

# Marcham & District News

COTHILL – FRILFORD – GARFORD – GOZZARDS FORD – MARCHAM – TUBNEY

Your Independent Local Newsheet – [www.madnews.co.uk](http://www.madnews.co.uk)

October 2008 Vol: 30 No: 10

READ & RECYCLE!

FREE



▲ Christine Whild, Winner of the 2008 Marcham Best Kept Garden Competition



▲ Pre-School Pumpkins and Hedgehogs see page 11 ►



Julie Summer brought to life the real story of the building of the Bridge on the River Kwai for the WI see page 9 ►



▲ From Drought to Plenty in Moldova see All Saints' page



## Last Month's Mystery Photo

The lady on the right has been identified as Mrs Wellman, by her great-grandson. This was confirmed by Douglas J Steptoe who left the village in 1951. He named the 'man' in the photo as his mother, Louise Anna Steptoe. They were dressed as Darby & Joan for a celebration of the 1936 coronation held in Marcham Park. 'Darby' is holding a Coronation mug.

## DIARY FOR OCTOBER

Thur 2	Midweek Walk: The Wheatsheaf, Drayton, 12.30pm lunch /1.30pm walk	9	Fri 17	Marcham PTA Ladies Evening 7.30-10pm	11
Fri 3	AGM, MSSSC, 8.30pm	11	Sat 18	Abingdon European Society, Guildhall, Abingdon, 7.15pm	15
Wed 8	Allotment Rent Collection, Duffield Place, 6.30 - 7.30pm	3	Sat/Sun 18/19	BBOWT Fungi Foray, Dry Sandford Pit, 2 – 4pm	15
Wed 8	Parish Council Meeting, Duffield Place, 7.30pm	3	Wed 22	Marcham Players' Trafalgar Day Celebration, All Saints' Church, 7.30pm	13
Fri 10	MP's Surgery: Wantage, 5.30-7pm	7	Fri 24	MP's Surgery: Wallingford, 5.30-7pm	7
Fri 10	Quiz Night, MSSSC, 8-11pm	11	Tue 28	BBOWT Hedgehogs, Sutton Courtenay, 7.30-9.30pm	15
Tue 14	Marcham Society, All Saints' Church, 7.45pm	9	Fri 31	Real Ale Night, MSSSC	11
Thur 16	Marcham WI, Denman College, 7.30pm	9			

*Details of events may change after publication, please check with the relevant organisers before attending events.*


*Dear Readers*

The Marcham Big Tidy Up went very well and you can certainly see the difference to the weeds along the roads and paths! Well done to everyone - especially the Little Litterpicker (see page 5)!

With the darker nights, everyone needs to take more care on the roads - drivers and walkers alike. On the bends there has been one incident concerning a human walker (see the letters page) and at least two not-so-fortunate cats.

**Be Bright Be Seen**

*Until next time*



**PUBLISHER/EDITOR**

Meriel Lewis  
8 Orchard Way, Marcham  
Abingdon OX13 6PP  
Tel: 01865 391725

*Website:* [www.madnews.co.uk](http://www.madnews.co.uk)

*Email:* [editor@madnews.co.uk](mailto:editor@madnews.co.uk)

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except for Jan when it is 15th Dec for both

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**NOTES** The Editor reserves the right to alter, omit or hold over copy to another issue. The views expressed in the Marcham & District News are not necessarily those of the editorial team.

**POLICE**

PCSO Laura Schmid  
Tel: 0845 8 505 505

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

Iain Brown  
Janus, Westcot Lane, Sparsholt, Wantage,  
Oxon OX12 9PZ  
Tel: 01235 751210  
Email: [iainbrownconservatives@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:iainbrownconservatives@yahoo.co.uk)

**DISTRICT COUNCILLOR**

*Marcham and Shippon*  
Jane Hanna  
4 Charlton Road, Wantage OX12 8ER  
Tel: 01235 772782  
Email: [janehanna@dial.pipex.com](mailto:janehanna@dial.pipex.com)

For other councillors go to  
[www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

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October 2008

**PARISH COUNCIL NEWS**

**The Big Tidy Up**

The Council would like to thank all those parishioners who took part in The Big Tidy Up in the village on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September. It was very nice to see villagers who had given their time voluntarily on a Saturday to help. It would also like to thank Mr. William Cumber who provided the trailer on which to place the rubbish collected. In total 20 sacks were filled. Fluorescent tabards, gloves and litter pickers were borrowed from the Vale of White Horse District Council and these have to be returned otherwise the Parish Council will be charged. If anyone still has any of these items, could they please be returned to the Parish Clerk as soon as possible.

