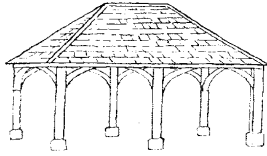


The Charlbury Chronicle



Volume 11 Number 4

September 2007

This is another forty-page edition of the *Charlbury Chronicle* and it completes our eleventh year. There is quite a lot of discussion about the future of Charlbury's shops, and it gives us all food for thought. We really don't want our lovely Charlbury to change its character by losing all the shops at the centre of the town, and it shouldn't be too difficult to work out for ourselves that if we want them to remain we really do have to change our shopping habits and buy as much as we can locally. You can start doing that right away by making a point of attending the Christmas Market with its late night shopping, carol singing, gift stalls and much else on Thursdays December 6th and 20th.

There is also a reminder from the Town Council that in May 2008 there will be local government elections. In a community of over 3000 people surely there must be fifteen or so people prepared to put their names forward to give local electors a choice and to have a fully elected Town Council for the next four year period.

Many thanks to all those kind people who deliver our *Chronicles* every quarter, and to Diana Potten, Julia Caston and Kat Patrick for their contributions. Thank you, too, to Jack Potten who keeps our advertising going so successfully. Not to forget, either, all those who submit information and articles to keep us all interested. As we always say, we are delighted to receive items for publication and hope they will keep a-coming.

Please make a note of our quarterly deadlines - February 1st (for the March edition), May 1st for June, August 1st for September and November 1st for the December issue.

We wish all our readers, helpers and advertisers a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Lynette Murphy

CHARLBURY CHRISTMAS MARKET

Thurs 6th & Thurs 20th December 6-8pm

- Late night shopping
- Carol singing
- The Mummers Play
- Craft and gift stalls
- Santa's grotto

*Thursday 6th Turning on Charlbury
Christmas lights – 6pm*

**For stall holder and visitor information,
please contact chamber@charlbury.info**

CHARLBURY LIBRARY TALKING BOOKS:

Charlbury Library may be able to help fill the longer, darker evenings - read a good book (large or regular print) or, for a small charge, hire a Talking Book on tape or CD. We have a selection of films on DVD and a few videos, or you could even ring and book a slot (for free) on the broadband internet connection. If you are unable to get to the library through ill-health or disability perhaps you would like the 'Books on Wheels' service to come to your home once a month? Watch out for posters about the Children's Christmas Story-time.

For more details on any of the above ring Penny on 01608 811104.

CHARLBURY BRANCH of the ROYAL BRITISH LEGION has sent toiletries and confectionery to the value of £100 to British forces based at Camp Alamo in Afghanistan to let them know we are all thinking about them.

DECEMBER FARMERS' MARKET

Don't miss the Farmers' Market on the Playing Close on Saturday, DECEMBER 8th
from 9am to 1 pm.



Photograph by Andrew Lawson

AMAZING GRACE

It's a fair bet that there has never been a day like it in all of Charlbury's history! On Monday, September 24th, Miss Grace Fredericks invited everyone in the town to come and celebrate her 100th birthday with her. Everything went amazingly well, and even the weather obliged by clearing up at mid-day after a wet and windy start and the sun shone on the Playing Close all afternoon. The children came from school and performed a spirited programme of gymnastics; there were races, there was an excellent Punch & Judy Show which the young audience loved, there were free soft drinks and biscuits — and all of this had been arranged by Grace herself. Grace's younger sister Julie (a mere 98 year old!) was there to share the day. There was a great atmosphere of happiness and good will, as eventually everyone adjourned to the Memorial Hall, where a short musical interlude was provided by a string quartet. Next, the Brownies gathered round Grace and helped her to blow out all the candles, and miraculously there was enough cake for everyone. Chinese friends of Grace provided a display of

origami which was fascinating to see.

After the singing of 'Happy Birthday' Grace made an inspiring speech in which she thanked everyone for coming to her party and explained that she had arranged it in order to strengthen and foster a real community spirit, something she felt was endangered in modern life. She said that she hoped that her day would have led, for example, to people speaking to people they had not previously spoken to, and to doing things they had not previously done together, and thereby built up unity and love in the life of the town.

At 6 pm there was a bit of a breather for everyone to go home for a while and then from 8pm to 10pm there was Grace back again at the Memorial Hall to welcome a whole lot more guests. Everyone was treated to a glass of wine and some refreshments, and music was on hand to entertain those who wished to dance. Later, country dancing took over and Sir Roger de Coverley was enthusiastically performed.

I am sure I speak for everyone who attended this unique and happy occasion when I say a huge Thank You to Grace for her wonderful generosity and for giving Charlburians a chance to come together and celebrate this very special birthday.

Grace had asked that no presents should be given. In keeping with her expressed views on the value of community, however, she said she would be glad if those who wished would donate to the Charlbury Community Centre Appeal - and to date over £1500 has been donated in Grace's name.

We were all saddened to hear that Daphne Fredericks, the dear youngest sister of Grace and Julie, died on October 15th, aged 96, at The Langston in Kingham.

CHARLBURY STREET FAIR 2007

WOW !! I think you will all agree that this year has been a bumper year in all respects, especially with regard to Street Fair. This year we were able to give the Corner House and Memorial Hall Committee **£10,750**. We would like to give a big thank you to all of you who so generously gave of your time, money etc to make it such a huge success. There are too many people to thank – but you know who you are, so a BIG thank you from all the Street Fair Committee.

Next year's Open Gardens will be on Sunday 8th June and Street Fair will be on Saturday 20th September 2008 – so don't you dare be away! The first meeting to organise next year's fair will be on 21st January 2008 at 8pm in the Garden Room.

HELP!!

Some of the existing committee are standing down this year, so we do need **lots** of help and new ideas in organising the fair; it's not too much work if we have lots of people to help – and it's good fun too (we go to the pub afterwards!). If we are to continue the success of Street Fair we really do need help. Ever thought about running the tombola stall, organising the parade, helping sell draw tickets. You don't have to come to the committee meetings – just promise to help on the day. We are just short of bodies!

So to all of you who enjoyed this year's fair, please think about even giving just a few hours of your time. Please don't just read this, and say well maybe I will help – and then forget about it. Contact me **NOW!** I look forward to hearing from you all. Phone number is 01608 810861 or by email at susanna_finch@hotmail.com.

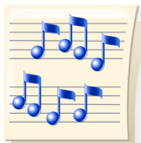
Susie Finch, Street Fair Committee

MEALS ON WHEELS MAKES A WELCOME RETURN

Marjorie Glasgow says that 'the Meals on Wheels service is going to restart and that deliveries will begin in the New Year.' Initially there will be just one delivery per week but another day will be added as soon as possible. Jan Griffiths will be coordinating the deliveries (810440) and Marjorie will be coordinating the catering and seeing that everything runs smoothly.

Please, if you would like to help either in the kitchen or making deliveries, contact Jan or Marjorie (810 161). Also, please contact Marjorie if you know of someone in Charlbury, Chadlington, or Stonesfield who may benefit from a delivered home-cooked meal.

We must add a sad note that Margaret Crockford, who cooked for MoW for so many years, died on October 26th. Her contribution in so many ways was inestimable. She will be very much missed and our sympathy goes to John and her family.



COME AND SING 'THE MESSIAH' IN FEBRUARY

By popular demand Handel's "Messiah" will be sung in St. Mary's Church, Charlbury on Saturday, February 9th 2008. If you have never been in a choir or sung "The Messiah" before, please come and give it a try.

The rehearsal for singers will start at 10 am. There will be a lunch break at 1pm and then the singers will return at 2pm to rehearse with the orchestra until 3.30 pm. The concert will start at 7.30 pm.

The cost will be £15 for the day, £5 for under 18s. Music will be available for hire. Lunch will not be provided but can be obtained in Charlbury. Performers are requested to wear a white top and dark skirt/trousers. Tickets for the audience (£5) will be available on the door from 7 o'clock on the night.

To reserve a place please contact Hilda Reed on 01608 810423 or e-mail her at hilda.reed@btopenworld.

The concert is being held to raise funds for the Charlbury Community Centre Appeal (C.C.C.A.) Sponsorship would be welcome and anyone wishing to do so or wishing to advertise in the programme, please contact Jack Potten on 01608 810991.



ROYAL BRITISH LEGION CHARLBURY BRANCH Trip to the Poppy Factory

Apologies that the proposed trip in October was postponed due to unforeseen circumstances. We have now booked a tour for March 6th 2008. The tour starts at 1.30pm and lunch may be booked/taken prior to the start of the tour.

