

Chit-Chat

Parish Newsletter
for the residents of
Chitterne, Wiltshire

Editor: Barry Ricketts, Stable Cottage, 24 Townsend, 01895 850884

No 3, November 2005

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Before its formal business began on 17 Oct, the Council was briefed on a number of topics of interest to us all. Mrs Joan Robertson alerted the Council to the increase in Traffic in the village caused the Government's delay in resolving improvements to the A303 around Stonehenge. Sue and Dave Robinson sought permission to plant a tree in memory of their daughter on the recreation ground. Maj. Davies asked that a ban on military traffic on the Tilshead road be sought, a request that was supported by many signatures from people living on Townsend. Mr Ray Feltham gave a useful and part historical briefing on the inadequacy and inaccuracy of the signs about the village. He also made a number of points about responsibilities for the cut. All these views were either dealt with at the meeting or will be dealt with subsequently.

Recycling

Hills the waste management company have advised that boxes for kerbside collection should be delivered to households in the latter part of this month. Once this system is up and running the future of the bins will be considered.

Play equipment

Wicksteeds the makers of the equipment on the sports field have now been authorised to do the repairs to the slide and to fit new seats and chains to the swings. In order to stop birds fouling the swing seats anti roosting devices will be fitted to the top bars.

Parish Council Grants

The Council has adopted a proforma for application for grants from the Council. They can be obtained from the Parish clerk. Applications for grants for the year 1 Apr 2006 – 31 Mar 2007 need to be received by 14 Nov 2005. The budget for next year will be considered at the next Parish Council meeting on 28 Nov 2005.

Taxi Bus Link

The Passenger transport unit at County hall have now said that there is little prospect of this service being introduced before 2006. This is a thoroughly unsatisfactory state of affairs as the subject was first proposed two years ago. We have asked our County Councillor to try to get something done to have this matter moved up the priority list.

A303

As a result of the work done by Mrs Robertson and Councillor Horsfall it was agreed that we should ask for a response from the Minister for Transport as to when we could expect some action to resolve the problem.

Chitterne Residents are Among World's Rarest Pigs

During September, Chitterne Village Hall was the venue for Piggywigs Farm's produce sale, but how many customers realised that Chitterne's own rare breeds pig farm is the home for a pair whose breed numbers only 20 in the entire world?

Carron McCann, owner, marketing director, manager and workforce of Piggywigs Farm 'rescued' Joan and Elsie from certain death. As laboratory bred pigs, having neither natural sire nor dam, their value as commercial porkers was nil, but on Piggywigs Farm, they will live out their natural span in comfort. "They have a perpetually worried look" says Carron, "They are known as 'MicroPigs' and clearly their lack of family background has left a scar." It is to be hoped that the piggy heaven of Carron's farm, located behind Chitterne Manor on Eric Babey's land, will cure their neuroses.

Recent convert

Carron is a fairly recent convert to pig farming - a past headmistress, in fact. We asked if a career as a swineherd was a natural progression? "No, I was fed up with the bureaucracy really. I had already acquired two pet Pigs, George and Mildred, who outgrew their Wendyhouse in my garden and were re-housed on a one and a half acre spread I leased in Berwick St.James. I saw an advertisement for a one-day introductory course on pig keeping, signed up and thought 'I can do this' and after a few swift sums on the back of an envelope and some local enquiries, found myself renting the site of Piggywigs Farm from Eric. He was a marvellous help in getting the place straight, but I think he was a little puzzled by this mad lady, who



Carron McCann and Elsie prove that it's not only lorry drivers who are partial to Yorkshire Bars.

bore not the faintest resemblance to any farmer he had seen before!"

