SOUTH NEWINGTON NEWSLETTER



Winter 2017

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Parish Council News

For the past 30 years Vincent Burns has been looking after our church clock which involves climbing up the tower and squeezing himself into the area of the mechanism to retard or advance the timing. This is dependent upon the weather and there is of course the one-hour change in the Spring and Autumn. So, a big thank you to Vincent for all his years of dedicated service. He has reluctantly decided it is now 'time' to call it a day and Tim Catton has kindly agreed to take over under his guidance.

Another, belated thank you, to Emma and Stuart Dunlop who for many years ran the Village Youth Club. They stepped down in July last year. The Parish Council is seeking someone to take over running the Club. There is a fund of £850.00 left in the bank account. If no-one comes forward, we propose to ring fence the money for a while, before deciding what could be done with it.

The Village Quiz Night which took place last month was enjoyed by over 40 people. The plan is to repeat the evening once or twice a year. Thanks very much to Sue Robertson and Paula Staples for all their hard work and to all those who contributed to making it a very successful evening.

As Christmas is fast approaching the Parish Council has ordered the tree for the church, which will be decorated as usual by villagers when it arrives at the beginning of December.

Wishing everyone a very Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Peter Thomas, Chairman.

South Newington Occasional Singers

We are still going strong – in fact stronger still thanks to our inspirational conductor, Stuart Dunlop. Do come and hear our latest, lovely little repertoire on Sunday Dec 10th at 5pm when we will be giving a short concert in the church to start the singing before we all sing together outside round the Christmas tree.

It's a proven fact that singing is good for you, physically. It is also sociable, funny, diverting, and emotional so if you fancy any of these benefits you are most welcome to come and join us.

Our new term will start on Jan 6th usual place and time: South Newington Village Hall 10.30 – 12 Saturday mornings. We will be starting work on a new programme of music from Les Miserables in January, to perform in the Chipping Norton Music Festival on Saturday 10th March in the afternoon.

It costs £5 to sing and you get a free cup of coffee plus the aforementioned emotional benefits. People from other villages always welcome. Any questions Nicky Smith, John Hadley or Elizabeth Wheeldon.

Another musical note: 'I'll be home for Christmas' - sing along audience participation theatre show

- Weds 20th December St Mary's Church Banbury
- Friday 22nd December Chipping Norton Town Hall

Joe Cummings, piano teacher and piano accompanist for the South Newington Singers, in between this work and studying at the Royal Academy for Music also runs a charity which uses music to help children with ADHD.

Together with other actors and musicians, Joe is putting on two shows in December called **"I'll be home for Christmas"** raising funds for his charity plus Katherine House Hospice.

The show is set in WW2 and will include favourite music from that time plus popular Christmas carols for the audience to sing along with.

Joe will be performing with other gifted young musicians and actors, so if you enjoy a good show and sing along, book tickets early to avoid disappointment. Tickets are £10 adults and £5 children from boxoffice@voiceacrosstime.com or 07532 446665.

Church yard copper beech tree

If you had any wood from the beautiful copper beech tree in the Church yard when it came down, and haven't yet paid for it, please give your cheque to any member of the Parochial Church Council, Dale Gringrich (Vicar) Tim Catton (Church Warden) Peter Hudson, Andrew Wells or Venetia Elliot.

Bloxham School Primary School

Bloxham Primary School is holding an Open Morning for parents of children aged 4 – 5 on January 8th

Children in South Newington go to school in many different places, including Bloxham, Great Tew and Chipping Norton, and Bloxham has traditionally been the hardest school to secure a place in.

It is in the top ten per cent of schools nationally for its results, and as a large, well-funded school has specialist teachers for both sports and music. It also has other exceptional facilities such as nurture provision helping build confidence in children when needed, and ample playing fields.

Unusually this year the school has a few places in a couple of year groups, following the closure of a large traveller site in Bloxham, which saw many families and their children leave the school.

If any parents are interested in seeing the school, or to book a place on the Open Morning please contact the school office on 01295 720224.

Nicky Smith

The Copper Beech in the Churchyard.

The autumn Newsletter included an item about the sad loss of the copper beech in the churchyard and attributed to me some speculation about its history. Somehow this got a bit garbled and was in any case wrong in the first place, so I welcome the chance to correct and add a bit more information.

