

Rowlands Castle Association

Summer 2014
Village Magazine

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ROWLANDS CASTLE ASSOCIATION

Village Magazine Summer 2014

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The Village Magazine is published three times a year by the RCA. The aims of the RCA are to act as a channel of communication for the Village, to conserve the character and to enhance the life of the Village.

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Cover picture: Graham Croker

Rowlands Castle Association

Message from the chairman of the RCA by Kevin Connell Chair, RCA

First I welcome onto the RCA committee Sue Leonard and Deborah Richards. Sue has put much effort into the setting up of the Rowlands Castle U3A and I am sure she will similarly energise the RCA. Deborah currently lives in Finchdean and will bring a welcome perspective from that part of the Parish. She also intends to take a particular interest in planning issues and particularly the issue of overdevelopment of our village home.

This month has seen a highly successful village fair. However the organisation of this annual event is falling onto an ever decreasing small band of individuals and it is essential that more people



Kevin Connell (Chair)
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Photo: Ian Smith

get involved if it is to continue. If you would like to help out contact Jan Croker on email at jan.croker@btinternet.com You will be made very welcome.

The RCA quiz is scheduled for 18th October this year. Fireworks will be on November 8th and the Children's Christmas Party on 21st December 3.30-5.30, so pop the dates in the diary.

This is a bumper edition of the magazine. For the first time I have had to leave some contributions out. However, I hope to include them in future issues. It's good to see so many people taking an interest in the magazine.

A final plea, the magazine is largely funded by our advertisers so do take the time to have a look through to see what is on offer locally. A surprising number of services are available through our advertisers.

Rowlands Castle Association

Your RCA Committee



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Deborah Richards

RCA News

Blooming Rowlands Castle

by Alan Eyers Vice president RCA

At the RCA AGM earlier this year I was invited to become the Vice President of the RCA, a post I readily agreed to. I have lived the best part of 24 years in the village, I and my wife, Jackie, feel less of being ‘incomers’ than we did when we first arrived. I must say we have both enjoyed every minute of living in such a diverse environment, styles of housing, flats to mansions and easy access to countryside, coast and Cities alike. A few minutes from a Ferry to France or Spain, or Airports to counties afar.

We had moved from Kingston-upon-Thames, somewhere we visit less often these days, when we do, we always comment as we leave, ‘this is why we moved to Rowlands’! Kingston has grown out of all recognition since we left. Our home here is blessed with a small front garden but a longer back garden; I have over these years gradually reshaped the back and the front, to being somewhere as to how we want it.

We now have a small black dog, Bertie, who is walked in Stansted in the mornings and often around the village in the afternoon and or evenings. This way we see the various front gardens many of which have changed since we arrived, as has ours. Gardening has become quite a passion, which had me thinking that maybe we could all strive to ‘improve’ the look of an already picturesque village by encouraging others to make more of their front gardens, porches and forecourts.

I am sure like me you have seen with pleasure the baskets outside the Cafe next to the bridge, the ‘patio’ in front of what was the Post Office, these could be an inspiration to us all, along with the many other excellent gardens we pass daily. Looking forward to seeing who wins this year’s ‘best front garden’ at the Village Fair.

Where to begin, perhaps we could encourage the local schools to include the ‘art of growing plants from seeds or cuttings’ as part of nature or biology studies, the resulting plants being made available to family & friends, for planting out. Local businesses could add a few planters or hanging baskets to the front of their properties, the Parish Council could look at planting more bulbs on and around the Green, say tulips, to come after the great display of daffodils.

The Hardware Store always has a good selection of bulbs, seeds, plants and the like, available all year round. The Allotment Society, I know, would be keen to contribute expertise and advice, to those less sure of what to plant where and when! The EHDC would, I am sure look kindly on request for ‘funds’, Marge are you listening!? The other organizations, Village Fair, RCA themselves, could all make a contribution, in man-power and/or funds? Plus any others who would like to become involved.

I hesitate to say we need yet ‘another’ committee for this, but if a small bunch of volunteers wanted to get together to throw a few ideas into the pot and look at the possibilities, I would gladly be available to discuss them. Please feel free to contact me on 92412443 if you are also so inspired, Britain in bloom entry, you never know!!

LOCALISM—an appeal to our local MP

by Michael Daysh

Dear Mr Hollingberry,

LOCALISM

I am sure that many people in Rowlands Castle appreciated your explanations of Localism (in the village's magazine last year, and then earlier this year, at your public meeting in the Parish Hall), and its effect on housing numbers in the village.

You seemed to share our impression that Localism would, as the Prime Minister specifically said, allow communities to stop “big plonking housing estates” in their villages, and you will also have supported the Conservative Party's manifesto commitment that planning inspectors would not be allowed to impose housing numbers on communities.

You may well now share our shock at discovering that the reality could not be more different from the promises.

In Rowlands Castle, for example, the District Council proposed 25 new houses for the village. The planning inspector overruled this, and imposed a minimum of 242. We now understand that there is a very real possibility of at least 400 houses being built.

I am told that often, local authorities see little point in risking their scant financial resources by refusing planning applications, which they know will be allowed at appeal by the government's planning inspectors. In addition, the fact is that, whether or not the Planning Inspectors stop imposing housing figures, the government imposes them anyway, through the National Planning Policy Framework. Meanwhile, at parish level, where the contact with the communities is closest, councils often feel completely thwarted and ignored.

Unsurprisingly, in my opinion, there is an enormous volume of press coverage, reporting the dismay of individuals, communities and elected representatives (including many Conservative MPs), at the way in which the government is out of touch with the needs and wishes of the people and the environment.

As the results of last month's elections came in, the three established parties candidly admitted for several days that they were out of touch with the electorate. May I respectfully suggest that your party, with its troubled flagship policy of Localism, has the most to gain from continuing with the policy of candour, and rectifying the errors of the



Localism

past?

I thought you might be interested in the following extract from the comments book at the recent local plan exhibition at the Church on the Green. The writer said that we would be turned from a village into a town, and a mere suburb of Portsmouth. Most salient, I thought, was this:

“Whilst I am only 16 and as such, you will probably ignore my comments...”

Is it not depressing that, by the age of 16, people already know that they will be ignored by their “representatives”?

Having heard you speak, knowing of your personal concern for local communities and for the environment, and since you represent in parliament the most beautiful constituency in the British Isles, I know you will want to convey these widespread and urgent concerns to your colleagues in government.

If you would like to respond to this letter, which I have made “open” I would be pleased to post your reply on the Grapevine, and I am sure that many people would welcome you back to the village, to discuss these compelling issues.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Daysh

Copy to: Rowlands Castle Association, Rowlands Castle Parish Council, Rowlands Castle Village Grapevine

This is a copy of the letter which I have sent to George Hollingberry MP regarding Localism. To be fair on our Member of Parliament, if he is to act on our behalf, he needs evidence that these concerns are widespread. If you share these concerns, please send me an email, simply saying “yes” to noplonkerism@gmail.com

It would also help very much if people could sign the CPRE Charter. Just ‘phone 0800 163680 or go to www.saveourcountryside.org.uk.

Also, please go to Parish Council meetings when you can, to show your support for their work. People don’t realise how much work the councillors and staff do on our behalf, and we need them now more than ever.

Village Fair

Rowlands Castle Village Fair July 5th 2014 by John Higham

Despite what looked like a gloomy start the rain subsided by the start of the Fair and the rest of the day lived up to (mostly) the fine weather we have come to accept on Village Fair day. And the local community did its best once again in coming along in their usual large numbers. It's such a pleasure to see everyone, both visitor and business supporter really enjoying and contributing to the success of the day.

This year Portsmouth manager Andy Awford opened the Fair at 12.00pm (remember it starts at 11.00am!) and was warmly received by the crowd. It was a real pleasure for Andy to come along this year and I'm sure everyone watching appreciated this and Rowlands Castle will no doubt wish Andy and Portsmouth success in what has been a remarkable period in the club's history. And thanks to Andy, the entrants to the fancy Dress show turned out in a great array of outfits many along a football theme. Well done to all the children. Surely one of Andy's more difficult selection choices for the year?!

Another firm favourite with the Fair was the visit again of Professor Crump, popping up at all the events including the Children's sports and generally walking around entertaining the visitors. You can't miss him being the tallest person there! His presence really is a great feature of the daytime atmosphere.

As always, the dog show proved ever popular and it is always surprising how many different dogs the community has and the number of people who look forward to this event. Indeed it is quite a talking point leading up to the Fair and is taken very seriously! But in a friendly way. Thanks must be passed on to the Vets Practice and the veterinary nurses who



Village Fair

ran, sponsored and judged the competition.

There was a great turn out of stall holders both inside and outside the Marquee offering everything from craft stalls, wood turning, cake baking, Vereccia's Ice creams, Household goods, sweets and the Scouts coconut shy to name just a few. They all made a really good effort and hopefully went home happy. Many apologies to all those that had a stall and are not mentioned, but we have so many really great contributions the list would be endless. The horticultural show organised by Brian Aherne was fantastically supported again this year and really did add to the colour of the day. Well done to all the entrants and exhibitors. It was great to see everyone enjoying the offerings again this year along with the very popular Tea Tent provided by Tea on the Green and the fabulous Stansted Farm Shop cooking Pizzas, Pulled Pork sandwiches and farm-made sausages.

Special thanks also go to all our sponsors on the day including Extra Mech Services who sponsored part of the evening event, HPD Estates who sponsored the bouncy castle, Gaz at Acer and Caroway for both providing skips for all the rubbish. Blendworth Trailers provided the refrigerated unit and the arena cabin once again which are invaluable to provide our announcement team with shelter and more importantly, your drinks cold. Chris and the staff at Londis provided the winners of the Golden ticket vouchers and provided (along with the pubs and cafe) a great service in selling tickets for the evening event. So many thanks and a well done from us.

There are many businesses and individuals who also gave prizes for the raffle, so a big thank you to them all. If you have won a raffle prize you will have had a call, so please present your details to the sponsor of your prize if it needs collecting. A list of winners has been put on the Community notice board along with the name of the prize giver.



