

Parish News – January 2018

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 most important news to report this month is that the much loved and admired matriarch of the village Doris Baber has just passed what will be delicately announced as a significant birthday. She was joined at Field Barn Farm by family from all over the country and we all join in the congratulations. Without giving too much away she will receive a card from Her Majesty (who is older than her) in 10 years time. Well done to a lovely lady.

The day of the carol service in Westonbirt School Chapel could have been better. Heavy snow had fallen but at least St. Catherine's had been decorated with numerous lovely flower arrangement from a wedding the previous day and all looked well. However, at about lunchtime the wheels started to come off. Andy Clarke took the trestle tables, urn and mulled wine up from the golf course only to find that the flowers had been removed, presumably and quite understandably by the family from the previous day. Undeterred, we gathered baubles and greenery to do some last-minute decorating but as dusk fell it became clear that with no outside lighting and seriously slippery access ways the service should be cancelled. Easily done where our local phones

were working but contact with our two churchwardens Annabella and David was impossible due to a power cut in their valley. Richard, our vicar, was also uncontactable but after finding David feeding his ewes at the head of the valley he took up the reins and contacted all the powers that be to confirm cancellation. Your scribe and Andy Clarke felt that it would be wise to wait in the Chapel for half an hour prior to the service (sipping a modest amount of mulled wine) just in case the message hadn't reached all parts of the parish. We were rewarded by the appearance of Richard and his wife Candy from the Arboretum who had walked along and joined us. We greeted them with the opening line of 'Oh, come all ye Faithful' but sorry to say our mulled wine supplies had run out and they had to suffice with chatter. At least we had four attendees for our carol service!

The two Christmas services at Lasborough fared better. On Christmas Eve there was little room left to accommodate the congregation. A hundred attendees were probably encouraged not only by the joy of singing carols but also the prospect of generous hospitality so freely offered each year by the Scott family at Lasborough Manor. On Christmas Day the attendance was a still respectable 45 people of all ages who had only just recovered from assisting Santa and starting preparations for the day.

The Spring term Lecture at Westonbirt School will take place on Friday 26th January. The lecture, given by Head of History at Westonbirt, Mr Ahmed, is entitled 'An exploration of the Holocaust, one of the greatest tragedies of modern times.' Mr. Ahmed will illustrate how the Holocaust developed over time to become the infamous act we all recognise today. Perhaps most importantly he will examine the consequences and the lessons that should be reflected upon following his visit to Auschwitz last June. It should be noted that booking tickets is now essential rather than just turning up as in the past . To book free lecture tickets please go to the following link. You can also book tickets for optional delicious post lecture supper in one of the Westonbirt House state rooms for £15. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/an-exploration-of-the-holocaust-one-of-the-greatest-tragedies-of-modern-times-tickets-40899645942>

A reminder that the next Westonbirt Society meeting in Woodlands Lodge will be on Wednesday, 10th January at 2pm. when John Gingell, who worked at Cadbury Frys for 40 years, will be talking on the history and manufacture of chocolate. As well as his talk he will offer samples of chocolate made to 19th century recipes which are very different from today's fare.

The AGM of the Village Hall Fund will be held in Woodlands Lodge on 22nd January at 7:30pm. All parishioners are very welcome to attend.

Huge congratulations are due to Ethan Phillips of Rose Cottage in the Village Street who at the tender age of 8 has proved himself to be the Rory McIlroy of his generation and has been selected to be part of Gloucestershire County under 16 golf team. A great achievement at his age due not only to his innate talent but also the support of his parents Charles and Andrea. His four-year-old brother Kyle is probably planning to emulate his achievement knowing him!

Happy New Year to everyone.

G.F.