Birlingham News online

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No. 297[2] Wednesday 22nd February 2023

Editorial

It has been quite a week in Birlingham! Last Thursday saw the return of the phone box, now beautifully restored and repainted. The following day the refurbished Millennium Bench was re-installed in its new location around the time capsule. Both projects have been ongoing for many months, yet over a period of 24 hours the centre of the village has been transformed. Congratulations and thanks are due to Maxine Cook, who has been overseeing both these projects. We are printing a couple of pictures here but there will be more in the Spring edition of the *Birlingham Bystander*.

Meanwhile the controversy over the clearing of Swan's Neck has rumbled on and we have devoted a page to views received from residents and a report of a meeting between the Chairman of the Parish Council and farm managers, which had the intention of improving communications in the future.

Then there was the visit by Rowan Williams to the IW last Thursday and the final weekend of Bulb Teas coming up in a couple of days.

Last, but certainly by no means least, the first open meeting to discuss the Coronation celebrations will be held on Monday. Ideas have already started coming in and we have listed these so that you can start thinking about how you want to celebrate. We have not had a coronation for 70 years and the next jubilee is decades away; therefore this is likely to be the last big royal occasion for many years. So please come along to the open meeting and help us decide how we are going to make this an event to remember for the current generation of children.

Who said nothing ever happens in Birlingham?

Potted Snowdrops Closing Sale

Sunday 26th February

by Maryanne Dyer



It has been an excellent season for the Birlingham Snowdrops with large numbers of visitors and strong sales of potted snowdrops. This year, those snowdrops were planted and grown by supporters of the Friends of St James' to maximise the funds raised for the care of our church and its churchyard. Any snowdrops remaining at the end of the final weekend (25th/26th February) will be available to villagers at a heavily discounted £1 per pot of 3 bulbs.

4.00–5.00pm Sunday 26th February at St James' or the Village Hall or please call me on 07540 407544.

St James' will be open for the rest of February from 10.30am to 5.00pm. This will give visitors and villagers the opportunity to admire the amazing flower arrangements, browse the sales table and perhaps buy a pot of snowdrops.



The refurbished Millennium Bench, installed on 17th February, with the phone box (re-installed the day before) in the background (Photo: Maxine Cook)

Coronation Celebrations Open Meeting

Monday 27th February

by Steve Morris

The Coronation of King Charles III will take place on Saturday 6th May, with other events on the Sunday and the extra bank holiday Monday.

The Jubilee Committee is hosting an open meeting on Monday 27th February, to which everyone in the village is invited. A glass of wine or a soft drink, plus a few nibbles, will be available. This meeting gives you the opportunity to decide how you would like us to celebrate the Coronation as a community.

As the timescale is quite short, we will need to make some decisions at this first meeting: for example, what events we would like to organise and whether we want to order a Coronation mug. Some of the ideas that have already been suggested are listed opposite, so please have a look and give it some thought.

The meeting will begin at 7.30pm and the aim will be to complete it within an hour. Refreshments will be available from 7.15pm.

Please come along if you would like to be involved in some way, no matter how small, or have some suggestions for Coronation activities. If you are unable to make that date but would like to be kept informed, please let us know at news@birlingham.org.

Jubilee Committee – New Members

The Jubilee Committee is pleased to welcome two new members, Pat Chinneck and Tony Hawgood. Both led important activities during the Platinum Jubilee last year and will join Chris Hermon, June Hiden, David Kew and Steve Morris to make an effective team.

Meanwhile, Maxine Cook has decided to retire from the Jubilee Committee in order to concentrate on her family and work commitments. As a founding member, Maxine has been involved in all the activities of the Jubilee Committee over the last ten years. She will be greatly missed and the Jubilee Committee would like to thank her for all the hard work she has put in during that time.

Coronation Suggestions

Some of the suggestions received so far are:

- Quiz on the evening of Saturday 6th May
- Picnic lunch/tea on Sunday 7th, if possible at the cricket ground
- A simple treasure hunt at the cricket ground for young children, with a Coronation egg for all children entering
- A bouncy castle
- Other activities for children
- A china mug:



- or engraved glass tankard:





Left: The return of the phone box, 16th February (Photo: Tony Hawgood)



Right: The phone box back in situ (Photo: Nikki Hollier)

St James' Church



Churchwarden: Adrianne Woodward (Tel. 01386 750936)

The month of February is drawing to a close and it has been a success for St James'. We have been heartened by the number of visitors to the church and the size of the congregation who joined us at the Bulb Sunday Service to enjoy the sound of the Upton Church Parish Choir, led by their musical director, John Holloway. We have also made a profit at our sales table and many thanks to those people who made donations of bric-a-brac to sell. The church looked lovely with flower arrangements on every surface. A big 'thank you' is due to Jayne Mackenzie who organised her band of skilful ladies to such great effect.

