

Brixworth Bulletin

Including Draughton, Hanging Houghton and Lamport

Issue No.24, March 2010

COLDEST WINTER MONTHS FOR QUARTER OF A CENTURY



Photograph, courtesy of Country Eye



Photograph courtesy of Country Eye

I am sure that villagers do not need to be reminded of the cold weather experienced in December, January and February. However, Country Eye's photographs show how beautiful the scenery looked and how the children enjoyed sledging in good snow. Long in the future, people will be able to say 'Do you remember the winter of 2009/2010'.

Harvey Fox

BRIXWORTH CARNIVAL 2010 OFF TO A FLYING START



John Blason accompanied by Paddy Fox, Louise Cramp and Jane Neill.



Some of the cast of 'Winfrith' performed at All Saints' Church at the Millennium.

More than 30 organisations have already signed up to take part in the village Carnival planned for 3rd July 2010.

The Carnival Committee, which has been meeting regularly since last spring, has decided that proceeds from the Carnival and the Party in the Park will be shared between Save the Children Fund and village voluntary groups. After the Carnival Procession, The Party in the Park will provide a full programme of entertainment featuring local musicians, refreshments and many stalls and sideshows.

Chairman of the committee, Mike Nice, said, 'It is a real opportunity to raise a significant sum of money to help Save the Children Fund in their relief work in Haiti.

We are fortunate to have enlisted the aid of Spratton Folk Festival organisers who are assisting us in many areas. They are offering day tickets to their event as prizes for the best carnival float. In addition, thanks to Novacroft we are also able to offer cash prizes of up to £100 to the group that is judged to have the best entry in the parade.'

The village Youth Club are organising a 'Design a Float Competition' as well as a chance to be Carnival King and Queen. Winners win receive a VIP tour of the Mercedes complex.

Speaking to the Bulletin, Mike said, 'It is an event that can bring the village together and there is plenty of time for individuals, groups or organisations to join in the preparations for the day. A small army of

volunteers is needed to sell programmes for the event in the weeks leading up to the Carnival and also to steward the procession. A group are already making the bunting that will decorate the carnival route.'

A growing number of village companies are assisting through sponsorship or entering floats. They include Mercedes-Benz HPE, CPL Aromas and Raybell and Son. Support is being given by the Parish Council and Daventry District Council as well as our local police.

If you would like to be involved in any way, please contact Mike Nice on 880086.

The photographs of two of the many floats illustrate what the Village made for the Millennium carnival. You are being asked to do it again to celebrate the start of this decade.

BRAUD

Dear Editor

In the past, residents of Brixworth and surrounding villages have, in the form of pressure groups Brixworth Residents Against Unnecessary Expansion (BRAVE) and Brixworth Residents Against Unnecessary Development (BRAUD) successfully campaigned against proposed unwelcome developments in the vicinity of the village.

The publication of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) by West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit (WNJPU) again raises concerns for the village, and indeed surrounding areas.

SHLAA identifies various sites in and around the village, together with the number of potential units. These are:-

Northampton Road West	300
Northampton Road East	240
Holcot Road	50
Frog Hall	10
Church Street	15
Scaldwell Road	173 (may not be available)
Total	788

These sites have been assessed as suitable, available and achievable, although it should be noted that SHLAA does not make recommendations on which sites should be developed. In addition, sites have not, at this stage, been excluded on policy considerations. Inclusion of a site in the SHLAA does not necessarily mean a planning application has been received, nor that such an application would be looked upon favorably.

BRAUD has written to WNJPU with various questions regarding the methodology of the SHLAA. The consultation period of this stage of proceedings runs until 11th February 2010.

At the present time, there are no definite proposals to be considered, but the prospect of hundreds more dwellings, adding more strains to the already overloaded infrastructure is daunting.

In the meantime further information on SHLAA can be obtained from www.westnorthamptonshirejpu.org

BRAUD members, at the present time, have decided to maintain a watching brief.

Stephen Marriott

Brixworth Residents Against Unnecessary Development (BRAUD)
c/o 10 Pytchley Close, Brixworth,
Northampton.NN6 9EW
01604 889309

COPY DATE FOR BULLETIN 25

The next edition of the Brixworth Bulletin will be on the 1st May 2010, but contributors and advertisers are asked to advise the editor of their requirements as soon as possible.

LITTLE ACORNS PRE-SCHOOL



On the 2nd March, Little Acorns Preschool will be celebrating its 1st anniversary. The support, enthusiasm and commitment that have been shown from families, staff and other services in the village and surrounding areas have been overwhelming.

Little Acorns Preschool is a privately run preschool which is held in Brixworth Village Hall and is co-owned by Jo Bailey and Rebecca Burnage both of whom live in Brixworth. We are a 30 place preschool and care for children between the ages of 2-5yrs and are open every weekday with two full days.

We could never have possibly imagined that its success would have been so rapid and this year's numbers are at capacity.

We would like to thank every body for their support and here's to many more years.

Jo Bailey

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BRIXWORTH and DISTRICT U3A REPORT



Following the decision to allow an increase in membership to one hundred and twenty this figure was quickly reached and there is now a small waiting list. No doubt some of the existing membership will decide not to renew in March so this matter should be quickly resolved. However, if there is a continuing demand for membership the committee will keep the position under review.

The village hall has proved eminently suitable for our meetings allowing plenty of space to display the interest group activities in addition to the needs of the monthly speakers. These meetings, held at 2 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month, have been well attended with generally in excess of fifty

members present. The December meeting was of a festive nature with complementary mince pies and sherry instead of the usual tea and biscuits. A very pertinent and interesting presentation was given in January on the problems of living over high levels of Radon gas and ways to minimise the problem. The February presentation was about the Mission Aviation Fellowship and in March it will be a talk on the History of Pantomime.

