



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

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

## Diary Dates

### June

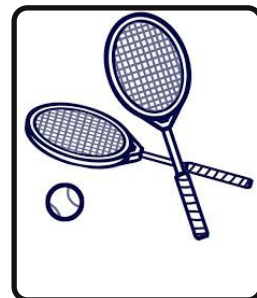
27th Village Market MBCH  
29th. Violet Szabo Memorial

### July

3-5th Summer show LBVH  
8th Whist Drive LBVH  
10th Evergreen Club Outing  
12th LB Church Fete Old Rectory  
12th Book Exchange LBVH  
15th Older Driver Day  
15th Womens Institute MBCH  
25th Village Market MBCH  
30th Gardening Club Visit

### August

9th Book Exchange LBVH  
12th Whist Drive LBVH  
17th Young Driver Day MBCH  
22nd Village Market MBCH



**As usual there will be no August  
Newsletter.**

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

## Summer Show-A timely reminder!

Come along to LITTLE BIRCH VILLAGE HALL on 3rd, 4th, or 5th JULY and 'beat the blues' of England losing! All the actors from last year's 'Allo, Allo' are going to entertain you in a variety show with comedy sketches, song and dance.

**ACT 1 is hosted in traditional style by a Master of Ceremonies who will lead you with enthusiasm, jollity and lots of audience participation.**

**ACT 2 is our version of 'Wish you were Here'  
with our own 'Judith Chalmers'!**

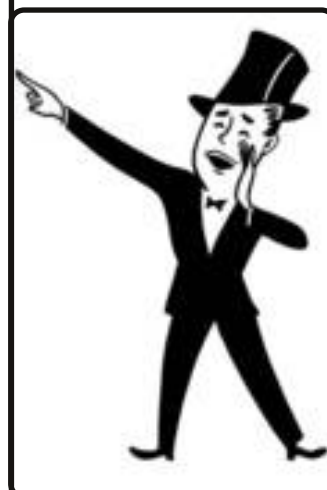
Summer holidays approaching?  
Come and take an animated 'whistle stop' trip around the world.

Hilarious sketches, riotous dance routines and rock music.  
What more could you need to make Summer swing!

**ONLY £10 p.p.(over 16's) TO INCLUDE DRINK ON ARRIVAL AND SUPPER**

**Please support this event - all profits go towards YOUR Community Village Hall.**

**TICKETS FROM IRIS - 540068 OR JACKIE - 541027**



## **Little Birch Church Fete 12th July from 2pm at the Old Rectory.**

**Stalls. Cakes , Plants, Books, Bric a Brac, Bottles, Children's Games.**

**Strawberry Teas, Children's Races - Fun for all the Family**

**Grand Draw - 1st Prize National Theatre Tickets**

**2nd Large Hamper**

**3rd Sun. Lunch for 2 people  
plus at least 10 other prizes.**

**Everyone most welcome**

**For the book stall, Jane Rodd will be pleased to receive any books in  
good condition. Please ring Jane on 01981 541359**

**Donations of prizes or to any of the stalls will be gratefully received.**

**Contact numbers:- John Caton 540267 Steve Turner 540090  
James Gould 540676 John Bryant 540316**

Local Parish Councils received a copy of a letter from British Telecom to the Herefordshire Council, dated 29th. May, that included the following:

### **REMOVAL OF PUBLIC PAYPHONE: KINGSTHORNE HEREFORD HR2 8AL**

*We have been informed that a planning application will shortly be submitted to redevelop the farmland at the rear of this kiosk. The Highway Authority has asked for the kiosk to be removed/relocated to improve visibility.*

*Our records indicate that the service is not used and therefore we are proposing to remove the kiosk.*

*Before we can permanently remove a kiosk we have a responsibility to consult with relevant public bodies on the proposed removal. As part of the consultation process it is a requirement that the council reply in writing to BT within 90 days giving their comments or objections received from the local community. Further information on the consultation process can be found at:*

*<http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/consultations/uso/statement/removals.pdf>*

*If you do not reply it will be taken that the council and interested parties have no objection to the permanent removal of the kiosk.*

*A notice of our proposal is being displayed in the kiosk.*

**King's Thorn and Little Birch Gardening Club July 30th.** Evening visit to **Westonbury Water Mill**, Pembridge. Richard Pim is a hydrologist and has a real passion for water features. He has made quite a few changes since our last visit including a water powered Cuckoo Clock - it may be the only time you hear one this year!

