



Post Panto Presentation

Rapunzel a.k.a Leanne Roseblade-Bargh handing over our cheque to Yvonne Wood,

Westbury Players

As many of you know, Rapunzel was played out in front of enthusiastic audiences in January - none more so than the matinee audience, where the younger element got so involved in the story that Prince Charming struggled to get a word in edgeways! An excellent time was had by all and many thanks to all the cast and backstage crew, including some newcomers. And so we roll on to the next project. Before that, however, we are happy to report that the raffle raised £645 which we have donated to the Forest Foodbank, who were thrilled to receive much needed funds. This was decided at the last AGM and it is good to see the fruits of every-

one's labours giving much needed help to a local charity. Thanks to all who donated prizes and sold or drew out tickets. We also gave £250 each to Westbury-On-Severn School, Riding for the Disabled and Westbury-On-Severn Parish Hall in exchange for washing up duties. So thanks to the support of our audiences, we contributed a total of £1395 to good causes. Hooray !

Our next event is our **Annual General Meeting** which will be held in the Parish Hall Lounge on **Sunday 24th March** at 6pm. Everyone is welcome to come and share your views and ideas. Watch this space for updates on Summer events and next year's pantomime. *Mark Landon*



February's Parish Hall management committee meeting rather reflected the time of year, with some absences due to various bugs doing the rounds, and one or two rather hoarse voices. For the rest of us, after a minor correction of the minutes of the last meeting, we heard the

Treasurer's report.

This showed that the cost of our utilities and other essentials exceeded our income again last month but at the moment, our reserves are still untouched. However, there is clearly a limit as to how long this can continue. Various work is being done to examine the amount of electricity used by the appliances in the building and also to find out whether any more can be done to reduce our bills.

Severndipity (Bar) report

We were ready for some good news by this time, and happily Val Morgan-Townsend was able to tell us that the bar had made a profit in December. The Severndipity Committee have come up with a loyalty scheme whereby regular customers can get discount on their drinks and bar snacks, and one of the draught lines has been taken off in order to reduce costs.

Fundraising Jan reported on our meeting to discuss future fundraising plans, which include a BBQ in May, a Tribute Night in June and an Italian Food Night in July. The Flower and Produce Show, with some stalls and events in an arena outside, will take place on 1st Sept. Jan has also been in touch with the District Council about a plan to organise a Communi-tea event, where everyone will be invited to the Hall to find out what the Council has to offer, and at which we can also ask people what sort of events they would like to see happening at the Hall – all over a cuppa and a biscuit. Nosh and Natter continues to provide both an excellent lunch for many local residents and a steady source of income for the Hall, so thanks to Jan and all her helpers for all they do. Last month saw a record number of 39 diners

Doctor's Surgery Progress with installing the separate electricity supply has been temporarily stalled as we wait for more clarity from the NHS on what exactly is needed. This means that we still have no precise figure as to what this will cost. Newnham Parish Council has declined to help with the cost and Westbury Parish Council has offered £1000. It was agreed that we delay signing the lease until we are sure that the costs will not be prohibitive.

Rent review In view of the rising costs, it was agreed that hire charges will have to be increased by £1.50 per hour from 1st March. *Di Landon*

Westbury Parish Hall
Annual General Meeting
Tuesday 12th March at 7.30pm
New members needed
If you care about the future of our Hall, please come along
to this crucial Annual General Meeting.



@
**WESTBURY
 PARISH HALL**

10% OFF ALL YEAR

Your local community bar, which is open to everybody, is now offering a loyalty card giving you 10% off all bar prices all year.*

There are 3 types of card available; Single (£15), Dual (£25) & Family (£35).

**For more information and to get your application form contact Neil Wyman:
 WhatsApp 07889 178260
 Email neilwyman@icloud.com**

Or just call in for a drink and pick one up from the bar.

