

august | september 2012

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magazine



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The editorial group from left to right: Jo Stoves, Joan Grummant, Christine Atkinson and Diana Pearman.

# From “ the editorial group

By the time this edition reaches you, some of us will be engrossed in the Olympic events and our front cover photo is our local link with this international competition.

In some ways this is an unusual edition of the magazine with a potential mix of emotions. It contains the joys and delights of the here and now, with highlights of the Jubilee celebrations where everyone clearly had a great time, contrasted with more thoughtful pieces on burial grounds, memorials and embalming.

There is the usual update on the community activities in the village and the notice board displays the variety of forthcoming events. Progress on the neighbourhood plan is promising and the library update indicates a future direction.

We continue to look forward to life after this amazing summer of Euro 2012, Jubilee, Wimbledon and the Olympics. Can we possibly follow such an eventful time??

So returning to village life we would welcome any information that exists concerning the contribution made to the village by Sibella Bonham Carter during her lifetime. If we are able to gather sufficient information she will be the major feature of the next issue.

Anouska would love to hear from the younger members of the village, especially if one of them can identify the secret village photo.

Sadly we did not win at Wimbledon today but we all wish Team GB 'to be the best they can be' in the 2012 Olympics. Enjoy!

*Diana*

**DIANA PEARMAN** Editor 2012

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PS...

Sonning Common Magazine is on sale at the village library in Grove Road for £1.50 a copy. Annual subscriptions are available for £15. Contact Geoffrey Adams. Email: [chairman@sonningcommonmagazine.org](mailto:chairman@sonningcommonmagazine.org) Phone: 0118 972 2134

Magazine contributions may be posted to: 1 Woodlands Road, Sonning Common RG4 9TD.

WHILE EVERY EFFORT IS MADE TO ENSURE THE ACCURACY OF INFORMATION PRINTED IN THIS MAGAZINE, THE EDITOR AND THE PUBLISHER CANNOT ACCEPT ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONSEQUENCES OF ERRORS THAT OCCUR.

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### COVER IMAGE

**Will Traves, aged 13 from Banbury carries the Olympic Torch through the streets of Nettlebed**

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# Grove Road Residents Celebrate the Jubilee in Style

Around 200 Grove Road residents, along with their families and friends, joined in a community street party to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee on Monday 4 June. Children, with Union Jack flags painted on their faces, scooted up and down the empty road between the closure barriers, delighted with their new found freedom. The youngest party goer was a babe-in-arms, the eldest was 102.

It was Grove Road resident Leena Wisely who'd got the ball rolling by applying for the road closure. When it came through she said "I panicked! I was worried I wouldn't be able to organise the party on my own and everyone's so busy nowadays." So Leena got a group

of local "Mums-that-do" together, divided up the party planning jobs between them, and got cracking.

Leena's husband Duncan and their neighbour Michael Cann were particularly enthusiastic about the event and by coincidence, turned up in a party shop on the same day and at the same time, to buy bunting, which they then strung high up across the street.

"In the end, I had so many offers of help. That was the lovely thing about it. Everyone did their bit and really took it in the spirit it was meant to be," said Leena. So, is she keen to organise another street party in the future? "Well we've got all this bunting now so we'll have to put it to good use. It would be great to have another one. Perhaps if Prince William and Kate have a baby!" ■



# A Fitting Toast to the Monarch

By JOAN GRUMMANT



**It might have been raining outside, but the atmosphere in Sonning Common Village Hall was warm, bright and very festive on the afternoon of 3 June.**

A Champagne Tea Party took place to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee and it was an event that celebrated local community effort, as well as the sovereign's sixtieth anniversary. This fun event was non-profit making and enjoyed by all.

The colourfully decorated hall was buzzing with activity and the beautifully presented tea of sandwiches, scones and cream and cakes was greatly appreciated by the 100 people present. Thirty eight, hand knitted red, white, and blue tea cosies adorned the tea tables and had been donated by anonymous well wishers. As well as entertainment and community singing led by Nottakwire the afternoon was rounded off with a champagne toast to her Majesty.

The occasion was the brainchild of Chrissie Phillips-Tilbury. The stalwart band of helpers who made a massive contribution to the success of the afternoon included Sue Frayling- Cork, Carole Lewis, Susan Rusman, Jill Vallis, Diana Atfield, Margaret Johnson, David Rusman, Alan Gibben and John Stoves. As well as baking and serving tea, the ladies were indefatigable in their efforts to ensure the success of the afternoon. It was an occasion

of great warmth and good humour and it was certainly appreciated by the village community.

After discovering that the John Jackson museum at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, was looking for hard copies of jubilee material, Chrissie Phillips-Tilbury has sent them copies of an event ticket, a poster advertising the event and also a poster asking for volunteers to make tea cosies. It seems that the fame of Sonning Common may be available for posterity! ■



## 'Molly Makes it to Millwall' – No, not football!

Undoubtedly the most magnificent maritime spectacle of a lifetime, the 12-strong crew of American Whaleboat "Molly" included two Sonning Commoners, rowing in the leading squadron of The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Pageant, Sunday 3 June.

It rained, but the overwhelming impressions remain; cheering crowds on the banks and bridges, glimpsing Her Majesty, and the jostling throng of rowing boats queuing to pass through the many bridges.

At Chiswick boat-house, taking a break from decorating Molly", we watched the Prime Minister of New Zealand deliver the formal send-off to the Maori crew. And the drizzle stopped!

At Wandsworth waiting on our Mustering mooring, and anticipating worsening weather we switched our uniform shirts to outside warmer, waterproof layers.

At last the Pageant begins. We're in the leading squadron; nominally 9th row and 3rd from starboard (the right, you landlubbers!)

The Queen is ahead till Cadogan Pier

where she changes boats and is visible atop the splendid "Spirit of Chartwell".

"Molly" passes, performing The Royal Salute (tossed oars) - Crowd roars.

The river is wide compared with Henley, but the crush of manpowered boats (nine abreast, and some oar-spans exceed 30 feet), it becomes a mad melee, queueing to squeeze through the bridges.

Below The Tower of London, and Tower Bridge is the "Avenue of Sail" – Tall ships moored between The Tower and Wapping. This is where Her Majesty will disembark but we have 3 miles to go. Raining 'stair-rods'. Row on regardless.

Crowd still cheers. Rain still pours. Pull those oars. Millwall slipway at last. We've been afloat nearly 5 hours and rowed 13 miles.

A long day but what a memorable one.


Paul and Irenka who live in Sonning Common are both members of The Henley Whalers, "Sail and Oar" enthusiasts who participate in events throughout Europe. They row, year round at Henley. Paul also offers student-sailing. ■

[henleywhalers.org.uk](http://henleywhalers.org.uk)



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# Olympic Torch in Nettlebed

Local schoolchildren, parents, neighbouring villagers and local residents all came together early this morning to watch the Olympic Torch pass through Nettlebed.

