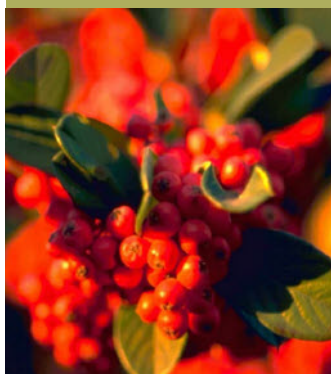


No. 151
December 2011



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CHIGNALS WITH MASHBURY

Chignal News



Christmas is fast approaching and there seems so much to do: cards to write and send, presents to buy, menus to plan, parties to attend and so on. I am sure everything will turn out well on the day, but this year in particular things seem more austere than in previous years. As the impact of the world financial crisis bites deeper, people seem to be cutting back and going back to the more thrifty ways that were characteristic of my up-bringing and; I am sure, many of yours too. In some ways, this may not be such a bad thing, as Christmas was becoming more and more commercial. Perhaps the current situation will remind people that Christmas is not about spending more money than you can afford, but is about the joys of family and friends and of course celebrating the birth of Christ and doing things to help each other. On which note, I was very heartened to find out that the charity ride; from Southend in Argyll to Southend-on-Sea; for which I drove the crew van, has raised over £22,000. The money is being split between the Willows Foundation and Havens Hospices and the amount raised shows the generosity of many "ordinary" people and will make a difference to many ill people and their families, so if you have the opportunity to do something to make a positive difference; however small, it will enhance someone's else's life as well as yours. Pictures: Top Left - Christopher Nelson, bottom left - Linda Nelson in Crew Van; loaned by Volkswagen Van Centre Chelmsford, top right - Tracy, Chris, Linda and Garry Nelson

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

Women's Institute

At the October meeting a member of Chelmsford Neighbourhood Watch gave a presentation about preventing burglary, this included a film which showed a day in the life of a burglar. How easily we can be conned. I couldn't attend the Quiz this year but it went well, some of the proceeds will go towards the Village Jubilee weekend. In November at the AGM secretary, Helen Towns, read her annual report which was then sent to the Essex Federation of Women's Institutes. It has been another interesting and successful year. During the year we have been able to support four charities. The AGM was followed by the craft group displaying all the decorations they had made for our Christmas tree at Hyde Hall, all the decorations were made from recycled objects, bottles, cans old CDs etc. They were quite remarkable, a group from our WI are going to see the trees on December 5th, followed by a Christmas Lunch there. At the December meeting we were greeted by a beautifully decorated hall, THANK YOU, BOWLS CLUB. It made just the right atmosphere for our Christmas Social. We were delighted to have so many visitors at this event, Julia, Kitty, Sylvia, Avril, Bridget, Eve, Diane, Mary and Doreen, we hope they will join us again. During the afternoon amusing poems were read, carols were sung and puppeteer Wendy Cole had brought along Santa Claus who walked around the hall bowing and waving to everyone! This was followed by a fantastic tea and gifts from 'Secret Santa'. On the first Thursday in January we will have a Reminiscence afternoon of memories from the 1950s. This will start off our 60th year, our WI started in February 1952.

January Reminiscence
February The Crown Jewels Mr. David Vroobel.
Visitors always welcome
Details Myra Wilkins 440659.

Art Group. We concluded our look at seed formations with a wonderful selection of Banksia seeds which Julia Bevitt-Smith had found in Alice Springs. Ideas for Christmas cards concluded the November meeting. There is no meeting in December, the next meeting will be the fourth Thursday in January.

Details Myra as above.

Bowls Club

We have had a very successful years bowling, and have won all fourteen of our Friendly Matches from January through to December. Our last match against Little Waltham was a very tight one but we won, just! Congratulations everyone on a good year with enjoyable and challenging games against a variety of bowls clubs and we look forward to another challenging year of matches in 2012.

Alas we were not so successful in the first round of the West Area Cup, losing to Fyfield on their home ground. Better luck next year!

On the social side, we had a very enjoyable Puddings Evening in November. This started with sausages and mash, followed by a choice from thirteen puddings! Our Christmas Supper is to be held on 16th December in the Village Hall, which I am sure will be as enjoyable as all the past ones have been,

Wishing all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

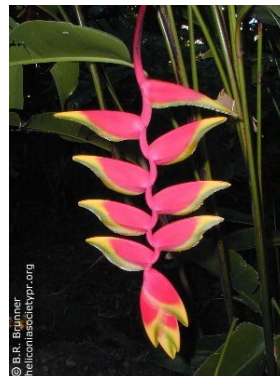
Gardening Club

The speakers at our two autumn meetings attracted a healthy interest from existing and potential new members. On a chilly October evening, it was a treat to see vibrant images of tropical flowers, lush gardens and Caribbean beaches. Suzanne Gaywood, entertained us with accounts of how she and her band of helpers in Essex and Grenada have designed and built gardens over the last 14 years at the Chelsea Flower Show to give visitors an idea of the natural riches of this beautiful island. During this time, Suzanne's team have been awarded Gold 9 times. All of the plants used at Chelsea are flown in from Grenada and the team have just 4 days to unpack the carefully wrapped blooms and spices to dress the stand. We saw pictures of flamboyant plants such as pink Gingers, Orchids, Bananas and exotic Heliconias and were lucky enough to be given handfuls of whole nutmegs to take away at the end of the evening.

