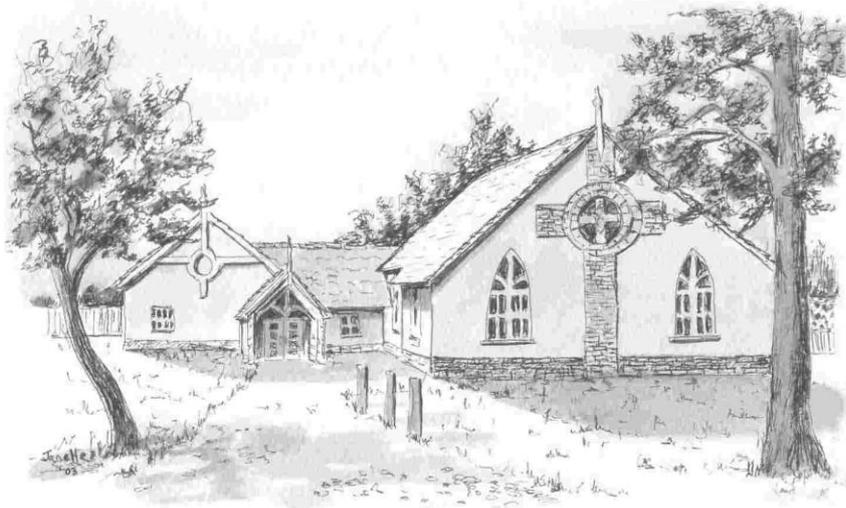


# Sonning Parish Magazine



Serving the Communities  
of Sonning and Charvil



25p

April 2008

## The Parish of Sonning

The ancient parish of Sonning, originally extending from Sonning Common to Sandhurst was one of the great blocks of land handed over to the Church in the 7th century. In 909 A.D. Sonning with Ramsbury, became a separate bishopric, the Bishop of Ramsbury/ Sonning maintaining a riverside Hall in the village. In 1075 the see was transferred to Old Sarum, ultimately Salisbury, whose bishops had their own Palace on the same site as the Saxon Hall until 1574, when the manor was transferred to the Crown.

St Andrew's Church in the heart of the village was founded in Saxon times - probably by Birinus, first bishop of Dorchester-on-Thames. It was largely rebuilt in 1852, during the incumbency of Canon Hugh Pearson; it was he who founded the Sonning Parish Magazine in 1869.

The White Hart Hotel, now known as The Great House, and partly 17th century, stands on the site of older buildings including the home of 'Elias the Ferryman' mentioned in a deed of 1100. The French Horn Hotel, in Sonning Eye, was built in the 1880s in front of the original old inn - now Bridge House - and its farm buildings. The Bull Inn, belonging to the Church, was originally known as Church House, a guesthouse for pilgrims to medieval St Sarik's Chapel in St Andrew's. Also adjoining the church is Deanery Garden one of Sir Edwin Lutyen's best-known country houses built at the turn of the century, just above the site of the ancient residence of the Deans of Salisbury who regularly visited Sonning, the parish being a 'Dean's Peculiar'.

Sonning Mill produced a regular supply of flour from Saxon time until 1969, after which it was converted into a 'Dinner Theatre', the first of its kind in Britain. The Pearson Hall is the principal venue for village functions

Within the village boundaries lie the Reading Blue Coat School at Holme Park (once the home of the Lord of the Manor) Sonning Church of England Primary School, King George's Field and other sports grounds, and Reading University Farm - all of which help to preserve the rural atmosphere of Sonning, the centre of which is now a conservation area.

The civil parish of Charvil is of relatively recent origin but the land on which it lies has long been part of the ecclesiastical parish of Sonning. In the 18th and 19th centuries it consisted of Charville Farm and a few cottages, which lay between the villages of Sonning and Twyford and adjacent to the London to Bath highway.

The development of Charvil began between the two World Wars, particularly after the new A4 road was constructed in the 1920s bypassing Twyford, and was accelerated after 1945. To meet the needs of this increasingly large community, St Patrick's dual-purpose Church and Hall was consecrated and opened in 1952; it remains within the ecclesiastical parish of Sonning. It was considerably extended and refurbished in 2001.

