

The Villager

Minsterworth, Churcham, Birdwood and Bulley News



DECEMBER 2011

Price 30p

Edition 110

Dear Readers,

December again - how can it be??? I was going to put a snowy scene on the cover, but despite the doomsayers it feels very unlikely, given the warm autumn we've had.

A friendly reminder - don't forget to complete the two questionnaires; Housing Needs and Broadband. It's your chance to make your views heard.

Have a very good Christmas season.

Paula



**Closing copy date for the January edition is
Thursday 15th December 2011**

All items for consideration to:-

Paula Ruffley,

Editor, The Villager,

The Firs, Church Lane,

Minsterworth, GL2 8JJ

Tel: 01452 751226.

E-mail: thevillager@minsterworth.org

Responsibility is not accepted for the accuracy of submitted items nor the content of advertisements.

Cover photo: Santa in Cheddar by Jane Fraser-Hook



DECEMBER

Kerbside Recycling	BLUE Bin	GREEN & BROWN Bins
Churcham		Thursday 1
Minsterworth	Tuesday 6	Tuesday 13
Churcham	Thursday 8	Thursday 15
Minsterworth	Tuesday 20	Wednesday 28
Churcham	Thursday 22	Friday 30

Please ensure that your bins and caddy are out by 7am.

Green bin lid **MUST BE CLOSED!**

Mobile Library Van

Tuesday 6 December:

3.25-3.40pm—Churcham, Lake Close

3.45-4.00pm—Churcham School

Wednesday 7 December:

10.05-10.25am—Minsterworth, The Firs, Main Road

10.30-11.00am—Minsterworth School

This service will run until December when there will be a further review.

For more information visit the Library Service website:
www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/libraries

