



Thurlaston Chronicle

2017

Contacts

		2016/2017	2017/2018
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Introduction

Was Thurlaston ahead of its time? most towns call a 'closed road' a cul de sac; the village fathers here obviously made a break from mainland Europe by using the anglo alternative of "Pudding Bag" Lane after the cloth-covered steam pudding that has single entry/exit, when naming a local road. However, as we know, it is in fact a feature of the whole village, one way in and out by road. It is this feature that makes the village special. It is a geographical recipe for *community* which encourages a sense of *contact*, *caring* and *creativity*.

In addition to the regular reports from the 'formal' groups/committees we have the updates from the 'leisure' groups and activities.

The stories and anecdotes at the back of the Chronicle share amongst other things the view of new comers to the village, life changing events, a peek into the past and acknowledgements to a couple of villagers.

I hope you enjoy reading this publication and my thanks go to those who have contributed and especially to Gill Dakin and Sue Winton who have worked hard to get the articles together. Many thanks to Mary Harwood who, for those who did not have the pleasure of catching a glimpse of the 'white' squirrel that featured on the Thurlaston net earlier in the year, has produced a wonderful likeness for the front cover.

Of course thanks to all who strive to make this community what it is.

Brian Coleman

Council/Trustee/Community Reports

Thurlaston Parish Council, Chairman's Report

This year has been a very busy year for the Parish Council and obviously the main topic that has taken up a lot of time has been the RBC Local Plan proposal which will bring major changes to villagers and the residents of Dunchurch in the near future.

Obviously all the councillors have been involved in dealing with the plan but I would like to thank Norman along with Colin Reeves who was co-opted on board because of his expertise in this field. We have been fortunate that they have been able to contribute their time and skillsets to challenge RBC Planning Department who seem to be churning out crazy figures on housing needs and even worse projections for a massive distribution park not far from our village.

This year we have been asked to look at the open spaces and verges within the village. Concerns were being raised that encroachment had been taking place over recent years and not enough action had been taken to stop it. We have now done so, and hopefully this will give more clarification to residents and future Parish Councils on what is common land or highway.

Parking has become an issue for residents in various parts of the village especially on sunny weekends and Bank Holidays. We have been asked to look at the possibility of introducing double yellow lines in areas where the road is too narrow for parked vehicles which makes it difficult for any emergency services to pass.

Speeding continues to be a problem on Main St and Biggin Hall Lane; we know this from the comments we receive from residents. Certainly many drivers observe the 20mph speed limit but with a mixture of delivery vans, taxis, staff at the Nursing Home and people who live here ignoring it, extra measures will need to be implemented to help reduce the problem. The problem is exacerbated by the increase of vehicles coming into the village each day, we all use Amazon and other on-line services and so with one road in and out of the village, we probably notice it more than villages with various routes through their community.

We have been looking into the complaints about the shooting business at the Laughing Dog site. It seems that they will be carrying on as usual because both the police and the planning department do not have any due concerns.

Quarrying looks like it will be going ahead along the Straight Mile. In our recent meeting with the planners at RBC we let it be known that we have serious concerns about the probable increase in large vehicles from both the quarry and the distribution park in the very near future.

The website has been delayed a bit because of time taken up by the Local Plan, Norman will resume working on it when the time constraints allow.

Last year we mentioned about a possible 40mph speed limit at the entrance of the village on the Coventry Road. It now looks as if the 40mph will start near the Baptist Church going towards Dunchurch and we will stay 50mph on our stretch. Mary, Helen and Norman continue to look at planning applications as they come in.

Steve looks at conservation issues.

Gary and Sylvia deal with Governance.

Though not Parish Council business I think it's worth mentioning the amount of social groups and activities that take place on a regular basis. The most recent being the film club which takes place in the church. We also have the Birding Group, the ancestry group, the yoga group, ramblers, the Pub Night, Book Club, Ladies Club, Quiz and Progressive Supper Nights and the Christmas Lights Switch- on. We also have a fantastic Fete and Village Hall Committee. It's

surprising how much actually takes place within such a small community and I apologise if I have omitted to mention any. Only a couple of weeks ago, at the quiz, someone mentioned they would like to see a chess club start, so if anyone else thinks that is a good idea please raise it on the net and we can see how many would be interested.

On behalf of the village the Parish Council would like to thank the many groups, committees and villagers who work tirelessly to maintain Thurlaston as a thriving community and such a pleasant place to live.

Finally I would like to thank the rest of the parish council for their input and support over the last 12 months which has been invaluable - it makes the job a lot easier when you have a good bunch of people around you.

Steve Murphy, Chair of the Parish Council

Thurlaston Village Hall Report

The role of the Committee is to manage the maintenance of the Village Hall as per the Deed of Gift and Trust Deed by Miss Stanley in 1947. The Committee should comprise 7 village volunteers, who stand for a period of one year, once elected by the Parish Council and Villagers. This past year, the Committee has comprised only 5 volunteers (subsequently reduced to 4) who have worked hard keeping the hall in good order.

In 2016, the hall saw a good volume of use from both those inside and outside the village. The funds to keep the hall in good order come from a number of sources including; profits from the Fete, Progressive Supper and Pub Nights, fees from non-resident hires and not least the very kind donations from residents, the Thurlaston Ladies' Club, Yoga group and the Friday Coffee Mornings.

We greatly appreciate the generosity of these contributions without which we would not be able to keep the fabric of the structure in such good order. We thank all the villagers who make these events happen.

The Village Hall charges were previously reviewed at the end of 2015. At the end of 2016 the Village Hall finances are in a healthy position, therefore the Committee sees no reason to review the charges for 2017. The current system, where residents are able to use the Hall for free for personal use, is well understood and we are fortunate that villagers have been generous with donations. The Christmas Party, which is the one social event organised by the VHC, proved very popular again. The arrangements were admittedly a little late in being organised, and this is something we will learn from for next year. Thanks to all committee members and other villagers who rallied round and made it such an enjoyable event.

