



Pictures
by
Jonathan
Pointer



Skittles, quoits and turnips...

...were flying on the village recreation field on Saturday 16 May, as villagers enjoyed Lanie Allen's Medieval Day. The plague rat was splatted and several poor souls took a turn in the stocks. However there was mead to ease their distress, and a splendid banquet of medieval fare was enjoyed by all. The company was serenaded by Artorius, a quartet featuring Max and Gerlinde Hunt of Ash Tree Corner, with a guest appearance by George Chaffey on flute. The music followed an Arthurian theme, the legends as recounted by Tennyson and Geoffrey of Monmouth.

Villagers and visitors entered into the spirit of the event by dressing in costume. It is hoped to repeat the event next year on a larger scale.

Major repairs planned for St Mary's tower

The seventeenth-century brick tower of St Mary's Church needs substantial restoration work to reverse the ravages of wintry weather.

The parochial church council has earmarked £84,000 for the project, which must now gain the approval of diocesan authorities. The problems stem from the use of impervious material to repoint the brickwork in the past. This will be replaced by more traditional lime mortar. At the same time 2,500 of the most damaged bricks will be replaced, and the rendering around the louvres renewed. The job is expected to take eight weeks, starting in August.

The good news is that the church has been found free of death watch beetle.



Ian Walker

In April Chapel Corner lost one of its longest-established residents with the death of Ian Walker.

The Walker family came to the village in 1973, when Ian Walker worked as one of the first employees of Micro Consultants, later to become the electronics giant Quantel. It was his research that originated the idea for Paintbox, one of the company's most iconic products. After retiring in 1999 Ian worked as the company's archivist.

He was a familiar figure around the village, driving veteran cars which he had lovingly restored, or walking his dogs. His voice was known to many through his role in village fetes, for which he often supplied and manned the PA system. He sang with several local choral groups, and was a long-serving volunteer with the Kennet Cassette, recording the

Newbury Weekly News for the blind.

A lifelong enthusiasm for all things technical led Ian to involvement with the project to recreate the WWII Enigma code-breaking machine, and he joined a group dedicated to the investigation of wartime underground installations. As one of the Last of the Summer Wine group in the village he sometimes organised technology oriented outings for like-minded friends.

Ian also became well-known through his fight to obtain Sutent, a life-prolonging drug, when he fell ill with kidney cancer. A vigorous national campaign promoted by his family succeeded last summer, when he was allowed Sutent on the NHS.

Ian is survived by his wife Mary, a former drama teacher, their daughters Sarah, a doctor, and the novelist Fiona, and four grandchildren.

Village hall looking good

The chair of the village hall committee is now occupied by Sue Watts, who has taken over from Jim Clarke. Other members of the committee remain the same: Anne Budd (vice and bookings), Gill Cook (treasurer), Lanie Allen (secretary), Peter Benest (parish council rep) and Jerry Ree. Gill Cook reported a good year to the parish assembly. Hall income totalled £7,700 (£4,600 from hall hire, £200 from tents, £3,000 in grants and sale of old curtains). Expenditure was £7,200. There has been an increase in hirings, and a formal hiring agreement is now under compilation.

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Craven Fishery sold *subject to contract*



The Craven Fishery, which has been owned since the mid-1980s by Sir Peter Michael's Eddington estate, is under offer within a couple of weeks of being placed on the market. The advertised price tag was just under £1 million.

The 35-acre property includes the two-bedroomed bailiff's cottage with workshop, garage, kennels and Victorian fishing hut, together with more than 1,500 yards of chalk stream fishing rights.



The Craven Fishery
above left, in recent years
above right, as offered for sale in 1984
below left, mapped in late Victorian times



The Craven Fishery has been described in The Vineyard's publication *Grapevine* as yielding an average catch of 117 trout per year. Daily rates were £150 per person in 2008. The Eddington estate has for many years marketed the facility for corporate entertainment days, alongside clay shooting near Hungerford Newtown and golf at Donnington Valley.

See inside for other village property on the market.

Where next with the parish plan?

You will surely have noticed various village improvements which have been achieved over the past two years since the parish plan was approved by West Berkshire Council and implementation of its objectives began.

The village hall is now refurbished both inside and out, and hosts a much more active social programme. We hope that a recent bid for funds will enable the hall field to be enhanced with a play area and some rustic seating. Broadband has helped home-workers to survive. Better traffic signage and speed control has made the Kintbury Road much safer. The information point is regularly used by lost visitors, and a welcome pack awaits newcomers to the village.

The parish plan steering group is now seeking more suggestions which might attract additional funds from WBC and other funding sources. Suggestions should be realistic, both practically and financially, with a guideline cost limit of £5,000. If you have any bright ideas please contact me.

