SOUTH NEWINGTON NEWSLETTER



SPRING 2023

Newsletter by Nicky Smith

Please send news, views and photos to Southnewingtonnewsletter@gmail.com

PARISH COUNCIL

After what has seemed a very long winter, we are seeing beautiful glimmers of spring as the village fills with daffodils. I hope you're all finding the South Newington Cares 'WhatsApp' group helpful; so far, we've shared some useful info and been able to warn each other of some concerning situations. Please let me know if you would like to join the group. I can confirm we are all being very good and not using the group for chit-chat or selling!

We on the parish council have lots of plans this year alongside all the usual responsibilities. We will be making some much needed repairs to the playground equipment and are also investigating new adult gym equipment for the poleaxe.

We have just agreed the precept for 2023 and, with our increasing costs covering insurance, grass cutting and dog bin emptying, we have agreed to a 10% rise. We will also be moving forward with our plan for a Queen's Platinum Jubilee commemoration tree in the churchyard. Hopefully, you will get to see this in place soon.

Vanessa Doyle Chairperson

07972 324 512

Dates of PC meetings this year

Thursday 20th April - Annual Parish Meeting
Tuesday 16th May - Annual Parish Council meeting
Tuesday 18th July - PC meeting
Tuesday 26th September - PC meeting
Tuesday 21st November - PC meeting

If you have any questions or topics you wish to raise you please email them at least ten days in advance of the meeting to vanessasnpc@hotmail.com or Clerk to the council southnewingtonpc@btinternet.com

The Parish Clerk asked to highlight that photo ID is now needed to vote at a polling station. If you don't have a passport or driving licence with a photo, you can apply for free voter ID at www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voter ID or by calling 0800 328 0280

Parish Council Elections

There is a PC election in South Newington in May. There are five seats. The Parish Council is a tier of local government. It responds to planning applications, sets a budget and liaises closely with Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council. The Parish Clerk will have nomination papers: southnewingtonpc@btinternet.com or call 01295 276229

If you are interested in serving on the parish council, wondering what the role involves or what the council is responsible for, the government website has lots of useful information at this address: https://www.gov.uk/understand-how-your-council-works

"Civil society is the term used to describe the voluntary and community organisations, as well as informal groups of people, who come together to make the community a better place to live."

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING ROAD CLOSURE NOTICE

TRAFFIC REGULATION NOTICE

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT, 1984

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 14(2) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act, 1984, that the Oxfordshire County Council

TEMPORARILY PROHIBITS THE USE OF THE HIGHWAY BY ALL MOTOR VEHICLES

LOCATION:	**South Newington, Green Lane**
REASON:	**To facilitate broadband installation**
DURATION:	**Starting on 13 March 2023 The anticipated completion date is 17 March 2023 (date included). This is a 24 hour per day closure. (Traffic Regulation Notices cover a maximum of 5 consecutive days.)**
ACCESS:	**Limited access will be maintained for emergency service vehicles and for frontages within the closed section of road, subject to the progress of the works**

SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVE ROUTE:via Barford Road – Moor Lane and vice versa

VILLAGE EMAIL LIST

The village email list notifies villagers about things going on in the village.

Some emails come from the Parish Council e.g. to inform villagers of Parish Council Meetings and other matters. Other emails will keep villagers informed about what's on or planned such as road works/road closures, coffee mornings, church services, village quiz nights, and other village meetings.

If you wish to join the village email distribution group please email Susan Robertson using the following email address: susanrobertsonSNEM@gmail.com

You will need to provide your name, address and email address and Sue can then add you to the email distribution group.

Who Is Your Information Shared With? The information will not be shared with any other organisations. **How Do I Opt Out?** If in the future you wish to opt out, simply send another email to that effect to susanrobertsonSNEM@gmail.com and your details will be deleted.

NOTE: Due to data protection rules you cannot ask on behalf of someone else that they be added to the village email distribution group.

There's also the village noticeboard where most village events are also publicised, plus the website www.southnewington.co.uk

VILLAGE HALL NEWS

THE VILLAGE HALL NEEDS YOU!!

We are extremely fortunate in South Newington to have been given our delightful village hall, envied by many who have much less attractive halls in their village or even no communal space at all. We are also very fortunate in having many generous, hard-working volunteers who organise the groups that use the village hall and make a very significant difference to life in this village.

