

The Bulletin of Whitchurch on Thames

whitchurchonthames.com

Most Whitchurch residents think of the Greyhound as an icon of the Village. Now it is up for sale and there is a real possibility it will be converted into a private dwelling. If there is someone with enough drive and determination to raise half a million very quickly it could be saved, but otherwise there is a real risk that as a pub it will become just a memory.

What disturbs me most about that is the potential loss of another focal point in the Village. Most of our residents have demanding jobs, and often both parents work full time. There is little energy to spare. The risk is that we become less of a community of 320 dwellings and more like 320 islands.

It is always the same people who turn out to plant trees on the Village Green or organise the Garden Walk or the Arts and Crafts Exhibition. We all enjoy the fruits of their labours but some of them are feeling that the demands are becoming too great and that we need others to join in. So if you care about our Village, get in touch with a Council member or a member of any group that may have interested you. Maybe, for example, you would like to help with the Arts and Crafts exhibition in November (things have to be thought about well in advance) or perhaps you might like to help in the organisation of the summer Garden Walk. The Whitchurch Society would welcome new members. You will find names on our web site and of course at the foot of articles in the Bulletin.

At last the weather appears to have relented a bit and we can start to think of a warmer spring. Perhaps even some summer sunshine. There are still some people with real problems and there are questions that need answers. SODC has asked the Parish Council for a report. A study group which includes a professional river engineer has been brought together and has already produced an interim report. The final report will be released for all to read once the working group is satisfied that it represents reality to the best of their understanding.

The Hardwick Road passing place and mudbath-by-Muddy Lane project is having red tape problems. OCC provided the funds and the project team thought they had everything organised and were set to go ahead when OCC decided that they had issued the wrong permits. So far they have not come up with the right ones. I don't need to record what the team think!

I can't get away without mentioning the Bridge. Firstly, I have to remind everyone that the bridge is actually the private property of the Company of Proprietors of Whitchurch Bridge as governed by the 1792 and 1988 Acts. Although they do not have to listen to what anyone says, the two Acts do determine the limits to the tolls they can charge.

The Consultation Document to which there is a link on our web site is an attempt to simplify the mechanism by which tolls can be increased. My personal opinion is that option 2 would be a disaster for us but option 1, or something very like it, might prove to be workable. The Parish Council is seeking professional advice on the matter. We will certainly respond as a Parish Council. There is a link to the report of the meeting between John Howell, Alok Sharma and the Bridge Company on our web site.

So far as progress of the reconstruction goes, at the moment you can find a rumour to fit any scenario you may like - or dislike. Myths spread like moths round a candle. Our web site will carry whatever firm information is available and nothing else. The latest I have is that OCC Highways say they expect the road closure orders will have to remain "until July at the earliest". No specific reason or analysis is given.

Geoff Weir has asked to be allowed to address the Village AGM in the Village hall on the 8th of April starting at 8 pm. So please come along and listen to what he has to tell, and also of course to hear what all the the various Village activities are up to. You may even find that one of those activities is something you would like to be a part of. Or you might decide that something else is a brilliant idea and start it up yourself!

The police report that there has been a substantial reduction in theft in our area since the bridge closed. That suggests the need for vehicles to carry away things like lawn mowers. Their recommendation is to keep those sheds locked at night and paint your mower in such terrible colours that it will be easily recognised and therefore too much of a risk for any thief.

Finally, it seems that a surprising number of our residents have written a book, have had a book written about them or a book has been written about their forebears. So a section of the web site is being built to cater for this. I am sure it will provide a lot of interest and anyone with information should contact Richard Wingfield rmwingfield@btinternet.com

Harry Butterworth

WHITCHURCH SOCIETY GARDEN WALK SUNDAY 15 JUNE

Gardens will open from 1.30 to 4.30 pm. As in the past, with the generous agreement of Matilda and Neil King, tea and cakes will be served in The White House garden from 4 pm. Cost £3 adults, £1 children.