With regard to the Interest Groups, the Away Days have been curtailed during the winter, but by the time of this publication a party of nine or ten members should have returned from a trip to Bruges, and a similar number are expecting to go on a trip to Italy in

June. A new Gardening Group has been formed and the dozen or so members are meeting at 2 p.m. in the Heritage Centre on the third Wednesday of the month. Other group activities include Conversational French, Family History, Art, Armchair Travel, Table Games, and Swimming, with the possibility of a Poetry and Literature group starting shortly. The Rambling Club had a successful walk in December starting and finishing at the Stags Head in Maidwell, but unfortunately the January walk had to be cancelled due to the adverse weather conditions. A full programme of walks has been planned for the coming months starting at Sherington in February and Gumley in March. The Lunch Club had a very well attended Christmas lunch at The George at Great Oxendon, visited the White Horse at Old in January, and are due at the Royal Oak in Walgrave in February.

The end of the current membership year is fast approaching and the committee are looking forward to another successful year of activities. The present committee comprises the same members as when we initially formed and it would be appreciated if some more volunteers came forward. We are grateful for the ongoing support of the group leaders, without whom the activities would not take place, and we are always looking for ideas for new groups. Enquiries for new membership should be directed to the Membership Secretary Peter Davies on 880401.

Gerry Dobson



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COUNTRY EYE



by Brian Webster



Climate Change Talks end in Disaster – Obama's fake 'deal.' This is my take on the outcome of December's talks. Even better, one delegate leaving the meeting said 'It's like the last hours of the 'Titanic' in there; everyone running round shooting each other and stealing their money.' So Big Business and Big Government triumph again.

Well, not quite. It means we go back to the main plan – change will be down to you and I. Already across the globe there are millions of us beginning to realise that this is the case. When enough of us begin making real changes in our own lives the powers that be will eventually have to wake up to what's going on. Then we may begin to see real shifts in policy. It's about time the tail stopped wagging the dog! Literally time is short and the water rises.

Meanwhile what has been happening in the real world, the one just outside the living room window? The recent spell of severe weather has certainly brought more hungry birds into my garden, spilling over from the surrounding fields and hedgerows, where the ice and snow locked their food away from them for days on end. Doubtless thousands locally will have died, but we will have to wait until the dedicated volunteers who take part in the various schemes organised by the British Trust for Ornithology among others have produced the hard figures. The Garden BirdWatch survey will be prominent among them. Because I put the 'wrong' kind of seeds out for them, goldfinches are not common visitors to my garden. Yet I have for several days seen one inspecting the feeders holding whole black sunflowers seeds, and I believe helping himself to them. A great spotted woodpecker turned up from the big garden across the way, and spent some time on the trunk of the lime tree, watching the smaller birds and wondering what was in it for him. Eventually

he decided that the plain fare was not to his liking and flew off with distinctive deeply undulating flight in search of pastures new.

I have had many reports of redwings and fieldfares, winter visitors from Scandinavia, in gardens, especially those with berries or fallen fruit in them. These beautiful thrushes are a treat to see. Normally they spend their time in our fields and surrounding hedgerows, but the hard weather has driven them to look elsewhere for a meal.

Two birds, which have most likely fared badly over recent weeks, are the goldcrest and the wren. Both among our tiniest birds, they need an enormous amount of food to get by. Both need to use every waking moment questing for something to eat. Indeed the wren needs to eat its own weight of food every other day just to get through the long cold nights. In the worst winters, like 1963, it was estimated that well over ninety percent of wrens perished. Yet by 1966 they had bounced back to their former numbers. This

is because living and raising young is easier after such disasters due to less competition.

So each pair is able to raise more young to build up the numbers. Incidentally some experts tell us that in a normal year the wren is our commonest bird. But thanks to its small size and skulking habits, it is not often seen.

As I write, at the end of January, the grass is greening up nicely, and the days are getting noticeably longer. Even the sun, when it appears, has a little warmth in it. Before we know, the first flowers of spring will appear. The fragile-looking snowdrops will nod their snow-white heads in hedgerow and garden, the crocuses will seek to attract early bees with their offering of pollen, whilst the daffodils will proclaim that spring is truly on the way. Look out in February for the buds beginning to expand on the trees, especially the willows that glow in the wan sunshine, either bright yellow-green or orange according to the species. By the time you read this, life will be bursting to get on with it out there.



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GYMNASTIC CLUB



The Northampton Boys Gymnastics Club has a membership of over a hundred boys with nearly half of them living in Brixworth and the surrounding villages. At Christmas we had a large raffle and a display for the parents which raised money for new equipment.

We would like to thank Daisy Roots, Kelmars Hall, Overstone Golf Club, Brampton Heath Golf Club, Esporta and Northampton Football Club for their continued support and kind donations to the Christmas Raffle.

Our thanks go to Waitrose and their customers for collecting green tokens which raised £250.00 for the Club's funds.

We will always welcome new boys to the club. For details please call Karen Rate (Head Coach) on 07811120965

The competition season has started and we have a number of talented youngsters competing in the London Open, Regional Trials and with luck the Nationals.

Alison Cox

BRIXWORTH W.I.

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DRAUGHTON NEWS



on Monday 15th at 7.30 and the speaker will be Stephen Ashpole who, many of you will remember, was our guide at Ryton Organic Gardens. Anyone is welcome to come.

We are pleased to be able to report that the students from Moulton College have started the pollarding of the lime trees in the churchyard. We thank Moulton College very much for the work they are doing for the village.

All the renovations on the Club Room are complete and the room is available for hire. Bookings can be made by calling Anne Hickey 01604 686200. Cost per hour - £5.00.

We have survived the snow in January. It was hard for the folks who had to get out for work as the roads were very treacherous. We, being 'slightly' older, did not have to go out and our car was in the garage for more than a week. We were well stocked up and have good neighbours who brought us milk etc.

