

Meeting Point

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The community magazine for the villages of Olveston, Tockington, Old Down, Lower Hazel, Awkley, Ingst, Aust, Elberton and Littleton upon Severn

EDITOR:

Sue Hunter

Hazeldown,
Hazel Lane
Old Down
Tockington
Bristol BS32 4PL
Tel: 01454 412191

meetingpointeditor@gmail.com

ASSISTANT EDITOR:

Carol Norman-Vincenot

The Stocks
Main Road
Aust
Bristol BS35 4AX
Tel: 01454 631814

meetingpointmagazine@gmail.com

ADVERTISING:

Nigel Dawes

Cromwell House
The Street,
Olveston
Bristol BS35 4DR
Tel: 01454 201558

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**Material for March 2008 to
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From the Editor

Some extraordinarily early daffodils were in bloom at the A38 end of Hazel Lane at the beginning of January and now snowdrops are out in my garden. Spring really must be around the corner!

With this in mind I would like to start a new series of articles in these pages called *Village Garden*. I am hoping that those keen gardeners amongst you will write something about your personal experiences regarding your own plot: what has changed and evolved over the years, what grows well and what doesn't, what you love and what you don't like. You could include any special tips and advice. I am sure it will make fascinating reading. Appropriately this month we have a History of the Allotments by Eric Garrett – based on a talk that he gave recently..

.On a different subject Meeting Point Committee has been discussing the village website and how it can best serve the community. One problem about all websites is keeping them updated once they are set up and we would be interested to hear from anyone who would be prepared to get involved with this aspect, primarily in a voluntary capacity.

Our cover is by Kate Hickman.

Meeting Point Founded in 1976 by the Anglican and Methodist churches in Olveston, near Bristol

Village Person - Paul Mcquaid

Carol Norman-Vincenot

Paul Mcquaid came to our attention in September when he hit the local headlines as the man taking on a mammoth 1,000 mile cycling fundraiser, for the Jessie May Trust, from John O'Groats to Land's End. Not only is this a gruelling trip at the best of times but he set out to do it in a heart stopping 15 days! Luckily Paul had very good company on this trip and this was Mark Petrie, a great friend and in fact Paul's neighbour in Aust.

Born in 1967 Paul, a self-employed Ceramic Tiler, met his wife Sarah, also a Bristol native, through friends and after a four year courtship they finally married in 1991. They have two teenage daughters and now live in Aust. Paul bought his current house from his father some years previously and it was here Paul met his neighbour and his future cycling partner.

When I asked, Paul claims he is more of a hill walker and climber than a cyclist but it is plain to see that he has a passion for the outdoors – let's face it, not everyone is cut out for this kind of test. So what induced this urge of physical endurance? It seems it was a chance family meeting in Carlisle back in 2005, when Sarah and Paul met up with a nephew of theirs who had undertaken the very same ride a few years earlier. This get-together inspired Paul to think about having a go himself, undeterred by the obligatory horror stories from his nephew.

Paul was determined to be thorough from the outset and to learn from other people's experiences. He spent many an evening scanning the Internet for cycling forums for 'dos and don'ts' of previous John O'Groats veterans. It seems this is somewhat of a British Institution and once you have navigated this route - in whichever form you choose, and there are many wacky and quite frankly crazy ways people have attempted this challenge - you join an elite band of people united in the same goal: a combination of personal challenge and fundraising endeavour.

Back to Paul, and having finally put the word out to everyone that he was up for the challenge, he hoped he might find a few volunteers to join him and boost not only the fundraising side of things but also the morale which on such a trip is hugely important. Several people came forward but, due to varying factors, duly dropped out before the trip really started to take shape. In hindsight this was a godsend; if any of your group is under par in any way, shape or form, it just doesn't work on all counts. At this point, the only other person left in the offing was Mark Petrie, a grandfather - albeit a very fit and young one! Mark is another 'dark horse' in that he does marathons for fun(!) and is ex-navy and therefore has a high standard of fitness and discipline.

So we must go back to a year and half before the event, June 2006, (which I find quite astonishing in our lastminute.com culture). But preparation is paramount to success and the training was built up over the course of 18 months from 30 to 50 and then to 70 mile rides during evenings and weekends. To start with, the bike panniers were empty, progressing to fully laden rides with weights of 15kg in all weathers and several rides to the Forest of Dean and the Wye Valley, to take advantage of the hard and hilly terrain, culminating in a couple of 250 mile rides to Exmouth fully loaded. In the latter stages of training, the boys would eventually start to realise the enormity of this challenge. However, doing these trial runs in all weathers proved to be highly astute and showed the sort of equipment that was needed or was in fact surplus to requirements.

To be continued next month



A New Year's resolution: Learn how to sail!

Tony Turnbull

Have you ever thought that some day you might like to sail: crashing through stormy seas and blinding spray, or perhaps much more leisurely, just pottering contentedly across a smooth rippling sea on a summer's day? Well, whatever your dream, now's your chance, the possibility is right on your doorstep. Challenge yourself to something new, exciting and different in 2008; come and learn how to sail at Thornbury Sailing Club. The club meets on the banks of the Severn at Oldbury and it organizes sailing and social events to cater for all tastes and ages throughout the year. As in previous years, it will be running **RYA Start to Sail** courses for Adults and Juniors over 11 yrs on Saturdays and Sundays between March and June. There's a shore based meeting at 2 pm on Sunday 16th March where you will learn a bit about the club and be shown around the club facilities, meet the instructors and fellow trainees, learn how to rig a boat and have a short talk on what to wear for sailing. This is followed by eight sessions on the water where you will be taught by qualified instructors to the point where you will be able to sail your own boat and join in all the club activities.

It really is easy and a lot of fun. If you would like to know more, please contact Tony Turnbull on 01454 614253 or by e-mail on: tonyt@cherry-lyn.demon.co.uk.



