



The Newsletter and
"What's On" Guide for
Residents & Friends
of Chelsfield Village

December 2009



**DON'T MISS
THESE
SPECIAL
CHRISTMAS
EVENTS!**

**Chelsfield Primary School
Christmas Fair**

in Chelsfield Primary School
Wednesday 2nd December 3.00pm

Carol Concert

St Martins-of-Tours
Sunday 13th December 3.00pm
Tea and Mince pies served for Save The Children

**Carols Around The Christmas Tree
followed by Quiz in the Five Bells**

Tuesday 15th December 8.00pm

Village Christmas Party All Welcome

in the Parish Room
Wednesday 23rd December 7.30pm
Music - Quiz - Social

Please bring a contribution of food and drink

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CONTRIBUTIONS

PLEASE !

Contributions for our
January, New Year
issue, should be emailed
to:

villagevoice@chelsfield.org
or posted to:

Chelsfield Village Voice
2 Bucks Cross Cottages
Chelsfield Village BR6
7RN

To read the Village Voice
online visit:

<http://www.chelsfieldevents.co.uk/cvs/index.htm>

Visit
www.chelsfieldevents.co.uk

**MERRY
CHRISTMAS**

Croft Tea Room Opening

The Croft Tea Room at 263 High Street, St Mary Cray (next to the Red Lion Pub) is now open.

The building is deceptive, appearing larger on the inside than on the outside. The interior is bright and friendly with a good atmosphere, and certainly matches the manager Carol Well's aim of reproducing the small cosy atmosphere of a Highland 'Croft' where people gather to eat and chat in a relaxed atmosphere. When we visited it was doing brisk business serving a selection of teas, coffee, home-baked cakes, breads and home-made soups.

The Tea Room is run as a Community Interest Company, with profits going back into other community related projects. It is also intended



to be used for other community activities in the future. It is part of a local food initiative encouraging people to eat healthy nutritious food that is home made and sourced locally, supporting local producers and avoiding excessive food miles. A selection of local produce is available for sale.

The building is designed to be energy-efficient,

uses sustainable building techniques and materials and has a heat recovery system

It is open Wednesdays – Saturdays 9 am – 4 pm and on 11 am to 4 pm Sundays.

A local venture worth supporting, perhaps after visiting the Wednesday morning St Mary Cray Country Market in nearby Vernon Hall.

Naked Joggers !!!

The Village Voice has reported some unusual sights in 2009, an Albino Squirrel, a Peacock, and now, spotted at 1900hrs on Saturday 14th

November, a couple of NAKED JOGGERS, stretching their legs down Court Road just past Church Road running towards Orpington! -

Sorry, no photos of this sighting. Thank you, you brave couple, whoever you are, you gave our evening out a hilarious start!

Letter - Barrage Balloons

During the school summer holidays of 1944, together with other youngsters, I cycled up to Mr Salmon's farm at Park Gate to help him in picking fruit. He had a big crop and no one to gather in. I cycled from

Crofton, so it as quite a trip on my "sit up and beg" bike!

I remember a balloon barrage was sited in a field at the junction of Well Hill and Park Gate and was manned by

RAF personnel.

On one occasion I was so busy watching the balloon, I rode into the ditch! This may be of interest in the story.

*Sincerely yours
Jean Burgess.*

Build-a-Bear Report

On Tuesday 3rd November Class 2 from Chelsfield Primary went on a school trip to a Build-a-Bear workshop in The Glades Shopping Centre, Bromley. We caught the bus outside the school and had to change at Orpington before we reached Bromley. After a quick visit to the shops, we

went to the Build-a-bear factory where we were able to choose a cuddly animal to take back to school as our class mascot. We chose a dog. We stuffed our dog and put a heart inside him. Then we brushed him and gave him a name. His name is Sparky. After Build-a-Bear we went to Joe's

Kitchen where we had a lovely lunch. Next we went to the park and had lots of fun in the maze! Finally we caught the bus back to school and we were exhausted. We had a really great time and we love our new Class mascot, Sparky.

