

WETHERSFIELD

BLACKMORE END & BEAZLEY END

NEWS

October/November 2003

news@churchhillhouse.co.uk

Holey Roof Repairs

HOLES in the roof covering have called for some expensive repair work on the South side of Wethersfield Parish Church. Prolonged exposure to sunlight has caused the felt covering to rot and slip and this is being replaced with a multilayer membrane with lead on top. The parapet is also badly weathered and is being dismantled and rebuilt. It will then be treated with a lime and horsehair render, as it would originally

have been and as required by English Heritage, who have awarded a grant of £34,500 towards the total cost of £69,000.

The balance is being raised by fundraising events such as Garden Party, Youth Music Festival, recent Barn Dance. These and other events have raised £3000 in the past year.

Applications have also been submitted to nationwide trusts and charities sympathetic to the restoration of historic buildings. However, there is still a long way to go - in fact £15,000 is still needed.

Parapet Pranks: The specialist firm of builder-restorers has taken every possible precaution against unauthorised access to the scaffolding, but, in spite of this, children's heads have been seen peering over the roof-top parapet. The police have been alerted. Parents and children should be aware of just how dangerous these pranks are.



Sheeting covering the South side of the Church.

Bins for Wethersfield?

IN ANSWER to a query raised by Wethersfield News, the following statement has been received from Braintree District Council:

"The original plan approved by the previous administration was to roll out the wheeled bin scheme to Braintree this year, Halstead in 2004/05 and the remainder of the District, including Wethersfield, in 2005/06.

The Council's Executive reviewed this plan at their meeting on the 15th September and have decided to defer any further implementation of wheeled bin collections once the Braintree and Bocking project is completed. This decision enables the Council to revert to the original plans at any time, but given the current financial constraints it is unlikely that Wethersfield will be switched to a wheeled bin system in the foreseeable future.

The good news is that Wethersfield is likely to benefit from plans to introduce a full multi material recycling collection, bringing it in line with most other parishes in the District. The exact timing of this will depend on the outcome of an external funding bid. As soon as details are known the Parish Council will be notified"

No to Broadband

BT have just revealed that it cannot set achievable broadband trigger levels for 322 local telephone exchanges across rural Britain. This is in addition to 100 already declared. **Shalford Green** exchange, which serves Wethersfield, is on the list. A full list can be viewed on www.adslguide.org.uk.

BT have calculated that there aren't enough potential broadband users in these particular areas to justify and trigger the expense of upgrading the exchange equipment. "Under current circumstances we can't see a case for setting a trigger, because the total number of customers needed simply would not be achievable".

Broadband4Britain (B4B) reckons the move is a ploy by BT to try to win public money subsidies to support its roll-out of broadband. It is possible that community activists may step into the breach to set up privately sponsored broadband networks, possibly under the Community Broadband Network (CBN) umbrella organisation - how about it?

Clowns for the Day

WETHERSFIELD Primary School marked the completion of a week learning about healthy living with a 'Smiley Day'.

Both teachers and children dressed as clowns and held a special afternoon assembly in the Village Hall where parents and the Friendship Club watched the children show what they had learned during the week. This included healthy eating, personal hygiene and other 'good living' habits.



Beware bogus callers

THERE have been recent cases of bogus callers tricking their way into houses in Wethersfield, with thievery in mind.

They tend to operate in pairs, one distracting the householder whilst the other searches for valuables and cash. They direct their attention to the most vulnerable, often the elderly living on their own. Sometimes the well known 'Water Board Official' trick is used.

The advice is *never* to let unexpected visitors into the house, even if 'identification' and a plausible reason is given.

Smoke alarm working?

THE Fire Authority reminds residents to check that fresh batteries are fitted to their smoke alarms. This is especially important with the start of cold weather, central heating boilers and open fires starting up and the possibility of festive lights and candles in use.

Happenings...

