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Catshill & North Marlbrook

Parish Council

Newsletter Spring 2014

First World War Commemorations



MOST people will be aware that this year is the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War.

The total number killed defies comprehension with around 700-900,000 British military casualties and if civilians are included the total number of deaths across Europe was around 17 million.

A number of men from the parish and the surrounding area died in this war and their names are engraved on the Memorial at the junction of Meadow Road and Stourbridge Road.

The Parish Council felt that we owe a great debt not just to the men who gave everything but all those who served and the many who 'did their bit' as civilians back home.

As such we intend to commemorate (not celebrate) the sacrifices made with a number of events:

- **A service at the Memorial on Monday 28th July - the 100th anniversary of the start of the conflict**
- **An afternoon in the Village Hall with readings, a talk or similar.**
- **Over the four years some research on how the war impacted on the people of the Catshill and North Marlbrook area.**
- **To step up our efforts to trace relatives of the men whose names are on the Memorial and add any information gleaned to our existing archive.**
- **To liaise with local schools with a view to putting on a WWI-themed concert**

Anybody wishing to contribute, having any other ideas or able to supply information for our archive should contact the clerk at the Parish Council Office at the Village Hall.

www.catshillandnorthmarlbrook-pc.gov.uk

A Message from the Chair

SINCE my last article the Parish Council hosted the annual bonfire and firework display and are already planning for this year's display. This event continues to go from strength to strength each year. The same applies to the Remembrance Day Service that we organise in conjunction with The Royal British Legion and Catshill Churches. It is really good to see so many people turn out for the two events.



It was an honour for the Parish Council to fund the Centenary Year Pottery project at Catshill First School and Nursery earlier this year. This not only provided a lasting wall display, but also reinforced the role the schools have at the heart of our community. Keeping with the youth, we have funded the purchase of equipment for the new Beaver Colony in Catshill as part of our continued support of the youth in the parish.

The Parish Council continues to maintain the three gardens in the area. We received many compliments on the quality of the planting at the Ivy Gardens, and that should be repeated this season. Last autumn many sack loads of bulbs were planted around the parish, particularly along the A38. These have provided a great display this spring and it is hoped to plant more this autumn. We are also supporting The Royal British Legion's Centenary Poppy Campaign by distributing packets of Flanders poppy seeds during the coming weeks.

Members of the Parish Council have been involved in the consultation process that is ongoing with the Highways Agency regarding the two projects on the M5 motorway and we will continue this work.

I am pleased to report that following the Annual Parish Meeting in April, we now have a nucleus of interested parties to form a committee to re-launch the Catshill Fun Day next year.

Finally, we replaced the bus shelter outside of Catshill First School and Nursery, setting it back into the hedge so as to make the pavement wider which will stop members of the public having to step into the road to pass

the bus stop. Part of this was funded by Worcestershire County Council through Councillor Sheila Blagg.

Alan Kelly. Catshill & North Marlbrook Parish Council. Chairman.

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Remembrance Day Service



The Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial

THE Remembrance Day Services on 10th November once again attracted large crowds; possibly being the best attended in living memory, no doubt helped by warm, dry weather.

Branch Chair of Lickey End Royal British Legion, Dawn Bowyer, commented “it is reassuring to see members of this community out in such numbers to pay their respects to those from Catshill who paid the ultimate price during the two world wars and I would like to thank

everyone for their generous support of this year's Poppy Appeal".

As part of the commemoration of the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, the Parish Council would like to hear from anyone who has a relative named on the Catshill War Memorial, so that we can start to collate some back ground on the fallen and preserve it for future generations. Please contact the Clerk to the Parish Council if you can help.

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Happy 100th Birthday Catshill First School & Nursery

EARLIER this year the clerk and several parish councillors helped pupils, parents and staff celebrate 100 years of Catshill First School. The councillors joined



One Of The Birthday Cakes At The School Celebrations

parents and friends witness a school assembly where pupils and staff dressed as they would have 100 years ago. The children sang songs that would have been sung over the last century, including “It’s a long way to Tipperary” and “Pack up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit-Bag” both of which became popular morale boosting songs among soldiers in the First World War, which of course started 100 years ago.

