



Issue 49
Summer 2010



Speen and North Dean News



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SNDN DATES

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August			
Sunday, 1 st	Strike Marquee	North Dean, 5.00pm	Ashley Cooper 488454
Wednesday, 4 th	Mens' Philosophical Society	Pink & Lily, 8.30pm	Graham Peart 488327
Thursday, 5 th	WI - Catching Smugglers	Speen Village Hall, 7.45pm	Barbara Collett 488348
Sunday, 8 th	Porsche Club cars / BBQ	KW4	David Hill 488329
Wednesday, 25 th	Pub Lunch Club	KW4, 12.00 noon	Gloria Holmes 488420
September			
Wednesday, 1 st	MPS visit to RAF Uxbridge	Uxbridge, 7.00pm/Harrow, Hugh'n	Graham Peart 488327
Thursday, 2 nd	WI - The Czech Connection	Speen Village Hall, 7.45pm	Barbara Collett 488348
Thursday, 16 th	Speen v North Dean golf	Weston Turville	John Rogers 562041
Thursday, 30 th	WI Garden Club talk	Speen Village Hall, 8.00pm	Daphne Westray 488742
October			
Thursday, 7 th	WI - New Genetics (Open Mtg)	Speen Village Hall, 7.45pm	Barbara Collett 488348
Wednesday, 6 th	Mens' Philosophical Society	Black Horse, Lacey Green, 8.30pm	Graham Peart 488327
Friday, 15 th	"Eyes Front" mini theatre	North Dean Village Hall, 7.30pm	Julie White 562311
November			
Wednesday, 3 rd	Mens' Philosophical Society	The Whip, Lacey Green, 8.30pm	Graham Peart 488327
Saturday, 6 th	Speen Bonfire Night	Speen Playing Field, 6.00pm	Andy Thompson 488524
Fri/Sat, 12 th /13 th	SSG Christmas Market	KW4, from 10.00am	Christine Symondson 488654
December			
Wednesday, 1 st	Mens' Philosophical Society	Old Plow, Speen, 8.30pm	Graham Peart 488327
Thursday, 2 nd	WI - The Four Seasons	Speen Village Hall, 7.45pm	Barbara Collett 488348
Saturday, 11 th	Speen Christmas tree/carols	Speen Playing Field, 6.00pm	Andy Thompson 488524

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Dear Reader

When we left Speen in May for the heat of the great Karakorum Desert an election was imminent and, having done our voting by post and proxy, we felt we would be returning to a different land. As is invariably the case, the expectations of travellers were to be confounded. Not only has Speen and North Dean proved to be hotter than the great Karakorum Desert, but the great HS2 debate, which might have been submerged in an austerity package, appears as live now as ever. We make no apology for inserting current reports and opinions on that debate in this issue, and asking readers, if they have a view which has not been shared or raised, to contact us. We need to ensure that the diversity and breadth of views held in the villages is fully represented here.

This is clearly not a political issue in the confrontational sense. All three political parties appear committed to it, and at the time of writing no one appears to take political exception to the choice of routes put forward in the planning process. Those who oppose it must therefore be very clear on their grounds for objection. It is all too easy for those who want to protect a way of life to be accused of "Nimby"-ism and dismissed out of hand. Those who would oppose cannot simply point to



house prices, or an intrusive building process, or an unsightly air vent as a reason for shifting this issue onto another part of the country. This is an overcrowded island, and people have to move around for good economic reasons.

So we need to remind planners and government of the economic values of small villages. Economic resurgence starts in small businesses, and small businesses are increasingly found in small towns and villages. Broadband may be more important than High Speed in this context. Speen and North Dean are home to some 23 small businesses, if the membership of our Small business group is anything to judge by. Then we have our agricultural interest to consider, and the importance of the Chilterns in tourist and leisure terms. Gill Kent's column sums up the stresses and strains on our local farms. Those who have to make judgements have to see more than the value of retirement homes: these villages are real communities with real economic value and should not be disparaged just because they are also "scenic".

And of course, the villages are also a hive of building activities. Recession does not seem to have dented the urge to extend or re-arrange our dwelling space. We should perhaps remember that planning laws are strict in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and building on new

sites is particularly difficult. If HS2 were an extension or a garage rebuild it would be limited in terms of footprint and told it could only occur where existing buildings had once stood. HS2 might be a good deal less intrusive if it was forced to run on or alongside existing mainline tracks to Birmingham.

Not that we are at all obsessive on this particular subject! And we do need to note that this issue sees our first walk, in the shape of a re-issue of the Speen Heritage Trail, and an indication from Peter Symonds of the great tasks that remain in this area. And as we move to the end of village Summer Madness, and the euphoria of Fetes and FunDays subsides, it is worth noting that the 2011 Festival Committee has begun meeting, and that they appeal for anyone with ideas to contact the secretary, Sue Taylor. No theme has yet been made final but it was rumoured that they are looking at "Ghosts and Ghostliness". All aboard the Ghost Train this winter then? [Ed. Note. Dreaming has become the newer theme, but we can always reflect on nightmares and lost sleep if the Ghost Train sweeps through . . .]

*Anne and David Worlock
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david@davidworlock.com*

Barry Stickings offers more woodland views with a challenge

The answer to our winter quiz (we bet you guessed even if you didn't know . . .) was that

this is Canada



and this is Speen



The Willotts Farm Garden is clearly a place of quiet enjoyment. We'd be interested in readers' thoughts about the thought bubbles above the Muntjac, and the ducks . . .





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Speen Supporters Group benefits from new sources of fund raising – Phase 2

Speen Supporters Group held their First Arts & Crafts Fair in the Village Marquee on Sunday 11th July from 11:00 - 16:00. They presented a mix of talented local artists and craftsmen both demonstrating and selling beautiful things. There was a small entry charge of just £1.00 for adults and all the profits from the day will be passed to the five hospices we have been supporting for many years. Final numbers are not in but about £1500 may have been raised.

Even though it was a Sunday the King William remained open to serve food.

A date for your diaries – Annual Christmas Card Sale and Gift fair

SSG are holding what has become an annual Hospice Christmas Card Sale and Gift Fair in the King William on Fri 12th and Sat 13th November. See you there and a final thank you to you all for your continuing support.

We know that everyone is finding those extra charitable pennies hard to find but we believe our local Hospices provide an invaluable and loving service and are therefore deserving of all our support.

Appetiser for upcoming cookbook

The Editor spent considerable effort to get this special recipe from one of SSG's popular Ladies Lunches - next one Spring 2011. The SSG are going to keep their other recipes to themselves. A booklet of all their past efforts will be available at the Spring Lunch, 2011.

SALMON WREATH WITH LEMON BUTTER SAUCE SERVES 12

- 300g/10¹/₂oz full fat soft cheese
- 75g/2¹/₄oz watercress
- Rind of 1 lemon + juice of half a lemon
- 2 crushed garlic cloves
- 660g/1lb 5oz skinned salmon fillet
- 2 x 250g packs puff pastry
- 1 beaten egg
- ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 220C/425F/gas 7.

Put soft cheese, lemon rind and juice, garlic and pepper in a food processor or blender and whizz.

Roll out each piece of puff pastry to a rectangle about 38x18cm/15x7in.

Join the short ends together to make a long strip*.

Dampen the joint with water and secure.

Cut salmon into long strips and arrange evenly in the centre, along the length of the pastry.

Spread the cheese mixture over the salmon.

Dampen one long pastry edge with water, then bring the other side of the pastry up over the filling and secure the edges. Roll over so the joint is underneath.

Arrange in a ring on a baking sheet, overlapping the ends slightly, dampen to secure.

Depending on the event decorate the wreath with pastry shapes and brush the whole with beaten egg.

Bake in the centre of the oven for 30 minutes until brown.

Can be served warm or cold.

At our Ladies Lunch we made *smaller amounts into sausage roll shapes sealed at each end for ease of serving

LEMON BUTTER SAUCE to accompany SERVES 4 (multiply as necessary)

- 3 tblspns freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 40g (1¹/₂oz) unsalted butter
- 125ml (4fl oz) double cream
- 2 tblspns finely chopped fresh chives
- salt & freshly ground pepper

Heat the unsalted butter in a saucepan.

Add the cream and heat through.

Add lemon juice and chives and warm thoroughly but do not allow to boil, as the sauce will curdle. Season to taste.

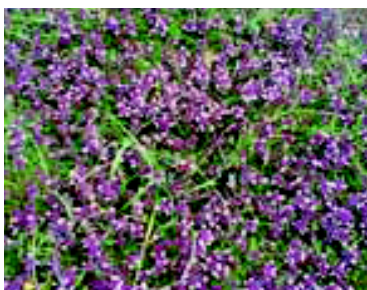
*Christine Symondson
jem@symondson.co.uk*

The Ridgeway Walk 1 – June 2010

Julie White's camera and words give a poignant perspective on this part of our beautiful Chilterns

As a tribute to my late son Anthony, I have wanted to walk the Ridgeway - his favourite walk along the Chiltern Hills. My intention is to walk its entire length (87 miles) during the changing seasons, and to document through photography, the beauty of my experience. However, my photographic skills leave a lot to be desired, so I can't promise expert photographs - simply snap shots of the magnificent views and abundant flora as seen through my own eyes. My faithful little puppy 'Buster' and my husband Tony, will share this wonderful experience with me.