Services at St James' Church during March will be held at the following times:

* **Sunday 5th**: Morning Praise, 10.30am (led by David Bray)
* **Sunday 19th**: Mothering Sunday (Holy Communion), 10.30am (led by Revd Alma Organ)

Cuppa & Chat

Wednesday 1st March

by Sue Hermon



Cuppa & Chat will be held on Wednesday 1st March from 3.00pm to 4.30pm in Birlingham Village Hall. The cost is still £2.50 per person and everyone is most welcome to come along for tea or coffee plus a cake or two and a chance to win our free Mystery Entry Prize! Hope you can join us.

For more information, or to request transport, please contact me on 01386 750096 or email sue.hermon@me.com.

CPRE's Star Count 2023

17th-24th February *by Mandy Pressland, Cotswolds National Landscape*

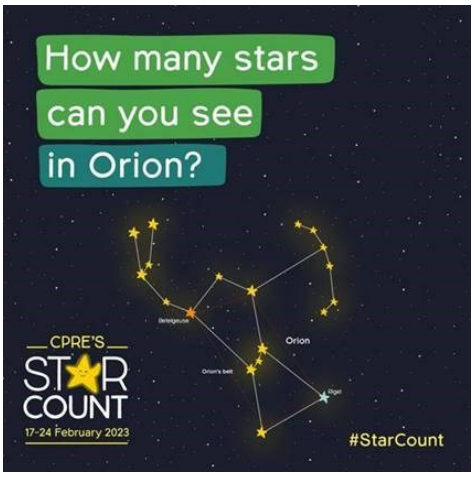
Between 17th and 24th February, in celebration of our starry skies and to help protect and improve our view of the stars, CPRE, the countryside charity, is inviting the whole nation to become 'citizen scientists' and take part in Star Count 2023 – a cosmic census that will help map our view of the stars, and measure the impact of light pollution across the country.

To help understand all this, thousands of people have submitted star counts over the years, which CPRE's experts plot onto an interactive Star Count map, then analyse and compare with previous years' data. In the 2022 Star Count, 49% of participants counted 10 stars or fewer in the constellation of Orion, indicating severe light pollution, while only 3% experienced truly dark skies.

Help count the Cotswold stars by becoming a citizen scientist!

Taking part in Star Count is completely free, and can be done without any special equipment. You'll be part of a nationwide citizen science project. Stargazers are asked to count the number of stars they can see (with the naked eye) within the constellation of Orion, and submit their count online.

There is still time to take part in this interesting project, which ends this Friday, 24th February. Full details of how to join in, along with much more information about the Star Count and how to find Orion, were given in the full version of this article in the previous edition of *Birlingham News Online* at:
www.birlingham.org/village/bn/bn296.pdf.









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Contact Catherine Hurley
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knightsgroveevents@gmail.com
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Swan's Neck

Birlingham News ***has received comments from a number of residents regarding Swan's Neck, which we summarise below, along with a letter on the subject. We also include a report of a meeting between the farm and the Parish Council (opposite).***

Birlingham News ***does not necessarily endorse the views stated here.***

We understand that the farm will provide an article for a future edition and that they will replant the area in the autumn.

View on Swan's Neck

It is an irony that as I was planting trees around the cricket pitch these past few days, I was told of the devastation that has taken place at Swan's Neck, a place I have known and loved for its beauty since childhood.

The owner of the land may have a right to do what he wants with the trees that grow there, but this is increasingly a right that is out of step with modern times and a priority to preserve habit and natural beauty. Swan's Neck, in a very real sense, belonged to the village and the people who walk there, and it is astonishing that one individual can take a decision that profoundly impacts the environment without the slightest consultation, still less concern for the feelings of those who knew and loved Swan's Neck.

We need precise answers as to why this has taken place and an assurance that this particular landowner consults the village if he is moved to any further acts of vandalism. He might also care to undertake a planting programme to make up for the loss that has been suffered.

Henry Porter

Communications Between Woodfield Farm and Birlingham Village

by Ian Yates

As a result of resident comment and some opposition to the recent tree felling carried out by Revills at Swan's Neck, Councillor Julia Luff and I met with Michael Porter and John Sansome of Revill/RedStar this week. As chairman of the Parish Council I had received a number of suggestions from villagers as to what action should be taken. I established that all permissions for the tree felling were in place but realised that the lack of communication between Revill/RedStar and the village (and vice versa) can sometimes be responsible for creating a false perception of why something is being done. This has led to a deterioration of goodwill between the village and the farm, which is unhelpful in resolving issues. Therefore the objective of the meeting was to agree how, through better communication, we could ensure we are kept informed of planned activities that might affect residents, so giving us an opportunity to provide feedback. This will hopefully avoid surprises and ensure that information is available. It will also provide a way in which any concerns villagers have can be escalated and resolved quickly. We discussed some current issues as examples.