## St Andrew's Sonning Contacts

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**Notes: Deadline, May Magazine: Fri, 25<sup>th</sup> April 2008**

R = Reminder from previous issue.

D = Diary entry.

### **St Andrew's Church – Book of Remembrance**

The book will be updated again in the next few weeks. If you have any names you would like added, please contact m on 0118 969 6693 with the name, year of birth and day, month and year of death.

**Carole Barnett**

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## Regular Services

### The Parish Church

Sundays	8 am	Holy Communion (Prayer Book)
	10.30 am	Family Service, first Sunday of the month Parish Eucharist, second, fourth and fifth Sundays Matins, third Sunday
	6.30 pm	Evensong, except third Sunday of the month, when it will be Holy Communion with the laying on of hands for those who wish it.
Wednesdays	10 am	Holy Communion at St Andrew's

### St Patrick's Charvil

Sundays	9.30 am	Family Service, first Sunday of the month Holy Communion, second and fourth Sundays Worship Service other Sundays  Sunday School 9.30 am except first Sunday of the month
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*If you would like to arrange a Thanksgiving for the birth of a child, a Baptism (please give at least one month's notice of your intention), a Marriage or a Funeral, please contact the Vicar. Please note that the Vicar hopes to take Monday as a day off, although urgent matters will of course be dealt with.*

### The Vicar's Letter

#### **"We have seen the Lord"**

Let me tell you a story. It is not my story but St. John's and he records it in chapter twenty of his gospel. There were many other stories John might have told about the Resurrection of Jesus and how the disciples reacted to it, but John chose this story - the one about Thomas, doubting Thomas as we call him. I think he did so because the hearers of this story might recognise themselves. That is certainly why I am retelling it now.

Thomas was not, I think, one of those happy go lucky people, the sort who are always talking, always joking, ready to tell a funny story at the drop of a hat - the type of person whom no one takes too seriously but who it is good to have at a party. I think Thomas could not cope with that because, I suspect, he was rather melancholy. Life had not worked out well for him, not that he hadn't tried, but nothing seemed to work out as he hoped. Thomas is the sort of person who always fears the worst, and to whom the worst always seems to happen, perhaps because he fears it. Thomas never looked on the bright side.

It would be easy to write him off but let me urge you not to. Thomas may be melancholy but he has depth, which is partly why he is as he is. Thomas is a man with ideals and principles. He will not say things unless he is sure. He longs to believe and trust and hope, and wishes he could, but he can't. I think his doubts may well be an index of his sensitivity.

We must always remember that Jesus chose him. His name is bracketed with Matthew in the gospel of Matthew yet we hear little about him until almost the close of Jesus' ministry. Judging by the records he never said anything significant till then. The disciples had tried to dissuade Jesus from going to Jerusalem for fear that trouble, if not death, awaited him. What does Thomas say; he resigns himself to the worst "Let us also go that we may die with you". Now you know why I call him melancholy, but do not overlook his devotion to Jesus. Thomas would rather be dead than go on living without his master.

Then there is the second recorded utterance in the Upper Room. Jesus had been saying, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither be afraid. In my Father's house are many rooms, ...I will come again and take you to myself that where I am going you may be also" Thomas WAS troubled, he could not make any sense of what Jesus was saying so he says "Lord we do not know where you are going so how can we know the way".

Lastly there is this third event in the story of Thomas. Jesus appears to the disciples and Thomas is not there. So he protests "Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails and place my hand in his side I will not believe". He is looking for visible and tangible proof of the resurrection and he is not alone for many others need the same.

He had missed the thrilling experience of the Risen Christ because he had absented himself from their company, we do not know why. It is one of the troubles of melancholy people they will go off on their own! It is in the believing community assembled for worship that faith is likely to be evoked. Something happens when we gather together which is little to do with logic and argument. We cannot make it happen and we cannot guarantee it will happen but the possibility is always there. This is what Thomas missed.

The story ends with Christ appearing again and offering Thomas a sign to help him to faith, which he categorically refused to give to the Pharisees during his ministry in Galilee.

