

the guardian angel

your community's news & views



This publication is produced by a team at St Michael & All Angels Parish Church, belonging to the Summertown-Wolvercote Church Partnership.

Colours of Cutteslowe

Cutteslowe Community Centre is one of this area's most valuable assets. It is conveniently situated adjacent to the local Primary School and the North Oxford Children's Centre in Wren Road and lies directly opposite the park. Owned by Oxford City Council, but managed by Cutteslowe Community Association, it is now an incorporated charitable organisation.



A beautiful mosaic, made by children, in the Community Centre's entrance hall

The Centre's activities are a stepping stone for all ages towards a myriad of new learning and new hobbies. It's a social centre and a hub of all community news. The Centre is an open door to those living in its immediate surroundings, although people from North Oxford and further afield also enjoy use of its facilities and services.



The children's Art Club show off their 'dream catchers'

Classes range from art and yoga to dance and self-defence, maths, English, and IT. There are youth clubs, a seniors' club, an all-age allotment, Messy Church, a family cafe and a community lunch. There are social and fundraising events, after-school clubs, nature projects for children, and special community occasions. There's never a dull moment! Volunteers for office work, fund raising and working with children are indispensable. Young volunteers also have good opportunity to add new skills and experiences to their CVs. The Cutteslowe Association relies for financial and other support from many organisations both local and national and a full list is on their website: www.cutteslowecommunity.org.uk



Claudia, a key Centre volunteer and champion ballroom dancer, at a recent fundraising event

Our flooded heritage

The flood waters from the Cherwell River cover Sunnymead Island in the Park and on over Cromwell's Ditch into the gardens of Lucerne Road in Summertown. In drier times the ditch is an



excellent habitat for birds; it was cleared by the hard work of the Sunnymead User's Group with support from the City Council. Sunnymead Island is a conservation area of floodplain grassland and dominated in summer by the tall, creamy white, meadowsweet plant.

Oliver Cromwell did put up a temporary bridge in 1644/45 over the Cherwell for military purposes and possibly came towards Sunnymead. The peace treaty was signed with the Royalists in Marston and the area has connections with Cromwell; this might explain why the ditch now bears his name and lives on in mythology. Can any reader throw more light on this interesting area of the river?

Local residents enjoy a cuppa with Cutteslowe Centre Manager, Allie Noel, before starting the Spring Clean of litter from the park and adjacent roads. Pride in local neighbourhoods is a key theme for this annual **OxClean** event which took place on 8th March. Sainsbury's provided the workers with yummy pastries and hot drinks!



Good news is announced for Cutteslowe Association's plans for an Outdoor Gym and Fitness Trail near the basketball pitch in Sunnymead Park. The money has come through from the WREN Foundation, The Friends of Sunnymead Park are generously match funding and the City Council have agreed to fund maintenance and insurance!

Please email comments or contributions for the next edition of Guardian Angel to guardianangel.newsletter@gmail.com, or write to Summertown Church Hall, Portland Rd, OX2 7EZ.

The deadline date for the next edition is May 7th; we look forward to hearing from you.

March 2014 (5)



King George's Walk has Night Lights!

Anyone who hated walking through this church passage between Lonsdale and Portland Road on a dark night, need fear no more; superb post lights now guide your way. Michael Collier, St Michael's Church volunteer maintenance guru, was determined to achieve this before Christmas. The job was complex and demanding, the weather bad and the ground rocky, making trench digging difficult. Trial holes were first dug to locate old lamppost cabling needed for connecting to the lights. Four posts each with 6 LED lights were concreted in, and wiring connected to all these was laid in a trench the length of The Walk. Electrician, Steve and experienced handyman, Roger and his son assisted Mike with this arduous task. Recognising the need for such a project, a generous contribution of £500 towards material costs was donated from funds raised at a street party by the Seven Roads Group. Now that the path is illuminated, it means access for events at the church and access between the two roads is safer and easier.



OXO's - Now a Community Café

Last November Tom and Stacey, who run Oxo's store in Islip Road, transformed it into a community café; there are tables inside and out, as well as a menu that will take you from breakfast through to tea. You can still buy wine, beer and essential groceries. They also sell a range of newspapers (tokens accepted) and give a mobile phone top-up service.