The Christmas Sing-along at the Parish Hall

Angela Green

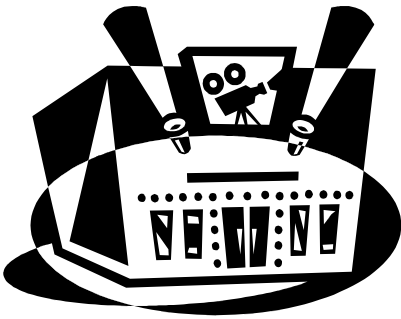
A happy evening was enjoyed by all who came to the Christmas Sing-along in early December. The Parish Hall had been most attractively decorated by the organiser, Val Huish, and her many able helpers such that, on walking in, people were greeted by a Christmas cavern of pretty coloured lights, with tables attractively laid with garlands, nibbles all set out and a very reasonably-priced bar. Most inviting!

The singing, when it began, was charmingly compèred by Rod Williams and accompanied by John Green at the keyboard. We all had copies of the words to sing from, and the songs (nearly 60 altogether!) ranged from “You’re a Pink Toothbrush, I’m a Blue Toothbrush” to “Yesterday” with plenty of carols and Christmas songs in the mix. Everybody who came seemed to enjoy themselves thoroughly, and over £300 was made for Parish Hall funds. So congratulations to Valerie for having had the idea in the first place, and sincere thanks to her, Rod, John and all the helpers for an excellent evening. Let’s hope for more of the same next Christmas!

They’re back!

Phil Savage

All 94 “Hikers for Hope” in Kenya safely survived close encounters with Ardvarks, Dik-Diks, Long-Drop Loos, Ice-cold Showers and Whistling Acacias. Phil Savage will reveal all these wonders and many more on Sunday 17th. February after Morning Communion in St. Mary’s Church, Olveston. Allowing for Coffee-Time, the show should start soon after 11.30am, allowing time for those who perhaps wish to arrive following the Service. Everyone who so generously supported the Charities will be pleased to know that the present total raised is in excess of £375,000, but there is still time to get this even higher! Phil would be delighted to see as many people as possible on the 17th, and you can donate on the day if you wish! You are promised amazing views of the country flora and fauna of Kenya and, to bribe you in, there will be a glass of wine available!!



'My Fair Lady'

Parish Players - Tockington Parish Hall
March 4th-8th at 7.30pm

Linda Evans

Now that that the festive season is over, members of the Parish Players are forging ahead with preparations for their early March production of Lerner and Loewe's 'My Fair Lady'.

There are so many aspects apart from performing that have to be organised and completed. The all important set design, involving Covent Garden, the Ascot Racecourse, Wimpole Street and an Embassy Ballroom to ingeniously fit the small stage of the Tockington Parish Hall, is in the capable hands of Andy Black, who also plays Alfred Doolittle, the incorrigible dustman father of Eliza. Mrs Pearce, Professor Higgins' long suffering housekeeper, is played by Gill Olewicz who is also designing and making fourteen elegant Edwardian ball dresses, amongst others. Keith and Norma Richards have the onerous challenge of assembling a large collection of unusual props to include recorder machines and speaking horns of the era, as well as baskets of flowers and fruit for the Covent Garden market, Eliza's workplace. Peter Dobbins is busy collating some evocative sound effects of the period, not forgetting the galloping hooves for the notorious Ascot scene, whilst an enthusiastic lighting team look forward to mounting their rig on the Saturday before opening night.

The company is indeed fortunate to have Joanna Sawyer portraying the immortal Eliza Doolittle. Aged eighteen and at present auditioning for a professional training in musical theatre, she is ideally cast. Philip Savage plays the world famous phonetician, Henry Higgins, a mammoth part to learn and sing. He looks forward after months of dedicated rehearsal to engaging an audience as he transforms, in the person of Eliza, "a squashed cabbage leaf into a lady". Judy Jones is cast as Mrs. Higgins, his despairing mother. His friend and ally, Colonel Pickering, is played by Graham Clark in his first leading role. Chris Bentley has the romantic part of Freddy Eynsford Hill, Eliza's would-be fiancée and has one of the hit songs from the Show, 'On The Street Where You Live'. Sandy Shaw is cast as his ambitious mother, Debbie Harries his social climbing sister. Tadd Olewicz as Zoltan Karpathy, Higgins' rival and old pupil, nearly exposes Eliza's origins at the Ball but she manages to triumphantly sustain her metamorphosis from Cockney flower girl to, in Higgins words, 'a Princess fit for a King'.

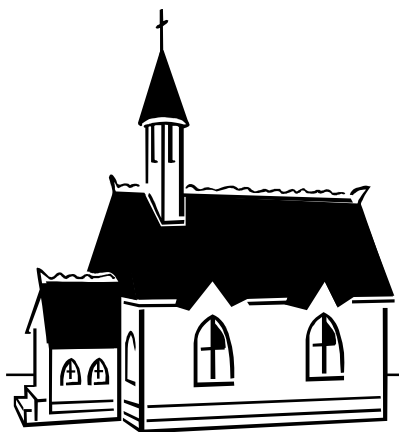
The final scene which is very different from Bernard Shaw's play 'Pygmalion' is one of the great cliff hangers in the history of successful musicals. A hard

working chorus complete the casting of cameo roles and small parts, the costermongers also being part of Rod Williams' stage management crew.

Songs include 'I Could Have Danced All Night', 'Wouldn't It Be Luvly', and 'With A Little Bit Of Luck'.

Directed by Linda Evans, choreography by Jill Harris and under the Musical Direction of Chloe Allsop-Jones and the stage management of Rod Williams, this promises to be an entertaining production.

Box Office opens Tuesday February 5th at the Olveston Methodist Hall from 6-7pm or telephone Rod Williams on 01454 612850.



Tockington Chapel, 8-10 February 2008 A Tribute to William Denning: 1934 - 2007

Jennifer Bone

Bill Denning was a much loved Methodist Minister whose name is well known well beyond the Thornbury area and far outside church boundaries. After twenty years of circuit appointments he left the

routine circuit role in order to pioneer new approaches to ministry. He and his wife Gill bought Maypole Farm in Lower Morton, and here he held retreats and quiet days, encouraging people to explore their creativity as part of their spiritual search, to reflect on their joys and sorrows, and to learn from one another.

