



The pictures here were all taken at the church – the snow scene a few years ago, last year's Carol Service and a couple of entries at the Christmas Tree "Festival" in 2013.

Why not attend the Band Concert in Church on Friday 11th or the Carol Service on Sunday 20th?

Merry Christmas to all our readers

Letters to the Editor



Dear Sirs

I am sure by now that most of USL is aware of the proposal for the development of land at Rooksmoor. However, having spoken to many people I am not so sure that everyone in the village has a computer or if they have, know how to navigate their way around the World Wide Web let alone SDC website! I would appreciate it if you could include in next month's newsletter a list of the various stages of a building application and how it proceeds and how villagers can contact and lobby the Development Control Committee. This information would be invaluable to everyone no matter whether they support or object to the proposal.

May I also suggest that the Parish Council meetings are advertised and the subjects up for discussion, to encourage villagers to take a greater interest in what's happening on their doorstep, (apologies if you do and I've missed it !)

Many Thanks
Sara Hemming

Editor: Thanks to Sara for raising these two issues. The first, on how the planning process works, needs a bit of research - we'll try to get something on that in an upcoming issue. We'll also ask the Parish Council to work out what could be done about the second.

Leylandii Trees between Woodland Green and the Motorway

From Bernard and Julia King:

Firstly, a big Thank You to all who signed the petition in support of getting Highways England and Skanska to reduce the height of the trees that are parallel to the M5 Motorway and Woodland Green. Over 200 people signed the petition and again, our sincere thanks.

To update everyone: Stroud MP Neil Carmichael visited our property in Woodland Green on the 6th July and was able to see the problem for himself. He agreed the trees were much too high and needed reducing to an acceptable height. He said he would write to the Chief Executive of Highways England.

Since then there have been several communications by e-mail which have resulted in a response from a Director of Highways England responsible for this area. He outlined a plan to address the offending trees with a wider intent to not only attend to the trees, but to facilitate better growth characteristics of the trees which should deal with the undergrowth issue as well.

This is not the ideal result!! We wanted the trees culled / lopped now or during winter. This is not going to happen. More likely to be in the 2016 / 2017 programme. So what next???

Since the petition there has been little enquiry from residents regarding progress. The only other avenue to pursue is to create a protest stance, say on the Motorway Bridge, with the media involved to publicise the issue. That would make the need for a significant number of local people standing in protest with placards of some description or another. We rather feel the support for this action is unlikely to receive the numbers of persons with the necessary dedication that would be required.

Meanwhile, we are chasing ITV West to support the issue, but as yet we have not received a formal agreement to this. We will continue to push for it.

So our thanks to everyone again!! We will wait to see if Highways England honour their commitment in due course.



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What's been happening in Upton ...

FIREWORKS AT THE VILLAGE HALL

As every year in recent times, there was a huge crowd. All the nearby roads chokka with parked cars, cars on verges, cars on pavements. Where do they all come from! The people working in the kitchen were absolutely rushed off their feet. The bonfire and the fireworks lit up the sky splendidly, and the weather was kind, if a trifle windy.

Jackie Lord, on behalf of the Village Hall management committee writes: "Thank you everyone who attended the village Bonfire & Firework evening on Nov 5th. It was a very successful event, even though very crowded. All monies raised will go towards the upkeep of the Village Hall.

Also thank you very much to all our helpers, in whatever capacity. Without you the event would not be possible, so your assistance is very much appreciated. If anyone would like to get involved with Hall events please contact me, as new people are always needed.

Finally, well done to Aimee, James & Sarah who were the winners of the teddy, sweets and treasure."



Mike Stratford at the gate taking ticket money



Leylandii trees beside the M5 dwarfing houses in Woodland Green (see the letter on the left)

BRING AND BUY IN AID OF "MAGGIE'S" - over £1,300 raised!

This event was organised by Ginny Ring, and held at the BMI in early November.

Ginny writes: "The sale was a great success, and actually at the event we raised, with the help from "Maggie's" ladies, the grand sum of £1,300! I was absolutely amazed, and delighted for Maggie's, which is a wonderful drop-in centre, for anyone effected by Cancer, in Cheltenham. I have some orders to make some more Teddy Bears, and when that money is collected, the sum is likely to be £1,500.

I would like to thank the villagers, for bits and pieces given to me for the sale, and their support on the day, it was lovely to see how many came. I think everyone enjoyed it, especially watching young dancers from Mandy Godding's Dance

maggie's

and Theatre Arts Studio, who gave a short display*.

A big thank-you also goes to the BMI Steward Alec and his wife Mary, for their kindness and helpfulness on the day. We are lucky to have such a lovely club, my friends thought it was super."

* PS: Mandy Godding has said that if any old people's clubs etc, would like a display at their Christmas events, she would be delighted to bring her little dancers along.

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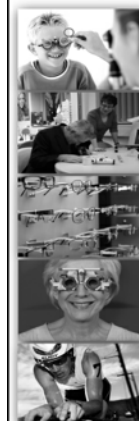
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What's been happening in Upton ... continued

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: SOLAR PANEL "FARM" AT ROOKSMOOR

The November Parish Council meeting was attended by rather more than the usual number of villagers, of course because the Council was to discuss the planning application for solar panels in fields between Rooksmoor and Valley Lane. There were about 50 present. This being a Parish Council business meeting meant that it couldn't be a full consultation and debate involving non-Council members. Nevertheless, the Chairman allowed non-Council attendees to make brief statements, and he even took an informal vote among those present.

