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December 2015

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Editor's Comment



IT's hard to believe another year is coming to an end.

By the time you read this another Victorian Day will have been and gone and we will be counting down the days to Christmas and New Year.

If weather forecasts and national newspaper reports are anything to go by we could be facing a cold winter and even the prospect of a white Christmas - if we do get any snow we would love to see your local snow scene photos.

Don't forget to share them on our facebook page or to send them in for us to publish online.

In fact if you have any interesting stories and pictures we are always on the look out for them with news online now almost 24/7 365 days of the year!

As always this Christmas period is important for a lot of local business so whenever possible shop local and support your local community.

Finally we would like to wish

all our readers and advertisers a happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.



Christmas tree festival

The 10th annual Christmas Tree and Crib Festival will be held at Newchurch Parish Church, Culcheth, on December 11, 12 and 13.

On Friday, December 11 the festival will be running from 10am to 4pm, on Saturday December 12 it will be open from 10am to 5pm, with children's activities between 2pm and 4pm and on the Sunday, the festival will be open from 12 noon to 5pm.

Refreshments will be available.

On the Saturday at 7.30pm there will be a concert by the Ellenbrook and Boothstown Brass Band.

There will be a closing "Tree Service" with favourite carols on the Sunday at 6.30pm.

Proceeds are in aid of The Children's Society Warrington Project and church funds.



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Hula hooping world record bid

A STUDENT from Culcheth will attempt to break a hula hooping world record in Peru.

Rhona Mackay, 21, will join a team of 17 Peruvian and international charity workers in an attempt to climb to more than 6,000m and break the world record for hula hooping at high altitude on December 7.

The team of charity workers and volunteers – representing nine nationalities – is using the ambitious challenge to raise funds and awareness for their organisation Helping Overcome Obstacles Peru (HOOP). HOOP is a small organisation working in the city of Arequipa in the south of Peru, with the vision of breaking the cycle of poverty through education, health and social programs.

Its main activities centre around a free after-school program, which teaches English, art, sports, homework help, science and other activities for 100 children and their families. The charity operates with the help of 20 volunteers from Peru and all over the world.

The team has set an ambitious fundraising goal of \$10,000 and thanks to a very successful start to the campaign, is already more than two thirds towards this target.

You can support the fundraising campaign at www.hoopperu.org/hulahoop. All funds will go directly into HOOP's project in Arequipa.

The world record team has been doing weekly training and fitness sessions to prepare for the challenge. Everything from

hula-hoop techniques to avoiding altitude sickness are being worked on to give the team the best chance of success when they climb the 6,057m peak near Arequipa called Chachani. With high wind speeds at the summit, and oxygen levels at 50 per cent compared to sea level, the team will face significant challenges in the record attempt. The current record was set in 2010 at an altitude of 5,895m on Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

Rhona, who is doing an internship with HOOP as their school co-ordinator, said: "The challenge will be difficult but it's really captured the imagination of the public and we have already received a lot of support and good wishes from friends and family back home."

"As well as becoming world record holders, we have an ambitious fundraising goal – with all the money raised going straight back into supporting the project in Flora Tristán. The team has been working really hard – I think we have a good chance of success!"

The money raised will be spent on school rental, schoolbooks and supplies, teacher training, a new maths programme and a new social work program.

More information and regular updates on the world record attempt are available at www.hoopperu.org/hulahoop.



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Councillor welcomes Policing commitment to neighbourhood

A NEW police post has been set up in Culcheth, following talks between Cheshire Police and the 3rd Warrington East (1st Culcheth) Scout Group.

An office has been made available for police use at the scout centre on Jackson Avenue.

The agreement has been welcomed by Culcheth and Glazebury parish councillor Paul Campbell.

He said: "This is great news for the area and shows continued commitment by Cheshire Constabulary to its Neighbourhood Policing Plan."

"Local officers tell me that this will increase the time they will be able to spend in the area and make it easier for residents to contact them."

Cllr Campbell has also welcomed

the news that improvements are being made by the police in transporting beat officers to their area of patrol when they attend briefings in Warrington.