If you are interested, please contact Jane Parsons on 810822 by January 21st 2008. There is no admission charge. The cost of travel will be determined by the numbers travelling, and lunch is charged separately at around £7.50p per head.

For more information about the work of the Royal British Legion, becoming a member, or for assistance, please contact Nick Potter (Branch President) on 810388, Derek Fowler (Branch Chairman) on 811706, or Jane Parsons (Branch Secretary) on 810822.

CLUBS, GROUPS, SOCIETIES

WEA CHARLBURY/ENSTONE BRANCH is now part of the West Oxfordshire Branch and the next local five week course will be "The Art of Romanesque", tutor Juliet Heslewood, starting on 17 January 2008 from 10am-12 at the Corner House

CHARLBURY CRICKET CLUB

I am pleased to report that our fundraising appeal, as launched in the September issue of the *Chronicle*, has been a great success. To date we have raised more than £100,000, with almost £15,000 having been contributed by the people of Charlbury and the surrounding area. This is a magnificent response and we are extremely grateful to you all for your generosity at our time of greatest need. The success of the appeal has enabled us to apply for planning permission to build a new pavilion at the top of the cricket field, above the redrawn floodplain. Hopefully, by the time the next issue of the *Chronicle* appears the new building will be starting to take shape, ready for use next season.

When the rain and flood water permitted it, we did manage to play some cricket at Charlbury this season. Our First XI consolidated their position in the upper echelon of the OCA League, finishing comfortably in mid-table. They also performed with great credit in cup competitions, winning the Combe Knockout tournament and narrowly losing in the final of the Ernie Clack Memorial Cup. The Second Team topped their league and thus gained promotion to Division 4. This

makes them the highest-placed Second XI in the OCA League, a fantastic achievement. Charlbury 3rds had a difficult and frustrating season, finishing towards the bottom of Division 10, but they did perform creditably in the cup. The Third XI provides an opportunity for many of our younger players to play competitive senior cricket, and several talented Third Team players subsequently performed with distinction for the Club at a higher level.

Derek Collett

CHARLBURY ANGLING CLUB

Christmas Bingo at the Memorial Hall on Friday, December 21st 2007. Doors open 7 pm. Eyes Down 7.45 pm *Jane Parsons*

CHARLBURY CHESS CLUB

Chess has been played in Charlbury for well over 100 years. The Club itself was inaugurated in 1933 and the Chess Cup which was competed for back then is still played for today. Our Museum has a presentation chess set from the 19th century and a fine old photograph from 1935 of the all-conquering Charlbury Chess Team. We are a friendly Club and mostly play socially. We did have a match against Witney last season which was drawn 3-3, but our chess is largely limited to a weekly meeting at 6.30 pm for two hours on Thursdays. We play at the Methodist Hall in Fishers Lane. We welcome players of all abilities and ages - we currently have a number of pre-teens - who join us for the first hour - then the older members have a further hour to themselves. The more experienced members are very happy to teach and encourage those who are relatively new to the game. If you are interested then either give Bob Douglas a ring on 01608

811083 or just turn up on the nights. For under 18s it's 50p. And for over 18s £2.

Roger Farrow

CHIPPING NORTON ROTARY

Life begins at 40! Chipping Norton's Rotary has just celebrated 40 years of Rotary and is looking for new members. Several ladies have recently joined for the first time and Chippy's Rotary is the fastest growing Club in the area. Rotary, with over 1.2 million men and woman members in 165 countries, is a global network of volunteers from the professional and business worlds who provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards and help goodwill across the world. Rotary which raises millions for charities has primarily been responsible for almost eradicating Polio having raised \$500 Million since 1985. Chippy's Rotary meets Monday evenings and is a highly social group who enjoy each other's company while raising funds mainly for local good causes. *Further information can be obtained from Paul Jackson 01608 658 500.*

PROBUS

The Probus (**PRO**fessional & **BUS**inessmen in retirement) Club of Charlbury meets on the first Wednesday of each month for lunch at Witney Lakes Resort. Each luncheon is followed by a talk on a wide range of subjects, with regard to local issues and the wider domain. Speakers are culled from within our own group and from outside. In addition to our luncheons we organise visits to places of interest or theatres. During the current session we were escorted around Waterperry Gardens (Spring Outing), went to the Watermill Theatre near Reading (Summer Event) and recently we made a trip to the Birmingham Symphony Hall (Fall Meeting with the Friends). We are now planning the Christmas Dinner at Riverside to which are invited Friends of Probus Charlbury and other interested parties. The Annual Golf Championship has just been completed under Tony Hall's expert guidance. If you are new to the area, retired, and would like to know more about the Group or are interested in joining us and getting to know a wide range of people in our vicinity, please contact the Honorary Secretary, (Prof.) Michael Marsh on 01608-810029.

THE CHARLBURY SOCIETY

Meetings at 7.30 pm, in the Memorial Hall. New members and visitors are particularly welcome.

Friday December 14th : 20th Century Charlbury: a conversation between Charlburians about life in the town over the past eight decades.

Friday January 11th : Re-writing British History: the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. Dr Lawrence Goldman, Editor, O.D.N.B. & Fellow of St Peter's College, Oxford.

Friday February 8th: Quaker Clocks of North Oxfordshire. Tim Marshall.

The annual subscription is £7.50. Visitors £1.50 per meeting. Under 18's free.

For further information, please contact either the Chairman, Brian Murray (01608 819091) or the Secretary, Lesley Deane (01608 810849)

*If you would like to submit information for this section, please contact
Julia Caston (810240)*



Bah-humbug!

The pumpkins and witch hats aren't even packed away yet and already the shops are displaying Christmas cards and 2008 calendars. Soon, the boxes of tinsel, baubles, and fake holly will all come out. The Christmas season is upon us.

Not only do we get out the holiday decorations, but we get out our credit cards, too. Again, and again, and again. It seems our children have an insatiable appetite for fiddly-boppy-this and doo-hicky-thingamabob-that, and if you're like me, you end up buying several of the doomy-flatchies because:

a) it will make them happy, and you like seeing them happy; b) it will

keep them entertained for at least five minutes in a row, for at least one afternoon;

c) it isn't all that expensive if you think about it, and besides, if we put Granny Simms' name on it, then it's one fewer presents she has to traipse out to the shops to buy.

Before you leap into the Christmas rush, however, take time to think about one or two things. First of all – that post-Christmas feeling. Close your eyes and think back to last year. Remember when you were bloated with parsnips and pudding, and all around your feet was that sea of ripped-up wrapping paper? Is the feeling coming back to you? The "ugh"? Remember when there was that groan of the car's boot when you tried to stuff in one more My Little Phoney, and suddenly, you were declaring (either internally or, like me, externally with a lot of naughty words besides) that some of the old toys would have to be thrown out to make room for the new?

You know it doesn't have to be like that this year. In fact, it shouldn't be like that. Not only is it bad for our bank balances, the land-

fills, and the developing world, but it's a terrible conveyor belt on which our children are trapped.

There are loads of websites about alternative Christmas, clawing back its family-centred basis from the commercial-centred monster. Just google on some of those words: alternative Christmas, simplify holiday. Mostly you'll get suggestions about home-made baked goods, recycling old gifts, and giving vouchers, magazine subscriptions, or organizational memberships.

For children, you may still want to provide one or two thingamabobs, but there are still plenty of unusual options. Here are a selection:

- * Look through your (and your kids') old clothes, cut out squares of fabrics they will remember, and make a little wall hanging or pillow or stuffed toy or whatever. Pick a nice quote or scripture verse and write it up in calligraphy or a nice handwriting.

- * Buy lessons of some kind, such as musical or sporty or crafty.

- * Collect a selection of old clothes or buy some from a charity shop, and make a dress-up box.

- * Get tickets for a play, film, Lego-land, or other kind of outing.

- * Make a jewellery-making kit with some coloured cotton, some beads, and metal clasps. Similarly, a puppet-making kit with an old sock, goggle eyes, fabric-pens.

* Think consumable – special sweets, bubbles, flavoured popcorn.

* Write and illustrate a story with the child as a main character. You can even get these printed onto acid-free paper with hardback covers from most internet photo sites like Snapfish or Bonusprint.

* Purchase toys and clothing from ethically minded shops such as Traidcraft or Tearfund. St Mary's runs a Traidcraft stall every Sunday after services, where you could also order from the catalogue if you don't want to shop online.

