February 2015

Your independent village magazine - produced and delivered free to every home in the Tring Rural villages entirely by local volunteers.

36 PAGES

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We depend on readers' articles and pictures. So let's have them!

Not so fast for fibre broadband *by Phil Buchi*

IT seems that any optimism in my last report was misplaced! *(Village News, December 2014, page 25.)* Thanks to readers who responded to the article by making enquiries of their own, a more accurate picture is emerging. I am sorry if I raised your hopes. The picture is subtly different for those with 01442 numbers (e.g. Wilstone), and those with 01296 numbers (e.g. Long Marston), but the end result is the same - no one has access to superfast fibre broadband.

For 01442 numbers (served by the Tring exchange), the BT Openreach website still shows that the Tring cabinets have been upgraded for fibre broadband and that orders are being accepted. But none of the readers who contacted BT to place an order for the BT Infinity superfast service succeeded in getting their order accepted. The reason given was the old chestnut: distance from the exchange to the village. While this always has been a technical constraint, is seems odd that today it cannot be overcome. The same reason was used fifteen years ago to deny villagers access to the first broadband services, but with a bit of technical effort it was made to work then. The current network upgrade programme involves running an optical fibre cable direct from the exchange to a new high-tech cabinet, which stands next to the existing green distribution cabinet in the street. This amazing wizardry enables the existing copper telephone wires to carry the signal on the final stage into home and business. An impressive technical achievement indeed, and it is a shame if the benefits are limited by the odd kilometre of copper wire. Perhaps the volume could be turned up?

For 01296 numbers (served by the Cheddington exchange), a reader has extracted from BT the statement that BT has no intention of upgrading the Cheddington cabinet number 3 (see picture), which serves most people in the Long Marston area. The reason given is that it is not commercially viable, and never likely to be so. Our correspondent has registered a protest with BT and with the regulator, Ofcom. It is true that Cheddington cabinet number 5 is in the Connected Counties programme for upgrade in 2015, but I was wrong to suggest that this could be a big benefit locally. In fact, few customers in this parish are served by cabinet number 5, and the main beneficiaries will be in Marsworth. In the Connected Counties programme, jointly sponsored by Herts and Bucks County Councils, the status of cabinet number 3 is "under review".

So, a less than encouraging picture. Only a demonstration of demand through lobbying by customers is likely to improve things. The best chance for 01296 numbers is the Connected Counties programme, which is there to fill in the rural gaps left by the main network operators. BT also have available other technologies which they do consider for 'difficult' situations, such as a radio link to a local wi-fi "hot spot". Our problem here seems to be that we are no-one's priority at the moment.

Many thanks to the following contributors to this article: Paul Dumpleton, Peter Walker, Graham Thorpe, Richard Fermont, Scott McKenzie. Relevant websites are: **www.connected-counties.org** *and* **www.superfast-openreach.co.uk.**

No upgrade for cabinet No.3 cabinet in Long Marston. This venerable item of street furniture bears the letters "GPO", making it at least 45 years old.
(Picture: Village News)

Wilstone Film Nights

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 20th

The Hundred-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out of the Window and Disappeared

by Jonas Jonasson

Allan Karlsson is about to celebrate his 100th birthday; a party is planned at his retirement home. Allan is alert despite his age, but not interested in the party. Instead he steps out the window and disappears. He accidently gets hold of a suitcase of drug money and becomes chased by both drug dealers and the police. Allan's highly adventurous and improbable life story is told in parallel to this. He eats dinner with the future President Harry S. Truman, hitchhikes with Winston Churchill, travels on a riverboat with the wife of Mao Tse Tung and walks across the Himalayas on foot.

This quirky, bizarre, ridiculous, and very funny black comedy is based on the best selling book by Swedish author Jonas Jonasson in 2012 and has sold three million copies world wide.

8pm Friday February 20th. Doors open 7.15pm

Wilstone Village Hall. Licenced bar.

Tickets £7 available from Wilstone Community Shop

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Village News

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WOW!- another bumper 36 page issue, no shortage of articles this month, keep them coming in and don't forget that with spring approaching, summer is not far behind so make sure that you include the dates for all your events throughout the villages.
This will be my last edition of *Village News.* I must say how much I have enjoyed these last few years editing it , my computer skills have improved considerably although I have cursed my slow old computer many a time!
My best wishes to you all.

Colin Davenport

The next edition will be for March 2015 and the deadline for items is: Thursday 19 February 2015

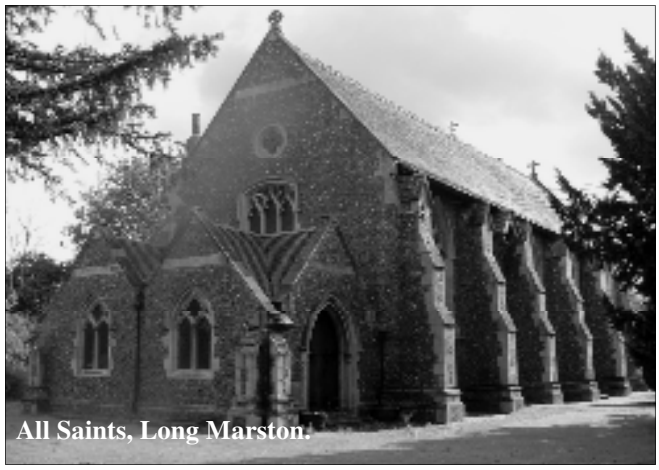
Village News is written, edited, produced and distributed entirely by local volunteers. Only the final printing is done by a commercial company. We aim to be local, interesting, informative, fun and a good read.
Let us know if we are not!

Printed by ***Lonsdale Direct Solutions***
Denington Estate, Wellingborough, NN8 2RA. 01933 228855.
01733 230800

Church services at St Mary's Puttenham St Cross Wilstone and All Saints Long Marston

You are most welcome to join us at any of the services.

1st February	Candlemas
10am	All Saints Morning worship
6pm	St. Cross Evening Prayer
8th February	
8.15am	St.Mary's Holy Communion
10am	All Saints Family Communion
6pm	All Saints Celtic Evening Prayer
15 February	
10am	St. Cross Holy Communion
10am	All Saints Morning Worship
4pm	All Saints Mardi Gras!
Wednesday 18 February	
10am	St.Cross Holy Communion with imposition of ashes
22 February	
10am	All Saints Family Communion
3.30pm	St. Mary's Evensong
1st March	
10am	All Saints Morning Worship
6pm	St. Cross Evening Prayer

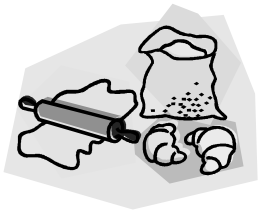


All Saints, Long Marston.

What's on...

Snowdrop Day at Old Church Cottage, Chapel Lane, Long Marston

ON 14th and 15th February between 11am and 3pm John and Margaret Noakes will be opening their garden as part of the National Gardens Scheme, Gardens Open for Charity. Parking is difficult in Chapel Lane so please use the Village Hall Car Park.
There should be many snowdrops and winter cyclamen in flower. All of this is weather dependent. Mulled wine and muffins will be served as antifreeze and are included in the entry price of £5.00. All takings will go to charity. Do hope you will join us. Wrap up well!



ST.CROSS
LENT LUNCH
WEDNESDAY 11th MARCH
12NOON—2PM

WILSTONE VILLAGE HALL
A FRUGAL LUNCH OF SOUP,
BREAD AND CHEESE
TEA AND COFFEE

ALL WELCOME
NO CHARGE
DONATIONS TO CHRISTIAN AID

Diary dates...

Tring Rural Parish Council meetings (8pm)
The public are welcome to attend these meetings.
Wednesday 4February Puttenham village hall.
Wednesday 4 March Wilstone village hall .

Sunday 15 February
Pancake races at All Saints 4pm
Sat/Sun 14/15 February
Snowdrop day Old Church Cottage, Chapel Lane LM
Thursday 19 to Saturday 21 February 2015
Long Marston Pantomime—"Jack and the Beanstalk"
Friday February 20
Wilstone Film Night.
Wednesday 11 March
St. Cross Lent Lunch. Wilstone Village Hall 12 noon –2pm
Friday 13 March
LM Cricket Club Quiz night at Marlins
Saturday 21 March
Tennis club Quiz Night LM victory Hall 6.30 for 7pm meal.
Wednesday 25 March Ipm
Village community library lunch .Cheddington village hall
Saturday 28 March
Tambourine Jerk Wilstone Village Hall 7.45pm — 11pm
Tuesday 2nd June 13.30 start
Spitfire 60+ 1st XI County championships
Hertfordshire 60+ v Hampshire 60+
Sunday 7 June
Wilstone Fete
Sunday 14 June
Midsummer picnic - LM Recreation ground 1pm
Sunday 21 June
Marsworth Steam Rally – Startops farm
Sunday 28 June
Wilstone open gardens
Tuesday 14 July 11.00start
ECB Second XI trophy
Unicorns v Leicestershire 2nd XI
Wednesday 15 July 11.00 start
ECB Second Trophy
Unicorns v Yorkshire 2nd XI
Saturday 1 Aug
Long Marston Village Show— (incorporating Flower and Produce Show)
Sunday 16th, Mon 17th,Tues 18th August 11.00 start
Minor counties Championship
Hertfordshire v Suffolk

Times for mobile library Route 72

Thursday fortnightly: 5 & 19 February 5,& 19 March

Tringford (Piggeries Pine)	**11.00 to 11.20**
Wilstone (The Half Moon)	**11.25 to 11.55**
Astrope (Astrope Lane)	**12.50 to 13.15**
Puttenham (Church Lane)	**13.20 to 13.45**
Long Marston (Queen's Head)	**14.00 to 15.15**

... don't miss anything with our guide to local events! Free listings.

WILSTONE GARDENS
will be opening on Sunday 28 June 2015

Gardeners keen, willing and able to join in please contact Gill Glasser
01442 890300

FEELING FLAT AFTER CHRISTMAS? LIFT YOUR POST FESTIVITY MOOD AND SING!

