# KING'S THORN & THE BIRCHES NEWSLETTER

A Newsletter for the Villages of King's Thorn, Little Birch & Much Birch – April 2010

#### The Evergreen Club

The first trip this year will be on TUESDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> APRIL to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas. The very varied memorials are set in an attractive arboretum of over 50,000 trees, offering pleasant walks. A land train also tours the site (£2). There is a good restaurant.

The cost is £10 for members (£12 for non-members).

The number to ring is **01981 540932**.

The pick-ups are:

Fonteine Court	9.00
Peterstow (Broom Farm lay-by)	9.05
Axe and Cleaver	9.15
M B Church bus stop	9.20
Tump Lane (bottom bungalows)	9.25
The Park, Wormelow	9.30
Tump Lane (middle)	9.35
Poor Clares Convent	9.40
Kings Thorn bus shelter	9.45
Coach Depot Brandon	9.50

#### Whist Drive

Our next Whist Drive at Little Birch Village Hall is on TUESDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> APRIL. We shall start at 7.30pm. The entrance fee is £1.50 Excellent prizes and refreshments will be available. New players are always welcome.

# Flicks in the Sticks SATURDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> APRIL at 7.30pm — BRIGHT STAR PG

This is a finely crafted, terrifically well performed and subtly told tale about the forever-stalled relationship between John Keats and his Hampstead neighbour, Fanny Brawne who he was not able to marry because of his poverty.

Tickets £4 (£3 under 16s)

#### DIARY DATES FOR APRIL 2010

10<sup>TH</sup> APRIL – Bring and Share Social for the Dinnens

13<sup>TH</sup> APRIL – Evergreen Club Outing

13<sup>™</sup> APRIL – Whist Drive LBVH

17TH APRIL - Flicks in the Sticks

19<sup>TH</sup> APRIL - Pop In

20<sup>TH</sup> APRIL - Save The Castle Public Meeting

20TH APRIL - Much Birch WI

23RD APRIL - Much Birch Village Market

23RD APRIL - Beetle Drive LBVH

23RD & 24TH APRIL – Halfway Community Theatre

#### **ADVANCE NOTICES**

8th MAY – Riding for the Disabled Open Day

5<sup>TH</sup> MAY – LBPC Meeting

13TH MAY - PACT meeting

Refreshments served from 7.00pm. Tickets available in advance or on the door - for further info or to book tickets please call Bryony Connolly 01981 541274.

#### Pop In

This month's Pop In at Much Birch Community Centre is at 2.00pm. on **MONDAY 19**<sup>TH</sup> **APRIL.** 

#### Public meeting

The Save the Castle Inn Campaign is holding an open public meeting at Little Birch village hall on 20<sup>TH</sup> **TUESDAY** APRIL at 7.30pm. The meeting has been organised to update the community on the progress of the campaign to get the Castle Inn reopened so far, to provide a forum for people to voice their views on the direction of the campaign and get involved, also to formally ratify campaign committee. also provides an opportunity for local people to get together with their

friends and neighbours. Everyone is welcome, please come and support the campaign.

#### WI

The April meeting of the WI takes place on **TUESDAY**, **20**<sup>TH</sup> **APRIL** in Much Birch Community Hall at 7.30pm. The speaker is David Till, whose subject is 'A visit to Argentina'.

Visitors and potential new members are always welcome. For further information about Much Birch WI please contact Kath Watts, 01981 540382 or Jennifer Jones, 01981 540698

#### Much Birch Village Market

The April Market will take place on **FRIDAY**, **23**<sup>RD</sup> in Much Birch Community Hall between 2.30pm and 4.30pm.

All the usual stalls will be there and, in addition we will also have Cake Angels, who make delicious cakes, including a selection for allergy sufferers.

Please join us in showing our support of local suppliers of meat, cheese, bread etc. and enjoy refreshments sold in aid of MacMillan Cancer Support. You will also find a variety of crafts and a Fair Trade stall. For further details please contact Kath, 01981 540382.

#### LBVH Beetle Drive

This is on **FRIDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> APRIL** starting at 7.30pm.

