



Learning to care for your Elvers!

On a drab, blustery, overcast Wednesday in late June, some 24 Year One and Two pupils from Westbury C of E Primary School assembled at the famous Westbury Dutch water gardens. Had we been suffering from the searing heatwave that was afflicting continental Europe at the time, they might have been there for a refreshing dip in the canal. However their mission was more serious, interesting, educational and slightly quirky. It is well known locally that Westbury is home to an internationally acclaimed fish smokery, famous for its smoked

eels, and the children were at the water gardens to release into the main canal scores of elvers provided by the Severn & Wye Smokery. They were accompanied by some senior pupil helpers and teachers Mrs. Sim, Mrs Kift and Miss Wills, who ensured that no one fell in. The Smokery was represented by Anita Nicholson, who talked the children through the life cycle of the elvers, from the Severn to the Sargasso Sea and possibly back, although I understand that much of their existence, including breeding habits, remains a mystery. Anita had brought with her some 24

boxes, each containing a handful of elvers. Each child had to lie prone on the bank of the canal (on a mat of some sort) and hold their cupped hands out over the water as Anita emptied the contents of the box over their hands. Not one child flinched as anything up to a dozen wriggly little elvers and half a pint of freezing water was spilt over their hands. There were a few grimaces and waving of hands as they got up, however.



Jerry Green, top man at the water gardens, told me that this ritual became an annual event about five years ago, and elvers could remain in the canal for up to ten years. Herons could be a problem, but the small elvers could easily hide in crevices in the masonry wall. It was not possible to be sure how the elvers made their way into the Severn, but there were overflow outlets from the canal, and eels can travel overland.

As a treat for the eager children at the end of an exciting afternoon, Nicola produced a fully grown eel (not wriggling!) and invited the children to feel its skin, explaining that one big difference between eels and fish is that fish



have scales, whereas eels have a smooth skin.

Each time I encounter the pupils and staff of our two primary schools I am reminded how lucky we are in this large parish to have such obvious centres of excellence for our youngsters.

Walmore Hill School News

The Summer Term is a busy time for teachers and children. We are continuing to work hard in our classroom lessons but have more opportunities to enjoy learning outdoors. We all seem to be very active! Children in Cygnets Class are looking forward to taking the elvers to the river



channel on Walmore Common next week and are also enjoying their weekly Mini-Marines' sessions with Dan.

Children in Swans Class enjoyed taking part in Battlesports last week. We all go swimming at the Cinderford pool on alternate Mondays and the children are making really good progress and are gaining confidence in the pool.

Our Teddy Bears Picnic had to be postponed due to rain, but will be taking place on 12th July weather permitting!

Cygnets Class topic is called 'Land Ahoy!' this half-term. The children are enjoying learning about pirates and will



be taking part in a 'Pirate Day' before the end of term.

We are starting to practise team games and races in preparation for our Sports Day early in July.

Children in Swans Class are continuing to study their topic 'Blue Abyss'. As well as learning lots of scientific facts, the children have produced some lovely art work.

*Suzanne Loten,
Cygnets Class Teacher*

Parish Council

The weather was not exactly what you would expect for a summer evening when the Parish Council met in June. Apologies had been received from Mike Townsend but the rest of us were there, together with four members of the public, who raised questions about the school playing field and the issue of noise from the autograss race meetings and the recent paramotor event. There were also two planning applicants who were there to answer any questions we might have regarding the application for change of use of agricultural land at Elton Farm to provide a recreation ground and amenity area together with car parking.



A paraglider over the river

With regard to the paramotor issue, Chairman Simon Phelps reported that he had

been in touch with Arlingham Council again and had now been told that those taking part *had* been advised to fly on this side of the river, but this was mainly for safety reasons to ensure that those in the air were clear of the area required for taking off and landing. Simon also pointed out that Parish Councils do not grant the licences for this sort of event – that is the responsibility of the District Council. This also applies to the licensing of the Autograss events and anyone who feels strongly that these events should not be allowed to take place should address their complaints to the Forest of Dean District Council.

