

IWERNE MINSTER NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2024 – JANUARY 2025

FIRST SNOW COMES TO BROOKMAN VALLEY



UPDATE ON THE PLAYPARK

A Village Playpark update will be held on: Saturday January 11th from 10.30am-12.30pm in the Village Club.

After reviewing 90 children's and 82 adults' questionnaires, we are delighted to tell you that we are very close to a final design for the Iwerne Minster children's play park. Thank you to everyone who took the time and effort to fill in the questionnaire. A fantastic 95% of you are in favour of the play park being upgraded. When completed, our exciting new play park will, once again, become a fabulous asset for the village.

We have taken on board the main desire for a variety of equipment that offers adventurous and imaginative play. With your highest priority for children aged between 5-12 years but not ignoring

our biggest kid at 56 years and our youngest at just months old!

We look forward to seeing you on the January 11th, where you can view the new design.

Kerry O'Connor

IWERNE MINSTER OPEN GARDENS EVENT 2025

An Open Gardens event is planned for the weekend of the 28th/29th June 2025. If you would like to open your garden to the public to support this event please contact Dianne Benfield. If you are new to the village and would like more information about this event, please contact either Dianne Benfield on 01747 811507 or Sue Le Prevost on 01747 812173. (See page 8 for pictures of Open Gardens 2018 in all its glory.)

HIS MAJESTY'S LORD-LIEUTENANT OF DORSET RETIRES



Angus Campbell, who has been His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Dorset, is our neighbour and has been a regular fixture at events in the village such as the Jubilee celebrations. Now after more than a decade as the late Queen's and now King Charles' representative, he is taking a well-earned rest.

Angus Campbell has long associations with Dorset. Although born in London, he moved to Charlton Marshall as a child and then to Shroton where his parents ran a small holding and where Angus learned to love the outdoor life and the land. After two years in his early twenties working in New Zealand for the Auckland Herd Improvement Association where he also learned to fly at Rotorua airport, Angus returned to the UK. Although he enjoyed life in New Zealand, he missed the rich historical associations of Great Britain. On his return, he joined the Army Air Corps and served in various areas: Germany, Northern Ireland, Canada and Cyprus. When he left the Army Air Corps after five years, he was a member of the T.A. for a further two years.

Angus' retirement from active service took him back to Dorset and Preston Hill Farm whose one hundred acres of land had been bought by his parents. As well as running the farm, Angus took an

active interest in local politics and his list of appointments is long and impressive: a stint on Iwerne Minster Parish Council, four years as a Conservative councillor representing Blandford at County Hall, and then as both leader and deputy leader of the Dorset District Council, sixteen years of service in total.

And then, finally, after more years spent farming, came the offer of the Lord-Lieutenancy, a chance for Angus to support the Royal Family. He saw his army service as an advantage; he was at ease in uniforms. He also delighted in the opportunity it gave him to put people in touch with each other, especially volunteers. His focus ranged much wider than chaperoning the Royals around county events though he was clearly a real expert in this area having welcomed Royals to Dorset no less than 43 times. He established the Lord-Lieutenant's Fund for Young and Talented which gives talented young sports people opportunities to shine which they otherwise could not afford. He has also been responsible for presenting medals and awards and for choosing Dorset citizens to attend national and royal events.

Angus has worked tirelessly for a decade, leaving behind him a legacy of service of which he can certainly be proud. He certainly deserves a long retirement in the beautiful surroundings of the Iwerne Valley which he knows so well.

Monique Goodliffe

TO SAY THANK YOU!

It was unfortunate my not being able to attend the recent Village Club AGM and Dutch Supper for this would have been addressed to you then.

Having broken a wrist, for several months now I have been splendidly cared for, cossetted, fussed over and made to feel rather special by so many of you. Without unstinting kindnesses and such attention, it would not have been possible for me to keep appointments at various hospitals and clinics, to have been on the mend so swiftly or indeed been able to turn up for the occasional jolly. Without, too, this pervading sense of community in our village, the days would have been less easy and long indeed. Visitors, phone calls and emails were so numerous that they amounted to a fan club making mine a much extended Fifteen Minutes of Fame.

There is no need for me to enumerate the sources of such generosity of spirit – you will know who you are – and now I say thank you again to every one of you.

Dot Hinchliffe

NEWS FROM THE CLUB



The Italian Dinner Night in October was a great success. There is a report of it below. Our thanks to those involved who helped organise it.



It was followed in November by the AGM & Dutch Supper. Although attendance was down, the business was quickly concluded and the members enjoyed a delicious supper. The Chairman reported on a successful and happy year, emphasising what a happy, sociable lot we are and how everyone helps with our activities. Rod reported a sound financial year and was thanked by the chairman, as was the Committee, for their hard work over the year. Much work has been done to further improve our facilities and Richard Andrews was thanked for his expert work in this area. Penny reminded everyone that the club is well used with Table Tennis, Snooker, Pilates, Circuit Training and Panto Rehearsals taking place every week. It is also being hired out for private functions. Don't forget, it is there to be used. Panto Rehearsals are in "full swing" – make a note of the performance dates: February 27th and 28th and March 1st, 2025.

