

VILLAGE VOICE



April - May 2011

The community magazine of Bantham, Buckland, and Thurlstone



NUMBER 168
APRIL - MAY 2011

"Oh, to be in England" yearned Browning, *"Now that April's there"*. And after our protracted and icy old winter we too have been delighted to see the blankets of snowdrops now giving way to trumpeting daffodils throughout the parish. We have a lot to look forward to - not least two Royal Weddings, and the visit of the splendid choir of Oxford's Lincoln College - and much to be thankful for. Our beautiful countryside here in South Devon remains all that Browning craved in *Home Thoughts from Abroad*.

Sadly, abroad today is not enjoying the best of times. Natural disasters have brought devastation to many corners of the earth on a scale difficult to comprehend, even with the photographic evidence. Other disasters we continue to create for ourselves. Once again, the technology of nuclear energy has demonstrated that fail-safe can be exaggerated. Even the most well-regulated and flourishing democracies are not immune. And where democracy is but early in the bud, or in a state of restivation, the sword of state may be drawn to deny the flowering process.

The twitterings of unrest, and the ditherings of the UN, and the intuitive empathetic response we have for people in need all combine to demand the judgement and wisdom of a Solomon in our national leadership. Let us hope we have it or, like Browning's *Patriot*, we may find that it is not just *"roses, roses all the way"*, but also *"and afterwards, what else?"*

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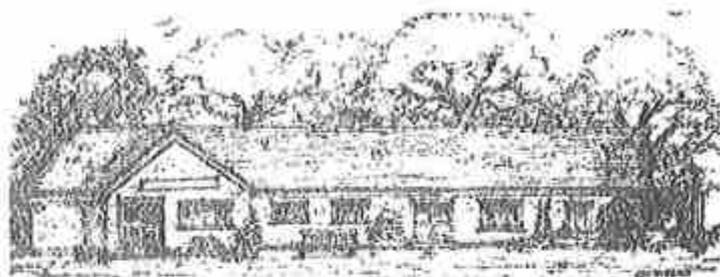
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Published Bi-monthly

Parish Hall

News

by Chris White



Well, I start this edition of Parish Hall News with details of both a resounding success, and a disappointment. The evening concert given by *Mazalka* was truly remarkable. Never in the history of the Parish Hall has such an amazingly wide variety of music been played in the course of one concert. Every genre you can think of, and several that you wouldn't, were all played with the same stunning quality. We had opera, Russian folk songs, Hungarian gypsy, Vivaldi, Hot Club of France, tango and Edith Piaff, to name but a few. **Sarah Harrison** and **Igor Outline** were a true delight, and we shall keep in touch for a return visit at some time in the future.

The disappointment was the planned children's concert of Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*. In spite of John and June Beven's enormous hard work in writing, e-mailing, and phoning nine schools in the locality, we had only fourteen confirmed ticket sales by the week before the Concert, and so felt that we had no option but to cancel it – the first event we have had to cancel since the new Hall opened. The children of the South Hams missed out on what would have been a real treat. A great shame.

Putting that aside, there is no chance that we will have to cancel our next event, which takes place on Saturday 2nd April, just after this edition of Village Voice is published. As trailed in the February/March edition, we are extremely fortunate, through the good offices of **Ron Parkin** and **Jonathon Swinard**, to have booked the highly reputed choir of **Lincoln College Oxford** to sing in the Parish Hall.

Ticket sales are going very well, so if you haven't already booked by the time you read this, don't delay. Full details are elsewhere

in this edition of Village Voice. We have been promised a varied repertoire, with plenty of music that you will know and love.

Also in April – on Friday 29th April to be precise – we have a previously unscheduled event, an *indoor street party* to celebrate the Royal Wedding. Bring your own food and drink, and watch the proceedings on our famous big screen. There will be a small charge for entry on this occasion, a proportion of which will be donated to the Parish Of Thurlestone Society, to go towards the creation of something of beauty in the Parish, to commemorate this event. Full details can be found on the posters displayed around the parish.

After that, the next social event in our calendar will take place very soon after the next edition of Village Voice is published, so it's worth giving you plenty of advance warning. On Sunday 5th June, **David and Kitty Cooke** have once more kindly invited us to hold a lunchtime **Cheese and Wine Party** in their unique walled garden at *The Downs*. If you've been there before, you will know what a special place it is, and if you haven't, then don't miss out this time. There will be plenty of publicity as usual, nearer the time, with all the details to enable you to book your place. Keep your fingers crossed for a beautiful June day.

Finally, almost immediately after you read this, assuming you're quick off the mark, we have our **AGM** on **Tuesday 29th March** at 6.30 pm, in the Parish Hall. Do please come along, and hear first hand how we're doing.

It's also a good opportunity for **YOU** to tell us what else you would like to see happening in **YOUR** Parish Hall - in the way of ad hoc events, and/or regular activities.

Parish Council

Meetings held on 7th February & 7th March 2011

News & Views by Citizen

Attendance

The February meeting saw six Parish Councillors, the Parish Clerk, our District Councillor and ten members of the public present.

In March six Parish Councillors, the Parish Clerk, our District Councillor, a Police representative and eleven members of the public filled the Yeo Room.

Open Forum

A large dangerous pot hole opposite Lambs Close was reported at the February meeting. At the March meeting the Parish Clerk was thanked for chasing the relevant authority and getting it repaired.

Thanks were also given to Councillor **Charles Mitchelmore** for policing the Parish Hall car park at the start of the school day.

The "Best kept village" sign adjacent to the turning to Court Park Road is considered to be in a poor position.

The path at the top of the Golf Club car park is full of litter and no one is sure who is responsible for its maintenance.

Parish Hall

Councillor **Peter Hurrell** reported that the boiler, and the air handling equipment located in the loft, had been serviced. Overloads had been removed from the air handling equipment control panel located in the Yeo Room. The fire alarm system had received its monthly check.

The hall projector had been repaired and was back in working order, and the portable electric appliances had also had their annual check.

The magnetic catches to be fitted to the railings to hold the fire doors open in windy weather have been ordered but are on extended delivery.

Benches and vaulting horses that were in the store room are now in the loft.

Councillor **Peter Hurrell** also asked his fellow Councillors to attend the Parish Hall AGM on Tuesday 29th March 2011.

Highways

Councillor **Kit Marshall** reported that the cost of removing the 62 "No Parking" posts and notices was prohibitive. A letter to Sir Simon Day asking for help has been sent.

A map of salt bin locations has been received by the Parish Council and needs to be debated.

An amendment to the car parking on the cobbled road adjacent to the church is to be considered along with the possibility of painting our own yellow lines.

Thurlstone main road drainage is poor.

Pot holes in the Parish are getting worse and have a hidden danger when full of rain water. Whether Devon County Council will have any money to carry out repairs is anyone's guess.

Footpaths and Heritage Coast

The footpath sign to Yarmer Beach has yet to be replaced.

Evans Estate who own the road to the church car park have no plans to carry out repairs.

Erosion to the cliff footpath alongside the golf course needs to be surveyed as the path in places is very close to the cliff edge.

Grant Thornton are getting a second estimate for repairs to "Post Office Lane"

School

Councillor **Andrew Rhymes** said that the car park was yet to be completed. Eleven places were planned but three of these have to be for disabled users.

Trees

- # Councillor **Charles Mitchelmore** said SHDC would not take his word about dead trees that need attention nor would they come and look at them. They need photographs!
- # Japanese knotweed is not being treated.

Parish Plan

- # Councillor **Kit Marshall** said that volunteers are still needed (see separate article).
- # Devon Renaissance had contacted SHDC mentioning that Thurlestone had poor broadband. **Richard Swan**, our Broadband guru, is chasing up funding from SHDC which may be available (see separate article).

Forward Development Plan

- # Councillor **Dale Came** reported that the plans for additional housing for Thurlestone and Churchstow were now considered to be undeliverable. Dale was thanked for all his hard work on keeping in touch with these proposals.
- # The redevelopment of the old telephone exchange is to go to planning shortly.

District Councillors Report

- # **Shonaugh Rankin** said she will not be standing for re-election in May, having served for the last eight years. The Parish Council expressed their thanks to her for her work, and extended good wishes for her future, in which *Citizen* joins.
- # Council tax has been frozen for the coming financial year and is the third lowest in Devon. A further £700,000 has been saved from the budget and there are no redundancies at SHDC yet!
- # A directive from Eric Pickles, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, should make it easier in future for street parties to be held.
- # Bus travel will become the responsibility of Devon County Council from April this year.

Free bus passes for route 162 will be usable before 9.30 am. Councillor **Charles Mitchelmore** is to receive a list of all the local bus time-table changes.

Police Business

- # Councillor **Charles Mitchelmore** stated that the new crime statistics map appears to show that there had been two violent crimes in Glebefield. This is clearly wrong and could affect house prices. The information needs to be changed.
- # No crimes have been reported in February.

Business as directed by the Chairman

- # **Thurlestone Sands.** Thurlestone resident **Mrs Bronwen Ziaffiro** has written to the South Hams Gazette on this subject. The Parish Council is to contact John Baverstock, SHDC Chairman, to see if a neutral mediator is available to chair a meeting of all the interested parties.
- # **The late Len Hubbard.** Len's family would like to plant a tree in his memory in the vicinity of the green at Thurlestone. A slow-growing Christmas tree has been suggested, which could be illuminated at Christmas times, and a site meeting will be held to select a suitable spot.
- # **Best Kept Village sign.** This sign is located at the entrance to Thurlestone on an unsightly grass strip owned by Devon County Council, not considered an ideal position. The Parish of Thurlestone Society has offered to fund, or part-fund, improvement work and a "tidying-up" of the area. The Parish Clerk will write to Devon County Council and ask if they are willing to help with such a project.
- # The date of the Annual Parish meeting has been moved from the 9th May to the 16th May 2011 to accommodate the local elections.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday 4th April 2011 at 7.30 pm in the Yeo Room.

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Village News Round-Up

Mike Wadey

Readers will be very sad to learn of the death, on 12th March, of Mike Wadey, the President of Thurlestone Golf Club. We would like to express to his wife, Janet, and their family, our sincere condolences.

Len Hubbard's collection

Kate Hubbard has asked Village Voice to let readers know that the collection taken following Len's funeral amounted to £680.90 which has been passed on to the South Hams Hospital League of Friends. Dorothy Jerrard, on behalf of the League, has written to say "This very kind donation will be a very valuable contribution towards our present fund-raising work. Please convey our appreciation to all concerned."

Mead Car Wash

Young Alex Humphries of 7 Meadcombe Road is hoping to raise enough money to be able to attend a community development project in India with Raleigh International, so he is offering a car wash service for just £5.00 per car. As Alex puts it, if you are "Too busy to wash the car yourself, or don't want to spend time and fuel driving to Kingsbridge to get it washed" why not let him do it for you? He can be contacted on his home phone 01548-562349 or mobile 07749-608233.

NSPCC

A jumble sale is being held at the Parish Hall on Saturday 16th April in aid of the NSPCC. The organisers report that there will be some very good items on offer at reasonable prices and urge you to come along and support them from 2.00 pm.

Walking with your MP

Dr Sarah Wollaston will be walking the South Coast Path from Bantham around the coast of her constituency to Broadsands near Brixham. The walk will take place over five

days, leaving Bantham Surf Life Saving Club at 9.30 am on Saturday 9th April. She is raising money for maritime-based charities and she hopes to meet constituents who might like to join her to 'walk and talk'. If anyone would like to accompany Sarah, at any stage between Bantham and Hope Cove, she would be delighted to see you. Full details of the 5-day schedule are on her website: www.drSarah.org.uk.

Aune Conservation Association

The ACA will be holding its AGM at Bigbury Memorial Hall on Wednesday 20th April at 7.30 pm. There will no doubt be updates provided on the following:

- the South Efford salt marsh
- the large-scale cattle farm at Hendham View Farm near Moreleigh
- the proposed river project for local primary schools
- a 1-day willow weaving workshop
- a Ram Roast at Folly Hill Farm
- the local invasive weed situation

Members and supporters all welcome. You can read all their news at the ACA website www.aca.aveton-gifford.co.uk

Aveton Gifford Preschool

"The Hive", Aveton Gifford's preschool and toddler group, is now in a brand new, eco-friendly, state-of-the-art building alongside Aveton Gifford primary school playground. They are holding an Open Day at "The Hive" on Saturday 2nd April, 2 pm to 5 pm, with an official opening at 3 pm followed by cream teas, to which everyone is welcome. Please contact Mandy Tucker (01548-550541) or Rachel Townsend (01548-550524) for all details.

Woodcutter

Eddie Cameron works on tree care, hedge laying, fencing, establishment, maintenance, felling and small woodland management. He has 25 years of experience of contracting and training in South Devon. If you are in need

of his services, please talk to him on 01548-854480 or mobile 07977-906401. We hope there will be space for his advertisement in Village Voice in due course - we have no spare slots at the moment!

