

CROCKERNWELL
DREWSTEIGNTON
SANDY PARK
VENTON
WHIDDON DOWN

Drewsteignton Parish Post



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AUGUST 2011

JULY NEWS FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

This month the Council have been receiving applications for the post of Clerk to the Council. A number of people registered their interest in the position and a short-list of three were selected for interview which took place on Monday 25th July. The standard of applicants was extremely high, but following interview Mrs Bella Snook from Whiddon Down has been appointed and takes up her responsibilities on 1st September 2011. Bella brings a wealth of experience to the Council ranging from managing a team of 20 hairdressers, running her own business, financial and personnel management in the voluntary sector and even poultry packing!! We are looking forward to a long and happy working relationship with Bella.

The Council also thank our outgoing Clerk Jackie Bowden and wish her well in the future.

As appears to be the norm at the moment, the Council are waiting for other partners to progress a number of matters: Devon County Council for parking at the Post Office and Turnpike Road; Dartmoor National Park on planning matters and the commercial shoot in the Fingle

Gorge; West Devon Borough Council regarding the Travellers site and provision of a play area in Barn Close at Whiddon Down.

The Council were sad to hear that Nick Payne from WDBC had lost his job in the latest reorganisation. Nick has for many years been a valuable friend to the Parish Council and was always been approachable for advice on many matters - even if his views did not always agree with those of the Parish Council!!!

The Council were notified of damage to a wall at Parford allegedly caused by a refuse lorry. As we are aware of another similar incident we have written to WDBC requesting that they discuss these incidents with their contractors. Are you aware of any similar problems?

Another one moving on is Michael Petrie-Ritchie, who has notified his wish to stand down as Editor of the Parish Post. We thank him for all his hard work over the last couple of years and are grateful to him agreeing to stay in post to work with the new editor.

Our next meeting is Monday 15th August 7.30pm at Drewsteignton.

Showtime!

Chagford Show Thursday 18th August, 2011 held at Mill End, Chagford. Entertainment galore this year with all sorts to keep the young and the old happy and entertained all day.

Children's Pets Corner : Children's Races: Ticklish Allsorts Show: Punch & Judy: Savage Skills World Champion Freestyle Mountain Bike Stunt Team: Ben Potter Birds of Prey Display: Cogs & Wheels Ladies Morris Dancers: 'Red Hot Steel' Band: Terrier Racing: Parade of the Mid Devon Hunt: and much much more. The day starts with judging at 8.30 and continues right through to early evening with a Tug of War competition with £100 first prize.

For further information please contact Sally Hutchings Show Secretary on 01647 24306 or email sally385@btinternet.com Entry: Adults £7-50. Children 5 - 15 £2-50. Under 5's free.

Free Car Parking. Free bus from Moretonhampstead and Chagford Square.



The Tour of Britain Cycle Race 2011

The Tour of Britain cycle race returns to the South West for one day in 2011, passing through Devon on Thursday 15 September.

Now in its fifth year in our region, it will take on its familiar format that has been so successful in recent years. The race is comprised of 16 teams of six cyclists who will race across the county of Devon on Stage 5 of this international event. The race receives global television coverage and is broadcast nationally on ITV4 on the day of the race.

The Tour of Britain is the UK's leading professional cycling race and the biggest spectator event in the country. Last year's two South West stages saw almost a quarter of a million people turning out along the routes to see the racing and has generated almost £11 million for the economies of Somerset and Devon over the past two years.

On Thursday 15 September the race will start in Exeter and travel through Devon, finishing on the Esplanade in Exmouth. Starting from Cathedral Yard in Exeter, the Devon stage will push the profes-

sional cyclists to their limits as they cover more than 110 miles (180 km) of tough terrain, including Dartmoor National Park, before finishing in Exmouth. The route will take in a number of other communities including Pathfinder Village, Tedburn St Mary, Moretonhampstead, Bovey Tracey, Dartmeet, Postbridge, Bow, Crediton, Broadclyst, Rockbeare and West Hill. Most towns along the route will have rolling road closures, meaning the roads will only be closed whilst the race passes through the town/village.

