

Thurlaston Chronicle



July 2013

35th Anniversary

The Thurlaston Chronicle 2013

Contacts:

Parish Council

Chair

Vice Chair
(Acting Chair)

Gary Hartfield

Councillors

Helen Creery
Mike Hutton

Clerk

Mo Steer

Local Borough Councillors

Ian Lowe
Graham Francis
Howard Roberts

Warwickshire County Councillor

Howard Roberts

Member of Parliament

Jeremy Wright MP

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Introduction

Congratulations Thurlaston for producing a village Chronicle covering 35 consecutive years in the village.

The first edition came out in 1979 and over the years (except for the year where the season for publication was changed from Christmas to May of the following year) there has been a booklet produced each year. It is testament to the community spirit that it is celebrated in Thurlaston that makes it possible, more about this later in the Chronicle.

The first issue of the Chronicle had an illustration of Pipewell Cottage on the front cover on plain paper. Coral is the colour associated with a 35th Wedding anniversary hence the colour was chosen for this issue and the cover illustrates the welcoming entrance over the bridge that is our main link with the outside world.

Just a social comment...we notice that Fleetwood Mac are celebrating 35 years since the release of their album "Rumours", what a marvellous title with connections to village life.

It has been an historical twelve months with celebrations for the Queen's Jubilee, a tinge of Olympics at the Annual Village Fete, an Emergency Plan published and other new initiatives; again see later.

While reflecting on historical events, the Wroth Silver Ceremony is a local annual event which some of you have been to in the past and others might like to experience, if so read on.

There have been some recent changes with the village administration, also there are pending plans that will affect how we use 4 and/or two wheels in the village so again it is worth reading on.

The issue you have all been on the edge of your seats for is the result of the census that was held last year...guess what..read on.

Thank you to all those who are willing and able to organise the many events we can enjoy in the village to maintain that community spirit. If you feel there are other ways/activities that would enable more to be involved please let us know.

Happy reading and here's to 2018, our 40th anniversary.

Barbara and Brian Coleman.

Council and Trustee Reports

THURLASTON PARISH COUNCIL.

The Parish Council was sad to accept the resignation of Walter Harvey after 11 years service, during which he served for three years as Chairman. We welcomed Mike Hutton on to the Council in October 2012.

Bryan Spann retires as Parish Clerk at the end of this month after eight years in that role. We have all benefitted from his expertise and tireless work and wish him well in his retirement. Mo Steer will take over from April 1st.

Andrew Henning will become Chair of the Parish Council in May with Gary Hartfield as Vice Chair.

Parish Councillors have been allocated areas of responsibility in an attempt to reduce the workload of the Parish Clerk.

The duties of the Parish Council are varied and a few examples of our responsibilities this year are:

Village Emergency Plan. Thanks to the leadership of Andrew Henning this has been completed and circulated to every house in the Parish.

Planning Applications Several have been received and considered by Councillors prior to returning our comments to the Planning Department at Rugby Borough Council. Some applications have been for private properties but we also approved four planning applications for improvements at Draycote Water Country Park and Draycote Sailing Club. Rugby Borough Council has since approved these applications and it is to be hoped that the work to upgrade this amenity will commence soon. The brown sign for Draycote to be installed on the B4429 has been approved by all parties but we are still waiting! It is to be hoped that the improvements at Draycote will attract fewer parked cars in the village. The Parish Councillors put questionnaires on parked cars and the results showed that people like to visit our village and prefer this part of the reservoir to that nearer the Country Park.

Church Lane. This has been redressed this year. It was a good job and worth the wait.

Exceptional Rainfall. This caused some localised flooding in the village. Councillors have monitored areas of flooding. The County Council responded to our request for the drains to be cleared. The sodden verges have made amenity grass cutting difficult but our contractor worked well to maintain his usual standard. Verges have been damaged by vehicles. .

Severe Weather The two periods of icy weather early this year brought out the best in our villagers. They gritted the road near the bridge and the bend on Biggin Hall Lane. We are all so grateful to these volunteer gritters.

Traffic Calming. W.C.C. has approved the 20 mph limit in Thurlaston, which will be implemented later this year. This will be a speed limit (not a speed zone), which will involve sympathetic signage but no speed humps. Thanks to Gary Hartfield who has managed this project.

Street Lighting. This is another responsibility of the Parish Council. Minor repairs have been carried out and one lamp standard has had a new sensor fitted.

Sign Boards Graham Stokes constructed and donated a frame for signboards for the village. We hope that this will reduce the number of random signs. A new notice board has been installed in the bus shelter.

HS Broadband Walter Harvey continues to monitor the progress of this and we hope to see some benefit by the end of 2013.

Meetings. Councillors and the Parish Clerk have attended the quarterly Dunchurch Divisional Forum meetings, which have given us the opportunity to raise issues concerning this village with the Police, Rugby Borough Council and Warwickshire County Council. We have also attended meetings at Rugby Town Hall.

Precept The precept remains unchanged at £3,500 for the 5th year.

Village Census. Claire Jinks and Alex Winton have compiled and analysed the Village Census. The response was in excess of 90%. The results which will be published in the Thurlaston Chronicle will enable us to assess the social changes in the village over the last 10 years.

On a lighter note – 2012 was Diamond Jubilee Year and the village celebrated in style with a memorable day starting with breakfast in Jo and Roland's field, afternoon tea at Mary and Michael Binney's and an evening 'do' on Main Street. Many thanks to Unni, Andrew and their team for planning the day. The memory is revived by those of us who purchased the Village Jubilee mugs that were commissioned by Barrie. There is also a commemorative tree in Main Street which is marked with a plaque.

