

Village News

in Swindon Village

*Your local Newsletter sponsored by the
Parish Council and delivered by volunteers*

No. 451 February 2019

February

Monday	4	Marle Hill W.I. - St. Nicolas' Hall 7.30pm Mary Seldon - Midland Air Ambulance
Wednesday	6	Wednesday Club - Village Hall 8.00pm AGM
Tuesday	12	Parish Council Meeting - Village Hall Beginning with Public Session at 7.30pm
Wednesday	20	Swindon Village Society - Village Ha 7.30pm Richard Goddard - The Battle of Tewkesbury

March

Monday	4	Marle Hill W.I. - St. Nicolas' Hall 7.30pm Ian Cassie - S.S. Great Britain
Wednesday	6	Wednesday Club - Village Hall 8.0pm Bill Farnsworth - "I was a chef at The Savoy"
Tuesday	12	Parish Council Meeting - Village Hall Beginning with Public Session at 7.30pm
Wednesday	20	Swindon Village Society - Village Hall 7.30pm Chris Rowlands - Spirax Sarco

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Contact the Editors

(Full minutes of all Parish Council meetings are available on the Parish website www.swindonparish.org.uk. They are also available on request from the Chairman.)

It might be February when you read this but Happy New Year to you anyway. I hope you enjoyed your festive break (assuming you had one).

The Parish Council has finalised its budget for 2019-2020 (i.e. 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020). Advertising revenue from the Village News and the rental income from the allotments helps to keep the precept down. The precept is the money we collect through council tax. The budget we have set amounts to an increase of roughly 1p per week for a house in council tax band D. As always, we strive to provide a meaningful service to residents as cost effectively as possible. We hope we won't be blown off course by Brexit!

I thought I would also take an interest in Gloucestershire County Council's budget. The minutes of our parish council meetings usually occupy four pages. I looked at the document that resulted from the County Council's cabinet meeting that covered preparation of their budget. It ran to 516 pages! Good job I didn't accidentally press "print".

Whilst on a financial theme, the name on the parish council's bank account is "Swindon Village Parish Council". This is erroneous. The correct name is Swindon Parish Council (the village is only a part of the parish). The bank has introduced a service whereby one can scan cheques on a mobile phone to deposit them. However, cheques written (correctly) to Swindon Parish Council are rejected because that is not the name of the account. One step forward, two back. Feel free to put cash through the letter box. Or Bitcoins.

Our new defibrillator is now installed at the Village Hall and registered with South West Ambulance Trust. This means that, in the event of a medical emergency, someone can ring 999 and will be given the code to unlock the defibrillator cabinet. We will also give the code to local organisations and individuals. The Parish Council will next need to consider training for key people. The device itself is very clever; it talks to users and decides whether to administer an electric shock. Isn't that what the Daleks used to do in the 70s? There is also a training video referenced from our website if you want to take a look.

I asked the woman who registered the machine whether many defibrillators actually get used. Unfortunately, the answer seems to be yes. One was installed at the school where she is a governor and three days later it saved a man's life. The device seems quite straightforward to use but please take a look at the training video so that you understand what this thing is and what it can do.

Complaints were received about fireworks being set off in the park. We don't want to be kill joys but this can be very frightening for any dogs being exercised in the vicinity. Cheltenham Borough Council has confirmed that they never give permission for this sort of activity. Anyone claiming that they have been given the go ahead is being economical with the truth.

Not quite continuing the fireworks theme (but close enough; I have lowered my standards), a parish recently held a scarecrow competition. Guy Fawkes, scarecrow, what's the difference? Anyway, one of the entries was an effigy of their parish clerk. Don't you dare.

The Parish Council have been heavily involved in helping to recruit a new wave of volunteers to take the Village Hall forward. Some of you may have participated in the meetings that were called. We hope this activity will result in a new lease of life for the hall and a well earned rest for those presently on the committee who wish to stand down. If you are not on the list of volunteers but would like to get involved please get in touch with me.

My request for volunteers to help clear the undergrowth in the Amenity Area was a disaster on two counts. Firstly, only three people came along (my sincere thanks to them). Secondly, someone had got there before us so there was very little to do. Perhaps these two factors cancel out. At least I only wasted the time of four people rather than twenty. The Borough Council may have done this work but, if there are zealous individuals out there, can I please ask that the parish council be consulted prior to any work being done on our land? This will avoid me wasting time setting up activities that are not required. It will also mean that the person doing the work will be covered by the parish council's insurance.

