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NEWSLETTER

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

March 2017

From the Editor

By Jonathan Batten

February was a short and not necessarily sweet month and the good people of the parish have endured the winter elements including some feeble attempts at snow.

The grass verges have taken their usual hammering as vehicles continue to churn up the edges and park on the grass without a second thought for the damage that they cause.

March blows in the beginning of spring: the sap is rising and the buds are bursting, our Dear Diary column will soon start expanding with events in the months to come – I draw your attention to June and July in particular.

I am arranging for an executive order to ban all travelling outside the parish for 30 days between 17th June and 16th July to help ensure your maximum enjoyment of the fête and the flower show is not accidentally disrupted by that old ‘going away on holiday’ excuse.

Aquamarine, the birthstone of March, has a rich colour and has long been a symbol of youth, health and hope – so be youthful, keep healthy and remain optimistic but do watch out for those Ides...

Please send your contributions for next month to the editor, Colin Sully, at

theleenewsletter@googlemail.com or hard copy to Fairleigh, Swan Bottom by 12th March.

Inflammable letter

To the Editor

Following the serious fire reported at Swan Bottom earlier in the year, I have been in touch with Buckinghamshire Fire Service to enquire about access to fire hydrants. Their Water Officer, Greg Edwards, has replied:

“We have some 14,000 fire hydrants in Buckinghamshire which we service by rotation. Fire engines now have computers in the cabs which show the locations of fire hydrants and I keep a central record here.

Your address has three fire hydrants nearby. They were last serviced in May 2016.”

Greg also supplied a broader-scaled map showing hydrant locations in the whole of the parish, which has been put on The Lee village website www.thelee.org.uk/firehydrants.pdf

Most hydrants (see page 2) are painted yellow, some with a road-side sign, also in yellow. We estimated there are 22 in total in the parish.

Whilst the hydrants appear to be regularly inspected, some are not



actually in the road and are in side verges or hedges. I suggest therefore that each property owner not only identifies their nearest hydrants from the map, but also that, where appropriate, they ensure that they are kept weed-free and identifiable.

Michael Jepson
Lee Common

Library friends

By Gill Dickinson

February this year was the first anniversary of The Friends of Great Missenden Library. There are more than 70 current library users who have taken up membership, and we hope that number will increase.

The aim of the group is to raise funds to enhance library facilities and to encourage more use of the library as a social hub.

Last year in July, The Friends held a very successful quiz evening – good fun, good food and excellent company. Local businesses provided us with super raffle prizes and, overall, we raised more than £1,000.

The funds raised in this first year have been put to good use. More than 60 bestseller books have been

purchased and The Friends are currently in discussion with the library manager with a view to updating the children's area with more user-friendly furniture.

We are planning to repeat the quiz evening in July of this year and, in addition, we will be inviting speakers to come along and share a variety of interesting topics with us at the library.

HS2: changing of the guard

By Simon Morris, Chairman, CRAG

Chiltern Ridges HS2 Action Group (CRAG) was set up in 2010 to give a voice to the residents of the hill villages in this area of the Chilterns. Over the last seven years CRAG has helped the community make Parliament aware of its objections to HS2 during the process of the HS2 Phase 1 Bill. The Bill will become an Act by the end of March this year and CRAG's role will come to an end. The Parish, District and County Councils will be dealing with issues under the Act such as Planning Consents for the design of HS2 structures, ensuring HS2 Ltd contractors comply with the Code of Conduct and ensuring that any changes made to the HS2 project are within the parameters set out in the Act.

The major proposal for mitigation of HS2 in this area was the long tunnel to save the AONB from Mantles Wood to north of Wendover. CRAG's engineering team, formed by Barnaby Osborne and including a team of engineers of the highest calibre, developed the long tunnel proposal



which HS2 Ltd agreed was technically feasible, complied with all the required regulations and, most importantly, provided much better mitigation than HS2's surface route proposal.

The issue was the cost. HS2 Ltd claimed it was too much "on balance" to merit its adoption. The real objection to it, I believe, was political. The Government claimed HS2 would create a "Northern Power House" bringing jobs to the north. Spending an additional £300 million on saving the Chiltern AONB did not sit well with their message for the North and might have appeared to jeopardise the project. HS2 Ltd blamed the cost but then cost did not prevent HS2 diverting the route past George Osborne's constituency at an estimated additional expenditure of £600 million.

