



Newsletter for King's Thorn, The Birches & Aconbury

A newsletter for the villages of King's Thorn, Little Birch, Much Birch & Aconbury Decemberr 2012- First published 1977

Diary Dates

November

28th Gardening Club LBVH
30th Antiques Valuation MBCH

December

1st Book Exchange LBVH
5th Gardening Club Social LBVH
6th Christmas Bingo LBVH
11th Whist Drive LBVH

December

6th MB Parish Council MBCH
11th Flicks in the Sticks MBCH
18th WI MBCH
21st Village Market MBCH
31st. New Year's Eve Party LBVH

February

8 & 9th Jack and the Beanstalk LBVH

Are you a Tweeter or want to become one?

See page 2

Pantomime tickets now available

January Newsletter

Please send copy for the January Newsletter to birchesnews@gmail.com or written contributions to John Bryantat Bramley Bungalow, Aconbuty Close by 18th. December

The Birches New Year's Eve Party

At Little Birch Village Hall



December 31st. 2012
7.30 pm. -Late

Dancing to
DJ Wolfie

Licenced Bar, Refreshments

Tickets available from:

Di 01981 540401, Iris 01981540068, Jackie 01981 541027

£6 each (£10 after 21st. December)

A Day in the Life of a Dairy Farmer

Thanks are due to Sue and Bob Mason for the excellent illustrated talk they gave at Little Birch Hall on 14th October. The audience of more than 50 people heard about silage production, the cattle breeding programme and robotic milking at Merrivale farm. The talk generated a lot of interest and many questions. As a result a farm visit will probably be arranged during next summer. Watch out for an announcement!

Twitter

The Birches are now on Twitter! The account is @lbmbinfo or you can go direct to <https://twitter.com/LBMBInfo> Some of you may well ask “what is Twitter?”, or you may have seen references elsewhere and not known how to get involved. Twitter is a real-time information network that connects you to the latest stories, ideas, opinions and news about what you find interesting. Simply find the accounts you find most compelling and follow the conversations. At the heart of Twitter are small bursts of information called Tweets. Each Tweet is 140 characters long, but don’t let the small size fool you—you can discover a lot in a little space. You can see photos, videos and conversations directly in Tweets to get the whole story at a glance, and all in one place. You don’t have to build a web page to surf the web, and you don’t have to tweet to enjoy Twitter. Whether you tweet 100 times a day or never, you still have access to the voices and information surrounding all that interests you. You can contribute, or just listen in and retrieve up-to-the-second information.

Much Birch and Little Birch Parish Councils have joined together to provide this service to their parishioners, which will be in addition to the newsletter. By its very nature, Twitter is instant, so local news stories can be publicised immediately, without waiting for the newsletter to be published. Simply go to <https://twitter.com/LBMBInfo> to follow the conversations, you don’t need to open an account. However, if you want to join in and add your own comments, you will have to set up your own account. If you want to publicise your own local event, simply add @lbmbinfo to your Tweet so that it can be circulated to interested parties.

For further information, please contact Cllr Terry Cook

Local News

It is sad to report the death of GEOFFERY PRIME of Wormelow, a few weeks before his 85th. birthday. Geoff. was born in Stroud, the son of a Vicar, who later

took charge of the Church at Lydbrook when Geoff was in his early teens. In Lydbrook, he was befriended by Pat Mann, who eventually became his brother-in-law. At the funeral service at the Crematorium on 1st November conducted by Rev. Mark Johnson, it was fitting that Pat, a lifelong friend, gave the eulogy. As teenagers they both loved music, particularly jazz, and the old black and white films with all the glamorous stars, such as Hede Le Marr. Geoff loved cricket, playing as a fast bowler and was a good tennis player where his height gave him a great advantage at the net. He did extremely well at school and went to Bristol University from where he graduated in French in 1948. He was appointed to teach at Long Eaton, Nottinghamshire and in 1957, married Val whom he had first met when she was 15. A vacancy for a French teacher at Ross Grammar School was advertised in 1959 and Geoff was successful in obtaining this appointment. They moved to Tump Lane where in due time Richard, Alison and John were born. When Ross Grammar School closed, Geoff taught at John Kyrle High School and became Vice-Principal, but had to retire on health grounds in 1985, having given 25 years of teaching service in Ross.

