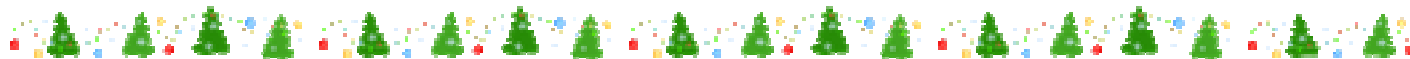


*around..... Longparish*



## ST NICHOLAS CHRISTMAS FAIR

Saturday 6 December 2pm – 4pm in the Community Hall

Please bring your family and friends. Entrance £1 for adults – including a glass of mulled wine.

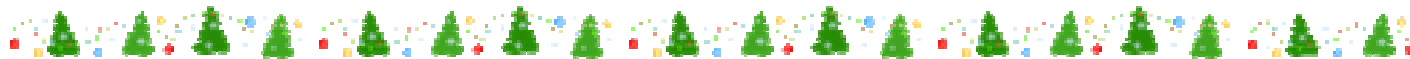
- Santa's grotto
- Christmas cake & pudding raffle
- Children's crafts & tombola
- Hamper tombola
- Mulled wine
- Cake stall
- Local gift & craft stalls
- Home produce
- Book stall
- Home made gifts
- Teas & cakes
- Grand Draw
- Silent auction
- Christmas Quiz

We would be grateful if you could help by donating any of the following

Bottles of wine, packaged foods and drink for hampers, chutneys, jams, mincemeat, mince pies, cakes etc, 'Good as New' books, raffle prizes

We are also looking for wicker baskets to use on the hamper stall  
Any offers of help on the day would be gratefully received.

For more information or collection of donations please ring  
Christian Dryden 01264 720 398 or Andrea Hulme 01264 720 347



### The Spirit of Christmas

The perfect way to get into the spirit of Christmas – singing carols in the pub!

The Longparish Village Choir will be leading carol singing in our two village pubs again this year.

Do come and join in at

The Cricketers on Sunday 14th December at 7.30; and at The Plough on Friday 19th December at 8.30.

The choir will also be singing at the Carol Service at St Nicholas on Sunday 21st December. There will be mince pies and mulled wine served after the service.

The choirs of Longparish and St Mary Bourne are very grateful to everyone who came and supported the Armistice Day concert in November. Thank you!

If you would like to join the choir you would be very welcome. Do call me on 720790. Cathy Yelf

### New Landlords at The Plough

A warm welcome to David and Kerry Hicks who have taken over at The Plough. They are experienced in the trade and were previously at the Chestnut Horse at Easton, near Alresford. They will be offering a warm welcome to us Monday to Saturday from 11.30 in the morning to 4 (ish) in the afternoon and from 5.30 in the evening. Their special early bird menu features two courses for £12. On Sundays they open at 12 and will be serving food until 4 with the doors closing around 6. Our pubs are part of what makes our village special and we wish them every success.

### Gymnastic Success

Longparish gymnast, Amy Jones, with her partners Hannah Jones and Holly West came first in a local acrobatic gymnastics competition in November. Well done! Their scores are so good that they hope to get into the final eight at the British Championships next month. They showed their determination when they braved atrocious conditions and put on a great display at the fete in September. We wish them good luck.



### LONGPARISH GARDENING CLUB

There is no meeting in December. The next meeting is on Tuesday 27th January 2009 in the Village Hall

### A word from the Guest Editor

As guest editor of the Longparish pages for this month's Hill & Valley I'd like to say a huge thank you to the regular editor, Mary Jo Darrah and all the other people who bring you the magazine. Getting all the copy together and juggling it to fit the pages is a challenging and time consuming task. This month the mistakes are all mine! Mary Jo quietly gets it right every month. We, the readers, also owe thanks to Phil and Sarah Harris who do the main distribution and all the many distributors who deliver our copies. Jeremy Barber

## LONGPARISH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

### LCA Morning Coffee



On Tuesday 9th December between 10.30 and noon Sarah Nicholson will be hosting the "coffee and chat". Everyone is invited to go along to her home, Nordale, where a warm welcome is assured. If you need a lift please contact Gloria on 720425.