The one thing about the snow, it covers all the gardens and makes them all beautiful, but we were all pleased to see it go. *Anne Block*

I mentioned in my last report that there was to be a Christmas Fayre in the church. I am pleased to say that it was a great success and raised £1200.00 for much needed church funds. Thanks to all who worked so hard cooking and making all sorts of wonderful things to sell. Next year's event is planned for 4th December 2010.

The Garden Group has started up again and had a very enjoyable quiz and fish & chip supper in The Club Room for their first meeting in December. The March meeting is



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THEATRE VISITS AROUND THE COUNTRY

A slave to a habit: that's how my dictionary defines an addict. So be it – I hereby confess to addiction, though not to drugs nor to tobacco nor even to alcohol. The habit to which I cling is the theatre and as far as I know, the only damage it does is to my wallet. Like all habitués, I want to persuade others (that's you!) that this indulgence is most enjoyable, that Brixworth is an ideal location from which to feed the habit and that it needn't make you bankrupt.

First, there's Northampton's Royal Theatre only a stone's throw from Brixworth. Their artistic director, Laurie Sansom, is putting on some really imaginative productions: only recently he directed an Alan Ayckbourn play where the actors shared the stage with the audience who in effect became almost a part of the action. More recently he directed a couple of early plays by American playwrights, Eugene O'Neill & Tennessee Williams, the latter a European premiere.

Then there's Stratford-upon-Avon, only one hour's drive away with plenty of parking and excellent concessionary tickets for pensioners. For keen shoppers, there's also a branch of Lakeland!

But London has the most to offer though, if you want to remain solvent, you need to know some fundamental dodges. First, remember that the West End theatres are EXPENSIVE. They have no subsidies and unless you are very well heeled, an occasional visit to a musical or a play with famous TV stars is all you can permit yourself. But there are theatres, and they're the ones who mostly put on the best plays where, thanks to subsidies, the prices are most reasonable and don't require you to have a banker's bonus though it does help mightily if you are a pensioner. The theatres I visit most frequently, the

National Theatre on the South Bank, the Donmar Warehouse in Covent Garden and the Almeida in Islington all offer inexpensive matinee tickets for so-called Senior Citizens. And I am not talking about perching up in the gods: these are all for the best seats in the house. For example, mid-week matinees at the National Theatre cost as little as £22 or even £10 for the Travelex sponsored seats, Donmar mid-week matinees are only £12 and Saturday matinees at The Almeida, £15.

If you are a pensioner, travelling can be a reasonable matter too. Buy an annual Rail Card for £26 and you become entitled to ? off most standard rail fares, making a day return ticket from Northampton to Euston only £15.10; four trips to London in one year and you're in profit! (But beware: since January, London Midland have imposed a weekday restriction that means cheap day returns are not available for use on trains leaving Euston between 16.45 and 18.45 p.m. Oh, and don't bother to buy a ticket entitling you to use the tube: that costs another £3.50. Make sure, instead, that you have your Bus Pass (available from Daventry District Council free of charge) and you can wave it nonchalantly at the driver of any London bus and travel on it for nothing. One final tip: the car parks on Northampton station charge an outrageous £7 for a day ticket. Park instead in the nearby Chalk Lane car park for £5 per day; it's only three minutes walk to the station.

I look forward to seeing you at the National Theatre or in The Donmar some midweek afternoon or for a Saturday matinee in the Almeida, but remember: the habit can become addictive: I went to the theatre thirty-seven times in 2009!

George Hammerschmidt



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**LOCAL CHARITY
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Did you know that there is a local charity with funds available to persons aged up to 25 years and resident within the parishes of Brixworth and Scaldwell?

Cash grants are available to any qualifying person for use for educational purposes. Grants have been made to assist in the purchase of school uniform, books, course materials, musical instruments and computer equipment. The grants could go towards the costs of travelling expenses linked to an educational venture including school trips.

Any person who wishes to apply should either pick up an application form from the Library or the Information Centre at Spratton Road, Brixworth. Alternatively ring the Clerk to the Trustees, Ursula Morris on 01604 505554.

Meetings of the Trustees are held twice yearly to consider applications. **The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 19th March 2010.**

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Wednesday 21
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MAY

Friday 7
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Tuesday 11
'Silver and the Country House'

Saturday 15
Animals in Pastels

Tuesday 18
5th Annual Lampport Lecture

Bank Holiday 29/30/31
The Festival of Country Life

POLICE QUARTERLY REPORT

Sergeant Mike Grady returns to Brixworth



A local 16 year old male youth is on bail in relation to theft of a motorcycle and another 14 year old local male is about to be interviewed over 2 counts of damage to flowerpots on the Ashway.

We continue to listen to what concerns you and have been conducting a 'street a week', the latest being in Froxhill Crescent. The information from this survey was used to agree the current priority for the area of speeding on Froxhill Crescent and of motorcycle nuisance across the area. We will be conducting some speed enforcement and will target any irresponsible use of motorcycles particularly those with extra loud exhausts.

Later this year PCSO Hillery is to work with the Brixworth school children on a Junior Road Safety Officer initiative. The intention will be to improve responsible parking in the vicinity of the school.

If anyone would be interested in joining the community panel working with us to tackle the issues that matter to you please give me a call on 01604 883743.

Please report incidents on 03000 111 222 and an emergency to 999. You can contact us directly via the force web site or email SCTDaventryRuralNorth@northants.police.uk. Should you wish to pass information about crime anonymously please call 0800 555 111. Your call will be treated in the strictest confidence.

On 18th January 2010, after 13 months in a Temporary Inspector role in Northampton, I returned to the area taking over from Sergeant Jacqui Harris who has gone to the Crown Prosecution service on secondment. I am pleased to return to my old team, an area and community I know well and I am looking forward to working together to improve your community.