At the time of purchase, Maypole Farm lacked the most basic amenities. Installation of the septic tank apart, Bill did all the work of renovation himself, and he and Gill together made it a place of welcome and hospitality, which drew many folk from across the country, with differing beliefs and persuasions. He was also much in demand as a counsellor.

In recent years, Bill Denning also became well known through his association with Woodlands Memorial Cemetery at Earthcott Green, where many local families valued his inclusive approach and readiness to ensure a service or form of memorial which they found fitting and supportive.

Olveston and Tockington Methodists held Bill in high regard. Few, if any, of those present on Good Friday mornings, will forget the way in which he led us through the awesome meaning of the day and the mystery of suffering, towards the hope of Easter, as he created a simple hill of Calvary and an Easter garden, from stones, earth, twigs and flowers. When Tockington Chapel re-opened after renovation last Summer, Bill Denning was to have led the opening service; sadly his final illness intervened.

On Friday and Saturday morning, February 8 and 9, the Chapel will be open for coffee from 10-12.30 and there will be a small exhibition of Bill's life and work, including some of his drawings and poems. Copies of the book *The Secret Garden of my Heart*, published in his memory, will be on sale. The Sunday evening service at 6pm on 10 February, will also draw on Bill's life and work, a reminder of the ways in which he encouraged us and opened up our understanding.

**Also at Tockington Chapel on
Tuesday 12 February at 7.30pm
Lent Event: The world we live in: a place for hope?**

Speaker: Professor Mary Grey

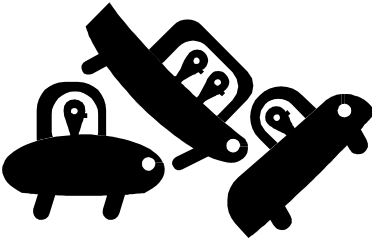
This is the first of the Lent Events at Tockington, on the theme of 'The world we live in'. Mary Grey is an eminent theologian, in great demand internationally, who has explored in her work the centrality of hope to the Christian message, and linked it to the needs of those who lack the necessities of life or who suffer oppression. She has travelled widely, from South America, to Uganda, to Palestine, and to India, a country she knows very well, as she and her husband Nicholas founded there a charity: 'Wells for India'. The meeting will last about an hour and include an opportunity for questions and discussion. Coffee will be served. For any further information, please ring Jennifer Bone on 614601.

St Mary's Outreach, Christmas gifts

Rowena Winkler

A huge 'Thank You' to everyone who contributed to our collection – your gifts and food were really appreciated. The manager of the Wild Goose Café, himself a reformed addict, told me that it was the generosity of communities like ours which gave so many of the clients at the Crisis Centre hope for a better future. In the six months that he has been running the café, 50 people have been helped 'off the streets' and into a more secure life. Regular news about the work of the Crisis Centre can be found on the church notice board.

Chaos on Old Down Hill



A local resident

About 3 days before Christmas, workmen from Wessex Water appeared on Old Down Hill to dig a small hole at the side of road, three foot by 2 foot. With the hole some eighteen inches deep and

Christmas looming, it was deemed necessary, by the powers that be, to install traffic lights over the long holiday period. Of course with Haw Lane closed, Old Down Hill is twice as busy. Needless to say when the lights showed red in both directions one morning, traffic chaos quickly ensued. Despite telephone calls to the appropriate authority the situation remained until 5pm!

Note from Ed: For my part I am getting heartily sick of the rash of traffic lights all over South Gloucestershire. Whatever happened to old fashioned courtesy and giving way to other vehicles when necessary? Especially annoying is the fact that lights are switched on permanently when in most cases they are only required at peak times.

WI December Meeting

Joyce Davies

Mrs Shepherd, President, welcomed members to the Christmas meeting. Business was kept to a minimum, but she took the opportunity to welcome the new Treasurer, Mrs Sylvia Roos, and the 2008 committee. She was most encouraged by the wonderful response to the Christmas 'Samaritans Box' charity, with nearly every member producing a shoe box of presents for children in less fortunate countries.

The rest of the evening was 'Party Time' with fun games and delicious food provided by members.

In February we will welcome a Speaker who will give a Talk on the History of the John Lewis Store. Visitors are always welcome on the second Tuesday of each month at 8pm in the Parish Hall.

Men's Breakfast: Men's Health

Philip Rowe

On Saturday 9th February we are gathering at 8.30am in Almondsbury Church Rooms, above the Doctor's Surgery. Dr Martin Lockyer will join us in a conversation about Men's health, including prostate cancer, cholesterol and issues you raise. All males are welcome to join us. Please phone Mike Keg (614855) or Philip Rowe (613223) to book in.



The Celebration of Marriage Service

Philip Rowe

You are warmly invited to the Celebration of Marriage Service at St Mary's Church on *Sunday 17th February* at 6pm. This is an occasion for us to gather to thank God for the gift of marriage. There will also be an opportunity, for those who wish, to **renew their marriage vows**. Everyone is invited, whether they were married in Church or elsewhere and whether they are currently married or not. As part of National Marriage Week, it is good for as many people as possible to affirm the importance of marriage as it enriches society and strengthens community. If you would like to suggest a hymn please let me know. Do contact me if you have any questions.

Olveston Parish Allotment

(Field name: The Folly)

Eric Garrett

A brief history

Eric presented this fascinating talk to allotment holders at their A.G.M. in October 2007, to commemorate 40 years on from the 'To Quit' Saga .

The FISHER family of Olveston formerly owned the land. It was given to the parish church, for use as allotments by the poor of the parish. It was in the possession of the church by 1824.

The land was situated on the fringe of an area that had been quarried for limestone that stretched along and between the Aust and Elberton Roads.

The only early surviving record in ledger form begins in 1897 with six tenants, increasing to eight in 1898. At the end of the First World War, tenants had increased to 14. In 1940, they had increased to 22. Currently the land size is smaller due to Council Highways compulsory purchase; there are now some fifty tenants.

