

BARFORD NEWS

May 2015

www.barfordnews.co.uk

Price 30p where sold

Record number turn out for village clean up morning



Over 40 adults and children turned out for the clean up on 11 April. Some new faces, and some familiar ones from many previous years, (some 11 years in succession!).

One or two escaped before the photos but hopefully, everyone is listed here. Huge and grateful thanks to:

Annie Beesley, Basil Butler, Tony Ecclestone, Maggie Eden, Carol and Jack Edginton, Glynnis and Jeremy Eastwood, Trish Field, Simon, Sophie and Georgie Hanmer, Ami Harding, Valerie and Ava Hardingham with Angus, Rodney Hobbs, Sophie, Harry and Lucy Homes, Louis and Laura Holtzhausen with Letty and Cecilia, Bernard Lane, Ann and Jonathan Lindsay, John and Janet Morris, Di Muirhead with Quaffle and Jazz, Chris and Gunilla Murray, Hazel and Barney Neal, Linda Newberry, Cathy Peacock, Maggie Rampley, Tony Shrimpton, Lilian Stevens, Dave and Julia Streeter, Jacque Thunder, Rodney Tustin, George Williams, Julia Winter, Mariann Young.

Definitely need more doughnuts next year!

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

TRUE
 FALSE

A fun evening of
Call My Bluff

7.30pm

Wednesday 13 May
in the Village Hall
Please come along and join us at
our WI meeting
Visitors £4

Check us out on the village website,
www.thebarfordvillages.co.uk
under village groups.

**Open Gardens Scarecrow
Competition**
Saturday and Sunday 13
and 14 June



Entry forms for the scarecrow competitions
will be delivered to all those who have taken
part in previous years.

If you are having a go for the first time
please contact Mariann 338 570. email
mariann.young@btinternet.com
Traditional free-standing figure or a group
scene

**Not necessarily human, but it must be
capable of scaring birds!**

Competitions for adults and children

Barford Village Market

in the Village Hall 10am -12noon

Saturday 16 May

Wooden planters and garden sundries (weather permitting),
seasonal plants - all at silly prices.

Preserves and chutneys, artisan breads, Meat Joint, fairtrade goods, books, handicraft
items, beauty products Paul's great selection of cards and papers

Country Diaries' delicious cheeses, yoghurts, etc

Bacon butties/bacon and egg butties
add a sausage for a breakfast buttie
Not forgetting tea and coffee

Please come along have a cuppa with friends and support our local market
All profits go towards Village Hall maintenance

Plants, cakes and coffee

Please come to a coffee morning at
St Michael's Church
on Saturday 9 May
from 10am to 12noon
in aid of church funds.

There'll be perennial and bedding plants for sale. Cakes large and small. Offers of plants and cakes gratefully received. These can be left at the Old Post Office, High Street on Friday 8 May, collected (please phone Jan Elvidge 338214) or brought along on the day.

With many thanks - look forward to seeing you there!

Fancy cat!

Barford-based vet Sophie Hanmer writes:

When it comes to breeds of cat most people would be hard-pressed to name more than two or three, and this is hardly surprising considering the majority of cat owners prefer 'moggies' or non-pedigree cats. So you might be interested to know that the Cat Fanciers Association (CFA) currently recognises 40 pedigree cat breeds, ranging from the unpronounceable Abyssinian to the interestingly named Turkish Van.

As with different breeds of dog, cat breeds also have their own characteristics. If you are thinking of owning a pedigree cat it is important to consider which breed is best for you and your lifestyle.

Most people think of cats as being very independent and low maintenance. However, certain pedigree cats, especially Persians and Ragdolls, require daily grooming and may need their eyes and ears cleaning on a regular basis. Short haired breeds such as the Rex (Devon, Cornish, and Selkirk), Ocicat and British shorthair are easier to groom and the hairless Sphynx obviously needs no brushing at all! These breeds may be more suitable for people with allergies.

Potential health problems should be considered when choosing a breed. Pedigree animals usually have a higher risk of heritable diseases but due to advances in genetic testing breeders now have the opportunity to reduce the risk of producing litters with problems such as Polycystic Kidney Disease, Progressive Retinal Atrophy and Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy. Due to their facial conformation Persian cats are at higher risk of breathing problems, weepy eyes, and dental disease.

With moggies it is normally down to an owners preference whether they are indoor only or indoor/outdoor cats. However some pedigree cats may be safer if kept indoors. The Sphynx for example cannot stay warm if it is cold outside and risks sunburn on a hot day. Munchkins (not recognised by the CFA) with their shorter legs may struggle to jump great heights but are still very agile and athletic.

