

SPRING/SUMMER/AUTUMN/WINTER



**DOWNLEY
COMMUNITY**

Village News



Features

- Local Events
- Local Societies
- Lifestyle
- History
- Poetry Corner
- Letters
- Downley Diary



Issue 89 / November 2011



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Editorial

You may have noticed that this edition of the Village News has come out in November which is a month later than in previous years. This is to enable societies and businesses to publicise what events they are putting on in the Christmas season. The diary on the back cover lists these events and there is an article on pages 4/5 describing what's on. We have made some effort to include everyone; if your event isn't listed, make sure you send details to "news@downley.org" and it will at least get into the eNews.

So far there are 165 subscribers who receive the eNews every 2-3 weeks. If you want to be kept up to date more frequently than is possible with this Village News, then the eNews is for you. Go to the News page on the website (www.downley.org/news/enewsletter) and enter your email address. If you don't like it you can unsubscribe at any time. Send the link to your friends even if they are not resident in the village - ex-residents are often quite keen to be kept in the loop.

Many thanks to all those contributors who have been sending in articles and news of what's on in the village. In fact there has been such an enthusiastic response that in places we have had to do a bit of editing to fit it all in. Please forgive us if your contribution has ended up a bit smaller than you were expecting.

Finally, we are still looking for a permanent editor for the Village News. If you are (or you know of) someone who might enjoy putting together this quarterly magazine, soliciting articles, editing and correcting where necessary and guiding its development with your own ideas, give us a call to talk it over.

Bill Thompson, Chairman, Downley Communications Forum

What's on at Christmas

How many shopping days are left till Christmas? If you're like me, that question shouldn't be asked until about a week beforehand and only then is it worth thinking about buying presents. However, many people take a different view and this short summary will attempt to summarise all the attractions Christmas has to offer in Downley, from fun evenings and carol concerts to jumble sales and special offers at local businesses.

Traditional: St James and the Pastures have a full programme of services with Christingle Services for the children on the 11th and 24th Dec, Midnight Mass on the 24th and Christmas Day day services at both.

Carol Concerts: Downley Day are organising Community Carols around the village with mince pies after at the Community Centre on 21st Dec. The Theatre group have a trip to Christchurch's carol concert in Oxford on 20th Dec. Downley School reception are putting on a Nativity Play for senior citizens on 6th Dec.

Christmas Fayres and Bazaars: Woodlands are holding theirs on 27th Nov at the Scout Hut and St James are having one the day before on the 26th. The Downley School PA are running theirs on 3rd Dec

Children's Parties: St James are having their "Arty Party" on 26th Nov and the Downley School are holding their KS1 and KS1 parties on the 7th Dec.

Fun evenings: Downley Common Preservation Society are presenting "Mince Pies and Aircraft Industries" at the Memorial Hall on 10th Dec while on the same evening Get Rhythm are playing at the Le Despencer - take your pick.

Finally, the **Millennium Beacon** will be lit at midnight on New Year's Eve - come along and see in the New Year with a glass of something in the company of some friends.



For more details, look on the downley.org website.

If your event isn't mentioned above, send some details to news@downley.org and it will be added to the list.

Bill Thompson

EDITOR FOR THE VILLAGE NEWS

Did you enjoy this edition of the Village News? Could you do it better? If so, Contact Bill Thompson at: news@downley.org



Queen's Diamond Jubilee

Downley Parish Council have been invited to take part in the above celebrations. A letter from a voluntary organisation sponsored by the Government regarding the lighting of Beacons has been received outlining the registration procedure. It is hoped to light 2,012 beacons simultaneously across the country at 10.00 p.m. on Monday 4th June 2012.

In 2002, over 1,800 beacons were lit in celebration of the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

Buckinghamshire County Council are anticipating that at least 60 beacons will be lit in the county. A special book listing all the registered Beacon sites will be given to the Queen after the event.

Registration must be confirmed before 30th April 2012. Fund raising by local groups can be arranged for charities.

Initial items of interest proposed already to accompany the lighting of the Downley Millennium Beacon at Commonsides have included a Hog Roast, a firework display, It's a Knockout, plus live music or a disco, with a timetable of 7.30 p.m till 11.00 p.m.

It is hoped to form a committee from within the Downley community to organise the event.



Please send details of additional items of interest that could be included in the evening's programme of events and whether you would be interested in joining the committee to: downley_pc@tiscali.co.uk

Downley Village Evening WI

We have been in the village for just over 40 years, our membership now stands between 30-35 . We are a friendly WI and can offer members a mixture of outings apart from the monthly meeting, each month we have visiting speakers, news of events and refreshments.

Bucks Federation of WI's and the National Federation of WI's of which we are part have outings and holidays. Our residential college Denman near Abingdon hold courses and workshops on a large range of subjects.

Downley Village Evening WI's programme for early next year - please come and join us we meet the 1st Tues of the month at the Community Centre. School Close at 7:45pm.

Jan 3rd	The History of Holywell Mead by Mrs F Alexander
Feb 7th	Elizabeth and Phillip By Mrs B Askew
March 6th	Amazing Costa Rica & its Wildlife by Mrs B Hulbert
April 3rd	The World of Flora Thompson (Lark Rise) by Miss C Bloxham

Details Mrs P Heath 01494 535998 and our Federation Office at BFWI Stuart Lodge H/W

Downley Common

News

The sledging slope above the sunken Moor Lane on Downley Common has delighted children, mums and dads and grandparents for many years.



The added exact timing needed to roll off the hurtling sledge just before the 3 ft drop onto Moor Lane added a certain challenge, especially if a car was slithering down the lane at the same time..... the number of ‘sledgers’ has increased over the years (partly of course thanks to the last two snowy winters), so a decision to enlarge the sledgable area was taken at a special meeting of the Downley Common Preservation Society.

The work has involved much land leveling on the old village dump area, removing bricks, broken bottles, dense blackberry and bracken growth, and several quite large hawthorn bushes, using volunteers and ‘Rosie’, the DCPS tractor. Grass seeding using a suitable seed mix was then sown, the result is a smooth but steep slope, the grass mowable by brave tractor drivers. We now wait for the winter. Incidentally, the wider sledgable slope allows bigger sledging races, and with the sunken Moor Lane adding a required concentration at the finishing line we



anticipate some quite exciting results.

As an afterthought...summer grass sledging using ‘chair back’ sledges was very popular for many years on West Wycombe Hill, so perhaps the sledging season in Downley using this method can be extended and the reliance on snow diluted.

For technical information re ‘chair back’ sledge construction please contact John Willson, veteran sledger. The photo of a High Wycombe made chair, (above) shows the classic chair back shape, and the back pieces were easily available in High Wycombe, if you knew the right people.



Meanwhile, the Chilterns Conservation Board is launching an exciting new project to preserve and promote a vital part of our natural and cultural heritage. The Chilterns Commons Project was launched on 30 September with £400,000 of Heritage Lottery Funding. The four-year project will help improve the natural environment of commons in the area, spread the word about the value of commons and get more people involved in studying and caring for them.

A new Commons Project Officer, Rachel Sanderson, is in place at The

Chilterns Conservation Board to advise and support those interested in helping the Commons Project. ‘This is a fantastic project that everyone can get involved in,’ says Rachel, ‘We’ll be running training schemes for landowners and committed volunteers to equip them with new skills to help them with practical work for habitat conservation and restoration on commons, or train them in wildlife or archaeological survey techniques.’ Funding for professional works to improve wildlife habitats and historic features on common land is also available as part of the Chilterns Commons Project. If you’d like to find out more about the Chilterns Commons Project, please contact Rachel Sanderson on 01844 355525 or email rsanderson@chilternsaonb.org or write to The Lodge, 90 Station Road, Chinnor, OX39 4HA.



Community Plan Update

Activity has subsided over the summer and a recent meeting agreed to try to reinvigorate the various teams working on their sections of the plan. A summary of the plan status follows.

- The improvement to the Community Centre and the War Memorial Hall are underway and are reported elsewhere.
- The seating around the new playground in School Close has now been installed by Barratts and the landscaping is due to be completed soon.
- The provision of more allotments is still dependant on finding a suitable site. Several possibilities have been investigated but not been found suitable.



- Kerbside Glass Recycling - due to the cuts by the Council this seems to have been put on a back burner and there is no date to roll this out within the district.
- Lighting - a new lamp was put up in the alley way off Hillfield Close.
- Dog Fouling - Posters were put up around the village around Easter time. The environmental people had a stand at Downley Day and freely gave out poo bags and spoke to villagers about the problem. BUT the problem is still as bad as it was especially along the Commons side pavement.
- The possibility of installing zebra crossings has been investigated and the cost of £30K per crossing versus the current perceived crossing hazard has made it unlikely that approval would be gained from Transport for Bucks.



Downley Guides & Scouts
invite you to our



Christmas ceilidh

Only £15 per Ticket
Includes Hogroast & Dessert
Beer & Wine Available

The Downley School hall, Faulkner Way,
 Downley, HP13 5AL
 Doors open at 7:00pm, Start 7.30pm
 Saturday 3rd December

Contact Simon Bray 530019

Amis francophones, bonsoir!

It looks like a traditional English primary school, the playground now turned into a car park. Yet step inside on certain Friday evenings and suddenly you've crossed the Channel: a babble of *bonsoirs* and chitchat, the occasional "*bise*" – for a few hours, this corner of Downley is unmistakably French.

