

WHAT'S ON

in

Oakridge Lynch; Far Oakridge; Waterlane;
Bournes Green & Tunley



December 2020 / January 2021

Edition 248

EDITOR'S NOTE

Thank you to Bizzie White, for suggesting a new feature for the What's On – Your Page - where you, the reader, are invited to comment on previous articles, or observations of general interest - see page 3.

My thanks go to those who have written pieces for the 'Memories of Oakridge Past' feature; it has been a pleasure to read them, and I would welcome more from villagers – more recent tales and recollections would be great too! Huge thanks as ever to those who provide regular contributions on behalf of all the groups and societies; and of course, to the fantastic delivery team who ensure your copy arrives on your doorstep (or inbox!).

And finally, Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year to all – hopefully 2021 will be an improvement on this most challenging of recent years!

Victoria Beard

MONDAY 25th JANUARY 2021 - CLOSING DATE for the next WHAT'S ON

COVER ILLUSTRATION BY DANNY WILSON

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E&OE

OAKRIDGE RAINWATCH



The rainfall in September and October, as measured by my rain gauge, was as follows:-

September..... 31 mm.....about 1.2 ins.

October..... 172.8 mm.....about 6.8 ins.

So far the rainfall in November (to 17th) is 49 mm.....about 1.9 ins.

Gill Farrar

YOUR PAGE

If you have any comments on the current issue or concerns about any matters that have arisen in the village just get in touch with the editor, Victoria Beard, vbeard51@gmail.com.

Jenny Black would like to thank everyone who has kindly visited her over the past few weeks and to wish all a peaceful Christmas.

- Put conkers in the porch to repel spiders - it does work and I've plenty if anyone wants them! *Sue Korda*

- Sloe Gin. Bizzie forgot to say you should put the sloes in the freezer to split their skins. *Judy Mackie*

- I would like to say how delightful Danny's cover illustrations are and how much I enjoyed and appreciated Sue Wise's poem: it struck such a chord with me. I'm also enjoying the memories of Oakridge and, picking up what Kay wrote for the History Group, more please of memories of school and village life from the 50's onward. *Bizzie White*

Good Reads from local Book Groups:

Wilding, Isabella Tree
 The Guilty One, Lisa Ballantyne
 Step by Step, Simon Reeve
 A Single Thread, Tracy Chevalier

- Kay recommends the Sky Arts Book Programme on Freeview, Channel 11 on Sunday evening. It really is free!

Fiona's Film and Series Recommendations

Films: My Octopus Teacher - Documentary on Netflix
 The Social Dilemma - Documentary on Netflix
 The Trial of the Chicago 7 - Feature on Netflix

Series: The Queen's Gambit - you don't need to know anything about chess! Netflix
 The Plot against America - Sky/Now
 Mrs America - BBC iplayer

THE CHURCH IN OAKRIDGE



meeting at St Bartholomew's

VICAR Rev. S Murray 01452 770897

CHURCHWARDEN Mr. Martin Green 01452 770322

These dates assume that the Government guidance / requirements regarding Coronavirus remain as they are planned to be on 3rd December. Congregations are limited to 30 people maximum, please follow the notices in church.

DECEMBER 2020

10th Thursday Parish Communion TO BE CONFIRMED	10.00 am
20 th Parish Communion	9.30 am
25 th CHRISTMAS DAY Parish Communion	9.30am

JANUARY 2021

7 th Thursday Parish Communion TO BE CONFIRMED	10.00 am
17 th Parish Communion	9.30am

Greetings from the Church in Oakridge

As we enter into Advent, awaiting celebrations of the birth of the baby Jesus Christ, we are very much aware that Christmas will be different for us all this year. We wish you peace and joy, love and light. Sadly we will not be holding a parish Christingle Service this year due to Covid-19 restrictions, but will be marking the occasion with our school on 4th December. There will be a Crib Service at 5pm on Christmas Eve, this is primarily for families with young children. Seating is unfortunately restricted to comply with Covid-19 restrictions. Therefore it will have to be a ticketed event, please make your reservation with Brian Cheeseman, telephone 01285 760452.

It's disappointing that we are unable to host the Carol Service on Christmas Eve in the church. It would be lovely however to share some festive decorations with our neighbours - lets light up our trees, bombard them with angels - children might like to create their own.

During these difficult times of lockdown we are grateful that Saint Bartholomew's Church is open for private prayer between 10 - 12 on Thursdays and Sundays. It is a lovely safe haven for thought and reflection, with social distancing of course.

Blessings to you all.

FARM LANE

The state of Farm Lane is getting worse and worse. We can flag up the issue by reporting it Gloucestershire County Council Highways. Telephone 08000 514514. Email highways@gloucestershire.gov.uk or search 'Gloucestershire County Council Highways complaints', report it, mark the lane on the map and make a comment. Hopefully if lots of people contact Highways something will get done.

Farm Lane will be closed from its junction with Bakers Mill to outside the property known as Frampton Place. This road will be closed from 4th January to 22nd January 2021 for repairs to retaining walls.

THE BUTCHERS ARMS

What better way than to re-open with our delicious new Christmas Menu available from 5th December. Please call us on 01285 760390 or follow our facebook page for details.

We have made the magic happen in the Butchers Arms, the tree is up and the fire roaring for the re-open on 2nd December, along with our delicious food and finest ales. Please call in advance to book a table, we require a minimum 2 days' notice.

