

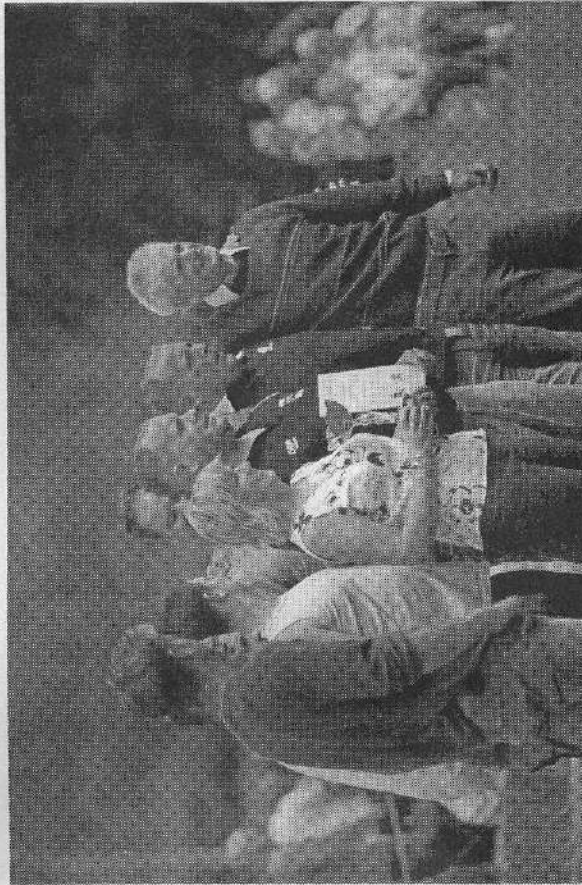
Braishfield Village Diary

- August**
- 11th Mon 12.00 Lunch Club in the Village Hall
 - 26th Thur 7.30 Braishfield Flower Arrangement Society
- September**
- 2nd Tues 7.00 Braishfield Parish council
 - 9th Tues 7.30 Braishfield Horticultural Society
 - 8th Mon 12.00 Lunch Club in the Village Hall
 - 22nd Thur 7.00 Braishfield Flower Arrangement Society
- Looking Ahead to October**
- 4th Sat 10-30 Book Launch until 12-30 see page 20
 - 10th Fri 7-30 Fun Quiz see page 7
- Weekly**
- Weds 10-12 Braishfield Toddler Group
 - Thurs 10-12 Braishfield Art Group

All functions take place in the Village Hall unless otherwise stated.
Please send details to the Editor if you would like dates of forthcoming events published.

BRAISHFIELD Village Association NEWS

Issue 170 August 2008



Winners Again

The Dog and Crook Celebrate retaining their title at this years Braishfield School Summer Fayre Tug of War

Distributed free of charge by the Braishfield Village Association to the residents of Braishfield and the surrounding hamlets

Braishfield Village Association

Committee 2008-2009

Chairman	George Elliott	368306
Secretary	Rosie Groves	368178
Treasurer	Sheila Still	368384
BVA News Editor	Mike Stevens	367801
News Distributor	Ros Chaplin	368483
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Editors Notes

This magazine is produced by the Braishfield Village Association and the Editor reserves the right to elaborate, withhold or abridge material as space permits. The views expressed in this Magazine are not necessarily those of the Editor or of the Braishfield Village Association. Any form of reproducing or copying of this publication requires the prior written permission of the Editor. © Braishfield Village Association 2006

Written items for the 'News' should be sent to:-

The BVA Editor
 Goodhope
 Stockbridge Road
 Timsbury
 Hants SO51 0NG by the date shown below.
 Copy may be hand written, typed or on PC media but, ideally, by e-mail to news@mikopy.com

All items for publication must show the name, address and telephone number of the originator. Letters to the Editor should be on topics relevant to the villagers of Braishfield. The BVA attempts to deliver a copy of the Braishfield Residents Guide and the Village Design Statement to all new residents. If you have not received these publications please contact the News Distributor, Ros Chaplin on 36848

Latest Copy date for the next issue is
 15th September 2008

From the Chairman

Disappointingly, the weather failed us in June and so far in July, too. Old sayings are not just a load of hot air. The old saying, heard from time to time, 'Rain before seven, fine before 11', is one of our simplest and most enduring snippets of old country weather lore. It has lasted partly because it does contain an element of truth. It works best in the lowlands, less well in the rainy uplands, when our weather comes from the west. This brings to mind the occasion of the longest recorded spell of continuous rain in Britain: it was a prolonged summer downpour in London in 1903 which lasted 58 hours and 30 minutes, beginning at 1am on 13 June and ending at 11.30am on June 15. On that occasion, 11 o'clock was passed five times before the rain finally stopped!

On reading the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 1 July there are three items that should be of interest: First, the Affordable Housing presentation given by John Lancaster from Hampshire County Council, who explained the procedure and action required to clear the various 'fences' should the Parish Council wish to proceed and explore the options. It was encouraging to learn that the response in the village to the housing survey had been positive. Second, the 30 mph restriction from the Sandy Lane Junction

into the village will be implemented in September. It will be interesting to see whether there is a noticeable difference in 'reduced speed' through the village. Perhaps this will give rise to the police having another Roads survey in the future to confirm its success? Third, the footpath diversion proposed by the Curator of the Hillier Arboretum. This seems practical and an improvement on the present situation, particularly for residents in Crook Hill. The changes put forward have the support of the Hampshire County Council.