The Village Fete in July had an Olympic theme and was a great success. Who will forget the village children running down Main Street to the theme of Chariots of Fire? Many thanks to Sue Winton and the fete team for all their work in organising such a special day.

Finally, a plea for volunteers – it is now some years since the Conservation area was reviewed and the Thurlaston Village Design Statement was last updated in 2003. Could anyone who would be willing to work alongside Parish Councillors on either of these documents let me know please?

I cannot close without thanking my fellow Councillors Andrew, Barrie, Gary and Mike and our Clerk Bryan for their support during this year.

Helen Creery.

Village Hall Committee Report 2013

Bookings for the hall have certainly increased this year. Irene Spann, our booking clerk (Tel 522882), will be pleased to continue to take your bookings for the use of the hall or to hire hall equipment. We bought four smaller tables this year all of which are available to borrow, together with other items kept in the hall such as plates, glasses, cutlery etc. There is no charge to village residents for personal use of these facilities, but occasionally there is a clash of dates so do try to be flexible if you can.

Irene Spann has also continued to run very cheerfully and expertly the ever popular Pub Nights which are held in the hall on the first Friday of alternate months. The sign on the left as you enter the village indicates when they will be; the next is due on Friday 7th June. We had a very successful Progressive Supper in October organised by Helen Creery, with some help from Lee Wise. Helen has put much time and effort into organising the suppers and is looking for someone to assist and eventually take over the running of these most enjoyable events. The next Progressive will be on Saturday, May 18th to take advantage of the light evenings. Sue Winton headed the Fete Committee last year and they gave us a wonderful and unforgettable day in July. Very generously they donated half the profits of the fete to the village hall funds. The Christmas Lights party held on 14th December again proved very popular.

The Village Hall accounts for 2012 are displayed on the notice board. Our main source of income has come from hall and equipment hire charges (£961.00), the Village Fete

(£1039.45), the Pub Nights (£405.11), and the Progressive Supper (£288.38). The Fete Committee have control of the Fete Equipment Fund which has a present balance of (£689.38).

Bob Hobday has decided to stand down this year after a remarkable 14 years as our treasurer. His contribution to all aspects of running the hall over the years has been invaluable, and he will be very greatly missed. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Bob for all he has done, and also thank all the members of the committee for the considerable amount of work they have put in during the year.

2012/2013 Committee Members

Chairman	David Cooper	810443
Hon Secretary	Dawn Whitmee	
Bob Hobday	Treasurer	
Irene Spann	Vice Chair/ Booking Clerk	522882
Sue Winton		
Lee Wise		
Helen Creery	Parish Council Representative	

Thurlaston Poor's Plot Charity Trustees Report 2013

The Poor's Plot Charity has helped a number of people this year, monies toward heating costs and lifelines.

We can still help more people if there is a need. Please contact one of the Trustees or the clerk.

Help can be given to students at University with a contribution toward books.

All the allotments are being used and they are in good order. If you wish to be put on the waiting list please contact the clerk.

Farmers have paid their rents and their land is in good order. A few problems with water flooding the ditches this year but what farmer has not had this problem.

Our accounts have been prepared and audited. A meeting to accept these accounts was on 19th February.

Our Trustees are Mr.S.Watts, Mr.R.Robinson, Mr.C.Cook, Mrs.C Salmon, Mrs.J.Stokes and Mr.S.Back. Clerk Mrs.K.Owens

Newcombe and Spier Almshouse Charity. Trustees Report 2013

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 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. After a more routine year with regard to maintenance in 2011, last year, 2012, saw further major work being carried out.

In October 2011, internal damp became apparent in No.1 and a check by specialists revealed damp through the end gable wall and this was treated externally in the autumn of 2011. A check by specialists throughout the terrace revealed that there was also rising damp in No.1 & No. 3 and to treat this required the tenants of No's 1 & 3 to move out for several days. This work, which required a chemical damp proof course, replacement plaster, and then re-

decoration, took place in the spring of 2012. The total cost was £3686.60 which included accommodation for one tenant at the Dun Cow whilst the work took place.

The windows and doors and the benches at the front of the six almshouses had minor repairs and were repainted on the exterior at a cost of £1795.

The bathroom of No. 6 was renovated with the bath replaced by a shower and a new door at a cost of £3184.

The total expenditure for the year ending 31/12/2012 was £14,598.76, leaving a surplus of £1287.22. In November 2012 the trustees moved £35,000 from a basic deposit account to The National Association of Almshouses Common Investment Fund where our major funds are held. This fund will now provide a tax-free dividend of about £6000 p.a. which is automatically reinvested.

The Charity funds remain in good order and enable the trustees to maintain comfortable albeit limited accommodation for the residents. We currently have a list of four people waiting for a possible vacancy in the almshouses.

Walter Harvey

Trustee Governor Report 2013 Dunchurch Boughton Endowed Trust.

The Trustee Governors are responsible for administering the Trust fund left to the school by a local benefactor Frances Boughton, after whom the school was named.

The last meeting was held on 18th October 2012.

The trust had maintained its value over the last 12 months and generated additional income.

