

Culcheth *Life*

Magazine

ISSUE 229 | SEPTEMBER 2022
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**Birchwood 10k
goes green!**

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Printed by TwentyFourSeven

JUST in case anyone is in any doubt - when it comes to reporting local news we are completely politically independent.

We also make every effort to give politicians a right of reply as we endeavour to provide balanced news reports.

Over the years I have been accused of being a "council mouthpiece," a "Tory sympathiser" and a "Lib Dem supporter." So I must be doing something right!

We work closely with both Charlotte Nichols (Labour) here in the North and Andy Carter (Con) in the South.

We deal with press releases from all political parties and Warrington Borough Council and work closely with parish councils in our local communities.

Our agenda is always to be fair and balanced and as factual as possible when it comes to reporting local issues.

I am totally transparent when it comes to my other roles in the community, either as Trustee of a charity, a director of a board or more recently as Chair of Warrington Healthwatch.

You might wonder why I am saying all this?

Well, my integrity has been called into question a couple of times recently, including an accusation that I write sensationalist stories that are not factually correct – pretty much the biggest insult someone can throw at me.

Unlike some media we are not

into clickbait – but I was trained as a journalist how to write a headline to gain interest.

I was also trained on how to give all sides an equal opportunity to have their say.

After more than four decades as a journalist, I am not going to change the way I write stories – and I'm also not going to tolerate people going on social media making wild accusations about me. I don't have a political agenda.

My only agenda is to try and promote Warrington and the wider community in a positive light and make it a better place for us all to live.

Unfortunately, some of our elected politicians don't always practice what they preach and

as I have previously said, politics appears to be getting more and more toxic – with social media, a necessary evil for most people in public life, only fuelling the fire.

I understand Warrington Borough Council will be promoting a "Debate not hate" campaign in September. This is something I totally agree with and will support.

In the meantime, we will carry on being Warrington's "critical friend" highlighting all the good things that happen, while challenging as and when required.

We are here to represent our readers and local residents to the best of our ability – maybe some elected politicians should take note.



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Pupils walk the extra mile for Foodbank charity

PUPILS at Twiss Green Community Primary School in Culcheth were allowed to come into school in their trainers on the last day of term, in exchange for the donation of their pre-loved school shoes, which they had outgrown.

Warrington Foodbank School Uniform Shop receives many requests from families in need of uniform, and in particular school shoes, which can be an impossible expense for some families.

The generous shoe donations from the children at Twiss Green will help families in need provide a pair of shoes for their children. Many of the shoes donated have already found new owners, and will be greatly appreciated when the new term commences in September.

The school uniform is located in Warrington Golden Square, near

Primark and is offering a warm welcome to all families.

It is open to everyone and not just service users. It is not means tested and people are free to simply donate items or to pick up new items that they may need for the new term.

Manager David McDonald said: "We have an abundant supply of uniforms from most schools across the area. Some items are pre-loved and some are brand new. We look forward to welcoming as many families as possible over the summer months."



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Colette takes the plunge for teenager left disabled after being starved of oxygen at birth

TO mark her 40th birthday year Colette Toynton is taking the plunge with a sponsored skydive to help raise funds for a teenage family friend left disabled after being starved of oxygen at birth.

Aaron aged 18, from Croft, was born full term after a normal healthy pregnancy but suffered lack of oxygen due to clinical negligence at birth and spent the first three days fighting for his life in Neonatal Intensive care.

His parents clung on to each other to find hope and strength whilst they tried to navigate the most unconventional uncertain journey.

After three weeks Aaron was allowed to go home and at 4 months old he was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy with MRI scans confirming irreversible brain damage.

Aaron didn't meet his milestones and although he has developed into a happy, fun-loving sociable boy with the cheekiest sense of humour, a winning smile and a resilience like no other, he has been

severely affected physically.

Throughout his life he has required various pieces of specialist equipment to manage his postural needs. He is unable to sit unaided and is reliant on using a wheelchair.

The biggest challenge for Aaron is to control his dystonia where his tone fluctuates from very high to very floppy.

Aaron's parents sourced an all-terrain buggy so he could access beaches etc and has opened up so many locked doors. This buggy has a custom-made maximising comfort and support but he has now outgrown this. Specialist equipment for disabled people is a niche market and unfortunately, zero's are added onto the prices and parents are often exhausted in caring for their child/young person alongside having to source and fundraise this essential equipment.

