

MARDI GRAS WITH **DOM AND THE IKOS**

WESTBURY PARISH HALL
TUESDAY 25
FEBRUARY DOORS
OPEN 7.00PM
DRESS COLOURFUL!

Tickets including food £20 or
£15 for students and under-18s.
Available online from Eventbrite*
or call Maurice McCartney on
(01452) 760255.

*<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/mardi-gras-with-dom-and-the-ikos-at-westbury-on-severn-parish-hall-tickets-89097530111>

Jazz

Any fool can criticise, condemn and complain, and most fools do.

Many people are gossips, , however some of us are merely being informative

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A Star is Bjorn.

Paul Moscrop, WoSP Food and Theatre Critic.

Mark Brill's majestic tour de force as Bjorn, the conflicted gay Swedish oven, was a standout at this year's triumphant Pantomime 'Hansel and Gretel'. The audience jeered his variously-accented Aga because they realised that here was the real Baddy; "just following orders" is no defence when cooking children. They say brevity is the soul of wit and in this year's four-hour performance, half the wit was provided by Adrian Crompton and half by Mark Landon. Crompton was also involved on stage, well cast as a large tool (Max the Axe), bringing a cutting edge to Landon's thoughtful direction of Westbury Player's best production since *The Hobbit*. (*Written by Paul Moscrop! Ed.*) A really excellent meal was provided by Jan D'Ambrogio and her team featuring Gill Smith and Di Landon amongst

many others.

Before the main event Stuart Hawke made an impassioned plea for the audience to make noise and to boo loudly and frequently. As this request was also mingled with health and safety instructions, the straightforward folk of Westbury proceeded to enthusiastically boo more or less everything. This did not seem to dismay the performers too much, unfamiliar though such a reception would doubtless have been.

The main booing was directed at Sally Church's typically glamorous but very wicked witch, Griselda. Remarkably, although your reporter was the butt of a questionable joke about a "Dieting Spell" the next morning I had lost three pounds Don't mess with her.

Carrying the show were Amelie Phillips and George Ford as the eponymous twins. They were cool and word perfect

throughout, clearly ones to watch in future.

The challenge taken up by stalwart Andrew Landon was standing in for crowd favourite, Clive Tempest, and assisting Griselda as "Squelch" (seemingly a walking compost heap). The transition was seamless, with Andrew forgetting all the same lines at all the same places. Hardworking prompt Carolyn 'Tink' Jones kept the intermittently coherent plot on track, although when Andrew remembered some previously unwritten lines, thank goodness also for old pros like Colin Cotterell (Gertrude Winkelchafer) who could turn the chaos into opportunity. So it was an inspiration to periodically use the Narrator (Harry Phillips) to gently explain any progressions of the plot which may have escaped the audiences attention.



Probably the moment of highest quality, amongst many, was the 'I've Been Everywhere' song which miraculously mentioned every town and village in the Forest and which must have taken no little rehearsing. Well, almost everywhere, the Mayor of Green Bottom and entourage stormed out when the hamlet failed to get a mention.

Griselda notwithstanding, the most spellbinding moment was the beautiful singing voice of Principal Boy Clemmie Byrne (Helmut) and both she and leading lady Louise Fransham (Willow) gave confident, beautifully-timed and accomplished performances throughout. Nicely adding to the vocals were the chorus line of Zoe Fransham, Caitlin Bennett and Esme Crompton, who made a promising debut at what might seem the very bottom of the showbiz

ladder - but being 'third tree' in the Forest of Dean is actually pretty good.

Inevitably the plot involved the characters making some pretty disastrous life choices. For example, Tim Smith agreed to appear as a singing Oak Tree.

But meanwhile, the heroic Woodman (a relaxed and likable Simon Roberts), Max the Axe, aging handsome



Simon Roberts, David D'Ambrogio and Adrian Crompton

Italian football legend and Latin lover Count Beaky (a type-cast David D'Ambrogio), along with desperate mother and hirsute widow Gertrude Winkelchafer were all involved in a race to prevent the twins from being made into a pie. Imagine trying to narrate that. Anyway all ended well, but have we seen the last of the evil Griselda? Tim was very entertaining by the way.

