



Newsletter for King's Thorn, The Birches & Aconbury

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

Little Birch Village Hall

Traditional

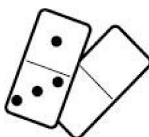
Pub Evening

Saturday 27th September 2014

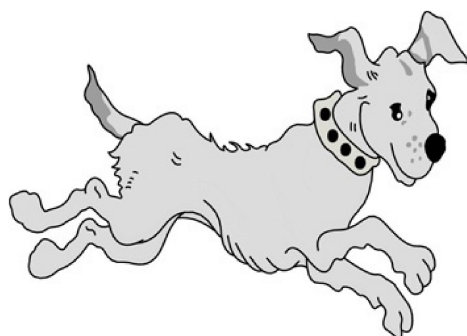
7.30 to midnight



**Real Ale
Hot Dogs**



**Pub games
Competitions
Darts, Cribbage,
Dominoes, Quoits etc.
Free Entrance**



Little Birch Village Hall
Barrack Hill, Little Birch,
Hereford HR2 8AZ

Companion Dog Show

(Held under Kennel Club rules)

Sunday September 14th. 2014

Venue:

Field behind Village Hall

(Entrance opposite Castle Nibole farm)

In Village Hall if wet

Entries from 1p.m. Judging from 2p.m.

Enquiries-call Robyn Hodges 01981 540264

Refreshments available

Diary Dates

September

- 2nd Bowling Club LDVH
- 3rd Little Birch PC LBVH
- 4th Much Birch PC MBCH
- 6th Horticultural Show LBVH
- 9th Evergreen Club Trip
- 9th Whist LBVH
- 12th Older Driver Day Ross-on-Wye
- 13th Book Exchange LBVH
- 14th Harvest festival MB Church
- 14th Dog Show Castle Nibole
- 16th Womens Institute MBCH
- 19th Pantomime meeting LBVH
- 24th Gardening Club LBVH
- 27th Pub Evening LBVH

October

- 17th Hereford Revealed MBCH
- 21st Womens Institute MBCH
- 29th Gardening Club LBVH

BM KAYE TAXI

**Local Taxi available no job
too large or too small !!**

Contact Brian Kaye on

**01981 540734 OR
07968147415**

DAYS ONLY

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



Little Birch

Village Hall

Pantomime 2015

Peter Pan

(Director and Producer Jane Bolam)

First Meeting

Friday September 19th

Young People 6.30-7.30

Adults 7.30 onwards

(Jane hopes to welcome many new young people. It is a good opportunity for them to meet and work with experienced talented performers, gain confidence and above all have fun. For more information call Jane on 07541 347931)

Church Services in September

Sep7th 11am L. Birch Holy Communion

Sep14th. 11am M.Birch Harvest and Lunch

11am L.Birch Morning Worship

**Sep 21st. 10.30am Wormelow Hundred
Benefice Service at Little Birch.**

**Sep.28th. 9.15am M.Birch Matins
11am L.Birch Family Worship
Little Birch Summer Show**

1.The view from the front!

As one of the few privileged to see the whole show from "the front" on four or five occasions, I just have to report on the event to those who didn't make it – you missed out - big time!

Under the inspired direction of **Jenny Baldwin** this was designed to be a "romp" and a romp it certainly was! Hosted in Act 1 by **Geoff Nichol** and in Act 2 by **Iris Lloyd**, we were taken through drama, dance, songs and poems with a common theme (the theme was sometimes a little difficult to quantify although I am assured it was there!) – but who cares! The "mis-interpreted" cucumber

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

sketch, the (frankly stunning) melodrama with beautifully overplayed Edwardian characters, hilarious and well executed dance routes of Morris Men and "The Follies Bergere", mad Scottish drunk reading "Rabbie Burns" (with translations), brilliant acting in the "Green Eye of the Little Yellow God", "The Deckchair Sketch", Marlene Dietrich..... I could go on. But if you were there - you know. And if you were not -you should have been!

It all worked wonderfully and the evening just kept rocketing along.

I am not going to give a long list of all those who starred, assisted, catered, backed up or otherwise made this another triumph for Little Birch. Suffice to say, it was a wonderful show and, even after seeing it for the third time, I was laughing so much I nearly forgot my lighting cues. That is the mark of a brilliant production for a jaded old lighting operator!

