

# Meeting Point

**Volume 33, Number 4, January 2009**

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The community magazine for the villages of Olveston, Tockington, Old Down, Lower Hazel, Awkley, Ingst, Aust, Elberton and Littleton upon Severn

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## **From the Editor**

### **A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE**

When your Meeting Point drops through your door you will probably still be in the hurly-burly of Christmas. By contrast, January can be a time when life is a little less frantic and you can take stock and start planning for the year ahead. In my family, we used to try to get around to those indoor projects that had been put on the back burner, like decorating or sewing those curtains. These days, there is little incentive to make do and mend like we used to, since goods are so cheap, relatively speaking, and we are all encouraged to spend and borrow more. The paradox is that what is good for the economy is not good for the planet and we each have to resolve this for ourselves.

Our Village Person this month features ex-editor Dinah Spratt - now living in Tasmania. We have a couple of other people lined up for this spot but if you know of someone you think ought to be featured please let me know. Also if you know people who have moved away and would like to know what we are up to, please tell them about [www.olverston.com](http://www.olverston.com) where they will be able to read the magazine in its entirety.

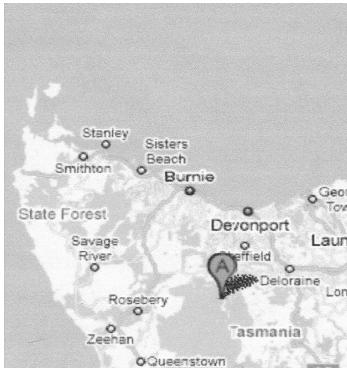
Our cover is by a young Matthew Addis  
**Meeting Point** Founded in 1976 by the Anglican and  
Methodist churches in Olveston, near Bristol

# Tales from Tasmania, Part 1

*Dinah Spratt*

As we, the Spratt family, approach our second anniversary of living on the far side of the world in Tasmania, I felt it was time to write about this beautiful state and our experiences in it.

You may know that Tassie is an Australian state. It covers an area a mere 185 miles north to south and 197 miles east to west, and is equivalent in size to the Republic of Ireland. It is situated south of the mainland and is separated from it by a stretch of water named the Bass Strait; population is less than half a million people. Two thirds of the island is made up of National Park land in the form of dolomite mountains, glacial lakes, trackless rainforests and ancient Aboriginal art sites, not to mention the wild and largely untouched beautiful coastlines. There are no motorways, only a main highway, most of which is single carriageway, no passenger railway, and the two largest 'cities', Launceston in the north, and the capital Hobart in the south have a population of only 68,000 and 200,000 respectively.



From west to east in the north, farming is in abundance. The west receives the most rainfall and is ideal for dairy farming. On travelling eastwards the soil is rich and fertile and there are tulip farms, vegetable crops, poppies (farmed for medicinal use), fruit orchards, and even vineyards. Around the coast the fishermen collect lobster, abalone and oysters, to name a few.

Heading south through the middle of the state takes you through the Midlands; a dry and barren plain, where even the merino sheep struggle to survive. Dotted amongst

this foreign landscape are delightful English villages which appear to have been plucked straight out of a Bronte's novel with their sandstone cottages, thick hedges, convict-built bridges and neatly tended orchards.

At the bottom of the state lies Hobart, Australia's second oldest city, which is situated on the broad estuary of the River Derwent, under the spell of the majestic Mount Wellington. It is surrounded by bushland and boasts prime examples of distinctive colonial architecture. The city centre is probably the most historically intact in Australia. Whole areas appear today as they would have when Hobart was a seafaring town in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The history of Tasmania dates back to 1642 when it was first sighted by a Dutchman named Abel Tasman who named it Van Diemen's Land. It wasn't until 1770, when an Englishman, James Cook, in his ship HM Barque Endeavour, charted the east coast of Australia and claimed it for the British Crown. Britain subsequently decided to use the new outpost as a colony for

convicted criminals and on 26<sup>th</sup> January 1788 a fleet of eleven ships arrived in Sydney Harbour. This First Fleet, commanded by Arthur Phillip, a captain in the Royal Navy, brought an estimated 1500 people, including 750 convicts, to the new colony.

In 1803 the British government, concerned at growing French interest in Van Diemen's Land, established a settlement (Hobart) on the River Derwent. The state became a separate colony in 1825, and for 50 years was a penal colony and an infamously brutal one at that. The historic settlement of Port Arthur was one of Australia's most infamous penal settlements from the 1830's to the 1870's.

Unfortunately, Van Diemen's Land acquired a reputation for violence and lawlessness, plagued by escaped convicts who had become bushrangers and by the notion that the indigenous inhabitants were a problem the island needed to be rid of. White settlers drove the Palawa (aboriginal people) from their hunting grounds. Following the Black War of the 1820's in which white settlers were authorised to kill Aboriginal people on sight, the government rounded up the few indigenous survivors and sent them to nearby Flinders Island. After 13 years only 47 of the original 133 sent there had survived, with most succumbing to disease and despair. The remaining few were later transferred to Oyster Bay near Hobart where the last of the group died in 1876.

Despite its chequered history, some semblance of normal society took root. Free settlers (mostly British) arrived, houses were built, communities born, and whaling, sealing, shipbuilding and wool growing industries established. After 1852 no more convicts were sent to the colony, and in 1856 the British government changed the colony's name to Tasmania.

When I arrived on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2006 with my husband Phillip and three young children in tow, I knew very little about Tasmania and its history or what our future would bring. Our only plan was to buy a dairy farm. Phillip had managed to secure a job on a dairy farm in Moriarty, which was much further east than the windy and wet dairy pastures of the north west. In fact this farm was the only dairy farm in the area, surrounded by a landscape of poppies and vegetables.

We moved into a house on the farm, just us and four suitcases, and settled in to our new life. The children took it all in their stride, despite the fact that everyone spoke funny and all our belongings were on a container ship somewhere in the ocean.

Emily and Jesse started their new school only two weeks before the end of the school year, at the local primary, which had a total of 75 pupils and whose head teacher was a bright and charming man with long hair, earrings and a winning smile. They were welcomed by the other children with open arms, and before long were even picking up the Aussie lingo...

