

**MARCHAM PLAYERS**

**Looking Both Ways.**

It is just over thirty years since Marcham Players was founded - thirty-one to be precise. It was in May 1975 that our first full length play was produced, "Bonaventure", a whodunnit set in a nunnery. Since then the Players have aimed at producing two plays each year and, with one or two exceptions, have succeeded. There have been several very memorable productions since then; one that particularly stands out in peoples' memories was "We'll Meet Again", an anniversary spectacular in 1995 to commemorate the end of the Second World War, when the front of the Institute was sandbagged to resemble the entrance to an air raid shelter. During the performance the audience were subjected to the sounds of an air raid, including bits falling ( apparently ) from the ceiling. Other big productions, when we were fortunate to have a body of young actors to draw upon, were "Charley's Aunt", "The Thwarting of Baron Bolligrew" and "Hans, the Witch and the Gobbin".



Now we have no hall in which to perform and no prospect of one for some years to come. We have been made most welcome in the Church, for which we are most grateful, and we plan to put on one play per year in the Autumn when evenings are dark, plus something simpler in the Spring or early Summer This we hope will get over the major difficulty of lighting (no blackout ) but still leaves us with difficulties of suitable subject matter and staging. We hope our regular audiences will continue to support us and we, in our turn, will do our best to provide enthralling entertainment with suitable intervals for comfort and refreshment!

**JANET FRERE**

*Forthcoming attractions*

**"With Great Pleasure"** - an evening of poetry with a summer theme, chosen by Christine Whild. Friday, 5 May, 7.30 pm in the Board Room at Manor Farm. Refreshments will be provided.

**Enjoyment guaranteed!**

The Marcham Players are looking for singers of any ability to join them in performing **"A Summer Miscellany"** on the 7th July. Please ring Joey Maclean 01865 391242 for further details.

[www.marchamplayers.co.uk](http://www.marchamplayers.co.uk)

**MARCHAM CRICKET CLUB**

May O.C.A. fixtures are:

**1st XI**

- 6th Away to Eynsham
- 20th Home to visitors Freeland
- 27th Away to Kings Sutton

**2nd XI**

- 6th Home to visitors Shrivensham II
- 13th Away to Marsh Gibbon II
- 20th Away to Hook Norton II
- 27th Home to visitors Freeland II

Also on 13th May, the 1st XI plays Shrivensham at Marcham in the 1st Round of the Airey Cup.

This month's historical entry represents something of a natural progression from the World War II items of last month and reflects the austerity of the post-war rationing days of the 1940s. Thus, in the Minutes of a Committee Meeting of 5th May 1947 it is recorded that "Correspondence from the Food Office was read which included the grant of a Catering Licence to the Secretary as representative of the Club".

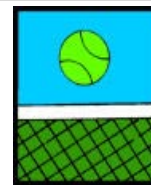
Information concerning the Club may be obtained, as usual, from Terry Whittaker (391317) or Graham Hill (391415).

**CLIVE BENNETT**



**MARCHAM TENNIS ASSOCIATION**

Summer is nearly here and it's time for tennis! Registrations for 2006-7 season will be at the court 10.30-11.30am on 6 May. If you can't make it, please call Meriel on 391725. The cost this year are: Junior £13, Adult £21 Family £43 (key deposit £4).



*Please bring your old key.*

**PLEASE** remember to put the nets back in the box when you have finished so that the school can use their playground. If juniors are playing, there should be a responsible (strong!) adult to assist them with the net posts as they are heavy.

**JENNY & MERIEL**

**EXOTIC GARDENING**

Well isn't time flying, Christmas and the New Year seems but a distant memory, but how about making a late new year's resolution? How about endeavouring to grow something exotic from a far-off country this year?



Exotic often equates to expensive to purchase too. But I can suggest something exotic, which is relatively simple to cultivate, a heavy cropper and save you money to boot.

**Runner Beans** may not seem exotic, but believe me, they most certainly are. They can be amazingly expensive in many shops (try Farmers Markets for cheaper beans without compromising the quality) and if they are not exotic prices, I would like to see something that you think is exotically priced then.

Grown properly, you could get a kilo off each runner bean plant. Next time you go to the supermarket, see how much a kilo of runner beans are, compare that to the cost of 1 bean seed and the savings are boundless.

Runner Beans should be grown up canes about 14 inches apart, and they are best picked young. By freezing the surplus ensures you will be eating them into the winter. The flowers of these beans can also be considered exotic, I've known gardeners grow Runner Beans primarily for their flowering quality. On introduction to this country from America in the 1630's, gardeners of the period only ever grew them as ornamental plants, just like we grow geraniums and ageratums today. It wasn't until the following century that the discovery was made that the pods were tasty and nutritious to eat.

A packet of Runner Beans seeds cost around £3.50, with an average of 60 seeds per packet. You do the maths and see how much you can save. If you want to go the whole hog and even save the £3.50 for the seed and get your beans for free, then let some of the pods stay on the plant in autumn. When the pods have dried and gone brown, they can be harvested, and the ripe beans inside are your seeds for the following years crop.

But don't leave beans on the plant too early in the growing season, or else the crop you pick to eat will be reduced, due to the plants putting their energies into producing seed. Wait until you have harvested what you need to eat and store before you allow the plants to produce seeds for you.

A lot of people shy away from these beans because they can be stringy, but modern varieties, if picked regularly when they are young and tender avoid this texture.

These beans can also be grown in the same place for many, many, many consecutive years, where as crop rotation issues dictate where and when you can grow other crops. So if you only have a small space for growing Runner Beans, it can be used year after year, avoiding the headache of trying to find different places to grow them.

So grow some Runner Beans this year and turn your garden into something exotic.

*Happy Gardening*

**STUART MABBUTT**

To get your letter included please write to the editor by 20th month latest