



# *BRAISHFIELD*

## *Village Association NEWS*

Issue 200 August 2013



Lunch with a View - the Farley Walk page 20

Distributed free of charge by the Braishfield Village Association to the residents of Braishfield and the surrounding hamlets, and available in colour on the BVA website:

[www.braishfield.org](http://www.braishfield.org)

# Braishfield Village Association

## Committee - 2013

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Vice Chairman	Graham Bennett	368109
Secretary	Rosie Groves	368178
Treasurer	Sheila Still	368384
Editor	Mike Mullane	368099
Website	Chris Balchin	368427
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Committee	Tessa Allen	368014
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## Editor's Notes

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

The BVA Editor  
Hazel Cottage  
Braishfield Road  
Braishfield  
Romsey SO51 0PR by the date shown below.

Copy may be written, typed or on PC media but, ideally, by email to:

[mike@braishfield.org](mailto:mike@braishfield.org)

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 on 368099.

BVA Website: [www.braishfield.org](http://www.braishfield.org)

**Latest copy date for the next issue is 16th September 2013**

## From the Chairman

I write this in the middle of the heat wave - 30 degrees again. By the time you read it we may be suffering under quite different weather, but at least we will have had some sort of summer!

The BVA's efforts to join in with the Horticultural Society's annual Flower Show had some success; about 40 people joined in the 'd-i-y' picnic on the Rec. on the Saturday afternoon, and kids joined in the games being organised for them, having fun and expending energy in spite of the heat! If we can repeat it next year we'll try to get the word around about it earlier and better, because it would be good to have more people joining in. The barn dance in the evening was poorly attended, for whatever reason (too hot, clashing with the Beggars' Fair in Romsey, forgot...) Nevertheless those who came had a brilliant time dancing to the music of Pogle's Wood under the expert calling of Graham Taylor, and with lots of space to do it in! We'll review it all at our next BVA meeting and decide whether to repeat it next year - both the picnic and the dance. A barn dance after the Flower Show used to happen years ago apparently, so we unwittingly resurrected an old tradition.

There's nothing like 'change' to get people in a tizz, and the prospect of having some affordable housing built in the village is no exception. Do make sure that you go along to the next 'consultation' in the Village Hall on August 7<sup>th</sup>, 3.00 to 7.30 pm, if you missed the first, so you can see what

is being proposed. I went to the first one, and it appeared less like a consultation but more of a selling exercise aimed mainly at people who might like to take advantage of the scheme. Fair enough, except that a lot of people have varying reservations about what is proposed, and it seemed to be really difficult either to get these views heard or get answers to some of the questions. My impression is that there is a lot of support for the idea within the village - it will encourage young people in particular to be able to live near parents, the school, their place of work etc.

But whilst there are some who oppose the entire idea (only a few, I suspect) others just have concerns: for example, is there still a real need, given Abbotswood and affordable housing there; is the site the best place for them or are there better ones; why not have some of the houses available on a shared equity basis to help people get on the 'housing ladder'; is the quality of build good enough; and so on.

So, I'm urging you to go along to make your views known and to ask whatever questions you may have, either to the TVBC and housing association officials present, or to our own Parish Councillors. You may find reassurance there, or you may not. You'll be able to make comments on the design of the houses, and our own councillors are collecting responses on wider issues in the questionnaire they circulated with the letter, notifying us of the meetings; and if you've lost that, go any way. It matters.

## From the Editor

Not many people know this, but here is the 200<sup>th</sup> edition of the magazine! The current “staff” can only claim involvement in about 10% of that remarkable achievement, so the praise goes to you all out there in the wilds of Braishfield, and sometimes a bit beyond, for your amazing support throughout the past 27 years or so. That was a long-winded way of thanking you all again for your input to a very full, unpadding edition!

Quite a lot inside, and certainly one pithy topic; as a ‘junior’ villager I hesitate to get embroiled too early in local politics, but nonetheless encourage you to heed and join the Affordable Housing debate. No ‘nimby-ist’ I, but from what I read many legitimate questions are being evaded by those who should answer them, and our Chairman cites some of the concerns which seem to attract only obfuscation and unseasonal fog. I will cite another one that warrants a higher profile - traffic. Even before the prolonged nonsense on Winchester Hill forced extra traffic into the village, I had already noticed an

increase in volume (and speed) of traffic passing through. Abbotswood and further development will continue to exacerbate this. At its widest point Braishfield Road barely allows large lorries to pass each other comfortably and, at the northern end, becomes a single vehicle country lane. No emotion here - simple logic demands that future loading takes account of the existing village road infrastructure; and if it is clearly unsuitable then trim back hard on the plans which threaten to overload it. Ah, well; doubtless the secret plan is to rename Braishfield “Romsey North”! Hobby horse now back in its stable!

Music - in the last edition we said farewell to Christoph Götting and welcomed David Munro. Now delighted to see a date for the next concert - unfortunately timing and space didn’t allow a full page for the event, but see the Letters and Notices inside and the Diary.

Whether it’s broolly or sun cream, have a wonderful holiday!

### Braishfield 200 Club

Here are the details of the winners and donations made in the past four months. Winners have been Tim Howkins, Hannah Boothman, Harriet and Nick Ashe, and, er, me (to my embarrassment!). We’ve been able to make the following donations (in each case 60% of the total money in the pot for the month): Romsey Young Carers, Braishfield’s own Social Contact Group, and two donations to All Saints Church.

Membership has remained at around the same level, and we’re always keen to welcome new ones. Help us to do some good locally - telephone me, David Robinson on 368774 or e mail me ([davidbrobinson@talktalk.net](mailto:davidbrobinson@talktalk.net)) for details.

Remember the BVA Website: [www.braishfield.org](http://www.braishfield.org)



# Letters & Notices

## ERRATUM

Unfortunately there is an error in your new Residents' Guide. Please amend the telephone number on page 3 for Abbey Mead Surgery which should read 830888 NOT 830088. Our apologies for this error. If anyone spots any others please let us know. Ed.

## CHRISTIAN AID

Thank you to all who delivered envelopes. (Many hands made light work): and to everyone who contributed. The amount collected was £1050 - a fantastic result.

Hazel Davies  
Orchard Lodge

## BMADS

The annual general meeting of the Braishfield Music and Drama Society was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2013. A variety of subjects were discussed but one of the main points was whether to change from a spring production back to the traditional autumn one. After weighing up the pros and cons it was thought that returning to the autumn would be preferable.

