

# THE Grapevine NEWSLETTER

## New Vices = New Vigour

At the AGM in October the new committee was elected. Brian Palmer agreed to serve another year as Chairman, Mark Nevitt as Treasurer and Peter Dawson as Secretary.

Sarah Russell and Siobhan Gardiner offered to stand as joint Vice-Chairs and this was enthusiastically accepted by the meeting.

The Village Hall Committee has operated from around 1928 and has always been re-vitalised when new members bring new ideas and skills and really get involved. So watch out Stockcross. The 2011 agenda is already looking good with plans for a masked ball, fun run and Royal Wedding celebration on top of all the old favourites.

### Stockcross Village Joins Facebook

The recent creation of a 'Stockcross Village' page on Facebook offers a new, fun way to stay-in-touch with the goings on in the village. Despite a lot of bad press, many of us use Facebook to stay in touch, share photographs and snippets of our lives with friends and relatives we don't see enough of. For most of us, it's a great way to waste away a few moments catching up on gossip, when we should be working or doing something much more important, and whiling away those hours we're sitting in front of the computer.

Whatever; Stockcross has embraced this new development and the Stockcross Village page is a-buzz with chatter about planned events, missing wheelie bins and ideas for future events. As it stands the page is open only to members who have requested to join or those who have been invited by other members of the group. This is to maintain some level privacy for the group. However, there has been a suggestion that the page may be useful as a marketing tool. This wasn't considered when the page was set up however it may be open to discussion within the page.

Take a look and see what you think.....*Siobhan & Sarah*



**FROM THE SUTTON HALL  
STOCKCROSS  
January 2011 No:76**

| Current Hall Hire Rates (£ per hour)<br>1 <sup>st</sup> January 2011 |           |           |             |
|--|-----------|-----------|-------------|
|  | Small     | Large     | Both        |
| Resident   | Hall 5.50 | Hall 8.00 | Halls 11.00 |
| Non resident   | 9.00      | 13.00     | 16.00       |

Call Jay on 01488 608769 to book  
or visit our website

[www.suttonhallstockcross.org](http://www.suttonhallstockcross.org)

or email

[suttonhall642@btinternet.com](mailto:suttonhall642@btinternet.com)

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Quarterly Round up
- Editor's Update
- Villagers' Achievements
- What's On

## Chairman's Report

Well I am back; this will be my third year as chairman and hopefully my last. You will have guessed that I didn't have any takers for the chairman's position at the AGM but we have got two young ladies to share the vice chair's job. It is good to see as they are coming up with new ideas. I think they will do very well.

Went to the panto on the Saturday night yet another sell out performance well done to every one. We all know now why Roger has to tow the line.

It's hard to believe but I went to the over sixties Christmas party on Saturday the 19<sup>th</sup>. We had an old boy in the village called Percy, one of his favourite sayings was it will come to you my boy, never believed him, but it sure has. Any way we all had a great time so thank you Maureen and Angela for organising it. A big thanks to Julie for doing the catering, I think we have all survived?

Despite the bad weather we had a fairly good turn out for Christmas drinks at the hall after the carols at the church.

I don't know how many of you with mobile phones are on Vodafone but if like me you are, the signal in Stockcross is rubbish. I saw a new way of getting a signal the other morning, you need a dressing gown, socks and slippers. Then walk up and down the B4000 in the frost and dark. I don't know whether this method works on other networks But it's worth a try.

Well that's it from the Marsh Benham Boy all I need to do is wish you all a Happy and prosperous 2011 and thank everybody for their support in 2010.



*Brian G Palmer*

## Grapevine Nature Notes December 2010

I am writing this, rather later than usual it must be said, with an outlook of freezing fog which if nothing else has produced some very lovely looking trees and shrubs as every twig and leaf is outlined with ice. This winter seemed to start as soon as what was supposed to be summer had ended, and with something of a bang too. I cannot remember such low temperatures before Christmas and there are many plants that have been fooled too, many trees and shrubs still have not dropped their leaves which are hanging like wet washing and looking very unhappy.

Before that it was a very colourful if short autumn with some quite gorgeous colours. In one garden in Stockcross I saw a rhododendron and a rose flowering together and my rosemary has been in full bloom, poor thing it still is, just frozen solid I guess!