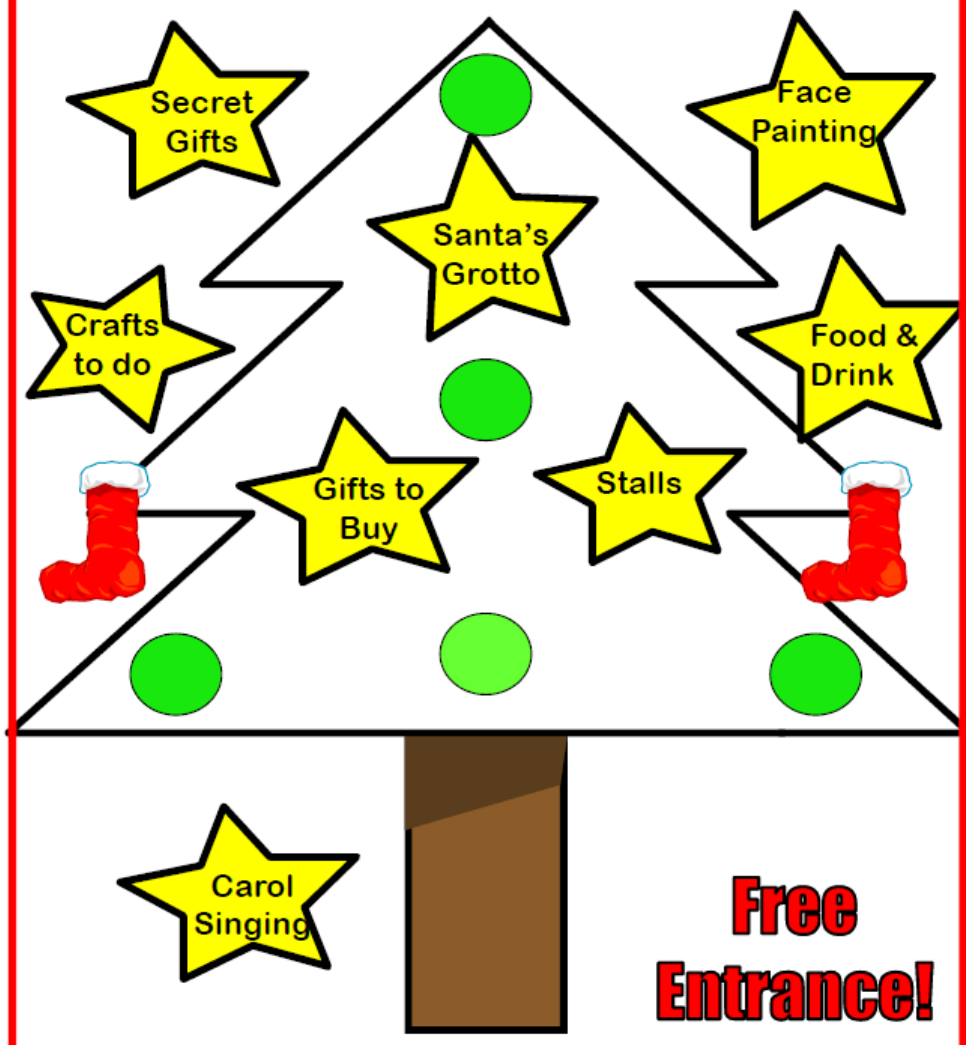


Minsterworth School Christmas Fayre

@ Minsterworth School

Saturday 3rd December

10am-12noon



MINSTERWORTH READING GROUP



The book reviewed this month was *The Viola* written by Natasha Solomons.

It is about the youngest daughter of a wealthy and talented Jewish family in Vienna who flees Nazi-occupied Austria for England just before the start of the second world war.

She is employed in domestic service at a large country house on the Dorset coast, where she falls in love with the heir. We all enjoyed this book, it is written well, the story line is both moving and charming, if a little predictable in parts.

The book to be reviewed at next month's meeting on 7th December is *Midnight's Children* written by Salman Rushdie.

If you are interested in joining the reading group please contact Sara Dunn on 01452 751076. For more information visit the website www.minsterworth.org.

Sara Dunn

COME AND JOIN US

Anyone can join the Legion - whether or not you have a connection with the Armed Forces. Members of the Royal British Legion meet through the branches for social events which raises funds for those who have served or are currently serving in the Armed Forces and their dependents.

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION MINSTERWORTH AND DISTRICT

The branch meets at the Village Hall on the **second Wednesday of each month at 8pm** - except August and December.

Please come along and help those who have helped us.

Terry Bourne, Chairman



Trioscope Garden Centre
invites you to an Evening of
Festive Flower Arranging on
13th December, 7-9pm in aid of
Birmingham Children's Hospital.

Featuring demonstrations from Katherine Kear (S.F.I. L.F.P.S. F.A.S.A.),
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What a joy they will bring to children who have literally nothing.

**Thank you to everyone who helped in any way at all.
Have a wonderful Christmas**

Kath Lunt.

Churcham Mothers' Union

There will not be a meeting in December, so our next get-together will be on Tuesday 31st January, 2012 at 10.30am.

On Saturday 5th November, some of us attended the Diocesan Festival Service in Gloucester Cathedral. It was a lovely service bringing together members from all over the diocese, and our banner was carried by Monica Richardson. The theme was the MU work world-wide with particular reference to Africa. There was some splendid African singing by 'Rough Diamonds'. 'Baba Yetu' part of the Lord's Prayer in Swahili, and 'Ise Oluwa' ('that which the creator has made, cannot be destroyed'). This was truly inspiring, and then before the final hymn we all took part in two minutes of movement and flag-waving African style! It was a memorable occasion.

Mary Pitt - 750343



ST PETER'S P.C.C.

THE WHIST DRIVE

The whist drive for November brought a profit for Church funds of £42.90. Again we were a few tables down but hopefully this will begin to improve. We are very grateful to all who give of their time to help the evening run smoothly.

The next monthly whist drive will be held on Monday December 5th. Last year we did not hold the Christmas whist drive due to the hall being refurbished. However, this year we are back in action and the date for the Christmas drive is on Saturday 10th December, 7.30pm at Minsterworth Village Hall. Please help to support the evening either by coming along to play whist, or if you would like to, by donating a prize. Please contact Liz on 750401 for any further details.

200 CLUB

The winners of the November draw were as follows:-

034	Pat Knight	£50
088	Dot Roberts	£20
048	Roger Dauncey	£10

Don't forget the December draw includes the extra prize of £100.

There is still a vacancy in the 200 Club and should you wish to join then please contact either Barbara Arkell on 750247 or Liz Savage on 750401.

FLOWER ROTA

4 th	December	no flowers
11 th	December	no flowers
18 th	December	no flowers
25 th	December	Pat Haisell-Neves
1 st	January	Pat Haisell-Neves

CHRISTMAS WREATHS



It will soon be that time of year again, when we hang Christmas wreaths and garlands on our doors to welcome visitors and offer good will, or place on a grave in memory of a loved one.