Matilda is happy for children to use the swimming pool provided they are supervised. The tennis court is also available if you bring your own racquets.

A list of open gardens will be delivered to each household nearer the date. A Garden Open notice will be displayed at each address.

We are still keen to find new households willing to put their gardens on show. Please contact the undersigned ASAP if you are interested.

Ian Bruce

Secretary – tel 984 2653, mobile 07879 405559,
email ian.bruce@btinternet.com

ART & CRAFT EXHIBITION

Date has been fixed for Saturday 15 November.

Everybody, please take your cameras on holiday. Note that photos taken with Smartphones are perfectly acceptable.

The procedure, updated for 2014, for submission of entries to the exhibition will be shown on the Whitchurch on Thames website under Village Groups/The Whitchurch Society.

Joyce Voysey theme will be published shortly – on the website and elsewhere. Of course, this prize is available for any art and craft entry.

WHITCHURCH LITTER BLITZ

Spend an hour or two keeping Whitchurch beautiful! Come along on Saturday the 5th of April and volunteer to pick-up a street or two. Bags, litter pickers, and Hi Vis Jackets will be provided. Please bring your own gloves. There are about 8 litter pick-up streets identified and we need about 2 or 3 people for each, so the more people we get the quicker it will go. It couldn't be easier to volunteer for your community! Please contact Jim Donahue and jimdonahue7@gmail.com or 07557668601 if you can make it and let him know if you have a preferred pick-up area. Or just show up in front of the Greyhound on the day!

Village Hall Management Committee Report

- 1 Mrs Laura Lucas joined the Committee, replacing Dr Matilda Oppenheimer who resigned due to pressure of work and other commitments.
- 2 Income for the hall fell slightly in 2013. The loss of the Young Riparians, Toddlers Group and fewer private functions, was only partly offset by extra Pilates classes and other activities.

A much higher gas bill over the very cold winter period increased expenditure but this year's figure for gas is significantly lower.
- 3 Eddie Pilcher, the hall's manager suffered a severe stroke and we have appointed Mr Richard Scarce, a retired postman living in Manor Road to replace him. He is making a very good start.
- 4 A number of minor improvements were made during the year but no further capital expenditure is planned for 2014.

Katie SMITH

Kathleen Eva Bolton was born on the 18th March 1919 at 445 Sandygate Road, SHEFFIELD, the youngest of three daughters. Educated at Lydgate Lane Elementary School and the Central Secondary School she matriculated in 1935 but, with little interest in an academic career, declined to follow her elder sister into the University but signed up for a 6-month course, in shorthand and typing, at the Gregg School. Bored, she left after 3 months, having already acquired a workable ability in both subjects. After watching a film on the production of steel in the city of Sheffield she joined the English Steel Corporation in 1936 where she began work in the Chemistry laboratory meanwhile taking a night-school place in the Applied Science Department of the University in Metallurgy, later transferring to a Trades Technical course on the Treatment and Testing of Sheffield Steels. She was the only woman on both courses.

Katie met her future husband, Richard Smith, at about this time. He was a trainee professional at the Hallamshire Golf Club and was a lodger with the Misses Wood, who also owned 445 Sandygate Road. They were married in July 1942. Richard, by then drafted into the RAF, had managed to arrange 48 hours leave. Their honeymoon, of 24 hours, was spent at the New Bath Hotel in Matlock. The couple agreed not to have a family. Essentially Katie was not maternal (like several of the women in the Bolton family). She preferred the freedom and fulfilment of a career. Strange then, that she had a great rapport with other people's children. Her nieces and nephew all adored her.

