

King's Thorn & The Birches Newsletter

A Newsletter for the Villages of King's Thorn, Little Birch & Much Birch – November 2006

Announcement,

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the *Children's Halloween party* scheduled for **SATURDAY 28TH OCTOBER** at Little Birch Village Hall has been cancelled.

Reminder

Remember the *Beetle Drive* to be held on **TUESDAY, 31ST OCTOBER** in Much Birch Community Hall, priced £3 per person.

Pencils at the draw at 7.30pm.

Open to all. Please come along to join us for a fun evening. This is the WI's fund raising event for the Hall Development Fund.

Refreshments - tea, coffee and biscuits.
Enquiries: **01432 840559**

History of Little Birch

What do you know about your Village?

Come and find out from the Little Birch History group with illustrated talks at 7.30pm on **WEDNESDAY 8TH NOVEMBER** at Little Birch Village Hall. Tickets are £5.00 to include supper and a complimentary drink.

Proceeds in aid of hall refurbishment fund

Craft Table Top Sale

On **SATURDAY 18TH NOVEMBER** we are holding a Christmas Craft Table Top Sale at Little Birch Village Hall starting at 2.00pm. Tables Cost £6.00 each - for more information or to purchase a table, contact Robyn on 01981 540264

Proceeds in aid of hall refurbishment fund

Flicks In The Sticks

in association with Arts Alive

This month's film will be **MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA** on **SATURDAY 18 NOVEMBER** at Much Birch Hall. The film is set in the years before World War II, when a Japanese child is torn from her penniless family to work at a geisha house. Despite a treacherous rival who nearly breaks her spirit, the girl blossoms

DIARY DATES NOVEMBER 2006

8TH NOVEMBER - What do you know about your Village

18TH NOVEMBER - Christmas Table Top Sale

18TH NOVEMBER - Flicks In the Sticks

21ST NOVEMBER - W.I.

24TH NOVEMBER - Halfway Concert

25TH NOVEMBER - Seventies Evening

25TH NOVEMBER - Halfway Concert

29TH NOVEMBER - Gardening Club

30TH NOVEMBER - Christmas Bingo

ADVANCE NOTICES

2ND DECEMBER - Christmas Fayre

6TH DECEMBER - Gardening Club Christmas Social

9TH DECEMBER - Flicks in the Sticks

12TH DECEMBER - Evergreen Club Christmas Party

31ST DECEMBER - New Year's Eve Party - Music & Dance

(evening wear) - tickets only

into the legendary geisha Sayuri. Beautiful and accomplished, Sayuri captivates the most powerful men of her day, but is haunted by her secret love for the one man beyond her reach.

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. Coming up... *'Pirates of The Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest'* on **9TH DECEMBER** at 7.30pm

W.I.

Our next meeting, the AGM, is on **TUESDAY 21ST NOVEMBER** at the usual time of 7.30pm. Your tea hostesses will be Mrs. P. Garbutt and Mrs. M. Roberts and in December we will be holding our Christmas Social Evening.

Concert

The next Halfway Theatre concert entitled *'British Musicals'* will be in Much Birch Community Hall, on **FRIDAY 24TH and SATURDAY 25TH NOVEMBER** commencing at 7.30pm. Tickets can be obtained from Jenny Wrigley Tel: 01981 540617 and it is advisable to book early as these concerts prove to be very popular.

Seventies Night Disco

SATURDAY 25TH NOVEMBER from 7.30pm. to Midnight in Little Birch Hall with a Fully Licenced Bar - Ploughman's Supper - Admission by ticket only £7.00. Prize for best Lady's and Gent's "Seventies Outfit".