WETHERSFIELD PARISH CHURCH Sunday Services

November

2nd - 8am Holy Communion
9th - 11am Remembrance Sunday
Morning Service at URC
16th - 11am Parish Eucharist
23rd - 6.30pm Evensong
30th ADVENT SUNDAY 5pm Songs
of Praise in the Parish Church followed
by refreshments in the URC Hall.

December

7th - 8am Holy Communion
14th - 11am Annual Family Toy
Service

Sunday School on 9th Nov. will have a
Remembrance Day theme and will finish
promptly to enable those who wish to
attend the local Remembrance service.

Contact - Elaine Ambrose 850244 or
Sarah Pilgrim 850781

Memorial Book

This was presented by Sue Bennett in
memory of her husband Keith and
dedicated by the Bishop of Colchester.
Wethersfield PCC has agreed that the
names of loved ones whose mortal
remains lie in the churchyard may be
recorded in the book for a fee of £25. All
entries will be made in the same
calligraphy as can already be seen in
the book. It is intended that entries will
be made quarterley and hope that first
entries will be made by the end of Nov.
to be ready for Christmas.

Details from the vicar or churchwardens.

GARDEN PARTY

Many thanks to Mr & Mrs Smith for
opening their home & garden to us and
to everyone who helped make this such a
success, raising £500 for Church funds.

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Nov 15th 2 pm in the Village Hall

CREAMER FUND

The recent Garage Sale in Great
Bardfield raised a magnificent £915 -
many thanks to all who participated.

Christmas Raffle - ticket sales between
Monday Dec.15th to Mon 22nd., with
the draw on 23rd Dec.

Contact Jean Murphy 851147

WELCOME GROUP

Nov. 6th - Rita & Derek Norman will be
telling us about "when we were stage
struck"

Dec. 4th URC Hall at 8pm
Entertainment by the Upbeat Youth
Band and food (please bring a small
plate of food)

Contact: Jean Murphy 851147

GARDEN CLUB.

Oct. 17th - 'Garden Pinks' by Susan and
Peter Russell. Their specialist nursery
was recently featured on TV, so we were
lucky to secure them before their fees
became unaffordable! A selection of
pinks will be available for sale.

Nov. 21st - Charles Soule - 'Gardening
for those who need support.'

Meetings start at 7.45pm in the Village
Hall. Visitors welcome.

HISTORY GROUP

Nov.13th - Steve Atterton - 'The British
Involvement in the American Civil War'

Dec. 11th - Malcolm Coleman ' Crime
and Punishment in the 19th Century'
with wine and mince pies!

Contact: Leslie Nicks 850624

RAINBOWS & BROWNIES

Brownies visited Braintree Police
Station, working towards their Crime
Prevention badge.

Half Term - pack holiday

Dec 6th - Christmas trip to Colchester.

Contact Sarah Pilgrim 850781

WINE CLUB

Nov.14th Competition Evening for
Page, Wyatt & Aga trophies

Dec 12th Christmas Social Evening

Contact: Barbara Mostyn 850 978

WETHERSFIELD PATHFINDERS

Nov. 23rd meet on Wethersfield Green
at 10.30 am Sunday morning for a 2-
hour ramble.

Dec. 26th (Boxing Day) meet outside
Blackmore End Village Hall 10.30 am
for this popular walk - escape the in-laws
and walk off the Christmas pud! Well
behaved dogs also welcome.

WETHERSFIELD ARTS CENTRE

Watercolour Classes - continuous
enrolment till April 4th. Separate classes
Tuesdays and Thursdays - 9.30am till
3pm - expert tuition with demonstrations
Excellent lunch Call 851054

BLACKMORE END VILLAGE HALL

NOVEMBER 1st

GRAND BONFIRE AND FIREWORK SPECTACULAR

Gates open 5.30pm Bonfire 6pm
Fireworks 6.30pm

Admission £3 adults £1.50 children
'Souper' refreshments and bangers!

