

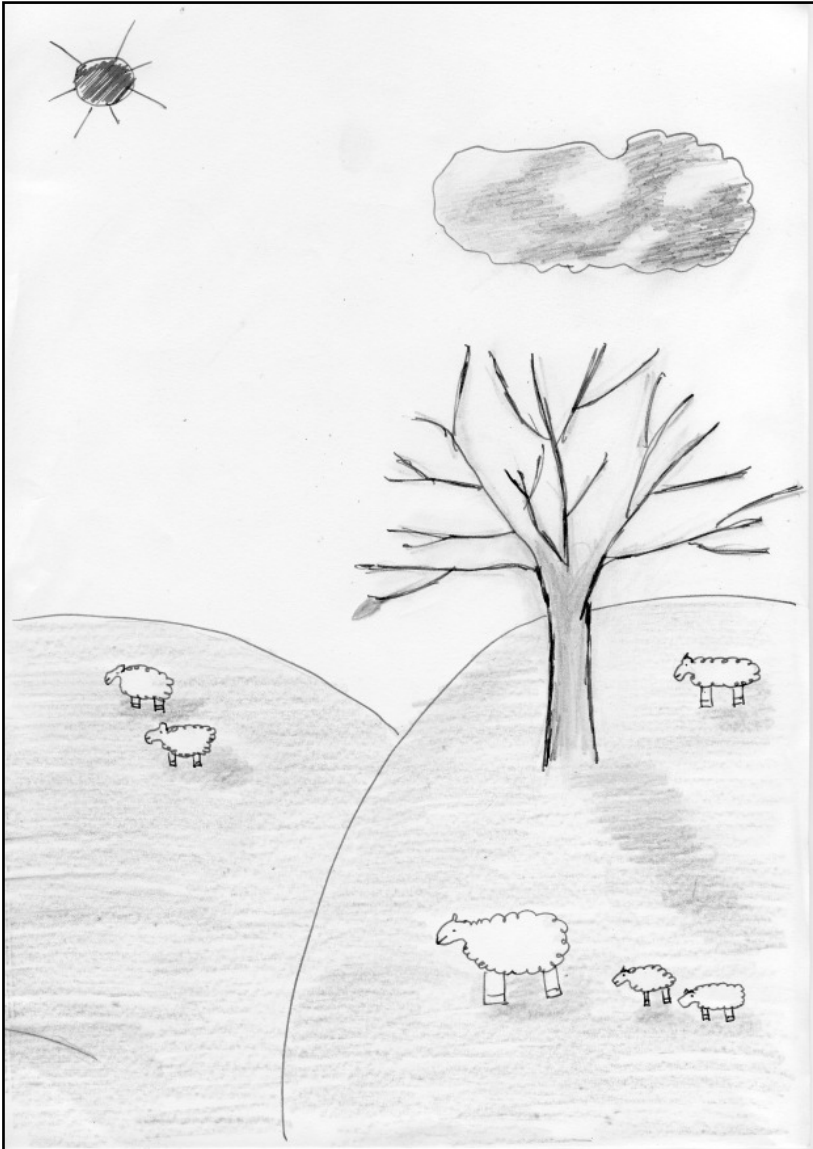
The Whitstone

Issue 23 - March 2010

Whistler

The community magazine of Whitstone

Free to each household



The Whitstone Whistler

The community magazine for Whitstone

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If you would like to receive a regular emailed copy of The Whistler (.pdf) each month just email us with the word 'Subscription' in the subject line.

@ whitstonewhistler@gmail.com

✉ The Whitstone Whistler
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Welcome

Welcome to the March issue of your Whistler. The snowdrops are out and the daff's won't be far behind and the lambs are in the fields (our cover shows them), so can we say it's Spring? There isn't any Community News this month but it's a pretty full issue nevertheless, thanks to all for your contributions, and keep them coming! You will see, in the Group News section, That the WI need some support in terms of members. It would be a shame to lose this village organisation after 58 years! So please contact Judith Ibbison if you want to find out what the WI has to offer. The subject of The Big Interview (p21) is someone who has been part of the village community for 58 years... but I don't think she has given away all her secrets! If it's culinary inspiration your looking for, look no further than Mrs Trewhitless (p23) and if it's gardening tips you want...well we haven't got any! Anybody interested in sending me some?

I hope you enjoy this month's magazine

Mike Sutton, Editor

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This month's cover picture
is by
Kolby Lymer

Group News

News from the village organisations

St Anne's Parish Hall

To book the hall please call Ruby Edcombe on 01288 341309

Mr. Gerald Fry gave a very interesting illustrated talk, about the Bude Canal, in the Hall on 5th February. Mr Fry has been involved with the preservation of the canal for more than 40 years and has many tales to tell. There was a slide show of all the different areas of the canal.

Some of these pictures were very old, and the buildings in them long gone. Also "before" and "after" photographs showing the improvements made by clearing weeds and cutting back foliage from the sides of the canal.

