



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

A newsletter for the villages of King's Thorn, Little Birch, Much Birch & Aconbury February 2015. First published 1977



**Little Birch  
Village Hall  
Pantomime  
2015**

## Peter Pan

(Director and Producer Jane Bolam)

Friday & Saturday February 6th & 7th 7.30 pm

Saturday matinee 2.00pm

Tickets available from:

Jackie 01981 541027

Margaret 01981 540374

Adults £6  
Under 14 £4



**Pantomime tickets are selling fast.  
Only a few remaining for Saturday  
performances.**

### Found

A pair of ladies black leather gloves left in the  
village hall after the Wassailing evening.  
Call 541027

**Please send copy for the March  
Newsletter to [birchesnews@gmail.com](mailto:birchesnews@gmail.com)  
or written contributions to John  
Bryant at Bramley Bungalow, Aconbury  
Close by 18th February**

## Diary Dates

### January

28th Gardening Club LBVH

### February

5th MB parish Council MBCH

6th Peter Pan LBVH

7th Peter Pan LBVH

10th Whist Drive LBVH

12th Flicks in the Sticks MBCH

17th Pancake Evening LBVH

17th Womens Institute MBCH

21st Book Exchange LBVH

24th Advanced Motorists MBCH

25th Gardening Club LBVH

27th Village Market MBCH

### March

5th MB Parish Council MBCH

7th Flicks in the Sticks MBCH

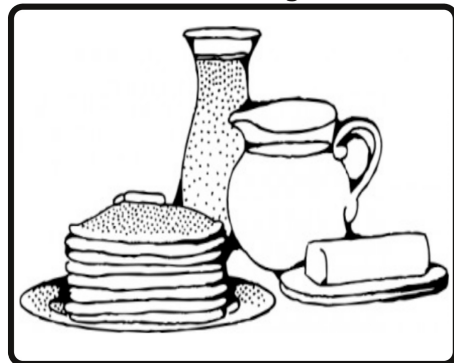
10th Evergreen AGM MBCH

11th LB parish Council LBVH

25th Gardening Club AGM LBVH

27th Annual Quiz LBVH

### Little Birch Village Hall



## Pancake Evening

**Shrove Tuesday March 17th 2015**

£2.50 to include 2 pancakes

Additional pancakes £0.50 each

Sweet and savoury fillings

## **Des Clarke**

(Message inadvertently omitted last month)

**Alison Clarke** and family would like to thank all those kind people who sent such thoughtful and sympathetic cards and letters both before and after Des's death. They have been much appreciated. We are also very grateful to all those who came to his funeral, who obviously thought so much of him and for the donations received.

## **1st Much Birch Brownies**

Last term was a very productive and busy time, the Brownies worked towards 3 new badges- number fun, craft and cooking.

All Brownies enjoyed our end of term party, having chips from the chip shop and decorating the Village Hall Christmas tree.

We meet on Monday evenings at Little Birch Village Hall and currently have a few spaces available, so if your daughter is between the age of 7-10 years and you think that they may enjoy Brownies please contact **Katie** on 01432 351768

## **New Year Celebration**

Around 120 people attended the party at Little Birch Village Hall to celebrate 2014 and welcome the start of 2015. It was especially pleasing to see so many young people enjoying themselves. Dancing to the Wolfie disco was very popular and continued until 2a.m except for a short break to enjoy the food. The bar was exceptionally busy.

This was the third appearance of Wolfie for the end of the year party in the hall but unfortunately his last. Family and work commitments have already forced him to dispose of his equipment.

The hall is already booked for December 2015. Ideas for music and entertainment will be welcomed.

## **Wassail at Little Birch Village Hall**

On Saturday 17th Compost Heap held their third Wassail and what a night we had! 110+ people turned out.

We started with our traditional procession up to Bob Mason's orchard where we had bonfires burning: we sang the Apple Tree Wassail; we fed an apple tree with cider and hung toast in the branches; we danced a farandole and we gave three hearty cheers for this year's harvest.

