

Osney Island Residents' Association Newsletter

www.osneyisland.co.uk
November/December 2012

COMING UP

Osney Island children's lantern parade

The traditional Osney Island Children's Lantern Parade and carol singing will take place on Saturday 15th December. Please join us to set off from outside The Punter at 5pm. Bring a lantern and dress warmly. Refreshments are offered en route! Everyone welcome. The carolers do not collect money and love to sing for both old friends and new arrivals. If you'd like us to sing outside your door please drop us a note at 50 West Street or call 07706 188263. Nibbles and drinks are very welcome en route - please drop us a note if you can provide some!

Recitals at St Frideswide

Thursday 29th November at 7:30pm, the exuberant St James Singers will be giving an evening of music and readings with an advent theme.

West Oxford Primary School Christmas Bazaar

Saturday 1st December from 11am -2pm. Come along to make your own willow Christmas wreath, pick up a Christmas gift, enjoy lunch in the café and, and if we are really lucky, get to visit the big man in the red coat! More details are available from Suzanne Jeffrey at 13 South St.

Summer events 2013

Planning has started for the next Osney Island summer event including (hopefully) the reinstatement of the Round the Island Raft Race. Yay! We will be meeting to discuss the details and work out logistics so please come along 8pm at the Punter on Wednesday 28th November. If you can't make it, please email Karen Brooks Karen@chillipots.co.uk with ideas or how you would like to be involved.

ISLAND NEWS

A royal date for Heather Marsh

Heather, who attended Matthew Arnold school, has achieved her Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award. On Wednesday November 14 she will travel to London to receive her certificate from the DofE's Patron and Founder – HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. The Gold Award Presentation (GAP) is a celebration and recognition of Heather's achievements in her Gold DofE programme. The GAP is a unique event and a fitting culmination to mark the hard work, determination and perseverance required.

She worked tirelessly through the five sections of her



DofE programme over two years to achieve her award. Her diverse activities included three- day expeditions to the Isle of Arran and Dartmoor, helping on a week long residential course for her old primary school North Hinksey, volunteering every week for six months at the youth club in Dean Court, training for competition with the Oxford Swimming Club and obtaining a distinction at Grade 8 on the flute. Heather said her experience "Had helped her to realise the importance of the role played by volunteers in our area and the huge reservoir of good will that many people pour into helping others. It also allowed me to appreciate that hard work and commitment have their own rewards and that the important things in life are worth striving for."

Slug island

Introducing a regular slot from our new roving correspondent, Jane Buekett of South Street.

Until I moved to Osney I'd never given much thought to slugs and snails. After I had lived here for a couple of years a friend complained that we rarely had a conversation in which I didn't mention them.

Every effort at gardening turned into a battle for which they seemed better equipped. I despaired at the chewed off stumps of lettuce seedlings, the doily- like hostas and the pansies with their flowers gnawed away. I tried all the deterrents. The saucers of milk and beer were untouched, the garlic infusions watered onto plants were just smelly, snails crawled happily over copper strips unperturbed by rings of gravel, eggshells or chillies.

But the worst thing was that they came into the house. We'd come down in the morning to find half eaten pieces of paper on the kitchen noticeboard, the edges serrated by those tell-tale gummy marks, or trails of slime across the bread board. We'd spot a slug halfway up the wall during dinner, even the occasional desiccated slug corpse under the bed, perfectly intact but as dry and inflexible as one of those moulded plastic farm animals I had as a child. I had visions of them spending hours painfully inching up the stairs, to an inevitable sorry end – the Captain Cooks and David Livingstones of the mollusc world. What were they hoping to find?

The Willows of East Street

From Michael Lear: A meeting took place between the City Council Parks Services and Susanna Pressel and East Street resident Michael Lear on Thursday 8th November regarding the 18 willows in East Street when all the trees were reviewed.

At the south end of the street towards the Punter, there are six crack willows which survive as pollards as part of the original 1953 scheme to commemorate the Coronation. As Osney is a Article 4 Direction Conservation Area, the landscape management of the trees is an important consideration to the character of the area. Pollarding is a traditional way of maintaining this type of tree, especially where the spread of the tree has to be controlled, but once pollarding has started it has to be continued.

For residents at the north end of East Street, song birds were almost totally absent following the felling of trees in October 2006, the silent springs ended around 2010/11 when replacement white willows provided safe shelter. In 2012, this use has increased further. There appears to be good level of summer bat activity connected with the crack willows at the south end of the street and all six trees do provide considerable wildlife value. It has to be remembered that willows have more other organisms associated with them any other native trees, including oaks.

