

# Elkstone Newsletter

31<sup>st</sup> Year: No. 1 (324)

October 2014

## Editor's Bit

The work on 'one mile loop' has meant a large number of lorry movements and a slight change in traffic noise and frequency. I wonder if the traffic level using the Westerleigh rat-run will travel faster as it gains a *grand prix racing* surface?

I have included a letter from the GCC about road surfaces, which was an answer to a villager's question. My claim for reparations for the damage caused by a pothole to my 1923 motorcycle in June has still not elicited a meaningful response.

*Reg – 20<sup>th</sup> September*

Features	
Services at Elkstone Church	Harvest Supper
Harvest at Elkstone	Neighbourhood Watch
New Vicar	Nature Notes
Elkstone Film Night	Local Events + Advertisements + Late stuff
Date for your Diary	
Elkstone Film and Supper Night – Thursday 23rd October – 8.00pm	
Harvest Supper Bring and Share – Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> October – 7.00pm	
ERG Walk - details by e-mail to regular ERGers	
Please note copy date – The 20 <sup>th</sup> means the 20 <sup>th</sup> . Items arriving late will appear next month	
Regular Dates	
Waste & recycling	Food + garden waste - Every Friday
Waste & recycling	All bags, bins + boxes – Fridays 10 <sup>th</sup> and 24 <sup>th</sup> October
Watercolour Painting	Every Tuesday - Village Hall - 10am – <i>Yvette Levick 870485</i>
Indoor Bowls	Every Tuesday - Village Hall – <i>Trevor - 870246</i>
Deadline for next month's edition: <b>Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October</b> please	
The Elkstone web-site has current and past copies of the Newsletter – <a href="http://www.elkstonevillage.com">www.elkstonevillage.com</a>	
<b><i>Reg Eyre – High Beech – 870375 – <a href="mailto:reg.eyre@tesco.net">reg.eyre@tesco.net</a></i></b>	

## Services for October are as follows:

October 5th	Morning Prayer	10.00 am led by Alexandra Proctor
October 12th	Harvest Service	10.00 am led by Will Halse
October 19th	Holy Communion	11.00 am led by Rev Paul Youde
October 26th	Songs of Praise	10.00 am led by Rev Geoffrey Cox

*David*

## Harvest at Elkstone

Early September, and the harvest is nearly once again gathered in, but there is still some to be done. We are used in Elkstone to the harvesting being a few weeks later than in the valley because of the cooler temperatures. This year the rain at the beginning of the year followed by the dry weather in June and July, means that we are a bit earlier than usual, and it seems that there has been a better harvest. Already the cycle is starting again, with the land being prepared for the start of the next planting. How wonderful it is to see the turn of the seasons, and the goodness of God in providing for our needs. The chance for us to celebrate God's provision through the Harvest will be on Sunday October 12th at 10.00am. Please join us then and bring your harvest offerings. If you are not able to be with us but would still like to make an offering of produce then please bring it to the Church on the Saturday, when it will be being decorated, ready for the following day.

As in previous years the produce will be given to local charities to help those who are in need. The cash gifts on the Sunday and from the Harvest Supper will go to Send a Cow to help with their work in Africa, as they enable local people to become more self sufficient. More details about the Harvest Supper are in the newsletter. Please join us if you can for the Supper on Friday October 17th at 7.30pm at the Village Hall.

### **New Vicar**

Elkstone, with Cowley, Coberley and Colesbourne have been in interregnum since Rev John Holder left in February 2013. It has taken much longer than we all expected, but the decision has now been made to appoint Rev Arthur Champion to the post of "House for Duty, Associate Priest". He will have primary responsibility for these four parishes, although Rev Warwick Heathcote has overall responsibility for the Churn Valley Benefice of which we are now part. Arthur is finishing at Zurich Insurance where he is currently in full time employment, at the end of October and will be starting with us in January.

*David Pierce*

### **Elkstone Film Night**

**Thursday 23rd October, 8.00pm**

We will continue the autumn season of Supper and Film Nights with **The Invisible Woman**, the remarkable "back-story" to Charles Dickens' amazing success in Victorian times with his series of fact-based novels that recorded the huge social divides between the aristocratic landowners on the one hand, and the grinding poverty and social deprivation faced by the most of the 'lower orders'.