Back in the warmth of the hall, Compost Heap launched into their Mummers' Play where St. George took on all comers, the doctor revived the

Turkish knight and Beelzebub turned up to complete the proceedings. Then, we had our food, hot dogs and crumble, but not on the same plates, before we launched into some singing.

The purpose of this year's Wassail was to raise money for the Heart and Lung Transplant Unit at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham. Our friend, Phil, had two new lungs fitted there two years ago, and it was our pleasure that he was able to sing and play at the Wassail, receiving a standing ovation after finishing with a full rendition of 'American Pie'.

It was a really good night and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. People were so generous with their time, gifts of raffle prizes and crumbles, etc. and in the way they put their hands into their pockets. We will be sending a cheque for £755 to the Transplant Unit. Thank you everyone! And look out for the Wassail next year, where we will do some of the traditional things and a few new ones, and hopefully raise some more money for charity.

**Wassail!!**

The "Compost Heap"

## **Local News**

A very warm welcome is given to **Jo and Nick Pinfield** who have renovated 'Wayside' in King's Thorn, to **Maz and Alex Richmond** from London who have moved into 'Brambles' and **Pauline Hastie and partner, Steve Litley**, who moved into Rose Cottage about a month ago. We trust that they will all be happy in their new homes and in this community.

Hereford Crematorium was full of family and friends on 8th. January for the funeral of **Fred Turner** who died just before Christmas at the age of 76. He was the second eldest of the 13 Turner children and was born at Llanigon, near Hay on Wye. His father was a farm worker and his mother, Dorothy, was a real worker doing her fair share of land work as well as bringing up a large family.

Farm workers had no security of tenure at that time and so the family moved in turn to Harewood End, The Ark at Pencoyd and Poolsnatch Cottage at Much Birch, the two latter farms were owned by the Snell family. When the council houses were built in Tump Lane, it gave the family the opportunity to get out of tied cottages and they first moved to No.11 and then to No. 35 by which time the family was complete.

Fred attended schools at Hentland, Pencoyd and Llanwarne and aged 15 went to work at the mushroom farm at Much Birch. The chance came

a few years later to work on the construction of the Wiggins factory at Holmer in lagging pipes on site. He was called up for National Service but must have had the shortest service record in the Army as conscription soon ceased and soldiers became full time professionals. He came back to the mushroom farm for a while before heading off to Bromyard for a spell of making 'spoilers' for the backs of racing cars. His love of growing vegetables drew him back to gardening and with brother, Richard, they helped out Acton Billing at 'Cedar Villa' for a few years before Mr. Billing died. Fred and Richard then purchased the smallholding and diversified from strawberries and potatoes into a wider range of vegetables. This was hard work with limited machinery and Fred often took on hedge trimming, and tree felling to bolster the income.

They grew prize winning vegetables and won many cups and awards at local and county shows, sweeping the board at the Little Birch Show for many years. Fred also loved motorbike scrambling and would go off to local and national events most weekends. In the early days, he and Richard would go off on bikes but when a car was purchased, several family members would also accompany them. Fred also did some 'beating' for local shoots with his numerous dogs over the years. Eventually, Fred had to take things a little quieter as his 'chest' had been getting gradually worse and he helped out Richard when it wasn't too cold in the garden in winter or too warm in the polytunnels in summer. He always liked to chat to customers who stopped to buy eggs or veg or wooden tubs or compost or garden benches which were made on site. He also became interested in making walking sticks until his eyesight began to fail.

The last few months of his life were very difficult and he had several spells in hospital with breathing problems but throughout all this illness, Richard gave him the utmost care but a bad chest infection eventually caught up with him and he passed away in hospital.

The funeral service was conducted by Rev. Mark Johnson from whose address these notes have been taken. Donations in memory of Fred were made to the Asthma UK. We extend to Richard and all sisters and brothers our deepest sympathy.

It is also sad to report the death of **Peter Blandford Thomas** of Tump Lane at the age of 89. His well attended funeral service took place at Hereford Crematorium and was conducted by Rev.

Mark Johnson from whose address these notes are given.

