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Contributions for next Newsletter to be with RetBatNews@gmail.com, by 18th of the month

Bell Fields Charities High Court Case - Update

This took place on Tuesday, 21st July, on-line and by personal attendance in the court.

We await the outcome.

Barbara Wright, compiler



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, RETTENDON

Private Prayer - Sundays, 11am - 1pm

The church has finally been open on a Sunday for private prayer. Our other churchwarden is kindly opening up at 11am and closing at 1pm, and ensuring all the Government guidelines are followed: hand sanitiser, only one pew in every three available, and seating apart except for families. Unfortunately not many people have taken the opportunity to use this facility, but we will continue to open at 11am for the foreseeable future until Church services can be resumed.

The website has all the information about our churches and services we have going ahead:-

<https://hrr-churches.org.uk/>

Jane Fallows, Churchwarden, 01245 400394

Planning Application Notifications - Update

Following on from last month when I mentioned the moves afoot that letters of planning application notifications may not be sent, I am indebted to the resident who took the time and trouble to ask the Planning and Development Management of Chelmsford Council about this proposal.

Their reply, in essence was:-

At present letters are still being sent to neighbours who may be affected by planning applications adjoining their properties. The yellow site notices will be put up when they are required by statute.

Although the proposal to discontinue the sending of individual letters was agreed in principle earlier this year, any changes will be subject to public consultation as it will involve an amendment to the Statement of Community Involvement.

People will be allowed to "self-serve" and sign up for notifications affecting or interesting them as to specific location or type of application by email on the Council's Public Access IT system. Reliance will not be just on the yellow site notices.

Obviously of concern will be those people who are not on email. Hopefully the consultation will take this into account.

Barbara Wright, compiler.

Rettendon Memorial Village Hall

You may have noticed some activity going on at the front of the hall. Lots of digging out of the old overgrown plants, including the poor cherry which had more suckers than actual tree. Then a clean up of the area before the construction of what will be the new Community Herb Bed.

Now that the raised bed is in position it will be filled with earth and compost to give a really good start to the herbs which have been bought and are growing well already.

Plans include a water butt to allow for watering of the plants, which will be fed via one of the downpipes from the roof guttering.

We hope you will all soon be able to enjoy fresh herbs, which will be available for cutting by any resident of Rettendon.

We would like to thank all those who have contributed to this: the hard work of the diggers, who had a tough time getting all the roots out, the construction workers who cut, preserved, and put together, as well as all those who provided materials.

We hope you will enjoy the tastes, smells and watching the plot grow in time.

The Knit and Natter group have been in contact with one another during the lockdown using WhatsApp. It has kept us together, interested and amused. Lots of jokes flying the ether, and some lovely flowers - artificial as well as real. Mind you we are still looking forward to coming together as a group to sit and knit, sew, natter and pass the time. May it be soon.

The bowling club decided they could not wait to get-together again, so had an informal picnic tea on the cricket field. All socially distanced, all with their own food and drink, but at least face-to-face chatter, even if the talking had to be at a raised level to ensure everyone heard. They are planning another get-together in a couple of weeks where they are hoping to play petanque on the field.

Rettendon Village Hall Management

Bookings: phone Dianne Francombe on 01245 400297

Pre-School

We managed to open for the last few weeks of term and it was great to see the children and the leavers were able to say goodbye to their friends. We had a Teddy bear picnic in the woods with Mrs Bear and the children cooked sausages on the campfire then we had our leavers presentation on the field adhering to social distancing. Good luck to all our children starting primary school in September.



We will be meeting at the memorial park every Wednesday at 11 all through the summer break

We will reopen on 7th September.

We have spaces for 2 to 4 year olds for September and we do 2 year old funding. Located in Rettendon village hall.



Any enquiries call Pat on 07762909351

Battlesbridge Free Church



We have been surviving with virtual weekly Sunday services during the lockdown. Our leaders have produced an order of service with hymns, prayers and finishing by wishing God's blessing to each other. We all undertook to

share this service each in his or her own home at the eleven O'clock hour when we would normally have met in our little white church beside the river.

On Sunday, 12th July, we had prepared the church with hand gel, chairs at social distance and devised a one-way system to enter and leave the church. We had a few members who were still self-isolating and we sent the usual order of service to them, but fourteen of us were able to meet in church once more and could appreciate each other's physical company rather than just a voice over the telephone. We praise and thank our God for that opportunity. We hope we now may go on meeting in the church for Sunday services from now on.

On July 26th it will be the 177th Anniversary of the time when local farmers and business men had the church built for Christian worship down at Battlesbridge. We had hoped for a speaker from a Suffolk church to come down to lead this special service.

