

Tithe Farm & Ladygrove Residents Association (TFLRA)

Winter 2016



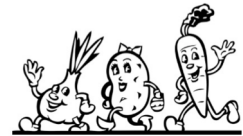
WELCOME - Well here we are again - that's come round quick - Christmas!!! Our summer seems a long time ago now and our autumn with its falling leaves arrived in November. I expect we're all preparing now for the chilly months ahead. As last year, this newsletter edition has an extra page so we can include a children's colouring competition, puzzles and lots of articles. Wishing you all a good Christmas and a Happy New Year for 2017.

COMMUNITY GARDENS (*a member of the Carbon Cutters writes*) - More and more people are looking to grow their own fruit and vegetables and we are very lucky to have some wonderful projects in our area. In 2015 Edible Abingdon (contact carbon.cutters@gmail.com) started growing produce for the community on a strip of land in Abbey Meadow between the Ice Cream kiosk and the river, and this year they expanded to grow vegetables and herbs using old-style recycling bins in a wonderful sunny site beside Old Station House. It has been a great hit with residents, and the public, who are encouraged to pick the produce and have really enjoyed the fresh vegetables.



Edible Abingdon's aim is to encourage more people in the community to grow some of their own food, to show that lots can be grown in small spaces and to reduce dependence on fossil fuels by eating less imported food. Growing your own produce is good for you, there are more nutrients in fresh food, it's cheap, all you need are seeds and compost, and it's fun and children see where food comes from.

Stonehill Community Gardens is just off the Drayton Road down Oday Hill, and they are creating a vegetable garden and holding garden-themed events. It is a garden for everyone and it is open every Wednesday from 11 till 3 for everyone keen to be outdoors, to learn and share skills and make friends.



More information from Rachel at info@stonehillgardens.co.uk



MILL ROAD TRAFFIC - We were very sorry to learn that in there had been another accident at the end of Mill Road in September. As with the last accident in April last year, this resulted in major damage to several vehicles. Both have happened in the Mill Road stretch between Wordsworth Road and the Drayton Road - thankfully there appears to have been no injuries in either case and, as we understand the accidents both happened at about 7.30am, there were no children around. It is not for us to comment on why these smashes may have happened but we are very concerned about this situation.

There is a feeling, however, that cars sometimes travel too fast around our roads and down Mill Road in particular, (although obviously we don't know if this was a factor in either accident). The County Council has major funding problems and is unlikely to find much money for traffic calming measures. We felt however that we should at least start tackling the Mill Road problem by asking residents for their thoughts and suggestions. We are also going to talk to the PCSOs for this area. Please do let us know what you think.

BADMINTON LIFT - Do you go to the badminton sessions at John Mason School on Wednesday evenings? If so, are you willing to offer a lift to a Ladygrove resident who would love to play badminton again but doesn't drive? If you are able to help, contact us via 07548419545 or email tfl_ra@zoho.com and we will pass on your offer.



FAULTY STREET LIGHTS - These can be reported by ringing 0800 317802 (free 24 hour fault line) or by visiting oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/street-lighting. You will need to have the location and the number of the unit, normally on the street side of the column about 2/3 m. from the ground.



A WALK ON THE WILDSIDE (by Max the Wildlife Watcher) - Winter is a great time to look out for birds, desperately trying to hunt out food to survive the cold of winter.



Last winter I spotted another winter favourite of mine along the Ock Valley walk...mistletoe (*Viscum album*). Look out for a spherical mass on leaves on the branches of deciduous trees, such as apples, willow, limes and poplars. They are semi-parasitic on their host trees. Their seeds are distributed by birds, who eat the seeds and try and remove the residual goo by wiping their beaks on suitable rough branches. If it is a host tree with the correct texture a new plant may be formed. To encourage the spread of this unique plant, I don't pick from the wild, but buy from reputable places such as Abingdon Market. Mistletoe has had a special place in mid-winter customs for a very long time, and its use pre-dates Christianity. There are

many explanations of the kissing tradition – though most relate either to the Norse legend of Baldr or to the view that mistletoe is an ancient symbol of fertility. The concept of mistletoe as a fertility symbol is reflected in many uses – as a medicine to encourage fertility, as a charm for young ladies to find husbands, and in our kissing custom.

