

SOUTH HINKSEY ECHO

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www.southhinksey.org

South Hinksey Street Party



Celebrations of The Wedding in South Hinksey were as traditional as it was possible to be. Organization had been swift and efficient, with several sub-committees, including a wet-weather contingency group. We sat down at long tables at the bottom of the village to eat cottage pie, vegetables, rhubarb crumble, bread and butter pudding, all under the guidance of inimitable MC and organizer, Adrian. Entertainment included plenty for children. The quiz was won by a group calling themselves the Republicans, and the slowest

cyclist was Tom Barron, who didn't seem to be moving at all. The Donkey House Band provided traditional jolly music and some people turned up in traditional fancy dress.



What's more, it didn't rain at all! We are all very grateful to Adrian, his organizers, the cooks and the clearers-up.

Parish Council

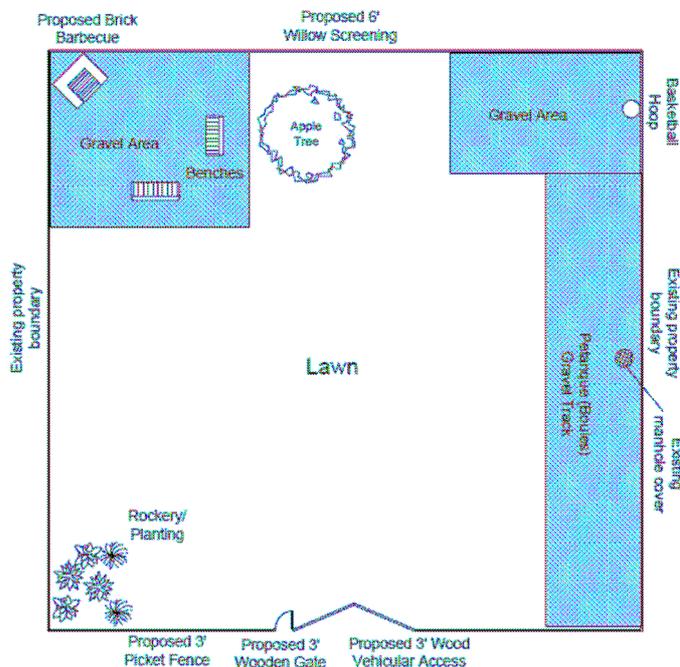
At the recent Annual Parish Meeting, we were given a summary of the activities of the Council over the past year. They have certainly been busy. Here are some of the main points:

Maggie Rawcliffe has taken over the Chair from Clive Briffett, and Tom Barron joined as a new Councillor.

The Council has given financial support to St Lawrence Church and to South Hinksey Village Hall. They are taking over ownership of the Hall to ensure its remaining in the control of the local community. Plans are under way to develop the old General Elliot car park on Manor Road as an area of community land.

They have instituted a new system for maintaining verges and footpaths, and won a battle to have ramps rather than steps on the new bridge over Hinksey Stream. They have also been working to improve safety on Hinksey Hill and trying to alleviate parking congestion in St Lawrence Road.

Parish Council meetings are held on the first Monday of each month and parishioners are very welcome to attend. If parishioners have any issues they would like addressed, or would like to submit any comments of feedback, please contact Parish Clerk, Sheridan Edward, on 07720 052572 or s.hinksey@gmail.com



Priority List

- 1) Ground clearance and lawn
- 2) Willow screening and graveling
- 3) Fencing and gates
- 4) Trees and plants
- 5) Barbecue, benches and basketball hoop

Proposed use of the Community Land on the old General Elliot Car Park

The aim is to keep the land clear and uncluttered, while providing opportunities for flexible use

Please contact Mark Parker via shinfo with any comments or further suggestions.

Village Hall



The Village Hall is in good health again after the recent unblocking and repairing of the main sewer drain. This was an unwelcome and major expense, but thanks to the good housekeeping and foresight of Treasurer Ann Allsworth, and a grant from the Parish Council, the Hall remains on track financially.

David Minns stepped down as Chairman in April after seven successful years but remains on the Management Committee. Under David's chairmanship the Hall has become increasingly able to stand on its own feet and usage has increased. Bookings from beyond the parish have increased largely by ensuring that the hall appears high on the list in a Google search. Word of mouth and repeat bookings follow.

