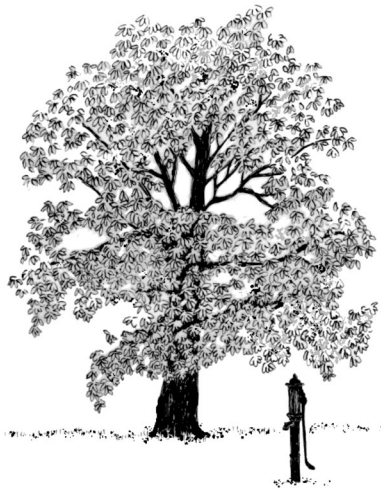
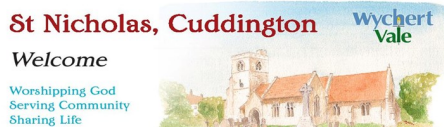




Cuddington Village Voice

December 2024



Services in December 2024

1st December	All-Age Advent Holy Communion
8th December	Gift Service and Nativity
15th December	Holy Communion
22nd December	Morning Worship
24th December	Crib Service at 2.00pm
24th December	Carol Service at 7.00pm
25th December	Family Service, with Holy Communion
29th December	All-Age Holy Communion

Services in January 2025

5th January	All-Age Service
12th January	Holy Communion, with Children's activities in the Bernard Hall
19th January	All-Age Holy Communion
26th January	Morning Worship, with Children's activities in the Bernard Hall

Unless stated, all services are at 10.00am
All are welcome

Community Library



Earlier this year the PC sponsored a Community Library for Cuddington. The Cuddington Playing Fields Association have agreed for the library to be situated beside the clubhouse on

the car park side.

Susan Henshaw from Waddesdon has kindly agreed to stock the library with a selection of titles including romance, thrillers and murder mysteries. The selection is regularly changed. There are also books for children of all ages.

The books are free to take – pass them on to friends or sit in the playing fields for a read on a nice day.



Village Carol Singing

Please join us for carol singing around the village on Thursday 19th of December in aid of Crisis and Tearfund.

Meet at 6pm at the playing fields end of Bernard Close.

Please bring a torch and wear hi viz. Younger children are very welcome but must be supervised by an adult at all times.

Cuddington Playing Fields Association is looking for new committee members.

If you think you would like to be involved in the organisation of this excellent village facility, please contact our secretary at carolhayward24@com.

Thought for the month...

As we enter December once more, the festive season is well and truly upon us, whether we feel ready for it or not. With lights and decorations going up outside and in our homes, the familiar sense of Christmas approaching returns.



The traditions we associate with Christmas have diverse origins, from the neolithic beginnings of the winter solstice festival, via the medieval yule log, to the German Christmas trees popularised by Prince Albert during the Victorian era. The singing of Christmas carols dates back centuries, with The Angels' Hymn, thought to be the oldest, having been composed in 129 AD. Music has a particular ability to transport us to the past and recall memories, a fact well-known to advertisers. Christmas music, whether secular or religious, is particularly good at this, but carols also point us to the reason Christians still celebrate Christmas.

Music does not have to be old, of course, to be illuminative. Nick Cave, in his recent *Wild God* album, contemplates pain and suffering but finds euphoria despite it. Here is a man who has known the depths of grief (having lost two sons in the past decade), but through his music talks of amazement, wonder and joy. He has been open about his re-engagement with Christianity, and speaks of finding faith and hope even among the carnage of our world. In the song *Joy* he sings of looking beyond, above, and to the stars that “*stand above the earth, bright, triumphant metaphors of love*”.

Perhaps this Christmas, try to take a quiet moment away from the festive activity to think of the star that pointed to Jesus, and remember the triumphant message of love that he brings us.

Merry Christmas!

Will Lewis, churchwarden

Cuddington Aims for Best Kept Village Award – Let's Get Ready!

Following our success in winning the Morris Cup, Cuddington is advancing next year to the cup winners cup stage! This is a wonderful opportunity for us to highlight the beauty and community spirit of our village and in preparation for the judges' visit, we're launching monthly working parties from January onwards, and we'd love your help.

Working Parties

Starting Saturday, 18th January 2025, we'll meet on the Upper Green at 10am on the third Saturday of each month for a couple of hours to tidy the village.

The judging route has been carefully planned to highlight the key locations that will be evaluated by the judges:

- Starting at the Upper Green, they will go past the seating area at the top of Welford Way to Bernard Close
- From Bernard close they will assess the playing fields and playground, past the clubhouse to Aylesbury Road, then down Holly Tree Lane
- From Holly Tree lane down to the Lower Green and then up Lower Church Street past the Methodist church to Tibby's Lane
- Down Tibby's Lane to the well and then back up, past the church returning via Upper Church Street to finish at the Upper Green and the pump.

