

# King's Thorn & The Birches Newsletter

A Newsletter for the Villages of King's Thorn, Little Birch & Much Birch – March 2008

## Gardening Club

The February meeting of Kings Thorn and Little Birch Gardening Club is in Little Birch Village hall on **WEDNESDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY** at 7.30pm when Mr George Always will give a talk entitled “*Hints and Tips*”.

## Riding for the Disabled

**Could you help?** Herefordshire Riding for the Disabled, based at Holme Lacy College, has space for prospective riders and a great need of willing volunteers to help with the horses or with riders. We also need assistance with administration in the office. An hour or so of your time would mean so much to us and to our riders.

On **MONDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> MARCH** we are holding a Voluntary Helpers morning from 10.00am-12noon. Do come along, have a chat to staff, volunteers and riders and find out all about RDA.

You will find us on the B4399 at Holme Lacy College – take the entrance opposite the Primary School and we are in the big blue shed at the bottom of the car park. For more details please ring Heather on 01432 870831.

## Evergreen Club

Our Annual General Meeting will be held at Much Birch Community Hall on **TUESDAY, 11<sup>TH</sup> MARCH**, at 2.30pm. If anyone would like to come and join on the day, they will be most welcome. The annual membership fee is £5.

The first trip will be to the Cotswolds on **TUESDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> APRIL**. We will pick up our Blue Badge guide, Mary Badger, for the afternoon tour, with tea at Burford. The fare will be £13, including tea (+ £2 for non-Members). More information at the AGM.

Your Committee is grateful for your continued support as we look forward to another year – see you at the AGM.

## Whist Drive

This will be at Little Birch Village Hall on **TUESDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> MARCH** – 7.30pm

## DIARY DATES MARCH 2008

- 5<sup>TH</sup> MARCH – LBPC Meeting
- 10<sup>TH</sup> MARCH – Riding for the Disabled
- 11<sup>TH</sup> MARCH – Evergreen Club AGM
- 11<sup>TH</sup> MARCH – LBVH Whist Drive
- 15<sup>TH</sup> MARCH – Flicks in the Sticks
- 18<sup>TH</sup> MARCH – W.I.
- 19<sup>TH</sup> MARCH – Planning Issues – LBVH
- 25<sup>TH</sup> – 29<sup>TH</sup> MARCH – Scout & Guide Gang Show
- 26<sup>TH</sup> MARCH – Gardening Club
- 27<sup>TH</sup> MARCH – Bingo
- 28<sup>TH</sup> MARCH – Village Market

### ADVANCE NOTICES

- 8<sup>TH</sup> APRIL – Evergreen Club Outing
- 9<sup>TH</sup> APRIL – Talk by David Whitehead LBVH
- 15<sup>TH</sup> APRIL – W.I. Open Meeting
- 23<sup>RD</sup> APRIL – Little Birch Village Hall AGM
- 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL – Gardening Club

start - entrance fee £1.50 – excellent prizes – refreshments available – new players welcome.

## Flicks in the Sticks

*in association with Arts Alive*

This month's film is **BECOMING JANE (PG)** at M.Birch Community Hall on **SATURDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> MARCH**.

*Jane Austin (Anne Hathaway) lit up the world with her words, wit and wisdom. But her life too was stoked by passion and romance. At the age of twenty she met and fell in love with Tom Lefroy (James McAvoy) and their relationship sparks a tale as real and romantic as her greatest work.*

**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.

## WI

Members of Much Birch WI are looking forward to getting ‘*Lost in Herefordshire*’ with David Hill on **TUESDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> MARCH**.

Meetings are held in Much Birch Community Hall on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month, beginning at 7.30pm.

**TUESDAY, 15<sup>TH</sup> APRIL** is our Open Meeting when everyone is welcome. The evening promises to be most interesting. Ellie Targett is telling the story entitled ‘*In my Father's Shoes*’ which was mentioned in one of the national newspapers recently. For further details please contact Barbara Wilson (President) 01432 840559 or Kath Watts 01981 540382

## Planning Issues

Are you thinking of applying for planning permission? Have you had problems previously understanding planning red tape? Peter Yates, Development Control Manager at Herefordshire Council is giving a talk on planning issues with a “Question and Answer” session.

