We were very sorry to receive the news that a past Parish Clerk Dr Anthony (Tony) Milward who lived in Crockernwell up to a few years ago had passed away. We held a moments silence to reflect on his service to the parish.

We are still waiting to hear from British Telecom about what they intend to do with the telephone boxes at Whiddon Down & Crockernwell.

The state of the parish footpaths was highlighted with Pete Rich our Dartmoor National Park Warden. Defects were reported on some and improvements on others. This is an annual consultation but Pete is always anxious to hear of any problems and is looking for volunteers who might be able to spend a few hours a month helping him.

Bunny Johnstone from the Gardener’s Club addressed the meeting giving details of the upkeep to the Parish Garden in Drewsteignton. The Gardener’s Club have looked after the maintenance of the garden to a very high standard for many years but are no longer able to undertake the work. They are prepared to continue until April 2018 but after that date the Parish Council will assume responsibility. It would be of great help if you, or anyone you know, might be able to assist, either in undertaking the work or organisation of others to do the work. At present there is a Parish Council grant of £200 per annum but obviously this amount may have to increase.

You may remember a few months ago we appealed in the Parish Post to anyone with knowledge of the now defunct Youth Club in Drewsteignton as there was a dormant bank account with around £1,000 in it. We are most grateful to Brian Bradford, who now lives in South Devon, for attending the meeting and explaining that he had been in touch with the bank and arrangements are being put in place to have the money transferred to the Parish Council and then it will be passed to the Playing field committee. Many thanks to Brian for all his work.

Talking of money, we would also like to thank the anonymous parishioner for £100 to be put towards improving the look of the parish.

We were also addressed by Mr Jack Mann who is exploring the potential of opening a farm shop at Whiddon Down. This is purely exploratory at the moment but he was seeking the views of the Parish Council which, in principle, we would be happy to support any enterprise bringing employment to the parish. The matter would have to go through the proper planning application process and we would make further comment then in the normal way.

We have heard from Devon County Highways that, when available, police will be attending Whiddon Down to undertake speed enforcement in the 30mph limit.

One planning matter, DNP 0485/17 Holly Down Venton, was discussed and councillors agreed to support the application.

Drewsteignton Parish Plan was published in April 2009, it was “compiled by the community for the community”. The working party consisted of ten parishioners (only 4 of whom remain in the parish) and they produced a “proposal for action”. It covered many subjects from environment, social groups, businesses, volunteering, shopping, housing needs, transport and highways.

Many of the proposals have been actioned, some have not and some do not apply any longer. If you would be prepared to assist in a review of the Parish Plan, will you initially contact either the Clerk or a councillor. It must be stressed that whilst a councillor may act as a link it is NOT a Parish Council plan but very much community led. The Parish Plan is available to read at www.drewsteigntonparish.co.uk

Our next meeting is Monday 20th November 2017 7.30pm at Whiddon Down.

Drewsteignton Gardener’s Club
Monday November 13th
7:30 at the Village Hall
Speaker: Sue Fisher
“Making the Most of a Small Garden”
Everyone most welcome
DREWSTEIGNTON
CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAYRE
Saturday 2nd December 11 - 5pm
Sunday 3rd December 11 - 4pm
In Drewsteignton Village Hall
Local Crafters — for that ‘something different’
15% of sellers’ sales to Holy Trinity Church
Refreshments and home-made cakes etc, available in Holy Trinity Church

‘Wolf’s End’ - MED Theatre Young Company Performance and Film
Saturday December 2nd, Moretonhampstead Parish Hall, 7.30pm
Sunday December 3rd, Southpark Community Centre, Buckfast, 7.30pm
Set on Dartmoor in the 1780s during the time of the ‘Improvers’, when the last wolf in Britain was reputed to have been shot, the play ‘Wolf’s End’ explores the relationship of human life with that of Dartmoor’s wildlife and incorporates the story of Kitty Jay, who lived and died at that time.
Written and performed by MED Theatre’s Young Company, the performance includes their contemporary film “The Last Wolf” and is the culmination of an 18-month project entitled ‘The Hound of the Baskervilles and the Last Wolf on Dartmoor’. For more information and to book tickets email info@medtheatre.co.uk or call 01647 441356

WHIDDON DOWN VILLAGE HALL
CHRISTMAS BINGO
MONDAY 18th DECEMBER
EYES DOWN 8.00PM

Whiddon Down Methodist Church
Come and join us in the Village Hall on
Saturday 2nd December At 2.00pm
for Christmas Cream Teas. Cakes.
Draw, Bring and Buy and Christmas Wreaths
Come along and enjoy a tea and a chat with your friends

Carol Service
At the Chapel
Sunday 10th December at 6.30pm
Collection for Action for Children
Tea and Mince Pies
All Welcome
ACE Archaeology Club

Our Year
ACE’s year starts with our AGM in November so it seems like a good time to try to do a round-up of what we have managed to do this year.

