

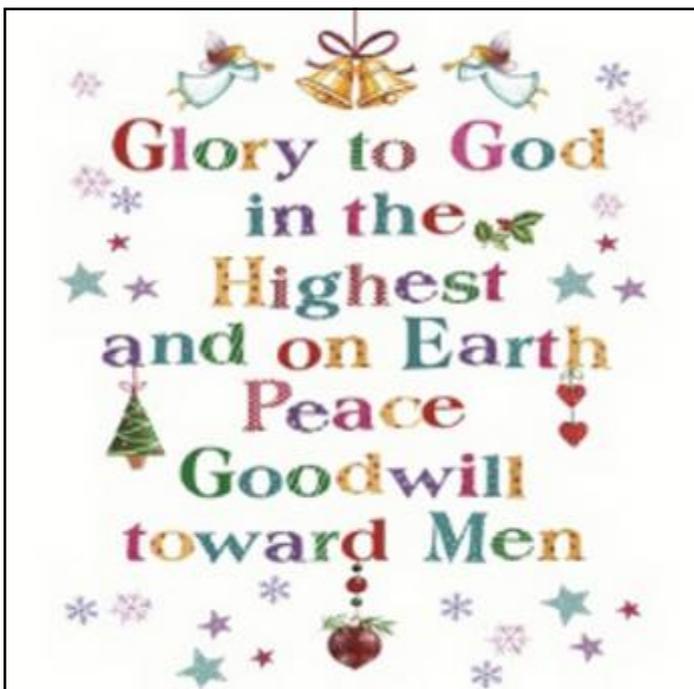
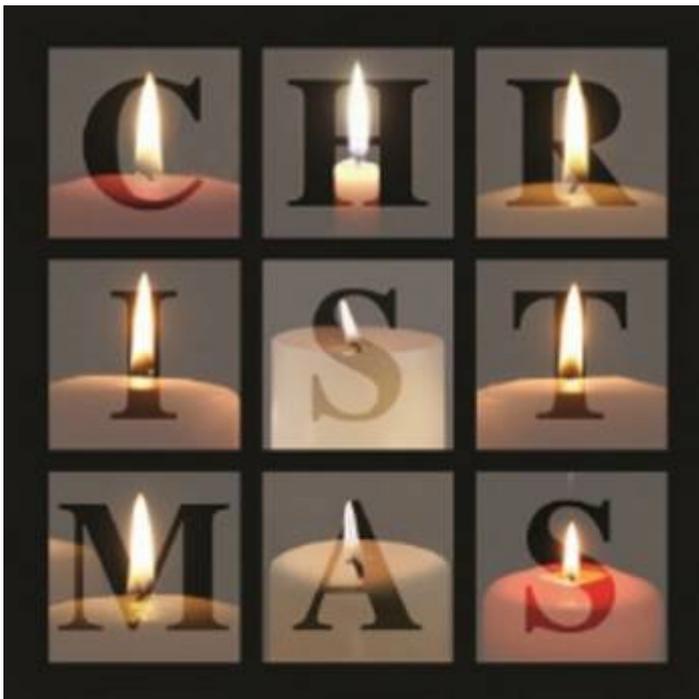
Valley News

December 2012

No 204

News & Views from the Cherwell Valley

Wishing all our readers a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year



Church Services in the Valley

	Ardley St Mary's	Fritwell St Olave's	Lower Heyford & Caulcott St Mary's	Somerton St James	Souldern ABVM	Upper Heyford St Mary's Chapel	
2-Dec	9:30 Family Worship Communion - Ardley						11:00 Contemporary Worship
9-Dec	9:30 CW Family Communion	08:30 1662 HC	11:00 Family Worship 'The Christmas Story'	9:30 Sunday Club	11:00 CW Sung Communion	9:30 Matins	11:00 Contemporary Worship
14-Dec						19:00 Lessons & Carols	
16-Dec	9:30 Morning Prayer	11:00 Lessons & Carols	11:00 Morning Prayer	09:30 Family Communion	08:30 1662 HC	9:30 Family Worship	11:00 Contemporary Worship
21-Dec					19:00 Lessons & Carols		
23-Dec	4:00 Lessons & Carols	18:00 Evensong	11:00 Family Service with Carols	9:30 Matins & HC with Carols	11:00 Morning Prayer	08:30 1662 HC	11:00 Contemporary Worship
24-Dec		23:00 Midnight Communion		4:00pm Nativity with Animals		23:00 Midnight Communion	
25-Dec	9:30 Christmas Communion		11:00 Christmas Communion	9:30 Christmas Communion	11:00 Christmas Communion		11:00 Christmas Service
30-Dec	9.30 Joint Benefice Service - Souldern						11:00 Communion
6-Jan	08:30 1662 HC	11:00 Family Worship	11:00 1662 Communion		11:00 Matins	9:30 Trad Lang Communion	11:00 Contemporary Worship
13-Jan	9:30 Family Communion	08:30 1662 HC	11:00 Family Worship	9:30 Sunday Club	11:00 CW Communion	9:30 Matins	11:00 Contemporary Worship
20-Jan	9:30 Morning Prayer	11:00 Family Worship Communion	11:00 Morning Prayer	09:30 Matins & HC	08:30 1662 HC	9:30 Family Worship	11:00 Contemporary Worship
27-Jan	9:30 Family Worship	6:00 Evensong	11:00 Family Communion	9:30 Family Worship Communion Christingle	10:30 Cafe & Christ	08:30 1662 HC	11:00 Contemporary Worship

Services described as 1662, Matins or Evensong follow the traditional form as laid out in The Book of Common Prayer.

Services described as CW (Common Worship) use modern language and follow the revised form given in the Common Worship Service and Prayer Book.

Services described as Family Worship or Contemporary Worship are suitable for all ages, including children.

Valley News is delivered FREE to every household in:
Caulcott – Heyford Park – Lower Heyford
Somerton – Upper Heyford

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Also published on line, Google, Upper Heyford Parish Council and click on Valley News

The Cherwell Valley Benefice in the Diocese of Oxford www.cherwellvalleybenefice.org.uk

For further details about services or requests concerning baptisms, weddings or funerals please contact the benefice office

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Mr. John Hine (LLM)	01869 278565	john@hineandco.com
Benefice Office	01869 233687	administrator@cherwellvalleybenefice.org.uk

Dear Friends,

I Christmas is a time of myths and miracles.

Some of the myths we willingly embrace – like Santa Claus or St. Nicholas. Personally I can't remember a time when I believed in an actual Father Christmas, although I do remember spotting Nanny Green at the end of my bed with a sack of presents late one Christmas Eve! I guess I am the sort of child who never took anything at face value, but understood the value of playing along with the story.

St. Nicholas was a real person, although it is hard to verify many of the stories about him. However the meaning behind them speaks to us still today. Nicholas lived in the fourth century, and from a young age was very pious, fasting every Wednesday and Friday as was the practice of the early church. Having lost his wealthy Christian parents he was brought up by his uncle, who encouraged him in his vocation as he became a Reader and later a Priest and a Bishop. He is known as Nicholas the Wonderworker, having many miracles attributed to his name, and is a patron saint of sailors, merchants, archers, thieves, students and of course children.

On one occasion he is recorded saving a group of children from a cannibalistic butcher, who had salted them in barrels to be sold as meat, but St. Nicholas caught the butcher and restored the children to life. The most famous story revolves around three girls for who their poor father could not afford a dowry, and so they were threatened with being forced into prostitution. Nicholas provided the poor man with enough money for a dowry for the girls, a purse of gold for each child delivered through an open window. A later legend suggests he dropped the gold down the chimney where it fell into the daughters stockings they had hung up to dry by the fire – although chimneys did not exist in 4th Century Lycia where Nicholas lived!

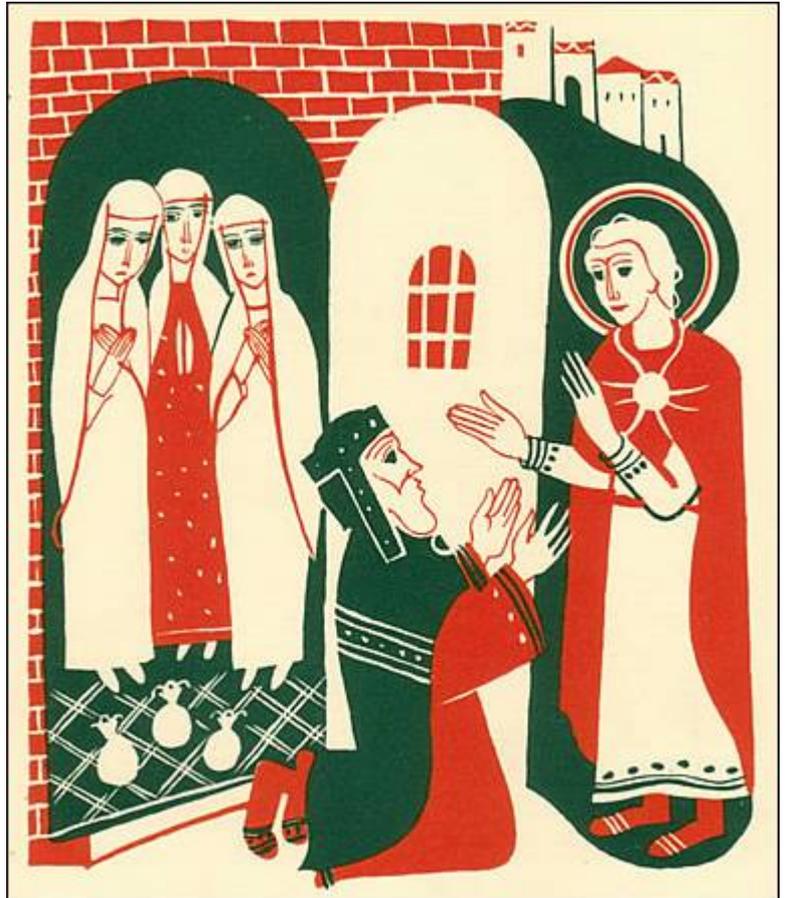
Nicholas then was a preserver of childhood innocence, something we value at Christmas especially, and something that seems to have been eroded in our culture. Nicholas reminds us however that there have always been those who would use their power to abuse the trust of young people, and as a whole society we have a responsibility to educate and protect our youngest and most vulnerable members. The actions of a few however must not cause us to live in fear - there are many modern day St. Nicholas' helping our children: teachers, youth workers, uniformed organisations, charities and social workers as well of course as parents and families - we should be thankful for all they do.