Entrance: £5 per team (table of four) nibbles included! There will be a draw and a bar.

#### Halfway Community Theatre

We are pleased to announce that our next show 'TRIAL BY JURY PLUS! will take place at 7.30 pm in Much Birch Community Hall on FRIDAY 23RD and SATURDAY **24**<sup>TH</sup> **APRIL.** Come and enjoy the G & S Trial by Jury! and a great celebration of an English St Georges Day. Tickets can be bought from Audrey Crowte on 01981 540432 from the beginning of March and as usual, the cost includes a hot supper and is £10 a head (£5 for under 14's). Don't forget to bring your own drink and a glass. We would urge you to book early as tickets are limited. We look forward to seeing you there.

Celia Brown

#### Gardening Club

On WEDNESDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> APRIL our good friend Mrs. Dot Skyrme will demonstrate flower arrangements with reference to the annual Show classes. As usual the meeting starts at 7.30pm. in Little Birch Hall. New members are always welcome. For more information Phone Helen Fox 541004 or John Bryant 540316.

#### A date for the diary.

On **SATURDAY**, **8<sup>TH</sup> MAY** the ladies of Much Birch WI and Llangrove WI are staging an Art and Craft Show in Much Birch

Community Hall between 10.00am and 5.00pm. We hope there will be lots of work to see and to inspire. Members will be giving demonstrations of their particular field of expertise at various times during the day. Refreshments will be available throughout.

#### Have Your Say!

PACT stands for Partners and Communities Together. It gives you the chance to tell your local authority, police team, and other local organisations about issues that concern your neighbourhood, and how we can all work to together to address them and make Herefordshire an even better place to live. Topics which come up include: \*\*\* Recycling \*\*\* Traffic speeding \*\*\* Dog fouling \*\*\* Local roads \*\*\* Litter and street cleaning \*\*\* Antisocial behaviour.

### IF YOU DON'T TELL US, WHO WILL?

To find out more please visit www.herefordshirepartnership.com/pacts or e-mail us at hfdpartnership@herefordshire.gov. uk or telephone us on 01432 261792.

The next PACT meeting for Hereford Rural South is on THURSDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> MAY at 7.00pm. at Much Birch Village Hall,

#### Bingo

Following the "Special Easter Bingo" the next Bingo at LBVH will be the "Special Christmas Bingo". Details to be posted later in the year.

#### Local News

DR. JOHN DINNEN and REV. JUDY DINNEN moved in February from Minstercote, Much Birch to their new home in Madley, which will be closer to Judy's work in the Ministry in the Madley Group of Parishes. They will both be greatly missed by the Much Birch Community for which they have worked tirelessly. Judy was in the

Church Choir for many years and a Church Warden for a while. John has been on the P.C.C. and has organised the Area Warden Scheme and Christian Aid for the Parish for a number of years.

He is involved with Fairtrade over a wider area and is on the Deanery Synod. Their friends will have the opportunity to say goodbye to them at a Bring and Share Social Evening on **SATURDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> APRIL** at 7.00pm. at Much Birch Community Hall. We all wish them an enjoyable and healthy future life in Madley.

A warm welcome to Much Birch to ROBIN and HANNAH DALE and children ELIZABETH and FREDERICK. They moved into Minstercote in February from Hereford.

NIGEL LINDON took up residence at Firethorn, Much Birch a few weeks ago. He runs his own firm of builders with a particular speciality of building and adapting properties for people in wheelchairs and with other disabilities. He is a newcomer to Herefordshire and we hope that he has an enjoyable life here. He hopes to participate in village activities.

Having spent several weeks in Hillside, FRANK SHORT has decided not to return home to Tump Lane but to live at Charnwood Retirement Home in Much Dewchurch. He will still be quite near his friends and no doubt will continue to give us all the local news! We wish him happiness there and better health than he has enjoyed recently.

It is sad to report the untimely passing of COLIN WEALE of Tump Lane at the age of 51 years after a short stay in hospital. His funeral service was held on 16th. March at the Crematorium and was conducted by Rev. Mark Johnson and the following is taken from his address.

