

TITHE FARM & LADYGROVE NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2007

As this is the December issue, we would like to wish a very happy Christmas to all our readers, and with Christmas and New Year coming, the January issue will no doubt be a bit late in appearing.

The festive season means strange things happening to the waste and recycling collections, so here are the holiday dates:

Normal Collection Day

Monday 31st December

Thursday 3rd January

Monday 7th January

Thursday 10th January

Bank Holiday Collection Day

Wednesday 2nd January

Saturday 5th January

Tuesday 8th January

Friday 11th January

Potholes in the road As most residents cannot fail to have noticed, there are an alarming number of potholes and cracks in the road surfaces. The ones in Mill Road (and possibly in other roads) have now had white lines marked around them. This may mean a) They are about to be repaired b) Once the council has marked them, they are no longer liable if someone has an accident c) They have been designated as a tourist attraction.

I had been hoping that the answer was a) but I have been unofficially told it may be b)

Motorcyclists on the path to Tesco. Residents have told me that they have encountered motorcycles/scooters being ridden on the path to Tesco. This is, of course, completely illegal and highly dangerous, but in the absence of the police doing anything about it, please be very careful when using the path.

Flood Photos – David and Pat Adams of 21 Francis Little Drive have many photos of the flood. One is, I think, of Elsie Cosser's dog being carried by a fireman, though not riding in a boat. They say that people are welcome to call and look at the photos and they can provide copies for a nominal sum, but please phone first on 527 043.

If you have photos you would like to share – perhaps they are of people you don't know or dogs, children, canoes, wet suits etc. – contact us at the newsletter. We will not publish your name or address if you do not want us to, but could put you in contact with people who might want to see or have copies of the photos.

Public Meeting about the Flooding – This was held at the Guildhall on Friday 16th November and chaired by Dr Evan Harris M.P. It was, predictably, very well attended by those wanting to hear explanations and ask questions about the absence of warnings, the lack of sandbags until after the event and what can be done to prevent flooding in the future. Presentations were given by the Environ-

ment Agency, the Vale Council, the emergency Planning Officer and a Drains Man. After each section, members of the public were invited to ask questions and give their views. I will do my best to summarise the meeting.

1) **Flood Warning** – why were people not warned until it was too late – even those people who were signed up with the Environment Agency? The Environment Agency official admitted they could not cope with the amount of information coming into the control room in Reading the weekend of the floods; there were only two staff on duty. This was despite a whole day having passed since the torrential rain on Friday 20th July. Evan Harris said that a Severe Flood Warning had not gone out until the Sunday – after the Ock and Stort had flooded.

2) **Sandbags** – As we all know, these were not delivered until after the flood, and various suggestions for the future were put forward, such as people at risk having a stock of empty bags, which could be filled from a local sand store. Evan Harris did point out that sandbags were of limited use; they only protect from lapping water and to be effective, must have plastic sheeting behind them. Also, they do not prevent water coming up through the floor.

3) **Flood Fair** – there had been a Flood Fair in Oxford on Thursday 15th November (that is, an exhibition of flood protection products). Many people complained that they had not known about it (We did not know about it in time to put it in the November newsletter. I put up some posters around Ladygrove and at the end of Mill Road on Monday 12th. By Friday, I found three of them had been torn down.) We were promised a Flood Fair would be held in Abingdon. However, a member of the audience who had been to the Oxford one said the products were very expensive (£22,000 was mentioned) and not always effective. To protect a house in a terrace, all the houses in the row would need to be protected.

4) **Preventing Future Floods** – The Environment Agency said it was not going to do dredging. People suggested that there should be much more clearing of debris from the water courses.

The E.A. said there was a possibility of a flood storage area to the West of the A34 and improvement of “pinch points”, such as the Ock Bridge and St Helen’s Mill area. However, these possible improvements came up against one big obstacle – money, or rather, lack of it.

Flood prevention projects are scored on a sort of points system, on a scale of 1-44 (why 44?),

and the proposed projects in Abingdon do not score high enough.

