

The Painswick Beacon

Vol. 25 No. 6

September 2002

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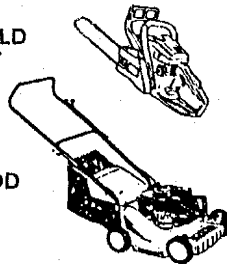
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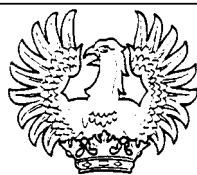
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Summer, and young people's thoughts turn to... marriage

Saturday, 3rd August saw St Mary's Church celebrating the marriages of two local girls, Clare Shearer and Fiona Johnston, daughters of two parish councillors, just two months after Charlotte Hudson, daughter of another parish councillor, married there.

Above, the Beacon photographer caught the smiles of Clare, only daughter of Susan and Alan Shearer, and Philip Smith as they left the church. Clare, who has a degree from Durham University, teaches disadvantaged children in Brixton, while Philip is a magazine journalist. The couple live in Hampstead.

Right, another Beacon photograph after the wedding of Charles Bateman and Rebecca Cousins, daughter of former parish councillor Jennifer Crook, on 24th August at Elmers Court, Lymington. Rebecca went to Stroud High School and met Charles at Portsmouth University. She is now an IT trainer in the City where Charles also works as a computer project manager. The couple will live in Kingston-upon-Thames.

Below right, Fiona, only daughter of Hilary and Johnny Johnston, of Sheepscombe, leaves St Mary's Church after her marriage to Crispin Layfield. Although Fiona and Crispin live in Iver, Buckinghamshire, she spends much of her time still working in Painswick, as a director of the company that runs the Falcon Inn and the Butchers Arms, Sheepscombe, among others. Crispin is a professional stunt performer in the film industry.



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Benefice seeks a part-time administrator

The Painswick Benefice is seeking a new administrator to work from the office at the St Mary's Lychgate.

The administrator will be responsible to a committee of representatives from the six parishes, providing clerical and administrative support to the Rev. John Longuet-Higgins, the Rev. Ian Gobey, the Local Ministry Team and other church officers, including church wardens, church groups and the Sunday School.

The role requires administrative, computer and interpersonal skills, the main tasks being:

Dealing with phone enquiries and visits to the Benefice Office (Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings), coordinating/supervising volunteers, correspondence, looking after the Benefice Diary, producing Service sheets and other photocopying, overseeing the publishing of the Grapevine, and handling bookings for St Mary's Rooms and custody of the keys.

It is desirable that the applicant is a church member, for knowledge of the Benefice and a faith commitment are valued by those who use the Benefice Office.

The tasks cover 12 hours a week, at £6.82 an hour, with holiday entitlement. The successful applicant will have a three-month trial.

Applications must be in by the 14th September to the Incumbent, The Benefice Office, The Lychgate, Stroud Road, Painswick, GL6 6UT.

Early post - now you know!

Prompted by a glance at the Collection Times plaque on her local post box, a reader drew our attention to the unexpected fact that, after more years than she could remember, the first collection had been advanced from 10.30am to 8.30am. Dismayed that Auntie Flo might not receive her birthday card on the due date, we were invited to investigate whether this was a widespread phenomenon.

One letter (unstamped, of course) to the Commander in Chief of the Stroud sorting office, and five telephone calls when no reply had been forthcoming two weeks later, elicited two facts, the first of which could have been anticipated: the letter had either been lost in the post, or mislaid while

said Postmaster was on his holidays. However, on enquiry as to whether such change in the times of collection were widespread, we were advised that he was not aware of any others (or the one for the post box in question for that matter), but that it made no difference to whether Auntie Flo would get her card on time.

It seems that the only collection that really matters is the last one each day; earlier collections are basically to start piling up mail which needs to be sorted and thereby provide activity for staff after they have completed deliveries until the last mail bags themselves come in to be sorted.

Then, and only then, does that day's mail move off to distant parts.

Help with college and school costs

Painswick Educational Foundation is able to make small grants to boys and girls in the civil parish of Painswick to assist with their educational expenses. The next meeting of the Trustees will be held on Tuesday, 17th September.

Application forms for grants are available from The Clerk, Painswick Educational Foundation, 2, Rowcroft, Stroud. Glos. GL5 3BB (or telephone 01453 763433) to whom they should be returned completed as soon as possible.

For a friendly night out...

Fancy a friendly night out, and the possibility of going home with a bit of cash? Painswick Bingo enthusiasts welcome all newcomers to their Wednesday evening sessions from 7.30pm in the Green Room at Painswick Centre.