Tu prends quelque chose à boire? Vin, jus de fruit, eau minérale ? Ça va bien ? Yes, in the heart of the village, it's French Circle night and, whether you are *français(e)* or British *francophone*, from Marseille, Manchester or l'Île Maurice, you are welcome to come along and revel in your language.

« *Si vous voulez prendre une place...* »

Around 8.15pm, Claire makes her voice heard over the hubbub, chairs are rearranged and the evening's planned activity begins.

Sometimes projector & laptop spring into action and a knowledgeable speaker talks – it might be Art Deco, Coco Chanel, the TGV or French cuisine; questions and discussion often follow. Or maybe people gather round tables for a quiz or a murder mystery, with much ragging, dispute and laughter. "*Nos Vacances*" brings revelations of delightful places to visit and sometimes hilarious tales of adventure and mishap from members. Other evenings, according to members' requests, may be devoted to discussion of favourite books, films, music, or to

sharing food and drink with Gallic relish. Not for nothing is the French declaration, "*Je suis gourmand*" an expression of pride rather than guilt! (Translate, not "*I am greedy*" but "*I like my food*".) Once a year we even try some *danses folkloriques*, though usually with more mirth than precision. Key to our evenings are fun, an interest in French culture, appreciative listening and a love of good conversation.

So if you are a speaker of French, why leave your language to rust? Come and join us.

Vous serez les bienvenus!

Le Cercle français de High Wycombe meets 2nd Friday of the month (except August), 7.45/8pm at Downley Old School, School Close, Downley, HP13 5TR.

Membership £4.00 p.a. plus entry fee £3.50-£4.50 – try up to two evenings before joining fully.

Future programme & all details on website www.bucksinfo.net/highwycombe_frenchcircle/ or just google High Wycombe French Circle; or phone Claire on 01628 484833.



Chameleon Singles Group

As autumn is now in full swing we can reflect on another quarter of successful events and a warm welcome to a number of new members who have joined us.

While the summer was perhaps not the best for getting out and about autumn has given us some good weather for events. Christmas is now very much on our minds with the annual dinner dance ahead of us on 10th December and a visit to the Marlow Brewery to sample the offerings and stock up ahead of the festive season. For these trips we may well be swapping car sharing for the bus conscious of a few drinks that may be consumed!

Our programme has a number of regular events such as the pub night on the last Friday of the month and the lunch club usually held on the first Friday of the month. However, we are always looking for new ideas and events and encourage all our members to get involved as organisers be it an at home event, trip out or to a venue such as the pub, theatre or cinema. For the next few months we will be doing more indoor events and making use of our own homes to welcome other members where we can. This will include such events as games evenings, sample events, sharing meals, DVD evenings and take-aways.

Our pub night on the last Friday of the month is a great place to meet new members and you would be very welcome to come along. We meet from 8pm and there is food available until 9pm if you wish to eat and avoid the cooking at home for an evening. You are of course welcome

just to join us for a drink, a chat and to find out more about the group. Our Lunch Club continues to be a successful daytime event and we have been holding this regularly over the last few months at The Crown in Hazlemere but in the coming months may be trying new venues giving variety in hospitality and food on offer.

Membership has been increasing over the last few months and includes a number of local people from Downley, West Wycombe, Sands and surrounding areas. If you are single, 30 plus, looking for a social life and new friends then why not give us a try? There are no strangers at Chameleon, just new friends to be made in a social group run by and for its members.

**To find out more call Joyce on:
01494 461328, Martin on 07747 703663
or e-mail: chameleon_bucks@tiscali.co.uk.
You can also visit us on the web at:
www.bucksinfo.net/chameleon where
there is further information and an
events listing.**

Downley Guides & Scouts ***Centre Hire***

**One or Both Halls Available for:
*Parties • Meetings • Classes • Clubs***

**During Afternoons
Some Evenings & Weekends**

For further information contact:

**Sarah Birch on 01494 442438
(email sarahb@vale2000.com)**

**Margaret Stagg on 01494 530736
(email margaret.stagg@tesco.net)**

The Coffee Stop

As I write this bulletin, we have just had a meeting to plan the major event of our year, the now famous Harvest Lunch. When I say “we”, there is no committee as such, we are all in it together, to use a popular phrase.

Ticket price is £6 for a 2 course meal with a glass of wine or soft drink followed by tea or coffee and mints. The raffle will take a different form this year with a single ticket being on sale on the day for £1 in a draw for approximately 10 larger prizes, we hope this will speed up the proceedings and make less running around for ourselves! Now Joan has stepped down from the fantastic way she has done the raffle in the past, it was an opportunity to try something different.

We expect to cater for 80 people which caused me to wonder where they all are for the rest of the year?! Our customer numbers are down as some regulars are no longer able to join us due to ill health, and some have sadly passed away. Whilst we treasure our older visitors I would like to stress that The Coffee Stop is open for anyone, whatever age, who would like to drop in for coffee and cake or a light lunch.

On 12th December we will hold our Christmas celebration, which traditionally includes mince pies and mulled wine, after that we will be closing down for the festive season and reopening on 9th January, snow permitting!

We have reluctantly had to decide to increase our prices for only the second time in 9 years, the price of food is mounting steadily and on occasions we have been unable to break even on our costs. You will be pleased to hear that

our popular winter warmer, soup, is back from the beginning of October. We have tried out different varieties of sandwiches and are always interested to hear any comments or suggestions to vary our menus, bearing in mind that we only have one day to cater for so we have to shop accordingly and buy fresh on the day.

After our most enjoyable village holiday in Malta early this year, I had hoped to arrange for a group to visit the once in 10 year event Floriade in Holland next Spring. Unfortunately there was not enough interest to organise a group but if anyone is still keen to go Saga, Travelsphere, Leger and Shearings all have holidays available including local pick ups, so you should be able to find something suitable.

We look forward to seeing you on a Monday at St James Church Hall.

Ann Buxton

Learning with love and laughter

Merry Christmas!
The Woodlands Pre School
Christmas Fayre
visit Santa's Grotto
BBQ
Festive Stalls
Raffle Prizes
Fun & Games and much more...

Date: Sunday 27th November
Time: 11am – 2pm

Address: Woodlands Pre School, The Guide & Scout Hut, Coates Lane, Downley, High Wycombe, Bucks HP13 5UZ

Join in the fun. Bring family & friends.

Registered Charity number: 292793

Downley Gardening Society

What can you get for a fiver? ... a packet of soap powder, a packet of tea bags, a bottle of cooking oil, a jar of coffee and so on, all of which are soon gone. Surely the best value for a fiver is a years' subscription to the Downley Gardening Society and for only £8 the whole family can become members!



‘Autumn horticultural show’ held each September and here again it’s getting better each year. The tables were full and the judges were very complimentary over both the quantity and quality of all the different classes. It was nice to see

a number of youngsters at the show so to encourage them further we are going to re-arrange the junior section and broaden it to see that they all get a prize. It will still be competitive but none of them will leave empty handed.

The December meeting is very seasonal in that we follow on from the speaker with lovely mince pies baked by Pat Mills and a glass of mulled wine which brings a nice end to the evening. We go into the New Year with our January meeting when we enjoy cheese and wine after the presentation.

2012 will be yet another good year so for visitors, you can get tea, coffee and biscuits and a good evening entertainment, can’t be bad.

Yearly membership £5 or £8 per family. £1 per meeting for members, £1.50 for non-members who are very welcome.

For further information please call Ken on 01494 524622

Ken Thompson

Just look at what we have done so far this year:-

- **Back to fuchsias**
A beginners guide
- **Our worldwide gardens**
- **Successful propagation of plants from cuttings**
- **The world of plants**
- **Birds in a village**
100 years of change
- **Autumn colour**
Seasons of mists
and mellow fruitfulness

Our speakers are all professionals and provide very entertaining talks after which coffee, tea and biscuits are served free of charge along with a monthly raffle.

Each year we run a coach trip to a well known garden attraction at which we spend the whole day and we make sure their facilities offer good food, easy access for wheel chairs, picnic areas and plenty to look at, it’s a lovely day out.

We have a stall at Downley Day from which we sell donated plants and shrubs etc and it has grown in strength over the past 3-4 years providing valuable contributions to our funds. Downley Day itself is a great day and we are pleased to be part of it.

The highlight of our year is the

**FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO
WOULD LIKE COPIES OF THE
STAR FREE NEWSPAPER
THEY ARE AVAILABLE FOR
COLLECTION AT DOWNLEY
COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Downley War Memorial Hall Revival!

The Memorial Hall in Downley High Street was erected in 1923, financed by public subscription to commemorate the 22 men of the village who lost their lives in the First World War.

Five more names were added after the 1939-45 War. The original Trustees were Jenny Langley, Lucy Emery, Edwin Burrows and Brian Gray. Joe Bowler, who had a plumbing company, served on the committee to oversee the running of the Hall, and after a brief break, returned to serve on a new committee 10 or 11 years ago. With other members, he has been heavily involved in the recent renovations.

Over the years the Hall fell into disrepair and despite redecoration, it became evident that a planned refurbishment was required. It hosted varied Village activities – WI, playgroups, quiz nights, line dancing, parties and celebrations, Brownies, on-stage performances and the Montessori school to name but a few. All these took place in a building with minimal kitchen and toilet facilities, and latterly, a leaky roof!