Bowringsleigh Open

A rare opportunity to view the beautiful gardens at Bowringsleigh's Open Day on Sunday 10th April, 2.00 - 5.00 pm in aid of the Children's Hospice. Don't miss it!

Trail Maps

Reminder that the Parish of Thurlestone Society's two full-colour handy-sized pictorial maps of Thurlestone and Bantham and Buckland are available to purchase in Thurlestone PO Stores at only £2.00 the pair. These are just the job for handing out to your Easter visitors so they can take themselves off for an hour or two on a bit of parish exploration!

Stanborough Chorus

Just in case anyone thinks the Stanborough Chorus has ceased to be, please note that their first concert for 2011 with new Director of Music, Christopher Fletcher, will be held on the evening of Saturday 16th April, at St Edmunds in Kingsbridge (see separate advert for details).

Lower Kerse Garden

A note for your diary - this lovely garden will be open to the public on Sunday afternoon, 19th June, to raise funds for the Children's Hospice South-West. If you like roses, this is a garden for you as it will be the time of year when they are at their most beautiful! Details in the next issue, but reserve the date!

Sharpitor - Help Wanted

Unfortunately the Edwardian conservatory at Overbeck's has been closed as it will need extensive (and expensive) repairs and replacements before it can be used again for serving teas. To help in paying for this work, the National Trust is looking for volunteers to sell raffle tickets and for donations. If you think you can help, please ring the NT on 01548-842893.

The gardens at this property have undergone massive improvements over the winter. At the time of writing, over 1000 new bulbs put in last autumn are bursting into colour and their amazing collection of magnolias are all flowering, including the oldest resident, the 110 year old Magnolia Campbellii

Lunch at The Downs

A date for your diary. On Sunday 5th June David and Kitty Cooke are hosting a Cheese and Wine lunch and a Garden Open to raise funds for the Parish Hall. Everyone will be welcome. Full details will appear in our next issue.

Cameron a Rocker?

Over the weekend of 12/13 February it was reported in the national press that David Cameron, when asked by a journalist to name his favourite place, replied "Thurlestone Rock, South Devon"!

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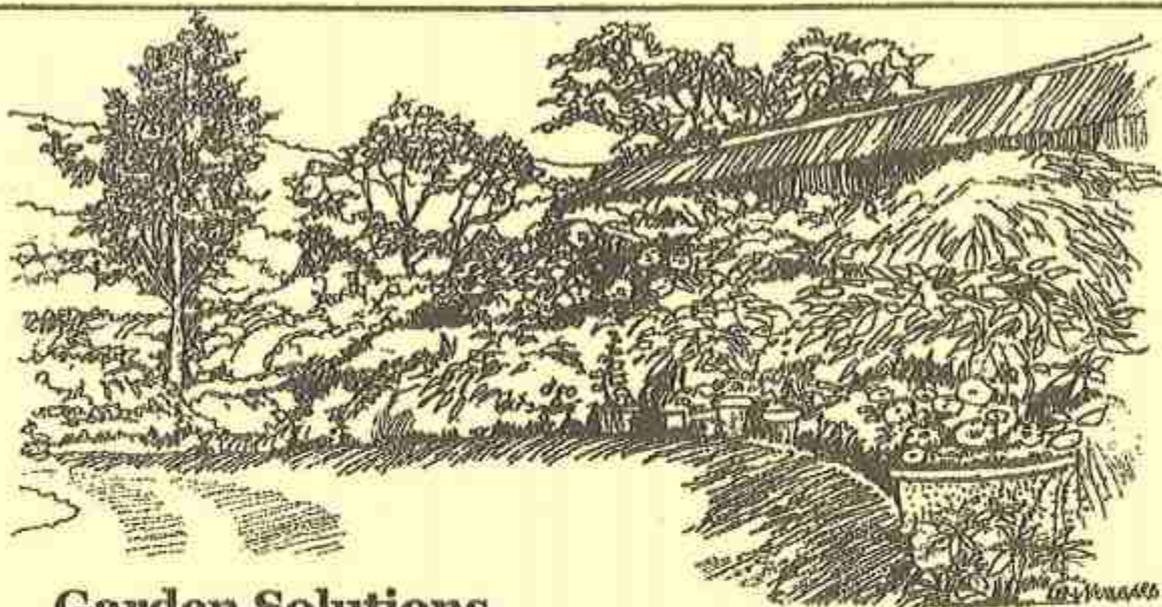
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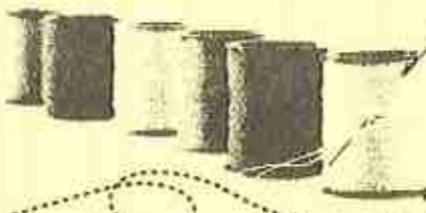
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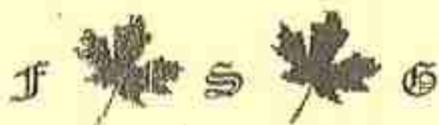
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STEP FORWARD THE VOLUNTEERS YOUR PARISH NEEDS YOU!

I have been gazumped!

After a lot of effort the Parish Action Plan was adopted last December and whilst there were a few sighs of relief I did have to point out to the Parish Council that the word Action in the title is there for a purpose and the job was only just beginning. But the bad news is that it is Action by Parishioners as much as Councillors.

For starters: Section 5.13a (councils love that) states.... "Set up a task group who will look after the cleanliness and maintenance of the general environment, public places, beaches, hedgerows, footpaths etc...." So I was planning this article to ask for volunteers who would form such groups to help look after our three villages to contact me. Bearing in mind that the District Council is cutting down on services (not that they covered all of these anyway) the need for volunteers to fill the gaps is ever more pressing.

However, at the recent Parish Council meeting a parishioner complained about the general litter on the public footpath that runs behind the 1st green of the golf club. "Tough" was the general reaction but immediately two worthies from the public gallery volunteered to take on the task of cleaning it up. So I was gazumped, but only partially! (But I might just have forgotten to tell them that I understood they had taken on the task in perpetuity).

So, if it's that easy, I am looking for volunteers who would be prepared to join small groups to do some of the tasks under 5.13a. If you want to win your badge of honour please leave me your contact details either by phone, note or email and we can try to sort something out.

Actually (and I know some of you do already), if you are out walking or going to the beach, take a spare plastic bag and pick up some of the litter you come across to take back home for recycling or binning. In this way, even a bit at a time would make a huge difference.

Elsewhere in this issue of Village Voice you will read the article about improving our Broadband speed. I am happy to say this initiative is a direct result of the Action Plan which was picked up by someone in SHDC (yes, they can read believe it or not!). If you want our Broadband improved from its current almost unworkable status to modern day speeds, then please, please take the trouble to fill in the survey form....it is a lot shorter than the census form!

Over to you!

Kit Marshall
Vice-Chairman, Parish Council
Phone : 560214
E-mail : kigimarsh@gmail.com

New Opportunity for Faster Broadband

by Richard Swan

- The Parish Survey carried out during February and March 2009 gave a clear indication that Parishioners required *Improved Broadband Speed* (IBS) to meet the immediate and future interests and needs of both residents and businesses within the Parish. This requirement was subsequently adopted into the Parish Plan.
- Thurlestone's first opportunity to achieve IBS occurred during the last quarter of 2010, when BT ran a national competition requesting Broadband users to vote online for IBS. This opportunity was widely advertised with articles in *Village Voice* and local posters. The response from our Broadband Telephone Exchange (Sutton Cross) area was only 15%. This may appear disappointing, but the exchange serves not only our Parish, but also South Milton, who generally receive acceptable Broadband speeds - being geographically closer to the exchange. Marlborough and Hope Cove, who also share the same exchange, were included in the BT competition but not canvassed in the same way.
- The present Government has promised that every household in the United Kingdom will receive a minimum Broadband speed of 2 Mb per second - but now by 2015 instead of the 2012 originally intended. However, if our community is not happy to wait until 2015 (or later!) for IBS, we now have a second bite at the cherry via an opportunity to develop our own solution through Devon Renaissance.
- Devon Renaissance is a not-for-profit regeneration company offering support to local communities and private organisations as well as the public sector. It has secured funding from South Hams District Council and South Devon Coastal LAG to identify two communities in the southern part of the South Hams, where problems of poor broadband connectivity could be overcome by a community-led broadband project. They have submitted an outline funding application to support the implementation of such a project to the Rural Development Programme for England, which "has been well received".
- Thurlestone could be selected as one of these two communities if we can demonstrate sufficient desire and enthusiasm. The way to do this will be via a survey form (available on-line at www.surveymonkey.com/s/SouthDevonBroadband). If enough people complete this form we stand a good chance of getting early IBS for Thurlestone Parish.
- We should grasp this opportunity with both hands to achieve one of the objectives of our Parish Plan and help to ensure a successful future for Thurlestone, Bantham and Buckland by attracting full time residents, young families and supporting businesses.
- **Action** Go to www.surveymonkey.com/s/SouthDevonBroadband and follow the on-screen instructions in completing the form. Use the Broadband Speed Checker website as indicated to check and record the broadband speeds you currently obtain. If you cannot complete an answer, simply enter *Not Known*, but complete the survey **by 30 April**.
- *Devon Renaissance have given written assurance that answers will remain confidential. By completing the survey form you will greatly help our chances of gaining IBS. Go for it!*

Graeme Martin

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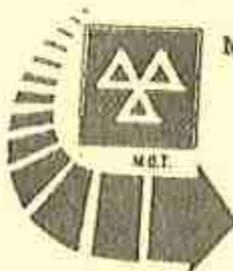
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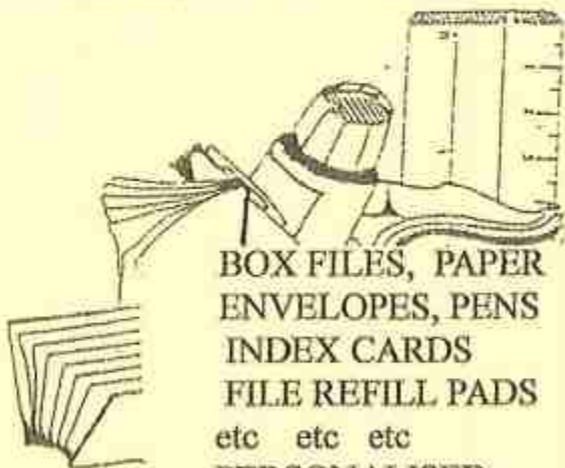
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*All
Saints*

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(01548) 560967

LAY READER: Peter Gornall

From the Rectory



The last hundred years have seen a truly remarkable transformation in the way that images of events in the world are delivered to us. What we would have once read after the event in our newspapers is now beamed into our living rooms and on to our laptops virtually as it happens.

The catastrophe that has befallen the people of Japan has unfolded before us, we saw with horror the destructive power of water and we watched the drama being played out at the nuclear facilities. It had all the characteristics of a blockbuster film but, unlike a work of fiction, the tragedy was all too real. Real people were searching desperately for missing loved ones, real human beings were struggling with bereavement and loss and real rescuers seemed hardly to know where to begin so great was the scale of the destruction.

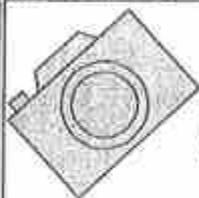
What came home to me was the dignity with which ordinary men and women coped with their predicament and the strength of community that seemed to lead to mutual support and respect. No pushing into the long queues for food or fuel, no assumption that my 'entitlement' trumps yours.

The sense of community in these devastated places is strong and the respect for neighbour is strong. What an example to us. Those who try to follow the Christian faith are surely reminded by what they see of the great commandment given to us by our Lord: to love God with all our hearts and our neighbour as ourselves. We may see this being lived out by those who follow a different spiritual path but the relevance should not be lost on us.

What we see far away might provoke us to think. How would we cope with a time of disruption? Are we ready as a community and as a church ready to deal with chaotic situations? How would we love our neighbours in a time where supplies of food, fuel and power were disrupted - not difficult to imagine in a world where our supermarkets stock themselves on a 'just in time' basis.

We feel reasonably secure and put our trust in others to ensure that the problems of the world are quickly resolved. But, we live on a planet where security is scarcely more than skin deep. As we approach the Easter season, with its message of hope, perhaps we might choose to reflect both on where we put our trust and to ponder how our community would come together if we found ourselves in crisis.

Phil



**Don't forget to get your entries in by May 1st for the
*Photographic Competition***

to choose photos of the Thurlestone Area for a 2012 Calendar
Entry forms available in back of Thurlestone Church, Church Meeting Room,
Bantham/Thurlestone Shop or from Liz Webb (560090)

50p/photo in aid of church funds ~ **Entries must be received by May 1st**

**The winning photographs will be chosen by members of the public at a
Photographic Exhibition May 28th - June 1st in the Church Meeting Room**

CREAM TEAS: Saturday, Sunday & Monday 3 - 5 p.m.

COFFEE-TIME: Monday & Wednesday 10.30 a.m. - 12 noon

Remember: Enter your photos & come and vote for the ones for the calendar!



