



**A Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year  
to all our readers**

## Dates for your Diary

### December

1	Oxford Waits	North Leigh Mem Hall	7.30pm
	WI Carols	Combe Longa	2.30pm
3	Allotment meeting	White Horse	7.30pm
3	Stonesfield Craft Club	St James Centre	7.30pm
4	Darby & Joan party	Village Hall	5.45 for 6pm
5	Christmas coffee morning	St James Centre	10–11.30 am
7	French Circle	Chapel End, Churchfields	8pm
8	WI Christmas lunch	Wychwood Golf Club	1.30pm
11, 12	Bach Mass in B minor	Woodstock Parish Church	7.30pm
12	Social Club quiz night	Social Club	7.30pm
14	Gardening Club	Village Hall	7.30pm
15	WI Bring & Share supper	Village Hall	7.30pm
16	Stonesfield Society	Village Hall	8pm
17	Social Club Bingo	Social Club	7.30pm
19	John Berry Live	Social Club	7.30pm
22	Carol singing	Meet St James's Church	6.50pm

### January

3	All Hayle to the Dayes	St James's Church	7.30pm
7	Stonesfield Craft Club	St James Centre	7.30pm
14	Darby & Joan	Village Hall	2pm
19	WI birthday party	Village Hall	7pm

## Publishers

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## Editor for this month

Dale Morris

## Editor for February

Dale Morris (898210)

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# Notices & thanks

## Thank you

Many thanks to those who attended our Open Day / House-warming event on 19 September. Catering was in the capable hands of David Woodfine and a good time was had by all. We had suggested that any donations our guests cared to make would go direct to the Sethule Trust Fund, which is managed by our good friends Michael and Thabbeth Cotton to alleviate distress in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe – mainly for children orphaned by Aids. The grand total of £350 was generously donated and dispatched and brought this response from Thabbeth, quoting from Book 1, Thessalonians: 'We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. We continually remember before our Lord and Father your work produced by Faith, your labour prompted by love and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.' Thabbeth continues: 'I am humbled by your work for Sethule, for a village in Zimbabwe, for a people you may never meet. I pray that the Lord will keep you in good health and that you will continue to live in His house for ever. Thank you to all of you.' Nel and I add our sincere thanks to all of you.

*Bob & Nel Hain*

## Thank you

Frank, Jean and family would like to thank all our friends in Stonesfield for the many cards and messages we received at this sad time for us.

*F and J Hall*

## Thank you

Thank you to everyone for the cards and kindness shown to me on the sad loss of my daughter, Martina.

*Irene Harris*

## Thank you

Michelle and David would like to thank everyone for their kind gifts and cards on our wedding day, 24 October 2009. We had a lovely day celebrating with family and friends.

## Christmas greetings

To my friends in Stonesfield – Best wishes for 2010. I'm replacing cards this year with donations to Thames Valley Air Ambulance, and Heart & Cancer research.

*Muriel Morgan (891694)*

## Beware Dog Walkers

There have been two serious incidents recently in which small dogs in the village have been attacked by three aggressive dogs. On 12 November a small dog (ON A LEAD) was mauled and almost killed by these three dogs (NOT on a lead and NOT under the control of their walker). The vet's bill for the little dog's sedation and treatment was considerable. Six days later another dog in the village was attacked and, again, almost killed. The walker/owner of the three dogs does not live in the village but she apparently walks in and around Stonesfield. If this notice is seen by the walker or if anyone is in

contact with her, we would be grateful to have a call from you.

*The Publishers (891614)*

## Carol singing around the village

Everyone is most welcome to join a group of carol singers on Tuesday 22 December, meeting at the church at 6.50pm, to leave at 7pm. Refreshments afterwards. Music will be provided, and remember a torch! (For safety reasons, please can all children be accompanied by an adult.)

*Lindsey Seller*

## New allotment holders meeting

Please come along to the Function Room of the White Horse on 3 December at 7.30 to sign your allotment agreement, pay the fee of £2 for membership of the Allotment Association and choose the position of your new plot. Plots will be allocated according to the position you are on the waiting list. If you are unable to attend please telephone 01993 891823 before the meeting so that we can discuss which number plot you would like.

*Clare Bebbler, Secretary, Stonesfield Allotment Association*

## The phantom weedkiller

Someone, no doubt meaning well, has been going round weedkilling slots and flower beds around Glover's Yard, and hacking back the lovely rose that hangs over the gate.

Please don't. We value the natural growth in these patches. Californian poppies have now been sown in the slot along the front of the Post Office, which should thrive in that poor soil and strong

sunshine; and if they do, they will make a merry show. Don't kill them.

*Tony Crofts*

## Do you enjoy singing?

A group of 12+ (including 3 men!) meets twice a month on Thursday mornings at Protestant House on The Cross. No one is expected to be able to sight-read. We sing a lot of rounds, some part songs and are learning several madrigals. Above all we have fun. Do come and see if you would like to join us. Next dates: Dec 10, Jan 14, 28, all at 10am.

*Liz McLean (01993 898536),  
lizzie.mclean@zen.co.uk*

## Voluntary stone wall building

Our younger architectural team members, with a keen interest in conservation, are eager to volunteer their time to help rebuild the Stonesfield wall or any other conservation exercise in or around the Stonesfield area.

If you know of how we can help rebuild this wall or are able to advise of any other conservation exercise which may aid with their continual professional development, please contact me direct on 01865 856250 or 07956 905 610. Thank you.

*Deanna Asplundh*

## St James's Church Christmas Coffee Morning

Saturday 5 December – 10 to 11.30am at the St James Centre

Join us for a coffee and mince pies. We will also have cakes and gifts for sale and a raffle with lots of goodies.

## Combe Christmas Fair

An evening of Christmas shopping, in aid of Combe Pre-School. Thursday 3 December, 7.30–9.30pm, Combe Methodist Church.

