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December 2016



NEWSLETTER

For The Lee, Lee Common, Hunts Green, Kings Ash and Swan Bottom

From the Xmas Editor

By Jonathan Batten

Santa has brought us another sack full of interesting seasonal articles and information for this Christmas edition of the newsletter – I sense a theme developing...

Let's start with a song which you will all know, written 45 years ago by John Lennon, which still strikes a chord in the world today:

So this is Christmas
And what have you done
Another year over
And a new one just begun
And so this is Christmas
I hope you have fun
The near and the dear one
The old and the young

A very Merry Christmas
And a happy new year
Let's hope it's a good one
Without any fear

And so this is Christmas
For weak and for strong
For rich and the poor ones
The world is so wrong
And so happy Christmas
For black and for white
For yellow and red ones
Let's stop all the fight

A very Merry Christmas
And a happy new year
Let's hope it's a good one
Without any fear

One quarter of our editors will be leaving us in the New Year, so we say goodbye and thank you to Gilbert Nockles for all his input over the years. Gilbert told me an amusing story about when he first became an editor after bidding for the privilege at a charity auction. Having done it once he was never allowed to escape... we wish him and Sally the very best with their move far away from the threatening tracks of HS2.

We take a break next month so please send your contributions for the February 2017 edition to theleenewsletter@googlemail.com or hard copy to the editor, Peter Archer, at Mulberry Cottage, Blackthorne Lane, Ballinger by 12th January 2017.

Swan Bottom ladies' artistic adventure

By Trish Swain

On Friday 21st October, 29 ladies and friends from the local area set off from Ballinger to the Courtauld Institute of



Art in London. Our coach dropped us at the doors of the gallery on the Strand and, after a quick coffee break, we split into two groups and started our guided tours.

Our knowledgeable guides introduced us to four or five paintings in the sublime collection. The Courtauld is home to a spectacular collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist art, as well as Old Masters. The techniques, rationale and personal philosophies of artists such as Cézanne, Vincent Van Gogh, Renoir and Manet were described to us, as we stood before the masterpieces. We were all left wanting more, and vowed to return to this delightful 'box of treasures' in Somerset House.

A number of our party had lunch in the sunken terrace cafe at the Courtauld, wrapped in rugs provided by the management. Our peace was suddenly shattered by an outbreak of gunfire from the courtyard above. Although we had been made aware that filming was taking place, it still came as a shock each time it happened... and it certainly set the pigeons flapping! I have been

informed that they were filming a Hollywood film called 'The Long Walk', which has been adapted from a Stephen King novel.

October/November next year will see our 13th outing. If you would like to add your name to our mailing list, please contact me at swaino@talk21.com. Places are on a 'first come, first pay' basis when the invitation is emailed out.

Finally, a huge 'thank you' to Frankie Little for her sterling efforts in liaising with all the 'Swan Bottomers'.

Christmas carols with Vocal Lees

By Jeannette Batten

We invite you all to come and join us to sing carols with the Vocal Lees and then stay for tea and mince pies at the Methodist Chapel, Oxford Street, Lee Common, on Monday 19th December at 4:00 pm.

Do come and simply have a wonderful Christmas time.

Santa's inbox

Beginning of the end

To the Editor

On 15th November at The House of Lords HS2 Select Committee, Colin Sully, Chair, The Lee Parish Council, masterminded a very effective presentation of all of our remaining petitions against HS2.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from Travel Impressions

If you need help and advice planning your next holiday, we will be extending our opening hours in January to include every Saturday from 9am-1pm.

Come in for a chat over a coffee!



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The Lee Parish Council's Petition against the Spoil Dump at Hunts Green, its effect upon Robert Brown's livelihood, the Council's serious traffic concerns, the viaduct at Wendover Dean and the protection of the AONB locally all got a fair hearing without provoking any hissy-fit from the Committee. Hilariously, quite unlike the reaction to some other petitioners on the day.

It's easy to sympathise with the Committee getting bored with the endless repetition of the well-rehearsed issues, but Colin got their lordships (only one ladyship) to look up from their hand-held devices and it seems possible that the Committee may even visit the area, the Chairman giving us the impression he'd actually like to. After all, they are our only hope.

