

BLETSOE

GAZETTE

1995

PARISH COUNCIL

Your Parish Council has had an active year since April 1st, 1995.

There have been two special projects, namely the Playing Field Pond and the Walled Garden. Both were successful on application to the Sainsbury Fund and we receive a grant of £3000. The progress on these items has greatly improved the village and we look forward to the tree setting and the seat in the Walled Garden, in memory of David Bayes, now that autumn has approached.

The grass-cutting in the village is now organized by the Parish Council and paid for by the Borough Council. This has kept the Avenue and the triangles at Bourne End looking much tidier.

There was a public open meeting regarding the Playing Field, which was poorly attended and indicated that there was very little interest in sporting activities. Should we really be continually cutting a field that is not used? Is anyone in the village interested in helping on a Playing Field Committee? Please let the Council know your feelings.

The red painted areas on the A6 have reduced accidents but still people take their own lives and those of others into their hands by overtaking; it is hoped they will realise the dangers! Speeding through the village continues; there will shortly be police speed checks again. Why do so many people ignore the 30m.p.h. including many of our residents?

It was with great sadness we learnt of Pat Woodfine's death. She had been our Chairman for many years and so much in the village was due to her work and enthusiasm. Our thoughts are with her family with many thanks to Pat.

Should you have any queries on village matters please contact a councillor. You are welcome to our meetings on the first Monday of the month when part of the meeting is open to the public.

Although it is early, I would ask you to note the date of our Annual Meeting, which is open to the public and a time of voting on crucial matters (hedges in the centre of the village!)

April 1st --- some may say appropriately so!

Colin R. Deas

Chairman

25.9.95

ST. MARY, BLETSOE

1) The Inspection

This summer has seen the five yearly inspection of St. Mary's by the officially appointed architect to determine what restoration work needs doing over the next five year period. The result reflected the hard work put in since 1990 on the building and the excellent fund raising in that time. Now that almost all the masonry on the building has been restored, the majority of work left to do at present is small scale.

The really good news is that we don't need to do any more work to the tower. This year's work on the base of the tower and round the parapet is sufficient for the present. That means we can now look at other much needed work such as the drainage round the base of the church. Some of this was done many years ago but a section still needs to be dug out and new drainage put in place.

2) The Church Clock

There have been a few problems with the church clock this year, notably with timekeeping - it was stopping even when it had been wound. These have now been solved but both the P.C.C. and the Parish Council have been looking for a way of automating the winding mechanism. The P.C.C. has just received an anonymous donation which will allow us to install an electric winder. This will be dedicated to the memory of Pat Woodfine, who gave so much support to the Friends of St. Mary's. As a permanent mark of her efforts, the new winding mechanism will bear a plaque up in the ringing chamber with a similar message in the nave. Permission for this installation will take a while as it needs diocesan permission but the necessary arrangements have begun.

3) Future Services and Events

Remembrance Sunday this year is 12th November with a service at 10.00am, then at the War Memorial at 10.45am.

We hope that the Christmas Coffee Morning will be in the Village Hall on Saturday, 25th November at 10.am.

The Advent Carol Service will take place this year on 26th November at 6.00pm in St. Mary's.

The Christmas Service of Lessons and Carols will be at 3.00pm on 17th December followed by tea in the Village Hall.

Our Christmas Service pattern will be:

Christmas Eve 10.00am Christmas Meditation of words and music.

Christmas Day Family Communion at 9.30am.

New Year's Family Service at 10.00am. This will be a joint service with Riseley and will be followed by a walk and coffee in the Village Hall.

Don't forget our Community Day Service every third Thursday at Barbara Button's, 22, The Avenue.

Mike Gibbons

Church Warden

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S, BLETSOE

We were all very saddened to hear of the death of Pat Woodfine. Pat gave so much time, energy, and inspiration to many village events and in particular to the 'Friends' from the very beginning. She was instrumental in raising a great deal of money whilst providing much enjoyment through lunches, art exhibitions, the pageant, and many other events. She was the Friend's Secretary and the member of the Fete Committee with the imaginative ideas for many years. Although she had recently moved away from the village she was still supportive in many ways. We will miss her greatly.