Most of what we do is outdoors, as you might expect, so we are at the mercy of the weather but not much was cancelled.

Our AGM always includes a planning session when everyone can contribute their ideas and wishes about what to do in the upcoming year.

Last year we shared our Christmas meeting with Friends of Berry Castle, in North Devon. We visited them on the Iron Age Hill Top enclosure on which they have been working. They have cleared the site and arranged for information boards and hope to be able to do some limited excavation at some stage. They provided mulled wine and mince pies by an open fire and we then joined them at a local pub for Christmas lunch. The weather was lovely.

January, we stayed indoors and had a look at some of the finds from last year’s dig. The pottery had all been washed and allowed to dry off so needed numbering.

February was also indoors and we had a talk on astro-archaeology from Allan Jones, a volunteer at the Norman Lockyer Observatory in Sidmouth.

March was a busy month; we ventured outdoors to do some clearing of our dig site at Moistown; did some more dowsing on the site and had two evening sessions on Geographical Information Systems and how they can be used in archaeology.

April saw us back indoors again making wicker shields. As you can see, we have some rebels who decided to make other things!

May is dig time, our first digging session of the year. We uncovered more and more cobbles but also walls and more and more shards of pottery.

June, a couple of members organised a walk on Dartmoor to look at some stone rows, cairns etc to see if we could put some of the Astro-archaeology into practice.

At the beginning of July, we had a guided tour of Wooston Castle, by Bryher Mason, the Heritage Manager, Dartmoor Portfolio of the National Trust. Wooston Castle is another hill top enclosure, this time near Castle Drogo. We are sitting in the remains of a roundhouse near the Wooston Castle enclosure.

July is Council of British Archaeology Festival time and we did our bit as usual within the Step Back in Time Festival at Pattiland Farm, near Broadwoodkelly. We run a ‘have a go trench’ which at times we couldn’t see for young people having a go. Some came last year and came back for another session.

August and September, we dig, not for two months but for two weeks at the end of August and the beginning of September. This is the find we got most excited about, a complete and undamaged Lee and Perrins Worcestershire Sauce bottle, with stopper!! We have an Open Day in the middle of this dig and all are welcome to come and have a look and eat tea and cake in the sun. If any of this sounds like your sort of thing, do get in touch.

Our website is still a work in progress but we hope it will be up and running soon, in the meantime we can be found on FaceBook.

Erica Williamson,
ACE Archaeology Club.
Memoirs of a child growing up during the war.

3rd September 1939.

Our family were on holiday from home in the Midlands, we were on Budleigh Salterton beach when news of the war came through. It was amazing how quickly the beach emptied, as people dashed back to homes or lodgings.

A black whale shaped object was visible just off the end of the cliffs on the west side. Suddenly a bi-plane, flying low, came from behind us and went out to the black “hump” which quickly vanished. We learned later, that the “hump” had been a U-Boat (a german submarine) on a reconnaissance exercise. It dived quickly when it saw the plane coming so it was not damaged by the bomb dropped by the plane.

Action on the first day of war.

Air Raids: During air raids when the siren sounded people were advised to take shelter in the safest part of their homes. We sat at one end of the front hallway, and at night tried to sleep or rest on mattresses, while our papa was upstairs fire watching at my bedroom window, wearing a tin hat.

That tin hat did good service, at aged 10 I wore it and carried a gas mask box over my shoulder, while I walked the 1 1/2 miles to school daily and if an enemy plane came over low I had been told to lie face down in the ditch or gutter, holding the tin hat over the back of my neck. Fortunately I never had to do this. I used the walking time to count the number of steps between home and school, to work out where half way was, so that I would know whether to go on, or go back, if the air raid siren went off, fortunately this never happened.

Anderson shelters were built in gardens for people to shelter in when there was an air raid.

