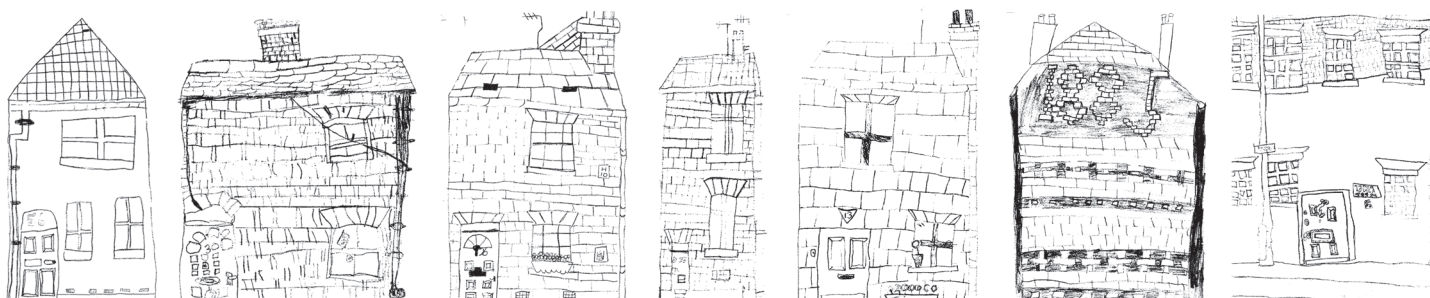


# OSNEY ISLAND RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

www.osneyisland.org.uk

NEWSLETTER JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2009



A very happy New Year to everyone on Osney!

## COMING UP

### West Oxford Academy

The term starts on **Tuesday 20 January at 8pm in the Community Centre Cafe** and will run for eight weeks.

*20 January:* What is environmental education?  
Athene Reiss

*27 January:* The life of a freelance photographer.  
Douglas Fry

*3 February:* Zanzibar – The history and politics of a tropical island in the Indian Ocean. Jan-Georg Deutsch

*10 February:* Ecopsychology – it's natural. Ruth Finar

*17 February:* Molecular language of the immune system. Marion Brown

*24 February:* My life as an immigration judge.  
Tony Talbot

*3 March:* A short history of Morse code. Ray Goff

*10 March:* Steam trains behind the Iron Curtain.  
Mark Doran

If you would like to find out more or would be willing to give a talk please contact Susan Hutchinson on [allat42@gmail.com](mailto:allat42@gmail.com) or phone 792358.

### Spring Clean 2009

Friday 6th & Saturday 7th March are set aside for OxClean to build on last year's success when 1,500 people in almost 100 different groups turned out for a two-hour local pick and seemed to have a great time doing that. Take a look at [www.oxclean.org.uk](http://www.oxclean.org.uk) to see what this annual event is all about. More importantly, OxClean urgently needs a working group to register NOW if they want to tackle something in their area.



This way, litter pickers and other essential materials can be organised for those who need them, alongside the essential collection of rubbish gathered up. What's bugging you, around Osney? Find just a few others who share your concern, and you're all ready to sign up. When you've done that, call at 112 Bridge Street for a window sticker to promote the event and encourage others to do their bit.

### The OIRA AGM

This will take place on **April 22**. Details to be announced in the next newsletter.

### Open gardens

This popular biannual event will take place on **Sunday May 17**. We need about 12 gardens – a mixture of the known-and-loved and new entries to make this event go with a swing. If you would like to open your garden or could offer other services such as serving teas, making homemade cakes or manning the plant stall, please contact Anna Truelove on 245496 or drop a note through 83 Bridge St.

### OIRA website

As you know the OIRA website has been down for several months now. It is currently being redesigned and should be up and running again in February/March.

## A BIT OF LOCAL HISTORY

### Oxford Marmalade

*Those of you up to your eyes in marmalade-making may like to read about Frank Cooper's Original Oxford marmalade. From Roy Hoare:*

In Sainsbury's recently, I felt a tug at my sleeve: 'Would you kindly pass me down a jar of Coopers Original Oxford Marmalade' asked a gentleman in a wheelchair. As this was one of my own favourites, we had a short chat and touched on the history of the brand as follows.

