

Tidmarsh with Sulham Parish Magazine



Editorial

Welcome to the November/December issue of the magazine. It is hard to believe as I sit and write this that our new style magazine has been in production for well over a year! Every issue we are fortunate to receive a good number of contributions and this issue we have yet another excellent restaurant review from Richard Thomas — Richard seems to have adopted the role of restaurant critic and does a superb job so we all hope he and Rosemary continue to sample the local eateries for our benefit — and we have contributions from Ian Walker (new play equipment) and John Haggarty (Sulham vs. Tidmarsh cricket match).

Our aim, when we first got together to take the magazine forward early in 2008, was to create a platform where everyone could have their say and write about anything they felt might be of interest to fellow parishioners. It is also a vital link to let everyone know what is going on and where along with a number of useful contacts. We even tried to set up a 'Trader page' but this has not proved to be terribly popular probably because there are so many other ways to sell, swap or recycle unwanted goods these days. In my continued attempts to try and be 'green', I like the idea of 'free-cycling' unwanted goods and therefore, if you do have anything that you think someone else might be able to make use of but would prefer not to sell it, then why not advertise it here! Something that springs to mind as an ideal 'swap' item is seeds or cuttings - soon we will be thinking of ordering seeds and if anyone has saved seed from flowers or vegetables this year - why not share with your neighbours?

I am sure everyone has seen the new play equipment on the village green and will agree that it really is quite splendid. Before the nights started drawing in, children were playing there in the late afternoon and are still making the most of it at the weekends. I even spotted a group having a picnic there one evening! It really is lovely to see the village green being used as I am sure it was always intended to be.

As a magazine that relies on advertising to make the books balance, we seldom give advertising plugs but will always make exceptions if we hear of a company or individual who has gone out of their way to go over and beyond the call of duty. In case some of you haven't chanced upon *Ruby & Grace*, the new florist in Sulham (based in The Granary, Sulham Lane) let me tell you, it is well worth a try. Recently I needed three tied flower arrangements to be ready fairly early in the morning. With just one day's notice, Hannah offered to go to the market at 4 am and have the bouquets delivered to my house by 7:30 in the morning! Now that's what I call outstanding customer service. The prices and the choice of flowers are excellent too! Next time you need flowers, do give Ruby & Grace a try and support a local business!

As this is our last issue of the year, let me sign off by wishing you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy and prosperous new year. Please remember that this is your magazine and if any of the things I have mentioned have struck a cord, please do put pen to paper (or drop me an email); we would love to include new things in the 2010 issues!

Jenny Cope
jenny@candcsystems.co.uk

Dates for your diary

Art classes

Mondays and Wednesdays

Art classes are held in the village hall on Monday mornings, Monday afternoons and Wednesday afternoons. For further details, contact Christina Taylor Smith at artdynamics@btinternet.com or call 01491 671870.

Table top sale

We are sorry but due to other commitments this has been postponed (from Sunday 1 November) until the spring.

Walking group

Friday 6 November and Friday 4 December

Meet outside the village hall at 9:30 am. The walks last approximately 1½ hours. They will be at an easy pace on paths over fields and woodland. All are welcome, including well-behaved dogs. There will be coffee and chat afterwards in the village hall (see below).

Coffee morning

Friday 6 November and Friday 4 December

Coffee mornings at the village hall are held on the first Friday of each month from 11 am to noon. Do come along for a chat. There's a village walk that takes place prior to this, weather permitting (see above).

Book club

Monday 9 November, Wednesday 13 January and Wednesday 24 February

The next meeting is on November 9 at 8:30 pm at Box Cottage, in Sulham. For details, contact Gillian on 0118 984 2729. Books to be reviewed are *The Woman in White* by Wilkie Collins (continued from the summer reads) and *White Tiger*, last year's Booker prize winner, by Aravind Adiga. You don't have to read both!

The Glass Room by Simon Mawer will be reviewed on January 13 at Walnut Tree Cottage, Sulham. For details, contact Rosemary on 0118 984 5740.

For Whom the Bell Tolls by Ernest Hemingway will be reviewed on February 24 at Meadowside, Sulham. For details, contact Sally on 0118 984 3416.

New members are welcome to come and join in the informal discussions.

Pamper evening

Thursday 12 November

Come along to the village hall from 7 pm to 9:30 pm and spoil yourself. Treatments available at introductory prices include: reflexology, mini-facials, Kinesiology, manicures, yoga massage and Indian head massage. Also, Tarot Readings, crystal jewellery, and Jamie at Home.