COMMUNITY CHOIR – SING WILSTONE

MEETS ON TUESDAY EVENINGS
7.45-8.45PM
NEW MEMBERS ALWAYS WELCOME

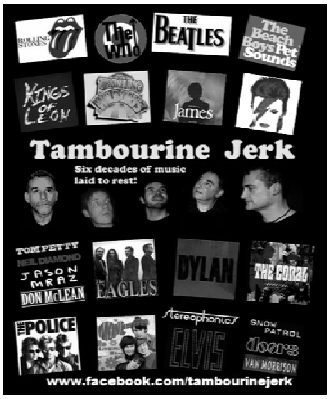
ENQUIRIES TO JO WOODBRIDGE
01442 891444
JOMARK@WAITROSE.COM

Tambourine Jerk

Live @ Wilstone Village Hall
Sat 28th March 2015
7.45pm-11pm
Tickets can be purchased from February from Wilstone Village shop priced @ £8.00

For one night only Tambourine Jerk will be rocking out the village hall with 40 of the best pop and rock songs from the last six decades of music. Their set will take you on a sonic journey from fifties Rock 'n' Roll right through to 21st Century pop classics.
From The Beatles to Bowie, The Rolling Stones to Snow Patrol, Neil Diamond to the Kings of Leon. There is something for everyone from disillusioned teenagers to silver surfers!

There will be a licensed bar on the night.



The Small Church with a BIG heart

St Cross. Wilstone is preparing for
A new Pattern of Services.
Beginning with a special service for

Mothering Sunday March 15th

There will be a service at
10 a.m. every Sunday
Our regular monthly pattern will be
1st Sunday 10a.m. Family Service 6p.m. Evening Prayer

2nd Sunday Sunday Worship
3rd Sunday Family Communion with organ and hymns
4th Sunday Sunday Worship
5th Sunday Sunday Worship

All our 10a.m. services will have aspects that involve children and there will be activities provided for them we will have a variety of music and songs and aim to include songs our children are singing at school. We are creating new service books to help us provide the right service for the people who come.

Reverend Didier Jacquet will be leading our services regularly sharing the care of St Cross and the Wilstone Community with Reverend Jo.

Letters...

From Mrs Doreen Austin, Long Marston.

Anthony Roland Austin

DOREEN Austin and family would like to say thank you to all friends and family who attended Tony's funeral. A very big thank you for your kind donations in memory of Tony. An excellent amount of over £770 was raised for the charities British Heart Foundation and British Lung Foundation.

From Councillor Olli Wheeler-Cornell,
Member of Tring Rural Parish Council.

Open discussions and consultations

Mr JENKINSON is entitled to his opinion *(Village News, December 2014, page 24)* and of course, to voice those views. It is somewhat disappointing however that he did not do his research with regard to the proposed extension of the pavilion in the Long Marston recreation ground before his rant. Consideration as to what would be the best course of action regarding the pavilion and village hall has been a long extensive process. There has been an ongoing investigation as to how the Parish Council can meet the needs of all parties. Whilst the Parish Council has no authority over the village hall, its position is one of a supportive role and the hall committee have every opportunity to contact the Parish Council. In addition, a Parish Councillor sits on the hall committee.

There have been comprehensive open discussions regarding the obtaining of grants/loans and the best way forward at Parish Council meetings, all of which are open to the public. Mr Jenkinson could have attended any one of those meetings, and minutes are always taken and posted on relevant notice boards and on the web site. The local "Village News" also reported on the process the Parish Council was following. The Parish Council held three open consultation meetings for the expressed purpose of allowing residents to ask questions, check the plans and voice any discontent, or indeed to add any suggestions.

The pavilion and the recreation ground are both assets of the community. The whole community. They are used, and will be used, by other organisations, not just the football club. By adding an extra changing room it will give us the opportunity to start teams for the younger members of our community, something that is missing at present. The meeting room, which the football club have financed, will be available to anyone wishing to hire the facility. Integration of a disabled toilet into the building, which will be accessible from the recreation ground, can only enhance the use of the recreation ground for people. An added bonus is that it will free-up an extra room for the village hall which at present is a changing room. The village hall is restricted on space and the pre school group are in real need of the extra room to accommodate them.

Yours faithfully, Ollie Wheeler-Cornell, TRPC Councillor.

From Daphne Bateman,
Long Marston Football Club.

Changing facilities

THE Long Marston Football Club became a Charter Standard club over four years ago. This benefits the club, but also places demands on how it operates. In order to meet the standards we made several applications, along with the Parish Council, to obtain funding from organisations that fund such necessary work. We were refused because we did not have security of tenure. We were advised that the only way of obtaining such a grant was to have a lease. We sought the advice of a solicitor, obtained legitimate leases from other councils and football clubs and had long, hard discussions with the Parish Council. Unfortunately the lease idea did not meet with approval from some residents; hence, the only way forward was to go down the loan route.

The new room was financed by the football club and built by voluntary labour. In addition, the football club also funded the rooms at the back of the village hall - which we are happy to relinquish once the new extension has been built in order for the toddlers to use as they desperately need more space. At present one of the other users of the pavilion is the young people's jogging club who use the facility every week.

For Mr Jenkinson's information, the football club have in the past erected and maintained other buildings which were eventually replaced by the present building by the Parish Council. We continue to maintain the building and grounds. The football club has been running for over one hundred years and has always been supported by the people of the parish.

Yours faithfully, Daphne Bateman.

A big **"Thank you"**
from

The Chapel Room

Sadly the Chapel Room will be closing in February this year due to an exciting relocation to Cheltenham. Having lived in Wilstone for 27 years it is now time for Mike and I to make a move to pastures new and hopefully to trade one beautiful area for another!

I would just like to extend a great big thank you to all my lovely clients, who have supported me so well over the years that I have been running the Chapel Room. I have made a great many loyal and dear friends and I will miss you all!

Helen.

No more nuisance calls !

by Graham Thorpe

AFTER being plagued with nuisance calls a few weeks ago I asked BT for help . They suggested their new phone , the BT8500 . I bought 2 of these handsets from them for the delivered price of £49.99 total. I plugged them in and then , on one of them followed the instructions to created a contacts list of names and numbers we know . Those were automatically transferred on to the second hand set. The set up was very easy.

That was a few weeks ago and since then we have had zero nuisance calls!! How fantastic ! The way it works is that the phones use the inbuilt Truecall technology (that's the tall guy on Dragon's Den , Peter Jones) and it monitors the caller. If the person calling is on our contacts list the call comes through in the usual way.

If the call us from someone not on our contact list then before the phone rings the phone informs them that calls to the number are being monitored by BT Call Guardian and instructs them to say their name and press the hash key . If they do that the phone then rings and when I pick up the handset I hear "you have a call from ...name...do you want to accept it ? " if I do then I press 1 to accept that call or 2 to always accept calls from that number or 3 to block the call. So far I have never used 3. If I do ever press 3 then the caller will hear a message informing them that their call has been blocked .

The only slight criticism I have is that when a caller is being announced you have to be sure to listen carefully for the name .

For this service to work you have to have Caller ID active on your phone but there are no other charges ..Call Guardian is free. The phone also has a built in answering service.

The BT8500 with Call Guardian has been absolutely fantastic for us with not one nuisance call getting through since we set up a few weeks ago. £49.99 very well spent.

There is more information about the phone on the BT web site .

Active over 60s wanted to take part in university research project

by Rachael Frost

AS PART of my PhD, I am carrying out a study in and around the Dacorum area looking at the best way to measure activities people are asked to do at home, in this case walking. It is an eight week study, in which participants will be asked to complete two different walking diaries for four weeks each and to wear an accelerometer – a device that measures activity – for two separate weeks. We are looking at how accurate and reliable the diaries are. Participants will receive a copy of their activity profile and a booklet about the benefits of walking. We hope that the results will inform us about how to measure activities such as physiotherapy exercises that people are asked to do at home as part of rehabilitation therapies in long-term conditions.

We are looking for volunteers over 60 without any major health or mobility problems in Dacorum and the surrounding areas. The research is sponsored and has been approved by Glasgow Caledonian University. If you would like more information I would be happy to chat by email, in person or over the phone.

To take part please contact:

Rachael Frost
PhD Researcher
NMAHP Research Unit
Glasgow Caledonian University
Email: rachael.frost@gcu.ac.uk
Tel: 0141 273 1606.

Read *Village News* online at:
www.tringruralpc.org.uk (Click on Village News)
www.wilstone.me.uk (Click on Village News)

WANTED

CLEANER

FOR SMALL HOUSE IN LONG MARSTON

FOR UP TO TWO HOURS PER WEEK.
PLEASE CONTACT OLLI
01296 662207
Olli Wheeler-Cornell

I need to find the owner of this cat. He's been around for many weeks.

I live in Gubblecote.
Please ring me (Jill) on: 01296 661716

Smiffy's Curries

Hi, my name is Emily Smith and I am doing a ***World Challenge Expedition to Rajasthan, Northern India in July 2015.*** I am looking to raise money and offer a **Friday** curry *service.*

Freshly cooked, serves up to two people costing £6, generally chicken to start with and can be heated in oven,hob or microwave - just add rice. I am happy to provide for larger numbers for dinner parties.

Order by Wednesday for Friday after school delivery to your door in Gubblecote, Wilstone, Long Marston or Puttenham.

Fed up with cooking, fed up with turkey sandwiches? Get your orders in now- a SMIFFY'S Curry in the freezer ready for the days over the Festive period when you just want a break.

Just tell me your preference of curry and heat - £3 a pot (serves 1) I would just like to thank everyone for their continued support I have now cooked well over 500 curries, a mix of Friday night orders , dinner parties and parties. I think my family are fed up with the smell of curry in our house !

My World Challenge trip is fast approaching in July and I am over half way towards my target of £3,400. If anyone is interested in sponsoring me it would be greatly appreciated .