Village Fair

I'm sure one or two business supporters have been forgotten from this list, but please be assured your help is most appreciated and no doubt everyone knows who you are!

The Children's Fair rides proved very popular especially the Reverse Bungee once again. I don't think there was ever a point throughout the day when there wasn't a queue. The Golden Ticket winners certainly had fun - remember to try to win a Golden Ticket you need to win the Fair Brochure cover completion or try your luck on the Tombola at the St John's School Fete. The Fair ground ride prices are kept as low as possible to allow everyone to have a go...

The Tug of War competition was won by the Caroway Team. Unfortunately one or two usual teams weren't able to make it this year but they faced stiff competition from the Robin Hood staff who brilliantly stepped up to the plate. It was a tense 5 set affair and at 2-2 we had to flip a coin

to see who had the advantage of the Lords-like slope for the final round. Caroway won and pulled themselves to a well deserved victory. Well done lads and thanks to both teams must be passed on. The victors then faced the onerous challenge of pulling against all the village children. The numbering seemed fair, 42 vs 8. Needless to say the children won! But then again, Caroway are very sporting!

The bar proved as popular as ever. The beer, wine and Pimm's flowed throughout the day and night. A big thank you to all the staff as they were on the go constantly from first light until the close of the evening event. They must have special powers.

The evening kicked off with people coming to the Band and DJ in the Marquee. A rapid transformation occurs

as all the stall holders pack up and rows of large tables and chairs are set up with a stage. This year we had the fabulous Evolution Disco providing their video disco of dance music and the live entertainment were the extremely talented Shane Hampsheir and his band performing a Michael Buble set. Shane is renowned in the UK Swing band arena and pro-



Village Fair

vided a fantastic evening with his talented musicians, interacting with the crowd in that great Las Vegas way. The repertoire and skill was evident all through the evening: the testament being the dance floor was full. We must say at this point the evening was thought to be a sell-out, so a big thank you to everyone who bought a ticket. The bar and the evening entertainment really do help keep the costs of the Fair rides low, so please continue to support them again in the future.

All the Fair committee are entirely voluntary, put it all together during the year and setting up in the week before. It takes a great deal of effort but the social aspect of being involved and the eventual day is what makes it all worthwhile. All profits are then ploughed back into village projects and to pay for next year's event. If you would like to join the committee please come and see us. It really is a great way to get involved and put something into the community. Whatever your skills, please get in touch.

The serious aspect of the Fair is to raise funds for community projects and we would appreciate any ideas on projects to support. It is non-political and aimed at helping provide tangible help and long term benefits of the village.

Once again, thanks to all the visitors, stallholders, sponsors and supporters for making the 2014 Fair a great event. The business community of the Village and surrounding areas always provide great support and everyone appreciates this. The weather was on our side once again and people of Rowlands Castle and surrounding area really do deliver. Well done to all! See you next year when hopefully the tradition of sunny days may continue!



All photos: Graham Croker

Letters to the Editor

From Hugh Martin-Stoner Finchdean

The Shipwrights Way: Congratulations to the public partnership responsible for the new Shipwrights Way. Its members can surely explain why all twenty sculptures are to be in Portland stone when shipwrights worked in oak. Cannon balls were often made of stone, but never ships. Change the name of the route and this problem goes away, but other problems remain.

Ships were not built of stone, the route and its markers have nothing to do with shipwrights, the route is not the best way of getting to Portsmouth from Farnham, the sculptures do not enhance their surroundings and the subject matter bears little local relevance in each case, they are much too small for outdoor use, and they are certain to be damaged. They will incur high insurance and maintenance costs.

A group of public officials has ignored local priorities, especially that of flood prevention. They have spent £100,000 of public money on a project that seems poorly conceived, irrational and ambiguous, and will incur permanent running costs at the expense of the taxpayer. Is it true they are planning to spend more by employing twenty different celebrities in commissioning ceremonies, and to create and mark other routes?

Editor's note

*The Shipwrights way has been generally welcomed particularly by cycling organisations. Two members of the RCA took part in public meetings with the artist who produced the sculptures. The attendance at these meetings was very disappointing. What do you think of the Shipwrights way and the sculptures that mark it? How can we encourage more people to get involved with public consultation? Let me know your thoughts at :
editor@rowlandscastle.com*

Local Council News

Annual Meeting, Planning and the Recreation Ground

*by the Clerk to the Council, Lisa Walker,
and Chairman of the Council, Cllr John Pickering*

Annual Parish Meeting: The Annual Parish Meeting (APM) took place on 28 April 2014, and began with an informative presentation on Community Emergency Planning by Julie James, a senior member of HCC’s Emergency Planning Team. A Community Emergency Plan is designed to put arrangements in place, should the Parish be hit by a major disaster eg heavy snow or flooding, a major incident, pandemic etc. It would guide the initial local response before the relevant emergency services arrive, and would act in conjunction with them thereafter, if needed. RCPC believes the drafting of such a Plan for the Parish would be desirable. It need not be onerous, but should draw on the wider skills of residents and Parish organisations. Plan templates are available and RCPC is actively seeking volunteers to join such a Group. Please let the Parish Office know if you can help.

Although those residents who did attend took a very active part in the proceedings, RCPC was a little disappointed at the turnout for the APM. RCPC was wondering whether a Diary of Parish Events might give residents suitable notice of what is happening in the months to come. We would welcome residents’ views on this. It may be such a Diary could be published regularly and updated in the RCA Magazine and/or listed on a website for all to view.

Planning: In May, EHDC adopted the Joint Core Strategy (JCS), which will guide planning in the District until 2028; SDNPA is due to adopt this in late June. RCPC remains concerned about the implications of the JCS, especially the Inspector’s insistence on “a minimum of” being used to describe new housing targets. This, and the apparent deficit in EHDC’s rolling 5-year land supply, means that even if the Parish fulfils its targets, more housing may be sanctioned, because of the National Planning Policy Framework’s presumption in favour of “sustainable development”.

Local Council News

Now EHDC is working towards an Allocations Plan, due for publication in 2016, which will detail where the new housing will go in the Parish. EHDC held an Exhibition in the Church on the Green on 24 April, to seek residents' views. RCPC remains concerned that potential housing on some of the sites identified in the Exhibition, particularly at Hazelton Farm, may not count towards the Parish's housing targets, because although they are within its boundaries they are adjacent to neighbouring parishes' settlements. RCPC has challenged EHDC on this point and still awaits its response. Regrettably, EHDC also seems to have abandoned its earlier plans to conduct a South of Butser Housing Study.

RCPC will be seeking to make representations at the Public Hearing of Keyline's Appeal against EHDC's refusal of planning permission to develop the site for housing. The Hearing will take place on Wed 23 July from 10am at St John's Church Hall, Redhill Road. Everyone is welcome to attend, and you can also request to speak at the Hearing if you wish. EHDC is contesting the Appeal due to the lack of affordable housing in the proposals, however RCPC is concerned that any increase in such housing should not be at the expense of accommodation geared towards those residents wishing to downsize or retire. The results of EHDC's Housing Exhibition (see above) support the view that residents wish to see more retirement provision within the Parish.

In addition, RCPC is anticipating formal applications for developments on land at the Former Brickworks (behind College Close) and Land at Oaklands ('Oaklands II') in the near future. Another application for land east of Horndean (incorporating parts of Hazelton and Pyle Farms) is in the pipeline! Once validated, all these applications will come to RCPC for comment, so please keep your eye out for RCPC Meeting Agendas which will detail when such matters will be discussed. All RCPC Meetings are open to the public, so come along and have your say in the Open Forum.

Recreation Ground: As you may have noticed, work has begun on the extension to the Pavilion which, when finished, will provide 2 publicly-accessible WCs, extra clubroom/storage space, additional referees' changing facilities, and a light and airy social room at the front. Unfortunately, the building work is currently behind schedule. RCPC has expressed its dissatisfaction to its contractor, Topmarx Ltd, and is addressing various contractual issues. We hope sports users can regain partial use of the Pavilion towards the end of July, before the windows for the social

Local Council News

room are installed in September. RCPC is sure that it will all be worth it in the end, and the Parish can enjoy a much enhanced facility at the Recreation Ground.

RCPC is keen to encourage greater public use of both the Recreation Ground and The Green, however whilst RCPC's insurance covers these areas of land, it does not extend to those activities or events which are not the direct responsibility of, or organised by, RCPC. Insurers are becoming increasingly risk averse and it would be unwise for RCPC to expose itself to potentially uninsured risks, which could have significant cost implications for RCPC. So, if you wish to hold an event on this land, please factor in the costs of insurance for your event, and let RCPC know well in advance so that we can give whatever assistance and advice we can to help achieve the best solution.

Other Matters: Earlier this year, RCPC discussed in Open Forum, and with the participation of a number of specially invited residents, how we should mark the Centenary of the Outbreak of WWI and the 70th Anniversary of D-Day. After careful consideration, it was agreed that no formal events should be planned regarding D-Day in this Parish. Regarding WWI, three actions were noted. First, the Rev'd Trevor Filtness will be conducting a Vigil Service at St John's Church at 2.30pm of Sunday 3 August, followed by refreshments in Church Hall. Secondly, the Chairman of the Historical Society is researching the background of all those named on the WWI section of the War Memorial, and reporting his findings at Society Meetings. We hope his hard work will be permanently recorded for future generations. Thirdly, RCPC has set aside funds for the cleaning and conservation of the War Memorial and King's Stone.

RCPC has long been the sole trustee of the Charities of both the Recreation Ground and The Parish Hall, and is progressing the modernising of the governance structures for both charities. This is likely to have little or no effect on end users, but will clarify RCPC's role in relation to their management.