*Many of you know that Dinah used to edit Meeting Point from 2003-2005. We hope to publish part 2 of this fascinating article in February MP. - Ed.*

# Workaid

*Pat Thirkettle*

To all those who donated typewriters, tools, sewing machines, material and haberdashery recently, a big thank you. It was suggested that you might like to know what happens after your gifts leave the area.

Workaid tackles poverty by providing disadvantaged people with the tools they need to earn a living and build better lives for themselves. The idea grew from a Christian home group in 1986 who wanted to do something practical; but Workaid helps people of all faiths and none.

Collecting from you is the first step in a long journey that will usually end up at a village in East Africa. When we have a sizable load, a van comes from Amersham in Buckinghamshire to transport it to their workshop. There a dedicated team of retired men and some disabled workers refurbish everything into good working order.

Meanwhile in each receiving country there will be a coordinator, usually a pastor, who will have links through local churches to people and groups needing specific tools - maybe widows with no income, who with a sewing machine can start a small dressmaking business, or an orphanage where donated carpentry tools will enable them to make small items of furniture for sale. When sufficient projects in one country have been approved, the equipment is loaded into containers and transported by sea to Mombasa. Recent fighting in Kenya made roads unsafe and containers were held back, but mercifully they are now on their way again.

Transport costs are huge, but Workaid has received generous help from many sources. Sometimes a smaller identified need requires air transport and often it will be free of charge. On the home front, Workaid recycles around 60 tonnes of tools and equipment each year which would otherwise end up in landfill sites.

If you have since remembered anything in the loft, or the back of the garage, that you would like to donate, please ring Pat Thirkettle, 612084, or Derek Glew, 613433.

## Olveston School News

### **Chinese Musical Extravaganza!**

On Wednesday 15th October, we were pleased to welcome Andy Warne back into school for another international music workshop. Last year the whole school took part in a Samba drumming workshop and performed to parents and children at the end of the day. Fun was had by all as part of International Week.

Mr Warne has been working on a new Chinese workshop that he would like to take on tour in primary schools and wanted to test it out with us! Year 2 and Year 5 children enjoyed learning about the music and culture of China.



The workshop began with children putting on red headbands and getting into character. They watched a Chinese festival procession and saw the Chinese dragons in action. They were then very excited to be able to create a dance using real dragon costumes.

This really was a wonderful workshop and the children gave a huge 'thumbs up' to Mr Warne. Will from Year 2 said, 'That was the best thing I've ever done!' We would like to say 'thank you' to Mr Warne for the opportunity to try this new workshop.

### **Bonjour mes amis!**

An exciting opportunity has arisen for the Year 5 class to take part in a 'blogging project' along with eleven other schools in South Gloucestershire. They will be paired with a French Canadian school and will be exchanging news, photos and videos on a secure internet platform called 'merlin'. We are sure that Year 5 will keep us informed as this project develops – so watch this space! Bonne chance, year 5!

Although Modern Foreign Languages does not become a statutory requirement until September 2010, Olveston School children are already enjoying regular French lessons. We know many of our families visit France for a holiday and hope that our children will be able to demonstrate the skills learnt so far!

## **A Community Play for Thornbury and Surrounding Area**



There is nothing quite like a play for drawing together people of all ages, skills, and experiences. When Barbie Davies produced the *Thornbury Plays* for the Millennium, 1000 people became involved and around 2000 people came to witness them. She is at the

helm once again and, on behalf of **ACT**, would like to issue an invitation to all local people to join in this Community adventure.

Under Barbie's guidance, a production of *The Wigan Girls* is to be staged at Thornbury Leisure Centre from **Tuesday 7 to Friday 10 July, 2009**, so

everyone can get involved before taking their summer holidays! This is a wonderful 'home grown' musical which started life as an 'A' Level exam piece and was then expanded by Janet Halfyard, now a Senior Academic at The Birmingham Conservatoire. It was orchestrated by Nigel Davies and directed by Barbie at Marlwood School in 1989 and offers hundreds of opportunities for straight acting, singing and or dancing in every sized part possible, whether you are 6 or 86! The music is a glorious mixture of traditional folk, Victoriana and modern, needing a large orchestra to accompany the 300 strong cast. Also, for such a large venture, we shall need backstage help of every kind; secretarial, floral art, photography, refreshments and publicity to name a few!

*The Wigan Girls* traces the fight for work and dignity by the coal pit brow lasses of Wigan, championed by social researcher Arthur Munby, and how their plight and fight became a beacon for improving the rights and conditions of many manual labourers of the era. The story shows the divisions between North and South, rich and poor, plus men and women, in a script with music full of grit, humour and poignancy, enhanced by stunning images of the original women and the working conditions of the poor.

Rehearsals and backstage sessions for this exciting venture will be carefully scheduled to facilitate minimum demands on people's time, with adults mainly needed on Sunday afternoons and evenings and children after school or early evening on Mondays. Full registration will be in the second week of February, but **all** are invited to a public meeting at Turnberrie's Community Building on **Sunday 25 January** from **8.15pm. – 9.30pm**, or register your interest to: [ruthpiolle@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:ruthpiolle@tiscali.co.uk) or post your details to 5 St. John Street, Thornbury.

## Tai Chi

*Malcolm Scott*

After the excesses of Christmas and the New Year why not try some gentle exercise?

*Tai Chi* is a simple exercise, which can be beneficial to everyone, old and young alike. Taking the established wisdom of the Chinese over four centuries, the techniques of *Tai Chi* seek to establish a balanced and relaxed body structure. Many people suffer from poor posture and could benefit from an increased awareness of their body. *Tai Chi* exercises aim to redress the imbalances by improving the co-ordination and structure of the body. You may not lose too many pounds but you will improve your posture and balance, meet new friends and have fun. *Tai Chi* is also recommended by physiotherapists for anyone with skeletal or joint problems.

Classes are held on Thursday mornings at the Chantry and on Monday evenings at Christ the King school in Thornbury.

