

SC SONNING COMMON MAGAZINE

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ADDING LIFE TO YEARS

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.....
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20th anniversary of Health Walks
24 April 2016
.....

APRIL / MAY 2016

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APRIL / MAY 2016

FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

First of all, my apologies for the error in the last edition. The phone number for Chris Brook, First Responders should have been 07789 717017.

What a strange end to the winter! The daffodils look as though it is Spring, yet they are alongside the snowdrops which match the current winter temperatures. Gone are the 'good old days' when the seasons were more predictable??

Enough of the weather and looking forward to the Spring; the Noticeboard pages have vast numbers of events listed which can be enjoyed in the hope of warmer days. The main focus of this edition is the 20th anniversary of Health walks, an initiative from the Sonning Common Health Centre, which now has a network of nationwide groups as others have realised the enormous health benefits of this scheme. Come and find out for yourselves on Sunday 24 April at 2pm in the Village Hall.

It will be a busy day as On Your Bike, which celebrates its 10th anniversary takes place on that morning. This is another initiative which is supported by the health centre as well as a weekly regular cycling group and a new running group. We are very fortunate in having such a proactive medical practice which encourages exercise as part of its preventive strategy.

I have mentioned a few of the articles but there are many more which I hope will be of interest. ●

Diana

Diana Pearman Editor

Email: editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org



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While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information printed in this magazine, the editor and the publisher cannot accept any responsibility for the consequences of errors that occur.

SC SONNING COMMON
MAGAZINE

MEET THE TEAM ...



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NATIONAL LIBRARIES DAY (NLD)

It started late on Thursday evening, 4 February, with an appeal from the Chris Evans Breakfast Show on Facebook for people to tell him if they were doing anything special at the weekend. So I duly wrote a few sentences about Sonning Common Library celebrating NLD on Saturday, pressed 'send' - and went to bed.

I was fast asleep in bed just after 7am on the Friday when Chris Evans announced: 'Representing Sonning Common - Rosemary Dunstan is running her local National Libraries Day, showcasing all those wonderful books and millions of words' (not exactly my words!) However, other people were awake and heard it - and duly reported it to me. There was even a special announcement at the PTA Quiz that evening - more publicity for NLD!

We had a very busy morning on the Saturday with over 100 visitors - that's

about twice our normal number! We had story time at 10am, with stories about the 'Ticket Tale Teller', the 'Midnight Library', and the 'Library Mouse'. Then the children were able to choose from 3 craft tables, offering Rainbow Fish and Hairy Maclary collages, Hungry Caterpillar finger puppets, origami book corner bookmarks, and making their own sewn book. Some children stayed all morning and had a go at everything!

There were home-made cakes and drinks for sale, and library bags, and a raffle and 2 quizzes, one for adult and one for children. The volunteers were fantastic, both before the event (helping with craft and cake preparation, and donating raffle prizes) and on the day - reading the stories, selling the cakes and raffle tickets, and helping the children with their chosen crafts. I could not have done it without them.

There was a real buzz in the library and everyone seemed to be enjoying the morning, in spite of the rain outside. One young boy who normally likes to stay at home on a Saturday insisted on coming to support the library. It was good to celebrate the survival of libraries in Oxfordshire, especially when continuing to hear of drastic cuts to libraries around the country. ●

Rosemary Dunstan



LOCAL COMMUNITY PROJECTS BENEFIT FROM WI COFFEE MORNINGS

Four local community projects have benefitted from the generosity of the Women's Institute in Sonning Common. Monthly coffee mornings are held in the Village Hall, 40 people attended this one, where regular stall holders attend and refreshments are served. £600 was raised in 2015 and cheques for £150 were presented to Club SC, the Village Gardeners, First Responders and Greenshoots.

Gill Hayward who chairs the fund raising committee thanked all members of the WI for their contribution to the success of the coffee mornings, which have gone from strength to strength, Chris Brook on behalf of First Responders, thanked the WI and said "£16,000 has now been raised, enough to buy a second hand vehicle and if we are successful in our Lottery bid to gain extra money, then for a new one." Chrissie Phillips-Tilbury said "All the money will go straight back into the village with additional tubs and plants". Carol Viney Chairwoman of the Management committee "thanked everyone on behalf of the Club SC" and Frances Hill Chief executive of Greenshoots added "We have a waiting list of people who want to help so thank you".

Greenshoots hold a stall at the monthly coffee mornings. ●



Thursday 4 March was World Book Day in the UK. School children all over the country dress up as their favourite character from a book. Sonning Common Primary School saw staff and children alike taking part and all sorts of weird and wonderful animals, wizards, knights and even oompa loompas turned up for school

Photos - children and reception teacher Miss Fox - as Fantastic Miss Fox



HAVE YOUR SAY MEETINGS

Date: Friday 8 April 2016
Time: 6pm - 6.30pm
Venue: Outside the Health Centre
Contact: PCSO Mark Bell

Sonning Common Pre-school wants your memories!

This year marks the pre-school's 50th anniversary, which will be celebrated with a larger-than-ever Summer Fair.

Summer Fair organisers are asking past pupils and parents to send in their stories and photographs now, in preparation for the half-century birthday bash on Sunday 26 June. The pre-school first opened in 1966 as 'Sonning Common Playgroup' and was based at Kidmore End Memorial Hall in Reade's Lane, opposite Chiltern Edge School.

Eventually it ran eight sessions a week for 60 children using the Kidmore End Memorial Hall and Christ the King Church Hall, in Sedgewell Road.

In 1981, with a £4,000 loan and a £2,000 fundraising appeal, the preschool moved to a new pre-fab building next to Sonning Common Primary school.

Thirty years later, in 2011, after a long campaign to secure funds for a new building, the pre-school said goodbye to the crumbling pre-fab and moved into a modern, purpose-built school building on the same site.

If you, or family members attended Sonning Common Playgroup (as it was once called) or the pre-school, please contribute to the memory appeal by scanning photos, emailing your memories or posting (or bringing in) memorabilia. Original copies will be returned to you.

Please email Helen Upsher info@sonningcommonpreschool.co.uk or phone 972 4760 or post, to: Sonning Common Pre-School, Grove Road, Sonning Common, RG4 9RJ.



The Chiltern Edge School Association

The Chiltern Edge School Association (C.E.S.A.) team raises funds throughout the year to purchase extras for the school such as cameras, kitchen equipment, dictionaries etc. One of their main events is to provide refreshments at the local and county cross country races which are hosted by Chiltern Edge School each winter.

A fantastic \$506.18 was raised at the last Primary Schools Cross Country in late February, taking the funds raised at Cross Country events in the past school year to a grand total of £1459.19!

WELL DONE EVERYONE INVOLVED

Headteacher Mr Sadler said "we are very grateful to CESA for all their hard work in raising funds to support our community school. The cross country events get bigger and better each year. ●



A Matter of Life and Death Free Workshops in Advanced Care Planning

What does 'Advanced Care Planning' mean? Who would benefit from these workshops?

Advanced Care Planning is a discussion with your loved ones and/or health care providers about your wishes and preferences. Issues include where you may wish to be cared for in your final days, who will speak for you when you are no longer able to do so and other things that are important to you.

If you are caring for someone who is approaching the last stages of life then it would be particularly useful to learn more about your options and what services are available locally.

The purpose of the workshops is to raise awareness about the importance of having plans in place. We give:

- information about how to make Advanced Care Plans
- the legalities of a Living Will (Advanced Decisions to Refuse Treatment)
- Power of Attorney
- explain 'Do Not Resuscitate'-form and the Message in a Bottle Scheme.
- focus on how to start a difficult conversation
- information about our local services and booklets about End of Life Care Planning.

