

The Charlbury Chronicle



Volume 7 Number 4 December 2003

Welcome to the twenty-eighth issue of the *Charlbury Chronicle* which contains the usual mixture of news, views and articles which we hope will interest our readers. Please continue to support the *Chronicle* and let us know what it is you want to see in it. It is only as good as the contributions we receive. There must be many residents who could write something for us - please don't be shy and please come forward with your ideas.

The December issue is the one where we thank all those people who give their time and talents freely. Our treasurer Dawn Colvin, our advertising organiser Jack Potten, Ann Gilbert who does our artwork, Diana Potten whose Life's Day interviews are always popular, Alison Offer who runs the TotBits column, Julia Caston who gathers news of the many clubs and societies that function in the town, and Alison Holthouse who does various features for us. Brian Murphy, Robert Caston and Jack Potten are our efficient team taking parcels of *Chronicles* to a faithful band of 33 distributors who finally deliver your *Charlbury Chronicle* to your door. Thank you to all of them.

**May we wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a
Happy and Peaceful New Year.**

Lynette Murphy, Editor

(NB The deadline for copy for the March 04 edition is February 7 2004)

CHARLBURY CORRESPONDENTS FORWARD PLEASE

Would you like your five minutes of fame on Alison Booker's programme on BBC Radio Oxford 95.2 FM? The programme is looking for a regular Charlbury Correspondent who would be available every six weeks or so for a five minute slot to talk about Charlbury. Listen to the programme at about 2.35 pm in the afternoons and you will hear other Correspondents doing their piece. If it's the sort of thing that interests you, please get in touch with the Editor (810549) and we'll take it from there.

CHRISTMAS EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

The morning of Saturday December 13th is going to be a good time in Charlbury for stocking-up on your Christmas needs. There will be three events that morning all within a few yards of each other. The Friends of Wychwood will be holding their **Christmas Craft Fair in the Memorial Hall**, with a wide range of locally made quality craft items. In the Corner House the Pre-School Playgroup will have its **Christmas Bazaar** with many attractions and items for sale including Santa's Grotto for the younger visitors, whilst on The Playing Close the regular **Farmers' Market** will be in attendance with its wide range of local produce. With those three events, plus our local shops well stocked with goods, it could be the right time to find many of those special presents, decorations and food items.

NEW CO-OP STORE

We understand that preparatory work on the site of the new Co-op store at the Spendlove Centre will start in December with work to the trees.

PLEASE TIDY UP

Home owners whose trees and shrubs overhang the pavement are asked to ensure that these are well pruned so as not to cause problems for pedestrians.

TRAFFIC CALMING

OCC have agreed to look again at the traffic calming scheme on Nineacres Lane and will be installing revised 'humps' within this financial year (i.e. by 31/3/04). It is expected that initially one set will be changed, so that comments can be gathered and if agreeable the remainder will be similarly modified. Ideas from OCC for some sort of traffic calming on the The Slade are awaited.

NEW PLANS TO POLICE CHARLBURY

Thames Valley Police are about to open a police office at the Spendlove Centre, and are asking for volunteers to help run it. Turn to p 28 if you would like to help.

OOPS! SORRY!

In the review of the book on W D Campbell in the September Chronicle the reference to Bill teaching at 'Spendlove School' from 1928 to 1940 should, of course, have read 'Charlbury School'. It was the editor's, and not the reviewer's, mistake.

Home Zone : Progress on this project has been delayed due to the requirements of the County Council tendering process.

Cemetery : Plans are progressing for the proposed extension to the cemetery.

Street Fair : The Town Council would like to congratulate the Charlbury Street Fair Committee on another splendid effort this year. The Charlbury Street Fair Constitution has now been agreed and signed by all those concerned.

Remembrance Sunday: The Town Council's wreath was laid at the War Memorial in St. Mary's Church by Cllr Carol Jackson.

The Town Council would like to wish all residents of Charlbury a Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year.

THOMAS GIFFORD TRUST

At the time of writing the trustees are still waiting for counsel's advice so that they can finalise with the Charity Commission whether to take legal action against the Charity's former advisers.

A status report on the proposed Community Centre has been given to local political representatives and local government officers, but currently we await the outcome of discussions with the Charity Commission before wider distribution. We are also working on a funding strategy for the project before the end of the year.

A meeting has been arranged for **FRIDAY FEBRUARY 20th 2004** in the War Memorial Hall at 8 pm to bring Charlbury residents up to date on the position of the Spendlove site and other matters concerning the Charity.

Trevor Jones, Chairman of the Trustees



CHARLBURY TOWN COUNCIL REPORT

– No. 29

by Councillor Trevor Jones

Affordable Housing : The new housing development at Ticknell Piece should be complete and occupied by the end of the year. The Opening Ceremony took place on 28th October with speeches by Jonathan Higgs (Chief Executive, Oxfordshire Citizens Housing Association), Cllr. Nick Potter (Chairman, Charlbury Town Council), Cllr Barry Norton (Leader, West Oxfordshire District Council) and local district councillor, Cllr Glenna Chadwick. A bench was dedicated to the memory of the late Cllr Jack Kearsley and his wife Tegwen for their services to Charlbury. See article elsewhere in the *Chronicle*.

Permissive Paths : The Permissive Foot Paths over Wigwell Nature Reserve and Nine Acres Recreation Ground will be closed to the public all day on Wednesday January 7th 2004. Householders with gates opening on to Nine Acres Recreation Ground and Oxpens Allotments are respectfully reminded that there is no right of way over these areas.

Street Lighting : Homeowners and residents who have trees near street lights are asked to cut back branches that prevent lights illuminating pavements and paths.

Town Council Meetings : All the meeting dates for 2004 are now available and can be seen on the Council Notice Boards at the Corner House and on the area opposite Five Ways Stores or obtained from the Clerk to the Council, Roger Clarke – tel. no. 810608. At the request of the Thomas Gifford Charity the Council will also hold a **Public Meeting** in the War Memorial Hall at 8.00 p.m. on Friday February 20th 2004 to provide an update on the Spendlove site and other matters concerning the Charity, and to answer questions.

Dyers Hill Traffic Scheme : This is nearly complete with only the cycle lanes still to be marked. The yellow lines are the subject of a six month experiment. Anyone wishing to comment should do so in writing to the Highways Department of Oxfordshire County Council with a copy to Charlbury Town Council and to the local county councillor, Cllr Brian Hodgson. Alternatively, tackle a councillor.

Co-op Foodstore : Oxford Gloucester & Swindon Co-op has been granted permission by the District Council to demolish the old bungalow (recently occupied by Kyldane Fieldsports) at the entrance to the Spendlove car park and to build a new food store subject to several conditions and a legal agreement that is still the subject of negotiation. Building should start soon. The public toilets will be incorporated into the new building but obviously with access from the outside.



