Village News

October 2015

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.

Sporting successes

TWO sports clubs from Long Marston have made their annual awards which are fully reported in this edition.

The Long Marston Cricket Club held their presentation evening on the 12 September. Prior to the main evening event an inter team six a side competition provided the afternoon entertainment.

The highlight of evening was the first time presentation of a Lifetime Achievement Award. An engraved silver salver was presented to Don Winfield by the club President Jim Dean. Don has served the club for near on 70 years as player, groundsman and latterly as an advisor. A full report of the can be found on page 19.

Long Marston Tennis Club also has had many winners and you can read the full report on page 21. Unlike cricket, tennis continues through the autumn and winter months. The Winter League matches start soon and it is expected that the club will have a stronger presence in the league this year. The new the new floodlights means the club can now host matches in the winter evenings.

Lifetime Achievement Award for Don Winfield

New member Julie Stanley facing Jane Dean and new member Nick McDowell. Nick and Jane won the September American Tournament. Photo by Lee Nash

More news from Long Marston Tennis Club on page 17

Scarecrow competition -who you gonna call?

by Ali Driver

THE day was made by a sunny afternoon and a great turnout with 20 amazing scarecrows from minions to dinosaurs, dragons to a ghost-buster.

A huge thank you to all those that manned the bar, sizzled the BBQ, sold sweets and helped to tidy up afterwards and a massive thank you to Gillie and Chris Mann for providing our venue. The event raised an amazing £605.00 for Long Marston School. Thank you so much to everyone for supporting the scarecrow competition and making it such a success.

The winners were:
1st place: Maeve and Orla Brough with 'Toothless the Dragon'

2nd place Ashleigh Jo with a 'Strawasaurus'

3rd place Sophia Miles and Lauren Wallace with a 'headless zombie'

Assorted horrors from this year's collection. They certainly scare us let alone the birds.

Winners!

hold the Champaign

All scarecrow pictures by Ali Driver

'Headless zombie'

minions

S c a r y !

Stop!

Don't just sit there!

Get a scoot on, there's the rest of the Village News to read!

Village News

Editor this month: Caroline Clist

Advertising Manager
Graham Thorpe: **07743 896800**
email: villagenewsadvertising@googlemail.com

Editorial Team
Phil Buchi, Colin Davenport, Caroline Clist
John McCall, Colin Moore.

email: **editorwlmp@yahoo.com**
Post: 3 Ravens Court, Long Marston, HP23 4AN.
Phone: Phil Buchi: 01296 661339

Distribution Manager
Rob Briant 07802 384151
Finance Manager & Treasurer
Toby Davidson 07970 636168

WELCOME to the October edition of Village News, and the letters keep coming in…

We're with the Rev'd Didier Jaquet as he reminds us to give thanks for what we do have.

For a small rural community, there is a lot going on organised by local groups, so go on, turn the page and go to one or more of the events listed!

In the meantime, I'm using this opportunity to say a big thank you to all those people who through local organisations volunteer to provide a broad range of events within our parish, most of the Village News wouldn't be possible without you. So, a big thank from me.

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The next edition will be for November 2015 and the deadline for items is: Wednesday 21 October 2015.

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

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.

4 October
10am All Saints Sunday Worship
10am St Cross Worship for all
6pm All Saints Evening Prayer

11 October
8.15am St Mary Holy Communion
10am All Saints Holy Communion
10 am St Cross Sunday Worship
6pm All Saints Evening Prayer

18 October
10am All Saints Holy Communion
10am St Cross Holy Communion

25 October
10am All Saints Sunday Worship
10am St Cross Sunday Worship
3.30pm St Mary Evensong

1 November
10am All Saints Celebration of All Saints (Holy Communion)
10am St Cross Worship for all
4-6pm All Saints Night Time Light Time children's celebration
6pm St Cross Evening Prayer

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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Denington Estate, Wellingborough, NN8 2RA. 01933 228855.

What's on...

All Saints, Long Marston

CURRY AND QUIZ NIGHT

FRIDAY 23rd OCTOBER

7.30 pm for 8 pm start in Long Marston village hall.

Featuring Quiz by Toby & Curry by Huw Beef Rogan Josh, Sag Aloo, Chana Daal, Rice, Naan (vegetarian option available on request) **Tickets still only £12** (includes the curry but bring your own drink) from Rev'd Jane **01442 822170** or email Liz **admin@tringteamparish.org.uk**

The Village News team would like to recruit

volunteer reporters

to report on Parish Council meetings for our readers.

We would like to form a panel of people who can take it in turns to write this column - a useful service to our readers. Council meetings are held at 8pm on the first Wednesday of the month, usually lasting about two hours. Official reporter's notebook and training are provided! No previous experience needed. *If you can help, please call Phil Buchi on 01296 661339.*

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

Diary dates...

Tring Rural Parish Council meetings (8pm)
The public are welcome to attend these meetings.
Wednesday 7October Puttenham Cecilia Hall.
Wednesday 4 November Wilstone village hall.

Saturday 3 October
Jumble sale, Puttenham, 2pm start.
Saturday 10 October
'60s & '70s Gala Night at Wilstone Village Hall, 7.30pm
Friday 16 October
Wilstone film night: first show of new season.
Saturday 17 October
Concert at St. Peter & St. Paul, Tring, 7.30pm
Wednesday 21 October
Library Lunch at Cheddington Village Hall, 1pm
Friday 23 October
Quiz and Curry at Long Marston Victory Hall, 7.30 for 8pm
Saturday 24 October
Plan A charity gig at Long Marston Victory Hall, 7.30pm
Saturday 31 October
October Supper, Puttenham.
Saturday 7th November
Long Marston Village Fireworks, Old Tom's Field, 6.15pm
Friday 13 November
Christmas Food Fair at P.E. Mead's Farm Shop, 6 - 9pm
Friday 20 November
Wilstone film night.
Friday 20 November
"Club Paradiso" at Long Marston Victory hall, 7.30pm.
Friday 27 November
Christmas Wines at Long Marston Victory Hall, 7.30pm
Saturday 5 December
Christmas Fayre at Long Marston School.
Friday 18 December
Wilstone film night.
Friday 15 January 2016
Wilstone film night.
Saturday 6 February
Maggie's Cabaret Club, Wilstone Hall, 7.30pm.
Friday 19 February 2016
Wilstone film night.
Friday 18 March 20-16
Wilstone film night: last show of the season.

Times for mobile library Route 72

Thursday fortnightly: 1, 15 and 29 October

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.

ST. CROSS
WILSTONE

ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL

AN OUTDOOR SERVICE OF BLESSING FOR ALL ANIMALS

SUNDAY 11TH OCTOBER @10AM

ALL PETS ARE WELCOME

REFRESHMENTS FOR **ALL** AFTER THE SERVICE

WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU TO ST. CROSS

Beacon Villages Community Library

LIBRARY LUNCH

WEDNESDAY 21st October at 1pm
CHEDDINGTON VILLAGE HALL
with guest speaker
LYNNE GROCOCK
'More Than (!)
A day in the life of a Bee Keeper'
includes 2 course lunch
(vegetarian option can be pre booked)
Tickets £15 from the Library in Ivinghoe
or Linda 01296 668582 / Janet 01296 668341
In association with
BeaconLit
The Beacon Villages festival of Books & Writing

Beacon Villages Community Library

MILLENNIUM EDUCATION FOUNDATION
Registered Charity No. 1077157

Are you hoping to go to University or College in 2016, but are concerned that financial resources might not match up to the requirements?

Are you under the age of 22? Have you lived in Aldbury, Long Marston, Marsworth, Pitstone, Puttenham, Tring, Wigginton or Wilstone for at least three years?

To see if you would be eligible for a grant, apply to Tring Charities' Millennium Education Foundation for information and an application form.

