

THE BRIDGE

Produced by Elmore Parish Council
Issue No. 2 - October 2014



From the Editor - Trevor Jones

Welcome to this our second issue. The response to the first issue of The Bridge was so enthusiastic! It has certainly confirmed the need for a village magazine. Now so many people have agreed to put pen to paper that I have had to double the size of this 2nd issue. I have also increased the font size a little in response to your requests. I am grateful for the agreement of Elmore Parish Council to fund these increases

In this issue you will find reports of the many interesting things going on in Elmore. How are things at Elmore Court? What have the farming community been doing this summer? What was going on in Elmore in 1914? What is this year's pantomime? When will we get faster broadband? It's all here, and much more.

So, I hope you enjoy The Bridge.

'Sinbadaladdin'

The Village Players have begun rehearsing for their annual pantomime, 'Sinbadaladdin! by Richard Lloyd. Join Aladdin and Sinbad the Sailor in Old Peking as they battle against Abanazar and Mrs Cheng alongside her crew of Yangtze pirates, with popular favourites like Widow Twankee, Wishee-Washee and Princess Jasmine helping along the way. Performances run from 27th November - 6th December. Tickets go on sale 27th October 2014 - £7.00 for adults and £4.00 for children. To purchase tickets, once on sale, please call our Box Office 01452 722245. We hope you will come and join us on our adventure across the Orient.

Amy Parkin, Village Players Secretary

Services at Elmore Parish Church

You are always welcome to join us for Sunday worship.

This quarter our Sunday Services continue according to the pattern:



First Sunday of the Month – Parish Eucharist 9.30am

Second Sunday – Evensong with Hymns 6.30pm

Third Sunday of the Month – Parish Eucharist 9.30am

Fourth Sunday – Evensong with Hymns 6.30pm until the clocks change when the service of Evensong at Elmore Church on October 26th will be at 3.00pm

The autumn brings a number of keynote services at Elmore Church:

Harvest Festival at Elmore - Sunday October 12th

A service of traditional hymns and readings with the Church Choir at 6.30pm.

Remembrance Sunday – Sunday November 9th

There will be a service with a contribution from The Village Players at 2.30 in the church. At 3.45 we will gather at Elmore War memorial for wreath laying and two minutes silence

From the Registers of Elmore Parish Church

Funerals

July 27th Memorial Service and Interment of Ashes of John Ryder 85 years

Weddings

July 4th Christopher and Laura Tl

July 11th Andrew and Jocelyn Wormald

July 26th Andrew and Hallane Matjaszek

August 1st Rory and Hayley Follett

August 23rd Stephanie and Joseph Spry

Baptisms

August 10th Isabella Watts



What's going on down on the farm?

Farming remains at the heart of Elmore but these days few of us are actively involved in the industry so we thought an occasional report about what has been going on on the land would be interesting.

The Grower

It has been said many times that no two seasons are ever the same. This season has had its own character – very wet early on followed by some of the best growing condition in May June and July that I can ever remember. Grass, runner beans, raspberries, blackberries sloes and most other fruit are all in abundance.

This has been true of most farm crops; maize has enjoyed the warm weather of June and July with good rainfall from time to time making perfect conditions for the crop. Cereals have been more mixed in their performance, the well drained fields doing well whilst some of the heavier clay soils have not recovered from their soaking in 2012 and the sub soils have remained wet. We do use a subsoil implement to improve drainage and this works fairly well if the subsoil is not too wet but is less effective in very wet conditions.

Another nationwide problem is blackgrass which is a weed grass favouring clay land. For those of you not familiar with this weed, it's not black, produces thousands of seeds, is expensive to spray and it's a dark day when you get it.

We are already planting for next year; the oil seed rape is already in and wheat will follow it in a few weeks weather permitting.

Prices of cereals have hit rock bottom in recent weeks, yet we still plant. You have to be an optimist to farm; this glorious September weather helps.

