April 2017

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

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

Parish Council without a quorum after six resignations

IN an unprecedented move, six of our eight Parish Councillors tendered their resignations immediately before the March meeting of the Council. As the required quorum is three members present, the meeting could not go ahead. In effect, the Tring Rural Parish Council is for the moment not able to operate. The Councillors who resigned are: Mrs Olli Wheeler-Cornell, Ms Andrea Garnham, Mr Chris Griffiths, Mr Alan Winfield, Mr Nick Murrell and Mr Richard Briant. This leaves only Cllrs Malcolm Morgan and John Thirkettle. The six who resigned from the Council have written a joint letter of explanation which is published on page 8 & 9, together with own reporter's account from the meeting which did not take place and a letter from Councillor Morgan.

By the time this edition comes out, Dacorum Borough Council will have issued a notice (27th March) confirming a date for the parish council election, should more than six candidates stand.

Watery Lane Potholing Club

by Martin Winship

I was recently invited to spend a day with the newly formed Watery Lane Potholing Club. Their chairman, Del Vindeip, met me outside the entrance to Mill'oppers where one of the biggest pots was discovered. "The system is flooded for the first hundred metres, so we have to wear full scuba gear. And it gets pretty tight in places."

I watched as Del adjusted his mask and checked his air supply, and then disappeared down beneath the surface of the very muddy water. I was left with Alan Turnelps, the club secretary, and I asked him about the narrow passages and openings in the cave system."That's where some of our members of a smaller stature excel," he explained. "Paul Meayup (deputy chairman) is only 4 foot tall. He recently got through a very small gap and found a big new chamber." I suggested he must have felt happy. "No, Happy had left the club by then. He felt Grumpy."

Del re-emerged from the pot at that moment (see photograph) and as we shared a flask of hot coffee, I asked him about other famous cave systems. "What about Gaping Gill?" I enquired. "Well, to be honest, we all wish she'd stop standing there gawping at us, and either join in or push off."

I ended my visit by asking Del and Alan what they would do if the potholes were ever filled in. They looked at each other, and started to laugh.

Del in action

Wilstone Film Nights

April 7th, 2017

Tom Hanks in SULLY

On 15 January 2009, American pilot Chesley Sullenberg (played here by Tom Hanks) landed his crippled passenger jet on the Hudson river, saving the lives of all of the 155 souls on board. But this remarkable achievement, named "the miracle on the Hudson", only took a couple of minutes, from the bird strike that took out the engines to the splashdown, to the chilling words of Brace! Brace! Brace!

Last film of the season

8pm Friday April 7th. Doors open 7.15pm

Wilstone Village Hall. Licenced bar.

Tickets £7 available at Wilstone Community Shop

12A

Village News

Editor this month: Toby Davidson

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Welcome to this month's edition of the village news.

Firstly, we can only apologise on behalf of our printers for the late arrival of last month's edition. Unfortunately their main printer went down for 3 days just as our file arrived. Once that one was fixed, its sister machine broke down for another day! They have been trying to catch up ever since.

I decided as a result to visit their premises and include a centre page article on how your village magazine is made for you to enjoy.

There is also a report on the resignations at the Tring Rural Parish Council. It is hoped that the May edition will include a list of potential new councillors now that an election has been requested, dependant on there being more than 6 candidates. I would encourage anyone who feels that they can contribute to the wellbeing of our area to come forward, especially from smaller communities so that the whole parish would be represented.

The next edition will be for May 2017 and the deadline for items for inclusion is:
Wednesday 19 April

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!

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Church services

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

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

2 April 2017
10.00am – Sunday Worship at All Saints, Long Marston
10.00am – Holy Communion at St Cross, Wilstone

9 April 2017 – Palm Sunday
8.15am – Holy Communion (BCP) at St Mary's, Puttenham
10.00am – Sunday Worship at All Saints, Long Marston
10.00am – Sunday Worship at St Cross, Wilstone

13 April 2017 – Maundy Thursday
8.00pm – Service of the Last Supper at St Peter and St Paul, Tring

14 April 2017 – Good Friday
10.00am – Worship for All service at St Peter and St Paul, Tring followed by the Churches Together in Tring Walk of Witness
11.00am – Churches Together in Tring Walk of Witness from St Martha's, Tring. We walk together with Christians from the Baptist, Methodist and Roman Catholic Churches in Tring.
1.00pm – Raising of the Cross service at St Cross, Wilstone
2.00pm – Last Hour at the Cross at St Mary's Puttenham
6.00pm - Worship at All Saints, Long Marston

16 April 2017 – Easter Day
8.15am – Holy Communion (BCP) at St Mary's, Puttenham – (in church hall)
10.00am – Holy Communion at All Saints, Long Marston
10.00am – Holy Communion at St Cross, Wilstone

17 April 2017 – Easter Monday
10.30am – Easter Egg Hunt and a short family service at St Cross, Wilstone. Inside, if wet.

23 April 2017 – Second Sunday of Easter
10.00am – Holy Communion at All Saints, Long Marston
10.00am – Worship for All service at St Cross, Wilstone
3.30pm – Evensong (BCP) at St Mary's, Puttenham

30 April 2017 – Third Sunday of Easter
10.00am – Team Service at St Peter and St Paul, Tring

There will be no other services at 10.00am at St Marys, All Saints or St Cross today.

What's on...

In aid of:

ABF The Soldiers' Charity

The Army's National Charity

Quiz Night

Tilsworth Village Hall

Stanbridge Road, Tilsworth, LU7 9PN

Saturday 13th May
Please arrive 7pm for 7.30pm start

Tickets £10 will include light supper
Feel free to bring own drinks and nibbles
Teams of 4-6

Please call Jacqui on 07941 107699
email jssp1967@gmail.com
to register your team

Wilstone Village Hall Management Committee

Hereby give public notice of
Annual General Meeting
To be held on Wednesday 10 May 2017
at 8.00 pm
St Cross Church, Wilstone

All are invited and new members are welcome

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the 2016 AGM
2. Chairman's Report
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Election of Committee Members
5. Signing of declaration
6. Resolution to pay the rent (£1) to Tring Rural Parish Council

Tring Rural Parish Council Meetings

Are held at 8pm on the 1st Wednesday of the month
Wed 5th April at Puttenham village hall
The public are welcome to attend these meetings.

Diary dates...

Friday 7 April
Wilstone Film Night, "Scully", 8pm
Saturday 8 April
Rennie Grove Concert, St.P & P Tring, 7.30pm
Saturday 22 April
Mentmore Plant Sale, Mentmore Village Green, 12 - 4pm
Friday 5 May
The Attention Seekers 'Band Night' L M Victory Hall 8pm
Saturday 6 May
Tring Together Job Show
Belize Fundraiser, Wilstone Village Hall 7.30pm
Friday 12 May
Biggest Brain Quiz, Nora Grace Hall, Tring, 8pm
Saturday 13 May
Quiz night, Tilsworth Village Hall, 7pm for 7.30pm prompt
Thursday 18 May
Pitstone Museum, Tring Parish Hall 8pm
Saturday 20 May
Table Top Sale, Long Marston Victory Hall 11am - 2pm
Friday 26 May
Annual Long Marston Football Match & Disco 6.00pm
Saturday 27th - Monday 29th May
Mentmore Arts Festival, Mentmore church & village hall
Sunday 18 June
Marsworth Steam Rally, Startop Farm. 11am - 5pm
Future of cricket. Mixed junior match at Marlins 10.30am
LMCC past & present 2pm
Wednesday 21 June
LMCC v Cherwell Legends at Marlins 2pm
Sunday 25 June
Wilstone Open Gardens
LMCC Presidents XI v Mike Dean Select XI. Marlins 1pm
Sunday 2 July
The Big Community Lunch and Rounders Day
Long Marston Recreation Ground 1pm
16-18 July
Minor Counties. Herts. V Cambs. Marlins 10.30 am
Wednesday 19 July
Hertfordshire Gardens Trust, High St. Baptist Church, 8pm
Thursday 3 August
T20 Unicorns v Sussex x two matches at Marlins 11am
Saturday 5 August
Long Marston & Puttenham Village Show 2pm
Sunday 3 September
ABF The Soldiers' Charity Cycle Ride
Saturday 16th September
Long Marston Cricket Club v Cross Arrows,
Lord's Cricket Ground, London. 10:45 am
Wednesday 20 September
The Railway comes to Tring, High St. Baptist Church, 8pm

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

Belize Fund Raiser

Wine and Food Tasting
6th May 2017 at Wilstone Village Hall @ 7.30pm

Join us for some excellent wines and food
Tickets £15.00 per person in advance from
Peter 07740 942083
Email peter@prs-officefurniture.com

Organised in conjunction with Wilstone Village Hall
Limited tickets available.

Long Marston Primary School is looking for a Midday Supervisory Assistant to join our team.

This is a paid position and could be on a full time, part time or casual basis. The position is for 1 1/2 hours in the middle of the day and involves setting up the hall, helping the children whilst they eat their lunch and supervising them in the playground.
If you are interested in this role please contact Long Marston School on 01296 668386 for more info.

EASTER EGG HUNT
EASTER MONDAY 17TH APRIL
ST CROSS CHURCH, WILSTONE
(INSIDE IF WET)
10AM START
HOT CROSS BUNS & COFFEE TOO!

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.

