

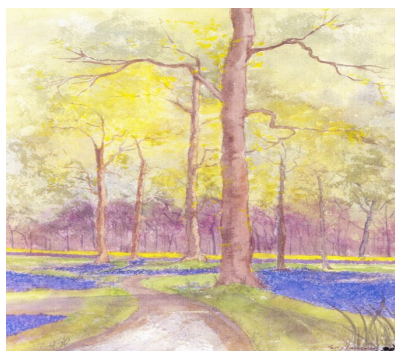


Oakley Newsletter



Spring 2015

Number 62



Front Cover

Spring Scene by Terry Youngman

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
11 more bunnies



Parish Council News

Spring 2015 By PAUL PHILLIPS (Chair)

Christmas Lights 2014.

The Christmas lights at the crossroads and the ones at St. Marys Church were switched on at 5pm on Saturday 6 December. The lights at both locations were very well received by most people. The overwhelming comments received have been very complimentary but a minority were not so impressed. The Parish Council has made quite an investment in the lights, but they will last for many years to come. It is so good too to have our own rooted Christmas tree which, provided we look after it properly, will grow and look better and better. The evening of the switch on was a super evening; it was crisp and cold, but dry. Approx. 200 people turned up with very good singing voices. We just about sang every carol on the sheet and we were suitably refreshed with mince pies, mulled wine, tea and coffee by the generous members of the Churches. St Marys Church was nicely decorated with wreaths from the various organisations within the village. We will let you know in good time the date for the 2015 switch on. These events do not just happen, so on your behalf I must say thank you to Phil Supple, a lighting expert, whose advice and efforts resulted in the brilliant displays. I should point out that over the last two years Phil and a colleague have given in excess of 50 hours free time to install and take down the lights. I also say a huge thank you to the members of the Churches and Reverend Linda and Rev Gill whose respective teams were so accommodating with the refreshments and with the piano playing.

Village Photographs/

Documents Archives

The Parish Council has decided to rent an upstairs room at the Old School where we can store old village photographs and documents. The idea of having such memorabilia all in one place and accessible to all by arrangement is very exciting. Should anyone have anything that they would like to donate to the village then please contact a member of the Parish Council.

Continued on page 3

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If there are any Archivists/Historians in the village who would like to work on indexing/setting up of the archive then we would love to hear from you. Please contact either the Clerk or any member of the Parish Council.

Defibrillator

With the cooperation of the Village Hall Management Committee the Parish Council has decided to obtain a defibrillator and have it installed outside the village hall. It was felt that this was the most suitable location in the village with the playing fields so close. We hope there will never be a need to use it, but it is there should the need arise. Awareness sessions will be arranged with the Community Heartbeat Trust.

Litter Pick

Our next organised Community Litter Pick will take place on Saturday 7 March 2015 between 10am and 12 noon. Please come along.....the more the merrier. The village is kept fairly litter free thanks to the efforts of Mr Hobbs, but in addition we can have a concerted action on 7 March to give the village a spring clean. Hopefully there will be some goodies for any younger members assisting. We will meet at the Village Green. Please wear suitable clothing and sturdy footwear.

Average Speed Cameras

Discussions concerning the installation of average speed cameras around the village have been ongoing. It is accepted that many months have elapsed since we embarked on the beginning of the process. I know in the last couple of Newsletters I have given the impression that installation was imminent and in that regard I thank you for your patience. I am sure you would agree that when spending such a large chunk of money, and considering the profile of speed cameras, it is better to get the detail right rather than proceed too quickly. The Parish Council's choice of sites is as follows and ranked in order; Pavenham Road, Church Lane, Station Road and Lovell Road. The work leading to installation has actually started and could take three to four weeks, after which calibration and testing will need to take place. By April we hope they will go live and with a bit of luck their presence will reduce speeding in and around the village. In other areas where such equipment has been installed results show that many of the people caught exceeding the speed limit are local residents. Make sure it doesn't happen to you.....or me for that matter!

Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held at the Village Hall on Tuesday 7 April 2015 commencing at 7.15pm. In 2014 the meeting was very well

attended by residents and it is hoped that this year's meeting will be similarly attended. The members of the Parish Council will be present together with the Borough Councillor and it is an opportunity for questions to be asked and ideas to be shared.


Budget

The finances of the Parish Council are healthy even though we have purchased the average speed cameras during the course of the year. We plan to replace the village entrance signs and have allowed £5,000 for this project. £3,000 has been allocated for Christmas lights including installation and taking down and £2,000 has been allocated for repairs to the childrens' play area. This is a very important area within the village which is valued by many families. The precept has been set at £49,856 for 2015/16, which with a top up grant would total £51,400: this works out to be approximately £1 per week per household.

Parking on Pavements

I am very pleased with the reduction of vehicles parking on pavements, however we must not be complacent. Some people continue with this either selfish or thoughtless action. Please do not do it and please consider pedestrians, people with prams/buggies and wheelchair/disabled scooter users who have an absolute right to use

ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE?




General and Local Elections will take place on Thursday May 7th 2015

To have your say on how the country and Bedford Borough is run you must be on the Electoral Register. Make sure you can have your say - act now!

Registering is quick, easy and can be done online at:
www.bedford.gov.uk/register-to-vote

YOUR VOTE MATTERS
MAKE SURE YOU'RE IN



Registration & Records Unit



For more information, please visit the Council's Customer Services Centre, Home Lane, Bedford, MK40 1SJ.
Alternatively contact the local electoral registration staff on 01234 276922 or via email at electoralservices@bedford.gov.uk



Parking on Pavements—Continued

the pavement without obstruction. There are also a few people who choose to park on the grass verges around the village. Please do not do this either. It is not necessary and it is inconsiderate. During inclement weather it is not sensible and makes the verges unsightly. It is worth noting that a driver who persistently parks their vehicle on a verge causing damage to the verge, or parks dangerously, or is causing an obstruction with their vehicle could lay themselves open to prosecution.

Dog Fouling

In our last newsletter I mentioned that I was encouraged by what appeared to be a marked improvement in dog fouling around the village. We hope that improvement will continue. I have received comments from a resident which I reproduce as follows;

'I refer to your item in the last Newsletter regarding Dog Fouling and I have to agree that there has been a marked improvement generally around the village, however I have noticed, sadly, some lapses particularly in Station Road between Reynes Drive and the schools, an area that has many young pedestrians.'

To those people who might admit responsibility, please change your habits and let us all aim to eradicate this problem.

Crime Matters

Whilst crime in our village does not increase significantly, we must accept that it does still occur. The latest that I heard of was the theft of some old and very heavy garden pots from a house in the High Street. We must never be complacent, but must safeguard our property and always be vigilant. I cannot impress too strongly the importance of reporting all matters requiring Police attention; from crimes to anti-social behaviour. Don't assume someone else might report it, just call 101 if non-urgent.

Bottle Bank

The village has had a bottle bank at the rear of the Bedford Arms for a long time and over the years it has been well used and provides a good source of income. It is a wonderful resource and is there for our convenience as residents of the village. It is however the responsibility of the persons using the bottle bank to put their bottles/jars into the bin. If the bottle bank is full it is not acceptable to leave bottles/jars around the outside of the bin. They must be taken back home until the bank has been emptied or they should be taken to another bottle bank nearby. There are a number within a short drive of Oakley.

The bottle bank was emptied on 20 December 2014 in readiness for Christmas and New Year, but sadly by 30 December the bottle bank was full and a number of irresponsible users had just left their bottles on the ground near the bank for someone else to deal with. On one morning around this time one of the members of the Parish Council gave up his time to restore the area into some semblance of order and whilst there someone came with a quantity of bottles. This person was asked politely to take the bottles away but he refused, leaving the bottles there and left. The contractors who empty the bottle bank didn't return to work until 5 January 2015 and they were asked to empty the bank immediately. **Unfortunately they were unable to collect the full bank until Bedford Borough Council had been asked to come and clear the loose bottles from the area at a considerable cost to Oakley Parish Council, in other words YOU AND ME.**

It really shouldn't be necessary for me to ask all users of the bottle bank to act responsibly. Please continue to use it as much as possible, but please don't abuse it. If it is full then take your bottles away. A telephone call reporting the bottle bank being full would be appreciated.

