

Ashlands Meadow
Crewkerne



Dear Friends

A busy month lies ahead with the start of Lent on the 5th, Mothering Sunday on the 30th, and before that the Annunciation is on the 25th. Celtic saints also figure: St David on the 1st and St Patrick on the 17th. Thomas Cranmer as well is noted on the 21st.

However most of our attention will be taken, if the media have their way, by concerns about world peace. This must bother us as we know how many nations are beset with massive problems from misguided and sometimes downright evil leaders such as North Korea, Zimbabwe, and not least, Iraq for example.

We all know how difficult it can be to contain and restrain the wicked in our midst, also how devious criminal minds can be set to deceive and trade on our innocence and sometimes gullibility. We also know how powerless the police are to act, that is until some definite harm is done. We also know all too often who are the guilty BUT cannot prove it in a way that will stand up in a court. Those in Northern Ireland, as well as elsewhere, know these are truths.

Unless there is a consensus with moral force and the will to sanction evil behaviour then the wicked have a field day. Such is the moral chaos of our time that sadly such a consensus seems impossible to achieve. Saddam seems to have been able to flout the declared will of the United Nations ever since the Gulf War, if not longer. Without a formidable combined stand he will be able to continue to do so. There will be no need for war provided all nations stand and combine to make clear to him that his behaviour will no longer be tolerated.

We must do what we can to proclaim Jesus' way of life by PRAYER FOR PEACE and by commending His will to those we can influence. Do not despair God is not mocked and in the end of all Their Will will prevail.

Hold the faith then, in trust and love.

David Savill



ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH AND THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

There will be a united service at the United Reformed Church, Winsham on Sunday 16th March at 10.30am, please come, you will be most welcome. This will replace the normal 10.30am service at St Stephen's on this day.



LENT COURSE AT ST STEPHEN'S

Rev. Stephen Kivett will lead this course and we will be studying St Mark's gospel. All you will need is your favourite version of the bible.

The course will start at 7.30pm on Monday, 10th March and subsequent Mondays for 4 weeks. We will meet at The Garden House, Back Street, Winsham. Everyone welcome do come and join us.



LENT LUNCHESES IN THE PARISHES

There will be a total of seven lunches to be held in the parishes of Thorncombe and Winsham during Lent in aid of various charities. Do come along and join in as many as possible. Venues, dates and times appear in This'n'That at the back of the magazine.



"Peace grows from inside people and from the community in which they live."

Sopheap (aged 18) Cambodia

CANCER RESEARCH

Elsie and Bert Vickery thank all of you who contributed books, bottles, cakes, donations and your valuable time as well as all of you who came to support the Book Sale and Coffee Morning at Blackdown Hall on Saturday, 8th February. An excellent sum of £418 was raised for a very important cause.



CONGRATULATIONS to Freda Hulme of Winsham, now at Sunnymead, Chard, who celebrated her 100th birthday on January 19th. Amongst many tributes, she received a card from the Queen.



SOS TO FORMER THORNCOMBE BELLRINGERS

If there are any of you out there who no longer need beginners' booklets (one cream, one green) we should be most grateful to have these back for current learners. Could you either put them at the back of the church in an envelope marked 'Virginia de Boinod,' or in Pauline Holt's street letterbox (Papan, next to the village shop.) With many thanks for your help.



FAREWELL TO Ros and Keith Stevens, 8, Orchard Lane, Thorncombe
WELCOME Barbara and John Barnes to 8, Orchard Lane, Thorncombe

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH WINSHAM

Minister – Revd John McMinn – 01935 872105

Hon Secretary – Michael Hebditch – 01460 30201

Sunday services at 10.30am. 1st Sunday, tea and biscuits after the service. 3rd Sunday Holy Communion
3rd Thursday 12.15-1.30 monthly Soup & Cheese Lunch at the Sports Club



THORNCOMBE CHAPEL

Normal Sunday Services: 11am and 6.30pm. Every 2nd Sunday at 11am is a Family Service.
A welcome to everyone.

Ladies Bright Hour: Alternate Wednesdays – 2.30pm. A welcome is extended to all ladies to join in this special hour followed by tea and biscuits and a chat.

Saturday Club for Boys & Girls: 11am to 12.15pm every Saturday. This is an exciting club for boys and girls of 4 years and over. It has a mixed programme of bible stories, quizzes and many other activities.

Enquiries 01460 30267



ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH CHARD

Priest: Canon James O'Brien – 01460 62197

Services: Sunday Mass 8am and 11am. Weekdays – 9.30am. Holy Days – 9am and 7pm.