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What’s on June to September 2009		
14.00-16.00 Sun 7 Jun	Elm Farm open day and guided trail walk with education officer Bob Winfield	01488 658298
20.00 Sun 7 Jun	White Hart quiz £2 per person – all proceeds to charity	01488 658201
10.00-13.00 Sat 13 Ju	village market in village hall local produce & refreshments	Sue 01488 658932 Lanie 01488 658168
10.00-18.00 20/21 Jun	West Woodhay House Garden Show	www.westwoodhaygarden show.co.uk
19.30-21.30 Thu 2 Jul	Circle of Friends (ladies’ group) in village hall open evening before summer break	Sue Watts 01488 658932
20.00 Sun 5 Jul	White Hart quiz £2 per person – all proceeds to charity	01488 658201
19.00 Wed 8 Jul	Enborne & Hamstead Marshall Garden Society summer garden meeting at Redhill House	01635 253370
10.00-13.00 Sat 11 Jul	village market in village hall local produce & refreshments	Sue 01488 658932 Lanie 01488 658168
evening Sat 18 Jul	parish party at village hall recreation field free admission - bar - salads - music	
20.00 Mon 20 July	parish council meeting in the village hall	Jo Wheeler 07766 692235
20.00 Sun 2 Aug	White Hart quiz £2 per person – all proceeds to charity	01488 658201
10.00-13.00 Sat 8 Aug	village market afternoon event at village hall/field with cream teas	Sue 01488 658932 Lanie 01488 658168
14.00 Sat 2 Sep	Enborne & Hamstead Marshall Garden Society Flower Show at Hazel Paddock, Enborne	secretary 01635 48701
14.00-16.00 Sun 13 Sep	Elm Farm guided trail walk (part of Organic Fortnight) with education officer Bob Winfield	01488 658298
20.00 Mon 21 Sep	parish council meeting in the village hall	Jo Wheeler 07766 692235
10.00-11.30 Weds termtime	yoga classes	Inga Craven 01488 658744
13.30-16.00 Mons termtime	oil painting classes for beginners & improvers	Newbury College 01635 42824
weekdays termtime	Little Sunflowers nursery school	Teresa 01635 253201 Trudy 01635 255363

looking further ahead...

Sept/Oct: Harvest supper and auction (for St Mary’s Church) in the village hall – date to be announced

Nov: Bonfire evening at the village field; Garden Society AGM and social evening

Dec: Circle of Friends Christmas party; Trip to see *The Nutcracker* at Arlington Arts Centre

W A N T E D

plants, preserves, cakes, gifts and volunteers

for the

WEST WOODHAY GARDEN SHOW

20-21 JUNE

Each parish in the benefice contributes to and benefits from the show

Help to make Hamstead Marshall’s share a success

Enquiries/donations to

Robin or Julie Althaus 01635 524346

North Lodge split for sale

North Lodge, which was offered for sale last year as one property of 12.5 acres with two houses, has now been divided into two separate properties, each offered at £1.2million.

The main house, formerly a keeper’s cottage and later home to Lady Craven, has four to five bedrooms, and a total of 4.6 acres including 123 yards of Kennet fishing. The second property, a former barn and artist’s studio, is now converted to a two-bedroom dwelling in 8 acres, including 134 yards of fishing. The whole site is a registered historical monument because it contains two medieval castle mounds – one apiece for the two houses under the new division, which has been sanctioned by English Heritage.

Events at Hamstead Growers prompt concern

Holtwood residents have expressed opposition to the traffic attracted by increasing number of equestrian events at Hamstead Growers, in connection with which a retrospective planning application is currently under consideration with WBC.

The application, filed last November, is for manege and stable block, and for change of use of fields and buildings to equine activities. According to a letter from the proprietor, Keith Webb, Hamstead Growers currently holds dressage and show jumping events for 30 competitors on three Sundays and one to two weekdays per month. Additionally workshops for 20 participants are held on two Saturdays per month. It has been claimed that this generates no more traffic than was customary when the site was a farm shop and PYO.

Local residents point out that the nature of the traffic has changed, being now horseboxes, trailers and 4X4s rather than the cars of former times.

A decision by WBC was postponed when it was discovered that the adjoining Hampshire parishes had not been consulted. A site visit was made some weeks ago, and a traffic report compiled. It is understood that the highways department is no longer in favour of granting the application.

NEWS

The Red House gastro-pub in Marsh Benham closed at the end of April, its parent company Partridge Inns Ltd of Reading having dissolved. The owner of the building, Timothy Gwyn-Jones of Hamstead Park, is reported to be looking for a new tenant.

David Harris of Ash Tree Corner raised £300 for the Reading Single Homeless Project by taking part in a sponsored sleep-out in April. He reported a chill wind blowing around the Madejski Stadium, outside which he camped.

The Hamstead Marshall Village Charity, which owns and lets out a 3.7-acre field in Holtwood, reported a balance of £1,626 at the end of the year. Five pensioners in the village received grants of £80 each at Christmas. Jim Clarke, who has chaired the charity for several years, has now handed that responsibility back to the parish council.

The parish council is to take action on vehicles parking too close to the Ash Tree Corner junction, which has given rise to complaints by motorists that traffic sightlines are being obscured.

A silk-painting workshop in the village hall in May was enjoyed by adults and children under the tutelage of Lorna Webber.

Other village property on the market

Eastgate Cottage in Craven Hill is being offered by Carter Jonas at £850,000. The property contains a three-bedroom house and converted barn annexe in an acre of walled garden.

Waverley at Ash Tree Corner continues to be offered by Downer at £374,950.

Merrowmead too is still on the market as a four-bedrooom home with stables and paddock at £560,000 with Rural Scene.

Other planning applications

Decisions pending:

- **Barrs Farm** has applied to move a footpath in connection with refurbish-ment of the farmyard for agricultural purposes. The parish council supports this application.

- Permission to demolish **Holtwood House** and replace it with a larger dwelling has now generated an applica-tion with regard to materials and land-scaping.

- **Rickety Gate Farm** in Holtwood is seeking a certificate of lawfulness for poultry runs.

A retrospective application relating to the summerhouse at **25 Chapel Corner** has been refused. The second retro-spective application for continued use of the garage as a residential dwelling was approved.

Following the council’s refusal to permit the erection of a replacement dwelling at **Foxlee Farm**, application has been approved for use as a residen-tial property under class B of 1987.

PARISH ASSEMBLY

At the parish assembly in the village hall on 11 May Gordon Fisher agreed to continue for another year in the chair, with John Handy as vice. Stuart Morton, Peter Benest, Jon Phillips complete the membership. The assembly, attended by five villagers and two district councillors in addition to the parish councillors, received reports on the previous year.

Parish coffers are still low, and several years of precept increases may be needed to bring the finances to a level at which the council can consider funding any village initiatives.