

BARFORD NEWS

MARCH 2011

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Parish Council Notes

THE MEETING TOOK PLACE on 2nd February at Barford Village Hall and was attended by Councillors Hobbs (Chairman), Bullard and Eden, Styles and Turner. Also attending was Mrs R Watts (Clerk), Mr B Lane (for part of the meeting), Mr A Maddison (for part of the meeting)

Apologies for absence: Councillor Best and District Councillor P O'Sullivan

PC Richard Miller & PCSO Angela Alford

Councillor Hobbs welcomed PC Richard Miller and PCSO Angela Alford to the meeting. PC Miller explained that some motorists speed through villages, especially those using roads as 'rat-runs'. In order to educate drivers and at no cost to the Parish Council, he can set up volunteer groups to assist with roadside monitoring using a Speed Indication Device (SID). If a police constable is present he/she will use a laser to determine the speed of motorists; those exceeding the speed limit will be prosecuted. If a police constable is not present, details of speeding vehicles recorded on SID are fed into a database; the Police send letters to the offending motorists. In the event of a motorist receiving three letters, the police make a house visit; these details are taken into account if the motorist is later caught with a laser. PC Miller will need at least four volunteers to cover the Barfords over a 6 month period. Following a Safety Brief Meeting the Parish Council/volunteers can suggest sites to be monitored/dates/times; these would be assessed and then approved by PC Miller.

It was unanimously agreed accept PC Miller's offer to work with a group of volunteers to monitor speed through the two villages.

Public Participation:

Mr Bernard Lane expressed concern about damage being caused to grass on The Green. After some discussion PC Miller was asked to look at parking in that area. If parking could not be addressed, consideration would be given to putting wooden posts along The Green or installing heavy duty grass protection grids.

Mr Alan Maddison raised concerns about the state of the verges in High Street, some of which had been damaged as a result of recent utility works but others by passing vehicles. The Electricity Board is

to be contacted if verges damaged by contractors do not recover.

Verges in Lower St have also been damaged by utilities during preparatory investigations for sewer works.

Planning Matters

Details of planning applications can be found on the CDC website http://cherweb.cherwell-dc.gov.uk/publicaccess/tcd/DcApplication/application_searchform.aspx

This site does not include 'Notice of Intent' for tree works in a Conservation Area (TCA)

Application: 10/01849/F – 10/01924/LB Brown, The Red House, The Green, Barford St Michael. Re-roofing of existing stone outbuilding, including new door and window; construction of adjoining garden shed. Councillor Hobbs felt that the proposed works would have a big impact on the adjoining property (The Nook) due to differences in ground level in the properties. There were no other objections.

Application: 11/00038/LB – Mitchell, Barford House, Horn Hill, Barford St Michael, variation of Condition 5 of 09/01391/LB, to fit Amtico floor instead of natural stone. No objections

Notice of Intent TCA: 11/00014/TCA, Palmer, Staddletones, Horn Hill, Barford St Michael – tree works. No objections

Approved TCA: 10/00301/TCA The Old Bakehouse. Tree works approved

Any Other Business

Councillor Styles reported that there was a low shrub hanging over the bottom of the slope of the entrance to West Close. She would arrange for it to be trimmed back.

Councillor Hobbs reported that he had signed a Tree & Vegetation Consent form from Fountains Tree Surgeons who had advised him that Central Network needed to pollard Parish Council trees at Riverside, which are encroaching on power cables. Power will be disconnected whilst the tree surgeons carry out this work.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.55pm.

The next meeting is on 2 March 2011.

T. A.B.

Update on Travel Tokens

IN A TELEPHONE CONVERSATION with a representative from CDC Customer Services department I was given the following information on 16th February:

From April 2011 tokens will no longer be issued. All customers who currently receive tokens will receive a letter from CDC offering them the opportunity to switch to having a bus pass

If you do not receive a letter or for further details contact Customer Services at CDC 01295 227001.



Village Hall Management Committee Annual General Meeting

To be held in
The Village Hall
on
20th April, 2011

**New members are invited to join the committee,
either as an elected member
or as the representative of a group
or club who use the hall on a regular basis**

For newcomers this is an excellent way to get to know what goes on in the village and the people involved with the various activities. For established residents this is your chance to give something back to your community. Please give some thought to joining our committee and come along to the AGM to hear more about it.

Thames Water Improvements to Sewerage System

Information below was provided by Optimise, the contractors who will carry out the work on behalf of Thames Water.

A street map has been posted on the village hall notice board. This shows the section of Lower Street that will be closed while work to renew the sewer is in progress.

Closure comes into force on 1st March and is for six weeks although we (Optimise, Water) hope to complete the work sooner

Please thank residents for attending the "drop-in" at the village hall on 9th February, we had many kind comments on the day.

Rachel Groves



2011 CENSUS

**The 2011 Census is coming
– Sunday 27th March 2011 -**



The census collects information about the population every ten years. The next census in England and Wales is in March 2011.

What is the census used for?

The census is vitally important for communities, making sure that the facilities and services can be identified. All sorts of decisions are taken based on census statistics, from the number of car parking spaces needed at local supermarkets, to where to locate bank branches and even the allocation of fire engines. Numbers of school places, development of traffic systems and funding for local authorities are all heavily influenced by the census. It's all about planning ahead. The census, a rich source of statistics, affects all of us in one way or another, as decisions about the communities we live in take place all the time.

A census counts everybody and describes society

The population's characteristics are always changing. A census collects and shares facts about society's make-up.

200 PLUS CLUB FEBRUARY WINNERS

£15.00, No. 13, Cathy Peacock

£10.00, No. 135, Barbara Greenwood

£5.00, No. 128, Claire Cox

The Draw took place at the WI Meeting

1st Deddington Guides

THIS TERM at Guides we have done lots of things. The best



thing we have done was a talent show! It was just the Guides and we had 2 judges who were 2 ex-guides who left in the summer (Jasmine and Maisie). Some of us played our musical instruments; I played my clarinet.

Also we have been singing and learning new songs and we had a lovely visitor called Glynnis Eastwood and she did some singing with us.

Tilly Neal

Deddington Library

I ATTENDED THE PUBLIC MEETING at the Windmill Centre in Deddington on the evening of 15th February to hear what the situation was with regard to the library, which is threatened with closure. There was a huge turnout and people were even standing at the back. Such was the concern within the community of Deddington and the many surrounding villages.

Judith Heathcoat, OCC Cabinet Member for Safer and Stronger Communities, outlined the situation, providing information on the proposal to withdraw OCC funding on 31st December 2010 for 20 of the 43 libraries in Oxfordshire, Deddington being one of them. The idea is that the remaining 23 (including Hook Norton, Chipping Norton, Kidlington, Bicester, Witney and Banbury,) will act as 'hubs' which will involve the option to order books online for collection. The mobile library service will (apparently) continue, possibly with longer stops due to the proposal to have only one member of staff per van. We were told that a total of 82% of library visits are to the 23 libraries that are currently proposed for continued funding..