**Our winter opening is every Saturday from 3.30pm
 We look forward to seeing you.**

*10% off all items unless already on offer



Nosh and Natter

Westbury Parish Hall

Thursday 14th March 2024

Food served between
 12.30pm and 1.30pm

Vegetable soup

Beef and bacon meatloaf with
 tomato sauce

Salted caramel cheesecake

£8.00 two courses £10.00 three courses

Call us to say that you are coming and please let us know in advance if you have any dietary requirements

Please either see in person or call
 Gail on 760495/ Jan on 760630

Please note that Nosh n Natter in April will be on Thursday 18th April (the 3rd Thursday that month)

Sorry for any inconvenience and please change the date on your calendar

Message from Jan

As mentioned previously, we really need new members to sustain and ensure the future for the hall. It is a great function venue and even though we are a Registered Charity and look to volunteers to run the hall, it is also a small business, and we are looking to the wider community to join the Parish Hall Management Team.

Date for the diary – Sunday 1st Sept 2024 Flower and Produce Show along with craft stalls and arena, food and music. If you would like to be more involved with the running of the hall please get in contact on info@wosph.co.uk or ring 01452 229570

Parish Council

There was a full agenda for our February meeting and, after completion of the formalities, we began with a proposal from parents living in Northwood Green for a play area on the land next to the Social Hall. The Parish Council rents the land from the Parochial Church Council, so their permission will first be needed, and consideration will have to be given to maintenance, inspections and insurance etc. Unfortunately, the Parish Council's budget is very tight at present due to high expenditure on the school playing field and burial ground extension, so financial help could not be offered, but grant funding may be available and the parents are also willing to fundraise. Our clerk, Fiona, mentioned that a similar project has been successful in Redmarley and advice from the organisers there might be useful.

Planning

There were no objections to the two planning applications – one a variation in the cladding of extensions at 6, The Crescent in Northwood Green and another for conversion of two barns to holiday lets at Ardens Farm.

Finance The accounts were agreed and signed.

Highways The poor state of the roads seems to be a nationwide problem and nearly every road in Westbury has potholes. Road safety is also an issue with ongoing concerns about the speed of traffic going under the bridge at Jordans Hill, and at Chaxhill, where there is a lot of traffic turning into the garage, care home and smokery. Water is leaking along Elton Road, and it was also suggested that signs warning motorists that there is no footway on this stretch of road might make it a bit safer for pedestrians – at the

moment it is not a road you would choose to walk along. Richard Hewlett has been collecting up numerous temporary road signs that just seem to get left behind when flooding clears, or works are completed, so these can now be returned to Highways.

Chairman Simon Phelps has spoken to the Bridges and Structures Manager at Gloucestershire Highways about concerns that the Dinny brook is collapsing, and that there is erosion of a retaining wall at the bridge at Blaisdon. Simon has also spoken to Andrew Middlecote, the area manager, who has agreed to come and inspect the parish's roads. It was also agreed that the Secretary of State for Transport, Mark Harper, (who, of course, is also our MP), should be asked to come and see for himself the state of our roads and bridges.

Burial Ground In spite of having full planning permission for change of use and the plans being closely examined by the County Council, FoDDC, Sport England and solicitors, the County Council have suddenly decided that we have to apply to the Secretary of State for Education for change of use of the land. As the work has now been completed, at a vast cost to the Parish Council, this is frustrating, to say the least. The application form is extremely complex and time consuming and so it was agreed that we ask our County Councillor, Philip Robinson, to assist us with this issue.

Climate Change

Government guidance requires parish councils to consider what can be done to conserve and enhance biodiversity in their area and I have been looking at what is needed. Fortunately, we are already following most of their suggestions in that our main land holding is the closed churchyard, which we are already caring for with biodiversity in mind, and we also

encourage litter picking and collection of dog mess. The planting of native species of trees is suggested but we are not aware of any suitable space for this. We should also be encouraging biodiversity in our parish magazines so if anyone has any advice to offer on this subject please let me know.

The Forest of Dean District Council has been working on a scheme to ensure that our towns and parishes are preparing for the changes and risks that climate change may bring in the future. I'm afraid that my long-suffering fellow councillors then had to listen to me ranting about the length of the instructions, which ran to 73 pages! However, the advice is generally to use our local knowledge to anticipate where problems might arise and to take avoiding action wherever possible. We already have a recently updated emergency plan.

Doctors' surgery

Definitive details about the electrical installation are still awaited, so this is on-going.