Colin was born at 14, Tump Lane in 1958 and spent most of his life in this house. He was the third son of Betty and John with older brothers, David and John. John senior was a fireman while Betty stayed at home to bring up the family and, like many wives at that time, did fruit picking in the summer months for Col. Howorth at Court Farm. Sadly, Betty passed away 23 years ago.

He attended Much Birch School then moved on to Haywood School (now the Wye Academy) until he was 15 years of age. He then took up an engineering apprenticeship at Denco, which set him up in a trade for life as he enjoyed being a practical 'hands on' craftsman. Later, he worked for Northern Dairies in Grandstand Road and Rexam on the Rotherwas Estate, where he remained until ill-health forced him to retire early.

The problem was stiffness in the back and hips, which dogged him for many years. On some of the 'good days', he could get up and help his father and drive the car but on many other occasions, he could not get out of bed, which was very frustrating.

Whenever possible, Colin pursued several of his hobbies. He was a keen photographer and particularly interested in aircraft and visited the air tattoo at Fairford for several years. He later took the photographs at his friends' weddings and produced very good quality prints and albums on his computer. He also travelled in a helicopter to take shots landmarks in Herefordshire.

Colin's greatest passion was for motorbikes and in earlier years with his brothers, spent most evenings and week-ends riding all around the district and beyond, much to his mother's great concern. Later, he became interested in the County Air Ambulance and supported their many of fundraising events, including the heli-bull, which was photographed in many locations around the county. Until recently, he kept his Harley Davidson in the front room in Tump Lane and when his health allowed, he would work on it to

keep it in good working order. He loved his bikes and the sense of freedom that he got from travelling around on them though his disability meant that he wasn't able to ride as much as he would have liked.

Although Colin struggled with his disability for so many years, it was a shock when he complained of chest pains and was rushed into hospital just a couple of weeks ago. His condition seemed to improve after the medication was sorted and he talked of coming home. Sadly, he then took a turn for the worse and with his family around him died early on that Tuesday morning.

Such was the respect in which Colin was held, that many of his contemporaries, friends and neighbours joined the family for the funeral and it was most appropriate that generous collections and donations were given to the County Air Ambulance in his memory. Colin will be sadly missed by all his friends and acquaintances and we send our sincere sympathies to his father, John, his brothers, David and John and their families.

There are a number of friends in hospital at the present time and we hope that they will all recover quickly and be able to return home as soon as possible. We also remember those who are suffering long term illness and those who care for them.

#### Pub night on February 20th

This was a huge success with well over 150 packed into the village hall in the course of the evening. It was a very enjoyable occasion with excellent beer (until it ran out!) and excellent company. The Save the Castle Campaign committee are very grateful for this groundswell of support. It only goes to show what a need there is in the village for someone to drop in and have a drink and a chat and how important it is for cohesion of the Thanks are due to community.

those members of the committee who organised it, to those who donated refreshments and to those who provided a variety of entertainment on the 'open mic'. Thanks also to Nick for working his socks off behind the bar! We look forward to seeing you all at the next pub night on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

#### Adrian Harvey

After postponements due to illness and weather, Adrian's talk finally took place on 25th February and it was well worth waiting for. It represented an enormous amount of research work by him on a subject in which he has a real interest; in fact he is writing a book on the Civil War in Herefordshire and the subject of his talk was a chapter from this.

He told us how the Scottish Army

under the direction of Lord Leven came to be sent down to Herefordshire in the summer of 1645 from the north of England, supposedly to help the **Parliamentarians** trace the movements of Charles I. The Parliamentarian army meanwhile been sent to the southwest. After laying siege to and acquiring Canon Frome Court, the home of the Hopton family, the Scots headed south, the main body reaching Mitcheldean and a smaller force going to Ross. After various secret meetings, involving three Scottish officers and a Royalist courtier, Leven decided to get his army away and besiege Hereford. Barnabas Scudamore, a younger brother of the owner of Holme Lacy, was the military governor of Hereford. Leven based his army on Bartonsham meadows where they were well protected by the river on 3 sides and a high bank which they built on the fourth (the remains still to be seen at the back of the houses on Park Street). They built a temporary bridge across the Wye (the Old Bridge being held by the Their main problem Royalists). was lack of food - they had not been paid for many weeks and