We, the committee, are getting excited about the future possibilities for the hall now that we are getting close to submitting for planning permission the final plans for the extension improvement project. The main motive for the planned changes is to make the hall fully accessible and inclusive. We foresee the hall becoming a venue for even more groups, clubs, socials and private parties once the service area has been brought up to a modern standard whilst retaining the charm of the main hall with its original structure. Naturally we want the hall to meet your needs as far as possible and there is no better way of discovering what our hall can offer you than by taking part in doing some of the many little tasks which arise on the way to the realisation of a communal space, welcoming to all.

MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK!

It would be great if you could occasionally be called on to help out with a minor DIY job or a bit of gardening or delivering leaflets, or anything you might like to offer. You could become a "Friend of the Village Hall" so we could occasionally call on you with a job offer which you could accept or reject depending on your particular circumstances at the time and the kind of skills you felt able to offer. You could even choose to be co-opted onto the committee, join the occasional meeting, give us the benefit of your feedback and enjoy a convivial cuppa and cake with us!

Please do contact me, Stella Darke (Chair of the Village Hall Committee): darkestella@gmail.com, 01295 720096

Feb 23 Update on the Village Hall development project

The CDC officers' response to our draft plans for improvements to the village hall was received in mid-October 2022 and raised a number of significant questions about the proposals. After discussion the Management Committee decided to ask for another meeting to clarify CDC's position on the submitted draft and a number of detailed requirements.

Following a helpful and productive meeting with planning officer Shona King and conservation officer Joyce Christie we now have a clear idea of CDC's expectations and are able to begin finalising the design. This will be substantially as shown in the exhibition in November 2021, that is with step-free floor throughout the main hall and the extension, a wheelchair accessible toilet and second toilet, a larger kitchen and a new front wall and flat roof to the extension.

However, we shall need expert input on various aspects, which we did not want to commission until we were reasonably clear about CDC's view. It will therefore take several weeks to finalise the design and the documentation for the planning application. We will let you know when the plans are available to view.

Now that we are able to foresee when we may get planning permission we can begin conversations with potential funders.

If you have any ideas for local fund raising or know of potential sources of grants then please let John Braithwaite (jkbrithwaite@btinternet.com – 01295 722181) or Stella Darke (darkestella@gmail.com – 01295 720096) know.

SOUTH NEWINGTON OIL GROUP

You may or may not be aware that a heating oil buying group exists in South Newington. It is free to be a member, is easy to use and currently run by Stephen Anderson. By consolidating your oil order with those of other members when you need to refill your tank, you benefit from obtaining a more competitive price per litre, than if ordering directly from a supplier yourself.

How does it work?

Orders are prepared at the beginning of a month, typically, between September and May, inclusive. The monthly order is triggered by a member contacting Stephen with a request for oil. An invite is then sent round to all members asking if they need oil. Using a link to an online form, those who need oil submit their quantity by a cut-off date. Once that date arrives the quantities are amalgamated and the bulk quantity is used to obtain a best price from suppliers.

The overall timescale for an order from receiving the invite until delivery is up to 3 weeks. The Oil Buying Group does not get involved in the payments for deliveries – this is the responsibility of the individual members. Other queries about a delivery are also down to the member once the order is placed.

If you would like to join the Group or obtain more information about it, please contact Stephen Anderson by email at *sn.oil.club@gmail.com*.

CHURCH NEWS

Mothering Sunday is the fourth Sunday of Lent. This year it falls on Sunday 19th March 2023. The church warmly welcomes you at 11.15am, to celebrate mothers and to take away a posy of flowers.



Traditionally, it was a day when children, mainly daughters, who had gone to work as domestic servants were given a day off to visit their mother and family before Easter. Today, it is a day when children give presents, gestures, flowers, and home-made cards to their mothers. They also try really hard to be lovely to their mother all day long! Although it is often called Mother's Day it has no connection with the American festival of that name.

Centuries ago it was considered important for people to return to their home or 'mother' church once a year. Each year in the middle of Lent, everyone would visit their 'mother' church - the main church or cathedral of the area. It is the fourth Sunday in Lent known as Laetare Sunday; more ancient than Mothering Sunday itself but considered a day of relaxation from normal Lenten rigours; a day of hope with Easter at last within sight. Traditionally, weddings, otherwise banned during Lent, could be performed on this day.