As usual, the people who work the hardest for the least thanks are left until the very end but that's life. So congratulations to all the crew without whom the Show could not go on. They were;

Director, Mark Landon **Producer**, Di Landon **Sets**: Mark Landon, Sue Pemberton, Mike Edginton, Brian Wyman, Elfie Clarkson, Issy Baker and Andrew Landon, **Stage Manager** Elke Landon, **Wardrobe Mistress**, May Brass, **Musical Director**, Stuart Hawke, **Lighting and Sound**, Stuart Hawke and Matt Fransham **Backstage Crew**, Mike Edginton, Brian Wyman, Mike Matthews, Caitlin and Patrick Riley **Make up**, Penny Collick, Angelenna Kelly, Gemma Byrne, Nicola Atkinson. **Prompt**, Carolyn Jones, **Props**, Di Landon

More pics on page 11

persona of Nana, Lady Storm, mistress of Astted Hall, she actually dug the moat.

No tribute to Anna would be complete without reference to her wry sense of humour, although she could, indeed be forceful, and sometimes a little impatient with those of us who couldn't keep up. However she invariably saw the humorous side of any situation, and her infectious chuckle often punctuated, and indeed punctured, our deliberations. She leaves a yawning gap in the lives of her family and loved ones, and in the life of the community." Ed



George Ford, Amelie Phillips and Colin Cotterell



Above; Clemmie Byrne and Louise Fransham
Below Mark Brill.



Sally Church



Zoe Fransham, Caitlin Bennett & Esme Crompton

Anna Tempest

On Tuesday 14th January at the Forest Crematorium we said our final farewells to Anna, and it was my privilege to be asked to say a few words in tribute to this remarkable and well loved lady, who had been a unique local figure for over 40 years. Although words are seldom adequate on these occasions, this is what I said.

“Anna took a lively and practical interest in local affairs. She served on both the Parish Council and the Management Committee of the Parish Hall, the twin functionary pillars of Westbury. She brought to our deliberations a keen insight that often cut through much of the, I must say predominantly male, pomposity, and was for some years Treasurer of the Hall committee, a not much sought after post. Among her last- ing achievements as a Hall committee member was the acquisition of a liquor licence for the Hall. Back in the early eighties it was no simple task to persuade the magistrates that you could be trusted to run licensed premises, and there were considerable hoops to be jumped through, culminating in an appearance at what is now the Museum of Crime Through Time. We had legal representation, but both Anna and I were closely interrogated by the Chairman of the Magistrates. I stumbled through the process, but it was clearly Anna’s calm, and if I may say, slightly



regal, approach that convinced the bench that not only was she supremely capable of running a licensed premises, but as long as she was in charge, there would be no trouble.

Her contribution to the life of the community didn’t stop there. Before the formation of Westbury Players, she appeared in a number of short, we hoped, humorous, one act plays, which, if memory serves, we rehearsed at Adsett Court. She went on to become instrumental in the establishment of

Westbury Players, and a stalwart of the costume department. I have little doubt that Clive, in his various roles over the years, benefited considerably from her wisdom.

Clive’s sporting prowess, particularly at the Summer game, is the stuff of legend, as were his wife’s teas. It was clearly a matter of pride for Anna to conjure up an unsurpassable repast for the cricketers, and people spoke of

her teas in reverential terms. As a mere spectator, I would routinely sidle into the lounge after the players had returned to the pitch and forage for a bit of pork pie or pickled onion. On Anna’s watch, there was scarcely a morsel to be had, except, perhaps, a solitary home -made Viennese whirl.

For one so intellectually astute, Anna was also very practical and much of the maintenance of Adsett, at least the Tempest section, I understand, fell to her, to the extent that, in her fictional

Parish Council

The first Parish Council meeting of 2020 was a small gathering, with no parishioners and apologies from three of our councillors and from Brian Robinson, our County Councillor. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and with no public to make comment, we moved swiftly on to planning matters.

Planning An application to extend a barn at Bury Court Farm, Rodley raised no objections and an application for change of use and extension of an existing equestrian building to facilitate a riding school and equestrian training at Oaklands Farm, Northwood Green was supported. Fiona reported that an earlier application to establish an annexe as a separate single dwelling house had been withdrawn and an application for two new houses between The Lawns and Hay Barn at Chaxhill had been approved.

There was little to report on finances, other than £149 + VAT is needed to pay for the upgrade to Windows 10 on the Parish Council laptop.

