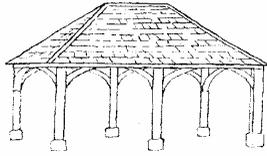


# The Charlbury Chronicle



Volume 10 Number 2

June 2006

Looking through the pages of this *Chronicle* you will see that there is quite a lot in this issue about stage, drama and music. This is really a very talented community and there is such a lot going on. Firstly, there is the great news that Shed has been invited to perform at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in August. This is a huge accolade and reflects the years of hard work and dedication of the organisers and their young members and they can be certain that they have the congratulations and good wishes of all Charlburians for success in their exciting adventure.

Secondly, there is a fulsome critique of a recent production of *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, performed by Shed Theatre, by a Fellow of Oxford Brookes University, Stuart Parker. Then there is news of Street Stage, a 'touring youth arts fusion company' which is receiving support from Charlbury Town Council. There are details of the opera *Don Giovanni* which CHoC is bringing to Charlbury this month. Finally, there is news that a 'highly acclaimed' dance company will be doing a one-off workshop in Charlbury over the half-term.

All this emphasis on the performing arts makes one realise what a great thing it will be when we get our new Community Centre. If anyone doubts the need for such a facility they need only ask where performances are rehearsed, and indeed given, at present - in an assortment of back rooms and inadequate spaces dotted all over the place. These enthusiastic young people will thrive and reach even greater heights when their talents can be properly displayed in appropriate surroundings.

After this issue, there will be only two more before we reach the **TENTH** anniversary of the *Charlbury Chronicle*. When I started it I thought I might do it for about five years! Every now and again I ask if anyone would be prepared to take it over, but so far no one has ever offered. Please do think about whether this is something that you could do, and get in touch with me. I would be very sad to think that the *Chronicle* might finish as it seems to fill a need in the community.

Please note, again, that my new email is [lm@cchronicle.plus.com](mailto:lm@cchronicle.plus.com)

Lynette Murphy

## **FESTIVAL CLOCKS UP RECORD BEER MILES** - *Rob Stepney*

The 36 real ales at this year's Charlbury Beer Festival (8th July) include many wondrous brews from far-flung places which you've previously had little chance to taste. The closest comes from two counties away, and Dave Sangwine calculates that the average distance beers will travel is around two hundred miles.

Among them we'll have Hebridean Black Ale, Fenland's Osier Cutter, Scafell Blonde, Rudgate's Well Blathered, Garton's Stunned Mullet, and the Belly Dancer of Brewsters.

CAMRA's newsletter "Beer on Tap" said of last year's selection: "The range of styles and strengths was impeccable... Quality was nigh on perfect and the service was unfaulted."

The review, by someone who came by train (presumably from Oxford) also praised our Beer Festival's friendly atmosphere: "Even first time visitors were made to feel welcome and part of the community," he wrote. So we have a great reputation, and a good deal to live up to.

Should we worry that our beers will travel a total of eight thousand miles to be with us? Maybe, if it wasn't in such a good cause. Last year, as well as providing a highly enjoyable day, we raised more than six thousand pounds for the school and local projects.

And remember that God's own gravity, not gas, is used to dispense our beers. So, forgetting methane emissions for a moment, let's consider the event carbon neutral. It contributes greatly to local warmth, but not much to global warming.

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## **MEALS-ON-WHEELS**

Diana Griffiths MBE has decided to retire from organising the transport for Meals-on-Wheels after doing it for many, many years. It is a task she has been sharing with Marjorie Glasgow, but she now wishes to step down and hand over to someone else. It is a really worthwhile voluntary job to do, and it is important that this work of arranging the transport rota taking hot meals to the elderly in our community should be continued.

Do please think about it and if you are able to offer a little of your time you can ring Marjorie on 810161 for more details.

Meals-on-Wheels also requires more drivers and non-drivers to be on the reserve list. Volunteers always work in pairs as they take the hot meals around, so it doesn't matter if you are not a driver.

Ring Marjorie (810161) or Diana (810465) if you have any queries — they will be glad to hear from you.

# CARLBURY STREET FAIR SEPTEMBER 16<sup>th</sup> 2006

**This year's theme is '1256 and all that'**

This year's Street Fair is to be held on Saturday September 16th, and we will have all the usual stalls, together with the evening parade and dancing in the street until 10pm. 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 811000 or by email at [teresa@beeb.net](mailto:teresa@beeb.net)

## **CHARLBURY OPEN GARDENS IN AID OF CHARLBURY STREET FAIR ON**

**SUNDAY JUNE 4<sup>th</sup>:** This is the 8<sup>th</sup> annual Open Gardens Day. At the time of writing we have seven gardens open but a couple of others are still thinking about it. All the gardens are in the centre of Charlbury. Tickets and route map will be on sale at the Corner House in Charlbury from 1.30 pm on the day. The gardens open from 2pm - 6pm. We are also including **Art in the Garden** which will feature exhibitions and demonstrations in various gardens from local artists and by the children of Charlbury Primary School. There will also be teas and plants for sale. Tickets are £3 for entry to all the gardens. For more information please contact Pat Court 01608 811031 or email [pat.court@tesco.net](mailto:pat.court@tesco.net)

**.BUSINESSES:** If you would like to advertise your business in the Street Fair programme, then please contact Jon MacKay at [jonboy7473@yahoo.com](mailto:jonboy7473@yahoo.com).

**THIS YEAR WE HAVE ALSO GOT SOME CRICKET TICKETS TO RAFFLE** - only 100 goes at £5 each, kindly donated by Warwickshire County Cricket Club. There will be FOUR tickets to watch Warwickshire play at Edgbaston. They are all One day fixtures and are in the 40 Overs League or the Cheltenham & Gloucester Trophy. All the money we make from the sale of these tickets goes towards Street Fair. Queries on this should be directed to Susie Finch at [susanna\\_finch@hotmail.com](mailto:susanna_finch@hotmail.com). Draw takes place at the Open Gardens.

**THE MAIN PURPOSE OF STREET FAIR and OPEN GARDENS**, whilst intending to entertain local people, Fair (and Open Gardens) is to raise money for the upkeep of the Corner House and War Memorial Hall – the two community buildings that play such an important part in the lives of so many people in and around Charlbury. These two venues are used by the many groups and societies in Charlbury for meetings, sports, Meals on Wheels preparation, Theatre productions, Toddlers, Day Centre, Library and many more. For further information please contact Liz Watson at [liz.watson@bbc.co.uk](mailto:liz.watson@bbc.co.uk) or on 0794 6893342.

N.B. Will residents of Church Street please note that we have been granted road closure permission for the 16<sup>th</sup> September 2006 from 9 am to 10 pm

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**Home Start is a registered charity that provides friendship and support for families with young children by bringing together a volunteer and a family for a few hours each week.**

A couple of years ago I decided to change my job and alter the balance of my life so that I could be around for my son who would soon be starting school. I had just come through a difficult few years and when I first saw the advert for Home Start my first thought was that it would have been great to have had a volunteer to visit me during those times.

I couldn't forget the ad and started thinking that perhaps I could be there for someone like me. I rang the Organiser and joined a Volunteer Preparation Course which was good fun and taught me a lot about myself. I was very nervous about my first visit but the Organiser came with me and it went very well.

I now fit my new jobs into school hours but I set aside a couple of hours for Home Start each week. Having a chat over a cup of tea, playing with the children or feeding the baby can really make a difference to someone's life and it is a chance for me to step away from my own life and problems for a while.

By giving up a small amount of my time I get a lot back from Home Start and the Organisers are always there for me if I need a bit of support or advice.

**Could you make a difference to a family in your community?**

For more information contact Home Start on 01295 266358 or ring Polly on 01608 641565.

*Polly used to live, and now works, in Charlbury.*

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## **WANTED – PLANTS**

Charlbury Primary's getting green fingers – and we need your help.

If you've grown too many seedlings, potted on too many cuttings, or just decided to thin out your borders, we can use all your spare plants in our ongoing school grounds refurbishment and new sensory garden.

If you have any plants (any colour, size, species) going spare, contact Alison Holthouse on 810954 or alichap@mac.com and we will make sure we find a good home for them.

