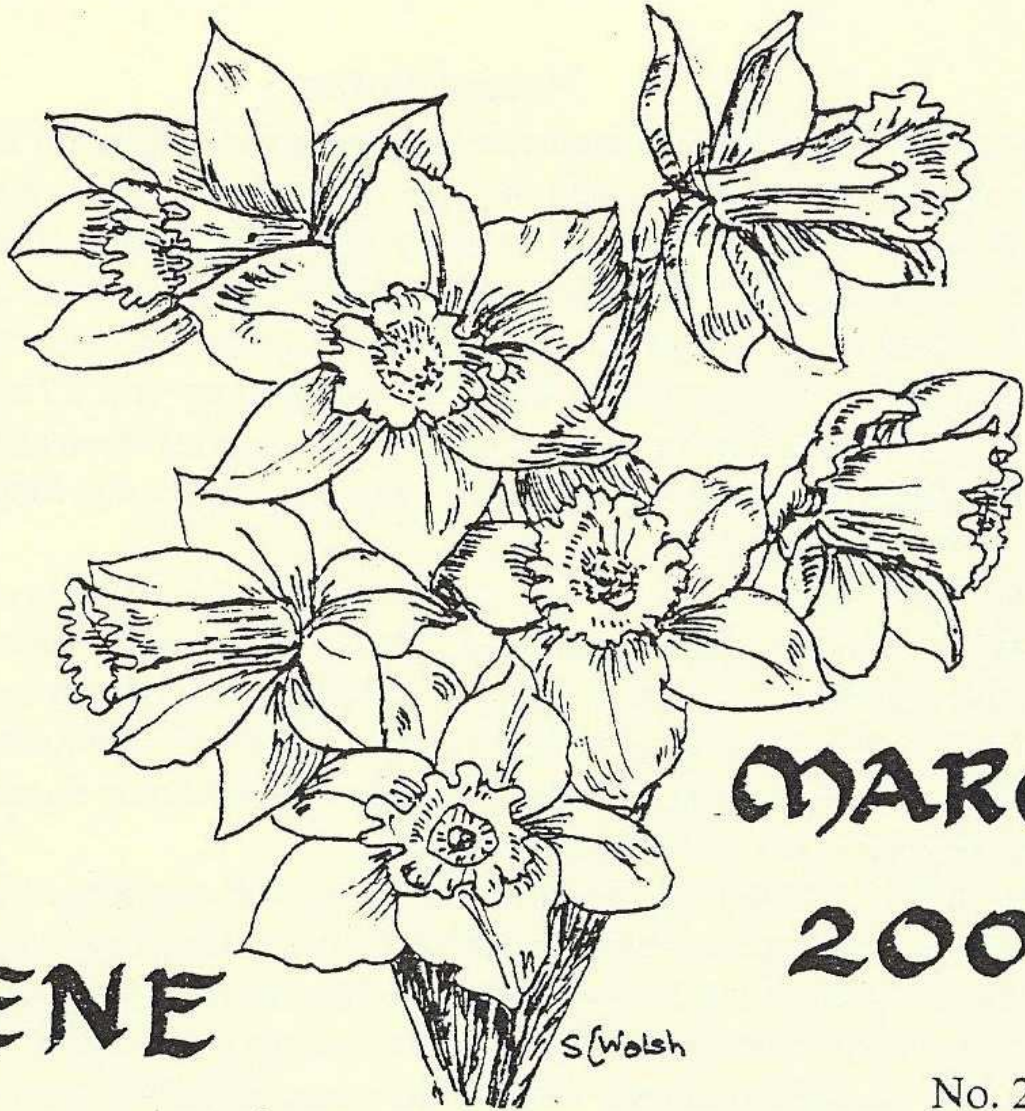


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SCENE

MARCH  
2001

No. 231

20th, 21st and 23rd March

**Bugsy Malone**

At Sibford School. See page 10

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24th and 25th March

**Art Exhibition**

10.30 - 4.30

At Sibford Gower Primary School

See page 11



## Nature Notes

**Jan. 17th.** Hook Norton seems to be a favourite village for waxwings to visit. A few years ago a group of these spectacular birds were seen there eating cotoneaster berries and recently there has been another sighting there. Waxwings nest in Lapland moving down into southern Scandinavia for the winter months and sometimes crossing the sea to Scotland. Some years ago I had a letter from a farm near Lairg to say that 27 of them were busily feeding on a cotoneaster bush growing against the wall of his barn. What a sight that must have been. It is only very rarely that they make their way as far south as this.