But, no question, the star performers were Mary Godfrey and Claudia D'Alessandro from Hunts Green Cottages. Witness this heroic exchange:

Lord Walker, "Do you have many more points to make?" (*Lunchtime coming*).

Mary, "Yes."

By close of play, Chairman Lord Walker was caught smiling and cracking a joke or two. Consistently Lord Walker referred to Colin as Mr Scully. Contrast this with the truly horrific X-certificated dismemberment of 'expert witnesses' for the Chiltern Society. One could scarce bear to look.

No results guaranteed, of course as usual, but Colin did us proud and I, for one, am truly grateful.

We couldn't have hoped for better.

Richard Stewart-Liberty
The Lee

Scouting Christmas festivities

By Marilyn Burrows

The Common Scout Group warmly invites all local villagers to the Scout Hut on Wednesday 14th December at 7:00 pm, for carol singing and festive refreshments.

Members of our three sections and their families, together with leaders and helpers, will join you in this seasonal celebration.

Kindly contact Marilyn if you are able to come as it will help with catering requirements – phone 837434 or email: marilyn.burrows@gmail.com

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History first hand No. 5

Eyewitness accounts of history in the making: how the Liberty department store led the way in lighting up Regent Street at Christmas to the delight of its distinguished customers



The joy of Christmas light

By Liz Stewart-Liberty

In his capacity as President of the Regent Street Association my husband suggested to everyone up and down the street that they might hang up a small modest lantern, lit within, at Christmas time. All agreed and that small beginning was the conception of the now world-famous Regent Street Christmas lights – since copied by many other streets.



Princess Diana switched on in 1981 in Hamleys and was charming and efficient. She had been a regular Liberty shopper although in the famous photo of her holding a toddler, wearing a see through skirt, rumour had it that this was a copy of a Liberty print.



Right after Christmas (with sale on) everyone was working on next year's windows which were world famous. I suggested to my husband, "Cram the Regent Street windows with merchandise, display a big notice – *Lucky tickets for all items in windows which will rain down at six different times daily; get one and come in and claim your prize*".

My husband thought it an original and brilliant wheeze, put it to the Board who agreed – betting/gambling authorities who were approached stamped on the idea instantly as it

would contravene the new betting and gambling rules, etc. Think again.

A Princess Margaret visit was not a success – we were ticked off for not making a big enough display of her husband's, Anthony Armstrong-Jones, photographic book. Rap on the knuckles for chairman – A I Stewart-Liberty.

Queen Mary was a regular customer. Her well-known penchant for oriental *objets d'art* (especially with precious stones and ivory) were catered for well in advance of a Royal visit. Our much respected buyer of many years received a personal invitation to her funeral; a kind gesture after years and years of friendship.

Liberty have held many Royal Warrants of which we are justly proud. There are good photographs recording their visits to shop and print works.

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The picture (right) is of me giving Prince Charles an old biscuit tin, bearing a smiling face of his late uncle Edward VIII (who abdicated), for which he thanked me profusely: "For my collection of memorabilia!" Couldn't do that today; security would have a blue fit.

My husband spent the last 26 years of his life in a wheelchair in which he patrolled the shop at least twice a day. Once he spotted two middle-aged ladies obviously lost. He asked them, "Can I help you?" and summoned an assistant to accompany them to their objective. The assistant came to see him later and said, "Did you know those ladies were two royal duchesses?" AS-L said, "Did they buy anything?" "Yes." "What?" "An expensive oriental carpet." "How did they pay?" "Cash," came the reply, "but we've got the delivery address and we are not to tell it to anyone!" End of story. Is it apocryphal? I'll never know as all the characters are dead.

Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret Rose had lots of Liberty smocked dresses while growing up. Some 10 years ago I met our beloved smocker, trusted to undertake all royal items. Lovely gifted loyal lady. These days most smocking is done by machine.

One day in Carnaby Street I spotted Liberace, went over and said, "You're such a star and have given so much happiness to so many." He replied, "How lovely, thank you." Then I said to go to Liberty – it's just there. He replied, "Liberty of London?" "Yes you could be Liberace of Liberty!"

Then a man tapped me on the shoulder and cried, "I don't know who



you are but you just ruined 2,000 feet of film!" I merged off.

My husband formed a trade union within the shop and dreaded the first meeting not knowing what demands would be made. There was only one. Word had got round that at a forthcoming royal event Dickins & Jones (next door) had been allocated more money by the board to decorate and commemorate the royal event than us and the Liberty loyalists weren't having that. Budget doubled.