Information on the race route and estimated times are below. We apologise in advance for any inconvenience that might be caused by the race, but hope that you will enjoy the event. If you are aware of a planned activity taking place on the 15 September which might be affected by the road closures.

Please email: environment@devon.gov.uk to discuss any concerns.

Jenny Caldwell, Tour of Britain Project Manager, Devon County Council

Hike For Dartmoor Rescue

During the summer holidays a couple of local Drewsteignton children, Bonni Shapland-Hill (age 11) and her brother Jacob (age 7) will be taking on the challenge of the Two Moors Way, an epic trek across some of the most difficult moorland terrain in the country.

Starting on the South Devon Coast in early August, the children, accompanied by their parents Rob and Deanne, will be hiking 150 miles across Devon in aid of The Dartmoor Rescue Group, a charitable organisation established in 1968 who every year rescue dozens of people who have become lost or who have encountered problems while in difficult terrain. All volunteers, they work alongside the police and coastguard, often being called out into harsh and bleak conditions to ensure the safety of people visiting and hiking the moors and any other wild areas within the region.

The children's' journey will include crossing the entire length of Dartmoor from Ivybridge to Drewsteignton and also across the whole of Exmoor where they will finally descend into the north coast town of **Lynmouth. The official route is 117 miles but, as this is the family's summer holiday, they are planning a few sightseeing detours - all by foot of course! - to bring the total up to 150 miles.**

The children have been training and preparing for this walk for a long time and are both extremely excited about the whole adventure. The family often find themselves hiking over the moors, enjoying the unparalleled ruggedness and beauty of Dartmoor while learning all about wildlife and nature. They recently attended a 'foraging for wild food' course and hope to sample many edible plants along the way. Dad Rob, who is a navigation instructor, has been showing them how to fix their position using maps and compasses. He said that the children have learned how to identify landmarks and plot these on an Ordnance Survey map using a compass to take bearings. This is a vital skill if you are planning on a high moorland hike as very often there are no proper footpaths to mark your route and becoming disorientated can be a very real hazard.

The children are already well on their way to raising their £1,000 target but could really do with some more support. I mentioned that the members of the Dartmoor Rescue Group give their time completely voluntarily and the money raised will be used to help purchase vital search and rescue equipment. Please

help us support this very worthy local cause.

If you would like to donate or would like more information on learning to navigate by land or sea you can **contact the childrens' parents** shapland.hill@hotmail.com **or by visiting the charity's website** <http://www.dartmoor-rescue.org/> (please ensure you mention 'Bonni & Jacob sponsored Two Moors Way hike' so the children can be recognised as the fund raisers). Thank you for any support. *Deanne Shapland-Hill*

News from Whiddon Down



On July 16th it tipped down with rain so our Village Fete had to move location and was held inside the Village Hall. It didn't dampen people's spirits – they still turned out to enjoy the afternoon. The hall was packed with people, cakes, bric a brac, cream teas, a treasure hunt, stalls and games and a very successful raffle was held. Thank you everyone who helped on the day or came along to support us. It was lovely to see so many local people.

Did you go to school in Whiddon Down? This year Whiddon Down Village Hall is 50 years old! Before that

the building was the local school. If you used to go to school in what is now the Village Hall and have memories, photos or any anecdotes you would like to share and that we could use in our 50 year celebration please contact Margery Wonnacott 01647 231631 or me, Pat Sheridan 01647 231580 or any of the other Whiddon Down Village Hall Committee members. Don't forget to make a note in your diary, our **Village Hall celebration is on October 22nd at 3.30pm.**

The Village Hall is being used regularly by a number of organisations and groups. The Dog training group, Whiddon Luncheon Club, Okehampton Beekeepers, Mother's Union, Rosemary Conley Fitness Group etc. who are all making the most of this really good facility. If you are planning a party or need a venue for a meeting or event why not consider hiring Whiddon Down Village Hall? It is a good sized hall with a kitchen and a car park - ideal.