Confessions – Saturdays 11am – 12 noon.



A BIG THANK YOU

I wish to thank, firstly, Julie my wife who has loved, cared, supported and worried for me all these past months, the children and my parents for all they have done.

I thank all of you out there who have prayed for me, offered help, supported us as a family and encouraged me at every step of progress that I have made.

I don't believe I knew how ill I had been, I can't remember all of the last 3 months of last year, but now as things are coming back together it's dawning on me, I couldn't walk and now I can!

I have now had my first day back at work and was exhausted but the recovery is happening.

Despite thousands of pounds being spent no diagnosis was ever made, nothing could be found wrong with me. Though I am the one who has been ill I find it strangely comforting that man doesn't know all the answers and that us mere mortals are not really in total control we're just on a really long lead running amok.

Thank you.

Stephen Rowsell

A belated but nevertheless sincere Thank You to all the kind people who sent cards, flowers and good wishes on my recent stay in hospital.

It is wonderful to be part of such a caring community.

Rosemary MacCrimmon



WINSHAM MOTHER'S UNION

The Mother's Union held its AGM in January. The meeting commenced with a brief service followed by a few moments silence in remembrance of Edie whose dedication and enthusiasm will be greatly missed by all. Members then reviewed the annual accounts. The highlights of the past year were recounted and the programme of meetings and speakers for the coming year was agreed.

The Mother's Union were asked to co-ordinate a theme for the Family Service in February and chose the MU Wave of Prayer "Patchwork" theme for the service. All the children (with a little adult assistance) together with the adults attending the service wrote personal prayers on patchwork squares, they were then all arranged together to make a large patchwork, which was on display at the end of the service for all to read.

An important date for your diary is Tuesday, 11th March, when the MU is organising an Information Evening for Carers within our community. This will be held in the Jubilee Hall from 7.30pm. Although at the time of writing this is still in the planning stage, we are hoping that a representative from Care Direct, which is a new organisation offering advice, information and help to those aged 60+, their carers and relatives, will be giving a presentation. We are also planning for a Care Support Worker for the Chard/Ilminster area to be available together with representatives/information from other useful organisations such as Home from Hospital, a Red Cross Service offering help to those coming out of hospital. Refreshments will be available and we

hope that people will be able to share experiences and exchange information in order to help further those individuals needing assistance, their carers and all their families.

We look forward to welcoming you to the meeting.



“ACROSS THE DIVIDE” – The Magdalen Project

I am writing to you as I know you are concerned for the environment and our care for it. I am aiming to raise funds for the Magdalen Project in Dorset, which is part of the Wessex Foundation, a Registered Charity, No. 1002373. The Magdalen Project is an educational establishment seeking to encourage all who come to the courses to a deeper awareness of global sustainability and environmental understanding. Probably the most challenging aspect of the project is to welcome disadvantaged and excluded young people. By teaching these principles it has already encouraged many back towards economic and social integration.

A group of us have pledged to raise at least £2,500 each for the Magdalen Project by going on a 130km, six-day sponsored trek across the Namib Desert. Namibia has been chosen because walking there is a challenge, and it is one of the few places where the natural environment reigns supreme. The trek is arranged by “Across the Divide”, the only company allowed access to this part of the desert as it supports the local wildlife trusts and is strictly monitored by the Park Wardens to ensure the minimum impact on the area. “Across the Divide” specialises in organising treks for charities.

If you are willing to sponsor the Namib Desert Trek you will be helping the Magdalen Project to continue its important work with people of many backgrounds and abilities, and to further develop its work among young people who will have the care of the planet in the future.

Please make your cheque out to Wessex Foundation and return it to me, Elizabeth Rutter, Home Farm, Chilson, South Chard, Chard TA20 2NX.



PARISH WALKS

Following a synod meeting where church people wanted to do something to help to improve the rural economy, it was decided to produce a booklet of country walks. Each walk starts at a parish church within this deanery and leads walkers on a circular route taking in beauty spots and mentioning local shops, pubs, tea rooms, craft centres, sources for buying local produce etc. A volunteer from each interested parish drew up a walk between 2 and 6 miles long, walked it and wrote it down as clearly as possible. A volunteer from another parish checked that all instructions given were unambiguous then tested the walk. The walks are being assembled into a booklet to be published shortly by S. Somerset District Council and sold

in tourist offices and local outlets, and it is hoped that they will generate interest and money from visitors to the area.



