, the dreadful muddy conditions underfoot.

The Greyhound welcomed us on our return but with some surprise at the numbers seeking a drink and food.

I have in mind a longer walk for Spring – possibly 8 miles or so. I have nearly run out of new paths to introduce you to and so may take you in the opposite direction around a previous Spring walk.

The support in the village for these walks is very encouraging.

Eric

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## **Whitchurch & Goring Heath Twinning Association**

The Annual General meeting, at which we will discuss plans for entertaining our guests from La Bouille, will be held on Friday February 1st at 8pm in the Old Stables, opposite the Ferryboat pub in Whitchurch. All welcome.



**LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL**  
**Goring, Woodcote & District Lions Club**

*Serving the villages of South West Oxfordshire*  
 One of over 44,000 Lions Clubs Worldwide, forming Lions Clubs International  
 Charitable Trust Number 1131754

✉ [info@lions-gwd.org.uk](mailto:info@lions-gwd.org.uk) ★ [www.lions-gwd.org.uk](http://www.lions-gwd.org.uk) ☎ 0845 833 9837



## Lions thank Santa helpers

The Lions Club of Goring, Woodcote & District raised a record £4,391.18 with the kind help of local volunteer groups who turned out as Santa's elves to assist with door to door collections. This total is over £1,000 above last year and marks the 31<sup>st</sup> successive year the Lions have toured the villages of South Oxfordshire with Santa on his sleigh to collect donations whilst playing seasonal carols.

Each volunteer group of helpers will receive 50% of the amounts they collected towards their chosen charity project. In Sonning Common the Lions were helped by Shirehall Rugby Club, in Woodcote by local Beavers, Cub & Scout Leaders and in Goring by Goring Primary School PTA.

The total amounts collected by area are as follows

Sonning Common	£1,026.30
Goring on Thames	£1,025.46
Woodcote & Crays Pond	£1,009.12
Whitchurch Hill	£ 371.07
Whitchurch on Thames	£ 306.47
At the Tollbridge	£ 652.76

Goring, Woodcote and District Lions Club is part of the International "family" of Lions Clubs, but is very much a local club, dedicated to helping in the local community with members who live in the area. The majority of the Club's fund raising receipts are spent locally with approximately 10 to 12 % of funds going to support Lions International charitable projects in other parts of the world where people are in need of help.

Every pound donated goes to charity with no administration charges taken out.

This is a summary of some of the projects undertaken and support provided during the past 12 months:

- supply of 3 kissing gates for Chiltern Way footpaths in & near Woodcote
- supply & plant Jubilee trees in Goring, Woodcote & Whitchurch Hill
- a Christmas hamper given to someone in need
- a new washing machine (plumbed in) and furniture provided for a family
- donation to the Air Ambulance Berks/Oxon/Bucks
- donation to Macmillan Nurses
- support for the RBH Prostate Cancer “Robbie the Robot” appeal
- provide a specialist bed & chair for two local Hospices
- giving two weather-proof benches for residents of Mowforth Close, Woodcote
- supplying equipment for Sonning Common pre-School
- provision of 4 tents for Sonning Common Cubs Group
- sponsorship for local girl to work with children overseas
- financial support for the Footsteps Foundation
- internationally approved overseas projects, such as Water Aid and the Lions Eye Health Programme.

Throughout the year Lions also collect used or unwanted spectacles including sunglasses to recycle free via other Lions Clubs in third world countries. This year marks the 29th Anniversary of this Lions Spectrek project. Established collection points for spectacles are at Sonning Common Health Centre, the Boathouse Surgery in Pangbourne, both Goring and Woodcote Medical Centres, the Post Office at Woodcote Way, in Caversham and in the Reception area at S.O.D.C. Offices at Crowmarsh.

The value of these spectacles given free of charge to people with impaired sight in these countries cannot be over-emphasised.

If you would like to help or would like more details about the Lions please contact

Chris Stevens on 0118 984 4551 or Alan Wright on 0845 833 9837  
email: [info@lions-gwd.org.uk](mailto:info@lions-gwd.org.uk) Website: [www.lions-gwd.org.uk](http://www.lions-gwd.org.uk)

# Woodcote Library.

A happy new year to all our readers! Our new year resolution is to continue to provide books and films for your information and entertainment during 2013.

