



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

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

## Diary Dates

### April

28th Village Market MBCH

### May

2nd Fashion Show MBCH

7th Little Birch PC LBVH

8th Much Birch PC MBCH

8th History Talk LBVH

15th Flicks in the Sticks MBCH

17th Flicks in the Sticks MBCH

17th Plant Sale MBCH

20th Womens Institute MBCH

28th Gardening Club LBVH

31st Rhayader Male Voice  
Choir MBCH

## FLICKS IN THE STICKS

### at Much Birch Community Hall

Thursday 15th May 7.30pm - CAPTAIN PHILLIPS 12a

British director Paul Greengrass brings his unique brand of thriller to the 2009 hijacking by Somali pirates of the US-flagged MV Maersk Alabama, the first American cargo ship to be hijacked in two hundred years. Highly acclaimed performance by Tom Hanks as the Captain.

Saturday 17th May 4.00pm Matinee - TURBO u

Turbo is a snail who dreams of being the greatest racer in the world. His obsession with speed has made him an oddity and outsider in the slow and cautious snail community. Turbo desperately wishes he could escape the slow-paced life he's living, and he gets that chance after a freak accident leaves him with the power of incredible speed.



Refreshments including hotdogs  
available from 7pm (3.30pm for Matinee)

Tickets £4 (£3 under 16s)

Tickets available in advance or on the door –  
for further info or to book tickets  
please call Bryony Connolly 01981 580298

## Little Birch Village Hall Drama Group

The group will present "Summer Sunshine" a variety show on July 3rd, 4th and 5th for over 16's.

The hall will be set out in cafe style and supper will be included in the £10 ticket price.

Last year all performances were completely sold out so get tickets early to avoid disappointment. Call 540068 or 541027

## June Newsletter

Please send copy for the June Newsletter to  
birchesnews@gmail.com or  
written contributions to John Bryant at Bramley Bungalow, Aconbury Close by 18th. May

Come and join us for a

## Concert

to be held in

In Much Birch Church

on Saturday, 31<sup>st</sup> May 2014 at 7pm.

given by

**The Rhayader and District Male Voice Choir**

with Soloist Jayne Swann

and afterwards in

Much Birch Community Hall for an 'After Glow'

Tickets £8.50  
To include light refreshments

Bar available

Ring 01981 540980 or 01989 563676 for Tickets

Proceeds for Much Birch Church

Pew Cushions for Much Birch Church

Huge thanks to those people who have donated towards the Church Pew Cushions we want to purchase to make Much Birch Church more comfortable than the carpet strips lining the pews at present and to make the Church look warmer and inviting.

Our target is £2372.76 and so far £1271.16 has been raised which will purchase 10 pew cushions. We would be so grateful to receive any further donations to cover the cost of the remaining 9 cushions. If you feel that you can donate please send contributions to Sylvia Jones at Chelston Grange, Much Birch, HR2 8HR. Thank you.

**Much Birch PCC.**

### **Local News**

A warm welcome is given to **Dr. Elizabeth Bulivant** and **Mr. Bartholomew Nelson** who have moved into 'Kesterdene' Little Birch and we trust they will be happy in their new home and in this community.

**Mr. Bob Read** erstwhile of Llanwarne, passed away on 15th. March and his funeral service took place at Hereford Crematorium on 28th. March conducted by Rev. Mark Johnson. Bob was for many years an agricultural contractor and was well known in local farming circles. He was someone who would help anyone wherever possible. He was particularly friendly with Mr. Percy Verry and fetched Percy for lunch every Friday until Bob's wife Connie, became ill several years ago and then Bob had to be her full time carer. There were some 90 mourners at the Crematorium, some having travelled as far as from Sussex. Bob and Connie were not blessed with a family and so we send our condolences to Connie who has been recently in care at Withington.

