

# West Ilsley News

January 2003

**A very Happy New Year to everyone - we look forward printing your contributions in 2003 (hint, hint to all those who haven't yet taken part). Welcome to West Ilsley to the new residents in The Retreat - and to those who will shortly be departing from the village, please don't forget to let us know the names of your replacements.**

**The Editors**

## CHRISTMAS FAIR FOR THE ILSLEY SCHOOL

Jill Wiejak

Initial thoughts of a coffee morning in my kitchen snowballed into a Christmas Fair (in the Village Hall) of which all could be proud! We had a superb array of local (W.I.) hand made gifts and crafts - such talent.

We raised £270 for the benefit of our children and the Ilsleys Primary School and I know Mark Jones and staff are delighted. Many, many thanks to Toni Sudgen, Pat Hardy, Louise and Alyson, Jo Scriven, Alec Cole, Donna, Lisa, Beccy, Anne Wond and particularly my daughter Jane whose idea it was originally.

I have received many encouraging comments and would be happy to organise a similar event next year. So, if you would like to take part please let me know.

## CAROL SINGING

Steve Price

On Wednesday, 18th December, you may have been lucky enough to hear the newly-formed "West Ilsley (*Possibly Slightly Small*) Band and Choir" singing a selection of Christmas Carols at various locations around the Village, ending up - as if any other destination were likely! - at the Harrow. I am pleased to say that the event attracted some big names from the Aldbourne Silver Band (well, two of them) and about a dozen somewhat rusty but decidedly lusty vocalists (think volume!) plus, on occasion and to our surprise, we were joined by householders singing with us in the street - and I think it safe to say that we all had a thoroughly good time; the mulled wine and minced pies at half time may have helped here, of course, as the evening was certainly crisp.

And - an added bonus - we raised the magnificent sum of £126.00, 3 Eurocents, and 35 Spanish Pesetas - all of which will go towards the ongoing maintenance of our beautiful Church. Except for the cents and the pesetas.

A big thank-you, then - to singers, musicians and public - we hope you all enjoyed it as much as we did. We will return again next year.

## ILSLEY UNDER FIVES

### Baby and Toddler Group

A festive Baby and Toddler Christmas party was enjoyed by all on 18 December and the Hall was

buzzing with 26 children in total. The baby boom continues in East and West Ilsley!! The party included a special visit from Father Christmas which was a great success!

The Baby and Toddler Group meets on a Wednesday morning, 10.00am - 11.30am in the Village Hall. There are lots of toys plus a climbing frame, playhouse, slide etc for the children and coffee and a chance to chat for the Mums. If you are interested in coming along please contact Jess Logan on 281670 for more details.

Toddlers re-start on Wednesday 8 January.

### Playgroup

Playgroup also re-starts on Wednesday 8 January and we are pleased to welcome back Julia Reveler this term.

The playgroup is held in the Main Hall at the Ilsleys Primary School on a Wednesday and Thursday afternoon from 1.25pm to 3.30pm during the school terms. The numbers at the playgroup have risen suddenly and we are currently only accepting 3 year olds if a place is available. If you are interested in your child attending the playgroup please call Tracy on 281650 for an application form to register your child or if you would like to arrange a visit.

## ALL SAINTS

### WEST ILSLEY

Ian Fewtrell-Smith

Church Services for January

5 <sup>th</sup> January	All Age Service	11.00 am
12 <sup>th</sup> January	Holy Communion	8.00 am
19 <sup>th</sup> January	Family Communion	9.30 am

It was lovely to see the church full for the carol service and midnight communion. Thanks to all who decorated the church so beautifully. The collection taken at the carol service was divided between the local branch of the Macmillan Nurses and The Beale Park Trust, each receiving just under £80.

It was good to see the Newbury Weekly News report on the crib service. Sadly, I wasn't there but I understand it was a sight to behold!!

Thanks also to Steve and Alison Price who organised the carol singing around the village and filled us with mulled wine and mince pies half way through. Singing was slightly more urgent after that (or was it just the pub in sight?) and £126 was raised for church funds. Thank you all.