Local improvements

There were a number of changes won in our area which will reduce some of the damage of HS2. The tunnel from the M25 to Amersham was extended from Mantles Wood to just north of South Heath, saving a very beautiful valley near Mantles Wood and the massive disruption and pollution that building a cut-and-cover tunnel past South Heath would have created. Potter Row was saved from being an HS2 Construction Route and a temporary haul road from the Great Missenden roundabout will be used instead. The permanent spoil heap planned close to Hunts Green was converted to a temporary spoil heap. The House of Lords Select Committee

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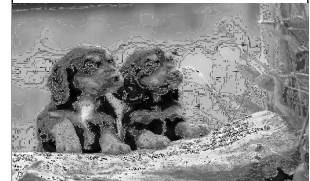
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then recommended that it be moved to the west of the track near the A413 and reduced in size, which will save The Lee from most of the noise and dust pollution from the spoil heap during construction and will also save some good farm land that would have been rendered unusable for many years. Furthermore, pressure from petitioners led to both of the Select Committees recommending HS2 Ltd to improve its compensation arrangements and certain helpful improvements have been introduced.

In addition some funds are being made available to reduce the traffic problems that construction of the line will bring to the A413 between Little Missenden and Wendover and a design panel is to be set up to try to ensure that the two viaducts between Durham Farm and Wendover are well



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designed so that, the House of Lords Select Committee hopes, "they may be admired by future generations".

A huge team effort

CRAG cannot claim credit for these changes by itself. It was very much a team effort of a number of local Action Groups and Councils in the area together with the hundreds of petitioners and the local MPs.

Hilary Wharf and HS2 Action Alliance were extremely helpful in this long fight in particular in providing much needed expertise on many aspects of the construction and future operation of HS2 and Hilary regularly kept us informed of HS2AA's activities at our CRAG public meetings.

Above all the Board of CRAG wants to thank the community for all the support it gave us. So many people submitted and presented petitions, donated generously to CRAG to enable it to make its own presentations to Government assisted by professional experts, turned out in large numbers to get the message across to visiting MPs that HS2 was seriously damaging our environment, and attended and participated in our monthly CRAG public meetings throughout the period asking good questions, giving us feedback and encouraging us to keep up the fight.

We do thank you all for your help and encouragement.

CRAG directors and team leaders will continue to be available to support local residents and councils in any way that is useful to them but, as this project moves into its construction phase, it is appropriate that local councils now lead in the local engagement with HS2.

We wish them well.

Litter louts

By Pat Chinnery

Our annual litter clearance day is on Sunday 2nd April starting at around 10:00 - 10:30 am. Please put the date in your diary and help us to make the place we live in and the surrounding roads tidy again.

If you are able to help, please get in touch with me, Pat Chinnery, on 837564 or Ann Ash on 837550. Thank you.

Liberation

By Reina Free

It took another four months for the whole of Holland to be liberated; the north was the last. In May 1945, Holland, whose real name is the Netherlands, became free again.

How very well I remember the tanks and jeeps entering our village of 's-Graveland just outside Hilversum. Standing on both sides of the main road people were beside themselves with relief, happiness and gratitude shouting and calling out to the troops who started throwing cigarettes and sandwiches.

They camped in the woods in their army tents. Just as well I was a little girl. Soldiers relieved the war was over, women swept off their feet by these foreign uniformed soldiers, I was totally unaware of the 'goings on' in the army tents. Things were very different when I was a little girl.

When the Germans had finally left, slowly things changed for the best. Some groceries returned to the shops. I

remember mother had made for me a jacket with pockets left and right out of an old army blanket. Clothes were also sent to us by American people.

I was given a bright blue pullover. I remember it well. An American couple 'adopted' my sister and me as war children and sent us all kinds of things. They became Uncle Bill and Aunt Lena. I visited Aunt Lena in my twenties but by that time Uncle Bill had died. It was very moving when I first met her.

To this very day bread is very special to me. Loaves of bread were sent from Sweden. It was well-risen and slightly creamy in colour.

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life" and in this world in which we are all living now we need him more than ever before!



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History first hand No. 7



By Diana Morley

From 1948 until she came to live in *The Lee* in 1969, Diana Morley wrote occasional reviews of concerts for *The Times*, under her professional name of McVeagh. This article explains how it came about.