Wilstone Open Village
&
Wilstone Open Gardens
June 25th

This daylong event is designed to promote all that is best in Wilstone – its creativity, musicality, sociability and community spirit.
It will combine the popular and successful Open Gardens which is aimed at visitors, open between 2pm and 5pm, with an Open Village event for residents in the parish, which will be packed with arts and crafts, artisan food and drinks, and plenty of food stalls. In addition, there will be musical variety at the Half Moon through the afternoon.
Please bring the children, friends and relatives for this event, and wander amongst village gardens & allotments, & enjoy the best of village entertainment.
Tickets for the Open Gardens event cost £4, but the music and other entertainment are free.
To offer your assistance, make suggestions or other comments, please contact Peter & Jill Walker at jillmarywalker@btinternet.
For Open Gardens contact Gill Glasser at glasser@btinternet.com

Archaeology in Long Marston

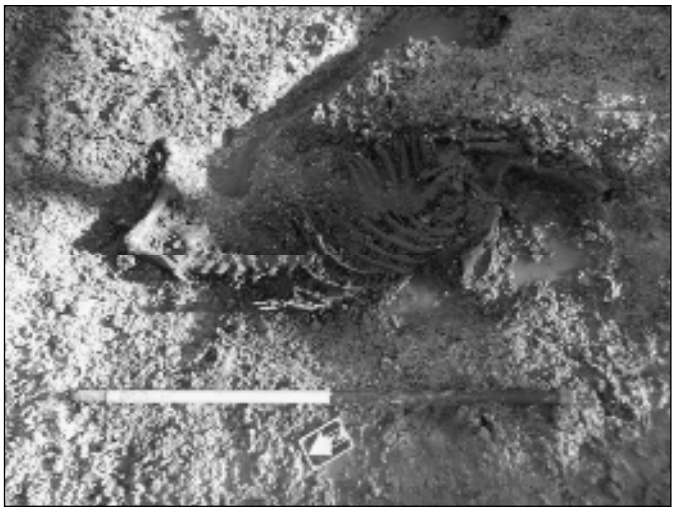
by Karen Kaye

THREE new houses – each with a detached garage – are to be built on land behind the school at Loxley Farm. Because Long Marston is of historic interest and has several listed buildings, the developers were obliged to bring in the archaeologists, in this case the firm of KDK Archaeology Ltd. I spoke to the site manager, Laura Dodd MSc, who explained what happens when a development is given the go-ahead in a sensitive area like this. On the advice of their Archaeological Advisor, in this case Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Team, the Local Planning Authority will determine what sort of archaeological investigation will be needed. There are several programmes of archaeological work which may be implemented, but the main three for field archaeology are;

1. Archaeological Evaluation – involving the digging of linear trenches representing a certain percentage of the building area
2. Watching Brief – an archaeologist attends when the foundations and services are being dug to keep an eye out for interesting finds and features,
3. Strip, Map and Record – the footprint of the intended buildings are stripped, and any finds and features are excavated and recorded.

This last option is the one which was undertaken at Loxley Farm. Once excavation is completed, finds recovered from the site will be sent off to specialists for further analysis.

Archaeology is not an occupation for softies. The team of Laura, Cameron Kaye BA, and Barney King suffered freezing conditions, thick ice, severe wind chill, and clinging cold mud (caused by the high water table). They uncovered a system of ditches and narrow gulleys, and a few fragments of roof tiles, which are almost certainly of modern origin. In one of the trenches, a cow's skull was unearthed, complete with impressive horns and the lower jaw. Close by, another intriguing animal burial was discovered – that of a headless dog, with several puppies by its front end. No evidence of the skull remained indicating that the burial had been disturbed in antiquity.



Dog burial

Cow's horn in situ

Previous work in Long Marston has included a site on Cheddington Lane, the Old Post Office and at the old egg packing site on Station Road, where Laura found the base of a lovely 17th century stoneware vessel. Her best find so far, she told me, was a very unusual Roman tile kiln which had been built on top of an earlier kiln in Surrey. A rare find and the only example discovered in this country.

Tring & District Local Historical & Museum Society

All meetings will be commence at 8 pm
Visitors will be welcome on payment of £4 per meeting.

Thursday 18th May 2017 AGM
Pitstone Museum – what on Earth is that?, *Dennis Trebble*
at *Tring Parish Hall (behind the Church of St P & P, High St)*
Dennis Trebble is the Secretary of the Pitstone and Ivinghoe Museum Society, which runs the museum at the Pitstone Heritage Park. This contains a large number of artefacts from all aspects of rural life, a 1940s room, engines of all shapes and sizes, farm machinery and many other fascinating items, including a Lancaster bomber cockpit. Dennis will tell the story of how all this came about.

Wilstone Village Hall Committee

have a vacancy for the post of

Bookings Secretary

Our Bookings Secretary is the first point of contact for information about booking the Hall and also for dealing with confirmed booking requests. They are responsible for keeping the Bookings Diary and for passing relevant information to the rest of the Committee.

The post is voluntary but all expenses are reimbursed. For more information about the vacancy, please contact: Chairman Richard Smissen on (01442) 823253 or at richard.smissen@btinternet.com .

We are also looking for new people to join as general Committee members.

Rennie Grove Hospice Care
Care based around you

Hertfordshire Chamber Orchestra

Saturday 8th April - 7:30pm (Doors open at 7:00pm)
St Peter and St Paul Church, Tring

We are once again privileged and delighted to welcome Paul Barritt as director and soloist for this 13th concert in aid of Rennie Grove Hospice Care. The programme for the evening, which starts at 7.30pm, will be:

Haydn: Symphony No. 98
Mozart: Rondo for violin and orchestra in C major
Mozart: Adagio for violin and orchestra in E major
Mozart: Symphony No. 41 "Jupiter"

Tickets for this popular event are only £15 per person. A raffle will be held during the evening and refreshments will be available during the interval.
Tickets are now on sale and can be purchased from the Fundraising Team at community@renniegrove.org, on 01442 820723 or from the main shop in Tring.
We hope that you will be able to join us at this event.

Events

The Hospice of st francis

Join the Bubble Rush!
Our Bubble Rush is back for 2017 and this year it's coming to Bucks too!
Open to all the family you can run, walk or dance your way through bubble stations as you are blasted by cannons blowing out crazy-coloured *bubbles*, covering you in safe, frothy foam. There are no age restrictions and the 5 km route is child friendly. All we ask is that you come and have fun and raise what you can in sponsorship for the Hospice. Last year's event raised a staggering £132k for our hospice care! Join us on Sunday 30th April at Gadebridge Park, Hemel Hempstead or on Sunday 9th July at Lowndes Park, Chesham. Register now at stfrancis.org.uk/bubblerush

Film Forum
Our Film Forum takes place on the first Wednesday of the month, showing a Hollywood blockbuster, thought-provoking art-house title, or cinema classic.
Anyone is welcome to come along to the viewing in The Spring Centre; you can see the year's programme of titles by visiting www.stfrancis.org.uk/filmforum. Each month the film begins promptly at 7pm and a recommended donation of £5 for refreshments is suggested.
Further details at: www.stfrancis.org.uk/events or call 01442 869555
Facebook/TheHospiceofStFrancis **Twitter:**hospicstfrancis

Tring enjoying life Together
Spring Fayre

Spring Fayre runs for a fortnight from 22nd April through to 6th May 2017.

A fortnight of events celebrating the arrival of spring in Tring. Our aim is to bring the local community together and promote well-being through healthy outdoor pursuits.

It includes guided nature and heritage walks, FOTCH Family Fun Day, a Spring Photographic Competition and special offers at local sports clubs.

The fortnight starts with the launch day on Saturday 22nd April on Church Square, High Street, Tring and features a petting zoo, local charity stalls and the photo competition launch.

For more information visit www.tringtogether.org.uk or look out for the Spring Fayre brochure.

From our reporter at the Parish Council meeting

Tring Rural Parish Council resignations

PICTURE the scene. A bleak hall, with rows of chairs, occupied by a motley crowd, all muffled up against the cold. In front of them, a horseshoe of rough deal tables, and at their head, a pair of villainous-looking old rogues, scowling at the crowd. All eyes turn now and then, taking quick furtive glances at the doors, waiting. The only sound an occasional nervous cough, and the sonorous ticking of the heavy wall clock, counting off the seconds and dropping them into the past.

This was the scene at the Tring Rural Parish Council meeting at Puttenham on the 1st March. OK, the Cecilia Hall is not really bleak. It's quite nice really. The crowd wasn't especially motley either. The tables were actually Formica, I think, and the two councillors sitting at them were not particularly villainous-looking, or *very* old, and almost certainly not rogues. The scowling might have been imagined too. Everything else was exactly as described. Oh, apart from the ticking clock. There wasn't one. But there should have been.

At eight o'clock, there were still only two councillors present. Whereupon Councillor Morgan said hello, and announced that Councillor Thirkettle had something to say. This gentleman revealed that about fifteen minutes before the meeting, as he had been about to leave home, an envelope was pushed through his letterbox. Opening it, he was astonished to discover six letters, all similar but not identical, from the missing six fellow councillors. By some extraordinary coincidence, they had all decided to resign, without giving any reason for doing so. Stretching the coincidence even further, these six independent councillors' letters had somehow ended up in the same envelope.