Fresh wreaths hand made from a variety of seasonal greenery to include, holly, fir, and berried ivy (approx 36cm diameter) are available to order at a cost of £7.00 If you would like to buy one please contact: Lynne Richardson 01452 760541 or email:

landbrichardson@btinternet.com

Wreaths will be available for collection on Saturday 10th December between 10.00 and 12.00 at Westbury Church or by prior arrangement. All profits will go to Westbury on Severn Church

If you are interested in advertising in The Villager contact Mark Atkin on 01452 750089 or e-mail thevillager@minsterworth.org

If you would like to become a subscriber and receive your very own copy of The Villager each month, contact Tony Pearson on 01452 750174

If you would like to hire the Village Hall call Anne on 01452 750174 or e-mail village_hall@minsterworth.org

Going from Strength to Strength

The popularity of the monthly “Café-on-the-Green”, started at the beginning of the year, shows no sign of diminishing judging by the number of people who turned up on Saturday 5th November at the Northwood Green Social Hall. A very big thank you to all who came and especially to those who brought home-made cakes, pies, etc. for the bring-and-buy table.

These informal get-togethers will continue on the first Saturday of each month with all the profits going each time to one or other of our less well off local charities. The profit of £118.00 from the November event has been donated to the Westbury Bell Tower Appeal while the proceeds from the next event on 3rd December will go to The Pied Piper Appeal.

There will be a home-made cake stall at each event. Donations of home-baked cakes, fruit tarts and pies will always be welcome.

Café-on-the-Green is an independent venture hosted by Ann & Chris Manning.

Telephone 01452 760 454 for further information.

VILLAGER DISTRIBUTION

On behalf of everyone in the village, a very big thank you and wishes for a prosperous 2012 to the following people who kindly distribute the magazine every month:

Cathy Thomas, Jane Fraser-Hook, Carol Selwyn,
Doreen Clifton, Gerald Savage, Barbara Arkell,
Fiona Thomas, Hazel Sealey, Mary Cooper,
Margaret Winstone, Cath Arkell, Terry Moore-Scott,
Roger Dauncey, Alison Dowding and Tony Pearson.

Thanks also to Tony Pearson for collecting the magazines every month from the printer in Cheltenham and then passing them to the distributors.

From Paula Ruffley, Editor

LADIES NIGHT FUND RAISING EVENT

Many thanks to everyone who helped make this evening a success - to the friends who helped set-up the Hall, the guest presenters, the ladies who donated items for sale and especially to everyone who braved the rain to support the event.

A total profit of £726.50 was raised and will be donated to the Hall Improvement Fund.

I hope you enjoyed the evening and I look forward to seeing you all again at the next one!!!

Mary Howard

P.S. I have donated all the clothing and accessories left at the end of the night to the Sue Ryder Charity shop in Brockworth.

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Westbury Bells Return!!

Work continues on cleaning the bell chamber and clearing old bits of wood, debris and fittings left over from the removal and use of the bells. (Some of these are great conversation pieces and deserve a second life, see separate ad). Builders have cut pockets in the tower walls in the clock room to take the stub beams that will transfer thrust between the existing steel beams and, now, all of the walls. One full length steel beam joining the east & west walls is still to be fitted.

Whites of Appleton, the bell hangers, are due at Westbury towards the end of November to bed and align the new ball bearings in the existing wooden frame and at the same time insert the full length beam mentioned above. The new headstocks have been cast or fabricated and should be fitted to the bells in White's workshop when the Westbury ringers visit on Dec 3rd to view progress.

The final figure for the Frog Race evening was a cracking £908, very many thanks to all who took part. We do need more money to complete needed works. These include fitting a modern electricity supply, complete a display and perhaps light the inside of the tower and possibly a new, additional, staircase. This could make a long-lasting contribution to the use and educational aspects of our almost unique tower. The Big Lottery money is drawing down fast. With bills being paid out all the time and all non bell-related projects on "hold" the exact amount that we need to raise is difficult to judge. Any contributions, however small, will be extremely useful. Please see our separate sales advert on p26.

STOP PRESS

News has just been received indicating that the bells will be going back in the tower in the third week in December. The ringers are jubilant!!