It is fair to say that most or all present wished to object to the plans. Objections were based principally around the opinion

that this was an inappropriate development in a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It also would have a very considerable impact on the houses nearby. Other concerns mentioned were about perimeter fencing and security lighting, access for construction traffic, the impact on wildlife, and on the footpath and bridle path that border the fields concerned. There was also concern that there had been very little public consultation time allowed in the planning process. Most heard for the first time about the application only days before the deadline for submitting objections.

The Parish Council agreed unanimously to object to the plans. Their objection is now lodged with the District Development Control Committee.

News from the WIs

UPTON ST LEONARDS W.I.

Our November meeting included our AGM - the time to introduce new members onto the committee or to re-elect officers. Our current president Lynne Cook, who has worked very hard for us all during the last 5 years, has decided to step down, and Diane Thomas has taken over the reins; we all wish her the very best in her new role.

Once the AGM business was over, we heard a most interesting and unusual speaker, Mr Steve Syer, who told of his life as a heart transplant patient. He had

received his new heart 30 years ago, and is still living a full and busy life, spending most of his time raising funds for the British Heart Foundation; an inspirational story indeed.

Our next meeting will be on Monday 7th December 2015 at 7.30. Do come along and join us; you will receive a warm and friendly welcome.



BMI AUTUMN CHARITY QUIZ

On the same day as the "Maggie's" event, in the evening, the BMI held its Autumn Charity Quiz.

Many thanks to the fifteen teams that entered. Together with a raffle on the night, £141 was raised towards the BMI Charity - "Research into Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy". The quiz winners on the night were the "Bluebells".

The next BMI quiz will be on 9th January. A date for your diary?



TWYVER W.I.

Margaret Buckley, our President, opened our 50th AGM, welcoming us all to this special meeting, including our two visitors. Jerusalem was sung particularly well as almost all our members were present. Margaret delivered her President's report for 2015 which made us realise what a varied programme we had enjoyed over the past year. This was followed by the Secretary's report which listed all the speakers and events which had occurred throughout 2015.

...continued on next page

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TWYVER W.I. Report continued ...

Margaret herself was re-elected as President for 2016. She thanked the departing committee members who were given flowers to express our gratitude for their contribution to the group.

Entertainment for the evening was provided by Pam Street who shared with us her passion for the history of British Dance Bands.

It proved to be a nostalgic experience for many of our older members whilst we enjoyed our wine and cheese refreshments. Birthday gifts were given out and the raffle

drawn before the meeting was closed. Our next meeting will be held on Monday, December 14th when the speaker will talk about the Christmas Mummings Play in Gloucestershire.

Happily our membership continues to grow; currently we have 46 members. We look forward to 2016 and our exciting new programme.

In the meantime do listen out for the Twyver Ladies Choir (TLC) in December as they have been busy practising and will be singing at some of our local clubs.

Coming up this month in Upton ...

An Evening of Music

Sunday December 13th, Village Hall, 7.30pm

**You are warmly invited to join
The St Leonards Singers & Twyver
Ladies' Chorus**

led by Sylvia Ardron, for an evening of music

Seating will be at tables, for 6 or 8
Bring your own food and drink to enjoy
during the interval

Tickets £5 from Catherine McLean

All proceeds will go to "Mindsong" - Music for
Dementia.

This is a local charity, in which a number of the St
Leonards Singers are involved, taking music to
dementia sufferers.

Upton St Leonards Primary School PTA Christmas Fayre 2015

Santa's Grotto

*Grand
prize
Draw*

*Secret Santa
Gift
wrapping*

*Crafts
& Gifts*

*Choc
tombola*

Choir

Games

Refreshments

Entry: Adults 50p Children free
Saturday 5 Dec 1.00pm-3.00pm
Bondend Road

See also the BMI events shown on the back page



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...and in the New Year ...

The UpStagers

Join The UpStagers with " Snow White "

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February 2016

A **Panto** not to be missed

Bring the children and grandchildren to enjoy
all the fun and laughter
"Oh yes there will be"

SPRING SHOW & RENT-A-CRAFT STALL SATURDAY 12th MARCH 2016

Now is the time to get CLICKING with those camera devices ready
to enter next year's SPRING SHOW. The subjects are :

- Class 30 'WAR MEMORIALS'
- Class 31 'BERRIES'
- Class 32 'KICK THE BALL!'
- Class 33 'WATERLIFE (PLANTS/WILDLIFE)'
- Class 34 'BLING!'
- Class 35 'MOONRISE' (Black & White only)
- Class 53 'CHRISTMAS TIME!' (Children only
up to age 16)

Max size of photograph 12"x8" (30x20cms)

December News from our Village Agent, Lou Kemp, 07776 245767

COLD

Research highlights that there is a general lack of awareness of the effects that cold weather can have on an older person's health.

Cold weather causes a massive increase in associated health problems: heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia, depression, worsening arthritis and increased accidents at home (associated with loss of strength and dexterity in the hands).