### LCA -The Great Longparish Santa Dash



Come and run off the Christmas pudding in the Longparish Santa Dash on Boxing Day. Assemble at the Shop at 11.45 where the best dressed and most

glamorous Santas will be judged followed by a dash to The Plough starting at 12 noon. Please put on a Santa outfit (available from The Range for under a fiver) or just come and support or cheer along the route. The pub will be open for Santas and supporters to satisfy their thirst. Last year we had over 20 Santas and about 40 spectators. Let's make it more this time!



### LCA KidzZone

Thanks go to all parents who have offered to help out at club nights this year. We are in the process of arranging the rota for next year. If parents can help out at least once per year we will be able to keep KidzZone going.

KidzZone will meet on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> December. The last date this year will be our Christmas party night; more details to follow.

Andrea Hulme

### LCA ??? Christmas Quiz ???

Test your knowledge with the LCA Christmas Quiz. 250 general and local knowledge questions suitable for all the family and you won't be able to answer all of them by sitting in front of the computer. A great stocking filler for a fiver and a chance to win £100. The quiz will be on sale at the St Nicholas Fair and at the carols in the pubs. Or you can get one (after the Fair) from Jeremy Barber, tel 720459. Don't worry if you will be busy over Christmas; the deadline is not until 31 January.

### LCA Membership renewals

It is subs time! If you haven't already renewed your membership for 2009 please fill in the form on the back of the December events diary and return it to Christine Beresford or Jessie Gould. At only £1 per year the subscription is very good value. Please re-join.

### LCA - L2SOTM - The Longparish Second Sunday of the Month handicap running race

We welcomed three new runners from Austria for this month's race, Magda, Monika and Alexandra. They brought the number of runners up to 19, the most since the all time high in August. The weather was overcast and Novemberish but the rain held off. Liz Mayon-White put in a very strong performance to finish first and nearly a minute ahead of the field. Well done. First man home was Jeremy Barber who



turned in a new personal best only a week after the New York Marathon. Thanks go to David for doing the signs, Maggie and Emma for catering, Jack and Katy for marshalling

and the Cricket Club for the venue.

Next month we start at the normal time of 10am on Sunday 14 December at the Cricket Ground. To celebrate the festive season we'll have mulled wine and mince pies as part of the post-race refreshments. Runners of all standards are welcome as are brisk walkers. It is a handicap race so the slowest have as much chance of winning the cups as the fastest. Hope you can come.

### LCA and Hog the Limelight - Puck's Bottom

Sun 8 Feb 2009 – 3pm in the Community Hall

An enchanting burlesque tale for children from 5 years and their parents, based on A Midsummer Night's Dream.

This is a visual and magical piece with hand-carved puppets and an original musical score, inspired by traditional English and African folk music – a tapestry of slapstick, puppetry, magic and music.

Puck leads the audience on a perilous journey through Fairyland as Nick Bottom the Weaver and friends are preparing a play to perform before the Duke and Duchess on their wedding day.

Meanwhile in the forest the King and Queen of the fairies are at war. The worlds of humans and spirits are entwined and turned upside down until Puck comes to the rescue.

Further details available later, in the meantime, please put the dates in your diaries.

Children £4, Adults members £5, non-members £7.

### LCA Recycled Teenagers Shopping trip to Winchester Christmas Market

We'll be leaving from the shop at 11am on Tuesday 2 December for our shopping trip to the Winchester Cathedral Christmas Market. Booking is essential as the trip is well subscribed already. Contact Corinne on 720643.

**Remembrance Day Concert****The Combined Choirs of  
St Mary Bourne & Longparish****Music by Holst, Fauré, Gibbons, Jenkins,  
Vaughan Williams, Irving, Parry****Tuesday 11th November, 7.45pm  
St Nicholas Church, Longparish****Admission Free**

The 90th Anniversary of the Armistice ending the First World War was marked by a very special concert. The advertisement gives the basic information but what was it really like?

