

The Villager

The community magazine for the parishes of Martley and Wichenford

Volume 19 No. 7

December 2009

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Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of The Villager. The Villager cannot be held responsible for any goods or services advertised in the magazine.

Regular events in Martley and Wichenford:

Sundays

2nd Sunday in the month:

Teme Valley Farmers Market for local produce 11am The Talbot, Knightwick
Martley Ramblers meet Church car park

3rd Sunday in the month:

Path-or-Nones meet 9.30am Martley Memorial Hall car park to help maintain the local footpaths

Mondays

Rhythm Time: 9.30-11.30am Martley Memorial Hall *Enq.* Rachel 01886 812565

Martley Parish Council: 1st Monday in the month 8pm Memorial Hall

Martley & Villages Carers' Group: 1st

Monday in the month 10.30-12.30 Heaton House.

Tuesdays

Short Mat Bowling: 2.00pm Martley Memorial Hall

Wichenford Ladies' Fellowship: 2.30pm
2nd Tuesday in the month (usually)

Martley Mums and Tots: 9.30-11.30am
Martley Memorial Hall

Wednesdays

Teme Valley Shufflers Line Dancing:
7pm Martley Memorial Hall *Enq.* Jeff & Thelma 01886 821772

Martley Folk Club: 1st Wednesday in the month at The Talbot, Knightwick and 3rd Wednesday at The Admiral Rodney

Martley WI: 2nd Wednesday in the month 7.30pm Heaton House

Thursdays

Wichenford Wine Club: 3rd Thursday in the month

Martley & District Horticultural Society: last Thursday in the month
7.30pm Martley Memorial Hall

See Church Words on page 27 for details of services

See articles inside for details of special events
AND changes of time/date/venue of regular events

See the Diary page on www.martley.org.uk for a complete listing of all forthcoming events (that the Diary page editor knows about)

See page 28 for contact details of organisations

Articles to go in The Villager must be submitted by the 1st of the previous month

Records of the Parish Council meetings in the two parishes are not intended to be full and complete minutes. Minutes of meetings can be seen by contacting the respective Clerks to the Councils.

OUT AND ABOUT IN MARTLEY

Visit our website—www.martley.org.uk



Martley Circular Walk

It rained then as it is raining now (Sunday 1 November); rained all day in fact, the first rain for many weeks. Did it detract? Not really, for Thursday 15 October was the long-awaited launch day of, well, a number of things.

Firstly, Worcestershire County Council Countryside Services had spent some time 'upgrading' the loop walk that runs from the Worcestershire Way, starting below the church. There is now a very fine notice board and map of the route. Over the years this walk has proved a strong draw, combining as it does, the

flatter orchard, arable and Teme lands with the ridge of Rodge Hill—a glorious celebration of Worcestershire's finest countryside (and Herefordshire's eastern borders if you look across the Teme).

Secondly, in January this year, Martley was awarded 'Walkers are Welcome' status. Martley has been doing the welcoming bit for years but there is now a national group that acknowledges this (www.walkersarewelcome.org.uk); we became the first in the county to meet their entry criteria and celebrated this on 15th. Hurray! You might have noticed the black and yellow logos in shops and pubs.

After a couple of speeches and a tricky ribbon-cutting ceremony (whose scissors were they?), we retired to the Memorial Hall for a first class tea—sandwiches, cakes n'all, courtesy of WCC (supplied by Sheila of Cherry Tree Cottage).

In the hall were stands by the Path-or-Nones, Countryside Services and Earth Heritage Trust. As many know, a 109 miles, just-opened Geopark Way exploring the whole length of the 17th European Geopark, runs through



Tony Lewington (L), John Nicklin and others in the Memorial Hall ready to walk



The new map by the Millennium Green

Martley (excellent guide book available). Natalie Watkins of EHT provided a fine display that created much discussion and interest.

As a follow up, at a more convenient time, walkers met on 24 October to try out some of our many local routes. The weather was better, though it had teased us by raining in the morning. Around 20 took the opportunity to have tea and biscuits at the hall, then venture off in small groups. We are happy to do this again if anybody wants us to. We are particularly keen to attract those who aren't too confident about stepping off the road and we will lead walks or even run short courses to teach some of the basics. I'll wait for the flood of letters and emails (johnn@martley.org).

Thanks to all who helped make the events successful—Tony, Ben, County, EHT.

*John Nicklin,
Footpaths Warden for Martley*

Well Done

Congratulations to Edward Faulkner, aged 14yrs, on winning 1st prize to become Local Rotary Young Chef of 2009-10. He will now be entered into the semi-finals. Edward was entered by The Chantry High School and the competition for under-16s was held at Worcester College of Technology on Tuesday 3 November.