Emily Smith .
SMIFFY'S CURRIES
em.darling@btinternet.com -01296-668878 - 07977912251

Jack & the Beanstalk
Neil Gurney's
Pantomime
Spectacular
At the
Victory Hall,
Long Marston
Ticket Prices: £7.00
Senior Citizens: £5.00
Children: £3.00
Thursday 19th February 7.30pm
Friday 20th February 7.30pm
Saturday 21st February 7.30pm
& Children's Matinee 2pm
TICKETS FROM: THE QUEEN'S HEAD, LONG MARSTON; WILSTONE VILLAGE STORES OR MEAD FARM SHOP, WILSTONE OR SUNDAYS 2 – 5pm AT THE VICTORY HALL. ENQUIRIES: 07855 369515

From our reporter at the Parish Council meeting

Flood report actions

HERTS County Council issued the final report into the February floods in Long Marston on 27th November 2014. The 29-page report contains eight recommendations, and the Parish Council discussed these at their January meeting. Members of the public attending were invited to contribute their views. Resident Keith Foster thanked the Parish Council for earmarking £2,000 for direct action this year, and a further £2,000 in the budget for next financial year. Mr Foster reported that flood-affected residents had met with County Councillor Nick Hollinghurst, and the main focus of those discussions had been improving the drainage at the end of Chapel Lane, and lowering the road level there too. Chairman Cllr. Mike Tomlinson agreed that lowering the road level where it rises at the end of Chapel Lane was the most practical solution. As the road is a County Council responsibility, pressure was needed to get the work into the Herts Highways programme, he said. The Parish Council agreed that a plan for improvement of local drainage should be put forward too. Some of these improvements could be carried out by local action, but some would need the involvement of other agencies. All seemed to agree that the recommendation to "investigate the Tring Bourne culvert upgrade" was whistling in the wind in view of the huge cost of such a project. The Parish Council has since submitted their detailed response to each of the recommendations.

The final "Section 19" flood report and the preceding technical assessment can be found on the County Council website: **www.hertsdirect.org.** A search for "Long Marston flood report" on that website should take you to the right page. *(A summary of the report's recommendations can be found elsewhere in this edition. Ed.)*

£60,000 now due?

THE VOLUNTARY contribution to the community of £60,000 offered by Hive Energy - constructing the solar park power station at Folly Farm - should now be available, Cllr. Chris Griffiths suggested to the meeting. Payment of this contribution to the Parish Council was promised by the company's legal representative on condition that the planning application was approved. Well, permission was granted by Dacorum BC on 12th November 2014, and construction work is already under way. *(See article elsewhere in this edition.)* So a polite approach will now be made to the company.

Make a Will
& Lasting Powers of Attorney
Your priorities?
BEST VALUE SOLICITORS and professional Will Writers
• Provide the best for any partner or children
• Protect the home from care fees
• Avoid Inheritance Tax
• Expert guidance (since 1999)
• BEST PRICE guarantee
Will Trusts & Probate Practice
A wise choice
Daytime or evening HOME VISIT
Call The Will Centre on:
01525 220 644
www.wisechoicewills.co.uk

Problem with your windows?
- Double glazed windows or door unit broken, or is the seal damaged?
- Want to clean the inside of the glass but can't?
- Water getting into the double glazed unit?
- All misted up inside the unit?
- Handles & Hinges repaired
- Cat flaps fitted
Guarantees on all units fitted
Visit our website for a free online estimate:
Www.SmashingWindows.com
Or ring
01296 630650 to arrange an appointment today!
Try our window cleaning service.
Call 07875 534780 for more details.

No budget increase for 2015-16

THERE will be no increase in the Parish Council's budget for next year under proposals which Parish Councillors have submitted to Dacorum Borough Council for approval. Although costs are expected to rise by between 3% and 4%, the budget will have to stay the same for normal operating costs: £11,210 for the year. A bid for £2,000 for additional flood prevention work has been made in addition. If the figures are approved by Dacorum, the Council Tax "Village Precept" for TRPC will in fact go down slightly. (For 2014/2015 the village precept was £34.80 at Band E.) One cost has been allowed to rise: the Village Warden (Mr Colin Reedman) has been awarded a 2.2% pay increase, but this cost is paid by Dacorum BC and not from the Parish Council budget. A proposal to take out a loan to pay for improvements to changing rooms at Long Marston recreation ground has not been pursued at the moment while other options for raising the money are still being explored.

Community shop reprieve

THE Wilstone Community Shop is to be granted a new lease taking them up to at least October 2016, it was reported to the Parish Council by Mr Reedman, a member of the shop committee. The owner of the building has said that he does not intend to sell the property at present, and is happy for the shop to continue with its present rather favourable lease arrangement on a year-by-year basis. The shop committee has therefore suspended plans (announced at the December Parish Council meeting) to seek re-location within the village. In fact, customers can hardly have failed to notice that a number of improvements have been carried out within the shop as a result of this re-assuring reprieve

Tring Rural Parish Council - Public Notice

Are you interested in helping to make decisions that affect the area you live in?

Nominations sought for Parish Council elections in May 2015.

In May this year the Parish Councillors' four year term of office will come to an end. This means that all Councillors stand down and then decide whether to stand for office again. If you feel passionately about the area you live and would like to be involved in discussions and decisions about looking after and improving the parish, then perhaps becoming a Parish Councillor could be the thing for you.

If you would like to find out more about what the Parish Council does and what is involved in being a Parish Councillor, please contact:

Lucy Bancroft, Clerk to the Council
Email: clerk@tringruralpc.org.uk
Telephone: 01296 660844

Your Parish Councillors are:
Mr Michael Tomlinson (Chairman) 01296 661 311
Mr Chris Griffiths 01296 668 257
Mr Alan Winfield 01296 668 977
Mr Christopher Mann 01296 668 548
Mr Nick Murrell 01296 668 190
Mrs Olli Wheeler-Cornell 01296 662 207
Mr Richard Briant 01442 825 674
Mr Robert Briant 01442 825 674

The Clerk to the Council :-
Mrs Lucy Bancroft 07590 989202
Email: clerk@tringruralpc.org.uk

***The Village Warden is*:**
Mr Colin Reedman 01442 822 031

Parish Council Website:
www.tringruralpc.org.uk

You can view and comment on planning applications at
www.dacorum.gov.uk/planning
www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk

Read *Village News* online at:
www.tringruralpc.org.uk (Click on Village News)
www.wilstone.me.uk (Click on Village News)

Do you know someone who needs care?

Our Tring Rural team provides specialist live in care – to enable your loved one to remain within the comfort and familiarity of their own home, whilst receiving full-time care.

Working with people of all ages, our live in carers provide one-to-one support, balancing independent living with bespoke care needs.

We can assist with:

- personal care
- companionship
- housekeeping

Find out how we can help you, please call **0808 180 1023** or visit www.helpinghands.co.uk

Great British Care Awards 2010 Winner

UKHCA

Helping Hands

Established since 1989

Fed up of doing your ironing?
Let me do it for you.
£3.50 per kilo
Shirts £1.00
Bedding £1.50 - £3.50

Please contact me on 07770993784 / 01442767319
eyvindssonkate@yahoo.co.uk

Tuition

- 11+
- Literacy Support
- Numeracy Support
- Key Stage 1,2, & 3
- Special Educational Needs

Jemma Boult (28 years experience)
Specialist Teacher; Language Disorder

Mobile: 07803 068531
Email: boult386@btinternet.com

M.D.SPRING AUTOS

All mechanical repairs
Very competitive prices
All work guaranteed
Vehicles collected and returned at no extra charge.

MOTs available on site (class 4 & 7)
Welding -
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Wheels balanced -
Batteries -
Exhausts -
Diagnostic Tuning -
Air Conditioning servicing and repairs

Phone: 01296 662280
New Fax: 01296 662347
Mobile: 07860 847328
Unit 9, Airfield Industrial Estate,
Cheddington Lane, Long Marston.

LONG MARSTON DOG TRAINING CLUB

Victory Hall, Long Marston.

Long established friendly club, catering for all dogs.
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Local lives: Cyril Chandler

District Councillor for 28 years and village historian

by Phil Buchi

In the November 2014 edition of Village News we reproduced an article from a 1978 copy of the Beds & Bucks Observer about flooding in Long Marston. The reporter interviewed Mr Cyril Chandler, who had compiled a record of flooding incidents in the village going back to 1875. This has prompted us to find out more about Mr Chandler, who died in 1978 shortly after giving that interview.

ARTHUR CYRIL CHANDLER lived all his life in Long Marston, and from an early age was interested in the history of the village. He was born in 1901 at 25 Tring Road, Long Marston, left school at the age of 12 and joined the family building firm. He became a skilled bricklayer, gaining City and Guilds certificates and was particularly interested in stone masonry. This enabled him to work on the restoration of Puttenham church in 1935, and he was present at the re-opening ceremony on 29th September of that year. He was later to work on Drayton Beauchamp, Marsworth and Cubblington churches too, and to teach these brickwork skills at Aylesbury Technical College.

In June 1934 he married Elsie Short, and they initially lived in Astrope Lane. During the war he was an air raid warden, and member of the local Home Guard. As well as being a good cook and skilled baker of cakes, Cyril was a bell ringer, and played the cornet in the Long Marston band. His cornet was heard each year as he played the "Last Post" at local services of Remembrance.

Elected to Berkhamsted Rural District Council as an independent in 1946, he continued to represent the village on that council until it was replaced by Dacorum Borough Council in 1974. By that time he had been elected Chairman of the Council and at the final meeting he was presented with a clock by his fellow councillors to mark his twenty eight years' service to the community. This service had also been recognised by two invitations to Buckingham Palace.

In 1945 the village organised a victory party to mark the end of the war. There were a few pounds left over from the celebrations, and it was suggested that this money should be put into a fund to build a modern village hall to replace the parish hall in Station Road. A committee was established with Mr Chandler as secretary, Mr Len Dean as Chairman and Mr John Chapman as Treasurer. Thus began a huge fundraising programme, and by 1954 there was enough money to put down the foundations of Victory Hall. Most of the work was carried out by villagers themselves, as all the necessary skills were available within the community. Victory Hall continues to be an enduring legacy of their efforts and a considerable asset to the village. The initials of many of the founders can be seen inscribed on the bricks at the front of the building.

