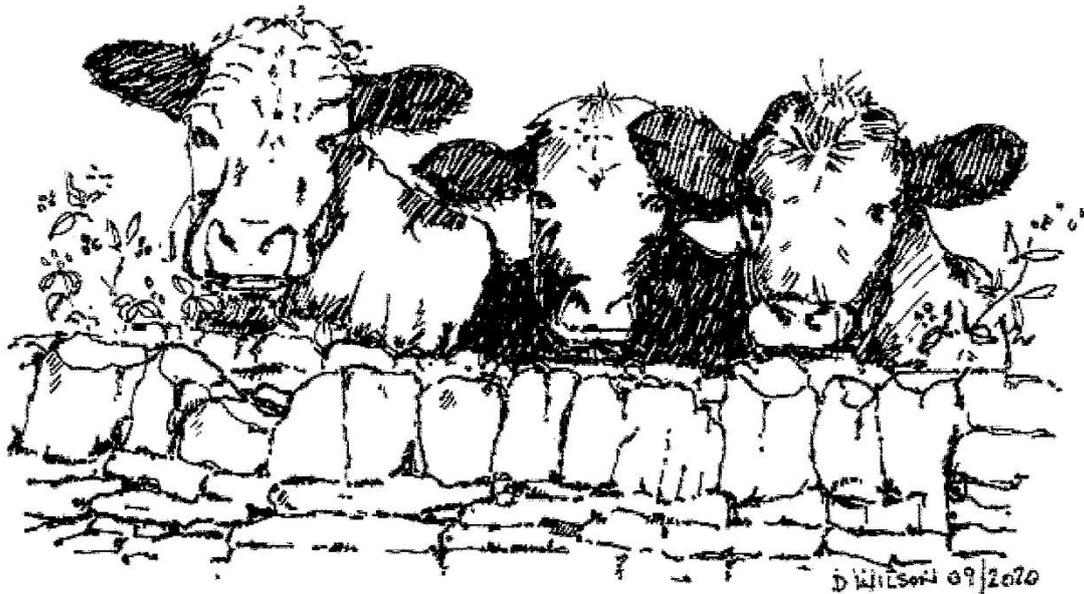


WHAT'S ON

in

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



*Cattle at Weir Farm
Oakridge Lynch*

October / November 2020

Edition 247

EDITOR'S NOTE

I hope you all continue to keep safe and well as Covid-19 cases begin to rise in numbers again through the country. As it appears possible, even likely, that there will be a return to some form of shielding for the older and vulnerable members of the community, or even to lockdown, the Coronavirus Network volunteers have agreed once again to offer their services to anyone who is required to self-isolate, and who would appreciate some help with shopping, prescription collection etc. The contact numbers are below.

I am sure it has not escaped your attention that a telecommunications mast is proposed in Far Oakridge; more information can be found on pages 20-22. My apologies to anyone who felt that the special What's On, circulated online at the start of September, was an inappropriate use of the publication; the intention was merely to bring the proposal to wide community notice.

Thank you to those who have very kindly made donations to the What's On funds; this is much appreciated and will go towards the costs of producing the publication.

Victoria Beard

CORONAVIRUS SUPPORT NETWORK CONTACT DETAILS

Oakridge Lynch	Caroline Priestley - Claire Robinson -	01285 760969 01285 762867 / 07903 974577
Bournes Green	Beth Taplin -	01452 770872 / 07989 743068
Tunley	Louisa Crisp -	01285 760684
Waterlane	Katy Craine -	01452 770111
Far Oakridge	Vicky Beard -	01285 760339 / 07763 124285

24th NOVEMBER 2020 CLOSING DATE
for the next WHAT'S ON

COVER ILLUSTRATION BY DANNY WILSON

THE CHURCH IN OAKRIDGE



meeting at St Bartholomew's

VICAR Rev. S Murray 01452 770897

CHURCHWARDEN Mr. Martin Green 01452 770322

These dates assume the Government guidance / requirements regarding Coronavirus remain as they are on September 23rd. Congregations are 30 people maximum and please follow the notices in church.

OCTOBER 2020

4th Harvest Festival Family Service 9.30a.m.
See notes below

25th Parish Communion 9.30a.m.

NOVEMBER 2020

8th Remembrance Service (short in Church) **10.45a.m.**

15th Parish Communion 9.30a.m.

HARVEST FESTIVAL

A service of celebration outside on the Green. Please bring a chair or rug to sit on (thermos, big coats and blankets too!). Please bring Store cupboard groceries for Stroud Food Bank as a thank offering (up to date list on what is required can be found on the Food Bank website). If wet we will relocate indoors.

OAKRIDGE HISTORY GROUP



As restrictions continue, it has been decided that meetings of the Oakridge History Group cannot be resumed before February 2021 at the earliest. We hope to reschedule as many cancelled meetings as possible thereafter.