**A personal account of an emotional experience**

How do you start to put together a programme to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of Armistice? I wouldn't have a clue but am very grateful to everyone involved for assembling a truly fitting tribute to the Armistice. The 'eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month'.

My 'experience' didn't start well. After a rush to get home, numerous distractions and interruptions whilst trying to get out of the house and a jog across the field with my wife Anne from Forton to St. Nicholas Church came the dreaded thought - 'did we turn the grill off?' Given the history of our cottage [it is one of a row of three burned down as a result of a frying pan fire in 1988. Ed] there was no alternative - go back and check. So I did and yes, as usual it was off, hence the lack of comment on the opening.

What I walked into, not uncharacteristically late, was very moving. A packed church and the combined choirs of St. Mary Bourne & Longparish delivering a moving rendition of Fauré's Requiem intro to a captivated audience. I sneaked in, hopefully quietly and relatively unnoticed.

I wasn't really prepared for the emotionally charged experience that was to follow. I know it was a choral concert but I was stunned by the quality of the readings by Rachel and Derek. So appropriate for the occasion and yet so beautifully delivered.

My focus turned to the photo present at ion; I noticed that everyone looked like my late Grandad, a veteran of the campaign with the trademark moustache. I looked later and they were of my Uncle Bill, a WW2 veteran, who was critically ill at the time but despite that was still sporting a trademark 1940 version of the same moustache.

The rest of my evening turned into my very own personal journey of Remembrance. Probably my first truly absorbing Remembrance Concert, for a whole host of reasons.

The combined choirs, the soloists, and everyone involved should be very, very proud of what they achieved. A moving and exceptional programme delivered with a level of intensity that is difficult to describe and unbelievably

inspired me to volunteer for the choir! I am grateful and I am sure that the entire audience were grateful for a special evening. More importantly, we had the opportunity to demonstrate collectively our gratitude to those that we remember. Sadly Uncle Bill of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tank Regiment passed away the following day. David Marklew

**A performer's perspective**

Music can have a tremendous effect on our mood. According to neurologists, that warm feeling that people get when they hear a rousing piece of music or when they sing together in a large choir is the result of chemicals released by the brain. Whatever the explanation, singing at the Remembrance Day concert was a wonderful experience!

Fired up by some very positive feedback after its performance at the Summer Fun Day, when Bohemian Rhapsody was such a hit, the Choir started practicing in earnest for the concert in September. But I for one hadn't bargained for the complexity of classical choral pieces, and when faced with the Fauré's Requiem - in Latin - I almost bowed out gracefully! Still, we persevered and Cathy (who has the patience of a saint!) managed to coach us towards at least an approximation of the right notes, in the right order - not an easy task, considering many of us can't actually read music. We linked up with the St Mary Bourne Choir only a week or so before the concert and felt pretty relieved (and a little inadequate!) when we heard their sopranos reaching the top notes that we had been struggling with.

On the night itself, the Church was packed and it was wonderful to see so many people there, not least because the collection raised £600 for the Ex-Services Mental Welfare Charity, Combat Stress. Henry had put together a fantastic set of slides showing various images from World War 1, from Kitchener's famous recruitment poster to photographs of Longparish's own Memorial to the fallen. Expertly timed to coincide with the various musical offerings and interspersed with readings imaginatively performed by Rachel Foote and Derek Kane, they created an atmosphere of solemnity and poignancy entirely appropriate to the occasion. Although I certainly wasn't note-perfect on the night, somehow any mistakes and flaws diminish when you sing with other people and it was an amazing feeling to realise that, in just a few short weeks, we had transformed from a hesitant bunch of singers into a fully-fledged choir. We even managed to get those top notes in the Benedictus!

Of course we are extremely lucky to have some real talent in our midst - Anna Bennett's beautiful soprano solo had a few people scrabbling for their hankies, I noticed; everyone in the choir felt safe and secure knowing that Robin was providing the organ accompaniment and the addition of Nicky on the flute and Kevin on the bugle was the icing on the cake. Our very own Maestro's Cathy and Nigel (with Richard Anning) performed magnificently and, of course, special mention should go to Lucy Smith for assisting Robin, and Alistair Chapman for his wonderful bass solo.