Our first leg of the journey starts on a cloudy and cool June morning in the little village of Wiggington on the outskirts of Tring. Armed with a picnic, map and sturdy walking shoes, we set off on our modest 6.5 mile walk to Ivinghoe Beacon - the end of the Ridgeway. So we started at the end - who cares!



Wild Thyme

My first observation is how lush and green the landscape is looking after the recent summer rains - you can almost smell the 'green' of the fields and trees. The tuneful song of the sky lark - a sound reminiscent of childhood summers - follows us along our route.

Wild flowers are in abundance wherever we look, from the vivid mauve of the wild thyme to the bright yellow of the birdsfoot-trefoil. It's amazing how many of these wild species survive along the trail, considering that they are



Approaching Beacon Hill

constantly being exposed to wind and direct sunlight. We see a multitude of bees and strange looking insects that have been attracted to the abundant flora. Buster thinks the bees and butterflies are worth chasing!

Having walked through woodland, narrow footpaths and



Wild Orchid



Buster and the 'Emerald Lake'

pastureland, the scenery opens up to breathtaking panoramic views. We have nicknamed the disused chalk pit at Pitstone to 'The Emerald Lake'. The sun was shining at this point and the water truly looked turquoise in colour. It really was the most amazing sight.

We were lucky enough to see a yellowhammer (but not lucky enough for me to get my camera out in time!)

As we approached the final leg of our journey, we were also lucky enough to see a spotted orchid - a rare find on this walk so I understand.

As our little puppy is still 'developing', we have to take regular 'pit stops' (that's my excuse anyway). But actually, it was a joy to simply sit and marvel at the natural wonder of our surroundings. We took a few moments to reflect on how lucky we were to have the unspoilt beauty of the Chiltern Hills surrounding us. For how long we wondered?

Julie White



'Egg and Bacon'

Chiltern wide strategy launched for making ourselves heard at Westminster on HS2

High Speed 2 Affects You

This is the banner used recently to draw attention to the proposals to route a high speed railway, initially from London to Birmingham, through the Chilterns - one of the possible routes passing through Hughenden, North Dean and under Speen.

Recent activities in the village have included the promotion of responses to an Exceptional Hardship Scheme consultation and a public meeting held in the village hall on Wednesday June 23rd, organised by a committee (yes, another committee in the village) formed to co-ordinate and focus local effort against HS2.

Some of you may be wondering why there is a movement 'against' HS2, and what all the fuss is about. After all, it won't be running until 2025 and may not come near here anyway. For those that were able to attend the Speen meeting or others in the area, we hope the answer is clear.

It is tempting to think that the reason for this opposition is simply that our backyard will

be spoiled - that the glorious countryside we live in will be forever damaged by an ugly scar of a railway which, even if it is in a tunnel, will dramatically impact the lives of everyone who lives in the area. Simply put, we are NIMBYs.

It would be ridiculous to say that these factors are not important, however, there is a bigger picture that needs to be understood, debated and acted upon.

HS2 proposals were developed based on the theory that there would be dramatic growth in demand for travel, that there would be no alternative way to satisfy demand, that the financial justification was sound, and that the provision

Continued on page 13 . . .

Speen Schools

Speen Pre-school

Drums beat as school reflects on its future

Speen Pre-School has had a great few months with increasing numbers of children attending. We continue to have one of the best child to staff ratios and most highly qualified staff teams in the local area of which we are very proud. The children have been engaged in a variety of exciting activities including "Bridging the Gap" African drumming sessions at Speen School in June (see page 10) and are now looking forward to our Sports day and end of term party.

Our biggest news though, is the publication in June of our long awaited Pre-School

Feasibility study, conducted by Cat Cook and Kate Worthington.

You may remember that this study was commissioned to look at the long term strategy for the village pre-school over the next 10 years and to identify possible options for ensuring the service it offers can remain available to our villagers and those living in surrounding areas. Cat did an outstanding job of analysing the questionnaire responses as well as gathering more in depth information via a series of interviews with key stakeholders, and the results are very interesting indeed. Our plan is to hold an open meeting in early July where Cat will present the findings to the community. Please do come along if you can.

In the meantime, our pre-school committee has already

met to discuss the short term proposals from the study, which we hope will lead to some innovative developments in the service we provide and the way we are organised by the time the new term starts in September - watch this space!

The challenging longer term options identified by the study remain on the table and we will start a series of more detailed discussions with the key stakeholders in the autumn.

In July we wave goodbye and wish good luck to our leavers who will start school in September, and we look forward to welcoming our new starters after a long, and hopefully hot, summer break!

Annabel Warr
annabel.warr@btinternet.com

SpeenFest drummers, painters and FunDay punters



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The Speen Photographers' Workshop explores the terrain

We all see the same space differently

At a meeting of the SNDN Committee a few months ago we were engaged by the sight of many of our fellow villagers, entirely oblivious to their surroundings, except for the object of their camera lenses. It was wonderful to see, so Peter Cooper asked Martin Hart to tell us about the Photographers' Workshop.

We set up the Speen Photographers Workshop just after the last Festival following a suggestion by Kate Laughton. Kate is a very ingenious 'ideas' lady, and approached me with this idea. The idea quickly gathered momentum and I found myself with an eager group of photographers ready and willing to give this new activity "a go". The objective was really quite simple. For a few hours a month, we would get together to understand what makes a good photograph, and to use the

'workshop' model to examine and learn by experience; what we are doing wrong, and what we are doing right. The test is "how satisfied are we with our photographs?"

The question "how good is your camera?" does not apply here. Learning how to use your camera does. Peter Adams, the great Australian photographer once said "Photography is not about cameras, gadgets and gismos. Photography is about photographers. A camera doesn't make a great picture any more than a typewriter writes a great novel". Ninety nine per cent of cameras sold today will give a very high quality A4 photograph. So firstly we met with our cameras to 'shoot' a project, usually no more than a three hour session. The project is not known until we meet and is very broad based.

The first project was Speen based. To produce images that covered three subjects:

1. Speen, what it means to you.
2. People.
3. The Chapel.

Then to produce 3 of your most successful images from each of the three subjects. We walked from the Village Hall to the Chapel, looking and considering where the pictures were. This took nearly three hours. It became an intense

exercise in 'seeing' and decision making. None of the group's resulting pictures was similar, all very different and personal. Because the three hours were solely dedicated to the project with no outside interference, we became:

- a) highly critical of our own work
- b) Aware of 'Speen' as a visual subject in a very new way
- c) Aware that we are all different in how we see things and we were able to visually express them in a very personal and original way.

As a group we avoid the 'competition' syndrome. We are a self- help group. Like many village groups we often meet in the King William. David is extremely helpful, cooperative and welcoming. There is nothing the group offers that couldn't be learnt from books or the internet. The great advantage of this type of group is that there are moments when you suddenly make a discovery, a connection, and a query that has been buried in your mind, becomes clear, whether it be about your camera, your thinking, your failure to grasp a seemingly basic problem or something entirely new. But most importantly, the sessions need to be enjoyable and fun.

Martin Hart
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of a high speed rail network would form a key plank in a low-carbon transport strategy.

It is worth noting at this point that several reviews of transport strategy commissioned by the previous Government had basically rejected the idea of high speed rail as impractical and unsound - until railway enthusiast Lord Adonis became transport secretary. Away from the enthusiasm and political theatre, and in the cold light of rational analysis, it is becoming increasingly evident that the theory behind HS2 is deeply flawed.

For the country to need HS2, the growth in demand would have to be 237% through to 2033. This is more than twice any forecast that can be derived from population growth, travel patterns or any other 'reasonable' measure. It also assumes no impact from internet communications or business cost constraints, both of which are known to create downward pressure on travel demand.

For the country to justify HS2, capacity on the existing 'classic' railway network could not be expanded sufficiently to meet demand - which it can be, at cost levels significantly lower than HS2, and without having to drive new lines through anyone's back yard. This is not such an exciting option, though.

For the country to afford HS2, the business case must deliver an adequate return investment

which, as proposed, it does - just. If the demand doesn't materialise (and no recent equivalent infrastructure project has come close to forecast) and if the costs exceed estimates (please identify a major project like this that has come in on time and on budget), then the business case falls apart. That means you and I and every other taxpayer in the land ends up paying more tax to cover the deficit - for as long as the trains run and possibly beyond. Affordability also depends on the availability of funds - difficult when the country is almost £150 billion in debt and virtually all Government departments are facing up to 25% cuts.

For HS2 to support a low-carbon transport infrastructure, it must unequivocally be shown to reduce carbon emissions - which it doesn't. By HS2's own account, the effect is between plus and minus 25 million tons of carbon emissions - in other words - neutral. However, the minus case can only be achieved if all of the electricity needed (and these trains use 2 x the power of a normal train) is from a zero carbon source, such as nuclear or wind / wave power. There is no clear plan for the UK to reach a zero carbon power generation state any time soon.

There are many other arguments, including the suggestion that regional development will be stimulated, but unfortunately 80% of prime journeys will be towards London, according to HS2, which suggests that the job creation will be down south

and people will simply travel in from the regions with a longer and faster commute.

There are also more 'notional benefits' being quoted, and in fact one of the key financial justifications is £28 billion - over 60 years - of time saved by business travellers. For reasons that are unclear, dis-benefits, such as the notional value of visitors to an Area of Outstanding National Beauty, or the estimated loss of property values along (any) high speed route - of between an estimated 10 and 30% - are not counted at all.

