

The Baldons and Nuneham Courtenay Newsletter



July - August 2023

FROM REV TERESA STEWART-SYKES AND REV SORREL SHAMEL-WOOD

We've been having some lovely sunny days recently and some terrific thunderstorms! As I write, I'm keeping an eye on the forecast for the Church Fete at Drayton St Leonard! My colleague, Rev Sorrel Shamel Wood, has been reflecting on weather themed summer days and intriguingly 'Alice's Day'.

This is what Rev Sorrel writes:

The Christian calendar has included special saints' days for many centuries, and July includes St Swithun's Day on July the 15th. Perhaps you have heard of the legend, that if it rains on St Swithun's Day, it will rain for forty days, but if it is dry on St Swithun's Day then it will remain dry for forty days! Is the legend true? Well, perhaps you can test it this year and let me know!

However, the day which most captured my imagination when I was writing this article is "Alice's Day", on July the 1st. Alice's Day celebrates the story of Alice in Wonderland, and of course being so close to Oxford, there are plenty of opportunities for us to celebrate: for example, the Story Museum hosts a special programme of events including puppets, trails and games. Charles Dodgson, aka Lewis Carroll (1832-98) was a fellow at Christ Church, Oxford and the idea for the story of Alice in Wonderland came to him while punting past Christ Church on the river Thames (or Isis, as it's known in Oxford) towards Godstow Abbey.

Some of Lewis Carroll's ideas for Alice in Wonderland were inspired by Medieval Christianity. For example, the way that she falls down a hole at the beginning of the story was inspired by the legend of St Frideswide and the holy well at Binsey. The alarming and aggressive "off with your head!" refrain from the Queen of Hearts may have been inspired by Godstow Abbey, at the end of Lewis Carroll's boat ride, and its dissolution by Henry VIII during the Reformation.¹

Stories, such as "Alice in Wonderland" capture the imagination and stand the test of time. Why? Because not only do they offer a glimpse of a fantastical reality beyond the normality of our everyday lives, but they also offer structure and resolution: they have a beginning, a middle and an end. As humans, we can find life confusing and chaotic at times, so shaping it into a story and taking control of our own story can be very helpful: who am I? Where am I going? What has brought me to this point? How do I hope things will change, and ultimately resolve?

The bible is, in my opinion, the greatest story ever told. It follows the adventures of humanity from their beginning, through many trials and challenges, to the ultimate happy ending through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and his promise to return in the future. Much of Western literature has found deep inspiration in the pages of the bible, from its deep poetry to its sacrificial, redemptive hero narrative and, like Lewis Carroll, many writers have also found inspiration in the history of medieval Christianity. Here in the Dorchester Ministry Team, we have many beautiful historic churches right on our doorstep. Why not

¹ Some of the historical information from this article derives from "Alice in Medieval Oxford" by Andrew Dunning: <https://blogs.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/theconveyor/alice-in-medieval-oxford/>

pay us a visit this summer, and find some inspiration for the start of your own story!
Who knows? One day it may even get its own "day"!



The Revd Teresa Stewart-Sykes is Team vicar for The Baldons with Nuneham Courtenay, Berinsfield and Drayton St Leonard.

e-mail: RevTeresa@outlook.com and tel: 07823 809112

Our current curate is The Revd Sorrel Shamel-Wood who lives in Berinsfield.

Our safeguarding officer is Sara McDouall: saramcdouall@gmail.com

A clergy person can always be reached in a pastoral emergency by ringing the Dorchester Team Office 01865 340007

BALDONS PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The new Parish Council met for the first time in May. Dawn McGiveron was elected as Chairman and Andy Speight becomes the new Vice-chairman. Tom James remains the Clerk to the Council. The Agenda for the AGM tends to be dominated by compliance and other statutory matters, so not surprisingly only a few villagers attended the meeting.

The Council is keen to develop a strategic approach to the next four years, with a number of planned projects to improve the infrastructure of the two villages. CIL funds will be used to finance these projects. The bridge over the east side of the ditch, on the Green, is being replaced with a wider and more substantial structure, without the slopes that can be slippery in the winter. The new bridge will also have handrails on both sides. An extra dog waste bin is being installed by the parking area at St Lawrence's Church, as dog walkers are not always aware there is a dog waste bin by the Toot Baldon notice board. The Council is also working with the local authority to improve the drainage and substrate of Tinny Lane; this is likely to be a long-term project.