If any of you have over indulged over the festive season we have a good selection of diet and fitness books to help get you back into shape - or if the cold weather has started you dreaming of your next summer holiday our section of Travel Guides might to help you choose your next destination.

Congratulations to Stilehopper on the launch of his new book, Walks near Henley and Wallingford, copies are available to purchase at the library for £5, all proceeds to local charities.

## OWL

The New Year will see the beginning of the next phase in OWL's work as we shall start talks with Oxfordshire's Library Manager, Jillian Southwell, about the future running of Woodcote library. As previously reported, Langtree School has let the building on a long lease to Oxfordshire County Council to run a community library, when it took over the campus on becoming an academy earlier this year.

The Library Service has installed self-service machines to help with book administration, and is continuing to supply books and other materials for all ages. What now needs to be resolved is how to staff the library on half the present budget - which is by no means generous in the first place! There will be a chance for discussion at our AGM to be held in March, details later.

Meanwhile, our fundraising continues so that we can provide the library with things the county can't afford, so that readers return often and enjoy their visits.

The Annual General meeting will be held on Monday 18th March at 7.30pm in the library. All welcome.

## **Woodcote Library News.**

Spring is in the air! New books, new ideas, new rugs?!

OWL's December coffee shop morning was aimed at raising enough money to provide a new rug for the children's zone of the library. We have selected a very smart rug and as soon as it arrives we will be holding a 'rug sitting' ceremony. We hope to have lots of children sitting on the new rug listening to, or reading, some of their favourite stories during a Saturday morning library session. Please look out for more details in the library.

Oxfordshire Library Service now offers a facility to download and listen to audio books free of charge anytime, anywhere with OneClickdigital. Books can be downloaded onto computers, IPHones, IPads etc for a normal loan period of 21 days and you can renew if necessary. There is a good selection of books to choose from - ranging from children's books to thrillers. Go to [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk) and follow the links. You will need your library card number and pin to access the facility. Please ask in the library if you need more information.

Recently someone asked me how much it cost to join a library, it reminded me that not everyone is aware that you can join the library and borrow books free of charge, come and visit us to find out more. New members are always welcome.

Woodcote Book Club's next meeting is Monday 18<sup>th</sup> February at 6 p.m.

## **Whitchurch & Goring Heath History Society**

We begin the New Year with an evening on January 17th in Whitchurch Village Hall devoted to short talks by members - more details on the posters. On February 21st we meet in the same place for our Annual General Meeting, which will be addressed by Robert Harris. He will give an illustrated talk about Lord Nuffield, with whom he and his father worked. We hope to visit the newly opened home of Lord Nuffield in the summer, and this will be good preparation.

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### **Hardwick Lecture Series**

#### **“The Transformation of Government”**

**There is a belief that statesmen should ‘lead by example.’  
But what if the example set is one of cheating, hiding and  
obscuring the truth?**

**Julian Rose tackles this contemporary dilemma by  
exploring the potential of creating break-away self-  
governing communities that run their affairs according to  
a more responsible ethos.**

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2013 – 6.45 for 7.00pm  
Hardwick House, Whitchurch-on-Thames, Oxon RG8  
7RB**

**To book a place please call the Hardwick Estate Office on  
0118 9842955 or e-mail [hardwickestate@btinternet.com](mailto:hardwickestate@btinternet.com)  
Tickets £10 – to include a bowl of ‘transformation’ soup**

## **THE PLANT STALL (1988 –2013) at 25 YEARS OLD!**

Since 1988 we have been running the Plant Stall. It all started because of the need, in those days, to raise money towards the upkeep of St John's Rooms, as Goring Hall Parish Hall was then called.

Before and even following the sale of the Hall by the Church, the Plant Stall raised and spent thousands of pounds on maintaining the "Rooms". For example over the 10 years 1988 to 1998, from the sale of the plants, five & half thousand pounds (£5,500) was spent on the inside and out, decorating, window cleaning, buying cleaning materials, grass, hedge and tree cutting and later purchasing items for the refurbished hall.

As people have continued to support the stall, we have also been able to donate sums of money to all sorts of "causes" within the village and afar.

We have continued to support the Parish Hall and have also contributed to items required by St John's Church, a mower and new gowns for the choir for example. We have donated to Sue Ryder, and previously donated a total of £800 to the Air Ambulance.