There has been relatively low amounts of capital expenditure in 2016 which is reflected in the final year accounts. As with any building of this age, capital expenditure goes up and down depending on the maintenance requirements. In 2015 there was significant expenditure and the hall recorded a loss, whereas in 2016 spending was far lower and there was a surplus of similar size. Looking

forward to 2017, there may again be a higher level of expenditure particularly as the Committee are looking into replacement of the heating system.

At the end of 2016, the Village Hall accounts had cash assets of £7,914. The 2016 surplus of income over expenditure was £843.

When the VHC employs people for work on the hall, we do like to use local residents where possible. Examples are George and Haidee Eden who cut the grass and Ian Gall who has maintained the hedges.

The Village Hall belongs to the village for villagers use and as such the VHC is always keen to hear any suggestions or ideas for how facilities could be improved or expanded upon. For example in 2016 we have considered installing Wi-Fi and purchase of a projector.

Current Committee members are listed below (all I believe are happy to remain). However, 4 members are really not enough, and we really need at least 5 to work effectively. We would like to encourage anyone who is willing to give a little time to help support an important community asset to please get in contact with any of the VHC. We meet just 6 times a year and my personal experience of this last year have found it takes around 5 hours per month.

Current Committee members: Simon Knowles (Treasurer), Irene Spann (Booking Clerk), Vicky Foster (Secretary), Mary Cook (also Parish Council). Previous: Darren Guy (Chairman resigned November 2016).

I would like to thank them for their hard work and support over the last year.

Simon Knowles, Treasurer of VHC

Thank you Irene!

As many of you already know, Irene has “retired” from her duties as Booking Clerk of the Village Hall after a lengthy spell in the role.

Irene, always ably assisted by Bryan, not only undertook the varied duties of Booking Clerk, but also kept a keen eye on the fabric of the building and its equipment in addition to cleaning where and when necessary.

Thank you both for your exceptional commitment to village life, the Village Hall Committee and in many other ways.

We are all indebted to you both and a vote of thanks is massively deserved.

Marilyn Hobday (on behalf of the village)

Thurlaston Poors Plot Charity

The report was presented at the meeting by Sheena Ashford on behalf of the Chair Roland Robinson. Catherine Camp has been appointed as the new clerk. Only a few plots remain of the 43 acres of land founded in 1728 to enable the poor of the village to grow crops to support their families. These are now Allotments and rented to provide an income to the charity. The charity was registered in 1964 and 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 has been distributed for help with winter fuel bills, coal and electricity. A few years ago the objects were changed to enable support for education grants and currently the charity is considering supporting the purchase of a defibrillator for the village. (extract from the Annual Village Meeting minutes)

Trustees of the Newcombe and Spier Almshouse Charity.

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.

Last year, 2016, was another busy year with regard to maintenance, repairs and improvements.

The major activity last year was to renovate the windows for all six almshouses. At the upper story front these are unusual horizontal sliding Yorkshire sash windows of the Victorian era. Over the years these have been inadequately repaired and now needed major renovation. The almshouses are listed buildings so we had to obtain listed building consent from the local authority and we were required to use an approved contractor, Heritage Guild, to do the renovation work. This work was completed in July last year for a total cost of £17,500.

We also have problems with rising damp in three of the almshouses. A survey was carried out in November which showed a need to provide a chemical damp proof course in each of the three. One almshouse is empty due to the tenant moving elsewhere and work will start on this one early this year. This work should be completed in the early spring and we have a lady tenant waiting to move in.

The routine maintenance necessary with buildings of this age continued throughout the year and required an expenditure of £1300

The work on the windows required expenditure in excess of our immediate cash income of £5700. However our main investments did quite well and £7000 was automatically reinvested in our main funds.

The Charity funds remain in good order and enable the trustees to maintain comfortable albeit limited accommodation for the residents.

Walter Harvey, Trustee.

Dunchurch Boughton Endowed Trust, Trustee Governor Report

January 2017

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.

Trust Contributions

The £20,000.00 donation to the school in respect of the extension to the main building has been completed.

The trust is looking to take ownership of a portion of land near an adjacent stream by the school field. The land could then be used by the school for educational purposes.

The next meeting was scheduled for March.

