

BARFORD NEWS

NOVEMBER 2010

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Parish Council Notes

THE MEETING took place on 6th October and was attended by 6 Cllrs. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Turner and County Cllr Jelf. Also attending were Mrs R Watts (Clerk) and for part of the meeting Tom McCulloch (ORCC), Kate Winstanley (CDC), Alan Maddison (Barford St Michael).

Minutes of the meetings of 7th July were updated to reflect that Cherwell District Council's objection to tree works to T5 sycamore at The Old Turnstile related to crown thinning not felling. Unanimously resolved as a true record of the meeting and signed off by the Chairman.

Minutes of the meetings of 1st September 2010 were unanimously resolved as a true record of the meeting and signed off by the Chairman.

The Clerk reported:-

1) Dr & Mrs Kommu of Cornerways, The Rock, had acknowledged by telephone a request regarding trimming back of fir trees.

2) There had been no response from Mr and Mrs Purton of the Manor House, Barford St John regarding trimming back of hedge. The Clerk to contact Highways

3) Mr Maddison reported that work to cut back the trees on Nether Worton Road to Great Marsh Gate had been carried out on 5th October 2010.

4) Letters sent to Cherwell District Council on 2nd July and 4th August questioning the decision making process regarding trees in the conservation area have been replied to from Head of Safer Communities Urban & Rural Services on 20th September apologising for the unacceptable delay in replying to the correspondence and for the errors in the TCA process. The Parish Council were assured that their views are taken into account when

Cllr Hobbs welcomed Tom McCulloch, Rural Housing Enabler, ORCC, and Kate Winstanley, Strategic Housing Officer, CDC to the meeting. They spoke to the Council about three potential rural exception sites for affordable housing in Barford St. Michael. Three land owners had been contacted asking if they would be willing to sell land for affordable housing. To date two land owners had responded negatively and one land owner had not replied. Mr McCulloch and Ms Winstanley asked the Parish Council to carry out a housing needs survey. Cllr Hobbs informed them that two surveys had already been carried out which had identified the need for seven houses of which the parish might get planning permission for four.

This request will be an agenda item for the November meeting. The Chairman thanked Mr McCulloch and Ms Winstanley for speaking to the meeting.

A telephone call from Sarah Aldous of Oxfordshire County Council had been received by the Clerk informing her that the owner of Coombe Farm has agreed to sign both the original footpath across his land (which remains Highway) and the new private route he has made available to walkers.

Mr Alan Maddison informed the Council that the conversion of the Chapel to a house had been done to a high standard but he was concerned about a headstone, which is lying flat on the path. He feels that this should be re-instated to its upright position. Cllr Hobbs thanked him for his observations and advised him that this is not a Parish Council matter but one for the Trustees of the Chapel to consider. Cllr Woolgrove is a trustee and assured Mr Maddison that work is still ongoing. Memorial plaques still have to be put in place and headstones, providing they are in a suitable condition, will be re-positioned.

The white line in Barford St John has been removed. Slow signs have been put on the roads in Barford St Michael.

The name plate in Lower Street by the church has still not been replaced. The Clerk has reminded Cherwell District Council again.

Sarah Aldous of Oxfordshire County Council has informed that repair works to the access to West Close via Murrey's Lane will be carried out by the end of November.

Details of planning applications can be found on the CDC website

http://cherweb.cherwell-dc.gov.uk/publicaccess/tdc/DcApplication/application_searchform.aspx

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

Approved: 1 Robins Close, single storey rear, 2 storey extension to side, porch and fence.

The Budget for 2011/2012 will be discussed at the December Meeting.

Under Any Other Business Cllr Bullard reported that the gravel path leading to West Close is becoming overgrown with weeds. The Clerk will ask Mr Probbits to put down weed killer.

Cllr Woolgrove had seen a report in the Banbury Guardian reference dog faeces. This can cause toxocariasis (a serious eye condition) in humans, especially children. Dog owners are asked to be more responsible in clearing up after their animals.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.10pm

The next meeting was set for 3rd November 2010.

T.B.

~ ~ ~

Deddington Fire Service News

THIS MONTH HAS BEEN quieter than normal with just 12 firecalls including a kitchen fire, a car fire, a road traffic collision, a lady locked inside her house, and a handful of false alarms.



The kitchen fire occurred in Windmill Road, Deddington and was tackled by both Deddington and Banbury crews. The car fire was in Earls Lane, and only minor, believed to have been caused by oil leaking onto the hot engine manifold.

The road traffic collision on the A41, and as both Bicester appliances were already, we were sent along with the specialist rescue tender from Kidlington and one appliance was also sent from the Ministry of Defence fire service.

This collision happened at a crossroads between two vehicles and one casualty was cut free using hydraulic cutting equipment.

The lady that was locked inside her house had fallen during the night in Duns Tew, and a carer raised the alarm when she could not access the property the following morning. Upon arrival, we gained entry using a ladder, pitched to the first floor bedroom window and opened the door to allow paramedics to treat her for a suspected broken wrist.

It's that time of year again, when we all start to light fires and wood burners, so don't forget to have your chimney swept and get rid of all of the soot and carbon deposits that were left from previous years. In particular, pay attention to ridges and shelves that some older chimneys have, as the build-up of soot here can cause a chimney fire and check your smoke detectors whilst you are at it!

A/CM Graham Harding
Deddington Fire Station

Deddington PTA News

WE ARE ALL KEEPING our fingers and toes crossed for lovely clear skies for our



Fireworks Night
on
Thursday 4th November.

This will be held on the school field as usual. Yet again, we have invested in a fabulous firework display which we hope will delight both young and old! Our gates will open from **6pm** when a tantalising aroma will be wafting from our sizzling **BBQ** to tempt your taste buds! There will be children's entertainment and lots of fun "glow in the dark" products! We have toffee apples (thanks to the Co-op), and a licensed bar selling mulled wine and beer. For a special treat we also have hot chocolate with whippy cream too! This is an "all weather" event - we will not be rained off!! We look forward to seeing you all there and hope you will support this annual village event. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Farmers' Market Committee for lending us their market stalls for this event, as they do every year, it is much appreciated.

Once again, our children have designed another wonderful range of Christmas cards. Many thanks to Mike Homer and Multiflow Print Ltd for assisting with their production. Cards will be on sale at the November Farmers' Market or they can be ordered from Janet Watts on 01869 337135 or email janet@janetwatts6.wanadoo.co.uk.

The PTA is also supporting another fantastic live music gig at The Windmill on Saturday 4th December. The one and only Pete Boss and his Blues band will be supported by the excellent Indigo Child playing more contemporary songs. See posters nearer the time for ticket info or email me and put the date in your diaries!

Thank you for your continued support.

Janet Watts
PTA Chair



Barford Service of Remembrance
Sunday 14th November
09.00am St. Michael's Church



Barford Christmas Ceilidh

THE BARFORD PANTOMIME is taking a rest this year, but there's still going to be an opportunity to come along to a great pre-Christmas event at the village hall.



The Barford Christmas Ceilidh and Supper Evening is on Saturday 11th December.

Come along and spend a traditional English dance evening with top local musicians the Old Mettle Dance Band. Comprising originally of musicians from the Adderbury Morris Men, Old Mettle has grown over the years with various changes in the lineup but always committed to playing lively dance music. Current members include Verna Wass, caller and fiddle, Stephen Wass, melodian and concertina, Bryan Martin, fiddle, and Meg Graham, whistles, recorders and pipes. Tony Ecclestone, from Blue Coyotes and Chameleon also features on bass guitar, and Chris Mitchell formerly of Hampshire Union and currently with Fat Freddy's Cat is on guitar. Together they make a sound that is rooted in local tradition but eminently suited to dancing the night away in good company.

For times check the Barford News and posters around the village noticeboards.