By Beau French

Village Traffic Problems

Village parking problems came to a head on Sunday 22nd November in the late morning. Everything ground to a halt with gridlock in the village centre. This was

due to too many people wanting to park in the village including two batches of footballers and their supporters.

The Chelsfield Village Society is on the case

to try and avoid these problems in the future.

If you have any comments or thoughts on the subject, please don't hesitate in contacting the Village Voice.

Warning: Car-Jacking scam

This is a warning I received by email recently. I don't know how genuine it is, but it certainly could happen, so please be aware.

You walk across the car park returning to your car, unlock your car and get inside. You start the engine put it into reverse. When you look into the rear view mirror to back out of your space, you notice a piece of paper stuck to the middle of the rear window. So, you stop and jump out of your car to remove that paper (or whatever it is) that is

obstructing your view. When you reach the back of your car, that is when the car-jackers appear out of nowhere, jump into your car and take off. They practically run you over as they speed off in your car.

And guess what, ladies? I bet your purse / wallet / phone is still in the car. So now the car-jacker has your car, your home address, your money, and your keys. Your home and your whole identity are now compromised!

BEWARE OF THIS NEW SCAM.

If you see a piece of paper stuck to your back window, lock your doors and just drive away. Remove the paper later. And be thankful that you read this e-mail. I hope you will forward this to friends and family, especially to women. A purse contains all kinds of personal information and identification documents, and you certainly do NOT want this to fall into the wrong hands. Please tell all your friends.

Review - Chelsfield Players Production

The Chelsfield Players like a challenge and "Our Country's Good", directed by novice director Lana Beckwith, certainly fell into this category. A story of convicts and Royal Marines sent to Australia in the late 1780s as part of the first penal colony there. Based on a true story, it follows Second Lieutenant Ralph Clark's attempts to put on a production of George Farqu-

har's restoration comedy *The Recruiting Officer* with a cast of male and female convicts. The play shows the class system in the convict camp and employs themes such as sexuality, punishment, sadistic officers, cruelty, suffering, compassion, love and death and the idea that art can act as an ennobling force.

You could be transported to Australia for stealing a sheep but when you got

there you might be forced to take on the unwelcome role of hangman and be expected to perform with an amateur dramatic group with your prospective victims.

Not a well known play, but an interesting diversion, and a challenge to stage with its 20 scene changes and story covering the whole gamut of emotions. Considering the content we were surprised to find it quite

funny at times. It was easy to engage with the convicts in particular and gratifying to have news of the outcome of their lives at the end of the play.

A difficult play was helped by a strong cast of over a dozen actors with about half of these taking two roles, usually an officer as well as a convict. This generally worked well, but some confusion was created by the dual casting of a female convict in the role of a marine officer in dress and red uniform jacket. Did we miss something? Philip Lane obviously relished playing a convict whose enthusiasm resulted in hi-

larious overacting in the “play within a play” and Philippa Rooke’s Devonshire accent was a joy. The emotional nature of many of the scenes had the audience rapt with attention. Good use was made of the minimal scenery with scene changes taking place quickly on a dark stage in front of the audience.

Some scenes stood out – where the officers discuss the merits of staging a play, where the meaning of plays is discussed, deciding on the fate of the leading lady (sentenced to be hanged) and the final staging of the play viewed from backstage.

The art of the prompter is

always to be admired. Having to decide whether the actor is in need of assistance or pausing for dramatic effect is a very fine edge. As usual, very little prompting was needed but when required it was virtually unnoticeable.

A good production, with many of the audience finding it quite an emotional experience.

We welcomed the introduction of tickets and a colour program with more information on the play and its participants. Who needs the West End when we have entertainment like this on our doorstep?

View from the Stalls

Bromley Little Theatre

Bromley Little Theatre (affectionately known as BLT) is a little known jewel in the locality.