If you have a story to contribute to the History First Hand series please contact Anthea Hartley on 837372 or bassibones@yahoo.co.uk

Christmas at County Hall

By Tricia Birchley

Did you know that a Buckinghamshire Healthcare company, Mediplus, who this year won the Queen's Award for Export, was part of a delegation to Texas where they visited medical schools and hospitals in a bid to bring cutting edge British medical technology to America?

Another Bucks-based company, Global Infusion Group, recently received a call to help launch the Michelin Guide in Shanghai. Every pound that BCC invests in Bucks Business First brings a benefit of £46 into the Bucks economy. Bucks Business First has a thriving membership and welcomes all new start-ups to join them.

Buckinghamshire Adult Learning has achieved excellent results in a national employer satisfaction survey with a rating 12% above the average on two key questions. They achieved 92% when asked "Would you recommend this provider to another employer?" and 90% on the quality of their training. This is good news for Buckinghamshire businesses and unemployment fell by 8,700 in the year to June 2016 representing 3.1% of the working population.

I have been out regularly this autumn with TIB to get gullies cleaned out and insisted that the Jetpatcher was brought back to complete the promised programme of road repairs. Whilst the quality of local roads is improving I am conscious that the profile of rural roads must be maintained at County Hall.

HS2 continues to be an absolute priority with the county council

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responsible for agreeing to both permanent and temporary road works. We are determined that traffic disruption will be kept to a minimum during the construction phase and I shall work energetically to protect your interests.

During November meetings were held with the Parishes to discuss the county's proposals for a single Unitary authority for Buckinghamshire, based on cost savings produced by replacing five councils with one new council. It is suggested that savings in excess of £18 million per year are achievable and I shall be meeting as many people as possible to hear your views during early December.



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Next stop... Christmas

By Symeon Economu

We have a great Christmas Eve planned at The Shop this year, helped along by mulled wine, mince pies and carols by Vocal Lees ladies' choir.

Last year at the Shop we completed 55 customer orders on Christmas Eve. This year we would like to do better. More of this below, because, before I go touting for your order, I must report on our recent Christmas Market (see pictures).

I must say we had a wonderful selection of seasonal, gifty indulgences in food and drink, and a quirky range of Christmassy decorations – none of which I can take credit for, all of the hard work having been done by Katie, Laura and Chris.



On a grey, extremely wet day the village once again turned out in force and did justice to their hard work, making it one of the best days ever in the Shop. Of course they were ably assisted by the usual army of volunteers, without whom nothing like this would be possible.

So, it is now time to be looking to what we can do for you on Christmas Eve. Order packs are available in the Shop which will enable you to give us your order for your turkey, any other poultry, meat, bread, pastries, fruit and vegetables, milk and cream, and a small selection of ethnic foods including olives and baklava. Everything is sourced from known suppliers such as Kings Farm, Darvels, Peterley Manor, etc.

Please ask for an order pack in the Shop and let us have it back by Saturday 17th December. Orders will be ready for collection from 9:00 am until 1:00 pm on Christmas Eve when

we hope you will stay and enjoy the mulled wine, mince pies and Vocal Lees ladies' choir.

[Wine, women and song – show me the way... Ed]

In the meantime please look out in The Shop for all our seasonal goodies.

Trump... triumphant!

By Liz Ford et al

This hand occurred during our weekly bridge evening: the cards were unevenly distributed so it presented an interesting bidding challenge.

♠ K 5 2

♥ 9 4

♦ K J 8 2

♣ A Q J 7

♠ A Q 10 9 8 4 3

♥ 2

♦ 10 9 6 3

♣ 4

♠ J 7 6

♥ K J 6

♦ A Q 7 5 4

♣ 9 8

♠ -

♥ A Q 10 8 7 5 3

♦ -

♣ K 10 6 5 3 2

Dealer: East

Vulnerability: None

At our table, the bidding went:

S	W	N	E
			Pass
1 ♥	3♠	Db1	4♣
5♣	Pass	Pass	Pass

In practice all tricks made. How would you bid to a slam, as we would like to know?

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Christmas I will never forget

By Reina Free

It was the winter of 1944/1945 which was called in Holland *De Hongerwinter*.