Meet at King's Thorn Bus Shelter at 6.15pm. Cost £4.

Schedules for our 'Open Show' on Sat 6th Sep. are now available from Committee Members.

John Bryant 01981 540316

### **Police Update**

#### **Kingstone**

Sometime during April, 70 moulded plastic chairs were stolen from the village Hall in Kingstone.

Overnight from the 7th - 8th of June a burglary occurred at a farm in the Kingstone/Cleghonger area. Offenders damaged a lock on a gate and tools were stolen from an outbuilding.

#### **Llandinabo**

An office was broken into on a farm in Llandinabo overnight on Saturday the 7th June. 5 gallon drums were stolen and subsequently 800 litres of fuel was also stolen.

#### **Much Birch**

A vehicle was stripped of various parts sometime between 18:30 on the 9th June and 12:15 on the 12th June. The Land Rover had a bumper and light

fittings removed. This occurred in a rural field at the side of the a49.

Between 13:00 and 15:00 on the 11th June an outbuilding at a Hotel situated on the side of the a49 was entered and a Mitox brush cutter strimmer and a jerry can containing fuel were taken.

### **Holme Lacy**

Overnight on the 12th/13th June a container was broken into at a College in Holme Lacy. Two hedge trimmers and a leaf blower were stolen.

### **Positive Policing**

Last week two of Herefords finest Officers carried out speed enforcement in the Wormbridge area. 4 speeding tickets were issued and many others were given suitable advice.

PCSO 6993 **Kevin Powell**

Hereford Southside and Rural Safer

Neighbourhood Team

South Wye Police Station

kevin.powell.c6993@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

### **Local news**

We offer a warm welcome to **Mrs. Margaret Hines**, who has recently moved into Firethorne, Much Birch. She lived at Ridge Hill for 16 years but has been participating in the activities of Much Birch Church for a number of years. Her grandchildren went to Much Birch School and her daughter in-law is now Head Teacher of the School. Margaret was a teacher of needlework and now enjoys quilting with the Archenfield Quilters. She is Chairman of the Herefordshire Textile Group.

We are sorry to hear that the Wormelow Stores and Post Office ceased trading on the 30th May, this is a great loss to the local Community and we hope that it will not be too long before it opens again.

Congratulations are extended to **Tania and Oliver Heyes** who have both recently obtained their degrees. Tania studied Philosophy and Religion at Aberdeen University and will graduate in July. Oliver studied Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering at Glasgow University but his graduation will take place later in the year. Well done to both! Proud parents **Lindsay and Hilary** (nee Rowan) of Innisfree will have 2 long trips to Scotland for the graduation ceremonies and we send our best wishes to them all. **Cllr. Elaine and Andy Godding** are very pleased to announce that daughter, **Lucy**, has been awarded a Master of Arts 1st Class Honours

Degree in French, German and Russian with a Distinction in spoken German. So another family will be taking a trip to Scotland, this time to St. Andrews for the Graduation Ceremony. Well done! Lucy, your hard work has been richly rewarded.

**Iris and Selby Lloyd** are also very proud grandparents to announce that **Rebecca** (daughter of Vanessa) has been awarded a 2.1 Degree at Dublin University and has been offered a 'Scholarship' to continue her work as a Nutritionist and Dietician for a Masters degree.

What a talented group of young people have emerged from this area over recent years! **Well Done! to you all. This is really good news.**

We say a big 'Thank You' to **Sid Hitching** for over 20 years of delivering the Newsletter to houses in his area. Coming up to 88 years of age, Sid has been our oldest deliverer and takes a very well deserved rest. His 'round' has kindly been taken over by Mrs. **Margaret Scrivens**.

It is very sad to report the death of **Gordon 'John' Wilden** at the age of 77 years after a long illness bravely borne. John was the eldest of 9 children and the family lived in a small cottage near Mayhill. His mother worked extremely hard to keep the family together and she picked snowdrops, violets and wild daffodils and later in the season, hedgerow fruits, which John had to take to Gloucester market at 6am and be back in time for school. John had a very difficult relationship with his step father and when the family had to leave their cottage, he went to live with an aunt.

When John finished school he found employment in one of the coal pits in the Forest of Dean. Part of his pay was the delivery of one ton of coal each month. This was shared with neighbours who in turn gave eggs, butter or meat when they killed a pig.