In my view, we shouldn't allow Deddington library, which costs £40k a year to run, to close its doors. It is not just a place to borrow books, audio books and DVDs and to use the bank of computers. More importantly, it is a community space where friendships are made and people go as part of their regular weekly routine to catch up with local news and to improve their minds. It is a vital resource for the older people in our community.

Libraries support literacy standards which we all know are a concern, especially in primary schools. Back in November 2010, the BBC reported that schools Minister Nick Gibb said: "The government is determined to raise the standard of reading in the first years of primary school so that children can master the basic decoding skills of reading early and then spend the rest of primary school reading to learn." In the same report, Russell Hobby, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said: "Literacy is a fundamental skill and right. The **overwhelming** majority of children reach good standards but we want every child to get there. **More than that**, we want every child to enjoy reading and writing." Deddington School uses the library as part of the curriculum and I understand that the new Headteacher would like to use it more.

Did you know that it was opened in the current building in 1956 and the guest speaker was a Professor J. R. R. Tolkien?!

My children have grown up with the library, taking part in the various reading challenges and story time activities. As a child, I was taken to my local library every Saturday morning and I remember queuing to get in. I have tried to

continue this tradition with my own children, taking out 20 books at a time to satisfy their appetite for reading. If Deddington closes, we will lose important social interaction and the ability to spend half an hour or so browsing for books and DVDs and bumping into friends. For me, it has often been a very welcome half an hour's calm in a hectic world. If Deddington closes, I guess I am expected to take the boys in the car to Banbury, pay to park and mix with people I don't know. Maybe there will be more books to choose from. But that's not the point. Oh and on the subject of ordering books online, what happened to browsing? As an MA student, I have access to all sorts of online catalogues and a fantastic library at City University in London. Ordering academic literature online for collection when you know what you need for study is great. But for non-academic reading, I would bet that most people don't know what they want to read until they've found it on a shelf.

E-books are great too especially as they are likely to draw in a new section of society who may not necessarily read a traditional book. But in my opinion, they will never replace paper and card. They've tried it with newspapers, but we still have both forms.

The important thing now is that EVERYONE submits comments and ideas to the consultation process which will be online (and offline, hopefully). I have looked for it on the OCC website under consultations, but haven't yet been able to find it. If in the meantime, you wish to make your views known to Judith Heathcoat, please contact her on 01367 241468 or email to judith.heathcoat@oxfordshire.gov.uk. She assures us that all comments are being recorded and included in the consultation and she is responding within 10 days.

If we as a community fail to make our views known, we will lose the library in its current set-up. If we don't respond, the proposal will become a plan. A proposal is easier to influence and potentially reverse than a plan. Judith told us that she has many responsibilities as well as libraries. One of them was the Fire Service. She said that if the library closes, no one will die. True. But as Cabinet Member for Safer and Stronger Communities, she must, in my view, consider the death of the community itself.

There were lots of questions from the floor at the meeting and the Parish Clerk is busy preparing minutes should anyone want to see the full detail (Lorraine Watling parishcouncil@deddington.net or call 01869 337447).

Alison Duffy
Robins Close

Barford Green Garden Club

OUR AGM TOOK PLACE on 7th February and 29 members attended and 13 apologies



given. It was an enjoyable evening with mincepies and mulled wine served to members on arrival: thank you Sandi and Rachel. The elections took place and the officers are Jill Bunce (Secretary) Sandi Turner (Chairman) Stephen Bunce (Treasurer) and committee members Rachel Speight, Annie Radford and Janet Payne

A letter will be going out to members shortly with full details together with the list of events for 2011. There will as usual be a plant swap in May and Sarah Best has kindly offered to host this, date to be advised. We also hope to have Barford Open Gardens again but we were unable to decide upon a date on the evening so again this will be advised in the near future

Subs. were due in January so if you have not yet paid please let me have your £2 asap

I have your membership card here ready for collection.

Please do come along to listen to Timothy Walker on 31st March, 7.30pm in the village hall, £2.00 members, £3.00 visitors. See separate advert in this issue for full details

Jill Bunce

Tel 337577 : email jill@ridleymarreco.co.uk

Fernhill Club

FIRST WE HAVE TO APOLOGISE to our visitors on January 19th who came to watch 'Miss Potter' with us, unfortunately, the council computers went down over Christmas and some bookings were wiped. On February 2nd we enjoyed a great game of curling and were joined by Erika Smith, a local lady, who showed us all the medals that she won as a champion curler. She also gave us one of her medals to present to the winner of our game.



Maddy and Mo visited on February 9th and entertained us a wonderful afternoon of songs, anecdotes and readings, we also welcomed friends from Fritwell 'Forget-me-not' club, a good time was had by all!

On 23rd February we welcomed Dr. Maisey to talk to us about 'Spare Parts',

Future plans include our Birthday Lunch on 9th March, venue still to be decided. The story of the Mary Rose on 23rd March and Carpet Bowls on 30th March.

Newcomers always welcome.

Mary Ashbridge, 01295 252298

Christmas Disco A Great Success



Over 30 excited youngsters had a great time at the free 'Christmas' Disco provided by Nick and Zalie Butler on 12th February. Watched by parents, grandparents and younger siblings, they danced, jumped, twisted, clapped their hands and generally let off steam for two hours. Mr Mayhem and his assistant must have gone home exhausted – I doubt if the children did!

Thank you to Nick and family for a very generous gesture and a great party!

'Taking Part' Workshops

There has been interest expressed in four of the workshops offered by Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC) and advertised last month, these are listed below. Fees for each participant vary depending on the precise workshop but most will be in the region of £10 to £20 each. However we can apply for a grant to pay 50% of the cost but first we need to know how many of you are interested!

Willow Garden Structures Workshop

Learn to make wigwams, small domes, trellises, shaped and woven from willow. Not suitable for very young children.

The Animation Station

Learn the basics of animation using plasticine models or progress to more complex 3D modeling using i-technology. Suitable for 9 -12 yrs, 13-16 yrs, adults and seniors.

Creative writing workshop

Enjoy inspirational input and learn the tricks from a published author.

Your Shout

Learn how to use multimedia equipment and make a clip, film or music about an issue you feel is important to your community.

If you are interested in any of the above activities, please contact: Austin@cueperformance.com or Gunilla on 01295 720521 or Mariann on 01869 338570.

Joan Helen Cook
22 August 1943 – 1 February 2011



Joan was born on 22nd August 1943 and spent her early years in Mead Road, Barford St. John. She was youngest of six children born to Emily and George Coe.

