

Winter Blankets Wittenham Clumps

By Susan Ganney



The Villager

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell

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Editorial

While we are not yet in the grips of winter, the lovely contemporary painting on our front page 'Snow Blankets on Wittenham Clumps' introduces us to the changing season. Thank you Susan Ganney for allowing us to use it. More fabulous art and crafts will be seen at the annual Art Club Exhibition in the Village Hall on Saturday 6 December (see flyer and page 7). This is the first of several Christmas events in the village, details of which you can find in this issue. An event usually not to be missed is the Carols Evening in the Village Hall on Monday 8 December where more Brightwell talent will be on display. If you like carols, you can enjoy singing at the Donkey Sanctuary on Thursday 18 December, also at St Agatha's on the 21st and at the Crib service on Christmas Eve. An advent card with details of all the Christmas services at St James and St Agatha's is included with this issue.

The Red Lion and the Village Shop articles have details of their Christmas opening hours, while you can find last posting dates for your cards and parcels at Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Post Office on page 23. So it really is beginning to feel quite Christmassy.

Have you been to see the evocative WW1 exhibition in St Agatha's church? It will run until 14 December, well worth a visit if you haven't got there yet. As Olive writes on page 10, there are some truly interesting stories that have emerged in the research by the History Society and from families of the young men. For me, it made me think about the impact the loss of 25 young village men must have had here at that time, many no older than my own daughter. We also have another exhibition on at the moment – poetry in the old phone box opposite the Red Lion, by Robert Seatter. Pop along there too and take a look.

A Happy Christmas to you all from *The Villager* team,

Helen Connor

Carol Evening – Monday 8 December at 7:30 pm in the Village Hall

Get into the Spirit of Christmas with a fun-filled evening of carol singing, poetry reading, music and sketches, all washed down with mulled wine and mince pies. No booking needed, just turn up (early to get a good seat).

John Burrige 1960 - 2014

It was with much sadness and shock that we heard of the sudden death of John Burrige, aged just 54 years. John and his family have lived here for over twenty years, first up on Sires Hill where they were my neighbours and then down in the village in Bell Lane. He was known and respected as a talented engineer who could find solutions to any problem, working at Williams F1 for over 25 years; as a cyclist of some repute; as a friend to chat with, often while walking his dog; and a devoted family man. He will be missed greatly by his wife Lynn and his children Izzy and Jack, as well as many villagers. Our thoughts are with them at this sad time.

Helen Connor

Letter

Christmas Greetings

Christmas cards will need to be done,
But Village folk will not get one.

It's not because we do not care,
More that we feel it better to share,

The money that we would spend, you see,
Will now be donated to charity!

This year we are splitting our donation,
To animals, and those who fought for our nation.

But when we meet, you will still hear,
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Best Wishes from the Lucks

Follow Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Community on Facebook

Did you know we have a Community Facebook page? You can post messages about events, ask questions or share links (but no commercial adverts). Latest posts include staff vacancies at Allsorts Preschool, a lost key in Wellsprings, someone asking about babysitting and info on local town Christmas events. Take a look.

Community Association

AGM – 23 September 2014

A big thank you to everyone who attended our AGM. Our Treasurer Susannah was pleased to be able to report that £3,154 was distributed to various clubs and charities in the Village. We also provided Hampers for the elderly in the village, with the generous support of the Fairthorne Trust. We would like to record our sincere thanks to David and Jenny Dobbin, who this year lent us their garden for the Fete.

Our Secretary Laura left this year. We are grateful for all her hard work and dedication over the last three years. We are delighted that Sarah Jackson, Caroline Annets, Bill Horsfield, John Burdass, Tom Rodgerson, Andy Lewis, Graham Adlard and Charlotte and Mike Woods were all happy to be re-elected. The Secretary post is vacant but our Treasurer (Susannah Magnion) and Chairman (James Davys) were also re-elected. Jim Sanger has kindly agreed to be Auditor again this year

Bingo Evening – 18 October

Thank you to everybody who supported this fun packed evening. Andy surpassed himself again in organizing this event and we were pleased that seventy people came along

Carol Evening – Monday 8 December at 7:30 pm in the Village Hall

If you haven't got into the Spirit of Christmas yet (or even if you have!), come and enjoy a fun-filled, festive frolic for all ages at the Carol Evening, where the talent of Brightwell will be once again on display. Andy Lewis & Anthony Finn host carol singing, poetry reading, musical interludes, sketches and mince pies, all washed down with Derek Brooker's mulled wine.