There were no pending planning applications to be considered.

The Agenda for the meeting on Monday 10 July at 7.30pm will focus on the strategic plan and villagers are encouraged to attend to give their views on future projects.

Tom James
Clerk

ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER

Items for the September 2023 newsletter

by 16th August please

Any villager is welcome to send items for publication in the newsletter. Please send copy to Natasha Eliot: tashaandjames@btopenworld.com. Alternatively, I can be contacted on 343478 or at Baldon House East, Marsh Baldon.

For advertising queries, please contact Leanna Maggs on:
leanna.maggs@gmail.com or on 01865 340 521

BALDONS FUEL CHARITY (BFC) - A Brief History

Many years ago, land to the east of the houses in Nuneham Courtenay was given so that villagers could gather firewood.

In 1965, the Charity known as the 'Fuel Allotment' or 'Poor's Land' was established by the Charity Commission with this land comprising the asset. In 1988, the Charity Commission agreed to rename the charity 'Baldons Fuel Charity'.

The land was then sold and the Trustees invested the proceeds in Charifund investments. The income is used to "reduce the need, hardship and distress" of residents in the Baldons.

Between 1988 and 2007, the BFC arranged for the delivery of coal to some households and an annual cash allotment in lieu of coal to all other villagers of pension age to assist with their heating bills. The amount of the cash allotment was determined by age, with the over 75s receiving an additional amount. Grants were also paid to individuals/families for a variety of reasons, in particular financial need, who were elderly people who had lived in the Baldons for a number of years.

In 2007 and regularly since then, the Trustees have written to all pensioners in receipt of assistance from the BFC, to ask whether they still required financial help, in the light of the fact that the Charity is required to ensure that help is given only where needed.

Not only can grants be provided to assist with energy costs but in other ways as well. Awards have been made to help with personal alarms, funeral expenses, mobility aids, school transport and other educational costs.

In view of huge recent increases in fuel (and other) costs, the need for assistance from the charity has seen increased demand, which has put pressure on funds which the BFC has available for distribution. For this reason, it has been decided that future grants will not automatically be given solely on the basis of age but applications from parishioners will be considered on the basis of perceived need.

Application forms are available from the Clerk, Emma Timms 01865 341461

or any of the Trustees:

Alison Barne	01865 343624
Bruce Don	01865 343330
David Greenaway	01865 343496
Alan Johns - Treasurer	01865 343268
Jacqui Lake	01865 343006
Chris Nichols	01865 343388
Alison Porter - Chair	01865 340405

The Seven Stars has REOPENED!

We are delighted to announce that the Seven Stars reopened on Friday 23rd June.

Namit Julka and Sunit Bansode are taking the tenancy of our community pub. Namit has run The Tree Hotel bar and restaurant in Iffley village for the last 13 years and has built up a strong and loyal following both within the village and from outside; including running various events that bring the community together as well as generally providing a warm and welcoming environment. Sunit also has a wealth of hospitality experience, having worked together with Namit as well as with other recognised hotel, bar and restaurant businesses. A keen cricket enthusiast (aka fanatic), he's looking forward to cheering on the Baldon team! They can't wait to get started and are excited to meet and welcome everyone back to the Seven Stars.

The pub will initially open 6 days a week (closed on Monday), looking to return to 7 day opening after a few weeks. For the first weekend, it will be drinks only, however food will be introduced during w/c 26th June, starting with a limited menu and building up to a full offering as soon as possible.

Date for the diary:

- Friday 30th June - Official Village Launch Event - more information to follow

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Freespirit Pubs, Mark Higgs, Alistair, Patrick and the team for all they have done over the last two years.

We look forward to sharing more news of events that Namit and Sunit already have in the planning, however for now wish them both a very warm Baldons & Nuneham Courtenay welcome and wish them every success. Thank you for all of your continued support which is essential to ensure that the Seven Stars can continue to thrive.

