

Village News

in Swindon Village

Your local Newsletter sponsored by the
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No. 381

February 2012

February

- Wednesday 1 Village Hall Committee meeting - Village Hall lounge 7.15pm
Wednesday Club - Village Hall 8.00pm AGM
- Monday 6 Marle Hill W.I. - St. Nicolas' Hall 7.30pm
Sam Cairney - Hair styles
- Tuesday 14 No Parish Council Meeting - postponed to 21st
- Wednesday 15 Swindon Village Society - Village Hall 7.30pm (Note new time)
- Tuesday 21 Pancake Parlour - Village Hall 3.00pm to 5.00pm
In aid of church restoration appeal
- Tuesday 21 Parish Council Meeting - Village Hall lounge 7.30pm
With Public Session**
- Wednesday 22 Wine Club - Village Hall 7.45pm
Doug Wilkins Competition and Pudding Night
- Saturday 25 Scouts collecting jumble around inner village from 10.00am

March

- Monday 5 Marle Hill W.I. - St. Nicolas' Hall 7.30pm
- Wednesday 7 Village Hall Committee - Village Hall lounge 7.15pm
- Wednesday 7 Wednesday Club - Village Hall 7.15pm
Chris Witts - Life on the Severn
- Tuesday 13 Parish Council Meeting - Village Hall lounge 7.30pm
With Public Session**
- Wednesday 21 Swindon Village Society - Village Hall 7.30pm (Note new time)
Sue Rowbotham - Cheltenham's Blue Plaques

Swindon Parish Council

(Full minutes of all meetings are displayed on the Parish Council notice boards and on the Parish website. They are also available on request from the Chairman.)

Notes from a meeting of the Council held on 13th December 2011.

Footpath Outside CF Roberts' Premises

A member of the public asked the Council about the above footpath. A new section of footpath had been laid, which stopped abruptly at the entrance to 'Simply Gym', so pedestrians had to continue across a muddy surface.

Councillor Simpson explained that he had recently brought this matter to the attention of Gloucestershire Highways. In brief, the new section of pavement had been required as 'planning gain' following a recent planning application, i.e. the funds had been provided by CF Roberts, not Gloucestershire Highways, and it would not have been reasonable to provide a footway past the gym. The Council acknowledged the circumstances, but felt that the situation was not quite satisfactory.

Police - Burglaries in the Local Area

PCs Johnstone and Silsby introduced themselves and explained that they were present in order to increase awareness of a spate of burglaries across Cheltenham. There had been 30 incidents in the previous month. The Police were willing to advise householders on how to prevent such crime, which usually increased in the weeks around Christmas. The Police would visit elderly and vulnerable people in their homes to advise on security measures.

The Clerk explained that he had been sent 'Burglary Awareness' posters by the Borough Council, which he would put on the parish noticeboards.

Boy racers/cruisers

Councillor Helen Wells reported that she had attended the meeting of the Borough Council's 'Cheltenham Cruisers Working Group' held on 18th November 2011. She felt it had been a useful meeting at the time and this had been borne out by the fact that she had not heard any Boy Racer / Cruiser related noise in the following weeks. However, it was now winter and it was likely that activities would be scaled down until the spring anyway. The Police were working with one of the Cruiser groups to find alternative venues. The Clerk is to write to County Councillor Suzanne Williams, the Chairman of the Working Group, expressing the Council's thanks for the recent action and its hope for continued action.

Reports

It was reported that dog walkers were failing to clear up after their dogs when exercising them in the Swindon Playing Fields. The Clerk would advise the Dog Warden.

It was also reported that rubbish had accumulated in the hedge bordering the wooded area in the Playing Fields. Members were requested to provide the Clerk with a list of other litter-strewn areas, for forwarding to the Borough Council.

Planning Applications referred to the Council for observations

11/01660/ADV - Renault Premises, Mackenzie Way - Display of a new 4.8m high Nissan pylon sign (in the position currently held by a Renault pylon) and relocate the Renault pylon sign. This application was delegated to the Clerk for a response (subsequent to consultation with Members).

Joint Core Strategy

Councillor Wells reported that the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) team had published different development scenarios for consultation purposes. She understood that Cheltenham Borough Council was predisposed to Scenario A which would merely meet the Government's housing targets without allowing urban extensions. However, this Scenario still allowed for the construction of 4,500 houses between Swindon parish and Uckington. Despite all the local reaction to similar proposals in the old South-West Regional Spatial Strategy the housing number proposed for this area (and even the plans) appeared to duplicate those in the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Councillor Wells recommended that the Council analyse the scenarios and critique the evidence which, she felt, was not as robust as should be expected. In order to do so, Councillor Wells encouraged Members to attend the Public Meeting organised by the JCS team for 4th January 2012 in Uckington Village Hall. This was agreed and, also, a Working Group meeting would be arranged to discuss the Council's response in detail.

Purchase of Salt/Grit Bins

The Council was requested to consider purchasing salt/grit bins for installation at suitable points around the Parish. Relevant background information was provided in the circulated report. Gloucestershire Highways had approved three locations. The Council also noted that the County Council was able to supply a suitable hand operated spreader for £100, half the usual price, as the County Council wished to encourage the parishes to take the initiative in helping keep the footpaths passable in winter conditions. The Chairman of the Village Hall had offered the Council the use of a disused bin store, to house the spreader, subject to the Council arranging for its adaptation.