Why should Jesus do that? I think the answer is simple, Thomas wanted to believe and couldn't and the Pharisees couldn't believe because they did not want to. In matters of belief a start is not possible for those who do not want to believe.

**Love & prayers**  
**Chris**

## From the Registers

### Baptisms

March 1<sup>st</sup>: Deborah Nicole Bowman  
March 2<sup>nd</sup>: Acer Ryoma Ishii - Clarke  
March 9<sup>th</sup>: Charlotte Olivia Lulu Lumlock

### Weddings

March 28<sup>th</sup>: Robert John Graves to Susannah Mary Bromiley

### Funerals

March 4<sup>th</sup>: David John Staples (Reading Crematorium)  
March 18<sup>th</sup>: Margaret (Marg) Wall (St. Andrew's & Reading Crem)  
March 27<sup>th</sup>: David Penny (St. Andrew's & Reading Crematorium)

### Annual Church Meeting

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting will be held at St. Patrick's, Charvil on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> April at 8.00pm. The Annual Reports and Accounts are at the back of both Churches and you are asked to read them before you come to the meeting to help us keep the business part of the evening reasonably short and to the point. After the meeting there will be the opportunity to meet others over a drink.

This is always an important meeting and well attended but this year it is even more important because the Church Council and Churchwardens have at least one major task to perform with the appointment of the next Vicar! There are six vacancies for the Church Council and two for the Deanery Synod. Anyone on the Church Electoral Roll is eligible to stand for election. Do please try to attend.

### Rededication of Stained Glass Window

The window at the west end of the south aisle, which was restored with a bequest from the late Armine Edmonds, will be rededicated during the 10.30am service on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> April. It was a generous bequest and I am pleased we have been able to use part of it for this important piece of restoration. We also used some of it to provide the new pew cushions. I hope that many of Armine's friends will be able to be present when we dedicate this restored window to her memory.

### Chris

#### So the Vicar's leaving - 18<sup>th</sup> May

Plans are now well underway in preparation for the Vicar's Retirement. Chris will be preaching for the last time at St Andrew's Church at the 10.30 service on Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> May. We are anticipating a fairly full church, so we would encourage you to be there in good time.

This will be followed by lunch at Reading Blue Coat School where we are expecting a good turnout. Thank you for signing the list which has until recently, been at the back of the churches and has helped considerably with planning this event. We are also very grateful for the cooperation and support we have received from the school and are looking forward to an occasion to remember!

Many of you have already contributed to the cost of the lunch as well as to the retirement gift, and we thank you for this. However, if you still would like to do that, please make any cheques payable to Sonning PCC and pass to one of the churchwardens in an envelope indicating whether it is for the lunch or the present, or both.

A lot of work has been done on the Parish Profile, which is a key document in the process of looking for a new incumbent and that process is moving forward as planned. As churchwardens, we recently met with David Hodgson, our Area Dean. He will work alongside us during the interregnum to help with the smooth running of the Parish and answer, what I'm sure will be, our many questions.

We look forward to joining with you on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Jan Hammond and Bob Hine**

### **St Patrick's Patter**

I imagine heaven will be rather like Heathrow Airport arrival hall where St Peter is the immigration officer. Some will be let through straight away as they will be in possession of an impeccable passport to Heaven. Others will be kept in the waiting area until the record of their activities and faith on earth has been searched. Waiting for those who have been admitted by St Peter will be a heavenly host of family, relatives, friends, saints and angels in the greeting area. Some of one's ancestors, who pre-date the portrait photographs in the family album, will be holding aloft placards inscribed with their relative's name. The noise in the greeting area will be excruciating with the shouts of joy and recognition.

Of course with no one ever having been there and returned, except Jesus of Nazareth, my description is purely down to my imagination. However Ascension Day is on the 1<sup>st</sup> May; the day on which Jesus finally vanished from the physical presence of his followers after His many resurrection meetings with them to reassure them all was not lost.

Today with stem cell research and the 'embryology' bill before Parliament the accent is on life here and now more than belief in life hereafter.