Cllr Campbell said: "Any delay which causes officers to spend less time on their patch is not acceptable and I am glad to see that any such

delays are being addressed.

"At the last Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council meeting our police representative informed us that transport to the area has been greatly improved and is now less of an issue."

"I welcome this news but like other councillors I will be monitoring the situation to ensure there is no detrimental effect on the quality of policing in this area."



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Accountants appoint new partner

PRACTICE manager Alicia Flint has been made a partner at Culcheth-based accountancy firm Hunter Healey.

Alicia joined the firm in 2010 as practice manager and has significantly contributed towards the growth of the firm over the last five years, during which time it has tripled in size while retaining its client focus and the professional, approachable atmosphere they pride themselves in.

Alicia has a wealth of experience in the owner managed business sector having spent 18 years in various roles within accountancy practice.

She qualified as a Certified Chartered accountant in 2003 gaining first time passes, before going on to become a member of the ICAEW.

Senior partner Nigel Healey said: "Alicia's promotion represents exciting times for the firm. We welcome her to the board and look forward to her future contributions towards the company's continued success."

"As a partner, we are certain that Alicia will continue to provide the outstanding service that our clients have all come to expect."



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Gyms to be upgraded at cost of £1 million

THE gymnasium at Culcheth Community Campus is to be upgraded with state-of-the-art equipment as part of a £1 programme initiated by leisure and lifestyle group LiveWire.

Similar improvements will be carried out at Birchwood Tennis and Leisure Complex, Woolston Neighbourhood Hub

and Broomfields Leisure Centre at Stockton Heath.

A new layout and design at the four fitness suites will mean there is

more space for functional training, a type of exercise which involves training the body for activities performed in everyday life.

The functional training zone will also support a new timetable of short 15 minute workouts on the

gym floor, led by one of LiveWire's Health and Wellbeing team.

New internet enabled cardio equipment will be fitted with the innovative digital platform, mywellness cloud so customers can use fitness apps like Strava and MapMyFitness to track their progress or check in on social media during their workout.

The mywellness cloud system will give members the real advantage of being able to access their gym programme through a website when they're at home so they are able to keep tabs on their fitness.

Top-of-the-range spin bikes and the latest free weights will also be part of the investment, with the brand new equipment being provided by Technogym, the company who were responsible for kitting out the training centres during the London 2012 Olympic Games.

The work is due to be completed before the New Year but will require each centre to be closed for a short time.

Apprentice finalist Neil Clough steals the show

LOCAL accountancy practice Styles and Co Chartered Accountants hosted their final seminar of the year to what was a sell-out audience at Flexible Meetings in Birchwood.

On the bill for the afternoon was local celebrity Neil Clough (pictured with the Styles & Co team), best known for his appearance on

the BBC hit TV series

'The Apprentice' who took to the stage to share his inspirational story of overcoming adversity to achieve success for himself and his family, providing a stimulating Sales and Motivation talk in the process.

In the words of Styles and Co Partner, Graeme Hindley "Neil really is an inspiration to us all, the

way he overcame tragic personal loss, using it as the motivation for success is incredible and something we can all learn from."

"It's great to see so many members of the local business community turning out to make this such a memorable event and I'm looking forward to future events in the New Year."



Picture by Andrew Collier Photography



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Villagers brave Victorian



IT was a case of on with the show at the annual Culcheth Victorian Day as villagers braved the wind and the rain to start the countdown to Christmas.

Shopkeepers dressed in Dickensian costumes at the event, organised by Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council and Birchwood Lions, with support from local community groups, as Fairground music and rides entertained visitors.

Father Christmas gives a present to Olivia Cooper aged 9 at Culcheth Methodist Church.



Newchurch Parish Church held a Christmas Fair in the Church Hall. From left on the Tombola Stall, Jean Wright, Irene Bromolow, Freda Wilcock, Sophie De Jong and Ann Atkinson.

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the elements at an Day



Staff at the CPS Shopping Centre dressed in Victorian Dress. From left, Paul Callaghan, Elishia Nunn, Fiona Whelan and Jens Krause.