Mr Fry kindly gave the donation he received from the Hall Committee to the Bude Canal Trust. This contribution will go towards the upkeep and maintenance of the canal towpath.

Thanks to Mr Fry and to everyone who helped on the night.

Helen Eccott (Secretary)

It was interesting to find out that there is an old Bude Canal mile marker in a garden in the village. (Ed)



Whitstone Methodist Chapel

7th Mar, 11:00am	Sacrament	Revd John Henry
14th Mar, 11:00am	Service at Bodmin Street, Holsworthy	
21st Mar, 11:00am		M. Elliot
28th Mar, 11:00am		Cole
28th Mar 7:00pm	Healing Service	Revd John Henry
2nd Apr, 7:30pm	Good Friday Concert by The Stowford Meadow Singers	
4th Apr, 7:00pm	Service at Bodmin Street, Holsworthy	

Coffee Club

Tue 2nd March 10:00-12:00am
Tue 16th March 10:00-12:00am
Tue 30th March 10:00-12:00am

Sian Flynn, the prospective parliamentary candidate for the Conservative Party in the next election paid a visit to the Coffee Club on 2nd February. She has expressed her thanks for the opportunity and very much enjoyed talking with the locals.

Smile Club

Wed 3rd Mar 6:30pm
Wed 17th Mar 6:30pm

Whitstone Parish Council

Unfortunately we have not received a report from the Parish Council this month.

The Parish Council will be meeting on Tuesday 9th March at St. Anne's Parish Hall at 8:15pm. The Agenda will be posted in the notice board opposite the shop ahead of the meeting.

Whitstone W.I.

Unfortunately, our January meeting had to be cancelled due to the snow and ice.

The February meeting was held in the Sunday School and was also our AGM. The speakers for the evening were Mr and Mrs Sandercock from Launceston Stamp Club. They brought along a display of stamps ranging from the very beginning of stamp usage to modern picture stamps and first day covers. Mr Sandercock explained how and why the postage system was started by Rowland Hill and talked us through the display which we then all had a chance to look at closely. Two visitors joined us for the evening and teas were served by Mrs Ruth Mill and Mrs Judith Ibbitson.

Sadly, this may have been our last proper meeting - three of our ladies feel unable to carry on as members for reasons of ill health which means that we are down to seven members. Our hardworking secretary / treasurer can no longer carry on doing both jobs due to other commitments which means that we need another member to take on one of these roles. None of the members feels able to do this so we will be unable to function as a WI (we need at least a President, Secretary and Treasurer on the Committee in order to exist as a WI).

Whitstone WI has been in existence for 58 years and has had varying numbers of members during that time. It will be a sad occasion for all of us if we have to close now!

Our Birthday Dinner will be on 10th March and we will be making a decision on the future of our WI that evening.

Whitstone C.P. School

Wanted: School Governor

In May 2010, a vacancy will arise at Whitstone C.P. School for a Community Governor. Ideally, a Community Governor is someone who lives or works in the local community and is committed to the good governance and success of the school.

If you are interested, please contact the headteacher, Mr Paul Woolner on 01288 341241 or head@whitstone.cornwall.sch.uk or the chair of governors, Mrs Clare Horn on 01288 341482 or clare.horn@homecall.co.uk for more information.

Clare Horn

Chair of governors, Whitstone C.P. School

St Anne's Church

Sun 7 th Mar 11:15am	3rd of Lent	Holy Communion Revd. James Rugg
Sun 14 th Mar 18:30pm	4th of Lent	Evening Service Revd. James Rugg
Sun 21 st Mar 11:15am	5th of Lent	Holy Communion Revd. Rob Dickenson
Sun 28 th Mar 09:45am	Palm Sunday	Morning Prayer Revd. Richard Ward Smith
Fri 2 nd Apr 12:00	Good Friday	Stations of the Cross Ministry Team
Sun 4 th Apr 09:45	Easter Day	Holy Communion Revd. Rob Dickenson



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Councillor Report

By Phil Tucker

Budget

The budget has been set at 2.9% increase for the following year. I was hopeful of an increase of 1.5% because this has been a difficult year for people. All of us are paying increased fuel prices as well as using more fuel through a cold winter, so it has been doubly bad.

The problem at the Council is that, since the last administration, the Children's Services, Adult Care and the Fire Service are all in special care. We have been working tirelessly to remedy the problems in these services to demonstrate to the country that Cornwall is not the "basket case" in relation to these services. This involves extra training and to be blunt, extra costs.

So I did support the 2.9% increase in the Council Tax but only with the assurance that the audits for the services mentioned above will show improvement. The majority of Independent Councillors also supported the proposal because they understand where the Council is heading and why the extra percentage is needed. The thought was the Lib-Dem group would also support but they didn't at the time. They offered no alternative and didn't offer their suggested increase. The majority Lib-Dem administration had, last year, proposed a fixed 4% for 3 years although this was not proposed at the budget meeting. The proposal was simply opposed.

