

UNITED BENEFICE MAGAZINE - April 2008

ST JOHN'S CUTCOMBE

Apr 6 th	6.00pm	EVENSONG	
		Readers	Mr R Webber & Mrs W Schofield
		Sidesman	Mr R Neal
Apr 13 th	8.00am	BCP HC	
		Readers	Mr E Beckett & Mr J Webber
		Sidesman	Mr J Howe
Apr 20 th	6.00pm	EVENSONG	
		Readers	Lady Burns & Mrs G Brooks
		Sideman	Mr R Neal
Apr 27 th	11.15am	FAMILY CW HC	
		Readers to be arranged	
		Sidesmen	Daniel & Nick Matravers
May 4 th	6.00pm	EVENSONG	
		Readers	Mrs M Russell & Mr R Webber
		Sidesman	Mr R Neal

FLOWERS & BRASS

April 6 th	Mary White
April 13 th & 20 th	Gill Langdon
April 27 th & May 6 th	Sally Parish

A new rota will be compiled soon and I would be delighted if any new ladies or gents would like to add their name to the rota. No previous flower arranging experience necessary – we can all put flowers in a vase! Sybil Williams has done this task for many years and collected our enthusiastic band of helpers. We wish her a speedy recovery and have her back home soon. *Gill Langdon*

ST JOHN'S CHURCH CUTCOMBE

We very much hope to have the Rector Terry back with us for Evensong on Sunday 20th April before he has his well earned Sabbatical.

Vestry & AGM for St John's will be held on Thursday 10th April at 7.30pm in the Edwin Beckett Room of the Moorland Hall. All parishioners are eligible to vote for the election of Churchwardens. This is followed by the AGM. The annual reports will be available from 7pm.

CUTCOMBE FRIENDSHIP CLUB

We meet in the Moorland Hall for a couple of hours on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. At the moment we have tables playing bridge, whist, Rummikub or Scrabble but could always have a go at learning something different as well! We would be delighted to welcome new members, so why not come along?

Tuesday 8th April at 2.30 Teas: Eileen Webber

Tuesday 22nd April at 2.30 Teas: Enid Mantin

MOORLAND HALL 100 CLUB – March Draw

£20 No. 42 Roger Webber; £10 No. 73 George Taylor
£5 No. 49 Misses M & R Brinkley.

CUTCOMBE FETE MEETING

The first meeting to arrange this year's Fete is on Monday 21st April in the Moorland Hall at 7pm. Everyone welcome.

CUTCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council met on the 18th March. Draft minutes of all meetings are available on the website www.wheddoncross.org.uk and are posted on the Parish noticeboards at Wheddon Cross and Luckwell Bridge. Remember to leave any community notices or correspondence for the Clerk in the yellow folder at the Londis shop.

Snowdrop Valley Park and Ride Scheme

Having been co-ordinated by the Parish Council for the first time, it was reported that the scheme ran with few problems and it was resolved to continue to run it in 2009. Thanks were recorded to Sally Parish and her

team or workers as well as the Exmoor National Park Authority, the Badgworthy Land Company and all others who had helped to make this year successful. Final figures and details are still to be finalized.

Dulverton Practice Outreach Surgery

We have been asked by the Dulverton practice to urge parishioners to use the outreach surgery on Mondays at the village hall as much as possible rather than visiting Dulverton as it is important that this facility is used and retained in our village.

Wheddon Cross Recycling Bins

Due to the many problems with rubbish accumulating around and behind the bins and items being dumped at the bins by commercial organizations who should pay to dispose of them in the proper manner, it has been decided to ask parishioners if they wish the bins to be retained in the car park, especially as now everyone should have black boxes and be having regular kerbside collections. Please come to the Annual Parish Meeting of Electors and make your views known.

