



Newsletter for King's Thorn, The Birches & Aconbury

A newsletter for the villages of King's Thorn, Little Birch, Much Birch & Aconbury December 2013. First published 1977

Diary Dates

November

- 22nd Village Market MBCH
- 23rd Flicks in the Sticks
MBCH 2.30 & 7.30 pm.
- 27th Gardening Club LBVH

December

- 4th Gardening Club Social
LBVH
- 5th Much Birch PC MBCH
- 6th Bingo LBVH
- 7th Book Exchange LBVH
- 7th Social Evening & Silent
Auction MBCH
- 11th Whist Drive LBVH
- 14th Social Gathering Cherry
Tree Bungalow LB
- 17th WI Christmas Celebration
MBCH
- 18th Carol Singing
Meet LBVH
- 20th Village market MBCH
- 31st New Years Eve Party
LBVH

January

- 24th & 25th Pantomime LBVH
- 29th Gardening Club LBVH

The Birches

New Years Eve Party

Little Birch Village Hall
7.30 pm. -Late
Licenced Bar
Light refreshments



Dancing to

DJ Wolfie

Tickets £7 each
(£10 after 21st December)

From: Di 540401
Sue 540682
Robyn 540264
Jackie 541027



LITTLE BIRCH VILLAGE HALL PRESENTS

Goldilocks and the Three Bears

FRIDAY 24 JAN - 7.30
SATURDAY 25 - 2.30 or 7.30
Tickets: £6 & £4 (u14)
from: Iris 01981 540068
Jackie 01980 541027



January Newsletter

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

Use of Green Lanes

It's that time of year when problems arise from the use of vehicles on green lanes because of the wet weather.

Residents are reminded that most of the green lanes in Little Birch are registered footpaths and it is therefore a civil offence to use them for horse and bicycle riding. It is also a criminal offence to drive vehicles on them without lawful authority or excuse.

Motorised vehicles with appropriate tax and insurance are permitted to use Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATS). The lane from Crossways Cottage to Wallspool junction is the only BOAT in Little Birch. Parish Lane, mainly in Much Birch, is also one.

Normally tolerance is shown to users of green lanes despite their legal status. However residents are asked to be considerate to others by avoiding damage to footpaths and by driving safely and not speeding on BOATS. It is usually quicker by road.

Local News

A belated welcome to Margaret and John Fraser who moved into Ravensworth, Church Road, Much Birch, in April. They came from West Wales to be nearer the motorway network to make it easier to visit their children, also to be in a lower rainfall area.! We hope to see them participating into village life in due course and wish them a long and happy stay in Much Birch. Last month, the good news of Margaret Smithett's donation of a kidney to her husband, Robin, was reported. It is now with the utmost sadness to report that Robin died suddenly at his desk on Friday, 15th. November after looking and feeling well and enjoying his daily walk to Aconbury Wood, usually with his friend and neighbour, Derek Nash. He was a very good and generous neighbour to many in King's Thorn and we send our sincere sympathies to Margaret and sons, David and Stephen and their families. A fuller tribute to Robin will be given next month. It is also very sad to report the passing of Coral Gidley of Wrigglebrook, peacefully at home on 6th. October. She was born and grew up in Crawley, West Sussex and was a good student who also excelled in netball and hockey. Her further studies had to

be abandoned so that she could care for her mother who became seriously ill, but her caring nature led her to train as a nurse in Oxford. After living on a Kibbutz in Israel and an introduction to farming, Coral returned to the UK and decided to train as a midwife and started a course in Yeovil in 1985. She joined a local conservation group and first met her partner, Alan, who was teaching at Yeovil College.

When she completed her training, she worked for a while at St. George's in Tooting but London did not suit her. She then worked as an assistant warden at Alfriston Youth Hostel in Sussex, being joined later by Alan, they then worked together on a small holding in southern France.

In 1987, they returned to Somerset with Coral working in midwifery at Yeovil Hospital. In 1988, they bought their first house in Wellington where Joe was born followed 3 years later by Alfie. Coral learned about Steiner Education and a group of parents set up a Steiner- inspired playgroup, hoping to establish a Steiner school in Wellington. When it became clear that this wasn't going to happen, Coral and Alan looked for an established school and chose to move to Herefordshire.

