

King's Thorn & The Birches Newsletter

A Newsletter for the Villages of King's Thorn, Little Birch & Much Birch – October 2007

Community Forums

On **TUESDAY 2ND OCTOBER** Little Dewchurch Parish Council and the South Hereford Local Policing Team will be hosting a Community Safety Evening at Little Dewchurch Village Hall. There will be several presentations during the evening including:

Hereford & Worcester Fire & Rescue - Home Safety,

West Mercia Police – Crime Prevention and Neighbourhood Watch.

SmartWater – the unique property marking system,

Little Dewchurch Parish Council – Parish Plan.

Refreshments will be available. For further information contact Mr. Tom Canham on 01432 840333 or CSO Fiona Witcher 7779 141232

The evenings are open to all, and are free of charge, so please come along and support these worthwhile events.

Spooky Night

On **SATURDAY 6TH OCTOBER** we are holding a Spooky Night with a Spicy Spud Supper for all the family to enjoy at Little Birch Village Hall. There will be fun and games for all, Fancy Dress competitions for adults and children with prizes for the best costumes.

Refreshments available, 7.00pm until 11.00pm, entrance fee £4.00 per adult and £2.00 per child (up to age 14). Come and join in the fun.

Evergreen Club

We had a wonderful day at Bewdley in September – it was peaceful and tranquil walking alongside the river and the Museum in the centre of the town was an absolute delight. If you haven't been – do go.

On **TUESDAY 9TH OCTOBER** we embark on our final trip for the year to Charlecote Park. This is a National Trust property so please remember to bring your membership card.

The trip will be £6 for N.T. members and £12 for non-N.T. members to include entry, of course. If you haven't already booked, please ring 01981

DIARY DATES SEPTEMBER 2007

28TH SEPTEMBER – Market

2ND OCTOBER – Community Forum Little Dewchurch

6TH OCTOBER – Halloween party

9TH OCTOBER – Evergreen Club Outing to Charlecote Park

9TH OCTOBER – Whist Drive – Little Birch Hall

11TH OCTOBER – Film 'An Inconvenient Truth'

13TH OCTOBER – 'Flu Clinic

16TH OCTOBER – W.I.

18TH OCTOBER – Athelstan's Wood

20TH OCTOBER – 'Flu Clinic

25TH OCTOBER – Bingo

26TH OCTOBER – Village Market

27TH OCTOBER – Parish Freighter

27TH OCTOBER – Flicks in the Sticks

ADVANCE NOTICES

15TH NOVEMBER – Country Houses & Gardens in South Herefordshire

30TH NOVEMBER & 1ST DECEMBER – Halfway Community Theatre

540406 or 540932 (don't leave a message on 540406 in case Beverley is away).

We travel south for this one so the pick-up times are:-

8.45 Coach Depot, Brandon

8.55 Tump Lane Bungalows

9.00 The Park, Wormelow

9.05 Poor Clares Convent

9.10 Kings Thorn Bus Shelter

9.20 M.B. Church Bus Stop

9.25 Axe & Cleaver Bus Stop

9.40 Merton Hotel

9.45 Fontaine Court

May we thank you all for your support this year. We have had more rain on our trips but we smiled through it all! As many of you will know, Peter and Beverley will be departing for fresh pastures – if they haven't concreted them over – within the next few months and they would like to thank everyone for their friendship over the years ... can't remember how many it was since Beverley took over from Frank Short but it must be around seven. Frank, by the way, celebrated his 95th birthday the day after our last trip and Peggy was 90 years young a few weeks ago. A lesson to all of us, I think!

Details regarding the annual lunch will be sent out shortly. Members felt that they would like this moved to February so they didn't get "turkeyed" out just before Christmas! We hope this will suit everyone. Best wishes, Bridget, Evelyn, Beverley & Michael

Whist Drive

At Little Birch Village Hall on **TUESDAY 9TH OCTOBER**, refreshments and excellent prizes, 7.30pm start, entrance fee £1.50, new players welcome.

