

# Smisby Newsletter Summer 2015

Issue 47

A mixed summer in terms of the Great British weather but also in terms of our own Community in every sense as we reflect upon a season tinged with some real sadness, along with some real highs, and some great achievement of note within our Parish.

The summer certainly had a melancholy feel within the Parish as one of Smisby's best loved residents, Joan Grew, had sadly passed away on 10th July 2015. The funeral took place on 21st July at St James's Church in Smisby and the fondness for Joan was truly reflected in the phenomenal turnout from the residents of Smisby. Residents will certainly miss her sat in her porch waving as they walk by on Chapel Street. Joan was much loved by everyone and she adored living in Smisby.

The summer celebrations this year saw a Smisby VE Tea Party which was another wonderful community event where we managed to relive this historic war time era with a truly nostalgic celebration. Hazel Salt led a chorus of War Time classic songs and live entertainment saw a fantastic Beverley Sisters tribute act, with our very own Karen Walker taking centre stage. Everyone enjoyed a high afternoon tea with sandwiches and cakes, and for once a blessing with the weather allowed everyone to enjoy the Village Hall and the gardens as an amenity in all its glory.

The next social occasion takes place on 18th September with a Fish n Chips, Bingo and Quiz night again in the Village Hall beginning at 7.15pm. It costs £8 per head for the food and bingo with £1 per head for the quiz. The evening is being hosted by the local Conservative Repton Branch. Teams of 2 - 6 people are more than welcome to come along and join in. Please also bring your own drink refreshments and a glass.

In amongst a Summer of Sport with England winning the Ashes and Mo Farrah and Co winning at the Athletic World Championships, it is worth noting a great achievement of one of our own young parishioners. After only 3 months into her sport, Laura Hewitt, qualified for the British Weight Lifting Championships competing at the Ricoh Arena in Coventry, and then recently became British U23 Champion in her 58kg category at Crystal Palace. Laura has now been offered a full time sports scholarship by British Weight Lifting, based out of Loughborough University, on a Golden Chance programme helping support potential future talent towards the Olympic Games in Tokyo 2020. We all wish Laura well in her new sporting endeavours.

Finally just to raise awareness of the Smisby Facebook page "Smisby Village News" which carries information and photos about local events, clubs, classes, and articles of interest.

## Hazel's Corner

We are so lucky to have such a well cared for ancient and beautiful church at the centre of our village, so it was devastating to have had lead stolen from both church roofs. It would be fantastic if we could use this terrible crime, to get parishioners and families to come along occasionally and share our heritage. Even for those who have never believed in God, you can still experience the peace and tranquillity of a service in this lovely building and would achieve something positive. The congregation and team lead by our wonderful Rector Mark Powell, would love to welcome you to our family and or evening services, and afterwards we have a chat and a laugh with our friends over coffee, tea, and biscuits. Go on give it a try!



**Fish 'n' Chips,  
Bingo and Quiz Night**  
**Friday 18th September, 7:15pm, Smisby Village Hall**

£8 per head (includes food and bingo)

£1 per head for the quiz. Bring your own drink and glass.

## St James' Church

In June, between Monday and Thursday of the week ending Friday 5th, lead sheeting that covered the



south roof of the church was stolen and then a few weeks later thieves returned and stripped lead from the main roof over the nave and chancel. There was also some damage inside the church from the water and grime that came in following heavy rain, as well as further external damage to the stonework. Most people reading this will be aware of these events which must have taken place during the hours of darkness. We can be certain that the second, and most costly theft, took place on the Saturday night of 11th / 12th July with the lead being loaded onto a vehicle parked at the bottom of Forties Lane. There must have been one or two vehicles pass that location during the night but nothing has been reported and the police chose not even to inspect the crime scene, assuming the chance of apprehending the criminals as negligible.

The financial situation for the church is extremely serious as the thefts came soon after the 5 yearly structural inspection of the church last year which identified repairs, needing to be carried out in the next few years, as amounting to around £150,000. The Church Council (the PCC) is responsible for the upkeep of the church and the only regular source of income is the 'money on the plate' collection at the weekly services - combined with standing order donations from some members of the congregation. However, unlike most churches, it can apply to a charity for grant aid - to the Smisby Church Charity. The Church Charity holds no capital assets but automatically receives half of the disposable income, less expenses, of Smisby Parochial Charity. From this source the PCC has been able to enlarge the vestry to include a kitchenette and toilet facilities and also pay for the upkeep of the churchyard and carry out a number of repairs from time to time. Unfortunately, the church's weekly income nowhere near meets the cost of maintaining even the basics of keeping the church running. In the last few years, the Church Charity has received an average of around £25,000pa and apart from making grants to the PCC has also built up a very useful reserve of over £80,000. It was confidently expected that this reserve would be close to meeting the costs identified by the 2014 structural survey but obviously that has not proved to be the case.

The lead thefts could add a further cost of perhaps £60,000 and the insurance compensation will yield probably no more than about £20,000. Even though the double claim should pay for most ancillary damage to the church, the individual lead theft claims will be capped at £7500 for each event.

