

was at Frocester House and moved to its present site in the early part of the 20th century.

At Elton, one of the cottages housed the Plough Inn from 1788, and another was the Traveller's Rest Inn from 1839 until at least 1891. The moral of this sober tour of the local hostelries is obvious – USE IT – OR LOSE IT.



Age UK Gloucestershire is still able to deliver support to Gloucestershire's older people. Our **Help Team** is available Monday – Friday 9am – 4pm to help older people resolve specific problems. We have up to date information about local resources and support. Call us on **01452 422660** to access the Help Team, or email essentialinfo@ageukgloucestershire.org.uk to let us know about essential services you are offering locally. Our Out of Hospital Team continues to support older people recently discharged from hospital who need guidance to stay well at home through in depth welfare calls.

Supporting Older People to stay connected:

We recognise that social isolation and the associated wellbeing issues are a real and serious issue for older people. We have set up a **new Freephone telephone** number for people who are alone and who want to have a **friendly conversation**

with a staff member or volunteer. Call us on **0800 2980579**, Monday – Friday 9am – 4pm. We are also compiling tips from our Older People's Springboard Groups about how to stay connected, including virtual 'Get Connected' workshops and one-to-one telephone support to help older people make the most of the resources and social opportunities access to technology can offer. Call **07511 223995** to find out more.



"To be honest, I thought that drag hunting meant something else."

In conclusion, some grafitti.
*I fought the lawn and the lawn won
Rehab is for quitters
Friends help you move. Real friends
help you move bodies*

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W E S T B U R Y - O N - S E V E R N P O S T

WoSP



35D

Issue 220 March/April 2020



Spring is on the way ! A bank of cheerful spring flowers in Rodley

cc-by-sa2.0 - B-11xM/spring-flowers by Pauline E - geograph.org.uk/p/1217154

Parish Council Helpline as Corona goes viral

There is a lot of very bad news connected to the invasion of the coronavirus, but the virus is also certainly producing a wonderful response from many who have come forward to help others in these difficult times. In Westbury, over fifty local people have offered to help with shopping and collecting prescriptions for those who are at increased risk from the virus due to their age or health conditions. Many of us who have to stay at home have family, friends and neighbours who are able to help us, but if they develop symptoms or have been in contact with someone who has the virus, they

will no longer be able to help and may, indeed, need help themselves. So if you need someone to shop for you or to collect your prescription, please call the Westbury-on-Severn Parish Council helpline on **01452 229570**.

This is the Parish Hall phone number which can now be diverted to the helpline, and if you leave your name, address and telephone number and say what sort of help you require, we will then ask one of our volunteers to contact you to make arrangements about getting you what you need. The local Young Farmers are providing a similar

service (please see page 10)

None of us likes to ask others to do our running around for us, especially when everyone has been advised to stay at home as much as possible, but it is especially important that those at increased risk stay at home and keep safe, as if they become infected they are far more likely to need hospital admission, which will put even more pressure on our struggling, overworked NHS staff. The risk is very real so just **STAY AT HOME**. We are fortunate to live in a lovely place with willing helpers all around us so – **STAY AT HOME**.

Parish Council report

As we suspected, the Parish Council meeting held on 16th March was probably the last that will be held for quite a while. The seven parish councillors present all sat at a healthy distance apart and we also welcomed, at a distance, two parishioners. Sadly our clerk, Fiona, was not with us following a family bereavement and we sent her our condolences. We missed her very much.



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Play Area The wire is showing through in places in the climbing net and there are cracks in the rubber of the swing seats so these will be looked at more closely at the next maintenance check.

Highways Chairman Simon and Mike Townsend had met Andrew Middlecote and Nathan Choat from Highways and had toured the Parish looking at the various problems. Simon reported that most of the drains in the village are silted up and Peter Radley reported potholes in Elton Lane. John Henry reported severe flooding the previous week in Goose Lane, when a person had

As we are short of contributions this month, and need to fill the space, we hope you will not mind if we re-run a Bygone Westbury piece that I wrote for the WoSP in September 1992. I had completely forgotten about it, so I'm sure that you will too.

The theory that the people of Westbury all have hollow legs has often been voiced, especially by those clearing away the empty bottles after occasions such as the pantomime. Considering that a total of 14 pubs have, in the past, flourished in the parish, this capacity is obviously nothing new. Over 200 years ago, Westbury was well known for making high quality cider (and, no doubt, for drinking it too) which was exported via Newnham to London and Dublin and sold for as much as 15-20 guineas a hogshead of 52 gallons odd. In the late 17th century, there were so many casks about that the churchwardens were able to buy enough to repair the church steeple, and many local houses now have parts of cider-mills decorating their gardens.

Much of the drinking was, of course, to quench thirsts brought on by hard and honest toil. Many of the pubs were near the river, and their customers were the watermen who moved their cargoes up and down the Severn. When the tide was low, they needed somewhere to bide their time until it turned and if, as sometimes happened, they had to unload the cargo in order to haul the barge over a sandbank before reloading it, they certainly would work up quite a thirst. At Broadoak, as well as the White Hart which was opened in 1783, there was also a Broadoak Inn on the Westbury side which was open by 1760. In Rodley, two hundred years ago, the

Bollow House Inn was open but was later renamed the Sloop after the craft which delivered goods there. It closed in 1930.