**Vale of White Horse District Council – Register of Electors**

The District Council is currently compiling the new register of electors for the area. Please complete the white form which you should have recently received via Royal Mail and ensure that the District Council is aware of who occupies your property. Otherwise you will lose your chance to vote.

**Trick or Treat - 31<sup>st</sup> October**

It is approaching that time of year when children can be tempted into going out trick or treating. Normally it is a harmless pastime for children, but it can also be both frightening and intimidating. Much distress is caused by unexpected knocks on the door or loud noises. Some residents may welcome treat or treating, others do not. If your children do go out, please encourage them to call only on those whom they know and to respect the wishes of anyone who does not wish to participate. If you do get an unexpected caller, make sure the chain or door bar is on before you open the door. Do not let anyone in your house unless you are happy with their identity. If you need to talk to the police call 0845 8 505 505 or dial 999 in an emergency.

**Grants**

The Parish Council considers any requests for grants at its November meeting. Therefore, if there is any worthy and needy organisation where Marcham residents benefit which is considering applying to the Parish Council for a grant, then please write to the Clerk before the end of October stating the purpose of the grant and supplying a copy of your organisation's accounts.

**Hills Quarry Products – Planning Application for Sand Extraction at Upwood Park**

The planning application for sand

extraction for up to 20 years, next to Cothill Fen with access of the A338 has generated much local interest. The Parish Council has now responded to the County Council expressing great concern over the impact on the environment in the locality, in particular the site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Area of Conservation which is a strictly protected site designated under the EC Habitats Directive. It also had concerns regarding the transport implications and lorry movements. It has asked, should the application be given permission, that lorry movements be directed towards the A420 and not along the A338. It has also asked for a 50 mph limit to be put on the length of the A338 from the A420 through Frilford. It also had worries that the exhibition about the application was held on just one afternoon in Appleton, and did not really give full opportunity for the public to view the proposals.

**Allotment rent collection** – See advert below.

**Date of Next Council Meeting:**

Wednesday 8 Oct at 7.30pm. in the residents' lounge, Duffield Place.

**Clerk to the Council:** Mrs. L. Martin,  
90 Howard Cornish Rd, 01865 391833

[www.marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**TO LET**

**Grazing to let.**

About 5 acres at Frilford Heath. Contact Judith Haworth, [jmhaworth@waitrose.com](mailto:jmhaworth@waitrose.com); 01865 390739.

**FOR SALE**

**Blue Mothercare High Chair.** Safe, stable and in good condition £10

**Portable Playpen/Travel Cot.** Primary colours, Very good condition £10

Contact 01865 391 689

**GARFORD – HELP NEEDED**

The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal needs volunteers (the more there are the less work has to be done!) to do a house-to-house collection from 25 October – 9 November. Garford has been a substantial contributor to the yearly appeal, it would be such a pity to lose it.

Please contact Susan Spurgeon on 01865 390569 if you can help.

**ALLOTMENT RENT COLLECTION**

The Clerk will be in attendance from 6.30 – 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 8th October in the residents' lounge at Duffield Place for the purpose of collecting allotment rents.

***Would allotment holders please remember to bring their rent card with them.***

*Dear Editor*

Whilst returning home from walking my dog on the night of Saturday 6th September, I was 'clipped' by the wing mirror of a car whilst walking around "The Bends" on the A415 in Marcham.

The car did not stop and although I was not injured, beyond a slight red mark on my arm, I did get the registration number and immediately reported the incident on the Police non-emergency number. I was first informed that somebody would come out to see me, which I must admit I thought was a little optimistic on a Saturday night, before being re-contacted and told that as nobody was available I should make a statement the next day at a Police station.

I duly reported to Abingdon Police station on Sunday, and although the receptionist at the station was exceedingly helpful and made several phone calls to clarify if anybody was available to take a statement, and what the correct procedure actually was, the net result was that as I had not been injured the Police would not be able to take the matter further.

As a realist I am fully aware of the pressure placed upon limited Police resources and that prioritising does have to take place. However, I am very concerned that although in this case nobody was injured, that might not have been the case. If I had been slightly further out in the road, was elderly, or as in the case of my neighbour, was carrying a baby in a car seat the situation may well have been very different.