The Clerk was authorised to issue orders for the purchase and installation of three salt/grit bins, a hand spreader and work to the disused bin store at the Village Hall to a value not exceeding £1,000.

Traffic Management Plan during replacement of the bridge over the M5

The Council received a plan and information from Gloucestershire Highways explaining its plans for the road network when the A4019 is closed at the M5 junction for the bridge replacement. A number of Members stated that they had seen press reports that the work was to be put back a year.

Notes from a meeting of the Council held on 10th January 2012.

Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council

Chairman

It was explained that, as Councillor Iliffe had resigned as Chairman, the Council was required to elect a Chairman. Councillor Peter Allen, the current Vice-Chairman, was nominated. Councillor Allen stated that he would be willing to serve as Chairman for the remainder of the present Council year only, and he would withdraw if there was another nomination. There were no other nominations.

Councillor Peter Allen was duly elected as the Chairman of the Council, to serve until the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2012.

Vice-Chairman

It was explained that, as Councillor Allen had been elected as Chairman, the Council now had a vacancy for a Vice-Chairman. There was only one nomination, for Councillor Glenn Simpson who was duly elected as the Vice-Chairman of the Council, to serve until the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2012.

Queen's Diamond Jubilee

The Council was invited to consider whether to engage in the celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in June 2012. There had been little or no response to notices in Village News, but one resident had suggested that the Council revive its plans for a Village Sign, which had been shelved some years previously, and that the sign include reference to the fact that 2012 was the year of the Jubilee and the London Olympics. It was agreed that this was a good idea and, later in the Meeting, a sum would be allocated in the Budget for 2012/13.

Administrative Matters

The Council was reminded that the Clerk was likely to start two weeks Paternity Leave at some time in the New Year. Arrangements would be made to minimise the effect on the operation of the Council.

Date of next meeting

In view of a clash of meeting dates, it was agreed to put back the date of the next Meeting to Tuesday 21st February 2012.

Planning Applications referred to the Council for observations

11/01868/FUL and 11/01869/CAC - Kynance, Swindon Hall - Demolition of bungalow and construction of replacement dwelling. NO OBJECTION.

11/01898/FUL - Unit A, Gallagher Retail Park (Next premises) - External alterations including new shopfront. NO OBJECTION.

Allotment Rent Review

The Council was requested to review its rental charges in respect of the Allotments on Stantons Drive, for implementation with effect from 1st April 2012. The Council had last amended (increased) its charges with effect from 1st April 2007, when it had been agreed to set the rent for a full plot at £25.00 per year and the rent for a half plot at £14.00 per year. These charges had last been reviewed in October 2009, when it had been agreed to make no change.

The Clerk recommended that, because five years had passed since the last increase, water service charges were continuing to increase and the Council was currently considering work to the Allotments that it was now an appropriate time to amend the rental charges. Tenants would be advised of any change prior to the start of the next rental year.

It was resolved that, with effect from 1st April 2012, the rent for a full plot at the Stanton's Drive allotments be increased to £29.00 and the rent for a half plot be increased to £16.00.

Other Allotment Matters

(i) The Council was pleased to note that Mr. Ian Brown, a tenant of the Allotments, had volunteered to act as the new Allotments Manager. The Clerk had put this information on the allotment noticeboard.

(ii) The Clerk was requested to place signs reading 'NO DOGS ALLOWED' on the entrance gates.

Budget and Precept for 2012/13

It was agreed to allow the sum of £2,000 for the creation of a Village Sign, of a low-level carved stone design, which should recognise the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Any excess (to an approximate maximum of £1,000) could be met from the General Reserve.

It was also agreed to create a new Reserve; while the Council did not anticipate embarking on a Neighbourhood Plan in 2012/13, it had aspirations to do so. Funds would be accumulated incrementally, with an initial £500 to be set aside in 2012/13. It was resolved that the Budget for 2012/13 be approved, as detailed in the attachment to these Minutes; and that Cheltenham Borough Council be advised that the Council's Precept for 2012/13 will be £9,500.

(A Precept of £9,500 would cost the Swindon Parish Band 'D' Council taxpayer £13.32 per year, against £9.99 for the present year and £13.88 in 2007/08.)



Community Speed Watch

Gloucestershire Police are looking at setting up a Community Speed Watch initiative across Gloucestershire. We are looking for volunteers in the local community who would be willing to get involved in this scheme.

It would involve working in pairs on roads perceived to have a problem with speed. Volunteers would only be expected to record data and registration numbers of speeding vehicles and report these figures back to the police. The data would then be analysed to see if there is a real problem or if there is an issue with repeat offenders.

Volunteers would be trained to use the speed radar equipment on a training session.

A 'pool' of speed radar equipment would be available to book out from Bamfurlong – this is shared with other community members across Gloucestershire.

High Visibility jackets would need to be worn.

There are no minimum hours required that volunteers would be expected to carry out, it would be a personal choice.

Roads to be monitored would be identified by the community, the police would then carry out a risk assessment to ensure the road is appropriate before volunteers conducted the surveys.

Volunteers would be required to book 'on' and 'off' duty via our control room so that they are aware surveys are being conducted and on which roads.