All sessions are facilitated by Ellen, Rika and Pam and held in a friendly café style setting, with refreshments provided. OPEN TO EVERYONE.

To book a place in the free workshop on **Wednesday 20 April 2.30-4pm** please contact Reception on 0118 972 2188 - there is no need to be on the Health Centre list.

'Talking about death does not bring it closer ... it's about planning for life'

Workshops are at Sonning Common Health Centre upstairs in the Palmer Room.

Wednesday 20 April 2016	2.30 - 4pm
Wednesday 18 May 2016	10am - 4pm
Village Hall Open Day	
Monday 20 June 2016	2.30 - 4pm
Wednesday 20 July 2016	2.30 - 4pm

A few quotes from people who attended the workshops....;

'Really informative - worth sharing'

'Helpful and liberating'

'It highlighted items we as a couple still need to address'

SC Magazine AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the magazine will be held on Friday 13 May 2016 at 7.30pm in the hall of Christ the King Church, Sedgewell Road, Sonning Common. All are welcome at the meeting but only residents of Sonning Common may vote in the AGM.

Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the 2015 AGM
3. Matters arising
4. Chairman's Report
5. Treasurer's Report; Chair to sign accounts
6. Distribution Manager's Report
7. Editor's Report – Diana Pearman
8. Advertising Manager's Report
9. Election of Officers and Committee
10. Date of next meeting
11. Any other business

If you have any questions about the meeting please contact Geoff Adams, Chairman.

Tel 0118 972 2134. e-mail. chairman@sonningcommonmagazine.org

On Your Bike

"When On Your Bike was first staged in 2007, we had no idea just how much local people were going to love it," said founder and Sonning Common resident, Penny Snowden. "Many families have come back year after year!" "When the kids are little they can start off with the playground cycle or the 6 mile circuit. Then, as they grow, they can challenge themselves to complete the longer 12 or 20 mile routes. Every year is a new experience!"

Dr Andrew Burnett from Sonning Common Health Centre helps organise the ride. He's a keen cyclist himself and said "The joy I get from seeing all those happy faces, as I welcome the riders across the finish line, is brilliant! Maintaining a basic level of fitness is important to our long-term well-being."

"On Your Bike is a great way to kick-start a healthy summer, as it's a ride not a race and so can be completed at any pace!" ●



Neighbourhood Plan still with SODC

We are expecting to receive the independent Examiners Report on our Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) sometime during April. This report will be posted on our website - www.scpcc-ndp.co.uk and it will also be available on SODC's website.

We anticipate that the examiner will ask for some changes to be made to the Plan and we understand that we will have around 3 weeks in which to incorporate these amendments. We will brief residents as to the extent of the changes via our website.

Assuming we are able to keep to the timetable prepared for us by SODC, the Plan could be finalised and accepted by the examiner by early May. The Plan will then go before the SODC Cabinet who will publish a Decision Statement to the effect that the Sonning Common NDP is ready to go forward for a 6 week Legal Challenge period prior to Referendum. Our hope is the Referendum can take place prior to the commencement of the school summer holidays.

Since the last edition of the magazine the Sonning Common Parish Council have responded to Linden Homes' planning application for SON 2/3 (refusal) and also to the new application from Bewley Homes in respect of SON 9 (refusal). The Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Party also asked the Appeals Planning Inspector to uphold the refusal decision issued by SODC in respect of the previous application on SON 9 by Bewley Homes. These applications are regarded as premature given that SON 2/3 and SON 9 are allocated for development within the NDP.

Barrie Greenwood – Chairman of the NDP

UKELELES, ICE SKATING AND PIZZA PARTIES



Club SC had a busy run up to Christmas. Sam Brown and her International Ukulele Club of Sonning Common kindly put on a concert-come-workshop for our young people to enjoy. We all had a fabulous time learning 'Jolene' and 'You are my sunshine' and were amazed at how quickly we learnt to play. Sam donated a ukulele to the youth club and some music which has been used since by our members during club nights. Perhaps we'll set up our own ukulele club one day!

On Sunday 20 December Club SC joined with other youth clubs under our umbrella organisation of Oxfordshire Youth to go 'Midnight Ice Skating'. This was an exciting opportunity for our members and they had a wonderful time on the ice. Most even managed to stay upright! The young people enjoyed wonderful Christmas 'pizza parties' which were sponsored by

Nottakwire. The club is so very grateful for their continued support.

We have some exciting activities planned for the next few months including a trip to Reading's new trampoline park 'Bounce Box' a circus skill session with 'Oojamaflip', a Chinese new year party and running professional football coaching sessions. 2016 is certainly going to be an exciting year for Club SC.

Club SC are currently looking for volunteers to help on Thursday evenings from 7-9pm, this could be running our tuck shop, supervising arts and crafts, supervising sports sessions or just being an extra pair of hands. We can offer training, development and support in return. If you can help for even one session per month please get in contact. ●

beckyclubsc@hotmail.co.uk

Becky Jenkins – Youth Leader

ORCHARD LODGE TO BE KNOWN AS FLORENCE HOUSE

By late Spring this year, Calcot Services for Children will open Florence House as a Home for no more than 7 vulnerable children between the ages of 5 and 18.

Local residents greeted the news with some strong feelings and mixed emotions, and the February Parish Council Meeting was well attended by interested parties. Chairman, Douglas Kedge began proceedings by explaining that it was not a Public Meeting, but he would try to ensure that everyone who wanted to speak would have the opportunity to air their views. The PCC had "no decision making powers".

Concerns were raised regarding:-

- Lack of transparency and information from Calcot Services for Children
- Lack of facilities within the village for children and teenagers
- Effect of "disruptive" children on village life and local schools

However, the overwhelming consensus was that:-

- Sonning Common should be "proud to support" this initiative
- "Vulnerable" does not mean "disruptive"
- The children will be supervised by trained professionals

Calcot Services have issued a Question and Answer Sheet regarding the new home in which they emphasise that Florence House will be a family home (without a capital H) for the children and staff.

They also say:-

- To protect the childrens' safety, there is no legal requirement to inform neighbours of a home opening and no Change of Use was necessary in this instance
- Specialist staff will provide in-house activities for the children and use their own transport to access local community facilities

- Children are matched prior to placement in the best interests of the child
- The home is staffed at all times but is not a "secure" unit
- Family visits will require approval from the home manager and social worker but parents will not necessarily be "problem parents"
- It is a presumption that all of the children will have special educational needs. Many who need help are already in mainstream education

Sonning Common prides itself on its friendliness and community spirit so let's welcome these kids. It is through no fault of their own that they need help. They may have been abused or neglected by the adults around them. Florence House should enable them to enjoy their childhood and grow into stable, rounded adults. ●

Jo Stoves

A Very Special Birthday

Over recent years residents of Sonning Common have been generous in support of various events organised by Chrissie Phillips-Tilbury and friends in the Village Hall:- Themed Lunches for local charities (French, Spanish, Italian, Best of British, Back to the sixties, Scandinavian), also Afternoon Teas for the Royal Wedding and Diamond Jubilee. All of these have been great fun and successful because of your support.

The great event for 2016 is, of course, Her Majesty the Queen's 90th Birthday. Celebrations will be held throughout the Kingdom and Commonwealth and we have decided to contribute to Sonning Common's efforts by planning a CHAMPAGNE CREAM TEA, and have fixed on a date near Her Majesty's Official Birthday – Sunday 12 June in the Village Hall 2.30 for 3p.m.

We shall pull out all the stops and are inviting local residents to join us. Tickets (£5 per head) will be available from Occasions from 2nd May.

