



Oakley Newsletter



Autumn 2020

Number 83

Look inside for

High Sheriff - One of Our Own

VJ Day Anniversary

Day Centre Update

Warning re Telephone Scam

Back Through Time 1934



Front Cover : Oakley Landscape
By Laura Saunders

The Oakley Newsletter

is published quarterly by Oakley Parish Council and delivered by parish councillors free to every house in Oakley – about 1,000 copies.

Opinions and information

in the Newsletter, both text and adverts, may not be endorsed by the Editor or the Parish Council.

Next issue

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Hello Children

look out for
Ten more
little ones



Parish Council News

Autumn 2020

Hello Everyone

How time flies! Here we are with our Autumn Newsletter and I hope everyone is keeping as well as possible during these continuing very strange times when we are all experiencing life so different to the norm. We are however in it together and if we continue to do the right things we will get through it together. Thankfully, for much of the time, the weather has been very kind to us. A couple of the days were uncomfortably hot and now we are experiencing those promised thunderstorms followed by a break in the settled weather pattern with cloud and rain being the norm!

Village Bottle Bank

Residents will remember that many months ago the village bottle bank was removed from the rear of the Bedford Arms and placed at the rear of the Village Hall. At the time of the removal we were not confident that this was an ideal place for the bottle bank to go. In the absence of anywhere better, and by that I mean away from residential properties, the Parish Council decided that the bottle bank was an important resource for the village and we would evaluate its use over a period of time. It has been at that location in excess of 9 months now and many residents have been very respectful with their use, but sadly some people have misused it. The bottle bank will be discussed on the 1st September at the Parish Council meeting. Whilst no decisions will be made until that meeting, should we need to be on the look out for an alternative location please let us know your suggestions. Remember that we do not want it close to residential properties for obvious reasons.

[Editors note - I took my bottles mid-August only to find four smashed bottles on the ground with glass spread over 4 square metres. Very dangerous for children and dogs both of which were ranging freely as I visited. Went back with a brush and only took five minutes to clear up - come on folks!]

Continued on page 3

OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

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Inconsiderate Parking

As I travel around the village I still see a lot of inconsiderate parking. Cars are either too close to road junctions, over dropped kerbs that have been deliberately laid to make life easier for parents with buggies, young children, the elderly and people in wheelchairs, or on the pavement and on the grass verges.

If you have been someone who has done this please do not. If you know someone who does it please tell them to stop. It might make life easier for them but it creates hardship for others.

Only a few days ago I heard from a lady who was walking in the High Street with two dogs and two children when she came to a large white van parked pretty well over the entire pavement. She spoke to the driver who was fitting new windows and could have used the driveway of the house. She said she could not get by without walking in the road and the driver responded by saying he refused to move and she had to get on with it.

Such behaviour is sad and very irresponsible. I wonder what his employer would have thought? The photograph above taken in The Furlong junction with Pavenham Road also shows exactly what I mean by inconsiderate parking, on two counts!

Speed Watch

The village speed watch has been in operation for a few years now providing a useful resource for the village, the Police, the local authority and the community at large.

Currently we have 13 volunteers, all friendly people, but we are always on the look out for more volunteers. The demands are not great, so if you are interested please give me a call.

Social Media

Social media is a very big part of our lives and I am aware that some village issues are raised on social media and discussions then take place.

Where appropriate that is fine and not an issue. I thought that I should point out that where someone wants to bring something to the attention of the Parish Council or raise an issue that they require to be discussed and/or a decision made then there is a correct process. This could be a personal discussion, a letter, an email or a phone call to any Councillor or the Clerk. Alternatively by attending a Parish Council meeting in person, or joining via Zoom at this particular time, and raising the issue during the Public Open Session at the start of every meeting.

The Parish Council cannot make any decisions unless the matter has been discussed in the open forum and the item must have been part of the agenda published one week before the meeting.

Christmas Lights Switch On and Carols

The Christmas Lights Switch On and Carols will take place at 5pm on **Saturday 28th November**.



I think I have covered everything I wanted to, so it just remains for me to say thank you to all those volunteers who have done so much for residents within the village during the last few months.

As usual without volunteers where would society be? I hope you will forgive me for singling out Bill Chalker, our Newsletter Editor who continues to publish a Newsletter that we are very proud of. Thank you Bill.

To everyone thank you for reading the Newsletter and thank you for your continued support. Keep well and keep safe.

Kind regards

Paul Phillips.

BEDFORD BOROUGH REPORT

Since the last newsletter we have seen a bit more of a return to normal, although Bedford Borough's Coronavirus infection rate has remained higher than some of our surrounding local authorities. Thanks to the majority of people listening to the guidance issued by the Borough Council the infection rate is currently falling but they are urging the public not to get complacent.

It has been noted that all across the country it does not take much for an area to have a sudden increase in cases. So please keep staying 2m apart from others, washing your hands and wearing a face covering in busy places, and **help slow the spread of coronavirus.**

There are now two permanent test centres in Bedford: a drive through centre at Borough Hall and a walk in centre in the Prebend Street car park opposite. This facility is for those arriving on foot or bicycle. These are expected to remain for the foreseeable future.

Transport

Works have begun to build a new footbridge over Manton Lane, which will make it easier for pedestrians to cross this busy road, improving road safety and reducing congestion. This new bridge is part of the Transporting Bedford works, which have already seen this stretch of Manton Lane widened with new traffic signals installed to help ease congestion and make the road safer.

Construction work on the foundations of the new bridge has now started, with the bridge expected to be complete and open by the end of the year.

Preparation works to move utilities on Clapham Road are also happening this Autumn ahead of major improvements starting in the new year to help ease congestion in this area. This will see part-time signals introduced on the Paula Radcliffe Way / Great Ouse Way roundabout to help traffic flow better during peak times. The Manton Lane / Clapham Road roundabout will be reconstructed with full-time traffic signals and pedestrian and cyclist crossings. Clapham Road will be widened to help create more space for traffic.

The works to complete the repairs to the bridge over the A6 between Lovell Road & Clapham have finally been completed, with the full strength of the bridge now restored.

It is expected that shortly Network Rail will present their proposed permeant bridge parapet extensions for the Highfield Road bridge. These will now cover the full length of the bridge after it was used for unauthorised access to the tracks. In the short term Heras Fencing is proposed to be installed to secure the parts of the parapets

that have not yet been raised.

Leisure Facilities

Libraries

Bedford Central and Kempston libraries have opened for a new 'Select and Collect' service, as well as for customers to return books they have had on loan during lockdown.

Select and Collect gives customers the opportunity to borrow library books again by making requests based on their favourite genres or subjects, online or via the phone. Library staff will then choose books based on these preferences and issue them. Customers will be notified when they are ready to collect from library entrances during Select and Collect opening times. Please remember that you must wear a face covering when visiting a library, unless you have a legitimate reason not to.

When books are returned they will be quarantined for 72 hours and safety measures have been developed for the selection, issuing and packing of books for collection. Customers will also be able to return the items they have at home to Bedford Central and Kempston libraries during Select and Collect hours. Due dates will continue to be extended for any items already on loan and charges will remain paused for any items that are already overdue.