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## **CSA raises the stakes – with a little help from its friends**

Tuxedos, glamorous women, champagne cocktails and dry martinis (shaken not stirred) ... Where are we? Monte Carlo? Vegas? ... No, just a Saturday night out in Cornbury Park organised by the Charlbury School Association.

The CSA's 'Casino Royale' night on 6 May was a huge fundraising success raising a much needed £2,500 for the primary school. Over 110 parents, governors and guests donned black tie and sultry evening dress to enjoy a great night out complete with (as well as the martinis) a sumptuous buffet with chocolate fountain, dancing till the small hours and, last but definitely not least, the serious business of chancing your luck against the vagaries of the roulette table.

The organisers had needed to think on their feet during the planning stages when the first venue (The Stable Block) secured a long-term let just six weeks before the event. The CSA is hugely grateful to Lord Rotherwick for lending the Stable Block as a lovely setting for its May Ball last year and for again offering it this year. When this became unavailable, he was again most accommodating in suggesting that he was happy for the event to go ahead in a marquee in the park.

However, there was a cost implication to this and a mad dash to secure sponsorship was set in motion. One of the first to pledge a substantial sum were the organisers of the Cornbury Music Festival, Sound Advice, an exceedingly generous kickstart that encouraged the team to believe that it would be possible to fund a marquee. Other businesses and many local companies followed suit with much appreciated sponsorship and the CSA is enormously grateful to all those who pledged money and helped the event to go ahead.

Recently, a large part of the CSA's funds have gone towards a big refurbishment of the school's grounds. Two 'Ground Force' days when many parents have turned out to dig, paint, clear and create at the school have revitalised the nature pond, smartened up and planted the swimming pool surrounds, helped create a new sensory garden and generally spruced up the children's outdoor space. This great communal effort has been underpinned by the CSA who have supplied funds for an exciting new traversing wall, multisport/goal post kits and new picnic tables and benches. The playground is really beginning to show an improvement and Charlbury's children are thoroughly appreciating the new facilities.

Forthcoming CSA events include this year's 'bigger and much better' Summer Fayre (Saturday 17 June, 2.00-6.00 at Wychwood Paddocks) which will feature barbecue and beer tent, kids café, Dad's football, games and races, crafts and stalls – truly something for everybody. The CSA will also be at Cornbury Music Festival on 8-9 July when again they are grateful to Sound Advice for supporting them by giving a free pitch.

*Alison Holthouse*

## **A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum - Stuart Parker**

Another triumph for Shed theatre was achieved in their recent production of 'the Forum' in the first outing of Shed Thursday to the larger Memorial Hall at the end of April. This time, it was a Stephen Sondheim musical dating from 1963. The revival is based upon the original work by *Plautus*, and some of the jokes indeed appeared to be 2000 years old but they were delivered with such dexterity and commodity on what is an extraordinarily small stage to mount such a complex production, that the rapid interchange of farce and innuendo was carried off with complete confidence.

This fast-moving piece of theatre which is a cross between 'Carry on up the Khyber' and 'The Comedy of Errors' and has lines designed for the likes of Frankie Howerd, and was performed with live music provided by Geoff Holmberg. All the songs were delivered with competence and enthusiasm.

Barney Iley-Williamson, who played Hysterium delivered his lines and quick-fire repartee with more than a passing reference to Kenneth Williams (surely Barney has understudied the arch camp practitioner at some stage) but this performance was matched by the delivery of numerous one-liners from Sam Page-Jones who played an assured Pseudolus and Robert Fenton as Senex with competent support from Joe Weller, Lawrence Dixon, Alex Cox and Max Winpenny. Of course, there were some female actors, but Katie Muir as Domina, was provided with the only opportunity to match the male dominance

There were no passengers in the superb cast, confidently directed by Teresa Laughton, but although it is good news in the current climate of high achieving females to see so many males taking confident leads, one has to wonder how, in a play in which all the women are depicted as hookers or harridans and innumerate to boot and political correctness is as remote as an ice cream in the Sudan, this play still manages to appeal?

Shed moves on to the Edinburgh fringe this summer with another production and are they raising funds at the moment to cover the cost of this ambitious project. Having been there some years ago with a theatre group from Southern Africa, I can only wish them, good luck, lots of fun and loads of wild parties.

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### **ROYAL BRITISH LEGION**

**Branch 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:** The Charlbury Branch was founded on 13 January 1926. The Branch will hold an **Anniversary Supper** at 7.30pm on Friday June 9th 2006 at the War Memorial Hall, Charlbury. There will be a finger buffet supper and entertainment provided by a brass ensemble - The Accidentals. Admission will cost £5 per person and will include your supper and your first drink from the pay bar. Tickets will be available at the door.

**Pingat Jasa Malaysia Medal:** This medal, offered by the Malaysian Government to British veterans and others who served in operations in Malaya/Borneo between August 1957 and August 1966 has received approval to be accepted, but not to be worn on parade or on medal bars of official British medals. Please contact Jane Parsons on 810822 for details of the application procedure.

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

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## **SHED's Great Edinburgh Adventure**

*'This is the most wonderful opportunity, and will be an experience we will always remember' reports Sue Cochrane*

This August SHED Theatre will be taking its 20 senior students to perform at The Edinburgh Fringe Festival. We will be performing at a C Venue in Chamber St. on Aug. 20th to 27th with the play 'Victims of Freedom'.

The brief to the company was to produce an original piece of drama set in the style of the Irish playwright Shaun O'Casey. The content of the show was the creation of the students, developed during workshops and channelled by the directors into a free flowing play for the stage. The script will be refined right up to performance in order to present a fresh and lively production. The actors will also play in different roles on different days of the run giving every performer the opportunity to excel.

This particular group has been together for four to six years and there is an extremely strong bond between them. This brings powerful mutual commitment to their drama which shines through in their performances.

Even though we put in our application in January we only received confirmation that we had secured such a prestigious venue three weeks ago and you may have seen photographs in the local press of ecstatic SHED students and leaders where we announced our great news to the students and their parents. This is the most wonderful opportunity and will be an experience we will always remember. We are particularly grateful to Charlbury Community Projects (Charlbury Beer Festival) for their generous donation to help us on our way to Edinburgh, as well as Charlbury Town Council for their continuing financial support.

SHED Theatre was the inspiration of its Artistic Director, Chris Wray and was created by him and Sue Cochrane in 1993. It is run by Chris, Sue, Trish Fraser and Teresa Laughton as a non-profit making organisation on a voluntary basis. There is an open door policy and the age range is between thirteen and twenty years. There are two groups (soon to be three) meeting weekly with a membership of 50 plus a two year waiting list.

We are very grateful to the local community, organisations and individuals for their ongoing support for thirteen years as well as our students and their parents for their dedication and commitment. Without this SHED would never have flourished and we would certainly never have even dreamed of going to perform in Edinburgh.

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## SATURDAY JULY 8 & SUNDAY JULY 9 2006

*Promoter of the Festival, Hugh Phillimore,  
hopes to see you there*

Plans are well advanced for the 3rd Cornbury Festival which will be held at Cornbury Park on Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th of July. Organisers believe that this year's line-up which includes **Robert Plant, The Waterboys, Deacon Blue, Texas, and The Pretenders**, is the strongest yet. Other Oxfordshire festivals have come on board to programme the 2nd Stage with Abingdon's Truck Festival taking care of Saturday with **Goldrush, Piney Gir's Country Roadshow, Get Cape Wear Cape, Fly, Fell City Girl, Aberfeldy** and one of the hottest bands of the year, **AirTraffic**. Sunday sees Oxford Folk Festival stepping aboard to feature **Kate Rusby, Spiers & Boden, Martin Simpson and Circulus**. Taking a year off from staging its own event, Charlbury Riverside Festival will programme an additional, new Riverside stage. Organisers have not forgotten that Sunday July 9th is the day of the World Cup Final and will be providing screens for the big match !

Apart from great music, the festival boasts the usual mix of high quality food stalls along with loads of festival shopping opportunities ! Free children's entertainment, a large fair-ground, massage treatments, hot air balloons mixed with morris dancers and brass bands as well as some extraordinary street entertainers are all part of the festival's mix. Shed Theatre will also be performing and raising funds towards their proposed trip to The Edinburgh Festival.