Tickets cost £2 in advance or £2.50 on the night and include a complimentary drink and free entry into a prize draw.

Dates for your diary (continued)

Children's Christmas party

Sunday 6 December

This party for the under 10 year olds of the villages is great fun with games, party food and a special visit from Santa on his sleigh.

The party will be at the village hall from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. If you have children who would like to attend, please book your place by contacting Ian or Joanne Walker on 0118 984 5558. We would be very grateful for volunteers to help with organising the party.

Carol singing in Sulham

Sunday 20 December

Come carol singing in Sulham. Meet at 6 pm outside the church.

Carol singing in Tidmarsh

Monday 21 December

This annual event will start in Strachey Close at 6:30 pm. Further details available from Julia Sheppard on 0118 956 1820 or Jennifer Nutt on 0119 984 2370.

Christingle service

Thursday 24 December

This year the Christingle service bringing together family and friends of all ages will be held at 3 pm at St Laurence in Tidmarsh.

Ladies Pamper Evening at Tidmarsh Village Hall

Thursday 12 November 7 pm to 9:30 pm

Sample relaxing therapies and cosmetics.
Look for gifts for friends and family.

Treatments available at introductory prices include:

Reflexology, Mini-facials, Manicures, Kinesiology,
Yoga Massage and Indian Head Massage.

Also, Tarot readings, Crystal Jewellery, and Jamie at Home.

Tickets £2 in advance or £2.50 on the night.

Includes a complimentary drink and free entry into a Prize Draw.

Enquiries to Karen on 0118 930 2622

Parish matters

Sulham vs. Tidmarsh cricket match

by John Haggarty

The annual Sulham vs. Tidmarsh cricket match took place on Sunday 30 August. The match was played at Englefield Cricket Club in the superb setting of the deer park and Englefield House.

This being the Bank Holiday weekend making up teams for both sides was the first challenge to overcome. The match was much anticipated after last year's game was cancelled due to rain; this year the weather was dry but, like much of the summer, it was cold and cloudy. In fact at the close of play supporters were wrapped in their picnic rugs instead of sitting on them.

After winning the toss Sulham asked Tidmarsh to bat. The Tidmarsh innings got off to a good start with Stuart Robinson and Mike Hall retiring without losing their wickets after they both reached the maximum of 25 runs each. Sulham were then able to keep the runs down with two wickets from Lewis Ross and two catches taken by James Haggarty. After the required 20 overs Tidmarsh made a very creditable 136 for 5.

After a splendid tea provided by the ladies it was Sulham's turn to bat. The opening

batsmen got about their task of reaching the required runs quickly with Rob Hayes hitting a total of six fours. At the mid point in the innings Sulham were very much on target to reach the total set by Tidmarsh. The run rate now though was beginning to slow and Tidmarsh were excellent with their fielding and bowling. As the innings approached the end it was going to be a close finish. Sulham continued to bat well with Mark Grimshaw and Martin Ross both reaching the required 25 without losing their wicket. A final fling of the bat from Stuart Veal was not quite enough and Sulham finished just 8 runs short of the Tidmarsh total.

Thanks to both captains, the umpires in the match, Rob Robertson for arranging the ground and the ladies for the excellent tea. Also to supporters who came along to make this a great village fun occasion.

Parish matters (continued)

Play equipment for the Millennium Green

by Ian Walker

I would like to thank and congratulate all involved in the fabulous new play park on the Millennium Green.

As a parent of three, I feel our village has been long overdue for this kind of facility and as all will have noticed the green has seen more action since it has been installed than in all the years previous I have lived here put together!

I believe it has provided not only an excuse to go to the green with our children, but an excuse for parents to meet there too and sample the delights of the Greyhound whilst our children play.

Mike Broun kindly came over to introduce himself to me whilst myself and a neighbour and his children were 'checking it out'. I gather Mike was instrumental in making this play park happen in the village and on behalf of myself, my children, and the parents and children of the whole village, may we say many thanks to Mike and all others involved in making this happen! I believe it has provided a heart to the village that was long overdue — well done.



Parish matters (continued)

Village hall news

by Ann Robertson

Future events

This autumn brings two special events to the hall. The **Ladies Pamper Evening** provides a chance to try out new therapies and products, and the **Children's Christmas party** starts the festive season with party games and a visit from Santa and his reindeer. See the *Dates for your diary* section for details.