The continued low level of crime suffered in the rural areas of Romsey North, Braishfield, Ampfield and Dun Valley, has been encouraging and only highlights the good work being carried out by PC John Viney and the mobile police office. Please do discuss any concerns or complaints that you may have when he visits the village on a Wednesday. It would be wise to be realistic living in a rural community, with the economic downturn biting. It used to be that rural criminals wanting to make a few readies at the reclamation yard would target the humble old straddle stone, or a bike would go walkabout from a garden shed. In these harsher times, the countryside's lead-laden churches and oil tanks full of

liquid gold appear to offer rich pickings. Here 'Neighbourhood Watch' by all of us in the village should come into its own and be a deterrent.

The proposed development at Fairbourne Farm is now under consideration by Test Valley. It is encouraging that so far the proposal has been supported and that the matter is likely to have a happy outcome.

It is heartening to see the headline in the *Romsey Advertiser* 'All the fun of the Braishfield Fayre' - a traditional English village fayre and flower show. The combined event held on the recreation ground was the greatest success and was very well supported. An account of the day is given on later pages. One

'headline' for the Village is clearly not enough as the Advertiser again proclaimed, 'Outstanding report for Braishfield' with wonderful news that Braishfield School has been given a glowing Ofsted Report. Congratulations to the head-teacher Caroline Carter-Frost, supported by her staff and the governors.

Weather is our favourite subject so may the end be linked to the beginning! The book of ancient weather lore has a saying to accommodate a probable event yet to come: 'Rain from the east, two days at least!'

George Elliott
Chairman

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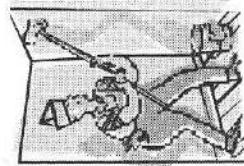
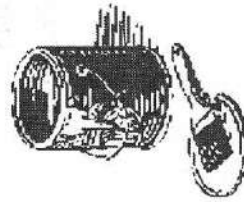
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Village Hall Committee

Hon. Treasurer Required

The Hall is now over 25 years old and throughout its existence a dedicated committee has facilitated its use and maintained its fabric.

I took over the Chairmanship earlier this year and hopefully I can now play my part in encouraging Villagers and others

to use the Hall. Hire income is its lifeblood and has to be maintained to ensure this important facility remains available to all.

We have a dedicated committee and any Villager who would like to help will be welcome.

In particular, following Graham Bennett's indication he intends to retire from his position as TREASURER at the next AGM in January 2009 after 14 years service, we are looking for someone to take on that role and join the committee from October to ensure a smooth handover.

Normally we meet quarterly and the job is not too onerous. An understanding of bookkeeping / accounts would be helpful.

Anyone who may be interested please contact me in the first instance either by e mail or telephone.

Looking forward to hearing from any willing volunteers.

Richard Brazier

e mail: rd Brazier@hotmail.com

Tel: 368414 or 07768 020917

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Village Fun Quiz

Friday 10 Oct 2008
7.30pm

Braishfield Village Hall

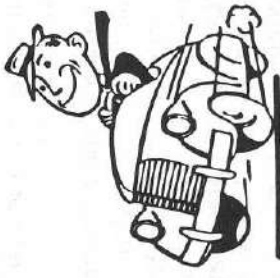
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Braishfield School Summer Fayre Show 2008

On Saturday 5th July, despite the weather forecast, record crowds flocked to Braishfield recreation ground to enjoy the fun of a traditional village fayre and flower show.

Although a breezy day the rain held off and the sun shone through helping the school association raise just over £6,100 profit for our small but well loved Primary school.

The grand opening of the fayre was conducted by Steve Thomas of Elliotts Builders Merchants, Romsey, the main fayre sponsors, along with a group of children from the school representing each class. Mrs Carter-Frost, Headmistress, commented on the fantastic organisation of the hardworking Braishfield School Association parents who not only had organised a super event but had even managed to pick a day with good weather!

The ceremony continued with the Saplings class (years 3 & 4) putting on a Samba Drum display, which were purchased with some of the proceeds of last year's event, conducted by the deputy head Mr Boyes and accompanied by the cheerleaders from the oaks class (years 5 & 6).

The school choir then followed performing a selection of popular songs that they had been practising for the Romsey Arts Festival's "Let's Sing". This was then followed by the whole school performing a number of country

dances, with parents, ex-pupils and members of the audience joining for the last dance.

During the afternoon the crowds were entertained by a fantastic display by CJ Birds of Prey, a family team of falconers from Cambridge. Charlotte and John Hill brought with them an impressive number of birds and the crowds were thrilled by seeing the birds in action flying around the recreation ground.

Youngsters (and the adults who admit it!) were entertained during the fayre by the Balloon Man and Jaz, the Juggler's Circus Workshop. Many also enjoyed rides on The Little Red Bus a superb half scale model of a 1910 London 'B' type open top bus.