There will be a raffle, prizes and a quiz.

It is also suggested that you might like to dress for a Royal Occasion? (wait until you see Chrissie's outfit!) ●



Chrissie Phillips-Tilbury, Jill Vallis and friends invite you to join them for a **Champagne Cream Tea**

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RACE NIGHT
with compere - Tony Collins

SATURDAY 14 May 2016

Doors open at 6.30pm
First race at 7pm

Sonning Common Primary School
Adults £5.00 entry Children Free

- * Drinks available from the bar
- * Snacks and tuck shop
- * 50p bets
- * Raffle Prizes
- * Please come and support the club with some much needed fundraising

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FOOD OF THE WORLD

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Sonning Common Village Hall
Saturday April 23rd
From 5.30pm - 8pm

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**20TH ANNIVERSARY OF
HEALTH WALKS**

Sunday 24 April 2016
2pm Village Hall

Social walk on one of the original routes
3.30pm Afternoon tea served in village hall
Talks on different aspects of the walks
Display of photos celebrating the 20 years
Please come along

Matters of Life and Death
Sue Ryder

Open day at
Sonning Common
Village Hall

10:00 - 4:00pm
Wednesday 18th May

Information and advice for advanced care planning.
Stalls and talks from: Age UK, Sue Ryder, FISH and
Carers Oxfordshire, as well as advice about
funerals, organ donation, solicitors and counselling

10th Anniversary!
On Your Bike 10th Anniversary!
Sonning Common

Jump onto your saddles, hit the pedals and help
us celebrate by riding with us this year!
Sunday 24 April
10am for a 10.30 start!

All riders who register before 9pm on 10 April
2016 will be entered into a draw to win a bike,
generously donated by AW Cycles.
Entry fees £5 per person if you register in advance,
or £8 on the day!

Register www.onyourbikesonningcommon.co.uk
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Primary School, Sue Ryder and the
Cardiac Care Unit at the Royal Berks.

South Oxfordshire Archaeology Group
Founded in 1969 Charity XT29402

What did the Romans do for us?

Come and help find out at the mysterious Roman site in
woodland at Highwood, Harpsden, on the Phillimore Estate.

**Excavations will be resuming on 11th March 2016
and volunteers are required now!**

There is plenty to do for all ages, with or without experience,
from digging to pottery sorting and washing. All equipment
provided.

The project is being run by the South Oxfordshire Archaeological
Group with support from Oxford Archaeology.

Digging sessions will run every other weekend
from March until the end of June.

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HOME OF HOPE ORPHANAGE, MALAWI

Last September, my wife Ursula and I visited this orphanage in Malawi; I wonder what picture comes to your mind? Well, Malawi is in the bottom 15 poorest countries in the world, struggles with starvation, poverty, HIV/Aids, T.B. malaria and earlier this year with severe flooding. And yet as the name suggests here is a Home of Hope!

A quick history: In 1994, Rev. Thompson Chipeta set up an orphanage for 20 children with a first donation of 100 kwachas (worth 12p in our terms). Today there is a baby unit, a nursery, a primary school, and secondary school supporting 650 children with no income or rather solely sustained by donations! It is now more like a village! It includes a clinic to address some medical needs, and also two farms and a garden area to provide food.

But what were the aspects that impacted upon us?

The first aspect is the provision of hope; one boy Wiseman aged 15 with polio was taken to hospital to gain his own shoes for the first time in his life as well as a second set of clothes! His words: 'before here I had no hope, but now I have a future'. The orphans would have little opportunity in the countryside without Home of Hope. Now they leave with proper education to stand on their own feet and make a contribution to the economy! The next vision for Agogo, leader of the community, is of a vocational college to take this a step further!

The second aspect is the struggle to overcome; overcoming malaria with each child being provided with a mosquito net; overcoming disease, through the

clinic dealing with HIV/aids and TB; overcoming starvation: 160 adults arrive each day at the farm. They walk for 2 hours often with no shoes, and little clothing, starving; the home has no money to give, so they ask them to work and then pay with a maize porridge meal for lunch.

The next aspect is to be outside our comfort zone; electricity on about a third of the time, water on most of the time but failing when flushing the toilet, buckets of water for showers; malaria nets around the beds, up for 5.30 a.m. devotions, seeing and meeting 160 starving adults, cockroaches swarming on the back seat of the car. Not our usual daily life!

Perhaps the best was meeting Agogo, aged 87, still skipping with enthusiasm as he shows us the campus; his desire to share the love of God with as many as need! He is an extraordinary man living his life to worship God. What a retirement project!

This is wonderful work! It is more than an orphanage but more like a relief agency in itself. Money given goes to the Home of Hope as there are no overheads here but simply folks voluntarily giving their time and money.

Home of Hope Mchinji Malawi or
<http://malawi orphanfund.uk>

Richard Walker

Ursula and Richard have recently moved to Sonning Common from Bedford. They are wanting to raise awareness and sponsorship for this orphanage. Anyone interested in becoming involved in this way should get in touch. richard.j.walker39@gmail.com



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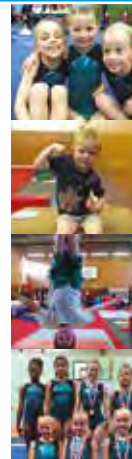
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BOOKREVIEW



Channel Shore: From the White Cliffs to Land's End by Tom Fort

The desecration of our coastline, a cyclist's view

I have to declare an interest because the author is a friend but I wouldn't be reviewing his book if I didn't like it.

I rarely read anything other than fiction so it was a leap of faith to pick this up but there it was in the book shop at Gatwick and I thought it would be an interesting idea to read a travel book about England while sitting in the Spanish sunshine and so it proved to be.

Tom Fort's book covers the bicycle ride that he made from St. Margaret's Bay in Kent to Lands End in Cornwall.

Judging by his bibliography, the author writes with a depth of knowledge and research but also supported by his own idiosyncratic sense of humour, style and eccentricity.*

It is a book that made me laugh out loud sometimes but also gave me pause for thought on the desecration of our coastline, the proliferation of caravan parks, the loss of many fine buildings and the greed and negligence of developers and local and national government.

He has a keen and caustic eye but is never afraid of a joke against himself, witness his short meeting with Bertrand Russell's daughter.

He writes well about the history, the geology, and the landscapes of the places he visits.

I particularly liked his descriptions of shipwreckers and smugglers, from the sinking of the Northfleet in 1873 to the looting of the Napoli when people drove from all over Britain choking the Branscombe lanes to steal the cargo.

I now feel a great affection for Peacehaven having seen it through Tom's eyes and his description of Dungeness made me want to leap on my bicycle and go straight away to see it for myself.

His background as a journalist makes him naturally curious about people's lives and he uses his journey to chat all to briefly to strangers and I would like to have known more.

Having said that I understand his next book is to be called The Village News and features Sonning Common in some small measure, so it may be too many confidences are not such a good idea! ●

Chrissie Phillips-Tilbury

*I looked up the dictionary definition of eccentric. It means unconventional and slightly strange .so that's alright then.

Biggest shake-up of government in Oxfordshire since the Local Government Act 1974 proposed

These changes would simplify local government in the county and bring about significant savings that could be reinvested in public services.

Oxfordshire District Council Leaders are asking government to agree their plan for the creation of new Local Unitary Councils and to support an ambitious devolution deal for Oxfordshire. The devolution deal would bring in significant investment in roads, schools and public transport.

The new proposals introduce joint working with the National Health Service to pool budgets and to commission health and adult social care in a way that improves service quality and deals effectively with increasing demand.