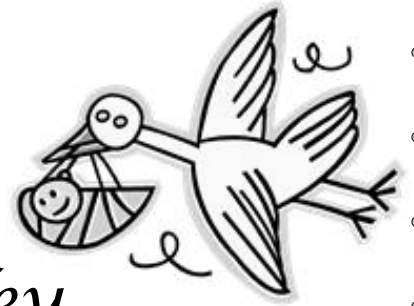
Please contact me if you are interested in becoming a volunteer for more information.

Telephone 101 ext 7245

Email kirsty.johnson@gloucestershire.pnn.police.uk



*Congratulations to
Stephen and Dee Holley
on the birth of their twins,
a boy and a girl,
on 17th January.*



Project 500+



Team v would like to say a HUGE thank you for all the donations of food in December.

We raised over 400 items from you, the village and 838 in total. This food has now been sent on to Cheltenham 1st Stop who have already started distributing it to those in need.

If you want more information about the campaign then please phone me, Charlotte Brewer on 07526164327. Or visit <http://vinspired.com/teamv/leaders> for more information.

Thank you again.

Charlotte Brewer, Team v Leader

St. Lawrence

Services and events in February

Sunday	5 th	<i>3rd Sunday before Lent</i>	
		9.15am	Holy Communion
		6.30pm	Evensong
Tuesday	7 th	7.30pm	Tuesday Group
Sunday	12 th	<i>2nd Sunday before Lent</i>	
		9.15am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		6.30pm	Evensong
Tuesday	14 th	7.00pm	Holy Communion followed by Tuesday Group
Sunday	19 th	<i>Next Sunday before Lent</i>	
		9.15am	Holy Communion
		6.30pm	Evensong
Tuesday	21 st	<i>Shrove Tuesday</i>	
		3.00pm - 5.00pm	'Pancake Parlour' in the Village Hall
Wednesday	22 nd	<i>Ash Wednesday</i>	
		7.00pm	Holy Communion
Sunday	26 th	<i>Lent 1</i>	
		9.15am	Morning Prayer
		6.30pm	Sung Holy Communion
Tuesday	28 th	7.00pm	Holy Communion followed by Tuesday Group

From the registers



Christenings (Holy Baptism)

We have recently welcomed into the Church family:

Charlie & Danni West	10 th December
William Hicks	11 th December
Maxwell & Phoebe Holmes	11 th December
William Pennicard	18 th December
Ewan Turner	18 th December



Marriages

We have celebrated the marriage of:

David West & Jemma Dowding	10 th December
Martin Maphumulo & Nonhlanhla (Leeane) Ndimande	31 st December



Funerals

We have recently given thanks for the life of
Mair Raybould 18th January

Burial of ashes

Olive Badge 14th December

If you would like to enquire about baptism (also called christening) or would like to book a wedding in St Lawrence church, please contact the Team Office, which is open Monday to Friday from 9am until 12 noon. The Office is based in St Nicolas' Church in Swindon Lane. Contact the Office on 244373 or admin@northchelt.org.uk

You can contact me, the Revd Canon Michael Cozens (Team Rector) on 523177 or michael.cozens@northchelt.org.uk

Lent 2012

With Christmas only just behind us our thoughts turn now towards Lent which begins on 22nd February. Ash Wednesday has traditionally been a day when all who are communicant members of the Church of England attend a service to mark the beginning of Lent. There will be a service of Holy Communion in St Lawrence at 7pm.

To emphasise the special nature of the season of Lent, there will be a service of Holy Communion at 7pm every Tuesday until Easter. Following the service, the Tuesday Group will be using a Lent course entitled 'Transforming Life' which is based on the Old Testament readings for the Sundays in Lent. This course will also be followed by other house groups across the North Cheltenham Team Ministry. Further details about how to join a group can be obtained from the Team Office on 244373 or admin@northchelt.org.uk

Prayer Every Day in Lent

Bishop Michael, the Bishop of Gloucester, is again asking us to ensure that our church buildings are prayed in every day during Lent. St Lawrence church will be open everyday at 9.30am for a short time of prayer using some special material for Lent. Anyone is very welcome to attend; why not 'take something on for Lent' and aim to attend at least one extra service each week?

Revd Canon Michael Cozens

A view from the pew

I don't know if you're fascinated by the night sky. One of the many good things about Swindon Village is that on a clear night you can look up and see the stars and planets. If you had a good telescope you could see marvels like new stars being made.

When I came out of church last Sunday I was once again bowled over by the view and there was Jupiter moving across the sky and shining brightly with reflected light. That set me thinking.

We're into the season of Epiphany or the 'shining out of the light'. As St John says, when thinking about the birth of Jesus as a helpless baby - the light shines in the darkness and the darkness doesn't understand or comprehend it. You may remember the famous picture, 'The Light of the world'. In Epiphany we're celebrating the coming of light to our world.

Then, as so many people do, I thought about the immensity and majesty and mystery of the universe. We look upward and wonder - is there life out there? With all those planets it's possible.

And then we wonder how we humans fit in with it all. Is there a creator God? How do I fit in to all this? Much of the time I feel that I'm the centre of my own little universe but then I look up and realise how small and insignificant I am. God created this wonderful, mind boggling universe (perhaps) and if this unimaginable Being did that - he must have created me - so where do I fit in?

Christianity emphasizes that this creator God is a God who can't help loving what he has made. He's definitely not some distant 'old man in the sky'. God loves me, insignificant as I am. The poet in the bible says: "Underneath are the everlasting arms". We're not alone in the immensities of space, hard to believe as it is at times.