Unfortunately he is still in a lockdown situation so we shall celebrate on a "Do It Yourself" basis with all members being urged to contribute favourite hymns, readings, poems, prayers, etc. so that we can all be a part of this Anniversary day. We might be able to go home with a piece of celebratory cake! We would normally have enjoyed a celebratory tea together.

Another local event which has raised the spirits is a meeting of members of the bowling group. We all brought our own chairs, maintained the correct distancing but were able to chat and compare notes whilst sitting in a spread out circle on the cricket field by the pavilion. Again, lovely to see each other rather than just a voice on the phone. I am sure others from the Horticultural Society enjoyed being able to meet for the Garden Safaris.

So our God does continue to watch over our lives.

June Edwards

Country Diary

Once upon a time a long time ago in my childhood I used to go searching for tadpoles. This memory was brought about by the thought I must do something about our small pond. I was desperate to have a wildlife pond so that we could have some frogs. Frogs like to eat slugs, insects and such other pests to the gardener. Eventually we dug a hole and put a liner in. Now I regret we made such a small pond, however this missive is about tadpoles. I begged some frog spawn from a neighbour and fed the emerging tadpoles and eventually we had a good gathering of frogs. All went well for a few years then one spring we had a fierce late frost killing the emerging late tadpoles. I left it for a few years as Keith, my then neighbour, had a healthy population of frogs and I thought some of the frogs would emigrate to our pond. Nothing happened so the following year I begged some frog spawn which hatched and then disappeared then the following year this repeated itself. Recently my desire for frogs has disappeared but I must top up the water level and clear the weed. However dragon flies and back swimmers have survived when other species have failed including water snails.

Changing the subject completely I have taken great pleasure in watching house sparrows feeding their young. The youngsters are very noisy about it but I don't mind.

On another subject the churchyard is a good place for wildlife, as anyone who saw Countryfile last Sunday (July 19th) will have seen. That does not mean you don't have to look after the churchyard but perhaps a few corners could be left a little less tidy than the rest. However there are lichens, birds and insects all using this environment.

Jane Fallows 01245 400394

Retendon Horticultural Society

Website: <https://e-voice.org.uk/rethortsoc/>

Another telephone conference call, and another delay - but all for the right reasons. At present the hall is closed, so our plan for holding any events there is on hold. We are planning to keep in touch and decide on the 18th August (the latest we can decide for newsletter coverage) as to whether we can actually hold our two planned shows in September. These would be on the same weekend: a Horticultural Show on Saturday the 11th and a special Craft and Cookery show on Sunday the 12th.

Schedules will be put on the website when the decision has been made, but the Autumn show is similar to last year, and the Craft and Cookery similar to the Summer show craft and cookery sections.

Hazel Dale-Evans Chairperson 01245 401538

Garden Visits

We believe everyone who came enjoyed their garden visits. We had 3 very different gardens on offer, on 3 different days to space the excitement apart. People social distanced and chatted if they actually met, though we asked for bookings, which helped with the parking restrictions, and it was taken to heart - so thank you all for complying.

We are looking into continuing our "Garden Safaris" next year, so please let us know if you can host one. Hopefully it will not be quite so carefully monitored.

Walk and Talk - Little Wheatley Woods Wednesday, 19th August at 10am

This walk has been confirmed for Wednesday, 19th August, at 10am, weather permitting of course. We are to be led by one of our members who lives nearby and who has researched a little of the history of this area. If you would like details so you can join us please phone me. I will be sending out to those members who have email addresses, but not all are on email nor have I everyone's phone number.

Covid 19 restrictions will apply so unfortunately there will be no toilets open. Please contact me for a place - we do need to book to know how many are coming.

(Little Wheatley wood is part of the Woodland Trust)

Facebook page Yes - we are aware this seems to be going nowhere at the moment. Lot of things going on, but it is being looked into.

Barbara Wright, secretary Tel: 01245 321554
Secretary email: RetHSsec@gmail.com

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If you would like to help with funding please get in touch. Either email or phone **01245 321554**.

To celebrate this event we hope to ring some bells at All Saints Church, Rettendon. All Covid 19 precautions being taken.

In memory of Gunner Charles Henry Faulks of Rettendon
Died 16 Feb 1945 aged 27years. Commemorated on
Column 18 of Singapore War Memorial

VE/VJ Day 2020

On VE day 1945, in London and across the country, ecstatic crowds rejoiced to celebrate “the end of the war”, except of course it was not. The war in Europe had ended, leaving so much chaos and destruction to clear up, but it was not the end.

It was not only those whose loved ones did not return from the European and North Atlantic Theatres of war, who could not wholeheartedly join in. In those days when the sun did not set on the British Empire, Burma, Ceylon, Malaya, Hong Kong, India and Western Samoa were British Territories. While London was partying in the Mall, General Slim’s “forgotten Army” the 14th Army, numbering over 1 million men, supported by sea and air were fighting the Japanese in Burma and beyond. The fighting was savage, the conditions for prisoners of war were appalling. Those who worked on the notorious Burma Railway, who even survived, carried terrible memories for the rest of their lives.

