



Tithe Farm and Ladygrove Newsletter

February 2014

Welcome to the February newsletter - First of all I have to announce that the April newsletter will be the last. I have been in charge of the newsletter for nearly nine years and a few months ago I decided that nine years was enough. Totally independently of my decision, Joyce, who has printed the newsletter at minimal cost for even more years, has decided to give up her home-based printing business. So even if someone were to take over the newsletter, it could no longer continue in its present form, that is, where all households on Tithe Farm/Ladygrove receive the newsletter unless they specifically ask for it not to be delivered. Commercial printers would charge considerably more than Joyce does. Were anybody to take on the task, it would have to be a newsletter to which people subscribed and for which they paid more than the current £1 a year, though it might be possible to produce a double sided news sheet for this amount. An e-newsletter would be another solution. Again, residents would need to subscribe to it and there would be the advantage that a small number of copies could be printed off for those residents with no access to the internet. If any of the above ideas (or any I haven't thought of) appeal to you and you would like to take on the task, please get in touch. Many people have helped to make the newsletter possible over the years, but there will be time for thanks in the April edition.

Tithe Farm Archives dating back to the Swinging Seventies! - Does anybody want them? Come on, all you amateur historians, there may be material for a book in there!

Improved Bus Service - What do you think of the X1/X2 bus service? I once waited over half an hour when the expected 10 a.m. bus didn't turn up and I wish they would display the "real time" waiting times on the bus stop a bit less spasmodically, but it's good to have a half hourly service, buses running throughout the evening and buses going on to Wallingford or Wantage. The newsletter would be pleased to hear of your experience with the new service. I wrote to the bus company in the Autumn about the inadequate bus service in South Abingdon and more than two months later received a reply. The letter ends thus: "I hope that this addition to the public transport offer will benefit you and your community and provide the additional offer that you sought to gain." Funny use of the English language, but don't let's quibble over it.

Pelican crossings on Ock Street/Marcham Road - As a condition for the developers to be allowed to build 160 dwellings South of Virginia Way, they have to fund the following traffic congestion mitigation plan: The present pelican crossing on the Marcham Road side of the double roundabout at the junction of Drayton Rd/Ock St/ Spring Rd/Marcham Rd will be moved 60 metres West along Marcham Rd. Barriers will be installed to discourage pedestrians from taking a short cut across Marcham Road. An extra crossing will be installed in Ock Street 25 metres from the double roundabout. These measures are intended to ease the traffic congestion in Drayton Road, which will be made worse by the extra vehicles from the new houses. I will leave you to work out how.

Dog Poo again! - A resident has complained about dog owners who don't pick up after their dogs. He was unfortunate enough to step in some outside his house. These dog owners are disgusting, selfish, lazy people. Their dogs should be rehomed with a responsible owner and they should be fined and banned from keeping dogs ever again. And I hope that's the last thing I ever, ever, ever have to write about dog poo!



Oxfordshire Science Festival – 7th – 23rd March 2014
From Building a Chocolate Virus through Marvellous Mathemagicians and Science in Antarctica to a trip round Didcot Sewage Works, there will be more than a hundred events throughout Oxfordshire. There are also some “pre-events” in February, Cracking Crystals, 20th Feb at the Abingdon Museum and Making Global Health better, 27th Feb in Oxford.

Many of the events are free but many must be pre-booked. So go to www.oxfordshiresciencefestival.co.uk to find out what's on.



More forthcoming local events are listed on the back page, so take a look!

Abingdon Drama Club celebrates its 70th anniversary in 2014!

We are the oldest and largest drama club in Abingdon and since we began we have presented over two hundred and fifty productions.

As with every year since we began, ADC will have a full schedule of drama productions throughout 2014.

But 2014 will be different. We will be holding many one-off special events to celebrate our birthday and the curtain will go up with a 70th Anniversary Launch Party early in the new year. Alongside the four planned productions for the year there will also be various parties, play readings at historic venues around the town, and a themed disco - all to make 2014 a year to remember, not only for ADC members but for audiences, supporters and the good people of Abingdon too.

Existing club members will be involved with the activities, as will our **Juniors Group** which has itself been in existence for over 30 years!

Most of our plays are performed in the **Unicorn Theatre, Abingdon**, in the beautiful Medieval Abbey Buildings. When the Unicorn Theatre was created in 1953, Abingdon Drama Club was asked to stage the first production. We chose to do "The Two Angry Women of Abingdon" by Henry Porter.

Since then the Unicorn Theatre has become our second home and has seen us do many different styles of drama - from tragedy to high farce and from plays by the great names to those by more home-grown and local talent.