Following discussions the following areas have been approved for funding by the Trust:

Minor changes to the fencing, e.g. to put a fence around the top of the kitchen compound	£660
Repair of ceilings by replacement of odd imperial sized, crumbling tiles, by taking down the staff room ceiling, replacing it and using the old tiles to replace old tiles in other rooms (SAFETY HAZARD)	£250
Replacement of We-learn computers.	£5,700
Additional items under consideration	
Replacement of We-learn software	£2300
34 iPads and charging trolley, (£10,000 donation may be received from the County)	£18,000

Replacement of windows, subject to a bid for £40,000

£6,000

Greg Irish

St Edmund's Church Report for Year 2012.

Church Activity

In a small community like Thurlaston (130 houses), we are very fortunate in being able to run a service every Sunday throughout the year. Alternating morning and evening services, the attendance has been consistent over the year, with substantially different congregations for each, and the electoral roll for St Edmund's is 31. We are further blessed in having two excellent musicians, who ensure that our services are full of music to enhance our worship.

We try to provide a variety of services with Holy Communion at 9.00am using modern language on the 1st Sunday and the older version on the 3rd Sunday, with its wonderful phrasing. A sung evening service has taken place at 6.30pm on the 2nd and 4th Sundays, but we are currently experimenting with an evening service using modern language on the 4th Sunday, in order to provide more variety and perhaps make the service more accessible. When there is a 5th Sunday in the month we have a joint service with St Peter's, alternating the venue.

In the future we look forward to introducing new services, possibly during the evening for those who find Sundays difficult, and we welcome the use of the church by those being led by Archdeacon Morris as part of the SEARCh initiative. Morris lives in the village, and is also holding ALPHA courses at his home for those seeking an introduction to Christian faith.

We are also very fortunate in not only having Malcolm our Vicar and his wife Mary to administer services, but also Clive Harper and David Charles-Edwards, retired vicars, whose assistance and support has been very welcome. David has in particular been supporting Malcolm in running services in our local nursing home at least once a month with help from church members, and recently we have been very pleased to welcome some of those in the nursing home to our church services. Wheelchair access has not been a problem using the ramps, and the nursing home manager is very supportive on increasing their participation.

Outreach in the local community

A great success has been the introduction of a coffee morning held in the village hall on the morning of the 3rd Friday of each month. Good coffee and biscuits are served and organised by members of the congregation to great effect, because the uptake has been extremely good.

The Myton Hospice coffee morning raised £460 for that good cause, and £200 was given to Hope4 in Rugby and a further £200 to the Young Carers. Collections were raised in the village for Christian Aid and also for the British Legion, which were well supported, and gratefully received.

The Five Yearly Architect's Inspection

This took place in November 2012, and the documentation relating to safety issues (fire precautions, electrical appliances, lightning protection, and risk analysis) for the church and flat was well received by the inspecting architect. His inspection of the church took three hours, and was extremely detailed. We have yet to study his report, but it is likely that he will recommend work to be undertaken on the windows, some of which are very delicate, and on the wall adjacent to the road. Also he would like to see some of the trees adjacent to the church removed. No major structural issues were highlighted during his visit, but the long-term health of the roof remains an issue for the church committee.

Finance

In 2012 church income ran at £225 per week, compared £223 the previous year, and expenditure at £216 compared to £170 per week, and with the charity payments the surplus was only £20 on the year compared with £2,500 the previous year, even though no major works took place. It can be seen that the financial position has deteriorated to break even, mainly due to increases in costs, and with the five year repairs coming up together with an increase in the payments to the central organisation (because other Parishes still subsidise us), we face a difficult year financially which must be addressed. The money received from the fete is greatly appreciated, as are the individual gifts, and of course the income from the flat, which together has enabled us to keep going. We have funds of about £17,000, but at some stage in the future we will face huge costs to repair or replace the Victorian roof, and we will not be able to obtain grants unless we contribute ourselves. This raises the issue of what the village wants from the church in its midst, and how to make it more appealing and more central to village life.

Thanks and appreciation.

We would like to thank all those who have contributed significant time and effort to support the Church music, cleaning, flowers, refreshments, maintenance and administration of this beautiful church.

Jackie and Brian Bowsher March 2013

Neighbourhood Watch Report

Another year passes without major incident, well done to those who keep an eye out and pass on their observations, particularly with regard to the door to door sale /marketing callers. Again another reminder to those who use the Thurlaston Net, do not exchange details about the holiday or days out movements of yourselves and/or others in the village.

If you have any concerns or wish to make comments on issues relating to Neighbourhood watch please feel free to contact me.

Tony Mennell 01788 522931.

Village Census 2012

The first village census was held in 1992 and was undertaken by Bob Brooks and myself for the Village Archives. Bob was the 'computer wizard' and I his (able) assistant! We repeated the exercise in 2002.

Sadly, Bob is no longer with us and another 10 years have passed, so Brian Coleman, now the Custodian of the Village Archives, and I discussed producing another census in 2012. As my computer skills have not improved sufficiently to take over Bob's role, we needed to co-opt another member to the team with the right skills. Thankfully, Alex Winton volunteered and I was promoted to organiser due to seniority and length of service and leaving the computer 'stuff' to Alex.

