

SHALFORD NEWS

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Buttercup

Why does the church need money?



St Andrew's was built in the 12th Century and this is where over the years parishioners have been able to worship and attend services for births, marriages, and deaths. Today, the church's roof, floor and windows are desperately in need of repair at an estimated cost of £35,000 of which £8,000 has been already raised. The building meanwhile continues to deteriorate so the balance must be raised quickly.

A generous parishioner, Frank Jennings, left a legacy to the church, but stipulated that the money should only be used for new work; a planned project providing toilet and kitchen facilities in the church, will take all of this legacy leaving a shortfall so more money will be necessary to complete the work.

"The Friends of St Andrew's", a recently formed group aim to raise money to ensure that the church's future is safe for generations to come by organising a variety of fundraising events. Wanted, more enthusiastic people to join the group; ideas, suggestions, skills and talents are required as well as support at actual events. Any help will be warmly welcomed. Could you assist in any way? If you can, and would like more information please contact Helen Willey 850376, Sue Morton 850626, Jo Crow 850101, or Brenda Hanley 850480

Village Plans

Jan Cole of the Rural Community Council of Essex explained that parishes were being encouraged to produce a plan for their village. Wethersfield had already started to produce theirs. Grant funding was available to contribute to the cost of production.

Essentially the plan, which would be Parish Council owned, would be produced by local people through questionnaires and workshops identifying issues affecting the Parish. These would not be simply planning issues, but could include need for additional amenities, litter-controlling arrangements etc. Such plans could influence the overall planning process and District and County policies. A good deal of action and work would be required to implement, monitor and review any plan produced.

Some feeling was expressed at the meeting that a Village Plan would be of questionable value, although it was recognised that it could be needed to support applications for funding grants i.e. the Lottery which might require evidence of the existence of forward plans and be assured that applications reflected identified priorities. The Parish Council is to look into the matter.

STOP PRESS A Village Directory

In the September issue of the Shalford News, which goes to every household in the village, we plan to include a card directory of the names and telephone numbers of local businesses and services useful to villagers.

If you provide taxis or tutoring, decorating or dinners, gardening or greetings cards and you want to advertise contact Sylvia Lester 01371 850211 now for further information.

A Walk in the Park

Do you know that Shalford has a Parish Park? Do you know that this park is always open? Do you know where the entrance to the park is? Go through a small metal pedestrian gate, right of the Amenity Site entrance, opposite this across the drive, is another similar small green gate and through this is Stoneley Park. Nearby on a grassy bank is an established colony of rare oxlips, locally known as "peggles" and found only in East Anglia.

The park was originally a sand and gravel pit, later a landfill site, which once filled was compacted, landscaped and capped with topsoil. The methane gas, a by-product of such sites, still burns off, flames can be seen sometimes from the stack behind the hedge half way down White's Hill. Parishioners planted in specific areas a variety of oak, alder, willow and maple saplings and shrubs including viburnum, black-thorn, gorse and hawthorn leaving a large tract of open land to be sown with grass seed.

These plantings, now matured, are a habitat for many species of wild flowers, birds and animals. A wide circular track cuts through the park: from the stone compass table at the highest point, there are beautiful open views of the Pant valley. Adjoining Stoneley is part of ancient Levelley Wood, known to be over 500 years old, growing a mixture of coppiced hornbeams, chestnut, holly and yew trees as well as some standing dead wood, ideal habitat for bats and insects. Beneath the trees in season bluebells, wood anemones, violets, primroses and orchids bloom. A small stream, a pond, old boundary ditches and banks add further interest to this area. With a forest ranger local volunteers have done valuable maintenance work in this area. This village parish park provides an ever changing, interesting hour's easy walk throughout the year. Ideal for dog walking! Visitors please follow the Country Code
TAKE NOTHING BUT PHOTOGRAPHS, LEAVE NOTHING BUT FOOTPRINTS.

Depending on the season these birds, animals and insects, can be spotted on a park walk.

Blue, Great and Long Tailed Tits, Robins, Wrens, Sparrows, Bullfinches, Linnets, Goldcrests,

Goldfinches, Green Woodpeckers, Crows, Fieldfares, Redwings, Mistle and Song Thrushes, Moorhen, Mallards plus an occasional Buzzard. Foxes, Roe and Muntjak Deer, Badgers and Rabbits. Butterflies, Dragonflies, Bats and Stag Beetles.

