

*Crockernwell,
Drewsteignton,
Sandy Park,
Venton,
Whiddon Down.*

Drewsteignton Parish Post

NEWS FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

ISSUE NO. 119

FEBRUARY 2016

How effective the Parish Council actually is comes up in conversation from time to time and I guess for those who don't take too much notice of what goes on in the parish unless it has some direct effect on themselves, one can understand that view.

The Parish Council made very strong and detailed objections to the Dartmoor National Park concerning a planning application at Crockernwell from our December meeting and that application has now been withdrawn. We do not know why this has happened but leave it to you to decide! A group of residents from Whiddon Down have been put in touch with Alison Chapman who is the Chairperson of Drewsteignton Playing Field Committee for advice on the play area at Barn Close. Dee Douglas should be thanked for her work in and around the village clearing gullies and overgrown verges and other gardening projects to enhance the village landscape. She is doing this work unpaid, at her own risk and in her own time. The roundabout is due to be resurfaced overnight on the 11th – 13th February with an extensive diversion via Drumbridges A38 and A30 from Peamore. When an "A" class road is closed the diversion has to be suitable for the traffic likely to use the road. Locals will of course know their way round without too much problem, we do hope Chapel Hill will not see an increase of traffic overnight.

The parish precept (your contribution to the parish from the Council Tax) has to be set at our January meeting and always makes for a lively discussion. We have certain expenses which have to be met, public toilets, insurances, clerk's salary and maintenance costs in the parish are just an example. Over several years we have tried to manage your money prudently. This led to a zero increase last year and again for the next financial year there will be no increase. The precept will remain at £13825.00. The band D property will be equivalent to £37.21 (if you would like a copy of our full financial details, please contact the clerk)

Following the opening of the new link road at Whiddon Down you will no doubt be aware certain problems have arisen concerning primarily road safety, but also access to properties on the redundant road.

The Council held an extra meeting at Whiddon Down on Wednesday 3rd February which was well attended by parishioners together with representatives of Devon County Council to see how these problems could be resolved and progressed. The new road has had a "safety audit" completed by independent auditors who declared it "safe". DCC have agreed to make representations to have a further audit done and the Parish Council informed of its outcome. The access to the old road will either have a "No Left Turn" restriction at the Post Inn end & "No Right Turn" from Spreyton, or "No vehicles except access" restriction throughout. Enforcement of the restrictions vary according to the police, and it is felt the former would be more obvious to motorists and easier to enforce. Those present at the meeting will I am sure, draw their own conclusions on the responses from the County Highway representatives.

A future date for your diary is **Monday 25th April 2016** which will be your chance to question the Council and other representatives from the parish at the Annual Parish Meeting. The next Parish Council meeting is **Monday 15th February 2016 7.30pm** at Drewsteignton.

Drewsteignton Apple Juice

Pure apple juice from apples grown in the parish. Pasteurised and bottled locally, free from any additives, it will last at least a year unopened. A few dozen bottles left at £3 a bottle. Available from Norma Gillard (24236) or Angela Thomas (281602).

All proceeds go towards the upkeep of Holy Trinity Church, Drewsteignton.



The Winter Garden

The summer fanfare has long since disappeared underground, the decorative seed heads so fondly talked about are often just an unsightly, rotting mess – structure is needed in the form of trees and evergreens. The slanting winter sunshine and glittering frost light up the edges of beautiful tree trunks and other garden structures. One of my favourite trees not only for its gorgeous ghostly white stems but also for its delicate form and pretty, twiggy stems, is the white stemmed birch – *Betula jacquemontii*. There are many different cultivars of this species and of course you can select a multi stemmed tree if space is an issue. *Betula ermanii* is a similar tree with a beautiful creamy/pink bark. The biggest, fattest catkins I have ever seen, at least 4 inches long, come on an alder called *Alnus maximowiczii* – quite stunning. You can see these trees and many more just down the road at Stone Lane Gardens – a glorious collection put together by the late Kenneth Ashburner who was a world authority on Birch and Alder. I had the great good fortune to work for Kenneth and learned such a lot from him but some of my best memories are the stories that Kenneth would tell of his often hair raising collecting trips including once paddling for 4 hours in a canoe across the open sea to collect rare seed from an isolated island.