I'll start with the magnificent copper beech that stood in the vicarage garden and had to be felled on safety grounds in 1995, as recorded in John Britton's film of the village made that year. I had long suspected it had been planted around 1819 to mark either the completion that year of the front part of what is now the existing Old Vicarage or the arrival of the energetic new vicar W E Coney in 1820 (he oversaw the re-pewing of the church in 1825 as a board near the organ tells). This conjecture turned out to be spot on. John filmed me counting the tree rings on the trunk just after the felling; they indicated an age of about 180 years, which fitted perfectly with planting of a tree a few years old around 1819.

The copper beech in the churchyard stood next to a grave surrounded by iron railings. I thought the somewhat illegible text on the tombstone indicated it was the grave of Henry Duke Harington, who,



according to a plaque in the church, was vicar of South Newington from 1836 to 1864 and died in Leicestershire in 1875 (according to the genealogical website WikiTree, he was born about 1807). Encouraged by my previous success, I thought the tree could have been planted then and that its tree rings would indicate an age of about 145 years. I was wrong on both the person buried and the age. Laurence Carey has sent me an accurate tombstone transcription. It wasn't the last resting place of Harington but of his wife Harriet, who died in 1854. If a tree a few years old had been planted then, its tree rings should indicate an age at its felling of nearly 170 years. In fact, there seem to be no more than about 135, so I think the tree was planted, a few years old, around 1885. According to Wikitree, Henry Duke and Harriet had five sons and a daughter; a further plaque in the church states that three of the sons died between 1889 and 1892, so one of them might have had the beech planted in memory of their mother. That's all I can save from my speculation.

However, back in 1972 I put on an exhibition about the history of the village and came across what must surely be the oldest extant photograph of a South Newington resident. Taken in 1860 and kindly located for me by Laurence Carey, it shows the 53-year old Henry Duke Harington and is signed by him with a confident flourish. He was a fellow of Exeter College in Oxford. As you will see, he cut a fine figure. I checked with Netia Elliott whether the grand background panelling is anywhere in The Old Vicarage, but it isn't. Perhaps Harington posed for the picture in Exeter College. Netia spotted something I had missed: the top hat on the small table next to the vicar. It's a nice Victorian touch. According to WikiTree, Henry Duke married again in 1858 and was presumably buried in his new parish.

Julian Barbour.

49 Club

	Date	Amount	Number	Name
1	02nd Sep	£35 +£20	08	Harden family
2	09th Sep	£20	06	Terence Harper

There were some bumper pay-outs this quarter in the 49 Club following three rollovers. We have a rollover because there are 59 balls in the 'Lotto', but we have 53 members in the Club. So, when numbers 54-59 appear as bonus ball, we rollover the prize. In addition, we closed August with a rollover. Congratulations to all the winners this quarter and a big thank you to all members for supporting the Club (which pays the church insurance). We are just about to start the final quarter of the year (Dec -Feb) and there are vacancies if you would like to join. It is just £1 per week. Please contact me on 01295 721104.

3	16th Sept	£20	38	Whittle family
4	23rd Sept	£20	57	*Rollover*
5	30th Sept	£20+£20	20	Judith Denby
6	07th Oct	£35	21	Jenny Rudnay
7	14th Oct	£20	42	Mary Adams
8	21st Oct	£20	32	Mike Fenner
9	28th Oct	£20	53	Britta Horsthemke
10	04th Nov	£35	57	*Rollover*
11	11th Nov	£20 +£35	54	*Rollover*
12	18th Nov	£55 +£20	11	Sue Robertson
13	25th Nov	£20	08	Harden family

Paula Staples

South Newington Autumn Weather

Autumn maintained the dry trend we experienced this year. With average rainfalls of about 65mm only September exceeded that with 86.1mm recorded. A very dry October brought only 22.6mm with 49.6 mm in November. The River Swere measure remained below 0cm all the time though this is not too unusual if the water table has dropped in the summer, taking a long time to build up again. I think we will see a build up form now on. One or two days were noticeably very wet, with 15mm of rain on September 24th and 14mm on the 10th November. There seemed to be many days of cloud and light rain throughout Autumn.