Councillor Cyril Chandler pictured in Long Marston in 1971.
(Picture: Mike Dellow, Hemel Hempstead Evening Echo. Reproduced with acknowledgment.)

During his lifetime Cyril Chandler made extensive notes on local history. This interest was first awakened by conversations with his grandfather, who died in 1911 aged 81. "I have a good memory and I can remember what he told me", he is quoted as saying. It is from these notes that he was able to tell the reporter in 1978 of the history of flooding in Long Marston going back as far as 1875. In another newspaper article he described to the reporter the difference between *down-town* and *up-town* Long Marston, a distinction perhaps forgotten today (but you may like to know that the demarcation line was the recreation ground). His notes are not lost, but they await the attention of an archivist, or a local history research project perhaps.

With thanks to Eunice Hall, Mr Chandler's daughter, for making the information available for this article. With acknowledgement to Irene Harris (1971) and Alison Glanville (1978) whose reports have been referred to. If any reader has a suggestion for a "Local Lives" article, please contact the editor.

Sudoku Corner by Colin Moore

No 91 Easy

			2			5	1	
	6			1			7	
				6		9	4	
	9		5		2	1		
4	7			8		2		
		3	1	7			9	8
	3		7					1
6				5			2	
2	8					3	5	4

Solution on page 33

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A Man For all Seasons

by Andy Ashwell

MY NEW YEARS' resolution this year, not that I usually bother with one, is not to quit booze, or chocolate or to try to lose weight because I don't really have a problem with any of those. No, my New Year's resolution, at her request, is to stop boring my wife with continuous references to, and commentary on, my latest obsession: cycling. You see, I've become a MAMIL or a Middle-Aged Man In Lycra. If, like me, you hadn't heard of the term until recently (or in fact until now) it's actually been around long enough for the Oxford English Dictionary people to have deemed it worthy of inclusion in their latest update – along with two other supposedly well-known words: mahoosive and xlnt. One of the more irritating traits that I have developed since becoming a MAMIL, apart from the delusional belief that I look great in skin-tight lycra, is that I have become a cycling bore. I have therefore been banned from mentioning cycling – or the 'C-word' as Florence calls it (if only she knew) – in or around Anna's presence.

At least Santa is on my side because, in amongst the heaps of stuff under the Christmas tree for Florence, he left me some nice new warm cycling clothing – a pleasant change from the usual "pants 'n' socks'll do for dad for Christmas" doctrine embraced by certain members of our household over the last few years – to wear on my winter bike rides. Although cycling along quiet country lanes on wintery mornings and enjoying the views and smells of the countryside sounds sublime (or mahoosively xlnt, if you like) it can, if you don't dress suitably, be far from idyllic.

I try to avoid getting caught out by unexpected bad weather and usually check the weather forecast online before I go out for a ride, or ask "my man in the playground" who is more accurate than the BBC – mainly because he lives next door to amateur meteorologist.

The one time that I decided to ignore the weather forecast, despite what the BBC and "my man" had said that morning, because the sun was out and there wasn't a cloud in sight – and I knew better, I got caught out by one of the forecasted torrential, sleety downpours.
In minutes the road on which I was cycling turned into a river of icy slush so, cursing my luck and my stupidity, I did a quick U-turn and headed back home. With all the potholes hidden under three inches of slush I had a dilemma: cycle in the gutter and hit a pothole or cycle in the middle of the road and get hit by a car. I decided to risk the latter and cycled in the middle of the road whenever possible, only swerving into the gutter when absolutely necessary. My strategy worked well for a while until a stream of splashy traffic forced me to stay in the gutter for too long and I eventually hit one of the many submerged potholes. Fortunately the pothole wasn't deep enough to knock me off my bike but unfortunately it *was* deep enough to puncture my front tyre.

Now I don't know if you've ever tried to change an inner tube on a modern road (racing) bike but it's not the easiest thing to do, even in perfect conditions. In the pouring rain by the side of the road, in near freezing temperatures, it's virtually impossible. I managed to get the tyre off, the punctured inner-tube out and the new one in. But shivering like a jelly on top of a washing machine and with uselessly numb fingers, try as I might, I just couldn't get the tyre back on. As I was only a couple of miles from home I decided to walk the rest of the way. The herniated front tyre made the bike impossible to push as the bulging inner-tube kept catching on the brakes, so I chucked it over a hedge and continued on my way without it. After half an hour of hobbling along in my cycling shoes the sun came out and made the rest of the journey home relatively pleasant – 'relatively' being the operative word. After a hot drink and a quick bath to warm me up, I jumped into the car and went back to the hedge and retrieved my sorry-looking bike.

So, having learnt the hard way, my new New Year's resolution is now to take note of what the weather forecasters say, regardless of what the *actual* weather appears to be doing. As an extra precaution I have also bought some expensive reinforced tyres and have filled their inner-tubes with some self-healing green gloop. Unfortunately my bike now weighs an absolute ton which is a real pain when going uphill but will, I am sure, help me to improve my stamina and build up my scrawny legs so that I will truly look mahoosively xlnt in Lycra.

Wilstone village hall and fete committees

HERE we are again at the beginning of an exciting year. The Wilstone village fete is being planned right now and we would love you to join us in organising this brilliant venture - after all, we have a reputation to keep up! We are also looking for some bright ideas for events to take place in the hall throughout the year too. The Village Hall is one of the best in the area with its wonderful stage and curtains and (almost) refurbished loos. I'm sure most of you have experienced some great evenings there e.g. film nights, cheese and wine quiz and tasting, cabaret night, quizzes, dances etc. If you are interested in joining either the Village Hall Committee or the Fete Committee (or both) please get in touch with Richard Smissen on 01442 823253 or Jill Walker on 01442

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Quality wines and spirits on our doorstep

Village Wines in Miswell Lane: an independent wine merchant

ENTER Village Wines (in the parade of shops at the top of Miswell Lane, Tring) and you step into an impressive emporium of fine wines and quality spirits displayed from floor to ceiling. The independent wine merchant has all but disappeared from our towns, but in Tring we have a fine example. The proprietor, Mr Tejpal Singh, has been in the business for 25 years and clearly knows his trade. He had a business in London before opening in Tring eight years ago, and does the buying in this specialist trade himself. Best quality and unbeatable prices are his twin objectives, he says.

What you will discover here are selections not likely to be seen in supermarkets. A display of fine champagnes - perfect for a special occasion - catches the eye with a wide range of prices. For example, a rather exclusive Laurent-Perrier Cuvée Rosé at £44.99. The array of fine malt whisky must surely be the best selection for many miles around and enthusiasts are certain to find something to their taste. The popular Glenfiddich 12-year old single malt is priced at £29.99. Wine drinkers will be pleased with the selection of fine wines in particular. A large range of wines from Europe and the New World should meet everyone's tastes. Some examples are: a Faustino I Gran Reserva Rioja at £15.99; Oyster Bay Sauvignon Blanc at £8.99; and Lindeman's from Australia at £11 for two bottles. If you are looking for something special, Mr. Singh will be able to help. A particular speciality of Village Wines is top class vodkas from around the world - Belvedere from Poland is on special offer at £29 at the moment. Add this to a great selection of cocktail mixers, and you have the ingredients for a great party. There are always special offers, so best call in and take a look for yourself.

Village Wines is at 8 Miswell Lane, Tring, HP23 4BX. Telephone: 01442 827117. Mobile: 07949 531932. Open seven days: 2pm - 11pm Monday to Thursday; 12 noon - 11pm on Friday and Saturday; 12.30 - 10.30pm on Sundays. Offers quoted above available until 31 March 2015.

An impressive selection of champagnes is just one of the discoveries to be made at Village Wines.

New power station for Wilstone ?

Or An alternative **VILLAGE VIEW !**

ON THE NIGHTS of Sunday 18th and Thursday 22 January, Wilstone suffered two long power cuts lasting between 2½ and 6 hours. The problem appears to have been with the transformer opposite The Old Forge in Tring Road.

Overnight on Thursday this very large generator appeared on the lawn outside The Old Forge to keep the lights burning in Wilstone.

It would appear that there were two faults .One with the low voltage overhead wires, which has been fixed and another with the sub station itself, which is why the generator is there. No further details available at this moment.

I must say I feel sorry for the residents of The Old Forge and those nearby. Ed

Pictures :(Peter Walker and John Painter)

First Steps Pre-School News

AUTUMN term at First Steps Pre-School saw a wide range of activities that started with blackberry picking and baking apple and blackberry crumble which the children proudly took home to show their families. Staff and little ones wrapped up warm, braved the Autumn chill and ventured to College Lake for a memorable day trip learning about nature. November brought bonfire themed crafts and Nursery Rhyme Week, which culminated in a fun challenge for all of the children to join in with a sing-a-long of all of the rhymes that they had learned. All of this singing practice had the children ready to begin rehearsals for the Nativity play, which was performed on 16th December. The children donned their spectacular costumes and delivered a fantastic performance that was greeted with rapturous applause (and a few tears!) by an audience of very proud parents, grandparents, families, carers and friends. Autumn term finished with a lovely end of term party for the children with food, music and games to get the party season in full swing.

Spring term started on the 5th of January and Pre-School have made the most of sunny January days by taking the children across to the primary school where we have the use of outdoor space and play equipment as well as our own on site outdoor space where the children can use bikes, scooters and playground. We held an open morning for prospective and current parents on January 20th which was an opportunity to see Pre-School in action, look at the children's learning journals and ask questions to the staff and committee members. We are looking forward to special Book Week activities in March and World Book Day with fancy dress outfits representing the children's own favourite literary characters. On the 31st of March we will have our Easter Show, which is another great occasion for the children and families.

