

# Thurlaston Chronicle 2018



**Near Neighbours**

## Contacts

2017/2018

2018/2019

### **Parish Council Thurlaston**

Chair:	Steve Murphy	Steve Murphy
Councillors:	Helen Creery Mary Cook Gary Hartfield	Helen Creery Mary Cook
Parish Clerk	Norman Lines Sylvia Jacques	Norman Lines Sylvia Jacques

### **Borough Council**

Dunsmore Ward

Deepah Roberts  
Howard Roberts  
Carolyn Watson-Merret

### **Warwickshire County Council**

Howard Roberts

### **Member of Parliament**

Kenilworth and Southam  
(includes Thurlaston)

Jeremy Wright MP

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## **Introduction**

Greetings to all our readers in Thurlaston, Warwickshire. And a special welcome to the newcomers since the last issue. I always say you don't just buy a house when moving to Thurlaston – there is a very good chance to buy into a community lifestyle.

Apparently it was Heraclitus, the Greek philosopher, who said: "The only thing that is constant – is change". Centuries down the line, we find that this sentiment is still very real. People leaving the village, newcomers arriving, community projects phasing out, new one starting and, of course, infrastructure developments like the Local Plan. Even the Chronicle has a changed lineup. Sue, Gill and I are pleased to welcome Colin Cook to help with the compositing.

During the past months there has been quite some consternation about developments that might affect our village. I always reflect that this village has, over the past sixty years, had five billion gallons of water deposited in its back yard and a motorway driven through its front garden. And then it was threatened with an airport! Patience, perseverance and persistence pays off in the end I guess.

Enjoy the read and if you would like to see something in next year's issue, please let me know.

**Brian Coleman**

## **Council/Trustee/Community Reports**

### **Thurlaston Parish Council**

Thurlaston Parish Council met every second month last year often accompanied by Cllr Roberts who provides advice and support when called for.

A lot of time has been given to DB Symmetry's proposed distribution park as well as the Rugby Local Plan which is at the moment being examined by the government Inspectorate.

The Village Website is still being worked on by Norman Lines and progressing nicely, more later.

We recently had a couple more 20mph signs installed and some existing ones repositioned. It was thought that the original signs were not in the best positions for motorists to see. Hopefully this is now rectified, though one continues to give cause for concern.

On a positive note, a lot of motorists do adhere to the 20mph limit, which is encouraging. However, there will always be those who think it doesn't apply to them. With ever more children and our more senior members plus horse riders using Main Street and our local lanes, we will continue to monitor traffic speed and try to make improvements where we think necessary.

Parking on Main Street is a subject never far away from residents' concern. Realistically it's not going to improve because people can legally drive into the village and park their cars. We have a very attractive outdoor amenity on our doorstep which is always going to attract visitors - especially at weekends and Bank Holidays. If vehicles are blocking the road something can be done by those affected at the time but if it's just a case that vehicles have to pass slowly and with extra care then that is not an issue for the authorities.

Helen, Mary and Norman handle the planning applications. Parish Councillors give their views on each application based on what we believe is best for Thurlaston as a whole and whether we think the application will enhance our village or detract from it.

As you will all know, the defibrillator was installed last Autumn. The insurance is covered by Parish Council and the Poor Plots have agreed to pay the excess on any claims. The installation of this equipment was a classic example of members of the community coming together and making something happen. It's great when people have that approach to life and get on with it instead of waiting for others to do something. Hopefully more projects will be taken on by villagers that will be of benefit to us all. Last year we were asked to look at village security and Robert Ashford is investigating this.

We recently decided to drop Neighbourhood Watch from the Parish Council agenda, since Brian Spann stepped down from the roll of coordinator. It was thought that the Thurlaston Net was proving the best communication tool for us all to flag up anything suspicious taking place around our homes and local farm buildings. On many occasions word has gone out to lookout for certain vehicles or individuals hanging around the village and in doing so this has become our own Neighbourhood Watch.

I would like to thank my fellow Councillors and the clerk, Sylvia for all their input over the last year. We all have our own duties on the Council Committee and a lot of it has been quite intense with research and correspondence especially with the Rugby Local Plan (RLP).

I think a special mention should go to Norman at this stage. He has spent so many hours studying documents and then putting together some brilliant letters fighting our corner. Whatever the outcome of the dbSymmetry application, we should all be grateful for his input on our behalf.

Colin Reeves contribution, after he was installed as part of a subgroup, was invaluable when working on the RLP. Recognition should also go to Brian Coleman who quietly kept digging at RBC, asking searching questions of their aspirations for this once great engineering town. Norman, Colin and Brian also spent many hours at the Local Plan hearings recently, putting our concerns to the planning inspector.

Sadly, Gary Hartfield recently resigned due to him soon moving home. Gary has been a Parish Councillor for seven years and quite a few of those as Chair. How he managed to juggle family life, run a business and be a Councillor was pretty impressive and I am sure everyone will join me in thanking him for his contribution to village life whilst living here. We wish him, his wife Jo, and the boys all the best when they move to their new home.

The good news is that Selina Larque has come on board ensuring that we operate at full strength. Selina lives on the Coventry Road which for the first time in many years gives representation to those living that end of the village.

Finally, though not Parish Council business, I would like to thank all those who in some way organise groups or events throughout the year.