After this announcement, there was what journalistic hacks refer to as a "Stunned Silence", and parishioners were "Left Reeling" and "Shaken Rigid". Recovery was rapid, and after a preliminary chorus of "What? Why? When?" etc. discussion quickly turned to "What Happens Next?" Councillor Morgan pointed out that as the quorum for a council meeting was three, they were short of this number to the tune of one. Having demonstrated his needle-sharp grasp of mathematics, he explained that this meant it was effectively open house.

There were comments and questions, some conciliatory, some sarcastic, but mostly bewildered. However, some advice was forthcoming, and it was that if ten or more parishioners call for an election, then one would be held provided 7 or more candidates put themselves forward. If six or less candidates put their names forward, they would automatically become councillors without the need for the election to go ahead.

Both remaining councillors were keen to stress that this was a time for positivity and to ensure that this would be a new chapter for Tring Rural Parish Council. They both look forward to working with the new parish councillors once the council has been formed. Little more was resolved, so the "meeting" broke up (in what is believed to be record time).

Letter from the Six Councillors who resigned at the March

THIS is a piece written by the six parish councillors who resigned before the March council meeting to explain their reasons and motivations for doing so.

The work of the councillors is all voluntary unpaid and undertaken on the basis of trying to make a difference within the parish and to benefit the whole community. In most cases we have 'council work' to do outside of the monthly meetings, most of which is unseen by the rest of the public, which adds a further drain on our time.

With the six of us standing down, the parish council has lost its contact with some nine local organisations and charities, associations which are long established, both personal and working relationships, built up over many years, something that will be hard to replace. We have between us nearly 70 years of service on the council. That is an awful lot of experience of council work and the local community that has gone, also very hard to replace, especially with the toxic atmosphere surrounding the council at the minute. Please step forward those who wish to pick up the poisoned chalice.

While on the subject of a toxic atmosphere, it has saddened us that the acrimony has lead to at least one member of the community no longer attending meetings despite their almost continuous presence over many, many years. This atmosphere we feel has also been the downfall of at least one parish clerk and lead to the council struggling to employ anybody else in the position.

We have taken the decision to resign for many reasons, not least of which is the fact that the job is in no way the same job that we signed up for many years ago. The root of this came with the last but one council election when the real animosity of a section of the Long Marston community started to rear its head, leading to all kinds of accusations and ill feeling. This has then increased with more unrest over the CAB building and the football club. We feel that all the correct procedures and processes were undertaken and completed with the project but there was still dissent and it has proven to be a thorn in our sides. Why, when the first stage of the redevelopment went ahead without any complaint, has the second stage been so divisive, apart from some people wishing to use it as a stick to beat the council?

Flooding is another issue that is problematic. The council took advice from a higher, more knowledgeable body, who stated that ring fencing £20,000 of the Hive fund money purely for Chapel Lane flooding was not allowed as the fund was there to benefit the entire community not simply one section of it. This is the advice we

Letter from Tring Rural Parish Council

Dear fellow parishioners,

AS has been well publicised within this edition of Village News and earlier on our Tring Rural Parish Council notice boards, the resignation of six of our eight parish councillors has created vacancies. More than ten parishioners have already requested that an election be held to fill those vacancies, so it is reasonable to assume that an election notice from Dacorum Borough Council has/or is about to be posted when you read this letter. Dacorum's notice will give the date of the by-election and details on how candidates should apply for those vacancies.

This is a great opportunity for anyone wishing to give of their time to make a real impact, not only on how the council should serve the day to day needs of their parish, but to be instrumental in fulfilling its future needs as a growing and vibrant community while protecting the rural environment we all enjoy and cherish.

There's a saying that a parish gets the council it deserves. **We deserve the best**, so please, those of you who have the commitment, drive and passion to make a difference to your community, don't hold back, put yourself forward as a candidate for election.

To find out more about the role and what is expected of a Tring Rural parish councillor please visit our new website http://www.tringrural-pc.co.uk/. Details on how to apply for election can/will be found on our notice boards, website and Dacorum's website.

Your Parish Needs You.

Tring Rural Parish Council

Tring Rural Parish Council contacts

Your Parish Councillors are:

Mr John Thirkettle 01296 661825

Mr Malcolm Morgan 01296 661747

The Clerk to the Council is :

Vacancy email: clerk@tringruralpc.org.uk

***The Village Warden is*:**

Mr Colin Reedman 01442 822031

Parish Council Website:

http://www.tringrural-pc.co.uk/

You can view and comment on planning applications at:

www.dacorum.gov.uk/planning

www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk

Parish Council Elections

IT has been confirmed by Dacorum Borough Council that a parish by-election will now take place as a result of the petition made by more than ten of our parishioners.

The likely date for the election (dependant on there being more than 6 candidates) is 4th May.

DBC will make an announcement on 27th March confirming the date of the election and how candidates should apply. This will be posted on the parish notice boards and the DBC website.

Six Councillors Letter …..continued

took and the decision was made on that basis. There is a government scheme in place to pay £5,000 to victims of flooding but to our knowledge only one person (a former councillor) has taken this up despite the public being made aware of the facility. Surely this would have gone some way to easing residents concerns or is it that some people do not wish to claim on their insurance with all that it entails?

The reason for our desire to pay off part of the CAB loan was to reduce the precept so reducing the Council Tax bill for all of us. This again was fought against by the same group of residents. We feel that this was a chance missed in our aims to benefit the whole parish.

We have been attacked 'in the press' for perceived inactivity on issues such as potholes and speeding. The council can only go so far in trying to get higher authority to act; we will forever be looked upon as the poor rural backwater that is low down the pecking order. We cannot do a lot to overcome local government inertia, as previous parish clerks will testify.

On a more personal note, one of our number had become totally fed up with the constant barrage of emails, some of which were frankly rude and demanding. Not only were emails unpleasant but personal contact with certain other councillors was confrontational and lacking in respect. Another of our number has been made to feel under pressure and almost vilified for the position and decisions they have taken, an uncomfortable situation for them to deal with. Surely this is not the way that a local council should operate, when people are made to feel like this, largely by one small section of the community?

With all of the above reasons in mind and no sign of an improvement in the situation any time soon, we felt the only course of action open to us was to stand down and let others take the job on. It was not a decision taken lightly nor with any pleasure, you don't walk away from a collective 70 years of service without very good reason. We would like to see a completely new council elected, in its entirety. This may then lead to a calming of the whole atmosphere. Also we would say, let those who have been most vocal and strident in their criticisms of our work, stand up, 'put their money where their mouth is' and see if they can do a better job. We wish them all the very best of luck!

Olli Wheeler-Cornell, Andrea Garnham , Chris Griffiths, Alan Winfield, Nick Murrell and Richard Briant.

Masons
mini bus & coach hire ltd.

Days out in 2017

Pick ups in the Long Marston & Wilstone area can be organised
Please contact the office to make an arrangement

Bombay Sapphire Distillery - plus Winchester

Sunday 23rd April **£33.50**

Discover the artistry & heritage behind Bombay Sapphire at their state-of-the-art distillery, set astride the banks of the crystal clear River Test. Go behind the scenes & discover how they infuse ten exotic botanicals from around the world into their gin. After the tour, we head down to Winchester where you will be able to get some lunch and have some free time for the rest of the day

Short Breaks - Isle of Wight

22nd – 25th September **£295.00**

After a short stop en route, we'll board the ferry mid-afternoon and travel across to the traditional Isle of Wight seaside resort of Shanklin. We'll be staying at the Channel View Hotel, overlooking Shanklin Bay and offering sea view rooms. From here, we will be able to explore the many sights and attractions the Isle of Wight has to offer. Breakfast, dinner, evening entertainment and excursions all included.

Royal Ascot

Wednesday 21st June
Silver Ring **£43.00**
Grandstand **£74.00**

Enjoy a day at one of the worlds most prestigious horse racing events. Don your glad rags for a day full of fun, food, drink, betting and hopefully winning!

Aladdin - Prince Edward Theatre **£62.00**

Thursday 25th May

Evening Performance. Following in the footsteps of The Lion King, Aladdin is the latest Disney film to earn a West End adaptation, casting it's magic over a whole new generation.

Eastbourne **£22.00**

Sunday 4th June

Visit Eastbourne's seafront for quality, lifeguard patrolled, award winning safe bathing beaches, restaurants, beach huts, cabins, deckchairs and children's attractions. A lovely way to spend a day

Enquiries: 01296 661604

info@masonscoachhire.co.uk
www.masonscoachhire.co.uk

Calling all Gardeners...
Mentmore Village Green

Plant Sale
Saturday 22nd April
12 - 4pm

Professional and amateur growers supplying a wide variety and choice of plants and garden paraphernalia.
BBQ, teas and cakes.
A fabulous location and an enjoyable day.

Contact tel: 07795383086

The Village News team needs a volunteer

Reporter

to join our panel of volunteer reporters who write the Parish Council News articles each month. If you are interested in local issues here is an opportunity to share your interest with readers. Our volunteers take it in turns to attend the monthly Parish Council meetings and write these reports. Each reporter attends up to four meetings per year, the schedule being agreed in advance. Full briefing is given.

If you can help us provide this service to readers please call Phil Buchi on 01296 661339.