It was to Burma that Vera Lynn, who died recently, went to entertain because “no-one else was going there.”

We hear each Remembrance-tide the words of the Kohima Epitaph, “When you go home tell them of us and say, ‘For your tomorrow, we gave our today’ “. The battle of Kohima was one of those fierce battles.

The dwindling number of veterans who wear the Burma Star has led the Association to conclude that they should close on the 15th August 2020, the 75th anniversary of VJ day, when the war did come to an end.

We did celebrate VE Day this year in a more muted way. That felt all right to me, not overshadowing this year’s commemoration of VJ Day, giving more space so that we can give these men the respect that they truly deserve.

VJ Day was preceded by the deployment by means of long-range American Bombers of the Atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. They shortened the war saving potentially thousands of lives. The use of this terrifying weapon of mass destruction has shown the world the awful and long-lasting effect that this weapon can have. The consequences of its use in future is clear for all to see. The concept of “The Nuclear Deterrent” was born, which has divided consciences and opinions ever since.

Those of us who have worked in the Defence Industry or the Armed Forces have had to come to terms with the fine distinction between Defence and the possible use of Offence, which became so real during the Falklands Crisis.

A Commemoration always looks backwards to honour those who gave their lives in the past, some who still suffer today, and forwards to our responsibilities now and in the future. The tensions of today are plainly rehearsed in the News each day, those of the future, shadowy possibilities.

Our Remembrance, our gratitude, can be expressed in how we deal with those challenges. **AKF July 2020.**

What was VJ Day?

Whilst VE Day (Victory in Europe) marked the end of the war in Europe in May 1945, many thousands of Armed Forces personnel were still engaged in bitter fighting in the Far East. Victory over Japan would come at a heavy price, and Victory over Japan Day (VJ Day) marks the day Japan surrendered on the 15 August 1945, which in effect ended the Second World War.

Fighting in the Asia-Pacific took place from Hawaii to North East India. Britain and the Commonwealth’s principle fighting force, the Fourteenth Army, was one of the most diverse in history – more than 40 languages were spoken, and all the world’s major religions represented.

The descendants of many of the Commonwealth veterans of that army are today part of multicultural communities around the world, a lasting legacy to the success and comradeship of those who fought in the Asia-Pacific. Veterans of the Far East campaign will be at the heart of the commemorations as the nation thanks them for their service and sacrifice.

Events will also pay tribute to the tens of thousands of service personnel from across the UK and the Commonwealth who fought and died in the war against Japan, including all those who were held as prisoners of war by the Japanese. (<https://ve-viday75.gov.uk/viday/>)

From the Burma Star Association website

(<https://www.burmastar.org.uk/>)

We are indebted to Derek Lawbuary who has been able to find out the origins of the Kohima Epitaph.

The Kohima 2nd Division Memorial is maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission on behalf of the 2nd Infantry Division. The memorial remembers the Allied dead who repulsed the Japanese 15th Army, a force of 100,000 men, who had invaded India in March 1944 in Operation U-Go. Kohima, the capital of Nagaland was vital to control of the area and in fierce fighting the Japanese finally withdrew from the area in June of that year.

The Memorial itself consists of a large monolith of Naga stone such as is used to mark the graves of dead Nagas. The stone is set upright on a dressed stone pedestal, the overall height being 15 feet. A small cross is carved at the top of the monolith and below this a bronze panel is inset. The panel bears the inscription

*"When You Go Home, Tell Them Of Us And Say,
For Your Tomorrow, We Gave Our Today"*

The words are attributed to John Maxwell Edmonds (1875-1958), an English Classicist, who had put them together among a collection of 12 epitaphs for World War One, in 1916.

According to the Burma Star Association the words were used for the Kohima Memorial as a suggestion by Major John Etty-Leal, the GSO II of the 2nd Division, another classical scholar.

The verse is thought to have been inspired by the Greek lyric poet Simonides of Ceos (556-468 BC) who wrote after the Battle of Thermopylae in 480 BC:

*"Go tell the Spartans, thou that passest by,
That faithful to their precepts here we lie."*

Battlesbridge and More Matters

I have been up to the High Court twice, but what was terribly strange is that London was like a ghost town. One day I only saw one taxi cab! The shops were often closed due to Covid 19, or closed and gone forever, some wonderful Tudor-fronted shops in Holborn empty with the coat of arms over the fascia board "Shirt makers to the King 1846", etc. In 1961 I worked in the city in Milk Street, Cheapside. I was 15 and I cleared £1 per week after paying my keep at home. This rose to £2 per week after a few weeks. We travelled up on the old steam trains. As things progressed some of my pals wore bowler hats. Most of us had stiff paper collars - it wasn't much fun when it rained, but most of us had polished black shoes, creases in our trousers and a black umbrella. I could write a book on my adventures in London. Even in difficult times when my mum, who was half French maiden name of "Pettite", aunt and a little brother, Robert, had no money and even food was a problem. We were at rock bottom for a time, but there was still a quality of life, I still had a passion for fishing and used to shoot/poach rabbits for the pot. However, gradually things got better.