Christmas Hampers

The profits from the Carol Evening are used to purchase hampers for older members of the village. If you know of anyone over the age of 70, whom you believe does not currently receive a hamper but would appreciate one, please notify me on 01491 834195

Village Quiz Evening – 21 March 2015 in the Village Hall

We plan to send entry forms to all teams that took part last year. Anyone else who wants to enter a team should contact me, on 834195. Numbers are limited because of the event's popularity and fire regulations, so entries will be accepted in strict order of receipt of completed forms. All entry forms will be despatched at the same time to ensure everyone has an equal chance of acceptance.

James Davys

Parish Council

Elections: On 7 May 2015, the nine members of the new Parish Council will be elected when voting takes place for Parliament and for the District Council. Any parishioner can stand for election: you just need a proposer and seconder. The Parish Council meets once a month and there are no party politics involved. The Council advises the District Council on planning applications, it allocates grants to parish bodies and it decides on many of the matters concerned with the life of the Parish. These are recorded in the minutes from its meeting and in the pages of *The Villager*. For the next 2 years one of the most important of these matters is the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. This Plan, which was described in the last *Villager*, is different from the recently published Community Led Plan, because it will have legal status and be the basis for the future development of the Parish.

Several members of the present Council will not be standing in May, so please consider whether you wish to become a Councillor. It is an interesting thing to do and need not take up a lot of time.

Defibrillators: Thanks to the generosity of parishioners and village bodies, the Parish Council will soon be able to purchase and install three defibrillators. One is planned to go to Shillingford Hill and the others to the phone boxes by the Red Lion and on the High Road.

"Putting your foot in it": The Council continues to receive many complaints about dog owners not clearing up the "poo" their dogs leave behind on footpaths. These dog owners are asked to consider other walkers when they take their pet for a walk.

Neighbourhood Plan: After his excellent work on the Community Led Plan, Jason Debney has agreed to chair the committee that will be preparing the Neighbourhood Plan over the next two years. A number of parishioners have already volunteered for one or more of the 7 groups charged with particular tasks within the Plan, but more are needed to join the team. Please contact Jason (jjrdebney@gmail.com) to contribute.

Footpaths: The Village Walking Group has taken on role of Parish Path Warden.

Jubilee Pavilion: The Parish Council is exploring the possibility of mounting solar panels on the roof of the Pavilion.

John Rodda

Brightwell Art Club Annual Exhibition

A brief reminder to everyone that Brightwell Art Club's Annual Exhibition and Sale of Works will take place, as always, in the Village Hall on **SATURDAY 6 DECEMBER**. Do please come along and support your local artists and other arts and crafts exhibitors who will be there! We've had several new members this year so there will be the usual favourites as well as some new exhibitors.

The Exhibition will run from 10am until 1pm and alongside the artworks will be cards, pottery, knitting, quilting, woodwork, jewellery and more to get your Christmas shopping underway! Great refreshments, a cracking raffle in aid of charity, and a warm welcome are standard. Do please ask to speak to any of the artists if you would like to know any more about them and their work and we'll be very happy to help. Hope to see you there!

Susan Ganney, Club Secretary

Environment Group

Bees: This year's autumn talk was given by Steve Moll on the Incredible World of the Honey Bee. It was an outstanding presentation, beautifully illustrated by Viv Moll's series of shots of the bees in action and of Steve husbanding them in his white "space suit". The explanation of how bees explain to others in the hive the route to a source of nectar was fascinating. The audience was stimulated to question Steve about different aspects of bee keeping. There was concern about the health of the British bee population and the reduction in the various types of natural flora on which bees depend.

Millennium Wood: Growth of the trees has been good this year but the glade in the centre of the Wood has been taken over by lots of brambles. These are to be cleared. Free advice on the Wood's long term management came from the County Council's expert on woodlands for several years. However his post has been axed and another source is being sought. Certain trees will need felling so that the ones that already have been identified to grow to maturity can develop properly.