Housing Growth in Martley

An Open Meeting was held in the Memorial Hall on 15 October with representatives of local developers, regarding a proposed new housing development on 3.7 hectares of agricultural land behind the Post Office, Central Stores, Martley Garage and The Crown Inn. The hall was packed with Martley residents. Leading the meeting was Mr J. Cornwell, of Bell Cornwell, Chartered Town Planners, together with two architects, Henry Welton, lawyer for Marsden Developments, and a representative from Affordable Housing. No one from Malvern Hills District Council was present.

A draft layout of the housing development was on view. Martley lies within the West Midlands Regional Strategy. We were told that in the Malvern Hills Local Plan, there are four categories. Martley is a Category 1 settlement area. The housing requirements for S. Worcestershire, including Worcester City, Malvern Hills and Wychavon are higher than was previously expected.

The plan is to build 35 affordable

houses, plus 48 “open market” houses, two work/live in units, a new doctors’ surgery and an open children’s play area. This would result in a 10% population increase. In a sometimes heated exchange, many strong opinions were voiced, and many questions asked. Below is a list of the main points raised:

- Flooding; The developers have consulted SUDS, and a full assessment and report had been made.
- Increased traffic; Consultations had been made, and the site considered suitable.
- Drainage including Sewage; existing sewage works were considered adequate.
- Schools; This has not been discussed.
- Ecological impact; An ecological survey had been carried out. Nothing in the report suggested the land in question was unsuitable for development. (WWT was not consulted in this).

Many people were deeply concerned about the visual impact that so many new houses would have on this unspoilt part of the village. The issues of additional noise and light pollution were also raised. There will be two acres of allotments provided, but when asked if this was separate, or only as part of the overall development, the developers were unable to confirm. Two acres was not considered sufficient, considering there are over 16 people already requesting a plot. The question of building on

brownfield sites was raised. Mr Cornwell said this was not possible, even if a site was available. When asked how environmentally “green” the proposed building will be, the architects said it was too early on to be precise, but it is likely that there will be rainwater/grey water storage put in place, as well as solar panels, and possibly ground-source heat-pumps.

It was generally agreed that Martley needed some affordable housing for local families. It was also unanimously agreed that farmland of this sort should continue to grow food, rather than be used for houses with the consequence of more mouths to feed. The desire and need for locally-grown and sourced food is increasing, so in a rural area, this should be of high importance. Most agreed that a development as large as this would result in at least 100 more vehicles using our already-congested country roads and lanes, as well as the ultimate urbanisation of a rural village.

If you feel strongly about any of the issues raised here, please contact Martley Parish Council, and/or write in person to: Malvern Hills District Council, Planning Applications (Development Control), Council House, Avenue Road. Malvern WR14 3AF.

Some useful facts:

Martley falls within the South Worcestershire Joint Core Strategy (SWJCS). This is the biggest planning document in Worcestershire, and will provide strategic direction for all development in the southern districts.

There are proposals to build 24,500 new homes in the three districts of Malvern Hills, Wychavon, and Worcester city. Consultation events will be taking place throughout the towns and the villages between now and the end of March 2010. There was one in Upton recently. A timetable for the villages is currently being prepared and it is an opportunity for local needs for such uses as allotments, open space, community facilities etc to be identified.

See www.swjcs.org : On the Malvern Hills District Local Plan, the area put forward for development is in area QL24, defined as an Area of Outstanding Landscape Value.

Area (shaded yellow) QL17, (known locally as The Nubbins), lies on the boundary of the proposed development. This shading indicates a Site of Regional or Local Wildlife Importance, and also a Regionally Important or Geomorphological Site.

This area (The Nubbins) is part of the nationally-important Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark.

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust is working alongside the three councils to ensure that all developments put forward in the lifetime of the Local Plan will be sensitive to its local environment and provide significant enhancements for wildlife as a matter of course, and not as an add-on extra.

Contact Steve Bloomfield, WWT Planning Officer, on 01905 754919, or by email:

stevenb@worcestershirewildlifetrust.org

A. Hill

Martley Millennium Green Trust

(Registered Charity No. 1076295)

Our Annual General Meeting will be held in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 1 December 2009. The meeting will be as informal as possible and will provide an opportunity to review progress and discuss current priorities. We shall be very pleased to see you and any ideas or thoughts you may have about future plans for the Green will be most welcome.

T.Lewington

Village Hall News

Please pop along and check out the fresh look of the Hall. We have been working hard to improve and update the appearance of the hall and hope you like it. We have received many bookings and are planning hard for the Village Hall Christmas Fare held on

29 November. (When you read this hopefully you'd have paid us a visit). We are still looking for volunteers to join us on the committee or if

you are not able to give us this time perhaps you could co-ordinate a fundraising event alone or alongside the committee to help with funds. We are currently reviewing and costing the heating system and cavity wall/loft installation in the hall.