Greg Irish

St. Edmund's Church Report for 2017

We have excellent news to report in that a new Vicar has been appointed and will be joining the Parish of Dunchurch with Thurlaston on 29th March at an evening Service of Introduction at St Peter's led by Bishop Christopher, with community leaders invited. Her name is Patricia Townshend and her husband is Graham, and they will be moving into the existing Vicarage at Dunchurch in early March, having spent many years in South Africa. No doubt this will be a major change for them both, and we all need to welcome them and give as much help as possible. We have been in an interregnum since Malcolm retired in the Summer of 2015, and it has not been an easy task for the St Edmund's church committee to meet all the spiritual and practical needs of our village, but we have had superb support from a number of retired clergy, particularly Clive Harper and Peter Beresford, and the Parish PCC, which has enabled us to have a Communion Service on the first Sunday of each month, and Evensong on the third Sunday. 34 Services were held in St Edmund's during 2016, and the average attendance was 16, not taking into account Christening and Funeral Services. In general, the Communion Service has been more popular, and no doubt Patricia will have a view on the types of service to be run in future in the two churches, but we need your views on this to ensure a vibrant future for St Edmund's. It should be noted that our committee is getting somewhat aged apart from the youthful Rebecca Shields, and help is needed from younger members of our community. One of our strengths over the years has been our music, with both Gill Wood and Angela Stewart supporting us, but Angela now living in Rugby, spends more time at St Andrews which is our loss and their gain. It is likely therefore that in future we will move to the use of more recorded music and perhaps the digital projection of verses. Financially, we remain in a somewhat precarious position, in that we are so dependent on the income from the Church House to be viable in the long run, and at some stage we will need serious money for updating the house and church facilities as well as maintenance on the roof. Nevertheless, in 2016 we came close to breakeven again (deficit of £450), thanks to the many people who have supported us, and particularly to the Village Fete which once again has been a major benefactor. We need to remember that the running cost before maintenance of the church is roughly £1000 a month, the heating runs at about £5 an hour, and we are due for the church architects 5 yearly inspection this year. In order to broaden the use of the church and its facilities, and hopefully provide a new revenue stream, it has been decided to introduce regular Film Nights in the Church for both adults and for children with their parents, and this has proved to be very popular. Our thanks are due to Mo Steer and Rebecca Shields, who have worked hard to get this off the ground, and it is perhaps the start of a "Friends of St Edmund's" initiative enabling a broader community to support the church. Jenny Cooper our Church Secretary, supported by other church members, continues to run the monthly coffee mornings in the Village Hall (3rd Friday of the month), which enables villagers and passing walkers to pop in between 10.00 and 12.00am for a chat over a good cup of coffee. With help from David Charles-Edwards and Angela we support the local Warwickshire Nursing Home, and

collections for Christian Aid and the Myton Hospice have again been very well supported by Thurlaston.

So far it has not been possible to re-open the church throughout the week, but on most weekends St Edmund's is open for villagers and those passing by, and many show an interest, as the building is a gem and the outlook over the reservoir superb. The open plan seating makes it ideal for many uses, and many adults and children have made good use of this facility.

With regard to the running of our church, grateful thanks are due to all those who love the church, and who undertake the church cleaning, provide and arrange the flowers, play the music, keep things in good repair and enable us to run our services.

Brian and Jackie Bowsher Deputy Church Wardens

Community Leisure Groups

Thurlaston Ladies Club

The Club is flourishing. We have had an increase in the number of subscriptions through the year. The outings which we arrange are popular and many friends join us on these occasions. We gave £500 to Air Ambulance at our AGM. All our profit goes to Charity and we like to be able to give during the year to any particular charity that comes to our notice. We also contributed £256 to the fete from our 'pink and white' stall. We have a 'Bring and Buy' each October which this year was held in the Village Hall and raised £239. We are thinking of changing the format this year and hope that some non-members will join in the day.

In March, our new year starts with a speaker. This year, Gary Webb, the head landscape gardener at Compton Verney, spoke on the work of Capability Brown and his effect on English garden history which was very interesting. In April, David Price returned to give us another entertaining talk with slides and video clips, on the Hollywood Production code during the last Century and its effect on musicals. It highlighted the change in attitudes over this time.

In May, many of us met at Rimo's where Marie gave us lots of good ideas for the garden and was there to answer questions. June is the month Kay arranges a wonderful day out. We were not disappointed. We visited a magnificent garden in Eastleach which was started from scratch by a lady and her husband who has since died. She has the help of two gardeners but the ground must cover at least four acres with many individual gardens plus walks both lawn and woodland.

For our summer lunch this year we went to Hilltop Farm in Hunningham. As usual, the event was very well supported. After our lunch it was interesting to look round their shop and buy a few tasty foods. In September, we were delighted to hear Sheila Woolf again, this time giving a well-researched talk on the liaisons of the impecunious local aristocracy with wealthy American heiresses. A very happy 'marriage' for both parties. In October, a friend of Kay's, Gillian Forsythe gave us

an exciting and successful account of her searches for her ancestors. Gillian is an excellent speaker and the afternoon was thoroughly enjoyable.

In November, Peter Preece came again to show us more of his wonderful photography of mainly birds and some small animals and to talk about his experiences in getting the photos. What patience. This year we had our Christmas Lunch at Brownsover Hall. It was slightly disappointing that the service lacked professional guidance. Obviously the manager's day off. In January we had our Winter Warmer Lunch provided by the committee. This was very well organised and the food was highly recommended by the ladies.

February is back to the AGM. 22 ladies attended. As most years I would like to stress how welcome non-members are at our meetings and such visits will not, in any way, mean that you are expected to join or to come on a regular bases.

Judy Douglas



Thurlaston Ramblers 2016

I don't know why, but the dates we choose to walk are dry as often as not. We have no complaints, as it means those who have organised the route, the transport and (more to the point), the pub rarely have to postpone and rearrange. Obviously the numbers vary with each route, but by giving out more detailed information before the due date (such as gradient of hills, number of stiles and the distance) folk can assess whether it is within their capabilities. For some reason the annual pilgrimage to the Friendly at Frankton still draws the biggest crowd! We are always pleased to have new people join us, and Kath and Keith (Beech Drive) and Sheena (The Grange) have been able to join us on a couple of rambles.

Thurlaston Ramblers did its first walk to Toft and Dunchurch on January 24th 1988, and those taking part (Bob Brookes, Jenny Stokes, Claire Jinks, Joan Sullivan and Heather Tebbutt) are listed in the "Red Book". Heather must have donated the lovely red leather book in which all subsequent walks have been logged: her father's name on the inside cover – R.C. Mitchell THURLASTON. As you can imagine it's now quite a weighty tome, but if you want to see it please contact Mo at the Mill.

Each year we venture to new places and in 2016 Colin and Liz (The Gardens) introduced us to Hampton Lucy and Penny (Main Street) to Chipping Walden; both providing us with interesting scenery and wonderful buildings en route. Plans are afoot to venture further afield, as over the years the group has exhausted most of the walks locally - although we are happy to repeat old walks (especially if there is a good pub at the end!)