Leisure Centres

With lockdown measures easing over the summer, various shops and other facilities locally began to open and Fusion Lifestyle and the Council are looking at options for local leisure facilities. The Council have a 10-year contract with Fusion Lifestyle to manage eight leisure facilities on behalf of the authority, which is set to run until February 2024.

In partnership with Fusion Lifestyle, the Council are continuing to work hard to put in place arrangements that will allow the residents of our Borough safe access to the vital services that these facilities provide, whilst ensuring staff are protected also. Fusion Lifestyle have requested significant financial support from the Council to enable them to reopen facilities locally.

Bedford Borough Council is facing a huge financial challenge, with the costs of responding to the coronavirus pandemic creating a funding gap of over £20million in their budget. With responsibility for adult social care, caring for vulnerable children, and statutory duties to keep the roads safe, collect waste, and a range of other services the Council is already facing very difficult decisions in the coming months. Continued :-



There are ongoing discussions between Fusion Lifestyle and the Borough Council, both around the long-term and an interim solution that will enable some leisure facilities to open in the near future.

Green Waste Collections

These have now re-turned to fortnightly collections. These collections were suspended and then reintroduced on a monthly basis to ensure that the bin crews could continue an uninterrupted collection of household waste and recycling, whilst ensuring they could social distance.

Now, with crews stabilised the Council has reintroduced garden waste collections on a normal schedule of every two weeks, with the recycling collections.

You can check your bin collection dates at www.bedford.gov.uk/bins, and the schedule will be back to normal, so if you have a printed calendar for your bin collections this year that will also be correct.



Councillor Jon Abbott

Telephone: 07784 549180

Email: jonathan.abbott71@icloud.com



SYDNEY HOWARD LOVELL MEMORIAL ALMHOUSES AT OAKLEY

The Lovell Homes is a small independent living community comprising two bedroomed bungalows and one/two bedroomed flats

Applicants over the age of 60 are invited to apply to go on the register of interest for a property - priority will be given to those with an agricultural or related background.

If you would like to be considered please visit the website

www.lovellhomesoakley.co.uk

Or contact the Clerk :

Mandy Newton On 07736 466965

Registered Charity Number : 200480

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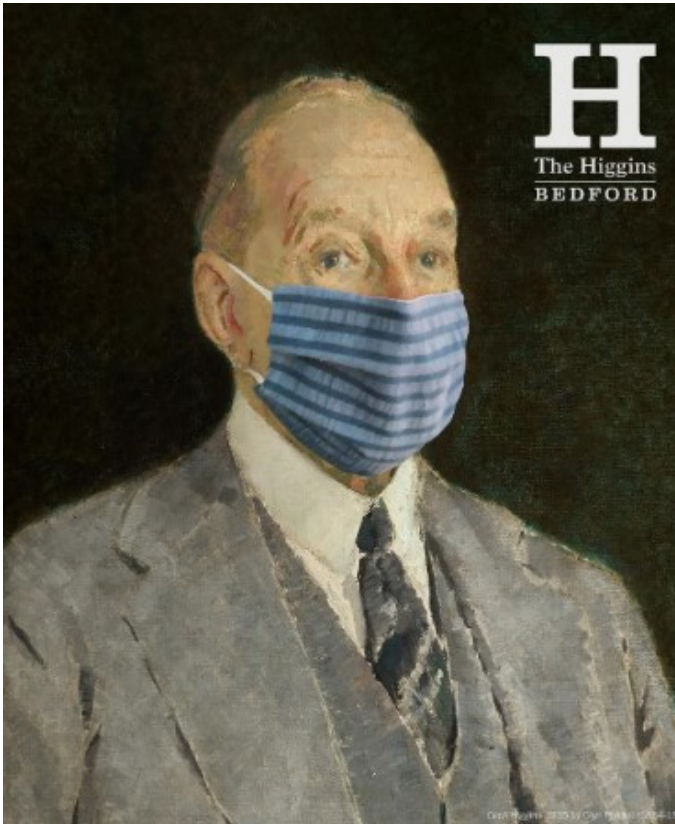
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H
The Higgins
BEDFORD

Pre-book your free ticket online at www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk
Please wear a face covering during your visit

The Higgins Bedford
Castle Lane
Bedford, MK40 3RD

Email: thehiggins@bedford.gov.uk
Website: www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk
or call us on 01234 718618

BEDFORD
HARPUR SQUARE

We are very pleased to welcome you back to The Higgins Bedford.

We have introduced several new measures in line with Government and health guidance to help ensure that you have a safe and enjoyable experience.

Please do not visit if you, or anyone in your household, has had any COVID-19 symptoms in the last 14 days.

Timed Entry

To help manage the number of people in the museum at any one time, capacity has been reduced and visitors must book a free timed entry ticket in advance here.

If you are unable to book online, please telephone the Box Office on 01234 718044 and a member of staff will be able to assist. The phone line will be available Monday to Friday from 11.00am to 3.00pm (phone line open from Monday 24 August). Please note that the Box Office in the Harpur Suite, Harpur Square is not currently open for collecting tickets in person.

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V.J. Day.

Saturday 15 August 2020 saw the 75 Anniversary of V.J. Day marking the surrender of Japan and the end of the Second World War. The Parish Council were privileged to have Mrs Susan Lousada DL, High Sheriff of Bedfordshire, present at the village War Memorial together with many local residents. We broadcast to Facebook Live and together remembered and recognised all those who served and sacrificed their lives in the Far East until that surrender, in awful circumstances, brought an end to the Second World War.

The two minutes silence was observed at 11am following which The High Sheriff laid a wreath. Pat Olney laid a poppy in remembrance of her father who was one of those serving in Singapore. We were also reminded that the late Bill Knight formerly of Middle Farm Oakley, known by many as a lovely gentleman and the village historian, also served in the Far East.



My father-in-law was serving in Burma at that time too, so the whole occasion was very meaningful for our family especially as we were able to include our Grandchildren in the preparations of the War memorial with custodian Dave Ursell in the morning. Then in the afternoon, again at the crossroads, we were able to toast the end of the War and listen to Wartime tunes and songs played by resident Steve Gadsden on his euphonium.

Sadly it was still raining, having started about noon, but not to be beaten we decided to go ahead donning our wet weather gear and armed with umbrellas, drinking glasses, bottles and chairs. Though there were only 12 of us there we made the toast and celebrated as they would have 75 years ago enjoying all of the music played. Thank you Steve. Steve played his euphonium every Thursday evening at 8pm during the Clap for the Carers.

We were delighted to receive two sixteen foot lengths of poppies, each poppy having been knitted or crocheted by members of Oakley WI. They went all around the railings at the memorial. Two more similar lengths decorated the sign at the Bedford Arms. We have placed an order for two more lengths to be draped over the 'roof' at the war memorial for Remembrance Sunday. To the Ladies at Oakley W.I. we thank you so much for your hard work.



