

King's Thorn & The Birches Newsletter

A Newsletter for the Villages of King's Thorn, Little Birch & Much Birch – March 2007

Whist Drive

Little Birch Village Hall on **WEDNESDAY 7TH MARCH** - starting at 7.30pm, entrance fee £1.50, refreshments and raffle.

Proceeds in aid of Village Hall refurbishment fund.

Flicks In The Sticks

in association with Arts Alive

This month's film will be *THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA* PG at Much Birch Community Hall, on **SATURDAY 10TH MARCH**.

Meryl Streep stars as high powered fashion editor, Miranda Priestly, in this Oscar nominated film. Anne Hathaway also stars, as Miranda's new assistant, a small-town girl in her first job out of college, trying to navigate a world she's only glimpsed in print – while surviving her impossibly demanding boss.

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

Gardening Club

"The gardens of China - Ancient and Modern" will be the subject of the next meeting to be held on **WEDNESDAY 28TH FEBRUARY** at L.B. Hall. The talk, starting at 7.30pm, will be given by Duncan Coombs. All are welcome to attend.

The AGM of the Club will be held on **WEDNESDAY 28TH MARCH** at 7.30pm. The evening will also include a quiz and the first plant sale of this year. Contact Helen Fox 540004 for further information on either of the above.

The Evergreen Club

The AGM will be held at 2.30pm. on **MONDAY 12TH MARCH** at Much Birch Community Hall. Members will be receiving the Agenda and a list of Outings for 2007 giving pick-up points and details of what is available at each of the choices very shortly.

DIARY DATES MARCH 2007

- 1ST MARCH – L.B. Parish Council Meeting
- 7TH MARCH – Whist Drive
- 7TH MARCH – L.B. Parish Council Meeting
- 10TH MARCH – Flicks in the Sticks
- 12TH MARCH – Evergreen Club AGM
- 20TH MARCH – W.I.
- 27TH MARCH – L.B. Village Hall AGM
- 29TH MARCH – Easter Bingo
- 30TH/31ST MARCH – Halfway Theatre Concert

ADVANCE NOTICES

- 10TH APRIL – Evergreen Club Trip to Oxford
- 17TH APRIL – W.I. Open Meeting

2006 was an extremely successful year although we did suffer a couple of minor hiccups on the coach front which were quickly sorted out by our excellent coach people and on some trips we did have a downpour or two!

We had an excellent Christmas Lunch at the Red Lion, Peterstow, which just managed to fit us in. Our numbers are growing and we pick up 15 members from Ross alone together with 2 new members at the coach depot at Brandon.

We are able to pick up at all villages on the A49 on the way through to Ross so if you know anyone who would like to be picked up in Peterstow or Bridstow then please ask them to telephone 01981 540406 for further information.

We start 2007 with a trip to Oxford of the dreaming spires, riverside walks, shops, college quadrangles and the University Botanic Gardens with 3,000 **species of plants** (by Magdalen College). Walking tours may be available as are the Hop-on-Hop-off buses. The date is **TUESDAY 10TH APRIL** and the fare £8 for Members (£10 for non-members). Please telephone your booking through to either 01981 540406 or 540932 by the **1st April**. In the meantime we look forward to seeing you all at the AGM.

Bridget Banks (Chairman), Evelyn Vaughan-Williams (Treasurer), Beverley Webb (Secretary) and Michael Wardle (Co-opted Member)

W.I.

The speaker for the meeting on **TUESDAY 20TH MARCH** in Much Birch Community Hall will be Mr. Peter Jowers, whose talk will be entitled '*Gardening in the Outer Hebrides on the Island of Taransay*'.

Meetings are held in the Community Hall, Much Birch at 7.30pm on the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

ADVANCE NOTICE

The **OPEN MEETING** will take place on **TUESDAY 17TH APRIL** and is entitled '*History of the Royal Forest of Dean - Canute to Elizabeth II*'.

The evening promises to be most interesting. Refreshments will be provided by the Committee.

For further details of meetings and joining the WI please contact Barbara Wilson (President) on 01432 840559 or Kath Watts on 01981 540382

LB Village Hall AGM

TUESDAY 27TH MARCH at Little Birch Village Hall - 7.30 start. Please come along for an update on what the committee has achieved since election and what the future holds. The election will also take place for the new committee. The meeting will be your opportunity to discuss any fundraising ideas you may have and what you would like to see taking place in the

hall in the future. Refreshments will be available.

