



Withycombe and Rodhuish Newsletter

April 2019

THE RIVER PILL

Rising on Monkslade Common at an elevation of 275 metres, the Pill River flows gently north easterly through Rodhuish to Bilbrook, through the Ford to Black Monkey Lane, and then beneath the West Somerset Railway to Binham Farm, and then Home Farm, before flowing beneath Pill Bridge to reach the sea at Blue Anchor - a total distance of approximately 3 miles.

When I came to live in Rodhuish 52 years ago I soon realised how important our little stream had been in the past. With no electricity the stream was the main source of power for the farm: - the Water wheel in the old Mill was driven by water from the Mill Pond in Millway (used as a swimming pool for many children), controlled by the Sluice Gate. The Mill was used to hoist 2 cwt sacks of corn into the loft before grinding the grain for the stock. It was also used to drive the Shearing Tackle, with the sheep penned up in the small pens on either side. Further downstream the river was also used to drive the Wheelwright at Lower Rodhuish and several other Mills between here and the sea.



The outfall of the Pill River at Blue Anchor

The pace of life was so much slower then, but so reliant on the environment - no electric switches like today!

Jennifer Thomas

The Bumble Bus

The Bumble Bus is Somerset's Mobile Chemotherapy Unit (MCU) owned by the charity Hope for Tomorrow and operated by Taunton and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust to bring cancer care closer to patients' homes. Over the past 7 years Bumble has administered more than 8000 treatments, saving patients over 364000 miles of travel and 32000 hours of travel and waiting time.

For more information visit www.hopefortomorrow.org.uk

The Flight of the Bumble Band

I am playing my saxophone in 2 concerts in the afternoon and evening of Saturday 13th July 2019 called the Flight of the Bumble Band at the Regal Theatre, Minehead. These 2 concerts are led by Bev Trimmings, my saxophone teacher, to raise money towards the upkeep of our local Mobile Chemotherapy Unit, Bumble.

Coffee Morning

Each band member is being asked to raise £198 sponsorship. This is how much it costs each day to keep Bumble 'on the road'. So, as well as asking people to sponsor me, I am holding a Coffee Morning on Saturday, 18th May, from 10-12 at Foxwarren, West Street, Withycombe. Please put this date in your diary and come along.

Albert Vickery
(9years)



Withycombe Memorial Hall

Withycombe Memorial Hall Committee Changes

At the up and coming AGM a new chairperson will be elected. Having been in post for two years it is time to hand the reins over to a new person. I would like to thank the villagers for all their support over the past two years and I would especially like to thank the committee members. Without their dedicated hard voluntary work we would not have such a wonderful facility. A very special mention for Teresa Flynn who is retiring as secretary and has given a huge amount of time and amazing support over many years.

Looking to the future we can hope that we may yet get that sorely needed carpark in Titholes and this will be a big asset to the village as well as enhancing the function of the hall.

You are all very welcome to our AGM whether or not you wish to be on the committee or be more actively involved in any way.

Thank you again for your support

Anne Rivett

Withycombe Memorial Hall dates for your diaries

WMH committee AGM 10th April 7pm. All welcome.

Parish Assembly 17th April 6.30pm Withycombe Memorial Hall.

Bluebell Wood walk and Cream teas served in the hall 28th April 2pm to 5pm. To include a Craft Stall and a Book Stall for which we already have enough contributions but any of your spare plants would be gratefully received, on the day, by Aileen who is running the Plant Stall.

Gardens Open Saturday 22nd June - contact Chris, see details in poster on next page.

Wheelchair

The family of John Nicholas, who died last year, asked that any monies collected after his funeral should be donated to Withycombe Wheels, the Community Car Scheme for Withycombe and Rodhuish. It was decided to use the money to buy a wheelchair. One has been purchased. It is lightweight and can be folded to put in the boot of a car. If anyone wishes to borrow it for a short period please contact Jean Humber - 01984 640983 - jeanhumber@btopenworld.com

Hall bookings/enquiries: David Tilley 01984 641231

Regular activities in Memorial Hall

Daytime

Evening

Monday

Table tennis
Contact: Bob/Anne Rivett
01984 641656

Tuesday

Wednesday

Active living
(twice a month)
Contact: Roger Hurst
01984 640060

Snooker
Contact: Graham Burnett
01984 640946

Thursday

Pilates
Contact: Fiona Pascall
07711 296116

Short mat bowls
Contact: Mike Burnett
01643 822301

Friday



"Do we really have to continue tolerating these incredible monster HGVs ploughing through Withycombe and damaging residents' properties?"
Maggie Rutty

Memorial Hall Committee

Current committee members are:

Anne Rivett (Chairman), Teresa Flynn (Secretary), Judith Blathwayt, Richard Barnham (Treasurer), Chris Adams, Audrey Bateman, Fiona Chamberlain, Dave Maynard, Bob Rivett, Anthony Shopland, Liz Steadman, Judith Tilley, Carol Wheeler.

Our meetings are open and minutes are posted on the noticeboard at the front of the Memorial Hall.

If you would like to help in any way please contact one of the committee members (telephone numbers on hall noticeboard).

GARDENS OPEN DAY

The Withycombe Memorial Hall Committee is once again organising a Gardens Open Day with Cream Teas this summer.

Several residents approached us after our last event, expressing their disappointment that they had not been asked to take part. Therefore, we are looking to add some new addresses to our list.

No garden is too big or too small, too formal or too informal!!

We have a lovely village and it would be wonderful to welcome visitors from both near and far to enjoy our gardens and relax afterwards with a cream tea!