Penny Marsh

A FIRST FOR THE VILLAGE CLUB!

A group of us got together and held an Italian Evening to raise funds for the club-house restorations - what a success! The hall was transformed with decorations and gentle lighting, people arrived to a medley of Italian songs and music, olives and breadsticks. This was followed by a delicious menu of minestrone soup, lasagne with

salad and garlic bread all rounded off with mouthwatering desserts of Tiramisu or Amaretti cheesecake and coffee with biscotti. The team of cooks did a splendid job both cooking and serving, with all plates delivered to tables by superb waiters - and collected up, ready for a very proficient team of two who loaded the dishwasher and did a huge amount of hand washing! A thoroughly enjoyable evening enjoyed by everyone who attended. A huge thank you to all who helped in so many different ways.

On that note of fine dining in the Village - the annual Christmas Dinner will be held in Abingdon Hall on Tuesday 10th December 6.30pm for 7.00pm. Tickets at £20 each are available from the Village Shop. This is a popular event and numbers are limited so buy your tickets while they are still available!

Thinking ahead to the Summer Show 2025, one of the subjects for the Photography section is Fungi. Now is the time to look out for splendid specimens, so get out your cameras!

Sue Le Prevost

CHRISTMAS TREES FOR SALE AT OASIS PLANT CENTRE

If you need traditional Christmas trees for this year's celebrations, may I remind you that they will be available from the Oasis Plant Centre (in Child Okeford) from 9.00am on Wednesday 27th November...so please make a note somewhere! We will have a good stock of traditional Nordmann firs in a range of sizes and we should also have a few small (1-2ft) pot grown trees. Should you have a need for an extra tall tree - say 10ft+ - please let us know as we may well still be able to order you something suitable.

Please try not to leave it until the last minute but come over to get your tree at the earliest opportunity. Please remember that, although it is possible to purchase your tree and leave it with us for a few days, we will be closing for Christmas on Saturday 21st December and reopening at 10.00am on Saturday 1st February 2025. With that in mind, please remember to collect your tree before 4.00pm on 21st December to avoid disappointment.

Please note that we hope to have some Christmas wreaths for sale also.

Needless to say we look forward to welcoming you and we offer our seasonal greetings.....if it isn't too early to be saying that!

Andrew Davies 01258 861325

THE VIEW FROM ST MARY'S

Autumn is always a busy time at St Mary's, starting with Harvest Festival and the Harvest Lunch. The lunch was a sell-out and those who attended enjoyed home cooked food and were entertained by musicians from Clayesmore. Thanks are due to those who organised the event, those who cooked and, in particular, to Christine and Tim Ingram for allowing us to hold the event in the atmospheric surroundings of the Tithe Barn. Following Harvest Festival and the lunch, we were able to donate £1000 to Alabare towards their work with the homeless. We plan a further donation at Christmas.

We also celebrated the two ancient festivals of All Saints and All Souls. The former honours all saints and martyrs in Christian history, while All Souls Day is a day of remembrance commemorating loved ones who have died. Many people find this service a comfort.

We have also held two services of Choral Evensong, one celebrating Harvest and the other featuring musicians and singers from Clayesmore. Both services were very well attended.

During the morning service at St Mary's on 13 October, in a short but moving ceremony, a wall plaque was dedicated to Richard Hood, our former churchwarden. Richard was the leading light in the refurbishment and updating of St Mary's and the church owes him a great debt. Richard will be fondly remembered by all who knew and worked with him.

The celebration of Remembrance Sunday was, as ever, well supported. Following the service at St Mary's the congregation and many other members of the community gathered at the War Memorial for the laying of the wreaths in memory of the fallen from Iwerne and Sutton Waldron, and the playing of the Last Post. Following the service, we made a contribution of £500 to the Royal British Legion.

On Remembrance Day itself, St Mary's hosted a free seminar entitled "Preparing Well, Living Well". The seminar was aimed at those who wanted to consider how they can prepare for their latter days – setting their affairs in order so that they can get on with life, while at the same time making things much easier for their families. Arranged and led by Chris Jervis, the morning featured presentations on legal matters (in particular wills and powers of attorney), funeral choices and end of life care. Chris also spoke briefly about our spiritual preparation.

By the time you read this, the St Mary's Christmas Bazaar will have taken place, as well as a Choral Evensong for Advent. And it will be soon be Christmas. Look out for the Christmas tree festival at Fontmell Magna as well as the traditional carol services and the celebrations of Christ's birth.

A Happy Christmas to you from all at St Mary's!

