

December 25th, Christmas Day. To most boys and girls Christmas Day is the most important day of the year. It is the celebration of the Birthday of Christ. Christmas means 'Mass' or Church Service for Christ. Nobody knows at what time of the year Jesus was born. Christians who lived a few hundred years after Jesus chose the twenty-fifth of December to remember his birthday because this was already a special day. Long ago the 25th December was the shortest day of the year and on this day the Sun was worshipped. Christians knew that God had made the Sun and so turned the old pagan festival into a day of worship to the 'Son of God.' Many of the traditions of Christians have been practiced for hundreds and sometimes thousands of years. Decorating our homes with evergreens is a custom much older than the birth of Jesus. So, too, is the giving of gifts at this time of the year. Santa Claus, as we know him, and the sending of Christmas cards are traditions begun less than a hundred years ago.

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The Friends of the Vale of Aylesbury. Mrs. G. Osborn has agreed to act as a liaison between Soulbury Parish Council and the above group. The Friends are concerned with preservation of the character of the Vale of Aylesbury and to this end keep a close watch on planning applications and other matters affecting the Vale.

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From the Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting. Playing Fields. The Chairman stated that a final decision could not be made until another matter with a direct bearing on the issue is settled. The Green. Residents of the Green had asked that their appreciation be expressed of the improvement to the Green as a result of the new kerbing. Traffic Sub-Committee. This committee reported to the Council that they thought the Council should oppose the planning application for a new road bridge at the Three Locks.

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Jubilee Committee. The committee announce the final profit from the various events is in the region of £176, and would like to take this opportunity of thanking all those who gave so generously towards the fund raising activities. The committee who had been expecting to disband decided to remain in being to arrange a social evening early in the New Year, officially to hand over the remaining monies to the Parish Council and to show some colour slides of some of the Jubilee events.

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Carol Singing for Pleasure. Why not revive the old spirit of Christmas by singing carols around the village. There will be a practice in the Clubroom on December 14th at 8.00 p.m. for those who are interested. If anyone is unable to come to the practice but would like to join us on December 22nd at 7.00 p.m., meeting at the Stone, please contact Mrs. M. Rowe at 33 The Green.

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Spring Show. There will be a Spring Show on Saturday, April 22nd 1978 of Flowers, Vegetables, Pot Plants and Bulbs, Cookery and Handicrafts. Start thinking about your entries now.

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We extend a welcome to Mr. and Mrs. J. Linney who have come to live in Stewkley Road and to Mr. and Mrs. Michael Green who have moved into Andrews Close.

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We would like to send our condolences to Mr. Fred Barnes after his accident. Mrs. Barnes would like to thank all those who gave her husband assistance after the accident and who have called with offers of help, and Mr. Andy Aitken for the care and attention he gave to Mr. Barnes on the way to hospital. We wish a speedy recovery to Mrs. Maher, Mrs. M. Jones, Mr. T. Hall and Mr. Wagstaff.

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Chapel Functions. In keeping with the spirit of the Festive Season the notification of forthcoming Chapel events has been submitted to us in verse.

Soulbury Methodist Church - Christmas Fayre and Carol Concert.

On December 10th at three o'clock,
Down at the Village Hall,
Mr. W. Smith will arrive on the dot
To welcome you one and all.
There'll be gifts for your mums, and gifts for your dads
And some for your grandmas too,
So why not come down and join in the fun,
A welcome there'll be there for you.

At a quarter to six we'll gather once more
In the Chapel to sing and to pray,
We'll watch once again at the Stable Door,
And see Jesus asleep in the hay.
Come, join with us all as we worship the King,
And let us this Christmas, our gifts to Him bring.

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Methodist Chapel

Minister: Rev. Norman Burrows,
The Manse, Stewkley. Tel: 251.

Sunday	4th December	10.30 a.m.	Mrs. Heffer.
Saturday	10th December	5.45 p.m.	Carol Service.
Sunday	11th December	6.00 p.m.	Mr. L. Roads.
Sunday	13th December	2.30 p.m.	Toy Service. Rev. R. L. J. Kaye.
Saturday	24th December	11.30 p.m.	Christmas Eve Service.

Sunday School December 4th and 11th at 2.30 p.m.

Bible Study Mondays at 2.30 p.m. Everyone very welcome.
December 5th - 11 The Green; December 12th - 25 The Green: December 19th -
27 The Green.

All Saints Church

Vicar: Rev. Paul Drake,
The Vicarage, Stewkley. Tel: 287.

Sunday	4th December	11.30 a.m.	Sung Eucharist and Sermon.
Sunday	11th December	11.30 a.m.	Sung Eucharist and Sermon.
Friday	16th December	11.30 a.m.	Sutherland School End of Term Carol Service.
Sunday	18th December	11.30 a.m.	Sung Eucharist.
Sunday	25th December	11.30 a.m.	Sung Eucharist and procession with Carols.
(Christmas Day)			
Sunday	1st January	3.00 p.m.	Combined Choirs Carol Service.
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We should like to thank everyone who has contributed to this special Christmas edition of the Newsletter.