Tickets £1 at the door (ticket price includes free drink and mince pie).

*Anna Lethbridge (891399)*

## Christmas Bazaar for churches' funds and Third World support – Wootton, Glympton, Kiddington

Saturday 5 December, 2–4 pm, in the village hall at Wootton-by-Woodstock (beside the church). The attractions include Father Christmas, Christmas gift stall, Bric-à-brac, Toys, Plants, Raffle, Teas.

*Guy Lemon (811205)*

## Bridewell Organic Opera Gala

Daisy Productions presents the 'Bridewell Organic Opera Gala' – indulge your senses and immerse yourself in the glorious music of Mozart, Verdi, Puccini, Donizetti and more. Be inspired . . . intoxicated! Come to the Corn Exchange in Witney at 7.30pm on Thursday 3 December for a feast of opera with sopranos Penny Shaw and Candy Langsdon, baritone Grayham Case and pianist Lyndall Dawson. Tickets £10, concessions £7, includes a complimentary glass of Bridewell Organic Wine and

proceeds go to Bridewell Organic Gardens. Tickets are available from the Music Stand, 62 High Street, and Green-way Antiques, 90 Corn Street (both in Witney) or call 07796 272794. For more information or on-line ticket booking email [info@daisyproductions.com.au](mailto:info@daisyproductions.com.au)

## Wootton Village Hall Talks

The Wootton talks, conceived to raise funds for Wootton Village Hall, take place monthly on a Friday at 7.30pm.

11 Dec Rupert Sheldrake, described as 'the most controversial scientist on Earth'

15 Jan Jon Snow, of Channel Four News

Tickets are £6 and can be booked through the website [www.woottontalks.co.uk](http://www.woottontalks.co.uk) where further details can be obtained or through Andy Warner (810937 or 07966 286487).

## The Slate

As we get to the end of another year, we should like to thank all those who make the *Slate* what it is – the contributors, the advertisers, the editors, the bundlers and the deliverers. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated team of deliverers, who conscientiously deliver the *Slate* to every house in the village, whatever the weather.

*The Publishers*

# Politics & local affairs

## Parish Council

On a wintry evening with heavy rain and high winds no member of the public graced our November meeting. However, both our District and County Councillors braved the weather to keep the Parish Council abreast of the West Oxfordshire and County business.

Council was advised that the Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) was pursuing the complaints from Stonesfield and Wootton Councils regarding inherent dangers at the Judds/Duke of Marlborough junction on the A44. It would appear that a traffic movement survey will be undertaken with, hopefully, a change in the markings and position of the bus stop. Our suggestion of a similar arrangement to the Hopcroft Holts junction has not found favour with the Highways Department – so far!

Council spent some time in discussion of the future possible action which could be taken against a householder whose 45-foot high Leylandii 'hedge' is causing material damage to housing owned by the Stonesfield Community Trust. All efforts so far to persuade the owner to lower the height have failed. Council has written on three occasions to WODC, and our County and Parliamentary representatives are now involved in an effort to resolve the matter. It is still hoped to avoid the necessity for expensive legal action.

Stonesfield Council, supported by many other Parish Councils in West

Oxfordshire, have requested that WODC Planning Committee permit members of the public to speak at Planning Meetings. WODC is the sole District Council in Oxfordshire to bar comments from the public at these meetings. The request will now be debated by WODC.

As a result of a rumour circulating among some members of the village, the Chairman has had several discussions with the relevant planning officers concerning planning futures within the village. It was confirmed on all occasions that there will be no large scale development in Stonesfield. Only very small developments will be permitted and then only on the two sites already identified. Any large scale development in West Oxon will take place in the larger centres of population, i.e. Chipping Norton, Carterton, Witney and Eynsham. The West Oxon villages will not figure in the plans for the foreseeable future.

Council was advised that the future of Dean Pit Waste Disposal Site had been decided. The Dean Pit site would close within two years and a new site further north would be identified. Additionally, applications for a waste disposal incinerator had been refused for both sites in the area but the applicants would be appealing against the decision.

The Council also received complaints from several parents regarding the speed of traffic passing the shop and rounding the bend towards the Woodstock Road on Pond Hill. Neil Owen, County

Councillor, volunteered to raise the problem with Highways.

Once again it is time for Council to establish its budget for 2010/2011. Groups and societies are reminded that Council welcomes requests for financial assistance. Any request should be accompanied by a statement outlining the purpose and the financial health or otherwise of the group making the request.

### Planning Applications

Erection of garden shed at 8 Combe Road – no objection.

Erection of single storey extension at rear of Old Boot Inn, on Boot Street – no objection.

Erection of garage & car port, relocation of front door at 4 Brook Lane – no objection.

**Planning Decision by WODC**  
3 Churchfields – permitted.

The next meeting of Council will be on Thursday 10 December at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

*Richard Bishop (891414)*

### Operation to tackle burglary delivers results

An operation to crackdown on burglary and car crime in West Oxfordshire, Operation Jugular, has seen positive results as incidents have fallen by 10.2% compared to this time last year.

DS Craig Kirby, who is leading the operation, said: 'We are extremely pleased with the results of this operation which has involved many officers working hard to raise crime reduction awareness around

burglary and theft in our local communities. We've also been focusing on the importance of information we receive from residents in rural areas who are more alert to strangers in their villages. We continue to ask them to report suspicious incidents and people to us.'

Crime Prevention and Reduction Adviser Bill Butcher said: 'Unfortunately we are still seeing thefts from vehicles where the driver has left valuable items on display. With Christmas coming we are reminding people once again not to leave bags of shopping or any items in view in their cars. The police community support officers and the district council's parking wardens regularly note down the details of vehicles where property has been left on show. These details are then passed on to me and I write to the vehicle's owner advising them about what has happened and including a crime reduction booklet.

