

SOULBURY NEWSLETTER



February 2003

No: 313

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The December meeting seems a long time ago now but a few items are still worthy of note.

County Councillor Mrs Brenda Jennings has generously agreed to apply for part of her community fund to be allocated to Soulbury to be spent on a basketball post. The council agreed to look into the cost of laying a tarmac surface for this post as well as a netball post. Councillor Mrs Liz Miller was asked to investigate costs and other possible funding.

Progress was also reported on a local problem caused by vehicles illegally driving across The Green. The northern end of the service road up to Dean Farm Lane has always had some rather unsightly metal posts to keep traffic to the road, but these are rapidly deteriorating now and need replacing. It was agreed to position ten new concrete posts such that cars could not exit from the service road onto The Green and also to discourage access from Dean Farm Lane.

CHURCH NEWS

The church now has three new helpers who will help serve during the Sunday service. Becky, Jade and Georgina will be dressed in purple robes and will sit in the choir stalls. These

young ladies will be a welcome addition to our Sunday services.

Work on the kitchen and toilets inside the church have begun, thanks to Mr R. Onslow and Mr D. Axtell-Powell. We look forward to the day we will be able to make use of these excellent facilities.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE HOUSE, AYLESBURY VALE HOSPICE AT STOKE MANDEVILLE

“Soulbury’s Bygone Days”

A fund raising night will be held in the Clubroom to support the work of Florence Nightingale House on Saturday 8th March.

You are invited to come along and enjoy an evening viewing some village memorabilia and listening to some tales of days gone by, whilst partaking of a hot meal and maybe joining in a quiz. Ticket £6 each available from Liz Miller 270545. If anyone has anything suitable for display Miss Daphne Booth would be pleased to hear from you 270322. Please bring your own drink.

UPDATE FROM ESTHER MARTIN IN CAMBODIA

Bon Om Touk, as the Water Festival is known in Cambodia, is held in the middle of November, coinciding with the

full moon on the Buddhist calendar month of Kadeuk: a time of religious significance. It also marks a unique natural phenomenon. The Tonle Sap River – upon which the festival takes place – reverses its current: this is due to the build up of monsoon rains in the Mekong flooding down stream and up the Tonle Sap, a tributary of the Mekong. The water finally drains into Lake Tonle Sap near Angkor Wat at the river’s head. This is the only major waterway in the world to reverse its direction of current.

Upwards of 1.3 million people stream into the capitol of Phnom Penh to see the festival, bringing along with them street vendors of every description. The riverside becomes full with the brightly clothed people and their children who have come to watch the races and other entertainments.

The boats, of which there are several hundreds, are long and narrow; each with a crew of between 20 to 80 oarsmen all dressed in the same coloured caps and t-shirts. Sometimes there is an all female crew, and occasionally a mixed one. The rowers in the front half of the boat sit with those behind standing, each with an oar on alternate sides. The boats, which lie low in the water, are highly

decorated with intricate patterns including dragons and serpents in bright paint-work of red, gold, green and blue. Some may have a man or woman in traditional dress standing in the prow as a figurehead.

The finishing line is in front of the Royal Palace where an elaborate grandstand is erected for the officials and commentators. Two enormous barges are moored there, each with high towers supporting national emblems which become illuminated at night and then are towed up and down river. On these barges are men frantically blowing whistles and shouting, trying desperately to get everything underway on time.

The river is fast flowing with the floodwater and it is hard work to row up to the starting positions against the current. There are boats going in every direction, looking to the ignorant observer like chaos, however at about one-o'clock the races begin. The boats race frantically upstream with current, the crowds shouting wildly for their team.

The vendors on the riverside can sell you everything you could possibly imagine in the way of food: little cooking pots are set up everywhere with rice, chicken, bananas, and all manner of seafood cooked while you wait. Baskets offering crispy cockroaches, frogs, silkworms and spiders to eat if you feel your stomach can cope with them. There are so many types of fruit to choose from, bananas, mango, pineapple, and pomelos to name those few that I can, but there are many more that I cannot. To drink, you can buy canned soft drinks, bottled water, Cambodian brightly coloured drinks in plastic bags with a straw,

crushed sugarcane, and finally, fresh coconut milk from a coconut prepared while you wait. Boys will sell you balloons, sunglasses, watches, and jewellery, while ethnic Cambodians from the northern provinces with traditional remedies, sell bones, bits of animal, snake skin, and even a crocodile skull to cure what may ail you. Mixing with the aromas: the din from speakers, playing very loud Cambodian pop music, and blind men with small children leading them around, playing drums and a violin type instrument, all adding to the cacophony that surrounds the spectators.

As evening approaches on the third day of the festival there are so many people at the riverside it becomes difficult to walk along and see what is happening. Fortunately, I have a friend living in an apartment which overlooks the river, and so I was able to see the last of the races along with other friends who were invited. After the final results were announced, all the boats drifted together upstream with the current, an unforgettable sight in the fading light of the day. As the darkness deepened, the sound of traditional music played on wooden xylophones floated up to us: the barges lit up, and were pulled up and down the river front. The whole festival ended in a huge firework display which lasted at least half an hour.