He was able to travel to work by motorcycle alternating each week on his own and then on his cousin's motorcycle. One day, they were riding to work on his cousin's machine and met a lorry travelling on the wrong side of the road on a bend. With buildings on either side of the narrow road, there was no way of avoiding a collision and both finished under the lorry. The cousin was killed and virtually all John's limbs were broken and his skull fractured. He was in hospital for 6 months. As neither of them had passed a driving test there was no insurance and hence no compensation.

As soon as he could, John got an HGV licence and spent over 40 years driving buses and heavy

goods vehicles. Joyce and John were married in 1959 at Weston under Penyard Church and in due time, Michael and Christopher were born. They moved into Little Birch Road in 1964 and Heather's arrival completed the family.

John helped for a number of years with the mini Agricultural Shows behind Little Birch Village Hall both setting up and clearing afterwards and also put up and ran a 'tin can shy' stall. The family also supported the scouts and brownies in King's Thorn and took part in the first Pantomimes in LB Village Hall.

John loved his cars and bought an Austin 7 as soon as he could afford it and had many cars over the years but his pride and joy was the Mercedes with a personalised number plate which he had in recent years.

After retiring from lorry driving, John took on a 'driver's truck stop' on the A465 Abergavenny Road below Lock's garage. He was always there by 6am each morning and made many lasting friendships with drivers. He later converted a caravan so that customers could shelter in all winds and weather to enjoy their breakfasts and burgers. John had a very dry sense of humour and when asked by a customer "What are you doing this week end"? As quick as a flash and without a hint of a smile, John replied "I'm taking my granny hang gliding"

When John finally retired he was always busy at home and in a gale one night went out to secure the roof of the conservatory. Sadly, he fell backwards from the ladder landed on his back on the railings and finished unconscious in the garden below breaking his back and damaging his skull. He had to spend many months in hospital at Oswestry and then at home before making a full recovery.

John and Joyce greatly enjoyed visits from the grandchildren and took them for walks in the surrounding fields and woods.

In recent years, John underwent two major operations in Birmingham and was determined to get back to full health. He walked for miles each day and was a familiar sight in his fluorescent jacket. He talked to many local folk who he had not met before and enjoyed conversation with them.

In the last months, John's health deteriorated again but with the dedication of Dr. England and the Much Birch Surgery staff his pain was well controlled. Joyce stayed with him day and night and gave him the best possible care.

His funeral service was held at the Crematorium on 4th. June conducted by Rev. Mark Johnson.

The presence of so many erstwhile customers and friends showed the high regard in which he was held. We send to Joyce, Michael, Chris and Heather and their families our deepest sympathies. John will be greatly missed.

Donations in memory of John were made to Much Birch Surgery.

### **Little Birch Village Hall Committee Community Book Exchange/Lending Library**

The July meeting for the "Book Exchange" will be on **Saturday 12 July** at Little Birch Village Hall.

The August meeting of the 'Book Exchange' will be on **Saturday 9 August** 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 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 12 July and 9 August 2014.

### **Whist Drive**

Our next Whist Drive is on **Tuesday 8 July** at Little Birch Village Hall. We shall start at 7.30.p.m. The entrance fee is £2.00.

The August Whist Drive will be on **Tuesday 12 August** at 7.30pm.

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.

### **John Kinross of Much Birch continues his series on local castles with Brampton Bryan Castle.**

One of the more spectacular castles in the county, Brampton Bryan's ruined castle stands in the front garden of the Georgian home of the Harley family and can be seen over the back wall of the churchyard and on the occasions when the garden is open. It dates from the reign of Henry 1 and may well have been strong enough to defend against



bows and arrows but was not easily defended against artillery. During the Civil War, Sir Robert Harley, a puritan and Cromwell supporter, was in London as a member of Parliament leaving his young wife, Lady Brilliana with three of their seven children to defend the castle. She had a garrison of some 70 men under an experienced soldier, Sergeant Hackluyt, who did his best to keep the attacking Royalists under Colonel Lingen at bay. At first, all went well and the Sergeant's men shot many of the attackers. A poisoned bullet killed the garrison's cook, but after burning the village and church, Lingen withdrew to Gloucester where the siege was turning against the Royalists.

It was alas too late for Lady Brilliana who suffered a bad cold and died, but the siege was resumed in 1644 by a new force under Sir Michael Woodhouse. His guns destroyed the castle walls and Dr. Wright and the Sergeant had to surrender. The prisoners were sent to gaol in Shrewsbury.