Please come along on **WEDNESDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> MARCH** at 7:30pm at Little Birch Village Hall and get your planning queries explained.

## Gang Show 2008

100 enthusiastic members of the Scout and Guide Movement present this fast moving

variety show in its bi-annual return to the Courtyard. Come along and join in with songs old and new as we prove that the Spirit of 'The Gang' continues to thrive in Herefordshire. **TUESDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> - SATURDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> MARCH** 7:15 and Saturday Matinee 2:15.

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### **Gardening Club**

The Annual General Meeting will be held in Little Birch Village Hall. on **WEDNESDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> MARCH** at 7.30pm Following the AGM there will be a slide show by Janet Gwinnett showing Houses and gardens of Herefordshire.

On **WEDNESDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL** Michael Leech will be talking to the Club about Beth Chatto. The meeting will start at 7.30pm in Little Birch Village Hall. As ever new members are always welcome to any meetings.

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### **Bingo**

The next is in Little Birch Village Hall on **THURSDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> MARCH** eyes down at 8.00pm – excellent prizes, refreshments available.

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### **Much Birch Village Market**

The Village Market takes place on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday afternoon of the month between 2.30 and 4.30 in the Community Hall. The next is on **FRIDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> MARCH** and forward dates are **FRIDAYS 25<sup>TH</sup> APRIL** and **23<sup>RD</sup> MAY**.

As well as the usual producers, 2008 sees some new producers. Greenflynn greengrocers bring vegetables and fruit at reasonable prices and Lynn, from Fresh From the Field, will take orders for Free Range poultry, as well as bringing a small amount for sale on the day. The Country Fudge Company had a stand for the first time in January and has asked to come again, which is what we like to hear! Laura is bringing unusual herbaceous plants to help us look forward to summer. Hopefully, by the time you read this, we shall have a regular fishmonger too.

We wish Lorraine and Gordon Games, of Gorzac Farms, well, after their accident on the way to the January Market and look forward to seeing them again soon.

Please come to visit us and maybe enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and a piece of cake provided by Chris and Peter Dowsett and sold in aid of MacMillan Cancer Support. If you have any queries please contact Kath Watts, 01981 540382.

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### **Talk**

On **WEDNESDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> APRIL** at Little Birch Village Hall there will be a talk by David Whitehead on Cranston and Kings Acre Nursery.

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### **Local News**

The Service to Celebrate the Life of STEPHEN HOUNSELL of Hollybush Lane was held at Much Birch Church on Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> January and was conducted by Prebendary Kay Garlick.

'Steve' was the youngest of eight children born to Ellen and William Hounsell in Swansea. At school, he excelled in most subjects and enjoyed playing rugby and attending the local boxing club. He also learned to play the piano and clarinet and he kept this love of music throughout his life. Despite his achievements at school, he decided not to go on to further education but to seek employment and support the family. This took on a further sense of urgency as his father died suddenly in 1958 just before Steve's 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Steve joined the prestigious, family-run store of David Evans in Swansea as a Trainee Buyer. He took a 2 year day-release course in Retail Distribution and followed that with a further 2 year Retail Management Course. This he passed with flying colours and was rewarded by being appointed the company's youngest ever Buyer aged just 20 and was given a new position in the Boyswear Dept. at the Port Talbot branch.

His wife-to-be Jenny, had joined David Evans in 1960 and Steve soon noticed her and asked her out.... and the rest is history. They were engaged after a 3 year courtship and married in October, 1964. By this time, David Evans had opened a store in the 'new town' of Cwmbran and so they moved there in 1965, with Steve promoted to Hardware Buyer. Their first born, Mark, arrived in Nov. 1965 and Karen followed in 1967. Sadly, Mark was diagnosed with leukaemia aged 3 ½ years and there followed almost 2 years of hospital stays and treatments at Cardiff hospital. He was a brave fighter but sadly died at the age of 5 ½ years. Meanwhile, Michelle had been born and was just 6 months old at this time. After Mark's untimely death, Jenny and Steve decide it was the right time to move on and Steve was appointed to the post of Hardware Buyer for the Gloucester and Severnside Co-operative Society and thus began a 21 year successful association with the company. They moved to Gloucester in Feb 1972 and another son, Bryan, was born in the July.