Thank you for your local custom and support during these turbulent times. As we step into Tier 2, we embark on another difficult journey; please support your country local in a safe manner to keep us all safe (and open).

We wish you all a safe and Merry Christmas.

Bev and Greg

OLLIE'S SHOP

This year, Christmas may be a bit different but that doesn't mean we can't still make it special for our loved ones, even if we won't be able to be with them. If you need to post a little something to far away relatives, we've got you

covered for early Christmas shopping available already in our Cotswold room. We offer a selection of unique gifts, delicious treats or stocking fillers for all the family, for under £10 and you can post them right here on the spot through the post office so that your family gets to enjoy their special gifts on time. Latest recommended posting dates within the UK are December 18th for second class and December 21st for 1st class; while for USA and Canada, it's the 12th of December; for Italy, Germany or Spain, the 16th of December and for France, the 18th of December.

We also offer a fabulous Hamper Service and are already busy making lovely custom made orders, just let us know what you have in mind and we will do our utmost to create the perfect bespoke gift basket.

And speaking of gearing up to Christmas, we are already taking orders for our popular, high welfare Christmas Meats (from the family farm recently featured in Countryfile) as well as Veggie and fruit boxes. Please let us know if you'd like to place an order as soon as possible.

A selection of Wreaths will also be available soon, so please stop by to see what's in store!

Merry Christmas and may 2021 bring all the best, health and happiness to all,
Laura, Oscar and Ollie

PROPOSED TELECOMMUNICATIONS MAST

Soon after the last edition of What's On, EE unexpectedly withdrew the application for a telecoms mast in Far Oakridge, from Stroud District Council Planning.

There was a short breather before we became aware that they intended to re-apply. It seems that a new application would take no account of public comments submitted to the first application.

A major obstacle to EE is that they cannot claim to have a "willing landowner". They appear to overcome this by starting legal proceedings against us, (for a second time), to take the matter to the Upper Lands Tribunal, who would then decide whether there is a mast in our field in Far Oakridge, or not. Simultaneously, agents of EE have been photographed and witnessed making a survey of the site without notice or permission. Then soon after that, notifying us of a site survey on 12/11/20. Access to the field was promptly refused and cameras installed.

These actions by EE are inconsistent with the Industry Code of Conduct for Mobile Operators in that they are required to have standards of respectful and constructive engagement with the community and the landowners.

We are grateful to have the support of our Parish Council, District Councillor, local MP and many others, in expressing opposition to the mast and / or the tactics used by EE.

This matter is being discussed at the next Parish Meeting on Weds 2nd Dec. It is possible for members of the public to join the meeting via Zoom – please contact the Clerk (email admin@bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk) who will send the relevant link.

We are aware, of course, that some parishioners support the idea of having improved signal etc. but feel obliged to make known, especially to nearby landowners, the background and fast moving developments in this matter.

If anyone would like to constructively discuss, comment or offer advice on this disturbing situation, we would welcome your communication.

Sue Casey, Oakridge Farm, Far Oakridge GL6 7PF caseychief@gmail.com
 Sandra Coles
 Emma Vickers vickersemma@btinternet.com
 Jason Sippel Jason@sippel.com

OAKRIDGE HISTORY GROUP



Oakridge Mill

People new to Oakridge are often puzzled by The Old Mill at the end of Broadway. This was not a woollen cloth mill, but the site of a silk throwing mill which converted raw silk to various types of silk thread for weaving. It provided employment for both women and children in Oakridge and many children worked half time between school and the mill. The school logbooks record the battle between the schoolmaster and the mill manager concerning children missing school to work in the mill. The mill was powered by steam with coal brought up Farm Lane by donkeys from the canal at Baker's Mill.

The mill was built by John Jones, the son of a wealthy clothier, Nathaniel Jones of Green Court, Chalford. Following the collapse of the woollen cloth industry in the Chalford area, Nathaniel Jones provided funds for his sons to start up silk throwing mills to reduce the serious unemployment in the area. John Jones built the mill in Oakridge around 1856 and he is reported to have said "that women should not walk all the way to Chalford to work". He died in 1860 "of inflammation of the brain" at the age of 31 after cutting off rivets to beat the boiler smith at Seville's Mill in a bet.

His widow, Mary, remarried a commercial traveller, Charles William Rudolf de Bary who had been staying at the home of a lawyer, William Trotman Lambert,

in Chalford at the time of John Jones's death. De Bary took over the running of Oakridge and Ashmeads silk mills, but in 1869 the mills were taken over by a solicitor from Essex, John Alexander Sparling. From 1874 to 1879 Oakridge mill was owned by the firm of Tubbs Lewis and run by their manager Mr Henry Foden. Tubbs Lewis subsequently moved to Wotton under Edge. In 1880 William Chapman, the owner of several mills in Chalford area, took over and employed Nathan Frost as manager.

Following various periods of closure, the mill finally closed in 1897 and was demolished. Images of the mill can be found on the Oakridge History Archives website <https://oakridgearchives.omeka.net>

John Loosley

OAKRIDGE GARDEN CLUB



Here are more hints and tips from members for making the most of winter in the garden.