Colette, who also lives in Croft said: "All Aaron's parents want is for him to be comfortable, happy and relaxed so he can carry on to enjoy his life, socialise which he certainly does at our local pubs

where he is a part of the community supported by so many lovely and caring people.

"I turned 40 this year and after years of watching 'I'm a celebrity get me out of here' and the trial of jumping from a plane, I forever said to my husband...I'd easy do that! Only turning 40 gave my husband the bright idea to book and pay for a tandem skydive 12,000ft in the air!"

"Working for a Care Provider – Potens, I understand the difficulties many face in having the correct equipment to enhance their everyday lives and the funding involved to provide this.

"So I am braving it, putting my big girl knickers on and taking the dive! By doing so I would love to be able to raise funds for a very special young man...our friend Aaron.

"Any donations are gratefully received, and a track of progress, updates, end results will be shared."

Donations can be made online via www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/colette-toynton



Birchwood Library to relocate to tennis complex as part of refurbishment plan



PLANNING chiefs at Warrington have given the go-ahead for a change-of-use and refurbishment of the Birchwood Leisure and Tennis Complex.

The plans approved by Warrington Borough Council planners will allow for the relocation of Birchwood Library into the complex in Benson Road, Birchwood.

A new studio and updated changing room facilities are included in the proposals and the library will be moved from the

adjacent Birchwood High School.

The school will continue to have shared use of the leisure centre and also use the library which will be in an under-used bar and cafe space.

Heating and hot water repairs will be carried out together with minimal roof repairs and external cladding work.

The proposal is designed to meet a need to improve the existing building and facilities to enable the relocation of the library and increase the use of the building with a studio space.



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£2,000 raised for Library renovation fund

MORE than £2,000 was raised for Culcheth Village Library Renovation Fund by a Fiesta Day at Partridge Lakes, Culcheth.

The event was hosted by Barbara Ikin and her team from Partridge Lakes – and villagers turned up in force to enjoy the day.

The sky was blue, the sun shone and there were plenty of stalls and fun activities for people to enjoy.

Janet Evans, of the Friends of Culcheth Library, said: "It was a huge success and there was an extremely varied range of things to do – the roundabout, karate exhibition, salsa dancing and a food stand to assuage people's hunger were just some of the things."

Keep fit guru Sue Chinn organised a treasure hunt for children.

There was a Culcheth Library stall, staffed by members Friends

of Culcheth Library, which enabled them to share with local people the good news of what will soon be happening when the library renovation is carried out.

Janet added: "Thanks go to everyone who played their part on the day and gave of their time, but special thanks of course go to Barbara Ikin and her team of three extremely competent, pleasant and caring organisers – Daniella, Charlotte and Ellice. We cannot thank them enough for their help and generosity in aid of the library."

A total of £1,800 was raised on the day which when added to the amount made on the library stall brought the total to just over £2,000.



Sue Chinn at the Culcheth Library stall



Janet Evans third from left with Ellice, Charlotte and Daniella



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Celebrating Ukrainian National

UKRAINIAN families with their hosts and local supporters celebrated Ukrainian National Day at Culcheth Sports Club.

The event was organized by the local Ukrainian Family Hub to mark the occasion and there were games, football, a bouncy castle and stalls to entertain the children.

Among those present were Warrington North MP Charlotte Nichols, local PCSO Tom Palfrey and chairman of Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council Neil Johnson, together with other local parish councillors.

Climax of the day came when the crowd of several hundred gathered in the hall for an address by the founder and chairman of the Ukrainian Hub, Kate McCarthy-Booth (translated into Ukrainian), followed by the singing of the Ukrainian national anthem.

This was led by a well-known Ukrainian opera singer, who also entertained the audience with two emotional Ukrainian songs.

Commenting on the event Charlotte Nichols said: "I had an absolutely wonderful afternoon celebrating Ukrainian independence day with host families and Ukrainian guests at The Daten in Culcheth.

"The sun was shining, we had gorgeous food, music and fun for all ages- including a special guest Ukrainian opera singer who sang the national anthem which left no dry eyes in the room!

"It was lovely to catch up with Parish Councillors, and people I met on my recent visit to the Ukrainian Family Hub while enjoying the different activities put on for everyone to enjoy.