Once again the festival will be supporting many local causes including **Charlbury Primary School, Charlbury Pre-School and Charlbury Community Centre Appeal**. For this reason, the organisers feel that they cannot also offer discounted local tickets as the festival, while happy to contribute to the local community, must get into profit in the next few years if it is to continue to grow. Once the event is fully thriving, it will be in a position to again offer a deal for locals. Also, in time, the festival will be making an increasing impact on the local economy, supporting local businesses, using local labour, and hopefully bringing something unique to the area.

Although the festival went on sale a month later than last year, tickets have been selling fast, overtaking previous years, so organisers are expecting a high attendance. Prices remain the same as before - **Adult £40 per day, £70 weekend, Under 16's half price and children under 10 free**. Tickets may be purchased via the credit card hotline on 0870 1181636 online or at [www.cornburyfestival.com](http://www.cornburyfestival.com)

As usual, festival organisers will be consulting with West Oxfordshire County Council, Police, Fire, Health & Safety, & Environmental Health officials to make sure the event runs smoothly and that there is minimum disturbance for the local community.

Hope to see you there!  
Hugh Phillimore, Promoter

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**THE CANADIAN STUDENTS OF THE ATLANTIC BAPTIST UNIVERSITY OXFORD STUDY PROGRAMME ARE PROFOUNDLY GRATEFUL TO THE CHARLBURY COMMUNITY FOR THEIR SUPPORT AND KINDNESS DURING THEIR THREE MONTH STAY**

"Are you sure we are awake? It seems to me that yet we sleep, we dream." Thank you Charlbury for allowing us to experience a wonderful dream come true! *Heather O*

On leaving I shall miss the green pastures, the sheep, the sound of the church bells. I needed this experience and have learned so much from it. God knows I ground my teeth beforehand in fear of leaving all that I was familiar with. God knows I leave now after three months with a heavy heart after an experience so memorable and so precious. *Heather M*

The beautiful scenery coupled with the cottages made of gorgeous Cotswold stone has etched itself in memories I will always hold dear. Andy Faulkner thank you for driving us everywhere and putting us with our singing. *Chera R*

All the little details from the smiles and warm greetings to the grand Sunday lunches, the people of Charlbury will forever leave a wonderful and special impression on us... Thank you to Mike Summers for helping us with all our computer troubles – you're a life saver ... special thanks to Claudette Oddy, our chaplain, for supporting us throughout this journey. *Annie L*

People have been so accommodating and friendly, I have felt very much at home! A special thanks to Keith Rigley and Kathy Ward for designing and producing our play's poster and programme and also to the kind ladies at the *Good Food Shop*. *Kelsie C*

Charlbury is the most adorable town. The people are amazing and kind. Thank you to Glenna Chadwick, who helped with our play, entertained us and shared amazing stories! To Ron Prew, Ann Gilbert and the Charlbury Museum, for a memorable insight into local history and for the large colour maps of Charlbury... so we can take a piece of it back with us. *Carly S*

Thanks also to the kind people at the Post Office for handling all our mail and at the Co-Op supermarket for the great food. I am blessed to have met you all. *Amy S*  
Thank you to Ivor and May Payne for opening their home and hearts to us all. *Chantal L*

Thank you to the Baptist Church, you have taken us in and made us feel welcome since day one. To all in Charlbury for your generosity. *Christy M*

I have a newfound appreciation for potatoes and cream (not together). Also thank you to all who put on the Lent Lunches at the White Hart and the Quaker Meeting House, I have never had soup so wonderful. I hardly knew what a leek was before I came here! *Sarah G*

It was an honour to meet and hear David Cameron – such an amazing presence. *Kristy R*  
This programme expanded my horizons in ways I could never have imagined. I would like to thank the Rose & Crown Pub for allowing us to hold our playreadings in the "back room". *Amber A*

Thank you to the staff at Charbury Railway Station for handling our tickets these last three months. Also grateful to *Pot et Fleur* and *News & Things*. You made a difference in our lives. *Lauren S*

**The ABU–Oxford organizers are extremely grateful to all those who offered Home-stay accommodation:** Marion Ackrill, Heather & Mick Donegan, Rita Finch, Hilary & George Gandy, Angela Gwatkin, Birgit den Outen & Matthew Hancocks, Elizabeth Hardie, Jillian Harris, Kat Patrick & Robert Leese, Eileen Mitchell, Frances Short, Catherine & Alan Stevens

**Also to those who entertained our students so generously for Sunday lunch:** Marion Ackrill, Joan & Hugh Belshaw, Rachel & Brian Farr, George & Hilary Gandy, Birgit den Outen & Matthew Hancocks, Elizabeth Hardie, Hilda & Michael Jones, Eileen Mitchell, Pippa & Jonathan Nash, Ivor & May Payne, Patricia & Forbes Perry, Marion & Harry Speight, Catherine & Alan Stevens, Gwen Wearing.

*Peter Colyer, Executive Director - ABU Oxford Programme (UK);  
Madeleine Wheare - Coordinator  
January — April 2006*

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## Dr Frank Ellis

Dr Frank Ellis, a distinguished previous resident of Charlbury, died in February aged 100 years. He was a pioneer in the treatment of cancer by radiotherapy. Most of the advances in radiotherapy in the last fifty years were due to him. He set up units in many hospitals in this country and overseas including some in the United States. His lectures were greatly in demand and he continued to give them long into his retirement. He last lectured in America in his mid-nineties. A wing of the Churchill Hospital is named after him.

He was a Quaker and actively supported the peace movement through the Oxford Project for Peace Studies and other groups. He was still playing squash in his eighties and on one occasion went to the Chipping Norton Squash Club and found a youngster reluctantly willing to play with an old man. He beat him in straight games and the dejected lad told him as they walked off the court that he was the Captain of squash at a public school.

He was surprised to reach the age of 100 owing to the damage that is expected from radiation, but he died having had five children and with 30 descendants.

*John Lethbridge*

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## THE DIANA POTTEN INTERVIEW - FREDDIE JONES, ACTOR

At the moment I am working in Leeds playing the part of Sandy Thomas in *Emmerdale*. Because I have to spend a lot of time there, even weekends, I have taken a minimalist modern flat right in the centre of Leeds. If I have an early call, I get up at 6.45 a.m.; it is chilly because the heating hasn't come on and I miss Jennie bringing a reviving cup of tea and having a chat, making me realise I am still alive. After I have washed and dressed, I open the shutters, look down on the River Aire and let the world and the noise of traffic in.

While I wait for the studio car, I look at the complexity of scenes for the day. It is essential to get the scenes absolutely right. I assiduously avoid panic and let the hippocampus absorb the words. When the car has taken me to the studio, I have a coffee and start to think of ideas for the day's scenes. Miriam Margolyes paid me a big compliment during *Ladies in Lavender* saying that the main thing about me was my ability to invent tiny minutiae, which add to the whole character. I must admit it is something I love doing. While they are lighting the scenes, you gather around with other members of the cast doing your lines. Once I did my line and it was the wrong one. I had to learn the correct scene on the spot, so I try to make sure that doesn't happen again. The scene is blocked and choreographed and shooting starts. There can be as many as four takes if something goes wrong or there is a fluff. There is tremendous pressure these days because accountants dictate everything. It is very different from the past – once working with Clint Eastwood he insisted we only had 40 minutes for lunch but there was a counterbalance. He had his own crew, who adored him and therefore everything went smoothly. He also provided wonderful food for everybody. It was right and beautiful. We are given a lunch break and have a 'green room' where we can get food and coffee. There is good camaraderie among the cast. You can get tetchy but I am amazed at the harmony that exists. It is an extraordinary phenomenon because you take part in some emotional scenes with someone and then you don't see them for months. We finish about seven in the evening after a gruelling day; it is just as tiring if you are sitting around waiting for a scene as when you are performing.

I was brought up in Stoke-on-Trent. It was an oppressed place in the 1920s and I was born in the worst part, Longton. There were terrible slums and the child mortality was the highest in the country. My parents were hard working and they considered that the optimum achievement for survival was to get a white collar job with a pension. I was very unhappy at grammar school. It did not suit me. I had met a professional actor in a touring company and I had this dream that I might act but I knew I had to comply with my parents' wish for normality. This was even more pressing as my elder brother was not a well-person. So after school I had a series of jobs and by the age of 22 ended up working in a factory on an estate that had belonged to Robert Peel. I was doing quite well; I had three assistants in my laboratory and we were testing heat-making products to be used for gunpowder.

