

PEN PAPER



Photo: Geoff Parcell

The newsletter of St. Michael's Church and the Parish of Pen Selwood



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From the Editor

The recurring theme this month is leaves, whether they be autumn colours or providing mulch for the garden. The cover picture was taken looking down on on the Garden Lake from the Temple of Apollo at Stourhead.

Changes to how the village assets and activities are managed were signed off at the Sports and Social Club AGM and they are now looking for a new name. Read on for details and a prize too!

There's a big push to improve our Broadband service in the village and Wessex Internet is coming in as a better alternative to BT.

Geoff Parcell 841216

Rector's Reflections



Deep snow or a deep mystery?

As I write and think about this Christmas edition of the Pen Paper, I realise today is *stir up Sunday*; known as such because a particular prayer is used ...which has the words *stir up* and *fruit*, and, as you may well know, in the past many have used it to remind them to stir their pudding or cake ..and press on with Christmas preparations. Traditional fruit cakes and puddings need time to make, and time to mature... and topped up with a strong spirit in which to steep. I am reminded that many of us imagine and hope for a Christmas which is just right and celebrated in an almost perfect fashion. Don't we just love it if snow falls on Christmas Eve leaving a wonderful scene to enjoy in the morning! In addition we send Christmas cards and sing carols depicting deep snow. This adds to the beauty of the scene, but also to the pathos of the story of the birth of Jesus, who was born into a homeless family kept warm in the clean hay in the manger. However, it is unlikely that Jesus' birth had any of that beauty.

I recently chatted with an academic humanist who had just given a talk on what he said were the particular dangers of Islam, and also all religions. One reason why he did not believe in the Christian gospel message of love based on the life and words of Jesus is that the story of Jesus' birth is told differently in the biblical accounts the gospels. St Mathew and St Luke had other agendas and were not objective in their writing, while the other two gospels say nothing of the Christmas story and the question of the virgin birth.

There is not space here to go into the counter argument details, but in my mind it is worth noting that there is a sort of choice: we can either get stifled in our faith by the modern-age desire for proof before we dare believe, or we can grow by hearing and tasting a greater/ deeper truth and meaning behind the story.

Thus we can dwell upon the message, rather than the lack of proof. This message is one of Emmanuel (God with us), and we can let it soak into our minds and hearts: a process which can continue for a lifetime! If Christmas card paintings and carols help us value this mystery, then all well and good. Like the cake, maybe we are being stirred up by God, and steeped in His Spirit?

A very happy Christmas to you all.

Nigel

Village Walks



Enjoying autumn colours during a walk near Castle Orchard

Recent Events



Our special commemorative **Pen Pub** evening held on Friday 7th October proved to be an appropriate way for villagers and members of the Bourton Players to remember Robin Cuthbert who died suddenly on 3 September. Many stories of people's friendship and memories of Robin filled the village hall from the moment the doors opened through to closing time; a true illustration of his reach and popularity. All the takings from the bar and generous donations from Robin's many friends raised an incredible £565 for the village community field blockhouse improvements - the latest of many projects which Robin had been working on.

This year's 'foody' Pen Pub curry night in November was equally well attended by many villagers and their guests sampling the delights of some talented chefs! The various delicious curries were all devoured by a packed Village Hall, washed down with a selection of fine wines, local bitter and Indian lager!

Rob Backus

The **Macmillan Coffee Morning** raised £460.

Thank you to every one who donated cakes, bring and buy items and raffle prizes and supported us on the day. I would like especially to thank all my helpers Josie, Sandra, Renee, Angela and Jane for all their hard work.

Elaine Coffin

Harvest Festival

Thanks have been given for successful harvests since early pagan times. Harvest festival is traditionally held on the Sunday near or of the Harvest Moon. This is the full Moon that occurs closest to the autumn equinox (22 or 23 September). The celebrations on this day usually include singing and praying and

decorating the Church with baskets of fruit and vegetables. We continue this ancient tradition in Pen Selwood and held our Service of thanksgiving on Sunday 25th September. The Church, as always had been decorated with wonderful flower arrangements and all the fruit and vegetables were laid out for everyone to admire.

The Service is always well attended and afterwards we retired to the Village Hall for a buffet supper and the produce was then auctioned off for The Royal Agricultural Benefit Society. It is another wonderful example of community spirit in our Village whilst at the same time showing support for the farming community. If you have not yet managed to attend this particular Service, be assured you will be very welcome.