***The Shalford Map** showing the parish's public footpaths and bridleways is available from the Parish Clerk, Anne Tee, tel: 850975

CREAMER Fund Update

The funds recently purchased sphygmomanometer (for arterial blood pressure measurement) is now available for patient use. A big thank-you to all those who went to the convivial Open Evening, which was well supported and enjoyed by both medical staff and patients. FundraisingThe CREAMER Fund ran a successful Tombola at the Finchingfield May Fayre. Make a note of the place and date for a Coffee Morning, by kind permission of Bunty Wright to be held at Northeys, Petches Bridge Road, Wethersfield, at 10.30 am on Tuesday 28th June. Please support this, all proceeds to the CREAMER Fund. An autumn Car Treasure Hunt has been offered to the fund and if there is sufficient interest this will be organised, meanwhile please let Jean Murphy tel: 851147 if you are keen to take part. Good news.... John Finbow, this year's BDC Chairman, (and a farmer from Wethersfield) has chosen the CREAMER Fund as one of his official charities



"Blackwater" by kind permission of the poet David Cobb

Sinuous, on a silent gut,
You are the serpent that disperses us,
In all directions scattering us when swift
You raise your awesome hood, away
Into burrs and snagging teasels,
Into lank strangles of grass, into slime,
Where in season when the cold floods swirl
You would bring to their knees the weak sheep
Had they not moved to the shed and manger full of straw.

But in the months of May, June and July,
Starved to a snakeling, you abide repose
Under the sand spits where fresh mussels lie,
Awaiting a spate, and surely conscious
Your tenebrous name was not an idle whim.

(published Anon 2, 2004)

FAREWELL TO THE MARTINS and CHINNERYS

WHO FLY AWAY THIS SUMMER

Dave and Sue Martin soon leave Jaspers Green to live in Clare, Suffolk. Dave, whilst a Parish Councillor undertook months of work negotiating with farmers and Essex County Highways staff to rationalise the village footpath network, then he co-ordinated the Shalford Footpath Map* production. Dave and Sue, a skilled and volunteer gardener at Mark's Hall, served on the Horticultural Society Committee, and Sue delivered the Shalford News. Together, she and Dave, organised and led village walks, worked with the Levelley Conservation group and willingly supported fundraising events. Len and Barbara Chinnery plan to move to Witnesham, Suffolk. Len, a former Parish Councillor and enthusiastic member of the VHMC did "hands-on" work during the hall's modernisation project and Barbara also on the VHMC served as secretary. They were on the Horticultural Society Committee, Len as an excellent Treasurer and Barbara as Vice-Chairman. Recently the "Len Chinnery Trophy" was given by them to be awarded in the Society's photographic competitions. Their work in the Levelley Conservation group resulted in Len writing several nature articles for the Shalford News. Both couples' interests and input into village life will be missed; we wish them much happiness in their new homes.

The River Pant Shalford's Boundary,

The River Pant, rises west of Radwinter close to the Cambridgeshire border then flows through the Sampfords and Bardfields to Shalford and then on to Bocking where it becomes the Blackwater. The Pant forms Shalford's well-defined NE boundary, most of the time it is a quiet meandering stream, disappearing in places during very dry periods. Following heavy rain or snow it can become a fearsome life and property threatening force, as some villagers know from experience.

The Pant has another function apart from land drainage and providing water amenities; keen observers, especially fishermen, may notice brown coloured high water flows during dryish periods. This water is not as a result of sudden intense summer storms, but is from the Cambridgeshire Fens. The River Ouse drains an area of over 1300 square miles upstream of the Denver Sluice, which is the river's tidal limit, and is fed downstream by four main



tributaries the Cam, Lark, Little Ouse and Wissey.