To book the Hall (very reasonable at £5.50 per hour, £4.50 per hour for local hirers) please contact Clare Rowe tel. 01647 231643.

Whiddon Down Village Hall **Produce Market** is held on the fourth Saturday of the month **10am – 12 noon**, the next date is **August 27th**. Please try to come along. There are a wide range of local produce items for sale including fresh meat, plants, cheese and cakes. We now have a seasonal fruit and vegetables. There are opportunities to buy locally made jewellery, cards, wooden items, framed photos of Dartmoor scenes and more... Refreshments are also available including delicious bacon rolls. Come along and see for yourself, meet friends, enjoy a cuppa and have a chat. You will be sure of a cheerful welcome.

If you have something suitable to sell and would like to, please book a table - it only costs £4 for the morning. Contact Patrick Sullivan tel. 01647 231411.

Pat Sheridan, Whiddon Down Village Hall Committee

CALLING ALL COOKS!

We need help in creating a village cookbook to be sold in aid of Drewsteignton Playing Fields later this year. All recipes, however simple, will be very much appreciated - sweet or savoury.

If anyone would like to attach a drawing/photo of their dish, please do!

Thank you to those who have already responded to my previous request- they are great!

Please email your recipes to: jessloram@hotmail.co.uk or post through my door:

4 Knowle Lane, Drewsteignton by the end of August!

Thank you for your help,

Jess Loram.





HEALTH MATTERS

Pip Rubbra lives in Drewsteignton and works as a Community Matron, providing a specialist service aimed at caring for people with complex diseases at home and keeping them out of hospital.

How do the new NHS reforms affect us locally?

At the moment, Health Secretary Andrew Lansley tells us that groups of GPs, called consortia, will be established by April 2013 and these will commission care for their local communities from the NHS or any qualified provider (such providers refer to private companies, charities and voluntary organisations, many of which already provide services to the NHS or new health social enterprises).

Currently NHS Devon covers a population of 756,258. Under the new organisational plans there are to be three localities in Devon: Southern, Eastern and Northern. There will be seven GP consortia in total across these three areas: two in Southern, four in Eastern and one in the Northern locality.

In September 2010 the Devon Primary Care Trust board considered the option of an interim arrangement to give more time to review all possibilities for the future, starting from 1st April this year. So, our Devon Primary Care Trust disbanded and the decision NHS Devon came to was that community services in Eastern Devon -- believe it or not this is the area we come under -- would be managed by Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust. This means that our local community services, including Moretonhampstead and Okehampton hospitals, are now managed by Northern Devon Healthcare Trust rather than Devon PCT.

The thinking at the moment is that the GP consortia will take on the commissioning role from Northern Devon Healthcare trust by April 2013, as long as they can show they are ready. Strategic health authorities (SHAs) which oversee the work of PCTs will be abolished nine months earlier. A new NHS national commissioning board is expected to take over many of the functions of the SHAs, Shuffle, shuffle !!

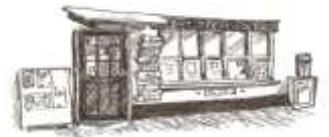
As you can imagine the shifting of services from one employer to another has been unsettling over the last few months with a lot of managerial positions being squeezed but be reassured all local services will carry on as normal and we will wait to see what delights the new GP consortia will bring us in April 2013.

Pip Rubbra

Drewsteignton Post Office

Did you know ... **How easy it is to pay your rates through the Post Office.**

By using your local Post Office you keep it going. Use it or lose it!



Drewsteignton Merry - Go - Round

Outing to Weston-super-Mare

Thursday 8th September

Leaving

Whiddon Down

At 9.30 am

For further details and to book your seat

Please ring Pam 01647 281638

Open to all.

DREWSTEIGNTON GARDENERS' CLUB

ANNUAL SHOW

Entries open to everyone in the parish

Schedules from the Post Office

Saturday 27th August

In the Village Hall



Show open to the public at 2.30pm

Refreshments - Raffle!