The story tells of Dickens' progressively developing romantic involvement with a young London actress Nelly Ternan – all at a time when his masterpieces such as *The Pickwick Papers* were taking the literary and social scenes by storm. The film follows their secret story together over some 12 years until his death in 1870, and her subsequent marriage George Robinson, an Oxford graduate some 12 years her junior.

Supper will be Fish Roast or Fish Pie and accompaniments. This will start at 7:00 pm, with the film starting at 8:00 pm

Cost of supper £5.00 and film £5.00. If you wish to have supper please put your money into Manor Farm Cottage by 6.00 pm Monday 20th October. Thank you and we look forward to seeing you.

*Jeremy and Anne Davies – 870516*

### **Harvest Supper**

The Bring and Share Harvest Supper will be held on Friday 17th October 2014 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. This is open to anyone from the parish and your friends. The Harvest Celebration will be held in the Church the previous Sunday.

This is usually a very jolly occasion and time to catch up with all your neighbours during a sit down meal.

There will be no ticket price, all we ask is for a donation to the charity 'Send a Cow' and a contribution of food for the Bring and Share Supper.

Carole (870493) will be taking your call for offers of food, and will be asking for either a shepherds pie or an apple/plum pudding.

The 'Send a Cow' team work hand in hand with families in Africa. Understanding that poverty is more than just the day-to-day struggle of toiling on land that fails to produce. Many people believe that poverty has become part of their personality, and hold out little hope for change. 'Send a Cow' provide livestock and training in natural organic farming practices alongside courses in gender equality, conflict resolution and more. It's a package that works. It's a package that families pass on to others. [www.sendacow.org.uk](http://www.sendacow.org.uk)

St. John the Evangelist Church

*Carole – 870493*

## Neighbourhood Watch Alert

### Hare Coursing

A villager has reported to Neighbourhood Watch that they interrupted a gang hare coursing at Highgate Farm. On hearing of this, it is now clear that a previous report of suspicious behaviour was also of hare coursing (though not recognised at the time).

While driving from Highgate Farm to the Brimpsfield roundabout (north end of A417 dual carriageway), 4 cars were spotted in the last field gate on the right hand side. These estate and hatchback cars had their tailgates open revealing greyhound type dogs in cages. Men with close-cropped hair were leaning on the gate. The full details of the cars have been passed to the Police, who did attend the scene. That field entrance has advantages, as a quick getaway can be made. A problem with detecting this crime is that participants claim to be walking their dog.

Hare coursing is cruel and illegal, and threatens these fabulous wild animals. It involves dogs chasing wild hares until they are exhausted or killed. The attraction is huge bets and the 'thrill of the chase'. Just after harvest is the perfect time as dogs cannot be seen within a standing crop. They cannot run so fast on a ploughed field - so the window is quite short.

If you see any such vehicles parked up as describe above, please report on 101 **immediately** so that officers can follow it up. If you are able to take registration numbers, even better.

Many thanks

*Julia Davey - Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator*

### Allotment Shed Breaks

Please review your shed security especially in relation to allotments, recently 15 sheds have been broken into in the Moreton in Marsh Area - thieves have broken into the sheds using bolt croppers, and have taken the damaged locks away with them. The only items that appear to have been stolen are petrol trimmers. You may think that Moreton in Marsh is a long way from you but we can never be sure were the thieves will strike next.

### Terrorism Threat

The threat level to the UK from international terrorism has been raised from **substantial** to **severe**. This means that a terrorist attack is highly likely, although there is no intelligence to suggest that an attack is imminent.

The increase in the threat level is related to developments in Syria and Iraq where terrorist groups are planning attacks against the West. This is not to specific communities. People can expect to see an increase in high visibility police activity around a variety of sites, sectors and communities. Communities defeat terrorism and the public are urged to report suspicious activity. We are particularly concerned about those who might be intending to, or who have returned from, fighting in Syria and Iraq. We are not trying to spread panic, only awareness. Please, if you note anything suspicious, report it on 101.

If any of you would like further advice on shed security then please contact PCSO Andrea Shutt ([andrea.shutt@gloucestershire.police.uk](mailto:andrea.shutt@gloucestershire.police.uk)).

Dawn and Steve Clark from Hill View complained to GCC and got a reply, which villagers might like to read:

"It was good to meet you on Friday and I hope Richard and I managed to ease your concerns over some of the issues you highlighted to us, especially on the Penhill to Cocklesford Road.