- 70°F (21°C) is the ideal temperature for your living room
- 64°F (18°C) is the ideal temperature for your bedroom
- Keep your bedroom window shut at night

If you have an older friend or relative close to you, some of the advice given here may help them prepare for the winter season

• Call in or visit more often, if the cold weather stops your friend or family member from getting out and about. Calling in on someone can help keep their spirits up and make them feel less isolated.

• Make sure they have basic food items in the cupboard or freezer in case it's too cold to go shopping.

• Pick up prescriptions if it's too cold for them to go out, or find out if their local pharmacy offers a prescription pick-up and delivery service.

• Make sure they don't have a fall. Take round a mixture of salt and sand for putting on steps or paths in icy weather.

• Encourage them to keep warm. Check with the recommended temperatures given above. Low temperatures increase the risk of flu and other respiratory problems and can raise blood pressure.

• Help them get a benefits check to make sure they're claiming everything they're eligible for. I can arrange a benefits check, or you can use some of the online benefits calculators available through Age UK, gov.uk, Citizens Advice, Turn to Us and other information websites.

If you are over 50 and would like any advice or support, please call me to arrange a home visit to discuss how I can help.

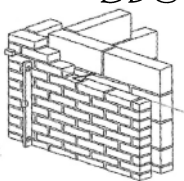
Information in this article was taken from the Age UK website.



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CHURCH NEWS



Dear friends

It's a boy, a bonny baby boy.
He looks like his mother, has the
spirit of his father.
He brings light into the world.
It's a boy. His name is Jesus.
An old man can rest in peace. An
old woman can pray with joy.

For the Light of the World has come.

Although as I write this letter, it is only a week into November and Christmas seems so far away, the angels tell us that the baby is to be born and we need to prepare for that special time when we hear about that famous Divine promise of peace and goodwill to everyone.

It is inevitable that sometime this month you will encounter something of the Christmas message, a sense of hope, a sign of peace. Sometime this month there will be an invitation or a greeting that is personal and beckoning if you are open to it. Perhaps it will happen as you attend a Christmas concert, open a card, watch a TV programme or maybe at one of our services.

May I challenge you to engage in random acts of kindness; spread a little peace and goodwill to your neighbour. This is the season when angels are often recognised and stars shine brightest as new birth happens; continue to be expectant and you will be rewarded.

For the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.
Those who lived in a land of deep darkness,
on them has the light shined.

For a child has been born to us; a Son given to us.
Authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named:
Wonderful Counsellor; Mighty God;
Everlasting Father; Prince of Peace.

After all the waiting and watching for the signs; all the anticipation and excitement, this is the moment: Immanuel - God is with us. Amen.

May you all have a very blessed and wonderful Christmas
With love, joy, peace and prayers

Christine

FOUNDATION GOVERNOR REQUIRED

A vacancy has arisen for a Foundation Governor for Upton St Leonards Church of England Primary School

If you feel that God is calling you to minister in a Church School then this may be for you? Foundation Governors have a vital role in supporting and developing the Christian foundation of the school. Such governors must be regular church attenders as well as having an interest in schools.

To find out more, please have a look at
<http://www.gloucester.anglican.org/content/pages/documents/1410262343.pdf>
and contact Rev'd Christine.

December Church Diary

(Correct at time of printing but subject to change - please check details in pew sheets)

SUN 7th	ADVENT 2	
	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.00am	All Age Worship
Thu 10th	2.00pm	Mothers Union in Church
	5.00pm	Brownies Concert in Church
Fri 11th	7.30pm	Christmas Band Concert
SUN 13th	ADVENT 3	
	10.00am	Communion4All
Tue 15th	9.00am	School Juniors Carol Service
	2.00am	Chipmunks Carol Service
Thu 17th	9.00am	School Infants Carol Service
SUN 20th	ADVENT 4	
	10.00am	Communion4All
	6.00pm	Carol Service
Mon 21st	11.30am	Wedding
Thu 24th	CHRISTMAS EVE	
	4.00pm	Christingle Service
	11.30pm	Midnight Communion
Fri 25th	CHRISTMAS DAY	
	10.00am	Christmas Communion
SUN 27th	ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST	
	10.00am	Holy Communion
JANUARY		
SUN 3rd	CHRISTMAS 2	
	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.00am	All Age Worship
SUN 10th	JOHN THE BAPTIST	
	10.00am	Communion4All
	6.00pm	Plough Sunday Service

Who's Who at the Parish Church

Priest in Charge:

Reverend Christine Birkett 627828
The Rectory, 12 Bondend Road, GL4 8AG.
rev.christine@uptonstleonardschurch.co.uk
Usual parish working days are Tuesdays and Fridays

Churchwardens:

- 1 Keith Robbins
- 2 Vacancy

PCC Secretary:

Roy Roberts

Church Treasurer:

Vacancy

Deanery Synod Representative:

Dorothy Cox

Bell Tower Captain:

Roger Fry

Mothers' Union:

Rachel Hall

Church Cleaning Rota:

Claire Appleyard

Church Flower Rota:

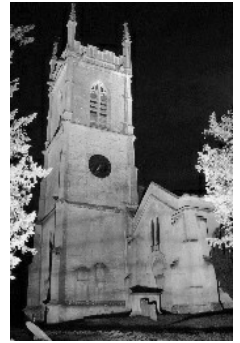
Evelyn Rumsey

Electoral Roll Officer:

Naomi Stanley-Gunn

CHURCH NEWS

Tower Flood Lighting Sponsorship Details December



On Friday 11th December the Tower Lights are lit in memory of Iris on her birthday, kindly sponsored by Liz Brownhill.