The next Parish Council meeting will be on Tuesday 15th April at 7.30 pm in the Moorland Hall. The agenda will be available on the website and on the Parish Council noticeboards in Wheddon Cross and Luckwell Bridge several days beforehand. Please remember that all parishioners are warmly welcomed at Parish Council meetings and time is set-aside at the beginning of each meeting for public questions and statements.

Contact the Clerk, Marlene Allinson, for any further information: 07964 521206 or e-mail marlene@marleneallinson.wanadoo.co.uk

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF ELECTORS

This will take on Wednesday 2nd April at 7.30pm in the Moorland Hall. It is hoped that many parishioners will attend and make their views known on things affecting the village. We have many things happening at the moment, including the proposed development of the market site and closure of the Post Office, a request for support from Dunkery Pre-School and the Parish Plan, so please come along and make your views known.

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF CUTCOMBE

In the January issue, Mully included some outspoken items in her bit on Village News. These views belong to Mully and villagers who have voiced their concerns to her. These views do not constitute the opinions of the PCC.

There are two views on the magazine including debates and questions.

Against

1. To include any items that might divide the village is wrong.
2. To do so would cause trouble and enmity within the village, thus must be avoided.
3. There are already forums to air them ie Parish Council, PCC and Hall committee.
4. The magazine should only carry Church or club news.
5. We do not have an Editor to rein in excitable writers, as the Rector is the de facto Editor, but does not have the time.
6. The Church should not involve itself in village matters.

For

1. It is better to air concerns any differences and have them answered in the magazine.
2. As people are already discussing in private these concerns, will making it public, make it worse.
3. Many people are too reserved to face a forum or Authority figure and need a public place to voice their concerns freely and receive answers.
4. Unless the local forums know what concerns the villagers, they will assume all is well and carry on regardless.
5. Three of the issues mentioned in the Jan. Magazine are being dealt with or answered. Surely this is a good thing.

The PCC debated the above questions at great length, taking into account the views expressed by villagers to individual PCC members. It was voted that the Magazine would try an experiment. A section called Village Debate could be started, in which questions can be posed and answered. This is not for abuse but proper debate. You will note that Mully only posed questions, nothing specific. We will discuss the situation with the other PCC's in the Benefice.

Finally, it was suggested that the Church not be involved in local matters. St. John's Church, Cutcombe, is the benign heart of this village, and thus fully involved in every aspect of daily life.

Jon Trouton 01643 841224 Mully@woolmer.org.uk - 01643841892

Church Notice Board

A few years ago the PCC agreed to use the position at the Bus Stop for the following reason.

1. It was free. To replace the board in the old position would have cost hundreds.
2. It might well be vandalised again in the old spot.
3. There was, at that time, no other place available.
4. Jon Trouton agrees with Mully about the bad position. Could any of our bright villagers suggest a good position?

POST OFFICE CLOSURE

The news that Wheddon Cross Post Office was on the Government closure list came as a great shock to all of us. In excess of 100 people attended an excellent meeting chaired by Roger Webber to discuss why it was on the closure list and what if anything we can do to keep the service we are now enjoying. I was always told 'if you don't use it you will lose it'. We do use it but the government has the upper hand by taking away all the services we have used over the years – remember buying your National Insurance Stamps, Television Licence, paying certain bills? Well these and many others are now history. One could call it closure via the backdoor – we can no longer use it for certain services so instead of 'if you don't use it you will lose it' it is can't use it so you will use it. Now if we want to keep our Post Office in the community we have to fight for it to stay and if we do manage to keep it will it still be on the same premises and for the same hours or a few hours in the draughty car park until the saying comes around again – 'if you don't use it you will lose it'? Slowly in the countryside (and now the towns as well) everything that was ever useful is taken away.

I hope that you have written your letter of support to the Government, Post Office, Post Watch and our local MP.

VILLAGE NEWS

Easter has been very early this year, clashing with lambing, but at the same time makes the Christian Easter very merry with baby lambs leaping and rushing around madly.