An Inconvenient Truth

This film is to be shown on **THURSDAY 11TH OCTOBER** at Little Birch Village Hall with a 7.00pm start. Entrance fee £4.00 per person to include a cheese supper and a complimentary glass of wine served during the interval. If you are interested in Climate Change and knowing how you can help to save the planet, come to see and discuss the spectacular award winning film presented by Al Gore, previously US Presidential candidate.

W.I.

On **TUESDAY 16TH OCTOBER** one of our members, Mrs. Ann Evans, is telling us about 'Our Trip to New Zealand via The Canyons of America'.

If you would like to know more about Much Birch WI please contact Mrs. Barbara Wilson (President) 01432 840559 or Kath Watts 01981 540382

Visitors are always welcome.

Meetings are held in Much Birch Community Hall at 7.30pm.

Athelstan's Wood

Come and find out about **Athelstan's Wood** in a talk by **David Lovelace**. David studies ancient woodlands and is at present involved with the Landscape Origins of the Wye Valley project. Part of his brief is to promote the restoration of ancient woodlands. Hear all about it with reference to its history and ecology and about the others in the area too. The talk is on **THURSDAY 18TH OCTOBER** at 7.30pm. in Little Birch Village Hall. Cost will be £5 and for that you will get a bowl (or more!) of soup chosen from a delicious range, together with a roll or two and a complementary glass of wine or beer.

Bingo

In Little Birch Village Hall on **THURSDAY 25TH OCTOBER**. Eyes down at 8.00pm excellent prizes, refreshments available.

Village Market –

On **FRIDAY 26 OCTOBER**. There will be another Village Market selling a wide range of local produce and crafts at Much Birch Community Hall from 2.30 – 4.30pm.

The next market will be on Friday 23 November.

Flicks In The Sticks

in association with Arts Alive

This month's film will be **A GOOD WOMAN PG** at Much Birch Hall, on **SATURDAY 27TH OCTOBER**.

Set in the 1930s on the beautiful shores of the Italian Riviera, **A GOOD WOMAN** stars Helen Hunt, Scarlett Johansson and Tom Wilkinson in an elegant and witty romantic comedy based on Oscar Wilde's classic play, 'Lady Windermere's Fan'.

Doors open at 7.00pm and the film commences at 7.30pm. Tickets are £3.50 (£2.50 under 16s) and are available in advance or on the door. For further information or to book tickets please call Bryony Connolly on 01981 541274.

Coming up... Saturday 17th November – **FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS**

'Flu Clinics – MB Surgery

We will be holding our annual flu clinics at Much Birch Community Hall on

- **SATURDAY 13TH OCTOBER** from 09:00 – 11:00, and
- **SATURDAY 20TH OCTOBER** from 09:00 – 11:00

These clinics are for all Much Birch Surgery patients who are over 65 years of age or are at risk from influenza (including patients with asthma and chronic breathing problems, diabetes, heart or kidney disease or impaired immune systems).

Country Houses & Gardens

There will be a talk on Country Houses and Gardens in South Hereford by David Whitehead at Little Birch Village Hall on **THURSDAY 15TH NOVEMBER**.

Halfway Community Theatre

The Halfway Community Theatre is delighted to announce it will be Presenting Gilbert and Sullivan's 'The Mikado' (concert version) on **FRIDAY 30TH NOVEMBER** and **SATURDAY 1ST DECEMBER** in Much Birch Hall. We begin at 7.00pm. (not 7.30 this time).

Tickets are £5.00, to include a delicious supper (bring your own wine) and can be booked through Beverley Webb on 01981 540306. Don't miss out on our first ever costumed and colourful extravaganza.

Much Birch 100 Club Draw

The September draw took place on Wednesday, 6th September in Much Birch Community Hall at 7.45pm

The winners were:

1. No. 13 – Mrs. E. Fitzpatrick, Ross-on-Wye
2. No. 108 – Mrs. K. Dawson, King's Thorn

The next draw will take place on Friday, 12th October 2007 at 12 noon in Much Birch Community Hall.