THORNCOMBE RAIL ACTIVITIES CLUB

The club aims to cover all aspects of the railways from narrow gauge to standard gauge, from model to full scale, from historic to present day.

At the January meeting we welcomed Julian Crow from First Great Western to give us an insight into the present day workings of the railway and also the future. Julian, who has worked in various parts of the railway industry for over twenty years, started off by reminding us how First Great Western came about following the privatisation of British Rail into various groups. He went through the development of the High Speed Train (H.S.T.) from the days of its conception nearly thirty years ago to the trains of today, which still form the backbone of the railway services in the non-electrified areas of the railway. These train sets are worked very hard by the present day companies and on some routes cover up to a thousand miles a day.

After the refreshment break Julian showed us a video of the newest trains being introduced by his company, the Adelante. The video took us on a tour of one of the units from the driver’s cab right through the train looking in all the various parts that passengers do not see. It was explained to us how a computer screen in the driver’s cab will tell the driver whether or not all is working properly and if a problem develops, what is wrong.

After the video members asked a considerable number of questions all of which were answered in detail.

Members were reminded that the next meeting would be on Wednesday the 19th of March when Richard Derry will be giving an illustrated talk “Railway Miscellany”.

Any inquiries please telephone Michael Sheasby on 01460 30474.



WINSHAM HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY’S COMPOST CORNER.

Oh laugh, well I did! Remember last month I featured Jasmine. Well guess what? Ours hasn’t flowered and it’s not the fault of the poor plant, it has been giving its best efforts to bloom. The blooms, when new, look all shrivelled and brownish. When my dear wife, standing at the back door indulging in her bad habit, sees these little buds she removes them! Good job she wasn’t a midwife, if we all emerged a little shrived and odd looking what would have happened! So if she can now leave the plant alone we may have a few flowers.

It’s a tad wet still and spring soil preparation needs to wait until things dry a little. You are supposed to produce a

fine tilth, not a quagmire, though walking around with a few pounds of mud stuck to you feet is good for leg muscles. Any seeds planted in wet soil will rot, so wait or sow under cover and plant out later. It will dry up. Sweet peas can be sown in pots out of doors or straight in the ground along with first early peas, peas will also rot if the soil is too wet.

Sets, bulbs and tubers can go in. Sow onion and leek seed as early as possible, in pots is fine. Bedding plants such as impatiens and petunias and tomatoes, capsicums and celery can be sown in pots in the greenhouse, ensure they are fed and watered regularly. Just remember that with green houses a couple of hours of mid- day sun will send the temperature in a green house up to 100°f and it could easily still fall below freezing at night.

When you can get on the garden sow some early root vegetables especially parsnips they need as long a season as they can get. Remember, root crops should be sown in ground not manured in the last year, ideally two. Summer cabbage and cauliflowers can be sown. Sprouts can be sown now ready for December onwards. All these brassicas can be sown in deep boxes and just transplanted later on, it works well.

My plant of the month is the once magnificent English



Elm (*Ulmus procera*.) I remember as a young boy climbing elms, only to be peeling off the dead bark the following year, then seeing the little metal tags

pined on the trunks of all those wonderful felled trees, how the landscape has changed. About 5 years ago there were a number of elms making a break for the sky, they must have been getting on for 20ft, all to be wiped out in one foul season buy the dreaded Dutch elm disease. I have heard of elms surviving to maturity if bees are kept nearby. I hope they are still surviving and the bees of course, who have also been having their own troubles.

Enjoy your gardening.

Stephen Rowsell



THORNCOMBE VILLAGE HALL

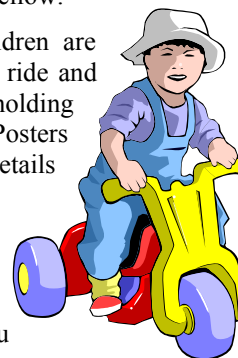
The Food Festival held last November was a resounding success thanks to Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall for opening it and the tremendous response from all those who supported it. This raised £370 towards the cost of the very necessary resurfacing of the hall's car park. It is now proposed to make this an annual event. There is also the possibility of W.I. markets being held quarterly. It is intended to continue raising funds by holding a BBQ in the summer and maybe a village variety show nearer Christmas.