Siamese, Tonkinese, and Burmese cats tend to be very vocal and enjoy nothing more than a good chat with their owner (or anyone who will listen)! Maine Coon cats don't appear to have the same

BARFORD ST. MICHAEL
BARFORD GREEN GARDEN CLUB
OPEN GARDENS....
and MORE
SUNDAY JUNE 14th
TRADITIONAL SCARECROWS
PHOTOGRAPHS
Plants for sale
ENTRY AT THE VILLAGE HALL
2 - 6 pm
TEAS

fear of water that many cats have and most enjoy splashing around in their water bowl.

Owning a pedigree cat can be demanding but also very rewarding so whichever breed you chose make sure you do your research first. Contact your vet for further advice.

BBQ **BBQ**
BBQ **BBQ**

The date is changing

The annual Village Family Sports and BBQ will now take place on
Saturday 4 July
with sports from 3pm and the BBQ and bar opening at 4pm.

Full details in the next Barford News

Welcome

to

**Robert and Jenny
Pietruszkiewicz
and their toddler George**

who have just moved to
their new home in St John
We wish the family many happy
years here in our lovely villages.

Ecuador here we come!

My name is Danielle and I am a GCSE student with another challenge ahead of me.

Last year you all kindly supported me with a geography field trip to Ethiopia where we were helping to rebuild a school library. I had to aim for £1000 and achieved it with my village quiz raising a huge £1300. Thanks to all who joined us and who contributed raffle prizes, food and drinks. I will post a picture of the completed library in the next newsletter.

So no pressure for this year's challenge - Ecuador here we come! This year is different. Each team member must raise the money for the entire trip. We will be away for four weeks and so our funds cover flights, accommodation, subsistence, equipment, etc. Each of us has to raise £4500.

We will be working on projects in the community and out into the Amazon and coastal areas. This will be a wonderful hands-on experience, seeing how other areas of the world manage.

I am looking to organise another memorable quiz night and hope you will come and support me. We are looking for teams of four, but if you cannot get a team together please don't worry - we can put you with the winning team!

The date **20 June**. Tickets will be £10 including supper and nibbles. Look out for the posters and magazine up dates. For further information please call 01869 338050 or email vpthimblehall@aol.com Many thanks and I look forward to seeing you on the night.

Danielle Semple, Thimble Hall, Lower St

Found in Church Street

**– a pair of gloves. If they are yours
email the editor at
barfordnews@gmail.com**

News from the WI

On the second Wednesday of each month a group of 30+ members of the WI gather in the Village Hall. We are all ages, have many interests and enjoy a varied programme of talks and activities throughout the year. Recently we have let our hair down with an evening playing the African djembe drums, sampled Sarah Best's delicious curries and have learned about the dinosaurs of Oxfordshire and the incredible world of the honey bee.



Then, of course, there's time to chat and socialise, as well as keeping abreast of WI activities countywide and nationally. There are trips out, social evenings, fun and friendship. Coming up on 10 June we will welcome recently retired vet Alan Walker, with his talk '4 Legs and a Tail' and on 8 July, Timothy Walker returns to answer the question 'What have plants ever done for us?'

Visitors are welcome at our meetings. Barford News always includes an advert for each meeting, or contact our president Jill Hopcraft on 337229 for more information. You can also visit www.thebarfordvillages.co.uk under village groups.

Down on the farm

The excellent April weather enabled us to get to grips with spring work. Lambing sheds were mucked out, the chicken house moved to its permanent place in the orchard awaiting yet more chickens in May, Clarissa's piglets were weaned and the second fertiliser dressing put on the wheat and barley.

Getting 10 tonnes of fertiliser onto the crops took less than a day. When we first came here we had 12 metre tramlines (unseeded wheel runs through the crop to ensure spreader and sprayer accuracy), one hundredweight (50kg) bags for the fertiliser and a half tonne capacity spreader.

I would manhandle the bags onto a trailer and drive it to the field, walk back to the farm to get the tractor and spreader, drive back to the field and start loading by hand. When the field was finished the process started all over again for the next field, and so on.

Now we have 24 metre tramlines, 600 kg bags and a two tonne capacity spreader. Handling is mechanised and the job takes about seven hours instead of three days, even with the need to go back to the farm buildings to get each load of fertiliser. There's progress for you - and no backache!

The spring barley that was sown into a soggy seedbed to avoid being too late getting it drilled doesn't look cheerful; areas of it are struggling to get through the panned soil. Also, while Clarissa performed well (13 piglets weaned), Bertha has passed her date for showing signs of farrowing and will have to go.

Next one to farrow is a gilt (one year old female) which we kept from our own progeny. We intend to raise more of our own breeding stock in future; it avoids buying in trouble.

Another job I managed to get done last month was to spray out the crop in two fields of wheat which are host to a public footpath; this in response to the usual flood of letters from the local council.

In the past I have walked in what I hoped was a straight line while pumping a knapsack sprayer. The meandering usually looked as if I had previously over-indulged on the hard stuff. This year a neighbour kindly came with his quad bike and drove a straight line so that I could spray out the crop between his wheel marks. The result is much more pleasing.