All Saints' Diary

Churchwardens: Liz Webb 560090 & Graham Worrall (562016)

Everyone is welcome at all services,
which are at Thurlestone, unless indicated otherwise

Church Services

Every Sunday	8.00am Holy Communion (1 st , 3 rd , 5 th BCP; 2 nd , 4 th CW)
EVERY WED, THURS, FRI & SAT	8.30am Morning Prayer (said) (N.B. No Morning Prayer in May)
WEDS APRIL 6TH, 13TH & 20TH	10.00am Holy Communion (CW) (said)
MOTHERING SUNDAY APRIL 3RD	11.10am Family Service with posles (Fairtrade Stall)
SUNDAY APRIL 3RD & MAY 1ST	6.00pm Benefice Evensong (BCP) (April: SM, May: WA)
THURSDAY APRIL 7TH, MAY 5TH	10.00am Holy Communion (BCP) at Bantham
SUNDAY APRIL 10TH	11.10am Parish Eucharist (CW)
PALM SUNDAY APRIL 17TH	8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
	10.15am Palm Sunday Procession leaves Parish Hall
	10.30am Palm Sunday Family Service (Note time)
MAUNDY THURSDAY APRIL 21ST	8.00pm Benefice Eucharist (CW) with optional vigil
GOOD FRIDAY APRIL 22ND	10.00am Family Service at South Milton
	2.00pm Last Hour Devotion
EASTER EVE SATURDAY APRIL 23RD	9.00 p.m. Easter Vigil and First Mass of Easter with Renewal of Baptism Vows at West Alvington
EASTER SUNDAY APRIL 24TH	8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) with hymns
	11.10am Easter Family Communion (CW) <i>Drop-in crèche for young children with an adult</i>
SUNDAY MAY 1ST	11.10am Holy Communion (CW) with Baptism
SUNDAY MAY 8TH	11.10am Morning Worship followed by Easter Lunch
SUNDAY MAY 15TH	11.10am Parish Eucharist (CW) <i>Our Mission Partners Paul and Christine Salaman will talk about their work in Tanzania with the Church Mission Society. Followed by soup and ploughman's lunch</i>
SUNDAY MAY 22ND	11.10am Matins (BCP)
	6.00pm Benefice Praise Service
ROGATION SUNDAY MAY 29TH	11.00am Benefice Rogation Service at Churchstow followed by a 'Bring & Share' Lunch

BCP = Book of Common Prayer CW = Common Worship SM = South Milton WA = West Alvington
See Church Notice Boards for variations & more information

You would be welcome to join us for **Activities in the Church Meeting Room**

Films for All TUESDAYS 2.30 p.m.		MARCH 29TH Africa United <i>The story of 3 Rwandan children's bid to get to the 2010 Football World Cup in S. Africa</i>	APRIL 26TH Toy Story 3 <i>Continuing animated story of Woody, Buzz Lightyear, etc</i>
		Donations to <i>Hearing Dogs & Church funds</i> ~ Leaflets in Church, Meeting Room & shop	

MONS. & WEDS.	10.30am <i>Coffee-Time</i> in aid of monthly charity
THURSDAYS (term time)	9.00am <i>Under 5s</i> Contact: 560375/562417
FRIDAYS	12.30pm <i>Lunch Club</i> for those living alone - Book on 560090

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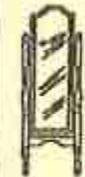
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Travelling in the Antipodes

by Judith Le Grice

In October last year we landed in Christchurch, New Zealand, shortly after their earthquake. Damage was not extensive and no lives had been lost – the Kiwis were grateful that, despite many small aftershocks, they knew the earth's tectonic plates had eased themselves along and that they would be safe for a while. So it must have been a terrible shock when it happened again recently, and much worse this time, with terrible loss of life and damage to buildings and infrastructure. How will the city begin to rebuild itself?

We had avoided the affected areas by staying out of Christchurch, in a town some 30 miles to the south. Even there, our B & B had lost 3 chimneys and there was a gaping hole in the bathroom ceiling. How have they fared in the recent quake?

There is only one main highway in South Island and, once off that, we drove along, often for miles at a time, without seeing another car. Parking in the small towns is easy – you just stop outside whichever shop you want to go into. Going through the Canterbury plains, we passed tall conifer hedges separating all the fields, planted to prevent the cold mountain winds drying the land. This is the land of Canterbury lamb.

We passed brilliant blue lakes, Pukaki and Tekapo, holiday resorts where fishing is the main attraction. Then up through snow-capped mountains, on roads only recently hard-topped, and down to Queenstown and Arrowtown, pleasant in the crisp mountain air, yet with the spring sunshine bringing out the daffodils and tulips and blossom – how strange for October! Arrowtown was one of the original Gold Rush towns, and still has examples of the tiny stone huts that the Chinese miners used. They were the people who worked hardest and longest at the most difficult seams.

Dunedin was our next port of call – many emigrants from Scotland settled here,

and, with the mist swirling around the hills of the Otago Peninsula, one could see why. We visited the Albatross Colony, but never an albatross did we see!

The wet and windy weather continued as we flew into Wellington, a rather scary descent over iron-grey waves glimpsed through the cloud and rain. There are a number of interesting new buildings here, including the 'Beehive' (the Parliament building), the Law Courts and Te Papa ("Our Place"), the amazing Museum. This has a collection of the best Maori artefacts, meeting houses and war canoes, as well as housing an exhibition explaining volcanoes and earthquakes. There are pieces of volcanic rock for the visitor to try to lift up – all Health and Safety! – and a room in which one can experience an earthquake taking place. There is also a basement room where the Base Isolators can be seen. These are made of rubber and metal, and support the whole building, but are able to absorb sideways motion in the event of a quake.

Auckland was a packed schedule, with a super hotel – sadly, after a late night, we were woken by a fire alarm at 5am and had to be ready to leave our room, then up the following morning early to leave for the Coromandel Coast. This has the most beautiful coves and beaches, with tropical vegetation coming right down to the sand. A mile of white sand and kingfisher blue sea with about a dozen people on it. Bliss! I must admit to keeping a wary eye open for the odd fin when I was swimming!

Despite its reputation, we did not find Rotorua very interesting. It is a town built on the lines of American rural towns with long industrial strips on the outskirts, and a pervading smell of sulphur from the volcanic activity. However, the Maori Village of Whakewarewa was certainly worth visiting, very low-key commercialism, and run entirely by the Maoris. We were shown how, even nowadays, they put natural hot water and steam to use in cooking and bathing.

There are walks where you can see bubbling pools of mud, green with copper salts, yellow with sulphur, and the geysers.

In New Plymouth, we stayed in the most unusual apartment of our trip, a former bank. Beautifully set up and furnished, the bathroom was in the old strong room, with an iron door nine inches thick – impossible to shut – with an iron grille inside that! Overlooking the town is the volcano Mount Taranaki, a perfect snow-topped cone which has stood in for Mount Fuji in several films, most notably “The Last of the Samurai”.

New Plymouth houses the Archive of Len Lye, the foremost NZ artist. We were fortunate enough to be taken into the store rooms of the Gallery to see a selection of his work. The gallery was in the process of packing up some of his work to be sent to the UK for an exhibition in Birmingham, which we later saw before Christmas. Lye made many promotional films in the 1930s for the Royal Mail, which are great fun to watch, as well as paintings and moving metal sculptures. The crates were being sprayed with pesticide before departure – New Zealand and Australia are very hot on not importing or exporting any bacteria or pests. Arriving in Australia on an international flight, we were subjected to a search by sniffer dog to make sure that we were not carrying any foodstuff.

With a niece and her new baby living in Sydney, we had to spend some time there, renting an apartment in Rose Bay, close to the ferry jetty on the harbour with its resident pelican. This is a lovely way of travelling around Sydney, and getting into Circular Quay, right next to the Opera House, was a 5-minute walk and a 15-minute ferry ride. One of the highlights was a concert at the Opera House - Gershwin and Duke Ellington. Booked out, we were only able to get tickets for the Choir Stalls, but what splendid seats they were – we were able to see everything. We went with my niece and sister-in-law, baby in pram as well, as Cath's husband had not arrived home in time to look after him. He was handed over in the Opera bar, over a bottle of champagne. The building is a work of art, inside and out, even the design in the

toilets is superb and innovative.

Whilst in Sydney, we had the opportunity to go on a 4WD trip into the bush. This was for me a shut-your-eyes-and-hope trip down very rough and at times almost precipitous tracks. The tracks are made and maintained by the Fire Service in order to be able to reach bush fires when necessary. We visited a bush plot where a friend of Mike, our driver and great friend of many years, is building a week-end retreat. As a Buddhist, he has spent several weeks living and meditating in one of the caves previously used by Aboriginals. The men climbed up to this site. I found it a bit difficult, but was rewarded with the sight of several Superb Fairy Wrens, similar in size to our native ones, but more gregarious and covered with iridescent blue feathers. We also saw a Lyre Bird, a great mimic, but sadly looking a bit dowdy.

Deborah, the wife of our friend Mike, runs an artist-in-residence estate at Nowra, several hours south of Sydney. The Bundanon estate was owned by one of Australia's foremost artists, Arthur Boyd, and is run on similar lines to Dartington, with artists, musicians and dancers invited to spend time there developing their skills. They have regular performances to the public in the studios and in the open air. Whilst we were there, a class of mainly Aboriginal teenagers had just arrived to spend a week making art, living and working in the award-winning accommodation designed by architect Glenn Murcutt, whose windows look down to the wide River Nowra. The original Boyd house, a comfortable wooden building with wide verandas, is surrounded by large gum trees and a lovely garden. Undisturbed by us, there were two female kangaroos and their joeys, quietly nibbling away at the plants. On the whole, they are welcomed into the garden, provided there aren't too many of them.

A flight up to Brisbane where the heat hit us. This was several weeks before the floods. (We do seem to have been followed by disasters!) We were impressed by the new development along by the river, lovely gardens with walk-ways and cycle-

ways, swimming pools with beaches open to all, and a super children's pool with water spouts. There are walkways along both sides of the river, at one point going through the Mangrove Swamps, at another point passing high-rise apartments, and along by the State Museum, Gallery and Library. Garden beds by the paths are planted up with herbs (beautiful basil!) where I saw people helping themselves. There are two new pedestrian and cycle bridges across the river, and there is a huge selection of cafes and restaurants of every sort. The pictures I saw on the TV after the inundation showed the places we knew and had been impressed by under several feet of dirty brown water. Dozens of people lost their lives, hundreds of homes were lost. As Germaine Greer, who was over there at the time, said, "Why were we surprised?" Meteorologists had long warned of La Niña effect and of flooding. The Wivenhoe Dam, built to protect Brisbane from a flood like the one in 1974, was overflowing and the flood gates had to be finally opened at a time of Spring Tide! Why so much water? The surrounding hills have been cleared of rain forests in order to build, and whereas the

trees used to suck up the rainfall, now there is nothing to do so. The huge amount of topsoil which has been washed out to sea will have destroyed marine ecosystems.

Our final treat was a few days stay on North Stradbroke Island, just off Brisbane. Beautiful almost empty beaches of white sand. I am used to the waves on Bantam beach but these ten-ton monsters, translucent, sparkling, and tantalisingly green, had me bowled over time and time again. Too hot to sit in the sun for long, we sat under the trees and read Bill Bryson's "Down Under." We were just too late to see the whale migration from Lookout Point, but watched a pod of about twelve bottle-nosed dolphins playing in the waves.

For Malcolm it had been a successful tour, showing films and lecturing. Whilst there is obviously a very nice lifestyle in both Oz and NZ, many people would be glad of more culture, and we were given a great welcome wherever we went.

Judith Le Grice

National Trust South Hams Centre

Programme for April and May 2011

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Wednesday
6 April | Coach Trip to Tavistock and Cotehele (NT). Late morning and lunch in Tavistock then on to nearby Cotehele, to visit house and gardens. The gallery, excellent shop, restaurant and Cotehele Mill will be open. |
| Tuesday
19 April | A walk from Stokenham . Meet at the car park by Stokenham church (GR808428) for a walk of about 4 miles. Return by lunch-time. |
| Wednesday
4 May | Coach Trip to Babbacombe and Compton Castle (NT). Babbacombe is Britain's largest and best kept model village. After lunch (there is a café) we go over to Compton Castle, a dramatic fortified manor with charming garden (particularly fine herb garden) and tearoom nearby. |
| Monday
16 May | Coach Trip to Pine Lodge Gardens , Holmbush, St Austell. Hopefully a dry day to re-visit these lovely gardens! Refreshments available or bring a picnic. |

For more information about these events, or about joining our National Trust South Hams Centre, please contact Midge Elliott on 01548-562017 (9am to 5pm only please).

sudoku

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(As featured in *The Times*, Monday to Saturday)

			5	7	4			
1				6				2
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	9			8			4	
		1				3		
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Easy

No. 57

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Easy

No. 58

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Medium

No. 57

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Medium

No. 58

SUDOKU - Another four part challenge!

