



Chignal News

It has been a busy time for me since the last edition, I had a fabulous time in Rome with Anne, Jo & Wendy. The weather was lovely warm and sunny every day, a welcome change from cold and wet Britain in October. We saw so much and had a great deal of fun but it was very exhausting all that sight seeing and shopping!

We then celebrated my 50th birthday on the 16th October with 25 of my family and friends at Reeves Restaurant in Felsted. The food at Reeves was wonderful, we had the place to ourselves and I was made to feel very special.

I am not the only one who celebrated a significant birthday this year, Mrs Dunn was 80 in May. I found this out because she contacted me about the request for information from John Loveday in Queensland Australia. Mrs Dunn has lived in the village all her life, she used to live in Dyers Hall Cottage, now called Brookside, which is opposite what was Dyers Hall. She spent much of her childhood, riding the shire horses; her favourite being Captain and playing around the farm. It must have been a lot colder then as she used to skate on the moat in the winter. Dyers also had a wonderful garden and lots of quince trees in the orchard which overhung the moat. Villages used to pick these quinces and make quince jelly, so some things do remain the same, despite the changes that have happened over the passage of time. If you have any anecdotes about village life please let me know. These tales form part of the heritage of our villages, especially where no photographs exist to show how life used to be here. People are interested in hearing them, even as far as Australia, so please don't be shy, let me if you know any village tales that could form an article for the Chignal News.



**Wishing you all a
Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year**

Inside this issue:

Wine Discovery	2
Village Hall	2
Gardening Club	2
Women's Institute	3
Farmer's Diary	3
Essex County Council	4
Masbury Parish	4
Parish Meeting	5
Church Warden	6

St Nicholas Services

Sunday 21st December at 3 p.m.
The United Carol Service.
Wednesday 24th December at 3 p.m.
Children's Crib Service
Christmas Day at 9 a.m.
Holy Communion
Sunday 28th December
N.B. No Service

Services normal time 11 a.m.
from Sunday 5th January

Wine Discovery

We all met in November for an evening of fortified wines. Having tried these last year we were all looking forward to this tasting. We were not disappointed when Simon from Metsendorf arrived with his wide array of bottles! He educated us in the history of fortified wines, the fermentation process and the various classifications for the wines. Simon cleverly arranged the tasting around the comparison of two varieties for each fortified wine. We started the evening with two Sherries that, like marmite, you either loved or hated. We moved onto two Madeira's, interestingly the group agreed the Old Malmsey could easily pass as a dessert wine. Madeira does not 'go off' – it is briefly heated to a high temperature when being made to recreate a past environment that was found to enrich the flavour, give the distinctive taste and longevity in the bottle (in the past heat was unintentionally given when it was transported in ships holds for several weeks – but this improved the wine and the winemaking was altered to suit this even more). We then moved onto four varieties of port - a tawny, (matured in oak and bottled just before sale) a late bottled vintage (bottled early to keep its ruby colour), a crusted port (yes kept from oxidation by a thick crust of bacteria!) and a

Quinta (one step down from a vintage). Ports are generally not associated with a specific year – it is a never ending 'top up' process that mixes the different years and creates a product whose contents may have been harvested anything between 1 and 40 years ago. This may sound strange but is one of the reasons why the port makers can consistently give us a bottle of port that will taste roughly the same from one year to the next. No ones taste is the same but everyone from the group had their own personal favourite from the evening - our drinks cabinet is now well stocked in time for Christmas but I'm sure it won't stay well stocked for long! Any wines left over at the end of the evening were carried forward to our December meeting, which was our Christmas dinner held on the 6th December at Pleshy Village Hall. As always a thoroughly enjoyable affair, everyone was in party spirits, the food was delicious and an exceptionally good time was had by all. A big thank you to all of those that helped to make the evening such a success but a special thanks must go to Chris for preparing an excellent 3 course meal. As always, please contact Dave (442474) if you would like to try an evening wine tasting. The wine club wishes all a very happy and prosperous 2009.

Village Hall

We are due to hear in the next few days whether we have been successful in our application for grant assistance to improving the car park. If we are successful then work should start shortly. In the meantime the doors have been fitted from the entrance lobby together with new fire doors so after Christmas we can do some more decorating.