Talking about clearing vegetation, some people don't like the old tree stump on the corner of Dark Lane and Quat Goose Lane. It is on Highways land and so belongs to the County Council. Their tree expert does not consider it to be dangerous and apparently it is a good habitat for insects so it will be retained for the time being.

A number of people have contacted me expressing their interest in undertaking voluntary activities. I am very grateful for this but until we have

appropriate procedures in place the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) does not allow us to hold the personal details of individuals. I shall continue to “broadcast” details of events (e.g. litter picks) via our website and the Village News. By the way, the town of Farnham must be quite affluent. A recent litter pick there recovered a flat screen TV.

Even Santa is affected by GDPR. A local authority in Germany cancelled its traditional ceremony where children hang their Christmas wish lists for Santa on a tree in the market because of GDPR concerns. The tradition saw kids write their name and address so Santa knew where to deliver their presents. However, under the GDPR, the local authority decided it must obtain written permission from the parents of the 4,000 children who usually take part. Surely that must be easy compared with Santa’s task of visiting them all.

I write the article for the Christmas Village News in mid-November. It is very hard to think of appropriate seasonal messages when it is effectively still autumn. If I may, a couple of small additions made with the benefit of hindsight. A big thank you to Ian Brown for collecting the allotment rents again. I am also told that the noticeboard at the allotments has been refurbished by Ian and/or his trusty helpers. Thanks for that. Thanks also to Yvonne, our newest councillor but one, for entering the Christmas Tree Festival with a Parish Council tree. We submitted photographs of ourselves to decorate it. My photo looked very menacing so it is not surprising that we didn’t take first prize.

Shaun Cullimore

Clerk to Swindon Parish Council


<https://swindonparish.org.uk>

"If you have concerns about anti-social behaviour do not hesitate to contact the police.

Ring 101 (you may be charged for this call)
or email 101@gloucestershire.police.uk

Get an incident number and let the parish council know about it.
If the police are not made aware of a problem **THERE ISN'T A PROBLEM**".

“WE NEED YOUR OPINION ON THE FUTURE OF YOUR VILLAGE HALL!”



The current Village Hall Committee are retiring this year and we would like to thank them for their years of service to our Village Hall. A new committee of volunteers is forming and a great number of ideas have been provisionally discussed but **we need to know your opinions first!**

Please help us by completing **a short 2 minute survey** with each family member. **We need the opinion of ALL AGES.**

bit.ly/svhallsurvey

We will be doing a selection of **door-to-door surveys** also for those who are unable to complete it online. If you would like us to visit you please call the Hall on **01242 690479** to register your name, address and contact number.

Services and Events for February

3	Sunday	10.30am 6.30pm	Together @ Ten Thirty Holy Communion
5	Tuesday	10.30am - 12noon	Chatterbox Coffee Drop-In
10	Sunday	9.15am 6.30pm	Holy Communion (BCP) Evensong
12	Tuesday	10.30am - 12noon 7.00pm	Chatterbox Coffee Drop-In Holy Communion
17	Sunday	10.30am 6.30pm	Together @ The Table Evensong
19	Tuesday	10.30am - 12noon	Chatterbox Coffee Drop-In
24	Sunday	9.15am 6.30pm	Holy Communion Evensong
26	Tuesday	10.30am - 12noon	Chatterbox Coffee Drop-In



Well it's the beginning of another new year as I write....and it's filled with all the promises of fresh beginnings and resolutions to be adhered to. Ideas for resolutions will probably skirt around losing a few pounds after Christmas to making more dramatic life decisions. Whatever your resolutions might be, making changes to one's life is far from easy, especially when those changes impact on the lives of others.

Some may know that I have recently become a father; and a new baby signals new starts and forces us in to this new world of fresh beginnings. In a way, it forces us to say goodbye to some things in order to embrace that which is new. The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, which we celebrate on the 2nd of this month encompasses this idea. The story about this old man who, when he finally gets to see this little baby Jesus in the Temple realises that he can at last die in peace, says something about laying aside one's life in order for other lives to thrive. In some ways, it becomes sacrificial in nature to do this. Decreasing so as another can increase is a familiar theme. Simeon hints at this but it also resembles the relationship between Jesus and his cousin, John the Baptist. "He must become more important, while I become less important", he says. (Jn. 3: 30)

The birth of Christ demonstrates that change does impact on all of our lives. It's humbling to acknowledge that our lives are never completely our own when our own life story influences the stories that others eventually live out.

And so as the presentation marks the beginning of this, another new month and year, I pray that its lesson can deepen our understanding of our own existence as a people in relationship in all kinds of ways and with all its variants.... in this cosmic drama of God's chosen people.

