

Claydon with Clattercote Newsletter

November/December 2014

VILLAGE VOLUNTEERING AT LOW EBB

At the Parish Council Meeting on 11th November it was announced that the Claydon Car Service had closed down. It was brought on by the unavailability of volunteer drivers, mainly due to ill health.

The Claydon Car Service was set up by the late John Lloyd to cover short journeys such as surgery and hospital visits and to collect prescriptions etc. It has always been run on an informal basis, with the volunteers willing to cover the fuel costs themselves. It has provided a lifeline for residents dependent on just the bus service for transport. In recent years the need to provide the service has reduced, as Cropredy surgery has provided a drug delivery service and the Cluster Care Group, based in Cropredy, has organised its own drivers to collect and return residents from Claydon. However, ad hoc surgery and hospital visits are not covered elsewhere.

It is hoped that a younger and fitter group of villagers may step in to provide a service on either an informal or more formal basis.

On the same evening, at the Playing Field Trustee Meeting which followed the Parish Council Meeting, it was announced that the Playing Field Management Committee is sorely in need of volunteers. Although there are villagers who regularly turn up to assist with events such as the recent bonfire, the PFMC also needs help with administrative tasks. It has been without a Chairman since 1st October and it is also short of active committee members. As a result, an unreasonable workload is placed on the remaining committee members and is in danger of discouraging them from continuing in their roles.

The worst case scenario is that if the PFMC folded, as the Trustee, the Parish Council would take over the responsibility. The grass would be cut and the safety checks performed but there would be no other activity.

If you would like to help ensure that the PFMC keeps running, please call Emma Gallagher on 690119.

OTHER PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The Parish Council Meeting on 11th November was attended by District Councillor Ken Atack. Councillor Putt was unable to attend. The following further items were discussed:

CHURCH ROOM COMMITTEE

A new Church Room Committee has been formed and new terms of reference agreed. It will be responsible for the maintenance of the building, the payment of the insurance and electricity bills and the collection of the hire fees. The new committee members are Dorothy Beckett, Tim Cozze-Young, Keith Hamilton, Stef Kearney, and Clive Mutch. Clive Mutch has taken over the responsibility of the hire bookings. More members would be welcome. If you are interested, please contact Dorothy Beckett on 690322.

It was stressed that there is no paid caretaker or cleaner. A new vacuum cleaner has been purchased to assist in cleaning and Clive will check the room after each event and those responsible may be asked to return to clean up any remaining mess. The hire charges are also under review as it is thought that they may be insufficient to cover the heating expenses during the winter.

PARISH COUNCIL GRANTS

Grants for the 2015/16 financial year were discussed and awarded as follows:

Parochial Church Council

The grant will not be awarded as a lump sum, but grass cutting invoices will be paid up to a limit of £500.

Claydon Website

The annual hosting charge of £39.35 was agreed.

Playing Field Management Committee

A grant of £1500 was agreed. Members of the PFMC were extremely disappointed that the grant was not more generous, as their recent acquisition of play equipment has resulted in a boost of £985 to the Parish Council bank balance, due to the reclamation of VAT on the purchase. With expected maintenance costs of £1275 for grass cutting plus £80 for the safety inspection, the grant provides very little towards the next phase of the Play Area Enhancement Project.

Church Room Committee

It was agreed that a grant of £100 would be awarded, but only paid when work was completed on the installation of a new double glazed window in the kitchen.

Cluster Care Group

A grant of £50 was agreed. There is one villager from Claydon who attends the regular Tuesday sessions in Cropredy.

Grants were not awarded to the **Claydon Film Club**, as it was felt that the operation should be self-funding, nor to the **Cropredy Youth Club**, as a brief survey of villagers had resulted in a fairly indifferent response. Councillor Atack indicated that although the Youth Club was starting up in Cropredy, if successful, meetings may be held in other villages. The Parish Council agreed to review the situation once it was up and running.