Your voluntary input is invaluable for keeping social events and traditions alive for our community. We have quite a mixed bag of people living in Thurlaston and when we all come together we have some great times creating a lot of goodwill and enjoyment. Long may it stay that way.

**Steve Murphy**

## **Village Hall Committee Report**

First I would like to thank my fellow Committee members for being so dedicated to improving the village hall and being so supportive of each other. Our committee is strong, proactive and with diverse skills and is committed to raising funds for our hall. I would like to thank all those organisations within the village who work tirelessly to raise funds for the hall. We have no other means of support and depend entirely on funds raised. This year we were lucky to receive a generous donation from the estate of Joyce Baugh, a long-time resident of Thurlaston. For the future, we have some new ideas for events to raise funds for the hall. We will publish these in due course. The village hall, along with the church, is the hub of this community and it is important that we take care of it.

This past year we have made quite a few improvements to the hall beginning with a new heating system and, thanks to Polly Hall, a new small refrigerator. Work on our two storage sheds will keep them going for another few years. The glass display cabinet now has a safety film covering. It was expensive but the glass is now shatterproof. Nic Payton, our booking clerk, has installed an online calendar so that it is easy to check bookings. If anyone wants to know how to access the calendar just contact Nic. His email is on the noticeboard. Nic with others has been working on the new website. The Village Hall will have a dedicated page. The VH now has its own Facebook page and a dedicated email address.

The garden is quite a challenge. We employ George and the Eden family to look after the lawn plus a gardener to keep the hedges under control. Sue Winton and Gill Dakin do a great job with the front garden but we would appreciate help with weeding. Before his illness Eamonn O' Neil made a great difference to the garden. Our thoughts are with the O'Neill family at this sad time.

Sally Wise is drafting a set of policies to cover our statutory and trustee responsibilities including Health and Safety and Data Protection. All Policies are available for residents to inspect. We are also arranging for the legal title of the hall to be registered at the Land Registry.

Lois Back does a great job keeping the hall looking clean and tidy. Tim Back is our 'go to' maintenance advisor and has been a great help to us.

Simon Knowles is our treasurer and keeps our accounts in order. This year we have quite a healthy reserve. If anyone wants to know more, Simon has prepared a treasurer's report. Selina Larque has volunteered to be our new minute secretary and she follows in the footsteps of Vicky Foster who did a great job.

**Mary Cook**

## **Thurlaston Poors Plot Charity**

With a grant of 43 acres of land, the Poors Plot Charity was founded in 1728. The land was divided up so that the poor of the village could grow crops to help support their families. Only a few plots now remain, these are referred to as the “allotments”. The rest of the land is rented to two tenant farmers. Together they provide the charity with its income.

The charity was registered with the charity commission in 1964. Its objectives are: **“To relieve either generally or individually persons resident in the Parish of Thurlaston who are in condition of need, hardship and distress”**

Until recently money was mainly distributed to people of the village for help with winter fuel bills, coal and electricity etc. We are strictly bound to the conditions of the charity but are always looking into ways of using a portion of the income to benefit people in the village. We are also able to give an Educational Grant of £250 towards any young person resident in the village who is going on to further education of any kind. Anyone who wishes to apply for a grant, please send an email to our clerk at [thurlastonpoorsplot@outlook.com](mailto:thurlastonpoorsplot@outlook.com) and she will send you an application form. If you prefer you can contact one of the trustees, all details are available on the village notice board, or can be obtained from the clerk. Please note that all grants and applications for them remain strictly confidential. Currently the Charity has a healthy financial position of £35,145.

## **Dunchurch Boughton Endowed Trust. Trustee Governor’s report**

The Trustee Governors are responsible for administering the trust funds left to the school by a local benefactor, Frances Boughton, after whom the school was named. It has been a difficult year for the school. The Junior School has been without a head for the past 12 months. Until affairs were more settled, the Trust had not been asked to make any donations to the school. Recently Ian Dewes has been made acting head and this seems to, potentially, be a more permanent move. At the last meeting one area that was felt to need urgent improvement was the computer room. It needed redecoration and revamping. The IT hardware was also in need of updating. The school has a fund of £30,000 partly from previous donations and it was agreed that this could be used to contribute towards improving the computer room and hardware.

**Greg Irish**



## **Newcombe and Spier Almshouse Charity – Trustee Report.**

For those who are not aware, the local almshouses are a terrace of six small houses in Dunchurch between the Dun Cow and the Church, opposite the Scott statue and Mops the hairdresser. The charity was founded in 1690 and has run continuously since then. It is for the benefit of Dunchurch and Thurlaston residents and Thurlaston Parish Council appoints one trustee

As with all old buildings last rebuilt in Victorian times there is a constant requirement to repair and refurbish. Last year the problem was with rising damp in two houses, probably brought on by a suspected raising of the water table in Dunchurch. The first house became vacant at the end of 2016 and we were able to get specialist damp proofing and redecoration work done by the spring of 2017 and a new tenant moved in early in May. Work on the second house followed on and the redecoration was completed by the end of June. The cost of this work was about £3,500 for each house.