Katie continued her work at English Steel throughout the Second War, at considerable personal risk as the works was situated in the heart of the steel producing area of the City which attracted frequent German bombing raids. Eventually rising to become personal assistant to the Director of Metallurgy and Research, Mr. T.R. Middleton, who became a personal friend. Katie left English Steel in 1972, when T.R.M. Retired, saying she couldn't possibly work for another boss after such a long time. In any case the firm was about to be amalgamated into the British Steel Corporation. At roughly the same time Richard's firm – Davy United Ltd – also in the process of amalgamation, relocated its headquarters from Sheffield to London and it was at this point that Katie & Richard moved to Whitchurch-on-Thames.

She was well suited to the quasi-rural life of the village, in its idyllic setting on the Thames, with her abiding love of gardening, interest in garden birds and the other small animals that visited the garden – apart from the grey squirrels which she despised with gusto.! Friendly and outgoing she soon made inroads into village life, becoming a member and then treasurer of Whitchurch WI until it eventually closed due to the steady decline in membership – we were then in the era when most women were obliged to pursue a career in order to pay the mortgage! She also, for many years, collected the entrance money for the annual Whitchurch Fete and

helped with the monthly delivery of the Whitchurch Bulletin. She was a mainstay of the British Legion Poppy Collection. Many people in the High Street will recall Katie's annual progress up and down the street, punctuated and lengthened by frequent stops for cups of coffee and the occasional sherry! She insisted on continuing with the collection even after she had suffered a serious stroke in 2009. At the age of 90 she carried out her part of the Appeal, on her zimmer frame, accompanied by her carer, who carried the collection box. Her determination and staying-power have to be admired. Both she and Richard had many friends in the village though lately Katie had bewailed the fact that she was going to more funerals than sherry parties. Sadly Richard died in 1999 from complications following a hit-and-run accident in the High Street which left him incapacitated for several years. With the support of many, loyal friends, Katie continued to enjoy her retirement and her garden which she opened to the public for Whitchurch Gardens Day. Her stroke in 2009 meant that she could no longer live alone. She has been supported by carers for the last five years and this has meant that the last years of her life were spent where she was happiest, among friends and looking out over her beloved garden. She died in the Royal Berkshire Hospital on 17th February 2014, at the age of 94.

Requiescat in pace.

Ann Palmer

For many years Katie was an enthusiastic collector on behalf of the RNLI and the Poppies, She always had pencil and paper with her to make a note of the houses where there was no answer, so that she could go back at a later time. Anyone with small children would have experienced Katie's ploy of shaking her box in front of the children as she stood outside Gateway or Somerfield (as The Cooperative was known in those days), thereby guaranteeing a coin or coins being put in the slot.

Katie also helped with the "Poppy Count" at Diana Marriott's house in the week after the collection. It was she who entered all the amounts of the various collectors into the record book which was kept.

A completed book is now in the archive of the Whitchurch & Goring Heath History Society and is evidence of her neat handwriting and meticulous eye for detail.

In her later years she was often seen being wheeled down to Pangbourne by her carer and it was not long ago she still insisted on going round her collecting beat in her wheelchair.

She was a great gardener & her garden was a joy to walk through as you went from the gate to her front door.

Katie was a tough old bird, God rest her soul!

Tony Voysey

Anne Bryant

With the passing of Anne Bryant goes the last member of “Cotton Patch” still residing in the Village.

Cotton Patch was a group of ladies, Anne, Joyce Voysey, Jeannie Yaldren, Frances Booen & Beta Cahalan, who for many years made all sorts of soft goods from off cuts of material or in some cases, material bought for a particular project. They sold these articles at fetes and charity markets (they had a regular stall at the Sue Ryder Hospice annual fair), to raise funds.

The Village Hall was one of the first beneficiaries.

Anne & Joyce were good friends and when Hugh (Anne’s husband) died they spoke on the telephone daily and played Scrabble together until Anne got the “Bridge Bug” (*though I think she preferred Scrabble - Ed*).

She was an enthusiastic member of the reading group, as was evidenced by the turn out of those members at her funeral.

I did not know much about her life before we came to Whitchurch, but there are many people still in the area who benefited from her time as teacher in Woodcote & helper in the village school.