At that time the WEA was very active in the area and a factory engineer's daughter asked me to join a course in drama, which was putting on a production. I was a dashing romantic at the time writing poetry and the idea appealed to me. It was while I was on this course that a producer from Birmingham Repertory asked me to stay behind and said that he could not understand why a man of my talent was working in a laboratory. It was a historic

moment and a seed was planted. My work declined; I was spending time trying out soliloquies on my assistants and it was suggested that I resign. I did not want to upset my parents so I tried to get another job but it was no good. My parents guessed the situation, when I sent my dog home.

The engineer's daughter, who was a good actress herself, sent for prospectuses from acting schools but it was going to be difficult as I had no School Certificate. I got a reply from the Rose Bruford College of Speech and Drama and decided to go for it. I prepared a speech form Shakespeare, another from a modern play and I had to do an improvised work. They offered me a scholarship and suddenly I knew what great happiness was. I was to spend 3 years on a beautiful campus and there were lovely girls there as well. I had been led out of my projected fate by a combination of people and circumstance.

At the end of my time at Rose Bruford I had the main part in the college showpiece which was Ibsen's "Peer Gynt". I played Peer at all three ages; there are 1500 lines of verse and it makes huge demands. The performance was a great success and it is the thing I have most enjoyed doing during my acting career. After that I went off on an Arts Council tour doing "Romeo and Juliet" and "Romanov and Juliet" but when I came back from that it was dead! Then the struggle began with years in repertory. It was brutally hard.

In 1960 I met Jennie. I watched her in rehearsal at a theatre in Jesmond Dean and thought how much I liked her; things developed from there. At this time television and film were providing more work. I had the privilege to have the lead in a Fellini film, "The Ship Sails On". Fellini was wonderful to work with and you could argue about things. He was avuncular with me and there was a lot of laughter. He loved circuses and I often went to them with him. When we came to the last scene we were in tears because we had enjoyed working together so much.

Another high point of my career was in 1968. I was doing a Hammer film at Boreham Wood. Anatole de Grunwald's grandson was acting as a runner and he knocked on my door. He had not come to fetch me but had a message. He wanted to know if I wanted the good news or the bad. I chose the bad and he told me I had not won a Bafta award but the good news was that I had won the Golden Nymph award at Monte Carlo for International Television. I jumped up and hugged the poor boy. There were 47 entries from 26 countries for the best male performance. I got it for playing Claudius in "The Caesars" for Granada Television.

Things are not always serious and things do go wrong. The best thing to do then is take the audience with you. In "Peer Gynt", I lost one half of my bushy moustache, so I dramatically tore off the other half and threw it down. The audience loved it. The one thing actors should never do is make one another laugh during a performance; "corpsing" it is called. In a very touching scene in "The Dresser", where I was dying and Tom Courtenay was making me a cup of tea, I realised something was wrong, his dialogue was not right. The stage crew had not put any tea in the pot and it was obvious that he was pouring out hot water and bringing it to me. We carried it off though.

When I leave the "Emmerdale" set in the evening, I am taken back to my flat by car. There is one aspect of acting that is not immediately obvious. It is a very lonely

profession; one spends a great deal of time travelling or on one's own in digs. I miss home and Charlbury. When I am at home I love to cook, particularly curries. I like using any of the ingredients I can find in the fridge. I find it therapeutic but it is not something I do at the flat. In Charlbury I like to wander up the garden and inspect what is growing and think of new layouts and designs. Of course it is also good to be able to wander up to the pub and meet friends.

The centre of Leeds is a strange place to live; it can be dead at night or at weekends it is full of scantily clad youngsters, whatever the weather, who are anxious to live it up. When I come in, I usually watch some television, things like "Mastermind", "University Challenge" and documentaries, then I drift over to a charming Edwardian pub near the flat. I am gregarious but I like to creep into a corner and watch the world go by. Very interesting it is!

I usually am in bed by eleven. Because I have the capacity to catnap during the day for ten or fifteen minutes, I am able to keep up this daily regime. I want to continue working. John Gielgud was rung up by Maggie Smith on his 96<sup>th</sup> birthday: he was rather depressed because he was not being offered any acting parts. "I think I'll change my agent", he said. I also think I have much more to do. I nurture the ambition to play Lear. Actors never retire; they just die.

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## TAMING OF THE SHREW

There will be an open air performance of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* on the lawn of Cornbury Park, Charlbury, 3pm Sunday 25th June, performed by the highly acclaimed Oxford Shakespeare Company.

**The park will be open from midday for walking and picnicking prior to the performance.** Tickets £20 per adult; children 12-16 £10; under 12s free; concessions £16.

For tickets and further information please call 0870 609 223

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## ART EXHIBITION

The Rotary Clubs of Chipping Norton and North Cotswolds would like to see you at the Cotswold Art Exhibition on Friday to Sunday 28-30 July, at the Cotswold School, Bourton on the Water.

Enjoy a day out, admiring hundreds of paintings, sculptures and ceramics, created by highly skilled amateurs and professionals from a wide area. Admission is free, but the more works of art you buy, the more our charities will benefit.

Come and support CLC-Sargent (Cancer Care for Children), TOAD (Trips, Outings, Activities for the Learning Disabled) and Moreton New Ambulance Fund

# 'Don Giovanni' at the Memorial Hall

Charlbury's Own Cinema (ChOC) are hosting and staging Chipping Norton Theatre's production of Mozart's opera *Don Giovanni*.

Set in 17th century Seville, dissolute citizen Don Giovanni's lust for life and erotic adventure will ultimately be his downfall - but who can control him while he's so enjoying the descent? An inferno of promiscuity, and embodiment of unrepentant masculinity, is the world a better place without him?

This professional production is produced and directed by a former Glyndebourne director. It will be sung in English with piano accompaniment from Igor Kennaway. It has been specially tailored for small community halls.

**The Memorial Hall,  
Friday 2nd June at 7.30pm.  
Tickets will be £10 with  
concessions of £8 for under 16.**

Tickets available from News & Things, The Pharmacy and Evenlode Books.  
Further details on 07760 148745 or [ChOC@charlbury.info](mailto:ChOC@charlbury.info)

## FILMS FOR JULY AND SEPTEMBER

ChOC will also be screening "Mrs Henderson Presents" in July and "A Constant Gardener" in September. Please see local publicity nearer the time for further details.

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## ROSE AND SWEET PEA SHOW - 24 JUNE

Charlbury Horticultural Society's summer show will take place in the Memorial Hall on 24 June. Anyone can enter, you don't have to be a member. There are 6 cups to be won as well as cash prizes. The Society will also be awarding its new cup for the best kept allotment which will be judged in early June.

There are 14 different classes for roses including a novice class (including cup!) for a simple vase of three roses. Also there are six different classes for sweet peas as well as other flowers, hanging baskets and flower arrangements.

Vegetable growers can exhibit lettuces, peas and beans as well as soft fruit. There are children's classes of paintings and posies. The full schedule of classes will be available in the library or local shops a week or two before the Show or available from Nick Johnson on 810507.

Entries should be in to Nick Johnson on or before Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June and staged in the Memorial Hall between 8.30 and 10.45 on the 24<sup>th</sup>. The Show is open to the public between 2.00 and 4.15 pm.

*Nick Johnson, Show Secretary*

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*For David Halliwell*

## **The Cranberry Kid**

David named me  
The Cranberry Kid  
Because I drank lots of cranberry juice in the pub with him.

He had a good face,  
A very understanding face,  
That could show you what he felt like.  
So I drew him.

David lived on Crawborough Road,  
The bumpy road,  
Round the corner from my house.  
I never read one of his poems  
But I will some day.

Words were so important to him  
And he used them in many ways.  
I bet he spoke a million words a day.  
David always said what he felt about things,  
No matter what.

He always told people the truth  
Even if they didn't like it.  
He would tell me things that he knew  
A child would understand.  
And for that I will always remember him.

