

## Dates for your Diary

### MARCH

- 4 Safari Supper start at The Bear at Home 7 p.m.
- 8 WI Meeting & AGM, The Barn South Moreton 7.30 p.m.
- 13 Annual Parish Meeting, Village Hall 8 p.m.
- 13 South Moreton School Governors' AGM
- 16 PCC Meeting at Hagbourne School 8 p.m.
- 18 Coffee Morning & Tabletop Sale, Village Hall 10.30 - 12.30
- 23 Malaysian Evening at The Bear at Home

### APRIL

- 2 MCC Nets. Didcot Leisure Centre 4 - 6 p.m.
- 2 Annual Church Meeting All Saints' Church (after 10.30 a.m. service)
- 9 MCC Working Party & Nets
- 12 WI Meeting, The Barn South Moreton 7.30 p.m.
- 23 MCC First Match
- 23 Footpath Walk, Bus Stop 11 a.m.

### MAY

- 8 Parish Council AGM, Village Hall 8 p.m.
- 10 WI Meeting, The Barn South Moreton 7.30 p.m.
- 13 South Moreton School Jumble Sale 1.30 - 3.30 p.m.
- 14 North Moreton Fete, The Croft 2 p.m.

### JUNE

- 3 Hatstand Opera Company, North Moreton House
- 7 WI Meeting, The Barn South Moreton 7.30 p.m.
- 11 The Astons' Fete

### JULY

- 2 Salmon Lunch at Peckwater (in aid of Village Hall funds)
- 16 Open Garden at Filberts from 2 p.m.
- 14 - 16 Wedding Dress Display & Flower Festival All Saints' Church

### AUGUST

- 6 MCC President's Match and Pig Roast

### Utilities etc.

**Beat Officer:** WPC Susan (Pip) Walker - 0845 8505505

**Mobile Library:** North Moreton Bus Shelter - alternate Fridays, 12.15

**Village Hall Bookings:** Ann Silvester, 17 Bear Lane (811646)

**Refuse Collection:** Thursdays

**Recycling Collection:** (paper, cans & plastic) Thursdays

**Postal Services:** at **'The Crown'**, South Moreton - Wednesdays 9 - 12  
and at **'The Red Lion'**, Brightwell - Wednesdays & Fridays 9.30 - 12

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# North Moreton News

Issue 72

March 2006

## Editorial

From time to time the *North Moreton News* has introduced its readers to the village's historical past and, in particular, to the places of origin from which some of its buildings have come. We have learnt that the Village Hall (strictly, the Church Hall) was once the Canadian Military Hospital, during the First World War, at Milton.

We know, for instance, that the old cricket pavilion had once been a part of the old Army Depot at Didcot and that its recent successor - now almost completed - had been the site office of a housing development in Wallingford. In antiquity, the stones of North Moreton Church seem to have come from Oolite limestone in the Taynton quarries north of Oxford.

Recently, we have discovered that the old barn, beside Cherry Court, once did duty in the Crimean War and its (unbroken) glass window was used as a way in which NCOs could identify that no one was AWOL from the barracks. Huts of similar appearance can be seen in Roger Fenton's photographs of the war. Who brought it back from the Crimea? What tales it could tell of a war in which the ravages of the weather were almost as hazardous as the enemy? It is a fascinating piece of history.

With this addition to our 'possessions' in North Moreton, we may wonder what buildings we can really claim as our own! It is right that this newly-identified pile should be commemorated in 2006, the 150th anniversary of the end of the war.

It was, indeed, the only major European War that any Victorian experienced, though somewhere in the Empire - the Ashanti, the Zulus, the Boers - British troops were fighting overseas in almost every year of Victoria's reign.

It was the custom of the previous editor, as well, to reflect on North Moreton's historic past but it is time now to turn to the future. The current editor, after eleven years in charge (44 issues) passes the baton on to Nora Haycock. He confesses that modern technology baffles him: it holds no terrors for his successor to whom we all wish well as she takes over a task which may see the *North Moreton News* achieve its century - only 28 issues more. *Valete!*

## **North Moreton Parish Council**

*Roger Haycock, the chairman, writes:*

### **Annual Parish Meeting**

All parishioners are welcome to attend the Annual Parish Meeting which will be held at 8.00 p.m. on Monday March 13 in the Village Hall. This is the opportunity for local clubs, societies and organisations to promote themselves and say what they have been doing over the past year and what their plans are for the future. It is an opportunity for people to question our County and District Council representative, Patrick Greene. Perhaps most importantly, it is an opportunity to express views or ask questions of the Parish Council about village issues. Please take the time and trouble to come along and show an interest in village activities. When the meeting has closed (approx. 9.00 p.m.) it will be followed by a Parish Council meeting.