Inevitably the return to the 'mother' church became an occasion for family reunions. Children who were working away returned to their home. It was quite common in those days for children to leave home for work once they were ten years old……take note all offspring!

Many historians believe that it was the return to the 'Mother' church which led to the tradition of children; particularly those working as domestic servants or as apprentices, being given the day off to visit their mother and family.



As they walked along the country lanes, children would pick wild flowers or violets to take to church or to give to their mother as a small token of affection.

Another thought is that the name comes from one of the Bible readings for that day, which refers to motherhood in a different way:

'But the Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all,' Galatians 4:26.

Paul wanted to explain to the Galatian community what their relationship as Christians was to the Jewish Law. In the full passage (Galatians 4:21-31), the two children born by Hagar and Sarah to Abraham are seen as symbolising two promises from God. One is the Law or Torah which is restraining and earthly. The other is the Gospel, which is spiritual and liberating. The Galatians are encouraged to regard themselves as children of Gospel.

Mothering Sunday was also known as Refreshment Sunday because the fasting rules for Lent were relaxed that day. Originally, both Old and New Testament lessons on mid-lent Sunday made a point of food.

The Gospel reading from the New Testament told the story of how Jesus fed five thousand people with only five small barley loaves and two small fish.

'Now there was much grass in the place; so the men sat down, in number about five thousand. Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted.'

John 6:10-12

The food item specially associated with Mothering Sunday is the Simnel Cake. A Simnel cake is a fruit cake with two layers of almond paste, one on top and one in the middle. The cake is made and decorated with eleven balls of marzipan on top representing the eleven disciples. Judas Iscariot is not included, as it is believed that he betrayed Jesus. Traditionally, sugar violets could also be added.



The name Simnel probably comes from the Latin word simila which means a fine wheat flour usually used for baking a cake. However, there is a legend that a man called Simon and his wife Nell argued over whether the cake for Mothering Sunday should be baked or boiled. (Who'd have thought it!) In the end they did both, so the cake was named after both of them: SIM-NELL.

What would you call your cake?!

Claire Swan, Church Warden

EASTER CHURCH SERVICES

Worship in Holy Week & Easter

Palm Sunday 2 April	
S Newington:	8.00am BCP Holy Communion
Bloxham	9.30am Starting from Parish Rooms: Palms/Branches Blessing & Procession, Holy Communion with dramatised reading of the Passion
Milcombe	11.15am Holy Communion with blessing of palms and dramatised reading of the Passion
Monday 3 April	7.30pm Holy Communion South Newington
Tuesday 4 April	11.30am Holy Communion Bloxham
Wednesday 5 April	7.30pm Holy Communion with Prayers for Healing & Anointing Milcombe
Maundy Thursday	7.30pm Holy Communion with Washing of Feet, Stripping of Altars and Prayer Vigil Bloxham
Good Friday	10.00am Walk of Witness Bloxham 12noon Choral Good Friday Meditation Bloxham 3.00pm Prayers at the Foor of the Cross S Newington 7.30pm Good Friday Liturgy Milcombe
Holy Saturday	7.30pm Great Vigil of Easter
Easter Day	7.00am Easter Rejoicing—Bloxham Churchyard 8.00.am BCP Holy Communion Bloxham 9.30am Festive Choral Communion Bloxham 11.15am Festive Holy Communion Milcombe 11.15am Festive Holy Communion S Newington

FLOWER SHOW SATURDAY 5 AUGUST

The 'jewel in crown' of South Newington events is the annual Flower and Produce Show, or 'Make, Bake and Grow Show'. This year it will take place on Saturday 5th August.

There will be new features such as 'teenager tractor trailer' among the entertainment; local artists and ceramic products on sale, as well as the traditional favourites such as the popular bottle stall. In the marquee, categories such as garden on a plate, the hotly contested sweet pea cup, dahlia bowl

and perennial classics, best marmalade, largest marrow and funny shaped vegetables will also be on offer.

The dog show, silver band and tea tent will be there as always and the theme for this year's display in the church will be 'Souvenirs of travel', so do look out your unusual or much-loved travel mementos for the exhibition.