At a recent RCPC meeting, some residents expressed their concern at the possibility of 'fracking' on land near the Parish. RCPC continues to keep as up to date as possible on such matters, with the assistance of a local expert, where appropriate. It recently argued that parish and town councils should be included as statutory consultees on minerals and waste applications (which would cover 'fracking'), in line with planning applications, which would ensure the electorate are kept informed of applications in their area. However RCPC must be careful

Local Council News

not to form/express a general view on the practice, which might prejudice its ability to comment on formal applications.

RCPC is pleased to learn that the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations Group has commissioned an artist to create a mosaic for the Deerleap verge as a permanent commemoration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in the Parish. We understand the Group has sought to ensure the design would have wide appeal, incorporating colourful images of the day. The base for the mosaic is due to be installed in late July, with the mosaic itself arriving in late August/early September, when there will be a formal unveiling.

Finally, RCPC welcomes County Cllr Ken Moon as the newly-elected representative for Petersfield Butser Division; Cllr Moon takes over from the late and well-regarded Cllr John West.

As we write this, the spring weather has been reasonably kind so let's hope for warm summer days for the Village Fair and the holiday season, with any rain falling softly in the dead of night! Enjoy your summer.

Highways (roads/pavements, flooding/drains, street lighting, overgrown vegetation etc)

HCC Contact Centre: 0845 603 5633

Report on-line at: www.hants.gov.uk/roadproblems

Rights of Way (footpaths, bridleways, pavement etc)

HCC Contact Centre: 0845 603 5636

Report on-line at: www.hants.gov.uk/rh/row/problem-report.html

East Hampshire District Council (waste collection, planning matters, environment)

Main Switchboard: 01730 266551

Website Home Page: www.easthants.gov.uk

U3A News

U3A update

by Kevin Connell Rowlands Castle U3A Chairman

The Rowlands Castle U3A has at the time of writing 145 members. We already have 29 active groups but are still looking for someone to lead singing and German. To give a flavour of activities there follows a couple of brief reports from a selection of groups.

The U3A Cycling group have held successful rides every month this year



beginning with the first ride in January through floods. We have dodged showers occasionally, but never enough to cancel. Rides now begin at 9.00 in the Summer, and 10.00 in Winter to make best use of the day - 4th Thursday by the tree outside the shops on the Green. We are a mixed bunch of beginners through to seasoned veterans - all are welcome regardless of ability.

So far we have ridden to Compton, Langstone Harbour entrance, QE Park and Bosham, plus circular rides through Racton & Emsworth to coffee at Tea on the Green.

The Spanish beginners group has met every Monday and is using the BBC Active Spanish course. This involves listening, speaking and watching video material. We have gone out for a lively evening at a Spanish restaurant in Chichester which gave us a chance to practice ordering food and drink as well as enjoying some excellent food.

If you are interested in the U3A, membership is £13 for the remainder of the year which includes insurance cover whilst you are involved in U3A events. Come along to the monthly meeting, 3rd Monday of the month except April (2nd Monday), July and August (no meeting) or contact u3asecretary@rowlandscastle.com



1st Rowlands Castle Scouts

Outings

by Nicci Lucas

“If you can find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn’t lead anywhere.”
— Bear Grylls

All groups have enjoyed a fun packed summer term. It all started with St George’s Day celebrations in St Francis Church in Leigh Park where the Explorer Scouts entertained the younger congregation with their story of St George. They have also been lucky enough to take part in a circus skills workshop kindly taught by Matt blossom at the end of which they gave a short show to show off their new skills...(mattblossom.com.) With us fortunate enough to have Stansted on our door step, there have been various outings during these lovely summer evenings, exploring the environment and learning about the village we live in.

A visit to the police station was also arranged for all troops as part of their community experience...not to be confused with community service... where they had great fun finger printing each other. Little do they know that is all now on file!!!

In May the scouts enjoyed an evening on the water Kayaking off the shores of Gosport. They have also recently taken part in the annual cooking competition in Hayling Island where they showed great improvement on last year...congratulations to all those who attended. Also well done to Aaron, Ed, Ollie, Rob & Ryan who successfully completed the “Expedition Challenge” weekend to earn their Challenge Award. They completed two hikes of at least 4 hours in the New Forest and camped as one of several supervised groups of Scouts at Ferny Crofts.

With the summer holidays looming we look forward to a weekend cub camp in July and scout camp for a week towards the end of the month.

Scouting helps children reach their full potential and helps them to develop skills including teamwork, time management, leadership, initiative, planning, communication, self-motivation, cultural awareness and commitment. This everyday adventure is only possible thanks to our dedicated team of adult volunteers and I would like to thank you all for your continued support and dedication. We are currently looking for a Beaver and Cub Leader for September, so if anyone would like to get involved then please do contact me. Also if you have youngsters that wish to join in the fun then please do give me a call on 02392 412543.

Photography Club

Rowlands Castle Photographic Group.

by Ann Page

During spring and early summer the photography group has been lucky enough to have several very talented photographers who gave us a talk about their work and showed us a selection of their images that gave us inspiration to keep taking photos in the hope that one day we may take a shot as good as them.

The March talk was by Andrew Whitmarsh a wildlife photographer from the village who enthralled us with his shots of Deer in Richmond Park at sunrise, foxes in his back garden and water voles from Arundel to name but a few. Andrew explained how he took his shots and the lengths he goes to in order to get that perfect picture; sometimes sitting in a hide waiting for hours on end in the hope a deer will pass in front of his lens. Obviously a great deal of planning, practice and patience are required.



The April meeting could not be more different, it was all about Studio portrait photography and the inspiring talk was given by Michael Woodward. Not only did he explain the techniques and different lighting methods, he brought

his studio lights to the meeting so we all had a chance to try for ourselves. Obvi-

Photography Club

ously it takes huge skill, an eye for composing the subject as well as the studio lights to achieve photo's like Michael's.



Heather Coulson was the speaker for the May meeting. Heather is an incredibly talented and internationally acclaimed photographer who has won many awards for her industrial photography. Heather's photographs were a master class



in how to turn an ordinary city scene or building site into a work of art. Heather kept us entertained with her humorous stories about how she took her winning images.

We are very lucky that Heather has agreed to judge the photographs at the Village Fair this year.

During the late summer and early autumn meetings, we will be having several photo walks and practical evenings. So check the website <http://www.rowlandscastle.com/CulturalSocialDir/photography.htm> for more information. We have been eagerly anticipating seeing all your entries in the Village Fair.

Horndean Music Society

Horndean Music Society - Blendworth Brass Band Concert

by **Will Irvin Draycott. Chairman, Horndean Music Society.**

As the end of the Society's Season approaches the immaculately attired Blendworth Brass Band, led by Conductor Tony Bushnell, came to their spiritual home to present a cornucopia of music on what seemed to be the first balmy evening of the summer. The programme was extensive ranging from the calm delight of Hubert Parry's tune for "Dear Lord and Father of mankind", through to the boisterous "Blackadder IV" march. The Band very quickly showed its facility for orchestral music in a performance of the overture to "Nabucco" by Verdi in which they created the truly operatic atmosphere required.

We were then rapidly swept on to the Russian steppes with a suitably spirited version of "Kalinka", which, for many in the audience, is inextricably linked with performances given by the "Red Army Choir". A large section of the audience was moved to clap along with the authentically Russian cadences that made up the performance from all sections of the Band. At the announcement of the "Post Horn Gallop" a lady in headscarf and mackintosh stepped up from the audience and offered to play a duet with the Band's Principal Cornet, Steve Croney. This was agreed and the lady was handed a valveless post horn, though, it should be said, to the considerable discomfiture of the Conductor. What followed was an absolutely astonishing account of this famed work, with its highlight of a beautifully balanced cadenza played by the duo, which delighted and amazed the audience. During the extended applause for this item the lady removed her mackintosh to reveal that she was in fact the Band's Soprano Cornet, Melanie Croney. After the exhilaration of the Gallop the Band moved with consummate ease to "Songs of the Auvergne" and gave a beautiful accompaniment to the lyrical interplay between the cornet and horn, which shared the burden of the Song. A surprise item called the "Lone Arranger", incorporated various themes from other compositions within Rossini's famed "William Tell Overture", to give a fascinating musical

Horndean Music Society

tapestry, which allowed all sections of the Band to make their joyful contribution.

After the interval the Band proceeded on its familiar way with three World War 1 marches and then a well remembered medley of Beatles tunes including “Yesterday”, “Norwegian Wood” and “When I’m 64”. There was then a complete change to music for the big screen with “The Mask of Zorro” Suite from the 1990s film of that name, and again the Band was able to recreate an appropriate atmosphere of the Mexican border of the period in our imagination. Onwards then with military precision to the small screen for the regimental march from “Blackadder IV” with their very own L/Cpl. Baldrick on triangle! The concert closed with a triumphant and uplifting, and, again, totally authentic performance of the Farandole from Bizet’s L’Arlesienne Suite.

After prolonged applause the Chairman thanked Tony Bushnell, and all the Members of his most accomplished ensemble, for the evening of outstanding music-making that they had given the Society, and noted that the Society was also indebted to the Band for sacrificing one of their rehearsal nights each month over the Season to allow the programmed concerts to proceed.

On both counts therefore our grateful thanks to the BLENDWORTH BRASS BAND.

We want to hear from you.



Do you have something to say? The RCA Village Magazine belongs to the whole Village and serves as a channel of communication between villagers. If you have a point of view, write a letter and we’ll publish it.

Simply write to Editor, RCA Village Magazine, 19 Mallard Road, Rowlands Castle, Hampshire PO9 6HN. Email to editor@rowlandscastle.com

Craft Fair

Craft Fair Update

Hilda Tart

The regular craft fairs provide an opportunity for you to buy unique hand-made items made by local people. There are approximately 20 stalls representing a wide range of crafts such as textiles, photography, jewellery, knitting, glass-work, candles and wood-work. A plant stall and a knitting clinic are also available.

Sadly Sandra Hillyer, one of our regular stall-holders, died in May and we shall miss her.