A coffee morning is to be held on Saturday, 26th April in aid of the trust fund, which gives a subsidy to youth organisations using the hall. *VD*

WINSHAM PRE-SCHOOL & TODDLERS

Our theme this term has been 'celebrations.' We did 'birthdays' when the children had a birthday party and they did their own pass-the-parcel game. They took their dolls and teddies over to the church to be baptised. The 'weddings' theme, where a few got married! They made veils, bowties and wedding cakes. We also celebrated Chinese New Year by making various things like lion masks, tangram puzzle pictures, firecrackers and dragon puppets. This was also the theme for our display in Chard library. We also talked about Saraswati Puja, which is the Hindu festival celebrating spring. This was a yellow theme and all items were made in yellow.

On Tuesday, 11th March the children are doing their annual sponsored trike ride and on Saturday, 22nd March we are holding an auction in the Jubilee Hall. Posters will be going up with all the details soon.



A message to all Persil washing powder users. We are still collecting the Persil stars. There is a box in the shop for them or you can bring them into pre-school.

The pre-school is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9.15am until 12 noon. There are still places available. Any information about pre-school please contact the supervisor, Mrs Julie Rowsell on 01460 30031.

AE



THORNCOMBE VILLAGE TRUST

The committee spent some considerable time discussing the possibility of making a tender for land known as the Old Sewage Farm, after two members of the committee declared an interest and withdrew. We would have liked to have purchased this land and planted suitable trees for the village to use as an amenity. The implication of cost and continuous maintenance was a burden the committee felt more than the Trust could sustain, and so, reluctantly, we unanimously decided not to tender.



Our next meeting on Thursday March 13th at 7.30pm will be a talk on "Butterflies and Moths" by Brian Dicker from Butterfly Conservation. This should be of interest to many as the decline due to weather and farm practice has affected the numbers surviving. Members and non-members are welcome.

A special general meeting will take place after the butterfly talk. The committee wish to make changes

to the constitution and ask as many members as possible to attend so that a democratic decision can be achieved, in time for the A.G.M. on May 8th at 7.30pm. After the

business meeting we are looking forward to a talk from Kath Crouch, past T.V. Gardener of the Year. Members and non-members are welcome. JL



AXE VALLEY & WEST DORSET RING & RIDE SERVICE

Do you live in Thorncombe, Holditch or the surrounding area of West Dorset or East Devon? Do you have a problem getting to the shops, because there is no local bus service? Are you elderly or disabled? Do you have a mobility problem? Do you have physical difficulty using the local bus service? If so then try the Axe Valley and West Dorset Ring & Ride Service.

The service operates every Friday and on some Saturdays. You can be collected from your own home, no waiting at bus stops in the cold. Pick up time in Thorncombe is around 10am. Destinations vary each week but the trip will always be to a market or seaside town, giving you access

to supermarkets. Help is available with loading and unloading your shopping.

The bus is a 15 seater mini bus and is totally user friendly for disabled people. There is a tail lift for people in wheelchairs, we can transport small motorised battery operated buggies.

The timetable is published alongside this article, please take the time to read it. If you feel the service is for you then all you need to do is to phone the office on **01404 46529** no later than 4pm on the day before you want to travel.

If you would like further information about the service please phone Pipa or Jane who will be happy to answer any questions. All you have to do is phone 01404 46529.

FV

Chardstock, Thorncombe, Hawkchurch, Millwey Rise, Northay, Weycroft, Axminster, Waggs Plot, Smallridge, Churchill.

MARCH		APRIL		MAY		JUNE	
Friday 7 th	Axminster	Friday 4 th	Sidmouth	Friday 2 nd	Sidmouth	Friday 6 th	Axminster
Friday 14 th	Sidmouth	Saturday 5 th	Yeovil/Sherborne	Friday 9 th	Honiton	Saturday 7 th	Dorchester
Sat 15 th	Taunton	Friday 11 th	Honiton	Friday 16 th	Axminster	Friday 13 th	Sidmouth
Friday 21 st	Honiton	Friday 25 th	Axminster	Saturday 17 th	Taunton	Friday 20 th	Honiton
Friday 28 th	Axminster	Saturday 26 th	Exeter	Friday 23 rd	Sidmouth	Friday 27 th	Axminster
				Friday 30 th	Honiton	Saturday 28 th	Exeter

Shopping trips:- first pick up 9.45am return 1pm . Day trip fare:- £4.00 single or return.

Day trips (Saturdays):- first pick up 10am return 3pm

To book your journey or to enquire about the service please ring **01404 46529**



THORNCOMBE ART GROUP

The Art Group would like to thank everyone who bought a 2003 village calendar. £150 was donated to the First Responders as a result of the sales. Thank you. RR



SOUTH SOMERSET LINKS

South Somerset Links is a community based transport service operated by volunteer drivers.