Four all-correct solutions to our last challenge were received, but unfortunately one had inadvertently entered a digit twice on the same line and so had to be rejected (*Sorry, G!*). So it came to a ballot to find a winner from **Ceri Jayes**, **Sue Dwyer** and **Polly Wyld**, and the draw this time went in favour of **Sue Dwyer**, who will once again receive another choice vintage from the *Chateau Sudoku* cellars. Well done, Sue! Entries for this issue's challenge (above) to 25 Mead Lane, as usual, by 5th May, please. And the best of luck.

And please don't forget to check your entries carefully!



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MIDI VALET	Hand washed with shine enhancing wash and wax & chamois dried Door shuts cleaned & dried Wheel & wheel arches cleaned with traffic film remover & rinsed Tyres cleaned & dressed Dashboard, centre console and vents dusted Interior & exterior glass cleaned Interior plastic wiped down Carpets & seats vacuumed Boot area vacuumed	from £30.00 inc. VAT
FULL VALET	Pre-wash with traffic film remover & rinsed Shine enhancing wash & wax then rinsed Traffic film remover applied to tyres & rinsed Door shuts, hinges & surrounds cleaned & conditioned Super resin polish applied then hand removed Wheel acid applied & rinsed Exterior trim deacid All litter removed Seat & carpets vacuumed Footwell mats cleaned Dashboard, centre console & vents cleaned and polished All glass emptied & cleaned Interior & exterior glass cleaned Interior fragrance Air freshener	from £65.00 inc. VAT
INTERIOR	Seats & carpets vacuumed Footwell & boot vacuumed Gloss and mirrors cleaned & polished Dashboard, centre console and vents cleaned and polished Litter removed Airfrays emptied & cleaned Seats wet cleaned or leather conditioned (optional fee for carpets) Air freshener	from £47.00 inc. VAT



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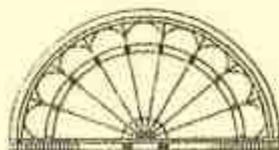


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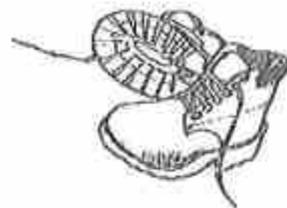
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1 With the temperature at just above freezing on Thursday 20th January, and a high chill factor, five hardy walkers two dogs and myself had a very lovely winter walk of some three and a half miles in and around Modbury. Not a cloud in the sky, lots of sunshine but quite icy under foot. We parked at the top of Brownston Street and enjoyed looking at the water pump of 1708, North Traine House, a Palladian fronted library and scientific building (since 1954 a private house) and the delightful Queen Anne period Chain House. Proceeding up Galpin Street we looked at Brook House (Georgian) and the other town water pump. From there we followed the footpath going east, taking in the two battle sites of 1642/3 when 6000 Cromwell troops defeated the Royalist army of 2000 men. The rest of the walk was along country lanes with splendid views over the moors.

David Chubb

2 On Wednesday 26th January for once the gentlemen outnumbered the ladies - even with the inclusion of Corrie the lady labrador. Is this a record? Altogether, seven of us set off from Thurlestone at 9.30 am heading for New Waste (SX626612) to the east of Cornwood. The weather at New Waste was fine and cold with a chilly north east wind blowing all morning, and the moor itself was pleasantly dry after ten days of dry weather. It is really worthwhile going on the moor in winter, as it is quite a different experience.

We set off in a northerly direction (NNE) through an area scattered with the remains of settlements, keeping the River Yealm to our west, and made good progress up to the Yealm Steps. These are a number of small waterfalls which are about one mile south of the head of the Yealm. This was a suitable stop for a coffee break as it was also out of the wind! We then went in an easterly direction and passed through a fairly large settlement just above the Falls. The next mile or so was across tufted grassy clumps with no pathways. Progress was slow but most of us kept our feet dry. We headed for a location marked as a 'cairn' but in fact it turned out to be a burial 'cist' or 'cyst' which was in excellent condition

but without its top stone. The going then got easier as we descended into the Erme valley, and after half a mile we came to the SW Waterboard sluice gates across the river. As this is a trout river, there is a fish ladder to the side of the gates. From this point, the walk became even easier as there is a track all the way down to the Water Treatment Works at New Waste. This part of the walk was exposed to the NE wind, but fortunately it was behind us. We found a rare copse of really old oak trees, called Piles Copse, to the east of the river. Can anyone age them for me?

The views across to the clay pits at Lee Moor, the power station at Plympton, and Plymouth Sound were just fantastic. The sun came out for us at noon and was even reflecting off the water of the Sound. We arrived back at the cars in just over three hours after a six mile walk in amazing surroundings. We were made very welcome for lunch at the Cornwood Inn with lots of home made grub and good local ale. Do join me on my next moor walk in August.

Mike Stickland

3 I offered to step in and lead the walk on Wednesday 2nd February in place of Tricia Wilson (who was away in South Africa), and decided it should be a walk I have led before, which would take us up and around Ugborough Beacon. Five of us, and a dog, met on a rather misty and damp morning, and it was touch and go as to whether to abandon the walk altogether!

In the end, we all clambered into one car and drove towards the Moor, but the mist was thickening instead of clearing as we had hoped. So Dartmoor was out! Instead we decided that a short walk in Andrews Wood (a little north of Loddiswell) would fit the bill nicely. It was a good decision, apart from the fact that, underfoot, the ground was quite boggy and muddy, which meant that the most senior member of the group had to be assisted at times so as not lose her balance!

We had our fresh air and exercise however, so it was all worth it! And a refreshing cup of coffee at

Avon Mill Garden Centre rounded off the morning nicely.

Alastair Durden

4 A group of six met at 9.45 am on Tuesday 8th February at Court Park and drove to Stretre, timing it to catch the bus from there to Dartmouth, whence we began our walk along the South West Coast Path back to Stretre via Blackpool Sands. It was quite misty in Thurlestone when we left, but when we got to Dartmouth, it had completely cleared. In fact, for most of the morning we had bursts of sunshine.

We set off through the town, passing through Bayard's Quay, with its old custom house, on the way to Dartmouth Castle. The walk took in some breath-taking coastal scenery, with wonderful views over Start Bay. Lunch at The Green Dragon pub at Stoke Fleming was a welcome break. The path back to Stretre was quite steep in places, but only for short stretches. This section of the coastal path between Stretre and Stoke Fleming was newly opened about four years ago and, with its constantly varying terrain and very little road walking, is a real delight! The whole walk is one which I shall never tire of.

Alastair Durden

5 Just five walkers braved the depressing weather on the morning of Wednesday 22nd February - overcast with drizzle and very poor visibility. No doubt this was the reason for the low turn out, which was a shame since this 7.5 mile ramble was new to Tramps (courtesy of South Hams Ramblers). Nevertheless, we set off from Kingsbridge bandstand in good spirits as the forecast was for an improvement as the day progressed.

Initially, our route was northerly via back streets and lanes to Coombe Farm and Ledstone Cross, thence to Wrinkley and Avon Mill Garden Centre, where we stopped for a leisurely lunch.

Thereafter, in somewhat brighter conditions, we followed the river Avon downstream for a mile, then turned uphill to Leigh Cross and returned to Kingsbridge across fields via Norton Farm, with great views of the estuary.

Roger & Trisha Wilson

6 Tuesday 14th February, Valentine's Day, dawned bright and clear for this shortish walk - and it appeared particularly bright to the male half of the leadership team when he discovered that he was to be accompanied by six dogged ladies and two lady dogs on this the most amorous day of the year!

The walk involved no transportation to or from the starting point which was Court Park itself, so off we set to the top of the road attacking the first of several steep inclines with gusto. Then the gentle slope down to Kerse gave some breathing space, and we discussed the fact that several members of the party had never before taken the opportunity to explore this part of our village on foot. Perhaps more of these very local walks are called for?

The first short stop was at the charming hidden garden below Kerse House where an abundance of snowdrops and camellias caught the eye and enhanced the romantic theme of the day. From here we continued over fields and lanes to the hamlet of Upton Barton (hub of the newly founded rape seed oil industry) and after a mile and a half we reached Huxton Cross - familiar to those driving from Thurlestone to Kingsbridge but less frequently explored on foot we suspect.

Here we entered the first of two sections of bridle path which bisect the roads leading from Whitley Cross to the outside world. They led us to a steep-sided meadow occupied by a flock of ewes with their offspring. After crossing the Buckland stream there was a steady climb up to Worthy, a Georgian mansion of note, whence we headed back west-south-west to Clanacombe via the steep grassy hillside which lies north of Cross Park Farm. We joined the Buckland to Bantham road above the sweeping lawns of the Clanacombe residence and proceeded to stroll along the valley bottom via East Buckland to West Buckland. It was at this juncture that the PROPOSAL came.

Everyone listened eagerly as our leader suggested a pint and a packet of crisps at the Sloop Inn - not quite what the sentimental amongst us had been hoping for. However, it seems that romance was not in the air - the proposal was turned down as the party opted for a return to base via the short route. It may not have been a morning of love, but it WAS a lovely morning.

Graham and Val Palmer

7 St. David's Day morning broke with cloudy skies and a hint of frost in the valley, so we knew we were in for a pretty cool walk with the wind chill

factored in. Twelve Thurlestonians with three dogs and one walker from Kingsbridge ventured across the borders to join four South Milton residents to walk around the outskirts of South Milton.

Leaving from just outside the village we turned into Middle Park crossing the field to join the Whitlocksworthy-Upton road. Turning into the stony narrow Sandheap Lane we walked towards the village, only to be confronted with an approaching tractor towing lifting equipment. Fortunately a viewing point was not far away and we were able to look over the budding spring countryside towards Upton and the Salcombe road allowing the vehicle to get to its destination. We approached Shute Lane lying behind All Saints' Church, and our route took us down Luggers Hill to join the Thurlestone Road for a short way before turning into Backshay, opposite the Old School House, built originally as an Inn in 1870.

Continuing through the twitten to join Horswell Lane we climbed Vineyard across the fields to the Ridgeway. Although underfoot was rather muddy we negotiated the Ridgeway back to Horswell Lane and made our way through the fields, across the stream running down to The Ley, to join the Thurlestone Road at the junction to Kerse Lane. Although a short walk we saw all the spring flowers appearing in the hedgerows and lambs were trampolining in the fields. We enjoyed splendid views, the sun shining on Dartmoor, the villages of Thurlestone, South Milton, Malborough and distant Salcombe, and the sparkling sea with the Thurlestone Rock lying offshore. For the past six months South Milton has been shrouded in fleecy, so it was a real pleasure to see and walk again on the bare earth of the fields.

Joy Hailey

8 The weather was lovely, if a little chilly, as 7 walkers and a dog assembled on Court Park on Tuesday 8th March. Our walk for the day was

around Yealmpton which meant negotiating our way round Modbury because of the road works. The road was closed at Harraton Cross but that did not deter us. We told the chap manning the barrier that we were only going to Modbury and

he let us through. Modbury was no problem and we by-passed the main street by going around the back of the church.

Two more walkers and a dog met us in Yealmpton and my first job was to organise lunch at the Market Street Café. We placed our order ready for lunchtime and set off down Church Lane passing St Bartholomew's Church, then across the grass with the swings and play area. We entered a wood and took the path down to the caves by the River Yealm. Following the river, we passed the old lime kilns and the old brick buttresses of the remains of a railway bridge and arrived at Puslinch Bridge. Over the bridge, our route then followed a lane on the left for a while before turning up a green lane to Gala Cross and on to Marland Cross. From here, we had wonderful views of Yealmpton and Dartmoor in the distance.

At Marland Cross, we were to cross fields, down a gully to Fursdon, before heading across fields to Dunstone. However, the reccie showed the route to be extremely wet and muddy and virtually impassible in places, so we headed down a green lane and came out at the delightful village of Dunstone. From there, we followed the road down towards Yealm Bridge before following a footpath back to Yealmpton. Lunch at the Market Street Café was excellent (definitely to be recommended) and we sat outside in the lovely warm sunshine enjoying a lovely Spring day.

Only four of us continued on after lunch, and from the café we crossed the main road and climbed up Yealmbury Hill until we found a gate with the name Blythknoll in a high stone wall. It looked as though this was the entrance to someone's house. However, we went through the gate and up the steps between houses to Bowden Hill. Our route then took us over several fields, past Cole Hill Plantation and eventually to a lane. We followed this lane until we reached the Smithaleigh to Yealmpton road, turning right to Yealmpton. However, after a short distance, we followed a footpath sign over a field, then down some steps between the houses eventually arriving in the car park of the Rose and Crown and back to the car.

The morning part of the walk was approximately 5 miles with another 2 miles after lunch. It had been a lovely walk on a beautiful day and we had found parts of Yealmpton that we didn't know existed.