The Stansted Park Farm Shop staff will no longer have a stall at the craft fairs for logistical reasons but we hope some people have tried their products for the first time as a result of their presence. We are grateful for the time they have given us.

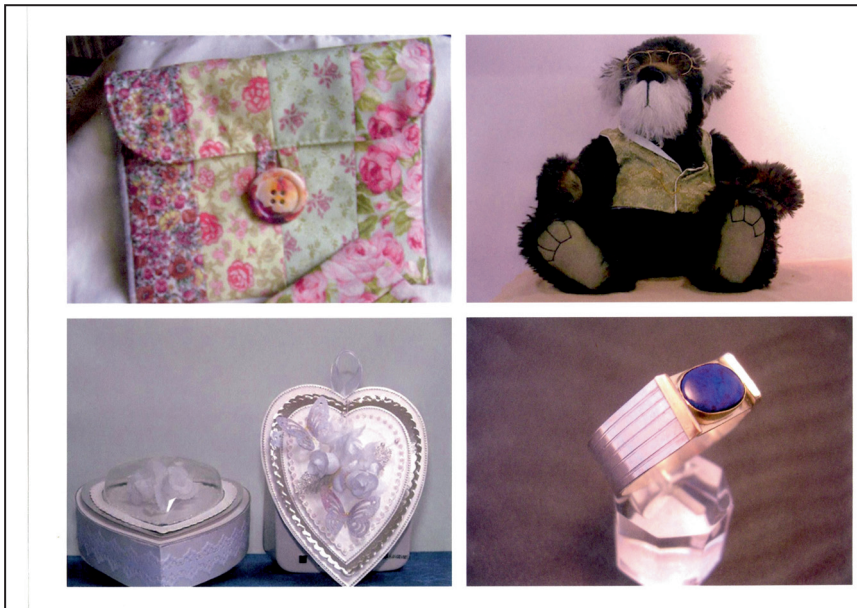
The fairs are held in the Parish Hall on Saturdays from 10am to 1pm. Future dates are: 12th July, 13th September, 11th October, 8th November and 13th December.

Admission is free and refreshments are provided.

Enquiries to: pandqforyou@btinternet.com

Find us on facebook at:

www.facebook.com/rowlandscastle.craftfayre



Gardening Club

Busy time of year by Elisabeth Hall, Chairman

The programme planners and committee are busy at this time of year planning and booking the club's 2015 speakers and garden visits, as well as keeping on top of their own gardens and getting ready for the village horticultural show competitions.

So far this year the lectures have covered a good variety of topics: hanging hostas — yes, they do also want to grow; coloured plants and scented plants throughout the year; and we have enjoyed our first garden visit to Down Place, South Harting, and we have another private garden visit in August. The winter tulip-growing competition was well supported.

Pat's plant sale has become a village occasion – the village looked like the last afternoon of the Chelsea Flower Show sale, with villagers staggering home behind trays and boxes loaded with plants.

The Church on the Green is the venue for our meetings, where there is room for plant sales and an information table as we mingle with a cup of tea or coffee and biscuit after the speaker has finished. Visitors are welcome, but there is a waiting list for new members joining. The Christmas party and the garden visits are for members only.



Committee at work and members visit Down Place, South Harting

Rowlands Castle Surgery and Pharmacy

Surgery News

Janine Leakey Practice Manager

We are pleased to announce the arrival of Dr Webb's 3rd child, born in May. Dr Webb has now returned from Paternity Leave for some peace and quiet at the Surgery! Many thanks to you all for your kind wishes and congratulations to Joseph and his family.

Another big event in May was the retirement of Sandy. She is missed by all the staff and I am sure by many of the patients. We have welcomed a new member to the team, Jan, who is settling in very well to surgery life! Many of the older village residents will remember Dr John Harrison doing his home visits with his children in a car seat some 20+ years ago, all of course have grown up now. Emily, the eldest has just qualified as a doctor and will shortly start work in Hospital on the south coast, Tom sensibly has not followed in his father's footsteps, but has graduated this summer in Geography and Economics, but plans a further gap year to recover from all his studying. We think he might be found in the Alps over the winter!

Surgery opening hours: 8:30 to 18:00 & alternate Saturday mornings 8:30 to 12:00.
GPs Phone-in for consultations & advice" 08:00 - 08:20 Mon – Fri - Tel 02392412309

Pharmacy opening hours: 8.30 to 18.00 & Saturday mornings 9:00 to 13:00.
(Pharmacy Closed for lunch 13:00 to 14:00)

The Surgery situated at the tip of the green has been providing the village with GP Services for decades. Our attached pharmacy opened in May 2010.

Our principal aim is to provide a first class service for your health and we offer a broad range of services including:

Chronic Disease Management

Diabetes

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease / Asthma

Coronary Heart Disease

Smoking Cessation Consultations

Travel Immunisations & Advice

Cervical Smears

Family Planning

Attached Staff also provide in-house:

Physio services

Midwife – Antenatal Clinics

Rowlands Castle Surgery and Pharmacy

Health Visiting Services.

Phlebotomy

New patients are welcome, just pop in to reception and ask for the new patient registration form.

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Fax: 023 9241 3070

www.rowlandscastlesurgery.co.uk



ROWLANDS

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SURGERY &

PHARMACY

WOMENS FELLOWSHIP IN ROWLANDS CASTLE

Our Womens Fellowship is held every 1st and 3rd Tuesday afternoon each month (except August) at 2pm in St John's Church Centre. Our small group is one of the longest established organisations in the village. ' Fellowship ' means sharing interests, experiences, ideas and skills so we have talks, outings, demonstrations and games included with this is a great deal of good conversation plus a welcome cuppa! We also enjoy socials, Bring and Buy Sales, meals out, quizzes, musical afternoons and debates. **We are a small friendly group so if you are interested in coming along to our meetings please contact Claire Stanley 02392412340.**

Fracking

The potential impact of fracking on the countryside by Peter McDowell , C.Geol. F.G.S.

The process of increasing the permeability of rock formations by using high water pressure to produce fractures, or to open and extend existing fractures, known as “fracking”, can have adverse effects upon the countryside in several ways. In the past this technique has sometimes been used in the UK to enhance the yield of conventional oil and gas reservoirs, which are usually sandstones and limestone formations, but not unconventional potential reservoirs, such as shales. The reason for this is that shales are very fine grained sedimentary rocks with tight fissures and shale partings, unlike sandstones and limestones which are coarser grained and usually have good connections between the intergranular pore spaces and between the joints. Oil and gas production from shales, therefore, requires fracking on a much greater scale and at more cost and effort than the fracking of conventional reservoirs to enhance oil or gas yields. For this reason, shale fracking has only recently been considered in the UK, or adopted in some parts of the USA, as accessible conventional reservoirs have become depleted of oil and gas. All fracking operations could have adverse effects upon the countryside but the risk of environmental damage and countryside blight is likely to be much greater for fracking of shales than for conventional reservoirs. This distinction is not often clearly presented by the media and other sources of information, e.g. the article “Here are the facts about fracking”, written by Professor Robert Mair and published in *The Telegraph*, 27, August 2013. This article states that techniques similar to fracking have been used for many years at many sites in the U.K., including the site at Wytch Farm in Dorset, which is in an area of outstanding natural beauty, but omitted to mention that only conventional reservoirs have been targeted, to date, at this site, and at all but two others in England.

The fracking process requires very large quantities of water, often mixed with chemicals, some of which may be toxic, and any water which is returned to the surface would be further contaminated with different chemicals derived from the reservoir. These also could be toxic. The water usage at shale fracking sites in the USA has varied from 9000 to 29000 cubic metres (2 to 6.5 million gallons) for one well, and there would probably need be several wells, perhaps as many as ten, at each well-site. This is a huge amount of fresh water to be conveyed by pipe, or transported by water tankers, to each well site, and there may need to be large on-site storage tanks, or reservoirs. Transport and storage would also be required for the chemicals to be used and for the polluted water, perhaps as much as 33% of the water input, which is returned to the surface. Coupled with the requirement for large pumps, the well-site size and the well head infrastructure for fracking at each well site would be substantially greater than for current oil and gas extraction of conventional reservoirs in the U.K., particularly for shale fracking. These sites may be difficult to screen adequately and constitute a visual blight on the landscape. This would be accentuated by adverse ecological effects resulting from accidental spillage of chemi-

Fracking

cal, or polluted water, at the sites and on access routes to the sites.

In many parts of the UK the local water supply is from near surface groundwater aquifers lying above oil and gas bearing formations which may be exploited using fracking techniques. The risk of pollution of such aquifers by polluted water or methane moving up through fractures caused by fracking is generally considered to be small, except where there are connections via natural fault induced fractures* or inadequately lined wells. Pollution of aquifers could conceivably extend to springs and spring fed streams, thus extending the area of environmental damage and landscape blight. For some limestone aquifers, such as the Upper Chalk in S.E. England, swallow holes provide a direct link between surface waters and groundwater within the aquifer, enabling spillages of chemicals or polluted water to reach springs and water wells.

The area of countryside between Rowlands Castle and Horndean in S.E. Hants. can be used to illustrate many of these comments. Oil has been extracted for the past 25 years from a conventional reservoir, a Jurassic limestone formation known as the Great Oolite, (depth 1330-1430m) at three small, well screened sites. Initially, the wells were vertical, but, subsequently, holes deviating to horizontal within the reservoir were drilled at these sites to increase yield. At each site there is usually one, sometimes two, 'nodding donkeys' and a small tank for temporary oil storage. To date no 'fracking has been carried out at these sites, but as the production licence has been extended to 2020, permission to frack, with hydrochloric acid added to the high pressure water, may well be sought in the near future. Consideration should then be given to the possibility of pollution of the Upper Chalk aquifer, which is at or near the ground surface in this area, both from below and from the ground surface, as well as landscape despoliation. If the shales and fine grained limestones of the Kimmeridge Clay formation become targets for fracking in this area, as at Balcombe in West Sussex, there will be even more reason for concern. The top of this formation is much closer to the ground surface (circa 600m) and much closer to the base of the Upper Chalk aquifer (circa 200m) than the Great Oolite. Also, fracking of the shale horizons, as previously mentioned, presents a greater risk of environmental damage. Hopefully, a precautionary approach would be adopted for any such proposals, as was the case with the proposed landfill site at Hazleton Farm near Horndean.