BUS SHELTER PROJECT

The specification of a stone bus shelter has been significantly reduced in order to bring the cost down. It now stands at £5900 plus VAT for a 3 sided shelter with a sloping roof and integral bench. It would be as unobtrusive as possible, backing against the wall of the Village Green.

Councillor Atack had previously confirmed that it would not be necessary to submit a planning application.

Although this specification was not refused by the Parish Council, there was no unanimous enthusiasm to press ahead and find the money to pay for it. The Chairman suggested that the Parish Council may find £1,000 towards the cost and possibly more in future years. Councillor Jones confirmed that all attempts to obtain a grant for a bus shelter from a third party had met with refusal and the insistence that councils have a statutory duty to provide them.

Councillors Hill and Mutch felt that a bench would provide an interim solution.

PARISH PRECEPT

Although the Parish Precept will not be set until January, preliminary discussions were held. (The Parish Precept is the portion of Council Tax which goes directly to the Parish Council. In 2014/15 it was set at £4100).

The Chairman, David Hill declared that the Parish Council had always been very careful and had very little in terms of reserves. In addition to the regular budgeted items, funds had to be found to cover unforeseen events such as the recent collapse of a section of the Village Green Wall.

There was a shock reception to the suggestion from the floor that the Precept be increased to £10,000 for one year in order to fund the bus shelter. It was argued that it was not used by enough people to justify such an increase.

It was forecast that the Parish Council will carry a balance of £2500 into 2015/16. Councillors were requested to return with positive suggestions in January.

(See Editor's Comment later in this issue).

BROADBAND

Paul Gallagher was thanked for all the work that he has done in bringing superfast broadband to the village. Over 20 households have now signed up to Sugarnet and are awaiting installation.

There is very little movement on any official solution as the Farnborough exchange is not due to be upgraded. At the Parish Liaison Meeting on 12th November details remained vague on which properties would be in the 95% rollout by 2017 and which would be in the 5% with no coverage.

PLANNING

Manor Farm Buildings now known as 'The Barnhouse'

An application has been made to extend the Lawful Development Certificate within the barn to incorporate a 3 to 4 bedroom house with windows to the outside. If this application is granted it would permit the remainder of the barn to be demolished to reveal the house inside.

It was felt that the proposed building would not fit in with the surrounding properties and a request was therefore made that the application be heard by a full planning committee.

16 Bignolds Close

The application for dormer windows has been approved by CDC.

Point to Point Farm

The application for an additional barn at Point to Point Farm (in Mollington Parish) has been granted by CDC.

LOCAL HERITAGE ASSETS

It had been hoped that a representative from CDC would come to the village to discuss the registration of Local Heritage Assets with the Claydon History Society but this has been refused.

MAINTENANCE

The state of the Blue Brick Path was of concern, but Councillors were asked to consider whether they wished to spend any money on maintenance, as any work will result in just a short term improvement. It was requested from the floor that the path outside Bank Cottages be inspected.

From the floor, the request was repeated to trim the vegetation on the verge in Crossing Lane so that it does not scratch vehicles using the road.

ALLOTMENTS

The vacant allotments have been strimmed and the process will be repeated in the spring.

CLAYDON PHONE BOX

There were slight second thoughts regarding the removal of the BT phone box as it does provide a very useful light in that part of the village. However it was decided to go ahead with the removal as it is in such a disgusting state.

SPEEDWATCH

The Speedwatch operation has now concluded. Councillor Mutch was thanked for his work. In 4 separate events only one car was caught speeding. The sight of a high visibility jacket was sufficient to encourage vehicles to slow down.

GRIT BINS

Both grit bins have been filled in preparation for the bad weather

TRAINS

There was a complaint that goods trains are not sounding a warning when approaching the Crossing.

FENNY COMPTON ROAD

A replacement for the damaged road sign is due to be installed.

AOB

The Parish Council will attempt to identify the owner of an open inspection pit on the verge of Crossing Lane. The steel cover has rusted away, leaving a dangerous hazard.

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 13th January at 7.30 pm in the Church Room.

