

The Leigh & Coombe Hill Newsletter

Issue 146 August 2017

Parish Website: www.theleighpc.org.uk

Issue Editor: Jo Robson Deadline for next month's Newsletter articles: Thursday 17 August

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VILLAGE POND 'TIDY UP'

A huge 'thank you' to the band of willing helpers who turned up to transform the area around the village pond on Sunday 2nd July.

It was a scorcher and we all worked really hard. As usual, we were very well fed and watered - special thanks to Barry for his amazing rock buns and to Jayne (Old Well) for her delicious chocolate cake. Thanks also to Martin for letting us use the tractor and trailer to get rid of the waste with the assistance of Harriet.

We're keen to keep up the good work but may need some help from the Parish Council as some of the work that's needed is a bit beyond us!

We will have another session in the autumn - date to follow.

Thanks again
Rob & Nicky Walters



St Catherine's Services:

6th August Evening Prayer 6pm

13th August Worship Together 10am
(Down Hatherley)

20th August Holy Communion 8.30am

27th August Evening Prayer 6pm



Coffee Morning at Josie and Frank's (Coombe Hill) on 12 July raised £138

A big 'THANK YOU' to:

- Michael Kelsall for making the split tree in the churchyard safe
- everyone who mows and trims the churchyard



Parochial Church Council

IMPORTANT PARISH NEWS

Before the end of July you will receive an envelope marked 'Important Parish News' enclosing a questionnaire relating to future development within the Parish.

Please complete and return the form in the pre-paid envelope by the end of August. There will be two for each household aimed at covering all adults, however, should you need another form or do not receive one, please contact Kate Tilling (Parish Clerk).

The survey is anonymous and is vital in enabling the completion of our Neighbourhood Development Plan for the next twenty years.

Colin Withers



This promises to be a most interesting evening if my conversation with Dr Jones, on the bund in May, is anything to go by.

Martin Robson

The Deerhurst Lecture 2017

The Deer of Deerhurst: Landscape, Lordship, Custom and Ritual

by Dr Graham Jones (University of Oxford)



Earl Harold and his men ride to Bosham as a hunting party (from the Bayeux Tapestry)

**16th September 2017
at 7.30pm**

St Mary's Church, Deerhurst

Admission on the door from 7pm

Tickets £5 Students £3

(includes a glass of wine and cheese)

Visit www.deerhurstfriends.co.uk

AGM of the Friends in the Church at 6.15pm

Don't forget the 'Last Friday of the Month' get together in the Church.

All welcome - BYO nibbles and drinks.

Learn more from:

Janine and Brian Bramley 680336



Norton, Leigh & District 70th Horticultural Show

Vegetables, Fruit, Flowers, Wine,
Preserves & Cakes

**Norton Village Hall
Saturday 12 August 2017**

Schedules from:

Jo Robson, Mary Chandler,
Janet Broughton & Oliver Hidson

Entries to: Jo Robson, Daniels Orchard
by **Tuesday 8 August**

Mobile Library

Coombe Hill
3.10pm – 4.10pm

18 August
15 September
13 October



Full Parish Council
Meeting dates:

Wed 9 August
Wed 8 November

7.30pm
St Catherine's
Church, The Leigh

COOMBE HILL CANAL



Most villagers will be aware of the Coombe Hill Nature Reserve, a Site of Special Scientific Interest no less, at The Wharf.

The site is a naturally-occurring and nationally important wet meadowland, with a high number of different birds and rare flora and fauna. It is under the management of The Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, which has carried out management work with aid of Severn Trent Water and the then Nature Conservancy Council to restore the derelict canal. The area was severely flooded in the Gloucestershire floods of 2007, and significant restoration work was necessary.

A walk around the site is always interesting, but it is the canal which survives there which caught my attention. The Coombe Hill Canal runs west 2.75 miles (4.43 km) from The Wharf at the Coombe Hill Basin to the River Severn near Wainode Hill. The Canal was built to link the Forest of Dean coalfields with Cheltenham via the River Severn, but emerging competition from railways for shifting heavy freight loads, and then maintenance difficulties, eventually led to the canal's closure.

