

Dorney in 1968: A Year of Community Spirit and Local Initiatives

The *Dorney Parish News* issues from January to December 1968 provide a vivid portrayal of a thriving village community deeply invested in local affairs. This year is marked by robust participation in religious and social activities, as well as ongoing discussions and actions concerning local issues, particularly the Christian Stewardship Campaign and the anticipation for a new village hall.

A Thriving Church Community:

The Parish Church of St. James is a central pillar of Dorney life, and the *Parish News* meticulously documents its activities:

- **Regular services:** Details of Holy Communion, Morning Prayers, Evensong, and Sunday School are consistently provided, emphasising the church's role in the weekly rhythm of the village.
- **Special events:** Notable events such as the Church Forum, the annual Parochial Church Meeting, the Family Service for Mothering Sunday, and the Flower Festival at Dorney Court highlight the church's engagement beyond regular services.
- **Christian Stewardship Campaign:** The campaign, aimed at raising funds for the church's operational costs, repairs, and charitable giving, is a recurring theme throughout the year. The *Parish News* publishes detailed reports on the campaign's progress, emphasising the importance of community support.

Active Social Organisations:

Dorney boasts a lively network of social organisations catering to various interests:

- **Dorney Women's Institute (DWI):** The DWI holds monthly meetings featuring diverse speakers, organises outings (including a trip to the Wembley Ice Show), and contributes to local fundraising efforts.
- **Dorney Horticultural Society (DHS):** The DHS fosters a love for gardening through its annual show, attracting a commendable number of entries despite unfavourable weather conditions. The Society also organises a demonstration on Floral Decoration, reflecting its commitment to sharing knowledge and skills.
- **Dorney Women's Social Club (DWSC):** The DWSC provides a space for women to socialise and engage in activities like listening to talks on Antiques and enjoying a Christmas party.
- **Dorney Players:** The amateur drama group provides entertainment for the community, organising a Social Evening with performances by both junior and senior members, and staging a "who dunnit" comedy play.

Engaging with Local Matters:

The *Parish News* serves as a platform for discussions and updates regarding local issues:

- **New Village Hall:** The community anticipates the construction of a new village hall, with discussions centred around fundraising strategies, potential grants, and the sale of the old village hall site.
- **Dorney Common:** The management of the common land, particularly the use of Cinagro fertiliser, generates debate. Letters to the editor voice concerns about potential environmental and aesthetic impacts, highlighting the community's engagement with environmental stewardship.

- **Traffic and Road Safety:** Discussions around road safety include issues like speeding vehicles, the need for cattle warning signs, and the installation of traffic signals at Lent Rise and Marsh Lane.
- **British Standard Time:** The introduction of British Standard Time sparks varied reactions among residents, with letters to the editor expressing both support and criticism of the change.

The *Dorney Parish News*: A Reflection of Community Life:

The *Parish News* functions as a vital communication tool:

- **Informing residents:** It provides a comprehensive overview of local events, church services, and social gatherings, keeping residents informed and fostering participation.
- **Facilitating discussion:** The inclusion of letters to the editor provides a space for residents to express their opinions and concerns, showcasing the diversity of perspectives within Dorney.
- **Promoting community spirit:** The *Parish News* celebrates the achievements of local organisations and individuals, acknowledges the contributions of volunteers, and encourages collective action towards shared goals.

Dorney in 1968 emerges as a vibrant and engaged community. The *Parish News* captures a year marked by strong religious participation, an active social scene, and ongoing dialogue surrounding local issues, painting a picture of a village deeply invested in its present and future.