Nutmeg



Heliconia



More information about the gardens of Grenada and the island tours led by Suzanne, can be found at www.grenada-at-chelsea.org.uk

In November, we found out some of the secrets of a creating a beautiful garden by ensuring that we put the Right Plant in the Right Place. It sounds simple doesn't it but how many of us know where the plants that we have in our gardens originate or the conditions that they need to survive and thrive. Hilary Thomas, a garden designer, author and former Head of Garden Design at Capel Manor College, encouraged us to think about the type of soils, aspect and exposure in our gardens and the sorts of plants that would be happy growing there. In designing gardens, it's also useful to understand how plants grow in communities in their natural habitat and to consider the shape, texture and colour of the plants that we put together. A lot to think about before buying your next plant!

Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday 18th January 2012, at 7.30pm** in the Village Hall when Alex Bass will speak about, **"The river Colne from source to sea"**. The talk will focus on the varied history and wildlife of the river from its source to the sea.

On **15th February 2012** we will have a talk on **"The Gardener's Year"**, by **Mr Harry Brickwood**, owner of "Orchard Cottage Garden", Rayleigh and Secretary of the Essex branch of the Hardy Plants Society.

For more information about the Chignal and Mashbury Gardening Club, please contact John Dennis (Chairman) on 01245 440289 or Lynn Ballard (Secretary) 01245 440880.

Community News

Update on the Inter-Village Games, 30th June - 7th July, 2012

I'm delighted to report that there was a very enthusiastic response to the recent invitation to the Chignals to participate in the proposed Inter-Village Games next summer. Volunteers have put their names forward for the following activities: Badminton; Carpet Bowls; Clay Pigeon Shooting; Cricket; Equestrian – dressage; Golf; Quiz; Table Tennis; Tennis; 10K Trail Run; Tug of War; and, Volleyball.

Following a meeting of the inter-village organising committee on 7th December, I plan to get in touch with all those who signed up for the above to give you the contact details of the lead person for each sport and to let you have more information of what will be expected. Early next year, I hope we can all get together to map out what we will need to do to prepare for the Games, (including training schedules!)

The only activity that the Chignals will host is the Quiz which is likely to be held at the Village Hall on the evening of **Saturday 6th July**, subject to availability. However, we are being invited to take part in a 'torch relay'. A lightweight torch is being made and will be available to be carried through the participating villages. It is proposed that it is carried by representatives through their own villages before being handed on to the next location. On Day One, **Saturday 2nd June**, the torch would start at High Easter and travel through Good Easter before being driven to Chignal Smealy to be carried through that village and on to and through Chignal St. James.

Each Village would need to assemble its own runners (individuals or teams) and each leg might be ¼ mile. **The objective is that as many villagers, of all age groups, take part as possible so we will be seeking some volunteers to be torch bearers.**

If you have not already indicated that you would like to be involved in the Inter-Village Games and/or would like to join the torch relay, please contact Lynn Ballard, email: lynn_ballard@btinternet.com or tel: 01245 440880.

Update on Community Orchard and Allotments

In the last edition of 'Chignal News' we asked for your views on whether you'd like to have allotments and/or a community orchard in the village. To date, only two people have expressed an interest in having or sharing an allotment but there has been much more support for the creation of a community orchard that could produce fruit and nuts and provide a place for local people of all ages, (and beneficial wildlife!) to enjoy. 10 households have offered assistance to get the project off the ground and to be involved in management and promotion once it gets established. In addition, when canvassed by email and at our meeting in November, members of the Gardening Club expressed support for an orchard and several people said that they would be willing to provide expertise and/or practical help.

These are some of the specific comments received on how a community orchard could be used:

"I find the idea of having a community space where local varieties of fruit trees and fruits in danger could be grown would be an extremely valuable asset to the village. Such a space sounds fantastic especially if it could be combined with some of the ideas of memorial seats/trees, permanent gazebo, gardening classes for youngsters etc that I have heard being discussed around the village. A relaxing space such as an orchard would also prove useful for village groups such as the Reading Club, Gardening Club, Art Group, Wine Club etc to hold meetings during the summer months".

