



Newsletter for King's Thorn, The Birches & Aconbury

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

Diary Dates

January

29th Gardening Club LBVH

February

6th Much Birch PC MBCH

6th History Talk LBVH

8th Book Exchange LBVH

11th Flicks in the Sticks MBCH

11th Whist Drive LBVH

22nd Male Voice Choir LBVH

26th Gardening Club LBVH

28th David Lim Steiner Ac.

March

4th Pancake Evening LBVH

5h Little Birch PC LBVH

11th Evergreen Club AGM MBCH

11th Annual Quiz LBVH

26th Gardening Club AGM LBVH

Little Birch Church is pleased to present a concert by

The Hereford Rail Male Voice Choir

Little Birch Village Hall.

February 22nd commencing at 7pm.

Tickets £7.50 for adults and £4 for under 16's

Available from :- **John Bryant** Tel. 01981540316.

Steve Turner Tel. 01981540090.

James Gould Tel.01981540676.

John Caton Tel.01981540267.

Tickets are limited so please book your seat early to enjoy a wonderful evening of musical entertainment by this highly accomplished choir.

What are those lines in the sky?

Persistent jet contrails reduce sunshine and change our weather. Former doctoral researcher David Lim invites you to hear about local weather modification activity, geoengineering and the health effects.

Friday 28th February, 7:30pm

**Birch Hall, Steiner Academy Hereford,
Much Dewchurch, Hereford HR2 8DL**

Winter Gritting

Bob Mason has kindly agreed to do his best to keep key local roads open in case of snowfalls this winter on behalf of Little and Much Birch Parish Councils. The grit has been provided by Herefordshire Council/ Balfour Beatty.

In case of overnight frosts road users should beware of ice especially on hills and use grit from bins if necessary.

March Newsletter

Please send copy for the March Newsletter to

birchesnews@gmail.com or written contributions to John Bryant at Bramley Bungalow, Aconbury Close by 18th.

February

The Women of Rotherwas

Working in the munitions factory in the First and Second World Wars was something a number of women in our area were employed in.

Come and hear what their life was like in a talk by

Julia Orton-Davies

Little Birch Village Hall

Thursday February 6th at 7.30.

It should be a fascinating talk.

Entry £4.00 will include a ploughman's supper

Extract from the Daily Telegraph 20th. January
' Our NHS medical records.'

by Philip Johnston.

Most households will have received a leaflet from the NHS called 'Better information means better care'. Don't throw this away as junk mail because it concerns how your health records are handled. From March, the NHS will extract your health records from GP surgeries and send them to ' Health and Social Care Information Centre. The 'care data scheme' will then share your records with other sections of the NHS and with third-parties such as, researchers and pharmaceutical companies. Progress in medical research is vital and the scheme states that the records would be given anonymity: BUT THEY ARE NOT, the system is not foolproof.

NHS records are the property of the Health Secretary. Whilst the leaflet does advise that we can tell our GP if we do not want our records to be extracted, this is not given any prominence.

If you do nothing, the NHS will presume your willingness to access your records by default.

If you decide that your records are personal and wish them to remain confidential, a phone call to your local surgery to ask that your records must not be extracted by the NHS is all that is necessary even if you have thrown the leaflet away.

Local News

It is very pleasing to report the safe arrival some 2 weeks ago of baby **ALBERT, born to CARLA GILLESPIE** and her partner, **JOHN FERNYHOUGH**. Needless to say the parents and grandparents and friends are all delighted and brother, **FREDDIE**, could not be more pleased.

Congratulations are extended to **BECCE ALLSEBROOK** of Little Birch on her appointment as Speech and Language Therapist at the Watergate Park Rehabilitation Centre in Newcastle. This is one of the few centres dealing with patients who have experienced severe trauma and brain injury. There was much competition to fill this post; so well done!! Becce. She will also have the opportunity to study for her Master's Degree at Edinburgh University over the next 2 years.

It is sad to report the death of **IRIS GRIFFITHS**, formerly of Long Orchard Farm, Tump Lane and

Much Dewchurch. The funeral service took place at Much Birch Church on 7th. January and was conducted by Rev. Mark Johnson. She was 86 years old and had been in a nursing home for several months.