Lisa White



Herb Crusted Leg of Spring Lamb

Easter is approaching and many of us will be celebrating with friends and family. The Thurlestone/West Buckland area is certainly a pull for visitors at this particularly lovely time of year. Spring lamb is tender and juicy and locally produced. It is a harbinger of spring and new life. Some of you may have watched *Raymond Blanc's Kitchen Secrets* recently. I'm going to use his Provençale herb crust on top of the lamb (www.bbc.co.uk/food). You may wish to serve the lamb traditionally with roast potatoes and other favourite vegetables. Raymond Blanc offers a ratatouille alternative which may be made the day before and so takes the pressure off the cook, and it has a sauce of its own.

Ingredients

For the lamb:

- ◆ 1 Leg of lamb 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- ◆ 1 large onion, peeled and cut into thick rings salt and black pepper

For the Provençale breadcrumbs:

- ◆ 75g/3oz white or brown bread with crusts removed 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- ◆ Handful of flat leaf parsley, leaves only, finely chopped 2 pinches sea salt
- ◆ 1 sprig rosemary, leaves, only, finely chopped. 2 pinches black pepper
- ◆ 4tbsp extra virgin olive oil I also added a small handful of chopped mint leaves

Preparation

For the breadcrumbs: (May be stored up to a week in an airtight container in the fridge).

- ◆ Preheat the oven to 80°C/175°F/Gas mk1/4 and toast on a baking tray for 2 hours
- ◆ Crumble toasted bread into a food processor and add garlic, salt and pepper
- ◆ Pulse to a sandy mixture; then add chopped herbs and pulse once more to blend
- ◆ Drizzle in the oil and more salt and pepper.

For the leg of lamb: (Cooking time depends on how you like the meat.

Oven temp 160°C/290°F/Gas mk4. 15mins/lb for *medium rare*, 20mins/lb for *medium*, and 25mins/lb for *well done*.)

- ◆ Preheat the oven. Place the onion rings in the roasting tin with the lamb joint on top. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place in the oven.
- ◆ Remove from the oven 15 minutes before the finished time. Allow to rest for 10 mins
- ◆ Spread out the breadcrumbs on a shallow tray.
- ◆ Brush the top of the lamb with Dijon mustard.
- ◆ Pick up the lamb (protect your hands from heat!) and press it into the breadcrumb mixture to coat. They should stick easily to the mustard.
- ◆ Return the lamb to the original roasting tin for a further 15 minutes.
- ◆ Place on a carving dish and rest for 10 minutes in a warm place before serving.

If making a traditional gravy use the juices from the roasting pan. Discard excess fat and the onion. The flavour will stay in the pan. Add stock from the vegetables and perhaps a slosh of red wine and a dash of redcurrant or mint jelly. Season and thicken with a little cornflour.

Bon Appétit and a very happy Easter

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Harry Huggins has a Defining Moment

Last November *The Daily Telegraph* had a piece about a dispute between the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and a couple in Wales. It seemed that these people had spent four years studying the rare and declining Black Grouse. The outcome of the argument was that the couple were suing the RSPB in the High Court for defamation. I haven't read about the result; actions for defamation usually benefit lawyers and no one else. But the point I have to make is that the article referred to the couple as 'twitchers'. Maybe they were twitchers at some time - most of us are if there is anything to twitch. But you aren't a twitcher if you are doing a study which lasts for four years.

The problem is what do you call such people? 'Birdwatchers' hardly seems appropriate, accurate though it obviously is. Maybe 'ornithologists' might be better, although that term seems to imply someone, probably with a degree in zoology, who works for a conservation body - maybe the RSPB itself. So one has some sympathy for the paper. But the press is apt to call all birdwatchers twitchers. One Stuart Winter had just written a book *Tales of a Tabloid Twitcher*. He is a newspaper man - hence the *Tabloid* bit. And he is a twitcher too. He writes that to define a twitcher is easy - one of a number of men (it is still largely a male pursuit) who can drop everything at a moment's notice to rush off and see a rarity found by someone else. They see no shame in spending a small fortune, risking wife (yes "wife", that was not a typing error) and limb dashing across the country to see some waif from distant climes. In a phrase, birders find, twitchers follow.

You can divide bird watchers: ornithologists, birdwatchers, birders (there is a difference), dudes, robin-strokers. Likewise you can split twitchers: there are those work who their own patch and now and then go for a rarity if the mood seizes them (and it is not too far). I reckon that includes most of us. For example, one February day in 1989 a gentleman in

Maidstone went to post a letter. He happened on Britain's first Golden-winged Warbler. This bird is an American wood warbler (we don't have anything quite comparable on this side of the Atlantic). It was a previously unheard of vagrant to Britain. He was clever to recognise it - my North American field guide shows the heads in spring of fifty different wood warblers. He put it on *Birdline*. It took up residence in a Tesco car park and over 3000 people went to see it.. Most of them must have been just ordinary bird watchers. I recall reading at the time that enterprising Girl Guides set up a coffee stall and made a bomb!

Then there are the more fanatical twitchers, who seem to be a very competitive lot. Last autumn the BBC did a programme about them. I don't know how many there are, maybe 200 or thereabouts. They depend on information. At one time by telephone. People rang one another. Then someone started *Birdline* (09068 - 700241 for the south-west). At considerable expense you ring the number and they tell you about birds which usually you don't want to see anyway. Now there is the Internet and if you are really keen you subscribe to a pager service. No matter where you are, or when, the pager will tell you about a rarity and off you dash. You have a life list of the birds you have seen in Britain. The maximum figures is somewhere near 600. Most fanatical are the *year listers*. There can't be so many of them. They record every bird they see in a single calendar year. The maximum is nearly 400. To achieve that you have to drive over 50,000 miles a year - a costly exercise. Then do it again next year!

"Birders find, twitchers follow". If you are going to see all those birds you cannot find each one for yourself. In thirty years in South Devon, much if it spent in quite intensive birding, we could count on the fingers of one hand the real rarities we have found for ourselves: Lesser Yellowlegs (Aveton Gifford 1981); Black Stork (Thurlestone 1985);

Subalpine Warbler (Thurlestone 1986); Whiskered Tern (Thurlestone 1987). We knew some of these were twitchers' birds because the twitchers came. Not the warbler; I rang two very distinguished birders. They said (a) you don't want umpteen twitchers crawling all over your garden, which is where it was and (b) it won't stay. Obviously they didn't believe me. It stayed three days and I got photographs which ensured it was accepted.

There were quite a lot of other birds. Some you could class as semi-rarities. Others, like June's Sooty Tern, were not accepted. One, like my Scops Owl in January 1988, was so improbable that I told no-one. This is a bird of the Mediterranean which goes to Africa for the winter.

Very, very occasionally one migrating north overshoots. This one I heard before daybreak when I was taking the dog in the garden. It couldn't have



Scops Owl

been. But a friend in Plymouth had seen a Painted Lady butterfly just then. Flown north on a southerly wind (it can't spend the winter in Britain, so they say). If a Painted Lady, why not a Scops Owl?

Rarest of all was June's Citrine Wagtail, the first adult male ever recorded in Britain; she found it in Essex in 1976. News of it was 'suppressed' - otherwise we would have been overrun by twitchers. On looking at my record cards I realise that most of our rarities have been found by June. Birding is a great outdoor pastime which a couple can pursue together. But I have to admit that sometimes one is better at it than the other. She has the sharpest eyes!

In *Tales of a Tabloid Twitcher*, Stuart Winter remarks that he knows three geniuses - Lee Evans (twitcher), a schoolboy footballer who went to America, and Alistair Campbell. He devotes 14 pages (out of 206) to Lee Evans.

This gentleman is the twitcher supreme. The book was published in 2010 so the figures I quote may be a bit out of date by now, but Evans told Winter that his British list was 566 species and his best British year list was 386. This last doesn't bear thinking about.

On 31st December you put your list aside and on the 1st January you start again. Blue Tit, Robin, Blackbird, those are the easy ones. Then it gets more difficult, and costly. You have to drive for geese on the Solway, Golden Eagle and Ptarmigan in Scotland - to say nothing of chasing after any vagrants from abroad which you might hear of. We had a friend in Totnes who thought he would give it a try one year. He wasn't a very experienced birder but he knew a lot of people, gave the whole year to his list, and saw some really rare birds - I think Chestnut-sided Warbler, a North American vagrant, seen at Prawle Point was his best. He came out with around 200 species.

Evans seems to be less than popular with other twitchers. In particular, he questions much of what people say they have seen. In his latest tv programme he said that a percentage of folks were cheats, 13% I think he said, and many more were just unreliable. It matters to him. His way of making a living is by writing books about birds, nearly thirty to date, and by dispensing information. So accuracy is paramount. Not an easy matter; if someone says he has seen a rare bird, no one can deny it; the days when, to be believed, you had to produce a corpse have gone.

I see his point. In 2005 they found in South Milton Ley a Temminck's Stint, a very small sandpiper which nests in Scandinavia and for the winter makes its way down the eastern side of Europe. They all ticked it on their lists as this species. Then along came the county bird recorder who said "That's not a Temminck's Stint, that's a Least Sandpiper" - common on the eastern side of America but a very rare vagrant to Britain. We went for it when it moved to the Thurlestone valley. We saw it through Arthur's telescope (remember, never carry your own telescope, which is heavy and

awkward, if you can look through someone else's). There was another twitcher standing there. All innocently I asked him how I could be sure that was not a Dunlin (which is about the commonest small sandpiper we see here). The twitcher snarled back "from its plumage".



Dunlin

I thought "A lot he knows about it!". At a distance one brown sandpiper looks much like another brown sandpiper. He didn't mention the main identification feature.....this bird has yellow legs, a Dunlin's are black.

But why do we call them "twitchers"? In our first field guide, which had birds painted by the great Roger Tory Petersen - he invented the modern field guide - there is a check list of birds' names; the first time you see one you put a tick against it. I thought that "twitcher" was a variation of "ticker". But in *Birders - Tales of a Tribe*, Mark Cocker gives another explanation and Winter repeats it in *Tales of a Tabloid Twitcher*.

I'm sorry but a bit of history is required here. There is an august body called the British Ornithologists' Union. I have never met anyone who has admitted belonging to it. Though I have never asked. It has a committee whose task is to decide, when a new bird is discovered in Britain, whether it should be admitted to the British list. Once a bird has been admitted, the committee is not interested in any future occurrences.

There is a magazine called *British Birds* which has been going for a very long time, certainly since the early 1900s. For many years there was no other magazine. *Bird Watching* and its competitors just did not exist. The BOU had,

and I suppose still has, a journal called *Ibis* which I understand is unreadable; far too deeply serious. The British Trust for Ornithology had, and presumably still has, a journal called *Bird Study*. We belonged at one time and found that unreadable - I recall a long and erudite article about the colour of Long-tailed Tits' eyelids.

A rare bird which someone found was reported in *British Birds* - if it was reported at all. Whether it went in depended on the say-so of the editor. This was hardly satisfactory: so in the early 1950s under the auspices of the magazine a committee was appointed - the British Birds Rarities Committee, familiarly known as the ten rare men. I haven't heard, yet, of a rare woman - bird watching is still largely a bastion of chauvinistic male piggery. The ten rare men are chosen for their deep knowledge of birds, and especially for their deep knowledge of bird watchers.

One of the original members was a gentleman named Howard Medhurst. I think he lived in London: he thought it a good idea to see any reported rarity which might be within reach. Surely by the time news of any rarity reached him it would have flown away. Not always. In 1981 the Lesser Yellowlegs (north American version of our Redshank) which came to the River Avon just downstream from Aveton Gifford, stayed well into the following year. To reach wherever a bird might be he was taken on the back of a friend's motorcycle. They were joined by a couple on a Lambretta scooter. This couple had a dog which rode between them, keeping his back and her tummy warm. Medhurst and his driver had no such luxury and when they arrived at their destination, Medhurst was so frozen that until he had had his first cigarette he shivered and twitched. The other three started to twitch in sympathy. The practice grew and grew and they called it 'going on a twitch'. Somehow it spread

That is the story, which you can believe or not as you like. It sounds preposterous enough to be true!

Harry Huggins

Grey Matter

A BOTTLE OF WINE to the first all correct entry (or the closest to correct!) drawn 1st May 2010. Please submit entries to: 5 Mead Lane, Thurlestone, TQ7 3PB or email: cgwonthenet@themed.co.uk

Love Story:

Find the name of a drink that will fill the gap and make sense when the story is read aloud. Beverages, soft drinks and alcohol have been used and you should consider cocktails and brand names as possible solutions. The number of letters in each answer is indicated by number of dashes in the space.

