

# ***THE BRIDGE***



**Produced by Elmore Parish Council  
May 2016, Issue EIGHT**

## **From the Editor**

Welcome to the eighth edition of The Bridge. This edition includes the Parish Council Chairman's Report following the Annual Parish meetings in mid May. It is a legal requirement that this is published in the village. It is also on the parish website; [www.elmoreparish.co.uk](http://www.elmoreparish.co.uk). There is much of interest and importance in John Field's report but this edition also includes the usual mix of notices of local events as well as interesting and informative articles. We continue to remember the events of the First World War - July 1st 2016 is the centenary of the most disastrous day in the history of the British Army. 1916 also saw the Battle of Jutland, the biggest naval battle of the War. Did you know hymn 'Jerusalem' also came into being 100 years ago?

Elmore Village Hall is undoubtedly the social heart of our village. We are extremely lucky to have such a well managed and well appointed facility in Elmore. It would not exist without the tireless efforts of the management committee to raise money for its upkeep and improvement. Much of the burden of raising money falls on the Chair of the Social Committee and for many years this has been Su Hardisty. Su has just retired from this position and The Bridge would like to thank her for her service. She and her committee have raised tens of thousands of pounds to give us the Village Hall we all enjoy, and on the way provided lots of fun and good craic.

Andy Nash has retired as a parish councillor after more than 16 years in post. Particularly his expertise on planning matters has been invaluable to the Parish Council. He has done a huge amount for the village in that time and elsewhere in this issue our chairman, John Field, thanks him for his contribution.

## 100 Years Ago

The third year of the Great War was littered with many military actions that could not be classed as victories for either side and was probably the darkest year of the Great War for the British Army with the Battle of The Somme raging from 1<sup>st</sup> July to 18<sup>th</sup> November. By 31<sup>st</sup> December 1916 there were 3,451,861 personnel in the British Army as well as 789,135 horses! Casualties in the British expeditionary Force in France during 1916 were as follows:

Killed	– 152,131
Wounded	– 450,917
Missing or POWs	– <u>40,228</u>
Total:	643,276

French casualties - 200,000

German casualties - 465,000

### **January 1916:**

The first event of note in 1916 concerned Winston Churchill, who had resigned from Asquith's Government the previous November with the intention of 'playing a part in the war'. He was already a Major in the Oxfordshire Hussars so went over to France to join the unit. However, Field Marshall Sir John French, who was the commander, had other ideas and wanted Churchill either to join his own headquarters as an aide de camp or be given the command of a brigade. As it turned out there wasn't an immediate vacancy at this level and Prime Minister Asquith, as well as Churchill's political enemies in Westminster, were determined he should not be given such a command. So it was that, after a period of training and battle inoculation, on 1<sup>st</sup> January he was given the command of 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers. He only stayed for 6 months on the Western Front and when his battalion was amalgamated with another he didn't seek command but instead returned home to politics.

### **March 1916:**

On 25<sup>th</sup> March 1916 a new medal was instituted for bravery, to be awarded only to non-commissioned officers and soldiers – this was the Military Medal (MM). In June of 1916 approval was given for it to be awarded to females. The medal continued to be awarded for the next 77 years and was discontinued in 1993.

### **April 1916:**

On 2<sup>nd</sup> April a disaster struck the ammunitions factory at Faversham in Kent. Following a large fire a huge explosion rocked the area killing 115 men and the tremor from the explosion was felt as far away as Norwich. This was the worst munitions disaster in British History.

The Easter Rising in Dublin on 24<sup>th</sup> April could not have come at a worse time for the British Government as they struggled to make progress on the Western Front. Therefore, the heavy-handed way in which the British Government tackled the problem was hardly surprising. However, the British casualties amounted to 132 men killed and 397 wounded while the Irish rebels had only 64 killed. Sadly the civilian population of Dublin suffered the most with over 250 killed and 2,217 injured. The subsequent Court trials, which sentenced 90 people to death (although only 16 were actually executed) and imprisoned so many others, set the tone for many years of bitter unrest in Ireland and proved to be a serious mistake.