The Redwings were later coming to my holly tree, November 3<sup>rd</sup> to be exact. The most I counted at any one time was 20 whereas they usually come in flocks of hundreds it seems. Nevertheless the berries, and there were lots, had gone before the end of November. I think my growing population of pigeons had something to do with that.

I always hope to see Waxwings but so far none have appeared here. I did contact the RSPB but they had only been seen south of Bracknell. If anyone knows better please, please let me know. It would be nice to have some sort of alert e-mail system for this sort of thing.

All the other usual birds are back, bless them, and I like to think many are from the nest boxes round and about. I keep feeding and breaking the ice on the pond for them and they do seem very grateful.

Meanwhile let's look forward to Spring.

*Janet Scul*

## Speen Parish Council

<http://www.speen.gov.uk/minutes.htm>

There was an extraordinary meeting of the council in December when two proposals were voted on and carried.

### Proposal 1

"Speen Parish Council propose to spend up to £8,000.00 if it is successful in securing a grant of £8,000.00 from the Football Federation. The money is to be used for the provision of football pitches and the refurbishment of Stockcross recreation ground, including the provision of toilets, and is to be based upon the documents presented to this meeting. The method of funding will be from the reserves "

### Proposal 2

"Speen Parish Council will finance £15,000.00 per annum for the provision of 18.5 hours per week of a warden subject to partnership funding being available. The commitment will be for a minimum of three years, to be funded through the Parish Precept."

Full details and background can be found in the minutes on the council's website. The minutes are also published on the council Notice Board on the corner of Church Road. Dates of future meetings are also available via the same sources.

# OUT AND ABOUT

## PUMA British Championships (Professional Unification of Martial Arts.)

On 21st November, two 'Little PUMA's, Harvey Brown and Elliot Crouch, entered the British Championships. This was only their second championship they had entered.

As 'Little Pumas', they compete along the same lines as the juniors and adults, with a High Kick competition and a 'Drill' competition. The drill competition is where each Little PUMA has to learn a set sequencing of moves, and they then compete against each other in pairs.

They both did really well to even attend the event, as it is quite daunting having to stand up and perform in front of a hall full of observers, let alone in front of three judges too!

Harvey won bronze for the drill competition, and received a rather impressive medal which he proudly showed to everyone that afternoon at the Panto rehearsals.

Well done Harvey and Elliot!



Sheelagh Brown

## Knit and a Pint

The Knitting Club is starting up again, this time at the Lord Lyon on the first Monday of each month from 8pm-10pm. Come along and join us as we knit a few rows – and also put the world to right with our chatter. Everyone from beginners to the experienced welcome. Each session will have a special project – but you are very welcome to bring along your own knitting, crochet or sewing projects.

February's session (*Mon 7th*) will focused on knitting little kitten blankets for Battersea Dogs Home (who have an appeal out at the moment for kitten blankets).

March's session (*Mon 7th*) will be knitting hats and boots for newborns and infants.

Hope to see some of you there. *Claire*

## Another Year To Remember



Over the last 30 years I have bred my own Poll Dorset sheep and been to many shows up and down the Country.

The Sheep showing season began again in June 2010 with a visit to 'The Three Counties Show' which resulted in two 1st prizes and Reserve Breed Champion.

Next was 'The Royal Welsh Show' in July, the largest sheep competition in Europe, which we entered for the very first time. We had 1st prize with our 8 month old ram, 2nd with our 18 month old ewe who also went on to win Female Reserve Champion. Then finishing the year off with 'The Royal County of Berkshire Show' in September, with our Shearling Ram being awarded 1st Prize, then going on to win Breed Champion and then going on again to win Overall Supreme Champion, this success would not have been achieved without the help and support of my girls Sophie Holly and Zoe.

Next years 'Show Team' of sheep are already being prepared for the 2011 season.

*Nigel Wernham*

## Morocco Challenge

I'm a 13 year old St.Barts student who lives in Stockcross called Jessica Hersh. In May this year I am participating in a school World Challenge Trip to Morocco which is aimed at teaching leadership skills! One challenge of the trip is that I have to raise £1000 myself to pay for it and I have been trying various ideas (babysitting, looking after animals during holidays, cleaning etc)

I have decided to try a raffle to raise additional money and Angie and Tim at the village Post Office have kindly agreed to sell tickets. Please help me by buying some raffle tickets or do call me if I can help with anything! Closing date for buying raffle tickets is 4th Feb and the draw will be at the Post Office at 10am on Sat 5th Feb. Prizes are ; Champagne, red wine, white wine, a big box of Thorntons chocolates, a meal for 2 for £30 donated by an Indian restaurant in Newbury, a World Atlas of Wine and many more!