Rev George

From the registers



We gave thanks for the life of

Desmond May	Funeral and burial	10th December
Esme May	Burial of ashes	10th December
Ralph Bennett	Funeral	12th December

Enquiries about baptisms or weddings

If you would like to enquire about baptism (also called christening) or would like to book a wedding in St Lawrence church, please visit the Team Surgery at St. Nicolas' Church, Swindon Lane on any Saturday morning between 10.30am and 11.00am. (Enter through the main door and turn right.)

If this is not possible contact the Team Office, which is open Monday to Friday from 9am until 12 noon. The office is based at St Nicolas' Church in Swindon Lane. Contact the Office on **244373** or **admin@northchelt.org.uk**

You can contact the clergy by email:

Revd. George Davis (Team Vicar) fr.georgedavis@hotmail.com

Revd. Nick Bromfield (Team Rector)

nick.bromfield@northchelt.org.uk or via the office.

Christmas at St. Lawrence's

It was a pleasure to welcome so many people into the church for our Christmas services which were all well-attended.

The collection taken at the Crib Service on Christmas Eve is traditionally donated to The Children's Society and this year we were able to send them £120. Thank you for your generosity.

Karen Evans

Christmas Tree Festival

It seems a long time ago now but the Christmas Tree Festival attracted a lot of visitors who experienced the “wow factor” produced by a record 23 trees. In addition to the group trees we had more individuals taking part this time. As usual we were all amazed at the ideas and ingenuity behind the decorations.

A young lady called Amelia received a record number of votes for her “Crafty Christmas” tree which was hung with Christmas decorations that Amelia had made using several forms of craft – knitting, crochet, pom-poms, baking, melting plastic beads – and which stood over a clay model of a Christmas dinner. Well done, Amelia!

The Wine Club’s tree was covered in miniature glasses, bottles and cocktail umbrellas and was very colourful. Two people had chosen gardening as their theme with real sprouts hanging from one of them. The Chatterbox tree was covered in an assortment of representations of hobbies including miniature paintings on easels.

It’s impossible to write about every tree. There are photographs on the parish website – <https://swindonparish.org.uk> – but even they don’t do justice to the trees.

For those of you who remember your guesses, there were 346 Lego pieces in the nativity scene; the nearest guess was 350, from two people. The raffle prizes were won by Jim Groves, Pene Manford, Brenda Stanford and Rose Martyn.

The Christmas Tree Festival has become a regular event on the parish calendar, having started in 2007 as part of the major fundraising effort after part of the church ceiling fell down. Historic buildings such as our church require ongoing maintenance and repair and our current project is to replace the roof on the tower, before it leaks! So, in addition to the Christmas Tree Festival being a fun and sociable event, I’m pleased to say that over the weekend we raised £834 for the restoration fund.

The Festival theme was “Hobbies and Pastimes” The staff at the Early Years playgroup even wrote a poem to go with their tree.

*Some of us village folk like to knit and some like to sew,
Some of us like to cook and bake and watch the rising dough.*

*Most of us like to shop and spend for a dress or shoe or boot,
Spending on our credit cards and losing lots of loot!*

*All of us are different in what we like.
Some adore cars and others a bike.*

*Others would choose to dig in the mud,
Planting out bulbs and watching them bud.*

*Whatever excites you, it's lovely to see,
Because it's what makes you you and what makes me me!*

Thank you very much to everyone who took part in or visited the Festival;
we couldn't have done it without you.

Karen Evans

On behalf of St. Lawrence's Fundraising Group

Cotton for crochet

One of our readers has several balls of crochet cotton suitable for making table runners etc. surplus to requirements. If you have a use for them please phone Jackie Staples on 01242 510882.

Wednesday Club

On behalf of all of us at Wednesday Club, we would like to wish you all a very Happy and Healthy New Year for 2019.

At our meeting in December, it was time to Party (as they say). John Dale came along with his guitar to entertain us with songs from the 50s and 60s. I think we knew all the words for all the songs as they were sung originally by Tommy Steele, The Searchers and many more. It was a good evening followed by supper and makes a lovely start to the Christmas season.

On the 2nd January, twenty one of us went along to The Swan at Coombe Hill and had our annual meal. This all went very well and we will be planning the next one before we know it!

The next meeting is on Wednesday 6th February and will be our AGM. All are welcome; the business side only takes about 15 minutes so do come along.

On Wednesday 6th March, our speaker will be Bill Farnsworth and he will be telling us about being a chef at the Savoy. Please do come along and join us, visitors are always welcome.

Look forward to seeing you in February.

