

Bletsoe

Gazette

2010

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Parish Council 2010

Parish Councillors

It has been a year of change in the parish council. We were truly very sad at the loss of Ann Binder who died earlier this year after having served on the Parish Council for a short time. We will miss her determination and wisdom.

Mike Grimes stood down as Chair at the Annual Meeting and Edward Bean has taken over! Mary Cook filled the vacancy left by Ann Binder and the rest of the council remains the same. We are continually grateful to Jane Walker, our Borough Councillor who attends our meetings regularly and provides constant support in helping to move certain issues forward. The Parish Council also owes a huge debt to the sterling work of our Parish Clerk, Bill Rowlands, who keeps us all in order and makes sure all procedures are followed correctly.

Planning Issues

The Parish Council continues to monitor and comment on planning matters, and representatives meet regularly with Borough Planning Officers to discuss any major issues.

Lottery Funding

We were fortunate to receive some Lottery Funding this year, which enabled us to buy equipment for the young people of the village. The new area in the village field has been well used by youngsters and we hope to see many more years of such activity.

Transport

Transport has always been a problem in the village, or at least the lack of it, but there is now a regular service in and out of the village to Bedford much to the delight of our older residents!

Speeding is another major problem through the village and the Parish Council are in contact with the local police to find ways of dealing with this and will continue to address the problem.

Traffic using Coplowe Lane has increased over recent months and is being closely monitored. "Unsuitable for HGV" signs have been installed and hopefully, will stop some of the heavy transport using the Lane.

Planning Applications

These have been varied during the year and included applications from BioGen Power Ltd, Coomblands Park, and Thurleigh Business Park.

Dog Fouling

This comes up with amazing regularity at our meetings and is a problem in the village. If you own a dog, please dispose of the waste in the dog bins which the Parish Council has had installed around the village. It would make life more pleasant for young and old alike as they walk through the village and the parish field. It would be a very sad day if we had to resort to legal action to address the problem. Dog owners should also be reminded that their dogs should be on leads when passing through the village field.



Please feel free to contact any of your Parish Councillors regarding any issues you wish us to raise at a Parish Council meeting or with the Borough Council.

Your Parish Councillors are:

Edward Bean (Chairman) 781372

Paul Caves 781812

Mary Cook 781495

Matt Cox 781917

Ann Gibbons 781161

Mike Grimes 781183

Debbie Hall 783063

Clerk: Malcolm (Bill) Rowland 781646

Ann Gibbons

Diary of Events

Sat. 30 th Oct	10am Churchyard tidy up
Thurs 4 th Nov	8pm In the church, Friends of St. Mary's AGM. Church architect attending
Sat 6 th Nov	6.30 pm Fireworks in the playing field Soup, hot dogs and bar
Sun 14 th Nov	Remembrance Day 10 am in the church 10.45 at the war memorial
Sun 21 st Nov	11am –3pm Village hall table top sale Sellers £5 ring Maria 781812 buyers 50p
Sat 4 th Dec	10am –noon Village hall -church coffee morning
Sat 4 th Dec	Festive concert – The choir of St. Mary's Wallingford
Sat 11 th Dec	7.30 pm for 8 Village hall Christmas dance Roger Williams Tickets £15 from Barbara 781813
Sat 18 th Dec	6.30 pm Village hall - Christmas family social - games and presents
Sun 19 th Dec	4pm Carol service in the church
Sat 25 th Dec	9.30 am Family communion service
Fri 31 st Dec	8pm Village hall New Years Eve party DJ Daniel £6 (under 16 £ 3) bring food
Sat 29 th Jan	Village hall 40 th anniversary celebration

Regular Village Events

In the Village Hall

Whist Drive	7.30pm second Monday of each Month
Women's Institute	7.45pm second Tuesday of each month
Coffee morning	10.30 am second Thursday of each month
Bingo	7.30pm third Friday of each month
Young Farmers	7.30 pm every Wednesday
Parish Council	7.30 pm first Monday in each quarter

Further details from Barbara tel. 781813

In the Church of St. Mary's

Church service 9.30 am every Sunday
(this time is varied at Christmas, Harvest Festival and Remembrance Sunday)

The Village Hall

So far this year we have enjoyed entertainment from Craig Powell, Melvis and "Hair of the Dog". We had a car boot sale in September and are planning another for next year. All these events were very successful and the money raised is going towards the new kitchen furniture and the clean-up, painting and new guttering for the outside of the hall.