Dec. 13th Blackmore End Quiz Night
Teams of 6-8 people 7.30 for 8pm

Contact: Adrienne Poulsen 850308

WETHERSFIELD FLORAL ART CLUB

Oct. 29th - Nicholas Grounds - 'Christmas
Carols' 8pm - Tickets £6 incl. refreshments.

Nov. 26th Annual Dinner

Dec. No meeting

Contact: 851094

PARISH PLAN

The piece on "Have Your Say" in the last
issue resulted in two volunteers for the
steering committee to supplement the
efforts of those from the parish Council.
(*Wethersfield News* is sent out to 500
households).

However a 'kick-off' meeting has been held,
at which Jan Cole from the Rural
Community Council of Essex gave very

useful guidance on the way forward. An
Open Meeting, to which all residents will
be invited, is planned for early in the new
year. Those with interests in researching
local subjects, graphic design, computer
assisted data processing and report
production/printing are urged to contact the
Steering Group.

School Report

WE were very pleased with the
positive Ofsted Report and staff and
governors
are working hard to address the Action
Points.

We were very grateful for offers of help
from the Village Hall and the URC
when we were recently unable to use
the Parish Church for our Harvest
Service.

These positive aspects have been
somewhat spoiled due to some petty
vandalism at the school; the worst of
these incidents was when several
bottles were thrown over the fence, out
of school hours, and smashed on the
playground, putting the safety of our
children at risk.

We have also had damage done to
several padlocks on the gate as well
as bins being overturned and emptied.
As a small school, this puts further
strain on an already limited budget.

We would be very grateful if our
neighbours could be aware of this and
let us know if they see anything
happening around the school
when we are not in session. JD

LET THE LIBRARY COME TO YOU!
DOES age, disability or caring for
someone prevent you from visiting
the library?

We can arrange for one of our
volunteers to make a regular visit to
your home, when you can chose
what you'd like to borrow. There
are books (including large print),
talking books on cassette or CD,
music CDs and videos. On the next
visit you can change or renew
them.

For details call Braintree Library on
01376 320752 and speak to Janet
Wagner or Jackie Cowan.

LATE ISSUE

READERS of *Wethersfield News* will
have noticed that we have slipped a
month, for which we apologise. The last
issue was July/August.

Apart from a few trusty contributors and
a loyal band of distributors, the
production of *Wethersfield News* tends
to be a 'one man show' and I have had
other pressures on my time.

The future of the *News* depends on
contributions from YOU! So how about
writing a few lines on local items of
interest? - Editor.

Wethersfield News, in colour, is available
on the internet at

www.wethersfield-esssex.co.uk

Theatrical Wethersfield

An appeal from Jessie Threadgold

Who remembers Wethersfield's panto days of yesteryear? As a child I remember going to see some quite brilliant productions and one year the musical "Joseph" was performed instead of/as well as - I don't remember exactly - the usual pantomime. A choir was recruited from Wethersfield School, of which I was one, an experience I thoroughly enjoyed. As many of you may already know, I have been directing the Wethersfield Youth Music Festival for 6 years now, but I would like to try another challenge: that of a musical, with participants of all ages. As Martin Luther King once said, "I have a dream..."

At the moment this is just that, a dream, an idea, but one I am hoping that you, the



Jessie plays at the Youth Music Festival

citizens of Wethersfield will take to your hearts. I would be interested to hear some of your thoughts and to find out who would be

willing to help form a group to undertake this venture. I will happily direct the musical / drama side of affairs but for such a big project would need a committee to help with the organisation. (This would not prevent you from auditioning as well!)

If you are interested in helping me set up this venture then please contact Jessie Threadgold on 01371 850481 or jess@boydellsdairy.co.uk If I receive sufficient interest we will organise a meeting to discuss practicalities, then roll on auditions, rehearsals and the big night...

Note - The Youth Music Festival organised by Jessie this year raised over £350 towards the Church restoration fund.