A third house had an outdated electrical supply system and this was brought up to modern standards at a cost £1500. A fourth house had a complete kitchen refurbishment including the replacement of the old hot water tank system with a direct electrical water heater. This cost £5000. Finally the external woodwork of all six houses was repainted at a cost of £1500. During 2017 expenditure exceeded cash income by some £2000 but this was more than compensated for by an increase of some £10,000 in our long-term investments. The Charity funds remain in good order and enable the trustees to maintain comfortable albeit limited accommodation for the residents.

## **Walter Harvey – Trustee**

### **St Edmunds, Thurlaston**

It is now almost a year since Graham and I arrived in England and it has been a year of learning, fun and challenge. It is a year in which I have learned to call Dunchurch and Thurlaston “home”. I am still glad to be here! Turning to the year for St Edmunds, 38 services were held during 2017, and the average attendance was 16, not taking into account baptism and funeral services.

I know that statistics can prove anything and I am not going to dwell on them here. What concerns me is that the membership of the church appears to be static. We still have only one young family attending church and, when we consider that the average age of the congregation is growing greater by the year, it is worrying to think about what will happen in a few years' time.

Already some of our faithful supporters are wanting to step back and have a bit of a rest. There is no one to take their place. And, though we have broken even financially, the parish is in a precarious position should any major work need to be done. In order to encourage families to attend, the committee and I agreed that for a trial period of six months we would hold two communion services a month and drop evensong, which is the more poorly attended service. The first service of the month would be a family communion, in order to encourage younger members of the village to come. It remains to be seen if this has any effect.

During Lent this year (as with Advent last year) there will be a communion service every Sunday, though some will be said services as we do not have an organist for every week.

Having said all this, I want to pay tribute to the extremely dedicated group who keep St Edmund's going. We couldn't operate without them. A special thanks, however, must go to the village who give so generously of proceeds from the fete. Also, thanks to the villagers who support the coffee mornings and various clubs which utilise the church. The church plays a central role in this village, with the building used by many organisations and I know that many villagers support it materially. However, the church cannot exist if there are no members worshipping and praying. Our valiant churchgoers have supported it for so long, is there no one to take up the baton? If the church has to close because of lack of growth and lack of support, this will be a tragedy not only for the parish, but for the whole community of Thurlaston. I appeal to you, if you have any ideas (and are prepared to support them!), to speak to me or the parish church committee.

This year is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the modern Diocese of Coventry and many events are planned. One of these is to make a 3D map of the diocese in Coventry Cathedral. The idea is that every school and church in the diocese is invited to work together to make a model of their local church. Next June all the churches are brought to the cathedral to make a massive mini diocese. Now St Edmund's doesn't have its own school, so how about the community of Thurlaston getting together and making a model of the church? I would like to add that, as vicar, I see my role as extending beyond those on the parish roll. If anyone in the community is in need, I am always there – no strings attached!

**Rev. Pat Townshend**

## Community Leisure Groups

### Thurlaston Ladies Club

The club has continued to grow in membership and in attendance which is very encouraging. This led us to being able to give £ 1000 to charity at the AGM. We also gave an additional £200 to the Birmingham children's hospital lung transplant ward during the year.

On a sad note, four former members have passed away during the year. Joyce Baugh who had lived in the village nearly all her life and spent her last years in the Warwickshire Nursing Home, will be remembered with great affection. Joan Sullivan, an unforgettable character was very active in the club and in the village. Joan Campbell enjoyed the meetings for many years until overtaken by ill-health but remained in her home, taken care of by her son. Pat Dewing only moved here five years ago and was a member for a short time but sadly passed away in a hospice, supported by her family.

At our meeting in March the renowned embroiderer Ann Rogers demonstrated bags that she had designed and embroidered with each of Shakespeare's heroines in mind. It was a wonderful meeting attended by about 50 ladies, which was a first for us. In April, Mike West gave us a talk on 'The History of The Fountain Pen'. He showed us his collection and invited ladies to bring any pens they had to be dated and valued.

Our May visitor was Patience Wardley from the village who talked about the centenary of the sinking of the Lusitania in 1915. This happened not far from her family home in Ireland. Our annual outing, organised by Kay, took place in June. We visited the National Memorial Arboretum and from there Lichfield Cathedral. We all took the train ride through the Arboretum which along with the commentary gave a wonderful view of the many groups commemorated at the Arboretum. After that we had time to see places of particular interest to us. We had a guided tour of the Cathedral, a fascinating building. A really enjoyable day out and made better by Kay's commentary in the coach.

At the Village Fete we had two stalls. One selling strawberries and cream and the other selling all kinds of items many with a floral theme. We made £242 for fete funds. Our Summer Lunch was at The Bell at Ladbroke and was well attended and enjoyed.

In September, Sheila Wolff returned to give a well-researched talk on the association of Jane Austen to Stoneleigh Abbey. Jane Austen's mother was a member of the Leigh family and Jane spent some time there. Sheila pointed out features in the abbey which are described in her novels.

Over 30 members and friends attended our regular fund raising for charity event in October when the Club raffled seven hampers donated by members. This was followed by a cream tea. Our final speaker of the year was Heather Alford who kindly stepped in at short notice. She showed pictures and talked about her cruise around Antarctica. This had been her long held ambition, far away from the usual cruising

regions. Also, in November we had the Christmas shopping trip to Stow-on-the-Wold and Burford.