Therefore, from a "health and safety point of view" I cannot understand why this "near miss" is not to be followed up in some way. If a driver is not adequately skilled to judge the distance between their car and a pedestrian they are surely a danger to themselves and other people. I have also asked myself if their reason for failing to stop was the result of something more than ignorance of the fact they had hit somebody: Was the vehicle insured; was the vehicle taxed; was the vehicle in a roadworthy condition; was the driver entitled to drive or was the driver within the drink-drive limit? I would like to put on record that as a resident of "The Bends" I personally was not in favour of the traffic scheme proposed by the Council, and even in light of this incident my view has not changed, as the 'cons' definitely outweighed the 'pros'. However I did expect that if an incident did ever happen, the Police would act in some way. Perhaps I should merely be grateful that the driver of the Volvo car was not a member of the shooting fraternity, and having winged their prey, didn't come back and "stretch my neck" to finish me off.

**PETER ROWE**  
October 2008

*Dear Editor*

On Monday 4th August at approx' 12-45pm my husband was involved in a road traffic accident at Frilford Crossroads, but was thankfully not seriously injured.

Having joined my husband at the scene, we had a very long wait for the recovery truck to arrive. While we waited, we were approached by a very nice lady who lived nearby, who brought us a very welcome cup of tea each and a cake, having seen us waiting forlornly next to the wreck.

We did not exchange names so we will be grateful if you can publish this letter so that we can express our thanks and appreciation for her thoughtfulness and concern.

*Many Thanks*

**PAM AND ROBIN CLAY**

*Dear Editor*

Please allow me a few minutes to explain my long love of Marcham. I was born here in 1952 and apart from a couple of years away from Marcham it has always been a good happy place for my family and me, but over the last few years this village has lost so much.

What has built this village and the community over the centuries has been the people of Marcham, working men, business professional, labourers, councillors, mothers, grandparents, friends and neighbours. Most of these people built this village with love and pride are now in Marcham cemetery, the one place that they should be respected and laying in peace. They gave their love and dedication to Marcham in some way or another and helped build our future here, so why isn't the grass neat and tidy, the paths free of weeds and the flowers, whether real, silk or plastic, on a loved one's grave be allowed to be removed?

I love nature and respect it and over the decades of the years we have lived alongside of each other, so I am sure that in God's world there is room for us and nature to continue living together.

**ELOISE WRIGHT**

*Dear Editor*

I feel that a response to M Shepherd's (Mossy) letter is necessary even though I have spoken to him, outside the Institute Hall, something that I have done many times but have not seen him inside "it's quite sometime since I have been inside I must admit" says he! So whoever put the ideas into his letter this info is for you. The equipment, old furniture, personal goods have been stored there to help various organisations i.e. Chris Ricketts (Africa), Playgroup, Baby and Toddler, Church, Marcham Players and not least ME.

Since my 7 or 8 years in Marcham, Barbara and myself have lived a life of uncertainty

so many of the old packing-cases and suitcases are at the ready, no money has ever been exchanged or given to me or anyone else as far as I know.

*I do not wish to comment on the other issues mentioned.*

**JOHN CLINKARD**

## OBITUARY

**Herbert Reynolds (Bert Hallett)**  
10th January 1910 –  
29th June 2008

Bert was born at Bletchley and as a child lived in eight different places in the West of England and Wales before learning his gardening skills from his father at what is now the WI HQ - Denman College at Marcham in Oxfordshire. After leaving home he worked on seven different estates in the Surrey and Sussex, and finally at New Alresford and Twyford Moors before retiring to Colden Common. He was a greenhouse specialist and an expert at presenting flowers and vegetables for exhibition.

From 1943 to 1947 he did National Service as a Bevin Boy miner in the Kent coalfield. He was a railway buff, and a model railway enthusiast, but his passion was for music especially choral. He loved Welsh singing and sang in choirs for more than 60 years, including the Cheriton Singers. He also took part in BBC's Songs of Praise at Alresford in 1976.

He was an enthusiastic supporter of the Church and many of the organisations in the village where with Ruth he enjoyed a happy and fulfilled retirement.

He leaves three sons, a daughter, six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

**TED HALLETT** August 2008

## THE LITTLE LITTERPICKER

I am the little litterpicker  
The smallest one by far  
And I would just like to say  
Why do people drop their litter?  
The fair streets of Marcham to mar.