The irony of the Easter Rising in April of 1916 was that there were a considerable number of loyal Irishmen serving in the ranks of the British units in France, many of whom acquitted themselves exceptionally well throughout the war. Indeed, on 27<sup>th</sup> April, only 3 days after the Easter Rising in Dublin, the Germans launched a gas attack at Hullach (near Loos in Belgium) which was followed by a German infantry assault – the units the Germans attacked were the Dublin Fusiliers, and the Inniskillings of the Irish Division. The German assault was repelled and the Irishmen made a stalwart counter attack, driving the enemy back. The Germans, who were determined to make progress launched further gas attacks over the next few days much to their own disadvantage as the winds veered erratically and, not having put on their gas helmets in time, they were overcome by their own chlorine gas resulting in nearly 1,600 casualties. The British casualties over the period 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> April amounted to 1,980 of which

1,260 were gas casualties, 338 of whom died. Sadly the local population also suffered greatly as they did not leave the area in time nor did they have the protection of gas helmets. The cattle, sheep and dogs all perished and what crops had survived the bombardments were burnt by the acid cloud.

### **June 1916:**

During 1916 unrest in Russia was growing and so the British Government decided to send a high level mission to maintain relations with this faltering ally who were more concerned with their internal problems than with the war in central Europe. Field Marshall Horatio Kitchener and Lloyd George (then the Munitions Minister) were chosen to lead the diplomatic mission. However, at the last moment Lloyd George felt he could not leave his post at such an important time so withdrew. Kitchener boarded HMS Hampshire at Scapa Flow on 5th June and the ship set sail for Russia. At 19.30 that day the ship struck a mine off Marwick Head causing a massive explosion which resulted in the ship sinking within 15 minutes. There were only 12 survivors from the 655 men aboard the ship. Kitchener's body was never found and when the news broke it caused widespread dismay accompanied by many conspiracy theories, especially as the location of the sinking was kept secret and the locals were not permitted to join in the search for survivors. Added to this was Kitchener's fall from favour in Government circles; he had become an increasing embarrassment to the Government although he was idolised by the general public. Many people could not accept that as their country's greatest military man had merely been drowned.

On 24<sup>th</sup> June the **Battle of The Somme** started in order to relieve the French forces who were under heavy attack from the Germans in the area of Verdun. The Commander in Chief, General Haig had resisted pressure to carry out attacks in the Somme area since the spring as most of the troops stationed there were reservists who had been sent to France to replace the original regular troops who had been killed in their droves up to this point. The attack was preceded by a particularly heavy artillery bombardment which was scheduled to last 5 days but in fact continued for 8 days. An unprecedented number of artillery pieces were made available for the bombardment with over 1000 field guns, 233 howitzers and 180 counter battery guns being employed. The

anticipated damage to the German defences did not occur with many shells missing their targets and furthermore, a third of all shells fired were classified as duds and did not explode. The confidence of troops in the British front trenches was raised by the sight and sound of the relentless bombardment and many thought that the subsequent attack would just be a walk over deserted German trenches.

The main assault was launched on 1<sup>st</sup> July and this day that has been written down in our history books as the single most destructive day every experienced by the British Army. On this fateful day the British suffered 57,470 casualties. Some 2,252 men were missing, many of whom had been simply swallowed up by the mud in their own trenches or in no-mans land. Of the total casualties there were 35,493 wounded and a staggering 19,240 killed.

### **July 1916:**

During the early part of the Great War General Haig was reported to have stated that; *'The horse is the queen of the battlefield and shall never be superseded'* How wrong he was proved to be. On 14<sup>th</sup> July 1916 a spectacular cavalry charge took place on The Somme and, as a result of the outcome, such tactics involving mounted cavalry would play no further part in the Somme battles of 1916.

Two squadrons of cavalry were used to attack the German lines on High Wood, one from 7<sup>th</sup> Dragoons and the other from the Indian Deccan Horse – armed with lances. Initially the attack was a success in terms of ground taken albeit short-lived as the Germans retook the position that same night. Although only 8 cavalymen were killed in the charge about a further 100 were wounded with 130 horses killed or wounded.