100+ club

Thank you to all the residents who bought 100+ club tickets. This helps towards funding improvements for the hall. The results of the 100+ club draws are:

Month	Prize	Ticket Number	Winner
September	1st prize £25	7	Pat Loveridge
	2nd prize £15	145	Stan Boatman
	3rd prize £10	162	James Evans
October	1st prize £25	133	Sarah Hall
	2nd prize £15	160	John Harland
	3rd prize £10	75	Devani
November	1st prize £25	62	Peter King
	2nd prize £15	77	Belinda Thorne
	3rd prize £10	164	Grace Turner

Hiring the village hall

Tidmarsh village hall is available for hire for £10 per hour. For information on availability and booking, please contact Karen Fountaine on 0118 930 2622.

Parish matters (continued)

Village fete update

Many thanks to everyone who ran a stall at the village fete in August or who contributed to one. The fete raised £2,653.78 to be split between the two churches. We are very sorry that we omitted many of the stalls from the last edition of the magazine so please accept our apologies and find the complete list below.

Stall	Total
Adult raffle	£101.50
Beer	£210.00
Books	£87.25
Bottles	£399.80
Bowls	£52.40
Cakes	£238.55
Car park	£288
Childrens games	£14.35
Coconut shy	£117.40
Cold drinks	£76.65
Cow pat predictor	£88.20
Face painting	£43.50
Gate	£37.50
Golf game	£42.00
Hoopla	£74.50
Ice cream	£31.50

Stall	Total
Lollipop game	£18.60
Gate	£26.15
Lucky dip	£22.60
Luxury raffle	£329.00
Pimms bar	£191.30
Plant and produce	£215.45
Guess the name/weight of the pony	£31.00
Spots on dog	£20.05
Teas	£322.60
Teddy tombola	£66.00
Toys	£13.98
Treasure map	£11.70
White elephant	£67.25
Gross profit	£3,238.78
Total expenses	£585
NET PROFIT	£2,653.78

Parish matters (continued)

Local planning applications

Below are details of recent planning applications made within the Tidmarsh and Sulham parishes. You can find more details on these planning applications, including their status, on the West Berkshire Council web site at:

http://publicaccess.westberks.gov.uk/PublicAccess/tdc/tdc_home.aspx

Application Ref.	Address	Proposal
09/01558/LBC	Sunny Brook Tidmarsh RG8 8ER	External refurbishment to include re-roofing, new windows, refurbishment to decorative wood/stone features and demolition of chimney.
09/01593/HOUSE	Forge Cottage Tidmarsh RG8 8ER	Conservatory to rear elevation
09/02007/HOUSE 09/02008/LBC	Willow Tree Cottage Mill Lane Tidmarsh RG8 8EB	Extension to kitchen and enlargement of chimney breast, repairs to existing chimney stack.

Restaurant review

The Pot Kiln, Frilsham

by Richard Thomas

We are lucky to live in an area where there are so many good places to eat. Here is another one we can thoroughly recommend for here is another where the owner obviously enjoys his food, particularly game, including the venison he shoots himself. Yes, The Pot Kiln is a little unusual. Game is its speciality and, so far as we are concerned, it is all the better for that!

This pub-cum-restaurant is right out in the country down a narrow lane, so it may be thought surprising that on a Thursday lunchtime (1 October) so many customers were eating there; not so surprising when you get inside to find a comparatively simple but atmospheric interior; certainly not surprising once you join the others in an interesting, nicely produced but not over-fussy meal.

Rosemary had a warm salad of wood pigeon breast, game bacon and black pudding followed by a pavé of fallow deer, pommes purée (mashed potato to you and me!), kale from the restaurant's own garden and green peppercorn sauce. Although Rosemary found the bacon a little gritty, both dishes looked delicious and I was lucky enough to be allowed a taste in confirmation.

I started with a ragu of hare with linguine and truffle shavings. Delicious. When did you last have hare, let alone truffle, particularly truffle grown in Wiltshire? As Rosemary beat me to the choice of main course and I was not feeling greedy enough to eat a whole T-bone fallow deer steak, I settled for belly pork on braised red cabbage with calvados jus. The cabbage was excellent; tasty, sweet and sour and still with just a little "bite", but the belly pork crackling did not really crackle: what a disappointment. Perhaps I should have chosen

the partridge or grouse, but that would have put the cost way above the £19.50 for the weekday lunchtime fixed price menu and way above the call of duty in making this report for the residents of Tidmarsh and Sulham!