**Feb. 2nd.** Today I was shown a male mink which had been shot near Lambs Pool. It was the first one that I have had in hand and it was bigger and heavier than I expected. I tried to look up their weight in a book but only found reference to the european mink. The ones that have escaped or been released from farms into the wild here and are doing so much damage to our wildlife are of the American strain.

**Feb. 3rd.** A muntjac appeared in the garden this morning. I think it may have been a young one as it seemed less nervous than they usually are and with its tail cocked up, looked very much like the kid of a toggenberg goat. I thought that it might be tame enough to let me walk round it allowing it to go into our clump of trees where I have seen signs that they are lying up but it would not trust me to that extent and trotted back towards Mannings Close.

**Feb. 4th.** Most of our grandchildren who were here to lunch were able to watch the same or another muntjac as it wandered around in full view from our kitchen window. It was only eating a few ivy leaves while I was watching but I have noticed that a few of our garden flowers have been neatly trimmed.

**Feb. 16th.** A mistle thrush that has been singing frequently for most of this month has largely given up singing the typical short sharp phrases all on a similar note in favour of a rapidly repeated Tyew-Tyew-Tyew-Tyew-Tyew-Tyew which is not as nice. However it's distinctive song has taught me that the same bird sings from different trees spread over much of Sibford Ferris. Previously I would have thought that there were several separate males singing in the area, which means they are rarer than I thought.

**Feb. 18th.** While we were out today a sparrowhawk had picked a colored dove right by the wall of our bungalow. It had taken the carcass away with it just leaving a deep ring of feathers.



# SIBFORD CRICKET CLUB - AGM ANNOUNCEMENT

Having concluded the season many months ago, it is now time to look forward to the following Cricketing calendar.

The Annual General Meeting will be held at the **Bishop Blaize at 7.30pm on 12th March.**

All members of Sibford Cricket Club and anyone else who wishes to attend are all welcome.

---

## Sibford Gower Parish Council

Sibford Gower Parish Council is looking for a new Clerk following the resignation of the present Clerk. Expenses and a small salary are paid in accordance with OALC guidelines. Average workload is around 2 hours per week.

Knowledge of accounts will be helpful and the use of a word processor/computer an advantage.

For further information please contact the clerk Petra Berry (780462) or Cllr Robin Spicer (780690).

The Parish Precept for 2001/2002 was set at £2000.

This years **Litter Blitz** will be held on **April 28th**. Please come and help tidy your village. Sacks, gloves and aprons will be provided. We will meet at the Village Hall at 2 pm.

The next Parish Council Meeting is on **Friday March 23rd at 8 pm**. The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on **Wednesday May 2nd at 7.30pm**. All meetings are held in Sibford Gower Endowed Primary School.

Petra Berry, Clerk.

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# Gardening Help Wanted

From March 1<sup>st</sup>-October 31<sup>st</sup> 2001  
Person Required to help in the Walled Gardens at  
Sibford School.

12.5 hours per week during Term Time and  
15 hours per week during school holidays.  
Timing of these hours is negotiable.

For further details please contact  
Angela Bovill  
01295780609

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Cards of our Sibford Village Panels will bring interest and happy memories of time spent in the Sibfords to family and friends at Easter and on other occasions.

ON SALE at THE SIBFORD VILLAGE STORE

Pack of 6 cards (1 of each panel) £3.50 per pack or 65p each

ALSO FROM Pauline Inns tel. 780702 or Mollie Mulley tel. 780629

We also have a pack of 6 cards of the same panel or of your choice.

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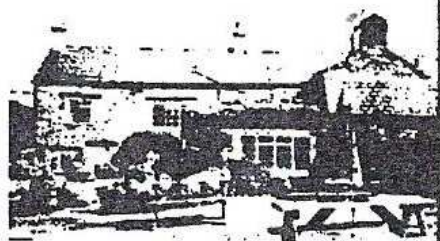
Enjoy our Well-Kept Traditional ales