I am the little litterpicker  
The smallest one by far  
And I would just like to ask  
People, please pick up your litter  
It's surely no great a task.

I am the little litterpicker  
The smallest one by far  
And I would just like to state  
Let's all take care of Marcham  
And keep it beautiful and great.

**Marcus Owsnett** Age 6

Written after The Big Cleanup 20 Sept 2008

**COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORT**

There are several important issues facing Marcham and district over the coming weeks and months.

Firstly, Marcham school has been extended to allow the extra children coming forward to attend their local school. This is good news and a great village effort. There are still concerns in the next few years as these children progress through the school whether another classroom is needed.

To this end, I am attending a meeting with officers at OCC to try to plan the next 5 years ahead in terms of school buildings and facilities, to try to ensure that the school can cope with the growing number of young families in the village and surrounding catchment area. It will be an interesting meeting on 6th October, and I am not ruling out the possibility of having to bang the table a bit !

Secondly, the plans for sand extraction at Upwood Park by Hills Aggregates is causing concern amongst the neighbours of this land for reasons of access, traffic, noise, dust and loss of amenity. I will do all I can to ensure that these concerns are listened to and acted upon, where possible. It is always difficult to balance the need for mineral extraction against the need to protect the environment from development. The determination of this application will come before the Planning and Regulation Committee at OCC, the date is not decided as I write, but the details are available on the council website - [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk) Anyone wishing to speak either for or against the application at that meeting may do so by contacting the monitoring officer - Mr Graham Warrington - at OCC or by e-mail - [graham.warrington@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:graham.warrington@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Thirdly, and in some ways it would seem to be a topic that does not rouse passions in Marcham as it does in the Hanneys or Steventon, the proposed reservoir is back on the agenda. All water companies have been busy producing their 25 year plans in draft form - called draft water resources management plans (dWRMP). These dWRMP's are to be scrutinised by the Environment Agency and altered - if needed - before being finally submitted to Defra on November 5th. The Environment Agency have

already commented on Thames Water's dWRMP, and do not support the need for a reservoir at Steventon at this stage. Thames Water are now working overtime trying to convince various bodies of the merit of a reservoir in our area. Whilst some people believe that a reservoir would bring a bypass for Marcham, and it might well do, it is by no means a certainty, as Thames Water have already indicated at some - but not all - of the "consultations" they have held, that OfWat will only let them spend our money on water resources and not new roads! I remain unconvinced by the need for a reservoir at Steventon, but concerned that other measures may have been excluded from the dWRMP for reasons that only Thames Water and the Environment Agency can answer. These alternatives must be fairly explored, or the whole process may be declared void under environmental directives from the EU that our government must comply to. The time from now until 5th November is going to be busy!

Finally, on September 28th, Garford village hall celebrates its 110 year! It was officially opened by Robert Lindsey - Lord Wantage in 1898, and the original key and plaque are in the hands of Garford parish. Despite its age and condition, and the small number of inhabitants in Garford, they are determined to not only retain, but enhance this village hall for future generations. Well done Garford, you have my support and admiration!

**CLLR IAIN BROWN**

Tel: 01235 751210 Email: [iainbrownconservatives@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:iainbrownconservatives@yahoo.co.uk)  
Janus, Westcot Lane, Sparsholt, Wantage, Oxon OX12 9PZ.

**ED VAIZEY WRITES...**

I have recently returned from a trip to Beijing. The good news is that the trip did not cost you, the British taxpayer, a penny. The bad news is that it was led by John Prescott. (Actually, that's a cheap shot, I quite like John Prescott and he is a lot more on the ball than his public image suggests.) You may wonder why my visit to Beijing is relevant to Marcham. Well, as everyone knows, China is the world's fastest growing economy, and overtook us a few years ago. Most of the world's electronic goods - photocopiers, mobile phones

and so on - are made there. It also supplies the highest number of illegal immigrants to this country, as well as the largest number of overseas students. So China has a huge impact on us, directly and indirectly. The value of a trip like this is that you get to dispel a few myths.

China is a closed society, and a one-party state. But there is certainly a great deal of freedom apparent in people's daily lives, and a certain level of free discussion about the future direction of the country. Also, China has the largest number of internet users in the world, so censorship is becoming more difficult. China is also taking the environment much more seriously than we might think, and is very conscious that it is in her own self-interest to tackle carbon emissions.