For pudding Rosemary had stewed plums under a nut crust with cardamom ice cream (her favourite): a posh plum crumble, really. She certainly enjoyed it. I had a delicious lemon cream with spiced berries: one of my favourites, so didn't we do well!

By the time we had a glass or two of wine with coffee to follow, the bill came to almost exactly £60 including a service charge. For quality and enjoyment it was money well spent. Do give The Pot Kiln a try.

Perhaps we should also try the Sunday supper nights for only £10, when "a different something hearty and delicious" is promised each week with puds also available. The first supper night on 4th October promises venison stew with spiced rosemary dumplings. No need to book, but I do suggest you book at other times to avoid disappointment.

The Pot Kiln

Frilsham, nr Yattendon, RG18 0XX.

Tel: 01635 201366

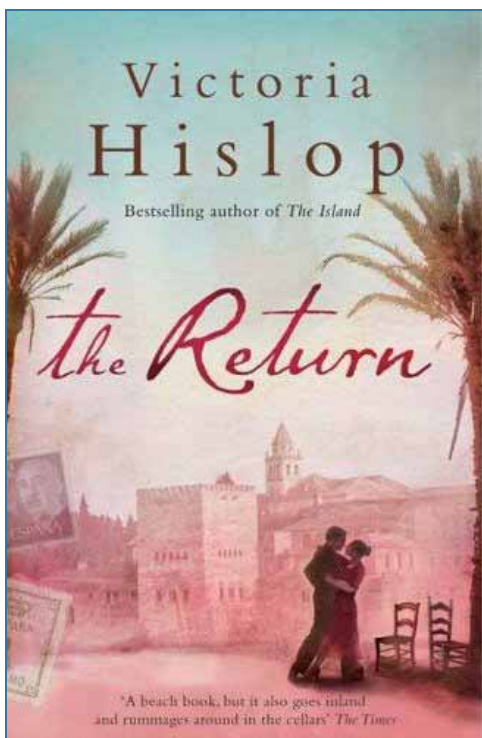
<http://www.potkilm.org/>

Book review

The Return by Victoria Hislop

A review by Fran Brown

The Return accompanies Sonia and Maggie into the heart of Granada in the lighthearted pursuit of salsa dancing, yet ultimately leads to the more gruelling path of the Spanish civil war.



The women are compromised by men: Sonia by her controlling and status obsessed husband James and Maggie by all of the men she would like to bed. We are enticed into the heady atmosphere of a Spanish city rich in culture and yet scarred by the deaths and destruction inherent in Franco's rise to power in the 1930s.

Maggie's frequenting of a café, whose walls display old posters of flamenco dancers and bull fights, ignites her curiosity into its history. The elderly owner, Miguel, is a willing narrator of the Ramirez family story and its poignant chapters. And it is this family which is the jewel in *The Return*; the deep love of Concha and Pablo for their children, and for each other, makes the sibling rivalry that unfolds and intensifies all the more heart rending. Divisions of political belief cut deeply into the family, its wounds left unhealed, its blood staining the ties of kinship. Each character is vividly drawn by Hislop so that we feel the impending doom.

The ravages of the civil war are described with great attention to detail and yet, somehow, the horror of women and children starving in their attempts to escape bombardment, of young men ripped apart by shells and the agonies of separation, do not have the

impact they deserve. It lacks conviction compared to books such as Sebastian Faulks' *Birdsong* whose powerful imagery has the ability to haunt the imagination.

The Return is, however, worth reading as Hislop artfully draws the reader in, most significantly through her depiction of the romance of Mercedes and Javier. The feisty Mercedes, so accomplished in dance and so hopelessly in love, enthralls us as her footsteps in the flamenco reverberate furiously through our imagination. Javier's beauty is tangible, giving a sensual texture to each of their liaisons and encouraging us to share in their passion. It is a story full of pain and regret but Hislop's strength, as the Guardian says, "is her ability to put a human face on the shocking civil conflict. Stirring Stuff."

Children's matters

Rainbows, guides and rangers

by **Helen Randall, Unit Guider**

1st Basildon Rainbows

The Rainbows had a great summer term and enjoyed a party, where the new Rainbows made their promises, and we also had an African drumming evening. Some of the Rainbows enjoyed a county activity day in Thatcham.