In the 1870s Frank and Sarah Cooper ran their Italian warehouse at No.84 The High, (now the Grand Café). They sold foreign and home produced fruit and vegetables displayed in boxes and wicker baskets with hams and continental sausages hung above among the gas lamps. In 1875 Sarah made her first batch of

marmalade, 100 lbs. or so, probably from the Seville oranges that her husband hadn't sold. This batch and subsequent ones were made in the kitchen of the old Angel Hotel at No.82. The distinctive salt glaze jars were returnable for a penny each. Some jars were decorated with pictures of the Martyr's Memorial and Magdalen Tower. It became a 'must have' item for College scouts for their 'gentlemen' and returning the empties were their perks.

Frank Cooper recognised that the University graduates were their best advertising medium, carrying off this toothsome conserve to other counties and the Empire. He secured military patronage by sending samples to the elite regiments such as the Life Guards and the Grenadiers, with the promise that they could be supplied at their overseas stations. A quantity was packed in soldered tins for Captain Scott's Arctic expedition. Over time the patronage of eminent people ensured the success of the brand. Among those expressing their appreciation were the Prince of Wales, the Bishop of London, the Dukes of Marlborough, the Governor of Madras and some 50 other lords. It is now supplied by appointment to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and no Fortnum and Masons hamper is complete without Coopers preserves.

Apart from marmalade, much of the raw materials for Cooper's bottled fruit, chutney and their eye-watering horseradish sauce, was grown on Twenty Pound Meadow, our own Osney Allotments, where the roots still thrive today.

The Factories and Workshops Act of 1901 caused the manufacturing to be moved to a custom built factory opposite the Said Business School. Coopers has since changed hands and been moved to a new home in Spalding, Lincolnshire. Wherever it is made, it still hits the spot on breakfast toast.

### **Chimney sweeps**

*From Roy Hoare;* Chimney sweeps planting sooty kisses on blushing brides was once considered good luck, but now it is a custom of the past, as both parties are rather rare. No longer are the few remaining sweeps the grimy individuals with cloth cap and overalls but clinically white-coated operatives who vacuum away every smut.

Before 1864, their predecessors, the Sweep Masters and their journeymen employed climbing boys to shin up flues and brush down the soot. These climbing boys and some girls were taken into so-called apprenticeships upon payment of perhaps 5 guineas to the parents, whereupon the child would become the property of the Sweep Master. An item in Jackson's Oxford Journal of 16th Nov. 1764 shows that John Lay, apprentice to Richard Dormer, had absconded and a reward of half-a-crown (25p in today's money) was offered for his return. The article gave his full description and forbade anyone to harbour or entertain him.

The so-called apprenticeship consisted of a brief period of watching, then being thrust into the flue with an experienced boy behind; any reluctance on the part of the

'tyro' would prompt the slapping or pricking of his feet. The discomfort and horrific conditions they experienced resulted in scrapes, burns, sore eyes and constant chest infections. In their later years many suffered from cancers of the lips and scrotum, which was known as the sweeps cancer and rarely seen elsewhere.

Major accidents were commonplace. In March 1813 an eight-year-old boy named Pitt became firmly stuck in a chimney that had only recently been extinguished. After part of the chimney had been demolished, he was found to be dead and his elbows and knees had been burnt to the bone. These incidents were deemed to be accidental deaths. A law was passed in 1864 to end this horrendous practice but not without some opposition in Government. One noble enquired, 'How would I know that my chimneys were being swept properly?'

In the early 17th century Italians from Piedmont came to England to work as sweeps. Today, in the first week of September each year, hundreds of chimney sweeps meet at Santa Maria Maggiori in Piedmont. A brotherhood of sweeps meet to drink, and generally 'whoop it up'. A museum to their profession was opened there in 1975 and has become their Mecca. It also serves as a memorial to the many children who endured such suffering.

## **PEOPLE**

Welcome to the newest addition to West Street, Albert Jude Utton, born on November 16 2008 and weighing a very bonny 9lb 10 oz. **Congratulations** to Parents Dom and Heidi and big sister Eithne.

### **Cuckoos**

Man of the moment is Mike Bayliss of East St, seen on BBC2 recently giving David Attenborough a helping hand with a programme about cuckoos. Mike started to study birds 40 years ago and then in 1988 won the cuckoo egg counting record when he counted 25 eggs from the same bird. Mike, who had worked with David Attenborough before, did a lot of the filming between Sandford and Radley. As Mike says "the cuckoo has to overcome many obstacles to reproduce, and so guarantee that an iconic sound of spring remains part of our lives."