She was born at Ullingswick on a farm where her father was a wheelwright. She was one of 8 children comprising 4 brothers and 3 sisters. Life was pretty tough in a small cottage with no running water, an outside loo and no electricity. She attended Ullingswick school from the age of 5 until she was about 11 when the family moved to Yarkhill where she completed her education. Iris had happy memories of school and often recalled the occasion when one of her sisters found her in a 'bit of a strop' and hung her out of the classroom window by her heels to cool off! Iris went into 'service' as a lot of country girls did in those days but then joined the Land Army, based at Bircher Hall, Yarpole. Her favourite tale was that she was asked to drive a tractor, not saying that she couldn't and with a load of Polish POWs she started off and then stalled the tractor, throwing most of them off. There were many Polish expletives uttered! It was here that she met Mike and they got on really well before he was posted to Burmah to fight against the Japanese Army. After he was demobbed, they married in Leominster in 1948. Mike came to work for Mr. Anthony Acheson at Long Orchard Farm, looking after the pigs and later the chickens and poultry houses when Sun Valley was established. In due time, they had 4 children, Linda, Robert, who sadly died aged 6 months, Clifford, who also worked with his father but was a diabetic and also sadly died aged 31 and Clive. Iris worked hard doing seasonal fruit picking as well as looking after the family. Later, she loved playing bingo and Dot Skyrme always gave her a lift to play bingo in the various villages roundabout Hereford and locally. Iris also enjoyed working part time at King's Thorn Shop where she made new friends.

When Mike retired, they moved to a flat in Tump Lane and when Mike died she eventually moved to a bungalow in Much Dewchurch where she was well looked after by the family and had Lorna living nearby. She delighted in her grandchildren, Lorna. Lee and Lorraine and eventually, great grandchildren. Sadly, she had to move into care at Credenhill Court and finally for several months at Holmer Nursing Home. Donations in memory of Iris were given to benefit Alzheimer's UK and

Much Birch Church. She will be sadly missed by all the family and many friends in the wider community.

The death of Mrs. **Gladys Garlick** occurred a few weeks before her 91st. birthday.

Gladys was born in Plumstead, South London where she lived with her parents and older sister, Dena. The family moved to Eltham and after primary school, Gladys went on to Prendergast Grammar School, where she did very well in her exams and much to the family's surprise at gymnastics and netball. At the outbreak of World War 2, the school was evacuated to the Isle of Sheppey and then to Tonbridge. She later joined the Voluntary Aid Detachment and was sent to the Isle of Wight, where she met Dennis who was a Sgt. in the Royal Army Medical Corps. They married in 1945 and lived with Gladys's parents for a while. David was born in 1946 and Peter in 1948 and then the family moved to Eltham, where Gladys continued to live until she came to Much Birch 14 years ago.

Gladys spent most of her working life in the Civil Service and was based at the local National Insurance Office until she retired. She taught a fresh out of school 16 year old, Katie, how to work out sickness benefits and showed her a photograph of David who was in the Navy. After an exchange of letters and a couple of 'dates', Katie was invited to tea. She was somewhat apprehensive about addressing her future mother in law as in the office, Gladys was affectionately known as 'Pickles'. The dilemma continued until Steven was born and Gladys was pleased to become 'Nan'. David and Katie recently celebrated their Sapphire Wedding Anniversary.

In 1960, Gladys and Dennis' third son, Andy was born. All the family remember the annual camping holidays on the Gower Peninsula, the overnight drive down from London, pitching the tent in a farmer's field at Horton and enjoying the freedom and fun that such a holiday offered. Dennis was the local Scoutmaster and when he took the Scouts camping, the whole family went. Later, Gladys and Dennis bought a caravan on the Gower and Gladys's love for anything Welsh, whether Welsh hymns or the Wales Rugby team, all stemmed from those holidays. There is a memory of Gladys playing in goal for the Scout football team when she was 6 months pregnant. She had played netball for a Civil Service team and showed enough interest in Andy's love of

football to know the names of most of the Spurs teams over the years. Gladys was a good housewife and was very hospitable to her sons' friends and bacon sandwiches were cheerfully produced at late hours.

In 1973, Peter married Kay and moved to Herefordshire. In 1979, Dennis became seriously ill and Gladys looked after him at home until his death. They had always done everything together and after his death, the family and her work were what kept her going. She became more involved with the local Church where she had many friends and was confirmed there in 1985. Gladys loved quizzes and had the most amazing memory for facts. Everyone has their own idea of heaven but for Gladys it will surely include regular quizzing. Andy married Jo and they lived close by for many years, so Gladys looked after grandson, Ben, when Jo was working and also helped with the washing and ironing. Andy and Jo moved to Battle (East Sussex) and Gladys moved into the Coach House next to Kay and Peter. She had always said that she couldn't possibly live in the country, but she made new friends in the Church, in the WI and through her involvement at Much Birch School where she regularly listened to the Reception Class reading. She had done this work before at Redhill Primary School in Chislehurst and always so enjoyed the company of young children, whether her own grandchildren or great-grandchildren or other peoples. She was so pleased to be able to give that precious gift of interest and time – time to talk, play and read to other children so that they could feel valued. She also vigorously campaigned for a bus shelter near Much Birch Church so that schoolchildren did not have to suffer wet clothes as they waited in the rain.

