



# Newsletter for King's Thorn, The Birches & Aconbury

A newsletter for the villages of King's Thorn, Little Birch, Much Birch & Aconbury December 2014. First published 1977



## LET'S PARTY!

Little Birch Village Hall

## New Year's Eve Celebration 2014

7.30 'til Late  
Wolfie Disco

Licensed bar and refreshments

Entry £7.50 (£10 after December 19th)

### CONCERT..

Halfway Community Theatre are hosting a Concert entitled 'TASTE OF CHRISTMAS' at Much Birch Community Hall on SAT. 6th.

December commencing at 2.30pm.

All are very welcome to come and hear Christmas songs and poems and share in a lovely tea together with a cup of tea or coffee. Tickets cost £10 with children and students at £6. Please call Audrey on 01981 540432 for tickets.

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

### Diary Dates

#### November

26th Gardening Club LBVH

#### December

3rd Gardening Club Social LBVH

4th Christmas Bingo LBVH

4th Much Birch PC MBCH

6th Halfway Theatre Concert MBCH

9th Whist Drive LBVH

16th Womens Institute MBCH

19th Village Market MBCH

20th Book Exchange LBVH

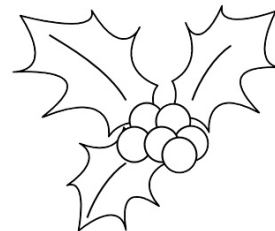
20th Mulled Wine & Mince Pies  
Cherry Tree Bungalow

20th Carol Singing

31st New Years Eve Party LBVH

#### January

28th Gardening Club LBVH



Greetings and  
best wishes  
to everyone for  
the festive season

### Little Birch on Aconbury Hill

Recent newcomers to the area might be interested to know that a history of the parish and it's people was compiled by members of the local history group and published in 2006. A few copies are still available. They can be bought by calling Alison on 540791

## Local News.

**Mrs. Margaret Blythe** writes to say a big 'Thank you' to all friends and neighbours in Tump Lane for all the kindness and help given during my recent illness. Special thanks go to **Eric Joseph**, who despite the traffic, got me to the County hospital on time so that I didn't lose the bed. For all the phone calls, visits and cards from so many different people, I was really overcome by the kindness of everyone. Also a very big 'Thank you' to **Doreen and Veronica**, my close neighbours and to **Shirley**, my dear friend of many years who has always been there for me, I appreciate it all so much.

It is good to report that **Beryl Townsend** is making steady progress in her walking with marvellous support from the family and we hope to see her walking around the lanes with her rollator in the near future.

A number of residents have been in hospital recently among them **Selby Lloyd**, who is now walking the dog again.

**Betty Bryant** would like to thank many friends in the community and at Much Birch surgery for their generosity in making up 29 shoeboxes for 'Operation Christmas Child'. These were delivered to the collection warehouse in Hereford and were gratefully received.

**Carol Singing** around Little Birch has been arranged for Wed. DEC 17th starting at 7pm from Little Birch Village Hall. Everyone is most welcome to join LBPCC for this evening.

It is very unusual for the police report to include an incident in Little Birch parish. Unfortunately there was a **break-in** recently at the village hall. Damage was confined to the kitchen window and to the robust lock mechanism on the shipping container behind the hall used for storage. Nothing appears to have been taken.

Police, including forensics, attended promptly to investigate.

For security reasons no food, alcohol, money, computers and projection equipment is kept in the hall overnight. The storage container contains mainly stage scenery and old folding chairs but no garden machinery.

A regular reader reported a recent telephone call to say that her computer contained a virus and an offer to remove it for £40 and asked for **credit card details**. As mentioned many times in the past, it is important never to reveal credit card information to any caller.

**MULLED WINE and MINCE PIES** can be enjoyed at the home of **JENNY & JOHN CATON**, **Cherry Tree Bungalow, Little Birch Road, King's Thorn** on **SATURDAY, 20th DECEMBER** from 2 to 4 pm.

**Everyone is invited, that means YOU.**

## Teaspoons in the Rain

Torrential rain and a flooded gateway didn't stop children from the reception class of Much Birch Primary School turning out to plant a commemorative tree on the **Rosemary Rigby Millenium Green**. With so many children, parishioners and friends wanting to play their part, the only solution was to share the planting by using teaspoons!