Peter McDowell , C.Geol. F.G.S.

*Written evidence submitted to the House of Lords Economic Affairs Select Committee by Professor David Smythe on the economic impact on UK energy policy of shale gas and oil includes the following statements:

1. The UK shale basins are heavily faulted from the shale layer right up to the surface, in contrast to those in the USA.
2. Pre-existing faults provide a potential fast-track pathway for fracking fluid and produced gas to escape upwards into drinking water aquifers and even to the surface

St John's School

Bishop Christopher opens Worship Area at St. John's School.

Kay Pennicotte-Henrie

On May 22nd we were very fortunate to have Bishop Christopher from Porstmouth Cathedral visiting our school. He was greeted by members of our School Council, Izzy Thelwell and Samuel Nash. They gave him a guided tour and looked after him throughout the morning.

We had a special 'Worship Time' for which members of St. John's church joined us. The school choir sang 'Hallelujah' and were accompanied by our ukulele band.

The children had prepared lots of questions for the Bishop and some of these are detailed below.

Question "What has been the most special ceremony you have been at?"

Answer "A family wedding where I was a guest and everyone was celebrating a happy occasion."

Question "Have you met anyone famous?"

Answer "Yes I have met the Queen, who is lovely. Some famous people are not as interesting as the ordinary people I meet everyday."

Question "What is your favourite food?"

Answer "Fish, especially fish and chips!" To which some year R children added their approval!

Bishop Christopher dressed in his official clothes in front of the children, explaining each item carefully. The children and adults were fascinated.

The whole school then moved outside to our Worship Area. This was named by the children 'The Garden of Peace'. It has the Bible verse from the book of Luke 'Peace be with you'. Bishop Christopher reminded us how important it is to find peace in our busy lives.

The 'Garden of Peace' was blessed and formally opened. This was a very special day for the children and staff.



Chris Wilkinson plays Aaron Butcher age 9 Ruth Butler

Chris Wilkinson (Former No. 1 British Tennis Player) visited school, to officially open the Outdoor Learning Project at St John's CEC Primary School and provide tennis-coaching advice to Year 5 pupils, including talented youth Aaron Butcher.

Aaron Butcher is a 9-year-old talented tennis player, training at and representing the Portsmouth Tennis Academy. He recently won an Under 12 tennis tournament in Australia and regularly plays in LTA tournaments. He represents St John's School in cricket, football and tennis and is also a member of Rowlands Castle Tennis Club.

Chris Wilkinson is a former British No1 Tennis player, TV commentator and National Performance Coach with the LTA. At Wimbledon, Chris reached the 3rd round in Singles on 4 occasions and made the quarterfinals of Doubles.

A day of celebration was held on 22nd May, with the Anglican Bishop of Portsmouth blessing the new outdoor Worship Circle in the morning and Chris Wilkinson officially opening the project in the afternoon, in front of an invited audience of sponsors and VIPs. £37,250 has been raised for the project so far, with £20,000 needed for the final phase.

St John's CEC Primary School is a state-funded one-form-entry (180-pupils) primary school (age 5-11). Ofsted judges the school 'Good' (with 'Outstanding' features). The Outdoor Learning Project is embedded in their School Improvement Plan and is part of their journey from Good to Outstanding.

The Outdoor Learning Project is a 5-year phased development of the school grounds. Pupils worked with landscape architect Johnny Rath/Fabrik in a design workshop to brainstorm ideas for the grounds. The project is currently in its third year. Completed works include: Woodland Walk and story telling tree; new quiet Garden of Peace; willow dome; enlarged Reception Class outdoor area and a play stage. Future phases include: Art traversing wall, outdoor amphitheatre, learning hut. £37,250 has been raised for the project so far, with £20,000 needed for the final phase.

Please contact Ruth Butler, vice-chair of Governors and Outdoor Learning Project lead on T 023 92413562 for further details.



Photo: Peter Langdown.

St John's School

Rowlands Castle Scarecrow Trail “My Favourite Book Character”

St Johns School Outdoor Learning Working Group is organising “A Scarecrow Trail” as a community event in Rowlands Castle. The pupils of St Johns School have the opportunity to work with an outside artist from ‘Making Spaces’ to create scarecrows to be displayed at the school and from this came the idea to extend the scheme to the village.

A Scarecrow Trail is a fun community project for all to enjoy. You can get involved either as a Scarecrow maker or come along and follow the trail. In a Scarecrow Trail, members of the public, local businesses and organisations will make scarecrows and display them during the week of the trail. During this week trail sheets will be available, with a map, showing where all the scarecrows are. There will be a competition to guess the book the character comes from with a prize for the most correct answers. Prizes will also be awarded to the best three scarecrows. Our theme for 2014 is “My favourite book character”. The week the trail will be running is Saturday 4th October to Saturday 11th October, culminating in a display of scarecrows made by the pupils of St Johns and by local organisations. This will be held at St Johns School on Sat 11th Oct when prizes will also be awarded. Entries need to be in by Monday 8th September.

Please complete the entry form below and return to St Johns School, Rowlands Castle. There will be entry forms and more information available on both the Rowlands Castle Website and St Johns School Website. This will include ideas and instructions on making scarecrows.



St John's School

ENTRY FORM ROWLANDS CASTLE SCARECROW TRAIL 2014

Name:

Address

_____ Postcode _____

Phone No: _____

Email Address

(We would prefer to communicate with you via email wherever possible)

Book

Character _____

Location of Scarecrow _____

Please return this form with a £10.00 entry fee (cheques made out to St John's School PTA Outdoor Learning Project), to St Johns School, Rowlands Castle, Whichers Gate Rd, PO9 6BB by 8th September 2014. Any proceeds to go towards the St Johns School Outdoor Learning Project

Rowlands Castle Women's Institute

WI half year report

by Rona Musker, President, Women's Institute

I can't quite believe that in May I started my 3rd and final year as President - time clearly flies when one is enjoying oneself! At the end of May we took part in the Parish Hall Centenary celebration by providing the teas - a huge thank you to all in the village who contributed scones, biscuits, cakes etc.

In June Frances Fawcett very kindly offered us her beautiful garden in which to hold a Coffee Morning in aid of Our Good Causes, which this year include the Parish Hall in its centenary year and Home Start in Havant. We were blessed with wonderful weather and raised an excellent £212. Then came our stall at the Annual Village Fair where the major attraction, as ever, is our Human Fruit Machine which made even more money this year than usual! All helpers wore a WI apron - our new uniform!



Our Craft Club recently had a very interesting visit to Blendworth Fabrics where we learned about the history of the building. The house was built in 1894 in the Arts and Craft style for Gales Brewery and the layout is still the original. In 1930 it was sold to builders and was used in World War II for evacuees who were looked after by nuns, and the Canadian Army were billeted there in the run-up to D-Day. In addition we were shown some absolutely wonderful fabrics and enjoyed a most delicious cream tea.

In February this year we had an excellent talk from Christina Reid who told us about John Keats' association with Winchester. Her slides showed us the route that she takes tours around the city and twenty of us are going there in September to do just that.

On a sadder note we have lost 2 members recently - Edwina Butler and Jean Trevis - our thoughts and prayers go out to both their families.

May Day Picnic

MAY DAY PICNIC 2014

A great day- Thank you all very much for coming, for contributing and for listening to the

Brilliant Blendworth Brass Band They treated us, [as always] with a variety of popular music. All was much enjoyed.

Thank you to **Sandra at The Fountain** for the use of the forecourt and Barbecue equipment for my son, **Richard**, and his friend, **Bob Carter**, [both village lads]. They were kept busy serving beef-burgers and hot dogs [courtesy of **Treagust of Emsworth**].

Tea on The Green manned their first stall actually on The Green with great enthusiasm.

Pat Carter and Rita, yet again, prettied The Green with flowers and produce.

Alison Myall sold home-made cards.

They all donated substantially to our cause, as did

The Trinity Angels Cleaning Service [07932658461].

The Annual array of veteran and vintage cars was organised by **Ian Halliwell** who cares for The Green throughout the year. The cars added greatly to the joyful atmosphere on such a comfortable, sunny, Spring afternoon. Everybody's contributions are so welcome,

we raised **£905.36 for THE ROWANS HOSPICE**.

Thank you all. Barbara Openshaw telephone: 92412400



Photos: Mark Seaman

Rowlands Castle Painting Society

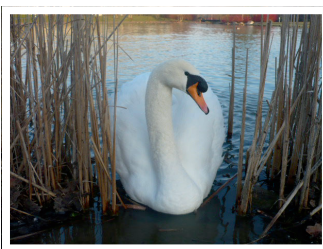
Spring

by Terry Devaney

This great Society have been celebrating their annual Reunion Silver Cup Awards, where members entered their paintings into all categories and eventual winners were voted for. It was a good evening with members enjoying an American Supper in a convivial atmosphere. Paddy Holmes presented the winners with their trophies, the Society were again grateful for her time and support she gives. A lot of hard work was put in by David Hughes and his team of helpers which ensured the evening went well. We have now embarked on our Summer programme.

We were sad to lose a well respected member, Pat Pond, who had been in the Society for many years. The large number of members who attended her funeral reflected just how well thought of she had been, she will be missed.

Now members are out and about visiting different locations on their picnic/painting days out. So far the weather has been very kind and these outings have been very enjoyable. It is a pleasure to spend time with like-minded people in picturesque places, where, if you are lucky enough to produce a masterpiece, is a real bonus! A recent trip was to Swanwick Nature Reserve, originally opened by Chris Packham. Principle Gill Dollery, to whom we owe our gratitude for all her hard work in organising these trips, took some impressive photographs of a grass snake swimming in one of the lakes. Great snaps! The last outing was to Bishop's Waltham Palace ruins, a fun day out which was well attended by the members.