The original land size of the allotments was two and quarter acres, known as "The Folly". Prior to the 1960s, those that worked an allotment always spoke of being at "The Folly".

The first alteration of the land occurred in 1958, when land along the Elberton road was lost to road widening. Some 20 feet of headland was taken. There was no compensation for loss of crops. (The land was required for construction of a foot pavement to the School.)

In 1961, a new vicar was inducted into Olveston Church, The Rev. Ronald Goodsell. Church wardens were: - Sidney Daldry (Parish Council chairman), Percy Addis (allotments manager & rent collector).

A waiting list for allotments existed, due to the construction of "Orchard Rise" housing.

In 1963, an allotment holder (living in Elberton) was given notice to quit, having been a tenant over the past 14 years, as there was a waiting list of Olveston parishioners. Another tenant (living at Aust) enquired if he was to receive notice to quit; he was told that, because he lived within the Parochial Diocese, he could retain his tenancy. (His wife was the church cleaner!).

By 1966, allotment waiting lists had disappeared and vacant plots existed. At this period, there were 20 plots with two vacant. Unknown to the allotment holders, negotiations were taking place between the Vicar and Gloucestershire Highways Dept., to purchase a strip of allotment land along the Aust Road for road widening.

On August 3rd 1966, all allotment holders received an advance notice, stating they would receive a 12 months' notice to quit in September.

On September 6th, Eric Garrett wrote a letter to J.P. Sturge & Sons, chartered surveyors, Bristol, who had sent the advance letter of notice. asking for a meeting with the Vicar for a discussion.

On September 30th, the Vicar rejected any such meeting.

All allotment holders received notice to quit by October 1st, 1967.

Francis Lucas, an adjoining market gardener, was given tenancy of the allotment land starting October 1st, 1967.

Eric Garrett on October 20th wrote to Sturge & Sons, stating that a request had been placed to Parish Council, for provision of allotments in Olveston.

On February 1st, all allotment holders received a letter from the Vicar, stating that all property including sheds had to be removed.

In May 1967, the Parish Council election occurred. Sidney Daldry, chairman, and Ronald Goodsell, vicar, stood down as councillors. A new parish council was formed, with Mrs. Muriel Vowles being its chairman.

The Parish Council on May 24th wrote a letter to the Bishop of Bristol to intervene. This was rejected on June 6th.

A special meeting was held by the Parish Council on June 9th to appraise events; the Parish Council then requested a Church representatives' meeting.

The Parish Council on June 27th held a Church delegates' meeting in the Parish Hall at 7.15, with Rev. Orpwood (dean), vicar of Alveston, Ronald Goodsell, vicar of St Mary's Olveston, a J.P. Sturge representative and 12 allotment holders.

The final outcome was that, since the Vicar had given consent to Francis Lucas to be the sole tenant in advance, he was to receive a portion of the land.

The overall agreement was that the Parish Council would lease the allotments, with a 7 years' lease, and Francis Lucas would become a tenant, acquiring the land adjoining his nursery extending to the gateway opposite to the School.

The first action taken was that Lucas fenced off his agreed area of land and Highways erected boundary marker pegs to their newly acquired portion of land at the Aust Road. The remainder was rotovated by tractor. Eric Garrett laid out the plots into smaller plot sizes to meet demand; these varied between 5 to 16 perch lengths, providing 25 plots.

During August 1968, mains water was provided to the allotment at very little cost. A service trench had been dug across the Elberton Road, for the construction of a new school, in which a water pipe was laid and connected to the mains. Eric Garrett dug the short length of trench for final attachment to a trough.

In 1968/69, Highways erected the post and rail fence plus a hedge. The allotment had been open for two seasons before enclosure.

One can say now, 40 years on, that, to encourage the allotment holder, Mr & Mrs Edwin Vowles gave annual money prizes for the best maintained allotments, of £7 & £5 for 1st & 2nd respectively.

FRIENDS OF ST. MARY'S

The prize winners in November's draw, held at the Christmas Bazaar on 1st December 2007, were:-

<u>Amount</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Name</u>
£150	213	Mr. T. Watkins, Alveston
£75	387	Mrs. M. Baker, Olveston
£25	492	Mrs. J. Lyons, Ingst
£20	500	Mr. L. Hawkins, Thornbury
£15	257	Mrs. C. Healy, Olveston
£15	237	Mr. G. Hargreaves, Alveston
£10	155	Mr. B. Brown, Olveston

The prize winners in December's draw were

<u>Amount</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Name</u>
£150	358	Mrs. S. Toft, Olveston
£75	234	Mrs. G. Bowen, Awkley
£25	215	J. Hahn, Olveston
£20	311	Mr. & Mrs A. Maunder, Cornwall
£15	360	Mr. & Mrs. T. Roper, Fern Hill
£15	316	Mrs. Y. Williams, Olveston
£10	212	Mrs. B. Daldry, Tockington

From the Registers

The Funeral of **Michael David Platts** (aged 22years), took place on Friday 21st December 2007, at St Mary's Church, Olveston.

The following notice has been sent to Meeting Point by his parents:

Julie, Geoff, Andrew and Philip Platts would like to thank all our friends, neighbours and colleagues who have supported us throughout the last few weeks. Your prayers, visits, cards and flowers have given us strength to go on. We would like to express our thanks to Rev.Philip Rowe, June Robbins and David Shaw for all they did both before and during Michael's funeral. We are especially grateful to Anna Foote, Jonny Domaille & Tom Boase for their kind words, to John Green, Tom Green & Lucinda Gould for their wonderful music and to all the many people who did so much without recognition. All our heartfelt thanks.



Women's World Day of Prayer

Rosemary Boere

Over 3 million women worldwide will be praying and worshipping together during an annual day of prayer on Friday 7th March. Meetings will begin at sunrise in Tonga and finish with sunset in neighbouring Samoa after there have been meetings in 170 countries. Here in the UK there will be well over 6000 prayer services in different places. The order of service has been prepared by Christian women from Guyana.