Maggie Rawcliffe does a sterling job as Booking Secretary; it's a busy task, taking phone and email enquiries, showing people round, making bookings and handling the moneys. To give an idea, this month's takings should be over £770. Recent bookings have come from as far away as Southampton and Much Wenlock!

Other Committee members are Linda Slater (acting secretary), June Ellis and Elizabeth Halcro - see below.

Kevin Duma is Caretaker: he cleans the hall, opens it for bookings, makes sure the car park is open, puts out tables and chairs, and clears up and locks the hall. This has become an increasingly busy job.

Three new people are now helping with the Hall:

- Matthew Balaam has agreed to give informal architectural advice.
- Ann Markham has, only last week, kindly taken on responsibility for the plants outside the entrance - and new flowers have already started to appear.
- We are very grateful to Phil Saugman who agreed to act as property manager. This new 'job' will help to ensure that the fabric of the Hall is maintained. A recent survey identified a number of things that need to be done. Phil and the Management Committee will decide on the order in which these should be done, given the available budget. Phil will then organize the work, obtaining estimates, working with contractors and so on, ensuring this important Parish asset is maintained in excellent condition.

We have an annual budget and outline five-year budget which will be reviewed annually in March. We will try to keep charges down as far as possible, especially for parishioners. However, the bulk of hire income (80% in calendar year 2010) comes from outside bookings so we need to remain competitive there too - without these bookings the Hall could not survive.

The Hall Committee intend to organize another entertainment in the Hall in February 2012. There have already been some very popular events but it is hard to find acts that will appeal to a wide range of people - if anyone has suggestions please let us know.

Finally, as many people will know, Elizabeth Halcro was *the* driving force behind the restoration of the Hall not very many years ago. The Hall would have closed down had Elizabeth not worked tirelessly to raise very considerable sums of money and get the extensive restoration work done. Elizabeth has been unwell in recent weeks and we have discovered the hard way just how much she has continued to do to keep the Hall running! We wish her speedy return to full health.

Peter Rawcliffe, Chair, Management Committee

Flooding

Locally: the culverts that will go through the raised track to the electric substation by the stream are still awaited but should happen, it is hoped, by the autumn. The bridge that carries the footpath at the start of the Devils' Backbone path over the ditch just beyond the ex-pub, needs clearing out underneath. I am not sure who is responsible but the Parish Council will be investigating.

Further afield: the Oxford Flood Alliance (OFA) is continuing to press for further work to get more water under the railway at Munday's bridge in north Kennington. The Environment Agency's (EA) Area Flood Risk Manager will be visiting with us on 26 May. Some improvement has been made but it is still not fully cleared and functioning as it could and should. It's very important for getting water away from our part of the floodplain. We are looking to see what can be done to improve flow on the Castle Mill Stream from Port Meadow through town. If this can be achieved it will bring some relief to the floodplain west of the railway - including us! We will be publishing a document which will form the basis of future discussions.

Symposium On 11 May OFA held a Flood Symposium in the Village Hall, with about 40 invited guests, including academics, residents, City, Vale and County councillors and engineers, postgrad students, Environment Agency and Thames Water people, conservationists and others.

David Macdonald, hydrogeologist with the British Geological Survey at Wallingford, gave a fascinating talk on *Groundwater Flooding in Oxford*, followed by plenty of discussion from the floor. Susanna Pressel, Oxford City and County Councillor, asked about the possibility of a groundwater flood warning service. David is interested to look further at this and we will be seeing how we can help. He has also kindly agreed to meet with OFA soon, to review our priorities for action.

The second speaker was Prof Edmund Penning-Rowsell, founder of the Flood Hazard Research Centre at Middlesex University, and international authority on the human, social and economic costs of flooding. He gave another excellent and well-received talk, entitled *Human Aspects of Severe Flooding*. Lively discussion followed again, including on flood insurance which is becoming an increasing problem: several good ideas were discussed. OFA has already established a sub-group to see how we can help to find solutions and this new input will help. There was enthusiasm for a second symposium next year and plans are under way.