John Jones, *Chairman/Promoter*

Local News

On 31st. August, Much Birch Church was full and overflowing with friends for the funeral service of **PETER KEITH GROOM**, who died suddenly and unexpectedly at the age of 69 years. Peter lived in Much Birch for the whole of his life and his early schooling was in Ross and completed at Hereford Cathedral School. After leaving school, he worked for the Snells at Treberva and enrolled for a course at the Tech. College where he learned the art of plumbing, welding and building, all of which enabled him to build up a successful business over the years.

He drove lorry loads of apples to the Hereford Cold Store and in those days, the fruit was packed in heavy 40lb. wooden bushel boxes which had to be loaded and unloaded by hand.

Peter enjoyed cream doughnuts and Bob Willis recounted that when he and Peter drove to Andover to fetch straw, they always stopped their lorries outside the same shop in Marlborough and before Peter could get inside the shop, there was always a bag of 6 doughnuts waiting on the counter; three jam for Bob and 3 cream ones for Peter.

Sadly, his father died when Peter was only 27 but he continued living at home to look after his mother and he cared for her right up to the time that she died in the 1970's. Peter bought his own lorry in 1964 and worked by hauling sand and aggregates from local quarries for some years before buying a tractor and lime-spreader. Whilst working at Welsh Newton, he had a lucky escape when the lime-spreader overturned. For 18 years, he worked with Robin Teague in the building trade and Robin paid tribute by saying that Peter was a skilled workman and a pleasure to work with. For some reason, they always called each other 'Dad'. When they were working on cold winter days, Peter always wore a thick donkey jacket. On one such day, they both had to get through a secret trap door in the roof space at Hampton Court. Robin went through successfully, head first, Peter decided to go through feet first but as usual his jacket pockets were full of tapes, nails and small tools and he proceeded to get stuck fast! He was wedged so tight that it took another workman to push Peter while Robin tugged at his feet for some 10 minutes and amid much laughter before he was freed.

Peter met Jean at the Park Hall Ballroom where all the well known Dance Bands played on Saturday evenings. From then on, the friendship grew and Peter bought the bungalow in Treberva Drive which he renovated and extended and in which Jean and Peter have lived for some 28 years. As soon as he bought his 'trademark' digger, Peter gave up the building work and concentrated on digging foundation trenches, other ground work and tarmac which he was still doing up to his untimely death and was even working late in the evening the night before he died. He had sold his treasured Bedford lorry earlier in the year and was supposed to be 'winding down', but Peter enjoyed his work so much and would always continue well after normal hours to get a job completed.

He loved the whole of the local area and knew every lane in his own and surrounding parishes. Being a true countryman, he appreciated the whole of nature and in particular, small creatures such as bats, hedgehogs and birds. Many of his friends have remarked that, when thinking of Peter, the two things that came to mind were his love of machinery and a deep respect for all animals, particularly birds. Jean recalled that he was never happier than when sitting in the conservatory and watching the birds at their feeding table and hanging on to the mesh feeders.

He served as a loyal Parish Councillor for 12 years and his colleagues described him as an honourable and thoroughly decent man, who it was a pleasure to know and who would be sorely missed. This memory has been echoed by many, many friends and customers. Peter always did a good job, never cut corners and always tidied up afterwards. He will be sadly missed by so many friends. We extend to Jean and family our heartfelt sympathy. Donations in memory of Peter will be shared between the Hereford Nature Trust, the Air Ambulance and Much Birch Church.

It is also sad to record the death of MRS NEL WORTHING, who celebrated her 100th birthday earlier in the year. She and her husband, Howard, were well known teachers in the area, with Nel at Much Birch School and Howard at Whitecross. They lived for many years at Churchfield, Quarry Lane, Much Birch. In retirement, they loved their gardening and country walks. Howard died some 6 or 7 years ago and after a while, Nel went to live with Peter and his family in Hereford where she was extremely well cared for. We send to Peter and the family our sincere sympathies.

Our congratulations to Frank Short of 41 Tump Lane who recently celebrated his 95th birthday over a period of several days. Well done Frank and keep 'taking the pills' to enjoy many more years. He wishes to express his sincere gratitude for all of the cards and presents that he has received and sends his best wishes to everybody.