Christmas in Holland when I was a child was more of a religious celebration. We always had a small Christmas tree with real candles, a special meal, but nothing elaborate. Because on the 5th December we had the celebration of the birthday of St Nicholas, a Spanish bishop who rode on a white horse accompanied by Zwarte Piet, a black boy, who helped him to give presents to the well-behaved children.

I remember that we put down our shoes near the stove with a carrot, a

cabbage leaf and a crust of bread. We sang special songs and in the morning a small present was inside the shoe.

Christmas was very special, always centred on the birth of the Son of God, Jesus, a unique revelation.

And so also that wartime Christmas in 1944 was also special. We had a small Christmas tree without candles. My father had gone on a search for something special for our Christmas meal. He came home with real braising steak, but when my mother wanted to use it to make a stew it had gone off and had to be thrown away.

As the shops had hardly anything to sell, communal kitchens had started. We queued up at schools, cafés, small halls with saucepans and small buckets then we were given for what we paid for: a soup-like concoction of odds and sods of meat scraps, potatoes and vegetable peelings. We were grateful because we were all starving.

My father had become so thin people in the village talked about him and my mother's arms with skin that drooped. In that time churches were full not only at Christmas. Holland is mostly Protestant Calvinists; in my time quite strict.

The church where we worshipped was heated by a large stove but there was always danger: German soldiers unexpectedly screaming and yelling entering the church searching for young men to send to Germany to work.

My Christmas present was a winter coat made by a local needle-woman from one of my own mother's coats at my request with an inside pocket – I was thrilled to bits.



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Of course all my shoes were either worn out or had become too small.

Very early one morning I queued up outside a local school for a coupon for a pair of shoes. What I got was a pair of too-large men's shoes, brown with, according to the fashion of that time, pointed toes, you could not make it up. My father made me a pair of wooden sandals which made me walk as if I was walking on eggs – I remember it well.

So when I do my shopping, every time I see all the affluent kinds of bread, it overwhelms me. Very often I say to a fellow shopper: "Aren't we spoilt" and they look at me with a kind of puzzled surprise.

Soon we will be celebrating Christmas again in whatever way it is personal. Food, drink, a newsletter, a new carpet, a new telly, whatever turns you on.

But the overwhelming gift which is most precious is the Unseen Creator of the universe revealing Himself in the birth of a human baby Jesus.

It's overwhelming in its down-to-earth simplicity. One thing is for sure, in the history of the world, with so much indescribable suffering and perplexities in which we live now, without any doubt, more than ever, we need Him right now.

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Conversations with Revd David Burgess

No.6: Incarnation.

In a series of articles for The Lee Newsletter, the Revd David Burgess is interviewed by Tony Brignull, an old friend and lifelong Buddhist. In this piece they explore the concept of 'incarnation'.

Tony Brignull: In this Christmas edition of the Newsletter you've chosen to discuss 'incarnation'. Why?

David Burgess: Because at this time of year Christians celebrate God entering into our lives in many different ways, but primarily in human form, sharing our humanity, our life experience.

TB: And in a very beautiful symbolic way with the birth of a baby. The first breath of a new-born is always a miracle but for Christians it has many other allusions...

DB: It marks the beginning of Jesus' work with us and for us, a new beginning in every sense.

TB: Is the choice of the mid-winter solstice significant?

DB: Yes, the early Christian fathers chose this dark time of year when nature is at rest and there's time for contemplation and preparation for new growth.

TB: That sounds pagan, doesn't it?

DB: I believe it was a deliberate attempt to establish the new, small and esoteric Christian church amongst the other old religions of the time, and to supersede them.



TB: In a sense, though, they were intertwined, weren't they?

DB: Yes, they were.

TB: In carvings on the oldest church in Greece there are Christian symbols alongside mythological ones, Apollo playing his harp and charming the animals, for instance.

DB: And we have Christ born among the animals, too, but then visited by wise men who'd travelled long distances to be present, so the whole spectrum of life was there.

TB: Jesus' birth was also highly politicised, occurring at the time of a census held by an occupying force and featuring an impoverished family with nowhere to live and facing higher taxes.

DB: Sounds familiar to us today, doesn't it. But it was - and is - a time of great hope.

TB: Founded on what, precisely?