Despite becoming a registered charity in the 1980's repeated appeals for a Lottery grant have been refused. However over time, fund raising activities were held; the Montessori school brought in a regular income; there were grants from local sources and a payment of £20,000 from the developers of the old Downley School site were received. Altogether a sum of £50,000 was accumulated to enable a scheme for improvements to be started. The Parish Council promised £2,000 per annum for the upkeep of the Hall.

The most urgent need was to provide new toilets and stairs to comply with health and Safety regulations. Graham Wheeler, a



local architectural draughtsman, prepared the drawing for a new two storey building and tenders were received from three local building firms. These varied between 58K to just over 90K. The lowest was accepted and the builder agreed to start work around June 2010. Just a few weeks before he was due to start and to the dismay of the Trustees, he withdrew his offer. Because the next tender price was way above the funds available, the Committee asked Joe Bowler to see if he could find a builder who could do the work at or near the original price. He contacted Mr. J. Wilks and Mr. Robin Johnson who agreed to carry out the work starting around September. This was a difficult job as the building was sited over an old well. However they completed the building to the satisfaction of everyone concerned, and the Committee is very pleased with the benefit this has added to the Hall.

The next major work required was to strip and re-tile the main hall roof. While the work was being done it was found that the rear gable end brickwork was loose. This was an unexpected setback, but it was as well that this was discovered as it could have been very dangerous. It is nice to know that the Hall is free from a leaking roof at last. With just a little money left it was decided to attend to the kitchen. The ceiling was black where the rain had soaked through. New plasterboard was fitted (the builders

pulled down the old ceiling and fitted new plasterboards at no cost to the Hall). The plastering was paid for by voluntary donation and a new floor covering was provided by the Parish Council. With the provision of a new electric hob, the kitchen really looks good and decent for customers to use. A new fire door was fitted and this completed the current improvements.

The flagpole had to be re-sited due to the building alterations and was reinstalled just in time for Downley Day this year, sporting a flag to mark the Armed Services celebrations the following week.

To complete the refurbishment to the upper hall we need to replace the electrical installation, re-decorate the walls, and replace the curtains. Long term we would like to upgrade the lower hall and the access paths. We have several differing thoughts on this but will have to wait till much more money is available.

The hard working Memorial Hall Committee consists of five Trustees and

seven serving members, who are currently applying to the National Lottery Fund for a grant to help build the disabled persons ramp. Much fund-raising is still required locally to continue with the hall improvements. The Committee would be delighted to welcome new members to help sustain the great efforts made to get this far. Please do support all the activities advertised – the recent ‘Theatre in the Village’ performance was a great success with an audience just short of a hundred! Bear in mind your Village Hall when considering worthy recipients of any charitable donations on offer. Offers of practical help are always appreciated – can you wield a paintbrush, for example? If so the Chairperson of the Memorial Hall Committee John Roden would like to hear from you. Phone 01494 442057 or alternatively Hazel Parnham on 01494 437422 or Joe Bowler on 01494 433188.

*Christine Audcent
(Information supplied by Joe Bowler)*

Disraeli Downley Youth Club

The Youth Club caters for all local youth aged 10 to 15 and meets on Mondays at St. James's Hall from 7 - 9 pm. The Club is fully equipped and various activities are arranged each Club Night plus a variety of outdoor activities and outings at other times.

With the support of Bucks Action4Youth and a band of great volunteers (including a volunteer Youth Club Leader), the Club has now been running for two years during which time it has allowed many members to enjoy a host of opportunities eg camping, water sports, bowling, resident activity weeks, making friends, cooking, etc.

The Club has been fortunate in finding willing volunteers to give up two hours of their time once or twice a month on Monday evenings. However, now that Action4Youth find that they are unable to provide weekly support, it becomes vital that we find additional volunteers. The only requirement being an interest in helping to keep the Club open.

**So, if you are at all interested and wish to find out how you can help, please contact:
Patrick Crotty (Chair of DD Youth Steering Group) 077 111 079475**

patrick@crotty.co.uk or:

Margaret Williams (Secretary of DDYSG) 01494 527629 m-williams26@sky.com

Please find out more details of Youth Club by contacting:

Jo Slifi (Youth Club Leader) 07968 008358 joanna.slifi@azzu.co.uk

Rock Solid

‘A place where people matter’

Rock Solid has won 2 Downley Day grants for providing outstanding community events for toddlers, children, teenagers and families. Rock Solid is held at The Pastures Church every Friday in term-time.

Rock Solid (£1 per child per session)

Fun foundations for ages 3-5: 3.50pm Registration. 4-5pm Activities including celebration time

Rockers for ages 5-7: 4.50pm Registration. 5pm-6.30pm Activities including celebration with Flints

Flints for ages 7-11: 5.50pm Registration 6pm-7.30pm Activities including celebration with Rockers

YOH for young people aged

11+: 7.40pm Registration 7.45pm-9.15pm Activities including celebration time

Rock Cafe for everyone attending Rock Solid and their relatives/friends. 4pm-7.45pm serving snack meals and drinks (Last orders 7.30pm)

Cameo at The Pastures Church (Come and meet each other). Cameo is a local group for those free during the day-time who would enjoy spending time socially with other local people. The group is run by local Christians, who want to nurture a stronger sense of community within the local area, and show they care!

Friday 18th November

Musical Performance by pupils of Downley School

Friday 2nd December

Gardening Talk and Workshop [preparing your garden for 2012] by John Goodway

Friday 16th December

Christmas Celebration with Mic Woodcock

What about transport? We can, in situations of real need, provide transport for a limited number of people. Let us know if you have a need, we can HELP! If you are in residential care you need to speak to your care manager. If you would like to find out more or have a question or enquiry, please call Trevor Lewis on 525074



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Join us for Christmas at The Pastures Church
10am Sunday 11th December

Super Star Nativity Gift Service followed by refreshments [bring gifts for Women in Wycombe suffering domestic violence] 6pm-7.30pm Saturday 24th December

Christingle Service followed refreshments [collection for the Children’s Society]

10am-11am Sunday 25th December

Nativity with Carols celebration [collection for the Wycombe Homeless Connection]

Every Sunday at 10.45am

Worship Service [including worship band, multi-media, life-changing teaching etc] with Sunday Rock [activities for 0-16 years olds]

All-Age services from 10am every second Sunday which are suitable for all ages and backgrounds.

Downley Parish Council News

Dates for 2011 diaries

Sunday 13th November

Remembrance Day Service at the War Memorial Hall starting at 3.00 pm

Saturday 31st December

Lighting the Millennium Beacon at Commonsides at 11.45 pm

Copies of the Parish Council's Minutes are available at the Downley Community Library for residents to read. They are also included on the Parish Council Website.

Please note that the 8 Parish Council notice boards can be used to display notices for Downley based organisations provided that at least 4 weeks notice is given. Please drop off notices at the old post office in an envelope addressed to Downley Parish Council. Please ensure that A5 size notices are supplied.

Street Lighting

If anyone wishes to report details of street light repairs needed in the following roads, they need to phone Ringway Jacobs (lighting contractors for Bucks County Council) on 0845 – 2302882.

Plomer Hill, Downs Park, Hillfield Close, (Hithercroft Road and Pastures from junction with Tinkers Wood Road up to Bellfields), Westover Road, Sunnycroft, South View, Woodcote Green, Pheasant Drive, Southfield Road, Middlebrook Road, White Close and Merry Down. There are no "scouts" employed to do spot checks of lights that are not working in these areas, so the contractors have to rely on members of the public contacting them with details.

Gosling Grove

This green space obtained "Village

Green" status in 2009 and is a very popular recreational site for all age groups. It is owned by Downley Parish Council on behalf of all residents of the village.

However, there is a continuing issue concerning litter, in spite of the fact that there is a litter bin near the pond which is regularly emptied by our contractors. The situation has deteriorated so badly this year that residents nearby have organised a daily litter pick to keep the area free of litter.

The purpose of this notice is to remind all users of this beautiful green space to treat it as if it was their own garden and ensure that it is kept litter free. Please report any known persistent offenders to the Chairman or Clerk to the Downley Parish Council.

Meetings

Parish Council Meetings are on the 2nd Tuesday every month.

In January, March, May, July, September and November at the War Memorial Hall, starting at 8.00 pm

In February, April, June, August, October and December at the Downley Community Centre, School Close starting at 7.45 pm

Up to 30 minutes are allowed for public questions.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Tuesday 24th April 2012 at the War Memorial Hall starting at 8.00 pm

Agendas are posted on the Parish Council notice boards at least 4 days in advance.

The Clerk (Chris Hamilton) can be contacted on H.W. 462195 OR by email at downley_pc@tiscali.co.uk

News and Events from St James' (CofE) Church, The small church with the BIG heart

“The Same Hymn Sheet”

Greetings from all of us at St James' Church, your Parish Church - everybody is welcome. We warmly invite you, your friends and family to the following events.

Family Service: 1st Sunday of every month at 11.00am for 50 minutes. A holy engaging, uplifting and meaningful family-friendly church service with helpful facilities for babies and toddlers.

