

The WOODCHESTER Word

NOVEMBER 2007

DANCING IN THE STREET

Thanks to the generous assistance of dozens of Woodchester residents, the Street Party 2007 was a huge success. Almost 500 people enjoyed an evening of entertainment and fine food, bringing together our community. The organising committee would like to thank all those who attended and contributed. We have carried forward funds to help arrange any future street party, and have been able to donate £1,500 to local charities and voluntary organisations.

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

STREET LIGHTING

You may well have noticed an article in a recent Stroud News and Journal relating to an energy-saving exercise by Gloucestershire Highways, whereby a number of street lights will be switched off between the hours of midnight and 5.30am. The idea behind this is to save energy, and the associated carbon emissions, but also to save energy costs.

I think most people would agree that in principle this is a good idea but that there are a number of lights that should stay on at all times for a variety of reasons. There are detailed criteria but those that might apply to the village are:

- Main roads
- Areas with above average crime rates
- Areas with sheltered housing and vulnerable people
- To maintain legal 30mph speed limits (two lights every 200yds)
- Where there are excessive distances between individual lights.

Highways have produced a proposal, with a detailed map, whereby the 18 street lights on the A46 stay on all night and 33 of the remaining 91 lights round the village would move to "part night" operation. This proposal is subject to input by the Parish Council and will be an item on the agenda for the November meeting.

Anyone who would like to see the plans can do so at the meeting or they can be viewed in advance by contacting either Duncan Hayes (Tel: 873107), the Parish Clerk, or Malcolm Swait (Tel: 873254).

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Join your friends and neighbours for the 2007 Woodchester Outdoor Carols on the evening of Friday, December 21. Following on the success of last year's event, there will be an opportunity to sing carols to musical accompaniment. There will also be mince pies and mulled wine. See the village notice boards for times and locations.

The carol sheets and refreshments are sponsored by Woodchester Parish Council, Woodchester Street Party and the Cheltenham & Gloucester Rural Initiative Fund.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 11TH NOVEMBER

This year we are making changes to the wreath laying ceremony at the war memorial. There will be a service at St Mary church starting at 10.55am which will include the traditional two minutes silence followed by a service of remembrance in the Church. At the conclusion of this service

there will be a laying of wreaths at the war memorial at 12 midday for those that wish to attend.

ROAD SAFETY UPDATE

In the last Woodchester Word I outlined some of the problems raised in the Parish Plan relating to Road Safety in the village and progress so far against the action plan. Sadly with all that has gone on over the summer, I have little further progress to report at this stage.

I have been in contact with the District Safety Officer, who was one of many who was co-opted into helping out with the floods and their aftermath, which has taken a heavy toll on his work-load. However, I am hopeful that we can soon start some activity to raise awareness of the problem of both speed and parking in the village, although we have decided that the "20 is Plenty" campaign is probably not appropriate, as in many places 20mph is far too fast!

We have over the summer had reports of a new parking problem higher up Selsley Road whereby, due to badly parked cars, overtaking vehicles are being forced onto the wrong side of the road approaching a blind bend, and access to some houses has been difficult.

Remember double yellow lines must be a last resort, so in the short term there is not a lot we can do except to ask people to think before they park and to be prepared to walk from somewhere where it is safe to park and emergency vehicles can get through.

Please help us to make this a safer village to walk and live in.

Malcolm Swait, Parish Councillor, Traffic.

WOODCHESTER PLAYGROUP

Following the success of last year's event, Woodchester Playgroup is holding another Christmas Fundraising Coffee Morning on **Wednesday 21 November from 10am until 12 noon at Woodchester Village Hall**. Please come and join us - everyone is welcome. Browse the stalls for festive gift ideas from Armadillo Jewellery, Phoenix Trading cards, Liz Falconer's stained glass and more. There will be a raffle, guess the weight of the Christmas cake and how many sweets in the jar? Enjoy a chat over a cup of tea, coffee or a glass of hot Bottle Green spiced berry cordial with a seasonal mince pie. We are hoping the young playgroup children will perform two Christmas songs for you at the end of the morning. All funds raised will go towards maintaining and updating the playgroup facilities. Woodchester Playgroup is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 12 noon during term time, for more details please call 01453 873004

