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Issue 131 February 2012 FREE

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Spotty wedding!

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Opinion

THE Purple Flag is an award, usually only made to cities and towns, in recognition of good management of their night time economies.

To put it more bluntly, it is an award to places which attract large numbers of young revellers of an evening without the noise, hooliganism and vandalism which, unfortunately, so often seems to be an inevitable by-product of such enterprise. So it is not just unusual, but unique to see the Purple Flag flying in a village.

Stockton Heath is the first village in the UK to win the flag, awarded by the Association of Town Centre Managers.

Why did the village apply for the award? Well, although a traditional village, it has changed dramatically in recent years and now has around 35 food and drink venues in an area no larger than 0.55 km, attracting 1,800 visitors on a busy night. A few years ago it suffered from an ill-deserved reputation for being a trouble-spot and for many had become a place to avoid. Villagers were not having that!

They got together with the council, the police, fire service, the local Pub Watch scheme, etc to form the Stockton Heath Early Evening Economy Working Group. The result has been a transformation – and the Purple Flag.

The assessors rightly praised the initiative for the strength of resident support, the working relationship between the various organisations and the efforts of councillors and police.

Members of the working group are the first to admit that Purple Flag status is only the first step and that close management of evening activities must continue. But we would like to add our congratulations to all of those involved.

ALL the world's a stage according to William Shakespeare. But we wonder if he might have had a different view had he been writing in Cheshire today.

Stages are increasingly hard to come by, it seems!

In Warrington, the town's premier amateur theatre group, the Centenary Theatre Company, travel to Runcorn to present their shows because there is no suitable venue in their home town.

Similarly, the Frodsham-based Zodiac Amateur Operatic Society also go to Runcorn for their main annual production.

In Knutsford, the long established Knutsford Musical Theatre Company, travel to Hartford to perform larger shows because of a lack of adequate facilities in their own town.

Even Knutsford Scouts have to travel to Mobberley to stage the annual Gang Show!

It was not always thus, of course. Warrington had a superb theatre, built through the generosity of a local manufacturer. Knutsford would probably never had an operatic society had there not been a local cinema they could hire once a year, capable of accommodating ambitious productions of Broadway hits, orchestra and all.

These buildings are long gone, victims of changing times, but the talented people who once played in them still exist and for them, the show must go on – even if it means travelling, or scaling down their ambitions to suit some tiny village hall.

We can only wonder why, when schools these days share so many of their facilities with local communities, they cannot also make available the excellent theatres that many of them have.

Teddy Bears are back!



THE ever-popular Chicago Teddy Bears jazz band play a charity concert at Grappenhall Community Centre on Friday, February 10.

In aid of the Lymm and Thelwall branch of Contact the Elderly, the concert will feature a wide range of jazz, taking in New Orleans, Dixieland and Mainstream.

The line-up is usually Ken Doran, trumpet, Frank Slater, trombone, John Hallam, reeds, Neville Goodwin, piano, Tony Ormesher, guitar and banjo, Ray Owens, bass and Brian Singleton, drums.

Formed in the early 1970s, the band's line-up has remained unchanged for some years.

Their annual concert in aid of Contact the Elderly has become something of a tradition at Grappenhall – with the band admitting to be rather elderly themselves!

The evening includes a two course supper. Further details from Colin Melrose on 01925 756742.

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Wedding knocked spots off all others!

WHEN a Stockton Heath couple decided to get married they could not bear to think about their loving Dalmatian Hector missing out.

So they brought his style to the ceremony - by covering the wedding vehicles in big black spots in his honour.

Crowds gathered at St Wilfrid's Church, Grappenhall, to watch the wedding and passers-by thought a local celebrity was getting married, when they saw the vehicles.

Lorraine Sinclair-Lawrence and Paul Lawrence enjoyed the ceremony. And when they returned home they gave Hector a special treat and took him for an extra long walk.

Lorraine, 32, a marketing manager, said: "We have had Hector for about

19 months. He is still very energetic so we thought he might jump up and spoil my dress if he was at the wedding."

She and Paul, 30, a human factors consultant, decided on the tribute - and all vehicles were covered with big, black, stick on spots. Rev Margaret Jones agreed it was a great tribute.

The bride arrived in a white camper van, followed by her bridesmaids - Laura Jones, Claire Robinson, Jade Lawrence-Howard and Paige Lawrence Howard - in a decorated white Audi.

The groom, and his best men Tim Sanders and Ollie Clarke, had already stunned the crowds when they arrived on a huge Boom trike.

Lorraine said: "We certainly had a great day and enjoyed having Hector there in spirit!"



