

BARFORD NEWS

JANUARY 2016

www.barfordnews.co.uk

Price 50p where sold



2016!

Paul O'Sullivan

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the passing of Councillor Paul O'Sullivan in the weeks leading up to Christmas. Paul was well known and hugely popular within the district as he'd been our District Councillor for over 20 years and become a friend to many, fighting our corner at CDC and making a difference to many who sought his advice and guidance. I had the unenviable task of taking over his mantle as Deddington & Barfords District Councillor as Paul was a mighty act to follow. His assistance and endorsement was invaluable ahead of the district elections in 2014, we campaigned together as he insisted on knocking on doors and standing shoulder to shoulder, introducing me to as many parishioners as he physically could, his enthusiasm and determination remained undiminished, such was his trademark, a kind, gentle and principled man that we'd all come to love and respect.



I, and many within the parish, will miss him dearly. We remained in constant contact and I continued to seek his guidance on many occasions. I would like to extend my heartfelt condolences to Paul's family and friends at this difficult time, it was a privilege to have known him.

Bryn Williams.

The Parish Council would like to echo Bryn's words.

Paul lived in Steeple Aston but felt a great affection for The Barfords, he seldom missed a Parish Council meeting and when he was unable to drive, his son brought and collected him. He supported village fete's, church services and other events whenever he could and was a keen member of the carpet bowls group. He will be sadly missed.

Rodney Hobbs

[Paul was a regular and generous supporter of Barford News too. Ed.]

Barford St John & St Michael Parish Council S137 Grant Applications 2016

Barford St John and St Michael Parish Council sets aside a sum of money each year to grant to organisations in the parish for projects that will be of benefit to residents.

Any organisation wishing to receive a grant in 2016 will need to a) apply to the Parish Council in writing, b) give details of what the money will be used for and c) provide evidence of the financial status of the organisation (e.g. end of year accounts and/or bank statements).

Completed applications and supporting documentation should be submitted to the Chairman of the Parish Council (address below) no later than **15 February 2016**. Applications received by that date will be considered by Councillors at the March 2016 Parish Council meeting and will be approved or rejected by them at the April 2016 Parish Council meeting.

Organisations should note that submission of an application does not guarantee that a grant, or the full amount requested will be awarded.

Application forms are available from Councillor Rodney Hobbs, Pear Tree Cottage, The Green, Barford St Michael, OX15 0RN barfordparishcouncil@gmail.com

Welcome

To new residents

Chris & Sarah Charman,
Church Street

Verity Craig & Richard Palmer
The Green

Paul ?Surtees,
Church St.

We wish you all a happy time
Living here in our lovely villages

200 Club results

December draw

£100, No. 158, Jean Statt

£50.00, No 200, Ann Beesley

£25, No. 61. Michelle Scanlon

£15, No.146, Streeter family

£10, No.104, Barbara Alt

£5, No.177, Mick Dyson

The draw took place at

The Senior Citizen's

Christmas Lunch

Village Hall Committee Changes

After nearly 20 collective years of service and with heavy-hearts Gunilla Treen, Co-chairman, Lucy Norman, Co-chairman & Co-secretary and Jess Romain, Booking Clerk are stepping down from the Village Hall Management Committee with effect from the Extraordinary meeting that will take place in the hall on Wednesday 20 January 2015.

To ensure our village hall's future these roles will need to be filled as soon as possible with any handover beginning immediately.

Please contact Lucy Norman on 337678 to discuss further.

Gunilla, Lucy & Jess
December 2015

(If you might be interested in getting involved in helping to run this valuable village asset, then please contact Lucy ahead of the scheduled meeting on 20th January. Ed.)

Poppy Appeal 2015

Once more there was another excellent result for the Barfords' Poppy Appeal. The total collection amounted to £701.07 up £13.00 so that is great.

As to the sources of the collection: £461.42 came from door to door collections. The Post Office and The George contributed £55.65, the Remembrance Service £109.00 and there were donations of £50.00 from the Parish Council and £25.00 from The Fernhill Club.

Once again The Royal British Legion thanks all Barfordians for being so generous. It is only by this generosity that the Legion can continue its wonderful and very much needed work. A successful and bounteous Poppy Appeal provides this essential assistance.

Thanks must again go to those uncomplaining and regular volunteers who collected your money: John Langlands, Barbara Greenwood, Jim and Ella Booth, Alison Drummond, Lucy and Angus Norman (who with their usual good will volunteered to cover Barford St. John as well this year), Barbara Alt and Martin Winter. All were very persuasive in encouraging generosity.

As a final point: Helen Honour after 20 years collecting in St. John is hard to replace. If there is anyone in St. John willing to collect for the Legion please give me a call on 01865 338956. I (and Lucy and Angus) would be very pleased. Again thanks to you all.