First Steps Pre-School is a registered charity, we rely on donations for renewing equipment and resources and to allow us to provide additional trips and activities for the children. We would like to thank families and friends who support us including those who give their time and have donated cakes for our stall at the Long Marston School Christmas Fair and Pre-School Nativity, also for buying and selling raffle tickets and donating prizes with special mention to A for Alfa, Wilstone Village Shop, The Half Moon and PE Mead Farm Shop for their generous donations of raffle items.

Pre-School is managed by a voluntary parent committee. On Tuesday January 27th at 9:30am we will be holding our first Committee Meeting of the year. If you would like to help support Pre-School and would like to find out more about what is involved contact Emma on 01442 823 013.

First Steps Pre-School is held at Victory Hall, Long Marston every Monday (9-12), Tuesday (9-12, Lunch Club 12-1:30 and afternoon session 1:30-3), Thursday (9-12, Lunch Club 12-1:30) and Friday (9-12, Lunch Club 12-1:30) during term time. We welcome all children aged between 2 ½ and 5 years and as a result many children stay with us until they move together 'across the road to big school'. If you would like to know more about Pre-School, come and visit or add your child to the admissions list then please get in touch with either Teresa Giddings our Pre-School Leader on 07925 185 311 (during Pre-School hours) or our Chairperson Emma Lynch on 01442 823 013 or email firststepslongmarston@gmail.com, see also www.firststepspreschool.org.uk.

The Whitchurch Morris Men – In Birmingham

OVER the festive period we did our usual Boxing Day dancing at Cadsden but elected not to go to Enfield on New Year's Day. Instead the Side went to Birmingham over the Plough Sunday weekend and attended the blessing of the plough in St Martin's Church in the Bull Ring. This was followed by a clear, bright if windy and cold day pulling the plough around the city centre and dancing at several locations.

The Plough in Lower Temple Street, Birmingham

Following on, we attended the Stafford Men's winter feast at Church Eaton for a very large roast beef dinner. The following Tuesday evening was our own Plough Tuesday Feast in Wilstone which was by coincidence another roast beef dinner with liquid refreshment direct from the St. Austell Brewery.

Before Christmas you may have come across a couple of television programmes that looked at England's local history. On More 4 there was a series called Hidden Villages with Penelope Keith. Perhaps a little light weight, the second episode did take a quick look at the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance. She didn't really understand what was happening or why and concluded that no-one really did. From 4 years ago, there was a programme called Still Dancing After All These Years, extracts are available on YouTube which is far more informative. The whole series has been/was rebroadcast in January but even if you missed that, it is available in toto on YouTube.

The other programme was a follow on from the continuing success of Strictly. This was The Intimate History of Dance with Len Goodman and Dr. Lucy Worsley and again came in three episodes. It looked how dance developed through the years in England, which didn't just include the formal dances but had a fleeting glimpse in episode 1 of North West Clog with Len trying his stepping in a Lancashire Mill. In episode 3, Lucy took a look at Mary Neal through the resources of the Vaughn Williams Library in Cecil Sharp House and what Mary achieved. Lucy was able to trace the steps of history in the modern world and danced with The Belles of London City on the site where Mary Neal and her girl's Esperance Morris danced. This whole series is available to watch on YouTube should you wish to view it. If you want to know more about Mary Neal, who was born in Edgbaston in Birmingham, there is plenty on the internet which includes her Morris notation book. There was so much about country/folk dance that wasn't included though.
February will see the annual Radio 2 Folk Awards so watch out for them.

Wassail,
John King
WMM

Review:

Club Paradiso medley delights with hidden talents

by our nightlife correspondent

FOURTEEN remarkably different acts delighted an enthusiastic audience at the LM&P Horticultural Society's new venture, Club Paradiso, on 28th November. The courageous promoters probably realised the risks when they canvassed for acts to take part, but they must have been impressed with turnout of performers. The MC, Chris Hodges, had his work cut out organising stage time for such a huge programme. Musical acts are the bread and butter of such evenings of course and there was fine music here too, but the variety of diverse (and whacky) acts marked out this show as different. 'Noddy on the Radio' strayed somewhat from the narratives I recall from childhood though - perhaps some mistake? Not so the fine rendition (in full) of the northerner's favourite: 'Albert and the Lion', delivered with accuracy and authenticity, apparently by a real northerner too. Now we know what a Foley Artist does on the film set (adds the sound effects) after members of the audience were invited to do just that in an entertaining and unusual practical demonstration of the art. Tel and Al's radio broadcast was also different - neither appeared, and the curtain remained closed for this audio comedy. Very funny. But the magic act 'The Great Supremo' went one better than that. He was sick, and could not come at all. The stand-in, 'The Great Stupendo', clearly needed more practice, and his first efforts were not encouraging. But just when we thought it was all over, to gasps of real astonishment, he did make the lady disappear! How was it done? No idea. One of many surprises at this highly entertaining evening at Club Paradiso.

All the performers deserve a mention. In order of appearance they were: Patrick Scahill, Noah Munt, Freddie Hodgson, Martin Winship, Emma and Harvey, Ian Nicholson, Terry Veal, Alan Munt, David Severs, Dash Macdonald, Gill Macdonald, Charlie Severs, Tarren Hayes, Chris Hodges, Jack Hedges, Steph Wilson, Sally Smith, Keith Foster, and Marie. Impresarios: Gill Macdonald and Chris Hodges. ***Review rating: delightful.***

News from the LM & P WI
by Sue Barraclough

WELL 2014 finished with a flourish for our members with a hugely enjoyable Christmas party at which, in addition to the delicious food, which as always was provided by our members, we enjoyed some hilarious home grown entertainment and a visit from Santa to distribute our gifts.

A couple of days following the Christmas party our members rallied once again to stage a Christmas Wonderland fund raiser – huge thanks go to David and Ollie Cornell for the work they put into this and the use of their garden. David was hard at work for days beforehand wiring up all the lights and making a Grotto for Santa. Come the day a band of WI ladies braved the cold for 3 hours whilst children and adults alike enjoyed a close up of the spectacular lights, ate delicious home baked cakes, browsed the craft stall and of course last but not least visited Santa in his Grotto. As we have been asked by several people if we would stage this event again in coming years I think that we can consider it a great success.

Onto 2015 and January started with a craft making meeting . Some members who had attended a county 'Dabble Day' demonstrated to fellow members the crafts they had learned, these included how to make decoupage cards, tapestry embroidery cushions, gift boxes and organza brooches. Everyone was able to leave with something that they had made and by popular request we will be staging more craft days in the future. We are also looking forward to continuing our regular walks, theatre trips and monthly lunches.

Our next meeting should prove to be very interesting as we will have Matthew Mojsac M.Ost, DO, ND, from the Chiltern Vale Clinic who will to talk to us about Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. The meeting is on Tuesday 10th February at 7.30pm and visitors will be welcome to attend.

We have a very busy year ahead as it is the 100th anniversary of the National WI. Events will include our local WI's having exclusive use of Waddesdon Manor Gardens for a party in the summer, the centenary baton coming through Bucks accompanied by various activities including a party, complete with craft stalls, on the lawns at Ivinghoe and a special Annual Meeting at the Royal Albert Hall.
We hope that some of you will be inspired to come along and join us as we are a very friendly group and always pleased to welcome new members and visitors.

If you would like more information or to receive full programme of our meetings please ring Sue Barraclough on 01296 668272 or Maggy Winship on 01296 662388.

Electricity from sunshine and food waste

Two local renewable energy projects aim to reduce carbon footprint

SOLAR power specialists Hive Energy have lost no time in beginning construction of their solar park at Folly Farm in the north west corner of the parish. Their planning application to build a solar power station to generate 15MW of electricity from the sun was approved by Dacorum Borough Council on 12th November, and already the solar panels are being installed at the 61-acre site. The £20M project will produce electricity for the national grid - enough for 4,500 homes apparently - and is expected to take 20 weeks to build. Hive Energy say that the UK now produces more power from the sun than Spain and is among the world's top ten solar markets.

Simultaneously, Buckinghamshire County Council is dealing with a planning application from Arla Foods to build an Anaerobic Digestion (AD) power plant on a site next to the Arla Dairy in Aston Clinton. Arla say that this is part of their plan for 'zero carbon' status for the new mega dairy. Anaerobic Digestion produces methane gas from food waste, and this gas is used to power an electricity generator. The power produced will be directly used by the dairy. The residues from the process are turned into fertiliser for agricultural use. To provide enough power for such a huge dairy a lot of food waste will be needed. 50,000 tonnes per year. So commercial waste food will be collected from large scale producers such as supermarkets, shops, restaurants and canteens. The milk residues left over from the dairy processes will also be used. The proposed AD plant will occupy a 5.7 acre site, and will be one of the largest in the country. Most existing AD plants in the country are fairly small scale (Archers fans will remember the Ambridge project). Although the consultation period will have passed by the time you read this, full details of the planning application (including a detailed description of the AD process) can be viewed on the Bucks County Council website: **www.buckscc.gov.uk/planningapplications.** The application reference is: CM/78/14. Tring Rural Parish Council decided at their January meeting that they did not have any objection to the proposal, but registered concerns about vehicle movements. A number of comments have been registered by local residents, not all of them objections. A concern expressed has been about unpleasant smells from the facility. There are some expressions of support too.

So where does our electricity come from?
The answer is a little surprising. Power companies now have to tell us the answer, so figures are published on electricity bills. Taking one supplier (E.ON) as an example, their UK figures for the year ending March 2014 showed that coal was still the biggest source, with 42% of their electricity coming from coal-fired power stations. Natural gas came second at 24.4%, but in third place were renewable sources (wind, solar, AD) at a surprising 20.9%. Nuclear power is an also-ran at 7.6%, and 5.2% of 'others' make up the numbers. So 'renewables' are making a significant impact.

Tring and district local History and museum society

Speaker programme 2015

20 May 2015 AGM
Cassiobury - A walk in the Park ***Laurie Elvin***

Laurie Elvin is a chartered surveyor and Chairman of the SW Herts Archaeological and Historical Society. He has a Diploma in Archaeology and much experience of fieldwork. The talk will describe the origins and extent of the Cassiobury Estate of the Earls of Essex, which was sold off in the early 20th century. A "walk" will then be taken around the estate, showing images of the lost and extant important buildings, including Cassiobury House itself.