Tickets are £10 including hot supper. The food will comprise of Nepalese dishes (vegetarians will be catered for). Tickets are available from Tracey 337369. Book early as we will be limited on numbers and a lot of interest has already been expressed for this event.

There will be a bar and a quality raffle on the evening. All profits are towards the Nepalese Helpless Children Mother Centre.

Barford Recipes

Proceeds to be divided between the youth of our community
in the Barfords
and
The Helpless Children Mother Centre, Kathmandu

84 Recipes - 43 Contributors

IDEAL FOR:

New Recipe ideas

Birthday or Christmas Presents

Stocking Fillers

A Barford Keepsake

ONLY:

£3.50



COPIES AVAILABLE FROM:
MAGGIE 338 835 OR MARIANN 338 570

Macmillan Morning Success



Congratulations

To

Tomasin, Jo, Zalie

(Pictured with letter of thanks from K.H.)

and friends

For raising the magnificent total of

£350

for our Macmillan Nurses

at Katharine House

Plus an additional

£90 for K.H.

from the sale of Christmas Cards

~

Thanks to everyone who contributed,
with help and with cash donations.

Frank Graham Miller: 1924 - 2010.



Born in Bridgnorth in 1924 Frank had a twin brother and 3 sisters. On leaving school he read history at Worcester College, Oxford and later served in the RAF flying Mosquitos and Dakotas before joining the Glider Pilot Regiment and ending up in India flying Dakotas over the Himalayas to China.

After demob Frank read dentistry at Birmingham, where he met his future wife Jean, who was reading Physiology. They married and lived in Birmingham where Fiona was born. Frank moved to work in Banbury and was followed by Jean after the arrival of Patrick. The family moved into Rock Cottage, in Barford in 1953. Frank developed a passion for fly fishing, and greatly enjoyed salmon fishing on annual trips with friends. The family gradually expanded with the arrival of two more daughters, Nicola and then Clarinda

Frank had many interests; ancient fertility symbols, the Ox plough symbol, the Red Horse at Tysoe and Hittites and Anglo Saxon history. He had a gold Saxon brooch which is currently on display at the Ashmolean museum in Oxford and all the Miller ladies have a gold replica of this fertility symbol to wear - 10 grandchildren, it seems to work! Another of Frank's great interests was his love of poetry, both reading and writing it. Several of his amusing verses have been enjoyed by readers of Barford News, where they were published from time to time. Some of you may remember that it was Frank who planted the very first daffodil bulbs on the hill at St. John, these have been added to over the years to give us the wonderful show that we enjoy each spring.

With the arrival of grandchildren Frank and Jean would spend Christmas with one of the families each year. At this stage Frank was still smoking his Villiger cigars, somehow the ashtrays never seems to be at hand or always one step too far. One particular friend of Clarinda's, mentioned in his letter of condolence, that perhaps with Frank, now up above, we could expect more airport disruption due to an increase in the ash cloud.

The past year, following his stroke, must have been, a very difficult time for Frank, and certainly for Jean. Frank died at the age of 86, leaving the world a large legacy: 4 children and 10 grand children, by whom he was much loved.

Here are three of Frank's poems which were read by grandchildren at his memorial service:

~

Memory

I want a cheerful memory to linger after me,
No marble stone or chippings for cold eternity,
I'll plant a cloud of cowslips near the London
motorway,
And a berried bush to feed the birds on an icy winters
day,
One day when I'm cremated cast my ashes near a
vine,
And I'll end up in a bottle and in your glass of wine

~

Grounds for Divorce

I get a lot of pleasure from the simple things of life,
Like Tattinger and Bollinger and quarrels with my wife,
I try to bring the children up in a sane and healthy way
With bottled stout for breakfast and Cheltenham for the
day
I prefer the whisky and Mother loves the gin,
So perhaps you can imagine what a predicament I'm in,
But now they've all forsaken me and visit me no more,
I'll have to share my bottled beer with that frothy blonde
next door.

~

Untitled

It's in the drawer in the other room or just as Mother
always said,
It's in the loft or down the bed,
For many years I've hunted for this odd elusive spot,
Where title deeds are hidden and fishing waders rot,
But never mind Mother dear you're not the only one,
For didn't Lot lose his wife and Abraham his son?,
Arthur lost the Holy Grail and Noah lost the Ark,
So what a dismal chance have I to find this keyhole in
the dark.

Thank you

To everyone who supported our charity raffle
table at the village market in September.
We raised a respectable £70 which will be divided
equally between both charities.

Trustees of
The Shepherds & Bakehouse Charity
and The Hall & Fernhill Trust.

Lucy Warner

W.I. News

THE SPEAKER AT our October meeting was Moira Byast, on the subject of 'Dear Diary'. Moira gave us a fascinating glimpse into her collection of diaries covering a period of 500 years starting with one from the 1440's. Writers included trades people, reverend gentleman, a young lady of fashion and a simple serving girl. The content ranged from what Katy forgot, through to how one gentleman was going to save his wine, silver and wonderful parmesan cheese following the Great Fire of London!

Flower of the month (raising funds for ACWW) was won by Lavinia with a double dahlia, and raffle winners were Maureen and Gillian.

Refreshments were served, and after an enjoyable social time, the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Our next meeting will be on 10th November when our speaker will be Kathryn Wheeler with 'Let's Party', possibly featuring some of Mr. Wheeler's finest free-range eggs! Visitors always most welcome to join us for the evening.

M.Y.

~ ~ ~

Barford Green Garden Club BATSFORD ARBORETUM

The talk given by Sue Burn on the evening of 16th September was very good but it was a shame that only 10 people attended. Batsford, now called "The Batsford Foundation" has been a registered charity since 1984. It covers 56 acres and has over 3500 specimens, all labelled! The autumn colours are incredibly beautiful and for those joining us on the 21st October visit will have the chance to see over 400 maple specimens and the lovely coral barked maple.



CHASTLETON HOUSE GARDENS

Please note your diary for Thursday 25th November, 7.30pm. to come along to the village hall and listen to Anna Derrett who will talk about spring bulbs at Chastleton. A follow up visit will take place in the spring of 2011 to see the lovely display of bulbs

Cost for talk £3.00 members, £4.00 non members.
DOBIES 2011 CATALOGUES

2011 catalogues have now been received and are with Rodney Hobbs. If you would like a catalogue please contact Rodney on 338078 or rodney.hobbs@virgin.net @virgin.net

Jill Bunce, Secretary BGGC
337577 OR jill@ridleymarreco.co.uk

THE POPPY APPEAL

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY this year is to be held on Sunday 14th November three days after Armistice Day 11th November. Because of this volunteers will be knocking on your doors asking for a contribution to The Poppy Appeal Fund between Saturday 30th October and Thursday 10th November. In return for what I am sure will be a very generous donation you will receive a Poppy to wear. This well known emblem will be visible recognition of your support for the many soldiers, veterans and their families who are still in need of help.



There is no need to remind you of those wounded and killed in the current Afghan conflict. It is daily in the papers and on TV and Radio. What we are not reminded of except at this time of year are those still affected by other wars, the 1939/45 war, Korea, Malaysia, Falklands, both Iraq wars and other smaller conflict like Sierra Leon. There are many veterans of all these wars and their families who are in need of your help

PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY

B.E.L.

Poppy Collection Organiser for the Barfords

~ ~ ~

1st Deddington Brownies

THERE WAS GREAT FUN at the Warriner School on 2nd October, when Brownies from Deddington joined their friends from around the Cherwell Division for a Brownie Adventure Day. The theme was '100 years of Guiding' and the Brownies took part in activities representing each decade of the last 100 years. These included making flags, singing, an obstacle course, writing raps and making bracelets! My Brownie had a fantastic time!