DB: Founded on God's presence in the form of his son, and his promise of his eternal and unconditional love for us.

TB: A promise you said in our

discussion on sin (November edition) that only we can break.

DB: Indeed!

TB: David, in our first discussion I asked you how you envisage God, and if I remember correctly, you don't see him as an old man with a white beard but as a beneficent power, always available to us and in all circumstances, ever watchful for our welfare, always forgiving if we slip-up.

DB: Yes, so long as we don't turn our backs on him, so long as we accept him wholeheartedly into our lives and, if we slip-up, we repent sincerely.

TB: So though you celebrate a special moment in the Christian calendar for a very special birthday, it is in fact a continuum, an endless series of birthdays; our new lives may begin at any and every moment. Is this how you see it?

DB: I do, but I find it helpful once or twice a year, at Christmas and Easter, for example, to realise freshly, and in good fellowship, what the amazing and wonderful invitation into a new life that God's incarnation in his son, and in us, implies.

TB: David, we come to the end of our fifth conversation. Our two traditions have some fundamental differences but many profound similarities, especially in practice. Perhaps we might talk about these next time we meet?

DB: It will be a pleasure, Tony.

TB: On behalf of all readers of the Newsletter, David, a happy Christmas to you, Penny and your family.

DB: And to you all.

Church services

St John the Baptist

December

4 th 8:00am	HC	Revd D Burgess Old Church
10:00am	AA	Joint Service at Lee Common Methodist Church
7 th 10:00am	MHC	Mr A Eccleston Revd D Burgess
11 th 10:00am	PC	Revd D Burgess Carol Service
18 th 6:00pm		Mr A Eccleston Crib Service
24 th 3:30pm		Mrs P Burgess / Revd D Burgess
25 th 10:00am	PC	Revd D Burgess

January 2107

1 st 9:30am		Four parish New Year service with Communion at Hawridge
8 th 10:00am	PC	Revd D Burgess
15 th 10:00am		Matins - Layled
22 nd 10:00am	PC	Minister the Four Parish
29 th 10:00am		Communion at St Leonards Revd D Burgess

HC Holy Communion (said)

MHC Midweek HC (said)

PC Parish Communion (sung)

AA All-age service

Contacts: *Vicar:* The Revd David Burgess (837315). *Licensed Lay Minister:* Mr Tony Eccleston (07777 640386). *Churchwardens:* Roderick Neal (837264) and Trevor Pearce (837601). *Verger:* Bill Pearce (785191). *Treasurer:* David Stephenson (867617).

Methodist Church

December

4th 10:00am AA Joint worship at
St John the Baptist
11th 3:00pm Gerald Tomkins
18th 3:00pm See notice board
24th 7:00pm HC Christmas Eve
Carols

January 2107

See notice board.

Our **coffee mornings** continue on Saturday 3rd December and Saturday 7th January. 10:30 am-noon. All welcome.

St Mary's, Ballinger

December

4th 9:30am HC With Advent
Carols
24th 3:30pm Christingle
10:00pm HC Christmas night
Everyone is
welcome

January 2107

1st No service

Coffee morning on Friday 13th January from 10:00 am onwards. Why not drop by for a chat and a New Year's catch up. There will be refreshments, a selection of stalls and a raffle.

St Mary's at Ballinger is available for hire: it provides a perfect venue for reading groups, coffee groups and any other similar activities. The church is set in a small garden; it has a newly installed heating system and kitchen and toilet facilities. Please contact Anne Ellis (837247) or Maggi Cameron (maggi.cameron@hotmail.co.uk) for further information.



Scouts remember

By Alvin Evans-Woodward

On Remembrance Day at The Lee the Beavers, Cub and Scout sections all made poppies out of Fimo, a clay that is cooked in the oven.

With the help off Kraftedinwood from High Wycombe, who crafted a helmet for us to adorn a wooden Enfield rifle, we created a sculpture of a fallen soldier's grave using his gun and helmet. With the help of Little Hampden forge, who created a metal



spiral with a metal poppy on the top, we were able to place the Fimo poppies around the spiral to give the effect that the poppies grew up around the fallen soldier's gun and helmet. It was well received at the Lee (see above).

Evelyn Boakes and Jack Hinds from Beaver section read a Remembrance Day poem created by that troop. Fiona Ward and Arun Norton from the Cub section read out poems in church during the service, which they had created themselves.