We have received much praise and appreciation down the decades from critics and audiences alike. Please take a look at our website under the “Archive” section.

ADC continues to put on high quality productions and to experiment with new performance styles and formats.

Come and see. Even better, why not join us? You'll be made very welcome!

We will announce dates of events and any new events as they're confirmed. Follow us on Twitter or our Facebook page, links to both are on our website:

www.abingdon-drama-club.com, email enquiries@abingdon-drama-club.com



A Mill Road resident, Paul Sheppy, sent this interesting piece in response to the speed bumps debate in the previous two newsletters. As you can see, he is well qualified to write on the subject of road safety. Why not try the observation exercise he suggests? It's also something you could try with your children or grandchildren.

Two issues ago, there was a request for speed humps in Mill Road. Someone was concerned about vehicles travelling too fast on the estate.

This begs the question, "How fast is too fast?" The best answer to that is "If you can't stop on your own side of the road in the distance you can see to be clear, you are going too fast."

That is regardless of the speed limit. On Drayton Road at 8.30 in the morning, 5mph will be too quick if you can't stop before you hit the car in front of you. Advice about stopping safely is to be found in the Highway Code (rule 126), but it is often forgotten.

Most accidents occur when something happens that we weren't expecting. A child runs into the road, or a cyclist appears out of a side road, or another driver decides to use a mini-roundabout for a U-turn just as we thought he was only turning right.

What this suggests is that the most important factor in road safety is how we use our eyes. And the truth is that much of the time, we only half look. Then, when our attention is caught by something unexpected, we rely on our reactions to get us out of trouble.

If we really do pay attention, we discover that there is more happening than we imagine. Here is a little exercise to try.

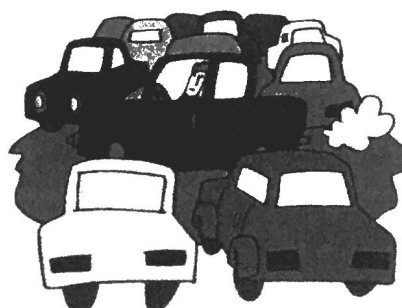
Walk (don't ride or drive) along Mill Road from Francis Little Drive to Drayton Road and then along Drayton Road to the double mini-roundabout system at the junction with Ock Street, Spring Road and Marcham Road.

Without counting any road users (pedestrians, riders or drivers) and looking only at road signs and markings, make a note all the information that is made available to you. If you want to check, contact the newsletter (contact details on back page) for a list.

How did you do? Were any of the signs or markings a surprise, or things you hadn't really noticed before? With what you now know, how will you drive or ride in future?

Oh, and by the way, while some drivers and riders are a bit enthusiastic on our estate, the vast majority are not – otherwise the driving schools would not use our local roads to get their pupils started as frequently as they do!

*Paul Sheppy
Training Officer
Thames Valley Group
RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders*



The Garden in Early Spring

It's been a very mild winter so one wonders if we will escape really bad weather...however be prepared! Now is a good time to feed all borders, using well rotted compost if you can get it, otherwise a handful of general fertiliser scattered per square yard will be fine. The idea is to get things moving after winter. Also top dress containers. This purely involves scraping away the top inch or so of compost and replacing with fresh.

Trim winter flowering heathers as they finish and this will ensure they keep their shape and provide good flowers next winter. Also cut back old hellebore leaves to let light get to the new growth that should now be showing.

Prune fuchsia and buddleia hard back to encourage new growth. Buddleia can often get leggy and thus only flowers at the top of the bush so cut it back now to buds just a few inches from the base and it will soon throw up new flowering branches.

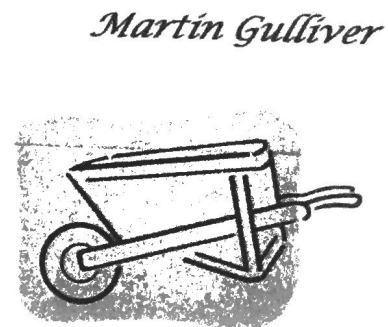
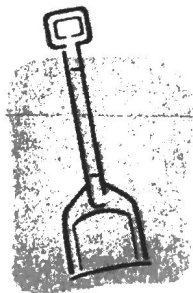
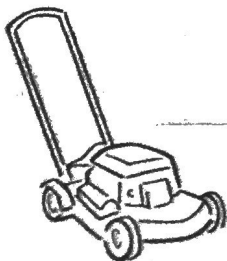
As snowdrops fade, lift and divide them to spread them round the garden. Now is also an ideal time to buy them "in the green" - that is as dormant leaves, and the newspapers will often have adverts. They are much cheaper this way and much more reliable than bulbs which rarely do well.

