

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

# Drewsteignton Parish Post

## NEWS FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

ISSUE NO. 120

MARCH 2016

It was reported that the light in Drewsteignton church yard has now been repaired and is working but the actual fixing still needs attention. The owner of the trailer which had apparently been abandoned in the car park, has very kindly removed it to make room for cars to be parked. If anyone has a small amount of space near the village it would greatly help the owner if they could store it there, please contact the Clerk or a councillor. The new parish website is now up and running, search Drewsteignton parish and it should come straight up. There is a facility for links to other sites and businesses and there is a comprehensive what's on page. Please have a look and use it as much as you wish.

Due to cutbacks by Devon County Council on highways, the results of which are blatantly obvious to all road users in the parish, we are looking at the way neighbouring parishes – Chagford and South Tawton - fund a lengthsman scheme. One day a month they employ a person to undertake various duties such as cleaning out gutters and drains, grass cutting and other maintenance as required. This does at least stop the roads and pathways getting any worse. The state of the roads in the parish are deteriorating in some places almost as bad as cart tracks, Veet Mill, Preston to Fingle Bridge to mention just two. We are continually reporting potholes to the County Highways but if you can help, please telephone 0845 155 1004 or go on line at Devon.gov.uk where you will be able to report them too. It appears that the amount of complaints about a par-

ticular area does make a difference.

It is good to report the roundabout at Whiddon Down has now been resurfaced at long last, it was about three years ago we first brought it to the County's attention!! We are also aware of several wooden direction "finger posts" which have rotted off and are lying down at junctions in the parish. We have been told that County Highways are not replacing or mending these unless they are on a "main road". It may be a case of "self help".

We discussed one planning matter, which included a listed building consent, Dartmoor National Park reference 0029 & 0030/16 at Narracott Close Drewsteignton and resolved unanimously to support the application. One unauthorised advertising sign has been removed at Venton and we are still trying to resolve other matters. We have now received a grant of £1104.00 from the Devon Association of Local Councils which we applied for. This was to cover the cost of the new website, to purchase a dedicated computer and scanner for the Council's use (up to now the Clerk has used her own equipment), and training. The Local Government Boundaries Commission have published their final recommendations to boundary changes, thankfully there are no changes for this parish!!

**A reminder your Annual Parish Meeting is on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2016 and the next Parish Council meeting is Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March 7.30pm at Whiddon Down**

### **Pothole Reporting Link**

[https://new.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/map/map\\_src/poth/](https://new.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/map/map_src/poth/)

### **Highways Report A Problem Link**

<https://new.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/>

## Himalayan Balsam

I am working with the North Devon Biosphere Reserve investigating the distribution of an invasive non-native plant called Himalayan balsam across North Devon and the surrounding catchments.

I am writing to you to enquire whether Himalayan balsam is present within your parish and, if so, is the local community involved with any work to control it?

If however you have not heard of Himalayan balsam before and you wish to know more you can visit the GB non-native species secretariat website at: <http://www.nonnativespecies.org/factsheet/factsheet.cfm?speciesId=1810> detailing information on the problems associated with this plant.

Please feel free to either contact me via email at: phil.metcalfe@devon.gov.uk or you can call the office phone line on 01271 388537 on Thursdays or Fridays or by leaving a message on my answering service on any other day and I will endeavour to return your call as soon as possible.

**Phil Metcalfe**

## ACORN COMMUNITY SUPPORT

**Cheriton Bishop Lunch Club** – Are now having 1 lunch a month which will be the first Thursday of each month, the next one will be 7<sup>th</sup> April. If you would like to come along and meet new people please phone; Jean Martin 01647 24586 for more details.

**Minibus trips to Sainsbury's from Cheriton** – Dates are Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March and 6<sup>th</sup> April. Please phone Sylvia on 01647 24267 or Jackie on 01647 252701. Help is provided in store and a wheelchair service is also available. The fare is now £4 return.

