SOUTH NEWINGTON NEWSLETTER



CHRISTMAS 2020

Editor: Nicky Smith. Send news and views to SouthNewingtonNewsletter@gmail.com

Parish Council News

Since writing in the last Newsletter, the Parish Council has had further advice from the Diocese Clock Advisor and we will now be seeking funding to replace all three winders on the village clock. The cheapest quote is for just over £6,000. Vanessa Doyle is investigating the various organisations that might be able to give us a grant, to enable the village to proceed.

Ben Johnson, who lives in Sands Lane and is doing a Duke of Edinburgh award has been doing voluntary work in the village for two months. He cleaned and re-painted the gates to the Poleaxe and to the Village Hall, as well as doing various other cleaning and tidying up jobs around the village. A very big 'thank you' goes to Ben for his conscientious and thorough approach to the tasks he undertook.

Leah Malcolm from Green Lane has been able to obtain an Xmas tree for the village and has also paid for its delivery. The tree is much larger this year and has been put up by Graham Smith with help from Stefan Luck and he has also sourced some new lights. Many thanks to them all.

I am very pleased to say that Graham Smith was co-opted at the last meeting of the Parish Council as a Councillor, bringing us up to the full complement of five. However both Sarah Wilson-Medhurst and I will be leaving the Parish Council in April. We have had another villager who has expressed an interest in joining, but we will still need to find another person in May. Could it be you? Please speak to me or one of the other Councillors, if you are interested.

Peter Thomas,
Chair.

VILLAGE EMAIL DISTRIBUTION LIST

Sue Robertson keeps a GDPR compliant list of villagers' email addresses. If you would like to be on the list to receive news about events or activities in South Newington please email Sue to ask to be added.
If you have any news you would like to share with the village, send your proposed email and message to Sue, and she will distribute it on your behalf.
Also if you're leaving the village (how very dare you!) and want to be taken off the list, email Sue directly.

susanrobertsonsnem@gmail.com

Welcome to South Newington

We're delighted to welcome new families to the village:

- James and Cherry who have moved into No 4 Barford Road.
- Hugo, Amy and family who have moved into Cathy and Craigs' house, Applegarth in Moor Lane
- Marijke Jones who has moved into Phoenix Cottage on Green Lane.
- Welcome also to Stuart and Sally in Bush House Lodge (the bungalow on the Wiggy Road).

For the benefit of villagers old and new, you may not be able to get a pizza delivered here but there are a few handy services available for all.

Bread delivered Tuesdays and Fridays. Handmade local artisan sourdough, baguettes, focaccia and fruit loaves from Marks Cotswold Bakery. Contact nicky@twelvepr.co.uk or call 07771785228 for details

Newspapers delivered every day. E-mail: info@smithsnewsagents.co.uk (no relation to the above Smith) or call 01295 268499.

Oil delivered monthly
Ordering oil as part of the South Newington group can save you up to 3 or 4 pence per litre, on a minimum order of 500lt. The scheme works by combining individual orders into a single quantity, which is used to obtain a bulk order discount from a supplier; there is no fee to be part of the group. No payments are made to or through the group, it is the responsibility of individuals to settle their accounts with the supplier.
For more details or wish to join the group, please contact Stephen Anderson by email: sn.oil.club@gmail.com

Church news

We had a lovely little ceremony to switch on the Christmas tree lights on December 5th. Thank you to everyone who came along to help mark the occasion, and of course special thanks to Leah who donated the tree and Graham and Stefan who put it up.

For the first time in thirty years we won't be able to have our much-loved Epiphany carol service in January but there is a full programme of services for Christmas across the benefice of South Newington, Milcombe and Bloxham.