Since the last report there has been another change to the team and PC Claire Salmon has progressed to the Force Wildlife liaison officer role and we now have 2 student officers working from the office PC Tom Cottle and PC Richard Markham. These officers will move on in March so I am working to find a permanent replacement for Claire.

Since October 09 the Force has a new Chief Constable too in Adrian Lee who comes on promotion from Staffordshire. Mr Lee is bringing change and fresh ideas to the force and one of his key campaigns is Operation Guardian that focuses the force, on burglary, auto crime, and robbery. There is a significant amount of work being carried out in relation to reducing these crimes and each month there will be days where all staff are directly involved in tackling and preventing these crimes, executing warrants, arresting suspects, and bringing offences to justice. Operation Guardian delivers a very simple message of crime prevention – ironically I returned to the area and on the first day found property had been taken from cars and homes which were insecure, and both had property left on display for that opportunist thief. Should anyone wish to check out the latest crime prevention advice please visit our website www.northants.police.uk or speak to an officer.

Year to date Brixworth is seeing 16 additional crimes; the increase appears to be in shed and garage breaks and simple theft. Making these outbuildings as secure as possible is the best deterrent, fitting a simple alarm, securing and marking valuable property helps too.

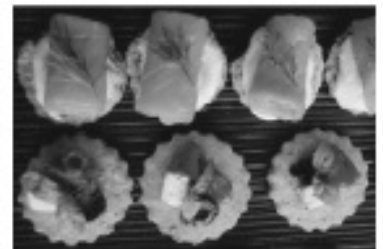
A local 20-year-old female was released from prison in April on probation; she breached her conditions and was recalled to complete her sentence in November.

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THE BRIXWORTH LIONS

The Brixworth Lions want to make an announcement to say sorry to everybody because the Santa Sleigh was unable to make the normal visits to Brixworth and surrounding villages last Christmas due to bad weather. Whilst we know that Santa is a very clever man and can get around in all sorts of weather, his Little Helpers were all feeling tired and unwell and not up to facing the freezing cold weather especially when they already had so much to get ready for Christmas Eve.

Eileen Truby

Evening Helper needed in Kingsthorpe (near Queen Adelaide Pub) to help with evening routine for an independent intelligent disabled woman. Occasional help is required at 10.30pm for half an hour. (£7). Please telephone Kate on 01604 718481 if you are interested in doing just one or two nights per week. References will be requested and interviews will take place to check mutual suitability.

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There will be a Brixworth Old School Reunion on Saturday 13th March 2010 in the Village Hall at Brixworth.

Tickets are £10 per person which includes a finger buffet and a glass of wine on arrival. Partners are welcome.

There will be a raffle in aid of Macmillan nurses.

For more information, please telephone Joan Shelton (nee Eldred)



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

Want to do something different? Want to raise money where you live or work? Want to eat fish and chips, while raising money for charity? Hold a fish and chip supper on Friday 21st May 2010 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. By inviting 7 friends and asking them to donate an additional £5.00 means you will raise at least £35.00 from your supper, but we will also give you additional fundraising ideas to raise even more money for SIA.

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 by providing services and publications which enable and encourage paralysed people to lead independent lives.

Every year in the UK over 1,000 people experience a spinal cord injury and there are an estimated 40,000 spinal cord injured people in the UK alone.

For more information or request a fundraising pack, call Elizabeth Wright on 0845 678 6633 xtn 229 or e-mail fishandchips@spinal.co.uk or visit www.spinal.co.uk.

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Brixworth Osteopathic Clinic opened in 2000 and supports three Osteopaths, offering a total of 20 years experience. Cranial Osteopathy is available at the clinic and is a particularly effective form of treatment for babies who have difficulty feeding, sleeping or who may be suffering with colic.

Initial consultations cost £42 and follow up appointments cost £38. Patients typically achieve 90% relief of symptoms within 3-5 sessions. We receive many patients through GP referral and as members of the General Osteopathic Council, we are accepted by all major insurance companies. For further professional advice, or to make an appointment, please contact us at the above number. Our telephone is answered between 8.30am and 6pm every weekday.

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KPD hopes to be starting a new service in the near future which will be a **Shared Schedule Bus Service**. The service will provide six services into Northampton and four services returning to Brixworth on a daily basis. They intend to use their 8 seater minibus for the service and seats can be booked in advance. KPD hopes to obtain their licence approval in February.

Police State?

Black bin waste helps councils find greener future for Milton Keynes and Northamptonshire

A study to analyse random samples of household rubbish thrown out between January and March this year is being carried out by Project Reduce, a joint venture between Milton Keynes Council and Northamptonshire County Council, so that better decisions can be made on how to manage our waste in the future.

The councils are working together to find alternative ways of treating and disposing of the black bag waste that currently ends up in landfill. They are looking for a partner from the waste industry to help design, build and manage new facilities offering cleaner, greener ways to deal with the waste by 2014. The Project is supported by the government, which has already pledged £138 million of Private Finance Initiative (PFI) funding.

The councils have commissioned the research to examine the contents of a small number of bins more closely to see if there are any recyclables still left in the waste system. This will give useful information that can be used for the development of more sustainable ways of dealing with residual waste. The study will also look at the litter in street bins, at household waste recycling centres and at commercial waste.

The first part of this survey took place at the end of last year. The second and final stage of the research is due to take place at the beginning of 2010, with full results not expected until the spring.

Cabinet member at Northamptonshire County Council and Chair of the Joint Waste Disposal Committee, Councillor Heather Smith, said: "Thanks to the continued efforts of residents, nearly 50% of household waste was recycled and composted across both Milton Keynes and Northamptonshire in 2009, exceeding national targets. But it is the rubbish that is left – the

residual waste – which is being addressed by Project Reduce. We need to find more sustainable ways of dealing with it so we can move away from our reliance on landfill. This survey is not designed to catch people out. In fact it is the opposite. We want a true picture of what is being thrown away so we can work out a future solution that is right for our residents."