I would like to thank the Fete Committee for the generous donation they have given. It is really appreciated as we would struggle without it. Also thanks to all the Village Hall Committee members for all the hard work they put in to help with organizing events and maintenance of the hall.

The hall is for use by all villagers, so if you want to book it for your own event please phone Edna 781646

Maria Caves 781812

Friends of St. Mary's

2010 has been a landmark year for the Friends of St Mary's and all who support the conservation & restoration of our village church; so the first task is to thank all those who have contributed in so many ways over the past twelve months.

Bletsoe Country Fayre is, of course, by far the biggest contributor to the funds and this year has been no exception. The Fete proceeds have provided £2,500 towards the bills. But other major and regular events have also played their part as **the Plant Sale each April** brings in around £1,000 and the many & varied social events each contribute significant amounts. From quizzes to concerts together with a wide range of food-based evenings, the Village Hall and St Mary's have echoed to the sounds of villagers & friends enjoying themselves.



The significance of this year, however, is in the work completed and the start of the next phase of restoration in St Mary's. For the past five years, the committee has been carefully considering what needs to be done to protect the building for years to come and a regular programme of work was in hand based on the five-yearly architect's inspection in 2005. All of this was thrown into disarray a couple of years ago when significant movement in the West End wall meant extra and unexpected work & expenditure. As with so many old buildings, it isn't always possible to be definite about the work needed and so it transpired that many discussions with various experts took place before the Friends and Parochial Church Council were able to decide a course of action. That work, together with the relaying of the floor in the St John Chapel supported by Lord St John of Bletsoe and also the rewiring and then redecoration of most of the church was commissioned early in 2010 and the church went out of action from April to July while it was completed. It's pleasing to say that the contractors carried out their tasks very thoroughly and on budget despite some considerable surprises and extra work beyond what was expected. All in all, the fundraising over the past

five years helped to cover some £50,000 worth of work and we do have a small amount left over to carry forward.

Since the end of the work coincided with the next five-yearly report - the Quinquennial - we held our breath till we heard the very good news that there is no major work to be done which is what you would hope after all the work this year to date. So the Friends are now able to concentrate on what to do next. First of all, we are hoping to carry out the many smaller and less urgent tasks identified in every Quinquennial but we are also keen to replace some of the external woodwork which has seen better days. Then the key question is 'what next?'

If you have been into some or more of the local village churches then it won't have escaped your notice that most of them have a level of basic services which we don't have in our parish church - toilets, kitchens, indeed water and plumbing are missing from St Mary's. So now the debate is whether we need to provide these and, if so, for what purpose and where is best? Could this be the time to look at the other spaces - vestry, St John Chapel and even the old chancel and ask what we should all consider over the next five years? Will we need to carry out further remedial work on either the West or East End walls given that the legacy of the Victorians onwards will always mean that there are issues over building walls and stability?

So, a host of questions for the PCC and Friends to debate. And the big date for your diary is the Friends of St Mary's AGM in St Mary's AT 8pm on Thursday 4 November when our architect, Bruce Deacon, will be present to take questions. We look forward to seeing you there and to hearing your views on what we do next.

And thank you again, to committees and to villagers alike who help to make Bletsoe church so well-maintained and commit such support. We look forward to seeing you at many of our events over the coming year.