## PRAM SERVICE AND AFTERSCHOOL SERVICE, ALL SAINTS CHURCH

The dates for the forthcoming services will be as follows:

<b>Afterschool Service</b>		<b>Pram Service</b>
<b>4pm Thursdays</b>		<b>11am Mondays</b>
16 January	Christingle	20 January
13 February	Jesus the Good Shepherd	17 February
13 March	New Life	17 March

The Pram Service is aimed at 0-5 year olds and the Afterschool Service for the slightly older ones as well as the babies. The services are well supported but we would love to see new faces or friends from outside the village. Each service lasts approximately half an hour followed by drinks for the children. If you would like more information please contact Denise Brown on 01635 281825, Antonia Cretney on 01635 248925 or Liz Dray on 01488 638749.

The Crib Service had an added extra this year as Mary rode into the church on Shetland pony Humbug! Thanks to our star performers – Mary (Lucy Paterson), Joseph (Caspar Sugden) and Jesus (baby Walter!), to Charlotte for her musical talents, to our narrators and to all the kings, angels and innkeeper (sadly we were a little short on shepherds this year!).

## MALTHOUSE WELL REPORT Alison Banks

Attention all residents with basements and cellars! My weekly check of the water level in our well, which I do for the Environmental Agency group, has been very interesting. The well turned early in October and water levels have risen at an alarming rate. At the beginning of December it read 13m26cm from the surface and now it stands at 7m74cm. This time last year the Well had just turned and was at 17m89cm!! - some 10m lower. I hope to have some more comparative data from The Agency but it is looking like the recent very wet weather and an extremely wet November (second wettest on record) have taken their toll. 2001/2 was a dry year for the area, reflected in the well readings but some will remember 2000/1 was very wet and the lake that formed outside the village. It looks like 2002/3 might be the same. Remembering back, the highest reading we had for 2001 was 2m89cm. I wonder how this year will compare. Please call if you would like more regular updates and readings - 281705.

## MISS TOFFELLEES

Well, what is there that is new for a New Year? It's not news that the old year has, yet again, fled by, so I will need to make reference to the various happenings in the village this month.

Firstly, the Christmas Fayre in the Village Hall. There was a whole manner of items you could have purchased, all competitively priced and nicely made. I bought a beautiful wreath (thank you Virginia!!), some lovely Anne Wond hand-made cards and scrumptious cakes and mince pies. There was some exotic jewelry made by Jane Wijekak, table runners, scarves, padded note-holders made by Jill....Christmas is so easy when you don't have to park in Oxford or Reading. All washed down by a cuppa in good company.

The crib service in church on the Sunday before Christmas necessitated a mass exodus from a party, but it was truly wonderful to see Mary, Joseph, Angels, the Kings and the shepherds all accompanied by a real live pony (masquerading as a donkey - a well-trained one at that!! Mary tried to leave Joseph (or was it the other way round?) but Victoria Carlisle was undisturbed by this and she continued to narrate clearly. A good start to the season.

I took myself for a festive walk and was most impressed by the clean state of The Butts - NO dog poo!! Good for the dog-owners of West Ilsley. Then someone pointed out a large mound in the street. I'd like to blame the visiting dogs, as I was sure the rest of the village looked so clean.

On returning home I watched a hedgehog amble up the gravel past the front of the house. It was evidently on a foraging trip and quite focused on its cause, it certainly did not notice me. It was curious to see this often-nocturnal animal take exactly the same inbound path as it had done outbound, for it made its way past all the same obstructions exactly in reverse. I do hope that it found its journey worthwhile and that it chanced on some delicacy to eat - presumably not everything is asleep!

Our dishwasher chose to pack up on Christmas Day. It is typical that after 13 years hard labour (No! Not the number of years I have been married!) it chose to pass to that white goods haven in the sky on Xmas Day! It owed us not a day - but it could have chosen a better day to do it. The prospect of replacing it filled me with horror. Queues of post-Xmas bargain-hunters... further queues to pay...and then a further wait for delivery. We went to Wantage: to Peter Ledbury's. We left the shop at 09.30hrs and a smiling, courteous gent arrived at home at 10.45hrs accompanied by our new competitively priced machine. One dishwasher duly installed with minimum upheaval and one happy family. (No more arguments as to who was going to do the washing-up. The rota was dead now, along with the previous machine). The one thing to actually commend this story was the bonding that went on whilst said task was carried out. Like all these modern conveniences we all take their labour-saving tasks for granted after one use and quickly forget how long it takes to do jobs without them!