This photograph shows the number of bottles/jars just left for someone else to deal with.



Neighbourhood Development Plan.

You will read elsewhere in this Newsletter what is happening concerning this plan. I do not intend repeating what is being said other than to say that your comments and support are valued and will be vital in helping to shape the future of our village.

Thank you for reading my input to the Newsletter. I look forward to seeing many of you at the Community litter pick early in March and at the Annual Parish Meeting a month later. Please come along. Together we can do so much more for this lovely village of Oakley

Paul Phillips
Chairman

Borough Council News

by Cllr Pat Olney

Bulky Waste Collection Vehicles

Are due in the village the 11th and 12th of April; Saturday 8.30am to 2.30pm and Sunday 8.30am to 12 noon. Please see page 10 for details and locations.

Roads and Bridges

Early Warning – road closures – Bedford Western Bypass where it will be joining Bromham Road

If you go along Bromham Road there are two roundabouts being constructed for the final link for the bypass. Bromham Road will be closed for three weekends at the end of April and either early or mid May. There will be a diversion route for people coming from the west and the east. The bypass construction firm will be sending a newsletter out nearer the time and the information on the closures will be on the Borough Council website.

Hartops Railway Bridge

The pedestrian access is now open and the road to railway cottages should be open by the time this newsletter is published. The residents of Railway Cottages have borne the brunt of the closure. Not only have they had a longer journey but also the temporary road has been so muddy and very bumpy.

The field beyond the road will not be reinstated until June as the ground is so saturated. The footpath will be open to Clapham but, until the land has dried, access to it is through the hedge further along the road towards Railway Cottages.

A road safety audit has been done on the road as it is now steeper than it was before and we are still awaiting that report.

The next works on the railway will be the installation of the electric wires and the straightening of the slow track.

Bedford Borough Council Tax Freeze

The Council will not be raising your council tax for 2015/16 whilst protecting key services and investing in others:

- the weekly bin collections will be maintained,
- replacement of temporary classrooms in all schools including Oakley Lower,
- increased disabled grants for adaptations to enable people to live in their own homes
- Child Centres protected.

Bedfordshire Police

Mr Martins the Bedfordshire Police Commissioner has put together a budget, part of which means more neighbourhood policing. This will mean an increase in the police budget of 15.85%; an extra £24.88 a year on a band D property. This will increase your council tax by that amount. However before this can happen the Bedfordshire Police must have a referendum which will take place on 7th May 2015.

Elections 7th May 2015

You will be electing your Member of Parliament, your Borough Councillor and possibly your Parish Councillors. It will also be your opportunity to take part in the Police Commissioners Referendum on the rise of 15.85%. These are important elections please go and vote. If you have not registered please go to www.bedford.gov.uk/register tovot e.

Health and Hospitals

The **Bedford Hospital and Care in the Community Review** that is being undertaken by Bedfordshire GP Commissioning Group is nearing completion. They are finalising the three possible options after which there will be a further consultation in the Summer of 2015.

These options are 1) for the hospital to be a Major Emergency Centre, 2) an Integrated Care Centre or 3) a Modern District Hospital. All options will mean changes to how care in the community is structured.

Bedford Hospital is the second best hospital in the East of England, getting A&E waiting times to under 4 hours continuously since Christmas.

The new **Reading Well Books on Prescription books on Dementia** is a scheme that provides reading material and support on well-being to improve people's awareness of dementia. There is also guidance and support for those who have been diagnosed with the condition. The collection for dementia is available at Bedford Central Library and Kempston Library with single titles being available at other libraries e.g. Bromham Library. Please visit www.reading-well.org.uk for further information and a full list of titles. All the listed books have been recommended by experts and tried and tested by those living with the condition and found to be useful.

Oakley Village Shop

Congratulations to Bally, Aneil and family. They won top award for Rural Business of the Year at the Bedfordshire Asian Business Association Awards ceremony. One of the citations says "Her motto is to provide service with a smile."

Cllr Pat Olney

Farm and Country – Spring 2015

By John Saunders, College Farm

Christmas has passed once again when everybody looks forward to family reunions but if you ask a dairy farmer if he has had a good Christmas he would say "Yes, well we did not have any breakdowns with the milking machine, two cows calved without any problems and we did not have to call the vet out." It brings back memories.

My daughter and her husband, Liz & Roger Sutton, started a dairy goat business in Cheshire in 1985. Delamere Dairy now sells goats' and cows' milk and even non-dairy milk such as soya, coconut, almond, oat and rice. They sell to all the major UK supermarkets and export all over the world. Goats' milk remains at the heart of their business and is still a relatively uncommon sector of British farming, which is surprising since goats' milk is the most commonly drunk milk in the world.

There are probably only about 40 commercial goat herds in the UK with a total number of 50,000 goats producing 30 million litres of milk every year. The goats are usually kept in large well ventilated livestock sheds on straw bedding and fed a mix of maize or grass silage with a concentrate (grain, soya or other protein) ration. This gives them a balanced diet with all the necessary vitamins and minerals. Contrary to popular opinion, goats are very fussy eaters. Yes, they will eat the hedge and the washing but, given a choice, they will pick out the very best bits of their daily food and leave the rest. Goats are browsers rather than grazers which is why they prefer to nibble the hedge rather than graze a lovely field of grass like cows would. Most of the UK's milking goats are large white goats called British Saanens. There are also other breeds such as British Toggenburgs and British Alpine. The goats with the loppy ears and roman noses are Anglo Nubians. Although goats look a bit like sheep, these breeds don't have a woolly fleece and hate being left out in the rain.

Goats start to be milked when they have their first kids, usually at about 18 months old. They do not necessarily have to have kids every year to stay in milk. Many goats are milked for 2 years before they are dried off to have a rest before they kid again. They usually have twins. The female kids are reared to go into the milking herd and the male kids are mostly reared for meat. At one time people happily ate goats' meat on holiday in the Mediterranean but never when they returned home. Now it is getting more popular here, especially in expensive London restaurants where its low fat, tasty qualities

are becoming widely appreciated.

Just like cows' milk, goats' milk is collected up every couple of days in a road tanker and taken to the dairy to be pasteurised and packed into cartons or to be made into cheese or yogurt. Just over half of the milk produced in the UK is sold as liquid drinking milk and the rest is used for goats' cheese and yogurt production.

Goats' milk does taste a little different to cows' milk but most people do not even notice and certainly get used to it very quickly. After 30 years of drinking goats' milk Liz and Roger think cows' milk tastes a little strange! If you want to use goats' milk in your cooking, just use it in exactly the same way as you do cows' milk. There are lots of recipes on the Delamere Dairy website www.delameredairy.co.uk – why not try the Pear and Ginger Bread and Butter Pudding.



Goat's butter is also very popular - churned from the cream taken from semi-skimmed and skimmed goats' milk. For the last 15 to 20 years, many British cheese makers have developed goats' cheeses, which not only replicate some of the French soft brie type, but also include some "hard" cheeses more like a cheddar type which have proved popular with the British palate.

Goats' milk is the ideal dairy substitute if someone has a respiratory problem such as asthma or catarrh. Replacing cows' milk with goats' milk can bring huge relief. This is because goats' milk is not mucous forming like cows' milk. Goats' milk can be more suitable for anyone with digestive problems such as IBS. Although the fat and protein content is the same as cows' milk, the fat globules in goats' milk are smaller and the protein make-up is different making it highly digestible.

When you read this article Margaret and I will have moved to the north end of the village. The family have lived at College Farm since 1928 and we would have been here sixty years in June. Although we look forward to the move it will be a sad occasion for us but exciting times for my grandson who will live at the farm.