The girls have returned to the new term and spent the first meeting back sharing their news with each other and planning for this year's scarecrow trail. We have had a joint meeting with the Brownies and Guides to launch the start of our centenary celebrations for girl guiding, where the girls enjoyed making a large mosaic and singing.

Each of the Rainbows has helped to make this year's scarecrow entry, Peter Rabbit and we were all thrilled with the end result.

Plans for the rest of the term include cooking, crafts and a Christmas party.

1st Pangbourne Guides

The Guides have had a busy start to the new term, with sorting of guidelines, term plans and

patrols. There has been a night hike, which is always a favourite. Some of the unit enjoyed the joint meeting with the Rainbows and Brownies.

Plans for the rest of the term include the making of this year's scarecrow, Christmas crafts and a food night.

Pang Valley Rangers

The Rangers had a very active summer term and activities included boating and walking.

So far, this term has been very focused on the annual scarecrow trail and making "Tin man". Three of the unit members went to a regional weekend, held at Bristol university, at the beginning of September, where they tried a range of activities, the highlight being an evening ball.

More information

We are currently looking for adult volunteers to help run the Rainbow and Guide units. If you are interested in helping in any way, or would like information on the above, please do give Helen a ring on 01635 48765.

Table Tennis

Are you 8 to 12 years old?
Would you like to learn how to play table tennis?

A qualified, experienced, CRB checked table tennis coach
has offered to teach beginners in the village hall

A 6 week course will take place on Sunday mornings and will cost £18 per child
(dates to be confirmed)

There will be places for 8 children
(places are being offered first to children of Tidmarsh and Sulham)

To reserve a place, call Gillian on 0118 984 2729

Water! water!

by Richard Thomas

Can you imagine my surprise at being accosted in late September by a young man wearing an all-over fluorescent pink suit? In broad daylight! In Sulham Lane!

Anyway, all he wanted was to warn me that he and two other young men from the Environment Agency had come to clean out the Sul brook. They were to remove overhanging vegetation to allow the water to run freely. Many of us driving between Tidmarsh and Sulham will have seen that, as part of the same exercise, the Environment Agency recently cleared the pipe that allows the brook to run under Mill Lane.

How ironic! For the last few weeks the brook has been dribbling rather than running. (Should a dribble of water be described as crawling rather than running?) Those in Sulham Lane whose properties run down to the brook are worried that it may dry up completely in summers and become a winter brook, but the Environment Agency doesn't seem to care much about that. Seemingly it seems to be far more concerned about flooding.

Cynic that I am, I wonder if they have thought whether water from the Sul may again flood Pangbourne this coming winter. It seems to me that the faster they allow, nay encourage, the water to run off the ancient marshes in the flood plain the more likely it is that the bridge under the A329 by Bourne Road, Pangbourne will once again not be able to cope. It is not for nothing that Tidmarsh is so-called and that, when I was a boy, what is now Briars Close was called Marsh Farm. The marshes held the water back as if in a sponge and allowed it to move into the streams over an extended period rather than immediately after heavy rain.

When we moved to Sulham some 12 years ago the brook ran quite happily every summer.

However, things seemed to change at about the time Theale was allowed to develop: perhaps not entirely uncoincidentally, for the Sul brook starts in the marshy ground on the northern outskirts of Theale. Since then, and since the Environment Agency started clearing the brook, it has been more uncertain each time we have a dry summer. Equally, in a wet period the water level now rises more quickly and it runs faster than it used to.

The brook is (1 October 2009) still just, but only just, running where it goes underneath the hummocky bridge on Sulham Lane, in the woods about half a mile south of the A329. However, before it gets to Home Farm it has dried up completely. It appears that the water disappears into the gravel beds over which it runs. No doubt the pumping station in Pangbourne is happy with that.

Water is extracted from deep under Pangbourne, Tidmarsh and Sulham and pumped to the water tower in Tilehurst, so serving the western end of Reading. The main pipe runs under Sulham Lane just to the north of Sulham Stables, but ironically none of the properties in Sulham are connected to mains water. We have to pump our own. So far so good, but one cannot be but concerned less the increasing dryness leads to the water table being lowered too much, out of the reach of our domestic pumps. In the meantime, we wouldn't want it any other way for our untreated water tastes much nicer than that from the mains — and we don't have to pay water charges — or drainage charges; but that is an entirely different matter — or is it?