Also our new menu of fine Traditional Fayre

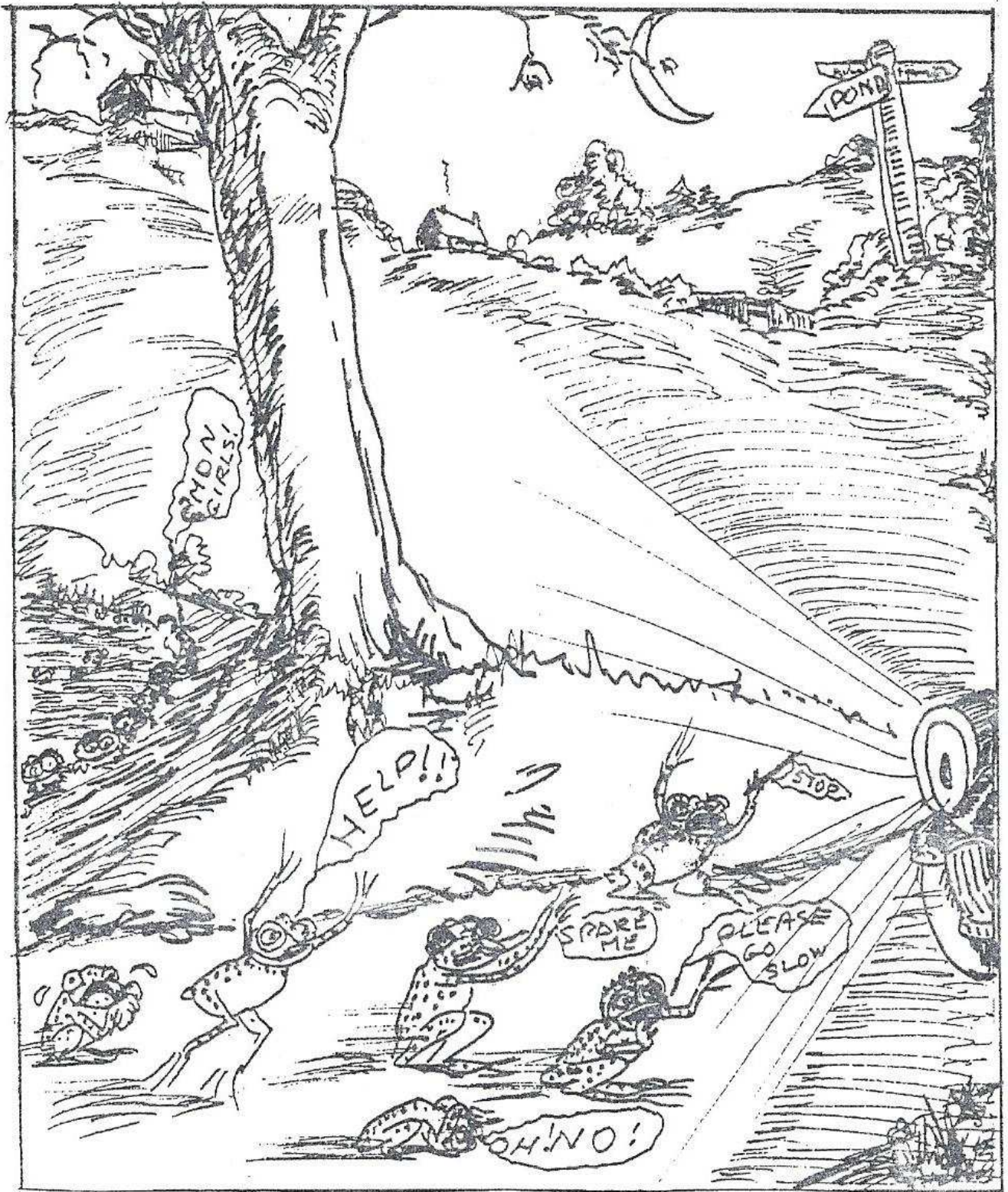
Don't forget Monday night is take-out night

Fish or double jumbo sausage and chips

Looking for some where to go on a warm  
summers evening ? Don't sit in any garden  
Sit in our Fabulous open garden with  
views over the Glorious Sib Valley, were  
on a clear day you can see into three  
different Counties.







It's that time of year again!

We are leaving our comfy winter quarters and heading for our birth ponds for courting and spawning. Nocturnal drivers, pedestrians too, please watch out for us, especially around Main Street, Bonds End Lane, Colony Road & Hawkes Lane. We can quite easily be spotted as our little throats glow white when picked up in headlight & torch beams. With your help and care we hope to make it.

Thank you. Croak! Croak!



## A NEW YEAR'S HONOUR FOR SIBFORD

Congratulations to John Millband, for whom the New Year Honours brought a well-deserved OBE 'for services to the community in Nepal'. John and Jean Millband have had their home in Sycamore Close, Sibford Gower, since 1986 but for the last 10 years have spent much of their time in Nepal.