Website: www.tringcharities.co.uk/education

Telephone: Elaine Winter, Secretary to the Trustees 01442 827913. ***Email:*** info@tringcharities.co.uk

Please note that the closing date is **15 November 2015** to lodge a completed application for grants payable from Autumn 2016.

Village News needs a volunteer to be our

Advertising Manager

The Advertising Manager handles enquiries from new advertisers, deals with renewals from our regular advertisers, and passes instructions to editors in a monthly report. No selling is involved - the magazine sells itself. The work is done by email and an occasional phone call.

Though not onerous, this is an essential role without which Village News could not function. If you would like to join our team of volunteers you can find out more by contacting Phil Buchi on 01296 661339.

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

GIVE BOWLS A GO!

CHEDDINGTON BOWLS CLUB, your friendly local Club, is for everybody – all ages: beginners to experts.

Open for you from May to September:

TUESDAYS at 2pm and FRIDAYS at 6pm

Our Open sessions are an ideal opportunity to get to know bowls and make new friends. Just bring trainers or flat soled shoes. We will supply the rest, including a cuppa or something stronger from the bar.

www.cheddingtonbowls.org.uk

Sponsored by:
Will Trusts & Probate Practice
01525 220644
www.wisechoicewills.co.uk

September omission

OOPS! We lost the address from the Two Oaks Sanctuary story last month. The sanctuary is a pony, horse and other animal rescue and rehabilitation home in Northchurch, Berkhamsted.

It is well worth a visit and you can find them at: Darrs Lane, Northchurch, HP4 3JR, but call them first to make sure they're open 01442 300872.

LONG MARSTON VICTORY HALL

LARGE HALL WITH STAGE & LIGHTING RIG AVAILABLE FOR HIRE

AFTERNOONS (2-6)
MOST EVENINGS (6-11)

IDEAL VENUE FOR SOCIETIES/CLUBS AND LIVE MUSIC GIGS!

For more details and to book, ring Liz Ayling on 07973 786389.

Christmas Wines

8pm Friday, 27th November

Long Marston Victory Hall,
Station Road, Long Marston

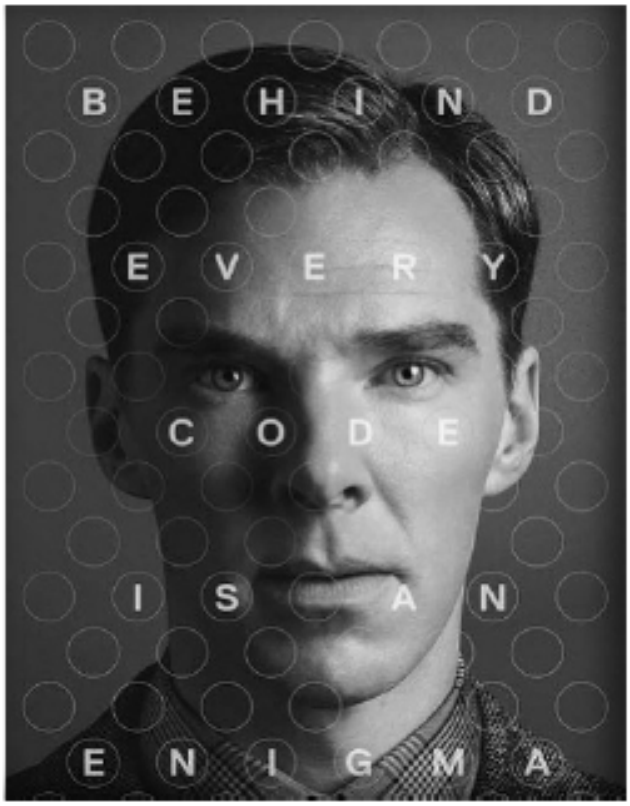
Wine tasting evening, with food matching tips & suggestions for Christmas

Tickets £20 each, to include light snacks & wine, available from Tim & Liz Ayling

Proceeds to Long Marston & Puttenham Victory Hall

Please call 01296 661384 for more information

Wilstone Film Nights



The Imitation Game

During the winter of 1952, British authorities entered the home of mathematician, cryptanalyst and war hero Alan Turing (Benedict Cumberbatch) to investigate a reported burglary. They instead ended up arresting Turing himself on charges of gross indecency, an accusation that would lead to his devastating conviction for the criminal offense of homosexuality - little did officials know, they were actually incriminating the pioneer of modern-day computing. Famously leading a motley group of scholars, linguists, chess champions and intelligence officers, he was credited with cracking the so-called unbreakable codes of Germany's World War II Enigma machine. An intense and haunting portrayal of a brilliant, complicated man, THE IMITATION GAME follows a genius who under nail-biting pressure helped to shorten the war and save thousands of lives.

Friday October 16th

Wilstone Village Hall

£7 tickets available now from Wilstone Community Shop

Doors open 7.15 Film starts 8pm Licenced bar

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From our reporter at the Parish Council meeting

New play equipment project progresses

THE long-running project to review and replace play equipment at the Wilstone and Long Marston recreation grounds is now progressing well, reported Cllr. Thirkettle at the September council meeting. The sub-committee has met and the gathering of further information is underway which will enable a final proposal to be put to the council for discussion and approval. This will take account of the recent safety reviews of current play equipment and the consultations held with local children. Some existing equipment coming to the end of its life will be replaced and the council expects to add additional features too, using the money from the 'S106' community contribution made by Dixon's Wharf developer CALA Homes. The budget is £40,000, and this has to be spent on recreation equipment under the terms of the 'S106' agreement.

No need to swing the gates! On the topic of recreation grounds, there was also a discussion about the operation of the gates to each of the fenced-off play areas. They are kept closed by a spring device, and some users have reported it bangs shut too hard. The gates have been examined, and the verdict is they are working as intended. But there is no need to swing them closed apparently - or they certainly will close with a bang.

Bids for £60,000 solar windfall to be reviewed at the 7th October meeting

Bids made by local organisations for a share of the £60,000 solar windfall payment made to the parish council by Hive Energy will be reviewed at the meeting on 7th October (8pm at Cecilia Hall, Puttenham). The parish council placed a notice in the September edition of Village News seeking more bids, with a closing date of 30th September. This edition will be published before that meeting is held, but there will be a report in the next issue.

One suggestion that has been received was to invest in solar panels on village hall roofs.

Mayor to visit these villages

The Mayor of Dacorum, Councillor Gbola Adelke, has asked to make an official visit to this parish to meet local councillors and villagers. A date in November has been proposed. Cllr. Adelke has lived in Dacorum for 40 years, and has been a councillor for 12 years. He has held senior positions in the computer industry and the automotive industry, and is currently regional director for a multinational company based in London. The Mayor's charity this year is The Rennie Grove Hospice.

Friendly village pub
Open all day
Food served 12 to 3pm and 6 to 9pm
(except Sunday and Monday evenings)

The Half Moon

Wilstone

(off the B489 near Tring and Aston Clinton)

Real Ales ● Great Food ● Children's Menu & Play Area ●Large Garden● Open Fire ● Heated Patio ●Car Park ●Dog Friendly ●Mobile Top up

Tel: 01442 826410
A warm welcome guaranteed!
halfmoonwilstone@hotmail.co.uk

Building improvement loan

The parish council's application for a loan of £40,000 to make improvements to the community asset building on Long Marston recreation ground has now been forwarded to central government, who have the final say on such matters apparently. Lucy Bancroft, Clerk to the Council, advised councillors that the VAT aspects of the proposed work needed investigation, as all the work may not necessarily qualify for the council's usual VAT exemption.

TRPC Recreation ground project update

by John Thirkettle

AS part of the Dixons Wharf development a sum of £40k was levied to improve the recreation ground facilities for young people in the parish. The parish council began the process by contacting play equipment suppliers to understand the range of products available and the likely costs. A survey was then carried out to determine which pieces of equipment were used the most by children. A team of 8 children were then tasked with identifying a representative list of desired equipment from the vast array on offer. The results of the survey and team were then used to produce a shortlist of play equipment to be used as part of a larger survey.

