

CROCKERNWELL  
DREWSTEIGNTON  
SANDY PARK  
VENTON  
WHIDDON DOWN

# Drewsteignton Parish Post

ISSUE NO. 54

JULY 2010

## JUNE NEWS FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

The results of the recent speed survey in Crockernwell were given by Cllr Savage. He had a meeting with the Casualty Reduction Officer to discuss the results and was told that the average speed was not high enough to justify much enforcement action being taken by the police. On further examination of the figures it appears that there is an average of 240 vehicles per day exceeding 36 mph and 91 exceeding 41 mph. The Council felt that given the high numbers involved some action should be taken and are again contacting Inspector Hammond at Okehampton to resolve this. Five planning matters were discussed and the Council resolved to support applications at Smiths Cross Farm, Drewsteignton, Fairview Bungalow, Venton, and Mellish Martins Farm, Whiddon Down, to object to land at Nether-ton Hill, Drewsteignton, and make no comment on Saddlers Close, Crockernwell. We received information from Dartmoor National Park that they pay Lonsdale Forestry £3,000 per year for the permissive paths through Fingle Gorge. A recent incident of air pollution at Venton was highlighted by Cllr Power and as a result of action taken by her the Environmental Health Department at West Devon Borough

Council have hopefully resolved the matter and there should be no further incidents. Should there be, then parishioners are asked to contact David Sexton at WDBC direct. Cllr Mudge gave a report on the Playing Fields AGM and the committee is to be congratulated for their hard work and future plans. WDBC have written to us to ask if we could suggest a suitable name for the new development at Lamb Park, Drewsteignton. After various options were put forward, we resolved that Prestonbury View would be our choice. The subject of unofficial signs at the side of the road at Whiddon Down was raised by Cllr Hester and we resolved to ask South West Highways to remove any commercial signs on the roadside, but those advertising local and charitable events should be allowed as long as they were not placed more than a week before the event and removed afterwards. The updated car park signs for Drewsteignton are being ordered. The training evening for Councillors has been altered and clashes with our normal meeting night so our next meeting is **7.30 pm on WEDNESDAY, 21st July 2010 at Whiddon Down.**

### Merry Go Round

Trip to Minehead by Steam Train from Bishops Lydeard

Wednesday September 2nd

£10 per person

Time of departure in next issue of Parish Post.

This trip is open to all so please ring Pam on 01647 281650 to book your seat.



## Parish Profile.....

The Parish Profile has been an occasional feature of the Parish Post for some time now, if you would like to be featured, or have any other ideas for articles, please get in touch.



**Jessie Kimberley (nee Shiell) has lived in Drewsteignton Parish all her life, and now lives in the village with her husband Dave.**

*What were you like at school?*

On the periphery of cool, but a bit swotty and a bit of a geek. Never

had a boyfriend.

*What do you do?*

I am a primary school teacher.

*Describe your perfect day.*

Puzzles, board games, Sunday roast with Mum and Dad (and Dave), and then a really good crime drama on TV.

*If you could have a plane ticket to anywhere, where would you go?*

I'd go to Sydney, but only if Dave had a ticket too and we could come home.

*What is your favourite film?*

No particular favourite, but I love films. Last weekend I went with 12 girlfriends to see Eclipse -- hot werewolves and vampires!

*Where was your last holiday?*

Mexico, on my honeymoon.

*What's your favourite meal?*

Spicy bean enchiladas from Harry's in Exeter.

*What is your favourite book?*

Harry Potter -- all seven of them.

*What's your favourite song?*

Total Eclipse of the Heart, by Bonnie Tyler. I sing it with my Dad.

*Favourite colour?*

I don't have one.

*How do you relax?*

Watch TV and eat.

*What's your motto?*

If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all.

*What's the most important lesson that life has taught you?*

Life is short -- make the most of it.

*When you were growing up, did you think you would live in Devon?*

I always hoped I would, but didn't think it would be possible.

*What do you like best about Drewsteignton?*

I know almost everyone and I like seeing them all the time.

### Scout report

At the beginning of July the scouts went on an overnight hike starting at Chagford, camping in Skip's wood near Cheriton Bishop, then finishing in Moretonhampstead. We planned our routes beforehand, carried all our stuff including our food and we did not get lost! Nobody cut or burnt themselves so hopefully Charlotte will let us have our badge.