In our area there will be a service at Tockington Methodist Church at 10.15-11.15am on Friday 7th March. The speaker will be Janet McBride and refreshments will be served. For more information contact Rosemary Boere on 615353 or email rosemaryboere@googlemail.com.

There is also a service in Aust Church in the evening. Contact Lizzie Philpott on 633375 or email lizzie.philpott@hotmail.co.uk.



Weather-December 2007

Marcus Bean

ITEM	DATE RECORDED	ACTUAL READINGS 2007	ACTUAL READINGS 2006	LONG TERM AVERAGE
Max Temp °C	5 th	14.0	14.3	14.7
Min Temp °C	20 th	Minus 3.4	Minus 1.4	Minus 4.8
Max Press. mbars	13 th & 14 th	1039	1043	1031
Min Press. mbars	9 th	973	980	990
Max Wind speed mph	3 rd	51	62	50
Days with Gales(35kts+)	1 st ,2,3,5,6,7,8,9,29,& 30 th	10	9	5
Max Day Rainfall mm	1 st	25.62	12.87	18.11
Rainfall in Month mm	—	121.74	111.00	88.90

Summary

The relatively benign conditions at the end of November were dramatically changed on the 1st of December with an electrical storm, gale force winds and torrential rain. This was caused by an intense low pressure system in the Atlantic moving to the North of Scotland but pushing its fronts over the country. This pattern of weather continued for the first nine days bringing strong or gale force winds and heavy rain but mild temperatures. On the 10th a high pressure system moved in which was centred over Denmark and built to dominate much of Western Europe including ourselves. Cold dry weather resulted with many night frosts and light winds predominantly from the East and continuing until the 25th. The high pressure then slackened, allowing Atlantic systems to move in with wind and rain, this pattern continuing to the month end.

Rainfall for the month was significantly above average, with pressure marginally above normal and temperatures marginally below. We had twelve ground frosts and eight air frosts with the temperature on the 20th not rising above freezing. We had one electrical storm in the month.



Weather Report for Olveston 2007

Listed below are the highlights for the year and comparative statistics followed by a short commentary Marcus Bean

ITEM	2007		2006		LONG TERM AVERAGE	
Highest day max temp (°C)	29.6	11 th June	36.4	July	31.9	Aug
Lowest day max temp	- 2.3	20 th Dec	0.0	Feb	1.9	Jan
Highest night temperature	16.0	4 th Aug	18.5	July	17.4	Aug
Lowest night temperature	- 5.2	7 th Feb	- 4.3	Feb	- 5.2	Dec
Max Pressure (millibars)	1040	3 rd Feb	1043	Dec	1042	Feb
Min Pressure	973	9 th Dec	976	Nov	972	Oct
Max wind speed (mph)	57	19 th Jan	62	Dec	58	Jan
Prevailing Direction	West	88 days	West		West	
Max rain on one day (mm)	38.06	25 th June	56.62	July	38.72	Oct
Wettest month	133.89	January	128.91	Oct	136.94	Oct
Driest month	6.03	April	13.44	Jan	19.82	Aug
Total for year (equal to ins.)	939.29 (36.98)		824.23 (32.45)		857.44 (33.76)	

The first quarter of the year was very wet but also relatively mild with both January and February being particularly warm. April was very warm and very dry but May, June, and July were very wet with flooding in many parts of the Country, and also temperatures were depressed. This was the wettest period in this part of the South West since 1879. August, September, October and November were more normal months with some sunshine and, being drier than average, were more pleasant. December was both cold and wet, this being experienced in two quite distinct segments of the month.

Rainfall for the year was approximately three inches above average but temperature and pressure were close to normal. We had thirty four gales in the year making it the roughest since 2002. We had seven electrical storms and two days with snow amounting to 3cms total in the year.



Summer Ball

Roly Bain

St Mary's Church is having a Ball - a midsummer black tie Ball. We're having it on Tuesday, July 15th on St Swathe's Day up in the marquee at Tockington Manor, by kind permission of Mr and Mrs Richard Tovey. St Within was a great repairer and builder of churches and it's all in aid of launching our appeal for the reordering of the church building. We're looking to provide a community meeting space in the chancel, new

vestries, new kitchen, and new toilets including a disabled toilet, new lighting and audiovisual equipment. These plans are the culmination of eight years' preparation and will greatly improve the facilities within the existing church building.

Tickets are £60, with an early bird price of £55 before April Fools' Day - you'd be a fool not to take advantage of it. St Swathe's reputation as a weather saint is enshrined in the old rhyme:

St Swathe's Day, if thou dost rain,
For forty days it will remain.
St Swathe's Day, if thou be fair,
For forty days 'twill rain na mair'.

Obviously we're hoping it's not going to rain, but you'd better start saving now for that rainy day! Tickets are available from Tony Bryan, Grove House, Tockington, BS32 4LF, tel 01454 616400, email a.g.bryan@btinternet.com. General enquiries to me on 616593 or email roly@rolybain.co.uk Roly Bain.

Royal British Legion Olveston Branch Poppy Appeal

Arthur Robbins

We would like to thank everyone who helped with the poppy appeal: the helpers and those who gave so generously. The final sum raised was £3172.43

Twinning News

Jan Winter

The Olveston Parish Twinning Association (OPTA) has two events coming up which you may wish to put in your diaries.



Friday 28th March Great Olveston Wine Challenge

If you have been to one of these before, you will need no further encouragement. If not, it involves a convivial evening tasting wines and trying to match them with their descriptions. Bread and cheese accompany the tasting to complete the experience. The noise levels always rise as the evening goes on and great fun is had by all. Prizes (bottles of wine naturally) go to those who match most wines – you may be surprised how difficult it is!

Emma Neal (01454 617849) is selling tickets and reserving tables (for up to 12 people/table). This is always a very popular evening and so we encourage you to book your tickets promptly.

The Wine Challenge is a great way of getting warmed up for:

OPTA's next visit to our twin village, Bréhan in Brittany.

