

# The Charlbury Chronicle



Volume 9 Number 1

March 2005

The *Chronicle* continues to surprise with the variety of items that are proposed to the Editor. We really are lucky to live in such an interesting and lively community with so much going on at all levels.

In view of the recent remembrance of the 60th Anniversary of the Holocaust, it is most appropriate that we have some wartime memories from Charlbury resident Peter Smith.

A reader has sent in a Crossword which we feature on p 28 - see how you get on with it.

You really need to have your diary at hand whilst you flick through these pages so that you can make sure you don't miss events that are coming up.

You need to note, for example, that the organiser of the Cornbury Music Festival is offering discounted tickets for local residents, but these must be purchased by April 30th.

People often say they are not told when meetings about the new Community Centre are held - see page 5 and note the date - Friday April 8th at 8.30 pm, when there will be some very important

matters to discuss as new Trustees need to be appointed.

If you are worried about safety in your home then go along to the Memorial Hall on Thursday April 28th between 2pm and 7 pm for helpful police advice - details on page 4.

Spring flower shows, Open Gardens, Lenten Lunches, Amateur Dramatics, and much else ..... your diary will be full!

There are three 'Sits Vac' advertised - a Secretary is wanted for two separate committees, and the *Charlbury Chronicle* is looking for a new TotBits editor.

Please note that the deadline for copy for the June issue is May 6th. We are always delighted to receive articles from readers, so please get in touch and you will be very welcome.

Lynette Murphy

## NEWSBYTES

### **CAWAG**

Despite the success of the kerbside recycling by the WODC, Charlbury Waste Action group still has a role to play. There are areas not covered by the District Council such as green waste, and the very popular Swap shop. We are in need of extra volunteers, so if you are interested in the environment and support recycling, please join us. Please ring Joyce Bagley on 01608- 811831.

**PETE CAHILL** would like to thank all those who took part in putting up the Christmas trees throughout the town. Altogether 80 trees, purchased from Geoff Burroughs, were placed around the town centre and further afield. Brackets were provided by Fred the Charlbury blacksmith. It is hoped that even more residents will take part next year.

### **A DATE TO REMEMBER**

Hugh Phillimore is returning to Cornbury Park on July 9th & 10th with another Cornbury Music Festival. Elvis Costello and Humphrey Lyttelton are just two of the big names that have been signed up. See page 6 for details and how local people can get discounted tickets if they buy early.

**WHEELED SPORTS FACILITY** It's been a long time a-coming, but the skateboard park is at last having its formal opening on Saturday, April 9th at 11am. Team SS20, sponsored by a skateboard shop in Cowley Road, Oxford, is going to give a thrilling demonstration. All are welcome.

**SPELSBURY WI** would like to thank everyone who supported the coffee

morning on Saturday January 8th which raised a splendid £940 for the Tsunami Appeal.

### **WODC's 'Parish Link' publication**

reports that this year's Minor Schemes Grant Allocation is £40,000. This sum contributes towards the costs for improving existing buildings and the Corner House, Charlbury was awarded £11,516 towards the current refurbishments.

### **FARMERS MARKETS**

**The 2005 dates for the Farmers**

**Markets are on the following**

**Saturdays: March 12th, June 11th, September 10th, December 10th.**

### **BEST KEPT GARDENS**

The 2005 judging will take place during late April and early May. It is hoped to see wisteria, rhododendrons, azaleas and the first clematis in flower. Categories are large garden, medium garden, small garden and best individual tub/window box/hanging basket. The first three winners in each category will be awarded garden tokens.

### **OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOE-**

**BOXES** Thanks from the Baptist Church to all who participated in bringing joy to the hearts and faces of deprived children around the world. Many people have shown interest in helping again this year. Remember to save a few shoe-boxes between now and November! If you would like to know more, please contact 810107.

**Recently there have been anniversaries of the liberation of the concentration camps at the end of the Second World War. Peter Smith, a Charlbury resident, was a PoW for four years at Wolfsberg in Austria.**

Peter Smith joined the Royal Army Service Corps in 1940 and after training was sent to Egypt and then Greece. He was employed delivering bread supplies to units around Athens but after five weeks he was ordered up to the Yugoslav border. It was a very difficult journey on wet, narrow muddy roads. His lorry skidded over the side of a cliff and he and his co-driver were lucky that a tree stopped them a hundred feet down. They scrambled up the slope and were pleased when a convoy of Engineers came along and were able to winch their lorry up and take it for repairs. They eventually rejoined their unit near the Yugoslav border. Here they were close to the fighting with the Germans and sometimes had to take cover when their truck was dive-bombed. Eventually they were forced to retreat down through Corinth and ended at Kalamata, where they were hoping to get a boat. Though they waited several days and nights on the jetty and could see ships, nothing put into port. After some street fighting they were forced to surrender but had had time to immobilise their lorries. They were taken by train to Austria. They were fifty in a truck and the journey took four days. Peter was taken prisoner on April 29th 1941 and he was released on May 8th 1945.

His first camp was at Wolfsberg; they were quartered where they had kept the horses in a cavalry barracks. There was little food but after twelve months Red Cross parcels started to come through and things were better. After a year Peter was sent to Klagenfurt to help drain some boggy land. He only had a very thin, worn pair of shoes and his ankle got so ulcerated that he couldn't walk. Here he reckons he had a piece of luck because he was returned to Wolfsberg. Some time later he and his New Zealand friend, Eric Tremlett, were sent with eleven others to work in the forest. They had to walk up into the Tyrol but when they got there things were better; they lived in a log cabin, had reasonable food and the people were friendly. They were employed doing building work and maintenance on a baron's estate. Once when they were painting a house, the supervisor asked them what paint he should get and they suggested red, white and blue but he did not see the significance. When the baron came to inspect the work, they were really worried but his remark was "How patriotic." He shook Peter's hand and asked him where he came from. When he said near Oxford, the baron said that he had studied at Magdalen College. Once in deep snow, Peter and Eric put on snowshoes and took food up to the baron's house as it was cut off from the village. They were given a lovely meal to say thank you. One day when they were working on a house and knew that the war was ending they saw a radio in the corner. While Eric distracted the householder, Peter tuned in and heard Big Ben and the wonderful news that the war was over. They downed tools immediately.

While they were at the camp, waiting for repatriation, the Russians arrived and Peter and Eric did not like the way they walked round their hut with their guns at the ready. They decided to leave and to try and find some English troops and eventually found some Sherwood Foresters, who gave them a meal and sent them via Klagenfurt to Italy, from where they flew home. Peter considers himself lucky. He was not ill-treated; there was good morale in the camp they shared with the New Zealanders and French and most importantly he came home.

*Peter Smith was interviewed by Diana Potten*

**THAMES VALLEY POLICE  
SAFER HOMES  
AND  
NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH  
EXHIBITION**

Do you need advice on any of the following?

**Crime Reduction - Neighbourhood Watch  
Horsewatch - Bogus Callers/Traders  
Drugs Abuse - Anti-social Behaviour  
Firearms Licensing - Fire Safety  
Housing**

If you do then come along to

**Charlbury Memorial Hall  
on Thursday April 28th 2005  
between 2 pm and 7 pm**

Tea/Coffee and Biscuits will be available

**For further info contact  
PC Bob Gillett  
at Chipping Norton Police Station  
on 01608 648715**

**CHARLBURY  
HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY  
FLOWER AND PRODUCE  
SHOWS**

Have you ever put anything into a flower show? Have you ever gone to a show and thought that you've something in your garden which you could have put in (and won)? Either way, why not give it a go this year?

Charlbury Horticultural Society runs three shows a year. Exhibiting in the Show is NOT restricted to members . Anyone can have a go. Details from Nick Johnson (01608 810507 or email nckjj@aol.com ) The first of the year is the Spring show.

**SPRING SHOW**

This takes place on 2 April 2005 and is a wonderful celebration of spring. Lots of daffodil classes, spring bulbs and arrangements as well as classes for children such as a painted Easter egg, collage of pulses, pasta and seeds and so on. The show will be combined with entry to the Arts Society Spring Show and will be held in the Memorial hall.

**Further dates for your diary are :**

Rose & Sweet Pea Show : June 25th  
Annual Show: September 3rd

*Nick Johnson*

# THOMAS GIFFORD CHARITY

## IMPORTANT NOTICE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

In recent years we have arranged a public meeting to discuss the position of the Charity. This year the meeting will be held on Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup> at 8.00 pm in the War Memorial Hall.

The trustees are currently discussing with the Charity Commission the reconstitution of the trustee body such that it would consist of individuals with a broad range of backgrounds and skills who can specifically focus on the future of the Charity. We have agreed with the Commission that we will advertise for trustees - there will probably be 9 in total.

The position will be specifically covered at the public meeting and we wish to attract all those individuals who are interested in becoming trustees. The new trustees will have a great opportunity to make a difference without committing themselves to a wide range of other responsibilities.