I remember Alistair Cooke, of Letter from America fame, once saying that he had a piece of advice given to him, that, when you get 75 start cultivating friends under 60, as many of your contemporaries will be dropping off the perch.

Anne had done that very well.

Tony Voysey

STATEMENT BY THE WHITCHURCH BRIDGE COMPANY

Delay to the Re-opening of Whitchurch Bridge

Balfour Beatty, the main contractor for the reconstruction of Whitchurch Bridge, has informed the Whitchurch Bridge Company that it will be unable to re-open the Bridge to road traffic on the advertised date of 14th April 2014. It is now expected that the Bridge will re-open in July 2014 – the exact date will be announced later.

Although many options have been explored for recovering the time lost prior to the start of the demolition works and more recently due to the adverse river conditions,

Balfour Beatty has been unable to devise a plan which will get the project back on schedule.

The Whitchurch Bridge Company's project management team will continue to work collaboratively with Balfour Beatty to evaluate all opportunities for saving time during the remainder of the project.

Mike Beckley, Chairman of the Whitchurch Bridge Company, says "The Company very much regrets the inconvenience that the delay to the re-opening will cause to local residents, residents on the diversionary routes and local businesses. We will continue to press Balfour Beatty to complete the works as soon as possible".

Background Notes

1 The Whitchurch Bridge Company is the commonly-used name for The Company of Proprietors of Whitchurch Bridge, which was established by the Whitchurch Bridge Acts of 1792 and 1988.

2 The Bridge now being reconstructed was originally built in 1902.

3 The Bridge is normally used by about 1.8 million vehicles per year, or about 5,800 vehicles per weekday.

4 The navigation channel will open for river traffic on 31st March 2014 as originally planned.

5 Birse Civils Ltd, the division of Balfour Beatty to which the Bridge reconstruction contract was awarded, is now known as Balfour Beatty.

6 More details about the Whitchurch Bridge Company are on its website at www.whitchurchbridge.com

7 For further information please contact the Company Secretary.

Geoff Weir Company Secretary

0118 984 4172 email; secretary@whitchurchbridge.com

"This statement was issued some weeks ago, on 27th January. For the latest information please visit the Bridge Company's website at www.whitchurchbridge.com."

WHITCHURCH & GORING HEATH TWINNING ASSOCIATION

**An invitation for you to
join us on our visit to La Bouille, our pretty twinned town in
Normandy**

**Our luxury coach will depart on Friday May 2nd for a weekend of
French culture and hospitality**

**This year, in addition to the customary welcome evening by the
mayor and the private dinner parties, we shall make two very
interesting visits.**

ARROMANCHES

In the 70th anniversary year of D-Day and the battle of Normandy we visit Arromanches where the allies built mulberry harbours to land troops and supplies. Models, videos and diorama bring to life the achievement of taking 600,000 tonnes of concrete and supplies across the channel, and of the battles fought on the beaches.

BAYEUX

Bayeux, where the tapestry, a wool embroidery on linen, tells the story of another conquest, by the Duke of Normandy in 1066. The audio guide tells the story, and the original retains the naughty bits which our copy in Reading leaves out!

Dates May 2nd morning returning May 5th evening
Coach Premier class
Cost £150 per adult, children under 12 free
Contact Vicky Jordan 01189 843260 or
vickyjordan5@hotmail.com

**Next Village Walk
- on Sunday 13th April
for the fittest villagers in England**

(about 6 miles - say two hours)

I hope to take you to three of our neighbouring villages (but on the other side of the river!).

If the ground conditions allow by April we will walk onto The Moors and follow the Pang to Tidmarsh and then cross to Sulham.. Our route will take us by flood plain and across water meadows and involve us in the Bloomsbury Group and its associated scandal at Tidmarsh Mill. We will see WW2 pillboxes and part of the defensive system for the Pang Valley.

