

Hothfield News

January 2010

The Monthly Newsletter by and for the Hothfield Community

KENT WILDLIFE TRUST - Ian Rickards, Ashford Area Warden

We seem to be getting more and more visitors to our Hothfield Heathland reserve. As well as more people arriving on foot and by car, a number of rather impressive visitors have been arriving by air. I am referring to one of our most spectacular birds, and one of our more recent, the Little Egret.

60cm (2') high with a 90cm (3') wingspan, these magnificently bright white birds are often seen searching for food across the wet fields of our Hothfield Extension. Related to herons, they stay together in little groups hunting for snails, insects, frogs and eels. 20 years ago, these birds were only found in France, occasionally visiting the UK for the winter. Recently they have become more and more common, and some are now breeding on the South coast and East Anglia.



Bought with GrantScape money in 2007, the farmland to the West of the original nature reserve is being transformed into a nature reserve. Over the last 3 years, we have been creating more pools, improving the river edges, and reintroducing grazing. As this work continues, the number of Egrets has steadily increased.

Part of this success is down to the cooperation of visitors to the Hothfield Extension. By keeping dogs on leads, and staying on the marked footpaths, visitors are allowing these sensitive birds to feed without disturbance.



To find out more about the work of the Kent Wildlife Trust, visit our website on www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk telephone 01622 662012 or e-mail on ian.rickards@kentwildlife.org.uk

HOTHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL – Shirley Whittington



Training Highway, a non profit making organisation is coming to Hothfield Village Hall on 22 March, 2010. What is Training Highway? It is an organisation which helps adults make sense of computers and the internet by organising adult friendly courses for people of all ages and competencies from absolute beginners to those with some knowledge but who want to learn more and those who want to get to grips with more advanced procedures. No matter which category you fall into, there will be something for you. Want to know more? Come along to the Open Day

which is being held free of charge on Monday, 22 March at Hothfield Village Hall from 10am to 4 pm. Everyone is welcome.



The ground works for the children's new play area were completed before Christmas. Delivery of the new play equipment should take place early in January. When it is completed I hope we will all take good care of it. Having said this may I remind everyone of the comments made in the December edition of the Newsletter by the child of an obviously caring member of our community who said "Why do people want to break things?" and "Why don't people use the bins? Can we go to Egerton or Pluckley swings? They will be clean". Hothfield is a good place in which to live so please let us all make it better by having respect both for the environment of our village and for each other. Let's make 2010 a really happy year for everyone.

ST MARGARET'S CHURCH NEWS – Sue Patten

Services for January 2010

Friday 1st January: New Year's day at Westwell: Holy Communion 10 am

Services at St Margaret's Hothfield

Sunday 3rd January: The Epiphany of Our Lord 9.30 am The Eucharist

Sunday 10th January: The Baptism of Christ 11 am The Eucharist

Sunday 17th January Second Sunday of Epiphany 11am Re:fresh All Age Service

Sunday 24th January: Third Sunday of Epiphany 9.30 am Holy Communion

Sunday 31st January: Candlemas

Egerton: 8 am Holy Communion Little Chart 9.30 am G7 Eucharist

2010 Roadshow

On Sunday 31st January at the 9.30am G7 Eucharist at Little Chart, we shall unveil the 2010 Roadshow, which will set out our priorities for the new year and present you with our long term vision for the churches in our group. We hope this will be a hopeful and thought provoking time together. Please make a note in your diary and come along.



Hothfield Coffee Morning

The monthly free coffee and cake coffee morning will next take place in Hothfield Village Hall on Tuesday 5 January between 10.30am and 11.30am. Please come and join us you will find you will be made very welcome.

Supporting Pastoral Care

Lots of people in our churches care for others, either as members of the parish pastoral visiting teams, or more informally as friends or neighbours. We thought it would be a good idea to find out more about the local resources that are available to us, and would like to invite you to the Westwell Parish Hall on Monday 25 January at 7.30pm to hear representatives from Social Services, Cruse, Citizens Advice Bureau and Sure Start. More information available from Lindsay.



G7teen

This is the name of our new Christian-based youth group for 11-14 year olds. G7Teen meets every Sunday in term-time 6.30-8pm in Charing Barn. On the last Sunday of the month we go on an outing. The group is open to anyone from the Parishes of Westwell, Charing, Charing Heath, Little Chart, Hothfield, Egerton and Pluckley. For more information please contact Lindsay.

Funerals

Patrick Treamer died on Tuesday 13 October 2009 aged 70. His funeral took place at Charing Crematorium on Tuesday 3 November 2009.

Sid Luckhurst died on Wednesday 11 November 2009 aged 77. His funeral took place at Charing Crematorium on Monday 23 November 2009.