**Please come along.** If you wish to put your name forward before the meeting contact me on 810644. or email [trevor.jones@ophiopogon.com](mailto:trevor.jones@ophiopogon.com) with details of your interest and how you would be able to contribute to the future of the Charity.

*Trevor Jones*

### **OXFORDSHIRE MUSEUM, WOODSTOCK**

**Until April 17:** 'Stitched in Oxfordshire' - a selection of samplers and other Victorian needlework.

**Picture Gallery:** From March 12 - topographic paintings including recently acquired paintings by William Turner of Oxford.

**Activities for Families & Children:** throughout April. Creative Workshops etc. First ring 01993 814111 to find out what's on.

### **LENTEN LUNCHESES**

*All lunches from noon to 2 pm  
A collection for Christian Aid is made*

February 25th: 14 Sandford Park (Joan and Hugh Belshaw)  
March 4th: 4 Enstone Road (Pamela and Don Porter)  
March 11th: The Presbytery, Enstone Road, (Monsignor V Morgan)  
March 18th: The Quaker Meeting House, Market Street.

# THE CORNBURY MUSIC FESTIVAL COMES TO THE PARK AGAIN

The second Cornbury Music Festival has been given the go ahead by West Oxfordshire District Council and will be held on **Saturday July 9th and Sunday July 10th.**

The Festival will feature a diverse line-up of artists to suit all ages with Elvis Costello, Amy Winehouse, Steve Harley & Cockney Rebel and Humphrey Lyttelton amongst the first to be confirmed. The festival got off to a good start last year and was enjoyed by many local people while causing little disruption to residents. The event helped raise funds for the Charlbury Pre-School Group and featured performances by local children from Shed Theatre.

Licence conditions require the festival organisers to pay special attention to traffic management and noise issues as they did last year. Having been given a clean bill of health in year one, organisers are keen to repeat this good track record and will be liaising with the Town Council to make sure all local concerns are addressed. Local fundraising will again be supported by various activities on the festival site. Any local volunteers may register to work at the event by visiting the website.

Tickets for the Festival will go on sale on March 14th when the full line-up is announced. **Local OX7 3 discounts will be available until April 30th only.** Full details of this offer will be posted on the website from the on-sale date.

For further details please visit the website at [www.cornburyfestival.com](http://www.cornburyfestival.com).

## **BBC Oxford is looking for people who want to write and record a two minute story about something that has happened to them.**

Don't believe you have a story to tell?  
Then think again – because everyone does!

Your local BBC is running four workshop sessions designed to take people through the whole process of scripting and putting on a CD a short piece about their life. These sessions include:

- A day of games and exercises to get people thinking about creative ways of writing before they apply these new ideas to their own piece.
- One to one training, polishing up the script and recording it.
- A Technical day: editing it and burning the piece to take away on CD.

Any one is free to apply to take part as long as they can make the commitment to all the sessions and the stories can be about anything- from the first time you saw your true love, to being flown home from holiday in a plaster cast. The best will go out on air; all of them will probably go on the BBC Oxford website. There are four to a group and the scheme will run on the third floor of the studios on the Banbury Road in Oxford.

However the most important parts are obviously the storytelling days and the recording so if there is a group who think they might be interested in sessions run just for them – they are invited to ring up Abigail Uden, BBC Oxford, 269 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX2 7DW ( 08459 311 444 )

or email [Abigail.uden@bbc.co.uk](mailto:Abigail.uden@bbc.co.uk)

All you need is a story – so why don't you apply? – Contact Abigail today!

[NB There is a website if people want to look at previous stories](http://www.bbc.co.uk/oxford/personal_stories)  
[www.bbc.co.uk/oxford/personal\\_stories](http://www.bbc.co.uk/oxford/personal_stories)

## **CHARLBURY TENNIS CLUB GETS THE BLUES?**

No, not a series of bad results in the league! After last year's very successful jazz evening, the Tennis Club decided to go bigger and louder for its winter social event this year with a Blues evening of music provided by local band KingB (to be seen – and heard - last summer at the Cornbury Festival on the same bill as Jools Holland et al). On Saturday January 22nd the Memorial Hall was packed with members of the tennis club, guests and KingB fans.

KingB is fronted by singer Claire Johnson who can really belt out the blues and, with her infectious enthusiasm for the music and generally making sure that everyone has a good time, soon ensures that a large part of the audience is up and dancing.

The rest of the band consists of drummer Ian Clark, John Corlett on bass, guitarists John Lanyon and Ian Phillips, and last but definitely not least harmonica player (and tennis club member) Ian Grierson. The music comprises a good mixture of original material and favourite blues tracks. (More information about KingB can be found at [www.kingb.biz](http://www.kingb.biz) and they can be seen playing at The Bell and also at The Golden Pheasant in Burford.)

In between the band's two excellent sets, the audience enjoyed a buffet supper provided by the Club's committee and all in all the evening was a great success.

Tennis club members can hardly wait to see what the committee will come up with for next year's social event!

*Alison Holthouse*

## A LIFE'S DAY

DAVID  
MORTIMER  
- POSTMAN

**Interviewed  
by  
Diana Potten**

The alarm goes at 4.20 a.m. I get up, don't bother with breakfast and I am out of the door by 4.40 am. I start work in Chipping Norton at five o'clock. My first job is to join others to sort the mail, which takes about fifty minutes. The mail is

sorted into walks and there are about 30,000 letters, also small packages, to be sorted for the district, which includes Chipping Norton, Charlbury, Finstock, Ramsden, Fifield and the Wychwoods. At 7.45 am. the second post arrives from Oxford, but this is much smaller and only takes ten minutes. By 8.15 am we are ready to set out on our deliveries – I use a van and cover a big area, stretching from Hundley Way, Ditchley Road, The Green, down Enstone Road to Crawborough and then up to Lees Heights. The Post Office does not insist on a set pattern and the order I do them varies. I usually finish about one but do not stop for lunch, although I may pick up a snack at the Co-op. I return to Chipping Norton where we do the final sort-out – we do any re-directions, deal with any killings, that is deadletters and sort out deliverables and by 1.30 pm I have finished my post office work.

I started in the Post Office in October 1987. I had been brought up in the Welsh mining village of Oakdale and after attending the local comprehensive, I went to college to train as a motor mechanic. In 1985 a friend of mine got married in Worcester and while I was at the wedding, I met Sharon Kerry, who was to become my wife. We got together and decided we should move to Charlbury. At first I worked as a mechanic at Hartford Motors in the Seacourt Tower and the later at Cook's in Chipping Norton. I got fed up with working indoors, breathing all the fumes and my wife persuaded me to

answer an advert wanting post office workers. I have now been doing it for 18 years. There was no training, you just observed someone on the job. I started in the Charlbury Post Office and when that closed went to Chipping Norton. Things have changed a great deal. Despite electronic mail, the volume of mail has tripled – a lot of it is junk mail and because of the weight involved there are few walking rounds. The only one in Charlbury is The Slade, Sandford Mount and Ticknell Piece. At Christmas there is three times as much mail. The Post Office no longer employs outside workers to help and we all put in extra hours. I have always been motorised and have delivered in the Wychwoods, Fifield and Charlbury. I like the Wychwoods, as the rounds are smaller and easier but the people in Charlbury are very nice – generally we have very few difficult people. I have had some interesting encounters. Once I went into a garden to find the houseowner hiding in the bushes. Apparently he had been watching a James Bond the night before and he was convinced there were spies in his house; another time I found a house with the door broken open and called the police, who found there had been a robbery. Once I went to a house where a lady had got her car wedged across the drive and couldn't move it; I managed to get it out. I have been quite lucky with dogs and have only been bitten once slightly, in fact the new draught-proof letter boxes are more dangerous! We are told how to handle dogs but not letter boxes. The weather has never been too much of a problem – in the 80s I got stuck halfway between Charlbury and Shipton-under-Wychwood and I was also stuck by Wychwood once. I like working for the Post Office; it is 5 days a week with a rolling day off and the hours give me a chance to do other things.

I go home in the afternoon and have a rest before the kids come home at 3 p.m.

I have 4 children – Kerry, my daughter has just started work at a nursing home and my son Kirk is at college, so Adele and Zara are the ones who come home for tea. If my wife is out at work, I get the tea. I am not a very good cook and it is better if my wife has prepared something. We have tea around 5 o'clock and then I ring News & Things to see if there are any bookings for the tennis courts. If there are, I go down and make sure the courts are clean and put the timer on for the floodlights. I started doing this in 2003 and it's good to meet different people. Then it's back home and some relaxation. If the kids will let me, I go on the computer. I really enjoy this and some years ago, when I wanted to upgrade my equipment, I found that it was too expensive, so I decided to learn to build a computer. I taught myself from the Internet and now I am able to help friends who are having problems with their computers and I can also build them for them. Sometimes I do things with the British Legion. My wife's family are very involved with it and she is the Standard Bearer in the parades. My father-in-law persuaded me to become the Deputy Standard Bearer. If I am not doing any of this, I watch television. I do not go to bed particularly early, about 11 o'clock. I lie awake for hours even though I know it is a 4.20 a.m. wake-up yet I can't see myself stopping being a postman.