If you were there on the night, I do hope you enjoyed listening to the music as much as we all enjoyed performing it. If you weren't able to attend you may be interested to know that you can listen to a recording of the concert and view the accompanying slides on the Longparish website ([www.longparish.org.uk](http://www.longparish.org.uk)). Jo Webb



## Longparish Cricket Club

Sponsored by Barker, Son & Isherwood, Solicitors

The winter can be the time when Club members lose touch with each other, so it is good to know that we have four senior/mixed and 2 colt teams taking part in local indoor leagues over the coming months. Our association with the Winchester League began when a senior team was entered in 2001 and, with the expansion of the Colts Section, an U16 colts side played for the first time last year. At Dummer Cricket Centre it was the other way round - the younger members of Longparish leading the way by competing in the North Hants Junior League in 2005. Since then, two senior/mixed teams have joined in the busy winter programme at the Cricket Centre; the Longhops in 2006 and the Lightwails in 2007. This winter both the Longhops and the Lightwails play in the second division of the Serious Cricket League (so far with mixed results), and have a long season ahead of them with fixtures scheduled into the middle of April. The two "Derby" matches should prove particularly exciting and competitive!

To date, the U15's have played only one match, when they had a comfortable win over Cove B U15's. 100 Club

Winners in the October Draw were:

1st	£35	No 75	Richard Wills
2nd	£15	No 151	Keith Paice
3rd	£15	No 74	Mrs. B. J. Herridge

The December Draw will be held at The Cricketers on Tuesday, 16th December, 2008 at 8.00 pm. As in previous years, the Draw will be followed by a buffet and members are invited to attend what is always an enjoyable evening and perhaps be among the list of winners.

On behalf of everyone at LCC, may I send best wishes to all Hill & Valley readers for a Very Happy Christmas.

Frank Hibberd

### A Tribute to Jack Copping

Jack Copping was a dedicated schoolteacher who came to live in Longparish with his family in the mid sixties. Son of Wilf Copping, the ex-Arsenal and England footballer, he was himself a great all-round sportsman and soon established himself as a leading member of the Cricket Club. A useful bowler, he excelled as a batsman of tremendous concentration.

But Jack was much more than just a good cricketer; he had a real enthusiasm for the game in general with a dry and ready sense of humour. He was also a keen clubman and was pleased to become its chairman. Together with his wife, Cath, he instigated many improvements and took the club forward until that memorable occasion when we played in the village K.O. final at Lords. Both his sons also played cricket for Longparish and they were a real "fun" family, greatly missed when Jack retired and moved to Penton.

Sadly Jack passed away at the beginning of November and we extend our sympathy to Cath, Gareth, Rhidian and their families at this sad time. Jack will always be remembered with great affection by his many cricketing friends.

Allen Snow, Longparish Cricket Club

## Village Hall

A very well attended Village Hall Committee meeting considered a "wish list" for refurbishing the Village Hall. This included a new and improved heating system, modern insulation throughout, new windows, updated and modern toilets, disabled facilities, modernised kitchen, more flexible use of space and a warmer and cosier feel to the whole building. Facilities such as a permanent screen for films, blackout options, an office, wi-fi, a hearing loop system, a larger stage, a dedicated room for Kidzone are all on the list and it is hoped to include as many as possible if at all possible.

Constraints facing the Committee in their quest to refurbish and update the hall and its facilities include the access to the rear of the building and car park, which is not wide enough for vehicles and pedestrians, the current lease from the Diocese, disabled access and the wide range of repairs needed to bring the hall up to modern standards compliant with current regulations.

Money so far accrued from the Parish Council (£45,000) and the Village Hall funds (£13,000) will not be enough to cover all the items in the 'wish list' but we might be able to access grant funding from various sources if we aim for an eco friendly facility, making use of modern technology and renewable resources wherever possible.