On Monday 21st December the Church lights will be sponsored by Clive and Julie Winstanley to celebrate the wedding of their daughter Helen to Ricci Harvey, with much love from all the family.

The Tower Lights at Christmas are sponsored in loving memory of Joe Stubbs from all of his family.

If you or your family wish to have the lights sponsored in celebration of a birthday or anniversary or for a loved one's life or any other reason then please contact Matthew Gibbs for more details.. There is no set amount for this, just what you would like to give to the Church in order to help cover running costs. If you are able to gift aid any donation this will help us too. Please note that the deadline to ensure a dedication gets in this newsletter is the 10th of the preceding month.



Bishop Rachel writes in this month's "messenger"

The light in the darkness

In recent weeks I have been struck by how many events there are in local towns and villages involving the switching on of lights. And this month there will be numerous carol services at which will be read these words about Jesus Christ: "In him was life and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1,4-5)

In the physical darkness of December we are perhaps more aware of the deeper darkness in our world. It is not only about conflict and suffering in places far away, it is also about the communities in which we live and the lives of those we know, often in places of pain or struggle.

It is also about those dark places deep within each of us where destructive thoughts and emotions lurk, such as fear, pride and shame.

In all of this we can easily be fooled into believing that the darkness is stronger than the light. Too often we fail to grasp the truth that the hope and light of Jesus Christ transforms the darkness. In this month of Christmas lights and candles, may we each have the courage to expose the dark places within us to the light and love of Christ. And as we open ourselves to transformation may we grow to be more confident bearers of Christ's light and hope in who we are, and what we say and do among the people and places of our daily lives.



Bishop Rachel visits Upton

Although she has been in post for just a few weeks, Bishop Rachel has already visited the Village. She came for a brief visit in late October. She had lunch in the BMI with 20 or so church members, and then spent a while after that with Revd Christine. Those who lunched with the bishop were

most impressed by her. Rachel Hall said: "she made great efforts to speak to everyone, she came over as very friendly and down-to-earth."

The Parochial Church Council would like to thank the BMI for hosting the meal, and steward Alec and Mary for setting out a very good meal.

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- Increase energy levels
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- Have fun!

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Christmas at St Leonards

Christmas is, above all else, the celebration of the birth of Christ, and this makes it a most special time at all local churches. The calendar on page 7 gives details of all the services and other events. The normal Sunday congregation will be swelled by well over 1,000 extra people over the festival. There are two Carol Services for the Primary School and one for Chipmunks Nursery. The Christingle Service, the Carol Service and the Christmas Eve Midnight Communion Services always attract a large number. Please pray for those who plan and lead the services, those who get the church ready, and those who attend.

We highlight again, below, some of the special events here and nearby ...

St Leonards Church - Band Concert

Celebrate Christmas

with music and carols played by the
Gloucester Brass Band

11th December at 7.30pm

£5 including mulled wine and mince pies.

**Tickets from Rachel Hall
or Evelyn Rumsey**

The Mothers' Union will have a special Christmas meeting on Thursday 10th December in Church at 2pm, with Christmas readings & Music & Carols

CHRISTCHURCH ABBEYDALE

IT'S REALLY CHRISTMAS

with
The Salvation Army Band & Songsters

Tuesday December 15 at 7.30pm

Tickets:- £5 Adults, £1 Children
Including Refreshments

Advance Booking Recommended
Telephone 616034 for Tickets



“Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass ... and they came with haste and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.”



Getting your notices, news, etc. into Upton St Leonards Life.

The editorial team at USL Life has messed up a couple of times recently - items have been sent in and then not appeared. We will try to do better. I know we should be capable of passing incoming material, whoever receives it, to the current editor, but if the recipient is away that may not happen, so we suggest you might as well send any e-mails with material to go in to all of us!

Getting material to us via the website or the Village Hall postbox should be ok as well. The only trouble is that we're not checking those places frequently enough (we will try to do better), but again, e-mails to the above will probably do better at the moment, we have to admit.

We don't promise to publish everything sent in. We have got a responsibility to ensure that, as far as possible, the Newsletter remains interesting and readable and looks good (in our "style").

Essay competition

We are running an essay competition, in conjunction with the School. Some of the children there are being asked to write a story - with a given title - of up to about 500 words. The school teachers will be short-listing four or five of the best results and we will then select the one we think is the best and print it in our January edition. Look out for it next month!



RECENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER

Recreation Ground -- Ref S.15/1979/FUL

Permanent non-turf cricket nets with security fence

Whitley Court -- Ref S.15/2026/HHOLD

Steel portal frame building to house a biomass boiler and wood store.

Belmont House Upton Hill -- Ref S.15/2119/FUL

Demolition of existing converted garage and erection of replacement dwelling.

17 Bondend Road -- Ref S.15/2245/FUL

Erection of two dwellings. Revised application of the consented scheme S.15/1013/FUL.

Every few months we try to include a list of recent planning applications. Time lags and our publication schedules inevitably mean we are behind the times, so most of the applications shown above have reached a conclusion.