David Parkhouse

REST IN PEACE

David Irving

Margaret Leach of Edge
House

George Dean of Oakwood
Drive

FRENCH CONVERSATION GROUP

Monique Goodliffe and Dougal Wilson-Croome are hoping to organise a regular French Conversation group to enable Francophiles to practise and improve their spoken French in a friendly social atmosphere. All levels are welcome, including native French speakers, as we will all be helping each other. To express an interest contact Dougal at dougalwc@btinternet.com.

IWERNE MINSTER 100 CLUB RESULTS

September 2024

£15 Robin Kennard (8)
£12 Jonathan & Susan Maguire (33)
£10 Sue Le Prevost (1)
£5 Jim Westwood (69)

October 2024

£15 Steve Harrison (44)
£12 Maggie Hale (61)
£10 Tony & Val Freestone (29)
£5 Helen Peat (14)

SWIM WI OCTOBER MEETING



In October we were treated to a passionate and well-presented talk by Ruth Croome about the faith-based charity, Mercy Ships. This charity operates two large seagoing vessels which take medical facilities to South Africa, Madagascar, West and Central Africa. All the crew and the staff are volunteers, of which there are over 1,500 on both ships, and they come from over sixty countries. The only paid workers are interpreters and local people whom they take on in the ports. Mercy Ships not only take advanced medical care and surgical techniques to countries where the need is great, but also train local people who in turn can train others.

When they have docked in a port, they reach out to patients by sending out leaflets with lots of photos, which can be understood by everyone including those who are illiterate, as well as radio messages. Then they send out volunteers to villages all over the countryside to meet possible patients, choosing those whom they feel they can treat. The range of conditions is wide and very serious, conditions which we in western Europe do not often see: huge tumours which though they can be benign are life limiting; cleft palates left untreated; severe burns; obstetric fistulas which often result in the women being rejected by their own people; cataracts and malnutrition. The doctors do their best to treat as many patients as they can and to ensure that the after care is there too. They set up rehabilitation units and places which can provide palliative care as well as a successful Food for Life programme. Doctors know that their work changes peoples' lives and that even though they cannot treat everyone because they are overwhelmed by massive need, the difference they do effect, makes it very worthwhile. We heard affecting stories about individuals whose lives have been changed in a very positive way.

You can volunteer to work on one of the ships until the age of 80 and Ruth told us that she intends to try and volunteer on one of the ships if

she has the opportunity. In the meantime, she delivers talks spreading the word about the work that the Mercy Ships charity is doing.

Monique Goodliffe

SWIM WI NOVEMBER MEETING



Inspired by a friend and her love of walking, in September 2023 Maggie Frear, a resident of Iwerne Minster, began her preparation for the 760km, 36 day pilgrimage to the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela where the remains of St James the Great are believed to be buried. There are many routes to choose from, the most popular being the French way beginning in San-Jean-Pied-de-Port. The pilgrimage is undertaken by many thousands of people from all over the world, from many diverse backgrounds and for many different reasons. It's a very personal, spiritual and unforgettable experience.

Preparation for the walk required intense training: walking five to ten miles three times a week with a backpack weighing around 14lbs at least three weeks prior to the trek and training at the gym three to five mornings a week. Backpacks were filled very frugally only allowing one change of clothes!

Maggie joined her friends and together they walked the ancient trails crossing the medieval

(continued on page 6)

bridges through ancient towns and cities, across fields of sunflowers and through ancient forests following the yellow arrows marked along the way. They met many fellow pilgrims from all over the world and in all weathers, sleeping in communal auberges, sharing meals and experiences and the occasional mass. Friendships were forged.

There were many opportunities for reflection, particularly when walking through endless fields of sunflowers. Without the intrusion of mobile phones, the 'pelegrinos' were able to focus their minds. A tradition of bringing stones from home and laying them at the foot of a cross on the way, which signified leaving their burdens behind, was very moving.

All pilgrims collect a scallop shell to symbolise their pilgrimage. They all have a Camino Pilgrim Passport which has to be stamped twice daily in order for them to be given a beautiful Compostela certificate in Latin to mark a walk of at least 100km.

With great elation and joy, they reached Santiago to the chorus of bagpipes! They attended a pilgrims' mass with its unforgettable huge, swinging incense bowl, the Botafumeiro.

Maggie's talk to our WI was fascinating and inspirational. The photographs were superb as were her descriptions of the walk.

Julia Osborne

IWERNE VALLEY WALKING GROUP REPORTS

OCTOBER 2024

Clare Martin led eight of us and her dog, Mollie, on a beautiful walk in bright sunshine, starting from the Spread Eagle Inn at Stourhead. We set off down the lane and turned right past the nineteenth century water wheel that provided water to the parish up until the 1950's and has been restored to provide green energy. The autumn colours were spectacular to behold as we walked along.