It occurs to me that I, at the age of 90, must be one of the few people left alive who wrote for *The Times* when it was based in Printing House Square. Printing had gone on in that building since 1666 and *The Times* had been printed there since 1788. In those days it was a great paper, still 'The Thunderer'.

At school I had been undecided whether I wanted to become a musician or a writer. Music won, and I was entered for the Royal College of Music in London. A few weeks before going



Antique etching of Printing House Square

up in 1944, I was thrown from a horse (I was an enthusiastic but poor rider) and injured my left arm, and so arrived at College as a one-armed pianist. I was directed to the Registrar, who looked me up and down and said "There are two things you can do, you can sing or you can write." Well, they heard me sing, and decided I had better write.

That meant weekly one-to-one lessons from Frank Howes, at the time chief music critic of *The Times*.

Because of the war, *The Times* permanent arts staff was small, and occasionally there were more concerts on the same night than there were critics. So in 1948 I was sent to review my first assignment, which happened to be Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*. From then on I was a guinea pig for the paper, so-called because we were paid one guinea a time. It went up to five in due course.

At the end of a concert we scribbled – fast. Sometimes we telephoned our notices, other times we went in to the office in that small courtyard in Blackfriars. In those days traffic was so



light I drove to the concert and then on to Printing House Square where it was possible to park, always avoiding the delivery vans waiting outside to snatch the first editions. Inside it was a labyrinth: narrow corridors, twisting staircases, closed doors, no signs. I always got lost. What I remember with such affection is the sub-editors' room, where one handed in one's copy: small, simple, cosy, with a coal fire and friendly men wearing green eye-shades. The presses – hot metal of course – were in the basement. We had been given a set number of words by the arts editor, and if I over-ran (very seldom) my words were cut 'on the stone'.

Exhausted, I drove home and fell into bed. Miraculously, next morning the paper pushed through my letterbox contained my words, anonymous in the early days, but printed and published. At the time, it seemed the most modern technology. Then *The Times* moved to a smart new building, all glass and open plan, the subs working away in full view; and for me the magic had gone. But I had managed to be a musician *and* a writer, and to work in

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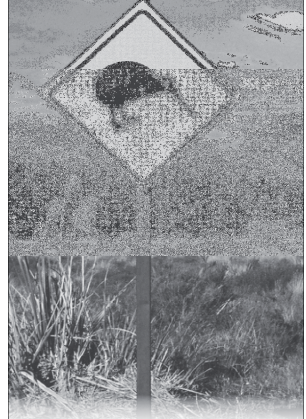
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The Times building in the 1940s

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Two memories

I was often taken to Glyndebourne by one of my critic friends. On one occasion we were driving home when I mentioned the leading tenor. "Oh my God" he said, "I forgot to say anything about him!" We had to find a phone box, and he desperately dictated a few extra sentences. The other time, after seeing a Britten opera, another critic friend, putting the new work in context, referred in his notice back to Britten's "*Rape and Screw*" I think it got printed. [Britten's earlier operas *The Rape of Lucretia* (1946) and *The Turn of the Screw* (1954).]

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



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News from the County

By Tricia Birchley

In early February I attended a meeting to discuss future road improvements and was insistent that Oxford Street should be a priority. This is particularly important as the school wishes to renew the yellow lines outside their gates and other safety measures have been discussed to keep our young people as safe as possible in the vicinity of the school.

I meet regularly with the heads of local schools and was invited this week by James Edwards and the Chairman of Governors of Lee Common School to try the school lunch! The hot chicken and vegetables were really impressive and I am pleased that parents have chosen a healthy dessert of fresh fruit most days. We can be confident that our youngsters are well catered for and I want to congratulate James on his commitment and hard work since taking over as head teacher.

A period of public consultation began in early February on the need for additional airport capacity. A Northwest runway at Heathrow would provide economic and employment benefits with the creation of tens of thousands of local jobs by 2030 and up to £61bn of economic benefits. It is also claimed that there would be new routes, better domestic connections, lower fares and new capacity for freight. You can register at www.aviationconsultations.com. You should enter your email address and the password: 7!ZRJ8#6

Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership is



delighted by the announcement that the Council will receive further Government funding of £20.48 million to create jobs, support business and encourage growth. This is on top of £53 million already committed and will be used to fund the Stoke Mandeville Relief road and the new centre for innovation and entrepreneurship at Silverstone. The University of Buckingham also gets a new centre for Liberal Economics and Entrepreneurship, much to the delight of Sir Anthony Seldon, the Vice-Chancellor.