Joan attended the village primary school on the Green in Barford St. Michael until it was closed. She went on to Bloxham Primary school and then to the Windmill Secondary School in Deddington where her favourite lessons were Domestic Science and Arts and Crafts

Joan enjoyed singing and joined the Banbury Choral Society. Joan left school aged 15 and went to work at Butler's delicatessen, café and restaurant, popular on weekly market days.

Joan met Mick during her last year at school and could be seen most summer evenings sitting on the Barford bridge holding hands. Joan and Mick were married at Bodicote Registry Office on 17 October, 1959. Their first home was in Broughton Road, Banbury when in 1960 Steve was born. Joan loved Barford and when the opportunity arose, the family moved to Summer Ley. In 1964 the family was complete with the arrival of Linda.

During the 60s and 70s Joan held a number of jobs, working as an auxiliary at the Horton Hospital.

then at Temple Close Nursery School, Bloxham later at Celebrity Jewellery in Banbury and afterwards at Bolham Dry cleaners. Her last job and most rewarding one was as a family support worker for Social Services which she did for 16 years helping to support broken families.

Joan had many interests and was a life time member of the WI. She served as Secretary, Treasurer and then proudly became their president. She attended many courses at Denham College where she learned the art of cake icing and decoration which led to her expertise in making the most wonderfully decorated cakes for weddings and birthdays. Joan also cooked for the Banbury WI market stall and latterly Bloxham Country Market. Her sausage rolls were legendary. Joan also attended art classes for a number of years and her paintings can be seen around the walls of their home.

In 1998 Joan was diagnosed with breast cancer which she bravely overcame after prolonged treatment. It was then that she began planning her fundraising weekends which became an annual event for 10 years. She brought friends of the community together and raised the magnificent sum of £23,000. The money raised went to the Barford Churches, the Air Ambulance, the Brodey Centre, Helen House Hospice, the Warriner School Hall and Katharine House Hospice. These weekends became so popular with items for sale stacked from floor to ceiling in their home that Mick joked that it took him several weeks before he found the television and then had to build an extension to accommodate these weekends.

Joan had many talents, one being her thespian exploits. She entertained at the WI and performed in several Barford pantomimes, appearing as Prince Charming in Snow White in 1979. Joan's talents were never ending including writing little ditties and poems, (Barford's answer to Pam Ayers). She wrote many for her family too, some unprintable!

Joan was a devoted Granny and was also a tower of strength to both of her sisters and their families when they were battling cancer. She was an active member of the breast cancer support group, helping those who suffered from this condition, often spending hours on the telephone talking to complete strangers giving them hope and support.

Joan's faith was very important to her and she regularly attended services at both St. John's and St. Michael's churches.

In May 2009 Joan and Mick celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary with all of the family going on a holiday together to Cornwall.

In the Autumn of 2010 Joan became unwell and was diagnosed with womb cancer 3 days before Christmas. She spent her final weeks in the Horton Hospital and was then transferred to Katharine House Hospice where on the 1st February she passed away peacefully with her family at her side. Joan never wavered in her belief in God even through her pain and suffering.

Joan kept her sense of humour right to the end of her life. She was a brave, kind, generous and friendly lady who will be sadly missed by all those lucky enough to have known her.

(Extracted from the tribute given by Robin Woolgrove at Joan's funeral service on 16th February)

WI News

PRESIDENT BETTY opened the February meeting with the sad news of the death of Joan Cook. Joan was a member for many years, and served as Treasurer, Secretary and eventually President. We all send our sincere condolences to Mick and his family.

After a brief business session, Betty introduced our speaker who was a last-minute substitute, but a terrific choice for all that. Matthew Armitage came to talk to us about Tooley's Boatyard in Banbury, where he is one of the directors. Matthew started out as an archaeologist, but was offered part-time work on the Narrow Boat restaurant "Rosamund the Fair" on the Oxford Canal and gained his Boatmaster certificate. This eventually led to taking on Tooley's in Banbury.

Tooley's (originally just called 'Banbury Boatyard') was founded in 1788, the oldest working dry dock in Britain. It has been in continuous use since 1790 when it was established to build and repair the wooden horse-drawn narrow boats which plied the newly constructed canal network. The Canal was finished 2 years after the dry dock, making the boatyard older than the canal! The Tooley family took it over in the 19th C and it became the busy narrow boat repair yard that it still is today.

Matthew spoke about the dry dock, which is still the original one - now a listed building - and the work of the smithy, where they run courses in blacksmithing. He was keen to promote the yard's diverse activities: as well as the smithing, there are boat trips and yard visits and of course a gift shop! A very interesting talk - and we look forward (again) to our bread-making thatcher later in the year.

Helen's was the sole Flower of the Month (a snowdrop) and Maureen, Pat and Sue B won raffle prizes. We hope to see all members at our Annual Meeting on 9th March.

SRT

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

INDOOR CAR BOOT SALE

at

Barford Village Hall

Saturday 26th March,

10.00 am - 1.00pm

£5.00 a table

(total collected be donated to
Barford Village Hall)

Also on the day - Refreshments
and Bottle Stall.

To book a table please contact
Lorraine Day on 338048.

Deddington PTA News

FIRSTLY, A HUGE THANK YOU to The Deddington Players for their kind donation from their recent Pantomime. It is greatly appreciated.



The race is on to purchase tickets for the year's hottest event so farThe PTA **Annual Quiz Night!!** As usual, this is being held at The Windmill Centre on **Saturday 12th March**. This is always a night of great fun and frivolity and tickets (which are selling fast!) can be booked by emailing deddington@cherwell.co.uk or by phoning 338468. Tickets are £8 per person which includes supper and there is a maximum of 8 people per table. Who will be the 2011 champions?!

Arrangements are gathering pace for the 7th **Annual Deddington Walk** which will be held on **Sunday 15th May**. We have a new route, new theme, lots of entertainment laid on and it is sure to be a fabulous day - make sure you make a note of the date and encourage your friends and family to join in! Further details next month or see www.deddingtonwalk.co.uk

Finally, our **summer fete** will be held on **Saturday 18th June** - new attractions are planned so don't miss it!

Thank you once again for your continued support.

Janet Watts
Chair - 337135

Thank You

To everyone who supported
our Raffle
at the February Village Market
and
special thanks to Joyce & Judy
for selling the tickets which raised
£60.00
For the Annual Christmas Lunch

Barford Green Garden Club
Present

**'Bordering on Insanity'
Creating an All-Year Round Border**

An Illustrated Talk

By

Timothy Walker

Director of

The University of Oxford's Botanic Garden

**7.30pm on THURSDAY
31ST MARCH**

In

The Village Hall

£2.00 MEMBERS; £3.00 VISITORS



This is a rare opportunity to hear one of the country's highly respected and knowledgeable gardening experts. Timothy is also responsible for the Aboretum and holds a lectureship in Plant Conservation at Somerville College. He studied Botany at University College and after graduating in 1980, joined the staff of The Botanic Garden as a trainee gardener.