As we walked in the hot night through the crowds of people going home, I reflected on the day of festivities and remarkable sights, pleased to have seen it all and to some extent, having joined in the celebrations: to be a part of the Cambodian culture. I am unlikely to be here to see it next year.

YOUR VOICE COUNTS
From Mrs Margaret White
ARE YOU 13 – 19YRS OLD?
Have you heard of Connexions? Young peoples conference October 2002. This was organised by Connexions, and held at Green Park, Aston Clinton. I spoke to a couple of young girls on Saturday 7th December, they managed to go to that conference and thoroughly enjoyed the day, they live at Ledbourn, which I believe is even more rural than Soulbury. If you didn't manage to get there, I have a very comprehensive report on the day. You are welcome to read this, I'm home most afternoons.

The sequel to that conference was held on 7th December at Green Park for the youth workers plus all interested in helping to give our young people a voice in the community.

We all appreciate the biggest obstacle for rural communities is TRANSPORT. Have you completed the survey forms for a Saturday bus to get us to Milton Keynes – and back late 10.30pm, so we can enjoy cinema or theatre, or any other form of recreation? The more we get the more likely it will materialise. Cannot promise anything – we shall meet in January 03.

QUIZ NIGHT
A quiz and fish and chip supper is being held on Saturday 25th January in the Clubroom. Price £7 inclusive. Please contact Margaret Rowe 270355 to reserve your tickets before 23rd Jan, 2003.

CAROL SINGING FOR
SAVE THE CHILDREN
The carol singers who braved the weather singing around the village on three days before

107 HIGH ROAD
10 308

Christmas were only able to do the top half of the village, mostly because there were not enough of them, and they were stretched for time, but managed a very creditable £125 for Save The Children Fund. Thank you to those who did turn up and for the generous contributions for the charity.

MILLENNIUM GREEN NEWS

Meeting for trustees on Thursday 30th January 2003 at 8pm in the Clubroom.

2003 DESK DIARIES

NSPCC diaries available for a small donation for those who haven't already obtained one. Please telephone Fiona on 270499.

GERTIE AUSTIN

Mrs Gertie Austin asked that all friends and relatives should be thanked for their kindnesses to her during her recent illness and hospitalisation, get well cards, good wishes and flowers. She is now back at home, doing very well, always cheerful and improving bit by bit.

MR RAY KIRK

We are pleased to hear Mr Kirk is now home from hospital, and is feeling better.

MR FREDERICK FOUNTAINE

We were very sorry to hear of the death on Christmas Day of Fred Fountaine.

Fred had lived in Soulbury or the surrounding villages all his life, coming from a farming family. He helped form the Soulbury Cricket Club in the 1950's and was a keen football supporter as well as loving his garden and a

good humoured chat. The village will miss him. We extend our sympathy to Olwen, his son and daughter, his brothers and sister, and to all his family.

IRIS AYRIS

Iris Ayris of Moorlands Road, Wing, would like to thank everyone for the lovely 80th birthday cards, "Get Well" cards and all the good wishes sent during here recent hip replacement operation. She is now out and about again and doing well.

SENIOR CITIZENS

The senior citizens from the village would like to thank the Stapleford Trust for their kind Christmas parcels and also the people who delivered them.

CARAVAN FOR SALE

Jean and Stan Morris are giving up caravanning. If anybody is interested or knows anybody who is interested in acquiring a caravan, call 01525 270577.

GARDEN MACHINERY SERVICE

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY 2003

(In the clubroom unless otherwise stated)

Saturday	Jan 25 th		Quiz and Fish and Chip Supper
Thursday	Jan 30 th	8pm	Millennium Green Trustee Meeting
Monday	Feb 3 rd and 17 th	2.00 – 2.15pm	Mobile Library – Bungalows Lay-By, High Road
		2.20 – 2.35pm	Stewkley Road Bus Stop
Tuesday	Feb 11 th	8pm	Women's Institute
Wednesday	Feb 12 th	2.30pm	Social Circle
Monday	Feb 17 th ✓	8pm	Parish Council Meeting
Thursday	Jan 23 rd		A.V.D.C. Waste paper & recycling collection
Thursday	Feb 6 th and 20 th ✓		A.V.D.C. Waste paper & recycling collection
Wednesday	Feb 19 th ✓	7.45pm	Women's Fellowship at 7 Chapel Hill
Saturday	Feb 15 th	8pm	Cricket Club Race Night

DIARY DATES

Saturday	March 8 th	Florence Nightingale House. Fund Raiser
Monday	March 20 th	P.C. Meeting at 8pm
Friday	April 4 th	Lions Club Race Night
Saturday	April 26 th	W.I. St. Georges Night

ALL SAINTS CHURCH SERVICES

Vicar: Rev. Norman Cotton, The Vicarage, Stewkley - Tel 240287
Curate: Rev. Peter Lymbery, 17 Hartwell Crescent, Leighton Buzzard - Tel 371235

Every Sunday		11.30am	Sung Eucharist

Items for next issue by 19th February 2003 to: Mrs Miller 270545, Mrs Bunyan 270461, Mrs Norman 270483, Mrs Fairbairn 270674, or Debbie@dbegroup.co.uk