Easter Bingo

Little Birch Village Hall - **THURSDAY 29TH MARCH** - Eyes down at 8.00pm
Proceeds in aid of Village Hall refurbishment fund.

Concert

The Halfway Community Theatre will be presenting their next Concert on **FRIDAY & SATURDAY 30TH & 31ST MARCH** in Much Birch Community Hall commencing at 7.30pm, doors open from 7.00pm. The theme is *AT YOUR REQUEST*. The content of the programme has been taken from requests made by the audience in a Questionnaire and from the performers themselves during the concert in November. The Programme will include a mix of songs and poems taken from our past shows plus several new items. Tickets can be purchased by contacting Mrs. Webb on 01981 540406 (01981 540502 if Mrs. Webb is away). A light supper is included in the price of £8 but please bring your own bottle and glasses. Since these concerts are so popular, please book early so as not to be disappointed.

Local News

It is with great sadness to hear of the death of JOHN DANKS who came with the family to live in Upper Wrigglebrook in the early 1970's. John was one of the prime movers in getting Little Birch Village Hall re-opened in 1977 and was a Management Committee member from 1977 until 1993. He was also the Editor of the Newsletter from 1977 for some 13 years ably assisted by his wife, Gill. A fuller tribute will be given in next month's news. We send our sincere sympathies to Gill, Jez, Ben, Becky and Ruth and their families.

MR. IVOR HARRIS, erstwhile of Llandinabo has also passed away and we send our sincere condolences to Rose and her family. Ivor spent many years of his working life on the farm at Llandinabo Court with Major Michael Symonds.

A belated welcome to CHARLES & BRENDA SHERWOOD of Claypitts Cottage, Holly Bush Lane, Much Birch. They have moved from Surrey and we wish them a happy and long retirement here.

A bouncing baby boy, RONAN JAMES arrived safely but slightly late for proud parents, LISA and JAMES GOULD. Fortunately, his late arrival did not put too big 'a spanner in the works' for the pantomime on Sat. 27th. January, as father

James was the musical director and only missed the matinee performance. We send our best wishes to the family and Ronan will doubtlessly be spoiled by both sets of dotting grandparents.

On the subject of the pantomime, the whole village talked about it for weeks after the 3 very successful performances and our thanks and appreciation are extended to everyone involved and especially to Hilary Gould who wrote, produced and directed the whole show. It was most enjoyable and great to see all members of so many families taking part. Congratulations to William White, aged 14, who is currently studying clarinet at grade 8 level and recently auditioned for the annual BBC Hereford and Worcester Showcase event to be held at the Courtyard Theatre in late February. He was successful in being accepted as one of the winners and his performance will take place during the afternoon to an audience of County school children and invited guests.

The event, which is organised by the County Music Service, is open to all young musicians in the County and draws a large entry. Auditions were held over two days.

Following this, he has been given an opportunity to take part, on stage, in a master class for clarinet to be given by the internationally recognised clarinetist Emma Johnson and will take place in March preceding her evening concert at the Courtyard.

The recent snow brought out the best in 'neighbourliness' in many instances with residents keeping an eye on older and more vulnerable folk and also spreading salt/grit at the usual 'black spots'. The deep snow did not deter two ladies from Hereford, who left their car at Kings Thorn and walked to a house in Little Birch to care for one of our residents.

A special "Thank you" to Sue and Bob Mason who, at short notice, undertook the delivery of Meals on Wheels in their Land Rover.

Many children and adults enjoyed time off school to enjoy sledging but sadly a minority just left their bits of board or plastic bags in the middle of fields after finishing their runs. This is not acceptable and certainly does not comply with the 'Country Code'.

Treasure Island Pantomime

Today Little Birch Village Hall, tomorrow the West End. I'm sure everyone will agree that this was a brilliant event, thoroughly enjoyed by all ages. A huge thank you to everyone involved front and back of house especially Hilary Gould

who made it all possible. Hopefully, this will be the start of the Village Pantomime revival, watch this space for details of next year's event.