New Seasons of the Christian Year Study Group: Thursdays 26 January, 2, 9, 16 February 7.45-9.30pm at the Vicarage. A four week course (this one focussing on Lent and Holy Week) looking into how the seasons of the Church came about and why and how they are celebrated. Next course: Eastertide.

Prayer for Wycombe 24/7: Vicarage prayer meeting 2.30-3.00pm on the 15th day of every month. Every day of every month, churches across Wycombe take turns to pray for the people, places and situations of our town. St James' has signed up for the 15th day of each month. We invite you to join in, wherever you may be during the day.

Children's Arty-Party: Saturday 26 November 11.00am to 12.30pm in the church - fully supervised creative Christmas fun for children aged 4yrs+. Booking recommended! Children are invited to bring a packed lunch to enjoy with carol singing at 12.30pm - family and friends are welcome to join them!

The Christmas Bazaar: Saturday 26 November opens at 1.00pm in the Hall - great value gifts and cards, competitions, homemade cakes, festive goodies and much more! Go on...give yourself a gift!



NEW Young People's Group: 4.30-5.30pm on Monday 9 January at the Vicarage and (until further notice) on the second Monday of the month thereafter. Music, film, games, spirituality and snacks for boys and girls aged 11 to 18 yrs of age. Non-churchgoing children are equally welcome.

Greenbelt Christian Arts Festival 23-28 August 2012: Nicky is leading a group of adults and children to this interesting, surprising and holy entertaining annual event at Cheltenham Racecourse. See Nicky for details in the first instance. Several types of accommodation available, not just camping! www.greenbelt.org.uk

Christmas Celebrations

Sunday 4th December at 11.00am: Our usual Family Communion Service is given a wonderful twist with the charitable collection and blessing of toys for children living at Saunderton Lodge

Sunday 11th December at 4.00pm: Christingle Service in aid of The Children's Society

Christmas Eve:

6.00pm Tree Dressing Service for All Ages.

11.30pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day: 11.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 1st January at 11.00am: A special New Year's Day service of Holy Communion

Contact Rev Nicky Skipworth on:

01494 526896,

nicky.skipworth@btinternet.com or

www.stjamesdownley.org.uk

St James' Catholic congregation

www.bjhnparish.org 01494 438300

Downley School



The new school year has started off with everyone making the most of the beautiful weather. Almost every time I look out of my office window during the school day, I see children learning outside. They love the contrast between the classroom and the outdoor environment and are highly motivated to learn in both settings.

We have been so fortunate to have had such a glorious start to autumn and as the weather gets colder, wetter and windier, we will still be learning outdoors. We will be wrapping up warmly with wellies at the ready!

School is all about the whole community learning together. We have already held two Literacy evenings so that our parents have the most up to date information and can support children with their learning. There has also been the first of two sessions for parents of our new Reception children. 'Help Your Child With Reading and Writing' being the first. 'Help Your Child With Maths' will take place after half term.

Lots of our wonderful parents are helping in school on a voluntary basis. They are supporting Guided Reading groups, Library duties, clubs, the Downley Diner hot lunches and general classroom support. We very much appreciate this help. Our school pond is looking amazing now and is ready to fill with rainwater and hopefully become a home to an interesting variety of wildlife. The Chiltern Society volunteers have worked extremely hard on this project along with staff, parents and children.

We now start every day with 'Wake and

Shake'. Five minutes of exercise moves for all the school – staff and pupils. The children love it and teachers have noticed a heightened awareness and enthusiasm to learn in the mornings.

We have been working hard for others as well. Year 2 children presented a wonderful Harvest Festival to other pupils, parents and local senior citizens. We supported Wycombe Homeless Connection, who came into school to give a very thought provoking assembly, by making up over a hundred 'Make A Difference' (MAD) bags of food for people in need.

Our joint Sing A Long with Maplewood School was just amazing. The event was to celebrate the Year of Communication and also to recognise the work of Rosie's Rainbow Fund – a charity very dear to many of us. We formed a human rainbow and sang and signed The Rainbow Song in Makaton. It was an extremely moving event. Mrs Megson thanked everyone on behalf of Rosie's Rainbow Fund. We raised £366 for this wonderful cause.

Our PA AGM/Coffee Morning in support of MacMillan Cancer Care Support raised a magnificent £304. It was attended very well and we had a fantastic variety of cakes that were donated – we have some very talented cooks in our school community.

Our sports teams are off to a great start with our Girls' football team coming third in a Saturday morning tournament held at Danesfield School; our Boys' football team winning their first league match against The Disraeli School; and the netball team in fine form winning a tournament at Wycombe High School.

Mrs Webb, Headteacher

News from the District

It is now, at the time of writing, five months since the local District elections and a good opportunity to highlight issues and give a brief outline of the plans going forward.

Firstly, the decision not to proceed with the new stadium and sporting facilities at Booker Airpark. It became clear that the proposals were not financially viable, the decision to halt work on the project was not going to please everybody but it was the right thing to do. A pledge was made however to engage with the sporting bodies around the district, and do what we can to maintain local sporting activities.

The plans for a replacement sports/leisure centre at Handy Cross are well underway and consultation is helping shape the final design. The Handy Cross site is also expected to contain a new bus/coach interchange, a re-located park-and-ride and first class offices. The running track and outdoor pitches have been found suitable alternative sites. The whole project will be self-funded so as not to result in an increase in the Council Tax as a result of the re-development.

By the time this edition of Village News is published the public consultation on the Town Centre Masterplan will be being analysed, before publishing the findings. We feel it is vitally important for High Wycombe to have a coherent town centre, bringing life back to Frogmoor, making shopping a pedestrian friendly experience, and at the same time ensuring that traffic can flow freely without the use of Abbey Way flyover. We will also open up parts of the River Wye enhancing the town centre even further.

At the recent Wycombe Business Expo, the Council launched a new website specifically designed as a guide to doing business in the



District - www.wycombeforbusiness.com.

To further support employment generation in the area, the Council is also supporting the creation of a Business Improvement District (BID), a partnership between the Council and local businesses.

In December, the housing stock owned and managed by WDC will transfer to the tenant led housing association Red Kite Community Housing (subject to Secretary of State approval). This transfer is a result of a significant effort from Council and the Red Kite Board following a ballot of Council Tenants.

Plans for a re-located Wycombe Museum have been proposed and are being finalised to open an improved facility, with a good reception area, a coffee shop, increased exhibition space and enhanced educational facilities.

Wycombe District Council is supporting the future sustainability of voluntary and community sector organisations within the District by making a one-off contribution to the Bucks Big Society Bank. Wycombe's contribution will be ring-fenced to organisations providing services to Wycombe District residents. The objective is to facilitate, encourage and support organisations within the voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors.

If you would like to discuss any of the above, or any other issues, concerns or ideas you can contact me at paul.turner@wycombe.gov.uk, telephone 07825 842292.

Best Wishes Paul Turner

Simply Walk

The Downley Simply Walk group continue to thrive and grow with 99 walkers, walking a total of 762 times - in just 6 months!

That's a lot of people making use of the wonderful countryside around Downley. If you haven't been out with them yet – why not give it a go? They meet every Monday morning at the Old School Community Centre in School Close, at 10.00am.

Following last year's successful Xmas buffet lunch, the Downley Simply Walkers will be holding another one on Monday 19th December, starting directly after the walk finishes, at around 11.45am. The price of £8 will be the same as last year and includes wine, tea and coffee plus live music. If anyone would like to be included, please inform one of the walk leaders.

Volunteer Walk Leaders are always needed! Regular, informal training sessions take place in High Wycombe usually running from 10am until 3pm. First Aid Training is also offered. Contact Fiona Broadbent on 01494 475367 simplywalks@buckscc.gov.uk for more details.



Full details for Simply Walk are available via the website at www.buckscc.gov.uk/simplywalk or contact Fiona.



The new season kicked off on Saturday 10th September 2011 and I am to report we are progressing well.

Our Under 6 age group has attracted 40+ new members from Early Years/Year 1 and our two new Coaches have been working hard introducing them all to the basics of football.

With the exception of the Under 16 age group, the Dynamos run teams from Under 7 up to Under 18 Youth and all age groups are well attended.

Phase 1 of the Mannings Field Car Park extension was completed at the end of September, providing hard standing for a further 20+ vehicles. The Downley Parish Council kindly provided half the funds for this project, for which we thank them. We are hoping to commence Phase 2 in Spring 2012, which will provide further parking facilities around the perimeter of Mannings Field. We will be relying on major fundraising, grants etc. in order to facilitate these works and will be organising events throughout the season.

I would like to wish everyone involved with the Club every success for the season ahead.

Fran Lazenby, Chairman

For more information and to join your local, friendly football club visit our website: www.downleydynamos.co.uk email: enquiries@downleydynamos.com

Downley Community Centre

Refurbishment under way

Building work for enhancements at the Downley Community Centre started on 26th September and is expected to last about 22 weeks.

The centre will stay fully open during this period and we will always endeavour to keep any disruption to the minimum. However there will be some restrictions and changes to how the building will be used during this time. Needless to say; all late afternoons and evenings will remain quiet!

There will be a reduction in the number of parking spaces at the front of the building whilst the contractor is on-site. Areas are fenced off solely for the builder's use both inside and outside the building at various times.