Does anyone know of a company who



would kindly re-paint the white lines outside the village hall - ideally they need to be painted with the same paint used in the middle of roads as it's so expensive? The Committee would like to thank members of the village for their continued support and wish you all a Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year.

Martley 100 Club

October winner is Mr T A Parkes of Willow Green who has won £35.00 - congratulations. (All renewal forms to be returned to me before January please)

Annette Smith



Teme Valley Views from the Teme Valley Children's Centre

A new initiative supported by the Teme Valley Children's Centre is called Heart Smart Homes. This programme is all about improving security for you and your home, in particular, making your home 'fire safe'. The four-week programme helps families make their home fire safe and smoke free and the aim of the course is to increase the confidence participants have in the safety of their home.

Useful tips about fire safety will be provided by the fire brigade when they make a free home visit in week three of the course. In addition to advice on fire safety, families will

receive information about exercise and healthy eating to encourage them to live an overall healthier life. All participants completing the programme will receive a 'Heart Smart' award.

For more information about the Heart Smart programme or for any other information about the Teme Valley Children's Centre please contact Sam Billingham on 01886 812982.



Martley WI

Wednesday 9 December 7.30pm Heaton House

It was disappointing that the Elgar Group meeting we were hosting in November was cancelled for lack of support, but Autumn is always such a busy time, especially in the last few weeks before Christmas. So many parents and grandparents are involved in half-term activities.

We are having a 'Celebration of Christmas' in Martley Church on Saturday 5 December at 3pm in which we hope members of the Elgar Group will join us. Also, of course family, friends and anyone who would like to join in the singing of carols and listening to one or two Christmassy poems and stories.

This month we have Christmas Entertainment with Tony and Ann



Benbow, so it sounds seasonal and should be fun. The competition is a decorated candle. Why not come and join us, you won't need a lighted candle to find the way.

Kate King



Martley and District Horticultural Society

'Topical Tips' was as usual the first item on the menu at the October Meeting, and Chairman, Mike Dunnett, recommended Autumn tidying and checking, such as brush or blow leaves off lawns, clean slippery paths, patios etc and make sure your hosepipe won't split when it's frosty. Also check outside light bulbs! As usual Mike had brought some plants to show us, but this time he'd got them in a black bag. This saved him getting mugged between his car and the Hall. Oh yes, members are very keen gardeners.

After the plant discussion we settled down for an evening with Howard Drury (a TV presenter and journalist), who gave his illustrated talk "40 Years of Ashwood Specialities" which was about how this West Midland Nursery came into being, its self-taught owner John Massey, and his amazing achievements in winning 48 gold medals for a wide range of plants, as well as breeding and propagating a

number of very beautiful and unusual ones. Last but not least John has raised £250,000 by opening his lovely private garden for charities.

Now for the Specialities. *Lewisia* is a plant name after Carl Meriwether Lewis in 1806 – you can go abroad for two weeks and it won't need watering! *Cyclamen* species (corms can last up to 80 years!); *auriculas* (have their petals dressed for shows!); *hepaticas* (very expensive indeed!) – these grow in Japan, USA and Korea; *hellebores* – a huge collection and some fantastic colours, pollinated with tweezers and a brush! More 'specials' included *anemone parvonina*, *hydrangeas* and *salvias*. Howard's slides were superb and he told us all about each species and how to grow them successfully. He had funny stories too. A very enjoyable and educational evening.

Members Christmas Dinner is on Friday 4 December. The new programme will be out!

Tina Steele

Martley Ramblers

Another season of walks over already. There is no walk this month as the weather can be unpredictable. At the recent AGM, the programme for 2010 was drawn up and details for the first one for the New Year will be in the January issue of *The Villager*. Happy

Christmas to all and keep your boots polished and ready.

Kate King



Pudford Lane

The on-going saga of Lane folk

Welcome to the family who have moved into Spring Meadow. We hope they will be very happy there. The fabulous view across the valley to Bredon and beyond almost gives the impression of sitting on a perch. It must be hard to concentrate on more mundane everyday jobs when a glimpse from the window is just there. The mysterious yellow signs in the lane were obviously to guide the Highways workmen as most of the holes have now been filled in. This month's BIG Question is: will the fillings survive the winter rains and ice? We shall just have to wait and see if the infamous Pudford Glacier reappears and forces them out and down to the main road. Or will the incredibly large delivery lorries that try to get up the lane most days, following the faulty sat-nav directions force out the tarmac? Watch this space if you are interested.

Kate King

Martley Parish Council

Unapproved, draft edited minutes of the meeting held on Monday 5 October 2009 at the Memorial Hall. There were 10 members of the public present.