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## **Charlbury Chamber of Trade and Commerce are looking for a new Secretary**

Roger Watts has been secretary for the past 10 years and is giving up at this year's AGM in July. The Chamber is looking for someone to take the minutes at their 7 meetings per year, organise venues and speakers, and arrange meetings etc. There is a remuneration for this very part-time position.

For further information please contact Roger Watts on 811559 or call in at Business Focus, Sheep Street.

## **CHARLBURY DAY CENTRE**

It is with mixed emotions that the Management Committee has accepted the resignation of Kathy Pearce as our Co-ordinator. Since her appointment early in November 2001 she has endeared herself to all our volunteers, helpers and drivers, as well as to those who attend week by week and benefit most from being part of a Day Centre that has become more of a family.

But she feels now is the time to detach herself from the responsibility of being the centre of this family life, to find more time to be with her family at home, and more space to do other things in Ascott and on the golf course!

Thank you Kathy for being with us, and thank you too for saying you will not leave us before we have appointed your successor. Hence this notice:-

## **CHARLBURY DAY CENTRE**

Applications are invited for the post of Day Centre Co-ordinator at Charlbury. The Centre provides care for people in later life who can benefit by being part of a small group of people meeting one day a week (Wednesdays). The person appointed will be expected to show good organising skills and be able to co-ordinate all the activities of the Centre, including the work of the volunteers. Previous experience in the care of elderly people would be desirable although training would be available.

*For a job description and application form, please write or telephone:* The Revd. Graham Canning, Moredays, 36 The Slade, Charlbury OX7 3SJ Tel: 01608 810421

**Closing date for applications  
22 March 2005**

## **CORNER HOUSE & MEMORIAL HALL BOOKINGS:**

The present system with the caretaker is for all users and potential bookings to look in the large comprehensive Diary which is on the Hall table in the Corner House. Check the date/dates you would like to book and telephone 01608 810879. If it is on ansafone please leave a precise message. Take a Booking Form and when completed put it in the Caretaker's box. It will help arrangements if the forms are filled in very carefully. **Please NEVER write anything in the Diary yourself.** Confirmations are not sent out, but if there are queries you will be contacted.

NB Groups and organisations are requested to let us know the names and contact numbers for their secretaries and treasurers. Please also inform us if these are changed at AGMs. Thank you.

*Ann Gilbert*

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## **CORNER HOUSE & MEMORIAL HALL**

### **Situation Vacant**

The Corner House & Memorial Hall Committee are in need of a Secretary. The position is vacant now and anyone interested is asked to contact the Chairman, Steve Andrews, on 01608 811212

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## **CHARLBURY MUSEUM**

The Musuem will re-open for the season in April and remain open until the end of September. Opening hours are from 10 - 12 o'clock on Saturdays, and Sunday and Bank Holiday Monday afternoons from 2.30 - 4.30 pm .

The theme this year will be the Second World War. We shall be hoping to get a team of volunteers to help with the stewarding of the Museum. Jennifer Bartlett (810312) would be pleased to hear from anyone interested in helping.

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### **WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE MEALS ON WHEELS?**

Charlbury's Meals on Wheels service welcomes new customers, so please get in touch if you or anyone you know would like a meal delivered on Tuesdays and Thursdays midday. Ring Marjorie Glasgow on 810161.

# ONLY CONNECT

**Charlbury Author, Charlbury Bibliographer, Charlbury Publisher**

Geoffrey Strachan, a Charlbury resident, has edited and annotated a collection of reminiscences and letters by his late father Walter Strachan: *Only connect... poets, painters, sculptors: friendships and shared passions 1924-1994* recently published by Jon Carpenter of Evenlode Books, Charlbury.

Walter Strachan (1903-1994) was a translator and a teacher as well as a poet and writer. Through his travels in France he got to know the work of many French artists, as well as the artists themselves. He was particularly interested in the rich range of so-called *livre d'artiste* being created in the post-war decades. These are limited editions of ancient and modern texts, illustrated by a range of 20th century French painters, printmakers and sculptors, with original prints such as engravings, etchings, lithographs or mezzotints.

This art form was not really known in Britain at this time and Walter Strachan wrote articles, lectured on it and arranged exhibitions of these works. He published a book, "*The Artist and the Book in France*" in 1969 and in the same year was made a Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres in recognition of his contribution to this subject. There were exhibitions from his growing collection locally, at the Ashmolean Museum in 1963 and 1978 and a final one in 1987, when Walter Strachan made a Gift of his collection to the Library of the Taylor Institution (the University of Oxford's centre for the study of modern European languages and literature). This was handsomely catalogued by the bibliographer, Giles Barber, another Charlbury resident.

This January running concurrently with the publication of Geoffrey's book, there was an exhibition of books from the Gift and throughout January and February there were talks on the *livre d'artiste* genre. Although all this has coincided with the publication of Geoffrey's book, the Walter Strachan Gift is permanently available for viewing on advance application to the Librarian of the Taylor Institution, telephone 01865 278162.

The beautifully illustrated complete catalogue to the Gift, *Le Livre d'Artiste*, is still available from the Ashmolean Museum Bookshop.

*Diana Potten*

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
(MISCELLANEOUS  
PROVISIONS) ACT,  
1982 (as amended)**

**NOTICE OF APPLICATION  
FOR THE GRANT OF A  
PUBLIC  
ENTERTAINMENTS  
LICENCE**

NOTICE is hereby given  
that Charlbury Town  
Council

Applied to WEST  
OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL on  
27th January 2005

For a LICENCE to use  
premises at Mill Field,  
Dyers Hill, Charlbury for  
the following days and  
times: Saturday, 18th  
June 2005 12 noon to  
10 pm; Sunday, 19th  
June 2005, 12 noon to 8  
pm

Any person wishing to  
object to this application  
must give notice in  
writing stating his  
objection in general  
terms within 14 days of  
the date of this  
newspaper's publication  
to:-

Head of Community  
Safety and Licensing ,  
West Oxfordshire  
District Council,  
Woodgreen, Witney,  
Oxfordshire, OX28 1NB

**LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT  
(MISCELLANEOUS  
PROVISIONS) ACT,  
1982 (as amended)**

**NOTICE OF APPLICATION  
FOR THE GRANT OF A  
PUBLIC  
ENTERTAINMENTS  
LICENCE**

NOTICE is hereby given  
that the Corner House  
War Memorial Hall  
Committee/Charlbury  
Street Fair Committee

Applied to WEST  
OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL on  
27th January 2005

For a LICENCE to use  
the forecourt outside  
The Bell Hotel for the  
following days and  
times: Saturday 17th  
September 2005  
1:30pm to 10pm.

Any person wishing to  
object to this application  
must give notice in  
writing stating his  
objection in general  
terms within 14 days of  
the date of this  
newspaper's publication  
to:-

Head of Community  
Safety and Licensing,  
West Oxfordshire  
District Council,  
Woodgreen, Witney,  
Oxfordshire, OX28 1NB

## BEARS ON TOUR

*Charlie and Sam are continuing on  
their travels to see how many miles  
they can clock up until the next  
Street Fair .....*

“You should have gone to  
Specsavers” the ad says – well,  
Charlie and Sam did! Specsavers  
in Witney have very kindly fitted  
them both with sunglasses so that  
they can go on exotic holidays to  
the sun with you, and very smart  
they both look. They also have  
woolly hats in case you want to  
take them somewhere cold!

After Street Fair last year they had  
a short rest, repacked their bags  
and went off to Madeira, Rhodes  
and Rome. They dutifully sent back  
their postcards and some photos  
so this year's album is already  
starting to look good. They also  
went to a Christmas Party at the  
Bull and joined in all the festivities  
and sang carols – no wine though;  
they aren't old enough!

So, where are you off to this year?  
Have you got room for a Bear in  
your suitcase? It doesn't have to be  
abroad, there are many places in  
the UK they haven't visited yet. Is  
your school or society holding a  
special day/event – maybe they  
could join you there.

If you can help Charlie and Sam clock  
up more miles than last year contact  
Pat Court on 01608 811031 to book  
their holiday.

# CHARLBURY STREET FAIR - SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 17th 2005

Yes, it's that time again when we are starting to organise this year's **STREET FAIR**. For those of you new to Charlbury, this event is run to help with the upkeep of the Corner House & Memorial Hall, which as you will know is constantly in use by members of the Charlbury community and really does need support in this way.