Kidmore End and Sonning Common Primary Schools gave permission for the children to attend this special event in the Olympic calendar this year.

Hooting vehicles and free drums given out added to the noise of the cheers as Will Traves, aged 13 from Banbury, ran past us as we lined the pavements. Sonning Common Primary School selected children to hold special boards spelling out the school name with pictures of all the sports on the other side (kindly painted by volunteer mums). After an early start to get in position the flame passed by very quickly on it's way to Henley. ■



## Will Trave's nomination story

William is a very special young man. As the younger brother of 2 sisters with special needs, he has had to shoulder much more responsibility than most 12 year olds. He has accepted this responsibility with a maturity beyond his years - he has even told his Mum that he will look after his sisters when she is no longer around. Friends are always commenting about his delightful manner with special needs children. ■

## Sports Report from Chiltern Edge School

One third of Year 9 pupils have almost completed their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh award. Working very hard, in their own time, doing volunteer work, physical activity and learning a new skill – WELL DONE!

Primary X Country events have taken place through the winter and spring – local schools competing for County awards.

Another successful skiing trip to Austria saw some of the best snow ever. Evening activities of riflery, swimming and bowling too – very busy week!

Year 10 has had a chance to enjoy golf lessons at Caversham Heath – beginners all the way to advanced.

In between many rain cancellations we have played some cricket! Year 7 unfortunately have only managed one of two games, but Year 8 very narrowly missed out on a semi-final place in the Oxfordshire competition and won the Oxon 6-a-side tournament.

Lots of other sports competition have taken place in the Olympic year including, athletics, netball, hockey, rugby, football, swimming and tennis.

Chiltern Edge are very proud of all their sports teams!

**KATIE SCOTT – PE department**

## Sonning Common Primary School's Jubilee Summer Fair breaks all records

A superb £4,325 was raised at Sonning Common Primary School's annual summer fair.

Bathed in glorious sunshine the school's very own Queen opened the proceedings as the choir sang a medley of songs ending with 5 verses of the National Anthem! Fair-goers enjoyed Jubilee Afternoon Tea, archery, a climbing wall, hook a duck and having their faces painted. A few very 'game' Dads were dressed up as kings using rags and paper. The money raised exceeded last year's total by over £1,000 and will be put towards new sports facilities at Sonning Common Primary school, as a legacy of Olympic and Jubilee year. ■



## Late delivery of the June/July magazine

Some of you will have noticed that the magazine arrived later in the month than normal. We are sorry for this. Although the printer was on time the courier failed to deliver before the Jubilee bank holiday weekend, by which time some deliverers were on holiday. We expect better for this issue – unless the opening of Olympic Games causes unexpected problems! ■

**GEOFF ADAMS Chairman Sonning Common Magazine**

# Neighbourhood planning is moving forward

**Design Day 2 on 2 June was devoted to guidance for villagers who signed up to do site and landscape evaluation surveys of the village. Despite poor weather 25 survey assessments were issued, many of which have been returned.**

Design Day 3 held on 7 July was advertised by 'flyer' to all Sonning Common residents. Again guidance was given on site surveys, landscape evaluation surveys of the edge of the village adjacent to SON sites 1 – 14 and village character surveys of 10 different residential areas making up the built-up area of the village. Over 80 residents attended and took multiple surveys with them to complete. The planning group look forward to seeing the results.

The landscape evaluations and village character surveys are very important as they put the various possible development sites SON 1 – 14 in context with the neighbouring countryside and residential areas, in order to see whether they would or would not be suitable sites for development.

Design Day 4 (date sometime in September) will be concerned with the various housing needs of our village and ideas about regenerating our village centre. This will be followed by a questionnaire delivered to all households asking for information and your ideas about housing types and needs in Sonning Common.

With regards to regenerating our village centre, the proposal for 4 semi-detached homes on back land behind 23a Wood Lane (Occasions) will, if accepted by the planners and District Councillors at SODC, not only encourage a similar proposal for houses on land behind the Tandoori and the Chemist but will totally block any longer term ideas for re-developing the village centre. In the short term these developments, if successful, will increase traffic flows, parking problems and congestion in Wood Lane and quite likely force Reading Bus Company to look for an alternative route to Wood Lane ie Peppard Road (B481).

This is of great concern to us all. ■

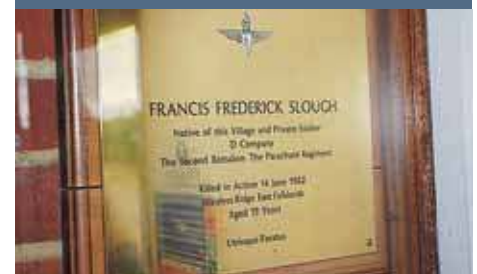
**CLLR BARRIE GREENWOOD**

## Private Francis Slough

*Private Francis Slough, 12 Platoon, D Company the Parachute Regiment, was mortally wounded during the final stage of the battle for Wireless Ridge and evacuated to the field hospital but died of his wounds under resuscitation.*

Over 30 years ago Francis Slough was killed in the Falklands conflict, the day before the conflict ended on 14 June 1982. He was a resident of Sonning Common and attended Chiltern Edge school. There is a plaque in the Village Hall in memory of his sacrifice.

RUFC is planning to plant a memorial tree in memory of local youngsters. Andy Davies, Chairman, is proposing that plaques can be sited on the wall of their new clubhouse to built on the site. It is hoped that one will be in memory of Private Slough. ■



# Nottakwire raises £1,200 for local charities

**"Nottakwire's Summer Celebration Day on 30 June in the Village Hall was a wonderful community occasion, thanks to the choir members who demonstrated their increasing musical skill by performing a varied programme of summer songs.**

Members also generously supplied new tombola prizes, delicious home-made refreshments and beautiful flower displays. Several of our local businesses kindly donated further tombola prizes.

136 visitors attended the three concerts through the day, played the tombola, bid for the flowers and enjoyed the range of refreshments. A total of £1200 was raised. All of this money will be donated to the village, to support local causes.

£200 added from our own funds, brings the total being donated to £1400.

The Village Gardeners £700 - to buy 2 Cherry Trees plus planters and compost, for outside the Village Hall.

The Health Centre £300 - to purchase an "Oxygen Saturation Monitor" as they only own 2

Club SC - £300 - in continued support for the youth of the village.

The local branch of "Global hearts for Children" - (formally Feed the Children) - £100.