Coral quickly became established in the Steiner School at Much Dewchurch and trained as a Kindergarten teacher. She was fantastic with the children, being patient and encouraging and was skilful in making beautiful craft items. As the boys grew older, Coral worked for Tim Headley's veg box scheme and got to know many more people in this community. She then worked at Merrivale Farm for Bob and Sue Mason and also helped Karen Tibbetts with her smallholding at Little Dewchurch. She loved working with animals and they responded wonderfully to her.

Coral was passionate about food and always cooked fresh raw ingredients whenever possible and made sure Joe and Alfie had the best possible healthy diet. Wherever she worked, everyone was impressed with her energy and dedication, always giving 100%, was selfless and went out of her way to help others. She was a very good neighbour to the late Jack Cox and helped him no end when he became frail and didn't look after himself.

For 4 years after she was first diagnosed with cancer, Coral carried on with life as normal. She was determined not to give in, but 2 years ago, her health started to decline rapidly. She had several spells in St. Michael's Hospice where the staff were fantastic. Coral would invariably go in

feeling completely desperate and with in a few days would be complaining that she ought to go home because she felt too well to be taking up a bed!

At home, the MacMillan nurses were wonderfully supportive and Dr. Vanessa England was absolutely marvellous throughout.

Coral had very strong views about how to live but she never preached or tried to persuade others. Instead, like all great teachers, she led by example and with great humility. She touched the lives of many people.

She died peacefully at home on 6th. October and was buried at Humber Woodland of Remembrance on 18th. October following a beautiful and well attended service at Risbury Court.

We send our deepest sympathy to Alan and sons, Joe and Alfie and the very many friends who have been part of her life.

It is also sad to report the death of Colin Anderson erstwhile of Parish Lane, King's Thorn. He was born in 1937 to Rose and George Anderson in Birmingham and had 2 older sisters, Rose and Sally. The 3 siblings all attended St. Patrick's School in Earlswood and Colin went on to Sharmans Cross Boys School in Shirley, where he achieved surprisingly high grades in the examinations. He later went to work at Browns Farm in Earlswood which was followed by tending the local parks and gardens with the Solihull Council.

His main love as a young man was steam engines and aeroplanes and his room was filled to capacity with model aeroplanes and magazines.

In 1966, while living with his mother in Shirley, Colin grew fruit and vegetables in the large garden. Colin met Alison at Umberslade stables where she rode horses. The story goes that one of her friends bet Alison that she wouldn't ask him out. Alison took the challenge and they dated. In 1967, they bought their first Manchester terrier aptly named 'Angus Prune', after a character in the radio series – I'm sorry, I'll Read that Again. This had taken over by then the Goon Show as one of Colin's favourite programmes and both were the main source of his humour. In 1968, they were married at Lechlade Church and set up home with Colin's mother at Windswept Cottage in Parish Lane. The large garden here could accommodate Colin's fruit and veg patches with Alison's horse along with countless Manchester Terriers, whippets, cats and goats and on the odd occasion, sheep.

After discovering they were unable to have children, they adopted Dominic in 1973 and Tony in 1974 and were shocked and surprised when Simon was born in 1979.

While Alison worked as a theatre nurse in the County Hospital and cared for her mother in law, Rose, Colin worked as a storeman and delivery driver for Franklin Barnes in Hereford before leaving to follow his love of gardening and farming. However, his main love was always steam trains and throughout the 1980's and 90's, he was a keen member of the Deane Forest Railway and trained to be a locomotive fireman.

As Alison and Colin aged, she sadly succumbed to illness due to her long term battle with diabetes, which was first diagnosed at the age of eight. Colin became her full time carer, a job which he lovingly did for over 10 years before Alison sadly died in 2009.

When Colin fell ill at the beginning of this year, he moved to the Forebury Nursing Home in Leominster where he lived his last days in comfort, often proclaiming to anyone who would listen – "Would you believe I get three square meals a day here !!!" Colin's funeral service was held at Hereford Crematorium on Wed. 6th. November and we send our condolences to Dominic, Tony and Simon and their families.

The death is also announced of Mr. Geoffery Townsend of Ruff Orchard Bungalow at the easterly end of Little Birch parish. Geoff was 92 years of age, the eldest remaining brother of Victor and Albert Townsend, to whom we send our condolences. A further tribute will be given next month.

