

Village News

in Swindon Village

*Your local Newsletter sponsored by the
Parish Council and delivered by volunteers*

No. 410 December 2014 / January 2015

December

- Monday 1 Marle Hill W.I. - St. Nicolas' Hall 7.30pm
Roselyn Terry - Demystifying hypnotherapy
- Wednesday 3 Wednesday Club - Christmas Party (Members only)
- Friday 5 Table Top and Craft Sale - Village Hall 5.45pm
Swindon Village Rainbows & Bishop's Cleeve District Rangers
- Christmas Tree Festival - St. Lawrence's Church
- Saturday 6 11.00am to 5.00pm
- Sunday 7 12noon to 5.00pm
- Monday 8 Closure of Hyde Lane starts - to 19th December
- Tuesday 9 Parish Council Meeting - Village Hall
Starting with Public Session at 7.30pm**

January

- Monday 5 Marle Hill W.I. - St. Nicolas' Hall 7.30pm
Lennet Isko - Fascination of Hats
- Tuesday 13 Parish Council Meeting - Village Hall
Starting with Public Session at 7.30pm**
- Wednesday 21 Swindon Village Society - Village Hall 7.30pm
AGM - Members only. Tea and update on Joint Core Strategy -
Non-members welcome.
- Friday 23 Quiz Night with Friends of Swindon Village School 7.30pm
- Wednesday 28 Wine Club - Village Hall 7.45pm AGM

(Full minutes of all Parish Council meetings are available on the Parish website www.swindonparish.org.uk. They are also available on request from the Chairman.)

The JCS rumbles to a conclusion. The public consultation phase has drawn to a close and the plan will be examined by a government inspector. In a last roll of the dice the Parish Council has written to Eric Pickles MP, responsible government minister, to protest at both the conclusion reached and way the process has been conducted. Amongst many concerns I have pulled out four key ones.

- (1) The developments proposed would, contrary to stated government policy, consume large areas of land presently designated as Green Belt.
- (2) Traffic management studies that should have been a critical part of the data underpinning the JCS were not available to the public as part of the consultation and are still not complete. Traffic in the area is already a problem and we believe this data would have objectively demonstrated the impracticality of the proposals.
- (3) The housing projections used in preparation of the JCS were pessimistic and out of date. More recent studies do not support a need for the huge numbers of houses included in the plan.
- (4) The consultation process was mismanaged. Due to “technical problems” the JCS team had to acknowledge that responses to the consultation had been lost. People were advised to resubmit their comments to a different email address. That address has now been “retired” yet it is still advertised on the JCS web site.

Whilst I described this as the last roll of the dice the Parish Council and others may have an opportunity to state their views in person to the inspectorate. The matter will then be decided and you won't have to read any more about the JCS from me and others!

The Parish Council are engaged with the Borough Council in a Local Green Space initiative. This seeks to identify and protect green spaces that are important to people. An area can be important for various reasons. Perhaps the area forms part of a popular dog walking route or perhaps it is home to wildlife. It could simply be because it is a quiet area where people can enjoy peace and solitude. The development that might take place as a result of the JCS would change the area for ever. The Parish Council is opposed to the JCS but to maintain any control over our environment we must also consider what might be done in the event that it is approved in some form. Otherwise it will be too late. The Local Green Space initiative might allow us to do a little to shape our landscape.

With budget cuts across the public sector affecting the County and Borough Councils it is becoming harder and harder to actually get things done. These councils claim to

be saving millions but generally it is not by becoming more efficient; it is by doing less. Drains don't get cleared, hedges are cut less frequently and enforcement does not happen. In the spring the Parish Council will be engaging with volunteers in the area to get done some of the "low priority" tasks that are simply not receiving any attention or funding. This might include litter picking, undergrowth trimming and looking after the mosaic in the park. We have been thinking about this for a while. We want to be sure we do things right in terms of public safety, insurance, etc. We will still put pressure on the County and Borough Councils to do the things they are supposed to do but we hope to engage with concerned people within the parish to start making a difference. Expect a call to arms in the New Year but in the meantime if you have ideas for projects or feel you would like to be part of this please get in touch. "Friends of Swindon Parish" is the working title!

Back to planning matters. Last month I talked about a proposed development behind Manor Farm. The Parish Council submitted a robust objection to the proposals. It is now up to the Borough Council to weigh the evidence and make a decision. In November the Parish Council met on a wet and windy night and we were delighted to welcome a resident who had come along simply to thank the councillors for supporting local residents in this matter. The Parish Council has limited powers but working together hopefully we can maintain and improve the quality of life for people in the area, so thanks for the thanks!

Finally, this will be the last you hear from us until February. That doesn't mean we won't be busy; we will be hammering out next year's budget! Thank you for the support we have received during the year. On behalf of the Parish Council I hope you have a safe and enjoyable Christmas and New Year.

Shaun Cullimore

Clerk to Swindon Parish Council

Road closure - Hyde Lane

Hyde Lane will be closed from
Monday 8th December to Friday 19th December
to allow for carriageway resurfacing works.

If you should require further information please contact
Gloucestershire County Council Highways on **08000 514514**

Debbie Palmer

Roadspace Coordinator (Gloucester & Cheltenham)
Gloucestershire County Council

Visit to Network Rail's Signal Box at Alstone Lane

There are two level crossings within Swindon Parish. One is on Swindon Lane (and is called Morris Hill) and the other is on Brockhampton Lane (but, confusingly, is called Swindon Road). There are lots of grumbles from both pedestrians and road users about the time they have to spend waiting at the level crossing gates, so the Parish Council decided it was time to dig a little deeper. I went with councillors Arran and Glenn as guests of Richard, Network Rail's level crossing manager for the area, for a visit to Alstone Lane signal box to see what goes on behind the scenes.