For more details ring Malcolm on 614016 or Derry on 612960 or visit [www.bristoltaichi.com](http://www.bristoltaichi.com)

# Kumon Thornbury - free trial

Kumon Educational is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year and to mark this momentous event we are delighted to be offering a complimentary two-week taster of Kumon to families in the Thornbury area.

The Thornbury Kumon Centre has supported hundreds of local children over the years and is pleased to be opening its doors to all students and their parents during January and February to see for themselves what Kumon offers through its maths and English after-school programmes. Please contact Trina Taylor on 01454 281037, or email [thornbury@kumoncentre.co.uk](mailto:thornbury@kumoncentre.co.uk)

Website: [www.kumon.co.uk](http://www.kumon.co.uk)

## Passion Play at Oberammergau



I am intending to organise a trip to see the Passion Play in June or July 2010 – this of course will really be a 'holiday of a lifetime'. Cost will be about £950 – if you are interested please phone now – if sufficient people make contact, there will be an initial meeting.

*Dan Evans – phone 625313.*

## Burns Night and all that

*Roly Bain*

A busy weekend is to be had at St Mary's on Saturday and Sunday, January 24th - 25th. On the Saturday night, there's the now annual Burns Night Celebration at Olveston Vicarage, where haggis, neeps and tatties are served. A piper will pipe in the haggis, which will then be suitably addressed. As ever, there will be a chance to taste wine as well as whisky, and there's bound to be some test of your Scottish knowledge! It's not been a ticketed event before but this year tickets will be £5, available from Roly Bain, June Robbins or Olveston Stores, and it will be in aid of the Appeal. It starts at 7.30pm. Then on Sunday we're having a joint communion service with Tockington and Olveston Methodist churches to mark the week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The Revd Roger Ducker is preaching, and he and the Revd David Bone will co-celebrate.

# It's finished and open!



On Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> November, the Scout Hut on Old Down Hill was officially declared open – hurray! The hut looked amazing, having been decorated with an archway of green and purple balloons around the doorway where a ribbon was stretched, waiting to be cut. After a blessing by representatives from our local churches, the ribbon was cut by a group representing the Scouting movement in Olveston – past, present and future. The hut doors were opened up and all the people who had come to join us on this great day were invited in.

We were delighted that so many people came: individuals who had been involved in the re-build of the hut, fund raisers, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers, district scouting officials, ex-scouts, parents, villagers, local and parish councillors and our MP all came to see the completed project and enjoyed a celebratory drink and mince pie.

Over £100,000 has been fundraised or donated towards completing the hut and many local people have given up a lot of their time to make this day happen. My thanks go to all of you who have contributed, be it financially or otherwise. This is evidence of a local community pulling together to make a dream come true; 1st Olveston Scout Group will be forever grateful.

*Ian Knowles, Chair 1st Olveston Scouts*

## Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

Christmas is over for another year, the decorations are packed away, the leftover turkey all used up; cards and trees recycled and no more mince pies!

So what do we do now? How about taking the whole family to a pantomime? Not just any pantomime but **Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs**, which will be performed by Thornbury Musical Theatre Group at the Armstrong Hall, Thornbury from Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February until Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February. There are nightly performances at 7.15pm with matinees on Friday and Saturday at 2.15pm. It has all the traditional elements necessary to make a fantastic show: goodies and baddies: funny bits and scary bits: lots of singing, dancing and audience participation and, of course, the all important happy ending! Why not ring Gill on 01454 415850 and book your tickets? The box office will open at Wildings, Thornbury on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> of February (mobile 07707 673734). The pantomime promises great fun for all of the family. You will enjoy yourself – oh yes you will! See you at the show.



# Toil and Trouble-a Murder Mystery

***“The Little Pickering Players are just about to perform their rendition of Macbeth, a two man musical adaptation entitled 'Melodies of MacB'. There is a buzz in town about the new Shakespearean director, Harvey Powers, and his fantastic, innovative ideas for the theatre. The stage is set, the costumes have been prepared and the seats are all sold-out. If only the leading man hadn't gone missing at last night's dress rehearsal, everything would be perfect. Unfortunately for the Players it seems that, true to superstition, producing Macbeth really is bad luck. As the skeletons creep out of the villager's closets, help us unravel the mystery of who the evil villain really is.”***



ACT, in conjunction with The Actor Factory, will be holding a Murder Mystery Evening on Saturday 7 February. The fun starts in the bar of Christ The King Social Club at 7.30 pm and continues with a three course meal in the church hall at 8.00 pm. Watch the mystery unfold before your very eyes and use your powers of detection to work out WHO DONE IT!! Tickets, £12 and £11 for FACTS, can be purchased from Thornbury Garden Shop from 2 January or from Jenny Dennis on 01454 417038.

## Olveston Parish Matters

**(Charity Begins at Home)**

*Andy Clarke*

If the spirit of goodwill to all mankind is still with you, perhaps this is the time to touch upon Charitable Donations. No, no, don't worry. I know you've spent far too much over Christmas and you've only got 20p and a 5 peseta piece in your pocket. We're not chasing you for money but as a Parish Council we do make some minor charitable contributions ourselves that we thought we should tell you about. Not enough to deal with your Christmas overdraft perhaps but over the course of the year we do make donations to some local good causes. In the light of this and a recent request to outline the Council's charitable policy we thought we might do so here. Calling it a "policy" makes it sound rather more grand than it is because the number of requests granted and the amounts settled upon is actually very small. (On an ever-expanding website, an explanation of this and other information may be viewed at your leisure on [www.olveston.com](http://www.olveston.com)).

The Council of course, is funded by public money so we are very careful about the selection of charities, which should generally be registered ones in order to qualify.

Requests, usually made in writing, are considered and voted on by the full Council after applying some sensible criteria first. Our interest is always in the welfare of the Parish and donations usually are only made to those charities whose work is connected with the Parish, of interest to parishioners or of some benefit to them.

If we consider any National charities, only those whose work directly affects people within the Parish will be approved and even then a local branch would be preferred as our line of contact. As our decisions are included in our monthly meetings' minutes and these are published ( one month in arrears) on the website, you can always see for yourselves who actually receives money and who does not.