Our events of the past year have been mainly of a gastronomic nature, (since these seem to be most popular with Bletsonians), catering for all tastes, from the over indulgence of the Victorian Breakfast, (for which we would like to thank Evelyn and David Baker for hosting the event this year), a Banger Night, where a wonderful selection of sausages were avidly devoured, and a Malaysian Supper held at the end of last year (for which event we would like to express our special thanks to David Song and Pat Ryan who were most generous in preparing a superb oriental meal, including freshly made and fried samosas, for more than 80 people). And we must not forget the Village Fete (which the Friends share with the Village Hall) which did so well when compared with results of fetes in much larger communities, and despite the continuing economic challenges.

Although there has been a temporary slow down in our activities whilst we have awaited the results of the quinquennial inspection of St Mary's, which determines how much money the Friends must raise, we have now planned a full programme of events for the coming year which we hope will appeal to all tastes (literally, literary, culinary, musically, and otherwise). Obviously these will be advertised prior to each event, but you might like to reserve the following dates:

10 November - Annual General Meeting

12 November - Celtic Lunch

24 February - Victorian Breakfast

30 March - to be announced

27 April - An evening of Music and Poetry

18 May - Banger Night

8 September - Family Fun Day - Barbecue Picnic, Games, and more.

13 October - Concert

We do hope you will join us at each of these events, not only to help raise funds to maintain our beautiful church building, but also for the fun, sociability, and neighbourly comradeship that only Bletsoe can provide.

Edward Bean, *Chairman, Friends of St Mary's, Bletsoe.*

BLETSOE VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE

As with any house or building, there is always going to be a certain amount of maintenance and this applies to our Village Hall. It is our top priority to try and keep our Hall in tip top condition. This is very rewarding when people comment on how nice the Hall looks with its splendid view over our Parish Field. All this costs money and although some work is done voluntarily by our Committee, we do have to get outside contractors to undertake some work. One of our biggest contracts just recently has been the redecoration of the interior of the Hall, something we try to have done every three years. Until quite recently we have had a regular income from our local Youth Club and Playgroup as well as other bookings, parties and the occasional wedding reception. With the closure of the Youth Club in July and just recently the closure of the Playgroup, we have had to look at our financial situation quite seriously. At our last Committee meeting it was decided, with regret, that we could no longer afford to employ a caretaker on a regular basis.

We continue to hold events throughout the year and try to offer a varied selection to suit everyone. All events are well advertised and tickets are always available from Alison or me. If you have any suggestion for a different event we could consider putting on in the Hall, please let me know and we will do our best to provide it.

Just a reminder about our Friday Bowls Club which now starts at 8.00p.m. There is always a good selection of drinks and sandwiches available. You don't have to want to play bowls to come --- we often just sit and chat. Please come along to our friendly Club.

Finally, if you are not a Committee member but perhaps would like to join us, do let me know. We can co-opt new members onto the Committee. Many thanks for your continued support. I hope to see you all at our future events.

Chris. Baldwin

Chairman TEL. 781917

VILLAGE HALL - FORTHCOMING EVENTS

28th October ... Hallow E'en Disco
4th November .. Bonfire Night
9th December .. Christmas Dance
16th December .. Christmas Social
31st December .. New Year's Eve Party

VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chris Baldwin	Ann Hewitt
Alison Bean	Hazel Herridge
Danny Lean	Alec Keep
Barbara Button	Bob Smith
Maria Caves	Jo Wallis

BLETSOE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Bletsoe is one of the smaller Institutes in the Bedfordshire Federation but we still are able to have informative, interesting meetings and we hope to continue for many years to come. Our meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month, in the Village Hall at 7.45pm. One of our most active members, even since moving out of the village, was Pat Woodfine. Her ideas and enthusiasm will be sadly missed.