Black bin bags will be taken from a small number of random properties in each of the council areas by specialists from the company Resource Futures. They will work separately from the usual bin collection services but are acting on behalf of the local authorities as their agents. Their vehicles should carry the logo of the local authority.

The waste collected is not specifically linked to a household and all the results will remain anonymous and confidential. Once the study is completed, the waste is disposed of through the usual channels.

For more information on Project Reduce, go to www.projectreduce.co.uk or email jointwasteproject@milton-keynes.gov.uk or call 0845 2011222.

The above press release was issued on the 15th January to some local media outlets but not to the Bulletin. On the 25th January, 3 people in yellow jackets were observed to be looking through 5 black bins placed outside for collection in the Harborough Road and removing items and placing them in separate bags. They were challenged by our neighbour and informed that they had permission to carry out this inspection. They took away the separate bags in an unmarked vehicle. We were concerned about identity theft and I telephoned D.D.C. and was given the above 0845 number. I tried several times to get an answer and subsequently found that the number was unmanned for several days. I was sent the press release on the 2nd February following an appeal to D.D.C. The 0845 number is now operational. Harvey Fox

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Bulletin

Working in the finance industry, I know just how curious people are nowadays about money – where it comes from and where it goes. The Parish Council welcomes such interest in our accounts too and I understand the Bulletin has received comments and enquiries about our finances. All our books are open to the public when audited and anyone is welcome to attend our meetings to ask questions or add comments, and some do!

Your Parish Council has an enviable record in recent years in setting the Precept – what people in the village pay for our services. Last year we actually reduced the amount we asked for in your Council Tax, whilst not cutting jobs nor services. This coming year's provisional figure will only increase by a few pence a month for the average household.

Like any well-run business (in effect we are a business) we need reserves for a "rainy day" to tide us over in case of the unexpected. Unlike a bank we cannot sell more shares to give us more money if we run out! Neither can we knock on your door and ask you for more money half way through the year. I know what the reply might be, and I wouldn't blame you!

By law we have to pay to have our books looked at carefully by an independent auditor once a year and he is thorough. It is to the credit especially of Mrs Jane Macken, our clerk, and Cllr Richard Monk, Chair of Finance, that we come through the annual checks so well. However, the auditor has remarked more than once that we have been running our reserves at a level which is too low for a Parish Council of this size. Your Parish Council has a precept (annual bill) of almost £100,000. The auditor says we should have an amount equal to 45-50% of our precept as reserves. We have around £57,000 in general reserves, slightly over this amount, so we have agreed to pay an unexpected Council Tax bill for our share of the Library/ Community Centre using some money from reserves.

We have also decided to invest up to £10,000 from general reserves for the proposed BMX/Skateboard project. This will bring our reserves to around the £45,000 level the auditor asked for.

As a community we are fortunate to have some other money in reserve but this can't be used for other purposes. These are called Restricted Funds, and typically, are given to the village by builders to pay for the on-going upkeep of features they added as part of their development. The Pocket park and Ashway are two of these areas with what we call Section 106 money locked up except for use in that area. This money is given to last us a fixed period – say 10 years – then the village takes over the full cost of maintaining

these areas. We have £48,000 in these Restricted Funds and are gradually using them year by year.

Finally, we have earmarked reserves of around £10,000. This is our saving up for replacement of machinery and vehicles, otherwise paying for the replacement of any one of these would be too expensive in one year.

As a Parish Council our aim is to keep your annual bill to a minimum. We ask for just over a pound a week from the average household. If, heaven forbid, we do get some large unexpected expenditure, then we know we have a safe level of reserves to protect us.

I hope you all find this interesting and informative and I have been able to explain the reassurance and security we can feel as a community from us having a well balanced budget and a safe level of reserves.

Ian Barratt Chairman Brixworth P.C.

We would like to thank all concerned for the hard work that goes into the up-keep of Brixworth churchyard.

Our family visit the churchyard every day. It is a lovely place to visit at all times of the year.

We take photographs to send to our family in the U.S.A. and last year we were able to prove we do get snow!!

Thank you again.

Betty Alcock & Family

Dear Sir

I have lived in and around Brixworth all my life including two years living next to the wood yard in Creton Road.

I feel that the redevelopment of the wood yard site would be a good thing for our village. The site looks unloved and unsafe and the change of use would bring jobs to the area. In addition the re-development would look better than the falling down mess that the site is in now.

When I lived next to the yard in the 1990's, there were large lorries and vehicles coming and going, the noise from the machinery and a horn to tell the workers when to stop and start work. The site was built as a work place, so I think it is a good thing that it will be used again.

Marie Dunham

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Interview with National actors living in Brixworth

Paul and Paula



'In the world there must be of all sorts' said Don Quixote and surely what's true for the world must be so for a village. Butcher and baker have been among us in Brixworth for ages; candlestick maker is perhaps less certain in these electric days. Now, however, we can boast the addition to our number of a pair of professional actors. Three years ago Paul & Paula Matthews moved here from Aston-Le-Walls, itself a staging post from Richmond in Surrey. They had at first chosen a house in Blisworth but over that Christmas the purchase turned sour and, with only a minor adjustment in spelling, Blisworth's loss became Brixworth's gain and the Matthews alighted in the old part of our village.

You might well be thinking "Matthews on stage, screen or TV? Doesn't ring a bell with me". That's because in the same house are living Paul Shelley and Paula Stockbridge which brings to mind Bernard Miles' classic monologue "The Low Down on Hamlet" in which he talks of "Rose and Krantz and Guild and Stern – only two people, mind". So why the apparent confusion? No one will be surprised that Paula, despite being married, is still using the name she was given when she was born in High Wycombe. It's the name she had when she started acting and, in common with all actresses, she's kept it that way. Paul (born in Leeds and brought up in York) adopted his professional name Paul Shelley because Equity, the actors' union, already had a member called Paul Matthews and using someone else's previously registered name is not allowed under Equity rules. (So if you're thinking of taking up acting, don't bother changing your name to David Tennant – it's not available!)