This does not, however, mean that all work on local records has ground to a halt. We are very fortunate in having a website – oakridgearchives.omeka.net – that people can explore and consult. Posts continue to come in and queries are, wherever possible, answered.

In addition, further information can, and is, being added. John Loosley has been writing up family histories in text form to complement the family trees already on the site. Families covered include Wears, Tanners, Haydens, Bishops, Butts.

Kay Rhodes has been adding to the history notes on houses of all ages in Oakridge Lynch.

Do go and have a look at this extra material, especially if you are interested in the history of your house or the people who lived there. And if you have additional information, let us know so that we can include it. On the website the easiest way to find this new material is by selecting "Browse Collections" then selecting Homes and Farms or People and families.

Also, if you are looking for a project to get involved in during the winter, how about picking a topic not fully explored on the website to research. Remember that research does not need to be only back in the distant past, and recording more recent developments and changes is equally important. For example, recording details of life and learning in Oakridge School during the past few years is as valid as records of how the school operated in 1900.

John or Kay will be happy to give any help they can if you want to take on a project.

Kay Rhodes

OAKRIDGE GARDEN CLUB



A random selection from members of hints and tips for autumn in the garden:

- Buy violas now to cheer up your winter.
- Sow hardy annuals in the greenhouse or on a windowsill and if ready to do so, plant outside before the frosts.
- Bulbs: don't rush to plant them and particularly don't plant tulips until late October/November. And plant them deep.
- It's the time to take cuttings especially favourite tender perennials such as some salvias and penstemon. Also to divide perennials.
- Plant bare root hedging, shrubs, roses and trees.
- Remember to collect leaves, put them in black plastic bags punctured with some holes, for making leaf mould. Weed borders and then mulch with compost and/or manure to protect and feed the soil over winter.
- If climbing roses are in an exposed position, think about pruning to prevent wind rock.
- Vegetables: Autumn sow broad beans as this helps to avoid black fly, but remember to stake them. Also sow rainbow chard, kohlrabi and winter cabbage seeds - or buy plugs from Stancombe Farm Shop!
- As with many other fruit, there is an abundance of sloes in the hedgerows. A recipe for sloe gin:

900 ml gin
 450 gm sloes
 100 gm sugar
 10 almonds

Turn every day for two weeks and then leave for three months so it will be ready for Christmas.

Decant, cut the stones out of the sloes, mix with crushed biscuits and melted chocolate, press into a swiss roll tin, chill and cut into small squares. Delicious!

So, lots to do before we put our gardens to bed for the winter. I am so grateful that I've had a garden this spring and summer of lock down and having spent more time than usual pottering in it, I'm inspired to do more now and in the spring to have a better show next year. Even the lawn will be given some needed care and attention.

Bizzie White

WI

We live in awkward times. Anne and I continue to stay in contact with you all one way or another. The Committee have held two outside meetings at Cave Cottage. Our main concerns are firstly for us all to keep safe; it is very important as a group NOT to endanger each other. Secondly, that the members are not getting value for their annual subscription paid in January. However, the 2021 subscription will not be due until April, and we are hoping to be out of lockdown by then.

Better speakers and a few treats will be in store we feel sure, with the money saved so far.

Continual updates about procedure come from National and County HQs. We are awaiting information on how to deal with the AGM in November. The National meeting cancelled in June has been re-scheduled for April 2021 to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the Albert Hall

Those of us who have attended and enjoyed many courses and wonderful company at Denman, the WI College, are very sad to hear of its imminent closure.

All I can finally say is "watch this space".

Mary Fern

OAKRIDGE VILLAGE HALL



We continue to host organised exercise activities such as Ballyhoo dance classes and Yoga, but are unable, at present, to hire out the hall for social gatherings. The Trustees will hold the Annual General Meeting in late September as prescribed by the Trust's rules but by means of written reports and questions only, and it will not be possible to open this to the public. However, if there are any questions from residents they can initially be addressed to the OVHT Secretary, Chris Gregg, at "Spring Hollow" Oakridge Lynch, preferably by email to chrishgregg173@gmail.com.

NEWS FROM OAKRIDGE SCHOOL



OAKRIDGE PAROCHIAL SCHOOL

I am pleased to report that children have returned to school and are very happy to be back. Although we are living in ever changing times, we are keen to ensure the school runs as close to normality as possible with the teachers working hard

to provide a rich, wide-ranging curriculum.

We would usually hold an Open Day at school at this time of year, welcoming prospective parents and children, as well as members of the local community to look around the school. We are unable to hold this in the same format this year. However, we would very much like to share all the wonderful things that go on at Oakridge School. If you would like to look around, particularly if your child might be approaching Reception age, please telephone the school (01285 760269) and we will arrange a socially distanced tour at a convenient time.