So be sure to come to the production next summer – we have another real treat in store for you!

Liz Hall

2. The View from the back

The Summer Variety Show at Little Birch Village Hall was an absolute delight, it had me laughing from start to finish. The sketches were very different from anything that the drama group has

Lastly I would like to say that I hope the intrepid gardener who spoke to the French “Madame” in error has now found Reg Moule and learned how to straighten his cucumber in time for the horticultural show!

DVDs containing a 2hour 16 minute video and more than 200 photographs taken during the performances are now available. They are free

We are sad to report the death of Mrs. **Edna Brown** of Little Birch Road who died in June at the age of 93 years. She lived very quietly since the death of her husband, Thomas, some 15 years ago. Her neighbour, Mrs. Joyce Wilden , was a great help to her over many years. She was very proud of her Welsh heritage which was reflected in the singing of the Welsh National Anthem on entry and exit from the Crematorium. Donations in memory of Edna were for the Hillside Animal

FLICKS IN THE STICKS
at Much Birch Community Hall
NEW SEASON

Tuesday 23rd September 7.30pm –
SAVING MR BANKS PG
 A likable drama centred on the development of the 1964 Walt Disney Studios film *Mary Poppins*, starring *Emma Thompson* as author P. L. Travers and *Tom Hanks* as filmmaker Walt Disney. Named after the father in Travers' story, the film depicts the author's fortnight-long visit to 1961 Los Angeles as she is pursued by Disney, in his attempts to obtain the screen rights to her novels. Together they set *Mary Poppins* free to make one of the most endearing films in cinematic history.

Tuesday 14th October 7.30pm –
UNDERTAKING BETTY 15

Saturday 18th October 2.30pm –
HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON 2 PG

Thursday 13th November 7.30pm –
THE RAILWAY MAN 15

Tuesday 9th December 7.30pm - BELLE 12A

*Refreshments including hot dogs available from 7pm
 (2pm for Matinee screening)*

Tickets £4 (£3 under 16s)

*Tickets available in advance or on the door –
 for further info or to book tickets
 please call Bryony Connolly 01981 580298*

**For further information about films and
 screenings visit www.artsalive.co.uk**

Sanctuary, Norfolk. We send our deepest sympathies to son, Richard (Anthony), daughter in law, Celia, and grandchildren, Michael, Cerian and Rhian and their families.

Little Birch Church PCC would like to say a very big 'Thank you' to all who helped in any way with the Fete in July and to those who kindly attended. The resulting profit of £1500 was excellent. Special thanks go to Chris Atkinson and 'his team' for their hard work and for allowing us to use this very attractive and peaceful venue.

John Kinross continues his series on castles of Herefordshire with 'Hereford Castle.'

The 16th century writer, Leland, described Hereford Castle as 'One of the fairest, largest and strongest castles in England'. Today, all we have is Castle Green with a house nearby that may have been the Governor's, part of a moat to the north and possibly the watergate. Sometimes in a dry summer, outlines of walls can be seen and Walter Pilley, a 19th century antiquarian, saw 2 or 3 skeletons and a 'pitcher jug' when a sewer was being made. The walls of the town date from AD900 and it is a pity that they have not been continually repaired like those in Exeter. Originally, a monastery occupied the green but in 1046 ,Ralph, Earl of Hereford, built the castle, a motte and tower which by the 17th. century is shown on Speede's map as having a tower on the motte wall underneath and a large bailey with walls and two gates. The Welsh captured it in 1055 and it had to be rebuilt by William FitzOsbern, who put the market outside the city defences where it remained until this year when it was replaced by Debenhams and surrounding shops. The castle passed to the crown and Henry 1 left it to his daughter, Matilda, but during the Stephen - Matilda war, it changed hands until it was taken over by the Sheriff with the King as owner. In the 13th. century, the castle featured in the Baron's war and young Prince Edward, captured at Lewes, was brought here. He was a keen horseman and when allowed to exercise his horse on Widemarsh Common, changed it for a fresh horse and galloped off to Wigmore where he joined up with the Mortimers. During the Civil War, the castle was held by Royalists. Waller briefly captured it for Parliament but Barnabas Scudamore took over and fortified it for the King. In Sep. 1645, the Scots who were attacking it were driven off and the King briefly stayed in the Royal apartments. Col. Birch

however was strong enough to retake it and re-fortify it with a garrison that remained until Harley took over and left it to 'public use'. When the new dining hall for the Vicars Choral was built, the castle stone was used and so we have the present situation where there is no sign of any castle buildings other than the possible commander's house.