What started out as even-aged designed landscape to commemorate the Coronation has evolved into a varied treescape. In arboricultural terms, the management of this diversity is quite challenging. We resolved the following:

- The older crack willows will be re-pollarded, but this may be done in two seasons in order to minimise the loss of habitat.
- The younger white willows require formative pruning in order to encourage the longterm tree armature which will provide the tall pollard form. Every tree will need attention depending on its individual form.
- In a further 4-5 years time the white willow's performance can be reviewed with the view to deciding where the main regrowth or 'knuckle' points will be selected so full pollarding can begin thereafter.
- Low branches in the way of the towpath will be removed.
- Two of the already damaged white willows should be replanted in order to start again.

The work is likely to happen in the New Year, no doubt there will be some inevitable temporary suspension of parking to allow safe access for the tree work. If any residents have comments please get in touch with myself (01865 725046 mjl@learassociates.co.uk) or Susanna (tel: 554001 email: cllrpressel@oxford.gov.uk).

Preparing for winter weather

As agreed at the last AGM, OIRA has bought grit bins from the Council which should help us cope if we have to deal with bad weather this winter. They have been placed on public land (as required by the Council) at each end of the Island. If we want to use the grit effectively and keep the supply from the Council free of charge (we cannot afford to pay for replenishment), there are some rules we need to follow if the snow comes down. The rules will also be placed on the noticeboard on Bridge Street. Please take a look at these now and especially if you think you will be able to help with shovelling and gritting in due course.

There are two grits bins – Bridge Street and North Street – and six snow shovels housed in the Punters' barn (all paid for by OIRA). Please return all shovels to the barn after use. If you are going to shovel you may want to bring a bucket or similar to ferry grit to the area you are working on.

The grit is provided free by the Council only for clearing public routes. If the grit is used otherwise (eg for private paths or car parks), supplies will not be replenished free. These are the rules for the sensible use of the grit:

1. To be effective, snow should be cleared before grit is applied - don't apply grit on top of snow. Shovel snow to the sides of paths, rather than on the road.
2. Use sparingly.
3. There will never be enough grit from these bins to clear roadways, or the full width of each pavement. Instead the aim is to enable pedestrians to get on and off the Island safely. The priority areas for clearance are:
 - the middle part of each pavement (not the whole width);
 - paths over each bridge off the Island; and
 - pathways across each road so that pedestrians can cross safely where necessary to get around and off the Island.

2013 is the first year these supplies will be in place. It may help next year to buy grit spreaders if this year is successful. Successful use of the grit requires able-bodied people to shovel and grit as soon as snow begins to settle seriously and to make the pedestrian pathways off the Island as above.

New logo

Simon Pressey, who designed the new logo, felt the egg and spoon frog wasn't appropriate now the Osney Olympics are over, so he's drawn a lovely new one.

A big thank you ...

From West Oxford School: profits from the sale of T shirts, mugs and ducks at the Osney Island Olympics were donated to the West Oxford Playground appeal, helping the school refurbish the foundation stage playground. The playground has been transformed from a tired and 'well loved' space with crumbling tarmac. It is now an exciting, adventurous outdoor space which is great for lessons and play, for pupils at the school, as well as the After School Club, Holiday Club and other community groups that use the space. Thanks to all of you who organised, participated in and bought at the Osney Olympics. We reached the total needed to transform the foundation playground, just in time to get the work done over the summer holidays.

The Playground appeal is now working hard to raise the funds to improve the playground used by the older children. If you have any fundraising ideas or would like to help with the Pplayground appeal, please contact Suzanne Jeffrey at 13 South St on suzanne@dands.org.uk

New farmers' market

A new monthly Farmers' Market will be held in North Parade, just off Banbury Road, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The market will be held in that street, which will be closed to traffic, on the fourth Saturday of every month from now on.

St Frideswide with Binsey

The Revd Clare Sykes is the new Rector for the Anglican parish of St. Frideswide and St Margaret's Binsey. You can contact her on 242345 or revclare@btinternet.com.