Two other members of our community have also recently died, **Mr Bill Andrews** at the age of 86 and **Mr. Cliff Farmer** , a few days before his 96th. birthday. Bill was born at the top of Parish Lane, with 3 sisters and a brother, Tony, as the family unit. He attended Little Birch School until the age of 14, then worked for 2 years with his father on the Guy's Estate and then worked as a timber feller for Mr. Sid Watkins at King's Thorn. At 18 years of age, he was called up for National Service and spent almost 3 years in Austria where he learned to drive. He became a bit of a fitness fanatic and learned to box. He was good at Boxing and the Army wanted him to stay on but he felt the family needed him back at home. On his return, he

had short spells of work with Sid Watkins and the Guy's Estate but really wanted a driving job. He became a tanker driver in Hereford and then went to work for the Highways Dept. of the County Council as a driver of a Road Roller, a job which he thoroughly enjoyed. He then went as a 'lengthman' for the Council and worked all over South Herefordshire. Bill and his father, George, had a large garden and field at Eden House where they grew vegetables and had chickens, pigs and a few cows so that they were more or less self sufficient. When George died, Bill lived alone and was fiercely independent. He loved his cats and was a true countryman. He loved driving and in his earlier days, grasstrack racing. He could strip down car and tractor engines and do all the necessary maintenance and servicing. On Whit Monday 1950, on returning from a day out in Hereford on 2 motorcycles, 4 of our local lads with another from Leominster, were involved in a crash near the Grafton Inn with a carload of policemen returning from a cricket match in Ross. Sadly, 3 were killed and Bill and Roy Gwynne suffered serious injuries. Roy lost a leg and one of Bill's legs was broken and had to be pinned. Due to his physical fitness, Bill recovered after a few months in hospital and was able to resume work. Then in Feb. this year, Bill had been sitting in the glazed lean-to built on the side of his home but went indoors for a few minutes when there was an almighty crash and a chimney had been blown over by the wind and crashed through the glazing where Bill had been previously sitting. Obviously, he was very shocked by this incident. Bill was always willing to help others and often took George Holley and Hilda (his eldest sister) to do their shopping and for drives around the countryside.

Over the last year or so Tony and the family have been very supportive and made sure that Bill was taking good care of himself. He did not respond to a phone call on April 5th, and his niece, Angela, went to investigate and found him collapsed by the bedroom door. He had suffered a massive stroke and had passed away.

His funeral service was held at the Crematorium on Tuesday 22nd April and was attended by family and friends. We send our sincere condolences to sisters, Happy and Joan and brother, Tony, and their families.

### **Stapleton Castle**

Mr John Kinross of Much Birch continues his

series of local castles and writes -: Close to Presteigne, Stapleton Castle stands on high ground but the ruins there today are those of an early 17th. century house which was built with the stone of an earlier castle. The site has never been properly examined by archaeologists and is very unsafe for viewers. The Stapleton family were Parliamentarians in the Civil War and Sir Philip Stapleton commanded a cavalry detachment at the Battle of Edgehill. Severe damage was inflicted on the Royalists but the main parliamentary cavalry was swept away by Prince Rupert's horsemen. The 12th. century castle belonged to the Lords of Richard's Castle with a large motte with a ditch on both east and west sides. The Cornwall family obtained it at the start of the fifteenth century and up to the Civil War, when Sir Michael Woodhouse advised the Cornwalls to pull down the walls so that it did not become a Parliamentary stronghold- rather like Lingen did with the owners of Wilton Castle at Ross. At the end of the war, the remains of Stapleton were passed to the Harleys at Brampton Bryan. Although the house must have needed extensive repairs, it was inhabited until the 19th. century as there is a drawing of it in 1850. For those who like gardens, Mr and Mrs. Griffiths open their garden at Stapleton Court 4 times each year (see Yellow Book published by the National Garden Scheme) on 21-22nd June and 24-25th. August 2014. and there are guided tours of the ruins at 2.30 and 3.30 pm each day. This is only suitable for good walkers. However, Mrs. Griffith's teas are magnificent and worth the £4 admission.

#### **Kings Thorn and Little Birch Gardening Club**

On 28th. May, Jon Mason from Highfield Garden Centre will demonstrate some of the 'tricks of the trade' in making up hanging baskets. He will make up 3 different sized baskets which will be raffled in aid of Club funds.

An Evening Trip to the Bell at Skenfrith has been arranged for June 25th, leaving the Bus Shelter at King's Thorn at 6.30pm. There will be a guided tour of the kitchen garden by Candy the gardener who grows all of the produce for the restaurant. Cost will be £5 to include refreshments.

On July 30th. a return visit to Westonbury Water Mill, Pembridge has been arranged. Richard Pim has made quite a few changes since our last visit including a water powered cuckoo clock. Meet at the Bus Shelter King's Thorn to depart at 6.15pm.