'We have also seen an increase in number plate theft, so to tackle this we are offering free anti-theft number plate screws to residents in West Oxfordshire. Once fitted, the screws can't be removed unless you break the plate. This deters thieves as the plate would then be useless to them. KJ Motor Car Engineers in Witney has kindly offered to fit these screws for free. Anyone wishing to take up this offer should pop into the garage and mention this offer.'

The Safer Communities Partnership is also selling SelectaDNA property marking kits to the public for £15. These kits can be used to security mark any valuables and register them on a secure database. If the items are stolen and the police recover them, they can then find the owner's details by searching the database.

### Saving Money and Eating Healthily

My friend was complaining about the cost of fruit and vegetables the other day, so just out of interest we decided to do a comparison with home grown produce. Carrots are being sold in the local store at 76p for a kilo or seven medium sized carrots. A packet of carrot seeds costs £1 and contains approximately 300 seeds. From this about half will grow, so for £1 you get 150 carrots, which are also organic. Not to mention the pleasure and freshness of picking your own.

If the idea of growing your own fruit and vegetables appeals to you, there are several ways in which Green TEA (Eynsham Transition Area) can help you.

- We have had the offer of an eight-acre site in Eynsham. If enough people are willing to help organise this, the plan is to provide extra allotments and a community orchard. We are also planning to set up a mentoring scheme for those relatively new to growing vegetables.
- For those of you who need to start with the basics, a group of us are planning to learn on an allotment in Cassington under the instruction of an experienced gardener.
- Lastly we will be running a weekend course in permaculture for both beginners and experienced gardeners. There will be a charge for this.

Anyone interested in any of the above should contact Helena Nielsen on 01865 880685 or [helena@nielsen17.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:helena@nielsen17.fsnet.co.uk)

### The Wychwood Project CAT (Countryside Action Team)

The Wychwood Project has an exciting opportunity for volunteers to access the countryside and socialise while benefiting the environment.

We plan to meet on the first Saturday of every month starting on Saturday 7 November. We will work from 10 to 3 and you will be welcome to come for some of the day or all day, depending on your fitness and available time.

This new initiative will enable you to:

- meet like-minded people of all ages
- access areas of the countryside not otherwise open to the public
- help support the countryside conservation aims of the Wychwood Project
- learn new practical skills such as coppicing and pruning.

Work will involve carrying out practical tasks such as caring for young trees, clearing out hedges and ditches, coppicing, pruning and grass raking to conserve calcareous grassland habitats. All tools and equipment will be provided, as will a welcome cup of tea and an assortment of cakes! No experience necessary.

For more information about the Wychwood Project CAT (Countryside Action Team) email [liz.brandom@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:liz.brandom@oxfordshire.gov.uk) or call on 01993 814142 on Tues and Thurs; or call Jane Bowley on 01993 814131. [www.wychwoodproject.org](http://www.wychwoodproject.org)

# Education & culture

## Stonesfield Library

Telephone: 01993 898187

### Opening Hours:

Monday	2.30–7pm
Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	10am–12noon
Thursday	2.30–5pm
Friday	Closed
Saturday	10am–12noon

## French circle

The next meeting of the French Circle will take place on Monday 7 December at Val Phillip's home – Chapel End, Churchfields (891455), 8pm. Everyone welcome.

*Jane van der Ploeg (898328)*

## All Hayle to the Dayes

### Music for a Baroque and Georgian Christmas and New Year

Being a most effective antidote to the excesses of the season, sure both to clear the head and lift the heart in festive celebration of Christmastide. Conceived and directed by Mr Jeremy White and performed by the Passtime Ensemble incorporating Hengrave Voices, The Stonesfield Consort of Viols and The Wilson Recorder Consort, all of whom will perform upon a great variety of instruments including fiddles, harpsicals and the great Serpent.

Some of you will remember the excellent medieval entertainment in Combe church a couple of years ago from this

group of both professional and amateur musicians. Here is a chance to enjoy their new programme, transporting us to the era of the Baroque with similar style and wit. The Stonesfield Players are hosting this performance on Sunday 3 January 2010 at St James's Church, Stonesfield, beginning at 7.30pm. Admission is free with a collection for the Village Hall and the church. For more information please contact Becki Sherlaw-Johnson on 891318.

## The Thwarting of Baron Bolligrew

The Stonesfield Players will be performing *The Thwarting of Baron Bolligrew* on Friday 5 Feb at 7.30pm and Saturday 6 Feb at 2pm and 7.30pm. Sir Oblong fitz Oblong is far too good and conscientious for the Duke and the rest of his knights who want a rest from succouring the poor and needy. So he is persuaded to go on a mission to the Bolligrew Islands to subdue the wicked Baron, who tyrannizes the peasants, pulls down churches and – most terrible of all, so far as Oblong is concerned – hunts all sorts of animals and birds. Oblong's task is complicated by the arrival of Dr Beelzebub Molloch, Professor of Wickedness, Oxford, and by the local dragon – a languorous but hungry aristocrat. Will good triumph over evil? Come along and be part of Sir Oblong's adventures in a story that will amuse and delight both young and old. For details of ticket sales, please watch out for posters around the village in January.

## Niche marketing with a health warning

3Score Publishing Limited is a writers' co-operative dedicated to publishing books by or about older people. To remind members of the need to get their legacy publishing accomplished, its logotype is an hourglass. 'The artist was told to show the sands nearly running out,' the animator, Peter Clifton, explains. The co-operative has five members: Pam and Ron Nixon, Priscilla Frost, Peter Clifton and June Osborne.

*Poems by June Osborne* is the first book launched by the new publishers, using the mutual assistance of the members in editing, publishing and marketing her work. It was launched – as was the new business – on Monday 9 November at the Rose and Crown, Charlbury. 'Choosing books like June's is a very personal decision by our members,' says the animator, 'maybe even more than it would be at an established publishing house. We know June and have often heard that wonderful dry voice reading her own poems to other writers in the Rose and Crown in Charlbury.'