Picture courtesy www.robfinneyphotography.co.uk



Picture: John King

From catwalk to businesswoman

FORMER Miss Cheshire Holly Ikin has retired from the cat walk to launch her own boutique business.

During her days as Miss Cheshire and as a Miss England finalist Holly soon spotted a gap in the market after the many hours she spent searching for the perfect outfit.

Now The Dress Studio at Culcheth has opened its doors and customers have been amazed by their collections, which include more than 600 incredible dresses - making it the largest selection of party and prom dresses in the northwest!

The Dress Studio offers a warm and friendly welcome, as well as a jaw-dropping collection of dresses! The boutique has dresses for all occasions - proms, parties, birthdays, engagements, pageants, weddings, cruises, races, nights out and more. The Dress Studio team also keep note of any special events or proms that the outfits are for, to help avoid any fashion faux pas!

Holly launched the boutique on Glaziers Lane, conveniently located next to Partridge Lakes Fishery - so, dads/husbands/boyfriends can enjoy a cup of tea in tranquil surroundings, while the girls are left to do what they do best! Holly has opened the store after struggling to find outfits that tick all of the boxes.

Holly explained: "When I competed in Miss England, I had a nightmare trying to find the perfect dress. Last year, I went to Aintree Races and had the same problem..."

"I could never find what I wanted. And as all women know, if I found anything from a high-street store, it

was practically guaranteed there would be quite a few of us in matching outfits!"

"I decided to open The Dress Studio to solve this problem. Instead of traipsing from store-to-store, I have created a one-stop-shop for all women."

With prom only a few months away, The Dress Studio has hundreds of

dresses perfect for the big event. They are prom specialists and have every style of prom dress that a girl could wish for. For groups of 5 or more, The Dress Studio also hosts 'Prom Parties!' With music, canapés, drinks and of course, trying on the dresses of your choice. The Prom Party is a fun and special way to select your perfect gown.

The boutique also has a very convenient 'Saturday Night Range,' an ideal solution for any outfit dilemmas!

Prices start at £25, meaning you don't have to break the bank for a last-minute fashion fix!

The Dress Studio is open 10am-7pm on Thursdays and 10am-5pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Private appointments are available on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Please feel free to contact Holly at The Dress Studio on 01925 766258 with any enquiries that you may have. Holly will be happy to help!



Wildlife charity celebrates its half century

A SERIES of high profile events, involving celebrity naturalists will take place this year to mark the 50th anniversary of the Cheshire Wildlife Trust.

Chris Packham (pictured inset) and Simon King, of BBC television's Springwatch programme are among those visiting the county.

The Cheshire Wildlife Trust has 44 nature reserves across Cheshire, covering around 500 hectares.

They include Holcroft Moss, Glazebrook, Knutsford Moor, Knutsford Heath, Owley Wood, Weaverham, Swettenham Meadows, Holmes Chapel, Warburton's Wood and Hunter's Wood, near Kingsley and Gowy Meadows, near Chester.

The events mark 50 years since the formation of the Cheshire Conservation Trust, later to become Cheshire Wildlife Trust.

The charity - supported almost entirely by its 12,000 strong membership - now looks after nature reserves from the Wirral to Macclesfield Forest, managing hundreds of hectares of land across the region.

The Trust initially started with just two nature reserves in 1962, and one of its first battles was the challenge to safeguard wildlife and woodlands during the construction of Manchester Airport.

Decades later the Trust successfully secured protection for bats and other wildlife following the installation of the airport's second runway.

Today, the Trust is at the forefront of projects as varied as returning rare dormice to the region, advising on managing rivers for otters and water voles, battling invasive non-native species in wildlife habitats and operating one of the largest grazing herds for conservation in the country.

The charity also maintains more than 200 acres of "wildlife-friendly" farmland where thousands of schoolchildren have been able to experience rural landscapes and wildlife first hand.

Chris Packham will launch the year of celebrations with a talk at Chester on March 29 and Simon King will be in Manchester on September 21.



Beauty in winter

EVEN in winter, Rostherne Mere is a place of great beauty.

At 30m, it is the deepest mere in Cheshire - and also the largest. It rarely freezes and, in hard winters, can support large numbers of wildfowl.

It is a National Nature Reserve and a Site of Special Scientific Interest and has been a centre of freshwater research for more than 70 years.

Around the mere, and also within the nature reserve, there are reedbeds, woodlands and grazing land - and overlooking it is the splendid St Mary's Church, a Grade 1 Listed building.

Its origins are lost in the mists of time. There is no mention of a church in The Domesday Book, but a deed of 1188 talks of a church on the site. A steeple was built in 1533 and the present tower and church was erected between 1742 and 1744.