I can confirm that one of our Inspectors has picked up several safety defects and the work has been ordered to be completed by 10<sup>th</sup> September (works orders 43005683 & 4). We have also ordered a road sweeper to pick up the pile of silt and sweep the road (43004658). This is currently being programmed and should be completed in the next few weeks.

I've also asked the Area Highways Representative (AHR) to look at the road with a view to any reasonable improvements we can make to the surface and/or edges and adding a 'slow' paint marking near the pub.

Elkstone itself was inspected in May as part of the annual inspection, and no safety defects were

found. When driving through the village, we did find only one area, which could be improved in the 'old' part of the village. Again, I have asked the (AHR) to look at this for potential patching or appropriate treatment.

Going back to our conversation about surface dressing and why some roads appear to be resurfaced when there is nothing visibly wrong with them while others are left to deteriorate, the reason for this is because of our Asset Management approach to highway maintenance. Unfortunately Gloucestershire's roads, (along with all local highway authorities) are a victim of a lack of investment in repair and maintenance over many years. Because of this, Gloucestershire County Council's approach is to concentrate funding on keeping the network as safe as possible. This means the Council have put in place a Highways Safety Inspection policy, in line with national guidance, which sets out how frequently roads are inspected and the criteria for determining which defects are prioritised for repair. The Policy is designed to identify all defects, which are likely to cause danger or serious inconvenience to users of the network or the wider community, and allows the County Council to provide pro-active maintenance to reduce risk and provide the public with a safe as possible highway network.

While this safety approach allows us to keep on top of defects, which pose a risk to the travelling public, it does not provide a long-term solution to maintaining or improving the network. Surface dressing allows us to identify roads, which are in a good condition and treat them to prolong the life of the asset. The treatment is a cost-effective process, which provides an impervious, durable and safe road surface.

Where a road has deteriorated past the point of being surface dressed, or is not suitable for the process, then patching and pothole repairs are made. In some instances, roads are in a poor condition and patching would do little to improve the situation. In these cases, the roads are allowed to deteriorate until complete resurfacing is financially viable.

We also discussed what is and what isn't deemed to be a pothole. The Safety Inspection Policy follows the national guidelines as set out in Well Maintained Highways: Code of Practice for Highways Maintenance Management. While the code of practice does not set out specific measurements for pothole sizes, as it recognizes that different intervention levels will be appropriate on different road types, the recommendations are that the minimum on a carriageway that authorities should start to consider a pothole as a safety defect is when it is 40mm or greater in depth, over 300mm in diameter and have sharp edging. Deteriorating edges, depressions and surface degradation, where they do not present a safety issue, are considered non-safety defects. While our safety inspectors focus on true potholes, they do identify non-safety works at the same time and you should see reasonable efforts to repair some of these issues as well as the safety defects.

Your concerns also included the pothole repairs themselves and in particular, repairs that are not sealed. Interventions depend on the hole and the road surface involved. In ideal circumstances, the hole is formed in a good surface and has sharp edges. If this is the case, then a neat hole can be cut, filled and sealed. On many rural roads you will find that the road surface will not hold an edge seal and so the 'throw and roll' method is used. While not visually as satisfying as a cut and sealed repair, the method is generally good, however, it is worth noting that pothole repairs are exactly that – a temporary repair, not a permanent fix.

As you are by now realising, highways maintenance is a fascinating subject and each of these points could easily run to many pages! Without wanting to bore you, I hope I've managed to go some way to explaining some of our methodology and the challenges we face trying to maintain the County's road network.

We do rely to a great extent on members of the public letting us know when there is an issue on the network and if you want to report anything in the future I would encourage you to call our Customer Contact Centre on 08000 514 514 or email us at

[GCCHighways@amey.co.uk](mailto:GCCHighways@amey.co.uk) “

## **Nature Notes**

In Celtic mythology the time around the 31<sup>st</sup> October was the festival of Samhain and marked the start of the Celtic year and the onset of winter. It was deemed to be an important time of change in the year where small acts of misrule and contrariness were encouraged. In addition it was believed that the veil between this world and the Otherworld was thin allowing the dead to return and warm themselves at the hearths of the living and, for a chosen few, a chance for the living to glimpse the Otherworld. Our modern Halloween stems from Samhain, and some believe the traditional pumpkin lanterns are an echo of the time when Celts placed the skulls of their ancestors outside their doors at this time of year. The Christians took over the Celtic festival and turned it into All Saints Day. Even the modern English celebration of Guy Fawkes Day has echoes of the ancient fire festival.