*Poems by June Osborne* costs £6.99. It can be purchased at Evenlode Books, Charlbury; the Woodstock Bookshop, Woodstock; or directly from 3Score Publishing Limited, Sothams Farmhouse, Stonesfield OX29 8PZ. [peter@3score.co.uk]. Contact Peter Clifton at 01993 891956 for further details.

## Woodstock Music Society's Christmas Concert

Paul Ingram will conduct Woodstock Music Society Choir and Orchestra in

Bach's great masterpiece, the *Mass in B minor* with soloists Siona Stockel, Lucie Spickova, Ian Barratt and John Lofthouse. Friday and Saturday 11 & 12 December, 7.30pm in St Mary Magdalene Church, Woodstock. Tickets cost £11 (£10 concessions) at the door, £10 (£9 concessions) in advance (under 16s £5) from Val Phillips, Chapel End, Churchfields, Stonesfield (891455).

## North Leigh History Group

Tuesday 1 December A special event! 17th-Century Music with the Oxford Waits. Including festive refreshments. North Leigh Memorial Hall at 7.30pm. Visitors £2, members free. All welcome. Contact Diana Power 01993 882301 for further details.

## Woodstock U3A – The University of the Third Age

The speakers for Woodstock U3A for December 2009, January and February 2010 are:

1 Dec	Marguerite Osborne Storyteller – Ghouls & Ghosts
5 Jan	Patrick Baldwin Isambard Kingdom Brunel
2 Feb	Kate Morris The History of Sobell House

U3A meets monthly at the Marlborough School every first Tuesday at 2pm, and new and potential members are most welcome. Woodstock U3A now has 16 interest groups, all of which meet regularly. Contacts for further information: Mary Hawken (01993 812166) email: mary.hawken@talktalk.net or Patrick Fitz-Gibbon (01869 347238) email: patrick@fitz-gibbonassociates.co.uk

## Marlborough Community Learning

We are once again running many courses, at various times and on various days – evenings, afternoons and weekends. Our current brochure is in shops, Post Offices and libraries. Most of the courses still have places available. Sometimes course start dates are delayed so please don't assume that you've missed something – ring and see!

If you would like a FREE copy of our brochure please telephone 01993 813592 or email: [comed.4560@marlborough.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:comed.4560@marlborough.oxon.sch.uk). Information is also available on the Marlborough School website [www.marlborough.oxon.sch.uk](http://www.marlborough.oxon.sch.uk) Please contact us for more details or to be put on our mailing list.

We also run a School's Out programme every school holiday (apart from bank holidays). Financial support is available for this, please contact: Jenny Bodinham at Marlborough School or your child's Headteacher, Family Support Worker or Health Visitor for more information.

Costs: £15 per day/£70 per week or family ticket (up to 4 children from the same family) £40 per day/£160 per week (there is an additional charge of £2.50 per child per session for the morning Chill Out session and £5 for the afternoon). *Eligible for those in receipt of Working Tax Credit.* We accept childcare vouchers. Please ring for information.

### School's Out Holiday Activity Programme

9.30am–3.30pm with an optional Chill Out 8.30–9.30am or 3.30–5pm. 21–23 December, 15–19 February

- School of Rock 11+

- Arts and Craft including the very popular 'Sparkle Days' on 21+22 Dec 6+
- Sports Activities, Themed party days 6+
- Sculpture 8+
- Make a Bag 10+
- Nails and Party 8+

## The Oxfordshire Museum

Telephone: 01993 811456

Museum opening hours (free admission): Tuesday–Saturday 10am–5pm, Sundays 2–5pm. Last admission 4.45pm. CHRISTMAS: Closed: 24–27 December & 1 January. Open: Boxing Day Bank Holiday Monday 28 December 10–5

### Family Drop-ins this Christmas

No need to book, just drop in between 2 and 4 pm. £1 per child, no age limits. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

- Tuesday 22 December: Bobbin' Robin – Make a bouncing robin Christmas decoration
- Wednesday 23 December: Woodstock Wonderland – Make a 3D winter Woodstock scene
- Tuesday 29 December: Four Seasons Calendar – Create a 2010 calendar showing seasonal images from the Museum

**Oxfordshire Craft Guild Christmas Exhibition** (Garden Gallery until 3 January). Designers and makers from across Oxfordshire display a wide range of traditional and contemporary crafts. Perfect timing for purchasing special Christmas gifts.

**Treasures Gallery: *Soldiers of Oxfordshire: Part-time Defenders*** – the first 100 years

**Picture Gallery: *Soldiers of Oxfordshire: Winston Churchill – Oxfordshire Hussar 1901-1965***

**Friends Lecture:** Wednesday 2 December, 7.30pm. *Treasures of the Ashmolean in their new home* by Jude Barrett, Education Officer. Friends free – visitors welcome £2

### Museum Café, shop and garden

- Gifts, cards, Aston pottery, books, mince pies and delicious seasonal fare
- Locally supplied produce

- Lovely lawned garden with seating – wheelchair access
- Awarded 4 stars by 'Scores on the Doors' food hygiene rating
- Fair Trade gift wrapping – lovely new Christmas paper, gift tags & bags

Our **Dinosaur Garden**, with its dinosaur footprints found at Ardley Quarry plus a full size replica Megalosaur, has won the Royal Horticultural Society award for the best garden to interpret 'local roots'.