At the unveiling of the sculpture we had Jack Boss read the Anzac

poem. All young Scout members were exceptional in the Remembrance Day service.

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Lonely HS2 Christmas

By Simon Morris, Chairman,
Chiltern Ridges HS2 Action Group

The Lee Parish Council, together with the only three residents of The Lee who managed to prove 'locus', presented their petitions to the House of Lords Select Committee on 15th November. This was the last opportunity we had of making representations for mitigation against HS2. The presentations were all well-received and we await to hear whether the Committee will make any recommendations that would help our petitioners.

Colin Sully, Chairman of The Lee Parish Council, made the case in presenting its petition to the House of Lords Select Committee, for changes regarding the spoil heap at Hunts Green, for assurances regarding local road use, for protections for the AONB, for changes to the Need to Sell Scheme so that it would apply to blighted Lee Residents and for funds to compensate our community for the



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disruption that it will suffer during the construction period.

Mary Godfrey and Claudia D'Alessandro each made good cases for mitigation from the effects of the Hunts Green spoil heap, which will be just across the road from their houses, and Richard Stewart Liberty's petition asked for changes to the spoil heap to reduce the damage it will do to farming in that area and to the AONB.

Future railway franchises

Early in November the Department of Transport announced that when it renews the franchise to operate the West Coast Main Line (WCML) in 2019 the franchisee will be for one franchisee to operate both the WCML and HS2 Phase 1 to Birmingham as from 2027. The logic for combining the two they say is to make the introduction of HS2 Phase 1 in 2027 as smooth and efficient as possible.

They are clearly trying to avoid the mistakes of HS1's introduction. HS1 ran for many years with far lower passenger numbers than had been forecast. One reason for this was that in predicting demand for HS1 the competition from cheap flights between London, Paris and other European destinations was not taken into account. This was in part remedied for HS1 in the UK by reducing the conventional train services to force people to use HS1.

The appointment of a single franchisee for both the HS2 and the

WCML lines will cut out price competition between them on journeys to Birmingham. However the quandary for the franchisee in agreeing terms for such a franchisee contract will be in forecasting what the demand will be for journeys to Birmingham.

The WCML will continue to run its jam-packed commuter service from London to Milton Keynes. However, will the franchisee believe it will make any profit by cutting WCML services and ramping up the prices on HS2 for journeys between London and Birmingham? The occupancy for the WCML service, excluding Milton Keynes, is only 52% at peak times in the rush hour and the WCML is one of the least busy long distance rail routes in the country.

Furthermore competition from the Chiltern Line and the motorways will still be there and indeed the motorways are likely to be even more competitive as I explain below.

It looks as if the mistakes of HS1 are likely to be repeated. One of the greatest risks for venture capitalist investors is the danger that new technologies will kill demand for their new products.

Visions of future transport

As I mentioned above, HS1 ignored the threat from cheap air flights to Paris and made heavy losses. Now HS2 looks as if it will clash with the introduction of self-driving cars. Google 'driverless cars' and you will find pages of information on their development. One of the advantages of self-driving systems is that they will



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enable cars to be linked in convoys on motorways. The cars will travel much closer together all at the same speed. Such controlled motorways will reduce accidents and keep cars travelling at steady speeds leading to faster journey times. The result will be the capacity of our existing motorway network will increase dramatically.

We have two good motorways between London and Birmingham. Self-drive cars will make road travel far more competitive with rail travel. Car drivers will be able to work while travelling, just as travellers by train do, but car drivers will be able to go straight to their destinations.

The normal reaction to this idea is that such innovation will take many years to materialise. Not so I am told. This is all about high-tech computer technology to control and synchronise car travel and these technologies develop fast. Ford predict it will have fully self-driving vehicles (SDVs) by 2021. Volkswagen estimates SDVs will be on the market by 2019, Toyota predicts its first model will be launched by 2020, Elon Musk's Tesla cars will have an SDV by 2018, Uber's CEO predicts it will have a fleet of SDV's by 2030.

So when the sedate HS2 Ltd finally gets its fancy HS2 trains hissing their way through our countryside in 2027, they may be travelling light – very light on passengers – and operating at a loss.

As our friends in France would say "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose".

Well! What do you know?