Building - The houses on the Drayton Road garage site will be built “above flood level”.

Tesco wants to raise its car park a few feet so it won’t flood. Tesco will have to convince the E.A. that its plans will not make flooding worse.

Finally, let us not forget the drain man. He said that they only clean out the gullies once a year. The ones round here have had their clean out, so that’s it for another year.

Evan Harris will convene another public meeting in 6 months’ time. He will also ask a Parliamentary question about lack of resources for flood prevention.

We suggest that everybody writes to Hilary Benn, Secretary of State for the Environment, to demand more resources for prevention of future flooding. The Government can always find the money when it really wants to.

JOKE TIME - LOST IN TRANSLATION

Hotel Notice, Tokyo:

IS FORBIDDEN TO STEAL HOTEL TOWELS PLEASE
IF YOU ARE NOT A PERSON TO DO SUCH A THING IS PLEASE NOT TO READ
NOTIS

Hotel Room notice, Thailand:

PLEASE DO NOT BRING SOLICITORS INTO YOUR ROOM

How to work the air conditioner, Japan:

COOLES AND HEATES: IF YOU WANT JUST CONDITION OF WARM AIR IN YOUR
ROOM PLEASE CONTROL YOURSELF.

Hotel lobby, Bucharest:

THE LIFT IS BEING FIXED FOR THE NEXT DAY. DURING THAT TIME WE REGRET
YOU WILL BE UNBEARABLE.

Hotel, Vienna

IN CASE OF FIRE DO YOUR UTMOST TO ALARM THE HALL PORTER

Hotel lift, Belgrade:

TO MOVE THE CABIN, PUSH BUTTON FOR WISHING FLOOR.

IF THE CABIN SHOULD ENTER MORE PERSONS, EACH ONE SHOULD PRESS A
NUMBER OF WISHING FLOOR.

DRIVING IS THEN GOING ALPHABETICALLY BY NATIONAL ORDER.

Mountain hotel, Austria

NOT TO PERAMBULATE IN THE CORRIDORS IN THE HOURS OF REPOSE IN THE
BOOTS OF ASCENSION

Taken from a menu, Poland:

SALAD A FIRM'S OWN MAKE; LIMPID RED BEET SOUP WITH CHEESY DUMP-
LINGS IN THE FORM OF A FINGER; ROASTED DUCK LET LOOSE; BEEF RASH-
ERS BEATEN UP IN THE COUNTRY PEOPLE'S FASHION.

The Garden in December

The question that I am most often asked when wandering round someone's garden is "Oi...who are you and what are you doing in my garden?"

The second most common question is "What can I do about slugs and snails?". The damp summer has been ideal for these pests and I have tried the following deterrents:-

Beer Traps – this involves setting small dishes in the soil and filling them with beer, the idea being that the slugs drown and can be disposed of. I tried this and was woken up at 3.00am by twenty eight slugs singing "Show me the way to go home". Failed.

Slug Pellets – these are generally far too small and even if you do succeed in hitting one, they just bounce off and do no damage at all. Failed

Copper tape – this can be stuck round plant pot rims and along the edges of raised beds. Apparently the slug gets an electric shock when he tries to cross over the tape. I discovered that slugs will elect a sacrificial member of the tribe to lay down his life on the tape whilst the others scramble across his twitching body. Failed.

Physical removal – a badminton racket is good for this. A Dunlop professional Super-String can propel a snail about 50 yards with a following wind. Somewhat messy with slugs though, and a cubed slug is a devil to clear up.

Salt – One is supposed to chase after the slug and sprinkle salt on it. I've tried this and the resulting mess looks like something out of Dr Who, stays on the ground for weeks getting bigger and bigger, and quite frankly scares the children. Leave well alone.

SO...learn to live with them.

And this is my final general gardening article (Hoorah I hear you cry...) but from January I shall be writing about growing vegetables in a small area - containers and the like.