Bernard Lane.
Poppy Appeal Organiser
for the Barfords

The Barfords Annual Christmas Lunch 2015

SIXTY-SIX PEOPLE ENJOYED another very successful Barfords Christmas Lunch on the 28th November. The menu was Celeriac soup, salmon with pesto, bacon and potato with green salad; fruit salad and cream; mince pies; christmas cake and coffee or tea. The atmosphere was wonderful, with the hall beautifully decorated by the VHMC, the wine flowed freely and, judging from the noise level in the packed hall, everyone enjoyed the occasion.

A huge thank you must be said to everyone who worked so hard to make the day such a success. Firstly to Maggie Eden, Jim Booth, Philip, Emma and Will Brodey for setting out and laying the tables. Next, a very big thank you to all the waitresses and waiters, who gave up their day to serve the food and wine, and stayed behind to clear up. These were: Liz Callow, Grace Palmer, Glynnis Eastwood, Lyn Daly, Sue Broughton, Julia Streeter, Sam, Ami and Lewis Harding, Barney and Connie Neal, Emma Brodey, Rosie and Cicely Best, Jim Booth, Brian and Ellie Dodwell. Another thank you to the Barford fruit salad makers for providing some delicious fruit salads yet again, Aggie Morrison-Booth, Liz Callow, Sam Harding, Sue Broughton, Sally Barber, Barbara Allen, Tess and Brian Dodwell, ICarol Warner, Hazel Neal and Julia Winter. Also we are very grateful to Lorraine Langlands for making and donating the delicious christmas cake, and Sandi Turner for making the excellent mince pies. A big thank you to the parish council for their financial donation, and to those who made donations following last year's lunch.

The final thank you goes to those who gave donations on the day, we were very grateful for these generous donations which will make a good start towards funding the lunch for next year. It is an enjoyable event, both for those invited, and for those who help to run it, and it seems to start off the festive season in just the right way.

Aggie Morrison-Booth, Sarah Best And Mary Brodey

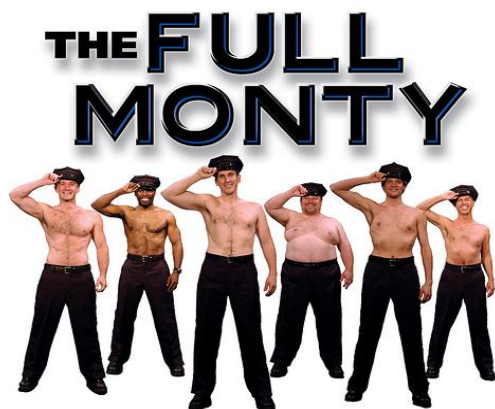
And, on behalf of all those who attended the lunch, I can add a huge 'thank you' to the three lovely ladies who organise and cook for the event every year. Thank you, Mary, Aggie and Sarah for a delicious meal and a super start to the festive season.

At the end of the lunch I did take a lovely photograph of everyone involved on the day. Unfortunately.... I now can't find it, so sorry ladies. Gents, boys and girls, – all that crossing of legs, 'right over left, and then left over right' came to nought!! So, here are a few pictures kindly taken by Maggie Eden, (who always comes to my rescue on such occasions!!):





**BARFORD PICTURE
HOUSE...
FIRST FILM OF 2016
SHOWING AT THE VILLAGE HALL
on January 16th
at 7.45pm**



Released in 1997, This film will get you all laughing, even if you haven't seen The Chippendales, who inspired six unemployed steel workers to follow in their 'footsteps' and form a dance act like you haven't seen before. Are we going to cheer them on?

Filmed in and around Sheffield it really is a film not to be missed.

Doors open 7.15 and film starts at 7.45.

**DOOR KEY FOUND
On the footpath to St. John**



Please contact Mariann

If you recognise it.

338570



Barford News Funding Update

Our envelope appeal raised £700, which will get us nicely into the black. Our printers (Hunts of Kidlington) have offered a slightly cheaper paper, which we used for December issue and which seems to be suitable, so that will save us £400 per year.

Our website costs, after a real struggle, were reduced on the basis that they were so late (3 years!) in sending the invoice.

We have increased our advertising charges (just by £1 each, but that should help, and I have managed to persuade 3 new companies to take adverts too.

So, with the wonderful contribution from the panto this year, reduced printing bills and a little in the bank already, we should be fine for the foreseeable future.

Thank you so much to all of you who responded to our appeal.

Special Thanks must go to Austin, Gwen, VHMC and the Playground Group for including us in the panto profits this year (and WHAT a profit this time!! marvellous)

Caroline and I are truly grateful.

Mariann

Deddington PFSU and Village Nursery

As I write our Christmas festivities are in full swing. The pre-school children and their friends in the F1 class presented their performance of 'Hey Ewe' to a packed audience of parents and friends in Deddington Church. Every one of our amazing 3 and 4 year olds stood at the front and took part in the performance, for which they deserve huge credit. The Nursery children also had a lovely morning on an interactive 'Journey to Bethlehem' with their parents and friends. Just our Christmas parties to come before the big day! Next term our activities include finding out about animals, meeting some pets, and celebrating Chinese New Year.

Happy New year.

Lucy Squires
337484



*Barford
Village Market*

**No Market in January
Next one 21st February**

Thank you for your support
In 2015
Hope to see you again
In 2016

Happy New Year to All!