However if the ground is still waterlogged we will retreat from the challenge and take a previous route (in reverse) on our higher and, hopefully, drier ground.

Meet at 11:00 hrs outside the Greyhound and then we can return to it to say 'cheerio' to Bob and Carole and maybe the pub!

SPRING FAIR

In aid of church funds

SATURDAY 17TH MAY

IN THE OLD STABLES ROOMS

10 am Till 12 noon

Home Made cakes, Raffle etc.

Refreshments

Come and celebrate Spring with a drink, a cake and a chat!

WHITCHURCH HILL FETE

**BANK HOLIDAY SATURDAY
24TH MAY**

2PM

Stalls and Plants Galore

Ferret Racing

Punch & Judy

Bottle Stall

Raffle

Children's Races & Games

Swing boats

Beer and Tea Tents

Barbecue

25 Piece Concert Band

Entertainer

WotHabs

Oak Processionary Moth - Good news and bad news

The 2013 inspections did not find any new nests.

However the wider use of pheromone traps during 2013 resulted in 5 males being recorded, (total for both sides of the river). This means that the moth is still around and still breeding, but the offending nests have not been found. As a consequence even greater vigilance by residents would help augment the inspections by the Forestry Commission.

Sightings of oak processionary moth caterpillars or their nests in this locality can be made to Arthur Cullen, 01635 519675 acullen@westberks.gov.uk. Alternatively, sightings may be reported to the Forestry Commission using their Tree Alert app or on-line form which you can find at www.forestry.co.uk/oakprocessionarymoth

Here is a brief reminder of the details of these pests in case you no longer have the leaflet we distributed throughout the village in 2012:

- ‘The larvae, or caterpillars, of OPM are a pest because they pose a threat to oak trees and to human and animal health.
- ‘OPM caterpillars are most easily recognised by their distinctive habit of moving about in late spring and early summer in nose-to-tail processions, from which they derive their name, and the fact that they almost exclusively live in and feed on oak trees.
- ‘They also build distinctive white, silken webbing nests in oak trees and leave white, silken trails on the trunks and branches in early summer. These become discoloured after a short time, and more difficult to see as a result.’

John Southey and Gill Goodwin

Goring Heath Parish Charity Regd. No. 1056772

Goring Heath and Whitchurch

SPRING SHOW

Goring Heath Parish Hall

Saturday
5th April 2014

Open to the Public 2.30 - 4.00 pm

Competition classes include Flowers, Fruit and Vegetables, Flower Arranging, Eggs, Art, Handicrafts, Photography, Baking and Preserves and a Class for Children up to 12 years

*** Raffle * Refreshments * Plant Sale ***

For schedules and entry forms contact

Liz Gibson

01189 842012

Rosamund Heath

01189 842358

Ann Lewis

01189 842377

Sue Sexon

01189 844236

Helen Willis

01189 843620

Or download an entry form from
<http://www.whitchurchonthames.com/diary.php> 13

News from Woodcote Library

With the clocks going forward this month at Midnight Saturday 29th March, Spring is now firmly here!

We have a great display of gardening books in the Library to get you going outside. The display has books on how to encourage wildlife into the garden, garden projects, books on foraging and advice on creating your own allotment.

We also have an amazing collection of guide books to lots of local walking routes (including Stilehopper's books). Buggy friendly walks are well catered for in our selection.

We continue to display information and notices concerning the Woodcote Neighbourhood Development Plan. The date for the Public Referendum is Thursday 3rd April 2014.

We have currently been putting together a guide which we hope will be helpful to anyone who is looking for work. The guide includes information on CV's, Employment Agencies, where to look for job advertisements, job clubs and interview help. We have three internet enabled computers in the Library – which are free to use and are a great resource to help with the task. You can just pop in or pre book a time to use the computer by phoning Woodcote Library on 01491 682323.

Rhyme times are on Thursday mornings from 10.a.m.