It was a beautiful Autumn for all who noticed the trees and colours of the leaves which lasted particularly well this year with frost absent till mid-November. Most leaves are now gone except the occasional oak in a sheltered area. Winter arrived with sharp frosts on the 17th November at -4.1C and on the 25th and 30th at around .3.6 and -3.4C. Average autumn day temperatures were 17.8C in September, 15.9C in October and 10.4C for November. I am not going to speculate on what the rest of Winter might bring us, although many villagers are talking of more harsh conditions.

Two named storms came to the village, Aileen around 12th September and Brian around 21st October, Aileen reached a Gale reading on my anemometer but Brian only managed 36mph. I am quite sheltered in Moor lane so properties higher up the hill will have felt more of the winds. As well as the named storms we had a rumble of thunder on 8th/9th September and some hail on the 18th. The weather station instruments were checked by Met Office engineers in early November but I have nothing else recorded. I wonder what I shall have to report in the next edition.

I am sure the Newsletter will have a Christmas theme, so Anne and I want to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and a really god New Year to follow.

John Britton

Village Hall

Those using the Village Hall will be very glad of our new heating boiler as the weather gets colder. We were extremely fortunate to receive a grant to cover the cost of the boiler and its installation. This grant from TOE2 – Trust for Oxfordshire Environment – was part of our energy efficiency project. We had already

doubled the insulation in the roof, hung new curtains with thermal lining and put draft excluders on all outside doors. The existing boiler had been in use since 1983 and was losing what efficiency it had.

TOE2 distributes grants to environmental projects such as ours from a variety of funders including Grundon Waste Management Ltd using funds from the Landfill Communities Fund, The Patsy Wood Trust and Whittard of Chelsea. We were very pleased to receive a grant of £4,000 to cover almost all the costs of the boiler, the new programmer and rerouting the high-level pipes on the south and east walls of the hall under the floor. We are continuing to investigate ways of ensuring the hall heats up more quickly and fully exploits the capacity of the new boiler.

Joyce Aydon

The Village Quiz Night

The Quiz with Fish and Chip Supper took place on Sat 18th Nov in the Village Hall. From the laughs and chatter in the hall as well as the feedback it seemed that everyone enjoyed the evening. The winning team took home £30 between them and commented that they had a great blend of knowledge on their table. Congratulations to Andrew and Caroline Wells, Catherine and Megan Clifton, Joan Gianassi and Julian Barbour. Caroline said that they would like to challenge other teams to a rematch. We are thinking of taking them up on their offer by arranging another event in the spring – maybe with pizza this time? We hope to see you there.

The Quiz Team

Cotswold Arts Society

10 January 2018 will see the first lecture of the new year by The Arts Society Cotswolds. "Modern Painting comes to Scotland: Glasgow Boys and Scottish Colourists" by Dr Anne Anderson.

On 14 February the lecture will be "Fakes and Forgeries: The Art of Deception" by Malcolm Kenwood and on 14 March it will be "Symphonies in Colour: The Mosaics of Ravenna" by Jane Angelini.

Lectures begin at 11.30 at The Warwick Hall, Burford OX18 4RZ. Non-members are welcome (suggested donation £10). For more information see our website www.theartssocietycotswolds.org.uk.

Dog Fouling in The Village

Yet again the unpleasant problem of dog fouling must be mentioned. To all the dog owners in the village, PLEASE be aware of what your dog is doing **and where it is doing it.** There is a statutory duty on dog owners not to allow them to foul areas of public access, such as footpaths, the Poleaxe, the churchyard and so on. The Parish Council has installed Dog Waste bins for your use. PLEASE use them or your own green bin and don't leave bags of poo decorating the local environment.

Editor

Ancestral Research

Hello,
On the way back home (Vienna, Austria) from bringing my daughter to Edinburgh where she is beginning her studies at the University there, I visited the church of St. Peter ad Vincula in South Newington, as I believe that my great great grandmother, Patience Austin was baptised there on 25 Jan 1784, the daughter of

George Austin and Martha. Patience married my great-great-grandfather James Smith at London on 20 Nov 1808 at St Marylebone and after living many years at Aberdeen, they came with their children, three sons and two daughters, to live in Ontario, Canada in 1835.