Neighbourhood Plan: The Group is involved in the preparation of the Plan, particularly in the possible solar farm for the Parish. Some parts of the Parish Conservation Plan, which was published in 2013, may be used.

Best wishes: Peter Varley, who has been an active member of the committee for a number of years, is leaving the village. We hope he enjoys his new surroundings as much as he has Brightwell-cum-Sotwell.

John Rodda

Brightwell Shop News

Most of you will by now know that we have appointed Margot Shawyer and Mandy Finn to the joint manager post at the Shop. Come and see them and let them have your ideas about how the Shop can best serve the people of the village.

Christmas is nearly upon us and although you may have missed our late night Christmas opening on 21 November we still have some exciting goods in stock to tempt you. We are also taking orders for meat, Christmas hampers, wine, tasty cheeses and Christmas puddings. In addition, we have many other Christmas goodies and essentials that you can pre-order from us. So why not make the shop your first port of call for Christmas gifts and food.

The Christmas and New Year shop opening hours are:

24 December -- 8.30am – 1pm

25 & 26 December - closed

27 December – normal opening 9am – 1pm

28 December – normal opening 9am – 12noon

29 December – 8.30am – 1pm

30 December – 8.30am – 1pm

31 December – 8.30am – 12noon

1 January – closed

2 January – normal opening resumes – 8.30am – 6pm

We wish all of our volunteers, customers and potential customers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Staff and Management Committee

Parish Church

It seems strange to be typing this in November around Remembrance Sunday, and wondering how to translate heart and mind forward a month or two to the more festive season of Christmas. However, the theme of Peace; working for it and building it, is most definitely a Christmas theme too.

Woodbine Willie, who went from a suburban parish in Worcester to the front line in Flanders in 1914 made a link between his traditional sacramental faith – with a strong emphasis on Christ’s suffering on the cross, and his self-offering in the bread and wine of the eucharist – and the self-giving of the soldiers. He taught the power of prayer to soldiers who were fatalists – who believed that bullets and shells had their name written on them and there was nothing they could do about it. That, he said, is a brave way, but it’s not the Christian way, it’s not the true meaning of ‘thy will be done’.

These ideas of a God who suffers with us, and the power of prayer, were not particularly fashionable then and they are often neglected today. We all hope to encounter the peace of the Season this Christmas but if, through all the tinsel and turkey, you have both moments of peace and also times when peace seems to be eluding you, then it’s worth dwelling on a verse which Fred Kaan has put to the tune ‘O valiant hearts’

*God, as with silent hearts we bring to mind
how hate and war diminish humankind,
we pause, and seek in worship to increase
our knowledge of the things that make for peace...*

When we gather in worship, or when we pray together or alone, we help build peace. We also help build peace, in the words of the Lord’s Prayer, by giving and forgiving. So let’s value this kind of peace building where and when we can; not just between nations but within our own communities, and amongst our friends and those we pray for this Christmas.

Hang on to the Service card in this edition of *The Villager* (courtesy of Jason, Helen & Co.) and I look forward to seeing you and celebrating the Prince of Peace whose season this is.

I am hugely grateful to all who have helped behind the scenes at the Church(es) this year not least; Margot, Robin, Janice, Roy, Sandra, Sally, David, Janita, Annabel, and all who people our Choir, our rotas, graveyard gang, flower arrangers etc., and the PCC.

Wishing a very Happy Christmas and much Peace to one and all!

Jeremy

World War One Exhibition in St Agatha's

This fascinating exhibition about the 25 village men who gave their lives in the Great War will now run on until 14 December which will be the final day. Some truly interesting stories and details have emerged from the research carried out and if you have not had time to visit it yet, we hope you will try to do so before it ends. Discovering something of the lives of these men, their families, their occupations prior to the war, where they lived – and then where they died - has been such a rewarding and at times very moving experience for those of us involved in the research. From just having the stark facts of regimental numbers, ranks, where killed in action and so on, we were then led in various directions.

One 19 year old for whom we could find no information linking him to this village was eventually traced to having been in a Cheshire workhouse with his mother and twin sisters until he was fourteen. We traced a relative who said they knew that the lad had 'gone down south to be a soldier'. He must have been living in this parish when he enlisted in Wallingford.