Swifts: A Leap Of Faith

As I write this on Sunday 31st July, I am aware that I have seen fewer swifts (only three) over the village today than on any other day over the month, and by the time this Parish Post is with you, they will be long gone on their trip back to Africa.

I had three breeding pairs this year in my six established boxes, which was a bit disappointing as I had seen adults going in and out of all the nest boxes over the previous two months, and presumed we had nesting in all the boxes.

It was only when my friend Malcolm (a licensed bird ringer) and I checked the boxes on the 9th July, were we able to confirm the breeding numbers and five juveniles were ringed from the three nests. We also carefully ringed four adults that we found in the boxes.

Since then, I have been watching the adults bring back food to the occupied boxes and have been able to hear the high pitched "twittering" of the juvenile swifts calling from inside.

By Monday 24th July, the young swifts had fledged (flown) from the two boxes on the front of the house as they could no longer be heard calling or scratching around in the box or seen peeping out of the entrance. I could plainly hear the twittering from the box at the rear of my house on the gable end, and Malcolm confirmed that during our visit on the 9th July, the young swifts in the front boxes were older than the single in the rear (gable end) box.

Over the past week, I have been keeping quite detailed records of the swift numbers in the long warm evenings, especially maximum numbers of birds in the screaming parties as they have been chasing about over the village. The numbers have been quite consistent with about 17 swifts present most evenings and the remaining youngster still audibly twittering when I listened from beneath the box in the back garden. The start of Saturday, 30th July was glorious, with mist in the valley and warmth from the sun at 06.45 as I opened up my greenhouse. Having made a cup of tea and grabbed my binoculars, I sat in the garden viewing the nest box and watched the remaining young swift looking out of the entrance hole then moving back inside again, wondering if today would be the day of its "leap of faith". I refer to them leaving a nest box or cavity as a leap of faith, as all its life it has been incubated, then brooded, and fed within the dark confines of its nest without being able to stretch its wings fully or exercise. So when a young swift leaves its nest, it has never flown before or even beaten its wings.

They just drop out of their nest and go for it, flying free for the first time and never to return to their nest again. Unlike song birds, they feed themselves from that first flight, may never see their parents as the adults normally leave before the young fledge and with no guidance, they just head off on their southern migration. If they survive their first three years and get to breeding age, they will have spent all that time on the wing, eating, sleeping and making their migratory journeys while continually airborne.

Between 7 and 8am, there were many groups of swifts hunting flies and moving high over the village, which I presumed were birds already heading south on migration (I counted a group of about 70 briefly) with occasional smaller groups of low level screaming birds.

As I switched back continually to the juvenile swift peeping out of the nest box, through my binoculars, I had such a good view that I contemplated getting my camera. Suddenly, it moved further out of the small entrance hole, showing its folded wings and then dropped straight out and was airborne. I even saw the dull blur of its leg ring as it left the box, and watched it fly up and off as it took to the skies, beating its wings for the first time. I was amazed to see one of our swifts successfully fledge and I actually gasped when it dropped out of the box. It fledged at 08.03am and the established wisdom is that they normally do this before 8am in the mornings!

The swifts will not be back in the village until next May so if anyone is interested in putting up nest boxes for next year, do get in touch on 281681.

Nick Dixon

Thank you from Dartmoor Arts

All of us involved with organising the Dartmoor Arts week want to thank everyone in Drewsteignton who showed such tolerance and kindness towards the visiting students. They all had a great week and so many of them commented to us what a friendly village Drewsteignton was. Thank you.

For our part, we will certainly try to improve our parking arrangements next year!