Why Alstone Lane signal box you may ask? Our two level crossings (and the one on Alstone Lane) are controlled from there. The signal box is part of a wider system that includes Cheltenham station and the main signal box for the area at Horton Road in Gloucester. The local box is manned 24 hours a day by crossing keepers who do 12 hour shifts. Procedures are a little different for the "up" line (heading north) and the "down" line (heading south).

Starting with a train wanting to leave Cheltenham station and head north, the train dispatcher on the platform will press a button that indicates to the signal box at Horton Road that the train is ready to leave. There, a route will be set for the train. This results in a buzzer sounding in the Alstone Lane signal box requesting that the level crossing gates be lowered. The crossing keeper presses a button that acknowledges the request and also cancels the buzzer. He then presses three buttons to initiate the closure of the three level crossings. Road users see amber lights, then flashing red lights and the gates start to descend. The crossing keeper checks that the gates are down and that the level crossings are clear of any obstructions. He can do this for Alstone Lane by looking out of his window but for our two crossings he looks at TV monitors which show the view from the remote cameras. He then operates buttons confirming that the crossings are clear before turning the railway signals "off" (i.e. to green). Note that the view of the cameras is restricted to the area of track at the level crossing; the crossing keeper will have no knowledge of the road traffic conditions.

The track side train signals are spaced at one mile intervals. A train must stop at a red signal. If a signal is red the one before it will be yellow to give the train driver a warning. The "down" line is fast (100mph maximum) and busy so it has "four aspect" signals. This means that the signal before the yellow will be showing two yellow lights. This warns there is a red signal two miles ahead. Therefore a train driver seeing either single or double yellow lights will start to slow his train knowing that he might potentially be required to stop.

Once the train has gone through a level crossing the gates open automatically (providing there isn't another train coming!) and the railway signals will return to the "on" state (showing red) ready for the process to be repeated.

For a train entering the area from the north the crossing keeper at Alstone Lane receives an indication when the train is about five miles away. He then closes the

level crossing barriers in the same way as for a north bound train and sets the down line railway signals to “off” (green).

The performance of the railway companies is closely monitored and reported. If one of the train operating companies delays a passenger by more than a certain amount compensation can be payable. If a train has to slow down unnecessarily the schedule delay sends ripples through the wider rail network. If Network Rail delays a train through poor signalling it can face severe financial penalties. The average delay payment is about £100 per minute. A heavy freight train slowed by adverse signals would easily lose three to four minutes on its schedule while it was slowing down and accelerating away again. The crossing keeper therefore tries to make sure that the train driver only sees green signals.

One of the criticisms that we hear most often is that the level crossing gates stay down too long. The problem for Network Rail is that trains take some stopping. Passenger trains in our area can be doing 100mph. Whilst goods trains are restricted to 60mph they take an even greater distance to come to a standstill. The heaviest trains on this route are typically around 1800 tons, conveying coal, oil and steel. If, for any reason, the level crossings are not clear, the crossing keeper must be sure the train can stop. He doesn't know how fast the train is travelling, only that it is entering the section of track for which he is responsible. Some of the signalling equipment used is dated but it is well proven. There may be some scope for reducing the time the level crossing gates are down but it is not clear that significant savings could be made without also reducing safety margins. Also, the performance metrics by which Network Rail are measured will naturally cause it to avoid delaying trains, potentially at the risk of inconveniencing road users.

Level crossings might be popular with train spotters but not with road users and pedestrians. In fact Network Rail would rather not have level crossings as well! Level crossings require regular maintenance and the management of the rail network would be simpler if there were only bridges and the road and rail systems didn't interact as they do at level crossings. With increasing numbers of cars on the roads and major housing developments planned the situation can only get worse.

The Parish Council is grateful to Richard, the level crossing manager, and Tony, the crossing keeper, for taking the time to show us what they do and to explain their system to us. If anyone wants more information on this subject or perhaps a visit behind the scenes I can put them in touch with Richard. If you were a road user inconvenienced on one of the level crossings at around 7:15pm on Thursday 30th October it was probably because the Parish Council was being allowed to operate the gates and signals! Under close supervision of course; no parishioners were endangered in the writing of this article.

Shaun Cullimore

Clerk to Swindon Parish Council

Diary for December

Tuesday	2 nd	7.00pm	Tuesday Group
Saturday	6 th	11.00am - 5.00pm	Christmas Tree Festival
Sunday	7th	Second Sunday of Advent	
		10.30am	Together @ Ten Thirty
		12 noon - 5.00pm	Christmas Tree Festival
		6.30pm	Sung Holy Communion
Tuesday	9 th	7.00pm	Holy Communion followed by Tuesday Group
Sunday	14th	Third Sunday in Advent	
		9.15am	Holy Communion
		6.30pm	Evensong
Monday	15 th	1.30pm	Early Years visit to school
		7.30pm	Cheltenham Area Ringing Practice
Tuesday	16 th	7.00pm	Tuesday Group
Sunday	21st	Fourth Sunday in Advent	
		9.15am	Holy Communion
		6.30pm	Carol Service
Wednesday	24th	Christmas Eve	
		4.00pm	Crib Service
		11.30pm	First Communion of Christmas
Thursday	25th	Christmas Day	
		9.15am	Holy Communion
Sunday	28th	First Sunday of Christmas	
		9.15am	Holy Communion
		6.30pm	No service at St Lawrence