The scheme offers two ‘People Carriers’, which have been altered to accommodate five passengers or three passengers and a standard wheelchair. Anyone who is unable to access normal bus or taxis services in their locality can use the scheme.

For further information call **01460 61973**

Iminster & District Community Transport Scheme

This is a locally operated Community Transport Scheme covering the rural area surrounding Iminster and Chard. The scheme has two minibuses, which are driven by volunteers offering services to groups or individuals with

transport difficulties, the elderly, disabled and youth groups in this part of South Somerset.

Group Trip. If you are part of a group or know of a group that would benefit from a day trip out, a shopping trip, or just need transport to and from a group meeting. If your family or a family you know has a disabled or elderly person who has difficulty with transport, and you would like a day trip, shopping, or just a family meal, we can provide the vehicle and the drivers



Bus Hire. We can provide own driver bus hire to schools and youth groups.

Chris Lamprill
Co-ordinator
Iminster & District Community Transport Scheme - **01460 61973**



As most of England braved gales and snow storms that brought the country to a grinding halt (could someone please explain why the slightest change in our weather patterns never fails to bring England to its knees?) Cricket St Thomas was blessed with a mostly benign climate with snowdrops glistening everywhere.

The hotel held a very popular valentines weekend break, heart shaped meals, roses and romantic crooning.....what more could you want?

Heather Harris, one of the housekeepers for the hotel is busy fund raising for a Namibian desert trek this summer, in aid of the Magdalen Project. If you would like to help Heather or have any brilliant fund raising ideas please contact the hotel.

February saw the birth of the most exquisite albino lechwe, to try to ensure her survival the baby calf is being hand reared in the children's zoo.

Chinese government officials have been visiting the park to oversee the arrival of the rare and endangered Reeves pheasants. Their enclosure is being built near to flamingo junction and these magnificent birds, with their two meter tail feathers, should hopefully be 'strutting their stuff' quite soon.

Finally, on a wonderfully happy note, congratulations to the beautician who undoubtedly makes many of the residents at Cricket St Thomas feel absolutely amazing on a regular basis. Tiny Tracy Gidley has just given birth to two beautiful girls, Rebecca and Isobel, mother and babies are all doing well. As I am sure her husband Paul had just a little bit to do with this wonderful event, congratulations to him!
SV



THORNCOMBE ST MARY'S SCHOOL

The computer club held another special session in January with the focus on scanning. We welcome any suggestions for future sessions and all are welcome to join us after school on Wednesdays.

We have another graduate trainee with us this term. As a school we are part of the School Centred Initial Teacher Training programme, which provides postgraduates the opportunity to learn their craft in school. This "hands on" experience is not only the best for the trainees but also gives us chance to keep up to date with new ideas. We were involved in interviewing potential trainees in school for two days last month as well. The successful candidates will bring lots of energy and enthusiasm into Dorset schools.

The children have recorded a tape of hymns to be taken out to Nepal by Liz Rutter. Liz will play the tape on a solar powered tape recorder and teach the Nepalese children some of our songs. We are also sending out an

inflatable globe to show them where we live and some pictures of what we do during a typical day.

Jenny Mather-Headteacher



WINSHAM HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Following the success of the evening in November when Katherine Crouch spoke to us about garden design we have arranged another talk, this time by Tony Spiller on 'Basic Show Preparation.' Tony is well-known at our village flower shows for the magnificence of his dahlias and perfect vegetables, so is well equipped to let us in on a few secrets of the trade! So make a note of Tuesday, 25th March and turn up at the Jubilee Hall in time for an 8pm start.

The Plant Sale this year is on Tuesday, 6th May, and the Annual Show has now come to rest on the Bank Holiday Saturday, which this year is August 23rd. Janet Smart



WINSHAM WOMEN'S ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The first meeting of the New Year was held on 10th January. A few moments silence was held in memory of Mrs Edie Jones who died recently, she was treasurer of our branch. She will be sadly missed as she was a very active member. Mrs M Tierney has taken over the position of treasurer so enabling the branch to continue. We welcome new members.

