

Osney Island Residents' Association Newsletter

Remembering Malcolm Mundy

Malcolm Mundy, one of the longest surviving residents of Osney, died at the age of 85 on 9 January. The feeling of loss on the island at his death has been huge. Many islanders saw and greeted Malcolm on a daily basis, but his modesty and independence were such that people knew little about his life.

The Mundys moved to their Bridge Street home some time in the early 1960s. Malcolm, a passionate supporter of Oxford City Football Club, worked for Pressed Steel Fisher. Later in life he cared for his wife, who became disabled and predeceased him. He was much involved in the lives of his grandchildren.



Islanders describe Malcolm as gentle, generous, caring, cheerful, energetic and kind. 'He never expected anything from anyone.'

Malcolm collapsed on Osney Bridge on his morning walk and did not recover.

Joan Stubbings, East Street

The sad news of Joan's death came just as the newsletter was going to press. There will be an obituary in the next newsletter.

Daffs on the towpath

Don't forget to look out for the huge number of daffodils and other spring bulbs planted on the towpath by a team of volunteers last autumn. Depending on the soil temperature daffs usually start to appear in March/April.

Wintertime butterflies

Will Scarratt, Bridge Street

Near the end of December, I found two peacock butterflies hibernating in a garden shed on Bridge Street, completely motionless until I got closer for a better look. Suddenly, they flashed their wings open

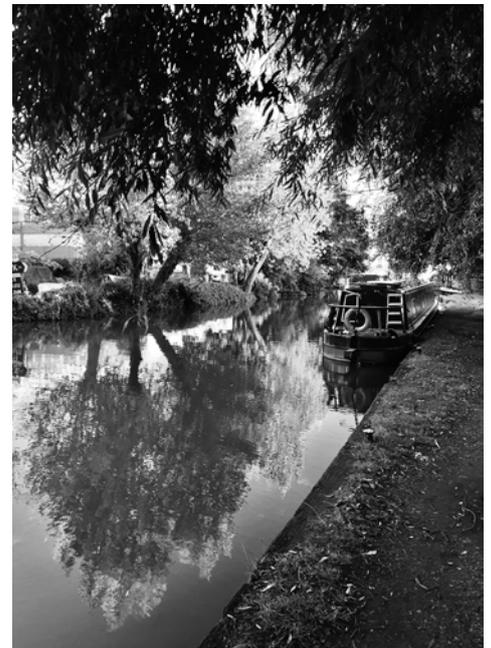


simultaneously, revealing red upper wings and bright blue eyespots. The movement was accompanied by a loud hissing sound created by tiny scales and ridges rubbing against the wing edges to produce vibrations. This display effectively deters predators many times their

size, including mice and blue tits. The peacocks soon closed their wings again, and I left them to continue their winter-long hibernation.

Most butterflies overwinter as larvae or pupae, tucked away at ground level in dense vegetation. In the UK, just five butterfly species are known

to hibernate as adults, three of which commonly choose sheds or outbuildings. This highlights the importance of opening these spaces in spring to allow butterflies to fly away.



▲ A reminder of warmer days from Sushanto Sarkar, South Street

Living on Osney

Zoi Katsirma and Alex Mittos, West Street

Both originally from Greece, we have called Osney Island home for a year now, after seven years in London. We live with our two cats, Hecate and Zelda, who really run the household if we're being honest. Zoi works as a data analyst for a gaming company. Her background is academic: she studied dietetics and applied biology, and earned a PhD in biomedical sciences, but her love for patterns and problem-solving led her to a different career path. Alex is also in tech. He's the Head of AI at a software company and has a PhD in computer science, but his passion is world-building and storytelling.

We both love cinema, cooking food from every corner of the world, and finding new stories to share, whether through films, books, or 'hypothetical geography and theoretical history' as Alex likes to call *Dungeons & Dragons*. Oxford's been a good fit for us. It has that mix of quiet charm and intellectual buzz that keeps life interesting, and we hope to stay here for many years to come.

Pet-sitting update

Robyn Stevenson Haigh, South Street

Just before Christmas Robyn sent this letter, with a cheque for £200, to WWF. Thanks to all the lovely

neighbours who have supported Robyn and also the wildlife fund.