Diary for January 2015

Sunday	4th	The Second Sunday of Christmas	
		10.30am	Together @ Ten Thirty
		6.30pm	Sung Holy Communion
Tuesday	6 th	7.00pm	Tuesday Group

Sunday	11th	The Baptism of Christ	
		9.15am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		6.30pm	Sung Evensong
Tuesday	13 th	7.00pm	Holy Communion
			followed by Tuesday group
Sunday	18th	Second Sunday after Epiphany	
		9.15am	Holy Communion
		6.30pm	Sung Evensong
Tuesday	20 th	7.00pm	Tuesday group
Thursday	22 nd	Evening (TBA)	Licensing of Canon David Smith as Team Rector at All Saints Church, Pittville
Sunday	25th	The Conversion of St Paul	
		9.15am	Holy Communion
		6.30pm	Sung Evensong
Tuesday	27 th	7.00pm	Tuesday group

From the registers



Baptisms

We welcome into the Church

Archie Jacca Smith	26 th October
Poppy Amelia Sizer	22 nd November

Enquiries about baptisms or weddings

If you would like to enquire about baptism (also called christening) or would like to book a wedding in St Lawrence church, please visit the Team Surgery at St. Nicolas' Church, Swindon Lane on any Saturday morning between 10.30am and 11.00am. (Enter through the main door and turn right.)

If this is not possible contact the Team Office, which is open Monday to Friday from 9am until 12 noon. The office is based at St Nicolas' Church in Swindon Lane. Contact the Office on **244373** or **admin@northchelt.org.uk**

You can contact me, the Revd Liz Palin (Assistant Curate) on 575547, liz.palin@northchelt.org.uk.

I am writing this having just finalised the rotas for the Christmas services across the team. During a vacancy this can be more of a challenge than usual but, thankfully, we are very blessed with retired clergy who have offered to help us out and we are very grateful to them.

There are of course lots of different services going on around this time: school Christmas services, carol services, crib services and my favourite service of Midnight Mass when the world seems to hold its breath in anticipation. For me that is the most precious moment of the season.

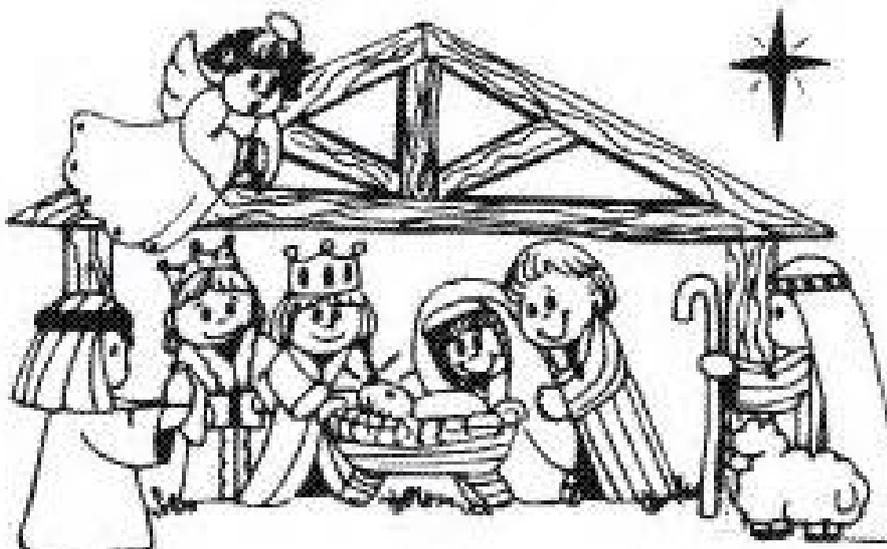
Offering hospitality is a big part of my life so I am always struck by the inn keeper when I reflect on the nativity story - the one who offered hospitality and played his part in God's plan. The church too welcomes everyone to celebrate the birth of Jesus. There is 'room for all' because *God* welcomes each and every one of us. No-one is turned away by God. Christmas is the opportunity to remind ourselves again of the miracle of God's love – so great that He came to earth as a small vulnerable child, who grew up to challenge those who wanted to shut the door on people because they didn't quite 'fit' the picture the religious leaders had of who was suitable to be part of God's kingdom. Jesus was a child who grew up to lay down his life so that we could have a relationship with God.

Not everyone enjoys Christmas. For some it is a particularly difficult time of year; maybe a loved one has died, maybe there is a family rift, maybe they are anxious about illness or finance or any number of things. But in all of that God is still with us – in the highs and the lows, in the joys and the sorrows. God is with us because God too has experienced them.

The birth of Jesus gives us hope. Hope for the future. Hope in the midst of challenge. Hope in the midst of pain.

At Christmas God welcomes us all to celebrate the birth of Jesus, God's son, the One who brings hope to the world. We are invited in to share the miracle of God with us. Come in – come and see – come and wonder at God's love. You are most welcome.

Revd Liz



Thank you

Thank you to all those who joined us for a memorable service of Remembrance at the war memorial in the churchyard, and joined us afterwards for refreshments in the newly re-ordered church. Thank you too to all those who came to our evening service of celebration.