Pauline Wright

Art & Crafts Club

Well come on!!! New Year new challenge - come and join us at the club, lots of socialising, some painting and craft work, refreshments, great evening for all to enjoy - go on try something new..... **Contact Helen on 07817 581223.**

By the time you read this, the AGM will have come and gone and at a guess the committee will have been re-elected en masse and the accounts approved and someone will have said thanks to someone and we will have settled down for another year.

So what do we have for your delectation? In February we have a talk on the Battle of Tewkesbury. The day before the battle the Yorkist army passed through the village passing along what is now Runnings Road and Dog Bark Lane to camp overnight at Tredington. So as a village we do have an interest. Edward IV was with his army as was Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and later King Richard III. When I tell the youngsters about this on the annual walk at least they have heard of him – ‘That’s the geezer in the car park, in nit?’ Ah, the joys of history.

In March we have Chris Rowlands coming from Spirax Sarco to tell us what they do and possibly their future plans. Could I ask that this does not become a complaints event. If Spirax Sarco are causing you a problem please write them a letter. This gentleman is giving up his time to tell us all about the (to me) rather scenic clouds of steam that decorate the winter sky when returning to the village of an evening. Visitors will be welcome but restraint please.

In April our spy is back to tell us about Kim Philby – Gentleman, Spy and Traitor. Can’t fault the title.

In May John Heathcott will take us for a walk in Lineover Wood, one of the few bits of ancient woodland in the area.

June will be our garden visit but as ever we await publication of the annual garden open day plan to see if anywhere new has opened.

In July Dr Tim Brain is back to tell us about Gloucestershire Battles. Even though many year a policeman, I am guessing this will not just be about Cheltenham High Street on a Saturday night.

August – garden party – gumboots and brollies mandatory.

Our good friend Arthur Ball will be back in September to tell us about the wildlife of Dowdeswell Reservoir Nature Reserve.

The October talk is still to be decided. All these speakers cost a lot of money. If finances are low I may bless you all with a rehash of one of my old talks, the subject of which will be by popular vote. If finances are OK you may be spared this.

November gives us a talk on Gustav Holst. The money from this goes to support the Holst Museum (£60) – see what I mean about finances.

We would love to have new members along – the annual fee is £6 for a single person and £12 for a family. You can drop the money into 3, Swindon Hall. Ring the bell and if I am in you get a free cup of tea and a one hour lecture (without slides) on the history of the Hall. Alternatively just push it through the letter box and run. Or join at any meeting. It's worth it just to come to the garden party and look at the rain through our window.

Do be aware that our real role is to act as a Civic Society for the village and keep the place a decent place to live. Sorry about the 4,200 houses in our green belt but not enough of you joined.

Barry Simon

The Swindon Village Society

The Battle of Tewkesbury

Richard Goddard

The Battle of Tewkesbury was one of the most important battles of The Wars of the Roses

Wednesday 20th February

Spirax Sarco

Chris Rowlands

A chance to find out what this major local company does

Wednesday 20th March

Both talks will take place in the Village Hall, starting at 7.30pm.

Non-members are welcome for the small fee of £1 each.

Refreshments and Raffle

We enjoyed a very festive meeting in December. With a Ukulele Band to entertain us, decorated tables, sausage rolls and mince pies it was a good start to the Christmas season.

A few of us joined other county members for a weekend away. We called in at Nottingham for a few hours on the way, where there was a Christmas Market to explore and somewhere for a lunch break. The following day we went to Chatsworth House, where the Christmas Market consisted of over 100 stalls. It was certainly one of the best I have ever been to. In the afternoon we went into the house itself to experience the Christmas decorations. The many decorated trees were enormous and the various scenes from various Fairy Tales were quite spectacular. On the return journey, the next day, we stopped off in Leicester to see the Richard III exhibition and his tomb. This was a very interesting and worthwhile visit that I can recommend if you are in the area.

The seasonal theme continued with our entry in the Christmas Tree Festival at St Lawrence Church in Swindon Village and a Meal at the Farmers Arms. I understand that the pub closed down a few days later; nothing to do with us, I hope! The Annual Christmas Concert in the Town Hall was a memorable occasion with Only Men Aloud as the guest artistes.

With the Christmas break over, we started off the New Year, at our January meeting, with our old friend Phil Collins as the speaker. He showed us a selection of pictures from his postcard collection depicting Old Cheltenham. It made us realise that some parts of the town were still very recognisable whilst other areas had altered or lost buildings, and some features were no longer there. However, the town did seem very different without the modern traffic and crowds.