John Saunders

AMIGO

Coach trip to London

Wednesday 24th June 2015 8.30 a.m. Leaving from Oakley Village Hall

Approximately 10:30 am: Arrive at Café 101, which is very near St. Paul's Cathedral, for toilets, tea or coffee, where our Guide, Charlie, will meet us. Walk past St. Paul's Cathedral to Smithfields via Postman's Park. Call in at St. Bartholomew's Museum and the Church of St. Bartholomew the Less. The Great Hall of St. Bartholomew's Hospital will not be open, but we will be able to see the famous paintings by Hogarth which are visible from the museum. (Admission to the museum is free but donations are welcome.

Arrive at the Cloister Café at the Church of St. Bartholomew the Great for lunch. It is intended that lunch is paid for in advance. E.g. Canon's Platter, or Smoked Salmon Platter, scone, jam and cream, or slice of cake. (Menu details to be confirmed later.) Tea, coffee or soft drinks will be extra. Also, the café is licensed with a selection of wines available.

A tour of the Church of St. Bartholomew the Great has been arranged which should last for about one hour.

A further walk, to the Museum of London. (Admission to the London Museum is free.)

4.30 p.m. Coach to pick us up from the Museum of London for the return journey to Oakley.

I estimate the cost of the trip as follows: The cost of the Coach (39 seater) at £475. The cost of the lunchtime meal (excluding drinks) at either £7.50 or £8.50 per head. The cost of the tour of the Church of St. Bartholomew the Great at £5.00 per head. The fee of Charlie as our guide is £8.00 a head. I am proposing a charge of £40.00 a head. Please let me have cheques payable to J. W. Dixon and send them to me at 30 Hunts Path, Oakley, Bedford, MK43 7SR.

News of our recent events



A most memorable evening was spent at Oakley Methodist Church on the 25th November when Richard Harpham gave an illustrated talk of his exploits around the world. Richard was accompanied by his friend Andy, who gave a truly inspiring account of his experiences as a soldier. Whilst he was serving in Afghanistan, he received severe injuries, which resulted in the loss of his legs and an arm. His courage and indefatigable spirit are amazing.



Another pleasant evening was spent singing carols and playing handbells at The Bedford Arms, Oakley on the 16th December. Free mince pies were also very much appreciated.

A fascinating account was given of the experiences of the Seventh Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment on the Western Front by Martin Deacon of the Bedfordshire and Luton Archives on the 27th January at St. Mary's Church. The sum of £41.40 was raised for Cerebral Palsy.

By the time this Newsletter is published, Brian and Pauline Leeson will have given their presentation entitled 'The Land of the Long White Cloud' on the history, culture, wild life and much more of New Zealand at the Methodist Church on the 24th February. A report will appear in the Summer Issue of the Newsletter.

John Dixon

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Oakley Neighbourhood Plan

Your Views – urgently needed



Thank you to the people who came to the launch. We now need to hear from more of you good people of Oakley to refine the draft vision and objectives.

We need you to put pen to paper or go to your computer.

Included in this newsletter is a short questionnaire based on the questions we asked at the Launch. You can either fill in the form and put it in box at the Post Office Shop or fill it in online at ndp.oakleyvillage.co.uk. Please encourage other members of your household to fill it in. We are especially interested in the views of your young people.

Draft Vision and Objectives were collated from the comments given at the Launch

Vision

To protect the village community and the landscape within which it sits

Objectives

- **Understand the current housing stock, identify future requirements and, if a need is established, look to identify new sites.**
- **Protect views across the country side and the green spaces of significance.**
- **Maintain a sustainable community (including sustainable businesses) with adequate infrastructure and facilities.**
- **Identify and enhance links to the countryside, other villages and Bedford Town**

The Launch showed us the importance of the landscape within which Oakley sits. The Borough asked the Parish Council to identify and give good reasons for the open spaces we value and then submit them to be included in their Local Plan to 2032. The Parish Council asked the Neighbourhood Plan Group to do this.



Open Spaces

The group has been putting together the Open Spaces document that will be part of the Oakley plan. The first task has been identifying the most important spaces for the Parish Council which are: Browns Wood, Judges Spinney, the Allotments and Community Orchard, Linch Furlong, the view from the ridge behind the High Street down to the River Great Ouse at Pavenham, Village Green, Sports Field, the wooded belt in Westfield Road, the field with its view from the Drive to the River Great Ouse. The field between the twin bridges and the St Marys Church, and the meadow on the other side of the river to the weir and the footpath from the twin bridges to the weir, We also identified the sports field of Lincroft and the Open view from Station Road opposite Lincroft School to the ridge of Browns Wood and Judges Spinney. Finally the green behind Brockwell. These will go to the Parish Council and, if they agree, on to the Borough Council for inclusion into the Borough Local Plan to 2032. All the other very small greens around the village will be included with the above in our own Neighbourhood Plan.

Website

We now have our own website which has been put together by Robbie Bays. Thank you Robbie. The address is ndp.oakleyvillage.co.uk. On this you will be able to find the latest news and any online questionnaires. We do need your views and those of your family.

New Members of the Group

We welcome Tony Kellet; Adrian and Jette Randall, Michael Carr and Rina Habes to the group. They are already bringing important skills. Other Members are Tony Atkinson, Rob Musgrave, Nick Saunders, Gerry Sansom, Richard Bailly, Jane Walker and Pat Olney, Chairwoman.

Please fill in the Questionnaire



or



ndp.oakleyvillage.co.uk

Please remember to fill in the Questionnaire and either put the paper copy in the box at the Post Office Shop or fill it in on line. Please encourage all members of your household to do so as well so that we can further refine your vision and objectives. Thank you.

Pat

Oakley Allotments

For the first time since getting my own allotment I have maintained a fair level of enthusiasm throughout the winter. I have managed to try a few experimental plantings of garlic and broad beans, which went in the ground at the beginning of December.

The garlic has started growing but I await the beans' emergence with some interest. The ground though is now unworkable, resembling the ingredients for a glue factory, so no digging or weeding for a few weeks yet, I fear.

Unlike in previous years, I have made regular trips to my plot to continue harvesting celeriac, greens, leeks, parsnips and, my favourite chard, which has continued to provide slim pickings under its protective fleece. It would be quite an achievement for me to pick chard until the new year's crop is ready - that may be a bit ambitious but I'll let you know of course!

I am reluctant to start sowing seeds for the new season yet, despite the promise on the various seed packets that February is a good month to start some of them off. If we get a late cold snap or it remains too wet then planting-out is delayed and we get leggy and weak plants. In past years we have had to re-plant when that happens and the new plantings have caught up with the season quite rapidly anyway.

I also intend to get a bit more scientific in my approach and have purchased a soil test kit ready to find out the true nature of the very variable areas of my plot. Hopefully I can then react accordingly and improve my efforts again this year. I also seem to be developing quite a slug problem so I am considering a biological control method using nematodes, obtained as a preparation specifically for controlling slugs in a more environmentally friendly way.

I have posted a bit more on the Facebook page I set up for the allotments and it is open to anyone who is interested. Comments and contributions to the page are welcomed. Imaginatively named "Oakley Allotments", we are easy to find. I will continue to keep tenants informed by email.

We should have 3 half-plots available soon, and we have a short waiting list. Please get in touch with me if you would like an allotment - it will soon be time to start work as the ground gets warmer and drier.

Also, it is an Oakley Carnival year and it would be good to plan for some involvement with that. If anyone has any ideas then please let me know.

Steve Nicholas



Joshua

Orphan & Community Care

Floods!!