LATE NIGHT SHOPPING FOR CHRISTMAS IN CHARLBURY

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 10TH UNTIL 8PM

ALL SHOPS WILL BE OPEN

and some will be offering
MULLED WINE AND MINCE PIES

CAROL SINGERS will be creating
A CHEERFUL CHRISTMAS ATMOSPHERE
and there will be a COLLECTION NAID OF
SAVE THE CHILDREN

The Museum will also be open



DO PLEASE SUPPORT OUR LOCAL
SHOPS AND DO AS MUCH OF YOUR
CHRISTMAS SHOPPING LOCALLY
AS YOU CAN

Letters to the Editor

From Mr Frank Dunn

While appreciating 'A Charlbury Voice' by Patricia Huth-Ellis in the September *Charlbury Chronicle* I feel that she (or her 'old chap' narrator) views the past too much through rose-coloured spectacles unfairly to the detriment of the present. For instance 'Now I know or speak to few people here, and fewer people talk to me, or care' - I too am old and I lived at Rose Cottage, Hixet Wood ('the old bachelor who had something to do with books') from 1931 until moving to a nursing home in 2002: and in all those years, when walking through the town usually met someone for a friendly chat or at least a cheerful greeting. And often we would set the world - or at least Charlbury - to rights. Indeed, I count myself a lucky bloke, because I didn't go to Noke. (Will some readers remember this reference to the old village rhyme 'I went to Noke, and nobody spoke'?)

*Mill House Nursing Home,
Bridge Street, Witney*

From Freddie Jones

The last Street Fair is now history. That it was a social delight and financial success is beyond doubt. In a world so fragmented by technological preoccupations we experienced a vivid manifestation of social intercourse for which many of us chose to escape the anonymity of urban life. Every year an indefatigable group of people work assiduously, long and hard to bring about the Street Fair. Shamefully, their monumental efforts are cloaked from our praise and admiration in modesty and virtual anonymity. Any suggestion of respite or resignation would be met, I am sure, with a sense of hurt and incredulity. There is no such suggestion thankfully but nonetheless they and we urgently beseech younger contributors to bring fresh and vital ideas,

and youthful innovation to enhance and continue our old and loved tradition of six hundred years.

*Crinan House,
Market Street*

Car Vandalism: On Friday 17th October, my car, parked outside the Friends Meeting House in Market Street, was deliberately scratched in four places by someone using a sharp object. This happened in broad daylight and my feeling is whoever did it knew exactly how much damage they were causing. If I have any fault in the situation it was that I parked there to use the station and to avoid the parking charge. I accept this was not sensitive parking but it was still legal. What upsets me most is that whoever acted so impulsively against me did so presumably without thought of who I might be or the full consequences their actions. So if you are out there and reading this then I would like to tell you the following. For five years I have cycled or walked to the station - I have had no car. Recently because my daughter has gone to Chipping Norton School my father gave a car so that we could have the flexibility with transport that we needed. This was the first decent car I have ever owned. I still use the train to get into Oxford because I believe it is a more environmentally friendly option. On the occasion I left the car in Market Street I did so because my bike had a puncture (which I had attempted to mend the night before since I knew I would be using my bike in the morning). When I discovered the tyre flat again in the morning I was left with 10 minutes to get to the station. I had to take the car. With the prospect of the increased expenditure of bus fares the other end I wanted to avoid any further costs which is why I parked in town. I am

Report from your County Councillor Brian Hodgson (tel/fax 01993 891310)

1 Home Zone: The consultants who will advise, consult and finally plan the Home Zone in Hughes Close and Sturt Close will have been appointed by December. There will be full consultation with everybody who lives in the two roads before the final plans are drawn up.

2 The Slade: The interim traffic-calming proposals for The Slade should have been discussed by the Town Council at its November meeting.

3 Road Humps: I have joined those who have complained about the road humps in Nine Acres Lane. The County Council has finally agreed to act by replacing two of the 75mm high humps with slightly lower ones - 65mm. If these are considered to be an improvement, all of the higher humps will be replaced.

4 NHS Dental Care: I proposed a motion at November's Council meeting which urged the new Health Scrutiny Committee to investigate the lack of National Health Service dental services in this county. It also asked them to look into the percentage of all dentists' surgeries which are fully accessible to people with physical disabilities or frailties. The motion received unanimous support. If you want to know where your nearest NHS dentist is, who is accepting new patients on an NHS basis, you need to phone NHS Direct, on 0845 46 47.

5 The Cotswold Line: First Great Western will soon replace the existing franchise holder Go-Ahead as the operator of the Thames Trains franchise, from April 2004 for two years.

From District Councillors Glena Chadwick (tel: 01608 810555; or email Chadwick@Glena.fasnet.co.uk) and Mike Breakell (tel: 01993 868201)

It was a great privilege to be present at the opening of the affordable housing scheme, reported elsewhere in the Chronicle. The quality of the housing was extremely high and it was particularly pleasing to see that they have been built to very stringent ecological standards, with regard to conserving power and, also, that they have taken into account the needs of the elderly. We are aware, however, that there is more demand and all partners in the scheme are trying to find ways of meeting at least some of this demand.

Last week WODC held a Highways Seminar for district councillors to hear presentations from the Highways department. This is a department of the County Council and many of its decisions often seem contrary to what local people and the district planning committees expect. This seminar gave their officials a chance to explain the context of these decisions and, although many of us were still not altogether convinced, it was helpful. The need for constant communication was stressed; members of the public can always contact the Highways department directly with their views.

Due to new law the district council will now take charge of all licensing that was formerly done by magistrates. This includes takeaways and applications will be advertised so that all residents will be able to make representations.

ChristmasChurchServices

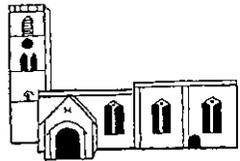
Baptist Chapel, Dyers Hill



Christmas Day - combined service with the Methodists at Fishers Lane at 10.30 am
 Sunday December 28th - combined service with the Methodists at the Baptist Chapel at 10.30 am

For further details ring Kay Colyer tel:810107

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

Friends' Meeting House, Market Street



Meeting for worship at the Friends Meeting House at 11 am on Christmas Day

For further details contact: Joan Rough (810704)

Methodist Chapel, Fishers Lane



Morning Service normally Sundays at 10.30 am (any changes posted on church notice board). Christmas services include Holy Communion at the morning service and Candlelight Carols at 6 pm Sunday December 21st. Arrangements shared with Baptists on Christmas Day and Dec 28th - see notice boards. Holy Communion at 10.30 am on Jan 4th and Feb 1st

Further information from Marion Speight (811737)

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



Sunday December 14th: Carol Service at 3.30 pm
Wednesday December 24th: Confessions 11 am to noon (visiting priest); 8 pm Holy Mass (in place of Midnight Mass)
Thursday December 25th: As for Sundays - Mass at 9.30 am Enstone Youth Hall and 11 am St Teresa's

Rt Rev Monsignor V F J Morgan, CBE, 5 Enstone Road, Charlbury OX7 3QR
 tel: 810576 or see 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)

Letters to the Editor

a single parent on benefit. I do not have much cash to spare. The affect this will have on me financially is very large. Having asked around the neighbourhood this appears to be more likely the act of a disgruntled resident than a person with nothing better to do. I have discovered at least three other people this has happened to recently in the same area. I would be very interested to hear if there are other incidents. Perhaps we can create a ground swell for some police action. Further frustrations are these: the hundreds of pounds I will have to spend will have no impact on this person to stop them doing it again; I feel completely vulnerable to it happening again as I am a regular user of the Friends Meeting House and sometimes have to park in the area to off load equipment. And lastly, if you are a disgruntled resident doing this then a note on the wind-screen would have served just as well to make me aware your feelings which I would have taken on board. Instead I am left with a great deal of anger, hurt and no love for you.

Anon - the writer does not wish a name or address to be published for fear of further reprisals.