We will be visiting our French friends on the weekend on **2nd to 5th May** this year and welcome anyone interested in joining us. As usual, we will leave Olveston by coach on Friday evening, taking the overnight ferry. We will spend Saturday and Sunday in Bréhan where our hosts will entertain us lavishly. We return on a daytime ferry on Monday (the early May Bank Holiday), making sure there is time for a wine-buying stop on the way to Roscoff.

We expect the cost of our travel to be up to £90 per person, with significant reductions for children. We seldom have the opportunity to pay for anything in France as our hosts look after us so well so this is a bargain weekend in France.

Full details will be available soon, but if you think you might be interested in joining us please contact Jan Winter (evening: 01454 612641) or Paul Hayton (evening: 01454 626835).



Police Report

PC Roger Hopes

Hello Everyone,

Well it's been a very reassuring end to 2007 with a very low level of recorded crime for December. There were only 5 recorded crimes for the Severn ward.

A commercial unit at Fernhill Almondsbury suffered an attempted burglary; the offenders tried to force a window at the premises but couldn't get in. Fingerprints were recovered and are currently being researched. The occupants of a farm house in Hill had jewellery stolen from them while the premises were insecure. The offence may have occurred while work was being carried out in the house.

In Olveston a garden shed was broken into and fishing equipment stolen.

Finally, the motorway services had two "drive-off" type offences.

We still plan to hold the monthly beat surgeries at the Coffee shop in Olveston Stores. These are held between 10.30am and noon and will be on the following dates 28th February, 3rd April, 8th May, 12th June, 17th July, 21st August, 25th September, 30th October and finally 4th December.

Raised at the last SSCG meeting was a lack of youth facilities in the Olveston area. Although not strictly a police matter, we had a meeting with South Glos Council about this and some positive suggestions came out but if anyone has any ideas please contact us. Also from the last SSCG meeting, we are continuing to monitor speeding vehicles and Heavy Goods Vehicles on the B4461 in Elberton. I have asked for the Safety Camera Partnership Mobile van to visit the site and although the criteria don't match their remit at present, moves are in place with the local authority to change this.

Roger Hopes PC 3404

Neighbourhood Beat Manager DC 125 Severnvale

Phone: 0117 945 5959 , Mobile: 07919 628625

Thornbury Police Station, Rock St, Thornbury, S.Glos. BS35 2BA

E-mail: roger.hopes@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk

Cricket Club

Tony Gardner

150 Club Winners, January:

£50 Martin Walker £15 Iain Murdoch £5 George Fensome

Latest £25 Bonus Ball Winners:

15th December Paul Middleton
29th December Beverley Stephens
5th January Beverley Stephens

A message from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Presidents of the Guild of Vergers

June Robbins

“Vergers are almost as much a part of the Great British Collective Unconscious as vicars. From Dickens' Edwin Drood through to Dad's Army and the Vicar of Dibley, they have been there. But now the stereotypes do not reflect the reality. There have been many changes in the role of a verger over three quarters of a century. The best vergers are creative, pastoral servants to the life of the churches they have cared for. More than ever these days, the job is one in which vergers are going to be involved in some of the most crucial work of the church - its reaching out to and welcoming of those on its margins. It is going to require huge gifts of stamina, imagination and spiritual steadiness. We join with you in this celebration in offering heartfelt thanks to God that the church of England is fortunate to have so many men and women gifted in these ways and who give themselves in such a dedicated way to this ministry, and we wish the Guild every blessing and prosperity in the years ahead.”

These words certainly apply to the verger at St Mary's Olveston – how lucky we are to have her! Ed.

Fibromyalgia Support Group

Meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday of each month at Alveston Methodist Hall from 7.00 to 9.00pm.

The **AGM** will be held on **Feb 26th**, followed by a Talk on Aloe Vera.

THORNBURY LIBRARY

Extended opening hours

Funding from the Hortham Hospital development, which was secured by South Gloucestershire Council under a planning agreement, has enabled Thornbury Library to open for an additional hour on two weekdays. The library will now open until 5.30 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday, commencing 7th January 2007.

Commenting on the increase, Cllr Heather Goddard, Executive Councillor for Communities, said "This is a small step in the right direction. Through opening later, it will enable young people and people who work during the day greater access to the service"

Our new opening hours will be:

Monday 9.30 - 5.30
Tuesday 9.30 - 5.30
Wednesday 9.30 - 7.00
Thursday CLOSED
Friday 9.30 - 7.00
Saturday 9.30 - 5.00

Premium DVDs

We have just introduced a new **Premium DVD service**. This includes the very latest DVDs which can be hired for £3.00 per week. Please note these DVDs cannot be renewed or reserved.

February titles include:

Rush Hour 3, Knocked Up, Bring It On – In It To Win It, The Kingdom.

A good winter read

A final list of recommended books, this time from Thornbury Golf Reading Group:

Cloud Atlas by David Mitchell
The Reader by Bernhard Schlink
Night Watch by Sarah Waters
To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
Purple Hibiscus by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
Brick Lane by Monica Ali
Girl with a Pearl Earring by Tracy Chevalier
The Lovely Bones Alice Sebold
All the detective agency series by Alexander McCall Smith
All the books by Anita Shreve

Pre-school story time and rhyme time

We hold a weekly story time on Monday afternoons from 2.15pm-2.45pm and a monthly rhyme time for younger children on the last Monday of each month, also from 2.15pm-2.45pm. Pre-school children and their parents and carers are most welcome to attend these free activities.

We also hold regular holiday activities. Contact the library for details.

Home library service

If you enjoy reading but are housebound and unable to get to the library, then our friendly home library service volunteers can bring books to you in your own home. Just give the library a ring or ask a relative or friend to contact us on your behalf.

Sharing the Care

Tony Bray

Shared Care Network is the national charity representing family-based short break services for disabled children and young people. Short breaks are services where a disabled child or young person is linked with a family or individual (short break carer) who provides them with regular, short-term care (usually in the carer's home). Local authorities throughout the country each have their own short-term care schemes and the one that South Gloucestershire Council runs is called Family Link.

Family Link allows its carers to forge long term relationships with not only the child but his or her family and it suits people who can offer short breaks and who feel positive about children and young people whose disabilities can range from learning difficulties, autism and physical impairments.