Wilstone Community Shop

Run by the community, for the community

We aim to serve the Community by:

- Keeping prices fair
- Offering a wide range of goods and services
- Stocking home-made and local produce
- Being a place where people like to shop and volunteers like to work

Lots of Easter goodies

Hop along to the shop

Our shop manager Alison, has, as always, created a wonderful Easter display in the window on the island, so come in and be tempted! As well as a wide range of Easter Eggs and cards, we will also be stocking homemade Simnel cakes of varying sizes and packs of hot cross buns. Orders for hot cross buns and bread are being taken for the Easter weekend. In addition, if you would like to order any Easter meats, then let us know by 11 April so we can make sure we have them in for you. We can order duck and chicken from our local supplier throughout the year—not just at Christmas!

As always, we're on the look-out for some new volunteers—if you've got some spare time during the week, then please do give volunteering at the shop a try. It's a way of giving back to the community, but it's also fun.

Cheese of the week is back

Those of you with a penchant de fromage will be delighted to know that 'cheese of the week' has returned to the deli after a short absence. The deliciously creamy 'beauvale' was the first back; an English version of gorgonzola, very spreadable & moreish ….it didn't last long

Easter opening times

Good Friday
09.00—12.00 hrs

Saturday 15 April
07.30—13.00 hrs

Easter Sunday
09.00—12.00 hrs

Easter Monday
09.00—12.00 hrs

Promotional feature sponsored by Wilstone Community Shop

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For more information or to arrange a visit contact our pre-school leader Maria Adams on 07925 185311 or **firststepslongmarston@gmail.com**

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Contact Tara Thirkettle 07796 965171.

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Tring Parish Men's Society

by Leslie Barker

AT our previous meeting, we considered choosing Islam as a future topic. However, it was decided to broaden this, so at our March meeting we discussed *Variety of Religions.*

We began by reflecting on Val Rockall's ministry during her retirement in Tring. Many of us had attended her funeral earlier in the day, and amongst her many gifts remember in particular her friendliness.

Leslie opened the discussion with some thought provoking comments he had made on the variety of Indian religions following a visit there in 1988. Though made as observations and not criticisms they may be politically incorrect today! However, it did show the variety of religions in terms of belief in one or many gods, and how they determine culture.

Islam was compared with Christianity and it was suggested that Islam may be at its "medieval" stage and eventually catch up with something similar to churches together. But this is something we have only achieved recently in the course of history.

Several members were knowledgeable on church history and we were treated to a history of the church in England since the Reformation. This included the CoE persecuting John Bunyan, and its political power which for long kept non-conformists out of parliament and universities.

Philanthropists were also mentioned, such as the Quakers known for their industrial enterprises, and Anglicans for providing housing for the working classes.

The big change over the last fifty years is that there is now a wide variety of religions in Britain, but space precludes reporting our thoughts on this.

In April, the Men's Society will join the service on Wednesday in Holy Week, and our next meeting at the Half Moon in Wilstone will be on May 3rd. As always, all men are welcome, and meals as well as drinks will be available.

The proposed topic is *FASHION* (do you think of clothes or interior design?) with the subtitle *Why do we wear clothes? (Gen 3v21.)*

Female Personal Assistant, communicator needed for disabled young female in Wilstone.

Approximately six to eight hours per week, weekends and occasional weekday evenings.
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Good at reassuring and encouraging others in an empowering way.
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My memories of Long Marston Cricket Club By Mavis Holdham (Bignell)

I'M afraid my memories of Long Marston Cricket Club are not how many games were won or lost, or how many runs or wickets were taken but more of the social side and the silly little things that stay in my memory.

The first one being watching my Dad play cricket from my Gran's back garden. We had deckchairs on the lawn at the top of the garden with a gate leading onto the recreation ground (rec). It was a number of years later that I realised it was not the norm to play cricket on coconut matting on top of a concrete slab with a sloping field! Maybe because of these conditions the Home Team had an advantage over the Visitors. The field was smaller than it should have been, so many sixes were hit over into Archie's Meadow.

Cricket was a way of life in my family, as my Dad was the eldest of six brothers and three sisters. The brothers all played Cricket for Long Marston at some point in their lives (Don, Charlie, Den, Phil, Ken, and Duncan Bignell), Don and Charlie (Wag) were opening batsmen for a number of years, clocking up quite a few runs between them, so I've been told. It was also said that when the scorer from the visiting team was writing the names in the book, they would say "Not another one!" and "How many more?"

Ken went on to be Chairman for a time after he had finished playing Cricket and Dad (Don) went on to be one of the first official groundsmen in the mid 60s.. I do know that he was still groundsman when he died in February 1992. Then there was the next generation, nephews Stephen and Nigel Proctor and great nephew Stewart Proctor, all played cricket for Long Marston. I'm sure if I had been born a boy, Dad would have given me a cricket bat before I could walk!

I don't remember where the cricket teams had their tea before the Victory Hall was built (1956), but I remember going to the Hall while they were playing at the Rec, and also when they first moved up to Marlins. One of my fondest memories of this was before I helped with the teas. I used to sit with the players. Bill Reason would sit on the same table and he would take some of the sandwiches from the plate on our table and swap them with some of the other plates, to make sure we had plenty of cheese and tomato sandwiches as we both liked these the best!

I remember when the cricket teams went to the away matches by coach! The two that come to mind are Bowring's in London and a team in Oxford. As I was quite young at the time, I remember thinking this can't really be London? All this green grass (Three Pitches) and great big chestnut trees! The pavilion was an olde world building with the score box upstairs! The journey home was always very jovial, after some liquid refreshments of course. I was too young to appreciate this but I did enjoy the singing!

When the club moved up to Marlins there was only a wooden shed! It was used for everything! Mowers, cricket equipment and changing rooms! I was asked if I could make some net curtains to put up at the changing room end. This I did, and they stayed there for many years after. I also helped to clear the table of stones before it was turfed. Many people were asked to help, and we were all given buckets, bowls, anything that would hold stones! I do believe that the stones were put down the well! There was no groundsman at the beginning, all the members mucked in and helped. Dad was always very keen for it to be a success, but he was always aware that some people had to lose their allotments, and they must have been as passionate about their gardening as he was about his cricket, but it was such a great opportunity not to be missed.

The first part of the new pavilion was built in 1965, by the Bignell Brothers building firm (just to keep it in the family!) There was a lot of fund raising done before and after this. There was the weekly bingo, that went on for many years (I made a cake for the 30th year!) the social evenings, cheese and wine, fancy dress and New Years Eve Dances and of course the Annual Dinners. When I first went to the dinners I helped with waiting on tables, but later when there were caterers, it was much nicer to sit down and be waited on. I suppose the social evening that is still talked about, even today, was when the marquee didn't arrive for the 'Cockatoos' The Cockatoos were the local equivalent to Abba. There were panic stations on the Saturday afternoon, so it was decided to borrow Deans Eggs Lorries and park them in the cricket field 'Cowboy and Indian style'. Luckily it didn't rain that evening and the lorries kept the wind off. The marquee did arrive just before the event was due to start, but they were told "thanks, but no thanks" or words to that effect!!

Dad spent a lot of time and dedication trying to make the Cricket field as it should be, and could be a little over protective at times! I can remember when I was learning to drive, he would take me out for a driving lesson, and we would always end up going past the cricket field on the way home. "We'll just pop in here, I've just got to do this and that", he would say. Then he would stick some cricket stumps in the ground and tell me to practice my reversing! This was where the pavilion and car park are now; I hasten to add, not on the pitch!

While I was looking through some of Dad's old cricket photos I found this one (Photo 1) they were still playing at the rec then. From left to right: Don Bignell, Len Dean, Bill Reason, Tom Chapman and Cecil Farmer. I've got no idea who the 'Likely Lads' are sitting in the ditch! But what caught my eye was the outfield, I don't think it would come up to today's standards! The second photograph is of Long Marston winning the Coronation cup. It must have been 1963-64, before the Pavilion was built, as it was taken in front of the old shed.

I also found a poem that I hadn't seen before. It's by Patience Strong. It sums up how Dad felt about cricket and the cricket field. I'm sure he would be very proud and pleased of what has been achieved at Marlins today, and long may it continue for many more generations to come.

left to right: Don Bignell, Len Dean, Bill Reason, Tom Chapman and Cecil Farmer

Village Cricket
By Patience Strong

This is the thing that brings to mind English life.
Not the England of politics; of feuds and strikes and strife.
The England of the cricket match upon the village green.
Grass and trees and men in white; the immemorial scene.
Whether watching it or joining in the play,
What could be more lovely on a golden summers day?
It's so much more than just a game that's played with bat and ball – even though it is the best and finest game of all.
It seems to stand for the traditions of our ancient past.
For fair play and for sportsmanship.
Long may that great spirit last!
England will be sound and true to all that she has been –
So long as there's a cricket pitch upon the village green.

Coronation Cup Winners
Back Row (L/R) Ken Bignell, Cecil Evans, Don Erridge, Humph Johnson, Tony Eggleton, Duncan Bignell
Front Row (L/R) Jimmy Dean, Robert Evans, Don Bignell, Norman Chandler, Terry Clay
Names supplied by Paul Dumpleton

Long Marston Cricket Club
By Paul Dumpleton

MUCH progress being made on the start of a very busy year at Marlins. Full indoor net sessions at Chesham have been going on for past ten weeks and soon we will be able to get out onto the outdoor nets as the Spring and hopefully warmer weather arrives.

To round off the playing side of our 150th Birthday Year the Club has been awarded a game against the Cross Arrows to be played on the Lords Nursery Ground on Saturday 16th September. This will be a 50 overs a side game with a 10.45am start. Great opportunity to visit Lords and watch LMCC play on this famous ground. A first for our Club.