Pew Cushions for Much Birch Church

Huge thanks to those people who have donated towards the Church Pew Cushions we want to purchase to make Much Birch Church more comfortable than the carpet strips lining the pews at present and to make the Church look warmer and inviting.

Our target is £2372.76 and so far £1271.16 has been raised which will purchase 10 pew cushions. We would be so grateful to receive any further donations to cover the cost of the remaining 9 cushions. If you feel that you can donate please send contributions to **Sylvia Jones** at Chelston Grange, Much Birch, HR2 8HR. Thank you.

WAR MEMORIAL CLOCK IN MUCH BIRCH CHURCH DEDICATED TO THOSE WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN THE WAR OF 1914 TO 1918

In this year of the 100th anniversary of the commencement of World War 1, it seems appropriate to recount the history of the War Memorial Clock in Much Birch Church, which commemorates those of the local community who were lost in the conflict, and which has been part of the village life since its installation in 1920. Research of the records held in the church show the steps taken towards the installation.

The clock was built by T.M. Hartley (thought to be of the Hartley's Jam family) and the first historical fact was documented as a letter to him from a Rev. Groves of Much Birch Parish on 5th August 1919, requesting the costing of manufacturing and erecting a War Memorial Commemorative Clock in the tower of Much Birch Church. His quote for a 4-foot diameter clock which would strike on the hour was £84. 'The clock would have gravity escapement and a compensated pendulum which would maintain the power of the clock.' This quote did not include the work to be carried out by masons and carpenters. After T.M. Hartley inspected the tower, he then quoted an additional figure of £5 to £7 to cover scaffolding for 2 days' work and which would also include the making of a

plain timber case for the clock movement. On file were also additional quotes from Oswin & Co of Hereford and J.G. Wall & Son of Ross-on-Wye. As part of the decision making on who should be awarded the contract for the work, correspondence took place between the Vicars of Bassenthwaite, Cumberland and Much Birch, regarding the condition of a similar clock installed in Bassenthwaite Church by Mr. Hartley, who resided in Cumberland at that time. The recommendation was "to the best of my knowledge the clock is quite a satisfactory timekeeper" since it was installed 15 years previously.

The decision was taken locally to commission Mr. Hartley and work commenced,. However, about that time Rev. Groves still followed up by seeking information on Mr. Hartley's work and reputation from a Rev Harold Chaffer of St. Phillips, Dorridge, Birmingham. Rev Chaffer replied that Mr. Hartley had moved from Cumberland to Birmingham to undertake engineering work as a skilled mechanic related to war work. He had no clock reputation but his work generally 'was well defined and carefully executed' and he found him conscientious and painstaking in everything he had undertaken. The records show that local subscribers had by then contributed £110.11.6d. With interest, this amounted to £114.2.8d., which covered the final total cost.

In October 1919, it appears that work was delayed because of an iron moulders' strike, which subsequently continued for some time, but eventually work commenced on the installation in October 1920 although Mr. Hartley was at that time busy on work in other parts of the country. A local builder by the name of V.P. Court did the preliminary work by erecting scaffolding at a cost of £5.17.5d and the carpenter's work amounted to £2.16.9d; the clock itself cost £76.00

From correspondence on file is apparent that other renovations took place in the church at the same time, which culminated in a 'Re-Opening of the Church' Service on Sunday, 14th November 1920 after refurbishment, when the clock was dedicated together with the memorial tablet which is situated inside the church, by the Bishop of Hereford. The clock then struck every hour and needed to be wound twice a week. There were initially some teething problems with the function of the clock, partly due to dust caused by work in the church, but the last letter on file was from Mr. Hartley who had looked at the timekeeping of the

clock and was surprised to be told that the local time is usually somewhat different to that in Hereford!