We have a busy year ahead of us. The Gloucestershire Federation are celebrating their centenary in 2019 with many activities. There is a Vintage Village Show to be held in the garden of Cirencester House in July and an exhibition and service in the Cathedral in October. The front garden of WI House in Gloucester is being redesigned and renovated to commemorate the occasion and we have a County weekend at Denman College with a celebratory meal. Other events are also being arranged during the year. A few members are going on holidays to Kent and Romania.

With the Book and Craft Clubs, walks, meals out, walking netball and other events the year ahead is already filling up!

Mary Seldon from the Midland Air Ambulance is the speaker at our meeting on Monday 4th February. We meet at 7.30pm at St Nicolas Hall in Swindon Lane and always give a warm welcome to visitors and new members.

Sara Jefferies

Happy Chinese New Year

The Chinese New Year starts on 5th February and this will be the Year of the Pig.

The name Swindon is derived from the Saxon Swine Dun, meaning Pig Hill or the hill where pigs were bred.

Did you know...

- * Piglets will run to their mothers' voices and can recognise their own names at two weeks old.
- * Pigs are clean animals. They roll in mud for its cooling properties but they make their toilet areas well away from where they sleep and eat.
- * Adult pigs can run at speeds of up to 11mph.
- * A pig's squeal can be as loud as a supersonic plane.
- * In China pigs are associated with fertility and virility.
- * Pigs are very social animals - they talk to each other and they like to sleep close together nose-to-nose.
- * Pigs have an excellent sense of smell and their snouts are a very important tool in finding food.

**Don't wait until
your loved one
goes missing...**



The Herbert Protocol is a form that contains vital information about someone with dementia who is at risk of going missing.

The form is filled in by the person with Dementia, their family or carers.

Your local Police can use the information in the form to find someone quickly & bring them back to safety.

For more information and to fill in a copy of the form visit:
www.gloucestershire.police.uk



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CONTACT US ASAP

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VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

Footpaths	John Heathcott	527753
Acting Scout Leader & GSL	Stephen Smith (Sos)	693107
Cub Scout Leader	Rachel Smith (Chil)	693107
Beaver Leader	Hugh Stanford	svbeavers@gmail.com 706020
Rainbow Guider	Jackie Bailey	07871 169308
Village Hall Booking Secretary	Debbie Styman/ Sally Stennett	690479 (during Playgroup hours)
Village Hall Secretary	Rose D’Gama	574964
Wednesday Club	Pauline Wright	693112
Play Group	(Playgroup hours)	690479
Winemakers’ Secretary	Roy Harper	662861
School Headteacher	Geraint Mills	690016
Friends of the School	Jodie Courts	chairfosvps@gmail.com
Art & Crafts Club	Adrian Skilling	690928 adrian.skilling@gmail.com
Swindon Village Society	Barry Simon	521723
Mary Godwin Under 5s	(Playgroup hours)	263746
Marle Hill W.I.	Sara Jefferies	692500
Save The Countryside	Helen Wells	07770 986078

Please inform the editors of any changes to the contact details for village

Deadline for the next issue of the Village News is the 16th of this month.
Please send contributions to the editors via
Karen Evans at 5 Manor Road
or e-mail village-news@swindonparish.org.uk

SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman	Cllr. Peter Allen	692933
Vice Chairman	Cllr. John Conmee	572060
	Cllr. Helen Wells	220875 or 07770 986078
	Cllr. Yvonne Pirso	515095
	Cllr. James Cornish	07950 196709
	Vacancy	
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Clerk to the Council	Mr Shaun Cullimore	07833 089435 parish.clerk@swindonparish.org.uk
Cheltenham Borough Councillors	Cllr. Flo Clucas Cllr. Bernard Fisher	255844 07523 421012
County Councillor	Cllr. Bernard Fisher	07523 421012
Allotments Manager	Ian Brown	528683

Swindon Parish and Community Website: <https://swindonparish.org.uk>

ST. LAWRENCE CHURCH

Part of the North Cheltenham Team Ministry

Team Rector	Revd. Nick Bromfield	nick.bromfield@northchelt.org.uk
Team Vicar	Revd. George Davis	fr.georgedavis@hotmail.com 702890
Reader	Ralph Griffin	510533
Churchwardens	Tony Jilbert	693639
	May Shurmer	241033
Tower Captain	Hugh Evans	241678
Organist	John Collins	511950
North Cheltenham Team Ministry Office		244373
St. Nicolas' Church, Swindon Lane, Cheltenham GL50 4PA		admin@northchelt.org.uk

The office is open on Monday to Friday 9am to 12 noon. Outside these hours please leave a message on the answer phone.

The contents of this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editors or the Parish Council