Mike Gibbons

Ten Yearly Census 27th March 2011

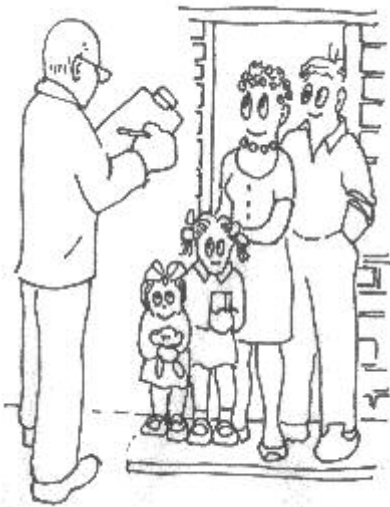
I have received a circular from “Census 2011” stressing the importance of this statistical exercise. The results are widely used for administrative planning by national and local government and by academic institutions for research.. The task is to count every single person living in the UK on the actual day of the census.

The area manager for Bedford and Central Bedfordshire is Jan Esson. She is keen that everyone should understand what is going on and should co-operate with the count when the time comes. She can be contacted by e-mail at G106@census.gov.uk.

There are **paid full and part time jobs available** to local people in the organization and execution of the survey. The work will extend from February to November 2011. Recruiting has already started (on 20 September 2010) For further information visit the website at www.censusjobs.co.uk

For more general information about the census visit www.census.gov.uk

Malcolm Rowland
Parish Clerk
781646



CEDAR COACHES BUS SERVICE 152

As it provides travel from Bletsoe to and from Bedford

Mondays to Saturdays (except bank holidays)

	NS	
Bletsoe Church	08.55	10.12
Thurleigh Baptist Chapel	09.05	10.22
Ravensden Crossroads	09.11	10.28
Bedford, Harpur Street Outside the old Telephone House	09.20	10.38

				SD	SHol	
Dame Alice School				16.10		
Bedford Harpur Street	11.15	13.15	14.15	16.15	16.15	17.45
Ravensden Crossroads	11.25	13.25	14.25	16.25	16.25	17.55
Thurleigh Chapel	11.31	13.31	14.31	16.31	16.31	18.01
Bletsoe Church	RR	RR	RR	RR	RR	RR

SD operates on school days only **NS** Not Saturdays

SHol - Operates on Saturdays and school holidays

RR - These stops are served on request to the driver



No service on Sundays or Bank Holidays

Full information on the service 152 between St.Neots and Bedford will be found on the notice boards outside the School House and behind the telephone box opposite the church



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First and third Wednesdays of the month

Riseley Five Bells	14.15		16.20	
Bletsoe Church	14.20		16.15	
Sainsbury's Supermarket Clapham Road	14.35		16.00	

Second Wednesday and third Tuesday of the month

Riseley Middle School	09.00 pre		13.26 RR	
Riseley Five Bells	09.03 pre		13.23 RR	
Bletsoe Church	09.09 pre		13.17 RR	
Sharnbrook Swan	09.16		13.10	

RR this stop is served on request to the driver

pre indicates for these stops a prior telephone booking must be made before 16.00 on the previous day (telephone number as above)

Fuller details of the Sharnbrook Villager minibus service, including routes from Bletsoe to St. Ives, Northampton and to Milton Keynes will be found on the notice board behind the telephone kiosk opposite the Church.

Countryside Commentary

What a contrast between two years - last year hundreds of Painted Lady butterflies, a fine lot of swallows and house martins, not many wasps nests and hedgerow fruits not in particular abundance.

This year a complete change : very few of the above birds, insects so numerous as to be a nuisance. The hedgerows are brimming with fruits, which will feed our migrants for a long time - if the farmers don't cut them down! Moths and butterflies are in very short supply, but parent peregrines and three youngsters have been positively identified.

Harvest started well, after a period of drought and then Mother Nature decided to even things up! Two and a quarter inches of rain in one week rather held things up and various corn driers were suddenly brought into service.

Local conservation schemes are working well and small birds are now in abundance—even the much talked about sky lark. An annual audit of birds on one farm I know produced a list of 73 species seen.

Enjoy the colours and the smells of autumn.

Haemonchus Contortus

Tree and Shrub Planting

Bedford Borough, now responsible for this scheme as “unitary authority,” intend to continue with it as in previous years. Budgets have been cut and it is a “first come first served” situation—so ,if you need hedge plants or small trees please let me know as soon as possible. This scheme may not last much longer so take advantage of it now!