From Miss Grace Fredericks

England is the country I know best and love, and hers is the only way of life I understand and am at home in. When I see faults in her they are my faults, but her excellences have been made, not only by us who live in the present, but much more by those who loved and served her in her past. I am so old that the disasters I see looming are not likely to affect me and I have no children or grandchildren to worry about. But you have, and I hope at least some of you will heed the warnings of a woman who

has lived through nearly the whole of the last century and has seen many changes come about. What is most precious to me in England is not primarily the outer things, such as her churches and ancient monuments, the remains of her once varied landscape of hills and small mountains, green fields and little rivers, woods and moors and fells. These are precious, but even more precious are the unseen beauties and treasures which underpin the whole fabric of our lives. They are so much a part of us that we notice them hardly more than the air we breathe, yet we will suffocate if we lose them, just as we suffocate when we have no air. It is difficult to put these treasures into words: our rich poetic heritage, not only for its beauty but even more for the noble sentiments we unconsciously absorb from it; the ingrained attitude of fair play, not kicking a man when he is down; the freedom to say publicly what we think; the tolerance which still exists of the foibles of others; and many, many other things. One virtue which I always valued was the practical pragmatic way in which we settled our affairs, and by means of which the most cherished bulwarks of our liberties were formed. That has been buried under a monstrous construction of theories and ideologies, but even so it could be resuscitated if we had the will. All this, which I express so inadequately, will be lost if we let others decide our destinies. They will, if we stay in Europe. Don't be frightened by such bogeys as 'What will happen to our trade if we leave Europe?'. Nothing, because they make a profit from us and we trade at a loss with them. Another bogey 'We must stay in Europe because she has saved us from another war'. No, NATO did that, and the makers of the new European Constitution (and we are not one of them) would like to get rid of NATO and have their own army with English soldiers under their

Letters to the Editor (continued)

control. To take back our power to run our own affairs, to stand on our own feet, requires courage, steadfastness, loyalty and sacrifice. But we are not without these, given the will and the unity to fight for our own lives. Most worthwhile achievements have started in small ways, and we can play our part in a small way if we wish. We do not have to think in terms of a crusade, but we can be alert to any opportunity that presents itself of asserting our own wishes. We can do more thinking for ourselves, recognising that the most powerful sources of information, the BBC, the press and politicians often do not give us the full truth about Europe and that we need to seek for information elsewhere. We can remember that Edward Heath deliberately misled not only the electorate, but the House of Commons itself, when he urged us to join the EEC, and that the Maastricht Treaty was forced through the Commons by heavy pressure from John Major, and that even then it was passed by a majority of only one. Last of all we can remind ourselves that there must be many other small communities who are trying to preserve the English way of life and that we are not alone.

*Pilgrim's Croft
Crawborough*

(The Editor does not usually accept political articles, but in view of Miss Frederick's venerable age, ninety-six, we felt an exception should be made. If any reader wishes to write in a similarly restrained manner to put the opposite view, we will be happy to publish their letter.)

From the Secretary of the Street Fair Committee

On behalf of the Street Fair Committee I would like to thank the *Charlbury Chronicle*

for all your help with this year's Fair. The *Chronicle* plays a vital part in keeping everyone informed and publicising the event and the Committee is grateful for your support.....

*Pat Court,
Lees Heights*

The editor has received an anonymous letter about the church bells and regrets it cannot be published unless the writer is prepared to give their name. If the author wishes to contact the editor on 810549 the letter can be carried in the next issue, anonymously if necessary. Incidentally, the people living within earshot of the bells, to whom the editor has spoken, are firmly in favour of them!

THAMES TRAINS LOSE FRANCHISE

Charlbury's website carried the news on November 4th that the Government has decided not to renew the Thames Trains franchise. The SRA (Strategic Rail Authority) announced that the current holders of the Thames Train contract will cease running services at the end of March when First Great Western will take over all stations, trains and staff currently employed by Thames Trains. FGW already operates Charlbury's two morning and evening express trains. The company says it hopes to replace the uncomfortable and cramped Turbo trains currently used on the Charlbury line with its new five-carriage 'Adelante' trains, capable of running at 125 mph. All this depends, however, on the signing of a binding agreement which is still being discussed. If the company are not offered good enough terms the Turbo trains may have to be retained.

CHARLBURY WEATHER



August 2003 will be a talking point for many years to come. It is the month in which, on the 10th, records were broken nationally, with the first temperatures of 100° or more being recorded in Britain, the highest being about 101° in Kent. Charlbury, on that day was completely different, achieving only 82°, caused largely by six or seven short thunderstorms which kept reducing the temperature. Actually, Charlbury did not follow the national trend in achieving record high temperatures during the month. Instead, it did the opposite, with an equal lowest night temperature for August at 44°. The last time we had such a cold August night in Charlbury was in 1993. The highest day temperature of 87° was 4° below the record set in 1990.

The month looked like breaking all records for average high temperatures, but temperatures tailed off in the second half. Up to 13th August, after 10 consecutive days in the 80s, the **average** was 80°, but this had dropped to 75.32° by the end. This was still 2.24° above the August average for the previous 14 years, but was lower than 1990 and 1995 and equalled by 1997. We had some very warm nights with 13 remaining in the 60s, the highest being 66°.

September 2003 continued the trend set in August, being mainly dry and sunny. Temperatures were well above average and, at 67.13°, 2003 was the second warmest September

in the 15 year period - the warmest was 1999, which was only 0.47° higher. The highest temperature was 74°. There was a cold spell towards the end of the month and the night of 23rd/24th produced the lowest temperature (37°) recorded in September and the following night equalled the previous record of 38°.

October 2003, whilst continuing the dry theme, was a month of two halves. With the exception of just one day, the first half, up to 16th, achieved above average temperatures. Then, the remainder of the month gave us a taste of winter, with temperatures way below the average, and more like those to be expected in November. Overall, the month came out at 55.00°, which is 1.49° below the average for the previous 14 years. The highest temperature was 64°. Air frosts were recorded on three nights, the first of the winter being on 20th/21st. However, none of the frosts was particularly severe, with the lowest being just 1° below freezing point. It is interesting to report that the coldest day, at 45°, was 8° below the warmest night.

John Stanley

WANT TO ADVERTISE?

The *Charlbury Chronicle* is delivered free each quarter to nearly 1,350 homes. There is a mailing list of over 50 subscribers. If you would like to take advantage of this opportunity to advertise, please contact Jack Potten on 01608 810991.

The Police Need Your Help!

Thames Valley Police will shortly be opening a police office in the Spendlove Centre, Enstone Road, Charlbury and are asking for volunteers to help run it.

We need help with front counter duties which will typically involve recording lost and found property, handing out crime prevention literature, taking details of non-urgent enquiries and probably giving directions!

Volunteers can be anyone over 16 years of age, with a few hours to spare each week, who are discreet, reliable and trustworthy. You need to be good with people, have the ability to listen, be able to take accurate messages, be friendly and approachable whilst still being calm and efficient.

Your motivation may be that you want to put something back into the community, or to gain experience for a future career. Whatever your motivation, all applicants will be required to complete an application form giving the names of two referees who are prepared to vouch for your character and suitability.

All volunteers are required to have a police check prior to acceptance onto the scheme, and then have an informal interview with their local co-ordinator. If successful, you will be given a short induction course at Charlbury.

If you are interested and would like to apply, please contact me.

Rosie White
Volunteers' Co-ordinator
Thames Valley Police
Banbury Police Station
Warwick Road
Banbury
Oxon. OX16 2AE

01295 754524 (office)
07970 145814 (mobile)
rosie.white@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

COMMUNITY SINGING UPDATE

Community singing in Charlbury is thriving! Numbers increase, sound swells if you're looking for a gathering of friendly people, good humour and that unmistakable sense of union that comes through singing together, then look no further than the Friends' Meeting House, Charlbury.