The reserve, the church and Rostherne village itself, with its attractive thatched cottages, lie in a tranquil oasis less than 0.5km from the M56 and alongside the A557.

Together they make up one of Cheshire's least-known hidden gems.



Rome – Everyone should visit at least once

Rome. There is no place on earth quite like it. It's like travelling back in time marvelling at the breath-taking architecture, monuments, churches and ruins.

There is so much to see and visit. You need time to experience Rome to the full. Must see places include the Colosseum, The Pantheon, Vatican City, Sistine Chapel, the forum and palatine. Allow yourself a full day to visit each of the above and utilise the services of the many guides or audio guides to get the most out of your visits. The Castillo St Angelo, Trevi Fountain and Spanish steps are also well worth a visit but these can all be combined into one full day of sightseeing.

Take a break from sightseeing to relax at one of the many street cafes at the Piazza Navona or Campo dei Fiori. If it's shopping you are looking for head to the famous Via Del Corso, Rome's equivalent to Oxford Street.

Travelling around the city is easy and cheap. Buses run regularly to all the main attractions or for something a bit more romantic, take a horse drawn carriage through the cobbled streets and alleyways. Spend time just walking around the city to appreciate the numerous buildings and cobbled walkways, each with their own Italian charm.

Contrary to popular believe, eating and drinking in Rome is not too expensive and probably less than you would pay in UK. There are literally hundreds of restaurants bars and cafes to choose from catering for all tastes and budgets. When choosing where to stay in Rome, choose a city or

boutique hotel slightly out of the city centre for a quieter night's sleep.

The people of Rome are very friendly and obliging. Watch out however for pick-pockets and check your change whenever you make a purchase. The Italians in Rome are notorious for short changing.

Plan to stay in Rome for a minimum of 4 days. Travelling to Rome is easy, flights daily from Manchester and the flight time is less than 3 hours. Rome is as far South as Barcelona and enjoys a Mediterranean climate. Winter temperatures are ideal for sightseeing. Summers can be very hot and oppressive. The journey from the airport to the city takes about 40

minutes and a taxi will cost about 40 euros each way.

Stockton Heath Travel Centre organises many city breaks to Rome so why not let us organise one for you. Contact us on 01925 269400 for the latest Rome offers and advice on where to stay and help in planning your visit.



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Theatre company return put on hold

KNUTSFORD Musical Theatre Company's bid to return to its roots after a gap of 20 years has been put on hold - because of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

They had booked the Civic Hall for their next production, "Tribute to Sondheim" for the June half-term break.

But when the Government decided there would be an extended weekend, June 2-5, to mark the Jubilee it was realised there could be an impact on ticket sales and also that many members would be on holiday.

So the cabaret-style show was switched to the Grange Theatre at Hartford on May 25-27.

KMTC chairman Lesley Reed said: "We haven't put on a show at the Civic Hall for 20 years because it is not really suitable for a big production. There were difficulties with the lighting, stage and changing rooms.

"But we decided to give it another try because, really, we would like to put our shows on in Knutsford,

"No other suitable date was available at the Civic Hall so we decided to move to Hartford."

The incident highlights the shortage of venues in Knutsford. The Little Theatre, in Queen Street, is suitable for small-scale productions but has seating for audiences of only about 90. An excellent theatre at the High School is unavailable.

"Tribute to Sondheim" features songs from Stephen Sondheim shows such as "West Side Story."

Musical director Alan Dean said: "I love Sondheim's work because his lyrics are always so meaningful. They can be brilliantly witty, disturbingly cynical, deeply moving, whatever the moment's mood requires."

Further details are available from Linda on 01565 873285 or Lesley on 01477 534843 or the company website www.kmtc.org.uk New members are always welcome.

KMTC's youth section is staging "I Have a Dream" at Knutsford Little Theatre on March 24.

The first show ever staged by KMTC - then known as Knutsford Amateur Operatic Society - was at the old Marcliff Cinema, which stood on the site now occupied by the Civic Hall.

Veteran councillor succeeded by son

TIM Stansfield, son of the late Cllr Mike Stansfield (pictured), has succeeded his father as a member of Appleton Parish Council.

Members agreed to co-opt Tim to the council following his father's death.

He will serve until May when parish council elections are due to be held.

Mike Stansfield served as a councillor at Appleton for 32 years until his death in November.

A farmer and yachting enthusiast, he was a long-serving member of Stockton Heath British Legion and local Poppy Appeal organiser. In recent years he had been responsible for a number of local initiatives, including provision of a village sign at Appleton Thorn and street maps in local bus shelters.

At the time of his death the council was preparing to present him with a clock and plaque, recognising his years of service.