A steady climb took us up through Park Hill Camp, an Iron Age Hillfort, and then we turned right again to come down into a valley known as Six Wells

Bottom through a gate near St Peter's Pump which sits above the source of the River Stour.

Some way on, we climbed out of the valley and walked on past the front of the house and through the walled garden back down the path to the Spread Eagle courtyard.

We had decided to drive the short distance to Zeals to have lunch at The White Lion pub and were rewarded with the most delicious food. Well recommended!

Helen English

NOVEMBER 2024 AGM

On a rather grey afternoon on November 16th, twelve doughty walkers and Mollie the dog set off from the Iwerne Minster Village Club for a walk before the AGM.

We started with the fairly strenuous climb up Preston Hill, along the muddy track to the top where we turned right to make our way down to Shroton. We returned across the fields to Oyles Mill and thence to the Village Club via the cricket pitch and the path behind the Glebe. When some walkers took a short cut across the stream, our chairperson, Helen English, stumbled and fell into the stream gaining a slight graze on her forehead and very wet clothes. Dressed in other people's loans of a jumper and a rather splendid red blanket, she then chaired the meeting with the aid of Claire Watson as her secretary. We were joined by two non-walkers and all enjoyed a welcome cup of tea and cake.

Thank you to Cathy Bird for providing a delicious apple

cake and especially to Phyl Burbidge for baking and icing a splendid confection to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Iwerne Valley Walking Group.

Dates for next year's walks were set and various people volunteered to lead the monthly walks. There are still spaces in a couple of slots so do get in touch with Helen if you would be willing to lead a walk. Especial thanks go to Helen for being at the hub of the walking group and for keeping us trekking month by month.

MG



DON'T LOOK NOW BUT...
CHRISTMAS IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER.

Are you planning a family or children's Christmas party?
Instead of holding it at home or at a hotel
have you thought of hosting it at Abingdon Hall?

The hall will be decorated for Christmas and is fully
equipped - use of the equipment
and electricity is included in the hire fee.

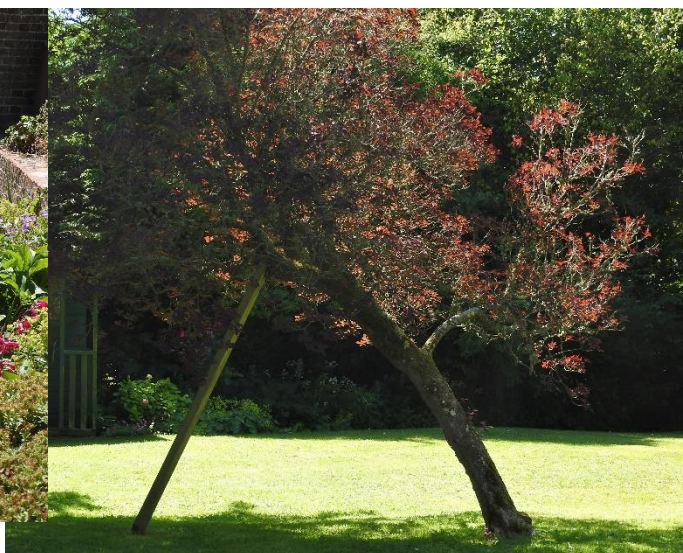
Why not check out our new website
www.iwerneminstervillagehall.com
where you will find full details?
We hope to hear from you.

ROLL UP! ROLL UP TO BUY YOUR XMAS CARDS FROM BERNIE'S!

Saskia's lovely Christmas cards of Iwerne Minster are on sale now at the Village Stores, and also at the Christmas Bazaar on Saturday 30th November. One features a very jolly snowman (who might be called Bernie!) outside the shop itself, and the other is of the church on a frosty Christmas night - look carefully and you'll see Santa Claus flying through the Dorset sky with his sleigh and reindeer, dropping presents for all of us who've been good boys and girls!

They come in two sizes: the large ones are £10 for five cards, or £2.50 each, and the smaller ones are £8.00 for five or £1.75 each.





OPEN GARDENS 2018



IWERNE MINSTER NEWSLETTER

Published every two months on the first of the month. Next issue: February 1st, 2025

Contribution deadline: January 20th, 2025

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Contributions are welcome from residents of Iwerne Minster or anyone with an interest in the village. Get in touch if you know of anything that is newsworthy. Please send any contributions by email or hard copy through the letter box.

Digital photos should be high resolution (i.e. direct from the camera, not down-sized for websites). Please send the image file rather than embedding it into a text document. Copyright should be agreed with the photographer.

The views expressed are not necessarily those of the editor.

Village Diary Paul Le Prevost compiles the Iwerne Minster Village Diary, available by email and pinned to noticeboards. Please let Paul know of new events at paul.leprevost@btinternet.com

Printer Parish Magazine Printing