The Democratic Period/Public Question Time

A Representative of Martley Recreation Association confirmed that clearing work has started at the play area. A quotation of £18,000 had been received to carry out ground work

needed there. The Clerk is to seek advice regarding grants and contact Martley Recreation Association.

CSO Smith reported that: (1) A suspicious vehicle has been reported by parishioners. The car is a dark blue estate car and is fairly new. The driver has been described as big build, blonde hair and smartly dressed. The last sighting was near to the church. If anybody does see this car please note the registration number and telephone the Police on 0300 333 3000 immediately. (2) Recent burglaries include a lawn mower taken from Church Steps, a car washer taken from a local farm on the way to Clifton (3) Some vandalism had occurred at the cricket pavilion.

Chair opened the meeting at 20:18pm.

Minutes:

It was resolved to accept the minutes as a true record.

Co-option of Councillors:

Mrs Karen Metcalfe and Mr Tyrone Fearnough will be joining the Parish Council from the next meeting as Parish Councillors.

Progress reports:

The Clerk - The Clerk has written to St. Peters Court regarding grass cutting and will refer to reply under correspondence. The Clerk is awaiting a reply from the Police regarding financial assistance for improvements to the weighbridge and the reason that surgeries have moved to The Chantry. County Councillor Davies is looking into the map. The Lengthsman has been asked to look at overgrown hedges. Bottle banks on The Crown

car park have been moved away from the road to a location nearer The Nubbins end of the car park. The Clerk is to write to The Crown regarding the broken glass where the bins were sited. The Clerk has requested signs for the top and bottom of Hillend Bridge Lane. The Clerk has asked MHDC again if they can notify the Parish Council when there is to be an organised cycle event. The Clerk is to write to Bank of Ireland asking for the account to be closed and all Councillors will need to sign the letter as current signatories.

Landowners support – ditch clearance - The Clerk is to send to County Cllr Davies a copy of the letter sent to Highways requesting permission to clear the ditches. County Cllr. Davies might have funding for ditch clearance.

Lengthsman - The Clerk advised the Parish Council that she has heard nothing from the lengthsman. The Clerk will find out from CALC/ MHDC what qualifications are required for a Lengthsman then advertise for one and write to Mr. R. Wilks terminating his contract. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Mr. T. Gale and Cllr. Mr. R. McHugh for installing the new bins in the centre of the village.

Allotments - The Clerk confirmed that the landowner will discuss rent, conditions, etc. The landowner requested that discussion is held following the open meeting on the 15 October 2009 as allotment requirements may be met by the

planning application.

Highways - The Clerk and Councillors identified work outstanding on Highways report. The Clerk will check the reported faults log for the next meeting.

District and County Councillors' reports:

District Cllr. Mrs. Williams reported that the Abberley-Martley walk will be launched on the 15 October 2009 congratulated the Path-or-Nones on their hard work towards this achievement.

Planning:

An open public meeting with Malvern Architects will take place on Thursday 15 October 2009 at 7.30pm to discuss the application they are currently formulating on behalf of Marsten Developments Ltd to develop the land adjoining The Crown Inn.

New

09/01195/HOU New House Farm, Hope House Lane – Proposed garage.
09/01209/TPA Apartment 1, Laugharne House – Reduce one lime by 30%.

Pending

09/00752/OUT Horsham Court, Horsham – Erection of dwelling.
09/00751/FUL & 09/00750/LBC Stables at Horsham Court – Conversion to create new dwelling with new garages.
09/00749/FUL The Old Court, Horsham – Refurb. of derelict former house with 2 storey extn. & new garage.
09/00662/FUL & 09/00663/LBC Rodge Hill Farm, Hillside – Conversion of barns to form staff and guest accommodation.

Permitted

09/01182/TCN Martley Court Barns –
Fell trees and reduce hawthorn.

Refused

None.

Appealing to Secretary of State

08/01169/FUL Treetops Bungalow,
Hillside – Replacement of existing
dwelling (on-going) 08/01498/FUL
Longside, Hipplecote – Replacement
dwelling (on-going) 09/00423/FUL
Bramblewood, Hipplecote –
Replacement dwelling (on-going)

Speed signs:

The Clerk is to write to County Cllr.
Mr. A. Davies for information about
availability, cost for poles, etc. of the
County Council's roving unit. The
Clerk is to arrange a demonstration
from both Westcotec and 3M.

Map:

Cllr Mrs. D. Goodyear will meet with
Mr Gosling who has kindly offered to
help repair the current notice board.
Possibly put the Path-or-Nones map
on the notice board until funding can
be obtained. Minutes and agenda
might be transferred to the bigger
parish notice board.