Unfortunately Malawi has been hit with the worst floods the country has experienced for many years and the villages where Joshua works have been devastated. Homes and crops have been lost and many families have taken refuge in the school buildings. A fund was set up to provide food and basics. Our fundraisers set out to find £5,000. Thanks to all our supporters £20,000 has been donated. On behalf of Joshua I would like to say a heartfelt Thank-you to the Oakley villagers who have contributed to the fund. You can be sure that every penny raised will be used to help the people in the Pensulo area to cope with the disaster that has wrecked their lives. If anyone would like more information, please contact me at djmould2009@hotmail.co.uk or go to www.josuaainmalawi.org.uk



On a happier note everyone involved with Joshua was delighted to hear that Sylvia Avgherinos, the Charity's director, has been awarded an MBE. In 1998 she established a feeding centre to support young orphans. From this small beginning Joshua now helps to feed 1200 children daily. It supports 5 primary schools and has built a secondary school, a Maternity and Health centre, a maize mill and a bridge. Joshua runs a student sponsorship programme which currently support 200 students in secondary education. Sylvia is the heart of everything Joshua does. Her boundless energy and determination are an inspiration to everyone who comes into contact with her and it's great that her work has been acknowledged with the MBE.

Jacky Mould

OAKLEY COFFEE CHARITIES

On Tuesday, 10th February, we held our Bacon Butties Coffee morning. This is the main fund raising event of the year and I would like to thank all those willing helpers and those who supported us on the day. This raised a total, including late donations, of £596.64. It is just amazing how much can be raised in a couple of hours. The chosen charity for 2014/15 is Alzheimer's Research UK. As I write this we still have 3 coffee mornings to go before the end of the year and we have already raised almost £2,500.

In April we will start raising money for Motor Neurone Disease the 2015/16 Charity.

The coffee mornings started in the year 2000 when a member of Oakley Methodist Church was asked to raise money for Age Concern (now Age UK). In May 2000 together with a couple of friends they raised £214. Another coffee morning in December 2000 raised £370 for the Harpur Trust.

Following the success of these two coffee mornings it was suggested that perhaps they should hold a coffee morning twice a month to raise monies for local charities or those close to our hearts. The member who chooses the Charity usually organises the coffee mornings for that year. Since then it has grown like Topsy and we now meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month (except for December when we only meet on the 2nd Tuesday) from 10.30 am to 12 noon. We meet in members' homes but twice year we hold a bigger event at the Methodist or St Mary's Church in Oakley. Why not join us? For £2 you can enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and biscuit, take part in the raffle, or bring something for the Bring and Buy Stall and raise money for Charity.

Sally Ball

Up until the end of March 2014 the ladies of Oakley raised a total of £27,583 for charities some of which are listed below:

2004/2005	Day Care Centre	£1350
2005/2006	Karibuni Trust	£1550
2006/2007	Romania	£1780
2007/2008	Primrose Appeal	£1500
2008/2009	East Anglian Air Amb	£2258
2009/2010	Joshua Orphan Care	£2250
2010/2011	Canine Partners	£2190
2011/2012	Leukaemia Lymphoma	£2500
2012/2013	Connor	£3602
2013/2014	Pancreatic Cancer Rsrch	£3389

COLLECTION OF BULKY WASTE

OAKLEY

Please take your domestic waste to the following locations:

Saturday 11th April 2015

Lovell Road & Station Road	8.30am until 10.30am
High Street & Station Road	10.30am until 12.30pm
Reynes Drive & High Street	12.30pm until 2.30pm

Sunday 12th April 2015

Dewlands	8.30am until 10.30am
Reynes Drive & Station Road	10.30am until 12.30pm

Times are approximate to allow for travel between sites

PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE RUBBISH AT THE SITE IF THE COLLECTION VEHICLES ARE NOT THERE



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SHARNBROOK MILL THEATRE

2015

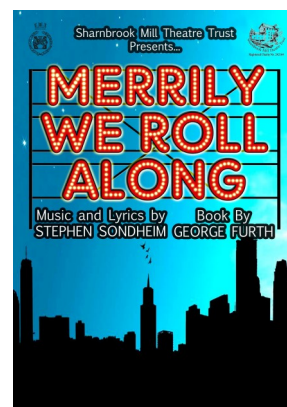
Monday 16th – Saturday 21st March 2015 Our Spring Show: **'Abigail's Party'** The social get-together from hell! An hilarious, acerbic comedy by Mike Leigh. Booking from 1st February: On-line [www/sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk](http://www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk)*; Sharnbrook Post Office (nb in person only please) or Bedford Central Box Office 718112#*. * Booking fee. 10% discount 10 + tickets (excluding charity nights, Fri. & Sat.). 2 Wheelchair positions # ; easier access seating Rows A-C; hearing loop Rows A-E : * NB Booking fee

Saturday 28th March 2015 Concert by The Ouse Valley Singers. Further details will be posted on our website: www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk;



MONDAY 8th TO SATURDAY 13th JUNE—MERRILY WE ROLL ALONG A THRILLING AND COMPELLING BROADWAY FABLE

The story begins in the 1970s and moves backwards to the late 50s, tracing the lives of wealthy, jaded composer Franklin Shepard and his two estranged friends through each milestone of their personal and professional lives (good and bad). The show ends with a touch of rueful irony, as the three best friends, at the start of their careers, face a bright future: young, talented and enthusiastic about the worlds waiting to be conquered. This is Stephen Sondheim and George Furth's tuneful and compelling Broadway fable about friendship, compromise and the high price of success.



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“Hold a Fish and Chip Supper to help spinal cord injured people rebuild lives after injury”



Great British Fish and Chip Supper – Friday 15th May 2015

Want to eat Fish and Chips, while raising money for charity? Hold a fish and chip supper on Friday 15th May 2015 whilst raising awareness of spinal cord injury and supporting SIA's vital services.

You can hold a fish and chip supper in your own home, at work or hold a larger supper at your local community centre.

SIA will provide a fundraising pack containing hints and tips, recipes, invitations and donation envelopes. By inviting 8 friends and asking them to donate an additional £5.00 means you will raise at least £40.00 from your supper but we will also give you additional fundraising ideas to raise even more money for SIA.

In 2015 we want to make the batter matter and raise £40,000 from everyone holding suppers. Last year we raised £20,000 from the suppers.

The money raised from the suppers will help the Spinal Injuries Association offer support to individuals who become paralysed and their families, from the moment a spinal injury occurs, and for the rest of their lives by providing services and publications which enable and encourage paralysed people to rebuild lives after spinal cord injury.

Every year in the UK over 1,000 people experience a spinal cord injury and there are an estimated 40,000 spinal cord injured people in the UK alone.

Community Fundraising Manager, Elizabeth Wright, says, “The Fish and Chip Supper is a wonderful opportunity for a great evening with friends and family. We are also encouraging people who work to hold a Fish and Chip Lunch in their work places to raise even more funds. You may be even a local community group wanting to run a fun evening with your group.

For more information or request a fundraising pack call Elizabeth Wright on 0845 071 4350 or email fundraising@siafishandchips.co.uk or visit www.siafishandchips.co.uk



Oakley Scout Group



Oakley Group Scout Leader Jon Abbott and his team of leaders and adult helpers continue to provide a range of fun and challenging activities for boys and girls between the ages of 6 to 13. The Scouting programme provided for the Sections is a mix of badge work, games, themed evenings, visits and weekend activities. If you are the parent/guardian of a child between the ages of 6 and 13 who may be interested in joining OSG, the relevant contact numbers are below.

Beavers	6 - 8 year olds	Wednesdays	18:15-19:30	phone Karen	07918 181815
Cubs	8 – 10.5 year olds	Thursdays	18:30-20:00	phone Martin	07917 137179
Scouts	10.5 - 14 year olds	Tuesdays	19:00-20:30	phone Dean	07854 312255

Jon and his team are supported by the OSG Executive Committee who are currently focussing on replacing the Scout Hut floor and are looking to increase the amount of fundraising that the Group carries out. We are always looking for people who can help in any way.

You don't have to be a uniformed leader or be on the Executive Committee, you may have specialist skills and experience such as DIY or fundraising that the Group could use. If you think you may be able to help in any way then please contact OSG Chair Simon Marshall on 07828 195001 or shmphone@gmail.com

The Group is always grateful for any time that people can spare and it is worth it when you see the enjoyment that the children get from their Scouting.