Scouts have now finished for the summer so thank you to Skip and Charlotte for all their hard work all year. We do appreciate you really! Skip is looking for a helper so anybody interested in spending their evenings with us lovely people do come along. We are planning lots more camps and campfires in September. *Elsa*

## View from the Farm-- Aliens in our Midst!

Aliens are threatening our biodiversity and farmers' Single Farm Payment and this time it's not the new team at DEFRA. Invasive plants are spreading in the UK at an alarming rate at an estimated cost to the taxpayer of £2.7 billion just to control the spread. When this is added to the cost of structural damage to roads, houses and flood defences by species such as Japanese knotweed, you can realise why Government agencies are keen to make us all aware of these 'attractive' plants. Himalayan balsam can clog waterways, thus increasing flooding risk, and some species such as giant hogweed can damage human health causing severe burns and dermatitis.

Under the Good Agricultural and Environmental Code that farmers must follow to meet the cross compliance to receive their Single Farm Payment, Code 11 states, 'You must take all reasonable steps to prevent the spread of injurious and invasive weeds on your, and onto adjoining, land.' This is enforced under the Weeds Act 1959, which is directed at clearing weeds that threaten agricultural production, and the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. 'Injurious weeds' include ragwort, spear

thistle, creeping thistle, broad-leaved and curled dock that farmers battle with at this time of year, sometimes using herbicides but more normally topping or even digging and removing the culprit (the only efficient way with ragwort).

Luckily around Drewsteignton there is not a lot of ragwort, but in some areas you can spot many yellow flowers along the roadside verges. Some councils take their responsibilities seriously and carefully remove the plants. I hope this doesn't become victim of the cutbacks in the future.

Thinking about this, the kids and I went on a search for Himalayan balsam in an area we have found the plants before -- the seed dispersal is great fun to watch! -- and found that it had been cleared, not sure who by but obviously by somebody keeping within the law.

If you are not sure what any of these plants look like and how to control them there is a load of information on the internet and a very interesting site from the GB Non-native Species Secretariat [www.nonnativespecies.org](http://www.nonnativespecies.org) as well as lots of help from the redesigned DEFRA site.

### Chagford FC Kicks Off

Chagford Football Club will be looking forward to some local derbies during the new season, having been voted into the Devon & Exeter Football League, following their withdrawal from the South Devon Football League. The season kicks off on Saturday 14th August.

Other important dates:

Saturday, 24th July (from 2pm): Double-header friendlies v Staverton/Landscove 1sts & 2nds.

At Moretonhampstead.

Saturday 31st July (from 2pm): Double-header friendlies v Newtown (Exeter) 1sts & 2nds. Venue in Exeter to be decided.

Sunday 8th August (K.O. 3pm): Steven Hill Memorial Cup v Moretonhampstead. At Moretonhampstead. [www.chagfordfc.com](http://www.chagfordfc.com)

### News from Whiddon Down

The Whiddon Down Village Hall Produce Market has been running for a few months now and is proving very popular. It is held on every fourth Saturday of the month from 10am until noon. Future dates for 2010 are: 24th July, 28th August, 25th September, 23rd October, 27th November. There are a wide range of items for sale including fresh poultry, plants, cheese, cakes and crafts and more... Refreshments are also available including delicious bacon rolls. Come along, buy our wares, meet people, enjoy a cuppa and have a chat. You will be sure of a cheerful welcome.

We need a few more sellers so if you have something suitable and would like to give it a go please

book a table -- it only costs £4 for the morning. Contact Patrick Sullivan tel. 01647 231411 or Catherine Dunn tel. 01647 231452.

If you have surplus allotment or garden produce but it's not quite enough to fill a table, why not get together with a friend and share a table? It's good fun and could pay for your next packets of seeds and some compost etc!

We are still holding our monthly Whist Drives on the last Saturday of the month. 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 please contact Clare Rowe tel. 01647 231643. *Pat Sheridan*



*Sam Peirce resides in Exeter and has been a regular columnist in a number of regional newspapers. Never shy of expressing an opinion, she writes about all manner of things but is happiest when ranting about the things that impinge on her otherwise harmonious existence. Every month, she will share her thoughts with us in The Parish Post.*

## Human Traffic...

I have always hated crowds and often consider taking tranquilisers before heading up the High Street because, for me, it ends up being an unnecessarily demanding obstacle course with no reward if I manage to get through it, except for the retention of the tiny bit left of my sanity. I don't know whether it's because of that impenetrable social armour that people put on before they go shopping, or whether I'm getting to that age where most females become invisible. But increasingly, it feels like the hundreds of people aggressively refusing to alter their trajectory don't actually see me.

There are three typical pedestrian situations that kick-start the panic attack. The first is a speed issue: the main ingredients are a narrow pavement and a person or persons who lack, shall we say, a sense of urgency. While this is usually nobody's fault, it usually results in a series of frustrated and erratic attempts to pass the obstructing stroller. When the restrained pedestrian finally overtakes, they secretly feel that same sense of pride and achievement recalled from the time they won the egg and spoon race at primary school.