This talk looks exclusively at the herbaceous border in Timothy's wife's garden and covers the principles and practicalities to be adopted when trying to create a border that is interesting all-year-round. It concludes with a look at a collection of 'must-have' plants for such a border.

**Katharine House Hospice
Morrison Orpheus Choir Concert**

THERE ARE STILL SOME TICKETS available for this wonderful concert at **St. Mary's Church, Horsefair, Banbury on Saturday 5th March.**

To hear this internationally-acclaimed choir. Tickets are £18 available by calling the Fundraising Office on 01295 812161 or by downloading a form from our website at www.khh.org.uk. Doors open at 6.15pm and the concert will begin at 7pm. A grand raffle will also be held on the night.

Easter Chicks

CHEEP CHEEP! It's that time of year again! Our fluffy knitted friends are now on sale (complete with Cadbury Creme Egg!) from our shops and Hospice reception, priced £1.50. Demand is outstripping supply, and we would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to contribute to our brood! This is the 5th year we have undertaken this fundraiser- last year raised a fantastic £3,300! If you would like to knit for us, call Sarah in Fundraising on (01295) 812161 to receive a pattern. We would also like to hear from anyone who would sell chicks for us.

Banbury Fun Run

The Banbury Fun Run will take place alongside the Banbury 15 Mile Run on Sunday 20th March at Spiceball Park, with Fun Run proceeds coming to Katharine House Hospice. The two mile Fun Run will start at 10.30am-entry £4.50, whilst the Under-14s 1 mile Run starts at 11.10am and entry is £1. Application forms are available from The Banbury Guardian Office and Spiceball Leisure Centre.

Hospice Clearance Sale

Our annual Hospice Sale will take place on Saturday 9th April at Adderbury Institute, 11am- 2.30pm.

Fairport Convention Acoustic Concert

Oxfordshire's favourite folk-rockers will be performing a fantastic line-up in aid of the Hospice at **St. Mary's Church, Horsefair, Banbury on Monday 23rd May.** The concert will begin at 7.30pm and doors open at 6.45pm. Ticket are £18 available from the Fundraising Department at Katharine House on 01295 812161 or by downloading a form from our website at www.khh.org.uk. Tickets are selling fast- book now to avoid disappointment.

Hospice Washing Up Liquid!

To mark our 20th Anniversary, long-time supporter, Cleenol Group Ltd in Banbury, has very kindly produced 1,000 bottles of Katharine House Hospice washing-up liquid to be sold to benefit the hospice. The bottles on sale for £1 in all our shops, hospice reception and at forthcoming events. Would your business like to support the Hospice's 20th Anniversary in a quirky way? This is a great way to promote your business, too! Please call Sarah Brennan, Community Fundraiser on 01295 812161.

1st Deddington Scout Group

Cubs

SO FAR THIS term the Cubs have worked towards and gained their Personal Safety badge which includes, road safety, being aware of dangerous environments, bullying etc. We have also spent an evening discussing garden birds and their diets prior to joining in with the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch. For the fitness award the Cubs made 'food wheels' which show the different food groups and then put this knowledge to good use by making pizzas.

We all had an enjoyable evening at the panto, I'm always amazed at how many sugar worms 1 Cub can eat!

Philip, Toby, Patrick & Olly attended the District Supercub event, they listened to a story, then made a scrap model based on something from it, although they did not win they all did very well.

Coming next, decorated clothes hangers for their uniforms and Easter boxes.

Jo Churchyard C.S.L. 338071
jochurchyard@hotmail.com

Scouts

Scouts also attended the panto and consumed the same amount of sugar as the Cubs but before that we started the term with an inter-patrol quiz, with rounds as diverse as, origami, flags and capitals and the 'yes / no' game. Cobra Patrol were the runaway winners and were awarded our 'no expense spared' trophy.

We are concentrating on some of the core elements of scouting, starting with basic navigation as they will be going on several night hikes in the next few weeks and we will be relying on them to find their way home.

In February they celebrated the Chinese New Year with an evening of Chinese themed activities, such as, fortune cookie making, the construction of a very small terracotta army and a mad relay game involving sweets and chopsticks.

Scouts need a few laptops (everything is on the internet these days) if you have an old one , or if your company is replacing some, we would be very to take them off your hands.

Pete Churchyard S.L. 338071
pete.churchyard@btinternet.com



The group is actively working towards the formation of a Beaver group (6-8yrs), if you would like to help, please contact Jo



BARFORD PICTURE HOUSE

Our next film will be on

26th March,

BLADE RUNNER

postponed from December.

We have extended our films for another 2 months, on **April 16th** we shall be showing **CALAMITY JANE**, an audience choice. This film starring Doris Day has been called 'Hollywood's Greatest Western Musical'. The last film will be on **May 21st**, and has yet to be chosen. These last 2 films are **not included** in your original Season Tickets. Entry to the films is £4 to cover the Hall costs. Soft drinks are available or bring your own favourite tippie! Doors open 7.15pm and films start at 7.45 pm. Contact: Gunilla on 01295 720521

Volunteers Needed

To join the

Village Entertainments Committee

If you think that you could offer help at a BBQ, or a picture house evening or other event held at our village hall then we would like to hear from you!

No experience necessary

Please contact Gunilla on 01295 720 521

1st Barford & Deddington Rainbows

WE STARTED OFF the term by making



birdfeeders out of pine cones for the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch, which was messy but fun! We celebrated Burns Night with haggis, neeps and tatties which were all surprisingly popular. I think all the Rainbows decided that they really rather liked haggis!

We made heart baskets from woven card for Valentine's Day, but the most popular evening again has been our 'Sleepover'! Squirrel hasn't done her overnight permit, so we all came to a normal meeting in our pyjamas and dressing gowns and brought our sleeping bags and played lots of Sleeping Lions. Connie, Shona, Anya and Hannah were all very good at this, but we did let them wake up for hot chocolate!

We sadly say goodbye to Shona, Amy M, Anya and Connie this half-term, as they go up to Brownies, but spaces aren't there for long and we welcome Poppy and Makenna from Barford and Harriet and Caitlin from Deddington.

Hazel Neal

From the Vicar

EASTER IS LATE THIS YEAR and so therefore is Lent which begins on Ash Wednesday, March 9th. On that day the traditional practice of the Christian Church is to impose ashes on the faithful as a sign of



repentance. Lent is a season of penitence and self-examination, a time for the discipline of self-denial as a means to spiritual growth, a growth also enabled by renewed commitment to doing good, to practical love of neighbour, whether near at hand or far away. It's a time for being more than ever serious about our spiritual nature and what is required of us because we possess that nature. It's a time, in fact, to commit ourselves afresh to developing our relationship with God.