A big thank you to all those who helped in any way preparing the church for the re-opening, and all those who worked hard to ensure our worshipping presence was maintained in the village during the closure. Particular thanks to the Village Hall committee and the School for allowing us to use their premises.

Parish Giving Scheme

We are enormously grateful to those who give regularly to the church. The envelope scheme has been being phased out over the past 12 months and will stop in December. If you are a member of the envelope scheme we would encourage you to join the Parish Giving Scheme whereby money is paid direct into our account on a regular basis, along with gift aid where appropriate. It makes an enormous difference to our mission and ministry to have regular income, and so thank you to all who support us in this way. Further details are available from Tony Jilbert.

Deanery Synod

The parish are seeking a representative to Deanery Synod. This is the decision making body for the Cheltenham deanery. They meet three to four times per year and discuss matters of local, regional and national importance in the life and work of the church. If you would be interested in this role, which then includes a place on the PCC, please contact either Tony Jilbert or Revd Liz. If you want to hear from our previous deanery synod rep to find out more about what it involves please contact Karen Evans.

The Revd Liz Palin

Assistant Curate North Cheltenham Team Ministry

Team office : 01242 244373

Home: 01242 575547

www.northchelt.org.uk

Change of opening time

Please note that the opening time for the **Christmas Tree Festival** has been delayed to **12 noon on Sunday 7th December**.

The opening time on Saturday is unchanged at 11.00am.

However, why not come early and join the **Together @ Ten Thirty** service which will take place among the trees? The theme for the service is appropriately **“Mary Had A Little Lamb.”**

Karen Evans

A view from the pew

Thoughts on our St Lawrence Church

As one of the old hymns puts it:

*We love the house of prayer,
wherein thy servants meet;
and thou, O Lord, art there
thy chosen flock to greet.*

The people who worship in this house of prayer, called St Lawrence Church, love our old picturesque church. The village community is proud of its historic church rising over the village with its unique tower. The Parish Church has been at the centre of village life for over a thousand years.

As the Guide, written by Barry Simon tells us, when it was first built the “church almost certainly consisted of no more than the tower, a nave (the main body of the church) and the chancel (the part with the altar). It is quite possible that there was not even a separate nave and that the tower itself provided the space for the congregation”. This space has been ‘reordered’ to provide a welcome to babies, youngsters and older people and their supporters as they start their Christian journey by becoming part of the world wide Christian Church through baptism. The font, probably carved in around 1450 and placed in a position representing the Christian’s journey through life towards God, still stands at the symbolic start of the journey at the foot of the nave.

I enjoy trying to imagine the church at various times in its history. “In the early 19th century the church was probably rather gloomy” (B. Simon). This church had a mud floor for many years which was probably covered with rushes. Remember ‘All things bright and beautiful’ and the strange line about gathering rushes by the water every day?) Like many churches St Lawrence had fallen into disrepair. In Victorian times there was a great desire to improve churches up and down the country. With increased resources available like many churches, St Lawrence Church underwent a major restoration and some important changes were made in the entrance and in building a vestry.

So our ‘reordering’ isn’t the first in many changes. This holy building has stood for many years and has been cared for and loved through most of its life. The task of care has been passed to this generation. We give thanks for the privilege. St Lawrence has been loved and looked after for so many years and it’s still in good hands - ours.

Ralph Griffin

St. Lawrence's Church

Christmas Tree



Festival



Nursery Rhymes

Saturday 6th December 11.00am to 5.00pm

Sunday 7th December 12noon to 5.00pm

Decorated trees on display

Christmas Shop selling cards, decorations and other Christmas goods

Competition to win a teddy bear

Christmas Hamper Raffle

Live music including sing-along songs

Refreshments

Vote for your favourite tree.

Will you choose the same one as Father Christmas?

It all takes place in the newly-refurbished St. Lawrence's Church.

Free admission.

Donations to church building and restoration funds welcome.

It's not too late to enter a tree. Phone Karen Evans on 241678.

**Tickets for sale
from the school office
or on the door**



Friday 23rd January

Swindon Village Art & Craft

Well, I looked around the group this week, and my there are some really good pictures being produced - our new members are flourishing, so all the 'oldies' are finding some competition. The craft group have been hard at work to decorate the Christmas Tree for the Church Festival. I won't tell you what it is as it will spoil it should you wish to see for yourself.

From all at the Club - A very happy Xmas and prosperous New Year.

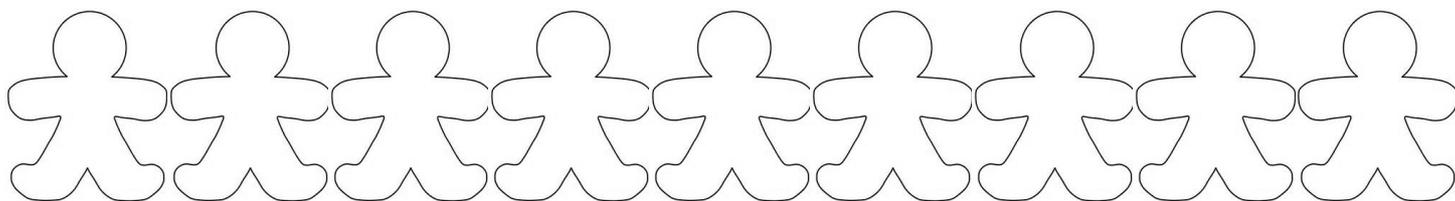
Helen Dicks

Wednesday Club

Last month we were entertained by Graham Johnson who told us of his travels “In search of Santa” Having played a Santa in his local area he decided he would like to meet the real Santa. He set off on his first ever flight on what sounded like a nightmare journey to Lapland. The flight was delayed, then he missed the connecting flight to Kittila where Santa lives; all this in sub zero temperatures. However, this didn't put him off and he went twice more. He told us lovely stories of the children that flew out from Britain to meet Santa with a lovely twist at the end!