Keep in mind that, above all, your children really want your time and attention more than the deely-boppies. Perhaps they won't obviously appreciate a coupon book of vouchers for book-reading, cake-baking, etc., but we all know that, in the years to come, they'll remember when they licked the dough from a spatula and it plopped onto the kitchen floor only for Daisy the Dalmatian to lick it up, more than they'll remember a super-fidgety-ultra-arm-action-man-robot-alien that came to them the same day as a jumbo-cool-whatsit, a magno-widgit, and sixty-four bumbledy-hickey-gizmo-gubbins.

Make that sixty-three bumbledy-hickey-gizmo-gubbins. Daisy just ate one of those, too.

LITTLE FISHES

Little Fishes starts up again on the 9th of January. This group is for the Under-5s and has it all: songs, games, stories, crafts, toys, and snacks – packed into 1 ¼ hours each Wednesday morning in term time. You don't have to be someone's mum to bring a child along – childminders, grannies, nannies ... all are encouraged to come down to St Mary's church for 10:30 and enjoy the company, the coffee, and the friendly atmosphere. Best of all, it's free!!! Babies are welcome, too. Contact Kate on 811579 for more information.

PRE-SCHOOL

Local companies continue to support pre-school with generous donations: this time, it's Fairfax and Co. and Hydac Ltd. which each contributed £270 toward the purchase of a lovely outdoor wooden playhouse. Thanks also go to Norton Leisure Buildings at Apple-garth Nursery in Chipping Norton who installed the playhouse at a discount price. Pre-School recently received a visit from the OFSTED inspector who was very impressed by how the Pre-School is run. It was felt that the children very much enjoy learning in the Pre-School environment, and the school was rated as 'GOOD' and even 'OUTSTANDING' in one area.

The Pre-School, located in the Old Grammar School on Park Street, is open from 9am every morning (during term-time) but enrolment can be as little as one morning a week to the full five days depending on your requirements. The premises can be hired 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.

SPANISH FOR CHILDREN

The Spanish Club takes place every Saturday at the Old Grammar School in Charlbury (the Pre-School). There are several sessions grouped by age and ability where the aim is to provide an enjoyable environment in which the children can learn basic Spanish. For more information and to arrange a visit to a session, ring Elizabeth on 811128 or e-mail her at elivergaravera@hotmail.com.

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. Now there’s also a monthly visit by the health visitor, Sally Miller, to weigh babies and discuss any issues (don’t forget your red book!). £2 per family.

Kat Patrick

kat.patrick@alumni.southwestern.edu

811660

PS Did anyone lose a pair of child’s or teen’s spectacles near the doctors’ in late September? Phone me. *KP*

MEMORIES OF CHARLBURY CINEMA

Following Vic Merry’s memories of the Charlbury cinema, (*see Charlbury Chronicle, September 2007, p5*) Janet Jeffs has also sent us some interesting information about the cinema. Her father Frank Jeffs and mother May ran the Town Hall Cinema from the 1930s till its closure in December 1960. Her father originally travelled around in his spare time with his projector and screen showing films in village halls or people’s living rooms. In the 1930s her parents moved from the Woodstock Road to become caretakers of the Town Hall, which was owned by the Quakers, and was used for local functions. At first it was made entirely of corrugated iron until Janet’s father rebuilt the walls with concrete blocks. It was definitely open as a cinema by September 1939. There were difficulties early in the war because it was called the Town Hall, the army thought it was a public building and requisitioned it and the garden behind for a catering HQ for troops billeted in Charlbury. Janet’s father appealed against this decision on the grounds that they were taking away his livelihood and the Hall was returned to its former use, though the Army continued to use it for ENSA concerts. In 1944 Janet believes that her parents bought the freehold of the house and cinema.

Her father used to book films via film travellers from the various companies, e.g. RKO Radio, Columbia, British Lion and J. Arthur Rank. Sometimes Janet went up with her father to the company offices in Soho. He was not usually able to book brand-new films.

They went to the bigger cinemas first. Customers were always anxious for their favourites to be shown but Janet thinks her father never showed X-certificate films partly because of the composition of Charlbury audiences but also because her mother would never have let him do so!

Janet's father did many other things. They had a shop at the Royal Oak and he was very involved with providing loud speaker systems. During World War II he toured the town with loudspeakers on the roof making announcements of local importance. Because of this Janet's mother played a large part in the running of the cinema, especially when her father became a parish, district and county councillor after the war. Many people attended the cinema regularly and obviously felt very at home. They often found single shoes left behind and even a set of dentures. In 1942 the weekly audience numbered 562. In a week in 1956 it was 503. Television and greater ownership of cars brought about the decline of small cinemas. Her parents moved to Elmstead in Crawborough for retirement. The house and cinema stood empty for three years and were eventually sold in 1963. The cinema was demolished to become part of the garden.

A fuller account of Janet Jeffs' memories can be seen at Charlbury Museum.

N.B. There is also a book, recently published and available from Jon Carpenter. It is called 'Oxfordshire Cinemas' by Ian Meyrick, and has a full entry about the Town Hall Cinema and nearby cinemas in Chipping Norton, Shipton, Burford, Woodstock and Middle Barton.

THOMAS GIFFORD'S CHARITY— New trustee required

One of the co-opted trustees has resigned because overseas work commitments make it impossible for her to attend the Charity's meetings.

The trustees (there are eight others) are advertising for a replacement trustee. The primary responsibilities of the trustees currently are to maintain the Playing Close and to develop the vacant site that the Charity owns on the Spendlove Centre. The trustees are keen to ensure they represent a good cross section of the community of Charlbury and to provide a range of complementary expertise (e.g. experience with developing activities with young people) that will allow good execution of its responsibilities. The trustees are at present agreeing a plan for the Spendlove site with the local authorities which will, with the help of enabling development, provide new community facilities for Charlbury and surrounding areas.

If you would like to participate in benefiting the community in this way we would ask you to provide an informal biography on your skills and experiences that would benefit the Charity, and also the residents of Charlbury. We do not expect an academic CV, just a couple of paragraphs on your business and personal skills that would enable the Charity to be run effectively and could help to achieve the goal of a new community facility at the Spendlove site.

Please send your details to: Annette Cooper, Secretary to the Trustees, 11 The Green, Charlbury, OX7 3QA or email her at: aracooper@hotmail.co.uk (tel: 01608 810882)

ChOC: CHARLBURY'S OWN CINEMA

It was good to see so many people at our screening of *Infamous* in October. The film, which was chosen in response to requests from Charlbury cinemagoers, starred Toby Jones who grew up in Charlbury. Toby's Aunt Juliet gave the large audience intriguing insights into Toby's experiences during the making of the film.

There will be another chance to see Toby in *The Painted Veil*, a stunningly beautiful rendering of a Somerset Maugham story, which ChOC will be showing on February 10th.

ChOC has yet more high quality film viewing in store for the winter months. Again in response to requests from cinemagoers, we will be showing, on December 9th, *Miss Potter* with Ewan McGregor, and with Renee Zellweger in the title role, and on January 13th, the much-acclaimed film of *Atonement*, by Booker Prize-winning novelist Ian McEwan. Films for December, January and February will all be at 7.30 pm in the Memorial Hall.

Vic Merry's account of the ground-breaking cinema in Charlbury during the 1940s made compelling reading in the September issue of the *Chronicle*. I was particularly impressed by the hectic business of changing reels every twenty minutes. Keeping this up five nights a week plus a Saturday matinee must have taken a cool nerve as well as plenty of stamina! Anyone inspired by this to join us in continuing to keep cinema alive and well in Charlbury, give Ed Fenton a ring on 811196, we are always keen to welcome new faces.

If you would like to receive monthly information about our films by email ring me, Hilda Reed, on 810423, or for up to the minute information take a look at Ed's web site <http://www.day-books.com/chocweb.htm> and at the posters around the town before each film.

Still not decided on this year's pantomime? Join the Charlbury crowd for *The Delicious Revenge of Princess Ruby Slippers* in the Memorial Hall at 7 o'clock on Thursday January 3rd. This is a 'topsy-turvy, helter-skelter story of sibling rivalry and parental desperation in a world of mixed-up, musical make-believe where the Fairy Godmother's hot and bothered and the Wicked Witch is itching to make boy pie!' It will be performed by The Oxford Touring Theatre Company and hosted by ChOC. Tickets will be on sale from December 1st. Prices: adults £7.00; concessions (children under 14, students, unwaged, 60+) £5.00; family tickets (2 adults + 2 children under 14) £20.00. For further information please contact Ed on 01608 811196.

From Ed, Margaret Godel and Hilda at ChOC, our best wishes for a holiday season full of good will, good cheer and of course, good films.