Martin Gulliver

ADAM TARNET - PERSONAL TRAINER

Adam is a Personal Trainer who specialises in martial arts training. He lives on Tithe Farm and is a qualified Boxercise, freestyle Kickboxing and Gym Instructor. He currently teaches a wide range of classes, from Spin to Circuit Training, Body Balance to Cardio-Kick in a variety of Oxfordshire's leisure centres. His main passion, however, is Kung-Fu. He has been training with his Master, in Oxford, for 10 years and is currently a Brown Belt, Instructor Level. He enjoys working with people of all ages and abilities to help them achieve their goals.

So if you are looking to get fit, improve your cardio levels, learn self defence or simply lose weight, then don't hesitate to contact Adam for further information. All fitness levels welcome. Prices available on request.

e-mail: adam.tarnet@hotmail.co.uk

Mobile: 07914 223471

November Quiz Answers and December Quizzes – Here are the names of the hidden rivers: Kennet, Cam, Exe, Derwent, Hamble, Lea/Lee, Test, Stert, Ock, Don, Tweed, Ouse, Cherwell, Wear, Windrush, Thames, Dee, Tamar, Forth, Ure, Aire, Tyne, Medway, Dart, Tawe, Usk

December Quiz - Merry Christmas – You will see “Merry Christmas” in 16 different European Languages. They are all written in the Roman alphabet but, sorry, my computer doesn't do accents, umlauts etc. Can you match the phrase with the language? Choose from the following languages: French, German, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Danish, Swedish/Norwegian, Finnish, Greek, Russian, Polish, Czech, Welsh, Irish, Scots Gaelic.

- 1) Vrolijk Kerstfeest _____
- 2) Feliz Navidad _____
- 3) Nollaig Shona _____
- 4) Kala Christougenna _____
- 5) Joyeux Noel _____
- 6) VerseleVanoce _____
- 7) Nadolig Llawen _____
- 8) Glaedelig Jul _____
- 9) Boas Festas _____
- 10) 10) Wesolych Swiat _____
- 11) God Jul _____
- 12) Buon Natale _____
- 13) Frohliche Weihnachten _____
- 14) Nollaig Chridheil Huibh _____
- 15) Pozdrevlyayu s Prazdnikom Rozhdestva! _____
- 16) Hyvaa Joulua _____

Christmas Anagrams – This quiz is strictly for the under 12s

Un-jumble the letters to make Christmas words:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1) KARRECCS _____ | 2) YETRUK _____ |
| 3) YARIF GITHLS _____ | 4) WONNSAM _____ |
| 5) CIGKNOTS _____ | 6) ANAST ULACS _____ |
| 7) ENDERRIE _____ | 8) TESSERPNI _____ |
| 9) TRAMSHISC ERET _____ | 10) VAITYTIN _____ |
| 11) TOMSLETIE _____ | 12) ROCLA GRESNIS _____ |
| 13) GLIJEN LEBLS _____ | 14) STRAINCOODE _____ |

Answers to Eleanor, 23 Masefield Crescent, by 23rd December.

Councillors' Surgeries

Samantha Bowring, Saturday 8th December 10.30-11.30 in the Jephson Common Room.

Mike and Marilyn Badcock 1st Saturday of the month in the Family Room, Abingdon Conservative Club, Ock Street.

**Date of the next TFLRA Committee Meeting –
Wednesday 12th December 2007 8p.m. in the Jephson Common Room.
Deadline for items for the next newsletter – Sunday 23rd December 2007**

Contact us – items for publication:

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Grenville Wells tithefarm2@yahoo.co.uk

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Pantomime - Advance notice

Abingdon Drama Club will present "Jack and the Beanstalk"
at the Unicorn Theatre, Medieval Abbey Buildings, Abingdon.
Evenings: Fri 11th, Sat 12th, Thurs 17th, Fri 18th, Sat 19th Jan at
7.30 p.m.

Matinees: Sat 12th, Sun 13th, Sat 19th Jan at 2.30 p.m.
Tickets: £6 (children £4) from The Bookstore, Abingdon Precinct
or from Ticketline 01235 524538