Michael Watts, Elm Farm

The Diary of a Dairy Farmer

Things change daily on a dairy farm and not everything can be planned or organised; you soon forget what happened a few days ago when another problem arises the day after. Focus changes by the hour sometimes. Since dairy farming is a 7 day a week industry much of the work is routine, ie. milking, feeding, mucking out and office work but on top of this much is also the complete opposite. We can only plan so far for animals escaping, extreme weather, power cuts and health problems – and when they occur they become priority and all other work has to wait.

We have a herd of 180 milking cows, both Holstein Friesian and Brown Swiss. If you get stuck on the road when the cows are crossing to be milked look for a few lighter brown and dark brown cows amongst the herd; these are the Brown Swiss breed. I am the part time secretary for the Brown Swiss Breed Association. Jerry has been in charge of cattle breeding since he was 16 when his father, Jim, handed him a bull catalogue and told him this was his task! Jim came here in 1970, which makes us probably one of the newest farming families in Elmore. I moved up in 1993 the year Jerry and I we got married. Spring/Summer on the farm is usually the busiest for fieldwork and forage. One of the most important operations of the spring/summer season is silaging. Grass is brought in to be clamped (stored and in effect pickled, no air, no moisture, just tightly stored). The grass silage constitutes a fair proportion of the cows diet, so it is crucial we get this right. We are therefore always looking for that window of opportunity of bright, dry days. We take 3 to 4 cuts of grass in a season to ensure that we have as much grass silage as we can harvest. If we can't ensile it, we bale and wrap it.

Producing good silage starts the year before when Jerry is looking at grass leys which need reseeding and selecting seed varieties which will suit particular soils. In autumn or early spring there is the preparation of soil and planting, which can be a different operation dependent on your soil type. There is also weed control and feeding the soil to carry out. Analysis of the soils and the health of the grasses are looked at in detail with the help of our agronomist.

Our herdsman Jamie and general farm worker Nick help to keep the farm running. Our children also help out during school and college holidays; Emily is off to Hartpury to study Agriculture – Ollie and Sam are off to do Agriculture and Agri-Business degrees at Harper Adams, so I guess you could say that it is in the blood!

Going into the autumn we have started to bring in straw bales from neighbours Michael Watts and Graham Littleton's arable fields. And we will soon be looking to harvest the maize - an important forage crop for the cows' diet. It looks like it will yield well this year after a good spring & summer. Now we are preparing for the cooler nights and the animals coming in to their winter housing. Once the extreme rains of the winter were over the weather has been fairly kind to us farmers this year, so for that we are very grateful.

Jenni Hobbs, Barhouse Farm (Sept 2014)

1st Elmore Guides

This summer we have been doing lots of outdoor activities, we have been fishing, visited Frampton Wool Barn, done outdoor cooking and made it to the top of Robinswood Hill! We also took part in the last ever Malvern Challenge and went camping at Cowley, we all enjoyed camping and can't wait for the next one. This term we have had our first Great Guide Bake Off. We all enjoyed it especially eating the cake. We have been collecting food to support Gloucester Food Bank and have had a talk from one of the volunteers. We are all looking forward to our visit to the Body Shop for a pamper evening.

1st Elmore Guides is looking for leaders. If you know anybody who is interested in becoming an Adult Leader, please call Catherine on (01452) 722444.

Pilates

The course after half term will start on Friday 7th November. Contact Laura Gardner-Wedge for details. laura@gwphysiotherapy.co.uk

From Elmore Parish Council

Broadband - Improvements to your download speeds

You may recall that some years ago BT attempted to drill under the canal to lay additional telephone cables to Elmore. Sadly this scheme failed with the loss of the drilling mole costing BT some £75k. Not surprisingly it was abandoned.

However, your Parish Council has kept up the pressure on BT and Open Reach to improve the quality telephone connections and broadband speeds. The Government initiative to deliver faster rural broadband has given our case added impetus.

A Severn Voice Meeting in May 2014 briefed local councillors on the Fastershire scheme to deliver faster broadband. Many questions remained so your Parish Council asked BT and Fastershire to address a local group within just Elmore and Longney, focussing on the specific problems we face.