Inevitably our raised expectations of an ever-increasing longevity make the death of a loved one more difficult to come to terms with, especially if their death is premature. Even more reason to ensure we use the time we have on earth to good effect as a preparation for a life in the spirit, released from the physical aging process and restraints of this life. Our faith and trust in God re-enforces our hope for the future expressed and re-enforced by thoughts and acts of love for our family and friends, as well as acts of compassion, care and concern for those going through the testing mill of poverty, or deprivation, or suffering in whatever form it takes.

Do you renew your passport to heaven daily, or is it out of date?

**Michael & family**

### **Upcoming Services and Events at St Patrick's**

Sun 30<sup>th</sup> Mar - Songs of Praise, combined service with St Andrew's (6.30 pm)

#### **Christian Aid Concert - 10<sup>th</sup> May**

Boss came to tell me the news on Sunday, we've got the weak Christians concert coming up again, well summat like that anyway. "Jo he says, after that pounding the organ grinder gave you at the BBQ and Vigil service you better gird your loins for the Christian Aid concert". "Oh good" I said "does that mean I gets to be the star of the show and all that goes with it, you know, red carpet, separate dressing room, flowers and curtain calls?"

He pulled a long face, answered in the negative and told me I was a bit part this time and would have to put up with dancers flouting their legs in front of me ivories, the bosses boss and his corny jokes, guitars and banjos and ukeles and all manner of things. I get it, back to being a supporting act & doing all the dirty work, when will it ever end. "Come on Jo" he said "Cheer up it's all in a good cause, last year we raised over £800 for Christian Aid, we need to better than that and everyone needs to pull their weight, even you"

So folks, that means you lot need to stir yourselves and get on down to St Patrick's for the artistic event of the season, a positive cornucopia of music, comedy and pathos presented by the cream of artistes from St Andrew's & St Patrick's, ably abetted by some talented comers ins. So put the date in your diaries: **Sat 10<sup>th</sup> May, 7.00 pm**. Tickets, priced £5, from Bob Hine (969 8653) or Chris Easton (934 0795)

**Joanna (the St Patrick's Pianner)**

## **Charvil Village Hall is 20 years old!**

To celebrate this milestone, the Parish Council have organised the following celebrations during the weekend of 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> May 2008. On Saturday there will be 2 FREE children's parties with local entertainer Fred in the Shed, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. In the evening there is a party with a live band, fish and chip supper and bar. These events are open to all Charvil Residents on a first come first served basis, however you must have tickets. On Sunday the Hall will be open all day with displays and demonstrations from the many local clubs who use the Hall. Please come along and experience the fun! Please contact Tracy Ray for more details on 0118 934 5270 or [tracy.ray@ntl.com](mailto:tracy.ray@ntl.com). For information about, and tickets for, the adult party please contact John Davies on 0118 934 5258. For further information, please see [www.Charvil.com](http://www.Charvil.com).

**Alice Wilkinson**

## **Christian Aid Week: 11<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> May 2008**

Christian Aid is actively working in 50 countries across the world. Their wish is to help people who are living below the poverty line. This year Christian Aid week is 11-18 May and as always volunteers are required to deliver and collect envelopes around the streets of Sonning and Charvil during this week. Would you be able to help with this very important work? If you can help, call either Pat Livesey (for Sonning) on 0118 961 8017 or Olive Bratchell (for Charvil) on 0118 934 9471. Thank you.

**Pat Livesey**

## **Sonning Lock - Tea Garden Re-opens**

Following a very successful first year, I am pleased to say that the tea garden at Sonning Lock will be re-opening again this year on **Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April** and will be open every day 11.00am to 5.00pm, come rain or shine! Apart from the usual teas, coffees, soft drinks, cakes, delicious cream teas, ices etc., sandwiches will also be on the menu. So what better way to spend a relaxing hour or two, either on your own or with friends, than at the lock tea garden.

**Keith Burnage**

## **A plea from the Caretaker, The Pearson Hall**

Please, if you have borrowed any items from the Hall, such as plates, jugs or similar, could you bring them back, as others need to use them.