We wish to extend heartfelt thanks to the many individuals who helped to make this day such a happy and successful one, and to all those people who supported the event by coming along." ■





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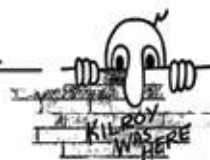
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## The Big Harvest at Greys Court, 22 and 23 September 2012

11am – 5pm

The annual Apple Day at Greys Court got bigger and bigger, in one day drawing visitors well in excess of 2,000 people. This year we are bringing together local producers of food, drink and craft to these delightful surroundings, offering our visitors an opportunity to taste and experience the finest the region has to offer. Not forgetting our own stalls of organic produce and plants grown by the National Trust at Greys Court.

With demonstrations, family fun, music and Morris men, this weekend is not to be missed.

The Big Harvest will be held over the weekend of 22nd and 23rd September from 11am till 5pm, with last admission at 4.30pm. National Trust member FREE, normal admission charges apply.

For more information, visit our website [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/greys-court](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/greys-court) or contact the Estate Office on 01491 628529.



**Where is the 101 service available?**  
101 is now available across all areas of England and Wales.

### What you can report using 101?

Call 101 to contact the police to report less urgent crime and disorder or to speak to your local officers. For example, call 101:

- if your car has been stolen
- if your property has been damaged
- if you suspect drug use or dealing in your local area
- to report a minor traffic accident
- to give the police information about crime in your area
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Our email address is [WEAreading@googlemail.com](mailto:WEAreading@googlemail.com).

Art exhibition

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## WEA CLASSES Studying Chaucer

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Please contact Pauline Twyman 0118 972 3767  
or Ruth Winchester 0118 972 2164

## NHS 111

The new number for the future of  
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A new three- digit number 111 will make  
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NHS 111 will be available 24 hours a day, 365  
days a year. Calls from landlines and mobiles  
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Information will be distributed widely across  
Oxfordshire this summer to inform people  
about the launch of the new NHS 111 service.



## Sonning Common and Peppard Junior Table Tennis Club has relaunched!

### PEPPARD MEMORIAL HALL

The club has found a great new coach, Graham Outrim – who has divided all the juniors into two groups (Stage One and Stage Two) mostly just on the basis of age. Coaching will be every Friday from 5.30 to 6.30, and then from 6.30 to 7.30 – £2.50 per session. Individuals will normally stay in the same groups unless a move is agreed. New starters are welcome – please contact Derek Brooke-Wavell for session availability: [d.wavell@talktalk.net](mailto:d.wavell@talktalk.net)



## Celebrate our Centenary Year!

**Come along, have fun and celebrate with us!**

We have some great events throughout this year to celebrate our village school.

*This years events include:*

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Centenary Christmas Fair  
Quiz Night  
On Your Bike & On Your Feet  
Summer Fair  
Wine Tasting evening  
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[www.sonningcommonprimary.co.uk](http://www.sonningcommonprimary.co.uk)



## RUFC UNDER 5'S

Rotherfield United Football Club had another fantastic Presentation Day on the 30 June. With a break from the rain, it was a lovely sunny day and we raised over £500 much needed funds for the club.

We are ready to welcome our new U5's (children who are in Reception) each Saturday morning at Bishopwood Sports Ground from 9.30 to 10.30 starting in September.

[www.rotherfieldfc.com](http://www.rotherfieldfc.com)

## Make a difference

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**Could you offer your time and skills to support those in difficulty?**

**Are you good at talking to people on the phone?**

**Do you want to develop your work related skills while helping your local community?**

We are looking for volunteers to join our Adviceline phone team in Henley & District Citizens Advice Bureau. Volunteers are trained to answer calls on a wide range of issues. You don't need to be a legal expert, just willing to learn new skills and have time to give.

Please email [recruitment@henleycab.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@henleycab.org.uk) for further details and an application form.

The Citizens Advice service helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing information and advice, and by influencing policy makers. CAB advice is free, independent, confidential and impartial, and available to everyone regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or nationality. Most CAB staff are trained volunteers, working at over 3,300 service outlets across England and Wales.



Following the success of our play reading of John Godber's Lucky Sods last month, we invite you to join us on the following dates in the conservatory of

## The Reformation

**At 8pm**

**Thursday 19 July**

Playgoers by Arthur Pinero/ Still Life by Noel Coward

**Thursday 16 August**

An Inspector Calls by JB Priestley

Future dates 18 September, 16 October, 14 November and 5 December

Suggestions for plays to read on the last four occasions will be warmly received! We have ideas but would welcome yours too.



## SONNING COMMON MAGAZINE

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# Nature's way

- at the risk of being thought morbid



By **JOHN PEARMAN**

*It is not everyone who wishes to consider end of life events, particularly one's own funeral, but one thing is certain - it is our common destiny and if we don't do the planning then either family or friends will have to do so after our death.*

The idea of a natural burial, sometimes called a woodland burial, is an idea that is growing in popularity as the final resting place of choice. With growing demand for space in conventional cemeteries as well as rising maintenance costs (and the unfortunate risk of vandalism in our larger urban cemeteries) more people are coming around to the idea of ending up under a tree rather than a headstone!

A natural burial could be the choice for those seeking somewhere more natural and beautiful to hold a funeral and remember a loved one. Most sites are set within acres of countryside, amidst the peace and tranquillity of trees and

flowers, providing a natural alternative to a traditional graveyard. The focus at these burial grounds is to preserve the natural beauty of the meadow or woodland environment and encouraging native wildflowers, trees and wild life.

In most cases no memorial stones or other grave markers are permitted, instead tributes are often made by the planting of a memorial tree or the placing of a simple memorial plaque in a central location. In all cases there is a commitment to preserve and treasure the landscape setting for future generations.



The first woodland burial site opened in Carlisle in 1993 and there are now over 260 natural burial sites in the UK with more being planned. Some are privately owned and run, while others are operated by local authorities alongside the more traditional cemeteries. As many residents will know we already have one in our local neighbourhood, in Rotherfield Greys, just a field's view away from St Nicholas' Parish Church. The natural burial site was set-up in 2009 by local landowner Alexander Hood following the death of his eldest son Sam, who was the first to be buried in the site with a Wellingtonia tree planted in his memory.

The development of a natural woodland environment was already a feature of the Greys Green Farm and the introduction of a natural burial ground into an area of meadow land was in keeping with plans for extending the wild, native woodland. The Burial Ground is now leased for 99 years to Native Woodland Ltd & Natural Burial Grounds.

The essence of a natural burial is that it seeks to minimise the effect on the natural environment. In popular jargon it is 'green' or environmentally friendly. So any materials used for coffins need to be naturally biodegradable such as cardboard, simple pine, wicker or bamboo. In some cases a simple woollen shroud is used and no embalming is done prior to a natural burial. Likewise it is suggested that for floral tributes, garden flowers tied with raffia and left on the coffin are the best way.