Winter Walk Reminder

**Don't forget folks
New Year's Day**

We will be having our 'Blow The Cobwebs Away' winter walk. As the title suggests, it will be 1st January, meeting outside the Village Hall. At the end of the walk is a steaming bowl of homemade game soup, with tomato for the veggies.

Be there for 10.30 and bring your family, a friend, the dog, a neighbour, or any late night revellers you come across on your way.

Donations of £5 per person (kids free). All profits go to the Kathmandu Kids Home.

TUESDAY LUNCH CLUB

19th January 2016

Menu

Main Course

Braised Lamb's Liver and Onions

with Bacon and Mashed Potatoes

Or

Pan Fried Chicken Breast

with a Mild Creamy Horseradish and Chestnut Mushroom sauce
served with Roasted New Potatoes

Both above meals served with Savoy Cabbage, Carrots and Broad Beans

Desserts

Apricot and White Chocolate Bread and Butter Pudding

Served with Cream

Or

Warm Sticky Toffee, Pecan and Date Tart

Served with Vanilla Ice Cream

Price £5.00

To book and notify us of your choices
please ring Anne & Mick on 01869 337074
and let us know by **Tuesday 12th January.**

Parish Clerk

Ro Watts, our Parish Clerk has decided to resign from her post.

The council wishes to thank Ro for all she has done over the past 6 years.

Ro has been a first class clerk and we will greatly miss the efficient way she has administered the business of our Parish Council.

If anyone is interested in applying for the post of Clerk to the Barford St John and St Michael Parish Council would they please contact the chairman.

Further details and a job description will be published in due course.

Rodney Hobbs
Chairman
01869 338078

Email: barfordparishcouncil@gmail.com

A TRULY HUMBLING EXPERIENCE

On the 26th November Barbara Alt, Helen Honour, Angus and I, in our roles as Poppy Sellers (Helen retired this year after trudging the streets of St Johns for many years), were invited by the Bloxham branch of the British Legion to tour the poppy factory in London.

During our visit we were shown around the factory where some 7 million poppies are made by hand each year with the remaining 66 million being machine-made in Kent. First stop was the chap who makes the wreaths, yes he's already making them for Remembrance 2016, then we met a lovely man who machine cuts the leaves and lastly we all got to make our very own poppy.....and I must not forget to mention the lovely lunch we had cooked and served to us prior to our tour.

It was such an amazing experience, meeting such lovely people who have struggled or may still be struggling with day-to-day living, enjoying their work, truly inspirational.

And lastly a big thank you to Bernard Lane and Lynne from the Bloxham Branch for organising this event. Well done.

THE VISION:

To help disabled veterans find meaningful, rewarding and sustainable employment – either directly as an employee (in the Factory), or indirectly (by supporting them into employment elsewhere).

Lucy Norman



Lest We Forget.

USE YOUR TALENTS TO HELP US RAISE MONEY



FOR
THE CHURCH
NEPALESE ORPHANAGE
BARFORD NEWS

Parable of Talents Update

In October, nearly twenty people took the £10 that the church was offering and have committed to make that £10 grow as much as possible. The money raised will be shared equally between The Nepalese Orphanage, Barford News and the Church.

A lot of great ideas are coming forward ranging from growing flowers and plants and selling them, to offering lunches, dinner parties or cream teas. Other ideas include a photo competition with the winning pictures used to create a calendar for 2016, making and selling village notelets and acting as 50:50 seller on eBay.

I'm sure there will be many more ideas in the coming months and it is still not too late to ask for your £10 note and join in the fun!

Regards

Tony Elvidge, 338214,
elvidgetony@gmail.com



1st Barford & Deddington Rainbows

We enjoyed the run up to Christmas, making Mexican God's Eyes as Christmas decorations, which were easy once we got the knack, and with an evening playing team games. We had a DVD night with popcorn and juice at Squirrel's house during the pantomime (I'm still finding popcorn!) and finished with a party, organised by Amy from Deddington Guides as part of her Baden Powell Award. She did an amazing job and the girls loved making their own crackers and playing lots of party games. We said a sad goodbye to Katie, Lois, Ella, Evie and Charlotte, but look forward to Daisy, Mazey, Isabella, Katie, Jessie and Polly starting on January 15th. Very sadly, with Charlotte goes Bumblebee (AKA Kayt) who has helped every week for several years now. We will all miss her, and Otter who has been helping this term, and thank them both very much for their time and support. The unit operates with a waiting list, so if your daughter is interested in starting Rainbow Guides (girls aged 5-7 years) please google 'Girlguiding join us' and complete the simple enquiry form. This will add them to our waiting list.

Hazel Neal
hmkn@sky.com

Down on the farm

The wet weather has prevented ploughing the last field which will have to wait until it dries up a bit. I dislike rain. Not for its wetness so much as because, other than sneaking off to the workshop or contracting an unpleasant illness, I have no excuse for avoiding paperwork. The in-tray overflows with forms, demands, questionnaires and other bits and pieces put there weeks ago in the hope they might somehow disappear.