Most of all please start planning and growing your produce! The marquee with its displays of flowers, vegetables, crafts and photos is what the show is all about. Please check out the categories by going to the South Newington website:

https://www.southnewington.co.uk/south-newington-flower-produce-show/

The webpage will be updated any day now and we hope you will enter lots of categories this year. Special new prizes include £10 for the best drawing of a wildflower, sponsored by the South Newington Biodiversity Group.

We hope to produce and circulate a Flower Show 'Make, Bake and Grow' brochure soon where you can find details of all the categories, events and timings.

BIODIVERSITY GROUP

Signs on the five verges in South Newington which are being protected from regular mowing will be put up soon. The sign is shown in the box below.

Meanwhile don't forget No Mow May again this year. There's plenty of information about #NoMowMay on the internet, including this extract from BBC Countryfile:

"Lawns are often wastelands for insects and flowers, with all potential diversity kept under tight control by regular mowing and weed removal. But left to its own devices, those ordinary weeds can provide vital food. Dandelions are a particular superfood for bees and butterflies. Despite being outnumbered by daisies 85 to 1 on a typical 100m2 lawn, they produce 9% of the lawn's pollen and 37% of its nectar sugar."

Also, for those of you wondering what the mud bath is in the Barn House front garden in Green Lane, hopefully it will develop into a beautiful wildflower lawn later this year…

PLEASE DO NOT MOW THIS VERGE

This verge is being managed to increase biodiversity and will be mown only twice a year. The grass cuttings will be removed to prevent them making the grass more vigorous which happens when you leave the cuttings to decay and thus fertilise the soil.

Testing in this area has shown that verges managed in this way sustain five times more plant species. This then increases the number of insects that can be sustained and the amount of food available for birds who eat the insects. Leaving plants to flower, rather than cutting the verge, also means seed heads remain, which provides another food source for birds.

Thank you for your patience and tolerance of this 'scruffy' piece of land. We hope you enjoy the wildflowers.

South Newington Biodiversity Group.

DOGGED WITH THE UPDATES

Remember Ana's brood dog Rosie who had a litter of ten puppies, from the Spring 2022 newsletter?



Rosie is now helping to fund raise for the Guide Dogs. You can see her in these photos taken in Bicester Library.

THE SOUTH NEWINGTON 49 CLUB

"You've got to be in it to win it", some other less important lottery company said.

Thanks to all members old and new for supporting the South Newington 49 Club this year. As well as providing many lucky members with weekly prize winnings, the funds raised also contribute to the SNPCC Repair Fund and thereby the upkeep of the village church.



Subscriptions for 2022 were due in February, with the new lottery year kicking off in March. There are several numbers spare, so please consider joining the club if you have not yet done so. It is a bit of fun and a cash prize is always a happy delivery through your letterbox!

The weekly prize is £20, or £35 for the first week of the month and membership is £52 per year, or £26 for 6 months.

The easiest way to pay is via a bank transfer to the 49 Club account:
Account number: 16589289
Sort Code: 52 21 31
Reference: Your Surname (important please or I won't know who the payment is from).
Alternatively, please deliver cash (no cheques please) to Judith Denby at Orchard House, Green Lane.

Please do contact me on 07866 630454 or judithdenby@hotmail.co.uk if you need any further help.

Here's the 49 Club winner's list since October:

07-Jan	Graham & Nicky Smith	10-Mar	Peter Read
14-Jan	No winner	17-Mar	Peter Read
21-Jan	Graham & Nicky Smith	24-Mar	Bridget Read
28-Jan	No winner	31-Mar	Peter Thomas
04-Feb	No winner	07-Apr	Bridget Read
11-Feb	Colin Galloway	14-Apr	Andrew Wells
18-Feb	Swan family	21-Apr	No winner
25-Feb	No winner	28-Apr	No winner
03-Mar	Lin Brecknell	05-May	Amanda Blythe Smith

WHAT'S ON IN SOUTH NEWINGTON

YOGA



There are two yoga groups in the village hall. The Wednesday evening session has a new organiser, Geraldine Thomas. Tel: 07584 571979 Email: southnewingtonyoga@yahoo.co.uk
Huge thanks to Sue Robertson who was the previous organiser for many years.
The Friday yoga session for the over 80's is run by Liz Davies, a qualified yoga instructor and well known in the village, as one of the much-loved Davis family from Moor Lane.

There is a waiting list for both groups.