Neil Tappin



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NEWS FROM YOUR VILLAGE AGENT

As ‘My goodness’ mused Father Christmas, scratching his head as he pondered over a sheet of paper. ‘I really don’t know where the time goes. Surely it can’t be 12 months since I was last toasting my toes in front of the fire and writing out my Christmas list’. Mrs Christmas looked up from signing her Christmas cards. ‘Yes’ she agreed ‘another year has gone by, you’re several hundred years old, and we’re still managing very well to live independently in our own place. I remember how much more of a struggle everything was before your sister, Mary Christmas, suggested we call that nice Village Agent person, and have a chat about how we can stay longer in our own home’. She looked out of the window, ‘Is it snowing again?’ she asked. Father Christmas glanced up. ‘No, I think it’s rain, dear’!!

Father Christmas gazed into the fire, and started to reminisce about the old days – not all good - living in a cold home, spending much of the year on their own, rushed off their feet in December, and curling up in bed to recover and keep warm in January. What a different story it was now. Everything insulated, both of them receiving Attendance Allowance now that Father C was struggling with his arthritis, which helped out with Mrs Moppen-Bukket, the cleaner, who now came in every week. Then there were their shopping trips on the Community Sleigh, and monthly lunches in the local village hall where they met and chatted with friends, new and old, (though none as old as FC himself!), and the smoke alarms, which proved to be a lifesaver the night that he fell asleep sitting too close to the fire, and his beard smouldered.

So what was going to be on his list this year? Having taken early retirement, after only a few centuries as the head of the family business, and handed over the reins (of the sleigh) to his son, Harry Christmas, who was now a Father himself, Old Father Christmas could afford to relax a little, and he was indeed looking forward to a warm and cosy Christmas. After a bit of thought, this is what his list looked like, and some of the suggestions would make good presents for anyone wondering what to buy their nearest and dearest, especially those who are a little older:

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New **Slippers** – the old ones were ill fitting and loose, making trips and falls so much more likely. One of those **fleecy ‘snuggle blanket’** things, ideal for keeping warm when sitting in front of the TV watching ‘The Great Escape’ yet again, just in case Steve McQueen finally makes it this time. A good **insulated flask**, so that on the days when his arthritis was playing him up, and Mrs C was out shopping, Old Father Christmas could always have a warm drink to hand. A **gadget for opening jars and bottles**, and tablet containers. They were supposed to be child-proof, but Father Christmas privately thought it quite likely that the younger generation would most likely find a way in, but when his fingers were painful and stiff, there was no way he could open them on his own. A good **torch**, with a plentiful supply of batteries. Invaluable for those nocturnal visits to the bathroom, and in the event of any power cuts – the supply was always a bit dodgy north of Greenland. And so another year passes, and Village Agents are still here to help everyone, not just red-cloaked celebrities, to remain living in their own home for longer. We wish you all a Merry and Safe Christmas.



I have to be honest, I can't take credit for the above, my colleague Jane, Village Agent who covers parishes in Tewkesbury, has produced yet another brilliant article, I just had to share it with you all. Have a peaceful Christmas and I look forward to helping you all in the New Year.

My next drop in session will be Thursday 1st December 10 –12 noon in Tibberton Church Room. Tania Shuttleworth, Police Community Support Officer will call in at 11 a.m. duties permitting. Come and join us for a chat, a cup of tea and a mince pie and browse through the many information leaflets on display. For news and events visit my village agent section at www.tibberton-Gloucestershire.org.uk Hilary Lyon, Village Agent for Rudford, Highleadon, Tibberton, Taynton, Churcham and Huntley. Tel. 07810 630254 or email Hilary@villageagent.grcc.org.uk
PLEASE NOTE I will not be holding a drop in session in January.

For those who live in the parish of Highnam, your Village Agent is Ken Haines Tel. 07810 630 234

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MINSTERWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

The November meeting took place on Monday 14th presided over by the Chairman Cllr. Richard Few. Attended by County Cllr. Phil Awford and Boro. Cllr. Derek Davies with Councillors Roger Blowey, Rod Crisp, Nigel Garbutt and Simon Ruffley. Apologies had been received from Councillors Steve King and Cathy Thomas. The Clerk Fiona Wallbank was in attendance together with five members of the public.

The meeting started with the Chairman announcing the death on November 10th of Michael Lunt, a one time Parish Council member and Churchwarden who had given much service to the community, and asked those present to stand for a minute's silence in respect.

After the minutes had been agreed and signed the County Cllr. gave his report mentioning there would be a meeting about the Severn Estuary on 8th December, which the Chairman said he would attend; also that the Judicial Review on the Mobile Library service would be held shortly.