May God enfold Patrick and Sid in his tender loving care.

HOTHFIELD HISTORY SOCIETY – Chris Rogers



Who are the History Society and what do we do? Regular readers of the Newsletter will know that the Society contributes a snippet of local history each month and we hope that you find those interesting. We have also produced a couple of publications about Hothfield's past as well as compiling registers of Parish Records and helping the Church to produce a colourful guide to St Margaret's.

Would you like to join us?

We have a small 'Committee' which includes a Treasurer to oversee the meagre funds that we have, and who meet once in a while to try to decide on what the Society should do next for the village.

However, we have a wider band of volunteers who silently support the Society by collecting newspaper cuttings, recording village life in words and photographs, and who hold their own collections of past memorabilia. We are simply a bunch of residents who are interested in Hothfield's past. We have no qualifications nor necessarily any experience in history (personally I found history to be very boring at school!).

Different residents have, from time to time, researched the area where they live or the history of their home, which helps to build up a record of our village and its surroundings (more relevant than 1066 and all that!).

Would you like to join the Society and help us? If you can give just a little of your time then we would welcome your support. The Society is about to embark on cataloguing and indexing all the pictures, documents and records that we have so far so that these can be more easily searched through for anyone who is trying to find out about their home or their family history. This won't be hard work but it will be time-consuming until everything has been recorded on computer. If you can use the simplest of programmes on a computer then you may be able to help us.



The next stage will then be to display some of the pictures on the internet. The Parish Council has very kindly offered to provide us with some space on their website to display some of our material and our e-mail address, for which we are very grateful. This will probably prompt even more enquiries from around the world from people looking for details from our archive. The computer index will allow us to search more quickly and easily for anything that might interest them.

If you would like to know more about the History Society then please don't hesitate to contact me via hothfieldmemories@hotmail.com or call 624105.

Best wishes for a Happy New Year to all of you. As another year begins so more of Hothfield's history continues to be laid down by you. What will the next residents look back on in years to come, and what notable events will they find that happened in 2009? Did the people of Hothfield help to break a world record?

OUR COMMUNITY – A Local Resident

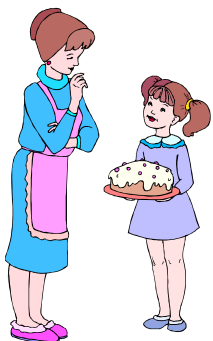


I'd like to send my support to the anonymous writer of 'Our Community' [in the December issue of Hothfield News - Ed]. It's so easy to become disheartened, discouraged and downright enraged in the face of the persistent everyday acts of petty vandalism that plague our village, whether it be litter dropping (a particular bugbear of mine, as not a day goes by when I don't have to clear up crisp and sweets packets dropped in my front garden), fly tipping in the woods, or dog fouling in gardens and streets.

Not quite a year has gone by since organising the volunteer clean-up days of the woods alongside Coach Drive, and we have watched in dismay as they have slowly but surely become dotted with discarded rubbish once more. And yet one can't give up hope, if only for the sake of the small but brilliant group of hardy local residents who braved snowy conditions last January to lend a hand!

I can only think that those responsible cannot know any better – much like the poor stray dogs who foul the streets simply because they are left to their own devices much of the time. So it really is a case of re-education at grass roots level, of somehow helping kids (and sometimes adults too!) to have a sense of care and responsibility for their environment which goes beyond their own front door - after all, you wouldn't drop litter or let your dog poo in your own front room, would you?

As a dog owner and consequently a regular walker, I agree with 'local resident' that dog fouling in the streets is not necessarily caused by dog walkers failing to pick up but by the poor strays themselves, who have not much choice as they are often not properly cared for, or trained to respect boundaries.



So what can we do?

There are so many wonderful people doing so much for Hothfield, and we have to hope that with their example, the ongoing efforts of our community workers, and the exposure of bad behaviour brought about by increasing numbers of people being peacefully but firmly outspoken about the problems (by writing in to this Newsletter, for example), that a strong message of no tolerance to uncivilised behaviour will slowly get through, hopefully, to where it needs to be heard most.

This is a truly beautiful place, and as an ex Londoner I count myself privileged to be able to live in such a lovely part of Kent – so let's work together to look after it!

A very Happy New Year to all. I. Deeley

A LOCAL HERO! – Chris Taylor (Lakeside)

I just wanted to write to you in the hope that you might be able to publicly recognise in the newsletter Jay at the Post Office. A few weeks ago Jay very kindly assisted one of our residents Mr Stevens and his wife when Mr Stevens unfortunately fell at the Post Office. Not only did Jay kindly drive Mr and Mrs Stevens to Lakeside in their car but rather than ask for a return lift he discreetly walked back. A very selfless act that I think is worthy of recognition. Mr Stevens is now recovering and we are all very grateful. Thank you very much Jay and kind regards.