Whatever your faith you are all most welcome to join any of our services, and for details of how to join services by Zoom please email Bloxham Benefice Office <office@bloxhambenefice.co.uk>

Christmas Church Services

20 Dec 8am South Newington (Traditional service following the Book of Common Prayer (BCP)
9.30am Bloxham – Family Service
11.15am Milcombe – Family Communion
6pm 9 Lessons & Carols by zoom

24 Dec 4pm Christmas Eve in South Newington – Family Service
8pm Christmas Eve in Milcombe
11.30pm Midnight Mass in Bloxham (a choir of six plans to sing)

25 Dec 8am South Newington (BCP)
9.30am Bloxham Christmas Communion
11.15am Milcombe

27 Dec 8am South Newington (BCP)
9.30am Bloxham Shorter Communion
11.15am Milcombe Shorter Communion
6pm Zoom Evening service – Night Prayer

Village Hall news

Village hall chimney

You may have noticed that the west end of the village hall has been covered in scaffolding for the past several weeks. This is because some of the chimney's stonework is in a poor state – some pieces of the lower moulding have fallen off and other stones are missing. The scaffolding was put up so that the chimney and gable end wall could be safely and thoroughly examined by expert builders, masons and a building conservation surveyor. This has now been done but the scaffolding will remain in place until the repairs are complete.

We have received listed building consent (the hall is Grade 2 listed) to take the chimney down to the roof ridge and rebuild it using serviceable existing stones and new local stone so its appearance will not change. Various missing stones and pointing on the gable wall will also be repaired. The cost will be significant, possibly £10,000 +non recoverable VAT, for which we are seeking grant assistance but we may not know if this has been successful until March 2021. Therefore, it is unlikely that the repair work will start until mid-March.

Development project

Initial proposals for improvements to the 'service areas' of the village hall (kitchen, toilets and store} and access throughout the hall are expected from Acanthus Clews Architects very soon. The management committee, at the recommendation of the architects, have commissioned a professional building historian to survey the hall. Such a survey and report will be essential when we apply for planning permission and listed building consent but having it at this early stage will give a better idea of what changes can be made and how they should be done. When the management committee has the plans and building historian's report we will consider how best to make them available for discussion and feedback, given that the Covid 19 regulations may make it impractical to hold public meetings.

HELP, PLEASE!

The Village Hall Management Committee is looking for a volunteer to join us in the role of Booking Secretary. Please do give it a thought as this role is not particularly demanding but is much needed and valued.

It involves:

1. Making sure that anyone wishing to hire the hall has read, understood and signed the hiring form. (Available on the website).
2. Showing them the Hall and drawing their attention to health and safety details.
3. Taking payment and giving it to our Treasurer, Susan Robertson.
4. Being available for collection and return of keys. (I can help out with that if ever that is inconvenient as I live so near the Hall).
5. Attending Committee meetings approximately 4 times per year.

The Hall is, of course, not in use at the moment but even if/when lockdown is lifted, use of the Hall is likely to continue to be very limited for some very considerable time.

In the past there have been usually 6 village groups with regular sessions in the Hall and there have been approximately 3 – 6 private hirings per year.

With high hopes that someone will offer.

Stella Darke, Chairwoman Either email me darkestella@gmail.com or ring 01295 720096, please feel free to contact me if only to question or discuss.

Jingle bells



Lockdown smells
Fun got blown away
No more play
No friends to stay
What to do today? HEY!

Jingle bells
Jingle bells
No nativity, so grey
They can't stop
The lord's birthday
And zoom might save the day, YAY!

Florence Whittle, age 11, Green Lane

Flower Show News

The South Newington Flower Show in August is, I think other village events won't mind me saying, the most exciting and important event of the year. Our traditional flower show is the envy of many other villages and the drayman from Hook Norton brewery, who has visited all the main shows in the area over the years with his shire horses and beer, said that South Newington was the best show in the county because "nothing ever happened."
Well nothing really did happen this year. Here's a note from the Flower Show committee about it.

Following the disappointment caused by 'you know what', the flower show plans to return with aplomb in August 2021. Sadly, we have lost some committee members, whose talents, skills and time, we will miss. If you enjoy working within a group of young, aspirational, energetic people …..then please let us know that you would like to be part of the committee!