Dear WWF
Thank you so much for working hard to save endangered species, we really appreciate it. Me and some of my friends admire you and wanted to help out, so we decided to raise some money but in an unusual way. We all adore animals, so we chose to help people look after their pets (pet sitting). We help out on various days of the

week and so far we have raised £200 for your funds!

From the pet sitter girls

(Robyn, Armelle, Frankie, Daphne)

The yew tree by the Swan Street bridge

Sarah Pethybridge, West Street

I've lived near the venerable old yew tree on the bank of Osney ditch through many seasons now and watched its widely varied bird life. It is a refuge and useful habitat to so many species. I am sure I have heard a song thrush singing from the heights of the tree in spring. It is hard to spot the bird but the song is piercingly clear. One year a racket of harsh squawks coming from within the branches attracted my attention. Looking into the tree from the bridge I spotted four or five young jays, newly fledged, calling for food. Their parents were close by and I watched them feed the young for some time. Standing on the bridge it is as if one is almost inside the tree itself. Most recently I was delighted to spot a tiny goldcrest very near the bridge among the branches. This tree deserves our respect and protection.

Water Marks exhibition

Elizabeth Newbury, North Street

Sewell Centre Gallery, Radley College, 9 January–12 February Tues, Weds, Thurs, 1–5 p.m.

Amanda Jewell, curator of the Sewell Art Centre at Radley College, was cycling down the towpath on her way to visit my venue during Oxford Artweeks 2024, and



noticed the relationship between riverside features and my work. Thus the idea of Water Marks, an exhibition based on the theme of water, was born.

▲ *Chubb in the Osney Stream.*

Earthenware dish decorated with slip (liquid clay), glaze and gold lustre

I walk to my studio in Jericho along the river, crossing and ducking under bridges, past the Rewley Road Swing Bridge and the last lock on the Oxford–Coventry Canal, and finally along the canal to the studio. These features – the boats, the water, the natural landscape, and the flora and fauna within it, are the inspiration informing my ceramics in this exhibition.

I am exhibiting with painter Su Braden.

West Oxford Academy is back!

Fiona McFarlane, South Street

Tuesdays, 8.15 p.m., 10 Feb–17 March, West Oxford Community Centre

'Academy' is a bit ironic, so if you are new to the island, please don't be scared. Short talks by someone local, informal questions/discussion (no obligation to say anything), lubricated by a glass of wine or soft drink, out by 9.15. One hour of your time, £3 each for individual evenings or £12 (cash only, please) for all six evenings, including a drink, all very relaxed.

I can't give you a list of this term's subjects/speakers yet. But we aim to surprise and interest. Some of the most enjoyable talks I have heard have been on subjects I would have confidently said held no interest for me whatsoever...before I started listening. If you'd like to give a future talk, or join the mailing list, contact Iain Tullis: iain.tullis@gmail.com

Hope to see you there.

Osney Chatty Wednesday

Eli Harriss, Bridge Street

Chats coming up: 18 February, 18 March, 15 April

Fancy a chat in The Punter with Osney neighbours? Come, have a drink, talk and put faces to names from the mailing list. Osney Chatty Wednesday takes place on the third Wednesday of the month from 7 to 9 p.m. at The Punter. Look out for me in a recognisable fluorescent yellow cycling jacket and be sure that you're at the table where Osney neighbours meet and chat. I have high hopes of more film reviews, music and holiday recommendations, and lives to gently learn about.

New Nisa Local

Mansi and Tapan

We're excited to introduce our new Nisa Local store to the neighbourhood. As Oxford residents, we're thrilled to bring a convenient, friendly shopping experience to west Oxford.

Our store stocks a wide range of Co-op products, everyday essentials, and a fresh bakery selection. For easy mealtimes, try the popular COOK frozen-food range, and don't miss a coffee from our in-store Costa Coffee.

We know life can get busy, so we have late opening hours and availability on Deliveroo. We pride ourselves on a personalised, welcoming service, making every visit a pleasant experience.

We can't wait to meet you – come in and say hello at 67 Botley Road.

Opening hours: Monday–Thursday: 7 a.m.–10 p.m., Friday–Saturday: 7 a.m.–11 p.m., Sunday: 8 a.m.–9 p.m.