The Council continues to meet regularly with HS2 and as Members we have made our feelings known to the company. It's essential they work with us to address our concerns and have a system in place for the public to get problems resolved quickly.

Shop calendar

By Katie Michaelson-Yates

How are The Lee's amateur photographers progressing with their winter shots of our village?

We are looking for a lovely group of eclectic winter photographs to choose from, for the 2018 calendar.

At this stage, please just give any printed colour photocopies to the staff at The Lee Shop. We have a box behind the counter for this.



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The Lee Flower Show 2017

By Jonathan Batten

Save the date for Saturday 15th July – the juggernaut which is the flower show will roll into the village – the greatest show on earth brought to your doorstep, or rather to the cricket ground.

The preparation for this year's flower show is well underway: the marquee is booked and the band for the dance is being auditioned; money has been paid out. The schedule is being finalised so that you can all start planning your entries.



Anne Kenyon has retired as secretary, after filling this role for more years than anyone cares to remember, so a great vote of thanks is due to her for her work over all this time. Marilyn Burrows has kindly taken over her quill and is now wielding the three line whip to keep us on the straight and narrow.

During 2016 we were able to donate money to a number of good local causes including for the church organ at St John the Baptist Parish Church, Medical Detection Dogs, Chiltern Dog Rescue Society and Hearing Dogs for Deaf People. Apart from the church one might be excused for thinking that there may be an unhealthy canine bias – you could be right, but tell us of some other worthy causes and we will be very pleased to look at them.

Leeway – it's there for you

By Ann Ash

Leeway has had a busy year providing lifts to appointments, shopping, picking up prescriptions etc.

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Garage and shed break-ins

By Jen Shraga, Police Community Support Officer, Chiltern / South Bucks

Recently Thames Valley Police have seen a large increase in number of garage and shed burglaries in the Chiltern and South Bucks area. These burglaries have predominantly taken place in the evenings and overnight, targeting items such as garden tools and sports equipment.

Please ensure that all garages and sheds are locked and checked that they are secure. We would also ask that you record any serial numbers & distinguishing marks on items in your garage or shed. This will assist police in identifying and returning items to their owners.

You can contact your local Neighbourhood Policing Team who can arrange a time to mark your property or pass you further crime prevention advice. These details can be found on the Thames Valley Police website.

If you witness anything suspicious and the person is still in the area please report it immediately by dialling 999.

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Conversations with the Revd David Burgess

No. 8: Greed

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 continue with the theme of 'faith in action' and explore the nature of greed.

Tony Brignull: In an age of consumerism when we are urged to eat more and buy more for the sake of the economy, it seems almost a duty to be greedy. What does the Church have to say about it?

David Burgess: It says that greed is antipathetic to the Christian way of life: it is at bottom deeply selfish.

TB: Greed has nothing to do with how rich or poor we are, does it?

DB: No, greed is more an attitude of mind which allows us to exploit others - and the earth itself - for our own ends.

TB: You're saying we find ways of excusing our behaviour?

DB: We say things like "The poor will always be with us" so why give to them? But the Church teaches us to live responsibly and generously.

TB: Don't we also see greed as someone else's vice, the over-paid bankers, the CEOs with their enormous bonuses, the oligarchs? But in fact we each have our own versions of greed.

DB: Our personal greed is often hidden because satisfaction is never more than a mouse-click away. Click! And here's



a new coat, click! And a case of wine wings its way to us. I'm not saying there's anything wrong with internet shopping but that it allows greediness to conceal itself in technology.

TB: I noticed the other day how deep greed can go. I was cutting two slices of cake and one was a millimetre thicker than the other. I gave it to our guest but I wanted it for myself. How petty!

DB: But how true! We cling to things which can never fulfil their promise of happiness. Pre-nuptial agreements, for instance. They may be sensible sometimes but they can also value property over love.

TB: This insatiable hunger, where does it come from?

