

KING'S THORN & THE BIRCHES NEWSLETTER

A Newsletter for the Villages of King's Thorn, Little Birch & Much Birch – January 2009

2009

2009

We would like to take this opportunity to wish everybody in the Community a very Happy, Peaceful and Fulfilling New Year.

2009

2009

Newsletter

Usually we print an appreciation to those who are involved with the production and distribution of this Newsletter on the back page, but I think they are worth a front page spread.

I am sure you will all join me in thanking Roger Thomas, our tireless Printer, Des and Rose Wathen and family and Dick Brimacombe for painstakingly collating over 500 copies between them, John Bryant and Dick Brimacombe, the News Gatherers, and the army of wonderful volunteers who deliver the Newsletter to your doors. Thank you all for a superb job.

A 'Thank You' also goes to all our advertisers and to those who have kindly donated towards the cost of this publication.

Please keep your news coming in, John Bryant can be reached on 540316 and Dick Brimacombe on 540677 or you can send it direct to me. Please keep us posted on new neighbours so that we can print a welcome, of any special anniversaries etc., and particularly any news of our young people. We also welcome letters on topical local subjects, poems, and even adverse comments too!

DIARY DATES – JANUARY 2009

- 13TH JANUARY – Whist Drive
- 14TH JANUARY – L.B.P.C.. Meeting
- 20TH JANUARY – Much Birch W.I.
- 23RD JANUARY – Much Birch Village Market
- 24TH JANUARY – Flicks in the Sticks

ADVANCE DIARY DATES

- 5TH FEBRUARY - M.B.P.C. Meeting
- 6TH & 7TH FEBRUARY – Pantomime
- 26TH FEBRUARY – Bingo
- 28TH FEBRUARY – Flicks in the Sticks
- 7TH MARCH – Herefordshire's Reptiles

Whist Drive

Our next Whist Drive at Little Birch Village Hall is on **TUESDAY 13TH JANUARY**. We shall start at 7.30pm. The entrance fee is £1.50. Excellent prizes and refreshments will be available. New players are always welcome.

Much Birch WI

The meeting on **TUESDAY 20TH JANUARY** is an **Open Meeting**, when we look forward to hearing about Dr. Garlick's pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela.

The meeting begins at 7.30pm. (visitors about 7.45pm. please) in Much Birch Community Hall. Refreshments will be served. For further information about Much Birch WI please contact Kath Watts 01981 540382 or Barbara Wilson 01432 840559.

Much Birch Village Market

The first market of 2009 takes place in Much Birch Hall on **FRIDAY 23RD JANUARY**. between 2.30pm and 4.30pm. Please come along to support our Herefordshire producers who supply us with an excellent range of food products.

For further information please contact Kath Watts 01981 540382

Flicks In The Sticks

in association with Arts Alive

MAMMA MIA! PG at Much Birch Community Hall, on **SATURDAY 24TH JANUARY.**

If you haven't seen it already, this is a must-see musical! If you have, then you know it's worth seeing again on the big screen!

Wear Your Abba Gear And Get Free Popcorn!

Doors open at 7.00pm. and the film commences at 7.30pm. Tickets are £3.50 (£2.50 under 16's) and are available in advance or on the door. For further information or to book tickets please call Bryony Connolly on 01981 541274.

Coming up... 28th February — *And When Did You Last See Your Father*

Pantomime at LBVH

Please make a note in your new diary! You are invited to enjoy an evening of fun and highway frolics with **"Friends of Dick Turpin"** at Little Birch Village Hall on **FRIDAY 6TH & SATURDAY 7TH FEBRUARY.**

Bingo

There will be no Bingo in January due to rehearsals for the pantomime. The next Bingo "Eyes down" will be at 8.00pm. **THURSDAY 26TH FEBRUARY** in Little Birch Village Hall. There are very good prizes and refreshments will be available.