John is a roads engineer and he has been helping the Nepalese government to decide how the money offered by rich countries for road building should be used for the greatest benefit to the community. Nepal is a mountainous country with few roads - they are all tremendous walkers. But new roads are easily washed away, so there is a temptation to build to a much higher standard than is warranted by the potential traffic. And roads built with the best intentions can sometimes have unfortunate results, for example if the village population decides to leave for the fleshpots and overcrowded tenements of the capital, Kathmandu.

The right course can be difficult to see and even more difficult to follow, as the roads department faces pressure from all quarters - local and international, political and commercial. John, having acquired a thorough knowledge of the terrain and people's needs, was able to provide the sort of calm and unprejudiced assessment of advantages and risks which greatly strengthened the hands of local civil servants and politicians.

John went to Nepal for Banbury-based consulting engineers TP O'Sullivan (of which he was a partner until the company was absorbed into the WSP Group in 1997) and thanks to him the contract was repeatedly renewed. Jean worked for a time in a local school. 'The people are so kind and so honest', she says, 'but all the same, it was 10 years in quite a hard posting.' Although John is now officially retired and they will spend most of their time in Sibford (and around - they are keen long distance cyclists), the Nepalese have asked him back for a series of short monitoring visits over the next couple of years.

John Millband follows a trail from Sibford to the Indian sub-continent pioneered by Frank Lascelles, with his pot of Sibford earth under the imperial throne at the Calcutta Durbar. John's mission has lasted somewhat longer and his impact will be more durable, if less spectacular. It is a pleasure to see such solid and useful work in remote places properly appreciated by governments both there and here.

AG



# The Sibfords Society

The Society's annual Social had a theme of 'Dance' and after a clever pictorial quiz identifying different dances, designed by Maureen and Keith Hicks, helped along by hot punch, we enjoyed a delicious supper provided by everyone present. To Peter Hardman's playing on the piano, we then sang songs on the theme of dance, which nearly raised the roof of the Village Hall. Our evening concluded with Old Time Dancing, to music provided by Beatie Haynes, which was enjoyed by all present, even if some of the steps had eluded us over the years!

**CHANGE OF DATE** - Please note that the Annual General Meeting has been changed to **22 March** and not the 15 March as printed in the yearly programme of events. Arnold Lamb has kindly offered to bring along maps made of the trades carried out in the Sibfords at the end of the 19th C and will talk about them.

---

The Deadline for contributions to the April Sibford Scene will be **Tuesday 20th March.**

Copy to the Editor or the Village Shop.

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The Firs Garage would like to thank the local community for there loyal support, it is much appreciated.



## LEO NEWS

The venue was changed and members were entertained at Jenny Barratt's.

It was one of the best evenings we have ever had and was a laugh from beginning to end. Everyone had brought a wedding photo (or two) and related how they came to meet their husbands, through to the eventual marriage. There were many interesting revelations, and great interest was expressed in the photos - how very much younger we looked and how pretty we all were - and some of the husbands were pronounced handsome and dishy! All round, I think we felt we were lucky to have had their company for such a long time, (in some cases over fifty years). We had one visitor, who not only told us how she had met her husband, but related a spectacular story about the actual wedding, which made headlines in the local paper at the time. They referred to it as a "Carry On" wedding. This finished off the evening perfectly.

We were enjoying ourselves so much that we hadn't realised it was 11.30! The evening had gone by in a flash.

The March meeting, on the 20th, will be at Glynis Morbey's, 22 High Meadow. As it appears there will be fewer people than usual, we decided we would just have a "chatty" evening.