### **September 1916:**

By September little progress had been made by either the Allied or German forces with a battle of attrition raging on both sides with considerable losses. When tanks were introduced for the first time on 15<sup>th</sup> September in an attack on the German lines it was envisaged by the British High Command that this would be a turning point in the war. However, of the 49 tanks assigned to the task only 32 made it to the start line. The missing 17 tanks either broke down or got stuck in ditches on their way to the front line. General Haig was insistent that the tanks were to be used in small packets of 2 and 3 to support the infantry and break through the barbed wire obstacles. Initially this

worked well with terrified German troops fleeing at the sight of the these great steel monsters bearing down upon them. By the end of the day 17 tanks had been hit by shells or damaged and of these only 7 were able to limp back the British lines. Nine other tanks had broken down and further 5 got stuck in shell holes. Despite these many failures 9 tanks stayed ahead of the troops and achieved their objectives. Those tanks that survived moved so slowly that they were overtaken by walking infantry. There were many senior British military officers who regarded the tank as an expensive gimmick and General Haig was criticised for using them when so few were available, but he argued that wherever they were used the objectives were achieved.

### **October 1916:**

Middle East: In October of 1916 a young military officer was sent from Egypt as part of the military team to help train the Hashemite forces who were fighting the Turks (who were allied to the Germans in WW1) – this was one Captain T E Lawrence or ‘Lawrence of Arabia’. As the saying goes .. ‘....the rest is history’ !

### **November 1916:**

The Battle of the Somme officially ended on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1916 and although seen by many as an extraordinary waste of life it was regarded by the Germans as an allied success. It also eroded the fiction of the infallibility of the German High Command and The Somme proved to be muddy grave for the German Field Army.

A memorial to the 72,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom and South Africa who died on The Somme and who have no known grave stands at Thiepval.

## **Annual Parish Meetings 17<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

### **Summary of the Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

The Chair opened the meeting by introducing a new member of the Parish Council – Paula Turner. This year Andy Nash decided not to seek re-election as a Councillor. Andy had been a Councillor for over 16 years and his advice on all matters has been greatly valued by all his colleagues and his contribution on Planning aspects has been of

particular help to us. We would like to thank Andy for his unstinting contribution to the community over so many years.

During the Open Question Time the problem of illegal parking on the canal bridge approaches was raised and in order to overcome this problem, it was suggested that the traffic priority for Sellars Bridge should be changed. This idea would now be followed up by the PC with Glos Highways.

We had a talk by the **SDC Neighbourhood Warden** for our area, Carol Novoth. Her responsibilities are wide-ranging and involve liaison with many other agencies including the Council, Police, NHS, and 11 local Parish Councils, including Elmore. A short article about her work appears elsewhere in this magazine

Following on from the Chairman's Address (see below) the matter of a small increase in the Parish Precept for 2017/18 was discussed as the Precept for this year has remained at the level pegged for the last 5 years. There was a general consensus for a small increase so during the Parish Council Meeting it was agreed that the Precept would rise by 3% for the next financial year.

As part of the new 'Transparency Code', and a change in the way our account is audited, we now post all transactions over £100 on the website.

Our recently re-elected District Councillor, Dave Mossman, highlighted a few issues in the Hardwicke Ward.

- Following a discussion by the Boundaries Commission, the Ward size has now increased and we now have 3 District Councillors.
- The new housing programme will start in 2017 with some 1,300 houses in Hunt's Grove.
- Linked to this new housing project, a new super-surgery is planned for Hunt's Grove and should be built in Nass Lane during 2018.

- A new primary school is also scheduled to be built to accommodate an anticipated increase of children from the new houses.
- Work on the Javelin Park Incinerator project is on schedule and should be completed by 2019. Once operational constant air-cleanliness checks will be carried out to ensure local residents are not put at risk.
- There have been 3 fatalities on the A38 in the last 6 months.

The Parish website is now live but still in a state of development. It is no longer a 'nice to have' facility but a legal requirement.

We now have some 54% of households on the electronic database who receive e-mail updates on road closures, security matters etc. We would like to include more people but appreciate that some do not wish to be part of it while others don't use the internet at all. Only 2 people have the complete list; the Chair and the Clerk, so your privacy is protected

## **Chairman's Address**

This year has seen the first full 12mths of production of our newsletter, The Bridge, which we introduced as an experiment in order to fill a perceived gap in communication and to replace the Annual Newsletter. It has been a great success so far, with many contributions from residents and some very interesting stories. What we need now is some constructive feedback so that we can take this project forward the way you want it develop.