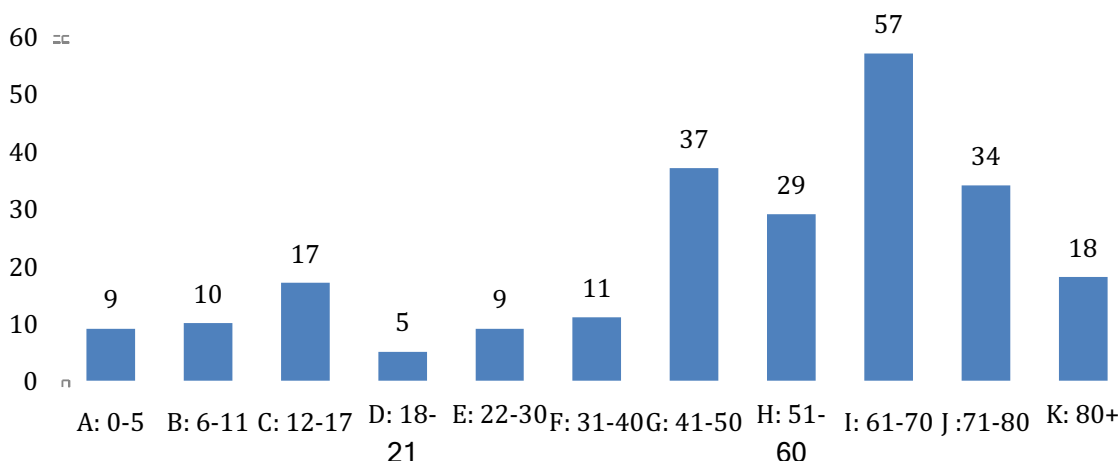
We discussed the data we were to collect, but past questions such as "have you a fridge, fax or video recorder?" did not take into account advances in technology, so our questions this time were tailored to reflect these changes. Completed census forms were collected in September 2012 and we had a magnificent response of 86% (102 households). This compared to 70% in both 1992 & 2002. However, due to lack of conformity in some of questions over the 3 censuses, it has been difficult to compare results. But, where possible, I have shown the comparisons otherwise the results of the 2012 census are shown.

Age Distribution

In 2002, we didn't ask the ages of under 20 year olds. Comparing 1992 & 2012 there isn't a great difference in the younger age groups, 41 under 21 year olds living at home in 2012 compared to 49 in 1992.

□

Age Distribution in 2012



Gender

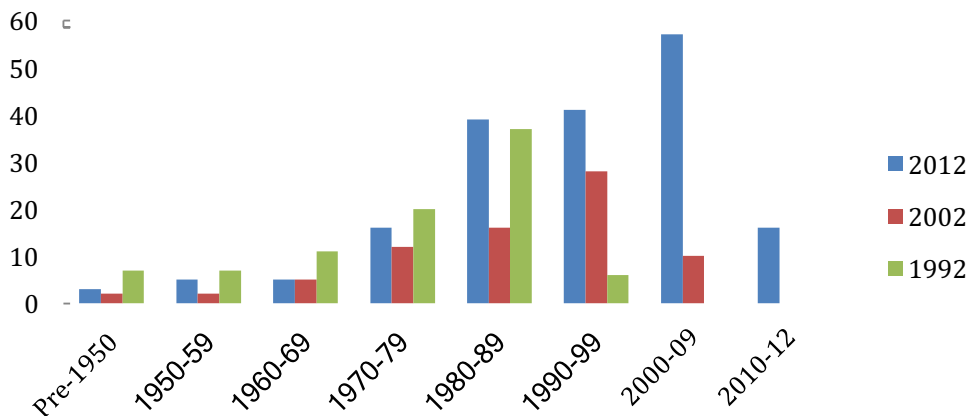
2012 was the first time this question was asked. Result: 55% male, 45% female

Year arrived in Village

All 3 censuses could be compared. It is worth noting that the north end of the village, i.e. The Gardens, Beech Drive and the houses opposite were all built in the early 1970s. More recently 2000-2009, when the housing market was more buoyant, the largest influx of people occurred.

□

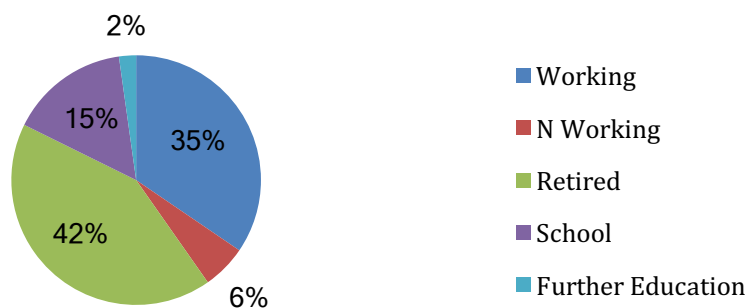
Year of Arrival



Employment

□

Employment Distribution



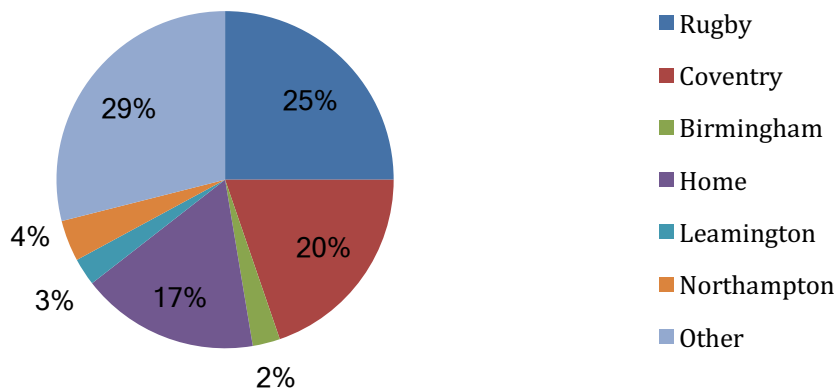
In 1992 & 2002, we only asked if working or retired. Using these 2 categories for over 21 year olds:

2012	51% retired	42% working	7% non-working
2002	51% retired	49% working	
1992	40% retired	60% working	

Where working

□

Workplace Location



The greatest increase has been home working, which would reflect improvement in communication.