**Teign Valley Memory Café** - This month it will be 31<sup>st</sup> March 14<sup>th</sup> April. Please call Margaret on 01647 252622 for more details. Meetings are held 10.30 – 12.30 at Strawberry Hill, Dunsford on the B3212 – look out for the sign.

**Acorn Coffee Morning at Teign Valley Hall** – The Bowden Room, Teign Valley Community Hall 10.30 - 12. This month it will be 22<sup>nd</sup> March and 5<sup>th</sup> April. Please do pop in for a coffee and a slice of homemade cake and meet up with friends, everyone welcome. Please ring Jackie on 06147 252701 if you need a lift.

**Acorn Services** - Should you need transport to an appointment, a prescription delivered or any other Acorn service, please phone Sylvia Tripp on 01647 24267. Please leave a message on her answering machine if she is not at home and she will call you back. If you have not heard back within 24hours please call Jean Martin on 01647 24586 or Jackie in the Acorn office 01647 252701 – answering machine available 24 hours.

**Coffee Morning** in aid of Cheriton & Teign Valley Memory Cafe, **Saturday 12th March** at Dunsford Village Hall, 10.30-12noon. Cakes, plants, craft, bran tub, childrens' activities, live music. Entrance £1.50 to include coffee/tea and cake. Please ring Margaret should you need more information 01647 252622.

## Pete Downey - Photos

I have five albums of photos taken by Pete Downey. Anyone wishing to look through them and take any of the photos of themselves or people they know please contact me 281638 or call in and have a look. Most of the photos are of the Drewe Arms, Aunt Mabel and customers, Morris Dancers and views around the village.

Several of the people in the photos are no longer with us but some of you may remember them and want to have a photo to remind you of the good times had in the Drewe.

I'm not sure what else to do with the albums, if anyone has any sensible suggestions please let me know, it seems a shame to throw them away as they are part of village history.

**Pauline Rowe**

## Plant Hunters

The Veitch dynasty was founded in 1808 and the famous Exeter nursery, Robert Veitch & Sons came into being in 1863 with a sister company in London. Veitch sent a total of 22 plant hunters across the globe to collect exclusively for the Veitch Nurseries - the most influential being Ernest Wilson and two Cornish brothers, William and Thomas Lobb. William Lobb, aged 31, set sail from Falmouth aboard HM Packet Seagull bound for Rio de Janeiro in the year 1840. Thomas was sent to the East Indies on what turned out to be a four year expedition. These trips whilst exciting must also have been fraught with danger - lengthy sea voyages, explorations through fairly unknown and often probably quite inhospitable country surviving on one's wits and common sense and the good will of the locals. Plants and seeds were collected, drawn, pressed and preserved and whenever possible seeds were bundled up and sent back to the nursery - this allowed the nursery to propagate in large quantities and so begin to sell new and interesting plants to the general public. Ernest Wilson, as an un-traveled 23yr old was dispatched to China in 1899 with instructions to find and collect a beautiful tree - he found hundreds of beautiful trees. He was very excited about one find - the Handkerchief or Dove tree (*Davidia involucreta*) - he stumbled upon this lovely tree and could hardly believe his eyes - it was a massive, majestic plant and just happened to be showing in its full glory which when draped with its large white flower bracts gives the impression of a flight of doves or a scattering of pure white handkerchiefs. Be warned though if you fancy this tree - it takes 15yrs to flower. Wilson was presented with a gold watch for this brilliant find so you can imagine his chagrin when he discovered that a Frenchman had beaten him to it by a couple of years and had managed to germinate one seed. Veitch however, once they discovered how to break the dormancy of the seeds (allow 18months alternating between warm and cold temperatures) germinated thousands of these seeds and the large, mature trees that you can find all over the country most probably came from this collection of seeds. By the outbreak of the first world war the Veitch firm had introduced a total of 1,281 plants into cultivation including greenhouse plants, orchids, trees, shrubs, ferns, bulbs, conifers and climbing plants. More were to come in the following years. The Exeter business continued trading until 1969 when it was bought by St Bridget Nurseries.