Paul Phillips, Chair



Oakley Rural Day Centre

Oakley Rural, The Old School, Lovell Road, Oakley, Beds, MK43 7RX

Tel: 01234 824935 Mobile: 07733 227374

E-Mail: oakleyruraldaycentre@yahoo.com

Web: www.oakleyruraldaycentre.weebly.com

Registered Charity No: 1060283



NEWSLETTER Autumn

Welcome to our latest Newsletter. If anyone has access to the internet please visit our website, www.oakleyruraldaycentre.weebly.com. The site is updated regularly with the latest news from the centre. We also have a Facebook page for anyone who has a Facebook account. This will be updated with the latest news and photographs of events at the centre. The Facebook page can be found at www.facebook.com/oakleyruraldaycentre. We are also producing articles in various publications throughout Bedford and surrounding areas to raise the profile of the centre.

MESSAGE FROM THE OAKLEY RURAL TRUSTEES

Due to the ongoing Covid 19 situation the day centre remains closed at this point.

We are beginning to put together the procedures that we will need to have in place before reopening. We are hoping that this will be in the New year.

It is important that we have those procedures in place for our vulnerable people.

I also wish to thank the Staff particularly Dave, Lynne and Angela for contacting our clients by phone and making sure that they have lots of quizzes, word searches, crosswords, funny stories, interesting facts and recipes to try out plus the jokes which enable them to smile and on occasions laugh out loud. We all look forward to the day when we can welcome back our clients in a safe manner.



NEW WEBSITE AND EMAIL ADDRESS

During the lockdown we have created a new website. The website address is www.oakleyruraldaycentre.weebly.com. We also have a new email address which is oakleyruraldaycentre@yahoo.com.

WHAT WE OFFER

We normally provide a day centre for elderly residents from Bedford and surrounding villages to meet, socialise and partake in various activities such as crafts, quizzes, chair based exercise and at times provide entertainment such as singers and choirs. We also provide tea/coffee and a 2 course freshly cooked lunch.

Unfortunately due to the Coronavirus outbreak we have had to temporarily close the centre until it is safe for us to return. As of August 2020 we are still not in a position to re-open. You can still contact Lynne on the number below for updated information or email the centre at oakleyruraldaycentre@yahoo.com.

For details of costs and advice please contact Lynne on 07733 227374.

Enquiries welcome from Bedford and surrounding villages in North Bedfordshire.

David Swallow

Oakley Neighbourhood Plan

The group has continued working. They did put in robust comments to a possible development in Pav-enham Road and I am pleased to report that that was refused by the Borough Planners.

Borough Local Plan 2040 Call for sites

We have also met and answered all the questions posed by the Borough. We, although in agreement with the main strategy, felt that several areas need further consideration and additions: housing design should be more detailed in terms of room area and there should be an area for working from home, cycle lanes should be incorporated into any development and green spaces are essential. Cycle lanes should be included to access open countryside and biodiversity and climate change policies should also be incorporated.

The Parish Council will also be putting in their comments.

Both Plans will be published on the parish website after the Parish meeting in September.

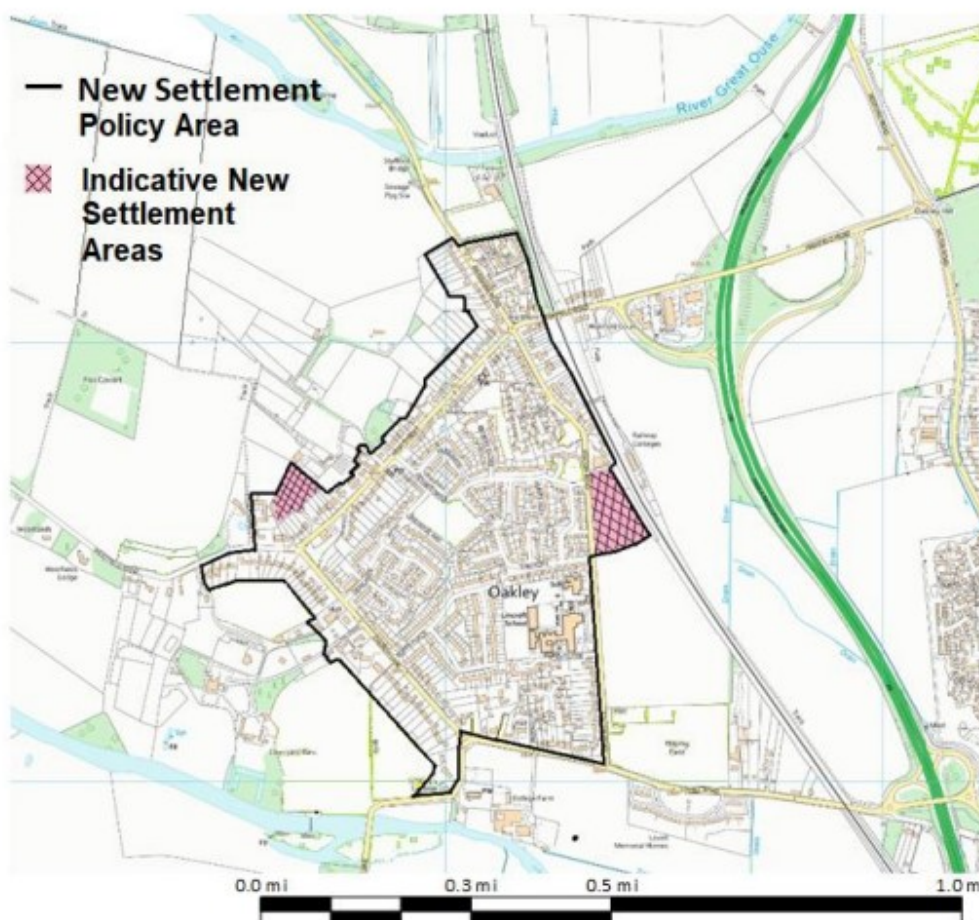
The government has published a Planning White Paper in which there are significant changes to planning policies which will have legal status.

We are looking at this shortly and will be making comments.

Please go to WWW.GOV.UK to find out further information about "Planning for the Future"

Pat Olney

Chair of the NDP group



Map showing additional areas included within the Oakley Settlement Policy Area.



Oakley Educational Foundation

This Foundation exists to assist young people between the ages of 16 and 25, who live in the Parish, with grants towards the cost of books and tools, etc. in furtherance of their education.

Applications are accepted in the months of May and November and must be accompanied by receipts of purchase. Application forms can be obtained from the Clerk, Louise Tunley.

For further information, or for an application form, please contact Louise Tunley on 07917 462213, by post at 19 Goldington Road, Bedford, MK40 3JY or by email at louise_tunley@yahoo.co.uk.

COOL-DOWN APPEAL & THEATRE UPDATE

Since 2013, £243,024 has been raised, for the Warm-Up / Cool-Down Appeal to date. The innovative water-source heat pump-based heating system, utilizing the mill pool, plus the air conditioning in the rehearsal/club room are fully funded and a success.

