

The WOODCHESTER Word

NOVEMBER 2008

NORTH WOODCHESTER POST OFFICE UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

At the beginning of November Tony and Maggie Lait handed the keys of the North Woodchester Post Office to Terry Walters and his wife Linda. Terry and Linda are new to the post office business but they are looking forward to running the business on much the same lines as before. However they are hoping to possibly extend the opening hours. They will need all the help they can get from the village to make a success of their new venture. Remember 'Use it or lose it!' We all wish them luck.

NEW TEAM AT THE ROYAL OAK

Louis and Laura Roche are the new landlord and landlady at the Royal Oak in North Woodchester. We welcome them and wish them luck.

"When we first started dating, Laura was working for the previous landlady Bunny. I still remember the first time I came to pick her up from her evening shift. I absolutely fell in love with the pub, it was so traditional and unmolested unlike so many pubs these days. It oozed character and charm in a very rustic way but I was living and working in London so could only come to the Cotswolds to see my family and friends at the weekends. That was three years ago and in that time we've got married and had a baby and now a total change of career and lifestyle.

We don't have a master plan, we take each day as it comes. Our aim is to give the local community their pub back, open seven days a week, serving great beer and locally sourced home cooked food at a reasonable price.

The Royal Oak opens from 11.30am till 3.00pm and 6.30pm to 11.00pm every day. To book a table at the restaurant, not open Mondays, call 01453 872735.

WOODCHESTER VILLAGE FETE 2009

At a public meeting held in the Village Hall on Monday 29th September, it was decided to hold a village fete on Saturday 12 September 2009. A committee has been appointed oversee arrangements, and to decide on a venue in North Woodchester, close to the Village Hall. There is huge enthusiasm from local organisations and the Committee now wishes to hear from anybody with suggestions for how to make this event a great success, or who would like to participate. This is an excellent fundraising opportunity for local organisations. If you would like more information or to hold a stall or participate in any other way, please contact the clerk to the Parish Council, Barbara Lewis: Council@woodchestervillage.co.uk or Parish Councillor, Penny Brown on 01453 873431

THE PRIORY CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION.

Our report, from the Catholic congregation, is all about celebration. It is about the celebration of human achievements made possible through Divine gifts including good weather.

First: - Father Piers Linley OP (Order of Preachers), our Parish Priest, celebrated the 40th anniversary of his ordination on the Feast of Sts Peter and Paul. Our Dean, Rev David Ryan joined us, for the speeches and presentation of gifts to Fr Piers. A BBQ. followed in the school grounds on a day full of sunshine.

Our second celebration was with our local 'Catholic Women's League' members for the 75th anniversary of the foundation of the League in Woodchester. For this occasion a group project was undertaken by the members to make a new Banner with the appropriate dates, 1933-2008. This was dedicated on Sunday September 28th.

All readers are warmly invited to our Christmas Bazaar. Saturday December 6th. 1pm - 4pm. Lunch will be served at 1pm also tea and cakes later in the afternoon.

Christmas Masses will be as follows: -
Christmas Eve: Convent of Poor Clares. 8pm
Priory Church 11pm, Lessons and Mass
Christmas Day: Convent 8.30am
Church 10.30am, Carols and Mass.
New year's day: Convent 8.30am.

It just remains for us to wish all our readers a reflective Advent and a joyous Christmas.

WOODCHESTER W.I.

Members of the W.I. are everyday women of all ages and backgrounds who involve themselves in various activities, maybe a local campaign or national issues. Members attend meetings and have the opportunities to take part in many activities. The W.I. has campaigned over the years on a wide range of issues, for example Equal Pay (1942), Keep Britain Tidy (1954), Aids (1986), Food Labelling (1995). This year it was a resolution on the inappropriate imprisonment of the severely mentally ill. Since its beginnings in 1915 the W.I. has been active in towns and villages throughout England and Wales. Woodchester W.I. has been in the village for over 50 years, giving support where and when possible. Our meetings are varied, sometimes we have a speaker, maybe an evening with another W.I., a county walk, a pub meal, a skittle match, the list is endless. For many years we have arranged a Christmas Concert in the Village Hall, raising money for a local charity. This year the concert is on FRIDAY DECEMBER 19TH at 7.30 p.m. Please support this happy event by coming along and being part of Woodchester's Christmas celebrations. If you can play a musical instrument, recite, sing etc we would love to hear from you, our village has a lot of talented people hiding away - please share those talents with us. This is a village event for everyone and not to be missed! W.I. meetings are held in the Village Hall on the third Thursday in the month at 7.30p.m. Please give us a visit ladies, you will be made most welcome. Contact Muriel McTiffin 873314