There is an able seaman on the records and we found a frightening account of the sinking of his vessel at Jutland. There is a young man who was in the Royal Flying Corps (early days for aerial combat), one who was awarded the Military Medal, and two sets of brothers. There is an account from the Berkshire & Oxon Advertiser of one brother whose body was actually brought back to Sotwell and buried with the best military honours they could assemble at that time.

At the end of the day, what we have managed to assemble has given us a glimpse of the villages of Brightwell, Sotwell and Mackney. Further reading from the Village History Group's publications and archive material gives a sense of how neighbour helped neighbour during these terrible years with ladies from the 'big' houses taking food along to others much less well-off after being widowed and with many children to care for.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the exhibition, including The Village History Group and the families who have provided such helpful information and photographs. It has all been so worthwhile!

Olive Sutcliffe

(St Agatha's is open every day 10am to dusk, Sundays from 11am. If coming from a distance, check on 01491 836661 to avoid weddings or funerals.)

Kitchener's Supper

On Saturday 1 November we held a supper as part of the 1st World War commemorations. From the very gratifying feedback everyone found it very enjoyable and informative - as one person put it, it was a "good village event". We raised £487.10 on the night for the Royal British Legion and have been given a further £50 donation. Additionally, we were able to give our guest speaker (Alan Knowles) £100 for the Oxfordshire 14/18 Centenary Appeal. We would like to thank all those who came and a special thank you to those individuals that helped us provide a delicious supper and decorate the hall.

Celia & Clive Collett

Community Orchard Planting

Would you like to help plant new trees in the Community Orchard? The area – behind the allotments – has been cleared and the first tree will be ceremoniously planted at 11 am on Saturday 29 November. Planting will continue until dusk, and from 10 am on Sunday. Get together with family and friends to make a team – and bring a spade. To find out more, or to keep up with Community Orchard news, visit www.brighwellorchards.blogspot.co.uk.

Christmas Services

Sunday 14 December - St. James 9.30am. A candlelit service for all the family with folk musicians (please bring a blanket if it is cold!)

Sunday 21 December - Annual Church Carol Service at St. Agatha's 6.00pm

Wednesday 24 December, Christmas Eve - Crib Service at St. Agatha's 4.30pm (followed by the annual Save the Children carols around the Christmas Tree). Midnight Mass at St. Agatha's 11.30pm

Thursday 25 December, Christmas Day: Christmas Communion at St Agatha's 9.30am

Sunday 28 December - Team Communion at St. Mary-le-More Wallingford 10.00am

The Christmas Party

We' re going to have a party
And a lovely Christmas tea
With flags and lighted candles
Upon the Christmas tree

And silver balls and lanterns
Tied on with golden string
Will hide among the branches
By little bells that ring.

And then there will be crackers
And caps and hats and toys
A Christmas cake and presents
For all the girls and boys

With dancing, games and laughter
With mistletoe and fun
We'll make our Christmas party
A joy for everyone!

By Jonathan

Carols at Island Farm Donkey Sanctuary

Once again there will be carols at Island Farm Donkey Sanctuary. Please join us at 7.30pm on Thursday 18 December at the Donkey Sanctuary when the carols will be accompanied by the lovely sound of Benson and Roke Silver Band. Lots of carols will be sung, the Christmas story will be told and after the service mulled wine and other refreshments will be served. Do come and join us for a lovely evening – a donkey and other animals will be present but the service is held indoors and we shall be nice and warm.

Janice Chilton

Save the Children

Many of you would have already heard from the media about the work Save the Children is involved in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea and Mali helping to bring the Ebola virus under control. Save the Children are also ensuring surviving children receive adequate support together with helping lone and abandoned children find and reunite with their families and communities.

We kicked off our first fund raising for this appeal with a quiz in the Red Lion at the end of October and raised £166.71.

We will be selling our Christmas cards throughout November and December, if you are unable to get to one of our events and would like some cards please contact me.

As usual Clive and Co will be erecting the Save the Children Christmas Tree in the Square for carols around the Christmas tree on Christmas Eve.

Celia Collett

Village Lunch Club

The Christmas Lunch will be held on Tuesday 9 December in the Village Hall at 12.15.

Contact Belinda Lee-Jones tel 836223 or Jacqui Brown tel 836018.