One of Wilson's most popular introductions is the Regal Lily - *Lilium regale* - do have a go at growing this lily even if you have no space as it will perform very happily in a large pot and it has a delicious scent. A plant he could well have left behind though, in my opinion, is *Clematis montana* - a thug of a plant with few redeeming qualities. Apart from one flurry of flowers its main claim to fame is an ever growing thicket of twisting, turning and messy stems, ugly for most of the year.

Plant hunters are still discovering unknown plants and bringing back seeds to cultivate. After the great storm in 1987 many of the historic tree collections of Kew and Wakehurst Place were decimated. Mark Flanagan and Tony Kirkham led exciting expeditions to the Far East and their adventures are told in the book 'Plants from the Edge of the World'. Daniel Hinkley is another modern day plant hunter with a now famous nursery in America. Dan has an infectious enthusiasm and his knowledge is very accessible - its well worth going to one of his lectures should he tour again in England.

I will leave the last words to Ernest Wilson - "some friends have said 'You must have endured much hardship wandering in and out of corners of the earth'. I have. But such count for nothing, since i have lived in Nature's boundless halls and drank deeply of her pleasures. To wander through tropical or temperate forest with tree trunks more stately than Gothic columns, beneath a canopy of foliage more lovely in its varied forms than the roof of any building fashioned by man, the welcome cool, the music of the babbling brook, the smell of mother earth and the mixed odors of a myriad flowers - where does hardship figure when the reward is such?"

**Philippa Allom**

## Whiddon Down Village Hall

The Lunch Club organised by Lyndridge, meets once a month in the Hall. It is open to all in Drewsteignton & surrounds. Come and meet your friends and share for lunch, starting with a cup of tea, lunch with a friendly glass and coffee, all for £12.

For bookings contact **Ann Symons 01837 861105 or 078269 36004**. If you need a lift, they can collect. Next dates: **11th March, 15th April & 6th May**.

### 100 Club

Thank you for your support which is a great help to ensure our scheme can continue to offer as many people as possible the services they require. You may receive a written or telephone reminder when it is time for you to renew. You can join the 100 Club at any time during the year, just send a cheque, payable to ODCTG for £12 to us at the address below.

### Community Car Service Drivers

We are sorry to say goodbye to Bob Lawrence who is moving away from our area but he will hopefully be helping our colleagues at another Community Transport Group. We welcome Bob Weaver from Belstone and Michael Chastey from Folly Gate to our team.

We are actively seeking more volunteer drivers, particularly in Okehampton itself, if you know of someone who might be available for a few hours a week then please ask them to get in touch!

### Coffee Morning

We will be hosting an event in the Charter Hall on Saturday 30th April – further details to follow but put it in your diaries! We will be requesting donations of books, bric-a-brac, cakes & produce and raffle prizes nearer the event. We are hoping to have the following additional stalls: Lula Harka (handmade skirts), Marielle Ebner-Rijke (Artist), Partylite Candles and Adorabubbles (hand crafted greetings cards and tatted gifts).

### New Bus!

We are pleased to confirm that our new 15 seater bus which we are receiving from the Department for Transport following a successful grant application, has been ordered and is currently undergoing conversion to make it wheelchair accessible, at GM Coachworks who hope to have it ready for delivery to us at the beginning of May. We are going to make this available for local community groups to hire as well as for our own lifestyle trips.

### Trips

We will be starting our Saturday (and weekday if requested) trips from April when the weather improves! Please let us know any locations/venues you would like us to include on the list and we will do our best to accommodate all requests.

**Sue & Liz, ODCTG, Unit 3 Okehampton Business Park, Higher Stockley Mead, Okehampton, Devon EX20 1FJ 01837 55000 [sue.odctg@btinternet.com](mailto:sue.odctg@btinternet.com) [www.odctg.co.uk](http://www.odctg.co.uk)**

## Tillys Parish Post

This month I'll be telling you all about one football match, as it seems I have had far too few of these lately, due to the continued wet weather and saturated pitches.

