

THE WISTOW WARBLER

Wistow village web-site: www.wistovillage.info

THE WISTOW VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2007

DOG POO BAGS

I have been asked by several people to appeal to dog walkers to please take home their bags of dog poo rather than leave them by the side of the paths. This problem affects a number of the footpaths used by dog walkers. One public-spirited villager recently went out with a bin bag to pick up the poo bags and retrieved no less than 14!

WISTOW CRICKET TOURNAMENT 2007

Sunday 9th September thankfully dawned warm and sunny to herald another full day of very enjoyable cricket at Porch House Field.

The under 12s started off in the morning with the boys team, the Musketeers, beating the girls team, the Super Bunnies, to take the junior trophy. Thanks to Dickie Hunwin and Steve Jenkins for organising. Unfortunately numbers were once again low; it would be nice to see a good turnout next year for this junior event.

The senior tournament started in the afternoon with two semi finals; the Wist Indies, captained by Jason Short, beat the MacInnes Invitational, and the Wistow Warriors, captained by Andrew Harding, beat the Wistow Wannabies, led by Paul Barker. The Wist Indies then won in the final in an exciting match that went to the last over.

Congratulations to the captains and all their players for providing excellent entertainment in matches always played in the best of spirit. In spite of several good batting and bowling performances the Player of the Tournament award, nominated by the captains, went to Oliver Jenkins; although by far the youngest player on the park his enthusiasm and all round performance was most impressive. He could also have won the best turned out player as well; well done Oliver.

The setting for the event was delightful and the field was at its most picturesque, helped by the lovely weather. As always sincere thanks go to Patsy and Richard Coles for preparing and allowing the use of their field, and also to Andrew Harding for his hard work in helping to prepare the wicket and for providing much of the equipment.

News from the Police

We have a new Police Community Support Officer looking after Wistow. His name is Marc Robinson (phone 08454 564564 ext 2985) and he is looking forward to working with residents to prevent crime in our village.

Although crime is very low in Wistow, there have been two thefts reported recently; hanging baskets from the bus shelter, and some lead plant pots. Apparently, theft of lead and other metals is unfortunately on the increase, and Cambridgeshire police have a county-wide objective to reduce this particular type of crime. Marc asks residents to be vigilant and to report any crime, however small, to the police.

IMMINENT CHANGES TO OUR LOCAL COUNTRYSIDE

As I'm sure many of you will know, John Bance, of Chestnuts Farm, has sold a considerable area of his farmland around the village. The sale was completed at the beginning of October, with the farm machinery and equipment being disposed of in a sale a week or so later.

This is very much the end of an era. John has been farming 640 acres around the village since 1949, initially in partnership but as sole owner since 1953. Over this time there have been many changes to the village and to farming.

When John first arrived, Wistow was blessed with three pubs, the Plough and the Fleurs de Lis still being open. Farming was largely done by manual labour, with 18 men employed looking after cereal and vegetable cultivation, and also a dairy herd. In the years since then, the main changes identified by John have been the introduction of improved breeds of cereals giving much higher yields, the introduction of pesticides and fertilizers, and, most dramatic, the advent of high levels of automation leading to a significant reduction in the number of people employed on the land.

In his younger days John was an accomplished sportsman and played rugby union at the highest levels and, as a second row forward, represented Cambridge University, Bedford and East Midlands. His playing career reached its pinnacle when he represented England in a 13 – 0 victory over Scotland at Murrayfield as they went on to win the Triple Crown.

The land being sold involves something in excess of 500 acres, with around 120 acres being retained with a view to letting. The sale has come about as John and Cynthia have decided that they now want to start taking things a bit more easily, and I'm sure you'll join me in wishing John and Cynthia a long and happy life of relative leisure. It'll seem strange no longer seeing John whizzing up and down Mill Road at harvest time.

The land has been bought by Laurits Larsen, a Dane who already has operations in Denmark, Poland, France and South Africa, and who has been looking to move into the UK for three years or so. His plan is to use the land to grow Christmas trees to supply the UK market, a market he already supplies from the continent. Savilles will act as land agents on his behalf.

The Christmas trees are grown on a nine year cycle and are cut when they reach about 7 feet high. The intention is to start planting a parcel of the land in October

2008, probably down along the Broughton footpath, and thereafter further parcels in autumn each year until 2014 when it will be fully given over to trees. In the meantime, the land still not being utilised for trees will be farmed, under contract, by Richard Blackhurst.