"A huge thank you to all the volunteers who made the day so special, and for everything you do to help our new Ukrainian friends settle in our community."



Charlotte Nichols MP
Warrington North

If you live in Warrington North and have an issue you need help with or would like to book a surgery appointment, please get in touch.

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Plan to retain use of land for car storage

PROPOSALS have been put forward to regularise the existing use of land at Croft, as a car storage site.

The land at Manor House, Cross Lane, is a previously used brownfield site and has remained unchanged for decades, according to the applicant.

It is being used for car storage in connection with a business that does not operate from the site. The cars are simply stored on the land for later access.

But the site is surrounded by other businesses uses – including

a golf driving range, which causes light pollution through the use of floodlights until late at night.

It is not accessed from Cross Lane but from Silver Lane.

Manor House is a two-storey house in domestic use – similar to other houses in the area.

The applicant maintains that continued use of the land for storing cars will not have any impact on the Green Belt.



Christmas Fair will be back – with a difference

CULCHETH'S Christmas Fair will be back this year – with a difference.

This time it's a "Makers Market" – strictly for businesses only.

So any business that would like to advertise and sell its wares in and around Culcheth village centre on Saturday, November 26 between

9am and 5pm should book a stall for the day.

Full details are available from Vicky at Vicky@themarketmarket.co.uk

The event is organised by Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council



"Urgent" roof repairs approved – 12 months later

PLANNING chiefs at Warrington have given the go-ahead for roof repairs at Newchurch Old Rectory, Culcheth – some 12 months after an application was made for permission for the "urgent" work.

Officers have decided the proposed work will not cause harm to the Grade 2 Listed building.

Dating from 1812, the building



on Warrington Road was originally a rectory but is now a private dwelling.

The work will include removing roof slates to allow new felt to be fitted, the slates then to be replaced, damaged or missing slates to be replaced with matching materials, relocation of an existing hopper and downspout and creation of a chicken wire system to prevent blockages on a sun room roof.

Coping stones and a lantern will be temporarily removed to allow the work to be carried out.

The building is in a semi-rural area with no other properties nearby.

There were no objections to the scheme.

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Look out for "The Amateur Killer" at Culcheth

CULCHETH Players have started rehearsals for their September production – a murder mystery by Robert Scott entitled "The Amateur Killer".

The play is set within a local amateur dramatics society where Daniel is letting his personal history with Lucas affect their relationship as he directs their production of "Adieu".

But it's his knowledge of Lucas' affair with Natalie that will lead to murder.

The production will be staged in Newchurch Parish Hall, Culcheth, over the weekends of Friday and Saturday, September 16 and 17 and Friday and Saturday, September 23 and 24.

All performances start at 7.30pm. Tickets are £7.50 in advance via culchethplayers.co.uk (booking

fees apply) or £8 on the door on the night of a performance. Doors will open at 7pm. The production will finish around 10pm.

Please bear this in mind if you intend to drive to the venue. Parking at Sainsbury's is now limited to two hours. There is a car park nearby at Jackson Avenue and at Shaw Street which is a five-minute walk away.

Culcheth Players always welcome new members. Two newcomers will be in the production Anyone who would like to get involved should drop in at the Parish Hall on a Monday or Wednesday evening at 7.30pm once the current production has ended.



Public meeting to discuss remaining fears over HS2 Golborne Link



A PUBLIC meeting has been organised at Culcheth to discuss remaining fears over the controversial HS2 Golborne Link.

Culcheth And District Rail Action Group (CADRAG) Chair Frank Allen, said: It is becoming clear that the Government has not yet dropped it entirely from its plans for HS2.

Frank added: "We were all very relieved to hear that the Government has taken the Golborne Link out of the Hybrid Bill authorising the next stage of HS2 construction, from Crewe to Manchester. However, it is becoming clear that the Golborne Link has not yet been dropped entirely from the Government's plans. Although the majority of the Link has been removed, its junction with the HS2 line from Crewe to Manchester has been retained. This will allow the Golborne Link to be added at a later date if the Government so decides.

"We are naturally concerned about this and are holding an information and discussion meeting on Friday September 23rd at the Village Club, Wigshaw Lane, Culcheth, starting at 7.30 pm. Everyone is welcome to come along, hear more about the current situation, and let us know what you think."