Churches Together in Oakley



Oakley Methodists Church

Palm Sunday 29th March

10:30am – Morning Service

Wednesday 1st April

7:30pm – Service for Holy Week

Maundy Thursday 2nd April

12:00pm – make hot cross buns and share a short service followed by a soup and roll lunch at

Park Road Methodist Church

(Park Road West, Bedford, MK41 7SB)

Easter Sunday 5th April

10:30am – Easter Day Morning Service with Holy Communion.

ST. MARY'S CHURCH

Palm Sunday 29th March

9:30am – Parish Eucharist with procession of palms

Wednesday 1st April

7:30pm – Eucharist & meditation

Maundy Thursday 2nd April

7:00pm – Passover Eucharist and then Watch in St. Mary

Good Friday 3rd April

10:00am till 12:00pm – Children's workshop and activities.

2:00pm – Good Friday Liturgy with Eucharist.

Easter Sunday 5th April

8:00am – Benefice Holy Communion - St. Owen, Bromham

9:30am – All Age Eucharist followed by Easter Egg Hunt.

MESSY CHURCH

Come along and join in the fun at Messy Church. Messy Church takes place every Thursday at St Mary's during term time 10am to 12oclock for children up to 5 years old with their parents / carers . A light lunch is served of fresh fruit with a drink and biscuits , with coffee or tea and biscuits for the adults.

PLENTY OF TOYS.

CRAFTS [SOME MESSY].

PAINTING.

PLAYDOH

STORIES AND SONGS

PRICE £2.00 PER CHILD PLUS AN EXTRA 50P ADDITIONAL CHILD.





OAKLEY 2015 CARNIVAL



Saturday 11th July 2015

Superheroes and Princesses



The Carnival will begin with a procession through the village from 12.30pm arriving at the ORA field (off Church Lane) for a fun packed afternoon

Craft Stalls

Funfair

Band

Arena show

Food stalls

Competitions

Bouncy Castles

Licensed Bar

Fun for all the family

To take part in your village carnival as an individual, organisation or business, to volunteer or to book a stall, email us at oakleycarnival@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

Uncomfortable with letting strange people into your home?

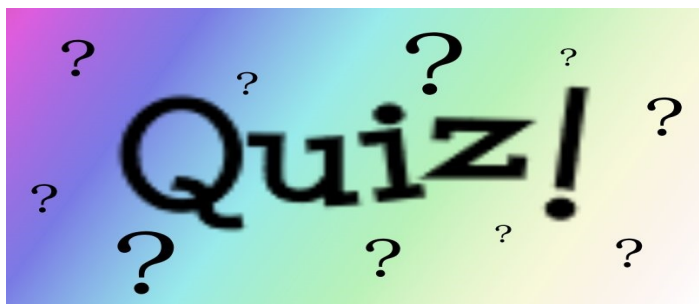
We are an **all-female** team of interior painters and decorators, working in the north beds village area. Fully experienced in hanging wallpaper, painting – including paint effects, restoring and repairing surfaces, wallpaper stripping and all general home decorating. We are all individually CRB checked, will provide references and testimonials showing the standard of our workmanship giving you peace of mind. We will come to your home to discuss your exact requirement, offer advice and produce a free written specification and quotation. We will then arrive on time, keeping disturbance to the minimum and deliver a quality job using only top quality materials.



OAKLEY ANGELS
The all-female painting and decorating team

- Trustworthy
- Experienced
- Guaranteed work
- Peace of mind
- High quality work at a reasonable price

Phone: 07989 778345
or: 01234 822499



Businesses Are Not Testing Their Emergency Plans

The Oakley Carnival Committee are kicking off this year's fundraising for local organisations and groups by holding **QUIZ NIGHTS** at the Oakley Sports and Social Club on the following dates;

Friday 27th February

Friday 24th April



Start time – 7.30pm

Quiz Entry fee - £1.00 per person

Final quiz night in village hall in the summer –
Date tba

Clubs, organisations, groups of friends, get together for a fun night and compete to be the trivia champions of Oakley Village.

Quiz Nights proudly sponsored by



Local businesses can test their ability to survive a major fire, power cut or flu pandemic during Business Continuity Awareness Week (BCAW, 16-20 March) by using free resources from the Bedfordshire and Luton Local Resilience Forum (BLLRF).

If small and medium companies do not test their business continuity plans they cannot be sure they will work when needed. Using BLLRFs easy desktop scenarios companies can simulate emergency situations and discover if their plan protects vital assets, enables the business to carry on and whether it might help save money.

During BCAW 2015 companies can download scenarios that could affect them and a series of "injects" to be used to test their reaction to an evolving emergency.

Bedfordshire businesses can also get advice from emergency experts at the Business Expo on 16 April 2015 at Bedford Corn Exchange.

Start planning for emergencies now, visit www.bllrf.org.uk.

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Jackie Munro: 07954138317
jackie@addalittlestyle.co.uk

Janet Taylor: 07783483133
janet@addalittlestyle.co.uk

A letter from Revd Linda

Love Life

The Slimming World Organisation have recently updated the members pack with the heading: 'Love food, love friendship, love life, love slimming world'. To this we can add: 'Love Life this Lent'.

It may seem strange that I suggest that we 'Love Life' this Lent. Lent has often had an individual emphasis focusing on self-examination, personal discipline and getting ourselves right with God – or at least coming closer to that aim. I think the emphasis needs to be sharpened. We need to ask why we want to grow closer to God and what will we achieve? In other words, what is Lent for?

It is not just for our personal needs. At Slimming world they emphasise personal well being, losing weight to avoid developing weight-related health problems such as heart attacks, diabetes, stroke and knee problems and the problems we may face when our body mass index moves out of the healthy range into the 'at risk' range. As well as focusing on the individual and their progress there is a tremendous sense of support and friendship at the Slimming World Group.

It is also healthy to add a spiritual dimension to this, for we all have spiritual needs of some kind. When our spiritual lives are refreshed and enriched we will feel better for it; in the same way that we have more energy when we shed a few pounds! We can refresh our love of life during Lent and help to enhance the relationship lives of others too!

Let us Love Life and seek a better quality of life through healthy eating as we live Gods' love. To 'Love Life' is to love God, it's source and sustainer. We are called to love all His creatures and creation. We can also give more time, energy and emphasis to our active service and support of those who find loving life harder than perhaps we do at the moment.

This Spring marvel at the beauty of the flowers as they poke through the soil. Develop an increased sense of awareness. We see God in all living things, so enjoy the wonder of the natural world. He created the world long ago and the divine work of creation still continues in every moment we live and move and have our being. So 'Love Life' in all it's fullness this Lent.

Rev'd Linda



FOOTPRINTS

Footprints is a Churches Together weeknight activity for children aged 5 to 11 years, and meets every Tuesday during term time, from 4.30pm to 5.30pm at the Methodist Church, with an attendance of 12 to 16 children.

Its purpose is to explore the Christian faith in a fun way through craft activities, Bible stories, songs and prayers, by following a Scripture Union (Splash/Xstream) programme suitable for all Christian denominations. Each week a different theme is followed. For part of the session, children are divided into younger and older groups. A team of some 6 members from both Churches lead the various activities.

New children are always welcome at any time, and parents of young children are encouraged to stay if they wish. Meetings of Footprints continue until 24th March, and begin again after the Easter break on Tuesday 21st April.

Highly recommended Mobile Female Care Assistant



Daniela Bennett can help you with:

Personal Care

Cleaning

Shopping

Meal Preparations

Hospital Appointments

Peace-of-mind services

tailored to your specific needs

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Oakley Pre-school news



Spring term has been another busy one, with several new children starting with us. They have all settled very well and are enjoying playing and learning with us at the pre-school.

As promised, we have three new additions to introduce. They are Margot, Edith and Agnes, our new chickens. They arrived in November and the competition to name them raised funds for our extension appeal. The children have been busy cuddling them to tame them and welcome them to their new home.

We started the term by observing the weather. The children used the iPads to look up information and made their own weather charts. They also made their own predictions and weather forecasts. The weather then obliged (as it often does in winter) and the children loved being able to play in the snow and make a snowman!