In one version of the legend of the three girl's dowry, our saint is caught by the father, who asks him why he is giving the money in secret. The response is natural and obvious; Nicholas wished the glory and praise to go to God and not to him. Nicholas may be at the heart of our Christmas celebrations in the form of Father Christmas, but he would not want our attention to linger on him. He devoted his life to Christ and would want us to do the same.

The Christ Mass is a very special time for Christians; we celebrate not the myth but the miracle of Christ - God with us in the flesh. We do so through the Mass, the offering of bread and wine in which Jesus promised he would be truly present with us until he returns. It is a deep and powerful wonder that is worked among us when we gather at this feast, be it at midnight or on Christmas morning. We should come to Holy Communion as we always come, prepared and anticipating an encounter with God as we join with Angels, Archangels, St. Nicholas and all the saints in heavenly worship.

May you and your families have a blessed Christmas, filled with the joy of the Christ Child and the presence of the Holy Spirit to the glory of the Father. Amen.

Eddie



OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Schools Admissions, County Hall, Oxford OX1 1ND

Tel: 01865 815175

Email: admissions.schools@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Infant or primary school applications

Important

You must still apply for an infant or primary school place even if your child already attends a nursery school class attached to that school.

For children born between **1 September 2008 and 31 August 2009** (inclusive), you must apply for a school place for entry in the academic year beginning September 2013. The closing date is **15 January 2013**.

Infant or primary school applications

Important

You must still apply for an infant or primary school place even if your child already attends a nursery school class attached to that school.

Key dates

Timetable for **on-time** school admissions application process

- **18 September 2012** - online applications open
- **15 January 2013** - closing date for on-time applications
- 16 April 2013 - email or letter offering a school place will be sent out (allow 2-3 working days for delivery)
- 7 May 2013 - deadline to accept places offered or placing names on waiting list (continued interest list)
- September 2013 - your child starts primary or infant school

Additional timetable for **late** applications:

- 14 May 2013 - late applications and those who have requested to be on waiting lists will be processed
- 11 June 2013 - Letter offering school place sent to late applicants (allow 2-3 working days for delivery)
- 29 June 2013 Deadline for receipt of late applications
- Acceptance forms and for placing names on 'continued interest' waiting lists.

How do I apply?

Before you apply make sure you have read the [admissions process \(pdf format, 233 Kb\)](#) so you fully understand our admission process, rules and criteria. Apply using only **one** of the following ways:

Apply online - It's quick, easy and secure to apply online. It also means you can start, save and complete your application any time up to the closing date of **15 January 2013**.

HEYFORD PARK FREE SCHOOL

The Secretary of State for Education has approved the opening of two new free schools but the Funding Agreements have not yet been signed. You can [apply online](#) or on paper for a place at **Heyford Park Free School** for entry to Foundation Stage (F1) or Year 7 in September 2013. Further details can be found in the [Heyford Park document \(pdf format, 54Kb\)](#).

A reference booklet called 'Starting School' is published on the County Council website and printed copies are available in all primary and infant schools, Children's Centres and libraries.

LOWER HEYFORD

Bell ringing

Have you ever thought of becoming a Bell ringer? If so, Lower Heyford and Somerton would like you to join us. If you are over 13yrs of age and can commit to practice regularly, we want to hear from you. We practice once a week on alternative Thursdays and Fridays. If you are interested please contact myself on 01869 340772 or via e-mail gay_hawkins247@btinternet.com

Hand Bells

Does any parishioner know the where abouts of Lower Heyfords hand bells? They used to hang in the bell tower all 12 of them. These bells are a delight to have at Christmas time especially, it would be lovely if we could locate them. I expect they were removed from the tower for safe keeping as they are a very valuable asset! Or they may have been loaned to another church. Please get in touch if you have any information either to myself on the above details or speak to either Rev. Edward Green or Eric Ball. Gay Hawkins

Jubilee Tree

The Parish Council have been discussing the possibility of planting a tree to mark the Jubilee year and would like to know the views of residents of the village, as to whether people think it is a good idea and what type of tree would be most suitable. The possible site for a tree would be on the grassed area in front of the old Village Hall, which the current owners of the hall have agreed in principle.

If you have any views on this, please contact the Parish Clerk, Cathy Fleet by email clerk@heyford.info, by phone 01869 347000 or by post at Westfield Farm Cottage, Fenway, Steeple Aston, Bicester, Oxon OX25 4SS

The Heyfords WI

Another busy month for the Heyfords WI during October. We had our monthly meeting on the 17th when Amanda Wood spoke to us about "The Last Great Gold Rush", explaining about the hundreds of thousands of people who hoped to make their fortune during the Yukon Gold Rush between 1896 and 1899. Sadly because of the harsh conditions the majority of people never even managed to get to the gold fields.

On Saturday 20th October we had a craft table at Charlton on Otmoor Craft Fair, where we sold various items ranging from Soft Toys, Jewellery and Handmade boxes.

On Wednesday 24th October it was our turn to host our Group Meeting. We started the meeting with updates of each group's news and then Betty Page entertained us with her "Talking Hats", a series of monologues whilst wearing different hats and accessories. This was followed by refreshments, a book sale, and a raffle. A thoroughly enjoyable evening.

We will be making wreaths at our November meeting and then in December we will be going out for a meal.

If you would like to come and join us at our meetings we meet on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at Upper Heyford Reading Room starting at 7.30pm.

The Heyfords WI wishes " Seasons Greetings " to all Valley News readers.

Final date for copy

Copy for the February issue required by 19th January, but please, if possible, don't leave it to the last minute!

What's going on at Cherwell District Council?

Councillor Calling

The **Housing Register** became the unexpected big issue this month. The council's policy for allocating affordable homes (formerly council houses, now transferred to Registered Social Landlords – Housing Associations, as was – mainly Sanctuary in Cherwell District) to those on the Housing Register, which we have a statutory duty to maintain, is reviewed every year to make sure it is as fair as it can be. Frankly, it's an impossible task to satisfy everyone: how do you prioritise the immediately homeless versus the long waiter, the disabled versus the safeguarded child, the injured soldier versus the hospital discharge, the victim of violence versus the family with no space for children.... You try!

Over years of agonising and fine-tuning, we have evolved as fair a scheme as we can, based on five priority "bands". Unfortunately, there have been many among the 4,000 on the housing register whose claims will, in practice, never come good, because there will always be those in far greater need coming on to the list as fast as homes become vacant – new affordable homes form about 30% of all new building, but that's only about 100 a year in the district, and the rest relies on death, downsizing and moving away. The total comes to roughly 600 a year and 4,000 into 600 doesn't go.

This system does nobody any favours as it holds out false hope to some 2,800 people in the lowest two categories of need, while tying up specialist staff in maintaining the register instead of devoting their time to solving the housing problems of those in desperate need. So the decision has been taken, under new powers conferred by the Localism Act, to drop the two lowest bands and focus all resources on the worst-off three.

So far so sensible: a few protests about "massaging the numbers" were inevitable (oppositions are there to oppose!) but, once explained properly, nobody is actually the worse for an injection of reality into the system – except, possibly, in this ward: hence my sudden call to action!

The potential trap I spotted was up at Heyford Park. Here there are three hundred families in former US service accommodation rented on short leases. Many are in what you or I would call "housing need" because they find town centre rents and mortgages unaffordable but, if you can afford the rents at Upper Heyford and are therefore not homeless, you aren't, technically, in the sort of "housing need" that qualifies for the top three bands on the register.

A bit of history, now: when the plans for Upper Heyford were becoming clear, quite some years ago now, I realised that it would be ridiculous (and cruel) for the current residents, who form a strong and settled community, to be turfed out when their homes came up for redevelopment and 300 new people brought in from Banbury and Bicester for the 303 affordable homes to be provided out of the 1,075 given planning permission. I drew on my experience of some 30 years on the boards of Housing Associations to press Cherwell into developing a "Local Lettings Plan", under which preference is given legally to existing residents. All they had to do was to register themselves on the Housing List and, as Heyford Park residents, they could transfer without leaving when the time comes.

So, you see the problem: this perfectly reasonable (for most of the 56,000 households in Cherwell) trimming of the lower bands of the register might inadvertently remove the 300 Upper Heyford people technically not in great "housing need" and thus stymie the Local Lettings Plan – panic!!

But, like all good Christmas stories, there's a happy ending. I've now had confirmation that: "the new Allocation Scheme should not penalise Upper Heyford residents in any way. A separate list will be maintained following the implementation of the new Allocation Scheme. All Heyford residents identified as 'qualifying' for 'new affordable housing options' at Heyford following the survey carried out in April 2012 will be on the list. Cherwell officers are currently working with Dorchester [the owner] and Bovis [the developer] to monitor progress regarding the 303 affordable homes promised". So, all is well: the Local Lettings Plan carries on and the changes to the Allocations policy will make no difference to those awaiting the provision of affordable homes at Heyford Park.

And that, of course, is precisely the point of being a local councillor and I make no apologies for being parochial – occasionally extremely so. Sometimes 300 houses can be overlooked when change is afoot for 56,000 and it's a privilege to be in a position to spot such a glitch before a policy is approved and set in stone. Happy Christmas!

James Macnamara



A Way of Caring

Registered Charity No 297099
East End
Adderbury
OX17 3NL

Grimethorpe Colliery Brass Band

Back by popular demand and tickets are selling well! Grimethorpe Colliery Band will be back at St Mary's Church in Banbury on Saturday 16th March (7.30pm) next year. Entrance is by ticket only and can be purchased from the Box Office at Katharine House Hospice by calling 01295 812161.