Now for the last lap! Installation of the air-conditioning in the Auditorium started in mid-August - whilst the theatre is still closed to the public and some pandemic work restrictions have been eased. Of the £67k cost, some £42k has been achieved. So, only about £25k has still to be raised! **Thank you for your valuable on-going support.**



Sharnbrook Mill Theatre are proud to present

In Conversation with Jamie Tyler From Sharnbrook to Shakespeare

Jamie was part of The Mill performing in shows such as Bugsy Malone, Billy and Follies, before heading off on UK Tours, West End engagements and, most recently, several seasons with The RSC. Jamie joins us to talk about his time at The Mill and the training that gave him for the profession. He will also share stories and tips about the industry!



Thursday 4th September at 7.30pm via Zoom

To book your place please email live@sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk

Optional, suggested donation of £5 to assist with the running of The Mill during Covid-19

For more information, please visit www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk

Registered charity number 242164

TO BOOK YOUR PLACE, please email live@sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk soonest!

An optional suggested donation of £5 can be made to The Mill Theatre, (cheques payable to SMTT), to support our theatre during the pandemic-imposed closure. **Other Zoom interviews to follow!**

Please visit www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk/blog for news updates, interesting articles, interviews etc

RECENT POSTS: (AUGUST) * 'From Lambing to Lighting' – an interview with Ricky, our lighting designer. * 'A Slice of Canada' how Madison Violet burst onto the Sharnbrook Mill Theatre stage. (July): * 'Wired for sound' - an interview with Mark Luckin, our sound engineer * 'Wot we learned' – an interview with cast members of *Daisy Pulls It Off* and more...! **Enjoy! - and stay safe.**

Phantom Sprayer

Footpaths are divided into several types: we have metalled footpaths beside the road and then there are Public Rights of Way, Footpaths and Bridleways, where we can take lovely walks around the fields and woods.

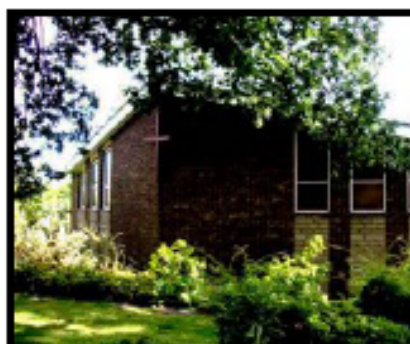
The third type are permissive footpaths, where the farmer or landowner gives permission for us to use areas for walking. Permission of course can be withdrawn on these if people do not respect the privilege. This can be done immediately if the farmer feels it is necessary

These last two types of footpaths are often well looked after by the Landowners who often mow around the edge of a field to make it easy for us to walk. It also makes it safer for our beloved pets in the summer months preventing them picking up those dreadful grass seeds in ears, eyes and between their toes. These of course cause a lot of distress to the dog and also a hole in the pocket when we have to visit the vet for removal of the seeds.

It is only fair to respect the farmers/ landowners whose land we are using by keeping our dogs out of the crop, which they can severely damage, and is the livelihood of the farmer and also our food. To allow the dogs to defecate in the crop is unthinkable.

The summer holidays are with us as I write this and the dogs mess lying around has increased all of a sudden – it had improved in many places. I am not sure whether this is children walking the dogs and not clearing up after their pets, or why else this happens, but please clear up after you dogs and if your children walk the pets, then make sure they also clear up. Please do not leave bags full of poo lying around just dispose in one of the many bins around Oakley. Sometimes it is unbelievable that they are left beside a bin or only a few yards away, rather than just placed inside.





WORSHIP DURING LOCKDOWN

Following changes to government guidelines our churches have started taking steps to re-open for prayer and services. Numbers allowed in church are still limited by social distancing and new ways of worshipping have developed during lockdown which are continuing. Other groups and events are still not taking place in church.

St Mary's St Mary's still offers a weekly Sunday service at 10.30am, and Evensong fortnightly, both via Zoom. The morning service is followed by a further Zoom coffee meeting where people can chat together.

We have started holding services (including Holy Communion) in our church buildings, but as venues and timings are variable it is best to visit our website for up to date details. We ask those who hope to attend to call by the night before, if possible, to let our church wardens know (numbers below). Additionally St Mary's is open for private prayer most Sundays 2-4pm - again, do check the website.

Short online Messy Church sessions will start again in September - please email Sarah if you would like more info.

For links to all services visit our website www.bromhambenefice.org, or to be added to the email list for a weekly Pew Leaflet and links to services and events direct to your inbox please email Sarah.

Oakley Methodist Church offers an emailed service at 10:30am on Sundays, which can also be made available to people as a paper copy. There is also a weekly evening prayer service at 8:30pm each Thursday hosted on Zoom.

We hope to be able to restart some form of services in the church from September onwards, dependant on guidelines.

Messy Church for All will restart in September in some form, dependant on circumstances at the time. Please make sure that we have your email address if you would like to be kept informed.

For information on Methodist Church activities, please contact Jeanette Letch, details below

Contact Details

Rev Catherine Wilson 825665

Church Wardens St Mary's

Hilarie Worley 262166 & Graham Palmer 07710 462535

Administrator Sarah Smale administrator@bromhambenefice.org

Rev Gill Balham 930025

Church Steward Oakley Methodist

Jeanette Letch 825204

jenletch@hotmail.co.uk

MERRI FLOWERS 2020

OK. This has most definitely turned out to be our most challenging flower farming year yet! No-one could ever have predicted such uncertainty. When COVID-19 decided to rear its ugly head we were beside ourselves. Rachelle gave up her full-time job at Unilever in August 2019, so our income became based purely on selling flowers and Christmas trees. By April all of our 2020 Wedding and Event Flower orders were cancelled and our 2020 Pick Your Own Experiences and Workshops had to be cancelled. Thankfully, we still had local florists wanting flowers and the demand for 'Picked For You' instead of 'Pick Your Own' flowers flourished, especially from local Oakley residents.



As we fast forward to August, it is hard to believe how quickly this year has flown. We have delivered flowers for all occasions. Sympathy flowers were by far the hardest to deliver, especially as we are 'in the know' as to what is written inside our handwritten cards. We delivered them with a smile and are extremely grateful to have been chosen to deliver flowers from our farm.



As for the weather... Well what can we say? Heatwaves one week, hailstorms and heavy rain the next. School closure did however mean that we gained two 'volunteer' flower farmers in the form of our sons this year! Home schooling and Flower Farming was a challenging combination to start with. We spent the mornings up the farm watering and planting, then the afternoon home schooling. Without our boy's help, our flowers would have perished in the heatwaves. They have learnt many life skills & even created one of our annual flower plots from seed.

Alas, our 2020 flower season is nearly over, as we plan to have a 'hard stop' at the end of September to take time out to plan for 2021 and convert ourselves into our Christmas Tree Farm. If nothing else, 2020 has made us realise that family & friends come first & we are all capable of adapting to change.

Stay Safe. Stay Positive.