most of their cavalry, who normally went far afield to acquire food by various means, had been sent elsewhere. In addition. Barnabas Scudamore had previously ordered the destruction of all food stores and crops within easily walkable radius of Hereford. Scottish outposts had been placed on Dinedor and Aconbury hills to watch for any Royalist relief coming from the west; almost certainly they too would have tried to raid neighbouring areas. What was able to be gathered was taken to a 'depot' at Wormelow tump. A diet of green corn and green apples (it being July) would have had a deleterious effect on the army. Eventually the Scots were forced to lift the siege.

The events in Herefordshire, including the secret negotiations, rumours of which eventually got out, seriously damaged relationships between Parliament and the Scots. Adrian suggested that this probably had a decisive effect on the outcome of the war. Adrian's talk was very received and we found his scholarly yet clearly presented and illustrated account both very informative and most enjoyable.

**LBPC** 

Report of the Little Birch Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March.

No interests were declared.

Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> January were read and signed as a true record.

#### **Matters Arising**

Village Hall – Refurbishment of the gents' toilets is almost complete. The grant for £1,600 from the Lottery has been confirmed for the funding of insulating the Village Hall. The Pub Night was deemed a success with a follow up planned for 22<sup>nd</sup> May.

**Parish Lengthsman** – The second agreed day of work has been completed and an invoice received.

**Parish Initiative** – Clerk to chase progress of outstanding work again.

Plan Parish Two Parish Councillors and a resident met with Herefordshire Council investigate the process of creating a Parish Plan. A summary of the meeting, giving the step by step process and the reasons to create a Parish Plan was presented. Parish Council supported the creation of a Parish Plan for Little with an invitation Aconbury Parish to produce a joint Aconbury Parish to give feedback after their next Parish Council Meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> April. After this date, a public meeting is to be organised inviting Lynda Wilcox from HALC to inform residents and request volunteers to help with the creation of a Parish Plan.

**Parish Councillor Vacancy** – Two residents, so far, have written a summary on why they should be selected to fill the vacancy. A decision is to be made by the next Parish Council Meeting.

Place Shaping Paper Consultation – Questionnaire to be completed and returned by 12<sup>th</sup> March.

Local Transport Plan Consultation - Questionnaire to be completed and returned by 12<sup>th</sup> March.

#### Any Other Business

CSO Fiona Witcher reported a burglary in Kings Thorn and expressed disappointment that the latest PACT meeting was poorly attended.

A site visit at the Parish Field is to take place on 13th March.

The Chairman is chasing Herefordshire Council on two current issues.

The Castle Inn Campaign Committee is organising a public meeting on the 20th April to update local residents.

## Date of Next Meeting WEDNESDAY 5<sup>™</sup> MAY Parish Clerk

Please contact the Parish Clerk with any issues concerning Little Birch

Parish. Contact details are: Liz Callwood 540081 or littlebirchpc@googlemail.com

**MBPC** 

#### Report on meeting 4<sup>th</sup> March A49 - Road Safety Issues

There are serious concerns regarding speed along the A49 at Much Birch following a number of serious incidents along this stretch over recent months.

In recent weeks the concern has been highlighted again by a parent who had experienced a near miss accident whilst waiting to escort her children across the A49 towards Tump Lane due to an HGV travelling at speed. Police were informed and the incident was debated at the last Parish Council meeting which was also attended by parents. The Clerk was asked to take the matter up urgently with Herefordshire Council and the Highways Agency. A request would also be made for a member of the Herefordshire Highways Department to attend the next PACT Meeting on 13th May at Much Birch Community Centre. (see separate item) Parishioners who wish to air their concerns and parents of school children attending Much Birch School are encouraged to attend this meeting.