A keen sportsman in his younger days, he was associated with Wormelow Cricket Club for many years and gave much encouragement to Richard and John who, in turn, played for many seasons at the club. Geoff had a fine record of service to the community both as a member of Much Birch Parish Council and Much Birch Parochial Church Council. He also administered the Much Birch charities and served on the board of governors at Much Birch School. Sadly, Val died just over 2 years ago after 53 years of marriage and this was a bitter blow to Geoff as he had suffered a stroke a few years before and Val had given him her utmost care. He suffered another stroke a few months ago and was treated at Ross Community Hospital, but died in the County Hospital on Oct. 20th. Donations in memory of Geoff were given to Ross Community Hospital. We extend our sincere sympathy to Richard, Alison, John and grandchildren, Sarah and Georgina. He will be greatly missed by many friends, neighbours and former pupils.

The sudden death of JUNE LEWIS of Hollybush Lane was a shock to family and friends alike as she was due to be taken by neighbours to a coffee morning that day. Her funeral service at a packed Much Birch Church was conducted by Rev. Mark Johnson from whose address, these notes are given.

June was born at Llansteffan, near Carmarthen, on 13th. June 1927 and was the oldest of 5 children, her father

being an auctioneer and her mother a district nurse. June attended the local school and set her sights on becoming a nurse. When she was 14, she spotted a local lad riding his cycle with a dog running as fast as it could alongside.

June was so incensed that she told the lad exactly what she thought of him and of course that young man was Noel Lewis. They started courting and while Noel trained to be a teacher, that career was put on hold as he was called up into the RAF. June came to Hereford to start nursing but missed her family so much that she returned home without completing the course. When Noel came home, they were married in Llansteffan in 1949 and his first teaching post was in London but they lived on the western outskirts, near Kew Gardens. The family increased to three when Susan was born in 1951 and Jane arrived in 1954. Noel was well established as a respected teacher and the opportunity came for a move to Goodrich School. This was a sad period for the family as their third daughter, Sarah, was born with a split spine. With June's love and care, she lived for 18 months, much longer than expected.

Noel meanwhile, had been appointed head at Little Dewchurch, so the family moved there and Sarah is buried in the churchyard. This sad loss was partially healed by the arrival of Carol in 1958, which meant that June's love and energy had a new outlet.

In 1964, Noel succeeded the late Miss Frances Lawrence, as head of Much Birch School and Alison was born in 1966. The head teacher's house was usually integral with the school and often lacked many amenities. Noel oversaw the building of the new school, which was opened in 1966. The family then rented the old school house and classrooms for a few years, but later purchased them. June could make any house a home and with Noel, transformed the building into a real family home.

With all the children at school, June worked for a while in the radiology department at the County Hospital and then became school secretary for some 5 years. Noel retired in 1984 after 20 years of inspirational teaching at the school. They moved in time to Far End in Hollybush Lane, where they enjoyed great times with visits from the family and the growing grandchildren, Matt, Ben, Nick, Isobel and Angus. June, meanwhile, enjoyed a busy social life with the WI and Probus and rediscovered her artistic talents in painting and flower arranging in addition to her dressmaking and cookery skills.

Naturally, music played a large part in the family life with Noel and June both playing the piano and encouraging their daughters to take up several

instruments. Many former pupils at MB School have expressed their thanks that Noel, with others, introduced music and singing and taught them with great enthusiasm.

Noel and June were great friends with Douglas and Peggy Manning and their family and also the Millers at Rosslea.

June did not speak fluent Welsh but certainly understood it and this proved useful in discussions with Noel when they did not wish the children to understand what they were talking about. After some 16 years of retirement, Noel's health began to decline and June gave him her utmost care, although they could not get out and about so frequently. Noel sadly died in 2004 after 55 years of marriage and although devastated by her loss, June did not give up and continued to attend MB Church, the WI, Flicks in the Sticks and Evergreen outings with the help of many friends as well as delivering Meals on Wheels.

Her sudden passing on 24th October followed the death the previous day of Matt, the eldest grandson, has been a double tragedy for the family.