This year's Street Fair is to be held on Saturday September 17th, and we will have all the usual stalls, together with the evening parade and dancing in the street until 10pm. This year's theme is to be **CARNIVAL** so that will give you all lots of ideas for dressing up/floats etc. It always is a great day, so put this date in your diary and make sure you don't miss it. Organisations wishing to book a stall should contact Teresa on 81 1000 or by email at [teresa@beeb.net](mailto:teresa@beeb.net).

We do need a lot of help – either on the committee, through sponsorship or on the day. If you would like to assist and bring lots of fresh ideas, please contact Sue Cooper on 819139. Our next meeting will be held on March 1st in the Anne Downer Room at 8pm. The success of past Street Fairs is due to the fantastic support given by residents and businesses in Charlbury. Please help us to continue to grow from strength to strength. Look forward to seeing you all then!

## Open Gardens – June 5th – Calling all gardeners

This will be the 7<sup>th</sup> Open Gardens Day held as part of the Street Fair. We are looking for volunteers to offer to open their gardens - of any type - either large or small, formal or informal, established or new - size doesn't matter! Would you be willing to show your garden? Don't miss your slot! If you would like to open your garden, please contact Pat Court on 81 1031 or by email at [david.court@tesco.net](mailto:david.court@tesco.net).

The atmosphere at Open Gardens has always been friendly and lots of tips and information are given and received. The gardeners put in a tremendous amount of effort but I think they would all say it is rewarding on the Sunday afternoon when so many people wander round genuinely interested in what has been achieved. As the gardens will be open during Art Festival month, it might be an idea to combine gardens and art (sculpture, paintings, scarecrows??). We are still working on this idea but if you have any thoughts or would even like to organise the "art" side, perhaps you could give Pat a ring or email her (details above).

The gardens will be open from 2pm to 6pm. Tickets and route map available on the day from outside the Corner House from 1.30pm. Teas and plants will be on sale in the Memorial Hall and Garden Room and there will be a quiz for children to keep them busy.

Finally, will residents of Church Street please note that we have applied to WODC for road closure permission for September 17th.

*Susie Finch*

PS: Apologies for not giving the result of the Plank Walking Competition in the last Chronicle! Congratulations to Teresa Laughton and Alison Curtis who won this event.

## NEW YEAR'S HONOURS LIST

It is with great pleasure that the friends and colleagues of Jo Dunn (resident in Charlbury for over 40 years) are able to congratulate her on being awarded the MBE for her services to conservation of Oxfordshire's flora.

Jo has been a keen Botanist for all of her adult life and her knowledge and skills at plant identification are impressive.

A founder of the Cotswold Rare Plant Group, she has worked (and continues to work) with Plant Life and English Nature on plant surveys and botanical reports.

She is an expert on the Downy Woundwort - a rare plant only found in the Witney area - her work is recorded in the Flora Britannica of Oxfordshire.

Her publication *The Flora of Ditchley - Wild Flowers of an Oxfordshire Estate* was published in 1993. She still works on plant surveys for the Estate.

Long may she continue to protect the plants in the wild that she feels so passionate about.

*Susan Strachan*

**DO YOU FIND IT DIFFICULT  
TO READ THE  
CHARLBURY  
CHRONICLE?**

Please ring the Editor on 810549 to request a large-print copy. A large-print copy is

## AWARD TO MERYL SMITH

Congratulations to Charlbury resident, Meryl Smith, the Deputy Director of Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) and the Manager of the Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association (OPFA), who was recently presented with the NPFA President's Certificate by the Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire Hugh Brunner.

The President's Certificate is the highest honour awarded by the NPFA and recognises outstanding work and contribution to the playing fields movement. Meryl has been doing this work for some twenty-five years not only in the county but at a national level.

## A Canadian Return to Charlbury

The maple leaf flies at the top of Dyers Hill marking the arrival of fifteen Canadian students who have come to Charlbury to study until mid-April. I studied in the 2003 ABU/Oxford Program and lived in Charlbury for a semester (3 months). For the past two years I have missed this town fiercely and was overjoyed when presented with the opportunity to return. Fourteen other students are here for the first time. They have been overwhelmed by the many kindnesses that have already been shown to them. I have suggested that the beautiful appearance of the town matches the warmth and friendliness of the people who reside in the houses of yellow stone. In many ways, the amber Cotswold stone is a metaphor for the warm welcome that we have been shown, and the friendship and generosity that have been extended by the Charlbury community. Charlbury is a very special place. We are so fortunate to be visiting your town. Thank you and blessings.

*Art Moore (Canadian Student: ABU/Oxford Study Program)*

# CHARLBURY COMMUNITY CENTRE APPEAL

All those interested in the proposed Community Centre are asked to make a very special effort to attend the special public meeting in the Memorial Hall on FRIDAY APRIL 8th at 8 pm. It really is very important that as many people as possible attend and hear the Chairman give an up-date on the situation and answer questions.

**THE BEECHCROFT CHRISTMAS QUIZ:** First prize went to Jeff Craggs of Watford; second prize to Derek Collett of Charlbury; and third prize to Mrs M Lyden and Miss C Oberst of Chadlington. Congratulations! Lucky Number prizewinners were Richard & Marianne Lewis of Charlbury, F Healy also Charlbury, and Mrs Lyden & Miss Oberst of Chadlington. The organisers of the Quiz would like to thank everyone who took part and supported the Quiz. It exceeded all expectations by raising the magnificent sum of £830 for the Appeal. It was certainly a challenging Quiz and everyone found it enjoyable. Nine entries achieved 80% or more, the winner scoring 85%.

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We are very grateful to all the following (in no particular order) who raised sums for the Appeal: Parochial Church Committee (£687), £540 (from the children at Centre Stage who did sponsored 'Park Bench' drama games); Charlbury Society - Phil Harding Talk (£860); Magic Lantern Show (£200); Auction of Promises (£2927); Ceilidh (£900); Day Centre (£172); various individual donations (£1000+); A Little Light Relief (£1100+). The Weekly Fundraiser continues to produce funds and several happy winners each week.

May we point out that all cheques for the Charlbury Community Centre Appeal should be made out to CCC Appeal and sent to the Appeal's Treasurer, Richard Neville, 12 Lee's Heights, Charlbury OX7 3EZ (tel: 810594)

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The Appeal has to compete with many other fundraising events in this busy community, so we can be very pleased that in spite of that we are now well on the way to £35,000. We look forward to a full programme in the coming months. Although there is a bit of a lull in activities at the moment, a great deal of work is continuing in the background in discussions on the proposed building, identifying user groups and their requirements, and constantly seeking to find sources of funds which might be available. If you want to know more please ring us - and please do make sure you attend the meeting on Friday April 8th at 8pm!

Appeal Coordinator: Lynette Murphy (810549)

Deputy Coordinator: Diana Potten (810991)

A lot of our readers ask what we are doing about getting money from the Lottery. There seems to be a feeling that we only have to ask for money and they will hand it to us. There are many examples of communities like ours which have been the recipients of Lottery grants in the past. **Our request for funding was recently turned down because Charlbury fails to fulfil almost all the conditions now required.** We think it is important that residents should see what we are up against, and we therefore give here the current criteria being operated by the Big Lottery Fund's organisers which were contained in a recent letter to the Chairman of the Thomas Gifford Charity:

'In the south east our current priorities are:

1. Vulnerable young people
  2. Families with children under stress
  3. Disabled people who live independently in their own homes, and the people who care for them
  4. Older people who are isolated and vulnerable living in their own homes and the people who care for them
  5. Refugees and asylum seekers
  6. Black and ethnic minority communities
  7. The areas of the region where there are significant pockets of deprivation, especially the 119 wards which are amongst the 20 per cent most deprived
  8. The 84 rural areas where very poor access to services can isolate individuals and whole communities. *(N.B. This does not include us)*
  9. Projects that tackle the causes of homelessness and that offer independent living support to homeless people
  10. The local authority areas of Thanet, Portsmouth, Dover, and Shepway
  11. Fair share - disadvantaged areas that have received less than the average amount of Lottery resources since 1995 (This does not include us)
  12. Countryside Communities - a joint initiative between Community Fund and the Countryside Agency. It aims to ensure that England's rural areas receive their 'fair share' of funding. These are the areas which will be receiving Big Lottery Funding up to March 2007  
Shepway £2,006,074; Dover £2,454,519; King's Lynn, West Norfolk £1,889,177;  
Fenland, Cambridgeshire £1,248,034; North Norfolk £1,989,036; Boston, Lincolnshire £995,619; West Lindsey, Lincolnshire £1,337,908; Sedgemoor, Somerset £2,056,864; England-wide (Strategic grants) £2,241,798  
Total: £16,219,029
- These eight areas were selected based on analysis of both deprivation indices and low levels of Community Fund funding. We want to encourage innovative and practical projects to help revitalise our rural communities. This is on top of the commitments to rural areas already included as part of fair share.'