TABLE TENNIS



The table tennis club meets on Monday evening in the village hall from 6.30 – 7.30 pm or longer if an exciting match is underway. Kindly organised by Dawn & Neil Hodson from Moor Lane, it costs £1 session. Bats provided.

CORONATION WEEKEND

Many different ways to celebrate the Coronation have been explored, but for practicality and inclusivity this is the plan at the moment.

Village Hall bring & share tea party Sunday 7th May from 3pm with tables and chairs in the garden under gazebos. Including:

- Best decorated coronation hat competition
- Musical pass the hat game
- Heads & Tails game

Village mosaic

Working with local Oxford designer Sophie Smith of Shattered & Smashed to create a bespoke South Newington commemorative mosaic. The design will be based around the official Coronation logo but adapted to include our village name and suitability for mosaic work. Everyone is invited to join a workshop in the village hall, choosing an area of the mosaic to work on such as flowers or letters, so that the mosaic includes work from as many villagers as possible. The aim is to hang it on a wall in the poleaxe for posterity. More details to follow.

Village Concert Sunday 7th May 7pm

The South Newington Occasional Singers will perform a concert in the church with some lovely music as well as some rousing audience singing too. More details to follow.

Coronation Quiz

More details to follow.

Village postcards

A set of postcards to be created by South Newington villagers, one for every month, sold in aid of a charity aligned with the King's environmental or societal interests. An idea for November is below.



Please submit your postcard artwork or ideas to Nicky@twelvepr.co.uk

There was a plan for a village tidy up organised by Toby Harris but thanks to the great work of Duke of Edinburgh volunteer Edith Suenson-Taylor this good work is already being done. Thank you Edith 😊

REGULAR WHAT'S ON

What	When	Where	More info
Table tennis	Monday eves	Village hall	Dawn and Neil Hodson hodsod@hotmail.co.uk>
Art class	Tuesday morning	Village Hall	bridget.read@icloud.com linda.brecknell@gmail.com
Yoga	Weds eves	Village hall	Geraldine Thomas 07584 571979 southnewingtonyoga@yahoo.co.uk
Book Club	Thursday evening	Pub or Village Hall	**southnewingtonbookclub@gmail.com**
Coffee mornings	Thurs morning most months	Village hall	darkestella@gmail.com
Circle dancing	4th Thursday of month	Village hall	Stella Darke darkestella@gmail.com
Yoga	Fridays	Village hall	Liz Davis
Singing	Sat morning 10-12.30 am	Village hall	Steph Rew stephrew99@gmail.com
Parish Council Meeting	See village noticeboard or website	Village Hall	Vanessa Doyle, chair vanessasnpc@hotmail.com www.southnewington.co.uk
Flower Show Committee	Now and then	Committee members house	Amanda & Graham, co chairs amandablythesmith@gmail.com gfewster@gmail.com
Biodiversity group	Now and then	Committee members house	Stella Darke & Nicky Smith darkestella@gmail.com Nicky@twelvepr.co.uk
49 Club	Weekly prize draw	Cash for the winner	Judithdenby@hotmail.co.uk
Church Services	Sunday morning 8am, 11.15 am or 5pm	Church	Church wardens: Tim.Catton@epr.co.uk claire_ainley@hotmail.com

BOOK CLUB

The story of the South Newington Book Club



Neither Cherry nor I had any experience of running a Book Club but from talking to people there seemed to be an interest in setting one up in the village.

The call went out by village email and a notice was put on the Village notice board. We had even more people than we expected who expressed an interest. We have some 25 people on our list; they don't all come to the meeting every month but we usually get around 10-14 people coming.

The Book club is held once a month on a Thursday, we aim for the 3rd Thursday of the month.

Our first book was called "Roar" by Cecelia Ahern – it was a book of short stories about the emotional state/traits of women. The book had mixed reactions. It was chosen because even if you had only read one of the stories you could still contribute to the discussions.

The following month we chose an author, which was Ian McEwan, so we could choose which book we would read, and report back to the group. Even though I did not like the one I chose, during discussions it highlighted others which I am now looking to read.