During refurbishment of the toilets, a temporary facility has been installed at the back of the building close to the rear entrance. The rear entrance to the building, close to the Chapel Street gate, is now the front entrance. Users who currently hold a front door key will find this also works with the rear door.



We want everyone to be as fully informed as possible on all aspects of the work. Please check for progress and news of any significant disruptions at www.downley.org or ask to be added to the weekly newsletter update by emailing bookings@downleycommunitycentre.org.uk

Downley Evening WI

Ladies! Cheer up those cold and miserable winter months. Come along to Downley Evening WI. We meet on the second Tuesday of each month at the Pastures Church Hall at 7.45pm.

At each meeting we have notices and a trade stall with books, toys and sometimes plants. There are home crafted cards to buy, in aid of Ian Rennie Hospice, and currently we have a light-hearted photo competition each month. We enjoy a Speaker and refreshments, often home made!

In the next couple of months we will have talks from a Paramedic and hear about 'the Humorous side of Nursing'. If you become a member you can join us on outings, at quiz evenings and additional gatherings to play Bridge, learn a new craft or discuss a poem or piece of prose.

So join us for a warm welcome we are very friendly and look forward to meeting you.

Rosemary Byrne Secretary
01494 535662

Magna Carta & Downley

Moving to live in a new community, the first thing to do, of course, is try out the local pubs. And I have to say that the beer in these parts is first class.

Le De Spencers Arms intrigued me to say the least. First and foremost it is a delightful place to eat and drink, but that French connection, with Latin undertones, is unusual. The Latin beneath the coat of arms is 'pro Magna Carta' (see photo). Before coming to live in Downley I worked for eleven years at Lincoln Cathedral and had the privilege of taking its original 1215 Magna Carta to the United States on a number of occasions. So you will understand my curiosity.

A bit of research, aided by kind locals, showed that the 1st Baron Le Despencer (1223-1265) married Aline, daughter of Sir Philip Basset of Wycombe. Sir Francis Dashwood, his successor as 15th Baron Le Despencer, owned much land around West Wycombe and the family mausoleum is located there. So the Le De Spencer (or Despencer) connection is clear. But what of Magna Carta?

My research on this has come up with a blank so I can only speculate. The 1st Baron lived at the time of Henry III, King John's son. Magna Carta had been forced on John but subsequently he reneged on his acceptance of its terms. So when he died, his young son Henry was under great pressure from the Barons to re-issue it, which he did in 1217. The 1st Baron was born shortly after this and would have lived his life at a time when Magna Carta



was iconic as a hedge against the power of kings. So 'pro Magna Carta' would have been a clear statement of where and with whom he stood on this important matter. That's my guess, but I would be delighted to hear from anyone with better knowledge.

Finally, 15 June 2015 is the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta being forced on King John at Runnymede. Great celebrations are being planned on both sides of the Atlantic and it is interesting to know that Downley has a connection, however distant, with this momentous period in our history.

Roy Bentham

Le Despencer - Origins

The name derives from the Norman French meaning Steward.

The first known was Robert Le Despencer in the time of William the Conqueror.

A lady once rang the pub to ask if the name was after Lady Di. She must have overheard one of the locals saying they were going "Over the Top to Lude Spencers."

Memories of Bradenham

A recent visit to Bradenham Manor with the Downley Gardening Club brought back memories of a boyhood spent in this locality.

Standing on the high ground with that lovely view of the village and surrounds, I began to reminisce of the times when I was a lad living at 25 Pictonville which is now Bradenham Road. Pictonville came about through Benny Picton who had a large greengrocers on the corner of Bridge Street. He then diversified into building houses for rental which as time went on, most of the tenants were able to buy. They had something you don't see so much of today and that was a walk-in pantry which came in handy when the air raid sirens sounded during the war years and we all sat in there until the all-clear sounded. It was also a hiding place when the rent man was in the road as times were a bit hard in those days.

From 10 to 13 years of age I busied myself in and around Bradenham making a few shillings doing numerous little jobs. My Dad was a Sidesman in the Church which meant I had to attend the 11am service, followed by Sunday School at 2 pm and then the 7 pm Evening Service. I was also in the choir and quite often had to pump the organ which Miss James played. Apart from the religious aspect this gave me a chance to make a bob or two as we were paid a shilling a month as a choirboy and an extra 9 pence if you pumped the organ. Mrs Tempest who then owned the Manor, once a year gave a party for the choirboys and all the local children, and those were the days when the grounds were pristine and inside the house was as one would expect a grand house to be — trophy heads of animals, spears and lances



almost covered the whole wall as you went up the first stairs, quite something.

Just a few fields away is the Rectory with a big courtyard and a large walled garden, as well as a couple of stables.. The Reverend Hughes was the first vicar I recall living there, and after him Mr and Mrs Martin and their Auntie, Lady Oldham. They were well off, employing a housekeeper and a maid. Their car was a lovely big green Armstrong Sidley automatic, which many of us children got to ride in - he was quite generous in giving people lifts. I did numerous jobs at the Rectory six days a week which included getting in the coal and logs for the fire in the dining room, cleaning all the shoes which numbered many pairs sweeping the steps and the porch. I then went along Top Lane, as it was then called to collect two gills of milk from Smiths farmhouse, and when I got back I had to fetch a peach from the tree which grew along the wall when in season. Lady Oldham had one each morning with a slice of thinly buttered bread with the crust cut off. She was rather frail. I was paid one shilling and sixpence a week for my little jobs and once done, I was back home by 8.30 am to get ready for school. There were no convoys of cars taking kiddies to school in those days, we had to walk almost a mile to West Wycombe School, mostly across the fields

and over the stile down to the school, the only exception being if it rained we caught the double decker bus to the Pedestal, but still had to walk along through the village and up to the school. Danny, more often than not, was the bus conductor and he had a space between his top front teeth from which he could spit up to five yards, which he often demonstrated!

During the war, loads of people moved out of London to the country and the Libbermans took the house next door. They had a dry cleaning business in Wycombe and also kept chickens in their back garden. I got the job of feeding the chickens and I also cleaned them out once a week for which I was paid a shilling and sixpence. They also liked mushrooms straight from the field for which I charged a shilling and three pence a bag.

Half way up the village, Daphne Bristow kept the post office but that disappeared as many others did then the GPO had their clear out. Further up the road is the white house where Admiral Silver once lived, and each morning he would go for a run around the village green and start by jumping the 5 bar gate by placing only one hand on the top bar, then over he would go — not bad for a 90 year old! The cricket pitch was popular and the surrounding villages and Bradenham always fielded a good side, which included Diddy Didcot who was a good spin bowler and quite a character — he was easily recognisable by his ruddy complexion and the bulges in the knees of his trousers which had never seen an iron. Baggy West was another character who owned the saw mill just along the road as you come to Saunderton. He got his name through his baggy trousers which also had a row with his boots as they were about five inches too short. He had the big wood lorry which

would often be seen on the road carrying the big beech tree trunks along to the mill to be sawn into planks. The tree tops were no use to the furniture factories so you could buy one for half a crown and once cut up, would give all the firewood you would need for a whole year. Sid North was the local gamekeeper and lived in the house adjacent to the school. He could lay the loveliest hedge you would ever lay eyes on, it would finish no more than four feet high with a woven finish at the top and the branches below all evenly inclined to the right. The Pictonville hedge ran from the end house down to the bridge, which took the best part of a week to do but when finished, you were looking at a work of art. A ditch ran alongside and was full of water for most of the year.

If you walked up beside the Manor wall you came to the Common, with several flint cottages on the right which are still there. A short distance on was Annie Wingrove's bungalow from which you could buy bottles of pop, sweets and packets of broken crisps which were a real bargain in that the packets were stuffed full and were almost a meal. She also kept chickens and sold eggs as well — I wonder if any of you remember Annie?

Bradenham and surrounds was a lovely old village and still is, and not too much has changed over the years. It still, like most villages, has its own pub, the cricket pitch, flint cottages, the church and the Manor.

There is evidence that the Saxons lived at Bradenham a thousand years ago. The name 'Bradenham' is a corruption of BRADEN-HAM — three Saxon words meaning 'broad-dene-home'. A home on a broad valley, a delightful way of describing this beautiful village — what a treasure.

Ken Thompson

The Furniture Industry In Downley

We were not aware in the 1930s of the hard times that our parents were having at that time. Short time working in the chair trade was a yearly event, and except for a few engineering businesses, and the building trade, furniture making was the major business and employer in the area. Of course many families were still bearing the loss of the men that were killed and wounded in the Great War, so many men from such a small village.

We had three furniture makers in the village. Mines & West at the top of Narrow Lane made high quality furniture which I think sold in the fashionable London stores. They employed machinists, makers, polishers, and highly skilled wood carvers.

Another firm was Norman Spriggs. Everybody knew him as 'Fiddle'. I'm sure that was no reflection on his honesty. He had this massive three story wooden building, (just behind where the hair salon now stands) and when the wind blew it creaked and groaned as if it was haunted, an eerie place to be in if you were an impressionable youngster. He specialised in upholstery I believe.