Thank you for your support

*Jessica 01488 658 454*

# AROUND THE VILLAGE

## Lord Lyon Latest



The Lord Lyon is getting busier all the time, so please remember to book a table if you are coming in for a meal at our busy times, especially at the weekends. Drinkers will need to fight

it out for the bar stools, but arriving early usually secures you one, or two.

The coming months may prove to be a trying time for the pub trade, but remember we are all in it together! We are organising a traditional Burns Night Supper for the 25th January, with an after dinner whisky tasting together with bagpipes, a drummer, plenty of haggis and perhaps even the odd swirling kilt but space is, as always, limited....

Valentines night will of course be very busy, details of the menu, prices for this and the Burns Supper will be advertised nearer the time, on our facebook page: The Lord Lyon and on the website [www.lordlyon.co.uk](http://www.lordlyon.co.uk) and also on the blackboards in the pub for any internet luddites, not mentioning any names, Dr Bob!

It has been very rewarding to have held so many "village" gatherings recently and also to see so many new, and less familiar faces using the pub more regularly and we have all been touched by the positive reaction from everyone to what we are doing, thank you all for your support and feedback, and we look forward to seeing you soon.

*Mark and the team at The Lord Lyon*

## Cricket



This Stockcross Team played the Old Bell Wash Common on the 19th September, it was a very close match which we lost 129 to 131 with one ball to go in the very last over. We are looking forward to playing more friendly matches with anyone who wants to give us a game. If anyone from the village would like to play next season please get in touch.

*Simon Wood*

## Ice Rainbow Over Stockcross

Did anyone else see the stunning halo that surrounded the moon over Stockcross on the evening of the 19<sup>th</sup> December?

Five of us were merrily making our way from Sutton Hall to the Lord Lyon when we saw this beautiful, shimmering circle of light around the moon. So beautiful and strange a sight, that at first we thought it might have been the affects of slightly too much mulled wine at the hall!

But no, it turns out that what we saw was an ice rainbow. A rare but very real phenomenon caused by the refraction of moonlight from ice crystals in the upper atmosphere. It creates an effect that looks like rings or a halo around the moon. We did try to take a photo but unfortunately it didn't come out. Did anyone else manage to capture it?

*Mike, Sarah, Claire, Mike & Anna*

## Everybody Loves this Classic Car.



Congratulations to Tony Earley. His 1952 Ford Pop was voted "My Favourite Motor Car" by visitors to the very popular and well established Swallowfield Show held over the August Bank holiday Weekend.



## Stockcross Panto Players

What fun we had putting on this year's panto "The Ice Queen and The Wizard". Having so many youngsters in the cast was a delight and Mum's you were great! The first night was a bit dodgy but after that it seemed to go well. Hope you all enjoyed it. Here are a few photos from rehearsals and the Panto workshop run by Jane Batt in October. Work on the next one will begin over the next few months. PS the auction of Vladimir The Vulture was won by Billy Chandler.



Does this clip board mean I'm in charge?



Surely my agent will call soon?



No scripts? Are you mad?  
We have another 2 weeks yet.



Any chance of a comfy mattress and a wake up call?



Boney M Tribute Band. Pass the Smirnoff!!



We've got enough snow for a Blizzard!

Panto workshop October 2010.



Yes, but what's it meant to be?

# QUARTERLY ROUND UP

## Let's Get Quizzical ! (Part Deux)

**Question :** What was the most fun you could have for a fiver in the village this last month ?



### Answer : Stockcross Village Quiz 2010 !

The Quiz was held on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October in the Sutton Hall to a sell-out crowd of 76. Proceedings started with a Ploughman's Supper and after the introduction of the two quiz comperes for the night : Stewart "Oracle of the Medical Periodical" Gardiner and Rob "Mao of How" Borthwick, it was straight into the first round, Rivers and Cities. Next up was Cryptic Chocolate followed by other rounds including two music rounds, picture round, Food & Drink, Sports, Quotations, a multimedia extravaganza Film Round and a Local Knowledge round that certainly allowed the locals to gain some advantage ! Highlights of the evening included the "Titanic in 5 seconds" film clip, toe-tapping music rounds, cool handling of hecklers and some impromptu French pronunciation masterclasses during the answers. Prizes were awarded and the results were as follows:



**1<sup>st</sup> place :**  
The Guesswells  
**2<sup>nd</sup> place :**  
Stockcross & Two Smoking Barrels  
**3<sup>rd</sup> place :**  
Bruce and the Also-rans

The Guesswells triumphantly accepted the Stockcross Village Quiz trophy, to be kept for a year until the next quiz in 2011.