Lucy Squires
338442

OIL Buying Group Saves Money & Reduces Co₂



SEVERAL BARFORD RESIDENTS have already discovered the benefit of joining the local OIL buying group and saved money on their heating oil.

It is a very simple concept. Instead of picking up the phone individually and being at the mercy of the oil suppliers, a group of buyers order together and just one person negotiates the best price across a number of suppliers. The oil buyers benefit from significant savings, the entire community benefits because each order can cut out up to 20 truck movements through the village, and everyone's environment benefits from reduced carbon emissions of a streamlined, co-ordinated delivery process. There is also the feeling of the community coming together and standing up for their rights as the consumer.

So who does it? Well, 18 months ago a resident of local village Wootton, Chris Pomfret, was surprised to see three tankers deliver to three different houses within 50 yards of each other on the same day! "It just made zero sense to me" he said. So he simply began knocking on doors, a group was formed, the first order went in and success – the average saving was over £60 per household. The message spread quickly, as he explains: "It just took off, mainly virally, I now buy for members in over 70 villages. I enjoy it and given that there are lots of benefits it is a good thing to do, but it has kind of taken over my life." So much so that he had to introduce an admin fee of £10 per year, only levied after the first delivery is completed and which is offset by much larger savings. Talking of which: "Some of my members have saved several hundred pounds and the average is £180 a year."

The next group order will be on
Friday 5th November

Please contact Chris (c_pomfret@hotmail.com or 07947 065100) for full details or to register your interest.

Chris Pomfret

Bloxham CE Primary School

Miss Johnson and Miss Ward joined our school this term, teaching years 5 and year 3, 4 respectively. We also welcomed a full compliment of children into F1 year (reception year if you are my generation!). Seeing the excited and yes sometime apprehensive faces of the children on their first ever day in school is a significant part of any academic year. As I said to their parents it is our responsibility and privilege to make sure that their start in school is successful-they won't ever have their first day in school again.

Beginnings are always important as are endings. The year 6 who left us in July did us proud and more importantly did themselves proud. Their academic results were excellent, both in terms of their overall grades, as well as the progress they made during their primary school education. Just as importantly they were excellent ambassadors for our school, with the leavers' service on the last day being a really memorable occasion.

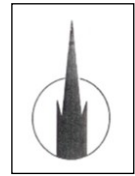
Over the summer a significant amount of improvements were undertaken to improve the school both for the pupils and the community. The children's centre was completed and is now fully open. It is an excellent facility with a whole range of activities for young children and their parents. A small extension to the Foundation Stage Unit building and canopy were built to ensure the appropriate amount of space for the youngest children in school. In addition our dedicated team of cleaners and our caretaker did a really good job in ensuring that the school really shone for the beginning of term.

Recently FOBPS (Friends of Bloxham Primary School) held their AGM. I am delighted that all the officer posts were filled with enthusiastic nominees. Last year the group raised an incredible amount of money, which was used to fund a whole range of really useful projects in school. As Headteacher I am very grateful for their continued support, both financial and otherwise for the school community.

We have some provisional dates set for some of events during the year, including

Firework Celebrations on Saturday 6th November and Christmas Bazaar on Friday 10th December between 6-8pm. Please check our website www.bloxhamprimary.uk.org for clarification of dates and times, as well as other events during the year.

Matthew Ingall





The Barfords Annual Christmas Lunch 2010

Saturday 4th December 12.45 for 1pm



This is open to all residents of the villages who are over 60, and their spouses/partners.

Invitations will be sent out at the beginning of November to everyone that we know of who qualifies. If you are eligible to attend and you do not receive an invitation, please accept our apologies and let Aggie know (01869 338406).

Please can we have your replies **by 20th November**, even if you are unable to attend, so we can plan the quantities of food to purchase (and also please let us know about special dietary requirements). PLEASE NOTE: we are not planning on offering a vegetarian option this year unless informed of vegetarians attending.

Helpers: We are currently compiling a list of helpers for the event. If there is anyone who would be prepared to help at the lunch or beforehand (setting out tables, serving food/wine at the lunch, or making puddings), please contact us.

Aggie Morrison Booth, Mary Brodey and Sarah Best

LET'S PARTY

With
Kathryn Wheeler

Food ideas for the Festive
Season.

Probably featuring one or two of
Mr. Wheeler's famous Free-Range
Eggs!

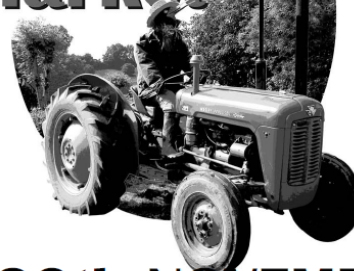
Wednesday
10th November
7.30pm Village Hall

At the W.I. Meeting
Open to All
Visitors Welcome £3.00



BARFORD ST MICHAEL

Village Market



SAT 20th NOVEMBER
in the Village Hall
10am - noon

- Speciality Bread • Deli Counter • Yoghurts
- Locally Produced Meat • Organic Vegetables
- Home Made Cakes & Preserves • Local Honey
- Free Range Eggs • Gifts • Cards • Crafts

Will Preece Out Drives Them All!!



On a cold and windy Saturday morning on the 25th September, the Juniors at Chipping Norton Golf Club took to the course in their Junior (under 18) Club Championships to be played over 36 holes, 18 in the morning followed by another 18 in the afternoon. The competition was hot and the tension was high!

A nervous morning round saw the lower handicappers go off first, not shooting their best scores and with Will shooting 82, he still managed to finish the morning in the top 3. In the afternoon they went out in reverse order with it all to play for. Will, at 14yrs old, showed he could cope with the pressure, shooting a round of 77. A total for the day of 159, beating all his rivals by at least 10 shots to become the Chipping Norton Golf Club Junior Champion 2010. He said afterwards "I concentrated so hard. I realised I had won on the 15th Tee having met another group who were all well over par which meant I would have to make a speech at the presentation – I then bogied the next 4 holes worrying about it!"

It was a great way to finish a busy summer of golf. All the practising is starting to pay off, winning an Under 14 putting competition earlier in the summer at Kenilworth GC, the longest drive at the Junior Club Championships and the ProAm held at Chipping Norton earlier in the year along with some top 10 finishes in Junior Opens and points on the Berks, Bucks and Oxon (BB&O) Junior Order of Merit. Will has played in all the BB&O County matches for the Under 14's this summer helping them win their League for the first time and is hoping to move up into the BB&O Under 16's. He is also part of the Chipping Norton Junior Golf Team this year who have got through to the County Finals for the third year in a row to be played at Kirtlington GC on Sunday 17th October against Bicester GC. Only a couple more events to go before the winter season sets in and the chauffeurs can have a break!!!

Well done to young Will of Robins Close, who many of you will recognise as the chap who delivers your B.N.! Ed.

Scouts & Guides Postal Service

Covering Clifton, Deddington,
Hempton & The Barfords

Only a month before the
Christmas Post boxes
make their appearance
ready for our superior
delivery service.

*Congratulations
To
Natalie and Liam
of
Robins Close
on the birth of
William
On 13th September*



*We wish little William a long
and happy life*

**REMEMBER
REMEMBER
YOUR PETS
THIS NOVEMBER!!
Fireworks Night
is no fun for them!**



**Please keep them safely indoors – not just
cats and dogs - rabbits and guinea pigs can
suffer great stress too!
Leave a radio playing if you go out.**

Ride and Stride

ON THE SECOND Saturday in September every year there is the Oxford Historic Churches Trust Ride and Stride which is a fundraising day when people from all over Oxfordshire are encouraged to walk, cycle or ride to as many churches as they can between 10am and 6pm. The money they raise is divided equally between Oxford Historic Churches Trust and their own church, OHCT being one of the principle donors when we were rebuilding the church tower at St Michaels.