You are more than welcome to 'dip your toe in the water' with our first meeting which will be on zoom on Tuesday 12.1.21 – yes it's a palindrome! Let Sue know. Also, if you have ideas for next year's show do email them to Sue suethomas0948@gmail.com

With warm winter wishes,

Claire Ainley, the flower and produce show committee

49 Club Winners

The 49 Club raises money for the Church insurance using lottery ticket numbers. It costs just £1 per week or £13 per quarter. (*I've just won £55! Ed*, 😊) It is kindly organised by Judith Denby, Green Lane. If you'd like to join the group please email judithdenby@hotmail.co.uk

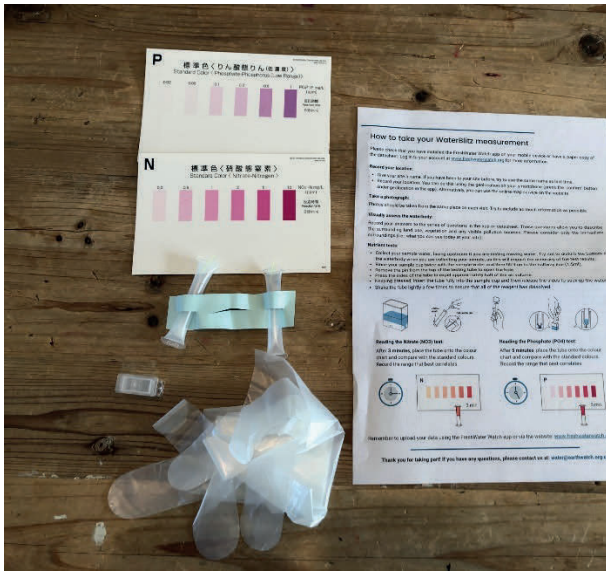
Winning number and members are below:

05/09/20	John Braithwaite
12/09/20	Jenny Smith
19/09/20	No WINNER
26-Sep	Roz Rapp
03-Oct	Jim & Jean Honeybone
10-Oct	Jim & Jean Honeybone
17-Oct	Rob & Freya Waters
24-Oct	Nicky and Graham Smith
31-Oct	Keith Lobban
07-Nov	Nicky and Graham Smith
14-Nov	Colin Galloway
21-Nov	Vanessa Doyle
28-Nov	John Braithwaite
05-Dec	Harden family

Testing times, by Fran Burles aged 9 , Moor Lane.

We live near the river in the village and we enjoyed reading about how Derek used to catch fish there in a previous newsletter. We wanted to know why there are no fish in the river now. Luckily in the last newsletter there was a link to a project called fresh water watch : https://freshwaterwatch.thewaterhub.org.

This involves lots of people within the river catchment area testing the water for phosphates and nitrates over the course of one weekend. To do this we had to send off for a testing kit and download the app. As soon as the kit came we read the safety instructions (and the ones that show you what to do of course) and we were ready to go!



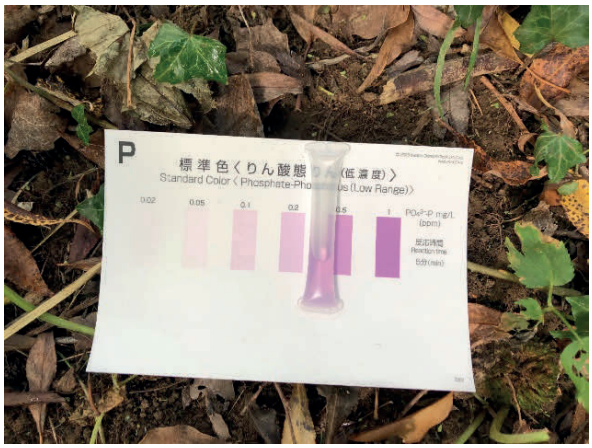
When the weekend of testing came we decided to test fairly close to the bridge because that's where all the children play. I put on my safety gloves and filled up a tiny container, squeezed the water into the nitrate and phosphate testers and shook them up.