As way of helping that development it is customary for churches to offer a series of talks or discussions in Lent. In the Deddington/Barford Benefice this year we are going to run a course on the Bible (in part because this year the Church of England is celebrating the 400th anniversary of the first publication of the King James Version of the Bible.) We shall consider how the Bible was put together, how it reflects Israelite History, how the Gospels compare with one another and how the Bible is to be used today. Our meetings will be on March 10 (Th); March 16 (Wed); March 30 (Wed); April 5 (Tue); April 14th (Th) at 7.30 pm. The meetings will be in Deddington Parish Church, with the exception of the one on March 30, which will be in Hempton Church. Find those diaries now and do come! (It's more complicated than it would be ideally because a lot is going on in the Benefice and this means we can't manage a single day of the week or a single venue.)

However you keep Lent (I've said this before), whether by giving things up or by doing more to help others, or both, do keep it. Do take a long, hard look at yourself and think about what you might want to change. Do reflect and pray. Do offer that helping hand. Do make that extra charitable donation. Give yourself a challenge in the spiritual area of your life. If you do, Easter will mean so much more.

Kick-off, Wednesday March 9th. Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes, 7.30 pm, Barford St John Church.

Happy Lent!

Hugh, 01869 349869
vicarhugo@hotmail.com

Changes To Barford News

Two important changes to the Barford News set-up have just taken place.

First, I am delighted to report that, after 11 years of being sole editor, I have now been joined by Rebecca (Becky) Dyson, who brings with her a great deal of experience and expertise and has already taught me a couple of new IT tricks.



At present we are working together on preparation of the copy, but, in time, we plan to take turns as editor. This will have the great benefit of perhaps bringing some new ideas on board, as well as allowing me to 're-charge' the batteries from time to time.

Many of you will already know Becky, but for those who don't, she is a working wife and mum with two boys and lives in Robins Close. Readers will recognise the photograph from the February issue where she was asking for support for her fund-raising marathon in aid of Katharine House.

The second change is that we have set up a new email address 'editor@barfordnews.co.uk', This allows us both to receive articles as they are submitted

1st Deddington Brownies

RECENTLY THE BROWNIES have had fun celebrating Valentine's Day and taking part in an enrolment evening. They are looking forward to celebrating Thinking Day with friends from across the District, going to London to visit Hyde Park, and taking part in the Deddington Community Concert.

Congratulations to Brown Owl (Anne Kent) and Tawny Owl (Sian Westbury) who are both now fully qualified Brownie Guide leaders. Anne has also taken on the role of job-share District Commissioner overseeing all Brownie, Guide and Rainbow packs in Adderbury, Barford, The Bartons and Deddington.

If your daughter would like to join Brownies when she is 7 it would be worth putting her on the waiting list now. Brown Owl can be contacted at the1stdeddingtonowls@hotmail.co.uk.

Lucy Squires



Banbury Rural Neighbourhood Monthly Update Team News

The team have been extremely busy this month in dealing with 'Anti-Social Behaviour' and 'Speeding' which are priorities set by the Neighbourhood Action Group.

During the month PC Miller has run over 9 speeding operations which has shown a small number of people continue to speed through our villages. The highest recorded speed was 47mph on a restricted 30mph road. The driver was dealt with appropriately and robustly. Please slow down on our roads and treat every village like it is your own.

'Anti-Social Behaviour' has also been identified as priority in Bloxham, Cropredy and Adderbury with Twyford. The team are working hard to combat this issue and these villages have seen over 30 hours of **dedicated** foot patrol by PC Miller, PCSO Dale and PCSO Alford over the past month. If you are experiencing anti-social behaviour or would like to report any concerns please make contact in the usual method.

'Youth Activators' from Cherwell District Council are on board to tackle 'Anti-Social Behaviour'. The 'Youth Activators' are setting up free sports sessions in Bloxham and Cropredy in an attempt to divert young people towards positive and constructive leisure activities. Information about these sessions will be published locally in due course. Anyone interested in participating in 'Youth Activators' can contact Lydia Fox (Lydia.fox@cherwell-dc.gov.uk) or Nick Harrison (nick.harrison@cherwell-dc.gov.uk) or visit the facebook pages.

PCSO Nikki Dale has been talking to several schools in the rural area, and has visited children at Bloxham Pre-School about personal safety, including a demonstration using the Neighbourhood Policing Team's van. PCSO Dale is always looking for other schools interested in working with their Neighbourhood Policing team, so please do not hesitate to get into contact with her.

PCSO Angie Alford has been developing the 'Community SpeedWatch' scheme throughout the neighbourhood. She has run very successful sessions in Swalcliffe and Shenington and will soon be running the scheme in the Barfords.



PC becky-mcleod

Community SpeedWatch is partly about enforcement, but also (and perhaps more importantly) about education. Using a piece of equipment known as a Speed Indication Device (SID), the volunteers and a member of the Policing Team will record details of vehicles exceeding the speed limits throughout the village.

The only way that this scheme can work is if residents of this village really get involved and be available for operations when needed. Giving up an hour of your day could really make a difference. **If you would like to be part of your village's Community SpeedWatch scheme, please contact PCSO Angie Alford.**

Crime News

The Team are pleased to report that over the past 12 months Serious Violent Crime has reduced by 50% and Serious Acquisitive Crime, this includes Burglary Dwelling, Theft Of and From Vehicles and Robbery, has reduced by 58% in the Northern villages and 45% in the South. Overall crime is down by approximately 25% from the same time period last year.

There has been an increase in thefts of fuel from large containers and tanks throughout the rural community. Most of the locations targeted have been very remote farms, yards and private properties. Please be extra vigilant and report any vehicles or persons acting suspiciously. PC Miller has charged a male with 6 offences including shoplifting; criminal damage and assault following an incident in Deddington last month. The male is due to appear before the Magistrates court in Banbury..



PC Richard Miller

HAVE YOUR SAY!

Have Your Say online

Members of the team will be available on the following dates and at the following locations, to meet and discuss any issues or problems within the community:

Monday 21st February 2011, 0900hrs – 1000hrs outside the Hempton Church.

Saturday 26th December 2011, 1100hrs – 1200hrs Deddington Farmers Market

Should you have any problems or concerns please phone the Thames Valley Police non-emergency number on 08458 505 505 or e – mail banburyruralneighbourhood@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk. In an emergency please dial 999.

Barford St Michael Spring Market

Saturday, 19th March
in the Village Hall, 10-12 noon

HOUSE TO LET



Quiet close in Bloxham.
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Newly installed kitchen and carpets.
Private garden. Off-road parking.
Non smoking.