FUND RAISING FOR THE COBALT UNIT

A few years ago I had to go to the Cobalt Unit in Cheltenham for an M.R.I. scan. My husband was very impressed by all the staff there and decided he would give them one of the quilts he had made for fund raising. Some people in the village will remember he was a very talented patchworker and quilter, and some of his work was shown at the craft exhibition held in the village some years ago. However serious cancer overtook him, and his thoughts were not put into action. Very sadly he died in 2007.

In the winter of that year my daughter Claire and I decided we put his wish into action and gave the quilt to local fundraisers to raffle for the Cobalt Unit. The quilt was on display at the Rococco Garden in Painswick in the snowdrop season and £700 was raised then. Various people in the

district also had raffle tickets for sale.

On May 10th there was a fund raising event in Painswick Town Hall selling bric a brac, jams, cakes, and gifts from Alan Titchmarsh and Pam Ayres. I was invited to draw the winning raffle ticket for the quilt, which was won by a lady in Cardiff. The event raised £795, and the raffle for my husband's quilt raised £1,400.

My family and I are very pleased with this result. (I would like to add that the voluntary fundraisers work tirelessly for the Cobalt Unit, and it is to be hoped that the target of £1,000,000. is raised in 2008).

Kathleen Ryan.

VILLAGE CAROLS

We're thinking of incorporating a living nativity into this year's village carols which will be on Monday 22nd December. The idea is to travel around so that as many residents as possible are included. For example, Mary and Joseph will set off from one part of the village; the shepherds will start from a field and the three kings from somewhere else. There will be more improvisation than learning of lines. If you're an adult or older teenager who would like to volunteer for a role please contact either:

Rhiannon Wigzell (01453 872353;
rhiannon@atcombe.com or Penny Brown (01453 873431; pennybrown@woodchestervillage.co.uk).

WOODCHESTER GIRLGUIDING

The Brownies and Guides all enjoyed their visits to Stroud Fire Station and demonstrated how much they had learnt by passing the test for their fire safety badges. The Brownies started working towards their sports badge, by improving their netball skills and the summer term ended with a joint meeting of Brownies and Guides, with games, a barbeque and melting marshmallows over a campfire. This was a very special evening for one Brownie who made her Promise.

A few Brownies joined 1st Nailsworth Brownies on a Pack Holiday in Cranham. At the end of the weekend, I'm not sure who was more tired, the Brownies or the Guiders! At the beginning of the new term a couple of Guides joined 1st Nailsworth Guides on a trip to Alton Towers.

This term the girls have started working on a national Girlguiding project called, "Changing the World". Both the Brownies and Guides have decided to support the Woodland Trust and one of the ways they would like to do this is by encouraging the recycling of Christmas cards; so, I know Christmas isn't here yet, but if you can save your Christmas cards and give them to a Woodchester Brownie or Guide, we will be very pleased to make sure they get recycled.

So far this term the girls have played games, and done various craft activities. The Brownies decorated some lovely cupcakes and the Guides painted some glass dishes to make very pretty tea-light holders. The Guides have also followed a trail by torchlight. Brownies and Guides both plan to do some badge work, go swimming, have a disco and a party this term. We will also be supporting the Nailsworth Goodwill Evening.

If you would like to join us, as a Brownie, Guide or helper/Leader please contact Jackie on 01453 821258, Jenny on 07966 665050, or Louise on 01453 832025.

WOODCHESTER FRIENDLY CIRCLE

The Friendly Circle regular fortnightly meetings began again on the 2nd September 2008, after a break since May.

Geoff Adams presented a film entitled "Night Mail" which showed the progress of items posted through the Post Office to their destination in Scotland and a film of the "Guild of Gloucestershire Craftsmen", which were much appreciated.