Allsorts Pre-School

Sparklers made from breadsticks dipped in chocolate and sprinklies have been one of this year's definite hits. The children also really enjoyed 'toasting' marshmallows on a pretend bonfire, after building it from sticks they had gathered. Autumn activities also included rolling conkers in paint, making crowns from autumn leaves and baking apple flapjack. The children have also been learning about people who help us, with visits from a doctor and a police officer, and talks about brushing teeth and washing hands.

During the half term holidays, the children from Allsorts got together in spooky outfits at the Red Lion's family Halloween party. As well as being lots of fun, the event was a great fundraising opportunity for Allsorts with landlord Mark allowing us to sell spooky goodies. We raised £130 for Allsorts, which included a face painter donated by Mark, and a monetary donation from him too – many thanks. The money raised will go towards our garden project, which aims to create a space where children can learn and play in an inspiring natural environment. At present the garden is very dated and in need of some serious TLC to bring it up to the standard of the rest of the Allsorts facilities, as well as making our preschool a shining example in the local area.

We have made a great start to the garden project, already raising enough money to replace the surfacing with a softer, more modern material by the New Year. But next comes the big job, completely re-landscaping and replacing various play apparatus. And what better time to make this happen than in 2015, our 40th anniversary year? Watch this space to find out about future plans, fundraising activity and how you can get involved.

Fundraising is part of the remit of Allsorts committee, which is responsible for helping run the pre-school. When the committee held its AGM in September, last year's co-chairs, Sophie and Alison, stood down and Lorna took over the role of chair, with Andrea as assistant chair. Helen G stood down as joint fundraiser, but Sally, Alexa, Hannah and Claire have joined Natalie to form a fundraising team. Alex continues as treasurer and Helen W as secretary. Rachel has stayed on the committee as a member without portfolio, but Kate has stood down.

Sadly we are losing Karen Stevens at the end of November after nine years at Allsorts. We thank her for her hard work and the fun she has brought to pre-school, and wish her all the best in her new job at a children's centre in Newbury.

With Karen leaving, and the number of children increasing over the year (six more starting after Christmas), we will be recruiting new members of staff to join the team. One of the new recruits will need to have reached Level 3 in Early Years Education and be able to work four sessions per week. If you may be interested, please get in touch with Julie Carr, manager, on 826387 or email allsortsadmin@btinternet.com.

Team Allsorts

WI

At our October meeting we were entertained by Martin Sirot-Smith, suitably attired in the costume of the 16th century whilst he took us through the Yuletide events that would have occurred at Sulgrave Manor. It was all very amusing and enlightening as we were reminded of the rituals and traditions that still form part of our Christmas celebrations today.

Other activities undertaken by members was a morning of musical appreciation at Benson, very well attended by over 100 members from around the county who enjoyed the music of Chopin.

Another opportunity to meet members of other WIs was the group meeting at Cholsey, an evening of poems and village tales read by their author Bob Harding-Jones.

Nearer home, in our village, a group of sixteen followed Bill Horsfield around as he pointed out the often over-looked historic buildings which form the core of our environment.

By the time you read this we will have had our Christmas craft evening, an opportunity to play with paper and glue to make something fabulous for the coming festivities.

Margaret Smith

Missing Cat

Sadly, our cat, Roxy, medium long hair, black/dark grey, is still missing. She has not been seen since Saturday 25 October. Any sightings, please let us know.

Lisa de Jong

Wassail

Those of you who joined us for Wassail last January will remember an afternoon that Sue Robson called the wackiest village event she had attended for a long time. Well, join us again on 4 January for an even wackier time beginning at the War Memorial (3.30pm) and ending in the Red Lion. Armaleggan, the colourful Cotswold Morris side, are keen to join us again to add to the fun, so bring your sticks and anything to make a loud noise and help us wake up those apple trees for next year's harvest!

Robert Field

Your Village Hall needs you!

Do you value our Village Hall? Do you use it either regularly or at particular times of the year? What would you do if it were no longer available?

Currently 15 organisations including the Brownies, Bowls Club, the WI, Keep Fit and The Art Group all use the Village Hall regularly. On average, there are 10+ parties a year, including receptions following funerals, children's birthday parties, anniversary parties and more. Concerts, plays, dancing displays, sales of Oriental carpets and Teak furniture all take place in the Village Hall.