DB: It might originate in a primal survival instinct, filling up in times of plenty to provide for the lean years. Then there's the dominance of the strongest animal in the pack who gets to eat first and most. It shows how thin the veneer of our civilisation can be.

TB: I think you slipped into scientist mode there, David.

DB: Not very convincingly I'm afraid, perhaps I'd better stick to history. In the early days of the Church, Christians shared property and resources; they lived a communal life, 'from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs'.

TB: And until recently gave tithes to the Church, a tenth of their income.

DB: Some churches still require this of their members.

TB: Our conversation on greed seems all the more relevant since the election of Donald Trump and his team of climate-change deniers, oil and coal merchants, who propose to ransack the earth for their own gain.

DB: Yet from the first book of Genesis we are told that we're custodians of the planet, stewards, not owners.

TB: A duty we neglect at our peril! A novelist said on the radio the other day that he detected in people far and wide a new sense of dread. A feeling of impending catastrophe we are powerless to avoid.

DB: We can't change the world but we can change ourselves. There's now a food bank in Chesham (opposite Café Nero) we might each take something there.

TB: To sum up then, David, we should try to see greed for what it is, not an entitlement to have whatever we want, but plain, old selfishness.

DB: Yes, greed closes the door on the kingdom of heaven but even small acts of kindness and generosity may open it.

TB: Next time shall we discuss the quality at the very centre of Christian teaching: forgiveness?

DB: It will be a pleasure, Tony.

Services for March

St John the Baptist

1 st 10:00am	MHC	Ash Wednesday Revd D Burgess
5 th 8:00am	HC	Revd D Burgess Old Church
10:00am	AA	Joint all-age Revd D Burgess
12 th 10:00am	PC	Revd D Burgess
19 th 10:00am	Matins	Lay Leader
26 th 10:00am	PC	Mothering Sunday Revd D Burgess

HC	Holy Communion (said)
MHC	Midweek HC (said)
PC	Parish Communion (sung)
AA	All-age service

Services:

Please note we are no longer holding a regular **Midweek Communion Service**, but we will have services when there is a festival or a special holy day which falls during the week. Ash Wednesday (1st of this month) is the first of these, followed by Thursday 13th April (Maundy Thursday) and Thursday 25th May (Ascension Day).

Contacts:

Vicar: The Revd David Burgess (01494-837315). *Licensed Lay Minister:* Mr Tony Eccleston (07777 640386) *Churchwardens:* Roderick Neal (01494-837264) and Trevor Pearce (01494-837601). *Verger:* Bill Pearce (01494-785191). *Treasurer:* David Stephenson (01494-867617).

Methodist Church

5 th 10:00am	AA	Joint Service at St John the Baptist Church
12 th 3:00pm		Rev'd Stephen Watts
19 th 3:00pm		Gerald Tomkins
26 th 10:00am		Mothering Sunday Joint Service at St John the Baptist Church

Our next **Coffee Morning** is on
Saturday 4th March 10:30-12 noon.
All are welcome.

St. Mary's, Ballinger

5th 9:30am Holy Communion

St Mary's Ballinger

By Anne Ellis

Well, here we are at the start of another year and looking ahead with hope and anticipation into 2017. Maggi and I have already begun to put together an action plan with several events lined up to further promote St Mary's and its place in our wider community.

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A very special New Year's present came in the form of a phone call from Brian Wilson who now lives on the Isle of Wight. He was very involved in supporting St Mary's during his time as a Licensed Lay Reader and was so pleased to hear of our exploits since his move. He has asked to be included in these letters and sends his best wishes to anyone who remembers him as he has many happy memories of life in the hilltop villages.

Looking back...

On 20th December we had a visit from a charming chap called Gerry who came to complete our quinquennial inspection. He was pleased with what he found and has made several helpful recommendations to Maggi and me.

Christmas seems so far away now but it is worthwhile recalling the happy, excited faces of both parents

and children as we celebrated Christingle, followed by a Christmas Communion. Needless to say, St Mary's was packed for both of these special services. Our little church was cosy and warm and looked its best bedecked with holly, ivy and a tree, whilst the nativity scene and advent wreath took centre stage.