My four days in Beijing also gave me the chance to visit the British paralympic team, and bask in some of their reflected glory, especially as we were briefly top of the table when I was there!

*ED VAIZEY, MP Wantage (Con)*

**MP'S SURGERY WITH ED VAIZEY**  
*5.30-7.00pm, unless stated otherwise*

10 Oct	<b>Wantage</b> , Civic Hall
24 Oct	<b>Wallingford</b> , Town Hall
7 Nov	<b>Faringdon</b> , Corn Exchange
21 Nov	<b>Grove</b> Old Mill Hall, Old School Lane
<b>Contact Ed Vaizey by</b>	
Post	The House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
E-mail	<a href="mailto:vaizeye@parliament.uk">vaizeye@parliament.uk</a>
Web	<a href="http://www.vaizey.com">www.vaizey.com</a>
Tel	0207 219 6350

**SEPTEMBER CROSSWORD ANSWERS**

**ACROSS** 5 Snail 6 Elder 9 Dead faint 10 Big 12 Blackberries 13 Aromatherapy 15 Old 16 Parchment 18 Cross 19 Elwes

**DOWN** 1 Aside 2 Wind farms 3 Ply 4 Delivery 7 :Market day 8 Inference 11 Treadmill 12 Burglary 14 Stash 17 Ass

**BY ALISA**

**Write to MADNews and let others know what you think about current events**



## Marcham WI September 2008

Our Autumn programme started last month with an excellent speaker at our open meeting. The historian, broadcaster and author, **Julie Summer** brought to life the real story of the building of the **Bridge on the River Kwai**; recalling her grandfather's part in the history of the second World War in the Far East. It was pleasing to have husbands as well as other guests to join our evening and Julie kindly signed copies of her books for us (see cover photo).

During September we enjoyed an **"Evening with Anne Widdecombe"** in Oxford Town Hall, a trip to Portsmouth and a fascinating science lecture at the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory where we learnt about the history and uses of plastic during the past 100 years.

This month our seasonal talk is about apples - all the different types and varieties as well as apples through the ages with samples to taste.

### Future Events

21st. October Singing for pleasure with Christine Whild

26th. October Visit to Stourhead in Wiltshire

29th. October Autumn Music Tasters Series starts

### NEXT MEETING

7.30pm Thursday 16 October

*History of Apples*

**Gillian Franklin**

Denman College: Teaching Block

Visitors welcome - £3 voluntary contribution

Contacts for: Sonia Edwards 01865 391442

more information Christine Whild 01865 391270

### SUNSHINE CLUB

**September** I have been asked by the Chairlady to see if anyone would like to come along and join us on our Monday afternoon Club which is held every week in Duffield Place. We start at 2.30pm, we play Bingo with a break for tea and biscuits. The meeting finishes around 4.15pm after we've had the raffle. If anyone would like to call round say about 2.15pm the Chairlady would be there to welcome you - so please come along and give it a try. No age limit will be pleased to see you. If you would rather ring first, contact our Chairlady on 01865 391536.

JOY CROOK

### REPORT FROM MARCHAM SOCIETY AGM

If you don't know a charcliffe from a partlet, you weren't at the Marcham Society meeting on 9 September. Having dealt with AGM business and been fortified with wine and nibbles, the audience sat back to enjoy a talk by Barbara Allison entitled Petticoats and Partlets. She brought along beautifully-sewn examples to show us. Anybody who was anybody in the 16th century made a will, just as we're encouraged to nowadays. However, instead of bequeathing money or stocks and shares, they left belongings. Hence, you might be left an apron or a pair of shoes, a best gown, second-best gown or even a worst gown!

Next time you oversleep and are rushing to get ready for the day, spare a thought for a 16th century lady as she dressed herself in a smock (a bit like a very long vest with sleeves), two petticoats - which were more like skirts, a jacket topped by a partlet which covered the shoulders and provided a base for a separate collar. Around the neck would be a charcliffe, a forerunner of the neckerchief. An apron would be tied around the waist. These were carefully folded to show a chequer pattern when worn, which can be seen on effigies in churches.

There was no problem with bad hair days, as the head was covered with a coif - a white linen cap - and topped off with a hat. Add a pair of knitted woollen stockings and a stout pair of shoes and she was ready to start the day. If you were wondering about knickers, they didn't wear them in those days!