The building is an old Victorian school whose fabric needs regular attention and forward planning of maintenance for its' continued safe existence. We, the Village Hall committee, would also like to update and enhance the existing facilities. All this requires discussion and careful planning. We are not asking you to help with the actual maintenance of the building - we pay registered tradesmen to do this - but we DO NEED people on the committee who are prepared to get involved with the planning and organisation of works to be carried out. There are only 4 official meetings per year, though more are sometimes needed to see through particular projects. Some long-serving committee members have been trying to retire, but we need to find replacements for them. In particular, our current Treasurer would like to hand over to someone new.

If you have any ideas as to how we can improve and sustain this excellent facility, and can offer your time and experience on the Village Hall Committee, please do get in touch with our Chairman, Steve Luck: 01491834543. email: steve@tooleys.co.uk.

Thank you on behalf of the Trustees of the Stewart Village Hall.

Poem from a Phone Box

*If a telephone box could speak, what would it remember?
What's the afterlife of a party line, the love song of an answerphone?
How do you telephone a thought, a dream?...*

Step inside the Brightwell telephone box, the smallest art space in Oxfordshire, and explore telephony-inspired words. A simple phone call may never ever be the same again!

These and other poems by Sotwell resident and poet Robert Seatter can be viewed at the Red Phone Box Gallery opposite the Red Lion.

Robert has published three poetry collections: *Travelling to the Fish Orchards*, *On the Beach with Chet Baker* and *Writing King Kong*. He has won many awards and nominations for his poetry and his work has been featured on TV, radio and even the London buses.

A lovely evening of poetry reading by Robert was enjoyed by many at St James Church in November. He has also been working with Brightwell school so we look forward to reading more poetry from Robert and the children in *The Villager*.

The Red Lion

The diary is filling up for December but we are still taking bookings for Christmas meals. Our Christmas menu will be served from 1 December, right the way through to lunchtime on 24 December - 2 courses £22, 3 courses £27. The menu can be found on our website www.redlion.biz or by popping into the bar.

Christmas opening hours: Lunch will be served as usual on 24 December. After this there will be no food served until lunch time on 27 December when normal service shall resume. During this time the bar will still be open: 6-11pm Christmas Eve, 12-2pm Christmas Day, 12-3pm Boxing Day. There will not be food on the evenings of 30 and 31 December but the bar will be open as usual. Father Christmas will be visiting the pub during lunch time on Sunday 14 December.

We will be having our usual New Years Eve party on 30 December, with a DJ and fancy dress.

On top of this, we have our normal events continuing: Jazz Jam Monday 1 December; Open Mic Night on Sunday 7 December; Stanley Moon Trio Sunday 28 December - and not forgetting our weekly Friday Fish nights.

At the moment we have nobody booked in to host a quiz in December (Monday 29th) but we are happy to hold one if anyone would like to volunteer.

Looking further ahead to January:

- **Traditional Burns night supper** on Saturday 24 January, complete with haggis, piper and speeches.
- **Stanley Moon Trio** on Sunday 25 January
- **Charity quiz** for the community shop on Monday 26 January

Hannah

Beauty and the Beast

January – and it's panto time in Wallingford. Once again, Sinodun Players will transform the Corn Exchange into the magical world of fairytale, this time with the enchanting story of Beauty and the Beast.

Audiences can expect to see a truly traditional panto with a script by Alan Frayn that offers more comedy and originality than any other version of this famous folktale.

With many twists and turns along the way, action-packed adventure, quirky visual comedy and side-splitting humour is guaranteed to bring the house down.

Performances take place from 16-31 January at 7.30pm with Saturday matinees at 2.30pm. No performances on Sunday or Monday. Tickets are £10 Tuesdays to Thursdays, £12 Friday and Saturday. £6 for under-16s throughout. Available from www.cornexchange.org.uk or at the box office (01491 825000), between 10am-2pm Fridays and Saturdays and 7-8pm each evening.

Carol Evans

The Bach Centre

In what turned out to be the last year of his life, Dr Edward Bach planned how best to tell people about his discoveries. One way was to revise and bring up to date his published description of the system of 38 flower remedies. Another was to plan a lecture tour.

Both plans came together on 24 September 1936. On that day - which was also Bach's 50th birthday - The CW Daniel Co in London published "The Twelve Healers and Other Remedies", while Bach himself walked down to Wallingford to deliver two talks on the remedies at the Masonic Hall in Goldsmiths Lane.