This was followed by a fundraising coffee morning on 13th January organised primarily by Maggi. Despite the inclement weather, it was a wonderful occasion as you will read from Elaine Rushforth's account: "Snow, friendly faces and a very warm welcome was extended to all who braved the adverse weather conditions to come along to St Mary's first coffee morning. The interior of the church was transformed as pews were lined against the walls enabling everyone to mingle freely over coffee and cake. It was a pleasure to see so many, chat and catch up with old friends whilst perusing the various stalls which included cakes, books, accessories (courtesy of Liz Wintgens), soft toys and bric-a-brac. Many, many thanks to all those who helped Maggi set up and who donated raffle prizes.

We are especially grateful to The Lee Shop and Salon 92 (in Great Missenden) and are extremely appreciative of the enormous support from within the local community. We are proud to announce that £320 was raised in aid of church funds!"

The coffee morning was such a success that another is planned for later in the year, so watch this space.

Phil has now been round every window which required attention,

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COMING BACK

leaving those less dilapidated to Maggi and me.

Looking forward...

Our 'to do' list is increasing but with the arrival of longer days and warmer weather, we'll tackle them in due course.

Items include; sorting out the iron front gate, re-staining the front porch and kitchen extension, re-painting some windows, digging up and re-designing the small flowerbed to the left of the porch, pruning the larger shrubs in the bigger bed, replacing the wooden 'A' frame and getting a St Mary's sign put up at the top of Blackthorne Lane. If anyone is able to spare a few hours to help with any of these jobs you would be most welcome. We can provide tea/coffee/biscuits and good company.

I am still researching the various artefacts in St Mary's and once I have sourced all the relevant information, we'll add another board inside the church for the benefit of visitors.

As many of you may know, after 40 years, Roger Hudson is moving on to pastures new. He (together with darling Val) has been indefatigable in his love and support for St Mary's and we wish him every happiness as he

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The Lee Parish Council news

By Liz van Hullen, Parish Clerk

Drop-in surgery

Our first Parish Council 'Drop-in Surgery' will be held on Saturday 18th March from 10:00 am-12 noon in the Parish Hall.

Whether you have a specific query about some aspect of the Parish Council's work or a general concern about some other aspect of local government... or HS2... we hope that you will take the opportunity to come and talk to us. We may well be able to provide you with a contact or better still, raise a query on your behalf and see it through to a response.

Parish Council precept

The Parish Council has decided to increase its precept from the council tax for 2017/18 to a total of £13,200. This represents approximately £48 per household in the parish (compared with £41 in 2016/17). The increase has been made necessary partly by rises in the costs of maintaining council assets and partly by the need to increase reserves. We trust that residents will continue to see this as value-for-money.

The fort in the playground

Recent visitors to the playground will have seen that the fort is slowly deteriorating and more frequently being repaired. Whilst the Parish Council is satisfied that it can continue to maintain the fort in a safe condition for the immediate future, the time has come to consider what to do with this facility in the longer term. In order to consider the options, we are forming a



The fort being opened by Cllr Andrew Stacey in the 1980s

small group to review and cost various alternatives and to bring proposals back to the PC.

We are inviting school and parent representatives onto this group. The time involved will not be onerous, but the views of those with children of school-age and younger will be important in understanding the value of different alternatives. It may even be that we will organise a survey of all parents, once we have a clearer idea of the options available.

To volunteer for this group, or for further information on any of the above matters, please contact the Clerk.

Allotments

The Parish Council allotment site on Oxford Street is an enclosed,



The fort today



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sheltered site of allotment plots, all easily accessible from the road, and with a supply of running water. Rarely are plots available but quite unusually, there are a few plots available at the moment. Annual cost is £22 per annum (to be reviewed this year) with a fully refundable deposit, subject to terms and conditions of £50. For all those of you hoping to enjoy fresh home grown veg through the summer and into next winter, now is the time to get digging.

Notice boards

There are a great many notice boards in the parish, only some of which are owned by the Parish Council (others are owned by the Shop, the Parish Hall Committee, the County Council and the churches).

The PC has been reviewing its notice boards, some of which are in a

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poor state of health. It is proposed that with effect from April, we reduce the number to just one at the entrance to the Parish Hall. That would result in the de-commissioning of the board at the Swan Bottom Cross Roads and the one outside the Guild Room.

Notices to this effect have been posted on the boards.

Up to date Parish Council information is available on the council website: www.theleecpc.org.uk together with a list of meeting dates.

Residents of the parish are always welcome to join us at our meetings.