I mentioned footpaths to a farmer friend in New Zealand and when he looked perplexed, I explained what they were and why they needed to be kept clear, properly signed and provided with stiles. He shook his head: 'We wouldn't stand for that over here', he muttered.

So not only are they devoid of snakes and foxes, they don't have people walking across their land either. But then they do have sand flies, and a bite from one of those little perishers will have you scratching for a week. Give me a footpath anytime!

Tony Collier



Katherine House Hospice events

Midnight walk: 4 July. Phone 01295 812161 or email fundraising@khh.org.uk. Open to adults and children aged 12 and over.

Annual raffle: Chance to win £1000. Phone 01295 812161. Draw takes place 5 August.

Open Gardens: May/July. Including Broughton Castle, Broughton Grange, Katharine House's own gardens and artwork created by our patients. Visit www.khh.org.uk

The F Word: 7 May. The F word is a meal arranged by students at North Oxfordshire Academy. Pay what you feel your meal is worth. To book a table email iona.corbett@northoxfordshire-academy.org



Cherwell District Council has started women's netball classes in Bloxham.

The sessions take place at the Warriner School in Bloxham on Thursdays between 6.30pm and 7.30pm. The classes teach the rules of the game and training techniques which can then be put into practice at an end of session match. Each session costs £2 per person.

For more information or to reserve a place call 01295 221806.

Open Gardens photography competition

Following our first photography competition in 2013, your entries are invited again this year. A professional photographer will be our judge, we'll have a slide presentation of all entries in the Village Hall on Open Gardens Day. There are four categories:

- a grouping of plants (formal or informal; indoors or out; in container, bed, or in a natural setting)
- animal life in the garden (any living creature, wild or tame, pet or pest)
- enjoying the garden (any interpretation - humans or animals, working, sleeping, eating, splashing)
- colour (any interpretation - a single flower, a sunset, a grouping, a clash ...)
-

For each category our judge will choose a winner, runner-up and best entry by a child of 12 or under. Entries should be emailed, by 24 May to L.newbery@btinternet.com as jpg attachments. Prints can be accepted. Phone 337526. Entry fee 50p per photo, six entries for £2 to Linda at Seaton House, Horn Hill, or Helen Taylor at 10 Church Street, with your completed entry form.

Open Gardens Photography Competition

Name Email or phone no:.....

No of photographs entered: Payment:

I am sending my entries by email / delivering prints

Gardening Club



19 May Plant Swap for members at Sarah Best's, Street Farm, Barford St. John at 7.30. Bring a plant, swap for another. Bring something to drink. Light snacks provided.

14 June. Open Gardens. Teas, scarecrows, photographs and more.

25 July, Outing to Dreamers Cottage, Little Haseley. Members and friends welcome.
<http://gardenandwood.co.uk/>

Plants for your garden that provide structure

- Autumn snakeroots
- Culver's root
- Jerusalem sages
- Joe Pye weeds
- Meadow rues
- Miss Willmott's ghost
- Queen of the prairie
- Sages
- Sea lavender

Plants with attractive seed heads

- Asters
- Bee balms
- Burnets
- Coneflowers
- Goldenrods
- Mountain fleece
- Orpines
- Purple cone flowers
- Sneezeweed
- Yellow wax-bells



Bye for now

Spade and Fork



Two email updates from the Kathmandu Orphanage

24 Feb 2015: Respected Jill Hopcraft and all members – Namaste.

Thank you for your email knowing that you had recently transferred £1000 into our account. Today I will go Bank to check out and I will let you know the details.

Once again thank you for your kind email knowing that you had transferred the money. We wish your every success and progress. Thank you

6 Apr 2015: Respect members Namaste (hello) In Kathmandu now weather is changing and Nepali New Year Eve is on the way. Anyway..... all the children at the centre are now in holidays because they had just finished their Annual Examination and waiting to their progress report. Hope they all had done well. Children are very excited to hear their good result and excited to go in new classes and also excited to meet their new friends too. Here i enclosed some photo hope you will like them. At last, we wish you all the best regards and warm greetings.

HCMC Family



The Friends of St Mary's, Bloxham present

The English Renaissance
Featuring Tippett's "Five Negro Spirituals" and
works by Parry and Stanford

The Choir of Exeter College, Oxford

St Mary's Church, Bloxham 9 May, 7.30pm

Tickets: £15 (£5 for under 16s) includes interval
drink. Available from 01295 720951 or
720432, and on the door



Parish Council Notes

The Parish Council meeting took place at 7.30pm on 1 April in Barford Village Hall and was attended by Cllrs Hobbs, Eden, Best, Hanmer, Campbell, Turner, Mrs Watts (Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer) and District Cllr Williams. Apologies were received from Cllr Styles.