Hilda Reed

THOMAS GIFFORD'S CHARITY MAKES STEADY PROGRESS

A cooperation agreement with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) for development of the Charity's site at the Spendlove Centre has been agreed in principle, and we expect this to be signed before this edition of the Chronicle is published.

The agreement foresees the construction of a new library and adult education facilities, financed and run by OCC together with the development of a number of residential apartments. The residential development will then help to provide the funding needed to enable the Charity to build high quality community facilities on the rest of the Spendlove site that have the capacity to meet the diverse needs of the town. The Charity will retain the freehold of the entire site.

West Oxfordshire District Council will also be involved and have confirmed their support for the proposed development, with the offer of a £100,000 grant in a recent letter to the trustees. In addition, Charlbury Town Council have previously set aside funds for new community facilities on the Spendlove site and the trustees will be seeking reconfirmation of this allocation on the signing of the agreement with OCC following receipt of the WODC's letter.

In September the Charlbury Community Centre Appeal received a generous anonymous donation of £30,000 and with other recent donations, the Appeal fund stands in excess of £120,000, practically half way to its £250,000 target. The most recent donations included those that Grace Fredericks kindly asked to be directed towards the Appeal in celebration of her 100th birthday.

The Leader Plus Programme, managed by WODC has also granted £4,500 to the Charity to assist the process of architect selection and community consultation. Using this, the trustees in consultation with the other financial stakeholders, will now select an architect with successful experience of sustainable low energy development. The architect will also be required to ensure full community involvement in the design and content of the community facilities, and a programme for consultation on the community facilities will start with a public meeting on Friday 1st February at 8pm in the Memorial Hall.

Other discussions will include key issues with the WODC planning department and OCC such as parking requirements and diversion of the footpath. The trustees feel that the trust should only provide additional parking required by the relevant planning departments specifically for the additional needs generated by the development and hopes to encourage more walking and cycling in the town centre. To maximise the site's potential, it is hoped that the footpath running around the edge of the site can be diverted to the common sense route across the site - as it was before the Spendlove centre/secondary school (now demolished) was built.

Finally - following a resignation due to travel & work commitments we are seeking a replacement trustee to help us take the Charity forward. Please read the job description on page 18 and if you are interested please get in touch with our Secretary, Annette Cooper (810882) or myself, Trevor Jones (810644)

News and Things - Reports of our demise have been greatly exaggerated!

Most people in the town will know that we have been refused planning permission for change of use to residential. A business has to be reasonably profitable to continue. Unfortunately, we are not. *However*, in view of the planning decision, we have decided to make a last determined effort to succeed. We were grateful for the generous comments of Mr Brian Shayler, whose letter to the September edition of the *Chronicle* mourned the "loss of News and Things", but we urgently need to clarify the situation. We are NOT closing.

News and Things is a place where we hope you can rely on a friendly welcome from familiar faces and where you can exchange local news and gossip and enjoy our excellent coffee, teas, chocolate and pastries. It was suggested that we should try to expand the range of goods on offer and as a result we are arranging to supply organic wines and expect to have these for Christmas. We welcome constructive suggestions and criticisms.

Don't forget that Christmas *is* coming and we shall have a full range of cards, including charity cards, wrapping paper, Christmas lights, both indoor and outdoor, decorations, boxed chocolates and much more. We now sell cheeses, milk, bacon, cold meats, and butchered meats to order (supplied by Castles of Burford) and other food items. Please do visit us and see for yourselves.

Our future is in your hands – the decision is yours.

Bill & Veronica Jones

**Anyone
interested in joining a Book Club?**

Ring Sheila Peacock (811726) or Carol Minshall (811630)

COMMUNITY FIRST RESPONDERS A REMINDER :

A First Responder can only respond after a member of the public has made a 999 call. Ambulance Control send a text message to the team, alerting them of any RED Calls, which are chest pains, breathing difficulties or any life-threatening conditions. A Responder can **ONLY** attend when Ambulance Control gives them permission to do so. We cannot attend independently.

Thank you for your support

Carol Hughes (tel: 01993 868710)

Community First Responders (Finstock, Ramsden & Wilcote & surrounding areas)

'OXFORDSHIRE 2007'

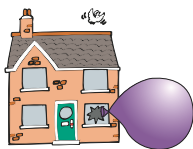
Keep the sun behind you and you'll
Reach Sibford, Hornton and Balscote.
There are the oaks, the sycamores,
The horse chestnuts, tall against the
northern sky,
Winding the lanes in case you miss them.

You can see further in the south, across
the broad valleys,
But this year the rivers snapped walls and
gates like twigs,
Drowning cars and chickens. The damp
straw still clings to
The wire, alien corn from the west,
threaded by the flood.
How could gentle weaving sit beside such
power?

I'll go north next year with a backward
glance, listening for the sound of water.

*Keith Fountain,
5/46 Blues Point Road,
North Sydney 2060, NSW, Australia*

*NB Keith Fountain is a regular visitor to
Charlbury*



SusCha moves forward

I am the new coordinator of Sustainable Charlbury and I'm looking forward to a busy few months! Since the last public meeting, the steering group have been planning how Charlbury can move forward in reducing its carbon footprint and get active on climate change. We have gained funding, contacts and support and are now able to move SusCha into the next stage. Our website will be up and running soon and it will contain a wealth of information and ideas on how you can reduce your emissions, with practical advice, links, resources and a forum where you can have your say.

The Charlbury website (<http://www.charlbury.info/cgi-bin/dindex.cgi>) will have a link to SusCha so look out for an announcement there.

As the nights draw in and it begins to get cold, warmth and efficiency become ever more important. We are now able to offer thermal imaging reports to households wishing to find out how to improve their heat-efficiency. The camera surveys your home, identifying problem areas that could be improved. This service is available at a discounted rate through a local company and we have a limited number of grants to help with the costs.

Anyone interested, please contact Martin Evans of Thermal Imaging Services at martin.infrared@gmail.com. The Council are also offering grants for loft and cavity wall insulation and even if you don't fit the criteria for a fully funded grant, you may be eligible for a discount or £50 off your next Council Tax bill.

We are planning to host several public events in Charlbury in the next few months:

We have invited George Marshall of the Climate Outreach Information Network to come and launch his new book, 'The Carbon Detox'.
Come along and see how you can 'detox' your life!

Tom Dyson will soon be giving a talk to launch a new sophisticated Carbon Calculator and the Cotswold carbon-rationing group (CRAG).
Unlike other carbon calculators, this one works over time so you can keep a track of your progress.

In conjunction with ChOC, we will be showing two films; 'The Power of Community' and 'End of Suburbia'. Dates to be announced soon.

Keep an eye on the Charlbury website and noticeboards for date confirmations!

Oxford Eco-House Open Day: Saturday 8th December, 3-5pm.
'40% house on Osney Island Open Day.' Climate Exchange Event. Come and be inspired by how David and Barbara Hammond improved energy efficiency and used renewable technologies when refurbishing their home 34 Easter St, Osney Island, Oxford.

Things are also moving forward with our plans for Charlbury's own Organic Market Garden. The garden will provide Charlbury residents with locally produced, seasonal fruit and veg - what better way to lower your food miles? This project is beginning to get moving and we are looking for volunteers to help get it off the ground. If anyone feels able to offer help or time in any way, please contact Lars Larson on 810285.

Dorrie Johnson

Congratulations to CAWAG who have now collected a total of 712 batteries in the first 3 months since collection boxes were set up at the Post Office, the Corner House, and the Primary School. Thanks to everyone who has brought along batteries. Louise Spicer empties the boxes weekly and periodically takes them along to the recycling facility at Dean Pit.

Any batteries put in landfill cause contamination from the harmful metals that they contain, so please don't put them in the general waste collection. If you do put batteries in your black box, then please put them in a separate bag so they can be identified and taken out before being processed with the rest of the material – otherwise they are liable to get jammed in the separation plant and cause problems.

Tetra Pak recycling now available at Dean Pit

Tetra Paks are composite cartons made from plastic and cardboard and used for milk, juice, soups, sauces etc. Until now they have been a problem to dispose of and can't be put in the black recycling boxes.

Tetrapak recycling containers are now installed at *all* the Oxfordshire County Council recycling centres!!! Tetrapaks are being collected from these sites, bailed up and shipped to Sweden where they are processed at a paper mill by a French company called Lafarge and turned into plasterboard lining. Rinse the Tetra Paks out and flatten them by pulling out the ears, cut the plastic opening tabs off so that they can be compacted as much as possible.

Our nearest collection centre is Dean Pit, but to make disposal even easier, CAWAG will have a monthly collection in the Spendlove car park.