Dates for walks go out Thurlaston Net and on the village notice board. This year's remaining dates are, 15 June, 29 July, 17 August, 13 September, 19 October, 16 November and 14 December. Everyone is welcome to join us on the walk and/or for the pub lunch afterwards.

Mo Steer

Friday Coffee Mornings

The monthly Coffee Mornings organised by St. Edmunds team in the Village Hall continue to be popular. Freshly brewed cafetiere coffee and biscuits are provided on the third Friday of every month from 10am to 12 midday, it is an ideal opportunity to catch up with 'old' friends and meet new people. Please consider putting it in your diary.

Thurlaston Art and Craft Show.

There is something to look forward to, an Art and Craft Show 21st and 22nd October 2017, and we know it is going to be good and worth visiting because of the previous Shows. This is the report of the last Show September 2015

Thurlaston Art and Craft Show – 26th and 27th September 2015.

This was the third time in recent years that we have held this popular event in the village. Remarkably this year nineteen Thurlaston residents in all displayed the fantastic variety of work they had done, which included millinery, furniture making, creative knitting and vintage dressmaking. Others displayed exceptional textile art; upholstery, artistic patchwork, quilting and felting, together with some fine tapestry and crochet work. Numerous paintings in various media by several village artists were also exhibited, together with an impressive photographic display.

For the first time the village archives were incorporated into the event which gave Thurlaston residents who had been unable to see them at the Village Fete a chance to browse through the absorbing presentation at leisure. Fortunately this year we had St Edmund's Church available as well as our Village Hall to house all the wonderful displays. In addition to all the visual arts some delightful music was provided by the village based Fresh Air Wind Ensemble on the Sunday afternoon, which enthralled a packed St Edmund's Church.

Tea and homemade cake served in the Village Hall received very generous donations from visitors and this resulted in £246.00 being available to support the Rugby Young Carers.

David Cooper

Thurlaston Village Fete 2016

Thurlaston village fete was held on 2nd July and another good day.

We were fairly lucky with the weather, mostly sun shining with a few showers, making the day a great success.

The villagers and visitors alike seemed to enjoy themselves with the Fete stalls; the takings were an impressive £2,276 net profit. This was split equally between the church and the village hall.

The theme this year was our Queens 90th birthday giving the village another opportunity to decorate the village with flags and bunting.

Steve Murphy compered the Fete and the proceedings started with Darren Guy, the present squire handing over the Chain of Office to the new Squire, Helen Creery. Then Councillor Howard Roberts said a few words and officially opened the Fete.

This year we had the Royal Leamington Brass Band leading 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 one of the stalls – the Fete wouldn't happen without you! The new tables, especially purchased from the Fete funds were a welcome addition. They provided enough tables for all. Thanks to the Warwickshire 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 nursing home gardens.

The usual popular stalls were back again, Tombola with Lynda and Peter Wilson, Cynthia and Norman Lines, Plants and Produce with Dawn Whitmee and Brian Coleman.

The Hot Dog stall manned by Peter Knight, Brian White and Kerry Scudamore, 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 Sally and Ev. 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 Vervan Hounson and assisted by Eileen Innes, and Andrew and Unni Henning displaying their Photographic work, very spectacular. Polly ran the Water and Wine alongside Eleanor Flowers selling raffle tickets with a wonderful array of prizes generously donated by local businesses. The Ladies Club had a new stall, the Pink Stall. They had filled it with all things Pink and this was very successful. Lee Wise photographed all around the Fete, so some good pictures will be shown soon.

The Jacques Jazz band entertained in the evening and this was a very good way to end the day.

The 2016 fete committee was again headed by Sylvia Jacques, who was joined this time by Karen Mcroggan, Mary Cook, John Wood and Robert Ashford.

The date for the 2017 Fete is Saturday 1st July and the theme will be announced shortly, watch out for details on the Thurlaston net.

Any help people are able to give with the fete - which raises much needed money for the village's two main focal points, the church and village hall - is always much appreciated, and for further information contact Sylvia Jacques at sjacques5@talktalk.net

Progressive Supper 2016

The 2016 Progressive Supper saw just 18 couples from the village taking part due to several couples having to drop out in the week running up to it, however we were delighted to welcome new residents to this annual village event.

For the second year the starter course was in the form of canapés in the village hall. Our hosts arrived (in the pouring rain) and set up an amazing array of delicious food, the table in the centre of the hall looked so colourful with all the various plates of food and it wasn't long before the guests were tucking in and enjoying a glass of wine too. Soon it was time for the mains hosts to leave and return home to prepare for their guests arrival. Once they had left the details of the mains venues was revealed and everyone remaining in the hall left and went off around the village to their host's home.

At 9.00pm the mains hosts revealed where their guests would be going for their pudding and coffee and once again everyone set off shortly after the pudding hosts to their final venue of the evening.

Apart from one minor hiccup which saw Nigel Jinks sprinting down Beech Drive with two non-vegetarian meals and returning with 2 vegetarian meals the evening was a great success!!

Christmas Lights Switch-on

Friday 16th December 2016

As is tradition everyone met at the oak tree by the village stocks for carols led and accompanied by Gill Wood, at the end of which the tree lights were switched on. Santa arrived just at the end of the carols and led everyone down to the village hall for a festive sing along, this year with Gill Wood on electric keyboard as Peter Wilson was unable to lead the 'usual group' due to a long standing prior engagement. Steve Murphy led the evening in his usual jovial and family friendly style. He always makes the children feel very special and certainly gets them engaged in the sing-a-long. Gill loves to be part of it and said it was her favourite village event as it is lovely to see all the families whether they have been in the village for years or are newcomers start the celebration of the Christmas season together.

