

# TITHE FARM & LADYGROVE NEWSLETTER

April 2005

*Welcome to the April edition of the newsletter. There are a few changes this month. We would like to thank Joyce who has kept the newsletter going since Steve Annells left, but now feels that it would be nice for someone else to have a go. So please bear with us as we try out the editing for the first time. We are still working hard to produce the newsletter and appreciate all of your comments and contributions.*

*To any residents that have just moved here may we welcome you and wish you many happy years living here.*

**Advance Notice** of the Tithe Farm and Ladygrove A.G. M., which will be held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> June at 8p.m. in the Jephson Common Room. Sub collection will also start in June. For any newcomers, we charge a subscription of £1 – 20p per year for the newsletters, and the person who delivers your newsletter will be knocking to collect the money in June or July. Senior Citizens are exempt, unless they want to pay, of course.

**Advertisements** We currently have a waiting list for business advertisements as we don't want the newsletter to become overwhelmed by advertising. If you need to change the details of your business advert or to withdraw it, please let us know. I am grateful to a resident of Orpwood Way for telling me that an advertising number she tried to phone was unobtainable and I subsequently found out that the advertiser had gone out of business. The newsletter, of course, does not endorse the advertisers, so don't blame us if a service proves unsatisfactory!

**Elections** This is not a party political broadcast, but don't forget to go and vote on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May. Whoever you vote for, it is better than being apathetic and not bothering. After all, you aren't going to have to get up at dawn, tramp twenty miles along a rough track and then wait in a queue for several hours in the searing heat and you aren't likely to get assassinated or even mildly threatened, so there's no excuse. If you have mobility problems, phone up your least favourite political party, ask for a lift to the polling station and then vote for a different party. My great grandfather used to do that, so I am told.

## **Events in May**

**Sunday May 1<sup>st</sup>** Abingdon Fayre, Dalton Barracks, An Air and Countryside Show.

**Saturday May 14<sup>th</sup>** Abingdon in Bloom Floral Festival, in the Market Place, 10a.m. to 1.30 p.m. Plant Selling, Local Nurseries, Music, Dancing, Punch and Judy.

**Sunday May 15<sup>th</sup>** Dragon Boat Racing on the Thames just across the bridge. Organised by the Rotary Club, this is a fun day out. Thirty teams compete and there are stalls, refreshments and children's activities.

All we need now is fine, warm weather.....

**Abingdon Museum** in the County Hall, open daily from 10.30a.m. to 4p.m. Now that the Sixties Exhibition is finished, the current display is called "A Cabinet of Curiosities". Entrance is free, though contributions are appreciated. There are activities sheets for children and coffee and biscuits are also available. There are also rooftop visits on Saturdays from Spring to Autumn at £1 for adults and 50p for children over 6.

Eleanor Dangerfield

## LOCAL INFORMATION

**Information from the last Councillor's Surgery** held in the Jephson Common Room on April 9<sup>th</sup>.  
**The Town Information Office** (ex Tourist Information). One member of staff will be on duty for information, Mon – Sat inclusive in Abingdon Council Offices.

**New Mayor of Abingdon.** Alison Rooke is now Mayor of Abingdon and Peter Green is Deputy Mayor.

**The Open Air Swimming Pool.** As you probably know, the Vale is planning to close the open air pool in Abbey Meadows. Please fill in the questionnaire in your copy of the "Town Crier", to gauge opinion on the fate of the pool. If the pool is to remain open and run by the Council, Council Tax will have to increase. If you did not receive a copy of the "Town Crier", call the Town Council on 01235 522 642.

**Cemetery Gravestones** will be tested for stability and if unstable, will be laid flat. This follows government Health and Safety regulations, to prevent people being injured by falling gravestones and crosses.

Lilian Barry

Lilian would also like to ask residents to keep their eyes and ears open for "yobbos", who use Friday and Saturday nights to attack cars and property on Tithe Farm. Thanks to a resident of Wordsworth, who notified the police and fire services in the early hours of Saturday morning. Considerable damage was done to one car. On Bridges Close, a full can of beer was thrown at a resident's window before midnight.

**Escaped Supermarket Trolleys** Are you fed up with trolleys in the Ock and other places they shouldn't be? I found this in the Basingstoke local newspaper. Residents of Chineham near Basingstoke got Tesco to fit locking devices to their trolleys, which lock if you take them off the premises. If they can do it, why can't we? If anyone has any ideas as to how we can make our point to the Abingdon Store then please let us know.

Jill Wells

### **Wildlife Sites around Abingdon - Barton Fields**

If you sometimes take a Sunday afternoon walk to Abingdon Lock from the town centre, for a change, try crossing the footbridge over the Abbey Stream and into Barton Fields. This Nature Reserve extends for nearly half a mile beside the Thames and is about 17 acres in area. It is a really good wildlife area.