Jonathan Preston

Executive Headteacher

Further School News.....

It has been lovely being back in school and seeing all the children, after such a long period of time, and to welcome all the new children into both classes. Taking care of ourselves is especially important so health and well-being are at the core of everything we do. Cathy Blofield of Mindful Matters has been coming in every week to help us with relaxation techniques which has been quite challenging for some of us!

Our value for the term is generosity and we are learning what it means to being generous, giving our time to help others and not expecting anything in return.

Both class 1 and class 2 are following the same topic 'Through the keyhole' and each have a history focus. In Class 1 we are taking a peep at what life was like in the past by looking through the keyhole into Victorian times. We have produced some fabulous writing about the seaside past and present.

We aim to be out and about as much as possible. In Class 1 the wormery has been given a new lease of life and the children have been learning

about the importance of worms. We have a recycling point in the classroom where children can begin the creation of compost.

Crime and punishment is the main theme of our Class 2 learning about crime post 1066. Every week we discover a new picture through the keyhole of our door on display and that becomes the centre of our learning. In English, we are reading a lovely picture book called Hermelin the Detective Mouse by Mimi Grey and using it to write our own detective stories based on a cat's disappearance. Last week PC Mark Weedon from Gloucestershire Constabulary visited us, explained how a crime is solved by setting up a crime scene where Mrs Modaley was the thief! Finally, in class 2 we continue to enjoy weekly ukulele instrumental lessons with our visiting teacher Norma Mills and we are quickly remembering what we learnt before lockdown.

Finally, thank you to all the wonderful Oakridge parents and children who joined Mrs Holburn for a day on the allotment. Time slots were allocated so as to keep to the social distancing measures enforced by the government. The allotment was in need of some tender love and care and we are grateful for your help as ever.

OAKRIDGE PAROCHIAL SCHOOL

MIDDAY SUPERVISOR REQUIRED

12.15 p.m. - 1.15 p.m.

5 days - Monday to Friday (inclusive)

(would consider job share or 2/3 days a week)

Term Time only

For more details contact Oakridge Parochial School

Oakridge Lynch

Stroud

Glos

GL6 7NR

Tel: 01285 760269

e.mail: admin@oakridge.gloucs.sch.uk

OAKRIDGE SHOW

Unfortunately not many photo entries were received for the "Alternative Show", but there is a wonderful 'love-heart potato' and 'courgette couch' displayed on the Oakridge Community website - www.oakridgevillage.org.

We have however received this poem from Sue Wise, which she wrote in the lockdown period earlier this year, and has submitted in the 'Special Lockdown Category'.

Protected

We are the blessed generation.

Born near war's end and destined to be gifted the best of everything.
Cossetted by the new welfare state, free healthcare and education for
all.

Showered with grants for universities; jobs and careers for the taking.

Every chance for social mobility if such was our choice.

Within our reach, affordable homes, cars, childcare and foreign travel.

Guaranteed pensions, a comfortable retirement

The burgeoning emergence of equality in all its forms.

A life free from world wars and want.

And even now in times of modern plague

We are the fortunate ones.

For our safe-keeping we are shielded from the virus,

The younger element in our communities looking to our every need.

All errands run by a generation less fortunate than ours.

Online slots and careful social distancing to safeguard our later lives.

No worries for us of loss of job or income.

And what have we done to deserve this life-long privilege?

To be smiled upon by the gods at every turn?

We were merely in the right place at the right time.

Not always so for subsequent generations.

We owe them.

NATURE NOTES FROM WATERLANE



I threw a large sack of bird feed into my garage and forgot about it. On remembering a few days later that I should have put it away into some tins, I opened the garage and noticed that all the dead leaves in the garage had been gathered up and placed around the

sack. On removing the leaves I found that a wood mouse had made some holes in the bottom of the sack and had cleverly ring fenced the sack to camouflage what it was doing. I know it was a wood mouse because its head came out of a wood pile in the garage to see what I was doing.

It has a classic mouse-shape with a rather pointed head, a compact body and a long tail. The coat colour is mainly yellowish brown on the upper parts with a dark vertebral band along the dorsal surface of the head and body and whitish underparts. It is widespread and the rodent you are most likely to encounter in the house and garden. They are mainly nocturnal and seldom venture out of their burrows until dusk. They are opportunistic feeders and their diet includes seeds, nuts and fungi as well as insect and other invertebrates. They feature prominently in the diets of most avian and mammalian predators, notably tawny owls, stoats, weasels and foxes.

I was sorry to spoil its little game after all its hard work so I left it some token seeds as a consolation prize.

Alan White

Wildlife extra.....