Net earnings on the night were £500, to be matched with £350 from Vodafone.

Thank you to the many people who helped with the organisation of the evening both before and on the night, with special thanks to John & Claire Mingo for posters, tickets and the handmade trophy and also to Angela and Tim for kindly donating all the ham, cheese and apples for the Ploughman's.

I think the amount raised and the good time had by all far exceeded everyone's expectations so start honing your local knowledge and useless trivia ready for next year !

*Richard & Julia Crouch*

## October's Harvest Supper

**Homemade, gorgeous food and cheap drinks (bring your own) – you can't beat that for a good night out**

Rural Britain has some wonderful, old traditions and a harvest supper is one of these. The coming together of a community at an important time in the agricultural calendar; to celebrate and renew bonds. *Oh, and to get more than a little bit drunk!* I love these traditions. Which is why, when I heard that the Supper might not happen this year, I decided to put my hand up to help out. With less than 3 weeks to go!

Foolish? Well not really.

The truth is the Harvest Supper has been so well organised down the years that it pretty much comes together all by itself. Many people have been making the same yummy dishes year after year and know exactly how much to make. And somehow we end up with the right balance of savoury and sweet dishes. And local businesses are very generous when it comes to raffle prizes.

Most importantly everyone comes with a smile on their face and the intent to enjoy themselves. Find a band that can get people singing, and clear some space for a dance floor and you have a successful night on your hands.



This next bit will sound a lot like an Oscar award speech – but I need to do it I'm afraid! So, a big personal thanks goes to Angela for pointing me in the right direction on so many things and without whom I wouldn't have had a clue! Thank you to the amazing team who turned up to set up the hall and also pack away again in the morning. Thanks to those who served the food on the night and to my lovely friends for washing up.

Finally, a special thanks to Sarah for supporting me throughout the evening!

I'm very happy to have been care-taker for a year. I hope everyone enjoyed themselves.

*Claire Ralphson Cook*

# QUARTERLY ROUND UP



The Stockcross Children's Christmas party was another great success. Scotty the Clown proved a huge hit with both young and not-so-young children. The special guest star, Father Christmas, delighted the audience with his special brand of magic. Grateful thanks go to all the Mums (especially Lorraine Lees), and Father Christmas, who brought this event together for a lovely family fun-filled afternoon.

*Siobhan Gardiner*



*Looks like Santa enjoyed himself too!*

## Over 60's Christmas Lunch

A great success despite the weather. Sorry to the one or two who were poorly and couldn't make it. Many thanks to Julie and waitresses for the superb food and also to everyone who bought raffle tickets throughout the year so that I was able to make this happen. Roll on the next one.

*Maureen Earley*

## August Meat Raffle

1<sup>st</sup> Ken Sullivan  
2<sup>nd</sup> Ernie Preece  
3<sup>rd</sup> Janet Scull

## September Meat Raffle

Barham House  
Linda Mason  
Jean Wallis

## A Litter Pick Mystery Find...

A big thank you to everyone who turned out on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September for the village litter pick. Once again we had a good sized team of wombles – who picked the paths and verges clean in no time at all!

There seemed to be much less rubbish than on previous litter picks. And most of what there was clearly came from the thoughtless drivers who toss their empty crisp packets, McDonalds wrappers and cans from the car as they drive through our village. If only we could stop this...

In among the more prosaic rubbish, there was one rather exciting (and slightly romantic) mystery find: a set of 1950s suitcases, tucked away in the hedgerow on Church Lane.



Both cases were well weathered and whilst one was open and empty, the other was locked and clearly had something hidden inside! Both cases had British Railways luggage stickers on them with 'Stroud' as the destination station – and both were elegantly monogrammed with the initials J. de L. B. We've done a bit of online research to see if we can turn up anything under the family initials de L. B. - but have had no luck. Do these initials mean anything to anyone in the village? We'd love to see if we could trace the old owners.