Bandwagons are marvellous things. Is it possible the Government believes that despite all of these virtually inescapable facts, we must have a high speed network because other countries in Europe have one? Is it possible that they have overlooked such things as the fact it costs 4.6 times more than the European average to build here, and that the distances and transport infrastructures are completely different in the UK?


Only you can be the judge. We are providing the information and tools which you can use to make your decision on whether this should go ahead, or be stopped. Please visit the Speen website, www.speenbucks.org.uk spend some time there, and then join **our** bandwagon.

*Mel Foster
Chair*

*Speen Area Action Group
against HS2*

*mel.foster@speenbucks.org.uk
488670*

Judith A Newenham



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HS2 and you

Understandably, given that we only appear three times a year, the Speen and North Dean News has to be a journal of record, and we are unlikely to ever "break" a news story. However, as we were preparing for publication, the Government response to the petition came through, and here it is in all its non-committal glory.



Petition to:

reconsider destroying the Chilterns with the high speed rail proposal

This petition is now closed, as its deadline has passed.

We the undersigned petition the Prime Minister to reconsider destroying the Chilterns with the high speed rail proposal.

Submitted by Steph Deimbacher - Deadline to sign up by: 06 June 2010 - Signatures: 6,872

More details from petition creator

The high speed rail proposal looks to completely destroy areas of outstanding natural beauty between London and Birmingham - a tunnel under Old Amersham, trains that travel at 320kmph close to our children's schools - this cannot be the right thing to do?

<http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/railhighspeed>

Government response

The new Government has a clear commitment to establish a national high speed rail network to help fulfil our ambitions for economic growth

and a low carbon economy. The vision is for a truly national high speed rail network which will include links to Heathrow and potentially other airports to provide an alternative to short-haul aviation. We will also actively study the options for a link between the new high speed line and the existing High Speed One line - which links London to the Channel Tunnel.

The previous Government set up HS2 Ltd in January 2009 to look at the feasibility of, and business case for, a high speed rail line between London and the West Midlands. HS2 Ltd's report, published in March 2010, makes recommendations on routes and station options for high speed rail, and includes an assessment of costs, benefits and sustainability impacts.

HS2 Ltd's recommended route follows the A413/Chiltern Line transport corridor through part of the Chilterns and makes considerable use of tunnels, cuttings and existing transport corridors to minimise the environmental impacts in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Reducing and mitigating the local environmental impact of high speed rail will always be a very high priority for the new Government in taking this project forward. And no final decision regarding the route of the line will be taken until a detailed and inclusive public consultation has taken place.

So what do we do next? Mel Foster's article starting on page 9 outlines the current situation.

Please now go to www.speenbucks.org.uk from which we reprint the following.

What can I do?

This section sets out some of the actions that you can take, events that are taking place, and other activities that can help fight the HS2 project. The intention is to regularly update this section so villagers can see how they can get involved.

Government Engagement Programme prior to the Comprehensive Spending review.

STOP PRESS: The public consultation is now open - please see the comments page below:

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/N11/Newsroom/DG_188773http://spendingchallenge.hm-treasury.gov.uk

This is the item I posted as an opening salvo this morning (Sunday 11th) at 9:14 a.m. This has already generated almost 100% positive comments - **it is important that people comment** as this moves the posting up the interest rankings and therefore attracts more interest in the subject. There is **also a rating system**, so if you agree with the sentiment, give it 5 stars.

Of course, the more submissions we make the better!

There is an interesting document below, which gives the parameters that the Government has set to justify spending choices, published by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations

NCVO Initial_spending_review_2010_briefing

HS2 Action Alliance Spending Choices Campaign

The HS2AA are running a

Continued on page 28 . . .

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Speen Tennis Court follows through

Caroline Crossley reports on how club's excess funds supported village initiatives

As many of you will be aware, last year a decision was made by the Committee to distribute approximately 50% of our funds to other village societies in need of financial support. Speen Tennis has been in a strong financial position for a number of years and it was felt that, provided there were ample funds to cover court resurfacing, the excess could be put to better use than sitting in a bank account earning little interest.



The Village Hall Committee toasting their new kitchen

Village societies were invited to our AGM where they were asked to give a five minute presentation explaining their plans and need for funds. Subsequently each member completed voting forms allocating percentages of the £15,000 fund to societies of their choice. All the applicants received varying percentages of the fund and we thought you might like to hear how the money has been utilised.

■ The Village Hall was off to a very speedy start and has now completed all its kitchen refurbishment.

■ The Scout Hut kitchen has been refurbished and the

Committee is very pleased with the results. Feedback has been excellent and the upgrade has resulted in considerably more interest being shown in the hiring of the premises.

■ The Baptist Church has cleared and tidied the overgrown area of the churchyard so they now have more space.

■ The Playing Field has a new playground, which was opened last year - this was featured in an earlier edition of the Speen and North Dean News.

■ Speen Festival put their allocation toward the 2009 Festival.

■ Speen School are now in the process of applying for planning permission for a Reception class outside play area.

■ Speen Pre-School used their portion of the fund to commission a feasibility study.

Additional News - following an extremely successful ladies tennis morning on a glorious autumnal morning last September, we have organised some more for this year. The season kicked off with a series of Ladies' Tennis Mornings at Lacey Green Tennis Club. The first was held on Friday 7th May with two more to follow on Friday 11th June and Friday 2nd July. The committee at Lacey Green are very keen to encourage Speen tennis members to take part in events and they offer the opportunity to play league tennis for those members who would like to take the next step.

Steve Bell is running coaching for children and teenagers throughout the summer term. If you are interested in coaching, Steve can be



Guides Marly Leonetti and Libby Ward in their new kitchen

contacted on 07740 859588 or lltland@hotmail.com. Steve is also planning to run some coaching during the summer holidays at Lacey Green; details will be available to members.

The coaching this year is subsidised by the tennis court, therefore we do ask that anyone taking part is a member of the court. We aim to keep the groups smaller than previous years so the coaching can be a little more intense and hopefully participants feel they are improving.

The current Committee is Chairman Trevor Daniels, Treasurer Doug Wilson, Secretary Caroline Crossley, Membership Cherry Seekins, Court Maintenance & SPFA rep Chris Walsh.

If you would like further information about Speen Tennis Court, please contact Cherry Seekins, Membership Secretary, 488355 cherryseekins@btinternet.com

Membership rates for 2010 are £35 Family, £15 Adult and £5 Junior.



Tennis Ladies

Caroline Crossley
caroline_j_crossley@yahoo.co.uk

Speen Heritage Group?

Should we establish a Speen Heritage Group?

Ideas have been put forward in the past and are being discussed again at present that might be better handled by a Heritage Group. These might both help to preserve and promote the best features of our past and also help our vital local businesses including our pubs, restaurants and the village shop.

Within this edition is a map of a Heritage Tour of Speen which is largely a reprint of a map prepared by Martin Stockley and Bob Johnston (see centrespread). It is considered that scope exists for producing larger more detailed maps to highlight the heritage of the village and also leaflets to cover other subjects. The possibilities are endless but one could envisage:

- A Birdwatcher's Walk
- A Bodger's Trail
- A Butterfly Walk
- A Children's Walk
- A Fitness Trail
- A Horse Rider's Trail
- A Mountain Biker's Trail
- A Wildflower Walk

These could be developed into a series of saleable leaflets.

Another idea that was considered back in 2000 following on from the village sign and the village map was to obtain plaques to highlight the historic features of certain buildings around the village. Whilst significant progress was

made the project needed a fair amount of additional input and it never came to fruition. Funds which had been raised were used to update and reprint "The Leaves of Time", a history of Speen. This idea could be resurrected.

There may be scope for producing cards, calendars and stationery that could

feature local heritage, culture or wildlife and the works of local artists and photographers. Since the winding up of the Millennium Committee there is not an obvious organisation in the village to bring forward these and other ideas. Would anybody be keen to be involved in promoting these and other initiatives? Many of these ideas may attract funding from local or County Councils that needs to be pursued. People may have other ideas for enhancing the village.

If anyone is interested in establishing an appropriate group please let me know.

Peter Symonds
488016

SPEEN - YESTERYEAR



(1) Speen Baptist Chapel.

Built by villagers in 1802 as a Free Chapel. Rapidly extended in 1817, the vestry with a fireplace, and in 1834 with new pulpit and balcony. The Baptist Union assisted with funds to buy the freehold land. Find the one-eyed natural gargoyle above a window and the flintstone corners, rather than brick.



Hampden Road and Speen Pond

There was a Speen Green and Pond up to 1925. Ward and Turner built the semi-detached houses, Westwood and Kildare and the pond was filled in at that time. The Old Post Office (9) is located opposite the pond, off picture to the left. Note: Speen's village Bobby with his bicycle centre picture and Rose Cottage (background)!



(7) Speen School.

The School House, in use from 1866 to 1966. Mrs Grace of Lacey Green Church of England financed a church school in this Dissenters' Village. 1966 saw the building of a new School on George Farm land opposite, with new classroom facilities.



(10) Speen Stores.

Emily Saunders in 1930 had a modern home with shop front built on the village crossroads. A following shopkeeper had petrol pumps installed about 1945. With declining sales the store was closed in 1989. Bucks Housing Association, with villagers and parish backing, built a new Speen Stores, which opened in May 1998. Note: Hanging outside the new shop is "A useful little shop" sign designed by the children of Speen School, to mark the re-opening of a shop in Speen, after almost ten years.