On a very hot morning in early August we had a rare view of our resident grass snake swimming lazily around our pond. In the afternoon that day I saw it again in the far reaches of my greenhouse, coiled and trying to look very fierce! In that week, while I was driving towards Oakridge, near to Fourways Farm, I had to make a large detour to avoid running over an adder. Maybe there are more of our native reptiles around than we realise.

Martin Green

OAKRIDGE RAINWATCH



The rainfall in July and August, as measured by my rain gauge, was as follows:-

July..... 62.9 mm.....about 2.4 ins.

August..... 118.3 mm.....about 4.6 ins.

So far the rainfall in September (to 16th) is 6 mm.....about 0.2 ins.

Gill Farrar

WINE CLUB



LATE SUMMER GREETINGS from OAKRIDGE LYNCH WINE CLUB yes we are still here!

What follows is a summary of the planned, the unexpected and what is to come....

Last February we met as usual in the old skittle alley of our lovely village pub, The Butchers Arms. A rather special evening as we had an Italian Sommelier to present just Italian wines on the theme of 'Weird and Wonderful'. Michele Longari, warm, witty and charming, he delighted us all with a most unusual selection of wines and further hit the spot presenting them in his passionate Italian accent. (A few of our members found him rather dishy.) Anyway he certainly knew his onions and absolutely will/must return!

And then came the unexpected.... life screeched to a halt and the pause button was firmly pressed on Wine Club and all our usual village activities.

As time went by it became apparent that people were really missing their friends and neighbours, the comforting familiarity of their faces and voices. Months were disappearing and although we had gradually acclimatised to the situation, the need for some sort of reunion was growing. Something had to be done. Something most definitely had to be done! Thinking caps got pulled down hard and firmly fixed in place. It was the beginning of August, six months since our last Wine Club meeting. What were the current rules? What were we allowed to do

outdoors? How many people could we get together? ... and the key question ... WHERE?

As the saying goes, "great oaks from little acorns grow", well that is exactly what happened... During a casual conversation texting on our mobiles one afternoon, a message said "It's a pity we couldn't have a socially distanced wine club in the garden one evening. I don't mind if it's here". Well that was it! The acorn had landed.

We set a date 23rd August ... far enough away to get organised yet near enough to get excited. An invitation was sent two weeks before to every Wine Club member, 44 in total though we had no idea of the response we would get, not a clue. First come first serve basis as how else could you be fair? Within 48 hours we had a full house and a waiting list! Hey presto we had done it, brilliant! Game on!

Weather watching became part on our daily lives. Rain and blustery winds were forecast leading up to and after 23rd August but somehow that particular date just kept appearing as a clear and sunny day. Is there such a thing as a 'weather god'? Anyway it was a massive 'all hands on deck' from now on.

The scene was set, as promised in the invitation, with gazebos, fairy lights, candles, plenty of tables (all with a white tablecloth), pre-wrapped individual portions of cheese and crackers, sparkly stars paper plates and a selection of wines to titivate the palate. Oh, one small caveat, almost forgot... bring your own chair! We had fulfilled the government guidelines as best we could with what we had.

A date to remember... it was everything we could have hoped for, the weather held ... soft evening sunlight ... no rain due ... gentle breeze and optimism reigned ...

Everyone turned up in good cheer. It was overwhelming to see so many people genuinely happy to be out and relaxing in as safe an environment as was possible.

The evening kicked off with a stunning Spanish sparkler and a toast was made to all the members who were unable to attend. Our second white was a lime scrunching Australian Riesling followed by a sneaky little challenge we had set ... THE G.S.M FACE-OFF!!! Three red wines each featuring a blend of the same grapes Grenache, Syrah, Mourvèdre, one from Australia and two from France. All of our wines for the evening were illustrated on a large blackboard so every member could see what they

were drinking. Though when it came to the red wines, the labels on the bottles were covered and no one knew which one was being poured into their glass. The challenge was to guess which country of origin, which was the oldest, the most expensive, and the better wine in their opinion. Prices ranged from around £15 to £40 a bottle. No rubbish here!

There was an unexpected addition to our tastings, our newest member to join the Wine Club had brought along some of her homemade Rhubarb wine obviously well hidden up her sleeve, Wow! It was delicious, there was enough for everyone to have a snifter. Perfect way to finish our wine tasting. Thank you from all of us for your kindness and generosity.

As our evening was coming to a close ... a few little speeches were made and a very big cheers and clapping for our host for the use of her beautiful garden. The whole atmosphere of the evening was filled with an abundance of warmth and joy. It had brought everyone together and we all felt the same... lucky, fortunate, grateful. I guess that's what being part of a community is all about. There was help at hand too for clearing up, even that was full of laughter.