**Jenny Adams**

# **Friends of St Andrew's Church**

## **THE FEAST OF ST SARIK**

**Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> April 2008  
7.30 pm, The Pearson Hall**

**An evening of fine company, dining, entertainment and general  
Merriment to celebrate Sonning's very own Saint.**

**Tickets £20.00 each, available from Trustees  
(Excludes wines)**

**Black tie optional**

### **Spectacles**

I am pleased to report that we have collected 94 pairs of spectacles during 2007. The glasses will be overhauled and sent to eye hospitals in Kosovo and India by the charity Hope & Aid Direct. The box will continue to be in the porch at St., Andrews during 2008 for all your no longer used spectacles. I thank you for thinking of this very worthwhile local charity.

**Norma McGready**

### **Sonning Art Group**

Back to basics, one of our members, Helga Hanfling, took over the role of tutor and presented an interesting session on the use of primary colours to produce a wide range of shades and tints for a colour mixing exercise. The session ended with members experimenting with the techniques to produce some very satisfying results.

The joint venture with Charvil Art Group involving an art exhibition and sale of paintings at the Oakwood Centre, Woodley, attracted a lot of attention and a steady stream of people throughout the day enjoying the 200 pictures

on display. Councillor Shelagh Flower, Town Mayor of Woodley, who gave time to the event and spent the whole morning with the artists, studying and discussing their work, opened the exhibition.

A survey of visitors' opinion concerning 'Best Picture' resulted in favour of George Lamb's 'Tower Bridge' securing the most votes, a well-deserved win. Not surprisingly, it was the first picture to be sold within minutes of the exhibition being opened. The two art groups worked well together to make this a worthwhile and successful event.

**George Webster**

### **Twyford Volunteers**

The Annual General Meeting of the **TWYFORD, WARGRAVE AND DISTRICT VOLUNTEER CENTRE** will be held on Wednesday 14th May 2008 in St Mary's Church Centre, Twyford, at 7-30pm. Our guest speaker this year will be Dr Davies from the Twyford surgery. It is hoped that as many drivers and office staff as possible will attend, as this is an opportunity for everyone to meet and discuss any difficulties that might have occurred during the year.

We are still very short of drivers and it is believed that this is because many people do not realise either what a valuable service this is, or that the commitment involved in becoming a driver need only be very very minimal and petrol costs are reimbursed. No one is committed to driving once a week, once a fortnight or indeed once a month. If you are telephoned and asked to drive but you are unable to do so then you simply say "No". Next time, you may be in a better position. If therefore you are at all interested in offering your services, please ring us on 0118,934 3010 and come to the AGM We will be delighted to see you. Alternatively you can ring me on 0118 969 3277 or e-mail me on [rosemary.digby@talktalk.net](mailto:rosemary.digby@talktalk.net)

**Rosemary Digby**

### **Sonning Parish Council**

#### **Annual Parish Meeting**

*Your opportunity to hear councillor's reports on achievements over the past 12 months and to ask questions.*

All residents are warmly welcomed to attend the Annual Parish Meeting of Sonning Parish Council on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May in the Pearson Hall. The doors open at 7.00pm when a welcome drink and nibbles will be provided - the meeting will commence at 7.30pm with reports by your councillors.

## Hydro Power Presentation

At 8.30pm, Dave Holt of Goring Parish Council, will give a presentation on the Goring and Streatley hydro power project. He gave a fascinating presentation to the Borough Conference recently on how the Goring and Streatley Sustainability Group plan to convert energy from the River Thames into electricity. We are delighted that Dave has agreed to repeat the presentation for Sonning and to take any questions.

Lesley Bates

### **KING GEORGE'S FIELD & NATURE RESERVE**

**Pound Lane, Sonning**

**SUNDAY 20<sup>th</sup> APRIL**

**From 11.30am**

### **SPORT FOR ALL**

**Meet the Teams & Have a Go!**

**Play, Watch & Picnic**

- Enjoy time on the Field and see what is on offer
- Meet players and clubs using King George's Field
  - Have a try at the different sports
  - Apply for Club membership.

**\* BBQ \* REFRESHMENTS \* BAR \* ICE CREAMS \***

**Bring Your Own Picnic**

**TENNIS:** Fun Factory & Coaching for all ages

Special offer: SLTC membership fee.