***1 July 2015**
Aylesbury, Tring, Berkhamsted - Three medieval market towns
Julian Hunt

As part of the celebrations on the 700th anniversary of Tring's market charter, the Buckinghamshire historian Julian Hunt is giving a talk on Aylesbury, Tring and Berkhamsted, three medieval market towns. He will explain just how difficult it was in 1315 for Tring to step up from a village to a market town with such ancient and well-established neighbours as Aylesbury and Berkhamsted. He will show, nevertheless, how Tring's strategic position in a gap in the Chiltern hills drew Roman engineers, turnpike trustees, canal builders and railwaymen to favour Tring as their gateway to the English Midlands.

16 September 2015
Oliver Pike - Pioneer wildlife photographer ***Rory Morrisey***

Rory Morrisey is an amateur photographer and naturalist living in Leighton Buzzard. The talk will describe the life and achievements of Oliver Pike, one of the first professional wildlife photographers. He started photographing wildlife in its natural home in the 1890s and was responsible for many innovations in that field. He wrote over 30 books and made over 80 cine films and was a champion of wildlife and nature conservation. He had several local connections – making films at Tring Reservoirs, and living at Marsworth and subsequently near Leighton Buzzard.

18 November 2015
The history of RAF Halton ***Francis Hanford***

Francis Hanford is the curator of the Trenchard Museum at RAF Halton. The talk will describe the arrival of the RFC/RAF at Halton, the acquisition of the estate after the First World War, the development and history of the Halton Apprentices, the station's contribution to the Second World War and the arrival of recruit training after the demise of the apprentice scheme. He will also mention the hospital and other trades trained at Halton over its 96 year existence.

*The meeting on 1 July 2015 will form part of the Tring Charter 700 celebration and will be held at 8 pm in the Victoria Hall, Akeman Street, Tring. Visitors will be welcome on payment of £5.

Martin Wells
Programme Secretary
Tring & District Local History & Museum Society

Some of the volunteers at the Wilstone Village Community shop.
Picture: John Painter

Community Shop Wilstone opening hours:

Monday to Friday: 7.30am to 2.00pm Saturday 7.30am to 1.00pm Sunday: 9.00am to 12.00 noon.

From the Vicarage

by Rev'd Jane Banister

PANCAKE Day is early this year – Tuesday 17th February – and it is also known as Shrove Tuesday, from the old word "shrive" meaning to confess. It is also known in many places as Mardi Gras, or Fat Tuesday, which comes from the celebrations that are held before Lent starts that often involve lots of food that will not be eaten during Lent. Carnival is also another name for the celebrations held in the run-up to Lent, and some believe that the word comes from the Latin "carne vale" or farewell to meat since many gave up meat.

I am not great at making pancakes: the first and the last in a batch are always disasters and quite a few of the ones in between. My husband cooks pancakes for everyone with 2 frying pans on the go at once but I know my limitations. Unsurprisingly I am traditional and prefer sugar and lemon as a topping, and no-one can persuade me that chocolate spread or golden syrup are better, although I still have sneaking nostalgia for Findus crispy pancakes with their fluorescent orange colour and filling that would always burn your tongue. While they were certainly crispy, I am not sure that they really qualify as pancakes. (NB I have just discovered you can still buy them! But the colour seems toned down somewhat).

However the bigger decision than what to have on my pancakes is what I will do for Lent this year and I still have not made up my mind. There are lots of resources out there to help – look at the websites for Christian Aid, Cafod, and the Diocese of St Albans – and these can come in app form, texts, emails, calendars and more. There are also lots of books such as Reflections for Lent by Lucy Winkett, or In God's Hands by Desmond Tutu.

But I know that whatever I choose I have to get the motivation right. There is no point in doing anything that makes me feel guilty when I don't do it, or anything that I don't find enriching or make me think. The point of taking something up for Lent or giving something up is that I should gain something from it. One of the advantages over a New Year's resolution is that the six weeks of Lent is a very good length of time to change things.

So over the next couple of weeks I will be thinking and researching and by the time I have finished my pancakes in Shrive Tuesday I will be looking forward to the weeks of Lent as a time of growth.

Church Bits

SOME time in the next few weeks, before the birds start nesting, we will be pollarding the ash tree in the church yard that is near the pavement. It is a magnificent tree and we do want to keep it, but the effects of ivy growth and more seriously of a fungus called Inonotus hispidus mean that we cannot keep it the size it is. It will be reduced by about two thirds, and we have of course gained the relevant permission from both the Council and the Diocese.

Mardi Gras!

FOLLOWING the success of our Night Time, Light Time event in the autumn, we have decided to do something similar for the beginning of Lent. So on Sunday 15th February at 4pm in church, everyone is welcome to gather for Pancake races, games and pancake eating! Watch out for more information on this (yes I do know that Mardi Gras means Fat Tuesday, but we were trying to avoid something in the middle of half term!)

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News from St. Cross

Last year and this year

WE would like to start with a 'thank you' from the end of last year. The Advent Concert by Richard Grylls and the Ridgeway Chorale, held on 10th December, provided a wonderful opening to the Christmas season. A full church (standing room only) enjoyed an evening of advent music and carols, followed by a glass of wine and nibbles. The concert is a bi-annual event, and this year proceeds went to DENS, the Dacorum Emergency Night Shelter project, which is raising funds to open a new hostel this year. Many thanks to Richard and his Chorale, and to everyone who attended the concert; together we raised a wonderful £465 for DENS.

Looking forward, our next two events are the launch of the annual Food Bank collection during Lent, and then the Lent Lunch.

Traditionally people gave up something for the duration of Lent, but contemporary thinking suggests that doing something practical to help/support those in need is a much more positive and sustaining use of the 40 days. St. Cross totally agree, so we aim to collect 40 items for the Dacorum Food Bank during this time, whilst still being able to enjoy coffee and cake every Tuesday morning at the church. The collection will start on Tuesday 24th February, as part of the 10.00am service, and continue to Easter Sunday.

The Lent Lunch is part of a series of lunches, held by churches throughout the country. It is a frugal lunch of soup, bread and cheese, and coffee, designed to remind people of the many areas of the world where food is scarce. Everyone is welcome, there is no charge, but donations to Christian Aid are very much appreciated. The lunch will be held in Wilstone Village Hall on Wednesday 11th March, 12 noon to 2.00pm.

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Wilstone Community Shop News

WITH the brilliant news that we are able to stay in our current location for at least the next couple of years, we have been able to give the shop a bit of a facelift by removing the old Post Office partitioning, relocating the counter and adding a bigger deli. The new layout has opened up more wall space for goods as well as providing a more welcoming feel for our customers. Come in and see what you think!

We have lots of ideas for the coming year and will be focusing on special themes every month. During February we will be stocking maple syrup, lemons, oranges, small jars of Nutella and of course pancakes for *Pancake Day* on 17 February. We shall also be supporting *Fair Trade fortnight* (23 Feb – 8 Mar) by not only discounting our current Fair Trade items for the period but also by stocking some additional Fair Trade items like Easter Eggs.

For *Mother's Day* on 15 March we shall be trialling a new idea - 'Breakfast in a bag'. You will be able to pre-order your chosen bag and pick it up on the Sunday morning in time to provide a delicious breakfast for that special person – or even for yourself! More details will be available in the shop closer to the time, but I myself have already put a request in for a pain au chocolate breakfast J.

As always our focus is on local products at good, fair prices as well as being a place where people can come for a chat or find out about local events and if you have a few hours to spare in the week, why not come along and join our band of volunteers? You'd be made very welcome.

Ridgeway Chorale at St. Cross

IT was a good idea to turn up early for the Christmas concert given by the highly-regarded Ridgeway Chorale at St. Cross, Wilstone, in December. All available seats had been deployed and, even so, latecomers had to listen from the lobby. This presented a delivery problem for the organisers of mince pies and wine at the end, but they overcame this by offering an "at seat" service. Musical Director Richard Grylls chose a wide selection of Christmas music, interspersed with well-known carols for everyone to sing, which they did - with enthusiasm.

Solos by 12-year old Thomas O'Shea on the French horn and by vocalists Zoe Hill and Katie Hughes, together with fine accompaniment on piano and organ by Jenny Hoare, complimented a delightful concert.

The Ridgeway Chorale is a local group which has given concerts around the UK, and has raised over £23,000 for charities in the process. They have a regular slot at 6am on May Day each year, when they sing to a select audience from the top of the church tower at St. Mary's, Puttenham. This concert at St. Cross raised money for the Dacorum Emergency Night Shelter through donations made after the performance. Great to have such a prestigious event in our villages.

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The agricultural story line….

by David Mead

WELL, where does it all come from? Well I came up Watery Lane on Saturday - that is where it's all going. I will try to answer the question. There are a series of springs along the base of the chalk hills. West of Bulbourne, Tring and Miswell, Tring Ford, Drayton, and small ones in between. These all drained towards Marsworth and on to Long Marston. Others ended up, via Wilstone, to - yes you've guessed it - Long Marston. The canal company arrived in the 1700s. They needed as much water as possible at the summit, so reservoirs were built, pumps installed. So all land below the spring line could now be cultivated. The main water courses still exist. With more water than the canal people can deal with, it has to get to the River Thames. If you drive to Oxford you can see it has a rest the other side of Thame. In my youth reservoirs used to overflow. Waters from Marsworth and Startops and Little Tring rushed along to the B489 where it could be directed to Wilstone reservoir or to join the old water course to Gubblecote and Long Marston. The river people used to clean out the water courses but now the ditches and culverts have silted up. The culverts are the old brick ones, cleverly made but in need of replacement. Some water is diverted at Gubblecote to go across fields to join the Wilstone 'river' down Watery Lane. I heard my Father say that he was told a diversion board could be put in the Wilstone Brook at the beginning of Chapel End Lane, Wilstone to take excess along the ditch there. The roadside ditch certainly falls away from the Tring Road towards the river course across the field. The canal boys can control the outlets from the reservoirs but such heavy rain overstretched the existing system. With flooding of houses, something must be done.