Blue Boys Farm

at Rodley Sands was also an inn then, probably doing a roaring trade from those using the Framilode Passage and the mooring place for boats at the Green on the bank close by. The Heald was another place where you could then, as now, get a drink when you wanted one. Hard luck on Clive Dunning - if he'd lived there a century earlier he would have been paid for it!

Also by the river at the Flat, were three more inns, the Duke of Gloucester, mentioned in 1786, the Kings Head in 1839 and the Bird in Hand - obviously worth two in the bush as it is the sole survivor, renamed as the Severn Bore.

The earliest of the pubs in the parish were, not surprisingly, in the village



itself, both the Red Lion and another called The

George being open in 1715. Considering that there only seem to have been 36 families living in the village in 1710, they were somewhat spoiled for choice, especially as what is now Bell House was also a pub by 1737 and remained the Bell Inn for over 100 years. The Junction was open in the later 19th century, but it wasn't where it is now, it

tender for man of the match and scored a fine goal, to equalise for 1-1 but Huntley were a little more physical and a bit more direct and clinical in front of goal. Alex Maton also had a good game and Sean the Keep pulled off a world class save in the first half that brought the crowd to its feet, notwithstanding the fact that they were already standing up.

Poor Reagan Warrington was subject to a certain amount of clattering from the opposition throughout the game and his somewhat fragile temperament eventually gave way at the final whistle although in a poor display of anger management he seemed to both resist the goading "Go on, hit me then" coming from the Huntley No 8 and yet got himself sent off anyway. Calm was restored as the watching ex Westbury midfielder and nightclub bouncer Leon Mendy strode onto the pitch but conveniently scuffles broke out again about 20 yards away behind his back. Those with experience of trying to manage a large children's party will understand the dynamic at play. *Mark Landon*

Rugby



Westbury 26 Painswick 27

At 1.00 pm West had only fourteen men, by kick off they had a side and what a bloody great effort the boys put in. The home side did themselves proud and really could have sneaked a win. In a great team effort No8 Paul Adams

scored two tries in an impressive performance. Debutant fly half Stan also scored a brace, the last score was by veteran hooker Simon Roberts who, at fifty one, played his second full game in two weeks. He epitomises what a true clubman is and was a well-deserved man of the match. Gary Smeaton, Will Marks, Will Kemp and Ben Woods all did well.

It was great to see Paddy Hinds, Zak Hinds and Seb Roberts and his son Cam take the field together.

To all Westbury players, please come along and help your club, captain and coach get a side out for the remaining games.

Pete Miles

to be rescued from the roof of their car. There have been several complaints regarding the state in which



Gigaclear have left the areas where they have been working and Simon has confirmed that Highways are able to insist that they make good any damage. Mike Townsend reported that the capping stones on the wall around The Crescent at Northwood Green are loose and he has reported this to Two Rivers Housing.

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He also reported several interesting figures to emerge at a Local Transport Plan meeting:-

40% of journeys made out of the Forest of Dean area are journeys to work

75% of drivers leaving the Forest area do so via the A40 (we assume that includes the A48 which joins the A40)

80% of journeys are by car, with only 3-4% by bus and 1-2% by rail.

Clearly many of these issues have become pretty irrelevant since the waves of change to all of our lives that have been brought by the coronavirus. We don't know when our next meeting will take place, but through the WoSP we will try to keep everyone up to date with local news.

Stay safe everyone and stay at home if you can . *Di Landon*



"Impressive, Norris, but the grant money is for cancer research"



Hall Matters

Last month we reported that there was seating enough for a large gathering because a couple of well intentioned members thought it was the AGM. The March meeting of the Parish Hall Management Committee was preceded by the AGM, and although extra seating was once again provided, it unfortunately proved superfluous. Nevertheless, members were treated to a comprehensive review of the year by Chair Jan D'Ambrogio, who, in a self-deprecating way promised not to ramble, as she thought she had in her very first report 10 years previously. Really? Ten years! Where did they go? As we digested this prolonged period of service to the community, Jan continued by observing that members should be satisfied by the way the Hall had been run in testing times, which had seen a decline in bar takings at sporting events on Saturdays, which had had a significant impact on income. Other Hall bookings, however, had increased, and Jan paid tribute to Sarah Mitten, our Treasurer and Booking Secretary, whose work on the website and Facebook page had played a major role in reaching a wider public.

Over the course of the year the Committee have kept abreast of most maintenance issues, including investment in a very high reach ladder, which meets all safety regulations, and which sur-

prisingly featured in the Summer Show. Doors have replaced the curtain over the table store in the hall, supplemented by a safety chain, which, as Jan pointed out, made the store yet more secure. In the lounge, furniture donated by Dean and Sarah Mitten added to the relaxing atmosphere and the ladies' loo had been updated.

Running a community centre involves quite a lot of administration and bureaucracy, for example annual returns to the Charity Commission and Entrust, and each year the regulations and requirements become more demanding. Jan thanked Sarah, Gill Smith and Gemma Byrne for their hard work in this field.

Jan noted that the Cricket Club had been instrumental in keeping our playing fields in award winning condition, cutting the grass from May to August and providing floral decoration to the viewing area. They have also submitted plans for a storage and viewing area in the far corner of the field. The Summer Game has been boosted by junior cricket on Fridays and Sundays and ladies cricket on Saturdays in addition to the regular 1st and 2nd XI fixtures. Thus both the grounds and bar are well used during the summer months, and Jan thanked Nikki Edginton and the Cricket Club for their efforts.

