

THE WISTOW WARBLER

Wistow village web-site: www.wistovvillage.info

THE WISTOW VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2008

SPONSORED SKYDIVE

Keiranne and Kerrie MacInnes finally took off on their sponsored skydive on Sunday 8th June into beautiful clear blue skies after it was twice postponed due to strong winds and heavy cloud. They are delighted to report that, once all sponsorship money is in, they will have raised around £1,500 for the Neurological Critical Care Unit at Addenbrooke's Hospital. The MacInnes family would like to thank everyone in the village who contributed to this fund.

Many of you will be aware that Gordon is up and about and making steady progress and he would like to thank everyone for their support and good wishes.

WISTOW FUN WEEKEND

The Fun Weekend got off to a promising start on Saturday 12th July with the Music Evening and the weather stayed fine for another enjoyable evening. Clearly rhythm & blues is a firm favourite as the BJs and On Route returned for a second year by popular demand. Lots of people were soon on their feet and what a pleasure to see Gordon MacInnes dancing after such a difficult year; some work to do on style, Gordon, but top marks for courage and determination.

The weather was almost perfect for the Sports Day on the Sunday and the usual round of events kept a good turnout occupied for the afternoon. As always the sports events were hotly contested and Jean Duke was hard pressed to keep up with the demand from eager young winners for their certificates.

A new element was tried this year, the Competition Tent, with sections for best cake, jam, Wistow photograph and amusing vegetable. Also, Wistow in Bloom organized a miniature garden competition for the children. There were good entries in all sections, particularly a high number of miniature gardens all of a very high standard.

A highlight of the afternoon was Barry Parker volunteering for a session in the stocks with the challenge to raise £100 and a generous offer to make up any shortfall. Needless to say the opportunity to chuck wet sponges at Barry was too great to resist and he emerged very wet but with his wallet intact. Well done Barry for being such a good sport.

The Village Hall Committee is very grateful to all the many people who gave their time and help to set up and run the Fun Weekend, to all those who took part in the events and competitions, and to all those who came along. Without this support, and that of Patsy and Richard Coles who always give so generously of their time in preparing their field, these events would not be possible.

Congratulations to all the worthy winners as follows: Flower Pot Man – Jeanie & Alan Pearson, "Two Drunks and a Dog", runner up the Cox family, "Beach Scene"; Cakes – Jeanette Roper; Jam – Sally Wilson; Wistow Photograph – Heather Stewart; Amusing Vegetable – Jeanette Roper; Miniature Garden – Annie Roper; Skimmers – Olive Parkinson, under 14s Antonio Fiore; Egg Throwing – adult Oliver Reed/Gregor MacInnes (71.84 m), under 14 boys Marco & Antonio Fiore, under 14 girls Kayleigh Hunwin/Molly White; Penalty Shoot-out – 11 to 16 Christopher Newton, under 11 Oliver Jenkins.

WISTOW PARISH CLERK VACANCY

Because of other commitments the current Parish Clerk, David Titmarsh, is having to relinquish his position as Parish Clerk as soon as someone suitable is able to take over.

The position pays currently £8.04 per hour plus any expenses incurred. Parish Council meetings are generally held on the last Tuesday evening of each month (except December), where the Clerk's responsibilities include taking full minutes, actioning anything necessary from these meetings, and circulating the minutes around the

7 Councillors. The Clerk is also responsible for receiving and circulating any Parish Council correspondence in between meetings.

Anyone interested in this position should contact the current Clerk, David Titmarsh, at Taycroft, Mill Road, telephone 822517, or email dave.titmarsh@btopenworld.com for more information.

WISTOW BRIDGE

As you may be aware, Cambridgeshire County Council have been looking at Wistow bridge as a result of concerns about its long term safety. To date, as far as I am aware, they have not clearly stated precisely what the problem with the bridge is but they have, none the less, come up with some solution options.

At the last meeting of the Parish Council in June, Stephen McGee, from Cambridgeshire County Council, and another man from Atkins Ltd, a Bridge contractor, attended and talked over three possible options. They have also talked to English Heritage and the Environment Agency about these proposals, but nothing has been decided yet.

The options being considered are:-

- To build a new bridge alongside the existing bridge, and to make the existing bridge pedestrian only.
- To build a new structure over the existing bridge.
- To strengthen the existing bridge and to clear some foliage from the area, maybe involving purchasing some land, to improve visibility from both directions, and to make the bridge single track (ie a one-way traffic system). Apparently traffic calming measures in this area could also be considered.