The level of commitment that would be expected of a carer is at least one weekend a month on a regular basis. However, people can give as much or as little time as they wish. Some Family Link Carers are linked with one child; others provide short breaks to more than one child. The amount of time spent with a child will be agreed with a Social Worker. Most of the children would stay overnight in the carer's home but, if accommodation is not suitable to meet the child's need, there is still a need for day care.

As the 9th to 16th March is 'Share the Care' Week - a national campaign aimed at raising public awareness of the services – this article is being published to not only inform people of these very important services but to encourage those who think they would like to get involved with this type of care to come forward and find out more.

If, after reading this article, you feel you want to take that first step, you can either contact me on 01454 866423 and I will answer any questions you might have, or you might prefer to read our very comprehensive information pack which can be viewed online by following the Family Link hyperlink at www.southglos.gov.uk/fostering. Here you will also find further information on general fostering, the Turnabout Programme and adoption.

If you wish to find out more about the Shared Care Network you can visit its website on www.sharedcarenetwork.org.uk.

Tony Bray
Recruitment & Marketing Officer
Family Placement Team
South Gloucestershire Council

Yours faithfully

Childish or childlike?

Philip Rowe

As I look at our society, it is my impression that we are becoming more childish because we are less childlike.

I see three childish traits increasing. The first is impatience. In our instant society I want it and I want it – now. So shops never shut and credit card bills grow. The second is self-absorption. So what is right is defined as what feels good for me. So rights trump responsibilities and duty is eclipsed by self. And the third is the refusal to accept the connection between our actions and their consequences. With a victim mentality it is never my fault.

This is happening because we are becoming less childlike or reliant on God. Jesus Christ said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs' (Matthew 19:14). It was the children's characteristics of dependence and trust which give us the humility to commit ourselves to God.

We all need a crutch. Each of us was made to live in a loving relationship with Almighty God. When we step outside of this something is missing. So we seek an alternative to find ways of coping. As a society we are casting off God's offer to be his children. Then, finding this to be uncomfortable, more of us are seeking solace in childishness.

Secularisation is causing infantilization. Are we going to be childlike and live in a trusting relationship with God? Or are we to continue to suffer the adverse and demeaning consequences of childishness? Each one of us needs to be an adult and decide for ourselves.

Church News: ST MARY THE VIRGIN, OLVESTON

February 3 rd Sunday next before Lent	8am 10am 10am 6pm	Holy Communion Holy Communion Breakfast Club Evensong with Choir	Rev. Philip Rowe Rowe/Bone Team Rev. David Bone
February 10 th Lent 1	8am 10am 10am 6pm	Holy Communion (BCP) Morning Worship with Choir Breakfast Club Evensong	Canon David Sansum D Jones Team Rev. Philip Rowe
February 17 th Lent 2	8am 10am 10am 6pm	Holy Communion Holy Communion with Choir Breakfast Club Marriage Renewal Service	Rowe/Bone Rev. Philip Rowe Team McBride/Bain
February 24 th Lent 3	8am 10am 10am 6pm	Holy Communion (BCP) 4th Sunday Breakfast Club Evensong (BCP) with Choir	Canon David Sansum Mrs Janet McBride Team Rev. Philip Rowe

Information on services correct at time of going to press.

CONTACT PERSONS:

The Rev Philip Rowe, (01454 613223); email: office@stmaryssevernside.org
Please contact Philip about baptisms, marriages, funerals or other matters at any time, but please try to avoid Thursdays except in an emergency.

Mrs. June Robbins, Verger 01454 617491

Internet: www.stmarysolveston.org.uk/index.html

PRAYER GROUP: Mondays, 3.00pm in the Church (except third Monday)

WEDNESDAY HOLY COMMUNION: At 9.00am led by the Rev. Roly Bain

CHAPELRY OF ST JOHN, AUST

February 10 th	10am	Holy Communion	Rev. David Bone
February 24 th	10am	Matins	Rev. David Bone

Assistant Curate: **Rev David Bone (01454 614601)**

Church Wardens: **Jo Jenkins (01454 632838) and Maria Livingstone (01454 632557)**

ST MARY DE MALMESBURY, LITTLETON-ON-SEVERN

February 3 rd	9am	Holy Communion	Rev. David Pole
February 17 th	9am	Matins	Mr Don Streatfield

Contact person: **Rev. David Pole (01454 414810); www.sthelensalveston.org**

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, ELBERTON

February 10 th	9am	Matins	Mr Don Streatfield
February 24 th	9am	Holy Communion	Rev. David Pole

Contact person: **Rev. David Pole (01454 414810); www.sthelensalveston.org**

OLVESTON AND TOCKINGTON METHODIST CHURCH

Feb 3 rd	10am	Tockington Ch.	HOME MISSIONS ANNIVERSARY SERVICE, led by Miss Rosemary Clews. Junior Church in the Wesley Rooms.
	6pm	St.Andrews, Filton	United Service led by Rev. Audrey Standhaft
Feb 10 th	10 am	Olveston Church	All Age Worship led by Mrs Lynne Richards. The Breakfast Club will join us later in the Service.
	6pm	Tockington Ch.	Service led by Church members.
Feb 17 th	10 am	Tockington Ch.	Morning Worship led by the Rev.lesinga Vunipola. Junior Church in the Wesley Rooms.
	4pm	Daldry Gardens	Worship led by our Superintendent Minister, the Rev. Peter Mortlock.
Feb 24 th	10am	Tockington Ch.	Morning Worship led Mrs. Margaret Mortlock. Junior Church in the Wesley Rooms.
	6pm	Olveston Church	Evening Worship with Holy Communion, led by the Rev. Tom Hall

LIGHT LUNCHESES: Thursday 7th February at 12.15pm in the Tockington Wesley Rooms. To book your lunch please ring 416056.

NORTHWICK LUNCHEON GROUP: This meets at 12.30pm on Wednesday 6th February. To book your lunch please ring 416528.

PRAYER MEETINGS: Thursdays at 2.15pm in the Olveston Vestry.