Ralph Griffin

Christmas Tree festival

Now that we are well in to the new year it seems a long time since the Christmas Tree Festival.

The theme, "Around the world at Christmas" seemed to baffle a few people but once again imagination reigned supreme, producing some excellent results. Several groups chose a global approach, representing several countries on one tree, while other trees represented single countries.

Marle Hill W.I. didn't stray too far, depicting Scotland with every decoration on their tree bearing at least some tartan, while Karen went to the other side of the world, showing her son Matthew enjoying a drink and a barbecue under an Australian themed tree. The contrast and cricket competition between Australia and England was picked up by the Hanging Tree Explorer Scouts with red bush, meringues and a surfing Santa on the Australian side vs. holly, mistletoe and a snowman for England. The Scouts portrayed one of the highlights of their year on their Dutch tree - the large amounts of cheese and salami eaten at the Haarlem Jamborette! The church choir featured music and composers from around the world while the bellringers' display showed penguins looking bemused by a Christmas tree which had been washed on to the shore of Antarctica. Penny used origami and pink blossom to represent Japan. Ruth's tree was hung with pictures of ambulances from around the world - oh boy, we should consider ourselves lucky! The Prayer Tree, once again decorated by the church's Bible study group, gave people a chance to reflect and pray.

Swindon Village Early Years playgroup won the public vote for the favourite tree and all of the children's groups who took part were given boxes of chocolates to share.

The festival was a great success financially, raising just over £500 for the church restoration appeal and, more importantly, it brought people together for a lovely start to the festive season. Thank you to everyone who helped, took part or came to see the trees.

Karen Evans

Drop in to the Village Hall for a pancake...

Pancake Parlour



Tuesday 21st February
Shrove Tuesday

Village Hall
3pm to 5pm

Pancakes with a choice of toppings and a drink

Admission £1 per person, includes first pancake
More pancakes at 50p each

Free admission and a cup of tea for adults accompanying children
if we really can't tempt you to a pancake!



Profits in aid of St. Lawrence's Church Restoration Appeal

Swindon Village Primary School

A very belated Happy New Year from everyone at Swindon Village Primary School! Despite only being two weeks into the new term a lot has already happened and we have a busy few months ahead.

At the end of the Autumn Term we had our usual array of Christmas performances which were well received and enjoyed by parents and children alike. During our productions we collected money for Gloucestershire based charity, The James Hopkins' Trust and were delighted to welcome them into school this week to receive a cheque for £1184. This is the third year that we have supported a charity over the Christmas period and we are always very proud to be able to support local children and their families.

This term there is a wide selection of activities planned including trips to Eastnor Castle and The Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, sporting fixtures against other schools, a maths & enterprise week and not forgetting the now infamous House Talent Show. Also, over the next couple of weeks, our Year 2 children are taking part in a project with a local artist and the work they produce will be on show at the Garden Gallery in Montpellier Gardens from 12th February – please pop along if you are in the area to see what the children have been up to!

Clearly, one of the most exciting things happening in school at the moment is our building project and, if you have been past the school recently, you will have seen that the work is progressing rather quickly. We are all really looking forward to getting inside and, unbelievably, the first phase is due to be completed by the middle of February – this will involve our Year 5 and 6 children moving into their new classrooms. After this, the next milestone is Easter when we will have access to our new Hall, offices and start using our grand new entrance! We are very keen to share this exciting project with the local community so if you are passing and want to pop in and have a look, we would be delighted to give you a quick tour.

Best regards.

Jonathan Dyer
Head Teacher

Wednesday Club

The Wednesday Club Christmas Party at the beginning of December went very well. We managed to decorate the Hall with a Christmas tree and the tables all looked lovely. The quiz was won by Gill Groves (after a tie break question) and the photo quiz was won by Mary Halliwell. Many thanks to all those members that came and made the evening go so well. Also, many thanks to the committee members who all came and helped get the Hall ready beforehand; quite a lot of work goes into this. Again, we thank Dave and Stuart for coming along to help with the tables and chairs and to get the tree lights working again!

On the 4th of January we all went along to Seasons for a Christmas meal. Again this went very well, the food was superb and we congratulate and thank Lisa and her team at Seasons for all their hard work.

On Wednesday 1st of February we have our AGM. There will also be a small quiz and our programme for 2012 will be available. Shirley and June arrange our speakers and they will give us more details of the programme during the evening. There may be one or two other events also during the year and we will discuss these as well.

At the meeting in March, Chris Witts will be telling us all about "Life on the Severn". Please come along and enjoy the evening with us. Visitors pay £2.50 for the evening and this does include supper with a cup of coffee or tea.

I look forward to seeing you all again on Wednesday 1st of February.

Pauline Wright

The Swindon Village Society

By the time you read this we will have had our AGM and at a rough guess nothing will have changed. No palace coup. The position of Chairman, Swindon Village Society is certainly more secure than that of certain middle eastern tyrants, more like that of Communist Party Leader in China really. Of course I do have rather less people to worry about unless this year's advertising campaign brings very surprising results.

Anyway what we do have is a new programme for the year. Our talks include 'Quaint and Quirky Gloucestershire', 'Cheltenham's Blue Plaques', 'Pub Signs', a lesson on how to fly your airliners down the glidepath on a dark and stormy night from Harry Hopkins, the village's own test pilot, 'Frost and Floods' on how the Severn Vale was formed and 'The Only Way to Cross', about the Queen Mary with some good anecdotes on celebs of the time (I think). One thing we are bringing back this year is the 7.30 start time for evening meetings.