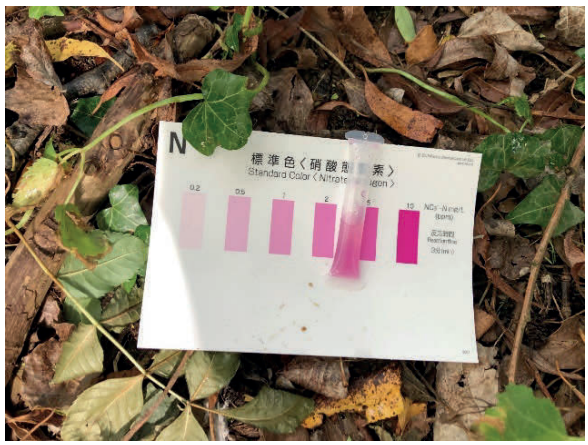
After three minutes the nitrate test was ready and we compared the colour to the colours on the chart and the results were between 2 and 5 mg/L. After five minutes the phosphate test was ready and again we compared the colour to the colours on the chart and it was between 0.2 and 0.5 mg/L. We uploaded the results and our location using the app.





What the tests showed is that there are elevated nitrate and phosphate levels in our river. Is this why there are no fish anymore? What has caused these levels - is it the farming? We need to find out to regain our fish! We will hopefully do this again next year to see if the pollution has got better or worse. To see the results of our testing please go to this link: https://freshwaterwatch.thewaterhub.org/sample/south-newington-river-26-09-2020-0







With huge thanks to Fran for this really interesting story, and for your great work on behalf of all us in South Newington.

Other environmental News

Those of us who enjoy the walks around our village towards Wigginton will have noticed the huge new road along the footpath, and to the left of the foot path (as you walk towards Wiggington) that the lovely little iron stone arched bridge over the stream has been demolished. You can see the old bridge in the photo below, a small pile of stones.



The bridge was at least 150 years old and a very beautiful construction. Its destruction was reported to Cherwell and the response is below.

Re: Unauthorised demolition of ancient bridge, construction of replacement bridge and construction of new road

The Local Planning Authority (LPA) has completed its investigation in respect of the above matter. The bridge concerned was not the subject of a listed building grading nor was it within a conservation area.

The landowner exercised their right under The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015; Schedule 2 Permitted development; Part 6 Agricultural and forestry; Class A – agricultural development on units of 5 hectares or more; To demolish the bridge and rebuild it to accommodate heavier modern farm machinery.

As such, no breach of planning control has taken place and the LPA has closed its inquiry as "Permitted development".

Apparently the land owners had to knock it down as it was the only way they could get the digger in to dig their swimming pool.

Good work in South Newington

Duke of Edinburgh

I have been doing my DofE volunteering in and around South Newington. I have done lots of weeding and strimming of footpaths, I have painted the gate at the pole axe and village hall, and John Braithwaite and I put up new fence panels at the village hall oil tank! I have very much enjoyed my time doing DofE and I have met lots of nice people. The most valuable thing I'll take away from this experience is the reward and relief of finishing a job, and then starting a new one all over again! I thank the parish council for giving me this opportunity and letting me and my Mum do these tasks around the village.

Thanks so much, Ben Johnson



On behalf of all of us in the village, thank you Ben!

Charity donations and good causes

Sadly, due to the restrictions at the time, the MacMillan coffee morning was not able to go ahead. Thankfully, that wasn't going to stop South Newington from making a contribution and we raised £224 in donations for the charity. I'm looking forward to next September when it will be bigger and better than ever!



The village also donated a huge amount for the Food Bank. This photo shows amount I took to the bank but I know some other generous villagers donated online or via the QR code so the total from the Village was actually more than this!

With thanks to everyone who donated to Macmillan or the food bank,

Becky Harden

Thank you

Roz Rapp (Wiggington Road) would like to thank the community of South Newington for supporting her boys in raising a fabulous £302 in the village for the Royal British Legion. Together with the pub's total of £109 this has made a fine collection from the South Newington community



Felix and Bertie on their poppy collection

South Newington Social Activities

Activities in the village hall such as Coffee mornings, Table Tennis, SNOS, Art, Circle Dancing and Yoga are on hold at the moment due to Covid restrictions.