Following mechanical problems in 2004, the clock was refurbished in its entirety by the Cumbria Clock Company, which carries out clock maintenance throughout the UK. The company removed the entire clock, including the clock face and mechanism, to Cumbria enlisting the help of a rock climbers and abseilers to lower and later reinstall the clock face. After this, a yearly maintenance contract was instigated, the cost of which is met by Much Birch Parish Council, who, as with other councils, hold financial responsibility for upkeep of war memorials.

When the clock stopped in January 2005, it was discovered that the independent automatic winding mechanism, designed, constructed and installed by two local engineers Robin Allum and Ron Blewitt in October 1989, had failed. It was revealed that the mechanism was made up of parts of a washing machine and the gears from a Raleigh bicycle, which was driven by an electric motor and switched on automatically by a float switch. It was established that the motor had burnt out and this was subsequently repaired locally and remains in good working order today.

The clock is of benefit to the whole community and it is of exceptional quality and considerable merit. People expressed concern when it was not in good working order and therefore supported the work done. With care and good regular maintenance, the clock will remain an appropriate acknowledgement of those that were lost for many years to come.

John and Sylvia Jones

MUCH BIRCH HARVEST FESTIVAL

Will take place in Much Birch Church on Sunday 14th September 2014 at 11am. This will be followed by a 'Bring and Share' lunch in the Community Hall. A very warm welcome to join us for the service and to the lunch is extended to everyone.

Much Birch Community Hall 100 Club

The following draws took place in Much Birch Community Hall at 11am, and the results were as follows.

13th July 2014

1st prize – No. 20, **D. & E. Jones**, Much Birch
2nd prize – No. 101, Mrs. **K. Dawson**, King's

Thorn

10th August 2014

1st prize - No 91, Ms **Rita Wilson**, Much Birch

2nd prize – No 93, Mrs. **P. Egerton**, Much Birch

The next draw will take place on 14th September

2014 at 12.15pm in Much Birch Community Hall.

Gardening Club News

The Annual Open Show takes place on Sat 6th September in Little Birch Village Hall. Everyone is invited to exhibit and schedules can be obtained from Much Birch Surgery, Pengethley Garden Centre, Axe & Cleaver, any G. Club Committee members or phone John Bryant 01981 540316.

A CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP WILL TAKE PLACE ON FRIDAY 5th September at 4.30pm. in Little Birch Village Hall. All children are welcome to make Vegetable Monsters or Gardens on a Plate.

Wednesday September 24th - A Talk on the Geology and Landscape in South Herefordshire. How do the rocks influence the way we live and the plants we grow?

Wednesday October 29th - Mr Will Scott will talk on Walled Kitchen Gardens.

Our meetings are held on the last Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm in Little Birch Village Hall. New members are always welcome.

John Bryant.

Little Birch Village Hall Committee

Community Book Exchange/Lending Library

The September meeting for the "Book Exchange" will be on Saturday 13 September 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 13 September.

Whist Drive

Our next Whist Drive is on Tuesday 9 September 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.

DEWCHURCH WARRIORS SHORT MAT BOWLING CLUB

The new season starts on Tuesday 2nd September meeting at Little Dewchurch Village Hall at 6.45 p.m.

There is a full programme of matches in the County League when we hope to improve on last season when we finished third out of ten teams with 12 wins from 18 matches missing promotion to Division 1 by one point. New members will be very welcome to join us - you don't have to be an expert, just come along and enjoy an evening of bowling.

Older Driver Day

Institute of Advanced Motorists - Herefordshire are holding their final Older Driver Day for 2014 on Friday 12 September in Ross-on-Wye, aimed at restoring older drivers' confidence.

Ageing can cause changes in ability to enjoy driving, such as difficulty negotiating roundabouts, junctions and manoeuvring.

Tina Lawrence, a driver training expert, will lead the day, covering a wide range of topics – such as hazard awareness, speed, observation and how to stay safe on the road. Tina said "Older drivers need their confidence reassured - which is the very aim of this course. There is always plenty of opportunity throughout the day to ask questions and seek advice."

Most people take advantage of a short assessed drive, in their own car, by a qualified Advanced Driving Observer and are given friendly help and advice on their performance. Murray Gwinnett, who attended the Leominster event, said "Tina was exceptional in her knowledge of the road and able to answer any question without hesitation. I believe that the whole audience left with an appreciation of her expertise and lively personality. I also undertook a driving assessment by one of the observers. One of the best £15 I have spent for a long time!" David Williams, IAM Herefordshire's chairman, sums up the need for Refresher Days for Older Drivers by saying "Driving on today's roads should be every bit as enjoyable for the older driver as for anyone else. It's about learning the skill of being in the right

position, at the correct speed and choosing the appropriate gear.”