Development in west Oxford

Lois Muddiman, City Councillor

The local authorities, university and other developers have formed a partnership called Oxford West End which has a new website: www.oxfordwestend.co.uk

It's a useful place to see the extraordinary scale of change in the pipeline for this area, including: Osney Mead, Oxpens, Beaver House, Inventa, Fabrica, County Hall, the Island site, Osney Lane and of course Oxford railway station. There is also the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme and the old garage site by Seacourt P&R.

Sign up for newsletters from these developers so you are kept informed of their progress. It's also worth joining West Oxford Community Association (£10 p.a.) to receive their weekly e-newsletter.

Thinking of getting an allotment?

Before the New Year resolutions about healthy living wear off, and as the spring approaches, it's the perfect time to sign up for an allotment. There are plots and half plots available at Twenty Pound Meadow, just the other side of the Botley Road. Rent is very reasonable. To find out more contact Nick Jackson: secretary@westoxfordallotments.org

News from St Frideswide

Rev. Rachel Cross

It was lovely to celebrate Christmas with so many of you. The Christmas carol service and crib service were highlights. In March this year we will be holding a confirmation service. If you would like to find out more about this, please get in touch: www.osneybenefice.org.uk/contact

Bus shelter

After the public consultation and planning notice, the Chancellor for the Diocese of Oxford has given permission for Network Rail to use land belonging to the church on a temporary basis for an additional bus shelter. This work needs to be completed by 6 February and will be dismantled when the road is opened again. It will not affect the Garden of Remembrance dedicated for the strewing of loved-ones' ashes. St Frideswide remains committed to rewilding the churchyard and continues to work around the current bus-stop provision.

Island freebie day

The freebie day in September, when people left unwanted items outside their houses on a specified Sunday afternoon, was reported to be a great success. Once the weather improves in the spring OIRA will organise another one. The date will be sent out in the email group a couple of weeks in advance.

This is an alternative to, not a replacement for, passing on items via the email group.

OIRA AGM

A date for your diary. The AGM will take place on Wednesday 22 April, 7.30 p.m., St Frideswide Church. There will be a new, improved, sound system.

New OIRA committee members

Following a request for new members, three islanders have been co-opted onto the committee prior to election at the AGM.

Eleanor Dickey of Bridge Street is taking on the role of secretary. Kate Stewart of East Street will host committee meetings. Sarah Parker of Bridge Street will act as co-chair.

Alan Goodwin is resigning as chair so the committee is looking for another co-chair to share the role with Sarah. Please get in touch with any committee member if you would like to stand.

Directory of local suppliers

This list is compiled from islanders' recommendations only. The list is online at: osneyisland.org.uk/directory-of-local-suppliers Please contact Jane Buekett to submit additions or changes.

Baby kit

Baby kit for hire: 01235 280081, www.babycomes2.co.uk

Bicycles, repairs and accessories

Jon Wyver: 07842 901873, info@oxbicycles.co.uk, www.facebook.com/oxbicycles (will deliver and pick up in Oxford free of charge).

Building and roof repairs

Rob Cassettari, North Hinksey Builders: 01865 242312/07977 152884/07900 881511, robnhc@virginmedia.com

Everest Roofing Ltd: 01865 881685, enquiries@everestroofing.co.uk

Brian French: 07957 315303 (local general builder and plasterer: takes on small jobs)

Paul Hackett, P & R Roofing Ltd (Horspath): 01865 875523, info@prroofingoxford.co.uk, www.prroofingoxford.co.uk

Mark Mavrommatis: 07970 974792 (installs new windows, repairs old ones)

Tim Mera, KM Builders Oxford: 01865 608649, 07462 971475, nfo@kmbuildersoxford.co.uk, kmbuildersoxford.co.uk

Oxford Roofing and Maintenance: 01865 820323, 07468 429000, oxfordroofingandmaintenance.co.uk

Richard S. Pocock: 07766 026648 (general builder)

Mike Shephard, MJ Construction (Abingdon): 07834 321274, mjconstruction@hotmail.co.uk (larger jobs)

Carpenters and flooring

Carlos Pereira: carpenteroxford22@gmail.com

Leo Eastley: 07496 701244, leoeastley@gmail.com (cabinet maker/carpenter, lives on Osney)