Transport

Public transport: Used by 31 people in 2012 compared to 32 people in 2002

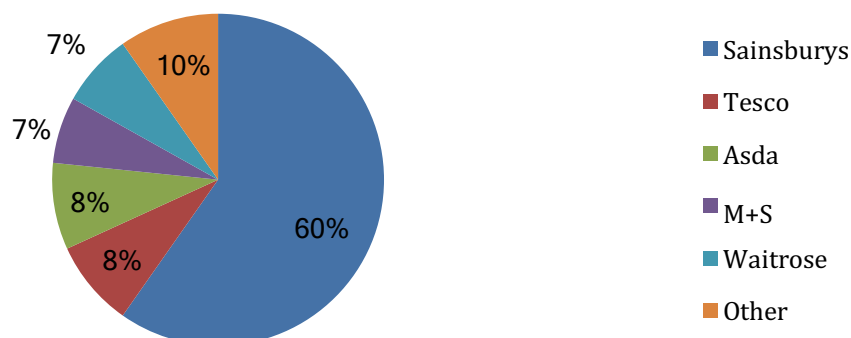
Cars: 186 cars used by 102 households, averaging 1.82 cars/household. This compares to 1.79 cars/household in 1992 and 1.95 cars/household in 2002.

Bikes: In 2012, there were 154 bikes, averaging 1.5 bikes/household. This compares to 2.1 bikes/household in 1992 and 1.79 bikes/household in 2002.

Shopping

□

Primary Food Shopping Supermarket



1992 was before the advent of online shopping. Interestingly, there has only been a 2% increase of online shoppers between 2002 & 2012, from 14 to 16%. Destinations for non-food shopping were very diverse.

Technology

94% of households have internet access, of which 66% (64 households) use the Thurlaston Net.

33% use the internet for social networking and 61% mainly for email & search engines. It would be interesting to look at the age profiles for these 2 groups.

63% watch TV via satellite (e.g. Sky)

Sustainable Energy

The first time these questions had been asked.

9% have solar panels with 4% having either a ground source or air source heat recovery system. No one had a mini wind turbine.

For ease of reading, I have rounded up/down the % to the whole number. The full details will be held in the Village Archives and the original forms shredded, when this is completed.

The census is 'flawed'; but the results are still interesting and valuable as an archive.

This article couldn't have been written without your participation, for this the team thank you.

My thanks also go to Alex, without whom I would have struggled!

Claire Jinks & Alex Winton

Young Thurlaston Stars

This is the place we celebrate those young people in the village who are making a mark in their sport or world of art.

Congratulations to Daniel Torrance aged 9 from Biggin Hall Lane. Daniel entered a Young Art Competition through his school. The topic was 'My London' and Daniel chose to paint a picture of HMS Belfast on the Thames. He was delighted to find that not only had his picture had been picked by the judges - it had also been 'Commended' and chosen to hang in the Royal College of Art in London.

As a treat Daniel's Headmaster allowed him a day off school to go to London to view the painting in situ. His Mum, Dad and Grandparents joined him for the occasion!

Well done Daniel!



Parish Council Extras

Parish Clerk...Past

Bryan Spann has served for eight years as Clerk to Thurlaston Parish Council during which time his extensive knowledge of local government has greatly aided four Chairmen and various Parish Councillors. His enthusiasm and conscientious approach focussing on the best interest of the Parish Council and the village have been much appreciated. He will be missed but his font of knowledge will be there for his successor and the benefit of the village. Thank you Bryan for all your support, organisation and dedication.

Walter Harvey, Cyril Holcroft, Barrie Bemand and Helen Creery.

Parish Clerk...Present

Parish Councils were established in 1894 so their democratic role has been operating for quite some time! The processes and procedures by which they make decisions for the benefit of their Parishioners are governed by a raft of legislation that specifies how, when and by whom all the various functions and responsibilities have to be carried out.

The Councillors appointed to Thurlaston Parish Council have been voted for to make decisions on behalf of the village of Thurlaston. The Clerk is appointed as an employee of the Council under the Local Government Act of 1972 to provide administrative support to the Parish and coordinate the council's activities. The duties of the Clerk include making sure the council as a whole carries out its business properly, offering independent advice where applicable, assisting in the formation of overall policies and producing all the information required so that the Councillors can make both effective decisions and implement them constructively.

So I will be attending meetings, preparing agendas and minutes, receiving and forwarding correspondence within the Council and, when instructed by the Council, issuing official responses, letters and notices. Reading relevant reports and data on matters that have a bearing on Council activities in order to inform future discussions is also required. All on just under 3 hours a week!

Fortunately there are training courses on the work and role of the Clerk. After three weeks in post Andrew Henning; the incoming Chair of Thurlaston Parish Council and I recently attended a one day Induction Day on "**Being A Good Councillor and Clerk!**" It's really good to know that there is plenty of expertise locally that we can turn to for guidance, information and support.

