



Friends of Old Headington

Honorary Secretary: Stella Welford, 33 Old High Street, Headington, Oxford OX3 9HP
Telephone: (01865) 764024
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November 2009

WINTER NEWSLETTER

WINTER MEETING

The Winter Meeting this year will be held on Friday, 27th November at 8 p.m. in the Parish Hall, Dunstan Road, when David Marquand, retired Principal of Mansfield College and a writer on political subjects, will talk to us on *Masks of Power: A review of some Oxford educated Prime Ministers of the last 100 years*. His most recent book 'Britain since 1918' was published by Weidenfeld & Nicholson in 2008. As many of you will know, David lives in Old Headington and he and Judith have opened their garden to us on Open Gardens days. We are delighted that he has agreed to give this talk to us, his neighbours.

Business at this meeting is kept to a minimum but the evening will conclude with wine, nibbles and chat, as on previous occasions, during which there will be an opportunity to talk to members of the committee about local concerns.

Our next social event will be Open Gardens, which will take place on Sunday, 13th June 2010.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and SUBSCRIPTIONS

The next AGM will be held on a Friday evening early in May 2010, also in the Parish Hall. Subscriptions for 2010 will shortly be due and may be paid any time now at the rate of £5 per household and should be paid to the Treasurer, Peter Gray, at 39 Old High Street, using the form below. Those not already paying by standing order, but wishing to pay by this method, should ask the Treasurer for the appropriate form. If you regularly come to the Friends' events, and make use of our efforts to solve problems in the village, we wish to encourage you to become members – unless, of course you already are.

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The Friends of Old Headington

1. I am/we are a member/s of the FOH and wish to/already pay by standing order OR enclose the subscription of £5 for the year ending 31st December
2. I/we would like to join the FOH, and enclose a completed standing order form/the subscription of £5 per household for the year ending 31st December
3. I am/we are content for my/our name/s address and phone number to be held on the Friends' computerised list of members.

Please delete as appropriate (Please make cheques payable to "Friends of Old Headington")

(Please use block capitals)

Signature

Title(s) Name(s)

Address

.....

Phone No.

Please complete and return to the Hon. Treasurer: I.P.W. Gray, 39 Old High Street, Headington,
Oxford OX3 9HP: Phone: 01865 768080

President: Mrs Penny Richards MBE MA Vice-President: Ray Wilsdon Esq



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MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

We are delighted that Veronica Hurst, a member of the Friends committee, has agreed to undertake this task and she will be liaising with the Treasurer, Peter Gray, about the payment of subscriptions, issue of membership cards, and reminders to those members whose subscriptions are outstanding. As we mentioned in an earlier newsletter, we would like to be able to welcome new members to the Friends more formally than we do at present, and to get to know them individually at a social event. We would like to encourage newcomers to the area, whether they live in the village or close by, to join the Friends and to help us in our efforts to look after problems within the Conservation Area.

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

You will see from the accompanying newsletter that we are asking for ideas on how we might celebrate this special anniversary, and are inviting you to join an *ad hoc* committee to organise events. We look forward to hearing from you so do please get in touch with the Chairman, Sarah King, at 1 The Croft (phone: 763679), or the Secretary.

FOH WEBSITE

As you will know from earlier newsletters our website is now active (foh.org.uk) and is being maintained by Katie Rayner who volunteered to set it up for us. There are numerous links to other websites within Headington so there is an excellent overview of the area as a whole. We do recommend you look at it, and we would welcome additional historical information about your house, along with anecdotes from the past, to add to our knowledge of life in Old Headington which would be additional to that which is already recorded in our books *Within Living Memory* and *A Village within a City*: copies of both books are available from the Secretary. Do tell the Secretary about any such information you would like included on the website.

RUSKIN COLLEGE

An update from the Principal, Professor Audrey Mullender:

“The Ruskin College Governing Executive has now given the green light to a slightly streamlined version of the capital project to redevelop the College on its Old Headington site. The overall cost of this will be just under £20million and the move of Ruskin’s headquarters from Walton Street in the city centre to Dunstan Road in Old Headington remains scheduled for 2012.