In SW Wolverhampton we had no bombs dropped near us, but 25 miles away at Birmingham they had many. One bomb fell a mile away on local common land, so the only casualties were sheep not humans, we presumed it was from an enemy bomber returning home from a raid on Liverpool and jettisoning an unused bomb to lighten the plane’s weight. Enemy planes navigated by electricity main power cables going across the country on tall metal pylons. One such pylon was on a small hill near where we lived and mother observed that enemy bombers (Junkers 88’s) changed course over our garden, where the power cables changed direction. They came in from the S.E and turned to go north presumably to go and bomb Liverpool docks.

When I went off to boarding school in North Wales in the autumn of 1941 age 11 clothing was rationed, so to obtain my new school uniform, all my family kindly gave up their current allocation of clothing coupons for that year. I soon learned that we were expected to write a letter home, once a week, parents usually responded likewise.

Due to our geographical location, we had many pupils from the Liverpool and Manchester areas, as well as across North Wales. Apparently staff had had to comfort some Liverpudlians, who had not heard from home regularly during the Blitz. Apparently this was not because families had been injured or killed by bombs in 1940 but because a number of Post Office sorting offices and post boxes, had been damaged or destroyed and some letters never reached their destinations.

Victory celebrations at age 15.

VE day: Victory in Europe 8th May 1945: The kitchen staff at our boarding school worked wonders and provided a giant picnic, (for all 400 of us) which we ate on the games field. Also a gang of us tore the centre page out of our jotter books and folded them into small square boxes, then we filled them with water and crept up to the 6th form corridor and when occupants came out of their study rooms to see what the noise was about we hurled our water-bombs at them.

The prefects made us fetch the cleaners’ mops and clean up the mess, the punishment fitted the crime, but it was worth it, even for such a silly antic.

VJ day: Victory over Japan mid August 1945: School holidays meant we were at home for this. Bonfires seemed to be the most used celebration.

Weekly Food Ration per person with coupons.

| 2 oz butter | 2 oz loose tea |
| 1 oz cheese | 3 pints milk |
| 6 oz fat for cooking | 3 lamb chops |
| 4 oz bacon or ham (3 rashers) | Sweets on coupon |
| 1 egg | Bread rationed after the war (1946) |
| 12 oz sugar | Orange juice and cod-liver oil for children |
**Drewsteignton Playing Field**

**Bonfire Night**
Thank you to everyone who attended our Bonfire Night on 4th November. We hope you had a good time. I assume you agree with me that the guys did a great job with the fireworks display, the torchlight procession and the bonfire. If you didn’t catch the procession, you missed a great visual display of 50 very old fashioned torches parading around the field.

We had a huge number of people helping us this year in all sorts of areas. There are too many of you to mention but we are truly grateful for all your help. We frankly couldn’t have managed without you. Particular thanks must go to our unsung hero Dave Woolston and his team, who have created and put on our impressive firework displays for a number of years now, and our main supporters, Chris Gosnay, Drewsteignton Parish Council and Fingle Bridge Inn.

We made a profit of £1,700 this year, which is amazing given that we had to limit the numbers and the weather wasn’t ideal.

We will keep the numbers limited to 499 (including all helpers) from now on. We could easily have sold a lot more than this but the event licence and insurance costs would make the event unviable. If you want to go next year it would be a good idea to get your tickets as soon as possible.

See you next year.

**New kitchen**
If you went inside our shed you may have noticed that we have a new kitchen with a new cooker and we will shortly have hot water available all year round (at least when we’ve turned the water on!). Judith Colton put a great deal of time and effort into this and we are very grateful to her. Without her the new kitchen simply wouldn’t have happened. **Alison**

**Whiddon Down Village Hall**

My name is Leesa Bradshaw I’m the new chair of the Whiddon Down Village Hall Committee. Along with another committee member, Sandra Bellamy, we organised a coffee morning on Saturday the 30th September for Macmillan Cancer Support and we managed to raise £235.48.

It was all very last minute, however, we had a few new local people attend as well as some of our committee members and as it was such a successful morning we are planning more in the future.

**Leesa Bradshaw**

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**Dog Fouling**

Dog Fouling is one of the top anti-social problems nationwide. Once again I have to remind all dog owners that walk through the churchyard to keep their dogs on a lead and to clean up after them. It is not very pleasant for people visiting their family graves to have to deal with others’ dog mess.