**FOOTBALL:** Penalty shoot out & Speed Shoot.

7- a- side for different age groups. **SFC** Past v Present

**CRICKET:** Kwik Cricket & Coaching for juniors.

See SCC new Aussie U19 Star in action for Sonning.

**SKATEPARK DEMONSTRATION.**

**SHOOT THE HOOP BASKETBALL**

**WALK or JOG QUIZ of The Field & Nature Reserve**

Pam Glasspool

## Village Spring Clean 2008: 10<sup>TH</sup> & 11<sup>TH</sup> May

The Parish Council has chosen the above weekend for the Annual Village Spring Clean. Your help is requested to prepare our area for the summer and especially for the prestigious Bank Holiday Festival, when our village will be on show. The central control point for the activities will be the Sports Pavilion, King George's Field, where equipment and refreshments will be available. The refuse skip will also be placed here (Spring clean rubbish only please). Individuals and groups alike will be welcome and with

a start time of 10.00am, we will allocate areas on the day, hoping to finish around 2.00pm. Please ensure that adults accompany all children. It would be appreciated if you could bring your own protective equipment, for example gardening gloves etc.

Please contact either Lesley Bates on 969 7753 or myself on 07774 494610 if you require any further information. Thanking you in anticipation of your help.

**Tony Farnese**

### **RNLI Sonning Branch**

The AGM will be held on Thursday 10 April at 7.30pm in the Sonning Working Men's Club. Please come along; all are welcome.

Following the success of the ever-popular Music Night we were able to forward to Headquarters £1,352.00. Thank you to all who participated in any way.

This year the Garden Party will be held, by kind invitation of Mr. & Mrs. M McNeill, at Bishop's Close, Sonning Lane, on Saturday 14 June, from 6.30 to 8pm. Tickets available, price £10.00, from David Bates on 0118 969 7753. Please come and support this very worthy cause.

**Lynn Woodhouse**

### **Sonning Floral Arrangement Society**

The speaker at the March meeting was Carol Dorward and the subject of the demonstration was "Synergy": That is, two or more items blended together to achieve an end result. And the end result was five beautiful arrangements, which were raffled at the end of the afternoon to a few lucky winners.

Our chairman mentioned the boat trip on 31<sup>st</sup> July on the *Caversham Lady* from Caversham to Pangbourne (and hopefully back again) for £25.00 per head to include a welcoming drink and a two course meal. Payment may be made during April, May and June. Parking is limited so if you need a lift, let us know.

On 10<sup>th</sup> April, Carol Vincent will be demonstrating "Dreaming Spires" and the competition title will be "Vertical in blue", an exhibit with or without accessories.

On 14<sup>th</sup> August the cream tea will be Pam Burn's house.

The *Gardeners Question Time* evening involving David Penny and Alan Gould was a great success, but sadly, the last time for David to be with us. We will miss him sorely, as a huge supporter of our Society, as a competitor in the men's class of the floral section at the village show, as a lecturer on plant cultivation and pruning and as the panel member of at least two *Gardening Question Times*. All members send their deepest sympathy to his widow, our chairman Catherine, and to all her family and this very sad time.

Jane Gascoine

### **Regatta and Elegant Picnic 2008 Ticket Day**

The ticket day for the regatta and elegant picnic is Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April from 10.00am to 12.00 noon, in the Pearson Hall. Please come along to enter your crews, buy your tickets for the evening musical event in the Working Men's Club on Sat 24th and for the Elegant Picnic on Sunday 25th or to order your Regatta Tee shirts. Programmes will be arriving through your letterboxes soon; so do not miss this village event.

Lynn Woodhouse

### **Scarecrows 2008: Sun 25<sup>th</sup> & Mon 26<sup>th</sup> May**

If you are still undecided which scarecrow to do **OR** you would like some suggestions on how to make your scarecrow **OR** you would simply like to come along and see what's going on, then do come to **Pearson Hall on Monday 7th April at 7.45pm**. Help and refreshment will be at hand and you will be in good scarecrow company. If you have already decided on your scarecrow, please come and register it on **April 7th**, so that it can be recorded on the trail map.