So on 29th August BT and Fastershire gave a detailed account of problems they face and their plans to overcome them. There is no miracle cure but the prospects do look good.

The Problems

The Canal – only one telephone line exists from the Hardwicke Exchange to Elmore. This naturally has a very limited capacity.

The Cables – Existing cables are copper or aluminium. They are old and stretch a long way from the Exchange.

The Distance – signal degradation for broadband occurs when the distance from the exchange and/or distribution boxes exceeds 1km. In Elmore we are between 2kms and 5kms!

The Solutions

A new hi-tech system. Fastershire will install a ‘Radio Backhaul’ system involving firing a microwave signal from the Hardwicke Exchange to our side of the canal. Two new masts will be erected, one to fire the signal and the other to receive it. Time Frame: before the end of October 2014.

Upgrading the existing cables. Openreach will survey the existing ducting and where possible install a fibre-optic cable – probably as far as the Village Hall. If this is not possible the old copper cables will be

replaced along with new relay boxes. If the distance from these new boxes to householders can be reduced to less than 1km we should be able to receive broadband download speeds of +/- 24Mb/s. Time Frame: over the next 18 months with the aim to have the system tested and functioning by the end of 2015.

Going Live: Fastershire will inform us when the system is fully operational.

What do we need to do?

Once the new system is operational there will be no automatic upgrade for users. It will be necessary for individual householders to organise the service they require with their current Internet Service Provider (ISP) or switch to another one offering a better deal.

However, be wary of signing-up for a download speed that is not technically possible, i.e. don't sign-up for a 50Mb download speed when the fastest possible for you is only 24 Mb.

If you want to keep up-to-date with developments regarding the installation you can register with Fastershire by visiting their website and logging on to the 'Keep me Posted' section:

www.fastershire.com

Flooding – Update as at 1st October 2014

Little has changed since our last Newsletter. In the wake of the Somerset floods of last winter, extra funds have been allocated by the Government to the Environment Agency (EA) in order to improve flood defences and to continue maintenance of existing defences. The EA's Tewkesbury Office has recently published the figures for 'estimated' costs for either capital intervention or maintenance for various areas along the River Severn.

Our local MP, Neil Carmichael, made a clear promise at the meeting of the Severn Voice in March that not only had the sum of £274,000 been allocated to cope with problems at Elmore and Longney, a further £1m was promised by the Government to address problems on both sides of the River Severn within Gloucestershire. Sadly, this seems to have been an empty promise as the total figure shown on this list of estimated costs for the whole of the lower Severn on both sides

of the River is only £56,100 which amounts to less than 20% of the figure promised for just Elmore and Longney.

In some areas such as Lydney, Westbury, Rodley, Minsterworth, Stonebench (Weir Green), Upper Framilode and Arlingham the EA intend to “*maintain and sustain to keep pace with climate change*”; in other areas including Elmore Back, Longney and Slimbridge the EA’s ‘strategy’ is to “*maintain into the medium-long term*”. Most of the locations have specific funds allocated but Elmore Back is the one of the three locations that does not! Furthermore, in Elmore Back’s case the caveat of maintenance has ‘*adaption*’ added to it.

Across the River from Weir Green is Minsterworth Ham the EA’s strategy there is to “*...maintain as long as economical benefits outweigh cost..*”.

Sadly, all the figures in the EA’s schedule of works have rather too many unexplained caveats attached to them to make them meaningful. Such wording as “*subject to available funding*” gives little comfort or confidence that the strategies for expenditure related work will actually be translated into action.

None of these strategies are explained,so we can assume that the EA’s policy, outlined in the Severn Estuary Flood Risk Management Strategy (SEFRMS) published last year for consultation, has not changed in the slightest.

Therefore, we can also assume that the EA’s long term intention for Elmore Back is to allow it to flood as sea levels rise and then create a wildlife habitat by ‘adapting’ the flood defences?

The hype surrounding the high tides accompanying the Severn Bores in August and September did not produce any problems but those living adjacent to the River would be advised not only to keep an eye on the Severn Bore timetables for future years but also register with the EA in order to receive flood warnings.