We are very fortunate to have a wide variety of skills available to us from within the village. A working group has been set up (John Scott, Graham Healey and James Field) to do preliminary investigations and put forward design proposals. They will report back to the main committee towards the end of January. Gina Snowden

## Take control of your driving future

Older motorists have a wealth of experience, confidence and tolerance. However sight, reaction times, judgement of speed and distance won't be as sharp as they once were. Fragility increases with age, so injuries tend to be more serious and recovery takes longer and the chance of surviving an accident is much lower.

The County Council's **Older Driver Skills Scheme** aims to find ways of helping older people drive safely for as long as they are fit to do so, rather than taking measures to prevent them from driving at all. It's ideal for people who've been driving for years and want to update their skills or gain confidence; those recovering from illness or injury; those advised on health grounds; people returning to driving or finding it difficult to adapt to a new car.

**What does it involve?** It's not a test - there's no pass/fail. Instead it's an informal, confidential appraisal aiming to offer help and advice, which will enable that person to continue driving with improved safety. General ability is assessed but particular concerns can be investigated. Each person is given a comprehensive debrief and any concerns or remedial action discussed, a written report follows. A current driving licence is required and eyesight is checked. The appraisal costs £25 and is delivered from the person's home, using their own car.

Road safety officers manage the award winning scheme with appraisals delivered by Driving Standards Agency (DSA) Approved Driving Instructors (ADI's). For further information or to arrange an appraisal please contact Hampshire's Road Safety Team on 01962 874600.

## Longparish Parish Council

This report covers the November meeting. Minutes of meetings are in the parish council area on the village website [www.longparish.org.uk](http://www.longparish.org.uk)

### Open Spaces



Thanks very much to everyone who helped at the Village Clean Up Day. The stream was cleared and the pedestrian entrance to the village hall car park and the gravel area by the church were improved. A huge amount of work was done by our hard-working volunteers who filled a large skip kindly donated by Purbeck Bins Ltd (part of the Raymond Brown Group).

### East Aston Common

You will recollect that Mr & Mrs Tacchi of Hurstbourne Estate have been considering whether to lodge an application to extinguish common rights over approximately 20 acres of common land at East Aston Common (mainly comprising river bank, bed and islands). In exchange they would grant new common rights over approximately 33 acres of cow pasture (known as Nether Regions and Bank) in the parish of Hurstbourne Priors on the East side of the B3048 to the East of East Aston. As part of the pre-application process they have consulted various bodies including the parish councils in Longparish and Hurstbourne Priors, the Test Valley and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Councils, Hampshire County Council, the Open Spaces Society and Natural England.

The two parish councils formed a working group which has considered the idea very carefully and taken soundings among local people. The group concluded that there was no support for the proposal and that there are many good grounds for believing that the Secretary of State would not approve an application. Briefly they are that

- The proposal is not in the public interest or the interest of the neighbourhood.
- The proposal does not safeguard the diversity and variety of common land.
- Public access and conservation on the common are not incompatible.
- The land adjoins other common land and thus forms part of a larger area of common land which will be devalued if the application is accepted.
- The land has a long history as common land going back many centuries.

We understand that other consultees do not support the proposal.

We are therefore pleased to report that Mr & Mrs Tacchi have decided to put the idea on hold for the time being

while they consider alternative approaches to balancing the interests of nature conservation and public amenity. We will keep you informed of future developments.

### Footpaths

Thanks very much to Ricky Boume for the brushcutter course, to Liz for the excellent cake and to students, Phil Harris, Patrick Beresford and Matt Denny who are now qualified to use the parish machines.

There was a long discussion about Dr David Wright's proposal to move footpath 12 in the Christmas Tree Field. The full range of views has been reported to the County Council.

The council has bid successfully for grants from the County Council to re-print our popular Longparish footpaths leaflet and put up small direction signs to help people on the walks in the leaflet with route finding.

### Planning

The council had no objection to

- A side extension at River Barn Cottage
- Tree works at Owls Lodge, Forton

### Conservation Area

The Borough Council is reviewing the Conservation Area and will be proposing modest revisions. These will be explained at a public exhibition on Monday 19 January from 2 - 8pm in the village hall. Your input is important. Please come. More information next month.