Fire Service

I have been heavily involved in the journey of Fire Service improvement. The improvement group have helped write their Integrated Risk Management Plan which covers every aspect of the Fire Service and I was chosen to represent the Improvement Group to answer questions put by other senior staff from excellent Fire Services. This included the Chief Fire Officer from Norfolk and the Head of Fire Service Scrutiny in Hampshire. This is part of the journey to attaining an excellent rating. It is a long journey, but from the feedback they gave, not by any means unlikely in the future.

Smoke Alarms

It is staggering that some 50% of homes in Cornwall have no working smoke alarm. We plan pensions, buying a new car, our children leaving home or our grand-child's wedding. All that planning and our hopes for the future are put at risk by something that costs so little. 25,000 people die each and every year in European homes, in their sleep, while a piece of furniture smoulders in the corner. These people die long before a full fire rages, long before anyone notices a fire. Children, parents, grandparents, the fire is not choosey. Please, if you have a fire alarm, test it now. If you don't have one, please call or email me. I will get one organised.

If you have any issues which you feel are not being addressed properly or which you need help with then please don't hesitate to give me a call.

Phil Tucker 01288 341617 philip.tucker@homecall.co.uk

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What's in a Name?

By John Stanbury

If anyone rings us and wants our address, nine times out of ten they will ask 'how do you spell Wadfast?' Wadfast is an old Anglo Saxon name and was spelt Wadefeste in 1086. The Wade part either refers to someone's name Wada or the English word wade meaning a ford. The second part fast meaning a stronghold or a secure place, thus the name either means a stronghold of a person called Wada or the stronghold of a ford. On an old map there were two fords one at the bottom of the Hill opposite the Entrance to the woods and one further along our lane which leads to fields known as Waddons. Similarly Buckfast in Devon seems to mean the Bucks safe place.

Lower Wadfast is mentioned as a Manor in the Domesday Book, coming down the hill from the village known as Briskey Down or its former name Buskey Down there is a sycamore tree on the left hedge, but referring back to 'Martyn's Map' 1748 this is roughly the position of the Old Manor House. The Domesday entry records that it was held in 1086 by Hamelin from the Count; Siward held it before 1066, and paid tax for half of land (yes they paid taxes then!!). With land for 6 ploughs, 3 slaves, with 1 villager and 5 smallholders, 15 acres of Woodland and 100 acres of pasture. The value formerly was 20 shillings with 8 cattle, 30 sheep, 6 pigs and 15 goats!! No intensive farming then!

There is another settlement shown between Lower and Higher Wadfast until maps in 1748 but this does not appear on any later maps. On the RPA (Rural Payment Agency to give them their correct title... we could think of others!!) updated maps it shows a place of heritage status an old settlement along Waddons Lane, it is easy to see the remains of two or three hedges there. In 3 of our fields it is possible to see, when the sun is at the right angle, or this winter where the snow would melt first, the signs of the old Anglo -Saxon ploughing method known as Ridge and Furrow where it is possible to see slight inclines and indents in lines approximately 4 metres (13 feet in old money!!) apart. Going across with a tractor at speed is a very bumpy ride. Obviously these fields have

never been ploughed with a tractor pulled plough. This is by no means unique to Wadfast there must be a lot of fields showing the same characteristics; look out for them as you travel around the countryside.

Has anyone else researched the history of their property?

The Open Road

By A Happy Camper

I have noticed that there are quite a few caravans in the village and caravanning seems to be gaining in popularity, much to the annoyance of the bullish Jeremy from Top Gear. As there are in excess of 490,000 touring caravans in Britain I suppose it is inevitable that we unintentionally frustrate some motorists.

Now is the time we all look forward to preparing the caravan for the first holiday of the year. Just as you prepare your caravan for winter hibernation, you have to make sure it is ready to use in spring (unless of course you frequently brave the winter weather!), with lots of jobs to be done, cleaning inside and out, routine maintenance, checks of gas bottles, cooker, heater, fridge, hand-brake, couplings, battery and tyres...the list goes on. We share these tasks and my contribution is the inside cleaning, stocking up with food and booking the sites. I think I have the best part of this 'job sharing process'.

What do we like about going away in our 'van?... walking the dog in some of the most beautiful settings in Britain, catching up on our reading, visiting new areas, re-visiting favourites and meeting up with friends. With more sites having wireless internet you can even 'work while you play'. All in all, a very relaxing pastime.

Let's hope we have a better summer this year and that you all enjoy the time spent in your 'vans.

Where do we live?

By Tounge-in-Cheek

Don't get me wrong....I like the Post Office! I don't mean our Post Office in the village, although of course I like that too. No, I mean THE Post Office, the organisation that delivers our letters to our door in all kinds of weather. Just to be quite clear, let me say it again...I like the Post Office. However, (you knew there was going to be a 'however'!) I do have a little gripe. That is, our official postal address which insists that we live in Devon. I have nothing against Devon either but I don't live there, never have.