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Sharing plate for two

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---	--------

Mains

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(*) – Asterisk denotes Gluten Free option available
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Events

8th August
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



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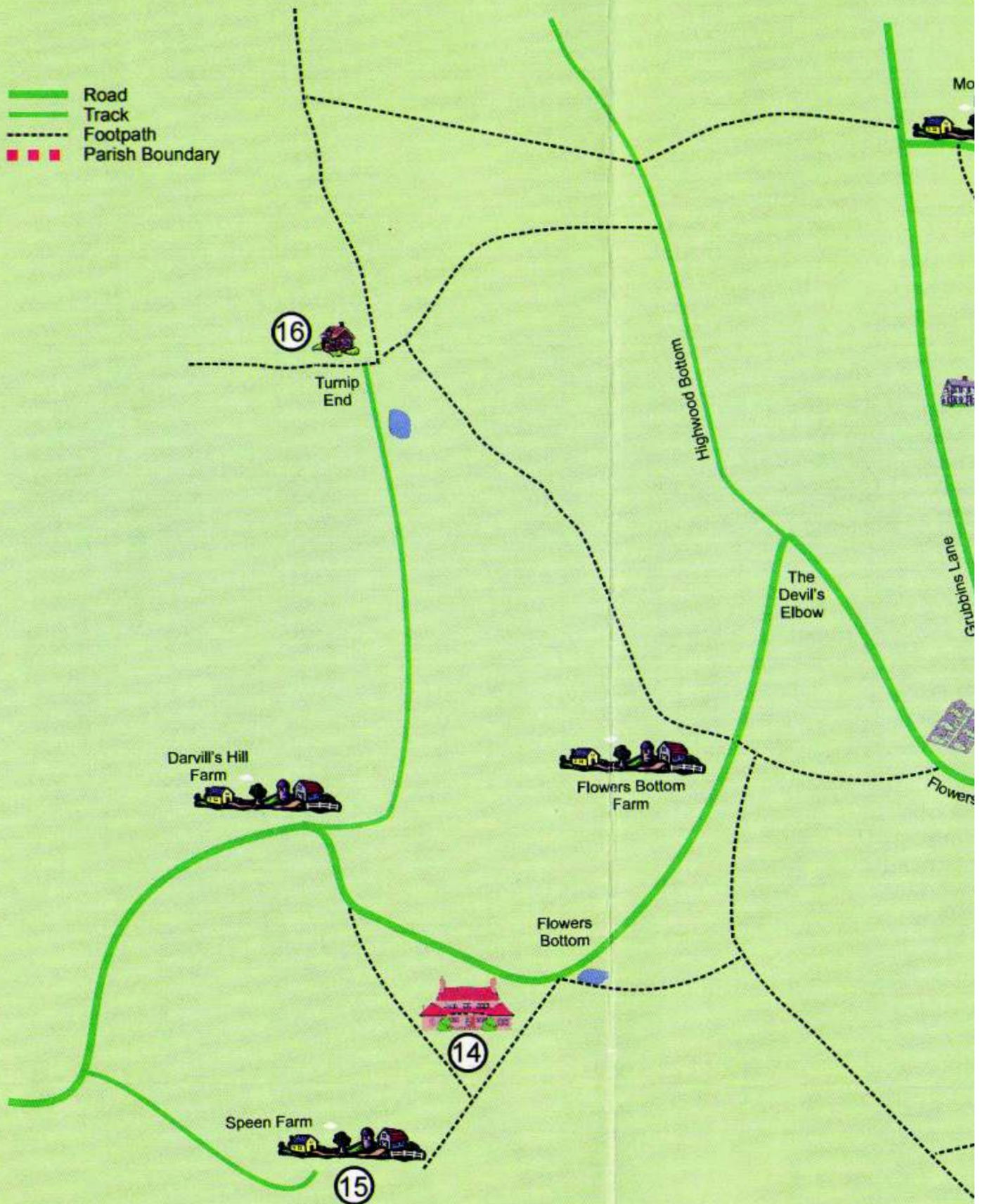
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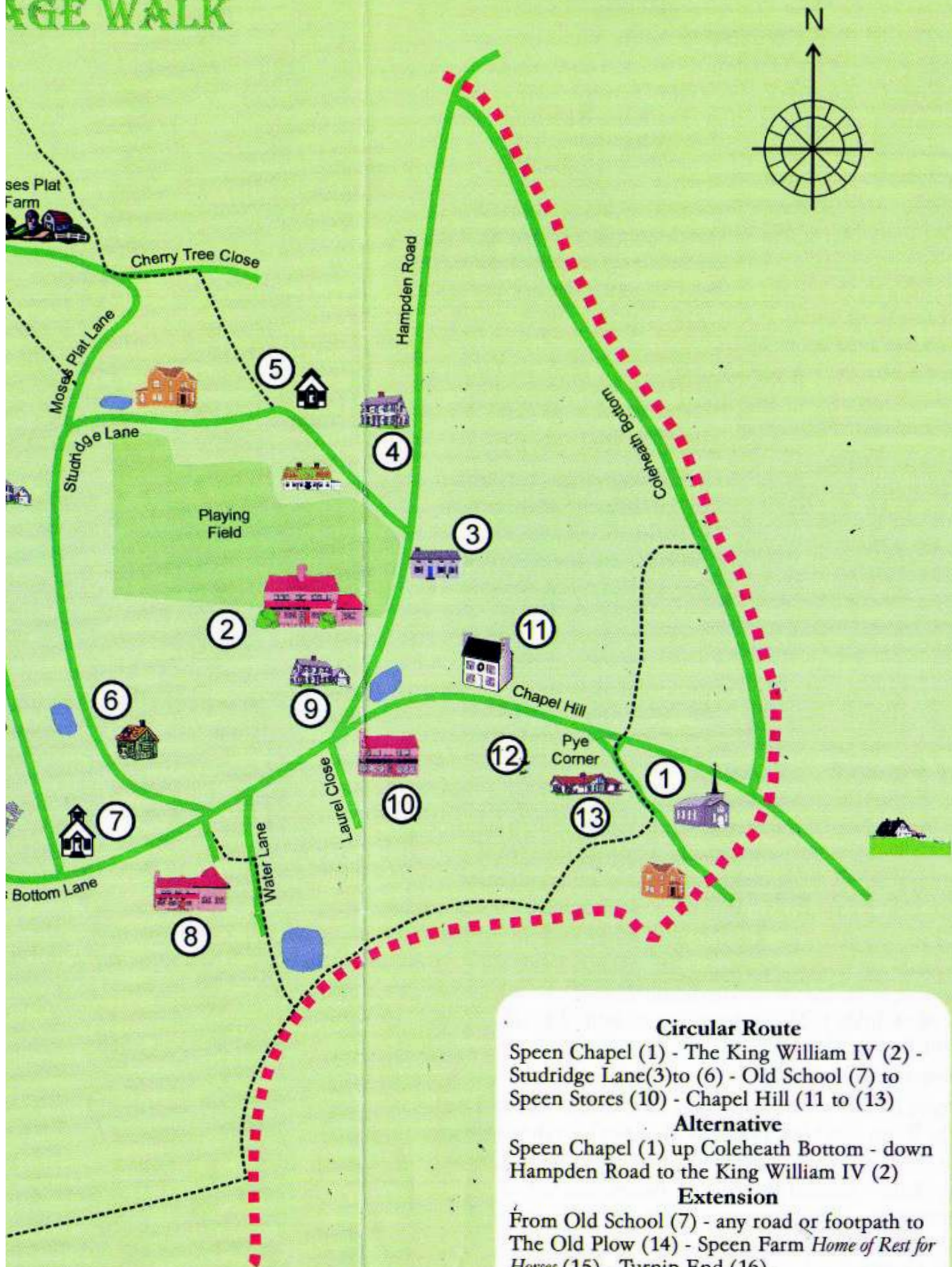
Approximate Scale

SPEEN HERITAGE

-  Road
-  Track
-  Footpath
-  Parish Boundary



AGE WALK



Circular Route

Speen Chapel (1) - The King William IV (2) - Studridge Lane (3) to (6) - Old School (7) to Speen Stores (10) - Chapel Hill (11 to (13)

Alternative

Speen Chapel (1) up Colcheath Bottom - down Hampden Road to the King William IV (2)

Extension

From Old School (7) - any road or footpath to The Old Plow (14) - Speen Farm Home of Rest for Horses (15) - Turnip End (16).

SPEEN HERITAGE WALK

(1) Speen Baptist Chapel.

(See inside panel with Picture.)

Opposite the lychgate is the southern tip of Princes Risborough parish. A shallow valley, Colchcath Bottom trackway, marks the eastern parish boundary with Monks Risborough. This is defined in Anglo-Saxon chronicles of 900AD.

(2) The King William IV 1830-1837.

On to *Speen Playing Field* to see the back of the William IV. The loft entry door was probably used for storing grain, or more likely apples. In the farm field is Orchard Cottage, with a detached chimney indicating an early (1600s) timber frame building.

(3) Rose Cottage.

The first Speen cottage built after the 1823 Enclosures by Levi Ward, son of Joshua of the Old Post Office. The Georgian symmetrical front is similar to the front of the Chapel, a roundel over a central door. Locally quarried Denner Hill Stone corners ensured its Grade II listing. Find proof of building date on the shed.