County and representative fixtures are confirmed and these can be seen in the Diary section of this magazine.

Early Season club fixtures see us playing a home tie in the first round of the National Village Cup against Old Albanian Cavaliers on Sunday 30th April. The following Saturday (6th May) the Cherwell League season starts with our first XI at home to Banbury and our second and third XI's travelling to Leighton Buzzard and Bicester & North Oxford respectively.

A date is to be fixed for our first round tie in the Aylesbury Midweek Cup against IAS and at the time of writing, the draw for this year's Coronation Cup competition is yet to be made.

The junior section continues to expand and anyone interested in joining should contact Lee Beesley, our Youth Development manager. The newly revamped system has now progressed sufficiently for us to offer several 'Academy style' fixtures for the youngsters which we hope will be played on Sunday mornings. Lee can be contacted on mobile 07923 462037 or develop@longmarstoncc.co.uk, if you have a child with cricketing aptitude who is looking to develop further.

Keep up to date with club progress on our website **www.longmarstoncc.co.uk**

The Village News team needs a volunteer

Reporter

to join our panel of volunteer reporters who write the Parish Council News articles each month. If you are interested in local issues here is an opportunity to share your interest with readers. Our volunteers take it in turns to attend the monthly Parish Council meetings and write these reports. Each reporter attends up to four meetings per year, the schedule being agreed in advance. Full briefing is given.

If you can help us provide this service to readers please call Phil Buchi on 01296 661339.

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Letters...

Long Marston Football Club

EVERY time I've opened the Village News magazine just recently I've seen someone complaining about the Football Club and I'm getting a bit hacked off with it, so I'm going to respond to some of the gripes and plain untruths spouted by various correspondents.

The Parish Council had the old Football Pavilion, which incidentally was built originally by the Club, pulled down when it was deemed to be unsafe. The present building was then put up in its place, all well so far.

10 years ago the Club approached the Football Foundation to ask for a grant to remove the 'ridge and furrow' undulations that blighted the recreation ground. This would not only assist the Club itself but also make the recreation ground a better surface for everyone that uses it. The grant was subject to the Club gaining Charter Standard status before it could be agreed. This charter status required the Club to abide by various conditions - the ground had to be maintained for at least 15 years, the Club was to be open to mixed race players and improve the changing facilities to accommodate youth players. The problem came in that the Club could not get the finance required for the changing facilities element as they did not own the ground and also due to the strong opposition of one member of the Parish Council. This effectively prevented the Club from going any further with the grant even though they met the required Charter Standard status.

The Council then agreed that the Club could apply for planning permission for the changing facilities and additionally a meeting room which would be open for all to use as required. The Club paid for all the planning work and the facilities were built, costing just over £10,000 in materials, all the labour involved being done voluntarily by members of the Club.

The Club has been an integral part of the community for many, many years, way before some moaning members of the village even landed in Long Marston. It has always tried to be inclusive and welcoming and over the last few years has attempted to aid the village with the projects outlined above. The 'bad press' it is getting at the minute is very largely unfounded and does not take into account these positive actions.

To finish on, there was a comment in last month's magazine that stated the ladies toilet is always locked. This is an interesting complaint bearing in mind the fact that there is actually no ladies toilet in the new building! Oh for people to get their facts right before going into print!

Daphne Bateman – Long Marston Football Club

Half Moon Scrabble Night
Last Sunday of every month

Wilstone Open Gardens Road Closure

IN response to the letter written by "Norris Cole", what a shame it is that instead of supporting those people who give up endless hours of their time to make our village a fun and happy place to live, "Norris" chooses to criticise and complain about an event that requires the closure of part of our road for no more than a few hours.

As for "his" totally unnecessary comment about delusions of grandeur, perhaps 'he'd" like to consider what a different and dull place this might be without those who strive to put something back.

Support rather than negativity might go a long way.....

Name & Address supplied

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.

Parish Council

THE Parish Council now has six vacancies. A group of councillors, evidently acting in concert, handed in their resignations in the same envelope half an hour before the March council meeting leaving the council without a quorum and unable to function.

The previous two month's meetings were a disgrace. I hope Councillors Morgan and Thirkettle will continue to serve and provide some continuity. They have acted with integrity and a surprising level of self-restraint throughout.

I would rather look forward than back, so I will not dwell on past events. For those who wonder what has been going on, I would suggest reading the reports and letters in the March edition of the Village News.
There is to be an election. Now is the time for a fresh start. Let there please be new candidates coming forward from all around the parish, with a variety of ages, gender and experience, who understand the need for breadth of representation, consultation, open debate, and respect for others and their views. There should be no place for factions at this level of local government.

John Kaye, Long Marston

How your parish magazine is produced

by Toby Davidson

AS an avid reader, I was intrigued by how the village magazine arrives at your front door. With the last edition coming out late, I helped with the distribution round Long Marston and then decided to visit our printers, Lonsdale Direct Solutions, in Wellingborough, to see how it is made.

Each month, the editor starts with a blue folder which contains amongst other things a memory stick with the starting Microsoft publisher file for that month. This includes all the items and grids that we use and the adverts from the previous month's. We then wait for articles to be submitted from members of the public to our email address,

Editors then try to include everything that is sent in by contributors, from regular articles to one-offs, as well as promoting what's going on in our local area. If you are organising a fundraising event and would like some free publicity, why not contact us with some details.

This work takes all month to create a final copy ready for printing. All regulars are informed which Wednesday is cut-off day for articles, giving the editor 2 days to complete the work. The finished file is then printed and sent by the editor to the appointed proof reader for that month to be checked and corrected on the Saturday morning. The final job for the editor is then to correct the mistakes as identified and send the final file as a pdf document to the newsletter coordinator together with the blue folder. This is then sent across to the printers on the Monday morning.

An old printing press

When I arrived at the printers, I was met by Leigh Butcher, who showed me round the premises. After I had paid a cheque for the last edition, he then showed me round the factory showing me the process as we went. He first checks that the pdf file is ready for the printer, including separating the outside cover which is printed on 130gm gloss paper as opposed to the main body which is printed on 80gm bond paper. The front cover is then printed on a separate machine to the main body of the newsletter.

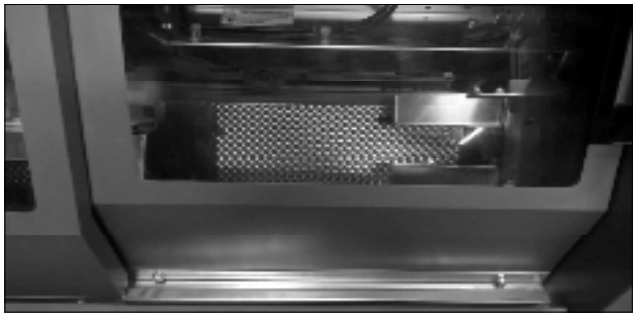
Main printer

Once each page is correctly printed, it is then taken next door to a machine that puts the whole thing together. Each separate sheet is carefully loaded into the trays in order. Each sheet is then drawn through the machine, which creates the 'crease' in the middle then stacks them one on top of the other before stapling them together with the colour page on the outside. This process takes just 75 minutes to complete, leaving us with the 660 copies we have ordered.

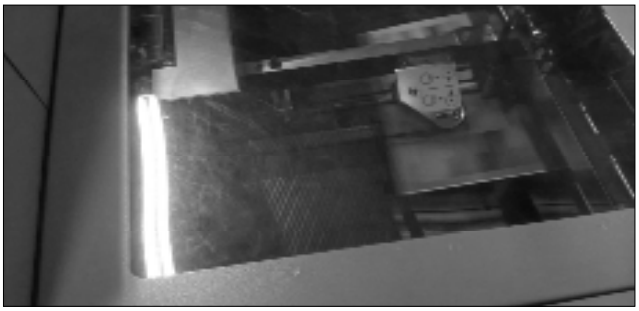
Leigh then took me on a guided tour of the works, showing me the different kinds of printing processes they do for clients. From litho printing where the staff finish the printed material by hand to machines that print onto huge rolls of paper. I was particularly fascinated by a six ink printer that not only prints onto the rolls, it also turns it over to print on the other side! He told me that the factory operates for 24 hours a day, starting on Sunday afternoon until lunchtime on the Saturday. They have a wide variety of clients, from newsletters like ourselves to several 'blue chip' companies. They might even be 'responsible' for some of the junk mail we get through our front doors!

Document stacker

Once completed, the 660 copies are then sent by courier back to Wilstone. It is then the responsibility of the distribution management team to separate them into individual 'packs' that are then taken to each individual volunteer who then delivers them in their local neighbourhood. This can vary from 10 to 30 houses.



The magazine being folded (top) and collated (bottom)



The finished Magazine

With the help of our amazing team of volunteers, the only costs that we incur are what we pay the printer. This varies depending on whether we have a colour edition or not, as this can cost us an extra £150. We have 4 local sponsors who each donate £300 and our advertisers, most of whom have supported us for a number of years.