The survey carried out included over 50 children from the parish and produced some firm results. From this information initial proposals were drawn up.

The parish council have now carried out two site meetings and discussed the results. It is now their task to implement, where possible, the survey results. Further meetings with suppliers and installers will need to take place, before a revised proposal can be presented. Once TRPC approves the report and its proposals it must then be passed to Dacorum Borough council to be signed off. When this is complete, funds will be released to the parish council and the work can begin.

Could you write this column for Village News?

The editors need to recruit reporters to write this column, as the regular correspondent will not be able to attend many council meetings in the coming year. If you could step in sometimes, see the 'vacancy ad' in this edition.

Tring Rural Parish Council contacts

Your Parish Councillors are:
Mr Richard Briant 01442 825674
Mr Robert Briant 01442 825674
Ms Andrea Garnham 01296 660767
Mr Chris Griffiths 01296 668257
Mr Nick Murrell 01296 668190
Mr John Thirkettle 01296 661825
Mrs Olli Wheeler-Cornell (Chairman) 01296 662207
Mr Alan Winfield 01296 668977

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

***The Village Warden is*:**
Mr Colin Reedman 01442 822031

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

Letters...

From Phil Stroud, Long Marston.

Letters to Village News

I AM not normally moved to write letters to newspapers, magazines etc., in fact I usually avoid them like the plague. However this last issue of Village News rather raised my hackles. I'm normally a placid type who likes to try to understand the other side of a debate or argument, and being a newcomer to the village didn't feel I had the right to pass comment. This changed when I happened to read one of the letters, which then led me to the others.

All the letters that were published seemed to be an attack on the parish council that we as villagers democratically voted for. All because of a piece of paper that they disdain, they invoked the Electoral Commission, the police, and the Returning Officer who then had to investigate. What a load of rubbish. I felt that my intelligence has been insulted if they think that a piece of paper or wording would affect my vote selection. Well done you - my secret vote became public and was therefore seen by someone, and became an object of scrutiny in a pointless exercise. Thank goodness for sanity. Well done those officials who did conduct the exercise and saw it for what it was. There were a lot of candidates, so someone was going to be disappointed. Oh dear, how sad. I do fear that the work of the parish council may now be subject to delays and points of order instead of true business being conducted, by those who feel they were 'cheated'. Tough. In every race there are winners and losers. That's life; it's full of disappointment.

Next we had a squabble over the naming of a building - the football changing rooms. My choice would be the War Games Hall. After all there have been running battles over its use etc. In my view there are more important things in this village, such as: where can the older children and teenagers be catered for; the idiots speeding through the village; the excessive heavy goods traffic using the village; the skip drivers indulging in their own version of chicken. Get real. Let the parish council deal with the real issues. I have no cross to bear, I support no factions. All I want to see is the best outcome for our fantastic village, things being put in place for the generations to come, every asset in the village being used to its fullest potential.

My last point is to parents of the children. I'm sure some of you could perhaps start a junior section for both boys and girls at the football. Even five-a-side, tag rugby or cycle clubs. Dacorum Council have advisers who could possibly help. Maybe the football club could start a social section and utilise the Victory Hall?

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

From Jaquie Sage-Passant, ABF - The Soldiers' Charity.

Soldiers' charity cycle ride disrupted when signs removed

I AM the charity volunteer for ABF-The Soldiers' Charity cycle ride. Myself and a number of others work tirelessly raising money for the Soldiers' Charity, formally known as the Army Benevolent Fund. We are the official army charity.

You may know that our charity cycle ride goes through Wilstone, Long Marston and Cheddington. This event has raised over £30,000 in three years, and the charity relies on these funds. We have one of our food stops at The Half Moon where Abby and Guy kindly let us set up a station so riders can stop have a drink and take some food. All provided by our sponsors. On the Saturday (the day before the ride) we put up direction signs. This takes in total 60 hours. On Monday our volunteers remove ALL the signs. The signs are up for three days in total.

After our signs were placed on Saturday we were very disappointed to find when we checked the route that someone had removed the majority of these signs (this happened here last year). This is extremely dangerous as it can mean cyclists stray onto busy roads. They had gone out armed with scissors as our signs are cabled tied to the posts so not easily removed.

Would it be possible to put this in your village newsletter, and politely request (as I am sure it must be a resident removing signs), that they kindly please leave them as they will be taken down on the following Monday. I know many cycle ride organisations are not as diligent as us and leave their signs, but again we work very hard at putting these up and then removing them. We are allowed to do this as both councils and police are aware of our ride.

All we are trying to do is raise much needed funds for our armed forces and the person removing these signs is putting the riders in danger and the funds raised for the charity in jeopardy. I'm sure in their own mind they feel they are doing their village a public duty and take offence of the signs, but perhaps by highlighting this he/she will see the bigger picture and realise the danger and damage they are causing. I would be grateful if you could highlight this matter.

From Dave Jenkinson

Use of Council Money

IT was with a wry smile that I read the readers' letters regarding the Football club facility, for it would appear that I am not the only one who feels that too much money is being spent on not a very just cause. Where are the other voices in the village? Why is a policy being pushed through that will not be of benefit, other than to the body proposing it.

Letters continued...

From Jim McMunn, Long Marston

Parish Council

FOR those of us of a certain vintage who enjoy the musician Prince may I disrespectfully suggest that the Long Marston Football Club changing rooms become known as "the building formerly known as the Long Marston Football Club changing rooms".

This may be amusing or possibly not if you have no idea what I'm talking about, but what is certainly not funny is that we now have a Parish Council devoid of the moral authority to make any decision on our behalf, from the naming of a building to the allocation of our parish finances - be it to the Football Club or anyone else.

The gross incompetence during the election is only matched by a blinding arrogance in refusing to offer an apology. An apology which in my opinion would have drawn a line under the whole sad episode those involved have created. The Councillors concerned have compounded their initial misdemeanour by trying to trivialise what they did. Another error of judgement.

A Parish Council requires the trust and respect of the neighbours it serves. With the tarnished election process and the contempt shown for those neighbours in refusing to apologise can this Council ever have that respect?

I know nothing regarding the technicalities or practicalities of re-running a Parish Council election but would a good use of a portion of the £60,000 solar windfall be to dissolve the current Council and run an election properly? This would deliver an elected body that could again be held in high regard. What price local democracy? And who would make that decision? Possibly the Parish Council...

From Jeremy Johnson

Proposal for use of solar windfall

I READ the article on the funding being made available (£60,000) as a result of the recent solar development in the parish by Hive Energy, and also that nobody had come forward with proposals for its use to benefit the community.

I don't know whether it has been suggested yet but both Wilstone and Long Marston suffer from poor internet connections and at this stage a better service does not appear to be on the horizon. I appreciate there is a case for saying that the utilities operators should deliver us with a decent service anyway, but probably they consider they are already meeting their commitment by providing us with the corroded bits of copper that currently serve our villages and which are steadily falling apart and persuading them to do something different could take a long time. Providing us with high speed fibre-optic broadband in the villages is a service that all age groups and members of the community either would, or could benefit from if they chose to use it, including those with mobility problems. Perhaps the utility companies might be persuaded to bring some of their plans forward if there was some contribution towards the cost even if we did not have to meet all of it?

An alternative proposal would be to improve the footpath or pavement network from Long Marston to Wilstone, or perhaps Dixons Gap to Wilstone in order to make it more usable on dark winter nights; however, much as the recent proposal to provide better changing rooms at Long Marston will only benefit those playing football, I suspect that high speed broadband would benefit a higher proportion of the community, or all age groups, than further investment in the footpath network at this time given that our footpaths are already in a reasonable state compared to those of many rural communities.