Please pick up after your dog in any public place. Always carry ‘poo’ bags & a torch for dark evenings and dispose of bags in a bin or take it home.
There have been very noticeable changes in the surrounding countryside over the last month as we have crept gently from early autumn towards winter. Hurricane Orphelia and storm Brian caused considerable wind damage to many parts of the UK, but locally, the main effects were noticed in the trees with many leaves coming down. Despite this, the current colours of the local woodlands and landscapes are truly spectacular, with the whole range of autumnal hues ranging through to exposed single trees now totally bare.

The sounds of the local countryside have changed too, and the most apparent is the varied calls of the migrant thrushes that have left north and eastern Europe to over winter here. I am not very good at identifying birds from their calls or song, apart from a handful that for some reason, I seem to have always known. However, the thin ‘seeep’ call regularly heard overhead is the redwing, and the ‘chack-chack-chack’ call is the fieldfare. I see both species flying over the village, and am hearing them migrating at night too. We also have increasing numbers of song and mistle thrushes around the village, and especially in the churchyard, where there are many berries on the trees. Starlings are also more in evidence in the local countryside and a small group is now often present on the top of Drewsteignton church tower. There are now huge flocks of woodpigeons to be seen moving around, also having come from the continent as the temperatures plummet and food supplies diminish.

It is in the woodlands and along the hedgerows that flocks of small birds are becoming more visible as the leaves drop. I have been seeing many flocks of tits moving from tree to tree gleaning small insects from fissures in the bark and the undersides of the remaining leaves. These mixed flocks often include a majority of long tailed tits, with blue and great tits present too.

I have found it fascinating that, as we approach the final days of October and the temperature has noticeably dropped, I am now getting visiting birds to my bird feeders in the garden, even though I have not yet started putting out food. Blue tits, dunnocks, goldfinches, chaffinches and house sparrows have all visited my feeders which have been empty since I stopped feeding in the spring, and I can only presume these are local birds, or migrants that are now investigating potential winter food supplies and remember there was a food supply here this time last year.

The subject of swifts seems to be carrying on in my articles far longer this year than in any other since I started writing about birds in the Parish Post in 2009. Swifts are long gone, but not forgotten by a few people locally, and various projects are being considered now for their return in May 2018.

Nick Baker, a Chagford resident, naturalist and friend had initiated interest in the church there as swifts had previously nested in the church tower, but have been absent for many years. In early 2016, 24 swift nest boxes were built and installed behind the louvres within the bell chamber of the tower. These were put up in 4 blocks of six within a wooden frame with one set on each aspect, with access for the swifts up in through the louvres, and directly into each nesting compartment. A small speaker was installed near one set of boxes to play swift calls through the months they were present, and attract them to the boxes. Despite some complaints about the calls from local residents, the swifts obviously approved as a few boxes were used successfully during the 2017 breeding season.

I was intrigued by this as I would like to get them nesting on other buildings in Drewsteignton, and there is currently a lot of interest and a variety of projects across the UK getting swifts nesting in church towers. I was interested in seeing the set up in Chagford, and Nick had been contacted by other people with a similar interest, so we all met at the church last week. Along with Nick, Reverend Paul Seaton-Burn and I, there were others interested in undertaking similar projects in the churches in North Bovey and Moretonhampstead. It was fascinating to be in the bell chamber of Chagford church, which is packed with the eight newly recast and rehung bells, to see how the nest boxes were installed. After assessing the set-up and taking some pictures, we went on the tower roof just to take in the views, which were stunning due to the 360 degree panorama and the good weather on the day. With the back drop of Dartmoor, the views across to Rushford woods, castle Drogo and the Teign valley, Whiddon Park and back to Natterdon and Meldon, it is a spectacular viewpoint. One fascinating aspect was to get a birds eye view to see just how much development for new housing is currently going on in the fields immediately behind Chagford Fire station. It would be great if swift nest boxes could be incorporated in all new developments!

Nick
News from the Castle

Hi everyone
As I write this, we have just moved in to winter hours. This means that, until Christmas, the café, shop and garden are open every day, 11am –4pm. The castle is open for guided tours at weekends so please pop in if you fancy a peek behind the scenes as we get started on the winter work.

As well as undertaking our annual deep clean, the winter gives us a much needed opportunity to move forward with some of the more intrusive and noisy elements of the major building project in the castle. We will be packing up all 2000 of the clocks in the Library which were part of the Luke Jerram art installation. The clocks will be sent off to Gunby Hall which is hosting the artwork next year. Once the room is clear, we will prepare the fireplace ready to re-line the Library chimney as well as starting to remove the windows from the Green Corridor and finishing the internal scaffolding in the Kitchen and Scullery area. Exciting stuff!