Jan paid tribute to the work of the Sevendipity Club committee who run the bar side of things on behalf of the Hall, and who labour under a chronic shortage of volunteers to man the bar.

Jan closed by enumerating all the varied activities that the Hall hosts and thanked committee members, who are also trustees, for making it possible

Of course an important aspect of the AGM is the election of the principal



tween February 2018, with a total rainfall of 29 mm, and this February, when the rainfall totalled 203.5 mm. When storm Dennis hit us, we had 33 mm on 15th Feb and 32 mm on 16th, whereas the wettest February day in 2018 produced only 8mm of rain. Worse still was the fact that 24 out of February's 29 days this year were wet – no wonder we were all getting sick and tired of it. After all, January too had brought 100mm of rainfall and 21 wet days.

Many children will have been disappointed at the complete lack of snow this January and February, whereas in 2018 it had snowed on 8 different days. The number of frosty nights has also reduced over the last 3 years with 20 in 2018, 17 in 2019 and 13 this year. The Met Office report a recent trend of increasing rainfall on both a seasonal and annual timescale and, since 1998, we have seen 6 out of the 10 wettest years on record. Although the Met

Office acknowledges that UK rainfall patterns have always varied considerably, they say that there is evidence that rainfall in single, extreme events has been affected by climate change. *Di Landon*

Westbury Sports

These reports of matches which took place before the national lockdown may be the last for some time. We can only hope that the start of the cricket season will not be delayed for too long

Football

In 878 King Alfred, surrounded by Viking invaders, under siege and with a restless kingdom to rule, allowed his attention to wander from the task in hand and foolishly burnt the cakes entrusted to him.

Fast forward about 1200 years and history repeated itself at Westbury Parish Hall playing field as Director of Football Tempest was left pondering the expulsion of the 2nds from the league for failing to field a side (again), losing the local derby to Huntley FC 1-4 and also losing perennial hothead Reagan Warrington to a red card issued after the final whistle. Such were the plethora of problems on his mind, his attention wandered and he allowed all five post match Pizzas to burn in the oven and so was forced to serve up something resembling fire damaged hubcaps to the already disgruntled players. It was fortunate that the press contingent were a bit peckish and so managed to work itself through a good portion of the frazzled offering.

As to the game itself, there were few highlights. Young Morgan was a con-

Local Suppliers

Minsterworth Butchers;

Shop is closed, but they will deliver phoned orders within a 30 mile radius. Phone 01452 750237 between 9.00am and 4.00 pm

Severn & Wye Smokery

Phone 01452 760191

Delivery and collection of seafood, bread, fruit & veg. See website

Chaxhill garage

Open till 10.00pm

Newnham PO and shop

Change of opening hours owing to reduced staffing:

Mon-Fri 9.00am to 1pm, 3pm to 5.30pm

Sat. 9.00am to 12.30pm

The Fairview Gardener Tea room.

Takeaway and deliveries only. Phone 07984 541088. Housebound and vulnerable people are their priority.

Over Farm Market.

Will close at 5pm. Card payment only, and have a click and collect and service and will deliver in the Westbury area. Google Over Farm Market.

Baileys Stores, Newnham

Open 8.00am to 6.00pm Mon –Sat.

The Lyon, Westbury

Chris and Sue have had to close, having given away their Mothering Sunday roast lunches. When all this is over we should pile in. and enjoy their hospitality again.

Interesting facts about New Zealand...

..has more bookshops and golf courses per capita than any other country.

...is the first country in the world to see the sunrise

...was the first country in the world to give women the vote, adopt the 8 hour working day and introduce retirement pensions

When floods were all we had to cope with

It seems strange now, that just a few weeks ago the hot topic of conversation for everyone was the weather – notably the constant rain that



Rodley Road

caused so many homes to flood and such disruption to our journeys. The Met Office recorded that we had the wettest February on record and that it was also the 5th wettest of any month on record since 1862. December 2015 was the only month with higher rainfall within most people's memory, although I confess I don't remember it!

More locally, our own Simon Phelps keeps a record of weather conditions and has done so for many years, and these show a startling difference be-

officers of the committee, which in this instance was a straightforward affair as all the officers offered themselves for re-election, and were unopposed. Thus the top table looks the same:

Chair: Jan D'Ambrogio

Vice-Chair: Andrew Landon

Secretary:: Gill Smith

Treasurer: Sarah Mitten.

All the existing members present indicated their willingness to continue. So we moved seamlessly to the monthly meeting

Jan reported that she had conceded to Water Plus (Severn Trent) who had been insisting that they owed us money, not the other way round. We just hoped that at some time in the future they did not change their mind and demand £1,000. She went on to confirm that the faulty catches on the fire exits had been fixed.

Treasurers report.

Sarah had circulated the figures, and declared herself satisfied with the income figure. She warned that the District Council may hit us with a rate rise, although she had asked for clarification that the 80% discount on business rates would continue to apply to village halls. She confirmed that the new fire exits had now been paid for. Sarah considered that the hourly hiring rates should increase by at least the rate of inflation. There followed a discussion about the composition of the rent review sub-committee, who would be tasked with producing a cost based recommendation to the main committee for ratification. Clive Tempest proposed a 'structured debate based on numbers' and it was suggested that we obtain rates charged by comparable hall in the area.