JF

### MARCHAM SOCIETY MIDWEEK WALK

#### Thursday, 2 October

For this month's walk we will meet at The Wheatsheaf in Drayton (Map Ref: SU 476942) at 12.30 for lunch and 1.30 for the walk of about 4 miles through the quiet countryside towards Sutton Courtenay, including an ancient route, the Drayton East Way. *New walkers are very welcome. Members free, non-members £1. Ring Eric Dunford on 391439 for lifts and details.*

### MARCHAM SENIOR CITIZENS' CLUB

**September** We had our annual outing to the sea this year - we went to Bournemouth. The whole journey was done in pouring rain so we were a little apprehensive as to what kind of a day we would have. But we need not have worried, as we arrived in Bournemouth the rain stopped. For the rest of the day it remained fine with occasional bursts of sunshine and everyone was able to enjoy their day out. I did hear that some brave souls also had a dip in the sea, not sure whether it was just a big toe they dipped or had a complete swim but they were braver than most of us. But everyone seemed to have a great day. We have a few members who haven't been too well of late we trust they will feel better soon and rejoin us at our meetings. Our meeting in October will be on the 30th.

JOYCE PARRY



The  
Marcham  
Society

## Fungi in Your Garden

*Pedro Collins*

Next meeting: 14th November Liz Wooley  
The Parish of St. Thomas the Martyr, Oxford

**All Saints' Church**

Tuesday 14th October 2008, 7.45pm

Non-members £2

[www.marchamsociety.org.uk](http://www.marchamsociety.org.uk)

Further details: Sheila Dunford (391439) or Judith Fontaine (391275)

**MSSSC: Marcham Sports, Scouts & Social Club**  
**The pavilion & field off Morland Road**

We held a successful Family Disco in September. Lots of you came along, rather more than we anticipated actually so it was a bit busy at times for our apprentice barperson! Due to its popularity we will try to do another soon. It's been suggested that we try a Friday night instead so please look out for adverts and posters.

Its great to see our two football teams playing again. Both teams compete in the North Berks Football League, the first team in the 2nd division; the reserves in the 4th division. The first team have started really well, gaining more points already than in the whole of last year! The reserves have yet to pick up any points but in a cup match they played really well against a team two divisions above them, eventually losing 3 – 0 they reportedly performed really well.

**REGULAR BAR OPENING TIMES**

Every Friday - 8pm to 11pm

Every Saturday - after Football or Cricket

**OCTOBER SOCIAL EVENTS**

**AGM** Fri 3rd Oct 8.30pm

**Quiz Night** Fri 10th Oct 8.30pm

**Real Ale night** Fri 31st Oct (Last Fri every month)

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** – Friday 3rd October

*We look forward to seeing you at the club*

For more info contact Geoff Dix, secretary on 391577

**MARCHAM FOOTBALL CLUB**

The North Berks football season kicked off recently with Marcham Football Club again fielding two teams, the first team playing in Division Two and the reserves in Division Four. It was Lambourn Sports Reserves away to begin the league campaign for the first team, and after a hard fought 90 minutes in some atrocious weather conditions, Marcham triumphed 2-1 with Lewis Hill scoring both the goals. The reserves started their season away at Stanford in the Vale, and against very strong opposition wound up on the wrong end of a 7-0 scoreline, but will be hoping for better fortune in the weeks to come. Forthcoming fixtures for both teams are available on the North Berks Football League website (www.nbfl.co.uk) and anyone who is interested in joining the club to play or coming along to the twice weekly training sessions can contact either Tristan Barratt on 07789 552244 or Simon Davie on 07899 946358.

**MARCHAM PRE-SCHOOL NEWS**

What a surprise we had when we returned to Pre-school at the beginning of September - there in our garden was the most enormous pumpkin we had ever seen! The children were thrilled to see what their hard work had resulted in. We've also had french beans, runner beans, onions, garlic, lettuce, potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers, peas, carrots and a selection of herbs. Keeping in a very autumnal theme we've been talking about hedgehogs and how they live. Some of the children made clay models and we then looked around the garden to find appropriate things to make a hedgehog habitat. I hope you like the results.