But London - will it ever get better? Unfortunately I think not. It really is the end of an era of years and years. "Why do we have to work in London" with modern communication and no travelling it is a new beginning. All I have got is my wonderful memories. I actually went to Mick Jagger's very first concert, etc. but I still have my dad's passion for all things in life: always praise other's success and never make negative of their betterment.

The river Crouch is slowly coming back to life. The problem may be the lack of rain in April, a low oxygen content, which had a vast impact on the river wildlife breeding cycle.

We will have the verdict of the High Court case over the Rettendon Bell Fields Charities soon. It will be a hard case to make judgement on. Myself and five others of the parish are fearful of the future of the Bell Fields, which is why we have taken the steps we have over the past 3 years. This wonderful asset of the parish should be preserved for the residents and surrounding neighbourhood. If we win we win not a single penny, but we think we will have safe-guarded the Bell Fields for generations to come for the residents of Rettendon. If we lose we can only console ourselves that we did our very best to save this wonderful asset forever.

Next month I shall relate the story of my dear friend who passed away at 99 years, 9 months, having survived Changi prison war camp and work on railway the Singapore docks, etc. He survived - thousands did not. If you worked you received a meagre ration, if you could not work you starved. Dear Harry survived. He was 6½ stone when he came home.

Very Sincerely Roy Hart 01268 768282

Newsletter Contributions - Have your say

Contributions from local individuals, societies or groups are encouraged. Please send to me, Barbara Wright, as soon as you can via e-mail: RetBatNews@gmail.com, or tel: 01245 321554

Or paper copy to 55 East Hanningfield Road. Mark for Newsletter.

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From our special correspondent An old codgers recollections

Does noise influence what we do in our lives - well apart from the old fellow next door being 'instructed' by his wife what he has to do next.

The Church bells are even today rung to summon people to Church or to celebrate a wedding or a special event. I do hear tell that a couple who bought a house next to a village church in a parish some miles away found out that weekly bell practices and ringing before Sunday services were noises they could not cope with and soon complained to the local Vicar, but without success. I am not sure whether they moved back to whence they came or bought some ear plugs.

#The sound of leather on willow to many is a sound to behold which can quickly change to the sound of tinkling glass followed by, "Oh, old Mr xxxxx's bedroom window again. Fortunately Mr xxxxx was not behind it at the time.

#There was a bell which could be heard from some distance away which was rung to summon people to their jobs at the local 'big house'. The bell was used by locals as their alarm clock until the bell broke and a replacement could not be found. A lot of people were late for work on that day.

#Years ago a bell was sounded in Old Bell Lane to summon people to the workhouse located further down the lane.

#Regularly each week at a specific time Hanningfield Reservoir staff carry out a test of their emergency siren. Then out comes the pocket watch, "Early today then," or some such comment.

#Do you remember the old school bell (Late again Jones minor! You rang the bell early today Sir. Forever the reason for lateness.) And the change of lesson bell?

#Every day traffic noise disturbs us with sirens and bells from Police, Fire and Ambulance vehicles. Oh better not leave out the ice cream van.

#The list goes on - motor bikes and fast cars up and down the new A130, a passing car at a junction emitting a very loud sound - music ? - deaf driver at age 30 is the oft used comment.

#People move house within the area and two village notables who were unpacking and re-arranging things in their new home when they paused and had a quick look around their front garden were asked by a passing neighbour, "Settled in yet ?" to which came the reply, "no not really, we can't get to sleep, it's so quiet here." I am glad to say like many things time has resolved this matter.

#In the early days of railways a particular young driver used to herald the arrival of his train with one long blast on the whistle and a few minutes later two short blasts (found to be a coded message to his dear wife that he would be home soon). On some occasions there were three short whistle blasts, the meaning of which cannot be found in a train drivers handbook.

#To some many years ago long before alarm clocks people who lived in heavily populated parts of big cities and often in the old two up and two down houses were awakened by a sharp tapping on their bedroom window. That tapping was to get the old feller up and off to work and was made by the local Knocker Upper. I often wonder was there a Knocker Uppers Knocker Upper?

Garden Notes

Collection of seed heads can be very fruitful this time of year to produce an adorable display next year. So cast your seeds far and wide. Exchange some with your neighbours for increased variety.

And, of course, great to sow in other people's gardens without them knowing! Watch their faces when the incredible blossoms. **Mrs. McGregor**