As we get into March, roses should be pruned now; firstly cutting out any dead or diseased wood, then cutting back any stems that face in to the middle of the bush, and finally trimming the outer stems by about two thirds. The idea is to open out the middle of the bush, and make sure any cuts are just above a bud and sloping away from that bud.

If you chitted seed potatoes earlier these can now be planted in bags, on a layer of 4-6" of compost, two or three potatoes to a bag. Keep them well watered and in good sunlight. Now is also the time to start sowing hardy annuals outside, as well as salad onions, carrots, spinach, lettuce, peas, rocket and cauliflower. Indoors you can sow herbs and half-hardy annuals.

It is a good idea to have a general potter round the garden to tidy up where new growth is showing, keep on top of weeds and also pot up any seedlings that may have sprung up - plants for free! Give the garden a general feed - use garden compost or fertilizer and fork it into the ground - to encourage new growth. This especially applies to newly-pruned shrubs.

Finally, I'm sorry to say, the lawn can be cut in fine weather...but not too short.



Martin Gulliver

February Quiz

Scary Movies

The answers to the cryptic clues are all horror, creepy or supernatural films. Answers to Eleanor, 23 Masefield by 10th March.

- Dark clad female _____
- Bad dream on road of diseased trees _____
- 31st October _____
- Badly spelled resting place for family animals _____
- Transylvanian Count _____
- Wind-up citrus fruit _____
- It belongs to me! _____
- Sign or portent _____
- It's not from round here _____
- Ex P.M. and sorceress collaborate _____
- He has bell, book and candle _____
- Fear of spiders _____
- The baby sheep are quiet _____
- What we all do for ice cream _____
- Portable girl _____
- Lone star state multiple killing with power tool _____
- Basketwork bloke _____
- Not the Daddy _____
- First half of path, somatic and therapist _____
- What the sun should be doing _____



Answers to December quiz 1)C.P. Snow 2)David Frost 3)A Song of Ice and Fire 4)The Snow Queen 5)A Winter's Tale 6)Midwinter 7)snowdrop 8)Ice Age 9)The Snowman 10) ice axe 11)The Lion in Winter 12)Robert Frost 13)Frosts Garden Centre 14)snow bunting 15)Snow White 16)Winterreise 17)Snow Patrol 18)Peter Snow 19)The Snow Goose 20)Winter Olympics

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR GIFT IDEAS FOR CHRISTMAS OR BIRTH-DAYS?

How about an original painting in oil or watercolour?

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**Caldecott Primary School
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For more details, please contact
Maria Reader
Childcare Co-ordinator,
01235 523132

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Colette.muir@cmmaccounting.com

Councillors' Surgeries - at the TFLRA Committee Meeting
Your local Councillors have been invited to the Committee meetings.

Contact details:

Samantha Bowring(Town) samantha.bowring@abingdon.gov.uk 07767 072 095
Mike Badcock- michael.badcock@abingdon.gov.uk 01235 201 810
Marilyn Badcock – marilyn.badcock@abingdon.gov.uk 01235 201 810

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

Dates of the TFLRA meetings: usually 2nd Wednesday of each month
8p.m. in the Jephson Common Room – all residents welcome – check beforehand in
case of change of date. Next meeting Wed 12th March 2014

Contact the newsletter – items for publication: Eleanor Dangerfield 01235 531857
23 Masefield - eledanger@hotmail.com. Deadline for next newsletter – Mon 10th March
2014

TOWN EVENTS

Guildhall

Mayor's Ball - Sat 8th March – Guildhall - doors open 6.30 p.m. - tickets £45 each
including a 3 course meal – profits to the Mayor's charities. Tickets from the Guildhall
and from Added Ingredients or www.wegotickets.com/event/258871

Out of Bounds Comedy at the Guildhall – last Friday of the month – 8p.m. - £12 per
ticket – 01235 524 085

Ruby's Vintage and Retro Fair – Sat 22nd Feb – Guildhall – 10 a.m. – 3p.m.

Unicorn Theatre

Arcadia by Tom Stoppard – performed by The Studio Theatre Club – Wed 5th – Sat 8th
March – 7.30 p.m.

Hobson's Choice by Harold Brighouse – performed by BreakaLeg Theatre Company –
Wed 12th – Sat 15th March – 7.30 p.m.

Folk at the Unicorn – 7.30 for 8p.m. start – www.folkattheunicorn.co.uk
Tue 18th March – Faustus

Thur 3rd April – Phillip Henry and Hannah Martin