Herefordshire's Reptiles Free Training day in March

An inspirational wildlife project for Herefordshire called **'What's That Snake?'** is offering free training days to learn about and identify the snakes and lizards found in our county, and how to do surveys. The training will

include illustrated talks about the animals, and then a visit to a special area local to the training venue to practice the skills learned.

Tea and coffee is provided – but people need to bring their own picnic lunch. To book a place, contact the Herefordshire Nature Trust 01432 356872. For more information please contact me on the same number. There is a maximum of 12 people per course, so please book early to make sure of a place.

The nearest training day is on **SATURDAY 7TH MARCH** Haugh Wood, Fownhope in Woolhope Village Hall from 10.00am. – 4.00pm.

Nigel Hand - *Project Officer*

Local News

Warmest congratulations are extended to JOANNE (nee DINNEN) and TIM FISHER on the birth of their daughter, Miriam Bethan, a brother for Reuben and a grand daughter for JUDY and JOHN and proud great grandparents.

DEREK and MARGARET SCRIVENS of Fairview (LB) are pleased to announce the safe arrival of a Granddaughter, SOPHIE ELIZABETH on 27th October. The proud parents are son GEOFF and daughter-in-law RACHEL who live in Hereford. Sophie is a sister for 2 year old Poppy.

A warm welcome is given to ISHA and KIERON WHEELER and sons, TARRAN and KIRAN, who have moved into 'Linnet' and to WENDY and HARRY HALL, who have just taken up residency of 'Cypress Cottage', both in Kings Thorn. Also to TONY and RUTH BLAXILL who came from Hereford at the end of October to live at "Firethorn" Much Birch. They have 5 children, 13 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. They hope to get involved in village

activities, We trust that all these families will be happy in their new homes and in our communities.

We are sorry to hear that MRS NOLENE BRAY who now lives in Charnwood Retirement Home but formally of "Dunstone", Tump Lane, is in the County Hospital after suffering an accident. She hopes to be home by Christmas and we wish her a speedy recovery.

Four of our residents have acquired 'New Knees' recently and we hope they will enjoy new found freedom from pain and a new lease of life. Several others have had operations recently and are now convalescing at home. BRIAN POWELL hopes to be home soon and we send our good wishes to Brian and Caroline.

L.B. Church Services

Services in Little Birch Church will follow a slightly different pattern in February, March and April in that the 1st Sunday of the month will be a 'Lay led' service, the 2nd Sunday will be Holy Communion in our joint service with our Methodist friends, the 3rd Sunday will be a benefice service at one of the churches in the Wormelow Hundred and the 4th Sunday will be at the Methodist Chapel.

Visit to Hereford Museum

The History Group is thinking of arranging a visit to the museum, to be shown and hear about the many archaeological finds from the local area. This would take place sometime in March and, to gauge numbers so that we can arrange a suitable visit, we would appreciate it if you would let us know if you think you might like to come. There will probably be a limit on numbers and a small charge may be made. Please ring 01981 540 791 if you would like to go.

Tips, Techniques and Tastes

An Evening with Renowned Local Chef, Ken Tait

If you have spoken with any of the people who joined us for this event, you will know what a wonderful evening we had. Everyone was greeted with punch and goody bags containing leaflets, discount vouchers and a kitchen utensil - from peelers to pizza wheels, from cake testers to chopsticks!

Our guest chef then took centre stage - and kitchen - for the evening and under our watchful eye, with the help of trainee chef, Louis, presented a six course meal in taster portions for 60 guests, and usually with two or three dishes per course. We were lucky enough to learn many tricks of the trade, the art of keeping to a timetable and to savour many delicious recipes that we wouldn't have tried had they not been so tastefully presented before us! There will be many new recipes on dinner party menus in the months to come, and no nibbles tray will be without Ken's Haggis Balls this Christmas, thanks to the interesting booklet he provided for everyone.

Discount vouchers came from The Herb Garden, who produce breads, preserves and pickles and The Squeaky Pig Sausage and Pork company, both redeemable at the Much Birch Village Market, and our thanks go to all the traders who offered to donate produce for the evening, and especially to Tracey at the Squeaky Pig for giving the delicious Pork.