The second is the highly irritating bunch of pedestrians who stop without warning – to light a fag, to take a break, to make a call, to text their gran, to cry Hallelujah – whatever.

It's inconsiderate and, if you're not alert, tends to create a bit of a human pile-up.

The third bunch make me violent: those that don't know what the term 'single file' means. They are usually walls of young people, going along chattering about erudite topics such as RPatz's, Lady Gaga's and Dappy's favourite jam varieties, oblivious to the fact that anyone else might want to use the pavement. Before you know it, you're forced on to the path of oncoming traffic.

Once upon a time, to make negotiating the pavements and walkways relatively painless, we could rely on courtesy and manners. An outstretched arm gesturing 'you first', a nod here, an acknowledgement there. Those days are long over.

What we need is a new form of crowd control: we need to treat pedestrians like the unthinking, blinkered automatons they seem to have become. Let's have lane systems, rear-view mirrors and brake lights. **As for the bunch who force innocent pedestrians on to the street? Let's impose penalties – the removal of their right to walk untethered to a responsible adult.**

Desperate times call for desperate measures.

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## Holy Trinity Church Clock

Drewsteignton PCC would like to thank Teignton Fayre, Fingle Bridge Harvest Auction and Devon County Council – through Councillor James McInnes - for all the contributions towards the repainting of the church clock face.

It is one of the main focal points of the village and following its renovation now gleams on us all – especially in the summer sun we have had of late.

There is, however, a question that has been asked by many and that is: 'Why is our church clock face black when most others are painted blue?' If you have any ideas on this please could you let me know on 281605 and I can report it back to all via this newsletter.

*Jane Hocking*

## Drewsteigtons Swifts

As I am writing this (at 6.45 in the morning on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> July), I can hear the joyous sound of swifts screaming from outside as they chase around in a tight knot skimming the roof tops. They break from their communal chases to occasionally fly up to the nest boxes beneath the eaves to check on the occupants. This is a good sign and means we have a healthy number of non-breeding birds -- swifts don't breed until they are three years old -- that are prospecting for nests for next year. It's a long process being a swift and breeding, and many swifts may find nest sites here this year only to find they are not available on their return next year for a variety of reasons. They may be occupied by other species such as house sparrows, which nest earlier. But what is known across the country is that nest sites are being lost, many through home improvements.



The prospecting swifts either fly slowly past the nest boxes while screaming or try and enter the holes. Both methods are to find empty nests to occupy and any resident swifts will state their presence by screaming from within.

Over the last two weeks, I have watched the adult swifts returning to the boxes with food for their offspring and heard the high pitched 'twittering' of the hatched young inside. Today, for the first time since the swifts returned on 30<sup>th</sup> April, I know exactly what is happening in each of the nest boxes. Four of my six boxes have juvenile swifts in, three with two youngsters and one with a brood of three.

The other two boxes have not been used but there are soft-lined nests in each one and adults are regularly going in and out.

I know this as a friend came yesterday evening to 'ring' the swallows in our woodshed.

Ringling birds involves the careful placing of a lightweight uniquely numbered metal ring onto the bird's leg. Bird ringing in the UK is organised and coordinated by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) and is carried out by a network of over 2,500 trained and licensed volunteers, who ring over 900,000 birds in the UK each year. On average only one in every 50 ringed birds is subsequently found and reported so every report of a ringed bird is important. Bird ringing provides valuable information on migration routes, winter and summer feeding areas and helps monitor bird populations.

Having ringed three swallows and safely returned them to their mud nest on a rafter in the wood shed, we decided to check one of the occupied swift boxes to determine when would be the best time to ring the young. We found two juvenile swifts at just the right age to ring, with nearly full plumage. Investigations in the other boxes revealed all but two juveniles were old enough to ring. One of the boxes had an adult swift (which we also put a ring on) which had returned to feed the rapidly developing youngsters. The good and settled weather we have had over the last couple of months has provided lots of food (in the form of flying insects) not only for the swifts, but house martins and swallows too.

I have counted far more swifts over the village this year compared to the last four years, with up to 25 airborne overhead during the early evenings. The increased numbers are due to the non-breeders feeding locally along with the adults rearing young, and as colonial birds, they tend to stay if food is available.

I have written before that I am interested in finding where the rest of Drewsteignton's swift nests are, and I have now found four properties (all thatched) where they have nested in the recent past.