Police Advice with the clocks changing soon, review your house security. If you are away arrange for dusk to dawn lights to be on – possibly on a timer – making the house look occupied. This can make all the difference. Don’t leave valuables on display. Make sure all windows and doors are locked when away or out. Make sure fences are in good order. Put away tools and garden furniture – these can aid entry

The First World War: Extracts from the Elmore Church Monthly Magazine gathered by Jennifer Watts

May 1916 Milking

In order to encourage boys and girls to learn milking, an effort has been made to teach them and on April 20th Lady Guise distributed prizes to the following:- Harry Camm, Edwin Ryder, Fred Clark, Willie Camm, Florrie Watts, Lettia Vick, Frank Littleton, Ernest Gabb, Willie Bedwell, Sidney Clark, Willie Ryder, Harold Hinder who have been through a year's training. The first four have milked everyday!

June 1916: News of our Defenders.

We all felt sympathy for Mr and Mrs Lovell when we heard that their eldest son, Sergeant Charles Lovell had been "*seriously wounded in Egypt*", but the latest cable is distinctly cheering. It reads "*improving conditions, very satisfactory*". Amongst those, who have joined recently are Fred Dawe, Harry Dawe, Ernest Heaven, Reginald Mayo, Joseph Merrett, William Reynolds, H.W. Vaughn and Sidney Webb. We do not forget them at our Sunday Services. Each one is remembered by name. Private Tom Greenaway has had a second stay in hospital, this time at Aldershot. The changeable weather caused him to catch a chill and then bronchitis and lumbago followed. We are glad he is well now and on the 'active list' again. Private Miles writes cheerfully from somewhere in France. Private W.R. Watts is very busy at Rifle Butts somewhere in Kent. Private French has been laid up with a poisoned foot, but was getting well. Private Fred Watts is somewhere on the coast enjoying his new experience

Elmore PCC

A new Banner has been made for Saint John the Baptist Church, Elmore and dedicated by Andrew James at a morning service. It was sewn by by Geneveve Taylor, Trish Kingshott, Pauline Ellis and Jennifer Watts with tuition and advice from Janice Williams.

Elmore Court – a message from Anselm Guise

We are now approaching the end of our first year in business at Elmore Court as a wedding and events venue and thankfully it has been a great success. At the time of writing we have hosted nearly 35 weddings and have nearly 120 booked going forward right into 2016. The Gillyflower has been a triumph and seems to be working from the point of view of noise. No one can hear a thing...! or at least that's what we hope..? It would be wonderful to get some feedback as to what people really think but we are assuming no news is good news.

The Court, The Gillyflower and the grounds seem to be enjoying being used so much and we have finally improved the back road into the property which I know has pleased the game keeper and his wife! The offices are now in the old wood shed and we have a permanent staff of 4 working from there; moving the offices out of the house has been great for Sarah and I as we are now living back in the Court and even we hardly notice the comings and goings of a busy venue. Our children love it which is clearly a good thing, especially as young Wylder has just started at Longney School and needs his beauty sleep!

The next stage of my journey to make the Estate increasingly self sustainable is to look at ways of using the land to provide food for our kitchens as we develop the catering side of the business and we are already providing all of the heating using wood from the Elmore woodlands via our Biomass Boiler set up.

So it's all rather exciting, tiring, time consuming and we're always surrounded by people having the best day of their lives.

Our doors really are always open should anyone want to get involved or are just curious and I hope that what we are doing is a success for you too.

Please check our website for more - www.elmorecourt.com

Frampton Surgery Talks

Many Elmore people are registered with Frampton Surgery. Pauline Ellis is the secretary of Frampton Surgery Patient Participation Group. The group arranges occasional talks on important health issues. The talks are open to all.

There will be one on Strokes to be held at 'Ley Bistro' The Green, Frampton-on-Severn, GL2 7DY at 7pm on Tuesday 25th November. 'Ley Bistro is close to the Three Horseshoes.

It is hoped to run further talks, one on dementia and another on nutrition on two dates to be decided. Watch this space.