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Contributors and Collectors are still needed for the  
**WEEKLY FUNDRAISER** (based on Saturday Lottery Number) .  
1-in-49 chance of winning **£15 (much better odds than the National Lottery!)** .**ONLY £1 per week.**  
Why not have a go? Buy a ticket for your household. Pay weekly, monthly or yearly.  
Your chance to support the Community Centre Appeal and have fun.  
Ring Alan Hanks, 811090 **NOW!**

## WEATHER REPORT

*by John Stanley*

**November 2004** started generally warm for the time of year. Then it became more variable, with temperatures going up and down, showing a considerable 20° difference between the high of 58° on 12th and low of 38° on 20th. Overall, it came out at 49.83°, which is 0.91° above the average for the previous 15 years. Air frosts were recorded on 3 nights, the lowest temperature being 30° on the night of 13th/14th, this being the first of the winter.

Looking back at the autumn period (September to November), temperatures in Charlbury, at 57.32°, were slightly above the 16 year average of 56.70°.

**December** alternated between four cold and four warm spells, but without any records being broken. The warmest day was 23rd (53°) and the coldest were 20th and 26th (37°). Overall, it came out at 45.13°, which is 1.79° above the average for the previous 15 years. Air frosts were recorded on 9 nights, the lowest temperature being 26° on the night of 19th/20th. We did have a white Christmas in Charlbury in 2004. There was a short heavy snow storm at just after 1300.

For the record, the temperature at midnight on 31st December was 44° and it was partly cloudy.

**January 2005** was also a warmer month than average. Up until 21st, it was particularly warm, then we had a more seasonable spell until temperatures rose again towards the end of the month. The average maximum temperature for the month was 46.39°, which is 2.41° above that for the previous 16 years. The warmest days were 7th and 20th (54°) and the coldest 23rd, 25th

and 26th (39°). Air frosts were recorded on 7 nights, the coldest being 30° on 25th/26th, so they were not severe.

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## CHARLBURY RAINFALL

The annual report from  
Nick Potter at Lees Rest

The rainfall measured at Lees Rest between January 1st and December 31st 2004 was 845mm (about 33¾ ins). The wettest month was October (165mm/6½ ins), the wettest October recorded since Lees Rest Measurements began in 1982, and the driest was February (34mm/1½ ins). Surprisingly, November and December (both 39mm/ over 1½ ins) was the driest since 1990 and 1991 in terms of rainfall, yet it seemed to be wet all the time!

As usual, we remind readers that Lees Rest is about 1¼ miles due east of Charlbury, so the readings in the town centre might have been different.

## TRANSPORT NEWS

"Commenting on Stagecoach's taking over the contract for the Charlbury to Oxford service, Martin Sutton, Managing Director, said "my team and I are totally committed to providing the residents of Charlbury and neighbouring villages with a high quality bus service. There have been a few teething issues with the new service, some of which have already been overcome, and the others are being worked upon. We are here for the long term and I am particularly keen that we take the views of passengers fully into account before making any timetable adjustments".

Martin Sutton, Managing Director  
Stagecoach in Oxfordshire

# CLUBS, DRAMA, SPORT, GROUPS

## **CHARLBURY AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY (CADS) The Matchgirls (A play with music)**

The dreadful working conditions in the Bryant & May match factory came to the attention of Annie Be'sant one of the first Fabian Socialists in 1888. Annie championed the girls to fight for their rights against the management. The dispute led to the first strike of unorganized workers to gain national publicity and was successful in the formation of unions all over the country. The play has a lighter side – when the 'Cockney Sparrows' go up west on the 'La Di Dah' with the fellows from the Dock Yard, but there is some conflict because Annie had not been successful in her attempt to help the Dockers in their plight. May 19th, 20th & 21st

## **CHARLBURY TENNIS CLUB**

With the longer, and hopefully sunnier, days fast approaching why not dust off your tennis racquet and join Charlbury's tennis club based at Nine Acres Recreation Ground?

We have over 100 members who currently enjoy an extensive programme of both competitive and social tennis that caters for everyone.

In the summer we run 6 teams for all abilities, ranging from the A team in Division 1 of the Banbury Town League to the friendly Wychwood League with matches against neighbouring clubs.

We also have regular social sessions throughout the summer (see noticeboard on the courts for details) and friendly club tournaments.

Membership entitles you to:

- Free court use at club sessions
- Reduced court fees outside club

times

- Opportunities to compete in tournaments and inter-club league matches
- Free junior tennis evenings
- Chance to win tickets to Wimbledon

For further details about the tennis club phone 01608 810777 or call into Vincent Pharmacy for an application form.

*Diana Jarman*

**WEA ENSTONE BRANCH** announce two Day-Schools (which take place at Enstone Parish Hall, Chapel Lane, from 10 am to 4 pm).

Firstly, on **Saturday April 23rd**, 'Birds of Wychwood Area' - tutor Alan Spicer.

Includes a local bird-watching walk. Bring picnic lunch, hot drinks provided. Cost £20.

Secondly, on **Saturday May 21st**, 'The Orchestra'. Tutor Tim Porter will demonstrate how European composers mixed their instrumental colours, and produced canvasses of superb orchestral sound. Cost £25. Lunch provided.

## **CHARLBURY ART SOCIETY**

Meetings in the current programme year have been very well attended, whether for talks on art-related subjects or for demonstrations of techniques by professional artists. In recent months we have been given useful tips on using acrylic gouache and on painting seascapes in watercolour, and in March artist Mike Skidmore will be showing us the effects which can be achieved in oil painting by the use of glazes.

Members will recall that a little over a year ago Denise Derbyshire held us spell bound with her enthusiastic presentation

on the Ashmolean's collection of Mughal Art. In April, as a follow-up to that, we will have guide Molly Stafford giving us an illustrated talk about the museum's Western Art collection.

April is a busy month as we also mount our Spring Exhibition of members' work.

**This year we will be returning to the Memorial Hall on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> April to hold it alongside the Horticultural Society's Spring Show.**

In May, to round off our talks for the year, we have another demonstration, this time David James demonstrating "Bridge and River" in ink and wash.

Following a survey of members, it is likely that some more practical workshops will be arranged in the near future, with Drawing tuition being the most popular request. Yearly membership of the Society runs from the 1<sup>st</sup> September to the 31<sup>st</sup> August and at £10 gives access to all our talks, the opportunity to exhibit in both our Spring and September shows, as well as useful discounts on artists' materials. But if you just want to come along to one or two of our talks, visitors are always welcome - entrance is £3. For further information ring 810116. Full details of each of our events appear in 'The Leaflet' and on the Charlbury Web site.

### **WEA CHARLBURY BRANCH**

Alan Spicer is offering two further courses this summer, one on 'Discovering Oxfordshire's Wildlife' for 5 weeks starting on March 21st, the other a Day School on May 7th on 'Ponds and other Wychwood Wetlands'. Alan Jones, an excellent lecturer who has a group of devoted followers in Banbury & Enstone, will be starting a 5 week course on 'Plant & Garden History - Collection & Creativity'

on April 21st (further details in WEA Brochure and on noticeboards).

If you would like to attend any of these courses please contact Dawn Colvin on 01608 810545 to give the organisers some idea of whether or not the course can be run.

WEA AGM on April 12th in the Ann Downer Room at the Corner House.

### **NEWS FROM THE SHED**

SHED THURSDAY made their debut in the Shed, Charlbury, in December when they performed The Nativity.

SHED THURSDAY was started by Sue Cochrane and Anneke Hay to enable more young actors to take part in the Shed experience. Shed is now divided into Shed Wednesday (the seniors) and Shed Thursday (the juniors) ranging in age from twelve to eighteen year olds. The directing was in the tradition of Shed through its creative twist and exciting persona. The play started with an acoustic thunderstorm, atmosphere was created through placing the chorus around the audience, giving an interactive feel to the experience, and also by the lighting. Despite the first night nerves the cast acted with confidence and presented a mature and enjoyable version of the Nativity, which was portrayed with a balance of subtle comedy and sensitivity to the seriousness of the story. We were particularly impressed with the performances of Sam Page-Jones, Bryony Cunningham and Alex Cox.

*Sophie Cullen & Jonny Kelly  
(Shed Wednesday Members)*

### **CHARLBURY BOWLS CLUB**

The winter season of short-mat bowls is going well for us, with various home and away matches. This gives our members an interest during the dark winter nights

which is most welcomed by all. We also have other various activities during the winter months. Looking ahead we have our Easter Bingo on Monday March 21st, and our Open Day on Saturday April 23rd at 2 pm, and a warm welcome will be extended to anyone wishing to attend on these dates. Then we have the start of our outdoor summer season with plenty of home and away fixtures. We also have trained coaches who will guide you and introduce you to the game of bowls. Do come along and have a go - you have everything to gain, and nothing to lose!