It's a great place to call in for a take-away coffee or tea (£1) when walking the dog. Burgers, baguettes and chips are available throughout the day, as well as the traditional English breakfast (£4.50). It's a family business with Tom's Mum, Janet lending a hand most days and even Nan Beryl helping out twice a week. Oxo was Tom's Grandpa's nickname, so a good name for a business in Oxford, even though they don't sell Oxo cubes. Tom and his partner Stacey still need more support from the local community. If you would like them to stock a particular item, just contact them:
Tel: 01865 425636 *Open 7 days a week*

Busy Befriending Bees

The bees are now waking from their winter slumber and starting to forage for nectar and pollen. In OX2 alone there are currently 22 members of the Oxfordshire Bee Keepers' Association either keeping honeybees or keenly interested in their welfare and behaviour. The bee population has declined rapidly in recent years due to the changes in weather patterns and the presence of the varroa mite which has destroyed many wild hives and bee keepers are vigilant in controlling it. If you are thinking of starting a hive, you can go to a beginners' course and to the teaching apiary run by the Association in Woodstock.



Nigel, local resident, checks the condition of his hives on a regular basis

A good hive has up to 60,000 bees in midsummer and can supply over 100lbs of honey, depending on the health of the bees and quality of nectar and pollen source. Your garden doesn't need to be a forest of flowers or be near an allotment; these tiny creatures will travel up to 5 kilometres for nectar and pollen! It's also not exceptionally expensive to keep bees, nor time consuming, and if you grow fruit and veg, your crops should increase too!

yours truly... Ann Spokes Symonds

- evacuee, Lord Mayor, author and local historian.



On a chilly Saturday afternoon at Alexandra Courts you may find Ann wielding a tennis racquet! She has been a member of the Norham Gardens Lawn Tennis Club for 70 years and has recently been awarded a free life membership. She still finds time to play golf twice a week and be President of the Wolvercote Local History Society.

During the Second World War Ann was evacuated to America returning in 1944. She then decided to study PPE at St Anne's and serve the war effort by growing vegetables. After university she worked as Woman Organiser for the Conservative Party, and tried unsuccessfully to get into Parliament. However, she became a City Councillor in 1957, a County Councillor in 1973 and Lord Mayor of Oxford in 1976. At the age of 55 she married Richard Symonds, who had just retired from the United Nations. She has published 14 books, 7 on local history.

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Saved for the Children

A huge petition to the County Council in October saved the Children's Centre in Wren Road from closure. The Centre's service covers Jericho to Wolvercote and Cutteslowe, and has over 1,000 children under five in its reach area. The Centre is a One Stop Shop for families with young children and last year 476 families attended. Most services are free. Families are able to access support of health professionals, benefits advisers, outreach workers, a home-school worker and signposting to other services. The centre



Shilpa Bhatt the Centre's manager with Philippa Sherry, an outreach worker

programme includes courses and networking opportunities for parents, and there are exciting play activities and groups for children using the Early Years curriculum. Floods of comments appealed to the Council to keep the Centre open. To quote: "A lifesaver for me, from the breast feeding cafe to the singing groups and the First Aid courses." "We can find comfort from other Moms and Carers from the day to day situation with kids." "As Mum to an autistic child, it has been a huge support." "A place to find out how to be a parent. You feel you are not alone."

northoxfordchildrenscentre@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Tel: 01865 559742

Work placements are available. Apply through school or college, or contact the Centre Manager

A Walk in the Meadow

Waterways residents know all about the treasures of this place, but for those who don't know Port Meadow, a visit this Spring, entering from the south west side of Summertown, is well worth the discovery. Walking from Elizabeth Jennings Way off the Woodstock Road, turn left onto the canal towpath towards the city and it should take you about twenty minutes.



Flooding in the Meadows has now abated, so leave the wild winter behind and enjoy this free natural resource in our community: walking, jogging, bird watching, seeing the ducks and swans, the horses and cattle, flying your kite or walking the dog; whatever your enjoy. You can check portmeadowbirding.blogspot.com for birdlife you might see on the day you go.

Cool for School

St Edward's School Food for Thought

In response to a school trip to the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp, sixth former Jacob Colman sat in a wheelie bin in the school dining room and allowed pupils to scrape their leftovers all over him. Jacob explains: "We saw how those who went to Auschwitz lived off 400-1,000 calories a day and risked their lives by smuggling in extra food. In contrast, vast amounts of food are nonchalantly wasted at school on a daily basis." I hope it's made an impact and people will now think about how much food they take at mealtimes."



The Cherwell School A link to Mandela's village

Pupils will have raised £1,000 by Easter for their school charity 'The Chicken Project'. This promotes business and agricultural enterprise in chicken farming for young people, in a poor and socially deprived rural area of South Africa, through training and education. Their commitment and fund raising for this charity for some years has prompted a grandson of Nelson Mandela to ask for their help in funding a library for some schools in Qunu, his grandfather's native village and final resting place; the pupils are very excited!