Other lovely trees for the winter garden are *Prunus serrula*, an ornamental cherry prized for its glossy, mahogany-coloured bark, which I challenge you not to stroke as you go by and *Acer griseum* which has cinnamon coloured bark that peels away like crazy giving it the nickname of paper bark maple – this tree has the added advantage of its leaves turning brilliant shades of orange and scarlet in autumn. Another tree which I sometimes use if the site is sheltered is *Acacia dealbata* (mimosa), not for its bark but for its beautiful, delicate, fluffy, yellow flowers produced in early spring. It really is a breathtaking sight when everything else is still curled up for winter, with a beautiful scent and nectar rich blooms for the odd, brave insect or bee.

Another strange tree which catches the winter light and holds water droplets which sparkle deliciously all over its contorted branches is *Corylus avellana* 'Contorta'. This hazel is an amazing thing to behold, as its name suggests, its branches twist and turn tortuously – great in the winter garden. Catkins will appear soon to be followed by leaves and nuts later in the year.

Other good stems for the winter are *Cornus* (Dogwood) and *Salix* (Willow). Good examples of each are *Cornus alba* 'Sibirica' with its brilliant stems in shades of crimson and *Salix alba* var. *vitellina* 'Britenzii' which has fiery orange stems. You can either cut down a third of the stems every year, leaving stems no older than three years or remove the whole lot every year. Use the cut stems as support in your garden or give them to basket makers who will be eternally grateful.

Of course not everything needs to be a stem or 'vertical accent' – evergreen domes are fabulous punctuation spots in the borders or along a drive. Box is very slow to grow and now prey to unsightly and fatal box blight; a really good substitute is *Ilex crenata* – do not be put off by the fact that this is a holly, it is a fabulous plant that doesn't mind how much you clip it. There are varieties that can be grown as slender columns or as little hedges for paths and borders, there is also a variegated selection. As you can see I really love and value this unassuming, undemanding workhorse of a plant.

I can't write about winter structure without mentioning conifers – the most underrated genre of garden plant but in my opinion the most amazing being some of the oldest plants on the planet. There are so many garden-worthy conifers to choose from – gone are the days of the dismal seventies palette of acres of heather and not so dwarf conifers rapidly outgrowing their allotted space. There really are miniature conifers that only grow 1cm a year and dwarf conifers that will not get taller than a metre. There are lovely blues, greens and yellows which light up in the winter sun, some produce attractive cones and all give shelter to wildlife.

If you have space and a steely, determined disposition you could plant a bramble – yes seriously! There is a superb bramble called *Rubus cockburnianus* (pronounced co'burnianus) which has amazing, arching, white stems that look great in the winter. In spring arm yourself with a thorn proof jacket, gauntlets and loppers and cut down as many stems as you desire. Once this plant is established and under your control its not so very hard to keep it within bounds. It brings me back to Kenneth as he selected a rather prostrate variety and named it after his mother *Rubus cockburnianus* 'Betty Ashburner'.

There are so many more wonderful plants for winter that I have no room to mention but do visit my facebook page Philippa Allom – Plantswoman if you would like to browse, to ask a question or post me photographs of your garden.

Happy Gardening – roll on spring. **Philippa Allom**

Autism Awareness

Are you affected by autism?

Do you know someone who is?

Are you running a sports club or group?

Would you like to know more about autism and how to help those who live with it in our community?

