



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

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

Little Birch & King's Thorn  
History Group

**Films of Local Interest**  
**Produced for the Borderlines**  
**Film Festival to be shown**

## 1. Wartime Secrets

(32 minutes)

*A fascinating documentary using  
newly found archive film of  
Hereford's secret wartime factory*

## 2. Chewing the Cud

(70 minutes)

*Memories from Hereford's Old Livestock  
Market. "A triumph. Warm, funny, with  
wonderful characters and an important  
part of Hereford history."*

**Little Birch Village Hall**

**Thursday October 9th at 7.30**

**Entry £5 to include ploughmans supper**

### Donations

Thanks to all readers who have made donations recently to help with the costs of this newsletter,

### LOST

Prescription sunglasses, brown tinted on 7th September, while blackberrying and dog walking on Aconbury Hillfort.

If found please contact: Jennifer French  
Tel. 01432 870549 Mob. 07539 262569

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

## Diary Dates

### September

24th Gardening Club LBVH

27th Pub Evening LBVH

### October

2nd Much Birch Parish Council MBCH

9th History Group Film Evening LBVH

11th Book Exchange LBVH

14th Whist Drive LBVH

14th Evergreen Club Outing

17th Hereford Revealed MBCH

21st Womens Institute MBCH

24th Village market MBCH

29th Gardening Club LBVH

### November

6th Much Birch Parish Council MBCH

12th Little Birch Parish Council LBVH

15th Harvest Supper Evening LBVH

### December

31st New Years Eve Party LBVH

## The City of Hereford Revealed



### An Illustrated Talk by Penny Platts

MUCH BIRCH COMMUNITY HALL

Friday 17 October 2014

7pm for 7.30pm

Tickets £9 to include finger buffet

Bar

Raffle



Proceeds to be shared between  
Much Birch Church and  
Marie Curie Cancer Care (Charity Reg No 207994)



Tickets and further information from:  
Coline Grover 01981 541130  
Sylvia Jones 01981 540980

### Local Buses

Bus services in the area were changed on September 1st. Full details can be found on the Herefordshire Council website.

Two new services that will be of interest to local people were introduced. Timetables are attached to this newsletter and also displayed on village noticeboards

#### Service 444

Includes Little Birch, Wormelow and Much Dewchurch and operates on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. It is scheduled to connect with Hereford-Ross service 33 at King's Thorn bus shelter.

#### Service 44

This route operates four times a day Ross-Hoarwithy-Little Dewchurch-King's Thorn bus shelter. It includes Caldicot crossroads, goes past Little Birch Village Hall and is scheduled to connect with Hereford-Ross service 33 at King's Thorn bus shelter.

### Annual Horticultural Show

The King's Thorn & Little Birch Gardening Club Annual Horticultural Show was held on Saturday 6th September 2014 at Little Birch Village Hall was, as usual, well attended by exhibitors and visitors alike. There were 11 more entrants providing 25 more entries than last year. The Domestic Class was very well supported and Helen Williams was the winner of the Domestic Cup.

The Flower Classes were a very colourful collection, the cup for which is the Rose Bowl. This was won by **Derek Scrivens**, who also won the Horticultural Shield and the David Enoch Cup awarded for the Best in Show exhibit - which was a Watermelon!

Granddaughters **Poppy and Sophie** joined Derek to win the Llewellyn Sutton Cup as the family with the largest combined score.

**Selby Lloyd** won the Harold Salisbury Shield for his fine collection of Vegetables and his wife Iris shared the Floral Art Shield with **Gillian Clouder**. The Children's Section is always a delight and the Vegetable Monsters were great fun. Many of these, along with some Garden's on a Plate were made the previous afternoon at our Children's Workshop. **Jai Watlington** won the cup for Children aged under 8 years and **Poppy Burton** won the over 8 years cup and the Children's Shield.

Last but not least, well, the cup is rather small, but none the less prestigious, and this is the Photograph Cup. The winner is chosen by the visitors and, as last year, was **Mike Johnson** with a lovely colourful photo of flowers.

This annual extravaganza is all thanks to the dedicated band of Garden Club Volunteers who work extremely hard, and to all the visitors who come to support us.

A great time was had by all and we will do it all again (given enough volunteers!) next year! See you all there.

Gillian Clouder Show Secretary

### Little Birch Village Hall Committee

#### Annual Dog Show

It was delightful to see such a large number of young people, as well as the usual contestants at the dog show on 14th September. A good variety of different breeds made for an interesting afternoon. The weather was good being warm and dry. Thanks to Kate and John Dillon for the use of a sheltered field and providing straw bales for spectators to sit on. Thanks also for the friends who helped with the organisation. We look forward to seeing everyone again next year.

