

Dorney in 1965: A Year of Community Spirit, Faith, and Change

The *Dorney Parish News* issues from January to December 1965 offer a rich tapestry of village life, highlighting the strong sense of community, the central role of the Parish Church of St. James, and the emergence of local concerns that would shape Dorney's future.

A Vibrant Church Community:

The *Parish News* meticulously documents the activities of St. James Church, reflecting its importance in the lives of Dorney residents:

- **Detailed Service Schedules:** Each issue outlines upcoming services, emphasising the regular rhythm of worship, including Holy Communion, Mattins, Evensong, and Sunday School.
- **Special Events:** The publication highlights significant events like Ash Wednesday services, Mothering Sunday, the annual Parochial Church Meeting, and the confirmation of Elizabeth Roche.
- **Financial Stewardship:** The *Parish News* actively promotes the Christian Stewardship Development Campaign, aiming to increase financial contributions and encourage active participation in church life. Detailed financial reports and calls for support are featured.
- **Commemorations:** The church plays a vital role in marking important life events, with the *Parish News* recording baptisms, marriages, burials, and cremations.

Engaged Community Organisations:

Beyond the church, several organisations contribute to Dorney's social vibrancy:

- **Dorney Women's Institute (DWI):** The *Parish News* reports on the DWI's monthly meetings, featuring speakers on diverse topics like "Dressmaking Today." The DWI also organises social events and outings, contributing to the community's social calendar.
- **Dorney Horticultural Society:** The society fosters a shared passion for gardening, organising events like the Spring Display competition for the Bulbeck Cup and a film show featuring "The Gardens of Britain."
- **Dorney Players:** This amateur drama group entertains the parish with productions like "Toad of Toad Hall" and "Deadly Record," providing opportunities for residents to participate in and enjoy theatre.

Emerging Local Concerns:

The *Parish News* also reveals emerging local concerns that would become prominent in later years:

- **Impact of Development:** The opening of the Langley-Chiswick section of the M4 motorway and the Local Government Commission's review of local boundaries spark concerns about Dorney's future and the preservation of its rural character.
- **Traffic Safety:** Letters to the Editor and Parish Council reports highlight concerns about road safety, particularly the lack of a footpath along a stretch of Marsh Lane and the need for improvements at accident-prone junctions.
- **Need for a New Village Hall:** The *Parish News* acknowledges the inadequacy of the existing village hall and reports on early discussions regarding the need for a new facility.

A Year of Community Spirit:

Despite these emerging concerns, 1965 is characterised by a strong sense of community spirit:

- **Fundraising Efforts:** Residents actively support local causes through events like jumble sales, raffles, and sponsored carol singing, reflecting a willingness to contribute to community well-being.
- **Celebrations:** The Parish Summer Fete and events like the South Bucks Conservative Association's Spring Party bring residents together for shared enjoyment and social interaction.
- **The *Parish News* as a Platform for Discussion:** The "Letters to the Editor" section provides a space for residents to express their opinions and engage in dialogue on matters of local concern.

Dorney in 1965 emerges as a close-knit community grounded in faith and tradition. The *Parish News* serves as a vital chronicle of village life, documenting the activities of the church and local organisations, while also providing a platform for discussing emerging challenges that would shape the future of Dorney.