English Heritage (now called Historic England) normally requires roof replacements to be made on a 'like for like' basis but their initial reaction is that they will be prepared to consider the use of coated stainless steel for St James roofing. Stainless steel would still be very expensive but hopefully not cost as much as lead. We do not yet have formal quotes for re-roofing but using an alternative to lead sheeting makes it unattractive to thieves due to its lower scrap value and the difficulty in handling it.

It is hoped that the Church Charity will continue to receive around £25,000pa from the Parochial Charity but when we compare anticipated overall income, over say the next 5 years, with estimated repair costs we see a shortfall of maybe £60,000 to £100,000. This sort of money cannot be raised by a small church in a small community so we have to work out how best to manage the situation. We intend to prioritise the repairs, including roof replacements, and schedule some of the less urgent essential work into a 5 to 10 year timescale. The roofs have been made watertight with roofing felt so delaying a permanent repair to one of the roofs could be a sensible option. It is hoped that it will be possible to reduce the shortfall in cash over the next 5 years to perhaps £50,000. This is still a tremendous sum to raise but when we have fully costed and prioritised the required repairs with our newly appointed architect, we will be in a better position to know how best to move forward. There is little doubt that we will be making appeals to grant making organisations as well as hoping for donations from corporate sources as well as from individuals, to help meet unavoidable repair costs.

Even before an appeal is launched it is wonderful to report that Smisby WI immediately started fund raising for the church. So far they have organised four events, three of them involving the church, and have raised well over £700 for St James. A lot of effort was involved and the church is enormously grateful for their work. We hope that these initiatives will kick-start other fund raising activities when we come to launch an appeal. We will report on repair progress, and on fund raising, in future newsletters.

## Ashby Camera Club

After a successful series of evening meets throughout the summer at local places of interest, often with access not normally afforded to the public, the Club now enters its 'winter' programme of talks, competitions and practical evenings through to May meeting at the Village Hall on most Wednesday evenings.

Membership has been buoyant and creeping up, and it remains a friendly group of diverse individuals from beginners to semi-professionals with a common interest in photography. While we are not a teaching club there's always help at hand with the technical and artistic challenges. If you're at all interested please take a look at [www.ashbycameraclub.co.uk](http://www.ashbycameraclub.co.uk), use the contact form on the website and pop along to one of our meetings.

## Ashby Art Club

The season starts with a joining night on 7th September, and membership may need to be restricted this year due to the popularity of the club.

Ashby Art club starts the new season with an acrylic workshop with well known Derby artist Steven McLoughlin on Saturday 12th September (to paint a Cornish Cove), followed by a demonstration by Stephen Ashurst on Monday 14th September. Nearly every month there is a demonstration to watch, and the opportunity to join a workshop to learn a variety of painting techniques. The complete programme can be found on and downloaded from the club website, [ashbyartclub.org](http://ashbyartclub.org).



Non members can attend the demonstrations for £5 as a visitor and also join in with the workshops for a small increase (normally £5 extra) in the members fee, if there is space available. Once again the highlight of the art club season will be the Easter Exhibition held at Ticknall, and members will be busy preparing for this and also getting involved in a number of other local exhibitions throughout the year, such as the Melbourne festival art trail (19th and 20th September 2015), and of course looking forward to the Ashby festival next year.

## Smisby Village Hall

By now I hope many of you will have seen the start of the change process to your Village Hall. The redecoration is now complete and the Interactive Whiteboard (now removed) will soon be replaced by a 'state of the art' Audio Visual system – the heart of which will be an 85" flat screen TV! The Committee have been informed by South Derbyshire County Council that our bid for this project, for up to 50% of the funding, has passed the first hurdle and we are now waiting for the Approvals Committee to give their final seal of approval (we should hear that decision by the end of the August). The Audio Visual System will be supplemented by a dedicated Wi-Fi (free for everyone to use) and a hearing loop. As we are fortunate enough to have two expert engineers on the Committee, we are going for a 'self-help' installation to keep the costs as low as possible.



Other plans include installation of air conditioning and additional soundproofing, together with purchasing some new, more comfortable chairs! We hope in the early New Year to refurbish the floor in the Main Hall, but this will require the Hall to be closed for a full week, so we will have to pick our time carefully to give maximum notice to our regular hirers, thereby giving time to plan around this work and causing minimum disruption to their activities.

You will probably already know by now that Smisby Day Nursery is building a new extension to accommodate their early morning, evening and holiday activities providing them with greater flexibility. As such, when the new building is ready Smisby Day Nursery will vacate the Village Hall, which will allow us to accommodate more Parish and local bookings. We will be planning an advertising campaign to attract new users and also local businesses which may care to use the Hall for their 'Away-Day' team building sessions. We will make sure we link with the Smisby Arms, who would hopefully be able to provide lunches for such bookings.

Our aim is that now we have brought the Hall 'up to date' and compliant with all legislation, we should boast about having the best Village amenity in all of South Derbyshire! Please consider using your Village Hall for your various activities.