Cost is £15 but places are limited. Phone 01432 840835 to reserve your place or email safer-drivers@iam-herefordshire.org.uk

IAM Herefordshire is your local charity, dedicated to developing safer drivers throughout Herefordshire. Affiliated to IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists) it also runs courses at Much Birch throughout the year for drivers of all ages, who wish to improve their skills and safety on the road.

The Evergreen Club

On Tuesday, 9 September, we are going to Kidderminster to visit the Carpet Museum and then find lunch before going to Bodenham Arboretum for the afternoon. They will supply teas and cakes here.

The cost will be £18 for members (£20 for visitors) which includes all entries and refreshments except lunch.

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 SURGERY FLU CLINICS

To be held on Saturday 4 and 18 October 8:30 - 11:00 at Much Birch Community Hall.

The invitation letters for the flu clinics will be ready to collect from the surgery the week commencing 22nd September for patients with pre-existing health conditions who are entitled to flu vaccinations.

Police notices

Allensmore

Sometime between the 27th June and the 1st of August a rural property in Allensmore had the outbuilding burgled. A pressure washer and a generator were stolen.

Ballingham

An outbuilding was broken into at a rural premises in Ballingham. This took place between 20:00 on the 30th of June and 16:00 on the 23rd July. Offenders made off with a number of tools.

Dinedor

Overnight Monday 21st to the Tuesday 22nd July, offenders attempted to force entry via a sliding door to a premises in Dinedor. No entry was gained.

Pontrilas

At 23:15 on the 22nd of July offenders approached a lorry at an industrial premises in Pontrilas. They siphoned approx 140 litres of diesel.

Positive Policing

I have carried out speed enforcement at two locations this week. Haywood Lane and Harewood End. One driver will be followed up for speeding and one driver was advised after an hour and a half of monitoring. We will continue to get about all over the Local Policing area with the speed gun over the coming weeks.

PCSO 6993 **Kevin Powell**

Hereford Southside and Rural Safer

Neighbourhood Team

South Wye Police Station

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

Much Birch WI

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

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.

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.

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 September market takes place on 22nd.

Stalls will include;

Moor Meals, award winning, local suppliers of Dexter beef, ready meals and pies, **Llandinabo Farm shop**, selling 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 is a **Fair Trade stand** and craft stands. Trevor will be providing refreshments and cakes to take home.

As you may have noticed we no longer have the '**Squeaky Pig**' with us. However, I am sure other suppliers will be able to meet your needs.

This is the first time, since the Market began, about 7 years ago, that **Chris and Peter Dowsett** will not be with us selling refreshments for McMillan Cancer Support.

We would like to thank them for all their support, and you for helping them raise so much money for such a very important cause. We give them our best wishes for the future.

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.)

St Michael's Hospice

Hospice Angels Vintage Summer Party

Sunday 31st August 2014

Fun starts at 12 noon with live music, vintage games and fun for all ages 'til 6pm.

In aid of St Michael's Hospice Redevelopment Appeal

Admission only £5 per car

Live music with

Bo Walton and Red Alert

Licensed bar - Cream teas

Hog roast - Vegetarian food

Watch the Hospice Angels ride out

Vintage and classic cars

Arkstone Court, Clehonger, Hereford HR2 9TR

For more information call the

EventsTeam at St Michael's Hospice 01432

851000 or visit www.st-michaels

hospice.org.uk/events

Rachel Entwisle Communications Assistant

St Michael's Hospice Bartestree

Hereford HR1 4HA 01432 851000

And finally

Voted the funniest joke at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2014

"I've decided to sell my Hoover ... well, it was just collecting dust-Tim Vine

Church Services in September

Sep7th 11am L. Birch Holy Communion

Sep14th. 11am M.Birch Harvest and Lunch

11am L.Birch Morning Worship

Sep 21st. 10.30am Wormelow Hundred Benefice Service at Little Birch.

**Sep.28th. 9.15am M.Birch Matins
11am L.Birch Family Worship**