Photos: Swanwick Nature Reserve

Moving on up by Juliette O’Hea

We do not think twice about maintaining our car in order to keep its parts moving, prevent damage and to keep it on the road. Maybe we should include our bodies in this maintenance schedule too in order to achieve similar aims! We need a body that is tall, strong and durable (able to take the knocks) and with parts that can move with freedom. This will help our balance too. Although it would be nice to simply pop lubricating oil into the joints, the same result can be achieved through specific exercises that suit your needs. Although it is ideal to set aside time to exercise daily it is often not possible and the following exercise can be done anytime anywhere.



Posture exercise

Maintaining our posture is important throughout our lives starting in our childhood years so this next exercise could be for all the family.

Whether you are standing or sitting at home or out and about, there is something very simple that you can do to improve your posture, and to strengthen your spine and your central core - the muscles that surround your back and protect it from strain.

Step one - Starting with the neck, imagine you are being pulled up with a piece of string from the crown of the head and lift the ears. The spine is lengthened from the top of the neck to the base of the spine. This creates freedom and length between the vertebrae for the nerves to pass and creates strength in the surrounding muscles.

Step two -Then pull the shoulder blades back and down to increase strength in the middle spine

Step three - Now finally pull your umbilicus back towards your spine, decreasing the curve in your lower spine

Try and do this exercise whenever you remember. The spine should now feel lifted, supported and strong and with practice your body will naturally default to this position.

‘Never bend your head, hold it high, look the world straight in the eye’ Helen Keller

Rowlands Castle Physiotherapist, Juliette, can assess and advise you in your own home and she runs exercise classes for people with arthritis and mobility problems in Emsworth, Havant and Chichester. For more information please check out her website www.arthritisfirst.co.uk, email her physio@arthritisfirst.co.uk or call her on 02392 413885/07974 238787

Holidays

A trip to the sea side.

by Frank Philpot

Have you ever thought you would like to spend a quiet holiday in a stress free place, with no traffic and no airport yet with everything on hand? Well come to sunny Suffolk. That is where we went. Of course the trip had two hours driving but nothing's perfect.

We rented a house for a week. Then we found, that a quiet place, is just what others needed for their secret searching into ways to save us from the German madness that was the 2nd World war.

Just down the road was a little place that of which you have probably never heard called Bawdsey Manor. We trundled down and were shown around by Mary Wain, who had opened up the museum especially for us. A big block of concrete surrounded by blast walls and fitted with a gas tight air lock. Inside an exhibition type presentation and a couple of videos and a few rusting remnants is all that our proud nation has bothered to leave for future generations to marvel at. Well actually it seems that it is mainly Bawdsey Radar Group who has done the saving, as the proud nation is not bothered.

This is the place where Britain developed its Radar (Radio Direction And Ranging) in a blinding flash of fear, as the imminent war prepared to closed its mighty jaws on Britain's defenceless neck.

They even invented a word to cover the actions of those heroes of intellect courage and perseverance, they called them Boffins. Such a nice word, sort of round and fuzzy, of no consequence. No shining armour just, 100kW of Pulsed radio frequency power sparking and banging to escape from the end of the aerial until they fitted copper spheres taken from lavatories, to reduce the electric field strength. Aerials that had pairs of masts each higher than St Paul's Cathedral. The transmitting aerials hung as a vertical net of parallel horizontal wires, flood lighting the sky. Only the receivers on separate masts were directional.

It all became quite complicated, but it worked, and most of the coast was covered by hundreds of these radar stations which reported to central control to call up the fighters at the last moment.

With no radar, the fighters would have been useless, with no fighters we would not have been able to hold on until the Germans turned their attention on Russia, giving the world time to react.

Holidays

We also saw the priceless jewels which earlier invaders left at Sutton Hoo and the Atom Bomb (casing) on the bombing range at Orford Ness.

Suffolk is a quiet restful place now, where one can meet the gentle giants of the farm, the Suffolk Punch Horses, at the Hollesey Bay Colony Stud and find nobility without pride, friendship without envy, and beauty without vanity.

All this has quite driven away my restless urge to share the wonders of the Universe. For the moment.



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DACD (Rowlands Castle) Cricket Club

Early Season Report.

Jonathan Law

2014 has seen a slow start to the season with only 6 of the first 12 scheduled games played. Whilst the weather wasn't too bad and pitch preparation completed it always seemed to rain on the actual day of a game.

We managed to get off to a winning start over BAE Systems where in a low scoring 20 over game we successfully defended a score of

77 to win by 21 runs with Dave Knott taking a match winning 4-16. We followed this with defeats to Chidham and Hambrook and East Meon. The latter comprehensively by 10 wickets as our batsmen struggled in both games to score runs and post a competitive total.

Our first Sunday 40 over win came over Odd Socks with Meredydd Hughes and Andy Robinson scoring unbeaten half centuries as we finally put some runs on the board scoring 162-5. This was followed by an excellent bowling and fielding performance with Jon Law the pick of the bowlers with 3-5 running out winners by 94 runs. We followed this with a first ever trip to

Amberley CC. Chasing 190, Meredydd Hughes with 54 and Mike Whyatt 49 took DACD to within a whisker of victory with a last ball thriller. We needed 1 to tie and 2 to win off the last ball but failed to score and lost by 1 run. Next up was the annual Bill Young Cup against the Tax Office which



DACD (Rowlands Castle) Cricket Club

we successfully defended scoring 117-0 (including retirements) then restricting the opposition to 105-3 winning by 12 runs.

Next up was our inter-club game. A fine day at the recreation ground with a playing format that got everyone getting involved, batting and bowling (not to mention some friendly banter) was an excellent pre-cursor to our tour weekend.

Our summer playing tour this year was a return to Belgium with a game against 12 Stars of Brussels and a new fixture in France against Lille. The tour was full of incident both on and off the field. In the first game against 12 Stars a badly broken wrist saw one of our number forced to return home for an operation. Luckily our hotel was next to the Eurostar terminal, handy for the enforced early return. The following morning discovering the mini-bus had been towed away overnight didn't prevent us making it to Lille where in a low scoring game we recorded our first ever overseas victory against a team containing two French national players. The game was played in a country park where a donkey enclosure formed part of one boundary complete with electric fence! and the gardeners had planted saplings on the outfield during the close season.

The final day included a visit to the Canadian memorial at Vimy Ridge before we attended the Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate in Ypres. This year a delegation from the cricket club took part in the wreath laying and Dave Richardson was asked to deliver the Exhortation from 'For the Fallen' by L. Binyon prior to the minutes silence. It was a true honour for Dave and the cricket club to take part.



A busy second half of the season awaits with a report to follow in the Autumn issue of the magazine.

Castle United

Castle United are the Chartered Status Youth Club of the Year by Stephen Crooks

At the annual Hampshire FA Grassroots football awards evening held in the Mike Channon Suite at St Mary's Stadium, Southampton, Gary Clark, youth club secretary and Stephen Crooks, club chartered status coordinator accepted the Chartered Standard award on behalf of the club from Nick Taplin, Director of Hampshire FA's Development Committee.

The club was selected for this award in recognition of all the work and commitment throughout the year in delivering the FA chartered status initiatives. Club Secretary, Gary Clark, said "that this was a honour to accept this award as recognition of the effort the club has made in raising its administration and coaching standards since 2007 when it achieved chartered status accreditation"

Gary continued "All of our coaches are FA qualified, CRB checked and qualified first aiders and we pride ourselves on having a friendly and encouraging ethos at the club for all our players"

The club also received a £600 donation earlier this year from the village Women's Institute group which they will use to invest in a set of permanent mini soccer goals for use at the recreation ground. This will enable the club to offer "soccer skills" coaching sessions for 7 to 9 year olds on Saturday mornings from September this year. So if you know of any boy or girl between the ages of 7 and 9 who were enthused by the World Cup and want to learn football skills, make new friends, and have fun then please contact Gary either by phone on 02392 780017 or by email garyatcastleunited@gmail.com for more details. Who knows they might be the next Adam Lallana?



A Bark in the park by Lucy Wood

Stansted Park / Canine Partners announce ‘**The Stansted Bark**’, a dog-themed Family Fun Day at Stansted Park.

On Sunday 10th August 2014 Stansted Park is teaming up with Canine Partners and The Hayling Island Bookshop to bring you a fun filled family day out in the wonderful surroundings of Stansted House, Rowlands Castle.

The day will be packed with family friendly amusements including fun dog competitions and demonstrations, vintage cars, craft stalls, children’s entertainment and the Author tent where you’ll be able to relax and listen to a lively show full of inspiration and fun for children of all ages. Tickets give free access to Stansted Maze, and discounted access to Stansted Light Railway and Stansted House.

Dogs are welcome on the day and there will be a chance to visit local vet Ben Trimmer, Director of Downland Veterinary Group in Emsworth, with any questions you may have about your four legged friend and to take advantage of the free micro-chipping service available on the day.

Tickets are £3 per child £5 per adult and £12.50 for a family ticket of up to five. A 10% discount is offered for tickets bought online.

For more information or to book tickets go to www.stanstedpark.co.uk or call: 02392 412265

Stansted is owned by a Charitable Trust, the Stansted Park Foundation held for the public benefit in perpetuity. All funds raised go towards the maintenance of the House and Estate.

Canine Partners was founded in 1990 by Anne Conway and Liz Ormerod who were joined by Nicky Pendleton and sponsored the training of the first three dogs in 1994. The charity rented various Hampshire based premises until 2003 when they began operating from a training centre in Heyshott, West Sussex. The centre officially opened in 2005 and their facilities lead the way in accessibility for disabled people.