Jeremy Cox

The **Bellringers** and spouses recently had a social outing to the Unicorn in Bayford for a fish and chip supper and award winning ciders. New members always welcome to the band with free tuition. Contact any of the band members or Jennifer Bower, the Tower captain on 840335.



The Buffet Supper, hosted by kind permission of James and Lucy Nelson, was on a night that was as dank as it was dark. As usual, there was an abundance of food, magicked up by Sandra's Soldiers. The Eton Mess did it for me!

The purpose of the event is, of course, to have fun and raise a bob or two for charity. The total raised was £658.86 with half going to The Balsam Centre. Visit <http://balsamcentre.org.uk> for more information.

Possibly the most noteworthy moment of the evening came when the normally shy Andrew Jenkins performed his trick of floating a tot of whisky on top of a tumbler of water, the two liquids not mixing. I always thought alcohol dissolved in water; what do I know?



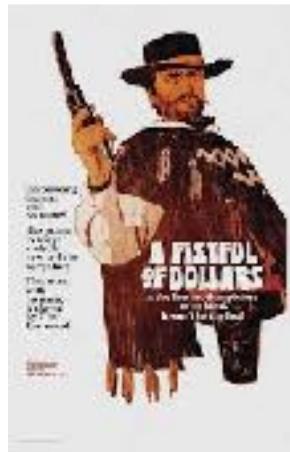
Mind you, trying to separate Colin & Megan Tanner from the bar after their period of duty proved even more tricky. Their dedication to the cause was exemplary.

Thank you to all those who supported the event and all those who helped make the event a success. TH

Clubs and Society News

What To Do When You Have No Name?

It is possible that, like me, you are old enough to remember the sixties. Yes, I can hear the “Old Groaners” of you retorting, “*If you can remember the sixties you weren't there!*” Sobeit, but I am talking about films; possibly the worst films ever made but making a huge profit: the trilogy of “Spaghetti Westerns” that made Clint Eastwood a star. His fee for the first, “A Fistful of Dollars” (1964) was a scant \$15,000. For “The Good, the Bad and the Ugly” 2 years later, he was paid \$250,000 plus 10% of gross profits. More than an English fistful! Can you remember the theme tune used throughout? It was “*The Man With No Name*”.



Which brings me to the hub of the matter. As I write, the Sports & Social Club, the village club of which we are all members, is “A Club With No Name”. Your club needs you to remedy this seeming act of carelessness.

As I have written here before in May, we have been working to make changes to the Club. These changes were agreed earlier this year and at the Club’s AGM on 28th October, the changes were enacted into the Club’s constitution. As part of the process it was decided to give the changed club a brand-new name.

The aims of the New Club are:

1. To organise social and sports activity within Pen Selwood
2. To improve the facilities and general area of the village of Pen Selwood

3. To carry out fund raising in aid of local and national charities.
4. To act as agent for the management of Pen Selwood Community Field, Pen Selwood Hall Trust, and any other village club as might meet its purposes.

So, what should its name be?

Of course, I would never expect you to do any work without reward so the person submitting the best name (in the view of the club's committee) will win a Fistful Of Dollars DVD or a bottle of champagne.

Please send me your submissions to tonyharrison@ahhe.co.uk or by a note in the post box of Melcombe House or by phone message at 840 697. Closing date 15th December 2016.

History Society

We've had two good meetings already this autumn, the first with Jonathan Cox leading a discussion about Saxon Britain, and the second learning about the architecture of Nathaniel Ireson and the impact he had on Wincanton.



SSARG have been back to continue the magnetometer survey and have identified anomalies which may suggest enclosures and habitation. They will be returning next year for further studies. See page 15 for initial results of the survey.

See the Village Diary for forward dates of meetings and contact me if you are interested in joining.

Geoff Parcell 841216

Mobile Library

Sadly the mobile library is changing its pattern again. They have made our current driver redundant and Somerset are down to one mobile library based in Taunton!

The visits will be on Monday every 4 weeks starting 30th January from 2pm to 2:15. We are trying to find out whether the visit will be outside the Village Hall or in Queens Grove.



Scrumptious spread at the Buffet Supper

Letter from the Parish Council

Things have been quiet lately so I have not that much to report.

We are still in contact with Wessex Internet. Many villagers registered an 'interest' and Wessex are exploring the possible ways of bringing faster broadband here. (See next page.)

We still have no news as to when the Highways Department intend to fix the landslip in Coombe Street, though we know that the site is monitored regularly. However, work has been carried out to fill the pot holes in Pear Ash Lane.