Contact the Clerk on 758800 or theleeparishcouncil@hotmail.co.uk for further information.

[NOTICE BOARD STOP PRESS: Having made the decision on notice boards, the Parish Council was very disappointed to find, just a few days later, that the one notice board they intended to preserve had been hit by a large vehicle leaving the Parish Hall car park and the front of the notice board had been completely broken off.

Turning up next day to effect a temporary repair, a Parish Councillor and two representatives of the Parish Hall were all surprised to find that the whole notice board was now missing: a real mystery!

However, an enquiry via the Forum revealed that the grandson of the original carpenter who had built the notice board had also seen the damage and had already taken it away to lovingly repair it. Our thanks to Paul Humphreys for this speedy and efficient response.]

An appreciation of Joyce Swain

By Jon Swain



Born in Nottingham on 20th January 1926, younger of two children of Ronald and Kathleen Anderson, a sister to Malcolm, her dearly beloved brother, who died far too young in 1980.

She was a bright pupil, first at Harrow County School, doing her A Levels in an air-raid, and after moving south to Harrow with her parents, went to Goldsmiths in London, to qualify as a teacher. She moved with her mother to

Nottingham during the war, and continued her studies there. She recalled being sent to a farm with a band of girls, and working hard during the harvest, winning over the curmudgeonly old farmer.

From Harrow to The Lee

Joyce was living with her parents in Harrow after the war, and her first teaching post was at Swakeleys in Hillingdon. The family moved out to Amersham, and a move to the White Hill School followed. This was fortuitous for my sisters and me, as Joyce was to meet Kenneth, who was teaching further up the hill at Chesham Tech. Ken was painfully shy, but mutual friends were able to engineer a match, through tennis. It went from love all, to advantage Ken, as they formed a bond that was to last, in this



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life, until 2009, when Ken succumbed to Parkinson's. They had married in 1954, had a wonderful honeymoon on Arran, and moved into Kingswood Cottages; three cottages, two with sitting tenants, and seven and a half acres.

Joyce was devoted to Ken over their 55 years together, looking after not just three children, but also Ken's 80 year old parents, who came to live with us in the grim winter of 1962/3. Children brought to an end Joyce's teaching career. From White Hill, where she was never happy with the headmistress, she had moved to Penn Street, often cycling over to the school, otherwise catching the bus. Her last teaching post came when Joyce was recruited by the Reverend Williams to teach at Lee Common C of E School. She recalled some of the children being a challenge...

Tennis was Joyce's sporting love; she had an annual appointment with the TV to watch Wimbledon. She was immensely proud to have qualified as a coach and would dearly loved to have played more, but, typically, put family first.

Joyce was a fine cook, a fan of the Aga long before it became fashionable. In some ways it mirrored her, the warmth was always there, sturdy, reliable and a base for the family. Joyce

produced wonderful food for us all, baking bread, cakes and vegetarian food for Ken. As a child of the war years she had learned to be thrifty and abhorred waste. Those times developed her resilience, which was tested by the loss of her parents, in the 1960s, and of course the untimely death of Malcolm.

Her practical side was also demonstrated by her knitting and sewing skills, gardening, and a deep and abiding love of the countryside.

Stalwart of the community

What of Joyce's input to this community? Immense. The Mother's Union, the Lee Young Wives' Group, and of course the WI. Joyce was immensely proud to have been President for many years; The Lee being one of the oldest branches. She was devastated when it eventually ran out of steam and became no more. Its daytime meetings didn't fit with modern lifestyles.

Mum was a supporter of the Children's Society; in past times she distributed collection boxes around the area, leading to mounds of coppers, shillings and florins as the annual counting-up took place.

As for the Flower Show: Joyce was the instigator of the superb organisation of the teas; they became an essential element and she organised a formidable army of helpers who were volunteered.

She once suggested that there should be a special class of the best weeds, as she felt that her battles in the garden could be avoided by growing buttercups as exhibits, rather than fighting them. This did not go down well with the Flower Show management, Nigel Dwight, he may have misunderstood her sense of humour!

Joyce and Ken enjoyed many holidays in the UK; it may be Joyce would have liked to travel further afield; she had a photo of a Norwegian fjord where she went after WW2, and loved it. The photo was with her in her final days.

Joyce was a liberal in her attitudes and politics; and read the Guardian every day.