The Hayling Island Bookshop run by husband and wife Marie and Colin Telford is one of the last remaining independent bookshops in the area and has gained a reputation for the quality of personal service and their innovative Author signing events. In partnership with Portsmouth, Hampshire and Southampton School Library Services, they help to run author events in schools for thousands of children each year. The Bookshop also helps organise and run events for The Portsmouth Festivities and Southampton Children’s Book Festival. Since 2010 they have organised and run Portsmouth BookFest in partnership with Portsmouth City Library Service. In 2009 The Hayling Island Bookshop was named as South of England Independent Bookshop of the year and in 2011 was invited to The House Of Commons as finalists in the 2011 Parliamentary Best Small Shops Awards.

St John's Church

Flower Festival and Upcoming events by Revd Trevor Filtness Vicar of St John's

After numerous delays, Rosemary and I are now established in the Rectory in 9 College Close, although I sadly underestimated the effect of moving house after being in one place for 15 years! We are still surrounded by disorder and many, many boxes three months later!

We are planning to hold a Vigil Service in church to mark the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War on Sunday 3rd August at 2.30pm. This will be followed by tea in the centre, which is being supported by the Parish Council – thank you.

I think that it is important to mark this date, and although it is perhaps a coincidence, it is good that the Vigil will be on the day before war was declared which was 4th August 1914.

The Vigil will be a thoughtful service intended to help us think about the immensity of that war and the huge change that it brought about to the lives of ordinary men and women in this country, not only of course of the sadness of the loss of so many young men and women but also in everyday life after the war. It will also be an opportunity to think about the state of the world today.

It is important to note that this service in no way replaces the vital significance of Remembrance Sunday in November where we specifically focus our minds on those who have given their lives for us and in the service of this country in all wars.

On a different note, one of our more interesting developments at St John's has been the introduction of what is called 'Messy Church' Many of you will have been to our Messy Christingle held early in Advent 2013 and also to our Messy Palm Sunday at Easter this year.

These events are for all the family and start off in the Church Centre with coffee and tea and lots of activities and things to make or cook usually connected with the theme of the day. This is followed by a short time of very informal worship in the Church while the Centre is prepared for lunch. 'Messy' has proved to be very popular and engaging so we are planning another 'Messy' when we celebrate our Harvest Festival on Sunday 5th October. This also ties in with St John's School Scarecrow Competition! If you haven't experienced this form of worship before do come along; it will be a pleasant surprise! We will also be repeating

St John's Church

our Messy Christingle in December.

I know that Kay, Head of St John's School will talk more about this elsewhere in this magazine, but we had a tremendous day on the 22nd May when Christopher Foster, our Bishop, came to bless the Worship Circle as part of the Outdoor Learning Project and Chris Wilkinson opened the whole area later that day. Although there are still things to be done before the end of the project, a significant milestone has been achieved. Well done to everyone in school and connected to the school.

With every blessing
Trevor
Rev Trevor Filtness
Vicar
St John the Baptist
Rowlands Castle

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St Hubert's Church

Walking up the Hill

John Bates

Our little Church of St. Hubert's is probably unique in its stunning situation on a hill in the middle of the South Downs looking over the valley to Idsworth down.

But it's the hill not the Church I want to talk to you about today.

As you pass through the lower gate the first thing that puzzles many visitors, who may not have visited the church in winter, is the little wooden bridge that appears to sit in a field. You need to visit after the heavy rains of winter to appreciate why it's there. After heavy rainfall a spring, rising on the hills opposite, will produce a chalk stream overnight which wends its way through the fields towards Woodberry lane and beyond. This may last days, weeks or, as in this winter, months. Water is an essential part of the Christian tradition and I think it is very appropriate that our stream should appear so miraculously to remind us of this even if it does necessitates Wellington boots to negotiate the mud.

Beyond the bridge the hill rises slowly and we have time to enjoy the fields surrounding the Church. Freshly ploughed and harrowed in the spring, the first green shoots in early summer and later the full grown crop sometimes winter wheat or maybe oil seed rape making St. Hubert's appear to float in a sea of yellow. Our farmer, Andrew, is careful to leave the field margins untouched to encourage the growth of wild flowers and the bright red of poppies are always a welcome site. This year they will be especially poignant, reminders of the sacrifices of the First World War 100 years ago. The area around the church has been seeded with a wild flower meadow this year and we all look forward to see the result of this.

Then you hit the "Hump". The hill rises steeply about half way up and makes many of us older ones slow and wonder "was it this steep last week" but this gives us time to listen to the magical song of the skylark or admire the greens of the woodlands beyond the church. In recent years we have watched Buzzards wheel effortlessly in the sky or recently Hares almost hidden on the newly ploughed brown earth. At the edge of the woods deer are often seen and as the emblem of St. Hubert is a stag these are a welcome reminder of our faith.

Now the hill levels out a bit and we catch our breath to complete the final stretch. Most of us are no longer in the first flush of youth but it is a matter of pride to walk up this hill and only those too infirm to walk would ever consider driving up. After all we pay the land owner the princely sum of £1.00 a year for the privilege of the right of way so let's use it. Many of us have made this walk in the dark for Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve when the Church and path are lit by candles and the illuminated cross is all you can see of the church. We watch the stars circling above reminding us of that first Christmas star. Or at Dawn on Easter Monday when the brazier is lit to signal the return of the light of the world.

We walk up our hill in all weathers, when the ground is hard and the grass crunches

St Hubert's Church

with Hoare frost or our footsteps are silenced by snow. We battle wind and rain but ask us and we would tell you we only remember the sunny Sunday mornings when the birds sing and the sky is blue and we plod up in our twos and threes and thank God for the peace and beauty of this wonderful place.

Finally we reach the kissing gate, built from green oak by Bill in 2005 as a gift to the church. As we pass through the gate, one by one, its shape naturally turns us, causing us to look back down the hill and across the valley to the downs beyond. We hear the bleating of the sheep on a far hillside, the lowing of cattle at old Idsworth farm and the horses whinnying in the field by the railway line. (We try to ignore the noise of the inter-city express). I believe our parish has more animals than humans but once, we are told, there was a village surrounding our church this was wiped out by the plague and the wattle and daub houses burnt down in the Middle Ages. The great edifice of Idsworth house was demolished when the railway came and rebuilt the other side of Idsworth Down were it stands today.



We can easily imagine the many hundreds of people who have walked the hill in the last 960 years? Peasants and artisans, Lords and ladies, servants and masters, there varied dress and lives will for ever remain a mystery to us but their prayers and spirit lingers on in the very stones of our church.

Now we can turn and admire the well kept churchyard, mown and cared for by Graham and newly fenced, thanks to a legacy from our dear departed Mary. In the spring the fence shelters a profusion of bluebells, a fleeting border of blue to our churchyard. The bell rings out. It is time to leave the hill and enter the Church but I believe that our worship had already started when we walked through the gate and began to climb up the hill. Come and join us any Sunday at 9.30am and enjoy a walk up our hill.

Church on the Green

“Neighbours. Everybody needs good neighbours.”

by Jackie Whitehead COTG

There are many virtues to village life. Having grown up, firstly, in a village in Kent and then a village in Scotland, I discovered early in life that one of the main virtues is neighbourliness. People calling “Hello”, people being concerned for each other with a loyalty and an interest that can only come from a close community.

In these days when community spirit is threatened and undermined by so many factions, we at the Church on the Green are doing our part to foster neighbourliness. On a Tuesday and a Wednesday morning we hold coffee mornings where everyone and anyone is welcome to come for chat, friendship, drinks and some yummy munchies.

Add to that the Rowlands Castle Good Neighbours group who are offering their help with transporting people to and from the coffee mornings and there you have it, neighbourliness in all its glory. We do invite you to come and be a part of this, come regularly or occasionally, we will be very happy to see you.

Coffee mornings: Tuesday and Wednesday mornings from 10.30 to 12, in the ‘Meeting Place,’ at the Church on the Green.

(See Church on the Green website for further details of all our meetings)

Good Neighbours: Transport. Good Neighbours can take registered clients. Please give at least 48 hours notice by telephoning 0845 519 6641 and leaving a message on the Answer Phone.

Rowlands Castle Good Neighbours

Rowlands Castle Good Neighbours AGM

by Ian Hewitt



The Good Neighbours AGM was held on 1st May. At present we have 37 volunteers including 8 new members following a recent appeal via the village Grapevine. Volunteers this year drove 2,633 miles in the year on 276 requests for help for 34 clients, 8 new this year. Half the lifts were health related – Hospital, GP, Dentist etc, nearly a quarter for shopping and the rest for social visits.

Sheila Johnson stood down as Chief Co-ordinator after several decades as the group's lynch pin and Jim Berry retired as treasurer to be relieved by Joan Drinkwater. We were all extremely sad to hear the news that Sheila's husband, Bob, died suddenly just over a week after attending the AGM.

During the year we contributed £400 to the Parish Council to buy the timing mechanism for the village clock on the Church on the Green to help get it working some 2 ½ years after it broke down in the cold winter of 2010/11.

Our guest speaker, Mr. Graham Mylward, gave an challenging and apposite talk on 'Driving Skills for the 60 +'. This HCC funded scheme provides an assessment of their skills, maybe ½ a century after passing the driving test.

On 14th May volunteers and clients enjoyed another coffee morning at the Church on the Green. Some 25 members enjoyed the church's hospitality as we joined one of their regular coffee mornings giving the opportunity for volunteers and clients to meet. Big thanks to hostess, Ann, Daphne and Joyce for such a super spread.



The Church on the Green is open for refreshments **every** Tuesday and Wednesday morning from 10.30 – 12 noon. All are welcome.

We are always interested in volunteers. If you could spare the occasional hour or two per month to transport clients please contact the help line.

And finally – if you know of anyone who may need help - for example, with:

Transport to hospital, library, or shopping?

Rowlands Castle Good Neighbours

- Collecting a prescription from the doctors?
- Transport to a club or social event?
- Some company for a chat or to play a game?
- Walking a pet, or any other neighbourly activity?

then please remind them of our help line - 0845 519 6641

and ask them to give at least 48 hours notice (if possible) of their need – particularly at weekends.