Tim Cooke from the District Council came to our September meeting to talk about the District Council's plan for housing development to 2025. We are classed as a 'Rural Settlement'. Most development is planned for the Market Towns, Rural Centres and around Yeovil. However, even in the Rural Settlements there may be plans for some small development sometime in the future and in order to be prepared, it would be useful for the Parish Council to be clear on what the village's needs and wishes may be. This is something that we shall looking into over the next year.

Our next meeting will be on 11 January 2017 so on behalf of all the Parish Council I should like to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a prosperous and peaceful New Year.

Jenny Steadman
Chairman

PEN SELWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman:

Jenny Steadman 01747 841041

Councillors:

Tony Appleton 01747 840168

Jane Ashman 01747 841481

Adrian Carter 01747 841431

Peter Fitzgerald 01747 840895

Andrew Jenkins 01747 840773

Alex Juckes 01747 841437

Parish Clerk:

Anne Kaile 01747 854565

Wessex Internet coming to Penselwood in early 2017!

Nearly 40 households have now registered their interest with Wessex Internet and a similar number have also applied for the Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) Voucher Scheme of £500 per household towards new infrastructure.

The CDS Scheme closed to new applicants on 30th November (and vouchers have to be used by 31st March 2017). We do not yet know how many people have secured vouchers as a number of applications are still in the pipeline. Please do keep Geoff Parcell or myself updated on your progress with this, so we can track the figures.

Of the 40 households who have registered, approximately half are in the Pear Ash/ Church/ Underhill area and the other half are in the Coombe Street/ Pen Mill area.

Subject to us agreeing costs with Wessex Internet, they are hoping to make a start installing infrastructure to the Church end of the village as early as December 2016, with a view to connecting all those with vouchers before the scheme expires at the end of March 2017. They are yet to work out a solution for the Pen Mill area as it is in a depression.

If you have not yet registered your interest with Wessex Internet, please do so at www.wessexinternet.co.uk so that you are on their contact list for a quote (a quote does not oblige you to proceed with an installation!)

If you are not eligible for a voucher, or have missed the deadline to apply, do not despair. We are optimistic that we may have enough vouchers from those that have applied successfully to carry the cost of installation to a number of other households. We will have to consider the figures once we know exactly how many people are eligible and have received a finalised quote from Wessex Internet. We have been through an exercise to look at the list of other suppliers on the Connecting Devon and Somerset website, but at the moment there are no other realistic alternatives.

In the meantime, it is worth checking the notice period with your current provider to ensure that you are not tied into a lengthy contract. Follow the village website for regular updates and information.

If you have any concerns or queries, particularly in connection with the CDS voucher scheme (some of the wording in their emails is incorrect and quite misleading/ discouraging), please do not hesitate to contact either Geoff Parcell or myself for assistance.

Alex Jukes

841437



Looking towards Pen Mill from Pen Pits

Garden notes for Pen

As I write this it is leaves, leaves, leaves in the garden, all needing to be gathered up. It is a lot of work, but put behind chicken wire in an odd corner of the garden will give you great leaf mould in a couple of years; so useful in the garden and free. If it is too late this year remember it is a yearly bonus.



After two or three seasons when things did not really go to the usual plan, it is now clearing up time, best done before winter really descends on us. Autumn seemed rather late this year, but what a splendour of colour it was. Stourhead was showing off in a big way with crowds jostling to see the great variety of every colour, but our own gardens and even the main road hedges were beautiful too.

Lots of cutting back and pruning to be done – do it in stages so that you don't overdo it. If you do, don't worry as plants can be very forgiving and grow on to hide your blunders. It is a good time to look at your borders and pull out what is not wanted, and perhaps divide or reduce clumps that are too large. It is a good idea to run the mower over the grass to take off the top layer of grass (high cut) and also the last few leaves.

In the vegetable garden it is also clean up time. Weed and dig your now empty beds, or even better, cover with a layer of compost for the whole of the winter.

Once the frost has come it is the green light for digging parsnips and eating Brussels sprouts (as they used to be called!) If you have managed to keep off the greedy wood pigeons as well as the cabbage white caterpillars, try cooking the tops of the plants. Removing them is said to produce larger sprouts, and even if it doesn't, they taste delicious, in some ways nicer than the normal parts that we eat. Good to try something new!