Why did I volunteer to do it? I felt it was important that whoever took on the role lived in the village, knew the residents and was part of village life. Peter and I moved into the village 30 years ago. Although we have been living and working away for a number of years in warmer

climes you do become more aware and appreciative of what your home country and, in particular Thurlaston has to offer.

If you need to get in touch with myself or your councillors you can either find our phone numbers on the Parish Notice Board in Village or under the Local Government Banner on the village website where you can also link into our individual email addresses.

MO STEER

Editors' note. We thought it might be a good idea as Bryan retires from the role and Mo takes over the task, to remind ourselves what the role of the Clerk to the Parish Council, so we are grateful to Mo for writing this article.

Village Emergency Plan

Over the last 12 months your Parish Council has developed a Village Emergency Plan and you will have all received a laminated sheet with the names of the Response Team on it. The thinking behind such a plan is that the village should be able to sustain itself without the support of external agencies if a major incident should occur. The planning process allowed us to identify a team of volunteers that have pre-designated roles and know what would be required of them. We also identified key resources that we have within the village that could be called upon depending upon the circumstances. One of the most interesting parts of the process was to test the team on how they would react given a number of different emergency scenarios.

In addition to the laminated sheets that were distributed, we also gave each household a Data-link pack. This is a handy little plastic container inside which there is a form where you record any special medical needs that you may have and place it in your fridge. The special sticker contained in the pack, is then placed in a prominent place so that any Paramedics that may need to attend to you in the case of an emergency would know that there is a Data-Link capsule in your fridge. They will then quickly understand your medical requirements. If anyone should require further supplies of the Data-Link pack please contact Helen Creery who has one or two left.

Of course we all hope that the plan will never need to be called upon, but at least we are now more prepared and our response should be more rapid and better organised as a result of the work that we have done.

Andrew Henning

Leisure Groups Reports



Thurlaston Ramblers

April 2012 to March 2013

A most enjoyable year for the village walkers.

Walks included: -

Bluebell Walk – April. Thanks to David Cooper, based on the Malsters Inn at Badby. It had rained and rained for days, but when we met at the bus shelter it stopped. Through Badby Woods and a magnificent display of bluebells lit up by shafts of sunshine. At times it was hard going due to the wet weather. 22 walkers with 2 joining us for lunch at the Malsters.

Buttercup Walk – May. Based on the Friendly Inn at Frankton. 13 of us headed down to Marton and the ancient bridge over the river Leam.

The fields going down to Marton and returning via the Frankton fish ponds were covered with golden buttercups a magnificent sight.

With the temperature in the upper 20's everyone was ready for a drink (or two) back at the Friendly.

Circular Walk- June. Kindly organised by Penny Holcroft was based on the Holly Bush Inn at Priors Marston. An interesting and picturesque circular walk through farmland on a beautiful summers day. A fine lunch at the Holly Bush.

Cracks Hill Walk – July. Blue sky not a cloud in sight – along the Grand Union canal, past the Crick marina. At bridge 17 we joined the footpath up Cracks Hill, 420ft a glacial outcrop which was once a Roman Fort and beacon. Wonderful views over Warwickshire and Northamptonshire 7 walkers with another three joining us for lunch at the Red Lion, Crick

Town Thorns Walk - August . Thanks to Norman Lines. Out over the Grand Union Canal and the Rugby Main rail line through the ground of Town Thorns commissioned in 1873 by an American Washington Jackson and owned by Alfred Herbert in the 1930's Round

Newbold Revel built in 1716 where it is said WG Grace once played cricket, now a training college for HM Prison service. 10 walkers plus 2 for lunch at the Red Lion in Easenhall

Winter Wonderland Walk. January 2013 - It had snowed for days laying down about 200mm plus the temperature had not been above zero for days. Off round Daventry Country Park, the going was good on well trodden snow. The scenery was beautiful, as the snow had settled on the trees and plants. Although it was cold, it was dry and crisp. A pit stop at the coffee shop then back to the Shoulder of Mutton at Grandborough for lunch. A hearty meal in the new heated conservatory. 10 walkers and 3 came for lunch.

Ryton Pools Walk – February. A fine February morning with soft sunlight but a bitter easterly wind. Ryton Pools Country Park, has well laid paths that are dry and mud free. A pleasant walk through the woods and past the pools. Many ducks, geese and swans came looking for food but alas we had come empty handed. We must come back at a weekend to see the narrow gauge railway in full steam. Back to the Malt Shovel at Bubbenhall for a hearty meal 8 walkers.

My thanks to all the people who have organised and helped and given advice with the year's Thurlaston Ramblers program.

We have a full program of walks for 2013 everyone is welcome.

If you don't want to walk then join us for lunch.

We look forward to seeing you all

Mel Harley

THURLASTON LADIES CLUB 2012 - 2013

The ladies club have enjoyed another interesting and happy year.

Tim Porter returned to give us another of his music and art talks with some excellent slides. This year the talk was on King's College Chapel. In April we had some more beautiful slides when Kay and Penny talked about their holiday in Syria. They left just as the civil war broke out which makes their pictures of Aleppo even more poignant.

May was a light-hearted talk on the history of corsets with the male speaker bringing a large sample for us all to see, if not try on.

The outing was to Blenheim for a very interesting day out, expertly arranged, of course, by Kay, our Blue Badge guide. Our contribution to the fete broke all previous records thanks to all the ladies who helped with the teas on the day and/or baked so many beautiful cakes. Some of our visitors came in looking for special cake that they had so enjoyed in other years. Whilst on the subject of food, our Summer Picnic was well supported and the committee ladies, once again, produced a sumptuous array of food.