We have also been finding out about winter festivals and traditions, particularly Shrove Tuesday, Valentine's Day and Chinese New Year. This year, they have all fallen in the Half Term week, but we have still celebrated them at pre-school. As with all festivals, we like to incorporate looking at any special foods, decorations and traditions that maybe associated with them and the children enjoyed making their own stir fry to celebrate Chinese New Year and having pancakes for snack in the week running up to Shrove Tuesday. We have also decorated the pre-school with the vibrant colours of Chinese New Year and the children took part in a Chinese Lion dance.

The planning for our joint extension project with The Methodist Church has now been approved and our fundraising efforts are continuing. Thank you to all who came to our Bacon Butty morning we raised £260! Our next event is the 'Family Spring Disco' on the 21st March at the Village Hall. Tickets are available from pre-school.

At Oakley Pre-school we are always looking for new and innovative ways to interact with the families that use our setting and for the past year we have had our own Facebook page. We post regularly with news and updates of what is going on at pre-school. Since starting the page our partnership with parents has improved and we would like to continue to raise

our profile within the local community. We have recently been asked by the Pre-School Learning Alliance, who started following us on Facebook, to write an article for their Newsletter on the success of our page. We look forward to this being published in the spring. Please feel free to 'like' us on Facebook. (You can identify us by our tree logo.)

Admissions

If you would like your child to attend Oakley Pre-School you can contact us on 01234 826452 or by email oakleypreschool@btconnect.com or take a look at our website at www.oakleypreschool.org.uk or you can drop in and see us during term time.

Sally Martiello



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Established in 1992 specialising in:

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Helen Dawkins LRPS

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www.blackandwhiterevival.co.uk

"Packing"

What response does the word raise for you? Perhaps you think of packing parcels for celebrations, packing up for school lunches, packing away winter clothes (or even those very last Christmas things that never quite made it into annual hibernation), packing up childhood memories or packing for new journeys and adventures. Even the garden is packed away, the old soggy leaves cleared and plants pruned, ready to face the march into a new season of fruitfulness. Packing is an emotive word, resonating with our excitement, our sadness, our anxiety and our hope. Whether we are good at packing or find it a challenge, it's something we all have to do, reflecting both on the things that are past and looking ahead to what might yet be to come.

I wonder if any of you can empathise with those of us who don't always get the packing right? One of my own memories is of a carefully planned sausage sizzle treasure hunt. We had organised the transport, gathered the camping stove and billy cans from the garage, collected mugs, flasks of hot chocolate and finger rolls. All was ready – until we came to our destination at the end of a chilly evening to find... we'd left the sausages at home. We had provided for all eventualities, apart from our need for warm nourishment. Perhaps you are more organised than I am, relying on a finely trained memory, or a detailed list, but what about packing for our spiritual lives? How do we make sure we have everything we need to live well from day to day?

Physically we need food, water, light, shelter and direction to make a long journey satisfactorily. As spiritual beings we need to find the same essentials to resource for us in all that we face. I know that I need food that nourishes the deepest parts of me, that challenge and inspire me, that give me the strength I need to keep going. I need refreshment, rehydrating when I am thirsting for fulfilment. I need the light of vision and hope to help me look ahead with confidence; shelter and security in my relationships, in those who accompany me each day and I need to have a focus on my destination so that I can find the way to get there.



As a Christian I believe that God offers each one of us all these resources and that in his gift of Jesus, his love-gift to us, we find all that we need to travel well through life. So, as we make sure that we pack the items we need, for holidays, for journeys, for a new home or job or just for that rushed lunch, let's not forget to pack the real essentials, the resources found in Jesus: Bread of life, Living water, Light of the world, Gate for the sheep and the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Every blessing to you, wherever the next stage of your life takes you,

Rev Gill and family

How about a unique holiday in Spain?

Just go to - www.holiday-costabrava-spain.co.uk

Or 01234 826119 or gjfollett@yahoo.co.uk

Our house, Tresviso, is available all year and sleeps 4. It's fully serviced including meet and greet, towels, bed linen, and there's a large swimming pool too.

The area is truly beautiful – and consists of a host of little coves – each with its own character, and all ideal for a quick dip or a spot of snorkelling in crystal clear water, or just lazing.

The nearest cove, Sa Tuna, is just 800m away.

The coastal and inland paths, woods and farmland are ideal for nature lovers and walkers, and the superb Aiguamols Bird Reserve is within easy reach, as are several golf courses.

Barcelona is only 1½ hours away by train and historic Gerona is 40 mins away.

You can get cheap flights from Luton direct to Gerona airport.

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Hot Food, Cold Food
Breakfast, Lunch, Morning/Afternoon Tea

All Food made on the Premises!

Open 7 Days a Week

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Oakley Neighbourhood Watch

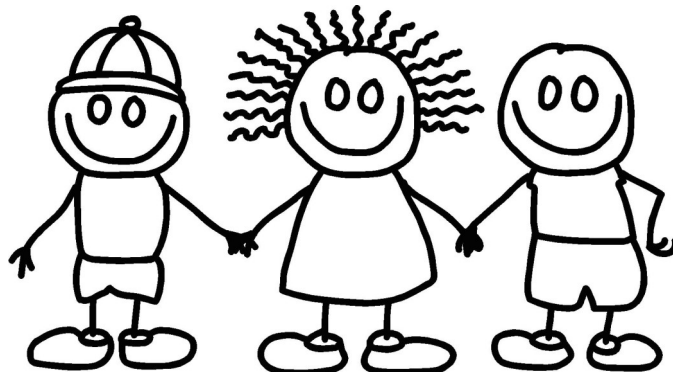


Work is underway for Riseley Police Station to be used for the deployment of the Special Constabulary enabling the force to increase its footprint across central and north Bedfordshire.

Initially six officers will work from Riseley with the number increasing over the next financial year.

Callers At The Door. Friend or Foe?

- If you don't know who is at the door ask, 'Who are you?'
- Use the door chain.
- Check the caller's card. Never be afraid to confirm details via a phone call. Most utility services offer a password scheme and a phone number which you can ring to check the identity of callers.
- If in doubt, shut your door.
- Ring 999 to contact the police.
- Be wary of anyone calling at your door offering to do repairs or gardening. If they claim you need work done, ring a reputable company. Never allow them in your home or garden.



Oakley Toddlers

Monday 9.30-11.00am
term time only in the Village Hall

£1.50 crafts/toys/singing/drinks & snacks

Oakley Toddlers has been running successfully over the last two decades, providing a warm friendly place for mums, dads, grandparents and carers to meet and play with their children.

Anyone interested in volunteering to help run the group please contact us at oakleytoddlers@hotmail.co.uk or drop in to meet us and see what is involved!

Steve's Snippet No.13

I refuse to believe in superstitions because that could lead to bad luck...

Apart from a Baker's Dozen (13) being lucky for someone, the number 13 has traditionally been associated with bad luck. I researched the possible reasons for this and suggestions for this unfortunate stigma are many and various.

A popular explanation is that the 13th person at the Last Supper was Judas Iscariot, later to betray Jesus Christ. Now, I don't want to raise controversy on that point but the betrayal of Jesus was part of the process leading to the salvation of Christians - so possibly not bad luck for Christianity.

There is a similar story implicating the Norse god and ne'er-do-well, Loki, who arrived at a meeting of other Norse gods to do his mischief as the 13th arrival.

Gallows supposedly had 13 steps and a proper coven of witches numbered 13, but we now start to get into the confusing scenario of cause and effect. This is an interesting study - once a number is given a bad name it starts to appear in all sorts of superstitions.

The star of the bad-luck stage is Friday the 13th - any Friday the 13th will do but the origin of this particular superstition is sometimes associated with another Christian event. Since our modern calendar does not relate directly to any dates of that time the connection is tenuous to say the least. Personally, I would dread a Monday the 13th far more than a Friday, which is a warm and friendly day leading to a weekend.