The next Book Group Meeting is March 17th at 6.p.m.

New members are always welcome.

South Chiltern Choral Society – Spring Concert

THE ARMED MAN: A MASS FOR PEACE **by Karl Jenkins**

Two hundred singers will congregate on Saturday 5th April at The Concert Hall, Reading, at 7.30pm for a performance of Karl Jenkins' *"The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace"*.

Three other Reading choirs - Reading Festival Chorus, Tamesis Chamber Choir and Reading A440 Choir - will join the South Chiltern Choral Society. The wonderful Ascot Brass, in what promises to be an exciting and full-blooded performance, will accompany the singers.

This concert will be part of Reading's WW1 commemorations and The First World War Centenary Partnership led by The Imperial War Museum.

There will be a collection in aid of the British Red Cross.

In the first half, the choirs and band, will give separate performances of appropriate music. Ascot Brass will open with a ceremonial fanfare followed by a medley of WW1 songs. The choirs will then sing various appropriate pieces including settings of poems by Wilfred Owen, Greater Love Hath No Man by John Ireland (accompanied on the magnificent Father Willis Organ), Roses of Picardy, Douglas Guest's "For the Fallen", and more.

Join the Reading WW1 commemoration by massed choirs, and a superb brass band, in the fabulous Concert Hall.

Tickets and more information are available on our website www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk

CAN YOU HELP YOUR LOCAL LIONS?

Life with the LIONS

**Pangbourne ,Theale and District is one of 46.000
Lions clubs in the worlds` largest service club with
1.5 million male/female members in over 200 countries**

OUR MAIN INTEREST IS OUR

COMMUNITY.Over the 40 years our club has been in existence we have raised in the region of £500,000 for worthy causes [mainly local] :- INCLUDING special mobility equipment for children/adults , special school needs [Brookfields], hospices and hospitals, riding for the disabled, Special Olympics , Sue Ryder, Children in Need, cancer & leukaemia research, Air Ambulance, Macmillan Nurses, holidays for the needy, - worldwide appeals- floods, earthquakes, Tsunami, World Trade Centre etc. - right down to xmas parcels and Whist Drives for local senior citizens, school uniforms and other local needs.

WE ARE HAVING PROBLEMS AND SERIOUSLY NEED NEW MEMBERS IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO CONTINUE- OUR XMAS FLOAT WITH SANTA CLAUS DELIGHTS CHILDREN EVERY YEAR AND RAISES £2.000 ANNUALLY

CAN YOU HELP US –DO YOU HAVE SOME SPARE TIME TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE ?

INTERESTED ? ; - PHONE MRS

.VAL OAKLEY 01189-833305

WYN WATTS 01189-426463

howdenjones in Concert

'Beautiful Music in Beautiful Places' Tour 2014

At Goring Heath Parish Hall, Whitchurch Hill, RG8 7NY

Friday 28th March 2014 7pm for 7.30pm.

Creating their 'beautiful music in beautiful places' Tour,

www.howdenjones.co.uk

***Drinks and refreshments - Tickets £10 each
from 01189842056***

**Goring Heath Parish Charity
Regd. No 1056772**

??QUIZ NIGHT??

GORING HEATH PARISH HALL

SATURDAY 15TH MARCH 8PM

Contact 0118 9842056 or bnt@waitrose.com

News from Basildon Park

Spring has sprung here at Basildon Park and the gardens and parkland are reawakening from their winter slumber and being speckled with colour once again.

We had a busy half-term week – our Valentines’ ‘Follow Your Heart’ trail in the garden proved very popular and we have a menagerie of colourful ‘love bugs’ from a craft activity in the Old Kitchen.

As the season gets into full swing, we have lots of things to look forward to. In two weeks’ time we will have a shiny new tearoom. The current space is being refurbished to better evoke the property’s history and to make the most of its unique position within the house itself. The servery will have a new layout so that we can provide a more efficient service to our customers and there will be an improved food offer, homemade on site.