We were all very interested in the work of the charity Samaritan's Purse, which sends Christmas gift boxes to deprived children in all parts of the world. Sara Welch is an active

member and would be pleased with any spare, small gifts available. Gill, our local artist, brought examples of her beautiful fabric art and described how her technique had developed.

We heard an intriguing story of a diary found in an attic with possible links to the French Revolution. In contrast this was followed by a lady and her mother who acted out “making the most of WW2 rations”. They came with tasters and the talk was considered one of our best ever. We shall be inviting them back. Gerald Lezinski returned on one of our open evenings and gave a very entertaining talk on his behind-the-scenes take on the Queen’s Guard. It was a great pity that more people did not attend.

We had another bead day when Rhona returned to help us make either a simple necklace or an elegant covering for Christmas baubles. All of us thoroughly enjoyed the day even if only a few “carry on beading”.

The Christmas lunch was at Dunchurch Park Hotel in a very pleasant, private room. It was well attended and enjoyed. Many thanks to Kathy Owen for organising it this year.

If you think you would have enjoyed any of our talks or outings, check this year’s programme. You do not have to be a member to come along to any of the meetings.

Judy Douglas

Village Life

The First Thurlaston Chronicle

The first Chronicle opening article read as follows,

“At the March 1979 Annual Parish Meeting it was suggested by Dr Smith, and carried, that an annual October newsletter be considered. Your Parish Council has organised this trial issue and would welcome constructive criticism.

We hear the phrase “rural deprivation” and rural life is certainly threatened. Within 20 years, 3 Thurlaston farms have been submerged by the reservoir, the motorway has cut through Main Street, our elm trees have died and now there is talk of an airport at Yardley Chase, coal mining nearby and even the possibility of an industrial estate. We treasure what is left of the agricultural heritage. There is still evidence of a healthy, caring community spirit and bonhomie. Long may they flourish!”

Mary Binney Chairman

Making a difference on the HOME front!

My name is Rick Bloomer and I started in my post as manager of The Warwickshire Nursing and Residential Home, Main Street, Thurlaston, in December 2012.

The Warwickshire provides nursing care for elderly residents within a homely and relaxed atmosphere. As well as permanent residency, the home also provides respite and recuperative care. The original Manor House, which dates back to the 17th century, has been

tastefully and sympathetically adapted and extended to provide elegant accommodation for its residents. The Home is registered for 41 elderly frail nursing places and 5 residential.

When I arrived it became obvious that that the Home had become isolated from the village. This is a concern I am trying to address and have been really impressed by the response I have already had from people in the village including the church. Our Residents can get isolated from the outside world if there are no visitors to the Home and if our Residents do not venture into the outside world.

We are now taking up to 7 Residents to the weekly services at the church with some help from volunteers in the village, and we are also attending the coffee mornings at the Village Hall. Currently we have Age UK representatives and some volunteers from Princethorpe College visiting our Residents. David from St Edmunds does monthly services in the Home.

But the Residents really need more!

We are starting fundraising for a Wheelchair adapted Minibus for daily trips out and would appreciate any help in this task.

If you would be willing to come and visit/befriend one of our Residents, provide an entertainment, share a hobby, invite one of them around your house for tea (there would be a member of staff with them), bring your dog or pet into the Home etc etc - please get in contact with me (Rick Bloomer 01788 522405)

If you can help with any of the above you will make one (or more) of our Residents very happy!

You would be making a real difference in their life.

Rick Bloomer

‘Faster!’

The Pursuit of Faster Broadband

It was in the summer of 2011 that Warwickshire County Council, together with various Warwickshire Borough Councils started the campaign to bring faster broadband speed to rural communities by extending the use of optical fibre cable.

But it was in the February of 2012 that the campaign really got under way when central government provided substantial funding to support the scheme. The idea was that where the cable installer, such as BT OpenReach, did not believe that it was economically viable to take optical fibre into a rural village, then central government and local authority funds would be provided to subsidise the installation work.

However, the cable installer would still have to make a substantial capital investment and needed some reassurance that there would be a reasonable take up of the service being provided. To this end, the people of the rural villages were asked to take part in a survey of present and prospective Internet use, so that there would be some measure of the likely use of the improved facility.

Warwickshire County Council asked for local volunteers to publicise this campaign in their villages and persuade people to take part in the survey. I undertook to do this for Thurlaston. So throughout the summer of 2012 I contacted every household in the village, either on Thurlaston.net or by an individual e-mail if I had an e-mail address or by printed publicity material through the letterbox. There were also posters on the village notice boards and I raised the topic at most of the village public meetings.

I also asked that those who completed the survey tell me that they had done so and also to tell me the Internet speed that they were currently getting. It would be interesting to know the current speeds within the village and the variations depending on distance from our local exchange cabinet.

As an engineer who had been using the Internet since it became available I had assumed that everyone in Thurlaston would be most anxious to get a substantial improvement in the speed and response available. Not so. After the first rush of 30 enthusiasts it became quite a struggle to build this up to 64 responses by the autumn of 2012. This is out of a total of 136 households. Some villagers completed the survey without telling me and the final official figure for Thurlaston was 73 survey returns. In addition, eight households in the village registered as business users.

I at first thought this to be a disappointing response, but apparently it is quite good. Out of the 436 parishes that were involved in Warwickshire, our response total brings us in at number 22. Cawston did well at 169, Long Itchington with 92, Grandborough had 66, Brinklow 58 and Long Lawford managed 46.

