

Frodsham Life

Issue No. 129
December 2015

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published monthly by
Orbit News Ltd.

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Printed by TwentyFourSeven

Editor's Comment



COLLECTIVELY, and perhaps paradoxically, even more so individually, we at Frodsham Life have been attending council meetings for more years than we care to remember. City councils, borough councils, unitary councils, county councils, town councils and parish councils, we have covered them all.

At certain times and in certain places, they have all had one thing in common - an inability to conduct their business in what most regard as a reasonable time. Such a problem currently besets Frodsham Town Council and they have come up with a unique, in our experience at any rate, solution. They are to hold full council meetings twice monthly, at least for a trial period.

We believe they are mistaken. It is one thing to adjourn a meeting because it is dragging on too long and reconvene on another occasion to finish the business, but entirely another to plan for two meetings every month come what may. Parkinson's Law - the notion that work expands to fill the time available - will come into play.

It would be easy to ascribe the current difficulties to inexperience for it should be remembered the council lost half its members,

including some of the most experienced, at the time of the last election. But in fact the most sensible contribution to the debate on the issue came from one of the new members, Cllr Mallie Poulson, who pointed out that if committees were allowed to do their job properly, full council meetings would be shorter.

He was dead right - although inexplicably, he later joined the majority in voting for the twice monthly trial, which will start in January.

Those councillors who had any doubts appeared to be concerned about costs - and rightly so. More meetings will mean increased

costs - not least the increased cost of having webcasts of meetings. Ironically, the meeting when the decision was taken was not recorded because the cameras broke down, which just about puts their value in perspective. We doubt, anyway, whether twice monthly webcasts will increase the tiny minority of people who watch them.

Frodsham has suffered lengthy council meetings before. The former Mayor, Brian Lloyd, in his last term in office, announced from the outset that he would tackle the problem and succeeded in cutting the length of meetings by almost half, without any noticeable change, for better or worse, in the way the council functioned.

Perhaps the present council should ask him how he did it.

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Tough 'Mudders' raise over £600 for charity



A team from Frodsham based plumbing, heating and electrical company Woodhouse Ltd. raised over £630 for the Alzheimers Society by taking part in a "Tough Mudder" event at the Cholmondeley estate.

MD Rory Woodhouse and members of his team are pictured before and after the event.



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Where you can spend your Town Council gift voucher

MORE than 30 shops, organisations and other outlets in Frodsham will be taking part in the Town Council's annual gift voucher scheme for the Over 70s this year.

Residents of Frodsham who will be 70 or older on January 31 and who have successfully applied for the £10 gift voucher will be able to use them to obtain goods or services from the participating organisations up until January 31.

Taking part in the scheme are: @ The Barbers, Collinson Court; Alan Pickup Butchers, Church Street; Booze Zone, Ashton Drive; Bulls

Head, Bellemonte Road; Castle Park Catering, Castle Park; Celebrations, Church Street; Cowards, Main Street; D R B Jewellers, Church St; Devonshire Bakery, High St; Elliotts Newsagents; Frodsham and District Stroke Club; Frodsham Brewery, Lady Heyes; Frodsham Coffee Shop, Main Street; Frodsham Community Association; Frodsham Flowers, Main St; Frodsham Post Office, Main

St; Hales Fruits, Church Street; Halton Haven Shop, Main St; Les Harris Jewellers, Main St; Little India, Main Street; Mayland Art, Church Street; Merricks Hair Studio, Main Street; Overton Village Stores, Hillside Road; Paws and Claws, Station House; Ring

O Bells, Bellemonte Road; Robert Gleave and Sons Ltd, Mill Lane; St Laurence Church; Texaco Garage, Bridge Lane; Top Marks, Langdale Way; Top Shop, Langdale Way; Whitmore and White, Main Street; Will to Work.

Pupils raised £712 for aid agency

PUPILS of St Luke's RC Primary School, Frodsham raised £712.49 for CAFOD, the Catholic aid agency.

A cheque was presented to CAFOD representative Toni Woodhead at a ceremony at the school.

Pupils raised the money in a variety of ways including a non-uniform day, a family fast day and collecting 20p pieces in Smartie tubes.

After the cheque presentation, pupils learned about the work carried out by CAFOD to combat poverty and injustice across the world.



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Weaver Vale is a 'good' school – Ofsted

EDUCATION watchdog Ofsted have given an overwhelmingly positive report on Frodsham Weaver Vale Primary School – giving it an overall rating of "good".

Inspectors visited the school in late September to carry out the inspection – grading it good for effectiveness of leadership and management, quality of teaching, learning and assessment, personal development, behaviour and welfare, outcomes for pupils and early years provision.