Chosen for it's spectacular autumn foliage, The Liquid Amber tree was planted on the morning of Friday, 7th. November 2014 to commemorate the start of the First World War. Despite feeling unwell, **Andy Hoare**, landlord of the Axe and Cleaver dutifully sounded The Last Post'

The **Rev. Mark Johnson** conducted a short service of dedication and the children sang "The more we are together". **Rosemary Rigby** thanked the children and presented each with a **Violette Szabo** bookmark to remember the occasion.

Leaving the rain soaked field, all were delighted to be served hot tea, coffee or chocolate and home made shortbread biscuits gifted and served by **Trevor** of the Pilgrim Hotel.

Rosemary E. Rigby MBE Keith James

## Another in the Series on Local Castles by John Kinross

To the end of the lane next to the Church in Wigmore springs a surprise to any walker. Suddenly, the not inconsequential remains of Wigmore Castle appear, which was the stronghold of the Mortimers. It was built by William Fitz Osbern about 1070 - 1071 and is mentioned in Domesday as the possession of Ralph de Mortimer. The Mortimers supported Stephen so when Matilda's son, Henry II became King, the Mortimers were out of favour. In Henry III's reign, it was Roger Mortimer who had to strengthen his castle as it was the time of the Welsh wars. This Roger welcomed Prince Edward when he escaped from Simon de Montfort and the Mortimers took part in the Battle of Evesham, which was the downfall of Simon. Another Roger was friendly with Queen Isabella, wife of Edward II, and was one of

those involved in the imprisonment and murder of Edward at Berkeley castle. He was eventually caught by King Edward III and hanged at Tyburn. The Mortimers continued to flourish and after his capture at Pilleth (1402), Sir Edmund Mortimer married the daughter of Owen Glyn Dower. He was rescued by King Henry V and sent to Ireland where he died in 1424. This was almost the end of the castle as it became crown property but the King preferred Ludlow. In 1601, it became Harley property and was partially dismantled during the Civil War. In 1999, English Heritage re-opened the castle but alas, they have not spent any money on it and the ruins are not all that safe. The lack of a suitable car park has meant that few visitors get to it and a much better effort at clearing the ivy and undergrowth would be welcome with sign boards as has been done with great success at Montgomery Castle.

### **Much Birch Parish Council**

Parish Clerk Mrs Alison Wright, Longfield House  
Gooses Foot, Kingstone Herefordshire HR2 9NE  
Tel. 01981 250860

Email: [muchbirchclerk@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:muchbirchclerk@hotmail.co.uk)

PARISH MEETING – at the Parish Council Meeting held on the 6th November at the Much Birch Community Hall. The Parish Council heard that the self help winter gritting scheme arrangements were again in place, with grit stocks full, to keep the parish roads passable in the event of icy weather. **It should of course be remembered that, whilst every endeavour will be made to keep key roads ice free, drivers should still drive with extreme care.**

The Parish Plan, previously produced, was to be revisited and reviewed and there will be opportunities, going forward, for residents to get involved in this process.

With wintery weather and increased rainfall on the way, further concern was raised regarding blocked ditches and the problems this can cause when surface water cannot run away freely. There was an appeal to all land, and property owners, to clean out any ditches, which are their responsibility, to safeguard the parish roads against flooding should heavy rainfall again be an issue. Everyone's co-operation to keep the roads safe is greatly appreciated.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Thursday 4th December 2014 at 7.30pm - at The Much Birch Community Hall. Please see notice

boards and website for agendas. As always the public and press are more than welcome to attend and will have the opportunity to speak directly to their representatives.

A reminder that:-

Your Much Birch Parish Councillors are:-

**Cllr Alison Cook** (Chair) Jasmine Cottage, Wrigglebrook Lane, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AW, email [thecooks@wyenet.co.uk](mailto:thecooks@wyenet.co.uk) Tel. 01981 540703

**Cllr Steve Turner** (Vice Chair) The Underhills, Hollybush Lane, Much Birch, Hereford, HR2 8HX, e mail [turnersofcrossways@btinternet.com](mailto:turnersofcrossways@btinternet.com) and Tel. 01981 540090

**Cllr Andrew Crum** Anfield House, Barrack Hill, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AX, email [a.crum@btinternet.com](mailto:a.crum@btinternet.com) Tel. 01981 540002

**Cllr Jon Norris** Whitewells, Laskett Lane, Much Birch, Hereford, HR2 8HZ, email [jon@jonnorris.co.uk](mailto:jon@jonnorris.co.uk) Tel. 07944 301250