If you would like more information about Marcham Pre-school, or have a 'skill' or hobby you would like to share with us please contact us on 07749 245313.  
 October 2008

**BACK TO SCHOOL IN MARCHAM**

We were delighted that the building work was completed on time for the start of term – you probably saw it over the Summer. This work has enabled us to accommodate the extra village children who wanted places at the school, and their teachers (both new to the school) have done a great job making the area inviting and vibrant.

A reminder to parents who know that they will be wanting a place in the school in the years to come - do let the school know of this as this will greatly assist us in our planning. And if your child is set to begin school in September 2009, the application packs are now available from school reception.

\*\*\*

This month sees Jackie Ward retiring from her role as Chair of the Parent Teacher Association and our intrepid interviewers went to ask her about this:

*How long have you been Chair of the PTA?*

5 years

*What does the PTA do?*

Fundraising activity to provide the extra bits that school doesn't have the money to provide. We've paid for books, whiteboards, computers and coaches for trips to name a few.

*What have you enjoyed the most about doing this?*

Everything - it's hard work, but fun and with friendly people.

*What has been your favourite event that you have been involved in organising?*

The Christmas Bazaars because I love Christmas.

*What will you do with your free time now?*

What free time?!

Our thanks go to Jackie and the rest of the PTA for all they have done to support the school. Others are standing down this month – Ray Tierney, Rosemary Bell and Lynn Heffernan and our thanks go to them too. The funds raised by the PTA make a real difference to the quality of the children's learning as shown in this picture – the PTA funded the use of these Tudor costumes for Morland class last year.



**Marcham Primary School PTA**  
**Ladies evening**  
 Friday 17 October 7.30pm - 10pm  
 Look out for further details on posters around the village

If you run or are a member of a group, why not write a short report about it?

**TASK FOR THE MONTH**

Growing plants in containers on balconies, window sills and outdoors is becoming more common nowadays, especially as gardens are getting smaller on new housing developments. But through this necessity to adapt how we garden, there are some interesting ideas and lessons to be learnt.



Some gardeners actually prefer to grow vegetables in containers as they feel you bypass poor soil problems if you purchase compost from the shops. Also they feel they reduce weeding and digging elements from the workload and well as limiting problems arising from pest hidden in their own garden soil. Growing bags, which you see being sold in many outlets, can be used for growing a whole range of different crops, and if they are prone to frost damage, can be moved to a more sheltered position if the weather forecasters warn of impending doom!

Other gardeners don't like the idea of container gardening as they feel yields are significantly reduced in containers compared to plants being grown in open ground. Concerns are also raised about pots being unsightly if placed near the house, as well as the plants need more watering and feeding if you grow them in containers. I can see both sides to this, but container gardening to me allows more people to dip their toes into gardening, and some people I've met may not have even been introduced to gardening in the first place if it wasn't for container gardening in its rawest form.

Any container (with drainage holes in the bottom) will do as long as its at least 9 inches deep, as long as it is raised of the ground a little so water can drain out of the bottom if needed. Salad crops, peppers, tomatoes, aubergines are some vegetables that will grow in containers, but the flower varieties that can be cultivated in this way are endless.

If the consumption of herbs in your household is high, you can have rows of pots in a well lit window sill containing sage, rosemary, basil, lemon balm, parsley and thyme. They will all grow happily and supply you during the winter period. The steamy atmosphere of a kitchen windowsill is ideal, just keep them moist.

It is advisable though to restrict your window sill to just a few things that you pick regularly, because those plants that are not harvested regularly often become long and straggly and soon look like an untended eyesore. So don't be too ambitious initially.

Just fill your window sill containers with seed compost, the surface should be about 1 inch below the top of the container, so if you water from the top the water does not run everywhere. But it is generally better to water from below and let it soak up into the compost. When these pots in your windows are growing, watering once or twice a week is all you should need to do. If the pots are located in a dry room, mist the leaves daily, but as I say, the kitchen is the best place as it is a moist environment already.

Once you become more confident with window sill gardening, you can become much more adventurous. Growing lettuce in shallow plastic trays or miniature tomatoes such as Tiny Tim is the possibility.

Go on, have a go. Not having a large garden, or no garden at all is no excuse, we can all grow something..

**Happy Gardening**  
**STUART MABBUTT**  
October 2008

**MARCHAM CRICKET CLUB**

The weather presented problems for cricketers again last month. Most of the scheduled OCA fixtures on 6th September were abandoned without a ball being bowled. For those matches that managed to get started "rain stopped play" was a major feature.