#### News Year's Eve Celebration and Party At Little Birch Village Hall

Full details will be in the November newsletter. Last year the event was over-subscribed so early booking is recommended for this popular and enjoyable community event. Tickets will be available from 11th October. One of the attendees from 2013 has already asked for 30.

#### Community Book Exchange/Lending Library

The October meeting for the "Book Exchange" will be on Saturday 11th October 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 11 October. Tickets for the New Years Eve party will be on sale price £7.50 each.

### Whist Drive

Our next Whist Drive is on Tuesday 14 October 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.

### Local news

Welcome to **Cassie and David Enoch** who are renovating the Old Cottage Little Birch where her Grandparents used to live. Cassie is the daughter of John and Toni Jones Sunnybank Cottage Little Birch and went to Much Birch Primary then to Saint Mary's Lugwardine. They have moved from Worcester and are living next door with Toni and John whilst the building work is carried out. Now she's back in the village she will get to see more of Sarah and John during their frequent visits. Cassie works at Sanctuary as a Data Analyst and Dave is a qualified electrician currently working for a security and alarm company.

Cassie's sister Sarah is a well established session drummer playing for many top bands, producers and studios all over the world only recently back from LA. She has made a number of television appearances including "Later with Jools Holland, Mercury Awards and the Dave Letterman show in the states.

Her brother John is currently touring the USA playing guitar for Bring Me the Horizon and besides touring the world the band are headlining Wembley in December this year.

Congratulations are extended to **Vivienne Rouse** of King's Thorn as she cycled in a group of fundraisers from London to Paris, almost 300 miles. A family photograph with husband, Harry, and children, Matthew and Mollie appeared in the Hereford Times at the end of August and were obviously very proud of Vivienne's achievement.

Congratulations also go to **Sarah Nichol**, erstwhile of King's Thorn, who joined the BBC in London two and a half years ago and has since had 2 promotions the latest being announced on 18th. Sep. when she was promoted to Business Analyst.

Well done Sarah!

Further Congratulations go to **Keith Williams** of Kings Cagle who won the Ferguson Class at the Llanwarne Ploughing Match held on Sep.13th and to **Huw Enoch** who was runner up. The following day, Keith won the European Championship near Cardiff Airport while Huw won the Ferguson Class at the Vintage Club meeting at Massington near Ledbury, against some very experienced ploughmen. Well done to both!

**Beryl Townsend** of King's Thorn suffered a broken hip following a fall at home on Sat. 6th. Sep. after the Open Gardening Show and we don't know what was put into the cups of tea on the day. Currently, she is in Ross Community Hospital and we send our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

It is sad to report the death of Olivet Lewis at the age of 85 years in Brockhampton Nursing Home where she received excellent care during the last 18 months. She was born in March 1929 when the 'great depression' was at its worst and times were hard, at Tooting, South London. Her father and mother ran a family shop and Olivet helped them in the business when she left school. She also had a brother, Peter.

Olivet met husband to be, Derek, in the early 1950's, they married in Sep. 1952 and had over 50 years together before Derek's death in 2003. They thoroughly enjoyed playing tennis and often played 'doubles' together. Derek worked for the White Star Line and later P&O on cruise ships. He travelled the world and sometimes there was space for Olivet to travel with him. She got to meet some of the famous people of the time who were then taking cruises. Indeed, she must have been one of the world's best secret travellers but she never boasted where she had been or who she had met.

Derek and Olivet had one son, David, who was a great delight to them and when David moved to South Wales and they had retired, they moved to King's Thorn in a bungalow in Wrigglebrook.

They joined the Gardening Club and distributed Meals on Wheels throughout adjoining parishes for about 7 years until Derek's health deteriorated and they had to give up. Derek had also been Hon. Treasurer of Little Birch Hall Management Committee for some 5 years when Joan Ingram was Chairperson. Derek's death in 2003 was devastating for Olivet but she bravely battled on and with great stoicism even drove to Oxford and other venues to meet up with relations and



Derek's brother 'Jim' and his wife, Inga.

She joined the WI, Evergreen Club, Pop in Club and the Village Monthly Market at Much Birch hall. She attended both Little Birch Church and the Methodist Chapel with her friends, Edith Davies and Christine and Peter Dowsett. She was also well supported by her neighbours and friends for many years.

Olivet's life was not without other tragedies, as David and his first wife had a baby, Ellinor, who sadly died of 'sudden infant death syndrome' at the age of 8 months. Olivet said that was one of the saddest days of her life. Several years later, David met Anne and both were extremely keen cyclists. Olivet was able to attend their wedding and all was going well until David was diagnosed with cancer and despite the best treatment and care in Swansea, he too died just over a year ago. Nephew, Roger, with his specially adapted people carrier for his tetraplegic son, was able to transport Olivet to the hospice to visit David and later to David's funeral.