Fun with Flowers, Saturday 1st November 2.30pm at Whitminster Village Hall.

An entertaining afternoon with Katherine Kear a British Master Florist extraordinaire and NAFAS National Demonstrator. Katherine is also a regular contributor and researcher for BBC Radio Gloucestershire.

Tickets £6 contact Rachel Williams tel 01452 740812 e.mail

mrks.williams@btinternet.com.

Harvest Supper

The Harvest Supper in aid of Elmore Church will be held on Saturday 18th October 2014 at 7.30 pm at the Village Hall. The evening will follow its usual format of good food and company. The ticket price will be £10.00 Bring your own Drinks. There will be a raffle.

We would welcome all residents in the village and their friends.

Tickets are available from Jennifer Watts 720233 and Jill Hurren 720539

Any Old Bikes?

The Rotary Club of Severnvalle is collecting redundant bikes for the Gloucestershire Bike Project. This Gloucester based group is a not-for-profit social enterprise that works with vulnerable youngsters and adults, teaching bike maintenance and repair. Vulnerable teenagers get help to progress their lives. Refurbished bikes are donated to charities, schools and other organisations. Some are sold at affordable prices to fund the work of the project . More details on this socially successful project are on their website, www.gloucestershirebikeproject.co.uk

If you have a redundant bike(s) please call Colin Ellis 01452 728253 or email colinellis50@hotmail.com. Please let me know how many bikes you have to donate and we will come back to you to arrange collection. You and your family will be making a difference to lots of people.

Colin Ellis, Rotary Club of Severnvalle

The Book Club

The birth of the book club, ‘The Island Reading Group’ was in February 2010. Three of the members, Sue Warren, Catherine Carter and Clare Stewart founded the club whose members live in and around Elmore. They meet in each other’s houses once a month to discuss the current book and enjoy social contact.

Each person chooses one book per year and the books are of all types, from biographies, novels and local interest books to books by contacts of the group, the classics and poetry. About three months in advance, the group is given a list of the important details like meeting dates, places and times as well as the book titles.

One of the most popular books has been ‘To Kill a Mocking Bird’ by Harper Lee. Sometimes the club tries to visit the theatre or the cinema to see a production which is linked to one of the books. ‘To Kill a

'Mocking Bird' is being shown again at The Everyman Theatre, Cheltenham, next spring, while the film 'Before I Go to Sleep' is on release this month and is of interest to members as this was one of the books a few months ago. The next book the club will be reading is 'The Mascot' by Mark Kurzem.

Unfortunately it is not possible to borrow books from the club as members usually borrow them from the library or buy them as eReaders. However, the club holds an annual event which raises money for charities chosen by the members – this is always well advertised locally and there is always a book stall with copies of the books.

At the moment the club's places are taken – twelve members is quite a challenge to squeeze around a table and give everyone a chance to air their opinions about the books. However, if you would like to set up your own book club, any members will be happy to help you – it would be fun to liaise with another lively and like minded group.

Corina Fust (visiting student) and Clare Stewart

Elmore WI

As there is no meeting in August we enjoyed a friendly skittles match at the Anchor and in September we had a talk on Syria.

Future meetings, as always, will be held on the second Tuesday of the month at 7.30 in the Village Hall. They include a demonstration on decoupage on October 14th and a talk on the history of Stroud on November 11th. On December 9th we will be holding our Christmas party.

We hope to be holding a quilling day in the near future and also a pottery day to make a Green Man wall plaque.

We are always happy to welcome new members so do come and try us out! Just come along or ring Gill on 01452 720544 for more details.

700th Anniversary!

A note for your 2015 diary

St John the Baptist Church, Elmore was consecrated in July 1315 by the Bishop of Worcester. To celebrate the 700th anniversary of the consecration, Elmore is holding a family weekend at the church on Friday 10th (preview evening), Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th July 2015.

A flower festival combined with displays of church archives and records plus historical information will feature within the church. Outside will be refreshments and a pay bar. For families there will be various fun events and competitions to occupy the children. Stalls will offer varied produce including cakes, books and plants for your garden. The weekend will conclude with a Songs of Praise service on Sunday evening.