I will always be his Cranberry Kid,  
No matter what.

*By Olivia Brooks,  
March 30th, 2006*

**David Halliwell,**  
playwright and dramatist ,  
born July 31, 1936;  
found dead at his home in Charlbury on March 16th, 2006

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## CHARLBURY MUSEUM NEWS

**An exhibition** is being prepared to coincide with Street Fair in September, which will highlight local people and events during the years following the granting of the Charter in 1256.

The Museum holds a useful collection of references which can help in tracing local family history. We also have photographs of the town over the years.

*Anne Gilbert*

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## THE CORNER HOUSE & MEMORIAL HALL COMMITTEE

**The Patio:** The Committee is delighted with the development of the patio. It really looks most attractive and grateful thanks are due to all who have already supported the scheme with donations, enthusiasm and getting work done. With the addition of tables, chairs and , we hope, plants, it is going to be a great asset to the amenities this summer. Do come and enjoy it!

**A reminder** that representatives of regular users of the Corner House and Memorial Hall are always welcome at our meetings on the first Monday of each month.

*Ann Gilbert*

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## JUNE FARMERS' MARKET

Don't miss the Farmers' Market on the Playing Close on Saturday, June 10th from 9am to 1 pm.

The Farmers' Market has proved very successful in bringing shoppers into Charlbury as well as being a popular local event with residents who appreciate meeting the producers of fresh local produce.

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## Congratulations to all those involved in the production of the recent Charlbury Independent Retailers Newsletter for Spring 2006

This highly professional publication presents our town in a very positive light, from the punchy editorial notes on the first page, to details and photographs of seventeen of our shops and businesses in the following three pages. No doubt more will be featured in future issues. The design and photography give Charlbury an up to date and lively image.

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## **Sue Haffenden reports on her first year as County Councillor**

A year ago I was elected as your County Councillor, representing the Charlbury Division which, with the new boundaries, stretches from Combe to Kingham. It embraces one Town Council, seven Parish Councils with monthly meetings and two hamlets with Annual Parish meetings. By May 12th I completed the full year as I attended the last annual Parish meeting for this year. It is at these meetings that I present the annual report: what policies have been discussed and implemented by the Conservative administration at County Hall. I have mentioned some of the more important debates and issues around Government policy as it affects all local authorities and spoken about one or two of the most important committees I attend, either as Chairman or voting member.

The really big issues from Central Government to which we have had to respond have been: the Local Transport Plan up to 2011; the Minerals and Waste Local Plan (to do with gravel, sand and stone extraction throughout Oxfordshire); the Children's Bill, with its emphasis on setting up a new Children's Directorate and ring-fencing the Education Budget for the first time, plus the proposed Children's Centres throughout the County and the implications of the extended School Day; the Education White Paper and then the much amended Bill with the issues of Trust Schools; the housing policy forced on us by the ODPM, via the unelected South East Regional Assembly, whereby we tried to 'spread the misery' of thousands of new houses to be built between 2016-2020 in areas where we have some reasonable rail and road infrastructure and employment prospects.

We have spent many hours discussing the Annual Budget, so that the promise to keep down the level of increase of the Council Tax could be kept. It was. However, every Directorate at County Hall was required to produce a balanced budget and some tough re-prioritising had to be undertaken, to avoid any cuts and to improve efficiency. When one is talking about the effect these decisions have upon people, as in my special area of interest of Social and Community Services and the Children's and Young People's Directorate, then it is vital that Councillors understand the implications of the Budget decisions. This was something of a challenge for me but I spoke in the Budget debate, so the many seminars I attended must have sunk in!

I have found the role of Councillor a very rewarding one: extremely hard work but totally absorbing. I have met many people, discussed many policies and ideas and realised what an enormous amount of work the County Council does. Above all, I have been able in some way to make a practical difference to some people's lives and that is really what a local Councillor should be able to do for her constituents. I have therefore become obsessed with drainage systems, pot holes, road surfaces, re-cycling, litter and fly-tipping problems, the destruction of our verges in villages and the countryside, petty vandalism, the lack of sufficient information about Carer's Forums, Centres, and benefits. These were some of the problems that arose locally from individual constituents during the year where a home visit was usually required. There remains the problem of the Charlbury humps (still hoping it will be considered a higher priority this year) and the Community Centre project, which is progressing at last. The more I learn, the more help I can really be to the Charlbury Division, so my second year should be even more productive, as I feel more at home in the role.

*County Councillor Sue Haffenden*  
*Email: Sue.Haffenden@Oxfordshire.gov.uk or telephone 01608 676642*

# CHARLBURY COMMUNITY CENTRE APPEAL

Our logo of our Appeal and has been used regularly in the *Charlbury Chronicle* and on all our posters, flyers, letters and so on since early 2005. To our astonishment, someone said the other day that they didn't know we had a logo! Please take a good look at it next time you see it, and identify it with all the information we put out. The three large Cs indicate Charlbury Community Centre and beneath in equally large letters is the word 'Appeal'.

We have been very busy in the last three months preparing for our **Big Day at Ditchley on Friday, June 30th**. An interesting programme for the day has been planned. We start the day with coffee at 10.30 am followed at 11 am by a talk on gardens to be given by television personality Jane Owen. There will be a free lunch with a glass of wine. In the afternoon there will be a talk on flower arranging given by Paul Hawkins, who has an impressive list of clients starting with The Queen! In the evening from 7 pm to 9.30 pm we are having a Midsummer Reception with champagne, canapés and jazz. We very much hope that this will be a successful day and that we will be able to raise considerable funds for the Appeal. Anyone interested in attending should please get in touch with the Appeal Coordinator on 810459 to receive an invitation. Tickets for the daytime talks, with lunch, are £50 each (the price includes morning coffee, lunch with wine, talks by two famous lecturers, and a visit to a beautiful house); those for the evening reception are £30 each. There is a flyer which comes with this issue, and anyone wishing to apply for tickets is asked to get in touch without delay.

We are grateful to the organisers of the Cha Cha Cha Charity Challenge which was held on April 30th. This year they decided to share the proceeds between our Appeal and the appeal for the new Sports Pavilion on Nineacres. We understand that it is hoped that this will become a regular event and it is a splendid way to raise money for community projects.

As we go to press we are looking forward to the evening at St Mary's church on Saturday, May 13th when Freddie Jones and Friends are giving a performance in aid of our Appeal of 'Wooing & Winning' - a production conceived and planned by Hilda Pipe. Now that Freddie Jones is appearing in 'Emmerdale' on TV we confidently expect a full house at St Mary's as his fans queue to see him in the flesh!

We are very grateful for the donations we receive from time to time from well-wishers - particularly when we can apply for Gift Aid, which boosts each £1 given by 28p ..... it soon adds up! Our thanks also go to Hugh Phillimore who is donating several tickets for the Cornbury Music Festival to our Big Day at Ditchley event for prizes.

We are always glad to hear from anyone who is willing to run an event or who has a suggestion for a fund-raising event. Do please get in touch with us to discuss your ideas.

Appeal Coordinator: Lynette Murphy (810549)  
Deputy Coordinator: Diana Potten (810991)  
Treasurer: Richard Neville (810594)

## **THOMAS GIFFORD'S CHARITY**

### ***A Report from the Chairman***

A public meeting was held on April 7th in the Memorial Hall to cover the issues relating to the Charity since the last public meeting in April 2005. I gave a comprehensive report to that meeting followed by a Q&A session. This report covers the key points which were also communicated at the Annual Parish Meeting on April 21.

The final report from the Charity Commission on its Inquiry into the Charity was published last June and is available on the Charity Commission website. This report allows us to put the issues of the late 1990s behind us. However we are still left with a situation where the Charity has very limited financial resources restricting its scope for independent action. Its regular income, excluding bank interest, is less than its expenditure which is why we ask local organisations holding events on the Playing Close to make a donation. Financial information on the Charity can be found in its published annual accounts.

