

Anyone wishing to submit articles for the January newsletter, please could you email me or post through my door by the 12 December due to the Christmas break. Many thanks. Sarah Moore

## **PARISH COUNCIL**

### **We would like to wish residents a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year**

The Parish Council are sorry to announce that Janet Rose and Steve Hay have resigned from the Parish Council. We would like to thank both Janet and Steve for all their hard work and we will be sorry to see you both go. As mentioned in last month's newsletter Barbara Brooks has been elected as Chairman and Paul Spearpoint has been elected as Vice-Chairman. We wish you both every success.

#### *Bus Service*

It was around this time last year that many of you signed a petition in support of our bus service. Once again, our bus service is under threat due to Government and County cutbacks. Our bus service is essential for the village in order to sustain a rural community and Service 81 is a popular well used service between South Petherton and Yeovil. Please look out for this petition around the village which is being made available for you to sign.

If you are popping into town why not leave the car at home and use the bus. South West Coaches who run Service 81 are currently promoting their Smart Card. Similar to the Oyster Card in London, you put money on the card and then use it to pay the driver (at a discounted rate) these can be used for either single or return journeys. There are a variety of options if you wish to pay in advance of travel and take advantage of discounts to normal fares and up until Christmas South West Coaches are waiving the application fee. For more information go to their website [www.southwestcoaches.co.uk/smart-card-season-tickets](http://www.southwestcoaches.co.uk/smart-card-season-tickets) or telephone 01935 475872.

#### *Mobile Library Service*

Somerset County Council are carrying out a consultation on a series of proposals for 2015/16 to change the way the library service will operate and they are looking to make savings of almost £500,000. These proposals mean that our mobile library service will possibly be withdrawn from August 2015. The reason for its withdrawal is that there is a library building within 3 miles of the current mobile library stop. If these proposals come to fruition they may have a profound effect on many residents some of whom have mobility difficulties, are elderly or do not have the means to travel to a library 3 miles away so please could you take the time to answer the questionnaire on Somerset County Council's website and help to save our mobile library service. We are classed as a rural community and those in need of such services should not feel cut off! Details of these proposals and the potential impact on current stops are available at [www.somerset.gov.uk/libraryconsultation](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraryconsultation).

## **P.C.S.O. REPORT**

We have two new PCSOs – Ian Ross and Ceara Stuart and a new Beat Manager – PC Mark Bonici.

For any advice and further/up-to-date information on incidents please go to the website: [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk). If you are a witness to or the victim of a crime then it is imperative that you report it to the police immediately whether it is during the day or at night. When reporting an incident please telephone either 101 for non-emergencies or 999 for emergencies only.

## **REMEMBRANCE WEEKEND**

What an amazing weekend!

Throughout the 8 and 9 November many of you joined us in remembering the men of Stoke sub Hamdon who gave their lives for this country. The weekend started off in the Working Men's Club with a journey of discovery on how the First World War affected Stoke sub Hamdon and its families with a commemorative exhibition by Stoke History Group. The exhibition not only covered those who lost their lives but all the men who returned, the battles in which they fought, and the aftercare and support they received and background information on the families. The children of Castle School wrote special poems about individuals on the war memorial which brought many a tear to our eyes.

In the evening a fundraising event was held in aid of the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal with musical entertainment from Stoke Band and two fantastic young local singers. A free buffet was provided which was kindly funded by the Parish Council.

What a beautiful morning on the Sunday, with clear skies and fantastic views as we remembered the servicemen and women who have given their lives for our country and for today's servicemen and women who are currently in action and stationed around the world. Thank you to all who came to the service around the Monument which was again attended by a fantastic gathering of all ages. Many thanks to Anthony Russell for leading the service in such a quiet and sincere way, to Andy Diplock for playing the Last Post and the Reveille which echoed over the hills to where others stood, to everyone who laid wreaths and crosses from Ken Ashford, the Parish Council, Stanchester Academy and Peter Bullock's family. Also, thank you to Castle Primary School and Stanchester Academy for involving our children.