Okehampton United Charity is hosting an autism awareness day on **Friday 11th March 2016** at the **Charter Hall, Okehampton, EX20 1AA.**

Training will be provided by Monika Davis during two sessions (identical in content)

10am to 11.30am or 2pm to 3.30pm

If you would like to know more or to book a place please contact **Karen Percival on 01837 55179**

or by email on clerk@okehamptoncharities.org.uk

My Granny's Hearty Haddock, Potato and Leek Soup

Serves 4

450g potatoes

3 small leeks

350g smoked haddock or cod

65g butter

300ml milk

900ml fish or chicken stock

pepper

To garnish:

1 tablespoon finely chopped parsley

Oven temperature:

Gas mark 6/400°F/200°C

Peel the potatoes & cut into small dice.

Clean & thinly slice the leeks, including a good proportion of the green tops. Preheat the oven.

Butter a shallow baking dish, put in the fish, dot with 20g of the butter, pour over the milk and bake the fish in the oven for 10 minutes, until the fish will just flake. Remove the fish from the milk and carefully remove the skin and any bones. Reserve the cooking liquid. Melt the remaining butter in a heavy saucepan and add the potatoes; cook over a low heat stirring, for 5 minutes. Add the leeks and stir over a low heat until they are soft and all the butter has been absorbed. Add the reserved cooking liquid from the haddock, bring to the boil then simmer gently until the potatoes are tender. Add the stock, season with pepper, mix in the fish and heat through. Sprinkle over the parsley just before serving

John



News from The Drewe Arms

We have a busy Easter and Spring coming up in a few months including a DJ set by the legendary Andy Kershaw on Good Friday so pop along and get your tickets—£7 in advance, £10 on the night. Please note there will be no Folk in the Bar for February and March as the dates clash with other major events in the parish.

Gary and the Team

Coffee Morning at Castle Drogo

Friday 26th February 10.30 to 12.00

Coffee morning with raffle is taking place at Castle Drogo Café function room,
to raise funds and awareness for the Mental Health Charity MIND.

Everyone welcome!

MED Theatre

REFUGE is MED Theatre's new community play, charting the course of the English Civil War and its aftermath on Dartmoor. Drawing on the rich store of myth and legend surrounding the arrival of Oliver Cromwell on Dartmoor, the play looks at the way communities, households and even individuals were torn by divided loyalties, some of which changed over time with changing circumstances. Throughout this period, Dartmoor served as a refuge for people displaced by the upheaval of conflict. Ultimately the figure of John Elford, Dartmoor's first identifiable artist, a parliamentarian who hid from Cromwell's troops in a cave on Sheepstor, enabled some kind of healing to begin through the complexity of his experience and the imagery he conjured to express it.

Dates

Friday 11th March: Manaton Parish Hall (preview)

Saturday 12th March: Manaton Parish Hall

Tuesday 15th March: Belstone Village Hall

Thursday 17th March: Meavy Parish Hall

Friday 18th March: Moretonhampstead Parish Hall

Saturday 19th March: Moretonhampstead Parish Hall

All performances begin at 7:30pm, **BOOKING RECOMMENDED!**

Tickets £8 adults, £5 children, £7 concessions. (Preview: £7 adults, £4 children, £6 concessions)

Tilley's Parish Post

Due to the weather and the huge amount of rain we've been having during the past month, I am sorry to report that I've only played one football match, against Dawlish United in a Cup semi-final!

It was a blustery day when we played the away game, and their pitch was in a truly horrendous condition after a very wet night. It also happened to be on a slope and West Exe, unsurprisingly weren't at the zenith of our fitness after so few matches, we tired early on allowing Dawlish to get not one, but two goals in the first half.

However, thanks to a good half-time talk and a drink for us, we headed back on and actually began to play football properly. We were passing the ball well, and were rewarded for it with a goal from our key striker, Charley. The second half was coming to a close when one of our wingers, Hana managed to snag the ball off a Dawlish girl and ran up the line before scoring, literally in the last minute. There was nothing Dawlish could do as they took the centre kick, there were just 4 seconds left on the clock. This was a two legged cup match so the second leg is due to be played at our ground at Barton fields when we can get an available pitch. Bring on the second leg...