PG

Geophysical survey on Pen Ridge

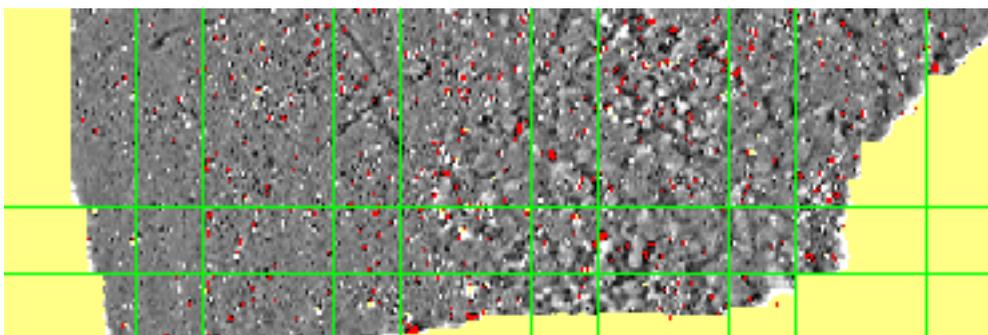
In the past few months we have had our own 'Time Team' working in Pen Selwood. Volunteers from South Somerset Archaeological Research Group (SSARG) have been conducting a magnetometer survey on the ridge. The aim is to identify underground features by their shape.

A magnetometer is highly sensitive and the anomalies picked up are often only one or two units (nanoTeslas) compared with the earth's magnetic field which is of the order of 50,000 nanoTeslas. A wire fence at the boundary of the field or someone holding a mobile phone can mask the signal received.

A grid is physically marked out on the ground. Traverses 2 metres apart are made and data are collected every 0.25 metres. Typically a hectare can be covered in a day.

Below you can see the initial processed results. Of interest are the linear, orthogonal features at the top left of the grid and the circular features the right of the grid. The linear features may indicate a settlement and the circular features may be pits or dwellings. Only digging trenches will confirm what they are and possible dates.

SSARG will return next year to continue surveying and testing the most interesting anomalies. To find out more about SSARG see www.ssarg.org.uk. Watch this space!



Farming Diary

You don't have to listen to Alan Power, the head gardener at Stourhead, waxing lyrical about the autumnal colours - they are all around us, and we can freely enjoy them. The colours flourish better in drier or colder weather as the leaves hang on longer. It has also been a good season for hips and haws, showing great splashes of red in the hedgerows, but a poor year for sloes.

My orchard, planted in 2011-2012 is now starting to produce a useful crop of apples, although a few eaters and cooks are still to get into gear. I have been making some apple juice and cider for later enjoyment.

I can't understand why the lamb prices are so low. Since the referendum, the pound has dropped against the euro, so our exports are cheaper for European countries to buy. This in turn should encourage the export trade, but so far it hasn't!

However let us be thankful that we don't live in an earthquake zone. I have friends in North Canterbury, where the quakes are much stronger and more extensive than the Christchurch quakes in 2010 and 2011. I rang one friend and he told me that the old homestead was completely demolished, but the occupants got out alive, while his own small house nearby survived.

The electric wires were torn down by the quake, so he and the son from the house started at 3am and got the generator going so the cows could be milked. A little further north, at Kaikoura, the place where tourist go to watch whales and where my daughter lived for a while, the road and railway follow the coast, often under the cliffs. Not any more - the cliffs crumbled and cut off the town.



Charles Buckler

Noticeboard

Village Walks

I am going to give four months walks in future as the first walk happens so soon after publication.

Monday 12th December Penny Varnes (840680) will lead a 1½hrs dog friendly walk starting from the village hall at 9:30am.

Wednesday 18th January Mike Carson (841563) will lead 1hr dog friendly walk starting from the carpark at the foot of Cadbury Castle (S of South Cadbury) grid ref ST633253. Meet in the carpark 10:45am. We should get good views at that time of year. Afterwards there is the option to have a drink/lunch in the Camelot.

Thursday 9th February 9:30am Jennifer Bower (840335) will lead a dog friendly walk starting from the foot of Pen Hill just beyond the acute angle bend in the road, grid ref ST747340. Sharing lifts would be a good idea as there is limited parking. If the weather is good we will go on a 3hr walk otherwise it will be 1½hrs long.

Wednesday 8th March Sue Burnley (840902) & Barbara Whaynan (840653) will lead a dog friendly walk starting 9:30am, details to follow nearer the date.

Jennifer Bower



Pen Pub nights are held on the first Friday of every month at the Village Hall 19:30 till 23:00. A convivial atmosphere, soft drinks, local draft beer, cider, quality wines and other refreshments are on offer.