There will be a bag for collecting Tetra Paks on the first Saturday of each month from 10am until 12 noon, next to the Green Waste collection lorry.

Charlbury Area Waste Action Group (www.cwag.org.uk)

Letters to the Editor

From Mrs B Nisbet

Ten years ago I moved to Charlbury from a town similar in size. I was immediately struck by the friendly atmosphere, unlike the town I came from where people passed by without a word. In this day and age of celebrity, sophistication and materialism we are in danger of forgetting the simple niceties and good manners of yesteryear, together with the closure of local shops due to the increasing influence of the large supermarkets. According to a previous article in the *Charlbury Chronicle* we were better served in 1632!

We are in danger of losing a wonderful part of our heritage with the possible closure of such places as News & Things in Sheep Street, where people can meet in their Coffee Shop for a chat and 'put the world to rights' - especially elderly people who can no longer drive. Before it is too late we should patronise these shops more before we lose a precious part of community life in Charlbury.

*Chelwood,
Market Street*

From Louise Littledale

We need to support our local shops or we shall lose them! I have lived in Charlbury for thirty years and it is a lovely place for a number of reasons, not least because of its still great community spirit. **BUT**, the fact that fewer people are visiting the town centre is placing our shops at risk. Most people know that News and Things is valiantly fighting to succeed. Do people realise that **all** the shops are at risk and that the problem needs to be tackled as a whole? Do people realise the loss they would suffer by our small shops closing? Local shopping is quite unlike shopping in a supermarket. The faces behind the counter are familiar. The assistants know their customers and are helpful and friendly. There is a good range of goods to be purchased here and needn't be more expensive. Shopping is an opportunity to meet and make friends and, as Grace Fredericks pointed out at her wonderful birthday party, to build up unity in the community. We mustn't lose this!

Please support our local shops! Give them a try and see what they offer. You will gain from it and your purchase may save the day!

*Highfield House,
The Slade*

From Mark Gregory

There are many special things about living in Charlbury. One of the most important is the feeling of community. This is a proper little town with a decent range of local facilities and a life of its own. The shops in the centre of Charlbury play a crucial role in this. Without them Charlbury could end up like so many other places in Oxfordshire: pretty, yes, but also lifeless and deathly quiet, with no one walking the streets and no focal point. Without well supported local shops there is no real reason to go into the centre of Charlbury and

little opportunity to exchange a few words with people you vaguely know and like but never quite get round to inviting over. If we let the shops die, Charlbury may begin to die as well. Jumping in the car and driving to a superstore, with the occasional top-up at the Co-op is, of course, very convenient, but then so is the alternative. It isn't difficult to use the local shops. It doesn't even cost much more. We are lucky in what is available in Charlbury: a newsagent that serves decent coffee, a delicatessen, a very good bookshop, two hairdressers, two small supermarkets, a chemist and others - why drive eight miles for everything when you don't have to? No other town or village of similar population in this area has as many facilities as we have here in Charlbury. Saving them doesn't require a lot of time or expense. We collectively just need to remember that they are there and use them a bit more often. If we fail to do this a once-vibrant town that's been around for 750 years is at risk of withering away. I don't want to live in a soulless commuter dormitory. Do you?

*The Yew Tree,
Fishers Lane*

From Mrs Nicolette Lethbridge

I am writing to plead with the dog owners who live in Thames Street, or who walk their dogs through it, to clean up after any mess. Not to do so is against the by-laws and anti-social. One woman who lives in the street, and incidentally who does not own a dog, habitually cleans the pavements after other people's dogs have fouled them. It is not the dogs' fault, it is that of their owner.

*The Old Bakery,
Thames Street*

Evergreen's Christmas Meeting

is on Tuesday December 11th starting at 2.00 pm at the Baptist Church,
to include carols and mince pies.

SUSIE FINCH – a community person

I am usually woken up at 6.15 a.m. by my husband Simon, unless it is a hair washing day and then it is 6 o'clock. Breakfast is cereal and fruit and the "must-have" coffee. I usually try and catch the 7.09 rail bus to the station but more often it is the 7.30 to catch the 7.48 train to Oxford. Then it's a bus to Oxford Brookes University, where I work. The offices are located in what was Robert Maxwell's old house, Headington Hill Hall. Parts of the house are very grand, particularly the entrance hall and galleried landing. I work as Executive Assistant to the Director of Corporate Affairs for the University. Basically, I am the first port of call for all the enquiries into the Directorate with my main responsibility making sure that the Director is in the right place at the right time with the right papers. I also help out with Human Resources and co-ordinate recruitment. At lunch time I either get a sandwich from the Students' Union or go across to the Gipsy Lane Campus for a baked potato. Often I go with a friend from the department which is a great opportunity for a chat and a catch up on what others are doing. Presently, I am also organising our Xmas Party – and trying to get money and menu choices out of everyone, is not as easy as it seems.

We had our business for 20 years which we sold 18 months ago. Since then I have been working as a temp both in London and Oxford. It's been a great experience with work ranging from international law firms, investment companies, pharmaceutical and advertising companies. It's really interesting to see how different companies work and to make many friends.

I am an Essex girl and proud of it! My parents lived in Seven Kings but they sent me to the City of London School for Girls in Blackfriars. I travelled up by train every day – often with the boys from the City of London School. I won't tell you what went on but it was great fun! When I came to leave I thought I would like to teach and was very interested in drama. I was offered a place at Padgate College, Warrington and I quickly realised teaching was not for me and left after a year, I then went to the Triangle Secretarial College for a year in London and my first job was with the Red Cross just next door to the grounds of Buckingham Palace. I worked as a welfare officer, involved in tracing people and organising handicapped children's holidays.

While I was working at the Red Cross in London in 1973, I went on a trekking holiday crossing the Sahara Desert in a Land Rover, starting from Marrakesh. My husband was on the holiday (but he didn't know that then!). Once he realised I was the girl of his dreams, and after a whirlwind six week romance, he proposed to me and we were married the following year. We started out married life in Maidstone where we stayed for five years. During this time I worked at Whatman Ltd (they make filter papers for Chemistry) as Personal Assistant to the commercial director. When Simon went to work for Duracell in Crawley, we moved to Wivelsfield Green. Here I worked for Lady Wilson, at The Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind, but I think they are known as Sightsavers now. While with the RCSB I managed the implementation of a computer system, general administration and even got to choose the Christmas cards for their Christmas catalogue.

In 1980 my life changed with the arrival of my lovely daughter Laura on my birthday! My husband always thinks of the best presents! Our second arrival Peter in 1982 completed

our family. Whilst in Wivelsfield Green I was secretary of the Toddler Group and also Chairman of the Wivelsfield Wives! In 1983 we were on the move again when Simon got a job in Eynsham. We then came to live in Charlbury and have loved it ever since. When we arrived in Charlbury, Deidre Lunney lived opposite and introduced me to lots of people. I joined the Playgroup Committee and became secretary. I also became involved with the Red Cross and qualified as a registered First Aider and an assistant teacher in First Aid. When the children left Playgroup, I then became a member of the School Association. I was secretary of the Scouts and Guides Association for three years and was involved with Margery Leslie as secretary of the Hard Surface appeal, which led to me being on the Nine Acres Committee.

Once Peter and Laura were at school I wanted more to fill my day, so with a friend, Penny Duquenoy, I set up the Business House. We used the front room of Cheorl House (The Old Gun Shop) and offered a secretarial service, with telex and fax facilities. We also typed out many dissertations for students in the area. People hadn't got computers then so the whole thing took off. We also carried out computer training at the Bell; that's why there are so many power points in the Cornbury Room! We needed more space as the business expanded and moved to Baldwin's shop in Charlbury when Simon came to join us. Again because of expansion we moved to Chipping Norton where we stayed until 2006. Simon now works as Director of Information Systems at a private girls' school in Newbury.

Travelling home in the evenings from Oxford with my "dear friends" First Great Western is always an experience and some of you may have heard me expounding their "virtues" on local radio and also seen my on South Today, where I had my five minutes of fame! Simon is usually home first and he is the cook of the family, always producing interesting and varied cuisine, accompanied with the odd glass of wine (or two!). As a special treat I always get to do the clearing up and putting away. My evenings at the beginning of the week are pretty busy. As a member of the Town Council I have a Planning committee meeting on Monday and then the Council Meeting on Wednesday. Two councillors left the Council in February 2002 and Trevor Jones and Ron Prew said they needed some new young blood! No one stood against me so I became a councillor by default. At first I think they thought I was a bit outrageous because I just wanted to say what I thought. But I think they have got used to me now!