Care Village UK, Lakeside Village, Chapel Road, Hothfield, Ashford, Kent



THANKS FROM SANDS –Emma, Emily, Chris and Chris,



Supporting anyone affected by the death of a baby and promoting research to reduce the loss of babies' lives

Thanks to everyone who supported our tombola at the Village Hall Christmas Sale on 5 December. We raised £57 for SANDS which was great and brought out total for that charity up to £800. Thanks to everyone who bought tickets and thanks to the Village Hall for letting us have a stall.

What a pity there were not a few more local people there to support this local event!

CHARING SCHOOL– Lisa Bellamy

While at the time of writing the children are in the midst of enjoying the many Christmas activities run in school (Pantos, School Plays, Nativity and Carol Service etc.) our thoughts are already turning to our many plans for 2010.



In November 2009 we had an Ofsted Inspection. The key findings were that the school no longer requires significant improvement, and the overall effectiveness was judged to be satisfactory, with the school's capacity for sustained improvement judged to be good. The school has certainly made significant progress and there are robust plans in place to continue to improve. This is a reflection of the huge amount of work that staff, pupils, governors and the local authority have undertaken. In addition our close links with Charing Church were recognised. 2010 will see us building on this success and

addressing areas for further improvement.

Buildings: contractors are now due on site from the start of January to construct the new outdoor learning environment for our youngest children, and demolish the old decommissioned classrooms, creating a decked outside area for quieter games such as giant chess and jenga and also for lunches in the summer! This combined with other building works, will help smarten up our school from the outside!

We continue to have success in sport, our boy's trampoline team has just got through to the Southern Schools trampoline semi-finals, and we had the 1st girl home in the first race of the local cross country series, so well done to all!



As a small village school, the children benefit greatly from the dedicated local volunteers who spend time in school, enabling us to run our cookery club, extend sports provision, and also hearing readers. If you would like to volunteer please do contact our school office as there is a range of ways volunteers can help.

We are all optimistic and ready to face the challenges of 2010. We look forward to continuing to deliver real improvements for all our pupils.

WATER! – Graham Parker

Just recently the BBC screened a programme called Rip-Off Britain. Southern Water was featured in the programme for charging customers for Surface Water Drainage when they did not have to pay that charge - people such as us in Hothfield. Southern Water admitted that this had been happening and that if a customer contacted them and they were on a soakaway system or another means of drainage which meant that the run off was not processed by them then they would have the charge removed from their bills.

They also said that if the person who contacted them lives in a street and are entitled to the charge being removed then the whole street was likely to be on the same system and they also would have the charge removed from their bills. As several people from Hothfield have phoned Southern Water that should mean that nobody in the village will be paying these charges any more.



When your next bill arrives check to see if you have anything showing under the Surface Water Drainage section. If there is then either phone them and ask why or contact me and I will contact them on your behalf. With regard to any refund, all you will get is a refund backdated to April 6 2009. Graham Parker. 7 Tufton Road. 643662.

HOTHFIELD WORLD CINEMA – Isobel Deeley

On Sunday 24 January 2010

The Hothfield World Cinema Club proudly presents:

'Italian for Beginners'

Romantic comedy in which a group of thirty-something misfits in a small Danish town find their lives increasingly intertwined through their Italian classes. Beautiful performances and an improvised script create this darkly funny, moving and uplifting portrait of people finding love, friendship and community far away from traditional family ties.

(In Danish/Italian with English subtitles)

- Times: 6.30pm for 7pm start – ending approximately 9pm.
- Prices: £3 non members, £2 members (annual membership of £5 includes free entry on the first night of attendance). No children under 15. No alcohol to be consumed on the premises



NEWS FROM ACROSS THE SEAS!

We heard recently from Keith Higgs who lives in Christina Lake, British Columbia Canada. He wrote to say what a pleasure it was to read our news letter. Keith grew up in Hothfield and went to Hothfield school from 1971 to 1977. His Grandparents (Harry and Phyllis Higgs) moved to Hothfield just after the second world war and purchased a home on The Street. Keith couldn't remember the address but it was between the pub and the shop and was right next to the old Village hall. Keith's mother (Patricia Higgs) was born in Hothfield and grew up there with her brother and sister (David and Jenny Higgs) and they lived in that house until 1977.



Keith has very fond memories of playing on the common and fishing at the Hospital Lake (now Lakeside's lake) and he still remembers much of his time at school and two teachers Mr Pepper and Mr Bowen. Hothfield was a great place for a young child to grow up.