Planning

The matter of the school playing field was moved up the agenda to allow for the public comment on this, which was a question about the starting date for work on the new playing field. Simon explained that it was not possible to give a date as yet but that we are in touch with Sport England regarding this.

There was quite a list of planning applications and it was decided to visit Rock Farm to view the two agricultural buildings which are proposed for conversion into dwellings and also the light industrial building on the north side of the Strand, where there is a proposal to change the use of the first floor from office space to a residential unit. Applications for a two storey extension at Otters Pocket in Ampney Lane and a single story extension at Moys Hill Barn in Strand Lane met with no objections, and two applications, which were basically just follow ups to applications we had discussed previously, also caused no problems. The application for change of use at Elton Farm (regarding which Peter Radley had declared an interest and therefore did not vote) also included the redirection of public footpaths on the land, but this was not felt to be a problem and there were no objections, as was the case with the removal of a sycamore tree at Rycroft and its replacement with a silver birch. Fiona will seek clarification regarding the application to install dormer windows at Fountain Cottage in Rock and Fountain Lane as the wording and the drawings did not seem to tally.

Fiona then updated us on the District council's decisions on several earlier applications, all of which had been granted, except for one to convert a

garage into separate accommodation.

Finance

A review of the parish clerk's salary resulted in an increase of 2.6%, as we are very aware of how fortunate we are to have such an efficient and hard-working clerk as Fiona.

County Councillor's report

Brian Robinson arrived at this point with the news that the Forest of Dean now has two members in the County Council cabinet with Richard Boyles now Deputy Leader. He also reported that a recent Ofsted inspection of children's services which had been judged inadequate in March 2017, had found that progress was being made but not fast enough. The Ofsted report states that "*The local authority is making progress in improving services for children and young people. However, too many children continue to experience drift and delay in the assessment, planning and provision of services to meet their needs.*" The number of children in care has now risen to around 700.

Brian also reported on his attendance at a conference on climate change which showed that 40% of our carbon emissions are due to transport and 40% to heating our homes.

Around the Parish

The **play area** is still awaiting its spring clean as we had been awaiting better weather, so we hope to complete this in the next month or so.

Two recent collisions between lorries



and railway bridges in the parish led us to repeat our suggestion that some sort of

height barrier be erected across the road before the bridge so that any lorry drivers who have failed to notice the height limits are given a thumping reminder



Could we do with something along these lines?

before they actually hit the bridge.

There was a report of a **blocked footpath**

near Longcroft Farm and some rather dangerous steps down from a footpath leading into Flaxley Lane.

Burial Ground The lack of space for burials is now a national problem and it is therefore imperative that everything possible is done to encourage people to choose cremation rather than burial. In our burial ground, the area for cremated remains often gets overgrown and it was agreed that we research how cremated remains are interred in other cemeteries, with a view to making cremation a more popular choice.

Closed Churchyard The repairs to the churchyard wall are progressing well and another working party had spent a morning tackling the 'thug' weeds, like nettles, brambles and docks which had been growing rapidly in the wet weather. The grass cutting contractors are to be reminded about the areas where the grass needs to be kept at a medium length and now that the scaffolding has all been removed, we can tackle this part of the churchyard at the next session on Saturday 13th July – all welcome!

Other matters A new defibrillator for Northwood Green was due to be handed over on 26th June and there is the possi-

bility of funding for more defibrillators which could be important for us as Westbury is such a large parish.

We have been asked to supply more information with regard to the registration of the Post Office as a Community Asset and this has now been supplied. In fact, when I went to the Post Office to gather this information, five customers were served in the short time after I arrived, which makes it an important Community Asset in my book.