Exactly one year later, Carron still doesn't resemble a farmer, but the quality of her products and the health and well-being of her animals prove that she is a very capable pig person indeed. "My dream was to have one of each of the seven rare breeds - Kune-Kune (a pet breed) Gloucester Old Spot, Middle White, British Saddleback, Cornish Blacks, Tamworths and Berkshires. I have all except the Tamworths, they're a bit wayward and I think my time in Chitterne could be limited if a Tamworth Pig were to break out and root up the cricket pitch." (How true, Carron. Ed.)



Chitterne Parent and Toddler Group meets every Thursday during term time in the village hall from 10.30 - 12 noon. We have lots of toys, refreshments, arts and crafts activities for children to take home, all for just £1 per child. Come and meet new people, make some friends and have FUN! For more information, please call: Melissa 850243; Katy 219541; Nicky 850028.

SERVICES AT ALL SAINTS IN NOVEMBER

Sunday, 6th November	08.45 am	Holy Communion (BCP)
Sunday, 13th November	10.35 am	Remembrance Service (Stockton)
Sunday, 20th November	10.00 am	Family Service
Sunday, 27th November	08.45 am	Holy Communion (CW)

UP ON THE PLAIN - ARMY ACTIVITIES, NOVEMBER

TRAINING

Exercise Royal Ledger, the NATO reaction force test exercise mentioned last month will finish on 2nd November. Thereafter it will be a busy month but with little activity above squadron/company level until 42 Commando RM start their TESEX on 14th November. However, this exercise will be unobtrusive apart from some helicopter activity towards the end of the month and into the first week of December.

Live firing

Normal live firing takes place from 0830 - 1700hrs daily, but may continue throughout the night - normally on Tuesdays and Thursdays only. Noise may be greater in certain areas depending upon the atmospheric conditions at the time. Dates and locations are subject to change:

- Artillery firing from Salisbury Plain (West): *Nil*.
- Late firing days on Salisbury Plain (West): *Nil*
- Heat firing days on Salisbury Plain (West): *Nil*
- Artillery live firing days from areas 7 & 8: *Nil*
- Artillery firing from Salisbury Plain (East): *Nil*.
- Late firing from Salisbury Plain (East): *Nil*
- Late firing days Larkhill/Westdown Ranges: 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 19, 22, 24, 29.
- Non-firing days on Larkhill/Westdown danger area: 5, 6, 12, 13, 26, 27.
- Non-firing days, Bulford Ranges: 12, 13, 19, 20, 26, 27.
- Non-firing days, Warminster Ranges: 5, 6, 12, 13, 26, 27.

Note

Due to unforeseen changes there is always a possibility that there could be firing on days other than those listed. This is particularly so now that operational training is being conducted to meet many and varied exigencies. The public should be careful to check that Red Flags are not flying before they enter the range. It is the time of year when we change late night firing times. From March through to October, the Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday night firing days will revert back to 2330hrs.

AIR ACTIVITIES

Dates and times which follow were accurate at the time of printing, but may be altered due to aircraft service-

ability or weather conditions.

Helicopter night flying

Night flying will normally take place Mondays to Thursdays inclusive over parts of the training area, dependent upon weather and the availability of range space. In some cases the aircraft will show no lights but will operate under strict area control.

Aircraft trials

Aircraft may conduct trials over Larkhill Range on each Wednesday and Friday from 1200 to 1700hrs which could involve circuits to the East crossing the Avon Valley.

Parachuting

Parachute dropping is scheduled to take place on Everleigh and Fox Covert DZs during normal working hours on most weekdays. Outside working hours and at weekends the dates and approximate times are:

- Fox Covert DZ (C130)
Nov 14, 2000-2200hrs
Nov 16, 2000-2200hrs
- Everleigh DZ (C130)
Nov 15, 2000-2200hrs
Nov 17, 2000-2200hrs

Striplandings

- Upavon, Nil.
- Deptford Down (C130) Nil

Fighter ground attack

Nov 1, 1700-2000hrs SPTA(W)

Nov 2, 1700-2000hrs SPTA(W)

WARMINSTER/IMBER ROAD OPEN

1. Notice is given that only the roads from:

- a. Warminster to Gore Cross via Imber, &
- b. Bratton to Heytesbury via Imber will be open to the public from 1800hrs Fri 16th December, through to 1800hrs Mon 2nd January, 2006.