## The White Horse Inn

*Now open and under new ownership*

**THE BOOT STREET BAND (NICK HOOPER AND FRIENDS) WILL BE HOLDING AN EVENING OF FOLK MUSIC, SPIRITUALS, BLUES AND CAROLS IN THE BARN ON THURSDAY 17 DECEMBER AT 8 P.M. ENTRY FREE BUT A COLLECTION WILL BE MADE IN AID OF STONESFIELD PRESCHOOL. PLEASE COME ALONG FOR AN ENJOYABLE EVENING.**

*Opening hours:*

Tuesday–Saturday 12–3, 6–11 • Sunday 12–3 • Monday Closed

# Clubs & societies

## Stonesfield Gardening Club

In December 2008 eight of us gathered together and formed the SGC. One year on and we have over 40 members, last month holding our first AGM. Sylvia Huddleston, our secretary, gave a brief report of the year's activities which included two successful plant sales, several interesting speakers, a couple of socials and an open garden evening on a pleasant evening in July.

At the end of the business Helen Taylor introduced John Alcock from Yarnton Nurseries, who showed us a selection of indoor plants suitable for Christmas. More importantly he told us how to care for them and keep them healthy beyond the festive season.

On 14 December, our next meeting will include a glass of mulled wine, mince pies and a gardening quiz; a little taster – 'Q. Where would gardeners keep their brandy bottles?' Come along and find out! All welcome. Visitors £2.

We are, of course, dormant in January so no meeting. Check your *Slate* for February's program.

*Wendy Gould (898091)*

## Stonesfield Society

Our next meeting is on Wednesday 16 December at 8pm in the Village Hall Clubroom. We will be having a Christmas entertainment, and mince pies and a glass of wine. Everyone welcome. Visitors £2.

On Wednesday 20 January at 8pm, James Mitchell will give us an evening of Flanders and Swann with singing and recordings. Raffle, coffee and tea available. Visitors £2.

*Jennifer Powell (891303)*

## Scrabble Club

Would anyone like to join us on a Thursday evening? None of us are experts – each of us is learning – and we do have great fun. A really good social evening ending with refreshments. If you're interested give me a call.

*Janet Melrose (891566)*

## Stonesfield Craft Club

The Craft Club met on Thursday 5 November at 7.30pm at the St James' Centre. This month's topic was to make a card by stamping on to shrink plastic and then shrinking the picture with a craft heat gun. The stamps that we used were based around Christmas tree baubles or snowflakes. They were stamped in black on to white Shrinkles or white on to black Shrinkles, giving a very classic look which, once cut out and shrunk, were hung in black cards which had four square apertures. It is so fascinating watching the shapes shrink under the heat gun. Everyone made at least two cards each and was very welcome to take more to complete at home. Once again the members were mesmerized at how easy it was to make cards that look so very effective. We all had another fun-

filled evening. There were eight of us at the session.

Next month, Thursday 3 December, we will be meeting at St James' Centre at 7.30pm and would be very pleased to see anyone who would like to join us in making cards using another crafting technique. We will be meeting again on 7 January at 7.30pm at the St James' Centre. We'd like to take this opportunity to say a very Happy Christmas and a joyous New Year to everyone.

*Debbie Faulkner*

## Women's Institute

Estelle Eddy, who has been unable to attend meetings for some time, was warmly welcomed back by us all. We are sorry that Mai Snelling has had to resign from WI on health grounds. The competition for a small autumn arrangement was won jointly by Estelle, Avis and Hilda.

The speaker, Derek Parkes, had come to tell us about his life as an actor. At the age of 14 his interest was aroused when he joined a drama club. In those days there was no TV and he used to go to Music Hall, the Shepherd's Bush Empire, Chiswick Empire and the Metropolitan, Edgware Road. Max Wall and George Formby were his heroes.

Derek decided to turn professional and joined a group called the Wayfarers (later disbanded). In the Second World War he was called up into the Royal Marines, doing office work, but when he was demobbed he wanted to become a full-time professional actor. He answered an ad in *The Stage* for a full-time student

and was accepted. He was paid £3 a week for a job in Gainsborough repertory theatre. It was hard work as they put on a new production each week and a new part had to be learnt.

Derek started to write stage plays in 1962 and has written about 30 since then. He said that Sheringham rep put on a good production of his play *Threat*. He was asked to do one day's work at Pinewood Studios on *Boys in Brown*. He was kitted out in Borstal uniform and paid £2 but unfortunately his part ended up on the cutting room floor!

Derek was a jobbing actor who would do anything and at one time he was a male model appearing in a catalogue modeling casual wear, and on various hoardings advertising all sorts of things, including whisky and cigarettes. He appeared in the original ad for NatWest credit cards. Subsequently he went on to appear in TV commercials and worked at Shepperton, now part of Pinewood Studios. He appeared with Dusty Springfield in an ad for Mother's Pride bread. He first appeared on TV 40 years ago and has been seen in episodes of *The Oneidion Line*, *As Time Goes By*, *Colditz* and *Sorry* with Ronnie Corbett. More recently he has taken part in a re-enactment for *Crimewatch*, and in *Eastenders*.

Derek was thanked for having given us an insight into his long life in the theatre. Our next meeting is the Bring and Share supper (members only).

Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year to one and all.

*Brenda Oliver (891330)*

## Over 60s Darby & Joan Club

We met on a cold November day for our meeting in a rather chilly Village Hall. We began with the announcements which included details of the Christmas Party – members were issued with a complimentary ticket as there will be no charge this year. Details of the 2010 holiday, which many of the club members enjoy, were given: a stay in Eastbourne in June. If you are interested in this Avis has some brochures and will let you have one if requested. We always have a great time together.

Following an enjoyable trip down to Bashley Park on the day of the Hampshire tornado, members were asked if they would like a lunch arranged nearer to home in February – this received a definite ‘Yes’. We welcomed the new Age Concern Lady ‘Ruth’, who told us about one or two things available to help the elderly, and she left a few leaflets. If we need more I am sure we would be able to have them. Avis showed members her copy of *Frank’s Story*, which brought a lot of interest.

Our speaker, Debbie Faulkner, then showed us how to put together a beautiful Christmas card. Debbie had brought with her enough material for each member to make their own card and this produced some really good results. Well done everyone, and thank you Debbie for coming along and brightening our day.