Cont. Pg5

News from the School



Smart winter uniforms appeared after October half term, the playground surface was repaired and the hall received a fresh coat of paint. This proved a good presentation space for Miss Webb's parent's phonics workshop on 8th November. Remembrance Day was respectfully observed at both sites on Monday 11th November. The infant pupils helped lay a wreath at the village war memorial in the churchyard. Children in Need fundraising saw the pupils and staff with very creative 'wacky hair' in assorted colours and styles brightening up a dull November day!

A couple of new faces have recently appeared at school; they are two Oxford Brookes 3rd year students, Miss Coles with Year 2 class and Miss Meehan with Year 5 joining as part of their teaching experience. We are delighted to encourage new teachers to the profession and our pupils are benefiting from additional expertise in their classrooms.

As we write the children are moving towards the end of a very busy term reading Christmas Stories in Advent, rehearsing for their Nativity plays and practising their Carol singing for the Sunshine Club Christmas party. The excitement is already building!



CHRISTMAS BRING & BUY

at Tyringham Hall
on Monday 2nd December
at 2.00pm

Great bargains, raffle and
tea

A warm welcome to everyone

Proceeds for Sunshine Club Christmas
Party



YOGA

WITH ILONA

Weekly hatha/vinyasa Yoga classes for
mixed abilities in the Bernard Hall,
Cuddington:

Mondays: 6pm

Fridays: 9.30am

Mondays every week, Fridays during school termtime only



To book a class, go to
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or, get in touch:
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ST.NICHOLAS' CHURCH,
CUDDINGTON

CHRISTMAS TRAIL

FRIDAY 20TH DECEMBER
TO
SUNDAY 5TH JANUARY

USE A TRAIL MAP TO FIND CLUES HIDDEN AMONGST
THE CHRISTMAS DISPLAYS AROUND THE VILLAGE.
CAN YOU WORK OUT THE HIDDEN MESSAGE?

TRAIL SHEETS
AVAILABLE FROM THE
CHURCH PORCH AND
VILLAGE WEBSITE

PRIZES TO BE WON!

Christmas at St Nicholas' Cuddington

There are lots of Christmas events to get involved with throughout the festive season. Please find the flyer included with this copy of Village Voice for a full round-up.

Here are a few of the exciting events that are happening in December.

Firstly, Cuddington and Dinton churches are holding a Craft and Christingle event at Dinton church on Sunday 3rd December from 4pm to 5:30pm. Families are warmly invited to come and make a Christingle, take part in other Christmas activities and enjoy festive refreshments.

On the 10th December, children of Cuddington church will be performing their nativity play at 10am and we are asking those attending to bring gifts for the women and children who are supported by Aylesbury Women's Aid.

Another event to get you in the festive mood is the Christmas Craft Afternoon on 21st December. This will be an opportunity for both families and adults to enjoy making some festive crafts such as Christmas decorations and festive decor for your Christmas table.

Carol Singing around the village returns once more this year. Join us at 6pm on Wednesday 20th December to spread tidings of comfort and joy around Cuddington. Meeting point to be confirmed, please check the website nearer the time.

Finally, on both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day there are services for all.

On Christmas Eve, don't miss the family Christmas crib service at 2pm and the wonderful Carols by Candlelight at 7pm. Christmas Day will see a Family Service, with Holy Communion, at 10.00 - come and celebrate Christmas with a short service in church before heading home for your turkey!



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Cuddington Youth Drama Annie Jr

Led by Elaine English, Cuddington Youth Drama put on another spectacular week of shows this year.

Performing the musical Annie Jr, a cast of 28 actors put on six incredible shows during the October half term to sell out audiences.

A huge thanks goes to all the team who helped put this together, from set design, choreography, costumes, lighting, sound and more.

Photos from the shows can be seen here: www.bencphotography.com/private-collections.

Cont. From page 2

Our aim is to ensure these areas are well-maintained and welcoming, with special attention paid to litter, weeding, tidiness, and overall presentation.

How You Can Help

- **Join the Working Parties:** No special skills are needed—just enthusiasm and a willingness to lend a hand. Bring along tools such as gloves, secateurs, brushes, and bin bags if you have them.
- **Maintain Your Area:** Please ensure the space outside your home or street is kept clean and tidy.