Mr. John Brookes of Sellack has died at the age of 90. John was well known over a wide area of South Herefordshire and we send our sincere condolences to his nephew, Adrian Hodges and his family.

It is good to report that Maldwyn Wylor-Owen is now out of hospital following a heart attack and fitting of a stent. He looks much better but is staying with his daughter, Virginia, as he is not yet allowed to drive.

A belated warm welcome is given to Margaret and John Fraser who moved into 'Ravensworth', Much Birch some months ago. We hope to see them participate in village life in due course and wish them a long and happy stay in Much Birch.

Shoe Box Appeal

Betty Bryant would like to thank all those who have kindly filled shoeboxes for the ' Operation-Christmas Child Appeal.' Twenty six boxes were delivered to the warehouse in Rotherwas where they are checked before being transported by lorry. Much Birch School and the WI also respond to this appeal.

Due to the difficulty of obtaining shoe boxes, it is likely that covered boxes will be available for a nominal charge of 30 or 40p next year. The boxes are normally filled with simple gifts such as a flannel, toothbrush and a tube of paste, a bar of soap, a small colouring book or puzzle book, colouring crayons, a small toy and a tube of individually wrapped sweets. Yo-yos and small mouth organs are also permissible. These boxes make so many children happy as most of them have never ever received a gift in their lives.

Some Local history

John Kinross of Much Birch poses the question, 'Who is the man with the long nose ? St. Junabius is the patron saint of Llandinabo Church in which the screen, according to Pevsner dates from 1520, has in the centre a cut out profile of a man with a long nose, supported by 2 mermen with strange 'Mexican' moustaches. What is the meaning of this central arch in the screen??

It may date back to 1872, when the Rector was Henry Lloyd Oswell who decided that the building needed re-structuring. He called in a relation, A.E. Lloyd Oswell, a Shrewsbury architect, who was knowledgeable about churches.

A few weeks ago, I was in Shrewsbury and went to see the Bishop's Palace near the castle. The gateway has the same strange carvings of mermen with Mexican moustaches on it. Was the screen at Llandinabo altered to include the two mermen? If so, the man with the long nose is the Rev. Lloyd Oswell himself as drawn by his relation. I think this is highly possible.

Also of note is that on 10th. June 1883, a service here was interrupted by a bolt of lightning. Several of the 40 members of the congregation were knocked down and a young boy was unconscious for several hours. No one was killed however so St. Junabius was watching over them. He was a Bishop of Llandaff and owned the land on which the church was built; this church of Dinabo being part of Wales or the welsh speaking area of Archenfield. In the Cantilupe Register, the first

recorded Rector mentioned is Robert Corbet, who was made Rector on the day after Ash Wed. 1279 by the Patron, Lady Celia de Beresford. The Corbets are a Shropshire family and we went to lunch with Christopher Corbet last year. He was not alone as his tame parrot sat on his shoulder throughout the meal and joined in the conversation. One wasn't always sure whether it was Corbet or the parrot speaking but it didn't matter fortunately as it was a very polite parrot.

Police Report

Much Dewchurch

Between 20:00 on the 24th of October and 08:00 on the 25th of October a caravan was stolen from a driveway in the Much Dewchurch area.

Much Birch

Sometime after 17:00 on the 25th of October outbuildings were broken into in the Much Birch area. Power tools, a generator and a tractor battery were taken.

Allensmore

Overnight between the 30th and 31st of October a barn door has been forced open and 4 motor cross bikes were stolen.

Didley

Overnight 31st of October to the 1st of November an outbuilding was broken into. The offenders broke the lock and stole drills and a gas cylinder. The items had been left nearby undamaged.

Kentchurch

On Saturday the 2nd of November a member of the public caught an offender trying to make off with tools from a site at which he was working. The offender was restrained and Police arrested the male. The Offender also had a vehicle nearby which was later seized and an accomplice located nearby was also arrested.

Much Birch WI

Much Birch WI hold meetings on the third Tuesday of each month, at 7.30pm in Much Birch Community Hall.

December 17th is the member's Christmas Celebrations evening.

Visitors and potential new members are always welcome.