Our team, West Exe Under 15's have been entered into 3 competitions this season, including the League Cup, and unfortunately we had been knocked out of the Devon Cup a couple of weeks ago. This was after a blustery fight against a Plymouth side and playing on an all weather pitch in Saltash, but losing 3-2.

We had played Dawlish in the first leg of our semi-final in the League Cup at their ground on an interesting sloping pitch and had drawn 2-2. We were determined to get to the final by winning the second leg.

With 9 players raring to go, our supporters loud and boisterous now we were playing at home, and another team to play against, we were ready. Dawlish are a new team to our league this year having dropped out about four seasons ago, due to a shortage of players. Now they had returned and we were yet to play them in the league game so we were still unsure of their key players. West Exe played a strong game with us pushing the ball out of our half with careful precision, yet Dawlish played a powerful defensive game and were quick onto the ball, often leaving some of our attackers trailing. It was quite an even match again, and it wasn't until about 10 minutes before the end of the first half that a goal was scored, and of course it was by our key striker Charley Melton! We held on to the lead, with the score remaining 1-0 for the rest of the match and so thankfully we're through to the final!

I apologise for the short Parish Post, between school work and various clubs, I seem to have very little spare time.

**Tilly**

## Bird Notes

Now is a good time to put up nest boxes for birds as many are looking for nesting sites as we approach the breeding season. I have already seen blackbirds gathering nest material, and blue tits and great tits investigating a nest box I put up in my garden fortnight ago. I have also put up an open fronted nest box specifically for robins as we have had a single bird singing for about the past six weeks now. He continues to be the first bird I hear in the morning and the last into the evenings. The best sort to put up are open fronted boxes (for robins, wrens, spotted flycatchers) and those with a circular hole in the front (28mm for blue tit, great tit and coal tit or larger for house sparrows). These can be bought in the village from Mike Rowe, who makes them from reclaimed timber. Nest boxes should ideally be put up facing north through east to south east and sheltered from the prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight. They can go at almost any height above one metre off the ground but position them to prevent predation by cats. There are about 9 million cats in the UK, and it is estimated they catch 275 million small mammals and birds each year, of which 55 million are birds. These are figures from a published study by the Mammal Society, and equates to about 6 birds per cat per year. In towns, cities and even villages, cats will often be found at very high densities, as will garden birds due to their attraction to bird feeders. I was in conversation recently when it was suggested that I don't like cats, which is not true at all. I adopted a stray cat at work last year, and fed and housed her in my shed. I happily feed neighbours cats when their owners are away on holiday, and I enjoy friends cats in their houses. I am less happy when cats try and catch birds in my garden and will shoo them away if I see them. However, over the past three months, I have had a very frustrating time with cats using my garden as their loo. This has not been the normal case of messing in fresh dug soil in vegetable beds, which has been going on for years. I am finding fresh poop on the grass in the garden with little or no attempt to cover it, which I thought cats always did. I tried a Google search to see how to 'Stop cats messing on my lawn' and see I am not alone with this problem, but found none of the solutions (get a dog, put down chemical sprays, use a water pistol) to be of use. So, If anyone has any ideas how to prevent this, please let me know.

I often mention bird ringing (putting small metal rings on the legs of juvenile birds in the nest), mainly the Exeter peregrines or swifts from the nest boxes on our row, as part of the B.T.O. Ringing Scheme. This morning as I left the house, I noticed a male blackbird on the ground through the glass panel of my front door. It flew off immediately as I opened the door but not before I spotted it had a leg ring on. Seeing the ring made me remember that when Malcolm came to ring the juvenile swifts here back in July 2014, he also ringed a brood of blackbirds in a nest in the yew hedge at the top of Frog lane, by my back gate. He had seen an adult blackbird going into the hedge with a mouthful of worms, and after it had flown off, he found a nest of five baby blackbirds which he quickly ringed. I can only think that this bird must be from that brood, which would indicate that 20 months after it was ringed, it is still alive and well, and I spotted it about 10 metres from where it hatched.