But still no final decision has been made. Stephen McGee agreed to expand on these options and to then present them to a Public Open Meeting in the village at a date yet to be fixed. When this meeting has been fixed I hope as many villagers as possible will be able to attend, and in particular will quiz the County Council about precisely what the problem is with the bridge that makes such dramatic action necessary in the first place.

PLANNED NEW VILLAGE SIGN

Following the publication of the Parish Plan in 2005, a committee of volunteers was set up to organize the design and erection of a village sign, in pursuit of Action Point 15 of the plan. After much debate, a design for the sign has now been developed by the committee.

The design incorporates many elements key to the village, such as the church, together with the traditional farming background and rural nature of the village. While the village has a long history, the sign also tries to incorporate a modern feel; looking forward to the future whilst recognizing its heritage.

Funding is still being sought for this project but, once funds are found, it is proposed to erect the sign on the green in front of Lodes Cottage at the junction of Bridge Street and Manor Street.

If anyone has any queries or comments, please contact Richard Farrar on 822444. An artist's impression of the design of the sign is shown below.



WISTOW MEN'S ALTERNATIVE TO THE WI

Meetings of the Men's Club are held at the Three Horse Shoes on the second Wednesday of each month starting around 7.30 pm. - which, coincidentally, is in line with the timing of WI meetings. This is completely informal with no membership fees.

So why not escape for a few hours while the going is good and do a few blokey things at the pub; drink beer, play games, debate issues, spout off a few opinions, etc. Belly dancing and weaving classes are unlikely to feature. For more information call Clive Williams on 823576.

Wistow Historical Society

A Historical Society has been formed with a view to researching and documenting the history of our village going as far back as possible, maybe even to Roman times. Meetings take place on a regular basis with three having been held so far. The intention is to document Wistow's history in chronological sequence and there is already a fair amount of documentation going back as far as the 900s.

At the moment there are three themes being worked on – pre-history, Roman, and Anglo-Saxon/Viking. There are hints that there was Roman occupation in or near Wistow, and that a Viking battle may have taken place in the area. Who knows what interesting facts may come to light.

If you would like to get involved in the group, or have information about Wistow's past, then please contact Richard Farrar on 822444

HISTORY OF WISTOW – THE LOST PUBS

This is the fourth article in a series about the history of our village

Today, Wistow is a small village with The Three Horseshoes its only surviving pub. However, at one time, Wistow was home to up to seven pubs, which is even more incredible when you consider that in the past the population of the village was considerably less than it is today.

The Fleur de Lis (now spelt Fleur de Lys) directly facing Bridge Street was serving drinks into the 1950s. The present building was built around 1860 and originally had stabling and was used for storing the village hearse. It stands on the site of an earlier pub called The Cross Keys which is believed to have burned down.

The Chequers in Church Street, now called The Cottage, was acquired by the Falcon Brewery of Huntingdon in 1899 and ceased trading in the early 1930s.

The Old Plough, on the corner of Church Street and Bridge Street, ceased to be a pub in the early 1950s but still retains some interesting physical features. It had a gate leading to the one-time

village bowling green, and was also home to an unusual local version of the game of skittles.

Two further pubs about which little information is available were The Oddfellows, just below the old post office in Bridge Street, and Toll Farm at Wistow Toll which used to be a pub called The Exhibition.

Lastly there was Uncle Tom's Cabin, now called Ross House, next to Fleur de Lys. This was trading as a pub in the 1890s and was subsequently used as a butchers.

Given these numerous opportunities for wetting ones whistle, one can only surmise that agricultural work was an extremely thirsty business, and you wonder how straight the furrows were!

Extracted from the booklet produced by Mac Simpson, to whom many thanks

PLEASE REPORT VANDALISM

If you witness any acts of vandalism being perpetrated in or around the village, the Parish Council requests that everyone please report them as soon as possible to both the Police and to the Parish Council.

If the appropriate authorities aren't informed of such events, or don't have sufficient evidence, then no suitable action can be taken; so, please, help us all to keep our village a safe and pleasant place by remaining vigilant.

Forthcoming Events - Dates for your Diaries for 2008

Thursday 28th August - Cancer Research Coffee Morning, 10.30 – 12.00, Pound House, Parsonage Street

Sunday 7th September – Cricket Tournament, Porch House Field