WOODCHESTER VILLAGE HALL

The Trustees of the Village Hall congratulate the WI and the Friendly Circle in celebrating 50 years of service to Woodchester Village Community - what an achievement! Redecoration of the Hall is scheduled between the end of December and January 11th 2008. This should not disrupt classes. Rental charges for regular users remain at £5 per hour until April 2008, when the rent

will be reviewed. One-off rents for parties, social events etc. have been uplifted by £1 to £9 per hour as from 1st September 2007. Unfortunately the Trustees have been forced to increase charges due to the huge increases for gas and electricity.

The Trustees are looking to install a hearing loop, as it has been brought to their notice that many people of various ages are hearing impaired. This requires funding; if anyone could fundraise, or contribute privately towards this worthy cause, donations would be very welcome. An amplification system could be installed at the same time, dependant on funds being available.

VILLAGE HALL COURSES AND ACTIVITIES

Various classes and activities are run at the Village Hall, mostly on a weekly basis (please see the notice boards). If anyone wishes to organise a new class or activity, please ring Bob Ludlow on 01453 872 340.

Monday 10 - 12 noon, SHORT MAT BOWLS - contact Bob Ludlow Tel: 01453 872340

Monday 6.30 pm - 8.00 pm. MARTIAL ARTS - contact Jo Dymond Tel: 01453 755504

Tuesday 10 am - 12 noon, ART GROUP - contact Vera Naumann Tel: 01453 873689

Tuesday 2 pm - 4.30 pm. alternate weeks, FRIENDLY CIRCLE contact Maureen Smith Tel: 01453 873566

Tuesday 7.15 pm - 10.45 pm, TABLE TENNIS - contact John Smith Tel: 01453 766116

Thursday 10 am - 12 noon, SENIOR'S LIFESTYLES - contact Dorothy Turner Tel: 01285 885766

Thursday (3rd in month) 7 pm - 10 pm W.I. MEETING - contact Fleur Vallender Tel: 01453 766038

Thursday (4th in month) 7.30 pm - 9.30 pm NEEDLECRAFT GROUP - contact Kath Gay Tel: 01453 873348

Friday 10 am - 12 noon, ART U3A mixed media & calligraphy- contact John Allison Tel: 01453 768534

Friday 7.15 pm - 10.45 pm, TABLE TENNIS CLUB - contact John Smith Tel: 01453 766116

PLEASE NOTE - SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS AVAILABLE FOR PRIVATE FUNCTIONS.

BAG 2 SCHOOL COLLECTION

In June you may have received a blue bag through your door to donate items towards Woodchester Endowed School's collection. A BIG thank you to all those who contributed in any way. The school received £260-00 towards its building fund by doing this.

There is another collection arranged for Friday 23rd November and it is hoped that bags will be delivered around the village again. They may also be available in Post Offices if we can get enough.

Items to start gathering together are: adults' and children's clothing, bedding, curtains, soft toys, handbags, belts, shoes (No bric-a-brac) The school will receive payment per weight collected so everything you can donate really helps. The more we collect, the more we raise! Look out for that blue bag through your door and posters with more information around the village. If you don't receive a blue bag or would like to donate suitable items sooner, please contact Helen Latham on 872643

1ST WOODCHESTER BROWNIES

We spent the whole of the Summer term outside playing games and joining the Guides for many activities. Some lucky older Brownies were invited to stay to Guides one night to cook their tea over a campfire. We went tracking and trailing with the Guides and also joined them for a sport activity challenge evening on Selsley common. This was great fun as we participated in everything from egg and spoon races to football matches. The evening finished with us following a trail of wool set by the Guides through the woods and a Brownie "flying up" to Guides.