### **The Big Garden Birdwatch**

*From Julia Hamer-Hunt:* Oxford University does the Big Garden Birdwatch **Sat 24 & Sun 25 January, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm**, Oxford University Parks, Keble Gate Entrance, Parks Road, Oxford. It's the largest wildlife survey in the world with over 400,000 people now taking part. This year, you can do your bit by helping us find out who lives in the beautiful parks of Oxford University. It's so easy. The birdwatch only takes an hour of your time, so why not make it into a trip out for your friends and family? You don't need to be an expert – just turn up on the day and bring your enthusiasm – the RSPB will be on hand to show you how it's done.

### **Red scarf**

A long red scarf was left at 3 North St over the Christmas period and is waiting to be claimed. Tel: 793360.

## Fresh fish on Mondays

For those of you new to the Island you might like to know that lovely fresh fish from Grimsby is delivered every Monday around 8.30p. Call Kim Dickens on 07806 602776 if you'd like him to call at your door.

## FOR SALE, SWAPS AND FREEBIES

### Osney House swap

Giles and Lisa on West Street are hoping to move to a larger home on the Island (3 or more bedrooms required). If any residents are planning to downsize and might consider a house swap please contact Giles on 07834 827 530 or [giles@oxfordrivercruises.com](mailto:giles@oxfordrivercruises.com).

### Freebies

Arabian pouf (hardly used), roll-top desk, modern 'antique' pine, many glazed pots (both indoor, outdoor) and two-part aluminium extension ladder. Contact [rupert@booth.nu](mailto:rupert@booth.nu) or call by 10 Bridge Street.

### For sale

5 sliding unpainted pine windows £30 each. Contact Peter McCagie, tel: 0785 4027 815. Or call at Willow Barn, West St.

## THE DIRECTORY

### New entries

Top notch painter and decorator (and Island resident) Rob Bennett, mob: 07905 819310 ('Highly recommended'); DEC electricians, tel: 725453; Flooring and general carpentry Amazon flooring, tel: 07899 918015; Rentacure (damp work), tel: 01993 771632 three new services all 'highly professional'; Roofing PJS Roofing Ltd ('member of the Confederation of Roofing Contractors and provides a reliable and professional service'), tel: 01235 559803, mob: 07702 946255; Beautiful Creases (ironing service that collects and delivers), tel: 01993 708333.

## TRIED AND TESTED

### Hairdresser

Nadine Wright, hairdresser, (ex-Mahogany, will come to your home and is highly recommended) Mob: 07824 660184.

### Garden design and maintenance

Olivia's Gardens tel: 07866 476044. Olivia Stewart, a fully qualified horticulturalist, runs a complete service from design to maintenance ('first class').

### Washing machine repairs

RG Domestic tel: 01865 718299 mob: 0771 113 2961. Repairs all makes and has timed appointments including after 6pm- a godsend for those who are out all day. Chris Griffin of CE Electrical Services tel: 01865 842598 or mob: 0778 2360979 ('I can thoroughly recommend him')

### General builder

Chris Willis, mob: 07974 155 638 does general building work/carpentry, for example (re)hanging doors, laying patios, decking, associated painting/decorating, as well as kitchen/bathroom fitting.

('the work was carried out efficiently and to a very high standard'.)

### Electrician

Lee Chapman a 'green' electrician, mob: 07825 133337

### Building and roof repairs

Keith Webster, tel: 01865 374585 ('strongly recommended')

### Carpenters

Rycote Carpentry tel: Robin 07947573371. ('I was really impressed with their work, fast, efficient and competitive pricing).

### Plumbing and heating

Ivan Kilbee, tel: 01235 847527, mob: 07050 133783; ('I have used Ivan for several years for servicing my boiler and general plumbing work. I'd give him a beta plus. His work is good and he comes on time, but he's not always easy to reach even on his cellphone.')

Peter Deadman, tel: 724384 ('very good and should be kept in the directory').

John Abbey, plumbing, heating and gas services, tel: 01865 882810, mob: 07802 399694 ('a great plumber!').

### Handyman

Jon Butt, tel: 07766 144116 ('a friend recommended him. He lives in Witney but very willing to travel to Oxford') David Morris, tel: 725875 (reasonably priced; highly recommended)

### Chimney sweep

Dennis Northcott, tel: 01235 526617 (does a good job)

### Window cleaning

Paul Smith, mob: 07979 692895 ('like many others I use Paul's window cleaning service. He is amiable and reliable.')

