

Smisby Newsletter Winter 2016

Issue 49

A very warm welcome to this Winter 2016 issue of the Smisby Newsletter.

We enjoyed record numbers in attendance for the seasonal Christmas gathering with the turning on of the Christmas Tree lights. Despite the appalling weather, a hugely impressive turnout from within Smisby Parish, which saw many residents and families, young and old, congregate this year in St James' Church itself, to sing hymns and carols under the warm glow of candlelight where everyone was in full voice.

This was a truly magical celebration and a wonderful humbling reflection of the real spirit of Christmas within our community where the hearts of all those who attended were uplifted. This year the occasion was again followed by a Hog Roast and gathering in the Village Hall which provided the ideal chance to have a festive tippie of mulled wine, a chat with our neighbours and saw a surprise special guest make an appearance for all the children.



The Cherries of St James' Church, Smisby

It's all too easy to take for granted Japanese flowering cherries which, whatever the weather, reliably brighten many British gardens with their beautiful blooms each spring. However, try to cast your mind back 150 years or so when the first of hundreds of cherry cultivars started to arrive from Japan which, hitherto had been virtually closed to the west.

In the early 19th century, the best flowering trees that British gardeners could have looked forwards to were the white flowers of blackthorn in April, occasional wild cherry trees with their single flowers, our familiar May blossom or the flower spikes of horse chestnuts, actually not native but introduced in the early 17th century from the Balkans. Try to imagine the first time people were lucky enough to see one of the first flowering Japanese cherries, perhaps planted locally in Derby Arboretum, the first public arboretum in England, opened in 1840.

Since the 9th century, Japanese nurserymen had been actively breeding and hybridizing many lovely selections and the first sight of these beautiful trees must have been sensational! The cherries above the restored wall of St James' church are a popular variety called Prunus x 'Kanzan'. They have a distinctive vase shape and huge clusters of double pink flowers in early spring, each flower containing between 23 - 28 violet pink petals.

'Kanzan' is a Japanese word which literally means "bordering mountain"; maybe something is lost in translation here as many Japanese plant names are much more poetic! There are two mountains close to each other, formerly of strategic importance at Ichi-no-seki, 550 miles north east of Kyoto, an area known as Kanzan from where this cultivar may have derived its name.

The short lived beauty of cherry flowers is much appreciated by young and old in Japan; towards the end of March and into April tens of millions of Japanese, young and old, enjoy their favourite festival, Hanami. Each day the eagerly awaited weather forecast predicts where cherry trees will be flowing at their peak, from Kyushu in the south, moving up into Honshu and finally finishing in northern Hokkaido.

Robert Vernon, Bluebell Arboretum

Ashby Camera Club

Ashby Camera Club is half way through its winter season of meetings at Smisby Village Hall. Coming up we have photo rambles, night photography, inter-club competitions, practical portrait (musicians) evening, and entertaining speakers. Our members range from school age to senior, and experience levels from beginner to professional, with members helping each other out and sharing knowledge in this rapidly developing field. To find out more about our programme, and if you fancy coming along to see what we're about, just use the contact form on the website (no fee for a visit, and no obligation to join) www.ashbycameraclub.co.uk

Parish Council News

Items from the 12th January Parish Council Meeting

There has been much discussion and emotion in the past over the status and future of the fir tree, situated next to the War Memorial on the Village Green adjacent to St James' Church.

Recently a tree expert employed by South Derbyshire District Council, was asked to inspect the tree by Smisby Parish Council for expert opinion on its well being. The Council considered that the tree either needed pruning or removing (and subsequently replacing). The size of the tree was becoming an issue, it was uneven in shape, dropping branches and completely obliterated the vista of the Church, as you approached from Main Street towards Anwell Lane.

In the expert's opinion, the tree could not be pruned, as it would reveal dead undergrowth and it is not the type of fir tree that regenerates itself. The tree drops its fruit which is acidic and would kill any plant life below it (the grass is already being turned brown). Finally, it is not the type of tree suitable for a memorial tree as it does have a limited life span. After this consultation, members of both South Derbyshire District Council and Smisby Parish Council would like to propose the following for consideration by Smisby Parish residents.

That the fir tree is removed by South Derbyshire District Council and replaced by a Fastigate Oak (the same species is planted to the front of the Smisby Village Hall garden). This type of tree is easy to shape and is ideal as a memorial tree. By the side of the tree will be a commemorative plaque stating that:

"This oak tree replaces a tree to commemorate the Coronation of King George in 1937 and now jointly commemorates that occasion together with the 9 September 2015 when, Queen Elizabeth II, became Great Britain's longest ever serving monarch (63 years)".