Finance:

There were 6 cheques totalling
£1381.88 approved. The Parish
Council accepted the cost for the
lettering of the names for the Freedom
of Martley Boards, which will be
around £50.00. It might be possible to
use any grant money from County
Cllr. Davies for hedge cutting as well
as ditch clearance.

Correspondence:

Items for decision/discussion

included: WCC – Grants Information;
Cheryl Phillips – Grass cutting; Karin
Logan – Post. There were several
Items for information

**Councillors reports and items for
future agenda:**

Cllr Mr. Richard McHugh is to find
out where to obtain further signs
relating to dog mess. The Clerk will
find out when Hollins Lane is due to
be resurfaced as horses are finding it
slippy. Cllr Mr. Richard McHugh is to
contact Highways regarding the recent
drainage work undertaken on Jury
Lane. Councillors are to provide the
Clerk with a list of hedges causing
concern over road-users safety.

Date of next meeting:

The next meeting will be held on
Monday 2 November 2009.

Martley's Past

I was intrigued by an entry in Michael
Grundy's column in the 8 October
2009 issue of the Berrows Journal
headed, 250 Years Ago: "A few days
since, one William Bullock, a
blacksmith of Martley, near
Worcester, aged 90, was married to
Elizabeth Merrell, aged about 15." I
decided to see what happened. I first
found a baptism of Wm Bullock –
bapt. 26 September 1708, son of
James and Elizabeth Bullock. (So, in
1759 was aged 50). I found no record
of Elizabeth's baptism. Then I found
their marriage – 4 February 1768,
William Bullock (widower) married
Elizabeth Merrell. Next came Wm
Bullock's burial, on 5 September 1774
(aged 66).

Then Elizabeth Bullock (nee Morell) re-married 10 December 1778, Abraham Thrupp. Then they have 4 children: John, bapt. 3 October 1779; Susannah, bapt 6 July 1783; 6 February 1785, Abraham, son of Abr and Eliz; 29 March 1789, William. All the children's burials are recorded: Susannah's on 15 February 1786 (aged 2 ½); William's on 10 March 1813 (age 24); Abraham's on 8 March 1814 (age 20) and John's on 8 September 1835 (aged 56). My records finish in 1837, so I have no record of when Elizabeth, or her second husband Abraham, died, but she survived her four children.

Alan Boon.

Martley Library Opening Times

Monday 2—7 pm

Wednesday 4—6 pm

Thursday 10am -1 pm

Friday 2 - 4 pm

Saturday 10am -12 noon

01886 888396 (*opening hours only*)

Burns Supper

After two successful years at Wichenford Village Hall where we sold out of tickets each time the Burns Supper committee have decided to move the venue to Martley Village Hall which will give us added space to have more guests.

The Burns Night supper will be on Friday 29 January 2010. Full details of this event will be available in the January issue of The Villager but in the meantime if you would like to pre-book your tickets please contact:

James Hyslop 01886 888359 or Sheila Richards 01886 888378



**The Villager would like
to wish all its readers,
old and new, a very
happy Christmas**



Over the Garden Wall in Wichenford

WICHENFORD NEEDS YOUR NEWS

Janet Andrews
01886 888303
Sheila Richards
01886 888378



Flower Rota

6 December Advent – no flowers
13 December Advent – no flowers
20 December Christmas decorations
27 December Christmas decorations

Wichenford 100 Club

October winners No. 91 K Webb £75.00 and returned subscriptions of £12.00 to No. 204 P Turner & No. 213 J Hardy. Drawn by David Rendall

A big thank you to all those who have so promptly renewed their subscriptions for 2009 - 2010. We still have a few outstanding subs so if you hold a number and you haven't renewed, please use the address label left with you and drop off or post the £12, or contact me on 888239

PS We do have a couple of members who cannot be traced, so if you have ever had a number and would like to continue please give me a ring. New members are very welcome. Phone if you would like to join.

The more members, the more in the pot and the more there is to win!

Heather Rendall

Ladies Fellowship

The Ladies Fellowship will hold their Christmas Meeting in the Memorial Hall. Date yet to be arranged.

Santa Visits the Hospital

A story ...

It was seven days before Christmas when Santa Claus arrived at the hospital to visit the children's ward. Stopping at each bed, Santa asked in his jovial way what gift each child wished for on Christmas Day. Moving along the ward he finally came to the last bed where a small boy was lying. When asked what he wished for, quietly he said - "Thank you Santa, but do you think that if I am really good, instead of a present I could have a wish granted by God? Then I could wish He would make me so well that I may go home and spend Christmas with my Mummy who is now all alone." Somewhat surprised Santa replied, "I am sure if you are good and you pray, then God will listen and hear what you say."

When leaving the Hospital, Santa was told by the nurse that the child was

very ill and she feared for the worse. She was truly convinced that before Christmas Day the little boy would have sadly passed away. (To be continued next month.)