The Boro. Councillor spoke about the developments arising from the National Planning Strategy as well as the local Joint Core Strategy and TBC's Local Plans. During the adjournment for public participation a number of questions were asked on this subject.

The first planning matter to be dealt with was the extension to an existing utility room at Cope House Farm, which was agreed. A revised scheme at St Peter's Church for the erection of a WC with drainage was clarified; the drainage is to be by way of a cesspit. This also was agreed to.

There were two new applications, received too late for inclusion on the published agenda, the first being the resubmission of the application for the rebuilding of Pound Cottage (on the corner of Pound Lane where it joins the A48) which had been objected to previously. The drainage plans had been clarified but the Parish Council continued its objections to the repositioning of the building maintaining that it should be on its own footprint or it would create a precedent. The proposed width of the entrance - 24 feet - was also still queried. It was agreed by a majority vote to submit the same objections again.

The second new application, at The Dinney, was for conversion of an existing store building to provide living accommodation, stated to be for a family member. This was agreed with a condition that it should not be disposed of separately from the existing property.

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There were no TBC planning decisions or appeals. A full copy of the enforcement order relating to The Firs, Main Road, had been received with the effective date of February 2012.

It was reported that the first caravan had arrived at Starcroft Lane and that the owner of the property was maintaining a record, as had been agreed.

The accounts and statement were agreed, but the draft budget for the 2012 precept will be dealt with next month to allow time to cost out any proposed celebrations of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. A number of suggestions were raised for further discussion; the lighting of a gas beacon on the Church Tower (in line with other churches) on the Saturday, a fete in conjunction with The Hall on Saturday, and the possible distribution of commemorative bone china mugs. The chairman will obtain the views of the Church, the Hall and the School before the next meeting.

The Village Hall representative reported there was still a small deficit on the refurbishing costs but this was being reduced from income.

Highway matters included the potholes on Bury Lane, still not filled though they had been marked. Cllr. Awford said he would attend to this. There had also been a complaint about the non-replacement of the speed posters on the lower road. These are being dealt with. The "Welcome to Minsterworth" sign at the Dinney end of the village had been knocked down; this would be dealt with, as also would the damage to the accident warning sign at that end of the village.

The police had recorded an increase in the number of crimes during the month to which a further one had just been added – the theft of a steel drainage outlet flap to the river near Highcross. This had had a temporary replacement, to alleviate flooding of Watery Lane, pending the provision of a costly permanent one.

Reminders to complete and return the Housing Needs survey had been posted at various points. [Readers of this report who have not yet returned their survey are urged to do so without delay.]

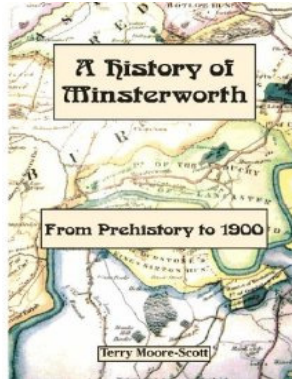
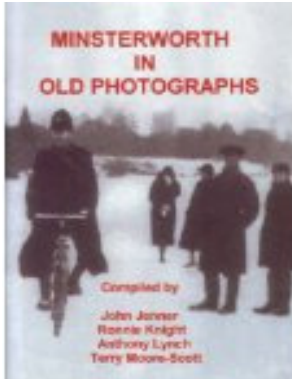
The meeting closed at 9.10pm and the next meeting will be on Monday 12th December at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

RLD

This report doesn't necessarily reflect the minuted discussions and decisions of the Parish Council; anyone wanting further information, or to inspect the agreed minutes, should consult the Clerk Fiona Wallbank on 01452-849178.

MINSTERWORTH BOOKS

At just £5.95 each, these books are the perfect gift.
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Please make cheques payable to 'Minsterworth Village Hall'.

For Sale

- Bell Clappers* £50 each
Bell Wheels** £25 each (approx 5 - 6 feet across)
Bell Headstocks*** £25 each

All are good for their age, have delivery mileage only, one careful owner (a vicar), are unfortunately out of warranty, but can be viewed by appointment at the tower showroom for any reasonable test. *Clappers make great conversation pieces, counterweights, or a garden focus; **Wheels make a wall statement, path end, circular trellis or plant support; ***Headstocks a focal point or tie-in for a garden assemblage, or a bird bath, sundial or sculpture base

-proceeds will help Westbury Bell Ringers complete essential works and go towards their 'wish list'. Contact Neil on 760962

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FOR YOUR DIARY

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