We have also revamped the Elmore Website, thanks mainly to the efforts of our esteemed Clerk, Dorie Jones, and we would welcome feedback on this project too as well as contributions and photographs.

You may recall that in April last year we joined forces with the Environment Agency in order to repair some erosion damage to our stretch of the riverbank. We had a good turnout of volunteers and managed to carry out some significant work. However, we only scratched the surface as regards the amount of work needed on our riverbank so would like to take this work forward and will be

advertising future events to cut withes and stakes, making faggots as well as completing some more repair work on sites where erosion has taken place.

In early May last year we installed the first of our 2 Defibrillators in Elmore Back and familiarisation training also took place for those interested in learning how to use the equipment. This first piece of equipment was paid for entirely by the Parish Council but as part of our Emergency Plan we forecasted the need for a second defibrillator elsewhere in the village, as our community is so widespread.

Therefore we asked for donations to try and raise the £2,000 necessary to buy a second Defibrillator and get it installed. We were amazed by the generosity of the village, which collectively donated £1,660, and also The Elmore Land Charity which contributed £300 – the small shortfall was made up from PC funds. In anticipation of the installation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> equipment, we adopted the red telephone box adjacent to EVH and gave it a facelift with paint donated by Crown Paints. The second equipment was installed in the telephone box in September and a second training event took place here in the hall. It is our intention to run refresher training later this year.

Many thanks to Trevor Jones and our Clerk who have been the driving force behind this project.

However, there will be on-going running costs as parts of the equipment are time sensitive and will need replacing in due course – namely the batteries and the electronic pads. We have aimed off for this in our budget.

**EPC Financial Forecast.** Our finances remain in a healthy state and our bank balance at the end of the last FY was £4,937.98. We had an excess of expenditure versus income of some £917.64 during this FY and this was due to the costs of purchasing the Defibrillators and getting them installed.

However, we have built into the budget a ‘Contingency Fund’ to cover unforeseen expenses and this currently stands at £1,500.

In addition, we have ring-fenced a ponds’ maintenance fund of £600 and, as I intimated earlier, we have also aimed off for the maintenance

for our defibrillators and this will amount to £160 a year and will accumulate until we need the funds every 3 years or so.

This contingency budgeting, totalling £2,260, means that, although our bank balance looks quite healthy, we only have the flexibility to spend just over £2,600 on an annual basis and much of that is already earmarked for insurance, wages, membership of the PC Association, use of EVH, printing costs for The Bridge and the website.

The Parish Council Precept is currently £2,400 and appears on households' Council Tax bills and varies according to the banding of the property. When the financial recession hit the UK we felt that we could not justify any increase so pegged it at the same figure and by the end of this FY that will have remained the same for the 6 years. When we cover 'Finance' later on I will raise the idea of a small increase in the Precept.

**Broadband.** This has been a disappointing year as regards progress on improving the broadband speeds into Elmore. Despite many promises from the Government, BT and Fastershire, we are still way behind our immediate neighbours and struggling to communicate in the digital world in which we live.

The Government's promise to give us all 2Mbps by the end of 2015 didn't materialise; this pledge then slipped to 2017 and maybe 2020 in some areas – it now appears the Government has abandoned the plan altogether!

However, despite Fastershire and BT making a decision to exclude us from the new – and much heralded - microwave project, there is some light on the horizon.

GCC has now stated that Elmore will be included in the Fastershire project but as yet we do not have a timeframe for this great event.

**Canals** We were made aware that the Canals & Rivers Trust plans to automate all 19 of the canal bridges between Gloucester and Sharpness. The bridges would be operated on demand by boaters using an App on their phones or tablets, thus giving them priority over road traffic. Elmore PC, along with the other parishes in Severn Voice, were opposed to his idea as we felt we would be put in a vulnerable situation if boaters had unregulated use of bridge openings.