So with little football to occupy my time, I've been also participating in a play called Bassett, by James Graham. We've now managed to get through the whole play, and our lines, on the whole, are pretty much learnt. It's been a really great experience working alongside 13 other teenagers on a pretty intense play; as we're all on stage for the entire time. I'd like to give you the dates so if anyone is interested in coming to any of the performances, please do come and support us. The dates are:

Wednesday 16th March- In the Octagon theatre at Okehampton College

Thursday 17th March –In Throwleigh Village Hall

Friday 18th March- In the Jubilee Hall in Chagford.

Tickets to the above performances are **£4 / £2 for** concessions. The 17th/18th performances can be booked at Sally's Newsagents in Chagford. To reserve tickets for the Okehampton College performance please call Kate Wilson on 01647 281681.

We're also doing another performance at the **Drum Theatre in Plymouth on 19th April** and these tickets are £5 and can be booked at the Theatre Royal Booking office on 01752 267 222. All shows start at 7pm and the show lasts approximately one hour. **Tilly**

Restoring Fingle Woods – heavy horses take the strain

The Woodland Trust and National Trust are continuing their restoration of Fingle Woods this winter, with over 50 hectares of conifer plantation being thinned.

In early January, members of the public had the chance to see a heavy horse in action on site, used by the charities to remove timber from sensitive areas of the woods. The heavy horse, Beano and his handlers, spent a week hauling out timber from an area of woodland around Upperton Weir. The timber had been felled by National Trust volunteers to open up the habitat in this riverside plot.

These low impact methods of thinning trees leave the ground less disturbed, allowing the wild plants to regenerate and minimising disturbance to other wildlife. There are dormice hibernating in this area so a careful inspection of possible nesting sites was carried out before the extraction work started!

Throughout the week many visitors and walkers stopped by to see the heavy horse and his handlers at work. Dave Rickwood of the Woodland Trust has been pleased with the way the work has gone and said “it’s been an excellent opportunity to show people how horse logging can be used in the management of sensitive woodland habitats”.

To read more about our restoration work please visit our blog finglewoods.org.uk and do come along to the forthcoming lectures at the Fingle Bridge Inn, Drewsteignton (EX6 6PW). To book a place please go to: woodlandtrust.org.uk/events

Fingle Lecture Series 2016

4th February - Dormice and Barbastelle bats 7pm

Matt Parkins & Cecily Goodwin will share recent research on dormice at Fingle and show wildlife footage from remote cameras. Susan Young will show videos from her study of Barbastelle bats in the Bovey Valley. *We'd like to do more remote filming - if you're interested do come along.*

3rd March - Fingle the wildwood. 7pm

Adrian Colston will be sharing his personal passion for the management of the Dartmoor landscape and the challenges posed by a changing climate. He will describe a long term vision for Fingle and how it might return to wilder times. Visit Adrian's blog adriancolston.wordpress.com

7th April - Fishing the Upper Teign 7pm

Mike Weaver, from the Upper Teign Fishing Association, will be describing a life time's experience of fishing the Upper Teign. He will be dipping into the history of fishing on the river and the current issues and fears affecting the life-force of the river's wildlife today.

For more information talk to **David Rickwood of the Woodland Trust on 07827 820637**
or by email DavidRickwood@woodlandtrust.org.uk

Teignton Fayre News

Just a quick reminder to let you know that, as usual, the Duck Race will take place on Easter Monday (March 28th) with the first race starting at 2.30pm. Ducks will be going on sale soon so look out for them in the usual places, if not buy them on the day but be warned - they always sell out, and if possible, walk or share cars due to being limited parking as ever .

Fingers crossed for a repeat of the excellent weather we had last year!