Good luck and CHEERS:

Victor and Maria first met at the wedding of a mutual friend in _____ California. They hit it off immediately. She fell for his brown eyes and _____ coloured skin while he was bowled over by her flowing blond hair and _____ cheeks. On their first date, they spent the whole night finding out as much as they could about each other. Conversation flowed between them. "Are you American or are you a _____?" Maria wanted to know. "_____ wonderful figure you have" said Vic, "how do you keep yourself in such good shape?" He asked her about her family but she explained that her parents had died tragically when she was 9 years old. Then she had been taken in by her Aunt Mary who had been very kind to her and with whom she still lived. Although she no longer felt _____ about her misfortune she always became sad when she recalled those dark days. "I am sorry to upset you - please don't shed a _____" pleaded Vic. Not many months later the two of them were married and were thrilled when an old pal of Vic's offered them the use of his yacht for their honeymoon trip. They said it would _____ fantastic wedding gift. However, much to Victor's disappointment, Maria insisted that her old Aunt Mary came along too. "That will be romantic" grumbled Vic "Don't be _____ darling" retorted his new bride. After the wedding reception they set sail from a _____ just outside San Francisco. It soon became clear that Victor resented the ever-present Aunt. "Why on earth did _____ have to come along?" he muttered to himself several times a day. "Call me _____" he said "but wouldn't it be so much better to have some time alone just the two of us, learn more and more about each other and spend long, lazy hours _____ together with no-one to disturb us?" Mysteriously, several days into the trip, Mary failed to appear at the dinner table one night. This was so unlike her. "Perhaps she's ill?" thought Maria who went to her Aunt's cabin and tapped gently on the door. There was no reply and when she tried to open it she found it was locked. So Maria, knowing that her Aunt was hard of hearing put her mouth to the keyhole and yelled "WHERE'S THE _____?" Still there was not a sound. Maria dashed off to find a _____ or some other tool with which she could break open the lock. On entering the cabin, she found Mary sprawled across the bed - lifeless because of the large quantity of arsenic in _____. Needless to say, the marriage had as much chance of surviving as a _____ in Hell!

Solutions to the previous Grey Matter Quiz:

1. Lampeter 2. Watchet 3. Bagshot 4. Flint 5. Alsager 6. Whimble 7. Bolton 8. Peterlee 9. Palsnton 10. Barmouth 11. Bristol 12. Esher 13. Pickering 14. Hassocks 15. Nuneaton 16. Maidstone 17. Market Rasen 18. Ringmore 19. Sheepwash 20. Pinn 21. Tongue 22. Weston Super-Mare 23. Stroud 24. Oldham 25. Dulwich



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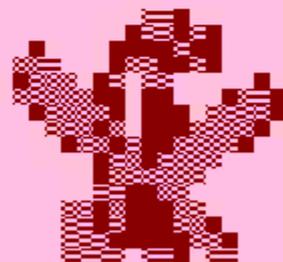
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THURLESTONE GOLF CLUB

CAPTAIN'S NEWSLETTER

I would like to give a warm welcome to 201 despite the bad weather which has resulted in the course being closed for a number of days since the beginning of December.

The competitions in January and February have gone ahead despite some awful weather. The Daily Mail Foursomes was won by **Alastair Whalley** and **Malcome Toone** with 36 points, and they will now go forward to represent us in the knockout competition. The January medal, although played on a cold day, had a good field of 50 men, and was won by **Kevin Mingo** with a nett 68 in Division one. In Division two the winner was **Andrew Longhurst** with nett 73. The January Stableford had a field of 48 members and was won by **David Coward** with 40 points in Division one, and **Martin Oakes-Monger** in Division two

The February medal saw some good scores with Division one winner **Alan Winrow** with nett 66, from junior **Robert Came** with nett 67, and Division two winner **Nigel Whalam** with nett 69, from **Patrick Robinson** with a nett 70. The February Stableford was won by **Mark Drew** with 36 points in Division one, and Division two winner was **Graham Smith** with 36 points.

It has become a tradition nowadays for golf club captains to support a charity during their year in office. **Lesley Saffin**, the Lady Captain, and I have agreed that this year our joint charity is to be Macmillan Nurses and there will be some appropriate literature displayed in the Clubhouse. The funds will be raised on certain days and we made a start on the "Captain's drive in" on New Year's day. The Lady Captain and her committee held a lunch and fashion show on Thursday 17th March to raise funds for the Macmillan Nurses and with all the tickets being sold out long beforehand it proved a very successful event.

We have to welcome a new Seniors captain as **Tom Shell** has taken over from **Ron**

Bancroft and vice captain **Dr t** have done such a good job for years. I am sure Tom will enjoy office.

At the end of March we will to our Secretary **Terry Gibb** looked after us so well for the years and we will miss his smile and helpfulness each day. Terry much to improve the club over and has written a very comprehensive of guidelines called "CROPS" for the smooth running of all the different of the club. He has been a keen of the Junior section and helped Golf Mark status in 2009. We welcome to **Russell Thomas** from Golf club who will take over from effect from 1st April.

John Laphorn

LADY CAPTAIN'S NEWSLETTER

As I write this copy for Village V sun is shining and it gives us hope coming season. Over the last month weather has not been kind to us, we have managed to play some g

The Daily Mail Foursomes had to reconvened to February after being in January and the eventual winners go on to represent Thurlestone as **Roberts** and **Heather Spencer**.

Back at the end of January five ladies for Staddon Heights to play in the **Sunday** Competition. For anyone who do not know Staddon Heights Golf Club offers magnificent views over Plymouth can be very windy. It was so cold we did ask ourselves what we had left for. Hand warmers were the only way. Sadly, the team lost by 2 matches but not too bad, especially when we were playing away from home. There is no match in this event, so it is just the draw whether you play home or

On 7th March we started our matches, first of which was a friendly against Dartmouth, which we all enjoyed, especially with the result going Thurlestone's way by 4 matches to 2. However, the more serious matches start in April.

On 17th March we held a luncheon and fashion show in aid of MacMillan Nurses, which is the Captains' Charity for 2011. This proved to be very popular and was sold out over a month in advance, with Thurlestone ladies clearly keen to be at the forefront of fashion! Following an excellent lunch served by Tony and his team, a packed clubhouse (including men!) admired models displaying sportswear from the Thurlestone Pro Shop followed by the latest fashions from Dreams of Dartmouth. A very successful event which raised £845. Thanks everyone!

Shortly after you read this or, to be precise, on Monday 4th April we are holding a coffee morning at the club, with a selection of stalls, and anyone who would like to join us for a coffee and a chat would be most welcome. If there are any ladies who are new to Thurlestone and would like to consider playing golf this would be an ideal time to come along and meet some of the members of Thurlestone. Apart from golf there is also a strong tennis club, a very active bridge section, and an excellent restaurant offering everything from a snack to fine dining evenings; something for everyone, and all on your doorstep, and even if you are not too active there is always a social membership to consider. So do come along if you can - you will be made most welcome.

I cannot close this report without wishing **Terry Gibbons** our secretary, a happy retirement and to welcome **Russell Thomas** who joins Thurlestone from Newport, Wales. I wish you both well and extend my personal thanks to Terry for all his assistance and guidance in the last year.

Lesley Saffin

JUNIORS' SECTION NEWSLETTER

January and February have been very cold and windy but the two junior competitions went ahead. Luckily both days were sunny and the juniors returned some good scores. In January the three-ball team competition of juniors and adults was contested by five

teams. The winners were **Callum Tollins** (21), **Toby Pepperell** (27) and **Steve Pepperell** (9), with 49 points, from father and son team of **Josh** (4) and **Stuart Walsh** (scratch) with **Jamie Johnson** with 48 points. In third place were **George Fountain** (24), **Rob Came** (11) and **Janet Richardson** (22) with 45 points.

In February the Adult and Junior Stableford had eight juniors and seven adults entered and we had some good results. **Tom Leach** was first with 43 points, from **Josh Walsh** (38), and **Rob Came** (36). The adult competition was won by **Stuart Walsh** with 39 points.

The juniors have also had some success in the adult competitions; in the Men's January Medal **Tom Leach** was second with a nett 70 and **Jamie Johnson** was 4th with a nett 72. In the Men's February Stableford, **Jamie Johnson** was second with 36 points, and **Josh Walsh** and **Rob Came** also put in some good scores. In the Mens February Medal, **Rob Came** was second with a nett 67.

The girls have already been in action with the Devon Ladies Golf Association. **Laura Tregelles** and **Charlotte Holland** played in the Devon girls meeting at Staddon Heights golf club and although the weather was awful, they both played well. Charlotte played in a three with Jess who is Devon's No.1 from the first team and once she slowed her swing down to match Jess, she hit some very good shots. **Laura** was in the winning threesome which was a good achievement.

The junior coaching and playing evenings will be starting in April and **Pete Mitchell** our Assistant Professional will be attending each Monday evening to coach and play a few holes with the juniors. All juniors are welcome and if you would like to come along to any free taster sessions please contact Pete Mitchell at the Pro shop on 01548 560715. Pete has already been into Kingsbridge Community College to teach Tri-golf to three different classes. They have been invited to come to the golf club for a free golf open day. Hopefully we might gain some new members from these sessions.

The club has also entered the West Devon Junior League again this year, having come 3rd last year in our Division. This year we play home and away matches against Staddon Heights, Tavistock and Yelverton.

Liz Line

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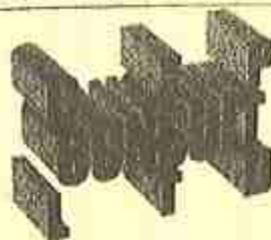
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July

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Mon 11

July

Holiday Program

Tue 26

July

July 8 - Lepera Junior

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July

Club Festival Double

Sat 30 J

July

Woodland Mixed C

Tue 2 A

Aug

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Aug

Open Hawks Mixed

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Aug

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Mon 15

8/19 Aug

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Wed 14

July

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When I bought my Blackberry.

A middle-aged American reflects on some aspects of the digital revolution.

When I bought my Blackberry I thought about the 30-year business I ran with 1800 employees, all without a cell phone that plays music, takes videos, pictures and communicates with Facebook and Twitter. I signed up under duress for Twitter and Facebook, so my seven kids, their spouses, 13 grand-kids and 2 great grand-kids could communicate with me in the modern way. I figured I could handle something as simple as Twitter with only 140 characters of space.

That was before one of my grand-kids hooked me up for Tweeter, Tweetree, Twhirl, Twitterfon, Tweetie and Twiterrific Tweetdeck, Twitpix and something that sends every message to my cell phone and every other program within the texting world. My phone was beeping every three minutes with the details of everything except the bowel movements of the entire next generation. I am not ready to live like this. I keep my cell phone in the garage in my golf bag.

The kids bought me a GPS for my last birthday because they say I get lost every now and then going over to the grocery store or library. I keep that in a box under my tool bench with the Blue tooth [it's red] phone I am supposed to use when I drive. I wore it once and was standing in line at Barnes and Noble talking to my wife and everyone in the nearest 50 yards was glaring at me. I had to take my hearing aid out to use it, and I got a little loud.

I mean the GPS looked pretty smart on my dash board, but the lady inside that gadget was the most annoying, rudest person I had run into in a long time. Every 10 minutes, she would sarcastically

say, "Re-calc-u-lating." You would think that she could be nicer. It was like she could barely tolerate me. She would go with a deep sigh and then tell me to make a U-turn at the next light. That if I made a right turn instead. Well, that was not a good relationship. When I really lost now, I call my wife and tell her the name of the cross streets I'm on while she is starting to develop the route. I'm as tone as Gypsy, the GPS lady, at least she loves me.

To be perfectly frank, I am still trying to learn how to use the cordless phone in our house. We have had them for years, but I still haven't figured out how. I can lose three phones all at once and I have to run around digging under the cushions and checking bathrooms and under the dirty laundry baskets when the phone rings.

The world is just getting too complex for me. They even mess me up every time I go to the grocery store. You would think they could settle on something themselves but this sudden "Paper or Plastic?" every time I check out just knocks me for a loop. I bought some of those cloth reusable bags to avoid looking confused, but I never remember to take them in with me. Now I toss it back to them. When they ask me, "Paper or Plastic?" I just say, "Doesn't matter to me. I am bi-saksual." Then it's their turn to stare at me with a blank look. I was recently asked if I tweet. I answered "No, but I do toot a lot."

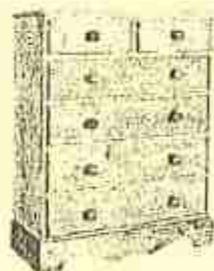
P.S. I know some of you are not over 50. I sent this to you to allow you to forward it to those who are.

[Courtesy of a circulating e-mail. Ed]

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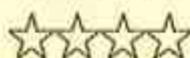
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HORSWELL DIARY

Whatever's going on? Nothing feels stable or predictable any more. The whole world seems to be in a state of chaotic upheaval. Everything's changing, whether through social and political uprisings or natural disasters. Lives are being altered forever, our expectations and perceptions of normality being challenged in a myriad of different ways.

Transformation seems to be occurring on a global scale, although at first I thought it was just us who felt uncertain of what the future may hold. In the past, we've felt cocooned here at Horswell, safe in the eye of a storm, as the tough realities of modern life swirled around us. But now, with each 'invasion' by potential purchasers it feels as if our utopian world of Horswellia is being shaken and undermined, the soil around our roots being loosened by each viewing, in preparation for the day when we shall finally be torn up and 're-potted' somewhere else. For the moment we have no idea where that 'somewhere else' is likely to be and the uncertainty adds to the feeling that our foundations are being severely rocked.

