

OSNEY ISLAND RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

www.osneyisland.org.uk

NEWSLETTER MAY / JUNE 2009



COMING UP

Open gardens

From Anna Truelove: **Sunday, May 17.** The gardens will be open from 2.30 - 4.30 and tea, squash and homemade cakes will be served in the communal garden next to 112 Bridge Street from 3.30 - 5.30. There will be a plant stall in the tea garden and a sale of surplus cakes will start at 5.31 pm. Tickets will be on sale from noon outside 112 Bridge St as follows:

Gardens only: £2 per adult; £1 concs; £5 per family group

Gardens + drinks + cake: £3.50 per adult; £2.50 concs; £7.50 per family group

This year you may also like to wander down to Osney Lock where ice cream and seedlings will be on sale from lock-keeper Ray.

- If you can offer your garden please contact Anna on 245496/ 83 Bridge St.
- If you can bake a cake, biscuits or buns please tell Bianca on 202977/15 East St. Pauline on 250870/ Bridge St
- If you can donate plants/seedlings/cuttings please contact Sally on 721596/1 Bridge St or Elizabeth on 793360/ 3 North St.

11 gardens are open:

3 North St; 15 East St; 1 Bridge St; 11 Bridge St; 58 Bridge St; 85 Bridge St; 80 Bridge St; 1 Swan St; 6 West St, 22 West St and 31 West St.

Arts Weeks

Sunday, May 9 -17, 12-6 pm; Thurs 12-8pm. Several local artists will be exhibiting at the WOCC, including Louise Summers of Bridge St who makes delightful woodcuts.

OIRA AGM 2009

From Richard Thurston:

Thank you to those who made the trek across the road to the West Oxford Community Centre for our 2009 AGM. We had over 35 attendees, the largest number for several years. We invited some special guest stars including Lord Mayor of Oxford, Cllr Susanna Pressel.

Keith Hutchence from the Environment Agency gave an enthusiastic presentation about the flood risk prevention strategy and encouraged Islanders to respond to the consultation on the planned flood relief channel.

Dan Rawstorne from the campaign against the super-probation centre in Mill Street, gave an impassioned speech encouraging residents to join the campaign against the centre.

We welcomed our two Police and Community Support Officers (PCSOs) Ray and Craig who updated us on the importance of reporting all crime, even so called 'low level crime'. Craig confirmed that, at present, there are no plans for CCTV for Osney.

The meeting dealt with the usual business, including receiving and approving the usual reports, including those of the Treasurer and for the Open Gardens event. The Officers of the Association, all of whom must submit themselves for re-election each year, were re-elected. Thank you for the vote of confidence.

We also asked the meeting to vote on some amendments that we proposed to make to the constitution and how OIRA operates. Several of these proposals generated much useful debate and we thank those who contributed for their thoughtful and helpful comments. The present OIRA Committee aims to start to bring the OIRA constitution more into line with modern practice. To begin this process, we tabled a couple of amendments to give the OIRA committee specific, rather than implied, power to act in certain areas. To this end, the AGM gave approval to the following amendments to clause 6:

- Vote 1 To allow the committee to effect insurance of all kinds (which may include officers' liability insurance);
- Vote 2 To establish and / or support any body, and to make donations for any purpose falling within the association's objects;
- Vote 5 To undertake spending to facilitate the production, design and publication of the associations' Newsletter, website or other communication methods as determined by the Committee.

Although the meeting was broadly supportive, following a spirited discussion, our proposal to form a company with similar objects to those of the association were withdrawn. We'll undertake more research, including whether charitable status might be worthwhile, and then look to ask Islanders for approval at an EGM.

Finally, the meeting endorsed the Committee's aim of developing a code of conduct that we would look to introduce that would govern the relationships that we enter into.

Thank you for making the AGM so successful and thank you for your participation.

Code of conduct

To be introduced with immediate effect:

Osney Island Residents' Association (OIRA) has no tolerance of any discrimination of any kind, whether on the basis of race, culture, gender, age, disability or economic status. We take pride in the diverse multi-cultural community in which we live. We expect that everyone with whom we come into contact:

- adheres to the principle of not acting in a discriminatory way;
- supports OIRA's aim of fostering the growth of community spirit throughout Osney.

We expect these standards from all including our contributors in the newsletter, those listed on our website and those with whom OIRA arranges community events, including our annual general meeting and open gardens.

OIRA website

The website is coming! The address is <http://www.osneyisland.co.uk/> It should be up and running by the end of the month.

A BIT OF LOCAL HISTORY

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.

BITS AND BOBS

Family looking for 3-bedroom house in Osney area to rent from 1 September. Reference available from current Bridge Street landlord. Please contact Peter or Linda on 723238.

Need a house sitter?

Our totally reliable Island window cleaner, Paul Smith, is available for house-sitting anytime this summer. Contact Paul on 07979 692895.

For sale

Pine Welsh Dresser, 4ft wide, 6ft high 18 ins deep, £70. Tel. 247001.