At the time, Olivet had been in Brockhampton Nursing Home for about 5 months and her 'quality of life' was not great as she could not stand and had to be hoisted in and out of bed in to her chair. The staff there could not have been more caring, patient and pleasant. She moved to a much more pleasant room with good views and bird feeders attached to and just outside the window. She became much more settled but earlier this year, she suffered several 'mini strokes' which affected her speech making conversation quite difficult at times.

She was a very private person but loved to have visitors who were greeted with an enigmatic smile and Leona and Roger, niece and nephew, gradually got to know Olivet better over the last few years in a way that they hadn't had chance to many years ago. She never complained about her illness and we shall miss her steadfastness in the face of all that life threw at her. She will be greatly missed. We send to the nieces and nephew and Brother in law, Jim and Inga and daughter in law, Anne, our deepest sympathies.

It was a shock to many in the community to hear of the passing of **Jean Mason** of King's Thorn at the age of 88 years. She was well known to many parents with children at Much Birch School in the 1970's and later saw those children grow up and have children of their own who came to the school and benefited from Jean's care during the lunch

time breaks. Her funeral takes place on Thursday, 3rd. October at Much Birch Church where she was a regular attender. A fuller tribute will be given in the next Newsletter.

### **Much Birch WI**

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

On October 21st **Bronwen Owens** will take us for a 'romp through the history and techniques of knitting, spinning and all things wool' with her talk 'Fibretastic'.

November is the AGM and in December we hold the Member's Christmas Celebrations.

Visitors and potential new members are welcome.

Our speaker for August was **Rosemary Prosser** with her talk entitled "One Lump or Two", referring to the part of her life where she did B&B and Self Catering accommodation as part diversification of being a farmer's wife. She was excellent, entertaining, funny & everyone could hear every word. Highly Recommended.

### **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 October market takes place on 24th. 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, Mr. G's** award winning chutney and preserves and a vegetable stall.

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.)

### **The Evergreen Club**

Our final trip for this year will be on Tuesday, 14 October. We will be going to Packwood House, a National Trust Property. Lunch and tea can be found in their newly-opened restaurant.

The cost will be £18 for members (£20 for visitors)

less £8.20 for National Trust 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

Kings Thorn bus shelter	9.05
Much Birch Church bus stop	9.10
Axe & Cleaver bus stop	9.15
Peterstow (Broome Farm lay-by)	9.25
Fontaine Court	9.35

### **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 4th September at the Much Birch Community Hall. The Parish Council met the new Locality Steward for the area, Dave Atkinson from Balfour Beatty, and he explained how Balfour Beatty would be working with the Parish Council, and the community, to help to improve matters regarding the condition of the roads, drains and other related issues. All items for consideration, such as pot holes etc. should be referred through the Parish Council, in the first instance, or they can be registered on the Herefordshire Council Website.

There was a reminder about an “Oil Club” which is seeking to obtain bulk purchase discounts for those purchasing fuel oil for heating. The Oil Club may be contacted at [www.oil-club.co.uk](http://www.oil-club.co.uk) and is internet based, so internet access will be required to join. You may e mail any enquiries to [sally.alldis@oil-club.co.uk](mailto:sally.alldis@oil-club.co.uk)

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Thursday 2nd October 2014 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 [thecooks@wyenet.co.uk](mailto:thecooks@wyenet.co.uk) Tel. 01981 540703

**Cllr Steve Turner** (Vice Chair) The Underhills,

Hollybush Lane, Much Birch, Hereford, HR2 8HX, e mail [turnersofcrossways@btinternet.com](mailto:turnersofcrossways@btinternet.com) and Tel. 01981 540090

**Cllr Andrew Crum** Anfield House, Barrack Hill, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AX, e mail [a.crum@btinternet.com](mailto:a.crum@btinternet.com) Tel. 01981 540002

**Cllr Jon Norris** Whitewells, Laskett Lane, Much Birch, Hereford, HR2 8HZ, 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** The Wriggle, Wrigglebrook, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AW e mail [tjsj@me.com](mailto:tjsj@me.com) Tel. 01981 540242

Full minutes of the meetings and information etc. can be found on the Parish Council website following the link found in this summary. [www.muchbirchparish.org.uk](http://www.muchbirchparish.org.uk)

### **Pew Cushions in Much Birch Church**

Last month unfortunately the compression of a wrong computer button meant that the wrong article (which had been published recently) was sent to the Editor. This month I hope to rectify the situation by pressing the right button resulting in an article of very grateful thanks to everyone. See below:

During the last few weeks cardinal red covered foam pew cushions have been installed on all the pews in Much Birch Church and at last we have been able to dispose of the old bits of carpet runners that have lined the pews for many years. Not only do the cushions look so much nicer but they also provide far more comfortable seating. The PCC is so very grateful to all of those people in the community who so kindly donated towards the overall cost of the new cushions and we hope that they will be much appreciated for some time to come. Thank you all so much for your generosity.