*Jack Fox, Hon Secretary*

*Please contact Julia Caston (810240)  
if you wish to submit copy for this section*

### **An alternative and very special Easter ‘Good Gift’ is available from Oxfordshire charity Transrural Trust**

The tradition of painting eggs at Easter goes back thousands of years. In northern Romania it is practised as an art form all year round, with women of all ages transforming blown duck and goose eggs into objects of astonishing beauty and complexity. Transrural Trust, an Oxfordshire charity working to help poor families in the mountain areas of Romania, is selling the eggs this Easter to raise funds for their Romania project. Priced between £4 and £10, they make wonderful and very special Easter presents. We would love to see you at our special Egg Days, which take place at Crawley Mill, near Witney, on the last two Fridays and Saturdays before Easter. There you will be able to see a stunning display of painted eggs in many different colours and designs. If you can't make it to Crawley, you can still buy from the catalogue featuring some of the best designs. *For details or to request a catalogue telephone 01993 771230 or visit [www.transrural.org](http://www.transrural.org). Egg Days are on Fridays and Saturdays 11th/12th and 18th/19th March at 16a Crawley Mill, Crawley, Witney. Gillian Rose of Transrural Trust will also be judging the painted eggs competition at Shotover Country Park, Oxford, on Easter Monday, 10.30am – 1.00pm.*

# **Want to volunteer but don't know where to start?**

2005 has been declared the International Year of the Volunteer – why not think about taking up one of the many voluntary opportunities in Oxfordshire? Volunteering can give you useful work experience, the chance to meet new people, new skills and training, and the chance to develop new interests – not to mention the satisfaction of contributing something to society.

Don't know where to start? Look at [www.do-it.org.uk](http://www.do-it.org.uk) for some ideas. Or contact your local Volunteer Bureau, where you can chat to someone about what volunteering would suit you, and have a look at a range of local opportunities:

Oxford Volunteer Bureau 01865 251946  
Banbury Volunteer Bureau 01295 279515  
Witney Volunteer Link-Up 01993 776277

## **BIRD AID**

The project to feed wild birds during the winter months is again taking place at several farms in the area. Locally this is taking place at Broadstones, Ditchley Road. Although the birds were very slow to take advantage on the extra food they are now beginning to flock in as natural supplies become exhausted. If you are lucky, yellowhammers in flocks of over 100 can be seen. This project is supported by the Friends of Wychwood, the RSPB and the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment. If you would like to help with monitoring the birds please contact Louise Spicer, tel: 810745.

# ROYAL BRITISH LEGION CHARLBURY BRANCH

**The Poppy Appeal for 2004** raised £3,785.96 in Charlbury and the surrounding area. This is a new record! The Poppy Appeal Organiser, Helen Clarke, would like to thank all those who helped to raise this sum and particularly those who gave so generously. Unfortunately there were not enough collectors to visit all the houses in the Town this year. Please accept the Legions' apology if your house was left out. Anyone who would like to help with the 2005 Poppy Appeal is asked to contact Helen on 810608.

**The Charlbury British Legion Darts Cup** for the Open Pairs held at Ye Olde Three Horseshoes was won by Pete Scarrott and Brian Mitchell.

**A Poppy Collector 30 year medal and certificate** has been awarded to Jane Parsons. 5 year Certificates have been awarded to Malcolm Dix, Alison Pritchard, Pat Serjeant, Morag Moore, Sarah Potter, Diana Potten and Rosa Charlesworth of Finstock. Congratulations!

**Wreaths were laid at the War Memorial** in St Mary's Church on Remembrance Sunday by the Charlbury Branch [Vic Merry], Thames Valley Police [P.C. Bob Gillett] and Charlbury Town Council [Cllr. Susie Finch].

**The 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Founding of the 52<sup>nd</sup>:** This occasion will be celebrated at Christ Church College, Oxford on Saturday 13 August with the following on the programme: 14.30 – Service in Christ Church Cathedral, 15.30 – tea at the Masters garden, 17.20 – Sounding Retreat, 18.45 – reunion at Slade Park Barracks. This event is open to anyone who served in any battalions for the former Regiment [Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry] including the Bucks Battalion and the 1<sup>st</sup> Royal Green Jackets [43<sup>rd</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup>] prior to 1 January 1966. Widows and children of members of the former Regiment will be most welcome. For further information please see the notice on the Legion board outside

the Barbers Shop and/or telephone Jane Parsons on 810822 for an application form.

**VE/VJ Day 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:** The Government have designated 4-10 July to be "Veterans Week" culminating with events attended by the Royal Family in London on 10 July. These will be televised. The Oxfordshire event will take place on 9 July at Christ Church Oxford. The event will start at 3.00pm with the band of the Royal Logistics Corps. There will be a service in Christ Church followed by a Parade in Tom Quad and then by tea in the Master's Garden. Further details will be available from Jane Parsons shortly. Whilst the event will be open to all, people wishing to take part in the Parade are asked to contact Jane as soon as possible.

**A "Charlbury Veterans Day"** is being planned for the afternoon on Sunday 3 July with an Open Air Service on the Playing Close and Afternoon Tea in the War Memorial Hall. Full details will be published in the June edition of the *Charlbury Chronicle*.

**Veterans Badge:** the Government has decided to give a Veteran's Badge to all surviving members of the Armed Forces who took part in the First and Second World Wars. People who are eligible for the badge may apply to the Ministry of Defence themselves or they may wish the Legion to do so on their behalf. Application forms can be obtained from Jane Parsons on 810822. At the moment there is a delay with the issue of badges, as MOD did not order enough.

For further information about the work of the Legion, how to join or how to obtain assistance, please contact Nick Potter [Branch President] on 810388 or Derek Fowler [Branch Chairman] on 811706



## OUT AND ABOUT

Soft play areas and play barns are great places to run off all that extra energy the average preschooler possesses.

**Tumble Towers, at Wesley Walk, Witney** (01993 700789) is ever popular. They have complex three dimensional mazes to clamber all over with a scary slide into the ball pool and a quieter toddler's area for very small children. Tumble Towers is open Monday to Saturday 9-6 and Sunday 10-6 and costs £2.50 for the under fours rising to £3.75 for over fours.

Bigger and brighter but further away is **FunDays Play Barn on the Bourton-on-the-Water industrial park** off the A429 just west of Bourton on the Water (01451 822999) . The main play area is huge with tubes, mazes, slides and ball pits. There is also a toddler area for very young children. Fun Days is for children aged under twelve, and costs £3.00 for the under fours in term time rising to £4.00 for over fours (more expensive for holidays and weekends). Adults, who are allowed to play if accompanied by a small person, are £1.

## TIMES FOR TODDLER

### SWIMMING SESSIONS

During the spring term, **Windrush leisure centre in Witney** has special toddlers swimming sessions in the small pool on Wednesday morning from 11 to 12, and on Friday from 1.45 until 2.45. Chipping Norton has a toddler session, with the level of the pool raised so that the smallest child can reach the bottom, on Wednesday lunch times from 12.30 until 1.30. Times may change after Easter.

## CHARLBURY PRESCHOOL

Following changes to the rules governing school intake, the Pre-School has lowered its minimum age limit from 3 years to 2½. Children between the ages of 2½ and 5 are welcome to join the sessions on any weekday; there are currently vacancies in all sessions.

Charlbury Pre-School is a thriving, voluntary run organisation that provides education through play. It employs six dedicated and experienced staff and is run by enthusiastic parents. Sessions take place in the morning at The Old Grammar School in Park Street, and are open to all families in the community. Please ring the preschool at 01608 811200 during session time to arrange a visit.

Charlbury Preschool is currently scouting for more volunteers to join the committee, particularly in the following areas:

**Buildings Manager:** Our current Buildings Manager, Barry Dodman Edwards, has recently had to resign due to time pressures. We are currently working on a large refurbishment project and would really like some support to help manage this. In particular, anyone with experience in the building trade would be fantastic, but any volunteers who are prepared to give us their time would be very much appreciated.

**Fundraisers:** We currently only have one volunteer for fundraising (compared with a full dedicated fundraising committee last year). As well as our



smaller fundraising events, we have two large events coming up in the summer: The Summer Fair and a Pig Roast at the Cornbury Music Festival. These events alone raise a substantial sum for the Pre-School, but they do take a lot of organising and support from parents. I do hope that we do not have to cancel either of these due to lack of support. This money is badly needed, please come forward with an offer of help.

Please call on 01608 811763, or email [tracysmart@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:tracysmart@tiscali.co.uk) if you think you can help in any way.