This plaque would be mounted on an oak post, maintained in perpetuity by the Smisby Parish Council, and would be visible for all residents and visitors to see. In addition, the vista of St James' Church would be permanently revealed, with the Fastigate Oak being able to be trimmed accordingly.

The Christmas lights would be transferred to this tree or each year mounted on a large seasonal fir spruce at Christmas time.

The Smisby Parish Council, a locally elected body to represent the views of the residents, wholly supports this proposal. However, in view of the sensitivity of this subject, has decided to conduct a full referendum to decide the way forward to allow democracy to decide. Therefore within the envelope attaching this publication there is a form requiring your completion and signature to be returned to Steve Hewitt, Chairman of the Smisby Parish Council at Truro Cottage on Chapel Street by 28th February 2016."

St James' Church

Our church architect sought quotations from five roofing specialists for replacement of the church roof, against the specification he



had drawn up, following last year's lead theft. Two potential contractors have failed to respond (apparently builders are having a busy spell at present) and one produced a quote of £70,000 + VAT - which suggests he did not want the job. However, the other two builders have both supplied a quote of just under £60,000 + VAT and the architect has to decide which one to select. The position on VAT, for church repairs, varies from time to time but we hope this extra 20% will be recoverable. The cost is rather more than the architect had forecast but does include the replacement of a rotten supporting timber wallplate, which is best dealt with while the roof is off. We are applying to the Listed Places of Worship Repair Fund for a grant towards the re-roofing project. The necessary building consents will be sought once we have the funding in place. This work is of course in addition to the building repairs that had been defined as necessary by the 5 yearly structural survey carried out some months ago. In the short term, for the roofing project, we can utilize some of the funds that had been built up for those quinquennial repairs (which can be delayed for a time) but there will be an overall shortfall to be met. How much needs to be raised will depend very much on the success or otherwise of our grant application. By the time of the next newsletter we should be in a better position to define the financial situation more precisely. In the meantime, Smisby WI are continuing to plan further fund raising activities for the roof repair, for which we are very grateful.

The main church steps have been re-set onto a concrete base, using stone which has been treated, to make the steps non-slip. The solid oak posts have been re-sited to give greater protection from large vehicles that over the years have impacted the steps and made this work necessary. It feels very sad to be losing our Rector, Revd Dr Mark Powell and his wife Helen from the United Benefice but of course we wish them every success and happiness at Windsor. We have really appreciated Mark's work at St James over the last four years. After his last service at Melbourne, Gary presented Mark with a cheque for £400 from Smisby, with a farewell card signed by donors.

Our Christmas services at St James were all well attended. First there was the Christingle, then the Carol Service and finally the Christmas morning Holy Communion. At the first two of these, Hazel's young choir were a delight to see and to hear.

Parochial Charity

The hearing loop that is being paid for by the charity for the village hall should be installed and operational by the time this newsletter is published. The charity is also pleased to be funding an air conditioning system for the village hall. This will also be available to use fairly soon and will provide an alternative form of heating when needed, but more importantly will be used to keep the hall cool in summer, thus avoiding the need to open windows and doors for cooling. This is a very worthwhile upgrade for the hall, making it more comfortable for hirers and will reduce noise levels arising from village hall activities, to the benefit of residents who at times in the past may have been disturbed by music and other noisy activities. The promised ornamental gate has been installed in Annwell Lane by the Smisby sign and makes for an attractive entrance to the village. The charity has recently taken on new land agents, mainly to improve access to information on agricultural land that comes up for sale, hopefully near to Smisby. The trustees have had two meetings with the agents and have discussed the likelihood of any of our existing land being scheduled by the planners for development. There do not appear to be any short term contenders but there may be long term potential for increasing the charity's endowed capital assets in this way for land that we hold near Castle Donington.