The last factory was R&H Mines next to the Old School, and it was fascinating to look through the window and see the machinery working, and the wood turners work their lathes, with great showers of shavings seemingly flying everywhere. They manufactured chairs, and I can still visualise Mr. Styles walking down the wooden staircase from the polishing shop with chairs in his hand ready for dispatch. I remember somewhere about 1932 that the factory caught fire. Apparently one of the paraffin lamps had exploded, but it created great excitement in the village and everyone rushed to see it. What struck me as funny, and I still remember, is the spouts of water

This is an extract from 'My Story', a memoir written by Joe Bowler who has lived all his life in Downley

which were coming out of the firemen's leaking hosepipe, and my concern that the school might burn down.

There were several individual craftsmen working in their sheds or workshops. My granddad used to finish off the roughly machined backrests of the Windsor chair known as a Smoker Bow. He took great pride in the finish of these and we had to take the greatest care in carrying them across to R&H Mines. I can still remember the smell of the glue pot that used to stand on the wood burning stove in his little workshop. This consisted of a metal pot partly filled with water, and the glue pot fitted down into the water which when heated up, melted the cow heel glue. A piece of cane beaten flat at one end made a form of brush for applying the glue.

Another man that we all used to know well was Mr Collins who lived in what we called Bottle Cottage, in Plomer Green Lane. His specialty was to finish the back legs of a type of chair. Why we got to know him so well was because he would sometimes have some "back feet" that were not good enough to finish, but they made super runners for a sledge. A rub down with a bit of sandpaper, a coating of lard or paraffin, and they would allow you to speed down the banks of the Common. We all liked Mr Collins and his wife, they were gentle and very nice folk.



**To read
more of Joe's
memoir access
the Downley
web site
downley.org**

Downley Ancestors

Nearly 30 years ago I moved away from this area, about 60 or so miles only to find that within four years I knew I had to come back. This is home. Since then and after researching my family history I realised just how much a sense of belonging to a place means more for me than simply just living somewhere.



Some people find it easy to settle into new places they may move to, to settle down and become part of the community, but previous generations of mine all living in this area has certainly got something to do with the real sense I feel of being at home, I feel comfortable living here, and would never want to move away permanently again.

As far back as I can trace, the majority of my paternal ancestors have moved up and down what is now the A40 (London Road) between West Wycombe and Wooburn. The earliest reliably recorded direct ancestors are back in Wooburn in the early 1600s, the earliest Turner record is of my 7x Great Grandfather and Mother being married at West Wycombe Church on 14th December 1783. His name was Edward Turner born c1750, and her name was Elizabeth Beesley, baptised on 26th June 1761 at West Wycombe. At this time most of Downley was part of West Wycombe Parish, and depending on where exactly you lived in Downley, the local Parish church was either West Wycombe or Hughsden.

I have no evidence as to where Edward was brought up, but after their marriage the couple settled in High Wycombe and went on to have nine children and at least 33 grandchildren. Most were furniture makers, but one was a baker in White Hart Street and two others made the army their career, they served in the Bucks Militia and one continued until pensioned off at the age of 70!

My paternal Grandmother's family have

left more evidence of their early lives. Her Mother was a Joynson and the Joynson family originally came down from Cheshire in the 1770's, settling in West Wycombe. There were a few inter-family marriages (they were quite wealthy lace merchants and this often happened, keeping the money in the family). One of the descendants of the original Joynson was farming at Plummers Hill Farm, leased from the Dashwood estate. John Joynson and Elizabeth Fenner who married at West Wycombe on 23rd April 1808 and were my 4x Great Grandparents, were at the farm between about 1813 and 1833. Their first born died in infancy and the place of abode on the burial register is given as Littleworth, Downley.

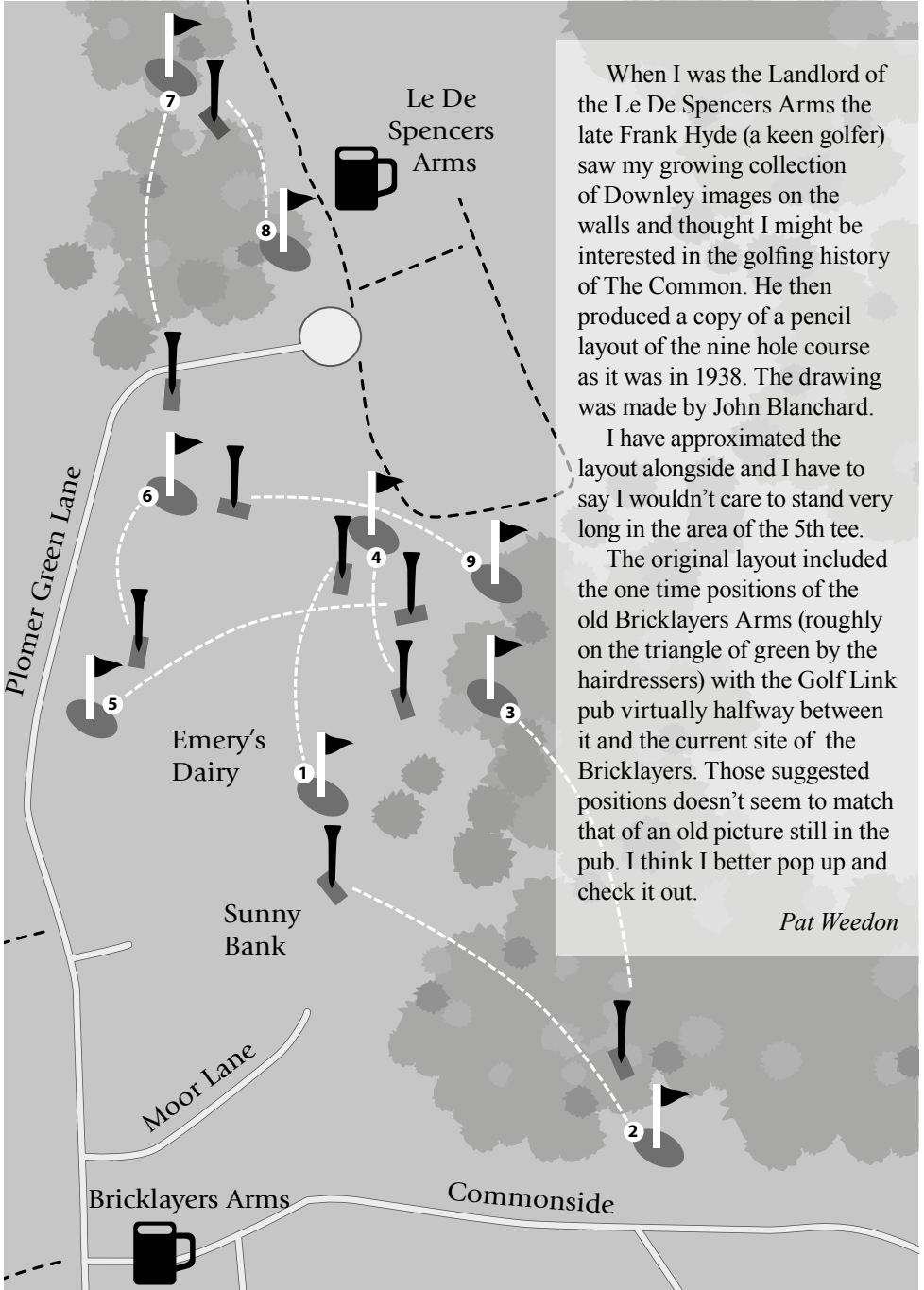
At the Downley War Memorial Hall there is a Joynson mentioned as one of the fallen of the 1st World War. William John Joynson is my 1st Cousin 3 times removed. He served in the King's Royal Rifles 16th Bn (Church Lads Brigade) and was only 19 when he was killed in a battle near Arras in France on 23rd April 1917.

This is a brief introduction to my family and I hope to bring you further instalments (links to the furniture factories; the paper-making fortune; teetotal publicans; my family connections with Mines and West; and a suspicious death at Fryers Mill).

For now, best wishes.

*Paul Turner
District Councillor for Downley & Plomer Hill*

Golfing Links



The Return of J.Heartycough's Horticultural Hints

Wal, me old mates, some of you have been wondering where I've been for the last few years...wal, it's like this, I thought it was time to do a bit of travelling, pick up somebody else's horticultural hints.

So off I went...but do you know there's a lot of strange places, and even stranger people out there... and the strangest of all was just the other side of the common... Nappel they call it. Wal, I tried my best over there, but, blow me down, they grow their stuff in very odd ways. So I thought to myself, get back to home territory, so to speak, where carrots are yellow, tommy toes red, and spinach green.

Wal, so I got back into the good old Downley ways...then I had this thought, after chatting to me mates up at Jubilee Alloments, (that 's the way it's spelt, in case any clever Dick thinks different), that some of you incomers might be in need of some good advice. So read on, concentrate, and all will be well for all your flowers, fruit and veg. (I hope!). First of all, remember it's the autumn, and Downley is on a wind swept hill. So protect all your little plants, you never know when Jack Frost will strike, helped along by winds from the north, which is where Nappel is, need I say more?

If you want to get something planted for the spring, get some of them over wintering onion sets, plant them where the spuds were, if you had any, and just let them alone, apart from a little weeding. Also get some broad beans a-going, best in seed boxes first, then plant them out when about 2" tall. If you plant them direct the mice will get them. It's been really dry so water any pots regular like, and any veg already in, like Brussels, kale, chard and so on. My Brussels, even in a debris netting tunnel, has clouds of them white fly things,

so I blast them with a big bicycle pump water squirter thing I got in Wycombe at the pound shop...mind you,

I don't get to Wycombe much, a funny place, fancy turning the old Red Lion hotel into a shop, Disraeli and Churchill spoke there to the Wycombe folk, standing by the lion, I can't think that Lord Cameron would do that, standing on the pound shop. Wal, perhaps he would now, with the country in the mess it's supposed to be in!