Paul and Paula, who are both RADA (Royal Academy of Dramatic Art) graduates, first met in 1991 at a casting audition for a Royal Shakespeare Company touring production of that very wicked and well named Christopher Hampton play, *Les*

Liaisons Dangereuses. Paul had already been cast as Vicomte de Valmont and was present at the audition to read in with the actresses who were auditioning for Presidente Tourvel. Fortunately for romance and for this article, Paula got the part and they were to spend from September 1991 to May 1992 on stage together. Paul claims that they really got to know each other over the snooker table: "how else do you pass the time on wet afternoons in provincial towns for eight months?" Paul added that Brixworth badly needs a snooker club!

In 2003 (York Theatre Royal) they played together once more in Noel Coward's brilliantly witty *Private Lives* with Paula playing Amanda and Paul playing Elyot, a divorced couple who have remarried and now meet again across the balconies of adjoining rooms where they are respectively honeymooning with their new spouses!

Both have enjoyed rich and varied careers on stage and on TV (where you may well have seen Paula in episodes of *Doctors*, *The Bill*, *Silent Witness*, etc). Among her many theatre appearances you may have seen her in Pinter's *Betrayal*, directed by Rupert Goold at Northampton Theatre Royal in 2002. Paul's theatre work includes many productions in the West End, the National Theatre, the RSC, the Globe and the provinces; he has also worked in film, including *Oh What a Lovely War* and, most recently, as Duncan in Rupert Goold's production of *Macbeth*, a filmed version (not yet released) of the highly acclaimed Chichester stage production starring Patrick Stewart as Macbeth.

But acting is a hard life and much time and energy has to be expended in chasing parts and competing in a greatly overcrowded marketplace. It is particularly hard for women: Paula says that out of the eight women who graduated from RADA in her year, two have never worked (i.e. acted) and only three of the eight are still working. When asked why on earth anyone would want to take up such a frustrating and fragile career, Paula said "I have often stood in the wings during a production, watching the action on stage and said to myself - this is the best place in the world".

George Hammerschmidt

Lollipop Person for Northampton Rd.

We reported in the September 2009 issue of the Bulletin that the offer made to an applicant for a school crossing patroller has not been taken up. The vacancy will not be re-advertised as there has been little response over a period of two years. The new crossing appears to be working well and does not appear to need a patroller.

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DRAMA GROUP'S WINTER PANTOMIME

GOLDDILOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS written and directed by JAMES SKEGGS



In his preview published in the December edition of the Brixworth Bulletin James said this production would offer 'Traditional elements of a pantomime with plenty of opportunities for booing and cheering, loads of audience participation, a smattering of songs and buckets of corny old jokes with a handful of corny new ones'. If you add to this a little slapstick, several dance routines, some wonderfully outrageous costumes and high class speciality acts you have all the ingredients needed for a great show. James and the whole company rose to the challenge magnificently and provided the packed audience at the matinee performance I came to with all of this and much, much more.

In the programme James told his audience 'I've been able to take certain liberties with the story of Goldilocks' – he certainly did this with great effect using characters like Tommy Tucker (Jacob Leach), Simple Simon (Isaac Leach), Tom Thumb (Ben Leach) and Post Girl (Lydia Howley) to entertain the audience before and during the show. His imaginative writing and direction was backed up by an excellent cast that provided numerous opportunities for audience participation. Too many of today's adaptations of traditional pantomimes seem to forget that the audience, particularly the children, want to 'join in'. My grandson, Marcus and Gertie's (Dennis Coles) three grandchildren, Mia, Hayden & Talia all sitting on the front row, some of the time, jumping up with excitement, most of the time, were as exhausted at the end of the show as the cast must have been.

Classic funnies from Gertie gave the adults a chance for a few quiet chuckles – who will ever forget her little gems like 'The guy who wanted to rule the world.....Attila the bun!'

or 'I can't stop singing "Delilah" Is that Common? Well, it's not unusual!' or 'Will you still love me when I'm old and grey? Of course I do!' - Bum – Bum!!

And what about the 'wicked' Herr Heinkel Schmeinkel (Mike Culverhouse)? – he got me into big trouble with my six year old grandson because he was the show's bad guy and I clapped one of his 'songs'. I think the way he encouraged and handled the barrage of hissing and booing directed at him every time he was on stage was brilliant.

Special mention also for Technical

Director/Lighting Design and Stage Manager Mark Sharman and his crew along with Musicians Andy Bransby and Dave Wareing for their valuable contributions throughout the show.

A final thank you to members of the cast who made themselves available at the end of the pantomime for photo opportunities with the children, I'm sure they and their parents really appreciated this thoughtful gesture.

Unfortunately the limited space I have for this review prevents me from making individual comments on all 55 members of the cast and production team. Thankfully I do have enough room to say, 'Well done also to Alec, Amanda, Ben, Bev, Bobbie, Brian, Carol, Caroline, Christie, Daniel, Darren, David, Eileen, Elaine, Eunice, Heather, Helen, Hilary, Irene, James, Jean, John, Jon, Karen, Kyra, Libby, Linda, Mary, Michael (age 4 years, 2 months), Nikki, Robin, Rod, Roger, Ruth, Stuart, Sue, Sue, Suzanne, Tim, Tina, Tom, Tony & William you were all great I'm already looking forward to making the 50 mile round trip next year to see you all in 'The Queen of Hearts'.

John Dawkins

I'd love to know how Gertie explained to his grandchildren why he was on stage wearing a dress!!