The location held meaning for Bach, who had become a Freemason in 1918 and belonged to the London Warwickshire, Royal Hampton Court and Norbury lodges during his time in London. In latter years his memberships lapsed - but he retained a fondness for the organisation and it was natural to turn to the masons when seeking a venue.

The longer of the two lectures was open to the general public. The shorter was reserved for masons. The idea was to take the same lectures to other venues, starting locally, and Bach had posters printed advertising talks in October at the War Memorial Hall in Cholsey and the Marlborough Club in Didcot - although in the event his assistants delivered those talks, as he fell ill in October.

The posters and Dr Bach's words are reproduced in a short downloadable book of "The Wallingford Lectures" that we posted recently on the web site. You can download it free at www.bachcentre.com/centre/download. If you are interested in local history you can read there words written in Sotwell and spoken in Wallingford 78 years ago.

Stefan

Welcome Packs

If you know of a newcomer to the village, please give their name and address for a Welcome Pack to Bill Horsfield 01491 832041 wthorsfield@yahoo.com and/or Andy Lewis 01491 825680 andyLewis10@talktalk.net.

Earth Trust – December and January Events

Introduction to Hedgelaying

Saturday 6, Sunday 7 December, 9.30am-4pm. A hands-on two day course learning to lay a Midlands-style hedge. £75; booking essential

Natural Christmas at the Earth Trust

Sunday 7th December, 10am-2pm. Re-use, recycle, bake and make this Christmas! Come along and learn how to make traditional, natural Christmas decorations. There will be a range of activities to suit all ages, from popcorn garlands to festive wreaths. You can also meet Father Christmas and purchase some Earth Trust Christmas cards. Activities cost between £1 and £12; free entry and parking. Poem Tree cafe will be open for light refreshments.

Heritage Skills Taster Session - Hedgelaying

Sunday 14 December, 10am-4pm. Have a go at hedgelaying in this free taster session. Please book on to the morning (10am-1pm) or afternoon (1.30pm-4pm) session, or both: volunteering@earthtrust.org.uk or 01865 407792.

A second set of taster sessions will be on Sunday 11 January, same times. These will be combined with a Volunteer Group Work session.

More information on all events can be found on our website www.earthtrust.org.uk. All events take place at the Earth Trust, Little Wittenham, OX14 4QZ

Lucy Benyon

Wallingford University of the Third Age (U3A)

A warm welcome awaits you at our monthly meeting in Crowmarsh Village Hall on the first Wednesday of the month at 2pm. Our program of talks cover a diverse range of subjects by a number of speakers, from history, nature, music etc.

In December, the speaker will be on Christmas customs in Tudor times and in January, a 'tour of the universe' while in February, Charles Dickens as a social reformer. All talks are followed by a cup of tea and chat. The programme for 2015 is just being finalised.

There are interest groups covering a variety of subjects including books, current affairs, computing, history, a monthly lunch, music, play and poetry reading and walks. Outings by coach are organised to a number of interesting places, exhibitions and gardens, as well as an annual holiday. Membership is just £15 a year.

U3A is a group who meet regularly to help keep our minds active now that we are no longer in full time employment. Part of a nationwide organization that was started more than 40 years ago in France and came to Britain in 1982, it has been growing ever since with the Wallingford Branch forming over 25 years ago.

For more details contact Jill Procter, Plus Four, 01491 835994

Round and About in Wallingford - In Brief

Science Exchange Wallingford

The River of Life: creating new wetland habitats along the River Thames, Lizzie Rhymes, Environment Agency & Chris Parker, Earth Trust. Tuesday 20 January, 7.00pm for 7.30pm, Wallingford School Library. St George's Road, Wallingford – doors open from 7.00pm. Light refreshments are available and each event is free to attend. We are privileged to be a Café Scientifique <http://www.cafescientifique.org/>.

Wallingford TWHAS

December's talk to The Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society (TWHAS) will be by Susan Ronald on 'Hildebrand and Gurlitt, Nazi art dealer'. This will be based on her soon-to-be published book.