And some good news for the parish (and for Ed!) - Dennis Beale has volunteered to join Lydcare as a volunteer driver. This will be a huge help, but even so, if there is anyone else out there who could also spare the odd morning or afternoon to help with community transport, a third driver would make things even easier.

The next meeting is on Monday 15th July at 7pm.

Di Landon

**Gloucester & District
Autograss Club
Race Dates 2019**

Sunday 7th July
Sunday 8th September
All events 11:00am Start
Pound Farm, Elton Corner,
Westbury-on-Severn,
On the A48

**For more information Please visit
our website**
www.glosautograss.jimdo.com





The June meeting of the Parish Hall Management Committee was held on a typical summer's evening, dark, dank and dismal. Fortunately our chair, Jan D'Ambrogio, was her usual cheerful self as she announced that there were still some alarm key fobs to be re-calibrated by Allcooper, and that we needed to indicate clearly what sort of rubbish could be put in the various large Biffa bins.

On the subject of the proposed sale of the Post Office, our Parish Council representative, Mrs Ed., reported that the Forest of Dean District Council had written seeking more information about the building.

Hall maintenance

A list of projects detailing the jobs needed to keep the Hall together is reviewed each month, and this month it was noted that the trunking concealing the wiring from the lighting cabinet to the stage had been reinstated, for which Dan Long was thanked. It was proposed to add hooks to the trunking, but regrettably I failed to make a note of the purpose. It was also suggested that we add pelmets above the windows to the list. Jan reported that she was seeking quotes for replacement fire exit doors for the Hall. Note is also made of completed projects, and it was agreed that the ladies' loo in the lounge now looked superb

Severndipity Club

Val Morgan-Townsend, the Severndipity Club Treasurer, circulated the latest figures, and expressed satisfaction that she was able to pass £2,000 to the Hall. She added that it was proposed to purchase a small freezer rather than a more expensive ice-making machine. There was some discussion around separate charges for providing a bar based on the number of guests at a function, and it was agreed to remove reference to any such charges from the website. Where there is a raffle which includes alcoholic prizes, it should be stressed that it could not be consumed on the premises. For weddings and some parties, where guests are offered a welcome drink, corkage would be charged based on the price of a 75cl bottle. If a specific wine was required, payment in advance would be sought. Gen Riley, Secretary to the Severndipity Club, announced that she would set up a WhatsApp group for bar volunteers, and asked for phone numbers.

Fundraising

Jan regretted that the Brunch on 9th June had to be cancelled owing to a low take up. However, it was hoped that the Bash and Band event on 2nd August would be better supported.

Odds & Ends

WiFi needs to be extended, not only in the Hall, but to the cricket scoreboard on the far side of the outfield.

Jan and Gen agreed to liaise on the production of a series of policies covering various aspects of safety and food hygiene. Jan would arrange for a policy folder to be placed in the kitchen.

Mike Edginton agreed to hold a training session on the new high reach stepladder including removal, erection, usage and storage

Jan observed that the new free furniture in the lounge looked very smart. That said, it was decided to repair to the lounge to verify her observations over a glass of wine. *Ed*

Events this month

Country & Western

6 July 7:30pm

No Nosh & Natter this month

Back in August

Meetings

Parish Hall Management Committee

9 July 8pm

Parish Council Meeting

15 July 7:00pm

Regular Groups

Short Mat Bowls

Every Monday 7:30pm, Weds 1:30pm

Fitsteps - Dance Yourself Fit

Every Tuesday (Main Hall)

from 6:15pm-7:00pm

Zumba Gold Low Impact

Every Thursday 9:30am-10:30am

Westbury Football Club Training

Every Tuesday 7 – 8.30pm

Westbury Rugby Club Training

Every Tues from 7pm

Contact Ken Boulton 01452 760285

Mother & Toddler

Every Friday 9am-11pm

Community Bar Open

Every Tuesday, 8-10pm and Saturday 5-11pm

BT Sport now showing in the Lounge Bar

Future Events

Parish Family BBQ

Friday 2 August Bar Open from 6:30pm

Nosh & Natter

8 August 12noon - 2:30pm

Westbury Summer Show

Sunday 1 September

Produce Show Schedule available from the Parish Hall and Post Office

Vicar's Invitation.