Joyce and Ken celebrated their Golden Anniversary in 2004; a great day for the family and friends.

Joyce was a great neighbour, babysitter and in the last few years, a dog minder.

"My forgettery"

Joyce started to get forgetful; and a diagnosis of Alzheimer's was made. Thankfully it never progressed to the point where she was lost to us; it was her short-term memory that proved troublesome. "My forgettery" she called it. Her daily refrain was a quote from her mother: "I don't know whether I'm coming or going." Joyce's recall of earlier events remained remarkable and she regaled us all with the privations of living through the war and rationing. She loved her trips to Wales to stay with Rosie and a memorable journey for me was collecting her one Easter, driving back, roof down, through glorious countryside, reminiscing about this and that (and being told to slow down).

Joyce loved her monthly tea parties with the old folk, and the vintage film club. I would ask what they had watched and got the response; "I can't remember, but I enjoyed it!" She insisted standing to propose a vote of thanks to those involved; drivers, helpers etc.

Joyce did not want to go into a home and avoided doing so until five days before her death. She was feisty and stubborn to the last. It took a dreadful fire to drive her from her home and even then she had to be prised out, as she hadn't finished her lunch.

So, looking back down the nine decades of her life, from the eager young child, to the budding teacher, devoted wife, energetic mother, stalwart of the community, then moving into a contented retirement, bathed in the affection of the community she served in such a distinguished manner; in so many ways, we can record a wonderful life, well-lived, loved and respected by all.

She wanted to be with Ken for her 91st birthday, and she was, and is.

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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).

March

Thursday 2nd. The Lee Walking Group. Meet on The Lee green at 9:30 am.

Thursday 2nd. No Dig Gardening. Ballinger Horticultural Society. Ballinger Hall 8:00 pm.

Saturday 4th. Coffee Morning at Lee Common Methodist Church.

Tuesday 14th. The Lee Parish Council Meeting at the Parish Hall 7:30 pm.

Saturday 18th. Parish Council Drop-in-surgery. 10:00 am to 12:00 noon at the Parish Hall. See page 16.

Thursday 30th. Ballinger DFAS. 'Cartier 1900-1939: Jeweller of Genius'. Ballinger Village Hall. 8:00 pm. Guest tickets £8.

Coming soon

Saturday 1st April. Coffee Morning at Lee Common Methodist Church.

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.

Sunday 2nd April. Annual Litter Clearance. See page 5.

Thursday 6th April. The Lee Walking Group. On the Green at 9:30 am.

Thursday 6th April. Spring Show at 8:00 pm. Ballinger Horticultural Society at Ballinger Village Hall.

Thursday 25th May. Eric Clapton and his band in concert at the Royal Albert Hall, London SW7 [if anyone has a spare ticket please contact the Ed.]

Saturday 17th June. The Lee Church Fête on the Green.

Saturday 15th July. The Lee Flower Show in the afternoon followed by **The Lee Flower Show Dance** in the evening. See page 10.

Sunday 5th November. Bonfire night at 5:30 pm - early notice!

Saturday 18th November. Roving Supper - ditto!

Pothole reporting

By Paul Hodson, Area Manager, BCC
From 1st March, residents and parish councils will only be able to contact the council for Transport for Bucks related queries via the Transport for Buckinghamshire online 'Contact us' form or in emergency by telephoning 01296 382416.

Significant improvements have been made to this tool which allows customers to receive updates direct to their inbox on how the council is resolving the issue. If a customer who phones in feels that a pothole or streetlight defect presents a risk of serious injury, they will be put through

to the council's Emergency Team.

The online forms are designed to gather the appropriate information required to answer enquiries at the first point of contact as they ensure all the necessary information has been logged right from the start. Currently many emails sent to the council contain incomplete information, causing delays in response.

These upgrades are part of a wider plan to improve the customer experience for residents and parish councils.

Heron alert

By Don Stone



This Grey Heron has graced us with his presence on several occasions during the winter, never staying long, he just perches precariously on the fence surveying our ponds, realises there is still no fish or other tasty bites and is soon on his way

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, Jen Ogley, Viv Robins, Adam Speller, Trish Swain, Colin Sully and Barnaby Osborne.

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To book the Parish Hall or Scout Hut

'phone Anne Barnett on 837796

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