Why It Matters

Winning the Best Kept Village competition is about more than appearances—It's about celebrating our

Nailed It By Gabby Nail Technician

Spurt St, Cuddington (next to Post Office)

Natural Gel & Biab Manicures

Gel manicure £20

French manicure £25

Plain Biab £30

Biab with colour £33

French manicure Biab £35

Extras

Simple Nail Art (each hand) £3

Removal (each hand) £5



07547564404

Instagram & Facebook:
Nailed_It_ByGabby

community and the spirit that makes Cuddington a wonderful place to live.

Join Us!

Whether you can join us monthly or just for one session, your help will be hugely appreciated. For more information or to volunteer contact Kez at kezia@kezialuckett.com for more details.

THE GENTLE CRAFT OF GRAVE TENDING

'A gentle craft, carried out by gentle people in gentle surroundings' would be my summing up of Grave Tending, a niche industry which is slowly but surely growing in the U.K.

The idea is to clean and restore graves and headstones in a non destructive manner (i.e. no sand blasting !), using environmentally friendly products as far as possible and doing so in as gentle way as is feasible.

No matter what I do, I can never return the stone to its original state, as constant exposure to the weather and the environment will inevitably weather and age it, but it is certainly possible to return it to a condition that a customer 'can be proud of', as one of my clients said to me.

Those sort of feelings are always in my thoughts when I'm working for a client and cleaning their loved one's resting place – I'm acutely aware of their investment in feelings, time, money and memories, hence the name of my company Memories Grave Tending.

It's safe to say that Grave Tending is not widely known in the Dioceses of St. Albans and Oxford, the two areas which I cover. Although there's no authentic history of the trade, I think it's safe to say it has its roots in Eire, with it's centuries old tradition of 'Cemetery Sunday'.

This was an annual day, usually in the summer, where graves were garlanded and decorated , but has slowly but surely morphed into a day of remembrance, flower laying and grave cleaning.

There's an apocryphal, but amusing story, which says it was a sideline for Council cemetery workers. It's said they'd be tipped a few quid by mourners or relatives to look after the grave, a process which happily continued for many years until Council managers found out that the workers were spending half their time, and using the Council's tools to carry out their profitable side line in working hours. Needless to say this brought an abrupt halt to the practice!

Back to reality, it's certainly a well established trade in Ireland, with even small towns having several firms. A blogger writing on the subject said that the Roman Catholic community had far more 'flamboyant' graves and were far more likely to use their services than their more austere Presbyterian counterparts.

Interestingly the biggest firms in England tend to be in the North West/Merseyside, areas with a long history of Irish immigration. Having said that the sector has spread throughout much of the U.K. to the extent that there is now a national Association of Grave Tenders (of which I am proud to say, I am a member of)

www.associationofgravetenders.org which encourages best practice, professionalism and environmentally friendly processes.

Many of the best practices are taken from the



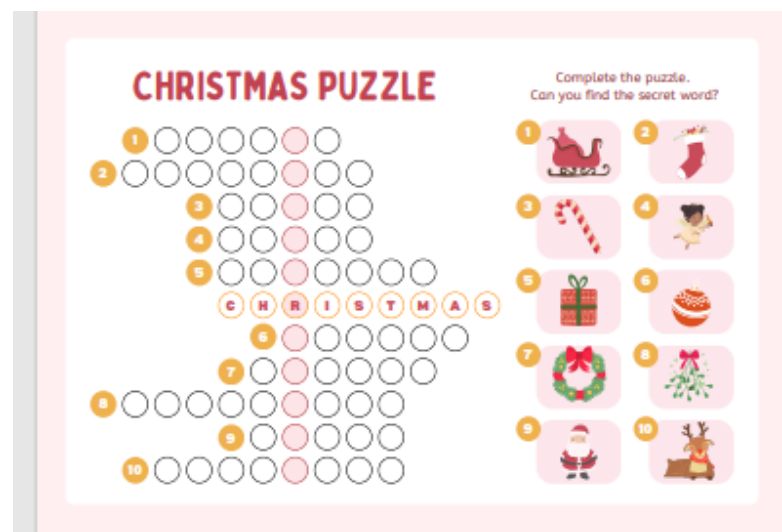
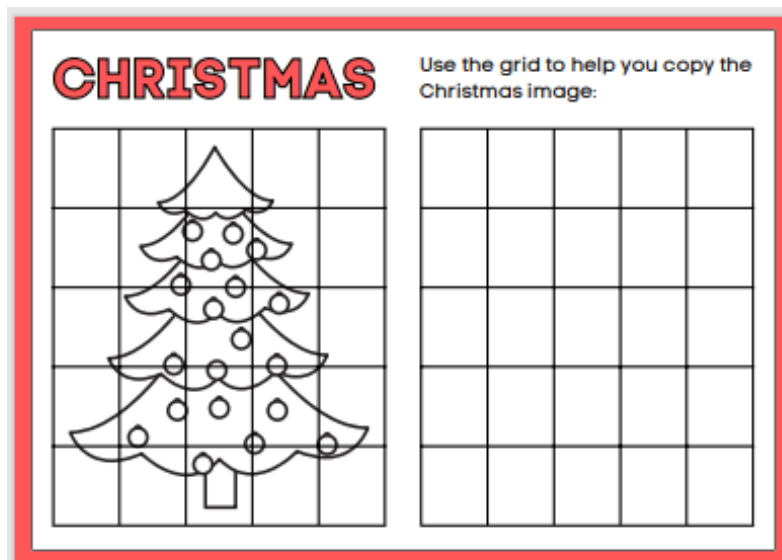
Commonwealth War Graves Commission (www.cwgc.org) , which it would be remiss of me to ignore. They are a wonderful organisation, which somehow manages to maintain 1.75 million graves over 23,000 burial sites in 153 countries, all in impeccable condition. If it's good enough for them then it's good enough for me!