Left, Enid Banner and Delia Caswell at the Glazebury Methodist Church Christmas Stall.



Gathered around the Bric a Brac stall in their Victorian Dress at Culcheth Methodist Church from left, Graham Borg, Glenys Borg, Daphne Eastburn, Rob Wilson and Jane Wilson.



Staff at McDee's Cafe served Hot Pot and Red Gabbage. From left, Justyna Rutowska, Duncan McVey, Angela Williams, Helen McVey, Rachel Hilton and Debbie Williams.

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Croft Parish Council News

Your Parish Councillors



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Traffic Management Plan

Traffic and Transport were the main issues that Croft residents voiced when Professor Steven Broomhead, Chief Executive of Warrington Borough Council attended a recent Croft Parish Council meeting.

Residents pointed out that there is an increasing volume of commuter traffic passing along the narrow and twisting country lanes. All recognised that the commuters were using routes through the Parish as part of a 'rat run' to reach destinations in Birchwood and the Wigan MBC area, but residents were worried that the volume and speed of the vehicles will result in a serious accident.

The well attended meeting was very constructive and Professor Broomhead proposed that to identify and address the problems that are occurring throughout the Parish, a Transport Management Plan should be devised and presented to the borough council. This plan will be developed by residents, the borough council and Croft Parish Council working in collaboration. It will entail traffic surveys and look at measures that may at least calm vehicular speed. It was appreciated that the work involved in gathering the data would be time consuming and would involve consultation with residents. To keep the impetus, Professor Broomhead agreed to attend a future public meeting where the results and proposals can be discussed.

Professor Broomhead was sympathetic to Croft's plight regarding the low level of public transport operating through the village in the evenings. He will ask Warrington Borough Transport to look at modifying an existing route so as to incorporate Croft.

On behalf of everyone, Councillor Cummerson thanked Professor Broomhead for attending the meeting and hearing for himself the concerns of residents.

The Parish Council would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Residents may contact Mike Pope, Croft Parish Council's Clerk on 01925 733766 or
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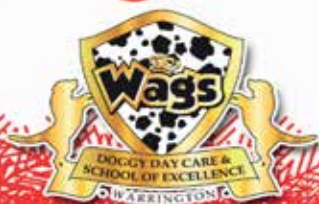
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Man jailed 27 years for murder of wife

A CULCHETH man was jailed for at least 27 years for the murder of his wife and an offence of causing grievous bodily harm with intent.

Andrew Munro aged 51, was sentenced at Preston Crown Court.

The offence of grievous bodily harm involved another individual who cannot be named for legal reasons.

Munro initially pleaded guilty to the offence on what would have been the second day of the trial but decided to change his plea to not guilty before the case went any further.

After a hearing on October 30, the judge ordered that his original pleas had to stand.

The court heard Munro attacked his 47-year-old wife on Sunday November 2 last year, stabbing her numerous times at the family home in Culcheth.

Emergency services were alerted when they received a call from inside the house where screaming could be heard along with the calm voice of Munro in the background.

When police officers arrived at the property they found Munro behind a summerhouse in the garden where he was arrested before being taken into custody.

His wife Clare was found in the kitchen with serious injuries and was declared dead at the scene by paramedics.

Detective Inspector Steve Jones of Cheshire Police's Major Investigation Team (MIT) said: "This was a vicious and sustained attack on a defenceless woman, who tried

despite her injuries to calm her husband down and stop any further attacks."

Munro was described as an extremely controlling man who used his expert knowledge of IT systems to keep tabs on his wife, employing various sophisticated pieces of equipment and software to follow her movements and monitor her phone and computer.

DI Jones added: "As well as the loss of Clare, her family have been made to wait for justice through Munro's continued manipulative and Controlling behaviour and attempts to avoid justice."

"Our thoughts are with the family who have been incredibly brave through this distressing time and I can only hope that the sentence today will bring them some sense that justice has been done for her."

Munro will not be considered for release for a minimum of 27 years.