Steve was appointed the Cheltenham Store Manager in 1974 and to the same position at the flag-ship store in Gloucester in 1975. In 1991, the Company became the subject of a take-over bid and Steve was appointed Acting Chief Executive but decided after 21 years service to take

voluntary redundancy. He was offered a post in Wrexham which he took and spent 5 happy years there before taking early retirement at the age of 55.

During his career, Steve served on various Chamber of Trade Committees and in 1984, took a 2 year Teacher Training Course enabling him to lecture on Retailing in order to help others achieve success in this field - such was his passion for his job. Jenny has received numerous letters from erstwhile colleagues and employees saying how much they appreciated working for Steve and how much he had helped them in their careers and also sometimes in personal matters.

Shortly after moving to Gloucester in 1972, Jenny and Steve spotted an advert in the local press seeking volunteers to raise funds for Leukaemia research. They got in touch and Steve organised the first meeting and with a handful of people created the first Gloucester branch of the Leukaemia research Fund. Steve became their Hon. Secretary and between them, Jenny and Steve spent the next 20 years raising thousands of pounds for the Fund by helping to organise events at fetes, schools, raft races, dances and house to house collections, not just in Gloucester but around the whole county. Even the children could be seen in red sashes drumming up support on most week-ends throughout the summer months.

Aside from his career and fund raising, Steve's pride and joy was his family and he loved and supported them in any way possible. He loved his music and most sports but particularly rugby and as a proud Welshman supported his native Ospreys and of course, the national team. He most loved to go out fishing and with Jenny, bought a cabin cruiser and spent many years with family and friends enjoying the delights of the rivers and canals while fishing up and down the local counties.

Steve also had a passion for DIY and has left his mark in each of the homes he and the family have made. His biggest project was a loft conversion in Gloucester and even during his illness, he made new 'tongue and grooved' doors for all the kitchen units and cupboards – a sparkling make-over.

Following retirement, Steve and Jenny decided to move from Wrexham and settled into Much Birch where they quickly made new friends, particularly after joining the Indoor Bowling Club at Wormelow, where they both became accomplished bowlers.

The last 7 years for Steve have been dogged by ill health, first being diagnosed with chronic lung disease and then 4 years ago with cancer. He has fought these

illnesses involving several operations, numerous courses of chemotherapy and infections with great courage and humour and barely a complaint. Last October, Steve told Jenny that he would have loved to renew their wedding vows. Jenny mentioned this to the family and without a word, they made all the arrangements and on November 3<sup>rd</sup> and at the church where they were married in Swansea, they were able to make Steve's wish come true. It turned out to be a most wonderful and memorable day for Steve and Jenny and the whole family. Everyone who has been in touch with Jenny and the family have said that "Steve was a most modest and wonderful man with a wicked sense of humour" and that is how he will be remembered by his family and many, many friends. Donations in memory of Steve were shared between the Leukaemia Research Fund, Cancer Research and Much Birch Church.

We send to Jenny, Karen, Michelle, Bryan and their families our deepest sympathies.

As last month's Newsletter was being delivered, it was learned that IVOR CRUM had passed away after being in hospital since 29<sup>th</sup> December. His funeral service took place in Little Birch Church on 7<sup>th</sup>, February. The congregation filled the church such was the respect in which Ivor was held and the service was conducted by Prebendary Kay Garlick.