Cost £4. Further information from John Bryant 01981 540316.

### **Policing News**

#### **Grafton**

A shed was broken into at a property in Grafton, causing considerable damage. 2 petrol mowers were stolen. This happened overnight between the 13th and 14th of April.

#### **Wormelow**

Sometime between 12:30 on the 12th of April and 15:00 on the 15th of April a number plate was removed from a vehicle and stolen. The vehicle was parked up in Wormelow.

#### **Much Birch**

A male was disturbed breaking into a residents car. The car was parked on the drive. The male ran off and the resident gave chase. The offender was described as 6ft tall and wearing a yellow jacket.

#### **Harewood End**

Two vehicles were broken into in Harewood end. Police were called to the area at 21:20 after an offender was spotted trying to gain entry to a vehicle. Subsequently another resident called Police this morning stating their vehicle had also been broken into.

#### **Positive Policing**

Thirty two offenders have been arrested and have visited Hereford Custody in the past 72 hours.

This week is "Rogue Traders week". The police are working alongside Trading Standards and targeting specific offences. Literature is/has also been handed out across the County to help raise the awareness of these types of crime.

In short Rogue Traders are people who travel around the county offering services for extortionate prices. They have been known to target the elderly and vulnerable.

If you are targeted, or know someone who you believe to be being targeted please call the Police right away. We can only act if we are made aware.

There are legal requirements for traders such as a 7 day cooling off period before work commences and the standard of their work can be assessed by Trading Standards which could lead to prosecutions if found to be substandard.

For any advice regarding the above please call local Trading Standards on 0845 404 0506.

PCSO 6993 **Kevin Powell**, Hereford Southside and Rural Safer Neighbourhood Team South Wye

Police Station

### **Much Birch Community Hall 100 Club**

The March 2014 draw took place on 9th March at Much Birch Community Hall at 11am. and the results were as follows:

1st prize – No. 98, **Mrs. J. Hounsell**, Much Birch

2nd prize – No. 52, **Mr. P. Berry-Ottaway**, Kivernoll

The April 2014 draw took place on 8th April at 7pm in Much Birch Community Hall and the results were as follows:

1st prize - No 3, **Mr. G. Sims**, Much Birch

2nd prize – No 28, **Mrs. J. Wilson**, Much Birch

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

### **Medical Records:**

All is quiet in the National Press at the moment with regard to data extraction from our confidential medical records. If you wish to keep up with the latest information follow this link <http://medconfidential.org/2014/opt-out-fixed-for-now/>

### **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 Meeting held on the 3rd April March 2014, at the Much Birch Community Hall. The ongoing road concerns over traffic, speeding and parking, in Tump Lane were discussed. The Parish Council wish to make a polite request to all those dropping off and collecting children, at The Much Birch School, to please drop off or collect their passengers promptly and move along to allow others to do the same. Please do try not to stop and chat, or delay your departure, so that traffic can move more freely around the school at peak times. Your co-operation with this request is very much appreciated and will hopefully go some way to improve the congestion, around the school, at certain times of the day.

Please see details, below, of the forthcoming Annual Parish Meeting on 8th May.

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](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, e mail [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, e mail [keithjamesphotos@btinternet.com](mailto:keithjamesphotos@btinternet.com) Tel 01981 540171

**Cllr Tim Jones** The Wriggle, Wrigglebrook, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AW e mail [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).

The next meetings of the Parish Council will be on Thursday 8th May 2014 at 7.30pm - at The Much Birch Community Hall. These will be firstly the Annual Parish Meeting and this will be followed by the Annual Statutory Meeting of the Parish Council. The Annual Parish Meeting is your meeting and your opportunity to come and discuss the things that matter to you in the Parish. Please see notice boards and website for agendas. As is always the case, the public and press are more than welcome to attend both meetings and will have the opportunity to speak directly to their representatives.