## **CHARLBURY TODDLERS GROUP**

Charlbury Toddlers Group continues to meet every Monday morning during term time from 9.30am to 11.30 am at the Memorial Hall. It costs £1.50 per family and there are lots of fun activities and indoor play for the youngest children of Charlbury and their carers. Refreshments are included. All are welcome.

**AND FINALLY** . . . . Any volunteers to take over this column?

My former preschooler, Hannah, is starting school full time after Easter and having written this column for just over two years I am ready to hand over to someone out there with younger children who will be more in touch with toddler and preschool life in Charlbury. It is not a huge commitment, with a few hundred words four times a year. If you are interested please contact Alison Offer (813063).

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**Witney & District National Childbirth Trust** will be holding their Spring Nearly New Sale on: Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> April in Langdale Hall, Witney from 1030 -1230.

There is a 50p entry charge. Don't miss the chance to purchase great condition baby, toddler and maternity clothes, toys and equipment for a great price!

### **Sellers Always wanted!**

Make some cash from your nearly new babies' clothes, toys, equipment & maternity clothes! You tag it we sell it 50/50 split.

**Call Lisbet on  
01993 778754.**

*Oxfordshire Mind offers a variety of services for people who are, or have been, suffering from mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, loneliness, stress and schizophrenia.*

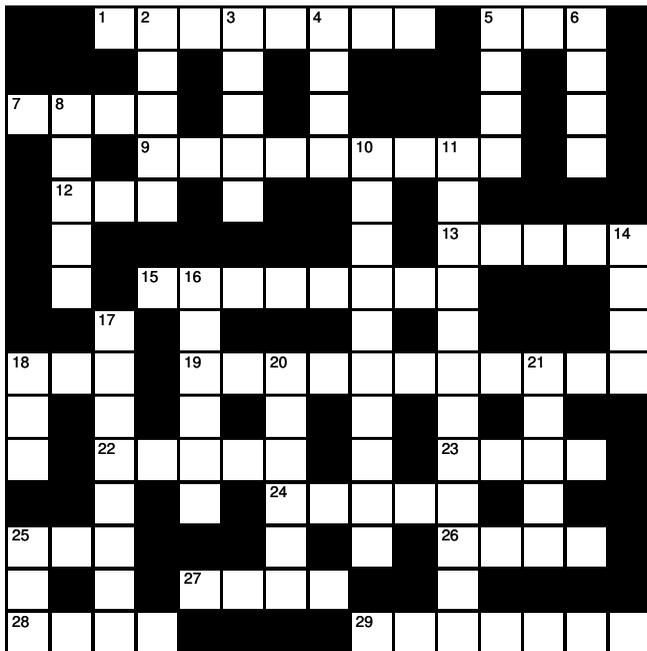
**MIND** in Chipping Norton is part of a network of Mind day services for adults (18-65 yrs) around Oxfordshire. It exists to provide help, support and information for anyone in and around Chipping Norton who for whatever reason has experienced emotionally difficult times.

At the Centre we operate an 'open door' policy so that anyone can just turn up without referral or phoning first. Some people come once and get information and advice, while others come regularly for support and friendship or to join a particular group or activity. If transport is difficult we may be able to help with this on Fridays.

If you feel we might be able to help, you are welcome to call in during our opening hours or ring to find out more.

Open on Tuesdays & Fridays 10 - 3.30.

St Mary's Parish Rooms,  
Church St, Chipping Norton.  
Ring Diana or Jo 01608 645296.



# The Chronicle Crossword

by Jay Denson

*Answers on p 36*

## Across

- 1 Charge although I've given already (8)
- 5 Always round your neck! It's a bind! (3)
- 7 Hardly fair (4)
- 9 Next one is about annexe (9)
- 12 Study short criminal (3)
- 13 About due after the Spanish escape (5)
- 15 Study after international tender not invited (8)
- 18 Tramp hits bottom (3)
- 19 Bionic man to be dismantled for collection (11)
- 22 Broadcasting about mixture of gases (2,3)
- 23 He gave the impression of being laid out (4)
- 24 Award points for being heavy (5)
- 25 Hit lightly! Hit lightly on the back (3)
- 26 Fruitful meeting? (4)
- 27 Banker has German alternative (4)
- 28 Specialist not late but quite firm (4)
- 29 Youth not allowed to listen to group (3,4)

## Down

- 2 Frequently to the point and places beyond (5)
- 3 Angry that I got up to speed (5)
- 4 I study a hero (4)
- 5 Conjunction of one short article to another (4)
- 6 An affirmative could be simple (4)
- 8 Relative benefactor? (5)
- 10 Can Swedish make something other than smorgasbord? (10)
- 11 On hand deeply, madly, generously (12)
- 14 Partially revenged (4)
- 16 Why make a beeline to reach the convention before Jack? (6)
- 17 I'm a carrier - I bring things in (8)
- 18 Hope to stay afloat (3)
- 20 The doctor stood up and looked down (6)
- 21 Lest I run aground here (5)
- 25 Place to explode (3)

**Report from County Councillor Brian Hodgson, tel/fax 01993 891310, or email [brian.hodgson@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:brian.hodgson@oxfordshire.gov.uk)**

**BUS & TRAIN SERVICES:** I have received several complaints about the new Stagecoach service and some aspects of the new bus and train timetables. I have been passing them on to our County Council transport officers at Speedwell House in Oxford; Allan Field and Adrian Saunders are both in close touch with the relevant operators and so if you have any further comments please let me know and I can continue to forward them. Even though the Council is not directly responsible for these services they can work very hard to influence the quality of provision.

**PART-TIME FIREFIGHTERS:** Retained firefighters are needed in some local stations. Men and women aged between 18 and 55 can apply, and so if you fancy getting fitter, want to earn extra money or just want to help your community, please call the recruitment hotline on 0800 587 0870.

**LAND VALUE TAX:** Following a motion I put forward in 2002, supported by the Liberal Democrat leader at that time, the Council has just completed a study of a pilot area of the Vale of White Horse with the help of their District Council. The idea was to judge the effects of replacing both council tax and the Business Rate with a new Land Value Tax. LVT would be much fairer than Council Tax with people in Bands A to E houses generally paying less than now, and those in Bands F to H mostly paying more. Any tax favoured by Winston Churchill, Einstein, Tolstoy and Milton Friedman must be an idea well worth considering! If you want more details of our very successful study, please contact me.

**From District Councillors Mike Breakell (01993 868201) & Glena Chadwick (01608 810555); or email [Chadwick@Glena.fasnet.co.uk](mailto:Chadwick@Glena.fasnet.co.uk)**

**Glenn Chadwick:** The Enforcement Working Party has drafted a set of guidelines so that local organisations will know how to put up posters without fear of them being removed. It is very much hoped that these guidelines will be passed by all the other committees that they have to go through. If that happens it will be the end of several years hard work and involvement on my part on this subject. There is still some concern over the appearance of the Spendlove area. The litter seems to be increasing and it is possible that the signage on the toilets could be tidied up. I am going to meet one of the Environment officers to discuss that and the vexed question of the toilet charges, which seem totally counterproductive. Two other working parties I am on met recently. One was to try and rationalise the points system for housing allocation and the other concerns health and leisure and is trying to encourage adults and young people to participate in healthy exercise. WODC is discussing initiatives to make it easier for people to get fit and stay fit !!

**Mike Breakell:** Sadly there are many transport issues still to be resolved since the great timetable changes of December 04. At the January 05 Economic and Social Scrutiny Sub Committee it was agreed to reconvene WODC Bus Working Party and incorporate rail services along the Cotswold Line into the debate as a matter of urgency. Stagecoach and First Great Western will be asked to explain just why problems are still arising, and if and when they can be resolved. Let me know ([mjbreakell@aol.com](mailto:mjbreakell@aol.com)) if you wish me to raise other issues into the debate (such as services not running to time, overcrowding, cleanliness, and poor communication) and I will be very happy to raise them. I will be working closely with Brian Hodgson on these matters as many are primarily a County responsibility. Planning issues continually arise due to the need to accommodate additional housing in the South East of England. The January 05 document entitled A Clear Vision for the South East is now out for consultation and seeks to clarify whether 32000 or 40000 additional dwellings should be accommodated in Central Oxfordshire between 2002 and 2026, for example by extending Oxford City or developing beyond Oxford's Green Belt. Fortunately Charlbury lies beyond Central Oxfordshire but we are still, quite rightly, expected to deliver our share of affordable housing and to develop the urban area in an appropriate manner. However without improved transport and infrastructure the Government's laudable aim to have more sustainable communities in the South East will surely be difficult to achieve.