With a first prize of a meal for four cooked in the winner's home by Chef Ken, the raffle raised almost £100, and overall, with thanks to all who joined us for this very happy, enjoyable and filling evening, £500 was raised.

Finally, Ken, Deb and Louis, we couldn't have done it without you, so many, many thanks.

Home Based Businesses

There is a new service for home based businesses. Herefordshire Council is looking for people who run their businesses from home. Council officer Andy Dawson can help with advice and guidance to small businesses that work from back bedrooms, front living rooms or even on kitchen tables. How to apply for funding, who to talk to about your plans and where to get training plus networking opportunities are all possible through the new Home Business Network.

Contact:

Andy on 01432 383064 or adawson@herefordshire.gov.uk for more information.

Blanche Parry Talk

A group collected in Little Birch Village Hall on 19th November to hear Ruth Richardson tell us about this hitherto little recognised lady. In a well-illustrated talk we heard about Blanche's Welsh ancestry and the family home at Newcourt, Bacton, - a house which no longer exists - and where she was born in 1508. It is very likely that, as a daughter of gentry, she attended Aconbury Priory where she received teaching in 'vertue and lernyng'. Aconbury was a finishing school of its day where the young ladies were taught English, writing, sums, embroidery, singing and social graces, also the use of herbs for culinary purposes and health. One or two of these can still be found growing in the churchyard such as dwarf elder. Her aunt, Lady Troy, used her influence to secure Blanche a position at Court where Lady Troy had care of the children of Henry VIII. Blanche knew Elizabeth I from the time of her birth and took over the role of care and companionship when her aunt retired. When, as Princess Elizabeth, the future

queen was placed in The Tower and later under house arrest at Hatfield, Blanche accompanied her. When she was crowned, Blanche was also there, decked out for the occasion.

During Elizabeth's reign Blanche had many roles. She had charge of the Privy Chamber, looked after the queen's jewels and furs, books and the great seal of England. She was a very meticulous lady and obviously totally loyal and trustworthy. She would receive money on behalf of the queen and would pass on requests for the queen's intervention, also acting as a conduit for the presentation of parliamentary bills. For all this she was rewarded with several gifts of land in Herefordshire, Yorkshire and at Llangorse. Her cousin, William Cecil, Lord Burghley, drew up her will for her and Blanche arranged for her burial in an elaborate tomb at Bacton church which is still there representing a statement of worldly status. However, when Blanche died aged 82 in 1590, she was buried at St. Margaret's Westminster. She never married.

"Awards for all" Grant.

Little Birch Village Hall Committee committee members were pleased to receive confirmation of an "Awards for All" grant to cover costs of the upgrade and refurbishment of facilities which include improved access for people who have a disability. The work is planned to take place early in the New Year and be ready in time for the "Panto".

Table top Sale

LBVH committee would like to thank all those who supported the successful table top sale on 7th December.

Much Birch 100 Club Draw

The December draw took place on Friday, 12th December 2008 in Much Birch Community Hall at 12md - The winners were:

1. No. 33 - Mr. H. Watson
2. No. 10 – Mr. & Mrs. C. Dymott, King's Thorn

The next draw will take place on Tuesday, 13th January 2009 at 7pm in Much Birch Community Hall.

John Jones, *Chairman/Promoter.*

M.B. Hall - New Year 2009

Once again it is the New Year and another 12 months has passed in the life of Much Birch Community Hall. I would like to express very grateful thanks to all those people who have continued to support the hall during 2008. It is so much a focal point for our community and we do so want to continue to provide the best hall we can for the people who use it.

Last year we were able to replace the central heating boiler, upgrade the roof insulation, redecorate the cloakrooms and the kitchen, and, of course, extend the car park. This has been achieved through the hard work of the Hall Management Committee and their fund raising efforts, by the community contributing to the 100 Club and other activities, as well and a donation from the Parish Council and the contribution of a small grant. It is important to remind people that whilst the enlarged car park was much needed, it was also a planning requirement to be completed before any other development could take place. Now, not only will the hall users enjoy the additional car parking space but there is also an additional length of new pavement outside the boundary of the hall.