If you believe you have swifts nesting in your property or anywhere else within the village, please contact me on 281681, or if you are interested in putting up nest boxes for swifts and want to see mine "in action", please get in touch.

*Nick Dixon*

## Police File

Please be aware of a man who called at a Chagford home on Thursday 10th June purporting to be collecting money on behalf of a charity. He had with him brochures which were dated 2003. He is described as white, in his 40s, 5ft 9ins tall with dark hair. He was wearing an anorak.

Please be reminded of the precautions when dealing with cold callers. 1 -- Be suspicious of unexpected callers. 2 -- Always ask for identification and check it carefully. 3 -- Contact the charity/company the caller says they are from and ask if they have anyone in the area. 4 -- Never let anyone into your property you do not know. If you are unhappy with the caller do not give any money and if you feel pressurised in anyway contact the police on 08452 777444 with details.

Please phone us with any information on 08452 777 444.

PC 4647 Nadine Wilson

## Summer Concert at National Trust 'Castle Drogo' Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> June

The concept was threefold. Firstly to raise some money for Holy Trinity the Parish Church of Drewsteignton and the Village Hall both, as ever, in need of funds. Secondly the National Trust were keen to have an event on their premises which involved the local community. Thirdly it's a long while since there was a local 'bash'. So CREDITON TOWN BAND were asked to perform. By good fortune The Red Rock micro brewery were able to support us in advance of a N.T. promotion the following day. Ladies of the village, and beyond, were asked to provide a plate of appropriate food. Wine of various styles was ordered and the sun was asked to shine.

The National Trust more than did its bit. The co-operation and help we received especially from Christine Gray and Andy Dawson was enormous.

The CREDITON TOWN BAND duly turned up, resplendent in their best attire, and played their hearts out for some two hours. The music was a wonderful selection which undoubtedly appealed to most people there. The sun sort of shone. It was warm and the big black cloud that threatened us disappeared over the horizon without shedding a drop. The backcloth of Castle Drogo, the Teign Valley and the sun setting over East Dartmoor was something to remember for a long time to come.

Numerous people followed the suggestion and bought picnics and those who didn't availed themselves of the splendid array of food and wine on offer. Red Rock did sterling business. A draw was held with some extremely generous prizes donated by local businesses and individuals.

From a financial point of view the evening could have been more successful. In the end, all expenses having been paid, the Church and Hall shared on a 50/50 basis £535. Not a lot for such an event.

On the positive side a reasonable number of folk from our local community had a really splendid evening so the social element was an unqualified success. So much so that people were requesting a further edition next year and this with the blessing in principal of both the National Trust and the Band.

Finally thanks must go to all the people who provided food, erected and dismantled tents, organised publicity, designed posters, donated draw prizes and ensured that Drogo was returned to its normal pristine state after the event.

A.H.T.



## News from the Castle

From now on I will be taking over the writing of the monthly Castle Drogo piece. So this seems like a good time to tell you a bit about myself, for those of you that do not know me yet.

I first came to the Castle as a volunteer Room Steward in 2002. Then, after two years, the opportunity arose for me to apply for the post of House Steward. Following an interview I was offered the job and started working here as a full-time, residential member of staff, in August 2004 - after 25 years of working in IT for the NHS. Four years later my role changed again, to that of Operations Co-ordinator, and I was offered the opportunity to move out of the Castle and into the village. Two years further on and I am happily settled in the Square and enjoy becoming involved in village events (I've even been known to pop into the Drewe Arms or Fingle Bridge Inn on odd occasions).

Talking of village events, it was great to see so many of you come to the Castle to hear the CREDITON TOWN BAND and support the Summer Concert. This event was held to raise funds for the Drewsteignton Village Hall and the Church Restoration Fund and I would like to congratulate Tony Thomas, and his team of helpers, for all their hard work in organising the evening and raising a very substantial sum of money for these causes. I'm certainly looking forward to being able to come along to more occasions like this in the future.

As Tamsyn mentioned in last month's Parish Post, we held a special event for Father's Day, at which we were joined by over 100 classic cars and Redrock Brewery.

Following some unexpected promotion in the previous week's Sunday Express, we were inundated with visitors (over 1,600 in all) and, being favoured by such great weather, a good time was had by all. Everyone who came to the event was given the opportunity to vote for their favourite car, and this year the prize was awarded to a 3.8 litre, 1950 Jaguar XK120 Roadster, as shown.



With the school holidays rapidly approaching we will shortly be at our busiest, a time when we avoid holding major events. However, we do still have spaces available for the next 'Drogo in a Different Light' and there will be children's activities going on during the holiday period.

If you would like more information then please see our events leaflet.