Interesting entries were also read out from the head teachers’ log book which reported precise information from days



The Ceramic Part Funded By The Parish Council



Pupil Maddie Lawrence With Her Mother, Grandmother & Great Grandmother – All Former Pupils.

gone by, including a mention of the outside swimming pool which no longer exists. Then, mimicking the style of the past, the headmaster who was sternly dressed in cap and gown along with a cane, marched into the room, addressed the assembled crowd and called out the names of the children he would deal with later for having committed various misdemeanours!

The assembly was a most enjoyable and joyous occasion, and it was clear that all of the children were thoroughly enjoying the celebrations which concluded with the unveiling of a large ceramic plaque depicting the school building, which is made up of individual tiles that the pupils had helped make. We are proud to say that the Parish Council contributed funding for this beautiful work of art. Now on display within the school, it will serve as a lasting reminder of the first 100 years of the school.

Christmas Tree

FOR many years your parish council has hosted both a summer and a winter free to enter competition. The summer competition is where we award first second and third prizes for the “Best Floral Display” (tubs and baskets etc) that can be seen from the road, and we are pleased to announce that we will be running this competition as usual this coming summer. However as announced in the last edition of this newsletter, we decided not to run the winter “Best Christmas Lights” competition last year and for the foreseeable future. Instead, we decided to redirect the prize money into providing an illuminated Christmas tree that would be enjoyed by all within the parish. It was positioned at the front of the Village Hall, thus helping provide some Christmas cheer opposite the shopping area of Catshill. We hope you enjoyed the tree, and although we realise it did not stand out quite as much as we hoped, we plan to provide another tree next Christmas and will look at ways of increasing its impact.



Christmas Tree Outside The Village Hall



Do you need a Helping Hand?

If you are looking for an **alternative to residential care** or extra support for those everyday tasks that are becoming difficult for you or a loved one – then we’re here to help - **from 30 minutes per week to Live-in Care.**

Our **Catshill & North Marlbrook care team** has been providing award winning quality homeworke since 1989 and can help with: personal care, housekeeping, help getting around or even to provide a break to an existing family member or care-giver.



To find out how we can help you,
call: 01905 401 958 or
visit: www.helpinghands.co.uk

Can You Help the Fun Continue?

THE spring edition of this newsletter usually advertises the Catshill Fun Day; an exciting community event held in May on the Catshill Meadow. This event has been held for many years, having its roots in the Catshill Carnival that started in 1977. However news of the Fun Day in this edition is very different...

Sadly, due to various reasons the North West Ward Association (NWWA), the charity that look after the Meadow and who have traditionally organised the Fun Day are unable to arrange the event this year, and so there will **not** be a Fun Day for 2014.

It is hoped that this will simply be a one year break, because as discussed at the recent Annual Parish Meeting, representatives of the NWWA, parish councillors and members of the public agreed that if possible a new organising committee should be setup with a view to reintroducing the Fun Day for 2015.

So this is *Your* chance to volunteer to join the small but enthusiastic group of individuals who will hopefully get this important annual event reinstated. If you can spare some time to attend meetings and contribute ideas, then we want to hear from you. Remember you will not be alone, but part of a team; so if you can help, please contact the clerk ASAP.

Street Theatre to come to Catshill on 4th August!

THERE will still be some fun on the Meadow this summer when Street Theatre organised by Bromsgrove District Council comes to Catshill.

On Monday 4th August, the Bread & Butter Theatre will be on the Meadow, where those that attend will witness fun and games as 80's PE teachers Mr Stretch and Mr Armstrong try to get the nation fit using their enthusiasm, a roving musical pommel horse and some PE Kits rescued from the lost and found locker!

If you are free, then do go along and enjoy this new community event.



Do you want to hold an event on the Meadow?