Simon, Jenny and the shop personnel have all been for an open day in Nottingham to be introduced to new tills. A challenge, we'll see. I heard the words "touch screens" mentioned. Words like: "That can't be right" will be heard. We're getting an expert. With four tills this week, he'll be kept busy.

Where have all the pigeons gone? Last year they did a lot of damage to the oil seed rape, this year none, just a few locals seeming to be quite happy with the odd berry and clover leaf.

I'm still doing my log deliveries. The logs are fine but the delivery boy is having trouble with his memory. A load to Tilsworth caused problems. I asked two people, thank you very much. Oh My God, I've been there at least a dozen times. I've got to go to Wallingford, the Old Post Office, I will be following the old spring line I mentioned earlier. It's strange but all our water goes under the road bridge at Wallingford on its way to London and the sea.

Chris Mead and Nick Murrell are both showing off their new knees. Chris is walking several miles a day and should be driving shortly. He was given a film of his operation, close up and gory. His other knee is alright, honest!

The gardens are well ahead this year, my Aconites are in bloom, still the odd rose and daffodils are in bud. Gardeners are very competitive. Come on. Who in our patch had daffodils out in January (not these ones grown in pots)? Are there any lawn mowers for mowing under water grass? We are only six weeks away from lambing. That's it. Hibernation is a must.

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Tring Parish Men's Society

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

AT our December meeting we discussed whether Christmas would be merry or spoilt by the pressure of preparation. Many do need to start preparing early for Christmas – eg choristers. And teachers and children need to rehearse for school plays. The anticipation and expectations can cause stress all round. The shopping rush began on Cyber Monday but as far as the world is concerned the twelve days of Epiphany do not exist, the decorations have come down and the sales have begun.

We looked at what *merry* means – relaxed contentment, warm and holding a glass of wine, a leisurely family Christmas dinner with all the family around – provided they only stay a couple of days. There can be practical difficulties over in-law visiting and children living faraway, but it is also the season when friction and family tensions can arise.
Many people have to work over Christmas but often those who dislike Christmas volunteer. There is a greater feeling of sympathy for those who are dependent on the social services which close over Christmas. Crisis (now not just for Christmas) is a charity set up to overcome this for the homeless.

So what should we do about Christmas – ban something? Drop the fir tree dropping needles everywhere, sending (Victorian) greetings cards, and eating dry turkey and brussels? Or we can try doing something positive like sharing the meaning of Christmas as a story which really happened, and not a fairy tale. Philip summed up by saying that although we moan about aspects of Christmas, it is a good annual routine to have.

The celebrations have got us past the shortest day!
"New Year, New Look, New Venue – at the Half Moon, Wilstone at 8pm. Topic *New Year Resolutions."* The meeting was quickly retitled *Abandoned Resolutions* by Philip who kicked off for the evening, having arrived early and just finished his meal. He recalled a millennium resolution when he had won a prize for writing on what to do with London's waste. It was not taken up but "all blown to bits."

Somehow the conversation, for the first of many times during the evening, strayed off resolutions. The topic became trusting other people, or rather that you cannot trust them – doctors? Immigrants? The bar staff? One another? In practice we are trusting or relying on others most of the time, and life could not function without trust. Trust, like friendship grows as we get to know people. At this point my Farmhouse ham, egg and chips arrived, so I will pick up the conversation later with trade union demarcation. Fleet Street in the 1970s was contrasted with impressions from our recent visit to the BMW Mini works.

Further topics included refugees from the Mediterranean, pensions theory (i.e where does the money come from?), and should I stop being prejudiced against institutions designed to help me?

John brought the conversation back to the topic of loving one's neighbour, where it had been before, for instance in the question of trust.
As customary at our meetings we ended with Compline;

The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end .

Leslie Barker

Rennie Grove Hospice Care
Care based around you

I would like to let you know about a fantastic musical event happening in Tring in February which you may be interested in attending to help raise funds for Rennie Grove Hospice Care.

Guys and Dolls:
Monday 9th February 2014
Markova Theatre, Tring Park School HP23 5LX

A musical fable of Broadway based on a story and characters of Damon Runyon performed in the Markova Theatre by students of Tring Park School for the Performing Arts, we anticipate this musical show being a sell-out performance and would recommend purchasing tickets early.
Tickets are £15 & £12 (under 16s) and the performance starts at 7.30pm. Doors open at 7pm and a bar will be available and raffle tickets will be on sale.
Tickets for both events are now on sale and can be purchased from the FundraisingTeam at community@renniegrove.org, on 01442 890222 or from the Iain Rennie Hospice at Home shop in Tring.
I do hope that you will be able to support us by joining us at one or both of the events, which look set to provide two enjoyable and entertaining evenings.
Best Wishes Nicola King Community Fundraiser Rennie Grove Hospice Care

The Puttenham Page

compiled by Christine Rutter

A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL

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Library Lunch - "Colour in the garden"

THE NEXT LIBRARY will be held on Wednesday 25th March at 1pm in Cheddington Village Hall. The speaker will be Edwin Rye, former BBC Gardener of the Year talking about "Colour in the Garden". A two course lunch with vegetarian option, is included. Tickets are just £15 each, available from the Library in Ivinghoe or by phoning Linda on 01296 668582 or Janet 01296 668341. All proceeds support the local library.

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Friday 2pm - 7pm
Saturday 10am - 1pm

Flood report
recommendations

Hertfordshire County Council, as the lead flood authority, issued their final report into the February flooding in Long Marston on 27th November 2014.The 29-page report contains eight recommendations, only the headings of which are reproduced here. The full report has been published on the HCC website: **www.hertsdirect.org.** *(A search for "Long Marston flood report" should take you to the right page.)*

Rec 1. Investigation of property level protection. Action by: Dacorum Borough Council.
Rec 2. Carry out maintenance works to watercourse. Action by: EA, HCC as lead flood authority, riparian land owners.
Rec 3. Investigate the Tring Bourne culvert upgrade**.** Action by: EA, HCC.
Rec 4. Investigate diversion of the Tring Bourne. Action by: EA, HCC, DBC.
Rec 5. Investigation of modifications to the surface water capture and drainage system in and around Long Marston. Action by: HCC, HCC as Highway Authority, DBC.
Rec 6. Investigate the modification of road levels south of Chapel Lane. Action by: HCC as Highway Authority.
Rec 7. Improvement to the foul sewerage infrastructure. Acton by: Thames Water.
Rec 8. Explore changes to Land Management east of Tring Road and Station Road. Action by: HCC as lead flood authority, landowners.
(EA: Environment Agency. HCC: Hertfordshire County Council. DBC: Dacorum Borough Council)

With acknowledgement to Hertfordshire County Council. Extracts from: "HCC Flood Investigation Report. Long Marston, Herts." Report author: Jack Shephard. Report approved by: John Rumble.

Max Smissen

Our beautiful Maxy sadly died very suddenly but peacefully on Christmas Eve. He was 10 and a half years old and was the most handsome, loyal, kind and gentle dog that anyone could ever wish to have. He was very popular in Wilstone and was always keen to greet and be loved and stroked by all his friends in the village.

Max had a great life, he was fit and healthy right until the end and died in his home with his family around him. We are absolutely devastated at losing him and would like to thank all those who have offered support and kind words over the last few weeks.

With love from Rich, Sam, Charlie, James and Shirley.

Jack and the Beanstalk

Once again, its time for the local population To join in the fun at this years Long Marston village Pantomime! Great fun for all the family, this year we have a floral theme with vegetables flying all over the stage. With 2 heartless baddies controlled by a fearful giant, will Jack and his friends be able to rescue the princess and save the day? Being staged during the half term holiday (19th-21st February), a fun night out for all the family is promised. Tickets priced at £7 (adult) £5 (OAP) & £3 (Child) can be bought from the Queens Head in Long Marston, Meads Farm Shop and the community shop in Wilstone. We will also be selling them every Sunday from Long Marston Victory Hall.

Red Nose Day 13th March 2015

Hello there,
I'm getting involved this Red Nose Day to raise cash and change lives both here in the UK and across Africa.

I am taking part in the Comic Relief Danceathon at Wembley on Sunday 8 March - 6 hours of dancing with 2000 dancers !

And I could really use your help to get as many sponsors as I possibly can. Please sponsor me on my Red Nose Day Giving Page today, it's instant and secure and will help make the world of difference to people's lives.

Thank you so much for your support!

Keri Donnellan

To sponsor Keri who runs the **Jazzercise** classes (page 22) at Wilstone village Hall just enter the following into your browser address bar

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Long Marston Cricket Club.

by Paul Dumpleton - Chairman

MUCH progress at the cricket club during the winter months. Several new exciting recruits on the playing front as we prepare for our first ever season in Division One of the Oxford Cherwell league.

The eager anticipation for the new season is evidenced by those members already making the efforts to go to Net & Coaching sessions at Chesham Prep School under the watchful, skilled eye of new coach Paul Atkins. Paul has a tremendous CV in local and National Cricket and we are already under way with a schools and youth programme in the locality. Paul (via the club) will offer his considerable skills to local schools as we continue the search for the next cricketers to take the club forward.

All representative fixture dates have been confirmed and can be viewed in the diary section of the Village news as well as on the website (details below). Highlight is undoubtedly the arrival of the 2014 county champions Yorkshire's 2nd XI on Weds 15th July to take on the National Unicorns team in the ECB Trophy.#

The draw for the early rounds of the Davidstow National Village cup is being made this week. Two sides from our Cherwell League reached the national semi finals in 2014.

Follow progress on:
http://www.pitchero.com/clubs/longmarstoncricketclub/

BOVINE CRISIS IN HAPPYDALE!

This years pantomime features 2 animals and the Horti are looking for volunteers interested in donning a cow suit for each performance! Why not come along and have a go!
We are also looking for volunteers to help out during the performances this year. Tasks range from selling raffle tickets and ice creams to helping out on stage setting up for each scene.