I think this gradual expansion has to do with two trends, namely longevity and mobility. Turning first to longevity – we are all living longer, and youngsters today will usually spend many years knowing their grandparents and even great grandparents. This just didn't happen 50-75 years ago. and means that today's generation have, in my humble opinion, a far more intense bond to their grandparents. This results in work for me (!), as they don't want their much loved relatives to be forgotten or neglected.

This latter point feeds into the second trend, namely the increased mobility of families in the last 50-75 years. So many people now move away from their birthplace for work or University etc. but still feel a connection to their family's historical base. They are obviously unable to tend their relatives' graves and so the need for someone to do it for them. So why do I do it? Primarily it gives me huge job satisfaction, something I hadn't had for years. It's also very rewarding , seeing the results of my endeavours and hearing/reading the positive, and sometimes very moving, reactions from my clients. I enjoy running my own business and I love the environment; graveyards are very peaceful, beautiful places which are a joy to work in. Add in the fact that there's no pressure or deadlines, that my clients are lovely people and I've always been interested in churches and local history I think it's safe to say I've got the perfect job! I hope I've shone a light on a niche sector that my friends and acquaintances are generally fascinated by.

I'll sign off with, inevitably, a little sales pitch. If you want to see examples of what I can do , or require any further information please visit my website www.memoriesgravetending.co.uk .

Andy Stephenson



Dates for your Diary



December 2024 and January 2025

December

Monday 2nd, 2.00pm	Sunshine Club Bring & Buy, Tyringham Hall
Tuesday 3rd, 2.00pm	Tuesday Group, Festive Tea & Secret Santa, Playing Fields Clubhouse
Wednesday 4th, 8.00pm	Bookworms Book Club Playing Fields Clubhouse
Sunday 8th, 10.00am	Nativity and Gift Service, St Nicholas Church
Monday 9th, 1.00pm	Sunshine Club Christmas Party Lunch, Bernard Hall
Wednesday 18th, 7pm	Parish Council Meeting, Bernard Hall (TBC)
Thursday 19th, 6.00pm	Carol Singing around the village
Friday 20th, 2.00pm	'Elf', Village Picture House
Sunday 22nd, 3.00pm	Christmas Crafternoon, St Nicholas Church
Tuesday 24th, 2.00pm	Crib Service, St Nicholas Church
Tuesday 24th, 7.00pm	Carol Service, St Nicholas Church
Wednesday 25th, 10am	Christmas Family Service, with Holy Communion St Nicholas Church

January

Monday 6th, 2.00pm	Sunshine Club Tea, Playing Fields Clubhouse
Tuesday 7th, 2.00pm	Tuesday Group, Favourite Poems Playing Fields Clubhouse. Guests Welcome
Wednesday 8th, 8.00pm	Bookworms Book Club Playing Fields Clubhouse
Monday 20th, 1.30pm	Cuddington Matinee Cinema, 'The Lady in the Van'
Thursday 23rd, 8.00pm	'The Critic', Village Picture House
Wednesday 29th, 7pm	Parish Council Meeting, Bernard Hall (TBC)

Every Friday, at 10.00am, in term time, Toddlers Singing Group takes place in St Nicholas Church. Everyone is welcome. For more details please contact Christine (christine.jackson@live.co.uk) for Toddlers Singing Group. For more information please refer to the village website – cuddingtonvillage.com