#### **Speed Indicator Devices**

SIDs will be in place during April & May at various locations in Much Birch.

#### Update of Parish Plan

There will be a Steering Group meeting on 25th March at Much Birch Community Hall. Parishioners are encouraged to come along to this important meeting, which will influence the future of the Parish, including matters such as planning issues, play areas, public transport or anything perceived that the parish needs.

#### Planning application

The Granary, Minster Farm, Much Birch. Revision of application DCSW2005/3085/F to incorporate existing lean-to for additional living space. *Application Unsupported* 

#### Correspondence.

Parish Councillors had previously been given the correspondence list, the contents of which were noted.

#### Parish Clerk

If you have any queries on Parish Council matters please telephone the Clerk on 01432 870874 or write to: Mrs Kath Greenow, Hackford House, Dinedor, Hereford HR2 6PD. For more information on Much Birch Parish Council please visit our website at www.muchbirchparish.org.uk

#### MB 100 Club Draw

(A fundraiser for the continued development of the Community Hall)
The March draw took place on Tuesday, 9th March at Much Birch Community Hall

The winners were:

- 1. No. 37 Mrs. K. Dawson, King's Thorn
- 2. No. 85 Mrs. P. Rogers, Little Birch

The next draw will take place on **SATURDAY**, **10**<sup>TH</sup> **APRIL** at 7.30pm. in MB Community Hall.

John Jones – *Chairman* 

## Neighbourhood Watch Crime trends

A commercial garage in Orcop was broken into over the past two approximately weeks and catalytic converters and 4 large reels of electrical wire were stolen. A garage premises on an industrial estate in Kingstone was broken into overnight 9th/ 10th March and a blue Saab convertible X254ABL was stolen, using the keys that were in the premises, the vehicle had been in for repair. Also taken were some socket sets, a computer and £20 cash.

There have been several instances of sheep rustling in the north of the county over the past few months, it now appears that they are coming to this side of the county. Eight ewes in lamb were stolen from a farm in Michaelchurch Escley over the past three weeks. The ewes were a cross between blue faced

Leicester and Welsh sheep, commonly known as Mules, and had tags on bearing the number 300463. Sheep farmers take note! There are a couple of items that circulated have been 'Ringmaster' in the past week that you ought to be aware of - for those of you already receiving Ringmaster, I apologise for the duplication, for those that don't, sign up! Go www.herefordshire-communitymessaging.org to register.

#### **Quad Bike Thefts**

Police in Herefordshire are asking farmers and owners of quad bikes to be on their guard after a number of thefts of the machines in recent weeks across the county.

Since Monday 22nd February, some seven quad bikes have been stolen from farms and isolated outbuildings, the thieves going to some lengths to break in, cutting padlocks to barns and gates.

The thieves have stolen from rural locations in Pixley, Dormington, Preston Wynne, Cradley, Knill, Bishops Frome and Wellington Heath and on each occasion the quad bike was clearly the intended target. Detective Chief Inspector Sean Paley, Head of Herefordshire CID, said, these offenders have shown some determination to get at the property they want but there are still things that owners can do to prevent theft or to make the goods un-sellable. Consider the use of lighting and/or cameras in vulnerable areas, paint your postcode in large letters on all the mudguards of the vehicle or consider having the machine chipped with an electronic tag which makes it easy to identify when found."

"Police patrols are out actively looking for these offenders but we need the help of the public to act as additional eyes and ears. The key factor is vigilance. Please report any suspicious activity or vehicles in the rural areas when you see it. Write down the numbers of

vehicles towing trailers late at night, especially if it has a quad bike on board, and contact the police immediately."

#### **Bogus Smoke Detectors**

The Fire Brigade have received information from West Midlands Police and Wolverhampton Trading Standards Department that the following company is selling battery powered smoke detectors door to door claiming that each connected smoke detector is directly to the customer's local fire station. Clearly this is misleading and members of the public who have had these detectors fitted may not dial 999 if they think their smoke alarm is connected directly to their local fire station. The company is based in Cannock, and could be operating throughout the region.