Three years ago, Gladys had a fall at Christmas time followed by a few mini-strokes and it was clear that she could no longer live independently and she moved into Charnwood. After a period of adjustment, she was happy there and was cared for so well and sensitively by the staff. Since her 90th birthday, she became very frail, suffering more small strokes but remaining very content and cheerful. A few weeks ago, on New Years Day, she suffered a much more severe stroke from which she did not recover. The family are so grateful to Charnwood for enabling her to stay there. She died very peacefully in her own room, in her own bed, surrounded by photos of all her

family and Peter and Kay were glad to be able to be with her.

Her funeral service took place on 24th. January in Much Birch Church and was conducted by Rev. Mark Johnson with several members of the family also taking part. Donations in memory of Gladys were given to further the work of Much Birch Church. We send our sincere sympathies to all members of the wider Garlick family. Gladys will be greatly missed. She was a real character!

Wilton Castle

John Kinross of Much Birch has penned the following article on Wilton Castle. This Castle, recently repaired at some expense by its present owner, opens to the public in the summer months and for an art exhibition in a marquee, usually in the autumn.

It was supposed to have been built about 1141 by Hugo de Longchamp. His descendant, Henry de Longchamp lived there with his daughter, Hawisia, who married William, Lord Fitzhugh. His heiress married into the De Grey family who produced many soldiers and Members of Parliament. Sir William de Grey was Deputy Governor of Calais, who after a struggle with the Duke of Guise, had to surrender. His ransom was set at the vast sum of 20,000 crowns. Much of the family property had to be sold and the Talbot of Goodrich offered £6000 for Wilton Castle. The deal was never completed and in Queen Elizabeth's reign, the Castle was in the hands of Sir John Brydges, Deputy Governor of the Tower of London. It was his delay that saved the life of the young Princess Elizabeth when she was imprisoned there.

During the Civil War, Sir John Brydges decided that he was neither a Royalist or a Parliamentarian and went off to Ireland. When he returned, the Royalists, Henry Lingen and Lord Scudamore, were so annoyed with Brydges for not allowing a garrison in his castle house that, waiting until he was in church, they sent their men to burn it down. In the 19th century, a small house was constructed in the SE corner, where the present owner lives. The title of Lord Grey of Wilton was revived in 1784 and the family became merged with the Grosvenors. So those who think Cromwell knocked down the castles in Herefordshire must think again. It seems that it was nothing but spite, because a seventeenth century castle Wilton would never have stood up to a siege.

Much Birch WI

Much Birch WI holds meetings on the third Tuesday of each month, at 7.30pm in Much Birch Community Hall. The February meeting takes place on Tuesday 18th when **Jane Davey will entertain us with, 'Dancing Skies: The Aurora'**. To whet your appetite, in March the subject of the evening will be **'The Countryside in the 1960's'** and in April, **'Cooking in Private Service'**. The Open Meeting, to which husbands, partners and friends are particularly welcome, is on Tuesday 17th July when the subject will be **'How old did you say you were?'** What an interesting subject!! Visitors and potential new members are always welcome.

Much Birch Village Market

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

The February Market is on Friday 28th.

Stalls will include;

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

There is a Fair Trade stand and craft stands.

Dan will be back to sharpen your knives and tools. Refreshments and 'take home cakes', the proceeds of which go to MacMillan Cancer Support, are supplied by Chris and Peter.

Please support our producers who bring local food 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 local economy.) If you would like to have a stall, or to find out more about the market, please contact Mark on 01432 278026

Little Birch Village Hall Committee

Community Book Exchange/Lending Library

The next meeting for the "Book Exchange" will be on Saturday 8 February 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 and coffee 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 Saturday 8 February.

Please note that this is a change of date. The hall is not available on the date stamped in books taken out in January.

Annual Pancake evening

Shrove Tuesday 4 March Little Birch Hall
Homemade pancakes with a variety of delicious fillings, savoury and sweet! £2.50 for two and 50p for each additional one you can manage!

Whist Drive

Our next Whist Drive is on **Tuesday 11 February** 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.

The Birches 'New Year's Eve Party'

The Birches Committee would like to thank everyone for their support for this happy and memorable New Year celebration. A wonderful time was had by all.