In addition we will be giving our illustrated talk on The History of Swindon Village for the first time in several years at 4 pm on Saturday 26 May. This is particularly recommended for new-comers to the village but anyone is welcome – non members will be charged the princely sum of £1 to hear the tale of where they live. Put it in the diary now.

Now one thing we are very concerned about is the Joint Core Strategy. We had the highest hopes that it would produce what we would consider a sensible plan for local housing. However, as I write this - it hasn't. And what I and several members of Save the Countryside are trying to work out is why. This is not easy. The JCS is based on several previous studies into housing in Gloucestershire, each of about 80 dense pages with masses of stats.

I think we have to face the fact that the professionals who wrote the plan are going to be very loathe to accept this – their credibility is on the line. What we will have to do is make a strong case to the local politicians who certainly, in the case of Cheltenham, have all stated that they would like to preserve the green belt. The other two Boroughs seem less sure in which case we may also go to national level since the Prime Minister himself has said many times that he wants to preserve the countryside and they are both Tory run authorities.

However, right now it is all to play for. The Swindon Village Society, closely allied to Save the Countryside, is in there and pitching on your behalf. Please support it (them). Membership of the Society is £8 for a family for the year and £5 for an individual. Join at the AGM or via any of the committee members or via No 3, Swindon Hall, Swindon Village, Cheltenham, GL51 9QR or call 521723.

We need the money for the stamps to write to that nice Mr Cameron and his pals.

Barry Simon

Swindon Village Winemakers

The guest speaker at our November club meeting was Rosemary Prosser; her talk was entitled 'Tights to Trousers'. Rosemary gave us a very detailed and amusing insight into her life as police woman in the 60s and 70s. The contrast between policing now and then was amazing, and it was interesting to see the photos and memorabilia she brought with her.

On Monday 28th November 21 members and friends spent a very enjoyable five days in Scotland on a Mountains & Mistletoe coach trip. We experienced Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day in the space of three days, which was a weird but enjoyable experience. Good food, lovely hotel and interesting trips out completed a lovely five days. Thanks go to Ray Hales for organising the trip.

Six of us attended Cheltenham Wine's Christmas Party at Apperley Village Hall. Lovely to get into the spirit of Christmas, although four of us were a bit tired after the 10 hours coach trip back from Scotland! Father Christmas made his usual appearance and helped to give out a wonderful array of raffle prizes.

On Saturday 17th December 18 of us enjoyed a wonderful Christmas meal at the Swan at Coombe Hill. This was a new idea for the club, suggested by our new Social Secretary, Roy Harper, and was a great success. We were joined for the evening by Simon and Jan Cooper, who were loyal club members for many years before moving to Yorkshire. It was lovely for their friends to be able to catch up with them, as they were unable to join us for the trip to Scotland this year. Thanks go to Roy for organising the event.

Our first meeting after the January AGM, will be on 22nd February, with the Doug Wilkins Rosé Kit Wine Competition, followed by a Pudding Night, when members bring along puddings; we all taste them and then vote on which one we think is the best.

Mandy Jilbert

Host families wanted

Accommodation is being sought in Swindon Village for two weeks in March for young Japanese students (aged 15 - 17) who will be on an English and Culture course locally.

For more details about this please phone
Midori Endicott on 07760 222676

Marle Hill W.I.

Our December meeting saw the start of our Christmas celebrations with Ann Blagdon and her company of belly dancers. The history of belly dancing can be traced to northern India. From there it spread to Egypt, The Lebanon, Turkey, North Africa (Bedouins, harems and veils), Spain (flamenco) and thence to Europe, each country making their own adaptations. Our own Morris (Moorish) Dancing originates from the same source. Variations also spread through Asia and include North American Native tribal dancing. The dancers, old and young, new and experienced, had made their own costumes that were beautifully decorated; they even attend workshops to create new ones. After half an hour of entertainment we paused for everyone to have a cup of tea and a mince pie before the programme continued. The climax came when most of the members joined in a 'have a go' session. An enjoyable way to keep fit!

The next seasonal event was the annual Carol Concert in the Town Hall where the highlight was 'Only Men Aloud', who had interrupted their National Tour, and were met with a standing ovation. The WI Choir sang 'The Twelve Days After Christmas'.

The County trip to see the decorations at Waddesdon Manor resulted in three coach loads travelling to enjoy the Neapolitan themed event, one of the most memorable sights being the tree decorated with red lights depicting the lava flow in Mount Vesuvius. We decorated a tree for the Swindon Village Christmas Tree Festival with a Scottish theme, and I hear that the Solo Club had a great party at Wendy's.

We started the New Year with Alex Stanbrook regaling some hilarious hat (and other) stories. She had a great display of hats that she had brought with her and wore many of them in turn as she delivered her talk. Afterwards members were let loose to try the hats on themselves. It was a great way to start the year as members were literally crying with laughter at some of the stories. We were reminded that the votes for the resolution for the AGM in the Royal Albert Hall had to be in by the end of January and that it is our turn to send a delegate this year. We are signing up for this year's Skittles Tournament – Cam WI, who beat us in the quarter-finals, won the cup last year.