The report describes a wealth of strengths and most notably states: "This is a rapidly improving school. Together with a very efficient and active governing body, senior leaders have ensured that both the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have greatly improved since the previous inspection."

Head teacher Peter Van Geffen has welcomed the report which he believes is a real testament to the hard work and dedication of pupils, parents, governors and the whole school staff.

He said: "We feel that the report portrays an accurate picture of our strengths; we are an all-inclusive school that prides itself on knowing each and every one of our pupils, this empowers us to plan bespoke,

engaging lessons, which brings to life each child's learning."

The lead inspector reported:

*Teachers are very effective in engaging pupils so that they make rapid progress.

*Children learn in stimulating and well-organised indoor and outdoor learning areas.

*Pupils take pride in their school and their work.

The school is also commended on how well it spends its sports funding. This is judged to make an outstanding contribution to pupils' participation in competitive sports and the investment has led to the school having a range of success in local partnership sporting competitions.

Chairman of governors Carol Sutton said: "We are all proud of this achievement and the excellent report which reflects the amazing progress that children are making at the school. We have all been on a challenging journey of improvement which, now secured, means we are the school of choice for many parents."

Visit www.weavervale.cheshire.sch.uk to view the full report.



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Snow White goes way out West!

FRODSHAM Panto Group's annual extravaganza next month places the traditional story of Snow White in an unusual setting – the Wild West.

"Snow White and the Magnificent Seven Dwarfs" will be staged at Frodsham Community Centre from January 10-16.

The story starts with Snow White's birthday party and a wicked Widow who consults her Indian Medicine Man only to discover she is no longer the fairest in the West.

As a result she enlists a bounty

hunter, One-Eyed Slim, to dispose of Snow White. But he can't bring himself to kill Snow White who escapes and, aided by seven miners flees from One-Eyed Slim, and the Widow concocts a poisonous toffee apple.

The plot thickens thereafter and the best way to find out the ending is to go the show!



'Cross dressing' at recorded music group!

PRESENTER at the monthly meeting of Frodsham Recorded Music Society was Peter Hodgson, a founding member of the group, whose theme was "Cross Dressing."

This he defined as the transcription of music from its intended original instrument to others, losing as little of its original musical value as possible while adding something of its own.

Examples included the music of Beethoven, "helped" by Felix Weingartner, and also Liszt, Schubert plus Liszt, Handel (a DIY example), Verdi plus Liszt, and, extensively, Mussorgski, ("Pictures at an Exhibition") originally on piano, plus Ravel with very full orchestra.

Members opinions were canvassed as to the success of these ventures and these were definite, but taken together, inconclusive!

Thanks were expressed by Michael Jackson, well-endorsed by the group members.

New members or visitors are welcome on the first Tuesday of each month. Details 01928 731359.

'Joy to the World'

FRODSHAM and District Choral Society's Christmas concert, "Joy to the World" will take place on Saturday, December 19 at 7.30pm at St Laurence's Church, Frodsham.

Conducted by Howard Kane, and accompanied by Robert Wood, the choir will celebrate Christmas with the singing of carols from the Home Nations, Croatia, Poland, Puerto Rico and China.

In addition there will be the Christmas Choruses from Messiah, contemporary pieces by Eric Whitacre and Ola Gjeilo and of course audience carols.

The society will also be accompanied by solo violinist, Daniel Axworthy. Tickets are £8 for adults and £5 for children from June Ross (01928 890736) and Morag Bragger (07845 730061).



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School 'sleep over' raised £2,300

THE annual "whole school sleepover" at Frodsham Manor House Primary School saw 1430 children aged 4-11 opting to sleep in the school overnight – and raising a fantastic £2,300 for school funds in the process.

A long queue of families with airbeds, pyjamas and teddies marked the start of the event.

The youngsters stayed in school from 7pm until 8am and were kept

busy with traditional party games, disco dancing and then watching a good film with hot chocolate and toast.

It was then time to brush their

teeth, put on their pyjamas and snuggle down in their sleeping bags for the night.

Deputy head teacher Sally Bedford said: "In the morning, the children returned home rather weary-eyed with some even having football matches to attend that

morning.

"But a great night was had by all."

The money raised will go towards additional curriculum resources, including improved reading spaces.



Pupils donate to Food Bank

PUPILS of Frodsham CE Primary School presented generous donations of food at the school's Harvest Festival service – to be given to the Frodsham Foodbank.

A representative of the food bank, Lilian Harrison, joined the children, parents and staff for the occasion.