*Paul Forster
Tree Warden
781320*

Bletsoe Country Fayre 2010

The village had been alerted and everyone was prepared for another Country Fayre and great community day. Two collection nights, a **wheelbarrow race**,



potato competition (won by Jean Jeavons) and bbq were all behind us

The eve of the Fayre turned into a social evening with lots of helpful people folding tickets, pricing items, setting the field up and enjoying being involved. Sadly we were informed that, due to adverse weather conditions, the flypast which had been promised would not take place. Such a disappointment after the great spectacle we had in 2009! However there was plenty more to be enjoyed.



The decision had been made early Saturday whether to stay indoors or go outdoors!! Half in and Half out seemed to be the best option and it meant that some people could keep warm in the hall while others braved the elements in the various tents!

BBC radio 2's Alan Dedicoat joined us again to entertain and bring his sense of humour to the opening. He has become a real friend of the village after five years.

The wind did not discourage a large crowd watching a display by the drug dogs. It was fascinating to watch how the dogs sought out drugs which had been planted in various places. There was audience participation as well! **The fun dog show** was run by Alison Eames and attracted a large number of entrants with their proud owners.



The children's races were enjoyed by a number of youngsters keeping themselves warm in the cold wind as were the Bedford Belly Dancers who demonstrated the routines which they practice in the village hall every Thursday. While it was not to everyone's taste, a large number of people watched and some even participated. Mike Grimes' vintage car display was better than ever and the Ouse Valley Swing Band played throughout the afternoon.

The wonderful sum of £5,000 was raised, meaning that the Friends of St Mary and The Village Hall Committee were each given a cheque for £2,500 from the Fayre. Well done and thanks to everyone involved on the day, which ended with a great fish and chip supper and an evening of relaxation

The 2011 Country Fayre Committee will have a new chair in Jane Temperley who will ably take the Fayre into another era! My thanks to a fantastic committee who have served with me over the past five years:-

Sophie Sheldon – terrific treasurer, Jane Temperley – superb secretary, Mike Grimes – magic motor man, Chris Grimes – inspirational ideas, Yvonne Martin successful stalls co-ordinator, Jean Jeavons – dynamic draw organiser, Evelyn Baker – queen of food and web searching, Paul Caves –dependable, Tess Ferriman – clever concepts. What an amazing team you have been – thank-you

Ann Gibbons

Motoring Memories

The Vintage & Classic Car Display has been a feature of the Country Fayre for a number of years. It has become popular with enthusiasts attracting some 70 entries. There are several other larger shows the same week-end, but many prefer to return to Bletsoe every year to meet up with old friends, enjoy the informal atmosphere of the event and test their knowledge of motoring in the fun quiz where pre-war owners as a team compete against the post-war owners.

One lady from Bedford comes every year in her Singer Gazelle. She bought it new in 1964 and has never owned any other car. More often it is childhood memories of cars owned by the family or of their own first car which prompts enthusiasts to look for a similar one

They may have found a rare model languishing in a barn unused for decades and spent countless hours lovingly restoring it. Those with less time and mechanical knowledge may have been lucky enough to find an original car in good running order, or they may have bought a restored example.

Whether an exotic sports car or a modest mass produced model like the Austin Seven or Morris Minor, it's great that examples of every marque are being preserved and brought to shows for everyone to see as they are all part of our motoring heritage.

Cars at the show this year included a 1929 Vauxhall Hurlingham Roadster originally the property of an American film star, a 1950 Bentley Park Ward Convertible built for a Indian Maharaja and the 1936 Austin Taxi pictured below. These taxis, once a common sight on London streets are now quite rare. Many covered over a million miles in their working lives and were as iconic as the Routemaster double decker bus.

Mike Grimes



Bletsoe Historical Miscellany – 3

Old Ways

Early highways and other lost routes.

This article concerns the historically important routes, now fallen into disuse, which criss-cross the landscape, connecting communities extant and extinct. There are a number of these once important transport arteries in and around Bletsoe that are now relegated to mere footpaths or bridleways, or have almost completely disappeared, and can only be followed with the aid of old OS maps.