Another Whist Drive has just been held, well attended (although mainly by non-residents) .

A date to note is the **AGM on 25th February at 8.00 pm.**

New members for the Committee would be welcome. The Hall does not operate on it's own!

Gordon Hillyear 231406

Gardening Club

We had a very interesting talk from Robin Carsberg on Tropical Tresco in November, it made you want to visit the Island! In December, Deb Hart demonstrated making a Christmas Welcome Ring and swag - and got the group to make bows and Christmas stars. It was good fun but not as easy as Deb made it look!

The next talk by Mark Logan Wood on the Secret Lives of Garden Birds, will be on January 21st at the Village Hall starting at 7.30 p.m.

Bowls Club

A team from the Club played a friendly match against Ford End in September. Although we lost the match by a narrow margin, we all had a very enjoyable evening. A greater success was had with a team in the Essex Triples, at Braintree Leisure Centre, where we reached the semi-finals, but were finally beaten by Dedham who went on to win the competition. Quite a feather in our cap. We are all looking forward to our Christmas evening in December.

Women's Institute

At the recent AGM all the committee reports agreed that we had had another interesting and enjoyable year tinged with sadness by the death of Gwen Marriage and the illness of Joy Shipcott. We had talks on a wide variety of subjects given by very good speakers. One or two talks were disappointing but that is unusual for WI speakers. We had great fun dowsing at Writtle and might well try it again, watch this space!

We took part in Essex Federation and National Federation events and we were able to send a donation to the ACWW the international WI organisation.

We have a good and varied programme booked for next year starting with 'Recycling', During the year we have a travel talk by Mr. Chignall, midsummer music and crafts. We will of course be having a garden meeting in June followed by a talk on the Buckingham Palace Garden Parties in July. We are very fortunate that new members are

joining us in January but there is always room for more. The Art group continues to meet on the 4th Thursday 12noon until 4pm and members have experimented in a wide variety of art styles.

The WI meet on the first Thursday at the Village Hall at 2.30pm

NB in January we meet on the second Thursday, January 8th.

January 8th Recycling talk by member of Chelmsford Borough Council

February 5th Sunshine Children by Mrs. Anne O'Riordan

March 5th Reminiscence poems of the 40s and 50s written and read by one of our members, Mrs. Anita Howard, who is a well known, published poet.

Everyone always welcome

Myra Wilkins 440659

Farmer's Diary

People are absolutely critical to the success of any business – and this year this has been especially true in agriculture. Yesterday I was very relaxed as I walked around Chignall Hall but this was certainly not the case last summer. In my “short” experience of being a farmer I can not remember a harvest like it.

As mentioned in the August Newsletter, the only reason I can relax now is because those employed at Chignall Hall have done incredibly well to get all the crops harvested, the land cultivated and replanted before the weather broke. The team have been able to achieve this by working very long hours, for several weeks during the busy period they were averaging over 100 hours per week. We all very much appreciated the support and interest of the village during this difficult harvest.

Fortunately things are much calmer now – we are currently working a more normal week, about 40 – 45 hours, with time taken up maintaining machinery, grading the potatoes and chasing pigeons off the oil seed rape.

There is something very satisfying about looking after machinery so it works when required the following year and similarly there is great pride in ensuring the potatoes sent to The Canaries are of good quality. You do the job once and do it well and then it can be forgotten about. The thing with pigeons is that as much as one scares them away they will return again and again, day after day, taking pleasure in us watching them eating their way through the small and fragile oil seed rape plants. We are currently spending hours and hours chasing these birds around the farm. It is great to see wildlife around the farm and being in the Governments Environmental Schemes we do actively encourage it but at the same time we must remember pigeons are a pest! Depending on crop type and value I have heard it said that every pigeon costs a farmer £5 (and a rabbit £10) in lost income.

Having had a very busy year we are all now looking forward to the festive period and some real time off work with our families. I hope you are also able to relax during the festive period. Happy Christmas.