During the past year we have had visiting speakers to give talks and demonstrations. These included a talk and demonstration on Spiritual Healing, a Mystery Outing, which ended at Fotheringhay, where we had a talk in the church on the history of the village and its royal connections. After this we retired to the local, also called The Falcon, where we had a delicious supper before returning to Bletsoe, tired, full and happy. We also had a talk on Superstitions, with a religious connection - but the speaker couldn't find anything to say about the letter "x". We also had two "Home Grown" evenings, a Christmas Dabble, where members demonstrated pot pourri bags, Christmas rosettes and decorated table decorations, and the other where Mrs. Nicholson brought along some of her Russian souvenirs and gave a short talk on the craft heritage of Russia.

We held our annual Christmas Party in December, when we were entertained by "Patchwork". This year's party will be on Tuesday December 5th. May we once again remind any Senior Citizens who have not attended before, that if you have not received an invitation by November 20th, to get in touch with either Mrs. Button on Bedford 781813, or contact Mrs. Rowland at the Post Office. The Jumble Sale was a success once again, with a healthy profit. January 27th has already been booked for 1996 and any suitable items will be most gratefully received. The Barbecue in July was the first for a number of years when the sun did not shine on us but that did not put us off and a most enjoyable evening was had by all.

I am sure there are many ladies in the village who have never been to a WI meeting and who possibly do not appreciate how enjoyable membership can be. It may be that you are unsure what exactly the WI does or maybe you would like to come, but feel unsure of your welcome. If you would like to come along and "try us out" you will be most welcome. If you telephone the President, Mrs. Button, on 781813 or Mrs. Nicholson, the Secretary, on 782268, they can always come and tell you in more detail about our organisation and Bletsoe Institute in particular. They can arrange for a member to call for you and take you to your first meeting. Prospective members can attend three meetings free of charge before joining. Any ladies in the village are also welcome to attend any meeting as a visitor, the cost of which is £1.50 per evening.

President ... Mrs. Barbara Button

Secretary ... Mrs. Margaret Nicholson

LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

One of my favourite Psalms is 104; it is a majestic Psalm full of the wonder of God's creation. It is an especially helpful Psalm for this time of year, the coming of Autumn, the end of the harvest, the celebration of all God's gifts. It reminds us of God's goodness in all that He provides, in the rich diversity of His gifts. Listen to this note of celebration,

"He makes grass grow for the cattle
and grass for man to cultivate -
bringing forth food from the earth:
wine that gladdens the heart of a man
oil to make his face shine
and bread that sustains his heart."

Food and life, the basic needs of every creature and here attributed to the open hand of God. To modern ears it perhaps sounds naive. Can we still believe such things in this age of science and technology? The truth behind this Psalm is that God the Creator is Lord of His creation. The universe is not a machine, He orders its workings, His wisdom lies behind the brilliance of the universe, behind its science and technology, His glory seen in the grandeur of the mountains, in the intricate beauty of the snowflake, in the joy of the human heart. It's a thrilling picture! No wonder then the Psalm finishes with with a great note of praise -

"I will sing to the Lord all my life
I will sing praise to my God as long as I live
May my meditation be pleasing to Him,
as I rejoice in the Lord."

Great words for harvest - - - and the rest of the year too!

David Bourne

COFFEE MORNINGS

The Coffee Morning Club continues to meet on the second Thursday of each month from 10,30am onwards. If you are free then, please come along and join us. We have a raffle with five prizes and with the profits from this, we buy items for the Village Hall and plants for the tubs outside the front door. So for a cup of coffee, a biscuit and a good chat, do come and join us.

Hazel Herridge and Barbara Button

BLETSON FETE: 1995

The annual summer fete was held on 17 June and was blessed with ideal fete weather; dry, bright and sunny, but not so hot as to give the stall-holders sunstroke!

As usual there were cakes, shirts, "fancy goods" and plants for sale, together with the usual sideshows and raffle. Making a stunning first appearance at this year's fete was Missed-it Peg, a local fortune teller of some renown. She is hoping to return next year, subject to any unforeseen circumstances!