Keith says he is very grateful because your news letter is all the information I can get about Hothfield and tells us he plans to visit this summer and is looking forward to seeing all the old sights.

I will be passing on Keith's details to the History Society who will, I am sure, be interested to make contact with Keith. Do we have any other overseas readers? It would be great to hear from them!

HOTHFIELD VILLAGE HALL – Chris Rogers

Guinness World Record Tree Planting and Christmas Fayre

The Christmas Fayre on 5 December raised just over £160 for your Village Hall and we'd particularly like to thank Santa for taking a few hours to come to Hothfield to give presents to the children who came to see him. We also need to thank Margaret Collins for organising everything and for generously donating a lot of gifts and time.



We also took part in the national attempt to break the Guinness World Record for tree planting and, with the help of Dave Beckley, Sheila and Mick, we planted more than 60 little trees and shrubs in front of the Hall. We'd still like sponsors to contribute to some larger trees to add colour to the front of the Hall and to leave your own legacy in the village.

Hothfield Singers

We hope that the handful of residents who came to hear the Hothfield Singers on 13 December enjoyed themselves and we're very grateful again to Caroline for her enormous efforts catering for so many people. We donated £50 towards the Singers' chosen charity: the Dame Vera Lynn Trust for children with cerebral palsy.



Thank you all

The New Year is a time to reflect on the past and right now the Village Hall Committee is looking back on a successful year. Thanks to you we have raised more money through fund-raising events than we did in previous years. We cannot list everyone but we would particularly like to thank local businesses and individuals who have supported us with gifts, prizes and cash, including: Oakover Nursery, Beefeater (Woolpack), ASDA, The Yellow Fisherman, Jay and Bina at the Post Office, Argos, Doug Smith, PowerSpeed Auto Ltd, Century Street and Leisure, Tesco, Wilkinsons and others – you know who you are!

Also a special mention for all the helpers at our events including at the recent Christmas Fayre and at the previous successful summer Jumble Sale; plus Tony Pender and Bob Fletcher for getting their hands dirty and helping with the painting of the entrance hall, and the Children's Centre for their colourful mural. Bob Rivers and Roger Boarman have also worked tirelessly to bid for funds for the refurbishment of the toilets, to whom we are very grateful for giving up so much of their personal time.



Our temporary booking clerk, Sharon, has also given a huge amount of her time and energy as well as spending most of December decorating trees and decking the Hall with her own collection of festive decorations. We're still hoping to find one of you to help take bookings to give Sharon a well-earned break.

We're also grateful to the editor for allowing us to use the Newsletter to keep you all informed, and to the Parish Council for updating our details on their website – we'd like to see a few more of them at the Hall once in a while.

Cinema Club

The Cinema Club held its second showing and now confirms that there will be a film on every fourth Sunday from January onwards. Members have been joining up from the surrounding area as well as from Hothfield. Every film is from a foreign country but will have subtitles in English (ideal for the hard of hearing). Doors open 6:30pm and the films start at 7pm. Entry £3 on the door, or £2 for members.



The next film, on 24 January, will be '*Italian for Beginners*': a romantic comedy in which a group of thirty-somethings find their lives increasingly intertwined through their Italian classes. Beautiful performances and an improvised script create this funny, moving and uplifting portrait of people finding love, friendship and community far away from traditional family ties. (In Danish/Italian with English subtitles).

Happy New Year to you

The Village Hall Committee would like to wish everyone a happy and successful new year and we look forward to seeing more of you at our events in 2010. We are still working on the Talent Competition as well as another Race Night and a Jumble Sale hopefully in the spring - watch this space!

ContraDance – open to you

Don't forget to come to the new dance classes every Monday evening from 18 January, from 8pm. Entry £5. A great way to get fit and meet new people. Wear what you like. No experience necessary!

HOTHFIELD NEWS

All contributions, letters, comments etc for the newsletter should be sent to the Editor, Chris Twydell, at 37 Coach Drive by the 15th of each month or by email to hothfieldnewsletter@gmail.com 01233 635 372. If you would like to receive a copy of the newsletter by e mail, or would like a large print copy, please let me know. Thanks.



As we start 2010, we wish a very Happy New Year to all our readers, particularly to those who have been supportive during the last year and to all those who will be supportive during 2010! This Newsletter is a community initiative, by the local community for the local community. Long may it continue!

AND FINALLYamidst all the cynicism that surrounds us, it was so nice to see at the recent Village Hall Fair a local woman give away a prize she had won to a youngster who had missed out on a prize for Santa. She did this quietly and discretely. Who says there's no sense of community spirit?