Our Christmas lunch was again at the Bell at Ladbroke and very well attended. It has become a tradition now that we have a "Winter Warmer" in January to start the new year off with a very sociable meal. This year we had various pasta dishes and salad plus fruit tart and cream. It has been very encouraging to see non-members from the village coming to some of our meetings. We are always delighted to welcome guests and are advertising the talks of general interest through the Thurlaston Net as a reminder of our programme.

A big thank you goes to all the committee for their continuing hard work.

**Judy Douglas (co-chairman)**

### **Thurlaston Ramblers 2017**

Another successful year of interesting walks and, more importantly, finishing at a good hostelry for lunch! I must admit we are having to cast our net wider and wider to find fresh walks but many are worth doing again at a different time of the year.

Thurlaston Ramblers started January 1988! Even if, say, a dozen of walks were cancelled due to bad weather since then, I guesstimate that around 320 to 348 rambles have taken place to date! Not bad going! It certainly demonstrates that some village initiatives can stand the test of time. But perhaps it's because it's the ultimate flexible event; attend if you can and join the walk, or just turn up for lunch.

The monthly dates are fixed in advance and those rambling volunteer to lead one walk a year. They work out the route, advertise it via Thurlaston net, confirm numbers with the pub and take overall responsibility for herding those meeting at the village bus shelter into the available transport. Although responsible for route finding whilst on the walk there have been occasions when this has become a team exercise! My lips are sealed... All leaders take no further responsibility for participants once they have reached the watering hole for lunch. A walk, a good pub lunch and a few pints, within the legal limits of course, means, if truth were told, that the majority of the group return back to the village for a quick zizz....

So in 2017 we did walks in the vicinity of Edge Hill, Harborough Magna, Braunston, Willey, Ilmington, The Brailles, Cropredy, Ashby St Ledgers, Napton and Frankton.

At the end of 2017 Claire Jinks volunteered to take on the role of setting the dates for 2018, circulating it on Thurlaston Net and putting them on the Notice Board. It seems fitting that she is the current ramble organiser for 2018 and onwards as Claire was on the first walk in January 1988!

Interested in walking, eating or drinking? Look forward to seeing you.

Contact **Claire Jinks** via [claire@jinks.plus.com](mailto:claire@jinks.plus.com) or 01788 812114

## **Monthly Coffee Mornings**

The monthly coffee mornings organised by a faithful team of helpers and St Edmund's continue to be very popular. We are always delighted to see you – stay for as long or short a time as you wish! Coffee mornings are held on the third Friday of each month from 10am – 12 midday in the Village Hall.

## **Thurlaston Art and Crafts show 2017**

The first Thurlaston Art and Crafts Show was held in 2011. This was followed by further shows in 2013 and 2015 leading up to our fourth show last year on Saturday October 21st and Sunday October 22nd 2017.

This was held in Thurlaston Village Hall and St Edmund's church where we had a remarkable record-breaking 21 residents displaying an amazing variety of work. This ranged from upholstery to dressmaking, paintings to creative knitting, model making to millinery. We even persuaded Adrian Turner, our military historian, to show, sell and talk about his books on World War Two.

In addition Martin Dakin on the acoustic guitar, Paul Jacques on the saxophone and The Rugby Operatic Society, with a selection of songs from My Fair Lady, provided a much-appreciated musical accompaniment to the weekend.

Although the main idea for the weekend was to act as a showcase or villagers' art and craft activities, we also raised a magnificent total of £513. This was from donations from visitors for refreshments and also from a commission of 10% from any items sold throughout the weekend.

We were therefore able to donate £100 to both The Village Hall and St Edmund's church, £100 to Thurlaston History Group to help them to store village archives, and also £213 to the very deserving Rugby-based Bradby Club.

## **David Cooper**

### **Thurlaston Village Fete 2017**

Thurlaston village fete 2017 was held on 1st July and we had a successful day with good weather and an impressive turnout. Visitors enjoyed the day, visited the stalls... and spent their money. The takings were almost on a par with 2016, making an impressive £2,165 net profit. This was split between the Church and the Village Hall, with a little left over for Fete expenses.

The theme was Country Crafts and the village was decorated with flags and bunting. The great success came from the Scarecrows and there were so many, all made with the theme in mind but the winner was a Donald Trump lookalike, judged by our Vicar the Reverend Patricia Townshend.

Steve Murphy once again, compered the Fete with his usual flamboyant manner and wit. The outgoing Squire, Helen Creery handed over the Chain of Office to the new Squire, Kay Thorpe. The Fete was then officially opened by our vicar Reverend Patricia Townshend.

This year we again had the Royal Leamington Brass Band entertaining with some rousing music. A big thank you goes to all the Thurlastonians who helped with the setting up for the Fete and to those who manned the stalls – the Fete wouldn't happen without you! The new tables, especially purchased from the Fete funds were a welcome addition as were the new Gazebos. Thanks to the Warwickshire Meadows Care Home for letting us use their garden again for the children's area, games galore.

Visitors always comment on the friendliness of the village, the topical theme and the safe and entertaining children's area with its games for pocket money prices, which was run by Karen Mcroggan with lots of helpers from the village and held in the care home gardens.