Noel had written many poems throughout his life and one of them,

'One Life, One Love', was read at June's funeral service by the Rev. Preb. Kay Garlick.

Donations in memory of June were given to 'Shine'- the Spina Bifida Charity and Much Birch Church and we send our heartfelt condolences to Susan, Jane, Carol and Alison and their families.

The death is also announced of Mrs. Maisy Powell, erstwhile of Tump Lane. Her funeral service takes place on Nov. 20th at St. Davids, Much Dewchurch and further details will be given later.

Andrew Holley was badly injured in a serious motorcycle accident some months ago and is currently being treated at Oswestry. This is a bitter blow to the family as his brother, Stephen, died just a year ago. We send our best wishes to Andy, wife Katy and mother Eileen.

Little Birch and King's Thorn History Group

We still have a few of our book, Little Birch on Aconbury Hill, for sale for £10. They would make that ideal Christmas present if you have recently moved into the area or know someone who has. They are also much appreciated by those who have moved away. If you would like to purchase one please ring 01981 540791.

The small group of us who produced the book still meet regularly and organise talks in the village hall on subjects more or less historical. We pay for the

speakers from the profits from our book sales and have bought the screen and contributed to the projector used for talks. The entry charge to these talks goes to Village Hall funds and towards refreshments.

In the new year we plan to have an open history group meeting in the hall and hope that anyone who expressed an interest in our Parish Plan questionnaire will come forward. We hope that more will join us and bring ideas for further talks and research.

Brownies

1st Much Birch Brownies have had an exciting and busy term. We are currently working towards the cooking badge and are starting to prepare to make christmas crafts.

We have raised money for Children in Need by having a pyjama night and a cake sale, and are very happy to say the Brownies have raised approximately about £250.00. Well done girls!

All the Brownies are excited for the end of term as we are going on a trip to Clearwell Caves to see Father Christmas to tell him what our christmas wish list is.

Police Briefing Sunday 18th November 2012 South Herefordshire & Golden Valley

Kingstone

A lady was assaulted in the playpark between Lowfield Meadow and Coldstone Cross at 11pm on Friday 16th November. She had been walking her black Labrador dog when she was punched and fell to the ground. She managed to get away from her assailant, the only details are that it was a male with a deep voice. If you have any information please call us on 101 quoting the incident number. Incident ref 703-s-161112

Madley

A Blue Citroen Xsara CK*4WUV was involved in 'lamping' at a farm just outside the village on the evening of Thursday 8th November. The occupants of the vehicle, who are local, have since been spoken to by myself, and the farmer made it very clear by his actions at the time they were not welcome on his land! I don't doubt that they will carry on with this activity, but we need to catch them at it, so please call in and a patrol will be sent if one is free. Incident ref 193-n-081112
A quantity of diesel was stolen from a tank on another farm just outside the village overnight on 12th/13th November. Incident ref 79-s-131112

Update

The four males that were arrested in the layby outside

Bredwardine on 8th November that had been involved with offering tarmac services were all released without charge later the same day, after having been interviewed by Trading Standards Officers.

This is however, not to say that they were legitimate, but they are the 'monkeys' and Trading Standards are after the 'organ grinder'!

The male they are after is the one that went round touting for work in the area, we know who he is and we have supplied Trading Standards with the contact details of several residents who have been visited by this male and are willing to make statements. Once all the evidence has been gathered, it is the intention of the TS officers to arrest and charge this male with offences relating to false representation. If you have been visited by this male offering to lay tarmac, saying he is with Amey, and have not yet reported it, please get in touch if you are happy for Trading Standards to make contact with you.

The male in question has already been in prison for similar offences committed in Devon. He has registered his company as Amey Roadworks, which unfortunately is legitimate, but obviously the sole reason he has done this is to mislead people! He will give out business cards with that name on, which also gives people the false impression that **he can be trusted.**

I doubt they will be in this area again for a while, but please let us know if they are!

At least we lost them a days 'work' and a lorry load of tarmac by keeping them in custody all day!

Scam

The Trading Standards Office are making people aware of the following scam:

A card is posted through your door from a company called PDS (Parcel Delivery Service) suggesting that they were unable to deliver a parcel and that you need to contact them on 0906 6611911 DO NOT call this number, as this is a mail scam originating from Belize. If you call the number and you start to hear a recorded message you will already have been billed £315 for the phone call. If you do receive a card with these details, then please contact Royal Mail Fraud on 020 7239 6655 or the Police on 101.