In summary it was a very constructive meeting and we agreed that the Parish Council (specifically myself and Julia) will act as the interface between you (the residents) and Revill/RedStar on any issues you may be concerned about. This of course does not guarantee that all issues will be resolved in favour of residents but through an open dialogue we have an opportunity to find common ground which will allow the long established farm business and the village to co-exist with respect for each other. The farm have agreed to write an article for *Birlingham News* giving the background and their reasons for the work at Swan's Neck.

You can contact me or Julia Luff via the parish clerk at birlingham_clerk@yahoo.co.uk.

A Selection of Residents' Views on Swan's Neck

- We were initially shocked and concerned at the level of work, change to views, size of bonfire and level of destruction. It used to be lovely.
- Over the last week, walking up to the village sometimes has smoke zones, and bonfires have at least once been left in the evening unattended.
- The carnage has left exposed two ugly pumping buildings. This was a wonderful area to get peace and calm but now it is an eyesore.
- We will never have that view again in our lifetime; let alone the damage they've done to the wildlife there. Bee and pollinator decline is staggering and so worrying. Just because Swan's Neck is one tiny part of the Earth doesn't mean it is any less significant, or can't help and support the wildlife.



Swan's Neck viewed from among the trees, 21st June 2019
(Photo: Nikki Hollier)



Swan's Neck viewed from opposite the middle of the bend in the river, 21st February 2023
(Photo: Michael Porter, Birlingham)

Letters to the Editors

We welcome brief letters to the Editors on any subject relating to Birlingham. The Editors reserve the right to shorten letters and we cannot guarantee that all letters will be printed.

Please send letters to:
news@birlingham.org

Planning Applications

The following planning application has been received and determined by Wychavon District Council:

Birlingham Village Green At (OS 9324 4309), Rectory Lane: Undertake tree works, as detailed on application form and in any accompanying information. (Case No. W/23/00206/TPOA). **Refused**. Full details and reasons for refusal can be viewed on the Wychavon DC website at: https://plan.wychavon.gov.uk/Planning/Display/W/23/00206/TPOA

The following planning application has been determined by Wychavon District Council:

Lower End Farm, Berwick Lane: Demolition of garage (with planning approval) and construction of replacement visitor accommodation as alternative (Case No. W/22/01882/FUL). **Approved**. Full details and conditions can be viewed on the Wychavon DC website at: https://plan.wychavon.gov.uk/Planning/Display/W/22/01882/FUL

The Parish Council comments are available at: www.birlingham.org/pc_info/pc_comments_22_01882.pdf.

Personal Ads

Personal adverts should consist of one paragraph of text, maximum 100 words, and will be included in a single issue of Birlingham News. Please note that advertisement text will be published exactly as received. Personal ads should be sent to news@birlingham.org no later than the Monday before publication. Birlingham News is published on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month.

Birlingham News online First Anniversary



A year ago tomorrow we published the first edition of *Birlingham News online*.

Our current plan is to continue until at least after the Coronation in May; whether we carry on after that depends on the response we get.

We hope you find *Birlingham News online* useful but would welcome your comments and suggestions for future editions. Please let us know your views at news@birlingham.org.



Signs that Spring is on the way, 18th February
(Photo: Nikki Hollier)

Dates for your diary

February

Sat 25/Sun 26	Snowdrop Teas
Mon 27	Coronation Celebrations Open Meeting

March

Wed 1	Cuppa & Chat, 3.00–4.30pm, Birlingham Village Hall
Sun 5	Morning Praise, 10.30am, St James' Church
Wed 15	Birlingham Parish Council, 7.00pm, Birlingham Village Hall
Thu 16	Birlingham IW, 7.30pm, Birlingham Village Hall
Sun 19	Mothering Sunday (Holy Communion), 10.30am, St James' Church

April

Wed 5	Cuppa & Chat, 3.00–4.30pm, Birlingham Village Hall
Sun 9	Easter Day, 10.30am, St James' Church
Thu 20	Birlingham IW, 7.30pm, Birlingham Village Hall

Birlingham News online is available at www.birlingham.org. Details of future editions will be emailed to subscribers of *Birlingham News*. These emails are available to residents of Birlingham, their families and friends. If you know anyone who would like to receive these emails, or have any comments or items for inclusion in either the email or online edition of *Birlingham News*, or wish to be removed from the mailing list, please write to news@birlingham.org.

Birlingham News online is open to any organisation or business within the parish to promote events. Inclusion of an event does not imply that Birlingham Jubilee Committee supports either the event or the views of the organisation promoting it.

The copy date for the next edition is Monday 10th MONTH (for publication on Wednesday 12th MONTH). We regret that we cannot guarantee to include any items submitted after that date.

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