The money raised will go toward essential maintenance and repairs to the Memorial Hall.

If you would be interested in opening your garden, or would like more information, please contact: CHRIS ADAMS

**Do people often comment on how nice your garden is?
Why not open it on Gardens Open Day?
22 JUNE 2019**

From the Hills

In the first or second week of April, the first swallows will return to the farm. What a long journey they will have had from Africa. If they navigate by prominent and familiar landmarks will they notice that we have had several large trees cut down? The swallows drink from the stream in front of the house, and fly low and fast up and down the garden path; but they will not nest in our open workshop and log store. Robins and Wrens nest there, but the Swallows will not. And yet they make themselves very at home in



other ways. Several times during the very hot weather last summer they swooped into the kitchen, flew around and perched on the clothes-drying rack above the stove. Studying us with their beady black eyes, seemingly unafraid, they chattered away excitedly as if this was their home and what were we doing there?

The pheasants seem to miss the trees: they wander around the garden, puzzled as to where their night-time roosts have gone. Without the tall Douglas Fir to nest in, perhaps the crows will allow us more sleep, early on summer mornings. Over the years we have grown used to them noisily attacking their own reflections in our downstairs windows; thinking them to be rivals in love. I resorted to making several oversized, cardboard, cut-out cats, painting them, and placing them in the windows each night before going to bed, ready to deter the territorial, lovesick romeos.

The trees had to come down. But I will miss the Douglas Fir and the sighing of the wind in its branches. I will miss the tangy citrus scent of its needles when nipped between fingernails, and sometimes the rare sight of a tiny Goldcrest.

But at least I can now see many more northern stars; we have more light, and more sun for drying the washing; and a new panorama of the farm orchard has opened up behind the house. I am hoping the apple blossom will be as good, and as heavy with the hum of bees, as it was last year. Often in hot and sultry weather we are visited by a swarm of bees. The beekeepers who come and fetch the bees, either in skeps or hives, have taught me such a lot and I am no longer so alarmed by the "flying chainsaw" noise of the swarm over the house.

Ben

Court Place Farm News

It's always about the weather!

My working (and leisure) life is governed by it. We rushed about in February's lovely sun planting potatoes and spring beans; they have emerged blinking in this week's even stronger sun, brave things poking through into the cold night air.

Also emerging into the open are my legs; it's shorts time on the bicycle so beware. Louise and I rode an event last Sunday all around Cheddar and the Levels, their crops are looking very well and lots of cattle and sheep in the fields, some teeny weeny lambs testing their wobbly legs understood how our legs felt at the end of 70 rapid miles.

No, the asparagus isn't ready yet! That'll be late April. If anyone fancies joining the team for the harvest please have a word with Emma or myself.



Steve Crossman

Titholes Update

On the 31st January The Crown, via Savills, submitted a variation to the original planning consent to the Planning Authority. The basis of the variation was the revised scheme for the car park, play area and activity area as presented in the Parish Council meeting of 3 September. The variation was approved by the Planning Authority on the 8 March. Savills are now seeking a start date from the contractor.

Once the site is finished the Parish Council will enter into a lease agreement with the new owner, MHPF. As a condition of the S106 the Parish Council must be offered a reasonable lease. The dwellings cannot be occupied until the Parish Council are happy with the lease offered.

The existing form of lease had 2 provisions that would have presented risks to the Parish Council:-

- 1) Repairing the access road at any time to a cost to the Parish Council, and
- 2) Onerous and unnecessary insurance risks

After many weeks of discussions between Savills and MHPF a form of lease has been agreed that is acceptable to all parties. A final check is being carried out by the Parish Council's solicitor. Any further developments will be announced at the **Annual Parish Assembly on Wednesday, 17th April, start time 6.30pm in the Memorial Hall.**

PARISH COUNCIL

Mrs Emma Wright (CHAIRMAN), 1 Crown Cottages, Withycombe, Minehead TA24 6QA
Telephone: 01984 641602 Email: burny150@gmail.com

Parish Council website:
www.withycombepc.co.uk

Parish Clerk:

Sam Rawle, 60 Paganel Road, Minehead, Somerset, TA24 5EY
Telephone: 01643 703514
Email: sam.rawle60@gmail.com

A Somerset farmer has recently been ordered to pay nearly £4000 in fines and costs for polluting a stream with contaminated water. The incident near Stoke St Gregory was picked up during a routine Environment Agency visit. Water from a roofing drain had become contaminated by silage discharge. It emptied into a watercourse within a Site of Special Scientific Interest, impacting several kilometres of watercourse.

All farmers, landowners and businesses should have measures in place to prevent pollution. However, ensuring that these measures work and continue to work is vital. Regular monitoring and testing can pick up any changes before the local environment is impacted. It can also avoid costly cleanup processes, and help avoid accusations of negligence.

Incidents over the last few years in Somerset have included costs of £4000 for a Merriot poultry farm, £9000 for a Radstock dairy farm, £18,000 for a Yeovil box company and £30,000 for a Cannington anaerobic digestion plant. Fines are unlimited and there is the risk of up to 5 years in prison. If your business creates contaminants, or you have a consent to discharge from the EA, get your equipment and processes checked and tested on a regular basis. Contact Somerset Scientific Services, part of SCC, for advice on 01823 355906 or SSSmailbox@somerset.gov.uk



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PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE A LARGEPRINT VERSION OF THIS NEWSLETTER.

Contributions to the next newsletter (including photos, drawings, poems, stories etc) can be sent or delivered to Anne Rivett, Squirrels, Lower Street. (anne.rivett@btinternet.com 01984 641656) - by 30th June please!