The castle has an impressive cellar where the family would have been safe and the gatehouse is nearly intact. The church roof is supposed to have been repaired with the castle banqueting house roof which would also have needed repairing as Lady Brilliana had reported to her son that "the roof was so bayttered that there was not one dry room in it".

Sir Robert Harley drew up a statement of losses amounting to £12,990 after the war and was advised to get the money from the estate of Col. Lingen. His son, Sir Edward, was eventually able to get enough money to build the present house in which there is a picture of Lady Brilliana and some Civil War relics.

### **Young Driver Day**

IAM Herefordshire are running two Young Driver Days for 17-30 year olds this summer, the first on Sunday 20 July in Tarrington and the other at Much Birch Community Hall on **Sunday 17 August**. Here's your opportunity to get sound, common-sense advice and learn advanced driving techniques from the experts.

Hosted by our young drivers, these sessions will give you a chance to find out how good you are on paper, on computer and on the road. You'll learn how to drive more safely and economically, and also how to avoid hazards and prevent accidents.

You can drop in between 10am and 4 pm and it's FREE – but if you would like an assessment drive - remember to bring your current, complete driving licence, insurance document and current MOT (if

your car needs one). And bring your glasses if you need them.

Reserve your place now! Ring 07909 631823 or email [neryspalmer@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:neryspalmer@hotmail.co.uk)

To all mums and dads, this is a great chance to encourage your young driver to become more safe on the road.

IAM Herefordshire is the safe driving charity affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorists whose aim is to develop safer drivers. Our next Advanced Driving course starts 26 August at Much Birch.

Anyone interested and for more information contact Mary Bevan on 01874 712267 or apply online at [marybevan@dsl.pipex.com](mailto:marybevan@dsl.pipex.com)

## **Supporting St Michael's Hospice in the Redevelopment Appeal**

### **Open Gardens**

Herefordshire gardeners have been using their creativity to support St Michael's Hospice by opening their beautiful gardens to the public. This summer we have more people than ever ready to invite you to explore their delightful private grounds. For details: visit [www.st-michaels-hospice.org.uk/opengardens](http://www.st-michaels-hospice.org.uk/opengardens).

### **Redevelopment Appeal**

The St Michael's Hospice Redevelopment Appeal is now within half a million pounds of finishing the new state-of-the-art In-Patient Unit.

To mark the closure of the current In-Patient Unit there will be a special event on 14th July at 5.00pm in the Orchard Room. This unique event will be an opportunity for people to remember all that has happened in St Michael's Hospice over the last 30 years.

Anyone wishing to attend can contact David Vonberg at St Michael's Hospice on 01432 851000.

### **The Wheelie Big Cycle**

Promising to be even bigger and better than last year's inaugural event, the Wheelie Big Cycle wheels its way back into town on **Sunday 20th July 2014**.

Join us with your family, friends or colleagues for a great day of cycling. There are four different routes to choose from 16,32,60 and 93 miles, all taking in different aspects of the beautiful Herefordshire countryside and offering a challenge for novice and serious cyclists alike.

For details: visit

[www.st-michaels-hospice.org.uk/events](http://www.st-michaels-hospice.org.uk/events)

### **The Evergreen Club**

On **Tuesday 10 July** we are going to Cirencester in the morning. After lunch there will be a short drive through the Cotswolds to Misarden Park Gardens.

The cost is £14 inc. garden entrance, tea and cake. (£16 for non-members).

Our August trip is on Tuesday 14 August when we have our seaside trip to Clevedon, stopping at Cribbs Causeway for lunch and a bit of retail therapy.

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

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

The pick-up times are:

Brandon Coach Depot	8.45
The Park, Wormelow	8.55
Tump Lane (bungalows)	9.00
Poor Clares Convent	9.10
Kings Thorn bus shelter	9.15
M. B. Church bus stop	9.20
Axe & Cleaver bus stop	9.25
Peterstow (Broome Farm lay-by)	9.35
Fontaine Court	9.45

### **Wormelow Store and Post Office**

It is sad to see that we have lost the Wormelow Store and Post Office. Independent shops need our support if we are not to lose even more of them. With this in mind, perhaps people might like to support two others of our nearest.