I think I can understand their reasoning, they have to divide up the country into postal areas to enable them to sort the mail into logical (from their point of view) areas, to allow an efficient delivery system. They have decided that ours will be Holsworthy, which is in Devon, so appears that way in our 'official' address. But I thought that the post code was supposed to have the same function, indeed the post code divides the country up into groups of about 15 houses I'm told. So, in theory the Post Office should be able to deliver the mail knowing just two things, the house number or name, and the post code. They don't need to make us live in Devon.

So, I put the theory to the test and sent myself two letters. The only things written on the envelopes were my house number and my post code. I didn't tell them which county I thought I lived in... sneaky eh! Both letters were received a few days later, no bother at all (I only used 2nd class stamps so I was pleasantly surprised with the speedy service).

I wonder if there are parts of Devon that have a Cornwall postal address? Hmm...I might have to move!

Brian's Quiz

Answers next month

- 1 Which two states have been added to the USA flag since 1958
- 2 What is the capital city of the Netherlands
- 3 What city does a car with a V identification plate come from
- 4 What country would you be in if the train engines are marked SNCF
- 5 What does a mahout mind
- 6 What nationality is a Breton
- 7 What city lies at the mouth of the Mississippi River
- 8 What country would you visit to see the ruins of Troy
- 9 What city was destroyed by Little Boy
- 10 In which city in Europe can you find wild apes
- 11 Which has the greatest circumference, the equator or the poles
- 12 What type of house are hops dried in
- 13 What is the fruit of the Rose bush called
- 14 The special name given to a dried plum
- 15 What plant is rum made from
- 16 What is the singular of scampi
- 17 How many drops make a dash in cookery
- 18 What was the first James Bond film
- 19 Who was the Commander of the star ship Enterprise
- 20 Who is Fred Flintstones best friend
- 21 What George Orwell novel features a pig called Napoleon
- 22 What is Donald Duck's middle name

Budefolk News

Sunday 14th March

Bude Folk Club with special guest TOM LEWIS 8.00 pm.

If you like songs and stories of the sea, new and old, you'll certainly enjoy Tom's singing, his stories and his recordings. Tom is a 24-year veteran of Her Majesty's Royal Naval diesel submarines; although now he's comfortably located on dry land in British Columbia, Canada. His songs cover a wide range of nautical topics, from life on board H.M. ships, through the loneliness and lure of the sea, to traditional shanties and classic nautical poetry, set to his own, and others' melodies and, on occasion, accompanies himself on Ukelele and melodeon. Admission £4 members £5.00 non-members.

Sunday 21st March

UNCHAINED HARMONY WORKSHOP with ROGER WATSON
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With the usual Excellent Soup and Pate lunch. All for only £10.00. Followed by Roger as guest performer at a special Bude Folk Club at Whitstone Parish Hall. Bring & share tea for those at the workshop who want to stay on. Concert £4 Non-members £5

A workshop based on the pleasure of making vocal harmony together, without having to read the music! Making up your own part is explained and positively encouraged and everyone, whatever their experience, is guided to find their own place in the sound. No previous harmony singing experience needed. Texts to songs provided.

Sunday 28th March

Bude Folk Club
The Falcon Hotel, Bude, 8:00pm

All welcome. Come and join in! Admission FREE!

Tickling Gordon Brown's Toe

By Brian Martyn

It all started with a phone call during the morning milking. A nice young lady from DEFRA, who didn't know much about farming, telling me I had been nominated for a special prize connected with the beef industry. Someone had heard that I had been feeding Ryvita biscuits to beef animals and they seem to thrive extremely well on it. Hilary Benn thought it ticked all the right boxes, vegetarian food and low greenhouse gases.

I thought now was a good time to enquire about the possible prize and found that Benn had banned British beef from the award reception and insisted on peanuts and cheeseburgers. British beef was far too expensive, anything else but, and the cheaper the better. The PM was very keen to import more Rye and pay for it by printing more money, since no one expects to be able to repay the Quantitative Easing money for years to come.

Then I woke up and looked at the date.... 1st April 2010.....just a bad dream!



Friday is film night in Bude

Films are shown at the Parkhouse Centre
Ergue-Gaberic Way, Bude EX23 8LD
Doors open 7.00 pm — Screening starts 7.30pm
(unless otherwise stated)

12th March - **Welcome (15)**

Special Extra Event

21st March (at 4:00pm)-**The Twilight Saga - New Moon (12A)**

Admission: £4.00 - Tickets are available from Bude TIC, Ark Angel Bookshop Bude, on the door, or buy on line via the Cornish Riviera Box Office at www.crbo.co.uk (NB. No Booking Fee!)