A very big thank you to everyone that gave presents to Santa who then made sure they were distributed by his helpers to Rugby Young Carers. They are a lovely group of young people who care for a family member and very much appreciate the support they receive from the village. On the back cover you will see a picture of Santa receiving the presents and in the background Jenny Stokes is looking on as the children donate their presents.

The tradition of 'bring a plate of food to share' produced a great buffet and was consumed after the sing-a-long amid much laughter and conversation. Drinks were served, including the legendry mulled wine, by Irene Spann and Marilyn Hobday.

Once again a lovely evening organised by the Village Hall Committee, Irene, Vicky and Simon, thank you.

Village Quiz 2017

The Thurlaston Quiz that was organised by team Carmen was a great success again this year,

There were 8 teams competing for the winner's prize which included a cake and other goodies.

Everyone contributed well and the scores were very close, leading to a nail-biting final round. The eventual winners were from London Road plus friends who romped home to a well-deserved win following a good 'music' round.

The rounds were varied, offering an opportunity for all comers; from anagrams and 'wuzzles' to airport codes, and included a crisp flavour-tasting round!! more difficult than it sounds!

For a change, supper was home-cooked lasagna and brownies which all seemed to go down very well.

Much wine was consumed... ask the clearer-uppers the next morning... always the sign of a good evening, and we raised £67.40 for the Rugby Myron Hospice, and the raffle raised £85.00 for the Bradby Youth Club.

Many thanks to all who attended.

Village Bonfire 2016

Saturday 5th November was the perfect night for the village bonfire, a crisp evening with light winds saw an amazing turn out of villagers and visitors; an estimated 400 people turned up for this event this year. Thanks to our hosts, Roland, Jo and Roger Robinson there was a huge bonfire and the ever-popular tractor and trailer rides transported everyone to the location. The trailer rides are always a hit with the adults and children alike, especially as it is dark. Hot dogs with onions, mulled wine and a spectacular firework display made this another great Thurlaston event. As always there were a band of helpers who worked all evening serving the food and drink and the firework display team who excelled themselves this year.

Sue Winton

Thurlaston St Edmunds Film Club

Thank you to everyone that supported St Edmund's Film Club. A mixture of film genres were shown from November-March allowing viewing in a spectacular location with good company. We also raised money to help towards the maintenance of the building of St Edmunds along with buying a film and music licence. With the better weather we will take a break from films but plan to start again around September 2017. Look out for advertisements nearer the time.

Best wishes,

Mo and Rebecca

Thurlaston Village History Group

The Ancestry Group has morphed into the Village History Group. We meet monthly on a Thursday morning in the Village Hall between September and May. The dates are in the Village diary.

In 1917 the Duke of Buccleuch sold his Thurlaston properties and the Group thought it would be interesting to produce a record of who has lived in those properties and the whole village since then. In September we gave all villagers a questionnaire about their houses to enable us to build up a database of when houses were built / rebuilt and who have been the occupants. The information has been collated and put on a database. We thank all who have returned the questionnaire.

Through the Rugby Register and other local almanacs it has also been possible to build up a picture of who the residents of the village have been since 1894. There are of course the censuses from 1841 which also give us names, but unfortunately as Thurlaston is a small village there are no road names mentioned. It is hoped that by finding out who lived where we may be able to track the enumerator's route round the village, so placing families in the village. It has been slightly confusing as Thurlaston Lane End has houses both on the Coventry Road and up Biggin Hall Lane!

The village has changed greatly over the years. We have now found photos of properties that no longer exist, Thurlaston House and the original Pudding Bag Lane houses. Also properties that have been altered greatly so that they no longer resemble their original look. We are hoping that you may have photos that we haven't seen before and would be grateful if we could have copies of them to add to the Archive collection.

Some of this ongoing project could not have been achieved without the help of 'long standing' residents and former residents and we are very grateful for their help. As I write this we are planning to show what we have achieved during our 2016-17 session in an open morning at the Village Hall.

The Village Archives are for all former, present and future residents to enjoy. The group are pleased we can help add information to our unique village and hope we can continue to display the Archives for all to enjoy and reminisce.

Claire Jinks

Myton Hospice Coffee Morning

The annual Coffee Morning in aid of Myton Hospice was held in St Edmund's Church on 2nd December last year (2016).

The amount raised for this important charity was £601.50 and we are very grateful to all who helped run it and all who supported it.

This year's Coffee Morning will be held on Friday 1st December 2017.

Around the Patch

Newcomers to the village!

Ten years ago I volunteered with VSO (Voluntary Services Overseas) as a teacher trainer and worked in a rural "hardship" posting in the heart of The Gambia. Whilst

I hope I imparted some helpful knowledge, I left after two years believing I had learnt more than I'd taught. A sense of community permeates The Gambia; you can't go anywhere without bumping into someone who knows someone from your village! The school in my village was a five minute walk away but it inevitably took me at least half an hour to walk there, as it was customary to greet everyone on the way, ask about their children; their parents; the scoutmaster's next plan; the ladies' soap making idea; the compound's lame chicken etc. etc. This sense of community, of people being aware of each other and their face-to-face communication (not that Thurlaston's 'net' is not a super idea and very useful!) was an essential part of co-habiting happily together. Children roamed freely, played happily and were known and watched by all. Women took their water carriers to each other's compounds in the evenings to drum and dance. Men discussed village business at the 'banta bar' whilst keeping an eye on teenagers. After Africa I lived in North Italy and the UK continuing to greet people but not quite getting that cheery African response and willingness to chat. I felt sad that in our ever increasing fast-paced, technology driven world we were losing the art of 'real' communication and sense of community.

But then I moved to Thurlaston!!