When added to the increased use of the canal for recreational purposes and the possibility of joining the canal with the one currently being renovated from Saul Junction to The Thames there is a great danger that canal users would create both disruption of local traffic and delays to emergency services.

We have also been painfully aware that the parking on the approaches to the canal bridge has been less than satisfactory. Increased use by boaters, rowers, walkers and fishermen will add to the problem. Subsequently we've had several meetings with C&RT as well as GCC and a small amount of progress has been made;

CCTV cameras will be placed to monitor traffic build up and bridge openings curtailed accordingly;

The Control Centre will now be based at Frampton which is the second busiest crossing outside Gloucester;

Parking at each bridge site will be improved;

Each bridge will have its own local Action Group so that specific issues can be resolved quickly.

No firm decisions have as yet been made but the trial is under way at Sandfield Bridge – adjacent to the Stables Café at Saul Junction – and we've been assured that the plans will be modified once the results of this trial have been analysed.

In addition, C&RT has not, as yet, secured the necessary funding of £4.5 million for the project. Nationally, C&RT has had huge unforeseen expenditure on repairs to their network following the floods in Cumbria over the last winter so the future of the local project is by no means clear.

**Elmore Emergency Plan.** There aren't many people left in the village who remember the serious flooding in 1947 and we've had a lot of newcomers arrive over the last 10 to 15 years so the memory of local disasters tends to be forgotten.

The Parish Council felt that a plan was necessary in case we were hit by another emergency, be it a natural one like the recent flooding of 2007 or a recurrence of foot and mouth as was the case in 2001 - which could isolate part or all of our community. A document was drafted that not only outlined what actions should be carried out in the event of an

emergency but also a short history of events in the village and elsewhere which explain the rationale for having an Emergency Plan.

At the end of 2013 a draft Emergency Plan was circulated around the village to some 16 key individuals and although this consultation took rather longer than we had expected, it has now been completed. As a result of the comments received during the consultation, the document has been finalised and a copy is now on the Parish website.

The Plan on the website is the 'Unrestricted Version' – there is another 'Restricted Version' - which contains sensitive information like names and contact numbers of individuals as well as a list of what we would term 'vulnerable residents' – i.e. those that would need assistance in case of an emergency. We appreciate that such a list will need regular updating and the criteria for inclusion on the list is shown in the plan – for example, someone over the age of 80 would be considered but not necessarily included!

In times past anyone over retirement age might have been included but we tend to be a lot healthier now so although we've set the age barrier at 80 – some who have achieved this venerable age will probably be dashing around helping others!!

The Parish Council would like formally to thank all those who contributed to the formulation of this document, which will provide the framework for action should a disaster strike.

## **The Battle of Jutland, May 1916**

Jutland was the only major surface naval battle of World War 1. It involved 250 ships and about 100,000 men. The German High Seas Fleet wanted to break the British blockade of German ports and so allow German merchant shipping to move freely again. However, the British had cracked German signal codes and were well aware of their movements and intentions.

The Battle was fought off the coast of Jutland (the Danish peninsula). It began in the afternoon of May 31st 1916 when British and German scouting fleets met and began exchanging fire. The German ships took a heavy battering but survived due to their superior 'honeycomb' construction. The British lost three Battlecruisers because their gun turrets were of inferior design without 'antiflash' protection which

allowed fires to reach their magazines. However, Vice Admiral David Beatty, commanding, turned North and lured the German High Seas Fleet towards the main British force.

When the main fleets engaged just after 7pm British Admiral Sir John Jellicoe disposed The Grand Fleet to take advantage of fading light. He brought his ships into single battle line and cut off the German fleet from its home port. The German ships took 70 direct hits, the British 30, but the High Seas Fleets escaped by making a series of three brilliant 180 degree turns.

By the end of the battle at about 10pm the British had lost 6784 men and 111,000 tons, the Germans 3058 men and 62,000 tons. So by these terms, the Germans had won (the outcome is still disputed today) but the German High Seas Fleet was driven back to its home port and never put to sea en masse again until it was interned in Scapa Flow at the end of the war. While the fate of the ships was being decided by the victorious Allies the ships were scuttled there on the orders of the German commander, Ludwig von Reuter.