Severn Trent

Sewage is still leaking out in Stantway Lane, Ampney Lane and near the burial ground and representatives from Severn Trent have agreed to come to next month's Parish Council meeting. Simon has briefed them on all the local problems.

Village Telephone Kiosk

Recent checks show that the book exchange in the kiosk has hardly been used and the books are just getting damp and deteriorating. Mike Townsend volunteered to clean it out and recycle what he can, but if anyone has any good ideas as to another use for the kiosk, please let us know.

Correspondence

The Parish Council has been asked by the District Council to put forward any sites

suitable for future housing development. There are a few sites that we have suggested before, so these will be suggested again.

The next meeting will be on Monday 18th March at 7pm at the Parish Hall.

Di Landon

Road Closures

There will be a road closure of 30 metres outside Poulton Court Farm for bridge repair works from 08:00 on 4th March 2024 to 17:00 on 8th March 2024 or until the works have been completed.



On the 14th March 2024, Goose Lane will be closed for 300 metres between 09:30 and 15:30 from its junction with the A48 to outside the property known as 'The Paddocks'. This is for pole testing works.

Weather Report

	2024	2023
Total Rainfall.	84mm	87.5mm
Warmest Day.	24th. 12.5C	11C
Coldest Night.	19th. -8.0C	-7C
Nights of Frost.	15	15
Average Maximum Temperature:	6.96C	7.16C
Average Minimum Temperature:	0.14C	-0.7C

Predominant Wind Direction, first half of month Northerlies, second half of month, Southerlies.

Warmest Night. 29th. 7.0c

Coldest Day. 17th. 1.5c

Snow fell on 8th

Thanks to Simon Phelps for these records

Joyce Ferson 1942 - 2024

Joyce passed away peacefully on 16th January. As a much-loved wife of 62 years, a mother, grandmother, friend and workmate, she will be greatly missed. Always ready with a smile, to listen, and to talk with you about anything, as well as share a laugh or two - that was Joyce. She was born in Nottinghamshire and as a child was known as The Blonde Bomber and even at that age she wanted to be the boss! She fell in love with Classical music at school, and mornings in Hillview were often accompanied by the radio, with Joyce singing along, with all the right notes...but not necessarily in the right order.

At 18 she joined the WRAF and was posted to Little Rissington and became a member of the ground crew for the aerobic team "The Pelicans". In 1961 she married Ken, and they made a scary combination of stubborn Yorkshire grit and Irish sense of humour - a perfect union. They started married life at Kingsholm, where son David was born, with daughter Karen arriving after their move to Tuffley.

Joyce later re-entered the work force, becoming Staff Manager at BHS, whilst also learning German at night school, and later working for Ecclesiastical Insurance Company. With her friend, Stephanie, she also enjoyed a game of scrabble and bowling, something to which she was later able to dedicate more time.

Moving to Northwood Green, she became a well-known figure: small in stature, mighty in spirit, frequently seen "walking the block" with Ken, binoculars at the ready for their shared love of bird watching. Having a strong sense of community and commitment, Joyce soon joined the WI, the Social Hall activities

and the church, again making new firm friends on the way.



Joyce as President of Barnwood Bowls Club opening the green on their centenary year 2022

Bowling was another shared love between Ken and Joyce. At Barnwood Bowls Club she gained a reputation for taking no prisoners on the green and she was a frequent Ladies Club Champion. The highlight of her bowling career was reaching the National finals at Leamington Spa on four occasions and, with Ken joining her, to reach the last 16 in the National mixed pairs competition. Not being satisfied with winning on the green she also became the first female president of the club.

Joyce and her life companion, Ken, shared the ups and downs of bringing up a family, adventurous holidays and shared interests, and this only deepened their love for one another. Ken has many happy memories that bring him some comfort at this time. The comments on the cards of condolence show how much Joyce was valued and loved in the community and were a fitting tribute to sum up a life well lived.

Cafe on the Green

Wow what a morning! The regular team were joined by a team from Riding for the Disabled carriage driving section. A magnificent sum of £269 was



raised as the event was so well supported both by villagers and RDA

carriage driving supporters. You needed to be there early to get your choice of cake, so you know what you need to do next month! Come and join us for an hour or two between 10 and noon for chat, coffee and cake on **Saturday 2nd March** at Northwood Green Social Hall, when we will be raising money for the Social Hall. The hall needs your support to continue to provide the many events organised. Many thanks to all who help to make this community event possible.