Severndipity Club (bar)

Gen Riley confirmed that Kirsty, a paid

member of the bar staff, would be leaving, and the committee would advertise for a replacement prepared to job share. Gen went on to say that Val Morgan-Townsend had asked that in view of GDPR no figures should be sent to private email addresses. There followed a discussion about the need for a proportionate response to regulations, for example using password protected transmission of data considered subject to GDPR. Gen went on to confirm that The Severndipity committee were seeking to become greener, by, for example, sourcing more local beer and using less plastic.

Fundraising

Gemma Byrne reported on a successful year and following the success of the Mardi Gras evening, it was hoped to hold a Blues and Reggae night.

Odds and Ends

It was agreed that rather than put up an honours board of past Chairmen/Women, a list would be posted on the Hall website.

Jo Barry confirmed that mice eat play-doh, and no, they didn't actually make anything out of it.

Clive Tempest announced, with some sadness, that the football club second XI had folded.

On the plus side, Gen was able to announce that Youth Project was restarting.

We proceeded somberly to the bar to consider the mixed news. *Ed*

In view of the current health emergency, the Parish Hall is closed until further notice

PARISH HELPLINE

Our community's response to the call for volunteers to help their neighbours in these troubled times has been amazing. In no time at all, we had a long list of volunteers all over the parish who were willing to help, and the phone line at the Parish Hall was organised (thanks to Sarah Mitten) so that it could divert calls to whoever was manning the helpline on any particular day. Leaflets informing people about the help that is available locally were distributed (thanks to numerous volunteers organised by Neil Wyman) although unfortunately this had to stop when the lockdown was announced. Since then, we have been gathering the names and contact details of those who may need help with shopping and prescriptions, and many people have used their local knowledge to help with this. I am sure that there will be some that we have missed, so if you know anyone who is over 70 years old or who you think may have health problems that increase their risk, please make sure that they know the helpline number (01452 229570) and let us know their name, phone number and address so that we can offer them help. The first week on the helpline has been fairly quiet, but already several people have been helped with shopping and quite a few more with collection of prescriptions from Newnham and Mitcheldean surgeries. We anticipate that the number of callers will increase as the coronavirus spreads and the message, for people over 70 or with health problems to stay at home, begins to be recognised as potentially life-saving. Unfortunately, we had a bit of a glitch on the helpline last Friday, but we are confident that our teething problems are

now behind us and that the system is fully functional, tried and tested. I think we are all negotiating unfamiliar territory at the moment!

Once we have ensured that all those who are unable to go out have got the helpline number and know that volunteers are on hand to help them, our next aim is to put those who are feeling really isolated and alone in touch with a volunteer (who may also be confined to their own home) who is happy to chat on the phone every so often and help to keep loneliness at bay.

We are very grateful to Mandy Howell, Jane Townsend, Mike Matthews and Vicki Hewlett for alerting us to those who might need help, and to all our amazing volunteers including Clemmie Byrne who will be helping us to answer the calls.

If you need to contact us individually, either to volunteer or to alert us to anyone who might need help, please do.

D i L a n d o n 7 6 0 5 3 1
diana.landon12@gmail.com

J a n D ' A m b r o g i o 7 6 0 6 3 0
jan.dambrogio@gmail.com

Simon Phelps 760765 simon-phelps@hotmail.co.uk

And a reminder that the **helpline number is 01452 229570**



No, no. We're Holsteins. She's a Bechstein

Gloucestershire County Council Hub

A new website has been set up to connect Gloucestershire residents who need help with those who can provide it as further measures are put in place to delay the spread of the coronavirus. The online community hub has been set up by councils across the county, working with the police and health partners, and has a range of ways to let them know you either need help or can help.

You can access this online at:- <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gloucestershires-community-help-hub/> or there is a phone line available on 01452 583519. The lines are open Monday – Friday 8.30am – 5pm and Saturday - Sunday 9am-4pm. This is a priority telephone line for people who need help or are volunteering, so please do

Prescriptions

Westbury Surgery is now closed as a GP surgery and will instead be serving as a hub for the assessment of patients with Covid19 symptoms. Prescriptions for patients of Westbury Surgery will now be issued by Newnham Surgery. For those unable to collect their prescriptions, we have three designated volunteers who can do this, so please just call the Coronavirus helpline (01452 229570) and we will put you in touch with them. We have been advised that patients at Mitcheldean Surgery, who normally have to order their prescriptions 48 hrs in advance, will now need to give the surgery a week's notice. If you are asking one of our volunteers to collect the medication for