In July 1915 a young lad named Jack Travis Cornwell joined the Royal Navy aged 15 and he joined HMS Chester on 24<sup>th</sup> April 1916 after being trained as a Gun Layer. At this stage he was still only 5ft 3in and weighed 7st 12lb. On 31<sup>st</sup> May HMS Chester was involved in the Battle of Jutland and Jack's post was as a Gun Layer in 'A' Turret, which, as it turned out was the first to be hit by enemy shells. All but 2 of the gun crew were either killed or wounded. Jack received intestinal wounds but stayed at his post. Part of his responsibility was to pass on orders to the remainder of the gun crew and, as no orders arrived he stayed put. At the end of the battle he was found by a first aid team and was the sole survivor of his gun turret but had shards of steel embedded in his chest. HMS Chester was, by now, unable to fight so was ordered back to port in England where Jack was transferred to Grimsby Hospital where sadly he died on 2<sup>nd</sup> June. He was buried in a common grave with no ceremony. However, The *Daily Sketch* carried the story of the 'The Boy Hero' on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1916 and such was the subsequent strength of public feeling that his coffin was disinterred and reburied at Manor Park Cemetery with full naval honours on 29<sup>th</sup> July. Despite Admiralty reluctance a recommendation was eventually made that Jack Cornwell

be awarded the Victoria Cross (VC) and this announcement appeared in this *London Gazette* on 15<sup>th</sup> September:

*“The King has been graciously pleased to approve the grant of the Victoria Cross to Boy First Class, John Travers Cornwell for conspicuous bravery...”*

Jack was the youngest recipient of the VC during WW1.

His marble headstone was funded by school children from the district where he had lived.

## **Elmore WI** Jan 2016 – May 2016

Approx 20 members and visitors have enjoyed various speakers in the past 5 months. We have also made visits to: Gloucester Cathedral; Cheltenham Town Hall for the annual Council Meeting; Tredworth Mosque, a very enjoyable and interesting insight into the Moslem religion.

A day workshop at the Village Hall, where members and friends were engaged in making various decorative items of glassware was so successful it's to be repeated later in the year.

There have also been organized walks with pub lunch.

August meetings start with a Skittle match and basket meal at the Anchor

Our speakers topics for the next few months will be as follows:

September Making a garden for the Chelsea Flower Show

October Looking after Uncle John

November Xmas Wreath Making

November sees another craft making day ( Wet Felting ) details TBA

In December we will round off the WI year with Christmas celebrations including the Carol service Cheltenham Town Hall with guest singer Laura Wright.

We meet at ELMORE VILLAGE HALL on the second Tuesday in the month at 7.30pm

Visitors and potential members are always welcome to sample our meetings and enjoy a tasty supper

Press, Val Overton.

## **“And did those feet ...” aka ....“Jerusalem”**

By 1916 the War wasn't going well for the British with one or two major disasters during 1915, including the catastrophe in Gallipoli, so it was felt that the British people needed some sort of rousing song to engender national spirit. Therefore, in March of 1916 Sir Hubert Parry was commissioned to write the music for the words of a poem. The poem in question was written by William Blake in 1804 but Parry seemed unaware at the time that his music and this song was an attempt fill the British people with national pride and support the war effort.

The song, and now a hymn, was first named '*And did those Feet in Ancient Times*' better known today by the title of '*Jerusalem*'.

The composer became unhappy that his tune was being used to engender fervour for the war effort and wanted to withdraw the copyright. However, in 1918 the Suffragette Movement adopted the song as their 'battle cry' and Parry seemed content with this, so transferred the copyright to them. In 1928 when the suffragettes were dissolved, the Women's Institute adopted the tune and hymn.

The song has also been adopted by the England Cricket Board and is often sung at football and rugby matches, albeit in a less reverent way!

It was also used at the opening ceremony of the 2012 Olympics.

There has been some public debate about its use to replace God Save The Queen as the National Anthem, but as the words relate purely to England this idea has been abandoned.

### **Village Hall News**

The Village Hall AGM followed by the Quarterly meeting were held on 10<sup>th</sup> April.