Thank you,
BNCS Committee

NUNEHAM COURTENAY PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Would you like to be a Tree Guardian?

The County Council is looking for Community Tree Care Volunteers to look after the new trees they have planted and will plant in future in parishes, like the ornamental Tibetan Cherry recently planted at the southern end of the village.

The County Council's Tree Service says it is able to provide watering cans and advice on young tree care to any volunteers. It says the scheme is very informal with no commitment requirements. If you're interested in looking after the Tibetan Cherry Tree, you can email tree.planting@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

South Oxfordshire District Council

At the annual meeting following the May 2023 elections, South Oxfordshire District Council chose David Rouane, Liberal Democrat councillor for Didcot North East, as Leader and the new Cabinet is again a mixture of Liberal Democrats and Greens, even though the Liberal Democrats have 21 of the 36 councillors and do not need to continue their coalition with the Greens.

Housing Infrastructure Fund 1 road

The County Council's Planning and Regulation Committee was set to consider the County Council's own planning application for the proposed road connected with the so-called Didcot Garden Town development on 26th and 27th June, but the meeting has been cancelled.

Your parish council has been working with the parish councils of Appleford, Clifton Hampden, Culham and Sutton Courtenay to challenge the shaky arguments for these separate scraps of new road which look very like sections of the southern route originally proposed for the supposedly abandoned Oxford to Cambridge Expressway, that would have connected the A34 at Milton to the M40 at Wheatley.

Geoffrey Ferres,

Parish Clerk,
Nuneham Courtenay Parish Council
Tel: 07419 991623
Email: clerk@nunehamcourtenay.org.uk

Feeling Peace

THE MEDITATION EXPERIENCE

Step aside from the stresses of daily life and enjoy an afternoon in beautiful gardens and newly refurbished palladian villa, followed by two hours of live performance, wisdom from master yogis, songs and a powerful collective meditation for peace.

SUNDAY 23 JULY

2-4.30PM HOUSE & GROUNDS OPEN

5-7PM MAIN STAGE EVENT



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Dorchester Team Churches Youth Photography Competition

The competition is open to young people up to and including age 17.

To enter, please submit a photograph you have taken of one of the Dorchester Team Churches. There are two categories:

- Inside the church
- Outside the church

Prizes: £30 book voucher OR Amazon voucher for the winner of each category; £15 book voucher OR Amazon voucher for the runner up (winners can choose).

To enter, please email your photograph to reverendsorrelshamelwood@gmail.com and include the following information (or ask a parent/guardian to do so on your behalf):

- Your name
- Your age
- A parent or guardian's contact email and phone number
- Confirm that you have the permission of a parent or guardian to enter the competition.

The closing date is **20th August 2023**. The competition entries will be judged anonymously by Team Rector Reverend Jane Willis.

The Dorchester Team Churches are:

Dorchester Abbey; St Mary & St Berin, Berinsfield; St Peter's, Marsh Baldon; St Lawrence Toot Baldon; St Leonard and St Catherine, Drayton St Leonard; Old All Saints Church, Nuneham Courtenay; St Laurence, Warborough; St John the Baptist, Stadhampton; St Giles, Newington; St Katherine, Chiselhampton; St Michael and All Angels, Clifton Hampden; St Paul's, Culham, St Peter's, Little Wittenham; St Mary the Virgin, Long Witteham.

Terms and Conditions

The Dorchester Team Churches Youth Photography Competition is open to young people up to aged 17 (there is no lower age limit). The entry instructions are part of the Terms and Conditions for this competition. The prizes are non-transferable and there is no cash alternative. Copyright of the photographs remains with the entrants but the entrant licences the Dorchester team to display their photographs in some or all of the team churches, on the websites of Dorchester Team churches and on Dorchester Team churches' social media. Winners will be notified by 31st August 2023, and invited to receive their prize at the team service at Dorchester Abbey at 10:30am on Sunday 3rd September, but can also choose to receive their prize by post if preferred. There is no limit to the number of entries per person. Winners' names will be announced and included in publicity, but entrants and their parents and guardians have the right to request that entrant names are withheld if preferred. Any application containing incorrect, false or incomplete information will be rejected. The competition organisers (Dorchester Team Churches) reserve the right to cancel the competition. The judge's decision is final. Any personal information you give us will be used solely for this competition and will not be passed on to any other parties without your agreement or used for any other purposes. By entering the competition you are agreeing to accept these Terms and Conditions. This competition is not affiliated with or endorsed by Amazon. Any breach of these Terms and Conditions by you will mean that your entry will not be valid, and you will not be allowed to enter this competition.