One organisation which has received donations in the past is the Olveston Scout Group and how well they have used it. The recent opening of their new facility at Old Down does them enormous credit and we wish them well in the future.

Perhaps you may need to work off your excess figgy pudding with some healthy exercise, so what better way to start 2009 than by walking the Parish footpaths. Whether you do or not, the Parish Council would like to wish you a very **Happy New Year**.

## Thornbury Town Centre Strategy

This will be ready for public consultation at the end of January 2009. It will be made available at St. Mary's shopping centre to provide you with an opportunity to make comments, to help shape the final version. Watch out for further information during the forthcoming weeks in The Gazette, on [MyThornbury.co.uk](http://MyThornbury.co.uk), or at the Town Council Offices.

## News from Olveston Parish Twinning Association

*Jan Winter*

Firstly, apologies to those who have been searching their diaries for the non-existent date given in last Meeting Point for the Wine Challenge next year! It will actually be on **Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April** in the Parish Hall. For those who have not been before, it is an enjoyable evening spent trying to match ten wines to their descriptions – which seems to get more difficult as the evening progresses! Tickets will be £10 for members and £12 for non-members of OPTA and will be on sale from 1<sup>st</sup> February. This is always a sell out event and tickets will be strictly sold on a first come first served basis, from Emma on 619833.

Also a reminder that you can sharpen up your deductive skills at our Whodunit evening on **Friday 6<sup>th</sup> February**. A wicked murder will take place, to the accompaniment of eating and drinking – your task will just be to enjoy the fun and try to solve the murder. Our cast of French café employees and the famous Inspector Cluedo will intrigue and amuse you! There will be a bar,

music and your ticket will include supper. Tickets are £5 for OPTA members and £6 for non-members. Please contact Jan on 612641 or Paul on 626835.



Finally, the weekend of **1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> May** is now confirmed as the time when a group will be coming over from Bréhan, our twin village in Brittany. We will be having several events during the weekend and are always happy to hear from people who would like to be involved. As above, please ring Jan or Paul if you'd like to know more.

*OPTA ladies heading towards a stud farm! – visit to Bréhan 2008.*



Joke found in the archives:

Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.



## Cancer Research UK Concert

*Betty Cain*

The Celebration Concert held on Wednesday 26th November at St Helen's Church Alveston was a great success and attracted a full church of supporters.

The evening was enjoyed by all and included excellent performances by The Castle School Jazz Band, Handbell ringers from St Mary's Church Olveston, a Recorder group from The U3A, the 'Oliver' Chorus from Marlwood School, some wonderful readings from John Lloyd and the St Helen's Church music group. The audience joined in and enjoyed singing a number of traditional Christmas carols and the evening ended well with mince pies and coffee.

A retiring collection in aid of Cancer Research UK raised £523. The Thornbury and District Branch of Cancer Research UK wishes to express their grateful thanks to all who attended, the various performers and to the Rev Dave Pole and members from St Helens Church, for their support and participation.

# Friends' Walking Group

**Plan: January to April 2009.**

Jan 6<sup>th</sup> – Little Sodbury/Horton area. Meet at Little Sodbury church.

Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> – Frampton Cotterell – meet at the Globe.

Leader David Evans – phone 01454 613912.

Mar 3<sup>rd</sup> – Little Sodbury, E of fort, then through Old Sodbury and take track N – W. Meet Little Sodbury church.

April 7<sup>th</sup> – Old Sodbury, Chipping Sodbury and Little Sodbury End. Meet at the Dog.

April 18<sup>th</sup> – Salisbury by train. 6 mile walk, pub lunch,

Cathedral and City visits. Closing date Apr 14<sup>th</sup> (we need to check train times).

**All walks start at 10.00 am** usually with pub lunch later.

Dan Evans – Leader, Friends' Walking Group: 01454 625313.

## From the Registers of Olveston and Tockington Methodist Church

On 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2008: **Baptism** of Tristan Ryan, son of Troy and Dawn Campbell.

On 20<sup>th</sup> November 2008: **Baptism** of Elle-Rowe, daughter of Kye Scriven and Amy Rowe.

## Improvements to St Mary's Church - Three Green Lights



St Mary's, Olveston

The long running project to improve facilities inside the church has taken three big steps forward recently.

We have received official permission from 'the powers that be' in Bristol Diocese to go ahead with our improvement plans within the building. This will provide new toilets, storage, kitchen, changing areas for priests and choir and a new multi-use space in the chancel.

Detailed drawings of the improvements are in preparation and will soon be available to see in church.

The estimated cost of this project is about £200,000, a lot of money, but it will give us proper wheelchair access and a set of facilities to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century expectations, needed in our well-loved historic village building, all done to highest standards of workmanship. We are fortunate that the generosity of donors and the hard work of fund-raisers has already produced £120,000 towards this project. In addition, Bristol Diocese has agreed to arrange a loan of £80,000 against our other assets, to enable us to go ahead with the project as soon as we have detailed plans and contractors engaged. So, at last, it's all systems go.

The final piece of good news is that we now have a fund-raising team led by Revd Roly Bain to raise the rest of the money needed for the project. There will be a whole host of opportunities for everyone to make a contribution in cash or in kind, a little or a lot are all welcome and will be gratefully acknowledged, and to enjoy events organised under the auspices of the fund-raising team. Tons of ideas have already been given and more are needed. Please contact Roly on 616593 with yours.

2009 promises to be an exciting new year for St Mary's, Olveston.

## From the Registers at St Mary's

On 16<sup>th</sup> November 2008: **Baptism** of Isobel Jasmine Lambie, daughter of Caroline Brewster and David Lambie.

On 21<sup>st</sup> November 2008: **Burial of Ashes** in St Mary's Churchyard of Austin Eli Coward.

## Pilning and Severn Beach Farmers' Market

*Barbara Matthews*

We are pleased to announce the opening of the Farmers' Market which will be held in the grounds of The King's Arms, Redwick Road, Pilning on Wednesday 21st January 2009 from 9.30am until 2.30pm. It will then continue on the third Wednesday of each month.