Peter was born in St. Briavels in the Forest of Dean where his father was a forester. When Peter was some 5 years of age, the family moved to Worcester and then to Turvey Hall Cottage on the Monmouth road. He went to the old school at Much Birch and I guess walked across the fields in Tump Lane to get there. The family now 5 in number with parents and Peter, Marion and Ivor moved to Wallspool Cottage in Little Birch. At 14 years of age, Peter also went into forestry since WW11 broke out and timber was in great demand. At 18, he was 'called up' and went into the Royal Navy, which is why the Service commenced with the hymn 'Eternal Father strong to save'. He served on ships in the Indian Ocean and after the celebrations of VJ Day which ended the war in 1945, he went on to serve in Japan before coming back for 'demob' to Scotland in 1947. That year the snow lasted for almost 3 months from mid Jan to the end of March and it was bitterly cold. When he arrived back at Hereford Railway station, there was no transport running and so Peter had to walk back to Little Birch through deep snow.

Peter then went back into the timber trade working for Mr. Sid Watkins at King's Thorn. Peter was trying to court 'Fluff' but she was less than impressed with him and rebuffed all his advances. However, his persistence paid off and not long after, they were courting and married in 1951 with the reception in the newly opened Little Birch Hall. They lived with Fluff's parents at Cherry Orchard Cottage and then to Eden Cottage, Barrack Hill, where in due time, Peter, Veronica, Diane and Elaine were born.

With a large family, a move to Tump Lane gave them larger accommodation and Peter went to work for Sankeys in Hereford until it closed and then did a stint at Pontrilas Sawmill. He later joined Painter Bros. and worked there until he retired. Peter never really retired as he helped Tony Shaw and his great friend, Ossie Hughes in various building projects mainly to keep him in 'beer money'. He had developed a taste for rum while in the Navy and so would often frequent the Black Swan at Much Dewchurch. Fluff and Peter celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary with a party in the Black Swan in 2001. Meanwhile, the family had grown up and son Peter, after a partnership with Robin Berkeley and Dave Davies in the building trade, emigrated to Australia but now lives in New



Guinea while the daughters have stayed locally. When Fluff wasn't too well, Ronnie (Veronica) took Peter to the Black Swan. Fluff died in 2012 and soon after, Peter was diagnosed with terminal cancer which was a double blow as he missed Fluff greatly after their 60 years together. Peter refused any treatment and Ronnie who had worked at ASDA gave up her job and looked after her father with help from Diane and Elaine. Peter had to have a bed downstairs and Ronnie gave him the utmost nursing and care. He was determined to remain at home to the end and he passed away peacefully just before Christmas with his family around him

Donations in memory of Peter were given to the Midlands Air Ambulance and we send our sincere sympathies to son, Peter, Ronnie, Diane and Elaine and grandchildren, Adam and Joanne.

One of the oldest Sisters at Much Birch Monastery has passed on at the age of 88. **Sister Veronica Pye** joined the Order of Poor Clare in Lower Bullingham some 60 years ago and was Mother Superior at the time of the move to Much Birch. She welcomed local residents to tea and major events at the Monastery and acknowledged everyone's denomination in an ecumenical way. She was just a lovely lady and will be greatly missed. A Requiem Mass for the repose of her soul was celebrated by the Archdeacon of Cardiff on Monday, 19th. January and her body was laid to rest in the small cemetery behind the Monastery.

We extend to her family, the Poor Clare Sisters and her many friends our deepest sympathy.

### **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 first Village Market of 2015 takes place on Friday, 27th February Stalls will include;

**Moor Meals**, award winning, local suppliers of Dexter beef, ready meals and pies, **Llandinabo Farm shop**, selling sausages, chicken, duck, lamb etc. as well as some cooked meats and cheese. Also we have **Castle Cheese**, and **Mr. G's** award winning chutney and preserves.

There are craft stands and a **Fair Trade stand**.

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

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.)

### **Village Market Come and Support Us**

The Fundraising Committee of Much Birch Church has taken over providing refreshments and selling eggs, cakes and scones etc at the Village Markets as from 27th February 2015. We do hope you will visit the market and stop by our stall by for a cup of tea and to purchase something to take home. We look forward to seeing you.

### **Much Birch WI**

Much Birch WI holds meetings on the third Tuesday of each month, at 7.30pm in Much Birch Community Hall.