Palm Sunday saw a huge crowd at our Church, St John's Cutcombe - including a very reluctant pony! 91 humans attended this service and the young readers gave a fine clear performance, they are so adept in public now that their voices are clear to the back of the Church. We also had the full choir attending, giving additional support and gravitas.

Maundy Thursday the Benefice Service and Choir were at Exton, what a beautiful gem, as we sang, prayed and stripped the altar the gale screamed outside. As we filed out of the Church in silence, even the rain had stopped.

Good Friday saw the Benefice Service and Choir at Ancient Winsford, with its wobbly pillars and beautiful windows. It was, in my opinion, the most gripping retelling of the Arrest, Trial and Crucifixion of Jesus. It is many years since I have listened to the terrible story with complete attention and held in breath.. I then had to breath again to sing. Brenda Staples has worked so terribly hard, during Terry's long illness, and I think the Choir repaid all her efforts to make us pay attention in rehearsals. Again we left the Church in silence.

Easter Sunday 65 people joined us at St. John's for a joyful Service. Our service was full of children and their families. Our visiting Priest remarked on how wonderful it was to see children in the Church and taking such active parts in the service. He also remarked how very rare this was. The service was boisterous and happy and we all sang with gusto, even without the choir – Christ is Risen.

In this country we always have said that hearing the first cuckoo heralded Spring has come. Not here at Wheddon Cross, for us, the first sign of Spring, for many years, has been the “For Sale” board go up at Sundial House! Then, the end of Summer would be heralded by the board being

taken down as Chris and Theresa decided they couldn't find anywhere better than here. What are we going to do. We are cuckoo-cuckoo less. Our Cuckoo has flown to Williton. Goodbye dear friends we shall miss coffee/gossip in the garden.

Didn't they do well? Snowdrop Valley has been a resounding success this year. What a lovely start to the new enterprise. Congratulations to the new untried teams of Car Park Attendants.

Hopefully, the R&B will be open again soon, but as I am writing this in March please make allowances. Still, this has been an ideal time to diet and cut out those naughty drinks that the Government disapproves of so much. The poor Norman's will be trampled with the rush of people trying to be first in when they re-open.

Our Rector, Terry, continues to make good progress and has even managed a drive to Minehead. The thrill of this must have made him giddy with excitement and in need of a lie down.

I received a parking ticket this week from WSDC. I had parked in the Summerland Road car park, with my disabled badge incorrectly displayed (upside down) on the dashboard. I have written to apologise and have sent them a copy of my Badge the right way up. Villagers, be careful out there, Minehead is a dangerous place for us hill-billies.

I urge people who wish to live in Social Housing in our Benefice to get on the list at WSDC, Magna or go and see the Parish Council to get advice and help on how to do this. There is no 10 year residency required for rented housing. However, it is vitally important that you do so now. We hope that Cutcombe Market Site will have both Affordable Homes for those who can afford to buy and Social Housing on the updated 2008 Housing List.

Twice Charles and I have been to the Parish Council for help and advice on certain matters, each time our problem has been solved. Even St. John's Church has benefited by approaching the Parish Council. Again I urge people to make use of our Parish Council in the way that it was set up to

do. If the Parish Council do not know of your concern, they cannot assist or answer your query. *Mully* email: mully@woolmer.org.uk

POORLY PARISHIONERS

It was on attending the Post Office meeting that I like many others heard that Sybil (Williams) had been admitted to hospital for treatment and an operation. We wish her well and back home in Cutcombe soon.

Beryl Thompson from Worzels has also been poorly with a mini stroke and spent time in Musgrove and Williton Hospitals. After one night home she felt poorly and was whisked back to Musgrove by helicopter for a spell of tests and treatment. Thankfully she is back home now and well on the way to recovery. *CS*

CUTCOMBE SCHOOL

Pre-School Extension

As an update on the Pre-School extension we are still planning to be up and running for September 2008. The planning permission has been granted and the tenders back from the building companies. These tenders are now being scrutinised so that we have the best company for the school. We will update you again with the outcome of this process in the next parish magazine.