HARVEST FESTIVAL CRAFT ACTIVITIES



Ten children enjoyed a craft session following the Harvest Festival Service. Four children were given prizes for bringing along creatures made out of vegetables.



Photographs by Pamela Putt

2014 Claydon Bonfire Night

The Claydon Bonfire Night was delayed 24 hours until the evening of 9th November due to bad weather but in the end was a great success. The event raised just over £500 towards play equipment for the Playing Field. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped out with the event.

Claydon Playing Field Committee

BOMBS AWAY

An account by Eric Bates of a very memorable night.

Have you ever looked back on your life and recalled incidents and events which you have experienced and realized how very lucky you were to have survived and how very unlucky you could have been?

I remember very vividly one dark evening in November 1940. Wave after wave of very foreign sounding aircraft had been passing overhead since early evening. I was a young lad and had been standing on my father's shoulders at the top of our garden, to get a better view of the huge bright yellow and orange glow reflected in the sky towards Southam. We learned later that this was caused by the centre of the City of Coventry becoming a raging inferno due to enemy bombing.

Dad and I had just gone indoors when out of the blue there was an almighty BANG. This was followed by four more in quick succession. I don't think that such a loud noise had ever been heard in Claydon before. The ill fitting door to our sitting room rattled alarmingly. We all scrambled into the cubby hole under the stairs. Dad soon decided however that the extra protection that the stairs might give was not worth forfeiting the comfort and warmth of our usual sleeping arrangements. So we went to bed as normal and, as far as I can remember, slept soundly. Next day all was revealed.

In the large field along the Claydon to Cropredy Road, opposite Clattercote Farm Cottages, quite literally a 'dirty big hole' had appeared. No damage had been done as a crop had yet to be sown. Later this hole was filled in by hand as in those days JCBs were not readily available.

The yard buildings of Oathill Farm are a field away from the house and are now known as Forge Farm. Another bomb had damaged the gable end of one of the buildings. A third had fallen in the canal between the farm buildings and the farm house. Water blown out of the canal had flattened the hedge on the towpath side for some thirty or forty yards. Another bomb had exploded only a few yards in front of the Oathill Farmhouse, in the small paddock between the canal and the Claydon to Cropredy Road. Miraculously only a pane of glass in one window was broken. Finally a fifth bomb had landed in the field on the other side of the Claydon to Cropredy Road, where a signpost still directs us to Lambert's Barn. Here a number of cattle were killed.

Within a week or two the farmer had vacated Oathill Farm and gone into hiding, living with relatives on their farm at Wroxton St. Mary. I think that he really thought that he had been Hitler's personal 'Target for Tonight'. He had frequently attended services at Claydon Methodist Chapel, but after this frightening experience he was rarely seen in the village again.

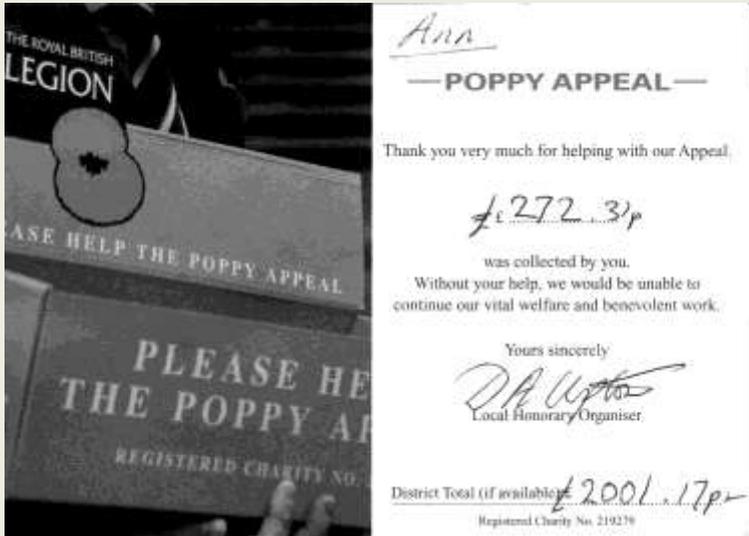
Sleepy old Claydon had suddenly been thrust into the front line of WWII. Live enemy action had come within half a mile of the village. If the bomb aimer of that German aircraft had pressed his bomb release button three or four seconds earlier, the bombs could all have fallen on the village itself. More material damage would most certainly have been done and human lives too would no doubt have been involved.