The usual popular stalls were back again, Tombola with Cynthia and Norman Lines helped by Sandra and Steve Lewington, Plants and Produce with Jackie O'Neill and Lois Back.

The Hot Dog stall manned by Peter Knight, Peter Steer and Holgar Mcroggan, was as popular as ever, while the ice cream sold by Mary and Colin Cook was incredibly busy in the sunshine, as was the Pimms stall run by Ev Murphy and Bridget Rothwell. Ev also did a great job as treasurer. Marilyn Hobday and Jo Hartfield lead the Tea Team in the village hall again, they did a brilliant job selling homemade cakes and teas. The church looked splendid with flower arrangements organised by Vryan Hounson and assisted by Eileen Innes, and the Thurlaston Ladies Club served Strawberries and Cream and also a floral stall. Polly ran the Water and Wine and Mo Steer sold raffle tickets with a fantastic array of prizes generously donated by local businesses. Sara and Alison ran the Cake Stall again, very successful with all sorts of home baked cakes and savouries. The books and bric-a-brac stalls were as successful as usual with so many books and donations.

Andrew Henning spent all afternoon photographing the Fete and the activities and then produced a video and put this onto YouTube. Very special.

More Art was created by David Cooper who produced tremendous, lifelike pen portraits of anyone willing to sit for ten minutes or so.

Shirley Hall showed off the new defibrillator that has been purchased with funds collected in the Village, this gave a chance for everyone to see the machine and how it operates.

Roland Robinson brought one of his tractors round and the children love to sit on and pretend to drive it. There are lots more people who have helped to make the Fete successful by giving their time to assist in setting up and breaking down and our thanks go to all.

Paul Jacques strummed along in the Church to give a lovely background atmosphere. Andrew Henning's band "Trailblazers" entertained in the evening in Main Street and this was a very good way to end the day.

The 2017 fete committee was again headed by Sylvia Jacques, who was joined again by Karen Mcroggan, Mary Cook, John Wood and Robert Ashford.

Paula Irish, once again produced all our advertising material, newsletter, posters and contacting the local press. This is much appreciated and a very good asset for the Fete.

Planning for this year's Fete on Saturday 7th July was taking place as we went to press and the theme will be Warwickshire Wildlife and with all the events happening during the year this gives great scope for the Scarecrows. The fete raises much-needed money for the village's two main focal points, the Church and Village Hall and help is always much appreciated. For further information contact Sylvia Jacques at [sjacques5@talktalk.net](mailto:sjacques5@talktalk.net).

### **Progressive Supper**

The Progressive Supper has been on the Thurlaston calendar for about 35 years and until a few years ago there were two each year. Sadly over the last couple of years numbers have fallen and it went to one per year. In October 2017 the low number of bookings meant the organising team, with great reluctance, decided to postpone and reschedule for March 2018. Thurlaston rallied as always and we were delighted to take enough bookings for it to go ahead on March 17th. Given the appalling weather in the run up to the day, we were very lucky we didn't have to postpone, again due to snow.

Thankfully it went ahead and we managed to 'progress' from house to house without slipping over on ice or getting completely soaked. In addition to the 'regulars' it was lovely to welcome three new couples this year, all of whom gave great feedback as to how much they enjoyed the evening, one even planning which course they would like to host next year! As always the great food and company made it a very sociable evening where new friends were made, recipes exchanged and pledges made to keep this lovely Thurlaston tradition going. Light snow falling as we all headed home, adding more sparkle to another great Progressive Supper.

### **Sue Winton**

### **Christmas Lights**

On the 8th December 2017 Thurlaston celebrated the start of the festive period with the Christmas Lights Switch on Ceremony followed by the Christmas Party held in the village hall. This event which is organised by the Village Hall Committee has become a cherished village tradition and another great night was had by all. We started with the Christmas Lights ceremony, which takes place at the oak tree by the Stocks. It's hard to tell how many are gathered in the dark but there appeared to be a very good turnout with many attending for the first time. On a particularly cold night we sang a few carols to get into the mood with clarinet accompaniment from Gill Wood before our village Squire Kay Thorpe turned on the lights on the oak tree. Upon which sign Santa made his appearance on Main Street and led the frostbitten hordes to the village hall

for the Christmas Party. A key feature of the night is the donation of presents by villagers for the Rugby Young Carers organisation.

Thurlaston residents have provided tremendous support for this very worthwhile local charity and this year 58 gifts were given to Santa to pass on. Steve Murphy did a grand job as MC and soon got everyone singing Christmas carols and songs while musical accompaniment was provided by Martin Dakin and Peter Wilson. Fuelled with mulled wine, the sing-along made up in enthusiasm what it lacked in tunefulness and climaxed with the usual raucous rendition of 12 days of Christmas. Irene Spann provided refreshment for the night with the village pub and in doing so raised much appreciated funds for the village hall. Many thanks to all those who helped put on the entertainment, donated gifts to the RYC and spent a highly enjoyable evening with their fellow villagers.

### **The Village Quiz**

The annual village quiz was held on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> February, hosted by team Baby Brains. The evening started with a pizza dinner followed by home-made puddings. Seven teams took part, mostly the usual suspects, but also some new faces. Rounds included such wide-ranging topics as Local Heroes, Geography, Sport, TV & Film, Literature and Jelly Bean Flavours. We also ran a raffle, which helped raise over £100 for the Village Hall – many thanks to those who donated prizes.