The War against Slugs

- Make bug hotels for the vacant beds in the vegetable garden. Put bundles of about 20 sticks of varying widths and about 2 feet long on the bare earth. These will attract insects such as woodlice and earwigs which will eat the slugs eggs through the winter so in the spring - no slugs!
- Always re-pot hostas in the autumn/winter. You will be amazed at the number of slugs nestling in the roots.

Jobs to do (and not to do) in winter

- Prune apple trees, but not in frosty weather. Trained trees such as fan, cordons and espaliers should not be pruned now, but in August.
- Plant garlic and shallot. Traditionally, these should be planted on the shortest day (21st December).
- Don't cut back ornamental grasses until the end of February.
- Remember plants in pots are much less hardy. The hardiness scale is h1, most tender to h 7, hardiest. H4 is ok for us in Oakridge and is -5 to -10.
- This is the best time to plant shrubs and trees. Don't plant trees too deeply, apparently this is the commonest cause of young trees dying. Keep to the soil mark on the stem. Don't put compost in the bottom of the planting hole as when it decays the soil will sink and the tree will find itself deeper than it should be. Add compost to the sides of the hole, which should be square, not round, (the roots like the corners)

and put plenty of compost on the surface when you've filled in, keeping everything at the right level.

- In the dark days of January indulge yourself with dreams of giving the garden a new look. What better way than looking through catalogues, checking photos of the garden you took during the year and going back to your favourite gardening books for inspiration? And all the while, sitting in front of a glowing fire with a cup of tea or a glass of wine to help the creative process!

Bizzie White

OAKRIDGE WI

Just to let our community know that we are now 97 years old.

The organisation for our November AGM took on a different form, very ably carried out by our brilliant Secretary Anne Brain, via the email system. All bases covered, hurray!

We look forward, in the not too distant future, to holding a proper meeting. Remember our membership drive towards our 100th Anniversary in 2023. Please.

This being the last edition of What's On before Christmas, may I on behalf of all our members, send everyone wishes for a Happy and Healthy Christmas Season.

Mary Fern

OAKRIDGE VILLAGE HALL



Taking Government guidance into account, and following lockdown and any local restrictions, we will continue to host organised exercise activities such as Ballyhoo dance classes, Yoga, Tai Chi and Verity's Fitness classes, but are unable, at present, to hire out the hall for social gatherings.

RAISE MONEY WITH YOUR SHOPPING

The Village Hall has now signed up as a beneficiary of donations from Amazon Smile. That means whenever you shop on-line at Amazon you can give a 0.5% donation to OVHT at no extra cost. It is very simple. When using Amazon just switch to smile.amazon.co.uk and search for Oakridge Village Hall Trust as your desired charity. You only have to do that once but can switch to another charity when you wish.

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon that lets customers enjoy the same wide selection of products, low prices, and convenient shopping features as on amazon.co.uk. The difference is that when customers shop through the URL smile.amazon.co.uk, Amazon will donate 0.5% of the net purchase price (excluding VAT, returns and shipping fees) of eligible purchases to the charitable organisations selected by customers. In order to browse or shop through AmazonSmile, customers must first select a charitable organisation. Once they have chosen their charity they can shop the site as they normally would. Only purchases made through smile.amazon.co.uk are eligible to generate donations.

smile.amazon.co.uk

STROUD FOOD BANK

A big thank you to all who have contributed to the food bank over the last year, to Ollie's Shop for providing a location for donations and the volunteers who have taken the goods to Stroud.

This year COVID-19 has caused problems and disruption to us all. One of its devastating effects is the increase in the number people in the UK who go hungry every day. Foodbanks partner with a wide range of care professionals to identify people in crisis and issue them with a food bank voucher. This can be redeemed for three days emergency food.

Volunteers are able to signpost people to agencies to help solve the longer term problem. A simple box of food makes a big difference, with foodbanks helping prevent crime, housing loss, family breakdown and mental health issues.

Your generous donations for Harvest Festival were very much appreciated. As we head towards Christmas, any seasonal contributions or toiletries donated in time to pack hampers will be gratefully received.

Linda Reardon

NATURE NOTES FROM WATERLANE



Our local walking group was walking the canal towpath in early spring when we came across a lot of ash trees being felled; we were told that in 5 years' time there would be very few left. Looking around our area I noticed that ash trees are one of the dominant trees in the area and its loss will change our landscape quite a bit.

Ash dieback is a fungal disease which causes leaf loss and crown dieback and can lead to the death of the tree. Some trees will survive infection but only a few, there is no evidence of full resistance to the disease. Spread of the virus is generally caused by the wind blowing spores of the fungus, although movement of diseased trees will also spread infection. It can kill young and coppiced trees quite quickly, however older trees can resist it for some time, although in their weakened state other pests may cause them to succumb. The airy nature of the foliage allows light to penetrate to the woodland floor, and its loss will change the ecology of the woodland floor, where a number of insects, lichens and mosses depend on the tree. It will also be a big loss to the timber market, with sports goods, tool handles, flooring and furniture being among their uses.

A lot of research has been carried out of the problem and recent studies has shown that the dieback is more prevalent in woodland areas mainly due to the fact that the fungus prefers cool, damp conditions. If you have ash trees on your own land you should check their health regularly against dieback symptoms and plan appropriate action in case of infection.

Alan White

BISLEY COMMUNITY COMPOSTING SCHEME



Bisley Community Composting Scheme is a members-only scheme.
Membership is open to ALL residents of the Parish of Bisley-with-Lypiatt.