How lucky we all were on that dark November evening and how very very unlucky some of us could have been!



A young Eric dressed in his father's old Army uniform

BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL



Anne Hoggins thanks everyone who contributed to the appeal and especially Jenny Hillier for collecting in Clattercote.

‘Listing’ of local heritage assets

Villagers of this newsletter will be aware of this project that will assess and ‘list’ assets of local significance. This will involve members of Claydon hist soc. acting as assessors and inspectors. As a researcher responsible for the Knibbs biography and a history of Clattercote Priory I applaud the aim of the project, however I think villagers should be aware of the use of such a listing.

- 1) Inclusion on the list is obligatory i.e. you cannot simply object, the decision rests with the inspector.
 - 2) Any further development in or around the asset will be taken into consideration if planning permission is required.
 - 3) You will not necessarily be informed you or the asset are on the list.
- While the aim of the project is admirable the consequences should be considered.

Don Siviter

The nomination of assets will be discussed at the meeting of the Claydon History Society on 19th January at 7.30 pm in the Church Room.

Editor's Comment

There is definitely a need for a village bus shelter. The Transport Needs Survey conducted in 2012 showed that villagers support the provision of public transport even if they don't currently use it themselves. Villagers now have to wait more often for a bus because it comes from Leamington, rather than Banbury, thereby increasing the possibility of a delay in its arrival. Children are also waiting for school buses, often without adequate outdoor clothing, as it appears that certain schools no longer have anywhere to store coats. (The school bus companies have agreed to change their stopping place once a shelter is in place).

Previously the County Council provided grants to install bus shelters, but because of the restrictions on their finances this is no longer happening. The current proposals cost £5,900 and to pay for that in a sensible time scale would involve an increase in the Parish Council precept.

The argument for paying the whole amount in the 2015/16 financial year is:-:

- 1. Villagers will have the benefit of the shelter as soon as possible.*
- 2. The £5900 quotation will increase as time passes.*
- 3. In future years there may be restrictions on Parish Precepts.*
- 4. The decision to act has already been delayed for years if not decades.*

Although an increase of £5900 is large in percentage terms, in monetary terms it would be an increase of approximately 82p per week for a Band D household (62p if that household was single occupancy).

The Parish Council and the Newsletter would appreciate your views

Diary Dates

OVER SIXTIES FILM

The next film showing will take place in the Church Room at 2.00 pm on

Friday 5th December

We're No Angels

starring Humphrey Bogart and Peter Ustinov

CHRISTMAS CRAFTY CROCHET WORKSHOP

Saturday 6th December from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm in the Church Room

CLAYDON LADIES' CHRISTMAS GET-TOGETHER

Monday 8th December at 7.30 pm in the Church Room

CHRISTINGLE FAMILY CHRISTMAS SERVICE

followed by arts, crafts and refreshments in the Church Room

Sunday 14th December at 4.00 pm

SENIOR CITIZEN'S CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Tuesday 16th December 12.30 for 1.00 pm at the Carpenter's Arms

JUBILEE GROUP XMAS COFFEE MORNING

Wednesday 17th December from 10.30 am in the Church Room

CLAYDON CAROL SERVICE

Sunday 21st December at 6.00 pm

CLAYDON KIDS' PARTY & FILM

Monday 22nd December 3.00 to 5.00 pm in the Church Room

CRIB SERVICE - Christmas Eve 3.30 pm

CHRISTMAS DAY COMMUNION - 10.00 am

Written and produced by Jenny Jones

Thanks to all contributors

Contact: **tel. 690510**, e-mail clayclatnews@btinternet.com