Contact Margaret Stringer on 01981 540583 or Mr. or Mrs. Morley 541027. Strictly No Children. *All proceeds to Little Birch Hall Refurbishment Fund*

Gardening Club

The Gardening Club next meets on **WEDNESDAY 29TH NOVEMBER**. The Club will be holding their annual Christmas social on **WEDNESDAY 6TH DECEMBER** from 7.30pm. Tickets are priced at £3.50 per head and are available at the meetings on in October and in November above or from Committee members. Further details from *Secretary* Helen Fox - 01981 541004

Christmas Bingo

THURSDAY 30TH NOVEMBER at Little Birch Village Hall, eyes down at 8.00pm. - last bingo of the year. *Proceeds in aid of hall refurbishment fund.*

Christmas Fayre

The Christmas Fayre, which is on **SATURDAY 2ND DECEMBER** from 10.00am. – 1.00pm. proved to be very popular last year and this year we shall have more of the same. There will be food stalls (Peter and Chris Dowsett will be there after their successful event at the hall for the Macmillan Nurses), paintings, patchwork, cards, gifts and lots more, so it will be worth coming and having a browse.

The Much Birch Recipe Book will also be on sale – that is if we haven't sold out – and all proceeds from this and the Fayre will go to the Hall Development Fund.

You will also have an opportunity to sign up for the 100 Club Draw 2007 – the closing date to accept entries is the end of December.

Tea and coffee will be served during the morning so do come along, have a look around and a chat with your neighbours and friends.

If you would like a table, please ring either 540406 or 540488 and we will do our best to fit you in. An early call would be appreciated as space is limited.

Apologies to those intending to come along to the Preserves, Pickles and Produce Fayre on 28th October. We have had to cancel this as it proved too close to other events at the Hall. Table Tops will re-commence in the spring.

Evergreen Club

Christmas Lunch this year will be on **TUESDAY 12TH DECEMBER** at the Red Lion PH & Restaurant on the A.49 (same venue as last year). We are not sure of the price at the moment but please put the date in your diary and we will be sending out a menu for choices and cost shortly. We shall also be preparing the usual Questionnaire for next year's outings which hopefully you will have ready to hand in to the Committee at the Christmas Lunch.

Tai Chi in Much Birch

Most of you will have heard by now that our Tai Chi teacher, John Llwellyn passed away peacefully on September 18th 2006, aged 75 years.

The class that John taught locally, has decided to continue to meet at 11.30am. on Tuesdays at Much Birch Community Hall. *Please see revised advertisement.*

All are most welcome, whether practiced or a beginner. We look forward to seeing you!

Lift

Exercise classes for the 50+ at M.B. Community Hall. These are drop in classes with gentle exercise in a friendly atmosphere with Sue. Enquiries to SHAPE at Herefordshire Council Offices in Plough Lane or telephone 01981 540406

Local News

Congratulations to BILL GIBBONS from Waterloo Cottage, Barrack Hill for reaching the grand age of 90. Happy Birthday Bill.

And to ROS and BOB PREECE who celebrated their Golden Wedding on 1st September with a surprise champagne breakfast at a city hotel. The following day they hosted a celebration for forty friends and relations at their home in Kings Thorn. The weather was evil, so the marquee didn't get much use, but one of the guests, was heard to say "What's a drop of rain, after fifty years together." No presents were requested but a donation box for St. Michael's Hospice raised £160. They followed this with a second honeymoon touring Devon and Cornwall in their motor home, their complexion on return suggests they spent more time outdoors than they did on the first honeymoon.

Well done to BRAD BLAKE of Arbour Cottage, Holly Bush Lane, for successfully completing the Ironman UK Triathlon held at Sherbourne on 20th August. His time for a 2.4 mile swim, followed by a 112 mile bike ride and finishing a 26.2 mile run was a superb 14 hours 36, minutes and 12 seconds. He finished 21st out of 35 for his age group which was 50–54. There were over 1100 starters and 1038 within the time limit of 17 hours. His sponsorship has raised about £1600 for the Leukaemia Research Fund and a similar amount for Rotary Charities, he thanks all of his generous sponsors.

DR. PETER GARLICK transformed Birch House into an Art Gallery when he participated in 'h' Art (Herefordshire Art week) on 9th – 17th September. He displayed 87 of his own paintings, mainly oils and watercolours and of the 75 that were offered for sale, he sold 30. This reflected the great quality and appeal of his works, which were mainly landscapes from the British Isles and France. The largest attendance was on the first Sunday afternoon when excellent refreshments were served. There was also a steady stream of Art lovers during the week. Proceeds will benefit Much Birch Church and the Community Hall Development Fund.