This year there were two people who took part. Chris Cox walked around 14 churches in the local area and I went over to the Lechlade/Filkins area for a change and also visited 14 churches. Between us we have raised £258, half of which will be returned to our church to help towards the pay and pension for the clergy and the maintenance of the buildings.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who kindly sponsored me when I collared them at the church fete in August and to encourage more people to take part next September. It really is a very good day out and you get to see so many lovely villages and churches that you wouldn't normally visit and so far, for the last 12 years that I've been doing it, the weather has always been perfect.

There are no central funds which we can call on to pay for the cost of running our churches so, if you want them to stay open, you must make an effort to raise the money yourselves. So next year when I ask for people to help out with the Ride and Stride, I would be grateful if some more would make the effort to join in a very enjoyable day.

Cubby Brett
Barfords Churchwarden



From the Vicar

First of all this month, a big

'thank you' on behalf of all of us to **Barbara Alt** who is stepping down from her duties as Churchwarden, Treasurer and PCC member at Barford.

Barbara has given many years of faithful service to the Church in Barford in these offices. The responsibilities have been weighty and their exercise time- and thought-consuming, with a fair measure of anxiety thrown in. Besides the day-to-day business of making sure the churches in Barford have been up and running, Barbara has been *suprema* of the Restoration Project at St Michael's, a major undertaking which has bequeathed a building in excellent repair to future generations.

Stephen Bunce will replace Barbara as Treasurer and we hope to be able to elect a Churchwarden in her place next Spring at the APCM. Please consider whether you might like to stand for this office.

Barford St Michael's Patronal Angel Festival was well supported and attended. Thanks to all of you who made angels for the occasion. I didn't do a precise count, but we must have had a hundred and fifty and more on show. Deddington Primary School did a great job for us. And thanks to those who came as angels - look on the Benefice website (www.deddingtonchurch.org) to check some of them out. We thought about angels at Deddington too on the last Sunday of September and on Michaelmas Day the Barford angels flew to Deddington for the Communion service with the School. Happy chaos ensued.

Thanks also to those who provided flowers and produce and decorated St Michael's for our Harvest Festival. The produce went to Penhurst School for the learning disabled, which is in Chipping Norton.

Sarah Green begins as the new Deddington Church Youth Worker this month. Sarah will be seeking to form a Church Youth Group and will be a part of the Boys' Brigade operation. She will also play a role with the Internet Cafe that is going to start in Deddington Church in November. We hope Barford young people will be interested in this and the other activities Sarah will be involved in.

Not many questionnaires have been returned. The more we get, the better our plans for the future of the Church in Barford are likely to be. Do let us have your thoughts.

Church Accounts

Some of the completed questionnaires have asked for publication of church accounts.
These are currently available at the village Post Office for public scrutiny

George



George Nicholson, a Barford boy, was diagnosed with a condition called Retinitis Pigmentosa in August 2007. RP is an inherited eye condition which affects the retina giving rise to tunnel vision. George, after many, many lengthy, and some unpleasant, tests was found to have no peripheral vision what-so-ever and as a consequence of this was put on the blind register as severely sight impaired in the September of 2007, unfortunately RP is a degenerative and incurable condition. We are lucky though, as George is being looked after by Susan Downes (Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon) and her team at the JR Eye Hospital and they have all been superb. George is involved in a research study looking further into molecular genetic analysis of his eye condition and one day, who knows, there could be therapy and hopefully a cure. They still don't know what is causing George's condition as there is no family history of RP. Thankfully, there is no change in his sight since diagnosis.

Despite George's visual difficulties he copes extraordinarily well, (it must be quite hard with only 10° central vision) he is a bright, social and lively little boy who lives life to the full, in fact you would never even know he has any visual problems. He climbs, rides a bicycle and does everything a boy should of his age. He also loves to draw. We hope that in the next year or two he will have enough work for a 'George Nicholson Exhibition' to raise awareness and much needed funds for the ongoing research into different causes, and indeed a possible cure for the condition of Retinitis Pigmentosa.

Hetta Nicholson

(Well done to George, look forward to visiting his exhibition. ed).



An example of George's work
Check it out in colour on B.N. website
www.barfordnews.co.uk

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Fernhill News

By the time you read this we will have enjoyed a talk by Sylvia Brown about her 35 years on a milk round. Then on 27th we had carpet bowls when we invited the Friendship Club of Deddington to visit.



On 3rd November we are joining our friends at Hempton for Bingo, then on 10th we are having Dial-a-Ride to take us on a visit to Wyevale for Christmas shopping. 17th November we are joining our Banbury members for card games.

Fernhill will be holding a Christmas Raffle at the village market on 20th November, donations of prizes would be welcome and please come along on the day to support us.

On 24th November Banbury hand-bell ringers are visiting us and the Upper Heyford Warreners Club will be joining us for the afternoon.

December 1st to be arranged. On 8th December the club are having Christmas Lunch at 'Hanwell Arms', Banbury, using Dial-a-Ride to take us there. Wednesday, 15th December will be our last date for this year when we will have our own party in the hall with a surprise guest.

If you would to join us on any of these dates please ring Avril 01869 338381, or Mary 01295 252298.

Warriner School News - Changes

AS SOME OF YOU will have heard I will be leaving The Warriner School at the end of December in order to take up the post of Principal at Dartmouth Academy. Personally this is an exciting challenge, a challenge that aims to make this “all-through” school (ages 3-18) the local school of choice. While this is exciting I am also saddened to be leaving both the school and the community and would like to take this opportunity of thanking all of you who have supported both the school and myself over the past few years.

On many occasions I have stated that we are not an exam factory simply churning out young people with good GCSEs; young people with no awareness of the society in which they live, incapable of playing a constructive part in their communities and unable to live independently.

We have a duty to equip students not only with the necessary skills for life but also the necessary evidence of their knowledge and subject based skills to allow them to take their next steps once their time here is over. However, to suggest that these two views lead to an irreconcilable dichotomy is too simplistic.

This year two students left us without any qualifications; neither student was present in school for months prior to the exams and did not attend an examination. In the past four years we have maintained this pattern. We do not give up on challenging youngsters; we give them life chances. Of the 228 who left us in June 225 were able to follow their plans and aspirations to the next stage of their education or employment.

Personally I have been very fortunate to have visited our partner school in SW Uganda and was looking forward to taking a party of young people out there in February 2011, sadly I am no longer available to do this. Nineteen 15 and 16 year old Year 11 students will be taking part along with 4 colleagues. We hope that this will become an annual trip for our students. In 2011 and 2012 we have secured British Council funding for this partnership, funding that will allow a number of Ugandan students to accompany their staff to the UK when they return here in June each year. If you would like to know more about this please visit <http://www.inspirebored.org/>.

In early October the Governors voted to become a Trust School. Many of you will have seen the recent, not entirely accurate, article in the Banbury Guardian about this development. In essence the purpose of the Trust for the school is to enhance students' opportunities and experiences. To find out more about this please visit our website.



The new farm building is coming on well and is currently 3 days behind schedule. It is due for completion in early November when those who study on the Warriner Farm will be able to have access to purpose built, modern, educational facilities on site. We plan to have a formal opening ceremony in February 2011.

For those of you who are looking for somewhere to carry out an activity our School premises are available for hire, we welcome community users and groups. If you need a venue to run a course, meet as a club, training facilities for sports etc. we can help. We are also looking for Tutors who have experience of delivering adult education courses eg. Cooking, Digital Photography, Languages, Yoga, Flower Arranging, Painting/Pottery etc. For all enquiries, please contact Leigh Barmby, Administration Manager on 01295 720777.

By the time you read this the outcome of the government's Comprehensive Spending Review may be known. We, along with most secondary schools in Oxfordshire are hoping that there will be a restitution of the planned school capital building programme that has been on hold since June. Should this be the case then we can again look forward to welcoming students into our own Sixth Form.