Obviously this means that the landscape is gradually going to change, hopefully in a positive way, as tree farming is more environmentally friendly than agriculture and we should be able to look forward to an increase in our local wildlife. There is also the possibility that additional footpaths may be created which would be an additional benefit to the village.

WISTOW IN BLOOM

As you know from Pam's newsletter, Wistow won a Silver award and also the award for Most Improved Entry in the Anglia in Bloom competition. Well done to everyone who played their part in any way, however small. In addition to the points mentioned by Pam, the judges made a number of other points. These included; praise for the lovely gardens in Oaklands Close, the various tubs around the village with sponsors' names, and also the fact that we were producing a newsletter to keep people informed.

Amongst their suggestions for the future they mentioned: enhancing the village entrance displays, replacing dead trees, and also the idea of more conservation areas.

Let's now build on what has been achieved in a fairly short period of time and keep up the momentum. The more people that participate the more pleasant our village is for everyone to enjoy, not just for getting awards in competitions. Additional members on the organising committee would also be very welcome; please phone Pam on 824725 if you'd like to be involved.

CHURCH FLAGPOLE NOW HAS A FLAG

You'll have noticed that the new flagpole in the churchyard now also has a new flag. The flag is a cross of St George and has been supplied by Tony Bish, who also added the arms of the Diocese of Ely in the top corner. It is intended that this flag will fly

permanently, except on special occasions when it will be replaced by the Union Jack.

Ronnie Sansum, who supplied and fitted the flagpole, has provided the Union Jack and also an additional St George's cross flag which will be available once it has the Diocese arms added.

WALKING HOLIDAYS IN MENORCA

During September, Denise and I went with some friends on a walking holiday in Menorca, and we enjoyed it so much I thought I'd share it with you.

The holidays are organised by John and Carolyn Devine who are ex-pat Brits living in Menorca. The holidays are a week in duration, and walks are arranged on five of those days, each walk being between six and eight miles long and ending with a slap-up lunch at a different restaurant each day. The walks are guided at a sensible pace, and water (and tea and biscuits!) are laid on en-route.

Most of the people who go on these holidays are aged between 40 and 65, although we had one or two 70 year olds in our group. We stayed in a small hotel in Fornells, which is a lovely picturesque fishing village. We also extended our holiday by two days at both beginning and end, and I would recommend you do this so you can see a bit more of the island.

To find out more, their website is www.menorcawalkingholidays.com, or have a word with Denise or me. You could also ask John and Judy Wiltshire, at The Shieling, who went on the same holiday last year and also enjoyed it very much.

LATEST NEWS FROM THE THREE HORSESHOES

The quiz night started up again in September and was very well supported, with £72 being raised for Cancer Research. Remember, the quizzes are held on the last Wednesday of each

month, so let's have even more people at the next one on 31st October. All those who came to the last one and enjoyed it, why not bring along some friends next time.

Please note that the day of the draw for the meat raffle, also in aid of Cancer Research, has changed; the draws are now on Sundays at 1.00 pm.

On Thursday 22nd November at 8.00 pm, yet again in aid of Cancer Research, a VIRGIN VIE make-up and jewellery party is being held. Everybody welcome.

Here are the pub opening times over the Christmas and New Year periods:-

24th December; bar 12-3 and 6-late, restaurant 12-2 and 6-8.30

25th December; bar 12-3, restaurant 1.00 onwards (bookings only)

26th December; bar 12-6, restaurant 12-3

27th – 30th December; normal times

31st December; bar, 12-3 and 6-late, restaurant 12-2 and 6-8.30

1st January; bar, 12-6, restaurant 12-3

Incidentally, did you know that the Three Horseshoes is now listed in CAMRA's 2008 Good Beer Guide? This follows unannounced incognito visits by CAMRA inspectors who are looking for pubs that not only serve a good pint of real ale, but also provide a pleasant all-round ambience. Well done Gerry and Julia.

Forthcoming Events - Dates for your Diaries for the rest of 2007

Thursday 22nd November, 8.00 pm at the Three Horseshoes - a VIRGIN VIE make-up and jewellery party in support of Cancer Research