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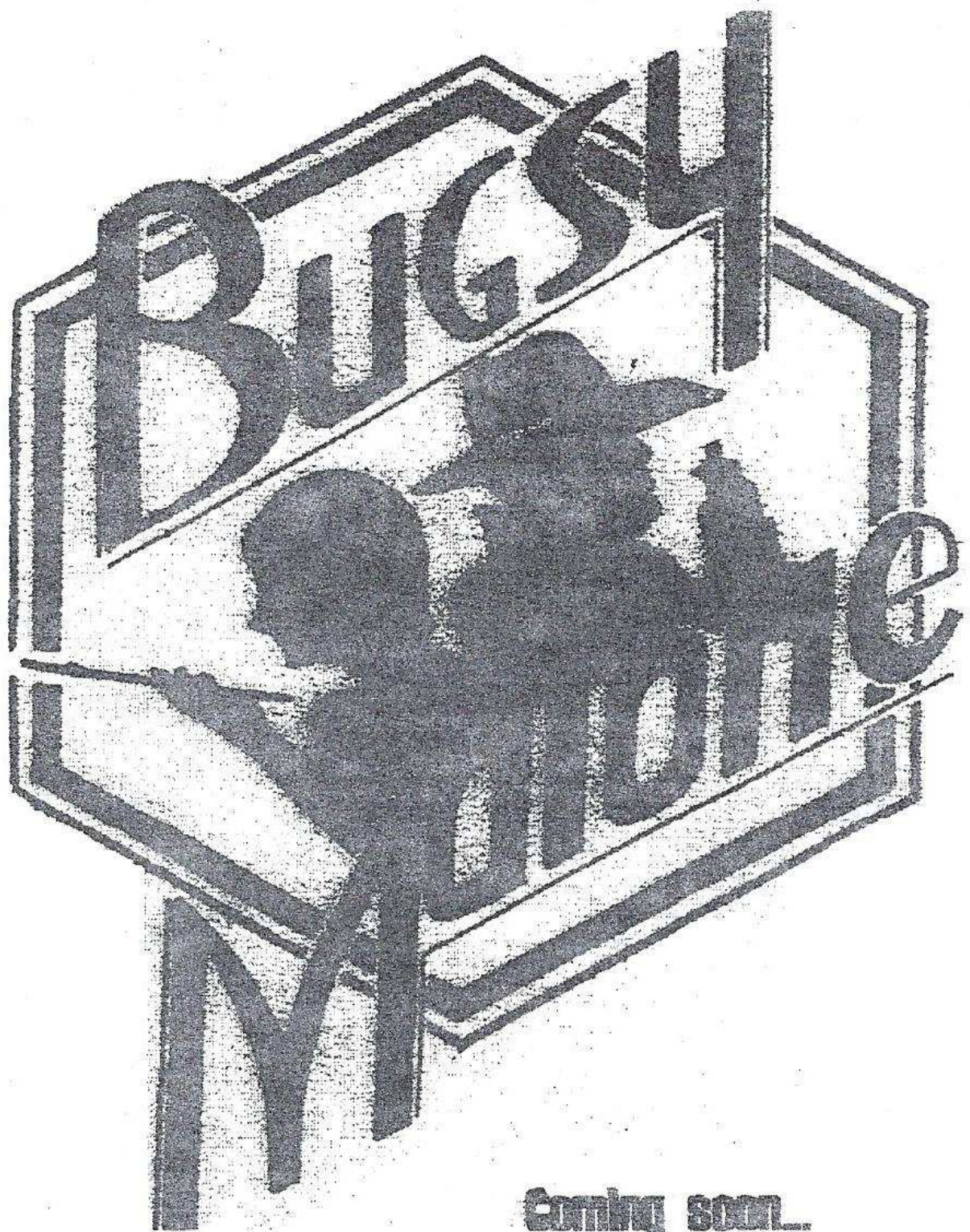
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**Sibford School**

**20<sup>th</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> March**

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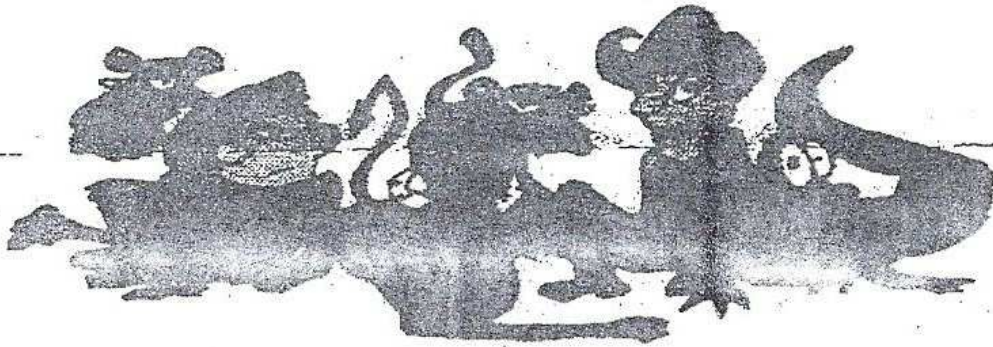


COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROJECT

# SUMMER

The Easter and Summer holidays seem to be getting longer !

Are the children getting under your feet ?



Have you thought of providing some activities during the holidays ?