<https://bisleycommunitycompostscheme.org.uk>

Members of the scheme bring garden waste to the composting site on the allotments in Bisley. Volunteers manage the scheme, with help from some paid local labour. Once composted, the product is offered back to all, to collect or buy, thereby returning valuable and lively nutrients to the soil, to your vegetables, your home-grown food. We *transform* unwanted garden waste from you into compost for the community. Furthermore, composting sequesters carbon helping to prevent climate change.

BCCS is not expensive compared to SDC brown bins, is open all year round and only costs £30 per year. We have many members from Oakridge who (we know) appreciate the scheme. We promote home composting, have a demonstration area in Bisley, and are always ready and willing to come out and give advice to home composters starting up or with problems with their heaps. We also helped Oakridge School set up their compost bins on their allotment.

Non-members are very welcome to come to buy our bagged, sieved compost on Saturday mornings between 10am and 1pm. Our bagged compost is £3 per 30 litre bag, or 4 bags for £10. Non-members may also make an appointment to fill their own bags with unsieved compost on a Saturday morning (in exchange for a donation). All our compost is peat -free of course and does not contain manures (if you are vegetarian or vegan).

The community has led this scheme for fifteen years for the benefit of the community. Our compost 'soil conditioner' is excellent, independently analysed, will feed the gardens of the Parish, increase local soil fertility, help wildlife, and help produce fine crops. BCCS is a Community Interest Company and is a fine example of a truly circular economy!

For Membership details please email Hazel Saunders hazelsaunders65@icloud.com Tel 01452 770606

For further information , for workshop sessions, talks etc etc contact Lesley Greene lesleygreene2@gmail.com Tel 01452 770018

And, if you would like to set up a community compost scheme in Oakridge we are here to help!

WINE CLUB



THE ART OF MULLING

For starters... a quick history lesson... are you sitting comfortably?

Once upon a time many years ago, about a few hundred BC actually, the Greek physician Hippocrates came up with a great idea to filter water, a conical shaped cloth filter bag. It was called the Hippocratic sleeve and used for centuries. 'Hippocras', named after this cloth sieve, was (and still is) a drink made from wine mixed with honey and spices. Sometimes heated but not always, it was poured through the cloth to strain the spices then used for medicinal or comforting purposes!

The Ancient Romans also drank warm spicy wine to keep their health in check during the cold winter months. As they invaded Europe and the Roman Empire grew, so did the trend for Mulled Wine. Pliny the Elder, an author, statesman and military commander wrote about the merits of warm and spicy spirits known as Piment. As one of the first ever wine critics, he was devoted to all things fermented, namely wine and beer. (His writings about terroir, vintage variation and ranking vineyards still influence the wine industry today.)

The practice of mulling survived the fall of the Empire. Throughout the Middle Ages people continued to blend warm wine with spices adding flowers and

herbs as natural sweeteners, again to promote health, ward off illnesses or just make an oxidised and sour wine more palatable. Anything was better than the water! 'Hippocras' became quite the thing with the aristocracy too. They could afford the exotic spices from the Orient along with the 'newly available' cane sugar, considered a luxury product. Hippocras sweetened with sugar was 'destined to the lords' but when made with honey was 'for the people'.

The first mulled wine recipe to be discovered was in one of the earliest known English cookery books *The Forme of Cury* ('The Method of Cooking') in 1390. A collection of 14th-century recipes, originally written down on a scroll. Cinnamon, ginger, galangal, cloves, pepper, nutmeg, marjoram and cardamom, the basis of the mulled wine spices, must be ground together to form a 'powdour' added to wine and left to steep for a day. The addition of a mystical ingredient 'grains of paradise', was most likely the herb, rosemary. Recipes using only spices continued to follow one another until after the 16th century when more fruit was introduced, oranges, apples, lemons, and almonds producing a much richer drink. Over time, a very long time, as Mulled Wine took off in countries like Germany (Gluhwein) and Scandinavia (Glögg), it started to wane in others. Eventually interest declined across most of Europe with the exception of Sweden. Glögg however, rose in popularity throughout the 1800's until its big turning point at the end of the century when it became associated with Christmas. Every wine merchant across the country had their own recipe to share. Bottles of Glögg, mostly depicting Father Christmas, were distributed throughout the rest of Europe uprooting the long forgotten mulled wine into a new festive light.

In England it had been cemented as a British classic during the Victorian era. In 1843, Charles Dickens wrote about a mulled-wine punch known as 'Smoking Bishop' in *A Christmas Carol*. Shortly after, the inimitable Mrs Beeton included a recipe for mulled wine in her 1869 edition of *Mrs Beeton's Book of Household Management*.

Mulled wine has become a global phenomenon with countries all over the world creating their own unique blend. To this day it continues to be a Christmas tradition.

....and there endeth your history lesson!!

**TO MULL OR NOT TO MULL...? WHAT TO MULL...? HOW TO MULL... ?
Let's mull this one over..... together.**

So, we know Mulling is basically adding spices, fruit and sugar to a liquid then warming them through to infuse flavours and we also know not all mulled drinks have to be served warm, some are best when chilled or iced.