His widow, Pat, son Tim and granddaughter Amelia attended a meeting of the council when the chairman, Cllr June Hancock, presented the clock to them.

The council is planning to refurbish Appleton Thorn War Memorial to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and in memory of Mike.



New name wanted for old library

THE Friends of Grappenhall Library - the group of volunteers formed to re-open the old library in Victoria Avenue - have launched a competition to rename the building.

Prize is an iPhone 3GS - and closing date for entries is March 3 and there is no limit on the number of entries.

The new facility will be much more than a library, although it will still have an extensive book collection.

But the building will have a much wider community use, details of which are still being worked out.

Possibilities include Mums and Tots groups, community meetings, pensioners' groups, etc.

Volunteers have redecorated the building and stocked its shelves.

A series of open days have been held to allow local residents to see what has already been achieved inside the building.

"Love Your Library Day" - February 4 - was chosen as the official opening day with a range of special activities.

Entry forms for the competition are available at the library.

Ear care clinic to open

A NEW ear care clinic opens at Knutsford Community Hospital on February 23.

Open from 12.30pm until 3pm on the third Thursday of the month, it will provide a full service for the management and treatment of adult patients with a variety of ear disorders, including wax removal, wax obstructions and ear infections. The clinic will also provide patients with effective and safer ear care to prevent disorders and support patients who have had previous ear surgery.

ENT Nurse Practitioner Kate Heath, who will lead the team, said: "Our aural care clinics have evolved to become a very popular service, with many compliments from patients about how it has vastly improved the quality of their life.

"The new clinic brings the service closer to home for Knutsford people."

Lucky prizewinner



LUCKY winner of the Village Life competition to win £500 worth of treatments at the Sculpt Medi Spa in Stockton Heath was Aimee Claire from Penketh.

Aimee is pictured receiving her prize from therapist Natalie Hopkins. Her prize package includes four non-surgical laser lipo treatments, four power plates sessions and a face peel at the plush new premises on London Road.

Legislation update

2012 PROMISES to be another busy year for employment lawyers, with some major legislation due in April and the start of the introduction of the new Pension rules from October.

The main "highlights" this year are:-

April

- Increase in the qualifying period for unfair dismissal claims to 2 years,
- Increase in parental leave entitlement to 4 months,
- Increase in the rates of Statutory Maternity and Paternity pay
- Increase in Employment Tribunal charges to deter frivolous claims October
- Start of new pension arrangements being brought in for large employers
- Increase in National Minimum Wage rates

If this wasn't enough to have you

reaching for the bottle, there will also be consultation on the introduction of financial penalties on employers who breach employment legislation, and making it easier for employers and employees to reach legally binding agreements without resorting to employment tribunals.

As you can see some of these proposals are intended to reduce the burdens on business, however from what I can tell, the concrete proposals are either cost neutral or will add to your problems. One interesting development is the increase in the qualifying period for someone to make a claim for unfair dismissal to two years. Some of my clients have said that they feel this will help them, however others have said that it will

make no difference as if an employee is not performing, keeping them on for an extra year doesn't help anyone.

Regarding the changes to pension arrangements these will eventually affect all employers in the UK but they are being phased in slowly(ish) and you will only be affected this year if you have more than 50,000 employees.

I will be covering these issues in more detail throughout the year but if you have any queries about them now feel free to give me a call on 07879 551256 or e-mail info@khes.co.uk.



Kieron Hill
Employment Services



Kieron Hill
Tel: 07879 551256
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Bus company joins social networks

BUS company Network Warrington has introduced a Twitter and Facebook feed onto its' website.

David Squire, Managing Director, explained, "The introduction of Twitter and Facebook, gives us the ability to communicate with our customers in an additional way. We see this as being particularly useful when our services are disrupted by bad weather or congestion caused by motorway problems. Following the upgrading of the website and opening of our Travel Centre last year, we are increasing the availability of information through all the different media available to us, in order to make it easier for customers to communicate with us".

To contact Network Warrington via either Facebook or Twitter, visit networkwarrington.co.uk and follow the links on the home page, alternatively, go directly

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Motorists are more prepared - but only just!

MOTORISTS are more prepared to cope with severe weather this winter - but only just.

More than one in three (38 per cent) say they have done nothing to prepare - and if that doesn't seem many it is better than last year when the figure was 42 per cent.

The last two winters came early and were more severe that we have been accustomed to in recent years, which is probably why 39 per cent of drivers expect local authorities to do a better job with road gritting this year.

But according to an AA Populus survey, while individual drivers expect councils to do better, they are less prepared to do much themselves.

Only four per cent have bought

winter tyres - one per cent more than last winter. Seven per cent have bought all season tyres, compared with four per cent last year.