Natural burial will have some obvious appeals to those with humanist beliefs but many people with religious views will also regard this form of interment as appropriate in the context of their own faith as well. Natural burial is open to all and can take place with or without a religious service. The ground is not consecrated but can be blessed by individual clergy at the interment.

At Rotherfield Greys small slate plaques bearing the names and dates of the deceased are located in an oak framed memorial panel. To preserve the natural woodland appearance no memorial stones or other markers are located on the graves. However graves are individually mapped and can be exactly located by reference to ground markers. Ashes can also be interred following cremation. Certificates are provided after the burial providing exact locations for those family and friends who would wish to visit the site in the future.

Annual tree planting is organised during the winter or early spring and families and friends are invited to plant young saplings in memory of the deceased person.

As to the practical issues, normally the next of kin would use the services of a funeral director although this is not a requirement but many families find the prospect of organising a funeral entirely without support from an undertaker very daunting, not least from a practical point of view. Many local funeral directors have experience of natural burials (see our advertisements section) and will provide undertaking services similar to a traditional burial.

Should you wish to visit the woodland burial ground at Rotherfield Greys it is easily accessed from the village, the entrance some 100m from the church on the Henley Road with a permissive footpath leading from the small entrance bay. Alternatively cut across from the footpath which runs from Dog Lane to the Maltsters Arms pub.

When I visited the burial ground the overall impression was one of tranquillity with an atmosphere very different to a conventional cemetery or church graveyard. In fact it had the feel of a place of life rather than death. Apart from a low drone of a distant plane manoeuvring in the sky the predominant sound was birdsong. The plan is that given time this area will develop into natural woodland with a mix of native tree species – an exercise in imagination at the moment, but still a very agreeable rural scene.

My research into natural burials for this article has certainly given me pause for thought on the choice of a final resting place. If it has done the same for you then my hope for both of us is that by the time the inevitable occurs this page will have yellowed with age! ■

**More information on the Rotherfield Greys woodland burial ground is available from its Custodian Andrea Chanter on 01494 881586 or visit [www.naturalburialgrounds.co.uk](http://www.naturalburialgrounds.co.uk)**



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*Autumn Leaf*

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## AN INTERVIEW WITH...

## Sammi Davenport

By ROS VARNES

*Embalming bodies may be described as one of those difficult jobs that someone has to do. That 'someone' is Sammi Davenport and, for her, embalming is rewarding rather than difficult, testimony perhaps, to her possession of the right mix of care, respect and practicality for the job.*

Sammi, from Ashford Avenue, has worked as an embalmer for 16 years and sees embalming as an extension of nursing.

Said Sammi: "It is really nice, to be able to be able to provide that last important care for someone. When the person looks peaceful and restored, as if they are just sleeping, I find it very rewarding. I certainly wouldn't want to do anything else."

Embalming involves injecting a combination of chemicals and pigments into the deceased's circulatory system to both slow down the decomposition process and to restore the skin to a more natural colour.

Often people from a cultural and religious background of open coffins at funerals will opt to have their loved ones embalmed.

Sammi set out on the path to becoming an embalmer after taking a job as a hospital porter, with mortuary duties. She was initially worried about how she would cope with handling dead bodies but found she was not fazed by the process.

She subsequently became a trainee embalmer at an undertaker's before taking a practical exam and gaining membership of the British Institute of Embalmers. She now works independently and is on call to various local funeral directors.

Sammi became hooked on embalming when she dealt with a trauma case - someone who had been badly injured at work - and saw the difference she made.

She said: "When I am able to restore someone to how they were meant to be and this allows their relatives to see them to say goodbye it can be a very important part of the grieving process.

"When a person dies it can be very distressing for the relatives to have their loved one's body taken from them. They don't know what is happening to the body and don't feel part of the process. However, relatives do have the right to help prepare their loved ones for their funerals. And it can be very therapeutic for them to be involved with this last act of caring for their loved ones."

Although the mother-of-two is very calm and measured when describing what she does, some cases do really get to her, particularly those involving children.

She said: "Last year I had to embalm the body of a two-and-a-half-year-old girl. Later I went on the school run and listened to parents talking about a washing machine breaking down. It's difficult to adjust sometimes and join in with normal conversations."

However, on the whole she is upbeat - a common trait of many people in the funeral business, she says.

"People who work in the environment I work in are not maudlin. They live each day as if it were their last since they are only too aware that it could be." ■

[sammidavenport@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sammidavenport@yahoo.co.uk)



## So much for the Great British Summer in this the Jubilee Year!

By JO STOVES

**But, undeterred, the Village Gardeners have continued to enhance the appearance of our village.**

The border outside One Stop has been completely replanted as the Jubilee Bed in regal colours of gold, silver and purple and the mangers on the front of the Village Hall are equally resplendent in red, white and blue.

The volunteers have replanted or replenished all the flower beds in the village centre. Both tubs and pots have been filled with bedding plants grown from seed over the winter. Considerable work has been done to improve the area by the wine shop at the bottom of Wood Lane. It is now full of summer planting and plans are afoot to plant a hedge in the autumn.

This spring the Millenium Field sported the 2000 bulbs planted last year. These will naturalise so will be more prolific and worth a visit next year.

Exciting plans for the future include planting another 1000 bulbs, moving the newly acquired telephone box from Blackamoor Lane to a more central site and filling it with plants and baskets and planting two flowering cherries in large containers on either side of the village hall doors.



The Village Gardeners would like to say a big thank you for all the support and encouraging comments they have received from villagers whilst out planting and weeding. It's nice to be appreciated. They also thank all the local organisations that have sponsored and supported their efforts with particular thanks to Heath and Watkins, for not only supplying the mangers on the village hall, but for maintaining them for the last two years. ■

### VILLAGE CUP awarded to Chiltern Edge Horticultural Society

**The parish council unanimously resolved at the April General Meeting that a cup should be presented to the Chiltern Edge Horticultural Society in grateful recognition of the important contribution the Society has made to the life of the village for over fifty years.**

The cup, engraved THE VILLAGE CUP, was presented on 14 May to two members of the Society's executive committee by the Chairman at the Parish Council. ■



## Parish council NEWS

- Money from the Abbeycrest development, put aside to go towards transport issues, will help fund the much needed new Essex Way bus shelter.
- Approval has been given for a grant of £7000 to the football club at Bishopswood. 70% of the players come from Sonning Common -192 children. The roller park site will be donated by RUFC to the village at the appropriate time.
- Good response for drop in mornings for Neighbourhood Plan. Many site Surveys have been completed ( more information on community page).
- Problems with grass cutting due to the unusually wet weather when the heavy

cutting equipment could not be used. Parish Clerk, Philip Collings is happy to receive polite queries about problem areas. SODC pay for a maximum of 3 cuts a year and the Parish council pay for 8.