The lower part of the field is marshy with peaty soil. In fact, this land was part of a much wider channel before the present Thames channel was deepened. The Radley Brook flows beside the Thames Path and is separated from the Thames itself by a piece of riverside woodland. In summer a wide variety of marginal plants flower beside this stream providing cover and food for Water Voles whose burrows can be seen along the banks. They are seriously declining in the UK, but are still quite common in the streams to the east of Abingdon. Listen for the characteristic 'plop' as they enter the water. Look out also for a Kingfisher, which can often be seen here. The riverbank itself is well wooded providing a beautiful view from the bridge over the weir.

The northern part of the field, crossed by the Sustrans cycle path, is slightly higher and drier and the grassland here provides habitat for different types of plants and animals, for example there are two different species of Bush Cricket new to Oxfordshire to be found there.

Just recently new interpretation boards have been provided, thanks to a grant from English Nature. You can find out a lot more about the site by reading these. If you are interested to take part in conservation work on this site please contact David Guyoncourt on 529151 or Jo Cartmell on 534424

David Guyoncourt

Thank you for all the entries to the competition last month. Here are the answers to March's quiz.

**Answers** 1)Joseph 2)Hair 3)South Pacific 4)Oliver 5)Pickwick 6)Annie 7)Cabaret 8)Cats 9)The King and I 10)Carousel 11)Gigi 12)Paint Your Wagon 13)Grease(stage version) 14)Oklahoma 15)Les Misérables 16)Showboat 17)West Side Story 18)Evita 19)Starlight Express 20)Camelot.

"Musical Magic" was won, after a draw from correct entries, by the **Cackett family**. I haven't thought of a prize yet. The budget doesn't run to tickets to a musical. Well done.

### April Quiz - Getting the Bird

Hidden in the following story are the names of twenty British birds. When you've found them, write them in the spaces provided and send them to Eleanor at 23, Masefield by Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May.

Lady Phyllis wandered around her flowering Ullswater garden. Such a beautiful day, wasn't it? Her onerous task was to gather the choicest produce for an intimate lunch. Something plain and easy to swallow, but substantial, or, just for a lark, a bit more exotic? Percy would be ravenous. Gazpacho, maybe, but no, he wasn't a soup lover. Perhaps a pudding with carob in it. Just a half inch from a locust bean pod. No, better not. She made a swift decision. Puffing slightly, for she was a little overweight, she walked over to a hollow log and sat gazing up at her gardener Jake's trellis, sturdy larch poles interwoven with rushes from the brook. In the flowerbeds grew geraniums, now renamed pelargonium. Her eyelids drooped and she began to snore. Once she was asleep, nothing roused her, short of an earthquake.

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17) \_\_\_\_\_ 18) \_\_\_\_\_ 19) \_\_\_\_\_ 20) \_\_\_\_\_

Finally we would like to know if you found the lay out of the newsletter helpful this month. We have decided to keep the advertisements to the back and have tried to make them more of an equal size. This makes it fair to all advertisers as the fee is a set amount per ad.

We are hoping to run a regular section for residents to make those special announcements. If you know of a birth, birthday, engagement, wedding, anniversary or bereavement, etc...and feel that you would like to let that someone know that you are thinking of them, then we could help. We would like this to become a newsletter that you feel that you can all contribute to and are pleased to receive, one that is about your estates. Sadly, we can't do this without your help, so please, even if you feel that what you have to say isn't much or you feel embarrassed, still send the articles in. We can always make you anonymous.

This years Summer coach trip is proving difficult to organise. It has been suggested that Kew Gardens would be a popular choice. Unfortunately Joyce is unavailable to organise it, so we are hoping that someone else will step forward to continue with this outing. If you could help or would be interested in going, please contact one of the editorial team as soon as possible. Thank you..

If you have any comments about the articles or the newsletter please contact any member of the editorial team:

Gena Ritchie	01235 526512	31 Wordsworth Road	<a href="mailto:rtasha31@aol.com">rtasha31@aol.com</a>
Eleanor Dangerfield	01235 531857	23 Masefield Crescent	<a href="mailto:a.dangerfield@ntlworld.com">a.dangerfield@ntlworld.com</a>
Joyce Brown	01235 524833	46 Masefield Crescent	<a href="mailto:joycebrown@btinternet.com">joycebrown@btinternet.com</a>

## My Hobby, Balloon Crewing

Over the past year I have been crewing for a hot air balloon company with my dad. This is mostly at weekends and involves early starts and late evenings. The early starts usually mean leaving the house at 5.30am and then a short drive to Streatly. On arrival we hitch up the 4x4 to their trailers and head off to the launch sites. We have several launch sites around Streatly, one of them being in Abingdon. The reason for different launch sites is to take into account different wind directions.