Elaine has invited us to afternoon tea and a natter at her house in January, and in February a trip to the theatre to see 'The King and I' is being arranged. Also in February Sam Cairney is paying us a return visit, this time to give a demonstration of hairstyles at our monthly meeting. If you would like to join us for the evening on Monday 6th February at 7.30pm at St Nicolas' Church, Swindon Lane, you would be made most welcome.

Sara Jefferies

1st Swindon Village Scout Group

Christmas Carols and Sketches

In December we decided to try something a little different from the usual carol singing around the village – and as it rained heavily on the night it's a good job that we did! In the shelter and warmth of the Village Hall, the Beavers and Cubs performed a series of short plays, sketches and jokes together with traditional carols. The Scouts were selling cakes and biscuits that they had made themselves. The evening seemed to go really well and we have received several favourable comments since. We also raised just over £60 towards the charity we support each Christmas - "The Children's Society". So a huge thank you to everyone who came along and supported us on the night – we hope to develop the idea for next December!

Winter Camp – Gilwell Park, Epping Forest

Yes, we really did go camping in tents - in January! Four Scouts and three Explorers together with Sos, Shane, Ashley and Marie from Shurdington Scout Group enjoyed a remarkably mild weekend (for the time of year) with around 3000 other Scouts and Explorers at this year's Gilwell Winter Camp. The Scout Association's annual weekend "Winter Camp" was held at Gilwell Park, which is the home of Scouting, set in a stunning 110-acre site situated in north-east London on the edge of the beautiful Epping Forest.

The camp is held in January every year and gives Scouts and Explorer Scouts aged 10 to 18 years of age from across the country, the challenge to camp in mid-winter and the adventure of tackling up to 70 different activities over the weekend. These included a high ropes course, quad bikes, outdoor laser quest, climbing and abseiling, argocats, two simulator rides, zorbing, Robot Wars, dodgems, waltzers, Segway, digger driving, laser clay shooting and old favourites including prussiking, shooting and archery. At night there were wide games and camp fires outside or a disco and cinema inside where you could escape the cold for a while.

Despite the cool conditions and the mud, all the lads seemed to thoroughly enjoy the weekend and some are already talking about going again next year! They all coped very well and proved themselves to be more than up to the challenge - well done all of you. Photos are on our website gallery already!

The Year Ahead

We have a very busy programme of activities, camps and trips planned for the months ahead. These include the Cheltenham Scout Cooking competition at the end of January, the Cotswold Marathon Night Hike and the IT Badge weekend at Cranham, both in February. Further camps and trips are planned for the months to follow with the Beavers and Cubs as busy and as active as the Scouts!

Girl Scouts!

Scouting actually went mixed back in 1991 although at Swindon Village we have only ever had boys in the group. However, our Explorer Scouts – "Hanging Tree" have been mixed since day one and currently have more girls than lads in the unit!

We currently have room in the Scout section for some more young Scouts and we are trying to encourage some girls into the troop. So if you are aged 10½ - 14 and fancy some fun and friendship, challenge and adventure, please get in touch – **boys or girls!** Contact Sos or Rachel at svscouts@blueyonder.co.uk or telephone 693107.

Sos

1st Swindon Village Scout Group

Look out for details of our forthcoming

Jumble Sale

(date to be decided)

Jumble Collecting
Saturday 25th February from 10am.

The Scouts will be collecting jumble
around the inner village area.

If you have jumble for us please leave it in a clearly labelled
bag where we can see it to save us disturbing you.

Thank you for your support

Village People

At the beginning of this year, Chris Hawkes left her home at the end of Quat Goose Lane and went to live in Bristol with her daughter, Rachel, and her family. We caught up with Chris the day before she left.

How long have you lived in Swindon Village and what brought you here?

After two years in Singapore with the Army, my late husband, Martyn, got a teaching job at Bishops Cleeve Primary School. We came to Swindon Village to live 43 years ago just before the children started school.

What have you liked about the village?

I've always enjoyed the friendliness here. I've been very happy here and will miss my friends, especially my B.F. And my next door neighbour.

Any regrets?

When we first lived in this house, we had a view of Bredon Hill but now we can't see it as the mountain of waste at Wingmoor Farm hides it. Otherwise we have loved living at this quiet end of the village.

Do you have a family?

I have a son and a daughter. They both have careers in Pharmacy, Philip in Birmingham and Rachel in Weston-super-Mare. They both have two children and I've spent a lot of time looking after my four grandchildren who are now aged 9 to 13. Sadly, my husband Martyn died in 1993. He was also very involved in village life, especially the church, and was ringing master for many years. Since then I've spent much of my time coming and going between the children.

Do you have any special interests?

I like music and can play the organ; I've played at Swindon Village church several times when they have been desperate! I like singing too.

Have you been involved in any village activities?

I became a member of the Swindon Village W.I. as soon as I arrived in the village and over the years served as Secretary, Treasurer and President. I've been a member of the Wine Club for a long time, too, and have served on the committee. I intend to keep on coming to Wine Club meetings.

In the early 80s the Revd Michael Bennett started up a club for older people, especially those who lived alone, called the Tuesday Club. It held monthly meetings with speakers or activities and was very popular. Along with Molly Brookes, I helped to run this for many years until it folded up due to lack of support. Another thing I organised were holidays for "senior citizens" not only from the village but other parts of Gloucestershire. I used to take a coach load away, twice a year to all sorts of places of interest. We went to the Lake District, to Scotland and many places on the

south coast, having lots of fun and many memories. I did this for 16 years so we all got to know each other really well!

