

HINTS VILLAGE NEWSLETTER
December 2013

Hints web site www.hints-village.com
Rev. Fiona Haskett 01543 432233

Editor's notes (Peter Edwards)

I would like copy for the Newsletter before (about) the 25th of each month. I need to print 90 copies of the newsletter. If you are willing to receive it by e-mail, send me an e-mail saying so. So far I've had 40 takers. Please help by saving postage and printing costs! Last month I was short of copy – this month I've had to put in an extra page!

Hints by a seasoned resident. (Ruth Petford)

We moved to Hints in November 1969, having lived in Whittington for a couple of years before. Hints was a wonderful 'sleepy village' with such amazing views we just loved it. We had no fences to the property and our children played happily in their pedal cars and on their bikes on the road outside the house. The only "traffic" we ever saw was the postman, the milkman and two tractors driven by John Field and Reg Bott, making their way from Manor Farm through the Private Drive gate and onto Clarkes Fields to work. John was the first person to warmly welcome us on our arrival to the village, and became a very dear friend as did Mary. Both lived with son David at the Villa. On his way home for lunch, John would on occasion throw us a cauli or cabbage freshly picked that morning, which was much appreciated and also we suspect, was unbeknown to Roy!! We were in awe of John's knowledge of the village, if we ever needed to know anything at all concerning drainage, water pipes and general services, he knew everything and where the unseen, deeply buried pipes etc. were located. During a very harsh winter in the 1970's our water pipe burst, only to learn from John that our supply was fed from a stop tap on a distant cattle trough under an oak tree.

Botley House was set in a wooded area, hence our wonderful show of bluebells each spring. There were hardly any lawns or garden, just thick spinneys surrounding the house. With the advent of Dutch elm disease in early 1970s which affected the whole country, serious re-landscaping had to be done, imagine our surprise and horror to discover we now had over an acre of garden to maintain. Where the nursery and livery are today was a glorious wet meadow grazed by a couple of bright chestnut horses owned by Anna Thomas, who resided with her family at Hintsbrook. Adjoining Hintsbrook was a plant nursery; this of course was demolished to make way for Hints Court in 1987. Whilst these large, rather grand houses were being built a number of us villagers would meet there on a Sunday evening to 'inspect' the properties and have a general 'nose' as to what was being built!! It was great fun. Home Farm was in the latter stages of completion and John and Gill Fairclough and girls moved here about 9 months after we did. These were the days when the council gang of road men came at least once a month to sweep and tidy the whole of School Lane, and they proudly kept it all immaculate. Overseen by John Moore's Father.

On the A5 we had the petrol station where the Fairings bungalows are now. This was competently managed by a lady called Maureen (petrol sales) and Carl (car repairs). There was also Maria's post office, café and stores, really useful if you ran out of anything and fancied a walk. The A5 would become grid locked on Bank Holidays, with people trying to get to Drayton Manor. A few cars would hurtle down the Private Drive from the A5 past Bangle Lodge to try and escape the hours of queuing. We had a small group of Brownies, daughter Donna was one, they met at the village hall on a Monday evening and all had a good time. The Church members would brave 'Dark Lane' at Christmas time to carol sing - raising funds for St Bartholomew's. This was a delight, they would be rewarded with a sherry, mince pie and coinage for the collection box.

Footnote (which even today makes us smile). Not long after moving here we found a very young piglet swimming down the brook, a dear little soul who we rescued from the water. We named her 'Penelope'. I phoned the local farmers and everyone who

kept pigs (much to their amusement) to ask if anyone had lost a piglet. There were so many stifled hoots of laughter that I gave up and 'Penelope' stayed with me until she got too big and went to live with a friend. The reason we think a piglet was swimming down the brook (yes, actually swimming, for people who know pigs) was that a settlement lagoon at Weeford quarry had broken its banks and flooded Blackbrook farm (now the Antique Centre) passing through leaving water marks on the building and house up to 4ft before entering the brook and sending a tidal wave through Hints Ford and beyond carrying straw bales and all manner of rubbish, and we think the odd piglet!

I have included a photograph (courtesy of the Tamworth Herald) of improvements to the village hall. Can't quite recall when this was, but there are some very young looking village folk, including a youngster of mine. I wonder if anyone can enlighten me as to when this was. Dates are definitely not my strong point.



We have loved living here, there has been many changes since we arrived. Its nowhere near as tranquil as it was, there is always someone hurtling down the road on one or another mission. We all know change is inevitable but non the less it is quite sad that our sleepy village is sleepy no more, probably old age creeping up makes one think back. HS2 – who knows?