Yoga

Our lovely Yoga teacher Katherine Chapple who has taken the Yoga class for many years is moving to be nearer her daughter. We wish her well. I have managed to arrange a new teacher and I am planning to restart Yoga in the New Year (Covid permitting). Based on current Covid information it will run in the same format as now 2 groups in each class. Also the classes with our new teacher will now take place on a Wednesday evening instead of a Thursday.
Sue Robertson

South Newington Weather Report

Autumn 2020: September, October and November

Everyone has suffered and is still suffering the problems relating to the Covid virus which has affected us all in different ways but I can't find any way that it has affected the weather!!

We have had a fairly normal Autumn spel,l apart from a few exceptions, with all the beautiful colours in the trees, loads of berries and seeds for the wild birds and fruit, particularly apples, very plentiful. My old apple tree had no fruit at all last year but this year it was the heaviest crop I have ever known.

So what about the weather? Rainfall first. September and November normal, and below average: 58 mm and 51 mm respectively but October turned out to be one of the wettest months I have ever recorded with a 189.2 mm.

Two wet days in September the 24th with 14.2 mm and the 30th with 22.8 mm produced most of the rain. A long dry spell from the 3rd to the 22nd was popular. Wettest day in November was the 14th with 12.8 mm. The 2nd and 3rd of October produced 19 mm and 66.8 mm respectively, so on the 3rd of October we had more rain than the totals for September and November!!

There was another wet spell around the 21st to 24th. The 3rd – 4th of October was when Atlantic storm Alex came close to us quickly followed by a storm without a name and they were responsible for the rain on those two days. As well as Alex we suffered storm Barbara on 21st of October but she was more wind down rain!

The rain of course affects the river Swere which had a negative height reading until the 3rd of October followed by the first flood of the season on the 4th. It was a substantial flood across the lower meadows, but was quite short lived when the weather improved. Yhe river has maintained a medium height to date.

We had the first air frost on the 4th of November at -1.9°Cfollowed by more on the 5th, 6th and 7th. The coldest night so far was -4.1°C on the 27th of November. We made the national press the night before, being the coldest spot in the British Isles at -3.1°. Warmer September produce the warmest day at 28° and daytime temperatures throughout the month were good.

Miscellaneous events. We had a fairly powerful hailstorm on 24th of September which I noted as heavy, and I noted gale force winds in early November. The technician from the Met Office was here on the 9th and 10th September checking the station equipment and renewing as necessary.

I hope all you reading this will have a Happy Christmas, and the coming year will be a better one for all of us once the Virus problems are cleared. John Britten

Ice hockey in South Newington, by Julian Barbour.

My sister Carmen, having recently moved house, has been sorting photographs and came across the ones shown here from when she lived at the Barn House in South Newington.

Global warming is real. Believe it or not, in every winter of the decade from 1981 we played village ice hockey.

It was on a lake which my brother David had created in 1980 by damming the tiny stream that flows under (and sometimes over) the Barford Road in the dip by the alpacas, just by Buttermilk Stud. As you set off on the road to Barford from South Newington, the lake was in the field on your right, beyond and below the brow of the hill.



South Newington gathers for ice skating



David Barbour who built the lake

Two clues confirm the pictures were taken in 1981, when, as in 1983, there was an exceptionally cold snap. One is the bare bank behind the group of children where two women are standing; the one on the right looks like my late wife Verena. David soon planted trees on the bank; they had already grown to a good height by the 1990s, The second clue: the diminutive girls on the left in the group photo are surely my daughters Naomi, born 1971, and Dorcas, 1974. Jessica, 1967, is looking at the camera in the picture on the right.





Experiences you have young can have lasting effects. One frosty winter in the early 1950s two masters at my school got permission from Lord Saye and Sele to organize a game of ice hockey on the frozen moat at Broughton Castle. We played with shinty sticks. As you can imagine it was exhilarating.

When the chance came to play again 30 years later in South Newington I splashed out on pucks, proper sticks (still stored in the barn), and skates on boots of all sizes. We played and played, often until sunset. One year the ice held for six whole weeks. There was a memorable game in which Aubrey and Sidney Charles kept goal at opposite ends in gumboots. It may have been the day the photos were taken that Verena said she and I should hold hands and give a display of graceful skating. We set off to applause, but I lost my balance of course; to laughter all round, we came down painfully on our backsides.