£650 pcm + deposit

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DEDDINGTON TENNIS CLUB

Adult Open Mornings (16+)

Sundays 10th and 17th April 2011
10.00 am to 12.00 noon

at
Windmill Centre, Hempton Road
Deddington

New Members Welcome
Competitive Membership Rates

For further details contact Trevor Stevens
Tel 01295 669135

Website: www.deddingtontennis.com



Singing For Pleasure



We are back to meeting on Monday evenings again.

Our March sessions will be **at 7.30pm** on Mondays, 14th & 28th in the Village Hall.

Hope to see you then!

Deddington PFSU and Village Nursery

AS I WRITE THIS the busy first term of 2011 is drawing to a close. The PFSU children have been finding out about animals and have enjoyed visits from a number of pets. We wrote letters to the vet inviting her to pre-school and were delighted that she could come along to see us and to tell us all about her job and about looking after animals.

We celebrated Chinese New Year at both settings and enjoyed visiting the May Fu II Restaurant to see their New Year decorations and to sample their delicious food. In our final week of term the PFSU welcomed some musical parents to pre-school who brought along their guitars and violins for us to find out about and hear. We also had fun at our Bookstart Story afternoon, when the children were presented with their Bookstart Treasure Chests, and on the final day of term we came to pre-school in animal fancy dress.

At the Nursery the children have been finding out all about transport and had a visit from the fire engine. Thank you to vet Juliet Owens, the May Fu II Restaurant, Deddington Fire Service and to all the parents who have supported our activities this term. Our amazing committee have done us proud again raising £1,500 for the Nursery and PFSU from the jumble sale in the Church on 12th March. Apologies to anyone who was inconvenienced by the queues that formed in the Market Place and thank you to everyone who supported us on this occasion. Nursery is now open all day on Fridays - spaces are available.



Lucy Squires
337484

Upton House & Gardens Join us as a Volunteer



WOULD YOU LIKE to become more involved with your local

National Trust

National Trust property and help protect your local heritage? Then come and be a volunteer at Upton House and Gardens!

Volunteering is a great opportunity to meet people, develop new skills, enhance your CV and learn more about Upton and the work of the National Trust.

Upton's heyday was in the 1930s when it was the weekend country home of Lord and Lady Bearsted. Lord Bearsted was the Chairman of Shell from 1921 to 1946 and was the son of the founder of that company. He and his wife hosted house parties at Upton for their wealthy friends. Today, visitors to Upton can delve into the Bearsted's millionaire lifestyle and experience a 1930s house party as well as explore acres of beautiful gardens. Lord Bearsted was passionate about art and visitors can also enjoy his internationally important collections of paintings and porcelain.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of Upton, helping us create a 1930s house party atmosphere and enthusing visitors about the property. There's a variety of volunteering roles available, most of which require no specific knowledge or skills. What you do need though is bags of enthusiasm and a friendly personality!

As a volunteer you could help visitors learn about the house, lead tours of the stunning gardens, serve in the Gift Shop or provide admin support to the team in the Property Office.

New for this year is Family Volunteering – we're looking for friendly families to engage with families visiting Upton by providing a warm welcome and enthusing them about the 1930s house party. You can also dress up in 1930s costume!

Your volunteering will really make a difference as you'll be supporting a charity whose mission is to protect special places like Upton for ever, for everyone.

For more info and more roles, please visit our new website "Local voices" which is available at: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/uptonhouse.

We look forward to welcoming you to the team!

Deddington & District History Society,

Liz Woolley's talk, 'It will do him more good than going to school' on child labour in nineteenth-century Oxfordshire, provided the society with one of its most interesting and lively talks.

This, her opening quote, was from George Dew (1846-1928) who lived at Lower Heyford and was the Relieving Officer for the Bletchington District of the Bicester Union Poor Law Union for over 50 years and kept extensive diaries. He applied it to a boy of seven from Cottisford: only two of the Poor Law Guardians saw any objection to him working, and this three years after the Education Act of 1870. This act, *the* Education Act, was but the sixteenth of some 30 acts in the hand-list to Liz's talk regulating child employment, starting with the Chimney Sweepers Act of 1788 which stopped children under eight being apprenticed to sweeps and shoved naked up chimneys through the Mines Act of 1872 which outlawed children in mines under 12, and on through a range of Education and Factory Act: the minimum age for factory employment did not reach 11 until 1891.

Children were often used for work where their stature or the size of their fingers enabled them to do what adults could not. As well as in industry they were widely used in rural areas as well, but it was more hidden, both from the 'authorities' and from the surviving records. Sources for the exploitation of children include school log books (we are in the process of digitising the Deddington School records from the 1870s onwards), diaries, Poor Law records, indentures, correspondence, newspapers (tread with care with these sometimes over-dramatised accounts), photos and other images and in quantitative terms the census. Finally the Parliamentary Commission reports, which are now on line and fully indexed, are touching in their detail.

Agriculture: in the 1861 census 16% of the Oxfordshire labour force was under 14, with 3,000 boys 10-14 and 300 more under 10 and in peak periods like the harvest it would be much higher. School log books often record children as young as six being absent during hay-making with schools hardly functioning 'harvest having become general' or 'baby minding' so older siblings could work the fields. Holidays were varied to match the harvest. In 1886 the vicar of Sydenham re-closed the school after it re-opened as the harvest was not over. Other tasks were the back-breaking gleaning, bird-scaring and feeding the pigs. Along the Thames children were employed willow-bark stripping for basket making: Whitchurch school in 1876 recorded that the willow-stripping children had

fallen behind the others. Children were also hired out in gangs to farmers. Many were hired to work in monotonous solitude, impairing their intellectual development: bird scaring was hardly stimulating to young minds

Agriculture was not a soft option, up at 3.30 in the morning, and in the fields by 4 am. Successive Acts did reduce the full-time employment of children, but not part-time, or the employment of your own children. And enforcement was uneven. And not all children welcomed compulsory school as an alternative! Far fewer girls were employed in farm work, and then mostly in dairy work and employment as servants was much more common with the growing middle class and even Banbury had an agency for employing child servants.

Children were sent away from home to strange towns to work long hours and might go for months between home visits. The maid-of-all work had it hardest and in Oxfordshire made up 75% of servants.

In 1851 there were 2000 female lace makers, many of them children, especially round Thame and Bicester:

there were 38 in Souldern, 10 years later it accounted for 20% of the women, there was a special school there and children started as young as five, where they might or might not learn to read and write. Some were no more than brutal sweatshops. Lace-makers were well-known for their poor health and pallour. It was not so much legislation, but Nottingham machine lace that reduced the need for child labour in lace making.

Gloving was common in west Oxfordshire, also employing children. Gloving schools existed, but were not as common as for lace and the children often started later. Gloving at home was common. There were no fewer than six gloving factories in the Oxford Road in Woodstock. Children were employed making blankets in Witney, and at Samuelson's in Banbury. Headington quarry was filled with laundry and 120 boys over 12 were employed at the Clarendon Press in Oxford, but 'only' for 10.5 hours a week. Climbing boys were employed in terrible conditions in flues. The Acklands were very concerned with the health of labouring children and they invited them to their house for a bit of R&R.