Minutes of the last meeting: The minutes of the meeting on 4 March were unanimously resolved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

Annual Parish meeting: This is due to take place on 15 April at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, followed by the Barford Village Hall AGM.

First aid courses: A second Parish Council St John Ambulance first aid course is due to take place on 9 April. There is a waiting list and a further course is going to be arranged. Please contact Councillors Hobbs or Turner if you would like to attend one of these free courses.

Wooden play equipment for West Close: Questionnaires for adults and children were sent out in the April Barford News, the deadline for responses being 26 April.

Flytipping: CDC had not removed the window/door frame and broken glass on the road from Barford St Michael to Hempton, reported to them in March. The Parish Clerk has contacted CDC again and asked them to remove it.

New PC noticeboard for Barford St John: This is now in place. Councillors thanked David Best for dealing with the faulty lock, removing the old post and installing the new post and noticeboard.

Footpath from Barford St John to South Newington: Stiles have been repaired or replaced and the right of way is now accessible to walkers. There is no right of way through Wooden Hill Farm.

Road safety: Councillors agreed that a Speedwatch survey should be carried out in the two villages if volunteers come forward to assist the police. This will be discussed at the Annual Parish Meeting on 15 April.

District councillor's report: The Inspectorate's decision on the Local Plan is not expected until after the election. Local Plan 2, which evaluates the number of houses which may be built in each village, will be sent to the Inspectorate in January 2016. Their decision is not expected until April 2017.

Planning Applications/TCAs received by the Parish Council since the March meeting:

- 15/00214/F 6 Summer Ley, StM - Single storey side extension to provide annexe accommodation. No objections.
- 15/00092/TCA Dove House, Lower St, St M – various tree works. No objections.

Planning Applications/TCAs granted by Cherwell District Council:

- 14/02170/F Seaton House, Horn Hill - free-standing greenhouse to rear of property. No objection. Granted 24 February.
- 15/00023/TCA St Michael's Church - T15 x Copper Beech adjacent to Irish Yews. Crown lift to 5m and reduce from church by 2m. No objection. Granted 24 February.
- 15/00164/F 3 Broad Close, St M - first floor extension with single storey extensions to side and rear. Re-submission of 14/00987/F. No objection. Granted 19 March.
- 15/00050/TCA The Old School House, St M - T1 x gingko – thin overall canopy by 15%. Remove cross branches. Remove dead wood. T2 x beech – crown raise by 5m. Tidy all stubs. Remove major dead wood from whole canopy. T3 x beech – branches to be removed as shown on picture supplied. Remove all major dead wood. No objection. Granted 26 March.

- 15/00051/TCA Pear Tree Cottage, St M
- T1 x apple – crown reduce by 2m.
Remove dead wood/correct previous pruning cuts. Thin crown by 15%. T2 x damson – fell. No objection.
Granted 26 March.

AOB

- Strong winds during March meant that items from recycling bins and boxes were strewn around the village. Parishioners are politely asked to secure bin lids and boxes during inclement weather.
- The noticeboard in Townsend is untidy. Cllr Hanmer will put a grill on the front to prevent items displayed being blown away by the wind.

The Parish Council website can be accessed on www.thebarfordvillages.co.uk

Fix My Street – residents can report defects in the highway to Oxfordshire County Council on <http://fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk> Once verified, OCC's contractor pledges to fix potholes within 28 days, 24 hours in an emergency and within 4 hours for a severe category.

The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Wednesday 6 May at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Want to see the Barford News photos in colour?

Then take a look at the magazine's website version:

<http://www.barfordnews.co.uk/>



And don't forget you can keep up to date with village events on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/pages/Barford-St-Michael-St-John/76830272830

From The Fire Station



Our station has had fifty call outs since the beginning of the year - down on last year but busy for a small station.

We attended the Bicester Village fire. When we arrived the roof was alight and we had to get ladders up to get directly onto the fire. There was also a call to a roof fire near Sibford caused by a water pump overheating. Other calls have been to road traffic collisions, alarms and standbys to other stations. There were no chimney fires last month.

We have been doing breathing apparatus training at Horton Hospital. They have a derelict building that we use for training. The drill at the hospital involved three fire engines and lots of casualties with many entry points into the building.

The car wash was a huge success. We raised £350 for the fire fighters charity. Thanks Tom Hall and Lewis Mahony for organising the event and the crew who gave up their spare time.

Our next big event will be the Four Farms Challenge on 10 May. More details from www.fourfarmschallenge.co.uk

Crew Manager Tim Parker Deddington Fire Station

Tuesday Lunch Club

Please note there will not be a Lunch Club in May, however, it will start again on 16 June and a menu will appear in the June Barford News.

Nature Notes

How many of you have seen a swallow yet? I know there are one or two around their favoured nesting sites in the Barfords. I have had no more than a corner-of-the-eye glimpse of one.