Sunshine Club Dates

December

Monday 2nd December, 2.00pm
Bring and Buy in Tyringham Hall
Monday 9th December, 1.00pm
Sunshine Club Christmas Party Lunch, Bernard Hall

January

Monday 6th January, 2.00pm
Sunshine Club Tea, Playing Fields Clubhouse
Monday 20th January, 1.30pm
Cuddington Matinee Cinema, 'The Lady in the Van'

Cuddington Matinee Cinema

On Monday 20th January at 1.30 (doors open at 1.00) in the Bernard Hall, the film, **The Lady in the Van** will be screened. A film starring Maggie Smith, Alex Jennings and Jim Broadbent. In this true story Maggie Smith stars as Miss Mary Shepherd, who 'temporarily' parked her van in the driveway of Alan Bennett's home – and stayed there for the next 15 years! After inviting herself in to use the bathroom she proved



impossible to budge, and yet, despite her prickly, irascible nature, she becomes the heart and soul of the district.

Entry £7 (Sunshine Club members £5)
Includes tea and cake at the interval.

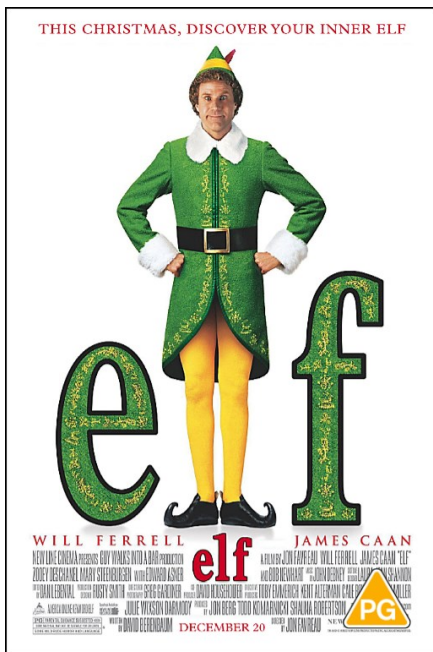
Village Picture House Screenings

November 2024



We have one last film at the Village Picture House in December to round off the year.

At 2pm on Friday 20th December, half an hour after the school term ends, we'll be screening a Christmas favourite: **Elf** (cert. PG) starring Will Ferrell, James Caan and Bob Newhart.



Buddy (Ferrell) was accidentally transported to the North Pole as a toddler and raised to adulthood among Santa's elves.

Unable to shake the feeling that he doesn't fit in, the adult Buddy travels to New York, in full elf uniform, in search of his real father. This turns out to be Walter Hobbs (Caan), a cynical businessman.

After a DNA test proves the parentage, Walter reluctantly

attempts to start a relationship with the childlike Buddy with increasingly chaotic results...

"Ferrell brings manic energy to this tale of an oversized elf called Buddy and it's still a charmer after 20 years," says *The Guardian*.

"Will Ferrell delivers one of the great modern man child performances, up there with Tom Hanks in *Big*," says *The Times*.

"Supported by a game cast, Ferrell's deer-in-the-headlights schtick is never better than it is here," says *The Telegraph*.

Tickets are £4 for children and £6 for adults, with the price capped at £12 for a family of up to four.

The first film that we have scheduled for the New Year is **The Critic** (cert. 15) on 23rd January, starring Ian McKellen, Gemma Arterton, Mark Strong and Lesley Manville.

It's London, 1934, and Jimmy Erskine (McKellen) is the most feared theatre critic of the age. He lives as flamboyantly as he writes and takes pleasure in savagely taking down any actor who fails to meet his standards.

When the owner of the Daily Chronicle newspaper dies, and his son David Brooke (Strong) takes over, Jimmy quickly finds himself at odds with his new boss and his position under

threat. In an attempt to preserve the power and influence he holds so sacred, Jimmy strikes a Faustian pact with struggling actress Nina Land (Arterton), entangling them and Brooke in a thrilling but deadly web of desire, blackmail and betrayal...



"Ian McKellen and Gemma Arterton steal the show in this tangy tale of a savage theatre critic," says *The Times*.

"Ian McKellen thrills as a vicious but needy theatre reviewer," says the *Financial Times*.

"The Critic is a joy ... it's Agatha Christie on steroids (and McKellen's magnificent)," says the *Daily Mail*.

Tickets on sale at Cuddington Stores or on our web page: www.cuddingtonvillage.com/cinema

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