Finally, I'd just like to let you know, in advance, that you are all invited to come to the Castle on the evening of Saturday, 4<sup>th</sup> September, when we will be holding the Inter-Parish Games. There will be events for both individuals and families (as well as the inter-parish tug-of-war), so you may want to start training and getting your teams organised. Refreshments will be available to buy in order to sustain you. Full details to come next month.

Andy Dawson

Operations Co-ordinator

Castle Drogo

Telephone: 01647 434117

Email: [andy.dawson@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:andy.dawson@nationaltrust.org.uk)

## Drewsteignton Gardeners'

Chairman: Phillip Evans 01647 281285  
 Hon Sec: Bunny Johnstone 01647 432068  
 and Carol Mason 01647 281185

Members and friends enjoyed an outing to Rosemoor on 30th June. For those who missed out on this visit another trip is planned for 15th September when there will be a special exhibition "Painting in the Garden". Please ring Jaqueline Page on 01647 433309 if interested.

On 21st July we visit Cothay Manor and gardens, a rare opportunity to see this 15<sup>th</sup> century manor house and its wonderful gardens. Cost is £11 for both house and garden and £6 garden only. This trip is open to all so please ring Carole for details and do join us. Thanks to everyone who supported our stall at Teignton Fayre.

The Village Show is on 28th August: Schedules are available at the Post Office from 1st August. Something for everyone so please ENTER!

### Chagstock's Back

The Hoosiers are the main act at this year's Chagstock festival, being held in three 10-acre fields at Whiddon Down on July 16-17.

Dartmoor is well represented, including headliners Seth Lakeman and Ade Edmondson's Bad Shepherds. Other bands with a local interest include With Nell and Eye, featuring Moretonhampstead's Nell Hubbard, the wonderful Voodoo Trombone Quartet, an eight-piece ska-influenced band featuring Patrick Symes, who grew up in Chagford, Dr. Kitch, featuring talent from Drewsteignton and Chagford, and Matty Matty, who in his spare time runs the Sandy Park Inn.

More info on [www.chagstock.info](http://www.chagstock.info)

### Chagford Show

A date for the diary -- Chagford Show this year will be held on Thursday 19th August.

For further details on this one-day agricultural show with horse and pony classes, sheep and cattle classes, dog show, children's races, Punch & Judy, trade stands and much, much more, please contact Sally Hutchings, Show Secretary, 01647 24306 [sally385@btinternet.com](mailto:sally385@btinternet.com)

## Last Chance to Sow for a Year Round Harvest

Peter Clements runs a business from home in Drewsteignton, all about helping people to grow their own veg.

I always think of July as a transition time in the veg plot. It's when the period of seed-sowing which started back in April generally comes to an end, and the focus shifts towards tending, and more importantly, eating the harvest. The amazingly warm summer weather we've been experiencing has meant super-fast growth on the veg plot, although keeping up with the watering has been more than a challenge on our very free-draining local soil.

It's important to remember that the end of summer doesn't mean the end of the veg growing season. The majority of vegetables will carry on producing food until October when the frosts arrive, and many will keep going right through the winter with no need

for protection, to give you a bountiful harvest in the spring. Make your final sowings of all the key fast-growing salad vegetables to harvest later this year:

**Beetroot - Carrots - Coriander - Lettuces**

**Radishes - Spring onions**

For tasty vegetables that can cope well with the winter it's your last chance to sow some of these if you haven't already:

**Perpetual spinach - Swiss chard - Chicory**

All are incredibly resistant to cold weather, and you can keep harvesting leaves from the same plants for months on end.

July is also the perfect time to sow oriental salad leaves. Sown earlier in the year they're prone to bolting (running up to flower)

and the nibblings of flea beetles which pepper the leaves with tiny holes. Cooler temperatures when they're reaching maturity from late August onwards will stop plants bolting and see off the last of the flea beetles.

My personal favourites are:

**Mibuna - Wild rocket - Mustard leaves**

These fast-growing 'cut and come again' salad crops will give you a big yield during the autumn and happily carry on growing outside through the winter to put on a fresh surge of growth and a new set of leaves in the spring.

Make sure you get some more sowing done now, and enjoy a year round harvest!

*Seeds, growing equipment and advice are available on our website*

## Can you help?

Drewsteignton Playing Field desperately need a small ride-on mower for keeping the football pitch in tip-top condition. Do you have an old one we could use/have? Ideally one which collects the grass cuttings, but a mulching one would be marvellous too. Please contact Jennifer Mullins 01647 281657. Enjoying the rounder's at the World Cup sports day in the playing field.



Drewsteignton

Parish Post

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