Stuck for an idea for a gift?

What do you buy for the person who has everything? A gift membership to the Katharine House Hospice Lottery of course! Simply download the form from the lottery page of our website www.khh.org.uk and return this to the hospice. Unless otherwise requested, we will send you an acknowledgment for your application together with the Gift Voucher and Welcome Letter for you to send to the person you have nominated.

We're on Facebook!

Our Facebook page is up and running and has regular updates about fundraising events, lottery results and general Hospice news! You can find us at www.facebook.com/katharinehouse.

NEWS & VIEWS FROM THE CHERWELL VALLEY

Upper Heyford Film Night Christmas Special.

It's a Wonderful Life
(a winter heart warming film)

On Friday 21st December 2012 at 7:45pm (ish)
Upper Heyford Reading Room



Join us for the usual delayed start, confused raffle and a multitude of snacks and drinks including Mulled Wine and Minced Pies.

Please contact Craig Lord, 07764992107
or e-mail craig.lord@btinternet.com for more details.



A Country Christmas
MIDDLE ASTON HOUSE
OXFORDSHIRE OX25 5PT
FRIDAY 7TH DECEMBER 2012, 7.30-10PM
ENTRY £2

COME AND ENJOY AN EVENING OF FESTIVE SHOPPING IN
THE BEAUTIFUL SETTING OF MIDDLE ASTON HOUSE
ALL PROCEEDS TO STEEPLE ASTON PRE-SCHOOL, CHARITY NUMBER 304376

Village and Country Life

A date for your new diary!
On Sunday, January 27th. 2013
at 6.00 pm in the Reading Room,
Upper Heyford.

An entertainment by the village Poetry Group of verse and prose reading, both serious and comic, based loosely on the delights of rural life. Lasts about an hour and a half. Not suitable for young children.

Entry is free and includes a glass of wine.

Everyone welcome!

Let us chase away the January blues. Don't miss out. Bring your sense of humour with you and have a fun time.

All donations to village funds.



Lower Heyford Village Events Committee Proudly
Present

Christmas Carols in the Village Square
(In the Church if weathers bad)

Come along and sing with the Bletchington Band
Free Mince Pies and Mulled Wine

Friday 21st December 2012
7.30pm onwards



BRACKLEY MALE VOICE CHOIR

A Concert of Carols & Seasonal Songs

St. James Church Somerton
Friday 7 December 7.30 p.m.
(doors open at 7.00pm)

Tickets £5 in advance. £6 on the door

Available from Malcolm Arnold
to include a glass of wine, mince pie and refreshments.
All profits to go to St. James Church.

Tel. Malcolm 01869 345439 e-mail deddlib@hotmail.com

Festival of Christmas
Saturday 8th December 12 noon
St Olave, Fritwell

Hot Punch, Craft Fair & Gifts, Raffle & Tombola,
Children's Activities, Christmas Songs, Minced Pies &
Mulled Wine

The Poetry Corner—War Poetry

I suppose that for most of us the term “War Poetry” conjures up the poets and poetry of the First World War. We remember poets such as Laurence Binyon, Wilfred Owen, Rupert Brooke and Siegfried Sassoon. Poetry has, however, been written during all wars and, indeed, continues to be written in current wars, including Afghanistan today. The poem I want to highlight in this article, however, was written just after the Siege of Badajos in 1812.

The Siege of Badajos was one of the bloodiest battles of the whole Napoleonic Wars. A force of British and Portuguese troops under command of the then Earl of Wellington eventually captured the town which had been held by the French, but at enormous human cost to both sides. When the British and Portuguese eventually breached the walls they had to climb over the bodies of their dead comrades to enter the town and it was said that blood flowed like rivers in the ditches and trenches. The victorious troops then embarked on three days of looting, rape and murder, including the killing of many of their own officers who tried to restrain them, before discipline could be restored. This was one of the worst atrocities ever committed by British troops.

The poem, *Faithless Nelly Gray* by Thomas Hood recounts the fate of a soldier, Ben Battle, who lost both legs in the battle but survives and returns to England.

I first came across this poem whilst still at school, probably in 1959 or 1960, and I still remember being amazed by the technical skill of the poet as he tells what is essentially a tragic story in an apparently light hearted - but never heartless - way. Hood was well known for his use of puns in his writing and they absolutely abound in this poem. Far from trivialising the story, however, they seem to me to help to maintain the momentum of the narrative and to keep the interest of the reader.

An aspect of the poem that I certainly did not understand as a schoolboy, however, was the effect that disfigurement, and society's response to that disfigurement, has on soldiers returning from foreign wars. It is clear in the poem that Ben expects to be received kindly and enthusiastically by his erstwhile lover, Nelly Gray. Nelly's response, however, is complete and utter rejection – “*I will never have a man With both legs in the grave*” – obviously on account of his disfigurement.

As a result of this rejection, compounded no doubt by some of the horrific scenes he had witnessed in Badajos, Ben clearly becomes clinically depressed and eventually hangs himself. Even after death, however, society continues to reject this man who had served his country loyally when the coroner's jury (“*A dozen men...*”) brings in a verdict of suicide and his body is denied burial in consecrated ground.

As medical advances have led to the survival of more and more seriously wounded and disfigured soldiers, the problems signalled in *Faithless Nelly Gray* have increased both numerically and in severity and the poem foretells of the great challenge to today's Defence Medical Services, today's National Health Service and, indeed, today's society as a whole. The poem's apparent light heartedness conceals remarkable prescience on the part of its author. *Bob Menzies*

FAITHLESS NELLY GRAY

Thomas Hood 1799-1845

Ben Battle was a soldier bold,
And used to war's alarms;
But a cannon-ball took off his legs,
So he laid down his arms.

Now as they bore him off the field,
Said he, 'Let others shoot;
For here I leave my second leg,
And the Forty-second Foot.'

The army-surgeons made him limbs:
Said he, 'They're only pegs;
But there's as wooden members quite,
As represent my legs.'

Now Ben he loved a pretty maid, —
Her name was Nelly Gray;
So he went to pay her his devours,
When he devoured his pay.

But when he called on Nelly Gray,
She made him quite a scoff;
And when she saw his wooden legs,
Began to take them off.

'O Nelly Gray! O Nelly Gray!
Is this your love so warm?
The love that loves a scarlet coat
Should be a little more uniform.

Said she, 'I loved a soldier once,
For he was blithe and brave;
But I will never have a man
With both legs in the grave

'Before you had those timber toes
Your love I did allow;
But then, you know, you stand upon
Another footing now.'

'O Nelly Gray! O Nelly Gray!
For all your jeering speeches,
At duty's call I left my legs
In Badajos's breaches.'

'Why, then,' said she, 'you've lost the
feet
Of legs in war's alarms,
And now you cannot wear your shoes
Upon your feats of arms!'

'O false and fickle Nelly Gray!
I know why you refuse:
Though I've no feet, some other man
Is standing in my shoes.

'I wish I ne'er had seen your face;
But, now, a long farewell!
For you will be my death' — alas!
You will not be my Nell!'

Now when he went from Nelly Gray
His heart so heavy got,
And life was such a burden grown,
It made him take a knot.

So round his melancholy neck
A rope he did intwine,
And, for his second time in life,
Enlisted in the Line.

One end he tied around a beam,
And then removed his pegs;
And, as his legs were off — of course
He soon was off his legs.

And there he hung till he was dead
As any nail in town;
For, though distress had cut him up,
It could not cut him down.

A dozen men sat on his corpse,
To find out why he died, —
And they buried Ben in four cross-
roads
With a stake in his inside.

LOWER HEYFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Lower Heyford Parish Council held on Thursday 20th September 2012 at 7pm in the Church

Present: - Mr Macnamara (Chair), Mrs. Ball (Vice Chair), Mr Mortimore, Mr Dare Members of the public: Mr. Mills, Mr & Mrs. Harris, Mr & Mrs Butterfield, Mr John

In attendance: Cathy Fleet (Clerk)

Apologies: Apologies had been received from Miss Hawkins

Declarations of Interest : Mrs. Ball declared an interest in the timber yard and Mr Dare declared an interest in the boat yard and Station Road

Minutes of the last meeting held on July 2012 were read and it was RESOLVED to accept these as a true record of the meeting and they were signed by the Chair.

09.12.01 Public Participation : All members of the public in attendance wished to discuss issues regarding the traffic on Station Road. Mr. Dare, having declared an interest, presented the issues. . The two main issues are volume and weight of traffic causing noise and vibration and structural damage and issues arising over the drains

Vibration and structural damage . The road was closed for some weeks at the beginning of the year and patch repairs made by hand which initially alleviated the problems of lorries bouncing and causing vibration. The patching was uneven and has now deteriorated to such an extent that the road is rutting severely and the carriageway is not fit for purpose. Since the bridge re-opened in 2006 to full weight lorries, the noise and vibration is causing buildings to shake and cracks to appear in the more vulnerable buildings. Speeding vehicles are causing more problems and the noise and vibration is significantly reduced in vehicles adhering to the 30mph limit. Mr. Mills reported that his house shakes and cracks are appearing in the walls. He has commissioned a structural survey and will inform the PC of the results. It is known that trains from the nearby railway line are not causing any vibration damage. The SID device, although not currently in place, had some effect on slowing down vehicles, although what is now required is a physical prevention of speeding .

Drains . Mr Dare has spoken to OCC and the Clerk has reported on many occasions problems caused by blocked drains. On 26th August and 4th November Mr Dare reported to OCC under Ref No 514098 that the boatyard was flooded by effluent due to drains not working properly and previous complaints not having been dealt with. Canal Cottage has been damaged by flood water and all storm drains appear to be blocked. Station Road floods regularly during severe weather.