No. 20: Dogs in The Lee

By Colin Sully



How many dogs do you think there are living in The Lee? 100? 200? More? Has anyone actually counted them? And what about visitors?

A survey in 2015 by the UK pet food manufacturers' association estimated that 24% of households have dogs and that the total dog population was around 8.5 million.

If the same ownership pattern were true in The Lee then it would suggest there are just 68 dogs living permanently in The Lee parish.

However, we know from other research that households with gardens are more likely to own dogs than households without gardens. The

likelihood of dog ownership also increases as household size increases and dogs are more likely to be owned by rural households.

However, the same research suggests that households in which someone is qualified to degree level are more likely to own cats and less likely to own dogs than other households, and that cats are more likely to be owned by semi-urban/rural households and by female respondents.

An earlier survey also reported that 60% of single people in the UK buy a pet for companionship – 39% of whom "... have replaced their partner with a pet." [That sounds a bit harsh: Ed]

All this seems to suggest that dog ownership in The Lee may in fact be slightly higher than the national average and a total canine population perhaps nearer to 100?

Lost and found

The Lee Forum has been a useful place to find lost pets over the past 12 months with 16 dogs (and eight cats) posted as lost/found. As far as we know, all were successfully re-united with their owners.

The UK-wide forum Doglost.co.uk posted 1,650 lost pets over the same period (mostly dogs and cats but also the odd parrot). Even allowing for the

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fact that The Lee Forum covers a wider area than just the Parish, using national rates of pet-loss-reporting, this suggests that The Lee might in fact have over a thousand resident dogs! Or is it simply that Lee residents are more likely to lose their dogs?

Whatever the actual numbers, at this time of year, remember – a dog 'found' is not just for Christmas!

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Tell the County

From Bucks County Council

The County Council now has extensive on-line systems for reporting highways and rights of way problems to them. By using these systems, you can help them to ensure that problems you come across are dealt with in line with their agreed timescales.

Fly-tipping

Fly-tipped waste generally consists of large items of rubbish that are dumped illegally on land instead of being disposed of properly at a landfill site or tip. Dumping rubbish in this way is illegal and dangerous and it can ruin the appearance of your neighbourhood. Don't put up with it - report it. If you report it, the rubbish can be removed and with your help the crime can be investigated.

You help us convict people who fly-tip waste illegally. Offenders have paid thousands of pounds in fines and on average one fly-tipper is caught and convicted every week.

If you see any waste dumped please tell us where it is so we can clean it up. Reporting online is the quickest way for your fly-tip report to reach our team; or call 01296 480771 or 0845 330 1856.

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Visit: www.buckscc.gov.uk/environment/waste-recycling-and-treatment/fly-tipping/report-fly-tipping/
Potholes

In the same way, the County Council have a procedure for reporting potholes. If you consider the pothole to be dangerous or an emergency, please call Transport for Bucks: 01296 382416 (9:00 am-5:30 pm Mon-Thurs 9:00 am-5:00 pm Friday) or 01296 486630 (out of hours and weekends). Otherwise, by submitting a report online, they will deal with it in line with their agreed timescales.

Visit: www.transportforbucks.net/Report-it-pothole.aspx

Public Rights of Way

The Public Rights of Way (PROW) network (in particular footpaths and bridleways) experiences high levels of use and there is a high public expectation for quality routes. Bucks CC is responsible for maintaining public Rights of Way and ensuring that they are free from obstruction at all times.

If you find a PROW that is blocked or dangerous, then if you consider this to be dangerous or an emergency, please call us on: 01296 382416 (9:00 am-5:30



pm Mon-Thurs 9:00 am-5:00 pm Friday) or 01296 486630 (out of hours and weekends).

Otherwise, by submitting the report online, we will deal with it in line with our agreed timescale.

Visit: www.transportforbucks.net/report-it-prow.aspx

Calendar not just for Christmas

By Katie Michaelson-Yates

The Shop @ The Lee hopes everyone is out and about taking shots for the 2018 Calendar Competition.

We want to see lovely pictures of the seasons – autumnal colours, snow fields, windy lanes or a cow's cold breath on an icy day – whatever you can see. A box is in the shop ready for your entries.



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Dear Diary

The fastest way to let everyone in the Parish know about an event you are arranging is to publish it right here in the Newsletter. Contact the Editor by the 12th of the previous month (see contact details on page 1).