Mrs Harrison said: "We are all

volunteers in the Foodbank, and a volunteer 'helps other people' and the children have all been amazing foodbank volunteers today!"

Headteacher Mrs Kirby said: "We are always happy to support our local foodbank here in Frodsham. At our Harvest Service we remember just how lucky we are to have so much."



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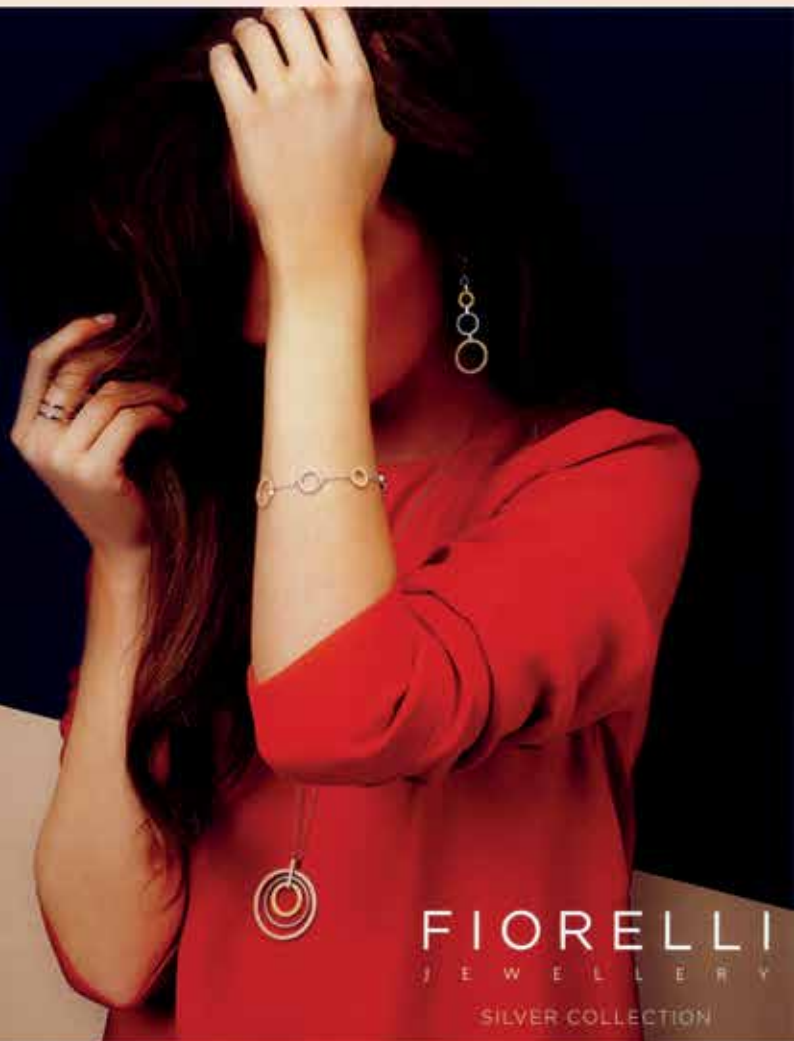
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'Frack Free' group gathers momentum

THE Frack Free Frodsham and Helsby community action group claims to be gathering momentum as more and more local residents become involved in their campaign.

Their first awareness meeting at Helsby drew an audience of about 140 and the following week a similar meeting at Frodsham drew an attendance of more than 160, including three members of

Frodsham Town Council.

Weaver Vale MP Graham Evans was represented at both meetings.

The groups first organising meeting at Helsby was attended by nearly 540 people.



'Remembering the young men of Frodsham who gave their all'

MEMBERS of Frodsham Town Council's Word War One Commemoration Working Group attended the Remembrance Day services at St Laurence Church and

at Overton Hill War Memorial.

Both services were led by Father Michael Mills and both were extremely well attended, with members of the Royal British Legion

among those present.

Working group member Pammi Taylor said: "These are poignant occasions and remembering those who gave their all by reading their names is very touching."

"More people attended the two services than ever before. This is

very satisfying and I feel our group has reason to believe that our work has raised awareness of the sacrifices made by the young men of Frodsham, not only during the Great War but also in the wars that have followed since."



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£1,000 donation in memory of Grandad

A CHEQUE for £1,000 was presented to the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MND) following the successful ploughing match at Warburton's Hatley Farm, Frodsham.

More than 4,000 people attended the event in September and, as a result the Cheshire Ploughing and Hedgecutting Society presented the Warburton family with £1,000 for them to donate to the charity of their choice.