If your house was burning down what would you want to save?

My photos with all their memories.

Thank you, Chris. Our best wishes go with you to Bristol.

BBC Songs of Praise

Just before Christmas Cheltenham, and in particular All Saints' Church, Pittville, were featured in a BBC "Songs of Praise" programme. As well as hymns sung by the congregation, the programme featured performances by Libera, Only Men Aloud and Mary-Jess, a local young star whose voice has been likened to that of Sarah Brightman. The recording had taken place several weeks earlier and six people from Swindon Village church took part. Two of those people were Liz and John Attwell and here's their account of the event.

It was such an eye-opener - nothing like we'd imagined!

Having been told to be seated by 6pm we wondered why we were had to be prepared to be there until 10pm - four hours to sing five hymns, surely not! We were a bit disappointed to find out that out of the five hymns, we only knew two. However, after constant repeats (at least six) we became familiar with them and by the time each one was recorded we could sing with confidence. We also started to realise why we had been told it could take four hours!

Not surprisingly all of the celebrities' performances had been recorded on a different occasion but even the presenter, Sally Magnusson, wasn't there. I shouldn't have bothered to take my autograph book!

Most of the "congregation" was made up of choirs from across the county, so not exactly local, and only a small number of tickets had been given to church-goers (did you spot us in the back row?).

It was certainly an interesting experience and we'll never take television for granted again!

Liz and John Attwell

Tower Captain celebrates 70th birthday

Hugh Evans has been the tower captain at St. Lawrence's church for 16 years but had never rung a peal at his home tower so it was fitting that a special peal should be attempted for a special birthday.

Being short of ringers ourselves, we rely on outside help to keep the bells ringing for services and one of our regular supporters, Simon, earlier in the year had expressed an interest in attempting a full peal on Swindon Village bells.

(A brief explanation: A full peal is defined as a minimum of 5000 changes and on 6 bells of average weight this takes about 2 hours 45 minutes to complete. It has to be completed without error as no change can be repeated; this requires immense concentration. In addition, Swindon Village bells can be a bit tricky to ring because of the short distance between the bells and the ringers and the ringers have to maintain near perfect bell-handling skills the whole time. So a successful peal is a major event and one that has only ever been achieved here eight times.)

Back to the story:

A little bird told Simon that Hugh would be celebrating his 70th birthday on 23rd December and so Simon started making plans. The request for the use of the bells went to the Rector through Hugh who was delighted to be asked to take part but who remained blissfully unaware that the peal was being arranged specially for him, thinking that the date was just a coincidence.

So Simon arranged the band, made up of other friends, and the family got to work on organising a surprise party at home.

Hugh and his daughter Elizabeth are also members of the St. Mary's, Cheltenham band whose Christmas party happened to be on the previous evening so Elizabeth kept Hugh out late while the rest of the family set to making puddings and decorating his birthday cake. Even with puddings in the fridge and a large box marked 'Dad, no peeking!' on the kitchen table, Hugh still didn't suspect anything.

The peal band, including Hugh and Elizabeth, assembled at St Lawrence's at 9.30am and Hugh was duly told that the attempt was to mark his birthday. Wife Karen, mother Margaret (age 93!) and daughter Ruth had an undetermined amount of time to hurriedly prepare for the party. After 2 hours and 47 minutes the bells returned to rounds much to the delight of all the band, especially Hugh. The peal band then returned to the house where Hugh was greeted by his son Matthew on the phone from Sydney and about 20 long-time bellringing friends from around Cheltenham. The guests enjoyed a hot lunch of jacket potatoes and chilli followed by ginger trifle, chocolate mousse and birthday cake. When not ringing, Hugh enjoys repairing clocks so Ruth had made the cake in the shape of a clock.

Similar arrangements had been made ten years previously for Hugh's 60th birthday but on that occasion the peal failed and the band arrived at the house in the middle of

party preparations! Despite that, it was obvious from Hugh's reaction that he had had no idea what had been planned this time until he arrived home.

Not only is Hugh an active ringer locally, he is also the Chairman of the Gloucester & Bristol Diocesan Association of Church Bell Ringers and makes regular visits to the Association's twelve branches.

Thank you, Dad, for all you do to keep our bells ringing.

Elizabeth



The peal band. Back, l to r: Hugh Evans, Simon Ridley, John Ridley.
Front, l to r: Hilda Ridley, Alex Hajok, Elizabeth Evans.

The birthday cake

Gloucester & Bristol Diocesan Association of Church Bell Ringers

St. Lawrence, Swindon Village

Friday 23 December 2011 in 2 hours, 47 minutes (10 cwt)

5040 Surprise Minor

1 extent of London, 3 extents each of Norwich and Cambridge

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>1 Simon J Ridley</i> | <i>4 Hugh N Evans</i> |
| <i>2 Hilda C Ridley</i> | <i>5 Elizabeth A Evans</i> |
| <i>3 Alexandra J Hajok</i> | <i>6 John R Ridley (C)</i> |

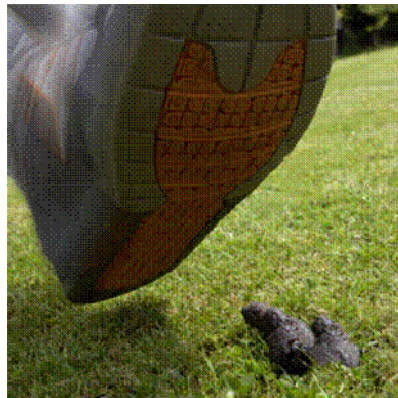
70th birthday compliment to Hugh Evans



Cheltenham Borough Council's Community Protection Team has recently received reports of dog owners failing to pick up their dogs foul in Quat Goose Lane and Swindon Village Park.

