
News and Notes

Issue 344

December 2004

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I feel like a Christmas cracker – no, please don't send me one! What I mean is that I feel that I am being pulled apart like a cracker at Christmas. On the one side there is all the joy and fun of preparation for the family, presents to buy, which are getting more complicated and technical as the grandchildren grow up. The tried and tested Christmas cake recipe has already had its annual outing and I will soon take down my Mother's handwritten book to buy the ingredients for the mincemeat (before you shake your head over the lateness of my efforts, remember that I am writing this at the beginning of November!).

There are special services for schools, Advent, Christingle and Crib services, and in churches up and down the valley their own special traditions of carols, hospitality and celebration once again. My "Mum-at-nativity play" days are over so I can no longer shed a surreptitious tear of pride over a tinsel bedecked angel or an embarrassed camel (I had an extrovert and an introvert). And here begins the pull on the other side. My family is grown up and they have family of their own and other people to see as well as us. There is the sadness for some, sharpened at Christmas time, of someone we love who is no longer with us. The pictures on TV remind us of the continuing conflict in Iraq and that there is not peace in that Little Town of Bethlehem. Which way do I go from the two hands which grasp hold of me and pull in opposite directions? Well, there is really nowhere to go is there? We live in the real world. Blake puts it this way:

"Joy and woe are woven fine, a clothing for the soul divine."

It is in allowing ourselves to live with these tensions that the prize, which the cracker always contains along with the motto and the paper hat, is revealed. For the prize is the "pearl of great price." Jesus tells the story of a man who was digging in his field and came across a great pearl, and went away and sold everything he had to buy that field so that he could own the pearl. The pearl is the good news of Jesus Christ. He came to this earth to share in both our joys and sorrows. Indeed, as "Immanuel, God with us" he became part of a family and community and finally gave his life for the world.

And in another sense, we too are the pearl. For Jesus left everything that was his by right to redeem that which was of great value to him. So when we sing "where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in" we are singing of the greatest story ever told and the treasure of the greatest worth. For Jesus enters our lives in our joy over family and friends and sharing at Christmas time. He enters the lonely and wistful places too and somehow, because the Christmas cracker contains such a treasure, the tearing open deepens the mystery of the wonder of God sharing Himself with us as a babe in Bethlehem and in Bread and Wine. May your Christmas be blessed with the presence of Jesus; may you find him in the business of preparation, the joy of giving and receiving, the strength of old friendships maintained and in the Christmas services in our valley churches.

Kate Rosslyn Smith

Email Addresses for Charity !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Each month, I email a copy of *News and Notes* to about thirty people and would very much like to extend my mailing list. I use the "blind copy" method of addressing so each recipient only sees their own address.

Please send your email address to newsandnotes@tesco.net (even if I already use it), together with the name of your favourite charity (Registered Charities only, please).

For each address (per household), 50p will go to the most popular charity nominated and a further 50p to church funds, divided between all our parishes.

If there is a tie, I will use a random method to select the charity. Although the donation will be restricted to one per household, please send more than one address (each with a choice of charity) if you would like them to be included on the mailing list. The donation to church funds will be divided between the parishes in proportion to the entries received (please indicate parish).

Please note that receiving *News and Notes* by email will not disqualify you from a paper copy but the list would be very useful if there is some mid-month information to circulate.

Please see back page for details of services and other dates for your diary.

WI

Margaret Morgan

Julia Joynt as President took the meeting on 8th November. A charming arrangement of flowers for the President's table was done by Pam Trubshaw and we were all delighted to know Doreen Osmond was better and hoped to be out of hospital in a week.

Pam Trubshaw has taken on future outings and meetings for the WI to help Jean Van Hagen who as secretary has an enormous amount to do. Val Martyn announced the date for the pantomime "Jack and the Beanstalk" would be 6th January. Transport was discussed for the Christmas lunch at the Emblems on 2nd December. The flower of the month was won by Celia Maidment.

Violet Bath was given a wonderful basket of flowers arranged by Judy Barke and congratulated on her diamond wedding. She produced a marvellous cake to share with us all and photos were taken.