As always, the Christmas hampers were well received by pensioners of the Parish when Barbara, Sheila and Andrew went round with the food parcels shortly before Christmas. Sheila has also received some heart-warming letters of thanks from happy recipients, making the work involved that much more rewarding. Book tokens for children of the Parish will be taken round very soon, perhaps around the time that the newsletter goes out. An order has now been placed for the creation of an area (called a piste) in the Jubilee grounds for the playing of petanque. We have had a meeting with and received useful advice from the secretary of the Leicestershire Petanque Association before placing the order for the piste. It is anticipated that a date will be fixed for some time in the spring when this guy or one of his petanque colleagues will come to Smisby and give a short talk in the village hall about how to play petanque and then move up to the playing field to give a demonstration and for us all to practice the game under his guidance. The piste will be of a size that will allow four matches to take place at the same time, i.e. 8 people playing singles or 16 for doubles. Time and date for this event should be in the next newsletter but will depend on the completion of the groundwork which will start when the field has dried out a bit from its current soggy state.

Finally, two more flower troughs have been ordered, to be located on the church wall in Annwell Lane. These should be fixed and available to be planted up in the spring, ready for summer flowering and add to the displays already seen from the current seven troughs around the village.



Smisby Village Hall

A very Happy New Year to all of our Smisby Village Hall users. Please remember it is your facility, to be used and enjoyed by you!

We started the year with Smisby Day Nursery vacating the hall, as their Smiz kids operation has now transferred to their new building. This gave us the opportunity to start the fitment of the new audio/visual system. This is being progressed on a self-help basis, using our committee members' expertise. We hope that it should be up and running within the next 2-3 weeks.

Free unlimited Wi Fi is now available for everyone using the hall with the code provided on the noticeboard. We are still awaiting planning permission for siting the air conditioning condenser at ground level on the eastern wall of the Village hall, behind a screen. As soon as we receive planning consent, we will request the contractor to commence work to install air conditioning into the main hall area.

At the last Village Hall Meeting on 26th January, the committee discussed the timescale for refurbishment of the floors and replacement of the current chairs.

We are still aware that parking of cars by hirers of the Village Hall can be an issue to Smisby residents. All hirers are courteously reminded to park with consideration and not restrict access to drives. As ever, if there is a persistent problem, please come back to me ideally with date, time and registration number and I will talk to the organization involved. However, do remember that some of the cars parked are likely to be customers of the Smisby Arms and not using the Village Hall. It was agreed by the committee, that the Smisby Village Hall AGM is to be held on Tuesday 26th April 2016.

In accordance with our rules, the current elected committee members must stand down and there will be an election for the vacant positions. As a reminder, the committee comprises:

- Up to 4 elected charity trustees
- Up to 2 appointed charity trustees from:
- Smisby Parish council
- The Parochial Church Council
- The Women's Institute
- The Parochial Charity in the Ancient Parish of Smisby and may include:
- Up to 2 co-opted charity trustees

Rob Hounslow
Chairman Smisby Village Hall Committee
07720-348860

Help At Hand

365



Domestic / Commercial Cleaning Services

Domestic / Commercial Gardening
& Grounds Maintenance

Home Pet Care Visits

Dog Walking

Contact

Emilie Barnett or Sarah Batterson

M: 07935 331174

T: 01530 413365

E: enquiries@helppathand365.co.uk

Ivanhoe Countrystore

Remember to stock up on dinner
for your best friend!



And don't forget the **FRONTLINE**

◆ Friendly service and advice on a
wide range of pet foods to suit all diets ◆

◆ Easy free parking ◆

Ashby Road - Boundary - 01283 212300

Easy Free Parking - Friendly service and advice

Ashby Art Club

Ashby Art Club are now holding a monthly morning painting session, on the 2nd Monday of each month. This starts at 9.30am and ends at noon. Members can attend this new session in addition to the regular Monday evening meetings and demonstrations. Non members are welcome to attend for a £3 charge. Information about all the various demonstrations and workshops running this season can be found on the Art Club website, www.ashbyartclub.org. Mansfield artist Matthew Palmer ran the January workshop, where members painted a watercolour of Bamburg castle. His amusing banter and expert tuition in painting techniques helped everyone to go home with a successful painting! The February workshop is an eagerly awaited event with local artist Di Lorrinan. Many of you will have seen her cartoons in Ashby's museum and her paintings and inn sign at the Shoulder of Mutton. This is followed in March by a pastels workshop with Sarais Crawshaw, the well known wildlife artist. You can view her work at www.saraiscrawshawart.com and visit her studio during the Warwickshire Open Studios weekend, running from Saturday 18th June until Sunday 3rd July 2016. see www.warwickshireopenstudios.org. Currently members are busy preparing for the annual exhibition will be held over Easter at Ticknall Village Hall. It is open from Saturday 26 March to Monday 28th March with homemade refreshments. This is followed by Art Club participation in the outdoor art gallery and art exhibition as part of the Ashby Festival running from 27th to 30th May 2016. Full details of our programme can be found at www.ashbyartclub.org



Smisby WI

Six weeks into 2016 and already the Craft Group has made beautiful paper roses, the Smisby Striders have walked around Calke Park followed by lunch in Ticknall and then at our monthly meeting we hopefully shed a few calories with a session of indoor Kurling and Kroquet.