- Complaints have been received about the length of grass in the play areas, which can only be cut when empty. If events are taking place then it is another month before the next scheduled day.
- Over hanging hedges are resulting in complaints and legally, hedges should not extend beyond the boundaries of your property. The parish clerk has asked me to remind residents that the Parish Council has the authority, if it becomes necessary after a formal

request to the resident has been ignored, to cut back hedges that obstruct the pavement and send the bill to the resident.

- A plan has been put together for the Roller Park. In addition, a working party is to be formed (more info in Youth Zone).
- I would like to remind you that apart from the Woodlands Road notice board all other boards have one unlocked side so that residents may put notices on them without referring to the parish clerk.
- I am happy to put up posters for the Woodlands Road board. Please put them through my letterbox at 35 Woodlands Road.

CLLR CHRISIE PHILLIPS-TILBURY

# Tell Us Once

## new service for recently bereaved

When someone close to you has died, there are a lot of things that need to be done at a time when you least feel like doing them.

Tell Us Once is part of a nationwide project led by the Department for Work and Pensions, and is designed to make it easier for the public to inform the necessary authorities and departments about a death.

In Oxfordshire, registrars will be able to inform over 20 different agencies on behalf

of anyone who chooses to make use of the service, including:

- Pension, disability and carers' service
- Jobcentre Plus
- Overseas health team
- War Pensions Scheme
- Child benefit
- Child tax credit & working tax credit
- Personal taxation
- Housing benefit office
- Council tax
- Council housing
- Electoral services

- The DVLA
- Libraries
- Blue badges
- Adult services
- Children's services

Previously, once a statutory death registration had been completed, you would have to contact all the local and national government agencies to inform them of the death.

For more information visit [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/tellusonce](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/tellusonce) or call 0845 129 5900.

# The Sue Ryder Woodland, Henley

## Help our care grow

This year the United Kingdom has celebrated the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics – why not celebrate in a different way by sponsoring a tree at the Sue Ryder Woodland, Henley.

The aim of the Woodland is to provide a special place for people to visit to remember a loved one or celebrate a special occasion, whilst helping to raise funds to grow services in the community for local people and their families. Trees do not have to be sponsored by individuals; you can raise funds together as a community, street, club or group, so why not bake some cakes, hold a quiz night or have a raffle. There are three types of tree available to sponsor:

**Woodland** – Lime, Hazel (minimum donation £250)

**Fruit** – Wild Plum, Wild Cherry (minimum donation £300)

**Majestic Hardwood** – Oak, Walnut (minimum donation £350)

To find out how to sponsor a tree visit:

[www.sueryder.org/henleywoodland](http://www.sueryder.org/henleywoodland) or call 01491 641 070.

Your support will help to create a wonderful place for everyone to visit. ■



■ View of the Woodland, near Tilebarn Close, Henley





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[www.beville.co.uk](http://www.beville.co.uk)



## Dog poo continues to be an issue in the village

**In response to Michael Williams letter 'Am I overreacting?' in the last edition. No Michael you are not.**

I have lived in Sonning Common for over 30 years and I remember writing a letter to the magazine about dog mess many, many years ago.

When my children were pre-school age I could not believe the amount of dog mess in the village, down the footpaths and on the pavements. Many, was the time that my pram wheels were caked in the stuff and the soles of my toddlers' shoes needing to be cleaned. How unpleasant!!

I am now a grandmother and give the same warning to my grandson 'watch where you are walking'

So Michael, I don't think there is much hope of your chalk protest making the slightest bit of difference.

So with all the good things we have always had here, the community spirit, great facilities, shops, services and the on-going positive changes in Sonning Common, there is one constant and that is that many dog owners just can't be bothered, and don't care and so dog mess abounds.

**ANN FULLER**



## What would we do without all the willing volunteers of Sonning Common?

May I, through the pages of the magazine, and on behalf of my husband and I, thank Chrissie Phillips-Tilbury for the original idea of the Jubilee Champagne Tea party and for the hard work of her helpers. The hall looked a picture as did the tables. Well done and many thanks to you all. ■

**ANN CHIVERS**  
27 Westleigh Drive

# Microchipping and your pet

You may have heard in the news recently about plans to introduce compulsory micro chipping for dogs. At the moment most pets do not legally require a microchip, but as a veterinary surgery we highly recommend it. Most months we are brought a stray dog or cat and reuniting it with it's owner is significantly easier when it is micro chipped. Many people will phone local vets and rescue centres when their pet goes missing, but what if the pet goes further afield? One local family's puppy went missing and several months later they received a phone call from Battersea dog's home to say he had been brought in! Without the microchip there would have been little chance of reuniting them.

Even if your pet is not lost, a microchip can be useful. Recently a member of the public brought us a cat which had been hit by a car. By scanning the cat's microchip we were able to contact the owners before they had even realised it was 'missing'.

Once your pet is microchipped, it is important to remember to keep your contact details up to date. If you aren't sure, please contact the database to check! The telephone number should be on your original paperwork, or your vets should be able to give you the number. Often the details can be changed online too.

A microchip is about the size of a grain of rice and contains a unique identification number. No personal details are kept on the chip, but the number links to the owner's contact details on a national database. The microchip is permanent and unlike collars cannot be lost! ■

**LUCY PREECE**

**Vet at Green Lane Surgery, Sonning Common**



# Tom Fort

## MAKING BREAD

**Is being particular about the bread you eat yet another sign of age-related crankiness?**

My grown-up children would certainly say so, but what do they know? Bread matters.

That's why I won't – unless desperate – eat anything resulting from the horrible Chorleywood industrial baking process, which means most shop-bought bread. It feels like a damp flannel, tastes of nothing whatever, and is not worth the trouble of chewing.

I buy decent bread when and where I can find it – there is a very good stall at the Thursday market in Henley – but the real answer is to make it yourself. By that I do NOT mean in a bread machine. These devices – like microwaves – may have their place, but not in my kitchen (as the snooty chef would say.)

What I mean is proper flour – strong white, wholemeal, malted with grains, spelt, you take your choice – and proper yeast, mixed in a big bowl, kneaded and bashed into proper dough. I use fresh yeast, obtained from

Tesco's in Reading – which is a bit painful for me as I am not really a Tesco person, but no one else does it.

This is not the time or the place to tell readers of this magazine how to bake – good bread-making books abound. What I will say is that the whole business is highly therapeutic. Digging your fingers into sticky dough and working it with the heel of the hand is balm to the soul, while stretching it and whacking it on your granite slab soothes away all sorts of resentments and frustrations.



Your bread will be delicious, and it will impress your friends. A loaf as a dinner-party gift is far more original – as well as much cheaper – than the standard bottle of 'plonk'.