Wal, that's it for now, send in questions or comments, I'd love to hear from you... as long as it's nothing to do about Nappel.

Signing off...

*J.Heartycough
See you up the plot*



Downley. A Digital Frontier?

Nigh on twenty years ago I moved in to Downley.

In those twenty years I have been instrumental in covering up military mistakes, overseeing advanced military manoeuvres with advanced weaponry, challenging demon hordes, running a rogue government assassin, protecting the world from evil sorcerers, developing an intergalactic space station, been on adventures with monkeys, tested furry toys to destruction, helped polar bears overcome multi-national conglomerates and played with toxic substances which should have been left in the laboratory. Some laudable achievements, some questionable I grant you, but such is the life of a video game developer.

My name is Graeme Monk, video game industry veteran and co-founder of Eiconic Games. Eiconic Games is a group of five tight-knit, highly talented and experienced individuals developing games for the PlayStation®3, Xbox360 and smart devices such as iPhone and Android. We are a unique blend of developers who operate a distributed development model; we all work remotely from home and are spread across the country. Depending on the size of the project we draft in help from colleagues within the industry or outsource to larger companies, it is not unknown for us to be collaborating globally. As such, Eiconic Games make up a small part of the UK game development industry; one of the UK's highest expanding sectors contributing approximately £1bn annually to the UK

Gross Domestic Product.

Most would think that I spend my days sitting on the couch playing games – if only. We face different challenges on a daily basis with each project bringing its own blend of problems. Games are generally germinated on a piece of paper, sketching out fun ideas of gameplay. From there we develop a working prototype aiming to demonstrate how the game would look and play, showing off the early features that make the game unique. Once the project is 'greenlit' we then proceed to production, populating the game with different environments and levels. Generally we will turn a game around in six to nine months during which we design, produce and evaluate all of the programming, artwork, music, sound effects and, most importantly, the gameplay to ensure that the product we release is something we're proud of.

So the next time you turn on your PlayStation®3 or Xbox360, pop into the PlayStation®Network or Xbox Live Arcade and give something like Mercury Hg or Polar Panic a go. And you never know, the game you'll be playing in a couple of months might just contain a small part of Downley.

Graeme Monk



Christmas Cheese Board

Les Root, proprietor of Roots Delicatessen has been championing traditional and artisan cheese for seventeen years.

I am a real humbug when it comes to the marketing hype of Christmas, it must be an age thing. I cannot understand why the multiples find it necessary to bombard with us with Christmas Merchandise from August onwards. They will, of course, say that's what the customer wants, but do we? A straw poll of my customers, especially the male of the species, would suggest otherwise. The obvious reason being to maximise sales, but does it? I have a sneaking suspicion that an extended 'in your face' Christmas promotion may cause customers to resent the hype and discourage Christmas sales. Regrettably us independents have little choice but to follow the big boys,

hopefully with a little more feeling and trying to evoke a true Spirit of a more traditional Christmas.

That's enough of my grumble. Christmas is a great time to enjoy the company of friends and fine foods.

I am a great fan of English Artisan cheeses but perhaps a little continental influence on the Christmas cheese board may add variety so here is my choice:

Brebis matured for 12 months
Vacherin Monte D'or
Colston Basset Stilton
Perl Wen.

If English is your choice then:

Goulds or Montgomery Cheddar
Waterloo (A local cheese)
Barkham Blue (A national champion from just south of Reading)
Windrush or Cerney. (Crumbly goats cheeses from Gloucestershire.)

Over 40% of all Stilton produced is sold over Christmas so it takes little mathematical skill to realise that the production peak has to be levelled out and consequently some Stiltons have been in a deep chill for quite a time causing the cheese to dry and become crumbly, so ask for it to be cut from a cheese and not pre-packed.

Wherever you buy your Christmas provisions remember a little of a great flavour is immeasurably more pleasing than a surfeit of no taste.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Peaceful New Year



*Les Root
Roots-Delicatessen*



Pride of Bucks



Abi age 10 has been made a finalist in the “Pride of Bucks” awards on a story she wrote about Downley Common.

I like Downley Common because it is good for playing, riding your bike and walking dogs.

We should keep it clean because if a dog was around and was to eat the rubbish on the floor, the dog would fall ill. Another reason is because a child could trip over and cut and bruise him/herself.

The Common could be kept clean because people like children, adults and the elderly could pick up rubbish and throw it in the bin. If anyone thinks throwing rubbish on the ground is all right then think again before you do throw rubbish on the ground.

Every year in October there is a bonfire night and everyone goes to the big lantern, queues up and gets their little lantern to

carry up to the bonfire to throw in the fire.

Another event is in July every year on the 16th there is a concert with 80s music in, there are burgers and hotdogs you can buy as well.

The final event is Downley day on the 18th of June. There are loads of fun games, the circus comes and the Downley brownies and Downley guides set up stalls.

Downley Common is at the end of Downley right next to Commonsie Road.

Downley Common By Abigail Eldridge

Good luck to Abi in the finals where she may win some equipment for her school.

Cressex Community School

Residents of Downley may be aware of a campaign organised by a group of local parents against the inclusion of Downley into the catchment area of the Cressex Community School as they consider the school does not give their children the opportunities that alternative catchment schools can provide.

You can check if your postcode is included in the catchment by going to www.buckscc.gov.uk/bcc/schools/ea_school_postcode_checker.page?

This follows an open letter from David Hood, the headmaster of Cressex School, published in the Village News in October of last year, in which he made a plea for parents to judge the school on its merits.

Evidence of the school's performance as judged by Ofsted is available at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/110500> and the 2011 league tables are at http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special/education/school_tables/secondary/10/html/825.stm.

Parents can use this information to make their own minds up.

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Computer & Internet Facilities

The library has two computers for Members use, both with Internet connection. This facility is free. We also have a copier/printer available, the charges are 10p for a monochrome and 25p for a colour print.

School Curriculum

The library has many non-fiction children's books that cover the present school curriculum. Why not come along and have a look at our selection. If we haven't got the book you need we will do our best to get it in for you.



Poets Corner

My Feathered Friend

By *Edna Bavister*

He'd come rushing down the garden
With all the strength he could muster
And land upon my doorstep
Like a worn out feather duster.
He was the poorest specimen
That I have ever seen.
He'd try to preen his feathers
But there were not enough to preen.

He'd come and ask for currants
In his own inimitable way.
The time he took them from my hand
It really made my day.
He'd come into the kitchen
And get into quite a huff
If I wasn't there to greet him,
My poor old blackbird named 'Scruff'.

I knew that he was getting old
He became slower and unsteady.
I couldn't accept his end was nigh
I really wasn't ready.
I'll never forget that September day
He just sat around and slept.
He seemed to want to be near me
I tried to help but was inept.
He drank a little water
That I held to his beak.
He tried to fly up to the bird bath
But he'd gotten far to weak.
Then he summoned up some energy
And hopped off out of sight.

I searched all round the garden
And hoped with all my might
That I would find his resting place
So that I could say goodbye.
He's probably gone to that great big nest
Up somewhere in the sky.

I did enjoy our friendship
So sad it had to end
I miss you oh! So very much
My little feathered friend.
Be not afraid to shed a tear.
'Cos I've cried about a bucketful
Since old Scruff did disappear.



Downley

By *Kathleen Avery*

**Born in Downley on 21st March 1899
and died on Boxing Day 1986**

How I love dear Downley
With her hills and valley green
No matter what the season
Still beautiful she seems
The Chapel in the valley
On Sunday sweetly rings
With the sound of village voices
Singing good old English hymns
The winding path o'er hillside
Soon mingles with the green,
Where golden gorse and purple heather
With their rich colours gleam
When my days on Earth are over
And Downley I must leave
To all who love her as I did
To these I'll her bequeath.

Technical Support At Your Service

Dear Tech Support,

Last year I upgraded from Boyfriend to Husband and noticed a distinct slowdown in overall system performance, particularly in the flower and jewellery applications, which operated flawlessly under Boyfriend.

In addition, Husband uninstalled many other valuable programmes, such as Romance and Personal Attention and then installed undesirable programs such as Rugby, Football, Sailing and Continuous TV. Conversation no longer runs, and Housecleaning simply crashes the system. I've tried running Nagging to fix these problems, but to no avail.

What can I do?

Signed, Desperate

Dear Desperate,

First keep in mind, Boyfriend is an Entertainment Package, while Husband is an Operating System. Please enter the command: 'http: I Thought You Loved Me.html' and try to download Tears. Don't forget to install the Guilt update. If that application works as designed,

Husband should then automatically run the applications Jewellery and Flowers, but remember - overuse of the above application can cause Husband to default to Grumpy Silence, Garden Shed or Beer. Beer is a very bad program that will download the Snoring Loudly Beta.

Whatever you do, DO NOT install Mother-in-law (it runs a virus in the background that will eventually seize control of all your system resources). Also, do not attempt to reinstall the Boyfriend program. These are unsupported applications and will crash Husband.