Here's hoping!

Nick Hindmarsh
Headteacher
The Warriner School

Hall and Fernhill Trust

Barford St John and St Michael

Distribution of Funds

Each household in receipt of a state pension and having three years residency in the villages of Barford St Michael and St John will qualify for a small amount from the above trust. The year end for the charity is October 30th, with the distribution of monies in December.

A list of likely beneficiaries is held but persons wishing to ensure that their name is on the list should contact the Clerk of the Trustees before 31st October.

Clerk: Mrs Lucy Warner
Mead Farm Bungalow
Barford St John
Tel: 01295 720202
Email: ljwarner@hotmail.co.uk

1st Deddington Scout Group CUBS



We are pleased to welcome Oliver, Jamie, Patrick, Harry & Joe to the pack, they increase our numbers to 24 and so we are full until January. Please put your child's name on our waiting list if you would like them to join in the future.

We are very busy this term, at the moment we are building a model of Deddington Castle as it would have looked in Bishop Odo's day, this has included a visit to the castle grounds (what a great improvement), for a look round & a quick measure before the more important job of conker collecting. We hope to have this finished soon & will be looking for somewhere to exhibit it.

Next will be Guy making, for our annual collection in the Market Square, last year we collected enough for 1 shelterbox (with the help of the market management), hopefully we can match that this year. Then comes a visit from Blue Cross to help with the animal carers badge & then Road Safety Week, more castle building & preparations for Christmas, phew!

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

SCOUTS

Welcome to, Jack, Angus & Monty who, along with Ollie, Chris, Tom, Nick & William from Cubs have swelled our numbers to 23.

This term, as well as the usual daft games, half the Scouts are working for the Guide badge, look out for 'The Dangerous Guide to Deddington – Scouts Edition', you will not be surprised that they know the best places to – scrump, pick conkers, hide from girls (& the opposite) & be scared witless. The other half of the troop are looking at the weather with the view to gaining the meteorologist badge.

We were horrified to find out that several Scouts had never played conkers!! We soon changed that with a rowdy tournament of disputed matches and bruised knuckles.

We have been invited to join in with the annual, JOTI (Jamboree on the Air / Internet) being held in Banbury, when they can contact Scout groups around the world.

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

Many thanks to the Farmers' market for their donations, we are hoping to buy some GPS handsets, cooking equipment & intend to set up a hardship fund.



Christmas Craft Fayre

In aid of the School Swimming Pool Fund

To be held at:

The Warriner School, Bloxham

Saturday 20th November 2010

1.00pm till 4.00pm



Christmas Gifts and Present Ideas including:

Jewellery, Cards, Candles, Handbags, Aprons & Bags,
Patchwork, Hair Accessories, Knitted Items,
Fabric Boxes, Essential Oils & Soaps, Bead Animals,
Raffle with Exciting Prizes, Cakes & Tombola
Delicious Homemade Afternoon Teas

Stall & Fayre Information: 01295 670716
Entrance £1.00, Children Free

200 PLUS CLUB OCTOBER WINNERS

£15.00, No. 68, Audrey Smith

£10.00, No. 145, Helen Honour

£5.00, No. 154, Thelma Moore

The Draw took place at a WI Meeting

Erika's Birthday

Please come to
2 Church Cottages

For Coffee or a glass of wine and Nibbles

26th November
10.30 – 3pm

No Cards - - No Gifts - - No Raffle

But I would love a donation for



I look forward to seeing you!

Erika

CROSS COUNTRY CANOEING

THE IDEA OF CANOEING from one side of the county to the other has been festering in my brain for quite a few years, to paddle from the Severn estuary across the country to The Wash. Tidal Atlantic to tidal North Sea - approximately 250 miles starting by Gloucester and paddling up the Severn to Tewksbury, then onto the river Avon up to Stratford on Avon. From Stratford to Warwick join the Grand Union canal and on to Northampton where I could get onto the Nene. The Nene runs all the way to The Wash and into the North Sea.

The trip would take about twelve days in convenient weekend sections, I would camp on the bank and forage for food at the pubs I passed - a sort of one man in a boat meets Ranulph Fiennes.

This trip would also give me the excuse to try out an idea about rowing a canoe. I thought that a sliding seat sculling rig would be loads more efficient than paddling and with a plastic tub of a Canadian canoe I could load all my camping gear in it and it should still be relatively stable.

I would row up the Severn and the Avon, have to paddle the narrow canals and then row the Nene. Getting everything to fit was all a bit more difficult than I thought it would be but in the end I rigged it up and even had a rowing lesson at the Warwick rowing club. A few practice sessions on the Thames and I was half way competent if a bit tippy.

The next job was to sort out the route, places I could camp, times to allow for each leg etc. After days riding around Gloucestershire, Warwickshire and Northamptonshire I thought it was time to make a start.

Day 1. Gloucester - Pershore

Mags dropped me off at Gloucester, and with a following wind I rowed up to Tewksbury. I then left the wide and choppy Severn and got onto the small and calm Avon. I pushed on further than I had planned and didn't stop to camp until I had reached Pershore. There was a good flat area next to the lock so I put the tent up for the night.

Day 2. Pershore - Stratford

Got up early and was on the river as it got light about 5 o'clock. As I had got on so well the day before I thought it may be possible to get to Stratford on day two and save a day. I had another good day - weather nice and all the boaters I meet very friendly. I reached Stratford at about 8 o'clock

that night just as it was getting dark and just as Mags had turned up to pick me up.

The whole rowing thing had worked really well and I had managed the 60 miles and 17 locks in two days instead of the three that I had planned for. I had forgotten the fact that this was supposed to be a fun exercise as I could barely walk and promised myself to take things a bit slower.

The river Avon carries on from Stratford up to Warwick where the Grand Union canal would then take me on to Northampton. The problem I had was there is no public access on this section of river. The alternative was to get on the Stratford canal and go on up towards Coventry and the back on myself to Warwick (about 36 miles and 56 locks) or walk the canoe over land the 10 miles to Warwick.

A set of old pram wheels can make a very good trolley and with a converted rucksack I pulled the canoe from my shoulders - it was surprisingly easy to pull.

Day 3. Stratford - Stockton Locks

I started early as I had to use a main road for the first few miles and I soon covered the first 5 miles. I had a lot of funny looks on the trudge across country, one old chap came out and asked me what I thought I was up to. When I told him he invited me in for breakfast, aren't there some nice people out there. The walk took me about four hours which meant when I reached

the Grand Union canal I could push on to Stockton locks.

Paddling a two man canoe by yourself was harder work than I had thought it would be and I was glad to get to my pick up point.

I was in The George on a Friday night with the usual crowd and I was saying that the next few days of the trip would be harder than I had planned for when Jeff said it would be better if I took someone else along to help with the paddling and maybe the locks and of course dropping of vehicles etc. He was quite right and from there on it would be two man team to make it to The Wash.

Day 4. Stockton locks - Braunston tunnel

The paddling along the grand union canal was very pleasant always something to look at and we had nice weather all day.

We arrived at Braunston tunnel at the end of the afternoon with enough time to work out how we



would navigate the tunnel. Strictly speaking canoes are not allowed in the tunnel but we thought it would be interesting to go through if we could avoid being crushed on the side by a narrow boat.

Day 5. Braunston Tunnel - Bugbrooke

Our plan was simple and probably predictable, we would have an early start and go through before any boaters had got up. It was still half light when we went into the tunnel and it was quite eerie with just the dripping sound of water droplets falling off the roof. The tunnel has a kink in the middle of it so much of the time it was totally dark. We emerged from the tunnel in daylight, we really needn't have worried about narrow boats as it was a good two hours before we saw another boat.