Derrick Jinks

Congratulations

Congratulations to Naomi Brookes on her appointment as the Royal Academy of Engineering, European Construction Institute Research Professor in Project Management at Loughborough University. Naomi is a former pupil of Wichenford C of E School. She wishes to say that she has very fond memories of all the teachers and also Mrs Hancock, Mrs Ledbury and Mrs Holliday and is grateful for an excellent start to her education . Well done Naomi, we are proud of you.



Little Witley Film Society

There is no film in December, but we start again on 16 January 2010 with *Notes on a Scandal*.

See details of the Little Witley Film Society on the Leisure page of www.martley.org.uk or phone Jean Latham on 01886 88888122 or Bob Jose on 01886 888383.

Mobile Library

Ockeridge

Silver Oaks 9.45–10.05

Wichenford

Malvern View 10.10–10.35

Church 10.45–11.05

Kings Green Farm 11.15–11.40

Rosses Green 11.45–12.05

Martley Hillside

Horn Lane Bungalows 12.10–12.25

Martley

Taylors of Martley 12.30–12.45

LUNCH

Heaton House 1.20–1.50

Church. 1.55–2.15

Clifton

Village Hall 2.30–3.50

The Mobile Library will be visiting these stops on Wednesdays on the dates listed below:

9 Dec 2009

30 Dec 2009

Any enquiries should be made to Stourport Library, Worcester Street, Stourport, Worcs DY13 8EH, tel: 01299-822866, stourportmobile@worcestershire.gov.uk

Harvesting the Past

Fifteen volunteers wanted!
Please read on...

Firstly, thank you for following the progress of our oral history project 'Harvesting the Past' – it has been lovely to have support and interest in the community. The project aims to record the stories and memories of those who grew up in the area, and then find ways of sharing these stories with the community. One of those ways is a community play, which has been especially written for the project by local playwright John Townsend and will be performed at the Chantry High School next April. Over the summer John had the daunting task of turning about 50 hours of recordings into a 90 minute play. It is entitled 'Back Across the Fields' and is set on a farm somewhere in the Martley, Clifton and Wichenford area between 1942 and 1947. I think John has done an excellent

job of weaving together all the recorded stories and adding some drama to create a play which is instructive, delightful and compelling.

I hope you will all come and watch it! The play dates are 28, 29 and 30 April and 1 May.

In September we held auditions for the play, and now have a cast of more than 60, including students from the Chantry, several local people including four octogenarians, and a group of May Pole dancers from Martley Primary. The play's producer Sue Rickman, Chantry's Head of Drama, says that rehearsals are progressing well and that she and the cast are thoroughly enjoying turning the oral history stories into drama. We



Interviewees Sheila Smith, Gladys Hoskins and Bert Bradley (behind) auditioning for 'Back Across the Fields', while playwright John Townsend (right) looks on.

would love more help from the community, so if you are interested in helping backstage, making props or costumes or getting involved in any

other way, please get in touch with Sue Rickman at the Chantry.

We are now taking on another challenge, and need volunteers, please! One of the aims of this project is to teach the youngsters about the way of life in Martley and Wichenford over the past century. The Chantry's Head of Art, Richard Aydon, has come up with a unique way of doing this. We want about 15 people from the community to come into school for about an hour in January to talk to a small group of children about their lives. This could include showing them old photos and may be old-fashioned tools of their trade or household implements that the children may not have seen before. The children will then create a rather special piece of artwork based on what they see and hear. All will be on display in the school in April when the play is being performed. We would love to hear from anyone who is happy to be involved and share a bit of their past with the younger generation. Please contact Sue Broome on 01299 251512 or Julia Letts on Julia.letts@virgin.net.



'Tis the Season to be Jolly

Saturday 5 December

3pm Martley WI are holding a 'Celebration of Christmas' in Martley Church. All welcome.

Sunday 20 December

8.00pm Christmas Quiz at The Admiral Rodney (David will be supplying some of the questions)

Wednesday 23 December

8.00pm Onwards – Carols at The Admiral Rodney

(There are no doubt many other festive events, but these are the only ones the Editor knows about)

In the Garden



In the Garden in December

You probably don't want to be working outside for long at this time of year; the days are short and Christmas takes up much of any 'spare' time. Remember to cut some holly early if you want berried branches for Christmas. Cut a branch leaving plenty of woody stem, then push the cut stem into damp soil in a polytunnel or greenhouse. It needs to be kept moist to keep the berries fresh.

Apple and pear trees can be pruned now and you can apply grease bands to protect the trees from winter moth grubs. Grape vines and gooseberries can also be pruned and you can cut back summer-flowering clematis to a pair of strong buds. It is possible to sow early varieties of broad beans now, but ones sown in the spring catch up quite quickly and are less likely to be dug up by mice.