So the next BMADS production will be November 2014. In the interim there will be several play readings held which are open to everybody. If you are interested in being involved on or off the stage, please contact me, John Edwards; 01794 368465.

We are always keen to recruit new talent so please come along. If anyone would like to see a copy of the accounts ring Richard Groves; 01794 368178.

John Edwards

## BROADBAND

In order to maximise our chances of improving Broadband speeds to Braishfield, we need as many residents and businesses as possible to sign up their interest. If you have not already done so, please register now.

Go to: [www3.hants.gov.uk/broadband](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/broadband) and follow the links.

## VILLAGE LUNCHES CHURCH ROOMS 12 NOON

### **AUGUST – no lunch**

MONDAY 09 September

MONDAY 14 October

MONDAY 11 November

MONDAY 09 DECEMBER - CHRISTMAS LUNCH



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## Letters & Notices cont.

### All Saints' Church

Enjoy a cream tea in the garden of Springbank, Newport Lane, Braishfield

by kind invitation of Mike and Betty Horton

on Sunday 4th August 2 - 4.30pm

If wet the event will be held in the Church Room

Tickets £5 available from:

Betty Horton 368259

Maggie Brooks 523928

Jane Bennett 368109

Music by the Braishfield "BUMS" Ukulele Band

A Date For your Diary..... Michaelmas Fair on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September from 2 - 4.30pm in the Church Room/ car park.

### **YOUR VILLAGE HALL NEEDS YOUR HELP**

The village hall has entered its fourth generation since being built in the early eighties. We haven't undertaken much improvement or refurbishment over the years but users are now telling us it's time we did so to meet current needs and remain competitive.

We obtained the views of over 100 villagers and users of the hall and, with the help of an architect, visits to other village halls and the village hall committee, we have drawn up designs and an improvement plan. At this initial stage we estimate that the refurbishment programme will cost around £200,000.. which leads us to the hard bit: raising the money!

We have some existing funds and have researched potential sources of grants but we need to develop a more detailed fund raising strategy. We would appreciate some help with this from anyone who has experience in this area, or indeed anyone who would like to help in any way. Our aim is to develop a Strategy over the next 3 months and launch an appeal for funds, to supplement grants, later this year.

**WE NEED SOME HELP AND ANTICIPATE THERE ARE VILLAGERS WITH EXPERIENCE IN THIS FIELD WHO CAN ASSIST.**

If anyone can help or would like more information on the current ideas and plans the Hall Committee are developing then please contact:

Iain Coleman on 367064 or at [iainandsue@gmail.com](mailto:iainandsue@gmail.com).

The Hall is the centre of Village life and we need to secure its future, both financially and to modern day standards for the use and enjoyment of all.

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**Saturday: Romsey**, Romsey Pilates Studio

9.00-10.00am: *Yoga4back & General Yoga*-suitable for all

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Please contact me for further information

# Letters & Notices cont.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

You will be aware of the proposal to build 9 affordable houses on a site south of the Wheatsheaf Pub.

The Parish Council are legally required to consult as widely as possible on such matters. So, with the assistance of the Test Valley Borough Council, the Parish Council agreed that there should be 2 opportunities for the Village to view the proposal and comment appropriately, and that the consultations be on different days and a month apart to ensure that the maximum number of parishioners would be consulted. A letter advising of the intended consultations was sent to all addresses in the Parish. The first very successful exhibition took place on July 8<sup>th</sup>. Please note that the next exhibition will take place in the village Hall on **WEDNESDAY 7<sup>th</sup> AUGUST** from 3pm until 7.30pm. If you were unable to attend on the 8th July, please attend in August: it is important to our village that we have the greatest possible involvement of the parishioners in the consultation that will affect our village.

Mike Prince

Chairman

Braishfield Parish Council

Dear Ed

### Demise of the Oak Tree at the Braishfield Rd / Sandy Lane Junction

I thought your readers might be interested in the background reasoning offered by TVBC when I enquired as to why such a magnificent specimen was felled earlier this year. First of all they said it was not protected by a TPO as it stood on land owned by TVBC. Apparently, according to a planning officer, trees on Council land are not normally given TPO's (and I quote) "given that the Council is considered a responsible body" which implies the rest of us are not!!??

"The demise of this tree and others in the vicinity is to facilitate the junction improvements planned as part of the Abbotswood development. This is to be a roundabout and it was considered the tree(s) could not be retained as part of the roundabout design".

Having noted the significant offset alignment of the already built roundabout nearer Woodley and assuming this new roundabout will be offset in a similar fashion on the TVBC land (of which there is plenty) surely with a little thought the oak could have stood proudly in the centre of the newly formed roundabout to be viewed and enjoyed by future generations creating a bold statement at the entrance to our village.

Sadly all too late now and maybe all we can salvage from this is to get them to plant a semi mature oak sapling in the centre of the roundabout for our grandchildren and their successors to enjoy.

Sincerely

Richard D Brazier

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## Letters & Notices cont.

### The Social Contact Group

On a chilly day in May, the Social Contact Group visited the Alpaca Farm in Wellow, which is situated in 10 acres of peaceful countryside. We were welcomed by the sight of the charming Herdwick Sheep with their baby lambs and then introduced

The two wethers named as Prince and we all enjoyed informative talk by with his wife beautiful animals. fascinating insight history and life Members also had stroking these whose fleece is strong.



to the Huacaya Alpacas. (sires) were aptly Hamlet and Mr Darcy the interesting and Ashley Browning, who Sandra breed these This proved to be a into the background, cycle of the Alpacas. the opportunity of delightful creatures fine, soft and very

By this time however, the temperature had dropped further and everyone was grateful to move into a Barn and have a very welcome hot cup of tea and home-made cakes. This fascinating trip was funded by a kind donation from the Braishfield 200 Club and was much enjoyed by all the Members.

### Summer Term 2013: 1<sup>st</sup> Braishfield Brownies

This term we have been learning many things to do with people with disabilities for our Brownie badge. We have learnt how to spell the alphabet in finger spelling and learnt all about braille. We even had a visit from a blind man and his dog Ruby. We also got the chance to try and use crutches and a walking stick. This term we also welcomed four new Brownies called Lilly, Tillie, Sophie and Amelie. We had fun preparing for the flower show by sewing, drawing and making marzipan fruits.