Ivor was born at Sutton St. Nicholas but the family moved to Hill Farm, Much Dewchurch, which was then a small dairy farm but which we now see from the road from the Kings Thorn bus shelter going towards Hereford as the fruit farm on the west side of the A 49. Ivor was very young at this time, his father was an agricultural contractor and there were two sisters, Mary and Irene, and a brother, Desmond. The family then moved to Holly Cottage, Little Birch. Ivor was a true countryman and this passion probably stemmed from the family keeping chickens and other animals and the necessity of trapping a rabbit or two, particularly during World War II. He will be remembered by many friends and acquaintances for his love of the woods particularly on Aconbury Hill where he worked for 45 years, first for the Trustees of the Guy's Hospital, then for Charles Clore and subsequently for the Prudential when they bought the estate after managing it for Charles Clore.

The various managers for the estate always said that whereas newcomers had to have everything documented about each plot and plantation, Ivor kept it all in his head and they would check their documentation against his memory. Ivor married Mona and they lived at Holly

Cottage, Castle Pool Cottage and for a few years at Merrivale Farm. Ivor claimed that they were one of the first to have a TV set in the area as he watched the 1953 Cup Final which Blackpool won, often dubbed the 'Stanley Matthews Final', a month or so before the Queen's Coronation in June, for which many bought their first set. Due to the fact that most of the area did not have electricity at the time, these TV sets were powered by batteries which were re-charged by Mr Taylor at the Kings Thorn garage. Ivor and Mona had four children, Cynthia and Shirley and a little later, Andrew and Valerie. Andrew remembers that his dad was always working, either in the wood, or in the garden or looking after animals. Cynthia echoed these thoughts and said that in her young days there were chickens and a calf in the garden and a lamb living in the house. She also remembers the happy times when the four children would sit outside the Pendant (Castle Inn) under the tree with a packet of crisps while Ivor went in to have his pint. Andrew recalls that during his school holidays he would go up to the woods for 'bait' or at dinner time to see his dad and would find him with John Lewis, Fred Turner and Jack Cross sat around a wood fire with Ivor pouring his cup of tea out of a cider bottle wrapped in newspaper. After the demise of Jack Cross, John Evans joined Ivor's team in the woods.

Sadly, the marriage failed but Ivor had 23 very happy years of marriage with Rita and his family grew to include Kerry and subsequently, her two children, Alex and Sadie. Ivor and Rita lived at Warren Farm where Ivor kept Jacob Sheep, ducks, goslings, guinea fowl and chickens as well as adopting two peacocks - George and Mildred. It was here that Ivor also found part of a Bronze Age spear head, dated between 900 - 700 BC, a photograph of which is shown in the History Group book, 'Little Birch on Aconbury Hill'. For many years, Ivor and Rita kept a good eye on Fred Turner in nearby Warren Cottage and many a meal found its way across the paddock. Fred was a very laid-back character and Ivor recalled that when Fred wanted to move from 'The Ark' at Dewesall, arrangements were made to the effect that Fred would be ready packed for Ivor to move all his belongings with a tractor and trailer at 9am. on the Saturday morning. On arrival, Ivor found Fred drinking a cup of tea in the kitchen and nothing packed. A few choice words were exchanged and the move was completed sometime later.

When the Prudential wanted to sell Warren Farm, Millie Sykes offered Ivor and Rita the bungalow behind her own cottage, saying she would love to have

them as her close neighbours. In his retirement, Ivor looked after a number of folk in the neighbourhood and gardened for Jill and Gwyn Richards and Polly Perkins as well as Millie Sykes. Meanwhile Rita continued her work at the Barrs Court School. Jan and Colin Armstrong became good friends and Ivor would look after their animals while they were away.

Ivor and his dogs were inseparable and many will remember the welcome given by 'Nesbit' as they walked up the Warren Lane, he could nip a bit!. Over the last five years, 'Benji' has been his constant companion and every day they walked the woods.

Football and cricket were Ivor's great sporting interests and Andrew recalled how they followed Hereford United both at home and to away matches and were joined by Percy Verry, Donny and others. They travelled to Cardiff, Bristol, Merthyr and of course to the 'big one' at Newcastle. When Little Birch football team started in 1978, Ivor marked the pitch and carried on doing so for five years. It had to be right and Ivor would not let anyone else do it. Ivor of course loved his pint of beer and at that time, there was a smoke room and a public bar at the Casle Inn. Ivor would be in the smoke room playing cards with Percy and all his other friends - no women in there. He was a good crib player and was cribbage captain for a number of years. In 1976, he and Percy Verry won the local crib pairs championship which he won again with Lou Tilling a couple of years later.