There are two types of events up and running at the moment: General community sings which are timed predominantly around the major shifts in nature such as the Equinoxes/Solstices, harvest time, May Day and so on. The Celts sited their festivals around these times which conveniently fall at 6-ish weekly intervals and many of the Christian festivals similarly tie in, all providing a rich soil for thought, attunement, poetry and song. You need not be an experienced singer to join in - most things are taught orally and at an accessible pace. The songs are taught in harmonies and come from a variety of traditions. Contributions of seasonal poems, readings, thoughts, homemade biscuits are also welcome. Look out for posters advertising these events. WorldSong get togethers happen more or less monthly. WorldSong is a community singing group that has been going for three years. The aim is to work on pieces of music (with an international flavour) that are more challenging and to perform in local setting as and when the occasion arises. This group is open to newcomers though you may find yourself having to do a bit of a catch up if there's a performance. (Song parts available on tape). Don't let that put you off if you fancy trying it out! The person organising and leading the events is me, Katherine Lucas. I've been doing this for quite a few years now and still appear to be passionate about it! Do get in touch for a chat 01608 811293 or just turn up. Happy singing!

HIGH COMMENDATION FOR FOUNDER & DIRECTOR OF THE PENDYFFRYN CHILDREN'S TRUST

The Beacon Fellowship Charitable Trust established the Beacon Prize to highlight exceptional contributions by individuals to charitable and social causes. Members of the public and voluntary sector organisations are invited to nominate exceptional individuals for consideration by a panel of judges, but the Beacon Trust undertakes not to reveal the source of each nomination. This year the judges chose fourteen finalists out of almost eight hundred nominated to receive the Beacon Prize 2003. It was not possible to honour all the people whose names were put forward, but the Trust considered several of them worthy of recognition, and Charlbury's Jennie Jones was awarded a Beacon Prize 2003 Highly Commended Certificate in the category of leadership for her work as founder and director of the Pendyffryn Children's Trust.

After seeing some of the suffering of children in Romania following the collapse of the Ceaucescu regime Jennie established the Trust ten years ago to help children who had suffered trauma of various kinds, by giving them and their families a holiday on the coast of Pembrokeshire. In that time some hundreds of families from several different countries as well as the UK have experienced a week of rest and fun, offering them some respite from often intolerable and tragic situations.

Charlbury can take pride in the fact that Jennie's compassion, helped by several friends from here and elsewhere, has reached out to alleviate some of the suffering caused by war, sickness, disability and bereavement.

Hilda Pipe

A LIFE'S DAY

Jennifer
Bartlett

Artist

I wake up at 7.30 a.m. and am usually the first to get up as I like to have some time to myself to do my yoga and have a shower. I come down and feed our two cats before having my breakfast of yoghurt and fruit. Fred comes down and takes a leisurely breakfast

reading the paper. We work out the programme for the day and I tidy up. My work can be all-consuming once I get started, so I try to do it in blocks of four to five weeks. I like to start in the workshop about 9 a.m. to 9.30 a.m. Though I work mainly in the mornings, if I am at a certain stage I will continue into the afternoon and when I am ready to print the plates I have made, I might be in the workshop all day. The prints I make are collographs. The process starts with a drawing that decides the design and size. I then create this on card and use many different materials; I stick all sorts of paper, fabric, carborundum mixed with glue, even leaves onto the card. My aim is to get a layered effect and a variety of textures. When I am happy with the plate, I seal it. Then intaglio ink is applied all over with a toothbrush. The lower surfaces of the plate need to be completely covered with the ink, and the surplus is removed from the upper surfaces. Now the plate is ready to print on damp paper and to be put through the etching press. When I have the first print, which is a proof, I may need to adjust the plate; I also may add colours by rolling thin layers of coloured ink of various viscosity over the surface. The plate is then printed. The moment when the paper is peeled away from the plate is magical because sometimes the result far exceeds what you have expected but of course it can go the other way. I try to get different effects with the texture of paper I use – a coarser one for buildings

and the pictures I do of stones, compared with a finer one for flowers. These processes can all take a long time but I enjoy my work.

I have always wanted to work in art and this started at an early age. I was born in Myrtle Cottage in Church Street, Charlbury. My father was Sidney Price, part of the Brice and Price garage business and my mother was the cookery teacher at the school. As a child I was always drawing and I remember being very peeved when I was at Infants' School because the boys did drawing with Miss Widdows, while the girls did knitting with Mrs. Foster and I hated knitting. When I went to Chipping Norton school I was really able to study Art and took an A level in it. I decided I wanted to teach and went to a training college in Putney where I specialised in Art and prepared to become a primary school teacher.

It was while I was in London that I met my husband Fred, who was also training to be a teacher. We married in 1957 and lived in London and eventually Nottingham where Fred was Senior Lecturer in History at the College of Education. We had three sons but I felt able to go back to part-time work in 1967 and taught slow learners with behavioural difficulties. I was meant to teach them reading and writing but I found myself using art to help with the process, for example getting them to write poems about their art work. I found the work very rewarding.

Ever since I left college I had attended evening classes in painting and drawing and now I started to exhibit. I had two other jobs after this, both connected with art, one teaching students, many of them mature, who were preparing to teach in primary schools and another in a junior Roman Catholic seminary. While I was working at the College of Education in Nottingham I met Ray, an American printmaker and he introduced me to



CHARLBURY TODDLERS

Charlbury Toddlers Group are celebrating Christmas with a Christmas Party at the last Toddler Session of the year, Monday December 15th at 9.30am in the Memorial Hall. There will be Christmas singing, Christmas snacks and a bouncy castle for energetic children.

If anyone out there has any children's books that they no longer want and that they would be willing to donate, Charlbury Toddlers Group would love to give them a new home. They are trying to set up a reading area for the children. If you can help, please contact Jackie Clark on 811417.

The Toddlers Group are still looking for new committee members. If you have a child who attends toddlers please think about joining the committee as many of the older children will be moving on.

NATIONAL CHILDBIRTH TRUST - WALKERS AND TALKERS

The Chipping Norton branch of the National Childbirth Trust (NCT), which covers the Charlbury area, runs a 'Walkers and Talkers' group on Tuesday afternoons (2pm-4pm) in the New Beaconsfield Hall in Shipton-under-Wychwood. This is a group for children aged one to four, and their parents. There are toys and plenty of space to run around, arts and crafts activities, singing and music, and refreshments with fruit for the children. There is a weekly charge of £1.50 per family.

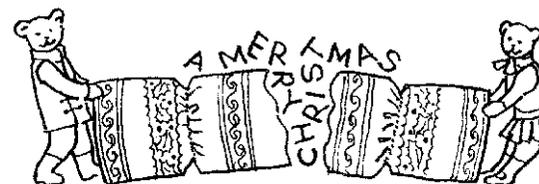
In the run up to Christmas, the Walkers and Talkers group have organised special events throughout December. On December 9th they will be making Christmas Decorations, on December 16th they will be decorating a Christmas tree with decorations made by the children, and there will be a visit from the vicar of Shipton-under-Wychwood who will bring his Nativity Scene. On December 23rd there will be a visit from Father Christmas himself (parents are requested to bring a wrapped and labelled gift for their child on that day). For further details contact Rachel (01993 832112) or Helen (01451 822552).