Any other offers of help will be gratefully accepted on that evening - car park supervising, trail map selling, manning a garden or cake making. If you are unable to attend the meeting, I shall be happy to take your scarecrow entry as soon as possible so either: Phone: 0118 934 5886 or email: [barbara.carr71@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:barbara.carr71@hotmail.co.uk)

Barbara Carr

### **1<sup>st</sup> Sonning Brownies**

The Brownies have all continued to work hard and gained their Healthy Heart Badges. The preparation for our "Greet A Granny" evening have continued, some Brownies making table decorations, some made cakes and the others busy rehearsing their entertainment. The evening was a great

success; lots of the “Granny” said how much they enjoyed themselves. The Brownies had to be creative with an oval shape of foam, some decorated it as an egg and some cut it into a Rabbit and Church shape. We finished the evening off by singing a song with actions - “40 years on an iceberg”.

We have also helped to make the posies for the Mothering Sunday Service in Church and some Brownies attended the District Thinking Day Celebrations where they found out about Fair Trade Foods and sang lots of songs.

If you would like to find out about Rainbows, Brownies or Guides in Sonning please give me a call on 07813 433 493

**Brown Owl**

### **Sonning Glebe WI**

We held our AGM in March. We then took part in a competition to identify plants and held a cheese tasting. Our members have now completed enough knitted squares to make 7 blankets. Some of our members enjoyed a walk in Windsor Great Park, to see the ancient trees. Our next meeting is on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> April at 7.30 p.m. and visitors are always welcome.

**Diane Reeves**

### **Sonning & Sonning Eye Society - Spring & Summer Events**

Upcoming on 26 April, as mentioned in the March issue, is a talk by Brian O’Callaghan, fittingly on the architectural history of St Andrew’s. The evening will provide the Society with the opportunity to say farewell to Chris Clarke, its capable, shrewd and adroit Chair since 2004. The talk itself is free, but if you would like to stay on for the finger buffet farewell reception after the talk, you will need to purchase a ticket. These are available at £3.00 each from Penny Feathers on 0118 934 3193. Please let Penny know if you would like a reception ticket by Saturday 19 April so that the Social Committee can cater appropriately. The Society regrets that it will be unable to provide buffet food for non ticket-holders.

Come and have your photograph taken with the Society’s contribution to Scarecrows 2008 on 25 and 26 May. Without giving too much away, we hope many families will enjoy our multi-faceted contribution to this very positive village event. (As an aside, on a recent visit to Tatton Park in Cheshire, which had a similar event on in its wonderful Victorian and Edwardian gardens, the scarecrows were not a patch on the ingenious and jolly ones that talented Sonning residents make.)

Our next major event will be the Society’s first outing away from Sonning and Sonning Eye. As some of you will know, Ali Driver was instrumental with others in setting up the London Wetland Centre in Barnes. If you would

like to see what the Sonning Eye gravel pits might eventually look like, once extraction is completed, then make a note of Sunday 22 June in your diary. Full details will be published in the next issue.

Plans are afoot for running village walks again on the Heritage Open Days Weekend in mid-September. The weekend organised by The Civic Trust and others provides the Society with an excellent opportunity to showcase the architecture and history of the striking buildings that we have here, and all are welcome to join these free walks. Further details about them will be published later in the summer.

Diana Coulter

*“Sport for All”*

## Sonning LTC

### TENNIS OPEN DAY

Sunday April 20<sup>th</sup> 11am – 3pm

- **Everyone welcome**
  - All ages (Adults and Juniors)
  - All standards
- **Wear your trainers & join in a game**
- **Rackets available to suit all ages**
- **Junior Fun Factory**
- **Coaching mix-in 12:00 – 2pm**
- **Join on the day for reduced rate membership!**



Sonning LTC

As part of Sonning Parish Council’s “Sport for All” initiative, Sonning LTC will be holding their annual Tennis Open Day on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April this year. Come along, join in a game or two, and find out what the club has to offer.