Four per cent have bought snow chains or snow socks and 42 per cent put a shovel, blankets, in the car. Twenty five per cent have purchased sturdy walking boots and 12 per cent have made plans with friends or colleagues in case the weather turns bad suddenly.

But in spite of the chaos of the last two or three years, 38 per cent have done nothing. However, the survey showed that in Scotland and the North East, motorists had done far more to prepare for the worst!

Seven-seat comfort with more fuel economy



AUDI Q7 drivers can now use fuel more sparingly and savour seven-seat comfort more completely in the new Q7 3.0 TDI 204PS S line Plus.

Taking the lower output V6 TDI engine first seen in the A6 on board the Q7 for the first time, and combining its 39mpg capability with an exceptional new specification, the lavishly appointed newcomer is available to order now priced at £49,120 OTR.

At the same time, this punchy but remarkably efficient unit also appears in the most attainable lead-in Q7 model to date - the 3.0 TDI 204PS Standard priced at £39,995 OTR.

To strike its impressive balance between performance and economy the timing of the 3.0-litre engine's camshafts, its turbocharger and its advanced common-rail system (with an injection pressure of 2,000 bar) have been optimized specifically with fuel efficiency in mind. As a result, up to 39.2mpg is possible according to the combined cycle test, equating to CO2 output of 189g/km.

With the help of a super-smooth eight-speed tiptronic transmission, the latest V6 TDI uses its 204PS and its 450Nm torque reserve to power the Q7 to 62mph from rest in 9.1 seconds, and enables it to reach a 127mph top speed where conditions allow.

In common with all Q7 models drive is channelled to all four wheels in a 40 per cent front to 60 per cent rear ratio by the quattro permanent four-wheel-drive system, and both on and off the tarmac the standard five-mode air suspension with its variable ground clearance of between 180mm and 240mm helps to iron out the most imperfect of surfaces.

£6,600 a year to run a car!

IT now costs the average motorist more than £6,600 a year to keep a car on the road, according to the RAC.

Over the past 12 months, the annual cost of owning and running a car has soared by 14 per cent to £6,689. This rise is almost three times the current rate of inflation.

Drivers now have to pay on average £128.64 per week, or 55.74 pence per mile, to own and run their vehicle.

This is £1,556 a year more than it was in 2007, before the financial crisis and subsequent recession.



■ Students who were awarded prizes on the night including those who received awards for endeavour, academic excellence and contribution to College life.

Students celebrate success

ANOTHER year of continued success was celebrated at Priestley College's annual awards ceremony as A-Level pass rates remained above 99% for the seventh successive year.

Former students celebrated both their own success and that of the College at the special event which also was an ideal opportunity for those returning to be reunited with old friends and tutors.

The academic year saw the College's A-Level pass rates remain above 99% for the seventh successive year, whilst 73% of students obtained A*-C grades and there was a 100% pass rate in all BTEC National Diplomas.

Keynote speaker was Martin Bell OBE who spoke about a life time of experiences in the field of Journalism which was an inspiration to many.

A large number of individual prizes were handed out to highlight the broad range of courses on offer at Priestley and throughout the College's nine different curriculum areas.

Musical accompaniment was provided by the College's own Choral Ensemble "Breathe."

College Principal, Mike Southworth, said, "Presentation Evening is always such a special occasion as we unite as a community to celebrate the achievements of all staff and students."

He added: "It was really pleasing that so many people made the extra special effort to attend and I place on record my thanks to everybody who contributed to an excellent evening, especially those local companies who sponsored many of the awards."

School still failing – Ofsted

THE first monitoring inspection carried out by Ofsted at Stockton Heath Primary School since it was placed in special measures for the second time last summer has concluded the school is still making inadequate progress.

Two Ofsted inspectors carried out the inspection over two days in November.

They say although pupils in Key Stage 1 made good overall progress from a lower-than-average starting point, under achievement at Key Stage 2 was still evident.

Their report states: "While some pupils are learning effectively and making up lost ground in response to good teaching, too many are not building well enough on their earlier learning because of weaknesses in teaching remain."

The report notes that headteacher Lynda Carnes is still absent from the school and that Joe Lawless, headteacher from Lymm's Ravenbank Primary School, is acting as head, spending four days a week at the school.

Although he and deputy head Jenny McAleney were working effectively together, improvements in leadership had been slow because two teachers, one a member of the leadership team, had resigned and two other members of the leadership team were absent.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieved well and thoroughly enjoyed the wide range of stimulating learning experiences provided.

The majority of pupils in Key Stage 1 were making appropriate progress.

But the report adds: "Overall, given children's attainment on entry to the school and at the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment by the end of Year 6 are not high enough and pupils are still not achieving as well as they should."