(4) The Manse.

During prosperous times 1868 - the Chapel Trustees built a modern cottage for the resident minister on the edge of the village - flint and brick, still traditional, but clever use of colours.

(5) The Village Hall.

Local verbal history reports that the Chapel goes split over Temperance beliefs. The building dates from 1873. This Temperance Hall was used for worship until 1924.

(6) Spinning Wheel Cottage. *(formerly Plumridge's).*

William Plumridge 1845-1937, chair maker, Chapel superintendent, cello player and leader of Speen Brass Band. His home and workshops, and the ivy are unchanged from Victorian times - date of the building is about 1850. The forward brick extension was his wife, Eliza's, shop and Post Office. Find the window shutter hooks.

Why then Spinning Wheel Cottage? Joyce Coleman 1905-1995 was one of the last arts and crafts workers - self-taught in spinning and weaving. The old workshops were ideal for the warping spindles and the six looms. She designed all her work of wool rugs, wool hangings, clothes and later silk. Coachloads of American visitors used to arrive and buy.

(7) Speen School.

(See inside panel with Picture.)

(8) George Farm/The Old King George Beerhouse.

Early mediæval timber framing is visible, the wattle and daub replaced by brick nogging. Benjamin Chilton, then his son, Free Chilton, were farm bailiffs until 1902. Like many farmers they brewed their own beer. The Ellis family arrived in 1927. Trading ceased in 1954.

(9) The Old Post Office.

Kelly's Directory 1915 says George Ridgley - Shopkeeper Baker and Post Office. He moved to Speen as a young boy, served the village faithfully until his death in 1955 aged 100. Find the door for the horses' hay, and the bar that fastened the shop window shutters. Opposite there was a *Speen Green and pond* up to 1925.

(10) **Speen Stores.** - A useful Little Shop. With no trading in Speen for some years the village now has a new shop.

(See inside panel with Picture.)

(11) Cottage Farm.

Robert Stevens, the village tailor, bought 10 acres and the cottage in 1890. The farm was mostly meadows. The cottage has a stucco front, on which lines were scribed to resemble Georgian stones. Find "Denner Hill" sandstones decorating the garden, and square chimney pots.

(12) Rosebank Cottage.

1793 is on the front of this brick cottage. Emily Saunders had her shop in the front room before 1930. The four houses below were the beginning of Speen's house building boom of 1950-1980.

(13) Pye Corner & Pye Cottage.

The pair of red brick cottages has 1825 on the bricks. Pye Cottage above has TF 1672 carved inside on the inglenook beam. This was possibly the date of a conversion from single storey thatch to two storey with detached chimney.

(14) The Old Plow Restaurant.

Believed to be early 17C. Civil War armour was found in the old pond in Victorian times - the tenants were the Janes family, with Baldwins Blacksmith beside in a lean-to shed. A Mr Childs sold the property to Ishbel MacDonald for £5000 in the 1930s.

(15) Speen Farm *(from 1971 Home of Rest for Horses)*

The largest farm had many owners and tenant farmers up to 1930s. Then the Hatt brothers also ran a timber haulage business until selling to Ishbel MacDonald. The Home of Rest for Horses started in 1867 in Acton, moved to Borehamwood for many years, then purchased Speen Farm in 1969. The original cottages stand.

(16) Turnip End.

The deep hilltop pond was at its centre. It has only three cottages with WW2 caravan sites lining the lane.

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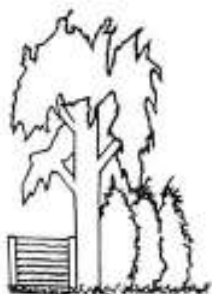
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Wildflower News

Our wildflower editor, Fred Burnham, reaches some milestones

Many of you will know that Fred Burnham, our wildflower editor, turned 75 this year. He is making some decisions about the next phase in his life. It is likely that he will be moving to be closer to family in Wycombe, which will be a loss for those of us who enjoy strolling past his windows, sometimes hearing splendid jazz issuing from his sitting room, or being able to stop and chat about his sightings of wildlife and being given a guided tour of his wild garden. Read on for this

description of one of the most exciting finds of Fred's career.

A chance find

Out exploring a new territory on 3rd April 2009 near the village of Longwick in the Vale of Aylesbury I crossed three small fields where a marsh area can be seen from the footpath. I came to a footbridge over a fast flowing spring fed chalk stream. I stepped onto the bridge and was walking across when I spotted what looked like crocuses. But

Photo copyright Dennis Burnham



Purple Toothwort

there was a question in my mind asking why none of the crocuses were open! So I had to take a closer look. At once I knew they were not crocuses. And for the first time in my life I was looking at very rare purple toothwort (*Lathraea clandestina*). I walked around a large tree on the opposite side of the stream to find a very large clump, 7 feet by 6 feet. It was impossible to count the number of flowers which are 1.5 inches high, by 0.25 inches wide, a lovely violet purple.

The plant

This is a parasitic plant living on the roots of willows and poplars. Our plant is living on the roots of crack willow and black poplars in a damp area beside the stream. It comes from Europe and it is not known who introduced the plant to Britain or when. On the day I found the plant I was so excited that I popped into Marks and Spencer, bought a bottle of Chardonnay

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positiveparenting

and visited my brother Dennis to celebrate.

Dennis Burnham visits the site

Together we thoroughly searched upstream to the road, and downstream as far as we could, although it was heavily scrubbed up. We could then estimate the size of the site. It's large; 360 feet by 14 feet wide in some places. The stream is the key. The hedge with trees follows the stream.

It was then that Dennis posed the question: how did it get there? We speculated that it might be seed floating downstream, or seed carried on the feet of ducks, of animals or it might even have been planted by man.

We then tried to find the land owner. I was given some information that led me to Chinnor, but no one could help me, so we're still looking.

Roy Maycock, Bucks County recorder for flora, visited us on 6 April. Because this is a new site, Roy needed a local plant list, which took some two hours. Then he looked at the purple toothwort, and we think he was surprised at the size of the site.

After Roy's visit we told friends, including Allen Showler, who is well known in the village. He told me that all the sites where he had seen purple toothwort were sites where the plant had been introduced. A lady friend had

visited the house on the opposite side of the road to the plant site and had seen the flower some years ago. Roy also phoned to tell me that he had sent a letter to the house, and that he would call if he heard anything.

With Dennis's help and David and James Paul, I was able to measure the area of the plants and make a map of the site. I want to thank them for their help. They took some wonderful photographs of the plants.

. . . and news of fresh developments

The best time to visit the site is from the middle of March 'til the first week of April. After this time all other vegetation grows very fast.

To find the site, park on the roadside (A4010) near the sign to Longwick before the roundabout. Follow the footpath. You will cross three fields, one with sheep with lambs. You will come to the footbridge, Map Ref 799042. The flower site is left of the bridge up stream.

It's only the second time purple toothwort has been found in Buckinghamshire so it is rare. As it

arrived after the fifteenth century it's classed as an alien.

Roy telephoned me in April to say that he had received a letter from the new owner of Alscot which is the property across the road from the site. She told Roy that purple toothwort was growing beside the stream on her land, so that is the place from which the seeds came. I walked the stream from the other side of Alscot to the spring which feeds the stream and did not find the plant.

Fred Burnham
488303

Ed. Note: With Fred's landmarks in mind, and aware of his contribution to the News, we will have a special profile of him in the next issue.

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Down on the Farm

The farm is a microcosm of the conflicting pressures on space, people and nature in a crowded island.

The health of our Chiltern woodlands is now being seriously threatened with damage caused by deer and grey squirrels. The former repeatedly eat the tops out of young trees, the latter ring bark the trees which eventually die. The Muntjac deer which was introduced onto the Rothschild estate near Tring has been a pest here for many years. It has now spread as far as Worcestershire. To make matters worse, roe and fallow deer too are now often seen at the woodland edges. Although foresters have tried to control the squirrels (without much success) only recently have any serious efforts been made to control the deer. If our beech woodland is to thrive then deer and squirrel numbers must be reduced.

Another animal which causes damage to farmland and gardens is the badger. The badger's habit of digging mounded sets under the fence line at woodland edges destroys the fence, but even worse is the set in an open field which is not always visible in a standing crop. The mounds can easily turn a tractor over. In the garden badgers will completely destroy a sweetcorn or raspberry crop in an effort to get at the fruit.

We are fortunate in the Chilterns in that our badger population is TB free and it is probably a good thing that we have a large population that keeps all other badgers away. Hence we do not have a problem with TB in our cattle. We are pleased for unfortunate farmers in the west country, whose cows are continually being plagued by the disease, that the present coalition government are attempting a cull of infected badgers as well as infected cattle. Why is the general public content with controlling deer and squirrels but not badgers?

Summer 2010 is reminiscent of summer 1976. Fortunately the drought is not so severe yet! In 1976 by July 1st there was not a blade of grass anywhere and all our stock were being fed full winter rations. Cattle thrive in hot dry weather as many of the parasitic worms which cling to the blades of grass are killed in the sunlight. At the moment there is still some brown dried up grass (hay?) in most fields. We are praying for a good rain soon so that we can make enough silage for the winter.

Everyone is fed up with HS2, and as it looks as if we will be annihilated if this route is chosen, so we have decided not to think about it until the final track is selected. However, the gods have got it in for us as next year a main electricity cable is being laid up from Amersham to Saunderton through all our flat fields in the valley.