Summer Fields School A good year for chess!

The school appears to have a particularly strong set of chess players at the moment. Congratulations to them for playing against 13 other schools and edging ahead of the always strong Magdalen College School, to win the U11 award in the Oxfordshire Junior Chess Tournament in November. Watch this space for future triumphs!



Best wishes to those taking GCSE and A level and other exams this Summer

OXFORD FESTIVAL OF NATURE 2014

3pm Fri 6th June — 5pm Sat 7th June

Cutteslowe Community Centre and Primary School
and Sunnymead Parks

The Festival celebrations start in the morning with the arrival of the
QUEEN'S COMMONWEALTH GAMES BATON
at CUTTESLOWE PRIMARY SCHOOL





St Michael & All Angels Church *All are welcome!*

Sundays

8.00 am Holy Eucharist - a short service.

10.00 am Parish Eucharist - with choir and hymns.
Have a coffee and a chat afterwards.

Children's Church - Meets in the church during 10.00 am Eucharist. **We have a Godly Play session every 4th Sunday.** On the 1st Sunday of the month the children participate in the All-age Eucharist.

6.30 pm Taizé Worship - A short candlelit service which includes chants and silent prayer.

3.30 pm 3rd Sunday of month: Messy Church
Cutteslowe Community Centre, Wren Road.

Weekdays

9.30 am Morning Prayer

10.00 am Tuesdays: Baby & Toddler Group
Play for children and chat for grown-ups!
Contact Juliet Field (see below for details)

8.00 pm Tuesdays: 20s/30s (Twerties Group)
For fellowship, fun and learning.
Contact Daisy and Yin at yinyaodong@yahoo.co.uk

10.00 am Thursdays: Holy Eucharist
Ministry of healing on the 1st Thursday of the month.

5.20 pm Thursdays: St Michael's Choristers age 3+:
Term-time only. Contact Alice on 07791 328108

6.30 - 7.45 pm Thursdays: Adult Choir Practice
Contact Stephen on 07717 852020

9.00 am Saturdays: Men's Breakfast
An informal social on 1st Saturday of the month.
Contact Steve on 01865 552475

Contact Details

Revd Gavin Knight (vicar)
01865 556079 / 07833 251939

"No matter where you are on the journey of faith, you are always welcome at St Michael & All Angels!" Find us just off the Banbury Road opposite BBC Oxford.



The upper and lower Church Halls (with kitchens) are available for hire. We advise early booking.

Contact Juliet Field
01865 311762 or email:
summertownchurchhall@tiscali.co.uk



12 Noon, Good Friday, 18th April

Come and experience one of the most celebrated pieces in the English choral tradition. The Good Friday performance in the church in Lonsdale Road will feature the composer's great, great granddaughter, Alice Stainer. Alice's beautiful soprano voice is a feature of the church choir Sunday by Sunday. She also takes after her forebear in training the young choristers at St Michael's. Sir John Stainer was no stranger to Oxford: having been organist at Magdalen College and the University Church, he returned from St Paul's Cathedral to become Professor of Music at Magdalen. Alice says of this special family connection, "Sir John would be especially delighted that we are here singing his work liturgically, as it was conceived: a moving meditation on Christ's Passion".

Cash in the Attic?

After moving from the old rectory into the new vicarage in Lonsdale Road, Gavin Knight - the vicar of Summertown - discovered art treasure. Paintings, prints and photographs were found in the attic of the old rectory and salvaged before the building was demolished. The painting displayed here outside the new vicarage is an original watercolour by Selim Rothwell (1873) of the church St John in Rome. A photograph of the first vicar of St Michael's, Summertown, Charles Burrough, (c.1910) was also discovered. The treasures have been put in safe storage awaiting an Antiques Roadshow!



Barry Doyle, site manager, who salvaged the painting, alongside Gavin

Calling all Singers!

Have you ever watched Gareth Malone on the television and secretly wished you could join a choir? Well, the opportunity could be on your doorstep. St Michael's Church Choir is a sociable group of singers and always welcomes new members. It contributes significantly to the regular Sunday morning worship, singing a broad range of music from William Byrd to the



theme tune from the *Vicar of Dibley*. It also gives concerts and even ventures further afield, singing in Leicester Cathedral last year and Warwick this August. Singing together fosters a real sense of community, but above all is great fun! The choir rehearses in the

church on Thursday nights from 6.30 to 7.45 and afterwards inevitably repairs to a local watering-hole for some well-deserved refreshment and relaxation. Attendance and commitment is flexible, so why not come along and give it a try? Contact Steve on 07717 852020. Gareth Malone eat your heart out!