Do come and join us. All proceeds will provide funds for Elmore Church

More information will follow early in the new year

**The Village Players
and Elmore Church**

Let's Remember


2014
Great War Centenary

On Remembrance Sunday, November 9th at 2.30pm
you are invited to a very special commemoration of the centenary
of the Great War in Elmore Church followed by Wreath Laying
at the Elmore Village War Memorial.

The Village Players will be presenting a sequence of readings, songs
and video and we will sing two memorable Remembrance Hymns
"O God our Help in Ages Past" and "Jerusalem".

Elmore Toddler Group is a small and friendly group that meet in Elmore Village Hall on Tuesday mornings 10 til 12 during term times. For babies to 4 years. Come and enjoy a cup of tea and a chat while the toddlers play. For more information ring Cath on 07774521289

VILLAGE HALL NEWS

Although bookings have been typically light over the Summer, our programme of improvements has continued. The final stage of the redecoration project, the lobbies and toilets, is now completed, together with refurbishment of the curtains. Two replacement storage heaters have been purchased and will soon be installed, giving us a more efficient, energy saving and cost effective system for the benefit and comfort of our hirers.

Finally, Mona Robertson has resigned as secretary of EVH Management Committee, a position which she has held since its formation 37 years ago. We thank Mona for her years of dedication to the Hall and I am pleased to announce that she is now an honorary member of the Committee. Pauline Fisher is to be Secretary until elections in April.

Many thanks to all users and supporters of the Hall.

John (Hardisty), Chairman

EVH SOCIAL COMMITTEE

We are pleased to welcome Cath Brint as Toddlers Group rep to our Committee.

In June, seventy smart ladies enjoyed a four course Ascot Lunch, followed by Susan Marshfield's amusing talk, 'Barefoot to Buckingham Palace', her experiences of Royal Garden Parties in the 1960's and 90's. The lunch was successful socially and financially generating a profit of £920 with £200 sent to the Air Ambulance. The weather held for our Village walk on October 5th & about 50 sat down to cottage pie and fruit crumble lunch. A healthy and sociable occasion, making £300.

Thanks to my loyal team of workers; Ann, Dorie, Jill, Pauline F, Barbara, Cath, Val & Gill. Not forgetting Brenda and Mona, members of the Social Committee since day one. Thanks also to those villagers who have cooked and donated food & raffle prizes.

For your diary - Race Night, Saturday 7th February 2015.

Su Hardisty

Contacts

What?	Who?	Telephone	email
Parish Council Chair	John Field	720237	fernhay@btinternet.com
Parish Council Vice Chair	Andy Nash	720903	andynash@talktalk.net
Parish Councillor	Jenni Hobbs	724633	jenni@barvaleholsteins.co.uk
Parish Councillor	Trevor Jones	722034	rose_cottage06@talktalk.net
Parish Councillor	Nick meek		nick@archies.me.uk
Parish Council Clerk	Dorie Jones	722034	elmore.parish@hotmail.co.uk
The Vicar	Fr Andrew James	720015	vicarage@inbox.com
Village Hall Chair	John Hardisty	721798	pikelett@hotmail.com
Village Hall Chair (social)	Su Hardisty	721798	pikelett@hotmail.com
Village Players	Amy Parkin	07557 793011	villageplayers@outlook.com
WI	Gill Farmer	720544	
Elmore Guides	Cathy Hartnell	722444	
Elmore Brownies	Jenny	722444	
Toddler Group	Cath Brint		cathbrint2014@hotmail.com
Bridge Club	Caroline Meek	720383	
Police	Non Emergency	101	
County Councillor	Tony Blackburn	01453 753429	
District Councillor	David Mossman	538686	
MP	Neil Carmichael	01453 751572	

Elmore Parish Council Meetings 2015

Monday 2nd March 2015

Tuesday 19th May 2015 (Annual Meetings)

Monday 28 September 2015

Monday 14th December 2015