Rachelle Merrill

Summer at College Farm...

Well they say August is one of the wettest months of the year and the weather has certainly put the brakes on harvest at present.

We first had the combine out on 6th July. To be honest I was being hopeful as it was a new machine (toy!) and I was keen to get it working. Within a couple of hours a rain shower passed over so we made our retreat back to the shed! Since then I do not think we have managed two full days harvesting in a row which has been very frustrating. This is due to the dry and hot spring and early summer, then wet July. The crops are all over the place, some ready to harvest, others nowhere near. We have been nibbling away at it and are about 2/3rds of the way there today (17th August). When the weather improves we should soon get it safely harvested.

In between harvest we have been getting on with cultivations, muck spreading, and we are still baling grass as there is more grass now than there was in May.

The situation with Covid seems to have eased a little, most places are reopening which is great and a new normality is beginning. I am still quite wary as I cannot afford to be off, nor have my employees off, at such a busy time of year so we have all been keeping our distance from busier places.

It has been a strange time as with no weddings, parties, or events at weekends there has been little to break the weeks up.

One issue that has annoyed me is the erection of a massive building on top of Manton Lane. One day I looked out of our window and there it was, a huge warehouse on top of the hill, a huge blot on our view. I know many people have also been surprised by this. Obviously as it is not in Oakley we do not get a say. I know we have the village plan which has been voted on, however this is only within our village.

Around Bedford now there are numerous large sites where developers are keen to put houses. The potential size of these developments will have a huge impact on our local area and make it feel very urban. I value the green space between villages and developers are slowly eroding these away.

Oakley cannot, in my opinion, take many more houses. The roads in are not suitable with a low bridge, a narrow bridge and a train bridge. The best solution I think is one large development, a garden village built somewhere with good infrastructure links, then leave our Ouse Valley villages alone!

Farmers wife duties at College Farm...

A few years ago, I dreaded the harvest season to start as you wave goodbye to your beloved for a good month as they work long days, well into the night. I often took dinner out and photographed the combine in action but when you throw a 2 ½ year old into the mix things change quite drastically!

Now harvest is an exciting time of the year, Emily (our daughter) loves watching 'dadda' on the combine and having a ride. To be honest, sitting in the air-conditioned cab has been quite pleasant during the heatwave! The nights do not seem so long anymore and its actually been quite nice to have some 'me' time.

It has also given me the opportunity to think about my range of art and new product ideas (watch this space!). As you may be aware I paint and also work in marketing for a local land and property firm. I have painted the Oakley front cover for the last few episodes. Oakley Church was the first, which is still available to buy, 'Celia' the calf which sold within a matter of weeks (thank you Sue!) and my latest 'Oakley with a view' which is a landscape taken from Highfield Road, in my opinion the best view in the village. The original A4 canvas is available to buy for £175 and limited edition prints start at just £20 for A4 mounted. If you are interested in purchasing these please visit my website ljcreativestudios.com or email me at ljcreativestudios@gmail.com

Our article is designed to tell you about what happens on our farm in the village. If there is a topic you would particularly like us to write about then please let us know by emailing laurajsaunders@outlook.com

Let us hope we are more back to normal as the year progresses.

Henry and Laura Saunders

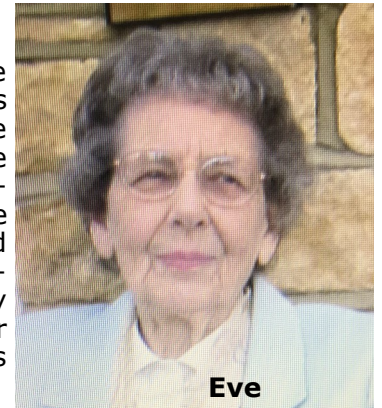


OAKLEY COFFEE CHARITIES (Churches Together)



Sylvia

The two ladies who originally started these coffee mornings in the late 1990's sadly died earlier this year, Sylvia Maguire and Eve Harrison. I believe Sylvia asked Eve to help organise several coffee mornings to raise monies for a Scanner for Bedford Hospital and like Topsy they grew. In the year 2000 the Oakley Coffee Charities was formed and I have been told these were held less frequently than the twice a month of today. Sadly both Sylvia and Eve had ill health in the latter years and were unable to attend but were always in our thoughts.



Eve

I would like to pay a tribute to both Sylvia and Eve, for all their efforts over the years, Sylvia for paying the monies into the bank and getting the twice yearly programme printed and Eve who organised the bring and buy stall rota and regular supporters too. Without these two ladies' passion we would not have been able in the last 20 years to raise £41,774 for 22 different charities.

I did not know Sylvia that well but I do know that she worked tirelessly for Oakley Methodist Church and was a Lay Preacher. I knew Eve a little better, she was a member of Oakley WI for many years and organised sewing groups in the village to raise monies for the WI, St Mary's Church and Cancer Research, and volunteered at the Cancer Research Shop in Bedford. Eve had a lovely way of getting you to help and like Sylvia is sadly missed.

During 2019/2020 the ladies raised £1500 for Parkinson's UK, the last one being held in February of this year just before lockdown. There had not been as many meeting as normal as we were unable to get hosts or the churches were not available to use. A big thank you to everyone who hosted or came along to support us. You were able to catch up with friends, old and new, and raise money for a local or national charity. Without your support we would not be able to continue.

We are living in such very strange times and hope it will not be too long before we can fill our coffee cups. As the song says 'Until we meet again'.

Sally Ball

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Sue Lousada - High Sherrieff

To be High Sheriff of Bedfordshire is a great honour and I had been planning my shrievalty year for four years. The role comes with the unique opportunity to achieve things that you could never usually do. However, in late March, with my installation ceremony in Oakley church cancelled due to the lockdown, I was installed via Zoom in my kitchen.



The theme for my year was always 'keeping children engaged in education'. This focus stemmed from a concern about the devastating effects that County Lines drug trafficking can have on the lives of children, by making them vulnerable to sexual or criminal exploitation. I have always been passionate that children need encouragement and respond when they are given an environment in which to flourish. I wondered how I could help with the pandemic unfolding.

Within the first few weeks, I became aware of what has now become widely recognised as digital poverty - children who wanted to learn but had no access to digital devices (computers) and unable to engage with the learning process. This issue already existed in our county, but COVID-19 highlighted the extent of the problem. I was approached by the Luton charity, Level Trust, who were being contacted by children unable to revise for exams or do schoolwork as schools and libraries were closed.

The government recognised the problem and gave some laptops to schools to loan to a number of Year 10 pupils assigned a social worker and claiming free school meals; this did not cover all disadvantaged children in this year group let alone any

other year. Consequently, working with the Children Services in Luton, we began to raise money so that specifically identified disadvantaged children in Luton could have access to a digital device. We have delivered 147 laptops so far, but the problem is not limited to Luton as Bedford and Central Bedfordshire have the same issue.

Now working with Children Services throughout Bedfordshire, we are aiming to deliver as many laptops as possible to secondary schools across Bedfordshire by the end of September.