The Cross House Portway -- Ref S.15/2247/FUL

Subdivision of existing dwelling into 2 separate dwellings with new driveway access.

Prinknash Abbey -- Ref S.15/2122/FUL

Demolition of existing 1970s monastery building and erection of ten residential dwellings and associated works.

Rooksmoor area -- Ref S.15/1765/FUL

Erection of a ground mounted solar photo-voltaic array and associated infrastructure.

All current planning applications can be seen at Stroud District Council Offices, Ebley Mill, or the Stroud District Council website

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Local Businesses ...

This month it is the turn of the Village Store and Post Office

... run by Shreyas and Krupa Patel.

Shreyas told us: "We were both born in India and came to the UK in 2002, initially living in London. When we were looking for a business to run we wanted to move to a nice environment with a good quality of life and for these reasons chose Upton St Leonards. We have been running the village Post Office for approximately four and a half years. A number of my family members run post offices in different locations in the UK so there is a long association with the company Post Office Ltd."

A lot of changes have been made since our arrival, both to the Post Office and what we are able to offer in the shop.

A recent development is that I now provide a part time mobile Post Office service to Painswick on two days a week, following the closure of their Post Office.

Below are some of the services we provide.

Personal Banking - withdrawal up to £300 per day plus deposits into any bank account (with some variations re paying in slips or use of Debit Cards etc.)

Other examples are National Lottery, Foreign Currency, Phone Cards, Gift Cards, Charity Christmas Cards, toys, off licence, newspapers (incl delivery), magazines, photocopying, pet food, bread, milk, cigarettes & tobacco and frozen foods.

I am in discussion with the Post Office to see if I can provide Passport and Car Tax and if successful will let everyone know through our Newsletter.

Of course we also have the shop with many products on offer. We understand we cannot compete with the range of goods in local Supermarkets but particularly for those who

don't drive or who may have mobility issues, we offer convenience locally.

You would expect me to say that I would like as many people in the village to use our goods and services as much as possible and hope this article reminds everyone what we do offer.

We are also interested to know if you need anything specific such as a particular brand of food eg bread etc or a weekly / monthly magazine which we would then endeavour to supply.

Our current opening times are as follows :

Post Office
Mon - Fri : 0900 - 1730,
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Sat : 0700 - 1230,
Sun : 0700 - 1100



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Aethelflaed, Lady of the Mercians

by Teresa Clarke

This month I take a brief step away from historical buildings to write about one of England's greatest women, Aethelflaed, "Lady of the Mercians" who rebuilt Gloucester from its former Roman ruins.

Aethelflaed was born in 869 at the height of the Viking invasions of England. Sources tell us that she was born in Staffordshire. She was the eldest daughter of Alfred the Great, King of Wessex, and his wife, Queen Ealhswith. She was sister to Edward the Elder.

In 874 most of Mercia (see map) had been invaded by the Danes and Danelaw extended from London northwards. The



only survivor of the old Kingdoms was Wessex.

In 876 Alfred and his army had been defeated by the Danish leader Guthrum, and had been forced to retreat to the Somerset marshes.

By 878 Alfred had rebuilt his army and defeated the Danish at the battle of Thundon. The Danes were pushed back to their stronghold at Chippenham where they were starved into submission.

886 sees Alfred take London and he returns it to the Mercians.

Aethelflaed is now 15 years of age. She is offered in marriage to Aethelred, Lord of the Mercians, to cement an alliance between Wessex and Mercia.

In 890 Alfred creates the Saxon chronicles.

892. Another Viking army arrives, but this time finds a kingdom defended by a series of fortified defences known as Burhs and a mobile field army. Alfred had constructed a series of 30 Burhs, designed to ring Mercia with military defences and fortified towns, each was detailed in a document known as the Burghal Hidage.

After a four year struggle the Vikings are forced to withdraw and in 896 Alfred is declared King by the Anglo Saxons.

899 Alfred dies and his son Edward succeeds him.

902 Aethelred is forced to withdraw from public life through illness and Aethelflaed becomes the ruler of Mercia.

905 Aethelflaed together with her husband, health restored, prevent the Norse settlers from taking the port city of Colchester. They continue Alfred's programme of fortifications, starting in Chester.

In 907 Aethelflaed and Edward raid Danish East Anglia. They bring the captured body of St Oswald to Gloucester. Aethelflaed begins to rebuild Gloucester from its former Roman ruins. She lays out a core street plan which still survives to this day.

910. Together the forces of Wessex and Mercia defeat the Danish at the battle of Tettenhall in Lincolnshire.

911 Aethelred is killed in battle and Aethelflaed becomes the sole ruler of Mercia. She is given the title Myrcna Hlaefdige, "The Lady of the Mercians", (some sources say Queen)

She now embarks on a vast programme of fortifications, adding a further 10 Burhs to her Father's original 30. The most important of these were Tamworth in 912, Stafford in 913, Warwick in 914 and Runcorn in 915.

916 She invades Wales taking Brecknock.

917 She leads her armies against the invaders and captures the Viking stronghold of Derby. Her Brother Edward takes Colchester. Aethelflaed then forms an alliance with Scottish kings Constantine II of Alba and Constantine Mac Aed of Strathclyde against Norse York.