Our usual December Pen Pub night will be on Friday 2nd December and then our extra special Indigo Blue Band night is back by popular request on Saturday 10th December - get your tickets early to avoid disappointment and dig out your dancing shoes!

Keep an eye on the Village website for future special events and to remind yourself when it is the 1st Friday of each month!! Don't forget we run the Pen Pub for the villagers of Pen Selwood to gather in a relaxed and informal setting with prices almost half that of most pubs. Children are always welcome with the pool table proving popular as well as the playing field in the summer months. If you haven't been yet, please do pop up and meet other like minded villagers.

Oil Buying Group

Can members please note the buying date for January 2017 has been changed from 9th January to **16th January**, the amended date will be posted on village notice boards and the Village Web site. Members can still order oil prior to the 16th date by email, if you order by phone please place you order on the 16th.

Could I also ask those members who have not yet confirmed their details to please do so, this will ensure my records are up to date and accurate.

Thank You

Richard Gething

The Yoga Group meets at the Village Hall, Tuesday evenings 7.00 to 8.30 pm. Spaces are available. Please contact Anne on 01747 835067 if you would like to come along.



Church Services

Sun 4 Dec	<i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i> 9am Holy Communion (BCP)
Sun 4 Dec	4pm Christingle service at Wincanton Parish Church
Sun 11 Dec	<i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i> 9am - Eucharist / Holy Communion (CW)
Sun 18 Dec	<i>4th Sunday of Advent</i> 4pm Carol Service with crib and Nativity tableau
Christmas Eve	11:30pm - 'Midnight' Holy Communion at Wincanton Parish Church. No Service at Pen Selwood due to shortage of clergy.
Christmas day	10am Family Eucharist/ Holy Communion. (No evensong)
Sun 4 Jan 2017	9am Holy Communion (BCP)

St Michael's Pen Selwood

Rector: The Revd. Nigel Feaver
Parish Office: Tel. 01963 824503
Church Warden: Jeremy Cox

The Parish Office for the Parish churches of St Michael's church, Pen Selwood and St Peter and St. Paul's, Wincanton.

Please note the Parish Office has moved to

38 High street, Wincanton BA9 9JF

Phone -1963 824503

If in town please call in and say hello!

Welcome to:

Yasmin Merritt, Jol O'Reilly and two little boys Casey Grace and Leo Grace who have moved in to The Croft, Chapel Lane.

Village Diary

Day	Event	see page
Every Mon	9 am Nordic Walking [Helen Gilchrist 07745 413194]	
Every Mon	7:30pm Bell Ringing [Jennifer Bower 840335]	
Every Tues	7pm Yoga [Anne Openshaw 835067]	
Every Wed	10am Silton Art Group [Joyce Butler 835978]	
Every Thurs	2pm Pen Art Group [Helen Aylett 826468]	
Alternate Fri	10:30am Black Bin Café [Jenny Steadman 841041]	
Fri 2 Dec	Pen Pub Night 7:30pm Village Hall	16
Fri 2 Dec	Mobile Library 10:15am to 10:30am	
Wed 7 Dec	History Society at Manor Barn - Pen Pits	
Sat 10 Dec	Indigo Blue Xmas Party	17
Mon 12 Dec	Village Walk from Village Hall at 9:30am	16
Fri 6 Jan	Pen Pub Night 7:30pm Village Hall	16
Tue 10 Jan	History Society at Woodlands - Gillingham School 500	
Wed 11 Jan	Parish Council meeting 7:30pm	10
Mon 16 Jan	Oil buying Group [Richard Gething 841481]	17
Wed 18 Jan	Village Walk at Cadbury Castle at 10:45am	16
Mon 30 Jan	Mobile Library 2:00pm to 2:15pm	
Fri 3 Feb	Pen Pub Night 7:30pm Village Hall	
Wed 8 Feb	History Society at Pen Mill Farm - American Revolution	
Thur 9 Feb	Village Walk at Pen Hill at 10:45am	16
Mon 27 Feb	Mobile Library 2:00pm to 2:15pm	
Wed 8 Mar	Village Walk at 9:30am start to be confirmed	16

The Pen Paper is the community newsletter of the parish of Pen Selwood containing news about St Michaels Church, Parish Council matters and other community activities. Contributions for the next issue should be submitted by 15 Feb 2017 to Geoff Parcell at Manor Barn or email: ourpenselwood@gmail.com. Items can be handwritten, typed or sent by email. The next issue will be published in March 2017.