The great myth about making bread is that it is difficult. It can't be. I can do it. ■

## My sight is fine so why have an eye test?



**Most people no longer question the need for regular visits to the dentist for a check-up, yet have no idea of the value of going for regular eye examinations.**

You may have recently seen leaflets and posters in Sonning Common provided by the local Lions Club. These remind you to have eye checks for early detection of glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy.

Glaucoma is a disease that

you can often not notice until it is too late. If left undiagnosed and untreated, it can lead to serious sight loss or even blindness. Yet a simple eye test is all that's needed to detect glaucoma.

Age increases the risk of cataracts, glaucoma and macular degeneration, but if detected early the development of some diseases can be slowed or halted. At 70 and beyond, you should have a full eye examination every year, even if your vision is good. If you are 60 or over you can get an eye test for free.

In the past three years more than a million pairs of unwanted spectacles, including sunglasses have been sent via Lions Clubs to Africa and Asia from the UK.

For more information about Lions and/or the Lions Eye

Health Programme Phone: 0845 833 9837 e-mail: [info@lions-gwd.org.uk](mailto:info@lions-gwd.org.uk) ■

[www.lions-gwd.org.uk](http://www.lions-gwd.org.uk)



# A LIFETIME AMBITION ACHIEVED, WALKING *the Thames Path*

By **CHRISSIE PHILLIPS-TILBURY**

**Linda Webb of Essex Way and a resident of Sonning Common for over 40 years recently fulfilled a long held ambition to walk the length of the Thames Path. Linda, who has worked for Waitrose for a total of 26 years realised that with her 6 month sabbatical approaching she needed to use the time creatively. As she has reason to be grateful for the work of the Reading Cancer Unit and our own Health Centre she decided that walking the Thames Path and raising money for both organisations would be an excellent use of some of her time.**

Linda accompanied by her daughter Hayley began her walk at the source of the Thames at Kemble, "a pile of stones, a muddy hole and a sign stating - Thames Barrier 180 miles" were her only clues.

After the first day's walking Linda questioned whether she would be able to complete the walk. "My legs had turned to jelly and I felt I couldn't walk another step but I fell into bed at 8pm slept for 12 hours and woke up knowing that I would be alright."

The first part of the walk was very rural, lots of hedges and meandering footpaths through fields of sheep. Friends started to join Linda as she walked closer to home and by the time that she reached Caversham Bridge she was walking with a dozen friends and family.

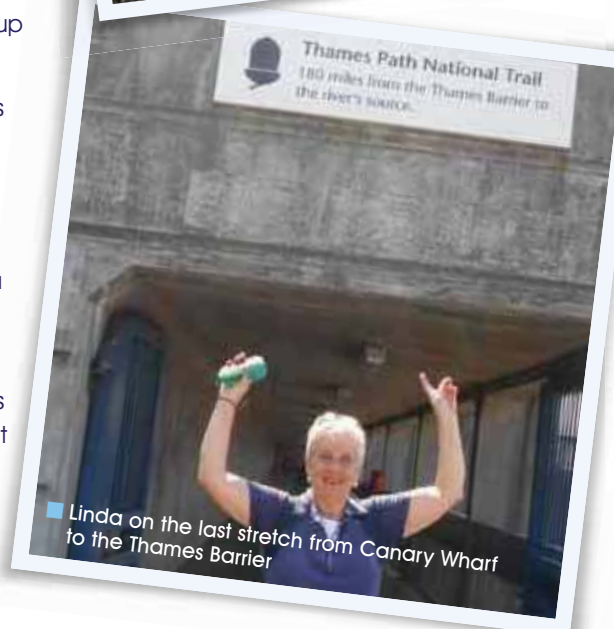
Linda has been asked many times which was her favourite part of the walk and has found this difficult to answer but thinks that Shepperton with its locks, weirs and little ferry was a particular favourite.

*High point of the walk?* Walking with her family and friends.

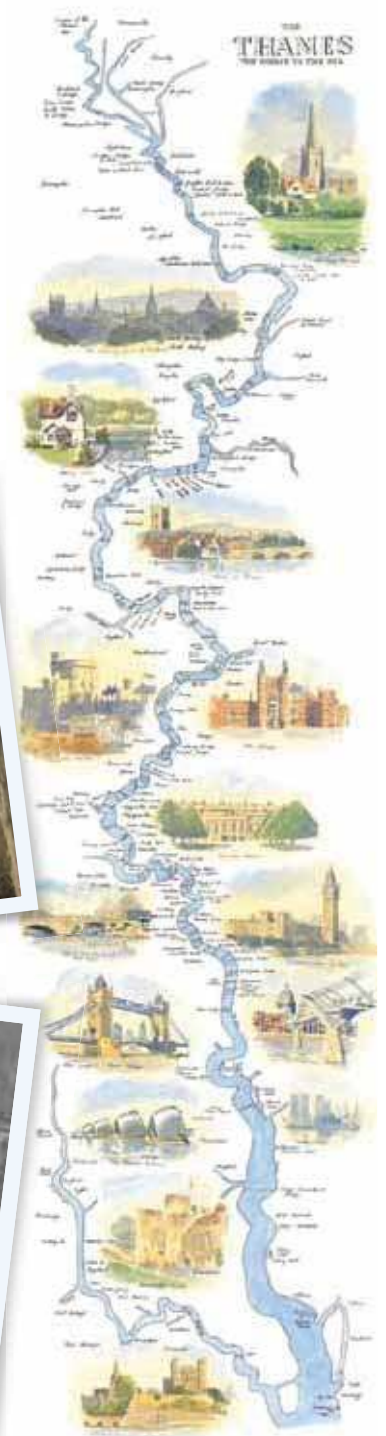
*Low point?* Wading through water up to her knees where the river had burst the bank at Cookham and her friend saying, "I can't swim!"

So far, Linda has raised £1500 for the Health Centre and the Reading Cancer Unit. If you would like to add to this, contact Linda on [webb649@btinternet.com](mailto:webb649@btinternet.com)

Linda would like to thank everyone who has supported her. ■



■ Linda on the last stretch from Canary Wharf to the Thames Barrier





# JUST FOR KIDS

**Hello and welcome to the third issue of Just for kids!**

It's been a busy couple of months, with both the Jubilee and half-term at the same time! In this issue I'll tell you all about what people got up to.

I hope you enjoy this issue, and don't forget to keep on sending your news and reviews to [junior\\_editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org](mailto:junior_editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org) ■

**ANOUSKA Junior Editor**



## JUBILEE HALF TERM

I hope you all had a brilliant half term and had fun celebrating the Jubilee.

I certainly did and I know some other people who did too!