I bet the first thing that comes into your mind is Mulled Wine and that is a room divider. Some dislike it so much it makes them grimace at the mere mention whereas some find it one of the most delicious highlights associated with the festive season. Whichever camp you fall into, it doesn't have to be wine that you mull. Some of us will have tried mulled cider in the past and though 'yup that's good, I'll give that one a go myself'... and then don't! Open up your mind to other possibilities and give something a try. To get started, think about what you like to drink, it could be anything at all, alcoholic or not as the case may be. For example Gin, Vodka, Brandy, Tequila, Rum (white or dark), Port for sure and Sherry, Vermouth, Rosé Wine, White Wine too and the beloved Red Wine, or Beer perhaps, even Tea and definitely fruit juices, Cranberry, Grape Juice, Apple, Orange, Pear, Pomegranate etc... and then ask yourself 'have I ever had that mulled?' Chances are NO!

Now that we have all got our choice of drink in mind, let us see what can be done. What spices, fruits and other additions could we consider? Look in the cupboards, in the fruit bowl, in the fridge and get ready to jot a few things down on your next shopping list.

The Spicy Bits

Nutmeg, Cinnamon Sticks, Whole Cloves, Allspice Berries (6 berries = 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon full of ground AllSpice) Star Anise, Peppercorns, Cardamon Pods, Crystallised Ginger, Fresh Ginger, Bay Leaves, Fennel Seeds, Vanilla Pods,

The Fruity Bits

Dried Lemon & Orange Peel, Fresh Citrus- Tangerines, Satsumas, Mandarins Clementines, Grapefruits... Apples, Cranberries (frozen will do).

Raisins, Prunes, Figs (after using in the mulling process, chop up and put into serving glasses before pouring the wine)

The Sweet Bits

Brown Sugar, Honey, Maple Syrup, Golden Syrup

The Herby Bits

Fresh Rosemary, Thyme, Mint

Mostly for garnish but adds to the aromas and therefore compliments the overall experience.

Wines

Reds - should be on the big bold side to stand up to the mulling process and not be left with a mouthful of spices! Try a dry Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Malbec, Tempranillo or a blend of these.

Whites - Choose a white that's not too acidic, such as a Viognier or an oaked Chardonnay (wines that are more astringent can develop a harsh edge when heated).

Price Point - mid range, not too cheap but definitely not your 'keeping for best' bottles. The well-crafted subtleties of high end wine will naturally be lost in the heating process.

Heating and Keeping Warm

Get your heavy bottomed saucepan out, add your chosen ingredients and gently warm through until the first signs of a simmer, keep on the lowest heat

for minimum 15-20 minutes. You can keep this going for hours, just never BOIL! Goodbye alcohol!

Set the slow cooker to LOW, do the same as above and 'cook' for 1-2 hours until ready to serve. Keeping the slow cooker on low won't spoil your concoction.

Put the oven on 200F/90 C to dry your citrus peel slivers on a lined baking tray for 25-30minutes.

For Serving

Heat-proof or double walled glasses, anything with a handle (protect your hand from the hot liquid), espresso cups, enamel camping mugs, jam jars, etc.

Storage

Un-drunk leftovers - cool to room temperature, put in airtight container in the fridge for 3-4 days.

Spice and dried fruit mix leftovers - put in an airtight container and keep for 3 months in the dark.

Tips and other uses

Too sweet? Add more spirit to balance flavour.

Too strong? Add more fruit juice or water.

Unsure of strength of your glass vessel? Remember the old trick of putting a teaspoon into the glass first before pouring hot liquid, prevents breaking.

Keep your glass bottles and **SHARE THE LOVE**

Give to a neighbour and leave on garden wall with a message, 'Try Me'.

We already soak vine fruits in brandy for Christmas cake so let's get marinading our fruits of choice in the mulled liquor and leave overnight. Strain and serve with anything you fancy, cream / ice cream / custard / yogurt.

Ooooh, Yum Yum pig's bum. (there's a rude version of that poem passed down the ages UK, make any vicar blush!)

More mulled tea Vicar?

There are no recipes here, no rule book, just thought provoking ingredients and ideas.

Give something a go and leave your comments or recipes on the new 'Your Page' in the next edition of 'What's On'. GOOD LUCK!!

Oakridge Wine Club is warm, welcoming and it's always compulsory to have a laugh.

If you're interested contact Jill 07816955362.

JOHN BAILEY OPEN STUDIO 2020

As you will know, I normally hold an Open Studio of my Paintings and Pottery at this time of year, in aid of Cancer Research. However, due to the lockdown and deteriorating local situation as regards Covid, I have regrettably decided to postpone opening the studio until the vaccine is available and it will be safer for all concerned. I do have a website – www.johnbaileyart.co.uk – or follow me on [Facebook.com/John Bailey Art](https://www.facebook.com/JohnBaileyArt) – the exhibition and a selection of my latest work can be viewed there.

In the meantime, I wish all my friends and supporters a Happy and Safe Christmas, and look forward to when we can meet again in happier circumstances.

Best wishes
John 01285 760659

MEMORIES OF OAKRIDGE PAST

More memories from those living in the village(s) across the decades. If you would like to make a contribution, please get in contact with Victoria Beard.

