

The Villager

The community magazine for the parishes of Martley and Wichenford

Volume 18 No. 9 February 2009

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Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of The Villager. The Villager cannot be held responsible for any goods or services advertised in the magazine.

Regular events in Martley and Wichenford:

Sundays

2nd Sunday in the month:

Teme Valley Farmers Market for local produce 11am The Talbot, Knightwick
Martley Ramblers meet Church car park

3rd Sunday in the month:

Path-or-Nones meet 9.30am Martley Memorial Hall car park to help maintain the local footpaths

Mondays

Rhythm Time: 9.30-11.30am Martley Memorial Hall *Enq.* Rachel 01886 812565
Martley Parish Council: 1st Monday in the month 8pm Memorial Hall

Tuesdays

Short Mat Bowling: 2.00pm Martley Memorial Hall

Wichenford Ladies' Fellowship: 2.30pm
2nd Tuesday in the month (usually)

Martley Mums and Tots: 9.30-11.30am
Martley Memorial Hall

Wednesdays

Teme Valley Shufflers Line Dancing:
7pm Martley Memorial Hall *Enq.* Jeff & Thelma 01886 821772

Martley Folk Club: 1st Wednesday in the month at The Talbot, Knightwick and 3rd Wednesday at The Admiral Rodney

Martley WI: 2nd Wednesday in the month 7.30pm Heaton House

Thursdays

Wichenford Wine Club: 3rd Thursday in the month

Martley & District Horticultural Society: last Thursday in the month 7.30pm Martley Memorial Hall

See Church Words on page 27 for details of services

See articles inside for details of special events AND changes of time/date/venue of regular events

See the Diary page on www.martley.org.uk for a complete listing of all forthcoming events (that the Diary page editor knows about)

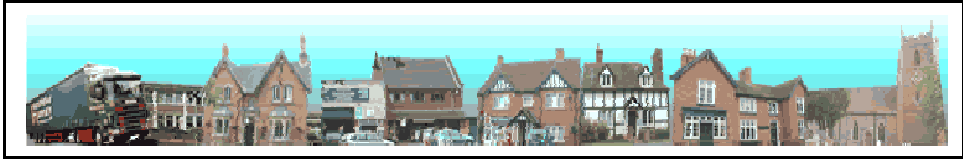
See page 28 for contact details of organisations

Articles to go in The Villager must be submitted by the 1st of the previous month

Records of the Parish Council meetings in the two parishes are not intended to be full and complete minutes. Minutes of meetings can be seen by contacting the respective Clerks to the Councils.

OUT AND ABOUT IN MARTLEY

Visit our website—www.martley.org.uk



Martley WI

**Wednesday 11 February
7.30pm Heaton House**

We heard of the origins of the Royal Mail at our December meeting. This month Tony Atkinson will be telling of the History of Maps and this should be another evening when we can learn things and think - "Well, I never knew that!" In these days of the sat nav, we have all read of tales of being led up tracks and left teetering on cliff edges, but some of us do still use maps to get to our destination. The competition is for an interesting map. The list of coming activities is growing apace. So please come and join us. We are not Calendar Girls but we do have fun and enjoy friendly evenings together.

Martley and District Horticultural Society

The Annual Dinner was held on 5 December in the Memorial Hall. The meal was superb and much enjoyed by all. President Mrs Pat Finch thanked everyone for all their hard work and

made presentations to retiring Chairman Mr Ray Ellis, secretaries Mrs Pam Minchin and Mrs Margaret Jackson and to retiring Show secretary Mrs Pauline Ellis. In his speech Chairman Mr Mike Dunnett read some amusing children's letters and went over the year's events. Afterwards, the Revd David Sherwin led carols, and the 'Twelve Days of Christmas' had been genetically modified to contain items relevant to gardening – five black pears got dangerously high on the decibel scale.

The programme for 2009 is out, with an exciting list of events designed to improve our gardening skills and lift our spirits. February meeting has Elaine Horton giving a talk entitled 'Day Lilies and what to plant with them'. You are welcome to join us.

Tina Steele

Beth Williams

It was with sadness that The Villager heard of the death of Beth Williams on 20 December, after some weeks of illness. Beth had been involved with The Villager since the very beginning in 1992 and many readers will have laughed out loud at her humorous

observations of life that were printed in The Villager from time to time over the years. We also have to thank Beth for keeping us abreast of the fortunes of our football team – the Martley Spurs.

Beth will be missed in the community as well as for her active involvement in The Villager.

Michelle Higgins, Editor

Martley Ramblers

Sunday 8 February

1.30pm Church car park

We are getting into our stride and our boots for 2009. This month Pam Bowers will be leading around Wyre Forest trails. Note earlier start time. The annual dinner will be at The Crown, Martley on Friday 20 February at 7.30pm. Members should have received the menu options and cost and Pam (01562 66835) wants choices by Monday 16 February. Please contact her if you need any more information. Old, new members, family and friends all welcome.

Kate King

Martley Pre-School Snippets

Firstly, let me apologise for the lack of pre-school snippets for the last couple of months. I have been plagued by ill health of late- but cross fingers! I also have to say a belated ‘Thank you’ to all the ladies from Martley W.I who held a cake sale for our ‘Heart of Martley Appeal’ and raised over £60. It was much appreciated.