Vale of Castiard WI

At our February meeting, Kate Peake gave us a new perspective on the local landscape with her presentation on "Views of Gloucestershire and Beyond". Her films, taken from a drone, included fascinating aerial views of Flaxley Abbey, Westbury Court Gardens and Westbury-on-Severn churchyard.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday 20 March, when Judith Humphries will enlighten us about "The Benefits of Reflexology". We meet in the Flaxley Schoolroom at 7.30pm. Visitors always welcome, £5 including refreshments. Please contact Gill Western, President, on 07879 532060 or Karen Johnson, Secretary, on 07879 86573 for more information.

WESTBURY FAMILY SERVICE

At Northwood Green Church
Sunday 17th March at 10am
CELEBRATING MOTHERS



What's it like to be a mother?
We've all got one! Let's give thanks for them.
(Bring a photograph of your mother)

Northwood Green Gardening Club

February saw the welcome return of Duncan Coombs, a popular and entertaining speaker, who gave us a host of ideas to create interest in our gardens over winter. His quiz about identifying trees showed that we all still have a lot to learn!

Our next meeting is on Thursday 14th March, when Ian Sadler, a grower of hardy plants, will give a talk entitled "Formative, Restrictive or Restoration", all about pruning techniques.

Meetings take place at 7.30pm in the Northwood Green Social Hall. Visitors are always welcome, £3. Annual membership £12. Please contact karenfayjohnson@gmail.com or call 07879 386573 for more information.

Westbury Youth Project

The reunion for past members is on the 27th March and then there will be a Taster session for new and old members on 18th April at 6pm at the Parish Hall. This year's theme is 'It's an Education' with everything about learning, knowledge building, teaching and quizzing. School plays to Mastermind!

Save the Date

The Friends of Flaxley Church
Friday 12th April 7.30pm

at Flaxley Schoolroom

Who was local hero Henry Hook VC (of the film Zulu fame)?

What is a VC?

Talk by Paul Barnett, maritime historian, about the role of the Gloucester boy, Henry Hook VC, in the story of Rorke's Drift.

£10 per ticket or £15.00 cash or cheque at the door for 2 tickets to include light refreshments.

To book please email danachambers96@gmail.com or phone/message 07708946060 or phone 01452 760563.

Good Old-Fashioned Jumble Sale

The Parish Hall Jumble Sale was again just like the ones I remember from my youth. A queue outside and lots of people happy, either with their bargains or some successful decluttering! And the Hall is now over £350 better off.



Lunch Club

Age Concern lunch club provides tea/coffee and a 2 course lunch on the last Friday of each month. It is as much a



social occasion as a chance to have a meal cooked by some-

one else! Diners like to chat and catch up with friends old and new. Recipients come from Westbury and the surrounding area, and also from further afield.

All are welcome and we would also welcome any volunteers who would like to help us. Please contact me on jwtowns12@gmail.com for further information. *Jane Townsend*

Closed Churchyard

The weather has been against us over the last few months and we have had to cancel our working parties at the churchyard. We are hoping for a dry day on **Saturday 9th March** so that we can do some catching up and prepare our lovely churchyard for the spring and summer.



If you can come and help, you would be very welcome - it's healthy exercise in a beautiful spot - and there's cake!

We are there from 10am until 1pm.

Phil Ayland 1939-2024



Phil was born in Westbury and, apart from a short spell in Gloucester, lived at, or within the boundaries of, the Mill House for the rest of his life. He did well at school, passing his 11+ and going to Crypt Grammar School, where he played cricket and rugby for the school teams. He thought that his rugby success, as a strong young prop, was due to his work at home, carrying heavy bags of coal and boxes of plums.

Phil helped his grandfather collect calves from the farms. Every farm had a cider shed and the love of a pint ran deep in the Ayland genes. Phil's life was typical of a country boy, with a lot of hard work, but in his spare time he enjoyed training a pony for Jimmy Wintle. On most Saturdays, he would travel with Jimmy's horses to various flapping tracks around Wales. At first, Phil thought he could make some easy money gambling, but soon learnt a hard lesson.