Gardening matters

Purley Horticultural Society

by Marion Dabbs

26th late summer show and exhibition "History of Purley WI"

This was held in Purley Memorial Hall on Saturday 5 September with 380 entries (the most we have ever had). The judges were pleased with the high standard of the exhibits. A large number of visitors came along to the show and the WI exhibition with the cream teas and cakes provided by the WI proving very popular. I would like to thank everyone who contributed in any way to making the show such a success. Rev. David Archer (Vicar of Purley) presented the trophies to the following winners:

Trophy	Winner
Banksian Medal	Mrs P Lewington
PHS Perpetual Challenge Cup, Purley Home & Garden Bowl, and Mrs Fairfoul's Trophy	Mr G Chapman
Reg Ayers Memorial Trophy	Mr R Stuart
Purley Women's Institute Cup and Purley Homecraft Salver	Mrs. P. Brightwell
Frankston Vase	Mrs H Blanchard
Golden Jubilee Cup	A Howard and O Howard
Neil Buckle Trophy	Mrs. A. Thomson

Talks

On **Wednesday 18 November** there will be a talk on *The Restoration and New Planting of Caversham Court* by Emily Waters, Head Gardener. This riverside spot has been completely refurbished thanks to a £1.6 million Heritage Lottery Fund Grant. Work has been carried out on the 17th and 19th Century features of the garden, including the gazebo and its causeway, the crinkle-crinkle retaining wall and the ancient yew family.

This talk will be in the Memorial Hall commencing at 8 pm with doors opening at 7:30 pm. Tea, coffee and mince pies will be available. Please try and come along so that we have a good audience for this speaker. **All residents of Purley and neighbouring parishes are welcome.**

Trading

The Shed in The Memorial Hall Car Park is open from 10 am to 11 am on Saturdays and Sundays but will close on Sunday 1 November, re-opening at the beginning of February 2010. We have bulbs and bird food in stock so please make sure you have ample food for the birds during the winter months. Seed potato order forms for next year are available at the Shed.

More information

For more details about the society, please visit our web site at:

<http://www.purleyonthames.net/index.php?page=phs>

Gardening matters (continued)

November and December in your garden

by Gillian Alderton

November is a good time to transplant large shrubs. Although transplanting will set them back, the risk at this time of year is less. (Do not attempt to transplant until there has been sufficient rain to soak the soil thoroughly.)

Tying up the branches makes the job much easier. Dig a trench around the plant; this must be deep enough to allow you to retain as

much root as possible. Cut through the roots and tilt the plant over enough to position a plastic sheet underneath as far as possible then tilt the plant the opposite way and pull the sheet through. Tie this up around the stem; this keeps the root ball intact.

Finally, get a friend to help you move it to its new position.

Music matters

Basingstoke Choral Society

Basingstoke Choral Society, in conjunction with St. Michael's Hospice, will present Handel's Messiah at The Anvil, Basingstoke, on Sunday 15 November.

David Gibson will conduct the Hanover Band, the international ensemble who play solely on instruments available during Handel's lifetime.

Four professional soloists will support the large choir in this major choral work.

A large audience is expected to help raise funds for the wonderful work carried out by the Hospice. Seats can be booked at The Anvil on 01252 844244.

BCS and St. Michael's Hospice Present

George Frideric Handel

Messiah

The Hanover Band
Basingstoke Choral Society
David Gibson conductor

7.00pm, Sunday, 15th November
The Anvil, Basingstoke

Tickets £10-£25; £5 under 16s and students
01256 844244; www.anvilarts.org.uk
All profits to St. Michael's Hospice; BCS is a registered charity No. 274009

Autumn at Moor Copse

by **Andy Coulson-Phillips, Berkshire Reserves Manager (Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust)**

The first good news to report is the opening of the new circular parish walk — an initiative of Sulham and Tidmarsh Parish — which uses our nature reserve for approximately 1km of its length. It has been great to have such a positive response to the route and to have new visitors to the reserve discovering some of the woodland wildlife and scenery.

Partly because of this new route and partly because of our own policies, we have been undergoing a round of tree safety assessments and, as such, a visitor to the reserve may see piles of logs and brashings beside the paths where we have had to remove dead limbs or rotten trees that could potentially have had an impact on the safety. Most of the trees to

remove have been small, but occasionally a lovely old but sickly tree has had to be made safe, and it is a real wrench thinking of the beetles, fungi, mammals and birds that could have made a home in it.