Jane Walker and Ann Wilcox can offer advice. They would be delighted to visit and chat with you in your village.

Contact them at the above address or telephone 01865 880900

Oxfordshire Play Association is a Registered Charity No. 276706



RED CROSS COFFEE MORNING  
SATURDAY 17TH MARCH  
SWALCLIFFE GRANGE  
10.00 am - 1.00 pm  
CAKES - RAFFLE  
ENTRANCE £1.00 (to include coffee)  
All proceeds to The Red Cross

## First retreat day of 2001 at Handywater Farm, Sibford Tuesday 10th April.

The arrival of the snowdrops and other signs of spring have turned our thoughts towards planning dates for Quiet Garden days in the coming months.

The first date for the diary is April 10th, the Tuesday in Holy Week, when Keith Walklate will lead the meditation. Holy Week is an appropriate time to take a day's retreat. When we chose the same date last year, the occasion was well attended and much appreciated.

Do take the opportunity to make space for a day's quiet reflection. Whatever the weather, you will be made welcome either indoors or out.

Fuller details will follow in next month's Wykeham News, but if you would like further information before then about Quiet Days at Handywater, ring Sue on 01295 788770.

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## W. I. NEWS & INFORMATION

*The sun was shining and knowing our speaker, we were assured of a pleasant afternoon.*

*To be prematurely widowed and left in a seven bedroomed house would have daunted many a widow, but not so Barbara Gray. By hosting (and in some cases almost mothering) a wide variety of overseas students from an Oxford college, she entertained us with many descriptions and anecdotes of the 'Students I Have Loved'.*

*From a four-foot lass who completely floored two large male colleagues to an XXL male who was obliged to invest in his own transport, finding a shared seat in the busy public transport quite inadequate.*

*Small or large, she cared for them all. This was a reciprocated gesture as shown by the many ensuing overseas wedding invitations!*

*We were full of admiration for her patience and prowess and our sincere thanks were expressed by Rosalind Pearlman.*

*Successful marmalade makers were 1st Greta Baadsgaard, 2nd. Kathleen Reid and 3rd. Gillian Soden.*

*Our generous tea hostesses were Glennis Hardman and Jennie Barrat.*

### *OUR NEXT MEETING*

*Tuesday March 13th.*

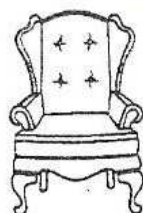
*Annual Meeting*

*with*

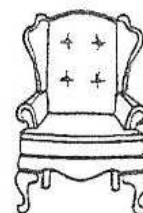
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# Sibford Horticultural Society

The first meeting of the year will take place on **Wednesday 14th March** at 8 O'Clock in the Village Hall, when Val Bourne will give an illustrated talk on Snowdrops of which there are many varieties and much of interest.

New members are very welcome the subscription being £2.50 per annum, which gives free entries at the annual Show and a discount at some garden centres.

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# SIBFORD VILLAGE HALL NEWS

'The 2001 Sibford Lottery Game' - your chance to play the lottery and win! The Sibfords are creating their own "Village Lottery", which gives people a much higher chance of winning (can't promise a million!) and is an exciting and novel way of raising money for the Village Hall. 50% of the money raised will go in prize money - all for £1 a month (taken as an annual sub of £12). A draw will take place at the monthly Collectables and Car Boot Sale (first Sunday of every month) to find three prize winners. The more players, the higher the prizes. Once the Lottery has 50 players the first draw will take place, hopefully in March. Contact either VH secretary Muriel Chandler (780025) or Asst. secretary Ginny Bennett (780373).

The next Collectables and Car Boot Sales will be on **Sunday 4th March** and **Sunday 1st April**. Both from 12 noon to 3 pm with refreshments available. To book please ring 01295 251339

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## Anti Dog Fouling Campaign

Following the success of Cherwell District Council's anti dog fouling campaign, which has resulted in 15 fixed penalty fines issued, the Dog Wardens will be targeting hot spots during February and March. Anyone with a query or complaint, seeking advice or requiring free poop bags or dog tags can contact Cathy Wainwright, Dog Warden, Environmental Health Department, Cherwell District Council, Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX15 4AA. Tel: 01295 252535 ext 4054/4158.

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# AGE Concern


Age Concern is pleased to announce the launch of an Advocacy Service for residents and other users of County Council residential homes in Oxfordshire.

The County Council will shortly be entering a partnership with an outside contractor who will take over providing 800 care places across the county.