THE NWWA are keen to raise money to help maintain the Meadow, and one way in which they can do this is by hiring out the Meadow. So if you, your group or organisation would like to hold an outside event on the Meadow such as a Weekend Car Boot Sale, then the NWWA would like to hear from you. They will consider any event as long as the impact on the neighbours is acceptable. Call 01527 873066 for more information.

What's happening at the Methodist Church?



Work Starts On The Catshill Methodist Church Extension

YOU may well have noticed that building work is underway at the Methodist Church in Golden Cross Lane - but what most people want to know is exactly what is happening! Planning permission has been granted for a new porch to be built on the front of the church with large glass doors so that anyone will be able to see what is going on inside the building, which the church hopes will make it an even more welcoming place than it already is. In addition there will be a new

disabled toilet where the old porch was, a new purpose built kitchen, so that the church can be used during the week to provide a meeting place and even a coffee shop, plus a new ramp inside for wheelchair access. Work is due to be completed by the end of June and then more information will be available about any new activities that are planned.



Step By Step The Building Work Progresses

Best Floral Display Competition 2014
Free to enter!
No need to tell us
 we will tour the parish and award
1st 2nd and 3rd cash prizes
 For the best tub and basket floral
 displays within the parish.
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M5 junction 4 - Lydiate Ash traffic island

DRIVERS in the parish will be aware of preparation works on the M5 and surrounding roads in advance of the main project that is to start in June and will see the Lydiate Ash traffic island widened from its current three lanes to four. This work has been designed to tackle congestion by widening the junction and creating a new lane.

These works are part of the national pinch point programme which forms part of the UK Government's growth initiative, outlined during the Chancellor's Autumn Statement in November 2011. The work is expected to start in June 2014 and last for approximately 48 weeks.



Aerial View Of The M5 J4 As It Is Today

The Highways Agency state the reason for this work is because the junction suffers from congestion, especially during peak travel times, on the A491 and A38 approaches, which leads to traffic queuing on the M5 exit slip roads. The estimated cost is £11.3 million.

The Highways Agency intend to:

- **widen the circulatory carriageway to provide four lanes around the roundabout**
- **Widen the two existing bridge structures to create space for the new inside lane**
- **Realign the circulatory carriageway section between the two A38 approaches to create a fourth lane**
- **lengthen the northbound and southbound exit slip roads to increase capacity**
- **reduce environmental impacts during construction**

It is claimed the benefits will:

- **significantly improve the flow of traffic around the roundabout**
- **allow easier exits and reduce queuing back onto the motorway**
- **help to reduce daily congestion and improve traffic flow between the M5 and M42**
- **reduce journey times for the travelling public and improve journey time reliability**
- **improve safety through the addition of technology to monitor traffic and manage incidents**

The overall aim of the scheme is to support the economy by providing much needed additional capacity at reduced costs, while maintaining safety for drivers, their passengers and those who work on the roads.

Notices have already been published in the local paper advising permission has been granted for road closures and reduced speed limits on local roads (A491 and A38) and on the M5 motorway. It is possible that residents may experience disruption to normal journeys at certain times but we have been assured that road closures will only happen at night after 9pm and if they are in the daytime they will more likely be at the weekends and for no longer than 48 hours. As far as we know only one such total closure is planned and this is when the new bridges will be winched into place; the date of this has yet to be advised.

More information can be found online at:

www.highways.gov.uk/roads/road-projects/m5-junction-4-improvements

From Our Past



*With teacher Mr. Dyke is: (Back Row L-R) Alan Weaver, Ian Graham, John Williams, Wayne Kings, David Stephens, Rob Thorley, Simon Morgan.
(Front Row L-R) Kevin Clarke, Adrian Dyer, Danny Hember, Steve Parry, Geoffrey Jones.*

WE are always interested to receive and publish photographs from our past, and in this edition, with the 2014 FIFA World Cup about to start in Brazil, we have decided to go back to the Mexico World Cup year of 1970. With thanks to Mr David Stephens, we are delighted to share with you a photograph from 44 years ago, not of the England team, but of Catshill First School's football team from their 1969/70 season. We hope this picture brings back happy memories to all who were around at a time when England were still (just!) world champions. If you have any interesting photographs of events, people or places from the past that you would like us to include in a future edition, then please let us know.