Work has started to make teachers accountable for the progress of pupils in their classes. But while there are some early indications of improvement for some pupils, such as those with special educational needs, there is no notable evidence of the accelerated progress required, particularly for the more-able pupils at Key Stage 2.

The report says quality of teaching remains inconsistent throughout the school, with some outstanding and some inadequate.

There is some good teaching at Key Stage 2, but over half of the teaching observed by inspectors at this stage was inadequate.

Despite the best efforts of the acting head and deputy, improvements had been hindered by the absence of senior leaders and the staff's resistance to taking on responsibilities for leading and managing subjects.

The acting head, deputy and governors recognise the need for the senior leadership team to be restructured and plans are in place and the governing body is committed to the school, keen to see it improve and has set up a specific committee to monitor and evaluate progress.

However, governors have not received the training planned to support them.

Provided by:
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or email:
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Money Column

By Margaret Black

Employer... employees... end of year returns to HMRC

WatkinsonBlack met the 31st January Self Assessment Tax Return deadline for numerous clients - and here we are already facing the next deadline for the PAYE end of year returns.

The good news is that we do have a payroll bureau with widely experienced staff who are dedicated to perform the payroll function. We currently act for 80 employer clients who have people on their payroll!

Over to you now

a) Do you know anyone in business who have employees?

b) Do you know anyone who is about to start up in a business where they will need to employ people?

c) Or do you have employees yourself?

If the answer is yes to any of those questions, why not consider outsourcing your payroll function. Why not use our expertise, we can take the strain away from anyone who requires the services of a payroll department but are not large enough to warrant employing someone inhouse to do it.

Once we have established certain relevant information the payroll service we

provide includes the following:

- we calculate net salary payable to the employee,
- we advise of the tax/national insurance together with due dates of payment to the HMRC on a timely basis. (This is usually monthly)
- we deal with the completion of P45's for starters and leavers,
- we can take away the headache of dealing with other aspects of payroll, i.e statutory maternity and statutory sick pay
- finally we deal with the end of the year paperwork, this includes the preparation and production of P60's and P14's (The P60 is the employee copy) The P14's are the HMRC and DSS copies, and these important documents are accompanied by a summary of the tax and national insurance payable for the tax year known as a P35 these documents all have to be submitted to HMRC by 19th May after the 5th April Tax year. We are registered to submit all relevant returns online which is now a compulsory requirement. If you wish to



David Watkinson and Margaret Black

process your own payroll documents, we can still offer a submission service at a fixed fee which will be advised when appointed

We would like to expand our payroll department and for that we need you, do you need US?

Our other services include:

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- All Aspects of Tax Advice

The Money Column.....is provided by WatkinsonBlack.

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WINE COLUMN

by Ruth Yates from



Spoil your loved one this Valentine

I JUST love Valentine's Day, it's that special day that never goes by without telling that loved one just how much you care. So, go on spoil your loved one this Valentine with a bottle of something fizzy to share.

For Champagne and something really special why not go for the underrated Grande Marque, Sir Winston Churchill, he was so impressed with his first glass of Pol Roger Champagne in 1908 that he remained loyal to the brand for the rest of his life, reputedly consuming a bottle of Pol Roger every day. He was quoted "My tastes are simple; I am easily satisfied with the best!"

Now if you want a Rosé Champagne for the lady you love then why not choose the Laurent Perrier Rosé the gift packaging is perfect and it also has a perfect, knock down price of £36.99. This Rosé is one of the few in Champagne that are made by the maceration of the grapes to gain the colour not by adding red wine, this gives body and character. Then you could go for another of my favourites, which has to be Billecart Salmon, very underrated and not something you can pick up everywhere as a smaller, more boutique Champagne House.

For Non-Vintage Brut, the Laurent Perrier is dry, light and elegant with fine, pale bubbles and the subtle body and bouquet, or go for something a little less well known such as Alain Thienot, a favourite in most top London restaurants and also

Raymond Blanc's Le Manoir. If you want something to go with food then try a Demi-Sec such as the Pol Roger or the Billecart Salmon, fantastic with food.

Still want fizz but not Champagne then why not choose one of the wonderful alternatives around that represent excellent value for money. For me there are two that are truly great value and made in the same way as Champers and that's the Braun Vintage Riesling from Pfalz and the Morton Brut, Mimi or Vintage Blanc de Blanc. Mimi has quite a quirky label and is a steal at only £9.99 and with the Blanc de Blanc Mimi at only £16.99 that's a third of the price of vintage Blanc de Blanc Champagne.