Editor's note -

This photo is in the Village Hall archives and was taken when we built the Lounge in Autumn 1986. Back row (L to R) Bob Spurrier, Chris Clarke, Peter Edwards, Ron Gibson, Arthur Hayes, Val Edwards. Front row – A VERY YOUNG Danny Petford!

Beer, Wine & Cider Festival (Graham Whittaker)

Thank you to Stuart, Lynne, Ian and Tracey for organising the beer festival. It was a real success and here's to the next one.

Beer, Wine & Cider Festival (Martin & Gill Needle)

Congratulations to the lads & lassies who worked so hard to make the first Beer Festival such a resounding success. Food, beer & wine 10/10

Beer, Wine & Cider Festival (Stuart Turton)

Just over 24 hours on from opening I can honestly say- "Where did it go?" and "How enjoyable was that!"- hopefully all those attended felt the same. We managed to have available 11 various Real Ales representing 4 breweries of which we opened 8 boxes. 4 boxes were completely demolished with very little remaining in the other four- almost 144 pints- Well done to you all. Opening at Noon we had the first tasters at around 12.30 (and they stayed for a marathon 6 hours or so) and closing around 7.30pm. For the limited lager drinkers we had at least 12 varieties. For the wine lovers we had a good selection of Reds, Whites, sparkling and Rose. The complimentary pickled Onions, black pudding, Bombay mix and cheese n biscuits were supplemented by very impressive dishes of Chilli with Jacket – Chicken Curry n Nan with an exotic Samosa as

the infilling lite bite. The pool table and dartboard saw lots of action - with the Rugby and F1 on the main hall TV and the heartening sounds of laughter and chatter all contributing to, in my opinion, a cracking atmosphere.

It was a delight to see so many people attending and giving their support to the event and the Village Hall. Everyone who pledged to attend, did so doing their very best to sample the various offerings available. Hopefully the word will get out that we have a cracking facility on our doorstep and given more support we can make more things happen. Without the support the facility will have no reason to be there. Surely this cannot happen! The thanks go out to all those who have helped with special mentions to Ian Reeley as the co-organiser, our wives Lynn and Tracey who prepared, made, served the main food and then cleared up the mess afterwards. To Graham Whittaker (Our Village hall Chairman) for helping set up and serving all day, John Toogood, Mick Hartland, Sue Petford and my son Aaron for helping where they could.

HOWEVER THE MAIN THANKS GOES TO ALL OF YOU WHO ATTENDED- GIVE YOURSELVES A PAT ON THE BACK FOR SUPPORTING THE EVENT AND THE VILLAGE HALL.

IMPORTANT- The unopened boxes (3 x 18 pint) of Real Ale will be available on the following Friday evenings 29th November (Nel's Best), 6th (Potholer) and 13th December (Red Shep) together with the remaining lagers of the world and selection of wine purchased but not consumed during the beer festival. The Malt of The month for December will be announced shortly.

IDEA! Sunday Opening during the Winter?- Please give us some feedback for opening on a Sunday- say 12.30 till 14.30pm- A mini two hours of the beer festival on a Sunday afternoon- just like the old days! If we have sufficient demand it could happen!

Christmas Craft Day in the Village Hall (Debbie Whittaker)

Friday 13th December 1pm to 6pm. Come and make your Christmas Wreath, Hearth or Table decorations with us. There is mulled wine, mince pies and plenty of festive spirit! Please let me know if you need any spruce or oasis for your decoration before the event. Please let me know if you will be attending. Also please note this event is not suitable for children under 12.

Deb on 01543 480090 or email deb@interiorsforkids.co.uk

New Year's Eve in the Village Hall (Debbie Whittaker)

The village hall will be open at 7.30pm on New Year's Eve. There is an option of a two course sit down meal, consisting of a main and a sweet, at £10.00 per head. The food will be sourced from Packington Farm; for more information about the menu please contact me. I need to know numbers for food by 13 December along with monies, this is the LATEST we can take orders. There is an optional dress code: Black and White.

Please contact Deb on 01543 480090 or email deb@interiorsforkids.co.uk or Tracey Reeley 01543 480272 to book for food.

Breakfast in the Village Hall (Debbie Whittaker)

The village hall will be open for breakfast on Sunday the 29th December.

Breakfast served between 9.30am and 10.45am. booking essential.