Phil's sporting career for Westbury began when he was persuaded to help the football team, when they didn't have enough players to reform the club. Phil played six games and considered himself probably the worst footballer to ever play for Westbury.

Phil started work at 16 as an apprentice radio and TV engineer in Gloucester but he left at 23 and joined GCHQ, working on various military sites and dockyards all over the UK & Germany. His job also took him to Seattle, Hong Kong and

many other foreign places and it wasn't long before Phil's potential was spotted and he was put in charge of a section. As you would expect Phil didn't talk about his work with GCHQ, but did talk about the friends he made and the places he visited, and he thoroughly enjoyed working there. He finally left after 32 years, aged 55, allowing him more time to pursue his other interests.

Phil was married for the first time to Sally, the daughter of the landlord of the Red Lion. They lived in Gloucester and were blessed with a daughter, Nicola, who has fond memories of spending time in Westbury with her grandparents. Nicola was blessed with two children of her own, Jenna and Molly, and Phil was exceptionally proud of all of his girls and spoke of them often.

In the late 70's Phil met Shirley, who he would spend the rest of his life with. Phil carefully planned their first date and in keeping with his romantic nature, whilst sparing no expense, he took Shirley plum picking on Popes Hill. Amazingly, this worked, and they got married in 1981. The wedding was arranged for a Friday, which Shirley thought was rather unusual, but all became clear when Phil went off the next day to play rugby, which he did every Saturday for many decades to come. For the 42 years of their marriage, Shirley was very accommodating of Phil's sporting interests.

Shirley and Phil shared a passion for darts and also thoroughly enjoyed working together, running the Red Lion, whenever Jon and Liz Parry went on holiday. They were keen gardeners and produced hundreds of pounds of runner beans every year along with Phil's famous big onions, Shirley's bedding plants and hanging baskets.

As a cricketer, Phil described himself as a hard-hitting batsman and wicket keeper,

although on one day he took 6 for 15 after scoring a 100 at Stone. Phil enjoyed many successes, but as he got older he retired from cricket to concentrate on rugby which was always a big part of his life. He played for Coney Hill for 14 years and the pinnacle of his time there was playing in a Kingsholm Final when he was 18. He played with and against some famous players, and particularly remembered propping against Curly Hemmings, a local legend.

From Coney Hill, he moved to Gloucester Civil Service for many years, including 3 years as first team captain until he thought his playing days were over. However, Phil got involved again when he became one of the founding members of Westbury Rugby Club and volunteered to be the fixtures secretary. Phil laced up his boots once again when he came out of retirement, aged 50, and turned out for the 2nds, 3rds & 4ths, playing his final senior game aged 58. Even then, he was still a handful with the sharpest elbows in Gloucestershire that he used liberally throughout the game.

Another of Phil's passions was travelling abroad with Shirley. After many visits to Lanzarote they decided this was the place for them and bought an apartment there which became their second home. They would set off several times a year, to enjoy its warm climate and meet up with many friends, both old and new. Phil was tremendously respected by all, and every encounter ended up with a pint and a chat in one of his many locals.

Phil famously organised a Rugby Tour for Westbury to Lanzarote in 1996, an interesting concept as they don't play rugby in Lanzarote. It was such a success that the next year Phil organised the tour to Ibiza and booked us into an 18-30 hotel, again with no rugby, but some very surprised looking teenagers.

But Phil's favourite place was right here in Westbury on Severn – with its village hall and the Red Lion (Lyon), a place he frequented most evenings and where many of us will have socialised with him. He would sit on his stool next to his good mate Pete Wyman, both grumbling about what was happening in the world, talking about sport and village life, passing the time over a few quiet pints and then repeating the process the next night, again and again.

We end Phil's story back at the Ayland family home with its garden, where he was happiest and content with his world. He looked forward to passing the time of day with everyone and meeting one of his closest friends, Sue Sterry. Phil knew that being happy with your life is all we can hope for and understood that it's not what you have, or where you go, it's who you choose to share your life with that matters. Thanks for the memories, Phil, you will be missed.