### **Planning Issues: A J Machinery site.**

In the last issue of *North Moreton News*, I mentioned planning developments for this site. Things have moved on in the last three months and the PC has had to express views to SODC on two Planning Applications.

As discussed in the last issue, the first application (for two houses) is an exact repeat of that which was turned down by the SODC Planning Committee in December 2004. NMPC has again supported this application. Last time a very strong majority of villagers who expressed an opinion on the subject supported the application, and nothing has changed in the meantime to make the Council think that this is not in the best interests of the village as a whole.

The second application is similar in most respects to the first, but has included an "employment" block in front of the houses, to be occupied by up to about eight people.

## **Walk for Wildlife!**

The local Wildlife Trust is holding a sponsored walk on Sunday May 14 Starting at Blenheim Palace and planned to meet all abilities - including a short walk suitable for pushchair and wheel chairs. Further details are available from Wildlife Trust ( 01865 775576) who will supply a registration pack.

## **North Wessex Downs AONB Sustainable Development Fund**

Residents of North Moreton are privileged to live in a magnificent landscape. The Thames floodplain, Blewbury Downs in the south, and the Moreton Plain are in the north-eastern peninsula of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The North Wessex Downs was designated an AONB in 1972 and is the third largest AONB in England. It includes the Ridgeway, Avebury and the Kennet Valley as well as Watership Down in north Hampshire and most of the countryside in between. In 2004 the newly-formed Council of Partners agreed a 20 year vision for the area and a Management Plan which can be reflected in local parish plans.

The North Wessex Downs AONB runs a Sustainable Development Fund grant scheme which aims to support local community groups carrying out environmental projects that help to deliver the Management Plan. All the projects will increase people's understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the North Wessex Downs AONB.

In 2005 more than £88,000 in SDF grants were distributed to projects in the AONB – you can read about them on the website [www.northwessexdowns.org.uk](http://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk) and go to SDF Grants. They include the Northmoor Trust's Neptune Wood project.

The SDF grant scheme will be open from the end of February. Guidelines and the Expression of Interest form will be on the website.

## **Age Concern...**

...will be holding a free Activity and Information Fair from 10 a.m.- 4 p.m. at Didcot Civic Centre on Friday March 10 and at the Regal Centre, Wallingford on Thursday May 4, to raise awareness of Active Aging. Celebrate and embrace your 50 years - and onwards! See local press or contact Ann Bruce on 01491 833925 for further details.

## Footpaths' Walk

The annual walk will take place on Sunday April 23. The survey of Public Rights of Way (1956) together with Ordnance Sheets SU 58 and 59, establishes the local footpaths. The walk will last about one and a half hours. Those interested should meet at the bus stop at 11 a.m. We do this to ensure that the paths remain open, as a way of introducing newcomers to the walk (and to each other) and as a pleasant social outing.

## Entertainment!

The highly-acclaimed Hatstand Opera Company will be performing hilarious scenes and heart-rending arias at North Moreton Barn on Saturday June 3.

The garden will be open for picnics from 6 p.m. onwards and the performance will start at 7.30 p.m. Tickets, at £22.50 each, are available from Katie Miles at North Moreton House (813283 for a ticket application form). It has taken two years to book the Company as it is so popular. Tickets will be numbered and, sadly, limited.

## Historic North Moreton

Information is welcomed, for the Bear at Home Web Site, on the historic background, owners &c of the Bear Inn - not already in the *History of North Moreton* - by Dean Beedell, 512811.

## SODC...

.... would like to bring the following information to the public:

The collection of garden waste in eco sacks will cease on April 28. It is hoped to introduce a new fortnightly garden waste collection using wheeled bins and costing £29 per year. Enquiries to 01491 823416.

Financial help with Home Repairs, for those who have lived for at least three years in their present house and are on a low income, is available on 01491 8233332. The same number will also give advice on energy use and its conservation.

General advice from the Council, on other matters, can be obtained during office hours on 0845 458 5449.

## South Moreton School...

.... is again grateful for vouchers from shoppers.

The rationale for this second application has been summarised in a letter which the Agent appears to have sent to most parishioners. After some consideration, NMPC has proposed rejection of this application. We are certainly not against employment in the village, but felt that the proposal was an uncomfortable compromise which would suit nobody. We didn't like the idea of an industrial site sharing an entrance with residential property, and were concerned about greater traffic. We also saw the addition of the employment block as having the effect of converting the houses to (perhaps subtle) 'backfill', which we see as undesirable.

We anticipate that the applications will again go to the SODC Planning Committee, probably on Wednesday March 8.