Dr Joe McManners, Chair of Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group said, "We support the ambition of the councils to bring health and social care closer together as this will improve outcomes for patients. We will wish to work closely with them in developing these plans. ●

Editor's compilation from OCC website

It would create:

- **Southern Oxfordshire Unitary Authority, replacing Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils and serving 261,867 people**
- **Oxford City Unitary Authority, replacing Oxford City Council and serving 157,997 people**
- **West Oxfordshire (Cotswold) Unitary Authority, replacing West Oxfordshire District Council and Cotswold District Council and serving 192,795 people**
- **Cherwell (South Northants) Unitary Authority, replacing Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council and serving 232,658 people**

VAL LUNN

How the Health walks began

By ROS VARNES

The insight and encouragement of a friend and a willingness to try something new led to a decades-long love affair with fitness and a rewarding new career for Val Lunn.

It wasn't a natural move for Val, who admits to hating sport at school because she was no good at it. "I used to come last in running races at school. I couldn't hit a ball. No one wanted me on their team and I was even bad at swimming," said Val, from Churchill Crescent.

"If someone had told me that I would have become a fitness instructor - even when I was in my 30s - I would never have believed them!

"But all that changed in the 1980s when my friend, Pam Gross, came back from America and said, 'There's this new thing called aerobics. I am going to set up a class in Sonning Common and you are going to come with me'."

Pam started an aerobics' class at the local Adult Education Centre and encouraged Val, then a busy mother-of-two, to join her.

"I went along and I found I could do it," said Val, now 65. "My friend successfully ran classes in the area for three or four years. When she found another job she asked me if I would take over her classes.

"I had to take some exams, which I was very nervous about because I am dyslexic, but I passed them and started working as a fitness instructor for adult education at Chiltern Edge School.

"The classes really took off. Eventually I involved my friend, Sue Adams, and

we formed a new business partnership, Bodyworks. We ran 15 classes a week between us, everything from high impact aerobics and circuit training for teenagers and fit adults to gentler classes for pregnant women, the over 50s and those new to exercise.

"I had to go on courses for fitness professionals and it was at one of those courses that I was first introduced to the benefits of fitness walking."

Val explained that a fitness instructor had come in to see all of the course delegates while they were having lunch, after a strenuous morning packed with training, and said, 'Come on, we are going for a walk'.

Although it was the last thing anyone wanted to do, they followed her for a brisk walk in the park and returned after 30 minutes feeling revitalised and ready for the afternoon's activities.

On the way home Val couldn't stop thinking about the benefits of fitness walking. She said: "I knew it was something that 99 per cent of the population could do, that it didn't matter whether people walked at 2mph or 5mph. As long as they walked as fast as they comfortably could, they would get the same benefits."

So, Val started taking her groups for walks around the local countryside and everyone loved it. Fitness walking reduces stress, lowers blood pressure, improves the cardio-vascular and respiratory systems, burns fat, is sociable and promotes a general sense of well-being.

It was at this point that she caught the attention of Dr William Bird, who was a GP at Sonning Common Health Centre. Dr Bird explained to Val that he was thinking of setting up a health walking

scheme in the village, after researching the benefits of fitness walking, and asked her to lead the groups.

Val agreed, Dr Bird secured some support and funding, and that is how the first health walking scheme in the country came about - 20 years ago this month.

Now the scheme has been taken up nationally. In Sonning Common, around 150 people regularly participate in health walks. All walks are around 30 minutes to one hour long, ranging in distance from 0.6 miles to five miles, and are graded according to difficulty. Ten walks take place in and around the village every week, all led by volunteers and they are free.

However, the scheme is keen to find some new, younger walk leaders since many of the earlier recruits are now in their 60s. Anyone who is interested in finding out more about the health walks, or volunteering as a leader, should contact: Colin on 0118 972 2527 or visit the website www.sonningcommonhealthwalks.co.uk ●



SONNING COMMON HEALTH WALKS

FUN, FITNESS and FREE!

This was the slogan used when the Sonning Common Health Walks were launched in 1996.

The brainchild of Dr William Bird a Sonning Common GP and Val Lunn a fitness instructor, there was a trial run year in 1995 and then the walks became official in 1996 with Dr Bird as the first Chairman. The aim is to walk as fast as you comfortably can over short distances – mainly between 1 and 3 miles and a longer walk of 4 to 5 miles.

They were well publicised and only worked, and still do only work, with the input and dedication of the walk leaders who are fully trained and prepared for the role.

Such a simple idea! Whatever your environment, be it urban or rural, walks can be arranged and enjoyed, though we are especially lucky to

have such beautiful countryside on our doorstep – bluebell woods in spring, beech woods in autumn and so on ...

So here we are 20 years on with some of the original leaders and walkers and lots of new ones. Fitness for those who walk regularly has undoubtedly improved – one walker commented quite simply ‘it has changed my life’ – new friendships have been made, laughter and fun have been shared – even two romances that I have been aware of and who knows there may be more ...

So come out and join us – hard copies of our walks programme are to be found in the SC library and Health Centre or visit our website www.sonningcommonhealthwalks.co.uk and remember they are still – **FUN FITNESS AND FREE!**

Jill Greenwood



Health walks can be life changing

I ‘celebrated’ my 40th birthday in 1996 and decided it was time to make some changes in my life. Middle age was approaching and I felt a need to do more exercise. I joined a Rosemary Conley Fitness Class in January – and the Health Walks in April. 20 years later I still do both! (though the Rosemary Conley Class has changed its name)

I love walking but need the discipline of a set time and place to actually get out and do it, so the Health Walks are ideal. I like the social side, the chat and the banter, but I’m also happy to walk on my own in the group. Walking is an excellent opportunity to sort things out in my head.

I was trained as a Health Walk leader about 10 years ago, and seem to have acquired the responsibility for organising the routes for the Monday morning and Saturday afternoon walks. I enjoy this, trying to find new

paths and ways to make the routes interesting for everyone. I also enjoy adding details to the local map I carry in my head!

20 years is a long time, and I don’t imagine that I’ll still be leading Health Walks in 20 years’ time – but I hope someone will be, helping to keep local residents fit and healthy, and enjoying our beautiful South Oxfordshire countryside. (I expect to be trailing along at the back!)

Rosemary Dunstan

SHANKS’S PONY – ON THE ROAD TO HEALTH? REVISITED

They say that time flies. They say time and tide wait for no man. Other endless clichés come to mind – and I’m good at clichés as my lovely wife and friends can testify – but I won’t bore you further with any more (well, at least not yet). Believe me folks, these expressions are an understatement. Tempus has well and truly fugitted for this hapless writer. For I was asked on what now seems like half a lifetime ago to write a light-hearted article describing the Sonning Common Health Walks that emanated from our excellent Health Centre. That piece I knocked off under the title at the top of this page (minus the “Revisited” bit) and it was published then in the inestimable Sonning Common Magazine. So I find it hard to believe that we are now approaching the twentieth anniversary of the start of the Health Walks and also, perhaps even more hard to believe for you poor readers, I have been asked once again to put pen to paper (or is that finger to microchip?) on the subject.

My previous effort at this writing lark on the topic, I mentioned looking back “from a comfortable middle age” to the long-gone days of youth and apparent fitness. Maintaining a modicum of fitness can be done quite easily and cheaply in Sonning Common without having to join a gym or obtaining expensive kit. All you have to do is get walking and you can enjoy these healthy past-times with friendly local people here in Sonning Common.