Our next meeting on Wednesday 3rd December is our Christmas party for members only. If you haven't already paid for the January meal this will need to be paid at the December meeting please.

Margaret Pointing



Swindon Village Winemakers

This month was our Annual Wine trophy competition for Peach Wine; it was also a fish & chip supper evening. Ray Hales was given the list of what members wanted to eat and he did the rest (he does have his uses) - thank you Ray. The food arrived on time and was enjoyed by everyone. To keep the members occupied whilst the wine was being judged we had a short quiz.

The winners of the wine competition were as follows:

- | | |
|-----|--------------------|
| 1st | Cyril Smallwood |
| 2nd | John Beardsley |
| 3rd | Barbara Smallwood. |

The club was very saddened to hear of the death of Vera Wilkins (13th January 1923 - 28th October 2014). She and her late husband Doug had been members of the club for a very long time.

The December meeting will be a Christmas meal at The House in the Tree.

All our members would like to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful, healthy New Year.

Best wishes.
Roy Harper

Our talk in October was about what the land throughout the Severn Vale can tell us about how the river itself was formed. Alan Pilbeam is a very knowledgeable speaker and told us fascinating tales. In short, during the more recent ice ages the ice sheet only extended about as far south as Birmingham. When the ice started melting it initially formed something of a dam of stones and gravel that created a lake and when the dam burst the stone was washed south and formed mounds and gravel beds. These can be found in many locations throughout the vale and show just how the land developed. Many of the hills lining the river have a gravel layer from this time which shows how the river has changed course.

In fact, as I understand it, Swindon Village itself is a small hill of sand in a saucer of clay. This sand too was brought down when the ice melted. The church is on the highest point. One edge of the saucer is about where Swindon Hall grounds meets the playing field. After rain the saucer fills up with water and can overflow around the edges which is why today, as I write this, there is a spring in Church Road just outside the Hall entrance – the saucer is full. So that water running down towards the school is not a water pipe leak – it is a spring.

Of course this hill of sand gives us our name. From the Saxon - Suin Done – the hill (Done) where the pigs (Suin = swine) are kept. As I quip in my talk on the History of Swindon Village, don't complain about Swindon as a name – we should have been called Pigshill.

Back to the River Severn. I do a lot of sailing on the Severn and I am always rather proud of the river. In the summer it is a pussy cat but in winter or in flood it is a tiger and you treat it only with great respect. On a technical note, when sailing in winter one should avoid the dead sheep. They have come down from Wales and are not in a good state. If you do hit one it explodes and everyone gets a lamb chop. Don't ask me how I know this.

And that is it for this year. We start off next year with the AGM which will be followed up with a cup of tea and what has become an annual event – an update on the Joint Core Strategy. It is becoming a bit like harvest festival. While it is members only for the AGM, the cup of tea and JCS update are open to anyone. We would hope to have the AGM over by 8.15 on 21st January so if the JCS does interest you come along to the village hall then. I'm wondering if this will be the last year when we are beset by the JCS. But then I always have been an optimist.

Barry Simon

Our November meeting started with the usual business followed by the AGM. Several members had been to a talk on the History of Signals. This proved to be very interesting and included coverage of the history before the formation of GCHQ. A bus trip to Gloucester and the Cathedral to see the display of sculptures provided an enjoyable and thought-provoking outing. I am still wondering how some of the titles came about and the ideas behind them. Our Birthday Party, once again at The Muffin Man, was well attended with everyone enjoying the good food and company on a wet and windy night.

The Group Meeting included an informative talk on chocolate 'From Bean to Bar'. Doble & Bignall is a small independent producer of specialized chocolate, importing the raw beans which they roast and then process into small bars in their kitchen. We were shown the correct way to sample a few and were surprised at the difference in the flavours. I wonder if Chocolate Tasting will ever become more popular than wine tasting; it certainly was enjoyable! After a chocolate quiz and tasting we were further treated to a delicious slice of cake with a cup of tea. I think maybe we should start a WI slimming club to counteract all the eating we seem to do!

Future events include serving teas at St Nicolas' Christmas Bazaar, entering a tree in the St Lawrence' Christmas Tree Festival (please come and support us), birthday parties at Bishops Cleeve and Woodmancote, the Carol Concert in the Town Hall when Aled Jones is joining the WI Choir, and a visit to 'Glitter and Gold' at Blenheim Place and also the Christmas Market at Stratford-on-Avon.

After a cup of tea and a chat we proceeded with the AGM when Wendy Custerson was elected president for another year; the committee has a healthy number and we are financially solvent. We are looking forward to a full programme for next year with many events being organized to celebrate the centenary of the founding of the WI in 1915.

On **1st December** we have **Rosalyn Terry 'De-mystifying Hypnotherapy'** with mince pies afterwards. On **5th January 2015** we have a change from the advertised programme when **Lennet Isko** is now coming to tell us of her '**Fascination of Hats**'. We welcome anyone who would like to join us for the evening at 7.30pm at St Nicolas' Church Hall, Swindon Lane.