Services for Christmas time

22nd December, 3.30pm at St Margaret's Binsey, Carol Service

- 24th December, 3.00pm at St. Frideswide's, Crib Service
- 25th December, 9.00am at St. Margaret's Binsey, Christmas Day service
- 25th December, 10.30am at St. Frideswide's, Christmas Day service

REQUESTS, FREEBIES & ACCOMMODATION

Piano available for loan

We have a fine sounding upright Yamaha, but unfortunately no room to house it at present. If you are interested in borrowing the piano and giving it a happy home for a while, then please call Tilly on 241 846.

For sale

Good quality sturdy pine kitchen table with drawer and four chairs £50. Call 07977 459598.

Osney Olympic mugs, T-shirts and souvenir booklet

From Karen Brooks: I have just 11 mugs left and seven 3-4 year old, five 5-6 year old and one 7-8 year old t-shirts left. Email Karen@chillipots.co.uk or call 07810805406 if you would like one. T-shirts are £4 and mugs £5 – the perfect Christmas presents!

The Osney Island Olympics souvenir booklets are selling out fast – price just £3.50. Contact Elizabeth on 793360 if you would like one.

A Christmas Wish

A CD of family Christmas songs written by local musician and composer John Jolliffe of East St, is now available price £7. Call 0773 633 9310 if you'd like one or visit www.cheeckymonkeyshow.com.

Departures

Bianca Elgar and Kate Stewart have both resigned from the OIRA Committee. Kate was notable for expertly steering the Committee through some tricky issues and Bianca generously hosted the meetings providing terrific cakes and good cheer. Thank you both for your valuable contributions and company – we shall miss you.

USEFUL NUMBERS

City Council, tel: 249811 (now 24 hours); *County Council*, tel: 792422; *Alan Armitage*, tel: 516115; *Susanna Pressel*, 7 Rawlinson Rd Oxford OX2 6UE, tel: 554001 email: cllrspressel@oxford.gov.uk; *City Councillors: Colin Cook*, tel: 272548 (day) 721844 (evening) email: cllrcook@oxford.gov.uk and Susanna (as above); *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; *noise complaints*, tel: 249811; *Community Centre* tel: 245761; *on-street*

finer, 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.

THE DIRECTORY

The following list is compiled from Islanders recommendations only. No one pays for an entry and suppliers are removed if there are reports of unreasonable rates or service. The list is only as good as the updates so please let me know if anyone has retired or dropped out for other reasons.

TRIED AND TESTED

General builder

Chris Willis mob: 07974 155 638 does general building work/carpentry eg (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'); Pete Coles tel: 01865 776319 mob: 07760 327 057 also does plumbing ('reliable, helpful and reasonable rates'); Building specialist in carpentry and joinery, NHBC registered est 1974: R.P. Lepper building specialist, carpentry and joinery tel: 01993 882522 mob: 07801 136 4817 ('excellent, experienced workmanship'); Mark Mavrommatis tel: 07970 974792 to install new windows, repair old ones, paint. (He did an excellent job and at the moment is very reasonably priced because he is re-establishing himself in the Oxford area').

Building and roof repairs

Gosford Builders tel: 01865 373467 mob: 07855 373467 ('good work and very fair rates')

Plumbing and heating

Plumbing and heating: Aquatic tel: 01865 749999 mob: 07050 011884 (highly recommended); Ivan Kilbee tel: 01235 847527 mob: 07771 787585; ('good work and comes on time'); APV Boiler Services tel: 01865 377264 ('friendly, efficient and clean workers'); Colin Pizzie (electrics, plumbing, kitchens, bathrooms) tel: 01235 554655; J Smith tel: 01993 778244, mob: 07790 961395 ('reliable, competent and cheerful'); Jamie Cook boiler repairs (electrical repairs only) mob: 07775 700330

Kitchen fitters

Benchmark kitchens (helpful kitchen designers with good range of products) tel: 01865 372372

Electricians

RJB Electrical (rewires and new installations) tel: 01865 882723 mob: 07711 934348; J.L. Electrical (rewires, fuse boards, sockets, lights) mob: 07825 133337; DEC Electricians tel: 725453 ('very good'); Baldwin Appliances all white goods tel: 01865 377484 www.baldwinappliances.com;

Handyman

Jon Butt tel: 07766 144116 (lives in Witney but very willing to travel to Oxford'); Oliver tel: 0791 900 2222 Oxford-based. Reasonably priced and highly recommended; Andrew Russell ('highly recommended handyman, house and garden maintenance') tel: 01865 453497 mob: 07977 837675

Locksmith

Davies Hardened Security tel: 01865 371816 mob: 07711 625092 ('a rapid response within 24 hours')

Chimney sweep

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

Window cleaning

Paul Smith mob: 0797 9692 895 ('amiable and reliable.')