In November we had a very successful Indulgence Night for ladies, raising

over £440. Many thanks to everyone who supported us, especially Mary from Martley Post Office for selling tickets and advertising the event, and to Ruth Keilty.

In December the whole Pre-School, including most parents, visited Father Christmas on the Christmas Cracker Express at the Severn Valley Railway. A great day was had by all, as children and parents enjoyed a ride on a steam train and Santa came through the train talking to the children and giving out presents.



Through January and February our topic is Being Healthy. We have been lucky enough to be chosen by the Pre-School Learning Alliance to take part in their ‘Healthy Hearts- Happy Children’ scheme. This will involve children learning about how to be healthy, how exercise and eating healthily affects their body and how they feel. As you may remember, we are an eco-setting and gained our bronze award last year, but we are now working towards our silver and would like to encourage anyone interested to join our eco-committee. Please contact me at the Pre-School for more info. .

First Aid course

Teme Valley Children’s Centre are running First Aid courses in our Pre-

School in February and March. Anyone interested should contact Rebecca at the Teme Valley CC for more information.

Don't forget!

We are a registered eco-setting with 20 years' history. Children can start from two years old and are entitled to 15 hours free from the term after their third birthday. We also have breakfast- and after-school clubs for children aged two to thirteen years. If you need any information, or would like to book a place for your child, call Kath or Lucy on 01886 889127 or visit our website www.martleypreschool.co.uk

Kathryn Smith

Martley 100 Club

The first draw took place on the third Thursday of January (results in the March issue of *The Villager*). There are still places left, so hurry if you want a chance to win and to help to raise funds for our Memorial Hall at the same time. When we have secured our target of 100 takers, we will raise £1,800 with £800 paid out in prizes and £1,000 for the Hall. The amount we raise will depend on the number of members. If each household has a ticket, it will be a great help to your Memorial Hall. If each could take two tickets, it would be an even greater help and also, of course, doubles your chances of winning!

If you would like to join, the cost is £18.00 per entry per year. You could win £50 each month, plus draws of £100.00 in June and November. (NB:

The monthly win amount will be pro-rata if we have fewer than 100 members). Send your name and address together with a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Annette Smith, (Village Hall Committee Secretary), Fairview, Willow Road, Martley, Worcester, WR6 6PS (01886 821895) together with your subscription of £18.00. Please make cheques payable to "Martley Memorial Peace Hall". Your ticket number will be returned to you in your SAE. The Club started in January 2009—a big "thank you" to the pioneers who have already joined!.

Annette Smith

Pudford Lane

Another episode in the on-going story of Lane folk

Congratulations to Simon Jefferies who recently completed his initial Royal Marines training and now passes on to the next stage. Good luck, Simon. We have seen various groups of Ramblers splashing up and down the lane, presumably to walk off some of that Christmas pud and chocolates and preparing for Easter eggs. The Worcestershire Way along the ridge is not too muddy and is drying up since the recent drier weather. Not many signs of flora yet, but a few hardy primroses have been blooming since late December along a sheltered part of the verge.

We have not seen many fieldfares or redwings, but they are finding plenty to eat with all the unwanted apples in Bulmer's orchards. There are numerous bluetits feeding on the

fatballs and nuts, plus coal tits, great tits and gatherings of long-tailed tits as well, amongst plenty of chaffinches, robins and a solitary goldfinch. If this credit crunch continues, notices will have to be put on the feeders, warning of rationing to come.

Please remember, if anyone sees suspicious happenings or has doubts about strangers wandering around private premises, do contact Neighbourhood Watch or police on 0300-333-3000. There was a large amount of sawn logs/firewood stolen from Little Witley. Is nothing safe? Three or four occupants in an 08 reg BMW were spotted recently in the lane. They said they were selling power washers. Oh yes, tell us another one! The car was traced to Basil, a burglar from Bristol. So, everyone, be watchful and wary.

Kate King

Congratulations

Congratulations to Lorna Woodburn and Francois Ruffet, who announced their engagement on Christmas Day. They plan to marry in 2010.

Get Well Ted!

We wish Ted a speedy recovery from his major surgery.

Martley Allotments

I am hoping that New Year will see good progress in our search for an allotment site in the Martley area. I shall contact everyone on my list at the end of February, to arrange an informal meeting not only as a way of

introducing ourselves, but to form a basic allotment committee - which is necessary if our request is to be taken seriously. I am still taking names of those who would like an allotment to "Grow their Own" locally.

angiehill1350@yahoo.co.uk 01886 888762

Martley's Past

The following two items appeared in the Parish Council minutes at its meeting on 11 March 1957, chairman Mr Harry Goring (Schoolmaster).

“Seat. A question was raised about the seat which used to exist by the Public Weighbridge. The clerk explained that in 1955 the CC had been asked either to repair the seat or remove it. The CC had said that originally the seat had been provided for the people from the Public Assistance Institution, and as it was now beyond repair, they proposed to remove it, which they had done. The councillors considered there was need for this seat still and the clerk was instructed to find out if the CC would be prepared to do this. (It re-appeared 50 years later!)”