Peter Rawcliffe

Wildflowers in the burial ground



We are now into the third year. In the “spring” half many plants have settled in well and increased in size and/or number. Birdsfoot trefoil, knapweed and dropwort are amongst them. A single bugle has all but gone, probably the dry weather was too much for it, it likes dampish ground. Cuckooflower has increased and ragged robin has been supplemented with plants grown from seed last summer and kept in pots over the winter. The grass grew fast early on and the cowslips, although

there, were rather lost: we will leave the grass shorter at the end of this season. Some of the grass is very coarse and this will be removed in part and reseeded with shorter grasses this year. The hay cut* is at the end of July.

The “summer” end is still being cut short but will be allowed to grow on soon and we will see what is there. The hay cut* of this part is at the end of September.

* Hay

If anyone wants to rake up the hay after the two hay cuts and have it they are welcome, but this must be done at the right time as the cuttings must be allowed to dry long enough for the seeds to fall off. *If you would like to have the hay let me know (735288) in good time or the contractors will dispose of it.* But please do not take it without discussion as it is so important that it rests till the seeds are released. Peter Rawcliffe

St Laurence Church



Eastertide

Easter Sunday (24 April 2011) began the great season of Eastertide which lasts until Pentecost and therefore runs for 50 days. This is the principal festival for the Christian Church and is even more important than Christmas. It celebrates the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead following his crucifixion on Good Friday.

After dark on the night before Easter Sunday churches have a service called the Easter Vigil – the new fire is lit outside the church and blessed, from it the large paschal candle is lit and

this then burns throughout Eastertide. It represents Jesus Christ risen from the dead, having five pins recalling the five wounds Christ suffered on the cross. After Eastertide is over it stands by the font and is lit for baptism and funerals.

You may like to use this prayer during the great 50 days:

Lord of all life and power, who through the mighty resurrection of your Son overcame the old order of sin and death to make all things new in him: grant that we, being dead to sin and alive to you in Jesus Christ, may reign with him in glory; to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be praise and honour; glory and might, now and in all eternity. Amen

St Laurence Church will be open between 3 and 5pm on the first Sundays of June, July, August and September. Come along for tea and cake!

Fr James Wilkinson. Parish office – Tel 01865 245879 E mail – frjwilkinson@gmail.com Web :www.acny.org.uk/468

News from Kennington Health Centre

Dr Stuart Frankum is now enjoying his retirement and we welcome Dr Yehu Azaz to the practice. Some of you may already know Dr Azaz as he has worked at the centre as a locum on a number of occasions before his appointment.

Those of you who have had to have blood taken will probably know Linda Marshall. Linda will be retiring from the practice at the end of May. We have taken the opportunity to look at the way we deliver both nurse and health care assistant services. A new timetable will be available from 1 June.

I have been looking at the number of patients who book appointments and do not turn up. It is currently averaging about 40+ a week. We all understand that things change and that you may no longer need to see the doctor. But can you please call and cancel your appointment as soon as possible so that we can offer that slot to someone who has an urgent need to see a doctor.

I am always happy to speak with any patient about any issues to do with the surgery. Please ask to speak to the Practice Manager – Dave Dixon on 01865 730911 or e-mail me at dave.dixon@nhs.net. If I am available when you call into the centre then I would also be happy to talk to you directly.

www.kenningtonhealthcentre.co.uk)

Nature's Niche

These reports inevitably start with weather conditions which are never “normal” - or have we forgotten what normal is? Following the unusual early snow of last December we entered into a dry and mild period of three months with February the mildest since 2002 and March being the driest since 1929 in some parts of the country.

Migrants have been turning up early with many Swallows recorded in Scotland in February and plenty of warblers arriving early in April. Blue tit eggs were recorded early April and I have three boxes each with five eggs each of this species. A camera is relaying activity to me in the conservatory which is fascinating to watch. I am looking forward to seeing chicks hatch but as Blue tits often lay up to nine eggs it could be a while yet. You may have noticed the peanuts on the bird feeders are not being taken so frequently in the last few weeks. This is due to caterpillars coming on line for the birds and they are sensible enough to know peanuts are not very digestible for chicks.