It was agreed that Mr Macnamara write to the OCC Cabinet Member for transport with copies to Cllr Hallchurch, the OCC Leader, Sir Tony Baldry MP and others in the strongest possible terms requesting road resurfacing/rebuilding, drain clearance and rebuilding where necessary, including an adequate discharge system, manhole and gully replacement, traffic calming to enforce the 30mph limit or a 7.5t weight limit to cover all of Lower Heyford. ACTION : JJM

09.12.02 Clerk's Report

Drains – covered above

Kissing Gate - Following email communication OCC have said that the Kissing gate in Church lane is privately owned and should be dealt with accordingly. It was agreed that Dave Harris and Alistair Watson would repair the gate with Mr Dare supplying some materials.

Salt supplies - Clerk has received Proforma for salt supplies from OCC which will be returned. Supplies to be stored at the boatyard ACTION : CLERK

105 Freehold Street – Following lengthy discussion with Kate Walther by email, it appears that OCC are prepared to install posts outside 105 Freehold Street to protect the building from vehicles with the cost to be covered by the residents of 105 Freehold Street. Clerk to inform Mr & Mrs Parker.

ACTION : CLERK

Audit - covered later in these minutes

Charity - covered later in these minutes

Weeds on Long Bridge - Clerk has received email from OCC stating that there is no funding for weeding. The pavement from the station to the bridge has deteriorated so much as to be

dangerous to parents and children going to school in Steeple Aston and is also narrowed by overgrown vegetation. The PC want this rebuilt rather than just patched and the vegetation cleared to widen the path for prams and children. It was decided that the PC could take no action in weeding the bridge due to danger to unofficial workers and traffic of carrying out works in the carriageway, but will seek someone with the relevant insurance etc to carry out the work. ACTION : CLERK

Letter received re speeding at crossroads and request for mirror on Freehold Street - Clerk to respond ACTION : CLERK

09.12.03 Matters Arising

PC Brown will be attending the next meeting, and matters to be discussed with her will be: Speeding and how best to utilize the data taken from SID; Recent break-in at the boat yard

Jubilee tree - Clerk to insert item in Valley News ACTION : CLERK

Millennium seat - to be repaired when services of a Handyman have been secured

Progress on brackets for SID - the new brackets will be made and SID reinstated as soon as possible. ACTION DD/LT

09.12.04 Meetings - No meetings had been attended

09.12.05 Correspondence - Correspondence lists were circulated and discussed

09.12.06 Relief in Need Charity - A response had been received from Dr Clayton stating that all trustees are appointed by the PC. It was decided to request that the PC receive an annual report of the charity's activities to be presented at the Parish Council's Annual Meeting and that in the meantime a summary be provided to the PC of the Charity's aims and aspirations and a brief outline of the function of the charity. ACTION : CLERK

07.12.07 Planning

12/12/00914/F Dr Elliot, Quiet Waters, Station Road
SSRE & Porch – Approved

0001/LB Caulcott Farm, 25 South Street Demolish existing kitchen gable wall. Construct new two-storey extension. Loft conversion with 3 dormer windows – Approved

12/00986/F The Old Balehouse, Caulcott— 2 storey extension - Approved

07.12.08 Affordable Housing - No progress to report

Finance -

It was RESOLVED to accept the following Accounts for payment:

Payee	Detail	Amount	Cheque No
CDC	Dog bin emptying	£174.35	500165
Cathy Fleet	2 x Clerk salary	£356.40	500166
Cathy Fleet	2 x clerk expenses	£100	500167
BDO	Audit	£186	500168

A VAT claim had been made and the sum of £665.51 received

The external Audit has been successfully completed. The notice of conclusion will be put on the noticeboard

07.12.10 - Handyman - It was noted that, due to the current austerity, tasks which had previously been carried out by other bodies, such as OCC, would no longer be funded. It was agreed that these tasks were necessary for the wellbeing of the parish and that there was no alternative to parishioners having to pay for them to be done. It was therefore RESOLVED that a Handyman be sought to carry out miscellaneous maintenance and repair jobs on an ad hoc basis and that the Clerk will advertise for such a person on noticeboards and in Valley News ACTION : CLERK

The meeting closed at 8.15 when Mr Mortimore had to leave the meeting thus leaving the meeting inquorate.

Date of next meeting : 15th November 2012

Matters discussed:

Parish Plan - Mr Macnamara has the Parish Plan on a USB stick and will edit it prior to returning to the PC making arrangements for it to be printed and distributed.

King George Field - no further progress has been made with signing the lease

It was noted that legislation stipulates that any councillor who is absent for six months or more is considered to have vacated their post. When this is the case, the Chairman should write to the retiring councillor thanking them for their public service while the Clerk would start the process for the PC to fill the vacant position.

Signed

Mr JJ Macnamara

An Apple a Day - by Mike Hardcastle



A year ago, in October, we moved in to South View on Orchard Lane and from the onset we felt completely at home and were made to feel immediately welcome by the whole village. One of the joys of our new home was wandering down to our small orchard and picking an apple to eat or to place into a wonderful pie or crumble. As this year developed we noticed that our 7 fruit trees

very heavy with their burden of apples and that we were going to have a bumper crop. We were aware that many of our neighbours and even commercial producers were having a bad year for apples and so I looked at ways that we might make use of our bounty and benefit the community that had been so generous in welcoming us. I quickly concluded that cider would be our salvation, and I asked around the village as to any experience that our neighbours may have in production, while a lot of villagers showed interest and offered to help out, there was nobody with cider making experience, however there were several, including our neighbour who had produced many a home brew. I set about trawling Amazon for all the equipment I might need. I soon selected a fruit press and bought the matching metal pulping bucket. I also bought a top rated book that was suggested by Amazon on Cider Making.

We have mostly dessert apple trees and, based on my limited research, cider is best made from mostly sweet apples, we needed to find another use for our burgeoning crop of cookers. As time grew closer and the apples matured, my nerves got the better of me, and I decided I really did need expert help, so an email went out to the village asking if anybody had any knowledge or supplies and would like to get involved. I had a huge response from people but none could offer any direct experience. I therefore decided to have a trial run and with the help of a friend took a small box of apples and attempted to fumble our way to apple juice production. Quartering the apples proved no problem to our combined extensive engineering expertise, but pulping would be a novel experience. We loaded our prepared apples into the metal bucket and attached the supplied metal blade to a drill. We were good to go. I turned on the electricity and my friend pressed the drill switch to start the blades, not realising that it was a variable power drill that went faster the harder you pressed. One bucket of pulp mixed with a handful of iron filings later we were ready for pressing. I had carefully laid out all the component parts and had complete confidence in the professional kit I had purchased at great expense.

We place the meshed cloth inside and loaded the pulp on top of it. With great enthusiasm we then set about placing the blocks of wood on top of the pulp ready to press down. However after a brief flurry we realised that there was insufficient pulp for the limited depth of screw thread used to screw down and press the juice out, so we set about raiding my very meagre timber supplies in order to build up the stack of wood to meet the screw thread. Disaster averted we started the turning of the screw and observed with delight the fresh juice that was being dispensed into our very glamorous plastic bucket. We invited my friends four year old son to sample the first results and he duly placed a cup under the stream and took a sip of the juice giving a thumbs up and an accompanying smile of approval. We had cracked it.

After we had repeated the process completing our small production run on our box of apples we set about convincing the wives to bottle the juice ready to take away (I decided to only go as far as making juice and leave the cider production to another day). From one small box we produced ten bottles of apple juice. I invited the village to an open day to create a community supply of cider. Emails were sent out and 2 weeks later that day came. Despite horrendous weather over the previous few days, the Sunday turned remarkably warm and sunny and all was set for cider production to commence in the orchard. I spent the whole morning preparing the different stations required in the production process.

There are two methods of producing Cider / Scrumpy, one involves washing the apples and adding yeast to the juice, the other does not require washing the apples as the skins contain natural yeasts, however the latter method is more prone to producing a bad batch as the juice can easily turn sour. I therefore decided on the more artificial but greater chance of success method of pre-washing the apples. I therefore set up the required stations:

Washing / Quartering / Pulping / Pressing

The first three stations could be setup in the orchard, however the press need a firm fixing, so this was setup on a sturdy bench in the garage. Our first helpers arrived with a groaning barrow of their own excellent apples and got to work straight away washing and quartering the apples in preparation for pulping. I attempted to warn of the pitfalls of pulping with the equipment I had, however nobody was ready for the full power mode of the mains drill and our first attempt not only decimated the apples but made a grand effort of breaking free of the metal bucket.

We took our bucket of pulp fortified with iron to the press and set about turning this into juice. Luckily I had previous form with the press and set about confidently stocking it and invited the group to take over pressing. The first juice started pouring out even before we had started pressing. The apples were so ripe that juice was running out by the force of their own weight.

We set about slowly filling our 25 gallon barrel and soon the production line was being manned (sorry personed) by new volunteers keen to contribute. As each eager volunteer arrived, I took a glass and filled it from the fresh flow juice. They had a drink and revelled in the taste of fresh sweet juice.

We soon had a very efficient production line until the blade on the metal pulping bucket decided pulping wasn't it's primary goal in life and broke. After some feverish lateral thinking and production analysis, we broke out a couple of food blenders and realised they were far better suited to the job increasing production considerably. An hour and a half later and with a jubilant juice team, we had filled the barrel to the brim and set about processing a final batch for apple juice to be taken away by volunteers for consumption.

Once the band of happy volunteers had left, I added some campden tablets which kill bacteria and any remaining natural yeasts. This helps ensure a stable batch of juice which should not turn to vinegar during the fermentation process. I sealed the barrel for 24 hours using an airlock and after the campden tablets had done their job added some brewers yeast.

Now it is a question of leaving and allow time to take effect. It is possible to check for sweetness and pH, but lacking that equipment I will leave things to chance for the time being. The cider should be drinkable within a couple of months, but I am advised to leave it for a while longer at which time it can be bottled.