The Pilning & Severn Beach Parish Plan Questionnaire that was completed last year showed overwhelming support for a Market from 89.5% of those responding, and the Steering Group felt this was a sufficient indication from the public to take steps to get this up and running even before the formal Parish Plan was adopted.

As so often happens, the time needed to obtain all the relevant licences became very protracted and they were only finally given this month.

Fruit and vegetables, fish, meat, poultry and game, homemade cakes, pies, biscuits etc. will be available and refreshments are obtainable from the King's Arms.

This is a beginning, so please do come along and support this Parish venture, which we trust will become an important part of community life and will serve the surrounding area as well.

## Cricket Club News

### **150 Club Winners - December:**

£50: Jon Pullin      £15: Chris Collins      £ 5: Ted Sharpe

### **Latest £25 Bonus Ball Winners:**

29th November: Dave Buckley    6th December: Barbara Binns

### **Diary Dates:**

Friday 9th Jan.      Sports Quiz at Olveston Sports & Social Club

Friday 28th Feb.      General Knowledge Quiz at Olveston Sports & Social Club

Membership Subscriptions for 2009 are due on 1st January - see website for details.

Happy Christmas everyone!!

Tony Gardner 07889 727729 [www.olddowncricketclub.co.uk](http://www.olddowncricketclub.co.uk)

# Thornbury Camera Club

## News and Tips

### NEWS

Well done to Jenny Byram, who gained a silver medal at the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain 'Projected Images' exhibition 2008, for her photograph entitled "No Return."

The January 2009 programme commences on the 5<sup>th</sup>, with a showing of the Welsh International Salon of digital projected images. This is followed on the 12<sup>th</sup> by John Chamberlain FRPS; his subject will be "A Personal Selection".

The results of the "Ace of Clubs" will be shown on the 19<sup>th</sup> January and the Beginners' Cup Competition takes place on the 28<sup>th</sup> January.

The Winter Exhibition opens this month in Thornbury Library with a selection of members' work including prints and digital images.

### TIPS

What to do on cold winter days: perhaps you could try selling items you no longer desire, and have a go on an "On Line Auction".

The first thing sellers discover is that good photographs lead to higher bids because "On Line Buyers" are more likely to purchase an item if they can see exactly what is being auctioned.

On line auction pictures can take on a mass-production aspect, the key is to have a set up you can use for various items and present each piece attractively.



Use a plain piece of fabric as a background, find a location that has good natural lighting, and in addition try using higher contrast lighting such as desk lamps, as direct flash could be too harsh and bounce back off shiny surfaces.

Use a tripod and the self timer mode on two seconds, instead of a remote cable, to obtain a sharp image. Keep the same subject distance and angle for similar size items. Try Aperture priority (AE) and crop photos tightly so space is not wasted. Practice taking a few pictures with different aperture settings and when you're satisfied take photographs of your various items for sale from the same position.

Good luck and a happy New Year.

# **"Return to Severn Beach - with Music"**

## **- a talk by David Cheeseley**

*This report first appeared in Helmet and is published by kind permission of Alveston Historical Society.*

*Angela Swan*

David Cheeseley brought to life his amazing story of the rise and fall of Severn Beach (at one time "the Blackpool of the West"!) with wonderful photos and appropriate popular music of the times!

It all started with the railway - originally a circular line passing through Avonmouth (docks) and Severn Beach - joining up beyond Pilning with the Bristol/Patchway line. Throughout the 1920s and 30s, Severn Beach became *the* day trippers' paradise for the industrial workers of East Bristol, Wales, the Midlands and beyond, all travelling by train. It was developed as an important holiday resort throughout the 50s, 60s and early 70s with access by car, rail, bus and cycle - then the resort disappeared so quickly- leaving just caravans and a sea of houses – a dormitory suburb for Bristol.

A landmark at the New Passage end of Severn Beach was the old Pumping House for the Severn Tunnel. The adjacent New Passage Hotel was built in 1863 for rail passengers who completed their journey to Wales by ferry. In time, the shingle beach became popular with day trippers and church outings, enjoying the growing number of amusements and the Tea Rooms. By the 1900s, the railway ran past Severn Beach; the day tripper business looked profitable and a platform and sidings were built. In 1922, they catered for 12 excursion trains from Bristol on one Whit weekend (10,000 people!). In 1924, a modest station was built and a regular service established in 1928 - a photo taken at the opening shows everyone in their best clothes – this was probably their only outing of the year!

At first, campers brought tents but soon these were replaced by very basic chalets (huts), provided by firms such as Millers; eventually there were 8 Caravan sites with relatively luxurious accommodation. Fairground and amusements were provided by travelling showmen like Prewetts from Kingswood, travelling to Severn Beach for the season, but eventually settling there permanently.

Clearly, the site had potential as a permanent resort - and local builder Robert Stride commenced an extensive building project that included a (cold water) swimming pool , a lake – with landscaping, and shops and houses all along the sea front.

These included Shirley Prewetts's Café (still there), where there were children's amusements - shooting, swing boats, roundabouts etc. - and behind this was a large caravan park. As the showmen stayed at Severn Beach



throughout the year, there was a growth in residential caravans. Development continued – the pool became the “Blue Lagoon”. On the Island Fairground Site were a ghost train and a large Fish and Chip Takeaway! And always on the site there were the dodgems.

During WWII, Severn Beach had a Beer Garden, and a ballroom complete with Wurlitzer where dances were held for visiting Americans! The New Passage Hotel was updated to become “Mollie’s Club”. Recollections from the 50s include spending days on the beach, in the Blue Lagoon, and enjoying shows at the “Galvanised Gaumont” Cinema. Then in the 60s (heyday of the Juke Box), teenagers hung out in Monty’s and Shirley’s cafés. There are memories of Mods and Rockers, slot machines and one-armed bandits, of the Boating Lake, miniature railway and Barney and Jay, the fattest man and woman in the World.