As an old fogey I can never understand what 24/7 actually means but I can tell you that the Sonning Common Health Walks do take place seven days a week, if not actually 24 hours a day. We have longer walks and shorter walks with grading of difficulty in relation to hills, stiles etc. so that new walkers can decide at what level they want to start at. Every walk has a walk leader – in fact two: one at the front and one at the back – to lead the way and to make sure that no-one gets lost. Health walking helps you make new friends

and influence people. As a walker I have met a great many more local people and made a large number of friends simply doing something I actually love, in the open air out in our beautiful local countryside. We probably take for granted the fact that parts of South Oxfordshire form an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: but let’s enjoy it for what it is. This goes on all year round but my favourite time, as Billy Shakespeare might have put it, is when rough winds do shake the darling buds of May. You’ll also find that walking in our groups also makes one feel a greater part of the local community.

You don’t have to be gazelle-like to undertake any of these activities. We come in all shapes and sizes – and all ages with teenagers and octogenarians participating. Come one come all.

You know it makes sense.

Pete Bailey

SOME OF THE THOUGHTS ON THE VALUE OF HEALTH WALKING FROM OUR WALKERS ...

MONDAY MORNING MILLENNIUM FIELD WALK

I am fat and unfit. I started this walk about 6 weeks ago.
I did 2 laps in 29 minutes.

The people who walk are so lovely with encouragement and praise. It makes you feel so much better too.

The walk has made me get out and not vegetate at home. If I wasn't walking I'd see a grey sky and not go anywhere.

I feel tingly and so much better after a walk around.
I can do 2 laps in 23 minutes now and I LOVE IT!

I am 58 years and live in Caversham.

Kerry Collis

THERE REALLY ARE HEALTH BENEFITS!

I could not believe a diagnosis of heart failure two and a half years ago. It really rocked my world. I had already started taking part in local health walks but found things getting more difficult. My consultant was very impressed with the scheme and encouraged me to keep walking regularly, little and often until surgery. I did this, and like he said, my recovery from open heart surgery was speeded up. Health walking also gave me the confidence to get back with a very supportive and friendly group of people - I strongly recommend it as a way to keep fit at your own level, enjoy the open air and good company!

Joan Grummant

HELPING OTHERS

I enjoy the walks. You meet new people. It helps to keep me fit. Through this I've walked in north Lincoln by the River Humber in Scunthorpe and Reading. I hope I am helping others to enjoy walking.

David Long

RESEARCH ON THE BENEFITS OF WALKING

Having taken part in a Pace exercise which we enjoyed David and I joined the Health Walks. We started off with First Steps but soon progressed to Tuesday and Thursday and now I've gone on to do 4 or 5 walks a week. One year I did over 200 walks in a year. We've discovered beautiful country walks and have made lots of friends.

A very big thank you!

Ruth and David Bowyer

A SENSE OF WELL-BEING

We have been health walkers since 2003 whilst we were still working so could only walk at weekends.

After we both retired, we were able to go on more walks and were leaders from 2007 to 2013.

We still do 2 or 3 walks per week and occasionally 4. We would say that health walking, as well as giving a good level of fitness, also provides a sense of well-being, a feeling of self-esteem, a structure and purpose to the day and it is very sociable.

George and Glenys Pritchard

OUR FIRST HEALTH WALK

Friday 18 years plus ago - 7 pm at Peppard Church. After a day at work we walked to the start, did the walk with Val and John, all very friendly and chatty. We were made to feel very welcome, then walked home to Sonning Common. We put the kettle on to make tea but did not have any for we sat down waiting for it to boil and both fell asleep! When we woke it was 10.30 so we went to bed.

We did get better at it and we are still walking and enjoying it as much as the first one. The only thing different is we are much fitter and have got to know more people.

Jenny and John Hawkins

ONE-OFF CHRISTMAS PUDDING WALK!!

My first walk with the Health Walks was a one-off Christmas Pudding walk. I didn't know what to expect but it was a nice day and I thought it would be good to get some fresh air and walk off some festive pounds! It started from the Health Centre and I remember being greeted warmly by Trish. She immediately put me at my ease and chatted with me as we walked the route. She suggested I try the Wednesday evening walks and over the next few months Trish and others walked with me at the back of the group and encouraged me to get faster and fitter. In a relatively short period of time I felt better and was confidently striding out near the front. I also met and shared conversations with many people and never failed to be inspired by their stories and how being part of the health walks had helped them with serious physical illness, to enjoy better mental health and find companionship.

When I was approached to do walk leader training I didn't hesitate. We are very fortunate to live in an area full of beautiful walking routes over fields along country lanes and past ancient churches and monuments and to follow in the footsteps of friends old and new.

I've been health walking for quite a few years now. I still lead the Sunday morning walks and act as Secretary. We're all different and want to get different things from the walks. For some it is about losing weight, for others it's getting fitter or simply being out in the fresh air in company. The walks have been all these things to me over the years but most recently they have helped me deal with bereavement and a stressful job.

I really can't recommend the health walk highly enough.

Thank you Sonning Common Health Walks and Happy 20th Anniversary!

Myra Evans

THANK YOU TO THE LEADERS

I started doing the Health Walks about 8 years ago and I am so pleased that I did. I have met a lot of really nice people and have made some very good friends.

Walking in the beautiful countryside and woodlands around this area has been so enjoyable and has made me a lot fitter too.

I would like to thank everyone responsible for starting up the walks and the leaders for making them possible.

Karen Martin

A FEW WORDS FROM A CONTENTED WALKER

I started coming on the walks two and a half years ago, after a heart attack. I enjoy the Tuesday walk and look forward to meeting up with everyone. I like to have someone to walk with and I feel the walks have helped my sense of well-being.

Janet Lovejoy

A DOGS' EYE VIEW

Having been unable to attend the health walks for over a month due to knee problems, I'm not sure who's missing them more, me or my faithful doggie walking companions, Dexter and Roxy!

Monday morning, Wednesday afternoon and Friday morning are their regular slots and they are always welcomed on these outings by our fellow walkers, to whom Dexter in particular usually barks a friendly greeting (he seems to especially respond to Rosemary's arrival!)

Roxy (the scruffy one) has 2 particular loves in life that are well catered for on the walks - stagnant, muddy ponds and fox poo! Although you never know when you might encounter the latter, sympathetic leaders now include reminders on the dirty water hazards during the pre-walk briefing when Roxy is in attendance.

Generally, in order to keep them from getting under anyone's feet, we keep to the rear of the walks and there are always willing helpers to take Roxy on the lead on road sections of the walk - thanks Lesley, Jill and Isobel - whilst Dexter resolutely refuses to walk with anyone but his "mum."

Fields with horses, cows or sheep in them are a potential obstacle but neither dog seems particularly interested in them and vice versa, so no scary animal encounters to report.

In the last 4 years of walking, only once have we encountered a stile which the dogs couldn't get through/under/around and so had to be lifted over - thank goodness they aren't Great Danes!

So, a barking, woofing, waggy, thank you from Roxy and Dexter to Sonning Common Health Walks for letting them (and Rebecca their handler) on their mud-bathing, smell-finding, bird and squirrel-chasing, health walks.

Rebecca Jennings

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Parish news

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MAJORITY IN FAVOUR OF NEW CHILDREN'S HOME

Nearly 30 residents attended a meeting
of the full parish council in February
at which plans for the opening of a new
children's home in Baskerville Road
were discussed.

Orchard Lodge, formerly a residential
home for the elderly, is currently
undergoing extensive refurbishment. It is
due to open later this year as Florence
House - a residential home for vulnerable
young people aged between five and 18.

Reading-based Calcot Services for
Children is behind the project. Although
they did not send a representative to the
council meeting they issued a brief to
councillors and residents explaining that:

- **Florence House would be licensed for up to seven children, although, more commonly four to five young residents would live there**
- **three to four staff would live in with the children on a year-round basis and the home would be staffed at all times**

The residents who spoke at the council
meeting were 4:1 in favour of the new
home opening in the village. They spoke
of the need for a place for children to be
safe and saw the home as making a
positive contribution to the community.