Very many thanks again to all those putting in such a musical effort, stage hands, helpers and audience - in fact all who all made the evening such a success.

PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

Edited minutes of the meeting of the parish council held on 17th September 2003.

MATTERS ARISING

Meadside Bank: The Clerk reported that he had nothing further to report.
Wethersfield Village Green trees
The Clerk reported that invitations to tender had been sent to four tree surgeons, with tenders requested by 30th September 2003.

Essex County Council - Braintree Locality Youth Services: The Clerk advised members that he had agreed to three further visits of the 'Contact' bus to Blackmore End. There had been a very disappointing response to the Wethersfield visit. The bus will visit on 22nd September, 20th October and 17th November 2003, from 7 pm to 9pm at the Village Hall, Blackmore End. There is a charge levied by BDC for these visits.

Essex County Council - Highways and Transportation Group: The ECC site meeting with Councillors Foster and Demeza at Blackmore End had taken place, and the Clerk read correspondence from ECC seeking confirmation of the Parish Council's preference for a speed restriction. Various maps were tabled and, after discussion, it was agreed to support a speed restriction of 40 mph through the village.

Silver Street: It was reported that the pot hole had been filled.

Councillor John Finbow: It was reported that contractors have been seen visiting the West Drive area, where

a suspect blocked drain is believed to be under review by Anglia Water. The Clerk undertook to contact the contractor's office to find out more about their investigations.

CORRESPONDENCE

Wethersfield C of E Primary School
The Clerk read a letter from the Headteacher regarding the shrubs at the rear of the playground. The vegetation is not planted on the school side of the boundary fence, and is not the school's responsibility. After discussion, Councillor Norman undertook to arrange to have the necessary cutting-back work done, the cost to be met by the Parish Council.

Braintree District Council - Regulatory Committee - Public Entertainment Licence
The Clerk updated members on the BDC decision earlier this year that a sound engineer's report was not required for an occasional Public Entertainment Licence in respect of a function concluding before 11 p.m.

Boundary Commission
Residents in Essex are being asked for their views on new local electoral arrangements for County Council ward boundaries. The consultation document is another large scale piece of writing, detailing current electoral arrangements and proposing changes to attempt to equalize councillors' representation (at present each ECC councillor represents an average 12,974 electors) and the aim is to gain electoral equality between divisions.

The County Council size would be reduced from 79 to 75 members. For the Braintree district, the proposal is to increase the number of councillors representing Braintree from 7 to 8, and revising the ward boundaries. The Commission proposes a new ward of

Three Fields with Great Notley, and there are other changes for our district. These proposals are locally generated schemes which have the backing of the main political parties.

The Clerk has more detail if required, and the full consultation document can be downloaded at www.boundarycommittee.org.uk or seen at council offices and in public libraries.

PLANNING

CC/BTE/33/03 - Wethersfield Primary School, Silver Street
-Provision of new school hall and single classroom.

The Clerk reported that the application had been approved by the County Council. Building work is expected to start next July.

03/01218/FUL - Old School Garage, Blackmore End - Conversion and extension to three dwellings

The Parish Council commented to BDC in detail on 9th July 2003, and a number of the points raised then are still valid and should be addressed before permission is granted.

03/01787/FUL - 2 Tricketts Lane, off Hedingham Road, Wethersfield
Demolition of garage and conservatory and erection of two-storey extension.

The Parish Council had no comment or objection.

03/01806/ELD Site of Brandons Coaches, Blackmore End Application for Certificate of Lawfulness for an existing use - non-compliance of a condition restricting hours of operation.

The Parish Council cannot comment on what is a legal issue outside its remit. Members questioned why the subject condition was not monitored after permission was granted in September 1980?

People.....

Autumn Migrations



Richard & Chrissie start their journey on a grey Sunday morning in Wethersfield

RICHARD and Chrissie Brown started a new venture in their life this Autumn. Loading their two dogs, 15 year old cat and as much of their possessions as possible into their Landrover and trailer, they headed *South* to Spain. They have bought an olive farm high in the hills about 60 miles East of Malaga.