Of course, it was our conscious decision to move, and somewhere there will be a safe haven for us to settle into and make our own, but for the thousands of people shaken out of their homes, displaced by the recent earthquakes and tsunami around the Pacific Rim, it may be a very long time before they are as fortunate.

Who could have imagined the scale of the destruction caused by a couple of tectonic plates fighting it out on the ocean floor? The damage is so vast it's almost beyond our comprehension. It is surely proof, if proof were needed, that however well-informed and well-prepared man may be, there is a raw power out there, far greater than us, that can alter the course of our lives or snuff them out altogether at a moment's notice. Life may be precious to us, but to an angry planet we're insignificant; a minor annoyance to be swatted away like a troublesome fly.

Two days after the New Zealand earthquake my friend Sandra rang me from her hotel in Dunedin, where she and her husband had found sanctuary after fleeing their apartment in Christchurch. From the far side of the world, I could feel that she was still shivering with shock. Her building had been one of the lucky ones, built with modern technology to withstand the tremors, but still sufficiently shaken to turn over all her furniture and open all the cupboard doors to spill their contents on to the swaying floor.

Running out into the smoke-filled street she watched the metal tram lines rise up from the road to bend and twist like spaghetti loops, then when the smoke cleared a little she realised that it was not smoke at all but a vast cloud of dust from the multi-storey building opposite that had collapsed like a stack of pancakes in front of her. As she and her husband hurried across the park to reach their hire car, the immaculate lawns and gardens heaved up all around them forming giant sand dunes, as the silt upon which Christchurch is built broke through the topsoil.

"We had to drive for three hours," she said, "before we could find anywhere to stay. All the hotels were full. We ended up in a ghastly bed and breakfast."

"Sandra," I said, thinking of the woman I'd heard on the radio, speaking on her mobile phone from beneath her desk, trapped under a pile of rubble, "It wasn't ghastly. It was a palace! At least you're alive!"

"Yes, I know. If we hadn't kept the hire car for an extra day so that we could go to a restaurant out of town, we would have been having lunch in one of the buildings that collapsed. We've been so lucky."

"If we hadn't kept the hire car..."

"If..." What a tiny little word to be such a giant buffer between life and death.

For the people of North Eastern Japan the choice between life and death was taken out of their hands. For those who survived, the

tidal wave must have felt like a prophecy fulfilled. The giant wave curling high over Mount Fuji has been a regular feature in Japanese art ever since Katsushika Hokusai, Japan's best known artist, created the famous wood block print called The Great Wave. It had become an integral part of Japanese culture, a part of their collective consciousness. Was this a case of life imitating art, perhaps? It's certainly made me look more closely at the pictures I have on the walls around me. Only positive, happy images allowed!

While the terrifying scenes of the tsunami are played and replayed across our television screens, powerful uprisings of a different kind have been bringing turmoil and destruction to other lives. Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya are all in the throes of toppling their tyrannical rulers in favour of democracy, sending shock waves of alarm to other dictatorships around the world.

In 1789 the French Revolution, the uprising of the common man against the excesses and iniquities perpetrated by the ruling elite, swept away L'Ancien Regime, by which France had been governed for centuries, in favour of the new. For the Arab nations and the whole of the western world, the year 2011 may one day have the same resonance as 1789 did for France.

Hopefully, the boiling resentment that has erupted in so many Arab countries and caused so much bloodshed in the streets will in time

be replaced by the same 'Liberté, Égalité, and Fraternité' that rewarded those 18th century protestors' efforts in France. But, until new democracies can be established, the humanitarian problems in the region could outweigh any political gain, with the possibility of military intervention being the most unwelcome development of all.

The only good thing that I can see coming out of these appalling situations is the speed with which countries around the world respond, accepting that we are all a part of a global community with a shared responsibility for the lives of our fellow citizens. That, in itself, seems a huge leap forward; the sense that we are all in this together, inter-dependent in our fight for survival on what seems to be an increasingly unstable planet. Perhaps from sharing our human resources we may learn to value and share the earth's natural resources too, without plundering them purely for our own personal gain.

Tough times do seem to bring out the very best in people. Certainly the kindness and support that I have received over the recent loss of both my parents has been overwhelming. At times, it has felt as though an emotional tsunami has swept through our lives; but, like all survivors, as we look towards the future, at least, one thing is certain. Life will never be the same again. Adieu, l'Ancien Régime!

Prunella Dart



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February

Jane Austen (1775-1819) and her connections to the West Country was the subject of an enjoyable talk by **Penny Townsend** at the monthly meeting. Jane's parents had retired to Bath and made frequent visits to the coasts of Devon and Dorset. Six classics were written by her and Devon figured in two - *Sense & Sensibility* and *Persuasion*. Penny had brought many good pictures from old prints of then undeveloped towns such as Teignmouth, Dawlish, Sidmouth and Lyme Regis, as they were when Jane visited them. Fashions and lifestyle of the time were also discussed along with modern photographs of the characters depicted in the popular television adaptations of Austen novels.

The pub lunch outings were due to start again later in the month with a foray to the Crabshell. Arrangements were made for a tour of the Plymouth Gin distillery on the Barbican on the 25th March. Four members had been to the pamper day at Exeter and enjoyed saunas, massage, facials, manicures and all kinds of beauty treatments. **Margaret Cullum** and **Alice Foster** had been to Denman college on the two bursaries which are awarded in our WI every second year, and had done a jewellery enamelling course and brought samples of what they had produced. **Carolyn Taylor** reminded us of the digital photography workshop organised for the 14th February by the South Hams Area, and encouraged members to attend the Area's annual meeting on the 17th March.

March

Joyce Thompson was making steady progress in hospital. **Angela Ford** was warmly welcomed as a new member. The Devon organiser for the National Gardens Scheme, **Miranda Allhusen**, gave an excellent presentation on their work, briefly outlining the history of the NGS

which had been founded in the mid-1800s by a Liverpool philanthropist, William Rathbone. After his young daughter's death, Rathbone retained her nursemaid to work in very deprived areas in the city and from this small beginning district nursing developed and spread nationally. Private gardens were opened to the public and the money generated was used to help both district nursing and other nursing charities. Currently the work continues with over half a million pounds a year donated by NGS to the Marie Curie fund and the same amount to Macmillan Nurses as well as generous gifts to other similar charities. Miranda illustrated her talk with wonderful photographs of some of the 150 Devon gardens that open each year for this cause.

The outing to the Crabshell opened the pub lunching-out season and was a companionable event with fourteen members attending. The next venture was to Plymouth Gin Distillery on Friday 25th March for a tour of the premises followed by lunch in the restaurant there. To keep this outing as 'green' as possible, those attending opted to use the public bus service from Churchstow.

Future Events

Saturday 9th April - an Edwardian Evening Supper (£10) will be served with appropriate entertainment. Bring your own drinks and, if possible, wear 'Edwardian' dress!

A reminder was given that choir practice is at **Judith Le Grice's** on Fridays at 4 pm.

Wednesday 13th April - the DFWI spring council meeting will be at Torquay.

On Thursday 14th April our speaker will bring us music when **Mike Bramwich** talks about Baring-Gould and the old song men. Visitors are most welcome to come. The theme for the sales table will be plants.

Thursday 28th April - the Sea Coast Group meeting will be at Salcombe.

BOOKSHELF

Half of the Human Race

by Anthony Quinn

(Jonathan Cape £12.99)

This book tells a love story but in no way is it a soppy love story and the characters and writing are such that it was a joy to read. Connie Callaway is a feisty suffragette and Will Maitland is a county cricketer. Their first meeting at the finish of a cricket match ends distinctly frostily when Connie, quite politely, criticises Will's footwork while batting. How dare she? They go their separate ways - Connie, a very articulate independent woman, gets more involved with the suffragettes and, although very much attracted by her, Will simply cannot understand her need for independence, her fight for women's votes and her outspokenness.

Will's hero is a former Test cricketer who still plays county cricket. This is "The Great Tam" and he becomes involved in both their lives.....but it would spoil the book to give too much detail on that! Towards the end of the book we come to the First World War when everything will begin to change. Connie is now a nurse, Will a soldier and, yes, they meet up once more and, yes, there is a happy ending. Connie is a lovely character and although Will seems a bit stuffy (you'd think he would be glad to find a woman who understood and knew everything about cricket!) he is simply a product of his class and the age. He always tries to do his duty and the Right Thing.

Carolyn Taylor

Lean On Pete

by Willy Vlautin

(Faber & Faber £12.99)

This is a rather bleak book, sparsely written, but I found it totally absorbing. Charley Thompson is the son of a single father. The father is pretty useless and as the story opens father and son arrive in Portland, Oregon, where the father will work in a warehouse. Charley simply wants to be able to go to school and to play football. His father leaves him alone for long periods, forgets to leave

him food or any money for food, and so he takes a job as a stable boy at a track where the horses are mostly worn out.

This is where Charley meets Lean On Pete, a former racehorse. Charley's father is involved in a fight and is taken to hospital; there is no money at all so Charley decides to take Lean On Pete and begins a long trek to find his aunt, who is the only person ever to have given him some semblance of a proper home. It's a desolate journey and he meets some horrible characters, but he's a tenacious little boy and throughout you are willing him to find his aunt and have a happy ending.

Carolyn Taylor

One Day

by David Nicholls

(Hodder & Stoughton £7.99)

Emma and Dexter meet on 15th July 1988 on the night of their graduation. They go their separate ways and the story concerns their on-off affair, unfolding one day in their lives every year for 20 years as their relationship grows. The man becomes a TV presenter and the couple have to work their way through the difficulties that fame brings. A highly enjoyable book that has had rave reviews.

Pat Macdonald

Major Pettigrew's Last Stand

by Helen Simonson

(Bloomsbury £7.99)

Retired army Major Ernest Pettigrew leads a quiet, conventional life in a sleepy English village. His companionship with the village shopkeeper, Mrs Ali, deepens as they are drawn together through a love of books and the loss of their respective spouses. They have to contend with some irate relatives and gossiping villagers, and the Major has to decide what matters most - tradition, family obligations, or love. This is the author's first novel. It is very perceptive, appealing, and funny and I very much look forward to reading her future work.

Pat Macdonald

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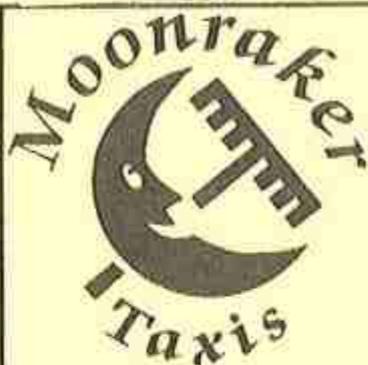
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Weather Wag

By Jan Turner

March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb, so it is said. Countrywide this was very much the case - at least for the first half. Wild storms and heavy snow in Scotland has been very lion-like and is still going on as I write.

We are not the only ones. The north-east of the USA, Canada, Greece, Turkey and Bulgaria have all had extreme weather of the wintry sort. For example, Vermont had 25.8 inches of snow, a record for the area (but great for late-in-the-year skiing). More snow fell in Greece and Turkey which closed schools and paralysed traffic. Athens, Istanbul and Ankara all experienced unusually high winds, low temperatures and snow, weather situations caused by tropical air moving north meeting with Arctic air moving south, the resulting conflict being evident in these storms. In the southern hemisphere much the same has been occurring, but during the summer season. Australia has had heavy rains with floods and tinder-dry conditions causing the inevitable bush fires. All this is bad enough but not as devastating as the tsunami resulting from the north-eastern Japan earthquake.

Throughout history there have always been such events as those we have experienced in our own memory - although many have been far worse. I can remember the following events, can you? There was the 1998 ice storm in Canada which left hundreds of thousands of people without power for several weeks in mid-winter; the floods in Britain in 2000 which wrecked thousands of homes and disrupted traffic for months; the 2002 bush fires in Australia where hundreds were left homeless.

We live in an area of the world which does not experience the full force of a tropical storm (hurricane) - even 1987 was not like Katrina. So are we spared some of the most destructive events that weather can throw at us? Do you remember the 1953 floods at the southern end of the North Sea? The north coast of the Low Countries was devastated, as it had been much earlier in history on several occasions, with great loss of life and land. The flood of November 1520 - known as the "All Saints' Flood" - was perhaps the worst of all in terms

of lives lost. The coastal areas were densely populated and towns such as Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Dordrecht were worst hit, and totally inundated. Contemporary reports estimated the losses to be as high as between 100,000 and 400,000. Philip Eden writes "*Such phenomenal losses clearly concentrated the minds of the governing classes, especially in the Netherlands, where a 400 year long battle against the sea was begun. Dikes and barriers were raised and strengthened, draining channels constructed and improved, and land was reclaimed from the waters*".

The lands of today's Netherlands are protected by high, well-managed dikes and dams. The Delta Plan was drawn up and is now completed, and keeps the North Sea at bay, protecting a vast area of fresh-water lakes and shipping waterways, to say nothing of the reclaimed land and new settlements.