Some residents are opposed to the
plans. They have raised their concerns
with Calcot Services and the parish
council. ●

TOP AT RECYCLING

A big pat on the back to South Oxfordshire residents who have topped a
Government league table for recycling household waste.

According to Defra figures released at the end of 2015, South Oxfordshire
was the top recycling district in the country followed by neighbouring
district, the Vale of White Horse, in second place.

However, we can't afford to be complacent if we are to hold on to our success.
South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) reports that some residents are
placing food waste and soiled nappies in their green recycling bins.

When these bins, containing contaminated waste, are emptied into collection
lorries they can contaminate other, clean recycling. This results in SODC
having to send the whole lorry-load off for incineration and residents'
recycling efforts are wasted.

REMEMBER

- **You can recycle worn-out, tatty clothes and textiles that are unsuitable for donating to charity. Just put them in a bag next to your green bin. Cotton and polyester items will be processed into industrial rags while wool will be shredded and made into felt or new yarn.**
- **SODC will accept small, broken electrical and electronic items placed in a bag next to grey bins. Items such as toasters, kettles, irons, telephones, power tools, toys, clocks and alarms are taken to a specialist site in Newbury for sorting, storing and processing into new gadgets.**

VOTE FOR NEW POLICE OFFICIAL

Come Thursday 5 May residents will be able
to vote in Sonning Common for the new Police
and Crime Commissioner for the Thames
Valley.

The commissioner's role will be to ensure that
the police service works across the whole
region and is good value for money.

Keep an eye on noticeboards for further
information.

BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

- During the growing season please remember
to keep hedges trimmed back to your
property's boundaries, and, generally
to ensure that your vegetation does not
obstruct pavement and road users.
- Do not park cars on footpaths as this
hinders pedestrians, wheelchairs and pram
users.
- Remember to keep the non-hinged side of
bin lids away from the prevailing wind to
prevent rubbish from being blown about.

Sonning Common Parish Council
Parish Office, Village Hall, Wood Lane, Sonning Common RG4 9SL
T: 0118 972 3616

E: clerk@sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk (Philip Collings)
deputyclerk@sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk (Ros Varnes)
W: www.sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk

TOM FORT CHOCGY

I have had a long and – until recently – happy relationship with chocolate. Remember “Treats – Melt In The Mouth Not In The Hand”? They never got a chance to melt anywhere with me when I was a boy. I adored them and Maltesers and Mars bars.

Milky Way – “The Sweet You Can Eat Between Meals” – I scoffed them between, before, after, any time. I was in love with Bounty bars AND the scantily-clad lady who walked along the edge of the surf to advertise the exotic pleasure. Fry’s Turkish Delight was Full of Eastern Promise for me and I was that Cadbury Fruit-and-Nutcase.

I never lost my passion for that kind of chocolate, but as I grew older I found new delights. Fuller’s truffles from the

shop in Windsor, Avison’s hand-made chocolates from Brighton, and – later still – the wonder of Godiva Belgian chocolates made with fresh cream.

Throughout my working life at the BBC I alleviated the tedium of the long afternoons with a Bounty or a Crunchie. In general I ate chocolate whenever I felt like it, in whatever quantity I wanted, and felt no shame.

That was the old days. But now the love affair has lost its sweetness. The problem is not my desire – which is as keen as it ever was – but the fact that my body chemistry has changed with age. To put it bluntly, if I eat chocolate, I get fat. And we all know that getting fat is bad.

So I have come to dread the presence of chocolate in the house. I beg people

not to bring boxes of chocolates. If they do, I urge my girls to eat them as fast as possible. If they fail, I eat them myself as fast as possible, and then feel dreadfully ashamed. It is a tragedy of our times.

By the way, have you tried the Co-op’s salted caramel milk chocolate bars? Golly they are delicious. ●



Just for kids DIGITAL SPECIAL

HI GUYS!

Hello everyone. I love technology. I’m a Digital Leader at school and one day I would like to design my own games (I’ve already started doing this in my Coding Club). This issue is all about tips for your favourite games, and also a little bit of 3D printing. So lets get straight to it! What is your favourite game? Have you got any tips you’d like to share? Make sure you email me at junioreditor@sonningcommonmagazine.org

ZACK



GAME TIPS

Halo: If you play any of the Halos games, remember to stay as a group. It might seem like a little thing but walking around alone is always a terrible idea! Get a friend in your game and stick by each other. You’ll be first and second in no time at all.

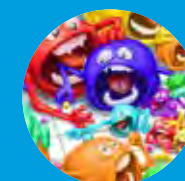


Star Wars Battlefront: Make sure you use your guns to start the battle off as this is more effective than using your lightsabre (even though they are cool). This gives you your best chance to weaken the opposition.

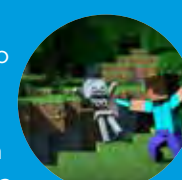


them. Lums are extremely useful and get you more heroes the more you collect. If you want to show off to your friends, these little coins are the perfect way!

Agario: Let people know you want to team up by calling yourself something like ‘Pro Team’ or ‘Teamer’. This is a great way to get bigger and you can also split without the worry of someone unwanted eating you.



Minecraft PVP: Lava spreads out slowly so if someone attacks you, try to run so they follow you, then place a bucket of lava on the ground and jump over it. Because it spreads, the person chasing you will have to either stop, go around or might even fall in. This even works on pros! Good luck!



Fifa 16: A football rule all players know – pass to a person who has some space around them! If you randomly pass, your ball will be intercepted or just roll towards nothing at all.



Rayman Legends: Lums (coins) may seem pointless in this game but if you want to look cool, collect

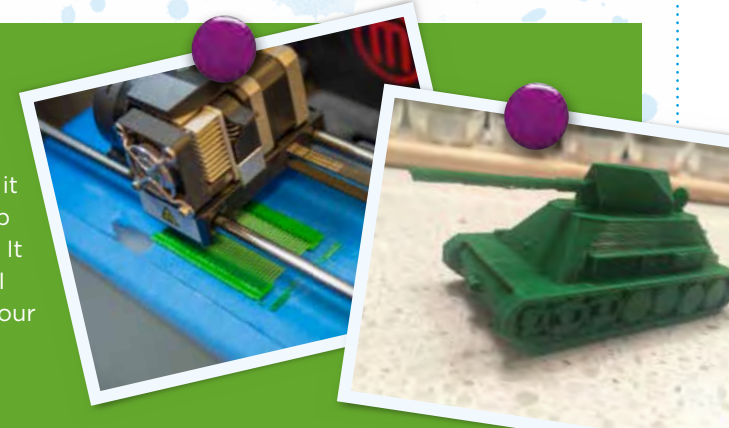


Lego Marvels Avengers: Plenty of vehicles are left around the place so grab them. Using cars and helicopters makes the whole game easier for everyone (except the baddies!).



3D PRINTING

Off the topic but really interesting – have you ever seen a 3D printer in action? I have recently designed a little tank and got it printed. It is awesome! I used a pretty cool app called Sketchup to design it, which was difficult to use as I had to teach myself. It allows you to push and pull 3D objects and draw all you want! I had it printed in Caversham at a place called Creat3D. It took four hours and got printed on a Makerbot printer. I watched the printing begin, but I didn’t watch for the whole four hours! ●



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- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| 12 flour tortillas | 1 tbspn oil |
| 3 tbsps lime juice | 1 tspn ground cumin |
| 1 tspn chilli powder | 1 tspn salt |

Preheat oven to 180/Gas 4

Cut each tortilla into 8 (or 16) triangles & place in a single layer on a baking tray. Brush with the mix of all other ingredients.