In 1966 the Severn Bridge opened - and the ferries stopped. The Blue Lagoon closed in 1974 and was wrecked in 1976 when seas breached the defences. The garage and shops disappeared, even Elliotts Hardware which hung on to support the Caravan trade. Caravans remain - but the only shop is the Post Office, the only Café is now Shirley’s. Where did the shingle beach go? It’s all mud now. Perhaps construction work in the Bristol Channel and new sea defences altered the seashore; perhaps Mr Stride topped up the shingle at regular intervals! But clearly entertainment tastes have changed. And all that is left of this vibrant resort are the happy memories of so many Bristolians who enjoyed the sun, sea and roundabouts at Severn Beach.

## ‘Doorstep Callers’

South Gloucestershire Trading Standards are aware of numerous incidents in this region involving bogus gas and waterboard officials. There is evidence to suggest that these calls are directly linked with distraction burglaries.

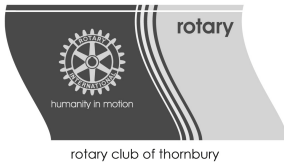


These incidents are not just restricted to callers claiming to be gas or waterboard officials, but if you do receive one from such an individual, their claims should be verified **BEFORE YOU ALLOW THEM ONTO YOUR PROPERTY.**

If, for any reason, such a doorstep caller asks you to leave your property, for example to view a problem with your house from your garden, be very suspicious and always secure your property before leaving it, for even the shortest period of time.

If you think you have been targeted by such bogus callers, or you suspect they are operating in your area, please contact the Police immediately. Further advice on suspected scams is also available by contacting Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06.

# Community Awards 2009



Thornbury Rotary Club are pleased to announce a new Community Awards Scheme which has been created to acknowledge the contribution made by local people to the community in Thornbury and the surrounding villages. The awards are intended to reflect the diverse way in which people enhance the community and the lives of those within it.

Whilst the candidates may come from different walks of life they will all have something in common. They will be selfless, always putting others first. Their achievements will be apparent to others if not to themselves. They would never call themselves heroes or champions.

There will be four categories of awards:-

## **Young Community Award**

This award is to honour the achievements of individuals under the age of 18 years who have made a positive contribution to their local community.

## **Community Award**

This award will acknowledge the voluntary work and commitment of the unsung hero.

## **Charity Award**

This award will reward an individual or group who undertake tireless work and fundraising for charities.

## **Courage Award**

This award will be made to a young person who has shown enormous courage by overcoming hurdles in their daily life.

Entries by **31 January 2009** with judging next March and an Awards Ceremony in April.

Further information and entry forms from Rotarian Richard Hiscock, tel. 01454 412494 or email [richardhiscock@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:richardhiscock@blueyonder.co.uk).

All entry details will be confidential.

David Thomas, PR Officer

# Police Report

*Roger Hopes*

Hi all, here is the police report for the month of November 08.

The Safer Stronger Community Group priorities remain the same from the previous months and the next meeting is on 13th January 2009 at Aust Village Hall at 7.30pm.

By way of an update on the ongoing problems in the park in Olveston, we have now spoken to quite a few youngsters out and about in the evenings. I would like to say that all I spoke to, and I must have spoken to about 30, were very polite, well behaved and showed concern that this sort of behaviour was happening in the village. Along with the South Glos rural youth services worker, we tried to have an evening with the youngsters to find out what they want. Even though we provided pizza and cola, only 4 young people turned up. However it was quite a productive evening and some good suggestions were made and things are moving.

It's been a busy month on the beat this month with quite a few crimes being reported, most notable being a farm in Ingst having 3 break ins over a two week period. Tools were stolen but the target seems to be a Quad bike. Their Landrover was stolen in the last incident.

1/11/08 Olveston Village Hall suffered damage during a birthday party where gate-crashers broke furniture and items belonging to the pre-school. A camera was also stolen from a coat belonging to a guest at the party.

3/11/08 Aust Services had a drive-off type theft

4/11/08 A shed in Bramley Close, Olveston was broken into and fishing gear stolen.

13/11/08 The first break-in to a storage barn at a farm in Ingst.

13/11/08. On the same night a stable block in Bilsham Lane (just along from the farm at Ingst) had sheds broken into and 5 horses were taken from a field and led into the lane. They were found the next morning in another field about 1/4 mile away.

16/11/08 In Oldbury Naite, a garage was broken into and quite large electrical items stolen.

17/11/08 A vehicle parked in Hardy Lane was broken into but nothing stolen.

19/11/08 A van was broken into overnight at the industrial units in Fern Hill, Almondsbury.

22/11/08. A shed at The Olveston Sports and Social Club was broken into.

26/11/08 A work van had a drill stolen at Hill during a couple of hours in the afternoon.

26 & 27/11/08 The farm at Ingst had two further break-ins. During the last burglary, their old Landrover was stolen.

28/11/08 A stables and storage unit were broken into overnight. Various large items were stolen during this. A man has been arrested for this offence.

E-mail: [roger.hopes@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk](mailto:roger.hopes@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk)

Tel: : 07919 628625 (mobile)

## **Alderman Rowland Jackson**

Retta and family wish to thank everyone for their cards and letters of sympathy following Rowley's death and for their donations to Parkinson's Disease Society. Also a big thank you to neighbours and friends in Orchard Rise and New Road for their help, support and kindness.

## **Yours Faithfully**

Well, it's all behind us once again and, if not already done, the trappings of Christmas will soon be packed away or discarded and the New Year is upon us.

I wonder, are you one who prefers to look back or look forward?

Paul, the writer of much of the New Testament in the Bible, had what some might call a privileged upbringing and he was a zealous adherent to the religious sect of the time known as the Pharisees. Whilst still relatively a young man, he took to a path of violence against those known as followers of The Way, later called Christians, until his life-changing experience on the road to Damascus - you can read about it in Acts 9 of the Bible. Through this encounter, he was able to say that everything he had previously had and experienced was to him like rubbish; the old King James Version of the Bible called it 'dung'! From that moment, he had a new direction and determination that took him through some tough times in life, as well as good, and even when he was languishing in prison, a prisoner for his faith, he was able to write: ..... "Forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus" [Philippians 3:13-14].

I have said it before and will probably say it many times more, that for the committed follower of the Lord Jesus Christ the best is yet to come.