Chris Philpot

Essex County Council

Back in the summer I wrote that I would keep you posted on the County Council's discussions with Post Office Ltd. to reinstate closing post offices. I am pleased to say that new post offices have been opened at Buckhurst Hill, Henham, Little Hallingbury and several more are planned in the next few months. The success of this initiative has attracted the attention of some 150 councils nationwide. Post office closures are currently one of the issues being considered by the Rural Commission set up in October by the County Council, which expects to report back to the Council in the Spring. Other issues being considered by the Commission cover public transport, affordable housing and all those local services crucial to sustaining rural communities. If you wish to submit evidence to the Commission, in writing or in person, you should write to the Essex Rural Commission, PO Box 11, Chelmsford, Essex. CM1 10X or access the website to complete the online survey www.essex.gov.uk/ruralcommission

A year ago the County Council promised that it would give further consideration to the proposal for a Cross Chelmer Valley road. The traffic modelling, which has subsequently taken place, does not demonstrate a significant benefit in providing an all purpose link between Essex

Regiment Way and Broomfield. Therefore, no further development of this proposal will take place. It is, however, intended to explore the possibilities of sustainable walking and cycling links between the communities in the north of Chelmsford. The Chelmsford Borough Council has been made aware of these findings and it is considering designating the area between Broomfield and Essex Regiment Way a "Green Wedge" when the North Chelmsford Area Action Plan is put forward for consultation.

For many people the construction of a second runway at Stansted Airport has always been a step too far. The County Council is wholly opposed to this enlargement and submitted its preliminary objections to the Secretary of State in October last year. It is to be hoped that the Government will allow all objections to be heard in a singular public inquiry and will not introduce a guillotine mechanism by running two enquiries simultaneously on the pretext of speeding up the planning process. This will make it difficult if not impossible for the non statutory objectors to finance their legitimate representations.

If you have any problems about County Council matters please let me know on 01245 421524 or email cllr.john.aldridge@essexcc.gov.uk

Mashbury Parish

The **Freedom of Information Act** requires every authority to publish what information is available and how it can be obtained. We have been informed that our current Publication Scheme expires at the end of 2008 and to stay within the law, we must have a revised version available for the public by 1st January 2009.

In contrast to 2003, when we wrote the last one, the Commissioner has prepared a nationally standard version for us to adopt. We must also publish the detail of what is available and information on anything that is not available.

To comply with the law, new versions of all of these documents have been prepared and published on the Parish website, which can be found at www.essexinfo.net/mashbury/

Comments are very welcome from any residents either immediately or at the next Parish meeting, when this will be on the agenda.

Mashbury has not responded to the Essex County Council **Tree Planting Scheme** as it has been impossible to identify anywhere within the parish which fulfils the criteria of publicly accessible space which will create a community asset. Again, please get in touch if you can suggest a site.

Moira Tarrant
Chair of Mashbury Parish Meeting
Contact: 01245 231437

Chignal Parish Council

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF CHIGNAL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 11th NOVEMBER 2008 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

P.C. Alan Davey attended the meeting and explained that from 3rd November, John McDonald is the new local policeman. The next meeting of the Neighbourhood Watch group will be on 8th January 2009.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

a) Phone Box, Chignal St. James – the request for 'listed building' status has still not been finalised. It was explained that the Parish Council can register an interest in buying the kiosk without any commitment to going ahead with the purchase.

b) Footpaths – Dyers Hall - some remedial work has been carried out to the blocked footpath and any further concerns should be reported to Linda Nelson or Janet Campen.

c) Concern was registered by local ramblers on the proposals by E.C.C. to re-route footpaths 7 and 10 and it was explained that the Parish Council is examining the proposals.

d) Road Signs – A parishioner expressed concern at the lack of 'horse' and 'deer' signs in the Parish and it was agreed that, to alleviate possible accidents, a request be made to the Highways Department for signs to be erected near danger spots.

e) It was reported that a drain has been damaged at the entrance to The Green. This will be reported to the Highways Department with a request that the verge which has eroded adjacent to the drain also be reinstated.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – It was explained that an invitation has been received for a parishioner to attend the Community Evening on 20th January 2009. The Mayor's Office will be advised of the parishioner the Parish Council wishes to nominate.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

PLAYING FIELDS – it was reported that advice has been given on the type of preservative required for the teak benches. The materials will be purchased and the benches treated at the appropriate time.

NEWSLETTER incl. WEBSITE – there were no distribution problems reported.