I have recently begun to think about the predictions we hear of climate change. I imagine many others have been thinking along the same lines. I am not a scientist, but I feel some incentive to raise the issue in the community. What I am wondering is whether there is any sense in starting a discussion locally, in the hope of identifying some things we could do locally to begin to address this issue. I would be happy to have such conversations, with individuals or groups. So if anyone in the community feels the same way, I would be pleased to hear from them, especially if you have links to other groups in the community, such as the Parish Council or Young Farmers. So please get in touch with me if the subject of climate change stirs you. This message is purely personal, from me as an individual, and does not represent the opinions of the PCC. It is prompted primarily by the thought that I would rather not have to tell my grandchildren that I was one who noticed the problem but did nothing about it.

Best wishes to you all,

Rev Steve Taylor, 01452
760756, stevewillstay@gmail.com



Northwood Green Gardening Club
Meetings held at Northwood Social Hall, GL 14 1NB, at 7.30 pm unless otherwise stated.

*Enquiries: contact Sue Stephens
01452 760773*

Visitors welcome to any meetings,
cost £3



Saturday 13 July

Coach trip to Powis Castle and Garden,
Welsh Pool



Westbury Players celebrated their 29th year with a summer event in part to honour their retiring Chairman Clive Tempest, and partly just to get everyone together. Thanks to May Brass and her team everyone was extremely well fed and a good night was had by all.

In summary :

1. Last year's Panto made about £2300 profit after costs - thanks to all who attended and took part in a very enjoyable event.
2. Panto 2020 is starting to come together

3. Next year's Spring production is being directed by Mike Edginton. Everything is under control.

4. Next year is our official 30th Anniversary. Those of you with longer memories may recall that the first "Eat, Drink and be Merry" evening was held in 1981 but Westbury Players was only formally established in 1990.

5. The committee have made charitable donations of £250 to both Great Oaks Hospice and Forest Sensory Services, two important local charities.

6. Our inaugural Suggestion Box was not an unqualified success and was clearly located too close to the bar but I shall tackle a few of the contributions here :

A) Clive Tempest has already resigned so he can't resign again.

B) I'm not going to resign either.

C) We will not be buying a Ceremonial Goat.

D) Suggestions written in Greek (or attempted Greek) will not be considered.

Mark Landon



2008 Panto at the OK Corral

A fellow was strolling along the bank of a river one lovely summer's day when he came across a fisherman. "Is this a good river for fish?" he asked casually. "It must be" replied the fisherman, "I can't get any of the beggars to come out"

At the Wicket

It's hard to believe as the monsoon season reaches its peak that in June Westbury CC managed to complete so many fixtures. As the most active sports club in the village, it runs two men's teams, a Wednesday team, several youth teams and a Ladies team which is a testament to the work of the club committee - but also something of a nightmare for a sports report with limited space to work with. However, we can but try.

The men's 1st XI currently lie 4th in Div 2 of the County League having won 3 and lost 2. The highlight of the month was a comfortable 55 run victory over Hatherley and Reddings which featured two of the finest catches seen at the Parish Hall Grounds in many a year by Charlie Gayther. I didn't see it myself but this story was confirmed to me by...er...Charlie Gayther. The opening partnership of Ian Dunn and Alex Wyman impressed all month and when Ian Dunn was unavailable Father Neil Wyman (that's Alex's father, not his calling) stepped in and notched a fine 50 against Cam.