Peace, luck and New Year - mid-winter mistletoe customs in continental Europe have traditionally included seeing mistletoe as a plant of peace and luck. In France it was often given as a *Porte Bonheur* - a gift for luck, particularly for the New Year. During the First World War embroidered 'silk' postcards sent from the Front at Christmas often depicted mistletoe, perhaps emphasising mistletoe's value both as a symbol of peace and as a message for loved ones.

Wishing you and your love ones a Happy New Year and watch out for young ladies carrying mistletoe!

BOARD GAMES (Tom of Ladygrove writes) - It's official – board games are back! So spectacular has been the industry explosion that simply stepping in to a gaming shop (such as Thirsty Meeples in Oxford) can in itself seem utterly overwhelming as you drown in the vast ocean of games before you. Well, my aim in this section is to offer you a safe vessel in these unforgiving waters by recommending a couple of new family games in the hope of getting you and your clan back around the gaming table this Christmas.



1) **In Loony Quest** (ages 8+), you'll first study a central 'map' which has marked start and finish points, along with several obstacles, bonuses and penalties. Your aim is to draw a route on your own transparent sheet that picks up all the bonuses & avoids all the pitfalls. Once drawn, your route is then placed on top of the world map and your total points are scored

2) **Pictomania** (ages 8+) is Pictionary-esque drawing game in which up to six of you take on the daunting task of both trying to draw something recognisable AND trying to guess what the other players are drawing AT THE SAME TIME. You'll score points both for guessing other people's pictures and for their guessing yours, but you'll probably be laughing too much to worry about the score...

If you'd like some more individualised game recommendations, or if you're interested in meeting up to play (adult) board games with others in this area, please contact me at tom@bigimaginationgames.com.



FOR SALE - (Genuine) Canon PG1-5BK ink cartridge in sealed pack, plus most of a second part used one. No longer needed. £7.00. Contact 07548419545 or email tfl_ra@zoho.com

THANK YOU – Joyce Brown has contacted the TFLRA and asked us to say a big 'Thank you' to all residents who helped in the search for David on 22 September when he went for a walk unaccompanied. As many of those who helped will know, David is suffering from dementia.

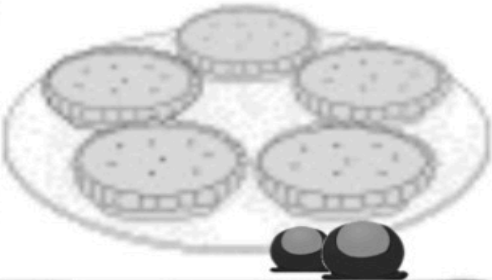


GARDENING AT CHRISTMAS - There are those that wish to combine the celebrations of Christmas with useful gardening – so here is a list that combines both.

1. Open bottle of Champagne, drink a glass. Thus refreshed, pop outside and prune that conifer back a bit.
2. Have a second glass - that was hard work - you deserve it.
3. Outside again and do a bit of weeding - throw the weeds over the fence to next door - they'll never notice.
4. Have another glass!
5. Time to move that ... shrubby thing - you know ... that green thing ... dig it up and move it over there ... by the glassy thing ... greenhouse - that's it!
6. Have another ... oh it's finished - best open abuther nottle ... erm ... another bottle.
7. Now, those pigeons on the fence ... if I can just – yes, got one ... perfect shot - knew that empty bottle would come in useful.
8. Pay for next door neighbours gazebo repairs in the New Year.
9. Slump in armchair happy in the knowledge of a job done well.
10. And another thing ... wotsit ... waserr ... oh yes ... Chrissy Merrymas! ...hic....



RECIPES – A few residents have submitted their favourite Christmas recipes to share – hope you enjoy them!!