# Church Services at Easter

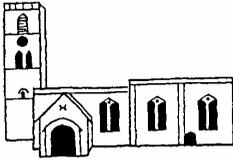
Baptist Chapel, Dyers Hill



**Easter Day:** Joint Service at the Methodist Church 10.30 am

**Minister:** Rev Malcolm Cook, 4 Churchill Road, Chipping Norton (tel: 646637)

St Mary's C of E Church



Full details of all services in Church porch or see The Leaflet

Rev Judy French, The Vicarage, Church Lane, tel: 810286

[www.stmaryscharlbury.co.uk](http://www.stmaryscharlbury.co.uk)

Friends' Meeting House, Market Street



Meeting for worship at the Friends Meeting House every Sunday at 10.30 am

For further details contact: Joan Rough (810704)

Methodist Chapel, Fishers Lane



Morning Service normally Sundays at 10.30 am, any changes will be posted on church notice board.

Holy Communion March 20th (Palm Sunday), April 17th and May 8th

*Further information from Marion Speight (811737)*

St Teresa's R.C. Church, Fishers Lane



**Palm Sunday March 20:** Holy Mass & Blessing of Palms at 11 am (9.30 am at Enstone Youth Hall)

**Maunday Thursday March 24:** Mass of the Lord's Supper 7.30 pm

**Good Friday:** Liturgy of the Passion 3 pm; Way of the Cross, 7 pm

**Holy Saturday:** Confessions 11-12 noon; First Mass of Easter 8 pm

**Easter Sunday, March 27:** Holy Mass 11 am (Enstone YH 9.30 pm)

Rt Rev Monsignor V F J Morgan, CBE, 5 Enstone Road, Charlbury OX7 3QR  
tel: 810576 or see [www.communigate.co.uk/oxford.stteresacharlbury](http://www.communigate.co.uk/oxford.stteresacharlbury)

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN CHARLBURY have several shared activities, such as the Bible Study Fellowship, Good News Group and Luncheon Club. Further details from Pat Owens (676541)

## THE THOMAS GIFFORD CHARITY REPORT

Following the last *Chronicle* report we received news from the Big Lottery that they had rejected our application for funding towards the Community Centre project. The main reason given was that the Oxfordshire County Council had too much control over the project. We pointed out that the Charity retained ultimate control but the County Council involvement was vital since a number of their services such as community education and library would be housed in the new centre. In addition the County Council support adds credibility to a Charity which is very small with a low annual turnover and limited resources apart from the Spendlove site itself. However it was clear from discussions with Big Lottery staff that their funding for community projects has been cut back significantly and that their priorities had been re-defined such that funds were now largely targeted at deprived areas. This setback came just after we had received some good news – we had reached the second stage of the Futurebuilders programme.

Unfortunately the lottery setback meant that we were unable to meet our deadline of end December with West Oxfordshire District Council to have an agreed funding plan in place – this was a condition of funding from the WODC. We could not meet the Futurebuilders timetable without some immediate funding for design work which was not available without such an agreement. This application was therefore withdrawn to give us the opportunity to re-submit at a later date.

As mentioned in the last report without positive responses from the two applications we would have to re-think the strategy for the Spendlove site. The trustees have started to discuss possible alternatives. It is still intended to develop the site for the benefit of the community particularly given that it is such a good location for community facilities and probably the only sizeable site in the Town. However in the absence of a large additional grant it will be necessary to consider some alternative development approaches to raising funds to enable the community centre to be built. We will continue to keep you informed of any news in the next edition of the *Chronicle*. A meeting has taken place with WODC officers with a view to a further 12 month extension of the loan agreement with WODC to allow the trustees to develop an alternative strategy for the Spendlove site which would still be predominantly community facilities.

The next Farmers Market is on the Playing Close on Saturday, March 12. Please continue to support this excellent event.

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## COTTAGE TO RENT IN LES BIARDS, NORMANDY, FRANCE

Sleeps up to 6 people      Peaceful location Normandy/Brittany borders  
Mont St Michel, St Malo and beaches within easy access  
Lake, fishing, boating and restaurants close by

Prices from £350 per week. Dates available May/June/July/August/September/October

For further details contact Margaret or Kevin on 01993 891858  
email [Margaret.darbyshire@virgin.net](mailto:Margaret.darbyshire@virgin.net)  
Mobile 07770 863890

## CHARLBURY TOWN COUNCIL REPORT – No. 34

**Christmas decorations:** The Town Council would like to congratulate everyone who put decorations, lights and Christmas trees outside their houses and businesses in the town to brighten up the Christmas period. Particular thanks are due to Pete Cahill and Charlbury Chamber of Trade and Commerce for co-ordinating arrangements and to Geoff Burroughs who donated the Corner House Christmas tree.

**Sturt Close Play Area:** This will be handed over to the landowner, Cottsway Housing Association (formerly West Oxfordshire Housing Ltd.) on 31 March. The play equipment, which belongs to the Town Council, will be removed prior to that date at the request of Cottsway. The Town Council regret having to take this action and hope that Cottsway will have more success in managing the area.

**Meetings:** All the meeting dates for 2005 can be seen on the Town Council notice boards at the Corner House and on the area opposite Five Ways Stores or obtained from the Town Clerk (810608). All the meetings are open to the public. Copies of minutes of Town Council meetings are available in Charlbury Library. At the request of the Thomas Gifford Charity the Council will hold a **Public Meeting** in the War Memorial Hall on Friday 8 April at 8pm to provide an update on the Spendlove site and other matters concerning the Charity and to answer questions. **The Annual Parish Meeting** will be at 8 pm on Friday 22 April 2005 in the War Memorial Hall. Please come and find out what your Council has been up to for the past year. **The Annual Meeting of the Town Council** will be at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 25 May in the Corner House. The Town Council will elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Committees and nominate representatives to other local organisations.

**Town Council Precept (Budget) 2005/6:** The Town Council element of the Council Tax for the next financial year has been set at £69,143 compared with £72,713 for 2004/5, a **reduction** of 4.9%. Over half the precept goes on unavoidable items such as cemetery and playground maintenance, insurance, grass cutting, clerk's salary, and contributions to the maintenance of community recreation areas and buildings such as Nine Acres, the Corner House and the War Memorial Hall. The remainder is for grants to the Riverside Festival, Youth Football Club, the Shed Theatre, the School Association, Charlbury Worldsong, Charlbury Day Centre and for essential tree works on the Playing Close. Projects include the Cemetery extension, the Nine Acres Pavilion, and the Skateboard park. The full list can be inspected by arrangement with the Town Clerk. Tel: 810608

**Annual Boundary Walk:** The walk will take place on Rogation Sunday, 1 May starting at 10.00 a.m. from the Old Oak Tree on Forest Hill. There will be a

break for lunch at Model Farm by kind permission of Mr. & Mrs. Hobill. The distance is about 11 miles across country, along roads, paths and bridleways often in places where public access is not usually allowed. Arrangements can be made to pick up people at various points on the route where it crosses a road. The Town Council is most grateful to all the landowners who allow the walk to take place and to the Charlbury Society for their assistance with organising the walk. Anybody who would like to help with marshalling and generally helping is asked to contact the Clerk.

**Charlbury Station Car Park and Traffic Issues:** First Great Western Link Ltd. together with Oxfordshire County Council have commissioned a consultant to conduct a feasibility study on the Station Car Park which began in January. The report is awaited – however there is likely to be a delay with the implementation of any recommendations because the franchise for the Cotswold Line is due for renewal in 2006 so FGWL are unlikely to want to commit to any expenditure until they know whether or not they still hold the franchise. Replies are trickling in over all the traffic issues mentioned in the last Town Council Report. Some are not particularly helpful and the ‘big picture’ is far from complete. The Town Council will continue to press for replies at the appropriate level.

**Planning and Licence Applications:** The notices for these applications invite members of the public to send any objections to these to West Oxfordshire District Council. The Town Council is a statutory consultee for both types of application and would appreciate copies of any letters that members of the public send to the District Council as it is not always aware of neighbour issues. The Council would also like to remind the public that comments need not be confined to objection and that letters of support are equally admissible.

**Wheeled Sports Area:** The formal opening by the SS 20 TEAM will take place on Saturday 9 April at 11 am. All welcome.

**Thames Valley Police:** Their new office in the Spendlove Centre was opened on 20 November 2004. Vice-Chairman, John Harrison, represented the Town Council at the event.

**Remembrance Sunday:** on 14 November Councillor Susie Finch laid a wreath at the War Memorial in St Mary’s Church on behalf of the Town Council.

**Election:** There is only one Local Government Election due in Charlbury this year, for the one seat for the Charlbury Division at Oxfordshire County Council, currently held by Brian Hodgson. The polling station is in the War Memorial Hall and will be open from 7 am to 10 pm on Election Day – Thursday 5 May. It is not yet known whether there will be a General Election on that day too.

**Permissive Footpaths:** those at Wigwell Nature Reserve and Nine Acres Recreation Area were closed to public use on 5 January. The Town Council apologises for omitting this notice from the last Town Council Report. Permissive footpaths have to be closed to the public once a year by law.

*Councillor Trevor Jones*