Mother’s Day is coming up soon and instead of a last-minute trip to the shops, why not come and join us on Saturday 29th March when we’ll be getting ready for Mother’s Day in the Old Kitchen. There will be a self-led craft activity where children can make a special homemade gift for their mum.

Here at Basildon we’re all looking forward to having an excuse to eat lots of chocolate and from the 1st - 21st April, we’ll be running our Easter trail. We’re inviting our young visitors to become ‘eggsplorers’ as they follow a trail in the garden and collect a Cadbury chocolate treat at the end.

Basildon’s popular Great Ball Run will be returning on 26th April. As we speak our Gardener-in-charge Tim is working on this year’s course and we look forward to seeing it in action soon.

Splashes of blue are starting to emerge around the parkland so we’re on Bluebell Watch - keep an eye on our website and we’ll let you know when they’re in full bloom.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

We need you...

Our volunteer team is vital to our work and we are always on the look-out for new recruits to help us share Basildon’s story with our visitors. We have a role for everyone; from welcoming visitors to the property at the ticket office, bringing the house to life through room stewarding, or pulling on your wellies and helping in the garden. If you’d like to be involved, we’d love to hear from you. Drop us an email to basildonparkvolunteering@nationaltrust.org.uk or call us on 0118 984 3040.

Basildon Park 2014 Opening Times

Ground floor exhibition area, tea-room, shop and grounds

1 Mar – 2 Nov 10 - 5
3 Nov – 31 Dec 10 - 4

House (main show rooms)

1 Mar – 2 Nov 12 – 5
3 Nov – 28 Nov 12 – 3
29 Nov – 31 Dec 11 - 4 Guided tours only

Open Bank Holiday Mondays. House opens at 11 for guided tours only, free-flow from 12. Timed tickets may apply. Last admission 30 minutes before closing.

Nature walks

Every Friday at 11am.

Join our wildlife volunteers for a guided nature walk around our glorious parkland.

Get ready for Mother's Day Sat 29 Mar, 11am-4pm. A self-led craft activity to make a small gift for your mum.

Eggtastic Fun

Every day from 1–21 Apr 10am-5pm.

Look for eggs in the house and collect a chocolate treat after solving our Easter trail in the garden. £2.

The Great Ball Run

Launches on Sat 26 April (runs until 7 September), 10am-5pm.

A series of handmade ball challenges – new and improved. Ball run kit £3.

Beautiful Bluebells

Every day 1st April – 31st May: please check our website for Bluebell Watch. We will keep you updated on when they're at their blooming best. Pick up a walks leaflet in the ticket office for 50p.

For further information visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/basildon-park or call us on 0118 984 3040.

Langtree School

Langtree School has a great history of opening its doors to the community, and as a result we would like to offer more to our local residents. What do you as our community want? Are you interested in art classes, adult literacy, adult numeracy, ICT, zumba, yoga, pilates, body pump, what else? Are you a teacher / trainer who has the skills to offer a class to our community?

Did you know that Langtree School is available to hire? The sports hall, the main hall with the stage is perfect for shows and performances. There are other spaces or various sizes around school that are ideal for all sorts of other events. If you have a request or an idea for a course or would like to hire the school facilities, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Furthermore, our Senior Citizens Lunch Club sadly ceased to run about 2 years ago, but at our Christmas Party in December several of our guests expressed a wish for its return. The school is currently looking at the possibility of restarting the Senior Citizens Lunch Club. Please get in touch if you are interested.

We are delighted as a school to work closely with our community, building relationships, extending and improving the activities we can offer our students and to our local residents.

Langtree School has offered our students and their parents and carers the opportunity to listen to guest speakers, and we would now like to open these events to you, watch this space. Could you or someone you know offer us a lecture? In the past we have been able to listen to Anthony Jones

from Microsoft who spoke to us about internet safety, Professor Sir Brian Hosking – internationally renowned climatologist, Professor Andy Kempe drama course leader at Reading University and Jo McGuiness from Cancer Research UK.