During the year the proposed new trustees were nominated in accordance with the structure agreed by the Charity Commission. Three by the Town Council: Ian Cox, Willem Hackmann and myself. Three by a nominating committee of our local County and District Councillors from a list of local residents who had put themselves forward: Tony Morgan, Russell Robson and Steve Vaux. The final three were nominated by these six from interested local residents, to ensure a better balance to the trustee body: Lisa Hadfield-Law, Alan Hanks and Liz Reason. Unfortunately the new trustees cannot take over until there is a new governing document, or scheme, for the Charity. This is dependent on the Charity Commission who have taken an inordinate amount of time to process their paperwork. However they recently supplied an amended draft which was agreed with a few minor changes. The Commission now has to advertise the proposed scheme - it is not until that exercise has been completed that the new trustees will take over.

We asked Oxfordshire County Council during the year to consider whether they wished to propose a first phase community centre project which they would lead. This could enable a community building to be built providing council services such as community education and a new library coupled with a large multi-purpose space, in particular for performing arts. Such a first phase project would allow the opportunity for reviewing community requirements and raising funding for a second phase. The decision by the District Council to take £250,000 out of their preparation pool slowed down this process.

However, in the last few weeks the County Council officers have come up with an initial proposal which they have shared with District Council officers and representatives of the trustees. It is clear that the proposal in terms of its funding and structure is not acceptable as it is, but the County Council officers are genuine in their enthusiasm to make progress. We are therefore exploring this opportunity fully to see if we can make it work for the benefit of the community.

Finally I thank again Lynette Murphy, Diana Potten, Richard Neville and others for their great work in leading the Charlbury Community Centre Appeal.

*Trevor Jones*

## COTSWOLD GUIDED WALKS

**The Cotswold Voluntary Wardens use their local knowledge to explain more about the landscape, history, wildlife and local communities of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

**Saturday, June 10th 10 am.** Starting at Salford Village Hall. North from Salford via Little Rollright, visiting the famous stone circle. South to Chipping Norton for lunch. Afternoon back to Salford. 5 hours, 8 miles. *Moderate*

**Sunday, June 18th, 10 am.** An attractive amble in the Evenlode Valley from Nether Westcote to Bledington and Bold. 3 hours, 6 miles. Lunch at New Inn, Nether Westcote. *Moderate*.

**Sunday, June 25th 2 pm.** Starting at the Hoar Stone, Enstone, past Heythrop lakes and house, crossing A34 to the head of the River Glyme and down the valley back to Enstone. Bring packed lunch. 4½ hours, 7½ miles. *Moderate*.

**Sunday, July 2nd, 10 am.** Meet Spendlove car park. Along the Oxfordshire Way from Charlbury to Fawler, across River Evenlode and through woodlands to Wilcote. Return via Finstock and Cornbury Park. Pub snack. 7 hours, 5 miles. *Moderate*

**Sunday, July 9th 10 am.** A circuit passing twice through Wilcote via Ramsden, Finstock, and North Leigh, calling in at Bridewell Organic Therapy Gardens. Pub snack. 6 hours, 9 miles. *Moderate*

**Wednesday, July 12th 10 am.** Meet at Burford Car Park, walk along the Windrush Valley to Widford and Swinbrook. Pub lunch. 3 hours, 6 miles. *Moderate*.

**Tuesday, July 18th 10 am.** Walk north across country to the edge of Chipping Norton. Return along upper reaches of River Glyme. Pub lunch. 6 hours, 11 miles. *Moderate*

**Tuesday, July 25th, 10 am.** The borders of Oxfordshire and Warwickshire. Meet at Salford Hill 3 m west of Chipping Norton at Cross Hands pub. Lunch at pub afterwards. 3½ hours, 6½ miles. *Moderate*.

**Saturday, July 29th, 10 am** Morning walk on s. edge of Wychwood Forest to Widford and Swinbrook. Meet main car park Burford. 3½ hours, 6 miles. *Moderate*.

**Saturday, August 5th 10 am.** Meet at main car park in Burford and walk along the Windrush valley via Widford, Swinbrook and Asthall then south to Shilton. Across country back to Burford. Pub snack. 5½ hours, 8 miles. *Moderate*.

**Thursday, August 17th 10 am.** Meet at Milton under Wychwood park outside The Quart Pot. Fields and farms off the beaten track. 4½ hours, 7½ miles. *Moderate*.

*Further information from Cotswold Warden (and Charlbury resident ) Peter Woolfenden on 01608 811296*

# STREET STAGE

**Street Stage** is a **touring youth arts fusion company** that mixes a wide variety of performance arts, such as dance theatre (mixing **devised theatre** with **hip hop, break dance & contemporary**), music and film, to create new performance pieces. The company is committed to giving young people experience of working with a wide range of professional performance artists, as well as organising theatre trips and residencies with professional companies. Street Stage specialises in site specific work and aims to create work in unusual spaces and take part in street theatre.

Street Stage is currently working on an exciting **dance theatre** piece called 'Tribes' based on the themes of **Romeo and Juliet**. It explores youth culture by mixing modern monologues with Shakespearian text, a range of dance styles and film to create a contemporary look at what divides young people and what brings them together.

The Tribe tour includes performances at The **Pegasus Theatre** and The **Mill Theatre** as well as **art** and **music festivals**. You can also catch the show for one night only in Charlbury on 17th June.

Street Stage is grateful to Charlbury Town Council for financial support of our minibus, which enables us to be a true touring company. We also work in partnership with Oxford Youth Arts Partnership and are members of the Oxfordshire Youth Theatre Collaboration.

For further information on Street Stage contact Anneke Hay on 01608 811269.

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## TRAVEL PASSES

If your permanent home is in Charlbury (or anywhere in West Oxfordshire) and you are 60 or over, you are entitled to one of three travel concessions: a free senior railcard, OR a bus pass, OR £31 worth of travel tokens.

Since April the bus pass now offers **FREE** travel on bus journeys starting or finishing in the West Oxfordshire District Council area. It can be used on services operating in Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire and Wiltshire, providing the journey starts or finishes within the WODC area. Journeys must begin after 9am Mon-Fri or any time at weekends, and you can use the pass on buses from Oxford city centre to hospitals. So you can have free days out in Oxford, Witney, Lechlade, Swindon, Bampton, Cheltenham, Banbury and Stratford, not to mention smaller places in between (like Northleach, Long Compton or Shipston on Stour) that offer pleasant walks and other attractions. You can use it on the Railbus, too, to get to Leafield, Shipton and Ascott. But note that the schemes are not necessarily reciprocal: that run by Oxford City Council does not offer Oxford over-60s free trips outside the city! If you have a half-fare bus pass at present, it became free-fare from April 1. You don't need to change it. But check the expiry date, and renew when necessary. If you already have a senior railcard or travel tokens under this scheme, and want to switch to the free bus pass, you don't have to wait till the railcard expires or the anniversary of the issue of the tokens. You can get the bus pass straightaway. But by doing this you forego your right to another free railcard, or the travel tokens.

Application forms and further information at: <http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/living/travel.cfm> or call at the WODC shop in Welch Way, or telephone 01993 861090

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# CLUBS, DRAMA, SPORT, GROUPS

## **SIX A SIDE FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT**

Our annual six-a-side football tournament will take place on Nine Acres Recreation Ground on Saturday and Sunday, June 3 and 4. Owing to the overwhelming success of last year's event, we have allocated 2 days this year. Teams from all over the county will compete at age groups ranging from Under 8s to Under 15s, and there will be boys as well as girls teams. We would welcome anyone interested in helping out with the various stalls.

This season saw two of our teams winning their leagues - the Under 17s, who won the B League title, and the Under 15s, who also won their B League title.

We are always keen to find new players, and in particular our Under 7s team are very short of members. So if you have a boy or girl interested in football who is currently in Year 2 at school please contact the Secretary, Helen Turner on 01608 810330.

*Helen Turner*

## **CHARLBURY CRICKET CLUB**

The 2005 season was a highly successful one for Charlbury Cricket Club, with two of our three senior sides gaining promotion from their respective divisions of the OCA League. The First XI, after a one-year absence, are back in Division 1. Our Second XI won Division 6 and also performed extremely well in the Osberton Radiators Cup, reaching the final only to lose narrowly to Tetsworth 2nds.

Cricket continued over the winter, with two Charlbury teams participating in the Banbury Indoor League. The First Team won all their matches and consequently were promoted to Division 1: the trophy is now sitting proudly in the club trophy cabinet! Unfortunately the Second Team were relegated to Division 3 after winning only one of their games. On a more positive note, this team was comprised mostly of under-17 youth players who will have gained valuable experience to aid their future cricketing development.