Book Day

On the 6th March the school had a Book Day where the children and staff dressed up as either characters from a book or as someone else. We had Power Rangers, Cinderella, ugly sisters and even donkey from Shrek. This was all in aid of 'Book Aid', which promotes literacy in developing countries by creating reading and learning opportunities. The idea is that the money raised be used to buy books for the children in these developing countries to read. We raised £36.46 which means that we can send 27 books. Well done everybody who donated and entered into the spirit of the day.

Wells Cathedral Pilgrimage Day

In true federation fashion, the Year 4 children from Timberscombe and Cutcombe joined together to visit Wells Cathedral on their Pilgrimage Day. They learnt what a pilgrimage was and why Christians would come to Wells on a pilgrimage. They had tremendous fun in mime and music as well as learning all the different features in the Cathedral itself.

Whilst this was happening, all the Year 3 children were enjoying time together learning all about Crime and Punishment in Tudor times. It was great to see all the children working across both schools, socialising and learning together.

Children's Art Day

A children's art day painting with watercolours is taking place in the Moorland Hall on Saturday 29th March from 10am until 2pm. Alex Adams a local artist from Minehead is running the session and kindly agreed to come away from his usual patch to make the day accessible to others. The day is open to anyone aged between 6 and 16. Places are limited so call Rachael Abraham ideally before Easter on 01643 841791 if you would like a place reserved. We could do with a couple of adults to stay and help so if you are able to please let me know. The cost is £8 per child and children will need to bring a packed lunch.

SNOWDROP VALLEY 2008

This year the parishioners of Cutcombe and Cutcombe Parish Council organised the annual Park and Ride scheme to the snowdrops at the bottom of Drapers Way during February. It was all a bit last minute and I was extremely grateful to the 12 people who put their names on the rota to man the information trailer and car parking areas as I don't think Bump and I would have been much use!

The buses carried a total of 4247 people over the 23 days with many more walking or using the disabled pass/group pass system. The busiest day was 9th February when 379 people used the bus system and the quietest day was 22nd February with only 35 people using the service.

One of the major issues we faced was that most visitors did not realise that Exmoor National Park Authority were not running the scheme and several coach companies and groups turned up oblivious to the changes. Once the

new process was explained most were very keen to give a donation to encourage the continuation of the scheme in future years.

A total of 247 people completed the questionnaire that was available from the car park and here is a brief summary of the findings:

87% came to the area specifically to see the snowdrops

91% came by car; 4.5 % by coach; 4% by bus and 0.5% by motorbike

Overall 79% felt the experience was excellent and a further 19% rated it as good which is very encouraging indeed and a reflection on the professionalism of both the bus drivers and the staff manning the information trailer. 1.5% suggested their experience was average or poor with comments relating to a lack of snowdrops in the valley; lack of publicity; dogs not being allowed on the buses and the fact that a previous years walk was not way marked. Well, you can't please all the people all the time, but I think we did extremely well in our first year.

I would like to express my personal thanks to Cynthia for her website work; Marlene for her work on the leaflet; Daphne and Robert who became Rota Coordinators and dealt with the day to day issues; to all the staff who undertook shifts; Badgworthy Land Company for giving us permission to use Snowdrop Valley; Exmoor Farmers Livestock Auction for the parking spaces; the Exmoor National Park Authority Rangers and Exmoor Conservation Volunteers for the physical preparation work; to all the organisations who ran the Snowdrop Cafe; to the Rest and Be Thankful and Exmoor House tea rooms for their contribution to the overall event; via WebberBus I would like to thank the drivers for going round and round in circles; and of course to the Parish Council for their support. I have also been asked to pass on thanks to Daphne, Robert and the snowdrop staff from Dulverton National Park Centre who were very appreciative of the regular snowdrop reports and all efforts made to running the scheme.