Prior to the Bedford to Higham Ferrers road being turnpiked in the 18th century, and the construction of the section between Bourne End Lane and Wymington Turn, there were a number of unreliable routes between these two important market towns (pre-industrial Rushden being a mere hamlet). One of these routes passed through Bletsoe; leaving what is now the A6, it followed Bourne End Lane, crossed the Sharnbrook/Thurleigh road, further on crossed the Sharnbrook/Riseley road, passed by Arnhoe Farm and Templars Wood, on through Knotting Green and Knotting (Church Lane) to either Higham Park and Rushden (Park Road), or Newton Road, then on to Higham Ferrers.

The construction of the all-weather turnpike roads resulted in a significant drop in traffic on these earlier routes. Later on the adoption of these turnpikes as free public highways between 1873 and 1888 caused many of the old routes to fall into complete disuse and be swallowed up by agricultural improvements.

A much earlier route went via Milton Ernest, Radwell, Felmersham (Old Road), crossed the river at Pinchmill, through Sharnbrook (High Street), Souldrop (High Street), crossed the Forty Foot Lane, and took a direct line to Wymington Turn, then to Rushden. Another variation went via Felmersham Bridge instead of the Pinchmill crossing.

An idea of the difficulty of road travel prior to the building of the turnpikes can be gained from a warrant signed by Sir Robert Carey, authorising payment of 21 shillings and 4 pence to Hugh Bowes, for moving effects from Bletsoe to Castle Ashby in the *summer* of 1619. The journey recorded in this warrant took Bowes and his team of labourers six days to cover a distance of just 14 miles.

The majority of Bletsoe people did not enjoy the use of their own horse-powered transport. For a small charge some rode on the carrier's wagon, which made a

return journey to Bedford twice a week on market days. Others walked, but the route using the main road was not the most direct. The shortest route, either on foot or on horseback, and one which can still be walked today, is via the appropriately-named Old Way, Wigney Wood, Yarl's Wood, Twin Woods, Green Lane, Clapham Park, crossing the summit of what is now Brickhill Drive, then alongside the old cemetery down the track that connects with the northern end of Foster Hill Road.

Several local routes have disappeared more recently, notably the original route from Sharnbrook and Bletsoe to Thurleigh, which, until the development of the wartime Thurleigh Airfield as the Royal Aircraft Establishment, went via North End Cross Roads, along what is now the main access road to the airfield, through the hamlet of Whitwick Green (now demolished) and Whitwick Green Farm, then into Thurleigh via Whitwick Green Road. This old route can readily be traced on the satellite photography of Google Maps. The present route, via the 'cutting', was not constructed until the early 1950s.

A route from Thurleigh to Riseley left the Whitwick Green Road, passed a small hamlet named Tidbury (demolished when the airfield was built), then down Lowdson Lane into Riseley.

The alternative route from Bletsoe to Thurleigh went via Coplowe Lane, past Coplowe (Coplax) Farm, joining Old Milton Road, then past the windmill to Thurleigh. Today, going in the opposite direction along Old Milton Road one now reaches a dead end at the fence of the former Wind Tunnel Site, but this originally continued straight on to Milton Ernest. The present route past the water tower was also constructed in the 1950s as part of a grand scheme for the Royal Aircraft Establishment, which was never fully completed – but that is another story!

Edward Bean, October 2010

Space precludes the publication of a map to illustrate this interesting article. However Edward has promised to publish one on the Bletsoe web site www.bletsos.org.uk in conjunction with the on line version of Bletsoe Gazette 2010

Editor

BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL NEWS

September 2010

Schools Reorganisation

As most of you will be aware the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) project, which was to fund the reorganisation of schools from 3-tier to 2-tier has been scrapped by the new government. As a result the closure notices for most of the middle schools will be rescinded in the autumn term.

The Bedford Academy (formerly John Bunyan Upper School) will be going ahead as they have been informed that they will get the full amount of money that was promised under BSF. Their new building scheme will carry on as planned with the intention of eventually increasing the capacity of the feeder lower schools so that they extend their age ranges to become primary schools. The Bedford Academy **will** then become an 11-18 secondary school in the south of the town.