Sylvia Jones

### **King's Thorn and Little Birch Gardening Club**

On Sep. 24th., the subject will be 'The Geology and Landscape of South Herefordshire'.

On Oct. 29th. Will Scott will discuss 'Walled Kitchen Gardens' and on Nov. 28th. Alan Clarke will give an illustrated talk on 'The Isles of Scilly'.

All meetings take place at Little Birch Village Hall at 7.30pm.

New members are most welcome.

John Bryant 01981 540316

### **John Kinross of Much Birch continues his series on local castles:-**

#### **Huntington Castle, near Kington**

This was a large Norman Castle, mostly included in Wales until 1535 when Henry VIII made sure that it was placed on the English side of the border. In King Henry III's time, it belonged to William de Braose, Lord of Brecknock. On his death, his wife held it until 1248 when her daughter married Humphrey de Bohun, son of the earl of Hereford. Humphrey sided with Simon de Montfort in spite of his father fighting for the King. Prince Edward, with help from the 2 sons of the earl of Leicester, captured Huntington with Hay and Brecon. De Bohun was captured at Evesham where Simon was killed and sent to Beeston Castle, Cheshire as a prisoner. Here he died but his family continued to hold Huntington and Humphrey, third Earl, married Edward 1st's daughter, Elizabeth Plantagenet. Humphrey died at the battle of Boroughbridge (1322) where the Barons tried to put down the de Spencers, favourites of Edward II

The castle now passed to the sixth Earl and when he died, his younger daughter married the Earl of Derby who became King Henry IV. The King passed it to the Earl of Buckingham who, in 1403, died fighting for the King at Shrewsbury. His widow, the Countess (the castle had a Countess Tower) asked one Captain Smart, her Constable, to fortify the castle. It was re-roofed with shingles and Smart got in a quantity of arrows. The great gate was re-hung and today the two bits of stonework that remain on the curtain wall, one a lump of wall and the other a chamber with a stair going up and one down to a dungeon, are all that is left of the Countess's works.

The second Duke (chased by Richard III took refuge here without luck as he was caught and put to death) had it valued and it was worth nothing at all. In the 16th. century, one tower was still a prison and there was a Constable but it was all too ruinous to take part in the Civil War.

Ownership passed to Caves, Garnons, Townsends and Holmans and in 1818, it was the property of Edmund Cheese, Today it belongs to a local farmer who has cleared

the undergrowth. Those wanting to see what is left should park at the village hall and take a short walk into the site where there is still much work to be done.

### **And Finally**

Several readers have submitted suggestions for this last newsletter item that will be kept for possible future use. This is one of the best ones.

#### **Frank**

A man walks out into the street and catches a taxi which just happens to be going by. He gets into the taxi and the cabbie says, "Perfect timing. You are just like Frank"

**Passenger:** "Who?"

**Cabbie:** "Frank Feldman. He's a guy who did everything right all the time. Like coming along when you needed a cab, things happened like that to Frank Feldman every time."

**Passenger:** Nah! There are always a few clouds over anybody."

**Cabbie:** "Not Frank Feldman. He was a terrific athlete, He could have won the Grand Slam at tennis. He could play a round of golf with the pros. He sang like an opera baritone and danced like a Broadway star... and you should have heard him play the piano! He was an amazing guy."

**Passenger:** "Sounds like somebody really special then."

**Cabbie:** "Oh hell..... and there's more. He had a memory like a computer. He remembered everybody's birthday. He knew all about wine, which foods to order and which knife and fork to eat with....he could fix anything; not like me-I change a fuse or a light bulb and the whole street blacks out. But Frank Feldman, he could do anything and everything right"

**Passenger:** "Wow, he was some guy then."

**Cabbie:** "He always knew the quickest way to go in traffic and avoid traffic jams. Not like me, I always seem to get stuck in them. But Frank, he never made mistakes and he really knew how to treat a woman too and make her feel good. He would never argue back, even if he she was in the wrong and his clothing was always immaculate; his shoes highly polished too. He was the perfect man! I never knew him to make a mistake! No one could ever measure up to Frank Feldman."

**Passenger:** "An amazing fellow. How did you meet him?"

**Cabbie:** "Well....I never actually met Frank. He died and I married his b....y wife!"