Bake for 5 minutes. Cool on rack. Serve with dips. ●



CINNAMON CRISPS

A lovely accompaniment to fresh fruit salad, strawberries or as an alternative to wafers with ice cream

- 12 flour tortillas
- melted butter or butter-flavoured cooking spray
- 4 tablespoons caster sugar
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon

Brush one side of each flour tortilla with melted butter. Cut into wedges and arrange in a single layer on a large baking tray. Mix the cinnamon with the sugar and sprinkle as much as you like over the wedges.

Bake for 8 to 10 minutes or until crispy (but not burnt). Repeat with remaining tortillas. Allow to cool approximately 15 minutes. Serve with chilled fruit mixture. ●



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You can find us as you drive from Peppard to Gallowtree Common past the Greyhound pub and then left at the entrance to the Rotherfield United Football Club playing fields and the new skate park. You can also easily walk or cycle through the woods or across the fields from Sonning Common (see advert on page 22) so take a walk or a drive to see the courts. Our annual subscriptions are low and we provide a casual and informal environment in which to learn and to play tennis – our only provision is that soft soled shoes be worn. We do not have a club house nor do we provide coaching or club sessions

but, hopefully, we can be a stepping stone for learners, or those who love an occasional game of tennis, and who might eventually want to progress to other clubs with more facilities.

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"I MIGHT AS WELL PLAY BRIDGE WITH MY OLD MAID AUNTS"

This well-known quote from "A fine Romance" by Jerome Kern and Dorothy Fields suggests genteel, rather scatty elderly ladies. Most, with whom I have had the pleasure to play, have had needle like brains that would give Miss Marple a run for her money and were particularly scathing with comparative youngsters who ignored their leads. My own aunt, admittedly twice widowed was teaching bridge shortly before her death at 95. Bridge has recently been declared not to be a sport but as a mental gymnastic it is unsurpassed. I myself am praying it will help me resist a steady descent into Alzheimer's or at least lessen the proliferation of the "senior moments" to which I am prone. Chess requires concentration for an unlimited period; most computer games seem to need a bloodthirsty instinct and a penchant for genocide. Not that bridge players are invariably good humoured, and where married couples play together I am surprised

that divorces are to my knowledge rare. "M'Lud he consistently refused to agree my trump suit!". "Case for the plaintiff with heavy damages". Some couples avoid playing together, some admit to airing their differences over the table and thereby living in comparative harmony at home. Of course a married couple should be more likely to read one another's mind than a casual partnership and a little thought transference would be a great if possibly illegal advantage.

I write as there is a bridge club in Sonning Common which meets most Tuesday nights at 7.30 in Christ the King church hall and we could certainly use some new members. This might be a trifle difficult for beginners as the faithful, while not achieving master status, (well not me anyway, but I would not like to insult my co-players) have acquired a certain degree of the mysteries involved. We do promise, however, not to get too steamed up

or unpleasant over misuse of the pack of cards, or at least to try, and really the only way to learn is to play with more experienced people.

I assure you, this is not a den of iniquity, or a gambling hell, we pay £2 a night and play for love. Anyone, or preferably a pair, interested could contact either the chairman, Peter Bowles at 0118 972 2916 or the secretary Ian Hodgkinson on 0118 947 9945

Peter Dayton



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Further observations on 'BAFFLED' 1

May I refer to Tom's page in the last magazine, with reference to dog owners, parking difficulties and cyclists all to which my wife and I are in thorough agreement. I am a little surprised that he omitted to mention the increased number of times drivers park in the area right opposite the end of Woodlands Road in Wood Lane, where it frequently hampers progress and visual advantage whilst negotiating from any angle at that junction, let alone the difficulty caused to the bus drivers.

Now I would like to take issue with regard to reversing into car park spaces. To reverse into a space is in fact the correct method, it being much easier to drive out than to reverse out against the flow of traffic before moving forward. It also has a visual advantage

and is physically more comfortable not to have to turn one's head in awkward directions, and is easier to drive forward in tight and restricted areas.

Whilst writing, I wish to mention the irritating habit of many motorists who will insist in driving into shop-front parking areas in an anti-clockwise direction. It is exactly like going onto a roundabout in the wrong direction and was once always an unwritten rule to enter clockwise for everyone simply to avoid conflict. Can all readers agree to do this please?!!! ●

Regards to all readers
MICHAEL HOLLINGS

IAM; High Performance trained; Rospa trained; Trained driving instructor

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A L L P R O P E R T Y M A T T E R S

Further observations on 'BAFFLED' 2

In his recent article "Baffled", Tom Fort neatly applied wit, he often does, to lighten otherwise dull but pertinent issues. Thank you Tom.

How right you are about the mysteries of defecating dogs' owners ignoring the deposits left on pavements. Well done for sniping at able-bodied drivers who occupy "disabled" spaces, and highlighting the dangers caused by people parking on yellow lines near junctions. What an interesting collection of everyday mysteries.

Just one topic in Tom's sufficiently jesty article required taking with jest [sic] a little more than a pinch of salt. Surely he would not deliberately have sparked off another "Drivers Vs. Cyclists" debate? Thank you anyway Tom, for prompting me to air another of life's great mysteries.

Never mind the occasional couple of cyclists riding two abreast. You don't really hate them do you? After all, you'll soon overtake (spreading noxious fumes, consuming precious fossil fuels, and adding to global warming as you

go); but who knows, more than likely you'll soon be slowed down by the car in front, or run into a traffic jam. By the way, are traffic jams caused by cars or cyclists? I digress....

There is a frequently encountered mystery in my typical day, cycling rather than driving the lanes of South Oxfordshire. Why, why, why, do "some drivers" overtake a cyclist in a narrow country lane, when they can see that they will soon have to stop and give way to an approaching vehicle. The overtaken cyclist not only has to waste time and energy stopping behind the obstructing car, but has to apply his/her own muscle power to get going again, all in a cloud of said driver's exhaust smoke. Doesn't he know it makes cyclists hate drivers? Touché Tom! ●

Regards

TONGUE N. CHEEK

Driver, Cyclist (and sailor) of Sonning Common.
Name and address supplied

Church *news*

A KIND AND LOVING LADY DOROTHY WEAVER

Dorothy was a very dear friend of mine. Before I was married in 1957, I visited Sonning Common from my home in Newcastle Under Lyme, because this was the area where my husband to be would be working at the BBC at Caversham Park. Dorothy and her husband kindly offered to have me to stay with them while we looked around for somewhere to live. It was the beginning of a friendship that was to last a lifetime. Judy, their daughter sent me the following tribute to her Mother. I know there are several people in the village who will remember Dorothy. ●

Margaret Fieldhouse



DOROTHY WEAVER 1920 -2016

Dorothy came to the area after the war to work as a secretary in the catering department at the BBC in Caversham, sharing a flat with her brother and his wife in Reading. She met her husband, Jim, a radio engineer with the BBC and they were married in 1948. They had to wait a year for the Billeting Officer to assign them a flat (bed-sitting room, kitchen and shared bathroom) in Sonning Common, at The Craggs in Woodlands Road. Accommodation after the war was very hard to come by.

The flat had a 'no children' stipulation so when Dorothy gave birth to their first child, Judy, in 1950 they had to look elsewhere. They moved in temporarily with Dorothy's father in Marlow, where their second child, Jimmy was born in 1951.