As Mrs Russell- Mann stated, Victory Hall could well do with funds spending on it and it has the very facilities which are now going to be duplicated next door. It's like living in a house, then building another one so you can be nearer your hairdresser. At least Victory Hall has "facilities for the disabled", unlike a suggestion to woo the public within the new build of "disabled facilities", which are actually no good to any one. Even more so if they might only be available during events, i.e. football matches. Or have the powers that be commandeered a hapless soul to open and shut the said facilities daily for general use?

Rather than a lengthy acronym of TRPCCAB, Tring Rural Parish Council Community Asset Building , what a load of hogwash! Why not just say the building is a "TWOM", TOTAL WASTE OF MONEY"?

While on the subject of wasting money, I cannot see for the life of me why a certain County Councillor feels there is a priority and the need to spend £55,000 blighting unspoilt countryside with traffic lights at Dixons Gap bridge just to stave off the odd rash motorist. Well, it is great to see that the repairs are finally being undertaken since the last debacle, which I think was about five years ago. To my knowledge the bridge has remained unscathed, albeit broken for that length of time, (so where's the problem?), which by the look of the speed at which the current repairs are moving they will probably take just as long!

Rather than jumping on to numerous hair brained "cotton wool crusades" which seems to be the trend from Tring, why isn't hard fought money benefiting the community of Long Marston by getting to grips with all the ditches in the area, to try and stay one step ahead of the forthcoming winter, as opposed to skimming the surface off a road in the hope that any flood water will magically disappear. To where? Clean out the ditches then flood waters will have somewhere to go other than into peoples' houses.

Help to apply for disability benefits

by Chris Connolly

Citizens Advice in Hertfordshire.

IF people have care needs, or they have problems getting around, they may be able to claim disability benefits. Under the Disability Benefits Project, the ten Hertfordshire CABs, supported by Hertfordshire County Council, are providing a special service to help anyone who lives in the County to make sure they do not miss out on the financial support available through these benefits, which include:

Personal Independence Payments (PIP);
Disability Living Allowance (DLA);
Attendance Allowance (AA); and
Employment Support Allowance (ESA).

The Disabilty Benefits Project also provides help to complete the necessary forms.

This is a free service and, according to the individual's needs, the appointments can be arranged either in the client's local bureau or as a home visit, or the advice can be offered over the phone. For a home visit in Dacorum people should call **01707 269255** or email: **benefits.hatfieldcab@cabnet.org.uk**

Long Marston Annual Fireworks Display – Appeal for Firewood

The Long Marston Victory Hall Committee are looking for donations of firewood for the bonfire. If you have any spare pallets, we can arrange for them to be stored temporarily, or we are looking for people who are planning to or have recently cut down trees/branches that we could collect on a trailer on the morning of Sunday 1st November. We must have access to the wood and it must be ready for collection in manageable sizes so as to make our lives a little easier! We are also looking for volunteers on the day to help build the bonfire.
For any offers/enquiries, please call
Toby (07970 636168) or David (01296 661021)

Minutes Secretary Required

The Long Marston Victory Hall Committee have recently lost their minutes secretary and are actively looking for a replacement. We only meet up 5 times a year on a Tuesday Evening, but the work is essential for the maintenance of the building and encouraging its use by local groups.

Anyone interested should contact the Chairman, Toby Davidson on 07970 636168 or thejug@lmcc.org.uk

Will you be our reporter at the Parish Council?

by Phil Buchi

SINCE 2004 this village magazine has provided readers with regular reports from the meetings of Tring Rural Parish Council. We think that independent reporting of the council's affairs is a useful service to readers and a valuable part of local democracy. From this month though, our regular volunteer reporter will be unable to attend many parish council meetings because of a clash of commitments on Wednesday evenings, when the meetings are held.

If the magazine is to continue this coverage (and I think we should) then we need some new reporters who would be willing to attend the meetings and write the column for the next edition. Experience as a writer or journalist is not required (though welcome); just an interest in local government and the actions of the parish council. It would be good if several people came forward so that the load could be spread, and to provide readers with different perspectives. I placed a request for volunteers in the September edition of Village News, but to no avail so far. So now is the time to raise your hand please! Even if you can only do it now and again.

Parish Council meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month in one of the village halls (by rotation), starting at 8pm. The finished article does not have to be with the editor until the third Wednesday of the month, so it is not a rush job. I would say it takes an hour or so to compose and write the copy. The space allocated in the magazine is not huge (take a look), so it is not a big writing task. Training and advice are provided. It is interesting to follow the workings of the parish council, and you are among the first to find things out! If you would like to join the team I would be delighted to hear from you. Call Phil Buchi on 01296 661339 for a chat.

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at Wilstone Village Hall, Saturday 10th October 2015

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News from the new school year

by Emma Lynch

WE'RE back! Preschool Autumn term started on September 3rd after summer holidays and we have had a lovely few days back at preschool, making the most of our fantastic staff to child ratios to find out about everyone's summer holidays, develop some absorbing imaginary play and get stuck in to the paint, playdough and mark making. We are also in the process of planning some trips and outings. Half Term starts on October 26th with an INSET day on 2nd November. This term is always fun with lots of activities planned around Halloween, Bonfire night and of course the Nativity Play and Christmas parties.

Many preschools and nurseries in the area are seeing low numbers of children at the moment as a temporarily low birth rate filters through and we would like to thank all of the local organisations who are supporting us as it is much appreciated. We would also like to thank staff and families for all the extra effort that has been made in advertising and fundraising. We are pleased to be welcoming more new children to join the fun throughout this term with more on the list for the following term.

If you are interested in your child joining preschool you may like to come along to our bonfire themed open morning on November 5th (remember remember!), although you are welcome to come along and visit at any time when we are open. 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.

There are no Pre-School sessions on a Wednesday, the Baby and Toddler group runs from 10am-11:30am for children from birth to 5 years (great fun and a good introduction to the setting and peers for those planning to join preschool to help settling in), for more details please contact Tara Thirkettle on 07796 965 171.

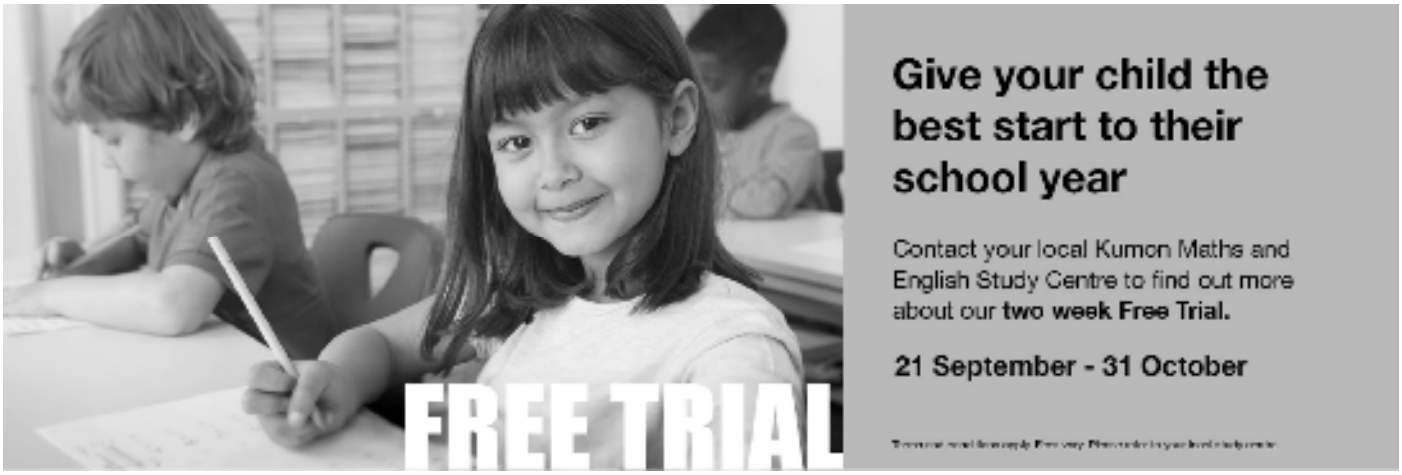
If you would like to know more about Pre-School or add your child to the admissions list then please get in touch with either Teresa Giddings our Pre-School Leader on 07925 185 311 (during Pre-School hours) or our Chairperson Emma Lynch on 01442 823 013 or email firststepslongmarston@gmail.com, see also www.firststepspreschool.org.uk.