Around the Parish

The list of parish roads that have been badly flooded or are in a very bad state seems to get longer and longer. Some of the damage has been caused during work done by Complete Utilities on the Gigaclear project and it was felt that this damage should not have to be repaired by the Council at the public expense, and the company should be made to restore the roads and verges to their former state. However, there are many other places where the problem is clearly the responsibility of the Highways department at the County Council and Andrew Middlecote, the Highways

man at the Council, will be asked to come and see the situation for himself.

Footpaths – a couple of footbridges are in need of repair and have been reported and there is a loose footpath sign at Poulton Court. Mike Townsend will ask Geoff Wheeler, the Public Rights of Way man at the Council to give us an update on various footpath issues.

Burial Ground – the headmaster and governors of Westbury School have now decided on the amount of the bottom field that the school would like to rent and so a new lease and rental agreement now has to be reached with the County Council.

Milestones - a recent survey of the old milestone markers in the parish has so far found five, although it appears that there should be at least six. These are mainly along the A48 which was the old turnpike road.

District Council report

Chairman Simon Phelps then updated us on developments following the consultation regarding the District Council’s revised Local Plan. The government has set a housing target for the Forest of Dean of 330 new dwellings per year (or 6,600 over 20 years), and this means that the new Local Plan has to identify enough suitable land to accommodate around 4,200 houses. The bombshell dropped when he revealed that a representation had been submitted for a new Eco Village of between 4000 and 5000 houses to be built on land largely in Westbury parish. The area is between Walmore Common and Ley Woods and the plans include a railway station and a new village access road linking the A48 and the A40.

The representation describes “the location of this Eco Village between the A40 and A48 served by the Gloucester to

Newport railway line” as “a prime site for a transport interchange and the provision of a hub to the east of the District. This is important in respect of securing attractive new employment provision in the District, as the location and access to the trunk road network and national rail network provides a good location for new employment both with easy access to the M5 and M4 as well as the national rail network.

It continues “A new Eco Village would be able to offer a range of employment land use types as part of a mixed use development and would provide the critical mass for investment in the required infrastructure, including super-fast broadband. It is considered that the location of land at Grange Court could help to intercept skilled employees leaving the District while also capturing those to the east around Gloucester and Cheltenham. A new railway station would access a wider catchment with train services to South Wales and the Western Powerhouse to the east and south and a new settlement in this location would be of a scale to help facili-

tate this.”

As you can imagine, we were all pretty shocked by this, and felt that it would change our environment beyond all recognition. For some of us, it brought back memories of the Ward plan, which in 1995 included considerable residential development in Westbury including a hotel and retail square near the water gardens and a new Severn Bridge between Rodley and Upper Framilode. There was considerable local opposition to this and the scheme died a death, but we cannot be complacent that this scheme will share the same fate. The planning officer will be invited to the next Parish Council meeting so that we can find out more about these plans and we will then consider a public meeting to help plan our response. The District Council has stressed that this is simply a third party proposal received as part of the recent consultation for the Local Plan.

Leaving us with much to think about, the meeting closed. The next meeting is on Monday 17th February at 7pm.

Di Landon



activities for the first time.

The new term has started well with all of the children returning to school refreshed and ready to work again, after the Christmas break.

The children in Cygnets Class are enjoying learning about ‘Big Cats’ as part of our topic called ‘Paws, Claws and Whiskers’. The children in Swans Class have started learning about the circulatory system in a topic called ‘Blood Heart’

Frosty weather: The younger children loved looking at frosty spiders webs around the playground and drawing frosty pictures after listening to the story, ‘Jack Frost’, by Kazuno Kohara.



Music: Swans Class took part in an Indonesian musical session in Gloucester, known as Gamelan. The children had a wonderful time exploring some amazing instruments.

Sport: We have a netball team now and we have made links with Churcham School so that we can get together to play some matches. We have met up three times so far and one match was held at Walmore Hill. It was a great event with lots of parents attending to support both teams.

Suzanne Loten, Cygnets Class Teacher

It is usually best to be generous with praise, but cautious with criticism.

It is not he who searches for praise who finds it



SEVERN & WYE

Please join us in our
Community Spring Clean
Sunday 16th February
10am – 12 noon

We will be picking up litter along the A48 and the back-lanes around Rodley, Adsett and Northwood Green.

We are hoping to cover the area from Walmore Hill Primary School to the Railway Bridge at the end of Westbury Village.