Thanks go to Simon Knowles, Elenor Fairgrieve and Fiona Jupp for helping write the quiz and providing salads and cake. Also special thanks go to our honorary team member Caroline Powell, for helping serve pizza and clear up.

The winners were The Beech Nuts, who were also the team picked by lottery to host next year's quiz!

### **Eleanor Flower (on behalf of Baby Brains)**

### **2017 Village Bonfire**

The evening of the 4<sup>th</sup> of November was marked by villagers, young and old, trooping down deepest, darkest Biggin Hall Lane to a change of venue overlooking Draycote Water. After a very wet morning the fire was reluctant to light but the selfless application and ignition of various flammable liquids, coupled with a favourable wind, turned the tables. The fire took and the weather cleared to grace us with a wonderful clear night. With the ha-ha duly cordoned off the team took their positions. Down in the paddock the pyrotechnicians co-ordinated a tremendous display and above, amidst



the 'oohs' and 'aahs', the Thurlaston Bakers plied their wares beneath the moonlit gazebo.

Many thanks to Roland for building the fire and providing welcome advice and logistical support and, most importantly, Robert and Sheena for the use of their garden and paddock. It was a wonderful setting for a great evening. Long may the tradition continue!

### **Thurlaston Film Club**

As a new venture in the village St Edmund's opened its doors as a film venue. This was a fantastic opportunity for villagers to enjoy classic films in a beautiful setting with good company. We aimed to increase the use of the space for a community activity and support the maintenance costs of running the church. After some research it transpired that in order to show films in public a licence is required. In order to purchase this (£120) villagers were asked to join the film club at a cost of £10 per household. Entry was gained either by donation or the purchase of a raffle ticket to cover the heating and lighting costs for each performance and include popcorn and a choc ice at the interval!

During the 18 months that the Club operated 37 villagers supported the venture by becoming film club members. 12 films were shown, of which 4 were specifically for children, but bigger kids were seen amongst the audience at times! In total 131 adults and 40 children within the village attended at least one film. We also held a Garden Party in the summer for Film Club Members which 28 adults and 10 children attended. Scones, strawberries and cream were enjoyed by all!

Through this initiative £320 was donated to the church in the first session and £342.50 in the second session. This money was put towards the buildings insurance which is over £100 per month.

Unfortunately with attendance numbers dropping and circumstances for the key organisers changing we decided to close the Film Club for the moment. We would like to thank all who attended and helped to make the club a success. A special thanks to Morris Rodham for lending us the projector and speakers without which none of this could have happened. If anyone would like to re-start this club we would happily share the knowledge we have built up.

**Rebecca/ Mo / Fiona / Caroline/ Eleanor and Elanor – Film Team Crew 2016 - 2018**

## Village History Group

The History Group is formed of about 10 residents who have an interest in collating the historical facts that are available on Thurlaston. We tend to meet during the dark, winter months.

This winter our project was to look at the houses, past and present and try and name all who have lived in them. We have been working with the replies villagers kindly sent us in response to our questionnaires, old Rugby directories, censuses and electoral rolls. We are hoping to put together a digitised database of householders along with photos of present properties, ones that no longer exist (i.e. Pudding Bag Lane) or have been altered over the decades. Thanks to the recent arrival in the village of Keith Boardman, we now have the IT expertise to achieve this.

We must also thank residents who have provided us with photos of their houses as they were being altered and Eileen Inns who has collected sales details of properties since the 1970s. It is now much easier to see this information through websites. We do have some old photos of householders outside their homes, which may be another avenue we can look at in the future, as it always good to put a face to a name. Slowly but surely we are piecing together the information of the properties and their owners....it's a bit like sewing the village map!

With the new general data protection regulations, it is important that residents should be able to opt out of information that is not freely available. We are hoping to put on a display of where we are at with the Village Archives later in the year. ***If anyone does not want their information to be put on display, would they please contact Brian Coleman.***

Our eventual goal is to leave behind a comprehensive record of Thurlaston that, one day, our descendants may wish to see to understand the times we have lived in.

## Claire Jinks

### Myton Hospice Coffee Morning

The annual Coffee Morning in aid of Myton Hospice starts off the Christmas season in Thurlaston. Last year's coffee morning raised £520 for this important charity. We are very grateful to everyone who supports us by running stalls, spending money, offering encouragement and especially to Angela who provides the music. A date for your diary – the next one will be on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

## Pub Nights

Another mainstay of Thurlaston community life is the Pub Night in the village Hall. It was started about 15 years ago as a social evening rather than a profit-making event. The revenue goes to cover the cost of the licence fee which is issued for each evening and any funds left over are donated to the Village Hall Fund.

The event is usually held the first Friday of alternate months and to give everyone notice a Pub Sign (painted by Vivian Sharp) is erected on the corner of Main Street and The Gardens during the week leading up to the Friday. It is a great way to relax in good company.

Many thanks to Irene, ably assisted by Bryan, who organizes the event.

## **Thurlaston Village Archives**

The Archives belonging to the village exist in several forms, paper documents, photo albums, maps, notebooks, framed photos, VHS tapes, directories, and yes even audiotapes etc., and an artifact!