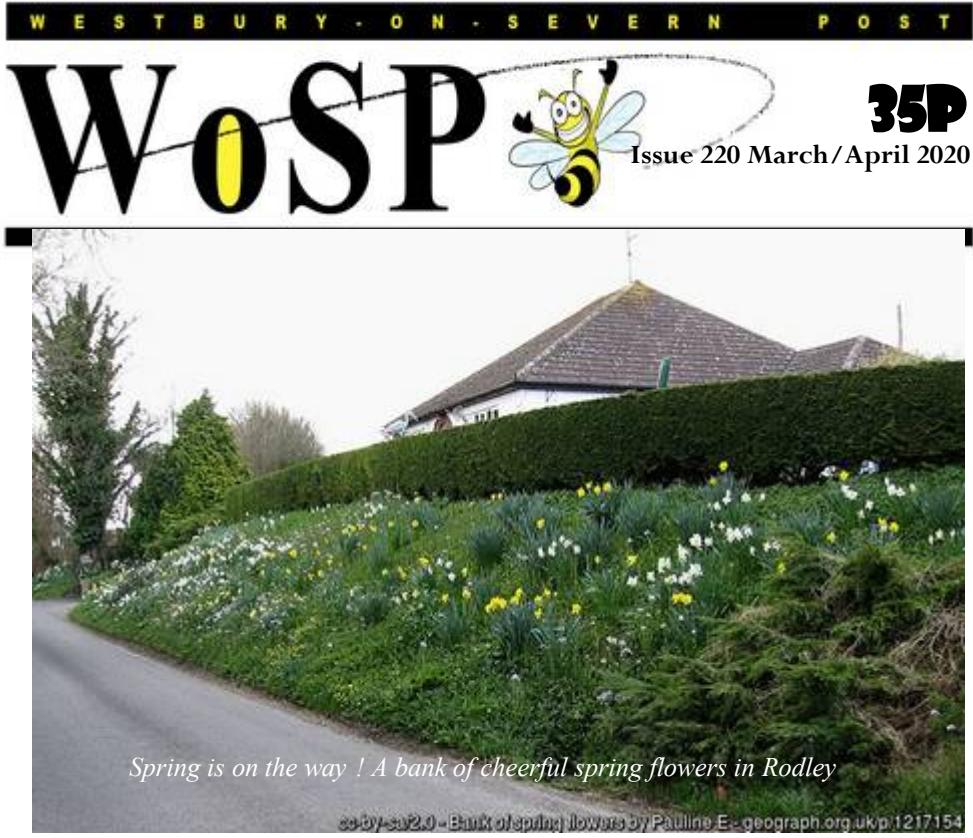
you, please write the following on your prescription order "I authorise a representative of Westbury-on-Severn Parish Council to collect my medication on my behalf" and add your signature. We have volunteers who can collect from Mitcheldean as well.

Play Area Closed



The play area at the Parish Hall, like all other play areas, is closed until further notice because of the coronavirus. The risk is not only from children getting too close to each other, but also from the virus being spread through contact with the surfaces of the play equipment.

Tom had this problem of getting up late in the morning and was always late for work. His boss was mad at him and threatened to fire him if he didn't do something about it. So Tom went to his doctor who gave him a pill and told him to take it before he went to bed. Tom slept well and in fact beat the alarm in the morning. He had a leisurely breakfast and drove cheerfully to work. "Boss" he said, "the pill actually worked!" "That's great," replied the boss, "but where were you yesterday?"



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"Impressive, Norris, but the grant money is for cancer research"



Hall Matters

Last month we reported that there was seating enough for a large gathering because a couple of well intentioned members thought it was the AGM. The March meeting of the Parish Hall Management Committee was preceded by the AGM, and although extra seating was once again provided, it unfortunately proved superfluous. Nevertheless, members were treated to a comprehensive review of the year by Chair Jan D'Ambrogio, who, in a self-deprecating way promised not to ramble, as she thought she had in her very first report 10 years previously. Really? Ten years! Where did they go? As we digested this prolonged period of service to the community, Jan continued by observing that members should be satisfied by the way the Hall had been run in testing times, which had seen a decline in bar takings at sporting events on Saturdays, which had had a significant impact on income. Other Hall bookings, however, had increased, and Jan paid tribute to Sarah Mitten, our Treasurer and Booking Secretary, whose work on the website and Facebook page had played a major role in reaching a wider public.

Over the course of the year the Committee have kept abreast of most maintenance issues, including investment in a very high reach ladder, which meets all safety regulations, and which sur-

prisingly featured in the Summer Show. Doors have replaced the curtain over the table store in the hall, supplemented by a safety chain, which, as Jan pointed out, made the store yet more secure. In the lounge, furniture donated by Dean and Sarah Mitten added to the relaxing atmosphere and the ladies' loo had been updated.

Running a community centre involves quite a lot of administration and bureaucracy, for example annual returns to the Charity Commission and Entrust, and each year the regulations and requirements become more demanding. Jan thanked Sarah, Gill Smith and Gemma Byrne for their hard work in this field.

Jan noted that the Cricket Club had been instrumental in keeping our playing fields in award winning condition, cutting the grass from May to August and providing floral decoration to the viewing area. They have also submitted plans for a storage and viewing area in the far corner of the field. The Summer Game has been boosted by junior cricket on Fridays and Sundays and ladies cricket on Saturdays in addition to the regular 1st and 2nd XI fixtures. Thus both the grounds and bar are well used during the summer months, and Jan thanked Nikki Edginton and the Cricket Club for their efforts.

Jan paid tribute to the work of the SevenDipity Club committee who run the bar side of things on behalf of the Hall, and who labour under a chronic shortage of volunteers to man the bar.

Jan closed by enumerating all the varied activities that the Hall hosts and thanked committee members, who are also trustees, for making it possible

Of course an important aspect of the AGM is the election of the principal

officers of the committee, which in this instance was a straightforward affair as all the officers offered themselves for re-election, and were unopposed. Thus the top table looks the same:

Chair: Jan D'Ambrogio

Vice-Chair: Andrew Landon

Secretary: Gill Smith

Treasurer: Sarah Mitten.