TODDLER SWIM SESSIONS AT CHIPPING NORTON POOL

Currently Chipping Norton Leisure Centre (01608 645154) are holding two Toddler Swim Sessions a week, on Wednesday from 12.30-1.30 and on Thursday morning from 11.30-12.30. These sessions are specifically for parents and children aged between 6 months and 4 years. The pool floor is raised - they are usually happy to raise it far enough that the smallest toddlers can reach the bottom - and there are plenty of floats, woggles and toys available. The current time tables run until the Christmas Holidays so if you want to go in the New Year you should ring to confirm the times first.

*TotBits is compiled by
Alison Offer (813063)*

Illustrations by Ann Buckmaster





OUT AND ABOUT

Christmas is in the air and many of the children speak of nothing else. It has become traditional for the TotBits column to organise a Chronicle Christmas Tree. Children from Kiddywinks and Pre-school will once again be making decorations for the tree, and the tree will be on display in the window of Bluebells in the weeks before Christmas. Please go and have a look at the children's decorations.

Christmas is also the time of year for pantomimes. This year **Chipping Norton Theatre** is producing the Pantomime "Robin of Wychwood" six days a week from the 20th November to Saturday 10th January. The pantomime is set in the Cotswolds and includes local landscapes and legends. It also promises audience participation and throwaway sweets. It is suitable for children from three years upwards and there are morning or early afternoon performances throughout most of the season. The times and prices vary throughout the season. Many children from Kiddywinks will be going to the pantomime at the end of November but if your child has not already been and you want more information you can contact Chipping Norton Theatre on 01608 642349.

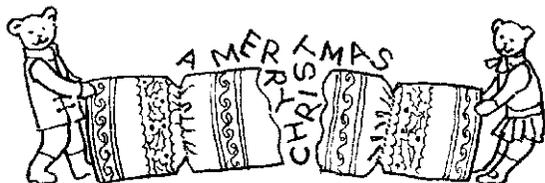
If you need a break from Christmas shopping in Oxford my three and a half year old would definitely recommend the **Oxford University Museum of Natural History** on Parks Road. It is free to enter

and a good bite-sized museum for small children. The museum has a large dinosaur collection including a Tyrannosaurus Rex skeleton and an equally imposing cast of an Iguanodon skeleton. Young dinosaurophiles can have a lot of fun outside the museum following the footprints of a Megalosaurus that stretch for sixty metres across the lawn in front of the museum. Don't miss the cockroaches, crickets and spiders upstairs in the gallery.

The museum is open from 12 noon until 5pm seven days a week except for a short break over Christmas, and admission is free. On Sunday afternoons there is family friendly fun at the museum from 2pm until 4pm that includes sorting boxes and colouring sheets. For older brothers and sisters (5 to 12 year olds) the museum has a free seasonal trail from December 19th until January 11th.

CHARLBURY PRE-SCHOOL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Please come to the Charlbury Pre-School's wonderful Christmas Bazaar on Saturday December 13th from 9.30 am until 1pm, at the Corner House. There will be fantastic home-made preserves (spiced oranges, jams, pickled eggs, etc.), handmade crafts, wreaths & holly, second hand toys and there is a super hamper to be won. Children can meet Father Christmas in the Christmas grotto, have their face painted, or make Christmas cards at the activity table. Absolutely everyone is welcome!



collographs. This was to have a great influence on me. In 1969 Fred became Head of History at Leicester College and we moved there in 1975; I spent the next five years teaching in an Art Department in a big comprehensive. It was while we were in Leicester that events took place that were to bring me back to Charlbury.

I leave the workshop at 1 o'clock and we sometimes have our main meal of the day then or else a snack. Fred has become very good at preparing meals when I'm working and will get lunch or the evening meal ready. My afternoons are varied. It is my time for getting exercise either with a long walk on the surrounding footpaths or else if it is raining a circular walk of the town. I particularly enjoy working in the garden of Providence House. My aunt and uncle - Alma Price and Chris Price - had lived in the house and their shoe shop was where 'Bluebells' is now. Their repair shop was in the front room of the house. In 1980 I had given up teaching to concentrate on my painting. Alma, now on her own, was ninety and becoming more frail. My mother was also in Charlbury. Simon was in the Fifth form and Andrew and Tom were at college - I was therefore able to visit Charlbury often. My aunt died in 1981 and the shop and the house were left to me. I had the mad idea to open the shop and make a go of it. All this with no business experience! I found other business people extremely helpful and the Leicester connection was useful as I could do my wholesale buying there and I even branched out into underwear and jumpers.

By 1984 it became obvious that a decision had to be made whether we would come to live in Charlbury. We decided to close the shop and that I would devote my time to painting. Simon wanted to change course and do A Level Science instead of Arts at Oxpens in Oxford. We converted the attic of the house into a

studio for me. When I went to an exhibition in Oxford, I was very interested in the prints and became involved in the Oxford printmakers. I did a course in etching and this together with my earlier interest in collographs has resulted in the work I do today. Some afternoons I may be occupied with the Open Studios. Di Gold, Briony Lawson and I decided to open our studios in 1995 in conjunction with an exhibition being held by Adrian and Andrea Lack of the paintings of John Knapp-Fisher. It was so successful that the three of us did it again two years later. Now many others have joined us and it is a really exciting event. I also take part in Oxfordshire Artweeks. I am still exhibiting with the printmakers' co-op. Once eleven of us exhibited in The Corner House and were known as the 'Printmakers' Dozen'! The Gallery has brought a new dimension to Charlbury providing a wider audience for Charlbury art and I am fortunate to have my work exhibited there sometimes.

Another afternoon occupation is the Museum. When we were sorting out the house and shop, I found much that belonged to my paternal grandfather, who had been a shoemaker in Church Street until 1919. There were also things from my aunt's time in Providence House. I decided to give these things to the Museum following a display in our shop window in 1983 as part of a local history exhibition. Peter Hilton and Andrew Rough then recruited me to work for the Museum; I also joined the Charlbury Society Committee. Through this I have met and worked with many interesting people. They taught me about museums and conservation and I was able to contribute memories of old Charlbury. I also use my afternoons to visit friends and do the shopping. There never seems enough time to fit everything in.

We have our evening meal between 6.30 and 7 pm. Evenings are spent variously.

LIFE'S DAY (continued)

I go to yoga once a week and belong to a reading group – fortunately it is not very strict as I am a slow reader. There are also different committee meetings to attend. It is my time for telephoning my family and friends. We do not watch much television but may put it on at 9 o'clock; we certainly try to see the 10 o'clock news.

I often reflect how lucky I am to have returned to Charlbury. It has changed greatly since I was a child when I knew everyone. I think the influx of new people into Charlbury has mostly had a positive influence and I am hopeful that the new Co-op store and a police station at the Spendlove are signs of further regeneration. After the news we go to bed and I read. When I put out the light I seldom have any trouble sleeping after what has been the usual busy day.

*Jennifer Bartlett was interviewed
by Diana Potten*

A concerned reader has asked us to draw attention to what could be a 'scam'. The area has been targeted with what sound like easy money-making schemes when you are promised a large sum of money on receipt of £20 or £30 to cover what they call 'expenses'. Beware!

Interested in car-sharing? This is the latest and cheapest way of getting around. If you are looking for a lift we can find someone to help you out, and if you are offering a lift we'll find someone who wants to share the journey and the costs with you. Call 08700 11 11 99 and register your journey for free. Contact Katharine May at Oxfordshire Rural Community Council on 01865 883488 for more information.