918 So formidable had she become that she peacefully takes the Borough of Leicester.

Unfortunately Aethelflaed dies in Tamworth before knowing that the Vikings have accepted her as overlord at York.

Aethelflaed is buried beside her husband in St Peters church (now St Oswald's

priory) in Gloucester alongside the bones of St Oswald a former Christian King of England. Though there is little left of St Oswald's priory, Aethelflaed's tombstone is displayed in Gloucester City Museum. A statue of her with her nephew Athelstan



stands in the grounds of Tamworth Castle and there are 3 depictions of her in stained glass, at Worcester and Chester cathedrals and in St Andrews Church in Churchdown. Her living legacy lies in her determination to defeat the invaders and unite England, this came to fruition in 954 when her nephew Athelstan became King of a united England.

She is a Gloucester heroine who has been overlooked by historians for centuries. She spent her lifetime developing and improving the lives of the people and was determined to drive out the invaders and unify the people of England.

She deserves our thanks and recognition.



Aethelflaed's tombstone, now in Gloucester Museum

The row of arches between Priory Street and Archdeacon Street is all that remains today of St Oswalds Priory.

We have put as much in here as space permits.
Events happening weekly are only shown for
the first month or so

VILLAGE DIARY

DECEMBER

1	Tue	Needles & Pins.....	Village Hall Annex.....	9.30-12.00p.m.
1	Tue	Painting Class.....	Village Hall Annex.....	2.15-4.45p.m.
1	Tue	Badminton.....	Village Hall.....	8.30-10.30p.m.
2	Wed	Pilates.....	Pavilion.....	9.30-10.30a.m.
2	Wed	Stitchers.....	Pavilion.....	10.30-12.30p.m.
2	Wed	Wednesday Probus.....	B.M.I.....	10.00a.m.
2	Wed	Pavilion Painters.....	Pavilion.....	2.00-4.00p.m.
2	Wed	Bingo.....	B.M.I.....	8.00p.m.
2	Wed	Upstagers Amateur Dramatics.....	Village Hall.....	7.30-9.30p.m.
2	Wed	Tai Chi.....	Village Hall Annex.....	8.00-9.30p.m.
3	Thu	Senior Circuits.....	Pavilion.....	9.30-10.15a.m.
3	Thu	Tai Chi.....	Village Hall Annex.....	9.30-10.30a.m.
3	Thu	Zumba.....	Village Hall.....	7.30-8.30p.m.
4	Fri	Yoga.....	Pavilion.....	1.15-2.45p.m.
5	Sat	Junior School PTA Christmas Fayre.....	School.....	1.00-3.00p.m.
7	Mon	Yoga.....	Village Hall Annex.....	10.00-11.30a.m.
7	Mon	Yoga.....	Village Hall Annex.....	12.15-1.45p.m.
7	Mon	Fitness Training (2 separate sessions).....	Village Hall Annex.....	6.00-7.30p.m.
7	Mon	Upton WI.....	Village Hall.....	7.30-10.00p.m.
7	Mon	Parish Council Meeting.....	Pavilion.....	7.30p.m.
8	Tue	Needles & Pins.....	Village Hall Annex.....	9.30-12.00p.m.
8	Tue	Tuesday Probus.....	B.M.I.....	10.00a.m.
8	Tue	Painting Class.....	Village Hall Annex.....	2.15-4.45p.m.
8	Tue	Badminton.....	Village Hall.....	8.30-10.30p.m.
9	Wed	Pilates.....	Pavilion.....	9.30-10.30a.m.
9	Wed	Ladies Probus - 10th Anniversary Meeting.....	B.M.I.....	10.15a.m.
9	Wed	Stitchers.....	Pavilion.....	10.30-12.30p.m.
9	Wed	Pavilion Painters.....	Pavilion.....	2.00-4.00p.m.
9	Wed	Bingo.....	B.M.I.....	8.00p.m.
9	Wed	Upstagers Amateur Dramatics.....	Village Hall.....	7.30-9.30p.m.
9	Wed	Tai Chi.....	Village Hall Annex.....	8.00-9.30p.m.
10	Wed	Copy Date for January issue of USL Life		
10	Thu	Senior Circuits.....	Pavilion.....	9.30-10.15a.m.
10	Thu	Tai Chi.....	Village Hall Annex.....	9.30-10.30a.m.
10	Thu	Zumba.....	Village Hall.....	7.30-8.30p.m.
11	Fri	Yoga.....	Pavilion.....	1.15-2.45p.m.
11	Fri	Gloucester Brass - Christmas Music.....	Church.....	7.30p.m.
12	Sat	BMI Senior Pensioners Lunch.....	B.M.I.....	12.00p.m.
13	Sun	The St Leonards Singers and Twyver Ladies Chorus.....	Village Hall.....	7.30p.m.
14	Mon	Yoga.....	Village Hall Annex.....	10.00-11.30a.m.
14	Mon	Yoga.....	Village Hall Annex.....	12.15-1.45p.m.
14	Mon	Get Together Club Christmas Lunch.....	Bowden Hall Hotel.....	12.30p.m.
14	Mon	Fitness Training (2 separate sessions).....	Village Hall Annex.....	6.00-7.30p.m.
14	Mon	Twyver WI.....	Village Hall.....	7.30-10.00p.m.
15	Tue	Needles & Pins.....	Village Hall Annex.....	9.30-12.00p.m.
15	Tue	Painting Class.....	Village Hall Annex.....	2.15-4.45p.m.
15	Tue	Badminton.....	Village Hall.....	8.30-10.30p.m.
16	Wed	Pilates.....	Pavilion.....	9.30-10.30a.m.
16	Wed	Stitchers.....	Pavilion.....	10.30-12.30p.m.
16	Wed	Wednesday Probus.....	B.M.I.....	10.00a.m.
16	Wed	Pavilion Painters.....	Pavilion.....	2.00-4.00p.m.
16	Wed	Bingo.....	B.M.I.....	8.00p.m.
16	Wed	Upstagers Amateur Dramatics.....	Village Hall.....	7.30-9.30p.m.
16	Wed	Tai Chi.....	Village Hall Annex.....	8.00-9.30p.m.
17	Thu	Senior Circuits.....	Pavilion.....	9.30-10.15a.m.
17	Thu	Tai Chi.....	Village Hall Annex.....	9.30-10.30a.m.
17	Thu	Zumba.....	Village Hall.....	7.30-8.30p.m.
18	Fri	Yoga.....	Pavilion.....	1.15-2.45p.m.
19	Sat	Christmas Draw and Carol Singing.....	B.M.I.....	8.00p.m.
20	Sun	Carol Service.....	Church.....	6.00p.m.
21	Mon	Yoga.....	Village Hall Annex.....	10.00-11.30a.m.
21	Mon	Yoga.....	Village Hall Annex.....	12.15-1.45p.m.
21	Mon	Fitness Training (2 separate sessions).....	Village Hall Annex.....	6.00-7.30p.m.
21	Mon	Abbeydale Garden Club.....	Village Hall.....	7.00-9.00p.m.
22	Tue	Tuesday Probus.....	B.M.I.....	10.00a.m.
22	Tue	Badminton.....	Village Hall.....	8.30-10.30p.m.
23	Wed	Pilates.....	Pavilion.....	9.30-10.30a.m.
23	Wed	Stitchers.....	Pavilion.....	10.30-12.30p.m.
23	Wed	Pavilion Painters.....	Pavilion.....	2.00-4.00p.m.
23	Wed	Upstagers Amateur Dramatics.....	Village Hall.....	7.30-9.30p.m.