What was so nice was the ranges of the players' ages, from burly boys in their late teens down to girls not yet ten. Among those that played were my son Boris; his cousins Mon, Anna and Lucy; Clare, Fred, Liz, and Chris Davis; Susan Aydon; Michael Page (top right in the group photo?); Kate and Jonathan Brecknell; Tim and Simon Read; Tom and Ben Honeybone; John and James Chanter; Matthew Burns; Tom Colvin, and many more. My nephews and niece now living in the Barn House played on occasion when they were back from Malaysia, quite a contrast to the tropics for them.

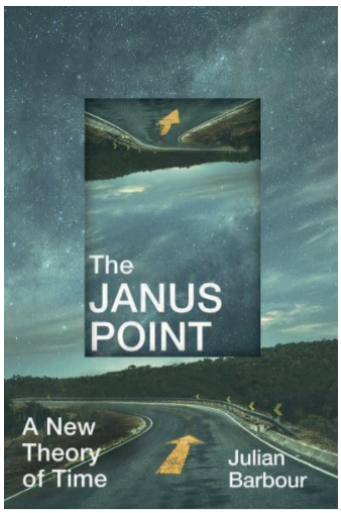
The big boys competed at top speed against each other but always slowed down for the 'nippers', who could nevertheless nip to good effect. Not once did anyone get hurt in a collision. There were places in the lake, near the dam, where a child could have drowned had the ice broken. For such an emergency, we always had a long aluminium ladder ready on the bank to push across from one to the other side of unbroken ice from which a rescue could be made.

We never had to use the ladder to rescue a child in the 1980s but it did help our golden retriever Ben, affectionately known as Benny Boysie. Near the overflow slipway on the dam the ice was thin and Ben fell through it. We pushed the ladder out and the grateful Ben clambered onto it. There was a more serious use once the next decade. The only year the lake froze adequately for skating was 1996. A game was organized, but it did not last long. Dorcas's boyfriend Nat Spring scored, sending the puck flying through the goal. He skated in triumph after it and did a quick twist to catch the puck and send it back. We all heard a crack. In making the twist, he had broken one of his shin bones and was in more than a little pain. Four of us stretchered him on the ladder up to the Barford Road to await an ambulance.

A year or two ago the present owners cleared the trees from around the lake and restored arable land where the lake had been so all trace of it has now gone.

Julian Barbour.

Julian's new book, The Janus Point was published this week. You can watch an extended interview on YouTube with Julian on 'Closer To Truth Chats' ' Time, the Universe, and Reality'.



Christmas Window Trail from Sat 12th Dec

Thank you to everyone who is decorating their window or garden especially this year for our village Christmas trail and quiz. Please collect your map from Becky at the Deans, Moor Lane, or Nicky from the Barn House from Saturday 12th December.

Also drop your completed map and questions back to Becky or Nicky to see if you have won the mystery prize for a correct set of answers. Winners will be revealed in the New Year!

Carol Singing in South Newington Weds 16th Dec

Stuart Dunlop and Elizabeth Wheeldon from the South Newington Occasional Singers invite us all to sing this year - wouldn't it be wonderful if the whole village turned out for Doorstep Carols on Wednesday 16th December at 6.00pm?

Pretty much all you need to know is in the name. Stand on your doorstep and sing along with carols played on BBC Radio Oxford (95.2 FM & DAB). Word sheets and even instrumental parts are available to download from www.doorstepcarols.co.uk Supply your own mulled wine and mince pies and let's make some noise!

In fond remembrance

It is with great sadness that we remember three villagers who have recently passed away.

Hilary Severn who lived at Barret's Green Lane with her husband Alex, where their daughter Nicky Catton and family now live.

Frank Davis, who came to South Newington in 1971 and lived in Moor Lane where his wife Sue and family live today.

And Lilian Clifton who with her husband Den moved to South Newington in 1951 and lived first on Tinker Tank and then on the High Street.

We remember them all with fondness and send our best wishes to their families at this sad time.



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