Cllr. Paul Masters.

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Another Amazing Display

THANK you to everyone who helped the parish council host another amazing bonfire and firework display last November. As you know, much organising and work has to go into this event. The hard work proved worthwhile as once again a huge crowd enjoyed the large bonfire and spectacular parish council funded firework display held in the Meadow, with Catshill Scouts (6th Bromsgrove) raising money by selling superb refreshments.



A new feature was introduced where numbered tickets were issued to visitors as they entered the Meadow; a draw was then conducted to select a lucky winner who would press a big red button to set the fireworks off. Congratulations to young Jacob Share who had the honour of pressing the button last year.



Good News

SATURDAY 1st November 2014 will see the fun repeated, so make sure you, your friends and family join us, and who knows, it could be you setting the fireworks off. Please also be aware that car parking for this event is **Free** if you park in the school yard opposite the Meadow.

Parish Council Finance

THE parish council's finances are open to inspection every year prior to the local government audit which will be on 16th June 2014. If anyone would like to see the accounts in detail please contact the Clerk. More information is available on our website and on the notice boards at Ivy Cottage garden and Old Birmingham Road near Tesco Express.

Marlbrook Recreation Ground Improvements



The New Changing Rooms At Marlbrook Recreation Ground

AFTER the submission of various plans, which led to much discussion, and then what seemed like a very long wait, followed by a period of construction, you may have noticed that the Braces Lane, Marlbrook recreation ground now has a new brick built changing room complex, complete with apex roof.

This is a most most welcome improvement to sporting facilities within the parish and gives current and future generations even better

facilities than those enjoyed by older readers and former residents. Many will remember the old 'cricket style' wooden pavilion on the Rec that served the community for decades before it succumbed to vandalism and became unfit for purpose.

The new building fits in well with the street scene and local surroundings and it is hoped the up-dated modern facilities will be a great asset to the teams who play at the ground, along with the enlarged and improved parking area that has been added in recent years.

Your parish council is also aware that several members of the public have recently expressed their delight at the new children's play area within this recreation ground, which is run by Bromsgrove District Council.

Meanwhile, in Catshill

THE North West Ward Association has gained planning permission for a Multi-use facility to replace the very old, basic concrete structure that has served the Meadow in Catshill for generations.

Thanks to grants from Veolia, Sport England and West Mercia Police, it is hoped that the construction will be completed by the end of the summer.

This is yet another exciting improvement to the Meadow which is maintained by the NWWA on behalf of the people of the village, but which is used by the wider community for sport and recreation, including the annual fireworks display.



Plans For The Catshill Meadow Multi-Use Building

A New Safer Bus Shelter



The Old Bus Shelter Outside Catshill First School

THROUGH this newsletter we have over the last few years informed you of how your parish council has replaced damaged, and added new modern bus shelters within the parish where deemed necessary. Last year we informed you that we intended to replace the bus shelter situated outside Catshill First School and Nursery. This was because the existing shelter had rusted to the point of falling apart and because of the way it was positioned, blocking part of the pavement in such a way that

pedestrians often had to walk into the road to avoid people waiting at the bus stop.

The Parish Council is pleased to announce that during the school Easter holidays we arranged with contractors for the installation of a new bus shelter with its back against the hedge to maximise pavement space. Part of the cost to the Parish Council was provided by County Councillor Sheila Blagg through the county council's divisional fund scheme.

Bromsgrove District Council helped by removing the old shelter and providing the new litter bin. This is a great example of all 3 tiers of local government working well together for the benefit of the community. We would very much like to hear your views on this project, please contact the Clerk.



The New Bus Shelter Outside Catshill First School

Useful Numbers

Bromsgrove District Council: **01527 881288**

Out of hours emergency: **01527 871565**

Catshill and Marlbrook Local Policing Team

01527 583733 / 0300 333 3000

Crimestoppers: **0800 555 111**

Contact Us

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