A huge spider regards me moodily from the middle of a web it has slung between the computer and the filing cabinet; my intrusion is clearly unwelcome.



The first job is to get the waste basket handy because it is surprising how much stuff in the in-tray shouldn't have been put there in the first place.

Then there is filing; that always thins the pile. That leaves the nitty gritty; DEFRA forms wanting to know how many acres of this, that or the other I have planted, pig and sheep population, people employed, etc; veterinary records to update, census and other forms to complete.

Some of this nowadays can be done 'on line' which avoids interminable waits on the 'phone listening to dreadful music occasionally punctuated by a metallic voice telling you that you are in a queue for a real person.

Livestock movement records are now electronic but you still have to have paper copies, and a book recording movements in case the humourless inspector calls. I often wonder who actually notices that we have logged on to report taking a pig to Cirencester market aside from perhaps a couple of hackers and someone at GCHQ.

The vet book also needs updating to list products used, their retention period, dose rate, product sell by date, etc. This involves unscrewing lots of crumpled bits of paper scribbled on at the time and trying to get them in the right date order.

When it comes to this sort of stuff I have a poor attention span; my parents were told this by several schoolteachers, and it's true that I could always easily find more interesting things to concentrate on than Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, Laws of Relativity or Archimedes Principle: after all it shouldn't take an ancient Greek egghead to tell you that getting into the bath is likely to send surplus water down the overflow pipe.

Ah, here's one from Grundon demanding a list of all the things I plan to put in their bin and, as usual, leaving only enough space in the box for something like 'anything I no longer need' – which is tempting, but only risks further communication.

Another form from the Home Grown Cereals Authority asks about cropping plans and tells me that the UK has a 3.5 million tonne wheat surplus. I am always annoyed by round figure statistics; after all how can they be so precise.

Anyway the HGCA got this one wrong because I didn't tell them about a couple of tonnes of wheat I kept back for the chickens!

Ah, the rain droplets have stopped abseiling down the window pane; time to go and do something more interesting. The surly spider will be equally relieved.

Tony Collier
Iron Down Farm

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

THE HAT BOX

With Christine Abel

Hat Hire With The Personal Touch
Come and try some different
Styles – find the perfect
One for you!



**Please Join us at our meeting
On Wednesday
13th January
7.30pm in the Village Hall
Visitors £4.00**

Want to see the Barford News photos in colour? Then take a look at the magazine's website version: <http://www.barfordnews.co.uk>



And don't forget you can keep up to date with village events on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/pages/Barford-St-Michael-St-John/76830272830

Shepherds & Bakehouse Charity

Charity Commission Registration No: 309173

The Trustees were pleased to award grants to six young people from The Barfords last year; we wish them well as they study towards their future careers.

The trust has supported local students to pursue a wide range of career paths. The original funding is invested and each year we use the income to provide grants.

Sadly low interest rates affect how much we can offer and we are conscious that students of today are likely to face substantial tuition fees as well as increased maintenance and travel costs.

WE NEED TO ADD TO THE SUM OF MONEY ON DEPOSIT IN ORDER TO INCREASE THE GRANTS WE CAN MAKE FOR GENERATIONS TO COME. THE CHARITY CAN CLAIM AGAINST DONATIONS MADE THROUGH GIFT AID WHICH MAKES MOST DONATIONS GO FURTHER.

COULD YOU CONSIDER:

MAKING A ONE OFF DONATION?

SETTING UP A STANDING ORDER FOR A REGULAR PAYMENT?

REMEMBERING US WHEN YOU WRITE YOUR WILL?

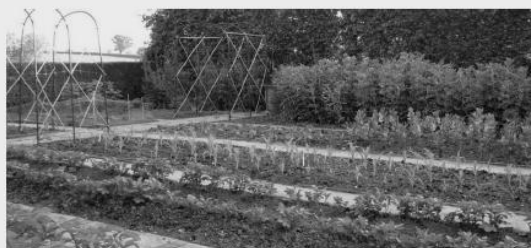
Every pound received will directly help our local young people so please contact the clerk to the charity if you are interested in supporting us.

Carole Coppin - Barn Elms, The Green, BSM
01869 338937 carole.coppin@hotmail.co.uk

North Oxfordshire Organic Gardeners



Meet in St Mary's Parish Rooms, Church St. Chipping Norton.
1st Wednesday each month at 7.30pm in the winter,
visiting local gardens in the summer months.
Visitors £3, members £1. Annual membership £10



Our programme for 2016 includes the Chief Executive of Garden Organic, Butterflies of Oxfordshire and Gardening in Raised Beds from Charles Dowding. Summer trips to gardens in Bledington, Cadmarton, North Aston, and Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

Website: www.noog.org.uk Contact: Tracy 01295 780710



Dates for your diary!!

24th January 2016

28th February 2016

March – Date to be confirmed

24th April 2016

**Join us at BSM village Hall
3pm – 4.30pm**

Activities, Chat, Food & Fun!