After the hearing, the family issued the following statement: "Clare was quite simply a magical person. She was a pillar of her community in which she was hugely respected and admired. Nobody had a bad word to say about her. She was an outstanding Mum to her three beautiful and brave children and a loving daughter, sister and aunt. She is sorely missed by everyone she knew, and has a left an irreparable hole in many people's lives."

"It is hard enough to deal with the death of a loved one through sickness, accident or old age, but Clare's untimely death was premeditated by a cruel and evil monster, whom until this day has tried to control not only Clare throughout her life but events surrounding and leading up to the trial. He feels no remorse or regret."

"His selfishness and indifference is no more than contempt for the life he has cruelly snubbed out, and for the family that he has destroyed."

"Once the true gravity was realised of what had happened last November, seeking justice for Clare has been the only option for her family. We would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank the police and the Crown Prosecution Service, who have worked tirelessly to solve and secure a conviction for this hideous crime. Their support and commitment has been second to none."

"We would also like to thank the close knit community of Culcheth for their unwavering support over an incredibly difficult time and also our wonderful family and friends for their overwhelming support and understanding during the last eleven months. It has been greatly appreciated and we would not have survived this ordeal without them."

"We also ask that people should remember Clare for the generous, loving, beautiful person she was and for the love that she had for her children. That love remains with them and makes them what they are today and it shall continue to inspire them for the rest of their lives."

"Lastly, the family now ask that our privacy is respected and that we are allowed to grieve in peace while we try and rebuild our lives."



Callum on course for golf success

A YOUNG golfer from Culcheth will represent the North West in one of the largest annual sporting events in England.

Callum Blinkhorn, aged 16, has qualified for the AoC National Championships in April and will compete against other college students from around the country.

The Priestley College student, who plays off zero, shot a round of 70 at the Reddish Vale Golf Club – seven ahead of his nearest rival.

"It was windy, which suits me because I often have to play in the wind on my local course and my shots stay low," said Callum.

The college sport National Championships is one of the largest annual sporting events in England, involving more than 1,800 college students and 200 staff.

Students qualify through regional tournaments that take place in the

autumn term.

As well as competing in their chosen sport, students compete for points for their region and the area that accumulates the most points wins the prestigious Wilkinson Sword trophy.

For Callum, who started playing at Leigh Golf Club, it will be a great challenge as he aims to become a professional.

The former Culcheth High School pupil said: "I hit my first golf shot when I was nine after my dad and my brother got me into it."

"It can be a frustrating game, but hitting a good round more than makes up for that."

Callum, whose favourite golfer is Tiger Woods, has represented the county and earlier this year finished 11th in a national under 18s competition.

He studies AS-Levels in

Geography, Business, History and PE at Priestley College and is hoping to secure a scholarship in America when he turns 18.

Nigel Howells, head of sport at Priestley College, said: "We're very

proud of Callum's successes so far and we always try and support all activities here at Sport Priestley."

"There's no doubt that with his dedication he will go on to greater achievements in the future."



Croft Christmas tree and lights

The ceremony to light up Croft's Christmas Tree will take place on Tuesday 1st December. As is the tradition choirs from the two local schools, Croft Primary and St. Lewis' will sing carols as the community celebrates the start of the Christmas season. Councillor Merrill Cummerson, Chair of Croft Parish Council together with the Croft Carnival Queen will lead the ceremony which everyone is welcome to attend.

The ceremony starts at 6pm in the Playing Field car park on Smithy Lane.

The Parish Council is extremely grateful to David J Platt Landscapes Limited for donating the beautiful tree and to everyone who helps makes this family event so enjoyable.

CULCHETH & GLAZEbury PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Your Parish Councillors

NEWCHURCH WARD



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Keith Bland
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Helena Campbell
01925 766658



Paul Campbell
01925 766658

Another successful Victorian Day for the village!

The Parish Council would like to thank all those people who came along and helped to make 2015's Victorian Day another success. The event – organised by the Parish Council in association with Birchwood Lions – is always a popular date on the village calendar and gives us the opportunity to work with businesses and local groups to launch the festive season. The lights around the village green are funded by the Parish Council and we hope you will agree that they really help to set the tone for the Christmas period. We look forward to working with local people on next year's event.