Day 6. Bugbrooke - Billing

It was only a little way along the grand union canal until we reached the Northampton arm which would drop us down the Rothersthorpe flight of locks and on to the river Nene. We pulled the canoe out and put it on the trusty pram wheels, its quite a sight - all the locks nose to tail running down to the bottom of the valley. Its was just a short paddle from here till we reached the river Nene just on the western side of Northampton.

The first thing to master on the Nene is the locks. These are different from other river and canal locks as they have a large electrically operated guillotine door to drain the lock. We had to get a key to operate this and generally they worked very well but a few had not been electrified and we had to spin a wheel for ages to wind the lock gate up.

Generally we had got into a good routine for food on these days out. After we had done a few hours we would set the faithful old tranga up on the lock gates and do a bacon sandwich and a cup of tea, we could then snack on anything we had bought with us for the rest of the day. In Northampton we struck lucky as we spotted a burger van in a park next to the river. Later in the trip I perfected the art of boiling a kettle in the bottom of the canoe for making cups of tea which meant we needn't stop so many times.

We finished the day at Billing about five miles east of Northampton. This was where we left off the trip for the winter. In the spring we would follow the Nene all the way to The Wash.

Day 7 Billing to Thrapston

Jeff and myself had done our homework for the rest of the trip over the winter and had spent some time organising it. The problem was now that we were moving further away from home the transport was getting more difficult. The answer was to do the rest of the trip in two long weekends, a three dayer to Peterborough, and a two dayer to The Wash. What makes this more difficult is we had to find and book accommodation at pubs at approximately the right paddling distances apart. After a lot of

riding around we found two pubs within canoe pulling distance of the river and hoped that I had not been too optimistic with our paddling abilities or that the wind would be in the wrong direction.

The Nene nearer Northampton is pronounced Neene but by the time you reach Peterborough its pronounced Nen, anyway it must be one of the nicest rivers to paddle on anywhere. It is crystal clear right to the bottom with all the wild life you could hope for (possible a few too many aggressive swans with young) and for some reason we hardly ever saw another boat.

Loads of locks on the river, about 17 a day but we still managed our 20-24 miles a day rate we had been hoping for.

We arrived at about 6.00 at Thrapston - pulled the boat out and put it on the wheels then just a short walk to The Woolpack. It was a pleasant enough place to stop at - good food and accommodation in a little chalet behind the pub.

Day 8. Thrapston to Wansford.

Early start which meant no breakfast at the pub but we would make up for it with the all bacon sandwich diet on the river. The most noticeable thing from on the river were the village churches that we passed. We wound our way around loads, they nearly all looked the same all with spires. The most impressive of all of them was in the village of Fotheringhay. For a small village the church looked very grand standing not far from the river. After only a little while we saw some old earthworks and large a plaque on some masonry which told us that this was the site of the castle where Mary queen of Scots was beheaded and that Richard the 3rd was born. Another good days paddling and we reached Wansford about 6 o'clock, put the canoe on the pram wheels and set off for the Cross Keys. That's when the problems started, the land lady had said there was loads of room for the canoe in the garden, what she failed to say was that we would have to get it into the garden through a narrow side door and up an alley. That would be hard enough - it was the Saab parked in front of the doorway that made it difficult!

We had to go to another pub for food and watched our footballers go out of the world cup.

Day 9. Wansford to Kings Dyke

This would be a slightly shorter day about twenty miles in total not so many locks.

We passed through Peterborough about lunch time and then turned of the Nene at Stanground Sluice. We were picked up from here by John And Sue Christy who combined the chore of retrieving us with looking around the cathedral in Peterborough.

On our recognisance trip we had found out that the Nene left Peterborough and then carried on in a manmade drain through The Dog and Doublet lock and on out to the Wash, about 30 miles in all. This

is dead straight with only a kink in the middle of it, high banks and as dull as the ditch water it was made up of. The alternative would be to get off the Nene at Stanground sluice onto the middle levels which is a series of dykes across the fens, this would drop us out at Salters Lode lock onto the Great Ouse. The Great Ouse is tidal at Salter's Lode and it didn't matter how hard we looked Jeff and myself could not find a spot we could launch the canoe into the river. The only hope was that the lock keeper who manned the lock was friendly and didn't look upon canoeists as second class boaters as some lock keepers do. To my relief he was the most helpful lock keeper I have ever met, he explained what time we should get to the lock on what days for the best tides etc, none of it made sense as I fear it is mostly witchcraft but it meant this route was now doable.

Day 10. Kings Dyke - Upwell

My brother dropped us off early in the morning on the kings dyke and we started out on what would be a slog of a day, nothing to look at just straight drains to paddle down with high banks around us. When we did manage to get out the canoe and scramble up the banks to make our bacon sandwich all we saw were huge flat arable fields. We were glad to get to the Five Bells in Upwell where we stayed the night especially as we had just encountered a miserable lock keeper who was less than helpful and wouldn't let us through "his" lock, this meant a lot of unloading and carrying.

Day 11. Upwell - Kings Lynn

Another early start with no breakfast but we had to be at Salters Lode before 10.00. As we left the village we crossed the main middle level drain on an aqueduct. The huge drain runs as straight as a die as far as the eye could see. We arrived at Salters Lode at 9.30. Time for a fry up before the trip down the river. We had been looking forward to canoeing down to Kings Lynn with the flow of the river and with the tide flowing out to sea but we hadn't reckoned for the gale force wind that was sweeping along the east coast, all of a sudden it looked a bit more hairy.

The lock keeper was great - explained about the tides again, still not sure what he was on about we changed our little life jackets we normally wear to the proper white water rafting type and the lock keeper set us out right on top of the tide. The wind was blowing right across the

river most of the time so we kept in the lee of the north bank all the way down. There was small choppy waves in the middle of the river and when we did get mixed up with them it wasn't very nice. It seemed to take for ever to do the fifteen miles to Kings Lynn and just when we thought we had it beat we realised we had a big problem. As the river reaches the outskirts of the town it swings to the north which means we would now have to paddle directly into gale force winds, worse still we now have to cross the river as the only landing place is on the other side of the river. We were both quite quiet as we struggled to get across the river while trying to stay front on to the small waves blowing up at Jeff who was in the pointy end of the canoe. Once across we hung tight to the high piling of the harbour, we could see the concrete slipway in the distance but we were hardly moving by this time so with only 100 metres to go there was no choice but to beach the canoe on the first available mud bank. This is when it all got a bit silly. The mud was soft and very slimy just about impossible to stand on. Jeff fell over first, then he tried to pull the canoe and that knocked me over. We couldn't shift the canoe until we had unloaded it and carried everything up the mud bank to hard ground at the top. Graham Cherry had driven out to pick us up, he arrived just in time to look over the car park wall to see Jeff and myself covered in mud trying to pull the canoe up the mud bank. He was not a lot of help as he was laughing so much he couldn't even hold his camera steady.

Within half an hour we had everything loaded and had changed out of our 'mudwear', cleaned up and went off for something to eat and then the long drive home.

It was a good end to a good trip. Sorting out the route, places to stay, pick up points etc is good fun, learning how to row and walking the canoe was

very enjoyable, but it was lucky break for me that Jeff wanted to join this rather pointless adventure apart from all the laughs we had on the way I think I would still be somewhere out on the fens struggling against the wind without his paddling power. It might have started like one man in a boat but it ended more like last of the summer wine.



Thanks to all who helped to ferry us about.

Pete

Deddington CE Primary News

AT THE END OF last term the whole school celebrated Harvest together at the Church, the children were as wonderful as ever and the support from their parents (plus grandparents, aunts and uncles etc) made it a very special occasion. Also at the end of last term Year 5 enjoyed a successful trip to The British Museum as part of their Ancient Greece Project, a great day was had by all!

As we enter November we are looking forward to the PTA's Fireworks night on November 4th, hopefully the weather is kind to us and the crowds turn out!