It is said that the weather, as much as Sir Francis Drake, defeated the Spanish Armada in 1588. Queen Elizabeth I awarded a medal to naval veterans of the event on which was inscribed "God blew and they were dispersed". However, it is now generally accepted that the English had 'done' for the Spaniards before any serious meteorological intervention! Tudor history expert Geoffrey Elton summarised it as "[the Spanish] were defeated by better ships, better seamanship, a needlessly rigid plan, and at last the weather". The story of the Bows match in Plymouth Hoe being finished before repelling the Spanish fleet is now considered to be 'political spin' in modern-day terms.....but it makes a good story!

I have written before about the extent to which prevailing climatic conditions, in times of conflict with an enemy, have affected the activating of a campaign or raid, or the outcome of such events. Most recently the Gulf War was affected by weather conditions at the time. In 1991 the Met Office forecasts for the area over Kuwait were a vital tool in the way the campaign was fought (and was over in five months). Much was reported about the 'rain' that fell in the desert at that time. Desert sands often turn into a thick mud during such weather

and news reporter were giving accounts of the difficulties of moving lorries, etc., across the terrain. The pictures on tv showing the conditions on the ground did not always match the descriptions, for aerial views showed cloudless skies with no rain in sight. These were classed as 'mis-matched' as military news was perhaps two days old when it was broadcast to give the powers-that-be based in Riyadh a chance to control what news was given out. A meteorologist in London explained all this but was politely told by the MoD that his comments were "unhelpful".

Then there was the classic example of WW2, when weather forecasters were heavily relied upon to advise when it would be favourable for air-raids on the enemy to take place. Windows of opportunity in weather patterns would appear and the order was given for take-off. The rest is history, as they say.

Now you might be interested in the February monthly figures. This was the last month of

our cold weather, although not in the official winter season.

Rainfall = Total 78.5mm. Just slightly above my 14 year average of 71.5mm.

Temperature = Average for the month 8.1 °C. Just a little warmer than my 14 year average of 7.7°C.

Sunshine = total for the month 52.9 hours. This is down on my 14 year average of 60 hours (due to gloomy skies associated with east winds and damp south-westerlies).

At least the days are dry at the moment - a welcome break for farmers to get the sodden land tilled for their 2011 crops. I wonder when the swede turnips will be harvested from our valley sides in South Milton? The grass is growing at last and the lawns need attention (NOW, not tomorrow Jan T!) Here's wishing you good gardening and good weather-watching.

Jan Turner

Why Change name of Sands?

"I am writing this as I am at a loss as to what to do next. I have been fighting the National Trust since last August with very little headway.

It has taken over Thurlestone Sands car park by Thurlestone Rock and re-named it South Milton Sands. According to all Ordnance Survey maps, past and present, and other old maps of the area the name South Milton Sands does not and has never existed. The village of South Milton is two miles away from here.

I have had letters going backwards and forwards to the National Trust to no avail. I have gathered and sent petitions and the Trust continues to refuse to acknowledge that this area has always been known as Thurlestone Sands. I have lived in Thurlestone for 65 years and my parents before me since the 1920s, so I have a thorough knowledge of the area. It is Thurlestone Sands, and always has been.

As the National Trust is such a large concern, it seems to be using this as leverage to change the name of our coastal heritage without consultation or permission of the parties involved. Is there anyone out there who can help me out on this matter and cares about retaining the factual history of our coastline?"

*Mrs Bronwen Ziaffiro,
Thurlestone.*

This letter appeared in the South Hams Gazette on Friday 11th March, 2011.

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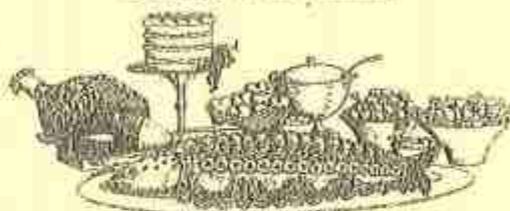
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April
 Saturday 2nd Choir of Lincoln College, Oxford, Parish Hall, 7.30 pm
 Monday 4th Parish Council Meeting, Parish Hall, 7.30 pm
 Friday 8th TRAMP - Newton Ferrers/Revelstoke (long)
 Saturday 9th WI Social Supper/entertainment, Parish Hall, 7.30 pm
 Sunday 10th Bowingsleigh garden open in aid of Children's Hospice
 Thursday 14th WI, Parish Hall, 2.30 pm (Mike Bramwich music)
 Friday 15th TRAMP - Charleton bird hide (short)
 Saturday 16th NSPCC Jumble Sale, Parish Hall, 2.00 pm
 Monday 18th Annual Parish Meeting, Parish Hall, 7.30 pm
 Wednesday 20th TRAMP - Plym Valley Trail (long)
 Thursday 28th TRAMP Easter walk, Frogmore/West Charleton
 Friday 29th Royal Wedding "Street Party", Parish Hall from 9.30 am

May
 Wednesday 4th TRAMP, Blackdown Rings/Andrews Wood
 Thursday 5th Local Elections, Voting, Parish Hall - open all day
 Wednesday 11th TRAMP, Little Dartmouth (long walk)
 Thursday 12th WI, Parish Hall, 2.30 pm
 Monday 16th Annual Parish Council Meeting, Parish Hall, 7.30pm
 Tuesday 17th TRAMP, Bolt Head/Overbecks via woods
 Tuesday 24th TRAMP, Dart Valley Trail (long walk)

June
 Friday 3rd TRAMP, West Alvington bluebells
 Sunday 5th Cheese & Wine Lunch, The Downs
 Monday 6th Parish Council meeting, Yeo Room, 7.30pm
 Wednesday 8th TRAMP, Hound Tor/Jay's Grave (long walk)
 Thursday 9th WI, Parish Hall, 2.30 pm (Barbara Moore doll collection)
 Thursday 16th TRAMP, Bantnam cakes

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The magazine is entirely self-supporting and is not a charge on the parish rate. It was founded on behalf of Thurlestone Parish Council and is delighted to remain under the Council's sponsorship. This does not mean that the views and opinions expressed in these pages are the views and opinions of any member of the Parish Council, and they should only be ascribed to the authors concerned.

In Thurlestone, Village Voice is delivered by a team of volunteer helpers organised by Ian Fraser

In Bantnam and Buckland it is delivered by Peter Hurrell and Linda Chilcott.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT (June-July) ISSUE = 5th MAY 2011

Please drop any contributions marked "Village Voice" through the letterbox at 25 Mead Lane before that date (or e-mail to Vvoice@aol.com or RbnMacd@aol.com)

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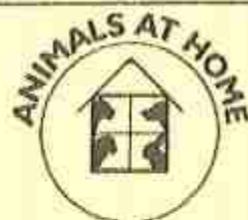
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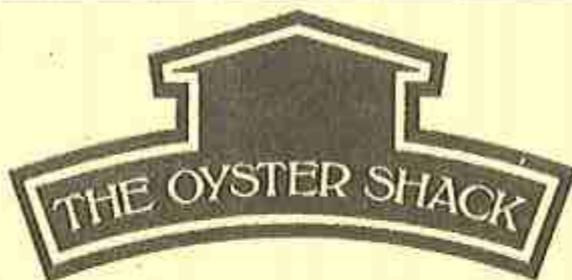
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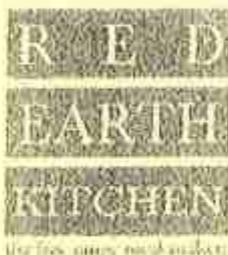
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School Report

By Betty Rhymes

I thought I would take a different approach with my report this time. Rather than you just having to read about what the school has been up to I thought you might like to see a piece of the quality work that the children have produced.

When you turn the page you will no doubt be surprised to know that this colourful maze of Thurlestone was created by Mrs Holland's class of 6 - 8 year olds. The class had previously undertaken some similar digital art work with a man called Tony Minnion. Tony is an artist from Cornwall who works with textiles exploring traditional and new technology. He is particularly skilled at working creatively with people and computers without getting bogged down with technology. These skills have proved very popular when working with children and his knowledge and enthusiasm have helped children create some stunning pieces of art.

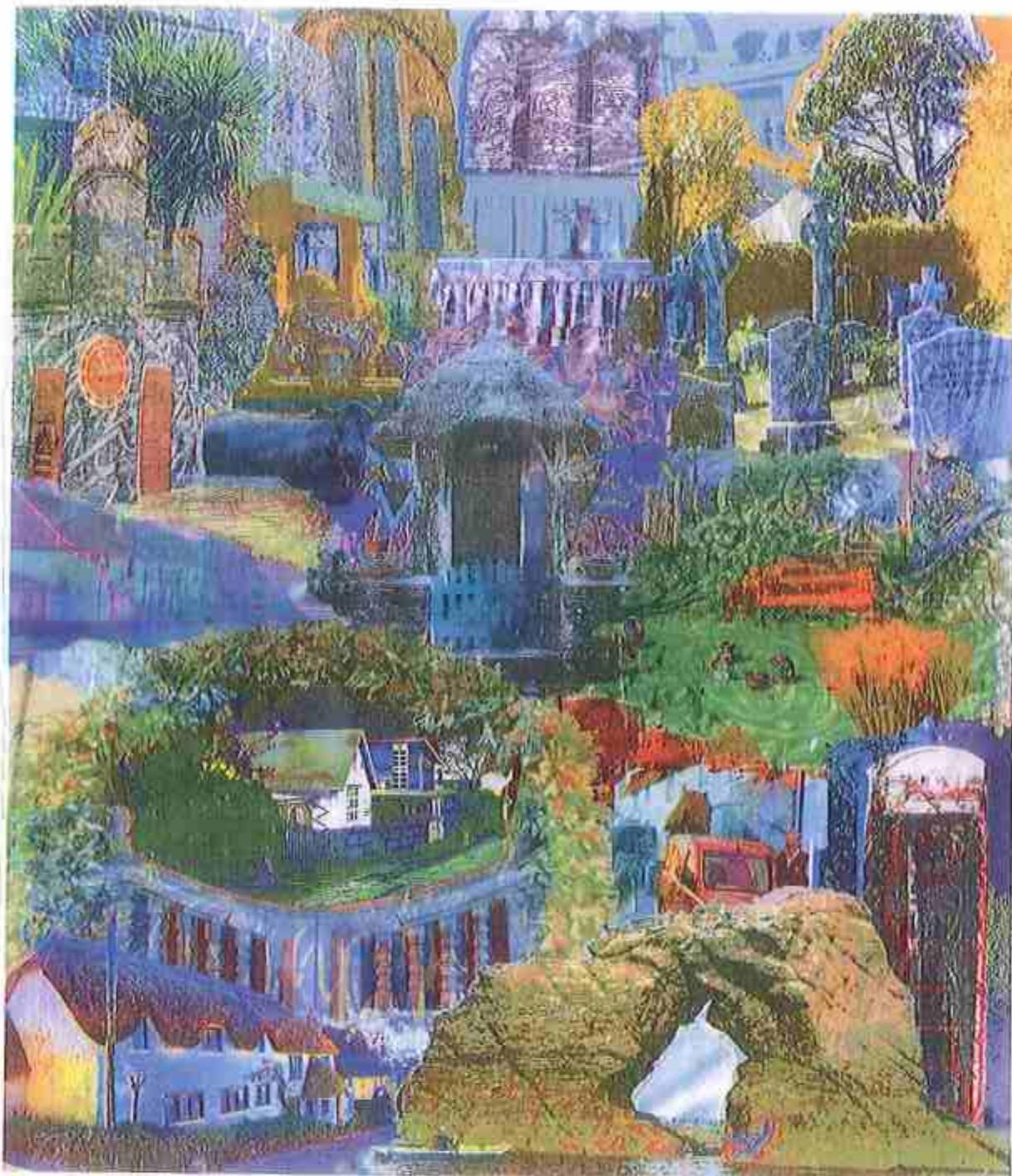
Tony was invited back to All Saints to help the children of class 2 to create a canvas of digital images of Thurlestone. Mrs Holland and her excited class went on a walk of the village and took photos portraying the character of Thurlestone.

After returning to school and printing off the pictures they cut out the important part of the images they chose to use for their canvas. These pictures were then laid on to a piece of cloth with the canvas laid on top. The children then ran permanent paint over their image on to the canvas and through to the cloth. After Tony had transferred their individual images to the computer and the children had adjusted the brightness and tone of them they were then ready to finalise their work by arranging their pictures on the computer to create the masterpiece you see overleaf.

The children and the school are very proud of their work and soon the canvas will hang proudly in our school foyer for all to see and admire. Whilst you admire and study their picture see how many different sights of Thurlestone you can spot. Sorry, there are no prizes but if you can spot more than 15 give yourself a gold star!

A selection of the children's digital images of Thurlestone have been produced as notelets and gift-cards. If you are interested in purchasing any please call at the school reception. Thank you.

Thurlestone Village Banner



by Class 2 (7-8 age group)
working with Tony Minnion,
parents and staff.