The last meeting of term was a fantastic evening tinged with sadness. We went ten-pin bowling in Stroud, followed by a party at which our Young Leaders demonstrated their dancing skills! Sadly though, it was our Brown Owl's last evening with us. The District Commissioner joined us and presented Brown Owl with a retirement present and gave a speech of thanks on our behalf. We will miss her and thank her very much for keeping Woodchester Brownies running over the past few years.

The Autumn term started with a new Brown Owl, a new Tawny Owl, a new Snowy Owl and an Occasional Owl. Although most of these Guiders have been seen by the Brownies before, they've all been recycled and have adopted new roles! Our Young Leaders have also been renamed as Penguin and Peacock. A Pow-Wow between Brownies and Leaders took place at the first meeting of term and we've been busy working towards gaining our Cook's badge, as well as playing new games and some of our old favourites.

Later this term we are going swimming and will also be learning some new songs, doing some craft activities and lots of other fun things. If you'd like to join us, please contact Jackie on 01453 821258 or Louise on 01453 832025.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION

Our mission this year is to join in the national 3 year programme set out by the Bishops' Council for England and Wales. 2006 was devoted to Welcoming; 2007 is to Spirituality; 2008 to Passing on the Faith.

We will also consider how we may be able to join the local Churches together in their programme of Evangelisation organised by Canon J. John of Coventry Cathedral.

On a wider scale, our Parish CAFOD group, which raised £1277 for S.E. Asia during 2005, will be concentrating its effort on Africa, particularly Kenya where 3,500,000 people face starvation after the severe drought destroyed crops across the region.

1ST WOODCHESTER GUIDES

Woodchester Guides spent most of the Summer term outside. We had a campfire, at which we cooked tea and melted the obligatory marshmallows! One new Guide signed the Unit Guidelines and some Go-For-It certificates were presented along with some Year Challenge Badges - congratulations! We went tracking and trailing a couple of times, with the Brownies, helping them to learn how to lay and "read" the signs. A game evening was also held out-of-doors. The sport activity challenge evening on Selsley Common was enjoyed, despite the rain and mud. The ten-pin bowling and party were thoroughly enjoyed.

At the first meeting of the Autumn term we officially welcomed Lefty Jenny as the new Assistant Guide Guider (she had been visiting us over the summer term). As we've been so busy preparing for our Performing Arts badge we haven't done such a variety of activities as we usually do, although we have found time for a couple of games! This badge, so far, has involved us making puppets, scenery and props

and preparing a script. This has given us a good chance to socialise - something we're very good at! We hope to present our puppet play to the Brownies very soon.

We will be joining the Brownies when we go swimming and some Guides will be making their Promise in the pool. We are planning to work towards another badge soon as well as having time to do some more of our usual activities. If you'd like to join us, contact Jackie on 01453 821258 or Jenny on 07966 665050.

WOODCHESTER FRIENDLY CIRCLE

Our new season began on Tuesday, September 4th with a good attendance and new members were welcomed. Geoff Adams presented his video of the last opening of the Roman Pavement in 1973 which was well received, particularly by the Members from Crystal Fountain Village who are mostly new residents to the area. The Coffee morning in July was unfortunately not well supported and it is hoped that the next one on November 17th, 10.30 a.m. to 12 o'clock in the Village Hall, will be well supported as funds are vital to provide social events for the Circle. The A.G.M was well attended and it marked the commencement of the 50th Birthday year. Members were treated to a choice of sherries and a slice of cake to commemorate the occasion.

Harvest Festival was celebrated on the 2nd October with a full table of goodies brought by members and later sold in aid of the Sue Ryder charity. Mr Willoughby from Sue Ryder gave a talk on the history of the charity and the services it provides. October 16th was the date for the celebratory lunch at The Castle, Moreton Valance and the next meeting on October 30th welcomed Mark Cummings from Gloucestershire Radio to talk about his morning programme (6.00 a.m.- 9.00 a.m.)

A loyal and longstanding member, Edith Smith has died very suddenly. For many years Edith had organised all the social events, outings etc and will be very much missed. See obituary below.