Please note that items for the January Newsletter should be handed in by December 16th as we hope as usual to distribute the next issue before Christmas.

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Soulbury, Bucks.

To a village I came as a bride,
Not so far from my home did I ride
The people were friendly and nice
To move now I'd have to think twice.

In the club room where work has been done
At Bingo's we've had lots of fun
There's a W.I., no need to be shy
And the Youth meet there too every Fri.

There's a club so I'm told that's run for the old
And a Women's Fellowship too
We've fought and won battles for WARA and SARA
Not wanting our village to lose.

I wonder where this place could be
Its miles and miles from the sea
Its not very quiet with the cars and the trucks
But its dear old Soulbury, Bucks.

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COMPETITION.

Each answer is a garden flower. Answers in next Newsletter.

1. A dangerous fire iron.
2. Unattached : partly said
3. A girl's name
4. The best policy
5. Frozen vapour : a kind of kick
6. Round of time without end : so be it
7. Youth in springtime ?
8. Part of a month : to dress : out of date
9. Heroine of a harlequinade
10. A fruit : a flower.
11. A female fairy : an eye movement : a broken leg.
12. A letter : a boy's name : in this manner
13. Tales by Chaucer : sometimes an alarm
14. Emblem of friendship
15. A girl's name : a wine
16. Easter without a beginning
17. A colour
18. As modest as a
19. Happy : part of a stringed instrument
20. A "doing" word : a girl's name
21. An animal : could be household
22. A letter : men reversed : a number
23. A flower from Amsterdam
24. Sounds like many sheep
25. Black spot : partly curious
26. The top of the head : a liquid measure
27. A mis-spelt girl's name : an insect : not all husk
28. To conserve with sugar : a cluster of grass
29. Wise management
30. A time of day : precise : a shade of red

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We wish all our readers a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Forthcoming Events.

Monday	5th December	8.00 p.m.	Gardening Association.
Wednesday	7th December	8.00 p.m.	Parish Council Meeting.
Saturday	10th December	3.00 p.m.	Methodist Christmas Fayre.
Tuesday	13th December	8.00 p.m.	Women's Institute. Decoration of Christmas Cake. Competition - Home made iced biscuit.
Wednesday	14th December	2.00 p.m.	Social Circle. Quiz. Yearly subscriptions are now due.
Wednesday	14th December	8.00 p.m.	Carol singing practice.
Thursday	15th December	8.00 p.m.	Christmas Bingo - for Church Roof funds.
Wednesday	21st December	8.00 p.m.	Women's Fellowship at the home of Mrs. P. Norman, 11 The Green. Mrs. P. Faulkner on Christmas Customs.
Thursday	22nd December	7.00 p.m.	Carol singing around the Village.
<u>1978</u>			
Friday	6th January	8.00 p.m.	Social evening for Jubilee monies to be handed over to Parish Council.

All meetings in the Clubroom unless otherwise stated.

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Christmas Over a Hundred Years Ago.

Let us board a modern time machine and go back to the beginning of the nineteenth century and accept an invitation to spend Christmas at Bracebridge Hall in Yorkshire.

Arriving on Christmas Eve we join the huge family circle of relatives and friends to a supper of frumenty - a dish made of wheat cakes boiled in milk with rich spices added - and mince pies. Then we share in the dance in the servants' hall, where are kept up the old games of hoodman blind, shoe the wild mare, steal the white leaf and bob apples. Perhaps we take an interest in the mistletoe, for the young men have the privilege of kissing the girls under it, each time plucking a berry - when the berries are gone the privilege ceases. On Christmas morning, after a short service in the Chapel, we breakfast on cold meats, wine and ale and then walk across the park to the Church for morning service.

Returning home we meet a band of boys with beribboned shirt sleeves, greenery in their hats and clubs in their hands performing a curious dance. Our host tells us that it is a descendant of the sword dance which was popular when the Romans occupied these islands. Then dinner in the great hall, warmed by a crackling fire of logs on the immense hearth. The parson has happily finished grace when the butler leads into the hall servants bearing a silver dish on which lies pig's head, decorated with rosemary and with a lemon in its mouth. After this come roast beef, pheasant pie, plum pudding and many more good things, finishing up with a drink from the Wassail Bowl. When dinner is over the table is removed so that the younger members of the family can play games while the older ones rest.

(The above is taken from the account of a visit to Bracebridge Hall, by William Irving, an American writer who came to England in the early part of the last century.)

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Christmas Crackers.

"Mummy, is that big helping for Tommy?" "No, dear, it's for you." "Coo, what a little bit!"

Waiter: "You rang, sir?" Irrate customer: "No, I was tolling - I thought you were dead."

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