Over the years we have had help from a lot of people supplying us with plants; we would like to thank them and every body who buys from the Stall, as without all of you we could not have made these donations.

Originally there were four of us, then for many of the years, three, and now just two. During those earlier years, we also had the invaluable support of husbands, helping us to wheel the trolley in and out and keeping an "eye" on it whilst it stood in front of the church! Alas no more and we miss that help; we have had the occasional loss when plants have been stolen and recently there was an attempt to wheel the trolley away and break into the moneybox! Ah well, a sign of the times?

Just to bring things up to date, since 2001 we have donated and paid nearly £1,600 for items and work done at St John's Church; the stall gave money towards the notice board, a Surplice (for the late Peter Steadon), hedge cutting, lots, around the Church Yard and most recently a strimmer, as well as other more recent donations to the above-mentioned charities.

So, Pat and Theresa hope to carry on selling, when the weather permits for one last year, after 25 years, we feel it would be a really opportune moment to hand over to someone younger.

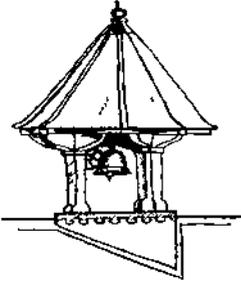
We would still welcome any plants that are surplus to your requirements, at an appropriate time of the year, for as you can see, either supplying or buying, the results are really worthwhile!

Plants can be left at "Beech View", opposite the Church, or at "Cross Trees", Hill Bottom.

And the Plant Stall, well, that can be found outside the Church at weekends and on Bank Holidays (starting again at Easter) for one last year unless someone comes to the rescue, please.

Many thanks, from us both.

Theresa Elsome, tel 0118 984 2056. Email: [bnt@waitrose.com](mailto:bnt@waitrose.com)



*??QUIZ NIGHT??*

*GORING HEATH PARISH HALL*

*SATURDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2013*

*8PM*

*Its that time of year again!*

*Don't miss out on the now famous*

***Mike Holland Quiz Night!***

*Make sure you get your team together*

*in good time and then book your table.*

*There will be food and drinks to simulate the brain,*

*Its competitive,*

*its ruthless, its fun!!*

*Teams of approximately six.*

*Cost £10 per person, includes food.*

*So put the date in your diary straight away*

*and contact 0118 9842056 or*

*[bnt@waitrose.com](mailto:bnt@waitrose.com) to book a table for your team!*

*See you there!*

## ENTENTE MUSICALE

On Saturday April 27th the **South Chiltern Choral Society** will join forces with the **Ensemble Vocal de Meylan** (Musical Director Annick Horras) to perform **Joseph Haydn's** masterpiece, **The Creation**, in the Concert Hall in Reading. This will be the fourth musical collaboration between the two choirs, **SCCS** having previously travelled twice to Meylan near Grenoble, so this will be an opportunity to renew friendships, as well as to make music together.

The choirs will be joined by soloists, Helen Winter (Soprano), a one-time finalist in the BBC Choir Girl of the year who now has a wide-ranging career in recital work and oratorio and who sang with SCCS in April 2012 at Douai Abbey, Ian Massa-Harris (Tenor), who has sung a variety of roles in both opera and oratorio including several with English National Opera and Stephen Svanholm (Bass), who, after completing his postgraduate operatic studies at the Royal Northern College of Music, has sung with many different companies both here and in his native Sweden.

The concert will be conducted by **Gwyn Arch** and accompanied by the **South Chiltern Orchestra** (Leader Ron Colyer). This is definitely a concert not to be missed!

Venue: Reading Concert Hall. Date: April 27<sup>th</sup> Time: 7.30pm

Tickets: £15 Under 18s: £7 from:

Nicola Woodman 0118 9891606

or via the website: [www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk](http://www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk)

or the Reading Concert Hall Booking Office 0118 9606060

For further information go to the choir website.

Registered Charity no. 297583

# DIARY DATES

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

## January

17th History Society meeting

## February

1st Twinning AGM

2nd Hardwick Lecture

21st History Society AGM

## March

9th Quiz Night

## April

27th SCCS Entente Musicale

## THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN

will be published in March 2013

Please send your contributions **preferably by e-mail to**  
[Sarah.pongo@btconnect.com](mailto:Sarah.pongo@btconnect.com) by 7th March 2013

Views of individual contributors  
are the views of those contributors,  
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editor.