This is the driest part of the country and because of the ever-growing demand for water in the SE the Ely Ouse Essex Water Act decreed that surplus water could be transferred from Cambridgeshire to Essex. To achieve this mammoth task water was diverted from the Denver sluice through large pipes and a 100-inch diameter tunnel to Kennet, here massive pumps lift the water into a 72-inch pipeline laid across country to Kirtling Green in Suffolk. There the water enters an open air stilling basin and flows to Wixoe, where another set of large pumps lift part of the water into a balancing tank at Gt Samford. From here the water enters the Pant which eventually joins the Blackwater and reaches the Hanningfield reservoir south of Chelmsford, a distance of 90 miles from Denver.

Hooking up to the past.

Originally a kissing gate was at either end of the Causeway, an old footpath, which links the churchyard, (and Cliffields now) with the George pub. In the past the entrance to the vicar's home, now the Old Vicarage directly behind the pub, was on the Causeway. Nearby is an old chestnut tree in whose trunk a hook can be seen. On this hook hung an oil lantern, and a second lantern hung from a metal arch marking the churchyard entrance, unfortunately this is no longer there. Before electricity came



to the village, on dark evenings these two lanterns lit the way to church along the Causeway for the vicar and parishioners.

Hull's Cottage Revisited

During the 17th Century several cottages were built in Hull's Lane and early in the 1920's the Alexander family from Highgate in London bought Hull's Farm, a semi-detached property with Hull's Cottage, as a weekend and holiday home. At that time the farm had 20 acres of land surrounding it and other family members purchased the neighbouring cottages, Rosebank and Little Bower, both these properties were eventually sold. During the war Hull's Cottage was let to evacuees and Patrick Alexander has memories of being evacuated from London to Rosebank as a "holiday" evacuee in the 1940's. When he was a boy Patrick remembers the small farm having 3 arable fields worked by horses, pigs, hens and a small herd of cows including a Jersey house cow, which provided the family with milk. The cottage like other old village properties at that time had no electricity or water, just a garden well and an earth closet and the night sky was unpolluted by light.

In the 1950's Patrick inherited Hull's Cottage, but he and his wife, Brenda, lived and worked in Suffolk. The cottage stood empty and many people were interested in buying it, but it was not for sale as the Alexander's plan was to restore the cottage and live in it on retirement. In 2000 they began restoration work and finally in 2004 when retired they moved in, having undertaken a great deal of the work themselves. Patrick had planted poplar trees in the garden years before and these provided the timber in the construction of the new part of the building and garage. Despite being modernised and extended the cottage retains many original features and a traditional appearance, its newly pargetted walls feature a muntjac, a bee and a duck-billed platypus. Work has now started on re-designing the garden, in which will be incorporated a vegetable plot and some hens.

Attention Shalford Computer Owners

David Eversden, who lives in Barryfields, has been working very hard to set up the community website for Shalford through the Local Channel. If you have a computer all you have to do to become involved is register, (it's free,) on www.thelocalchannel.co.uk. If you should experience any difficulty then get in

touch with Dave, who is the site's only local administrator, either by phone 01371 850606 or e-mail him direct at info@shalfordessex.co.uk Dave is a great computer enthusiast and will be happy not only to help, but also advise with any connected problems. The site already has a deal of up to date village news, but needs more. Dave recently won a Silver Award for his work and is anxious for the site to grow.

NEWS IN BRIEF

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

the Wethersfield and Shalford branch held its annual dinner, ably organised by Secretary Peter Morton, at The Cock, Beasley End. The party of 30, members and partners, enjoyed a pleasant evening together.

An announcement was made that a service lead by the Padre, the Rev John Shead will be held in St Andrew's Church at 11am on Sunday 10th July marking the 60th Anniversary of Victory in Europe and Victory in Japan.

ST ANDREW'S CHURCH

At the recent Parochial Church Council, Ruth Burrow who resigned after serving for 16 years on the PCC was thanked by the Chairman /Church Warden, Roger Singleton for her work during that time. Her husband, John, was elected and agreed to serve on the council and will fill the vacancy.

HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The Spring Plant Sale organisers were pleased to welcome buyers to the recent sale, all the plants sold and the afternoon yielded a satisfactory £215 profit.

Although the summer show is in July, the Best Kept Garden competition will be judged in early June. As last year's winners Gordon and Valerie Cornhill are resting on their laurels there's an opportunity for other keen gardeners to take over the title. There will be four vacancies on the committee later this summer when the Martins and Chinnerys leave the village, enthusiastic volunteers will be required to fill the gaps. If you are interested, do telephone John Smith 851378 or Shirley Bedding 850496 for details.