Amidst eighty plus boxes of 'stuff' piled haphazardly in the lounge (I gave up sorting before I moved!), visits, introductions, invitations for coffee, information, cards, even champagne were bought and gratefully received. What a welcome!! There was no time to unpack (still an excuse!) as village life was a whirl of activities: church events; carol singing and lighting the tree; pub night; sketching group; coffee morning; ladies' lunch; and all that was without the special moments enjoyed through Jai, an invitation to help build the crib, which he loved to see lit up before going to bed; joining and enjoying film club; a warm welcome from the nursing home to their events; patient and informative chats about the adjacent farm animals; a walk to see the beautiful Christmas toy display in a nearby house; and locally chopped logs for a warm fire to cosy up to. All these things helped to settle us into our new home. We are delighted to be here, and as a new generation of younger people join the village, let's hope they grow up valuing the sense of community spirit, respect for village life and the environment and most importantly, conversation and friendship with all.

Ronnie & Jai

Jenny Stokes - A tribute

As I look out over the road I see the distinctive Jenny walking her dog or gardening. When I pass the allotment I see her again digging or planting. The real sadness, however, is that my imagination is a poor substitute for the real Jenny we all knew and loved.

The shock of New Year's Day and the suddenness of her departure will never leave our memory.

Her popularity as evidenced by the numbers at her funeral and her lengthy and full role in village life can never be forgotten as she won't be.

We all miss her greatly, both Graham and family and neighbours alike.

Our thoughts are always with them.

Things will never be the same.

Bob Hobday

Swapping Lifesavers

The 'Tardis' that has been the home of the village telephone for many years is to have a new resident. The instrument that used to be a communications 'life saver' has been upstaged by mobile 'phones and domestic 'phones and will leave with the owners of the box, i.e. BT. It will be replaced by a different type of life saver a defibrillator.

The box itself must be the cheapest piece of real estate in Thurlaston at about 75p/square metre, with services laid on, great views etc. The phone box now belongs to the village.

However thanks to the foresight and enthusiasm of some villagers with the help of medical professionals in the village and the help of fundraisers the new lifesaver should be with us shortly.

In parallel with this new piece of kit resuscitation training classes will be organised to complement the defibrillator. According to the Internet the defibrillator is a treatment for life threatening cardiac dysrhythmias, specifically ventricular fibrillation (VF) and non-perfusing ventricular tachycardia (VT). The device delivers a dose of electric current to the heart. The defibrillator was invented by William Kouwen Hoven in 1930!!

The 'Wheels' of Industry.

Historically the village occupations included farmer, butcher, baker, miller etc.; today it's a very different story. Quite a number of our villagers work in the automotive industry or in their spare time collect and/or enjoy the products of the industry. So I decided to write an article based on one of the aficionados in Thurlaston.

Being lazy I picked my next-door neighbour to interview, I left my car at home and walked round to John and Gill Wood's house. What followed was a most enlightening, entertaining half hour on a subject that affects everyone of us.

Gill and John have been living in the village for 25 years, they have 3 boys and 4 grandchildren. For anyone who knows John he is a gentle giant by nature and as it turns out it, seems to me, he is one of the giants of the automotive world. He, very modestly would not say so.

John grew up in Horsham and with a father in the Army it was a natural course for John to join the Army from school. Following his passing-out from Sandhurst he went to Cambridge to study Mechanical Engineering. After university he transferred to REME (Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers). Two tours in Germany followed; the first being as the workshop officer for the Gloucestershire Regiment. At the time they were equipped with the FV432 tracked vehicle and were inevitably nicknamed "the armoured farmers". On returning to England in 1976 John became more and more involved in the development of the new Army vehicles and especially the Warrior APC and Challenger 1, the UK's main battle tank. End of chapter 1 "**The Army**", 1987.

Before we look at Chapter 2, let's share John's automobile memories...His first car was an MG J2 (1933) with a Ford 10 engine (if you are not familiar with the car, look it up on the internet, amazing.) apparently the gearboxes only lasted a week or two!!

His 'best car' choice was a split between a VW Sirocco (early model) and a French manufactured Matra M530 (how did he manage to get in and out of that?).

When I asked John what he considered to be the best invention in automotive engineering ...after some considered thought he replied ...Anti-lock brakes, because in "panic" situations it still provides the ability to steer. For all those who drive I think we agree! Especially in wet, muddy and icy conditions.

John is still a racing enthusiast and specializes in Speed Hill Climb events at which he has had some success; again you would not believe it from his pace when he leaves the house.

Chapter 2 (after leaving the Army) "**Industry**" begins with a role with the RAC Motoring Services as Chief Engineer and Technical Director. John then joined MIRA in 1991. MIRA grew out of the old Motor Industry Research Association to become an independent organization providing research, test, development and design services to the world wide automotive industry. In John's time they established outposts in Detroit and Shanghai.

John is passionate about the need to inspire young engineers to use their imagination and develop their practical skills. *Formula SAE* was an established student design competition organised by the Society of Automotive Engineers in the US, John visited the States to study this event and then introduced it to the UK. The first event in 1997 had 4 UK teams of young engineers performing at MIRA and at the last minute 4 teams arrived from the USA; within three years this event had grown to 30 teams competing at the NEC; the event is now held at Silverstone and attracts over 120 teams from around the world.

John was awarded an MBE in 2012 for services to mechanical engineering and recognized his involvement in setting up Formula Student to encourage and develop young engineers. He was presented with the award at Buckingham Palace by Prince Charles.

Chapter 3 "**Retirement**". John retired from MIRA in 2008. Since John finished at MIRA, he has been President of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers in 2009/2010, he is currently Chairman of the Institution's Engineering Heritage Committee, a subject on which he also lectures. He is an independent assessor sitting on various panels that assess applications for research funding particularly on low carbon programmes.