## Concessionary Fares

*Katie Miles writes:*

There will be several changes in the present arrangement of concessionary fares from April 2006. Tokens will only be issued to people over 70 years of age and to the disabled. Bus passes will be valid from 9.00 a.m. instead of the current 9.30 a.m. and available to everyone over the age of sixty. They will be valid for free bus travel within the South Oxfordshire area and also for travel to and from Oxford and Abingdon. In addition, the pass can be used for free bus travel in and around Oxford. 2006 tokens will be available from Katie Miles at North Moreton House from the end of April. The Tesco FREE bus has now been running through the village for the last few months. Although restricted to Mondays and Wednesdays, this is a useful service. Please use it! It stops at the bus shelter at 9.53 a.m. and returns from Tesco at 11.30 a.m.

## Moreton Cricket Club

*The Chairman, Trevor Denning writes:*

Another season is almost upon us with the first match next month. There will be an important working party on Sunday April 9 to prepare the Croft for the coming season - all members please take note! We will also be holding two pre-season nets on April 2 and 9 (between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m.) at the Didcot Leisure Centre - all are welcome to join us. There was another successful Quiz night in the Village Hall at the beginning of February. Thank you to all who took part, especially to the team of question-setters and organisers.

## Children's Playground

Residents are asked to watch out, when they can, for vandalism in the Playground area. The gate has been broken and many strips of the fencing torn down. In the first instance, information should go to a Parish Councillor or a member of the Recreation Committee.

## Moreton Table Tennis Club

*Roger Templeman (CD2ROM@aol.com, 01235 813913) writes:*

The MTTC teams in the Didcot and District league are doing well: the A-team in their first season in Division 1 are beginning to win matches and are now hopeful of avoiding relegation. The B-team tops Division 3, and the D-team leads Division 4. Our E-team is made up mainly of youngsters who are gaining valuable experience for future seasons and getting County recognition. MTTC has reached the final of the Bidmead Cup ( a handicap competition with teams composed of players from different leagues) beating Drayton 6-3.

Our South Moreton School venue is to host some important table tennis events in April: the Oxfordshire Junior Ranking Trials, the Didcot & District Association's Closed Championships, and a coaching course at part of SODC's Easter Activity Programme. We offer coaching and practice as well as the serious league competition, and still have spare capacity in our Wednesday and especially Thursday sessions.

Anyone interested please visit [www.mttc.moonfruit.com](http://www.mttc.moonfruit.com) or [www.ddtta.org.uk](http://www.ddtta.org.uk) or contact Roger Templeman.

## North Moreton Fete

This year's North Moreton Fete will be on Sunday May 14.

We are starting to plan this year's fete so please make a note in your diary as this is an event not to be missed! As usual it is your efforts and involvement that go towards making this day a success – if you have any ideas or offers of help please contact a member of the fete committee.

The afternoon promises all the usual fun for the whole family – there will be a dedicated children's corner as well as plenty of games and competitions for the grown ups. An art and photographic competition will be run again and it's not too early to plan your picture or photo of North More-

ton: the subjects are 'The Village' and 'Artists' Choice', so be inspired by your favourite tree, view, architectural feature etc – the list is endless! We look forward to warmer days and to seeing you all on Sunday May 14.

Fete Committee contact – Nora Haycock 01235 81220.

## North Moreton Village Hall

Since the last *North Moreton News* we have held a Christmas Party for under 7s and a Disco for the 8s to 11s: the children certainly appeared to enjoy themselves at both events. Although not primarily fundraising occasions, we did raise over £70 for hall funds: our thanks to all who helped and particularly to Libby Macdonald for providing the Disco. There was insufficient support to run the Disco for the over 12s but we would like to provide some 'in village' entertainment for this age group. What would you like? Ideas please – either via your parents or direct to me at [nora.haycock@btinternet.com](mailto:nora.haycock@btinternet.com). - and we'll see what can be done.

Our next fundraising event is the Table Top Sale and Coffee Morning to be held in the Hall on Saturday March 18 between 10.30 and 12.30.

Tables £5 bookable as above or via Mavis Crickmore on 813240.

Everyone who attended the Salmon Lunch last year seemed to enjoy it and we will be holding it again on Sunday July 2: more details nearer the time but book this date in your diary NOW.

(In May last year someone borrowed a single table from the hall and we haven't had it back. Could you please check that it isn't lurking unloved in a corner of your shed or garage – we really do need it!)

## South and North Moreton Women's Institute

*Penny Busby writes:*

The New Year Dinner was held at the Crown, South Moreton, when we enjoyed a splendid meal and the chance to chat to other members. In February we welcomed Janet Prescott who gave us a very informative and useful presentation on 'Top tips for gardeners'. Our AGM will be later this month when we hope to see some new faces as well as our 'regulars'. A new programme of events starts in April and we meet, as always, on the second Wednesday of the month at the WI Barn, in South Moreton.