From research, if bottling you should add a small amount of sugar to the bottle, this will restart the fermentation releasing carbon dioxide. However because the bottle is sealed, the gas is reabsorbed into the liquid and creates pressure. When opened the gas can escape creating the sparkle. Bottling should be done at least two weeks before drinking to allow the final stage of fermentation to take place.

The plan now is to monitor the juice and when it appears ready, hold a party for the village and enjoy the fruits of our labour. All villagers are cordially invited. If you wish to be kept informed and have not received direct emails from me previously, please email me: mike@mikehardcastle.com and I will add you to the distribution list.

I hope the cider will be optimum for the summer solstice so please pencil a date of Saturday 22nd June in your diary, but this may be brought forward depending on progress. Everybody that helped will be able to drink or takeaway their allocation and all guests will get to sample the cider.

In closing, I'd like to extend a big thank you to all the volunteers and advisors that took part in the project. I hope this will be the inaugural annual cider day for Upper Heyford and I look forward to welcome many more volunteers next year.

Mike Hardcastle, South View, Upper Heyford

HEYFORD PARK RESIDENTS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

“To create a vibrant community with a sense of pride, place & purpose”

Email: heyfordpark@btinternet.com

Telephone: 01869 233707

UPDATES

EGM

The committee was encouraged by the support shown by the residents at the recently held EGM. 20 residents attended this lively, pro-active meeting which culminated in the appointment of 8 new members to the committee. A **BIG** vote of thanks to all those residents who attended, and a special vote of thanks to the new committee members for making their time and energy available to our community.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Thanks to all who completed and returned our short questionnaire. The committee received 14 responses, all of which provided positive feedback which will help shape the way the committee serves the community in the future.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair Person	Jennifer Luff
Vice Chair	Paul Fortnam
Secretary	Sharon Keen
Treasurer	Carole Gother
Committee Members	
Alan Chandler	Tim Bigelow
Tom Barstow	Ben Carrick
Kate Henderson	Ed Fraser
Angela Ford	Alf Gother
James Henderson	Bee Henderson
Denise Clough	Matt Watson
Natasha Smith	

HPRA Liason Officer

The Heyford Park Residents Association (HPRA) committee is made up of residents who provide their services to the community on a voluntary basis – in other words, freely.

In order to serve the residents to the best of their abilities, it is important that the committee engages with other parties, such as Dorchester Group, Davies & Partners and the Parish Council, amongst others. Meetings take place quarterly during office hours and the committee has been attending these meetings. However, as they are held during office hours, it has been challenging to provide a single source of contact. Different committee members have been attending, leading to a break-down in communication in many instances.

Recognising this, the HPRA committee has now appointed Alf Gother to be their representative at these meetings. Alf has made a commitment to ensure a consistent platform to encourage pro-active engagement and communication, particularly during this time of re-development of the estate.

Please address any issues/concerns you may have via: heyfordpark@btinternet.com – you are also welcome to contact Alf directly at alf_gother@btinternet.com or mobile: **07540 290 992**.

WANT TO ATTEND A COMMITTEE MEETING?

Committee meetings are always open to all residents who wish to attend. Constructive input is always welcome and you will gain some insight into how things work. Our next committee meeting is Thursday 22 November at 19H00.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

The HPRA Christmas Fayre is back by popular demand! There will be plenty for the children to do whilst Mum and Dad shop for those last minute gifts, and of course Father Christmas will be in attendance with his sack of goodies!

Date: Saturday 8th December 2012

Venue: Chapel/Community Centre

Time: 3PM to 6PM

SEE YOU THERE!

BINGO AND QUIZ NIGHTS

No further Bingo or Quiz Nights are planned until January 2013, when it is hoped to start again – **WATCH THIS SPACE!**

BRITISH LEGION

Alan Chandler is investigating the feasibility of setting up a Heyford Park Branch of the British Legion. Interested parties to contact Alan on 01869 233 414.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS

A number of community projects are in the conceptual stage right now for 2013. Please let us know what you would like to see actioned. Top spots under consideration right now are:

Operation Playground ‘Clean-Up’

Best Garden of the Year Competition

Adults Social Club

Disco Evenings for over 18’s

Family Fun Day

If you have some ideas that would be really meaningful for our community, please let us know at heyfordpark@btinternet.com.



NOSE BAG

The new over 50s Lunch Club

Last Thursday of each month
Delicious 2-course meal only £2.75!
Conversation – Entertainment

Meet friends and enjoy yourself!
Contact **Nuala Francis** on 232838
or
just come along to the Community Centre.
We’re waiting to welcome you!

SOMERTON NEWS

News from St James's , Somerton

Farewell to Paul and Chris Hunt

The Harvest Festival, Baptism and Communion on 23 September was a wonderful if rather chaotic occasion with another amazing harvest loaf produced by Linda Mitchell, but the following week's farewell service for Paul and Chris Hunt was an even larger affair. Some 175 people packed into the church for the service and the 'refreshments' (ie a pig roast) afterwards. It was a wonderful send-off for Paul and Chris. They sent us a lovely card afterwards. This is on the notice board at the back of the church. The illustration is a reproduction of the lovely composite picture of the churches in the Benefice by Clifford Reeves. This was presented to Paul and Chris at the end of the service together with a number of other generous presents.

Remembrance Sunday

On a different note we were also delighted to host the Royal British Legion's Remembrance Service on 11 November .

Christmas is Coming, the goose is getting fat.....

Christmas is going to be even busier than usual since we will be having Matins with Holy Communion (and Carols) on 23 December, the now traditional Nativity with Carols extravaganza on Christmas Eve and of course Christmas Communion Service on Christmas Day itself.

Please to put a penny in the old man's hat!

Well actually we need a lot more than pennies. At its October meeting the PCC had yet another anxious discussion about finance. It costs about £350 a week to keep St James's open. That is £350 a week for 52 weeks a year. There are almost no weeks in the year when our income reaches that figure. We need our remaining capital to make our church fit for purpose. We must not go on eating into it for current expenditure. If we cannot boost our regular income there is a risk that our church will not be open in future for all the special occasions in our lives. Those coming to the Christmas services which we all enjoy so much will therefore be invited to consider filling in a Banker's Order form to put their support for our church onto a continuing basis.

Concerts

The church has excellent acoustics and has recently hosted two extremely successful concerts. The choir Commotio from Oxford gave a very well received recital in aid of the new playground, and in November the Somerton Hour organised a recital and talk by Craig Ogden, one of the leading young guitarists of today. This was not only a brilliant musical performance; it was also a fascinating insight into the career of a virtuoso guitarist.

On Friday 7 December there will be a Christmas concert by the Brackley Male Voice Choir in aid of general church funds, and Thursday 17 January the Wheatsheaf Consort will be giving us an evening of Music and Readings for Epiphany in aid of the church's campaign to conserve its remarkable monuments. The Wheatsheaf Consort is a group based in Bloxham which normally only sings as a visiting choir in cathedrals.

We have a new Churchwarden!

At the end of the very well attended Harvest Festival on 23 September the parish by acclamation elected David Reed to join Anne Corner as churchwarden. This was the shortest meeting on record!

Lighting the Tower

To brighten up the dark evenings we are again inviting sponsorship to floodlight the church at a cost of £10 per night. Sponsors' messages will be on the A-board by the bus stop each day and will then be published in the next Valley News. Please ring Alison Eastwood on 345792 or email her on stableyardalison@aol.com .

Somerton Social Club Christmas Party 8th December

The Club Christmas Party has attained near-mythic status over the years - this year promises to be no exception - with what can only be described as a 'Rock and Roll musical group' providing the entertainment. It will, as ever, be a blast. Members £5. Non-Members £10. Book early to avoid disappointment!

Finnish Buffet

Minna is proud to announce Finnish Christmas buffet will be held at Somerton Village Hall on the Saturday 22nd of the December 7.00pm onwards for price of £15 per person. All proceed to go to my favourite charity Play area and Tea Time club and particular Lawn mower as a Christmas present for the Play area.

Please any booking or menu information contact me on minnamoller@btinternet.com

SOMERTON VILLAGE PRODUCE SHOW

Although a little late in reporting having missed the closing date of the last issue, I am very happy to report on behalf of our small committee that the Show held on the 1st September was a great success despite the poor growing season and all the rain. Congratulations to the winners of the cups and main awards which were as follows-

The Emberlin Cup for the most points for vegetables - Ray Clare
The Ivor Greenhouse Cup for the highest number of points in the show - Sebastian Prentis

The Baldwin Cup for the best horticultural exhibit - Ray Clare
The Walter Smith Cup for the best exhibit of onions - Derrick Kingdom

The Ethel Smith Cup for the best Victoria Sandwich - Helen Standing

The Children's Cup for the highest number of points in the Children's section - Edward Willetts

Best Domestic Exhibit - Alice Bowmaker

Best Children's Exhibit - Tilly Prentis

Best Horticultural Exhibit - Ray Clare

We thank all our judges and stewards - their assistance is always much appreciated. Special thanks must be given to Mary Hall-Craggs for all her hard work leading up to the show and to Brian Parkes for so kindly undertaking all the printing of the schedules etc. and our secretariat team - all very much appreciated. We thank our tea ladies, and also John Gattley, our Chairman, for again auctioning produce at the end of the show in aid of funds.

We look forward to seeing everyone next year but we desperately need more help. The show is always on the first Saturday of September - a date to remember!

Anne Corner

Dates for your diary

7 December 19.30 Concert by the Brackley Male Voice Choir

9 December 9.30 Sunday Club

16 December 9.30 Family Communion

23 December 9.30 Matins with Holy Communion with Carols

24 December 16.00 Nativity with Carols

25 December 9.30 Christmas Communion

Continued next page

Somerton Parish Council

We are now coming towards the end of the year with Christmas approaching. This year as in previous years, the Parish Council have been representing Somerton on the parish's behalf. This has included commenting on an abundance of planning applications, (for the size of the parish), the Local Development Framework (LDF) plan, extending the village mowing area, highway issues, supporting the Jubilee celebrations and the play area sub-committee for play equipment etc., along with dealing with issues of vandalism, such as the parish notice board. This has since been repaired and the doors locked, with the key holder names listed on it.