An encouragement to volunteers: one of those who phoned shortly before the May coffee morning said, ‘Good Neighbours. We just couldn’t do without it.’ Good to be of service.

Good Neighbours enjoying one of their occasional get-togethers at a coffee morning at the Church on the Green.

No shortage of cakes that morning....



District Council News

A busy year by Marge Harvey

Dear Friends,
I must apologise for not having a report in the last edition, but there seems to have been a mix up, so I hope to give you as much information as possible in this edition. I can hardly believe that a year has gone by since I became your County Councillor, but I must admit it has been a very busy year. I hope that you will be able to see that I have been working on your behalf at Hampshire.

The pot holes seem to be one of the biggest problems since the flooding happened and I will continue to ask for this to be resolved. Hampshire have put a lot of extra money into this project so we should see them done. When John West passed away, I was asked to take care of the Finchdean part of his division as I am the closest person. This, I was happy to do as that part of our parish was really affected by the floods, but now Ken Moon has been elected for this area I have passed everything over to him to take forward.

The floods seem now to be a long time ago, but Steve and I will continue to work on this committee to be ready for next Winter. This did take up a lot of our time, but I think we came out of it quite well, but we mustn't be complacent! As I told you before, the committees I have been working on at Hampshire are quite busy, but one has been changed from the Hampshire Overview and Scrutiny to one called the HASC.

I really didn't expect to be on to the new committee, as I am comparatively new, but I was one of the four councillors invited out of the old committee of twenty to sit on this new committee.

I am very happy to be on this committee as it goes very well with the invitation to be on the Health and Wellbeing Board which works on all aspects of health and with my work at EHDC as vice chairman of the health and wellbeing committee, so I will be able to hopefully make a difference at both authorities.

At EHDC I am still part of the planning committee and the Development Policy Panel and the planning panel, which is very busy at the moment.

At the recent consultation in Rowlands Castle, asking you all to decide where you think the housing should go, the officers did not mark out the gap which is very important to us because it is the piece of land that is between us and Havant and if we allow housing to be put there, it will be a precedent and then we will be joined with Havant and we have fought that for many years.

For information, many people put their stickers on the SHLAA site at the top of Prospect Lane which is in the gap, so I have asked the officers to take that in to consideration when they use this consultation as evidence for housing and they have agreed. I will have to keep my eye on this.

There are many applications coming forward for Rowlands Castle and

District Council News

two are very interesting.

They are the Keyline application which has gone to the Government Inspector for decision and which will take place on July 23rd at St Johns Church Hall. I hope that many of you will come and give you input. If you would like more information about this, I will be happy to discuss this with you, just give me a call or come to my surgery on the first Thursday of every month at the refurbished cafe in the village.

The other application in that will be in soon is for the former brickworks and these two together will bring a lot of traffic on a very narrow road, but if only the former brickworks site goes ahead, we will have cars and lorries using the same road, with horses and walkers. Perhaps a recipe for disaster who knows!! The Hazelton Farm application is the other site that is in our parish boundary and there is an argument about whose parish will the numbers be attributed to. As you know, we have been allocated 150 houses to be built in the next few years, so these houses will have to go to either Horndean or us. Of course, both parishes would like to have the numbers because Horndean must build 700.

Anyway, I have asked for this to be decided by a legal counsel and not by our officers and this has been done before, so I hope that the decision will go our way . This has been agreed by EHDC, so watch this space..... Of course, my opinion is that it should be put towards the numbers for us as it is in our parish boundary and I have said so at EHDC.

As a member of the planning committee, there are many site visits all over the district and now that our joint core strategy has been accepted by the Government Inspector, but we still don't have a five year land supply, the developers are having a field day with their applications, so the members of the committee must look at all of the large applications, which at the moment are many all over the district. So life is very busy but I'm still enjoying the work.

So, if there is anything that you would like to discuss, then please contact me either by e mail, telephone or in person and if you would like me to come to you, then I will be happy to do so.

Marge

A new book on ‘Inns and Public Houses’

Paul Marshman

Your attention is drawn to a truly worthwhile publication on local history. It is titled “The Inns and Public Houses of Durants, Redhill, Rowlands Castle, Finchdean, Forestside and Stansted. A long title but one that is needed for the subject is exactly that. A history of the Inns of the area, and not just the ones we know and see today.

It has been written and researched by Steve Jones, an eminent local historian, who has written many books on the Havant and Waterlooville area and this is well up to his usual standard.

You can find out about the Packhorse Inn, the first and second Robin Hoods and the Royal Oak, but do buy and read for yourselves.

Copies are available at the Castle Inn, the George and the Spring Arts centre in Havant. At 80 pages long with many photographs, it is excellent value at £5.



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Local History

The Village War Memorial.

by Tony Cowin Historical Society

"...and in the morning, we will remember them!"

We will remember them! We repeat these words of Laurence Binyon every Remembrance Day. One hundred years after the start of the Great War, we need to look again at our village War Memorial.

When Admiral O'Callaghan pulled the drapery away from our Memorial in 1919, and the Bishop intoned his blessing, the villagers clustered round the memorial knew the names of the people who had died in the Great War, repeated again on the panels at each side.

Those that were left, in Binyon's words, have aged, and passed on. We that follow need reminding who these people were, how they lived, and how they died.

So I have started a period of research, to find out. I will tell the Historical Society the details over the 4 years of the anniversary, and give a summary here in the magazine.

There are 29 names on our Memorial from the Great War. 22 are from the Army, 6 from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, and one only from the Royal Air Force, newly formed in 1918. There are only 2 officers. There are many fascinating stories to be told about these men.

Lynton Woolmer White.

First to die was one of those officers, Lynton Woolmer White, elder son of Woolmer White, of Salle Place in Norfolk, and Southleigh Park, in Hampshire. Lynton was educated at Cheltenham College, and Trinity College, Cambridge. He was appointed to the King's Dragoon Guards on 7 May 1905 (a crack regiment), and joined them in India. A Lieutenant in March 1910, he married Dorothea in June 1911, a girl he met in India . The wedding was in Kensington, during one of Lynton's leave periods.

Lynton was back out in India in time for the Delhi Durbar, when the King Emperor (George V) was crowned with the Imperial State Crown. The King's Dragoon Guards formed his escort. He presented them with a special medal.

When war was declared, (4 August 1914) Lynton was again home on leave! The War Office directed him to join the next most prestigious cavalry regiment, the Second Dragoon Guards (the Queen's Bays) at Aldershot. When ready to leave for France, they were inspected by her Majesty Queen Mary , with her husband.

The regiment sailed 16 August from Southampton to Le Havre, to join the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). They fought at Mons, and joined the long retreat south to Paris. The Bays were in the rear-guard, together with "L" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery.

Local History

The action at Nery.

In the early morning of 1 September, as the rear-guard sought to leave the little village of Nery, they came under fire from German horse artillery. "L" Battery brought 3 guns into action, but was soon reduced by German fire to one gun, served by the Battery second-in-command, Captain Edward Bradbury, the Battery Sergeant-Major, George Dorrrell and Sergeant David Nelson. Bradbury was badly wounded, and died at Nery. The other 2 men kept firing till all their ammunition was gone. (all 3 received VCs).

British reinforcements arrived. A group of the Bays, including Lynton, drew swords, and charged across the valley towards the German guns. The Germans retreated, leaving 8 of their guns (4 more were captured later). We took 78 prisoners.

The British retreat continued. Lynton and others, severely wounded, were left at the Chateau de Baron, some 10 miles south of Nery. Lynton died in the Chateau on 3 September.



The stories to come.

There are many other stirring stories that I hope to recount.
Next in line -

- the Naval surgeon and the Royal Marine, lost at the Battle of Jutland.
- the young Territorial, marching behind the victorious tanks at Cambrai.
- the Chief Stoker, nursing his submarine through the icy Baltic.

We will remember them!

Domestic Heating Advice

Advice on buying a new boiler by Nic Radcliffe

A number of customers recently have been telling me how useful they've found the Which? report on boilers, outlining which are the most reliable and how you can keep them running well. So I thought this month I would summarise for you the main points Which? make. They have collected their data from over 10,000 members. I am reassured by them because they match what I see locally about boilers that are reliable and those that aren't.

For the fourth year running, Worcester, part of the Bosch group, are rated the most reliable of gas boilers. In contrast, Baxi and Potterton are rated the least reliable. It's because of this consistently high scoring that I always recommend Worcester as a good choice for a new boiler. As the report says in more detail, they have a full range of boilers to suit everything from a small flat up to the biggest properties. I'm in no doubt it's worthwhile paying that bit more for a good boiler because as I've seen time and time again the cheaper ones will have the same problems just outside their one or two year guarantee whereas the better ones will carry on without problem even outside their longer guarantee.

Worcester also came top of the customer satisfaction ratings, closely followed by Viessmann. Worcester's score of 84% satisfied is well ahead of Glow-worm at 69%, British Gas branded boilers at 65% and Keston a remarkably low 28%.

And of special interest to some of my customers in Compton and Forestside, the story is similar with oil boilers with Worcester again most reliable, closely followed by Grant and Warmflow.

To get a new boiler fitted, most Which? members use an independent heating engineer and are satisfied by the work, giving them a 85% satisfaction score versus 'the below-average customer score, 71%, achieved by British Gas'.

In terms of looking after your boiler, Which? recommends an annual service. Again most members use an independent heating engineer with these independents achieving 'a significantly higher customer score', 86%, than British Gas, 57%. Which? record an average price of '£60-£80'.

And finally, Which? discovered that there is 'a 90% chance that you will be financially worse off if you choose a boiler breakdown contract'.

If you'd like any more information about what Which? are saying just visit which.co.uk





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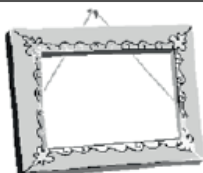


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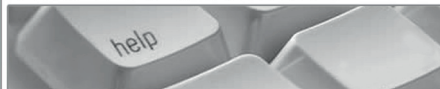
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