2. Please bear in mind that **only the metalled road** will be open, all other tracks, stone tracks and Southern Range Road and Imber Village remain closed (Out of Bounds) in accordance with the Imber Ranges Bylaws. Any

movement off the aforesaid roads on the Imber Ranges is forbidden, trespassers are liable to prosecution.

3. Red Flags are only flown at the vedette post when live firing is taking place on the ranges. The absence of Red Flags does not imply that the roads are automatically open to the public, times for which are notified in the Press and displayed on the entrance notice boards.

4. The roads identified above are not maintained to public road standards, if traversing the training area, drivers should do so with extreme caution.

Complaints

Specific complaints about army training may be telephoned through to 01980 620819 at any time.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

The Commandant wishes all those in receipt of this news sheet, those who read it on Parish noticeboards, those who read the copied version in their Parish newsletters and their families a very happy and relaxed Christmas and a successful and satisfying 2006.

Coming Attractions

- The village hall Open House continues on the second Wednesday of each month. Next one - November at 10.30 am .
- Saturday 5 November 10.30am - Village Hall "The Big White Elephant" Sale - and coffee morning. A chance to pick up some great bargains at really good prices, and an opportunity to catch up with friends in the village.
- 'Something for Everyone' Christmas Fair on at Chitterne Village Hall on Saturday 26th November 10 am - 4pm, organised by Kate Chadwick (01980 621209). Handmade jewellery, Piggie-wigs pork, cheeses, handmade wooden toys, homemade chutneys/jams, organic soaps and candles by Quintessentially English, refreshments and a raffle.
- Friday 9 December 7.00pm - Chitterne's Christmas Party at the Village Hall. A good start to the festive season, with dinner and good company. Tickets - only £7.50 (£3.50 for those aged 14 or under) - available from Kathleen Babey 850359, Ann Moody 851103, Gillian Nolan 850391.

UP ON THE PLAIN, NATURE NOTES

We are happy to welcome Aileen Fenlon of Honeysuckle Cottage, Townsend as the new contributor of Nature Notes.

THINGS THAT GO HISS IN THE NIGHT

Wandering through Chitterne the other evening I was stopped in my tracks by a hissing, rasping sound, not unlike a nest of vipers. Closer inspection revealed a nest of barn owls living in a hollow tree. Barn owls are known to breed at any time of the year so long as there is plenty of food for them. This comes in the form of voles, mice and other rodents, (I wonder if they could tackle a rat?) the best hunting grounds are areas of rough grass and there is plenty of that around Chitterne. They eat the prey whole and cough up the indigestible bits later in a pellet of bones and fir. If you poke around in the pellets you will get a good idea of what they are feeding on.

Screech Owl

My local nest has at least 4 occupants. While the busy parents hunt in the nearby fields, their ghostly call earning them the alternative names of 'screech owl' and 'ghost owl'. The young tussle amongst themselves and hiss loudly demanding their food. I have seen the parents on fence posts and trees silhouetted against a moonlit sky. They can find their food by sight and by sound. They have excellent vision and sound is enhanced by the heart shaped face. One hidden ear is larger than the other and at a different height enabling them to pinpoint their prey on the darkest of nights.

Phantom-like

The barn owl has a 3 foot wingspan. They have white feathers underneath and a buff colour to their backs. They are silent in flight, letting them swoop down on their prey without warning and grabbing the unsuspecting victim with deadly talons. When driving over the plain roads you may catch a glimpse of them in your headlights and they are quite phantom-like. Although large, they are very light and may only weigh 10 ounces. This makes them vulnerable to cold and wet weather. In the UK, they are right at the northern edge of their range and a hard winter will affect numbers in this area. You may be lucky enough to see a barn owl in the day time. They are known to hunt in the daylight in summer and can be seen on cold clear winter afternoons.