*Happy new year! Mike & Claire*

## Stockcross 2 O'clock Crowd

We are still meeting on a monthly basis after eight years. Our events vary from just afternoon tea with a topic for discussion to day-trips by coach, garden parties, pub lunches and half-day visits to places of interest. Events are decided by the group – there is no committee as such to run it and we welcome fresh ideas. Delicious teas are provided on a rota basis when we are at the hall and we welcome friends and newcomers to join in whenever they wish. Recently we enjoyed a 'pot-luck' Christmas tea with gifts from Secret Santa, a very enjoyable coach trip to the Christmas Market at Bath and are now looking forward to arranging a new agenda for 2011.

For details of forthcoming events, please check the Sutton Hall notice board, The Grapevine or the Stockcross Village Facebook page.

# What's On

## JANUARY

- 25 **Burns Night Supper** at the Lord Lyon
- 26 **STOCC Tea** at Sutton Hall 2pm -4pm £2

## FEBRUARY

- 5 **Murder Mystery Supper** 7.30pm at hall £7.50pp
- 12 **Jumble Sale** at Hall 2pm
- 23 **STOCC** tba

## MARCH

- 19 **Masked Ball** at hall details to follow
- 30 **STOCC** tba

**October Meat raffle result**  
This was the last of 2010

- 1<sup>st</sup> Ann Drewe  
2<sup>nd</sup> Ken Sullivan  
3<sup>rd</sup> Daphne Tucker

**Mobile Library**  
**visits to Stockcross**  
**NOTE CHANGE OF TIMES**  
**Looks like lunch in Stockcross**  
**for the drivers!**

Village Hall 11.30 to 12.10  
Bayford House 1.20 to 2pm

| Feb     | Mar | Apr     |
|---------|-----|---------|
| 2<br>23 | 16  | 6<br>27 |

## Regular Events

- Daily** Billiards at village hall
- Weekly**
- Monday** Pilates at Village Hall 6pm
- Tuesday** Yoga at Village Hall 6.30pm
- Thursday** Bridge Club at Lord Lyon from 7.30pm
- Friday** Toffs Bridge at Village Hall 1.30pm
- Sunday** Tennis at Rec mornings
- Sunday** Folk at Rising Sun 8pm

## Monthly

- 1st Monday** Kint & a Pint at Lord Lyon 8pm -10pm
- 1st Tuesday** Quiz at Lord Lyon 8.30pm
- 1st Weds** Quiz at Rising Sun 8.30pm
- 2nd Tuesday** Village Hall Committee Meeting at the hall

**Jumble Sale**  
**12th February 2pm**  
**Go on have a spring clean !**

**Please leave jumble at the hall from 10.30am on the day of sale.**

## Church Services

### January

- 23 **Morning Prayer 11am**
- 30 **United Benefice Communion at Chieveley**

### February

- 20 **Holy communion 11am**
- 27 **Morning Prayer 11am**

### March

- 13 **Holy communion 9.30am**
- 20 **Holy Communion 11am**
- 27 **Morning Prayer 11am**

**Who done it?**  
**Thames Players present a**  
**Murder Mystery Supper**  
**At**  
**The Sutton Hall**  
**Saturday 5th February 7.30pm**

**Enjoy a light supper and a few drinks with fellow sleuths**  
**Tickets £7.50 from Stockcross Village Stores**

## Editor's Update

For those not connected to the internet The Grapevine still has a role to play in letting everyone know what's going on. It also acts as a permanent record of what life is like in our village so that future generations can look back and see who we were, what we did and how things change.

It can be difficult trying to put together each issue to cover a variety of topics and include as many of you as possible within its pages. If I sometimes seem to nag please forgive me it is done with the best of intentions to make sure your achievements are recorded for posterity. Thank you to all those who regularly submit articles. You make my job a lot easier. If you have yet to send in stories or pictures for publication then don't hold back. If anyone would like to write a regular column on a particular subject please feel free to offer your services. Perhaps one or a group of our younger residents might like to have a go.

**Most importantly as from this issue The Grapevine will be published in mid January/April/July/October. Hopefully that will better suit our events calendar. So the next deadline for inclusion will be 31st March 2011. Make a note in your diaries.**