Sudoku Corner by Colin Moore

No 97 Moderate

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

Solution on page 29



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An Eventful Summer

by Lee Nash

IN the 4 months that have gone by since my last missive so much has gone on that I can only skate over the surface of it here. A narrow escape for you, dear reader!

We held our usual two one-day tournaments in late May and early September. They are both fun but feel quite different because in May everyone plays both with and against everyone else while in September fixed pairs slug it out, both hampered and helped by our patent handicap system which allows hope to spring eternal in every breast despite the intimidating presence of old lags who persist in being annoyingly good.

We also run internal tournaments throughout the summer in 5 categories (Ladies Singles, Mixed Doubles etc.). Ideally we would like all of the finals to be played over one weekend - but you know what is coming when you read a sentence that starts "Ideally": for a variety of reasons we ended up with finals spread over three different weekends. Having seen a few of these tournaments now my observation is that we could save time by giving any member born in South Africa a place in the final while the rest of us compete for the remaining places…

Each year we enter 6 teams into the Aylesbury and District Summer Doubles League. This year, all our teams all came in 3rd, 4th or 5th position out of the 7 clubs in their respective divisions, thus happily avoiding the relegation that comes with finishing in 6th or 7th position but sadly also the promotion accorded to the top two. We didn't run straight down the middle though: no team came very close to relegation but two missed promotion by whiskers so fine you'd need a metaphorical microscope to see them. For example, our Men's second team placed 3rd behind Horsenden despite winning the same number of matches, more sets and a higher percentage of their games. How can that be, you ask? Well when two teams have the same basic score at match level, the Lawn Tennis Association decide depending on the ratio of sets won to sets lost, and for Horsenden that was 27/19 versus our 28/20, which is a smidge less. As a glass-half-full sort of chap though, our Men's 2 were only promoted into this division last year and to move up again so soon would perhaps ratchet up the pressure more than the enjoyment in 2016, whereas now all our teams are just on the challenging side of comfortable, surely the best place to be.

Winter League matches start soon and we will have our strongest ever presence this year because we now have floodlights and can host matches in winter evenings. Wish us luck !

When I wrote last, we had just held our annual Open Day. A bit later we ran some junior coaching sessions and hosted a fun competition for all ages at the Village Show. We really wanted to increase membership at this point, especially amongst younger players, and I'm pleased to report that as a mission satisfactorily accomplished. In fairness we also benefited from a club closure at Mentmore, something we would not have wished for in the interests of tennis in the wider region. Nevertheless it is fantastic to tell you that some of our newest members have been not only active but often prominent in all the activities I describe, also supporting an additional weekly club evening. There is distinctly more buzz and optimism in the air these days. So perhaps not the driest summer but still a golden one for your local tennis club.

The competitors in the Branham and Chorlton tournament in late May, minus Lee Nash

Terry Fitt and Geoff Graveson, winners of the Men's Doubles in the Summer Tournament, with Chairman Jane Dean.

Tom Hodges and Margaret Kelland, the winners of the Men's and Ladies sections of the Branham and Chorlton Tournament in late May, together with the runners up, Dave Milburn and Lisa Fountaine.

All photos Lee Nash

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Another season over and with mixed success for our team

by Paul Dumpleton

OUR First eleven continued the improvements in the latter part of the season and finished with mid table respectability – a superb achievement in the club's first season at the highest level in the Cherwell Cricket League. Pete Toovey's team got to grips with the requirements of the division with a couple of resounding victories and this bodes well for 2016.

Our Second XI now have an anxious wait to see if they have avoided the drop into Division 6. A lot will depend on league management decisions after promotions and demotions in the higher divisions.

Third XI continued the previous season's work and gained promotion for the third season in succession. Pete Woodruff's work with the blend of young and old rewarded yet again. Pete will step down from the captaincy for 2016 and this will be a very hard act to follow.

Sunday cricket continues to be a problem throughout the area. Whilst our Sunday XI, captained jointly by the youngsters Matt Storey & Sam Bastin performed well to finish mid table in division 4 of the Chess Valley League, availability continued to be a big issue, not only for ourselves but also our opponents. Two of the Sunday fixtures were forfeited by opponents due to lack of numbers. A serious debate will ensue at this year's AGM over the direction of Sunday cricket in 2016.

Presentation evening on 12th September was preceded during the day by an inter team six a side competition played in and around several 'special offers' at the club bar. A very entertaining afternoon ensued.

Sam and Pete Woodruff - Seven wickets in 7 balls.

The highlight of the evening ceremony was the presentation for the first time of a Lifetime Achievement Award to long serving member and groundsman (latterly advisor) Don Winfield. Don first played for the club in 1947 and he has been 'in charge' of the ground since the mid 70s. A well earned reward for a great club stalwart who received a standing ovation and he was presented with an engraved silver salver to commemorate his achievement by the club President Jim Dean.

First XI players' player of the year Sam Bastin.

Photos by Paul Dumpleton

Other major awards were made to:

Players' Player (voted for by team members)
1st XI – Sam Bastin
2nd XI – Rory Miscampbell
3rd XI – Peter Woodruff

Dumpy Salver – Matt Wareham
Mary Sims Cup – James Beesley
Calder Cup – Luke Parker
Cutler Cup – Alastair Bee
Thomas Chapman Memorial Award – Brian Green.

The club's AGM will be held on Wednesday 25th November and after a brief interlude pre season nets commence on the second Sunday in January. Our veterans will play throughout the winter in the indoor league keeping those ageing muscles as supple as possible.

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Cheese of the Week is back!

Now the evenings are drawing in and Autumn is upon us it seems like a good time to bring back the ever-popular *Cheese of the Week.* Past favourites include Cropwell Bishop, Appleby's Red Cheshire and Somerset Brie.

We aim to stock high-quality cheeses that are made in Britain - the UK now produces more varieties of cheese than France, where sales of *fromage Anglais* are up by 20%. The French wouldn't eat it if it didn't taste fantastic—so why not come along and give it a try?

Wednesday morning volunteer required

We are still actively seeking regular volunteers to help in the shop—as well as a vacancy in the early Wednesday slot, we could also do with more help 9.30-2 on a Saturday. If you have a few hours to spare we'd love to hear from you. Please contact Diana on 01442-826043 for more details.

£151.77 raised for DENS on International Bacon Day

You could have made a real pig of yourself with all the cakes that were on offer...

Twenty one bacon rolls (including four vegetarian ones) were cooked on Saturday 5 September as we celebrated International Bacon Day with a coffee morning for DENs. At least ten different varieties of cake were also available, as well as some fabulous allotment fruit and vegetables donated to sell. Along with all the coffee and tea consumed, a total of **£151.77** was raised for this very worthy charity.

In addition to tackling poverty and homelessness in Dacorum, DENs provides food parcels to those in need, and through your generous donations we were able to deliver five bags of food for distribution throughout the Borough.

Everyone agreed the coffee morning was a bit different and a lot of fun. Our thanks go to all the volunteers who made cakes and helped on the day and, of course, to all our customers who came along and supported us.

Promotional feature sponsored by Wilstone Community Shop

A time to give thanks

by Didier Jaquet

LAST night I was on a flight from Luton to Alicante. It was delayed and so I suppose tempers were becoming a little short. Anyway, the air steward took hold of the tannoy, welcomed us all to the flight, apologised for the late take off and then said that one passenger had an allergy to nuts. This would mean that the cabin crew would not be able to serve peanuts and the steward asked that all passengers didn't eat them either.