Chocolate Truffles	Almond Meringue Mince Pies (makes 18)
<p>4oz Dark Chocolate 6oz Icing Sugar 4oz Butter 1 Egg Yolk Level tsp Jam 2tbls Rum or Drambuie (optional) 4oz Digestive Biscuits – crushed Chocolate and / or coloured Sugar Strands</p> <p>Melt Chocolate and butter in a basic over a pan of water. Add egg yolk, mix and remove pan from heat. Mix in jam, icing sugar, biscuit crumbs and rum or Drambuie. Mix well and leave in fridge for 1 hour. Roll into small balls and decorate as you wish, pop into the casings and enjoy!!</p> 	<p>8 oz Short Crust Pastry Jar Mincemeat 2 oz Ground Almonds 2 (large) Egg Whites 4 oz Caster Sugar Optional – 1 tbls Brandy added to Mincemeat</p> <p>Oven 180c, gas mark 4</p> <p>Cut out circles with pastry cutter and put in greased fairy cake baking tray. Put a teaspoon of mincemeat into each tart base. Whisk egg whites. As whites start to thicken, add sugar slowly, whisking until you have a nice stiff meringue mixture. Gently fold in ground almonds with a metal spoon. Place meringue mix on top of mincemeat with a teaspoon, making sure mincemeat is covered. Cook for 15-20 mins on middle shelf of oven or until just lightly golden on top. Cool on a cooling tray. Store in airtight container until needed – will be OK for up to two weeks. Happy baking!!</p>



UPDATE ON DRAYTON ROAD BUS STOP - Oxfordshire Highways Department had agreed to resurface the bus stop sometime this year, but they have now informed us that it will not be done until they have received next year's budget funding. In the meantime, they tell us that they will be checking it for safety issues.



CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD (*Kay of Masefield writes*) – Here are a few snippets of traditions carried out in various countries:



Poland - Christmas Eve is known as Wigilia (pronounced vee-GHEE-lee-uh). The house is cleaned and everyone gets washed and puts on their festive clothes. The main Christmas meal is eaten in the evening and is called "Kolacja wigilijna" (Christmas Eve supper). It's traditional that no food is eaten until the first star is seen in the sky! So children look at the night sky to spot the first star!

Spain - Most families eat their main Christmas meal on Christmas Eve before going to La Misa Del Gallo - The Mass of the Rooster (Midnight Mass) - a rooster was supposed to have been heard the night Jesus was born. The traditional Spanish Christmas dinner is 'Pavo Trufado de Navidad' which is turkey stuffed with truffles (the mushrooms, not the chocolate ones!)



Norway - Christmas Eve is the time when presents are exchanged. The gifts are sometimes brought by Santa Claus (called 'Julenissen' in Norway), though presents are also brought by the small gnomes called 'Nisse', and there are also hobgoblins (Nisse) decorations.

Germany - A big part of the Christmas celebrations in Germany is Advent. One type of Advent calendar used in German homes is one made out of a wreath of fir tree branches with 24 decorated boxes or bags hanging from it which contain a little present. Christmas Trees are very important and they were first used in Germany during the Middle Ages. If there are young children in the house, the trees are usually secretly decorated by the mother of the family. The Christmas tree was traditionally brought into the house on Christmas Eve. Christmas Eve is the main day when Germans exchange presents with their families.



ADVERTS

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Milk and More - *delivered to your door! To arrange home deliveries of milk and other goods, contact Steve Enock Dairies Ltd of Milk and More. Deliveries on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Tel 0345 606 3606 email steveenock@hotmail.com*

Simon's News - *Newspaper home delivery, 7 days a week - telephone 01235-553001.*

Irish Dancing School - *All ages and abilities welcome. Community Centre, Boulter Drive Abingdon OX14 1XP. Thursdays 5.30pm-6.30pm. Contact Sam Crossan 01235 520886 or email crossanschoolofirishdancing@hotmail.co.uk.*

Remember that you can also advertise your business. A full advert can go on the blog with a short summary in the paper newsletters. £10.00 for residents for the year. We look forward to hearing from you!

NEXT MEETING - please see blog at www.tflra.blogspot.co.uk for the next meeting.



CONTACT - For contributions, articles, announcements or if you'd like to come along to a meeting email at tfl_ra@zoho.com or phone **on our new number** 07548419545 to leave a message



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