Storing these items and making them readily available for people to access is part of a process we are exploring with a number of groups and people. The universal method for storage with longevity is in paper form. This means controlled conditions are necessary to keep the documents dry etc. However, it takes a lot of effort to get documents out for inspection. An alternative is to digitize and file on the Internet.

We visited the Warwick records office this year to see how records are classified and stored. We also had a visit from a representative of the Rugby Museum who gave us valuable advice on storage and handling of documents. Both groups also offered advice on digitising records.

It is a long, complicated task with protocols to follow but once the rules are understood and we have an implementation plan we will let the village know. Thanks to Keith Boardman, Claire Jinks and Norman Lines and the History Group for agreeing to be part of this.

## **Brian Coleman**

### **The Local Plan 2018**

Last year's Chronicle contained an article by Norman Lines about the upcoming Local Plan review. It outlined the major issues that were expected to affect the village of Thurlaston. It has been a long year. January and April were the two months when the Local Plan examination took place in the Benn Hall in Rugby. Norman Lines along with Colin Reeves had prepared a passionate and intellectual response to the proposal for warehousing on the Coventry Road.

The Inspector who conducted the review of the Plan has issued a preliminary report on his findings. There will now be a few months of consultation after which we hope we will have a Local Plan that will deliver prosperity, housing, education, health and social support to the residents of the Borough without creating a blight on the South West of the area.

The inspector prefaced his preliminary report by saying that his comments were based on what he had read, heard and seen so far. He emphasized that the examination was not yet concluded and that consultations on the main modifications had still to take place. His comments, he said were without prejudice to his final conclusions.

His final conclusions will deal with the matter of employment land including the provision for sub-regional strategic investment sites and the treatment of the strategically significant employment sites at Ansty and ProLogis within the Green Belt. However, he indicated that a further modification is required to the proposed employment allocation at South West Rugby for B8 warehousing. Whilst the site is well located to the strategic road network to support logistics uses, the scale of buildings permitted on this site should take account of the potential impacts on the surrounding landscape and the setting of any nearby heritage assets, including Thurlaston Conservation Area. Currently Policy DS8 does not provide such safeguards and, to be effective, should be modified to address this.

## **Villages reflections and news**

### **The Wags of Kensh Cottage**

Thurlaston visitors and residents alike may not have noticed Kensh Cottage on Main Street prior to August 2017, other than as part of a roadside collection of mature cottages dating back to the 16/17<sup>th</sup> centuries.....And then there was the fire.

Watched by 'Wag' Wagstaffe, the flames accelerated through the thatch under the metal coating. The trauma of the moment.....would the cottage survive?

Wag has every admiration for the Fire Service who sent just about every type of fire appliance and doused the flames.

The cottage survived but the resulting water damage made Wag and his wife Betty homeless. But thanks to the Warwickshire Nursing Home (now Thurlaston Meadows Care Home) they were provided with a roof over their heads. Then there was the strain and stress of adapting to the loss of their independent living status. Up till then Wag had the lead at home caring for Betty. There was also the concern of not knowing if they would ever return to their home. It was tough for a couple in their mid-nineties.

Help however was at hand – not only through their devoted daughter Linda but also from the community that is Thurlaston! Too many names to mention but the crowning glory was the gift of money from the village to help with the 'repatriation' of the cottage.

I shared a small part of the great inconvenience and trauma this couple have dealt with so bravely. During the chat for this article we sat in their lounge while two competent but very loud roofing specialists were hammering and stripping the old flat roof and fitting a new one. Very loud. Ironically the metal covering over the original thatch was added during the wartime to protect the thatch from incendiary bomb fall-out and catching fire.

Wag had named the dwelling 'Kench Cottage' from the name of a landowner he had seen on an old map of Thurlaston. There is a tenuous link because descendants of the Kench family, who had been big land owners in Thurlaston, emigrated to New Zealand in 1908. They now live in Christchurch, South Island, New Zealand, where we were privileged to meet one of them two years ago. And Wag's sister, who used to live in Thurlaston, now also lives in South Island.

Wag, who was a consulting engineer in the automotive industry, lived in a barrel-roofed lock keepers cottage at Preston Bagot and also worked as a volunteer lock keeper for the National Trust. He was an accomplished automotive engineer and received an award from the Duke of Edinburgh.

His sister and brother-in-law were made homeless from Coventry during the blitz and came to live in what is now known as Kensch Cottage. They then build a bungalow in Biggin Hall Lane, which is currently undergoing refurbishment. Their father and mother – the Wagstaffes senior – bought Kensch Cottage.

Time moved on, the parents passed away and Betty and Wag set up home at the cottage in the mid-eighties and have remained there ever since. So -all's well that ends well- but only thanks to resilience, devotion and compassion and those who exercise them.

**Brian Coleman – with help from Wag, their daughter Linda, and Sylvia**



**Wag receives his award from the Duke of Edinburgh**

## **The Move**

Moving home is always an emotive event. It is the tolling of the end of one chapter and the beginning of a new one – a tinge of sadness and a dose of excitement. Dunchurch had served us well. We had fantastic neighbours who had become good friends over the twelve years we lived there. Access to the Cinnamon Lounge or Dun Cow via foot was always an event that paid dividends and walking the children to school was a great benefit. We loved our house and had many happy memories. However, with three of our children at secondary school we had reached a natural staging post and a chance to make our next move. Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2017 was our first day in Thurlaston and, as it happened, the first time Biggin Hall Lane had been closed to through traffic for forty-two years...