We are not told to jettison the memories of the past but to see them in a new light. Neither should we fear the future but rather see it as an opportunity to develop both a personal relationship with God our Father and with His children now, and to be secure in our knowledge that when we leave this life we will reach the goal He set, to be in His presence for ever, and I do mean ever!

I pray that this year will be the most meaningful and rewarding that you have ever experienced.

Michael Matthews, The Vine, Pilning Street, Awkley

## Church News: ST MARY THE VIRGIN, OLVESTON

Jan 4 <sup>th</sup>	8am 10am 6pm	Holy Communion Holy Communion Evensong with Choir	Rev Philip Rowe Rev Philip Rowe Mrs Janet McBride
Jan 11 <sup>th</sup>	8am 10am 10am 6pm	Holy Communion (BCP) Morning Worship with Choir Breakfast Club Evensong	Canon David Sansum Mr Denis Jones Breakfast Club Team Rev David Bone
Jan 18 <sup>th</sup>	8am 10am 10am 6pm	Holy Communion Holy Communion with Choir Breakfast Club Evensong	Rev.Helen Webb Rev David Bone Breakfast Club Team TBA
Jan 25 <sup>th</sup>	8am 10am 10am 6pm	Holy Communion (BCP) 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday Breakfast Club Evensong (BCP) with Choir	Canon David Sansum Rev David Bone Breakfast Club Team Rev David Bone

Information on services correct at time of going to press.

### CONTACT PERSONS:

**The Rev Philip Rowe**, (01454 613223); email: [office@stmaryssevernside.org](mailto:office@stmaryssevernside.org)

Please contact Philip about Baptisms, marriages, funerals or other matters at any time, but please try to avoid Thursdays except in an emergency.

**Mrs. June Robbins**, Verger 01454 617491

**Internet:** [www.stmarysolveston.org.uk/index.html](http://www.stmarysolveston.org.uk/index.html)

**PRAYER GROUP:** Mondays, 3.00pm in the Church (except third Monday)

**WEDNESDAY HOLY COMMUNION:** At 9.00am led by the Rev. Roly Bain

## CHAPELRY OF ST JOHN, AUST

Jan 4 <sup>th</sup>	8 am	Holy Communion	Rev David Bone
Jan 11 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Holy Communion	Rev David Bone
Jan 18 <sup>th</sup>	8 am	Holy Communion	Rev David Bone
Jan 25 <sup>th</sup>		No Service	

**Assistant Curate:** Rev David Bone (01454 614601)

**Church Wardens:** Jo Jenkins (01454) 632838 and Janet Ford 633300

## ST MARY DE MALMESBURY, LITTLETON-ON-SEVERN

Jan 4 <sup>th</sup>	9am	Holy Communion	Rev.David Pole
Jan 18 <sup>th</sup>	9am	Matins	Mr Don Streatfield

**Contact person:** Rev. David Pole (01454 414810); [www.sthelensalveston.org](http://www.sthelensalveston.org)

## ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, ELBERTON

Jan 11 <sup>th</sup>	9 am	Matins	Mr Don Streatfield
Jan 25 <sup>th</sup>	9 am	Holy Communion	Rev Dave Pole

Contact person: Rev. David Pole (01454 414810); [www.sthelensalveston.org](http://www.sthelensalveston.org)

## OLVESTON AND TOCKINGTON METHODIST CHURCH

Jan 4 <sup>th</sup>	10am	Tockington Ch.	Annual Covenant Service led by Rev. Iesinga Vunipola
	6pm	St Andrews Filton	Evening Worship led by Rev. Peter Mortlock
Jan 11 <sup>th</sup>	10am	Olveston Ch.	All Age Worship led by Rev. John Emmett. The Breakfast Club will join us later.
	6pm	Tockington Ch.	Evening Worship led by Rev. Audrey Standhaft.
Jan 18 <sup>th</sup>	10am	Tockington Ch.	Morning Worship led by Mr Glyn Varney
	4pm	Daldry Gardens	Junior Church in the Wesley Rooms. Worship led by Mrs Margaret Mortlock
Jan 25 <sup>th</sup>	10am	St Mary's Ch.	United Service led by Rev. David Bone and Rev. Roger Ducker
	6pm	Olveston Ch	Evening Worship led by Rev. Malcom Warren

**LIGHT LUNCHES:** Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> Jan at 12.15 in the Tockington Wesley Rooms. To book your lunch please ring 416056.

**NORTHWICK LUNCHEON GROUP:** This meets at 12.30pm on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> Jan. To book your lunch please ring 0117 969 6387

**PRAYER MEETINGS:** Thursdays at 2.15pm in the Olveston Vestry.

**COFFEE MORNINGS:** Saturdays 10.30am – 12 noon in the Olveston Methodist Hall.

**CONTACT PERSON:** Rev Iesinga Vunipola. 01454 412269;  
[Iesinga@hotmail.com](mailto:Iesinga@hotmail.com)

## THE VINE, AWKLEY

The Vine, Pilning Street, Awkley

We meet in a relaxed, informal manner for worship, prayer and conversational Bible studies and incorporating Communion, normally on Sundays at 10.30am and Mondays and Wednesdays at 7.30pm. As we also visit other churches and events, please check our Notice Board or contact us. If you would like us to pray for you, your requests can be posted through the letter box at The Vine or sent to us by post or email. Please add a name or initial to identify your request.

**Mike and Barbara Matthews,** tel. 07840 793772 or email  
[thevine\\_awkley@hotmail.com](mailto:thevine_awkley@hotmail.com)

## **THE OASIS CHURCH, OLDDOWN**

<b>Jan 4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Paul Ashford</b>
<b>Jan 11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Myrtle Lawrence</b>
<b>Jan 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Stuart Dallinson</b>
<b>Jan 25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Ceri Morgan-Davies</b>

**Prayer Time every Thurs 8pm.**

For further information please contact **Olwen Wonnacott** (412141) or **Paul Ashford** (07774-110814) email: **Paul@CalebGroup.net**

## **AUST EVANGELICAL CHURCH**

offers a warm welcome to Family Worship at 11.00am and to Evening Worship at 6.30pm. For more details, please phone 632564.