**Cllr Keith James** The Slinget, Tump Lane, Much Birch, Hereford, HR2 8HP, email [keithjamesphotos@btinternet.com](mailto:keithjamesphotos@btinternet.com) Tel 01981 540171

**Cllr Tim Jones** The Wriggle, Wrigglebrook, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AW email [tjsj@me.com](mailto:tjsj@me.com) Tel. 01981 540242

Full minutes of the meetings and information etc. can be found on the Parish Council website following the link found in this summary. [www.muchbirchparish.org.uk](http://www.muchbirchparish.org.uk).

### **Little Birch Parish Council**

The most recent meeting was on Wednesday November 12th and three Councillors were present Cllrs Rees, Godding and the Chair Cllr Morley.

The Ward Councillor, Mr Jon Norris was also in attendance, he informed the meeting that the history of Little Birch had been put onto the website. He also asked for parishioners to consider the effects of bonfires at this time of year on their neighbours, with wet leaves smoking rather than burning cleanly and causing a smoke problem for those around them.

A generous offer has been made for the Old Chapel in Little Birch to be made available for a community enterprise, or a group who would be of benefit for the community to use (but not for storage). It would be available on a lease for 5 to 10 years potentially. Any one who might be interested please contact the Parish Clerk before

the end of December 2014.

Little Birch Parish Council will continue to work in partnership with one of our local farmers to try and get the main routes through the village gritted when necessary. However, the Parish Council would urge all drivers to continue to exercise care when driving in snowy or frosty conditions.

The Neighbourhood Plan was discussed again, and it was decided that the PC would look to secure a grant in 2015 so that the Plan **could** be developed at no (or very little) cost to the parishioners.

We were notified that the BT phone box near the village hall has been used only 3 times in the last year, and thus BT are looking to disconnect it. However, the Parish Council has been given the opportunity to purchase it for a very modest sum, which they intend to do, and they would welcome any suggestions as to what uses could be made of it. Once again suggestions to the Clerk please.

Following an account of the PC finances, it was decided that the Precept should remain the same for 2015/2016.

The next meeting is on Wednesday January 7th at 7.30 in the Village Hall, and all parishioners are warmly welcomed.

Sophie Glover –Little Birch Parish Council Clerk,  
littlebirchpcclerk@hotmail.co.uk

### **Little Birch Village Hall Committee**

#### **Special Christmas Bingo**

A Special 'Merry Christmas Bingo' will be held at Little Birch Village Hall on Thursday 4 December. "Eyes down" at 8.p.m. There will be 'very good prizes' and refreshments will be served. Do come and join us for an enjoyable evening.

#### **Community Book Exchange/Lending Library**

The October meeting for the LBVH "Book Exchange" will be on Saturday 20 December at Little Birch Village Hall.

All members of the community are invited to join us for this enjoyable monthly event which offers not only a wide range of books and DVDs (to suit all ages and interests,) but also an opportunity to meet others and exchange recommendations for "a good read".

A warm welcome, tea, coffee and festive 'Mince pies' will be provided and we look forward to meeting up with regular and new visitors to the Book exchange.

There is a charge of £1 per adult towards the cost of the hire of hall and refreshments. We look

forward to seeing you on 20 December.

#### **Whist Drive**

Our next Whist Drive is on Tuesday 9 December at Little Birch Village Hall. We shall start at 7.30.p.m. The entrance fee is £2.00.

We are always on the 'look out' for new members including those who are new to Whist and others who may not have played for some time. A warm welcome, good company and enjoyment of an evening of Whist may be just what you need! Excellent prizes and refreshments will be available.

#### **Much Birch WI**

Much Birch WI holds meetings on the third Tuesday of each month, at 7.30pm in Much Birch Community Hall. The December meeting takes the form of the Member's Christmas Celebrations.

Visitors and potential new members are welcome.

Please contact Gillian, 01981 540080 or Caroline, 01981 540422 for more details.

#### **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 Friday, 19th December.

Stalls will include;

**Moor Meals**, award winning, local suppliers of Dexter beef, ready meals and pies, **Llandinabo Farm shop**, selling sausages, chicken, duck, lamb etc. as well as some cooked meats and cheese. Also we have **Castle Cheese**, **Mr. G's** award winning chutney and preserves and a vegetable stall. There are craft stands and a **Fair Trade** stand. If you would like to have a stall, or to find out more about the market, please contact Mark on 01432 278026

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

(PS. It would appear that, nationally, we are being encouraged to 'Buy British'. Even better, 'Buy Local' and help the Herefordshire economy.)