I do not intend to stop there as every child should have the ability to fulfil their academic potential and gain the skills that they will need to go on to further education or to succeed in the workplace. If you do have a spare laptop or PC that is complete and less than 5 years old, we can wipe it of all data and repurpose it to give a child the opportunity to have the education they deserve.

Meet the High Sheriff

Sue was born in Kempston, spent her childhood in Wilstead and moved to Oakley in 20009. She went to Hastingsbury Upper School before going onto Leeds University to study biochemistry. Married to Simon, with two children and two grandchildren, Sue enjoys running around Oakley, taking a kayak up the river, gardening and cooking.

Email info@highsheriffofbedfordshire.com

www.highsheriffofbedfordshire.com

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**High Sheriff of Bedfordshire
Badge of Office**

The History behind High Sheriff's



This is the first face that comes to my mind when you mention the title High Sheriff and what a wonderful rotter he was! The current reality is much more acceptable.

The Office of High Sheriff is an independent non-political Royal appointment for a single year. The origins of the Office date back to Saxon times, when the 'Shire Reeve' was responsible to the king for the maintenance of law and order within the shire, or county, and for the collection and return of taxes due to the Crown. Today, there are 55 High Sheriffs serving the counties of England and Wales each year.

Historical Duties

The word 'Sheriff' derives from 'Shire Reeve' or the Anglo Saxon 'Scir-gerefa'. The King's Reeve was also known as the 'High' Reeve. Some Sheriffs led contingents at the Battle of Hastings. The Normans continued the Office and added to its powers. During the 11th and 12th centuries a High Sheriff's powers were very extensive. For example, they judged cases in the monthly court of the hundred (a sub-unit of the Shire); they had law enforcement powers and could raise the 'hue and cry' in pursuit of felons within their Shire; they could summon and command the 'posse comitatus' – the full power of the Shire in the service of the Sovereign; they collected taxes and levies and all dues on Crown lands on behalf of the Crown and were in charge of Crown property in the Shire. In short, High Sheriffs were the principal representatives and agents for the Crown and were thus very powerful within the Shire.

Of the 63 clauses in the Magna Carta of 1215, no less than 27 relate to the role of the Sheriff and from 1254 the High Sheriff supervised the election to Parliament of two Knights of the Shire.

Reduction of Powers

The Sheriffs' powers were gradually restricted over succeeding centuries. The Sheriff remained responsible for issuing Writs, for having ready the Court, prisoners and juries, and then executing the sentences once they were pronounced. It was also the Sheriff's responsibility to ensure the safety and comfort of the Judges. This is the origin of the High Sheriff's modern day duty of care for the well-being of High Court judges.

In the middle of the 13th century, more powers went to the newly created offices of Coroners and

High Sheriff Association



Justices of the Peace. Under the Tudors, Lord-Lieutenants were created as personal representatives of the Sovereign.

Ceremonial Uniform

The ceremonial uniform that is worn by male High Sheriffs today is called Court Dress. It has remained essentially unchanged since the late seventeenth century and consists of a black or dark blue velvet coat with cut-steel buttons, breeches, shoes with cut-steel buckles, a sword and a cocked hat. A lace jabot or white bow tie is worn around the neck. Today, lady High Sheriffs generally adapt the style of traditional men's Court Dress to suit their needs. Ceremonial uniform is worn at a wide variety of functions but when not wearing Court Dress, a High Sheriff will wear a badge of Office on a ribbon.

Current Duties

Whilst the duties of the role have evolved over time, supporting the Crown and the judiciary remain central elements of the role today. In addition, High Sheriffs actively lend support and encouragement to crime prevention agencies, the emergency services and to the voluntary sector. In recent years High Sheriffs in many parts of England and Wales have been particularly active in encouraging crime reduction initiatives, especially amongst young people. Many High Sheriffs also assist Community Foundations and local charities working with vulnerable and other people both in endorsing and helping to raise the profile of their valuable work.

High Sheriffs receive no remuneration and no part of the expense of a High Sheriff's year falls on the public purse.

Bill Chalker, Editor

Oakley Pre-school News



We returned to pre-school, post lockdown, on 15th June and were joined by 16 children in two separate 'bubbles'. The staff and children that returned were really pleased to see each other and we enjoyed five weeks of fun learning outside, before officially breaking up for the summer holidays on 17th July. We managed to mark the end of term for the 27 school leavers with a socially distanced visit at pre-school or their key person popped to their home to deliver their Development Records and small leaver's gift. This year's cohort has gone on to five different primary school settings, with the majority of children still attending Oakley Primary Academy. We wish them all well on the next stage of their academic journey.

We are busy preparing for September and are looking forward to welcoming 16 new starters. We hand delivered our new starter packs around the village and managed to see lots of our new little ones in the process. We look forward to welcoming them all for some settling in sessions at the end of August. Pre-school will remain open for administration purposes throughout the summer. Do contact us for up to date availability.

Admissions

If you would like to register your child for a place at pre-school, please contact us on 01234 826452 or by email: info@oakleypreschool.com Our website is: www.oakleypreschool.com

Follow us on Facebook to keep up with our latest news and events.

For information on funding you can contact the Family Information Service 0800 023 2057

Sally Martiello



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Oakley Allotments



It is the time of year often referred to as the "height of summer": fields are ripe with grains and the wild countryside often looks slightly dried-out and tangled, with the colours and order of spring and early summer becoming less fresh and green. There is a hint of approaching autumn. It is a time of fruitfulness and can reward the forager or country walker with a variety of hedgerow fruits.



Allotments and gardens are now delivering on the earlier investment of time and energy and become places to sit and enjoy between harvesting excursions. The main work is controlling weeds and watering at intervals during drier weather and it is the most satisfying time. There have been times this year when un-watering would have been appropriate had it been at all possible, as we have veered between drought and flood.

Our own allotment has possibly never been quite as lush and productive. The year has allowed (or demanded) more time to be spent there and the results show. As usual, those foolhardy enough to plant too many courgette plants probably now have

sufficient courgettes to build a small cabin out of them - this is merely conjecture as I do not intend to actually try it. Besides, the vegetables grow in such odd shapes and sizes, with this rainfall the roof would certainly leak.