All the existing members present indicated their willingness to continue. So we moved seamlessly to the monthly meeting

Jan reported that she had conceded to Water Plus (Severn Trent) who had been insisting that they owed us money, not the other way round. We just hoped that at some time in the future they did not change their mind and demand £1,000. She went on to confirm that the faulty catches on the fire exits had been fixed.

Treasurers report.

Sarah had circulated the figures, and declared herself satisfied with the income figure. She warned that the District Council may hit us with a rate rise, although she had asked for clarification that the 80% discount on business rates would continue to apply to village halls. She confirmed that the new fire exits had now been paid for. Sarah considered that the hourly hiring rates should increase by at least the rate of inflation. There followed a discussion about the composition of the rent review sub-committee, who would be tasked with producing a cost based recommendation to the main committee for ratification. Clive Tempest proposed a 'structured debate based on numbers' and it was suggested that we obtain rates charged by comparable hall in the area.

Severndipity Club (bar)

Gen Riley confirmed that Kirsty, a paid

member of the bar staff, would be leaving, and the committee would advertise for a replacement prepared to job share. Gen went on to say that Val Morgan-Townsend had asked that in view of GDPR no figures should be sent to private email addresses. There followed a discussion about the need for a proportionate response to regulations, for example using password protected transmission of data considered subject to GDPR. Gen went on to confirm that The Severndipity committee were seeking to become greener, by, for example, sourcing more local beer and using less plastic.

Fundraising

Gemma Byrne reported on a successful year and following the success of the Mardi Gras evening, it was hoped to hold a Blues and Reggae night.

Odds and Ends

It was agreed that rather than put up an honours board of past Chairmen/Women, a list would be posted on the Hall website.

Jo Barry confirmed that mice eat play-doh, and no, they didn't actually make anything out of it.

Clive Tempest announced, with some sadness, that the football club second XI had folded.

On the plus side, Gen was able to announce that Youth Project was restarting.

We proceeded somberly to the bar to consider the mixed news. *Ed*

In view of the current health emergency, the Parish Hall is closed until further notice

PARISH HELPLINE

Our community's response to the call for volunteers to help their neighbours in these troubled times has been amazing. In no time at all, we had a long list of volunteers all over the parish who were willing to help, and the phone line at the Parish Hall was organised (thanks to Sarah Mitten) so that it could divert calls to whoever was manning the helpline on any particular day. Leaflets informing people about the help that is available locally were distributed (thanks to numerous volunteers organised by Neil Wyman) although unfortunately this had to stop when the lockdown was announced. Since then, we have been gathering the names and contact details of those who may need help with shopping and prescriptions, and many people have used their local knowledge to help with this. I am sure that there will be some that we have missed, so if you know anyone who is over 70 years old or who you think may have health problems that increase their risk, please make sure that they know the helpline number (01452 229570) and let us know their name, phone number and address so that we can offer them help. The first week on the helpline has been fairly quiet, but already several people have been helped with shopping and quite a few more with collection of prescriptions from Newnham and Mitcheldean surgeries. We anticipate that the number of callers will increase as the coronavirus spreads and the message, for people over 70 or with health problems to stay at home, begins to be recognised as potentially life-saving. Unfortunately, we had a bit of a glitch on the helpline last Friday, but we are confident that our teething problems are

now behind us and that the system is fully functional, tried and tested. I think we are all negotiating unfamiliar territory at the moment!

Once we have ensured that all those who are unable to go out have got the helpline number and know that volunteers are on hand to help them, our next aim is to put those who are feeling really isolated and alone in touch with a volunteer (who may also be confined to their own home) who is happy to chat on the phone every so often and help to keep loneliness at bay.

We are very grateful to Mandy Howell, Jane Townsend, Mike Matthews and Vicki Hewlett for alerting us to those who might need help, and to all our amazing volunteers including Clemmie Byrne who will be helping us to answer the calls.

If you need to contact us individually, either to volunteer or to alert us to anyone who might need help, please do.

Diana Landon 760531
diana.landon12@gmail.com

Jan D'Ambrogio 760630
jan.dambrogio@gmail.com

Simon Phelps 760765 simon-phelps@hotmail.co.uk

And a reminder that the **helpline number is 01452 229570**



No, no. We're Holsteins. She's a Bechstein

Gloucestershire County Council Hub

A new website has been set up to connect Gloucestershire residents who need help with those who can provide it as further measures are put in place to delay the spread of the coronavirus. The online community hub has been set up by councils across the county, working with the police and health partners, and has a range of ways to let them know you either need help or can help. You can access this online at:- <https://www.goucestershire.gov.uk/gloucestershires-community-help-hub/> or there is a phone line available on 01452 583519. The lines are open Monday – Friday 8.30am – 5pm and Saturday - Sunday 9am-4pm. This is a priority telephone line for people who need help or are volunteering, so please do

Prescriptions

Westbury Surgery is now closed as a GP surgery and will instead be serving as a hub for the assessment of patients with Covid19 symptoms. Prescriptions for patients of Westbury Surgery will now be issued by Newnham Surgery. For those unable to collect their prescriptions, we have three designated volunteers who can do this, so please just call the Coronavirus helpline (01452 229570) and we will put you in touch with them. We have been advised that patients at Mitcheldean Surgery, who normally have to order their prescriptions 48 hrs in advance, will now need to give the surgery a week's notice. If you are asking one of our volunteers to collect the medication for

you, please write the following on your prescription order “*I authorise a representative of Westbury-on-Severn Parish Council to collect my medication on my behalf*” and add your signature. We have volunteers who can collect from Mitcheldean as well.