Church Electoral Roll

Every six years in the Church of England, the Church electoral roll is updated, and this year is when the new roll is created in both Little Birch and Much Birch.

Going on the Electoral roll does not commit you to attending church every single week, but does give you certain rights, like, for example, voting in the church AGM, being married and buried at the particular church, and standing for a position on the church PCC and as a Churchwarden.

If you live in Little Birch, you have to have applied by Thursday 12th April, when the roll applications will close.

If you live in Much Birch, the roll will close on Thursday 2nd April.

As Churchwarden of Little Birch Church, I am more than happy to discuss any queries about the Church Electoral Roll with any residents of Little Birch on a no-obligation basis.

I can be contacted on (01981) 540676

Please may I encourage you to consider inclusion on the new roll and help us keep the church going for future generations.

Best wishes,

James Gould, Churchwarden.

LBPC

Report on the meeting held on **WEDNESDAY 24TH JANUARY**. No interests were declared.

The minutes of the meeting held on 1ST November 2006 were read and signed as a true record.

Matters Arising

Village Hall – Annual Meeting to be held soon, details of which to be displayed in the Newsletter. Positive feedback has been received concerning all recent fund raising activities.

Parish Lengthsman Scheme – An advert to be placed in the local newsletter advertising the post of Lengthsman after existing Lengthsman's resignation.

Parish Field – No further progress. Clerk to chase Central Networks.

Parish Footpaths – A letter has been received from a local parishioner concerning the condition of local footpaths. As this parishioner was unable to attend the Parish Council meeting, this matter to be deferred to the next meeting. No correspondence has been received concerning the use of parish footpaths.

Parish Precept – A precept was requested for £2,200, an increase of £700 to cover

election costs. A newsletter article to be written to inform parishioners.

Litterbin – The Parish Council have agreed to share the costs with Much Birch Parish Council for a new metal litterbin to be located at the bus shelter in Kings Thorn. A letter of confirmation to be sent.

Financial Report

3 cheques written and 2 payments received

Correspondence

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

Planning Applications

The View – Replacement dwelling (Returned with referral to the letter previously sent by the Parish Council endorsing these plans)

Planning Permission

Land at Lynwood - Erection of new build 3 bedroom dwelling

Any Other Business

- Parish sandbags have been delivered to The Castle pub car park. A newsletter article to be written informing local parishioners.
- An email has been received from Herefordshire Council concerning verge erosion at Crows Nest Lane and the possible erection of verge markers and kerbs. A reply to be sent.
- Details received of a new mobile library service with larger buses to accommodate disabled parishioners with a proposed stop at Little Birch Village Hall.
- An email has been received from Herefordshire Council stating that they are not upgrading the U71603 road from Little Birch church to New Mills. A reply to be sent requesting why and when this road could be upgraded, with an appeal for Herefordshire Council to contact adjacent landowners to maintain the hedgerows of this road.
- A letter has been received from Herefordshire Council requesting opinions on local Post Office closures. A letter to be written to promote the importance of local Post Offices.

Date of Next Meeting

WEDNESDAY 7TH MARCH 2007

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

Much Birch 100 Club Draw

The February draw took place on **Sunday, 11th February** at Much Birch Community Hall at 11 am (delayed because of inclement weather)

The winners were:

1. No. 61 Mrs. Irene Hemmings Much Birch

2. No. 22 Mr. Brian and Mrs. Caroline Powell, Much Birch

The next draw will take place on **Wednesday, 14th March** at 7 pm in Much Birch Community Hall.

John Jones, *Chairman*

Parish Lengthsman

There is a vacancy for a Parish Lengthsman in Little Birch - to work, on average, four to five hours/month and duties to include; grass cutting, hedge and fence management, drainage work, ensuring the legibility of road signs etc. Health and safety training is essential and will be paid for by the Council.

The Parish Lengthsman scheme is funded by a grant from Herefordshire Council in order to allow local parish councils to administer the upkeep of local highways. For an informal discussion about this job please contact Liz Callwood, Parish Clerk, on 540081.