The **St. Weonards Post Office and Store**. The Store is well stocked and is open Monday, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays between 7.a.m. and 6.p.m. and on Wednesdays and Saturdays between 7.a.m. and 1.p.m. Sunday opening time is 8.a.m. to 1.p.m. and Bank Holidays 8.a.m. to 12.00 The Post Office is open Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays between 9.a.m. and 1.p.m.

Telephone 01981-580201

We have the **Pengethley Farm Shop** which is also well stocked.

Opening hours there are: Monday to Saturday 8.30a.m. to 5.30p.m. in the Summer, Monday Saturday 8.30a.m. to 5.p.m. in the Winter, and on Sundays 10.30a.m. to 4.30p.m.

Telephone 01989 - 730430

### **Rhayader and District Male Voice Choir.**

The audience thoroughly enjoyed once again the Concert given by the Rhayader and District Male Voice Choir on Saturday 31st May 2014 in much

Birch Church. They were accompanied by the superb soloist Jayne Swann who delighted the audience with her varied programme. The Choir again were fantastic and very professional and a joy to listen to. They led a very relaxed sing-a-long in the Community Hall during the serving of refreshments which added to the enjoyment of the evening. We are very grateful to them and Jayne for supporting us in our fundraising event at which we raised £800. Our grateful thanks also go to the fundraising committee, who not only worked hard to arrange the event but also donated the refreshments and draw prizes. All in all, a very pleasurable, happy and successful evening.

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

The June 2014 draw took place on 8th June 2014 Much Birch Community Hall. The results were as follows:

1st prize – No. 44 Mrs. P. Powell  
Lower Bullingham

2nd prize – No. 84 Mrs. I. Hemmings  
Much Birch

The next draw will take place on 13th July 2014 at 11am in Much Birch Community Hall.

### **Much Birch WI**

Much Birch WI holds meetings on the third Tuesday of each month, at 7.30pm in Much Birch Community Hall. The **July meeting is on 15th**, when the speaker will be Nadine Carr and the subject 'Votes for Women'. August 19th sees Rosemary Prosser speaking on a different subject from the one previously listed, 'One Egg or Two – experiences of running a B & B, among other things!' On September 16th the speaker, Marie Clarke, will be telling us about 'Safeguarding the Herefordshire Landscape for Future Generations – The Work of the Nature Trust'

At the May meeting we discussed the current resolution regarding organ donations. This was after having a brilliant resume of the current laws by our President

Gillian Clouder who has had first hand experience of organ donation and is a prime example of how well it all works! Following our discussions Mr Vincent Childerley who is an Acupuncturist ( as well as a paramedic) gave us an insight into this ancient procedure. Very interesting and informative speaker. Another good evening.

**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 **July market is on 25th and the August on the 22nd.** 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** award winning chutney and preserves.

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

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

### Message Received after the June Newsletter

*I wanted to write to thank you for your Newsletter. A charming gentleman gave it to us when we stopped outside his house to ask for information. The gentleman was very helpful and then went into his house and came back with a copy of the Newsletter, which he gave to us. On our drive back to North Wales, I read the Newsletter out loud to my partner, as he drove. I read everything. We both really enjoyed it, and gained an insight into your village life, which sounds very friendly and caring; The piece about Cliff Farmer was both interesting and touching; very well written. Thanks. Danny and Pam. Xx*

### Church Services in July and August

- July 6th.** 11am L.Birch CW Communion  
**13th** 9.15am M.Birch Family Communion  
11am L.Birch Morning Worship  
**20th.** 9.15 M.Birch Matins  
6.30pm Bridge Service for the Benefice on the Sellack side of river  
**27th.** 9.15am M.Birch CW Communion  
11am L.Birch Family Worship

- Aug. 3rd.** 11am LBirch BCP Communion  
**10th** 9.15am M.Birch family Communion  
11am L.Birch Morning Worship  
**17th** 10.30am Benefice Service at Llandinabo  
**24th.** 9.15am M.Birch Matins  
3pm L.Birch Blessing of Animals Service  
**31st.** 9am M.Birch Said Communion Service  
11am Fawley Chapel BCP Communion

And finally, some quiz questions and rational answers submitted by a reader.

Q1. In which battle did Napoleon die?  
HIS LAST BATTLE

Q2. Where was the Declaration of Independence signed?  
AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE

Q3. River Ravi flows in which state?  
LIQUID

Q4. What is the main reason for divorce?  
MARRIAGE

Q5. What is the main reason for failure?  
EXAMS