A few months ago, JOHN GWINNETT of Little Birch gained a scholarship to undergo 10½ hours flying instruction at FAF Woodvale, Lancs. The intensive course included, not only being able to pilot a plane, but also to navigate and perform aerobatic manoeuvres. John is a member of Ross-on-Wye ATC and last year obtained his glider flying wings. He hopes now to get a place on another course to obtain a private Pilot's licence. Congratulations John, we hope you fulfill all your ambitions.

RHYS POWELL of Green Farm, Little Birch has taken a year out from his studies and obtained a placement for work experience at the Eurocopter factory in Munich. He is enjoying this opportunity to work in a large factory environment and also to explore the local area and learn the language at the same time.

A belated but warm welcome is given to JUDY and KEITH LOCKYER, and their four whippets, who have moved into Elland Cottage, just off Barrack Hill, to RACHEL and STUART ROBERTS and sons CHRISTOPHER and CAMERON who have moved into Moss Croft, Kings Thorn, and to ELAINE and MICHAEL FREEMAN who have come to live in Church Lane, Much Birch. We wish them all many healthy and happy years in their new homes.

There have been quite a few changes with departing friends and new arrivals recently and we apologise if we have not yet had a chance to welcome you. This will be put right next month.

Congratulations are extended to GEOFF JONES and SID HITCHING who both celebrate their 80th birthdays this month. After a long painful period Geoff is slowly getting better and we hope that he will be able to sit out in a chair before long.

We record our grateful thanks to JOAN and COLIN RANDALL who have delivered the Newsletter to properties in Wrigglebrook Lane for many years. They have also delivered Meals on Wheels over the same period and our good wishes and thanks go to them for this service to the community. COLIN DYMOTT has kindly agreed to take on the delivery of the N/L. A number of friends have, or are about to have hospital treatment, and we send our best wishes for rapid and successful recoveries.

The withdrawal of the mini-bus service to the surgery and the link with the Hereford-Ross bus service has caused great disappointment but if anyone has an appointment at the surgery, a lift can be booked in advance through **Life Line Service – 01432 277622 Dore Transport – 0845 2020144**

Dial-a-Ride (Hereford) – 01432 341302 or **WRVS (Ross Country Cars)** covering the HR9 postcode area – **01989 765595** may also be able to help.

If you experience any difficulties with booking transport, please ring:

Sophie Pryce, Herefordshire - Rural Transport Adviser on **01432 267820**

W.I.

There was a change to the advertised programme on 17th October, when members of Much Birch WI were treated to an evening with Penny Platts. Penny spoke about Five Extraordinary Churches in Herefordshire, beginning with All Saints in Brockhampton, near Fownhope, built in 1902 and going back, as far as 1140, to St. Mary and St. David at Kilpeck.

As we have come to expect with Penny's talks, the photography was second to none and a most interesting evening was enjoyed by all.

Village Quiz

Nine teams, from organisations in Much Birch and Little Birch, took part in the Village Quiz this year. The History Group, newcomers to the Quiz night, won, with the Bridge Club coming second.

This event is held on the first Friday in October. If you belong to an organisation in 'The Birches' and did not receive an invitation this year, please contact Kath Watts, on 01981 540382, giving the name and telephone number of your Secretary, if you would like to receive an invitation for next year's Quiz.

Hobson's Choice

The rehearsed reading of this play by actors resident in the Parish was an absolute joy in performance. The actors moved about the stage, using books and body language (we didn't even notice the books). Suitably clad in clothes of the 1880's, the two younger sisters of the formidable Maggie (superbly played by Sally Hayter) were taken by Lucy Godding and Laura Hardman (both still at Colleges in Hereford and Monmouth). They were both petulant and "uppity" and will have learned much from the rest of the cast who were absolutely "on the button" with their characterisations, each achieving a creditable Lancashire accent.