May I take this opportunity to wish all our readers Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Sara Jefferies

The nights may be drawing in but that hasn't stopped our youngsters getting out and about.

Mandy, Charlotte and Sylvia got in touch with HobbyCraft who invited our Beavers along for a craft evening. Twenty very excited Beavers went along on the night - can you imagine the noise? Our thanks go to all the staff at HobbyCraft for a smashing evening.

Some of our former Scouts were part of the 40-strong contingent of Cheltenham Explorers that enjoyed the weekend "Escape from the BEAST" camp, held up at Cranham Scout Centre. Friday night started with a disco followed by films and supper. Despite the rain during Saturday all the activities were able to run. There was a climbing wall, an inflatable slide and bungee run, axe throwing, rifle shooting, archery, challenge course and laser tag up in the woods. Saturday night saw an incident hike with 23 patrols taking part. Watching the moon rise over the Cotswolds was awe-inspiring! And the Sunday saw just the closing ceremony with a mass investiture ceremony.

Ethan Drake, Leo Harcourt, Todd Lewis and Joe Roberts took part in the County organised Jamboree on the Internet (JOTI) weekend, also held up at Cranham Scout Centre. This is an International Scout event on the Internet which takes place every year on the third weekend of October. During the weekend thousands of Scouts from all over the world meet and communicate with each other over the Internet, using any technologies locally available, from web browsers to e-mail, chat programs, microphones, scanners and digital cameras. As well as the Jamboree, the Scouts also completed the Communicator Badge and tackled stages 2 to 5 of the IT Badge as well as plenty of other fun and games throughout the weekend.

On Remembrance Sunday we had a good turn-out of Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers at the Service of Remembrance held at St Lawrence Church. There were also more than 50 Cheltenham Explorer Scouts in the Promenade at the Service of Remembrance held in the town centre – all looking very smart.

As I mentioned at the start of the year, our Scout Group was first registered at Gilwell Park on 20th January 1964, which made 2014 our 50th Anniversary. We have done our best to celebrate the year in style with a special commemorative badge, a group camp held up at Cranham where all the sections were able to come along and join in the fun, as well as a return to Titley for our Summer Camp this year. In addition to these camps, our Scouts have taken part in an additional twelve weekend camps, trips and expeditions during 2014. Wow!

However, it's not just the Scout group celebrating its half century this year, but also three of the leaders. I turned fifty myself at Titley this year, Rich Keeley had his in October and we held a party to celebrate Hugh's 50th Birthday in November with lots of fun party games together with sandwiches, crisps and plenty of cake too!

Our group's open evening and AGM was held in the village hall in November. All the leaders gave reports of the many and varied activities and camps attended over the last twelve months. The highlights of these were the entertaining reports given by the Scouts themselves who did really well standing up and speaking in front of a room full of people. We were honoured to have Chris Brewster, our Deputy District Commissioner with us for the evening. Chris has a vast Scouting background both locally and nationally and was the inspiration behind both the Malvern Challenge and Operation Bald Eagle events. He also used to work alongside Phil Long (in a Scouting capacity) in years gone by, so it was fitting to have him present the awards and special badges this year. Several Cubs were presented with their Chief Scout's Silver Award – the highest award you can achieve as a Cub Scout. It's also the night that we celebrate the achievements and the efforts of the youngsters from each section of the Group. The award winners this year were:

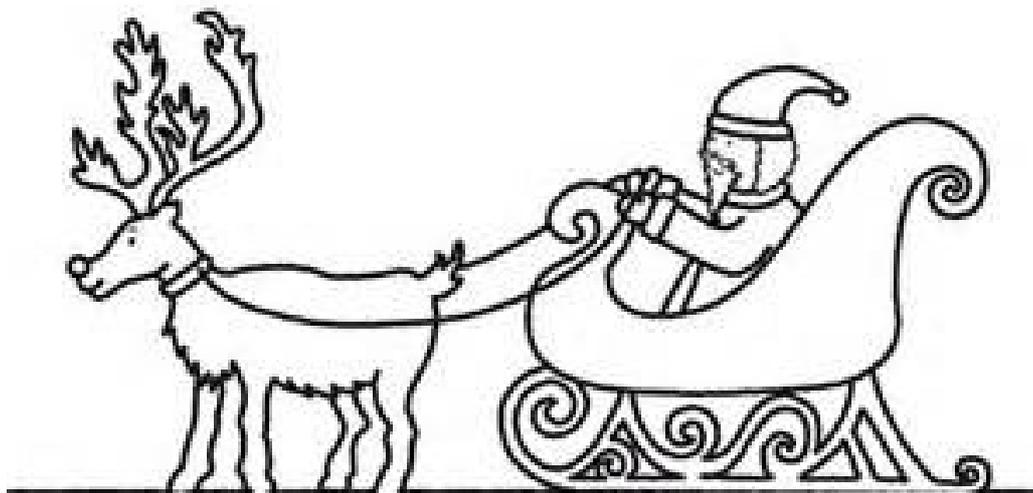
- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| • Beavers – The Alan Studd Award | James Anderson |
| • Cubs – The Phil Long Award | Victoria Emery & Leon Burnett |
| • Best Cub Camper – The Di Dimond Award | Todd Lewis |
| • Scouts - The Phil Long Award | Jakub Kubinak |
| • Best First-time Scout Camper | Ethan Drake |
| • Best Scout Camper | William Lancaster |

Congratulations and very well done to you all.