Deb on 01543 480090 or email deb@interiorsforkids.co.uk

Art for St Bart's (Val Edwards)

We will be taking a break from Monday 16th December and hope to reconvene in the Village Hall on Monday 13th January 2014, courtesy of the Village Hall Management Committee. We are working our way through northern European artists from Van Eyck to Vermeer and still have a long way to go so if you are new to Art History please feel free to come and join in. Monday evenings 7:30 to 9:30, £3 per session including refreshments, all proceeds to St Bartholomew's Church. For further details contact Val Edwards on 01543 480088.

St. BARTHOLOMEW'S
CHURCH SERVICES December 2013

8th December	6.30pm	Holy Communion Rev. Fiona Haskett
Readings:	Roy Clarke	Luke 1:26-38
	Val Edwards	John 1:19-28
Sides person:	Gill Needle	
22nd December	6.30pm	Candlelight Carols & Christingle Rev. Fiona Haskett
Readings:	tba	
	tba	
Sides person:	tba	
24th December	10:00pm	Holy Communion Rev. Fiona Haskett
Readings:	tba	Titus 3:4-7
	tba	Luke 2:8-20
Sides person:	tba	

St Bartholomew's Church (Fiona Haskett)

Sunday 22nd December at 6:30pm – Candlelit Carol Service and Christingle followed by mulled wine and nibbles in the Village Hall.

St Bartholomew's Church (Fiona Haskett)

This Christmas as on previous occasions we are hoping for donations to the Pathway Project Christmas Appeal. The Pathway Project provides a refuge for victims of domestic violence in the Lichfield area. At Christmas the Project organisers would welcome small gifts such as chocolate selection boxes for the children and unopened toiletries for mothers, just so they can have something to open on Christmas Day. If you have any to spare, please leave them, unwrapped, in the receptacle provided at the west end of the church. They will be delivered to the Pathway Project for them to be distributed in time for Christmas. Thank you.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

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Hints web site www.hints-village.com

Vicar – Rev. Fiona Haskett 432233

Churchwardens – Jeannette White 480066 and

Simon Clarke 07798 740209

Chairman of the Village Hall - Graham Whittaker 480090

Chairman of the Social Club – Stuart Turton 481162

Chairman of Hints with Canwell Parish Council

Geoff Kynaston 0121 308 6145

Chairperson of the Garden Guild – Maureen Casson 481151

Art History - Val Edwards 480088

V. Hall Bookings Sec. - Gill Needle 481220

Art Classes – Janet Clarke 481214

Hints Golf Society (Simon Clarke)

Hints Golf Society concluded the 2013 season and the "Race to Whittington" with a keenly contested game at Whittington Heath. Jez Holloway and Ann Meadows were tied at the top of the Order of Merit before the game. Who would come out on top? Ten players braved the dull and damp conditions. With the course playing quite long it favoured the longer hitters. Simon Clarke just beat Jez to first place on the day with 36 points (on count back) with Chris Meadows in third with 35 points. Unfortunately Ann could not find her recent good form and it was Jez who won their head to head and clinched the Order of Merit. Jez now becomes the 4th player to win the Order of Merit and receive the Presidents' Plate. The Society have had another successful season. The only low point was the Spring Tour to Woodhall Spa, which had to be abandoned due to torrential rain. A total of 26 players have played the remaining nine events, seven of which have been played on courses that were new to the Society. Here's looking forward to next season.

Garden Guild (Maureen Casson)

Another excellent evening was enjoyed on the 14th November when members gathered in the Village Hall at the usual time of 7.30pm ready to welcome our speaker, Helen Whitehouse. She very soon made us aware of the Heritage of our Canals as she donned the clothes appropriate to the barge people of around one hundred or so years ago. She wore a black skirt, white blouse and a special type of red bonnet that was designed for the ladies travelling with barges up and down the country. We enjoyed various slides of the canals in many places and in our minds we travelled with Helen as she expounded much of the history to us and although the canals were originally used for commercial and cargo purposes, things have changed and today the concentration has seen people enjoying their leisure time and relaxation and we note that many people choose to spend their holidays afloat on the canals where we often find convenient pubs in which to enjoy a meal. We were also made aware of the work being undertaken locally near Lichfield to re-open one of our local waterways on which many volunteers are working and with the help of Lottery funding. If YOU weren't there you missed a good evening.