“Bank. The chairman referred to the need for banking facilities in the village. It was stated that the Midland Bank had opened a sub-branch in Hallow on two days a week. The meeting was of the opinion that a need did exist, and the clerk was asked to ascertain the views of the Midland Bank on the suggestion of opening one session a week – preferably Friday.” (I can’t find that it ever happened. ALB). *Alan Boon*



Over the Garden Wall in Wichenford

WICHENFORD NEEDS YOUR NEWS

Janet Andrews
01886 888303
Sheila Richards
01886 888378



Church Flowers

1 February Mrs Andrews
8 February Mrs A Smith
15 February Mrs A Smith
22 February Mrs Randall

Ladies Fellowship

The Ladies Fellowship are to meet on 17 February at the home of Pam Webb at 2.30pm.

Memorial Hall Christmas Whist Drive

The Christmas Whist Drive in aid of the Memorial Hall was once again a very popular and very enjoyable event. As well as being an entertaining game of whist, these evenings are great fun and much appreciated by everyone.

The organisers are very grateful and thank all who gave the super prizes and to everyone who helped on the evening. Special thanks to Derrick Jinks for decorating the hall for this festive occasion.

Nora Parsons Day Centre

December was a busy month at the

Day Centre. We had a table at the Martley Christmas Fair to raise funds. Thanks to everyone who purchased items from us. Later in the month we had our annual sale at the Day Centre. We raised a magnificent £770 which will go towards our funds. Thanks to everyone who worked so hard to raise this money.

The Masons Arms then very kindly invited all the members and helpers for a lunch. A lovely lunch of fish and chips, followed by a hot sweet was enjoyed by all. Many thanks to Suti and her helpers for that.

And then on the final day before we closed for Christmas, we had our Christmas Lunch. David Sherwin popped in and we sang a few carols followed by a delicious lunch prepared by Paddy Sprunt and helpers. After lunch Father Christmas paid a visit (also known as John -our retired postie!) and members received a Christmas gift plus a plant each.

Everyone went off home for a hopefully happy and peaceful Christmas and looking forward to returning in early January.

Wichenford 100 Club

December winners

No. 100 W Banks £75 and returned £12.00 subscriptions to No. 89 P Andrews & No. 130 R Fewtrell.
Drawn by Becky Hoyle

Thank you to those people who caught up with renewed subscriptions - hopefully by the end of January there will be enough of them to add a nice large sum to the winnings! The draw has visited a previous winner for the second time in three months and another winner for the second time in a year! So to all those like myself whose numbers resolutely refuse to turn up, all I can say is let's hope our luck changes next year!

November winners

No 76 S Dyson £75 and returned £12.00 subscriptions to 1 A Hylan 133 L Kent Drawn by the driver of Worcestershire Mobile Library

We are still stuck at a payout lower than last year's because of the 24 outstanding subscriptions so if you hold a number and you haven't renewed, please contact me on 888239. If you have a number and do not wish to renew, please do phone too. We need to know which numbers are free.

We have also lost 15 members so new members would be very welcome. As two months into the Year have gone, new subscriptions now stand at £1 for Life Membership and £10 for the rest of the Year.

If all 24 late subs come in and if all 15 free numbers get taken, the prize pot would increase by £20 a month i.e. a

1st prize of £95 and two returned subscriptions.

Irene Rayner

We are so sorry that Irene has died and send our deepest sympathy to David and to all her family. Irene will be remembered by all with much respect and affection.

Irene Rayner (nee Roberts) was born in Richmond, London in June 1941; she moved from the big city to the quiet village of Martley as a small child when her parents relocated to Redhouse. She met her future husband David from Upper Sapey in her teens. Irene and David were married in Martley church in 1960 when Irene was 19; they made their home at the Woodlands Bungalow in Ockeridge where they were to spend the next 48 years together and raise two sons. Irene started her working life in the food processing industry, and later became a full-time mother to her children and eventually returned to work as an Orchardling Assistant for Bulmers. She settled into a long and happy career with Bulmers. For over 20 years she tended to the cider apple trees in the many orchards around the area. Her love of nature and plants was apparent in her love of gardening. She worked hard to keep her garden beautiful and this showed itself with the many dazzling floral displays and imaginative planting. The design and layout were ever changing and unique, a show she maintained despite poor health for as long as she physically could. Irene's other great loves were

her grandchildren, who brought her great happiness, and her dogs. Over the years she kept a few shaggy dogs, the most recent an Old English Sheep Dog whom she adored.

When David fell ill in 1996, Irene took early retirement to care for him. At the time she was starting to suffer the early stages of Raynauds Disease and Schleradoma, a condition that led to intense discomfort and pain for her. Over the next 12 years the disease worsened which resulted in frequent trips to London to see specialists and much out-of-surgery care from the nurses at Great Witley. Despite her own progressive health problems, Irene continued to care for David at home until she passed away. In October 2008 Irene was admitted to Worcester Royal Hospital with pneumonia; she spent a week there and was later discharged. Unfortunately the following month she was admitted again with the same illness, her ill health causing added complications and sadly she did not recover. On 25 November 2008 she passed away peacefully in hospital.

Irene was a much loved wife, mother and grandmother. She was fun-loving, adored her family, her dogs and her garden and tried her utmost not to allow her illness to inhibit her life or the lives of those around her. She will be sadly missed.