The February speaker is **Gill Suttle** whose subject is '**Celestial Horses, Travels in Turkestan**'.

Visitors and potential new members are welcome. Please contact Gillian, 01981 540080 or Caroline, 01981 540422 for more details.

### **IAM Herefordshire**

#### **Local Charity Aims to Increase Your Confidence on the Road**

Is it really true that anyone can learn to drive more safely, more cheaply and still have more fun? IAM Herefordshire's campaign is to help everyone to do just that. They aim to improve your driving skills by reinforcing things like hazard awareness, correct steering, gear choice, cornering and overtaking techniques, and are affiliated to the IAM, the Institute of Advanced Motorists.

Regular local courses are run at Much Birch and are aimed at motorists wanting to improve their driving skills. The course is titled 'Skill for Life', as the methods they teach are never forgotten, and is run over three weekly evening sessions, followed by practical driving advice, in your own car, from one of their fully qualified mentors.

The technique takes a methodical approach to driving - leaving nothing to chance, and increases your safety by giving you more time to react. The smoother driving that results also saves you money and makes driving more enjoyable for you and your passengers. This combined theory and practical approach to driving means that drivers are able to turn the theory into practice immediately - on the way home from their very first evening session.

Along with the kudos of being an Advanced Driver, there are practical benefits - such as free RAC membership, discounts on insurance, and lower fuel bills by being a better driver.

IAM-Herefordshire's team of qualified and highly experienced observers will coach, guide and mentor you with no limit on the number of drives, or the time taken, and sessions are at your mutual convenience.

The next course begins on Tuesday 24 February at Much Birch. To join and book a place, or for more information, call David Williams on 01981 580382 or email: [chief-observer@iam-herefordshire.org.uk](mailto:chief-observer@iam-herefordshire.org.uk)

Their highly successful Mature Driver Days will be repeated again, from March this year - aimed at older motorists who have fallen out of love with driving and want to restore their confidence. Phone 01432 840835 or email: [safedriver@iam-herefordshire.org.uk](mailto:safedriver@iam-herefordshire.org.uk).

### **Little Birch Parish Council**

The most recent meeting on Wednesday 7th January four Councillors were present, Cllrs Clarke, Wissler, Godding and the Chair Cllr Morley.

The PC had a short presentation from David Atkinson, the Localities Steward for Balfour Beatty. He explained that he is the first point of contact for Parish Councils if they need to talk to Balfour Beatty. He has a team of 7 people covering South Hereford and Ross Rural area. He confirmed that whilst Barrack Hill is on a bus route, it would not be routinely gritted, so please can parishioners be aware that the PC has arranged for this to be gritted in severe weather, but when it is really cold, careful driving is vital, particularly on this hill.

The PC would remind parishioners that they had been notified that the BT phone box near the village hall has been used only 3 times in the last year, and thus BT are looking to disconnect it. However, this might be reconsidered if it were used more often, so, don't forget, use it or lose it and perhaps each house hold could make one phone call from the box in the coming months, and that might encourage BT to keep it going? Also, the Parish Council has been given the opportunity to purchase the box for a very modest sum, if they did so, they would welcome any suggestions as to what uses could be made of it. Please submit any suggestions to the Clerk.

The Parish Footpaths officer is **Sandra Cameron**,

and if you encounter any problems for her attention on one of the Parish paths, please contact her on [shcameron@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:shcameron@hotmail.co.uk) or 01981 540397.

The PC have resolved to re-tender the position of Lengthsman for the Parish for 2015/16. Any one with the appropriate skills, who would like to find out more about the post, please contact the clerk on the numbers below before the end of January.

The next meeting is on Wednesday March 11th at 7.30 in the Village Hall, and all parishioners are warmly welcomed.