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17 Wed	Smile Cup, Methodist Chapel, 6:30-8:00pm * Yogacise, CP School, 7:00-8:00pm
18 Thu	
19 Fri	
20 Sat	
21 Sun	Church Service, St Anne's, 11:15am * Service, Methodist Chapel, 11:00am Unchained Harmony Workshop, St Anne's Parish Hall 11:00am-4:00pm followed by Folk Club Film, The Twilight Saga-New Moon (12A), Bude Community Cinema, 4:00pm
22 Mon	RECYCLING DAY
23 Tue	MOBILE LIBRARY
24 Wed	Yogacise, CP School, 7:00-8:00pm
25 Thu	
26 Fri	
27 Sat	
28 Sun	Church Service, St Anne's, 09:45am * Service, Methodist Chapel, 7:00pm Bude Folk Club, Falcon Hotel, 8:00pm
29 Mon	
30 Tue	MOBILE LIBRARY * Coffee Club, Methodist Chapel, 10:00-12:00am
31 Wed	Yogacise, CP School, 7:00-8:00pm
April 2010	
1 Thu	ALL FOOLS DAY
2 Fri	GOOD FRIDAY * Church Service, St Anne's, 12:00 * Good Friday Concert, Methodist Chapel, 7:30pm
3 Sat	
4 Sun	EASTER DAY * Church Service, St Anne's, 09:45am

March 2010

1 Mon	
2 Tue	MOBILE LIBRARY* *Coffee Club, Methodist Chapel, 10:00-12:00am
3 Wed	Smile Club, Methodist Chapel, 6:30-8:00pm * *Yogacise, CP School, 7:00-8:00pm
4 Thu	
5 Fri	
6 Sat	
7 Sun	Church Service, St Anne's, 11:15am* *Service, Methodist Chapel, 11:00am
8 Mon	RECYCLING DAY
9 Tue	MOBILE LIBRARY* *Parish Council Meeting, St Anne's Parish Hall, 8:15pm
10 Wed	Whitstone WI Birthday Dinner* *Yogacise, CP School, 7:00-8:00pm
11 Thu	
12 Fri	Film, Welcome (15), Bude Community Cinema, 7:00pm
13 Sat	
14 Sun	MOTHERS DAY* * Church Service, St Anne's, 18:30pm * *Service, Methodist Chapel, 11:00am Bude Folk Club, Falcon Hotel, 8:00pm
15 Mon	
16 Tue	MOBILE LIBRARY* *Coffee Club, Methodist Chapel, 10:00-12:00am
17 Wed	

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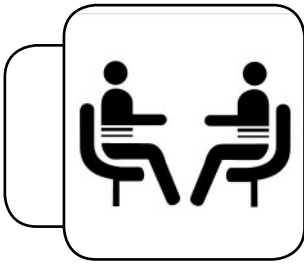
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The Big Interview

By Pat Nasmyth

This Month Pat talks to Jeanne Barrett

Jeanne came to live in Whitstone at the age of 7 in 1952 when her father and his partner Mr Roy Toms took over the family business in the centre of the village.

Frank Hambly ran a cycle shop before expanding into the agricultural contracting world through traction engines. As the business grew it moved into the era of tractors and machinery. The business, started in 1892, is still trading as Hamblys; the original premises will soon be demolished as a new building has recently been erected at Paradise in Balsdon Road.

The family moved into No 10 Meadowside, which was newly built, & Jeanne attended Whitstone School & has memories of walking through the field on the left just after Trelawne and coming out at Gratton cottages as a short cut. Most times the children walked along the main road as there were no pavements, passing fields which are now Paradise Park, the houses did not appear until the early 1970's. The children frequently worked in the school garden, which is now where Broadfields bungalow is built.

The Church had an Organ which needed someone to blow the bellows to play it. The Chapel had pews with doors. Jeanne started to play the organ at chapel when she was 13, Mr George Stanbury, a previous organist, frightened "the life out of her "as he sat nearby, keeping time with his foot as she played. The congregation from Chapel used to go carol singing around the village. One year, Jeanne remembers vividly, they had sung for Mr George Stanbury who lived at 'Elms' where Jeanne and John now live. They were invited in and shown in to the front room, where resided "the biggest Aspidistra" she had ever seen. The house-keeper, Aunt Polly, brought in hot

peppermint drinks which the children were not very keen on.....the Aspidistra had an unusual Christmas treat!

After 2 years Jeanne had to have a break from playing as she started to attend school in Cambourne to study for GCE'O' level exams & Secretarial subjects, as there was only a bus every 3 weeks to and from Bude to Cambourne it was necessary to lodge in Cambourne.

The village shop was run by the Pethick family, everything possible that you would need was jammed onto the shelves, if they did not have "it" they would soon get it for you. Two solid wood counters, with a gap in the middle, ran from front to back on the left as you came in the door. The first counter had chocolate bars, behind glass, sweets in jars were kept on shelves. A hand slicer was used to slice the sides of bacon.

Every day Jeanne was sent to fetch the milk in a white enamel can with a lid, from Miss Mabel Dowdle, who lived at Pentecost, the house on the lower side of Hambly's and milked her cows in a shippon at the side of the house.