Rob Hounslow, Chairman Smisby Village Hall Committee

New committee members are - Rob Hounslow (Chair), Simon Barnett (Vice Chair), Ron Walker (Secretary), Suzanne Jones (Treasurer), Barbara Ball (Bookings Clerk), Sarah Rushman, Pat Barnes, Jeff Barnes, David Waters. Please can any queries or questions relating to the Village Hall (including access to the hall) be directed to a member of the committee.

## Parochial Charity

The charity has confirmed to both the Parish Council and to the Village Hall that it will pay for the hearing loop that is to be installed in the village hall. It has also again confirmed that we will pay for the purchase of a defibrillator unit to be located on the outside of the village hall. The trustees went to see a boules court in use at the Kings Head at Coleorton recently and found there to be enormous enthusiasm by those playing a match there against another local team. Quite a few villages now have the facility to play Petanque and there is a league that is hotly contested. We are getting more information and also seeking additional quotes for laying a court on the Jubilee field, in the hope of having things up and running for next year. Other possibilities for funding, mentioned in the past, are making slow progress whilst going through the planning application stage but they should come to fruition in the coming months. In particular it looks as if the Annwell Lane decorative gate will soon get the go ahead.

## Help At Hand

365



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### Contact

**Emilie Barnett or Sarah Battenon**

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## Smisby WI

The WI has had a busy summer with many activities other than the monthly meetings. We have enjoyed not only the craft mornings and monthly walks, one of which was around Hanbury to visit the Second World War Crater...several husbands and friends came along too, but also a coffee morning at a member's home with entertainment provided by another member's Dancing Dogs, a day trip to the WI's Denman College near Oxford and a visit to Hampton Court on a beautiful day in August.



After the theft of the lead from the church roof, we held a couple of money raising mornings. A member and her husband gave guided tours around the church and we followed this by serving bacon butties, with home made cake and tea or coffee in the Village Hall. We managed to raise more than £500.00 serving more than eighty people. Thank you to all who supported us in this venture. We have one more celebration this year when the four institutes in the Harpur Crewe Group, Melbourne, Ticknall, Staunton Harold and Smisby get together in Ticknall Village Hall on September 16th to mark the 100th birthday of the WI.

Following the success of our last Murder Mystery Evening, we are having another on Saturday October 24th. "Death at the Big Top" will start at 7pm and includes a four course meal all for £12.50. There are only a few tickets left so if you would like to join us for a fun evening, please call the number at the end of this article or 01530 415346.

In the following months, at our meetings in the Village Hall on the third Thursday in the month we have speakers to tell us about 'A day in the Life of a Photographer', Farmhouse Cookery, Desert Island Discs and to bring the year's activities to a close, a Christmas Miscellany.

If you would like to come along as a guest to any of our meetings please call 01530 416411 for more information.

## Smisby Allotment News

We are continuing to work well in the allotments and the site itself is becoming well established with the hedging and free-wood filling out and starting to screen the area. We are currently renewing tenancies and we do have both full and half plots available. Please pass on our contact details to anyone who may be interested. If you are interested in a plot then please contact us at [smisbyallotments@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:smisbyallotments@yahoo.co.uk)



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[www.bluebellnursery.co.uk](http://www.bluebellnursery.co.uk)

### Useful Smisby Village Contacts:

#### Parish Councillors:

**Chair** - Steve Hewitt (07908 620002)

**Vice Chair** - Sarah Rushman

**Parish Clerk** - Emma Stroud (01530 587349)

[smisbyparishclerk@gmail.com](mailto:smisbyparishclerk@gmail.com)

**Councillor** - Mark Parnham

**Councillor** - Simon Barnett (07855 969719)

**Councillor** - Rob Hounslow (07720 348860)

Please contact the Parish Clerk if you would like to include anything in the next Parish Newsletter.

#### South Derbyshire District Councillors:

**Councillor** - Michael Stanton (07768 010251)

[michael.stanton@south-derbys.gov.uk](mailto:michael.stanton@south-derbys.gov.uk)

**Councillor** - Peter Smith (07894 338129)

[peter.smith@south-derbys.gov.uk](mailto:peter.smith@south-derbys.gov.uk)

#### Derbyshire District Councillor:

**Councillor** - Linda Chilton

[linda.chilton@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:linda.chilton@derbyshire.gov.uk)

#### Parochial Charity:

**Trustee** - Barbara Ball (01530 416411)

**Trustee** - Jeff Barnes (01283 217319)

**Trustee** - Simon Barnett (01530 412491)

**Trustee** - Andrew Parnham (01530 411202)

**Clerk** - Sheila Heap (01530 414179)

#### Village Hall Committee:

**Chairman** - Rob Hounslow (07720 348860)

**Secretary** - Ron Walker

**Bookings Sec** - Barbara Ball (07526 268698)

#### Smisby Church:

**Churchwarden** - Gary Margerrison (01530 414453)

**Churchwarden** - Carol Morgan (01530 411314)

#### Newsletter Publishers:

Steve Hewitt

James Barnett

Sam Hewitt (Photography)

**Forthcoming Parish Council Meetings; Held on Tuesdays @ 7.30pm in Smisby Village Hall.  
Members of the public are welcome to attend.  
Next meeting is on the 10th November 2015**