New knee rails for the village green

The Parish Council has committed £1,700 funding towards new "knee rails" around the Village Green. These small knee-high barriers give us an extra layer of protection to ensure that the Green does not suffer from incursions from members of the travelling community, as was the case last year. We are pleased to have been able to finance this valuable asset and hope that the extra security will ensure that our Green remains available for the benefit of the local community.

Speed activated signs

Undoubtedly one of the biggest concerns in our Parish is that of speeding traffic. The Borough Council have acknowledged that the problem is widespread, and your locally elected representatives have set about to find solutions to the problem. The Parish Council has ring-fenced the money needed to purchase a speed activated sign. The sign will be the moveable type, allowing us to relocate it to different areas of the Parish where the problems of speeding are most acute. We are delighted that the money is now available and we are shortly making purchase of the sign. The Parish Council also applied to the Police and Crime Commissioner for match funding, and were dismayed that our application was rejected on the grounds that the Commissioner did not deem the issue to be a significant local priority. The Parish Council has, to that end, opted to fund a second speed activated sign (to allow for greater coverage) from next year's budget.

Next year's Community Day

It doesn't seem five minutes since the last Community Day but, when the New Year begins, Parish Councillors will be setting to work planning the 2016 event. As always, we welcome input and suggestions from any local residents. If you have an idea that you want to put forward about the kind of thing that you'd like to see at next year's Community Day, please don't hesitate to get in touch with any member of the Parish Council, who will ensure your remarks are fed into the working group.

Recycling initiative

The Parish Council has a keen commitment to recycling and investing in our local environment. Currently, the Community Maintenance Officer (who is employed by the Parish Council to carry out additional litter collections in the Parish) is currently recycling 75% of the litter that the Parish Council collects.

And finally... Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

As this is our last report to residents before the seasonal break, the Parish Council would like to use this opportunity to wish all of our residents in Culcheth and Glazebury a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Green Belt workshop gets the go-ahead

PLANNING chiefs at Warrington have given the go-ahead for a workshop and car port to be built on Green Belt land at Croft – after a careful look at the site.

Members of the borough council's development management committee also approved a retrospective application for the site to be changed from open land to a domestic garden.

Earlier in the year they had refused permission for the development but now they have decided it will not have any significant impact on the Green Belt.

The committee was told the applicant, John Hawthorne, had bought the site from a developer when an estate of 26 houses was being built on an adjacent site.

He had converted it to a garden and now sought permission for the car port and workshop to store a caravan and van.

Officers recommended the scheme again be refused – although they admitted the proposal was modest when compared to the adjoin development of 26 houses. But they believed it was inappropriate development in the Green Belt and encroach on adjacent woodland.

Councillors decided however that with appropriate conditions the scheme would be acceptable.

WI members taken on an "underground journey"

SPEAKER at the monthly meeting of Newchurch WI was Graham Stirrup, who took members on an underground journey with his subject, "Women in the Mines".

He had spent his career in the coal industry and explained the dangers of early mining from the "bell pits" where women worked the windlasses to the deeper diggings common by 1800. It was difficult to rescue anyone after a rockfall.

The Davy safety lamp cut the explosion risk but the job of moving coal to the surface was left to women for many years. They were laden with up to two hundredweight as they crouched and used a short stick as balance. They worked at least 12 hours a day, often as part of a family group.

Coal railways also used women as draught animals, even when pregnant. At long last an Act in 1842 kept women and young children above ground. But the "pit-brow lasses" of Wigan and the North-West were still paid less than men and the work was still filthy and dangerous, but they were amazingly cheerful in the early photos.

Graham knew some of the last "lasses" in the 1960s and they were still very cheerful!

Phyllis Longson thanked Graham and he judged the "Toasting Fork" competition, choosing Marjorie Pugh as winner with Lesley Lloyd and Jean Riley as second and third.

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October 2015 – Mr & Mrs Woods

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June 2015 – Ms R.

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Courtyard appreciates all your fantastic comments and would like to thank you for your continued support.

Merry Christmas and all the best for 2016. From all the Courtyard team



Courtyard

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