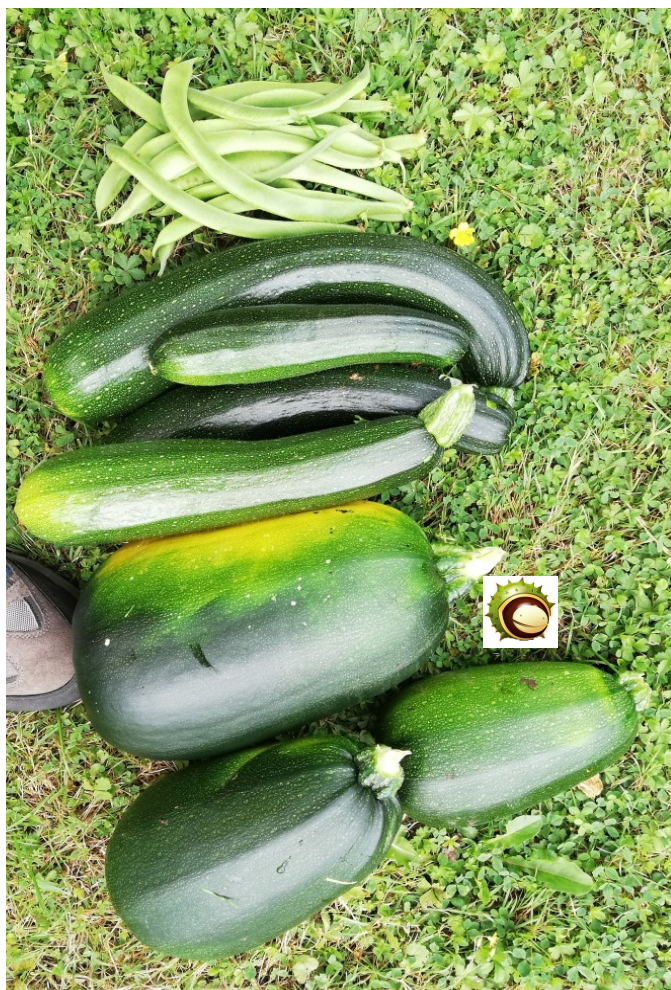
We have often walked to the allotments, except for those occasions when we need to transport some heavier items to or from the plot (courgettes, for example), although I have a handy folding cart which enables us to walk there more often. If time is available, and it has been available more often in these times, we take a longer route via the fields and paths and spend more time looking for wildlife and observing the changes in Linch Furlong as the year progresses. In all, we have found much more to enjoy.

Then, we have to deal with all of those courgettes...

We have found a recipe for courgette soup, which is absolutely delicious, freezes well (which courgettes do not, so much) and is easy to make. I have included the recipe as a snippet in this issue.

We still have a waiting-list for allotments and nothing available at the moment, but welcome further applications from those who might be interested in taking one on at some time in the future. Please contact me or our parish clerk.

Steve Nicholas



Snippet No.46

Roast courgette and Basil soup

1kg courgettes
1 leek or 2 medium onions
4 cloves of garlic, unpeeled
2 tbsp oil
750 ml vegetable stock
200g frozen peas
20g fresh or 3tsp dried basil
50 g grated cheese

Slice courgettes into 1cm slices

Slice leeks or roughly chop onions

Put courgettes and onions on a baking tray with the garlic, drizzle with the oil and season with salt and pepper, toss to coat in the oil

Roast for 40-45 mins at Gas 6 (200 degrees C), turning occasionally until soft and golden.

In the meantime make up the stock with boiling water, add the frozen peas and set aside to thaw

When the vegetables are roasted squeeze the garlic out of the skins then blend all the ingredients until smooth.
Steve Nicholas

Amigo

As you will be aware the outbreak of the Coronavirus has disrupted the programme of Amigo activities. A planning meeting is proposed for September with a view to Amigo activities beginning in January 2021.

My very best wishes.

John Dixon

Snippet No.47

...and, while we're on the subject of language and its usage...

"I, myself, quite like courgettes".

Can I be anyone other than myself?
Need I say more? (Hopefully not, I hear echoing around the village).

Steve Nicholas



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We'll be back!

Oakley Scout Group has struggled our way through the recent Covid-19 shutdown. Unfortunately we have not been able to remotely keep all sections going but we have managed to continue with our largest section – Beaver Scouts!



We have zoomed our weekly meetings every Wednesday and have managed to complete our Experiment Activity Badge.

This included growing cress and seeing how sitting a white flower in food colouring would change the colour of the petals, among other things.

Our parents have been very accommodating in allowing us to send the Beaver Scouts running around the house to find things in our treasure and our scavenger hunts.

We are busy working behind the scenes to allow the whole Scout Group to reopen for face to face Scouting in September. This is not as easy as it sounds with all the safety recommendations that have been put in place from the World Youth Organisation. I can report that we are overcoming each issue and hopefully we can all work together, Leaders, parents and children, to get back to Scouting in a safe manner.

We cannot wait to see everyone back together!

If you want to get involved with Oakley Scout Group, please contact the Group Scout Leader, Sarah Davey at sarah-davey@btconnect.com.

Sarah Davey, on behalf of Oakley Scout Group

Scouts 
Oakley (Bedford)



Brownies continued to meet over Zoom last term and we were pleased to even welcome two new Brownies who moved up from Rainbows.

Many of the Brownies took part in our sponsored stair climb and collectively managed to climb Mount Blanc, while raising over £300.

Our term finished with "Brownies got Talent" in which Brownies performed an impressive range of talents including gymnastics, art, playing instruments and telling jokes.

At the time of going to press plans for what form Brownies will take next term are still being confirmed, but Brownie parents will be informed of the details as soon as possible.

Lindsay Saunders

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We miss bell ringing!

The bells of St Mary's remain silent. The Central Council of Bell Ringers, the representative body of all who ring bells in the English tradition with rope and wheel, have issued guidance about how to safely return to bell ringing.

Unfortunately, because of the layout of the ringing chamber at St Mary's, a return to bell ringing does not look feasible at the moment. We have six bells at St Mary's and the ringing chamber is not very big, with no opening windows and a ladder for access. We cannot maintain the good ventilation required to minimise the risk of the virus hanging in the air and the ladder would require cleaning after each person has used it.

The guidance suggests that ringing sessions are limited to just 15 minutes and limited to only those who can ring without the need for assistance, so that excludes our young ringers who are learning the ropes. We are also supposed to make sure that the bells rung are 2m apart. That means that we could only ring every other bell, which severely restricts what methods (tunes) we can ring and would not sound good across the village!

So, we will have to wait a while longer and maybe try our hand at virtual bell ringing again!

Here is a reminder of better times when we rang 600 changes to mark the Diamond Wedding Anniversary of one of our fellow bell-ringer, John Stringer and his wife, Anne.



Shelley Abbott, on behalf of the Oakley Band of Ringers

Warning Over Telephone Scam

Targeting Elderly Victims

We are reissuing a warning to residents about telephone scammers, following reports of incidents in the county. Elderly Bedfordshire residents have been targeted in the last 24 hours by fraudsters posing as police officers. In one instance, a caller told a lady that a family member was being held in police custody, and then asked questions about her bank cards and account. Happily, she realised it was not genuine and terminated the call, then reported it to us straightaway.



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Together

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- Collect or arrange to collect money from your address
- Instruct you not to tell anyone about what they are asking you to do, or instruct you to lie to other officials about what you are doing
- Remember to always check the caller's credentials.

If you take a call from someone who you believe is not genuine, hang up, and contact either Action Fraud or the police. Where possible use a different phone to make the call in case the fraudulent caller is still on the line. If you do give your details to someone who you later believe is not credible, it's important that you contact the bank immediately.