The fete lacked as strong a theme as the previous year, with its D-Day and Glenn Miller overtones, but thanks to some resolute badgering and arm-twisting by the Committee an interesting and skilful display of rural crafts and arts provided a traditional backdrop to the day.

Ultimately, the Fete's success is judged by the amount of money it raises. This year's total was £2,300, which, as usual, is split 50/50 between the Village Hall and the Friends of St Mary's. This is an excellent effort, for which special thanks go to local sponsors and programme advertisers, in particular Townsend's Car Dealership in Rushden; all stall-holders and others whose time and effort is needed in order for the day (and evening) to run smoothly; and last but not least, the organising Committee who dream up all the ideas during the winter months and somehow make sure they all come together on the day!

Preparation for the 1996 Fete will begin in January. Behind the scenes help is always welcome and anyone with bright ideas or time to offer to the organisers is invited to join in. Please give me a ring if you would like to be involved.

Andrew Quayle
September 1995

There are always small tasks waiting to be done in the village. Jobs which cost ratepayers a lot of money if contracted out.

The Parish Council would be pleased to hear from any 'volunteers' who would be prepared to form Working Parties to help keep Bletsoe Neat and Tidy.

Contact any Councillor or the Parish Clerk if you would like join in!

		<u>Tel:</u>
<u>CHAIRMAN:</u>	Colin Deas, 36 The Avenue	781919
<u>COUNCILLORS:</u>	Jonathan Knights, Old Rectory Cottage	782230
	Peter Hetherington, 4 Bennett's Close	781851
	Ann Hewitt, 28 The Avenue	781613
	Chris Baldwin, 30 The Avenue	781917
	Jean Bayes, 56 The Avenue	781184
	Peter Thirlwell, Pixie Cottage, Memorial Lane	781525
<u>PARISH CLERK:</u>	Margaret Thirlwell, Pixie Cottage	781525

HOME WATCH

Shaun Corkerry continues to be our Homewatch Co-ordinator and he can be reached on telephone number 782506.

WHIST

Whist Drives are held in the Village Hall at 7.30pm on the second Monday of the month.

WANTED

Someone to take over putting this newsletter together next year. Any volunteers please phone 781604.

GENERAL INFORMATION

NEWCOMERS

We would like to welcome all newcomers to the village and in particular those who are returning to us after some years living elsewhere; the Hendersons, now living in Captain's Close and Mrs Dora Wise. Mrs Wise was born in 1900 and lived in one of the Old Way cottages. She was christened and married in St Mary's Church, Bletsoe and she used to help the Rector's wife with tea parties and fetes at the Old Rectory. She is now living there, in Kingfisher Home. She has many memories of Bletsoe past and she would be glad to see visitors for a chat.

MARRIAGES

We have had several weddings in the village this year. Congratulations to David Monk and Lucy (Deas) who were married in St Mary's and who are working in Egypt; to Ian Good and Emma (Hennessey) from Castle Barns who were also married in Bletsoe and who are now living in the Midlands. Our best wishes also to the other newly weds in the village, Russell Birkett and Samantha (Green) in Top Row and Robert Hall and Janet (Beal) in The Avenue.

LIBRARY

The Mobile Library have asked us to call attention to their service. They are outside The Old School House from 12.30 to 12.45 on alternate Fridays, October 13th, 27th etc. The Library Manager writes:

"The mobile vehicles now carry not just books but stories on tape, books for children, books with large print and a whole lot more. Our staff are friendly and helpful and borrowers will find a warm welcome inside as all our customer areas are heated. Disabled and even wheelchair-bound users can board our vans thanks to the lifts which we have installed."

CHANGES

Sadly, neither the Playgroup nor the Youth Club will be operating this year. Thanks to those who have given their time and energy to running or helping with these over the years.

We are sorry to have to record the deaths of several long-standing members of the village who at different times and in varying ways, added so much to the life of the community: Mrs. Herbert, "Gran" to so many of us, Mrs. Ingle, Mrs. Stanton and very recently, Mrs. Woodfine,

THANKS

Thanks to Ann Hewitt for photocopying and putting the Gazette together.

Jocelyn Wallis