Gill Kent
gk@bfarms.co.uk

The Speen Marquee

Our smart new marquee has been up for two village events - Funday and the PTA Ball. While up, it also accommodated a wedding reception, a Rotary Club function, the Chapel's Compassion Café, two World Cup games, a School function, Schools Fest, and a PTA party. So very well used!

We have speeded and eased our erection procedures by buying a mechanical 'Wacker' (see action photo below) to drive in the heavy steel stakes, and a trailer to store the marquee, to avoid loading/unloading every hiring.

The next hirings are for the Speen Fete (and associated Barn Dance and Craft Fair) and then North Dean Fete.

Many thanks to the team leaders (Jem, James, Ashley and Trevor) and all the volunteer workers for your efforts.

For information on the availability and cost of hiring the Marquee contact John Holmes (01494 488420 or jholmes@nildram.co.uk).



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campaign on their website to provide input to the government on spending choices. This can be accessed by following the link below: <http://www.hs2actionalliance.org/spendingchoices.php>

EHS Consultation

There is a separate page relating to this action which has now closed for input.

Get involved with the Chiltern Society

Visit their site and join their campaigns. They are currently putting £5 (of £20) for single membership, and £10 (of £30) for family membership, into an HS2 fighting fund.

Number 10 Petition – now apparently closed on June 6th

This petition was suspended by the new Government, and it transpires that the petition closed on June 6th. This seems to be an unsatisfactory situation, as it is believed that the number of signatories would be significantly higher, if people had been able to access it. Details, such as they are, can be accessed here. Disappointingly, given the massive number of people who will be impacted by HS2, there were only 6,871 signatures at the time the petition was suspended, and none added before the petition expired.

Write to David Lidington, MP and Philip Hammond, MP Secretary of State for Transport. Other MPs who should be contacted include John Bercow, who now represents Princes Risborough, and Steven Baker, Wycombe

Many people may have already done this, but if you haven't, the more people that register

their concerns with these MPs the better.

It is suggested that the best approach is to start with the proposed top-tier argument that the business case for HS2 is not sound, the environmental benefits are far from proven, and there are alternative ways of meeting future demand that have not been fully evaluated. David's email is lidingtond@parliament.uk and Philip's email is hammondp@parliament.uk

Facebook

Only applicable to those who are on facebook and for whom the novelty hasn't worn off yet, there is a group that can be joined

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=367587726768&ref=ts>

Bucks Free Press

It seems that the BFP have a petition running which can be accessed at

<http://www.bucksfreepress.co.uk/news/highspeed2/>

If you are aware of any key activities that should be publicised, please let me know via mel.foster@speenbucks.org.uk

Everyone in the villages knows how important these issues are, so please keep checking the website for updates - and use the What's On feature on the website, which links to What's On in this journal, to see notices of further meetings.

The Editors

Letters to the Editor

A recent appraisal of the villages conservation area describes the "strong community spirit" of the area, epitomised by this letter of 10th March, 2010

Dear David,

Yet again an amazing issue of the Speen & North Dean News - you and Anne are to be congratulated.

I am just wondering whether you would be kind enough to put the following comments in the next edition. I just wanted write on behalf of the residents of North Dean and Speen to thank sincerely the Kents, who every year spend much money and time in tending our hedges throughout the two villages. It is an expensive and time consuming job which they carry out very well on behalf of the villagers - Jim, Gill and Charles - thank you.

Yours sincerely

*Peter G. Keen
Chairman
Hypnos*

Wildlife Watch

After quite a hard winter many of the visiting birds departed relatively early this year. 12 Redpolls were present in Woodview Drive until early March whilst a group of 20 Crossbills near Hampden House remained until 12th of the month. Other interesting sightings included a Woodcock and Raven in Great Hampden during March.

Gradually summer visitors and breeding birds started to arrive and foremost amongst these were Cuckoos. Both myself and Jeremy Symondson heard individual birds in Prestwood on 26th and 27th April whilst Peter Dawson and Ashley Cooper heard a bird in Speen during May. Cuckoos, which have not been recorded in the area in recent years, seem to be more widespread this year. Other birds which are becoming more regular visitors include Buzzards and Mandarin ducks. Buzzards have been around the area for some years but are now coming down into larger gardens. I saw one in a garden in Spring Coppice Lane in February and one was

photographed on a telegraph pole near the Old Plow. Mandarin ducks have again visited our area searching for breeding sites. Jeremy reported one in Water Lane in April whilst I saw three in flight in one of the local woods in May. They have bred successfully near Wendover but it remains to be seen whether our local ponds offer sufficient safety. Certainly the 6 Mallard chicks raised at Willotts Farm have all been picked off, predominantly by Magpies apparently.

Interestingly Magpies trying to nest in a garden in Moses Plat Lane have themselves been attacked by Crows trying to raid their nest. Meanwhile Red Kites and Buzzards are nesting in the area whilst several pairs of Great Spotted Woodpeckers in the vicinity are feeding young fledged from 3 different nest sites. Within our garden three pairs of Blue Tits and two pairs of Great Tits have been successful whilst two pairs of Blackbirds are feeding young



Cuckoo

after failed first nests. These include a Leucistic female Blackbird in our own garden which has a partially white head. Dick Seekins reported a Whitethroat in North Dean in mid May with other interesting sightings including a Woodcock in Monkton Wood.

Both toad and frog tadpoles are now well developed in local garden ponds. Some of the early warm weather at the beginning of June saw a 3ft long grass snake visiting our garden pond.

On the mammal front there has again been a night time sighting reported of a large feline. Unfortunately we never seem to find evidence of paw prints, significant kills or associated sightings (or photographs) to add substance to these reports. In our own back garden a fox by the patio doors at 11.00am one weekend was very unusual. Hares have been noted again in Flowers Bottom and I can confirm that Roe Deer have bred again locally with a fawn seen in late May.

Please let me know of any interesting sightings.

Peter Symonds
 symonds@speen10.freemove.co.uk
 488016



Roe Deer fawn

"The past becomes the present in your head"

There are many stories to tell and hear about living in a Buckinghamshire village

SNDN and SpeenFest Interactive! Oral History project begins to stir memories

Jane Draycott quoted from *"Memory: an anthology"* edited by A.S. Byatt and Harriet Harvey-Wood when she introduced her fledgling oral historians to the art of story-telling, or perhaps more accurately, the art of listening to stories. A number of villagers had agreed to talk to us about their memories of their sporting past. The purpose of the afternoon workshop in the Village Hall was to reflect on what we had heard and, respecting the almost universal wish for anonymity among those who told their tales, try and give some sense of how memories of the past remain woven in the present.

She encouraged us to think of contrasts, between this little village on a hill, and the great northern industrial city that was the starting point for one of the tales; or between men and women; gardening and the war.

Words would come back: "lighting wood" and "dandelion hands". "Lighting wood" was made from thin chips cut away from the logs to kindle the fire, and people got dandelion

hands from picking the sticky flowers in spring to make dandelion wine. There were memories of boys and girls having to play separately - or perhaps they wanted to - and of times when women would never go into the pub. Sports included hopscotch and pub cricket (Dan Ridgley was on the team), and the boys going off to duff up the lot from Lacey Green.

Like wildflowers, the stories people told suggested a mix of toughness and the idyllic. Having to use bucket toilets, going off to war, living through the time when farm incomes were non-existent and the only way to survive was to sell up. And there would be blackberrying, country dancing, going to the circus.

As our interviewers told the stories they had heard and we reflected on them, the space in the Old Village Hall took on an intent and quiet air - quiet, not silent, because the past was giving voice.

*Anne and David Worlock
488033
anne@monimail.net
david@davidworlock.com*

North Dean relishes a proud history

North Dean Village Hall was the venue for a very interesting evening, exploring the involvement and influence of a past North Dean inhabitant, in the development of the aeroplane.

Dave Scott enraptured attendees with his collection of photos and presented a

detailed account of the development of the aircraft industry and the vital role played by **George Holt Thomas**, a previous resident of North Dean House.



George Holt Thomas

George Holt Thomas, in association with George White, (founder of the Britisand Colonial Aeroplane Co. Ltd. later the Bristol Aeroplane Company) and Lord Northcliffe, was influential in getting the Government to increase funding of air services for the military.

"By the end of World War One, George Holt Thomas had developed his Aircraft Manufacturing Company (AIRCO), to be the largest aircraft company in the world."

During 1914, Holt Thomas employed a Geoffrey de Havilland "to design and supervise the construction of the companies' aeroplanes," on a salary of £600 per year, with commission of £50 per aeroplane for the first twenty sold, thereafter a commission of £25 per aeroplane. This sounds like a very good contract at that time!

Continued on page 34 . . .

WI – 50 years in Speen

On 7th January 1960, Speen WI was founded, so we planned to commemorate this date this year. The extreme weather conditions intervened! Instead on 1st April, we invited guests from other local WIs and 7 former Presidents, 4 of whom are still members of Speen WI and 3, who now live in the local area.

Supper - cooked by our members - was delicious. As for the desserts, we are undoubtedly the most talented!