So.. what now? Well if you think the show's over ... you must be joking! Plans are afoot. We just have to wait for the government green light. It will come. We will meet again ...

Keep your chins up, keep supping and keep an eye out.

That's it folks.

Anyone reading this who fancies the sound of our Wine Club contact 07816955362 (Jill)

Over but not out ...

OAKRIDGE PLAYERS



Like every other performance organisation around the world we need to find a way of responding to the Covid19 situation. Where do we go from here?

In May we had a Grand Quiz, in June the first reading of Faulty Towers and in July the Oakridge Island Favourite music tracks. All online via Zoom and all great fun. Big thanks to all Oakridge Players for Zooming together. It was good to see everyone!

We are now putting together a YouTube offering of short video clips of members performing. This will create a celebration for 100 Years of Drama Onstage in Oakridge. We hope to be back on stage in the Village Hall in 2021 – in the meantime, photos from 2019's very successful Panto are on the village website. Stay safe and take care from all the Players to our loyal audiences.

Tim Toghil

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.

Life in Oakridge in my younger days to what it is now

I have lived in Oakridge all my life and have seen many changes over the years. I was born at Fair View Farm and lived there with my mother and father, two brothers and two sisters until I moved to Laurels when I got married.

There was always something to do on the farm, helping with delivering milk round the village, churning the butter etc., and over the years we all had to do our share. We were given certain tasks and could not go out to play or anything until we had finished what we had been given to do. There was no such thing as pocket money. Oakridge was often cut off completely in the winter by snow.

I went to Oakridge Parochial School and was actually in school when the German bomber went down in Strawberry Banks. Mr Weston was headmaster. There were no school lunches, we had to go home for lunch. After Oakridge I went on to the Girls High School at Downfield, we travelled on the service bus and often when it was bad weather in the winter had to walk to Chalford to catch a bus. I then went on to Stroud College (which in those days was above Batemans in Stroud) to learn shorthand, typing and bookkeeping. My first job after college was at Daniels at Lightpill and my wages were 30 shillings a week (£1.50 in today's money). If you didn't pass the 11+ to go to High School, Marling or the Central schools you stayed at Oakridge until you were old enough to leave.

Entertainment in those days was sparse so I joined the W.I. when I was 15 and am still a member today, and was also a member of the Methodist Chapel, where I was married in 1957, until it closed in 2007.

After getting married and having my girls, I returned to Oakridge Parochial School as the Secretary (now known as the Administrator) and stayed there for 34 years until I retired at the age of 74. I saw many changes while I was there, including the office being moved several times to different parts of the building and many headteachers and teachers come and go.

During the years I have seen many changes in Oakridge - you knew mostly everyone in my younger days but not today - house prices have rocketed - (I bought two for less than £1000) - bus services have diminished - I could travel to work on the bus but people can't do that now. Very few people owned cars, now mostly everyone has one as it is a necessity to get to work.

My 90th birthday was during lockdown so a quiet affair. Over all my years I think lockdown has been the worst.

Grace Cooke

Memories of Oakridge

I was brought up in Oakridge with my twin sister Mandy. We attended Oakridge School, which was quite different from the school today. There was just the two classrooms and a kitchen (where the middle room is now). The toilets were outside, and it was always a mad dash to and from the loo in winter when it was freezing cold or raining! Mrs Short, a lady from the village, cooked the school lunches and Mrs Davies (also from the village) served them. You weren't allowed a pudding until your plate was clear and you certainly weren't allowed out to play until everything on your plate had been eaten! Miss Harrison, the head teacher, taught the juniors and Mrs Fisher taught the infants. Both were very strict and did not stand any messing!

My grandmother lived at Fair View Farm and she also had an allotment. All the family used to help especially at busy times. I remember planting potatoes up at the allotment, picking gooseberries and raspberries in her garden, and helping to move the cows from one field to another. I usually had to stand at the road leading down to the village hall and playing field with the instructions to just "wave your arms and shout" if a cow started to come my way - fortunately they never got too close and never tried to make a break for it. Another thing my sister and I had to help with was the plucking of turkeys (which my uncle reared) at Christmas. The barn was always freezing and by the time we had finished our fingers were numb. It was lovely to go into the house and warm our hand by the fire and have a hot chocolate.

When I was growing up, I had several relatives living in the village – one auntie lived in the house next door and another in the middle of the village. It was lovely to have lots of people looking out for you, but it did mean that any mischief quickly got reported back to mum and dad!

Although I no longer live in Oakridge, I have been school administrator at Oakridge Parochial School since January 2004. I took over the role from my mum who had worked at the school for 34 years. I have seen quite a few changes over the past 16 years, with 4 different headteachers and various class teachers come and go, but I think that the highlight is that my office is now in the boys' old toilet!