The idea of moving to a warmer climate was triggered by Chrissie watching a TV programme about Brits moving abroad. As she commented "we know nothing about growing olives, but the locals have said they will help us with pruning the trees and giving advice. The 'farmhouse' is *very basic*, with an outside bucket flush toilet and only open fires for winter heat, but we have also bought another small house nearer the coast, which we will live in whilst we do up the farmhouse - then we will be able to let out the small house to help bring in some income!"

Richard pointed out that his practical skills will be put to good use "we want to put up some log cabins on the land which we intend to let out - we can't rely on olives as our main income".

The left hand drive Landrover was essential because the last part of the hill road to their land is an unmade track. Richard counts it lucky that he was able to buy it secondhand from an Army surplus depot.

Although the pair departed from their

cottage backing on to Wethersfield Church, their home for the past two years has been Hunstanton, North Norfolk, where they had a ten-bedroom B & B. and, prior to marrying Richard, Chrissie was landlady at the Dog Inn some years ago.

The Spanish venture "took a lot of planning, not the least, getting the animals chipped and equipped with passports and pruning down our clothes and bits & pieces to bare essentials" In fact the legalities finalising their purchase only came through the day before departure so as Richard said "it was a real cliffhanger, but now it's sorted we're really looking forward to our new life."

Another couple moving *South* to Spain are Max and Jo - the chip van ladies which we wrote about in the March/April issue. After 20 years 'doing the rounds' they have sold their fish and chip business - Brian's Chip Van - to Barry and his wife - and their house in Great Bentley. They are to retire to Spain taking their two blind Dalmatians and tiny German Shepherd dog with them.

Migrating in a *Northerly* direction are John and Barbara McKenzie, who have returned from their annual Summer feeding grounds near Poitiers, France, to the Winter quarters at the Wethersfield Barn, facing onto the Dog car park. where their son has been keeping the nest warm, ready for their return.

WITHAM, BRAINTREE & HALSTEAD CARE TRUST

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR YOU?

The Trust was set up in October 2002. The Trust is one of only 6 in the country. Local health services joining together with social services for the elderly and Care Call and Sheltered housing (previously managed by Braintree District Council.) The aim of the development of the Care Trust in Witham, Braintree and Halstead is to improve the quality of services to all residents, including older people and their carers. The Care Trust is already making a difference by focusing on improving the quality of General Practices, Community Health and Social Care Services.

The Care Trust is putting people at the centre of everything it does by involving the public in all its activities.

So what has the Trust achieved:

- No one waits more than 12 months for an operation
- Extra services purchased to shorten waiting lists for knee and hip operations
- There is no delay for assessments for social services
- Numbers of delayed discharges from hospital are at a very low level
- The Care Trust has been selected to become a Children's Trust
- Care Call equipment has been upgraded and moved to new premises
- Extra toe nail cutting services provided
- Single assessment for social services for the elderly
- Intermediate care services integrated into one team giving a single point of contact
- User forums established
- Expert patient programme established
- Plans drawn up for the new community hospital due to open 2006

These are just a few of the examples of how the Trust is working with you to improve the services it provides. The Trust welcomes comments on all services and would encourage you to become involved in Care Trust activities. For further information contact the Service User Advice & Information service - by telephoning 01376 333528, by email SAL@braintrecaretrust.nhs.uk or by writing to SAL Service, Witham, Braintree & Halstead Care Trust, Warwick House, Market Place, Braintree, Essex CM7 3HQ.

PLEASE NOTE THAT DECEMBER/JANUARY COPY DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 10th

We are always looking for ideas for articles. Correspondents and editorial volunteers most welcome.

news@churchhillhouse.co.uk

Letter and comments are welcome, but please note that they will not be used unless name and address is supplied. This information will not be published unless the writer wishes.