Mr Woodley was always there in the butchers shop preparing the meat along with his wife and sister-in-law. The Post Office was on the opposite side of the road from the shop, where the children waited for the school bus to Stratton. Further up the road was Ivy Cann's shop, which is now the house beside the car-park, where she sold all sorts of household items from wallpaper and paint to hinges, screws, and even mouse-traps.

Fetes, socials, concerts, football matches and various other social events took place enabling the village folk to get together, all were well supported and consequently most people in the village and those in the surrounding area were known to one another.



Mrs Trewhitless

Notes from the Whitsend Kitchen

Seeing red...

That red cabbage in the village shop just called out to me "must have"! Back home in the kitchen, though, I wasn't really too sure what to do with it: "typical Trewhitless planning," I hear you say.

In one of the great cookery books I received at Christmas (are they trying to tell me something?), Nigel Slater talks of the red cabbage's *hatred of boiled water*, so that was ruled out straightway. Frying it with some juniper, wine vinegar and apple cubes sounded delicious, but I had no juniper, nor apples for that matter. This is what I did – a variation on a regular Whitsend supper, **Stir-fried Vegetables and Brown Rice**, and definitely one I shall do again.

You need: 1 onion, 2 or 3 sticks of celery, a couple of carrots, all chopped into small pieces: 1 small cauliflower broken into small florets and half a red cabbage sliced fairly thinly: 1 large cup of long grain brown rice and the ingredients for $\frac{3}{4}$ pint of cheese sauce (butter, flour, milk and grated cheese). These amounts will make 4 servings – just vary the amounts of vegetables, rice and sauce to suit your needs, and the range of vegetables to what is available.

Heat a couple of tablespoons of oil in a heavy pan, then add the onions, celery and carrots and let them cook for a while. Then add the rice, stirring until it's well coated with oil. After a couple of minutes or so, add boiling water (twice the amount of your rice), stir once and cover. Meanwhile make your cheese sauce in the normal way – I usually add a half-teaspoon of mustard powder and sometimes a pinch or more of cayenne pepper to the flour. Then in another pan, stir-fry the cauliflower, adding the cabbage after a few minutes, until they are browned at the edges and as crisp or as soft as you prefer them.

When the rice mixture is cooked (usually after about 25 minutes), layer the stir-fried cauliflower and cabbage on top, then pour over the cheese sauce and sprinkle some grated cheese and black pepper on top. Pop the pan under the grill to brown the topping and then enjoy!

I am always looking out for uncomplicated recipes with ingredients I can buy here in the village, and this delicious soup, which was recently served to us by our friends living near Hay Tor, really fits the bill. Thanks to Chris for sharing the recipe!

Sweet Potato and Coconut Soup,

For 4 servings, you need:

1 onion, 1 clove of garlic, about 1" cube of fresh ginger, all chopped:
1½ lb diced sweet potatoes (2 should be about right):
1 pint of vegetable stock, 1 (400ml) tin of coconut milk (the size available in the village shop) and 2 limes



Fry the onion, garlic and ginger until tender but not browned, then tip in the sweet potatoes and cook a few minutes more. Add the stock, cover and simmer for 20 minutes. Allow the mix to cool a little, then liquidise with half of the coconut milk until smooth. Return to the pan and add the remaining coconut milk. Before serving, add the zest and juice of the limes. Rather than stirring it in, Chris dribbled pearls of the lime juice on to each bowlful, which burst with flavour as they reached your tongue. I've made this soup successfully today and so reckon it must be another foolproof recipe.

Now are there any good ideas from anywhere nearer than Dartmoor? Please e-mail them to Mrs Trewhitless via the Whistler!

W The Whitstone hippersnappers

Before the half-term break, we (pupils in Classes 2 and 3) were thinking of fund-raising ideas to help the victims of the earthquake in Haiti.

We came up with many ideas. Our first fund-raising activity for Haiti's earthquake victims was a sale of cakes we had baked and decorated. As usual, this proved a popular way of raising money, realizing an amount of over £38.

Another idea we had was an adopt-a-bear-sale – bears of the teddy variety. We were inundated with bears and other animal species from mice to elephants, cats to hippopotamuses and even a few prehistoric dinosaurs. We would like to thank everyone who donated so generously to our appeal for cuddly toys.

Invitations were delivered to the children of Class 1, and we were delighted to welcome children from the playgroup. Having paid their adoption fees, the children made their choice of toy and received an adoption certificate to go with it. There were many smiling faces as the children returned to their classes hugging their new friends. An amount of over £39 was raised.

Not content with the results of these efforts, we sought sponsorship for undertaking odd jobs during the half-term break. These included such tasks as house-cleaning, gardening and washing cars; it seems that many parents seized the chance to get certain bedrooms cleaned and tidied. So far, the 'odd jobbers' have raised over £36.



Members of the Adventure Ecology Club (an after-school club) have been making their own paper from paper they have recycled. They shredded the used paper and added water to make a pulp. Quantities of the pulp were then placed on rectangles of mesh and sandwiched between two pieces of cloth to absorb the excess moisture.