Our programme of refurbishment and improvement is continuing, for the benefit and comfort of our users and hirers. The range cooker in the kitchen is faulty and has caused number of electrical problems, it will soon be replaced with two new cookers. Also a faulty urn has been replaced and the Hall electrics checked and certified by our electrician. We have successfully approached the Parish Council to lead a project (with our support) to improve the parking opposite the Hall. More details later.....

Finally, Su (Hardisty) has retired from the Committee following nearly 30 years of service, including more than 20 years as Social Committee Chair. Su has been directly involved (with many others) in raising tens of thousands of pounds of much needed funds, mostly leading from the front and taking on the organisation of the many varied tasks which make up a successful and profitable function, using her networking and persuasive skills. Thank you Su, we wish you well for the future, especially as a newly appointed Governor of Longney Academy.  
John Hardisty, Chairman, 01452 721798 [pikelett@hotmail.com](mailto:pikelett@hotmail.com)

### **Elmore Village Hall Social Chair Report May 2016.**

In March we held our seventh Race Night. Jill, Val, Barbara and I worked hard in the kitchen and with the help of Pauline's grandchildren, Sophie and Jake, we fed 2 courses to 73 people in just over an hour, ready for Dan ably to comper the racing. Thank you to the generous sponsors, barman, toteman, tellers, and cooks. The target was to hit £2,000, we made a profit of £2,154.

I am very proud that the Social Committee, plus Mike, Pauline and John have raised £3,500 plus in the last year, a good proportion of the money we have in the bank. The Social Committee can rest on their laurels for a bit.

I joined the Hall Committee in 1988, have been Social Chair for over 20 years and have decided that the time has come for me to stand down. New ideas, more energy and younger people are needed to support and actually help at functions. It was great to have Dan Lovell, Sophie and Jake on board for my final function. From Jean Prout I inherited a very supportive committee in Val, Brenda and Mona. Ann, Dorie, Jill and Barbara have enthusiastically joined us over the years. John, Pauline Fisher, Mike and Gill Farmer also pitch in on the night.

### **From Neil Carmichael, your local MP**

Last month saw elections locally – all seats for Stroud District Council were contested as was the relatively new position of Police and Crime Commissioner. A number of Parishes also saw elections for their Councillors. It is a sign of a secure democracy when so many candidates from a wide range of political and independent positions

seek election so, to them all, thank you for giving so much of your time to this vital civic activity.

Stroud District Council has a similar political balance to the proceeding one with some 'churn' coming from the impact of boundary reviews. It's really important to have good local councillors who will speak up for you on issues such as planning and hold the Council in Stroud to account for its decisions.

Next, on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, the referendum to decide on our membership of the European Union looms large. This will be the most important decision we make through the ballot box for some decades to come. It is nothing less than the fate of our nation being in our hands; my views on this referendum are very clear and can be seen on my web-site, but I would strongly urge all people who will take part in this vote to ensure that they are as well informed on this matter as they can be.

If you would like to contact me about this, or any local issues, please email at [neil.carmichael.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:neil.carmichael.mp@parliament.uk)

## **Walking for Health in Severnside – Frampton Surgery PPG**

The next walk in the Walking for Health scheme in the area will take place on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> June from Saul Canal Junction by the footbridge at 9.45 am for a 10.00 am start. A pay and display car park is available alongside the canal and some free kerb side car parking a little distance away. The walk will include some field paths and stiles. The walk will be a maximum of 2 miles in length (approx 1 hour in time). All are welcome. For more information please contact Nick Peters on 01452 740285 or email [nandanilsworth@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nandanilsworth@yahoo.co.uk)

## **Talk 'Understanding Mental Health' – Frampton Surgery PPG**

A talk on understanding Mental health will be held at the Cadbury Hall, Frampton on Severn, on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> June to start at 7.00pm given by Dr. Henie LeRoux. There will be no charge for this talk. For further information please contact Jill Hurren on 720539

## **Neighbourhood Warden**

Our Neighbourhood Warden is Carol Novoth. She is employed by Stroud District Council. She can provide support with the following issues: supporting vulnerable people; intimidating or anti-social behaviour; abandoned vehicles; bogus callers; home security and crime prevention advice; hate crime and bullying; litter, dog fouling, fly tipping; and 'lots, lots more'.