Our most recent choice was any Biography or Autobiography. It was interesting to see such a diverse range of books which included books about Julie Waters, Michelle Obama, Ernest Shackleton, one about Eleanor of Aquitaine, Educated (about a girl from a survivalist Mormon family escaping to be educated), The Facemaker (about a pioneering surgeon who helped the many thousands whose faces were disfigured in WW1), Born a Crime (About Trevor Noah a South African comedian growing up during apartheid in South Africa), Taste My Life Through Food by Stanley Tucci, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks- about her impact on medical science, and important bioethical issues, Agatha Christie by Lucy Worsley.
Interestingly quite a few of the books chosen had been given to people as presents.

At our next meeting on 15th March the topic is a "Book that has been banned" and for the following meeting in April we will all be reading the same book "Where the Crawdads Sing" by Delia Owens.

So if you are interest in joining us or want more information please email us (Sue Robertson and Cherry Durley). **southnewingtonbookclub@gmail.com**

QUIZ NIGHT AT THE VILLAGE HALL

Why not join us for a Quiz night at the village hall with a Pizza supper?

Date: **Saturday 25th March 2023**
Time: **7pm to 9.30pm**
Price: **£7 per person includes Pizza**.
Drinks: **Please bring your own drinks and a glass.**



Cash prize for the winning team
Why not make up a team with your friends - Ideally people should make up their own teams of 6 but if you cannot do this you can still come but will be on a table with others to make up the team of 6.
BOOK EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT

Booking: Please contact Sue Robertson by email *snewingtonnews@gmail.com* or call 01295 722543. Place(s) to be reserved by 5pm on Monday 20th March 2023; we cannot accept any bookings after this date.

Payment to be made in advance before 25th March and you will be given details of how to pay once we have confirmed your place(s)

DUCK ON THE POND QUIZ APRIL 4TH

The pub is also organising a quiz to raise funds for the Earthquake Appeal in Turkey, on April 4th. Pub manager Viktoria's husband Alper is from Hatay, one of the worst affected areas in Turkey. Please pop down to the pub for more details.

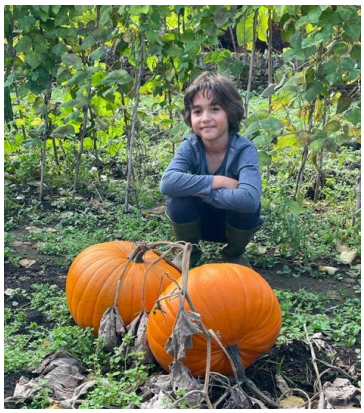
WHAT WENT ON IN WINTER

Seems ages ago now but here's a roundup of some of the things that went on in the village over Autumn and Winter.

Pumpkin competition

James Durley kindly organised a village pumpkin competition including providing seed plants, to see who could grow the biggest pumpkin. The prize was won by Jonah Barbour Cassimjee.





James Durley awards Jonah the cup for biggest pumpkin in the village. Above, the winning pumpkins!

Beetle Drive



Eyes down at the beetle drive.



Excellent auctioneers and event organisers

Geology tour of the churchyard





Stem of a crinoid, also known as a sea lily.

Fossils in the church walls made from Hornton Stone. These are from the Middle Lias formations in the Lower Jurassic Period, deposited in the warm, shallow seas that covered South Newington around 190 million years ago.





Belemnite – an extinct relative of squids and cuttlefish

With thanks to Oxford geologists Nina Morgan and Philip Powell for leading this fascinating tour of our churchyard.

Bonfire night



Menfolk setting up fireworks in the field



Girl with the best guy, Zoe Colegrave

Huge thanks to Andy Johnson, James Durley and Miles Colegrave for buying, setting up and organising the fireworks. Thanks also to all the families who contributed towards the cost of the fireworks which were enjoyed by everyone.

An especially big shout out and thank you to Zoe and Miles Colegrave for providing the refreshments and shelter in the field.





Thanks also to the Barbours for the use of their fields.

Church events



Christingle



Harvest Festival

Christmas advent decorated windows









Thanks to Roz Rapp for organising and donating the money raised, and to everyone who decorated their windows and offered refreshments in the grand count-down to window unveiling each night.

MORE RECENT EVENTS

Dubarry Delights



L-R: Sue Davis, Charles Ludlow, Angela Burns, Janet Page

Many of you will know Charles Ludlow who lives in Green Lane and works for Dubarry of Ireland, makers of beautiful, quality footwear, clothing, leather goods and accessories. Charles has generously supported the village with raffle prizes to win Dubarry goods at the Flower Show, and recently organised a shopping trip to the Dubarry retail outlet near Chipping Norton for a select group of villagers. The ladies certainly had a good time, thank you Charles 😊

DARK SACRED NIGHT....