COFFEE MORNINGS: Saturdays 10.30am – 12 noon in the Olveston Methodist Hall.

DISCUSSION GROUP: A Discussion Group covering topical subjects is held on the 4th Tuesday of every month. Meetings commence with coffee at 10.30am for 11.00am. This month's meeting is on the 26th February.

CONTACT PERSON: Rev'd Ilesinga Vunipola (01454 412269); ilesinga@hotmail.com

THE VINE, AWKLEY The Vine, Pilning Street, Awkley

We meet in a relaxed, informal manner for worship, prayer and conversational Bible studies and incorporating Communion, normally on Sundays at 10.30am and Mondays and Wednesdays at 7.30pm. As we also visit other churches and events, please check Notice Board or contact **Mike and Barbara Matthews**

Tel: 07840 793772 or email thevine_awkley@hotmail.com

THE OASIS CHURCH, OLDOWN

Feb 3 rd	6.30pm	Martin Taylor
Feb 10 th	6.30pm	Rev. Neil Mobbs
Feb 17 th	6.30pm	Michael Bryant
Feb 24 th	6.30pm	Paul Ashford

For further information please contact **Olwen Wonnacott (01454 412141)** or **Paul Ashford (07774-110814/email: Paul@CalebGroup.net)**

AUST EVANGELICAL CHURCH offers a warm welcome to Family Worship at 11.00am and to Evening Worship at 6.30pm. For more details, please phone **01454 613134 or 632564**. 'Happy are the people whose God is the Lord'.

BRISTOL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP IN OLVESTON - well not so much in Olveston these days, as we concentrate on serving the community primarily in other areas of Bristol and Thornbury. As followers of Christ, our heart is to be where the Lord wants us to be most effective and currently we are establishing our presence in North and East Bristol as well as continuing to work with the other local churches in Thornbury and in the heart of Bristol amongst the most needy. Our Sunday morning meetings are held at The Grange School in Warmley at 11 am, but the life of the church continues in a variety of forms, locations and styles throughout the week. Please contact the **Fellowship Office** in Almondsbury on **01454 613305** for more information or on the internet at www.bcfnet.com

RC CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING, Thornbury - each Sunday
8.30am - Mass 11.00am - Family Mass 6.30pm – Mass

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS), Thornbury - Meeting for Worship
Sundays 10.30am The Chantry, Castle Street. For further details please contact **Elizabeth Sidwell on 01454 412975**

Diary Dates for February 2008

The information given below is believed to be correct as we go to press.

1 st Fri			
2 nd Sat	City of Bristol Brass Band Concert	7.30pm	St. M
3 rd Sun			
4 th Mon			
5 th Tue	Tockington Toddlers Box Office for Parish Players: 'My Fair Lady'	10-12 noon 6-7pm	WR MH
6 th Wed	Olveston Parish Historical Society - John Bartlett "History of Fishponds" - visitors welcome. Thornbury Orchestra Rehearsals	7.30pm 7.45-9.45pm	MH URC
7 th Thu	Olveston Baby and Toddlers	2.30-4.30pm	MH
8 th Fri	Tockington Chapel Open Weekend (8-9 th)	10- 12.30pm	TMC
9 th Sat	Men's Breakfast: Men's health Enjoy tea and cake at Aust Village Coffee Morning - all welcome!	8.30am 10.30-12 noon	ACR AVH
10 th Sun			
11 th Mon			
12 th Tue	Tockington Toddlers Lent Event with Speaker Womens Institute-"The History of John Lewis"- Mr Hacker	10-12noon 7.30pm 7.30pm	WR TMC PH
13 th Wed	Severn Valley Flower Club - AGM plus lunch Thornbury Orchestra Rehearsals	10.30am 7.45-9.45pm	AH URC
14 th Thu	Olveston Baby and Toddlers Thornbury and District Flower Club - Talk	2.30 -4.30pm 7.30pm	MH TMH
15 th Fri			
16 th Sat			
17 th Sun	Talk on Kenya Hike for Hope - Phil Savage Celebration of Marriage	11.30am 6pm	StM St M
18 th Mon			
19 th Tue	Tockington Toddlers	10-12noon	WR
20 th Wed	Bosom Buddies –Call Jennie for venue Tel : 884177 Smallholders Association- Avon Pondways project	7.30pm 7.30pm	CHY
21 st Thu	Olveston Baby and Toddlers	2.30-4.30pm	MH
22 nd Fri			
23 rd Sat			
24 th Sun			
25 th Mon			
26 th Tue	Tockington Toddlers Fibromyalgia Support Group AGM + Talk on Aloe Vera. Contact Tel: 418882 Olveston Parish Council Meeting	10-12noon 7-9pm 7.30pm	WR AMH AP

27 th Wed	Thornbury Orchestra Rehearsals	7.45-9.45pm	URC
28 th Thu	Olveston Baby and Toddlers	2.30-4.30pm	MH
29 th Fri			
	Looking Ahead To March 2008		
4-8 th	Parish Players Production of 'My Fair Lady'	7.30pm	PH
5 th	Historical Society	7.30pm	MH
6 th	Olveston School - World Book Day		
7-9 th	Tockington Chapel Open Weekend		TMC

Key: **ACR** – Almondsbury Church Rooms; **AH** – Armstrong Hall, **AMC** – Alveston Methodist Church; **AMH**- Alveston Methodist Hall; **AP** – Alexandra Pavilion, **AVH** – Aust Village Hall; **CCCP** – Castle Court Car Park; **CH** – Cossham Hall; **Chy** – Chantry; **DGCL** – Daldry Gardens Community Lounge; **EVH** – Elberton Village Hall; **MH** – Olveston Methodist Hall; **OS** – Olveston School; **PH** – Olveston Parish Hall; **StM** – St Mary's Church, Oliv.; **StMA** Almondsbury Church; **TBCh** - Thornbury Baptist Church; **TMH** – Thorn. Methodist Hall; **URC** Thorn United Reform Church; **WR** – Wesley Rooms., **TMC** – Tockington Methodist Chapel

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