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Hundreds take part as Birchwood 10k goes green!

HUNDREDS of runners took part in the ever-popular Birchwood 10k race which returned for its 39th edition as it bids to become the greenest event of its kind in the North West.

Well represented by local running clubs, it was St Helens Sutton Athletics Club who took first places for the male and female categories with Matthew Crehan, first male to finish with a chip time

of 30:52 while clubmate Lucy Fairclough was the first female with a chip time of 35.13.

The Birchwood 10k is organised by Spectrum Striders Running Club with all finishers earning a bespoke

wooden medal and custom memento.

The club is striving to make the event the Greenest race in the North West

Green Initiatives include:
 • UK produced, wooden laser-cut

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- Recycled plastic water bottles and all plastic waste will be recycled
- Donations to The Mersey Forest's 10 Million Trees planting campaign

Picture: John Hopkins



Shaun captures images from outer space – as seen from Culcheth!

SHAUN Jones has lived in Culcheth for 21 years and although some may think he has his head in the clouds, he actually has his feet firmly on the ground.

He's a big fan of astrophotography – taking photographs of the Moon, planets, stars and distant galaxies – and would like to encourage other locals to take up what he sees as a fascinating hobby.

"I know there are people who are interested and would like to have a go but think that light pollution makes it impossible.

"But this is not the case. I'm only an amateur and I am still learning. But I think some of my pictures are quite good for an amateur."

Shaun has been interested in science and engineering since he was a youngster, now he is a graduate mechanical engineer, with a BEng in Automotive Engineering and an MSc in Mechanical Engineering.

He uses a Meade LX200 8" reflector telescope with a Nikon D3500 camera for his astrophotography

This means the aperture of the telescope is eight inches in diameter and in astrophotography the larger the diameter, the better, as it allows you to collect as much light as possible.

Shaun is at the mercy of the weather, of course, and astrophotography is quite sensitive to any sort of atmospheric disturbance, whether it be cloud cover, wind or thermals in the upper atmosphere, which can impact the final image. Because of this he uses a technique called "lucky imaging" where you take lots of short exposure frames with the hope that the atmosphere will be momentarily stable in some of them. The software then filters through them and selects the best frames to form the final image.

The Moon and the planets are

easier to photograph than the more distant stars – but Shaun will tackle them all.

He has pictures of the Moon, Jupiter, Saturn and Venus as well as more distant stars and groups of stars and is hoping to capture Mars this year.

Shaun's telescope may only be a baby compared with NASA's James Webb space telescope, which recently provided the first clear evidence of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere of a planet outside the Solar System, but it does provide impressive images of outer space and it should not be forgotten that sometimes amateurs make discoveries that the big boys have missed!



The Meade telescope Shaun uses with his image of Jupiter (right) and the Andromeda Galaxy.



The life and times of a busker

MEMBERS of Croft WI enjoyed a very entertaining musical evening courtesy of speaker Eric Newton with his talk "The life and times of a busker."

Eric showed himself to be an extremely adept clarinetist. Essentially a traditional jazz enthusiast, he played many well known but also proved quite capable of moving into the classical genre by playing part of a work by Mozart.

After attending grammar school, which he didn't find at all stimulating, he was becoming bored with life, until a school friend took him to a local jazz club where he was fascinated by the clarinet player.

His wonderful grandfather managed to scrape together the £16 to buy him his first clarinet and he taught himself to play, eventually becoming a member of the band who first sparked his interest. After trying numerous occupations as a day job, he was really only interested in his evening and weekend gigs playing and touring the country with the band.

One of their gigs was at the Cavern Club in Liverpool and they were once on the same bill as The Beatles, who at the time were just starting out. Even in those very early days, Eric said the audience were really only interested in the fab four and couldn't wait for the jazz band to leave the stage!

In 1962 he won a place at the Royal Northern School of Music and there learned to play classical music. Eventually he passed all his

exams and achieved the accolade of letters after his name. After leaving the School of Music he tried various occupations and related many hilarious tales of his many different jobs.

During a difficult time in his life, while aimlessly wandering around, he noticed a busker in the town centre and decided maybe he would give that a try, which proved a success and gave him a new interest in life. Busking has been a way of life for Eric over the years, even going as far as Australia playing in most of the major cities, in fact, up until the pandemic, he was spending six months of the year down under, staying with friends and busking during the day.