Kenswick and Wichenford Parish Council

Unapproved abbreviated draft minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish

Council held on Monday 24 November 2008 in the Memorial Hall Wichenford. Cllr. Britten-Long chaired the meeting. (Chairman).

Democratic half hour/public question time:

The Lengthsman reported that a lot of the flooding in the parish is due to the ditches not being dug out, and the pipes are not big enough to carry the amount of water. Martley Parish Council are hiring a contractor for a few days to do the worst of the ditches. The parish council asked the lengthsman to identify what needs doing and to get a price and they will consider this at the next meeting. The gullies at Witton Hill need jetting and the clerk was asked to report these.

District and County Councillors Report

District Cllr. B Williams reported that the audit commission rated them as excellent -the only 1 of 4 rated by the audit commission in the West Midlands. Cllr. Williams said she would look into the parish council's concerns regarding the planning cards not being sent out.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2008 were accepted and signed as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Woodward and seconded by Cllr Andrews.

Progress Reports

TPO at Kenswick Manor: Kenswick Manor estate has been contacted regarding the Tree Preservation Order but has not returned the call. Salt: The clerk has spoken to Highways

regarding the procedure for salt and new salt boxes. The reply was circulated in the folder. The clerk was asked to find out where the boxes are located in the parish and to see if they need filling.

Planning

Applications considered since the last meeting: 08/01595/Ful. Siting of static caravan for use by a full-time security and estate management employee at Colketts Farm, Wichenford. The parish council asked why the applicants were told by the planning department that they couldn't convert any of the existing buildings. The district councillor said she would find out from the planning officer involved. 08/01631/FUL Proposed construction of a new detached building to provide facilities for anglers and archers at Cob House Fisheries. The parish council agree in principle with this application, but have a few concerns that they would like the planning department to address.

Applications Approved/Refused/Withdrawn: 08/01295/CPU. Certificate of lawfulness for the proposed use of a caravan to be sited in the curtilage of Hill Farm. (Refused)

Finance

The current balance from 1 October to 31 October stands at £18,249.89. Of this £324 belongs to the Pathfinders Scheme; £1,247 is held on account for the NPDC and £2,336 was received for notice boards from the lottery funding. The clerk's salary and

expenses were agreed. Proposed by Cllr. Rendall and seconded by Cllr Woodward. It was resolved to grant Wichenford Church £400. Memorial Hall Donation: After studying the account the parish council resolved to grant Wichenford Memorial Hall £400. Millennium Green Donation (s137). It was resolved to grant the Millennium Green £300. The acceptance of the finances was resolved.

Budget (for discussion): Councillors were sent a draft budget sheet to read ready for discussion at the meeting. It was proposed to increase the hall rent by £40, the grant to the memorial hall from £300 to £400, reduce the amount of contingency by £250.00, and add £450 for computer repairs and work in the parish. The precept will be agreed at the next meeting. Proposed by Cllr Britten-long and seconded by Cllr Randall.

The NPDC

The parish council read through the statement of accounts. The dilapidations are the PC responsibility as the Day Centre does not have the money. The money from the Bluebell Ride and bank closure are held on account by the parish council, and will be used to help pay for the repairs. The chairman is to enquire whether the subsidence is covered by insurance. It was resolved to give the Day Centre £200 towards running costs.

Guises/Rosses lane

The county council has lost the appeal. A Moore, the County Solicitor, is

seeking advice on whether to take it further. The clerk is to keep writing to Mr Moore for a decision.

Correspondence

For decision by the parish council. (information only): Joint Statement on WMRSS Phase Two, Calc update 8/34; 8/35; 8-36, Nora Parsons Day Centre Accounts 2008; Communities and Local Government; Affordable and Rural Housing needs surveys meetings.; Amendments to the General Permitted Development Order; Countryside Voice Magazine; Newline Magazine; MHDC Development Quality Tour; Childrens and Young Peoples Strategic Partnership; Rosses/Guises Lanes Inspectorates decision

Councillors' Reports and Items for Future Agendas

The clerk was asked to report to the council the overgrowth along the visibility fence between the church and court. The council need to know the exact location before anything can be done, and asked the clerk to find out from the person that reported it. The clerk reminded all present to give a prize for the Christmas whist drive. Cllr. Rendall reported the fly tipping that had occurred along Barbers Lane, and asked for the pot holes to be reported outside Ridgend Farm.

Date and Venue of Next Meeting

Next meeting will be 12 January 2009..

Meetings were arranged for 2 March, 20 April (APM and ordinary meeting). 18 May (AGM)

SILENT AUCTION IN WICHENFORD

**FRIDAY 6 MARCH 2009
AT THE MEMORIAL
HALL**

Entrance £3 to include a glass of wine and nibbles

There will be a bar, and also a raffle

ANY GOOD ITEMS
GRATEFULLY RECEIVED,
BUT IF SOMEONE DOES NOT
WANT TO DONATE
SOMETHING COMPLETELY,
HALF THE SALE PROCEEDS
CAN COME BACK TO THEM.

*All proceeds will go to the
Wichenford Memorial Hall*

**Please contact Margaret
Fisher on 01886 888 214
for further information.**

Pensax Thrift Shop

Pensax Thrift Shop opens it's doors again on Wednesday 4 March at 9 am. For any newcomers, the shop is held at Pensax Village Hall (on the B4202) every Wednesday morning 9-11.15, until December. Come in, sell those unwanted Christmas gifts, or just have a browse and a cuppa.