This November the Remembrance service was held at Somerton before going to the Memorial at Heyford. As chairman of the Parish Council, I was privileged to lay a wreath on behalf of all those servicemen who died from Somerton in both world wars. On behalf of the village and the British Legion, Malcolm Arnold also laid a wreath in memory of the servicemen and women who have died on active service since. During the service the wreaths were placed next to the role of honour in front of the altar, although Somerton's War Memorial is within St James church, next to the main door. Next year the service will be at Heyford.

2013 will not doubt be just as busy with planning applications and the play area. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have given their time and support to the parish council over the year.

Neil Chairman

*To help fund the conservation of the
church's monuments*

*An Evening of
Readings and Music for Epiphany
with
the Wheatsheaf Consort*

*at 7.30pm on
Thursday 17 January*

*in the church of St James the Great,
Somerton.OX25 6NB*

A donation of £10 is suggested

*The audience are invited for
drinks at 6.30pm
at Church End (next to the church)*

RSVP - 01869 345792 or
stableyardalison@aol.com

New NHS 111 number—what is it?

111 is a new telephone service being introduced to help make it easier for you to access local health services. If you live in Oxfordshire, you can now call 111 when you need help fast, but it isn't a 999 emergency. You can ring to reach a full range of local health services, including out of hours, doctors, community nurses, emergency dental care and late opening chemists (calls are FREE)

No. 23 School Lane, Upper Heyford--the conclusion.

One place at No. 23 which had a continued fascination was the hovel, on the right hand side of the entrance passage, where there was stuff up in the roof space and right at the back which was always a bit of a mystery to me..

But by far the best thing in there was the built-in copper. It was brick built, probably about four foot square with a metal bowl in the top above the fireplace. I've had a go several times trying to get a fire going not really appreciating that there should have been water in the bowl as well.

I can only remember two uses and they were boiling up the family washing and for making Grans elderberry wine for which she was quite 'famous'. She must have given it a good clean out each time or we would have all been dressed in purple and the wine would have had more 'body' than it should.

Various tradesman used to come round selling their goods and some would call in to see Gran even when it wasn't 'her day'. Yeah, yeah, we all know what you've come for really and it's a good job there were no breathalysers then as I have heard some went away very happy indeed. The baker used to bring her some yeast (few tipples for him then) which was spread onto a couple of slices of toast and then floated on top of the must in the copper. Within a couple of days the toast was about three times its original size and frothing away with some gusto.

I remember she made some wheat wine and when the brew was finished she threw the wheat over to her chickens. She used to have lot of chickens and even got her name in the local papers when Fowl Pest was raging everywhere. All the flock had to be destroyed and she had to start again.

I suspect some of you reading this will have a far higher alcohol tolerance level than a chicken as it sometimes takes a drink or three before we have trouble with our legs. Not so with a chicken. They went for the wheat grains with some gusto and were very soon legless--literally. Absolutely hilarious. I don't know where they slept that night but I would have bet a lot of good money that it wasn't on a perch.

It's just a shame the eggs weren't about 40% proof as a few of them for breakfast would have really set you up for the day.

She also used to boil up small and damaged spuds to mix with oatmeal for the chickens. They didn't have them all by a long way as Pat Bunce, then Pat Porch and me had our fair share. Scalding hot they were and we just passed them from hand to hand until the skins fell off and they were cool enough to eat. In later years, I did the same thing on the pig farm that used to be behind Boards Farm House. We had our own pig there but couldn't eat 'our pet' when it was slaughtered. Well, that was a waste of time and effort.

Another thing that made No. 23 such a good place to be was the farmyard to the rear where Bottom Cottage and Ascona are now. Ascona is where the main rickyard was and was great fun when the steam engines came and the thrashing season was in full swing. The best fun then was trying to catch mice as they ran from the ricks when the bottom layers were about to be disturbed. The high wall between Bottom Cottage and School House was the back wall of a long stable cum store building. On the right hand end was a stable which opened onto an animal pen which had cows in there from time to time. On the left was another small store which is where they kept animal feed, mainly mangels. There was a large, ornate mincer in there and I used to 'help' Toby chop up the mangels into small chips for the animals.

But by far the best bit was the large central part of the shed where they stored straw bales. Endless hours of fun were had building tunnels right up to the back wall.

The farm was run by Bill Varney and Toby Varney. Bill used to live in Mugginwell Farm House on High Street and later on in Boards Farm House on The Green. I only remember both of them as very gentle and obliging people, one example being how some local kids could ride the heavy horse or the cart up to the harvest fields. Bill seemed quite old when I first saw him but then he didn't seem to change one iota over the next 30 years.

He used to get water for his animals from the pump at No. 23. and because he always seemed to walk with a limp, not all of the water he started out with got as far as the water troughs.

My dad loved his motorbikes and used to have Ariel Square Fours and Vincents. I have photo's of me as a baby perched on a bike

and others where he had a bike stripped down. Apparently that was pretty much dad's Sunday to strip a bike down and put it back together.. Probably nothing wrong with it but he just liked taking them apart. His test if a bike was going OK was to leave No. 23 at full bore up High Street and if he wasn't doing 60 by the time he got to The Passage it probably needed further attention. If you see photo's of that era you will see he had a pretty clear run at it and if you don't know, The Passage is the public footpath from High Street through where New College Square used to be to Mill Lane under the archway.

He told me once that one of his mates run around for a long time with a Woodbine fag packet in his licence disc holder. Best not try that now then.

My cousin Wilf had the Top Room as his own part of the house and he, like dad, had some superb motorbikes such as the Norton Dominator. But by far the best thing he had was a new MGB sports car with chrome wires.

It was on one of his bikes that I had my first try at riding solo. All went swimmingly until it came to stopping and of all the choices I could have made, I rode into a pile of manure which I can speak of from experience is a very efficient way of stopping a bike out of control. Not the sort of smell you would want in later years if you are going out looking for girls.

The fertilisation of yours truly didn't stop there. When we moved in to 26 The Green, it needed exploring and part of that experience was when I fell into an open cess pit down the garden. Dad hauled me out whilst mum stripped me off outside the backdoor and poured buckets of water over me to get rid of most of the foul smelling stuff. Is it any wonder that I finished up over six feet tall!

Before the water was laid on it was one of my jobs as soon as I was big enough to carry water from The Fountain so it's a good job we didn't have a bath or that would have meant quite a few trips. I wasn't much bigger when I got another job, emptying the loo bucket being careful to keep a strict rotation around the small rear garden so as not to disturb recent deposits.

Back in the farmyard in the 1950's and dad was well ahead in the recycling game. He had a contract to clear the trash cans from local American bases and we got to know Heyford, Croughton and Barford St. John intimately.

A few places on Heyford had to be cleared on Sunday morning, mainly food areas and we always finished at the cookhouse where a huge sandwich of ham and fried eggs was gratefully received.

At the PX and a few other places there was always a lot of clean cardboard and we used to bring it back to the rear of No. 23 where it was cut up, bailed and then sold for reclamation. I've seen huge mounds of cardboard and everyone seemed to muck and get it cut up. It took a while but dad eventually got enough to buy his first car, an Austin 16 which was big enough to take us and some neighbours on picnics all over the place.

When both Wilf and I were still quite young, Wilf is 5 years older than me, we thought it would be a good idea to see how fast he could tow me down Orchard Lane and into the farmyard. With Wilf on a two wheel bike and me on a trike there was only ever going to be one outcome. When the inevitable happened, something on the trike tore open the inside of my little finger (I still have the scar). Dad took me in the house to the washing bench and poured loads of cold water over it to clean the wound. Then mum held it open whilst Iodine was poured in. Good job swear words hadn't been learned by that time.

I must have been fairly 'normal' in that I seemed to do things which required their attention. I used to sit on the bank between the footpath and School Lane and if you peel back some turf there you will find Oxford Blue clay underneath. Many hours were spent there rolling up small balls of clay and using a whippy stick trying to stick them of the windows of Bunny Row. Obviously I got bored with that one day and thought it might be fun to stick one up my nose. Trouble was it went up a long way and we couldn't get it out. The doctor was sent for (they came out in those days if you were in trouble) but he had a wasted journey as someone, I know not who, had managed to get it out. Right, what can I do next to grab their attention?

Then came the big day when we moved into our own home, No 26 The Green, next to Boards Farm House, in spring 1942.

When it became vacant, dad wrote to New College to ask if we could rent it and I still have the letter back from their Land Agent saying 'move in when you can and we'll talk about the rent sometime in the future'.

I remember what a 'big boy' I felt carrying bits and pieces to our new home.

It wasn't too long after we had moved in that we had a visit from 'the authorities' because we had a spare bedroom. You didn't really have a choice about letting a spare room for airmen and their families on the RAF camp. Soon after, dad was called up into the army and so there was only mum and me in a large three bedroom house. We had some nice people but the reverse was also true. One really nice family we had was Bert and Bertha and after the war was over, they invited us up to their home in Maghull, Liverpool for a holiday. Bert was back working on the railways then so train fares were 'not a problem'. We were there when VJ day was declared and If you want to know how to throw a fantastic street party with very little then that's the place to go for a few lessons. Another great memory is crossing the Mersey on the ferry which was a big deal then.

So we are in our own home now and these memories are merely a summary of my association with No. 23 but they will stay with me forever.

The fun continued as I just could not keep away from No. 23. Ron Hawkins



Ron's new home in 1942—No 26 The Green

Thank you Ron for a most interesting and amusing piece of village history. Social history is so important and sadly many parishioners have passed on without leaving their stories for posterity. Here is your chance to emulate Ron, there's sure to be something we would all like to know about!

Tribute: Basil Hudson 1931 - 2012

Basil was born at No 5 New College Square, Upper Heyford.