Play Area Closed



The play area at the Parish Hall, like all other play areas, is closed until further notice because of the coronavirus. The risk is not only from children getting too close to each other, but also from the virus being spread through contact with the surfaces of the play equipment.

Tom had this problem of getting up late in the morning and was always late for work. His boss was mad at him and threatened to fire him if he didn't do something about it. So Tom went to his doctor who gave him a pill and told him to take it before he went to bed. Tom slept well and in fact beat the alarm in the morning. He had a leisurely breakfast and drove cheerfully to work. "Boss" he said, "the pill actually worked!" "That's great," replied the boss, "but where were you yesterday?"

Local Suppliers

Minsterworth Butchers;

Shop is closed, but they will deliver phoned orders within a 30 mile radius. Phone 01452 750237 between 9.00am and 4.00 pm

Severn & Wye Smokery

Phone 01452 760191

Delivery and collection of seafood, bread, fruit & veg. See website

Chaxhill garage

Open till 10.00pm

Newnham PO and shop

Change of opening hours owing to reduced staffing:

Mon-Fri 9.00am to 1pm, 3pm to 5.30pm

Sat. 9.00am to 12.30pm

The Fairview Gardener Tea room.

Takeaway and deliveries only. Phone 07984 541088. Housebound and vulnerable people are their priority.

Over Farm Market.

Will close at 5pm. Card payment only, and have a click and collect and service and will deliver in the Westbury area. Google Over Farm Market.

Baileys Stores, Newnham

Open 8.00am to 6.00pm Mon –Sat.

The Lyon, Westbury

Chris and Sue have had to close, having given away their Mothering Sunday roast lunches. When all this is over we should pile in. and enjoy their hospitality again.

Interesting facts about New Zealand...

...has more bookshops and golf courses per capita than any other country.

...is the first country in the world to see the sunrise

...was the first country in the world to give women the vote, adopt the 8 hour working day and introduce retirement pensions

When floods were all we had to cope with

It seems strange now, that just a few weeks ago the hot topic of conversation for everyone was the weather – notably the constant rain that



Rodley Road

caused so many homes to flood and such disruption to our journeys. The Met Office recorded that we had the wettest February on record and that it was also the 5th wettest of any month on record since 1862. December 2015 was the only month with higher rainfall within most people's memory, although I confess I don't remember it!

More locally, our own Simon Phelps keeps a record of weather conditions and has done so for many years, and these show a startling difference be-



tween February 2018, with a total rainfall of 29 mm, and this February, when the rainfall totalled 203.5 mm. When storm Dennis hit us, we had 33 mm on 15th Feb and 32 mm on 16th, whereas the wettest February day in 2018 produced only 8mm of rain. Worse still was the fact that 24 out of February's 29 days this year were wet – no wonder we were all getting sick and tired of it. After all, January too had brought 100mm of rainfall and 21 wet days.

Many children will have been disappointed at the complete lack of snow this January and February, whereas in 2018 it had snowed on 8 different days. The number of frosty nights has also reduced over the last 3 years with 20 in 2018, 17 in 2019 and 13 this year.

The Met Office report a recent trend of increasing rainfall on both a seasonal and annual timescale and, since 1998, we have seen 6 out of the 10 wettest years on record. Although the Met

Office acknowledges that UK rainfall patterns have always varied considerably, they say that there is evidence that rainfall in single, extreme events has been affected by climate change. *Di Landon*

Westbury Sports

These reports of matches which took place before the national lockdown may be the last for some time. We can only hope that the start of the cricket season will not be delayed for too long

Football

In 878 King Alfred, surrounded by Viking invaders, under siege and with a restless kingdom to rule, allowed his attention to wander from the task in hand and foolishly burnt the cakes entrusted to him.

Fast forward about 1200 years and history repeated itself at Westbury Parish Hall playing field as Director of Football Tempest was left pondering the expulsion of the 2nds from the league for failing to field a side (again), losing the local derby to Huntley FC 1-4 and also losing perennial hothead Reagan Warrington to a red card issued after the final whistle. Such were the plethora of problems on his mind, his attention wandered and he allowed all five post match Pizzas to burn in the oven and so was forced to serve up something resembling fire damaged hubcaps to the already disgruntled players. It was fortunate that the press contingent were a bit peckish and so managed to work itself through a good portion of the frazzled offering.

As to the game itself, there were few highlights. Young Morgan was a con-

tender for man of the match and scored a fine goal, to equalise for 1-1 but Huntley were a little more physical and a bit more direct and clinical in front of goal. Alex Maton also had a good game and Sean the Keep pulled off a world class save in the first half that brought the crowd to its feet, notwithstanding the fact that they were already standing up.