Fair enough. I think most of us are aware of the dramatic consequences that can follow should someone with a nut allergy come into contact with them. The flight was only just over two hours and so this was hardly a massive problem.

Much to my amazement, I then heard another passenger (I never clocked who precisely it was) exclaim loud enough for those around her to hear, 'That's so selfish.'

My heart sank at the meanness. I don't know much about allergies but I know they aren't chosen or picked like some sort of affectation. But for our appalled passenger, the fact that a person's health and possibly life could be harmed were not good enough reasons for this nut embargo. Apparently, the request for us fellow travellers to refrain from peanuts was in fact an entirely self-centred demand. The irony of the cry of 'selfish' was, I hope, not lost on all those who heard it.

In the Tring Team, we have been busy celebrating our Harvest Festivals. At the same time our news has been dominated by the refugee crisis, and so we have once more recalled how lucky we are living where we are and what others, not so fortunate, are having to endure. Counting our blessings and giving thanks for those things for which we often take for granted reminds us that we have lots to be grateful for and that, sometimes, what we take for hardship really isn't all that much after all – and that includes not being able to consume peanuts for a couple of hours!

As part of our Harvest Festivals, we have been supporting the Bishop of St Albans' Harvest Appeal *Building Hope – Opportunity for All* (http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/faith/bishop-s-annual-harvest-appeal/). The money raised will go towards providing classrooms and facilities for children in Uganda who have disabilities so that they have a chance of an education.

However, this season of thanks doesn't end with Harvest. We shall be giving thanks to God for our pets with pet services on 11 October at St Cross (10am) and at St Peter & St Paul, Tring on 18 October (4.30pm). These are the sorts of services that have to be seen to be believed given all the creatures great and small that join us!

On 17 October at 7.30pm at St Peter & St Paul, Tring there is "*A Musical Journey through our History*" a concert to celebrate the history and heritage of Tring since the grant of its town charter in 1315.
Tickets £8 (children free).

Finally, it's that time of year again: the *All Saints Curry & Quiz Night* to be held on 23 October at 7.30pm. Tickets are available from Jane Banister; they cost £12 each (the same price as last year)! This annual quiz accompanied by now infamous Huw's curry is great fun. Hope you can make it.

So all in all, a lot to give thanks for…

Village News needs a volunteer to be our

Advertising Manager

The Advertising Manager handles enquiries from new advertisers, deals with renewals from our regular advertisers, and passes instructions to editors in a monthly report. No selling is involved - the magazine sells itself. The work is done by email and an occasional phone call.

Though not onerous, this is an essential role without which Village News could not function. If you would like to join our team of volunteers you can find out more by contacting Phil Buchi on 01296 661339.

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NO CAR PARKING (disabled spaces only); Cars can be left at the Village Hall.

Please do not bring your own fireworks.
NO SPARKLERS ALLOWED

The committee reserve the right to postpone or cancel the event at short notice if they decide conditions on the night may compromise safety.

LONG MARSTON AND PUTTENHAM

by Toby Davidson

WITH Autumn in its ascendancy and the kids back at school, the villagers of Long Marston have a variety of different activities that they can enjoy over the coming few months.

Following the great success of the PTA Scarecrow Competition (see separate article), things step up a pace towards the end of October with a full weekend of events. It starts with the Annual Quiz and Curry Night in the Victory Hall on 23rd. This is a fun event which raises much-needed funds for the local churches and is normally well attended thanks to the generosity of our vicars, Huw & Jane, who prepare a superb curry supper for all those that want. This can then be washed down by some London Pride as kindly donated by Fullers Brewery, or you can bring your own drink! I promise the questions won't be too tricky, so why not come along and give it a go! (See the poster for details)

The following day, the Horti, in conjunction with the WI are planning to do some more bulb planting round the village and could do with some help for around an hour. We will supply the bulbs and direct you where they can be planted – please bring your own spade/fork! The meet time is 10:30 outside the Victory Hall for anyone who would be interested in helping.

That evening, there is a fantastic band night taking place inside the Victory Hall itself (see poster). When Plan A last played here, they went down a storm and raised a lot of money. This time round, they are raising money for "Florrie's", a local charity which has been selected by Mix 96 as their charity of the year. Every ticket sold will have a raffle ticket attached to it, which could win you one of several great prizes available on the night. With a subsidised bar, this looks to be a fantastic night out for all and I for one am very much looking forward to it!

Looking further forward, the Victory Hall will once again be hosting its annual Fireworks display in Old Tom's Field, just to the north of the village (with the generous permission of Neil & Joan Dean). Every year, I wonder how David can light up the sky as well as he does and with prices staying the same, it promises once again to be a fabulous display on the 7th November. We will also be running our popular burger and home-made treats stall on the night, so hopefully see you there!

With our second year of the talent show 'Club Paradiso' and a fantastic wine tasting evening lined up in November (more next month, but see posters for details), this provides villagers plenty of opportunity to get together in the months leading up to Christmas.

Spotters' Corner No. 304

Vintage bus services

SPOTTED at the Marsworth Steam Rally in June, these two fine examples were among the many motor transport exhibits on show alongside the steam exhibits.

Greenline Routemaster RCL2233 (CUV233C) provided the shuttle service between the show and Tring station. One of 43 Routemaster coaches built for Greenline use, it was in service from 1965 to 1982. Currently owned by Michael Narduzzo and Iain Puddephatt, 2015 is her 50th anniversary year.

The 1962 AEC European Touring Coach (25 TKR), in the colours of Maidstone and District Motor Services, was made for long distance touring in comfort. The unusual observation roof is to give passengers a good view of the mountains when passing through the Alps. Quite magnificent, with a stunning interior too.

(With acknowledgement to Marsworth Steam Rally. Pictures: Village News.)

The Flood A Story of Longub Puttastone by Martin Winship

JAKE Sparhawk sat at his kitchen table, eating a piece of toast thickly spread with some of Alice Ball's celebrated Brussel Sprout Relish. Before him, propped up against the teapot, was his latest electricity bill, which the postman had kindly delivered that morning. Jake eyed the "amount due" figure with evident disfavour. He wondered what his father would have made of it. Back then, a shilling in the meter under the stairs would supply a seemingly endless quantity of electricity. If his dad *had* seen this modern bill, Jake decided, he would have said something a deep shade of blue, and fallen on his bottle. Jake spread another slice of toast with the sprout relish, and gazed thoughtfully out of the window.

In his role as church warden, Jake of necessity had become very skilled in the art of fettling, and could fix anything from the wheezy organ to the vicar's bike, and could knock up just about any contrivance that circumstance demanded. Now, the Teasel Brook flowed through the village, in a ditch in front of many of the houses and cottages, and through a buried pipe in front of others. Jake's cottage was amongst the latter, and he wondered if he could introduce a turbine of some kind to produce his own – free – electricity. He had seen an interesting programme on the TV recently about something called Hypo-Electrics – he wasn't quite sure about the name – in Norway. Or possibly Sweden. Well, he thought, if a bunch of Scandinavians could do it, then so could he.

A few days later, the vicar noticed that the desk-fan was missing from the vestry, and another villager complained that the dynamo from his old bike had vanished…

Jake borrowed Old Siegfried's post-hole digger, and set to work. No-one ever interfered with Jake when he was about his various and mysterious activities, so it did not take him long to uncover the old crock pipe, nor to break through the top, and install his "Infernal Device." Once the wires were all connected up, with an occasional encouraging spark, the forty-watt bulb in his kitchen glowed briefly, like a sickly fire-fly, then went out, and stayed out. Jake humphed, and rubbed his chin.