If you would like to be part of a Working Committee – sharing your local knowledge and helping us to organise the event – please contact Anita Nicholson.

Please let us know in advance if you can make it, as this would help with logistics, but you can also turn up on the day at The Barn, Chaxhill, where we will send you out with bin-bags, litter pickers and a map of the area we hope you can cover.

We will collect the bags at the end of the clean-up and dispose of the rubbish.

Hot drinks will be provided at The Barn.

Thank you and please help us to tidy up the verges before the Spring growth.

*Tel: 01452 760 190 (option 1) or
anita.nicholson@severnandwye.co.uk*

Many a problem will resolve itself if we forget it and go fishing

**Northwood Green
Gardening Club**
Programme 2020

*Meetings held at Northwood Green
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

Thursday 6 February

Tulip Mania by Allan Wells

Thursday 5 March

Alpines around the garden

by Pam Turner

Saturday 21 March 2 pm

Visit to Daffodil Fields from Oxenhall

Church Hall, Newent

Thursday 2 April

Butterflies by Steve Mason

Thursday 14 May 7 pm

Plant Sale and The Land Girls

by Fiona Waring

Thursday 11 June 7pm

Summer Evening Garden Visit to

The Weir Reach at The Rudge,

Maisemore, Gloucester,

Thursday 2 July 7 pm

Social Evening

Thursday 16 July

Daytime visits to Greenfields, Brock-

weir Common Brockweir, and

Wyndcliffe Court, St Arvans,

Thursday 3 September

A perennial Year by Julie Ritchie

Thursday 1 October

The cutting garden by Julie Bircher

Thursday 12 November (AGM)

A history of vegetables by Jerry Green

Thursday 10 December

Christmas Party with a gardening theme

Walmore Hill News

Our Christmas celebrations were the focal point of our work at Walmore Hill at the end of last term. We were able to go to the Everyman in Cheltenham to see the pantomime, 'Cinderella' early in December. Several parents were able to come along too. It was a great production and we all enjoyed our trip together.



Our school took part in the Westbury Christmas Tree Festival this year. All of the children in school made a delicate swan to add to the

other decorations on the tree.

We also enjoyed eating a delicious Christmas meal in Westbury Parish Hall. Claire Wilson and a small group of parents and grandparents prepared the food and it was a lovely occasion where we could all sit down and share a meal together. We also enjoyed a craft-making day with members of the Crossroads Choir from Foxes' Bridge Day Centre and made special Christmas cards to take home.

Our Christmas productions were 'Whoops-a Daisy Angel' and 'A Cracking Christmas Party'. Many parents, Grandparents, older brothers and sisters came to watch. Our school hall looked very festive with a beautiful Christmas tree and lots of twinkly lights. It was a really special time for the youngest children, taking part in all of our Christmas



The evening of Tuesday 21st January was dark, dank and cheerless. A fitting backdrop, perhaps, as Chair of the Parish Hall Management Committee, Jan D'Ambrogio recorded that the meeting was being held a week later than usual as the scheduled date had seen the funeral of Anna Tempest, a long time and diligent supporter of the Hall. After some affectionate reminiscing, Jan plunged into the business of the day, starting with complaints that the lounge heating didn't seem up to the job in very cold weather. Jan thought that we might have to look into the possibility of installing another radiator. It was also noted that we were still having problems with the accounts department of Water Plus (a new disguise for Severn Trent). Treasurer Sarah Mitten explained that they seemed incapable of working out how much we owed them, or indeed, they owed us.

Sarah had circulated the accounts, and would be sending a draft set to our auditors. She was able to report that the finances looked sound, and that the Profit and Loss account was 'neutral', although there was expenditure due at the end of February.

Some of this would be incurred by the installation of the new fire exits in the Hall, which regrettably could not be easily closed by one person, but certainly looked nice. The installers were returning to rectify the problem. Meanwhile, the lights in the lounge received

a conditional seal of approval, pending the further change of a few bulbs...or lamps if you're an electrician.

Condensation was causing problems in the kitchen, and it was agreed to look into costs of an extractor fan.

A slightly different problem in the gents' loo was identified by Jan, who described them as 'minging', and suggested that the answer was greater accuracy, or a check on the automatic flush. Following a highly successful Panto (see page 1) it was noted that some older members of the audience experienced difficulty hearing. It was suggested that we consider installing a hearing loop for those with hearing aids.