Talking of younger players, the club has a thriving Youth Section for children between the ages of six and seventeen. There are weekly training sessions and plenty of games are arranged throughout the season. We would be pleased to welcome any youngsters who may be new to the area or who felt inspired by England's performances in The Ashes last year. If you have any questions about youth cricket in Charlbury, please contact Geoff Lowe, the Youth Section Secretary, on 01608 810580.

As many of you will already know, the club's application to build a new pavilion was turned down by the WODC Planning Department in February. We are currently exploring various options with regard to the pavilion and I hope to have more to report in future issues of the *Chronicle*.

Two quick points to finish with. Firstly, we are always on the lookout for new members (playing or social) and would also be delighted to welcome back any ex-members who wish to rejoin the club. Do feel free to come down to the ground on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon, get a drink from the bar and watch some entertaining cricket in a beautiful setting.

Secondly, the club has an excellent new website ([www.charlburycricketclub.com](http://www.charlburycricketclub.com)) which should have all the information you require if you want to play or watch cricket in Charlbury this summer. Enjoy the season!

*Derek Collett*

## **CHARLBURY BROWNIES AND RAINBOWS**

We are currently running two very successful groups. At present the Brownies have a waiting list, but there are spaces in the Rainbow pack. For contact details, please see below.

Our activities are very varied, we sometimes join with other units in the district to go on trips and attend events - in July we are going to Bristol. We also do lots of activities and badges, for example this term the Brownies have been working on their Seasons and World Guiding badges. We are also in training for the School Fete in June where we have been invited to Maypole Dance.

We are holding our next Coffee Morning in the Corner House on June 10th, which is to raise finances to help to support the Scout Hut. These have been greatly supported by the people of Charlbury for which we are very grateful. At our last one in March, we raised money to enable us to buy flowers to deliver to 250 elderly people in Charlbury on Good Friday morning, a tradition that has been going for about 40 years. We are again hoping to be running a tombola at the Cornbury Music Festival which will also raise funds for the Scout Hut. We participated in our District Duck Race on Easter Monday, raising £800 towards the rebuilding of Jubilee House, our county pack holiday headquarters. Hopefully we will be able to run a Brownie pack holiday there next year.

We have a great team of leaders at Brownies, but are looking for someone else to help run the Rainbows with Gill. If anyone would like further information then please contact me and I'll pass on your details to Gill (who is in the process of moving so cannot give a 'phone number at present). Also at Brownies, we would like another person with loads of ideas and enthusiasm to come and join us at our meetings. There will be no need to wear a uniform or attend lots of extra curricular meetings or training sessions if you don't want to, just come and help us to help the Brownies once a week. Call me if you would like to discuss this further.

Cathryn Taylor	Gill Lever
Brownie Leader	Rainbow Leader
01993 702938	c/o 01993 702938

Brownies – 7-10 years - Wednesdays - 6.45-8pm - Scout Hut, Nine Acres Lane

Rainbows – 5-7 years - Wednesdays – 5.30-6.30 - Scout Hut, Nine Acres Lane

*Cathryn Taylor*

**This section compiled by Julia Caston (810240)**

# TotBits

## **SUMMER: SILLY OR INSANE??**

When I was little, my dad used to play a record (yes, that's an LP!) with a song on it called "Silly Old Summertime", and the chorus called summer days both "lazy" and "crazy". As June turns into July, these words become so true: summer is lovely and lively, but it sometimes does my head in.

For one thing, there seems to be so many more things to do. The various farms and parks are all in full-swing: Cogges, Blenheim, Burford and Guiting Power's farm park. It's hard to choose between them, though the fact that Blenheim is accessible by public transport should probably count for something. The temptation is to visit all of them at various times in the summer. Two considerations, however, argue for plumping for just one: their pricey admissions seem more palatable when buying annual tickets, and the fact that young children seem to prefer familiar surroundings to something new and different all the time.

Another thing about summer is the light evenings. Isn't it wonderful to be able to send the children out into the garden while getting the tea ready, or even after tea is over? I guess the downside is the light mornings – if only I could get my 15-month-old baby to realise that birdsong at 5 a.m. is not a wake-up call! By next year, she'll be able to understand the symbolism of the "wake-up bunny" clock, which opens its eyes to indicate when it's an appropriate time to disturb mum and dad. (My older children are just about to suss out that I've put old batteries into their clock, so the bunny never wakes up!).

Finally, there's the summer holidays. I can't decide if this is the part about summer that's "lazy" or "crazy" – I'm beginning to think the latter. Whether it's long car journeys or trips in an airplane, I think the most essential items to take along (besides nappies and wipes, of course!) are drinks, biscuits, crackers, dried fruit ... you get the picture. Taking books only gets the kids car sick, toys only cause fights or are dropped where you can't reach them, music can lead to arguments over selection, and I can only dream of owning a vehicle with an integral DVD player!

One last thought about your summer – if it allows you time to sift through your unwanted items, then please let me know what you would like to pass on through the SWAP SHOP at Totbits. (Make note to self: tell Kat about swap items before July 1<sup>st</sup>)!!!

## **LITTLE FISHES**

Little Fishes has hit record numbers this term, topping out over 20 children. The show-and-tell session at the end is proving especially popular: it's so lovely to see the children each settling on a special "show-and-tell" bag from which goodies are extracted each week. Music, crafts, stories, and play time are followed by snacks, so whether you are a parent, grandparent, or carer, your Under-5 will enjoy the free session at St. Mary's each week at 10:30 during term-time. There are plenty of babies who attend, too, so bring yours along to enjoy the music while you have a cup of tea and a chat. **SPECIAL NOTE:** A summer party and picnic is tentatively scheduled for the 19<sup>th</sup> of June at the vicarage. Look out for further announcements about this in the Leaflet, on posters, or ring Kate (811579).

## **HOLIDAY CLUB**

Churches Together are running the annual Holiday Club during the week of the 21<sup>st</sup> of August at the Methodist Church on Fishers Lane. Most eligible children receive a form through Charlbury School toward the end of term, but if your child attends a different school, is visiting for the summer, or is younger than 5 but you would like to help during the week, then contact Sue Holiday on 810694 for more details.

## **PRE-SCHOOL**

Two major fund-raising events occur in early July: the Summer Fair on the 1<sup>st</sup> and the annual pig-roast at the Cornbury Festival on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>.

The Pre-School is available for birthday parties from 2 p.m. onwards on Saturdays, and at any time on Sundays or during school holidays. For only a £15 fee, you have the use of two rooms (one vinyl floor and one carpeted), child-friendly tables and chairs, a kitchen, and space even for a 10x10 foot bouncy castle! The heating of rooms can be arranged, if required, for a small extra cost.

Pre-school premises are also available for hire in the afternoons during the week, either on a temporary or regular basis. Why not arrange a visit to see the venue and find out if it's for you? Telephone: 811200.

## **CHILDREN'S YOGA**

Does your child never seem to sit still? Well, children's yoga can teach him or her the benefit of lying quietly as well as moving meditatively, stretching, and strengthening those young bones. Classes run at the Pre-School on Tuesday afternoons, the fees for which go to the Pre-School. The Yoga Club meets at Charlbury School for Years 2-6 on Mondays and Tuesdays after school. Phone Nirosha on 810676 for further details.

## **BABY AND TODDLER GROUP**

Though this is generally known as "the toddler group" around town, it's nevertheless open to mums-to-be and very young babies as well as pre-school children. The group meets every Monday during term time, from 9:30-11:30 at the Memorial Hall. Children especially love the chance to run, jump, and ride on toys when the weather is wet and grey – and you'll love the hot cuppa and conversation. £1.50 per family.

## **SPANISH FOR CHILDREN**

Children from as young as 3 years old are welcome to Saturday sessions run by Elizabeth Vergara, a native Spanish speaker. There are games, songs, tapes, videos, drama, and story-telling, all of which the children love. For more information and to arrange a visit to a session, ring Eli on 811128 or e-mail her at [elivergaravera@hotmail.com](mailto:elivergaravera@hotmail.com).