Veg Plot

Protecting the Harvest

It's the height of summer, and with a bit of luck your plot should be bursting with fresh vegetables. Now's the time to keep an eye on things and make sure you get to enjoy all the harvest yourself. Here are a few pests and problems to watch out for, and a few tips on how to deal with them:

Flea Beetles These little black bugs are noticeable by the tiny holes they make in the leaves of salad **crops like rocket and mustard leaves. The leaves are still perfectly edible, they just don't look so nice.** Flea beetles only tend to be a problem from June to August. Deal with them by either covering your crop with micromesh – either stretched across hoops, or laid loosely over the leaves and pegged down. Or more simply, avoid growing salad leaves during this time. Either sow in March/April for a late spring harvest, or sow in July/August for an autumn harvest.

Caterpillars These guys are a little more vicious, so you need to keep your eyes peeled. Brassicas (everything from radishes, mizuna, rocket, kale through to cabbages) make very attractive egg laying sites for cabbage white butterflies. Once the eggs hatch, legions of hungry caterpillars will wriggle forth. Either drape micromesh netting over your plants to keep the butterflies off in the first place. Or the simpler option, **if you're just growing a few plants** - pick off the caterpillars by hand. Look out for the eggs too - rub/wash off any clusters of white or yellow balls you find on the underside of leaves.

Tomato Blight This tends to affect outdoor grown tomatoes, especially in wet summers. With the dry **weather this year we haven't been affected, so fingers crossed.** The tell-tale signs are brown/black patches that first appear on the leaves and soon spread till the whole plant rots. Avoid it by growing varieties that reach maturity quickly like cherry tomatoes or tumbling toms. Or if your budget will stretch - get yourself **a greenhouse so the leaves don't get wet in the first place!**

Mildew Dry weather tends to encourage powdery mildew on the leaves of courgettes and squash. This often happens at this time of the year and is generally nothing to worry about. Cut/pull off rotten leaves if you want to tidy up the appearance of the plants, but it's not essential. Regular watering and tomato feed every couple of weeks will improve their resilience and boost the crop. *Peter Clements*

Church News

Our news includes the appointment of a new Rector, whose name will be known officially on August 7. Also, Angela Thomas and Norma Gillard have joined our team of lay worship-leaders. At the recent PCC meeting we continued to explore ways to make the church, and the story of Christ to which it bears witness, more available to people. We also made decisions about the restoration of the Lych-gate and kissing gates (both in hand).

Given the state of the property market, and a generous anonymous donation that has enabled the PCC to afford to refurbish Church Cottage, the Cottage will in the first instance be offered for let on a short hold tenancy basis, through an agent, at a commercial rent. This is likely to be in the autumn.

Dates for the diary: Sept 24 - working party on the churchyard. Sept 25 - 'back to church Sunday', an open invitation to a service provided particularly for those who haven't been for a while, and miss it. Nov 20 - a reading of John's Gospel, in celebration of the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible.

Christopher Southgate

Playing Field: Zip Wire News

Emanuel Hendry are well underway with the construction of the zip wire and hopefully this will be installed by the second week of August.

Huge THANK YOU to Tim Cox and the National Trust who have kindly donated about half of the logs required, the rest being bought from a bit further down the Teign Valley.

All the round poles used are larch, which is a naturally durable, very dense softwood. Unfortunately, a lot of the larch in the Teign Valley is being felled as a precaution due to the spread of the phytophthora ramorum infection.



News from the Castle

Last month I swore that I was going to set up a diary so that I'd have something to refer to when I came to write the next piece for the Parish Post – and I did. However, at this time of year there is really very little of any note to record, except for the standard girding of loins as we prepare for the school holidays and our peak season. So, once again, I will concentrate on looking forward.

I'm sure you're all aware that we currently have a project underway, called 'Design for Life?' to resolve the issues that have arisen as a result of water getting into the building. In order to promote the 'save Castle Drogo' message we are inviting both local residents and visitors to make some bunting for display around the property. If you have any good quality material that you can let us have, we'd be very grateful if you could send it in to us or leave it at the Visitor Centre. Even better, if you would like to help with making the bunting, then please come along on either Monday 15th August or Friday 26th August between midday and 3pm. All helpers are welcome to enjoy the Castle and the gardens afterward. If you would like any further information about this, then please ring Paula Clarke on 01647 434130.