We still have to tie up a few loose ends but it looks like we have made a respectable profit in our first year. If the Parish Council decided to continue to run the scheme there are a lot of improvements that need to be made which will of course involve some level of financial investment, and we must aim to have one year's operating profit in reserve for leaner years.

Thank you to everyone once again. *Sally Parish*

CUTCOMBE HORSE SHOW AND GYMKHANA

Plans are underway for Sunday 15th June 2008, when the annual Cutcombe Horse Show will take place at Dunkery Hill Gate by kind permission of Mr and Mrs Harold Stevens.

As always there would be no Show without the help of our generous sponsors and Jill Schofield will be writing for your support very soon. If you wish to sponsor a class or help in any way please contact Jill on 01643 841356. With money raised at last year's Show we were delighted to share the sum of £2515 between the following organisations: Cutcombe School, Dunkery Pre-School, St Johns Church, The Moorland Hall, The Parish Party, Clowns and the Devon Air Ambulance.

As well as a variety of Showing Classes for horses, Jumping and Mountain and Moorland, there is a fancy dress competition and fun gymkhana during the afternoon. The Family Dog Show and Terrier Show begins at 2pm and the Minehead Harriers have been invited to parade their hounds.

Make a note for your diary now!

PARISH MAGAZINE

Thank you to everyone for their recent donations towards the printing of the magazine. To contribute to the cost of magazine please either give your contribution to the person who delivers it each month, Eileen at Dunkery View or to Mully.

WELCOME

We would like to welcome Margaret and Steve Robinson from Hertfordshire to Sundial House. Having run a Ski Chalet in the French Alps they should have no problems dealing with the 'grockles' we get on Exmoor. As children they both holidayed in the area and loved the hills and the coast. They are hoping people will pop in and say hello when passing so they can get to know everyone.

As announced earlier in the magazine Chris and Teresa have moved to a bungalow in Williton. From what I hear they have been busy 'deep cleaning' and putting their mark on their new home. Teresa can be found working at Miles' in Minehead and would welcome any local updates. We wish them happy times in Williton and hope they don't miss village life too much.

CUTCOMBE LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

We held a very successful AGM in the Moorland Hall where 18 members were present. We had a resume of the past year's activities chaired by Bob Morton in the unavoidable absence of Mary White to whom the assembled company wished a speedy recovery to normal activities.

We had many people with ideas for the coming season, and with that in mind we have agreed to raise the subscription to £5 and £2 for guests who are always welcome to join us when staying locally. We fully discussed where we would like to visit and with local input wherever possible.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 16th April with a visit to the old redundant church at Parracombe followed by supper at the old Railway Station, Blackmoor Gate. Please let us know numbers attending t the latest Friday 11th and I will let you know the final details. Jacky 01643 841330

A BIT MORE HISTORY

Last summer the Free Press reported that it was the 40th anniversary of the purchase of the Playing Field. Wrong! The Playing Field was actually purchased on the 3rd April 1968 as recorded on the Minutes of the Moorland Hall. I can remember some details of when the Field was purchased but being away at College there are large holes in my knowledge. Who better to ask for a potted history than Jim Collins and Edgar Webber. The field next to the Rest and be Thankful belonged to George Melhuish from North Wheddon Farm and was put on the market by James Phillips and Sons Auctioneers for £950 (the village was to be offered first refusal of purchase). The village was given the opportunity to purchase the field and a meeting was held with the following attending - Sydney & Edgar Webber, Jim Collins, Dr Coaker (from Raleigh Cott now Manor), Leonard Stevens (from Hawkington), Millie Jell, Mr Jolly and

others. It was thought that £250 could be raised but not £950. Jim C said 'If we don't buy the field our church and parishioners will never forgive us'.