So why is it so important to encourage young engineers? John explains that there has never been a more interesting time to be in automotive engineering. Through the last part of the 20th century, the industry was focused on "evolution", i.e. the steady improvement of the car, but now since the damaging effects of hydrocarbon fuels has been highlighted, the security of supply of hydrocarbons is under question, the trends of young people looking for alternative modes of transport, the rising cost of insurance/tax etc. there is a REVOLUTION underway for alternative power units and modes of transport e.g. electric powered units and

eventually autonomous pods. The title is 'Wheels of Industry' indicating the progress of manufacturing industry, but with a cross-reference to 'Wheels' as slang for car; Who knows that just round the corner transport may not even rely on wheels. More power to the pioneers of alternative transport.

Brian Coleman in conversation with **John Wood**

The Rugby Borough Local Plan – Thurlaston Implications.

It seems a long time ago that RBC presented its draft Local Plan.

It was September 2016 when the document was released to the Borough and the full implications of the effects on our lives and those of future generations lives emerged.

The Parish Council were concerned and have strived to constructively criticise the plan through the official process but have also written to MP's, every member of the Council and the Planning Department on a number of occasions with various points which challenge the Plan.

We felt that it was extremely important that villagers took the initiative to be heard as individuals by responding to the consultation process. We held a village meeting to share the TPC knowledge and opinions on the Plan and explain the process of registering concerns. The TPC has shared with you much of the documentation we have submitted.

We wrote four documents during the two phases of consultation and were called for a meeting with the Head of Growth and Investment, Mr Back and the portfolio owner Cllr Timms. This proved to be disappointing. We don't believe that our submissions had been read in sufficient depth for sensible discussion and the meeting was merely a front to generate the impression that the RBC was listening to its residents.

We are aware that many of you took up the challenge to complain and you have shared with us the submissions you made. From these we have been able to gauge the strength of feeling which urges us to do our utmost on your behalf. Our strategy at the outset was to declare a desire to work with RBC in the generation of a Local Plan which works towards meeting the aspirations of the Borough community. The material we submitted discussed and generated significant questions regarding the soundness of the draft Local Plan in the key areas of: being *Prepared positively, Justified and Effective and consistent with National Policy*. In the interests of collaboration with the community the information contained within our submission needed very careful analysis and consideration to prevent disastrous consequences for our residents.

Our submission challenged all areas of the plan. It challenged the data, methodologies and validation and verification techniques. A major disappointment of this Local Plan is its total lack of vision for our community.

The document paints a portrait of the Borough today but it is totally lacking in a positive ambition for our town. The proposal is turning Rugby into a warehousing centre with no efforts being made to attract manufacturing and technical development institutions. Rugby has a long history of innovation, design and development and we should be encouraging organizations to base themselves here where there is access to the support from first class universities and

communication networks.

We are celebrating 80 years of Sir Frank Whittle and his successful first test of the jet engine in association with British Thomson Houston. I am not confident that in another 80 years we will be celebrating the decisions which are being proposed by this Council despite the fact that they also will be changing our way of life for all future generations.

Our critique of the document was prefaced with the following words.

In our response to Rugby Borough Council's Local Plan, we are mindful of the "soundness" requirements set by the NPPF, as described in para 1.6 of the September 2016 Draft document, and we have considered the plan's ability to measure up to these standards. In particular, it is vital that the development meets "objectively assessed requirements."

There are 3 broad areas where RBC is proposing change on a massive scale to the SW of the town and which are of most significance to Thurlaston: housing, employment land, and infrastructure. In all of these areas we find little evidence that the crucial first question is answered adequately. There is evidence of a great deal of "modelling", but much of it is based on out of date data, unverifiable (and sometimes unacknowledged) assumptions and only patchily validated models. Data and forecasts are often in conflict, consultants' views differ wildly, and the housing, traffic and employment studies appear to have been done without much inter-communication.

Whilst we looked at this plan in its entirety and commented accordingly, we have, for some time focussed on the issues which arise from the proposal of a warehouse development only 300 metres from the conservation area of Thurlaston. This is referred to as Symmetry Park.

We had an encouraging letter from our MP who wrote to RBC Head of Growth and Investment, Rob Back, seeking assurances that he had considered the very valid points contained in our submissions. I was told at the meeting with Rob Back, that when he responded to the letter from Jeremy Wright, he would let us have a copy of that response. This has not yet happened. Jeremy Wright was supportive especially regarding the environmental arguments.

Whilst we have written many times to RBC councillors they appear to be hiding behind the process. The majority have not responded and others have been non-committal. Howard Roberts has confirmed his opposition. The Lib Dems responded to me acknowledging a recent note to state that the points made were valid and the Lib Dem group would be meeting to discuss their course of action. We have no definitive information regarding the stance to be taken by our other RBC councillors for Thurlaston; Deepah Roberts and Carolyn Watson-Merret.

Looking to the future.

The planners will present the Local Plan to the full Council on June 21st at the Benn Hall. If it is accepted it will be presented to the Government Inspector to validate.

However irrespective of this, dBSymmetry are proceeding on the following timeline;

Apply for outline planning application in the spring/summer of this year.

They expect RBC will have allocated the site to the Local Plan in the winter/spring of 2017/2018.

They expect outline planning permission by the spring of 2018.

Our battle as a village continues in earnest when the planning application hits the planning department desk. The development is in the parish of Thurlaston and we have the right of complaint, as do all villagers as neighbours of such a massive development.

Your Parish Council will need everyone's support to fight this threat.

We will organise ourselves accordingly.

Norman Lines

A Dog's Life?

I never thought I'd be taking up a hobby which involved so much running; I've always preferred walking! The best way to describe Dog Agility is show jumping for dogs.....but without the reins! When I started just over 5 years ago I didn't know much about dogs and absolutely nothing about dog agility so the learning curve was steep but I soon realised that I was 'hooked' once I had competed at my first show.