We continue to look at ways to improve the magazine and are very grateful to our regular contributors. We are always happy to receive articles from any member of our readership and beyond. If you have an idea on how to improve the content, or would like to write something, please feel free to email us.
editorwlmp@yahoo.com

The 5th Long Marston Charity Football Match

Residents from the **PUB** *side of the village*

v

Residents from the **SCHOOL** *side of the village*

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FRIDAY 26th May 2017

Kick off 6pm

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Cracking Flags April 2017

4th	NATO
7th	Beer (US National Beer Day)
9th	Chequered (China F1 GP)
14th	Organisation of American States
15th & 16th	Happy Easter
17th	Syria
21st	Union Jack (The Queen's Birthday)
23rd	St George
27th	South Africa
30th	Chequered (Russia F1 GP)

Read *Village News* online

Please note that Vill*age News* is only available at **www.wilstone.me.uk** (Click on Village News)

The TRPC site is currently being updated

Mrs. Doolittles

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W: marsworthpreschool.org.uk

The Hospice of St Francis – Hospice News

WE receive many kind comments about our care including these words from Brian Darby, the son of a recent patient Terry, 71, who was cared for by the Hospice in the last days of his life. Brian told us how the Hospice had helped his dad saying, "It's hard to explain how grateful we are that Dad spent his final days at the Hospice, which transformed the last 10 days of his life and our last days with him. It really was a little bit of heaven before his passing.

"A year ago, if you'd asked me to donate to a hospice, I probably would have said there are more worthy causes for people who are going to live. However, now that I've seen the effect this Hospice had on Dad and on our wider family, I am converted. This special place helped us make the most of Dad's final days and we are eternally grateful to all the team at The Hospice of St Francis."

You can read Terry's full story on our website stfrancis.org.uk

10 Lilacs for 10 Years!

Over 30 founding Association Members of The Hospice of St Francis joined the Hospice's CEO Steve Jamieson and Chair of Trustees Alison Woodhams to plant the first of 10 purple lilac trees as part of a number of celebrations to commemorate 10 years at the Hospice's Spring Garden Lane site.

The Association Members were integral to the vision of the original Hospice founded in 1979 and its subsequent move to Spring Garden Lane and they still play an active role contributing to the Hospice.

Berkhamsted Golf Day

Our 7th annual Berkhamsted Golf Day is being held on Friday 19th May at Berkhamsted Golf Club in Hertfordshire. Bring your team of colleagues, clients or friends for this 18-hole Stableford competition. The day will include on-course competitions, plus a three-course gala dinner, prize giving, auction and raffle to follow. Entry is £100 a head or £60 for club members. Visit stfrancis.org.uk/golf to book or call Andrea Grant on 01442 869555.

The Garden Party at Ashridge House – Sunday 11 June 1-5pm

Bring the family and join us for our summer garden party in the stunning grounds of Ashridge House! There will be teas on the lawn, refreshing Pimms, lots of fresh local food including a BBQ on the terrace, local beer, cream teas, live jazz, children's entertainment and a fabulous shopping village with lots of artisan and local producers.

The Markyate Plant Sale

From summer bedding plants and perennials to fruit and veg, don't miss Markyate's party of the year for garden lovers on Saturday 20th May from 10am. 64 High Street, Markyate, AL3 8HZ.

Spring Centre Courses

Our therapeutic gardening group starts again on Wednesdays in April. We welcome anyone who has been recently bereaved, carers or people who have a life-limiting illness to join us to spend a couple of hours doing some gentle tending of our vegetable patch. This spring we're life drawing, pilates and Nordic walking among a whole host of other workshops and sessions. Find out more by calling the Spring Centre team on 01442 869550.

Others Dates for Your Diary

- Bubble Rush Herts and Bucks. Join us for Bubble Rush Herts on Sunday 30th April or for Bubble Rush Bucks on Sunday 9th July for our bubble-tastic, fun-filled 5k, complete with 4 different coloured bubble stations.
- The Challenge Trophy – Friday 14th July at Stocks Golf Club . With a bacon roll on arrival, this 18-hole Stableford competition will be followed by a BBQ, prize giving and raffle.

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Sudoku Corner by Colin Moore

No 110 Moderate

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

. **Solution on page 35**

MENTMORE ARTS FESTIVAL 2017

ART FOR ALL

THE 9th Mentmore Arts Festival will be held from Saturday 27th to Monday29th May 2017 from 11.00 am to 5.00 pm.

We are delighted that our favourite artists continue to support the event and are also very happy to make new artists a welcome addition to the team. We now showcase the work of over 60 contributors, twice the number from our opening year.

This, together with record numbers of visitors, has meant that we have been able to donate to charity the fantastic sum of £9,000 in 2016 and over £50,000 in total from eight events. The lead charity for 2017 will be our local Air Ambulance.

The weekend is an opportunity to have a family day out with our refreshment tent offering light lunches, teas, coffee and a bar including Pimms and local beer. We also have a raffle with some great prizes.

Many thanks to all those who make this such a popular event, including our exhibitors, all our visitors (some from as far afield as Wales!) and everyone who supports the Committee over the weekend.

For full information please visit our website and we look forward to welcoming you in May.

www.mentmore-arts-festival.co.uk

The Whitchurch Morris Men Spring Forward

SPRING is here and we've attended some great Ales during March. I took a couple from New Moon to the Letchworth Ale and let's say they had an education into the Morris lore and how to make your knees ache. Or put another way, how to eat and drink as much as you like, stay sober and lose weight.

The Letchworth Ale attracted the usual sides for dancing plus a side called Taylor's Men who specialise in the Longborough tradition. There's a lot of history hiding here as all of the dancers were from other sides (Morris Tarts), and it has been formed to commemorate the Longborough Morris of the 19th century and in particular Harry (Henry) Taylor. *Some reading up for me to do here.*

April will be a relatively quiet month with a tour being organised by Three Horseshoes around Thame and Princes Risborough. I'm still waiting on the details as I write but it's on the Saturday 22 April. For some of us this will be followed by a quick trip to Boldmere near Sutton Coldfield for the Jockey Morris Ale. No faggots this year but another curry night. Terrible. And to think we'll be so close to Mother India (*personal recommendation*) and the Boldmere Tap. Our final burst in April is our first night of dancing out commencing on Tuesday 25 April at 8pm at the Chandos Arms, Weston Turville. After that it's May and the May Day tour starting on Coombe Hill at 6.30am and then going on to Great Hampden, Worlds End, Wilstone for lunch and an afternoon spot at the Pitstone Green Farm Museum. If you're a grandparent looking for somewhere to take the grandchildren then the Museum is a place worth a trip especially on the bank holiday Monday.

Now this is a turn up for the books as I'd like to welcome two new members to the Side, Andy(2) and Alan (2) who expressed an interest to join us back in April last year. Better late than never boys.

In the meantime, there is still some practice time to be had so if you want to have a go, come and join us just after 8pm on any Tuesday at Wilstone village hall. If you want more information, please contact us through the website but time is running out for this year.

Wassail,
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Getting Nettled A Story of Longub Puttastone by Martin Winship

THE front door of the Half Head pub eased open, and Old Siegfried strolled in, stopping to let his eyes become adjusted to the dim light in the bar, before propping his second-best allotment fork against the wall. To his surprise, his pal Jake Sparhawk was not in the room, but Thomas Crab was, sitting at a table, midway through a pint of cider. "Siegfried," greeted Thomas. "I thought you'd be along. I put a pint in for you." Rupert, the landlord, had seen Siegfried come in, and had already pulled his pint. "You sit down Siggy, I'll bring your beer over to you." Having received his pint, Siegfried took a welcome drink, and gazed at Thomas, who had also supped at his cider, without displaying much enthusiasm. "You're not enjoying that, are you?" Siegfried asked. Thomas pulled a face. "Well, you know, it's alright, but it's nothing like my home-made stuff." "Aye," replied Siegfried, "but you couldn't sup a pint of that old jallop at lunchtime unless you were planning on sleeping for the rest of the day." Thomas chuckled. "That's true. How's the allotment?"

Siegfried had some more beer, and shrugged. "Fair to middling. But I've never known such nettles. All round the allotments they are; along the hedges and in the corners. Huge too - more like blooming triffids. They seem to get bigger and taller every year. Nothing seems to shift them." Thomas rubbed an ear and looked thoughtful. "Well now. I'm sure I've got an old recipe somewhere for Nettle Beer. It's supposed to be lovely – 'A Grand Refreshing Summer Drink,' it says." Siegfried looked interested. "Maybe we could have a go at making a batch" he suggested. Thomas managed to finish his cider. "We certainly could – nothing to it. Tell you what, I'll meet you at the allotments in the morning. Will you have another beer?"

Siegfried left home fairly early next morning. In view of the intended activity for the day, he left his allotment forks by his back door, and set off along the high street. As he neared the village pond, just past the Half Head, he saw three women standing by its edge, deep in conversation. He recognised the unmistakable figure of Aniseed, the astonishingly long legs of Florence Huckleberry, and the incongruously over-dressed splendour of Prunella Lympe. As he drew up to them, they fell silent, eyeing him suspiciously. "Don't stop on my account, ladies. After all, when will you three meet again on this blasted heath?" Alice Ball put her hands on her hips and spluttered, but before she could respond, Siegfried was past, laughing quietly to himself.