The failure of the Learning and Skills Council to live up to its unwritten promise of helping to fund the project has meant (as for colleges all over the country) that some aspects of the Ruskin project have had to be dropped or adjusted. The existing residences will be refurbished (which helps the environment) and a cafeteria will be located in the heart of the Academic Building (and open to local people who want to visit without cars). The crinkle crinkle wall and, indeed, the entire wall around the former walled garden has now been repaired and looks splendid, though it cannot yet be visited as much of the area is fenced off and the garden closed pending the rest of the construction work on site. In the future, it may once again become a walled garden but that is looking a long way ahead. In advance of this, some current students are trying to tend a small plot at Stoke House. Being new to gardening, they have asked for help and advice. Anyone able to offer this should contact the Principal, please at the email address given below.

We are currently in an intense period of detailed design. We expect the refurbishment of the buildings on the western side of the site (Smith House and all three residential blocks) to happen between mid-March and late September 2010. The 1960s extension to the Rookery is likely to be demolished in August 2010, followed by a building programme over a two-year period embracing the new Academic Building, and Block D - the 30-bed residential block to the east of the site. Both will have to go back to the City Council for some changes to save money, but not changes of a kind



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that will render them any more intrusive or less attractive. (For example, the Academic Building will have only half a storey at basement level, to save very expensive digging into the slope.) The main College drive and the internal construction route will be used as access for all the work. Stoke Place residents will be pleased to learn that the proposed electricity substation does not now look likely to be needed (owing to increased capacity being available through the existing substation as much as because Ruskin is building less – it is a mystery to us why this was not known sooner but apparently these things are constantly changing). As most readers will know, the one aspect of the project that has yet to be resolved is car parking on the Ruskin site. I don't think anyone came away from the Strategic Development Control Committee at the Town Hall in July feeling that a good job had been done by the committee (which is not a criticism of any individual). Indeed, they apparently spent half their next meeting trying to clarify what they had decided and why. As a consequence, Ruskin is likely to appeal against the decision to reject its entire car parking proposals. We don't think this is what anyone wanted to see happen and it leaves the whole question uncomfortably up in the air. Hence we feel we must try again and no doubt a wise decision will be reached when matters are examined more thoroughly. Whatever that decision may be, we remain committed to working closely and warmly with our neighbours. I am happy to answer any questions and to respond to any comments on this brief report, via email: amullender@ruskin.ac.uk".

BURY KNOWLE PARK

Inaugural meetings have taken place in connection with the formation of the Friends of Bury Knowle Park. The City's Parks department is working on a management plan similar to that in place for other city parks, and we would be glad to hear from anyone who would like to be involved with the preservation of this attractive and well used park.

Work to create disabled access to the library is due to start very soon, after years of lobbying by the Friends of OH and discussion with the County and City councils.

CAR PARKING ON THE PARISH HALL VERGE

We want to reassure local residents that we have been working with the City Council in an effort to stop the parking of cars on the verge outside the Parish Hall and we hope, with the help of our City Councillors, to have achieved a solution and that the work will be carried out in the foreseeable future.

STREET LIGHTS

Just a reminder about street lights now that the evenings are drawing in: during the winter the lights are checked on a regular basis but anyone who notices a faulty lamp should ring a freephone number, or send an email, to report the fault. You will need to give the number on the lamp post (usually between one and three metres up) and/or the location of the lamp. The Freephone number is 0800 317 802 and the email address is streetlighting@oxfordshire.gov.uk. The office is manned during working hours, i.e. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays to Thursdays, and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Fridays. At other times you will get an answerphone message, in which case leave your name and number and ask for a call back. The contractors have five days during which to repair normal faults.

GRAFFITI

The City Council is responsible for removing graffiti from public areas and public buildings but are unable to remove it from private property without the consent of the owner. Graffiti is removed within five working days of a report if it is within the city centre, or within 14 working days outside the city centre. Its removal is handled by City Works and the phone number is 0800 227676.