Most 'parish boys' found employment in the county, but some were sent to cotton or mining areas, and even fishing ports, thus sparing the parish further expenditure apart from perhaps an initial premium to get rid of pauper children. Seven Headington boys drowned in the fishing industry, presumably never having even seen the sea until they were sent to work on it.



Fire Station News

IT'S BEEN A BUSY START to 2011 here at the fire station, with a firecall virtually everyday for the first three weeks of January, then a brief respite for the last week of January, followed by another busy couple of weeks into February. In total so far, we've had 30 firecalls.

At this time of year, we're seeing the usual chimney fires, and more road traffic collisions. When the icy conditions came back in January, we attended four collisions in a matter of hours rather than days. These were both local incidents (A4260 Duns Tew crossroads) and further afield at Mixbury near Evenley, and on the M40 as well.

We've attended five chimney fires so far, in Somerton, Fritwell, Duns Tew and Clifton, with the Clifton incident being at Watch Manager Fenemore's farm!

Chris did request a silent approach to this incident, but as a crew.....we decided to let the world know exactly whose house was on fire, approaching at full volume!

Probably the most interesting job so far has been the oil fire in Southam Road, Banbury which was caused by an oxy-acetylene cutting set which caused sparks to ignite general rubbish in a pit of oil. This was tackled initially using foam extinguishers and high pressure hoses, but eventually needed a different type of foam, called FP-70. FP-70 has serious environmental consequences and we have to notify other agencies that we are using it, such as the Environmental Agency and Food Standards Agency just in case any of it runs into the local watercourses.

In this instance, the foam was contained with the oil, inside the pit.

Another of the more serious incidents was a flat fire in Pepper Alley, Banbury where sadly the owners dog died due to smoke inhalation. This was attended by ourselves and the two appliances from Banbury. We believe that the fire started after something had been left on or fallen onto the hot cooker.

Finally, we were called out in the small hours of the morning to reports of some rubbish that had been set on fire under the arches of Deddington Town Hall, by the bench. On arrival, it was apparent that a large pile of newspapers had been deliberately set alight. Fortunately, it was a passing police car that spotted the fire and called us and they are now investigating.

Generally at the station, things have moved on for 2011, with Chris Fenemore now appointed as the permanent Watch Manager. He's busy setting out the direction and way forward for the station in terms of training, recruitment and crew development. Whilst we are not currently engaged



in large scale recruitment activities as a brigade, there are a couple of kit pegs available here and we are looking to fill these positions this year.

If you are interested in joining us, then please contact us for an informal chat on (01869) 338281 or come up to the station to see us on Tuesday 1st or 8th March at 7 p.m. where we are holding informal drop-in sessions.

G.Harding
A/Crew Manager

Revised Pattern of Church Services

A reminder that the following regular pattern of Sunday services, will come into operation in April.



1 st Sunday of the month.	10.30 am, Eucharist (Common Worship)
2 nd Sunday,	10.30 am, Family Service
3 rd Sunday	10.30 am, Family Service
4 th Sunday	4.00 pm Evensong (Book of Common Prayer)
5 th Sunday	4.00 pm Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

Generally, all these services will take place at St Michael's with the exception of the 5th Sunday service which will take place at St John's. There will be some variations to the pattern above and in respect of the venues to accommodate special events in the Church calendar.

Deddington CE Primary

AS WE MOVE INTO the Spring Term (at last) we are feeling in a very creative mood at Deddington School!



The majority of the school is involved in our Wizard of Oz production at the end of this month, the school hall is constantly ringing out with songs from the musical and children are working hard to perfect their lines. We are very grateful that Deddington Church is once again letting us take over their facilities and we hope that this year is as successful as previous years.

We are also celebrating Red nose day this year by encouraging the children to wear red and on World Book Day we want children to dress a 'teddy' as a favourite book character.

Mrs Jane Cross, Deputy Headteacher

NATURE NOTES 94

AS WE SHIVERED INTO DECEMBER everywhere was frozen solid. A persistent large high pressure system over Northern Europe continued to act as a weather-blocker, preventing warmer air from the Atlantic blowing across the British Isles and causing equally persistent northerly winds. Average night temperatures were around -6° , days varying between 3° and -2.5° . There were snow flurries, shriving winds, silent stillness and mist. Rain and drizzle through the afternoon of the 4th produced a slight thaw which re-froze at dusk. The next day gloried in a flawless sky from dawn 'til dusk, warm in direct sun, but freezing rapidly at sunset with black ice. Nature-wise, everything withdrew into itself; only the birds persisted in their visibility. A Tawny Owl hooted about 6.30pm below Steepness on the 1st; a sharp-eyed Nick butler spotted an evening Little Owl at Bloodybones corner on the 4th and Kestrels were day-long hunting in clearer periods.

On the 6th, in still air, a moderate fog in heavy frost made everything picturesque with delicate rime-frost lace. Bird feeders were busy, attracting even Bullfinches. Very fine ice crystals fell all afternoon and evening, culminating with the coldest night yet, -13° !

The 7th dawned clear with bright sun illuminating an even more dazzling display of rime-frost. Nick Butler spotted the Little Owl again on Bloodybones, this time standing out starkly brown against the lacy white branches of its perch. A Great-spotted woodpecker was busy on feeders in Broad Close and, in the brassy light of a red and gold sunset, I watched a female Buzzard on Steepness calling to a male below Fernhill, which then flew up toward her, disturbing the Rooks into great commotion, having just settled to roost.

The second week of December commenced with deep frost (-9°) and a shriving N wind. The sun broke through after mid-day to reveal a few active Redwings, Mistle Thrushes, Goldfinches and Chaffinches in slightly milder conditions as the temperature rose to 0° . However, after a brilliant afternoon, the frost returned under the silvery sliver of a new moon.

The 9th became even milder as the temperature 'soared' to 3° . Flurries of snow fell as slightly warmer air, backing to NNW, moved over deeply frozen ground. A hen kestrel spent some time watching from the electricity wires below Steepness; later she was still hunting at dusk. From the B4031 crossroads at sunset, I listened to individual Buzzards calling territorially on Fernhill, Steepness, Ilbury and Hawkhill, and I think, just

faintly from Raven Hill! After sunset, Bullfinches and Yellow Hammers were going to roost below Fernhill and, as I made my way home, I was startled by the staccato call of a late Green Woodpecker from the darkness of Broad Close.

The next three days continued milder (5°) initiating a slow thaw. Nights were less cripplingly cold and by the end of 11th the snow had gone.