#### **King's Thorn and Little Birch Gardening Club**

On Wed. 26th Nov., **Mr. Alan Clarke** will give an illustrated talk on the **Isles of Scilly**.

The social highlight of the calendar year, the **Annual Social** takes place on Dec. 3rd. at

7.30pm. This is open to non members as well. Tickets £5 for the 2 course meal. Please bring plate and sweet dish and cutlery.

The New Year starts with a meeting on Jan. 28th. when **Sue Russell** will give an illustrated talk on **'The Herbaceous Border'**.

Meetings are held in Little Birch Hall usually on the last Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm.

New members are always welcome.

John Bryant 01981 540316

### **Police Report**

I would like to make you aware of some incidents and also some changes to the local team.

#### **Allensmore**

A bail spike was stolen from a rural premises in Allensmore. This happened between the 19th of October and the 29th of October.

#### **Little Birch**

The village Hall was broken into at Little Birch between 21:00 on Friday the 21st of October and 09:00 on Tuesday the 4th of October. Damage was caused however nothing appears to have been stolen.

#### **Rotherwas**

On the 2nd of November a lorry cab was stolen from a premises on Chapel Road, Rotherwas. Within an hour the vehicle was stopped towards Monmouth and a male was arrested.

On Wednesday the 5th of November a disc cutter saw was stolen from a building site at Rotherwas.

The offender was described as follows: White male, 5'4, a tubby build, 15-16 years old, he was wearing a green hoody, a pale blue tshirt, jeans and had a brown crew cut hair style.

#### **Wormelow**

On the 5th of September (reported on the 30/10) an electric meter box was stolen from outside flats in Wormelow.

#### **Positive Policing**

A vehicle was stopped in Holme Lacy in the early hours on the 30/10/2014. The vehicle was found to have no insurance and was subsequently seized.

**Callow Parish Council** are currently seeking volunteers to help with their Community Speed Watch scheme. The scheme is set up and put in to place to help Local Communities that have problems with speeding. The volunteers will at agreed times and on agreed routes monitor the speed of traffic in their local Parish. Reporting any vehicles speeding to the Local Police who will then deal with the offenders. If you would like to

volunteer please let me know and I will pass your details on to the Parish Council.

Lastly.... **I am moving on to pastures new...** I am moving to the Hereford High Town area. I am handing over my current responsibilities to **PCSO James Preece**. His email address is james.preece@westmercia.pnn.police.uk. He will be sending out further emails to you all. Thank you all very much for all the help and information you have passed to me. Any further information passed to me I will ensure it is passed on to PCSO Preece.

PCSO 6993 Kevin Powell  
Hereford Southside and Rural Safer  
Neighbourhood Team South Wye Police Station

### **Church Services in December**

#### **Sunday Dec 7th**

11am L. Birch CW Communion

#### **Sunday Dec 14th**

9.15am M. Birch Family Communion

11am L. Birch Morning Worship

#### **Sunday Dec 21st**

10.30am Kings Cuple Benefice Service

4 pm L. Birch Carols and Christingles

#### **Christmas Eve**

3.30pm M. Birch Carols and Christingles

#### **Christmas Day**

9.15am M. Birch CW. Communion

11am L. Birch CW Communion

#### **Sunday Dec 28th**

10.30am Llandinabo Benefice Service

### **Herefordshire's Talking Newspaper for the Blind**

Do you, have difficulty in reading newspapers because of poor eyesight?

Do you have a family member, friend or neighbour who misses being able to catch up on local news from local newspapers?

Do you know that the Herefordshire Talking Newspaper for the Blind is produced fortnightly on CD , and delivered free by post?

To obtain more information, please contact the Secretary, Elizabeth Wilson, on 01432 853283, or leave a message at 36 Widemarsh Street, Hereford, HR11BD Tel: 01432 352297

### **And finally**

A group of chess enthusiasts checked into a hotel and were standing in the lobby discussing their recent tournament victories. After about an hour, the manager came out of the office and asked them to disperse.

"But why?" they asked, as they moved off.

"Because," he said, "I can't stand chess nuts boasting in an open foyer."