Throughout the afternoon there was superb live music performed by the Tityre Flute Trio and the Romsey Community Wind Band. But the highlight for many ladies was the exciting performances by Tom Canning, who is widely recognised as one of the finest Tom Jones and Neil Diamond tribute artists in the UK. Many members of the audience were seen sing and dancing along throughout his performances and he even included the children by inviting the girls from the school choir to sing his backing vocals.

There were many other attractions for visitors attending the fayre including a classic car display and the "All Blacks" lorry from Hendy Ford, the main fayre programme spon-

sors, Wheek and Squeak Guinea Pig Rescue, bouncy castle and enormous monster slide, coconut shy, crockery smash, toddler's soft play area, face painting and many more. Not to mention the wide range of refreshments available including the delicious barbecue, Pimm's bar and beer tent, ice creams, cream teas and strawberries.

Later in the afternoon the final of the tug-of war matched the Braishfield School Dads and last year's winners the Dog and Crook and after an interruption to stop the tea marquee from flying away in the windy conditions, the pub team triumphed and took away the trophy for the second year in a row.

The event closed with the final of

the fun dog show followed by the drawing of the raffle prizes and the special Elliotts prize draw.

The Braishfield School Association committee wishes to thank all parents, teachers, sponsors, visitors and villagers for showing such valued support to their efforts, for all their help on the day and to achieving income of £6100 for a school with less than 100 pupils everyone can feel mighty proud.

Our official photographer on the day took some 300 photos which can now be viewed and ordered on the school fayre website: <http://www.braishfieldfayre.com>

Julia Stevens

Assistant Secretary

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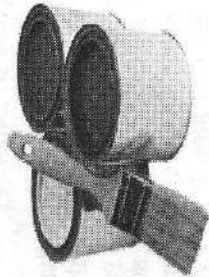
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Braishfield Horticultural Society

Time marches on, as the saying goes, which means in this case, time to produce something for the Village Magazine once more. Since the last edition, quite a lot has happened which means that in theory, there should be less time spent sitting in a trance, staring at the screen and wondering what on earth to inflict upon our happy band of readers. Ah well, here goes.

Regretfully, we begin on a sad note for, I believe, the third time during the past twelve months, following the passing of yet one more member of the Society. Joyce Alford was taken from us at the end of May following a difficult time, which she bore with both dignity and courage. Joyce was, it is true to say, one of the few remaining “elders” having spent most of her life in Braishfield. A quiet and private lady, she was always to the fore with a willing pair of hands in support of all that went on around the Village. She will be missed but not forgotten by her many friends.

On Tuesday 10th June, a group of Society members journeyed to Sparsholt Agricultural College for the first of our annual garden visits. It was a beautiful sunny evening when our party, thirty three strong, assembled on site which was a blessing. As the minutes ticked by and no one appeared to conduct us on our visit we began to feel quite forgotten. In fact, that, seemingly, is just what had happened. The whereabouts of our guide still re-

mains a mystery. However, a passing tutor, on his way to an evening class, made enquiries on our behalf and some three-quarters of an hour after our scheduled start time, a lady tutor named Janet Presscott, stepped into the breach and showed us around. It proved to be an interesting visit and we were most grateful to Janet for giving us her time. She was indeed, a lovely knowledgeable person. The one thing that marred our tour of the College was on arriving at a beautiful grassed area where, apparently, the students relaxed in the sunshine to enjoy some refreshments, the place was strewn with drink cans and rubbish left by the darlings. One could be forgiven for thinking that students studying agriculture etc; would be more caring about the environment. Later that evening, twenty-one of us descended on the Rack and Manger public house to enjoy a supper, a drink and each others company.

The next trip was on Tuesday 17th June when our travels took us to The Old Ship at Sandheath, near Fordingbridge. Again, an enjoyable visit with the garden being as described, flowing and informal with wild and controlled areas. Mr and Mrs Marwood-Yeatman whose home it was, had it appears, spent their time restoring the two acre garden from an overgrown wilderness after twenty years of neglect. The before and after photographs proved it to have been quite a formidable task. What was possibly the highlight of

Braishfield Horticultural Society (cont')

the evening was, when the time came to leave, we were invited to view the interior of the cottage. It was as if time had stood still from a few hundred years ago. All the tools and paraphernalia of the past was there for all to see, some of which, were still being put to good use. There was even a Ham hanging from the ceiling where it had remained for about eighteen months. The lady of the house remarked that it was perfectly alright and thought perhaps that it was about time that it was eaten. Eat by dates had not been thought of in days gone by. I wonder how many of our group would have accepted a ham sandwich had it been offered.

We later adjourned to the Augustus John public house where twenty-three of our group of twenty-four souls sat down to an excellent meal. Once again there was much chatter and merriment to round off time together.

Our final venture into the countryside for this year was on Tuesday 24th when we made our way to Borough Farm, in the village of Stoke Charity near Micheldever, home of Mr and Mrs J Dockray. Once more we found ourselves looking at the results of a lot of work put in by our hosts to restore a large garden that had been neglected over a number of years. The end result was excellent. The well kept lawns meant that the well kept place and there was much colour to be seen with a varied variety of flowers and grasses. From comments overheard

earlier than in the past did have an effect on what was available at the time. However, on the day the usual band of happy exhibitors arrived, loaded with their prized vegetables, flowers and fruit. It is true to say that the number of adult entries were down on last year, possibly as a result of the problems already mentioned, but maybe there are other reasons which we will have to look into. The Flower Arrangers were not represented this time. The absence of their colourful exhibits was very noticeable.