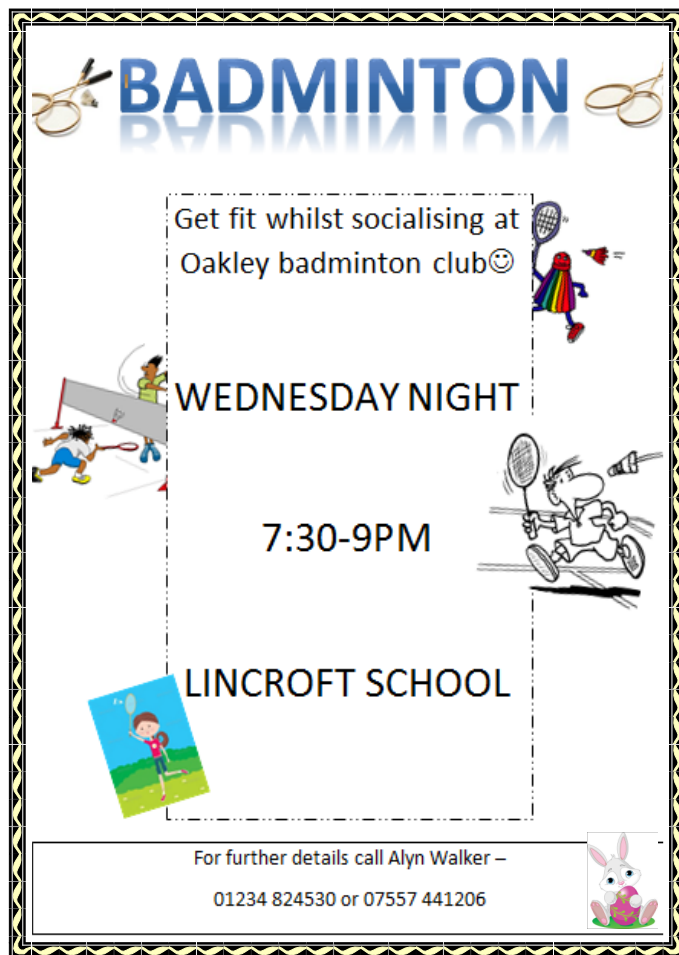
Superstitions bred in times when science had little grip on the workings of everyday life. Upsetting random gods or imagined entities could happen at the drop of a hat (more on that one later...) so was to be avoided in order that babies were born with the correct appendages and the crops succeeded, as was essential for survival.

A (most likely apocryphal) story tells how the powers of a navy, many years ago, wanted to scupper the long-held superstition amongst sailors that Friday the 13th was to be avoided if at all possible, and certainly for making momentous decisions.

With this in mind a new ship, to be named the "Friday the 13th", had her keel laid on a Friday the 13th, was completed on a Friday the 13th, and launched on a Friday the 13th. Kept in harbour for fitting-out the ship finally set-sail on its maiden voyage on a Friday the 13th.

Nothing bad had happened to the ship thus far and so the superstition was finally laid to rest... except that the ship disappeared at sea and was never heard of again.

Steve Nicholas



Oakley Youth Club has gone from strength to strength this term. We regularly have between 20 and 25 young people attending each week. I have really enjoyed the last 3 months running the sessions and with new young people joining nearly every week I'm sure we will continue to grow in the future.

We welcome 12 to 16 year olds and all you need is £1 for entry and some money to spend in our tuck shop. As always we are looking for volunteers to come along once a term to help supervise and cover the tuck shop. We can be found at the Old School every Friday during term time. It's only 2 hours, 7.30-9.30pm, so if you can help it would be appreciated.

I would hate to have to cancel sessions because we don't have enough volunteers. Please contact me on 07730979482 to discuss this or for any information regarding the club.

Samantha Cockings Youth Leader

Student Exhibition applauded as a resounding success!

Tudor Rose Patchwork was buzzing last Saturday 10th January when the tutors and students held an exhibition to display their 2014 work. Kathleen Laurel Sage, a world renowned tutor and author who regularly holds classes at Tudor Rose, collated pieces from every tutor's classes to create an exciting and unique collection of work. The staff were amazed to see what the students had been up to over the year and to have it all in one place was a true honour.

Visitors could view a whole variety of techniques including handmade lace, felted pictures, hand-dyed fabrics, hand embroidery, red work, beading, mixed media as well patchwork quilts, table runners and wall hanging. They were also treated to a buffet, made and served during the day by the staff at O for Coffee. Students and tutors were on hand throughout the day to explain how they achieved their finished projects. Some students were even demonstrating certain techniques such as hand quilting and embroidery.

The event would never have happened if it were not for Kathleen Laurel Sage being at the helm. She summed up her experience of the day by saying 'As one of the tutors at Tudor Rose Patchwork, it was truly inspiring to see the diversity of the beautiful and colourful work that was on display. All produced from the many talented

students of 2014. I can't wait to see what they produce next year! It was stunning.'

Pam Wise, a tutor and staff member, said 'there was a really nice atmosphere and the event had a fantastic turnout'. The tutors were equally impressed and very proud of their students with Cherie Luckman, a patchwork and quilting tutor, commenting that 'It was really inspirational to see such talent from all the students'. Visitors applauded the fantastic display with many sending messages of congratulations to the Tudor Rose Patchwork Facebook page. One of the visitors said 'Congratulations on the wonderful exhibition of work, the place was alive and humming'.



Tudor Rose Patchwork

*"Bedfordshire's
Foremost
Threadcraft
Emporium!"*

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01234 824983 – info@tudorrosepatchwork.co.uk

Shop On Line at:
<http://www.tudorrosepatchwork.co.uk>



Locals with Interesting Lives— James Callow

I was attending Sixth form at Stantonbury Campus looking to gain A levels for a career in the Army when a local funeral director (H.W. Mason & Sons) contacted the school asking for candidates with artistic ability. I mentioned it to my father and he was very enthusiastic and encouraged me to go for the interview just to see if it was something I might enjoy. I agreed terms with them after consideration and subsequently worked there for 8 years whilst attending City of Bath College to obtain an NVQ level 2 in stonemasonry. It was there that I learnt very valuable hammer & chisel skills as well as carving, restoration and lettering techniques.



After completing college I was offered an opportunity to work for Neville Funeral service as a mason but also as an administrator, dealing with customers, new enquiries, invoicing and sourcing new suppliers. Having worked there for 4 years I was offered a job with Butterfield natural stone to learn templating and producing Granite worktops and Marble bathroom surrounds. I enjoyed the work and was grateful for the experience but I was already being eagerly pursued by another memorial company called 1st Choice Memorials and felt the allure of producing memorials hard to resist having done it for so long. 1st Choice is the manufacturing arm of Memorials of Distinction, a large internet based nationwide company. I was overseeing the manufacture and, on occasion, the installation of memorials in cemeteries and churchyards up and down the country. I worked there for six years until last year, when my wife and I decided to start our own company, Sovereign Memorials Ltd.

There are so many decisions that have to be made when choosing a memorial and I feel that, with all my professional experience as well as my personal experience of loss, I am in a good position to help people make those choices in order to suitably commemorate the loss of a loved one. The stone will be in place for many years and it is my task to ensure that it still reflects the sentiments of the family in the future, as well as the present, in terms of content and material choice.

I am also well versed in the art of renovating memorials without the use of caustic substances, an alternative choice for families who already have a stone in situ but simply require the addition of a further inscription or cleaning to restore the stone to its former glory. I have restored a great many war memorials across the three counties using these same techniques so the chances are you have seen some of my work already! Its very rewarding and gratifying to complete a renovation because every stone tells a story. The workmanship involved in producing the stone originally often predates modern machinery and it is not until it has been refurbished that you can appreciate the skill and precision possessed by masons of times gone by.



**Sovereign Memorials Ltd**

As a memorial consultant we provide a bespoke personal service by a fully qualified Stone Mason with over 18 years' experience.