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

PARISH MEETING – at the Parish Meeting held on the 9th January 2014, at the Much Birch Community Hall. There was discussion over the setting of the precept for the year 2014. The Parish Council had looked at the likely budget

commitments including the need to provide lengthsman services to keep the parish roads and pathways usable, to ensure adequate grit bins and to continue to liaise in regard to the self help gritting scheme, ensuring it was fit for purpose. There was also the requirement to provide funds for a possible contested election in terms of election expenses. It was looking increasingly likely that more duties, of community provision, would be passed on to Parish Councils and to keep finances on track, the Parish Council had sought what was felt to be a judicious increase in the precept from £6000 per annum to £6390, an increase of 6.5%. The Parish Council had received the resignation of Mr **Terry Cook**, as Parish Councillor, and thanks are extended to him for his contribution to the Parish Council and also to his continued commitment to act as Webmaster for the Parish. Thank you, Terry.

A reminder that:-

Your Much Birch Parish Councillors are:-

Cllr **Alison Cook** (Chair) Jasmine Cottage,
Wrigglebrook Lane, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AW, e mail 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 and
Tel. 01981 540090

Cllr **Andrew Crum** Anfield House, Barrack Hill,
Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AX, e mail
a.crum@btinternet.com
Tel. 01981 540002

Cllr **Jon Norris** Whitewells, Laskett Lane,
Much Birch, Hereford, HR2 8HZ, e mail
jon@jonnorris.co.uk Tel. 07944 301250

Cllr **Keith James** The Slinget, Tump Lane,
Much Birch, Hereford, HR2 8HP, e mail
keithjamesphotos@btinternet.com Tel 01981
540171

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.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on **Thursday 6th February 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.

Little Birch Parish Council

The most recent meeting was held on Wednesday January 8th and all Councillors were present apart from Cllr Rees.

The new Ward Councillor, Mr Jon Norris was also in attendance, and he warned the Parish Council that they may well need to take on many services in the future that Herefordshire Council had undertaken previously.

The proposed Neighbourhood Plan was discussed, and the Chair outlined the position that Little Birch was currently in to the effect that Much Birch had decided not to do a Plan for the time being, but Aconbury was keen to join in if LBPC were going to go ahead. The Chair asked for a show of hands for those who felt that they ought to do a Neighbourhood Plan, and the vote was 3:1 against and concern was expressed that Little Birch seemed to be in the wrong village category. The Chair agreed to write a letter to highlight this to the Council.

The Parish Field now has a smart fence, and some work on the trees around its edge will be done in the spring.

The Village Newsletter will be available on the Community website from February, but those who got the newsletter by e mail will be sent a link to the website version.

All Parish Councillors were asked to be named as Village Hall Trustees.

Following an account of the PC finances, it was decided that the Precept should remain the same for 2014/2015

The next meeting is on Wednesday March 5th 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 and King's Thorn Gardening Club

Wed.29th. Jan. '**Friends and Foes**' in the Garden' will be the subject of an illustrated talk by Roger Umpleby, the well known entomologist and horticulturist.

Wed. 26th. February **Travelling for Plants in South America** will be discussed by Dr. I.K.Ferguson, a professional botanist who worked at Kew Gardens for 29 years. His current garden can be viewed at www.ebotany.co.uk

Wed. 26th. March Annual General Meeting to elect a new committee and officers for the ensuing year. If anyone would like to give a short talk or arrange a quiz, the committee would like to hear from you.

All meetings are held in Little Birch Village Hall and commence at 7.30pm. Visitors are always welcome.
John Bryant 01981 540316.

Open your gardens for St Michael's Hospice

If you have ever visited an open garden or held an open garden day yourself you will know that they provide a wonderful opportunity to show off your gardening skills, meet new people and raise funds for a good cause. 2014 is the 30th anniversary of St Michael's Hospice and as part of our celebrations we are looking to hold 30 open gardens. It doesn't matter whether your garden is big or small, if you would like to get involved we'd be delighted to hear from you. Perhaps you'd like to join together with neighbours and hold a village open garden day instead?

The Fundraising team at the Hospice can offer you advice, help you advertise your event and provide practical support on the day. The money you raise will help your local hospice continue providing care and support to patients and their families in Herefordshire and the immediate surrounding counties who are living with a life-limiting illness.

For more information and to register your interest please call the Fundraising Team on 01432 851000.

Forthcoming Fundraising Events for Much Birch Church

2nd May 2014 - Ladies and Children's Fashion Show and Sale

18th May 2014 - Plant Sale and Coffee Morning

31st May 2014 - Rhayader and District Male Voice Choir with soloist Jayne Swann

Please put these dates in your diary and if during the next few weeks you are cultivating seedlings and plants we would be very grateful if you could consider growing a few extra to donate to our Plant Sale.