BALDONS CRICKET CLUB



Baldons CC Kit for Afghans

Since re-forming during the pandemic summer of 2020, the Baldons Cricket Club has gone from strength to strength. Over 50 people from the local community played cricket for the club last summer, some of whom had never played before. Recently we invited some Afghan refugees who are being housed at a local hotel near the Kassam Stadium to play for us. They are a great group of educated guys, one is a 4th year medic, another a software engineer, all of whom have fled Afghanistan. They have no income or savings and are unable to work or study whilst they are waiting for their asylum applications to be processed. They regularly come along to nets practice and play for the team in matches. We didn't have any club kit that was fit for them to use and I am delighted that following our fundraising at the beginning of June we have been able to purchase some new pads, bats, helmets and gloves – as well as buying each of them a cricket box. They have been a great asset to the team, and the quality and speed of our bowling has improved!

Matches

We have had some great games so far this year and our first evening T20 against Warborough on a Friday evening at the beginning of June. We are always keen to encourage new players – it really doesn't matter if you are feeling a bit rusty – we are very inclusive. Even if you feel your playing days are over, please do come along and support us – join us for a drink, help with the umpiring or do some scoring. Everyone is always welcome, please see below for the up-coming matches and type in the link to sign up. Alternatively, send me your email and I'll forward the links electronically.

Sunday 2 nd July	Great Haseley	Away	www.tickettailor.com/events/baldonscc/934757
Sunday 9 th July	Islip	Home	www.tickettailor.com/events/baldonscc/934760
Sunday 23 rd July	The Astons	Away	www.tickettailor.com/events/baldonscc/934754
Sunday 6 th August	Britwell Salome	Home	www.tickettailor.com/events/baldonscc/934763
Sunday 3 rd September	Hanney	Home	www.tickettailor.com/events/baldonscc/934869

Nets

We hold nets practice on The Green on Thursday evenings, all welcome. Please email your telephone number to baldonscc@gmail.com and I will add you to the WhatsApp group.

Membership

For anyone in the village who would like to support us, do please consider joining The Baldons Cricket Club. We welcome young and old, players and supporters alike. We organise social events and members are most welcome to join us for a cup of tea and sausage roll on match days. www.tickettailor.com/events/baldonscc/875384

Pavilion

Our dearly loved pavilion is currently in rather a sorry state, and we are hoping to renew the tin roof over the kitchen and repair the uprights holding up the pavilion. There is also a rather large hole in the floor where the floorboards have given way with a lot of rain leaking through the roof. Thankfully we've already received a lot of help putting together a plan to co-ordinate these repairs, please get in touch if you think you might be able to help out!

I hope to see you playing or supporting at a match soon,
Cheers,
Cosmo

Cosmo Taylor
Baldons Cricket Club
baldonscc@gmail.com
07858 060931

Maths and Science help up to GCSE level

I am an A-Level Maths, Physics and Chemistry student, who would be happy to help others understand and improve their maths and science work, up to GCSE level. £7 per hour

Please text or WhatsApp me on 07561 407451

Thanks

Alexander Eliot

Looking for a babysitter, or someone to mow your lawns?

I am a responsible 15 year old person who engages well with children and mows in straight lines!

If you would like to contact me, please text or WhatsApp me on 07388 677402. £7 an hour.

Many thanks,

Sam McDouall Saw

THE ONLY WAY IS UP

A lot of gardens I've been involved with lately have been small, really small, but that's the scourge of many new build housing estates. Even though many prefer not to have a garden, preferring the sterility (in my view) of artificial turf, patios, crushed slate, and the odd pot containing a few dead plants etc. There are still some of us householders who would prefer a slightly bigger garden.