For such an iconic bird as the swallow, which should have been here by the end of March, and frequently in view before mid-April, to be so poor in numbers is a desperate warning of the state of nature across Europe and Africa. There is global warming whatever its cause; but I have real fear that the decimation of life on Earth is down to we humans. And we have neither the will nor strength to put things right. By not doing so, we could well be the authors of our own downfall sooner than we think.

Following a week of warmish weather for March, I concluded last *N.N.* after two further days. However, both were of numbing NE winds, 5° at night and 6° by day - pretty cold - and bringing most of nature to a standstill. But, on the 16th, with low pressure areas to NW and SE, a very light easterly breeze developed after overnight rain, bringing hazy sun and 11.5°. Nights became even colder (average 3.5°) over the next five days, but daytime temperatures maintained 10° to 11°. Nature started to become active again with the appearance of several tortoiseshell butterflies looking for mates and nettles on which to lay their eggs. Mornings were foggy, but after clearing, queen bumblebees started looking for nest sites. I saw both the big red-tailed *B. lapidarius*, and the white-tailed-with-3-yellow-bands *B. hortorum*. I think this latter was a bit of a fluke, it was rather early for them.

Then came the almost total solar eclipse. I hope you had a good view of it. I did, from my back door, using those special sun-observing

spectacles. Around 9.30am the speeding moon reduced the sun to a thin crescent and there was a darkening of the sky with a chill in the air and reduced bird-song. It was reminiscent of an imminent heavy thunderstorm. But in minutes the event was passing and the sun recovered its strength. The afternoon temperature went up to 16° and insects appeared once more; Ray Cox reporting a bright yellow brimstone butterfly in his garden. At dusk the Bloxham Road kestrel sat watching and listening intently on the wires opposite St. John's airfield gate.

The 21st returned to 10.5° on a cold NE breeze, stiff in exposed places, but it had taken the previous day's warmth to bring the first hints of green 'bread and cheese' onto the hawthorn hedgerows.

On the 22nd, the sun broke through in late morning. In my wild garden I spotted my first of this year's immature *pisaura mirabilis* spiders sunning themselves on the anthills. Even at this age the pale wedge on the abdomen and the 'tear streaks' below the eyes are noticeable. A buzzard was active on Irondown and almost suicidal in his pursuance of roadside carrion. With clear sky into night, the crescent moon and Venus were close in conjunction at dusk giving a wonderful spectacle before the stars came out. But there was an unhappy overtone - there were reports of the roadkill of a red kite on the B4031 near Barley Lane junction - I suspect it was ravenous, like the buzzard on Irondown. I know it's not easy, but please keep an eye out for these birds, and all wildlife, when driving our rural roads.

We continued this period of chilly winds with days at around 10° - 11° and nights below freezing, while the LP areas dithered slowly eastward. There were delicious spells of birdsong: robin, dunnock, blue tit, great tit and occasional long-tailed tit, plus greenfinches (wonderful after their recent serious decline) and goldfinches.

On 23rd I was very lucky to spot a small male peregrine falcon on the wires between St. John and the Swere Bridge. It was small enough to give me doubts, but I know nothing else that has that 'peregrine' appearance.

By the 26th the LP systems were passing slowly over the UK. The winds had boxed the compass anticlockwise from SE to W

between the 23rd and the 27th and both day and night temperatures were rising gently. At the Manor, Mrs Alt told me of a buzzard that was regularly visiting an adjacent mole infested paddock. It would land on the ground and, holding its head a little to one side, listen over a mole hill and suddenly strike into the hill! It was very fast, too fast to identify its prey, but it was very adept, whether the victim was mole, vole or mouse using the run.

Green and great spotted woodpeckers were resident below the allotments and are still frequently observed by the plot holders.



On the 28th I was pleased to see a red kite along Barley Lane near Austin's Barn after the reported nearby kill on the 22nd. As the LP systems cleared away, the sting in their tails whipped through on the 29th with heavy rains before and through dawn. These were followed by showers which raced through under a lumpy overcast, on a savagely gusty wind that veered from WSW to NW where it stayed until after the end of the month. But this wind dropped to a chilly breeze with strong clear, sunshine on the 30th. This produced a pleasant day (in sheltered areas) at 10.5°, which pleased the green woodpeckers, who called frequently below Steepness, until onset of rain at 5pm.

The 31st was another day of racing cloud on a strong NW wind. It cleared to strong sun, but the wind rose to gusty gale force. The Barfords were bypassed by several savage storms until 5pm, when we were beset by fierce hail storms and rain. Thus March departed as it should have come in - like a lion.