The men's 2nd XI are mid table in Div 7 having lost to Painswick, possibly due to the umpire (your correspondent) making a finely judged decision to give opening batsman Ian Martin out LBW on 45. He departed glumly but secure in the knowledge that he was on the receiving end of the cricketing equivalent of the wisdom of Solomon. The umpire was withdrawn from action shortly afterwards. The loss against a suspiciously strong Bourton Vale...cough...Thirds was a low point in the month and also being pipped by 6



runs against Down Hatherley in a low scoring encounter was somewhat frustrating. Tom Landon top scored in two of the games despite having a batting stance that displays a gate wider than the proposed Severn Barrier, but he managed to score 45 and 31 anyway.

Against bottom of the table Charfield, the team clearly saw an opportunity to improve their league standing and hopes were raised when their septuagenarian opening bowler asked the umpire (your correspondent again) if we "still went down the Junction after the game". However, he proved to be a surprisingly effective nagging slow left arm spinner and Rich Edginton, opening the batting and weighed down with the responsibility of being one of only three recognized batsmen, went through obvious signs of psychological torture in desisting from lashing the inviting little doodlebugs being lobbed at him towards the large marquee that had mushroomed up overnight outside the Parish Hall.

Indeed, this cricketing version of waterboarding led to a passage of play that

was strangely compelling to those watching Edginton almost physically reeling himself in with repeated almost apologetic dead bat prods interspersed with the occasional lash which invariably went straight to a fielder. However his patience (if that is what it was) paid dividends as he anchored the innings with a fine 50. However, when Arron Reese Williams strode to the crease the innings leapt forward in terms of momentum as he took the Charfield attack to the cleaners, smashing the ball to all parts of the field (and neighbouring fields) to post a magnificent maiden century and drive the total towards an imposing 252/6. Charfield never got close to achieving this and sank to a miserable total of 98 all out. The ghost of Dennis Dunn's last ball debacle against Charfield from yesteryear now thoroughly laid to rest (until we play them again).

On an individual level, the performance of the month must be young **Talia Edginton**, who was selected to play for



Talia Edginton, front row, left.

Gloucestershire Ladies U13 Development Squad, taking her first wicket against Oxfordshire! This magnificent achievement is a source of much pride not just for the Edginton family but the club as a whole - well done Talia.

In other sports news, **Esme Crompton**

represented Gloucestershire U-12s at tennis and the team won their County Cup group, so Esme and her team mates are off to Bolton for the National County finals next week. *Mark Landon*

Travelling by Train?



No trains will be calling at Gloucester Station on Sunday 21st or Monday 22nd July. Rail services will be amended or replaced by coaches.

There will also be disruption to services from Tues 22nd July until Friday 26th July, so check before you travel. The car park at Gloucester Station will be closed from 8pm on Frid 19th July until Sunday 28th July inclusive, but the overflow car park at the rear of the station, off Great Western Road, will remain open.

To check before you travel use nationalrail.co.uk or GWR.com/gloucester or crosscountrytrains.co.uk/gloucester2019





Westbury-on-Severn Summer Show

Sunday 1st September

Starts at 12pm at the Parish Hall
PLEASE PUT IN YOUR DIARY

There will be plenty of things to see and do on the day, including live music and food, entertainment for the children and a variety of craft stall holders on the field and in the hall there will be the

Flower and Produce Show

Now in its sixth year

Schedules now at Westbury Post Office,
Chaxhill Service Station, Westbury Parish Hall or can be downloaded from our
Parish Hall website

If you would like to offer your help before the event with putting up marquees and getting the site ready for the big day, or on the big day itself, or after the big day when it all needs taking down, please get in contact on 01452 229570 or send an email to: <mailto:info@wosph.co.uk>

Thank you



Registered charity No: 301644

WESTBURY ON SEVERN PARISH HALL PRESENTS

SUMMER BBQ

LIVE
MUSIC

BAR
OPEN



FRIDAY, AUGUST 2ND @ 6PM

OUR ANNUAL FAMILY EVENT COME AND JOIN US

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