For our final meeting of the year, on 15th December, we will again be holding an evening of Christmas Carols together with various sketches and routines performed by the Beavers, the Cubs and the Scouts in the Village Hall. There will be refreshments and a few mince pies available for those who arrive early enough! The doors open at 6pm with a prompt start at 6:15 and everyone is welcome to come and join in the fun. There is no charge on the door but we will be collecting donations towards the charity we support each Christmas - "The Children's Society". We hope you are able to come and join us all.

Can I finally thank everyone in Swindon Village for all your support and encouragement throughout 2014 and wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Sos



News from Save The Countryside

It's been a while since I shared any news so here is the latest on our campaign to protect our Greenbelt land from unnecessary development.

Our team has been working on this for 8 years now – positively asking for development on brownfield sites (like the Ashchurch military site in Tewkesbury and other vacant plots) first and for the low cost / affordable homes that are actually needed. We will carry on the fight as long as it takes!

We have been working in the background, waiting for the next stage on the JCS (Joint Core Strategy) which determines the house building across Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury, including our beloved greenbelt fields, for the next 20 years. Just a reminder, it is our view that the house building projections are too high by about 8000 homes and more than half of those are intended to be in the greenbelt around Swindon Village.

Many thanks to all of you that wrote in as part of the final JCS consultation. It really makes a difference. We hear that there were over 3000 submissions, many of which unfortunately were recorded incorrectly by the council so please do go onto their website <http://consult.gct-jcs.org/consult.ti/JCSPreSub/listresponses> and check that your submission is there and is recorded as you had intended. If it is not correct you can email the JCS team on info@gct-jcs.org

The plan will be formally submitted to the Secretary of State on 20 November 2014 when an independent Inspector will be appointed to oversee an examination in public. We expect this to be in spring 2015 with the Inspectors report published and issued to councils by the autumn. After that the Councils will debate any of the inspector's recommendations for change and consider any changes that need to be made to the plan before it is formally adopted.

Save the Countryside and our colleagues within the Cheltenham Alliance have recently written in to the Secretary of State to ask that the JCS is not accepted as currently it is unsound, based on inaccurate housing projection data and with huge gaps in evidence such as transport or infrastructure plans. (We all know well the traffic issues we already have in our area at peak times – how will it possibly cope with an extra 10,000 cars?). We ask him to stand by the clear statements that he made when he was in Cheltenham recently to protect Greenbelt land.

At the same time the team are meeting with Council officers to plan our Local Green Spaces application, another way we have to try to protect the green fields around our village. We will let you know how we get on.

My thanks again for your support. It keeps our small team going!

Helen Wells and the Save the Countryside team

A fun evening to be had for everyone.

Craft and table top evening

Friday 5th December from 5.45pm until 7.15pm
Swindon Village Hall

50p entry with free tea and coffee

All Occasions cards

Cake stall

Craft stalls

Christmas craft stall

Chocolate tombola

Other small games

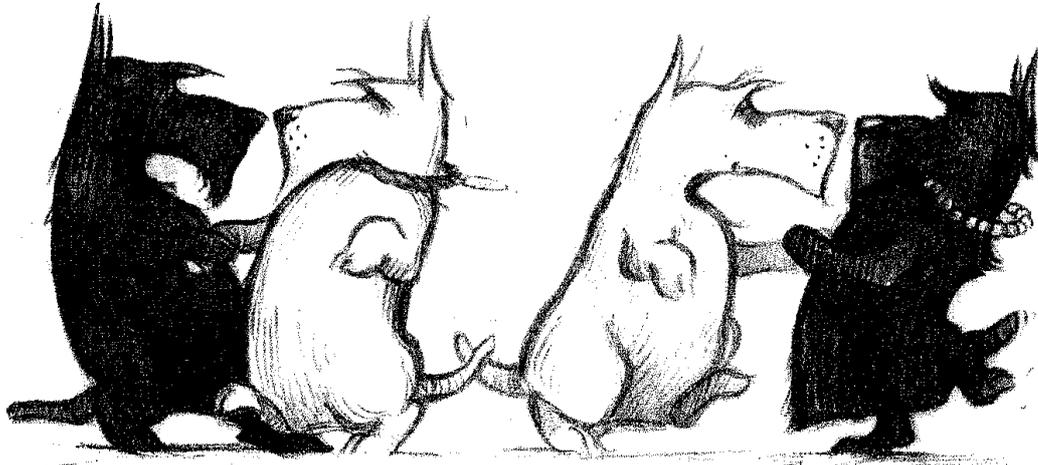
Hope to see you there!

Love from

Swindon Village Rainbows and Bishop's Cleeve District Rangers



*The Editors of Village News
would like to wish a
Happy Christmas
and a
Prosperous New Year
to all our readers and distributors.*



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SCOTTISH DANCING

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462777**

Mixed plastic recycling is now permanent for Cheltenham

Following an overwhelming response to its recent trial, Cheltenham Borough Council now offers permanent facilities to recycle mixed plastics at their most popular recycling sites. This was agreed by cabinet members when they met in September.

A pilot project over the summer meant that residents could go along to 12 of the borough's most popular 'bring bank' sites to recycle a range of mixed plastics. This included items such as yoghurt pots, margarine tubs, ice cream tubs, ready-meal trays and plastic fruit punnets as well as a whole range of plastic bottles.

Officers soon realised how well the trial had been received as the banks were being emptied more often than planned.