Severndipity Club (bar)

Gen Riley reported that takings were down slightly, and proposed a fundraiser specifically for bar improvements, and suggested a co-operation between the respective fund raising committees. She added that there was a need to advertise for further paid bar staff to cover the shortage of volunteers. Gen noted that there was dissatisfaction with the WiFi. Gigaclear, who are coordinating the installation of the new fibre optic cable in the parish, would be contacted to see if there was any planned provision for the Hall.

Fundraising

Jan announced that the 2020 Summer would take place on September 6th, and the first meeting of the committee would be on February 4th at 8.00pm and anyone who would like to contribute was welcome.

A Mardi Gras celebration would take place on February 25th. See page 12

Jan proposed an event to raise money for the Multiple Sclerosis Society in memory of Anna Tempest, a proposal

enthusiastically endorsed.

Odds and Ends

Ian Martin attended the meeting on behalf of the Cricket Club to explain their proposal for an equipment store and viewing platform in the corner of the playing field diametrically opposite the Hall, the current site of the nets. He provided detailed plans of the project, which was endorsed by the committee.

It was suggested that the Cricket Club seek a lease arrangement with the Parish Hall Committee, which could facilitate any grant applications.

Di Landon, the Parish Council rep, announced that the District Council had received a proposal to build 5,000 houses in the parish. This was followed by an announcement by Jan that it could cost £900 to service the cooker.

Decidedly our cue to repair to the bar for a stiffener. *Ed*

Parish Hall

Events this month

Six Nations Rugby Community bar open from 2pm

Sunday 2nd February

Quiz Night

Sunday 2nd February from 8pm

Nosh & Natter

Thursday 13 February 12noon - 2:30pm

Six Nations Rugby Community bar open from 2pm

Sunday 23rd February

Mardi Gras with Dom and the Ikos

Tuesday 25th February see advertisement

Age Concern Lunch Club.

Friday 28th February 11am-2:30pm

Meetings

Parish Hall Management Committee

Tuesday 11th February 8pm

Parish Council Meeting

Monday 17th February 7pm

Regular Groups

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

Zumba Gold Low Impact - Every Thursday 9:30am-10:30am

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 5-10pm open from 3.30pm on Match Days.

Church Times

It has always struck me that it is really easy to live your adult life with a childlike perception of God and His world. I think this happens for two reasons. In the first place many of us encounter ideas about God in our younger years, but don't so often examine those ideas again in later life. This can lead to the unhelpful notion that a belief in God is only for children, that adults should grow out of it. The second reason is that the world we live in becomes a little less godly every year, which makes it harder to maintain a faithful perspective. For both these reasons I think it is helpful every now and then to stop and ask ourselves what, if anything, our faith actually means to us. This is really important especially when life gets tough.

The church has for centuries been in the habit of encouraging believers, young and old, to do just that, which is why Lent, usually in March, is spoken of as being a season of self examination. In our diocese there are plenty of opportunities to join with others of a like mind to examine the value of faith in a confusing and adult world. If you would like to explore some of these opportunities, I would be pleased to tell you more. This train of thought has always led to the season of re-commitment at Easter, often through Baptism or Confirmation. Both of these sacraments are available in the Cathedral around Easter time. If you are baptised and believe in God, but have not yet been confirmed, then I would urge you to think seriously about it. Our faith is greatly encouraged and strengthened by making the promises for ourselves, which, in infant baptism we have not done.

Best wishes, Rev Steve Taylor, 760756 stevewillstay@gmail.com



The big shock in reaching middle age is that you discover you keep on growing older even after you're old enough.

Middle age is when you can do just as much as ever—but don't



Churchyard Working Party Saturday 15th February 10am – 1pm

We will be embarking on a new season in which we hope to encourage more wild flowers and wildlife to make the closed churchyard their home. So if you can spare an hour or two, please come and join us – refreshments are provided but please bring your favourite garden tools with you.

Nosh and Natter

At Westbury Parish Hall
Thursday 13th February 2020

Food served between
noon and 1.30pm

Vegetable soup

Sausage plait with onion gravy and
vegetables

Bread and butter pudding

Vegetarian option available
on the day

*£8.00 two courses: £10.00 three
courses*

Come along for a natter and some
home-made food

*Either see in person or call
Gail on 760495/Jan on 760630 to*

book a seat

Thank you