Interior and exterior decoration

Dave Buckle tel: 848630 evenings ('friendly, efficient and good value'); Steve Brierty 01491 836762 mob: 0785 0357414 ('strongly recommended'); Rob Bennett mob: 0790 5819310 ('highly recommended')

Flooring and general carpentry

Amazon Flooring mob: 07899 918015 ('highly recommended')

Upholstery

Ann Paver tel: 249129 soft furnishing including drapes, curtains but not upholstery ('highly recommended')

Damp

Damprot Renovations Ltd tel: 01865 742144 ('have done some replastering for us on a couple of occasions and are good').

Apple Macs

Bill Richardson email: bill@macfaction.co.uk tel: 01865 376100 ('excellent and will come out if not too busy'); Mac Simple is based in Osney Mead tel: 01865 580886 mob: 07974 321064 www.macsimple.co.uk ('excellent and local'); API Computing contact Andy mob: 07964 796007.

Oven Cleaning

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

Ironing services

Creases tel: 01869 347414 ('they collect and deliver - I've used them for years')

Removals

Isis Van Man tel: 01865 422342 mob: 07828 185884 email: help@Isisvanman.com ('very helpful and friendly')

Hairdressers

Highly recommended hair stylist who does your hair in the comfort of your own home! (former Art Director Mahogany and Toni & Guy) Sally Horton mob: 07815 445229; Nadine Wright ('ex-Mahoganny, cheerful and comes to my home on a Tuesday') mob: 07824 660184.

Gardening Services

Oxford Garden Services mob: 0755 498 7911 ('excellent tree surgery at fair rates - and they cleared up well afterwards'); David Morris tel: 01865 725875 (gardening maintenance and some diy); Eric Blake mob: 075911 57180 former head gardener at Shotover Estate does garden maintenance and carpentry eg building and repairing sheds and greenhouses fencing etc (very reasonable rates)

Logs

Logsforall.co.uk offer two sizes of seasoned, sustainably sourced, local, mess free logs, delivered free, the smaller size of log ideal for smaller woodburners/fireplaces. Not the cheapest but excellent burning and reliable delivery service, strongly recommended.

Bicycles

Jon Wyver: bicycles and accessories. He will deliver and pick up in Oxford free of charge. Efficient, friendly and reliable Excellent prices. mob: 07842 901873 email: info@oxbicycles.co.uk www.oxbicycles.co.uk

Thai massage, Chinese bodywork & acupuncture

Elizabeth Elliott mob: 07866 759669, offers treatment in her home on Osney. ('Highly recommended: one massage session with her is so relaxing, it's like a two-week holiday.')

Boilers

Jamie Cooke Tel: 07775 700300 email: JC.Electrical@hotmail.com ('excellent service')

Lighting

Oxford Lighting and Electrical Solutions Culham No1 Site, Station Rd, Abingdon OX14 3DA tel: 01865 408522 ('an immense range of light fittings and qualified electricians to install').

OIRA COMMITTEE

Jude Carroll 10 East St, tel : 793247 (gazebo); *Georg Deutsch* 4 Bridge St (Chair); *Suzanne Jeffrey* 13 South St tel: 247737 (noticeboard); *Bob Lawrence* 42 West St; *Susan Lloyd* Doyley Rd; *Stephen Lynam* (Secretary and Vice Chair) 11 South St tel: 201334; *Fiona McFarlane* (Treasurer) 11 South St tel: 201334; *Elizabeth Newbery* (Newsletter) 3 North St tel: 793360; *Anna Truelove* 83 Bridge St tel: 245496 (directory).

The email address for any OIRA committee member is askoira@osneyisland.org.uk

Next Committee meeting

The OIRA committee's next meeting is Wednesday, 9 January @ 8pm at the Punter. 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 January, last date for copy December 31. If you would like to put an item in contact: Elizabeth Newbery 3 North St. tel: 793360, email: elizabeth@newberyandengland.com or use the tear-off strip below

A note on the Internet

OIRA website: www.osneyisland.co.uk Contributors should be aware that the newsletter is automatically posted on the Internet just as it appears in print. Please bear in mind that OIRA can't accept any responsibility for the contents of external websites.

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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

Request

Tel. no.