When we moved to South Newington, it was the first time that either of us had lived somewhere there weren't any street lights. It didn't take long for us to realise that the "dark sacred night" was truly beneficial to our health, and finally we were able to see the stars properly after years of urban living.

So, as well as enjoying some stargazing, why is darkness so beneficial not just to human health, but to our overall environment?

Firstly, the human body has evolved by experiencing light during the day and darkness at night. We may take this "circadian clock" for granted, but it affects our physiology in so many ways, including sleep patterns, hormone release, digestion, and body temperature; having an irregular circadian clock and associated lack of sleep has been linked to various chronic health conditions. Sadly, an overall increase in light pollution can have a direct effect on people's health as well as potentially destroying any sense of privacy. "Light trespass" is now being used as a way to describe the impact of unwanted light on people's lives and livelihoods, and even UK Government health advice states that "light intrusion by white/blue light is disruptive to sleep", with all the negative outcomes that go with that.

The impact of too much artificial light also has a direct effect on the environment. For example

- 60% of insects are nocturnal and it is estimated that a third of those attracted to artificial light are killed as a result.
- The behaviour of many species of mammals, bird and insects in artificially lit areas leads to their becoming stressed to the extent that their breeding success is compromised.
- Some predators might benefit from foraging in artificially lit areas, but prey species that require darkness for their survival can be seriously affected.
- Artificial light seriously disrupts the feeding pattern of some bat species.
- Amphibians and fish are also adversely affected by artificial light.

For people who are interested in the numbers, if you look at The Campaign for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE) light pollution map you'll see that South Newington registers at <0.25 (nanowatts/cm2), in other words, at the moment we have a very dark sky ; in comparison, Banbury registers at >32 (nanowatts/cm2). This shows just how lucky we are as a village to be able to support biodiversity, and our own and others' health, simply by keeping our use of artificial light to where it is actually needed.

This doesn't mean to say that "all artificial light is bad light", but according to the research, the assumption that an increase in light deters crime has not been found to be true – the jury is still out on this one. As the Cherwell District Council website points out:

"The minimum level of illumination necessary to light a property should be used. Excessive levels of illumination provide dark shadows for people, including those with criminal intent, to hide in or behind. Lighting that is shielded or angled down can actually improve rather than compromise security."

And the Institute of Lighting Professionals (and they should know!) say

"Well designed, installed and maintained domestic exterior and security lights bring comfort and wellbeing to our lives, providing us with a sense of security and pleasure in our homes... we need to ensure that it serves the required purpose, providing the level of illumination required, but does not

become a cause for concern to adjacent residents or affect the natural environment surrounding your property. “

As a community, let’s carry on enjoying our dark skies – and all their associated ecological benefits – for as long as we can.

From Edwina Lawrence

***Jean and Jim Honeybone who live at East Bank on the Slibber will celebrate 50 years of living in South Newington next year. They kindly agreed to share their story of life in the village for the newsletter*.**

Jean and Jim Honeybone



In September 1974 we were renting the School House at Great Tew and looking for a house to buy in this area; we had moved from the north when Jim was appointed to teach History at Bicester School. Our two sons Tom and Ben (then aged 9 and 7) obviously went to Great Tew School next door!

They became friends with Boris Barbour whose father, Julian, told us we should definitely come and live in South Newington. So, we took his good advice, moving here in Spring 1975 to Yew Tree Cottage just as Jean started teaching at The Warriner School, Bloxham. We bought our present house, East Bank, in 1977.

South Newington was a wonderful place for Tom and Ben to grow up. Some of the exciting things we remember are - winters of deep snow, skating on David Barbour’s frozen lake, the village ice-hockey matches organised by Julian who kept a whole set of hockey sticks and other essential equipment at College Farm. There were rounders matches in the summer, the Flower Show every year on Philip Page’s field, children playing on the Pole Axe and splashing about down at the ford. We remember the kindness of Tom Clifton, Joan Giannasi’s father, bringing us beautiful baskets of vegetables and fruit from his amazing garden at the top of the High Street. Now, as oldies, we enjoy cycling to Barford or walking to Milcombe, Wigginton or Great Tew stopping to talk to our neighbours as we go along.