Schooldays, part 1

Thanks go to Miss Alison Gardiner for her schoolday memories, which will run as a 3-part serial

I started at Oakridge School, part-time at the age of 4, in 1936. To me the Waterlane Common appeared much as the London Marathon appears to me now. The three stages of the road were known to us as 'The Corner', 'Green Bottom' and 'The Crossroads'. I soon realised that we needed to be on the rights side of the crossroads by the time the school bell started ringing at 10 minutes to 9. The bell ceased to be rung at the outbreak of war, and sadly I have never heard it rung since. When my older sister acquired a bicycle I was ferried to and fro on the carrier.

The teachers were: Miss Tombs, followed by Miss Cook for the Infants; Miss Marmont followed by Miss Bridges for the middle class; and as always, Mr Weston for the top class.

I have vivid memories of the Infants Room – the collage of an apple orchard, and upper and lower cases of the alphabet pinned round the walls. There was also a heavily framed picture of the Mona Lisa which did nothing to encourage my appreciation of the Arts. There was a drawer full of bent and buckled shoes

of ancient vintage which were kept for children who arrived in school with wet feet. I never saw this footwear put to use.

We babies were issued with framed slates and crayons with which to commence our literary and numerical studies. After all this brain-fog we were given a square of coarse material to practice fraying, and what a jumble we got that into! We were taught french knitting, our equipment being a wooden cotton reel with 4 small nails hammered into it, and a ball of wool. We also grew mustard and cress in saucers with damp blotting paper.

The last lesson on Fridays was 'speech training'. We were each given a small mirror and had to look into it while speaking. The teacher would exhort us to "Open your mouths WIDE"; it was difficult to get our heads round this as we were usually firmly told to do the opposite!

At the end of a playtime outside, the teacher would blow her whistle and call out "Fall In"; we had to line up under the tree opposite the bus shelter. When we were standing ramrod straight, and quiet, she would say "Lead On", and we had to walk sedately into class. Not through the nearest doorway, that was known as the Teachers' Door, but round past the coke shed and in at the far side of the building.

Our memories of shop life!

On a warm and very quiet Sunday afternoon in September 1993, we drove to Oakridge in search of "the Post Office" having seen Ralph and Peggy Turner's advert in the Stroud News looking for someone to lease the shop and run the business. Despite having been brought up less than 3 miles away, we drove round in circles searching for our destination! For those of you who are newer to the village, the original shop was a small attachment to the front of Highridge. We almost ran over Dr Mike Thomas's dog as it was sprawled out across the road as we rounded a bend!

Several months later, on February 28th, after agreement from the Post Office, we took over the running of the shop. With help from my dad who hand made the original sweet shelves and replaced bits of counter space, we set out to try and increase trade. We introduced Sunday Papers and Sunday opening with the help of several teenagers from the village who are now mostly married with families of their own. Ordered papers and odd bits of late shopping requests were left out in the "cubby hole" at the side of the building for people to collect at their convenience.

For the first few years, everything was done manually. All orders written down and phoned or faxed through. All bills paid by cash or cheque. This led to mountains of paperwork that had to be filed, checked and stored. We had 2

break-ins even though we were so rural. The first was the most damaging but we managed to trade the next day from the steps outside!

We travelled backwards and forwards through the lanes in Bournes Green in all weathers until the opportunity arose to buy "Ambleside". This freed up a lot more time as it meant I could walk to work! After several years of coping with extremes of temperature, it became apparent that the building was no longer practical. The Post Office also weren't looking kindly on smaller run-down buildings and were searching for any excuse to close rural offices. The Turners were also looking to sell and were very understanding when, after a lot of consideration, we decided that it would be more practical to move to Cherryoaks as there was more space both inside and outside for parking. We had a very chaotic 18 months trying to get the Post Office and Stroud planning on side. Our builder was very patient when the planning proposals were rejected or amended at the last minute. We came very close several times to abandoning the whole project! But at completion, the village had a much improved shop and we managed to save the post office.

Finally on 17th August 2007 we had our grand opening. It was a lovely evening and most of the village came along. The sweet selection in the old chimney breast was always very popular along with the outdoor space and seating area. We introduced the Oakridge calendar filled with photos of the village and tried to use as many local traders as possible.

We have so many memories and often wish that we had kept a record of the unusual events and people who popped in, the most famous being Sir Ian McKellen, I think.

Finally, we are sorry if anyone thought the sale of the business seemed a little abrupt, but after 23 years of long hours we are very grateful to Laura and Oscar for continuing the business even though it eventually happened very quickly and was unfortunately during the school holidays when several villagers were away.

Best wishes, Kim and Mike Gorny

BISLEY-with-LYPIATT PARISH COUNCIL

Please see the Parish Council website for Ward information and minutes of Council meetings www.bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk

Next PC meetings: Wednesday 2nd December and Wednesday 6th January 2021

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

The business of the PC has been continuing throughout this pandemic but meetings have been conducted online via Zoom. I have received a few

requests from residents as to how to access these meetings. Our PC meetings happen usually at 7.30pm on the first Wednesday of each month. The location and agenda is posted on all notice boards around the Parish (we also want to organise a Parish wide email database in order to contact all residents more easily – the importance of which has been highlighted by COVID). Firstly you need to contact our Parish Clerk (Debbie Meredith) by email on admin@bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk. She will give you a link to join the Zoom meeting. You will have to download the free software from Zoom onto your computer (www.zoom.us/download) or get the app for your mobile. Once you have downloaded and installed the software, you will be able to click on the link at the appropriate time then you will be allowed into the meeting by the person controlling the online meeting. You may need to switch on your microphone and video but your computer should tell you this.