The village street began to flood an hour or so later. At first, it was little more than a trickle in the gutter, but it grew quickly, and rapidly became a flowing stream, slightly oily and sullen. The first casualty was the Community Post Office and Shop. People turned out with their buckets and mops and brooms, improvised sand bags and stirrup-pumps, eager to help in any way they could. One enterprising individual even turned up in an inflatable boat; another arrived in a yellow plastic canoe, though this was more bravado than helpfulness. But most of them put their backs into it, bailing and barricading, mopping and moving, determined to see the thing out. More than once, someone would mention "the Dunkirk Spirit".

Then word came that the Half Head was about to be inundated too. The shop was forgotten in the stampede to help the new victim. Heroic efforts were made that day to save the pub, and much beer was rescued, although Rupert, the landlord, never did find out what happened to it.

There was, of course, a village meeting some days later, when the waters had subsided, and the mess had been cleared up. Many of those attending said they thought it was a Disgrace, and that Something Should Be Done About It. One of the loudest protesting voices was that of Jake Sparhawk, who had decided to abandon all attempts at producing his own electricity in future, and indeed, paid his bills, however much they might have shocked his father, without demur.

CLUB PARADISO - COMING SOON!

Calling all budding local artistes...

Following its successful premier last year, Club Paradiso is returning on Friday November 20th at Long Marston Village Hall. For those who missed last year's event this is a chance for local talent to perform pretty much anything they wish, within the exotic atmosphere of a 1930's club. The whole event is very informal and performers are seated within the audience when not actually performing. If you would like to "do a turn", or just have a discussion about the event, please call Chris Hodges (01296 668475) or Gill Macdonald (01296 661974).

The objective is to produce a program containing an eclectic mix of music, drama, comedy, magic, and anything else that is fun and entertaining. There is also a bar serving both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks and nibbles, plus the very popular Club Paradiso cocktails.

For the many others who simply want to join the audience, please keep this date clear in your diaries.

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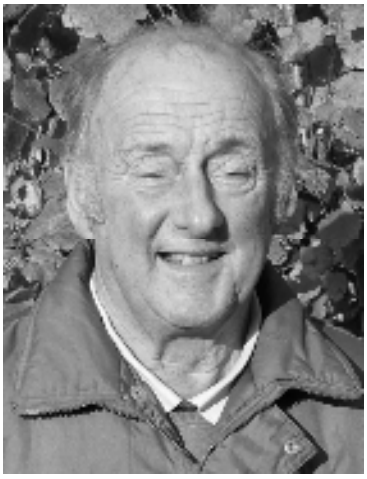
The agricultural story line… *by David Mead*

The Tring and District Sparrow Club, 1891

I HAVE mentioned the Tring and District Sparrow Club in a previous month. Now I have been offered the following article based on the archive of the Bucks Herald. I am sorry that I don't know the original author, but if any reader does know who wrote it I will be pleased to give the appropriate credit next month. With acknowledgement also to the Bucks Herald. DM.

"Tring and District Sparrow Club made a record of destroying 5,345 sparrows in the last five months. 20,000 were destroyed over the whole area and prizes were given", reported the Bucks Herald. *(Date not given.)* Just over a year later the paper went into more detail. "Tring and District Sparrow Club have killed 8,000 since last October. The efforts of members are now being directed to their nestlings with a view to extermination. Should the efforts of club members be as successful this year the farmers in the locality will be freed from 11,000 of these impudent destructive little pests. Since the club's formation in October 1891, 16,000 sparrows have been destroyed by members or their employees. Prizes have been awarded to Messers J. Fulks of Hastoe, J. Pratt of Marsworth, T. Mead of Aldbury and W. Mead of Gamnel.



Nowadays, no-one in Tring seems to have any recollection of a Tring and District Sparrow Club. They seem to have had rather a harsh opinion of the innocent little birds and the "complete annihilation" planned in 1891 was, fortunately, not achieved. For those of us who like to see these "impudent little pests" in our gardens, it was just as well.

It would seem that the farmers were satisfied with the slaughter of the birds as the club appears to have been discontinued until the start of 1914. On January 31st under the heading "**Formation of a Sparrow Club**", the Bucks Herald reported: "A good number of farmers met at the Rose and Crown Hotel to consider forming a Sparrow Club in the district. The society will pay 3d *(pence)* a dozen for all heads sent in by members. The subscription fixed at 5/- *(shillings)* for honorary members and 2/6d for farmers."

The war started later that year and the club continued, no doubt feeling that the killing of the farmers' "pest" was essential to the war effort. In the paper of February 9th 1918 it was reported in the Tring column: "The AGM of the Sparrow Club was held at the Rose and Crown on Friday evening. The accounts showed that 4,276 sparrows have been killed in the past year for which the sum of £4-9s-0d had been paid. Eight new members had joined the club in the past year. A vote of thanks was given to Mr W. N. Mead for so ably presiding."

In March 1921 the paper said:"**Sparrow Club Dinner.** At the Rose and Crown on Monday, Mr T. W. Fountaine, the Hon-Secretary, announced that £1-6s-10d had been paid for 966 sparrow heads. When the club commenced the usual number of sparrows killed was 2,000 or 3,000. From this year's figures it would appear that practically all the birds had been eliminated (laughter). The sparrow not only did an enormous amount of damage but prevented those birds which did good from living in the neighbourhood. Mr Clark submitted the toast: 'Sport'."

The sparrow club does not seem to have continued much further than the early 1920s. In February 1922 it was recorded that at a recent meeting the Secretary, Mr Fountaine, had decided to pay 6d a dozen for sparrow heads for the coming year.

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The Whitchurch Morris Men

Wassail

by John King

WAES Hael. Drinc Hael. From the Anglo-Saxon tongue meaning a toast of good health and the traditional reply. There is no single definition of what Wassailing is in all of its forms but is best described as a set of customs meant to bring good health and luck which is represented in the Wassail drink. A similar Norse blessing is Ves Heill or be healthy and in today's language – Cheers!

So I can hear you say, it's Morris and drinking again but in fact, there is no established connection other than that they are all part of our English social history. Roughly the Angles and Saxons came to Briton around 400AD and Danelaw was established around 800AD and both came to an end in 1066AD. The first recorded Morris event was in 1137AD so it's doubtful the Normans (French Vikings), brought Morris with them.

Whatever the origins of the Wassail, by medieval times, the symbolic toast and the drink itself was established and songs and chants recorded the custom. It is rumoured that King John was assassinated with a poisoned bowl of ale. Henry IV is said to have survived two assassination attempts from poisoned Wassail bowls, the first in 1399 resulted in the deaths of the Earls of Exeter, Sailsbury, Gloucester and Surrey and a second attempt in 1403 ended with less bloodletting. In 978AD King Edward the Martyr was murdered on the orders of his stepmother by being stabbed in the back whilst enjoying the Wassail Cup. There were some who claim that the mortal blow was actually struck by the stepmother herself.

The later custom has the Loving Cup passed from dancer to dancer and the person to the immediate left stands and turns their back to protect the recipient. I bet they didn't teach you this at school?

We've started our practice nights so come and join in on Tuesdays at 8:15pm in Wilstone village hall and live real history. All you men and boys have to do is come along and join us. You can contact us through our web address:- www.whitchurchmorris.org.uk or just turn up. The 2015 Vale Tour is on the 14th November.

The Village News team would like to recruit

volunteer reporters

to report on Parish Council meetings for our readers.

We would like to form a panel of people who can take it in turns to write this column - a useful service to our readers. Council meetings are held at 8pm on the first Wednesday of the month, usually lasting about two hours. Official reporter's notebook and training are provided! No previous experience needed. *If you can help, please call Phil Buchi on 01296 661339.*

Sudoku No 97 solution

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

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Getting to know you

by Leslie Barker

NINE members and two non-members (all men are welcome) met at the Half Moon on Wednesday 2nd September to start the 2015/16 round of meetings. Most chose to have supper there from the varied menu, as John Hawkes led us in the second session of *Getting to Know You.*

In July before the summer break we had shared experiences from our childhood. Most were born in maternity hospitals before the advent of the NHS, which surprised me as I and my three younger siblings were all born at home. Today we were going to share our experiences of education and National Service leading to getting a job.