### Transport Update

A revised Bus and Train Travel Guide for Andover & North West Hampshire is available free in the Village Shop. It contains bus and train timetables for this area including the Cango C4 and Stagecoach 26 buses that serve Longparish. The only change noted is that the 16.35 Stagecoach 26 from Andover now departs 10 minutes later at 16.45.

### Cango Bookings (0845 602 4135)

The Cango C4 timetable is unchanged. There have been problems with booked passengers not being collected by the Cango service. In many cases this was due to problems with the call centre that takes the bookings and the communication between the call centre and the Cango driver; this is being addressed and is improving.

However, it is advisable to book as early as possible to ensure bookings reach the bus before it departs, rather than trying to book once it is on route. In the morning the call centre opens at 08.00. The bus doesn't leave Barton Stacey till 09.05 but please don't leave it that late to call. The call centre is very busy at this time, taking bookings for all the Cango services in the area, so it is advisable to book the previous day.

The next parish council meeting is on Monday 8 December. Meetings are public. Parishioners are welcome to come and can speak by invitation. Jeremy Barber Chairman. Tel 720459 email [jeremy.barber@longparish.org.uk](mailto:jeremy.barber@longparish.org.uk)

### Senior Citizens Lunch

The Christmas Lunch at school will be on Thursday 18 December. It's a great opportunity to meet the children. If you'd like to go please contact Vi Mears on 720472.

## Longparish School News

This term we have competed in two new sports for the school; the first of these was cross-country, which was a natural follow on from our first triathlon competition last term. David Gould and Jeremy Barber kindly assisted in the training and over twenty children took part in the district competition earlier this term. They all enjoyed the event and eight children made it through to the final, which will take place at the beginning of December.

The second new sport for the school is field hockey and members of the field hockey club, which is run by Alice Evans, are taking part for the first time in the Andover Schools' Hockey League. The team members are not at all intimidated by playing more experienced teams and have won three of their first four matches in the league. We would like to thank Jeremy, David and Alice along with Jacqui Healey and Doreen Gregori for helping to make these sporting events possible for our children.

We have recently won funding for a Soundfield system to be installed in the Community Hall; this will provide a speaker system for both the spoken word and recorded music and should improve the acoustics for a range of events. The system is due to be fitted towards the end of November.

All classes have now started rehearsing for our Christmas productions this year. The two infant classes are doing two performances of a nativity on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December. In line with the tradition of the school, where on a two-year basis a nativity is performed one year and something different the next year, the two junior classes will be performing 'Cinderella' on 16<sup>th</sup> December. If you would like to join us for any of these performances, you would be very welcome, further details are available from the school.

Our Carol Service is on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December at 6.30pm in St Nicholas Church, we would like to extend an invitation to all the community to join us for the service.  
Alex Foggo, Head Teacher



### Pride of Andover

Sharp eyed readers may have noticed the name Victoria Taylor in the citizenship category of the recent Pride of Andover awards and wondered if it is the same Victoria Taylor who teaches the Chaffinch class at Longparish School. Well spotted; it is indeed. Victoria won

the award for her service to Girlguiding. She has been Brown Owl for the 10<sup>th</sup> Andover Brownies for 10 years. But she does a lot more as well. She organised a regional Pop Idol competition, is a District Commissioner, a mentor for new Guiders and has been Queen's Guide Adviser for SW England. She is also part of the national Girlguiding UK Council which looks at the future of Guiding. She loves music and dance and is a keen member of AMOS, the Andover Musical and Operatic Society. Their website describes her as a speed tappist. Her service to Guiding led her to be invited to a garden Party at Buckingham Palace this summer.

Victoria loves teaching at Longparish. She is in her

second year as teacher of the Year 5/6 Chaffinch class. She says that the school has a wonderful atmosphere. Children and staff alike are encouraged to develop talents, skills and interests. Everyone is welcoming and valued and it is a great place to work. And there's a link between teaching and Guiding because so many of the skills such as leadership, organisation and problem solving are needed for both.