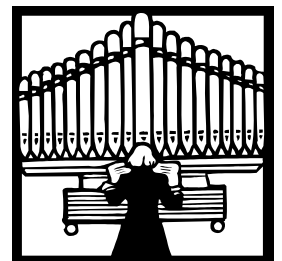
On February 10th there were eleven members present at the meeting. The speaker was Miss Mossdrop who told us about her trek over the Himalayas. She showed us slides to illustrate her interesting talk. There were six people in the party together with porters to carry the tents, food etc. Each day before the trek began they had to be sure to have a hat and carry food and water. They camped every night and washed in the rivers. The second highest mountain, Kanchenjunga could be seen and the views around were beautiful. Women working in the fields were a common sight.

She said it was very tiring but they all enjoyed the experience.
MF



THE ORGAN AT THORNCOMBE CHURCH

Whilst the organ pipes are in good condition and the organ regularly tuned, at some future date the electrics in the console are likely to break down through sheer wear and tear. The electrics were put in during the 1960s when the organ was rebuilt due to the encouragement and help of Commander Eyre. They were not expected to last more than twenty years.



The cost of putting in a new system with its many relays is £6,680 + VAT. Over the past few years' money has been set aside to help towards the cost of this eventuality. Alas the cost of rewiring the church has meant that this fund has been raided and it will restart from the proceeds of a concert to be held in the church on Sunday March 16th at 6.30pm. (See *This 'n' That* for more details.) We can be sure of an enjoyable evening and a high standard under the direction of John Mingay so please come and support us.

KRH



WINSHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL



After all the festivities of Christmas, January can sometimes seem a rather flat month. At school however, a variety of activities and visitors has brightened this dark time of year. We saved our Christingle Service until January. The circle of candlelight glowing on a particularly grey morning created a magical atmosphere.

A second visit from Guy of Carymoor Recycling Centre, this time talking about composting, is to be followed up in February with a visit by the juniors to the centre itself.

There have also been many visitors from the animal kingdom this month. As part of their literacy work on "Pets and Vets" the infant class had a "pet day," when children could bring their small pets to school. Goldfish, two rabbits, a chinchilla and a hamster were brave enough to be the centre of attention for the day! The Animal Lecture Centre made their regular annual visit with several exotic species including a huge snail and a leopard lizard.

Several members of the school took part in the RSPB garden bird survey. This year, throughout the country, the largest ever number of birdwatchers took part in this survey, making it an invaluable indicator of the bird population.

On a more energetic note – one-off athletics and basketball coaching sessions have been added to our after school clubs of hockey and netball and regular gymnastics lessons during the school day.



THORNCOMBE W.I.

In March we shall resume our evening meetings. On Tuesday 11th at 7.30pm in the Community Room we shall be entertained by Mr Max Pipe and his "Confessions of a Coach Driver." The competition will be for "the prettiest liqueur glass" and the hostesses will be Brenda Sheasby and Meg Terrett.

There will be a meeting of the Golden Cap Group on Monday March 16th details will be announced at the meeting on the 11th. Don't forget "flower of the month."

MT



WILDLIFE IN A VILLAGE GARDEN POND

The pond in our garden is just a hole with an old bath forming the deep part, lined and filled with water. Some suitable plants were added, the water settled down and we waited to see what would happen. That was nine years ago!

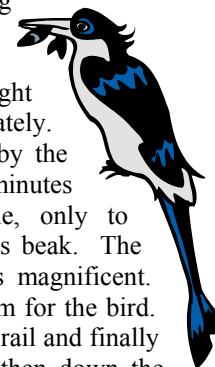
In the first summer water boatmen and pond skaters appeared and since then we have enjoyed watching frogs, tadpoles and dragonfly larva. The populations change. A great diving beetle demolishes frogspawn helped by the occasional grass snake. We still get many frogs at spawning time but the number of surviving tadpoles gets fewer and fewer.

An elver, about the size of a pencil, appeared one day. It was writhing about and was there for just one day, probably falling out of the mouth of a visiting heron.

Then the newts arrived. How do they know there to go to find a pond? We now have quite a colony of them. They come up for a breath of air occasionally but don't add much to our enjoyment of the pond as they too eat frogspawn and tadpoles.

However, last week something extraordinary, if gruesome, happened.

From my kitchen window, which is ten metres from the pond, I caught sight of a bird I did not recognise immediately. It was a kingfisher sitting on a rail by the pond. It was there for quite a few minutes watching intently then it was gone, only to reappear on the rail with a newt in its beak. The brilliant flash of blue as it flew was magnificent. The newt seemed to be quite a problem for the bird. From side to side it was bashed on the rail and finally thrown a little way into the air and then down the kingfisher's throat.