Once again the children of the Braishfield Primary School were well represented on the day. In fact, it is true to say that their efforts more than made up for any other shortages in the Hall. However, it is also true to say that were it not for the shortages in the adult entries, we would have had great difficulty in finding space to display all of the childrens' efforts. Every nook and cranny was taken up. The various items produced by the children consisted of, animals made out of fruit and vegetables, a print based picture using found objects, cotton reels, card etc, miniature gardens in seed trays, model houses from any material, paintings of flowers, peppermint creams made from a given recipe and chocolate chip muffins from recipes found from any book or magazine. Altogether a great effort on the part of the children and it must be said, a credit to the teachers who educate and encourage them.

The prize giving took place at 4pm

when, on this occasion, the presentations were made by Mr David Butler, a well known local gentleman who has farmed at Slackstead for many years.

Heading the list of winners this year were husband and wife, Ron and Sylvia Watts. It was only after the event that I was told that it was their Golden Wedding Anniversary on that day. What a pity we were unaware at the time, but better late than never, congratulations to you both. May you continue to enjoy the fruits of life whilst on route towards your "Diamond". Ron was awarded the Watkins Cup with highest points for Flowers and Plants, Fruit and Vegetables. His wife was the winner last year. He then went on to win the Attlee Cup for highest points with Fruit and Vegetables. Sylvia Watts then stepped in to win the Bacon Cup with her entry in the Flowers and Plants section. Husband Ron then came back and took the King Cup for the highest points for Vegetables. There was then a break in the chain when Ian Ross won the Bartlam Cup for highest points for Fruit. He was followed by Jane Bennett who was awarded the Braishfield Horticultural Society Ladies Cup for her Specimen Hybrid Tea Rose. Ron Watts then stepped in again and took the Braishfield Horticultural Society Fuchsia Cup. The Ron Hodgson Cup for a Flower Arrangement by a junior, 10 and under, was won by Alice Henery. Harry Talbot was awarded the Junior Floral Challenge Cup, 11 and over for his Flower Arrangement. The Watts family came back yet again

when Sylvia won the Hebblethwaite Cup for highest points in the Adult Culinary Section.

The Chairman's Prize for Children's Pre-School Class was won by little Jimmy Pearce. Jimmy's joy as he collected his prize was a sight to behold. He was thrilled to bits. Next came Max Marshall, he was awarded the Braishfield Women's Institute Cup for highest points for Children in Years 1 and 2. The Hobcraft Cup was won jointly by four contestants who tied with highest points for Children in Years 3 and 4- they were, Zoe Kyle-Henney, Gemma Asher, Emma Talbot and Fergus Channell, each will take turns to hold the cup for three months. The Vine Trophy for highest points for Children in Years 5 and 6 went to Jessica Maxwell.

The Certificate for highest points in the Handicraft Section was won by Betty Ayres. The Cottle Trophy for Best Entry in the Handicraft Section went to R D J Aris. Steve Renvoize then took the Certificates for Best Entry in the Men's Culinary Section and the Men's Special Brandy Snaps. The President's Challenge Salver for the Best Entries in the Horticultural Sections:- Flowers and Plant, Fruit and Vegetables, was awarded to Ian Ross. Finally, the Girlie Old Cup for a Miniature Garden on a Tray, (Adult) went to Emma Talbot. Congratulations are due to not only the winners but to all who took part, without whom there would be no Show.

One last comment on the Flower Show. Once again the Advertiser photographer failed to appear.

However, we overcame this with the help of Tony Lowe who had been on site with his camera. I submitted a report to our local newspaper stating that as usual, the Show had taken place in the Village Hall. For reasons best known to themselves, the venue was changed to read, the Parish Hall. I am aware that this has raised a few eyebrows. No, I haven't lost my sense of direction, put it down to the editors poetic licence or whatever they choose to call it.

August of course, is the month when we take a complete break. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 9th September when we will welcome Jim Love, who will talk to us about the Flowers Of Yunnan, in China. That will be an interesting change of direction.

Jim will be followed on Tuesday 14th October by Peter Barwick, who's subject will be, Apples Do Not Just Grow On Trees. The Autumn Show takes place during the same evening, details of which can be found on the back of your programmes.

Finally, the A. G. M. in November will soon be upon us. Have a good think and have something to say. It is a long time since any nominations for Committee Members were put forward. Maybe it is time that I was put out to grass. Who knows? Don't be shy, Have your say. Bye for now.

Bob Thomson,

BHS Secretary & Scribe



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Fun Page -

The Importance of Using a Correct Email Address

After being nearly snowbound for two weeks last winter, a Seattle man departed for his vacation in Miami Beach, where he was to meet his wife the next day, at the conclusion of her business trip to Minneapolis. They were looking forward to pleasant weather and a nice time together.

Unfortunately, there was some sort of mix-up at the boarding gate, and the man was told he would have to wait for a later flight. He tried to appeal to a supervisor, but was told the airline was not responsible for the problem and it would do no good to complain.