OFFICIAL OPENING OF NEW LOW COST HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Oxford Citizens Housing Association (OCHA) hosted an event on October 28th to mark the official opening of the new low cost housing development at Ticknell Piece.

Representatives from Charlbury Town Council, West Oxfordshire District Council and OCHA staff members, together with new and future tenants of the development were welcomed by Jonathan Higgs, OCHA Chief Executive. Charlbury Town Council Chairman, Nicholas Potter, thanked the many people who were responsible for bringing the project to fruition. He singled out particularly for mention former Charlbury Town Councillor Sue Stewart who had foreseen the need for such a development twenty years ago and was there to see her dream fulfilled. OCHA had donated a bench which Councillor Potter dedicated to the memory of Jack & Tegwen Kearsey. Jack had been a Town Councillor and Chairman for many years, and he and his wife Tegwen had always been much involved in the town. WODC Leader Barry Norton and District Councillor Glenda Chadwick both spoke and added their congratulations to all concerned.

Six of the housing units were already occupied and the remaining fourteen will be completed in the next few weeks, so that all units should be finished and in occupation well before the end of the year. The development will comprise four 3-bedroom houses, eight 2-bedroom houses and 8 1-bedroom flats. There remains a need for about ten further housing units in Charlbury.

All the visitors had the opportunity of touring several of the properties which were open to view and were able to appreciate the high quality of the workmanship, and the feeling of space achieved by the siting of the houses around a central grassed area. May we wish all the residents happiness in their new homes.

Lynette Murphy

BRILLIANT STREET FAIR

Just a **BIG** thank you to all of you, both individuals and businesses alike, who so generously gave of their time and money to make Street Fair 2003 such a success. Thank you all from the Street Fair committee. And for those of you who supported the event, we hope you all enjoyed it.

You will be pleased to learn that the Grand Total was £7150, so we will be able to give the Corner House and War Memorial Hall Committee a hefty cheque.

We shall be looking for new members to come onto the committee to help arrange Street Fair 2004 (18th September 2004 – so put it in your diaries NOW). We always need lots of help – both on the day and also to help organise. Its not taxing so if anyone would like to help, please contact Pat Court on 811031. The first meeting of the new committee will be January/February 2004, details nearer the time.

Thank you all once again.

Street Fair Committee

NEWS FROM THE CORNER HOUSE AND WAR MEMORIAL HALL

DIARY: for a trial period the diary for both buildings will be available for perusal in the Corner House entrance hall. You can check dates for coffee mornings or decide when to hold your next function. A booking form must still be completed for the hire of all rooms and submitted to the Warden.

TREASURER: due to other commitments Trevor Jones has resigned from the position of Treasurer. Eileen Kenrick has kindly stepped into the breach and will be appointed as Treasurer at the AGM. Our thanks and best wishes go to Trevor.

P.A. SYSTEM: The Memorial hall has recently been fitted with a P.A. system. If you would like to make use of the P.A. system when using the hall please contact the Warden for instructions on its use.

INDUCTION LOOPS: All of the rooms available for hire in the Corner House and War Memorial hall are now fitted with working induction loop systems.

CONTACTS:

**Warden - Moe Scholl 810879
Secretary - Teresa Loughton 811000**

TEEN SPIRIT GOES GLOBAL

*Rose Ogden gives an update
on her plans*

As I write I have only nine weeks until my departure date which is very exciting but also quite scary as I have an awful lot of organising to do before then! I

I have received some good news about my project. We have been relocated to Cambodia, as all the rainforest conservation work has been finished in Vietnam, and all the people I have spoken to about Cambodia say it's an absolutely fascinating place.

As far as fundraising is going I am getting to my target slowly but surely. I am working all the time that I physically can to get the money together, and I am also doing a sponsored swim! If you don't know about my swim already, I am swimming the length of the Channel in Chipping Norton Pool, which is 1536 lengths (but not all in one go!). Thank you ever so much to everyone who has already pledged their support - sponsorship forms are available in The Pharmacy, The Good Food Shop, The Post Office, News and Things and The Rose & Crown. If anybody else would like to help towards my £4,000 target I would appreciate it immensely! I have written a cheque out for £1175, my first instalment to Frontier, which is in the post (at just the wrong time as there is a postal strike as I write) so it looks like I am definitely going now! If you would like any more information about what I'm doing I would be more than happy to talk to you, catch me at work somewhere in Charlbury (you're bound to find me somewhere!) or phone on 810023. Thank you for your interest.

Rose Ogden

STREET FAIR FUN RUN

Another great turn out for this popular event on Sunday 21st September, the day after the Street Fair, with 86 runners pounding the streets of Charlbury and circuiting the grounds of Cornbury Park.

This year's winner was Greg Dell of Woodstock in a time of 35 minutes and 3 seconds. The fun run was won again by David O' Neill - that's 4 years in a row now! All finishers received a commemorative mug this year to remind them of their efforts!

A total of £250 was made for the Street Fair. Thanks to all runners and everyone who helped make it another memorable day.

Dean Vincent

ARTHRITIS RESEARCH CAMPAIGN

Please would all past and present members of ARC note that membership subscriptions should now be sent direct to Head Office at Copeman House, St Mary's Court, St Mary's Gate, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 7TD as, for tax purposes, it can no longer be collected locally. Continued support is vital for this most worthwhile cause. If you require further information please ring Julia Caston on 01608 810240

Many thanks to Bluebells the florists who have kindly agreed to have the TotBits Chronicle Christmas Tree in their window.

CHARLBURY WASTE ACTION GROUP

It's been a busy year for the Charlbury Area Waste Action Group (CAWAG). The group has organised monthly collections of articles which usually go to landfill and which cannot be recycled in the 'black box' - timber, plastic bottles, green waste, cardboard. It has also organised two 'bring and take' events in the Memorial Hall where Charlbury residents have brought surplus household items and taken away anything they can use - absolutely free.

There is no doubt about the impact of the group. Charlbury sends less waste to landfill per head of population than anywhere else in West Oxfordshire. Well done! Keep supporting our events and putting recyclable items in your black box. You ARE making a difference!

Next year, 2004, CAWAG plans to launch a revised edition of the A-Z of recycling opportunities in the Charlbury area. In April 2004 West Oxfordshire District Council is planning to expand the black box scheme, moving to weekly collections and to include aerosols, batteries, plastics and cardboard (see following article.) This is excellent news. Watch out for posters of future events - Christmas tree shredding (January 10th); cardboard collection (February 7th); and a plastic bottle collection (March 6th). New members of the group are always welcome - there is still so much to do.

John Lanyon

RECYCLING COLLECTIONS TO INCREASE

West Oxfordshire's recycling service will really take off from April 1st 2004. This is good news for our residents who have been pressing for an increased service for many years. The main changes will be:

(1) The current fortnightly kerbside recycling collection service will become weekly; (2) Each household will receive an additional recycling box; (3) It will then be possible to recycle plastics, cardboard, aerosols and batteries. This is in addition to the existing recycling collection materials, which are paper, glass, cans, aluminium foil and textiles. Environmental considerations and government-set recycling targets have led to these changes. In West Oxfordshire we currently recycle 12% of our waste but recycling targets are going up to 18% and are expected to be at least 30% by 2010. These changes have been made possible through the re-letting of the Council's waste management contract. CLEANAWAY, the Council's existing refuse contractor, who has been running the waste collection service for the last 8 years, tendered successfully for this. Bulky household waste collection together with end-of-life and abandoned vehicle collection service will continue. More details will be provided early in 2004.