He had to go into hospital with a twisted intral which left him with a large scar. He then lost an eye when making a bow & arrow at the age of seven, surgeons tried in vain for 3 weeks to save it. Basil was always into mischief, once hanging on the back of a lorry; the driver was almost at the 'Seven Sisters' before he noticed.

Basil was a keen footballer, sometimes being called a dirty player, though this was not the case as he could not see on his blind side. On a lighter note he once took what he thought was Brylcreem only to find he had put Windowlene all over his hair.

After marriage he lived in Bicester with his family, working for a small builder and later for Thames Water.

George Hudson, Basil's oldest brother

Basil was a friendly and amusing person who will be sadly missed. We send our condolences to his family

First World War Centenary 1914 - 1918



The First World War was a turning point in world history. It claimed the lives of over 16 million people across the globe and had an impact on the lives of everyone. One hundred years on, we are all connected to the First World War, either through our own family history, the heritage of our local community or because of its long term impact on society and the world we live in today.

2014 will mark 100 years since the outbreak of the First World War, and it is fitting that we should remember the sacrifice made by the residents of our small village all those years ago.

Albert Golder, father of the late Kenneth Golder, and grandfather of Christina, Priscilla and the late Janet was a reservist at the outbreak of War and went with the Expeditionary Force to France in August 1914 and on 16 September he was killed.

Albert was the first of 16 parishioners to perish in the appalling conflict:

Thomas Robert Dale, Fredrick John Wilson, Tom Hudson, Benson Golder, Arthur Allen, James Norman, Joseph John Boddington, George Edwin Mullis, Corin Cooper, Thomas William Slatter, Sidney George Scragg, Thomas Henry Izzard, Charles James Dale, Jesse William Bayliss, Jesse Scragg.

It is the intention of the Parish Council, in conjunction with the Historical Society, to produce a commemorative book to record how the tragic events of what came to be called 'The Great War' touched the lives of parishioners.

This is an appeal for information to help in the production of a comprehensive document, not just in respect of those killed, also villagers who went to war and returned, and the impact on the lives of families.

If you have any photographs, letters, family history and memorabilia of any kind that you would be comfortable having published, it would be a great help.

Please contact a member of the Historical Society or Parish Council if you would like to contribute .

Healthy Heyford Walks - 2 hours at leisurely pace

Monday mornings at 10am, meet at Upper Heyford Village Hall

Please ring Jo for more details 07734562028

Fridays: 7 Dec & 4 Jan at 7.30pm

Depending on weather conditions!

Upper Heyford Village Hall

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Proceeds in aid of the church



Warreners

We enjoyed the film Marigold Hotel at our November meeting and we are off to Fringford on 28th Nov for our Christmas lunch courtesy of the 200 Club. The December meeting is in Upper Heyford Village Hall on Wednesday 12th at 2pm with 'Horse racing' and a quiz. The January meeting is bingo and social on the 9th.

We would love to meet new members, the fees are modest, £5 to join and £3 at each meeting, and for 2 hours you will be entertained and enjoy refreshments with a friendly group. Why not give it a try. We send our best wishes to Jim Smith and Joan Warner who have been poorly and do hope that they will be back with us soon.

Warreners Committee

Macmillan Coffee Morning 2012

A very enjoyable morning in the Reading Room on 28 September raised £275 for Macmillan Cancer Care.

Many thanks to everyone who attended and supported the event in any way. Ann as usual came up with loads of raffle prizes and she wishes to pass on her thanks to all who gave so generously. *Veronica Lough-Scott*

Upper Heyford 200 Club

Many thanks for another very successful year with funds raised for the parish amounting to just less than £1400.

The funds will be divided as follows:

Christmas parcels + Warreners Christmas lunch £400
St Mary's Church £1000. *Veronica Lough-Scott*

Health Centre Transportation:

In July of this year Banbury Dial a Ride service was closed due to lack of funding. As a consequence the Monday service to transport patients to the Deddington Health Centre ended. There are two services that our residents can use for necessary transportation needs. The below information from the Deddington Surgery website is extracted for your information:

"There are currently 2 alternatives available for our patients.

1. You can Register with 'County Dial-a-Ride' – a new service set up by the county council. This service runs in Cherwell area on Mondays and will bring people to the surgery and take them home again. The service is free once you have registered and paid a £5.00 fee, providing you have a Bus Pass. You need to phone them a week before you need the lift. The phone number to ring to get a form for registration is: 0845 310 1111 and select Option 4

2. You can use Banbury Volunteer Bureau, whereby people use their own cars to transport those who are unable to use public transport. There is a mileage charge for this service. You need to allow 3 working days when booking transport. The phone number to ring is 01295 759126. This phone number is manned between 10.00am - 12.00 midday Monday to Friday, but there is an answer machine to leave a message the rest of the time.

We apologise for the loss of our Surgery Bus service, but unfortunately due to government cuts the funding previously available from Cherwell District Council for a full Dial-a-Ride service in the north of the county was removed from 31/3/12. The charity tried to carry on with the funding we and others provided but it proved not to be financially possible.

The delivery of medication to the villages is unaffected by these changes."

Jack Goodman Jr, Upper Heyford Parish Clerk

COARSE GARDENING.

*The Holly and the Ivy,
When they are both full grown,
Of all the trees that are in the
wood,
The Holly bears the crown.*



Familiar words from an ancient and rather nonsensical Christmas carol; though, actually, the verses are probably the time-worn remnants of an older, pagan song, cleaned up and pinched by the church. Whatever its origin, however, *why* does the holly bear the crown? Why not the oak or the ash or the mighty elm? Is it some reference to Christian iconography - the Crown of Thorns, perhaps? Probably not. Holly has been held in great esteem for many centuries and much of its history and folklore is pre-Christian. It is our commonest native evergreen (though not abundant around here), it is slow growing but very long-lived and capable of attaining a considerable size if left alone, and it might well be considered to be the king of all the trees that are in the wood because, without it, many of us would not be here today. We will come to why this is, in a bit.

In Old English the word for holly was *holegn*. By the time we get to the Middle English period, this had mutated to *hollin*. *Hulver* and *holm* had also come into use and these three names, plus *holly* itself, occur in a lot of place-names. 'Hollin' gradually came to mean a stand of hollies on their own, such as occur in Herefordshire, Staffordshire and Shropshire, and especially the New Forest, and is still in use today, though mostly in the north of England. In the south, 'holm' has the same meaning, a grove or wood of holly. However, place-names can be very confusing, because sometimes 'holly' means 'holy' and often 'holm' means a small island or even an area of marshy ground. And on top of that, in some areas the holly was later known as the Christmas tree. While we're on about names, the botanical name for common holly is *Ilex aquifolium*. Now, *Ilex* was what the Romans called the evergreen oak. That is, the tree which we call the Holm Oak. Its leaves are very dark green and slightly spikey, a bit like holly, hence the 'holm' prefix. So, we have named the holly after the evergreen oak and the oak after the holly. Clear?

Holly can be very common indeed in the sandy soils of East Anglia and the New Forest, and the grits and sandstones of the northwest, around Leeds and Manchester, for instance. In Epping Forest in Essex, it is widespread in the understorey, thriving in even quite deep shade under oaks. It is happy in dense beech hangers on chalkland, too, where almost nothing else can thrive. Its trick is to have leaves which grow during their first year, persist during the second, and are shed in the summer the third, and which are absolutely stuffed with chlorophyll. They can feed the tree for all their long life in the dimmest of light. Even the twigs and young branches are deep green. This is why it is so important and why our ancestors awarded it the crown. Those leaves are the most nutritious of any native tree, have a very high calorific content (see how they burn!) and - crucially - are available all winter long. Unlikely as it may seem, they were used as stock fodder, especially for sheep. In the New Forest, holly (and gorse) is regularly browsed by cattle, deer and the wild ponies and certainly helps to see them through a hard winter. The holms which they browse are prevented from growing upwards, often for many years, and slowly spread

sideways until they are so broad that even long-necked ponies cannot reach the middle of them, at which point oak saplings are able to grow under their protection. As the oaks rise, so does the holly, and the two remain closely associated.

So, imagine those truly dreadful mediaeval winters when everything froze for months on end and animals and people starved. The further north you went, the worse it got. Holly was widely valued, possibly planted, certainly nurtured and protected, the hollins providing vital food for the animals which, in turn, kept our forebears alive. Hence, maybe, we are here today. It is little wonder that holly was regarded as precious. Felling whole holly trees was considered bad luck, wicked, diabolical or worse... In Buckinghamshire, they said that if you felled a holly, a witch would spring up in its place and she would *get* you. In other places, hollies were left to grow tall in field hedgerows to stop witches (who run along the tops of hedges, as we all know). Hollins were carefully cropped, in rotation, as it takes a tree years to replace the branches lopped off. However, by the time we get to the Industrial Revolution, holly was in even greater demand and immense numbers of trees were used up. The wood of holly is white, straight grained, very hard, and not prone to split or crack, even if exposed to heat. (In 'Lorna Doone', we may read that John Ridd kept a holly stave in the chimney corner for three years - or was it five? - to season it; just the thing for thwacking Doones. It would have been like iron!) Hollies in the north were used to make bobbins for the weaving mills and also trees were coppiced - cut down and allowed to regenerate - to provide long, straight, tough stems for tool handles and whip stocks. When people drove cattle and horses rather than cars, in the 18th and 19th centuries, *hundreds of thousands* of whip stocks were manufactured *every year!*

Well, Christmas is coming and that is the chief association for holly now. There is still a considerable annual trade in berried sprigs. If you have a tree in your garden and it does not supply berries, don't hang about hoping for too long. It is most likely a male tree. Only the females bear fruit. Rarely, there are trees which are male at the bottom and female at the top and there is one cultivated variety, which my book describes as 'one sexy holly', which is bisexual - *Ilex* 'J.C.van Tol'. There are even yellow berried ones, the best known being 'Golden King' - a silly name, as it is, of course, female. To compound the annoyance, there is a 'Golden Queen', grown for its foliage: it has no berries, as it is male. All yellow hollies offend the pure in spirit, anyway. For my money, whichever way you look at it and whatever the reasoning, of all the trees that are in the wood the holly really does bear the crown. It gave our ancestors not only food for their livestock, but hope; food for their souls. There can be few more arresting sights in the depth of winter than a shaw of hollies catching the weak sunshine above frost or snow, the leaves gleaming and the berries ablaze, promising that all is not dead and that the year will swing around again into springtime.