The Federation of North Beds Schools continues to move forward. Margaret Beaufort governors have agreed that the school will become part of the Federation from this September 2010, which means that all three feeder middle schools and Sharnbrook are now working closely together as one school. Under the new government rules the Federation has been able to apply to become an academy which means that it will no longer be part of the local authority and will not be funded by Bedford Borough Council. In addition, academies will be able to set up their own staffing and curriculum policies and procedures. This is expected to be completed sometime in the autumn term.

Draft Settlement and Allocations Plan Consultation

This consultation (which used to be called “The Local Development Plan”) has now closed. The draft plan included areas put forward by developers for new housing sites and proposed gypsy and traveller sites for the Borough. All comments made during the consultation will be considered and a final draft will be agreed by the Council by the end of the year, ready to go out for a second consultation in January 2011. The final plan will then be agreed by the Council in March or April next year and will then be put forward to a

planning inquiry to be held during the summer/autumn of 2011. We hope the final report from the planning inspector will be published in January 2012.

If you would like any more information on these or any other Borough Council issues, please contact:

Jane Walker (borough councillor)
email: jane.walker@bedford.gov.uk or ring 07952 879587

Our Local Police Station at Riseley

PC 455 Tott and PCSO 3978 Underwood are your local officers and between us we cover 5 villages . Oakley, Clapham Thurleigh Bletsoe and Milton Ernest. PC Tott joined the safer neighbourhood team for Clapham /Oakley in May 2008 shortly to be joined by PCSO 3978 Underwood in November 2008. We are based at Riseley Police Station along with other officers who cover the remaining villages in the North Rural area.

One of our main roles is to deal with community issues and to attend quarterly meetings with the parish councillors. At these meetings the next 3 months' priorities are set. The 3 priorities for the 5 villages are Anti-social behaviour , speeding and inconsiderate parking. To have your say on what priorities are, you need to speak to your local councillors who have priority forms which you can fill in.

Please contact us with any issues you may have in the village.

We can be contacted at Riseley 01234 842864. This is not a emergency number and has an answer phone facility for you to leave non-urgent messages. If there is an emergency call 999 or 01234 841212 to report a crime or any other incident

.PC 455 Tott PCSO 3978 Underwood

Acknowledgements

My thanks to our resident artist, Gillian Venn who created all the wonderful drawings. Also to computer guru Edward Bean whose expertise has been essential to this operation.

Editor

In the blink of an eye life in Bletsoe

I close my eyes at 25
Fit and young and so alive
Had a baby the first of three
So many children there will be

79 finds a Bletsoe field for sale
Life continues along the trail
Growing veg and animals to eat
It seems now such a feat

The good life some people said
Children, animals and our veg
Moved to Bletsoe in 85
Hard work and tough to be alive

1990 brought fostering to us
After the death of a friend who thus
Left many children for us to love
Thank you to the one above

You may remember the sign
I know that many thought it fine
Beware free range children and animals it said
I was though, often glad when they were in bed

It takes a village to raise a child
With Bletsoe safe to run wild
Welcomes children from anywhere
Race, colour, not a care

2000 brought changes not known
Even this I was not thrown
2003 life began anew
I'll let you guess what life threw

I heard it said that love was more
For those that your children bore
2006 what an amazing event
I became a delighted grandparent

This year to University he has gone
That boy that I have called my son
The last child off he goes
Life continues on it flows

Foster placements may be here
For a few short weeks here and there
Love of children continues now
Beyond grandchildren somehow

All those years in Bletsoe gone by
Where has it gone the time doth fly?
I open my eyes I'm 56
With four beautiful grandchildren in the mix

Mary Cook

The
SALON

Opening Times

Monday	9.30 – 5.30
Tuesday	9.30 – 5.30
Wednesday	Closed
Thursday	9.30 - 8.00
Friday	9.30 - 8.00
Saturday	9.30 – 3.00

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