Rita and Ivor have enjoyed some wonderful holidays together and although reluctant to go abroad at first, he became 'hooked' and went to Minorca, Tenerife and Benidorm whenever possible. Ivor was always struck with the local way of life and the scenery, especially the volcanoes. It was on the way to a holiday that Ivor first became ill and with Rita's expert attention, they managed the problem for a number of years. From the window or sat outside the bungalow, Ivor would so admire the view over the Golden Valley in all its splendour and then reflect about how crazy people had become in selfishly wanting everything, with the result that they missed the most precious thing that creation had provided free of charge. He also loved the view over Hill Farm where he was brought up and said since that time, 'I have always lived within a mile or two of this place' and I would not want to live anywhere else.

Ivor occasionally did some strimming in Little Birch churchyard and said that if possible, when the time came he would like his body to be buried next to that of

his sister, Irene, who sadly died at the age of 14 in 1943. So after his service in Church, Ivor was laid to rest in the desired spot where a double depth grave was prepared.

Ivor had suffered over a number of years with Parkinsons and cancer but with the unstinting care of Rita had managed to stay in his own home and in hospital where both Rita and Kerry gave their utmost care and devotion to make Ivor as comfortable as possible. He was visited by all the family but unfortunately, his brother, Desmond, had already booked a holiday in South Africa before Ivor died. It was thought that Ivor would not like to see Desmond cancel this trip and so Desmond arranged that everyone should go to the Castle Inn afterwards to share their memories of Ivor. He sent a letter of tribute to Ivor and this was read out at the funeral service.

Rita and the family would like to express their thanks to our local doctors and nurses, the medical team in Monnow ward at the County Hospital, to Jean and Colin Quinsey for the funeral arrangements and to everyone who sent letters and cards and came to the funeral service. Donations in memory of Ivor were made in aid of the Barrs Court Hydrosense Appeal Fund and to date these have totalled £400.

We send our deepest sympathies to Rita and Kerry, to Cynthia, Shirley, Andrew and Valerie and all their families.

Several friends in the community have been in hospital recently including JOHN ROBERTS who is now very glad to be home after more than three weeks away and every good wish is sent for continued progress. FRANK SHORT, after an operation in Hereford, is waiting to hear when he will be going to Cheltenham for further treatment. It is hoped that he does not have to travel every day to and fro to that hospital. Coincidentally, John, Frank and the late Ivor Crum were all in Monnow ward which helped each of them to pass the time between family visits. Several other residents are quite poorly at the present time and we ask that you remember them and their carers in your prayers.

A belated but none-the-less warm welcome is given to AVERIL and MAURICE CLOTHIER and their young daughter, BEATRICE, who have come to 'Evendine', Kings Thorn and to the BIRCHES who have moved into Withycombe, Little Birch and we trust that they will be happy in their new homes and in this community.

Sadly, we have had to say good bye to LIZ MILLER who left Little Birch recently and we wish her well for the future.

A number of residents have taken up the offer of buying the new 'Smartwater' kit to mark all valuable items in the home or outside. This really is a big forensic advance and should give peace of mind knowing that any criminal caught with marked objects will have no defence and the items can, through the unique code, be returned to their rightful owner. The gel is easy to apply and once dry, is virtually impossible to completely remove. It costs £20 and further information can be obtained from CSO Fiona Witcher whose contact details can be found at the end of this newsletter.

A sincere 'Thank You' is given to all those who attended the soup rolls and cheese Lent Lunch held at Little Birch Village Hall on 8<sup>th</sup> February. As a result of the generous donations, a sum of £170 was raised for Sightsavers International. Grateful thanks is also given to those who made the splendid soups and everyone who was involved on the day.

The following has been received from Brenda and John Startin who moved to Walford just before Christmas and we are delighted to say that they have made a generous donation to the Village Hall funds and that John has recently had his driving licence restored.