The overall development plans of the hall have been reviewed by the committee who now consider

that the next step should be to build a storage room to the south side of the hall to house the portable staging, piano, tables and chairs etc. so providing more floor space for use in the main hall. In addition it is hoped to improve access to the rear grassed area of the hall by providing a ramp from the main building. These plans of course would be subject to the availability of funds and to help raise the amount needed we would be pleased to receive the community's continued support. One way of helping is by supporting the 100 club and although we have sold many entries for this coming year there are still a few more required to reach the 100. The scheme as in previous years remains at £12 for a single entry to the draw each month of the year. If you wish to enter the draw more than once each month then a further £12 would be required for each additional entry

If you wish to enter the 100 Club draw then please do contact me for an entry form.

Best wishes to you all for the New Year.

John Jones - Chelston Grange, Much Birch. Hereford, HR2 8HR. Tel: 01981 540980

M.B.P.C

Report on MBPC meeting of Thursday 6th November 2008.

The Parish Clerk reported on the following items since the last meeting.

Parish Lane

PROW are proposing that the top part of the lane has a series of "sleeping policemen" to keep the flow of surface water to the east of the lane and lead it into a collection point by Reculver. This would feed into a pipe which is suggested would run down the centre of the lane and under the road to the ditch opposite. This is all being costed by AMEY at

present and the Parish Council is waiting for further information from Herefordshire Council.

MB School Parking Problems

A site visit has taken place with Herefordshire Council & Cllr B Wilcox, the. Local Police & Stagecoach bus company in relation to parking problems at Much Birch School. A number of proposals have been put forward by Herefordshire Council upon which residents, living near the school, are to be consulted before any further action can be taken.

Lengthsman

Work identified by the Parish Council is to be carried out shortly

SID (Speed Indicator Device)

Amey has installed 3 out of the 4 sockets for the SID which the Parish Council will be hiring from Herefordshire Council. It is anticipated that the SID will be in place during early January 2009 at the following locations, sites at Much Birch School, Barrack Hill, and Tump Lane.

Parish Freighter

The Parish Council have made a request for a visit in late spring 2009. Confirmation regarding the location of where the freighter can be sited is to be decided near the time of visit.

Planning

Planning Application Supported
DCSW2008/2546/F - **Highland Cottage, Parish Lane**, Hereford HR2 8AT - Proposed conservatory – Application: Full
Planning Applications Granted
DCSW2008/2032/F - **Kimberly Cottage** Hereford HR2 8AL - Alterations with first floor extension to North West elevation.

DCSW2008/2025/F - **The Cabin Much Birch VC School**, Much Birch Hereford - Retention of timber building within the grounds of MB Primary School for the purpose of providing before & after school care and a nursery class.

DCSW2008/2186/F **The Chalice, Kingsthorpe**, Herefordshire - Alterations and single story extension to existing dwelling - Application Type: full

DCSW2008/2245/F **Court Farm, Much Birch**, Hereford - Convert existing farm house into two four bed dwellings, convert existing garage to one bedroom dwelling.

Meetings

HalC training dates were noted.

Correspondence.

Parish councillors had previously been given the correspondence list which was noted.

Next meeting

THURSDAY 5TH FEBRUARY 2009 at 7.30pm.

For information on Much Birch Parish please visit our website www.muchbirchparish.org.uk.

Parish Clerk

If you have any queries on Parish Council matters please telephone the Clerk on 01432 870874, or write to: Mrs. Kath Greenow, Hackford House, Dinedor, Hereford, HR2 6PD

L.B.P.C.

Report of the Little Birch Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 12th November
No interests were declared.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 17th September 2008 were read and signed as a true record.

Matters Arising

From previous minutes – The BT phone box has been reported but with no reply. Correspondence received from Herefordshire Council concerning the Parish Field informing the Parish Council that the overgrowing trees are not deemed unsafe in their opinion. Clerk to write an article to ask residents for ideas for the future of the Parish Field.