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HANGING HOUGHTON AND LAMPORT NEWS

As we have got used to the fairly mild winters of recent years it was rather different to have a period of snow.

The papers and news media fed us with articles which almost suggested that it was the end of civilisation as we know it.

However, it was a time to see our surrounding countryside from a different perspective.

There was a real feeling of a Christmas card picture looking out over the valley from Hanging Houghton towards the Nene Valley Way.

Alternatively, a walk round the back of Lamport Hall parkland lead one through fields in which sheep merged into their background and showed great interest in any walker who they thought might signal the bringing of food!

Whilst it is premature to suggest that snow and bad weather have gone for the winter, we are now seeing the harbingers of spring in the village as snowdrops have started to flower and daffodil shoots are appearing.

Spring is on its way!

Welcome to Tim and Linda Taylor and Paul and Sue Chamberlain who are new residents in Hanging Houghton.

David Ward

Keith Wilson 1919-2009



Keith was born in Northampton on 9th April 1919. At the age of seventeen he joined the RAF, serving as a Leading Aircraftman. Keith worked on Spitfires and Lancaster Bombers during the Second World War and he served in Belgium, Holland and France.

Keith met his wife Patricia in her home town of Bridlington. Later they moved to Hull where during the war their home was bombed. They then moved to Northampton to be with Keith's family, where they both settled down to bring up their young family. They later moved to Brixworth where Keith lived for 62 years of his life taking part in village life. Keith was very keen on football and in his younger days he played for Brixworth Football Club.

Keith also enjoyed spending Saturday evenings at the Red Lion where he and a group of friends would congregate to enjoy singing and dancing accompanied by Mr Boon, the Church Organist

A good friend to many, Keith leaves three children, 4 grandchildren and seven grandchildren.

Sue Verallo

BEFRIENDING SCHEME ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



Alzheimer's Society is the UK's leading support services and research charity for people with dementia and those who care for them.

There are 700,000 people with dementia in the UK with numbers set to rise to one million by 2025.

Alzheimer's Society works to improve the quality of life of people affected by dementia in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

How does a befriending service help?

When a person is diagnosed with dementia, it is likely to have an impact on some of their abilities but there will still be lots that the person can enjoy doing, both individually and with others.

Maintaining existing skill and interests, as far as possible, can give the person pleasure and boost their confidence. For this reason, it is important to help them find activities that they enjoy doing, and to continually adapt them to meet the person's changing interests and needs, throughout the illness.

There are many activities and interests that people with dementia can do. Therefore volunteers can help by sharing their own interests. Keeping occupied and stimulated can improve quality of life for the person with dementia as well as those around them.

The success of our Befriending Scheme is down to our team of volunteers and staff working in partnership. The commitment and passion of our volunteers mean that people with dementia can be supported in accessing their community or pursuing a hobby or interest for as long as possible.

We would be delighted to hear from you if you would like to volunteer your time and make a real difference to people affected by dementia in Northamptonshire.

If you could offer a couple of hours on a regular basis, we would love to hear from you. For more information please contact: Wendy Homan, Befriending Manager, Alzheimer's Society Northamptonshire, Unit 5B, Cottage Farm, Sywell, Northants, NN6 0BJ
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Gardening Notes by Catherine Hole



Daffodils, snowdrops, hellebores, and aconites are now flowering in borders; a cheerful sign after such a truly old-fashioned British severe winter with lots of snow. This is the optimum time once flowering has finished that snowdrops can be lifted, divided and moved elsewhere. Terminology for this procedure is 'planting in the green' whilst still plump and healthy.

Hedges, shrubs, roses and trees can now be planted whilst the soil is warming up yet still moist, adding compost and a handful of bonemeal to the planting hole to encourage a good start.

Last September the first 'Flower and Produce Show' in Brixworth for 40 years was a great success. Preparations for this years produce should now be underway. The vegetable growing season begins with sowing

broad beans, leeks, parsnip and onion seed in March; carrots a little later in April. The winter digging will have enabled the frost to penetrate, so breaking the clods of soil down. Just prior to sowing seed the soil should be raked to a fine tilth.

It is not too late to 'chit' potatoes, this means to encourage early shoots by placing them in boxes or trays in a frost proof, light, cool, airy place. Good Friday is the traditionally recognised date to start planting them out, but delay for up to a fortnight if the soil is too wet or cold.

In mid-April marrow and pumpkin may be started into growth 1 seed per 7cm pot in a greenhouse or on a windowsill. After 5-6 weeks, once the danger of any frost has passed the plants will be of a good size to plant out at least 1-2 metres apart on raised mounds of richly manured or composted soil. To aid watering, a flowerpot inserted in the soil next to the plant easily directs water to the roots. A weekly feed of liquid manure will produce larger vegetables. Courgettes are grown in the same way but picked once they are 10cm long.

In spring, nurseries and garden centres display their array of seeds conjuring up images of flower filled borders. Often a border is a patchwork of many different colours which can appear rather gaudy. A single or bi-colour theme with different shades, shapes, forms and heights is more pleasing to the eye. By placing an occasional plant of different colour or texture amongst them creates a point of interest

; using for example sunflower, evening primrose or the giant thistle - 'onopordon'. Taller plants should be located towards the back of the area graduating to shorter ones at the front. Nigella, echium, felicia, flax, lobelia, and salvia are all annuals in blue shades. In conjunction hardy plants such as Nepeta, which bees love, is an attractive edging to a path. This plant should have it's blooms cut off once they have gone over as it will then flower again. Lavender is a wonderful plant to attract bees and insects and smells lovely. These plants all require a sunny position. Alternatively a white border can be attractive - cosmos, nicotiana, marguerite, lobelia, busy lizzie. For a contrast a hot coloured area would include a selection of sunflowers, marigolds and nasturtiums. Shady areas need not be a problem as the 'hardy' variety of geranium is ideal, of which there are many colours from which to choose. These are bought as plants rather than seed, and are easily divided at the end of summer or in spring to increase your display. Many different plants can be treated in this way and it is a valuable practise to increase the number of your plants for your own use and for your friends.