Thank you to everyone for their support of the project to re-instate the hydro turbine system down by the river. It was lovely to have so many people at the official switching on ceremony and we were extremely lucky with the weather.

I am hoping we will be just as lucky with the weather on Friday 10 November when we are once again hosting the inter-school cross country race in partnership with OCRA. So watch out for hordes of children racing along the drive and out on Piddledown Common. It’s going to get noisy!

Take care everyone and see you soon.

Paula Community Engagement Officer, Castle Drogo
01647 434130, paula.clarke@nationaltrust.org.uk

The Top Down Fire

When I was a boy I grew up in a house with a big garden, which gave me lots of opportunities to experiment with all sorts of things, one of these being fire. I soon became very proficient at building campfires, following the principle that heat rises, generally building a tent like structure around a core of easily lit material such as newspaper. It works every time, and for the next half century (am I really that old?) I would scorn people who struggled to light a fire, as a result of not following this principle. I’ve always felt that it’s a fundamental piece of knowledge that everybody should possess.

However, my strongly held beliefs were recently challenged, when I read the book *Norwegian Wood* by Lars Mytting, subtitled *Chopping, Stacking and Drying Wood the Scandinavian Way*. How could an overgrown boy resist such a title? As the name suggests the book is full of good advice about what wood is good for what, how to dry it and for how long, how to chop it, what axes to use for what purposes (there are many), how to use them, and how to stack wood, with lots of wonderful illustrations of sculptural wood piles and old chainsaws.

What I didn’t expect from this book was to discover that all my life I’ve been lighting fires the wrong way round. According to Lars Mytting, the best way to light a fire is to lay your logs in the hearth, and then to build a small fire of the type I have always done in the past, on the top. Previously I would always have done this the other way round, with a small fire at the bottom, and the larger logs on the top. Not wishing to confirm the accepted wisdom about old dogs (age is, after all, an attitude of mind), I gave it a go, and well, slap me with a mouldy turnip and colour me flabbergasted, it works a treat!

The physics is simple. Normally, when you light a fire from the bottom, the wood on the top gets heated by the rising heat from below, and starts to smoke. It takes a while before it is hot enough to flame. However, the smoke is made up of combustible gases which will burn, but it’s all going up the chimney, so you have an inefficient fire that’s sootying up your chimney, and burning at a much lower temperature than it should.

If you build a top down fire then the wood below gets heated, and gives off smoke, but this time it ignites as it passes through the fire above, so you have an efficient and much hotter fire, and savings on your chimney sweep.

Of course, you may be someone who is already enlightened on this matter, but if not, shake off your prejudices, and give it a go. Hugh.
Granny’s Tattie Scones

Ingredients
500g potatoes (Tatties)
100g of plain flour
50g of butter
Pinch of salt

How to make tattie scones with this easy to cook Scottish recipe
A girdle or griddle pan is the best way to make potato scones though a frying pan can also be used. The trick is not to let the mixture get dry.
Boil the tatties and then mash them thoroughly.
Add butter and salt if needed. A healthier potato scone recipe should omit the salt.
In a mixing bowl mix in the plain flour with the mashed tatties ensuring the mixture does not go dry.
Empty onto a flat surface and use a rolling pin to roll out the mixture evenly and to a desired height of about 3mm. For this recipe for tattie scones cut into the traditional shape of triangles, though some bakers now sell round ones.
Put each one into the griddle or frying pan and cook on both sides until brown.
Serve whilst hot.

Drewsteignton Parish Post
Contact Details:

For Editorial
John Shiell
drewsteigntonparishpost@hotmail.co.uk  281282

Contributions
Pauline Rowe
plrowe43@gmail.com  281638

Village Hall Bookings

Drewsteignton
Alison Chapman
callum.chapman@btinternet.com or
01647 281197

Whiddon Down
Clare Rowe
whiddondownvillagehall@hotmail.co.uk
01647 231

For Parish Council

Business
Lucy Bruckner
clerk@drewsteigntonparish.co.uk
01647 252306

The Parish Post reserves the right to edit contributions and wishes to state that views expressed are not necessarily those of the Parish Post.

Contributions for the next edition by
1st December - Thank You