New Year's eve was full of excitement at the pub. The staff at The Harrow had made a tremendous effort to make the evening successful. It went with a bang! The entertainment was compelling, the food excellent and the company had much to commend it. There were a few who had such a good time that they might have had a teensy-weensy headache today. But that may have been due to the Karaoke, which was a real laugh. Such is the raw talent in the village there was stiff competition for the prize of a bottle of wine, which Ross had to hand over to his parents. We all thoroughly enjoyed it (the wine and the evening!). Thank you, Alan, for hosting such an excellent time and thank you to the staff without whom none of it would have been possible!

Happy New Year to you all. How content we will all be if we take heed of Tony Blair's New Year message, I hate to think. But hopefully we will meet all the adversities and be cheerful, healthy, happy and helpful.



## Supporting active rural communities

### HAVE YOU SEEN CLIVE?

CLIVE otherwise known as the Community Learning and Information Vehicle has been visiting communities across West Berkshire since October 2001. The bus is very brightly decorated and is difficult to miss! Did you know that it is jam packed with information either in paper form or on the Internet via the two lap top computers on board. Information ranges from council information, college courses, bus timetables, local walks, to sources of help and support. Recently it launched its primary schools Autumn Roadshow and this Spring the Older Person's Roadshow takes to the road with Age Concern Berkshire.

If you know of a one-off community event being planned for the whole community in the New Year or of a community group that meets regularly who would like a visit please contact John Ellis the co-ordinator on 07769 886345.

### DISPLAY SCREENS

Calling any group/association/council that wishes to display works of art or advertise/inform and mainly make a more attractive look for exhibitions/competitions. Chieveley Village Hall has 6 self standing display screens, fabric covered, 5ft. tall - 3ft.6inches wide for hire.

Please contact Mr. Cottrell, Beechworth, East Lane, Chieveley Berkshire RG20 8UY 01635 247290 for further details

### ROAD SAFETY PACK

If you have concerns about drivers speeding through your community, have any road safety questions or want to set up your own local road safety campaign, call BRAKE - the road safety organisation on 01484 559909. The guide contains a free road safety guide which contains tips and

ideas on how to make your community a safer place to drive, cycle and walk around.

.If you would like to find out more phone **FREEPHONE** 0800 316 2814

*Extracted from the newsheet of CCB's Rural Networks Project 1 Bolton Place Northbook Street Newbury Berks. RG14 1AJ*

## VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT FAIR

An important event is happening this month and we invite you to know more about it. **On Saturday 25\* January between 10 and 4** at the brand new Newbury College a Volunteer Recruitment Fair is taking place. This day is an opportunity for you and your members or colleagues to get to know a little more of what is happening across the voluntary and charitable sector. The Recruitment Fair has been arranged by Newbury Volunteer Bureau in partnership with experienced voluntary sector, commercial and statutory organisation personnel. Over 35 organisations will be at the Recruitment Fair to explain what it is they do, why they do it and how new people could be involved in achieving their aims. It is really a showcase of the very considerable voluntary contribution to life in West Berkshire that volunteers make.

**We** really hope that you and your friends and colleagues will come along on the day to meet with us and find out more- There are facilities for coffee and snacks, free transport from the town centre and there's free parking at the College. Call us on 016-35 49004 and ask for Karen Povey or Garry Poulson for more information if you need it. We look forward to seeing you. Take a look **at the new college** too!

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And finally: contributions to the WIN can be made by conversation, phone, email, handwritten or typed copy, "word" file (via email or disk) or fax, but most importantly, **please do contribute**. The **latest deadline** for the next publication is **5pm** on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January but the editors would appreciate receiving your contributions as you get them ready during the month, to save a rush of work at the last minute.

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