
COLWALL VILLAGE SOCIETY

Newsletter

March 2008

Some good nights out

After some five years, Derek Lewis is retiring at this year's AGM as Chairman of the Village Society. We asked him for some thoughts on his time 'in the chair' and the direction the Society might go in now.

I've sometimes joked that my most worrying time as chairman has been seeing the village hall at our open meetings become more and more crowded. It was not only a question of enough chairs, but might there be a snap inspection by the Health and Safety people? In fact, of course, these super turnouts told us that the talks we were putting on were just what was needed. The measure of success was an interested and, in most years, an increasing membership.

We've always tried to have a strong local content in the talks – the history of the railway in Colwall, the restoration of Park Farm, the geological history of the Malvern Hills, and more recently, the evenings on the Elms and Downs schools. I hope everyone feels we have set a high standard when it comes to speakers.

All the time, the Colwall Village archive has been building up, and we've always tried to put on a good display of local history at the annual horticultural show (excellent for recruiting new members, especially newcomers to the village) and the Fun Days. It is always gratifying, too, that the number of helpers for the annual village litter pick has grown from year to year.

The society's committee now has several new, enthusiastic members, joining the gallant band that have helped me over the years, so it should go from strength to strength. The Geopark Way initiative deserves the society's support, and we need to encourage new research into Colwall's past and present. A historical map of the area is planned based on the excellent talk given by Dr James Ferguson.

At a time when village societies tend to be having difficulty surviving, Colwall's has gone from strength to strength, and is something of which the village can be proud.

A big 'Thank You' to Derek for his considerable contribution in leading the Society as Chairman up to its tenth anniversary. We have much appreciated his humour and guidance both at open meetings and committee meetings.

Next meeting and AGM

– Monday 21 April at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

Wealth of watering holes!

Few people know more about the springs and spouts of the Malvern Hills than our guest speaker – **Cora Weaver**. She not only knows where they are, but how many of them were developed by benefactors for use by local people. She wrote her first guide to Malvern Hills springs in 1992, and then gave details of 27. She now knows of more than 100, thanks mainly to the interest of local people sending her details.

Cora, who is chairman of the Friends of Malvern Museum, has been interested in history since the age of eight. She moved to Malvern 30 years ago and was particularly intrigued by the water cure. Her interest in springs and wells is an offshoot of this. Every year when many of the wells are dressed she organises a bus to take people around the hills to see them – it's an unforgettable experience.

Refreshments afterwards. Visitors welcome at £2 admission; visitors may not vote at the AGM.

More committee news

Michael Burke and Diane Shail are standing down from the committee this year and we thank them very much for their enthusiasm and help. Part way through the year, our Secretary Deb Turnbull told us that she would be unable to continue as Secretary from March 2008, as she was taking a 6 month break from village commitments. We thank her for all her work on the committee and give her our best wishes for new activities. John Atkin has been acting as Secretary, and is willing to continue until Deb's return.

Willow Spring

Willow Spring, Upper Colwall, together with many other springs and small spouts in the area of the Malvern Hills, has been restored as part of the Malvern Heritage Project and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Sadly soon after completion, a lorry in the process of turning, perhaps due to congestion on Walwyn Road, broke the slate nameplate. The sign is being repaired and will be reinstated shortly.

Geopark Way Trail Update 2

Conrad Shail

The opening of the Geopark Way grows ever nearer. In my last update I wrote about the planned opening celebrations and the activities that may take place during the day.

Unfortunately the great flood of 20 July 2007 has impacted on the Geopark way footpaths, resulting in delaying the opening events along its way. The celebrations in Colwall that were due to be held on Thursday 28 August have now been moved into September (exact date to be confirmed). Please keep an eye on the village notice boards and publications for news of the celebrations.

I would like to thank those of you who answered my call for support in the last newsletter. Anyone interested in joining the ranks of helpers or have any ideas of what activities we can organise please don't be shy and contact Conrad Shail [REDACTED] or send an email to Geopark@rock.com. The Parish Council countryside committee is also considering getting involved and the Village Society Geopark Way team would like to offer them their full support. If there are any other clubs or organisations that would like to get involved please contact me.

A copy of the proposed Geopark way map through Colwall is available by emailing Geopark@rock.com quoting 'Geopark way map', or calling Conrad Shail on [REDACTED].

Archive news

We are grateful to the Wyche and Colwall Horticultural Society for the donation of Minute Books of the Annual Flower Show, dating from 1941.

Photographs of events in Colwall are always welcome – we now have a good collection showing the Carbon March and the cycle race passing through in 2007. We would welcome more accounts and photographs of the July 2007 floods. If you would be willing to donate items, or lend them for copying, please hand in to Colwall Library marked Village Society Archive, or email: villagesociety@colwall.info

Anniversaries in 2008

10 years Colwall Village Society
21 years Colwall Players
40 years Colwall Singers (formerly Ladies Choir)

Contributions, corrections and additions to the information in newsletters are always welcome.

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