BENDLOWES TRUST

This year the new trustee, Jo Grove-Smith helped to distribute gifts of potted plants and boxes of biscuits to some Shalford residents. On Friday 5th August there will be a "Vera Smith Memorial Outing" to Thaxted for tea, this will replace the annual summer tea party in the Village Hall. More details will be announced later. In the annual report Alex Tanner noted that the Trust's Funds, were in a healthy state, standing at over £2500 and that the Trust had ideas

to start a regular pop-in coffee morning later this year.

VHMC

Following the unsettled period due to the resignation of the former Chairman, John Nicholson, Ron Vincent, who has stepped into the chairman's role temporarily, is busy reshuffling the appointed members of the committee. This is necessary, as Barbara Chinnery will shortly be leaving her post as Secretary when she moves house. The Annual Fete date is set for Saturday 3rd September and plans for a sub-group to organise this are now in hand. The Committee is keen that this year's fete will be a success and would welcome help from villagers willing to assist in any way. Telephone Ron 851576 with offers now.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Chairman, Margaret Jack, gave a summary of the council's activities during the past twelve months, all of which had been reported during the year in the local press and previous Shalford News. A new Parish Council notice board is planned paid for by the BDC's extra funding. Jan Cole, of the Rural Communities Council of Essex, had been invited to speak on the Village Plan and was introduced by the Chairman.
(see front page report)

Contributors this quarter.

Patrick Alexander, Shirley Bedding, Len Chinnery, David Cobb, Brian Crow, Frank Easton, David Eversden, Margaret Jack, Peter Morton, Sue Morton, Anthea Morcom, Jean Murphy, Andrew Overall, Sally Prime, Ken Rust, Roger Singleton, John Smith, Angela Tanner, Ron Vincent, Jacqueline Wisby, Mollie Wright

Please note that the Autumn copy deadline is Monday 22nd August

The Editors welcome articles of village happenings/events, ideas and photos.

Please contact Jo Crow tel: 850101 or e-mail pinelodger20@hotmail.com

Brenda Hanley 850480 or e-mail hanley.millfields@btinternet.com

Writers' names and addresses are required, but will not be published, with articles.

Dates for your Diary

JUNE.

Sat. 25th B.D.C. Green Rubbish Collection. Corner of Cliffields and Braintree Road. 10.45am - 11.30am.

Tues. 28th Creamer Fund. Coffee Morning - Bunty Wright, Northeys, Petches Bridge Road, Wethersfield. 10.30 am.

JULY

Fri. 1st Coffee morning **10.30-12.30**
Friends of St Andrew's Church (FOSTAC) at Millfields, Water Hall Lane.

Wed. 6th. W.I. Meeting. 7.45pm. Village Hall. Speaker: Maggie Piper. 'Taster of the City of London'.

Note: Proposed afternoon visit end of July / early August to Bardfield Vineyard. Further details from Anthea Morcom telephone no. 850881.

Thurs 7th-
Fri 15th. Entries for the Summer Horticultural Show to Barbara Chinnery at 'Kelele' Braintree Road.

Sat 9th. Royal British Legion. Coffee Morning. 10am-Noon. United Reform Church. Wethersfield. Cake Stall, Raffle etc. Entrance 50p includes refreshment.

Sun. 10th Royal British Legion. 11.00am Service at St. Andrew's Church, conducted by Rev. John Shead marking the 60th Anniversary of VE and VJ day.

Sat 16th Summer Horticultural Show. Village Hall. 2.30pm. Prize giving 4.30pm.

Sat 23rd. **B.D.C. Green Rubbish Collection. Corner of Cliffields and Braintree Road. 10.45am - 11.30am.**

AUG

Fri 5th Bendlowes Trust. Vera Smith Memorial Outing. Telephone Angela Tanner for details on 850445.

Sat. 20th B.D.C. Green Rubbish Collection. Corner of Cliffields and Braintree Road. 10.45am - 11.30am.

SEPT.

Sat. 3rd VHMC Annual Fete on playing field.

Fri 30th 3rd Annual Macmillan Biggest Coffee Morning in the World at the Village Hall.