Jonathan Everett, Lockwood Carpentry: 07597 952381, j.everett.lwc@gmail.com

Bill Spires: 07786 672492 (carpenter willing to take on smaller fiddly jobs)

Car repairs and MOTs

Oxon Autos in Grove near Wantage (will come to you): 07899 762949, oxon.autos@live.co.uk, oxonautos.co.uk

Cat sitting/feeding and dog walking

Shirley Gibson (also housework, shopping, companionship): 07510 991213 (Binsey)

Chimney sweep

Martin Simmonds: 07762 816185, enquiry@ashlogs.com, www.ashlogs.com

Cleaners

C&S Cleaning Services: 01865 872395, 07824 159855
Edna: 07548 384737

Clothing alterations

Bespoke Alterations (Makespace, Hayfield Road): 07835 098 496, www.bespokealterationsoxford.co.uk

Computers

Bill Baxter, The Animated Laser Company: 07774 412944 (noon to midnight, Old Marston), bill@animatedlaser.co.uk

Bill Richardson: 01865 376100, bill@macfaction.co.uk (Macs)
Mac Simple: 01865 580886/07974 321064, www.macsimple.co.uk

Damp

Damprot Renovations Ltd: 01865 742144

Stonehouses:

stonehousewaterproofing.co.uk

Electricians

Baldwin Appliances: 01865 377484, www.baldwinappliances.com

Jamie Cooke: 07775 700300, JC.Electrical@hotmail.com

DEC Electricians: 01865 725453, mail@decoxford.co.uk, www.dec-oxfordltd.co.uk

Andy Webb (A W Electrical Services, Yarnton): 01865 377171, 07931 127982

Footcare in your home

Kate Reid: 07952 127534

Garden compost and manure

George: 01793 575100/07831 437989, info@muckandmulch.co.uk, www.muckandmulch.co.uk

Gardening services

Rory Whelehan: 07341 849035, rory@rorlyn.co.uk (gardener, lawn/hedge cutting, general tidying)
Clive: 07787 741968

Heather: 07522 856744 (one-off or regular jobs, heavy or light work including pruning)

Green builders and installers

Energy My Way: 08453 713181, www.energymyway.co.uk

JoJu Solar: 01865 403336, www.jojusolar.co.uk

Next Generation Renewable Energy Ltd: 01993 810130, office@ngre.co.uk

Gutter clearing

Ben's Gutters: 0800 917 3157/07778 240161, info@bensgutters.com, www.bensgutters.com

Greg Zasuwa:

clearviewforyou@gmail.com (also window cleaning)

Handymen

Mark Morris, Botley: 07970 342375 (small jobs, minor electrics and plumbing)

Andrew Russell: 01865 453497/07977 837675 (painting, decorating and garden maintenance)
Colin Stanley, The Small Odd Jobs Company: 07804 908545

Home hairdressers

Sally Horton: 07815 445229
Nadine Wright: 07824 660184

Locksmith

Ross Blaikie, Lockforce Oxford: 07588 844042, www.lockforce.co.uk/locksmith/Oxford

Newsagent delivering to Osney

Mr Patel, Court Candy Shop, 65 Woodstock Rd, Oxford OX2 6HJ: 01865 515506/07917 990029, court candyshop@googlemail.com

Painters and decorators

Steve Brierty: 01491 836762/07850 357414

Paul Buckle: 07920 099196

John Chappell: 07985 490970

Dan Driscoll: 07934 718788, danieldriscoll63@gmail.com (also home repairs)

Sam Gordon: 07976 516941 (plasterer)

Brendan McCarthy: 07982 614633

Pests

Avenge: 02865 246195/07879 405060 (based in Binsey)

Plumbing and heating

APV Boiler Services: 01865 377264
Byron Morris, Avid Heating (boiler repairs etc.): 07899 629629, 01865 703303, www.avidheating.co.uk

Jules Jones: 01993 778244/07790 961395, reallygoodplumbing@outlook.com
Ivan Kilbee: 01235 847527 /07771 787585

Oxtech Facilities: 07868 190748, www.oxtechfacilities.com

Remloc Plumbing and Heating: 01235 536345 (Abingdon)