"As a postscript to the much appreciated piece about us in the Newsletter last January, we would like to add the following:

When we arrived in Little Birch, thirty five years ago, after searching all summer for somewhere to settle, we knew we had found the right place. It couldn't have been more different from the busy London environment we had both been brought up in. It was quiet, peaceful, remote, yet not unwelcoming – a wonderful place to live and to bring up our kids. It has been all of that and we are very grateful. We have made many friends in the area, both among the many incomers and, of course, among the real Herefordians. We dare to hope we have become at least honorary "proper white-faced-uns". We aren't going far away. You can almost see Little Birch from Walford. So be warned. We will be back. *Brenda & John Startin*

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### **Snow White**

It was absolutely brilliant, what a wonderful performance from our local talent and so well supported. The Pantomime tradition is certainly back in Little Birch with a vengeance and I'm sure everyone is looking forward to the production next year.

A huge thank you goes to all those involved including, not only the cast but, everyone else who helped to make this Pantomime possible from the lighting,

those who designed and made the scenery, the official programme and costumes, the make-up artists, the stage hands, the music and those front of house for providing refreshments and raffles. I would like to mention one person in particular, for the wonderful script and Direction without whom none of this would have been possible and that is Hilary Gould.

Watch this space for news on next year's Pantomime.

The official DVD of the Pantomime which includes over 200 still photos is now available for purchase from Hilary Gould at £10.

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### **Does Your Horse Need Exercise?**

We are two teenage girls who are familiar with horses and would love to help out ..... For Free!!

We are happy to help with mucking out, tack cleaning, feeding and also taking your horse for a ride. We live in Kings Thorn and you can contact us on 07731 194797 or 01981 540875. Julia and Anna.

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### **Dr. Garlick's Retirement**

Dr Peter Garlick is retiring at the end of March after 32 years as a GP. There will be a tea party at Much Birch Hall on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> April between 2.00pm. – 4.00pm. for all to attend who would like to wish him well in his retirement. Any further information about Dr Garlick's retirement, please contact Mr John Jones, Chelston Grange, Much Birch on 01981 540980

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### **Thanks**

LBVH Management Committee would like to thank John and Brenda Startin for their generous donation to the hall refurbishment funds. We would like to take this opportunity to thank them both for their support over the years and wish them both all the best for the future.

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### **LBVH Grant**

Little Birch Village Hall Management Committee have been successful in gaining a grant from Awards For All for the sum of £1,783 to purchase a storage container which will be sited behind the hall.

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### **L.B.P.C.**

Report of Meeting held on Wednesday 23rd January. No interests were declared. The minutes of the meeting held on the 7th November 2007 were read and signed as a true record.

### **Matters Arising**

**The renewal** of water pipes by Welsh Water through Aconbury Woods - Public

Notice has been received via Aconbury Parish and Clerk to display.

**Athelstan Wood** - Mrs. A. Clarke reported that some planting complying with the current contract, had taken place. **Lane** from New Mills Farm to Little Birch Church Lane - Clerk reported that Herefordshire Council Council has agreed to contact land owners direct.

**Parish Field** - Chairman to give Clerk copies of paperwork from the maintenance company.

**Community Safety Meeting** - The meeting that took place on 16th January 2008 was deemed a success with 26 parishioners in attendance who gave positive feedback.

**Village Hall** - It was reported that the Lottery Fund Application had been refused. Little Birch Village Hall Committee is currently applying to "Awards for All" to fund an outside storage container which all Parish Councillors had agreed was necessary. An application for a "Communications" grant is currently underway and suggestions were given. Initial meetings have taken place to create a 'Communications Committee' to oversee the Newsletter and website. A number of issues have been raised and discussed and Mr. M. Morley presented a summary during the Community Safety meeting on the 16th January. Further issues are to be confirmed and an update will be given during the next Parish Council meeting.

**Parish Lengthsman Scheme** - No further work has been completed by the Lengthsman. A quotation for work to be completed in School Lane has been received and all Councillors agreed that the work should go ahead. Two further culverts to be cleared also.