Please ensure, that for the time being children attend with a parent or allocated responsible adult.

We are currently unable to be solely responsible for a child due to Safeguarding, DBS checks and The Church of England laws for running public events.

Many Thanks for helping us to protect your children.

NOTES FROM OUR POTTING SHED



We plan to have another **members only** event this year in the spring.. The second of a few 'private' **Nosey Gardens** visits.



There is one garden opening to date
If you wish to join us on the next visit, or would be prepared to open your garden for a peek
Contact Linda Newbery on
.....L.newbery@btinternet.com.....

A REMINDER ...

We are visiting **Steane Park Garden** in Northamptonshire. Our visit is confirmed for **June 4th 2016** at 2.30 pm with a gardener to show us round.. More details to follow but we would need a group of **10** people. This stunning garden is located just outside Brackley close to the borders of Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. It is situated adjacent to the site of the old medieval village of Steane, which is mentioned in Domesday book. Steane Park Garden is approached via parkland, with an abundance of classic trees and a smattering of wild flowers. The sense of history is strong with a beautiful church, built by Thomas Crewe in 1620 adjacent to the lake and ancient stew ponds. The attractive formal gardens, governed by a stunning copper beech and a classic cedar of Lebanon, leads to a more relaxed wooded area next to the lake, with wandering paths, wild flowers and an amusing folly. The effect is one of rural peace and calm. Booking details to follow next year.

GARDENING TIPS for JANUARY

The coldest month, your garden could need protecting from frosts, gale-force winds and heavy rain. Check stakes, ties, fleeces and other supports for damage and consider moving plants to sunnier positions to maximize light. Don't forget to keep feeding the birds, food is scarce for them over winter. You can also start planning next year's vegetable plot.

Recycle your Christmas tree by shredding it for mulch; Ventilate the greenhouse on sunny days; Dig over any vacant plots that have not been dug already; Repair and re-shape lawn edges; Inspect stored tubers of *Dahlia*, *Begonia* and *Canna* for rots or drying out; Prune apple and pear trees; Start forcing rhubarb; Plan your vegetable crop rotations for the coming season; Keep putting out food and water for hungry birds; Prepare a polythene shelter for outdoor peaches and nectarines, to protect them from peach leaf curl

Did you know ?

That the colourful wrappers of **Quality Street sweets** are compostable? In case you have been eating any over Christmas, they are made from cellulose, derived from wood pulp, so rather than chuck them in the bin with your Christmas wrapping paper place them on your compost heap!

Bye for now and we hope you were given some 'gardening friendly' presents.



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Spade and Fork



Girlguiding UK
girls in the lead

Deddington Guide Report

Onesies and PJ's were the order of the day for "Film Night". We split into two groups according to age and spent a lively night watching a film, eating snacks and drinking pop in the comfort of the leaders homes. Always a very popular annual event.

Since then each patrol put on a short play or gymnastics routine, much enjoyed by all. These activities concluded the "Go for it" badge for each patrol.

To finish the term, we decorated savoury biscuits with healthy salad ingredients etc. We completed some badge work and played some very energetic games.

We rounded off the term with glass painting and making table decorations and enjoying lots of games and fun at our Christmas party.

A happy Christmas to all, and every good wish for the New Year.

Maggie Rampley. 01295 810069

Marion Trinder. 01869 340806

Catherine Blackburn

P.S. We meet on 5th January from 7pm to 8pm only, for dance and drama fun to start the term.

New Year Brain Teazer

1. Which charity in 1949 was the first to produce a Christmas card? Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, now called ?
2. What red-blooming Christmas plant came originally from Mexico?
3. Brandy is made from distilling what?
4. Which famous comedy double-act partner made the first ever UK mobile phone call, New Year's Day, 1985?
5. White Christmas, a cake made of coconut, crisped rice and dried fruit, is popular in which country?
6. Who is the narrator in the 2000 film The Grinch Who Stole Christmas?
7. Pine needles are said to be a good source of which vitamin?
8. Choirboy Peter Auty sang the film version of which song later recorded as a hit record by Aled Jones?
9. What drink invented by Francis Showering has a fawn mascot?
10. What creature, noted for feeding on its berries, is linked by name to the mistletoe plant?
11. In which Christmas carol does this line feature: "Bring me flesh, and bring me wine, bring me pine logs hither"?
12. What is the birth sign of people born on 25 December?
13. 'Full of Eastern Promise' is an advertising slogan of what exotically positioned chocolate product?
14. Which author and creator of Jekyll and Hyde, gave his birthday by formal deed to Anne Ide because she disliked her own birthday of December 25th?
15. Christmas Crackers was the first Christmas edition of which popular UK comedy series.
16. What song topped the UK charts at Christmas in 1957 and in a medley version in 1978?
17. Which hugely popular actor was born on Christmas day 1899?
18. What is the name of Dorothy Gale's dog in The Wizard of Oz?
19. What is a baby Turkey more correctly called, other than a chick?
20. What Christmas-time song did James Pierpont compose in 1857?
21. What is the title of biggest selling Christmas single, globally
22. What Christmas item takes its name from the old French word estincelle, meaning spark?
23. What Paul McCartney hit song video featured the First World War Christmas Truce meeting of German and British soldiers in no-man's land between the front line trenches?
24. What drink advert launched the slogan 'The Right One' in 1970?
25. In the song The Twelve Days of Christmas, how many pipers are there?