After coffee, we were thoroughly entertained by John Hook who told us endless stories of life as a High Court Judge's Clerk. He had obviously enjoyed his 24 years. He was warmly thanked by Joyce Babbs.

The next meeting will be on 13th December - our Christmas meeting - with a Magic Show, Bring and Buy and Raffle. Members were asked to clearly price items beforehand.

DOWNTON COUNTRY MARKET

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CHRISTMAS MARKET

**on 3rd, 10th and 17th December in the
Memorial Hall, The Borough Downton**

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make this Christmas a great success!

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Downton Band Concert

*Music, Carols, Raffle,
Mince Pies, Mulled Wine*

**Charlton Church Hall, 7.30 p.m.,
Wednesday, 15th December**

Admission Free

but a Collection will be taken.

*Please come and help us fill the Hall for
this popular annual fixture. All you need
is a voice, enthusiasm, goodwill and a
controlled thirst!*

Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

Susie Jenkins

The total raised in this year's Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal in Odstock, Nunton and Bodenham was £616.82.

My grateful thanks to those helpers who knocked on doors during the weeks leading up to Remembrance Sunday.

Sudan Christmas Cards

Recycled cards in packs of 10 for £3 - a very worthy cause. I will be selling them at the Sunday Services. Nunton, Odstock, Britford and Charlton, or contact Debby Underhill tel 01722 329769

Journey through Advent

Three informal Bible discussions in Nunton Vicarage
1st, 8th and 15th December from 2.30 - 4pm
(finishing with tea and cake).

A chance to think together about the way we prepare
for Christmas.

EVERYONE WELCOME!

Did you lose some mittens at the Charlton Bonfire Party?

A pair of children's navy blue mittens were left at the Charlton Bonfire Party on 6 November. To get them back please contact Barbara Box.

S.H.A.R.E.

The Tucker Family

The Jumble Sale at the Radnor Hall, Bodenham, on 23rd October made £400 for S.H.A.R.E. (Supporting Health and Reaching Everyone - Salisbury District Hospital Charity - Reg. no. 1052284). Many thanks to everyone who helped and supported the sale. The

next sale (mainly books) is in the Hospital Foyer on 3rd December.

Pumpkin Competition 2004

The annual Pumpkin Competition's weigh-in took place in beautifully sunny, autumnal weather on Sunday 31st October at the Radnor Arms.

All of the pumpkins entered were a good size and weight, but once again the prize for the heaviest went to Alan Ambrose (61lbs), with Peter Martin's pumpkin weighing in at a very creditable 55lbs, and Rod and Julie Poynting not far behind with a 53lbs pumpkin.

A very big thank you to all who supported us this year, participating, donating prizes, buying raffle tickets, or just turning up on the day. We raised £175 which has been donated to Odstock School.

Odstock Primary School

We have had a very busy start to November at school. We were able to collect 50 Christmas shoeboxes for the Trussell Trust. This exceeded our target of 40. These boxes will be taken to Bulgaria and given to families in deprived areas.

This month as part of National Science Awareness week we are going to have a visit from a team of scientists from Salisbury District Hospital. We will be learning about stimulating the human body, recording muscle activity, get up and fidget, and solids, liquids and gases. We are also having a visit from Devizes Museum who will be telling us all about light.

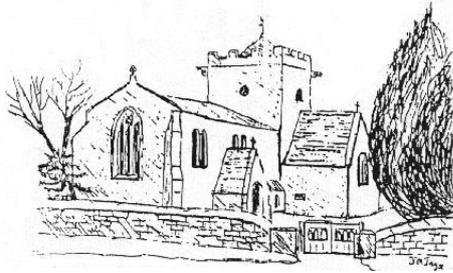
One of our village families invited our school to their house to celebrate Divali with them. This was a great opportunity for the children to see how the festival is celebrated and was lots of fun with candles and fireworks.

We had a planning meeting with Wiltshire County Council this month to discuss our new classroom extension. Work is planned to start in Easter 2005. This extension will provide a full size classroom for our growing population and will mean we can re-use the hall in the traditional sense for assemblies, PE and dance.