### **Herefordshire's River Trade**

Heather Hurley is making a welcome return to come and give us an illustrated presentation of Herefordshire's Trade on the Wye and Lugg on Thursday May 8th in Little Birch Village Hall at 7.30. This should be a very interesting talk full of incredible stories of how goods were carried up and down the Wye and, amazingly, the Lugg; what was carried and the people who carried them, to say nothing of the craft the goods were carried in. As usual there will be refreshments afterwards. The cost of entry and refreshments will be £4.00

Alison Clarke, History Group

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

Community Book Exchange/Lending Library

The next meeting for the "Book Exchange" will be on Saturday 10 May at Little Birch Village Hall. (Please note the change of date. The hall is not available on the previously advised 3rd May) 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 3 May 2014.

Whist Drive

Our next Whist Drive is on Tuesday 13 May 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 Evergreen Club**

On Tuesday 13 May we shall be going to Shrewsbury with the option to visit the Roman site at Wroxeter in the afternoon or to join a 40 minute boat trip. The cost will be £8.50 (£10.50 for visitors) – plus £4.50 to visit Wroxeter or £6 for the boat trip.

**IMPORTANT: LIMITED PICK-UP TIMES FOR THIS MONTH ONLY**

The Park, Wormelow	8.55
Kings Thorn bus shelter	9.05
Much Birch Church bus stop	9.10
Brandon Coach Depot	9.25

For enquiries or to book, please ring Bridget on 01981 540932

Much Birch WI

Much Birch WI holds meetings on the third Tuesday of each month, at 7.30pm in Much Birch Community Hall. The May meeting is the Resolutions meeting when we discuss and vote upon the resolutions to be taken to the NFWI AGM.

The Open Meeting, to which husbands, partners and friends are particularly welcome, is on 17th June, ( SORRY, NOT July as previously advertised!) 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 May market is on 23rd May.

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 newly award winning chutney and preserves and a vegetable stall.

There is a Fair Trade stand and craft stands.

Unfortunately Dan will no longer be coming to Much Birch.

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 Herefordshire economy.)

If you would like to have a stall, or to find out more about the market, please contact Mark on 01432 278026

### **Hereford Cathedral Perpetual Trust**

**Tuesday 6 May**

**Lunchtime organ concerts**

The first of the weekly lunchtime recitals, given by Johnny Allsopp (organ scholar, Hereford Cathedral), which are held throughout the summer (no concerts 13 May and 22 July due to evening concerts and 2 & 9 September due to the flower festival). Live video link from the organ loft to a large screen at the Tower Crossing. Free admission: retiring collection. 1.15-2 pm

Why not come early, or stay on, and have lunch in the Cloister Café?

**Friday 9 May**

**Ancestors, Antirrhinums and Antics**

A presentation by international floral art designer Katherine Kear in Hereford Sixth Form College Theatre. Tickets £15 to include drinks and canapés area available from Joan Jenkins (01981 500310). 7 pm

**Friday 9 May**

**Hereford Chamber Choir concert**

The Chamber Choir is once again giving a concert in support of the Friends. We are very grateful for their generosity. Tickets £8 per person. Further information from Thomas and Joy Roderick on 01432 274783. 7.30 pm

**Sunday 11 May**

**Orchestral Eucharist**

To mark the cathedral's Feast of Consecration the cathedral choir, with orchestra, will perform music from Joseph Haydn's Theresienmesse. The service will be followed by a reception hosted by the Perpetual Trust. All are welcome. 10.30 am

**Sunday 11 May 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

**Tuesday 13 May**

**Gala organ concert**

Dr Massey, Organist Emeritus of Hereford Cathedral, gives a gala recital to celebrate his 80th birthday. Live video feed from the organ loft, which will give you the opportunity to see his remarkable playing skills. This concert has been generously sponsored by the Friends of Hereford Cathedral. Tickets, available from the Cathedral Shop and at the door, priced £12 (students £5). 7.30 pm

**Saturday 17 May**

**Three Choirs Choral Evensong**

The choirs of Gloucester, Hereford and Worcester cathedrals sing Choral Evensong . Worcester Cathedral. All welcome. 5.30 pm

**Tuesday 20 May**

One handshake away: Hereford Cathedral and the world of Dante

The annual Ethelbert Lecture, which will be given by Canon Chris Pullin, will explore the links between the world of Dante and Hereford Cathedral through people, places, books and ideas that touch hands with 13th century Florence. Lady Chapel. Tea from 3.30 pm – lecture at 4 pm. No booking required. Free entry. 3.30 pm

**And finally**  
A dyslexic man walks into a bra.....