In the past there has been a notable increase in dog fouling reports over the town during the winter time. Perhaps this is because people think they will not be seen during the darker evenings.

Please be aware that Community Protection Officers don't just work 9-5 and patrols can happen at any time.



Failing to pick up dog faeces is an offence under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.

Anyone caught not cleaning up their dog faeces will be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice of £80. Failure to pay that fine could result in prosecution and a maximum fine of £1000.

If you see someone failing to pick up after their dog please report this to us, including time of incident, on telephone: 01242 264135 or email: ehbusinesssupport@cheltenham.gov.uk



74 Services

Property Maintenance Services & Repairs

For a
no-obligation
quote
please contact:

Ian Mann
01594 829504
07854 173743

Lawn & Hedge cutting
Fence & Wall repairs
Tiling
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Painting and decorating
House Painting
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Music Tuition Rhiannon Rhys-Jones

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- Music Theory Lessons
- GCSE Music Tuition

Please contact Rhiannon for a trial lesson:

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07957 419313

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AS and A level Maths, English Language
and English Literature

Common Entrance Examinations

Primary school tuition

Please phone:

Rhiannon Rhys-Jones
07957419313

Home security

Just a gentle reminder..

With the dark evenings lingering on don't forget to lock your doors and windows, and gates if you have them, to prevent potential burglars from simply walking in and if you are going out in the evenings close your curtains and perhaps leave a light on in the house.

Don't make it easy for the burglars.

***“Hold a Fish and Chip Supper to help spinal cord injured people
live full and independent lives.”***

Great British Fish and Chip Supper – Friday 18th May 2012



Want to do something different? Hold a fish and chip supper on Friday 18th May 2012 whilst raising awareness of spinal cord injury and supporting SIA's information and support services. You can hold a fish and chip supper in your own home, at work or hold a larger supper at your local community centre.

SIA will provide a fundraising pack containing hints and tips, recipes, invitations and donation envelopes. The money raised from the suppers will help the Spinal Injuries Association offer support to individuals who become paralysed and their families, from the moment a spinal injury occurs, and for the rest of their lives.

For more information or to request a fundraising pack call Elizabeth Wright on 0845 071 4350 or email fishandchips@spinal.co.uk or visit www.spinal.co.uk/fishandchips

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VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

Footpaths	John Heathcott	527753
Acting Scout Leader & GSL	Stephen Smith (Sos)	693107
Cub Scout Leader	Rachel Smith (ChiI)	693107
Beaver Leader	Charlotte Mitchell (Mole)	701854
Hanging Tree Explorer Scouts	Dave Herbert / Rob Ellis	514825/244708
Guide Guider	Jayne Ellis	244708
Rainbow Guider	Jackie Bailey	07871 169308
Guide District Commissioner	Pauline Szarko	570469
Village Hall Booking Secretary	Sandy Thornton	232045
Village Hall Secretary	Rose D'Gama	574964
Wednesday Club	Pauline Wright	693112
Play Group	(Playgroup hours)	690479
Winemakers Secretary	Mandy Jilbert	693639
School Headteacher	Jonathan Dyer	690016
Friends of the School	Anne Emery	07836 311 859
Art Club	Norman Scott	692394
Swindon Village Society Secretary	Barry Simon	521723
Mary Godwin Under 5s	(Playgroup hours)	263746
Marle Hill W.I.	Sara Jefferies	692500
St. Stephen's Cricket Club		
Echo Correspondent	Elizabeth Heathcott	527753
Save The Countryside	Helen Wells	07770 986078

Advertise your business in the Village News

Monthly rates

Whole page £30 Half page £15 Quarter page £7.50
Sixth of a page £5

Contact the Editors

Deadline for the next issue of the Village News is the 16th of this month.
Please send contributions to the editors:
David Iliffe at 16 Stantons Drive or Karen Evans at 5 Manor Road
or e-mail village-news@swindonparish.org.uk

SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL

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	Cllr. Victoria Fennell	07966 191759
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	Cllr. Mrs. Helen Wells	220875 / 07770 986078
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	Cllr. Paul Massey	07967 123221
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Allotments Manager	Ian Brown	528683

Swindon Parish and Community Website: www.swindonparish.org.uk

ST. LAWRENCE'S CHURCH

Part of the North Cheltenham Team Ministry

Rector	Revd. Canon Michael Cozens	523177
	The Rectory, 66 All Saints' Road	michael.cozens@northchelt.org.uk
Reader	Ralph Griffin	510533
Churchwardens	Mary Halliwell	692423
	Tony Jilbert	693639
Tower Captain	Hugh Evans	241678
Organist	John Collins	511950
North Cheltenham Team Ministry Office		244373
St. Nicolas' Church, Swindon Lane, Cheltenham GL50 4PA		admin@northchelt.org.uk
The office is open Monday to Friday 9am to 12 noon. Outside these hours please leave a message on the answer phone.		

See inside back cover for details of contacts for village clubs and societies.

The contents of this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the view of the Editors or the Parish Council