Courses for volunteers

Stroud and District Volunteer Bureau, which supports voluntary action groups in the local area, is holding a training programme for volunteers.

The next course, on Manual Handling, is in two four-hour sessions, being held on 12th and 19th September at the Red Cross House training room, Cainscross, Stroud, from 9am to 1pm. The cost is £15 per person.

Finally there is a three-hour Evaluation Workshop on 14th October to help voluntary groups to use evaluation as a tool for learning and development. This is a free course to be held at the Social Enterprise Centre, off 48c High Street, Stroud, from 9.30am to 12.30pm.

For enquiries or to reserve a place, call Christine Bassett on 01453 759005.

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New minister for Christ Church

The joint pastorates of Rodborough Tabernacle and Christ Church, Painswick will welcome Mrs Heather Whyte to the ministry of both churches at an ordination and induction service at Rodborough on Saturday 26th October. She is a graduate of Westminster College, Cambridge as a mature student after raising her family, and has a broad experience of church life in both Scotland and England, and working with young people in the Scouting movement, in secondary school and at the URC National Youth Resource Centre.

Prior to induction, Heather will be in the Gloucester District part-time as an opportunity to familiarise herself, but she will not undertake work in the joint pastorate before she becomes the Rev. Heather Whyte at her ordination service. We at Christ Church are looking forward to her arrival and know that Painswick will provide its usual warm welcome to our new minister.

Jim Hodge

IT volunteers needed for Age Concern project

Age Concern Gloucestershire are seeking volunteers to help to bridge the digital divide by making computers and the Internet more accessible to older people through their Mobile Internet Taster Sessions (MITS). These sessions will take place in communities, in informal settings, such as a local lunch club, day centre, village hall, hospital, community rooms at sheltered accommodation and residential homes, in fact anywhere that is appropriate and accessible.

Volunteers will be trained to use a set of portable IT equipment and organise the delivery of MITS throughout the county. A variety of skills will be needed but primarily an interest in IT, time to spare and a genuine interest in working with older people, encouraging them to learn how to email friends and relatives, search the internet, using the news and views, and to help others who would like to share your knowledge with others in the county, please contact Rob Cook, the IT Administrator, on 01452 422660 for more details.

Email mits@ageconcernnglos.org.uk or write to Rob at Age Concern Gloucestershire, Bleak House, 26 Station Road, Gloucester GL1 1EW.

Daphne Hudson

Panto has some tense mo-

The big news this month is that the Painswick Players' December production will definitely be a pantomime. What is less definite is what the panto will be. This is because it is still being written. Or, at least, it was being written before I had to break off to write this piece for the Beacon and, despite having the story-line more or less mapped out and half a dozen scenes written, it still lacks a title.

The plot concerns an Old Shoemaker who makes magic tap dancing shoes and involves the usual mix of Prince, Princess, Good King, Bad Baron, Wicked Stepmother, a Dragon - for which The Most Organised One is already pencilled in (but don't tell her) - plus a frog, who hopped on board in an unguarded moment. So, any ideas, anyone? The best suggestion will win a pair of free tickets for the

Painswick Players

production which will run from the 4th to 7th December. And, before anyone else suggests it, 'A Load of Old Cobblers' has already been firmly rejected.

Actually, it's a relief to break off panto writing for a few moments since I have somehow just managed to get the Princess gobbled up by the Dragon. I'm not at all sure how this happened. I'm equally unsure how the Princess is to be ungobbled (so to speak) for the next scene when she is due to put on the magic dancing shoes and waltz off with the Prince. Pantomimes can be like this. Very tense and confusing!

Also confusedly tense are/were/will be the auditions for the pantomime which are/were being held on Tuesday 3rd September in the Painswick Centre (Green Room), right after the Painswick Players AGM.

Sadly, I fear, you will be reading this after both events have happened and so you have possibly missed them. Unless you were there, of course. Never mind, I am sure all will become clear next month.

Meanwhile, I must get back to writing this panto. Let's see... the Princess is inside the Dragon... looks like a job for a Fairy Godmother... or... the Dragon could have a bad attack of hiccups... or... no! That's just silly.

Jack Burgess

Victorian poets course

Enjoying Poetry: the Victorians is the title of a 10-week course that starts on Wednesday 25th September in Painswick Library, from 2.30pm to 4pm.

Featured will be Tennyson, the Brownings, John Clare, the Rossettis, Mathew Arnold and Swinburne, some of the greatest names in English poetry who lived through the literary explosion from the 1830s to 1900. The tutor will be Mary Newman; the course fee is £35.90. Enquiries to Yvonne Penfold on 01453 766219.