Thomas was waiting by the allotments gate when Old Siegfried arrived. They went to Siegfried's shed first, and armed themselves with wicked-looking curved knives, and each put an old hessian sack over a shoulder. Siegfried handed Thomas a pair of very shabby and ancient-looking work gloves. "We'll need these, I reckon," he said. "The nettles growing here can sting like a cloud of hornets – but my special gloves will keep you alright." Suitably geared up, they made their way to the boundary of the allotments. Thomas saw that Siegfried had not, for once, been exaggerating. The nettles *were* enormous, almost as tall as himself, and with foliage like a set from a Tarzan film. They spread their sacks down, open, and began operations. "We only want the tender young shoots from the tips" Thomas cautioned. Siegfried grasped a great handful of stalks and pulled them over, ready to slice off the tips as Thomas had instructed. "OW! OH, FLIPPING HECK!" he shouted, letting go of the plants, and dancing around, waving his badly stung hand about to try and alleviate the agony. "Perhaps your special gloves aren't as special as you thought" Thomas said. "We'll have to be very careful." So they proceeded, with, as Thomas had suggested, a good deal more caution, and a great deal more respect for the power of the nettles. At last, Thomas decided that they had gathered a sufficient quantity of the tips for a five gallon brew, which was the volume his recipe was calculated for.

Off they went, sacks over their shoulders (and gloves still on hands, just in case) along the high street. Ahead, Siegfried spied the trio he had passed on his way to the allotments, still "chin-wagging" in deep and earnest council. Once again, the conversation dried up as they drew near, but this time it was Alice who was prepared for the encounter. "And what are you two so-and-sos up to this time? What have you got in your sacks? Poaching again?" Siegfried winked at Thomas. "Why no, Aniseed. Our sacks are full of stinging nettles." Alice put her hands on her hips. "A likely story! What would you want with a load of nettles?" Thomas and Siegfried walked on by, and Siegfried replied over his shoulder. "We're going to make cushions for you three to squat on!" Once again Alice was left spluttering and cross.

They took the sacks back to Thomas' house. One of his out-buildings held all the equipment and paraphernalia which he normally used to make his cider – but it would be perfect for the proposed brew of nettle beer. The first job was to dump all the green tips into a gigantic pan, add a quantity of sugar, and cover the lot with five gallons of water. Between them they hefted the pan – not without some difficulty – onto a mighty gas burner, and set it to boil. The liquid churned, swirled, and steamed, and took on a most unappetising colour – a sort of purplish-green – and the smell which was produced became stronger and more pungent with every passing minute. Other people in the village began wondering if a local farmer was muck-spreading, or whether there was something wrong with the drains again. After a good long boil, they let the unsightly mess cool, strained the liquid off into a large fermenting vessel, added yeast, and pushed an airlock in firmly. Then, it was a matter of leaving well alone, and being patient.

A few weeks later, Thomas called on Siegfried, to tell him that all was ready for the next stage; bottling their concoction. It took most of that morning, but by midday they had before them over a score of evil-looking green containers. Thomas reckoned on another couple of weeks before the eagerly anticipated time for sampling; during that fortnight, unfortunately, two or three of the bottles exploded, and redecorated the inside of Thomas' outbuilding a very unsettling colour. Eventually, the big moment arrived; Thomas and Siegfried generously invited Jake Sparhawk and Rodney Shoemaker to come along and join in the fun. The Gang of Four sat round the kitchen table, while Siegfried – who had claimed the honour - carefully decanted the unpromising liquid into four glasses. They all looked doubtfully at their drinks, and then at each other. "After all," said Rodney, uncertainly, "it must taste better than it looks." Reluctantly, they all took a swig, and swilled it experimentally round their mouths – and spat it out, with looks of utter revulsion and nausea on their faces. They all agreed, when the power of speech had returned, that they had never tasted anything so awful before.

Thomas insisted that Siegfried should help him get rid of the vile substance, as he did not feel safe keeping it on the premises. The only place they could think of to dispose of the stuff safely and discretely was back where it came from – the nettle patches on the allotments. The result was extraordinary. All the nettles immediately died, and nothing would grow, where the so-called "beer" had been tipped out, for years.

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What's going on at College Lake

By Paul Simmons

AS we move through spring there are increasing numbers of flowers blooming including the first tentative cowslip flowers on the banks around the Visitor Centre and blackthorn in flower out on the reserve. Butterfly numbers are increasing around the reserve with multiple sightings of brimstones, a few small tortoiseshell and peacock as well as an exciting and unusually early report of a painted lady. These are species which over winter in sheltered areas such as sheds and garages before emerging to breed at this time of year.

In our ponds and ditches we are seeing smooth newts and frogs returning to breed. Unlike frogs which produce clumps of spawn and toads which produce strings, newts produce single eggs. A female smooth newt will produce 200-300 eggs from spring into early summer. A female newt will carefully fold a leaf around the egg using sticky glue like

substance to hold the leaf in place to protect the developing egg. Why not consider a pond in your garden, it is one of the best ways to attract wildlife and once created it is amazing how quickly creatures will appear. As a trainee here in 2014 I created a new wildlife pond near to the June Ives hide which soon became known as Paul's Pond. The pond was only lined in November 2014 and filled with rainwater over the winter. I was extremely pleased to see newts breeding in there in the spring of 2015. Last year there were 6 species of dragonfly and damselfly seen egg laying in the pond as well as the first frogspawn. I am looking forward to seeing what is in the pond as we move towards the summer this year.

Out on the marsh we have the wonderfully evocative calls of redshank and oystercatchers, a real sign of spring for me. The three islands here at College Lake are an important breeding site for waders and common terns. Birds such as dunnock and great tit are already very vocal as they set up territories and attract mates. Warblers such as chiffchaff and willow warblers will also soon be singing from the hedgerows, scrub and trees around the reserve.

If you are interested in learning more about bird song and seeing College Lake at dawn, why not book a place on our Dawn Chorus walk on Sunday 7th May at 4.30am. For more details see our website at www.bbowt.org.uk/whats-on.

World Challenge Trip to Belize

IN July this year a group of 14/15 year old young adults will be leaving their comfortable lives in Tring to trek across a forest in Belize before helping to build a doctor's waiting room and toilet facilities in a village 3 miles from Monkey Bay. The guys have been fund raising for 6 months now and as well as raising £2,500 to cover their own expenses they have raised in excess of £3000 for the community project.

Our son Alec Kemp is raising money for this adventure and to help him we are arranging a wine and food quiz on the 6th May 2017 at Wilstone Village Hall. The fun will start at 7.30 pm.

Richard Smissen and Peter Kemp will be your hosts for the evening, we have an exciting menu of 5 wines which we have paired with various types of food for your enjoyment.

We will be running a light hearted quiz with a prize for the winning team.

Our wine evenings have proved very popular in the past as we limit the number of guests, so don't delay in purchasing your tickets.

If you would like to join us for a fabulous evening, tickets are priced at £15.00 per person with all profits going to Alec's Belize fund.

Please contact Peter on 07740 942083 or email, peter@prs-officefurniture.com for tickets.

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A new page, marked with pleasure

by Sally Smith

FRIENDS always comment on the number of recipe books I appear to have, and I will admit that I do have more than a few! However, in each one there are often only one or two recipes that I actually use on a regular basis. The 'other half' frequently asks why I don't simply take the recipes I use and paste them into one book – just think of the space that would create!

It's a good idea, and I could take it further and just 'google it' whenever I want a recipe, but something stops me from throwing away the books that tell the story of my cooking 'career'. It is a story illustrated with food splats and grease marks and one that has grown as I have broadened my tastes, increased my ability and given pleasure to my family through the menus that have been created.

This week, my daughter decided to make a cake for her school homework. Together we looked through a number of my cookbooks trying to find a cake that would be symbolic of Lent, and clearly related to the Easter story – we found the perfect recipe in a Simnel Cake, and so she began to cook. It was a pleasure to watch her follow the recipe, measure out the ingredients and mix them together, and I would love to say that the final result was delicious. Unfortunately, it was proudly taken into school and all that returned was the empty plate! Why not try it for yourself. We will certainly be making another one before Easter Sunday!

Ingredients:

175g butter
18cm/7" deep round, loose bottomed cake tin
175g light muscovado sugar
3 eggs
90g glace cherries
175g self-raising flour
30g candid peel
Zest of 1 large lemon
1 tsp ground mixed spice
175g sultanas
500 g almond paste
90g currants
2 tbsp apricot jam

- Divide the almond paste into 3 and roll out one third to the size of the cake tin.
- Grease and line the cake tin and pre-heat the oven to 150˚C/300˚F/Gas mark 2
- Combine all the ingredients together (excluding the almond paste and jam), and spoon half into the cake tin.
- Smooth the surface and top with the rolled out almond paste, before spooning in the remaining mixture and levelling the surface
- Bake for 2¼ hours or until golden brown and firm to the touch
- Leave to cool for 10 minutes before removing from the tin and leaving to cool completely
- Warm the jam and use to cover the top of the cake before decorating
- Roll out half the almond paste and place on top of cake
- Divide the remaining almond paste into 11 pieces and roll into balls. Place evenly on top of the cake
- Brush the balls and almond paste with egg white and place until a hot grill until the almond balls are golden brown

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The Puttenham Page

compiled by Christine Rutter

St Mary's Church, Puttenham

We are nearing there …

As this is being written, the scaffold towers are up and the church is flooded with workmen. The decorating is under way , once completed, the chandeliers should be fitted and the floor tiles laid and grouted. By the end of April, it is hoped that St Mary's will be "ours" again and all our bits and pieces can be put back in place and services can resume in the church as of May.
Details of the official opening and services will be in the next Newsletter. Thank you for remaining with us for our services in the Cecilia Hall.