Many residents will have concerns about the changes and will need support to speak up about decisions which may affect their lives. The Advocacy Service will offer independent support to residents through the period of change and beyond.

We are looking for volunteers willing to become Advocates for people living in residential homes. No particular experience is necessary we offer training and plenty of support. For more details about this rewarding voluntary work, telephone 01865 717615.

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 TEL. 01295 780206**



## HARVEST TIME IN THE CAPE

It is odd to talk about the harvest at the end of February when you probably have the snowdrops just coming through but the grape picking is well under way here. It does depend on where the wine farms are and the state of the grapes as to when they start but I'm seeing lots of open trailers loaded with wonderful looking grapes. On Wednesday next week a group of us are going to Morgenster wine farm to do some grape picking of our own, then we will be watching the pressing and learn more about wine is made at their new cellar. I'm sure we will be doing a bit of sampling too! At the same farm they also grow olives and they have won in international award for their olive oil. You can actually go and sample their oils which is quite a unique experience.

So while the grapes are being picked the tourists continue to flock in. It is the main season for European visitors, all coming to escape the cold northern winter. The Cape is proving to be very popular with the Germans who are buying property as holiday homes much to the delight of the local estate agents. We notice that a lot of the houses where we live on Erinvale golf estate are used as holiday homes which means that often six months of the year or more they are unoccupied - such a pity as some of them are magnificent homes.

While on the subject of Erinvale, perhaps I can describe in a bit more detail about the estate where we live. Golf estates are becoming very popular in South Africa, not just for the enthusiastic golfers but because of the security that they give. The whole of this estate is fenced and you have to pass through a security check point to get in and out. On Erinvale we have the Helderberg Nature Reserve on two sides, a fruit farm on another side with only the bottom end being flanked by a road. Not only does this afford it extra security but it is also very beautiful. The mountains circle the whole estate and it doesn't matter what time of day it is, they always look wonderful.

We can see the Nature Reserve very well from our house and often see bontebok, steenbok and duiker, all types of buck (deer), grazing just the other side of the fence. We see lots of birds, the most common being the guinea fowl who walk round in large family groups clucking contentedly. The down side is that they tend to scratch up your lawn, leave their calling cards everywhere and when alarmed give rather a raucous cry which at five o'clock in the morning outside the bedroom window is not welcome! There are also lots of plovers, Egyptian geese, and the hadeda ibis which has a very distinctive cry of ha..de da..de da., hence its name. Of course there are lots of other birds and the Nature Reserve itself is the place to go for some real bird spotting. There is a gate from Erinvale through to the Reserve and all residents can get a key and walk there at their leisure. They have some lovely trails right up into the mountains as well as some short walks around the pools at the bottom with lots of benches to sit on. A gentle stroll in the morning is rewarded by a lovely breakfast available at the 'Duck Inn'. In the summer the Reserve also hosts sunset concert; you take a picnic or just a bottle of wine, (cont p21)



MONDAY 5th MARCH  
AUSTERITY LUNCH  
SWALCLIFFE GRANGE  
12.30 - 2.00

All donations will go to Douglas House. A respite for young people. Douglas House is a new development in Oxford to help young people with progressive, life limiting / threatening disabilities and their families. It will offer support by respite care, outreach, day care, terminal care and bereavement support.

find a spot on the lawn and listen to the music as the sun goes down over the Helderberg mountains - quite magical.

I think I mentioned in the last letter that Steve's factory was officially opened on 2 February. I'm pleased to report that all went well in spite of the usual last minute panics. The factory is so large that they erected a marquis inside the building and the theme was an unusual combination of African and Japanese (the company is Japanese). So alongside the African décor of ostrich eggs, porcupine quills and zebra patterned tablecloths, traditional Japanese sushi was served. After the usual speeches a factory tour took place with each team leader giving a brief explanation of what happened on his/her section which was very well received by guests and staff. A few local dignitaries were present and there was quite a lot of press coverage making the most of a significant investment in the local economy. Prior to the opening we were guests of the Premier of the Western Cape at his official residence of Leeuwenhof, a wonderful old building dating back to the days of the Dutch East India Company.

Steve's sister and brother-in-law have just been out to visit us for five weeks. It was their first visit to South Africa and I don't think it will be their last! They had a wonderful time and were totally knocked out by the hospitality of the South Africans, the fantastic food and the incredible prices. We now have a lull until our next guests who arrive in mid March. We are also taking a short break in March staying in a place called Knysna up the coast on the Garden route. That's all for now.