I rehomed Sam at 11 months, he is a Sprocker (English Springer x Working Cocker Spaniel) even by the two breed standards Sam is bonkers and only gets tired when he has used his brain to learn something new and had plenty of exercise, which is why I took up agility with him. I got Jess in 2014 another rehome but much younger when I got her, she is also a 'Spaniel', best guess is predominately Working Cocker!

Agility involves getting your dog round a course of jumps and contacts within a course time set by the judge without faults. The obstacles include jumps which can also be in the form of a wall, brush fence, tyre, long jump, spread or wishing well; a line of 6 or 12 poles the dogs have to weave through, tunnels and contacts. The A-frame, seesaw, and dogwalk are the 'contacts'. The dog's paws must touch the contact points at both ends of the obstacle or they incur faults. As you progress through the grades the courses become more complicated requiring the bond between dog and handler to become incredibly strong as they work for you to complete the course. Almost all errors are made by the handler (but lots blame their dog), although I have seen some dogs take off, make up their own course and have a blast; lovely to watch but not much fun if you are the handler!

I love running both my dogs but it's not without its challenges. Sam & I have had some great results and have progressed to Grade 7 which is the highest grade, we have moved on to Championship classes and I'm very proud to say we made a Championship final last year. Jess is a great dog to run, so responsive, however she currently has issues doing the seesaw but we are getting there it just takes time and a lot of patience.

Agility shows can be a single day or a 10 day event and anywhere in between; many shows offer camping so a caravan became a must for me as the social side

is a huge part of it. Spending time with agility friends laughing over a glass of wine at the end of a day spent working my dogs is just the best.

In August the Club I am a member of was asked to put on agility displays at Countryfile Live at Blenheim Palace, what an experience! Both dogs handled the crowds, noise and unusual environment brilliantly and it was lovely to see some familiar faces there including Kay Thorpe! We have been asked back for 2017 so really looking forward to that.

If you had told me 6 years ago this is how I would be spending my weekends I would have laughed but I'm so glad I found this sport, I love it on so many fronts.

Sue Winton

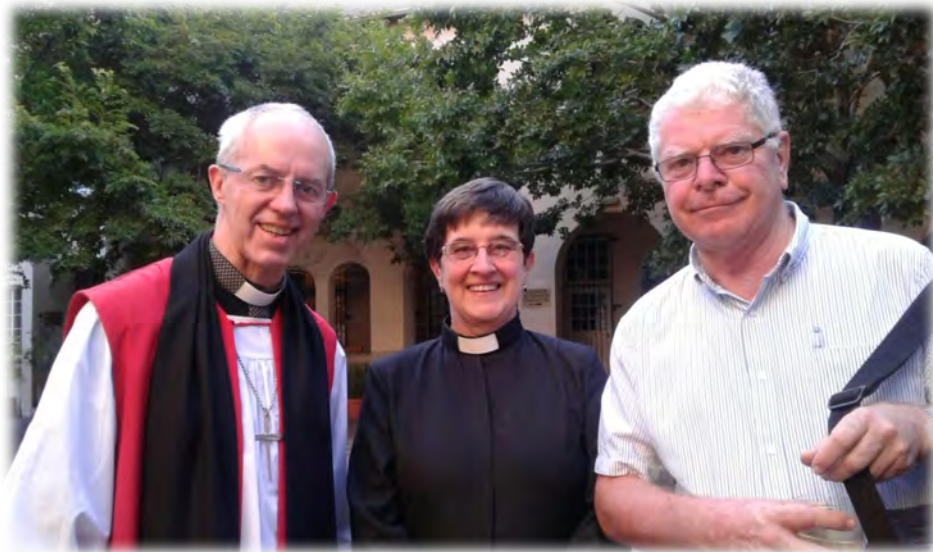
The Last Word on Thurlaston

Earlier in the Chronicle, Claire mentioned the Sale of specific properties in Dunchurch and Thurlaston by the Duke of Buccleuch in 1917. You may be interested to read the description of Thurlaston in the Sale Document.

Thurlaston...a hamlet of Dunchurch, standing on high ground, to the South of which there is a delightful view across country. There are two entries thereof in the Domesday Book, part having been held by Robert Earl of Malling, and part held by Hugh de Grentesmaisnil, the latter holding lands in seven counties. The latter portion became the property of the Crown again, for Henry I, granted it to a servant of his named Wigan to hold by "Sergeantry" viz., to find at his costs a man in armour for the King's service with two horses in every army of the Kings of England. It then descended through the family of Cantalupe to Stephen Segrave who being a judge caused the tenure to be changed to "Knight service". It eventually came by marriage to Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk. Again it was carried away by an heiress to the Barons Berkley. Since then it has passed through various families to the present owners. The lands of Earl Melling eventually passed to the monks of Pipewell who built a grange here. After the suppression of the Monasteries, it passed to Sir Thomas Leigh, and followed the succession of the Dunchurch Estate. There was also a portion of the manor held by "Knights fee" of the Earls of Warwick, by the Vernons who built Brandon Castle; through various owners it became in 1534 the property of Edward Cave whose daughter Margaret carried it into the family of the Boughtons of Cawston who sold it to the Duke of Montagu. The air of this locality is most salubrious as during the last two centuries a large number of the inhabitants lived to be over 90, and some considerably over 100 years of age.

Guy, Earl of Warwick, is traditionally said to have slain the great blue boar- a terror of the district- on the outskirts of the parish, at a spot where now stands the Blue Boar Farm.

The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, with our new vicar Rev'd Patricia Townshend and her husband Graham.



Christmas lights switch-on; Father Christmas receiving gifts



Arts and crafts in St Edmunds





Evie Harwood, aged one and threequarters.
Just starting her artistic career.
Photo by Rachael Harwood.



Many faces of art!



Some intrepid ramblers



Home of the 'Lifesaver'