**Sophie Glover** – Little Birch Parish Council Clerk, [littlebirchpcclerk@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:littlebirchpcclerk@hotmail.co.uk) or **01432 270499**

### **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 Council Meeting held on the 8th January at the Much Birch Community Hall. The Parish Council heard further updates on local road and highways issues from the Balfour Beatty (BBLP) Locality Steward. There was a reminder that the "self help" gritting scheme is in place to help keep the roads clear in the event of icy weather but that this will only be operational on certain routes and only during periods of severe icy conditions. It is therefore reminded that extreme care should be taken when driving, in all conditions, to try to ensure maximum safety for all on the village's roads. There are grit bins available for highway use, but not personal property (e.g. driveways etc.). It is advised that a light sprinkle of grit should be all that is required to maintain traction. Thank you all for your co-operation in this regard.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Thursday 5th February 2015 at 7.30pm - at The Much Birch Community Hall. Please see notice boards and website for agendas. As always the public and press are more than welcome to attend and will have the opportunity to speak directly to their representatives.

A reminder that:-

Your Much Birch Parish Councillors are:-

**Cllr Alison Cook** (Chair) Jasmine Cottage, Wrigglebrook Lane, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AW, e mail [thecoops@wyenet.co.uk](mailto:thecoops@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,  
Kingsthorne, 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, e mail  
[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** Swiss Cottage, Wrigglebrook,  
Kingsthorne, 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://summary.www.muchbirchparish.org.uk)

### Message from Balfour Beatty

We have received some queries concerning the  
most appropriate method for clerks to report  
service requests and enquiries – please see the  
information below:

When BBLP took over the contract in September  
2013, we set up a parish mailbox to receive service  
requests and queries from parish clerks. This was  
[herefordshireparishes@bblivingplaces.com](mailto:herefordshireparishes@bblivingplaces.com)

Once we had locality stewards in post across the  
county (recruiting over a period of time from June  
– August 2014) they were keen to understand  
what was important to the parishes and developed  
closer working relationships with clerks. Clerks  
were encouraged to contact them rather than use  
the parish mailbox (although this is still in operation  
and being monitored).

Over a period of time, Herefordshire Council have  
worked hard to further develop their website for  
online reporting and are keen we encourage this as  
a primary reporting tool as it reduces double  
handling of requests, gives customers the  
opportunity to report once, with the opportunity to  
clearly identify the accurate location of a defect,  
and include any local knowledge which helps add  
detail to the request. As web reporting provides a  
direct interface with our database, the locality  
stewards receive these requests directly to their  
tablets, which enables them to spend more time  
inspecting and less time tied to the office logging

routine requests received via email. All our locality  
stewards will communicate with the clerks  
whenever they need and are always open to  
discussing concerns locally – but they do have a  
limited timescale to complete a wide range of  
duties and where possible, we would like them to  
have the most opportunity to be out working and  
inspecting in their areas. Obviously, if a clerk has  
a complicated or particularly concerning enquiry,  
our stewards are very happy to deal with the  
matter directly, but routine requests such as  
pothole reporting, gully cleansing, street light  
faults and more can easily be logged via the web.

An additional bonus with the web reporting is that  
so long as individuals (members of the  
public, clerks etc) provide an email address when  
they log the request this allows automated updates  
to be sent back. There will be updates when the  
status of an enquiry changes, which in turn also  
helps reduce chasing and double handling. See  
the link at <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/report-it>

We hope this helps explain the changes to the  
systems over the last 18 months – we are keen to  
develop and improve the reporting systems where  
we can but appreciate it may have caused  
confusion and apologise for any uncertainty. We  
also believe Herefordshire Council are working to  
provide a simpler dedicated reporting tool for ward  
members and clerks, but this is currently a work in  
progress.

If you have any queries, do please come back to  
us.

**James Powell** Customer Service Assistant  
Balfour Beatty Living Places Unit 3, Thorn  
Business Park Rotherwas Hereford HR2 6JT  
T 01432349519  
M 07815709473  
E [James.Powell2@bblivingplaces.com](mailto:James.Powell2@bblivingplaces.com)

### Much Birch Community Hall 100 Club

The December 2014 draw took place on 14th  
December 2014 in Much Birch Community Hall at  
11am and the results were as follows:

1st prize – No. 2	<b>Miss N. Salter</b> Much Birch
2nd prize = No 7	<b>Mr. &amp; Mrs. D. Wiseman</b> King's Thorn

The results of the draw which took place on 11th  
January 2015 at 10.30am were as follows:

1st prize - No 53	<b>Mrs. C. Peers</b> Much Birch
2nd prize – No 55	<b>Mrs. S. Berry-Ottaway</b> Kivernoll



3rd prize – No 85     **Mrs. J. de C Sharp**

Fordham Cambridgeshire

The next draw will take place on 15th February 2015 at 10.30am in Much Birch Community Hall.