After the service everyone was invited back to the Working Men's Club for refreshments and entertainment; the raffle was drawn and there was a final chance to have a look around the exhibition. Also, the Workings Men's Club commissioned a hamstone commemorative seat to be placed in front of the Club which was blessed by Mr Russell.

On behalf of myself and the History Group we would like to thank the Working Men's Club staff and committee for letting us hold this special event for the residents of the village, the Parish Council who under their delegated powers were allowed to fund the food as they did for the Jubilee, the Art Group for the loan of the easels, to everyone who provided the advertising and publicity and those who provided the musical entertainment. Thank you to everyone who loaned family heirlooms for the exhibition, donated raffle prizes and help with the food. Thank you to Harvey's Quarry and Peter Hayman (Memorial Mason) for the commemorative seat and; the businesses who very kindly gave space in their premises for the poppy boxes and to the ever willing collectors who give their precious time each year, a special thank you. Last but not least, thank you to everyone who attended the event over the weekend making it a very successful commemoration.

Finally, the money raised for the Royal British Legion from the raffle and poppy collection has not yet been finalised so we will let you know in next month's newsletter.

Jon Moore, Poppy Appeal Organiser

### **LOTO CLUB**

The Loto Club (for widows and widowers) continue to meet in The Lighthouse on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month from 10am. Newcomers welcome. For more information please call Dru on 01935 822703.

### **STOKE BAND CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

The Christmas concert is on Saturday 13 December in the Memorial Hall. Doors open at 7.00pm and the concert will start at 7.30pm with the Training Section. Christmas pudding and mince pies will then be served. The main band concert will start at about 8.15pm with a short break at about 9pm. As usual there will be a licensed bar and refreshments. Tickets

will cost the same as last year, £6 per person, and are available from Jane & Ralph Herbert on 822402. Weather permitting the band will be carolling in Stoke on Christmas Eve.

Jane Herbert

### **STOKE ACTIVE WALKERS**

*Tuesday, 2 December*

Our final walk for 2014 will take us along the bottom of Bowey to Norton Path then down over Jack O'Beard to Broadmead Lane, across the field to Little Norton, past Little Norton Mill and follow the lane past Tinkers Bubble to the bottom of Witcombe,. We will then go up over Witcombe to Batemoor Barn and then follow the footpath out through Double Ditch, across the bottom of Ham Hill to The Fleur de Lis for a pre-Christmas lunch.

We meet at 10.30am at Sea Wall, about 50 yards on the Montacute side of Bonnies Lane. Please wear suitable boots or shoes and clothing according to the weather. All our walks are free and we welcome new walkers to our friendly group. Well behaved dogs are also welcome. ALL WALKS ARE UNDERTAKEN AT THE WALKERS OWN RISK. For more information please contact Norman on 01935 822792.

### **ACORN POP-IN PROGRAMME**

- |          |    |   |
|----------|----|---|
| December | 4  | 12.15 Xmas Lunch at Fleur De Lis                                    |
|          | 11 | Hinton St George Choir with Amanda                                  |
|          | 18 | Xmas Chat - Lucky Dip 50p. Mince Pies and Sausage Rolls by Jennifer |
|          | 25 | Happy Christmas to you all  |
| January  | 1  | Holiday   |
|          | 8  | Quiz  |
|          | 15 | AGM & Trade Table   |
|          | 22 | Helen - Music   |
|          | 29 | Boccia Session /Trade Table   |

### **CHRISTMAS WREATH WORKSHOP**

Jo Parker Flowers-Christmas Wreath Workshop will be held on Tuesday, 16 December between 10.30am - 12.30pm in Norton sub Hamdon Village Hall. The cost will be £25 which includes all materials and refreshments. Please join Jo Parker, and learn how to make a beautiful Christmas door wreath or table decoration. Get in the festive spirit with coffee and mince pies. Booking is essential, so please call Jo Parker on 01935 881276 or 07544307035

### **ST MARGARET'S HOSPICE**

*SANTA IS COMING TO SHOP IN STOKE SUB HAMDON*

You will find him in his Grotto on late night shopping nights: 9 and 23 December from 6.30pm to 7.30 pm. Each child visiting Santa will receive a gift (suggested minimum donation of £1.50 please). Please book a time-slot for your child to avoid disappointment (he's a very busy man!) Just pop into St Margaret's shop or call on: 01935 825785.