Not Simply a number

Part 1

There was a certain lady born in Martley during the reign of King George V who was known as Martley Belle. Who on earth was she? Well, she lived at Hope House Farm and her job was literally to walk on earth. She was a Shire mare, one of many with the 'Martley' prefix bred by Mr John Davis, whose family were listed as occupying the farm in 1840 (when it was owned by Mr Nash) and whose photograph hangs in the Memorial Hall Committee Room together with that of his nephew, Mr Ernest Badger, a breeder of North Devon cattle.

The Davis family were probably breeding working horses for decades before Bounce and Flower, the two recorded foundation mares were born. Bounce was by the simply named A1 (1) - the very first stallion alphabetically listed in Vol 1 of the English Cart Horse Society Stud book published in 1880. No doubt Hope House had a team of working oxen, and there would have been many tasks on the farm for horses too. It is said that Mr Davis built the shelter in Bath Meadow for his carthorse foals. It is interesting to look into the history of these animals, and good that some of the farmers in those far-off days got together to improve and register their stock.

In 1885 the ECHS became the Shire HS, and John Davis was elected

member in 1901. He used Cotheridge Hercules and other stallions for his mares. He would sell any colts and usually retain the fillies, keeping up his workforce of Shires into the 1930s, when. Inevitably. tractors took over the farm work.

Besides pedigrees, Heavy Horse stud books contain useful information about farms and farmers. In the early days, carthorses' names were somewhat un-imaginative - there are, for instance, in the Index volume that contains all known names up to 1893, 115 Honest Toms registered and at least double that of Blossom! Colours and markings are stated, names and addresses of owners, breeders, members etc, plus prefixes, death notices of stallions (yew poisoning is a



A shire horse drawn by Tina Steele

noted one) show results and some illustrations. Most stallions were gelded after a few years, then used for ploughing and work between the shafts. The researcher can go back into pedigrees for over 200 years, finding out who bred the horses and when ownership changed.

Working horses were not quite as large in the 18th century as later. The 1790 painting attributed to John Boulton of that great stock breeder Robert Bakewell's black stallion shows a lighter type of animal with a long mane and tail, but not much 'feather'. This painting was engraved in 1791 by Martley-born Francis Jukes. Other illustrations of that period show much the same. Later Shires became heavier with very hairy legs (which caused heel problems) and most were docked – now they are '18 hands plus' and have rather less hair, but long tails, which are done up or shaved, for show. Their lovely placid temperament has remained. Roans and chestnuts are very rare nowadays as they are not accepted into the Stud Book.

Bounce was mated with King of the Vale 3173, a strawberry roan horse bought by S H Greaves from breeder Thomas Pullen. Foaled in 1868 (and living until 1893), his sire was Waxwork 3390, his dam Flower. Mares were not given numbers until 1893. She was by Crump's Duke of Wellington (no number). 3390 was owned by J Crump and bred by Mr Reynolds – it was roan and foaled in 1860. This horse's sire was also

named Waxwork (2281) but his dam's name is not known. W H Edmunds is down as his owner, the breeder's name is missing, so is the colour, but the horse was foaled in 1848 – sire being Invincible 1140 (Vol 1) dam and her parents unknown. J Henshaw bred 1140 and sold him to Hillyear Reeve, Thomas Hinckley then acquired him and sold him on to R Stych. Invincible was brown and born in 1839, sire Bang-Up 94, dam's name unknown, but she was by Wonderful 2365 – a stallion bred by Mr Abbot who sold him to Mr Stephenson, who in turn sold him to Joseph Twigg. 2365 (black) had been foaled in 1810, sire Wonderful 2364 out of an un-named mare known to be by Bald Horse 93 (this implied a white face) which was owned and bred by Mr Bulstrode. 93's main colour is not stated, but the record says he was born in 1778, sire Oldacre's Old Kirby out of an unknown mare by Gallemore – no number for this stallion, so this is as far as this line can be traced, but we must have got back into the late 1760s and quite early in the reign of King George III! (to be continued).

Tina Steele

Martley Parish Council

The record of the December meeting is not currently available to The Villager. For details please contact the Clerk to the Parish Council: Sally Williams—01299 832949.



Dad's the word!

Men are becoming more involved in the day-to-day care of their own children, partner's children or as childminders. However, they may still feel marginalised in schools, daycare settings or at parent groups. The traditional family of mother, father and biological children is no longer the norm. Families now have such a wide variety and composition that a family can contain lone parents, step parents and extended families where, for example, grandparents may be the primary carers. We still seem to think that the mother is the parent that 'deals with the children', but recent research shows that positive involvement from fathers has a significant impact on children's emotional well-being and opportunities in later life. Research shows a clear link between substantial involvement by fathers and higher IQ in children. However, the father does need to be actively involved in child-rearing for the child to gain these benefits. In a two-parent household where the father has little to do with the children, IQ levels are similar to those in households where the father is absent. Lots of organisations can provide help, support and information for men in this important and rewarding role. At TVCC we are committed to offering further support to all dads and in 2009 we aim to begin a Dads' Group with you in mind. Find more information about