Upon arrival at the hotel the next day, he discovered that Miami Beach was having a heat wave. Miami's weather was almost as uncomfortably hot as Seattle's was cold. The desk clerk gave him a message that his wife would arrive as planned.

He could hardly wait to get to the pool area to cool off and quickly sent his wife an email. However, due to his haste, he made an error in the email address. His message, therefore, arrived at the home of an elderly preacher's wife, whose even older husband had died only the day before. When the grieving widow opened her email, she took one look at the monitor, let out an anguished scream and fell to the floor dead.

Her family rushed to her room where they saw this message on the screen:

Dearest wife,

Departed yesterday, as you know.

Just now got checked in.

Some confusion at the gate.

Appeal was denied.

Received confirmation of your arrival tomorrow.

Your loving husband.

P.S. Things are not as we thought. You're going to be surprised at how hot it is down here.



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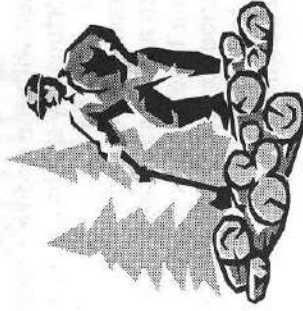
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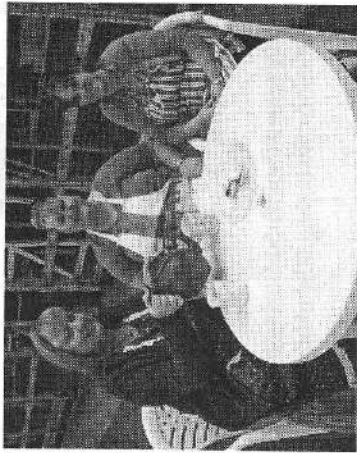


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Braishfield School Sports day refreshments

On Friday 13th June Braishfield School held their annual Sports Day. This was an all day event in which parents could watch their children and join them for a picnic lunch on the Rec. Mrs Fielding, Mrs Connolly and Mrs Light donated tea, coffee, cakes, rolls and very popular bacon rolls to sell to parents. They raised the grand total of £182.20 which they donated to Braishfield Senior Citizens Christmas Party Fund.



Do you like Cleaning Brass?

All Saints Church are in need of a volunteer to clean the brass once a month. The task takes approximately 1.5 hrs and it is very satisfying to see the brass shining brightly once you have completed your work.

If anyone is able to help, please contact Nicky Ayres on 368423

Join Us as Distribution Coordinator

The BVA has been blessed with the undivided attention of Ros Chaplin for the last few years. Unfortunately she has other commitments and is stepping down from the BVA.

We are looking for someone who can spare about 3 hours every other month to distribute the News to a dedicated team of distributors who then make sure the News arrives in a timely manner to every house in the Braishfield. Another task of the distribution coordinator is to join the rest of the BVA once every two months for a short meeting where we drink wine and snack on nibbles. Oh yes, we also go over upcoming matters and discuss ways to better the village.

Do you think you could handle this enviable task and help to keep the village running smoothly.

Please let George Elliot know of your intentions quickly as we don't expect this prestigious post to be available for long

You can contact George on 01794 368306

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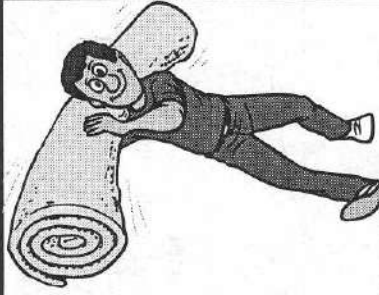
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INVITATION TO A
BOOK LAUNCH
SATURDAY 4 OCTOBER
10.30 - 12.30
BRAISHFIELD VILLAGE HALL

Stuart Ottowell, a former Braishfield resident and Meryl Balchin's father, has just published a book 'CHHE-SAAT' - his memoirs of the time he spent with the Indian Army (Rajput Regiment) on the NW Frontier and during the Burma Campaign (1940-1945). It provides a fascinating insight into army life during that period - he was involved with transport, both mules and mechanised - and his link with the Rajputs continues to this day. They encouraged him to publish his reminiscences! To mark and celebrate Stuart's great achievement at the age of 85, we are holding a book launch party at which he will be signing copies. A brief introduction to the book will be given at 11.00 by his son, Charles Ottowell. We would be delighted if you would join us.

A purchase is not obligatory but copies will be on sale at the special price of £4.99 (hardback!).

Free refreshments will be available, however, any donations towards refreshments will be given to 'Help for Heroes' - a charity recently set up to support injured service personnel from the Middle East conflicts. We hope to make a good contribution to this very worthy cause.

If you are unable to attend the Book Launch but would like to place an advance order for a signed copy at the above price, please contact Meryl Balchin on (01794)368427.

This event will be advertised locally. Please tell your friends about it! I do hope you can join us.