December

Thursday 1st. The Lee Walking Group – starting at 9:30 am on the Green. Check the Forum for updates.

Friday 2nd. The Lee Newsletter Dinner. 7:30 pm at the Parish Hall.

Saturday 3rd. Coffee Morning at Lee Common Methodist Church.

Saturday 3rd. Lee Common School Christmas Fair. See November issue

Sunday 4th. Lighting Up Ballinger 4:00 pm onwards. Brighten the gloomy nights, decorate your hedgerows and then join us in this early celebration of the festive season. Please bring a plate of food to share, your own drinks; meet old friends then make some new.

Sunday 4th. The Fayrfax Consort at the Old Church. A joyous selection of festive music. See November issue.

Wednesday 14th. Carol singing at the Scout Hut. See page 4.

THE LEEWAY – YOUR VILLAGE SUPPORT TEAM

If you have difficulty getting to your doctor or the hospital, doing your shopping or would like a home visit and a friendly chat, then please ring:

01494 837177

Mon - Fri: 10 am - 4 pm. Sat: 10 am - 12 noon. Please give us reasonable notice of your requirement to help us organise it.

Monday 19th. Christmas carols with Vocal Lees. See page 2.

Coming Soon

Thursday 5th January. The Lee Walking Group.

Saturday 7th January. Coffee Morning at Lee Common Methodist Church.

Tuesday 10th January. The Lee Parish Council Meeting. 7:30 p.m.

Thursday 12th January. CRAG meeting at the Parish Hall: 8:00 pm.

Thursday 2nd March ‘No digging gardening’ (Bob Flowerdew). Ballinger Hall Horticultural Society.

Two things to do before Christmas

From Chiltern District Council

Chilterns Green Belt review

Chiltern and South Bucks Councils are now preparing for their next public consultation on planning – ‘Green Belt Preferred Options’. This is limited to development options in the Green Belt that the Councils consider should be taken forward in the Local Plan in order to help meet development needs.

Whilst there are no proposals to change the Green Belt status of any land in The Lee parish, comments from all residents are welcome on:

- the suitability of the land identified for development
- what type of development should be sought if suitable
- the evidence base that has informed the consultation

• alternative options to be put forward
Consultation responses will help inform decisions on the draft ‘Local Plan’ (expected for consultation in March/April 2017). The current public consultation is running until 12th December.

For further information visit:
www.chiltern.gov.uk/planning/localplan2014-2036

Leisure and Community Hub Facility in Amersham

Chiltern District Council is considering the development of a new state-of-the-art leisure and community hub facility to replace the existing Chiltern Pools, community centre facilities, library and youth centre. It is proposed that the new facility will be located on the existing leisure centre/community facilities site and provide a range of activities, including:

- 8-lane 25 metre swimming pool with viewing
- Diving / teaching pool alongside a kids’ splash pad area
- Four badminton court sports hall
- Two squash courts
- Climbing wall
- Children’s soft play area and clip ‘n’ climb
- Library
- Café area
- Pool spectator area
- Exercise Studios
- 150 station gym
- Community centre (events/theatre space and community meeting spaces)

This public consultation also ends on the 12th December. Please visit www.chiltern.gov.uk/leisureconsultation to complete the on-line survey and express your views.

The Newsletter

The Lee Newsletter is published 10 times a year and distributed free to all households in the parish. The views expressed in it are not necessarily those of the Editor.

We welcome original letters and articles of general interest and relevance to The Lee. Copy should be sent to theleenewsletter@googlemail.com or, if on paper, to the Editor of the month (see page 1) by the 12th of each month.

Letters should ideally run to no more than 200 words and articles to 700 words; material may be edited and may also appear on the village website www.thelee.org.uk unless consent is specifically withheld. Anonymous contributions are not accepted.

To advertise or place an insert, please contact Paul Apicella on 837377 by the 12th of the previous month.

If you have photographs for publication please contact Jonathan Batten on 01494 837450 or email battenjonathan@hotmail.com.

Other members of the Editorial team: Peter Archer, Gilbert Nockles, Jen Ogley, Viv Robins, Trish Swain, Colin Sully and Barnaby Usborne.

Printed by Strongs: 01442 878592.

To book the Parish Hall or Scout Hut

’phone Anne Barnett on 837796

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