After a warming cuppa and biscuits, the raffle was drawn, also a little touch of the festive season among the prizes. Before leaving we were reminded that the party doors will be open at 5.45pm and please remember your cutlery.

Our January meeting, weather permitting,

will be on 14 January at 2pm and we will have Bingo. Back to normal!

Alan and I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a peaceful 2010.

*Avis Ushaw (898134)*

## Stonesfield Folk Dance Group

. . . meet every Wednesday from 8 to 10pm at the Village Hall. In addition we have a Valentines Dance on 14 February from 3pm to 6pm. For more details email [pvdavis@talk21.com](mailto:pvdavis@talk21.com)

Folk dancing is a fun way to keep fit.

- Exercises your body and your mind
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- A variety of styles of music, often with live bands
- Low cost entertainment – maximum £2.50 for a club night!

All at your local English Folk Dance Club.

It’s not *Strictly Come Dancing*.. . . .

- No partner needed
- Wear what you want
- Beginners welcome
- Relaxed and friendly atmosphere

It’s folk dancing!

## Sports & Social Club

12 Dec Quiz at 7.30 in aid of the Junior Football Club.

17 Dec Bingo at 7.30

19 Dec Live Music with The John Berry Band.

The John Berry band is a local Blues/Rock group with an excellent reputation. They have recently supported other bands like Wishbone Ash so they are a ‘must see’ act.

# Charities & good causes

## Royal British Legion coffee morning

On behalf of the WI, Alan and myself, I would like to thank everyone who helped in any way to make this such an enjoyable and successful morning. Those who provided cakes, prizes and other items to sell, those who helped on the day, and those who gave donations. Together we raised £250 for the Poppy Appeal. Many thanks to you all.

*Avis Ushaw*

## School Sweaters for Yamba

Thank you SO much for coming to the Coffee Morning and to the Cheese and Wine Party; the evening was great fun and it was lovely to see so many people. Thank you, also, to those of you who couldn’t come to either event but donated so generously. I also received kind notes and letters from some of you which really encouraged me – thank you.

So far, we have raised £1,458.50 to pay for the school sweaters in Yamba and donations are still coming in. Once again, the folk of Stonesfield, and their friends, have shown how lovely and kind they are. Your generosity will bring real joy to the people of Yamba and to Village Africa.

*Sheila Maclean (898639)*

## Charity sky dive, Salon Copenhagen

Cheryl and Harriet completed their sky dive for Breast Cancer UK on Sunday 18

October and raised over £2,000. A huge thank-you to all who sponsored my daughter and Harriet. I must say that I was glad when they were safely on the ground.

*Ali Evans*

## Halloween Fancy Dress Disco

The Halloween discos which we organised on Saturday 31 October were a great success. We had a good turnout for the children’s disco and hopefully everyone had a good time. A big thank you to everyone who supported our adults disco, bought raffle tickets and had a go on ‘guess the weight of the pumpkin’. We made a fantastic profit of £850 for Breast Cancer Research.

We would also like to thank everyone who helped us set up the hall and clean up afterwards. A massive thank you to all who helped with the bar from the social club, and to those of you who kindly donated raffle prizes, especially the White Horse for their generous prize of a meal for two.

Thank you to Dave Holloway for donating the biggest pumpkin we had ever seen – I know lots of you had great fun trying to guess the weight. Mr Theodorou won the pumpkin and he kindly agreed to let us auction it off. It went to the highest bidder for £17. Last but not least, thank you to the Village Hall Committee for letting us use the Hall.

*Elize and Scott Hunt*

# Sport

## Stonesfield Football Club

With the festive season just around the corner there appears to be a glimmer of hope among the First Team players that they've just seen the first green shoots of recovery for Martin Hall's managerial regime. A novice at the helm, Stonesfield's best defender has been plying his trade up front in recent weeks as his stock amongst the support has resembled that of Scotland's beleaguered George Burley. Defeat in the President's Cup at Hinksey (4-1) followed by losses in the league away at Bletchingdon (2-1) and Rover Cowley (5-0) deepened the autumn gloom. However, comparisons with the blundering Burley seem to be premature as Martin recorded his first two league wins at home to Horspath (2-1) and OUP (3-2). Could this really be the first green shoots of recovery alluded to above, that will see our lads climb the table to a respectable position? If the OUP game is anything to go by then it could well be: inspired by the magnificent Nick Higgs they recovered from being two down to snatch all three points in dramatic fashion with minutes remaining. Clearly there's still plenty of hard work to be done but let's hope they take heart from that fabulous team effort!

Unfortunately sightings of The Reserve Team's green shoots of recovery seem to be well off the mark, despite the fact that they recorded their second win of the season away at Bardwell (2-1). Predictably, that great result was followed

by successive defeats at home to Slade Farm (5-2) and away at Charlton (3-0). The latter result was particularly frustrating as a win would have put clear daylight between them and their fellow strugglers. Looks like it could be a long hard winter for the second string.

As winter draws near, The Vets continue to be our most successful side so far this season and they extended their wonderful league run to four in a row with a win at OCC (5-1). Unfortunately that winning streak came to an abrupt halt with defeat at Goring (3-2), though they still remain top of the table. With one game left before their winter hibernation let's hope our ancient heroes manage one more win before bedtime!

As is traditional, this is the final *Slate* of 2009 and on behalf of The Football Club I'd like to extend every good wish to everyone for a very Happy Christmas and let's look forward to 2010 with confidence and good cheer!

*Tom Flanigan (891979)*

## Eynsham Hall launches Health & Fitness Club

This December, you can join as founder members of the Eynsham Hall Health & Fitness Club. The facilities are being extensively refurbished prior to the opening and will offer a fully air-conditioned fitness suite, an exercise studio for classes, a fully heated indoor pool, mixed-use sauna, and a floodlit outdoor tennis court. Members of the

new club will also have access to the grounds, the Gun Room bar, and the first-class restaurant at Eynsham Hall.