**Financial Report** - Four cheques written and income received for payment of Little Birch Village Hall invoice.

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

**Planning** - No planning correspondence received.

#### **Any Other Business**

CSO Kevin Powell reported several minor incidents and asked for residents not to leave valuables in full view. CSO Powell informed the Parish Council of the next PACT Meeting (Partners and Communities Together) which is to take place on 12th February in Much Birch Village Hall at 7.00pm. Clerk to investigate if the Parish Council needs to register with the Information Commissioner.

The Parish Council agreed to fund a plaque to commemorate the service to the community by former Parish Councillor

Mr. J. Startin which is to be located at the base of the Holy Thorn. Discussions were held concerning the current proposals by Herefordshire Council, to review the County's school provision. Even though the proposals have since been recalled, this subject to be monitored closely.

#### **Date of Next Meeting –**

The next meeting will be held on **WEDNESDAY 5TH MARCH**

#### **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](mailto:lizcallwood@tiscali.co.uk)

#### **Much Birch 100 Club Draw**

The December draw took place on Thursday, 14th February in Much Birch Community Hall at 7.00pm

The winners were:

1. No. 12 \_ Mrs. Sybil Prout, Hereford
2. No. 90 \_ Mrs. Margaret Newman, Much Birch

The next draw will take place on 11<sup>th</sup> March at 7.00pm in Much Birch Community Hall.

John Jones, *Chairman/Promoter*

#### **Neighbourhood Watch**

There are a few items to bring to your attention.

An elderly lady from Green Crize was the victim of rogue traders recently, it was reported to us last week. A smart gentleman called round from a company calling itself Seal-ability from Wellington in Somerset and offered to work on some drains in her driveway. She asked how much it would cost, he replied 'not much' so she agreed to have the work done.

Four workmen spent two days 'working' on her driveway, then the boss asked the lady for £25,000 for the work, which she paid for with four cheques! Fortunately, a relative found out, and the cheques have been stopped, and we are working with Trading Standards to find this gang. The work carried out was very, very poor, and can only have taken a couple of hours to complete.

Have you heard of anyone calling asking for work on drains or mortar repairs? If so, we would love to hear from you. The male left a flyer with the lady which gives a description of the work carried out by Seal-ability, and gives a business address and phone numbers, so, on the face of it, it seems to be a legitimate company, but please don't be fooled. They have left the lady with no other paperwork, although she did ask for a receipt and details of the work carried out.

Two cars were stolen overnight Wednesday/Thursday last week. Both had been left by the side of the road after having been involved in traffic collisions. A Vauxhall Nova H371FDF was stolen from the A49 at Pencoyd, and a Fiat Punto AJ07XWC was stolen from the B3438 between Much Dewchurch and Kivernoll.

Damage was caused to a house in Kings Thorn yesterday on 17<sup>th</sup> February (Sunday) where an object was thrown at a window on the first floor.

#### **Your Officers based @ Peterchurch**

##### **Local Police Officer**

**PC Andrew Bundy**

**Mobile No: 07855 385 844**

**Email: [andrew.bundy@westmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:andrew.bundy@westmercia.pnn.police.uk)**

##### **Community Support Officers**

**CSO 6173 Fiona Witcher**

**Mobile No: 07779 141232**

**Email: [fiona.witcher@westmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:fiona.witcher@westmercia.pnn.police.uk)**

**CSO 6993 Kevin Powell**

**Mobile No: 07779 141 232**

**Email:**

**[kevin.powell@westmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:kevin.powell@westmercia.pnn.police.uk)**

**Hereford Rural South Answer phone**

**01432 346756**

**Non-Emergency phone**

**08457 444 888**

**Emergency phone 999**

#### **Your Local Representatives**

##### **East**

**JOHN BULBECK - 540178**

##### **Central**

**BOB PETERS - 540670**

##### **West**

**BETTY PHILPOTT - 540614**

#### **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](mailto:sarah.mathews@tiscali.co.uk) by

\* \* \* \* \*  
**18<sup>TH</sup> MARCH**

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**Please note there are  
new advertisers this  
month**