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Gwen's death at 97 closes an era

The death of Gwen Monk at the age of 97 in Gloucester Royal Hospital on 26th July after a stroke has brought to a close another chapter in the social history of Painswick.

Gwen was born at No 1 Rock Cottages, at the bottom of Vicarage Street, on 20th February, 1905. She was baptised at birth as it was thought very unlikely that she would survive. She was christened Gwendoline Violet Anne and put in a drawer from the chest of drawers. Her mother, Florence, then went on to have six boys who all died in infancy. Finally, Marjorie was born in 1913. Like Gwen, Marjorie has survived to a ripe old age.

Granny Ireland lived at No 3 Rock Cottages and the Mitchell family in No 2. Those were the days of high birth rates and a high infant mortality. Granny Mitchell had herself produced 11 sons and two daughters. Living conditions were primitive. The three families shared a privy in the back yard and each cottage had a single cold tap. No.1 Rock Cottages was to be Gwen's home for the next 90 years - still with only one cold tap. She spent the last six years of her life very comfortably in Eastington Park Nursing Home.

The village school was divided in two in those days. Gwen was taught by the headmistress of the girls' school, the formidable Miss Kirkland, who had been



Gwen outside her Rock Cottages home

a suffragette. Gwen left school at 14 and became a parlour maid in London. She was summoned home 10 years later to look after her father, Albert, and her sister, Marjorie, on the death of their mother from

a stroke at the age of 45. Florence's early death was not surprising.

Thus Gwen suffered the fate of many eldest daughters in those days in having to come home, somewhat reluctantly, to look after the family. A photograph shows her to have been a very attractive girl so she may well have sacrificed her chances of marriage as well.

Albert died in 1952 at the age of 80. He had been a builder's labourer with Freeman Bros of Camp. The Freemans were Plymouth Brethren who in those days met at The Friends Meeting House. Albert served in both the Boer War and the First World War. Gwen was very proud of his Campaign medals which included first the Queen's then the King's South Africa Medals, the British War Medal (1914-1918) and The Victory Medal. Albert was a regular customer at 'The Pony' The White Horse Inn where White Horse Lane is now. 'The Pony' was an important feature of Vicarage Street.

After Albert's death, Gwen's life revolved around The Verlands, with its successive occupants, and the families for whom she baby sat. She was much loved by us all. **HJH**

PROPERTY REPORT at 31st August from Murrays Painswick agency

What a lovely day we had at the Painswick Show, a little cool but it stayed dry after the downpours the evening before. Nearly all our local clients stopped for a chat at our stand, as did many old friends and new. As the day improved, so did the crowds.

So what's new in the property market? Not a great deal. Despite stock market jitters, interest rates didn't rise as expected, and house prices go from strength to strength. We are still recording record sales, ahead some 30% on last year. Based on the last three months against 2001, we are slightly ahead on instructions, about 10% down on viewings, almost the same number of offers but well ahead on sales

- difficult to analyse but it looks like we're getting the important things right.

Exchanges and completions include The Old Meadow in Cotswold Mead, 23 Churchill Way, Mayfield in Vicarage Street, Forest View at Sheepscombe, Elmbank at Pitchcombe, Seven Leaze at Edge, The Leys in Beacon Lane at Haresfield and Mulberry Tree Cottage at Brookthorpe. Sales have been agreed on Museum Cottage, The Nurses House, 3 Brookhouse Mill, 1 Cheltenham Road, 9 Churchill Way, 7 Hyett Close and The Old Stores at Cranham. We have had a good number of new instructions including Seven Leaze which has already

completed. No.4 Randalls Field is under offer and other new ones include Folly Cottage, just under The Beacon on the Gloucester Road, Lords Wood, a fine house in superb position at Sheepscombe, Whitehall Cottage with four bedrooms in Stamages Lane, all of which have stunning views.

We also have Ferndale, a cottage for improvement, and Applecroft, a superbly converted four-bed chalet, both at Pitchcombe, Lorien, a pretty cottage at Harescombe, Spring Cottage, a detached cottage in Stepping Stones Lane, and Turnways, a three-bed detached cottage at Butt Green.



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Post Office hosts this odd caterpil-

This caterpillar caused a good deal of interest among visitors to the Post Office recently when it was seen feeding on the fuchsias outside. Wally Walters who photographed it thought at first that it might be the Privet Hawk Moth caterpillar (as featured in last month's Beacon).