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PLANNING STATUS REPORT

REFERENCE NO. & DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	P.C. RECOMMENDATION & DDC DECISION
DA/2007/1400 Buckton Fields. Boughton. Residential development consisting of approx. 1250 dwellings.	PC 29/1 Traffic increase objections. Now amended but still PC concerns.
DA/2009/0776 5 Shelleycotes. Detached double garage at front of building.	PC 2/11 No objection. D.D.C. Approved
DA/2009/0790 Beech Hill 25 Church Street. Single storey detached annexe.	PC 2/11 No objection. D.D.C. Approved
DA/2009/0840 11 Broad Street. Single storey extension to rear.	P.C. 23/11 No objection. DD.C. Approved.
DA/2009/0983 132 Northampton Road. Change of use from A2 (Estate Agency) to A5 (Fast Food Takeaway)	P.C.25/1 Many objections
DA/2010/ 11 Eaglehurst. Conversion of garage to family room	P.C. 25/1 No objection.
DA/2010/0032 Park View 35 Lesson Rd. Conversion of garage to bedroom.	P.C. 25/1 No objection.
DA/2010/0027 Barn at South Lodge, Park Farm, Spratton Road. Conversion of agricultural building to B1 USE (Offices)	P.C. 25/1 Objection on grounds of inappropriate location.

GENESIS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

For over two years, we have been reporting the progress of the housing development on the ex-Rigiflex site. Projected completion dates have slipped due to the problems of the financial situation which has been keenly felt by the building trade. The latest estimate is that the units will be completed by the end of February 2010. Of the shared ownership units, there will be three 3 bedroom and two 2 bedroom houses, plus four 2 bedroom and six 1 bedroom flats. With regard to rental accommodation, there will be seven 3 bedroom and three 4 bedroom houses, plus six 2 bedroom and three 3 bedroom flats.

Sarah McCarthy of Genesis Housing Development told the Bulletin that prices for the shared ownership would not be set until the beginning of April. The rental charges would be in line with target rates for the local authority.

Bridget Jones



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BRIXWORTH CENTRE STILL IN DANGER OF CLOSING

As advertised in the last issue of the Bulletin, there still remains a vacancy for a Chairperson. Steve James told the Bulletin that the statement given last time still could happen i.e. if no one agrees to fill the vacancy, the Trustees will have no option but to suspend activities of the Brixworth Centre. Anyone who may be interested in this vacancy should contact Steve James (Trustee) on 01604 880054, stephenjames@tiscali.co.uk or Julie Thorpe (Treasurer) on 01604 881410 thorpejulie@hotmail.com

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at Brixworth Churchyard
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£1.00 per child.

Every child will receive an Easter Egg
Raffle/ Children's Crafts/ Refreshments.
All welcome for a fun afternoon

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Michael Schumacher, seven times F1 motor racing world champion visited Mercedes HPE at Brixworth in mid January. He has been retained by the new team Mercedes GP Petronas (formerly Brawn GP team who last year won the F1 Constructors championship with Jenson Button as world champion) to drive the 2010 version of Ross Brawn's F1 car with Nico Rosberg as his new German team-mate. He toured the facilities at Brixworth and was very impressed with the factory and

employees. Despite his age, now 41, he is confident that he and the team will do well in the forthcoming championship. It was the white car that was successful last year, but Schumacher and his long-time friend Ross Brawn hope that the silver cars will be the winners in this current year. No doubt Lewis Hamilton and his team-mate Jenson Button, both world champions, at McLaren have other ideas. They are all racing with the same make of engine.

Harvey Fox

BRIXWORTH ALL SAINTS FOOTBALL CLUB

The weather has played havoc with fixtures and will result in numerous evening games towards the end of the season.

The first team is currently sitting around fifth in the league and is playing good football. The reserves are presently in second position with games in hand over the leading team. Both managers are doing a great job and the club is heading in the right direction.

Boxing day was a great success once again. The veterans showed the youngsters that quality, class and experience sometimes outweigh energy with naivety. The old boys taught the kids a lesson on the park with a convincing victory. Later in the day the fund raising began with players fines, raffle and pig-racing, of which a £100 donation was put towards the Help the Heroes campaign.

Dog fouling of St David's recreation park is becoming a huge problem. Owners caught not removing dog mess will be named and shamed. We are still looking for additional members to assist in duties such as match-day nets, line marking, assistant referees, fund raising and general support for next season. Look out for posters for fund raising events in the near future. Training is on Wednesday evenings starting at 6.30pm (unless we have a game). All are welcome. I would like to thank all involved for their exceptional efforts this season and if you would like to contact me for any reason, my details are below:

Nigel Eldred – chairman BASFC
07812609095 or neldred@hotmail.co.uk

BRIXWORTH GOLF CLUB

Under the captaincy of Alan Cox, 2009 has proved to be another successful golfing year with high numbers playing at each issue.

The January venue and presentation evening had to be cancelled due to weather conditions and the day has been re-arranged for Friday 12th March when the George Clapton Memorial trophy will be played. Guests are welcome to play.

The Tim Mould's jug was won by Steve Marriott and winners of the Cup, played on each day out included Mark Dabell, Colin King and Steve Marriott.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday 11th March 2010 at 8.00pm at the Sportsfield Pavillion, Brixworth, where everyone, new and existing members will be welcome.

Venues for 2010 have been arranged for 23rd April – Overstone, 11th June – Rugby, 13th August – Abbey Hill and 1st October – Kibworth.

Anyone interested in joining, please ring John Wilson on 01604 880490

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