The company concerned is:- Switch On Security, Unit 6, West Cannock Way, Cannock Chase Enterprise Centre, Cannock WS12 OQW. (No phone number available)

Trading Standards are currently investigating the company - all enquiries regarding this matter should directed be Wolverhampton Trading Standards Department on 01902 550101. If you have any information regarding this company, or similar scams please contact you local Trading Standards Departments (Hereford Environmental Health and Trading Standards telephone number is 01432 261761)

#### Not Sure? Don't Open The Door

A national campaign to promote the risks posed by distraction burglars was launched by the Association of Chief Police Officers on 4th March. Under the banner of Operation Liberal, an initiative that police forces across the UK started a few years ago, a series of four posters will be in evidence at key locations.

Each poster carries a positive message depicting how elderly people kept out distraction burglars who were using different types of modus operandi: water, energy supplier, police officer and lost ball in the garden.

John called police when a bogus meter reader did not give the password that John had prearranged his electricity company. John refused the man entry and called the police. Jean police when two men said they were from the "Water Board" which, of course, no longer exists. Water company officials always have ID with them, which these two did not. Police arrested them and they are now behind bars.

Harbans had two men at his door claiming to be police officers wanting to come in. He was suspicious and made them wait outside whilst he checked with his local police station who informed him they were bogus. They decided to leave the scene when Harbans made them wait.

Mary was the quick-witted neighbour who saw a suspicious couple calling at her neighbour's house, claiming they were looking for a ball in the garden. Mary car's noted their registration number and called the police. It turns out they were known distraction burglars.

We can all play our part in activities thwarting the distraction burglars - being vigilant and watching out for neighbours, recording registration numbers of suspicious vehicles, always asking for ID from callers that you do not know, checking who out who callers say they are with their company and agreeing arranged passwords with utility companies. Above all, there is a simple message to remember - if you're not sure, don't open the door.

#### Nominated Neighbour Scheme

Police in Bromyard are looking to their Nominated Neighbour schemes in the town, and across the county. The scheme works by elderly or vulnerable householders asking a neighbour to deal with unexpected callers at the door for them. Callers are met with

a sign in the window stating that they are not known and should go to their neighbours address to present their credentials. neighbour then returns with the caller to supervise the visit, if appropriate. CSO Pete Knight from Bromyard said, "The scheme is common-sense and gives considerable reassurance to the householder. allowing good neighbours to do their bit for the community as well. If you'd like to know more about the free scheme, contact CSO Pete Knight at Bromyard or your local policing team on 0300 333 3000.

Your Officers based at Peterchurch **Local Police Officer** 

PC 799

Andrew Bundy Mobile 07855 385 844 **Community Support Officers** CSO 6173

Fiona Witcher Mobile 07779 141 232 CSO 6993

**Kevin Powell** 

Mobile 07779 141 232

E-mail

herefordruralsouth.lpt@ westmercia.pnn.police.uk

Answer phone - 01432 346756 **Local Police Officer** 

Your Local Representatives

East -

JOHN BULBECK 540178

Central -

**BOB PETERS** 540670

West -

BETTY PHILPOTT 540614

#### Newsletter by email

Thank you to the new reader who elected to receive Newsletter by email. Please do consider it. A lot of shoe leather is expended in delivery. the Donations are always welcome to help cover the cost of printing and the paper used; this amounts to over £100 per month. production, printing, collation and

delivery of the Newsletter is all done by volunteers. It is delivered to around 500 households free of charge - just £2 per year per household would nearly cover the annual outlay.

Items/Copy

Please may I have items for the MAY issue via email attachment in Word format to:

semathews@btinternet.com or by hand or post to Mrs. S.E. Mathews, Folly Cottage, Little Birch, HR2 8BD. by

> 18TH APRIL 张 张 张

Please mark your envelope "Kings Thorn Newsletter"

Please note there are new advertisements this month.

#### CLASSIFIED **ADVERTISEMENT**

Wanted to purchase - any small piece of land (not for building) in the Kings Thorn or Birches area. Please contact 01981 540669.