Verity Kington and Maisy Sykes

### Chelsea Flower Show.

2013 saw Hillier Gardens winning its 68th Gold Medal. Ricky Dorlay has been directly involved in winning those medals for the past 48 years, this year nurturing nearly 4000 trees and plants. Many congratulations from us all. Ed.

### Church Room Concert: Celan Quartet -7.30 pm Saturday October 19<sup>th</sup>

David Munro, who took over from Christoph Götting, has arranged the next concert. Performed by the Celan Quartet, it will include music by Haydn, Berg and Mozart. Details in the next magazine. Meanwhile for more information contact David: 02380 738517 or email: [mdavid@gotadsl.co.uk](mailto:mdavid@gotadsl.co.uk). Tickets £20 from Wendy Quarendon 01794 368015 or email: [wendy@quarendon.net](mailto:wendy@quarendon.net). The last concert was a great success.

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# Hampshire Air Ambulance

On Sunday 9th June, around 120 people turned up for the Braishfield Cream Tea. Some drove, many walked, a few cycled and two even



arrived on horseback.

Whilst the sun shone, everyone ate



delicious scones, generously provided by Jane Bennett and Silks Hotel (The White Horse in Romsey) and drank teakindly donated by Bookers - and were entertained by "BUMS".

It was great to hear some of the stories from many people, including

one of a person being airlifted as recently as four weeks ago after having been hit by a double decker bus: she had run the Race for Life in the morning too! Well done.

Those who helped on the day are too numerous to mention, you all know who you are and we really couldn't have done it without you. Such good village spirit all round.

A total of £876.06 was raised and Wendy and Ian Jeffery would like to thank all those who contributed to making the day such a huge success, from setting up, to adding the finishing touches

and finally making the site look like it had never been used!

We were provided with a demonstration of why we were there when, on their way back from a mission, the crew did a fly by. Fantastic to see everyone up and waving.

Watch this space for next year's event!



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# Romsey 3<sup>rd</sup> Cubs & Scouts Activities

## Summer Party

Thursday, 4th July was the date for 3rd Romsey annual Summer Tea Party. It was a beautiful evening, the sun shone and the Cubs & Scouts arrived with plenty of food to share. Tables were put out and laid, the 35 guests arrived and the party began. During the evening Scouts and Cubs shared the food around the table, provided teas and coffees to exacting requirements and chatted to all our guests. The evening rounded off with a raffle and entertainment by the Cubs & Scouts ranging from jokes,

music, singing to a quiz. Great fun was had by all!

Thank you to all the Cubs, Scouts & Parents who did such a sterling job in providing food, entertainment, chat, n washing up and smiles this evening!

After the party one of the guests sent their thanks, "We attended the 3rd Romsey Summer Tea Party, we would like to say how very much it was enjoyed, we really had a great time. The food was lovely and the entertainment was superb. Thank you very much for inviting us it was very much appreciated."

## The balsam battle

Over thirty enthusiastic Cubs and Scouts joined the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust to rid the Cadnam River of the non-native Himalayan balsam plant which, introduced by the Victorians as an ornamental plant, is invading river banks in the New Forest area. The youngsters, all members of 3<sup>rd</sup> Romsey Cubs and Scouts spent the evening of 27<sup>th</sup> June at Southbrook Farm in Newbridge pulling up thousands of balsam plants.

"It was great fun and very satisfying, especially seeing the huge heap of pulled-up plants at the end of the evening" said Scout leader Sarah Beaman.

Catherine Chatters, the Wildlife Trust's New Forest Non-Native Plants Officer, who organised the balsam pull, was delighted to have help from the Cubs and Scouts. "I was so impressed by their hard work and enthusiasm" said Catherine "and they

have really made a difference."

Cub leader Katie Brown said, "Cubs and Scouts recognise the need to protect our l o c a l



environment and we look forward to more balsam pulling next year."

The New Forest Non-Native Plants Project has organised a number of volunteer work parties this summer and would welcome your help. For further information please contact Catherine Chatters at [CatherineC@hwt.org.uk](mailto:CatherineC@hwt.org.uk) or ring 07770 923315.

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# Braishfield Flower Arrangement Society



Members of the Braishfield Flower Arrangement Society were recently privileged to take part in the Symphony of Flowers Festival at Winchester Cathedral. The last time the cathedral hosted a flower festival was 10 years ago so we decided we shouldn't wait another 10 years!

For some of us it was a new experience and the excitement was plain to see on our faces as we entered the cathedral early on the Monday morning. We were tasked with completing two arrangements - Team A (Denise Bright, Eileen Norman, Sue Gardner and Jenny Randall) produced 'Fanfare'.



This was to a heraldic fanfare and consisted of a two part contemporary design with bursts of bold flowers to proclaim the approach of an important visitor. The exhibit was

constructed on metal frames which were adorned with materials with a regal colour theme of red, gold and purple. The flower used was Anthurium andreanum.

Team B (Hazel Prince, Diane Lott and Carole Renvoize) produced 'Operetta'. Whilst this was a traditional pedestal arrangement set against the natural stone of a Pillar the challenge was the size - 9' high x 6' wide!

Fortunately the team had been specially chosen to cover that aspect although Hazel Prince was seen balancing on a ladder at one stage! The flowers used were consistent with a typical English garden



delphiniums, hydrangeas, roses, gladioli and carnations.

The team was assisted by Margaret Bennett who nobly swept up all the mess we made! The festival ran for several days and we felt very proud of the accolades we received for our small flower club. We feel we did the village proud!

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# The 2013 Farley Walk

After the now customary, wonderful barbecue 'send-off' on the Friday night by Wendy Graham and her team of regular helpers, the "Farley Walk" set off by coach at 9.00am on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> May from the Braishfield War Memorial bound for St David's, Pembrokeshire, to begin another week governed by precise, thoroughly researched preparation from the seemingly indefatigable partnership of Iain and Chris Chisholm. Nodding gently towards the passing years for many in the party, the week provided a raft of alternative activities and some shorter walks; and reducing the accommodation to just two centres, first in St David's and then in Brecon, was particularly appreciated.