A week later only four of the scheduled end-of-season matches were commenced.

The 1st XI made a good start in its maiden season in Division 1 and, after being in the upper region of the table earlier in the year, finished in a creditable mid-way position.

Also the 2nd XI maintained a satisfactory position in its Division. Even though the playing season is over for this year, the Club's activities do not cease, the on-going programme of maintenance necessary to provide a high standard of field facilities for 2009. By way of cricketing history a report from the North Berks Herald of 4th October 1873 records the following:

"Marcham v Drayton. This match was played on Thursday 25th ult in Marcham Park, and although the time would not allow of its being played out Drayton claimed a victory on the first innings. The bowling of J Betts and S. Bullock of Drayton was admired, as also the batting of T. Champ for the Marcham side. When time was called Marcham had lost their four best wickets for 33 runs leaving but little doubt as to the result had it been played out.

Marcham 54 and 33-4 Drayton 81 and 61."

Information relating to Marcham CC (including playing for, or umpiring on behalf of the Club) may be obtained from Graham Hill (391415) or Terry Whittaker (391317).

**CSB**

**MARCHAM PLAYERS**

Our latest planned production seems to be dogged by ill fortune at the moment. Its second planned presentation date has, I'm afraid, come to naught. Apparently the 'Performing Rights' licence can only be held by one group at a time.



Marcham Players put forward a very strong case but couldn't quite convince the licencees that we had the kudos and audience appeal over the 'Old Vic' in the West End. Fear not though, we're now all geared up for it to appear later in the spring. Additionally, fine weather has been ordered.

To avoid total despair, a production to lift the hearts and raise the spirit will take place to celebrate another great British triumph. A festival of song, ditty and tableau; "**TRAFALGAR DAY**", commemorating the naval victory of October 21st 1805 will be presented, led by Captain Horatio 'Timmy' Nelson and his 'Crew'. Participation is voluntary but Press Gangs may be utilised in the event of any shirking or slacking. All landlubbers are welcome. Grog & hard tack will be slopped out during the interval and a 'Golden Rivet' raffle will take place during "stand easy".

**Venue:-** Wednesday 22nd October @ 7.30pm.

**Date:-** All Saints' Church, Marcham.

**Tickets:-** £5 & £4 (conc). From Marcham Post Office or on the door.

Joey Maclean (01865 391242), or Dave Hutchinson (01865 391964), are the people to contact for membership details.

**STUART BRIGHTON**

www.marchamplayers.co.uk

**BBOWT** Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust  
**Saturday/Sunday 18/19 Oct 2-4 pm**  
 Fungi Foray at Dry Sandford Pit with Peter Creed. Suitable for beginners and fungiphiles. Meet in Dry Sandford Pit car park, Honeybottom Lane (OS grid ref SU 467 997). Admission Free - Donations Welcome. Contact Anita 07711 656945.



**Tuesday 28 Oct 7.30-9.30 pm**

**Hedgehogs: A Talk by Dr Pat Morris**

Sutton Courtenay Village Hall, Frilsham St/Hobbyhorse Lane, Sutton Courtenay OX14 4BB  
 Admission Free - Donations Welcome.  
 Booking Preferred: Contact Shirley Jarvis 01865 371297  
 shirley.jarvis@btinternet.com

**BBOWT WORK PARTIES :**

**DRY SANDFORD PIT, NR ABINGDON**

First Sunday of every month 10am – 1pm

Varied conservation tasks in one of Oxfordshire's finest and most intriguing reserves. Children Welcome Meet: Reserve car park in Cothill village, 100m west of Honeybottom Lane/ Church Lane junction. SU 467 997.

Contact: Stephen Grigson 01865 390 540

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[www.bbowt.org.uk](http://www.bbowt.org.uk)

**Grove Craft Fair**

**Old Mill Hall, Grove**

**Saturday 8 November 2008**

**10.00am - 4.00pm**



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Contact Jen Brown on 07880 714008 for further details

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**DCS Joncare, Radley Rd Ind Est, Abingdon**

**Music Stand, High St, Witney**

**Oxford Welsh Male Voice Choir:**

[www.oxfordwelshmvc.org.uk](http://www.oxfordwelshmvc.org.uk)

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 Dr Allan Chapman  
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 Saturday 15 November

Council Chamber, The Guildhall, Abingdon  
 7.15 for 7.30 p.m.  
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