Village Hall – Grant application for refurbishing the ladies and disabled toilets has been submitted. A further grant for replacement external doors is also being investigated. A local

resident has donated a kitchen and plans are being drawn to install it into the Village Hall. The Management Committee to decide upon the installation of a cooker. There is a Historical Talk and Seventies Evening organised for next month.

Parish Lengthsman Scheme – Further work has been carried out by the Lengthsman with an estimation of three days work remaining.

Parish Initiative – All defects have been reported with paperwork returned by Herefordshire Council with incident numbers.

Financial Report - 6 Cheques signed, 3 payments received

Correspondence - A detailed list of all correspondence was given to the Parish Council and noted.

Planning

Planning permission granted
Crows Nest for the alteration to outbuildings to raise height of roof no. DCSW2008/2174F.

Planning applications

The Castle Inn, Enlargement of existing kitchen/storage area, no. DCSW2008/2410/F.

Highland Cottage - Erection of a conservatory no. DCSW2008/2546/F.

Both applications returned with no objections.

Any Other Business

CSO Fiona Witcher discussed the recently stolen gates. She also informed the Parish Council of the new non-emergency telephone number for West Mercia Police and the forthcoming PACT meeting.

The Annual Audit has been completed by the external Auditors, Mazars and paperwork to be displayed upon the notice board.

Correspondence received from Much Dewchurch Parish Council requesting the sharing of meetings and information.

A request for Lynda Wilcox of HALC to attend the March 2009 Parish Council meeting to

discuss the reasons to renew the HALC subscription.

A request has been received from Herefordshire Council for the 2008/2009 Parish precept, an amount of £2000.00 was agreed. The Clerk has requested the Parish Freighters but it is not available until at least July 2009. Clerk to contact Herefordshire Council in March 2009 to book as no future bookings are being taken until then.

Date of Next Meeting - WEDNESDAY 14TH JANUARY
Parish Clerk

Please contact the Parish Clerk with any issues concerning Little Birch Parish. Contact details are: Liz Callwood 540081 or lizcallwood@tiscali.co.uk

Parish Field

There is a piece of land adjacent to the footpath opposite Little Birch Village Hall and Rosebank, called the Parish Field which covers approx. 400m². This land is mostly registered as common. Little Birch Parish Council wish to receive any suggestions as to what could be done with this land. Please note that the land cannot be sold, cannot be built upon and cannot be cleared with mechanical devices however it could be used by the community, overseen by the Parish Council. If you have any ideas could you please contact Liz Callwood, t: 01981 540081, email: lizcallwood@tiscali.co.uk who will then share your suggestions with the Parish Council.

Neighbourhood Watch

Between 10th November and 3rd December a Ford Transit van was broken into whilst it was left at a farm premises in Grafton. A large quantity of tools and a generator were taken, total value around £1,200.

On 26th November there were two 'distraction' burglaries in Ledbury and Bromyard, where elderly residents were targeted at home and considerable quantities of cash were stolen. The stories used by the offenders to gain entry centred on checking the washing machine, and checking the TV for fire risk. The offences happened around midday / early afternoon.

Both offences involved at least three males. The Bromyard offence involved a silver coloured car, recently a silver coloured VW Golf containing three males has been committing offences on Herefordshire Division.

Please report to police immediately any sightings of a strange silver car containing three or more males, or parked nearby to an elderly persons house.

On Friday 28th November a white Renault 5 F599NCJ was stolen from a layby at the bottom of The Callow on the A49. The vehicle had been involved in an accident and was awaiting recovery. A witness saw a male aged 40-45 remove the vehicle using a white flatbed lorry with a Hiab on the back between 1200 and 1300 that day.

Between 6pm on Monday 8th December and 7am on Tuesday 9th, a single axle Ifor Williams trailer was stolen from a residence in Tump Lane, Wormelow. The trailer was chained to a concrete post on the owners driveway, and the gates were closed, but the thieves cut through the chain and stole the trailer, which has high tail gate, and is identifiable.