In 1952 they were allocated one of the Nissen huts at Kingwood Common, previously a Polish camp (I think for prisoners of war.) When they moved in Dorothy had to scrub the bathroom from top to toe because the previous tenants had kept chickens in there!

In 1955 Jim's sister lent him the money to put down the deposit for a house in Wood Lane, Sonning Common and the family lived here until 1965 when they moved to a larger property in Kennylands Road. Dorothy was often seen cycling around the village and she was always ready to help anyone in trouble. She loved attending various adult education classes at Chiltern Edge, including Art lessons. She was still attending these into her nineties!

In 1980 Dorothy and Jim moved to Caversham because Jim's deteriorating health made it sensible for them to live nearer to a regular bus route into town.

Dorothy loved Sonning Common and in 1992 she was able to move back to the village to the over 55s complex on what used to be Kennylands Camp. She was to remain there until, at the age of 93, she had to go into assisted living a long way from her beloved home. She died in February 2016 at the grand age of 96. ●

THIS EASTER

2 to 3pm Tuesdays at Christ the King: Lenten studies
Ashes to Fire

Monday 21 March
12.30pm Christ the King:
Talk by Richard and Ursula
Walker The Home of Hope
Malawi orphanage followed
by simple Lent lunch
Mundy Thursday 24 March
8pm Eucharist at St John's

Good Friday 25 March
10am Procession of Witness
from Christ the King
followed by tea and hot cross
buns at the church
4pm Service of Reflection

Easter Sunday 27 March
9.30am Christ the King
11am St John's

A Happy Easter to all!



L-R Martin Seccombe and Bruce Jenkins



SONNING COMMON FREE CHURCH

Bruce Jenkins is the pastor of Sonning Common Free Church in Grove Road. Sonning Common resident Martin Seccombe met up with him to ask a few questions about his background and his vision for the church.

Bruce, where are you from and how long have you been living in the area?

I grew up under the sun in Durban, South Africa, within earshot of the crashing waves of the Indian Ocean. Carolyn and I came to the UK in 1992, first studying in north London, then moving to the Reading area in 1995.

What did you do before you came to the UK?

The milestones are school, university, army (2 years' conscripted National Service), and then working for 10 years as an architect. We designed houses for very rich people and for very poor people, hospitals for the rural people of Zululand, a secondary school in a township outside Durban, and a handful of church buildings.

How do you spend your free time?

Walking Renzo, our affectionate golden retriever; travelling to

interesting places to keep up with family and pursuing teaching interests; wondering whether this really is a new dawn for Tottenham Hotspur!

Why do you think the Christian message is relevant to the community of Sonning Common?

It is good news that addresses with certainty the issues that face everyone, including the people of Sonning Common: Who is the God whom I know exists and made me? What kind of a relationship may I have with him? What can I do about the things that trouble my conscience but I can't stop doing? What should my response be to the life, miracles, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ? Where will I spend eternity?

What's happening at Sonning Common Free Church this spring?

There will be a "Food of the World" evening, at 5.30-8pm on Saturday 23 April, at the Sonning Common Village Hall, to which everyone is invited (there will be no charge). We have English, Welsh, American, South African, Australian, Korean, Zimbabwean, and Kiwi people in the church. Others have lived in China and Japan. So we draw on the

cuisine from all these cultures, and prepare delicious dishes from around the world. We are expecting it to be a great opportunity to meet, eat, and chat.

We are planning a course that will provide an informal opportunity to discuss the central issues of the Christian faith. It will be arranged around the people who express an interest in attending.

What ways can SCFC serve the local community?

It is two-pronged, really.

On the one hand we organise regular activities that are designed to meet needs that we are aware of: the 4:30 pm Sunday afternoon meetings where we spend time together singing and hearing the Bible explained and made relevant to our lives; the monthly Saturday "Adventurers" club, provides fun for primary school age children, and a little relief for their parents.

On the other hand, we love to meet people, get to know them individually, and in the context of friendship to respond to individual needs as we become aware of them. ●

Martin Seccombe

DIARY DATES

APRIL

Monday 4 - 14.00 - 15.30

Royal British Legion Women's Section - Quiz & Craft

Wednesday 6 - 10.30 - 12.30

Village Coffee Morning hosted by Sonning Common Women's Institute. Open to all. Raising funds for local community projects

Saturday 9 - 14.30 - 16.30

Chiltern Edge Horticultural Society - Spring Show. Sonning Common Village Hall

Monday 11 - 14.30 - 16.00

FISH Tea Party in Sonning Common Village Hall. All welcome

Tuesday 12 - 19.30

Chiltern Edge Horticultural Society - 'Pelargoniums My Way'. A talk by Roger Butler. Peppard Memorial Hall

Thursday 14 - 20.00

Chiltern Players - 'Up the Beanstalk Again'. Peppard Memorial Hall

Friday 15 - 20.00

Chiltern Players - 'Up the Beanstalk Again'. Peppard Memorial Hall

Saturday 16 - 20.00

Chiltern Players - 'Up the Beanstalk Again'. Peppard Memorial Hall

Monday 18 - 20.00

Sonning Common Parish Council in Village Hall

Thursday 21 - 11.30

FISH - Pub Lunch

Thursday 21 - 19.30

Sonning Common Women's Institute - 'The Foundling Hospital'. A talk by John Caldicott. Visitors welcome. In Sonning Common Village Hall

Thursday 28 - 09.00

FISH - Henley Farmers' Market

MAY

Wednesday 4 - 10.00 - 12.30

Village Coffee Morning hosted by Sonning Common Women's Institute. Open to all. Raising funds for local community projects

Monday 9 - 14.30 - 16.00

FISH Tea Party in Sonning Common Village Hall - All welcome

Monday 16 - 20.00

Sonning Common Parish Council in Village Hall

Wednesday 18 - 10.00 - 16.00

Health Centre Open Day - 'Matters of Life & Death'. Sonning Common Village Hall

Thursday 19 - 11.30

FISH - Pub Lunch

Thursday 19 - 19.30

Sonning Common Women's Institute - Resolutions & Beetle Drive. Visitors welcome. Sonning Common Village Hall

Thursday 26 - 09.00

FISH - Henley Farmers' Market

JUNE

Wednesday 1 June -

10.30 - 12.30

Village Coffee Morning hosted by Sonning Common Women's Institute Open to all. Raising funds for local community projects

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Chiltern Beauty	Front	Sonning Common Garage	28
Christian Community Action	26	Sonning Common Pet Care	26
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David Walker Decorator	26	Studio One (Pilates, Matwork & Yoga)	6
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DK Builders	10	Tai Chi Classes	Back
Doggy Dips	Back	Tandoori Connoisseur	33
E H Hamley & Son (Builders & Decorators)	10	Tereena Hartin Personal Trainer	Back
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Family Mediation	24	Tomalin and Son Funeral Directors	20
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The FISH Volunteer Centre runs regular door-to-door shopping trips to Tesco in Henley every Monday morning and to Henley Waitrose, Henley Farmers Market, Morrisons in Reading and Reading Town Centre every month.

The programme of shopping and leisure trips for each month is published and distributed on 20th of the preceding month and bookings are taken from that date. Copies of the programme are available the FISH Volunteer Centre, Sonning Common Library, the Christian Community Action shop, Pet Country Supplies and on request from Carson's Chemist. The monthly programme of trips is posted on noticeboards in both Peppard and Sonning Common.

Details of all minibus trips can also be found on the FISH website www.fishvolunteercentre.co.uk

For more information and to book any trip call 0118 972 3986 any weekday between 09.30 and 11.30 a.m. •

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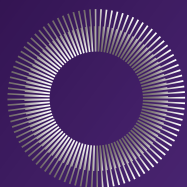
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