The council has an important role to play in Charlbury; I don't think anyone appreciates just how much the Council does and the amount of work that is involved. I have to juggle my Monday meetings with those of the Street Fair Committee, which take place from February to September. I joined the committee in 1997 and am now secretary. It is hard work but great fun. I have always said if you want to get to know people in Charlbury, then you should join either the Street Fair committee or CADS. As secretary I deal with all the correspondence and write to people asking for donations and sponsorship and work to sell space in the programme. I also try to find a celebrity to open Street Fair, so if anyone knows of anyone who would like to open next year's fair, please let me know! Anyone know Richard Hammond? I think he would be great! I say that I beg, borrow and steal on the Street Fair's behalf! Our biggest problem is that we do not have enough people to help on the day and need more volunteers. We enjoy ourselves and go to the pub after the meetings. The day itself is very hard work but very rewarding. I have been so involved with Street Fair that CADS has been a little bit on the back burner. A shame as I

am so keen on drama. I started acting at school but enjoy being involved in everything to do with the production – box office, selling programmes, helping on the bar. I always volunteer to help paint the scenery, unfortunately I get paint everywhere. I remember once when we were preparing the scenery for a pantomime, Dave Court told me to paint what was going to be an oven black. I did a lovely job and showed it to him proudly. “Great” he said, “but you have not painted the inside.” I climbed in and painted it. You should have seen me when I came out! I was covered in paint from head to toe. CADS is going well with lots of new members and I look forward to getting back into it

Thursday and Friday evenings are our “collapse in front of the telly” evenings. We catch up on all the programmes we have recorded during the week. I like to think that I only need a few hours sleep each night and don’t normally get to bed until after 1 o’clock; however Simon might disagree as he is the one who has to get me up in the mornings! I always like to read for an hour before I go to sleep and I enjoy authors like Patricia Cornwell, Ian Rankin, Kathy Reichs – anything gory! and also the Harry Potter books.

Weekends are spent either visiting friends, quality time with the family, selling the odd raffle ticket for the current good cause generally tapping up people for cash for local worthy causes.

I have always thought how lucky we are to have found Charlbury, nestling in the North Cotswolds. Over the last 24 years we have made many good friends and have enjoyed immensely playing an active role in the community.

*Susie Finch was talking to
Diana Potten*

Changes at the Charlbury Day Centre At the last Annual General Meeting of the Day Centre we had a bit of a change around on the management committee. Graham Canning has handed over the chairmanship to Roger Farrow who has very kindly taken his place. Graham will continue on the committee. Sheila Smith has stood down from the committee but will continue being a volunteer helper. We also welcomed to the committee Rosalind Scott who helped the steering committee of the Day Centre at its beginning, and has just retired from her work in Social Services.

We are very pleased to report that the membership of our Day Centre every Wednesday is up to strength, in spite of inevitable changes during the past year. We now have the same number of men and women. We do need to build up our waiting list for those who might wish to join us at some time in the future. On Wednesday 5th December in the morning we have an open meeting in the Garden Room of the Memorial Hall, with sherry and mince pies, to begin the Christmas festivities. Why not come along if you are interested and meet us all, including our volunteers. We also want some more helpers and drivers. This would be a good time to see what we are like. Or come on Wednesday 19th December in the morning and share in our Carol Service also in the Garden Room. Why not?



Maybe Volunteer Link Up Can Help.....!

Are you the organiser or leader of a group that's in need of help? Volunteer Link Up is the Volunteer Centre for West Oxfordshire, recruiting people with time to spare to help people and organisations in need of assistance. We can advertise, free of charge, any voluntary role on the National Volunteering Database, DO-IT and we also keep details in the office of local opportunities available for volunteers.

As mentioned above, we also recruit people with time to spare to help local people – by driving them to appointments, visiting isolated members of the community in their homes or doing shopping for them, or by doing simple DIY jobs and gardening.

If you think Volunteer Link Up can help you, or if you want to help out in your local community, call us on 01993 776277. Our office is open, Monday to Friday, 9a.m – 1p.m and we're based at the Methodist Church Centre, 10 Wesley Walk (off High Street), Witney, OX28 6ZJ. We can also be contacted by email at westoxonvb@freeuk.com. You can also find out more by visiting our website, which is westoxonvb.org.uk.

CHARLBURY & DISTRICT GARDEN CLUB CHILDREN'S CHALLENGES 2008

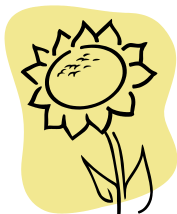
The Great Potato Race ~ Spring/Summer 2008

How heavy a crop can you grow from just one seed potato?

- ~ Potato Growing Kits will be available from the Farmer's Market on March 8th 2008.
(all necessary instructions and dates will be included)
- ~ Bring your crop for the Big Weigh-in to the Summer Show on 21st June 2008 at the Memorial Hall.
- ~ Entry fee: 50p

The Tallest Sunflower ~ Summer/Autumn 2008

- ~ Collect your Sunflower seeds and instructions from the Spring Show on 29th March 2008 in the Memorial Hall.
- ~ Judging in situ prior to the Annual Show in September.
- ~ Results and winners to be announced at the Annual Show on 30th August 2008
- ~ Entry fee: 50p



**Both Challenges open to 5 – 14year olds.
Small prizes for all completed entries.
Instructions and advice sheets available on collection of kits.**

Further details from Wendy Clifford 01608 811006



LOOKING FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT THIS CHRISTMAS?

..... then visit the back room of The Bell on Saturday December 8th (between 10am and 4pm). There you will find **David Whittaker** and **Geoff Clifford** marketing their unique wares.

David will be selling a fine selection of quality second-hand books (as well as his own newly published book of writings and photographs 'Stonelight') and some limited edition photographs, while Charlbury painter Geoff will have a tempting and varied selection of recent paintings for sale.

So avoid the mass hysteria this year and relax in the cultivated ambience of The Bell, allowing yourself to be guided in your purchases by two erudite, sophisticated and exceptionally modest individuals.

Art and books for Christmas, who could possibly ask for more?



New prize for new writing

Do you enjoy writing but have never had anything published? If you are, now is the time to consider your entry for a new writing competition to be judged early next year as part of the Chipping Norton Music Festival.

This is a first for this well-established Festival and has been launched in memory of local teacher, writer and critic George Hummer who died last year. George was a prize-winning novelist and latterly Arts Editor of the Chipping Norton News while his reviews of productions at Chipping Norton Theatre were always stylish and readable. He was deeply committed to communicating his knowledge and love of literature and the value of good writing. For this reason a Prize of £250 will be awarded to remember him and encourage **good, readable writing**. The panel of three judges will be chaired by Whitbread Prize Judge, Patrick Neale.

Entries can be poetry or prose, fiction or non-fiction of up to 1000 words on any theme. The deadline will be in mid-January and entrants must live in the area.

Details and an application form can be found on the Festival website (www.cnmf.org.uk) and in the Music Festival Syllabus available from Jaffé & Neale Bookshop & Café, 1 Middle Row Chipping Norton OX7 5NH Tel 01608 641033, local libraries etc. Any readers who knew George and would like to donate to the prize should send cheques (made payable to the George Hummer Literary Prize) to Jaffé & Neale.

Oxfordshire Children's Information Service

Oxfordshire Children's Information Service provides a wealth of FREE information and advice on childcare and services for children, young people and families. Your child may soon be starting school, so you may like to consider returning to work. OCIS offers advice both on choosing suitable childcare options and financial help that may be available to you, such as child tax credits.

If you have just moved to the area, or have just had a child, you may be looking for a local nursery or toddler group. We have a comprehensive list of all pre school provision in your area. We can help you find your local children's centre; an excellent place to get to know people and to take advantage of all the services they offer, such as crèche facilities, a drop in or childcare services.

We also offer information on careers and jobs in the childcare sector and one to one support if you are new to this type of work. Or, if you want to get straight into a job, we also produce a newsletter giving information on live vacancies in your area.

For all the information your family needs,

call us on 08452 262636, text 'information' to 07895070818 or visit our website

www.oxoncis.org.uk

Oxfordshire Craft Guild's Christmas Selling Exhibition Returns to Woodstock

The Oxfordshire County Museum at Woodstock will again be hosting a selling exhibition by some of the county's leading contemporary craft designers and makers. Admission to the show in the museum's Garden Gallery is free. This is a wonderful opportunity to see an array of crafts including furniture, glass jewellery, pottery, textiles, woodturning and much else. It is also a chance to buy something special to give at Christmas—something crafted by hand with a flare and design that you won't find in the usual commercial outlets. The show starts on Saturday, November 24th and runs through to Sunday, the 6th of January. There will be a 10% discount on all purchases at the Craft Guild show throughout the opening weekend, the 24th and 25th of November. Also on that first Saturday there will be a Candlelit Evening throughout Woodstock, and the show will remain open until 7 pm for this special event.