St. David's, although the smallest city in the United Kingdom, has all the trappings of city status including a strikingly beautiful cathedral close to the ruins of the magnificent Bishop's Palace; a reminder of the once wealthy religious centre which grew at St David's from the 6<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Happily our visit coincided with the St David's Music Festival and the concert on arrival included a reviving performance by the cathedral's superb girls choir. Dining with us on one evening, Bishop Win of St David's spoke about the identity of the patron Saint and the foundation of the early religious community. Although little is recorded of the saint himself, the Bishop confirmed that St David's was an important site in the development of the then nascent church.

Positioned near the tip a peninsula and about a mile and a half in three directions to the coast, the city is an excellent hub for walks; on the second

day after an arduous 12 mile cliff top walk, with frequent visits down to sandy coves, it was little more than a mile and a half back to St David's. The spring flowers on the cliffs were at their very best with carpets of pink, yellow, blue and white. On the third day we had the only unscheduled event (we've filled out our complaint form!) - a morning of torrential rain; but Chris C. Appeared miraculously and negotiated a long lunchtime stay in a large barn, thoughtfully converted as a refuge for regularly soaked campers from an adjoining field; we listened to the thunderous downpour and spared a thought for the young couple we had passed walking in the opposite direction, now facing at least ninety minutes with no shelter.

On the following day half of the party crossed over to Ramsay Island. The swell from the preceding storm almost prevented a landing but then the walk round the island, visiting the colonies of Guillemots and Razor Bills and the occasional puffin, made for an energetic day - or at least that was the story relayed by the walkers who did look rather ragged after their 15 + miles on the coastal path; the option of a further five miles had been unanimously declined!

After four nights at St. David's it was time to move on to Brecon. We stopped on the way to walk through the Preselli Hills, an ancient quarry there being the source of some of the huge stones forming Stonehenge. Just outside Brecon we visited the intriguing 'Craig-y-Nos' castle, once the home of a distinguished late C19 French diva, Adelina Patti who fell in love with Wales.

Next day a gentle introduction to the Brecon Beacons took us from Crickowell to Bwlch and then to Cwmdu with a relatively early finish to allow for one of Timothy Hornsby's amusing and informative talks, this time on the 'Tribes of Britain'. Canterng through Boxgrove man, Neanderthals, Dogger Land, the Roman invasion, Vikings, Normans, the effect of the Mongols and the Black Death, the Glorious Revolution, Huguenots and more recently the arrival of many thousands from the Indian sub-continent, it was quite clear that the British are indeed a mongrel race. Timothy wove in some local colour featuring a surprisingly outward looking 5<sup>th</sup> century Lord who sent his daughter to Ireland to 'hook and land' a Prince, and his son to Wales for his education: the son's name was Brychan and hence Brecon, the place where he settled.

The Castle Hotel at Brecon looks south to the Brecon Beacons and the highest point, Pen-y-Fan at 2907 ft. Of course this had to be climbed by the more energetic members and one 'nameless other' who, somehow hitching a lift with Chris to the lunch stop near the peak, quietly slipped into the group for the last leg! It was a fine day and the views from the summit across the Beacons and south to the Bristol Channel made the effort all the more worthwhile. The delightful alternative to Pen-y-Fan was a walk which included a long descent down the Bryn Oer Tramway (1814, horse-drawn),



*Pen y Fan*

which used to carry limestone eight miles from the Trefil quarries to the Brecknock and Abergavenny canal at Talybont; thence walking along the picturesque canal back to Brecon.

The last walking day was for many also the hardest with a steep climb to Fan Brycheiniog which, at 2631 ft, is the highest peak in the Black Mountains. On the final stage to the summit on a clear but cold and windy day, the drop in temperature showed how fickle conditions in the Beacons can be; but the long walk down, skirting the way Llyn y Fan Fach (Lake) made the perfect end to a walking holiday. That evening Doug McClean with his ukulele, Chris Amery reciting a dramatic tennis poem and Mick Summerhayes, with his brilliantly observed doggerel verse capturing the daily dramas of the walk, set the seal on another wonderful walking week. After the service at Brecon Cathedral next day we were given a tour by the Dean, Geoffrey Marshall. Much on display in the cathedral relates to soldiers from previous Welsh regiments (the Royal Welsh Regiment is now based in Brecon) and among the brass wall plates are a number of VCs from C19th tribal and colonial battles, such as Rorke's Drift. And finally, the coach returned us to Braishfield in the late afternoon - the end of another brilliantly organised Farley walk! Such a successful week is entirely due to the hard work by Chris, Iain and those who joined them in getting to know the area and walking the paths.

# Mollie's War

*Next year sees a series of commemorative events in recognition of the centenary of the 1914-18 World War. As a prelude we offer the memories of one of Braishfield's older residents; different flavour, perhaps, from those we read elsewhere, but as interesting and important as more obvious tales of heroism.*

Mollie Russell is 92 and lives in Chapel Close. In 1941, aged 20, she enlisted in the WAAF (Women's Auxiliary Air Force). Her father (1914-18 War) was in the voluntary National Defence Corps, her mother a VAD nurse and her brothers in the infantry and Home Guard; so collectively they were more than 'doing their bit'. For her part Mollie joined the Barrage Balloon section, part of Air Defence; initially staffed by men, in 1941 it was decided that women could take over to release men to front line duties. These hydrogen balloons were lighter than air and tethered to winches which eased them up to a chosen height between 500-1500 feet when enemy aircraft were expected. The idea, mainly at night, was that low flying enemy 'planes would hit the wire to which explosive devices were attached, and the combination would bring them down - and it worked.

So Mollie (feisty as always!) was kitted out with uniform etc. in Gloucestershire (handed out by Doris Dewey, also from Braishfield!) and then off to do her basic training at Morecombe (square bashing, bitterly cold!) and Wythall, near Birmingham (technical training); then posted to Solihull, close by, and then back to Wythall for additional training and a 'trade test'. They made her a corporal, unpaid, which she took on but the unpaid part of it still rankles. 'Basically' she says 'we were cheap

labour.' Nonetheless she had to lead teams of girls, some pretty unreliable. Two in her crew were particularly hopeless on night watch. The phone rang one night with orders to 'fly', and the two duty girls said they had never heard it - presumably because they'd fallen asleep. Shoeless, Mollie dashed out in the ice to answer it. A stickler for proper conduct, she found this extremely difficult to handle and at one point asked for a transfer to another team. Her crew then threatened mutiny if she went, so she gritted her teeth and stayed!