## **NAPPY NOWSE**

Recent statistics indicate that 100,000 disposable nappies are binned in Oxfordshire every day. Cornmarket could be filled to a depth of 10m with all the disposables dumped

in a year. The Oxfordshire County Council's website has a lot of suggestions for how you could become part of the solution, and save yourself over £600 a year! (Have a look at [www.oxford.gov.uk/services/nappies.cfm](http://www.oxford.gov.uk/services/nappies.cfm)). But don't stop there – ring any of the local suppliers of cotton nappies to get help with the myriad options, or contact Gina at Nappy Tales, a nappy laundering service that delivers in Charlbury (01235- 812747). (SIDE NOTE: I have a selection of Pro-Wrap brand wraps that someone could have for a donation to charity – Kat)

## SWAP SHOP

Last issue, I mentioned starting a section of TOTBITS for people to post unwanted items they wanted to give away. No one has contacted me yet, though I'm sure lots of you have things you'd like to pass around to others. As above, I have some nappy wraps for cloth nappy users, and I also have a rain cover for a stroller-type push chair that was sent to me by mistake. Another mum has a hardly used double buggy (one-behind-the-other style) that she would like to sell for a reasonable offer – if you contact me, I can pass on the details.

*TotBits is compiled by Kat Patrick (811660)  
Kat.patrick@alumni.southwestern.edu*

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## Dance workshop at half-term

We are delighted to announce that Studio KK will be running a one-off dance workshop in Charlbury over half-term. This will be led by Karen King, director and choreographer of highly acclaimed dance theatre company AK15. Karen was recently described by Sheridan Coldstream (Total Vocal & BBC) as "a truly inspirational dance coach and innovative choreographer".

AK15's debut performance in October last year with Charlbury's youth arts fusion company Street Stage, was described as "An astonishing piece of work" by Helen Le Brocq, director (OYAP). Since then their dancers have had numerous TV and stage appearances including *Blue Peter* and the *Royal Variety Performance*.

Studio KK have also provisionally agreed to provide us with a regular adult class for fun, led by one of their dancers.

For any further information please contact Jenny Harrison on 01608 811079

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## Letter to the Editor

*From Hannah Lewis, age 6:*

On the way to swimming after school, I saw a bird sitting at the end of Wychwood Paddocks road. He was sitting with his wings folded out and looking round. It was a sparrow hawk and no mistake! He had caught a blackbird. When we went back later all we found was grey downy feathers and one flight feather.

Love from Hannah Lewis, age 6

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# WEATHER REPORT

*By John Stanley*

**February 2006** continued the pattern set in January and was another cold month. Temperatures ranged from a high of just 52° on 15th down to remaining below freezing all day on 2nd at 31°, and did not rise above 32° on 3rd. Overall, the average daytime high temperature was 42.57°, which is 3.77° below that for the previous 17 years. Nevertheless, it was not the coldest February, with 1991, 1994 and 1996 being colder. At night, the warmest was 44° on 12th/13th and the coldest 26° on 2nd/3rd 9th/10th and 10th/11th. For the second consecutive year, February was colder than January.

## **Winter 2005/6**

There have been some exaggerated reports concerning the coldness of the past winter. Taking December to February as the winter period, 2005/6 averaged 43.06° for daytime high temperatures. The 17 year average is 44.50°, so last winter was a little on the cold side. The winters of 1990/91, 1995/6 and 1996/7 were all colder than this.

**March 2006** was another cold month. Temperatures stubbornly refused to rise above winter levels during the first three weeks of the month, during which period the 50° mark was only reached on two days. On three days, 12th, 16th and 17th, the mercury only rose to 39°. Then temperatures climbed to above normal levels, with 60° being achieved for the first time in 2006 on 30th March. Overall, at 47.29°, March 2006 was a massive 4.35° below average for March. However it was not the coldest on record, for, as recently as 2001, March was colder than this and the coldest, at 45.52°, was in 1996. We did break a record with the night time temperatures. The 22° recorded on 3rd/4th was colder than anything recorded during the winter period and was by far the coldest March night on record, the previous low being 25°. We also had some warmer nights, with the highest being 50° on 26th/27th.

With the exception of two days, **April 2006** was a relatively warm month and came as a welcome change to the previous three. On these two days, 4th and 11th, the temperature rose only to 48°. The remainder of the month exceeded 50° and temperatures remained remarkably constant from 12th to 29th, staying within a narrow range 3° either side of 60°. Overall, at 56.87°, the month was just 0.55° above average. The warmest day was 63° on 16th. The warmest nights were 48° on 20th/21st, 22nd/23rd and 26th/27th. The coldest night was 29° on 4th/5th. Air frosts were only recorded on 3 nights, the last being on 10th/11th.

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## **Report from District Councillor Glena Chadwick (tel: 810555 or email [chadwick@glena.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:chadwick@glena.fsnet.co.uk))**

WODC has decided to press on with its green waste collection from those households who have paid £30 for a weekly collection. Because fewer than the target number of 4000 households have signed up it will be quite costly for WODC to operate this scheme. It will be reviewed at the end of the year and may be altered. The budget has been finalised and this was a major part of the last months' activity.

Otherwise things were relatively quiet as many wards prepared for the recent elections. As you can see from the local papers, there have been certain changes; hopefully we will all work together for the good of West Oxfordshire and our own wards.

# CHARLBURY TOWN COUNCIL REPORT 39

*By Councillor Trevor Jones*

**Church Street:** The Church Street Working Group has now met twice. It is made up of 3 Town Councillors (Cllrs. Lethbridge, Prew and Cox/James) and representatives of the Charlbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee (Bob Wilkins), Charlbury Chamber of Trade and Commerce (Peter Smith), Charlbury Society (Brian Murray), Church Street Residents (Andrew Lawson), and Charlbury Residents (Margaret Taylor also representing the Evergreens). The recommendations made to the Council so far are to re-surface the pavements and to upgrade the street lights to conservation standard. The Council approved both of these with the County Council providing the funds. The Working Group has considered the 40+ letters from members of the public and is now turning its attention to bus routes and the provision of a bus shelter which may include a public telephone. The Town Clerk has been asked to make enquiries and report to the Working Group with a view to them making recommendations to the Council. Matters involving the road surface have yet to be addressed. Nobody had been informed that the County Council intended to trench the whole street (the actual application was from the Churchyard gate to the Marlborough/St. Diumas' House). Also the gas repairs have not yet taken place and new dates and plans are not known. Although progress may appear slow, the Council is trying to accommodate as many of the diverse opinions as possible and hopes to end up with improvements rather than arguments.

**Thomas Gifford's Charity:** The Town Council held a public meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> April at the request of the trustees who wanted to provide an update to Charlbury residents on the proposed community centre and other matters concerning the Charity.

**Annual Parish Meeting:** This meeting took place on 21<sup>st</sup> April. It is a requirement under the Local Government Act and is an opportunity for residents to raise issues with the Council. The meeting was attended by some 60 people who raised a variety of questions. A separate meeting will be held in the autumn to address traffic issues in the Town.

**Best Kept Village Competition:** The Council has decided not to enter the Town this year. The scheme is to be changed for 2007 and so the matter will remain under review.

**Cemetery:** The purchase of the land for the new extension has at last been completed. Work can now start on the drainage and landscaping schemes.

**Riverside Festival:** At the time of writing (first week in May) the Council has received no application from anyone, old or new, for any event on the Mill Field this summer. So far as the Council knows no application has been made to WODC for any such event either.

**Overhanging Branches:** As branches and other vegetation grow at this time of the year, please cut back where they create obstructions to pavements and other rights of way. It can be dangerous particularly for the elderly to be forced on to the road.

**Rights of Way:** Residents with gates opening on to Oxpens Allotments and Nine Acres Recreation Ground are respectfully reminded that this does not create a right of way.

**Wigwell:** New kissing gates have been installed on the public footpath next to the Scout Hut and where the path crosses the Cemetery.

**Charlbury Signs:** The correct sized signs have now been installed on the main approaches to the Town. The oversized signs were the result of errors by the manufacturer who has provided the new sign free of charge. The idea of the new signs is to prevent proliferation of different signs whilst at the same time trying to attract visitors and customers to the Town Centre.

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