Established in 1938 on its present site opposite Bromley North Station in a converted old Victorian bakery,

BLT presents eleven full-length plays a year, one a month, with the excep-

tion of August. A production rate that many professional theatres would be proud of. Each production covers an extensive eight-night run, commencing always on a Friday and begins at 7.45pm.

BLT offers the best of contemporary dramas, comedies, thrillers,

farces, musical productions as well as the classics. They also present the occasional new play that their members may not normally have the opportunity to see. These productions are of an extremely high standard, and belie the fact that this is an amateur organisation. Recent productions have included Ama-

deus (which I thought was an amazing production), and Billy Liar. This year's Pantomime, (always of a superior standard), is Peter Pan.

2010 productions will include Habeas Corpus, Glengarry Glen Ross, Abigail's Party and Macbeth.

Unusually within the UK's amateur theatre world, it has its own 113 seat / 12-row auditorium, a fully-equipped air conditioned theatre complete with sound & lighting systems, flip-up West End-

style seating and an Audio-Loop for people using hearing aids.

BLT receives no external financial support and derives its income solely from membership fees and profits from productions. They are always keen to attract new members as well as volunteers to take part in productions. BLT offers a wide-range of opportunities for acting, costume, lighting & sound design / operation as well as set-design and construction. With eleven productions a year, there is plenty of

scope for involvement in all aspects of theatre production and management.

The theatre is run as a membership club which does mean that one has to join to be able to purchase tickets, although non members can attend with members. Membership is £15 a year, £23 for two adults at one address and £30 for family membership. More information can be found on their very informative website:

www.bromleylittletheatre.org

Bromley Residents Federation

Notes from London Borough of Bromley Residents' Federation

The November meeting had a talk by Bob McQuillan of Bromley Council's Planning Department about the traveller situation in the borough. Bromley has a good, long standing relationship with travellers and is required to increase the provision of pitches by 59 by 2017. This represents an approximate doubling of the current provision but is

considerably fewer than the original proposal of an extra 117. Bromley Council are trying to negotiate a further reduction to 20-25 additional pitches. Interestingly, Southern Ireland deals with its traveller population using criminal rather than civil law which may explain the number of Irish travellers migrating to England. Some travellers have been granted temporary permission to occupy pitches only to sell on the rights at great profit to someone else.

This right is not transferable and the practice is causing the council many problems.

Mr McQuillan also spoke of Bromley's requirement to complete 565 new homes by a set date. This is becoming hard to satisfy due to the recession in the building trade. Historically, only 70% of permitted homes in Bromley are actually ever built.

The 727 flying in and out of Biggin Hill could appear to be lower than it

actually is because it is so much larger than the usual planes that use the airport. However, the delegate for Biggin Hill reported that when the plane takes off there are ripples in his cup of tea! He also reported that the proposed Heritage Centre is expected to be self supporting after re-searching the costings of similar centres.

Although Crystal Palace Sports Centre will be re-

furbished for the Olympics, after the event the refurbishment will be ripped out to make way for a 5 a side football arena. All the external sports facilities will be lost. The fall in the value of the land intended for housing had fallen from £13million to £5million.

The number of burglaries is up but the theft of car keys is down.

There was a recent planning seminar run by

Bromley Council. Concern were expressed at the meeting about new planning measures. If third parties were thought to be raising frivolous or vexatious objections to planning applications they may be liable for appeal costs if the appeal succeeds. It is very important for objectors to remember that, as before, objections should only be made using planning law, not the emotive views of residents.

Local History Group

Report on Local History Group November meeting

Paul Rason raised the subject of the sale of blocks of Orpington land in the 1890's and orphanages in the area. He displayed large map of the area showing the land being sold off in the 1890's by freehold estates, this was alongside the railway line and on the borders of Chelsfield, Farnborough and Orpington. These plots of land were sold off in two sales. The surrounding area was covered in the names of the other land-

owners of the time: Maxwell, Hart-Dyke, Brown, St Thomas's Hospital etc. These tended to spread over different areas of the map and not be in discrete blocks. This was due to land changing hands due to dowries, benefactors etc which tend to complicate the map.