July 1942 saw very heavy raids on the West Midlands. Mollie's unit was stationed at Small Heath (a suburb of Birmingham); a very difficult site with concrete blocks to tether the cables to, which caused complications. On one occasion she reluctantly agreed to a reputedly "accepted" short cut in the procedure for refuelling the balloons with gas. As a result the cable was not connected to the winch correctly so when the order came to 'fly' the balloon was not controlled - Mollie had to use an emergency device called a 'snatch brake' to prevent it heading off into the ether; they got away with it but Mollie remembers her anger at the carelessness and poor advice that caused the problem.

On another occasion, checking on the balloon, Molly found it flying but displaced some distance from the winch; the crew had allowed the cable to get tangled up in a hawthorn tree instead of going straight up; and there was an explosive device on the cable in the tree! Bravely Mollie climbed up and freed the cable by sawing through some of the branches. All in all, her career as a barrage balloonist was not entirely uneventful!

In 1943, when enemy raids had reduced and the RAF went on the offensive, Mollie volunteered to become an airframe mechanic; another example of women stepping into men's shoes, freeing them in preparation for D Day. More training and then she was granted a posting to Andover, much nearer home; arriving unheralded with another girl, no one knew anything about them, so she was randomly allocated work in one of the hangars and made herself useful for six weeks until the paperwork finally caught up - and then she was officially posted to the hangar next door - talk

a b o u t disappearing off the radar! 'We could have been enemy agents!' she says. There she stayed for the remainder of the war.

She often worked with an experienced mechanic named

Jack Thompson, she on airframes and he on engines. A duty crew of two mechanics remained on standby at the end of each day until 8.00 pm to deal with any late arriving planes. One very rainy night at 6.00 pm only she and Jack remained. Thinking that nobody would be flying in those conditions, they stood themselves down, wet through. Mollie was enjoying a good soak in the bath when the Tannoy called 'Duty Crew to Action'! She belted out of the bathroom, hair in a towel and uniform more or less on, to find that she and Jack had to help a woman ferry pilot, who had landed in a very large puddle, to push her plane into a hangar. The pilot in question was settled very comfortably into the officers' mess!

Chocks away! She and another mechanic, also named Jack, were working on a Tiger Moth with an engine



*A Tiger Moth*

problem. Starting it up to identify the problem, Mollie sat in the cockpit and Jack swung the propeller as she controlled the magneto (ignition) switches. The engine fired up, at which point the aircraft started moving - straight towards a petrol bowser!! Mollie frantically looked for the brakes, then remembered that Tiger Moths didn't have brakes. Jack was hanging on grimly as the plane gathered speed, shouting suggestions. Finally Mollie remembered the switches, turned off the engine, and Jack gave a mighty heave to slew the plane away from the petrol bowser and

hit a large sign instead! They put the plane in a hangar, and swore each other to secrecy. Their unforgivable sin? Forgetting to put chocks against the wheels! Mollie still refers to herself as Hitler's secret weapon!

Mollie was demobbed in 1946, returned home, worked at Wills Nurseries in Romsey and cared for her father. She still goes to yearly reunions of the former barrage balloon ladies. She remembers the fun of it all, as well as some pretty scary moments! Modestly she says that she did nothing out of the ordinary. But her story demonstrates how the war changed perceptions of what women could do, and perhaps laid the foundations for the social changes that shape the present day. It also shows what silent heroes and heroines we still have among us.

***If you, a parent, grandparent, uncle or aunt living in the village has a story to tell, let us know - we'd love to interview them.***

***David Robinson***

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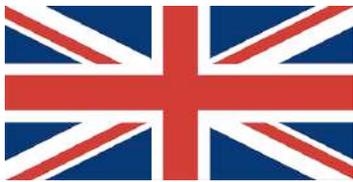
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**The Village Variety Show**

**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2013**

**Those who have booked an Act or are thinking of doing so, it  
would be appreciated if they contacted me by e mail  
preferably this month to reconfirm.**

**Also anyone who has already offered to help  
on the nights or in planning the event please  
reconfirm by e mail to me.**

**MORE ACTS WOULD BE WELCOME AND  
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# Worzel Gummidge

On Sunday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September, Derek Pykett, shall be launching his DVD documentary about Worzel Gummidge at a local location from the series.

Anyone interested in purchasing a copy of the DVD and joining Derek (and members of the Worzel cast and crew) at the launch should contact him on his e-mail or postal address below to obtain a free invite.

The DVD's will sell at £8.00 each and money from the sale will go to the Alzheimer's Society.

Derek is particularly interested in hearing from individuals who remember the filming of Worzel or appeared as extras in the series.

[derek.pykett@btinternet.com](mailto:derek.pykett@btinternet.com)

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Hertfordshire WD3 5J  
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Directed by Derek Pykett

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the storybook behind British TV's most lovable scarecrow.

Worzel Gummidge is highly regarded today as a piece of classic television, making this documentary a special journey down memory lane for anyone who remembers this delightful, magical series.

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**Open Event for Members and Non Members**

**Friday, 9 August**

Beer Festival opens at 5pm  
Evening Quiz commencing at 8pm  
All teams welcome (£3 per person inc ploughman's supper –  
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**Saturday, 10 August**

Opens at 12noon through to 11.30pm  
Day includes: Darts competition, Croquet, Badminton, Children's  
games,  
Cake stall and more.....  
Live music from 8pm onwards  
BBQ throughout the day

**Sunday, 11 August**

Opens at 12noon closes at 6pm  
Skittles competition – teams welcome  
BBQ throughout the afternoon

Coming soon our **Charity Weekend Music Festival 13-15  
September 2013** – see Village Noticeboards or contact the Club  
for further information. Members and Non Members welcome.

Tel: 01794 368458 evenings  
braishfieldsocialclub@hotmail.co.uk

# Newport Inn Cricket Club Mid - Season Update

First, many thanks to all the Braishfield residents who came to our quiz night on 20<sup>th</sup> April; a great success and your support means a lot to us!

The cricket so far has been excellent, as has the weather - only two cancellations. With long summer evenings we played midweek evening fixtures as well as our regular Sunday fixtures. Our form has been good. We started by winning our first four games but then came unstuck against a very strong Vagabonds team up in picturesque Bentworth. Since then we have had convincing wins over Leckford, The Rioteers, Compton Chamberlayne and Winchester College, and some outstanding individual performances - our two centurions Adam Richards and Warren Bowden, and James Hardy with a career best of 6 wickets in a match.