There is an open invitation to the kingfisher to come whenever he likes but I would like to think that if he did come I would be looking out of the window. *Anne Rose*



WINSHAM WALKERS

Except for the first walk our monthly walks have enjoyed good weather. Unfortunately February's walk did not follow the usual pattern and in continuous drizzle of varying strength eight people plus dogs set out via Bere Farm and Shedrick Bridge, in the direction of Thorncombe. Using the new footbridge a circuit was made following part of the Jubilee Trail, to Forde Abbey returning via Ammerham. Arriving back at the Bell, slightly damp, all agreed it had been worthwhile.

Our next walk is on the 6th March 2003, starting from The Bell at 11.00 a.m. Why not join us!

Further information from Peter Pye - 01460 30751.



THORNCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Welcome to the first article written by the new parish clerk, Lesley Barnes. I have a hard act to follow! Mary is doing an amazing job training me and showing me the ropes!

The Parish Council wish to thank the retiring clerk Mary Marsh for her hard work and dedication over the last two years. There have been many complex legal issues recently, which Mary handled with real professionalism and zeal.

The first point to note is that the date of the **Annual Parish Meeting has changed**; this is due to the original date clashing with a cultural event in the village. Therefore the date has been altered to **15 April 2003** at 7.30pm in the Community Room. May I remind you that this is a meeting of all electors, so please come along. The new parish website will be officially launched, all are welcome. There will be refreshments.

Cllr. Janet Walker has received details concerning two safety issues within the community. The first being a bogus caller and the second, details of a high-pressure sales tactics. These details will be posted in the village shop. A reminder to all of you who use the grit bins, if any of them are running low or empty, please inform Cllr Walker on 01460 30212.

Cllr. Brierley from DCC reported that there were to be new boundaries within the county for the next election in 2007. This may result in the need for 2/3 extra county councillors. The council tax at Dorset County Council is set to rise by 16½%. The government has changed the formula in calculating this. Part of the formula is based on house prices, but for Dorset it doesn't take into account the low wages and ageing population. The Parish Council is writing to the Minister to object to this change.

The Parish Council Elections are set for **1 May 2003** and **Tuesday 1 April 2003** is the last day for delivery of nomination papers. Nomination papers can be obtained from the Parish Council and the District Council. PLEASE CONSIDER STANDING FOR ELECTION – YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS YOU!

The Freedom of information publication scheme is now in force. Details of items that can be inspected have been posted on the relevant Notice Boards.

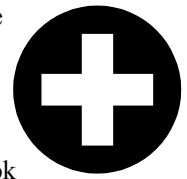
Any parishioner wishing to have an item placed on the agenda should contact the Chairman, Mark Agnew or the Clerk (01935 891971) at least seven days prior to the date of the meeting.

The next ordinary meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Tuesday 4 March** in the Community Room of the Village Hall at 7.30pm.

(Lists of planning applications and decisions which have appeared in the magazine previously under Thorncombe Parish Council will not now be included. This is due entirely to space. Apologies. Ed.)

THORNCOMBE FIRST RESPONDERS

The Responders wish to thank all those who have contributed funds recently to assist us in maintaining cover for the parish, whether by individual donations or by coins in the sweet jar in Thorncombe Stores. We recently took £50 out of the jar! Every penny is a great help to us.



Additionally, we are always on the lookout for new volunteers to join the team. There is a recurring need to train new Responders to replace those who are unable to continue because of work or family commitments. Please call Rosemary on 30189 or Richard on 30428 for further information if you would like to learn more.



WINSHAM VILLAGE SHOP

It is exactly 6 months on Saturday March 8th since we started in business as Winsham Village Shop. To mark the occasion we are holding a “launch” party in the shop from 1.00pm, combined with the Fair Trade event in the Jubilee Hall. Come along to both shop and hall to sample our current range of products, hear our plans and tell us how you think we are doing so far.

Thanks to those who have put suggestions into the box in the shop. Generally speaking we have met most of the requests and hope to be able to continue to do so. We really do need to know how well (or badly) we are doing. We would also like to hear from those who do not use the shop at the moment. What can we do to meet your needs? It would be a shame if the efforts of so many people (at present there are about 40 people involved in helping in the shop in one way or another) failed to provide what potential customers want. Only one of our directors has any previous experience in the retail trade so we are feeling our way – and learning on the job. Any advice or suggestions will be gratefully received, and if feasible, acted upon. We are, after all, a community shop and wish to reflect and respond to the needs of the community.