Wanted

Has anyone got a children's stair gate I can borrow for 3 weeks from July 22? If you can help please contact Elizabeth on 793360 or email elizabeth@newberyandengland.com

Osney house wanted

We are currently renting on Osney Island and are looking at buying a two/three bedroom house on the Island or nearby. We would prefer to buy via a private sale. If you can help please contact [REDACTED]

House to rent

Wanted: a year long let for lovely 2-bed furnished terraced house, recently redecorated. Available from mid July 09 for £925/month plus bills. Please contact the agent Chimneys at chimneyslettings@yahoo.co.uk or +44(0)123 5772670.

Seeking property to rent

I'm looking for a 2/3 bedroom property to rent on Osney Island from September 2009 - for me and a

friend who is moving to Oxford. I have been renting on Osney since 2008 and have been thoroughly enjoying life on the Island! Please contact Tilly at: 34 Bridge St, 250939. email: forstertilly@yahoo.co.uk

Summer accommodation

A young family of 4 is looking for accommodation in Osney from 18 July - 15 August 2009. If you can help please contact stanislas.pamela@cea.fr or Ghislaine Yver 28 West St.

Exchange

Do you need help with your children for a few weeks in July? 15 year old Spanish girl is looking for a family to stay with for 3 or 4 weeks this summer to improve her English in return for some baby-sitting. Or do you have a teenager who would like to do an exchange with a family in Madrid? For more information call Jill 798331.

Island babes

Congratulations to [REDACTED]

Crime

You may like to know ... that the **Community Support Officers** hold a surgery at WOCC from 2-3.30 every Thursday.

And ...

the **Home Office** has produced an information pack for householders on how to improve home security and foil burglars. Ring 0800 456 1213 to request a pack which also offers discounts on some security devices.

St Frideswide's

The organ restoration work has begun at St Frideswide, and Phase 1 of our repairs at Binsey are now complete. Many thanks to all who contributed to these projects!

Sat 16 May Christian Aid coffee morning at St Frideswide's from 10am till noon. There will be coffee served and jams and cakes on sale, all for the charitable work of Christian Aid.

Sat 27 June Gift Day and Coffee morning 10-12 at St Frideswide's.

Sun 19 July Binsey Village Fete, 12-5pm, with a procession leaving the village at 3pm for festal evensong at 3.30pm. The fete runs all afternoon with traditional village stalls, activities, and events.

Service times: At St Frideswide's, our parish mass is at 10.30am every week. Get in touch with Fr Russell or watch out for posters for the dates of Sunday school (older and younger children in two streams).

There is also a short said mass at 7pm on Tuesdays and 12.30pm on Thursdays. At Binsey, there is evensong at 3.30pm every Sunday, and Holy Communion at 9am on the first Sunday of the month.

Contact: Fr Russell - 01865 242680 or rdewhurst@mac.com Website: www.frideswide.org.uk

THE DIRECTORY

The following list is compiled from Islanders' recommendations. No one pays for an entry and suppliers are removed if there are reports of unreasonable rates or service so always check the latest list.

OIRA cannot be held responsible for any claims as a result of hiring anyone in the Directory. You are always advised to get two quotes.

Sorry, in the last newsletter I forgot to include Colin Pizzie's number: 01235 554655/07756 353433. He does electrics, plumbing (including showers), kitchens and bathrooms.

TRIED AND TESTED

Garden design and maintenance

Olivia's Gardens tel: 07866 476044. 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; Chris Griffin of CE Electrical Services tel: 01865 842598 or mob: 0778 236 0979 ('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

Baldwin Domestic Appliances on 01865 377484 ('they can fix anything'); Lee Chapman a green electrician ('really fantastic') mob: 07825 133337; DEC electricians on 725453 ('very good')

Building and roof repairs

Keith Webster, tel: 01865 374585 ('strongly recommended'; PJS Roofing Ltd ('member of the Confederation of Roofing Contractors and provides a reliable and professional service') tel: 01235 559803 mob: 07702 946255

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.');

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

Handyman

Jon Butt, mob: 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: 0785 0357414, tel: 01491 836762 ('strongly recommended'); **Rob Bennett**, mob: 0790 5819310 ('Highly recommended')

Flooring and general carpentry

Amazon Flooring on 07899 918015 (highly 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)

Ironing services

Beautiful Creases (ironing service that collects and delivers) tel: 01993 708333.

Beauty

Julia Harris does manicures and pedicures in your home. Her contact details are **Harris**, mob: 07843 477452 Email: jools010@googlemail.com (a very good service); **Nadine Wright**, hairdresser, (ex-Mahogany, will come to your home and is highly recommended) mob: 07824 660184.

Removals

Isis Van Man, tel: 01865 553347 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; **Susanna**

Pressel, 7 Rawlinson Rd Oxford OX2 6UE, tel: 554001 email: cllrspressel@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

Next Committee meeting

The OIRA committee's next meeting will take place on June 22 at 15 East St @ 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 July 09, last date for copy June 30. If you would like to put an item in contact: Elizabeth Newbery 3 North St. 793360, email: elizabeth@newberyandengland.com or use the tear-off strip below.

Further committee meetings will be held on 22nd June; 24th August; 19th October and 14th December.

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

.....
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.