However, the star performer has been Braishfield's very own Andrew Briggs - it seems that this year he has come of age, his confidence growing after an

unfortunate injury on a cold April afternoon at Crawley; going for a catch which most would have dodged, young Andrew dislocated his finger. The team consider that this incident somehow inspired him with the confidence to match his ability. He has played some superb innings, striking fours and sixes almost at will. This has been matched by his fielding - taking the most unlikely catches and, on one occasion at Wellow, displaying fielding that literally brought gasps from the crowd as he swooped to collect and throw a ball in one motion, hitting the stumps for a run out.

With plenty of cricket to come we hope for a long hot summer. As always we warmly welcome Braishfield residents us, either to play or to watch and have a cup of tea!

James Light  
Club Captain

## Braishfield Flower Arrangement Society

Programme 2013

Meetings held in Braishfield Village Hall  
4<sup>th</sup> Thursday in the month at 7.30pm

September 26<sup>th</sup> 'From City to Village', Helen Gibbons

October 24<sup>th</sup> 'It's a Gift', Ann Marie Dicker

November 28<sup>th</sup> OPEN EVENING - 'A Carol for Christmas'  
Michael Bowyer, NAFAS National Demonstrator



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## Queen's coronation 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary service at Westminster Abbey 4th June 2013

Dear Reader, you may wonder how a chance meeting in the ladies loo at Westminster Abbey on 4<sup>th</sup> June results in this article for the BVA news. To avoid any misunderstanding the meeting was between my wife, Betty, and your editor's wife Sue! 'Why are you here?' questioned Sue but, precluding a response, a loo became available and the meeting ended.

The following morning our phone rang early and it was your diligent editor's wife who, by then having absorbed the content of the Order of Service, had seen my name acknowledged as being one of the young choristers at the Coronation in 1953, who had contributed to the commissioning of Bob Chilcot's anthem for the anniversary service. Sue requested an article for the BVA news.

I hope you are not all 'anniversaried' out by the numerous recent interviews with coronation choristers in the press, on radio and television but space precludes what could be a book relating to my five years in the choir at St. Paul's Cathedral, and the build up to Coronation Day; the right choir and timing was the key to my participation in that Service, it being my last term at the choir school.

By June 1953 I had been fortunate to take part in many great state occasions including, amongst others, the opening service for the Festival of Britain, the opening dedication/concert at the Royal

Festival Hall, the Maundy Service and the service attended by Sir Winston Churchill and President Eisenhower commemorating 28,000 Americans who died while serving from this country during the war.

It was a great privilege for Betty and myself to receive invitations to both the Golden Jubilee Service at St Pauls in 2002 and the Coronation Anniversary Service in the Abbey this year. They were both memorable occasions even if our seats at the Abbey gave nothing like the

spectacular view I enjoyed sixty years and two days previously.

There was always intense rivalry between the Abbey choristers and those at St Pauls, both in singing and on the sports field! However, after the service, a joint lunch was arranged with the

coronation choristers from the Abbey and the Chapels Royal and I have to admit they were all quite human after all! This was followed by an invitation to tea from the St Paul's Cathedral School headmaster, the day finishing with Evensong in the Cathedral.

No country does state occasions better than the British and it was great to meet again those I had not seen for very many years, and memories of great events flooded back on what was a truly memorable day. But why did everyone look so old?!

Mike Horton



### And Two More Royal Villagers!

I was on The Mall on Coronation Day 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1953 with my mother and brother, who is now a steward at Westminster Abbey. Sitting not far from the Hortons, I too attended the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service at Westminster Abbey; my brother was stewarding. What a privilege for us both to be there 60 years later! Sue Mullane

And--- Tim Ballantyne was present at one of the Buckingham Palace Garden Parties two days later on June 6<sup>th</sup> with Romsey Young Carers.



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# Braishfield Horticultural Society

Greatly enjoyed by all the Members attending, our two final outings are now over. The first, to Atherling Villas, Hythe, was quite an eye opener; the garden fairly small, about one third of an acre, but exactly as described and very beautiful; the second, to Ordnance House, West Dean also proved to be a great success; quite a contrast to Hythe, larger and more open, but much to see and admire. Both gardens had been created from scratch by our hosts, the first about thirteen years ago, but the second in just twenty-two short months. Now to plan next year's fun!



*Ron Watts*

Then came our Annual Flower Show, Saturday 13th July (not a Friday!) Until quite recently, it has been wet and windy and one could not be blamed for anticipating a repeat of last year's deluge. But all was well - almost too well, with soaring temperatures! The exhibitors arrived promptly at the Village Hall bearing their offerings and it was not long before all was in place and ready for the Judges. There were some noticeable shortages in one or two categories but considering the unusual recent weather, this was no surprise. Exhibitors commented that many plants had bloomed early, whilst others simply lost interest; but despite this and thanks to all the effort put in, we had another fine Flower Show to be proud of. There was much to be seen and admired; flowers in abundance, vegetables,

mouth watering culinary items and of course handicrafts. The Braishfield School was again well represented with many entries, the Flower Arrangers put on their spectacular show as always; their entries, which increase each year, are really one of the highlights of the Show. The Tea Room was as popular as ever thanks to the ladies in the kitchen and of course those who produced a rapidly vanishing variety of cakes.

Outside, the stalls of plants, produce, books and the United Reform Church bric-a-brac stall were placed on the car park, adjacent to the Hall; not forgetting, of course, the raffle table, which proved to be very popular. And, last but by no means least we had "The Bums" on stage with their own brand of entertainment! Their music has become very popular and they have been in demand at a number of venues since coming together last year. Our thanks to them for keeping our feet tapping whilst negotiating our way around the hall.

Due to the blistering heat outside, the prize giving ceremony was conducted in the Village Hall, the presentation of awards being carried out by The Reverend Canon Steve Pittis. Ron and Sylvia Watts were once more among the winners with Ron taking home The Watkins Cup, The Attlee Cup and The King Cup and Sylvia winning the Presidents Challenge Salver. Sheila Still took the Bacon Cup, followed by Dorothy Ross who won the Bartlam

Cup. The Braishfield Horticultural Society Ladies Rose Cup was awarded to Alyson Morris. The Braishfield Horticultural Society Cup was won by Hazel Prince, who also won the Cottle Trophy.