Two fishing huts were broken into at Holme Lacy between 30TH November and 1st December, at this stage nothing appears to have been taken.

Thefts of Landrovers

There are 72 recorded crimes in West Mercia where Landrovers have been stolen this year, this

accounts for 6.5% of all car theft, despite Landrovers only constituting 1.5% of cars on the road.

The majority of these crimes involved Landrover Defenders pre 2002, and during the period in question, the level of theft has come down from a peak in January to a low in May, but it is now starting to rise again.

Please keep your Landrover locked at all times.

Christmas Presence

Since Christmas 2004, West Mercia Constabulary has run operation Christmas Presence each year, a campaign designed to makes our towns and cities safer places to enjoy over the festive period.

This year is no exception and Operation Christmas Presence 2008 will continue to build on the good work and results achieved in previous years.

Chief Inspector Shane Hancock, leading the initiative in Herefordshire, said, "West Mercia wants people to have a fun but safe Christmas. To ensure this, we will be cracking down on alcohol-related crime such as drink-related violence, drink spiking and drink driving." "There will be a visibly higher presence of officers on the streets on key dates - Friday 19th, Saturday 20th, Wednesday 24th, Saturday 27th and New Years Eve - to reassure revellers and prevent problems."

"We will also be working with colleagues from the Fire Service and Herefordshire Council on these days to ensure that fire and licensing regulations are being adhered to."

He said, "The police have five top tips for a safe and happy Christmas:

- Don't drink too much.
- Be aware of drink spiking.
- Look after your friends.
- Don't drink and drive and
- Walk away from trouble.

West Mercia are encouraging people to think about their actions when out by using the "If you could turn back the clock" theme, as one of the three posters being used shows.

In 2008, Herefordshire will be a safe place to enjoy a cracking Christmas. Let's keep it that way!

Jingle Bells

To highlight the need for vigilance with bags and purses when shopping, particularly in the very busy pre-Christmas period, the Herefordshire Crime Prevention Panel have purchased a number of purse bells, which have been kindly donated to the local policing teams across the county to issue free to shoppers with trolleys and mums with prams and buggies.

Whilst purse and wallet theft is not a problem in Herefordshire, people do need to be aware that it does happen occasionally. By clipping the bells to the zipper, the bells will jingle if they are disturbed in your bag or jacket.

Inspector Nick Semper, responsible for Local Policing in Hereford City, said, "People are reminded to be vigilant when shopping, be wary of other shoppers who 'crowd' you, keep your bags closed and don't leave your purse in view."

The bells can be obtained by contacting your Local Policing Team on the new number. - **0300 333 3000**

Neighbourhood Watch Local Representatives are

East		
JOHN BULBECK	-	540178
Central		
BOB PETERS	-	540670
West		
BETTY PHILPOTT	-	540614

New Year Resolution

What about making it a New Year resolution to have the Newsletter by email. This year

we have managed to save £75 out of an annual spend of well over £1,200..

Donations, unfortunately, have fallen drastically since we lost the local Post Office in Kings Thorn. Even if you don't enjoy reading off the computer it is easy enough to print it onto scrap paper and generate your own hard copy. This would cost each family around £3.50 per year.

So, if you would consider receiving the newsletter via email, it would enable the Community to save a lot on paper, shoe leather and time spent in printing and collation..

Items/Copy

Please may I have items for the **FEBRUARY** issue via post to Mrs. S.E. Mathews, Folly Cottage, Little Birch, HR2 8BD, or left in the post box at 'Bramleys' or by email attachment in Word format to: sarah.mathews@tiscali.co.uk by:

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18TH JANUARY
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**Got any spare computers,
laptops or computer
accessories not being used?
Donate them to the Tump
Inn's new Wifi Centre and
help people learn how to use
new technology. For more
information about Donating
to the new Wifi Centre call
the Tump Inn on**