Thus welcome April. However, a light, chilly NW morning breeze strengthened to become a cold blow. Cloud increased to produce showers in the afternoon; the wind dropped, a kite appeared over Deddington cemetery, but

again rain set in about 4pm. Not a promising start, but the background temperature was 10° with 6° min. overnight. A light breeze greeted the 2nd through broken mackerel cloud and the temperature rose to 15.5°. It was appreciated by a buzzard cruising above Irondown and another near the Mason's Arms on A361. I'll expect they were disappointed when drizzle started at 4pm, turning to steady rain through heavy mist at night. The rain continued and the 3rd developed into a mild but dull, wet day. A pair of red-legged partridges, running along the verge of the B4031 above Irondown, were undeterred, neither was a buzzard near Hill Farm access, or a kite at the B4031 junction with A361. And to top things off, my first chiffchaff of 2015 was calling at the bottom of Hempton Hills.

With a slight breeze now at NNE on the 4th, early overcast gave way to fitful sun with a short, clear burst before sunset and a temperature of 12°. The great spotted woodpecker drummed between the allotments and Fernhill, and the green woodpecker laughed higher up Fernhill; and a buzzard was happy to soar over St John's Way in Hempton - that's better!

A virtually windless day of heavy, overall, sky haze climbed to 16.5° on the 5th. This was the start of a remarkable period of warm weather. The 6th reached 20° with peacock and brimstone butterflies quite prominent generally. The green woodpeckers were conversationally noisy below Steepness all day and a red-legged partridge also called from the top of Steepness. In addition, a raven was croaking over Deddington, something I have not encountered around the Barfords for some time.

It set me to wondering about the reduced numbers of kites and buzzards around the villages. Were their numbers reduced through the bleak times in February/ March - or some other factor?

Despite an overnight air temperature of 3°, the 7th dawned on a sharp ground frost, with tiny granules of ice, in frost prone hollows. The day made up for this by reaching 22.5°. Another flawless day of 21° on the 8th brought a report of two swallows seen in St. John.

The warm weather continued with days at around 17° and nights at 6°, even so there was a strange, short, savage rain shower, under heavy sky haze, around lunch time on the 10th.

Another report of swallows, three this time, entering a traditional nesting barn in St. Michael was heartening. So was the wild singing of a mistle thrush below Steepness. These lovely birds are uncommon locally nowadays. This is the first I've heard for a very long time. The song thrush does seem to have rallied in the Barfords. Also, a few curlews are back in the Cherwell Valley - a sure sign of spring.

With the wind southerly for several days, the 11th, at 17°, brought buzzards and a kite soaring along the B4031 beyond Irondown, and the green woodpecker calling briefly below Steepness.

The 12th, after a bright start, built up a blustery, stiff SE blow that belied the temperature of 17°. It brought rain through the late afternoon and evening, but that didn't stop a beautiful barn owl eyeing me as I drove past his fence post perch beside the B4031. A 0° frost followed.

And so to a frost chill morning on the 13th. A bright start, a SW breeze lessening and becoming mildly overcast. But it cleared for a warm afternoon of sun at 20°. A pair of little owls was reported near St. Michael.

A chill, overcast start to the 14th cleared by 10.30am and, on a very warm, almost cloudless day, the temperature reached 23°. The green woodpecker yodelled softly from the Oaks below Steepness. Greenfinches twittered comfortably from an ash tree and a pair of bull finches whispered their little despairing cries from Townsend. A great pleasure to hear both, especially after such a drop recently, in Greenfinch numbers.

And so to the 15th. A very light SW breeze, heavy sky haze with wan sun, but warm. It was a warm afternoon and evening. Most creatures seemed to be slumbering in this balmy warmth. Ribbons of high stratus cloud reflected a pink-red sunset over most of the sky - my thermometer read another 23° max. On the 6pm news, the Met. Office had recorded, somewhere, a temperature of 27°! The highest ever recorded in a UK April.

Ron Knight



1940s weekend at Upton House



When World War Two broke out the world changed and none more so than at Upton House. Lord and Lady Bearsted moved to the Dorchester Hotel in London and their Merchant Bank, M Samuel and Co moved into Upton House with their staff for the duration of the war.

On 30 and 31 May, Upton House will reflect all that was happening at that time with two Home Guard groups camped on site giving marching displays, stripping guns down and helping children to understand what happened during the war. The ARP and WVS will be on hand to discuss the work air raid wardens and the women's voluntary service did in the community. The Upton estate was worked by the ladies of the women's land army, who will also be with us and to cap it all we will have a real 1940s pub serving real beers and soft drinks.

Of course a weekend at Upton would not be complete without music and Paul Casper will be playing the Ukulele on the rear terrace as the dynamic George Formby, whilst the ladies parade the fashions of the day.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/uptonhouse Phone 01295 670266.