Rubbish News

Please note the following from the recent Bin Collection Days calendar sent out by Test Valley which was not explicit before
Recyclable materials in cardboard boxes left beside the brown bin on recycling weeks will be collected throughout the year

Recycle weeks beginning 4th & 18th Aug. 1st 15th & 29th Sept

Household weeks beginning 11th & 25th Aug. 8th & 22nd Sept

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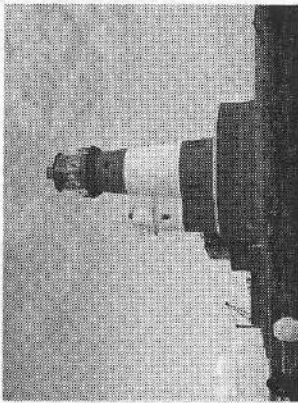
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The Farley Walk Part 1

The 4th year of a 5 year walk from Farley Chamberlayne to Iona. 24th May-1st June. Walking total - 93 miles



On Saturday, 24th May the walkers met up at the War Memorial full of energy and raring to go (approx 45 of them)! Our new driver, Malcolm, must have been quite impressed that we were only 5 minutes' late leaving but then we have had years (~10) of training under Iain Chisholm's good tutelage. After a brief stop for lunch near Sheffield we picked up some more walkers near York and continued north to Seahouses. En route we passed a man driving his car with his knees and eating a yoghurt from a pot with a spoon. Several other drivers were spotted doing the same thing on our various journeys.

At Seahouses we embarked on a small open boat for the Farne Islands. The sun shone and the waves were reasonably kind, as we sped across to the islands. We saw a wonderful number of puffins, oystercatchers, guillemots, eiders, ducks, gannets, cormorants and

arctic terns. It was the height of their breeding season and the islands were covered with nesting birds. It was an inspiring sight. There were also an amazing number of grey seals, mums, dads and pups. We were so lucky with the weather and it meant that some of us were able to visit the Longstone lighthouse (others missed out as they wandered off on the island!) from where Grace Darling launched her rescue of the seamen. This is the only lighthouse in the UK that you have to access from the sea. Two and a half hours later (7 p.m. by now!) we arrived back at Seahouses but not before 3 of the walkers, including one of the writers, got completely soaked by a freak wave - it just descended from head to toe! And so we arrived at our Belford hotel, ready for supper and bed.

Sunday dawned bright and sunny. This would be our first full day of walking. By now we had our full complement of walkers - fifty plus - with other friends/family joining and leaving as the week progressed. A quick transfer by coach and the walkers were off walking on the edge of the Cheviots on St Cuthbert's Way, just east of Wooler. Meanwhile, a group of walkers attended the Service in Belford where they must have prayed very hard for good weather. The south of England had torrential rain for most of the week so we were extremely lucky! They

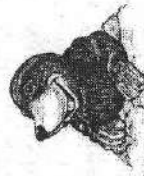
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joined us for coffee at Brown Law; others left to visit the site of the Battle of Flodden, which they found very interesting. Claire (née Chisholm) and husband, James, joined us at this point. Those who know Claire will be delighted to hear that she is expecting a baby in November.

The walk exceeded all our expectations. Wonderful views in all directions, balmy weather and dry underfoot with very comfortable footpaths and hardly a stile in sight! Lots of gorse everywhere, which our New Zealand walkers said is a complete pest in New Zealand, ranking with Japanese Knotweed! Bluebells still out and some broom too. A slowworm was spotted near the footpath. Skylarks flew overhead. Jimmy Chestnutt, our wonderful, mobile gourmet cake, coffee, lunch and tea provider was normally there to meet us at every rest point. However, our mobile canteen decided that the Grand Prix was more interesting than us so we missed out on tea that day! The cakes were amazing. Rumour had it that 36 had been provided this year. No wonder we didn't lose any weight as none of us could resist them! Lunch was at Hethpool where several of us exchanged bits of walking sticks, mugs etc.. that back walkers had retrieved!

Hethpool was the home of the late Sir Alec Douglas-Home and his family still live there. Everyone (including the Flodden tourists!) walked from Hethpool to Kirk

Yetholm and as we crossed the English/Scottish border you can probably guess what happened! A lone piper greeted us, playing his heart out on top of a nearby hill. Our Leader had, of course, arranged this and some of us went up the hill to chat to the piper whom we found was not wearing the right tartan and was married to a Northumberland lass - a real cross border medley! We tried to get him to lead the group into Kirk Yetholm but as he wouldn't, two of the party did a quick highland dance in appreciation of his efforts. Fortunately, no one had a camera but one of them was from NZ and had a Scottish grandmother as did the other one. Our walk on St Cuthbert's Way ended in a hostelry at Kirk Yetholm, which is also the end of the Pennine Way. (A very engaging lad (~14), whom we had passed earlier cycling up our footpath, came and chatted about life in KY. He loved the freedom of living there, surrounded by such beautiful scenery and hoped to join the Army after school.)

And so we returned to the hotel for dinner (30 minutes to get ready!) and a talk on the Battle of Flodden. Several walkers upped the dress code by wearing jackets. Our table were amazed that the speaker was still awake by the time he started speaking at 10 p.m., and even more flabbergasted that he did not finish until 11.05 p.m. which meant that we all lost our bets on how long the talk would last! The usual culprits were head nodding and unconscious

though sometimes they would rally for a few seconds. It is dangerous to be seen in this mode as you are likely to end up having to give the Vote of Thanks! 16.5 miles walked (18 miles if you allow for the ups and downs which were equivalent to going up and down Heltvellyn - 3,000 ft!)