Much Birch Community Hall 100 Club

The January 2014 2013 draw took place on 12th January 2014 Much Birch Community Hall. The results were as follows:

1st prize – No. 78 **Mrs. C. Powell** Much Birch

2nd prize – No. 41 **Miss C. Dawson** Kivernoll

The next draw will take place on 16th February 2014 at 11am in Much Birch Community Hall.

John Jones Chairman and Promoter

Local Police Briefing

Dinedor

A burglary occurred between Thursday the 2nd of January and Monday the 6th of January at a property in Dinedor. An outbuilding was broken into and tree surgeon equipment was stolen.

Rotherwas

Overnight Thursday the 9th of January to Friday 10th of January some fuel was taken from a lorry at Rotherwas Industrial estate. The victim only left small amounts of fuel in the tanks so offenders were only able to take a small amount.

Below I have added an update from Golden Valley's last email briefing.

Animal Carcasses

The police are currently working with Herefordshire Council in order to catch individual(s) dumping bags of sheep and rabbit meat, bones and carcasses and we would like your help in doing so. These items have been dumped in the Golden Valley and South Hereford during the last month.

The first report was received 16th December, this was passed to Animal Health as it was initially believed to be farm-related. It is not known if they were of the rotted or butchered variety. These were dumped in the Longtown area.

Following this incident a further three were reported on 2nd, 6th and 7th January. This included five carrier bags stuffed full of animal bones which are believed to be sheep bones, half skinned butchered rabbits and other food waste. These items were dumped in several different locations, some in Allensmore and one near to the Callow.

If you see any vehicles or people behaving suspiciously or anyone dumping items please ring 101 and pass us as much detail as you can including registration numbers and/or descriptions of individuals. As always your safety is paramount

so don't try and do this if you feel you are putting yourself in danger.

Positive Policing:

Two local officers from Herefordshire assisted in helping a female out of the river in the early hours of New Years Day. The two Officers located the lady shortly after a 999 call was made to Police. The Officers managed to prevent the barely conscious female from drifting off with the current and eventually managed to remove the female from the water. Quick thinking and action from two brave Officers.

Happy New Year to you all! Kind regards Kevin
PCSO 6993 **Kevin Powell**

Hereford Southside and Rural Safer
Neighbourhood Team
South Wye Police Station

The Evergreen Club

The Annual General Meeting of the Evergreen Club will be held at Much Birch Community Hall on Tuesday, 11 March, 2014, starting at 2.30pm - followed by tea, biscuits a chance to chat.

Mike Leigh

Hereford Cathedral Perpetual Trust

FEBRUARY

Saturday 1st 7pm

JS Bach's Christmas Oratorio

Sung by the cathedral choir with international soloists and the Marches Baroque. Conductor Geraint Bowen. Supported by the Alan Cadbury Charitable Trust. Tickets available 01432 374261.

Sunday 9th

The Evening Hour

A service of prayer for healing and wholeness with words and music from Iona and Taizé and time for quiet reflection; all are welcome. The service is held on the second Sunday of each month. 5.30 pm

Cathedral Choir

Do you know of a boy, aged 6–8 years of age, who might be interested in joining the internationally-renowned Hereford Cathedral Choir? As well as singing in the cathedral, the choir regularly tours abroad (USA last October), broadcasts on TV & radio (BBC Radio 3 last September and Radio 4 in October), performs in London (Guards' Chapel) and takes part in the world-famous Three Choirs

Festival. It may be your son, or equally it may be a grandson, nephew or the son of friends – sometimes a gentle nudge of the parents might be needed! If a parent or guardian would like an informal discussion about the opportunities, Geraint Bowen, the director of music, would be delighted to hear from you (01432 374238, organist@herefordcathedral.org or visit www.herefordcathedral.org). All choristers receive generous scholarships to the cathedral school and, in some cases, fully-funded places can be made available.

MARCH

Wednesday 5th

Ash Wednesday Eucharist

The service will include the imposition of Ashes.

With music including Allegri's Miserere. All

welcome. 5.30 pm

Saturday 8th

Chorister open morning

An opportunity to learn more about the opportunities for boys in years 2 and 3 joining the choir. To receive further information please contact Geraint Bowen, Director of Music (01432 374238: organist@herefordcathedral.org).

5 College Cloisters - Hereford HR1 2NG

01432 374261 tel - 01432 374220 fax

www.herefordcathedral.org/how-to-help/hereford-cathedral-perpetual-trust