This Christmas she is using her musical skills working on the school productions of Cinderella Rockerfella with children from KS2. Head Teacher Alex Foggo says that Victoria is modest about her achievements but they are very proud of her. A Year 6 parent said, "She's lovely. My daughter really enjoys being in her class."

Victoria had one request when interviewed for Hill & Valley, "Please mention that we need adults to help with Guiding in the Andover area. If we get help from the Longparish area it might even enable us to start Guiding in Longparish." If you'd like to know more please contact Victoria via the school. Jeremy Barber (Guest Editor)

### November FOLS 100 Club draw

1st prize	54	Anna Drayton
2nd prize	06	Elsa O'Sullivan
3rd prize	109	Shelagh Pye
		Maia Drewett

### Testbourne News

There wasn't enough space for this month's report. Sorry. You can read it in the village website version of this edition of Hill & Valley.



### Blue Peter Bring and Buy Sale

Charlotte Hulme would like to thank everyone who helped, donated and came to her

bring and buy sale on Saturday 22nd November. The event was attended by some select members of the village, who were very generous, raising £70 for Blue Peter's Mission Nutrition charity. The name the bear competition was won by Ella Harris who named him Billy.



### WHERWELL ABBEY REVISITED

A lively illustrated talk by Rhoda Bucknill.

Stories old & new! Longparish was owned by Wherwell Abbey until the dissolution of the monasteries.

Wherwell Village Hall, 6.30pm, Saturday 13 December  
Tickets from Pamela Prince, 01264 860441

In aid of Wherwell Church funds

### Did you know?

Stannah are rumoured to be working on a new high speed stair lift. The idea is that you can get to the top of the stairs before you forget why you wanted to go there.

## NEWS FROM TESTBOURNE

[note – this report was not included in the printed version because of lack of space – Ed]

### ***Thumbs-up to new Library***

If you are in school do come along and have a look at our newly refurbished Library and Study Zone, opened by the Mayor and Mayoress of Whitchurch on November 5th. The new layout and furniture, decoration, blinds and computer area have had a Tardis-like effect, with some pupils convinced the room has actually been enlarged. Their responses have included “cool”, “modern” and “awesome” so I think we can judge the improvements to be a big success. We owe huge thanks to our PTFA who raised over £10,000 towards the refurbishment.

Half-term also saw the completion of the works begun in the summer holidays, with decoration of the Scola Block corridors and Dining Room, which also had new lights and ceilings. Keeping the school in smart order and repair has a touch of the Forth Bridge about it but we are delighted with all the improvements, which have given us a much more attractive working environment. Now we have to start planning on how to get the Main Block up to the same standard!

### ***Pupils do good works***

Pupils have shown their thoughtful and generous side in a number of ways recently. A group of 14 pupils have just returned from a two-week visit to Mityana – our partner school in Uganda. It was a trip of a lifetime and a real personal challenge for these young people – and one to which they rose with flying colours. Closer to home pupils showed great maturity and respect at our Remembrance Assembly on 11<sup>th</sup> November. Prefects then went on in the same week to organise a lunchtime Children in Need Fair which raised several hundred pounds in just 50 minutes.

### ***Volunteer Drivers Needed***

Do you have any time you could spare to drive our mini-bus from time-to-time – for school or community events? We could provide training to help gain the MIDAS qualification needed. If you can help please contact Andy Noyce, Premises Manager or Paul Bushell our Community Manager.

### ***Christmas Plans***

We are holding a Christmas Concert at All Hallows' Church in Whitchurch at 7.00p.m. on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup>. The concert is open to school and the public and we would be very pleased if you would come and join our celebration.

This year we also have our own Testbourne-label Christmas puddings, produced in partnership with the Real Plum Pudding Company. They are excellent quality and can be ordered from Reception for £4.95 (1lb) or £6.95 (2lb) on 01256 892061

We look forward to bringing you more news in 2009 and wish you a Happy Christmas from all of us at Testbourne.

Hilary Jackson, Headteacher

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