However, another rime-frost on the morning of the 12th, with Venus *so* bright at 7am in the SE, brought us back to reality. Small mixed flocks of tits foraged conifers for insects; finches and buntings, after daytime dispersal, gathered in sheltered places to roost at evetide. The second week of December ended with a Tawny Owl hooting below

Steepness at 3am on the 14th.

After a raw cold 15th, a ragged sunset, fine drizzle followed into morning. Turning to steady rain later on, the air felt milder than of late, but a cold front, racing down from the north and drawing Arctic air with it, induced a sudden severe drop in temperature with driving sleet and snow. The temperature plummeted to -7.5° overnight with heavy snow flurries throughout the 17th.

Now indeed was the winter of our discomfort, if not discontent, and certainly not 'made glorious summer' by anything. On the 18th a fine snow commenced about 7.30am. It became larger and more dense as the day progressed, on a swirling, bitter, mainly E wind. After easing to a stop between 7 and 7.30pm – some 12 hours of continuous snow – with a little drifting, the clouds parted to reveal a brilliant moonlit night with a staggeringly low temperature of -18° .

In the morning I checked the snow depth in several places; I averaged it at 200mm (8"), others found it nearer to 250mm (10"). The sun broke through after morning cloud with a noticeable easing of air temperature to 2° . However, with huge 'lows' to the S and SW of the British Isles and cloud rebuilding through the afternoon, the outlook wasn't promising, and sure enough, clear night-time skies produced a near repeat temperature down to -17° . The 20th was misty and felt colder than its -3° . Powdery snow began to fall sporadically from 3pm until 7.30pm adding a further 25mm of depth, and a temperature of -7° .

The 21st was a little milder with a bright overcast and slight thawing on south facing slopes and roofs. Bas Butler watched a Red Kite circling slowly, low over St. Michael obviously looking for food. I observed a territorial dispute between Buzzards up the hill toward Hempton; a Great-spotted Woodpecker 'keck'ing at Cheney Manor and a pair of Jays at the end of Townsend. Brian Rogers later told me that he repeatedly had two



Jays visiting his feeders. Shirley Cedarland said that a pair of Reed buntings and a Yellow Hammer continued to visit her garden feeders. A light, evening fall of snow brought the end of December's third week and served to emphasise the great difficulty most of us faced in not only getting out of the village, but also getting around the village, a situation that was to intensify as slight thaw and re-freeze reduced our roads to rutted cart-tracks and sheets of thick ice.

By now the thaw-freeze cycle was creating spectacular icicles, pillars and curtains of ice, depending from roofs, gutters, ledges and eaves. Many were over 1.2m (4 feet) in length and some reached 2.4m (8 feet) or even more.

On the 23rd, Geoff Elliot achieved every bird watcher's goal of this winter; he saw *twelve* of the attractive, visiting Waxwings feeding in a garden in Lower Street!

And so December wore on. Longer spells of sunshine produced rather faster dripping from the icicles on the 24th, only to be rebuffed by a bitter frost on a clear moonlit night of -12.5° .

Then it was Christmas Day. Brilliant, clear sun; bitter cold; windless . . . My telephone rang about 4.30 in the afternoon . . . a dear friend of mine had broken their wrist in a fall; could I take them for X-ray. A broken wrist? No-one is able to do anything much with one of those, so I left Barford and Nature Notes to all intents and purposes until well into January, so that I could do some caring and household things . . .

I want to thank my friends for most of January's observations, but I did get back for the eight hour bird species count on the 9th, along with Basil Butler and Ian Hobday with his brother in law. 'Our' area is Ordnance Survey SP43, a 10 kilometre square with the Barfords nicely in the middle.

The day dawned with all the winter constellations glittering; Venus (as the morning star) shining brilliantly for some time after sunrise. The ground was covered with ice crystals as we set out but we had a day of near flawless sunshine, even if the west wind was bitterly cold. Its chill factor destroyed any effect of the daytime 6° .

We had an excellent count (considering there was only frozen water in the Cherwell Valley, (therefore no water-associated birds) – 53 species, of which we found 47 in the first 3 hours, all in Barford Parish! That says quite a bit for the wildlife-friendly gardening and farming of our villagers and farmers. Thank you everyone, on behalf of our wild plants and creatures.

January was a gloomy, depressing month often wet and very cold at night, even though the wind kept mainly to a westerly quarter. The 10th was

milder, drizzly, with lashing rain on a cold NW wind after sunset. Even so, Peter and Audrey Turner passed a hunting Barn Owl on Hempton Hills and then heard it screech as they got home about 11.30pm.

From the 12th to the 17th the wind went to SW as a huge cycle of weather over the Atlantic started blowing constant warm, moist air over the British Isles. It really was more mild, enough to tempt a Buzzard into the air over Steepness on the 14th. Night temperatures averaged about 8° , those of daytime about 10.5° , with a very unseasonal 12° on the 16th. Birds started to move away from the feeders and to find their own food. Foxes turned to thoughts of breeding with vixen answering dog fox on Steepness.

On the 18th the wind veered to NW and straightaway night temperatures dropped to around -5° . Nevertheless, Sylvia Butler listened to a pair of Tawny Owls call and answer on the Green during the small hours. Next day a Green Woodpecker found his voice on Fernhill and, at night through -6.5° of frost, I heard, toward the distant Cherwell Valley, the wild, rallying trumpets of a flight of Canada Geese.

Over the next days the wind veered through N, to NE. On the 22nd it stayed there until month's end with night temperatures returning to minus values, the last two nights at -10° and -7° respectively! Gloomy, showery days, with a few bright spells slipped from 5° to 0° . Birds came back to the feeders in numbers. There was little movement around the fields; a Buzzard on Steepness was standing on the wind at 3.45 on 27th and, in an icy wind, a flock of about 35 Goldfinches prepared for roost in a conifer in the gardens at Cheney Manor. A wonderful, prehistoric-looking Heron turned on the wind, low over the Swere bridge and disappeared upstream in the murk of evening.

Thus January groaned painfully away, leaving us to ponder on February's offerings and the threat (or promise?) of Candlemas Day.

Ron Knight

Thank you

To
Councillor Paul O'Sullivan

For his continued support
to Barford News
for which we are most grateful



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Foodie Tips

Ladies in Pigs

Do you like pork and bacon?

For some excellent recipe ideas see www.ladiesinpigs.org.uk and get ready for Bacon Connoisseurs' week, 21 – 27 March 2011. This is an organisation that supports and promotes British pork and bacon. It was launched in 1991 to communicate the value of British pork as part of a modern healthy diet, and they have taken part in demos and road shows at agricultural shows as well as talks in schools. To get involved contact Ladies in Pigs.

Eat seasonably

There is nothing like fresh fruit and vegetables at their seasonal best; bursting with taste and health-giving nutrients, great value and low in food miles. For ideas on what to grow, as well as what to eat now, see www.eatseasonably.co.uk.

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