

Charney Chatter

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PUBLISHED BY CHARNEY BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

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Your councillors:-

Geoff Beer (Chairman), Buckland Rd. 868709
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Geoff Rumble, Buckland Road 868738
John Stiles, Barnfield 868191
Jos Bath, Buckland Road 868260

Meetings are held at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall on the second Wednesdays of odd-numbered months.

The next meeting is on 14th March 2007.

ADVERTS AND EVENTS

Personalised Home-made Cards

If you can't find the right card for that special occasion, Eunice will make one for you. Ring her on 868646. Proceeds to charity.

Village Diner

The Village Diner provides home-made food from local sources in Buckland Village Hall, every third Wednesday in the month. For £4 you get a splendid meal, tea or coffee and a chat. Next date 21st March.

Piano Teacher

Liz Cowlam, experienced Piano Teacher qualified to CT ABRSM, has recently moved back to the area and is available for local lessons. Preparation for exams if desired. Tel: 868318.

Building and Furniture Repairs.

Local experienced craftsman available for maintenance and renovation of buildings and furniture. Small jobs welcome. Security alarms fitted. Steve Ridley, Gilbert's Cottage, East Hanney, Tel: 07999 841520.

Table Tennis in the Village Hall

The final sessions of the Winter period will take place in the Village Hall from 7.30pm to 9.30pm on the following Wednesdays:- March 7th and 28th. All welcome. Turn up on the night or contact David Sibbert on 01235 868734 for information.

Village Hall Bookings

Village Hall bookings are now managed by Eunice Davies. Contact her on 868646 for a booking form and conditions of hire, both for the hall itself and the crockery and cutlery.

Home-Start Antiques Roadshow

Dig out your treasures and bring them along for valuation by the experts on Friday 23rd March at Wantage Civic Hall, between 10.00 a.m. and 1.00 p.m. Bonhams, who have been auctioneers and valuers since 1793, will be using their expert skills to value your household wonders, in aid of Home-Start Southern Oxon, a local charity helping local families with small children. Valuation fee: 2 items £5.00, £1.00 per subsequent item. Refreshments available.

BOOKSTART - FREE BOOKS FOR CHILDREN!

Bookstart provides 3 different free gifts for 3 different age ranges containing books and other goodies. The Bookstart Baby pack is for babies aged up to 12 months. The Bookstart+ pack is available for toddlers between 18 - 30 months. The Bookstart

Treasure Chest is available to 3 year olds and is delivered to your child's pre-school.

For further details ask your health visitor, contact the Bookstart Co-ordinator on 01865 810243, or visit www.bookstart.org.uk

A CAPITAL WATER CORN MILL

That was the heading of an advertisement that appeared in the Reading Mercury of August 17th 1807. It related to a "substantial new erected Water Cornmill, on the River Ock, situate at Charney, in the County of Berks". Note the words, "new erected", which makes the present mill 200 years old this year and over the course of 2007 I shall be relating some of the history and archaeology of the mill and what little I know of previous structures on the site.

The advertisement was for an auction of the property to be held on Tuesday August 25th at the Chequers. The vendor was Mr Froud of Charlow Hill, the millwright who had built the mill. We know from the brief

description given that it contained two pairs of French stones, dressing mills, etc. and that it was capable of breaking seven or eight loads of corn a week. A "load" is 2,400 lbs or just over one tonne.

Included in the sale was, "a small dwelling house and stable adjoining and an excellent orchard, planted with choice fruit trees - the whole contains, by estimation, one acre".

The mill was unsold on August 25th and was re-advertised on the 31st as up for auction again on September 15th 1807. The mill was either sold at the later auction or sold privately since it was not advertised again..

Bruce Hedge.

CLET

Charney and Lyford Education Trust, CLET, supports a range of educational projects, with grants awarded both to individuals and to the community in Charney Bassett and Lyford. Applications will be considered

by the Trustees who meet in January, May and September. For further details please contact the Clerk: Mrs Frances Rothwell, "Oldwalls", Buckland Road, Tel: 868704 E-mail: fc.rothwell@tiscali.co.uk.

CHAFT 100 CLUB

The February draw was made at Coffee Hour on February 20th. Winners:- The Welhams (117) £25 and Frances Rothwell (10) £10. This was the 11th draw so annual subs. are coming up for renewal. Contact Geoff and Julie Rumble (868738) to join.

HEADLINES

- *Charney Mill is 200!*
- *100 Club is nearly 1!*
- *Hall fund raising events planned.*
- *Help build a boarding house in Uganda.*
- *Trees wanted!*

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Coffee Hour continues in the Village Hall on Tuesdays (10.30-11.30) Call in and chat. 50p buys you as much tea or coffee as you can drink - with biscuits too!

There'll be a special **Hour** on March 6th with a stall displaying a variety of Fairtrade products for you to purchase

Deadline for copy for the next edition in May 2007: 20 April 2007

Contributions are welcome, in fact desperately needed! Adverts are free!