The meeting on September 30th entitled "Harvest Praise" was extremely successful.

Members were asked to provide saleable items, which were then sold in aid of the Poppy Fund. The Speaker from the Poppy Fund talked about the work of the British Legion, how it helps ex servicemen/women in numerous ways, when help is needed.

Forthcoming programmes include a talk about the uncommon wild flowers found in our Countryside and a demonstration on "How to wrap presents".

The last meeting before Christmas will be on December 9th when members will socialise and enjoy together some Christmas Fare in the Village Hall.

After Christmas, meetings begin again on 6th January 2009 when members can bring antiques to be valued by a local antique dealer. New members are always welcome. Meetings are held on alternate Tuesday Afternoons at 2.30 p.m. in the Village Hall. Enquiries 01453 872424

THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY, NORTH WOODCHESTER

We warmly welcome you to worship with us. Our service on Remembrance Sunday, November 9th, begins at the slightly earlier time of 10.55am, with a short ceremony afterwards at the war memorial. The Christingle service, a short service in which the children make their own Christingles, is on Sunday December 21st at 11am, and the Carol service by candlelight will be on Christmas Eve at 6pm.

ST DOMINIC'S SCHOOL

Several changes have taken place in the School environment since my last report. The new arch and raised borders in the playground are now finished and were officially 'opened' by Fr Piers Linley at the Summer fete. During the summer holiday we were able to start on our hall refurbishment. The hall has been redecorated and the old ceiling tiles removed making it possible to see the wonderful beams above. At half term we are having the floor varnished and then hopefully next summer we can complete the project by accessing the room above the stage-which would provide much needed teaching space.

As always the end of the Summer term came around very quickly and was 'topped off' by a wonderful production of 'Joseph and his Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat' performed by our Y5/6 pupils. We were also delighted with our SATs results, which were again excellent with 100% of children achieving level 4 or above in all subjects. Looking forward, we have several initiatives to keep us busy; assessment for learning is still our main focus as this will enable all children to achieve their personal best. This will be supported by the implementation of our gifted and talented policy which will be enhanced by our close working with the cluster group. Although we have only just welcomed our new reception children into School we are also beginning to think about next September so if any parents are looking for a small school where 'teachers demonstrate outstanding care for pupils' welfare' (OFSTED) please contact the school on 832682 or email to admin@st-dominics.gloucs.sch.uk. We would love to see you!

WOODCHESTER YOGA CLASS

A new class is coming to the village on Wednesdays evenings.

Increase flexibility strength and balance. Relax and stay healthy for winter.

Traditional hatha yoga working on postures, breathing and relaxation techniques.

Six week course starts on 22nd October

Wednesdays 8.30-10.00pm but you can join at any time.

For more information and booking contact dory@yogadamba.com tel:Dory 07896215044

WOODCHESTER TODDLER GROUP

The Woodchester Toddler Group is back. It will be held on Thursday afternoons from November 6th at 1.30pm until 3.00pm. The venue will remain as the Playgroup building behind the Endowed School. We hope that many parents will come along with their toddlers for play and chat. For more information contact Ann on 01453 873456 or ann@clogworks.co.uk.

WOODCHESTER ENDOWED C. OF E. (AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL

As many of you will realise Woodchester Endowed has a new Headteacher. Mrs Needham left at Easter and after a term with Mr Johnson at the helm as acting Head; I took over on the 1st September. I have had a really warm welcome from the community - thank you.

We had 15 new Reception class children join us in September taking our overall number to 117. They have been a delight to watch as they learn their new routines and let us in on their individual personalities.

With our new school hall fully up and running we have been able to make the most of our facilities straight away this term. Not only are we able to have our assemblies, PE lessons and lunch in our hall but we are able make use of it for a number of after school activities. This term we are using the hall for an art club, a basketball club and football club. Further to this we already have a number of community bookings using regular sessions. The hall and meeting room are available to hire for short or long term use so if you need some space please give us a ring.

Our Year 5 and 6 children spent a great week experiencing the 'outdoor & adventurous' activities on offer during their PGL residential trip in September. This was a really good opportunity for the children to build on their friendships and develop their abilities to get on and work with all around them. The children were a credit to our school and came back thoroughly exhausted (as did the adults!).