Pat and Steve Bates

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*It's about time*  
*Have a massage.*  
*Soothe all those aches and pains.*  
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# Church Services

Society of Friends		Sunday at 10.30 am
Methodist		Sunday at 11.00 am
Roman Catholic Mass	Wroxton	Sunday at 9.00 am
	Brailes	Sunday at 11.30 am
Baptist	Hook Norton	Sunday at 10.30 am

Church of England, Holy Trinity, Sibford Gower.

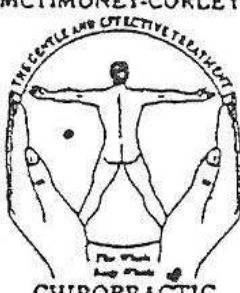
## March

Sunday 4th 10 am Benefice Eucharist at Broughton  
 Every Friday in Lent 7.30 am Holy Communion  
 Sunday 11th 9.30 am Holy Communion  
 Sunday 18th 9.30 am Holy Communion  
 Sunday 25th 10.00 am Family Service (Mothering Sunday)

## April

Sunday 1st 9.30 am Holy Communion

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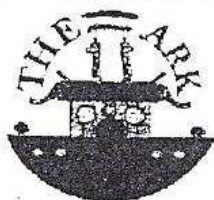
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 Tel: (01295) 780580



# Sibford Bus Services

## Free Bus Service

To Banbury Thursdays March 1st, 15th, 29th.

To Chippy Wednesdays March 7th, 21st.

Pick up points are; The Colony, High Meadow, Crossroads, Village Hall.

### Stage Coach 480 Shipston - Sibford - Banbury

Mon~Sat (M-S) Not Sat (NS) Sat Only (SO)

	M~S	NS	SO	M~S	NS
Shipston	-	-	9.20	-	-
Sibford Gower Crossroads	7.30	9.00	9.45	11.45	12.45
Sibford Ferris School	7.32	9.02	9.48	(11.38)	(12.38)
Banbury Bus Station	8.00	9.30	10.15	12.15	1.15
	M~S	SO	NS	M~S	M~S
Banbury Bus Station	11.15	12.15	12.15	2.15	6.00
Sibford Ferris School	11.38	12.47	12.38	2.38	6.23
Sibford Gower Crossroads	11.40	12.50	12.40	2.40	6.25
Shipston	-	1.15	-	-	-

### Cherwell Villager 55 Sibford ~ Banbury

Wednesdays Only	Outward	Return
Sibford Gower	9.55 am	1.55 pm
Sibford Ferris	9.57 am	1.53 pm
Hook Norton	10.15 am	1.45 pm
Bloxham	10.35 am	1.15 pm
Banbury	10.50 am	1.00 pm

### Cherwell Rural Dial-A-Ride Scheme

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Operates on **WEDNESDAYS ONLY**.

Phone 263777 for more details.



# Calendar of Events

## March

- Sun 4th Collectables and Car Boot Sale. V.Hall p17  
Mon 5th Austerity Lunch at Swalcliffe Grange p21  
Mon 5th Sibford Ferris Parish Council Meeting.  
Sat 10th **Ferris Spring Clean** 10am Lanes End Corner 780357  
Wed 14th Mobile Library in Sibfords and Burdrop (2.25-4.20pm)  
Mon 12th Cricket Club AGM. 7.30 at the Blaize p3  
Tue 13th W.I. Annual General Meeting p15  
Wed 14th Horticultural Society Talk on Snowdrops p16  
Sat 17th Skip in Barley Close  
Sat 17th Red Cross Coffee Morning at Swalcliffe Grange p14  
Tue 20th LEO Club meeting p9  
Tue 20th Deadline for contributions to the April Scene p8  
Tue 20th, 21st & 23rd Bussy Malone at the Friends School p10  
Tue 20th North Oxon Weavers, Spinners & Dyers. Talk -  
"Artistry in Knitting" Hook Norton at 7.30pm. Contact Joan  
Sprittlehouse on 251088 for details.  
Thu 22nd Sibfords Society AGM and talk. p8  
Fri 23rd Gower Parish Council Meeting p3  
Sat 24th Recycling units in Acre Ditch  
Wed 28th Mobile Library in Sibfords and Burdrop (2.25-4.20pm)

## April

- Sun 1st Collectables and Car Boot Sale. V.Hall p17  
Sat 28th **Gower Litter Blitz.** p3

### Sibford Scene

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