The Braishfield Flower Arrangement Rose Bowl, for best entry by a novice, was taken by Jo Nutbeam. Eileen Norman won the Vine Cup, followed by Penny Kington who not only won the Hebblethwaite Cup, but also a Certificate for highest points in the Handicraft Section. The Certificate for the Men's Special in Culinary, a Treacle Tart with Lattice, went to Graham Bennett. Susan Buxton won the Girlie Old Cup and also gained the Certificate for best entry in the Culinary Section;

Alan Lord and Helen North were second and third respectively in the Girlie Old Competition. Completing the list of adult winners, the Simone Trophy, a new award raised in memory of the late Simone Hughes, was presented to Denise Bright. Denise also won the Dawkins Cup and the Braishfield Parish Council Cup.

And the children: The Chairman's Prize was awarded to Kavita Ragu: the Braishfield Womens Institute Cup was shared by Lily Haycock and Hannah Young and the Hobcraft Cup was shared by Megan Holdaway and Annabel Uren. Finally, The Vine Trophy was shared between Verity Kington and Maisy Sykes. Congratulations, not only to our winners, but also to everyone who

took part - without you there would be no show. On behalf of the Horticultural Society Committee, it is time to offer a big thank you to all who helped with setting up and packing up, to all who ran the stalls and not forgetting all who came along to support on the day.



*Denise Bright*

Between 10th & 13th October 2013, the Hillier Garden Autumn Festival will be held by our near neighbour, the Sir Harold Hillier Garden which includes an Open Garden Show. All are welcome to visit and if, among our members, there is anyone who may like to take part as an exhibitor, I have copies of their schedule and entry forms available. Details will be on show at our next Meeting in September.

And now a timely reminder of our return to routine. On Tuesday 10th September, Sandy Worth will be our Speaker, who will talk about Garden Ponds in Garden Design. Make a note in your diary. There may be a change to our October Meeting, but all will be revealed in good time.

I leave you now in the good hands of our weather men; keep your fingers crossed!

Bob Thomson  
BHS Secretary & Scribe.

***2 of a set of 10 Flower Show tea room tablecloths are missing following last Saturday's event. Does anyone know where they are?***

## Braishfield Football Club Pavilion

After a long and complicated voyage, the Football Pavilion has now officially opened and is functioning. In fact our long time resident and football Master, Lawrie McMenemy, opened the pavilion not just once, but twice! Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July saw a small



*Lawrie and some of the teams*

unofficial opening involving those most closely involved in this success; sponsors, donators, builders, architects, the committee, team managers, councillors and volunteers.

Then, on Sunday, the official opening took place, attended by many villagers and an 'army' of football teams! After the Chairman's introduction, Laurie McMenemy spoke of his interest, involvement and delight in the whole project and emphasised the vital importance of grass-root nurturing of young talent in all sports. The pavilion, now open, was put to immediate use with a match between Braishfield and Whitenap, followed by a demonstration match by Braishfield Bees and then a Veterans match.

Our thanks go to many for this happy and successful conclusion, and in particular to Sharon Fielding for her tireless, dedicated and determined effort to see it through!

## Armed Forces Day

On the morning of Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June, in recognition of Armed Forces Day, two Union Jacks were hoisted at the flagpoles by the Village Hall, and subsequently lowered on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> evening. Additionally, on the Saturday evening, several villagers attended an excellent charity concert given by the Band, Pipes and Drums of the Brigade of Gurkhas in the grounds of Island House, Greatbridge.

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## Riding the Iron Horse - Burmese Style

We decided to take the train from Yangon to Bagan, one of the richest archaeological sites in Asia with some 800 temples, believing a train journey to be a better way of experiencing the countryside and avoiding dubious domestic flights, crowded buses and bad roads.

Entering the train from the hot platform our first class compartment is icily cool, has clean sheets and an en suite wash basin and toilet. Better still, we have the four berths to ourselves. Hopefully the first class waiter service will be good.

We leave the impressive Burmese style station on time and at a slow pace. As we pass through the suburbs, we glimpse the magnificent

Schwedagon Pagoda, which we visited the day before, dominating the brilliant blue skyline, the main bell-shaped stupa covered with tonnes of gold plate and topped with thousands of precious jewels winking in the afternoon sun. This the most holy of Buddhist places in Myanmar.

Once clear of the city, the pace quickens - a bit. The carriage begins to sway from side to side. People are walking along the track dressed in their traditional longyi, faces often covered in varied patterns of a light cream, thanaka, made from a tree bark to protect them from the sun. Children are waving, dogs are running. Soon we are passing small

villages of palm-thatched huts built on stilts. There are many more small gold and white pagodas and monks in maroon robes. We see people going about their daily life. We pass stations left from the time of British rule with unpronounceable names and semaphore-like signals. Each level crossing has a host of cycles, scooters and pickup trucks waiting.

The train now takes on a life of its own. It isn't just rocking 'n' rolling, it is hissing, jumping and tilting all over the place - so hang on and enjoy the view! Things get worse as the vibrations of the train cause the air conditioning unit to begin to slide from the wall and finally stop working. The

compartment warms up

so we open the windows There is now quite a pleasant breeze and we can see much better- more stilted villages, people working in the fields, more children waving. The air is full of smells of smoke and cooking. We are entranced by the beautiful green rice fields, bullock carts moving slowly in them. We will not actually see any mechanised farm equipment on the entire journey. Now we are passing many primitive brickfields with people making bricks by hand, bricks drying in the sun and brick kilns heated from piles of rice husks. Meanwhile the water pipe from the roof tank to our washroom fractures. Tony turns plumber and disconnects it



*Poverty*

to stop the shower of water from the ceiling. Then we realise there will be no waiter service as there is no communicating door to the rest of the train - Duh! Luckily we have a stash of food, water, some beer and a bottle of Ricard, so we will not starve or die of thirst, but it is difficult to pour liquid into the cups.

Each train stop has masses of people selling all types of produce, drinks and craftwork. Women carrying baskets of fruit and hot snacks on their heads appear at the carriage windows and children climb up to sell bottled water. Some stations have full scale colourful and noisy markets each side of the track. We refrain from buying even though everything looks wholesome. This is not the place to get sick.