**Nick**

## Teign Valley Players Presents.....

**Act-Off: Thursday 17th - Saturday 19th March 2016 \*\*\*FREE ENTRY\*\*\***

An Oscar Wilde inspired play full of flamboyance and fun for all the family running for three nights in the Teign Valley Community Hall, Christow. With a '*this valley ain't big enough for the two of us*' attitude, two rival amateur dramatics groups go head-to-head in an Act-Off to win the right to play and avoid being banished from acting forever.

Gender surprises contained within this production!!

Come along and support local talent as well as having a good belly laugh to this fast paced and hilarious script.

**7pm Doors Open (7.30pm Curtains Up)**

Entrance: free (first come, first seated) pay what you think it's worth when you leave.

Bar Food Raffle

All donations will go to local and overseas charities.

## News from Fingle Woods...

After the February storms, Fingle is recovering from the damage inflicted by the gales and floods. The access tracks have been cleared of fallen trees, to allow the timber lorries in and out of Fingle, however the riverside path has been left needing some repairs, but with the first daffodils in flower, there are signs that Spring is on its way!

Despite the weather, the woods are busy with forestry activity and an interesting piece of research is helping us to manage the woods sensitively for some of its smaller inhabitants. As part of the 2016 Fingle lecture series, Cecily Goodwin, a PhD student from Exeter University, shared her recent research on dormice. She described how last summer, with a special licence from the Home Office, the Fingle dormice were tagged with transmitters and their movements tracked at night to see if the nearby forestry work was affecting their behaviour. The habits of these dormice, were compared with dormice in areas of the woods where no work was going on. The initial findings are already helping us to manage the woods to benefit this important species.

### **Date for the diary... 7<sup>th</sup> 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. To book a place please go to **woodland-trust.org.uk/events** Talks take place at the Fingle Bridge Inn.

### **For more information...**

Please visit our blog **finglewoods.org.uk**

Contact David Rickwood of the Woodland Trust on **07827 820637**

or email  **davidrickwood@woodlandtrust.org.uk**



## Spring Embroidery Fair

To be held at Cheriton Bishop Village Hall

On Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April

10.00 am – 4.00 pm

Admission Free

Cheriton Bishop branch of the WCE warmly invites you to our Spring Embroidery Fair in April 2016. Now into our eighteenth year of this annual event, we hope to again provide a lively exhibition. On show will be a varied mix of embroidery and textile art, with examples of members' work resulting from workshops and day schools, as well as individual member's displays and stands, with some items for sale. There will be on-going demonstrations throughout the weekend and a number of trade stalls with fabrics, threads and books, making this fair a real celebration of all aspects of contemporary and traditional embroidery.

A draw for otherwise reluctant spouses are our delicious homemade lunches and children (and everyone else!) are very welcome to 'have a go' on our demonstration table. So there is plenty to keep everyone happy and interested while you enjoy the embroidery!

Cheriton Bishop is very accessible from the A30 between Exeter and Okehampton, and is close to Fingle Bridge and National Trust-owned Castle Drogo – ideal for an enjoyable day out with friends and family.

Contact Details: **Jenny Grist on 01647 281110, or [jennygrist@talktalk.net](mailto:jennygrist@talktalk.net)**

## Drewsteignton Branch - Royal British Legion - Women's Section

Our next fund raising event will be on

**Saturday 23rd April 3.30pm**

**St Georges Day Tea,**

at

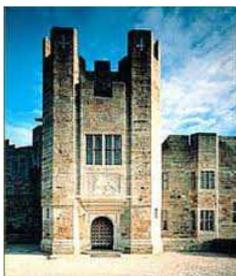
**Ford House, Drewsteignton.**

By kind invitation of

**Mr and Mrs C Chapman**

Raffle and Bring and Buy

## News from the Castle



Hello all

The new season has lifted off in style and we are looking forward to a fabulous year. We officially launched our new exhibition 'Truth and Triomphe' which features a tapestry by contemporary artist Grayson Perry. This tapestry, which will be on display for this year only, is shown opposite one of our very own tapestries which is over 300 years old. Old meets new!