*The above details appeared in WODC's
Parish Link for Autumn 2003*

DID YOU KNOW that West Oxfordshire residents can rent Waste Chippers from Hewden Hire at over 50% discount? Free collection and delivery to all households in the District. £50 per week/£40 per weekend/£30 per day. Ring 01993 883139 for details.

THINK ABOUT IT - by the end of a year in the UK we produce an amazing 26,250,000 tonnes of rubbish. Put another way, enough to fill dustbins to stretch from London to Edinburgh and back 323 times!

CLUBS, DRAMA, SPORT, GROUPS

CHARLBURY YOUTH HUT (The Shed)

Some three years ago, it looked like Charlbury was going to lose the use of the youth hut, now known as 'The Shed', when the youth club closed due to lack of support and insufficient funds to keep paying the bills! Had this happened it is likely the site would have been used for housing. At the last minute, the Youth Theatre managed to get agreement from Oxfordshire County Council for them to use the hut, although the lease was left in the name of Charlbury Youth Club. This was essentially because the County was unwilling to grant a new lease on a property it thought was basically unsound and still expected to demolish within a year. Since then, the Youth Theatre have met all the expenses of maintaining the hut, including meeting the annual rent of £600, and have ensured that it is well used and again a part of the community. They have also ensured that essential repairs have extended its useful life. As a result, OCC has now agreed to grant a lease to the Youth Theatre in its own right. This has to be a good thing both for the Youth Theatre and Charlbury as a whole. As the last chairman of Charlbury Youth Club, I have been asked to sign a formal deed surrendering the current lease on behalf of the management committee. No deadline has been set for this, but it would seem appropriate for all paperwork to be concluded in time for Youth Theatre to take over the lease before the end of the year. I hope the residents of Charlbury will agree that this is the right way forward.

Anne Ockleston (01608 811985)

CHARLBURY SOCIETY

There are three meetings on the Charlbury Society winter programme: On January 9th local artist Di Gold will be

talking about stained glass - the windows themselves and the techniques employed in making them. Her illustrations will include some of her own work in this medium. On February 13th Chris Day, lecturer in Local History at OUDCE, will give a talk on Town and Gown relationships in Oxford down the ages. His title 'Riot and Revel' gives a good flavour of what we can expect. Finally, on March 12th Christine Bloxham, know to many for her articles on local lore in *The Oxford Times*, will speak on the topic of her recent book (published by the Wychwood Press) *Mayday to Mummers: Oxfordshire Seasonal Customs*. These meetings are all held in the Memorial Hall at 7.30 pm. Free to members and schoolchildren; £1.50 to visitors.

Charles Tyzack

CHARLBURY JUDO CLUB

The Club is celebrating its 30th anniversary this month. Judo takes place in the Memorial Hall each Monday with about 25 enthusiastic young people from 5 to 15 years old. There are two classes: 5.30 to 6.15 pm (for the younger ones) and 6.15 to 7 pm (for the older ones). £18 per term. Newcomers can come for part of a term. The Club will soon be taking part in the Area Judo Championships in Witney. Anyone interested in joining the club please ring Simon Goddard, 01993 772988)

CHARLBURY SCOUTS & GUIDES

Rainbow Guides: Meet on Wednesday from 5.30 pm to 6.30 pm. for children aged 5 to 7. They have just been to the Discovery Centre in Bristol and are looking forward to their hand bells and carol concert in December.

Post your own news on the Charlbury Website

The Charlbury Website at www.charlbury.info has a new feature designed to reinforce its status as Charlbury's electronic noticeboard - the facility to post your own news and events.

By following the links from the front page, you can now post your news items, event details, and free advertisements directly onto the site. You no longer have to e-mail them to the website administrators. All postings will be reviewed, and will usually appear on the site within 24 hours.

Several Charlbury organisations are already using this facility to publicise their events. If you're organising an event in the town, why not join them? Simply go to www.charlbury.info, click the appropriate link, and enter your details.

To coincide with this, the site has a new look with a more attractive homepage. The discussion forum continues to be popular: one thread has somehow conspired to be among Google's top results for 'digital radio reception', so we now have unwitting surfers from Scotland and elsewhere asking whether they'll get digital reception in their village...

Other developments currently underway include a fully searchable version of the directory, listing Charlbury businesses and organisations; further polls; and a host of historical and contemporary articles. If you have anything you'd like to see on the site, we'd be delighted to hear at info@charlbury.info.

Richard Fairhurst

CHARLBURY YOUTH THEATRE

Make a note in your diary for the forthcoming production from Shed Theatre *A Midsummer Night's Dream* February 26th, 27th and 28th. Shakespeare as you've never seen it before!

BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS?

Looking for something a bit different for Christmas? David Whittaker will have his photographs of Cornwall, Dublin, Copenhagen & Charlbury on show & for sale in The Bell on Saturday & Sunday December 6 & 7, and Saturday 20. He will also have the two books he has written and published: **Zawn Lens: Words & Images from West Cornwall** and **Stafford Beer: A Personal Memoir** (which includes an interview with the musician Brian Eno). Ring David Whittaker on 811858 for more details.

WEA (Enstone Branch)

Advanced notice is given of our Spring Term Course, starting in February 2004, in Enstone Parish Hall, Thursday mornings. Andy Gunn will be looking at 'The Victorians: Design, Culture and Society'. We will examine how social, political and cultural changes affected the lives of Victorian people. 8 weeks, Cost £40. For further details, or to enrol please contact Moira Low, 01608 677443.

BRIDEWELL ORGANIC GARDENS

Saturday December 13th at Witney Methodist Church at 7.30 pm. A Christmas Concert by local singers and musicians in aid of Bridewell Organic Gardens. Music and carols to join in with. Tickets £5 including refreshments (children free) from The Music Stand, Witney, or ring Mary Elford 01993 882717



Save Our Pool campaign

As the *Charlbury Chronicle* goes to press, demolition of Charlbury Primary School's swimming pool, which has given generations of Charlbury's youngsters the chance to gain confidence in water and to learn to

swim, is already underway. Work in preparing the site has had to begin in order to have any chance of the fully refurbished pool being ready in time for lessons in the summer term.

The campaign to raise the £25,000 needed for a new pool, which was announced in the last issue of *The Chronicle*, is being led by parent Jane Turner and, while it is well underway with much appreciated donations having been received from businesses, organisations and individuals, funds in place are still very short of the target which has to be raised by the beginning of 2004.

If anyone has any fundraising ideas or information on grants that might be available, or would be prepared to organise a fundraising event, the campaign organisers would be extremely grateful. They will be pleased to provide support, publicity material and posters. Any ideas or help on this front would be really appreciated and the names of those who donate and help will be displayed on a permanent plaque.

Children from the school will also be doing their bit. They will be encouraged to take part in various sponsored activities later this term and next, and will also be given the opportunity to 'paint a tile' which will form part of the fabric of the pool surrounds providing a lovely and personal reminder of their input to the project.

If you can help in any way, either with fundraising ideas or donations, please contact Jane on jane.turner5@virgin.net or write to her via the school (Charlbury Primary School, Crawborough, Charlbury, Oxon, OX7 3TX). Cheques should be made payable to Charlbury School Association (Swimming Pool) and can be sent to the school for the attention of Jane Turner.

Alison Holthouse

CLUBS, DRAMA, SPORT cont'd

Brownie Guides: Meet on Wednesday from 6.45 to 8.00 pm for children 7 to 10½. Brown Owl is looking for an additional helper as her current helper will shortly be taking maternity leave.