In February one of members, who is fully trained in Garden Design will be giving us ideas that we can incorporate into our own gardens and in March, a member of Derbys. C.C. will be telling us how the contents of our recycling bins are treated. I'm sure there will be lots of questions to be answered at this meeting. This will be followed in April by Mind Coaching when hopefully we will all arrive home after the meeting full of positive thoughts.

The Craft Group, on the first Thursday in the month and the Smisby Striders on the second Thursday, will also be meeting in these months taking us up to Spring. In April, the Harpur Crewe Group to which we belong with WIs from Melbourne, Staunton Harold and Ticknall, will be holding the Spring Group Meeting in Ticknall Village Hall, when a speaker from the RNLI will be telling us about the lifesaving work they do around our coasts.

Following the success of the previous "Bacon Buttie and Visit to St James' Church Morning's," the WI has been requested to hold another. This has been arranged for Saturday May 14th meeting at the church at 10.30am, followed by bacon butties, cakes and tea or coffee in the Village Hall. All this for £4.50p and with all proceeds will go towards the Church Roof Fund. Monthly meetings on the third Thursday in the month will be starting at the slightly earlier time of 7.15pm in the Village Hall. Contact details: 01530 415346 or 01530 416411.

Landscaping and Horticultural machinery for Sale or Hire

Kilworth

Kilworth Machinery Ltd
Anwell Lane, Smisby
Tel: 01530 412690
www.kilworthmachinery.co.uk

- Rotavators
- Tractors
- Mowers
- Log Splitters
- Saw Benches
- Sweepers



Corporate wear & Promotional Items

We are suppliers of corporate clothing and promotional items in all formats for office, industrial, local government, schools and clubs.

sales@mannocks.co.uk

www.mannocks.co.uk

Tel: 01530 411066

Fax: 01530 411062

BlueBell Arboretum & Nursery, Smisby

*Specialist Growers of Rare Trees,
Shrubs & Climbers.*

Opening times:

March to October: 9am to 5pm (Sundays 10.30am to 4.30pm)

November to February 9am to 4pm (Closed on Sundays)

We are closed from December 24th to January 2nd

Tel 01530 413 700 Fax 01530 417 600

www.bluebellnursery.co.uk

Useful Smisby Village Contacts:

Parish Councillors:

Chair - Steve Hewitt (07908 620002)

Vice Chair - Sarah Rushman

Parish Clerk - Emma Stroud (01530 587349)

smisbyparishclerk@gmail.com

Councillor - Mark Parnham

Councillor - Simon Barnett (07855 969719)

Councillor - Rob Hounslow (07720 348860)

Please contact the Parish Clerk if you would like to include anything in the next Parish Newsletter.

South Derbyshire District Councillors:

Councillor - Michael Stanton (07768 010251)

michael.stanton@south-derbys.gov.uk

Councillor - Peter Smith (07894 338129)

peter.smith@south-derbys.gov.uk

Derbyshire District Councillor:

Councillor - Linda Chilton

linda.chilton@derbyshire.gov.uk

Parochial Charity:

Trustee - Barbara Ball (01530 416411)

Trustee - Jeff Barnes (01283 217319)

Trustee - Simon Barnett (01530 412491)

Trustee - Andrew Parnham (01530 411202)

Clerk - Sheila Heap (01530 414179)

Village Hall Committee:

Chairman - Rob Hounslow (07720 348860)

Secretary - Ron Walker

Bookings Sec - Barbara Ball (07526 268698)

Smisby Church:

Churchwarden - Gary Margerrison (01530 414453)

Churchwarden - Carol Morgan (01530 411314)

Newsletter Publishers:

Steve Hewitt

James Barnett

Sam Hewitt (Photography)

Forthcoming Parish Council Meetings; Held on Tuesdays @ 7.30pm in Smisby Village Hall.

Members of the public are welcome to attend.

Next meeting is on the 8th March 2016