You can contact Carol on: 01453 754514 or 07970 250343, or email her: [carol.novoth@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:carol.novoth@stroud.gov.uk)

## **Gloucestershire Orchard Trust**

**Saving Orchards in Longney, Elmore, Epney, Framilode and Arlingham areas – looking for volunteers!**

Gloucestershire has long been famous for its traditional orchards – tall trees standing in pasture - but in the past 50 years over 80% have been lost. Fabulous old orchards have been grubbed up as the market for fruit has disappeared or have been threatened by developer's chainsaws.

Others are slowly vanishing through neglect.

It's only relatively recently that we have started to understand what important places they are for wildlife and for people. Orchards are attracting the attention of conservationists and heritage experts – their meadows contain most of the unimproved grassland in the U.K., they are refuges for some of our rarest beetles and home to a wealth of insects, mammals and birds. Many have grown, undisturbed, on the same land for generations, the last guardians of varieties which have been bred to suit the soil and the land.

The Three Counties Traditional Orchard Project (TCTOP) was set up in order to help restore some of the orchards which are left and county orchard groups, including the well established Gloucestershire Orchard Trust, are leading the way in renovating some of our oldest orchards. We work with local people, training them in orchard skills so that they can help local owners to look after their orchards.

We're looking for more people to get involved with the project to help keep the lovely old orchards in this area. You can join us for a work day where we'll show you some basic orchard skills and help you put what

you learn into practice in the orchards. It's a great opportunity to enjoy fresh air, exercise and good company as well as the chance to learn something new. There's a job for everyone no matter what your age or experience.

We are particularly looking for volunteers in the Longney, Elmore, Epney, Framilode, Arlingham and Minsterworth areas and surrounding parishes, as well as Gorsley and Kilcot. One of the project orchards is the beautiful 18 acres at Longney, now owned by the Gloucestershire Orchard Trust.

Please contact Ann Smith, Coordinator of the Gloucestershire Orchard Trust, [info@gloucestershireorchardtrust.org.uk](mailto:info@gloucestershireorchardtrust.org.uk)

[www.gloucestershireorchardtrust.org.uk](http://www.gloucestershireorchardtrust.org.uk)

01452 855677

or Karen Humphries, Project Officer for the TCTOP,

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## **First Elmore Guides**

This term we are doing lots of outdoor activities, we have had our annual fishing competition where for the first time we had a draw between two patrols. We visited the police headquarters at Quedgeley and had a tour round the force control room and got to see live calls being dealt with. We have also had one of the girls organise a meeting on Australia and Mexico for her Baden-Powell Award, which included bush tucker trials! During the half term we will be going on camp to Deer Park, Cowley. We are also looking forward to having a tea party for the Queen's 90th birthday and to make bee houses.

If your daughter is interested in joining Guides, please contact Catherine on 01452 722444.

## **First Elmore Brownies**

This is the term we try to do lots out of doors, weather permitting. So far this term we have visited Tesco and did our Farm to Fork Badge with them and had a really enjoyable evening which included sampling some healthy food and looking on labels to see where in the world our food comes from. We have a Pack Holiday planned for the Whitsun weekend at Deer Park, Cowley and looking forward after half term to a Tea Party to celebrate the Queens 90th Birthday and working towards the Wildlife Explorer Badge including making bee houses and pond

dipping with the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust at Robinswood Hill, finishing on the 11th July with a Sausage Sizzle over open fires at the gravel wash Frampton with Severnside Cubs.

If you would like your daughter to become a Brownie please contact Jenny on 01452 722444.

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## The Island Book Club

You may remember that The Island Book Club ran a competition in The Bridge a few months ago and it is gratifying that our local rag is read and inwardly digested by a few! We are pleased to announce that we have a winner. Mrs Val Overton came closest to guessing the answer to

how many titles could be found in Linda Lovell's compilation of the books we have read since the group started. The answer was, in fact 61 titles, although we have read a few more in the meantime. The Island Book Club will be contacting Mrs Overton shortly to present her with a small prize. Thank you to everyone who took part in the competition. KEEP READING.