Mobile Library

Ockeridge

Silver Oaks 9.45–10.05

Wichenford

Malvern View 10.10–10.35

Church 10.45–11.05

Kings Green Farm 11.15–11.40

Rosses Green 11.45–12.05

Martley Hillside

Horn Lane Bungalows 12.10–12.25

Martley

Taylor's of Martley 12.30–12.45

LUNCH

Heaton House 1.20–1.50

Church. 1.55–2.15

Clifton

Village Hall 2.30–3.50

The Mobile Library will be visiting these stops on Wednesdays on the dates listed below:

28 January 2009	5 August 2009
18 February 2009	26 August 2009
11 March 2009	16 Sept 2009
1 April 2009	7 Oct 2009
22 April 2009	28 October 2009
13 May 2009	18 Nov 2009
3 June 2009	9 Dec 2009
24 June 2009	30 Dec 2009

Enquiries to Stourport Library, Worcester Street, Stourport DY13 8EH, tel: 01299-82286 or stourportmobile@worcestershire.gov.uk

the key role fathers can play on: www.fathers-plus.co.uk; www.pre-school.org.uk/fathers; www.includingmen.com; www.fatherhoodinstitute.org; www.fathersnetwork.org

If you're interested in the Dads' Group, contact Debbie Bird on 01886 812982 or Debbie.bird@temevalley-cc.org.uk. Also check out our website www.temevalley-cc.org.uk for more about Teme Valley Children's Centre.

Brigid, Valentine and Pancakes

The astute amongst you will have recognised the link between these three: they are connected with festivals that fall in February (the date of Pancake Day is not fixed, and could fall in early March). So read on to find out a bit more about them.

St Brigid and Imbolc

Imbolc is one of the four principal festivals celebrated among Gaelic peoples and some other Celtic cultures either at the beginning of February or at the first local signs of Spring. Most commonly it is celebrated on 2 February, since this is the cross-quarter day on the solar calendar, halfway between the Winter Solstice of 21 December and the Spring Equinox of 23 March in the northern hemisphere. Originally dedicated to the goddess Brigid, in the Christian period it was adopted as St Brigid's Day. Imbolc is traditionally a time of weather prediction, and the old tradition of watching to see if serpents or badgers came from their winter dens is perhaps a precursor to the North American Groundhog Day and the prediction of a wet spring if it rains on St Valentine's Day (14 February). Imbolc is the day the Cailleach — the hag goddess or "crone" form of the triple-goddess— gathers her firewood for the rest of the winter. Legend has it that if she intends to make the winter last a good while longer, she will make sure the weather on Imbolc is bright and sunny, so she can gather plenty of

firewood. Therefore, people are generally relieved if Imbolc is a day of foul weather, as it means the Cailleach is asleep and winter is almost over. On the Isle of Man, where She is known as Caillagh ny Groamagh, the Cailleach is said to have been seen on Imbolc in the form of a gigantic bird, carrying sticks in her beak

Fire and purification are an important aspect of this festival. Brigid (also known as Brighid, Bríde, Brigit, Bríd) is the goddess of poetry, healing and smithcraft and is associated with holy wells. The lighting of candles and fires represents the return of warmth and the increasing power of the Sun over the coming months.

St Valentine

Saint Valentine is the name of several martyred saints of ancient Rome. Of the Saint Valentine whose feast is on February 14, nothing is known except his name and that he was buried at the Via Flaminia north of Rome on February 14. It is even uncertain whether the feast of that day celebrates only one saint or more saints of the same name. The name "Valentine" does not occur in the earliest list of Roman martyrs, which was compiled by the Chronographer of 354. The feast of St. Valentine was first established in 496 AD by Pope Gelasius I, who included Valentine among those "... whose names are justly revered among men, but whose acts are known only to God." As Gelasius implied, nothing was

known, even then, about the lives of any of these martyrs. The Saint Valentine that appears in various martyrologies in connection with February 14 is described either as a priest in Rome, a bishop or a martyr in the Roman province of Africa.

Saint Valentine appeared in the Nuremberg Chronicle, (1493). The text states that he was a Roman priest martyred during the reign of Claudius II who was caught marrying Christian couples and aiding Christians being persecuted by Claudius in Rome, which was considered a crime; whereupon this priest was condemned to death. Historical sources shed no light on the association of Valentine and romantic love, but perhaps it has something to do the priestly Valentine who married Christian couples.

Pancakes

Shrove Tuesday is the name given to the day before Ash Wednesday, the day on which the Christian liturgical season of Lent begins. Pancakes are associated with this day preceding Lent because they were a way to use up foodstuffs such as eggs, milk, and sugar, before the fasting season of the 40 days of Lent. Liturgical fasting emphasized eating plainer food: in many cultures this meant no meat, and in some, no dairy or eggs. Therefore, forbidden foods were cooked to use them up prior to the fast. Many cultures and religious traditions still use fasting as a way of preparing the body and mind for significant spiritual experiences, from



the indigenous people of the Amazon basin preparing to take the hallucinogenic ayahuasca to followers of Islam who abstain from all food and drink during daylight hours during the holy month of Ramadan. Fasting is mentioned many times in the Bible, for example, Jesus fasted in the desert before the three temptations (Matthew 4,2 and Luke 4,2). The word shrove is a past tense of the English verb "shrive", which means to obtain absolution for one's sins by confessing and doing penance. Shrove Tuesday gets its name from the shricing (confessing) that English Christians were expected to do prior to receiving absolution before Lent began.