For those wishing to join our friendly club, membership entitles you to full use of the courts at any time (subject to availability) and to join in all club activities. There are regular Club Sessions, where all members are encouraged to mix in, held on Saturdays, Sundays, and Wednesdays throughout the year, and on Tuesday evenings during the Summer months. Coaching is available for those wishing to improve their game.

Looking for a more competitive game? There are Singles and Doubles Tournaments for members, and we have several teams entered into the Berkshire Leagues (Mens, Ladies and Mixed Doubles). Good players will soon find themselves in demand for League matches!

New members are very welcome - if you are interested in joining, but can't attend the Open Day, just come along to one of our Sunday morning club sessions, where you will be able to meet other members and join in a game. Membership for the 2008-09 season is available now - please contact me on 969 1101 for further details.

**Alison Driver**

### **'At Home Services' - New Service for over 50s in Berkshire**

At Home Services is a brand new service from the Anchor Trust who has been working with older people for 40 years. We deliver an integrated range of services into the homes of the over 50s. We launched our first Service Centre in Berkshire in December 2007 and offer a range of services to help people live independently including building, gardening, care and a lifestyle advice service.

Head of At Home Services, Adrian Harding said: "We will provide older people with everything they need [to] live the lives they choose... from having a washer changed, the garden weeded, an extension built to lifestyle club activities."

We were created in recognition of the fact that older people will increasingly demand more control over the care and support they receive and that these services will also have to become more sophisticated. For more information visit: [www.athomeservices.co.uk](http://www.athomeservices.co.uk) . If you are involved in an organisation and you would like one of our team members to give a short presentation, or for more information please call Tracy Tod or Rebecca McCarthy on 08000 50 2 100

**Rebecca McCarthy**

### **David Penny Memorial**

It has been suggested that a tree is planted in the village (location to be decided) as a memorial to David. Anyone who wishes to be included in this project and would like to contribute may send donations to either Rosemary Digby (Pilgrims, Thames St) or Wendy Cole (Long Acre, Thames Street).

**Rosemary Digby**

## The Sonning Festival

As there are many families who have moved into the village recently, it seems pertinent to write a short history of the modern Sonning Festival; the last was held in 1976.

As the Millennium approached, a group of us thought that this auspicious occasion should be celebrated in the Village, thus the Festival Committee was formed. It was decided to hold the events over the Spring Bank holiday weekend. Cathy Cattermole was very keen that the Regatta was once again held, the last being before WW2, and so set forth on the laborious task of persuading the Environment Agency that they should allow it to go ahead. No mean feat as it transpired! In order to fund the events grants & sponsorship were applied for but we knew that we should need other ways of raising funds if we were to have other Festivals in the future. The initial idea was to hold a Ball in a marquee but this was to prove far too costly so the Elegant Picnic was born. We were lucky to be able to hold the first Picnic in the garden of The Deanery, which had not been open to the public since Nigel Brookes left the village some years ago. Subsequently we have been invited to the gardens of South Hill, The Thatched Cottage and this year to Sonningdene. For some years, through the National Gardens Scheme, several gardens had been opened to the Public so this seemed a good opportunity to do so again and we were allowed to keep 20 per cent of the takings to go towards Festival funds. In 2002 the enormously popular Scarecrow Trail was introduced into Sonning. Lunches & teas have been available from the St Sarik Room & Pearson Hall, and weather permitting, outside!

Since 2004 the gardens have been open without the involvement of the NGS thus allowing the money raised to be used for deserving village causes. In both 2000 & 2002 we held a Street Party in Pearson Road, which was closed to traffic for the afternoon, absolute bliss! The food was carefully co-ordinated & then provided by everyone who attended. In 2000 children's activities were held during the half-term break, bread making, glass decoration, model boat making, circus skills, sewing & painting, in the Pearson Hall, tennis & football coaching in Recreation ground with pond dipping for the younger children at the Nature Reserve. We hope to repeat these again at a Festival in the future. Guided River walks were held for interested adults.

Since 2004 the Festival has consisted of Regatta on Saturday with a 'do' at The Working Men's Club in the evening, with open Gardens & Scarecrow Trail on Sunday & Monday and Elegant Picnic on Sunday evening.

**Lynn Woodhouse**