Poor Reagan Warrington was subject to a certain amount of clattering from the opposition throughout the game and his somewhat fragile temperament eventually gave way at the final whistle although in a poor display of anger management he seemed to both resist the goading "Go on, hit me then" coming from the Huntley No 8 and yet got himself sent off anyway. Calm was restored as the watching ex Westbury midfielder and nightclub bouncer Leon Mendy strode onto the pitch but conveniently scuffles broke out again about 20 yards away behind his back. Those with experience of trying to manage a large children's party will understand the dynamic at play. *Mark Landon*

Rugby



Westbury 26 Painswick 27

At 1.00 pm West had only fourteen men, by kick off they had a side and what a bloody great effort the boys put in. The home side did themselves proud and really could have sneaked a win. In a great team effort No8 Paul Adams

scored two tries in an impressive performance. Debutant fly half Stan also scored a brace, the last score was by veteran hooker Simon Roberts who, at fifty one, played his second full game in two weeks. He epitomises what a true clubman is and was a well-deserved man of the match. Gary Smeaton, Will Marks, Will Kemp and Ben Woods all did well.

It was great to see Paddy Hinds, Zak Hinds and Seb Roberts and his son Cam take the field together.

To all Westbury players, please come along and help your club, captain and coach get a side out for the remaining games.

Pete Miles

The poster features a yellow ribbon banner at the top with the text "EVERYONE IS CARING 30-30". Below it is a green virus icon. The main text reads "ARE YOU IN NEED OF HELP" in large white letters, flanked by green virus icons. Below this, it says "Westbury on Severn YFC are here to help!" followed by a list of services with icons: "Picking up Shopping?", "A friendly phone call", "Collecting your prescription", "Emergency supplies", "Posting Mail", and "Any other concern". At the bottom, it says "Please contact Club Chairman Ben Stephens 07972 761360 or Club Secretary Emma Greening 07948 085454 and we will be on hand to help ASAP".

As we are short of contributions this month, and need to fill the space, we hope you will not mind if we re-run a Bygone Westbury piece that I wrote for the WoSP in September 1992. I had completely forgotten about it, so I'm sure that you will too.

The theory that the people of Westbury all have hollow legs has often been voiced, especially by those clearing away the empty bottles after occasions such as the pantomime. Considering that a total of 14 pubs have, in the past, flourished in the parish, this capacity is obviously nothing new. Over 200 years ago, Westbury was well known for making high quality cider (and, no doubt, for drinking it too) which was exported via Newnham to London and Dublin and sold for as much as 15-20 guineas a hogshead of 52 gallons odd. In the late 17th century, there were so many casks about that the churchwardens were able to buy enough to repair the church steeple, and many local houses now have parts of cider-mills decorating their gardens.

Much of the drinking was, of course, to quench thirsts brought on by hard and honest toil. Many of the pubs were near the river, and their customers were the watermen who moved their cargoes up and down the Severn. When the tide was low, they needed somewhere to bide their time until it turned and if, as sometimes happened, they had to unload the cargo in order to haul the barge over a sandbank before reloading it, they certainly would work up quite a thirst. At Broadoak, as well as the White Hart which was opened in 1783, there was also a Broadoak Inn on the Westbury side which was open by 1760. In Rodley, two hundred years ago, the

Bellow House Inn was open but was later renamed the Sloop after the craft which delivered goods there. It closed in 1930.



Blue Boys Farm

at Rodley Sands was also an inn then, probably doing a roaring trade from those using the Framilode Passage and the mooring place for boats at the Green on the bank close by. The Heald was another place where you could then, as now, get a drink when you wanted one. Hard luck on Clive Dunning - if he'd lived there a century earlier he would have been paid for it!

Also by the river at the Flat, were three more inns, the Duke of Gloucester, mentioned in 1786, the Kings Head in 1839 and the Bird in Hand - obviously worth two in the bush as it is the sole survivor, renamed as the Severn Bore.

The earliest of the pubs in the parish were, not surprisingly, in the village



itself, both the Red Lion and another called The

George being open in 1715. Considering that there only seem to have been 36 families living in the village in 1710, they were somewhat spoiled for choice, especially as what is now Bell House was also a pub by 1737 and remained the Bell Inn for over 100 years. The Junction was open in the later 19th century, but it wasn't where it is now, it

was at Frocester House and moved to its present site in the early part of the 20th century.

At Elton, one of the cottages housed the Plough Inn from 1788, and another was the Traveller's Rest Inn from 1839 until at least 1891. The moral of this sober tour of the local hostelries is obvious – USE IT – OR LOSE IT.



Age UK Gloucestershire is still able to deliver support to Gloucestershire's older people. Our **Help Team** is available Monday – Friday 9am – 4pm to help older people resolve specific problems. We have up to date information about local resources and support. Call us on **01452 422660** to access the Help Team, or email essentialinfo@ageukgloucestershire.org.uk to let us know about essential services you are offering locally.

Our Out of Hospital Team continues to support older people recently discharged from hospital who need guidance to stay well at home through in depth welfare calls.

Supporting Older People to stay connected:

We recognise that social isolation and the associated wellbeing issues are a real and serious issue for older people. We have set up a **new Freephone telephone** number for people who are alone and who want to have a **friendly conversation**

with a staff member or volunteer. Call us on **0800 2980579**, Monday – Friday 9am – 4pm. We are also compiling tips from our Older People's Springboard Groups about how to stay connected, including virtual 'Get Connected' workshops and one-to-one telephone support to help older people make the most of the resources and social opportunities access to technology can offer. Call 07511 223995 to find out more.



"To be honest, I thought that drag hunting meant something else."

In conclusion, some grafitti.
*I fought the lawn and the lawn won
Rehab is for quitters
Friends help you move. Real friends
help you move bodies*

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