Carolyn Westerby

Schooldays

I was born in Bisley in 1930 and we moved to The Taut at Oakridge in 1933. I remember the day well, mum was pushing brother Terry in the pram and I was walking alongside, the policeman came along on his bicycle, asked mum where we were going, then lifted me onto the crossbar and I arrived in Oakridge in style.

I started at Oakridge School in 1925. Grace Cooke (nee Weare) started at the same time, and throughout our years there we shared a desk. There were about 100 children at the school. The headmaster was Mr Chas E Weston, and he took the top class, Miss Miles the middle class, and Mrs Weston the infants. Mr Weston had plenty of time for children wanting to learn. My older brother George and sister Jane were already at the school, younger brother Terry started in 1937 and sister Claire in 1943.

Some children stayed at Oakridge School for all of their schooling, leaving at 14 years of age. The scholarship could be taken when you were 10 or 11 years old; some children then went on the Central School in Stroud or to the grammar schools, Marling for the boys, Stroud High School for the girls. My sister Jane went on to Central School, George, Terry and I to Marling and Claire to the High School. I took the scholarship at 10, and was the youngest in the class at Marling.

When we went to school in Stroud we walked to Chalford to catch the 8am railcar to Downfield Halt, 3½d return; later on there was a bus from the village to Stroud 6d return and a penny on to Downfield – we usually walked from Stroud and saved the penny! My favourite subjects at Marling were maths, physics and chemistry. In the summer holidays we sometimes went on Harvest Camps, living under canvas and stooking corn in the fields. My job was usually in the kitchen helping the three

Miss Carrs prepare the meals ready for when the boys finished in the fields (the Miss Carrs were sisters, and the cooks at Marling).

On July 25th 1940 while we were at school, we could hear a dogfight going on overhead and gunfire. Chas E Weston told us to get under our desks and the blackboards were put over the desks. He went out to investigate: the German plane had come down on Strawberry Banks and one of the German parachutists came down in Mrs Le Bailey's garden by the school. Mr Weston disarmed him and brought his gun in to show us, Mrs Le Bailey's maid took a glass of whisky out for the German airman! Another parachutist came down near the Taut; dad had been on night duty so was at home. He was in the Home Guard and had been issued with a gun (no ammunition had been issued yet!) so he went out and stood guard over the German airman until the authorities came to collect him. Dad's comment was that he was no trouble as he had a bullet in his leg. The Hurricane came down between Oakridge and Waterlane; this pilot did not survive.

There weren't many telephones in the village and during the war there was a system where four boys, brother George and myself, Gordon Smith and Douglas Hunt, had a week each of sleeping at the Hornby's house in Isles Green where there was a telephone. In the event of an invasion we were to run to various people to inform them of any messages (it never happened). There was always two squares of chocolate left out for us and sometimes an apple. My problem was that to get to the room where we slept we had to go through the library, which I found fascinating and often stayed up far too late reading – my mum had to come over once to wake me up to go to school!

Evacuees came to the village from Clacton-on-Sea, and were billeted with families in the village; I kept in touch with one called Kenneth Baker for some time after he left.

Mr Simmonds at Far Oakridge let Tony Court hold a plane spotters club in his workshop. Brother George and I went, and Douglas Hunt and Gordon Smith. Tony had a box of cards of planes from all over the world and using an epidiascope he projected silhouettes onto a screen. We had a test every week to name them and George was the best at that. Tony Court later went on for this to be his official work, on the coast and identifying incoming planes.

I found Mr Simmonds' workshop so interesting, all the different tools and woods and puppets that he made, and wood carvings; he was very patient and happy to explain and talk about his work.

Oakridge School has always been particularly dear to me, and there is no doubt that the education I received there was largely responsible for how my life was shaped educationally and personally, and for this I have always felt truly grateful.

When Jenny and I came back to the village in 1976, dad still lived at the Taut and the school became part of my life again and I was a governor for many years. Two of the Headteachers were interviewed in our house, an interesting experience, especially when on one occasion we had the dining room table all set out with pads of paper at each place, and our cat came in with wet feet, jumped up and walked all over everything! When we left Oakridge in 2017 to move to a retirement complex in Cirencester, the schoolchildren presented me with cards and gifts at a tea party at the school. Lovely memories, and it is good that we can still keep in touch and enjoy reading the updates in the What's On.

Bob Gardiner

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 7th October and Wednesday 4th November

Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Housing Needs Survey – as part of the progress of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) we have asked GAPCC to undertake a Housing Needs Survey for the Parish Council to find out what sort of housing we have in the Parish and if residents are planning to move, consolidate or have other changing housing needs. The Survey will drop on your doorstep during October so please fill in this Survey (and return it!) as it is an important tool to help us formulate Housing policies together for the next 10 years.