The theme of the evening was of course gold - the table decorations, raffle prizes and our cake, which was cooked and decorated by our Treasurer, Jean Morris, who happens to be the Chairman of the

Buckinghamshire Federation of WIs. Mollie White, who joined Speen WI in April 1960 and is still a member, cut the cake. We were all asked to wear something that resembled gold



Current WI president, Christine Oliver, with Mollie White



Former Speen WI presidents with Mollie White cutting the cake

- earrings, bracelets, necklaces or belts. One of us visited a certain accessory shop to buy

house down with her amazing music from all over the world.



Victoria Molinar entertaining the WI members with her accordion

long dangly "gold" earrings that cost £5!

We owe a special thank you to June Pilkington and her team, who were responsible for the organisation of this celebration. Victoria Molinar, a young talented musician, brought her accordion to entertain us; needless to say she brought the

Many WIs in the country have members of all ages, so please come and join us on the first Thursday of every month at 7.30pm to see if you like us! You will be made very welcome. Speen WI must surely be the oldest organisation in the village, but please challenge

us if you have proof that we are wrong in that assumption!

Christine Oliver

christineoliver99@btinternet.com

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Eyes Front! North Dean Village Hall presents an exciting combination of live performance and film about the effect of music in wartime

Friday, 15 October

Thanks to an initiative of Wycombe District Council known as Theatre in the Villages (TiV), the Committee of North Dean Village Hall are proud to announce that Isla St Claire will be performing on Friday 15 October 2010 at North Dean Village Hall.



Isla St Claire

A note about the performance:

Singer and broadcaster Isla St Clair, presents and performs a selection of popular songs, classics of their time, and tells the story behind them.

Joining Isla is film maker Patrick King who gives a fascinating and humorous 'behind-the-scenes' look at the making of their award winning documentary films. Using film clips they illustrate how songs and music played an important part in people's daily lives for boosting morale, for propaganda or for just reminding people of better times.

This rich mix of song, film, funny out takes and interaction with audience, make for a light hearted family show that is both informative and wonderfully entertaining.

This is an opportunity to see a professional performance in our local village hall. Tickets will be on sale nearer the time; however, due to seating restrictions, tickets will be limited to a first come basis.

For more information, please contact Julie White on 01494 562311

Speen Horticultural Society

This organisation had been in existence for many years, holding shows and meetings, but interest was waning when in 2004 it was decided at a final (poorly attended) meeting to suspend the society to allow for the possibility of a resurgence of interest at some future time. Suspension was decided upon rather than winding up completely at that time mainly because the society still had some money in the bank which might, it was thought, be useful to assist a new start up.

However that was six years ago and lately the signatories of the bank account have received enquiries concerning the availability of the society's funds for useful purposes within the village. It has been suggested, for example, that the money could help pay for essential maintenance of the village hall and there seems to be some informal consensus to that effect. But first it is essential to ascertain whether there is any group of people in sufficient numbers within the village who might be interested in taking over and reviving the Horticultural Society. Alternatively, should the money be considered for other purposes?

A meeting will be held in the village at which these matters will be discussed and decisions made.

The date of this meeting will be announced possibly in the next issue of the magazine, but meanwhile I will deal with any enquiries and collate opinions given to me on the subject, eventually to be put forward for discussion and any proposals arising voted upon at the meeting.

My name is Peter Dawson (last secretary of the horticultural society) and you can contact me on 488222 or clondaw@gotadsl.con.uk

SpeenFest Interactive! has been ACTIVE

May Poetry Day

As a preamble to the domination of World Cup themes, on 20 May we invited professional poet and teacher Jane Draycott to Speen and Lacey Green. In the morning Jane worked with the children of years 3 and 4 from St John's Combined School creating poems 'You Are South Africa' based on fantastic images and music of the country and the vibrant colours of the South African flag. These poems were then used to inspire artwork and music by the children and teachers culminating in an assembly at the school.

In the afternoon Jane was given a very different task in Speen Village Hall.

I'm hoping that the Editor has written about the rest of the day somewhere else in this publication . . . [see the "Past becomes the present in your head" on page 30].

SpeenSchoolFest: Bridging the Gap

On the 22 and 23 of June 2010 in the Speen School grounds, over 100 children ages 2-7 from Speen CofE School, St John's Combined School Lacey Green and Speen Pre-school came together for a remarkable celebration of South Africa and the World Cup.

You kind of had to be there, and I'm sorry if you weren't. Thanks to all who were!

The creative team from the Speen Festival included local community artist Emma Child, not-at-all-local djembe drummer Nickens Nksoso from the African Band Kasai Masai (who had performed for the Speen community last summer) and two teachers from St John's School with wildly creative talent - Jac Osman-Allu and Fiona Insley.

Collectively, and with a wonderfully organised mess, the children created 1 metre diameter football heads of the King and Queen of South Africa. On completion these were ceremonially hoisted in the middle of the marquee. Individually the children created self-portraits in brilliant colours to make a 'rainbow' bunting and also a rainbow of handprints to represent the 'rainbow nation' hosting the World Cup (see page 10).

Musically they were not only drilled in the basics of djembe drumming (and dancing) from the Congo but also developed their African singing voices using call and response songs from all over Africa, South African Football Anthems (Shosholozza) and a little wordsetting of poems about Africa (written by some older pupils as part of May Poetry Day).

The whole proceedings were directed by Fiona's homemade Vuvuzela and came together in a triumphant match between 4 South African Tribes of children on the football pitch of Speen School under the canopy of the Speen Marquee and the African Sun.

In the meantime Debbie Hayman, teacher at Speen School had been busy creating African masks during school time with Speen pupils, and I had been making music with the Speen Pre-school who came together with the reception class both mornings for some African singing, instrumental

music and the making of African inspired decorations for our crazy football heads.

Everyone involved seems to have felt that this project was a triumph: "stimulating, exciting and bonding" says one teacher - and the Festival is so glad to support a creative project that has brought together different local schools so positively. Thanks to all who made it possible but particularly to Mrs Nayna at Speen who trusted me and then wasn't able to be there.

*Kate Laughton
Joint Artistic Director
Speen Festival*

More Information: contact Kate on 01494 488548 or email Kate@oldkinggeorge.plus.com

The Speen Festival is biennial and takes place over a ten day period in September in Speen. It is run entirely by local volunteers. SpeenFest Interactive! was an initiative of the 2009 Festival aiming:

- To promote participatory creative activities during and between Festivals
- To place professional artists and creative leaders within local community and educational settings
- To support local creative initiatives and harness skills to develop and encourage expertise
- To develop a strand of local projects relating to the main Festival events

The Speen Festival 2009 is supported by Beechdean Dairies, Speen Shop Charities and Wycombe District Council

The next Speen Festival takes place in September 2011

. . . continued from page 30

The technical qualifications of de Havilland and the business qualities of Holt Thomas were combined to great success. The name De Havilland became synonymous with the air industry in part due to Holt Thomas who played a major part through his tireless efforts and influential involvement in the aircraft industry.

Holt Thomas lived in North Dean House from where he deployed energy into dairy farming and raising a herd of prize winning Friesian cattle. He also bought several farms and other houses and land in North Dean. He was locally respected and a generous employer and did much to help the village. In 1921 he was responsible for the building of the village hall and the three black and white cottages opposite Clappins Lane (one now occupied by Julie White, secretary to North Dean Village Hall, who arranged the evening). All these buildings, it is thought, were relocated converted wartime barracks

from RAF Halton. Later, Holt Thomas began to build a large new house for himself, just off Stocking Lane. This is now part of the Timber Research and Development Association (TRADA) establishment.

The aircraft industry came to High Wycombe in a very big way during the war. It was fascinating to see photos and hear about the important role that the chair making industry, in and around High Wycombe, played for the war effort.

Due to local skills and workshop facilities specialising in wood working, the furniture makers were engaged in the manufacture of aircraft components - not just small components but the fuselage and the wings of the famous DeHavilland Mosquito! Rather than using our local beech, special timber was imported from Canada. The photos of these large loads being transported to Hendon were particularly noteworthy. It transpires that "wooden" airplanes had significant advantages over their metal counterparts.

From a comment posted on avionics: "I went to school in High Wycombe in the 1950s. The town was the home of furniture makers in England. It was logical for all that wood expertise to be used in manufacturing Mosquito parts. There are still pubs in HW - *Chairmakers, Carpenters Arms, Jolly Bodger* etc. that hark back to that period".

The evening was made even more enjoyable by the efforts of Julie in organising this event, with welcome assistance from co-committee member Steve Rogers, and the very tasty meal of hot steak and ale, prepared by the King William Public House in Speen.

Special thanks go to Dave Scott for his excellent presentation. In return for his efforts, and at his behest, the North Dean Village Hall Committee were pleased to make a donation to Chilterns Air Ambulance Service.

Tony White

Picture by kind permission of Dave Scott.



A HISTORY OF SPEEN



The "Leaves of Time" was first published in 2000 as part of Speen's Millennium Celebrations and is a history of the village and its inhabitants since records began. It records the building of Speen Chapel as well as the birth of our school, the origins of the 'bodger' and Speen's brush with the Second World War! It is a fascinating account of the self-reliance of the inhabitants of this remote hilltop village.

Updated in 2007, the current edition records recent events in the village such as the school's 40th birthday, the opening of the children's bike park, the numerous S.S.G.'s fundraising events and of course the biennial SPEEN FESTIVAL with its art and photographic exhibitions, plays and musicals. All proceeds of the sale of the books go toward Speen Festival.