Cub Scouts: Meet on Thursday from 6.15 pm to 7.45 pm for children 8 to 10½. We are urgently looking for people to help with this unit. No experience is necessary and you need not have a child in the Group. If you are unable to commit every week any assistance would be gratefully received. Please contact Ron Smith on 811549 or Fiona Snell on 810565.

All meetings held at the Scout Hut:

PROBUS CLUB OF CHARLBURY

Probus (Professional and Business in retirement) have during the past year lunched well on the first Wednesday in each month at the Witney Lakes Resort and have been instructed and entertained by a variety of after-lunch speakers. A medical man of our number told us of the life of a GP; we learned also of medical matters in far-away Nepal, where a base-camp hospital has been built at the instigation of a local general practitioner, Dr. Sandy Scott. Talks on the work of charitable organisations - the Douglas House Hospice in Oxford, Wateraid, and the SSAFA made us very aware of the essential work carried out by these bodies. China, Charles Darwin, a history of sterling, and the low-down on Jack the Ripper kept us further intrigued and instructed. Donations were sent to charities featuring in the programme of talks. Our annual dinner with partners and friends was held in January; visits were made to the Rowing Museum at Henley, and later in summer to Broughton Castle and Upton House.

A November concert in Reading will complete the social calendar for the year. 2004 will mark the 21st. Anniversary of Charlbury Probus. We hope to celebrate the occasion by asking founder members to reminisce a little at a luncheon in March. If you are perhaps new to the area and would like to know more, please contact the Secretary. Peter Barber, on 01608 811587.

CHARLBURY ANGLING CLUB

The Club will be holding their Christmas Bingo on Friday 19 December in the War Memorial hall, Charlbury. Doors open at 7 pm, Eyes down at 7.45pm.

CENTRE STAGE PRODUCTION

More than 75 of Charlbury's five to twelve year olds will be performing in a fun, festive show when Centre Stage puts on its first major public performance at the Memorial Hall on Friday November 28th and Saturday November 29th. There will be three performances (7pm on both nights and a 3pm matinee on Saturday 29th) of Dr Seuss's *The Lorax and How The Grinch Stole Christmas*. Parents of children attending Centre Stage already know how exciting and polished their performances are - now a wider audience will have a chance to see the work that has been going on at The Shed as well.

Ticket prices: £3.50 adults, £2 concessions. Ring the Box Office 01608 811269

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

NATURE NOTES: Consequences by Christine Elliott

Louise Spicer's report on her annual House Martin Survey highlights the problem that beset the house martins nesting on the Rose & Crown in September. With a total of 13 nests, this is the most important building in Charlbury for nesting house martins. Scaffolding was erected for some building work, but, although they waited for the Street Fair to be over, there wasn't time for the young house martins to fledge. This meant that the parents couldn't fly into their nests to finish feeding their second brood and this might have had tragic consequences for them.

Legal protection is given to birds under Part I of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by this law and it is thus an offence (with certain exceptions) to intentionally take, damage, or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is being built or in use. In England and Wales, the maximum penalty that can be imposed - in respect of a single bird, nest or egg - is a fine of up to £5,000, six months imprisonment or both.

Even if people aren't aware of the law, one would hope that they would be aware of and respect the lives of birds and other animals, but sadly this doesn't always happen. Often people are not aware of the consequences of their actions. The life-cycles of birds, animals, insects, vegetation and their intricate inter-relationships with each other is a complex subject. The loss of habitats in the wider countryside has resulted in a severe decline in the amount and variety of wildlife. It is now recognised that the protection of isolated nature reserves cannot stop this decline and that there must be a general change in the management of the wider countryside. There is a pilot scheme for a change in conservation grants paid to farmers and there is a new emphasis on maintaining an environment helpful to wildlife. As individuals, our actions have consequences and you can think of a village, with its patchwork of gardens and public open space, as an oasis in an agricultural desert. One obvious example is the garden pond, which has proved invaluable for the survival of the common frog while ponds and wet areas in the open countryside have declined.

Sometimes, people welcome the pretty side of nature into their gardens, for example the butterflies feeding on buddleia in late summer, but they don't realise what those butterflies need for the less visible parts of their life cycles. Some butterflies lay their eggs on large patches of nettles (in sunny rather than shady locations). The small tortoiseshell butterfly has two life cycles in a single year and needs nettles cut in June so that there is fresh soft growth for the second batch of eggs. Different species of brown butterflies need a variety of different grass species to complete their life cycles, so they need undisturbed long grass for their egg, caterpillar and chrysalis stages. People feed birds in winter, but birds also need insects to feed their young during the summer. Even if the adult bird eats nuts and seeds, they will feed their young high protein insects so that they grow as quickly as possible. In the garden, aphids are often thought of as pests but are a valuable staple diet for birds such as blue tits. Insects are vitally important for the survival of other wildlife. Once people realise the importance of their own gardens for wildlife, it becomes necessary to rethink priorities and change gardening practices.

Many people have realised this and are deliberately allowing their gardens to be less manicured, maybe not always so neat and tidy – particularly over the winter. One wonders when the Best Kept Village Competition will take account of this more enlightened approach in their judging. Long grass does not equate to neglect and disinterest, on the contrary it can indicate deliberate and careful concern.

Friends of Wychwood – Christmas Craft Fair

After the tremendous success of their fourth annual Forest Fayre held at Shipton-under-Wychwood at the end of August, with around 2000 people attending, the Friends of Wychwood will be holding a **Christmas Craft Fair in the Memorial Hall, Charlbury on the December 13th from 9.30 am to 1pm.**

From a start three years ago the Friends of Wychwood has now grown to a membership of well over 400, with the largest membership of any parish being here in Charlbury. That is very appropriate as the idea for the Wychwood Project was first conceived in Charlbury around six years ago. With its emphasis on an understanding and appreciation of the history of the old royal forest area of Wychwood, work with local communities, and conservation work, it is receiving national recognition and has become a model for similar projects elsewhere in the country.

All funds raised by the Friends are put to use in supporting the Project and its work, and that of local community conservation groups.

The Christmas Craft Fair will feature some of the many local craft workers who were at the Forest Fayre, and others, all with hand-made local products very suitable for Christmas presents for relatives and friends – or even just for yourself. Take time to look around and then enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, perhaps with a mince pie, and learn some more about the Project and the Friends' work in the community.

Roy Coates

TRANSRURAL TRUST: unusual handmade Christmas gifts and crafts for sale. Special Christmas sales days on Thursday-Saturday 4th, 5th and 6th December and again Thursday-Saturday 11th, 12th and 13th December. Gifts to suit all ages and pockets, including jewellery, Thai silks and decorated eggs.

All the products are sourced from our overseas rural development projects and the profits fund further work in the communities of origin. Come to 16a Crawley Mill, Crawley, near Witney or telephone 01993 771230 for further information.

House Martin Survey 2003

The final tally of active nests only rose to 84 (last year 103) so the decline of this popular bird continues.

There was no evidence of a third brood anywhere and early migration in mid-August became evident. However there were still young being fed in three nests on the Rose & Crown during the Street Fair on September 21st. Whether these actually fledged will never be known as scaffolding was erected shortly afterwards which might have prevented the adults from accessing the nests (see Nature Notes). Lets hope that next year will be better.

Louise Spicer (01608 810745)

THE CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ENGLAND (CPRE)

will be having a Coffee Morning, raffle and cake stall on Saturday, December 6th, 10am - 12 noon in the Corner House.