GRAVEL LIAISON – the next liaison meeting is on 27th January 2009. It was reported that Lafarge has issued a pre-settlement account of the land behind St. James Church explained that the height of the current contours will need to be increased, extending the completion time until 2012. A brochure prepared by Lafarge shows the re-settlement profiles with trees and hedgerows.

HIGHWAYS – it was reported road edges in Chignal St. James are deteriorating and the Highways Department will be contacted requesting that remedial work be carried out.

Complaints have been received that delivery lorries to the Nursery are arriving between 7.15 and 7.30 p.m. which could be dangerous on the dark narrow roads. Councillor Chambers reported that a representative from the Borough Council has visited the site recently and found that the nursery is being used as a distribution centre with plants being sold at the entrance. No planning application has been received for the plastic houses but the enforcement team is in discussion with the owner.

VDS – Another draft has been submitted to the Borough Council and a response is awaited.

TREE WARDEN – the large broken branch on the bend between Langley's Corner and Chignal Smealey church reported at the last meeting has been removed.

COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORTS

C.Cllr Aldridge explained that although complaints have been received regarding a sign erected at Howletts Corner, the sign is not on highways land and cannot be removed until a legal opinion is given.

PLANNING

Gravel extraction and formation of a reservoir opposite the Village Hall – the Planning Officer has received additional information and it is unlikely that a decision will be made until late December/early January 2009.

Blue Cottage – extensions - the Parish Council has forwarded its observations to the Borough and a decision is awaited.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held in the Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. on Monday 12th January 2009.

St. Nicholas' Church

Greetings to you all from the Church Warden and congregation of St. Nicholas' Church. It was lovely to see so many of you at our Harvest Festival. We thank you all very much for coming and for your generosity, 106 tins of tomatoes were sent to 'Harvest for the Hungry', £20 was donated towards transport costs and 5lbs of chutney made out of the donated tomatoes and apples. The chutney is to be sold for church funds. At Harvest the church was full and over 50 of you joined us for tea. Thanks you to everyone who provided the refreshments. The church looked delightful and we thank all of you who gave your time to help decorate with autumn flowers. Our thanks also to the Village Hall Committee and Chignal Cricket Club for allowing us to use their facilities.

We continue to have visitors throughout the week, the visitors book indicates that St. Nicholas' Church is greatly admired and appreciated, a place where people find peace, comfort and hope.

During the last few weeks our church provided the venue for the funeral service of Mrs. Beryl Doe of Springfield, formally of 1, Ash Rise, Chignal Smealey. The church was full, our thoughts and prayers are with her family especially her son Jonathan.

With suitable arrangements of poppies, an Armistice Service was held on November 9th

On a happier note we are looking forward to a christening later in the month of November. Christmas is fast approaching. By the time this newsletter is distributed the giving and receiving of cards and gifts will have started. With the commercialisation which surrounds Christmas it is very easy to become so pre-occupied and busy that the meaning of Christmas is diluted or dismissed from our minds, it is the time when we celebrate the birth of baby Jesus. We are inclined to think of Jesus' family only in terms of His Heavenly Father, but like you He was born into a human family. like any other family member He was not always understood by them, but God put

Him in his family, like He has you, to mould Him into what He had planned for His future. Maybe you often feel misunderstood; you may even be part of a 'dysfunctional' emotionally distant family. If that is so, consider taking time to phone them, or write a letter of encouragement. Time is your most limited and valuable resource, use it, freely give it away. God loves you, he can turn your curse into a blessing. The Kings brought the Christ Child gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, the shepherds brought a lamb. We can give ourselves by expressing words of love and encouragement to those around us. a ripple of love will spread forth into the community. we wish you all a very peaceful, happy Christmas and warmly invite you to join with fellow villagers at Christmas services during this season of joy. We will be decorating the church on Saturday morning December 20th, do come along and join us.

Christmas Services

Sunday 21st December at 3pm. The United Carol Service.

Wednesday 24th December at 3pm. Children's Crib Service

Christmas Day at 9am. Holy Communion

Sunday 28th December. **NB. No Service**

Services normal time 11am from Sunday 5th January

Telephone Nos:

Tony Towns Church Warden: 01245 440241

Myra Wilkins P.C.C. Secretary: 01245 440659



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