We will be hosting an Exhibition of Success in School on Monday 2nd December at 6.30pm. This will be an opportunity to see all the events of the year, to celebrate academic achievement and to see the proposed plans. All members of the community are welcome to attend.

CHRISTMAS FAYRE
AND
BABUSHKA - A CHRISTMAS MUSICAL
Friday 17th December, 1-3pm and 6-8pm
Radnor Hall - Free Tickets Available
Telephone: Odstock Primary School: 01722 329701

Carols by Candlelight



An evening of festive music and readings presented by

The Sarum Voices

5.00pm

Thursday, 23rd December

Britford Church

Call Ben Lamb on 01722 411365
for more information

Please note the early time

“Wings Over Charlton”

Barbara Box

On 22nd October, Steve Oakes, one of our two resident ornithological specialists, gave a wonderful talk entitled “Wings Over Charlton”, surprising his audience by including subjects other than birds - even flowers have wings!

Steve bought items of interest from the RSPB and cheese and wine were much enjoyed in the interval. The proceeds of £230 were given to the church to boost repair funds.

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Church of England Services

Sunday, 5th December Advent 2	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP	Nunton	WC
	9.30am	Parish Communion	Britford	DH
	11.00am	Parish Communion	Coombe Bissett	WC
	18.00pm	Evening Prayer BCP	Homington	AW
Sunday, 12th December Advent 3	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP	Homington	WC
	9.30am	Parish Communion	Odstock	AW
	11.00am	Family Service	Coombe Bissett	AW
	11.00am	Morning Prayer BCP	Charlton All Saints	WC
Sunday, 19th December Advent 4	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP	Britford	WC
	9.30am	Morning Service	Homington	AW
	15.30am	Carol Service (with Christingle)	Charlton All Saints	AW
	17.00am	Carol Service	Nunton	AW
	19.00am	Carol Service	Coombe Bissett	AW
Friday, 24th December Christmas Eve	18.00pm	Carol Service	Homington	AW
	23.30pm	Midnight Eucharist	Coombe Bissett	WC
Saturday, 25th December Christmas Day	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP	Homington	AW
	9.30am	Parish Communion	Charlton All Saints	AW
	9.30am	Parish Communion	Britford	PAC
	11.00am	Family Service	Coombe Bissett	AW
	11.00am	Parish Communion	Odstock	WC
Sunday, 26th December St Stephens Day	11.00am	Holy Communion BCP (said)	Coombe Bissett	WC

WC = Revd Westley Cole, AW = Revd Alison Williams, PAC = Revd Pat Clegg

BCP = Book of Common Prayer

Alison Williams, our Team Vicar, may be contacted on 01722 330628

Regular Events

WI	Second Monday of the month, 10.00am Radnor Hall, Bodenham
Whist Drive	Every Thursday, 7.30pm Barker Room, Nunton
Singing Group	Every Tuesday, 8.00pm, contact Adrian Taylor on 01722 325862
Tiny Tots	Wednesdays (ex. Aug.) 9.45–11.45am, Radnor Hall, Bodenham, contact Joanne Philp on 01722 510565
Mobile Library	Alternate Wednesdays (1 st , 15 th): Brookmead, Britford 10.00 – 10.20am Phone Box, Charlton 10.30 – 10.45am, Radnor Arms, Nunton 11.00 – 11.20am

December Dates for Your Diary

3 rd December	Sale (mainly books) in the hospital foyer in aid of S.H.A.R.E. (<i>see page 2</i>)
15 th December	Downton Band Concert (Charlton) (<i>see page 2</i>)
17 th December	News and Notes Deadline - please note early deadline
23 rd December	Carols by Candlelight, Britford Church 5.00pm (<i>see page 3</i>)

Please send *News and Notes* articles to Adrian Taylor
Florida, Nunton Drove, Nunton, Salisbury SP5 4HZ
tel: 01722 325862
email: newsandnotes@tesco.net (*see deadline above*)

Monetary donations should be sent to our Treasurer,
Neil Guttridge, Court-Hay, Lower Road, Charlton All
Saints, Salisbury SP5 4HQ
Tel: 01725 511468

Happy



Christmas