Rural Business Advice Day - Wednesday 21st November

Just a reminder about this event which is being held this coming Wednesday between 12noon and 8pm at The Three Counties Hotel in Hereford, which is free and open to all.

Myself and PCSO Alison Dore from Ross Rural will be

there with a stand, and we are being joined by Mr Bob Haynes who is our Traffic Management Officer. Due to the current problems with the mud on the roads, he thought it would be a good idea to be there to offer advice, and also on any other traffic matters.

Best wishes, Fiona

Golden Valley & Hereford Rural South Local Policing Teams

PC 2176 Wendy Powell 07811 131525

PCSO 6173 Fiona Witcher 07779 141232

PCSO 6366 James Cooke 07779 141223

PCSO 6482 Katie Middleton 07779 141223 E-mail - goldenvalley.lpt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

Non emergency number 101

A DOG WALKING NIGHTMARE

On Monday 12th November 2012 at around 1.30pm a routine afternoon walk with our dog in Aconbury woods turned into every dog owners' nightmare. Our dog "Bailey" was set upon by an aggressive Dalmatian breed of dog near the perimeter of the woods. In a frantic bid to evade his aggressor "Bailey" ran (with the Dalmatian in hot pursuit) the length of the main lane from Aconbury woods down to the main road at Kingsthorpe near the Thorn bus shelter. By the time my wife made it to the road our dog was nowhere to be seen.

So began a traumatic 10 hours of searching for "Bailey" around all our regular walking routes. Our dog is chipped and tagged so we informed the relevant authorities that our dog was missing. Thankfully, at around 11.00pm that night we were reunited with "Bailey" near the Thorn bus shelter. Remarkably, our dog was in good health – he was clean, dry and warm which makes us wonder if someone in the area had taken him in during this time. If this was the case we would like to extend our thanks to the person/ persons who looked after him. We would also like to thank all our neighbours and fellow dog walkers who were supportive and kept a look out for "Bailey".

To the owners of the Dalmatian we would like to say that it is your responsibility to keep an aggressive dog under control/muzzled and on a lead at all times. Fortunately, this time around we are so glad that it was a happy ending but suffice to say it may be a different story next time when the confrontation with this Dalmatian will result in your beloved pet being seriously injured or killed. Mr & Mrs Kearney.

Much Birch WI

Much Birch WI takes place in Much Birch Community

Hall, signed just off the A49, on the third Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm.

The December meeting is the member's Christmas evening.

Please ring Kath, 01981 540382, if you would like to know more about Much Birch WI.

Much Birch Village Market

On December 21st (yes, I know it is a week early!) we hope be welcoming our usual local suppliers: the award winning Squeaky Pig, producers of rare breed pork and delicious sausage (including Gluten Free, made to order): the award winning Moor Meals, producers of Dexter beef, ready meals and pies: Jane Symonds represents Llandinabo Farm Shop, bringing, among other things, chicken, duck, and lamb: Castle Cheese, Mr. G's chutneys, jams and pickles, Trefor will be here with quiches, both savoury and sweet, Ray will bring her hand made chocolates and there will be a vegetable stall. Sarah Snell will be bringing along apples together with fruit juices. Dan will be with us to sharpen tools etc.

There is a Fair Trade stand, and craft stands.

Much Birch WI has a book stall, raising money for The Cobalt Trust, its Charity of the Year.

Refreshments are made and sold by Chris and Peter, all the proceeds of which go to McMillan Cancer Support. This information is correct at the time of writing.