October is certainly a time of transition in nature. Now is the time of change and migration for the bird population. The Swallows and House Martins have left to be replaced by our winter migrants such as Fieldfares, Redwings, Siskins and Bramblings. The songs of summer from our resident birds are replaced with the less exuberant calls of contact and community and Robins start to defend their territories with zeal.

Whilst the flowers of summer have usually faded by October this is the time for berries and shrubs to reach their maturity, particularly noticeable are the Holly and female Yew berries, the black berries of Ivy, and the fluffy grey seeds of Old Man's Beard in the hedgerows.

The crops in the fields have been harvested and the leaf fall of autumn is starting to get underway as various types of trees take their turn in the autumnal succession of colour change with their reds, golds and browns building in intensity into early November. Sudden cold, combined with sunshine produces the best autumn colour and whilst Acers are renowned for their colours even the more humble Hawthorn and Blackthorn bushes can put on a show displaying a wide range of striking and subtle hues. A trip to Westonbirt Arboretum at the end of October/early November is one of those annual events you don't want to miss.

So, going back the Celts, the seasons are changing and the landscape celebrates with one last riot of colour before the stillness and chill of winter start to take hold. Fire, warmth, community and remembrance mark the start of the darker half of the year. Finally, however tempting, please resist putting the skulls of your ancestors outside your front door.... I think you'll find that carving a pumpkin is more fun.

*Francis*

## **Advertisements**

### **Colesbourne Men**

We are seeking the descendants of the men who went to the Great War from Colesbourne. If you are one of them, or know someone who is, we would love to hear from you and add any information and photographs you might have of your ancestor.

There will be a display of photographs and stories about these men in the Long Room, Colesbourne Park, on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October at 7.00pm, followed by a one hour play about a fictional Gloucester couple living in Gloucester during the war.

### **Tommy Atkins and the Canary Girl**

(A Gloucestershire family's life during the First World War)

Performed by a professional Theatre Company

The Long Room, Colesbourne Park, Colesbourne, Gloucestershire

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2014 at 7.45pm (Doors open at 7.00 p.m.)

Tickets £7.00, £6.00 (*over 65's*), £4.00 (*children aged 10 -16*),

(*Please note this performance is suitable for ages 10 and above*)

*Includes a display about the First World War men of Colesbourne*

Tickets available from

*The Estate Office, Colesbourne, Tel: 01242 870264 or Email: hwg@globalnet.co.uk*

### **A Warning!**

Vehicles approaching our village from the A417 are using the racing line after the start line, indicated by the 40mph signs. Please take care!



The greater the speed these drivers come down the slope, the further they drift away from the left hand verge into the path of vehicles coming from the lower village crossroads.

### **New Chicane**



Four lorries parked outside High Cross, two either side, with a drivers' conference in between, formed a very difficult chicane for traffic in all directions during the road works around the 'mile block'. The vehicle which is just visible is a pick-up carrying traffic lights which the driver failed to set up.

### **Please Can You Help Us Again?**

Coberley School are collecting "Let's Get Growing" vouchers from Morrisons to enable us to buy equipment for gardening and outdoor activities for all of us to use. Please can you help us to collect them? If you can, please post them through our letterbox at The Old School House and I will take them into school. Thank you for helping us collect Sainsbury's vouchers earlier this year – we are all using the netball posts that we bought with our vouchers every play time and we have a new netball club which is great.

Thank you

*Hannah Davey*

### **Biomass (Wood Pellet) Boilers / Heating**

I would welcome a discussion with anyone who, either:  
(a) knows about these, (b) has one, (c) is considering one.

*Nic*

### **Pilates Class**

Jannet Griffin is holding Pilates/Dance/Aerobic classes in the village hall on Fridays from 10.00 to 11.00. Please come and join us. The course has still 5 weeks' to run and hopefully will continue after Half Term.

For more information visit [www.pilatespure.co.uk](http://www.pilatespure.co.uk) or telephone 07792 533762

### **Water Supply**

I am talking to Thames Water about the amount of chemicals in our water supply. If any resident has experienced this too, would you please let me know? With thanks.

*Tony Haynes, Wool Barn - [tonyhaynes@eastwoodpr.co.uk](mailto:tonyhaynes@eastwoodpr.co.uk)*