Once at the launch site the passengers are introduced to the pilot crew. The pilot will go through the launch procedure with them and also reassure anybody who may be nervous. Passengers are encouraged to help prepare the balloon if they so wish. The basket is attached to the burners first and a test is carried out to check the burners are working properly. The envelope (the correct name for the balloon) is then removed from its protective travel bag and is laid flat out across the field ready for inflation. Cold inflation is when a small fan blows air into the envelope which starts the inflation process. The next stage is when the pilot introduces warm air into the envelope from the burners, then the balloon quickly rises up, a few more checks then the passengers are asked to climb aboard. My dad and I then wish them a good flight and take note of which direction they are drifting. Then we pack away and prepare to follow.

We are equipped with the maps at the area we take note of the time they launched. Flight is normally an hour long. We then try to predict the area they might be landing in. Sometimes this can take you down roads and lanes, through towns and villages you would never normally visit. As the end of the flight nears we try to keep as close as possible to the balloon, in order to see it land but there are occasions when we lose sight of it altogether. Once down and we have located the area we seek permission from the land owner to go and retrieve the passengers and balloon. Once we have permission we drive up and pack everything away. Packing away the envelope is a hot job as it still has lots of warm air trapped inside. When it is all packed away we head back to the launch site so the passengers can get their cars. We then travel back home to prepare the balloons for the next flight.

**Jack Kennedy aged 11 years**

I would like to thank Jack for writing this very interesting article about his hobby. What an unusual one. It is lovely and very hearting to have a young writer send us something to print. Lets hope that this may encourage other younger, budding writers to place something in.

Do you have an interesting hobby that you would like to tell us about, we would love to hear about it. The more unusual the better ☺.

Mr Kennedy would like us to mention that the company that they crew for, Bloomers 2000 are currently looking for new crews. They are based in Streatly and cover quite a large local area. If you would like more information about this intriguing hobby, please call Mr Kennedy on 01235 201370.

Abingdon youth football club are trying to raise funds. They are holding a raffle in the middle of May and one of the prizes is a, yes you've guess it, a Balloon Fight for two with Bloomers 2000. Mr Kennedy has asked us to let you know that he may be calling around soon to see if anyone would be interested in purchasing a ticket or two. The price of a ticket is a very reasonable £1.00. we wish you well with your sales.

## SURBURBIA AS A NATURE RESERVE.

A few weeks ago to our great surprise there was a fox sitting on top of our six foot high back fence, peering into our garden. We wondered at foxes of being evidently capable of jumping on six foot high fences? We wondered did it trot down Mill Road and through the gardens backing onto us.

Over the month we have had a sparrow-hawk eating its prey in the garden, noticed the red kites and regularly seen the heron that commutes its way apparently to and from the Ock stream and the Thames. All this from our back windows.

About a year ago, walking to Tesco's, I saw a little muntjak deer appear from one side of the first bridge and cross it and disappear over to the right.

How lucky we are to have so much wildlife about. Perhaps other readers would like to contribute any other sightings?

Phyllis Turret

### Wildlife information?

I was recently asked to keep a look out for Swifts as we seem to be missing a few? Does anyone know when they migrate here and leave? Also can anyone help with the mystery about wasps and bees? What happens to them in the winter months? Do they die off or just hibernate? I was asked this by a child and sadly couldn't answer. My mum used to say when it was warm in the early part of the year, January etc... "Gosh it's early for wasps and bees"

When a child quizzes you it is times like this you wish you had paid more attention at school.

### FINALLY

Thank you for all the contributions and to the distributors for their support in getting the newsletter together. Without you we could not run this anymore. It would be such a shame to lose the newsletter after it has been running for so long.

**The next Tithe Farm and Ladygrove residence meeting is on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May at 8.00pm. The meeting is always held in the Jephson's Common Room. It is always on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month and the dead line for the newsletter is the following Sunday.**

**The deadline for the May addition is Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>. Please send all contribution to Gena or Eleanor contact details are in the newsletter.**

**SARAH BULPITT BEAUTY THERAPIST**

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Do you have any unwanted terracotta pots that you no longer require or that have seen better days? If so I would like to take them off your hands. Any size required, any condition, except large chipped. I will collect them from you ☺  
Call Gena on 01235 526512.

**MESSAGE FROM NEW AREA BEAT OFFICER**

Hello everyone!

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Area Beat Officer for South Abingdon.

If you have any problems or issues that you would like to discuss, then please do not hesitate in contacting me.

I am available on either 01235 556850 or 07974127838.

I will also be attending your next monthly meeting so I can introduce myself face to face.

I looking forward to seeing you,

Charlie Pollard  
WPC 5014  
Thames Valley Police

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