As I write we are in the midst of our harvest festival celebrations. We shall be sending a food parcel to the Nelson Trust in Brimscombe and a financial gift to Christian Aid for their work with harvest projects in the developing world.

Later on in the autumn we are going to be holding a history focus fortnight. There will be all sorts of activities provided to bring this subject to life culminating in a medieval feast with entertainment to match. As you can see we don't stand still for long! I look forward to continued opportunities to meet and work with all aspects of this community.

Mr Gordon Soutar, Headteacher

INISHFREE

Inishfree is a residential project for people recovering from Alcohol and Drug Addiction and has moved to Rooksmoor about a year ago. We work with people who have stopped drinking or using drugs and are supported to remain abstinent through a 24 hour structured programme of activities and therapies. We are particularly interested in working on the land and with animals as a way of rebuilding lives and getting well on a physical, emotional and spiritual level. So we grow a lot of our own vegetables, keep sheep and chickens and ducks and work the land bio-dynamically to nurture the soil fertility and give back to the earth what we take from it.

We are always happy to welcome volunteers to the project who want to engage with our initiative and give to the community. We also like to contribute to the local community through providing help on small holdings and farms in the neighbourhood and be involved in village events when we can.

To find out more about us go to our website at www.inishfree.org.uk

Andrea Sprenger (project co-ordinator)

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Our newly appointed clerk is Barbara Lewis whom many of you will know as she has long associations with Woodchester, although she now lives in Brimscombe. Barbara attended the Endowed School, as did her son, and was married in the Church. Barbara is committed to Woodchester and looking forward to getting to know even more about the village and its concerns.

This is also an opportunity to thank Duncan for sterling service to Woodchester and the Parish Council during his stint as Clerk. The Council will miss his intelligence, enthusiasm, passion for Woodchester, sound judgement, all round competence and web skills. We hope he will continue to participate in the life of the Parish and wish him well with his other job.

WATER COURSE WARDEN SERVICE IS NOW IN OPERATION

In September, Stroud District Council Launched the Watercourse Wardens scheme, a voluntary scheme that will increase the council's knowledge and visibility to water related matters and provide a clear route to report problems. The scheme is coordinated by the newly appointed water Resources Engineer, who will act as the focal point for all watercourse related matters.

I attended the inaugural meeting at SDC on the 17th September where we were all introduced to the SDC team, provided information on the role of the warden and had a few lively discussions over issues like other parishes releasing water down stream, flooding and identification of wardens. As a Parish we have many bodies of water from the Nailsworth River which runs along our Eastern border, numerous springs, streams, Lakes and Mill Ponds both natural and man made, so for us this scheme could be vital to ensure the smooth flow of water through our community.

The warden scheme is voluntary and to ensure we are in the forefront in supporting the scheme, I have stepped forward as our initial warden and the focal point to communicate with the Watercourse Engineer. However we can have more than 1 warden so if you walk regularly in the parish area and want to take part then please contact me. More information about the role, the duties and matters relating to watercourses will be posted on our website in due course or can be obtained directly from me.

Lastly, our first report has been submitted to the council, concerning debris blocking the weir at Rooksmoor, so this is our first test of the service. Paul Syrett, Parish Councillor, Environment, Youth & Watercourse Warden

DESIGN STATEMENT.

The contributions from parishioners have now been sent into Stroud District Council, in the form of a preliminary draft, for comment. Following receipt of their comments a meeting will be called to re-activate the committee to progress towards an approved Design Statement. This is a chance to influence all future development in the Parish of Woodchester, as when approved it will be a supplementary planning document.

Anyone who wishes to become involved or has comments to make should contact Peter Lead 832383. Watch the notice boards for the date of the next meeting.

WEBSITE

We are thinking of setting up a group to help monitor, promote and add content to the village website: www.woodchestervillage.co.uk. There are several ideas that have been suggested. One is to have a directory of businesses in the Parish. Another is to collate residents' skills so everyone would know who did what before looking further afield. There is also a perceived need for a notice board facility for everything from events and lost pets, to articles for sale or to give away. Anyone who would like to get involved please contact George Bastin (872526), or Barbara Lewis (731838).

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 2009 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