The family decided to donate the money to the MND in memory of "Grandad" Lionel Warburton and the presentation was made by "Granny" Jean Warburton to Joel Millett and other members of the association's Cheshire committee.



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Sutton Weaver Bridge restoration work highly commended

THE restoration work on the Sutton Weaver Swing Bridge near Frodsham received a "Highly commended" at the 2015 Living Waterways Awards, held in London.

Launched by the Canal & River Trust in January, and sponsored by Keir, CPC Civils, Fountains and Hyder Consulting, the Living Waterways Awards seek to recognise the most inspiring and exciting waterway-based improvement projects across the UK.

The winners were selected from dozens of entries by an independent panel of experts, led by Christopher Rodrigues CBE.

The Leeds & Liverpool Canal Society's 'Kennet Project' fought off stiff competition to win the 'Education & Learning' award.

The new Postle's Bridge at Pontcysyllte Aqueduct was runner-up under the 'Contribution to the Built Environment' category, and Sutton Weaver Swing Bridge near Frodsham was commended under 'Restoration & Historic Environment'.

Christopher Rodrigues, chairman of the Awards Assessment Panel, says: "These important Awards bring well deserved recognition for the amazing work which is taking place across the country to improve the waterways for the benefit of us all. We've seen some truly wonderful projects across all award categories and I thank and congratulate all the finalists."

Richard Parry, chief executive of the Canal & River Trust, adds: "We are thrilled to announce the winners of the 2015 Living Waterways Awards - celebrating and recognising the individuals, communities and organisations that have done the most to make a difference to the nation's rivers, canals, lochs, lakes, reservoirs and docks."

"These really are incredible achievements and by shining a spotlight on what has been delivered to make our historic waterways exciting places to live, learn and spend time, we hope these transformative projects will inspire others to embark on similar schemes across the network."

The winners and runners-up were determined after a series of visits and assessments, which saw the expert judges, drawn from the environmental, engineering, architecture and regeneration sectors, travel from Sandwich to Enniskillen and from Glasgow to Devon.

From outstanding place-making sculptures and popular activity centres to sensitive restorations and powerful environmental initiatives, winners, runners-up and commended projects are recognised under eight award categories.

Further details of the winners, runners-up and commended projects can be found at www.canalrivertrust.org.uk



Flashback to the re-opening of the Sutton Weaver bridge.

Council chairman quits over "systemic culture of bullying."

THE chairman of Frodsham Town Council has resigned from the council alleging a "systemic culture of bullying."

Cllr Mark Warren's resignation – the details of which he says are private and personal – comes after four and-a-half years on the council – for most of which he has been chairman.

It follows the resignation, two months ago, of former clerk John Wild – believed to be for similar reasons.

He said: "I am looking forward to being able to spend more time with my family. But I would like to apologise to the people of Lakes Ward who elected me thinking I would be serving a full term in

office. I feel I have let them down."

Overall, Cllr Warren said he had found being a councillor an exhilarating experience. He had great admiration and respect for individual councillors and the staff who carried out a great deal of useful work.

"I am just sorry I have not been able to protect the staff and councillors from bullying, which has come from both inside and outside the council."

"I have seen members of staff go home in tears."

Cllr Warren said he had found it particularly frustrating that the council had few, if any, powers to take sanctions against councillors who breached the council's code

of conduct.

The last six months had been particularly stressful and the post of chairman had become almost a full-time job. He compared much of his work during that time with "pig wrestling."

He added: "I wish the council well. I want it to succeed. But I don't think the people of Frodsham will look back on the council and feel it has left any particular legacy."

Cllr Warren was the first chairman of the council. Prior to his election, meetings were chaired by the Mayor. But it was decided to split the roles to give more opportunity for the Mayor to represent the council at ceremonial occasions.





Crowds flock to Frodsham Festival

DESPITE wind and rain crowds flocked to Frodsham for the annual Christmas Festival.

The event included festive markets, fairground rides, Santa's Grotto and much more.

Musical entertainment was provided by local schools Kingsley CP School, Helsby High School, Manor House CP School, St Luke's

Catholic Primary School, Weaver Vale Primary School, Aston Primary School and Frodsham Sings.

There was also an impressive fireworks display and Santa and his reindeer were present when the lights were officially switched on.



On the bus for Festival Parade from left, Mayor of Frodsham Cllr Fran Sutton, Junior Mayors Josh Chow and Lily Brook and Frodsham Town Crier David Mitchell.



Daisy Proe aged 6 and Alfie Newman aged 5 meet Father Christmas and Elf at the Frodsham Roundtable Grotto.



Father Christmas in Frodsham Christmas Festival Parade.



Manor House CP School Choir entertain.

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