If you suspect you have been a victim of fraud, call Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or visit www.actionfraud.police.uk. Alternatively, call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

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Continuing : Oakley – Back Through Time - 1934

At the age of thirteen Cecil worked at Oakley House for Lord Amphill as a pantry boy. This he did before going to school arriving at 7.00 a.m., having cut across the wild gardens at the back of the barn to the big house. One of the first jobs was to pump water from the well to a tank in the roof. There was a gauge on the side of the house which could indicate when the tank was full. Mr. Hulatt, the gardener, gave him a helping hand. There was a special little room where the boots and shoes were kept and cleaned. Cecil's next task was to clean the boots for the day including those belonging to guests. Cleaning the silver, as well as the cutlery, was his next job. After his duties were done he was given a hearty breakfast.



If the Honourable Leo Russell was in residence, his chauffeur/valet Mr. Grant would drive Cecil to school in a Packard Limousine. This was a great treat and saved the 10 minute walk to school.

There were many fond memories of the Honourable Leo Russell, Lord Amphill's son, one of them being the model railway brought out every year at the garden fete. This was run as a lottery. The stations all had numbers on the track and wherever the train stopped this was a winner. Cecil did not have the money to bet but was quite happy to watch the trains going round.

George V's Jubilee Celebrations were again in the grounds of Oakley House. There were sports for the children, in which Cecil won the 100 yards running race, a fair, lots of food and drink and dancing went on to the early hours of the morning.

George VI's Coronation Celebrations were celebrated at Middle Farm with sports, games, singing and dancing with lots of food.

Sunday School treats were spent at Wicksteed Park. The journey started at Oakley Station where they travelled by train to Kettering. The Steam train was always the first to be investigated by the boys and the driver pulled the whistle to amuse them. The park was great fun with swings and a model railway and of course a picnic in the grounds.



The local train was also used from the village for the school outing which was spent in London visiting Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament. Miss Walker, the Headmistress, after her retirement lived in Oakley until she died. Miss Cronk taught the infants. The old school is now used by the church for village functions, not only for entertainment purposes but for a doctor's clinic, the Day Centre and there are education classes.

Transcribed by a resident from the Lovell Homes from Cecil's account.

Pat Olney by permission.

Oakley Toddlers Group



Come and join us every Monday 9.30 - 11.00am term time only in the Village Hall.

We are a friendly local community run group that has been going since the 1970's. We aim to offer a place for mums, dads, babies, toddlers and carers to socialise together and help start some of the building blocks towards our little ones development.

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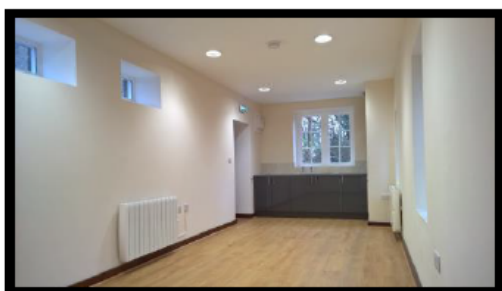
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Hi all,

Well what a summer so far! Or I should say spring and summer, that is how long it has been since we opened our youth club doors. We are in very strange times at the moment and we are looking forward to the day when we can welcome our members, new and existing, back into the youth club facility. We have missed seeing our members enjoying the activities and socialising with their friends every Friday.

At the moment the level of readiness for our type of activity remains at Amber which means only digital services online can be carried out. 1-2-1 sessions and small groups of 15 or less can meet ideally outside, indoor activity can take place as long as measures are put in place as per Public Health England and Gov.UK guidance. The youth club and the Old School committee have carried out risk assessments and have put measures in place for when re-open the doors.

The current plan is to re-open Oakley Youth Club in October. The youth club will operate very differently but the committee and staff are committed to ensuring the members will enjoy their time. If your child is interested in joining youth club then please contact Dawn Pither at the following email address info@oakleyyouthclub.co.uk to request a registration form and to request details of the youth club measures that have been put in place in line with Covid-19. Existing members please advise if your email address or contact details have been changed as letters will automatically be sent.

As we go into our new term we wave goodbye to Hannah one of youth club assistants. Hannah has done brilliantly in her A-Levels and is off to do her University degree in Criminology. Hannah has been a valued member of our team and we wish her the best of luck for the exciting times ahead. The new team at Oakley Youth Club will be led by Dawn assisted by Emma and Naomi whilst supported by our strong committee members including our Chair Pat Olney and Sara Fardon as our Secretary.

We would also like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to the Parish Council for our grant and look forward to continuing with our youth club service for the young members of our community.

There is a Facebook page for Oakley Youth Club (for parent members only), on which there will be online activities posted during September for our members to enjoy whilst we await the re-opening of the Youth Club.

Lastly, I just want to say we miss all our members so much and I am so proud of you all adapting to the changes we have all had to endure during these times. You have all done so well and hopefully soon we can get back to normal. In the meantime we want to wish you the best of luck for when you return to school

All the best

Dawn, Emma, Naomi, Pat and Sara



OAKLEY WI

Sadly we are unable as yet to resume our meetings. However we have been having Zoom coffee mornings every Wednesday and our members have been making poppies in the knit and natter group.

These have been held in a member's garden but it is hoped will resume in the Autumn in The Bedford Arms.

We are to have Zoom meetings until Christmas as follows:

8 September

Gurch Brandhawa will bring us up to date on Public Engagement and organ donation.

13 October

To be arranged

10 November

To be arranged

Our Christmas Dinner will be on 8 December.

The Zoom coffee mornings are to continue on a Wednesday.

If anyone has any queries do please contact us on 822087 or 825688.



OAKLEY GARDENING CLUB

Dear members unfortunately the September and October meetings have been cancelled.

We are hopeful that the November party will go ahead. No meeting in December. Please keep an eye on the notice boards for information.

For further information contact
Denise Hookham on 01933 312119

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oakley *Motorcycle* club

Well, what can I say? The quietest OMC summer since we formed in 2005.

The OMC COVID 19 sub committee continue to hold monthly virtual meetings and although Oakley Sports & Social Club has re-opened, Oakley Motorcycle Club has not. The OSSC has all the measures in place to comply with the Government guidelines. However we know that should we re-open then potentially, with the fine weather and fairly light evenings, we would likely attract numbers that would make the guidelines a serious challenge to comply with. Therefore we are agreed that it would be wholly irresponsible as a club to even attempt this.

With the possibility of a second wave, the fluctuation of the COVID rate in Bedford Borough and the possibility of a hospitality lockdown to allow the schools to return in September, personally, I cannot see OMC resuming until early 2021 at best.

The Bedfordshire Classic Car meet which had great success in 2019, their first year using the facilities at OSSC, have found themselves in the same situation and unfortunately it is unlikely anything will be happening at OSSC with them until April 2021

Finally, I mentioned in my article in the summer edition that OMC had been nominated for the EAAA Inspiration Award, however, the winner was the Black Shuck Gin Company from Norfolk.

Kind regards, stay safe

Baysie - Roger Bays - Chair OMC

Historic OMC photos from 2012, 2014 & 2015



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