The canal was commissioned in 1792 and was probably opened in 1796. It closed 80 years later. The cost of construction was about £5,000 and the completed canal could take barges carrying 60-70 tons. It was meant to carry goods to Cheltenham, including coal to the gas works where the main Tesco store now stands, but the extension into town was never built. The gap of nearly five miles between the canal and the town meant the canal was not as useful as it might have been. In 1822 it was leased to a number of committeemen from the Worcester & Birmingham Canal, presumably with the aim of linking it with others in the West Midlands, and then in 1849 the lease was taken up by the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal, which was also unable to make the canal pay. When it surrendered the lease in 1867, cargo fell to 1,800 tons per annum. The Coombe Hill Canal Company then asked the engineer of the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal to provide a report, which took the view that the canal could not be made profitable, and it would be best turned into an oyster bed. Despite this, the canal company tried to run the canal itself for a few years before selling it in 1871 for £520. The canal was resold for £1,000 in 1873 but in 1876 it was abandoned as the new owners were unable to afford to repair flood damage to the lock that connected it to the River Severn.

As you all know, I would be the last person to pass on scurrilous gossip. Keep this to yourselves, but I have been told that The Swan at Coombe Hill, now a popular pub and restaurant, used to provide entertainment of an entirely different kind in its upstairs rooms. Canal men and coal porters, with money burning holes in their pockets and time on their hands before taking the canal boats back to the river and beyond, were frequently relieved of both their time and money before they headed back to the Forest. Something to chew over next time you visit The Swan.

Derek Brandon (with acknowledgements to Wikipedia)

NORTON & THE LEIGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In 1999 a few of us got together and started Norton & The Leigh Historical Society which has been going strong ever since. As well as monthly meetings at Norton Village Hall we have been producing The Journal on a monthly basis. The Journal (August 2017 will be the 191st issue) contains articles and photographs of historical interest to our villages.

The Journal has always been sold on an annual arrangement with the issues being printed and then either hand delivered or posted to certain people distant from our area. With more and more people now happily using the internet and having e-mail addresses, and the fact that a number of people already receive the village newsletters in such a manner, we have decided to offer people the option of receiving The Journal by e-mail each month. In addition to lowering our costs for printing and postage it would also save on paper.

A number of you may already be receiving The Journal each month and will continue to do so in exactly the same manner as previously unless you tell us otherwise. If anyone would be happy to change to receiving by e-mail please let me know.

The face price for The Journal is 50p per copy which covers any expenses incurred in researching and producing the publication each month. If you would like to be included on an e-mail distribution for The Journal, I am proposing to start from August 2017 and initially include the 5 issues to the end of this calendar year at £2.50.

If you have any particular interests in our villages, be that a place, house, person, family, I would be happy to search all previous issues of The Journal on your behalf in case we have included any articles in earlier years. If you have any ideas for future articles or have any photographs that you think would be of interest I would also like to hear from you.

If you would like to subscribe for the remainder of 2017, if you have something to share with our readers, or would just like some additional information, please contact me by e-mail (maidment_steve@hotmail.com).

I can assure you that your e-mail addresses would not be shared or used for any other purposes.

Steve Maidment

Save the Date!!!

The village rounders match will take place during the afternoon of Sunday 3 September @ Daniels Orchard from 3pm – bring your picnic tea and the sunshine.



Loose Change Boxes for St Catherine's Church

This half-year total has included Euros, Centimes and 'brother-in-law's pennies'! It all made a great total of £229.13.

Thank you so much to those who have contributed to St Catherine's Church, which is also our Community Building. This money will, as always, go towards the running costs.

Thank you again. **Janine**



Anyone for Wimbledon Tennis 2018?



In order to enter the Public Ballot for The Championships 2018, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to AELTC, PO Box 98, London, SW19 5AE between 1 September and 15 December 2017. **Good Luck!**