The club will be open in mid December. Membership will be limited to avoid overcrowding and Founder Membership will be limited to 150 places. Founder members will benefit from a price freeze until 2012 (subject to any change in VAT after 01.01.10), and from a Founder Membership bond which will allow

transfer of Founder Membership status to a nominated person if you decide to leave the club.

Annual membership fees will be a reasonable £35 a month, or £60 for a dual membership. You can reserve your Founder Membership for only £25. For further information please telephone 01993 885207, email [fitness@eynshamhall.com](mailto:fitness@eynshamhall.com) or visit the web site at [www.eynshamhall.com/club](http://www.eynshamhall.com/club)

## Christingle Service

- ★ Sunday 6 December 2009
- ★ 9.30am at Combe and 11am at Stonesfield

Do come to our special Christingle Service ~ make your own Christingle at the service and learn about what it means.

Everyone welcome!



# Church news



## Anglican Worship in the Parishes of Stonesfield with Combe Longa

Priest-in-Charge: The Revd Roy Turner  
The Rectory, Stonesfield, Witney, Oxon, OX29 8PR  
Telephone: 01993 898552 – Email: r.turner131@btinternet.com



Stonesfield Churchwardens: Martine Smith-Huvers (898425) & David Gambier (898464)  
Combe Longa Churchwardens: Bill Andrewes (891376) & Julian Freeland (891223)

[S]=Stonesfield, [C]=Combe Longa, [SJC]=St James' Centre, BCP=Book of Common Prayer, CW=Common Worship, Order One: in Stonesfield Modern English, in Combe Longa Traditional English.

All Age Worship is worship for the family, of all ages.

### From your Parish Priest

Are you any good at waiting? It's not easy when you are looking forward to something exciting about to happen. Christmas is like that. In actual fact the season just before Christmas called Advent means 'a time of waiting for the arrival of something momentous'. In the church we are of course marking the time when 2000 years ago the Messiah was about to be born. Something truly momentous!

As a child I have to say I loved Advent, the run up to Christmas, and indeed the season of Christmas, when dad was able to be at home with us much more than normal. As a child I would join my brother and sisters beavering away and deciding what presents we would buy mum and dad and each other. I have to say it was never a very expensive present that we children selected for the others in the family; the late 50s and early 60s were quite frugal times for the Turner

family but somehow Christmas was always an exciting and joyful occasion.

Putting up home made trimmings around the lounge and of course the fake Christmas tree heralded the holidays and the promise of mum's scrumptious food. We all loved to help her in the kitchen . . . Well, lick the bowls out at least.

Meeting relations who lived far, far away who would be somehow crammed into our 'three bed semi-detached' was all part of the festivities. For me and the rest of the children it was like camping indoors and therefore camping without the rain that would invariably be the case in the summer holidays. Makeshift beds in already crowded bedrooms all added to the fun. I remember being almost breathless as we waited for our presents to be delivered on Christmas Eve. I also remember mum and dad trying to get us off to sleep so that the magic could begin. Then of course in the darkness, as from

time to time we woke up and checked, there would be almost unbelievably the glimmer of wrapping paper and the miracle of the arrival of hoped-for presents.

We could never understand, as children, mum and dad's reluctance to join in the excitement at 3am in the morning . . ., but they did! We of course had the usual trouble about missing batteries and the inevitable wait for them to make the electric train work but the promise had been fulfilled; the train had arrived.

I thought it would be good this year in our Advent Reflections to consider as a theme being 'Ready and Waiting'. To explore the patience we need for our lives together, the trust and the expectation of good things to come when we await the arrival of the hoped-for blessings of God. It seems to me that just as I needed faith in mum and dad that the hoped-for present would arrive so we need the same kind of childlike faith to wait on God's good grace too.

Advent then is a good time for us to consider these virtues and strengthen our faith in God's love for us. In the second session of our Advent Reflections we deal with trust in God and a great Christian minister of the past, Charles Spurgeon, helpfully brings this virtue of trust to our attention: 'Many men have enough faith to trust God as far as they can see Him, and they always sing as far as they can see providence go right, but true faith can sing when its possessors cannot see. It can take hold of God when they cannot discern Him.'

If we are honest we would all say that we have difficulty waiting. We like it much better to have arrived. Perhaps, however, this is a time of 'Advent' in your life, a time of waiting to receive a blessing from God. I am sure our Lord would say 'Hang on in there, Christmas will arrive.' God bless you at this time of Advent and Christmas. Oh, and of course don't forget to wave!

*Rev Roy*

### SERVICES FOR DECEMBER AND JANUARY

#### Sunday 6 December [Second Sunday of Advent]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe Longa	All Age Worship: Christingle Service
11am	Stonesfield	All Age Worship: Christingle Service

#### Sunday 13 December [Third Sunday of Advent]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe Longa	Parish Communion [CW/sung]
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion [CW/sung]

#### Sunday 20 December [Fourth Sunday of Advent]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe Longa	Matins [CW/sung]
11am	Stonesfield	Morning Prayer [CW/sung] <i>with children's Christmas Workshop</i>
3pm	Combe Longa	Village Carol Service
6pm	Stonesfield	Village Carol Service

### Christmas Eve: Thursday 24 December

3.30pm	Stonesfield	Crib Service – for all the family
10pm	Combe Longa	Midnight Communion
10pm	Stonesfield	Midnight Communion

### Christmas Day: Friday 25 December

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe Longa	Family Service with Holy Communion
11am	Stonesfield	Family Service with Holy Communion

### Sunday 27 December [First Sunday of Christmas]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe Longa	Parish Communion [BCP/sung]
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion [CW/sung]

### Sunday 3 January [Epiphany]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe Longa	All Age Worship
11am	Stonesfield	All Age Worship

### Sunday 10 January [First Sunday of Epiphany]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe Longa	Parish Communion [CW/sung]
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion [CW/sung]

### Sunday 17 January [Second Sunday of Epiphany]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe Longa	Parish Communion [CW/sung]
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion [CW/sung] <i>with Scramblers and Explorers</i>

### Sunday 24 January [Third Sunday of Epiphany]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe Longa	Parish Communion [CW/sung]
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion [CW/sung]

### Sunday 31 January [Fourth Sunday of Epiphany]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
10am	Combe Longa	United Benefice Service [CW/sung]

### Sunday 7 February [Second Sunday before Lent]

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe Longa	All Age Worship
11am	Stonesfield	All Age Worship

### Mid-week Communion Service [said]

Thursdays 9.30am at Stonesfield – everyone is most welcome.