"We went to a really good party for the jubilee weekend. We took our bikes and got to Kidmore End School for lunch time. We stayed all afternoon and it didn't rain. We played games with all our friends. Then we went to the pub and had tea."  
**CHLOE ALLEN (AGE 5 1/2)**

"We went to a BBQ at my uncle's house, it was really fun!"  
**KATIE FORT (JUST 10)**

"My mum, my little sister and I made meringues, and I was mentioned on CBBC because of that. It was so exciting!!! We went to a party afterwards and I never wanted to leave. Haha!"  
**LAUREN THORNTON (AGE 10)**



"I went to London for the day with my mum and dad and granny going past on her boat! There were lots of other boats as well, and it was fun chatting to all the other people in the pod."  
**GEORGE MALAPERIMAN (AGE 6)**

## The Secret Village

No one guessed the location of the last picture. It was very hard but if you tried to find it, well done. I will now reveal where it is: Rowan Close. I've done an easier one this time and you can still win five pounds worth of sweets!!!



## BOOK REVIEWS

Over the summer holidays there is usually a scheme at Sonning Common library to encourage children to read. I don't know what the theme is this summer but I'm sure it will be fun, and a good chance to discover new stories. If you take part, don't forget to let me know your favourite new books. Here are mine and my brother's current favourites.....

**FOR YOUNGER READERS: Smiley Shark by Ruth Galloway**

I like learning about creatures under the sea and I like the colours of this book. It made me laugh when Smiley Shark saved the other fish.

**FINN HAWKES (JUST 5)**

**FOR OLDER READERS: Meerkat Madness by Ian Whybrow**

The meerkats are mad, cool and crazy and the character Little Dream is really funny. They call people blah-blahs, and cars vroom-vrooms. I can read this book to myself.

**ZACK HAWKES (NEARLY 7)**

**FOR ADVANCED READERS: Six words and a wish by Karen McCombie**

A touching tale about a girl trying to find her runaway sister. If you enjoy adventure stories, this is one for you.

**ANOUSKA HAWKES (AGE 9)**



The years of waiting for a roller park in Sonning Common may soon be over.

**WHY...?** The site at the Bishopswood Sports Area is now secure

Work will start shortly on a bore hole to confirm that the ground is suitable for a sunken roller area.

Work could start in early 2013.

**WHAT NEXT...?** It is essential that this scheme is youth lead and the next stage is to establish a Youth Forum to drive the project forward. A minimum of 5 young people are needed to work with members of the Parish Council to make this happen.

**THIS IS YOUR CHANCE ... WITH YOUR SUPPORT IT WILL HAPPEN**

To sign up for the Youth Forum please contact the Parish Clerk on

0118 972 3616 or [clerk@sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk)

No experience is needed: just lots of ideas and enthusiasm. We will help you with everything and you will learn a lot! ■

**CAROLE LEWIS**

**Chairman – Roller Park Working Party**

## Summer Reading Challenge (July – September)

The theme for this year's national summer reading challenge at Sonning Common Library is 'Story Lab', which is a shorter way of saying 'Stories from around the world'.

Children are encouraged to visit the library four times over the summer (from July – September), and choose at least 6 books to read. Each visit will be rewarded with a small prize, and there will be gold medals for all the finishers! There are lots of new books in the library – come and see for yourselves.

There will be special story times every Saturday in August at 10am, with different storytellers and activities for junior school-age children, focussing on different countries from around the world.

There will also be tea, coffee and soft drinks, and home-made cakes and biscuits on sale for parents and children.

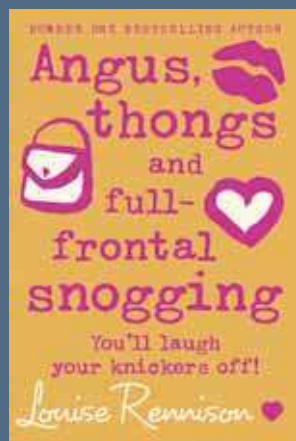
For more information about the Saturday story times ask at the library, or phone (0118) 9722448. See [www.story-lab.org](http://www.story-lab.org) for more information about the reading challenge. ■



## JUNIOR BOOK REVIEW

### ANGUS, THONGS AND FULL-FRONTAL SNOGGING

by Louise Rennison



Written by the Mouldy Cheese (girls) Reading Group, year 6, Sonning Common Primary School. (Becky Houghton, Tilly Lawson and Izzy Lusted).

Georgia Nicolson is a hormonal teenager, stressed about her huge nose, transvestite father and the SG (sex god) Robbie. This is her hilarious diary about her hectic life. Her maniac cat Angus and her poo-obsessed little sister Libby add to the originality of her life. This book is recommended for young teenagers, but definitely NOT FOR BOYS!

**BECKY SAYS:** I had a laughing fit every time I read it. I loved it so much, I've nearly finished the second one (called 'It's OK, I'm wearing really big knickers')

**IZZY SAYS:** This book made me LOL (laugh out loud) in class, and I will definitely be reading the next one in the series.

**TILLY SAYS:** This was absolutely amazing, and made me want to read

**the other 8 in the series (I've already read the second one)**

Mrs Dunstan (the library manager) says: This book was first published in 1999, which was before the reviewers were born! They wondered why the girls in the book were using public phone boxes instead of their mobile phones or computers – but the lack of technology is the only thing which dates the book. Georgia is selfish, vain, self-obsessed and hormonal, and I would hate to be her friend. But it is a very funny book and I can understand why the girls enjoyed it!

All the titles in the Georgia Nicolson series (10 so far) can be borrowed from the Sonning Common library. ■

# NEWS AND UPDATE ON *library funding*



## **Oxfordshire County Council is proposing to fund professional staff for Sonning Common Library for around 26 hours a week.**

The county council currently funds 52 hours staffing time for Sonning Common. This is for village-based staff and for Oxford-based staff who provide Sonning Common Library with professional support.

However, the county council is proposing to shift the balance of staffing to one-half paid staff and one-half volunteers over a three year period, which began in April of this year and will conclude in April 2015.

The library currently opens to the village community for 25 hours per week and to the primary school community for an additional 7.5 hours a week.

The Friends of Sonning Common Library met with Jillian Southwell, the county council's new library service manager, on 27 June to begin dialogue over the future operation of the village library.

In December of last year county councillors voted to cut the professional staff budget at Sonning Common Library by half, placing our library in the bottom category of library provision in the county.

The Friends group, represented by Douglas Kedge, John and Diana Pearman and Ros Varnes, asked the county council to provide a professional staff member at Sonning Common Library during all opening times.

Chair of the Friends group, Ros Varnes, said: "We believe it is important for the future success of the library that a professional staff member is on duty during all opening hours to provide professional expertise and much-needed coordination and continuity for volunteer support staff.

"This might mean changes to the library's opening times. But we feel it is more important that the library is adequately staffed and perhaps open for fewer hours than to be open, as it is now, with significantly reduced professional support. We feel it is neither practical nor fair to expect volunteers to run the library themselves.