Dave Baldwin gave a towering performance as Henry Hobson – finally beaten into submission by Dr McFarlane (Peter Webb with an impeccable Scottish accent), who forces Henry to face up to his alcoholism. Henry's daughter Maggie has set her marital sights on the hapless boot

hand, Willie Mossop (Colin Thompson who also directed), and after they are married, with a successful shoemakers in opposition to Hobson's, he has no recourse other than to ask Maggie to come home to look after him. Willie confronts Henry and says he will come if he is given a partnership in the business – Henry taking a back seat. The end is inevitable and the final scene sees him going meekly to get his coat to go to the lawyers leaving Willie with the final line "BY GUM !!" as he realises the enormity of what he and Maggie have achieved..

Small character parts were played by Margaret Baldwin, Anne and Peter Tame and Peter Blackwell. The concept of presenting a "reading" was proposed by Beverley Webb as a fund raising event for the Hall Development Fund and she read the linking dialogue, setting each scene.

Little Birch Harvest Supper

The Harvest Supper was a great success, enjoyed by all. Thank you to all for your generous contributions and to Sue Mason and Pauline Rogers for the entertaining competitions.

Tump or Chancer's Lane

A number of the residents in Tump Lane will appreciate that, as far as traffic is concerned, it is no longer a lane. Some of the drivers of vehicles which use the "Lane" show, by their style of driving, that it is getting more like a Motorway. A Department of Transport Regional Officer has referred to it as a "Rat Run" – a term well used by that department and they are not responsible for its upkeep. That is a Council responsibility.

Many of you readers will have, perhaps, witnessed or experienced a degree of rage at near misses upon your person, property, or seen others exposed to varying degrees of danger or abuse along its length. Although the bottom half has been resurfaced this year, the remaining, roughly patched, surface is in desperate need of attention, caused largely by frequent heavy traffic ranging from loaded car transporters and logging lorries with trailers, grain lorries and tractors with trailers going up and down the Lane, or where contractors have been working on the road surface and have gone away without bringing it back to a serviceable condition.

The lane is too narrow for heavy traffic and, in part, has no footpaths. There is a speed limit signed as 40mph. but for some sections of the lane, this is too fast. Even 30mph. can be too fast at times. What does that extra speed gain, more tyre wear,

more fuel used, a few kicks maybe but not much saving in time. This problem is not confined to Tump Lane; it is a general malaise where some have little consideration for others. Use of a mobile phone while driving is an offence – if there was an accident do you think your insurance would foot the bill? If the posted speed limit is 30mph. this means up to 30mph. and no more! Not what you can get away with..... Better to get there, drive with care and read the Highway Code.

Much Birch 100 Club Draws

The **September** draw took place on Tuesday, 12th September at the Evergreen Outing.

The winners were :-

1. No. 89 - Mr. H.A. Chapman of Forest Row
2. No. 111 - Mrs. Shirley Gemmell of Peterstow

The **October** draw took place on Monday, 16th October at 'Pop-In' in Much Birch Community Hall. *The winners were :-*

1. No. 62 - Mrs. E. Fitzpatrick of Ross-on-Wye
2. No. 111 - Mrs. S. Gemmell of Peterstow

The next draw will take place on **WEDNESDAY, 14TH NOVEMBER** at 7pm. in Much Birch Community Hall.

Entry forms for the year 2007 are now available from members of the Committee. Thank you for your support during this last year.

John Jones, *Chairman*

Much Birch Art Society

Classes continue with Fiona Field on Wednesdays from 1.30 – 3.30 in M.B. Community Hall and new members are always welcome. Fiona demonstrates the use of different media each week and if you would like further information, please ring her on 01432 355365.

Thanks

LBVH committee would like to thank all those who have kindly made a donation for parking at the Village Hall. This is very much appreciated.