Please get in touch if you would like to hire a school space, would like to hire a space to run an event, can offer an extracurricular class, would be interested in joining the lunch club, would like to ask a question or make a suggestion.

Contact: Mary Taylor-Lane, Community Coordinator. Email:

community@langtreeschool.com

Telephone: 01491 680514 or write to me at Langtree School. Woodcote. Reading RG8 0RA

Whitchurch & Goring Heath History Society

Thursday **March 20th** is the date for our evening of exploration of the Polish Camp.

Anna Szczeponiec and Peter Hawley will fill in the gaps in our knowledge, and there could be a distinctly Polish flavour to the refreshments.

Thursday **April 17th** sees Nigel Adams explaining the history of hedgerows and how they are managed today.

Both meetings at Whitchurch Village Hall at 8pm. Coffee served from 7.30pm

Visitors welcome, £2, including coffee

THE WHITCHURCH & DISTRICT THEATRE CLUB

**Organiser: Christine Martin,
“Sonia”, Goring Heath Road,
Whitchurch Hill, RG8 7PG**

Tel: 0118 9844252

e.mail:

whitchurchtheatreclub@gmail.com

The Whitchurch & District Theatre Club takes you to musicals, plays, ballets, operas, classical concerts etc. once a month. Salisbury, Windsor, Oxford, Stratford and Chichester, amongst others, are often visited. Also major London venues and productions. Mainly matinees in the week, but sometimes evening performances and weekends. Trips away. Tickets purchased at group/concessionary rates. When the Whitchurch Bridge re-opens members can be picked up from Whitchurch Hill, Whitchurch-on-Thames and Pangbourne. Tidmarsh and Theale when necessary. For our forthcoming programme please check the Whitchurch-on-Thames website. Subscriptions £10 per annum but £8 if paid online.

PAWS Meetings

- April** No Meeting, Easter Break
- May** **AGM, Youth Forum Update (Lady Hoskins)**
Pangbourne Village Hall
Thursday, 29 May, 8- 9:30pm
- June** **Sustainability Day** Pangbourne Village Hall
Saturday 14th June, 10 am to 3pm
- Emma Barnett – Love Food**
Pangbourne Village Hall
Thursday 26th June, 8- 9:30pm
- July** **Anaerobic Digester Visit** Benson, Oxfordshire
Friday 18th July (details TBC)
Biodiversity Hay Meadow Walk – 6 July
- August** Holiday **Whitchurch Fete** -30 Aug
- September** **Iain Tollhurst Organic Farming Talk**
Old Stables
Thursday, 25 Sept, 8- 9:30pm
- Barn Dance - Hardwick Vegetable Packing Shed -**
Saturday 27th September
- October** **Apple Juicing Day**
Sunday, 19th October Whitchurch Maze
Quiz Night – Saturday 18th October,
Pangbourne Village Hall

DIARY DATES

Contributions welcome for this column if anyone knows of a date that would be of interest to the village.

March

Saturday 15th
Thursday 20th
Friday 28th

Quiz Night
History Society
howdenjones concert

April

Saturday 5th
Saturday 5th
Saturday 5th
Tuesday 8th
Sunday 13th
Thursday 17th

Litter Blitz
SCCS concert
Spring Gardening Show
WoT Annual Assembly
Spring Walk
History Society

May

Weekend 2nd to 5th
Saturday 17th
Saturday 24th

Twining to France
Whitchurch Spring Fair
Whitchurch Hill Fete

June

Sunday 15th

Garden Walks.

THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN

will be published in May 2014

Please send your contributions **preferably by e-mail to**

Sarah.pongo@btconnect.com by 8th May 2014

Views of individual contributors

are the views of those contributors,

and are not necessarily the views of the Parish Council, or the editor