The next meeting for members will be on Thursday 19th December when we will be enjoying a quiz, a raffle and Christmas Party drinks and nibbles and the usual chat and swapping of hints and tips. Garden Guild members send Christmas Blessings to all readers and the invitation to come and join us at some future time, we really do have speakers who are interesting to listen to and you will always be made welcome.

Hints with Canwell Parish Council (Anna Jackson)

The people of the Parish of Hints with Canwell have the opportunity to decide whether to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. You may well be asking, 'What is a Neighbourhood Plan?'

Neighbourhood Planning is part of the localism agenda and enables communities to produce their own plans to give them more of a say in the development of their areas.

Through the Neighbourhood Plan residents can make choices about:

- Where new homes, shops, offices and other developments should be built
- Which important local green spaces and facilities should be protected
- The design and style of new buildings

Of course, all of the decisions must conform to the District's Local Plan, but a Neighbourhood Plan for Hints with Canwell would give us, the residents, more of a voice.

There will be a Public Meeting at Quinney Hall, Canwell, on Wednesday 22nd January 2014 at 19:30 to discuss the possibilities of producing a Neighbourhood Plan; **a plan which would develop a shared vision for the neighbourhood. Please come along – everyone is very welcome.**

On a separate matter: Copies of the HS2 Hybrid Bill documents will be on deposit at both Tamworth and Lichfield Libraries and in due course will be at Hints Village Hall.

"A BLAST FROM THE PAST" (Janet Clarke)

The first Church and Village Newsletter I have is dated July 1990 when Gerald Blackburn took over as editor from Jo Barwell. Up until December 1993 these were printed on sheets of foolscap paper and were issued twice monthly. Gerald continued to be editor until 2006 when I took over. Many changes have taken place. In July 1990 we had **weekly** church services and the Reading Rota numbered **fourteen** and the Flower Rota numbered **seven** with someone arranging flowers every weekend. (Can we hope that "what goes round, comes round")? The vicar, the Rev. Keith Haywood and family left the Peel Parishes (Hints, Drayton and Canwell) in 1990 to take up ministry in Leek, having spent five years with us. Mention was always made in these newsletters of parishioners who were ill or in hospital or who had passed away. In the September 1990 newsletter we learned of Vic Spurrier's death - father of Robert Spurrier. The Spurrier family lived in what is now Chadwick House and they were a much respected and appreciated family whose help was invaluable to our village. David Gates of Bourne Cottage passed away on 21st September. Norman Dorrington was home from hospital and Robert Clarke and Catherine Dillon were married at St. Bartholomew's church. The Rev. Hugh Baker and family were welcomed to Hints and his first service was celebrated on 16th September 1990. I'm hoping a few villagers will remember these people. More tit-bits next month.

BIRD UPDATE (Janet Clarke)

There's not much news to report on this topic. We have a few chaffinches visiting the seed containers and occasionally a blue tit, a robin and a few sparrows. There must be ample food for them in the gardens at present, taking priority over our seeds and peanuts. Perhaps when the really cold weather comes they will be very happy to return to our feeding stations. In a neighbour's garden a family of hedgehogs is being fed nightly on cat food, fattening them up ready for their winter hibernation. We have seen the green woodpecker only once, just happened to be looking through the window at the right time. The sparrow hawk is round and about, not a welcome sight! Do hope everyone is appreciating the wonderful autumn colours on the trees. We drove through Milford and part of Cannock Chase last weekend and the colours were spectacular - our very own "New England."

Parish Council (Geoff Kynaston)

At the parish council meeting held on 12th Nov at Hints village Hall the following items were discussed. PC Kevin Stackhouse give a report on local policing and informed us that there will be a public policing meeting held at 11am to 3pm on 21st Dec at Mill Lane Link, Mill Lane, Fazeley. There was a long discussion on our responsibility for the Parish Field at Canwell. Decision to contact Lichfield District Council for advice.

Neighbourhood Plan see separate note. Advice to log on to:

www.birmingham.gov.uk/plan2031 to see why a neighbourhood plan may be essential!

Decision to join Staffordshire County Council Forum road survey in the hope that we can get some action on HGV's in Hints and speeding in Canwell.

Advise highways on urgent need for gutter clearing in School Lane and gully jetting outside Weeford Lodge Hints and London Road Canwell.

Next meetings Tuesday 14th Jan 7.30pm at Quinney Hall

Wed 22nd Jan PUBLIC MEETING at 7.30pm Quinney Hall.

Tues 11th March 2014 7.30pm at Hints Village Hall.

Tues 13th May 2014 Annual Parish Meeting 7.30pm at Hints Village Hall.