Decline

Throughout the UK, barn owl numbers have declined by up to 50% since the 1930's but Salisbury plain is a stronghold for the barn owl. You can help them to survive by providing nest boxes strapped to trees or buildings and by leaving old and hollow trees for them to nest and roost in. BUT remember this, barn owls are protected by law, if you know of a nest, leave well alone and let them get on with the difficult business of survival without interference. With luck we will be seeing more of this ghostly bird in the future.

For more information take a look at www.rspb.org.uk/birds/guide/b/barnowl



From the Bell Tower



The bells of Chitterne Church rang out in a quarter peal on the evening of Friday 21st October to celebrate the Victory at Trafalgar 200 years ago which saved England from a French invasion which would have changed the course of history. After an excellent meal in the King's Head, the ringers and their guests drank to the 'Immortal Memory' of Admiral Horatio Lord Nelson, who died at the end of the battle.

All Saints was built about 150 years ago when the then two churches of the parishes of All Saints and St Marys were demolished (the Chancel of St Marys still stands; it remains consecrated and Services are still held there in the summer). The Tower holds 5 bells from the old Churches, although two need to be recast. No 3, which is the bell that is struck every hour, is now over 600 years old and would have been rung not only for Trafalgar, but also for the Armada.

A 'Quarter Peal' involves ringing the five bells non-stop for about 50 minutes changing the sequence at every stroke. For us, this was a notable achievement and was a 'first' for most of the ringers ('Campanalogist' is a term used by non-ringers, I'm told). The tower is in the fortunate position of having seven enthusiastic ringers and on this occasion the bells were rung by Adina Grace, Mike Lucas, Gillian Nolan, Marcelle Stobie and George Unsworth White; Jeremy Reid kept the score. Maureen Sprack who is the seventh member of our band, was able to join in afterwards.

Anyone interested in learning more about bell-ringing or perhaps even joining in themselves will be very welcome if they either come up to the Tower on a practice evening (most Tuesdays between 6.30 and 7.30 pm) or contact George Unsworth White on 850433. We are always keen to increase the numbers in the band.

The A360 will be closed to all traffic, just beyond the Chitterne turning, from 7th November 2005 for three weeks. Diversion signs will take northbound traffic from the A360 (Long Barrow) along the A303 towards the Countess roundabout (Amesbury) and from there through Durrington and onwards to Devizes.



**CHRISTMAS BAZAAR
CHITTERNE VILLAGE HALL
SATURDAY 3RD DECEMBER
2 - 4 pm**

**COME AND DO YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING
RELAX WITH A CREAM TEA
WHILE YOUR CHILDREN ENJOY
MAGIC MAN
AND GAMES IN THE CHILDRENS' CORNER
LOTS OF NEW STALLS
PASHMINAS AND PLUM PUDDINGS
USBORNE BOOKS, CARDS AND CHRISTMAS PAPER
JEWELLERY, CAKES, BOTTLES
CRAFT AND DECORATIONS**

Attractions continued

- Ray Feltham has yet another grand clearance of plum trees, gooseberry bushes, forsythia, syringie (white lilac) and other shrubs. Magnificent teasels. Collection by arrangement. Everything absolutely free. The organic conservationist owner of the Codford Road Open All Year Wild Garden regrets that nettles for beer, tea or compost are now past their best.

Letters:

Dear All,

This is just a few words to say a very big 'Thank You' for my lovely retirement present which Mr Jeremy Read presented to me at the coffee morning on September 14th. I really appreciate such a valuable present and I have already spent the book tokens on some wonderful books.

I admit I miss all the phone calls and items put through my door, but I hope I can keep in touch with all my friends via the coffee mornings.

Thanks again,

Yours

Jeanne G.