### Money Collections at Christmas Services

Loose money collections from the Crib Service, Midnight Communion and 11am Christmas Day service will be divided equally between the Children's Society and Church funds. At the Crib Service, children often like to place a gift under the Christmas tree – we would be grateful if this could be a gift of money (for the Children's Society), instead of a toy. It would be fun if children wrapped up a parcel of money to look like a present! Thank you.

### Carol singing around the village

See page 3 for details.

### Stonesfield Methodist Church

Dear Friends,

I can hardly credit it but some people have actually moaned to me about the Songs of Praise broadcast last week. I don't think they were grumbling about the bit with me in it but you never know.

The sort of complaint that I heard was about it not looking like their church and to be truthful we did have to turn it round so that the BBC could get the shots they wanted. But that seems to me to be a very little thing compared to the joy that the programme gave to the majority who watched.

I have been told that 2.3 million people tuned in and by Monday the Songs of Praise Unit had received lots of positive responses. They were delighted. I hope that you too were pleased with what you saw. I trust that all your expectations were met.

We are fast approaching a time of expectation. . . . Christmas is just around the corner. Our children will expect to receive exactly what they asked for.

As I was checking some Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes the other day the thought came to me about how our chil-

dren would feel if the only present they received was a shoebox containing maybe a toy, perhaps a game, almost certainly a toothbrush and toothpaste, a pair of hand knitted gloves that might or might not fit, a few pens and some sheets of paper. I suspect that the reaction could be very interesting and not at all positive. Yet for many millions of children to receive a filled shoebox is the most exciting event. What if you receive nothing at all? What if there is no one to give you a present?

Sometimes we should reflect how blessed we are. Even when we feel that things are not all they should be then they are likely to be 100% better than for many in our world.

We all, of course, receive a gift at Christmas. The gift of a child who changed everything. Be glad this Christmas, know yourself loved by God and richly blessed.

With my best wishes,

*Richard, Methodist Minister ( 03178),  
richard.donoghue@methodist.org.uk*

### SERVICES IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY

6 Dec 11am Revd Richard Donoghue,  
Holy Communion

13 Dec 11am Mr Ken Mumford  
 20 Dec 3pm Carol Service with  
 Revd Richard Donoghue  
 27 Dec 11am Ms Anne Welch  
 3 Jan 11am Mr Ron Glithero  
 10 Jan 11am Revd Richard Donoghue,  
 Covenant Service  
 17 Jan 11am Mr Brian Drowley  
 24 Jan 11am Revd Rohama Karam  
 31 Jan 11am Mr Eddie Fowler

The Christmas Bazaar held recently, raised over £500. Thank you to all those who made this possible. Although the weather was rather discouraging, we were very pleased with the result. The kind support is so very much appreciated.

### Roman Catholic Worship

#### St Teresa's, Charlbury

Sunday Mass 11am  
 Holydays 9.30am  
 7.30pm

#### St Kenelm's, Enstone

Sunday Mass 9am

#### Thursday 24 December (Christmas Eve)

Confessions at St Teresa's 10-11am  
 Holy Mass at St Teresa's 8pm

#### Friday 25 December (Christmas Day)

Holy Mass at St Kenelm's 9am  
 Holy Mass at St Teresa's 11am

Canon David Evans (01608 810576)

### New Church thought

God was born into this world at an extremely dark time, spiritually, for the human race. To really understand His

purposes for His sojourn here, you have to lift your thinking to the spiritual plane.

All of life here depends for its existence on life in the spiritual world. For balance and freedom to exist here, it must first exist there. Over time, the hells had become increasingly powerful – so much so that the ability of people to defy them was seriously weakened. All the conditions the Lord healed represented spiritual maladies even more than they were physical afflictions. Lameness, blindness, madness, death, chronic illness – in the Bible these signify mental states as well as physical ones.

By taking on a human body and human weaknesses as Jesus Christ, God provided an avenue of attack for all the accumulated evil in the world. In effect, He set up a giant 'sting' against the nether regions and its inhabitants: the hells thought, 'Here's another person for us to overpower – a really good one, which will make our victory all the sweeter.' At stake was the salvation of the souls of humanity. Big drama, mostly played out on a level we can't see, but glimpses of the struggle showed in the Lord's life here.

But the hells did not succeed. It looked like they had, in all the events of Easter week – but Easter Sunday showed the real victor. Death – spiritual obliteration – had been overpowered. Jesus Christ restored the balance between goodness and evil by re-establishing people's ability to follow goodness, to shun evil. Love did it – God's love for humanity's spiritual freedom. Quite a mission for a tiny babe with such a gentle, humble start.

Dale Morris (898210)

### Advertisements

Line ads: £1.50 per 30 words  
 Boxed ads: 1/16 page £2; 1/8 page £4; 1/4 page £8; 1/2 page £12; whole page £24.  
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Please give as much notice as you can. This is a free service provided by volunteers. However, an envelope will be provided for donations for costs.

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*Turn off the A44 on to the B4437 to Charlbury and look out for the banners*

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