### **CHRISTMAS PRIZE BINGO**

Stoke Working Men's Club Christmas Prize Bingo will be held on Monday, 15 December. This will be a 15 house bingo with lots of good seasonal prizes. Eyes down at 7.45pm and books will be on sale from 7pm. Non-members welcome.

### **CASTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### Diary of events for December

Thursday 4	FOCS Bingo
Wednesday 8	Fleet Air Arm Trip –KS2
Wednesday 10	Key Stage 1 Christmas Production 2pm
Thursday 11	Key Stage 1 Christmas Production 2pm
Thursday 11	Christmas Karaoke – in the hall (time to be confirmed)
Friday 12	Christmas Table
Monday 15	Carol Service at the URC 2pm – all welcome
Tuesday 16	Key Stage 2 Production
Wednesday 17	Christmas Lunch
Wednesday 17	Key Stage 2 Production
Thursday 18	FOCS Disco

### **LIGHTHOUSE COFFEE SHOP**

The Lighthouse will be closed over Christmas from the 18 December and will reopen on the 5 January 2015. Happy Christmas to all customers old and new and a great big thank you to all my fantastic volunteers without who the coffee shop would not keep going.

Also, it will be our 5th anniversary in February – well done to everyone. Thank you.

### **THE STOKE CHARITY SHOP**

The year is drawing to a close and we would like to thank the people of our village for their continued generosity and loyal support which has resulted in another successful year in our very own village charity shop. As you know ALL our profits stay within the village and we are delighted that with your help, we have been able to support our local groups by way of financial grants again during this year. It is an exciting time and the elves are still beavering away so during the weeks leading up to Christmas there will be lots of festive items and last minute bargains on sale in the shop - so call in, we would love to see you AND you never know what you may find! We will be closing for our Christmas break on Saturday, 20 December and reopening on Monday, 5 January. If we don't see you in the shop in the next few weeks we would like to wish everyone a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year. See you in 2015!

The Stoke Charity Shop Volunteers

### **MOBILE LIBRARY**

The van will visit the Memorial Hall Car Park every four weeks on a Thursday from 11.25am to 11.45am and will be in the car park on 4 December. If you haven't used the mobile library before, do give it a try!

### **CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2014**

Your Local Churches would love to welcome all of you to celebrate the birth of Jesus with us at these services.

Sunday 14	Christingle Service – St Mary's, Stoke at 4.30 Particularly appropriate all children and families
Monday 15	Castle School Carol Service – URC, Stoke at 2.00
Sunday 21	Carol Service – URC, Stoke at 9.30
Sunday 21	Family Service – Methodist, Stoke at 3.30
Sunday 21	Carol Service – St Mary's, Stoke at 6.30
Christmas Eve	Crib Service–St Mary's, Stoke at 3.00 Particularly appropriate for all children and families 'Midnight Communion' – St Mary's, Stoke at 11.30

Christmas Day                   ‘Christmas Communion’ – URC, Stoke at 11.30  
Family Communion– St Mary’s, Stoke at 9.30  
All very welcome to celebrate the birth of Jesus

**DIARY OF EVENTS:**

**December**

2<sup>nd</sup>                   Stoke Active Walkers  
4<sup>th</sup>                   Mobile Library  
13<sup>th</sup>                 Stoke Band Christmas Concert  
15<sup>th</sup>                 Christmas Prize Bingo  
16<sup>th</sup>                 Christmas Wreath Workshop