Opening times are: Tuesday to Saturday 10:00-5:00; Sundays 2:00-5:00. (The museum is closed on Mondays, on the 25th and 26th of December, and on New Year's Day, Tuesday, 1st of January.) Refreshments are available in the museum coffee shop.

Membership of the Oxfordshire Craft Guild is by selection based on the need to display the finest design ability and quality of workmanship. Thus the artists taking part in this show are amongst the best craft makers in the county. For details of the unique work they are doing or for any further information, please contact: Tam Frishberg Tel: 01865 454274 tam.frishberg@ntlworld.com

You can also go to the Craft Guild website www.oxfordshirecraftguild.com where you will find images and thumbnail descriptions of the artists' work.



CHARLBURY WEATHER: From One Extreme to the Other

John Stanley's quarterly report

Last time, I reported that we had three consecutive months of below average temperatures. We can now make that six!

In **August**, daytime maximum temperatures ranged from 61° on 20th to 80° - yes, we eventually did manage to get just one - on 5th. Night figures ranged between 48° and 59°. The month daytime average was 69.10°, compared with 72.08° for the 1989 to 2006 period.

With June, July and August all recording below average levels, it will come as no surprise to learn that, at 68.92°, the summer months of 2007 were the coldest in the 19 year period that these records have been kept. The 18 year average was 71.69°. An unusual feature is the fact that, despite being a little below its own average, June was the warmest month in 2007. This is the first time since 1992 that the honour has not gone to July or August.

September followed the cool trend with daytime maximum temperatures ranging from 54° on 26th and 27th to 73° on 7th. Night figures ranged from 39° to 58°. The month daytime average was 64.50°, compared with 65.10° for the 1989 to 2006 period.

October did try its best to change the trend. The first 17 days were pleasantly warm, averaging almost 60°. Then, temperatures dropped, with the final 14 days only averaging about 53°. Daytime temperatures ranged from 50° on four consecutive days from 22nd to 25th up to 63° on 3rd and 13th. Night values ranged from 34° to 54°. The daytime average for the whole month was 56.58°, compared with 56.79° for the 1989 to 2006 period.

Liz and Bob Tait would like to thank everyone who supported their Macmillan Coffee Morning on Friday, September 28th. They are delighted to report that they made £712.20p

CHARLBURY MUSEUM

The Museum will be closed for the winter months, but can still be visited by special arrangement with the Curator, Ron Prew (Tel: 810060).

The Museum has recently acquired an old gas lamp from Charlbury Station. This will be on display next year.

Charles Tyzack



KNITTED NATIVITY

She was not one you'd notice in a crowd,
Not even on a crowded country bus,
A small plain woman in a knitted hat,
Her fingers busy with some coloured wools.
While people round her chatted local news
Or moaned about the crowded Christmas streets.
Knit one, purl two, purl the two together

I was so tired of all the Christmas rush,
Spent and spent up in busy Advent shops.
It all seemed waste of precious time and cash,
Buying for folk I hardly ever see.
Christmas, which used to be a special time
Had now become quite meaningless to me.
And still the little woman's needles flew.
Knit one, slip one, pass the slipstitch over

But then, on Christmas Eve,
Waiting for yet another local bus,
I slipped into a little empty church,
For warmth, not looking there to find
Something to lift my spirits, cheer my heart.
I've seen so many lovely manger scenes,
In city church, or abbey far abroad,
Costly, exotic, oft with inlaid gems ...
But here beneath a knitted stable roof
(I ask you, knitted manger in a church!)
Were little figures, fashioned just from wool
Knit three, purl two, purl the two together

There were four shepherds in their rustic clothes,
The garments proof against the cold night air.
One of them held a white and curly lamb,
While round them gathered knitted cows and hens.
Brilliant in majesty stood three noble kings,
Clad in fine purples, red and gleaming gold,
Their precious presents held in darkish hands ...
And all were fashioned with a woman's skill
Knit four, slip one, pass the slipstitch over.

I gazed in wonder at the tiny folk,
But most of all enraptured by the pair
Who knelt beside the knitted manger there.

A man in homely garments and his wife,
Her face alight with joy, while in the crib
A tiny knitted child stretched infant arms
To me, who stared in awe upon the scene.
And suddenly I knew that it is true.
God came to simple people long ago
In form of baby boy .. And still he comes.

Forget the outward signs, the lights
And feasting, Christmas trees and such.
A simple woman, on a country bus
Had made it real to me that Christ was born
To ordinary people long ago.
And still He comes, in simple human ways.
Use us, knit us, blend us all together

Dee Moss

CORNER HOUSE NEWS

There are over 60 regular users of the Corner House and Memorial Hall and we need to know how to get in contact with you!

Please can the secretaries or contact person of the various clubs, societies and classes make themselves known, with contact details to the Chairman, Stephen Andrews either by email: stephen.andrews@phonecoop.coop - or in writing to the Corner House.

We are attempting to set up an enduring database for the Committee to consult and communicate with all our 'customers'.
Steve Andrews

A SPECIAL OCCASION AT ST MARY'S

The church splendidly full, the organ playing, the choir in full voice, a long procession of robed clergy and ministers - and all this on a weekday evening. It was certainly a very special occasion in St Mary's church: the service, on October 9th, for the licensing of the Revd Judy French as Area Dean, conducted by the Bishop of Dorchester, with the Archdeacon of Oxford also present.

The Bishop preached, emphasising that Judy's 'flock' would now be much enlarged, but reassuring the St Mary's congregation that she herself would not be required to be a personal 'good shepherd' to all the clergy and all the church members in the eight benefices in the Chipping Norton Deanery.

Afterwards, we all stood around enjoying wine and cake, along with those who had joined us from the other four 'Churches Together in Charlbury'. When one or two people asked me 'What is a Rural Dean?' I explained that it is the same role as was once called Rural Dean, will last for five years and involve liaising with others in the Oxford Diocese, running the Deanery Synod (helped by a Lay Chair and a Secretary) and keeping a pastoral eye on the (often over-worked) clergy. We in St Mary's know that Judy will be good at all this, particularly at chairing the quarterly Synod meetings and diplomatically sorting out any problems. We shall be sorry that she won't be quite so readily available to sort us out when we need her, but all the same we are delighted that she has been chosen for this important position.

Penny Nairne

A SPECIAL OCCASION AT ST TERESA'S

His Grace the Archbishop of Birmingham, the Most Reverend Vincent Nichols, was in Charlbury recently to visit the Church of St Teresa of Lisieux. The Church was originally purchased in 1931. When the Rt Rev Monsignor Vaughan Morgan CBE, was appointed to the parish in 1997 it was decided that the Church needed to be extensively renovated and enlarged. An Appeal was launched to raise the necessary funds, and the work was completed in 2000. The Archbishop came to formally dedicate it on Sunday Sept 24th. The previous evening, the Fathers and choir from the Oxford Oratory came to sing Solemn First Vespers, and on the following day the Archbishop celebrated the High Mass of dedication attended by many parishioners and by the Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, Mr Hugo Brunner and the Deputy Lieutenant, Mr Richard Lethbridge and their wives. Following the service of dedication there was a luncheon for over a hundred parishioners and guests in Charlbury Memorial Hall.

Monsignor Morgan is leaving Charlbury this month and moving to Oxford after over ten years as parish priest at St Teresa's, and the warm good wishes of all his parishioners go with him for a long and happy retirement. St Teresa's new parish priest is the Very Rev Canon David Evans, Ph.L, a former Episcopal Vicar, and Vice Rector of Oscott College in Birmingham.

The death at the age of 93 years was recently announced of Father Robert Bulbeck, SJ for many years Parish Priest of St Teresa's. He died on October 18th.

May he rest in peace

Report from District Councillor Glena Chadwick: email chadwick@glena.plus.com or telephone 810555

The aftermath of the floods has been one of the main issues at WODC in the last few months. A payment of £250 was paid to every household where flood water had entered the house; that amounted to 1631 homes in West Oxfordshire, and more money was allocated in cases of substantial damage. This would obviously not cover the whole damage or take the place of adequate insurance but it was hoped that it would give some immediate help. Debriefings and consultations have been held and the information gathered, both from those affected and from a range of advisors, has been discussed and analysed. Many people, particularly older people who know the area well, said to me and to other councillors elsewhere, that one problem was the number of choked culverts and ditches. This alone would not have stopped the flooding but could have alleviated it. £75,000 is going to be spent on engineering works and a survey to plot who is responsible for each water course, (which might be private landowners, Oxfordshire County Council, WODC or the Environment Agency) and to then ensure that they maintain them. £50,000 is going to be spent on immediate clearing and maintenance. All these monies are coming from the Flood Recovery Grant.