Please contact Toby Davidson (stage manager) on
07970 636168 or call in at the Village Hall on any Sunday.

We can always find you a paintbrush if nothing else!

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TGI February

by Martin Winship

LET'S face it, it's February. Everybody's second favourite month after January. Christmas and New Year just a fading memory (but still causing stabbing pains in the wallet) weather cold, wet and miserable. Though January is on average the coldest month of the year in the Northern Hemisphere, February holds some records for frosts more severe than any January ones. Margaret Atwood, in her poem about February, describes it as the "Month of Despair", and Flanders and Swan, in their Song of the Weather, crooned "February's ice and sleet, freeze the toes right off your feet" – but it's usually just grey, and damp, and grim. The Old English name for the month was *Solmonath*, which Bede interpreted as a reference to the cakes which Anglo-Saxons offered to their gods. Most other authorities, however, translate it as Mud Month, which somehow rings truer! All in all, it's hopeless.

Or is it? Surely there must be some redeeming features about this month, something interesting about it?

Well, February is named after the Latin word *Februum*, which means purification, from the ritual *Februa* which the jolly Romans held at the full moon, February is the time of cleansing. It was actually added to the Roman calendar in about 713BC; it remained the last month of the year until c450BC, when it became the second. Sometimes February only had 23 or 24 days! Julius Caesar put an end to all that nonsense.

February lies completely within the Wheel of Life Segment known as *Imbolc*, which runs from its feast day until the Spring Equinox. Imbolc day (1st February) is the old Celtic festival celebrating the birth of the first lambs, and coincides with Candlemas and the shared feast of St Bride. The zodiac signs covering the month are Aquarius (January 20th to February 18th) and Pisces (February 19th to March 20th). And in the Tree Calendar, it lies partly in the Rowan Moon (January 21st to February 17th) and partly in the Ash Moon (February 18th to March 17th).
February 2nd is Groundhog Day, and if Punxsutawney Pete sees his own shadow on this day, he hibernates for another 6 weeks! The origin of this rather odd tradition is ancient Greek; it was believed that an animal's shadow was its soul, which was darkened by the year's sins. Hibernation helped spiritual renewal; if an animal woke up and saw its shadow, it knew it needed more therapy!

February 14th is of course St. Valentine's Day, when secret love is shared. An estimated one billion cards will be received world-wide this year! At the other end of the spectrum, St. Valentine's Day 1929 saw four of Al Capone's gunmen deliver a different message when they machine gunned members of George "Bugs" Moran's gang in Chicago.

Plenty of famous people have had the "privilege" of being born in February; Clark Gable's cameras rolled on the 1st, Bob Marley wailed his first wail on the 6th, Jimmy Durante looked down his nose on the 10th, Abraham Lincoln and Anna Pavlova started their disparate careers on the 12th, John Travolta danced on the scene on the 17th, followed by Lee Marvin (19th), Gordon Brown (20th) and Robert Mugabe (21st). George Harrison tuned up on the 25th and Ainsley Harriot put the icing on the cake on the 28th.

February 2015 has some great prospects. For sport fans, the Rugby 6 Nations runs from the 6th of February to the 21st of March. Track Cycling World Championships are from the 18th to the 22nd and to cap it all, the European Indoor Archery Championships run from the 24th to the 28th. Some great new films are being released this month, including The Seventh Son, Fifty Shades of Grey, SpongeBob: Sponge Out Of Water, Hot Tub Time Machine 2, and The Vatican Tapes. The high-point of the month will of course be the Long Marston Pantomime, Jack and the Beanstalk, which you might be surprised to hear has been nominated for an award. I would be surprised too.

There are loads of other excuses for a party in February; here are just a few:-

1st	Baked alaska day	15th	Gumdrop day
2nd	Groundhog day	16th	Almond day
3rd	Day the music died day	17th	Random acts of kindness day
4th	Create a vacuum day	18th	Battery day
5th	Shower with a friend day	19th	Chocolate mint day
6th	Lame duck day	20th	Love your pet day
7th	Send a card to a friend day	21st	Sticky bun day
8th	Kite flying day	22nd	Saint Lucia independence day
9th	Toothache day	23rd	Dog biscuit day
10th	Umbrella day	24th	Tortilla chip day
11th	Japan national foundation day	25th	Chocolate covered nut day
12th	Plum pudding day	26th	Tell a fairy tale day
13th	Blame someone else day	27th	Polar Bear day
14th	Ferris wheel day	28th	Public sleeping day

Sudoku solution

No 91 solution

7	4	8	2	3	9	5	1	6
3	6	9	4	1	5	8	7	2
1	5	2	8	6	7	9	4	3
8	9	6	5	4	2	1	3	7
4	7	1	9	8	3	2	6	5
5	2	3	1	7	6	4	9	8
9	3	5	7	2	4	6	8	1
6	1	4	3	5	8	7	2	9
2	8	7	6	9	1	3	5	4

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Changes or additions? Contact the Editor.

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Caroline Clist will be your editor

You can read *Village News* online at:
www.tringruralpc.org.uk (Click on Village News)
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Santa sighting in Station Road

SANTA re-located to Station Road for one evening in December when he saw an opportunity to receive local children at the switch-on of the (unofficial) Long Marston Christmas illuminations. For several years at this time, the front garden at the home of Olli Wheeler-Cornell and her husband David has been lit up for Christmas, and is possibly a distraction for EasyJet pilots at the end of their long flight from Lanzarotte. This year the local WI branch organised a visit from Santa too, and laid on tea and cakes to make his visit worthwhile. Children were able to visit Santa and have their picture taken on his sleigh. Santa kindly agreed to have this photo taken for our pages.

Santa and his sleigh

The well illuminated garden of Oli Wheeler-Cornell

Carol Singing for Rennie Grove Hospice Care

A small group from Sing-Wilstone sang carols at Tring Station on Friday 12th December.

The choir also sang Carols (with the help of the patrons) at The Half Moon, Wilstone on 16th December.

A magnificent total of £316.25 was raised from both events. Thank you to everyone who contributed voices and pennies.

Galanthomania or the Love of Snowdrops

by John Noakes

EMERGING and blooming at a season when few other flowers are visible and coping with the worst weather, snowdrops bring optimism that winter is coming to an end.

The Swedish botanist, Carl Linnaeus, gave the snowdrop its scientific name *Galanthus* from the Greek *Gala* meaning milk and *anthos* meaning flower. In Germany they were called *Schneeglockchen* meaning snow-bells. Here we just know them as *Snowdrops.*

All snowdrops have the given or generic name of *Galanthus,* however there are 19 species that grow in the wild, mainly from Turkey, Greece and the Balkans. These individuals are given a specific name; for instance the common snowdrop we grow here is *Galanthus nivalis*

Some of the flowers display considerable differences from one another. Many have attractive green markings on the petals others are double and some have different shaped flowers. Some indeed are yellow.

Where individual species display distinct differences or cross fertilize with other species these are given a *varietal* names. With some it is impossible to know their origin or parentage and are named after a place or person; for instance a lovely snowdrop which has balloon shaped flowers is called "*Diggory."*It was found in the garden of a colleague of mine whose son had recently died. His nickname was Diggory and hence it was named after him.

Another is described after its strange shaped petals and is named *Galanthus "Walrus''*. A further snowdrop was named after the place it was found, South Hayes, hence *Galanthus "South Hayes"*. These are just three of the many hundreds in cultivation. Many of these snowdrops are quite rare and difficult to produce in any numbers so command ludicrously high prices. There is a large group of people who chase around the country in late January into February to snowdrop parties searching for these rare plants. Collectively these people are known as Galanthophiles. I suppose I might call myself one as I have over forty varieties but am not prepared to pay the high prices for bulbs. As I write this piece in early December I already have a drift of snowdrops in my front garden at Old Church Cottage in Long Marston. Late January and February bring many more.

Over the Weekend of 14th and 15th February between 11am and 3pm we will be opening our garden under the National Garden Scheme (gardens open for charity). In addition to snowdrops we will be serving muffins and mulled wine as possible anti-freeze. Please see page 4 for details

The Potash Lane allotment story

by Joan Dean

Ready for the off.

AS I SIT HERE eating my leek and potato soup (obviously the ingredients harvested from the allotment) I am contemplating what to grow this year. The Autumn raspberries and the asparagus have now been cut back ready for the new year's growth, they were both a great success and are here to stay. So little work and so worthwhile. There were, however, a lot of failures and much as I would like to blame it all on the cold, wet Spring I suspect that is not the whole story. So having covered the ground with manure where the beans and above the ground produce will go, the seed bed has been left unmanured as too much manure promotes forking of carrots and parsnips so I am told by the experts! I will definitely put my carrots in later so as to avoid carrot fly, had a lot of that last year on the carrots that did choose to grow (not many did in fact). The parsnips did not grow at all, lots of lovely tops nothing underneath, but will still give them another go this year. Will definitely not be growing anything (apart from leeks) that needs harvesting in the winter, far too cold and wet to be out there for that. Anything in the bean family are worth a shot at on our heavy soil, so they will have a place – broad, runner and French. Potatoes, particularly earlies, are a must nothing to beat those new small potatoes straight out of the ground, might try a few in grow bags again, you don't get many, but so delicious. Onions and shallots are a must too, they were a great success last year and we still have strings of onions although they don't seem to last as long as we would like; having to throw a lot away, perhaps we don't store them very well. The beetroot was great and we pickle a lot so that is still going strong in the larder, very worthwhile. The jury is out on the sweetcorn, the 5 or 6 we harvested at the right time were wonderful, but that is all out of about 30 plants not a good ratio? But watch this space, a bit loathe to give up on them. We grow the pumpkins for our grandson, but having given up one of our allotments suspect there won't be room this year for them, especially as we have put yet more paving down, much to Neil's disgust? Less growing ground he says. What a lot to look forward to, why not come and join our little community and enjoy the fruits of your labours. Ring Elaine Winter on 01442 827913 to book your pitch, need to get in early as not many come free each year. If you are a complete beginner it doesn't matter a jot a lot of help is on hand.