This is a military regime but there are only a few soldiers visible. We notice small gun emplacements in some stations. But why are they pointing at the train? Are we a threat?

We pass through a region where dissident tribes people have been forcibly resettled by the government from their fruitful orchards and farms in the hills. With no housing or jobs provided, they are forbidden, on pain of death, to return home without permission. There are signs of extreme poverty everywhere. How do they still manage to smile and wave?

Outside is a beautiful sunset over surrounding farmland. The palm trees become black silhouettes in the moonlight. Villagers are preparing their evening meals. Inside the



*Affluence*

carriage all lights except the emergency light fail. Tony is stymied. Rummaging in the electrical cupboard does not work. At the next major station we attract a guard to help. He stares with apparent concern, says

“Lightee fusee!” and jumps back on to the platform. The train continues on its way.

We rock to sleep and wake early. Outside, villagers are washing at communal standpipes and beginning the day’s work in the fields or walking to school. If they are lucky they are doubled, tripled or quadrupled up on scooters to go about their business,

sometimes with chickens or a pig added as well.

I think I have now become used to the train - or maybe the tracks are better. I now know to avoid standing too near the window when it is bucking wildly as I don’t want to become part of the countryside. Tony advises me not to look down when we are crossing trestle bridges or particularly sandy areas, when the foundations and the sleepers move.

Passing through another extremely poor area, we find passengers throwing sweets, money and even plastic bottles for recycling to the children on the side of the tracks. We join in.

We arrive at Bagan’s pagoda style station much later than scheduled, shaken but not deterred because this adventure has given us a greater insight into the real Burma.

Jean Lowe

# Braishfield Primary School

**B**raishfield Primary School was inspected by Ofsted on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of June and is delighted to have been judged a Good school, with the inspection report commenting that 'Pupils' good progress across the school reflects the good quality of teaching. 'Relationships between teachers and pupils are especially good; together with teachers' high expectations about pupils' behaviour, the harmonious relationships make an important contribution to successful learning.'

The inspector commented on the positive impact of a supportive school community and how important this was in enhancing the experiences available to our pupils. All who contribute to this community should be delighted with the very positive report, which can be viewed in full on the school's website.

The lovely weather meant that Sports Day on Friday June 28<sup>th</sup> was well supported, and the pupils were extremely proud to be representing their newly formed School Houses, named after the farms in Braishfield - Pucknall, Fairbourne, Hawkes and Farley.

The Summer Fayre on Saturday June 29<sup>th</sup>, organised by the brilliant Braishfield School Association, was a super day out for all of the family, bringing the community together for an afternoon of entertainment and enjoyment.

Small businesses set up stalls, the pupils performed dances and summer refreshments, including barbecue fare

and cream teas, were very popular. Thank you to all who supported this event in making it a key fund-raiser for the school.

The Year 6 pupils received their SAT results on the week beginning July 8<sup>th</sup>, and all were deservedly thrilled with their achievements - a real testament to their hard work throughout their time at Braishfield.

We will be looking for a number of Community Governors for the Governing Body of the school in the Autumn term, as the term of office for some of our members is complete. This is a key role in the school which is richly rewarding and has a real impact on the strategic progress of the school.

If anyone is interested in finding out more about becoming a school governor, they should contact the school on 01794 368359 to make an appointment to see me or the current Chair of Governors.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Braishfield Primary School community for making me feel so welcome and supported during my first two terms, and look forward to strengthening the partnership between us as the next academic year progresses.

Frances Hardy  
Headteacher

GARRETT

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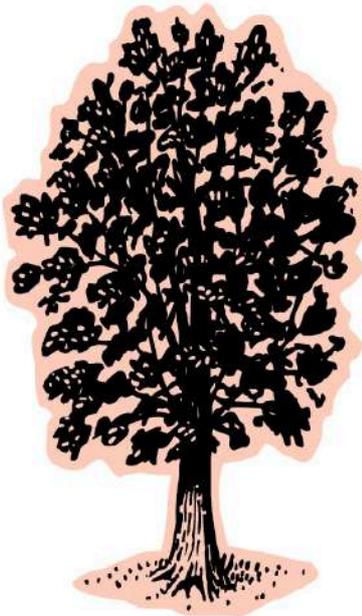
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### **Rubbish News**

Recyclable materials in cardboard boxes left beside the brown bin on recycling weeks will be collected throughout the year.

Recycle weeks beginning: 12<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> August, 9<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> September

Household waste weeks beginning: 5<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> September

Garden waste green bags are collected the same week as household waste, every other Friday morning.

For Bank Holiday week at end of August, collection will be a day later than normal

# Braishfield Village Diary

## August

14th	Wednesday	1.15-1.45	Mobile Library in Village Hall Car Park
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## September

3rd	Tuesday	7.00	Braishfield Parish Council
9th	Monday	12.00	Village Lunch in Church Room – All welcome
10th	Tuesday	7.30	Braishfield Horticultural Society Sandy Worth – Ponds for your garden
11th	Wednesday	1.15	Mobile Library in Village Hall Car Park
26th	Thursday	7.30	Braishfield Flower Arrangement Society Allison Finch - "Well Read"
28th	Saturday	2 - 4.30	Michaelmas Fair in the Church Room/Car Park
30 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	7.00	United Reformed Church Harvest Supper

## October

1st	Tuesday	7.00	Braishfield Parish Council
5th	Saturday	7.00	All Saints' Harvest Supper
7th	Monday	7.30	Five Alive Fellowship – Church Room
8th	Tuesday	7.30	Braishfield Horticultural Society - details to be announced
14th	Monday	12.00	Village Lunch in Church Room – All welcome
16th	Wednesday	1.15	Mobile Library in Village Hall Car Park
19th	Saturday	7.30	Celan Quartet Concert in the Church Room
24th	Thursday	7.30	Braishfield Flower Arrangement Society Ann Marie Dicker – "It's a Gift"

## Weekly

Tuesday	9.00 – 11.00	Coffee and Cake in Village Hall
Wednesday	10.00 – 12.00	Braishfield Toddler Group, Tel. 367710
Thursday	10.00 – 12.00	Braishfield Art Group

All functions take place in the Village Hall unless otherwise stated  
 Please refer to Braishfield.org or your Residents Guide for contact telephone numbers  
 Details to the BVA News Editor or Web Editor if you would like dates of forthcoming events  
 to be published