24	Thu	Senior Circuits.....	Pavilion.....	9.30-10.15a.m.
24	Thu	Tai Chi.....	Village Hall Annex.....	9.30-10.30a.m.
24	Thu	Zumba.....	Village Hall.....	7.30-8.30p.m.
24	Thu	Christingle Service.....	Church.....	4.00p.m.
24	Thu	Christmas Eve Party.....	B.M.I.....	8.00p.m.
24	Thu	Midnight Communion.....	Church.....	11.30p.m.
30	Wed	Wednesday Probus.....	B.M.I.....	10.00a.m.
31	Thu	New Year's Eve Party.....	B.M.I.....	7.30p.m.

Regular weekly events not listed below this line

JANUARY

4	Mon	Upton WI.....	Village Hall.....	7.30-10.00p.m.
4	Mon	Parish Council Meeting.....	Pavilion.....	7.30p.m.
9	Sat	Post Christmas and New Year Quiz.....	B.M.I.....	8.00p.m.
10	Sun	Copy Date for February issue of USL Life		
11	Mon	Twyver WI.....	Village Hall.....	7.30-10.00p.m.
18	Mon	Abbeydale Garden Club.....	Village Hall.....	7.30-9.30p.m.
20	Wed	Ladies Probus.....	BMI.....	10.15a.m.
21	Thu	History Group - Gloucestershire's Industrial Heritage.....	Village Hall.....	7.30-9.00p.m.
25	Mon	Camera Club.....	Village Hall.....	7.00-9.00p.m.
28	Thu	Get Together Club	Village Hall.....	2.30-4.30p.m.

FEBRUARY

1	Mon	Upton WI.....	Village Hall.....	7.30-10.00p.m.
1	Mon	Parish Council Meeting.....	Pavilion.....	7.30p.m.
8	Mon	Twyver WI.....	Village Hall.....	7.30-10.00p.m.
10	Wed	Copy Date for March issue of USL Life.....	Village Green.....	9.30a.m.
18	Thu	Upstagers - Pantomime.....	Village Hall	
19	Fri	Upstagers - Pantomime.....	Village Hall	
20	Sat	Upstagers - Pantomime.....	Village Hall	
22	Mon	Abbeydale Garden Club.....	Village Hall.....	7.30-9.30p.m.
29	Mon	Camera Club.....	Village Hall.....	7.00-9.00p.m.

To get your event included in the diary, contact Paula Quinn :

The USL Life Christmas Quiz!