TELECOMS MAST in FAR OAKRIDGE

It looks like the Telecoms company will be submitting a new application soon. The PC voted AGAINST the mast for the last pre-application submission and it looks like we have a similar fight on our hands. We encourage anyone to respond to the future planning application and express their opinion on the Stroud District Council planning website (www.stroud.gov.uk/environment/planning-and-building-control/search-planning-applications)

BONFIRES ON ALLOTMENTS

These have once again been banned during lockdown and a new system has been agreed and has been implemented. In Oakridge, there will only be ONE communal bonfire which can be lit ONCE a month. It will be under the control of Cllr Dennis Robbins so anyone with any questions about this matter please refer to him either at the allotments or by email d.robbins1945@btinternet.com.

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The NDP continues to be progressed. We have received responses to our Housing Needs Survey and they are being analysed. Thank you to all who have contributed to this. We plan to send out a full NDP SURVEY early in the New Year – this will be YOUR chance to express YOUR opinion on how you want to see our Parish developing in aspects including Housing, Environment, Wildlife, Transport and Energy. It is an important survey which will help us develop LOCAL policies which will be incorporated into the planning process. Please take the time to fill it in and return the survey document.

Cllr Tony Martin – tony.martin@bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk

Cllr Roger Budgeon - roger@greenshopgroup.co.uk

Cllr Dennis Robbins - d.robbins1945@btinternet.com

LOCAL PLANNING NEWS

Information relating to local planning issues, as outlined on the Stroud District Council website: <https://publicaccess.stroud.gov.uk/online-applications>. See the Parish Council website for local input. Here is a summary of local planning news in the period 22nd September to 24th November 2020:

S.20/1627/TEL Telecoms mast, Far Oakridge	Withdrawn
S.20/2409/HHOLD Alterations to existing stone barn, Tunley Barn House	Awaiting Decision
S.20/2335/HHOLD Various alterations to existing property, Springbank House, Tunley	Awaiting Decision
S.20/2288/REM 1.5 storey Dwelling, The Folly, Oakridge Lynch	Awaiting Decision
S.20/2201/HHOLD Erection of greenhouse, Pipers Cottage, Oakridge Lynch	Awaiting Decision
S.20/2092/HHOLD Alterations to outbuildings, Rodborough Cottage, Oakridge Lynch	Awaiting Decision
S.20/2028/VAR Change from Cotswold stone wall to panel fencing, Hawthornden, Far Oakridge	Awaiting Decision

DISTRICT NEWS

Hello and festive greetings to you all,
It seems strange to offer Christmas tidings in mid-November however editorial deadlines are pressing and coincidentally, for this 2020 year, I understand that some people are suggesting we start celebrating with lights and decorations early. I gauge some will have mixed feelings on that one.

Extraordinary Council meeting

On Thursday 15th October we had an extra-ordinary Environmental Committee meeting. The purpose for this meeting was two-fold.

1. To apply temporary changes to the council's statement of community involvement because of COVID 19.

Background: S18, Planning and Compulsory purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to produce a statement of community involvement (SCI) which should show how they will engage with local communities and other interested parties in producing the local plan and determining planning applications. The

SCI should be published on the planning authority's website. It was last approved in the same committee on March 28th, 2019.

May 13th 2020, the Government published updated planning practice guidance on which identified that local planning authorities would need to assess whether their SCI's are consistent with current guidance on social distancing to help stem the spread of COVID 19. This removed the need for physical deposits points and replacing them with online inspection only.

Naturally creating an issue for those who do not have access to the internet or otherwise would engage if they were physical documents in a public location such as the library.

The salient points included:

- We do not wish to do this, but with COVID we must ensure the safety of the community and adjust the strategy accordingly.
- Once Covid has reached a point where most normal activities can be resumed, we will revert to the original strategy.

2. Acknowledge and put forward to public consultation, an amended paper for housing options in the district.

Background: Council adopted the Stroud District Local Plan in November 2015. The Plan continues to provide an up-to-date planning framework to assess planning applications and identifies sufficient housing and employment land to meet needs to 2031. The Plan included a commitment to undertake an early review.

In September 2017 Committee approved a timetable for the Local Plan Review and approved an Issues and Options paper for public consultation. In October 2018 Committee approved an Emerging Strategy for further public consultation and in October 2019 Committee approved a Draft Local Plan for further public consultation.

The Council's published timetable envisaged approval of the Draft Local Plan for pre-submission consultation during Autumn 2020. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in delays to the work programme to the extent that this deadline can no longer be met and needs to be reviewed.

The salient points included:

- Some planners are banking land without building
- Cost of land has risen but not in line with the cost of building these houses; it was cheaper in 2015.
- We must decide whether we want larger sites or a higher frequency of smaller sites.
- How do we adequately assess the real need of a community and will developers ensure they are also building affordable homes?
- Can we be stricter on those developers? Yes, provided we have a strong local plan in place which provides us the necessary rules to reject and refuse inappropriate plans.
- If AONB becomes 'national park' who would decide on planning applications? It is something not yet discussed given the paper is still with parliament but could result in a re-distribution of the planning decision making powers.