*"We could celebrate the Queen's Jubilee by each child having a tree with a commemorative plaque".
"I would support a community orchard and would like to donate a tree and bench as memorials to a loved one".*

Given this groundswell of support, I should like to recommend at the next Parish Council meeting on 16th January 2012 that we investigate potential sites for an orchard and explore suitable funding sources.

If I have not already spoken with you about this project, please feel free to let me know what you think. Lynn Ballard, email: lynn_ballard@btinternet.com, tel: 01245 440880.

Chignal Parish Council

UNCONFIRMED REPORT OF THE MEETING OF CHIGNAL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 14th NOVEMBER 2011 IN THE VILLAGE HALL.

COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Neither County Councillor Aldridge nor Councillor Nicolette Chambers were able to attend the meeting but sent reports on the following:

Councillor Aldridge reported that the Highways Department is again being revamped with one contractor being appointed for highways maintenance. The delivery of salt to parishes has been carried out and it was emphasized that the salt is not to be used on private properties. Councillor Chambers reported that a tree planting exercise will take place shortly in Hylands Park.

SUB COMMITTEE REPORTS

PLAYING FIELDS – the coach from Broomfield Football Club's Under 8's team attended the meeting to request use of the playing field for training on Saturdays mornings for the next 3 – 4 months. It was agreed that the field could be used for this purpose with parking allowed on the field, weather permitting. Alternative parking will be discussed at the next Village Hall meeting.

VILLAGE HALL LIAISON – it was agreed to provide a donation of £500 towards the costs for upgrading the kitchen at the Village Hall.

NEWSLETTER INCL. WEBSITE – a request was made for the Newsletter to be available earlier than at present and the editor will be contacted to see if this would be possible.

GRAVEL LIAISON – the next meeting will be held on 22nd November 2011.

VILLAGE WATCH – it was explained that the information included in 'Farm Watch' is not for general distribution..

HIGHWAYS – it was reported that both the stolen manhole and the broken chevron have been replaced but the finger sign to Beadles Hall is still missing. Potholes between Langleys and Ivy Cottage will be reported.

FOOTPATHS /BRIDLEWAYS - changes to the definitive map are expected shortly .

TELEPHONE BOXES - the box at Chignal St. James will be fitted with shelves as soon as possible. It was agreed not to purchase the kiosk in Chignal Smealey.

TREE WARDEN – it was explained that a Winter Tree Course is being run by the Woodland Trust. Free trees are available if a suitable place can be found for planting.

PLANNING – Decisions on both the application for amendments to the previous application at Brick Barns and a temporary change of use of agricultural building at Chignal Hall will be decided shortly.

QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE – it was agreed that children in the Parish be provided with a memento of the occasion and it was agreed that a sum of £150 be donated towards the cost.

Possible ideas on the type of gift will be discussed by a small group of Councillors.

INTER VILLAGE OLYMPICS

Representatives from Chignal attended a meeting on 5th October and a summary of events distributed showing progress made since the last meeting.

PURCHASE OF THE VILLAGE GREEN – it was reported that the sale of the Green is progressing.

POSSIBLE FUNDING FROM 106 AGREEMENT – it was explained that funding is available to provide an asset for the Parish as part of the North Melbourne re-development plan and ideas for possible schemes were requested.

USE OF PLAYING FIELD BY CARAVAN CLUB – a request has been received from a caravan club to use the playing field from time to time. It was agreed that the use of the field be limited to 15/20 caravans, three times each year.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held in the Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. on Monday 16th January 2012, a week later than was originally arranged.

St. Nicholas' Church

Greetings to you all from St. Nicholas Church.

Our very sincere thanks to the Quiz teams at the Pig and Whistle, and other individuals who have given money towards our organ fund. Hopefully the organ will be renovated in time for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

A reminder about our Christmas Celebrations at St. Nicholas:

Decorating the Church for Christmas Sat December 17 from 10 a.m. onwards

The crib service at 3 p.m. on Christmas Eve

Worship with Communion for Christmas Morning at 9 a.m. (Note change of time)

The Village Carol service is being hosted by Chignal United Reform Church on Sunday 18th December at 3 p.m.

We wish you all peace and joy this Christmas Time. You are warmly welcomed to any of our services.

Please be aware that there is no morning service on Sunday 18th December.

Tony Towns – Church Warden (Tel: 440241)



Dates for your Diary

**Parish Council Meeting Monday 16th 2012
at 7.30 p.m. In the Village Hall**

**Village Hall AGM at 8 p.m. on Monday 27th
February 2012 at the Village Hall**

**Editor: Linda Nelson
Ivy Cottage
Chignal Smealey
CM1 4TA**

**Tel: 01245 442625
Fax: 01245 442952**

**Email: chignalswe@btinternet.com Web:
www.essexinfo.net/thechignals**

**Articles to the editor by 31st January 2012 for
next publication on 20th February 2012**