This month Year 5 and 6 are attending Oxfordshire Book Feast and will be meeting the award winning author of the Mr Gum books Mr Andy Stanton. Year 6 is out and about again towards the end of the month, this time they are visiting Bletchley Park as part of their World War 2 project, this promises to be a fascinating and informative trip.

Also in November we shall be saying a goodbye to Mrs Fane who will be starting her Maternity Leave; hopefully she will have lots of time to rest and get her energy levels up before the baby arrives! Mr Collings will be teaching her Year 2 class whilst she is on leave, he worked in Year 5 last summer and the staff and children are really pleased he has been able to rejoin us.

A date for your diaries 'Meet the Governors' on the 23rd November at 7.30p.m. in the school hall. The Governors play a vital role in the smooth running of our school but are aware that not everyone understands the areas of responsibility they have and how their role fits in to the day to day running of the school. They would really like as many to attend as possible, either for a general chat or to give guidance and answer any questions you may have.

Mrs Jane Cross
Acting Headteacher

New School Governors

Congratulations to Barbara Allen, of Rock Close and Thelma Moore, Mill Lane, who have recently been appointed as the Barford Church Governors at Deddington CE Primary.

Barbara can be contacted on 337863 or email barbara.allen1@live.com and Thelma on 338517



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Sue Brown

The Red House, The Green

Barford Saint Michael. billsuebrown123@btinternet.com

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Lower Street. Self-contained, detached.
Two double bedrooms, kitchen, lounge-diner, use of garden, off-street parking.

B&B rate: from £35 pppn. Significant discounts available to Barford residents for e.g. 5 days or longer bookings.

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NATURE NOTES 91

ST. SWITHIN HAD, ON A STORMY 15TH OF JULY, promised us all according to the old saying, some rainfall on each of the next forty days to 'Christen the apples'. He didn't get it quite right, but the apples had a good wetting all the same!

Back on the 25th of July the wind had moved to NW and it then stayed around that quarter for almost the whole of August. There was a 'blip' of changeable weather as it veered to NE on 14th and 15th, after which it returned to NW, carrying a very active 'Low' on the 18th, the wind backing to SW and W. This brought unstable weather and heavy afternoon storms from 21st to 24th when another rapidly moving deep 'Low' sent the wind all over the compass. On 27th a large high pressure system started to establish itself over the British Isles which drove the wind back to NW and then backing right round the compass to a southerly direction by the end of the first week of September.

These first days of August were generally quiet, warm and cloudy with just the lightest of breezes. Night temperatures ranged between 6° (chilly) and 13°, those of daytime from 20° to 25°.

As usual at this time of year many birds were withdrawing into cover to recover from breeding, to build up fat reserves and moult. Certainly the Blackbirds had disappeared from my garden. The House Martins that had such an uncertain start at nesting on the NE corner of my house were now trying to encourage their youngsters from the artificial nest. Green Woodpeckers were noisy everywhere and continued to avidly raid anthills, whilst a Great Spotted Woodpecker made his presence known by 'kecking' loudly below Steepness.

On the 3rd, I noted my first Painted Lady Butterfly of the year. These butterflies set up a 'patrolling' territory and select favourite perches, usually a stone or patch of earth, where they are superbly camouflaged despite their striking upper surface colours. They become very tenacious of these perches and withstand a huge amount of disturbance, with persistence on returning to the same perch. This 'first' specimen was a case in point; she set up base on my garden path which she relentlessly covered for several days. After some time she seemed to become annoyed by my disturbances and instead of tearing wildly around, seemed to fly deliberately close to my face! Is it possible that such an ephemeral creature could react in such a way? I don't know – but I wouldn't be surprised – and I would be delighted, if it were so. Anyway, she must have become fed up with my rudeness and eventually moved on.

The first Common Blue butterflies I saw in my wild garden were of the summer brood, around the

20th July. Now, on the 8th of August, a saga commenced in my wild garden concerning a female Common Blue butterfly which was to last until 1st of September!

It was a warm sunny morning, between 9 and 10 o'clock and the grass was full of grasshoppers. Close to a clump of Bird's-foot Trefoil (being the caterpillars' food plant) resting and flexing their wings on the still green calyces of Cowslip flowers, were a freshly emerged male and female Common Blue butterflies. The female was very distinctive almost wholly brown with the merest hint of blue scales near the wing margins and her thorax only bearing blue hair. Females almost always have a greater or lesser, but always distinctive, extent of blue toward and at, the base of the wings. (The males of course, are glorious azure blue overall the upper surface. Rarely, females are too, but always have a border of tiny black, white and orange circlets at the wing margins). The next day a further freshly emerged female joined yesterday's two butterflies, this one displaying the usual appreciable patch of blue at the base of the wings. They spent the day flying around the garden sampling various flowers but never far from and frequently returning to the wild area. By now it was obvious to me that they were offspring of last year's 'Blues' that had bred on the Bird's-foot Trefoil. In the evening all three settled to roost, head down, on neighbouring grass stems.

The next morning there was steady rain between 5 and 7 am followed by cool, overcast and showery weather which was much needed to get some moisture back into soil that was so dry, for such a depth, after the high temperatures of July, despite occasional showers. A Raven was croaking conversationally below Steepness in the afternoon and the evening revealed Roe deer grazing nearby.

After a chilly night (6°) the 11th opened to a clear golden sunrise and a fine, warm summer's day. My three Common Blues were still spending their time on the flowers in the wild garden until mid afternoon when I saw the male suddenly flip into the air and speed off across neighbouring gardens into the meadows beyond, presumably in search of new flowers and new lady friends. The two females remained faithful to their patch and roosted that night on grass bents.

A milder night turned into a cool day of heavy showers culminating in a spectacular thunderstorm about 5.30 pm on the 12th. I was busy in Deddington and kept an eye on the storm as it developed through the afternoon. It grew from a distant bank of cloud on the NE horizon which, by the time I surmised it was over Brackley, had developed into a huge, gloomy, turbulent cloud, deluging heavy rain that resembled a purple fog,

across a broad front. In a much shorter time, a similar, but less extensive storm had been developing to the NW and this too exhibited visually turbulent swirling cloud. These two systems were converging at an angle, I would say, of about 120° – and they met directly over Deddington! The turbulence of these colliding air masses was awesome to watch, and it generated enormous noise with flashes of lightning across the clouds, but very few discharges to earth. The larger storm from NE initially overcame the motion of that from NW, but eventually the whole appeared to unite in a great rotation which was swept away by the general, persistent airflow from NW.

During this stormy period, the more typical Common Blue female disappeared (I suspect in search of pastures new). The distinctive brown female remained and in warm sunny spells busied herself depositing eggs under the leaf buds of Bird's-foot Trefoil. I was fascinated that she returned night after night to roost on the same grass bent, always head down, facing the wind.

As I was finishing a late lunch about 2.45pm on 14th, I looked up to see a strange bird sitting unsteadily on the telephone wires in Hempton Road. I could see it was brownish with a paler underside, about the size of a recently fledged Magpie. It had a small head and a strangely long tail which it continually flicked sideways. I rushed for my binoculars and returned as it flew, somewhat hawk-like but with its head held up, across my garden, confirming my suspicion that it was – a young Cuckoo!

The remaining Common Blue was again ovipositing all day on Trefoil, but I could not locate her roosting when evening came.

On the hot, but breezy afternoon of 16th, I chanced upon a single female Holly Blue flitting about the flowers of Ivy on a wall in Lower Street. It is this second brood of these butterflies that lay their eggs on Ivy, the eggs of the first brood are laid on the buds of Holly.