Telecoms Mast – Planning application S.20/1627/TEL – EE has submitted a pre-planning application to construct a 20m telecoms mast just outside Far Oakridge (on the road towards Sapperton). It will be a large and prominent structure which will protrude above the largest trees in the area.

If you wish to object or support please contact Stroud Planning (online) and search planning applications using S.20/1627/TEL and then you may need to register then you will be able to comment.

The Parish Council resolved to object at a recent Parish Council meeting and has already put in an objection.

Parish Council New Website – this is now well underway and hopefully will be completed and live before Christmas.

Cllr Tony Martin – 07710 800290 - tony.martin@bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk

Please contact me or my fellow Oakridge Ward Councillors if you have any local concerns or problems we may be able to help you with

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 24th July 2020 to 22nd September 2020:

S.20/1382/HHOLD Erect detached building, Bakers Paddock, Oakridge Lynch	Permitted
S.20/1293/HHOLD Provide 1 st floor accommodation, Longridge, Oakridge Lynch	Permitted
S.20/1086/FUL Demolish and replace existing dwelling, Downe, Oakridge Lynch	Permitted
S.20/1627/TEL Telecoms mast, Far Oakridge	Awaiting Decision

PROPOSED TELECOMMUNICATIONS MAST

THAT MAST!

The residents of Far Oakridge have been having a tough time lately. Things have been quite tricky, unsettling and distracting since we found out about plans to build a telecommunications mast on the edge of Far Oakridge village. As if living in this new Covid era wasn't enough to deal with.

It's been difficult because we can't all get together as we used to in the old days, and it was hard initially to gauge response and to understand what the village as a whole felt about the proposal. At the beginning there was uncertainty about the idea of the 'willing landowner' and this caused a great deal of misunderstanding and unhappiness. I hope it is now clear that Sue and Sandra were seriously misled by EE into believing that they had no choice about their land being used, and that as soon as they were in full possession of the facts about their rights they rejected EE's demands and stated their own objection to the mast being built. It's been a difficult experience for them and for those of us in the village who couldn't understand the details of what had been going on. Sue and Sandra have written separately about their experiences and responses, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their courage in standing up to EE and for bearing as they did the discomfort of the situation.

I'd like also to apologise to anyone in Far Oakridge or surrounding villages if we, who've been actively campaigning against the mast, have in any way inadvertently offended anyone. We may have been a bit over enthusiastic about our posters and leaflets! And I now know that some people didn't like them. As soon as we were aware of this, and once we'd been rebuked by the Council we took them all down. We may have annoyed some of you by leafletting and door stepping - again we apologise. Some people didn't like What's On being used to provide information about the mast application and we apologise for that too. And of course not everyone thinks the mast is a bad idea, so we are sorry if we have campaigned against your vote.

As it stands today, as What's On goes to print on 25th September and the deadline for public comment arrives, we've gathered more than 150 objections and over 400 petition signatures, which is an amazing response. Many people thought at first that it wasn't worth protesting because of Home Office approval, but we have campaigned on the grounds of the inappropriate site and size of the mast, the current

uncertainties admitted by Government, surrounding the likely delivery time and effectiveness of the new Emergency Services Network technology, and the need to protect our precious and fragile AONB. People have written wonderfully powerful objections and we should all be exceedingly proud of our response. We should know the Council's decision by 5th October.

We've got many people to thank. Diana Simon who first spotted the application online, long before anyone was officially notified; Isabelle and Richard Britton who hosted the first village meetings and then worked tirelessly to keep up awareness; likewise Sarah Maingot who also created our posters and powerful printed materials; Simon O'Halloran who helped us spread the word; Oscar and Laura in the shop always at hand to help; our Parish Council, with Roger Budgeon and Tony Martin representing us, who immediately came to our support; Nick Holliday in Oakridge who early on gave us vital guidance, and many many more in Oakridge and beyond. Some of our neighbours in Waterlane and Tunley have been extraordinary in their support, namely Jason Sippel in Tunley who has worked tirelessly to direct the campaign, and continues to do so; Geoff Napier, also in Tunley, has helped us enormously to understand and grasp potential health impacts, and has campaigned exhaustively to protect us. Other Tunley neighbours have offered kind and useful support. Over in Waterlane similar responses: particularly Alastair Matchett who overnight produced our first leaflet within 12 hours of our first meeting, and other residents who have come to our aid.

People have been incredibly kind, and I'd like to use this space to say how lucky we are in our village to be able ultimately to all come together and give thanks for community. I think we all felt this during the Covid-dominated summer, and though we wouldn't have ever wished for anything like this to happen, we can at least give thanks for silver linings, and know that whatever happens we've all done our best to protect Far Oakridge, our beautiful home.