Now, you can tell I'm thinking of myself here and you ladies out there whilst writing this, therefore, I can't forget you guys out there and all those lovely Malt Whisky, Cognac and specialist Rum's, Gin's and Vodka's, so ladies If you are on the hunt for something special for the man in your life then pop in and let us talk you through the range or buy him a tasting ticket to one of our Spirit Tastings.

Happy Valentine

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Panto with a modern twist



A TRADITIONAL pantomime with a modern twist is presented by the Bridgewater Players at Thelwall Parish Hall from February 23-25.

"Aladdin.com" is loosely based on the familiar story - but is littered with computer jokes and the audience is challenged to cheer, jeer and boo every time they hear one.

Evil Cabanazar and his "mini-me" lookalike are after the magic lamp and dupe Aladdin to get it for them. But Aladdin won't give it up without a fight. His eyes are set on the beautiful Princess Jasmine - and definitely not her overweight ugly sister Princess Wontun.

Aladdin is helped in his quest by Wishee Washee and the Widow Twankee, despite the efforts of the palace guards Sweet and Sour.

The show is written and produced by Ian Hornby. Tickets are available from 0845 331 2958 or from Thelwall Post Office.

Council concern over shop plan

MEMBERS of Stockton Heath Parish Council have expressed concern at proposals to convert a house into a shop in the village.

The plan involves changing the use of the ground floor of the house in London Road, Stockton Heath, with an apartment above and a two-storey extension at the rear to create an additional dwelling.

Councillors say the welcome proposals to improve a dilapidated property and fully support the proposed change of the existing house to retail use with an apartment above.

But they question the additional dwelling at the rear which appears to be contrary the policy on managing the housing supply in the borough.

Alf's ashes scattered at beauty spot

THE death has occurred of former chairman of Stockton Heath Parish Council Alf Pester - and his ashes are to be scattered at the local beauty spot he loved and helped care for, Ackers Pit.

Alf was first elected to the council in 1991. A keen gardener and conservationist, he was elected chairman in 1997 and again in 2002.

When he retired in 2005 he was installed as a Freeman of the Parish - an honour which traditionally gave him the right to drive sheep down the main street at Stockton Heath.

The then chairman, Graham Roughsedge, presented him with a framed certificate and also a cuddly toy sheep - "to start his flock!"

After he retired, he continued tending the village's planters and hanging baskets for some time.

Councillors paid tribute to him and gave permission for his ashes to be scattered at the beauty spot.

Job swap at two councils

A COUNCIL clerk and his secretary are swapping jobs.

Peter Briggs, clerk to both Appleton and Stockton Heath parish councils for almost 10 years, is to become deputy clerk.

His secretary, Louise Parker, is to become clerk to both councils.

Peter has attended his final meetings as clerk.

He said: "I have been clerk to both councils for nearly 10 years and have attended about 200 meetings of each council.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my time with both councils."

Louise said: "Peter will be a very hard act to follow - and I know he will be there as deputy to make sure I manage."

In fact, councillors won't notice much difference at their next meeting. Peter will still be clerking because Louise is on holiday!

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What's On in the Villages

February 14
STOCKTON HEATH PARISH COUNCIL
Sandy Lane Centre, Stockton Heath. 7.30pm

February 21
APPLETON PARISH COUNCIL
Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road. 7.30pm

February 16
LIVE AT ST WILFRID'S
Kosmos - Harriet Mackenzie (violin), Meg Hamilton (viola), Shirley Smart (cello) play their own compositions and improvisations inspired by Gypsy, Jewish, Arabic, Tango and Jazz with a contemporary twist.
St Wilfrid's Church, Grappenhall Village, 7.30pm

Every Monday
THE EVERGREENS Senior Citizen's Club
Bellhouse Community Centre, Grappenhall.
Details: 01925 261381

ST MARY MAGDALENE MONDAY CLUB
St Mary Magdalene Church, Appleton 1.30pm

COUNTRY DANCING CLUB
St Thomas' Primary School, Parkgate Road, Stockton Heath.
8-10pm. Details: 01925 262356

BRIDGE CLUB
Grappenhall Village Sports Club
Stockton Lane. 7.30pm. Details 01928 712233

LADIES' FRIENDSHIP CLUB
The Quays Community Centre, Thelwall New Road, Thelwall.
8pm. Details: 01925 264099

Every second Monday
PARK (APPLETON) WI
Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road. 7.30pm

Second and fourth Monday
WARRINGTON ART GROUP
Bellhouse Community Centre, Bellhouse Lane, Grappenhall.
7-9pm.

Every third Monday
NATIONAL VEGETABLE SOCIETY
Cheshire District meeting
Grappenhall Ex-Servicemen's Club, Chester Road, Grappenhall.
8pm. Details: 01925 265773.