Charney Chatter can be e-mailed free to anyone giving their e-mail address to the Editor

Visit www.charneybassettpc.org.uk for the very latest village news

CHAFT NEWS - THE VILLAGE HALL PROJECT

CHAFT members have come up with numerous ways to raise funds for our project and these are detailed in the newsletter which you will have received - we do hope you will be enthused to come along to support our efforts, be it the Quiz Night on March 12th, the Jazz and Classical Music Soiree (date to be announced) or Charney Feast on July 7th to

mention just a few. If you want to encourage us in other ways, why not respond to Lucy and Paul Gildersleeve's Challenge !!! If you feel moved to do other things to fill the coffers, we will be only too pleased - this is a particularly important year for us to make a real difference to the funds - we look to you all to help us so that we can make this project happen.

CHARNEY ARMY

Those of you who have visited Charney Field lately will have noticed that most of the white poplars which were threatening to overcome the children's play area have gone - and at the moment the area looks like a World War I battle front! The Army can successfully claim to be well on the way to completing Phase I of this clearance, which will end when the site is completely cleared ready for levelling. We confess to having cheated by bringing in a JCB which removed a stump in as many seconds as it took us minutes! The JCB was provided by Neil Walker, owner of New Manor Farm in appreciation of the efforts the Army made in clearing up the mess following the disastrous fire at the farm early last year.

Although the original plan was to thin the poplars out, this was changed when the January gales blew one of them down to reveal it was diseased. Tree experts had warned us that this effect might appear when poplars are too close together so we grasped the nettle and decided to rip most of them out. A small cluster has been left near the willow arbour but they need to be thinned out. There is no doubt the policy has been justified as the poplars were very invasive and the JCB exposed root systems which covered the entire area. We are still finding suckers inside the children's play area, showing how far the roots have spread.

The roots which were dug up have been piled up to create two "stumperies". This idea came

from the Rumbles who had seen one in a country park. The basic idea is that the roots will form excellent habitats for insects, attracting birds and making children's bug hunts much more interesting!

Once all the roots have been moved to the stumperies, the area will need to be ploughed or harrowed and contractors will be sought to do this. Do you know someone who has the right equipment to spend no more than a couple of hours doing this?

The final phase will be to put the area to good use and this is where you come in. CHAFT will be seeking ideas from villagers, probably at a village meeting. There is an opportunity to put forward ideas for adding to the general environment of the Field. Suggestions so far include a bluebell or snowdrop wood, a scented garden and a nature trail with full disabled access. Unfortunately, our expectation that the Vale Council would help with tree planting has been dashed with the news that their budget has been scrapped, so if you'd like to help by donating a tree, please get in touch.

The Charney Army meets at 10.00 a.m. on the second and last Thursdays of the month. If you'd like to join and help carry out a variety of tasks to improve the village environment, send an e-mail to The Clerk and you'll get a reminder of each meeting.

FROM YOUR MP - ED VAIZEY

If there is one thing I have learned since becoming an MP, it is the frustration many people feel at not having control over what happens in their local communities. We are all aware of campaigns to keep our community hospitals and local post offices and concern over the growth in housing. In rural areas in particular, local services are under threat all the time. For example 70% of rural parishes do not have a post office, 75% no bus service and 83% no GP, causing real hardship, particularly to those who are less able to travel outside their local area.

For the first time in years a serious proposal has come before Parliament to address the decline in many areas of community life in the form of the Sustainable Communities Bill. It has support from all parties and hundreds of charities, national pressure groups and councils. If passed, it will force the government to draw up an action plan for every community to reverse the decline in quality of life resulting from closures of local shops, help small local businesses threatened

by big national retailers and address the social cost of people having to drive more, as less and less is available locally. You will all have the right to influence this plan through your local council. The government will have to accept the council's recommendations unless they can show good reason not to.

The central financial implication for us is that The Vale of White Horse Council would be given a breakdown of how central government spends money on local services in our area. If the council disagrees with how these resources are currently spent they can come up with an alternative plan that the Communities Secretary will have to accept and implement unless he can prove that it conflicts with national government policies.

March surgeries are in Grove on the 2nd, Shrivenham on the 16th and Wantage Civic Hall on the 23rd. All are from 5.30 – 7.00 p.m.

I can be contacted at any time at the House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA, 0207 219 6350 or vaizeye@parliament.uk.

UGANDA CHARITY FUND - FROM JANE SMITH

King Alfred's and Blewbury Primary School have links with two schools in Uganda and in July Friends of King Alfred's (including Ron and Victoria Smith of Buckland Road) are going to visit and support them. Butyaga Primary School has no running water, no electricity and few resources. The students live in incredible poverty. The Friends aim to work with local builders to construct a boarding house for students who currently sleep on the concrete floor of a classroom. Lords Meades Secondary School is a boarding school which is a charity for students who have difficult lives. Many are orphans who have lost their parents to AIDS or children who have escaped from being Child Soldiers. The Friends would

like to support the education of students at the school through sponsorship and providing educational resources. Those travelling are paying for their flights, accommodation etc. to the tune of £850 each. However, they are trying to raise funds for the two hugely worthwhile projects above. All money donated will be spent directly on helping the schools and not on expenses etc.

With the support of the Court Hill Ridgeway Centre the team will be holding a sponsored "sleep out" on Friday 23rd March 2007.

Donations would be more than welcome. More information from Jane, Ron or Victoria on 868292