On returning home, Bas Butler and I had arranged to investigate the contents of the artificial House Martin nest on the NE corner of my house, now that the young had flown and the nest had not been in use for nearly a fortnight. There was a good base of hair and plant fibres with a few feathers and, judging by the degree of compaction of this material and the quantity of feather-scale it contained, there had been at least one successful fledging. However, there were still two whole tiny white, infertile eggs still there, so, given this fact and the uncertain, faltering start at nesting, I think this was probably a first time attempt by a new breeding pair. Hopefully they will return in 2011.

During our investigation, a Buzzard was mewing peevishly over Steepness – a very juvenile noise.

On 17th the sun broke through in early afternoon and quickly became very hot and humid. This produced a spell of afternoon storms, but these didn't prevent a Raven 'kronking' on Steepness between rain bouts. The storms ended with another great thunderstorm passing just east of the Barfords, between 5.30 and 6.30 pm. Finally, about 7 o'clock, a Raven was seen flying SW at a great height toward Irondown.

Next day that same distinctive female Common Blue reappeared in my wild garden, but now bearing a little damage around the wing edges. Meanwhile the rapidly progressing House Martin young in the SE artificial nest were very noisy and constantly demanding food through the nest entrance hole.

The 19th saw the onset of a very active 'Low' moving NE. By now there many juvenile Goldfinches and Blue Tit families in our gardens, replacement broods from the many failures destroyed by the erratic extreme weather of May – June. There were also young Green Woodpeckers all over the villages and every green space seemed to contain a family. Sadly, the same could not be said of Green Finches and Chaffinches which were in my experience, non-existent.

Three of the Steepness/Ilbury Buzzard family decided to take a family outing, calling and circling as they gained height to finally disappear in the direction of Combe Hill.

Following an overnight wind change to SW, the sun broke through a heavy overcast around mid-morning on 21st and startled eleven juvenile House Sparrows busily feeding on fallen flower seeds in my garden. This was a good number given the species' sorry plight of recent years. A hot humid afternoon found my now rather battered Common Blue still in residence, and joined by a new female! In addition, they were joined by a female Small Copper butterfly, brilliant with metallic copper forewings glinting in the sun, contrasted against orange and mid-brown hind wings. A Buzzard was calling over Fernhill as heavy rain and high wind set in at 5.30pm putting a stop to the day's proceedings.

Next morning, a clear, cool, very still sunrise revealed everything a'glitter with the night's raindrops. In the hot clear sun of the morning I was lucky enough to see an immature Kestrel approaching high from Steepness. He was being harried unmercifully by a Carrion Crow that snatched repeatedly at his tail feathers. Continually squealing in fear, he refused to be bullied by the Crow and eventually managed to outfly the big bird, soaring out of its range, instead of diving for

cover. That's gutsy! There was intense rain overnight with very thick mist on high ground.

On 23rd, Bas Butler brought round a young female Sparrowhawk that had been picked up dead in Robins Close. Its feather condition appeared very good, but it was undersized and completely emaciated. Its unusually small bill was extremely sharp as were its talons and showed no signs of wear. Their substance appeared thin and soft and, as there were no discernable injuries, we concluded it most likely to have starved to death. The torrential afternoon storms continued on westerly winds and a very deep 'Low', moving through quickly, set in on 24th bringing rain throughout the afternoon and night of 25th, but not before I had seen a very large, healthy hen Sparrowhawk at Swere villas, as I was driving to Deddington.

The rainfall between the 23rd and 26th amounted to no less than 88mm (3.5") – one month's rainfall in four days!

On the 27th, High Pressure returned and produced a fine sunny day with a northerly breeze, during which five Buzzards were circling over Steepness. They continued to call on the next morning over Steepness/Ilbury.

My, by now very battered, female Common Blue was joined by a freshly emerged male. Neither was interested in the other and the new male quickly flew off through the sunshine toward Steepness.

The 29th saw small numbers of large Gulls (mostly Lesser Black Backs) moving slowly SW under morning overcast preceding a stormy afternoon with near galeforce NW winds.

The development of a large High Pressure system centred on the British Isles brought a lovely late summer day on the 30th. Another Small Copper butterfly, newly emerged, was taking nectar from the Scabious in my wild garden. During the afternoon, at our Church Fete in the Manor gardens, I was pleased to see a large green Southern Hawker dragonfly (*Aeshna cyanea*) circling the stalls and snatching flies from the shrubbery.

The 31st was another beautiful day – very chilly, just a hint of ground frost – with thick mist on the hills burning off by 9 am. My poor old Common Blue lady spent the day drawing nectar from the Bird's-foot Trefoil flowers, later spending a long time walking and flitting over long grass bents before choosing one on which to roost. This she did as the garden went into shadow at 5.50pm.


And so August slipped into September on an atmospheric high. On the 1st, I stepped out to see if the Common Blue was still there. She was, where I had left her last night. As the sun warmed she slowly revived and spent all morning basking on her roosting bent, very slowly opening and closing her ragged, tattered wings. I checked again after

lunch. She had disappeared. I hope she expired and simply dropped deep into the bottom of the grasses.

Twenty five days is a pretty good innings for a fragile little butterfly. I look forward to seeing her offspring in next year!

Ron Knight

BARFORD PICTURE HOUSE
proudly presents the new season of films for 2010/2011
in
Barford Village Hall



Sat 20 Nov **The Usual Suspects** (1995)
The ultimate thriller. A destroyed boat, dead gang members and only one survivor's account of what really happened... Starring Gabriel Byrne, Stephen Baldwin, Benicio del Toro and Kevin Spacey.

Doors open 7:15 pm - Films start 7:45 pm

Suggested donation towards the upkeep of the Village Hall:
£4 per person per visit or £20 per person for the season.

Non-alcoholic refreshments will be available but please feel free to bring your own wine/tipple of your choice!

The season is kindly supported by AgeUK.

Katharine House News

COFFEE MORNING SUCCESS!

A big Thank You to all those who organised and supported the Macmillan Coffee Morning on Saturday 25 September at **Barford Village Hall**. A fantastic £390* was raised to benefit the Macmillan nurses at Katharine House. Our grateful thanks to all concerned.

(*Note: a further £50 has been received in donations bringing our total to £440!! Ed.)

HANWELL FIELDS CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EVENT

This festive market will take place on **Sunday 14 November at Hanwell Fields Community Centre, Banbury, between 2pm and 5pm**. There will be over twenty stalls present selling cards, books, photography, chocolates and much more. There will also be refreshments, a raffle and hospice Christmas cards. Part proceeds to Katharine House.

LIGHTS OF LOVE

Our annual Lights of Love Service is scheduled for **Thursday 25th November at St Mary's Church, Banbury**. This will begin at 7pm with the switching on of the lights on the tree in Horsefair, followed by a service of remembrance at 7.15pm. All are welcome to attend.

CHRISTMAS STOCKINGS AND PUDDINGS

Banbury shops must be running low on red and brown wool, considering the numbers of knitted puddings and stockings our wonderful volunteers have sent us! Each pudding is filled with a Ferrero Rocher, whilst stockings contain a fun-size chocolate bar. These miniature festive woollies are now on sale at hospice reception and in our shops, priced at £1 each.

Sarah Brennan
Community Fundraiser





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Christmas Lecture: Discovering the Dinosaurs (Family/Talk)

Thursday 9 December, 6.30pm, £5

given by Dr Paul Barrett, of the Natural History Museum. He will take us on a journey of prehistoric discovery unearthing some of the weird and wonderful creatures that roamed Britain millions of years ago. Don't miss this chance to find out what it's like to have one of the best jobs in the world!

Suitable for 7+

Booking in advance recommended, by phone on 01865 810000 or online on www.scienceoxfordlive.com/whats-on
 Science Oxford Live, St Clements, Oxford



QUIZ NIGHT 2010

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Weds 3rd & 17th November
Weds 1st & 15th December

8.30pm START
10.50pm FINISH

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