Researching the Titt Family

Sally and Mike Hudson from Norfolk, paid a visit to Chitterne on September 9th in search of Sally's Titt ancestors. Sally is a great granddaughter of John Wallis Titt the famous engineer who was born in 1841 at The Manor, in what was then Chitterne St Mary. John's parents, John Titt and Eliza Wallis, lived and farmed at Elm Farm, just over the boundary in Chitterne All Saints, but Eliza's parents lived at



The Manor and all 8 of her children are reputed to have been born there. Sally's grandfather, Wallis George John Titt, was one of the younger sons born in 1882, but sadly Sally never knew him as he died the same night that she was born, in 1953. Sally's mother, Audrey Wallis Titt, was always sad that she moved away from this area and lost contact with her many aunts and uncles. I have Sally's address should anyone reading this be related to her and want to make contact.

Sally and Mike have traced the Titt ancestors back to Thomas Titt in 1527, but it seems that William Titt from Wylde was the first to settle in Chitterne. He married Ann Ingram from Stockton in 1767 and had two children, John and Ann, both baptised here. John Titt, their son, married Mary Grant and it was John and Mary's son, also named John Titt, who married Eliza Wallis. This makes Will and Ann Sally's great great great great grandparents and it was their splendid tombstone in All Saints graveyard that she and Mike wanted to see. It is still legible in a good light and has the following inscription at

the bottom:

Weep not for me children dear
I am not dead but sleepeth here
Till God above doth bid me rise
To meet our Saviour in the skies.

I was able to put the Hudsons in touch with a growing band of people descended from Will and Ann Titt who have made contact



through the website. Several of John Wallis Titt's siblings emigrated to the USA and their descendants are scattered from Kansas to Texas, while one of his sons

emigrated to Canada and is said to have fathered 28 children with one wife!

Sue Robinson 850370

The Pampered Chef

You are invited....

for a sensational time of food and fun! It is sure to be a delicious experience. Plus, you will see how easy it is to prepare simple recipes that produce dramatic results in no time at all! And bring a friend! Lots of party and gift ideas for the holidays!

Where: Lisa Murray's home at 1 Townsend

When: Wednesday 9 November, 7:30pm

Telephone: 850405

Please phone if you are coming or have any questions. There's a website:

www.pamperedchef.com

CHURCH CLEANING and FLOWER ROTA

Nov 6th/13th

Mrs S Gooch (850893)

13th Remembrance Sunday,
poppies

Nov 20th/27th

Mrs S Hawtry (850605)

Clean & Flowers/27th Advent,
no flowers

CHIT-CHAT IN COLOUR

You can now view, download or print out a colour copy of Chit-Chat from the village website.

To do this, click on the *Village Life* link on the home page, then click on *Newsletters* and lastly click on the monthly issue you want. The newsletters are in pdf format and you will need Acrobat to read them. The download may take a few minutes, please be patient.

ON THE BUSES



It could have been a scene from *All Our Yesterdays* when this veteran single decker ran a one-day only service to from Warminster to Chitterne on Sunday 23rd November. Abdon Close residents were tempted aboard for the nostalgic journey. The bus was one of many historic commercial vehicles at an enthusiast rally in Warminster.

... and on the subject of transport

To the Editor:

Dear Sir,

I am the transport representative on the Parish Council. Approx. 20 of each (i) *Bus Timetables* & (ii) *Guide to bus services - West Wilts.* have been delivered to me. 20 sets are not enough to go around. This will mean identifying households more likely to want to use the bus services, and this could make distribution tedious and time consuming.

Perhaps a notice in "Chit Chat" to the effect that if anybody requires bus timetables etc please apply to me. Your assistance would be much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Horsfall.

Tel: 850990.

Chit-Chat next issue

The December issue of Chit-Chat will go to press during the week commencing Monday 28th November. All contributions by hand, floppy disc, or email to: barry.ricketts@btinternet.com, tel: 850884 or 'over the stable door' at 24 Townsend (Stable Cottage).