Another glorious day dawned on Monday. En route to our "walk



off" one of our retired gastroenterologists, sitting near the rear of the coach, managed to have a bladder accident! It makes for good reading anyway! It appeared he pulled the bladder out of his pocket (the type that would normally have been in a rucksack) and spilt its contents down the central aisle of the coach, reaching the driver as the coach was going downhill at the time, which was very fortunate for those of us on the back seat! We started walking St Cuthbert's Way SW of Kirk Yetholm over three hilltops, starting with Crookedshaw Hill. Again, glorious views. On to Morebattle for lunch, then a quick coach journey to Kalemouth where some stayed on the coach for Kelso (our destination).

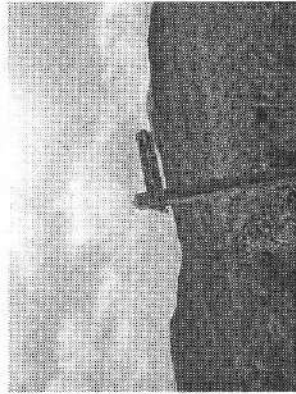
Malcolm, our driver, had to have a 24 hour break (EU regs), which started in Kelso. The walkers continued on the Borders Abbeys Way walking along the west bank of the River Teviot. A beautiful afternoon but quite windy. Banks of comfrey (purple and dark pink) and campion abounded. Fields of wheat and barley blew in the wind like waves. Herons, house martens, swifts, swallows, buzzards, wagtails all spotted plus some mighty-looking cattle, including Aberdeen Angus. One walker mooed at a bull who responded in fine form! We noted that sheep and cattle were very often put in fields together. We passed Roxburgh and its castle and saw Floors Castle across the rivers. We finally reached Kelso (at the confluence of the Rivers Teviot and Tweed), found our B&B, enjoyed a wonderful meal in the town and so to bed. 12.5 miles walked.

Tuesday and we awoke to a fine but cloudy day. Once our bags were loaded into the coach, we walked up the road and stopped outside the impressive gates of Floors Castle (10th Lord Roxburgh lives there). The gates should have been open for us and after about 10 minutes our Leader had raised the laird's henchmen. In the meantime, we had a talk from one of our learned walkers on Gog and Magog, who were on the crest above the gates. They were very quaint and looked as if they were each sporting an olive leaf covered nappy! With permission granted, we walked through the estate, fol-

lowing the River Tweed. Again, lots of comfrey and other attractive vegetation along the river bank, birdlife etc. Several fishermen were spotted and one of the walkers pointed out the exact spot where he fishes every year! It is one of the most prolific salmon fishing rivers in Europe.

Several miles further on we had permission to walk through the Mertoun Estate. While we were waiting for the back walkers to catch up, the afore-mentioned gastro-entologist managed to produce a stream of water from his pocket. Yes, you've guessed it! His bladder was misbehaving again! This time he took very speedy action and laid down on the ground, putting his head in a (dry) cow pat!! The water flow did seem to recede by his quick action. Shortly after this we had fun crossing a suspension bridge - no marching or jumping allowed! Only 5 people were allowed to cross at a time and the crossing was completed with naval precision by our Leader who yelled commands to Jimmy's wife, Alison at the other end! By the time we came to the next suspension bridge, we were experts. 12.1 miles from the start we reached our lunch venue at 2.30 p.m. The local postman became more friendly each time he saw us - we kept bumping into him every time we crossed a road! We were busshed on for a mile or so, some of the company continued on the coach to visit Dryburgh Abbey and Smalholm (a house associated with Sir Walter Scott).

The ladies (of the original Recy Party) now led the walk on the final stretch of St Cuthbert's Way to Melrose. We walked on to Bowden for a scrumptious tea at Jimmy's mobile café. At this point, one of the men held on to a runaway dog and blushed nicely when the lady owner commented on his nice legs. Well, there are one or two who always walk in shorts! We went over the Eildon Hills, 3 volcanic peaks which are a local landmark and very striking, to Melrose. A brief rest in our hotel and then we were all off for an evening's ceilidh in Ashkirk, organised by Bruce and Rosemary 'Twid' Ogilvie, who had joined us on our walk. It was a fun evening in an attractive golf clubhouse. Lots of excellent entertainment (singing and poetry) from John Nichol and Hilary Bell, good food and then Twid did the calling for the Scottish country dancing and much hilarity ensued. How did we manage to walk 17.1 miles and then dance. It is still a mystery to us!



.....To be continued next issue

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Braishfield Parish Council Notes

This report on the Parish Council covers the Council's meetings held on 3rd June and 1st July.

The Council had complained to Hampshire County Council about the approval of the Slackstead Generator and one of the points made was the prohibition on Parish Councils making representations at Planning Committee meetings. Ken Thornber, Leader of HCC replied that Councils were permitted to do so, but since letters from HCC Officers state the opposite, Ken Thornber has been asked to clarify the position. The Council noted the clarification is taking a while to be produced.

The Council made a number of donations to organisations - it just so happened that several requests arrived at more or less the same time. It gave £75 towards the Horticultural Society Flower Show, £60 to Victim Support Hampshire and £60 to Home-Start Eastleigh.