Apparently Brown owned the land where Orpington Hospital was built. When Brown died with no surviving issue, the land was taken over for the hospital due to its ideal site for this purpose. It had good communica-

tions being near a station and main road and had an excellent water supply, critical for a hospital

Brown's original house, on the site of the present Orpington hospital was called Boundary House due to it being on the boundary of Chelsfield, Orpington and Farnborough. The estate was, understandably, known as the Boundary Estate.

(Brown's name is also linked with Orpington All Saints Church, where the Lynch Gate was erected in commemoration of his wife. The purpose of lych gates was to keep the

clergy dry during the acceptance of the coffin into the churchyard.

The prominent railway bridge over Sevenoaks Road was known as the Great Arch, quite an engineering feat. Plot 27 next to the railway line and opposite the present Orpington Hospital was looked at in some detail. This was withdrawn in the original sale in 1890, as it did not reach the £3800 asking price. It was offered again a few years later and purchased by Bishop Butt for space to build St Ann's and St Joseph's Orphanages. These had spaces for 200 girls, 240 boys and some older children in domestic service. In total around 500. Many were disabled due to street accidents with carts as the children spent much of their time in the streets. It tended to be the older children that were put into orphanages, and not always because they were full orphans. Older children were more expensive to feed and clothe.

Pictures and census records of the two orphan-

ages were handed around. These were run by the Presentation Brothers and the Sisters of Mercy, accepting children from all over Kent, Surrey and south London, as young as 2. Once they reached 14, or sometimes younger, they were trained as tailors, shoemakers and needlewomen and many of the girls went into service. Many of the orphans were working in the orphanages to maintain such a large number of in-mates.

In 1915, 6 boys from St Josephs were sent to Canada after a magistrate gave authority. They were received in Canada at Orpington House then posted to farms where they endured hard labour.

The orphanages were closed in the late 1950s and the day school which remained closed in the late 1960s.

Each parish had to have its own workhouse, or would combine resources with another parish to run a workhouse together. Farnborough was the local workhouse.

George Orwell slept in Farnborough Workhouse during his researches for "Tramping round England". Workhouses often became hospitals, which is why they are often away from populated areas as people did not want the workhouse near them. (NIMBY, nothing changes!). They were originally known as infirmaries. This name was carried over to be used for hospitals but has largely died out.

Paul had followed up the WW1 service record of one ex-resident of St Joseph's. He explained the awarding of service medals. The 1914 Star and the 1914/15 Star were awarded to all those who signed up at that time. This was followed by the British War Medal for all enlisted soldiers and the British Victory Medal for all who served overseas. The three medals were known affectionately as "Pip, Squeak and Wilfred". The Old Contemptibles were those who enlisted in 1914.

Next meeting Thursday 21st January 10.15, Brass Crosby Room

EUROPE – Eh?

The European Commission has just announced an agreement whereby English will be the official language of the European Union rather than German, which was the other possibility.

As part of the negotiations, the British Government conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and has accepted a 5- year phase-in plan that would become known as 'Euro-English'.

In the first year, 's' will replace the soft 'c'. Certainly, this will make the sivil servants jump with joy. The hard 'c' will be dropped in favour of 'k'. This should klear up konfusion, and keyboards can have one

less letter. There will be growing publik enthusiasm in the sekond year when the troublesome 'ph' will be replaced with 'f'. This will make words like foto-graf 20% shorter.

In the 3rd year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling can be expekted to reach the stage where more komplikated changes are possible.

Governments will enkourage the removal of double letters which have always ben a deterrent to akurate spelling.

Also, al wil agre that the horibl mes of the silent 'e' in the languag is disgrasful and it should go away.

By the 4th yer people wil be reseptiv to steps such as replasing 'th' with 'z' and 'w' with 'v'.

During ze fifz yer, ze unesenary 'o' kan be dropd from vords kontaining 'ou' and after ziz fifz yer, ve vil hav a reil sensibl riten styl.