Oakridge EE Mast

On Monday 28th Sept. the day a decision was to be reached, EE withdrew the telephone mast application. As you will have seen in the parish notes and SDC website, a handful of committed residents and I have worked tirelessly to engage as many LPA stakeholders as possible to implore them to give the mast proper consideration. We have offered education and guidance as well as telling the LPA that they CAN and SHOULD question the application and not let it continue un-challenged just because it is part of the ESN.

EE then, on a mid-October Saturday morning, emailed the landowner to say they intend to resubmit and have trespassed on the **unwilling** landowner's field to gain the ecological information they require to resubmit the application. I had a meeting with the owner and two neighbours that week and continue to keep an open dialogue with them as the application develops.

Beyond that, I have been able to secure active engagement from our MP (Siobhan Baillie) and have drawn her attention to the conduct and way the applicant / agents have presented themselves. She will be working with me on a weekly basis as the case develops and is also raising this with Parliament [where appropriate]. The last formal action was to set up and attend a meeting between those residents and Siobhan so they could have their voice heard and let it be taken to the government.

Flooding

We have had multiple complaints about surface water flooding and how we manage this going forward. The situation in Bisley was tended to by GCC the following day (although I have raised my concerns that I don't think it has solved the issue and invited them to conduct a site visit with me to explain why). I am aware there are some areas in Oakridge which also flood so please do let me know if you are a resident and are unsure who to contact to raise awareness of this issue.

Footpath - rights of way

I was emailed by a resident about poor water management resulting in a footpath becoming unsafe and having already resulted in injury. The highways manager and I spoke about this and I have asked Sarah Macaulay-Lowe (rights of way officer) to investigate it further on our behalf. If you have an authority related issue but are unsure who to contact, contact me directly. Failing that, you have a very active parish council whom I know to be excellent in seeing matters are addressed in a timely manner.

Fireworks

I was approached by a Stroud District resident outlining her fears that with many of the scheduled firework events being cancelled, an apparent 18% increase in personal firework displays will take place and that this will impact negatively on stock and pets. She requested I respond to the RSPCA consultation currently being undertaken. I am asking members of the community what they think before responding with a comprehensive suggestion. My stock have reacted to fireworks in the past and pushed through

fences; in contrast our dog is familiar with loud bangs and isn't upset by it. I want to hear what you think as firework season runs from Halloween through to New Year.

White Paper on planning

I received my first resident submission in relation to the proposed planning reform. You will see on the *House of Commons* Library page, there is reference to the document and a link to the present version. The summary is outlined below:

- *Local communities will be consulted from the very beginning of the planning process. By harnessing the latest technology through online maps and data, the whole system will be made more accessible*
- *Valued green spaces will be protected for future generations by allowing for more building on brownfield land and all new streets to be tree lined*
- *Much-needed homes will be built quicker by ensuring local housing plans are developed and agreed in 30 months – down from the current 7 years*
- *Every area to have a local plan in place – currently only 50% of local areas has a plan to build more homes*
- *The planning process to be overhauled and replaced with a clearer, rules based system. Currently around a third of planning cases that go to appeal are overturned at appeal*
- *A new simpler national levy to replace the current system of developer contributions which often causes delay*
- *The creation of a fast-track system for beautiful buildings and establishing local design guidance for developers to build and preserve beautiful communities*
- *All new homes to be 'zero carbon ready', with no new homes delivered under the new system needed to be retrofitted as we achieve our commitment to net zero carbon emissions by 2050*

This has been passed on to the relevant members within the local authority; if you have thoughts, do raise them. It is not too late.

Development Control Committee

A large portion of my work is undertaken in the planning space. The most common being- "*I want the application to be taken to the Development control committee (DCC)*". You may also hear it called the planning committee (albeit a Committee of that name does not technically exist). Below is a very brief two-step process for a 'call-in' to that committee but you can find a 5-6 step flow chart provided in my submission to the November Parish meeting and also on the SDC website.

The process is as follows:

1. Referral requests

The Ward Member for the ward in which the development is located or the local Town or Parish Council may make a timely request that an application is referred to the Development Control Committee for determination. The request should be submitted in writing to the Chair of the committee and the

Head of Development Management; this should include the reasons for the request which must be based on material planning consideration.

2. Decision to call in

The Chair, in consultation with the Head of Development Management, shall then decide if the application will be referred to the committee against the established criteria.

Here is the end of another year of District Council news updates. I hope you have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Thank you,
Tim Williams

A WORD FROM STROUD CITIZENS ADVICE



Are you being scammed?

Citizens Advice Stroud & Cotswold has the following advice.....

You can register your landline with the Telephone Preference Service by calling 0345 070 0707. Talk to your phone provider to see what privacy services and call-blocking services are available. These services aren't always free but are useful in ensuring any call coming through is from a trusted or known source.

To check if something might be a scam and for further information go to our website www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/scams/check-if-something-might-be-a-scam/ There are lots of useful pointers, relating to phonecalls, emails and doorstep callers, including

- Never click on links included in suspicious emails
- To check whether an email is genuine click on the arrow on the sender's email address, if it shows a personal email address or one which looks unusual be suspicious
- If you receive an email or text which you feel is suspicious open a new tab and do a search
- Don't be rushed – you never need to make a decision straight away and if you feel pressured say "no", hang up the phone, or close the door

Or call us on 0808 800 0510 or 0808 800 0511 Monday to Friday 10am - 4pm – one of our friendly advisers will be able to help you.