But on reading up in various books, he discovered that it is almost certainly that of an Elephant Hawk Moth (*Deilephila Elpenor*). This one is brown, but it appears that there is also a green version of similar size (80-85 mm long) and shape. Although Hawk Moths, in general, are not very common, the Elephant Hawk is, apparently, the most common of all. The caterpillar is around from June to September, before it metamorphoses into a chrysalis. Although the caterpillar looks fierce, it is totally harmless.

Wally's grandson, Kyle, does not concur with this view. Wally wanted to take a picture of the caterpillar on Kyle's hand to give an idea of its size. "With some difficulty, I managed to prise the beast from the stem; it's got a powerful grip. I put it on Kyle's hand, whereupon it regurgitated its breakfast, as a green slime, but Kyle thought it looked pretty



cool. Everything seemed fine and I started to position the camera when, suddenly, he let out a scream."

"Get it off. It's biting me. Get it off, granddad."

"I had no option but to oblige and put it back on the fuchsia," said Wally.

So, unfortunately there's no perspective photograph of it on a child's hand. The pain from the bite subsided immediately the offending creature was removed so it does seem to be

Vital work of the wildlife rescue cen-

A cat proudly deposited a nestling bird on the kitchen floor of a house in the Croft this summer. The chick appeared un-harmed, although somewhat dis-orientated by the experience. No nest could be found in the vicinity.

Local Bird Club Secretary Dulcie Brotherton and Chairman Bill Boydell arranged for the bird to be taken to the Gloucestershire Wildlife Rescue Centre at Hartpury. The centre provides aid for casualties of all types of wildlife, and the rehabilitation necessary to release them back into the wild. The success rate is



Painswick Bird Club

as high as 66 per cent. At the Centre the young bird was identified as a collared dove, slimmer than a wood pigeon and with a distinguishing dark collar. It had been well fed, and was later given antibiotics to counter any infection from the cat's paws.

The work of the Rescue Centre will be explained and illustrated by Michael Barret at a meeting of the Bird Club at 7.30pm on 6th February next. It promises to be a fascinating evening for members, and others who would be interested.

Harold R Wood

The mills of Painswick

The histories of local mills, canals and gardens are the subjects of some of the talks in the new programme of Painswick Local History Society. The first meeting is on Tuesday 17th September when Mr. Lionel Walrond will give a talk on 'The Mills of Painswick'.

Membership subscriptions - £8 single and £12 joint - are now due and can be paid at the meeting or sent to the Membership Secretary at Stocks Cottage, Painswick.

Ride for county's historic churches

The annual sponsored bike ride, walk, or horse ride for the Gloucestershire Historic Churches Trust takes place on Saturday 14th September.

The idea is to sign in at as many churches as possible, between 10am and 6pm on the day. New recruits will be very welcome to join the old campaigners, or arrange their own route. Vicar John is going to cycle this year, so why not join him? If you would like a sponsorship form or further details contact Mike Buttrey on 812565.

New counsellor

Moira Legg has established a practice at Rough Park Bungalow, Cranham Corner, as an independent practitioner in counselling. Appointments or further information can be accessed on her web site, www.moiraleggcounselling.co.uk or email moiralegg@labyrinth7.fsnet.co.uk or by telephone on 813144.

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The lady with the dogs

Linda Evans and her beautiful border collies are well-known around Painswick, but few people will know that horses were, in fact, her first love. Horses, however, don't fit very easily into vicarage life, so she decided to have a dog instead. "I'm very much an outdoor person," she says, "and with dogs you get lots of exercise."

She lost her heart to a blue merle collie puppy in 1976. She called her Jo and together they went to the local dog-handling club...and that's where it all began. In 1980 she started in Obedience competitions with a puppy called Sian.

Now she goes to shows all over the country (thinks nothing of driving up to Edinburgh in a day), and her dogs have so many awards that she has lost count. But, however famous they become, first and foremost, they are part of the family.

When her husband, Eric, was appointed Dean of St. Paul's she was told in no uncertain terms, by one of the canons' wives, that it would be quite impossible to keep dogs in London. This idea didn't suit Linda at all and, to prove her point, a litter was born in their first year at the Deanery.

It must have been a nightmare trying to exercise dogs in the City of London. Their house had no garden, so each morning and evening she would bundle them into the car for a run in St. James's or Battersea Park, and many is the time, after an evening engagement, she could be seen in her ball-gown, giving them a late-night trot up Leadenhall Street.

For eight years she was a member of the Brixton dog training club, and is now President and Show Manager. She spends much of her time ferrying Craig Gamble, her protege, to shows, and is very proud of his achievements. She gave Daisy, a third time Crufts prize-winner, to him and looks after her while he is at college.

Paula Woodcock

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