It came to the attention of the Council that the Football Club believes that it is not allowed to do youth training on the Recreation Ground in the evenings. The Council has written to the Club saying that it has no objection to this after 6pm on weekdays. The reason for the 6pm start is that the School uses the Recreation Ground as a playing/sports field (HCC pays £150pa to the Council for this) and there might be after school activi-

ties taking place.

The July meeting had a presentation from John Lancaster of Community Action Hampshire on affordable housing. You might recall that there was a questionnaire sent round the village last year attempting to determine the need/demand for affordable housing. A report has been produced identifying the need and this may be viewed on:

<http://www.johnrhodes.supanet.com/braishfield/BraishfieldHousingSurvey.pdf>

'Affordable' housing is rentable or part-ownership housing which is cheaper than open market housing because it is built on 'cheap' land. The land is cheaper because it is typically agricultural land which would not receive planning permission for open market housing, but there is a planning rule which permits it to be used for 'social' housing, now known as affordable housing. A landowner would receive in the region of £10000 for each housing unit built. There is also a planning rule which allows Planning Authorities to demand affordable housing as part of an open market housing development. This is likely to be the case with the Abbotswood development, for which an outline planning application was made some months ago.

One obvious problem for small vil-

lages is to find a suitable site and the next problem is to find a landowner who would sell. Suggestions would be appreciated.

Having advertised the presentation on the six Council notice boards in the village, it was perhaps a little disappointing that only nine villagers attended and of those there was little sign of anyone actually in favour of affordable housing in Braishfield.

On other planning related matters, there has been another application for Fairbournes Farm. This time it is a much more modest development than before and the Parish Council sent in its support for it to the Planning Authority. It involves conversion of some of the listed buildings into residential accommodation, the construction of some garages and some agricultural buildings.

The listed buildings are in need of significant repair and the farmhouse has not been lived in for over

25 years. The farm is a very important cluster of listed buildings on a site which dates back to 985AD. The 18th century barn contains a vertical post which has joist holes in it and is believed to have come from an earlier building on the site.

Information on the listed buildings may be viewed in items 3, 4, 5 and 6 on the following page:

<http://www.johnrhodes.supanet.com/braishfield/brlistedbdigs.htm>

If approved, the access to the new residential buildings will be via the existing track which leads to the old farmhouse between Oaklands and Holmsleigh. The new agricultural buildings would be behind the existing Fairbournes Farm houses in Kiln Lane.

The 30mph speed limit has been given approval by Hampshire County Council as is expected to be implemented in September.

The TVBC and HCC Planning Authorities dealt with applications as follows:

08/675/F	Extension	Baileys Down Farm, Parnholt Road	Permission
08/776/FULLS	Swimming pool and office accommodation	Elm Grove Farm, Dummers Road	Permission

08/00887/ CMAS	Removal of time limit and need to restore to agricultural land	RFS Farms/ Waltet, Bunny Lane	Permission with new time limit
08/01038/ CMAS	Increase in height of stored materials	Ace Liffaway, Yokesford Hill	Withdrawn
HCC/2008/00 18	Swarf bulking up facility	BKP, Bunny Lane	Permission

The Council received a number of planning applications and responded to TVBC as follows:

08/01235/ FULS	Conversion to dwell- ings and construction of garages and agri- cultural buildings	Fairbourns Farm, Kiln Lane	Support
08/01206/ FULS	Conservatory	Hall Place Cottage, Eldon Lane	No ob- jection
08/00939/ FULS	Replacement sun- room	7, Newport Lane	No ob- jection
08/01126/ FULS	Retrospective con- servatories	12, Hill View	No ob- jection
08/01511/ TPOS	Fell oak tree	1, Newport Lane	No com- ment
08/01483/ TREES	Prune trees	Leith Howe, Braishfield Road	No ob- jection
08/01463/ CMAS	Removal of link be- tween permission to continue recycling and filling of Hunts Farm sandpit	RFS Farms, Bunny Lane	No com- ment

For information on planning applications in Braishfield and for copies of Parish Council Minutes etc, you can find these on johnbrhodes.supanet.com/braishfield

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In the 1830's, when this play was first performed, western Europe was firmly in the modern age. Russia, however, was still emerging from the middle ages. Rural life was still feudal (serfs were owned with the land) and this huge country was governed by a despotic Tsar and a vast, centralized bureaucracy, centred on St. Petersburg.

Within the government, Tsar Peter the Great had created a rigid hierarchical system (the "Table of Ranks") that reached into every corner of public life. For example, Tsar Nicholas I had decreed in 1837 that all army officers must wear a full moustache, whilst civilian officials must shave.

The system depended on patronage, nepotism, corruption and fear; the consequence was incompetence, inaction, injustice and waste. *Gogol's* play gives us a small window into this society at a level with which we can identify.

Think about the heightened anxiety even in a good school when an Ofsted inspection is imminent - this is a parallel with the feelings of the local officials when one of Tsar Nicholas' government inspectors was on the horizon - the difference is that this bunch of crooks had something more serious to fear. Exile to Siberia.

Don't miss it. Put the date in your diary now. You know it makes sense.

We promise you'll laugh.