The role of scrutiny committees, which I mentioned in September, was discussed at an excellent evening's seminar and these ideas will be carried forward by a working party that has just been formed. It was regretted by many that this group was constituted in a politically proportional way which rather seemed to defeat its purpose but we shall see.

I have been concerned for years with the length of time that disabled or frail people need to wait to have grants to adapt their houses. This has been largely due to the grave shortage of occupational therapists who need to make home visits before these grants can be made. This could cause delays of over a year while people existed in pain or even died before the matter was resolved. To alleviate this a 'fast track' has been set up to deal with minor adaptations (like grab rails) but which still make a great difference, without the need for the full assessment. Also WODC is going to ask the Oxfordshire County Council if O.T.s from the voluntary sector could be used. Both these measures should help to speed up what, at the moment, is still a very slow process.

New waste arrangements and decisions have to be made by the end of this year. All the options continue to be reviewed and a briefing session was held in October. The main objective is to reduce what goes to landfill, to recycle as much as possible and to minimise rubbish in the first place. The scheme that is set in place also has to be as carbon friendly as possible (i.e. the right sort of vehicles and not too many 'vehicle movements') and affordable. Watch this space !!!

Report from District Councillor Mike Breakell: email mjbreakell@aol.com or telephone 01993 868201

West Oxfordshire is now preparing its Local Development Framework which will ultimately replace the approved Local Plan and so encourage us all to look forward to wards the year 2025. Landowners and local communities have already been asked to suggest sites for future development and these will then be analysed by the Councils officers prior to public consultation in 2008...

Under the existing District Plan there is enough land already allocated to meet housing demand for the next seven years but we still await a final Government decision on the South East Plan and changing market conditions may well affect matters too. However in places like Charlbury and Finstock the allocation of additional land for 'affordable' housing is likely to be an important ongoing issue for years to come. .

The new Sustainable Community Strategy raises important issues too. Just what is a sustainable community anyway? How many and what type of shops, what level of provision of health, education, public, or other social services, how many and what type of shops, and how much public transport, are all issues that may concern us, as well as more specific problems relating to traffic or parking or water levels..

We are fortunate that this part of West Oxfordshire is such an attractive area with a strong, if small business economy. In the past decade there has been a surge in real estate, renting, and business companies locally, whilst almost 25% of us now work from home. We have almost the lowest unemployment and crime rates in South East England, but we have had a huge increase in car ownership and a growing number of older people both living longer and coming to reside locally. As a result there are fewer younger people particularly in smaller communities and there is often a lack of facilities for young and old alike. In Charlbury we are fortunate in having a thriving social scene with more community facilities envisaged in due course. As we approach 2008 this should lead to even more community involvement in these important issues that affect us all. I

Report from County Councillor Sue Haffenden

sue.haffenden@oxfordshire.gov.uk

We are sorry to learn that Sue Haffenden is suffering from a prolapsed disc and has been prescribed three weeks bed rest. We send her our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Here is a resume of her recent report to the members of Charlbury Town Council:

'Mrs Haffenden reported that OCC had considered issues related to the Local Development Framework and sustainability. Planning control is essential to combat 'developer greed'. A flooding debriefing had taken place to identify good and bad aspects of OCC response. Signage at Taston turn to be improved for safety. Meeting to consider The Slade held in order to input to the School Travel Plan.

The footpath between The Playing Close and Sheep Street

This footpath has now been confirmed as a public right of way and as such will be added to the definitive map. The land, over which the path runs, remains in private ownership and the Town Council would be grateful if users continue to respect that fact. It has taken about 8 years to establish this due to the necessary process of law and the shortage of staff in County Hall charged with dealing with such matters. The lower portion of the path, behind the Sheep Street shops, has now been cleared of debris and tidied up. The Town Council are grateful to those persons who provided evidence of use to the landowners and the Officers who dealt with the matter.

*Roger Clark,
Charlbury Town Clerk*

Chancellors Scoop another 2 Awards

The Chancellors Group of Estate Agents which includes Anscombe & Ringland and Russell Baldwin & Bright has won a further 2 awards at the prestigious Daily Mail UK Property Awards 2007 to add to the 8 they won last year.

The successes were Best Estate Agency for Chancellors Oxfordshire and Best Estate Agency Russell Baldwin & Bright Herefordshire, gaining an impressive five-star rating in each category, the highest available!

Managing Director, Robert Scott-Lee said "These awards are recognition of the expertise and dedication of all our staff who are committed to making us No1 in all our markets. This commitment and a range of highly innovative services in the areas of Sales, Lettings and Property Management mean that we are able to offer our clients a comprehensive and high quality service".

Commercial Director, Colin Pink explains "This is the second time Chancellors have won best Oxfordshire Agent in the last three years, which clearly demonstrates consistency and depth to our offering across the 17 Oxfordshire offices. We are also delighted to have won Best Agent in Herefordshire, as this is the second major award that Russell Baldwin and Bright have won in the last two years, winning Best Agent Powys last year and also shows the strength of the 8 offices across the two counties".

The Chancellors Group of Estate Agents is one of the UK's leading independent Estate Agents with 50 networked offices across London, The South East and Mid-Wales. Chancellors are a member of Home Sale Network, the national network of approaching 750 selected, independent estate agents in towns and cities all over Britain working together to assist families buying and selling property nationwide"



CHARLBURY TOWN COUNCIL REPORT No. 45

by Councillor Trevor Jones

Charlbury Housing Needs Survey: The Town Council would like to thank the Editor of the *Charlbury Chronicle* and its distributors for making sure that every known address in Charlbury received a copy of the survey in September. The form should have been returned by now. However if you have forgotten to fill it in and want to then do so now. If you want to take part in the survey and never received a form then please contact the Town Clerk on 810608. The District Council will not consider building further affordable social housing in the Town unless a Housing Needs Survey has been carried out for the Town Council by the Oxfordshire Rural Communities Council. If you have an opinion on whether more such housing should be provided and where it should or should not be built, or if you need to live in this type of accommodation then you should complete and return the form attached to the survey letter as soon as you can. The Council looks forward to ORCC's analysis of the survey.

Local Development Framework: This is the new vehicle for Planning and Development for the period 2011-2028. The Town Council has submitted a detailed response to WODC. This can be seen by arrangement with the Town Clerk who can also advise you what to do if you have strong opinions on future development of all types in and around the town.

Brian Hodgson, who was the County Councillor for the Charlbury Division 1993-2005, died in August. He will be much missed and was a very effective representative for Charlbury and the surrounding area regardless of party politics.

Nine Acres Management Committee: John Merriman has retired as Chairman and none of the present committee members are prepared to take over from him. This important organisation needs a Chairperson to co-ordinate the management of Nine Acres Recreation Area on behalf of the Town Council. Anyone who would like to volunteer themselves or somebody else is asked to contact the Town Clerk who can also advise on what is involved.

Councillor Activities: Cllr Jones was appointed to judge the Street Fair Floats. Cllr Lethbridge laid the Town Council wreath at the War Memorial in St. Mary's Church on Remembrance Sunday.

Polling Stations: In the recent consultation about polling stations the Council decided that a single polling station in the War Memorial Hall is sufficient for Charlbury as there are no other suitable "public" buildings that are not in the centre of town.

Permissive Footpath Closures: The permissive footpaths on Wigwell Nature Reserve and Nine Acres Recreation Ground will be closed to the public on 9 January 2008. This is a legal requirement.

Local Government Elections: In May 2008 there will be elections for the whole Town Council (12 seats) and for the WODC seat currently held by Cllr. Glenna Chadwick (Lib Dem). It is nearly 8 years now since there was a proper election for the Town Council. There were not enough candidates in 2004. Let us hope that this situation never arises again. There are many issues currently facing the Town and it is known that some of the present councillors wish to retire next year so "new blood" is needed. For more information about the Council and how to stand as a candidate in the election please contact the Town Clerk.

Vandalism: Recent damage to new signs in the Mill Field has cost the Council about £1,000. This money comes out of your Council Tax. Anybody with information is asked to contact the Police on 0845 850 5505.

Charlbury Town Council would like to wish all residents a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year

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