Congratulations are extended to FRANK SHORT of Tump Lane, MRS. MARY JONES an erstwhile and much respected music teacher at Much Birch School also celebrated her 95th birthday recently and we send to her our heartiest congratulations. She is currently residing at Helen and Chris Atkinson's retirement home, 'West Bank' in Ross on Wye.

There is also news that TOM HELME, formerly of Wormelow, has suffered a stroke and is currently in the Community Hospital in Ross. We send our best wishes for a speedy recovery. Meanwhile, GEOFF JONES still continues to be looked after at Hampton Grange Nursing Home and recently went to Oswestry for an assessment to see if an operation was possible to improve his mobility. Sadly, this was not deemed wise but undeterred Geoff continues to be cheerful even though he still has to spend everyday in bed.

Congratulations to our local Junior riders who have enjoyed much success on their ponies at various competitions this year.

Many are members of the local Pony and Riding Clubs. Both organisations run Area competitions which qualify riders through to National Finals. In the Pony Club Area Dressage, held at Gatcombe, HARRIET CHAPMAN and JOANNA DILLON were competing in the Novice Team and finished an excellent fourth. The next day Joanna went on to win her section in the Area Horse Trials and therefore qualified for the National Finals in Cheshire, where she did well but didn't come away with a placing.

At the Riding club Area Show Jumping Competition Harriet qualified in the Open Show Jumping Team, BEC CAMERON qualified in the Novice Team and Joanna in the Equitation Jumping Team. All travelled up to Lincoln in September where, unfortunately, the Novice and Open teams were unplaced. However, Joanna together with LUCY TURNER (who lives just over the border at Prothither!!) were placed second with their team. Well done girls.

L.B.P.C.

Get rid of your Household Rubbish!

Little Birch Parish Council has organised a Parish Freighter to be parked outside L.B. Village Hall on **SATURDAY 27TH OCTOBER** from 2.00pm.-4.00pm. The driver of the freighter will receive items of household waste from the residents of the parish. Exceptions are commercial or industrial waste, liquids, builders waste and special, hazardous or dangerous waste i.e. asbestos, gas cylinders etc.

Fly Tipping

A number of neighbouring Parishes have reported increased incidents of fly tipping. This is now happening in Little Birch with a recent incident at Chapel Pitch. Please be vigilant! If you see anyone disposing of rubbish on public property, please note the **vehicle registration number** and report to **PC Andrew Bundy on 07855 385 844**. He will then inform Herefordshire Council of the details. Alternatively you could contact **Herefordshire Council direct on 01432 261800**.

Little Birch Dog Show

This was a great success with over 60 dogs being entered, including entries from as far away as Cheltenham and Gloucester. Thanks to John and Kate Dillon for the use of the field and to Maggie Mullins for her invaluable input and advice. We would also like to thank Sheila and John Penrice and John Bryant for their help in making it a day to

remember. Watch this space for details of next year's show.

LB Village Hall

Progress Report on the Refurbishment Project - The committee made an application for funding from the Big Lottery Fund Community Buildings programme for major refurbishment of the hall. The fund received 1600 applications, more than three times the number expected, so decisions have been delayed. Ours is one of 545 that have been successful in progressing through the initial assessment stage. A decision on the progress of the application is now expected in December.

Meanwhile, money has been spent on essential repairs to the septic tank drainage system and replacement of the boundary fence at the rear of the hall, in part using a grant from Herefordshire Council.

The committee will continue to arrange fund raising events to supplement and match grants that may be available from the Lottery and other organisations.

L.B.P.C.

Report of the Parish Council Meeting of Little Birch Parish Council held on Wednesday 4th July at Little Birch Village Hall.

Mr. B Powell declared interest when discussing Crows Nest Lane.

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 16th May 2007 were read and signed as a true record.

Matters Arising

Talk by David Lovelace - Mr. Lovelace spoke about the history of Athelstan's Wood including showing historical documentation to prove the original content of the wood. The Parish Council agreed to write a letter asking the current owners to replace existing conifers with native broadleaves as historically documented or at the very least a request to take part in the mandatory consultation. All will be discussed further during the next Parish Council meeting.

Village Hall - Mr. Morley reported that the septic tank work is complete.