Scott Williams, strategic client officer, said: "Before the trial was launched, residents could recycle plastic bottles but no other type of plastic at these banks. Almost as soon as we promoted the trial, the bring banks were being filled more quickly with a mixture of different plastics. There is an increasing demand for this service as people become more aware of the action they can take to reduce their carbon footprint."

Councillor Chris Coleman, cabinet member for clean and green environment, added: "I am delighted that we are in a position to permanently increase the recycling provisions available to residents. Prior to the trial we were aware of the number of residents who said they wanted to recycle mixed plastics. We acted on that feedback and it's because of the great response to the recent trial that we feel it's only right to permanently enhance our services in this way."

Locally, residents can recycle their mixed plastics at
Sainsbury's, Manor Road and Swindon Road recycling centre

Mixed plastics include items such as plastic bottles, yoghurt pots, margarine tubs, ice cream tubs, ready-meal trays and plastic fruit punnets.

However, this does not include any black-coloured plastic, plastic bags* or cling film (or any other kind of film).

Other materials which can be collected at the bring bank sites include cardboard, paper, glass, cans, textiles and shoes.

Bulky plastic recycling, also known as mixed hard plastics, can be recycled at the Swindon Road Recycling Centre. This means people wishing to recycle items such as plastic toys, plastic garden furniture and plastic buckets can do so at the container located on-site at the recycling centre.

For more information on how you can recycle in Cheltenham please visit our website www.cheltenham.gov.uk/recycling or contact our customer service team on the dedicated waste hotline 01242 264244.

(* Editors' comment: Sainsbury's has a receptacle for plastic bag recycling in their entrance.)

Join us for a

Christmas Lights Switched On
by Pam Ayres @ 6:15pm

Festive Evening

Friday 5th December

6pm - 8:30pm

Late Night

Santa's Grotto

Viewing

Hog Roast

Homemade Crafts

Pet Gifts for Sale

Charity Shop

Children Welcome

Live Festive Music

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Gardner's Lane, Cheltenham, GL51 9JW

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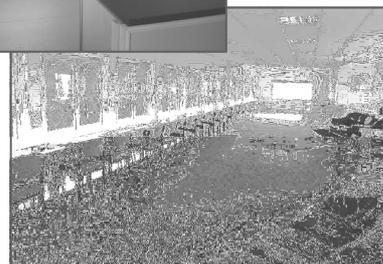
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Room hire starts from £16/hr (inc VAT) with max £50/hr for two storey accommodation and evening events.

Also, we hope to be able to offer secure indoor storage for caravans, motor homes and small boats from January .

For further details please contact Gary on 07771 346512 or e-mail us from the Contact page on our website: www.homefarmequestriancentre.co.uk



Used postage stamps and cards for recycling.

This year used postage stamps have benefitted Guide Dogs for the Blind but, as I have now lost my contact with this charity, in future they will be going to the Linc Clinic at Cheltenham General Hospital.

Cards have gone for recycling to raise funds for the Cobalt Unit, Action for M.E., the Red Cross and Woodland Trust. Please continue to save cards and stamps which can be left at **5 Stantons Drive**, Swindon Village. Birthday and special occasion cards and used postage stamps can be accepted all year. However, please note that Christmas cards can only be accepted up to the 11th of January.

Thank you.

Moira Stoneman

Tel. 01242 529631

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VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

Village & Community Agent	Vacant	
Footpaths	John Heathcott	527753
Acting Scout Leader & GSL	Stephen Smith (Sos)	693107
Cub Scout Leader	Rachel Smith (Chil)	693107
Beaver Leader	Charlotte Mitchell (Mole)	701854
Hanging Tree Explorer Scouts	Dave Herbert / Rob Ellis	514825/244708
Rainbow Guider	Jackie Bailey	07871 169308
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	Roy Harper	662861
School Headteacher	Jonathan Dyer	690016
Friends of the School	Charlotte Mitchell Mandy Harris	701854 chairfosvps@gmail.com
Art & Crafts Club	Adrian Skilling	690928 adrian.skilling@gmail.com
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	Tony Jilbert	693639
Echo Correspondent	Elizabeth Heathcott	527753
Save The Countryside	Helen Wells	07770 986078

There will be no Village News in January.

Deadline for the February issue of the Village News is the 16th January.

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

Chairman	Cllr. Peter Allen	692933
Vice Chairman	Cllr. Glenn Simpson	692845
	Cllr. John Conmee	572060
	Cllr. Frances Hunter	692845
	Cllr. David Iliffe JP	526323
	Cllr. Shannon Kerr	07954 128151
	Cllr. Arran Stibbe	07796 248658
	Cllr. Mrs. Helen Wells	220875 or 07770 986078
Clerk to the Council	Mr Shaun Cullimore	07833 089435
Cheltenham Borough Councillors	Cllr. Flo Clucas	255844
	Cllr. Bernard Fisher	07890 205767
County Councillor	Cllr. Bernard Fisher	07890 205767
Allotments Manager	Ian Brown	528683

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

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Part of the North Cheltenham Team Ministry

Assistant Curate	Revd. Liz Palin	575547 liz.palin@northchelt.org.uk
Reader	Ralph Griffin	510533
Churchwardens	Tony Jilbert	693639
	Val Smith	522245
Tower Captain	Hugh Evans	241678
Organist	John Collins	511950
North Cheltenham Team Ministry Office		244373 admin@northchelt.org.uk
St. Nicolas' Church, Swindon Lane, Cheltenham GL50 4PA		

The office is open on Monday to Friday 9am to 12 noon. Outside these hours please leave a message on the answer phone.

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