The Teignton Fayre Committee

The Johnny Fuller Band + Special Guests

A 60th birthday fundraiser and celebration.

Please come along to a fantastic evening of live music at The Fingle Bridge Inn on the 27th February, 7.30pm to celebrate Johnny's 60th birthday. As well as a JFB set, there will be guest musicians who he has collaborated with over the years.

Donations on the night will go to Survival International, the global movement for tribal peoples' rights.

Bird Notes

About twenty minutes after I had emailed off my previous Parish Post article, I spotted a brand new bird in my garden. I was really delighted to see we had six long-tailed tits feeding on a suet block on my bird feeder. I do occasionally see them locally, and on three occasions, I have seen them moving along the back hedge of my garden, but this was the first time I have ever had them on the feeders. The long-tailed tit is an adorable looking, small, fluffy pink, white and black bird.

The shoulders and under parts are pinkish. The head has a white crown with black marks above the 'peppercorn' eyes and into the nape. They have red eye rings and a very small black bill. The black and white tail is very long, over half the length of the bird and the longest tail of any British bird in proportion to its body. They are often seen in family groups or parties moving along hedgerows.

I saw them again the next morning but there were eight on this occasion, and again feeding on the suet block. I have seen them a number of times over the past month and have noticed that they tend to visit when the bird table and feeders are quiet, which is normally when the sunflower hearts in my big feeder have all gone.

Well, it has been another month of wet weather and mild temperatures, but we have had a few cold days with the coldest night of the winter in Devon on the 19th Jan with minus 4 degrees Celsius. It has been interesting to see the daffodils out so early along with snowdrops, primroses, crocus and lesser celandine in flower, and many birds are thinking it is almost spring. I have been hearing a lot of 'drumming' by the great spotted woodpeckers, robins continue to sing from pre-dawn to well after dark and on the (rare) sunny period, there is the feel that Spring is coming. What is noticeable is that the days are getting longer, and now in the first week of February, it is still just daylight at 5.20.

I received quite a bit of positive feedback from the previous Parish Post articles on the ringing recoveries of the Exeter peregrines, so thought I would explain the principle a bit further.

Bird ringing in Britain & Ireland is organised by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO). Each year over 900,000 birds are ringed by over 2,500 highly trained bird ringers, most of whom are volunteers. They follow a careful training process that can take several years to complete to ensure that they have the necessary skills to catch and ring birds. The bird's welfare is always the most important consideration during ringing activities.

Ringing began over 100 years ago to study the movements of birds. While it continues to generate information about movements, it also allows us to study how many young birds leave the nest and survive to breed as adults, as well as how many adults live from year to year and how many birds disperse to different breeding sites. Collection of this information helps us to understand why bird populations increase or decrease – vital information for conservation. With many recoveries each year come some interesting facts....

Oldest ringed bird – A Manx shearwater, which was 50 yrs 11 months.

Furthest travelled – Arctic Tern from Wales to Australia 18,000 km

Strangest recovery – A ring put on an Osprey was found in stomach of a crocodile in The Gambia!

Nick

Okehampton Library

Change Of Date

Local historian Paul Rendell will be presenting for the first time his brand new talk 'Tales of 100 miles Walking Across Dartmoor'. Paul talks about the Pack Pony Challenge that he undertook recently following in the footsteps of the moor men of yesteryear. It was a tough challenge but a great achievement by the ponies, the dogs and the people that accompanied him.

The talk starts at **7pm on Wednesday 9th March**, priced at £4 a ticket.

For further information on any of our activities and events, please telephone Okehampton Library on 01837 52805

News from the Castle



Hello all

The central scaffolding is coming down! Please don't get too excited though as it is just moving north ready for when we start the final phase of work. The good news is that as I type we can see the parapet walls of the entrance tower peeping out from the scaffolding for the first time in nearly 3 years. It is looking very clean and crisp. We are taking a brief rest before starting the final phase which will give us time to re-group and re-energise before we get going again. It's a great opportunity to see 'before' and 'after' and compare the clean and shiny part of the castle with the part that we haven't done

yet. Only 2 years to go now!

