

Parish News – October 2017

Editor this month: Geoffrey Fitch

If you have any news you would like included in the monthly newsletter please send your copy to geoffreyfitch@hotmail.co.uk

Also note that if your paper copy of the newsletter has disappeared you can always find it on the parish website www.wwl-pc.org.uk which is updated regularly by John Shepherd.

The Harvest Festival in mid-September was a little earlier than usual this year but was still well attended by all age groups who sang the well-known harvest hymns with gusto in the beautifully decorated church. The congregation then moved on to the Harvest Supper in Westonbirt School where an excellent selection of salads were on offer which had been prepared by many hard-working ladies (and possibly gentlemen!) of the village to accompany the salmon, ham and puddings provided by the school. The Raffle also attracted many offerings from generous donors and as at all raffles the excitement of the winners and the disappointment of the losers was a joy to witness and made for a good and very profitable start to the money collecting operations. The auction also got off to a good start with the Hewett brothers vying with each other to outspend the other (which is an auctioneer's delight). It reminded the audience of those days when Jonathan and Ajax Scott would compete with gay abandon for a bag of potatoes which they could easily have bought for a quarter of the price. All the lots which had been donated by parishioners continued to sell well until the last four lots when our

attention-seeking auctioneer was overcome by the unending generosity of the bidders and a desire to study the beautiful Dining Room ceiling and decided to pass out. Luckily for him our local equine vet Emma was on hand to oversee his recovery, along with NHS medics and another Emma and he is now neighing quite contentedly. Next year he promises that there will be less grandstanding on the rostrum. (Ed. Some hope!) As already mentioned countless villagers, too numerous to mention, pulled together in many different ways to make the evening such a success. It should also be noted that the auctioneer would be hard pushed without the ever helpful Colin Baber and the newly recruited Dangerfield children who are now paid up Auction Elves (minimum five years membership). Special thanks should also go to their mother Natasha for allowing us to use the school and their productive kitchen once more, to Andy and Kathy Clarke for pulling all the organisational levers so calmly and efficiently and to Ian and Lindsay Hilton for plying us all with drinks throughout the evening. Next month's newsletter will provide the financial details of the event.

The Westonbirt Society meeting on 6th September went very well, although attendance was down on previous meetings.

Alison Barnes gave a very informative and enjoyable talk on the history of botanical art, the materials used and some of the techniques involved. She also brought along examples of her beautiful work for the attendees to look at.

The next meeting of the Society is at 7pm on 4th October when Philip Taubenheim of Wotton Auction Rooms will be talking about antiques and giving valuations on any interesting small items that are presented to him.

We welcome Levent and Nil Kaptanoglu and their daughter Derin into the village street at East Cottage. As Turks they make us even more cosmopolitan, joining as they do all the British nationalities, Aussies, South Africans and other nations and we hope that as attendees at the Harvest Supper they were able to gauge what a friendly and inclusive village they now live in.

The Autumn Term Lecture at Westonbirt School will be given this year on Friday, 10th November by Paul Tapner. Paul is one of the best cross country riders in the world, an Australian eventing team member and the winner of many international events including Badminton Horse Trials. He is extremely driven, hard-working and likeable and is a consistent performer on the eventing circuit and a highly sought-after teacher and trainer to riders of all levels throughout the world. Entrance to the lecture is free with the pre-lecture drinks at 6:30pm and then an optional, delicious, post lecture supper after the talk. Tickets for the supper are £15 and should be booked by phoning Westonbirt School on 01666 880333.

G.F.