I Elmsdown Cottages, Wilcote Riding, Finstock, Oxon OX7 3BZ, mob: 0797 9692895.

### Interior and exterior decoration

Paul Simmons, tel: 01993 852317 mob 07803 603504 (good clean work and costs are reasonable)

Dave Buckle, tel: 848630 evenings ('friendly, efficient and good value')

Steve Brierty, mob: 07850 357414, tel: 01491 836762 ('strongly recommended')

### Sewing Services

Jan Donley, tel: 249625 upholstery (I've been please with everything she's done)

### Damp

Damprot Renovations Ltd, tel: 742144 ('have done some replastering for us on a couple of occasions and are good').

### Apple Macs

Macfaction: bill@macfaction.co.uk, tel: 01993 811197 ('knowledgeable and helpful')

### Oven Cleaning

Wayne, mob: 0791 7785 906 (doesn't use any chemicals)

### Beauty

Julia Harris does manicures and pedicures in your home. Her contact details are Harris 07843 477452 Email: jools010@googlemail.com (a very good service)

## Removals

Isis Van Man, tel: 01865 553347 [help@Isisvanman.com](mailto:help@Isisvanman.com)  
(very helpful and friendly)

## USEFUL NUMBERS

*City Council*, tel: 249811 (now 24 hours); *County Council*, tel: 792422; *County Councillors: Sushila Devi Dhall*, tel: 553415; *Alan Armitage*, tel: 516115; *City Councillors: Colin Cook*, tel: 272548 (day) 721844 (evening) email: [cllrcook@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:cllrcook@oxford.gov.uk); *Susanna Pressel*, 7 Rawlinson Rd Oxford OX2 6UE, tel: 554001 email: [cllrpressel@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:cllrpressel@oxford.gov.uk); *Community Beat Officer PC Jan Warner*, tel: 08458 505505; refuse, recycling, free collections, bulky items, street cleaning, drains and flooding tel: 252900; *free advice on energy*, tel: 252197; *free advice on energy and home insulation*, tel: 252197; *noise complaints*, daytime tel: 252553, out of hours tel: 742138; *Community Centre* tel: 245761; *on-street fines*, tel: 247090; *car park fines*, tel: 252489; *furniture recycling*, tel: 763698; *residents parking permits*, tel: 0845 634 4466; *bike theft and abandoned bikes*, tel: 0845 8505 505; *abandoned and unlicensed vehicles*, tel: 252900.

## OIRA COMMITTEE

### Committee members

*Bianca Elgar* 15 East St tel 202977; *Stephen Lynam* 11 South St (Secretary); *Fiona McFarlane (Treasurer)* 11 South St; *Elizabeth Newbery (Newsletter)* 3 North St 793360; *Richard Thurston* 38 West Street, tel: 723663 (*Chair*); *Kate Stewart* 18 East St tel 241856; *Anna Truelove* 83 Bridge St 245496 (*Vice Chair*); *Duncan Wagstaff (web and noticeboard)* 38 Bridge St; tel: 07812 125 650. The new email address for any OIRA committee member is [askoira3@osneyisland.org.uk](mailto:askoira3@osneyisland.org.uk)

### Next Committee meeting

**Next Committee meeting** The OIRA committee's next meeting will take place on **October 20 @ 8pm** If you'd like to raise an issue drop in or let someone on the committee know. You can find our agenda the minutes on the Bridge Street notice board and on the website. Next newsletter is due out mid January 09, last date for copy **December 29**. If you would like to put an item in contact: Elizabeth Newbery 3 North St. 793360, email: [elizabeth@newberyandengland.com](mailto:elizabeth@newberyandengland.com) or use the tear-off strip below.

### A note on the Internet

Contributors should be aware that the newsletter is automatically posted on the Internet just as it appears in print.

### Gazebo hire

*Sally Roberts*, 1 Bridge St, tel: 721596

### Notice board

*Duncan Wagstaff*, 38 Bridge St; tel: 07812 125 650

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Please use this tear-off strip to write down any requests for inclusion in the newsletter or concerns that you may wish Committee Members to raise at OIRA meetings. Post it through the door of any of the members listed above.

Name

Address

Tel. no.