We have plenty of exciting things coming up this year. The most exciting thing has to be a new item we will have on display which has very kindly been loaned to us for the year. We will have a Grayson Perry tapestry called Map of Truths and Beliefs displayed opposite one of our own beautiful tapestries. If you fancy getting a sneaky peek before the crowds, please do join us for our preview weekend on Saturday 5 or Sunday 6 March.

Having this tapestry with us will also fit perfectly with our Festival of Arts event which will launch with a free community open evening on Friday 13 May (date for your diary folks!) and finish on Saturday 18 June. Throughout the 5 weeks, there will be pop-up exhibitions, performances and hands on activities from local artists and arts groups. Please pop along to see what we are doing or, if you are an artist or an arts provider and would like to be more involved, please get in touch.

Best wishes everyone and see you soon.

Paula

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

ACE Archaeology Club.

We had to cancel our December and January ACE Days as they were both walks and the weather was rubbish. We are now hoping for a drier rest of 2016.

We have a lot planned so thought we would share a few dates with you. If you are interested in coming along then please let our secretary know. We do charge £5 for ACE days for non-members and if you wanted to dig with us would have to become a member for insurance purposes but as the subscription is only £10 we think it is a bit of a bargain. If you cannot dig then at least put the Open Days into your diary and come and see what we are doing and come along to the Festival and Archaeology and Old Technology in July, Step Back in Time. Details of all of these are below.

Some ACE Days that you might be interested in – booking required.

March 5th – Dartmoor Stone Rows – walk on Dartmoor looking at some of the stone rows and speculating about their purpose.

April 2nd – Making wicker shields

June 4th - to be confirmed but might be a day in Cornwall.

Other dates

April 30th to 8th Amy – Digging at Moistown

July 23rd and 24th – Step Back in Time, a festival of Archaeology, history and old technology at Pattiland Farm near Winkleigh. Come and try digging for yourselves or watch others doing it. Lots of other things on as well, check out the website.

<http://www.step-back-in-time.co.uk/>

August 20th – 4th September – Our main dig at Moistown.

August 27th - Open Day at Moistown. Anyone welcome and there will be tea and cake. Moistown is the possible site of a mediaeval farm house.

For more information on ACE and /or its activities contact:- ace@acearch.org.uk

Bible Book Club

Thursday's at 8pm,
Ardonay Cottage, Drewsteignton
All welcome
18 February Ezekiel
17 March Ezra & Nehemiah
28 April Hebrews
26 May 1 Chronicles
30 June 2 Chronicles

Drewsteignton Gardeners Club

March 14, 7:30
Village Hall
Laurel Farm Herbs and edible Plants
Refreshments
All welcome non-members £1

QUIZ NIGHT

Fun Quiz and Supper
Friday 11th March, 6.30 p.m.
Whiddon Down Village Hall
All welcome. Don't hesitate to come because you
are by yourself, or a couple.
We can introduce you to others to make up a team,
or you can take part on your own
your choice!
Wine and Soft Drinks Bar
Tickets £12 each from:
Peter Flick, Copse, Sticklepath EX20 2NR.
prflick@dartmoor-it.co.uk or Tel: 01837-840670

The Parish Post

The Post is designed to keep everyone in touch with life in the Parish. We'd love to hear about your forthcoming events, hair-raising experiences, fundraising efforts, funny stories, memories, recipes. Your thoughts, opinions, comments, views and concerns are important too. Please tell us. You don't have to be a great writer, just email or phone John Shiell or Pauline Rowe, details below.
If you don't tell us we can't print it
John and Pauline

Drewsteignton

Parish Post

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If you have trouble reading this publication please let me know and I will arrange for a large format version to be sent to you

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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 March - Thank You