On 10th September there will be another opportunity to visit us for free as we, once again, take part in the Heritage Open Day scheme. This year you will also have the chance to discover some parts of Castle Drogo that are normally hidden from the public, and learn more about the 'Design for Life?' project, by going on a roof tour.

Tickets for the tour cost £1.50 and can be bought from the Visitor Centre on the day.

Finally, on 24th and 25th September we will be holding our annual World War II event (and rumour has it that this may be the last one for a while!). As always the Military Vehicle Trust will be here with a selection of military vehicles from around the world. For younger members of the family there will be a trail to follow, during which they will have the opportunity to discover what life was like as a war time evacuee. Finally, the **highlight of this year's event will be a flypast by a Spitfire from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, on the Saturday, a truly spectacular and evocative sight.** For further information and updates about this, or any of our events, please visit our website at www.nationaltrust.org.uk/castledrogo.



Well, that's it from me for another month. I shall

now go and look for something interesting to put into the diary for next month's piece. Till then I'll keep my fingers crossed that the current spell of fine weather continues.

Andy Dawson, Compliance & Environmental Practices Co-ordinator, Dartmoor Properties.

Telephone: 01647 434117; email: andy.dawson@nationaltrust.org.uk

Cubs and Scouts

We had a successful bike ride to Castle Drogo -- fuelled with some jam sandwiches and homemade cakes from Sarah and myself. We also had a fantastic camp at Taw Bottom. The South Tawton cubs were extremely well behaved and I'm very proud to have taken them.

We're still looking for two new scout leaders, it's a challenging but hugely rewarding role and the Scout Association offers full training as well as all checks and other support.

If not you personally, can you think of anyone else who might consider taking this on? We need to recruit someone as soon as possible to ensure the survival of our scouts. The Scouts meet in Drewsteignton Village Hall on a Thursday evening and have children from all over the area. Until we have new leaders there will be no scouts until further notice.

The new term for cubs starts in September.

Paula Allen 01647 281144

Young Dartington

I've just had a really exciting five days at Young Dartington.

Young Dartington is a summer camp where you can do all sorts of activities. I went with Livy and we did the same activities - watersports, quest games, underground challenge, rock climbing and bush craft. The camp runs over a three-week period but Livy and I just did it for one week like most people. You had two sessions of each activity over the course of the week. You did one activity in the morning then had lunch then did a different activity.

On two of the days, Livy and I had all-day activities, rock climbing and underground challenge. On the water sports, we did kayaking in a big lake. We had to wear a wet suit, a swimming costume and a life jacket. Each session was three hours long. It took about 45 minutes to get there and then we had a long time in the water. Quest games involved a lot of running about. We played a game called **"Capture the flag" which was new to me and was very exciting!**

I think that underground challenge was my favourite of all the activities. We drove in a mini bus to the caves which were about 45 minutes away. Rachel,

our instructor, led us in to the mouth of the caves where we turned on our lights and checked that our overalls were done up. Then we went into the **caves. We went into Crystal Chamber and Bishop's Chamber. We got told a story in Bishop's Chamber** and saw a skeleton. We went through a worm hole, got so muddy and it was really fun!!!

Rock climbing was also an all-day activity. It took a while to get there and when we did get there we had to walk a bit to get to the rocks. I was the last to go rock climbing but it was worth the wait. We got to climb up and abseil down. We went on that rock twice then we went on a taller, bigger and steeper rock.

After that we went for a swim in the river then went and had a look at the top of a huge cliff with a stunning view. Bush craft was really cool we got to **have a go at archery, made "dampers" (a simple version of bread)** over a fire and swam in the river. We did animal tracking and we saw lots of crickets and grass hoppers. The food there was great, and so was the hot chocolate. On the last night there was a talent show and I won it with my poem Matilda!!!!!!!!!!!! Tilly



Drewsteignton

Parish Post

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Contributions for the next edition by
1st Sept — thank you