Why not try a little indoor gardening? There are excellent websites to explore. Two of the best for general interest and advice are those of the Royal Horticultural Society, rhs.org.uk and the Beeb, bbc.co.uk/gardening. Two smaller websites with emphasis on vegetable growing are gardenorganic.org.uk and kitchengarden.co.uk. The latter

is the website of the popular magazine and has a selection of short video clips demonstrating growing techniques.

PS Don't forget bird food in that Christmas shopping list !

JC



Malvern Opera Society

For Those Who Don't Sing

Well, you can sing if you want...but not at our meetings, because Malvern Opera Society (MOS) is about going to the opera—not singing in them. As I sing like a foghorn this is very good news...

The Society was started two years ago by a small group of people in and around Malvern who were interested in going to operas. It is open to everyone in the Malverns and the surrounding area and I've had a great time since I joined. Last season I went to see *La Rondine* by Puccini in a live broadcast from the Metropolitan Opera House, New York to a cinema in Cheltenham; *The Elixir of Love* by Donizetti performed by Welsh National Opera (WNO) in Cardiff and *Katya Kabanova* by Janacek performed by the English Touring Op-



era in Cheltenham. This season I'm off to Monmouth to see Turandot, Mozart's Abduction from the Seraglio by the WNO in Birmingham, Britten's A Midsummer Night's Dream in Cheltenham and Bryn Terfel singing his heart out in the WNO's production of Wagner's The Meistersinger. Puccini's Turandot is a simultaneous transmission from New York and the other three are live performances.

You get a discount on the tickets, a coach to get you there and back, excellent company and someone else to sort out the hassle of getting the tickets and the transport. What's even better is that every two or three months there is a MOS meeting in Malvern Theatre at which an expert gives an illustrated talk on an opera that you are going to see. As opera is one of the few entertainments where you really have to know the story beforehand, this is enormously helpful.

We are still booking for the 2009/2010 season if you are interested in joining us. Membership costs £10 for one or two people at the same address. For further details look at the website www.malvernoperasociety.org.uk, and for the low-down on membership contact Martin Addison on 01905 458537 or e-mail:

mail@malvernoperasociety.org.uk

Val Fare

Malvern Opera Society



Dedicate a Light of Love

Dedicate a light to a loved one in memory or as a gift this Christmas. The main event was at Worcester Cathedral, followed by the switching on of the Lights of Love on the Christmas tree at St Andrew's Spire, Deansway. This lovely event took place on Friday 13 November. You are also welcome to join our event in and at The Priory, Malvern, on Tuesday 15 December at 6pm.

To dedicate a Light of Love, visit www.strichards.org.uk/lightsoflove or telephone 01905 763963

Silver Christmas Greetings Poster

Save time and money this Christmas with one of the St Richard's Hospice special silver anniversary giant Christmas Card posters. Instead of sending cards to colleagues/your local group/your church, write a message on our poster and make a donation to the hospice. Simply email Joanna on jstreet@strichards.org.uk or call 01905 763963 to request your poster and we will also send a special donations envelope.



Church Words

The Rectory 01886 888664

The Christmas Story: what happened? How many of us can recount the story? Have we read the book and seen the film and got the T shirt, as they say? Mary and Joseph, shepherds and wise men, angels and Herod - do we know the story?

According to recent research (Theos), only 12% of adults know the facts of the Christmas story in any detail – the figure dropping to just 7% amongst 18-24 year olds. This may surprise us especially if we know the story well, but we have to ask how did we learn the story? Was it Sunday School, Church, school, or family? Stories are passed on; we all do it, something happens to us and we share that experience with others. Some of these

stories take on greater significance, some become part of our nation's heritage, some become what are known as 'meta narratives' (sorry, the big stories) around which our culture is based. Such stories shape culture and shape our lives. The Christmas Story is one such story passed on to us through culture and time and it continues to affect lives today.

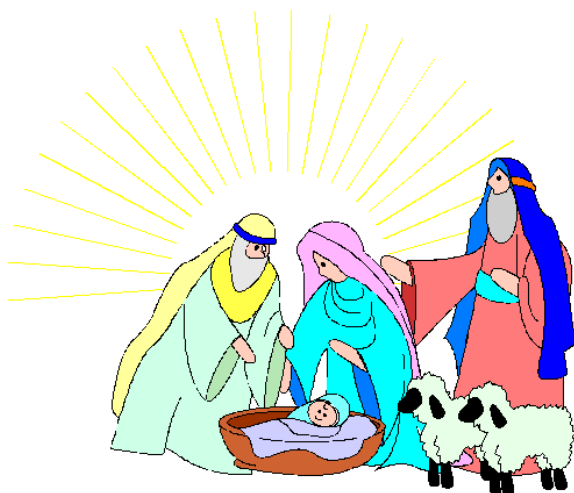
But why should the Christmas story be important for us to know in the 21st century? It's a story of how God himself became one of us and laid aside all his glory to bring us good news. About the obedience of Joseph and Mary, about hope given to shepherds and honour offered by wise men. It's a story that transcends time and culture. It is a story of incarnation,

of Emmanuel, God with us, yesterday today and forever. So how will others hear this story? It needs the Church, Schools and families to continue to tell the Story, for each one of us to apply it to our lives.