Visitors to the woodland this autumn will also see more standard woodland management



Autumn at Moor Copse (continued)

operations going on. Staff and volunteers will continue to coppice blocks of hazel, alder and ash in both Park Wood and Moor Copse — coppicing being the removal of stems from the central “stool” to promote further growth of straight poles. The cut material will be used on site, in a traditional way, in the laying of two new stretches of hedge around the old arable field in the centre of the reserve. As well as the coppicing, we are continuing with our plans to open up some of the old ride systems in the woods and also to “scallop” bays in the woodland edge; this lets light down to the ground for a few years before the trees and shrubs grow up again, giving flowers and insects a burst of growth, and when this happens the birds and bats that feed on them are not far behind.

At present, and as long as the grass keeps growing and it is not too wet, cattle are grazing in hay meadows on the fresh growth after the summer hay-cuts. They keep the fast growing grasses under check and allow space and light for the multitude of flowering plants that are such a feature of our meadows. Sheep are grazing the ex-arable field for the same end, but here they are the animal of choice, because on the newly established sward the

root systems of the flowering plants are still delicate and vulnerable to a great heavy hoof.

... And I have scarcely had a chance to mention the wildlife you may see on a visit this autumn, such as flocks of finches (linnets, and goldfinches around the fields, and siskins and redpolls high up in the trees feeding on alder cones or catkins) or yellowhammers, and the steady arrival of winter thrushes on the hedges and margins of the woods. Also there are woodpeckers and jays feeding frantically before the cold weather arrives. Squirrels, mice and voles are also harvesting acorns, hazel nuts and other seeds busily in the woods.

Finally, whilst visiting the reserve you may have noticed our new suite of interpretation panels have appeared; there are five sited around the reserve covering different aspects of the work and the wildlife. And there are new information boards in the A340 car park and on the public footpath as you cross the Sulham Brook.

If there are any questions regarding Moor Copse or any of the Wildlife Trust's work, please contact our Berkshire office on 01628 829574 or visit the website www.bbowl.org.uk.

Out and about

Round the island head with Goring Gap Boat Club on Sunday 20 September

by Jenny Pond

This was a really enjoyable event held on a perfect September day. We were joined by friends from Reading and Maidenhead Rowing Clubs, together with many members and families.



The winning 8+ crew — Reading Rowing Club

There were nine scratch crews in the restricted fours, a one minute erg competition and an eights inter-club race. Races were from the boat house, round the small island just before Mapledurham lock and back.

All the crews put in a huge effort and there were some impressive times.

The highlight of the day was the inter-club eights challenge; the same course as the fours, but with club crews and fine eights; faster boats but much more difficult to get round the bend at the island! Reading Rowing Club set the standard with an impressive 9 minutes

38 seconds with Maidenhead Rowing Club a close second at 9 minutes 48 seconds. The Goring Gap Boat Club crew eased off to ensure they didn't humiliate their guests and rolled over the line in a creditable third place!

Following the races there was an excellent barbecue organised by Annie, Stuart, Heidi and Jonathan. Many thanks to them for their hard work.

To find out more about the events organised by the Boat Club, and the next Learn 2Row course, which starts in October, do visit our website www.goringgapbc.org.uk.

In days gone by

Sulham and Tidmarsh in World War II — The rescue party

by Jean Harland

Prior to the outbreak of the Second World War (in 1937) the Tidmarsh and Maidenhatch Estates were sold and Mr & Mrs Trevors purchased Moor Copse, which was part of that Estate. At the time it was bought by the Trevors, Moor Copse was all woodland, but as Mr Trevors was an architect he built a house in the woodland.

The design, however, was different from what locals were used to and deemed to be too modern but little could be seen from the road. But as war was now on everyones' minds with blackouts, rationing, ID cards, air raid precautions, and evacuees, these things were more important issues than modern houses.

And so it was the brainchild of Mr Trevors to form the Rescue Party so that all were able to play a small part in the war effort. A second-hand serviceable ambulance was obtained (though no one knew from where). The vehicle body was removed and rebuilt with local help so that it was able to carry a crew, ladders, boxes on each side to contain ropes, jacks, pulleys and other various items required to rescue people from bomb damaged buildings. Much of this work which required some modification was most likely carried out by the local blacksmith Bill Burgess and his trusty companion Sid Gale, known to the villagers as Boxer Gale at Tidmarsh Forge.