A report has been issued discussing the newsletter which will be reviewed during the next Parish Council meeting.

Money has been received from Herefordshire Council in payment of the 1st phase of the Little Birch Village Hall refurbishment grant.

Parish Lengthsman Scheme - The Lengthsman commented on some areas which needed maintaining, including the digging out of Pendant Pitch. Clerk to contact local contractor to complete this work.

Parish Field - Central Network has once again been contacted and a revised reference number received.

Crows Nest Lane - the Chairman outlined current history of this issue for all attending. Many parishioners voiced opinions on this subject. The Parish Council agreed to oppose the kerbing of Crows Nest Lane. Herefordshire

Council has offered a site visit, a date and time to be organised.

Annual Audit – The Clerk reported that all paperwork had been completed and returned.

Parish Freighter – The Clerk reported that the only available slot for this year was Saturday 27th October from 200pm. - 4.00pm. This date was agreed with a request for the freighter to be located outside Little Birch Village Hall.

Financial Report

6 cheques written. Money received from Herefordshire Council for the Village Hall phase 1 grant and Little Birch Village Hall Management Committee for payment of recent invoices.

Correspondence

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

Planning

Withdrawn Application for 'Buildings at New Mills Farm' – Conversion of redundant buildings into two dwellings

Any Other Business

PC Andrew Bundy introduced the newly appointed CSO, Kevin Powell, and informed the Parish Council of a recent crime of a burglary on the edge of Aconbury Woods where a garage was entered and tools taken. He also reported that throughout Herefordshire burglary is increasing especially with the thefts of 4x4 vehicles for parts. Bogus traders are offering gardening work at inflated prices.

PC Bundy advised not to employ people who ask for work, always invite. Some fly tipping has occurred in the area, residents are to report any sightings with as much information about car vehicles, drivers etc to Herefordshire Council or the local police. PC Andrew Bundy request that residents report any suspicious vehicles or circumstances to the police in light of the current terrorist attacks, as rural areas are ideal for terrorists to collate bomb-making equipment.

Little Dewchurch Parish Council organised the showing of a current film about global warming. The Parish Council agreed to investigate showing the film to Little Birch residents.

A parishioner has proposed to fund the insertion of a ditch adjacent to his property to prevent flooding. The Parish Council agreed to this proposal.

Cllr Richard Smith discussed his current proposal to Herefordshire Council for a Route Safety Study to take place on the A49.

Date of Next Meeting - WEDNESDAY 5TH SEPTEMBER

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

L.B.P.C.

Report of Little Birch Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 5th September. No interests were declared.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 4th July were read and signed as a true record.

Matters Arising

From previous minutes - The movie 'An Inconvenient Truth' is to be shown 11th

October at Little Birch Village Hall. Refreshments will be provided with topical discussions afterwards.

Mr. Morley is to represent Little Birch Parish Council during the next newsletter meeting.

Athelstan's Wood – Correspondence has been received from the current owners and the Forestry Commission say that both are meeting their obligation and are planting some hardwoods and broadleaved trees. A 20-year plan is currently being compiled and a copy should be sent to the Parish Council. A further letter is to be sent requesting that Little Birch Parish Council is consulted for future developments. David Lovelace is to deliver a talk on local woods to the whole community, details of which to be issued in the newsletter.

Village Hall – Correspondence has been received from the Lottery Fund informing of a delay in the 2nd stage of the selection process with a decision to be made in December 2007. A number of fund raising events are organised for the upcoming months including a dog show and a presentation on portable antiquity scheme.

Parish Lengthsman Scheme – The contractor has completed digging out Pendant Pitch. The Clerk will contact the Lengthsman concerning the possibility of a ditch to be dug in school lane.

Parish Field – No further progress.

Crows Nest Lane – Two site visits have taken place with a Herefordshire Council Highways representative. At the 2nd visit a sketched plan showing the location of the proposed kerbing with further details of the kerb height was made. The Parish Council agreed to this specific proposal and a letter is to be written to Herefordshire Council by the Chairman.

Financial Report - 2 cheques written

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

Planning – A planning Application received for buildings at New Mills Farm for the Conversion of redundant buildings into two dwellings was returned with no objections.