Back home, whilst watching marathon running on TV, decided he could do that whilst, at the same time, playing his clarinet! He competed in the London Marathon, amongst 38 others, was interviewed for television, and raised £60,000 for charity! Unfortunately his days of marathon running are over, due to a heart condition, but playing traditional jazz and maybe the odd "busk" are still major parts of his life.

The competition was won by Anne Lamming, 2nd Alison Morley, 3rd Barbara Taylor.

Phone mast refused

PLANS for a 25m high telecommunications mast in Spring Lane, Croft, have been thrown out by Warrington Borough Council planning chiefs.

It was the second time an application had been made for a telecommunications installation on the site and planners decided although the new application was not quite as high as the earlier one

it would lead to a visually intrusive, obtrusive and incongruous form of development resulting in significant harm to the appearance and character of the area.

A nearby resident had objected to the proposal arguing that it would have an overbearing impact, would harm the street scene and character of the area and could also create highways issues.

WI craft group were cup winners!

ALISON Paterson and the Craft Group at Culcheth and Newchurch WI won the Middlewich Cup at the Chester Show and were able to show it at their August meeting.

Their subject - A Special Year - was 1932 when a mass trespass on Kinder Scout led to the right to ramble and the development of National Parks. They used ordinance survey maps, compasses and reconstructed moorland around a signpost with a walker's knitted cap on top.

Other details were Elderflower wine and Derbyshire fruit loaf and a watercolour of a rucksack and hiking boots. Their work was judged as "outstanding."

Competition winners were Aileen

Paterson Irene Bromilow and Jane Bushby.

Freda Wilcock and Ann Hambledon served tea and then president Eileen Griffiths began the business meeting. She thanked June Jolley for the table flowers and asked Doreen Procter to go through the details of the autumn outings.

Many members had enjoyed the garden party at Jean Riley's house.

The president said she hoped members would clean up the plaques on the two hornbeam trees in the Millennium Garden. Margaret Hill had brought some old photo albums and members were invited to take their favourite pictures.

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It's not too late to enrol! Retrain & upskill this September.



Warrington & Vale Royal college is enrolling now for hundreds of adult part-time, higher education, professional and leisure courses. Whether you are looking to change your career, improve your prospects of a promotion or simply want to try something new, the college has the perfect course for you. There are study modes to suit individual needs from full-time, part-time and even distance learning options available.

Situated in the heart of Warrington with excellent transport links, the college offers a wide range of courses and boasts state-of-the-art facilities. These include the college's brand new Advanced Creative & Digital Skills (ACDS) Centre and a newly built Health & Social Care Academy (HSCA) – both based at Warrington campus.

The ACDS Centre is equipped with cutting-edge software and equipment, making it the perfect place to study for those interested in a career in the lucrative creative and digital industry, or those already in employment looking to enhance their skills.

The Health & Social Care Academy works closely with employers, health & social care settings and care providers in the Warrington region to provide students with first-hand, industry

experience; fully preparing them for a successful career in the sector. Bespoke training packages are also available to employers looking to retrain and upskill their staff.

It doesn't stop there! Warrington & Vale Royal College offer hundreds of courses spanning a wide range of subject areas, qualification levels and modes of study. From entry level to higher education courses, there really is something for everyone.

To enrol on a course, simply pop into the Warrington campus.

College opening hours:

- Monday:** 9.00am - 4.00pm
- Tuesday:** 9.00am - 4.00pm
- Wednesday:** 9.00am - 4.00pm
- Thursday:** 10.00am - 7.00pm
- Friday:** 9.00am - 4.00pm

Visit: wvr.ac.uk to view the entire range of courses on offer and start your journey to success today.



The brand new ACDS Centre at Warrington & Vale Royal College



Unprecedented demand for places this September!

Have you just received your GCSE results but are still undecided about your next step? Maybe you did not quite get the grades you were expecting, or have changed your mind about what and where you would like to study.

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The clock is ticking, apply today to secure your place!



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Warrington & Vale Royal College

ENROLMENT OPEN DAY



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Warrington & Vale Royal College

Visit our Warrington campus to start your enrolment, or apply online at wvr.ac.uk