Every Tuesday
COFFEE MORNING
St Cross Church, Appleton Thorn. All welcome.
10am-12 noon
PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY
Quays Community Centre,
Thelwall New Road, Thelwall. 7.30pm.
Contact: 01925 757582.

COFFEE MORNING
Appleton Independent Methodist Church
Appleton Parish Hall, 10am-12 noon

Second and Fourth Tuesday of each month
STOCKTON HEATH & DISTRICT LIONS
Ram's Head, Grappenhall.

Every Wednesday
APPLETON HALL BADMINTON CLUB
Starting February at Hall Drive, Appleton. 8-10pm.
Details: 01925 262356

Every first Wednesday
Walton WI
St John's Church Community Hall. 7.30pm

First and third Wednesday each month
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS
Sandy Lane Centre, Stockton Heath.
8pm. Details: 01925 268311

STOCKTON HEATH PROBUS CLUB
Warrington Sports Club, Walton Lea Road,
Higher Walton. Details: 01925 268540

Every third Wednesday
HIGHER WALTON WI, St John's Community Hall,
7.45pm. Details 01925 262001.

Every fourth Wednesday
ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY
Support Group, Brampton Lodge Day Centre,
Bridge Lane, Appleton. 6.30-8.30pm

Every Thursday
THE SILVER QUAYS Senior Citizen's Club
The Quays Community Centre,
Thelwall New Road, Thelwall.
Details: 01925 753474.

Every second Thursday
STRETTON WI
Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road.
2.30pm.

Every third Thursday
NORTH EAST CHESHIRE FLOWER CLUB
Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road. 2pm
Details: 01925 740419

Every Friday
APPLETOTS TODDLER GROUP
Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road.
9.45-11.30am. Details: 01925 268153.

To list your event call **Village Life on**
01925 623632

APPLETON
PARISH
COUNCIL



Community soccer schools kick off again

WARRINGTON Town Football Club's Saturday Soccer Schools are back in action giving local youngsters a chance to get their first taste of football.

The soccer school will look at developing youngsters to play for the club's junior section while also allowing children to have fun and learning about football in a safe environment. Community development officer James Standing will be taking the sessions which start at 9:15am every Saturday. The first session is for children aged 4, 5 and 6 who are all welcome to join in. It will last for an hour with participants being given free tickets to attend Warrington Town's home games.

The second session starts at 10.30am until 11.30am and is aimed at children aged 7 to 12 years old who are not currently with a club. Once again, they will receive free tickets to Warrington Town fixtures while having fun through football.

The cost is just £2 per session and anyone wanting more information should contact the club's community development officer on 07714571425 or e mail james@warringtontownfc.co.uk

The Saturday Morning Soccer School will take place on the club's 3G training pitches and parents are advised to bring plenty of drink for the children and ensure the appropriate clothing is worn. Astro turf boots or trainers should be worn along with shin pads for the older age group.



Be prepared for the Gang Show

THE curtain is set to rise at Mobberley Victory Hall on Monday, February 13 on this year's Knutsford Gang Show.

More than 50 scouts and guides have been rehearsing for six months for the annual show.

The show, produced by Julie Eadie, will run nightly for a week at 7.30pm and there will be a matinee performance on the Saturday, February 18, at 2.30pm.

Tickets are available from tickets@knutsfordgangshow.co.uk or from Hal Whittaker's shop in Princess Street, Knutsford.

Jubilee beacon

THREE parish councils are joining forces to provide a beacon at High Warren, Appleton, to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Appleton, Stockton Heath and Walton parish councils will provide the beacon - one of 2,012 to be lit across the country.

It will be erected on scaffolding to give extra height, burn for about one hour and will be located on land between Appleton Reservoir and Warrington Golf Club.

Appleton, Stockton Heath and Stretton parish councils will join in a jubilee "party" to be held in Walton Gardens and a separate community picnic is planned for the Mill Lane playing field at Stockton Heath.

Weeds thrive in mild weather

A COMBINATION of heavy rain and mild weather has caused problems at Stockton Heath beauty spot Ackers Pit.

Footpaths have become muddy and weeds - which would normally not be growing at this time of the year - are spreading.

Stockton Heath Parish Council is to seek expert advice before deciding on a maintenance programme.

Cllr Graham Roughsedge said the area was looking very attractive - but the weeds and muddy paths were making access difficult.

Meet your MP

David Mowat

David Mowat, MP for Warrington South, holds regular surgeries throughout the constituency. If you would like to arrange an appointment to discuss an issue of concern to you please e-mail him at david.mowat.mp@parliament.uk or telephone **01925 231267**.

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