However, because of events out of my control, I cannot guarantee attendance by everyone mentioned

Our Village Market needs your support in order to continue bringing local food to Much Birch. For further details, please contact Kath, 01981 540382

Cathedral Perpetual Trust December Dates

Saturday 1st December

Christmas Sparkle: a lunchtime organ recital given by Peter Dyke, assistant organist, in support of the Perpetual Trust. Retiring collection. 1.15-2 pm

Sunday 2 December

Advent Sunday Carol Service sung by the cathedral choir. Hereford Cathedral. All welcome. 3.30 pm

Saturday 8 December

Handel's Messiah sung, by candlelight, by Hereford Choral Society. Ticket information 0845 46 33 124 tickets@herefordchoralsociety.org. 7.30 pm

Sunday 9 December

Boy Bishop Ceremony

A former chorister is Enthroned as the Boy Bishop during Evensong. 3.30 pm

Saturday 15 December

Advent Fair and Carols for Shoppers: over 30 stalls of local crafts, produce and seasonal gifts. Mince pies, hot coffee and much more. Christmas Fair 11 am – 2 pm.
Carols for Shoppers 12 noon

Saturday 22 & Sunday 23 December

Festival of Lessons and Carols

Admission by ticket only. See 1 November for ticket application details. 7 pm

Christmas Eve

Sunday School Nativity Play for children and their families 3 pm Choral Evensong with Blessing of the Crib 5.30 pm

Christmas Day

Holy Communion with hymns 8 am The Cathedral Eucharist 10 am Choral Matins 11.30 am Choral Evensong 3.30 pm

Friday 28 December

Holy Innocents Day a Service of Remembrance for parents who have suffered the loss of a child, whether recently or long ago, and for their families. 5.30pm

St. Mary's Church, Little Birch.

We wish all readers a very happy Christmas and New Year, 2013. Our doors will always be open to the community should you need us.

Christmas Services.

*Carols and Christingle service – 23 December 4.00pm.

*Christmas Day – Christmas Holy Communion 11.00am.

2013 services

We have a wide range of services to suit a wide range of people, so why not make it your New Year resolution to join us? Everyone will be welcome.

Monthly service pattern (all services at 11.00am)

*1st Sunday – Holy Communion.

*2nd Sunday – Morning Worship.

*3rd Sunday – Benefice service at 10.00am

(See church magazine/ service board for venue details).

*4th Sunday – Informal Family service.

*5th Sunday – No service at Little Birch.

In February, April, June, August, December, the 1st Sunday communion will be traditional BCP.

ADVANCE NOTICE

Harvest Festival October 6th, 2013

At 6.30pm. Our Guest speaker is the Bishop of Hereford the Right Reverend Anthony Priddis. This will be his first ever visit to Little Birch church.

At Little Birch, we welcome everyone including your screaming kids who will love our Kidz-Zone area. We also have access for wheelchair users, and generally have a welcoming and informal approach to worship. We look forward to welcoming you to St. Mary's very soon.

MUCH BIRCH CHURCH FUNDRAISING

Despite the cold weather the Market Stall at Ross-on-Wye was a great success and we all enjoyed the new venture. A great sum of £530 was raised and we are hopeful of adding to that total through selling one or two more valuable items which we still hold. The Fundraising Committee would like to express their grateful thanks to everyone who supported us by donating goods, making cakes and jams, and to the general public who visited us. Special thanks must go to Shirley Dyke whose idea it was and who looked after us all so well on the day.

I would like to thank the members of the committee and our friends so much for all their superb hard work before and after the event, but above all for manning the stall so willingly and cheerfully on a less than warm day.

Sylvia Jones

Much Birch Church Christmas Choir

The PCC would like to form a Christmas Choir to lead the singing at the Crib Service in Much Birch Church at 3.30pm on 24th December 2012. We would welcome interested children and adults and all we ask is for them to attend two rehearsals beforehand on the two previous Fridays i.e. 14th and 21st December, between 6pm and 7pm in the Church. If you could let us know beforehand if you are willing to form a choir for this special service it would help but you would still be welcome if you just turn up for the rehearsals. Please ring Sylvia Jones, Churchwarden, on 01981 540980 with names.

Much Birch 100 Club Draw

The November draw took place on 6th November 2012 in Much Birch Community Hall. The winners were:

1. No 43 – Mr. D. Jones, Much Birch
2. No 23 - Mr. K. Davies, Much Birch

The next draw will take place on Sunday 9th December 2012 at 10.30am in Much Birch Community Hall
John Jones – Chairman

Carol Singing

Little Birch Church invites you to join us for

Carol Singing around the village
Meet at the village hall for a prompt 6.30pm start. on Friday, 21st December, 2012. All proceeds in aid of Little Birch Church. The evening should last no longer than one hour, so everyone is welcome including children.