One of Sulham residents, the late Mr Fred Hambleton of Yew Tree Cottage, having served in the Royal Navy in WWI made a

breeches buoy. This device was used in WWI to transfer sailors from one ship to another when you donned the breeches attached to a stout cable. So it was thought possible maybe the same idea could be used to rescue people if they were trapped in burning buildings. Fortunately, I don't think this was ever needed. Training and practice took place at various venues, one being Aldermaston Mill and, on one occasion, as they were crossing the wooden bridge over the mill stream with their now adapted vehicle, the bridge gave way depositing several people and equipment into the mill stream.

When the air raid siren sounded the crew had to be quickly assembled and attend "Stand To" and await instructions. If bombs, such as time bombs or land mines, were dropped in this area the crew were required to attend and stand guard until the bomb disposal crew arrived.

Next time, more about the evacuees and we get bombed...

Church matters

Bishop's mystery talk hosted by the Friends of St Laurence

by Jon Chishick, Secretary, Friends of St Laurence

In recent years the Friends of St Laurence have hosted a talk of interest to local residents each autumn in the church, as a social gathering and fund raising event. Normally the topic is advertised in advance but this year the guest speaker, the Rt. Revd. Stephen Cottrell, was invited to speak on a subject of his choice.

Drawn by Bishop Stephen's reputation as an entertaining speaker, the audience of about 30 local residents, who braved a chilly damp autumn evening to be there on October 9, were rewarded with a very interesting and entertaining talk on the bishop's alter ego as an author.

While the talk was based around his recent book, *Do nothing to save yourself*, the bishop spoke about his love of writing and experiences as a school boy; we were sworn to secrecy so I cannot reveal these here! Suffice it to say that the bishop divulged that although

he was far from being a model pupil, he was the first student from his all boy secondary modern school in Essex to gain a university degree, having first attended the sixth form at the 'all girl' school next door. He also told us about his experiences in promoting his book which included handing out egg timers to rush hour commuters at Reading station.

After the talk the audience had the opportunity to ask the bishop questions and mingle while enjoying a splendid spread of refreshments provided by members of the congregation. A retiring collection raised £120 in aid of the Friends of St Laurence.

The Friends of St Laurence are very grateful to Bishop Stephen for taking the time to talk to us and to all those who provided refreshments to make it a most enjoyable and convivial evening.

Church of England

St Nicholas, Sulham

Regular services for St Nicholas are:

- **Family service** on the 3rd Sunday of each month at 11 am. Everyone of all ages is welcome.
- **Evensong** is held on the 4th Sunday of each month at 6 pm.

There will not be a Remembrance service at Sulham this year. A Remembrance service will take place at 11am at St Laurence.

On Sunday 20 December, the family service at Sulham will be a crib service and will include hand bell ringers playing Christmas carols.

Sulham carol singing will be on Sunday 20 December — meet at 6 pm outside the church.

A candlelit carol concert takes place on Wednesday 23 December in the evening with mulled wine and mince pies during the interval.

Christmas day lessons and carols will be at 11 am.

Church matters (continued)

Christmas services at a glance

	St James the Less Pangbourne	St Laurence Tidmarsh	St Nicholas Sulham
Sunday 13 December	10 am <i>Sunday at Ten</i> Christmas Tree Service		
Sunday 20 December	6 pm Christmas Lessons and Carols Service		11am Crib Service
Wednesday 23 December			Christmas Candlelight Concert
Christmas Eve 24 December	3 pm Christingle 5 pm Christingle 11 pm Midnight Communion	3pm Christingle 11pm Midnight Communion	
Christmas Day 25 December	10 am CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION <i>All Age Worship with Holy Communion</i>		11am Christmas Day Carols
Sunday 27 December	10 am <i>Sunday at Ten</i> Family Worship		

Services

Everyone is welcome at St Nicholas, St Laurence and St James the Less church services. For service details, please see the church noticeboards.

Contact details

Church contact numbers are at the back of this magazine. You can e-mail the rector at Churchoffice@vodafone.net.

Roman Catholic church

Our nearest Roman Catholic church is St Bernadettes in Horseshoe Road, Pangbourne which has Sunday mass and childrens liturgy at 9 am and Tuesday mass at 10 am. Confession is by arrangement.

For more information, please contact Father Benedict at Douai Abbey on 0118 971 5300 or see www.douaiparish.org.uk/stbernadette.html.

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