Fundraiser for Motor Neurone Disease

Peter Miles and Simon Roberts are riding again with two friends in May and June for MND and would welcome any donation no matter how small.



<https://www.justgiving.com/page/peter-miles-1708412379855>



People of Westbury, now and in the future, have much to thank him for. What would we do without his photos!
Thanks Pete and keep up the good work.

Pete Wilson at work

Football

WESTBURY UNITED 0 ELLWOOD 1

The Quarter Final of the Hospital Cup on 17th Feb saw Westbury take on Ellwood, who we had comfortably beaten in the first League match of the season. However, we are currently lacking some of the players who took part in that game, noticeably, Prem and Grzeg, the two Polish boys. Where are they Richard (Cook)?

A fairly grim first half was scoreless but Ellwood were the better team. Their spine comprised a tough well organised Centre half, an old head in midfield and a strong, lively centre forward. A few changes at half time saw Westbury take



the initiative but countless attacks were repulsed by a well organised defence and goalkeeper. Ackeen made various forays but to no avail.

Alas, tempers became frayed and some Westbury players lost it towards the end and Cam and Tyrell were red carded by a no nonsense referee. Not a good day for the club all round as our last chance of silverware receded into the distance. Unfortunately, other matches have been rained off.

Clive Tempest

Rugby

A week off had allowed Westbury on Severn RFC to rest and train for the game against Smiths Rugby United on 3rd Feb at the Prince of Wales stadium (training pitch). Before the game the assembled teams held a minute's silence to remem-



ber club legend Phil 'Archie' Ayland.

The game kicked off at a ferocious pace that set the scene for the first half. The lads from 'West' were playing in the SDG Groundwork Solutions Ltd Veterans shirts, due to some technical issues with the red away kit. DoR Matt Hart had been dispatched at the 11th hour to sort the issue - well done Matty.

Westbury drew first blood with veteran Lee 'Flea' Prince carving a line through the Smith's defence and crossing the whitewashmeat pie again Flea!! Some great inter play and support saw WoS crossing the home side's line three times in the first 40. The score line at half time sat at 21-0 to WoS with try honours

to Robbie Pritchard, Harry Jenner and scrum half Justin, all against some strong Smiths defence. A re-group at half time with some words from player coach Rychknyx McKenzie and a few tactical substitutions from team manager Russ saw WoS excel in the wheel house, the second half tries coming from Westbury's answer to the Kray Brothers - Rory & Robbie Pritchard. The freedom of a few points margin allowed some free flowing rugby from WoS and saw a mercurial try from Dec on the wing whose kick through would have made David Beckham blush, topped off with a touch-down that Louis Rees Zammit would have been proud of! The last score sealing the win came from birthday celebrant and season debutant Andrew Cueto who managed to cut a line that saw the crowd of some 100+ (ish - if you include the kids on their bikes) on their feet, beer and hats in the air! The final score was WoS 56 Smiths United 0. Some great performances of note - far too many to tag - a real TEAM effort...and a fitting tribute to Archie, who'd have loved it and a beer after

Well done West'

It was a sticky surface that welcomed Minchinhampton to the KB stadium of light on Sat 17th February, but the game was still on (and in light of the recent weather that was no mean feat for the



groundsmen.) The game kicked off at a cracking pace with Minch showing their prowess early doors and West defending well.

It was an end to end affair with points on both sides and a few yellow cards (well, two) for dissent - the ref wasn't having any of it! The score at half time sat at 12 - 19 to Minch. The second half was much more of the same tit for tat, like the chuckle brothers on acid. Then Minch made a few changes and put their foot down further than WoS and the final score was 19 - 49. The missed tackles and gaps will be worked on. Men of the Match for West were Andrew Cueto and Max Kaufmann.

The game against Bream RFC 2s on Sat 24th Feb had to be postponed because both pitches were waterlogged.



New to the game? New to the area? Returning to rugby after a few years away? Inspired by the 6 Nations? Or fancy giving it a go with a new club for the fitness? We at Westbury on Severn RFC welcome all - fully qualified coached training sessions at the WoS Club every Tuesday 6:45 - for a 7PM start

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