Zer vil be no mor trubl or difikultis and evrivun vil find it ezi tu understand ech oza. Ze drem of a united urop vil finali kum tru.

Und efter ze fifz yer, ve vil al be speking German like zey vunted in ze forst plas.

If zis mad you smil, zen it haz don vat vas intended

A History of Chelsfield Post Office (continued from October)

During Mrs Humpherson's era, as well as the widening range of services provision at the Post Office counter, there was also a great expansion in additional items sold alongside which was even then described as the "shop" side at Cross House. No doubt this trend also started before Mrs Humpherson took over but like the Post Of-

fice it widened in scope as time went on to encompass an Aladdin's cave of items stocked in cabinets and drawers. You only had to enquire and a drawer would be opened under the counter and then laid on top for the customer to view the contents. Likewise, the glass fronted display cabinets behind the post Office counter

were full of items the customer never realised he/she needed!

After the years of "making do" in the wartime period, customers were possibly still in that habit in the early 1950's and indeed at that time rationing was still in force for many items, especially foodstuffs and clothing. However, I am sure that as times became

a little easier the range of items on the shelves behind the counter filled out and by the mid/late 1950's seemed to include everything under the sun. For those readers not lucky enough to have experienced this era in the Chelsfield Village Post Office then perhaps I can mention a few of the items supplied. These included Birthday Cards, Anniversary Cards etc, various sized pads of writing paper, envelopes of all sizes, packets of postcards, biros, pencils, rulers, coloured pencils and crayons, children's colouring books and painting books, bottles of ink, notebooks of all sizes and thickness, packets of coloured balloons and even tins of "bubble" mixture for children.

I am sure that each reader who remembers the Village Post Office in this era can add extra items to this list. Even after so many years have passed it would be useful to have the marvellous selection on hand today.

In many eyes – especially if you were between 5 and 15 – the most important other counter in the Post Office was laid out with a vast selection of sweets to cater for all tastes and pockets.

In the 1950's and indeed for many years onwards the currency was mercifully still old pennies, half-pennies and even farthings. A colourful range of sweets in various shapes and sizes was displayed for choice to be made – often a process involving several changes of mind. These sweets encompassed 'gobstoppers' (that changed colour as you sucked through each layer), sherbet dips, flying saucers in various colours, liquorice laces, penny or half-penny chews, aniseed balls and (and no doubt rightly to be frowned upon) sweet/cigarettes. Once again I am sure that each reader can recall a favourite choice not mentioned here but the memory of that tempting array does not fade for all that. There were also bottles of lemonade, Tizer, Cream Soda, Vimto etc for Mum to carry home.

An abiding memory of my mother, Vera, concerning Mrs. Humpherson is the fact that she hated the daily surge of children into the Post Office at 3.30 pm when "escape" from the Village School across the road took place. Nowadays, the rush at 3.30 pm seems to be into the innumerable cars parked around the Village ready to

go home. In Mrs. Humpherson's time – and not forgetting the invaluable help of Mrs. Whitehead – the sweet counter was one of the first thoughts and "port of call" if pocket money was allowed. No doubt Mrs. Humpherson did have a hard time of keeping track of what was happening down amongst the sherbet dips etc so I expect it was the redoubtable Pat Whitehead who "held the fort" over on the Post Office side when other business needed to be transacted.

At that time during the 1950s there was little road traffic through and around Chelsfield Village so walking to and from school was not generally hazardous. Indeed children did walk there in small groups from the same locality and some with an adult – usually a mum. The prospect of walking nowadays seems to horrify many children but with company the distances covered in the 1950s seemed nothing at all and indeed everyone survived rather well. The racetrack-type situation in our locality now makes for a different set of circumstances but I think a change backwards in this culture will have to come one day and possibly not too far ahead. Anyway,



getting back to the sweet counter, the much pondered-over purchases were often devoured during the walk home with Mrs. Humpherson breathing a sigh of blessed relief when the rush was over.