The sheets of paper were left to dry. At the following session of the club, they made some prints of their hands. The results of their artistic endeavours have made a delightful wall display.

Whitstone's school council recently met and discussed ideas about raising funds to provide some new games and equipment for use during playtimes. They are considering holding a non-uniform day on which pupils will be invited to dress up on an Easter-based theme. The council will be writing to various local businesses seeking donations for this fund-raising activity.

Winter Fuel Payment

People aged 60 or over who did not receive the Winter Fuel Payment (£250) need to claim it before March 30th **or they will lose it.** Once you have claimed the payment you will receive it **every year for the rest of your life.** People born on or before Sep 27th 1949 are entitled to this payment for this year. Apparently thousands of people, mostly men age 60-65, have not received this payment because they do not receive State Pension so the Department for Work and Pensions does not know about them.

Call the Winter Fuel Payment Helpline on 0845 915 1515 or download a claim form from www.direct.gov.uk/en/Dio11/DoItOnline/DG_182383.

Local Otters

By Mike Sutton

Otters are shy retiring creatures aren't they? Not a bit of it... at least our local Bude otters aren't. Up until recently I had only seen an otter in the wild once, some years ago, on the Isle of Mull,



now I seem to be tripping over them all the time, not literally of course. These are not just fleeting, distant views either, but up close and personal.

I walk along the Bude Canal quite regularly with our dog, about once a week, and over the past month or so I have seen an otter on five occasions. One sighting near Whalesborough Farm Lock the otter was no more than a few feet away from me and at one point was nose to nose with the dog, neither of them seemed bothered by this. The otter continued to feed, with its characteristic rolling 'duck dive', surfacing a few seconds later with a

fish which it held between its paws and chewed as it nonchalantly paddled on its back along the canal whilst keeping an eye on us.

On another occasion at Hele Bridge there was quite a crowd of onlookers watching an otter feeding for about 20 minutes. It was making excursions underwater near the edge of the canal and under the bridge then returning to the bank to consume what it had caught, gradually working its way towards Marhamchurch.

Otters used to be quite a rarity in many parts of the country in the 1960's but have recovered well in many places since the use of organochlorine pesticides in farming was banned in the 1970's but there are still only around 10,000 otters in the UK and it remains a near endangered species across its range, which actually is huge. The same species we see, the Eurasian otter (*Lutra lutra*), is found in parts of three continents: Europe, Asia and Africa.

Devon has long been a stronghold for otters and the population there has fully recovered but inevitably this is leading to an increasing number of otter-human conflicts. This time the threat is from road accidents. I have read that over 50 otters are killed on the roads every year in Devon although this does not seem to be having an impact on overall population.

It has been found that the West Country's smaller rivers support greater fish densities than the rivers of southern and eastern England because of the lower levels of pollution, this has helped the otter population to keep a foothold in the South West throughout the bad times. Thankfully, with increasing water quality in rivers across the country the otter populations are recovering almost everywhere.

A lot has been learned about otters since the 1960's and its original description as a shy, nocturnal animal that couldn't tolerate human disturbance has proved to be quite wrong. Certainly the Bude otters don't seem to mind the human, or canine, presence. As you probably know, the canal towpath is very popular; there are people around at almost any time of year and in most weather conditions.

I think it is probably the healthy fish population in the canal which has allowed the otters to thrive and I hope the fish stocks remain high enough to satisfy both the otters and the local anglers. I am told there is probably only one otter family on the canal but I'm sure there must be others in the area and I hope that we can continue to enjoy close encounters with this charismatic animal.

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Alice through the Doorway

By Ean Lawrence

Alice Boniface opened the picket gate and entered the lane that led to the stable block of Holywood House. She advanced along the lane, hugging the beech hedge that defined one side of it. On the other side of the lane ran a wall that enclosed the rear garden of Holywood House. Alice, her quick breaths adding moisture to the mist that was aiding her on her undertaking on this particular late-summer morning, arrived at a door in the wall.

Alice crossed the lane and pressed her back against the wall. She strained to hear if there were any sounds that might disclose that she was not alone in the lane. The stillness and quietness, that were almost given physicality by the pervading mist, were undisturbed by any alarming sounds. She turned and faced the door, standing half a step away from its imposing solidity.

Alice stretched out a tentative hand and lifted the spiralled ring of iron that raised the latch. She gave the metal ring a turn and pushed against the door. She encountered a not unexpected resistance. She countered this opposition by increasing the force she exerted on the door; she pushed harder and harder until the door, with what seemed to Alice to be a mischievous squeal of delight, suddenly surrendered to her superior force; and she stumbled through the doorway. Recovering her balance, she again listened intently for any indication that her entry into the garden had been detected by an inmate of the house, either human or animal. Despite devoting much thought to her plan, she remained undecided what she would do if her uninvited presence in the garden were to be discovered: would she beat a hasty retreat the way she had come, or would she stand her ground and seek to offer a plausible explanation for her trespass? In part, what she would do would depend on how far she had got in her search of the garden: if she had been discovered at this point, it would have made sense to make a run for it; but if her movements didn't attract any attention and arouse curiosity until she had penetrated further on her exploration, she would have preferred to have tried to bluff her way out of the situation. She hoped she would not have to make that choice; and thus far, no alarm appeared to have been raised in the house. She turned and,

like a wary tortoise extending its head from under its carapace, poked her head through the opening in the wall she had just passed through and, the mist having begun to thin and its opacity diminish, glanced up and down the lane and confirmed with her eyes what she had trusted that her ears had faithfully told her - that the lane was empty of any human presence.