Any Other Business

PC Andrew Bundy informed the Parish Council that no crime had been reported in the area except for fly tipping in Chapel Pitch. A newsletter article is to be written to warn parishioners of the increased occurrences in fly tipping. CSO Fiona Wtcher advised on the upcoming 'Community Safety Evening' on Tuesday 2nd October at 7:30pm in Little Dewchurch Village Hall.

A letter has been received from the adjacent landowners of the lane from Little Birch Church to New Mills Farm after correspondence was sent requesting the maintenance of overgrown hedgerows. The existing landowners are requesting that the Parish Council maintain the hedgerows. The area Footpaths Officer is to be consulted for clarification.

After the kind offer of a presentation by Planning Officer Mr. P. Yeates, a community talk is to be arranged for February/March 2008.

Date of Next Meeting - WEDNESDAY 7TH NOVEMBER

Parish Clerk - Please contact Liz Callwood 540081 or via email lizcallwood@tiscali.co.uk with any issues concerning Little Birch Parish

Neighbourhood Watch Vehicle Crime

Help yourself - Most car crime is committed by opportunists who are likely to be deterred by simple security measures. Follow these points to help ensure you don't become a victim of vehicle crime:

Do:

- Print off West Mercia's vehicle crime prevention postcard. This can be done by visiting the West Mercia website and going to the vehicle crime section. Just click on the image on the site and a printable version of the postcard is available. Or for those without Internet access contact your local policing team who will supply a laminated copy of the postcard.
- Ensure windows, sunroof and boot are all secured and doors locked when leaving your vehicle unattended – no matter how briefly.
- Take keys with you when leaving the vehicle unattended.
- Avoid parking in poorly lit areas at night.
- Fit a locking petrol cap and wheel nuts.
- Activate the steering lock – whenever and wherever you park.
- Have the vehicle registration number etched on each of the windows.
- Fit an alarm or immobiliser
- Postcode your vehicle stereo.
- Consider fitting a vehicle tracking device.
- Garage the vehicle if possible.
- Keep vehicle keys in a secure place.

Don't leave:

- Valuables in your vehicle or on view.
- Vehicle documentation in the vehicle – it could help a thief sell the vehicle on.
- Keys in the ignition when the vehicle is unattended.
- Keys where they can easily be stolen, e.g. on a key rack in your house that's close to a window or door.

**CENTRAL POLICE CONTROL
08457 444 888**

**Non-Emergency phone
08457 444 888
Emergency phone 999**

Response Officers

PC Fiona Farrington

Mob: 07817 019 374

PC Roger Bradley

Mob: 07811 129860

Local Police Officers

PC Andrew Bundy

Mob: 07855 385 844.

CSO Fiona Witcher &

CSO Kevin Powell

Mob: **07779 141232**

Hereford Rural South Answer phone

01432 346756

Local Reps are :

East

JOHN BULBECK - 540178

Central

BOB PETERS - 540670

West

BETTY PHILPOTT - 540614

Bus Timetable

The bus Timetable has changed recently. Luckily it appears that the buses are arriving ten minutes late rather than ten minutes early! The full timetable will be published next month.

Newsletter

In the "good old days" when we had a Village Shop and Post Office, there used to be a tin into which people dropped in their spare change to help pay for the cost of the Newsletter. This no longer happens as we don't have a Village Shop and Post Office anymore nor do we have donations pouring in to help with the publication. In those days the Newsletter might be 2½ pages long, maybe three, now it is more often 5 double sides which cost twice as much to produce. So if you feel the Newsletter is worthwhile and you enjoy browsing through it when it comes through your door, do please think about donating something towards its upkeep. £2 per household per year would help enormously. Any donations would be most welcome to Mrs. Robyn Hodges at Wendover, Kings Thorn, HR2 8AU.

Items/Copy

Please may I have items for the **NOVEMBER** issue via post to Mrs. S.E. Mathews, Folly Cottage, Little Birch, HR2 8BD; or left in the post box at 'Bramleys' or by email attachment in Word format to:

sarah.mathews@tiscali.co.uk by

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18TH OCTOBER

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