New members welcome. Enquiries 01453 872424

OBITUARY

The news of the death of Mrs Edith Smith has been received by the Trustees of the Village Hall with great sadness. Mrs Smith has been a valued Trustee and has worked with devotion on behalf of the Village Hall for a number of years. She will be greatly missed.

Bob Ludlow, Chairman of the Trustees.

POLICE

I am Steve Phillipson, the police community support officer point of contact for Woodchester, Horsley and Nailsworth. I have recently taken over from Claire Slark who is currently training as a police officer. My colleague Steve Wadley will mostly be keeping an eye on Woodchester and our police support comes from P.C. Nicola Nolan, who is the council funded community officer for the area.

As you are reading this, the clocks will recently have gone back and many of you may even be starting to think about Christmas. Both of these present opportunities to the burglar. There is a peak in activity in the two weeks following the return to GMT and a house full of presents all boxed and packed up could be a tempting target. However, we have seen very few burglaries locally on residential properties so don't be alarmed, just be aware and make sure you are taking all the obvious precautions. Keep doors and windows locked, don't leave the keys in them or handy nearby. If you are out for the evening, leave a light on and keep those presents out of view. Being aware of the risks and remembering the basic precautions gives you the advantage over the criminal and hopefully

crime free. Tel: 0845 090 1234

Stephen.phillipson@gloucestershire.police.uk

WOODCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The next meeting of Woodchester Historical Society will be on Tuesday 6 November at 7.30pm in the Undercroft of St Mary's Church, North Woodchester.

We shall start with the AGM, followed by 'A Gloucestershire Quiz'. Admission is £2 members, £3 non-members. All are welcome.

W.I. REPORT.

The W.I. has had a fairly quiet time since the very busy months early in the year when we celebrated our 50th anniversary. We have had interesting speakers, joined Rdborough W.I. for skittles and enjoyed a meal out in August. With Autumn upon us we have an exciting programme ahead with interesting speakers booked. Our A.G.M. is in November when a new President and committee will be elected. December brings us once again to the Christmas concert. This year it's on 14th December at the village hall with the Stanley Singers and Woodchester Handbell Ringers already booked. We welcome any youngster in the village to take part, so if you have a hidden talent please contact a W.I. member. We donate the retiring collection to a local charity chosen by the W.I. It's always a happy enjoyable evening - don't miss it.

We were saddened to hear that Edith Smith, a long time member until this year, has passed away. Edith was a past President, a member of the W.I. choir and concert party and was a valued member always ready to help where and when necessary. Our condolences are extended to her family.

We meet every 3rd Thursday at the village hall. Come on ladies give us a visit. 7. 30pm is the time.

FLOODS 2007

The Glos. Federation of W.I.s is publishing a book about something that most of Woodchester only knows about through the media - the floods. Members from all over Gloucestershire have written about their experiences and provided photographs. These have been put together by local company Sutton Publishing. The book will be available in early November from bookshops at £9.99. All the proceeds from this book will go to the Glos. Flood Relief Fund.

CASTLE FINE ARTS

Local foundry Castle Fine Arts, based at the Inchbrook trading estate, has recently completed casting the bronze sculptures for the national Armed Forces Memorial in Alrewas, Staffordshire. The sculptures were designed by Rodborough artist, Ian Rank-Broadley and form a major part of the memorial dedicated by The Queen in October, which will feature in a BBC programme for Remembrance Day. Castle Fine Arts has had a foundry in Woodchester for over 4 years, producing bronzes ranging from the smallest most delicate pieces to monumental public commissions.

Tel: 01453 836123 www.bronzefoundry.co.uk

STORIES PLEASE

If you have any stories about local events, people or issues, please send them to us. We can't promise to publish them all but we'll do our best. Send to any of the team by 1st February for the March 2008 issue. Paul Lock paullock@incisecomms.co.uk Shelagh Woodhouse shelagh.w@wanadoo.fr Katie Beard katie.beard@btinternet.com Or post your news to Paul Lock at Lower Berrymore Cottage, North Woodchester, GL5 5PH