This response has taken Thurlaston out of the subsidised group and into the "Commercial Rollout" which means that OpenReach consider that it is commercially viable to bring fibre optic cable to our cabinet, which is outside "The Latch" on Coventry Road. The OpenReach website shows that Optic Fibre to the Cabinet will be completed on the Dunchurch exchange during 2013 but not be completed by September 2013. There was a recent article in the Rugby Advertiser which also stated that optic fibre would come to Dunchurch exchange in 2013. I have been told that when the new cable is installed there will be a second cabinet outside "The Latch"

Current speeds within the village vary with the distance from the Cabinet. Main Street near the bridge gets about 6 mbs, Beech Drive about 4 mbs. Stocks Lane and central Main Street about 5 mbs. Church Lane and Pudding Bag Lane about 3 mbs. Biggin Hall Lane about 2 mbs. These speeds may well increase by a factor of 10 when the upgrade comes.

Walter Harvey.

'Slower'

Slower seemed to be a suitable foil to the previous title 'Faster'. As it transpires it describes a process as well as the proposed end result.

It was reported at the Annual Village Meeting that in an attempt to promote more care with driving in the village the speed limit would be designated as 20mph instead of the current 30mph. However the process of change grinds slowly on. Since the Annual Village Meeting traffic surveys have taken place and the end result is eagerly awaited. It is hoped that new signage at the entrance to the village and fresh street architecture will encourage more careful driving, encouraging drivers to be more aware of young people, elderly folk, disabled people, people using concealed driveways etc.

We wait patiently for WCC to pronounce and if appropriate provide the resource to implement the changes. 'Thank you' to Gary Hartfield who is responsible for the negotiations with the Council.

Wroth Silver Ceremony

This is an ancient ceremony dating back hundreds of years in which the commoners of the Knightlow Hundred pay their landlord for the right to drive cattle over his land. The crowd gathers just before dawn at the base of an old cross on Knightlow Hill: the Wroth Stone. The Dukes of Buccleuch have been the landowners here for many years and the Duke's agent reads the Charter of Assembly as soon as it is light enough; he then calls out the name of each parish in turn, the parish representative says "Wroth Silver!" and drops the due amount into the stone.

This year it will take place on Monday 11th November. If anyone is thinking of going we (Barbara and Brian Coleman) can let you have the details and. ...might even join you. An interesting tradition that will die out if there is no interest from the public as there is no legal reason for carrying out the ceremony these days.

Community Life

Sometimes non-residents of Thurlaston make disparaging remarks about the lack of a village pub, shop or social centre but little do they know of the social life of the village which looking back over twelve months has included a varied range of activities.

The Queens Jubilee Celebrations on the 2nd June were a highlight, and included a Royal Procession, Breakfast at 9.30, a Garden Party in the afternoon and a Right Royal Knees-up in the evening.

The Fete followed with an Olympic theme supported by suitably themed scarecrows around the village.

Other regular features included Bonfire Night which again was well done and enjoyed.

A Progressive Supper that was enjoyed by around 48 people back last year although this year's Supper was more bijou.

Beer Tree evenings (Pub. Nights) are a good opportunity to catch up with people we only see occasionally because of busy lives, cold short days etc. This is a popular evening in the Village Hall organised by Irene and Bryan. Look out for the 'inn sign' by The Gardens which gives 5 day warning of the event.

The annual bus trip to somewhere interesting is always a good day out, organised by the Ladies Committee and shared by anyone who is available and interested. In 2012 it was to Blenheim, marvellous.

While on the subject of the Ladies Club, there is regularly an interesting 'open evening' if you have a free Monday evening when guest speakers are invited in and all are welcome. Watch out for the notice board on the exit verge by the bridge.

A more recent initiative is Friday Coffee in the Village Hall from 10 till 12. This gives folk of various ages.... young mothers, retired seniors, local workers, an opportunity to make contact and socialise.

The Christmas Light Switching-on event just prior to Christmas with carols round the oak tree, and a warm up in the village hall with nibbles and a singsong to follow is all good seasonal entertainment.

The faithful few look forward to circumnavigating Draycote on the Boxing Day traditional walk.

Remembrance Sunday is a time when folk gather at the church garden to think with pride of those who had given their all for their country, and of course St Edmunds provides a community spirit for those who want to share it.

For the talented in the village there was an autumn weekend when their skills were shared with those who appreciated the various practical art forms at the village hall.

For the energetic the Thurlaston rambles are good if you are free on a Thursday, see earlier report in the Chronicle.

Also for the energetic the Table Tennis group meets on a Wednesday evening in the village hall except during the summer months.

Recently there has been a village golf competition.

Something new this year...A Puddings Evening with 20 different items to choose from! Watch out for the next one.

All the time there are folk criss crossing the village walking dogs, collecting newspapers, heading for the bus, going for eggs at the stall, enjoying some exercise and fresh air, playing in the street, tidying the verges etc waving at passing cars invariably without a clue who is behind the tinted windows.

Who says there is no community life! Our apologies to any event that has not been recorded but more importantly if you feel there is still a need for another type of social event, or if you have an opinion about the existing ones please let us know.

What a great Fete we had this year 2013 ! We suspect the organisers for next year would be pleased to hear from you soon no matter how small or menial you think the role is you can play.

Barbara and Brian Coleman