Emma Vickers

From Sue Casey...

As joint owner of the field in question, and as the one who communicated with EE's agents, and whose name was on the email which implied that there was a willing landowner, I would like to make clear, as I did at the first public meeting of neighbours, that when first approached by Dael on behalf of EE, it was presented to me that although they preferred a co-operative landowner, actually it wasn't required. Neither was SDC planning approval. This proposal, I was told, was going to go ahead

anyway because EE was required by the Home Office to cover 'not spots' in Tunley and Daneway for Emergency Services vehicles to have voice and data coverage.

Having been given access to further information on a range of issues of concern to neighbours, by several notable good communicators in the neighbourhood, I was able to do further research for myself. I am a person who seeks truth based on evidence and willingly adjust my viewpoint accordingly. Personally my main concern is on health issues raised by the effects of electro-magnetism on the human body, when at unnatural levels. I would not be party to something that would subject my family, myself or my neighbours to that danger.

This hamlet will have seen controversies over the centuries. No doubt, strong words and feelings. How they were resolved will become lost in the passing of time. With the pressures we live under in these extraordinary times, we have a particular challenge in understanding each other and resolving our issues. Hopefully, communication and mutual respect will begin to calm things down and peaceful enjoyment of this beautiful valley will be restored.

From Sandra Coles...

It has been a stressful time for everyone who is concerned about the mast, including ourselves.

We would like to thank those neighbours who have taken the time and trouble to approach us in a helpful and constructive manner; in particular Emma Vickers, Geoff Napier, Jason Sippel and Victoria Beard. We are grateful for their input.

We would like to make it clear that it is EE/Dael who want to put the mast up, we are just the owners of the site who were given to understand it had to happen.

We hope that the outcome will be the one that the majority wants.

COMMUNITY CONNEXIONS



Community Connexions, a charity which provides transport for people of all ages across Gloucestershire, who would otherwise struggle to get where they need to go, have launched the **'you are more than a volunteer to us'** campaign in a bid to recruit more volunteers within the county to help their cause.

Chief Executive of Community Connexions, Paul Riddick, said: "The Covid Pandemic saw our volunteer base fall away and therefore the aim of our new campaign is to build this back up again as soon as possible. Without our volunteers we have no charity, and all our users who rely on us each day due to physical, mental, social or rural barriers, have no means to live their lives, and therefore we are urging people to come forward and help. Imagine not being unable to ever visit loved ones, attend vital health appointments or even just get your shopping? Well we all can – we have just been in lockdown. Well imagine if you were told that your lockdown was going to last forever! This is the reality for many people, either within the older, disabled or rurally isolated sectors."

Community Connexions tackle physical, mental, social and rural barriers to provide reliable, safe and accessible transport. Their team is made up from qualified drivers and trained volunteers, dedicated to providing transport to help enable independence, inclusion and participation. As a registered charity with over 30 years' worth of experience, they offer community transport at its best.

"We want to use this opportunity, following Covid-19, to build on our friendly team of drivers. Being a driver is so much more than driving, it's an opportunity to build friendships and combat loneliness in older and disabled people. If you have a few hours spare and are looking for an extremely satisfying role where you will see a positive effect in your local community, then this is the opportunity for you," enthused Paul.

Looking for individuals who have a willingness to learn and provide a friendly experience to their users, Community Connexions will provide full training to ensure volunteers have all the tools needed to provide the safe and valuable experience that really values the community. All expenses will be paid and Community Connexions will also provide the PPE to remain safe accompanied by a strategy which ensures social-distancing concerns are addressed as much as physically possible. Plus,

no previous volunteering experience is required - just a full UK driving licence.

Community Connexions - ***you are more than a volunteer to us; connect your community and turn loneliness into a smile.***

Tel: 0345 680 5029 or email: info@communityconnexions.org.uk

AND FINALLY.....

The final word of this edition goes to Ann Fry in Far Oakridge, with her amusing tale of....

A Pregnancy Test 1959/1960

In Springtime of 1960, Dr Middleton said "Yes!", so John and I were expecting our first baby later that year, probably 6th or 7th November. John's spinster aunt, Mabel Fry, lived a few cottages down the road from us at Tunnel View, so a couple of days later on my weekly visit for a cuppa and a chat, I confided the news that she would be a Great Aunt before Christmas.

I was very surprised when she said "I da-know!" and added "Well last August, John and his dad Edgar, ripped up those old flagstones to your front door and laid a wider concrete path...so that had to be for a pram, and you were having a Babby!"

I'm sorry I had kept her waiting another 15 months, until on 2nd November our 9lb 3oz son, Martin, arrived safely at Stroud Maternity Hospital.

(I was always rubbish at "sums" when young at school in Devon, but that's ridiculous)...

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E&OE