Phil began and showed photographs dating from 1938. One showed him and his elder brother at Halton. He hated school because of his dyslexia, not understood at the time; however he enjoyed life with adventures on the river. One photograph depicted his 'drop tank canoe' and as a Scout he made a kayak. He described the terrifying experience of the first time he witnessed a V1 flying overhead. During his National Service he became a Military Police Officer, and described the only occasion when, reluctantly, he arrested a drunk in Gibraltar.

Bill was apprenticed to de Haviland and enjoyed his National Service with the RASC in Portsmouth, perhaps because there he met Rosemary. It was entirely due to her that he started going to church and later trained for the ministry.

David W shared next while others were eating. He is from Liverpool and described himself as a stay-at-home boy, who went to Liverpool University and was articled to a civil engineer – thereby missing (or delaying) National Service.

I still have not worked out the complicated relationship between education and NS, and how some were able to use this to their advantage.

David described how he misunderstood Christianity, and thought it was a matter of one's good deeds outweighing the bad. Eventually after sitting on the fence for ages he realised that it is by God's grace that we are saved.

David G followed. He had a full church life joining choirs wherever he went, and established a meeting for all church members after evensong. He also joined Watford Choral Society and many other organisations including the YHA and Young Conservatives. David resented his NS as he failed to get a cushy job and ended up in the Royal Artillery and served in Northern Ireland. He was elated when he left.

Andrew was brought up in Stourbridge but sent to Worcester Cathedral School – a 15 mile train journey. He wanted to join the navy but failed the entry exam. He got a job at Lloyds Bank but was "one of the worst clerks" and one evening it took him until 7.30 to balance the books. He then joined a firm making guided missiles, and in 1956 was working with one of the early computers. This led to a lifetime running his own business. "Computers are for programming, not playing games."

Martin took up the theme of accounting. When he suddenly understood the principles of double entry book keeping everything else flowed from it. But it was school and church which were fundamental to his maturing faith over the years.

Though his parents rarely attended church he was sent to Sunday school, and this plus school assemblies and confirmation brought him to faith.

Before Jon spoke I warned him that Annette had asked me to write a report on the Men's Society. He passed the 11+ and went to grammar school and recalls that the 100 yards running track was on top of the air raid shelters. Jon blames making a mess of his A levels because of the introduction of the new Nuffield science curriculum. He met Annette at Canterbury College where he was learning to teach RE, and then taught in Hemel from 1978, and became a Reader at Long Marston.

Clive said he benefited from the 1944 Education Act, and was awarded a special scholarship for grammar school, but then, academically it was downhill all the way. He failed one A level, and had to return to school to take resits it in December, but enjoyed being stage manager for the school plays. He avoided NS by applying for an early medical, but then only achieved a third class degree. Nevertheless he got a job with Marconi's TV transmission department. Hence Clive can now explain why Australians did not get snow storms on their TVs.

Mike was born with two club feet, so easily avoided NS, but A levels were a difficult time as his parents split up just before the exams. He enjoyed managing the poultry counter at Sainsbury's. Mike showed his technical abilities in devising equipment to test aerosol cans, and later received an award for measuring the right chemical mix for sheep dips. After being made redundant he got a job making car parts in Aylesbury, which led to skills in cadcam.

I gave my contribution last ; I avoided National Service by being born too late. My education was a very straightforward progression from saying at my interview for grammar school that I wanted to become an architect to being one. My pilgrim's progress started being brought up as a RC and reading the Bible at school, but arguing with my parents that God was an astronaut. I hoped to discover the truth at university but the Truth found me through Christian friends. Good preachers in Sheffield's churches and Christian staff at the biblical studies department, ensured I understood what I was reading.

John concluded the "getting to know you" sharing his experience of joining the Navy at 13 and being discharged in 1946 due to health problems. He returned to Wallingford and got a job with a firm of auctioneers and estate agents. He undertook a postal course to qualify, but after a disagreement with his employer walked out with no job and a child on the way. Within weeks he had secured a job in Tring.

We then discussed the way forward and agreed to continue monthly informal meetings, which John kindly offered to arrange.

A number of themes emerged from common experiences, notably National Service, but what encouraged me was that academic failure, even the lack of further education, need not be a disaster. Many went on to successful careers. We will probably be sharing our working lives at our next meeting on Wednesday October 7th, again at the Half Moon. All men are welcome.

The Puttenham Page

compiled by Christine Rutter

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Thank You ….. to everyone who came to the Cecilia Tea Rooms. Although we were down on numbers this time due to holidays, we are still able send £140 to the "Scannappeal" Stoke Mandeville. We hope to run the same charity at our first Tea Rooms in the Spring of 2016.

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Big Butterfly Count

by Alison Beck

ONE of the more unconventional of Long Marston's allotmenteers, Les Stephenson, has an extensive herb patch on his organic plot. I decided to do Butterfly Conservation's Big Butterfly Count there on Thursday 30th July. The count requires you to watch for 15 minutes in a sunny spot, and to record the species and number of individuals that you see.

Thursday 30th was sunny but quite windy, and Les's marjoram and mint were in full flower. I counted 21 individual butterflies of 8 (or possibly 9) species in 15 minutes. It is difficult to be sure that you aren't recounting the same individual, but if you look hard, you can make an honest estimate, and sometimes you are helped by seeing 3 individuals at once, as I did with the Commas.

So we saw 3 Large Whites, 3 Small Whites, 1 Brimstone, 2 Small Skippers, 4 Gatekeepers, 3 Meadow Browns, 3 Commas, 1 Peacock and possibly one Green Veined White but I couldn't be certain so I counted him as a Small White. In addition we saw a Mint Moth (on the mint!) which I had to look up as Butterfly Conservation want moth sightings too and I'd never seen one before.

One interesting thing about this tally (apart from how impressive it is) is that on most visits I see Small Tortoiseshells and Six Spot Burnet Moths, but during that 15 minutes there happened to be none.

Comma

Brimstone on marjoram at the allotments
Photos by Alison Beck

So apart from all the wonderful vegetables and fruit, having an allotment helps our butterflies hugely. And you should see the bees on the spectacular artichoke flowers at the moment! Allotments can be a wonderful place to relax and watch wildlife: all that's needed is to create the right environment.

Village View

Wilstone goes back to the 19th century as steam powered vehicles make a dramatic return to the village following the Marsworth Steam Rally

Photo
Colin Moore

Harvest Festival at St. Cross

by Alison Cockerill

ON Sunday 6th September St. Cross celebrated Harvest Festival in traditional style. Led by Rev'd Didier Jaquet, the service started outdoors at Meads farm pond, where the agricultural heritage that the parish enjoys was clear for all to see---sheep in the neighbouring field, and arable crops beyond, all backed by the Chiltern Hills. In giving thanks for the work of the farming community, Didier also acknowledged the beauty of the surroundings, and our great good fortune in living and working in such a lovely place.

The procession, which included the Harvest loaf, then moved to the Community shop, to recognise the man-made harvest of comestibles and the human harvest of service and support to the village.

The second half of the service took place in the church, where the floral decorations included Old Man's Beard from the hedgerows around the village, and ears of wheat gleaned from the remnants of a sown field.

In keeping with tradition, Harvest Lunch followed in the Village Hall. Starting with the breaking and sharing of the Harvest loaf, the guests enjoyed a generous spread of main course and salad, followed by desserts—the calories present were diluted by a glass or two of wine, with tea and coffee to complete the meal.

Many thanks to all those who worked so hard to make the day such a success, and to all those who came to the service and the lunch—thank you for joining us, your continued support for St. Cross is very much appreciated.

All photos by Colin Reedman