Cecilia Tea Rooms

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Proceeds to "Friends of Puttenham Church" to assist with the restoration funds

MAY - DAY

MONDAY, 1st May — 6am with the Ridgeway Chorale

How quickly a year comes around! Once more it is time to set the alarm clock extra early for arrival at St Mary's churchyard to listen to the Ridgeway Chorale heralding in the 1st May from the top of the church tower. As always, this will be followed by breakfast in the Cecelia Hall at 6.30am with our usual array of fruit juice, kedgeree, sausage and bacon rolls, toast, and tea/coffee.

JUMBLE SALE

Saturday 6th May - 2pm

Jumble may be left at the hall at any time, but if you could leave it until the week preceding the sale, it would be of great assistance. We take anything that can be fitted into a car but, please, NO videos. Any offers of help during the week prior for sorting or, especially on the day of the sale, would be very much appreciated .

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W.I. News

by Maggie Winship

IN our March meeting we were pleased to welcome Jean Young, who gave a very entertaining demonstration of Ikebana. For anyone who does not know, this is a form of Japanese flower arranging, making use of only one or two flowers and a small amount of foliage, to create a simple and delicate display.

Jean produced a variety of seven or eight beautiful arrangements, which were available to buy at the end of the evening.

As is customary, our evening was rounded off with tea, coffee and homemade cakes, followed by a raffle.

At our next meeting, to be held on 11th April, we will be listening to a talk on The Thomas Coram Foundling Hospital, which promises to be most interesting.

Anyone who would like to come along to listen to the talk will be made very welcome, and details of the evening will be advertised on posters around the villages.

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From the Vicarage

by Rev'd Didier Jaquet

RECENTLY I have been lucky enough to visit Japan. My wife and I travelled around this distant country doing the major stops such as Tokyo and Kyoto, as well as a getting in a bit of skiing. We would both recommend a visit if you ever get the chance.

Unsurprisingly though the most moving place we visited was Hiroshima. At 8.15am on 6 August 1945, the world's first atomic bomb exploded on this city. It was a devastating blow and I suspect it is hard to get any proper sense of the destruction it brought without having been there when it happened. The city has since been rebuilt and is a thriving

Hiroshima Peace Memorial

and bustling place. However, towards the west of the inner city sits the Peace Memorial Park. On the edge of the Park, is the Atomic Bomb Dome, which is where the bomb exploded 600 metres almost directly above it. It has been preserved pretty much in the same state as it was immediately after the bombing. It's a stark reminder of what happened that day. People gaze upon it quietly – not quite being able to take it all in but at the same time realising that this is where many, many people died.

Further on in the Park is the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. I had no idea that so many children died in the bombing because, as part of their normal school day, they were clearing fire lanes. Following the explosion, their parents from the outer parts of the surrounding areas rushed into the city to search for their sons and daughters. No one actually knows how many people died as a result of this atomic weapon but some estimates reckon that by the end of 1945 140,000 people had lost their lives. Chillingly, we also learned that today's nuclear bombs are over 3,000 times more powerful than the one which landed in Hiroshima.

On the way out of the museum is a poster. It shows a plant growing in the midst of the collapsed city. Remarkably, new buds appeared in the autumn after the attack. It's a sign of new life, of hope, in the place where it was said that for 75 years nothing would grow.

Back home, the evenings are getting shorter, the daffodils have started blooming and there are signs of the arrival of Spring. All around us, the new life of nature is emerging. Whether you are religious or not, I doubt you can avoid that feeling of hope, of brighter, warmer, longer days ahead.

But my mind wanders back to that poster, and in the scene of death and chaos of Hiroshima, new life, a new beginning, started to show itself. Even there, hope could be held onto. And if it can happen in Hiroshima that it can happen in our lives and communities too (after all, mother nature doesn't have the monopoly on hope). It does, however, require us to work for it, to let there be new beginnings after the hurt and failure of the past. Where forgiveness frees us from the bonds of hate and enmity we imprison ourselves in. You can, of course, continue to be offended and upset by all those have upset and offended you but it rarely works out for the best; it just makes us wounded.

The Christian Church celebrates this time of year as a period of hope. We find hope in the story of Easter: the story of the one who was wronged, betrayed and crucified but who, in his new life, spoke words of forgiveness and peace. Like the plant in Hiroshima, new beginnings are possible even in the darkest places of death and devastation. But it is up to us to grasp them.

I wish you all a very happy Easter.

Didier

Tring enjoying life together

The Biggest Brain Quiz

Friday 12th May 2017 8pm

For a fun filled night, get a team together and join our annual quiz. A General Knowledge quiz – have you got what it takes to be the Biggest Brain?

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Changes or additions? Contact the Editor.

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Deadline for items to go in the May 2017 edition is:
Wednesday 19 April 2017.
The editor is Colin Moore

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

World Challenge Evening

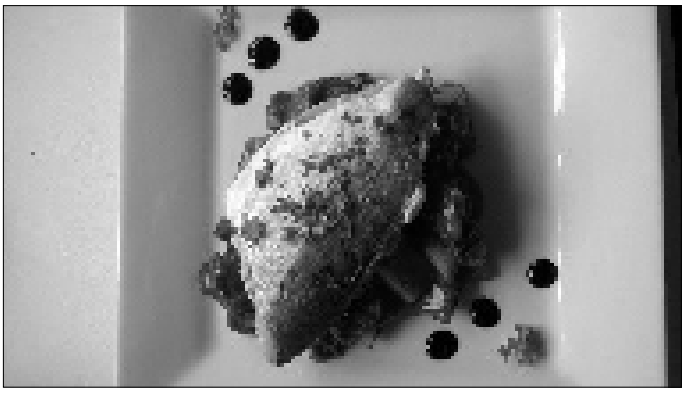
I am writing to thank you for your very kind support at my fund-raising event on 18th March at the Queens Head.

I raised £630 after all expenses have been taken out! It was a great success and your help has got me well on the way to meeting my World Challenge target. This will be helping

local communities in Morocco at women and children centres in Morocco in July.

I am so excited…The project phase of the expedition is 7 days working alongside a local community in Morocco. It offers the chance to contribute something meaningful back to a local area through my work. My school community project is based in a rural and remote area where I will live and interact with local people. My team and I will be with the community and immersed in daily life and traditions. I will be involved in manual labour tasks such as establishing a clean water supply, planting vegetable gardens, helping at a women's refuge and orphanage, helping vulnerable members of a community.

I thank you for your support, but especially Tim in the pub who helped me plan, and keep me on track when everyone



arrived! We are very lucky to live in such a lovely village.

Thankyou.
I hope to cook another meal on 20th May.

Warm wishes
Lucy Southam

Willowbrook Dog Club

MIKE Ward – who is a qualified dog trainer and Associate Member of the British Institute of Professional Dog Trainers – holding a certificate at graduate level for instruction and dog training techniques - has been associated with a dog training club in Long Marston for over 20 years.

The club now retiled "The Willowbrook Dog Training Club" - holds various classes on every Monday evening at the Victory Hall in Long Marston for all standards - ranging from young puppies through to advanced dog training.

The club's objectives are to facilitate the training and behaviour of all dogs to comply with the law and make dog ownership more enjoyable and satisfying – by using modern, positive, technical training methods.

Willowbrook Dog Club will be very involved with the forthcoming Horticultural Fete on the 5th August this year by organising and running a fun dog show with all proceeds going to the Victory Hall in Long Marston.

Anyone interested to finding out more about the club and joining a lively social group should contact

Mike Ward on 01296 668361
(email michaelward.2@btinternet.com)

or
Claudine Cox on 01296 668752
(email gerry.cox@tesco.net)

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

CAPTION COMPETITION

Please send in a caption for this photograph to editorwlmp@yahoo.com

Win Breakfast or Sunday lunch for 2 at the Queens Head

Photograph reproduced with the kind permission of Tim & Liz Ayling

Hurricane Doris wreaks havoc

ON Thursday 23rd February, the UK was battered by the next storm to cross the Atlantic. Hurricane Doris left her mark, with power lines cut for several hours and some train delays.

Wilstone was badly affected as the storm brought down a tree in Watery Lane, causing it to be closed for several days

Fallen tree blocks Watery Lane **Photo by Colin Reedman**

Class 4 trip to the Science Museum

by Long Marston

ON Saturday 18th March, Class 4 went to the Science Museum in London for a sleepover. We met animals such as a tortoise, cockroach, giant African land snail and a snake. After that we had a snack. Next we made lights in the shape of a polyhedron– to do that we had to make our bulbs and batteries light up. Then we went to bed in the Space Gallery but didn't get much sleep!

IMAX Cinema

In the morning we went to the Wonderlab, there was lots to discover. My Favourite bit was the IMAX movie on one of the biggest screens in Europe.

The children had great things to say about the trip...

Verity: 'We saw tons of bicycles hanging from the ceiling... I was trembling with excitement.'

Isabel A: 'I had a great time with all my friends.'

Aeryn: 'Next we were allowed to touch the animals. I didn't know a snake would be so delicate and warm!'

Rebecca: 'This weekend was the best weekend ever! I was overcome with excitement!'

Oliver L: 'It was so much fun, apart from the sleeping bit. I will never forget it. It was one of the best school trips ever!'

Thank you so much to Mr Scahill, Mrs Soar, Miss Cohen, Mrs Finlan and Mrs Kaye for giving up their time and accompanying the children.