LBVH Fundraising

As part of our ongoing fundraising campaign for hall refurbishment fund, LBVH committee is trying to put together a diverse range of events that will hopefully appeal to everyone. Some of these events will sadly not include

children. We are always *happy* to receive feedback on the events we have organised and would welcome any fundraising ideas that you may have.

Helicopter Trip

On the 9th September, we were at last able to take advantage of our prize won at the Little Birch Church Summer Fayre, with Jane and Teejay Townsend as our guests. We had a fabulous afternoon, beautiful sunshine. We were taken over the Little Birch/Kings Thorn area, Hereford city and were able to follow the Wye from there to Symonds Yat, where we could see in the distance views of the Severn Estuary. What a day!

We would like to thank most sincerely Mr. and Mrs. Guy Rogers for their generosity and making this possible. They looked after us extremely well and we really had a great time. I would certainly recommend it!

Thanks a bundle Guy!

Colin and Menna Swift

M.B. Parish Council

Speeding Through Kings Thorn

The Parish Council has been made aware of concerns by local residents about the speed of traffic through Kings Thorn. The matter will be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting on 2nd November and discussions are being held with the Police and Hereford Council, about possible traffic calming measures.

Planning permissions

Highland Cottage – Parish Lane - Widen new dwelling by 1m along its length.

Evergreen – Much Birch, Proposed conservatory.

Land adjacent to **The Bower Cottage** – Wrigglebrook ... New dwelling.

The Underhills – Hollybush Lane Four bedroom detached house. two storey with eaves at window head.

Applications supported by Parish Council

The Old Estate Yard – Kings Thorn ...

Variation of condition 7 of approval DCSW2006/0255/F to allow the use of any machinery and equipment within the buildings that will meet the environmental requirements of a B1 use.

Hideaway – Little Birch Road - Install oil tank on concrete hard standing.

Donation To Millennium Green A donation of £150 has been given towards the insurance costs of the Millennium Green in Tump Lane.

New Litter Bins

Parish Councillors have agreed to purchase a new litter bin for erection near the Church.

Discussions will also be held with Much Dewchurch & Little Birch Parish Councils, about the provision of a new free-standing bin outside the Kings Thorn bus shelter.

Meetings of Parish Council

Meetings of the Parish Council are held on the first Thursday of each month, at 8.00pm in the Community Hall. The next two meetings will be held on 2nd November and 7th December. *Local residents are warmly invited to attend.*

Parish Clerk

If you have any queries on Parish Council matters, please telephone or fax your Clerk, Mrs. Lynda Wilcox on:- 01432 276447, or write to 5 Croome Close, Hereford, HR1 1UY.

Minute Secretary

A WARM WELCOME AWAITS a Minute Secretary for Much Birch Hall Committee.

Relaxed and friendly meetings of a small group are held most months in the hall, currently on a Tuesday evening.

No correspondence is involved, just minutes and agendas, which may be e-mailed or posted out.

For information or a chat please telephone John Jones 01981 540908 or Lesley Lowe 01981 540366

No interviews or tests will be necessary, just a warm welcome!

L.B.P.C.

Date of Next Meeting – WEDNESDAY, 1ST NOVEMBER

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

Neighbourhood Watch

Hallowe'en

Keeping Hallowe'en a safe and fun time for all.

Whilst Hallowe'en is an exciting time for youngsters, there are dangers involved - and uninvited guests at the doorstep can prove a nuisance or even a terrifying experience for the elderly.

...Children under 12yrs should be accompanied by a responsible adult and over 12's should go in small groups, sticking to familiar areas, and never go into a stranger's home or accept lifts from people you don't know.

- Take a mobile phone or change for a payphone and a torch, when out in the dark.
- Only trick at homes where you know you will be welcomed, and respect any notices put up by the householders asking you to stay away (These will be available from the Force Website and also local Newspapers near the end of the month).

Mobile 'Phones

Cracking down on the mobile menace

West Mercia Constabulary is cracking down on motorists who use a hand-held mobile phone while driving. Latest statistics show too many drivers are continuing to flout the law, putting themselves and other road users at risk.