THE LEAVES OF TIME is available from Speen Stores and online at olivia.cowan@onetel.net

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Wildlife in all its forms supported on the Playing Fields of Speen

Speen Playing Fields Report, Summer 2010

The observant amongst our community may have noticed the arrival of a new tree on the playing fields . . . our very own Christmas tree! Our new arrival (yet to have an official name!) is a Serbian Spruce, not a well known Christmas tree species but given the difficulty of trying to find a suitable specimen, we are hopeful that it will serve us very well in the coming years. A hardy group of volunteers spent a hot spring day digging a large hole into which we lowered our tree. We were spurred on by the extensive wit of passing villagers who had some sarcastic "well I never" comments about planting a Christmas tree in May . . . thanks for those contributions! We then spent the next 6 weeks watering our tree and hoping the journey from Serbia (via Denham) hadn't been too arduous. We were pleased to see new growth and heave a sigh of relief that it had survived. We look forward to decorating it in December and singing carols in a less dangerous spot than the edge of Hampden Road!

Anyway, enough of Christmas in July . . . and to the early summer FunDay activities. We welcomed back the eclectic musical comedy of the New

Rope String Band to the village marquee on Friday June 4th. To a packed house they rattled through old and new material with the crowd in stitches all night; they were very well received on their return to Speen. The proceeds from this event went to support the playing fields and Malaria Consortium.

Speen World Cup FunDay followed on Saturday 12th June. With not a single piece of goal line video technology in site, and only the eagle eyes of Geoff our referee, we knew that the officials would be challenged with the usual skulduggery and blatant cheating of some of our teams. We enjoyed playing Mexican Wave, Hat Trick, Pitch Invasion, Bend it Like Beckham, the Ledley "King William" Gallas Dentists Chair game, WAGS and Bags and the Klinsman Kiddy Kurling Cup. With our traditional village teams adopting a World Cup country it was the blue of France/Hampden Road that walked off with the big prize. Without showing any of the infighting of the real French football team they scored early on by playing their "Gazza" joker on the first game and winning and from there they never looked back! We carried on into the evening with more sporting punishment by watching England play USA, and how little did we know then what was in store over the coming days for Capello's boys . . . still

having a World Cup theme does help the creative juices flow when coming up with new game ideas and names! Once again your attendance and support helped us to raise significant funds towards the upkeep of our playing fields.

Over on Dan Ridgley's field we have this year tried to leave the open area as a wildlife meadow with cutting to encourage wild flowers and wildlife. We have had a few users of our bird boxes with a nest of blue tits adjacent to the rope swing - a dangerous place to bring up a family!

As always many thanks for the support of the village in allowing us to keep the fields in the excellent condition that they are. We hope that you have a good summer and enjoy using your playing fields.

See you at Bonfire Night.

Andy Thompson
488524

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District and County Council News – June 2010



Paul Rogerson hopes that there are signs of a rethink

The High Speed Rail (HSR) proposals and their affect on the Communities and Environment within the Chilterns continue to dominate my work load. There have been indications that a rethink by Government may be happening but until firm alternatives come forward the proposed three routes are still the only proposal on the table.

The first indication of change was the cancellation, by the Coalition Government, of the third Heathrow runway and the request to Lord Mawhinney to look to see how link by HS2 to Heathrow could be made. A relook at the provision of a through connection to HS1 is also reported. Mix 96 News has a useful website and confirms that "The Secretary of State, Philip Hammond, has written to Lord Mawhinney - who has already been commissioned to consider how Heathrow might be linked to a high speed rail network - to adjust his remit in the light of the new Government's aviation policy." It has also been reported that Philip Hammond, wrote to the man behind the scheme, Sir

Brian Briscoe, calling for "a review in more detail" of the route and the impact it would have on residents living nearby. This should mean a complete relook at the HS2 Business Case and more involvement of 'private' finance.

A useful 'Summit', organised by the County Council, bringing together the various pressure groups opposed to routing through the Chilterns AONB, was held in June to examine the financial 'Business Case' for HS2 and it was evident from this that the numbers just do not stack up. I asked that, based on what had been presented that both the District and the County Council write to the Secretary of State for Transport and the Chancellor, pointing out the flaws in the finance and that, faced with Government Cuts to all services, money should not be wasted on this scheme. I was pleased that they both agreed and have written.

With the announcement, by George Osborne, to consult on Government Spending this is a good time to write to the Treasury with your thoughts on priorities for the Government. The next dead line for a Government Announcement is in October when the Comprehensive Spending Review, following the Budget proposals, is made. If you are concerned that the level of Spending Cuts will affect essential services then withdrawal of funding for the present HS2 could be a priority.

Road repairs and maintenance

are another key issue. You will have seen the completion of the missing 'finger post' signing in Hampden. It has taken a very long time to get these in place but I hope you feel that it was worth the effort. As you will also have seen the County has reintroduced the policy for surface dressing minor roads. Pink Road, Chapple Hill and Peter's Lane have benefitted from the improved specification which should give a longer life to the road between treatments. Bryants Bottom Road requires a higher specification for the surface treatment and therefore was not part of the programme. I have asked that it be given priority for more permanent repairs and await proposals.

I would apologise for the lack of 'grass cutting' in Speen. The area by Abbotswood was done but the piece opposite the Speen Stores was not. This happened because the contract arrangements were taken back by the County Council and list provided by the District was not up to date. This has been corrected and both areas will now be cut on a three weekly cycle though the season.

If you have a concern about either council services my email address is progerson@buckscc.gov.uk and my telephone number 01494 488315. So if you would like to contact me, I will do what I can to help.

*Paul Rogerson
progerson@buckscc.gov.uk
District and County Councillor*

Speen and North Dean News - Editors	Anne & David Worlock	488033
Speen and North Dean News - advertising	Peter Cooper	488975
Speen Baptist Church - Minister	Andy Gower	488758
Speen Festival - Secretary	Sue Taylor	488168
Speen Fete - Chairman	Amanda Dobbs	488887
Speen Fete - Secretary	Nicki Pitt	488713
Speen & North Dean Good Neighbours	Christine Oliver	488409
Speen & North Dean Guides	Pauline Hall	488372
Speen Infants School - Head	Denise Nayna	488321
Speen Infants School PTA	Ann Myers	488692
Speen Marquee	John Holmes	488420
Mother and Toddler Group	Katherine Matthews	489843
Speen PreSchool	Amanda Dobbs	488887
Speen Playing Fields Chairman	Andy Thompson	488524
Riding for the Disabled	Gloria Holmes	488420
Speen Supporters Group	TBD	
Speen Stores	Alison Templeman	488258
Speen Tennis Court - Secretary	Cherry Seekins	488355
Speen Village Hall - Chairman	Bill Groves	488180
Speen Village Hall - Bookings	Bill Groves	488180
Speen WI - Secretary	Barbara Collett	488348
North Dean Village Hall - Chairman	Andrew Howard	562775
North Dean Village Hall - Secretary	Julie White	562311
North Dean Village Hall - Bookings Secretary	Megan Chinn	563074
Pigotts 7 '48' Musical Evenings	Nick Wheeler-Robinson	562167
Hughenden Parish Council - Chairman	R F Gould	
Lacey Green Parish Council - Chairman	Cathryn Davies	01844 342800
Lacey Green Parish Council - Councillor for Speen Ward	Roger Craft	488343
Wycombe District Council - Member for Lacey Green & Hampdens	Paul Rogerson	488315
Bucks County Council - Member for Lacey Green	Paul Rogerson	488315
Police Contact	PCSO Lisa Roberts	0845 850 5505

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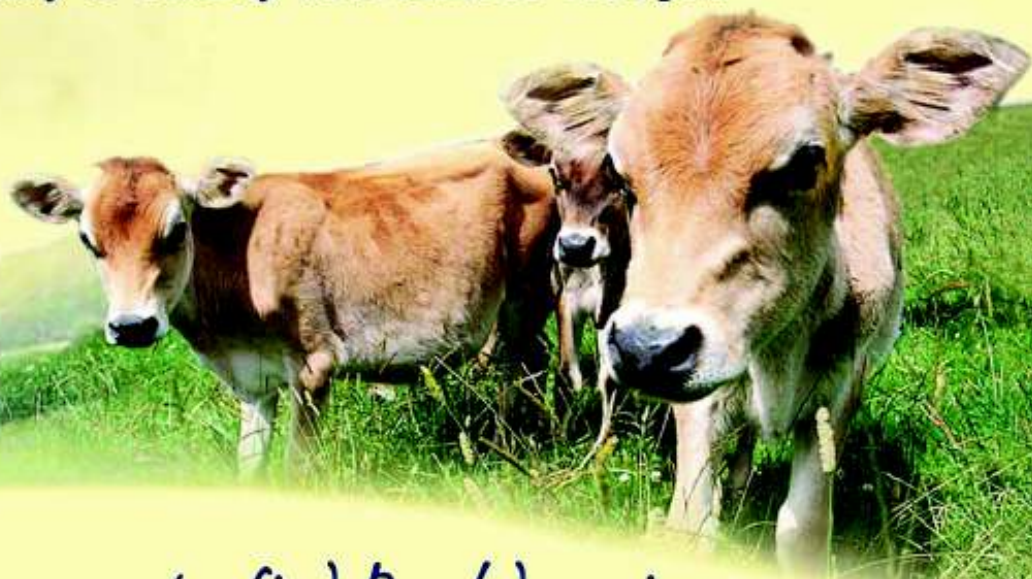


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