BARFORD VILLAGE SHOW SCHEDULE

Vegetable & Produce Classes

1	Three Beetroot, tops cut to 10cms (4ins) approx.	
2	Three Carrots, long, tops cut to 10cms (4ins) approx.	
3	Three Courgettes	
4	Three Onions	
5	Five Shallots	
6	Three Potatoes of one variety	
7	Three Runner Beans with stalks	
8	Five French Beans with stalks	
9	Five Cherry Tomatoes	
10	Three Round Tomatoes	
11	A Cucumber, house or frame	
12	A Pair of Vegetables (same variety) not in other classes	
13	Five Single Assorted Vegetables	
14	Longest Runner Bean	
15	Three Apples of one variety, eating or cooking	
16	Dish of one variety of soft or stoned fruit	
17	Adult Fun Class: A mis-shapen Vegetable	
18	3 Eggs (same size and colour)	

Cookery Classes

19	A Swiss Roll (Jam and Cream)	
20	Four Cupcakes	
21	Six Brownies	
22	A Victoria Sponge Sandwich, Raspberry jam, no Cream	
23	A Family sized Bakewell Tart	
24	A Cherry & Almond Cake (men only) Recipe in Barford News	
25	A Jar of Jam	
26	A Jar of Marmalade	
27	A small pot of Lemon Curd	
28	A Jar of Chutney	
29	Sloe Gin (decanted into small bottle)	

Flower Arranging Classes

30	An arrangement in a teapot (max 12"w x 18"h)	
31	An arrangement of herbs (max 12"w x 18"h)	
32	A miniature arrangement (10cms/4" overall)	
33	A table decoration for a dinner party (max 12" diameter)	

BANK HOLIDAY SATURDAY 29 AUGUST 2015

Cut Flower Classes

34	A single Gladiolus	
35	A sunflower in a vase	
36	Three Dahlias	
37	Three Roses	
38	Four Marigolds (one variety)	
39	Four Pelargonium heads	
40	Six stems of Sweet Peas	
41	Vase of mixed garden flowers, 5 varieties, (<i>max.15 stems, no oasis</i>)	

Crafts

(NB Crafts must not have been entered previously)

42	A mosaic-decorated item	
43	A piece of jewellery	
44	A handmade card	
45	A piece of needlecraft (<i>embroidery, tapestry, patchwork, cross-stitch</i>)	
46	You Made It, Let's See It (<i>Handmade article not covered in other classes</i>)	
47	Drawing or Painting: any subject, any medium (<i>mount or frame optional</i>)	

Photography

(13cmx 18cm or 5" x 7")

48	My pet	
49	A Garden bird	
50	An Apple	
51	A Flower	

Children's Classes

7 Years and Under (age to be marked on all entries)

52	A Colouring Picture (available from the Post Office)	
53	A Decorated Jam Jar	
54	Four Chocolate Crispy Cakes	
55	A Lego Animal	
56	You Made It, Let's See It (<i>Handmade article not covered in other classes</i>)	

8 - 15 Years (age to be marked on all entries)

57	A photograph (Any Subject, 13cm x 18cm or 5" x 7")	
58	4 Decorated Cupcakes	
59	A Design for a Phone Cover	
60	A drawing or painting (any subject, any medium)	
61	You Made It, Let's See It (<i>Handmade article not covered in other classes</i>)	



Update by Sgt Becky Fishwick

This month has seen changes in the Banbury Rural Team. PCSO Angela Alford has joined the Kidlington Neighbourhood Team. For the last four years Ange has been a huge with her local knowledge, her enthusiasm and commitment to making the rural community a safe place. She will be missed by the team here and I am sure by many of you as well. I would like thank Ange for all her hard work and wish her the best in her new role.

After several months of work in the local community the team carried out a warrant under the misuse of drugs act in Hook Norton. As a result an adult male has been reported for the offence of possession of cannabis.

If you have any information in relation to drug use or concerns you may have around drugs you can contact us directly on BanburyruralNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk, via 101, or anonymously through Crimestoppers on 0800 555111

We have continued to suffer with heating oil thefts. Earlier this month three properties were targeted in North Newington. A silver Mercedes estate car was seen acting suspiciously in the area during the time of the offences. If anyone has information about this vehicle or those responsible please contact us. I would continue to urge residents to report any suspicious activity to us and if you would like any crime prevention advice in relation to security of your property or your oil tanks please contact us.

Earlier this month we completed a two day operation targeting scrap metal We often get reports from residents who see scrap metal collectors near them and whilst some are licensed we occasionally receive information to suggest unlicensed collectors are targeting the area. If and when you see people in the villages collecting scrap metal please contact us and we can confirm whether they are licensed and deal robustly with those that aren't.

Please consider joining your Neighbourhood Watch. It's about people getting together with their neighbours to take action to cut crime. Neighbourhood Watch schemes are community initiatives run by their members. They work by developing liaison between households and the local police.

- cut crime and the opportunities for crime.
- help and reassure those who live in the area.
- encourage neighbourliness and closer communities.

