

# West Ilsley News

January 2004

A Happy New Year to all our readers!

We feel it important that every resident takes particular note of the message from the current (temporary) chairman of the Parish Council, Mr Nick Carter. The West Ilsley Parish Council has a long history of promoting the specific interests of the Village and has achieved much over the years from which we each continue to benefit. As Mr. Carter points out, we are in danger of losing that influence, and the distinct identity that arises from it, if the Parish Council is forced to merge with another through lack of support. This isn't a situation which should be allowed to happen "by default" - as you will see, the topic is due for discussion at the meeting to be held on 12<sup>th</sup> January at 6.30 pm - an opportunity for us all to hear more about the subject and progress being made.

The Editors

## CHRISTMAS CAROLS

On Thursday 18th December we again took to the streets to sing Carols around the Village and, in the process, collect money for the Church Roof Restoration Fund.

This year we were accompanied by almost as many Band members as singers, the recent colds having decimated the latter somewhat - Ian and Kay Fewtrell-Smith and Alison (Price) were amongst those unable to attend; fortunately, we were joined by a small number of new faces (though tenor and bass were perhaps in short supply) and we mostly managed to hold our own, though I confess that I for one was largely hoarse from 8.00 pm onwards!

Under Paul's guidance the band played most of the old standards, despite frozen instruments and cold fingers. With one or two exceptions - including singing half a Carol before discovering that some of the band were actually playing the wrong tune! - the singers serenaded a number of (mostly!) appreciative residents for the next 2 hours. Halfway along, Paul and Lynne had arranged for a brief pick-me-up in the form of warm mince pies and mulled wine, and as usual we ended up in the Pub at about 9.30pm.

The evening raised £144 plus a few coppers and Euros - about the same amount as last year, and a welcome boost to the Fund.

Thanks are due to all who took part and to those who made donations, and in particular to Paul and Lynne for organising the event and providing the mid-session refreshment.

## FATHER CHRISTMAS VISIT COURTESY OF THE NEWBURY LIONS CLUB

Thank you to everyone who gave so generously to the collection on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December. We have given £50 each to: Helen House - the Children's Hospice in Oxford, and Reading 3000 - a charity for homeless children. A big thank you must go to Paul Willis, Mick Crockford of The Lions, and Jemma, Tessa, Alistair, Charlotte, Vanessa, Carrie-Ann, Ryan, Danielle, Alina, Beccy and Ben for their enthusiastic collecting! Very best wishes for 2004. Toni Sugden.

## MEMORIAL TREE FOR ERIC BANKS

Amy Banks and family

You may have noticed a new tree has appeared in the pond area. It's a crataegus lavalley carrierii - Chinese hawthorn. It should have white flowers in the Spring, and good Autumn colour, with orange/red fruits. Many thanks to Terry Hughes, who did most of the hard work of planting, and to others in the village for their advice and encouragement. We hope the tree will thrive and give pleasure to all of us who enjoy what is now a very attractive amenity area.

## PARISH COUNCIL

Linda Gibson - Clerk - Tel 200242

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2004 6.30p.m. in the Village Hall. (Please note the earlier start time).

## CHURCH SERVICES FOR JANUARY:

Ian Fewtrell-Smith

4 <sup>th</sup> January	All Age Service	11.00 am
11 <sup>th</sup> January	Holy Communion	8.00 am
18 <sup>th</sup> January	Family Communion	9.30 am

## CHRISTMAS SERVICES

The church looked its usual beautiful self, thanks to the hard work of all who decorated it. Thank you all very much. The crib service, featured in the Newbury Weekly News, produced some budding acting talent, together with associated mayhem. The collection was for "Daisy's Dreams", a charity to help bereaved children, and it raised a magnificent £120. Even Humbug, the pony on which Mary arrived in church, gave a magnificent donation, although that had to be re-directed to someone's rose bushes!

The church was packed out for the carol service and the collection taken was £242.21. That was donated to the local Macmillan's Cancer Fund.

## "RAISING THE ROOF"

Your gifts have continued to come in. Thank you all very much.

## CAROL SINGING

A big "thank you" to Paul and co. for the carol singing around the village. Kay and I missed it, courtesy of some evil bug. Just under £150 was donated to the "Raising the Roof" appeal – thank you!

## WINTER WARMER – 7<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2004

There will be a meal in the village hall on Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> February in aid of "Raising the Roof". Please keep the date clear in your diaries!

## EAST ILSLEY BELLRINGERS

East Ilsley bellringers need to recruit new members to their team. If there are any ex-campanologists, willing learners or inquisitive undecideds out there, please step forward. We practice on Monday evenings between 7.30pm and 9.00pm, after which we can usually be found quenching our thirsts in The Star. We ring for 45 minutes before Sunday services and, in between times, we try to enjoy ourselves.

If you are interested in learning, please contact John Hibbert (281885) or pay us a visit on a Monday evening. It can be an extremely interesting, enjoyable and addictive hobby.

## THE FUTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN WEST ILSLEY?

### A message from the Chairman of West Ilsley Parish Council

Some of you will be aware that three West Berkshire Council officers took over the administration of the Parish Council 10 months ago. This followed the resignation of the previous Parish Council and the absence of any candidates at the following elections. Whilst we have done all we can to support the local village and have completed a number of important initiatives, no candidates have subsequently come forward from the local community to fill the vacancies for Parish Councillors, despite several attempts.

Our presence was only ever a short term measure. Parish Councils need to reflect, represent and support

the local community. Whilst officers from the District Council are running the Parish Council this local influence is being lost. Unfortunately the time has now come to consider other options, the most likely being the merger of West Ilsley with another Parish and the subsequent abolition of the West Ilsley Parish Council. Surrounding Parish Councils are now being consulted on proposals and your Parish Council will be formally considering the matter at its next meeting. I am aware of the circumstances surrounding the resignation of the previous Parish Council and the loyalty that exists to them. I am not in a position to comment on this, however, I would urge all West Ilsley residents to consider very carefully whether they are prepared now to see West Ilsley lose any formal recognition within the District. Your Council should play an important role in helping to address the future needs of the local community as well as representing local issues and concerns at a wider level. Actions taken over the next six months may well see future generations in the village being prevented from representing and supporting their local community. They may find it increasingly difficult to get their voice heard if a neighbouring village governs them.

There is still time for the village to act. The Parish Council only requires 3 councillors to represent it and there are only 5 meetings a year to attend. I believe this is a small contribution to make to ensure West Ilsley continues to attract the support and resources it deserves and maintains a clear and distinct identity within West Berkshire.

Notices advertising the vacancies on the Parish Council are currently displayed in the Parish. Nominations close at noon on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2004.

**Nick Carter**

**Chairman, West Ilsley Parish Council**

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And finally: contributions to the WIN can be made by conversation, phone, email, handwritten or typed copy, "word" file (via email or disk) or fax, but most importantly, **please do contribute**. The **latest deadline** for the next publication is **5pm** on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January but the editors would appreciate receiving your contributions as you get them ready during the month, to save a rush of work at the last minute.

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