"We would also like local people to have a say over deciding on any new opening times for the library."

Jillian Southwell, library service manager, said: "I am really looking forward to working with people in Sonning Common to make running the library a partnership. It is a two-way thing and we need to work together."

The Friends group and library service staff are due to meet again in the autumn when it is hoped that more information will be available on the proposed timetabling of changes at Sonning Common Library and training opportunities for volunteers.

The Friends then plan to hold a public meeting in the first half of next year to try to recruit volunteers to support Sonning Common Library and new members for the Friends group.

In the meantime anyone interested in volunteering to support the library should fill in a form, available from the library desk, or email: [volunteer@saveourlibrary.org](mailto:volunteer@saveourlibrary.org) ■



# Church news

## ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, KIDMORE END

## CHRIST THE KING, SONNING COMMON

**Thanks to all who collected for and contributed to Christian Aid during May, a record £1909.50 which will go to those in need in developing countries. Organiser Eileen Pearson was delighted at the response, considering the difficult financial circumstances still being faced by many. Thank you all again.**

The inter-denominational service marking the Queen's Jubilee under the splendid Peppard Revels' marquee was well attended by around 300 people. All local churches were represented and made a contribution. The Bishop of Dorchester, The Rt Rev'd Colin Fletcher OBE, gave a moving address laced with his own distinctive humour.

A sad farewell was said to Barry and Marion Olsen at the end of July, with

gratitude for his untiring commitment to our parishioners and to Marion for her talent for music and art. We wish them all the very best in their future home and community.

**SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 8:** All cyclists are invited to take part in this year's Ride and Stride event in support of Historical churches in Oxfordshire. Half the sponsorship money raised goes to preserve and maintain our parish churches. Enquiries and sponsorship forms to Stefano Cascarini: 0118 9721137

**WEDNESDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 9.30 am:** Little Lambs group for all young mums and dads/ carers and their under-5s. This friendly little group offers a short service, craft activity and refreshment. St John's Kidmore End. Enquiries: Felicity Cooper 0118 9477862

**4th SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH 11am:** Sunday school at St John's starting in the school and ending in church. Enquiries: beckytilney@hotmail.co.uk ■



■ St John the Baptist, Kidmore End



■ Christ the King, Sonning Common

## From Canon Graham Foulis Brown, Rector

**Sadly, this is the last issue of the Sonning Common Magazine that will be published while the Revd Barry Olsen remains Associate Priest in the benefice.**

Barry Olsen was retiring after 39 years of full time ministry, 17 in his native New Zealand and 22 in the Guildford Diocese. He came to England in 1981 so that his wife Marion could pursue her singing career, bringing their children Charles and Rebecca, with them. We have greatly benefited from Marion's musical

talents in church, in the concerts she has organised and in her own occasional performances.

Barry offered me three years' work, nine years ago. He must have enjoyed himself to have stayed and I know how much his ministry has been appreciated in so many ways and that he has become well known in our villages. He has been a very supportive colleague.

Barry has been described as the only Maori-speaking, bagpipe playing, bibliophile priest there can be – his Kindle always at the ready! He is Chaplain to the Maori community in London and of

the New Zealand Society.

Much will be said in the two parishes but it would be wrong for there to be no mention made in the three Parish Council publications. The Olsens intend to move to Aylesbury to be closer to their family, some time in August. We shall miss them and wish them well in their new home. ■





Aug

**MONDAY  
6****FISH - Garden Centre Visit**  
1.30pm**THURSDAY  
16****FISH - Pub lunch**  
11.30am**THURSDAY  
16****Chiltern Players. Open  
play reading evening.**  
**Everybody welcome.**  
The Reformation,  
Gallowstree Common  
8pm**SATURDAY  
25****Binfield Heath Flower Show**

Sep

**SATURDAY  
1****Chiltern Edge Horticultural  
Society: Autumn Flower,  
Veg & Craft Show**  
Chiltern Edge School  
2.30 - 4.30pm**MONDAY  
3****FISH - Garden Centre Visit**  
1.30pm**FRIDAY  
7****Annual lunch**  
Village Hall  
12.30pm**SATURDAY  
8****Ride & Stride cycling event  
in support of historical  
churches in Oxfordshire.**  
Enquiries and sponsorship  
forms to Stefano Cascarini:  
0118 972 1137**MONDAY  
10****Village Hall Management  
Committee AGM. Light  
refreshments - Guest  
speaker Fred Curzon**  
Village Hall  
12.30 - 2pm**FRIDAY  
14****Nottakwire practice**  
Village Hall  
9.45 - 11.30am**SATURDAY  
15****Rotherfield United FC -  
We are ready to welcome  
our new U5's**  
Bishopswood Sports Ground  
see: [www.rotherfieldfc.com](http://www.rotherfieldfc.com)  
9.30 - 10.30am**MONDAY  
17****Sonning Common Parish  
Council**  
Village Hall  
8pm**TUESDAY  
18****Chiltern Players. Open  
play reading evening.**  
**Everybody welcome.**  
The Reformation,  
Gallowstree Common  
8pm**WEDNESDAY  
19****20Notts singing group  
practice**  
Village Hall  
1 - 3pm**THURSDAY  
20****FISH - Pub lunch**  
11.30am**THURSDAY  
20****Nottakwire practice for  
Sue Ryder**  
Village Hall  
10.15am - 12.15pm**THURSDAY  
20****Sonning Common Women's  
Institute - Members Holiday  
Experiences. Visitors  
welcome**  
Village Hall  
7.30pm**SATURDAY  
22****The Big Harvest. See [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/greys-court](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/greys-court)  
or contact the Estate  
Office on 01491 628529.**  
Greys Court  
11am - 5pm**SUNDAY  
23****The Big Harvest. See [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/greys-court](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/greys-court)  
or contact the Estate  
Office on 01491 628529.**  
Greys Court  
11am - 5pm**TUESDAY  
25****WEA classes start (10  
weeks) - Studying  
Chaucer.**  
Christ the King Hall  
10am**WEDNESDAY  
26****Little Lambs group for  
all young mums & dads/  
carers and their U5's**  
St. John the Baptist,  
Kidmore End  
9.30am**SATURDAY  
29****Sue Ryder Starlight Hike**  
Green Park, Reading  
10.30pm

# John Abbey

## Painter & Decorator

### 0118 924 2552

58 Wood Lane  
Sonning Common

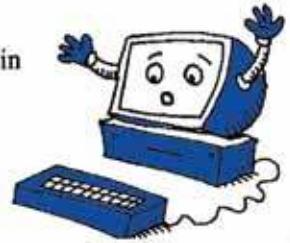


## Computer Problems?

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