Financially we continue to do better than target with turnover picking up again after the expected post-Christmas dip.

Tip of the month (don't expect one every month). Put a spoonful or two of Jack & Ollie's dip (available in the shop) into a vegetable quiche. Zips it up no end.

Robert Shearer



THORNCOMBE CINEMA

The film of the month for March is “Rabbit Proof Fence” with Kenneth Branagh, a story about two aboriginal children who were taken away from their parents by the government but found their way back home.

There will be an additional film to finish off the season . Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets has been secured

for showing in March also. (*More details of times etc. in This 'n' That*)

Look out for details on posters nearer the time. Call Pauline Holt on 30428 for more information. *RH*



ST MARY'S HOLIDAY CLUB 2003

The club will be for 5 – 11 year olds and will take place between 25th – 30th August, from 10am – 12 noon, finishing with a family barbeque on Saturday 30th. Under 5's will be welcome but will need to bring their mums.

MRM



2003 WALK AND BIKE RIDE

Friends of Somerset Churches and Chapels walk and bike ride will be on Saturday, 13th September. This raises lots of lovely lolly for churches throughout Somerset. 50% of what you raise goes to your own church and 50% to FSCC to make grants to needy churches when they are faced with major repairs.

So come on all you cyclists – start getting fit and oil up your bikes and see how many churches you can visit in the day. What about each organisation in the village sponsoring a cyclist? I did it last year and I can assure you it's great fun. *MRM*



WINSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Clerk writes: -

I have been asked to write on agenda item 10c **'parking'** for my magazine contribution this month.

The outcome of a long discussion was **'consideration for others when deciding where to park your vehicle.'** There is no public off-street parking in the village nor realistically is there a possibility of creating any. There are problem spots, and examples were quoted, of thoughtless parking all around the village. The comment was made that, on an individual basis, most people would consider their own circumstances to be a special case. However a major concern remains, that of access for emergency vehicles. Parking opposite another car seriously restricts access for others. Is parking on the pavement socially acceptable? The feeling was that it is not acceptable and can be dangerous especially when the pedestrian has to walk on the road to avoid the obstacle. Parking your vehicle facing in the wrong direction at night is against the law, so is parking within 10 meters of a road junction.

It was suggested that where people do have their own off-street parking they should use it whenever practical. I have been specifically asked by the Parish Council to write to the police expressing their concern over the practice of indiscriminate parking. Everyone has the right to park a

licensed vehicle on the highway provided they follow the advice of the Highway Code and park sensibly.

The Parish Council received a letter of complaint regarding the placement of refuse bags on the street too early, in advance of collection. I have been asked to enclose a copy of this letter.

"I noted with interest the piece in this week's "South Somerset News & Views" stating that residents should not put their refuse out more than 18 hours before collection. I was particularly interested to learn that people can be fined for doing this. Some people do put out their rubbish bags well before collection day (Wednesday). One resident already has a bag out and it is only Thursday. It is very unsightly and the bags are a great temptation to cats etc."

It may be that some people were confused about the collection times over the Christmas and New Year period, or perhaps you go on holiday and leave your bags out early. I am sure you all know that normal collection is Wednesday morning.

As a point of interest the District Council are introducing waste recycling in Winsham this year so we will have more than just bags to place outside ahead of collection, no doubt waste and recycled material will be collected on different days.

Are you interested in becoming a Parish Councillor? Local democracy depends on people who are interested in taking part in the work of the Parish Council, representing users of local services and deciding how local resources should be spent.

Winsham Parish Council can influence planning decisions. As part of their everyday work they provide a recreation area for young people and administer a cemetery. If you believe that our local roads are in a poor condition then, being a member of the P.C. offers you a platform to express your exasperation to the highway authority. The P.C. has a number of ongoing projects, some of which are about to come to fruition. A practical start has been made on the transport interchange. Affordable housing is high on the agenda and progressing well. Speeding and parking are serious issues in the village. On a grander scale do we need a new village hall?

There are conditions to becoming a councillor; being over 21 is astonishingly one of them. If you are still interested then elections are due on 1st May 2003. Candidates must complete a nomination form and return it to the Returning Officer before 1st April. I will be sent copies of the form shortly for distribution. You can contact me on 30310 or the election hotline 08009150804 or access the forms on the web at www.southsomerset.gov.org.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on **Wednesday 5th March at 8 p.m.** in the Jubilee Hall. Please come along if you can. *FV*



"There is no way to peace, peace is the way."

Mahatma Gandhi, India.