For more information or if you have any queries, (eg weather), please phone 01981 540676.

Little Birch Village Hall Committee

Community Book Exchange/Lending Library

November brought to a close the first year of the Book Exchange. It started as an experiment to see if it would work and the resulting attendance was very good. So, the second year will begin on Saturday 1 December at 10.am. (As usual) and a celebratory mince pie will be on offer. All welcome and we look forward to seeing you there.

Christmas Bingo.

There will be a Special Christmas Bingo at Little Birch Village hall on Thursday 6th December. "Eyes down at 8.pm. There will be "Good prizes" and refreshments will be served.

Whist Drive

Our next Whist Drive will be on Tuesday 11 December in Little Birch Village Hall. We shall start at 7.30.p.m. The entrance fee is £ 2.00. Excellent prizes and refreshments will be available. New players are always welcome.

Much Birch Parish Council

Parish Clerk Mrs Alison Wright, Longfield House
Gooses Foot, Kingstone, Herefordshire
HR2 9NE Tel. 01981 250860
Email: muchbirchclerk@hotmail.co.uk

PARISH MEETING – at the Parish Meeting held on the 1st November, at the Much Birch Community Hall, Councillors were addressed by members of the public about Parish matters, including planning applications, and heard an update from CSO Witcher about local policing matters, mud on road problems and crime trends.

There was more discussion on the self help gritting scheme and it was hoped to move the matter to a conclusion so that local gritting initiatives could help local people to remain mobile and safe during cold and icy weather.

There would be a meeting of the Finance Sub Committee meeting to discuss the budget, and precept requirements, before the next meeting, and it was hoped that members of the parish would submit any ideas or

suggestions for things they would like to see happening so that budget planning could take their views into account too. Contact your parish councillors, ward councillor, parish clerk or come along to the next Parish Council meeting to contribute your suggestions.

Full minutes of the meetings etc. can be found on the Parish Council website following the link found in this summary. www.muchbirchparish.org.uk.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Thursday 6th December at 7.30pm at Much Birch Community Hall. Please see notice boards and website for agendas. As always the public and press are more than welcome to attend and will have the opportunity to speak directly to their representatives.

From: Tony Rees, Newtown Cottage:

Tony, Beth and Giles are grateful for the kind and sympathetic report about Joan that appeared in the November edition.

We are also grateful for the kindness shown to us at such a sad time.

How can I thank those who were present at Joan's funeral? In truth I cannot find the words. How do you put into words the emotions experienced on arrival at the Little Birch Chapel to see so many people whose lives had been touched in some way by Joan? 'Thankyou' may not be enough, but it comes from the heart.

I am sure Joan would have found some words to say about the post-Service traffic block. It would have appealed to her sense of humour. Maybe Joan is writing a poem about it...

Joan loved Little Birch, ever since she first saw the advert for Newtown Cottage (and made me agree to its purchase!). Shortly before she died Joan was canvassing the Parish Council that there should be a wildflower garden at the site of the Jubilee Seat.

We have contacted some members of the Parish Council and told them that we will sponsor the garden as a memorial to Joan, if the plan comes to fruition. The garden, hopefully, would be a place for everyone to enjoy.

I would like to thank everyone for the words of comfort expressing such kind thoughts about Joan given in person or by telephone and in the many cards I received.

Parish Council Vacancy

Do you have one evening every other month to spare, because if you do, you could really help to make a difference if :-

You want to help get things done in your community?

You are worried about how cut backs might affect your local services?

Or if you would like to take a more active role within your village?

Then Little Birch Parish Council would like to invite you to consider applying to be a Parish Councillor. To find out more please contact the Parish Clerk, Sophie Glover on littlebirchpcclerk@hotmail.co.uk or telephone her on 01432 270499.

And Finally-Computer password

The following appeared in a newsletter received by a local resident.

During a recent password audit by Google, it was found that a lady was using the following password:

*"MickeyMinniePlutoHueyLouieDewey
DonaldGoofyMelbourne"*

When asked why she had such a long password, she rolled her eyes and said: "Hello! It has to be at least eight characters long and include at least one capital."