In summary, Husband is a great system, but it does have limited memory and cannot learn new applications quickly. It also tends to work better running one task at a time. You might consider buying additional software to improve memory and performance. We recommend Food and Hot Lingerie.

Good Luck!

Tech Support

Roadworks around Downley

This letter was sent to B.C.C./TfB. as the D.P.C. response to an open invitation to all Town and Parish Councils from TfB prior to the above Scrutiny Review taking place on 27th and 28th October.

Dear Mr. Cahill,

Please find enclosed comments from Downley Parish Council in respect of the above review.

(a) Improved consultation required between the parish council and TfB particularly in respect of the prioritisation of highway road surfacing. Although, the amended policy decision following the 2011 elections is very welcome, there are still occasions such as the recent complete resurfacing of a 30 metre cul de sac, Taylors Turn, off Grays Lane that appear to have little justification, when the area in Grays Lane (Route 31 bus route) from Bowler Lea to Plomer Green Avenue, which the parish council had as their top priority for 2011/2012 has still not been repaired. This stretch of highway was badly damaged over 3 years ago, during the construction of the Care Home in Langley Close by Castle Oak Ltd and should have been repaired at the beginning of the new way of working in 2010.

(b) In respect of the recent developments at the bottom of Plomer Hill, regarding the installation of concrete blocks, traffic light sequencing, etc. the general dissatisfaction from within the Downley community is the total disrespect shown by TfB, in particular the lack of communications to residents concerning the changes to the junction with West Wycombe Road. When it is considered that there over 2,150 houses and 4,000 electors affected by the changes and that the results have led to children being late for school, buses unable to pass on the bridge, surely people deserve better treatment. The least they deserve is an explanatory letter to each household in an understandable format, together with a timetable of future works affecting Plomer Hill traffic and the programmed works for the Chapel Lane junction with West Wycombe Road.

It is not unreasonable to request that a further traffic study be carried by TfB at the bottom of Plomer Hill so that the results of the above changes can be closely monitored and a report sent to the parish council. Obviously this would need to be done between 7.15 a.m. and 8.45 a.m. in school term time.

(c) Closer monitoring and co-ordination with utility suppliers of energy, e.g. gas, water and electricity is required. On 24th October, a gas company arrived at the junction of The Pastures and Plomer Hill, installed a 3 way temporary traffic lights system, then proceeded to dig up a very recently tarmacked surface completed by a different utilities provider.

Surely, there should be a central point of contact within TfB for all utilities that would co-ordinate the work schedules in any given area which would obviously help to alleviate such waste of public money.

Yours sincerely,

C.G. Hamilton. Clerk to Downley Parish Council

Door-to-door collections

Did you recently receive a bag through your door for a breast cancer “charity”. I wonder if you read all the small print?

When these different companies started collecting in the village some years back I contacted my Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator and pointed out that some weren't genuine charities. They used a logo similar to a genuine one or, as in the case of one firm, part of the BHF logo so that it looked like one of their collections. That recent one had a pink ribbon to make it look like a genuine breast cancer charity collection. I notice that some neighbours are still filling bags for these companies and wonder if they realise that all is not as it might appear. Do you read the small print and decide if the logo etc is genuine. I phoned the BHF when this all started and they were aware of the problem. In fact their van drivers often found that they were following another (bogus) van which was being used in order to steal the donations for BHF. I also contacted the police who were sort of interested and “would let their PCSOs know so that they could keep their eyes open if they were on the right street at the right time on the right collection day”!

At the time of writing the latest flyer to drop on the mat is from a firm which pays for donations. If you feel you get a good deal and make a few pounds then that is fine. But they have been prosecuted for stealing other collection bags and it appears they don't always pay up or the amount which they advertise. There is much to read on the internet if you have 5 or 10 minutes and they were mentioned on TV during the summer.

If you read the small print on the “breast cancer charity” collection bag mentioned above you will have learned that the donations would help women in Lithuania but I wonder how much of the proceeds end up in research.

I wonder if you feel the same way as I do about these collections. The suspect firms often claim to be providing employment in this country in order to gain credence. I prefer to donate only to genuine charities who we know are funding research. What do you think?

Harry Wheate.

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news@downley.org

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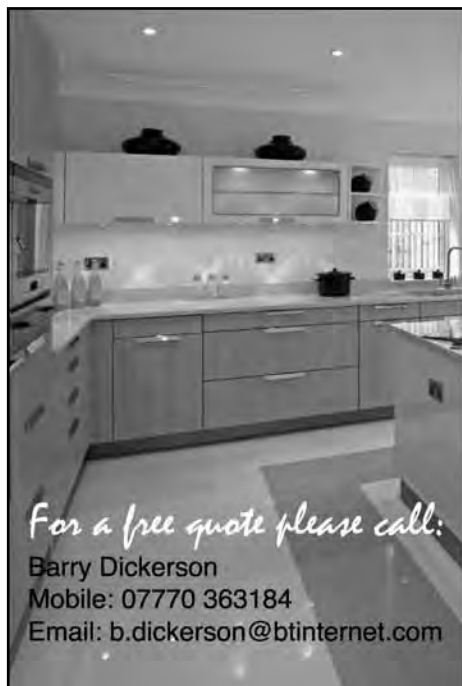
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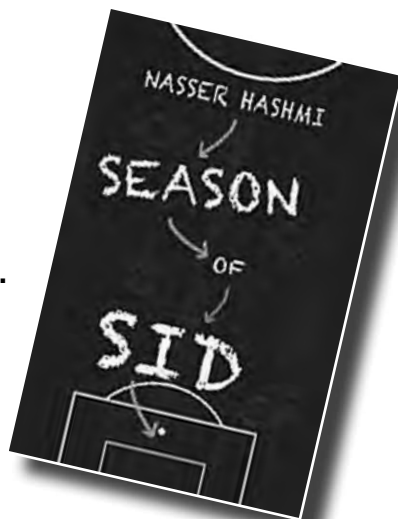
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Expensive and dear
Chances are sure
Much ends up on the floor*

~

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Yes that is soot*

~

*However don't despair
Or pull out your hair
Let me do the toil
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~

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Then never to be seen*

~

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2011*

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Credits

Editor

The Village News is currently edited by an editorial team drawn from the Downley Communications Forum. A volunteer is sought for the permanent position of Editor. Contact:

info@downley.org

Layout

Pat Weedon at *news@downley.org*

Correspondent

Christine Audcent *news@downley.org*

Advertising

Contact Clive Beard by email at: *adverts@downley.org* or on 01494 438147

Distribution

Coordinated by Des Ryan. Volunteers to deliver locally are always needed.

If interested contact Des on:

desmond.ryan@tiscali.co.uk or 01494 520938

Rates

Full Page £40 | Half Page £25 | Quarter Page £15

Steering Committee

The Downley Communications Forum set up as part of the Community Plan, provides oversight to the Village News, the Village enews and the *downley.org* website.

Chairman Bill Thompson

Secretary Peter Loadman

Treasurer Clive Beard

Web Admin Mark Starkey

Deadlines and Copy

The Village News is published quarterly in November, February, May and August. The deadline for adverts and copy for the next issue is 31 Jan 2012. Please send text in editable format such as *.txt, *.rtf, *.doc, .docx. Photographs to accompany the text should be sent in as high a resolution as possible in any common graphics format. Copy should be sent to *news@downley.org*. Any copy or photographs sent to this address may also be used on the *downley.org* website.

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Downley Diary *Please visit Downley.org for all the latest and up to date events and news.*

Nov	26th	St James Church Children's Arty Party
	26th	St James Church Christmas Bazaar
	26th	The Wedge at Le De Spencer Arms
	27th	Woodlands Pre-School Christmas Fayre
Dec	2nd	Gardening Talk at Pastures Church
	3rd	Downley School Christmas Fayre
	4th	St James Family Communion Service
	4th	DCPS Working Party on the Common
	6th	Downley Village Evening WI meeting Community Centre
	10th	Mince Pies and Aircraft Industries at The War Memorial Hall
	10th	Get Rhythm at Le De Spencer Arms
	11th	Super Star Nativity Gift Service at Pastures Church
	11th	St James Christingle Service
	13th	Parish Council meeting
	13th	Downley Evening WI Pastures Church Hall
	16th	End of school Winter term
	16th	Downley Wine and Beer Club meeting Community Centre
	16th	Christmas Celebration at Pastures Church
	20th	Theatre Group Carol concert Christchurch, Oxford
	21st	Carol Singing - Jubilee Green. Mince Pies - Community Centre
	24th	St James Tree Dressing Service
	24th	Christingle Service at Pastures Church
	24th	St James Midnight Mass
	25th	Nativity with Carols celebration at Pastures Church
	25th	St James Holy Communion
	31st	New Years Eve Lighting the Beacon on Commonside
Jan	1st	St James Holy Communion
	1st	DCPS Working Party on the Common
	3rd	Downley Village Evening WI meeting Community Centre
	4th	School Starts, Spring term 2012 4 January 2012
	6th	Theatre Group Trip To Pantomime 'Cinderella', Wycombe Swan
	9th	NEW Young People's Group at the St James Vicarage weekly from today
	10th	Parish Council meeting at the War Memorial Hall
	10th	Downley Evening WI
	11th	Downley Wine and Beer Club meeting - Sticky Wines