Answers on Page 17

Alice In Poundland

Barford Pantomime – 2015

After a break of six years the panto roared into life once more. It began with a meeting in July 2015, which was the opportunity for anyone interested in getting involved to let us know what they might like to do as cast, crew, band, admin, wardrobe etc...The Village Hall Management committee and the Playground Committee rallied to assist and there was no going back!

When we reconvened in September we had a group of almost 40 villagers raring to go, with 27 of those on stage (including the band). What a fantastic response and a wonderful testament to the energy and goodwill of this village and peoples' willingness to get stuck-in and throw caution to the wind for the benefit of others amusement. And this has also translated into the money raised; when all was said and done and paid for, the panto had generated a fabulous £2,535.50! These proceeds will be divided as follows:

- **£ 1,267.75 to the Playground Committee for the for the Homeless Children and Mother Centre (HCMC)**
- **£633.87 to the Village Hall**
- **£633.87 to the Barford News.**

The funds sent to the HCMC help keep approximately homeless 25 kids in a home and give them the invaluable opportunity to get their lives back on track. The Village Hall and Barford News are both vital village resources and its excellent that the panto can support them both this year: not only does the panto pay its way in terms of standard rental to the Village Hall but the amount handed over makes an additional donation to the upkeep of the hall.

But whilst the fundraising is a big part of the panto, more than anything it's about people coming together to enjoy themselves; about parents watching their children take on a new challenge; or parents and children working on something together. This will be an experience the children will never forget – after all they probably don't often get to see their Dad dress up as Dodo or Grand-Dad wearing a bodice covered in Bakewell tarts. Hopefully one day they will happily tell their own children of the craziness that happened in the village hall at Christmas.

Many have asked "how do you make the panto?". So here's a whistle-stop tour: we use a professional framework that Gwen and I are familiar with from our 'day' jobs and we aim to treat the whole experience as much as possible like a professional show; a key thing we bear in mind is nurturing new and untested talent that will develop at a different

pace across the cast, whilst keeping it interesting and challenging for those with more experience. As the writer and director my contract with the people wanting to perform is a simple one: if you turn up each week (and commit to learning your lines!) then I will write you a part that is within your capabilities. In September the process of making the show began with what we call a 'devising process': this lasts for about 6 weeks, that's 6 x 2 hour sessions. I'd decided on Alice in Poundland (Wonderland's 'austerity years') as a starting point, as the original Alice In Wonderland and Looking Glass narratives offered up lots of rich characters and also the scope for us to weave our own Barfood magic into the story.

During the devising, various improvisations are set up to generate images and very short story lines; in parallel with this we map out the design with our virtuoso set designer/painter, Jeff Elliott, and he starts working his magic with paint, ably supported by others working behind the scenes. After this period I spend a couple of weeks writing the script, incorporating the most relevant material generated during the improvisations, ensuring I have enough parts for everyone and that the story as a whole flows and has a clear arc from the beginning to the end. Once the script is delivered it's all about people learning their lines; working out how things will be done on stage so that the story leaps off the page and into life; working out the costumes and props for each character; mapping out the movement and the use of props' and integrating the music and the set. We work across the two weekends prior to the final week and then each night of the week leading up to the first performance. So it's quite a substantial commitment from everyone.

This year we were thrilled to have many new people involved and to have more help behind the scenes and we want to say particular thanks to: Gunilla Treen who was a Wardrobe and Props Mistress par excellence; to the ace Admin team of Lucy Norman and Sarah Thornley; and to David Crowther the panto's long-standing (and 'long suffering') civil engineer AKA Stage Manager, who once again rose to the challenge of helping us create some 'magical' moments. And that is to name just a few of an ensemble that both on and off stage was unfailingly generous and pulled together brilliantly. Thank-you all, it has been a pleasure!

And finally it would all be pointless without an audience so a special thank you to all those who came to see it. We all appreciate it and as one friend remarked to me afterwards, 'It's amazing, half the village are in it and the other half come and see it!'

Many thanks
Austin and Gwen





NATURE NOTES 144

AT THE END OF OCTOBER I wondered what surprises November would bring . . . I think we had only one, and that was on the 1st! That day the highest ever November temperature recorded in the U.K. was reached at 22°! This was achieved in Wales (sorry, I can't remember where). I noted only about 18° in the Barfords, but still warm enough for the 11th month.

A few Fieldfares and Redwings had been seen in October, but I spotted my first Redwing flying west and calling over Barley Lane on the 1st. Fog (which was to be a feature of early November) occurred with dense drifts through the night, persisting through the 2nd, although more moderately, resulting in a temperature max. of 11.5°. It was the 2nd when I noticed my first little group of Fieldfares, in the Ash tree behind Townsend in St. Michael.