Simon Crowther Plumbing and Heating: 07709 102328, sjclplumbheat@gmail.com

Removals

A. G. Jacob and Sons: 07977 963929, www.agjacobandson.co.uk
House and Carriage: 01608 811444/07769 585988

Martini Moves: 07495 908330/07887 631348, www.martinimoves.com, martinimovesremovals@gmail.com

TV aerials, wi-fi and satellite dishes

Oxford Aerials: 01865 400141, <https://oxfordaerials.co.uk> (installers and repairers)

Upholsterers

Anna Burt: annaburt@gmail.com
Adriano Ribeiro: 07771 560658 (Cowley, will collect small items)

Window cleaning

Mark Jennings: 01865 848904/07773 159198

James Middlebrook, Transparent Window Cleaning: 07957 410771, messageTWC@gmail.com

Torrison Slaney: 07746 356307

Windows

Oxford Refurbished Sash Windows, John: info@sashrefurbcompany.co.uk (refurbish the wooden frame and insert double-glazed panels)

OIRA info

Bridge Street noticeboard

To display something on the noticeboard (no larger than A5) contact Julia Marsh julia.marsh@btconnect.com or put it through her door at 26 Bridge Street.

Osney email list

To join the residents' email list, moderated by Alison Burdett, contact: osiramanager@gmail.com

OIRA committee

Andrew Boag andrew@boag.org.uk, Alison Burdett alison.burdett@gmail.com (email list), Eleanor Dickey (secretary) e.dickey@reading.ac.uk, Alan Goodwin (chair) 07765 034918 alan@alanguoodwin.co.uk, Eli Harriss gek2@yahoo.co.uk, Maria Holt (treasurer) mariaholt@yahoo.com, Philippa Lanchbery planchbery@icloud.com, Sarah Parker (co-chair) sarahparker_29@hotmail.com, 07834 772016, Karen Schoenemann 07718 632742, Kate Stewart kate.stewart1908@gmail.com, Julia Turner 07971 881258.

Newsletter

Newsletter and website editor: Jane Buekett (janebuekett@yahoo.co.uk 07716 408085). Newsletter distribution: Anna Truelove. Copy deadline for next newsletter: 22 April.

Councillor Susanna Pressel
7 Rawlinson Road, Oxford, OX2 6UE

Osney and St Thomas Ward

Home: 01865 554001
E: cllrspressel@oxford.gov.uk



OIRA newsletter supplement – February 2026

Network Rail (NR)

The first week of February will be the most spectacular time in the massive and horribly delayed project of replacing the railway bridge. (Most of the delay was caused by Thames Water.) The old bridge will be demolished, and the three new spans (built in advance) will be inched or craned into place. Step-free access through the station will be provided to get into the city centre and cycles can be wheeled. There will be a lot of marshals to help.

Osney Bridge

The separate project by Thames Water to replace the damaged water main under Osney Bridge has also been deplorably delayed. The damage was done (by an Environment Agency boat) in 2021, but work didn't start properly until 2024. It was supposed to finish in March 2025. The latest date for the temporary traffic lights to be removed is August of this year. However, SSE are now holding things up, because they can't find their cables.

Road works beside St Frideswide Church

Yet more disruption is about to hit your area. In the first week of February the county council will be working with NR to install an extra temporary bus shelter and waiting area on church land and at the same time sorting out the drainage in the road beside the bus stop and building a new pavement. The pedestrian crossing and the bus stop will be moved slightly eastwards for a week, so please take care when exiting Bridge Street.

Crime and anti-social behaviour

There is very little crime on Osney Island, but I have had some reports of drug-dealing recently. If you see anything that might be drug-dealing, it is important that you keep a record of the dates and times and report them to the police. Please report other anti-social behaviour as well. You can phone 101 or report it online. Please also look out for our excellent new PCSO, Toni Day, or come and meet her at the OIRA AGM on 22 April.

Ward surgeries

I still hold a surgery on the first and third Saturday of each month from 11 am to 12 noon. On the first Saturday it's at Jericho Community Centre and on the third at West Oxford Community Centre. You are also welcome to email me or phone me at any time if you notice problems with such things as streetlights, refuse collections, fly-tipping and potholes – or better still you can report them online at "FixMyStreet Oxfordshire". I can also often help with questions about such things as schools, social services, or traffic. I send out an e-newsletter to the Osney Island email group each week. Please join the group if you are not currently a member.

Susanna