South Newington was much more ‘rural’ when we first came, especially with Janet Page driving her cows up the High Street every day. Many houses have now been renovated and extended, and there are many more cars. The Wykham Arms pub, run by Ted and Gwen, used to serve chicken in a basket: it’s now transformed into The Duck on the Pond, a flourishing gastro venue with a vegetable garden at the back.

One of the best things about the village is the fantastic community spirit – the Coffee Mornings, Quizzes and all the various clubs and activities centred on our lovely Village Hall. It is great to see the younger generation so full of energy and enthusiasm and many older villagers are also still involved in helping others and making life in South Newington enjoyable.

In the past we have both served on the Parish Council: Jean for eight years when Joyce Aydon was Chair, Jim for three and a half years. He particularly remembers helping Ian Gale to get funding for wonderful new play equipment on the Pole Axe.

Our longest absence from the village was when we went to Shanxi Province in northern China for two years 1995 – 1997 as VSO volunteers to help with teacher training. We really missed the UK and South Newington in particular, but we knew that all was going well as our house was let to Leigh and Jonathan Warr and their two little children who enjoyed living here and looked after our two cats. In Tiananmen Square in Beijing there was an enormous electronic clock counting down the months, days, minutes, seconds, to the handover of Hong Kong in July 1997. We returned to the UK just after that. When we came back, we gave a talk in the Village Hall about our exciting experiences in China.

We usually go to the USA each year to visit our son Tom and daughter-in-law Fiona and our three grandchildren in Seattle. They are all keen skiers, so we often go to the mountains - Whistler in Canada, Mount Rainier Range in Washington State or Mount Hood in Oregon.

Our younger son, Ben, and his wife Joanne live in London, so fortunately we see them a bit more often. Ben is very much involved in his local community, recently helping to save the local Library from closure. We love France and have got to know most regions. We have also been on quite a few of the wonderful Galloway Tours organised by Colin who used to live in The Old Vicarage. Jim has always been a keen mountaineer, going regularly to the Lake District, North Wales, and Scotland with his group of climbing friends.

Our family holidays were usually to the Lakes, Yorkshire Dales, Cornwall, and Scotland. We still go there as often as we can, but, as you can imagine. . . we are always happy to return home to South Newington.

Jean and Jim Honeybone

AUTUMN WEATHER IN SOUTH NEWINGTON 2022



Autumn has different memories for all of us. A break welcome for some of us from the heat of summer and particularly so last year; a time for blocked drains from falling leaves and a time with very little water in the river.

This year our River Swere level was negative, below nought on my river height scale from the end of June to mid-October, a long dry spell. It is always been believed by old country folk that if Mother Nature creates an extreme in her weather patterns she will put it right afterwards, but not necessarily as we would want it.

Mid-October brought three days of very heavy rain, 32.4 mm fell on the 21st, 28.1 mm on the 22nd, and 14.2 mm on the 23rd, more than the rainfall in July and August this year

We had national recognition quite a lot this Autumn. Coldest place in the UK on September 22nd, 7th October, 9th October, 12th October and the wettest place on October 21st.

The Met Office weather station which started life in The Gatehouse field in 1995 as a manual station has recorded our weather ever since. As a manual station it meant a 0900 hours visit every day to take readings, and when I wasn't here someone always took over the duty.

In the early 2000's as technology improved, the station was changed to fully automatic, and it now sends details to the Met Office at very regular intervals day and night.

The Autumn heat dropped away from our summer record of 32.3°C on 12th August to 24.6°C on 12th September; 20.7°C on 29th October and 16°C on 12th November. Frost of Autumn only just appeared of -0.5°C on 21st November and -1.1°C on 9th October.

I noted two thunderstorms at 0100 hours on 5th September and 2300 hours on the same day. The early one was the heaviest and most prolonged which created flooding in Moor Lane. I have not noted any Atlantic storms carrying names this Autumn.

With best wishes

John Britten 5/12/22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Josephine Pilling from Bower Bailey asked permission to advertise in the newsletter. This is the first time adverts from businesses outside the village have been included. If you have any views on the advertising or newsletter content, news or ideas for future issues please email Southnewingtonnewsletter@gmail.com