A total of 472 drivers across the force area were caught using a hand-held mobile phone during August, and were issued with a £30 fixed penalty ticket. The Force is keen to educate drivers about the dangers involved in using their mobile while driving. Figures show that motorists are 4 times more likely to be involved in a collision if they use a hand-held mobile while driving.

If drivers are caught they will be given a £30 fixed penalty fine, which could rise to a maximum of £1000 if the matter goes to court.

If you are making a call and involved in a collision you could be prosecuted for careless or dangerous driving, and face severe penalties.

Mobile phone safety is one of the key areas of the Force's ongoing Seven Deadly Sins Campaign, which aims to raise the awareness about road safety and reduce the number of people who are killed and injured in collisions on roads in West Mercia.

Burglary Dwellings

Nil this month

Burglary Buildings

Only one outbuilding attacked this month, a warehouse near Llanwarne, but it is believed the offenders did not take any property.

Vehicle Crime

Sometime between 13th and 15th Sept 2006, a black Ford Escort – L214 HYF was stolen from Coldstone Cross, Kingstone. If you have any information about this crime or the whereabouts of the vehicle please contact the officer in the case, PC Fiona Farrington.

Theft

A single axle galvanised trailer carrying a speedboat was taken from premises at Harewood End, overnight on the 10th/11th Sept 2006.

The "Searay 180" sports boat is 18feet long and white with a blue rain cover, and equipped with a "Mercury" 90hp outboard

motor. If you have any information about this crime or recall seeing a vehicle towing a similar boat as described, please contact the PSD (Public Service Desk) at Hereford Police Station.

As fuel prices remain high, diesel and oil fuels remain a popular target for criminals. Offenders drained fuel from parked lorries at Hay and Brecon Farmers overnight on 17th/18th Sept, and a further attempt to take fuel from storage tanks was made overnight on 25th/26th Sept 2006.

Diesel was also taken from a storage tank, at premises near St.Woenards. Please take necessary steps to secure fuel tanks with a good quality locking device.

Special Constabulary Recruits Needed

West Mercia is one of the top performing police forces in the UK. To keep it there we need to recruit more people into our volunteer workforce – the Special Constabulary. These volunteers will support Local Policing Teams, which will form the basis of our new Neighbourhood Policing Strategy, and strengthen our links with local communities. Anyone interested in joining can obtain an application form from the West Mercia Website (see front page) or contact the Recruitment Line on **01562 826027**.

And on a lighter note

An officer was carrying out a street search of a man and discovered that the man's wallet contained a photo ID card, with his photograph, but a completely different name to the one he had given the officer. The man said the wallet belonged to his twin brother. The officer asked why his twin brother's last name was different from his. The man replied that he and his twin brother had had different fathers !!.

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

ADVERTISEMENTS

There are three new advertisers in this issue and a couple which have been updated.

GLAZY DAYS **HOME IMPROVEMENTS**

Steve Jennings

Coach House, Whitewells, Laskett Lane,
Much Birch, Herefordshire HR2 8HZ

Tel: 01981 541121 Fax: 01981 541121 Mobile 07738 016844
Email: sales@glazydays.net Web: www.glazydays.net

Cost of Printing the N/L

So far eight households have expressed a wish to have the Newsletter delivered via email. This is a small start. If you have an email address and would be willing to join them, it would mean you get your Newsletter nice and early and will save your delivery team petrol and time. *Editor*

Items/Copy

Please may I have items for the **DECEMBER** 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 NOVEMBER
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DONATIONS

We would like to thank those of you who have kindly donated towards the cost of producing this newsletter.

If every household could contribute £2 per year, which is less than 20p per issue, it would go some way towards covering our costs

The Newsletter is compiled, printed, collated and delivered by volunteers completely free of charge. The costs we incur are purely the amount we have to pay Much Birch resource centre for the use of the electronic printer and for paper.

If you would care to donate, cheques can be made payable to *Little Birch Village Hall Management Committee* and sent to Mrs. R. Hodges, Wendover, Kings Thorn, Hereford HR2 8AU.

THANK YOU