We had lots of exciting things happening in February. We hosted our third school cross country run with over 150 local children taking part. I'm sure you heard the cheers! It was a great event and the weather was simply glorious. We also welcomed a team of young people from the Princes Trust who spent 3 weeks working in an area of woodland where dormice live, helping us to make the habitat more dormouse friendly.

Looking forward, we have our Festival of Arts launching on Friday 13 May with a free community open evening. Doors open at 6pm until 9pm. There will be live music, games and sneaky peeks in to the castle. Please spread the word and come along armed with a picnic. Don't forget to bring some sunshine! We are also launching a new year of community workshops in partnership with Learn Devon. We have a wide variety of workshops from willow obelisk weaving to silk painting. The tutors are all great and the location of Drogo is good for inspiration! For more info, dates or to book please contact the Learn Devon team on 01822 613701.

Finally, latest news about the project is that protection work in the Entrance Hall has now been removed and we are able to see the beautiful windows again. Also, we are now taking groups of visitors on guided tours round the south end of the castle and in to the chapel. It's been 3 years since we were last able to see the chapel and the windows in the Entrance Hall. It's a clear sign that this project of ours is moving in the right direction!

Best wishes everyone and see you soon.

**Paula**

**Community Engagement Officer, Castle Drogo**

**01647 434130, [paula.clarke@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:paula.clarke@nationaltrust.org.uk)**



### Events at Okehampton Library April 2016

From April onwards Okehampton Library will be opening again on Wednesdays 09:00-13:00

During library opening hours, drop in Easter crafts for children over the school holidays. Free

7th April 10:30 Duplo storytime for children under 5 & their parents/carers. Free

13th April 10:30 Home Educating Support, chance to meet other families and find out what the library service has to offer. Free

19th April 14:00-16:00 Craft Workshop – make a Thimble Keeper, £5 per person, all materials provided. Booking essential

20th April 10:30-11:30 Stories and crafts for children under 5 & their parents/carers. Free

IT & Coffee on the 1st & 3rd Wednesdays of each month 10:00-12:00. Bring along your own digital device for IT support and information sharing, benefit from each other's information and tips. Free

Every Monday 09:30-11:30 IT support. Free

Every Tuesday 10:40 Storytime followed by Bounce & Rhyme at 11:00 for children under 5. Free

Every Tuesday 14:00 Colour, Craft & Coffee for adults. Free

Every Saturday 10:30 -11:30 Lego Builders for children over 5. Free

Monthly Writer's Group

Friends of Okehampton Library

If you would like any further information on any events, please contact Okehampton Library 01837 52805

## Don't Miss Out!!!

Drewsteignton Garden Club  
**PLANT SALE**

May 7th 10am to 2pm

Village Hall

Come early--Lots of Plants for sale  
at **BARGAIN PRICES!!!**

## Whiddon Down Methodist Church

Invites you to a Sacred Concert given by  
The Torquay Gospelaire Male Voice Choir  
on

**Good Friday 25th March at 7.15pm**  
followed by light refreshments.

**Easter Sunday 27th March**

Service at 6.30pm  
All welcome

## Drewsteignton Playing Field

Waitrose in Okehampton has accepted Drewsteignton Playing Field on to their Community Matters programme for March, ie this month. This means that anyone who goes into Waitrose from 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> March and puts their green token into the Drewsteignton Playing Field box will be contributing to our funds.

Can you please ask anyone you know who may want to shop in the Okehampton Waitrose over March?  
The more green tokens the better.

**Thanks Alison Chapman**

## 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

### Contact Details:

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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 April - Thank You