Merry Christmas. Roger Burt.

Holly in Folklore and Legend.

Folk names: Bat's wings, Christ's Thorn, Holy tree, Hulver bush

The holly is a herb of protection. It is said no evil, witches, sorcerers or evil spirits can cross where it is. It guards against lightning, poison, and evil spirits. Planted around the home, it protects it and its inhabitants from mischievous sorcerers. When thrown at wild animals, a holly branch makes them lie down quietly and leave you alone, even if you don't hit them with it. Holly water is sprinkled on newborn babies to protect them. As for fairies, it is said that they love to hide in the branches of holly and will protect the house from goblins, which is always useful.

A holly hedge around a house or field was believed to keep out evil influences. It was protection against poison, the evil eye, storms and fire. Cows thrived if a sprig of Christmas holly was left in the cowshed. The custom of using holly as a Christmas decoration seems to stem from the Roman celebration of Saturnalia, celebrated at the solstice in December. Holly was given to friends for good luck and protection and a cow was killed by a sword of holly to please the gods to bringing back the light for the next year.

Holly is associated with the thunder gods - Tannus, the thunder god of the Gauls, Taran the Pictish god and Thor the Scandinavian God. It is said to be their sacred tree that can protect or produce fire, because holly is a dense, stable wood which contains little water and will burn even when freshly felled. It was also used for spears and shafts for weapons and is a tree that gives courage, spiritual strength and warrior magic.

The holly is a particular tree for the winter solstice. The green represents the ever continuing life on earth. The Druids would bring holly in on the solstice as a home for the nature spirits during the winter. The holly's totem bird is the robin. The Celts believed the Robin gathered branches of holly and showed mankind how to make fire by lighting the branch in the fires of sun and then bringing it to earth. Offerings were placed out for the Robin to ensure luck for the next year. The custom of holly decoration was carried on into the Christian era, sprigs being brought in at Christmas Eve and taken down on Twelfth Night. In Christian lore the holly is the symbol of eternal life, the prickly leaves representing Christ's crown of thorn and the red berries his blood representing his suffering.

And here's a good tip. After midnight on a Friday, without making a sound, gather nine holly leaves and wrap these up in a white cloth using nine knots to tie the ends together. Place this beneath your pillow and your dreams will come true.

Debra Kaatz.

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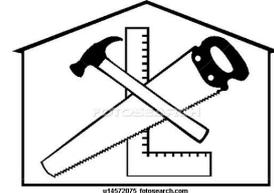
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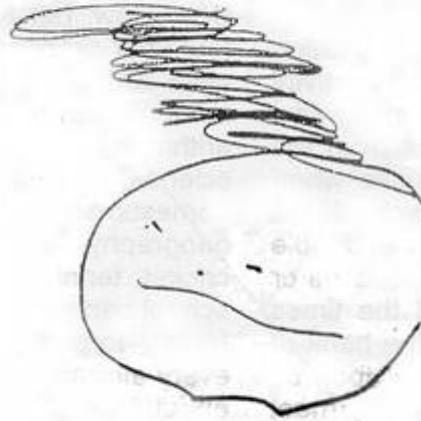
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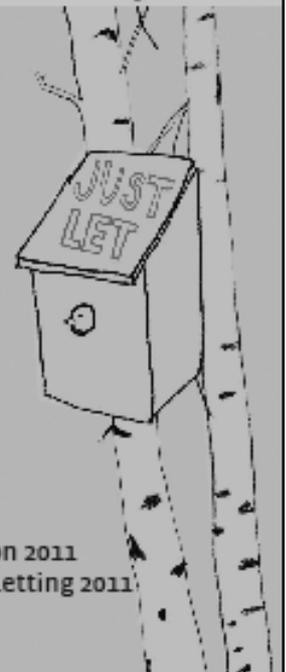
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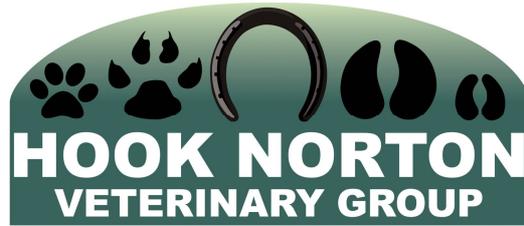


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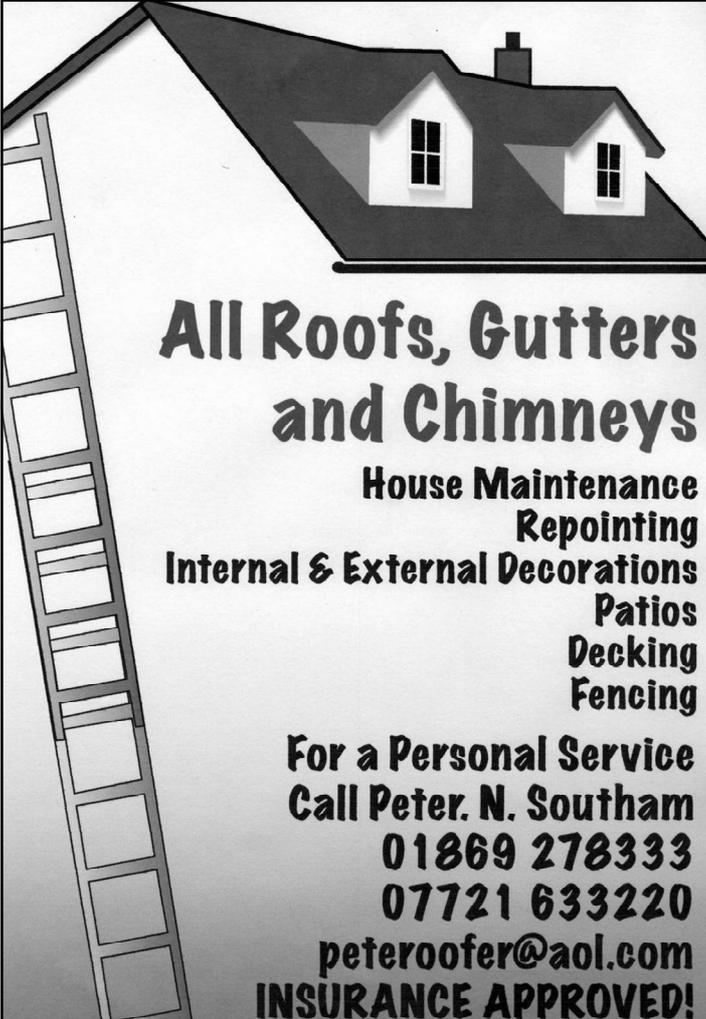
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Alison or Corinne on the above number

**e-mail elitecareagency@aol.com
www.elitecareagency.co.uk**

**Approved provider for Oxfordshire
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Beadman & Co
Chartered Accountants
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**We offer support to Companies, Partnerships,
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Our Services include:-

- Bookkeeping
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- VAT; Payroll; CITDS Returns
- Accounting Software advice & training
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For more information contact Paul Beadman

Tel: 01869 347650 or 07793 744350

e-mail: paul.beadman@btconnect.com

or visit us at www.beadmanandco.co.uk

Events Calendar - At a Glance

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Details/contact</i>
Saturday 1st Dec	Cherwell Valley Christmas Fayre St Mary's Upper Heyford 12 noon—4pm	'Table Top' sales and handicrafts
Saturday 1st Dec	Christmas Bazaar Somerton Village Hall 2.15pm	Gifts for all
Friday 7th Dec	A Country Christmas Middle Aston House 7.30—10pm	Fund raising for Steeple Aston Pre-school An evening of festive shopping in beautiful setting
Friday 7th Dec	Brackley Male Voice Choir Somerton Church 7.30pm	Brackley Male Voice Choir is a non profit making community based choir that was formed in 1995
Friday 7th Dec	Bingo, Upper Heyford Village Hall 7.30pm	Money prizes All funds to Upper Heyford Church Contact: Ann Woski
Saturday 8th Dec	Christmas Fayre Heyford Park Community Centre 3—6pm	Father Christmas will be in attendance with his sack of goodies
Friday 14th Dec	Lesson & Carols St Mary's, Upper Heyford 7.00pm	The Nine Lessons and Carols will be complemented by a selection of poems chosen especially for their relevance to Christmas by the Friends of St Mary's
Friday 21st Dec	Christmas Carols with Bletchingdon Band 7.30 Lower Heyford Village Square	In the Church if the weather is inclement
Friday 21st Dec	Film Night Upper Heyford Reading Room 7.45pm 'It's a Wonderful Life'	Please contact Craig Lord, 07764992107 or e-mail craig.lord@btinternet.com for more details.
Christmas Eve 24th December	Nativity with animals Somerton Church 4pm	The real joy of Christmas
Christmas Eve 24th December	Midnight Communion St Mary's, Upper Heyford 11.00pm	Experience the wonder of Christmas – the traditional way
Christmas Day	Christmas Communion Somerton 9.30am Lower Heyford 11.00am	Experience the wonder of Christmas – the traditional way
Friday 4th Jan	Bingo, Upper Heyford Village Hall 7.30pm	Money prizes All funds to Upper Heyford Church Contact: Ann Woski
Thursday 17th Jan	Wheatsheaf Consort Music and readings for Epiphany Somerton Church 7.30pm	The Wheatsheaf Consort is a group based in Bloxham which normally only sings as a visiting choir in cathedrals.
Sunday 27th Jan	Village and Country Life Upper Heyford Reading Room 6.00pm	Verse and prose reading, both serious and comic, based loosely on the delights of rural life. Lasts about an hour and a half. Not suitable for young children.