I would like to express many thanks to all those who have supported the Community Hall and joined the 100 club for 2015 for what is our 10th year.

**John Jones Promoter**

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

#### **Annual Pancake Evening**

We would love you to join us this Shrove Tuesday at Little Birch Village Hall for a selection of delicious homemade pancakes with a variety of fillings, savoury and sweet! £2.50 for two and 50p for each additional one you can manage!

We look forward to seeing you there at 7:30pm on Tuesday 17th February.

#### **Community Book Exchange/Lending Library**

The February meeting of the 'LBVH Book Exchange' will be in the morning of Saturday 21 February at Little Birch Village Hall.

All members of the community are invited to join us for this enjoyable monthly event which offers not only a wide range of books and DVDs (to suit all ages and interests,) but also an opportunity to meet others and exchange recommendations for "a good read". A warm welcome, tea, coffee and refreshments 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 21 February

#### **Whist Drive**

Our next Whist Drive is on Tuesday 10 February at Little Birch Village Hall. We shall start at 7.30.p.m. The entrance fee is £2.00.

We are always on the 'look out' for new members including those who are new to Whist and others who may not have played for some time. A warm welcome, good company and enjoyment of an evening of Whist may be just what you need! Excellent prizes and refreshments will be available.

#### **Kingsthorpe and Little Birch Gardening Club**

On 28th. January, **Sue Russell** will give an illustrated talk on

**'How to manage the herbaceous border'.**

**Helen Picton** of the famous Ballard Nurseries in Malvern will give a talk about the history, variety and cultivation of Michaelmas Daisies and the

development of Old Court Nurseries on Wed. 25th. February.

On March 25th., our AGM followed by a short video of the work of the 'Gloucestershire Federation of Gardening Societies'. An outline programme for 2015/16 will also be given.

New members are always welcome at 7.30pm on the last Wednesday of each month at Little Birch Village Hall. Potential New Members are always welcomed to a 'taster meeting' before joining.

**John Bryant 01981 540316.**

### **MLS (Minibus Link Scheme)**

#### **Solving transport needs for not-for-profit organisations**

hvoos (Herefordshire Voluntary Organisations Support Service) MLS throughout Herefordshire; linking groups wishing to use minibuses at low cost for one-stop journeys with minibus owners who will benefit from a contribution towards their vehicle's running costs.

MLS is available to all properly constituted not-for-profit organisations such as community and voluntary organisations, uniformed youth groups and youth clubs, schools and colleges. Upon joining the scheme all groups have access to a list of vehicles appropriate to their needs - passenger numbers, ramp and lift requirements, a list of volunteer drivers - all at affordable rates. Minibus owners submit details of their vehicles, indicating when they are available for loan. These organisations provide a valued community service whilst increasing their own financial efficiency and publicity through a wider use of their vehicles. MLS administer a smooth and safe booking process, ensuring both borrower and lender needs are considered.

hvoos is grateful to have received some funding support provided by Herefordshire Council and MLS aims to make transport accessible to all schools and community groups, helping to keep minibuses well-maintained and well-used by everyone. We are looking for both lenders and borrowers to use the scheme regularly.

MLS is also looking for volunteer drivers to join the scheme. If you enjoy driving and meeting people, then driving community minibuses is a great way to get out and about in your spare time. Drivers must have D1 category and we encourage all drivers to have MiDAS (Minibus

Drivers Awareness Scheme) training. If you are interested in receiving this training please email MLS for more information.