The Jet Stream was now crossing directly over the U.K. and drawing warm air up from N. Africa in a succession of Low Pressure areas on S to SE winds. Temperatures ranged around 13° to 14° (day) and 8° to 10°(night). The weather ranged between windless drizzle and lashing storms, however, miserable overcast predominated.

By the 3rd the sudden influx of Blackbirds, Dunnocks and other small birds had dispersed. Tawny Owls were noisy around Steepness on the 5th, but otherwise, apart from activity around bird feeders, Nature was out of sight for the rest of the first week.

A brilliant, fiery sunrise on the 9th slowly turned orange and disappeared under gloomy, solid overcast. An accompanying boisterous SW wind carried a noticeable wind-chill factor, despite a day temperature of 14° and the night at an amazing 15°. The 10th remained gloomy despite a very high, showery SW wind and achieving 15°. Two pairs of Kites stood soaring on the gale beyond Irondown, with another Kite at Barley Lane/B4031 junction, and a Buzzard over Steepness surprisingly doing likewise . . . Buzzards are not happy about hard work!

The night of the 11th dropped to 5.5°, but on the 12th, a bright sunrise developed into a warm sunny morning. I watched a brown-tailed bumblebee (*B. terrestris*) a big queen, gathering nectar from my Mahonia. I must believe that she was starting a nest due to the fine mild weather. Sadly, she can't last when the weather turns wintry.

Many Rooks had now completed the rebuilding of their nests and were acting as if preparing to lay eggs. Ridiculously unfortunate are the only words I can find! This is March behaviour, not November. The result could be a disaster next Spring. However, I was delighted when a late Red Admiral

butterfly settled with wings spread wide, sunning himself on the glass in my back door. Beautiful!

On the 13th a cool SW blow set in with early drizzle. The sun appeared about 1pm giving a pleasant, but chilly afternoon and another night of 5.5°.

The mad mix of weathers continued – the 14th gloomy and chilly, then wet after midday at 8.5° – the 15th was overcast, dry and with a very mild near galeforce W wind, giving 15° (day) and 9° (night).

The 16th to the 19th were similarly erratic weatherwise, but generally very mild. Winds were in a westerly quarter, from breezy to gusty gale force, mainly overcast with sporadic drizzle and squalls.

On the 20th, a dry morning with patchy sun on a westerly wind developed into a beautiful, sunny afternoon. However, the evening became steadily colder as the wind veered north. This brought freezing air bursting down from the Arctic with sleety rain and rising, bitter wind. Nature went even deeper into cover as temperatures dropped to 4°(day) and –3°(night) on the 21st and 22nd. Through the bitter wind of the 21st there was a day-long, clear, heatless sun. The night gave brilliant views of the stars, especially of course, of Sirius and Orion.

On the 22nd, the wind was backing NW, with hazy sun and very light airs. I met Mike Budd along Townsend, and he told me of the birds coming to his feeders – up to 4 Greenfinches, 12 Gold Finches, plenty of Blackbirds, Dunnocks and Blue and Great Tits. It's always interesting – and valuable – to get other's experiences.

On the 23rd we began to feel the influence of a huge High Pressure area stretching SW out into the Atlantic. After a night's sharp frost, a red sunrise produced a fine, windless day of patchy high cloud. The temperatures began to rise slowly, from 6°(day) on the 23rd to 9.5° on the 27th. Apart from a drop at night to 3° on the 27th, conditions from then to month's end were fairly steady, picking up to 11°(day) and 5.5°(night) on the 30th.

As usual, through the cooler months, the most noticeable wildlife tends to be birds of prey. They cannot rest; they have to hunt to catch their food or they will die; this applies to all exclusive meat eaters.

As a consequence of this situation, I noted, on the 23rd, a Kite over Ilbury Hill, 4 Kites over Hempton village and one at Swere Villas. Next day, a Kite was circling over St. Michael and a Kestrel was watching from the top of an electricity pole near Spring Hill Farm. On the 25th a Great-spotted Woodpecker was searching the cracks on a

telegraph pole in Townsend, and on the 28th, 2 Kites were foraging over St. Michael.

November had been an interesting month weatherwise. We had all enjoyed the presence of the female Mute Swan at the Post Office, and the occasional Heron and Canada Geese on the adjacent moats. But it was an erratic, changeable month, generally too warm and windily boisterous; unfortunately a possible foretaste of future Novembers.

And so, into December! I'm afraid my max/min thermometer failed and I've not yet found a suitable replacement, so temperature records will be sparse.

The month started with the approach of an extensive Cold Front streaming up from SW and moving slowly eastward over the first week.

The 1st dawned on a light overcast which thinned to reveal a much higher mackerel sky above. Then a strong, mild SW breeze brought heavy overcast, until it slackened and patchy blue sky appeared from mid-afternoon. The morning of the 2nd reversed the order, with blue sky and sun clouding over through afternoon. I watched a flock of about 40 Starlings in Barley Lane, near the B4031 junction, around noon. This is still the largest flock I have seen near the Barfords to date.