May the story of Christmas continue to bring you its eternal message of love joy and peace, this Christmas and always.

God Bless

Rev'd David Sherwin



Church Services for December

Tue 1 Dec	10am Holy Communion – St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas
Wed 2 Dec	10.15 Morning Prayer, St Peter, Martley
Thu 3 Dec	9.00am Morning Prayer, St Laurence, Wichenford
SUN 6 DECEMBER	8am Holy Communion, Knightwick Chapel 10.30am Holy Communion, St Laurence, Wichenford 10.30am Morning Worship, St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas 4.00pm Christingle, St Peter, Martley 6.30pm Evensong, St Leonard, Cotheridge
Mon 7 Dec	9.00am Morning Prayer, St Laurence, Wichenford
Tue 8 Dec	10.00am Morning Prayer, St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas
Wed 9 Dec	10:15am Holy Communion, Heaton House
Thu 10 Dec	9.00am Morning Prayer, St Laurence, Wichenford
SUN 13 DECEMBER	8am Holy Communion, St Leonard, Cotheridge 10.30am Holy Communion, St Peter, Martley 10.30am Morning Prayer, St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas 4.00pm Christingle, St Laurence, Wichenford
Tue 15 Dec	10.00am Holy Communion, St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas
Wed 16 Dec	10.15 Morning Prayer, St Peter, Martley
Thu 17 Dec	9.00am Morning Prayer, St Laurence, Wichenford
Fri 18 Dec-	8.00pm Onwards - Carols at the Masons Arms.
SUN 20 DECEMBER	8am Holy Communion, St Peter, Martley 3pm Carol Service, Knightwick Chapel 4pm Carol Service, St Laurence, Wichenford 6.00pm Carol Service, St Peter, Martley 6.30pm Carol Service, St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas 8.00pm Christmas Quiz at The Admiral Rodney (David will be supplying some of the questions)
Mon 21 Dec	9.00am Morning Prayer, St Peter, Martley
Tue 22 Dec	10.00am Morning Prayer, St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas
Wed 23 Dec	10:15am Holy Communion, Heaton House 8.00pm Onwards – Carols at The Admiral Rodney
Thu 24 December – Christmas Eve	
	4pm Crib Service, St Laurence, Wichenford 5pm Crib Service, St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas 10pm Holy Communion, St Laurence, Wichenford 11.30pm Holy Communion, St Peter, Martley 11.30pm Holy Communion, St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas
Fri 25 December – Christmas Day	
	9am Holy Communion, St Leonard, Cotheridge 10.30am Family Worship, St Peter, Martley
SUN 27 DECEMBER	10.30am Benefice Holy Comm'n, St Mary Magdalene, B'was



Village Contacts



Editor of The Villager	Michelle Higgins editor@martley.org or 01886 888344 or leave articles at Martley Post Office
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Martley & District Horticultural Society	Pam Minchin—01886 888521 or Margaret Jackson—01886 888654
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Martley Pre-School	Kath/Lucy—01886 889127 www.martleypreschool.co.uk
Wichenford contacts for The Villager	Janet Andrews—01886 888303 or Sheila Richards—01886 888378
Kenswick & Wichenford Parish Council	Clerk—Shirley Sanders 01886 888302
Wichenford Wine Club	Chairman—Bill Hylan 01886 888431
Wichenford Local Heritage Group	Heather Rendall—01886 888239

To have your organisation and its contact details appear on this list, or to change the details shown here, email editor@martley.org or leave a note for the editor at Martley Post Office.

And finally ...

Just to get you in the mood for you-know-what, here are some of last year's (always the best ...) cracker jokes:

Q. What must you know to be an auctioneer?

A. Lots

Q. *Why did the chicken run onto the football pitch?*

A. *Because the referee blew for a foul*

Q. What is yellow and white and goes down the track at 100 mph? (*unless it is on the Cotswold line to London, of course—Ed.*)

A. The train driver's egg sandwich

Q. *Who is the most famous married woman in America?*

A. *Mrs Sippi*

Q. How do snails keep their shells shiny?

A. They use snail varnish

Q. *Why don't ducks tell jokes?*

A. *Because they would quack up*