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Editors Note - "Locals with Interesting Lives" will be a regular feature so if you have someone you would like to nominate please let me know at bill@chalker.uk.net

Locals with Interesting Lives—Ade Clewlow

It's hard to know the precise moment when I decided that I was going to join the Army. When I was 15 years old I watched the story unfold in the Falkland Islands; I saw the drama and the courage of our forces fighting in a harsh winter environment and decided that was for me. Growing up in a small village ensured I was an outdoor type and pursuing a career in the military seemed to be a perfect fit.

Fast forward to my 19th Birthday. I was in my final term at The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, following in the footsteps of Princes and Kings, wondering how a normal lad who had attended the local state school had been transported into a completely different world; one full of high expectations and a growing sense of duty.

Of all the experiences from my military career, commanding Gurkha soldiers based in York was my most cherished. I took over my Squadron of 140 Gurkhas in 2003 and decided that I wanted to do more than just lead them successfully. While waiting to enter York Minster on Remembrance Day that year I decided that I was going to raise money to bring retired Gurkhas from Nepal back to the UK for the Cenotaph Parade in London a year later. I had to gain clearance from the Army and raise enough money to fly a dozen 'burho manche' (old men!) back to the UK.

I explained my plan to the 'chain of command' and waited for an answer. Christmas arrived and the first two fundraising events on the streets of York were about to happen; but still I had no direction from those above me. I decided to carry on with the plan and we raised over £3,000. Weeks later I was told by a senior General that I could not continue with the project; the issue was politically too sensitive. Unfortunately, I couldn't give the money back and to do so would have attracted very negative headlines. I knew that what I was doing was the right thing, and I decided that I had no choice but to carry on with my fundraising effort. I was privately assured that someone would make the General see sense.

In the year that followed I spent 3 months



learning Nepali in Kathmandu and Pokhara and I deployed on operations leading my Gurkhas for 4 months in Baghdad. Meanwhile we also managed to raise over £20,000. Exactly one year to the day after launching the project, and with a dozen elderly retired Gurkhas, backs ramrod straight marching behind me, we gave an 'eyes left' to the Cenotaph. The personal satisfaction I felt at having achieved my goal, together with the warmth from the crowds cheering the old soldiers, was unique and overwhelming. I was appointed MBE in 2007 following my time with the Gurkhas.



Hearts and minds: Ade with an Iraqi family in Baghdad 2004

Having served my country for 25 years across the world; from the jungles of Central America, via Baghdad, to dodging bullets in Mogadishu, I have come to appreciate the simple things in life. Uncomplicated friendships, acts of kindness and generosity from people I barely know, and seeing personal courage in those around me. Representing my country abroad, often in difficult places, has also made me value what it means to be British; doing the right thing and standing up for those who do not have a voice. I have also had a pretty good grounding in understanding human nature.

I enjoy the simplicity and beauty of the area in which my family now lives. Sometimes it is difficult for all of us to fully appreciate living in the UK; I can tell you from personal experience that people across the world aspire to emulate the quality of our lives here.

Ade Clewlow lives with his wife, two children and a King Charles Cavalier. [Ade and his wife have created a Facebook page called the '**Clapham, Oakley, Pavenham and Stevington Community Group**' to share local news and events. Please visit the page and join up!]

If you would like to listen to Ade recount some of his exploits then listen in to him on Radio York at <https://db.tt/qdYhQ2p5> and <https://db.tt/gOjcck5H>

theWI

OAKLEY WI



Oakley WI meets in the Village Hall on the second Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm. Over the next few months we can look forward to the following:

Tuesday 10th March Our AGM, followed by a glass of wine and a game or two of Crazy Bag Whist. No skill required!

Tuesday 14th April we will be hoping to pick up some tips from Amy Hall of April Flowers, Clapham, who will be demonstrating her flower arranging skills.

Tuesday 12th May we welcome Sheila Parker, a lively Liverpool lass who started out her dancing career as a Tiller Girl and later joined the Vernon Girls. Sheila has a wealth of stories about her career in entertainment.

If you have a fascination for birds of prey you will be in your element on **Tuesday 9th June** when Sue Mitchell brings along some raptors and tells us all about them.

If any of these appeal to you, we would be delighted to welcome you as a visitor. Members enjoy regular coach outings to places of interest, cinema and theatre trips, walks and meals out.

For further information tel: 823788 or 822577
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Friends Group

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Oakley Gardening Club

We meet in the Methodist Church Hall on the third Monday in the month at 7.45 pm and have two meetings left from our Winter Programme, to which visitors would be warmly welcomed

16th March 2015:

Speaker: Peter Vince "The Woodland Trust"

20th April 2015:

Tricia Thompson "The language of flowers"

Summer Programme:

In May we are planning an evening visit to The Old Rectory's Garden in Wrestlingworth;

In June a days outing to Savill Gardens in Surrey, also an evening visit to members' gardens in Oakley with refreshments, and

In July an evening visit to Flaxbourne Farm at Aspley Guise.

If you are interested in becoming a member of our Club or need further information please contact Audrey Mehew, tel: 01234 823380.



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oakley *Motorcycle* club

The membership of Oakley Motorcycle Club reached 475 members at the end of 2014, yet again another record for us.

The AGM was held at Oakley Sports & Social Club on Thursday 5th February with over 120 bike club members attending.

Founder and current Chair, Roger Bays will continue in the hot seat for 2015. Bouquets were presented to the Chair's "Leading Ladies" these being the Club Secretary, Bernice Russell, the Magazine Editor, Kirsty Eaton and the Fantasy Race Team Organizer, Marion Phillimore. The Oakley Bike Festival team won the Member of the Year Award. There was a special presentation of a £100 Bedford Arms meal voucher to Phil and Christine Randell who, after several years, stood down as Vice Chair and Secretary respectively. The membership on the night voted overwhelmingly to retain the East Anglian Air Ambulance as our charity for 2015

After an exciting 2014, numerous events are already being planned and booked for 2015. These so far include a tour of the BMW factory in Berlin, weekend trips to Wales and North Yorkshire, a few days at Le Mans and attending the Valencia MotoGP again. Adding these to our already busy schedule of rides, track days, competitions, walks, treasure hunts, archery, Community Boat charter and other non biking activities, it should be another great year for OMC.

Roger Bays , Chair - OMC



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The kitchen offers very tasty hot food served on certain days and evenings, homemade pizzas baked in our very own pizza oven. Check our fabulous menus out (download them from our website), pop down and try a bite - you won't be disappointed.

The Oakley Sports & Social Club house has two large LCD HD screens and a high definition projector, bringing you live sport from terrestrial, Sky Sports and BT - all in HD. Football, rugby, golf, darts, and many other main sporting events covering internationals and home fixtures. We have many football teams across the age groups up to adult teams under the Oakley Football Club (AFC) banner; Cricket teams Youth and Adult; Dart team, Pool team, and a petanque pitch.

As a Club we offer excellent facilities that are available to hire upon request for functions and parties at very competitive rates. The bar offers a large selection of drinks, alcoholic and non alcoholic, with a guest ale provided.

Membership of the club is a virtual give away at only £5 per year! You could save that on your first round of drinks compared to the current average pub prices. In order to take advantage of the great facilities at Oakley Sports & Social Club, membership is required. Membership can be completed online using the link below or over the bar in the clubhouse. Current members, please don't forget to renew your membership for 2014.

Latest News & Events



AFC Oakley into Cup final!

The AFC Oakley adult first team won their County Cup Semi Final on Saturday 7th February. They beat Langford (a team from the South Midlands League and two steps above AFC Oakley) in front of a large crowd. It was great to see the clubhouse buzzing!
(1-1 at Full time 4-3 on pens!)

The final will be midweek on a tbc date in April vs. Bedford or Crawley Green. See our website nearer the time for details.

2015 Membership Renewal

As of the 1st January 2015, all memberships are up for renewal.

Prices remain at £5/adult and £3/child (under 18)

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Full Menu

Friday's

5pm - 8pm
Pizza Night

Saturday's

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Full Menu

Sunday's

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Sunday Menu



824977



info@oakleyssc.com



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