The work was supposed to have been completed by the day of our arrival. I specifically had the conversation ninety-three times with the contractors, but, as expected it was not done in time. Good job that David Gilkes Removals had chosen an array of vans rather than a big lorry or we may have never made it over the borderline. Moving home with four children, two dogs and accumulated 'essential items' from eighteen years of marriage was an exercise in precision, patience, organisation and determination. Despite being only a mile away in Dunchurch, we may have well been moving from Southern Peru. We needed a comprehensively robust, strategic plan usually only reserved for military tacticians. We made it though and were greeted with an array of wonderful 'Moving Home' cards, warm wishes and a useful, informative welcome pack. We began to feel settled very quickly. Since then we have enjoyed the many advantages of Thurlaston. We love the proximity to Draycote and the views.

We love the walks, the spirit of the wonderful people here and the close community network. We love the honesty arrangement for the eggs. We love the amazing wildlife and frequent visits from Snowy, the albino squirrel. We have friends in the village and one thing that resonated with me before we moved was when they said every time you went into the village over the bridge you could feel yourself decompress, almost as though you were going on holiday. They are so right. Thank you for accepting us into your wonderful way of life and we look forward to seeing you out and about.

**Felix Bradshaw**

## **Looking back**

For me it is always interesting to look back and judge the emotions that are stirred. Exactly 80 years ago this month the chairman of the Parish Council in Thurlaston received a letter from the Council Offices, Warwick Street, Rugby. It was two pages of foolscap paper.

Two sentences were typed in capitals:

**NO PART OF THE RURAL DISTRICT OF RUGBY CAN BE CONSIDERED FREE FROM DANGER.**

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT EVERY VILLAGE IN THE DISTRICT, IRRESPECTIVE OF SIZE MUST HAVE A CAREFULLY PREPARED PASSIVE DEFENCE SCHEME.

This letter was sent to outline the dangers of the impending war, with the proximity to Coventry a key target of enemy bombers and the risk of indiscriminate bombing, fires, etc., therefore volunteers were needed. Thurlaston was 'asked' to provide an Air Raid Warden's Post with two Wardens and a 'Runner'. The village did not need an "Asst: to the Head Warden with a car or motorcycle", but it did need two 'First Aid Women' and 4 people in a Village Emergency Party, a total of 7 men and 2 women. In the whole rural area 320 men were required and 54 women. This came about following a debate in parliament 1<sup>st</sup> June 1938 called 'AIR-RAID PRECAUTIONARY SERVICES'.

Also exactly eighty years ago and in June of that year, the third [FIFA World Cup](#) tournament began in Paris with Germany (including Austrian players) and Switzerland playing to a 1–1 draw. The French crowd jeered the German team when the players made the [Nazi salute](#) and threw bottles, eggs and tomatoes at them throughout the match.

Troubled times but it tends to put into perspective the 'threats' of the Local Plan.

The original letter is part of the village Archives and will be available in August at the event being arranged.

### **Thurlaston Parish Council Website development March 1<sup>st</sup> 2018**

Four years ago the Department for Communities and Local Government issued a Transparency Code for smaller authorities.

This means that the documentation and governance of the Parish Council has to be transparent to residents, but it also must be done in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

We need to publish:

- Expenditure
- Annual Returns
- Governance statement
- Agenda and minutes
- Council members and responsibilities

The government believe this can be achieved using a website and they have provided a fund for small councils to achieve this.

We applied, got some money and embarked on the development of a site.

We are taking advantage of the facility to increase communications within the Parish.

Hopefully it will be a place that you can find documents and information about our village which you perhaps were not aware of or you would struggle to find.

It is intended to supplement things which we already have and are of great value and interest to our community.

The site encourages everyone to join the Thurlaston net as this is an exceptional tool which is a pretty much instant way to share information and most definitely helps to keep our community safe.

We have a development website which is now populated with most of the transparency requirements for the last couple of years. The Local Plan has dominated time recently but a group of us will shortly receive final training to be able to post information onto the site for the TPC and groups who will find a benefit in having a page to hold and share information on their specific activities.

Next steps will be training, completion of posting information onto the site, release a version to a critique group for opinions prior to formal launch.

Until we have more clarity on Local Plan activity I can't promise a release date. If there is anyone out there who would be interested to help with the final push I would very much like to hear from them.

## **Norman Lines**

*Editor's Post Script.* There is an intention to include on this site past issues of the Thurlaston Chronicle. This will give everyone chance to reminisce without having to store back copies. Initially this will only apply to the issues from 2010 when digital records were kept. Future issues will also be found here. I mention this to let you know that information that has so far been available in printed form only in the public domain will be available on the internet. If you have any comments regarding articles written by you or about you that you would prefer not to be available on the internet please let me know. Thank you.

## **Brian Coleman**





Damaged by fire -  
The Wags' cottage



The Brailles Ramble - September



Lunch at the Braenose Arms,  
Croprey - October.



Art in the Village Hall