Chris Packham confirmed on Springwatch that Cuckoos often arrive on 21 April 21. It was with great pleasure that during a golf game I heard my first this year on that very day. The best location in our Parish is the top pond of Harcourt Wood which you can reach along the Hinksey Heights trail. The Peers Academy pupils are making good progress with constructing two bird hides accessed along new boarded walkways so do try and get up there and observe. The Cuckoo generally predated on the sedge and reed warblers that are nesting in the reeds around the pond. Let me know if you see or hear any activity as Cuckoo occurrence is becoming a much rarer event these days.

I organised a recent talk from an RSPB researcher on woodpeckers and his twenty year study revealed that the Green and Great Spotted Woodpecker populations have been rising over this period. From his Hertfordshire woods study area he has learnt that a reduction in starlings enables woodpeckers to remain less disturbed for hole nest sites and this is one reason for the increase. Not a conclusion I would have guessed at. So if you think you are seeing more woodpeckers around, you are, and this for me is a bonus.

Butterfly surveys have started again this year at Chilswell in early April and so far eight species have been recorded. 20 species were recorded in 2010 and a total population of 1888 were counted over 19 weeks. This included top scorers of a large number of Common Blue (636), Meadow Brown (296) and Ringlet (144). Other species that were more unusual included Holly Blue (1), Red Admiral (3), and Brimstone (9). Surprises were Brown Argus (54) and Marbled White (119). Painted Lady was not recorded although I did have a single individual in the garden. Rather a contrast to 2009 when the country was inundated with them.

Clive Briffett Tel 01865 327161 or email c.briffett@btopenworld.com

Things to Do

Bridewell Organic Gardens will be open on **Sunday, 5 June 2011 from 2 – 5 pm.**

Teas, plants and Bridewell organic wine for sale.

Bridewell is situated in Wilcote, between North Leigh and Finstock.

Bridewell Organic Gardens is a registered charity that provides Horticultural Therapy for adults with mental health problems and our open afternoons are important for fundraising and an opportunity for people to come and enjoy the beautiful garden and vineyard. For more information, please telephone 01993 864530 or 868313

Return to Golf in South Hinksey!

Hinksey Heights Golf Club are offering free one hour taster sessions in May followed by 4X1 hour coaching sessions, June-August 2011

Sessions are open to anyone over the age of 16 and are aimed at those who have either played little or no golf before, or those who gave up playing the sport a number of years ago.

Following the free taster there will be the opportunity to try out new skills on a regular basis throughout the summer as the club will be offering discounted one hour golf sessions between June and August at just £20 for four sessions (including balls and clubs).

Booking for both the taster and coaching sessions are necessary. Please contact Dean Davis 01865 327775 or pro@oxford-golf.co.uk

Terms and conditions apply.

Why not try swimming at Hinksey open air pool? The pool opened for the 2011 season at the beginning of May. Open daily from 07:00 to 19:00 (20:00 from 23 May to 28 Aug) For more information see [/www.fusion-lifestyle.com/centres/Hinksey_Outdoor_Pool/home](http://www.fusion-lifestyle.com/centres/Hinksey_Outdoor_Pool/home).

Salsa and Latin Dance Classes in the Village Hall. Thursday 6.15-7.15pm £5 a session or pay in advance £25 for 6 sessions. Great fun. All welcome, no need to bring a partner.

NHS Oxfordshire would like to hear from you - help to shape better health services for the future.

If you would like to participate, the list of current consultations and public involvement activities at NHS Oxfordshire is available for you to respond to and have your say. You can find more about a particular consultation or public involvement activity at

consult.oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk

(This item is reproduced from the ORCC News bulletin.)

Crossword Solution

The winner of the Crossword in last January's edition was James Mallinson. A box of chocs is on its way, James. If anyone would like to know the answers, please contact echoeditor.

Advertising

For the first time, we have included advertising at the end of this edition. If you have strong views about this, please contact the editor at echoeditor@southhinksey.org. We will only accept adverts that are relevant to South Hinksey and the Hill, and the total amount will not take up any more room than the advert at the bottom of this page.

You can also contact the editor by phoning Linda on 739183.

Shaun Guard
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