On the shelved behind the front sweet counter a range of more expensive items were displayed such as boxes of chocolates of various brands. There were also large, screw top jars with the individual sweets that could be

weighed out per ¼ lb just as today (although often now you have to serve yourself). There were also various brands of cigarettes and tobacco which at today's prices were phenomenally cheap to buy – I will leave the reader to add his/her own comment on this subject depending on whether a smoker or not.

Mr. and Mrs. Humpherson ran the Chelsfield Village Post Office from around 1940 until 1959 when sadly Mr.Humpherson died

at still quite a young age (struck down by cancer). Following this sad event Mrs. Humpherson relinquished the running of the Post Office and went to live with her brother in Australia.

To be continued

Written by Carol Margetts with the invaluable help and co-operation of Mrs Pauline Lambert plus additional detailed information and inspiration from Mrs Vera Margetts

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Bromley Council

Main switchboard:

020 8464 3333

E-mail:

csc@bromley.gov.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm

Address: Civic Centre,
Stockwell Close, Bromley,
BR1 3UH

Reporting Problems to the Council

Can be reported via the CVS website, or if urgent by phone out of hours Emergency Duty Team 020 8464 4848.

Mobile Library

The mobile library stops outside Chelsfield Village

School on Tuesdays between 11:15 and 11:45.

Books can be reserved from here, or over the Internet via the Bromley library website for later picking up from the mobile library.

Councillors

Julian Grainger

01689 889392

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Chelsfield Village Society

cvscontact@googlemail.com

Chelsfield Village Voice

villagevoice@chelsfield.org

Chelsfield Primary School

01689 825827

BT Line Faults	0800 800151
Electrical Power Failure (EDF)	08007838866
Thames Water Emergencies	0845 9200800
Transco Gas Emergency Service	0800 111999
Orpington Police Station 1000-1800 Monday-Saturday	0300 1231212
Samaritans	01689 833000
NHS Direct	0845 4647
Safer Neighbourhood Team	020 8721 2605

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY****Tuesday 1st December**

Five Bells

Quiz Night

from 9.00pm

Wednesday 9th December

Parish Room

Internet Café

2.30pm to 4.30pm

Monday 21st December

Bo Peep

Carol Singingwith Phil Lane on his
Accordian**Wednesday 2nd December**

Chelsfield Primary School

Christmas Fair

from 3.00pm

Thursday 9th December

The Glades Bromley

**Chelsfield Primary
School Carol
Singing**

11.30pm to 12.00pm

Tuesday 22nd December

Five Bells

Quiz Night

from 9.00pm

Wednesday 2nd December

Five Bells

Steak Night

from 6.30pm

Wednesday 23rd December

Parish Room

Christmas Party

7.30pm

Thursday 3rd December

Five Bells

Live Music - JazzJust Friends Swing Sextet.
Jazz Standards 1920's on
Commencing 8.30pm**Sunday 13th December****Carol Concert**

St Martins-of-Tours

3.00pm

Tea and Mince pies
In aid of
Save The Children**Thursday 24th December**

Five Bells

**Billy Shears
Returns, Singing
into Christmas Day**

from 9.30pm

Thursday 3rd December

Five Bells

Live Music - RockDupe will be performing
their Christmas Show**Tuesday 15th December**

Outside the Five Bells

**Carols Around The
Christmas Tree fol-
lowed by the Quiz
in the Five Bells**

8.00pm

Tuesday 29th December

Five Bells

Quiz Night

from 9.00pm

Tuesday 8th December

St Martins-of-Tours

**Chelsfield Primary
School Carol
Service**Everyone Welcome
6.30pm**Tuesday 15th December**

Five Bells

Quiz Night

from 9.00pm

Wednesday 30th December

Parish Room

Internet Café

2.30pm to 4.30pm

Wednesday 13th January

Parish Room

Internet Café

2.30pm to 4.30pm

Tuesday 8th December

Five Bells

Quiz Night

from 9.00pm

Thursday 17th December

Five Bells

Carol Singingwith Phil Lane on his
Accordian**Thursday 21st January**

Brass Crosby Room

Local History Group

10.15am