Power Cut Essentials

Central Networks are advising householders to have the following items at hand in case of a power cut:

- An analogue corded telephone
- A torch with batteries
- A wind-up mobile phone charger
- A battery operated radio
- A foil blanket
- A reusable hand warmer

An example of a 'kit' will be on display during the March and May Parish Council meetings.

Sandbags

If more are required, please contact the Parish Clerk, Liz Callwood 540081.

Neighbourhood Watch

Burglary Dwellings

A distraction type offence took place at an isolated house in Shenmore near Madley. The elderly occupant was deceived by a male who called at the address claiming to be an off duty police officer. The intention of the offender was to keep the occupant busy outside the house whilst other offenders would slip inside and steal property. Fortunately due to the quick thinking of the resident the offenders did not manage to get inside the house.

It goes without saying that we must all be very suspicious about anyone calling at our house unannounced. Always ask for identification, and even if identification is produced, check with the relevant organisation before allowing anyone in or near your property. If you are in anyway uncertain about an individual, do not let

them inside your home and call the police. It is better to offend a genuine caller by turning them away, than discover that you have been the victim of a distraction burglary.

Burglary Buildings

Two out buildings were broken into during January. A hedge trimmer was stolen from a premise in Three Ashes near St. Weonards, and a chainsaw was stolen from an address in Clifford.

Vehicle Crime

A number of vehicles have been damaged in Peterchurch in recent weeks. Tyres on a car were slashed whilst it was parked in Lewis Way, and two other vehicles were scratched in Closure place. If you have any information about these crimes, please contact one of your local officers.

Also a handbag was stolen from a car at the Axe and Clever Pub on the A49. Please don't leave valuables in the car and never leave anything of value in sight, to tempt opportunist type criminals.

Theft

A green John Deere tractor with trailer attached was stolen overnight between 14th and 15th Jan 2007, from the Orcop area. The tractor registration number is VU 03 VCL, and anyone who recalls seeing this vehicle being driven, especially at night, please contact PC Fiona Farrington.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Incidents of bad behaviour involving local youths have cropped up again in the villages of Kingstone and Clehonger.

We encourage local residents to report any such incidents, and if possible name the individuals concerned so we can tackle the problem.

There are a number of ways to report incidents :

1. If the matter is not urgent you can contact one of your Local Police Officers or Community Support officers on their mobile phone numbers or email address.
2. If the incident is on going, please contact the main police Control Room on 08457 444 888, who will record the information from you, and allocate the matter accordingly.
3. We also have incident reports that can be completed and returned to your local officers. These forms will be delivered to some particular areas or housing estates where an anti-social behaviour problem has been identified. Or if you wish the forms can be delivered to you at your request.

“We need to tackle anti-social behaviour together – make a stand, and don't tolerate it”

Another chance to have your say

The next Golden Valley Community Forum will be held at Peterchurch Community Centre :

THURSDAY 1ST MARCH – 7.30pm.

Police Surgery in Ewyas Harold

Every Wednesday commencing **21ST FEBRUARY** between 2pm -4pm at the meeting room in Horsecroft, Ewyas Harold. Please feel free to drop in for advice, report an incident or crime, or just have an informal chat and a cuppa with CSO Dan Pilkington.

And finally on a lighter note.....

A probationer constable fell victim of a joke reminiscent from the cartoon, The Simpsons. The rookie officer had a message left for him to ring a Detective Inspector Dration on an internal number. Imagine the poor officer's blushes when he rang the number and asked for "DI Dration".

PC Christine Griffiths (Golden Valley)
Mobile No: 07855 785 080

PC Fiona Farrington
Mobile No: 07817 019 374

PC Andrew Bundy can be contacted directly by mobile telephone whilst on duty. His number is:

07855 385 844.

Local Reps are :

East

JOHN BULBECK - 540178

Central

BOB PETERS - 540670

West

BETTY PHILPOTT - 540614

Cost of Printing the N/L

We are up to 20 households who have opted for email copies. That will save 120 sheets of paper printed on both sides per month or, because the NL is sometimes quite a bit longer at times, around three reams of paper per year at a saving of over £12.00 - not forgetting the shoe leather of the deliverers!

I am now able to make sure that your email address is kept secret so your privacy is guaranteed. Please keep your acceptances coming. Thank you.

Items/Copy

Please may I have items for the **APRIL** 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 MARCH
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