This is very different from last year's challenge. There are 45 clues below to a set of very similar things. Work out the theme and solve as many of the clues as you can. A prize, very relevant to the theme of course, will be given to the person solving the most clues, and in case of a tie, the winner will be drawn from a hat. Send your answers in to the postbox at the Village Hall, or via the website, by 31st December. The winner's name will be announced in the February issue.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| 1 Wobbly infants | 16 Piece of snow | 31 Wandering singers |
| 2 Where refined people live | 17 Feline gear | 32 The sun blew up? |
| 3 100% precious | 18 Occult perhaps | 33 King of the jungle's watering hole |
| 4 9, 10,11 | 19 Corks for big mouths | 34 Grain and cane |
| 5 Fruit falls | 20 A galaxy | 35 Alfresco meal |
| 6 Carrier for dairy produce | 21 Punishment for a nut | 36 Valentine symbols |
| 7 Mother's local | 22 Break in a game | 37 Not chewy |
| 8 All sorts of girls | 23 London has big red ones | 38 US noughts and crosses |
| 9 Royal herb | 24 It's nonsense | 39 Frisbee plates? |
| 10 Pleasure in Istanbul | 25 9 pin bowling | 40 Inhabitants of Mediterranean island |
| 11 Sport of the princes | 26 Theme | 41 Dairy product north of the border |
| 12 Home for alcoholic teeth | 27 Tartan granite | 42 Uniform in tango medley? |
| 13 Speak quietly | 28 Clever clogs | 43 The lorry won't get far without them |
| 14 Edible fasteners | 29 Petals and prickles | 44 Just over 26 miles |
| 15 Aromatic spheres | 30 Dating websites | 45 Majorettes do this with their batons |

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MAKE YOUR OWN CHRISTMAS TABLE CENTREPIECE

To celebrate Christmas Dinner it's always nice putting a finishing touch to your table with a Christmas themed centrepiece.

Materials: A saucer or dish, half a brick of floral foam, floristry wires, a tall candle, candle support or candle pick, ivy, spruce or pine, fir cones, fresh flowers, small fruit (can be artificial), sticks of cinnamon, baubles, etc.

Method: Cut a piece of foam to fit your container, soak it well and apply floral tape to secure. Place the candle in the middle using a candle pick or by pushing the candle into the foam.

Then start arranging your foliage around the candle. Take care not to place it too close to the candle in case it catches fire.

Wire your fir cones and cinnamon sticks in groups of 3 and place at intervals around the centrepiece.

Place the fresh flowers, small fruit and baubles around making a beautiful centrepiece which everyone can view all around whilst enjoying their Christmas Lunch/Dinner.



PS - DON'T LEAVE LIT CANDLES UNATTENDED!

Christmas at home by Bob Tranter

The large Christmas tree that stood in the hall,
With holly and ivy hung on the front door,
The smell from the kitchen of parsley and thyme,
Mother getting tipsy on a glass of port wine.

Christmas puddings home-made, and home-made
mince pies,
Dad's Christmas shallots that brought tears to our eyes.
We saved two bob a week for our Christmas cheer
With the man at the door selling Davenport's beer.

The last Christmas shopping was done Christmas Eve,
The decorations put up and lights lit up on the tree.
Don't wake up too early, mother would say
As she gave us a stocking on the way up to bed.

But my sister and me just couldn't sleep,
And would wake up Christmas morning long before six.
At the foot of the bed the first thing to see
Was my Christmas stocking now full to the brim.

And the presents that mother had so long tried to hide,
Father Christmas had delivered them, and
somehow always on time.

To my Christmas at home I can never return,
But it's never forgotten with the passing of years.

*This poem was written many years ago by Bob. He says,
"This poem reminds me of Christmas at home before
Facebook, Twitter and mobile phones!"*

Allotments are good for you!

A university research team has shown that a single session of pottering on an allotment resulted in an instant reduction in stress and fatigue, as well as a boost to self-esteem, vigour and a general feeling of good health. Half an hour of activity at the allotment, or in the garden, repeated as little as once a week, has the power to do long-term good for body and mind.

When the team compared allotment holders to non-gardeners, they found those on the allotment were less likely to be overweight, had more energy and were less angry, depressed and anxious.

Impressed? Well there are vacant plots at both allotment sites! Contact allotment managers Carol Evans (Perry Orchard) or Peter Macey (The Stanley).

PERSONAL COLUMN

In Memory of Derek Brinkley

Alan and Peter wish to express their deep appreciation to so many friends and neighbours for their kind support, many cards and messages of sympathy and comfort received at the recent passing of their dearly loved father Derek and for the generous donations given in his memory to our village Church of St Leonard.

DECEMBER AND NEW YEAR EVENTS AT THE



BMI



Saturday 12th December

Traditional Christmas Lunch for Senior Members of the Club with entertainment by "Kenny" (now fully booked)

Saturday 19th December

Christmas Draw and Carol Singing

Thursday 24th December

Christmas Eve Entertainment Night for Members with "Eclipse"

New Year's Eve

New Year's Eve Buffet and Entertainment Night to welcome in the New Year, with "The Buck Stops" (Ticketed event for Club Members Only)

Saturday 9th January 2016

Post Christmas/New Year Quiz Night

UPTON ST LEONARDS LIFE

Web site: <http://usllife.co.uk/>

To contact us, use the website above or the postbox by the Village Hall main door, or use the contact details that appear below:

- This month's editor: Andy Russell
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Andy Russell
Peter Wilson
 - Company Secretary: Cliff Alderman
 - Treasurer: Ian Crowe
 - Feature writers: Kaye Redman
Christina Caldwell
Teresa Clarke
Linda Munnoch
 - Clubs / Societies / Organisations: Catherine McLean
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