Overnight rains introduced the 3rd. It became dry but retained an all-day heavy overcast, with more rain at night. The remainder of the first week was similar but, by the 6th, the temperatures had risen to 11° by both day and night.

Over the 7th, 8th and 9th the breeze remained SW. All three days enjoyed bright sunshine, bringing temperatures of 13°(day) and 9°(night). They also brought out the birds – more than I've seen for a long time. I encountered 2 Kites at Hempton, one over Steepness and one over St. Michael's churchyard. Also in the churchyard were, wonderfully, a male and female Kestrel, obviously a pair. There was also a Mistle Thrush, Long-tailed, Great and Blue Tits, Goldcrests, Greenfinches, Gold Finches and Chaffinches.

High Pressure to the S was now holding back a succession of Lows to the NW. Their influence was felt on the 10th as a fine start over-ridden by rain and a chill breeze. The rain lasted overnight and into the afternoon of the 11th, with temperatures of 8.5°(day) and 3.5°(night).

On the 12th LP was in full control, bringing cold showers throughout the day. The SW wind became savage and squally mid-afternoon and there were overnight showers at a chilly 4°. The 13th and 14th were overcast, almost windless, with drizzle. Mist developed on the 13th becoming thick, patchy fog at night. The fog cleared by morning of the 14th, but chilly rain through afternoon stopped as the

wind backed to S with sullen, pink cloud edges at sunset, and a mild night of 8°.

Because of this weird, mainly mild weather, we can hear the occasional Blackbird, and even Song Thrush in full song, usually in the evenings. Robins, Dunnocks, Tits are active at our feeders: Goldcrests and Long-tailed Tits work along our hedgerows, and finches flick around, and to and from, trees. In the last few days I have even seen a male Greenfinch perform breeding season display flight! Despite a few larger flocks of Redwing and Fieldfare, numbers are low locally – a similar status still holds for Starlings. Rooks that were rebuilding nests out of season in November, can be seen at dusk with one bird sitting on the nest, tail and bill visible, whilst the other is settled for the night about half a metre away, on a supporting branch. . . Eggs, I would say. So, with garden flowers such as Roses, Daffodils and Primroses in full bloom, what are we to expect through 2016?

HOPE for rational weather at Christmas and even more so, for rational weather through 2016.

Best Wishes for the Festive Season and thank you for your contributions.

Ron Knight

BRAIN TEASER ANSWERS

1.UNICEF (originally the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, now called United Nations Children's Fund)

2.Poinsettia(Euphorbia Pulcherrima)

3.Wine

4.Ernie Wise

5.Australia

6. Anthony Hopkins

7. vitamin? C

8. Walking in the Air (from The Snowman)

9. Babycham

10. Mistle thrush

11. Good King Wenceslas

12. Capricorn

13. Fry's Turkish Delight

14. Robert Louis Stevenson

15. Only Fools and Horses

16.Mary's Boy Child (Harry Belafonte and Boney M, respectively)

17. Humphrey Bogart

18. Toto

19. Poult

20. Jingle Bells (or, One Horse Open Sleigh)

21. White Christmas (by Bing Crosby)

22. Tinsel

23. Pipes of Peace

24. Martini

25. Eleven



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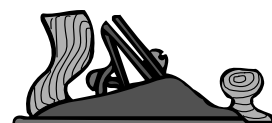
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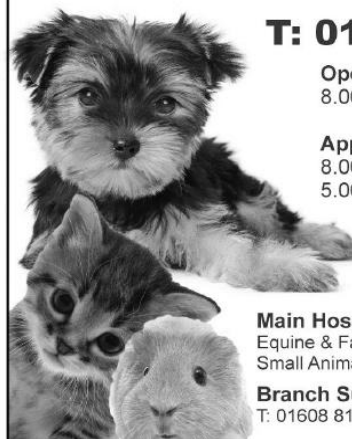


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Tuesdays	Guides (Deddington) Pool night (George) Carpet bowls – Sept - Mar
Wednesdays	Fernhill Club Pub quiz night (George) 1 st week parish council (not August) 2 nd week W.I. meeting 2 nd week – Deddington History Soc. Boys Brigade (Deddington)
Thursdays	Aunt Sally (George) Open cuppa mornings Cubs (Deddington) Scouts (Deddington)
Fridays	Rainbows Whist alternate weeks
Saturdays	Village Market 3 rd week (not Jan or Aug)

3rd Wednesday Village Hall Management Committee

Diary dates

January

1st Winter Walk – starts VH 10.30
13th The Hat Box – W.I.
16th Picture House – Full Monty
19th Tuesday Lunch Flub
20th VH Extraordinary Meeting
24th Messy Church

February

15th – Parish Council Grants – closing date
21st – Village Market resumes
28th Messy Church

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Copy deadline 15th of each month

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Mariann.young@btinternet.com

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CDC website: www.cherwell-dc.gov.uk – Parish Council minutes at www.cherwell-local.com