Next on the agenda – how to raise the money? Every farmer was asked to donate £5 and a house to house collection was made. Donations of £15 by Dr Coaker, £50 from Cyril Phillips brought the early total to £230. Jim C then asked the Playing Field Association based in Whitehall for help - giving his Navy rank and position as National Park Warden to add a little weight to his request. His name and rank were immediately recognised by the person answering the phone - a fellow Officer who had served with Jim in Singapore. 'I will match every £1 you raise' Jim was promised and lo and behold a few days later a cheque for £230 arrived for the fund. Jim will always remember one donation from 'Granny' Davies of 2/6p. He said it meant more to him than all the large donations received because to her it was a lot of hard earned money

A major fund raising initiative was organised with whist drives, dances etc and with the match funding from the PFA and other sponsors including Billy Butlin and a lot of hard work from Jim C and his team the field was purchased and the footballers and cricketers no longer needed to drive the sheep out of the field before they could use it. The field behind the present pavilion used to be used for matches.

As well as purchasing the field the Moorland Hall was improved (sound familiar!) by local builder John Burt. This was when the stage was added and loos beside the old kitchen. A grand opening by Tom King MP with a band from the Army Camp at Norton Fitzwarren playing from Fairfield (on the Taunton Road), round the crossroads and along to the Hall and field. I am told that this moved Granny Takle to tears (mother of Tony and Christine).

I can remember some of the fund raising especially the dances with the Dominos and Hotspots playing when the 'young ones' – Binnie and Roly and the even younger ones Anne C, Eric C, Jim S, John M, Margaret M, Roger W, Richard W, Gerald E, Derek E, Bridget C, Dave C, myself and many others had a great time. Thanks to the foresight of our elders the

sportsmen had a clean field and we had a venue for our functions such as the Fete.

It wasn't until 1970 that the loos were moved to the 'new' extension with the work again done by John Burt.

I understand that there was a local 'Hippie' happening on the field on one occasion. I am not sure whether it was for fundraising or to celebrate the opening but there are some very local people with a few stories to tell!

The field was bought by the village for the village. Thank you.

A bit more history – thank you

I was flicking through last months magazine, not showing much interest, when all of a sudden 3 words jumped out of the page at me. They were 'Alan (Lordie) Down. And suddenly I was very focused on the article – because why was somebody writing about my Grandfather?

Thank you Ken and Margaret for the lovely article, it brightened up my day and brought back happy memories of my grampy.

I can remember when telling my granddad that we were going to Wheddon Cross to live how 'chuffed' he was that we were moving to the village that he had been born in. How proud he would be now of his great-grandson playing cricket and football for the village teams.

We used to chuckle at the fact that the holiday cottages at Triscombe that I was 'mucking out' were the stables that he used to muck out! – was there much difference!!!! *Maria Adams*

WEATHER EYE



February fill ditch
Black or white it don't care which

February 2008 was the driest February this century, although the first week was very showery, some being wintry with hail. A predominantly chilly W/NW wind blew and brought some sunshine, although St Agatha's Day on the 5th had heavy overnight rain and heavy squally showers during the day. By the 7th it was becoming milder, with a light SW breeze. Frosty mornings followed with hazy sunshine and mildish days.

St Valentine's Day (14th) was, by contrast, cold and grey with an E/NE wind, which persisted until 20th, when a W/SW breeze signalled the start of a milder, greyer and damper few days.

The morning of the 25th brought freezing fog and was one of the two coldest mornings of the month with the thermometer showing -4°, (as did the 17th). More heavy rain overnight on the 26th was followed by a mainly sunny day, with a strong west wind and the rest of the month was changeable, becoming milder and less windy, until the 29th, which proved to be wet and windy midday onwards.

Total rainfall for the month was 74.5mm around 3" falling on 10 days. There were 10 air frosts and several ground frosts recorded.

COPY FOR THE MAGAZINE

Please leave any material for the magazine at Dunkery View on the Friday morning before the deadline date set in the previous month's magazine, preferably before 9am! I can't promise to collect them after that time so if late you will either have to bring them to me or they may not be included. emails by Friday if possible but can be dealt with up to Monday lunchtime. If there is a problem please ring me on 831513 or email cynthste@talktalk.net