There are many traditions associated with Pancake Day. For example, pancake races are held in villages and towns across the United Kingdom—a tradition dating back to before the 1600s. The famous pancake race at Olney in Buckinghamshire has been held since 1445. The contestants, traditionally women, carry a frying pan and race to the finishing line tossing the pancakes as they go. As the pancakes are thin, skill is required to toss them successfully while running. The winner is the first to cross the line having tossed the pancake a certain number of times.

In Estonia (*Vastlapäev*) and Finland (*Laskiainen*), this day is associated with hopes for the coming year. Finns share the tradition of marzipan- and cream-filled pastry, with Swedes.

Michelle Higgins

In the Garden



February

Summer-flowering clematis can be pruned back hard. Clematis will make rapid new growth during spring to carry flowers later this year. Clematis to prune early in the month include those in the *texensis* group and *viticella* group, as well as *C. tangutica*, *C. vitalba*, *C. integrifolia*, and *C. x durandii*. Many large-flowered hybrids should also be pruned down to emerging buds, including 'Jackmanii', 'Hagley Hybrid' and 'Ville de Lyon'.

Winter and spring bedding plants tend to flower in phases, depending on the temperature. Keep pansies, primulas and other flowering plants regularly deadheaded to keep plants looking tidy and prevent them setting seed, which can reduce flowering performance.

February is also a good time to move shrubs or flowers to a new position if they have outgrown their site. If not frost-bound, clumps of perennials can be divided and healthy young outer portions replanted into freshly-prepared soil.

Early flowering bulbs come into their own this month, but now is the time to plant up pots of anemones such as *Anemone coronaria* De Caen Group, or their double-flowered counterparts in the Saint Bridgid Group. Before

planting, the dry tubers are best soaked for 24 hours to absorb water, during which time they will double in size. Plant the plumped-up tubers in pots for an early display, or plant outside later in March or early April. Plant lily bulbs up in pots. Plant about five bulbs of the same variety in a 25cm (10in) container. Terracotta pots are ideal, as their weight provides extra stability for the tall flower spikes that eventually develop.

In a heated propagator, make the first sowings of summer bedding plants that need a long growing season. These include geraniums, petunias, busy lizzies and nicotianas. Most require a germination temperature of 21C.

If it is warm enough, crops that can be sown under cloches include broad beans, early carrots and parsnips. Shallots can also be planted out. Sow summer cabbage, leeks and onions under cover in a warm propagator. Buy seed potatoes of early varieties now and place them in trays with their sprouting ends uppermost. Keep in a cool but light spot to allow the shoots to develop, ready for planting outdoors in March.

Even if you don't get time to start the winter digging, try and cover areas to be dug with a layer of compost or manure. This layer will be worked in by worms over time, or it can be lightly forked in to the surface in spring to prepare the soil for planting. Divide snowdrops at the end of the month. They prefer to be planted 'in the green' after flowering.

Alternatively purchase snowdrops from a reputable supplier to ensure that they haven't been taken from the wild. Stay off your lawn or try to minimise activity on it if it is wet or frosty because it will turn to mud very quickly in the wet and will be damaged if it is frozen..

If your lawn gets waterlogged, spike deeply with a garden fork. This helps water drain away more quickly. You may be able to give your lawn a feed by the end of the month. Try the Chase lawn fertiliser (spring treatment) from The Organic Gardening Catalogue. It is an ideal organic feed for your lawn. Remove moss by lightly raking the lawn – the moss can be saved to line hanging baskets.

*Advice from www.bbc.co.uk/gardening
and Angie Hill*

Harnessing Worm Power!

If you've got past the title, and are still reading - congratulations!

We've all read the headlines about reducing the amount of organic waste sent to landfill. But it's not always possible to have a whopping great black Dalek compos-tbin in your backyard, so wormpower is coming to the rescue! Wormeries don't smell, take up little room, can stand on paving and need only occasional attention. Once up and wriggling, all you have to do is feed them kitchen waste, including cardboard or shredded paper, little and often, and remember to drain off the liquid that collects in the enclosed tray underneath the wormery. This liquid

can be used, diluted, as a plant feed. If you have a stacking system like the Can-O-Worms, ensure there's enough material in the lower tray, so the worms can move between the layers. Don't let them freeze up in winter, or overheat in summer, and really, that's about all there is to it. If space is a real problem you can even buy a "desktop" system, or one that doubles as a planter, so you can grow herbs, salad or flowers by your back door at the same time as vermi-composting (posh name for worm-powered composting). In a year or so, you will have a tray full of rich wormcasts to top-dress pot plants with, or sprinkle onto the garden. It is very high in nutrients, so a little goes a long way.

Can-O-Worms can be bought from Wiggly Wigglers, or at a discount from www.recyclenow.com. Type in your postcode for regional offers. Wormeries can also be bought locally from Bubblehouse Worms, in Bransford.