To read more about MLS (Minibus Link Scheme) visit:

<http://www.hvoss.org.uk/categories/community-transport.aspx>

If you would like to contact MLS, please email [mls@hvoss.org.uk](mailto:mls@hvoss.org.uk) or telephone Rachael Manacchini-Godfrey at hvoss on 01432 343932.

hvoss, Berrows Business Centre, Bath St, Hereford HR1 2HE. MLS is a service for all communities and organisations throughout Herefordshire so thank you very much for your anticipated assistance

Kind regards Rachael

Rachael Manacchini-Godfrey

MLS (Minibus Link Scheme) Project Manager

Tel: 01432 343932

Email: [rachael.manacchini-godfrey@hvoss.org.uk](mailto:rachael.manacchini-godfrey@hvoss.org.uk)

### **The Evergreen Club**

Are you 55 years plus? Would you like to join The Evergreen Club – the friendly group for enjoyable days out? We have monthly trips and our members tell us that we visit many interesting places.

This Spring we will be visiting Bath and the Avoncroft Museum of historical buildings.

For more information, join us for tea and biscuits at Much Birch Community Hall on Tuesday 10 March from 2.30pm onwards or please ring Bridget on 01981 540932.

### **NOTICE OF EVERGREEN AGM**

This takes place at Much Birch Community Hall on Tuesday 10 March at 2.30pm.

### **John Kinross continues his series on local castles.**

**Treago Castle** at St. Weonards, is the home of the Mynors family and is a fourteenth century fortified house built in 1470 by Richard Mynors, a close ally of the Earl of Pembroke, owner of Raglan Castle. It has turrets in each corner, that on the south front being much larger than the other three. The courtyard was filled in in 1844 with a new staircase and the large tower room has been used as a bedroom, meeting room or card room over the years. The family supported the Yorkists in the Wars of the Roses and the King in the Civil War. There is a picture of the lady of the house armed only with a dagger keeping out some Scots

marauders in 1645. The house however was never attacked so remains little altered over the years.

The family has hatchments and monuments in the nearby St. Weonards church. There is a large seventeenth century barn and a walled garden and for many years, the house was used as a farmhouse. The present family had a vineyard and their wine was well valued by local connoisseurs.

The castle is open occasionally in the summer months. Apply to Sir Richard Mynors on 01981 580 206. Recently, the Church of England has been using the castle for meetings.

**Pembridge Castle** is situated in Welsh Newton and is an exception to all Hereford castles. It is not a ruin and is a private house now but alas, no longer open on Thursday afternoons. It is 45m long and 30m wide with a gatehouse, strong wall, a round keep in the south west corner and a chapel in the north west corner. It is surrounded by a dry ditch. It dates from the 13th century and was built by Matilda de Valery but passed to the Pembridge family. Richard de Pembridge was a Knight of the Garter and Warden of the Cinque Ports. It passed to the Burleys, the Tudors and during the Civil War to Sir Walter Pye, who made it a Royalist outpost. It changed hands in 1644 and was garrisoned by Parliament when ordered for slighting. This was not carried out and George Kemble purchased it after the war and made it habitable. His relation, John Kemble had an oratory here. It was inhabited by the Scudamores in 1715 and the Townleys, a Jacobite family before being sold to the Bartletts in 1913, who rebuilt the gatehouse. There are some stone buildings behind and in the chapel a brass to Dr. Hedley Bartlett who was a Bishop of Siluria in the lesser Eastern Church.



### **February Church Services**

Sun 1st. Joint Service with St. Weonards. 10.00am at Llanwarne  
A chance to say farewell to Rev. Elaine Goddard before her retirement.

Sun 8th. Little Birch 11am CW Communion

Sun 15th Much Birch 9.15am Family Communion  
Little Birch 11am Morning Worship

Wed 18th St. Weonards 7.30pm Ash Wednesday Communion

Sun 22nd Much Birch 9.15am Matins  
Little Birch 11am Family Worship

### **And Finally a Competition**

**It is possible to buy a T-shirt with the following inscription.**

$\sqrt{-1} \quad 2^3 \quad \Sigma \quad \pi$

**It was delicious!**

**Can anybody decipher what the first line means and suggest the name of an appropriate person to wear the shirt? The best answer sent in to the Newsletter by email by 14<sup>th</sup> February will be awarded a bottle of wine.**