Much Birch Village Market

MBVM takes place on the 4th Friday of the month (except December, when it is the 3rd Friday), in Much Birch Community Hall, between 2.30pm and 4.30pm

The December market takes place on 20th. Stalls will include;

The Squeaky Pig, award winning suppliers of locally reared rare breed pork, sausage, including Gluten free (to order) and bacon. Moor Meals, award winning, local suppliers of Dexter beef, ready meals and pies. Llandinabo Farm shop, Castle Cheese, and Mr.G's chutney and preserves. Hopefully, Sarah will bring fruit juices and fruit.

There is a Fair Trade stand and craft stands.

Dan will be back to sharpen your knives and tools.

Refreshments and 'take home cakes', the proceeds of which go to MacMillan Cancer Support, are supplied by Chris and Peter.

Please support our producers who bring local food almost 'to our door'.

If you would like to have a stall, or to find out more about the market, please contact Mark on 01432 278026

King's Thorn and Little Birch Gardening Club

On Nov. 27th., Gail Plant will give an interactive, hands on talk entitled

'The Scented Garden Year'. She will be bringing many scented plants for members to handle and appreciate the different scents.

On Wed. Dec 4th. at 7.30pm, the Annual Social get together will be held in Little Birch Village Hall. Tickets are now available from Committee Members for an evening of feasting and fun.

The New Year kicks off on Jan. 29th. when Roger Umpleby will discuss 'Friends and Foes in the Garden'. Roger is a passionate plant and nature lover, a professional entomologist and an excellent speaker.

John Bryant 01981 540316

Little Birch Village Hall Committee

Community Book Exchange/Lending Library

November brought to a close the second 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 third year will begin on Saturday 7 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 Church Social Evening

Come and join us at a Social evening with a glass of wine or soft drink, refreshments and a **Silent Auction**. It is an opportunity to get together for fun and a chat before the Christmas rush starts. It will be in Much Birch Community Hall on Saturday, 7th December 2013 at 7pm. Tickets £4.00 each from Barbara Wilson Tel: 01432840559 or Sylvia Jones Tel: 01981 540980. Donations for the Auction would also be gratefully received. Proceeds for Much Birch Church

Much Birch Community Hall 100 club for 2014

The Management Committee would like to express their thanks to the members of the 100 Club for their interest in the monthly lottery during the past year which provides valuable funds to maintain and develop the hall for the benefit of the residents of Much Birch and surrounding areas. We would like to invite both our present members and any new members to contribute to the 100 Club for the coming year of 2014. As in previous years £12.00 will purchase a single entry into the draw each month. Entries for more than one per month requires a further £12.00 for each entry.

For application forms please contact John Jones: Tel 01981 540980 or write to Chelston Grange, Much Birch, HR2 8HR. Application forms need to be returned by the end of December when numbers will be allocated and participants notified.

Best wishes to everyone for Christmas and the coming New Year.

Much Birch 100 Club Draw

The recent draws took place as follows, both in Much Birch Community Hall.

The October draw took place on 13th October 2013 and the winners were: 1st prize: No 85 - **Mrs. Peggy Lyke** - Longhope, Gloucestershire

2nd prize: No 13 - **Mr. & Mrs H.Potts - Monmouth**

The November draw took place on 10th November 2013 and the winners were: 1 st prize: No 8 - **Mrs B. Wilson**, Little Dewchurch

2nd prize: No 23 - **Mr. & Mrs. R. Brimacombe**, Much Birch

The December Draw will take place on 8th December 2013 in Much Birch Community Hall at 11am

Little Birch Church

Social Gathering

On Sat. 14th. December from 1pm to 4pm. at the home of **Jenny and John Caton**, 'Cherry Tree Bungalow', Little Birch Road, King's Thorn in aid of Little Birch Church with Mulled Wine and Mince Pies. Donations for the Cake Stall, Raffle and Tombola would be very much appreciated.

Carol Singing

Join us for Carol Singing around Little Birch on Wed. 18th Dec starting from Little Birch Village Hall at 6.30pm (Should take about 1 hour).

James Gould.

Church Services in December

Little Birch

Much Birch

1st		9.15am Holy Communion	6.30pm Archenfield Group Service at M. Dewchurch
8th	11am. Morning Worship	9.15am Holy Communion	
15th			10.30am Benefice Service at M. Dewchurch
22nd	4pm Carols & Christingles	6.30pm Carols for MB & MD at Much Dewchurch	
24th		3.30pm Carols & Crib Service 11.30pm Midnight Communion	
25th	11am Christmas Day Communion		
29th			10.30am benefice Service at Much Birch