12 December, 8 pm at Wallingford Town Hall. Visitors (£3) are most welcome. www.twhas.org.uk

Wallingford Museum

As usual Wallingford Museum will be closed for its winter break (Dec-Feb) to carry out refurbishment and prepare an exciting new exhibition for next year - 'Wallingford's Royal Castle Revealed', together with a display highlighting Wallingford's mention in the Magna Carta. The Museum will re-open on 3 March 2015.

But don't forget that the highly successful Museum bookshop will remain open during December, January and February on Fridays and Saturdays from 10.30am to 1.00pm. Also, do please continue to donate your second-hand books. www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk

Wallingford Country Market

Every Friday 8.30-11.15am at the Regal Centre. Christmas orders being taken. Last Market 2014 is 19 December, re-opens 9 January 2015

Wallingford Gardening Club

At the December meeting of the Wallingford Gardening Club, our members will test their gardening know-how with a short quiz.

Following a very brief Annual General Meeting, they will all enjoy wine and mince pies!

Ridgeway Community Centre, Wallingford at 7.30pm on Thursday 11 December. Visitors very welcome £2.

8 January 2015 meeting will be on 'University Gardens of Oxford', Dr Stephen Head – to be followed in the summer with a visit.

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Post Office

Your Post Office is open in the Village Hall at the following times: Monday to Friday 09.00 to 13.00. Saturday 09.00 to 12.00. The Last Collection Time at the Post Office by Royal Mail is 11.05 am. For the full range of facilities available at Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Post Office see website at www.postoffice.so.uk

UK Parcels

There is now a new maximum for Small Parcels. This has gone up to 4 times a Shoe Box. ie 45cm x 35 cm x 16cm. The weight limit is 2Kg. This is for both First and Second Class post in UK..

Overseas Parcels

A new overseas weight band has been introduced of 0 to 60g so this should help customers with smaller parcels. Again do come for a leaflet with prices and sizes.

Last Posting Dates for Christmas

A leaflet is available with all the last posting dates. Key dates in December are:

New Zealand, Asia, Far East	Wed 3 rd
Australia	Thurs 4 th
Africa, Caribbean, C & S America. M East	Fri 5 th
Eastern Europe, Cyprus, Greece	Mon 8 th
Canada, Poland	Tues 9 th
USA	Fri 12 th
Western Europe	Sat 13 th
UK – 2nd class	Thu 18 th
1 st class	Sat 20 th

Collection of Parcels

Do use the Royal Mail arrangements, which allows you to collect parcels from Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Post Office rather than the Delivery Office in Wallingford. Do also remember that both Parcel Force and Royal Mail will very often leave parcels in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Post Office rather than your address if no one is in.

For Christmas Gifts

Do consider Gift Cards redeemable at most High Street shops or perhaps the Presentation Packs of stamps which are very good to make children think of other things than computers. The latest Presentation Packs list all of our Prime Ministers. Again worth a look.

Mike Powell

VILLAGE DIARY

December 2014

2	Quilting Group	VH	9.30-1
6	Annual Art Club Exhibition	VH	10-1
8	Carol Evening	VH	7.30pm
9	Village Lunch	VH	12.15
14	Candlelit Service with folk musicians	St James	9.30
16	Quilting Group	VH	9.30-1
18	Carols at Donkey Sanctuary	Island Farm	7.30pm
21	Carol Service	St Agatha's	6pm
24	Crib service and <i>Save the Children</i> Carols around the Christmas Tree		4.30pm
25	Christmas Day Service	St Agatha's	9.30

January 2015

4	Wassail	War Memorial	3.30pm
13, 27	Quilting Group	VH	9.30-1
24	Burns Night supper	Red Lion	
26	Quiz night for Village shop	Red Lion	8pm

Advance Notice

21 March	Village Quiz Evening	VH
7 May	Parish, District and Parliament Elections	

Refuse Collection: Food waste each week

Grey bins: 4, 18 December, **Sat 3**, 15, 29 January

Green bins: 11 & **Sat 27** December, **Sat 10**, 22 January

Reminder to distributors of *The Villager*: Please ensure that you have a replacement distributor for when you are on holiday and then inform Keith Brooks (839044) of your arrangements.

For information on Brightwell-cum-Sotwell and also an on-line version of this *Villager* go to the village website: www.brightwellcumsotwell.co.uk and Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Community page on Facebook.