Wiggly Can-O-Worms



Church Words

The Rectory 01886 888664

Love, love, love, love changes everything, love is in the air, all you need is love, love's a many splendid thing – love, it would seem from all the titles of these popular songs, is vital to life. It is of course true that love is vital and without love the quality of life is dismal and drives people to despair. By this I do of course mean love in its widest sense, not only the romantic love we celebrate on St. Valentine's day during later this month.

Paul, in his famous letter to the Corinthians, recognised that without love he was nothing and could amount to nothing without love. Love's qualities were those that would always consider the other first, not selfish. It was not to be arrogant or rude and it would never end. We are of course given the greatest love by Jesus when he declares that the greatest love anyone can show is that of giving one's life for the, that does not just mean death but a sacrificial unconditional love as demonstrated by St. valentine himself who sadly was martyred for his love of God.

I finish with the word of Jesus who said, "Love God, love one another, and love yourself".

Revd Davis Sherwin

As promised, a paraphrased excerpt from the monthly Martley Parish Magazine of 1909, price 3½d (old pence).

Church restoration fund continues to gain momentum with one donation from "the widows mite" of £1. A concert was also arranged by the choral society who sang a short cantata called "the picnic". Mention was made of Lenten services which will be lead by the reverend AC Fox Rector of Holt on the epistle of St James.

Finally I quote:

In the case of Martley the disappointment of the Bishop's postponement of visits would be much lessened as next year we shall have our Church in its renewed and beautified state more worthy of the Bishop and his visitor and more inspiring to those who worship within its walls.

The Magazine finishes with a weather report for 1908 which says: "*The year was remarkable for a wettish summer, for an extraordinary thunderstorm in June, for no very hot spell in the summer and for very little severe frost either in January or December. Rainfall was 3.17 inches above the average.*"

Church Services for February

- SUN 1 FEB** 8.00am Holy Communion, Knightwick Chapel
10.30am Holy Communion, St Laurence, Wichenford
10.30am Family Worship, St Peter, Martley
10.30am Morning Worship, St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas
6.30pm Evensong, St Leonard, Cotheridge
- Mon 2 Feb 9:00am Morning Prayer, St Laurence, Wichenford
- Tue 3 Feb 10:00am Holy Communion – St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas
- Wed 4 Feb 10:15 Morning Prayer, St Peter, Martley
- Thu 5 Feb 9:00am Morning Prayer, St Laurence, Wichenford
- SUN 8 FEB** 8:00am Holy Communion, St Leonard, Cotheridge
10:00am Family Worship, St Laurence, Wichenford
10:30am Holy Communion, St Peter, Martley
10:30am Morning Worship, St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas
- Mon 9 Feb 8:30am Prayer Breakfast, Rob Barlow
- Tue 10 Feb 10:00am Morning Prayer, St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas
- Wed 11 Feb 10:15am Holy Communion, Heaton House
- Thu 12 Feb 9:00am Morning Prayer. St Laurence, Wichenford
- SUN 15 FEB** 8:00am Holy Communion, St Peter Martley
9:00am Matins, St Leonard, Cotheridge
10:30am Holy Communion, St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas
10:30am Morning Worship, St Peter Martley
3:00pm Evening Worship, Knightwick Chapel
4:00pm Evening Worship, St Laurence Wichenford
- Mon 16 Feb 9:00am Morning Prayer, St Peter, Martley
- Tue 17 Feb 10:00am Holy Communion, St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas
7:30pm Study Group at the home of Brian Woodburn
- Wed 18 Feb 10:15 Morning Prayer, St Peter, Martley
- Thu 19 Feb 9:00am Morning Prayer, St Laurence, Wichenford
- Sat 21 Feb 8:30am Men's Breakfast, The Talbot
- SUN 22 FEB** 8:00am Holy Communion, St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas
9:30am Holy Communion, St Peter Martley
10:30am Family Worship, St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas
10:30am Holy Communion, St Laurence, Wichenford
6:30pm Evening Worship, St Peter Martley
- Mon 23 Feb 9:00am Morning Prayer, St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas
- Tue 24 Feb (Shrove Tue) 10:00am Morning Prayer, St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas
7:00pm Pancakes for all – Broadwas Village Hall
- Wed 25 Feb (Ash Wed) 10:15am Holy Communion Heaton House
7:30pm Holy Communion St Mary Magdalene, Broadwas
- Thu 26 Feb 9:00am Morning Prayer, St Laurence, Wichenford

Village Contacts



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To have your organisation and its contact details appear on this list, or to change the details shown here, email editor@martley.org or leave a note for the editor at Martley Post Office.

And finally ...



Woman is like the world:

At 20 years she is like Africa – semi explored.

At 30 she is like India – warm, mature and mysterious.

At 40 she is like America – technically perfect.

At 50 she is like Europe – all in ruins.

At 60 she is like Siberia – everyone knows where it is, but no one wants to go.

Man is like a train:

At 20 he is like the Local – he stops at every station,

At 30 he is like the Special – he stops only at the large stations.

At 40 he is like the express – and stops at the big cities only.

At 50 he is like the old locomotive – he stops often to water.

At 60 – he doesn't leave any more, he stops only in the yard.

Genuine cracker jokes!

Q. What do you get if you cross an i-pod with a refrigerator?

A. *Cool music!*

Q. What did the beaver say to the tree?

A. *Nice gnawing you!*

Q. What do you call a penguin in the Sahara Desert?

A. *Lost!*