‘Happy are the people whose God is the Lord’.

**BRISTOL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP** - Our Sunday morning meetings are held at The Grange School in Warmley at 11 am, but the life of the church continues in a variety of forms, locations and styles throughout the week. Please contact the Fellowship Office in Almondsbury on 01454 613305 for more information or on the internet at [www.bcfnet.com](http://www.bcfnet.com)

**RC CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING, Thornbury - each Sunday**  
**8.30am**Mass                      **11.00** Family Mass                      **6.30pm** Mass

## **SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS), Thornbury**

Meeting for Worship Sundays 10.30-11.30: The Hanover Room, The Chantry, Castle St. Wheelchair accessible. Anyone can come but children welcome with prior notice.

National website: [www.quaker.org.uk](http://www.quaker.org.uk)

Bristol area: [www.bristolquakers.org.uk](http://www.bristolquakers.org.uk)

Local contact: **Elizabeth Sidwell 412975**

# Diary Dates for January 2009

The information given below is believed to be correct as we go to press.

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Thu</b>		
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Fri</b>		
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sat</b>	<b>Olveston Methodist Hall Coffee Morning</b>	<b>10.30-12.00 MH</b>
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sun</b>		
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Mon</b>		
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Tue</b>	<b>Friends Walking Grp: Meet Little Sodbury Church Royal British Legion -Women</b>	<b>10am 7.30 DGCL</b>
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Wed</b>	<b>St Mary's Visit to Slimbridge Historical Society 'Along the Severn Way'</b>	<b>7.30 MH</b>
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Thu</b>	<b>Coffee Shop-Olveston Stores Olveston Baby &amp; Toddlers</b>	<b>10.00-12.00 2.30-4.30 MH</b>
<b>9<sup>th</sup> Fri</b>		
<b>10<sup>th</sup> Sat</b>	<b>Olveston Methodist Hall Coffee Morning</b>	<b>10.30-12.00 MH</b>
<b>11<sup>th</sup> Sun</b>		
<b>12<sup>th</sup> Mon</b>		
<b>13<sup>th</sup> Tue</b>	<b>Tockington Toddlers Safer Stronger Community Group Women's Institute</b>	<b>10.00-12.00 WR 7.30 AVH 7.30 PH</b>
<b>14<sup>th</sup> Wed</b>	<b>Royal British Legion -Men Aust Parish Council</b>	<b>7.30 DGCL 7.30 EVH</b>
<b>15<sup>th</sup> Thu</b>	<b>Coffee Shop-Olveston Stores Olveston Baby &amp; Toddlers</b>	<b>10.00-12.00 2.30-4.30 MH</b>
<b>16<sup>th</sup> Fri</b>		
<b>17<sup>th</sup> Sat</b>	<b>Olveston Methodist Hall Coffee Morning</b>	<b>10.30-12.00 MH</b>
<b>18<sup>th</sup> Sun</b>		
<b>19<sup>th</sup> Mon</b>		
<b>20<sup>th</sup> Tue</b>	<b>Tockington Toddlers</b>	<b>10.00-12.00 WR</b>
<b>21<sup>st</sup> Wed</b>	<b>Severn Vale Flower Club: Lucretia Goode, 'Midwinter' Severnvale Smallholders Association - Restoring Trace Elements in Soil</b>	<b>2pm AH 7.30 Chy</b>
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> Thu</b>	<b>Coffee Shop-Olveston Stores Olveston Baby &amp; Toddlers Thornbury &amp; District Flower Club, New Year Party</b>	<b>10.00-12.00 2.30-4.30 MH 7.30 TMH</b>
<b>23<sup>rd</sup> Fri</b>		
<b>24<sup>th</sup> Sat</b>	<b>Olveston Methodist Hall Coffee Morning Burns Night Party</b>	<b>10.30-12.0 MH 7.30 Oly.Vicarage</b>
<b>25<sup>th</sup> Sun</b>	<b>'Wigan Girls' public meeting at Turnberries</b>	<b>8.15 – 9.30pm</b>



<b>26<sup>th</sup> Sun</b>		
<b>27<sup>th</sup> Tue</b>	<b>Tockington Toddlers</b> <b>Olveston Parish Council meeting</b> <b>Fibromyalgia Support Group “ The Owlman”</b>	<b>10.00-12-00 WR</b> <b>7.30 AP</b> <b>7pm AMH</b>
<b>28<sup>th</sup> Wed</b>	<b>‘Body Tone’ Exercise Class</b>	<b>7.30 PH</b>
<b>29<sup>th</sup> Thu</b>	<b>Coffee Shop - Olveston Stores</b> <b>Olveston Baby &amp; Toddlers</b>	<b>10.00-12.00</b> <b>2.30-4.30 MH</b>
<b>30<sup>th</sup> Fri</b>		
<b>31<sup>st</sup> Sat</b>	<b>Olveston Methodist Hall Coffee Morning</b>	<b>10.30-12.00 MH</b>

## Looking Ahead to February

<b>6<sup>th</sup> Fri</b>	<b>Murder Mystery OPTA</b>	<b>PH</b>
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Sat</b>	<b>Toil and Trouble</b>	<b>Christ the King Hall</b>
<b>18<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs</b>	<b>7.15 AH</b>

Key: AC Aust Church **ACR** – Almondsbury Church Rooms; **AH** – Armstrong Hall, **AMC** – Alveston Methodist Church; **AMH**- Alveston Methodist Hall; **AP** – Alexandra Pavilion, **AVH** – Aust Village Hall; **CCCP** – Castle Court Car Park; **CH** – Cossham Hall; **Chy** – Chantry; **DGCL** – Daldry Gardens Community Lounge; **EVH** – Elberton Village Hall; **MH** – Olveston Methodist Hall; **OS** – Olveston School; **PH** – Olveston Parish Hall; **StM** – St Mary’s Church, Olv.; **StMA** Almondsbury Church; **TBCh** - Thornbury Baptist Church; **TMH** – Thorn. Methodist Hall; **URC** Thorn United Reform Church; **WR** – Wesley Rooms; **AC** - Aust Church

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