Alice gently closed the door, which this time obliged her by not making any noise apart from the muffled sound of metal hitting wood as the inertia of the iron ring on the lane side of the door was checked and it came back against the door as it closed upon its frame. She padded across the manicured lawn and sought the concealment offered by the pollarded horse chestnut tree that was the point of focus in this area of the garden, her confidence growing by the minute. With what she hoped wouldn't to prove to be a hubristic provocation, Alice couldn't prevent herself from admiring the composure and sangfroid she had so far displayed. Happily, Alice's self-regard, which was, in reality, little more than a mild form of childish vanity that, from time to time, exceeded the desired limits of Alice's efforts to constrain it, was counter-balanced by self-awareness, the result of much observation of human nature and calm self-reflection. Although she was studious in those matters she thought to be important, Alice could never really take herself too seriously, and often met both the praise and criticism she received from her family and friends in the same manner - with an enigmatic smile or an unsuccessfully suppressed giggle.

Alice moved cautiously around the chestnut tree, the fingers of her left hand agitated by contact with the furrowed surface of the bole; she stooped forwards, as if her legs were reluctant to take her body where it wanted to go, and peered around the trunk in the direction of the house, which still seemed to be ignorant of her presence. As with all antagonists in what would become, in its retelling, a ripping yarn, she was a muddle of trepidation and excitement: fear of discovery wrestled with the exhilaration she felt in pursuit of her objective; apprehension about failing to reach that goal marching side by side with the daring that was a necessary attribute on such an enterprise as the one on which she was engaged. As she walked along the path that led both the afternoon idler and the heroine of more resolute purpose to the next part of the garden, Alice couldn't stop herself from chuckling. She really did read far too many adventure stories.

Alice continued along the paved path that marked the no-

man's land between an over-groomed lawn and an herbaceous border that in its composition owed more to the tastes of Victoria's more conservative subjects than of the adherents of the innovative Miss Jekyll. Alice was eager to get to her goal but she knew that if she ran she was more likely to attract unwelcome attention than if she walked. As she proceeded along the path like a lady of leisure on an afternoon's gentle perambulation, she cast a glance now and again over her shoulder in the direction of the house, still concerned that she might be seen by someone whose duty or inclination took him or her to one of the many windows that enjoyed a view of the garden's undeniable elegance.

Alice reached one of walls that divided the garden into four separate, yet inter-connected, sections. Taking a last look back towards the house, Alice passed through the arched aperture that permitted transition from the summer garden to the autumn-themed area. From this point onwards the path divided, both strands taking a convoluted route to a bench placed against the outside boundary wall. This was as far from the house as it was possible to get and still remain within the sanctuary of the garden.

Unlike any of the other walls, the wall behind the bench was hung with a tapestry of clematis and honeysuckle; it was as if something was being concealed. Alice, her excitement rising again, walked round the bench and began to look through the interwoven stems. In the shadows behind the screen of plants, Alice could see a stone plaque set into the wall. She pulled the stems of the clematis and honeysuckle apart to get a better sight of the plaque's inscription. Here it was: the confirmation she had been looking for; this was the very place. The inscription ran as follows:

This memorial is dedicated to the memory of Humpty-Dumpty who from the top of this wall had a great fall, which left him broken. Regrettably, all the valiant actions of His Majesty the King's men and horses, under the personal direction of His Majesty, to restore Humpty-Dumpty were to prove unavailing.

Alice had always wanted to believe the stories her grandmother had told her. The stories about, when as a child, the friend she had had whose name was also Alice.

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And finally.....

Murphy's Law

Anything that can go wrong will go wrong.

Anything that is good in life is illegal, fattening or immoral.

The light at the end of the tunnel is the headlamp of the incoming train.

Beauty is only skin deep, ugly goes to the bone.

Never play leapfrog with a unicorn.

If everything is going right, you wonder what is going wrong.

A short cut is the longest distance between two points.

Everyone has a scheme for getting rich that will not work.

The other queue always moves faster.

The repair man will never have seen a model like that before.

In order to get a loan you must prove you do not need it.

The chance of a piece of bread falling with the butter side down is directly proportional to the cost of the carpet.

Murphy's golden rule: whoever has the gold makes the rules.

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	Morwenna, Bude	01288 352340
	DK Lawrence, Stratton	01288 356579
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	Mobile	0300 1234 111
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