I want to focus this month on showcasing the hidden opportunities for space, even in a smaller garden. Space that can be hidden in plain sight, even in one of those smaller gardens. I myself have what many might call a tiny garden, but space and potential for growing is everywhere I look.

I'm not just talking about having baskets, pots and window boxes etc. I'm talking about growing vertically. Mine is a walled courtyard, and though I've covered almost every wall I can with climbing plants, and even thinking about growing on a roof, one of those living roofs. What I'm really talking about is utilizing those vertical spaces within those boundary walls.

Putting up freestanding trellis, arches and pergolas are an option in many situations. So are freestanding vertical walls/panels, ideal for growing salad crops. I'm fast approaching my last piece of free space in the garden, so I'm thinking of having one of those salad crop vertical panels. I'm trying to find a freestanding metal framed one, with protruding feet that sink into the soil, with planting pockets, and reservoirs retaining water for the plants to tap into.

Not sure how this will work, what it will really look like, or who sells it? What I'm getting at here is if we think outside of the box, and think upwards, there are growing opportunities, even in the smallest of spaces.

Have a think yourself, be imaginative, and think beyond the sterility (in my view) of artificial turf, patios, crushed slate, and the odd pot containing a few dead plants etc.

Happy Gardening
Stuart Mabbutt
Wildlife Gardening Specialist
www.wildmaninspires.co.uk
01865 747243

PET PHOTOGRAPHER



New puppy, kitten, horse or an older four-legged friend?

Helen Carter Photography will come to you or meet you in an Oxfordshire location to capture beautiful images of your pet.

Photographs of your new puppy, kitten, horse or images of your older four-legged friends will look stunning on a wall in your home and provide you with everlasting memories. Action shots and portrait images are available.

Contact Helen Carter Photography on 07828153078

Email: helen@helencarterphotography.co.uk

Web: www.helencarterphotography.co.uk



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Summer Reading Challenge 2023

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Delivered in partnership with libraries.



Illustrations by Lexia Schauer and logo artwork by Little Emerald. All © The Reading Agency 2023.

Summer Reading Challenge 8 July to 9 Sept

Get active this summer with a FREE children's reading challenge! Read books, collect rewards, have fun!

Saturday 22 July 10am-12pm: In-library sports day

Wed 26 July 11am: Sports-themed story time ages 2-8

Tuesday 1 August 2-4pm: Board games & pop-up café

Friday 4 August 10am-1pm, 2-5pm: Lego Challenge:
Build a boat to float! All day drop-in session ages 5+

Sat 26 August 10am-12pm: Lego stay and play ages 5+

All events drop-in & free at Berinsfield Library, children age 11 and under must be accompanied by a parent/carer

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berinsfield.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk



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CHURCH SERVICES FOR JUNE 2023

2 nd July	11.00am	Toot Baldon	Annual Aircrash Service
9 th July	4.00pm	Marsh Baldon	Evensong
16 th July	9.30am	Toot Baldon	Holy Communion
	4.00pm	Nuneham Courtenay	Evening reflections in words and music
23 rd July	10.30am	Stadhampton	Team Service
30 th July	9.30am	Drayton St Leonard	Cluster Service
6 th August	10.30am	Toot Baldon	St Lawrence breakfast – come and join us for an al fresco breakfast and then a service to celebrate the Feast of St Lawrence
13 th August	4.00pm	Toot Baldon	Evensong
20 th August	9.30am	Marsh Baldon	Holy Communion
	4.00pm	Nuneham Courtenay	Evening reflections in words and music
27 th August	10.30am	Marsh Baldon	Holy Communion
3 rd September	10.30am	Dorchester Abbey	Confirmation Service

SAVE THE DATE:-

PET SERVICE 10th September, 4pm St Peter's Marsh Baldon

CHURCH FLOWERS

Date	Marsh	Toot
2nd July		All help please for Aircrash Service
9th July	Laura Martin	
16th July		Vanessa Bowler, Linda Brook, Tracey Greenaway
23rd July	Oni Sandilands	
30th July		
6th August	Beth McLaughlin	Jane Brook
13th August		
20th August	Dinah Southern	