I was very pleasantly surprised to find in the church on the day I visited, a document which someone had very kindly prepared and which gave a list of gravestones in the churchyard sorted by name, in which I was able to find that of George and Martha Austin:

Grave no. 227. George Austin, died 1821 (73 yrs)
Martha Austin, his wife, died 1828 (73 yrs) also Sarah Austin, his daughter, died 1819 (19 yrs) and 3 children who died in infancy. Just before the entrance to the church I also found a map showing the locations of the gravestones in the above-mentioned list, and so was able to locate and photograph the gravestone of my great great great grandparents. The inscription on the gravestone is now very difficult to read and I was wondering if someone might have the exact text of the inscription.

Please pass on my thanks to the person or persons who prepared the list and map of the gravestones.

Peter Smith
(Editor: If anyone can help with the inscription please pass me the details and I will forward them to Peter.)

Happy Childermas!

Which image sticks in your head? Sophie's choice or Dunblane; Malala Yousafzai or the Peshawar school massacre; the 3-year old washed up on a beach in Turkey; the Syrian child pulled from the rubble of Aleppo sitting bloodied and bewildered in the back of an ambulance. Perhaps now it's the baby torn from his mother Rajuma's arms and thrown into a fire. Syrian children; Pakistani boys; Nigerian girls; Rohingya babies.

December 28th is the day when the church observes the Feast of the Holy Innocents to mark the moment when Herod ordered a massacre of all newly born baby boys around Bethlehem in response to intelligence he had of a newly born 'King of the Jews' posing a threat to his sovereignty. It is the day when Jesus becomes a baby refugee. There is no end, it seems, to the adult assault on and abuse of children. No end to the human capacity for destruction in response to creation.

At this time of year, we're used to hearing the Bible account of the Annunciation when the Angel Gabriel first appears to Mary, a dramatic and extraordinary encounter between the human and the divine. Of course, for sound natural reasons, in the church year Annunciation is celebrated on March 25th which, given the rather arcane process of calculating the date of our Easter, does sometimes fall on Good Friday, even more dramatic and extraordinary: the miracle and mystery of conception, the pain of a body deformed on the cross; from the womb to the tomb. The coincidence of date does not happen often. In case you missed it, it happened in 2016. It happened in 1608 and John Donne was so struck by the paradox of death in the middle of life, "this doubtful day of feast or fast", that he wrote a poem about Mary's long hard day at the office: her emblem, a circle "whose first and last concurre….Her Maker put to making, and the head / Of life, at once, not yet alive, yet dead……

Th'Abridgement of Christs story, which makes one
(As in plaine Maps, the furthest West is East)
Of th' Angels *Ave*, and *Consummatum est.*

In the medieval church, then an echo of ancient pagan customs and now revived in a number of cathedrals, Holy Innocents' Day – known also as **Childermas** – crowned the reign of the Boy-Bishop, a choirboy elected on the Feast of St. Nicholas, and invested with a Bishop's authority to supervise the ceremonies and rituals of the cathedral through the festive season. This symbolic, mischievous reversal of the roles of child and adult enacts in ritual the power invested in the low-born 'baby in the barn' whose mere presence so threatened a king that he had to lash out so brutally to snuff it out. Except, of course, that he could not snuff out the life or the light that survived then and burns still: the light for those that find themselves in darkness, on the way from the womb to the other side of the tomb, "the lamp for my feet and a light for my pathway", guiding our feet into the way of peace. The best of times, the worst of times; the darkest and the brightest.

So after the joy of Christmas, do join us this Childermas, **at 7.30pm in the Village church**, to mark this day for holy innocents everywhere and in all times. And say together, loudly and clearly, that our world is not the way things were meant to be, and it does not have to be this way if good people of all persuasions come together and say no. We'll take up a collection for the Save the Children Rohingya Crisis Appeal. And we'll crown the Boy and Girl Bishop in honour of them all.

Tim Brierley

Christmas Services at St Peter ad Vincula

17th December 3:00pm Christingle **24th December 11:15am Carol Service**

25th December 11:15am Holy Communion **28th December 7:30pm Childermass**

31st December 11:15am Holy Communion at Milcombe

Happy Christmas and New Year to all our readers, whether on paper or via the website and to all who contribute material and ideas, from the Editor and the proofreading and distribution team. Alan, Paula and Jasper the greyhound.