For more information please email Deb Hextall at Banbury Police Station:
deborah.hextall@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

Follow us on **Twitter** @_ThamesVP or 'like' us on **Facebook** at
<http://www.facebook.com/thamesvp>

Thames Valley Alert: receive free local crime alerts and crime prevention advice by signing up at www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk

For more crime reduction advice visit www.thamesvalley.police.uk or call the 24-hour Police Enquiry Centre on 101.

The poster features a yellow background. At the top left is the logo for 'SOLDIERS OF OXFORDSHIRE MUSEUM - CONFLICT & COUNTY' with a blue and white emblem. At the top right is a circular logo for 'MUSEUMS at NIGHT'. The main text in the center reads 'Professor Ashley Jackson CHURCHILL: Command & Leadership'. Below this is a portrait of an elderly man with a white beard and a pipe in his mouth, wearing a white shirt and tie. Underneath the portrait is the text 'Churchill ASHLEY JACKSON'. Further down, the event details are listed: 'Thursday 14th May 2015', '6.00pm-8.00pm', and 'Tickets £7.50'. At the bottom, a dark orange banner contains the text 'Available from www.sofa.org.uk or call 01993 810 213'.

Hedgehog Awareness Week



Hedgehog Awareness Week runs from 3 to 9 May and is organised by the British Hedgehog Preservation Society.

This year efforts are focussed on gardens and how you can do to help hedgehogs with simple things like:

- ensuring access into the garden (**all that is needed is a 5" square gap**)
- checking areas before strimming or mowing
- moving rubbish to a new site before burning it
- ensuring netting is kept at a safe height
- checking compost heaps before digging the fork in
- reducing the amount of pesticides and poisons used
- covering drains or deep holes
- ensuring there is an easy route out of ponds and pools.

For more information visit

<http://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk>

Deddington PFSU and Village Nursery

The children had lots of fun preparing for Easter with cooking, egg crafts and Easter egg hunts, all being much enjoyed.

Our Easter holiday club ran for four days during the break and the children had a great time cooking and taking part in creative activities.

This term children at both settings are finding out about the world around them, feeding the birds and hunting for minibeasts.

On 19 and 20 May Ian Taylor will be visiting us to take photographs of the children at play. These will be available to purchase and are always very popular.

There will be an informal parent's evening for PFSU parents on Wednesday 6 May between 7pm and 9pm.

Don't forget the Four Farms Challenge on 10 May and good luck to those taking part.

Our jumble sale raised £950 – thank you to everyone for your support.

Lucy Squires
337484

Party in the Park

Adderbury Party in the Park takes place on 20 June this year. For more details including the music line up visit:

<http://www.adderburypartyinthepark.co.uk/index.html>





1st Deddington Scout Group



Cubs

Well done Ben, Owyn, Sam and Tom who gained the Silver Award by earning all the challenge badges, working hard and attending regularly. As part of the animal carer badge, the cubs visited Crocodiles of the World at Brize Norton - great fun with much more than crocodiles on display, best bit – feeding time!

As we now have lighter evenings, we'll be out hiking, shelter building and firefighting. **Jo Churchyard 01869 338071 email jochurchyard@hotmail.com**

Scouts

Well done to Toby, Richard, Patrick, Tom and Rhys who gained their top award, Gold. Topics for this term have been, ecology and fundraising with an evening of tracking using flour. Now the lighter nights will tempt us outside but hopefully it'll still be dark enough for 'glow in the dark' cricket. **Pete Churchyard 07793013046 email pete.churchyard@btinternet.com**

Explorers

Two of our explorers attended the county explorer weekend and enjoyed frantic entertainments. Unit meetings are concentrating on disability awareness, with a survey of the village facilities with regard to wheelchair users and the visually impaired.

During the holidays we held a sponsored gaming evening to raise money for Special Effects, a local charity. The boys held up well sustained by chips and chinese take-away. **Pete Churchyard email pete.churchyard@btinternet.com**

Hornton May Day celebrations

Our sleepy little village of Hornton comes to life from midday on Monday 4 May with Morris and maypole dancing and traditional and non-traditional games, as well as a variety of stalls.

Donkeys, goats, dogs and humans can all be found enjoying the fantastic atmosphere on what is a very special day for our village.

So come and join in the fun from 1pm. For more information phone Lorraine on 01295 678708.



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marthaspamperedpaws@gmail.com



Girlguiding UK
girls in the lead

Deddington Guides

The last few meetings of the spring term were spent rehearsing and preparing for our grand production of Frozen. The production was great fun and we raised over £200 for our chosen charities, which are BARKS, the Rhino Trust and a children's charity. Well done Guides, we saw some super performances. Thank you for all your support.

Maggie Rampley 01295 810069, Marion Trinder, 01869 340806, Catherine Blackburn. 01295 258008.



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