

W I N T E R 2 0 1 2

the
**Bellingdon and Asheridge
Newsletter**



Back: Brice Barnwell, Mike King-Jones, Doug Owen, Jack Rutley, Robin Collingridge, Brian Latham.
Front: Barbara Saunders, Hilary King-Jones, Eve Collingridge, Hazel Rutley, Irene Roberts, Val Latham, Jill Owen.



Xmas Feasting

Xmas Elves are needed to help make the mince pies for the Xmas Carol evening at Huge Barn. Are you a keen baker? If you can help please email bellingtonm@hotmail.com

And more feasting on the 16th December, when the Bellingdon Belles have organised a wonderful excuse for further Xmas revelry. Don't miss this opportunity to raise a toast with your neighbours!

Short Mat Bowls in a league of their own

Congratulations to the Bellingdon Short Mat Bowls Club who had a very successful Summer season, winning the Summer League. They were presented with the winner's shield at a presentation evening at Haddenham on 21st September.

The Winter League season is now under way and Bellingdon have two teams in the single mat league and one in the two mat league.

The club formed in January 2006 and has about 26 members. It plays in the village hall on Monday evenings and Wednesday mornings. For more information visit <https://sites.google.com/site/bellingdonsmbc/bellingdonsmbc>



Save the Date!

Xmas Carols

24 December

All are welcome to join the singing at Huge Farm Barn. From 4pm.

Bellingdon Belles

Sun 16 December

Xmas Social. 12-3pm.

Friday 8 February

Beetle Drive. From 7.30pm

Stories from the Past

19 January 11am

Rev Yates' Sold Out Tour on the history of Bellingdon comes to the Village Hall



Chairman's Chat

Photo: Don Baker

Welcome to the Winter Edition of the newsletter



Renovation of the hall facilities is one of our key priorities over the next few years. We have started internal renovation of the main hall by painting and the new grey colour gives it a fresh, new, modern feel. The lobby and kitchen will be done in due course so if you have a few spare hours, why not volunteer to help paint?

Another improvement we are looking at is the heating system. Whilst it is functional, it can be very noisy and this is one area where we receive the most comments. One option we are researching is to have electric convector heating.

The other two areas we are looking at upgrading are the toilet facilities (to include a disabled toilet) and installing a new kitchen. This would bring the hall up to date for the 21st Century. We will need to raise additional funds for these improvements and will also be applying for grant funding

We currently have two applications in the pipeline with Sport England and the Football Foundation. If these are successful we will be able to upgrade the changing facilities and install separate toilet facilities for the field users.

As most of you are aware, our major fund raising activity is the fete. We have an army of volunteer to run and organise various activities. However this year we need a **fete chairperson** to oversee the general arrangements. This person is out there ... is it YOU?. Please contact friends@bellingdon.com if you feel you can take on this fun yet vital position.

Friends of BAVH. We know most of you are very busy, but could occasionally have some spare time. You may not have the time to commit to being a regular committee member but may have time, once or twice a year, or even a few hours every so often to help out. So why not become a "Friend of BAVH"? We would love your help with things like hall painting, general rubbish clearance and other small tasks on an "as and when" basis. Please register your interest at friends@bellingdon.com.

Finally, two social events we'd love to see you at. On Sunday 16 December in the hall we are having a **Christmas social event** with mulled wine & sausage baps. Join us from 12.00 - 3.00pm. Costs £5. The **Christmas Carol concert** will be held once again at Huge farm where the Taylor family have kindly invited all to their barn for singing and mince pies and a short Christmas service. Join us on 24 Dec at 4pm.

On behalf of the committee, I thank you for your continued support. We would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

The Bellingdon Belles

Thank you for your support in their first season – they have raised £1583, which they donated to the Village Hall to help with the improvements and maintenance required. They also have planned lots of fun evening events for next year so do put the dates in your diary now. All start at 7.30pm. For further info contact bookings@bellingdon.com or phone 01494 757028

* **Beetle Drive:** Friday 8th February,

* **Pie & Mash Social Evening:** Friday 20 September

* **Pop Pickers Party:** Saturday 27 April

* **Reindeer Racing:** Saturday 7th December 2013

Local Business Profile: Xmas Tree Farm



How time flies when you are having fun! Yes, it is that time of year again.. the silly season is back upon us and that means time for presents, wrapping, mulled wine, Santa, Christmas trees, mistletoe and sparkly lights.

And as many of you may know, in the midst of Bellingdon is our very own Christmas Tree Farm. The business was born in 1992 when Robert Matthews bought part of Bellingdon Farm at auction when the late John Page's family sold their 134 acres of farm land.

It was just 4 weeks after Black Wednesday and in the middle of the recession when Robert bought Lot 10 (32 acres). He now wishes he had bought more, but he was only 28 at the time and embarking on an exciting career change - moving from a City job to farming in the country.

He expanded the business a year later when he bought the field that is now Christmas Tree Farm in Chesham when Ella Darville advertised it for sale in the Bucks Examiner and then bought another field in Hawridge from the Hadden-Patons in 1995. Christmas Tree Farm now grows all their trees on land that they have bought in the Chesham area - 107 acres on various plots. They sell around 10 000 trees a year in Chesham, Aylesbury and Surrey.

So buy local – get your Christmas Tree when the retail outlet opens in Chesham on Friday 23rd November. You will find huge ceiling-scraping trees (the largest trees take over 12 years to reach their grand heights) to mistletoe, wreaths and other fun Christmas items. **MERRY CHRISTMAS!!**



Curvaceous Cook: Slow Roast Pork



This is the most wonderful party food, or for any big occasion when you have time to prepare in advance, but just want to forget it on the day. Perfect for Christmas, and leftovers are great in a hot roll or salad. The juices make a wonderful soup or gravy base. I use Jamie Oliver's porchetta mix, to rub on the meat before cooking, and have then adapted all sorts of recipes to this really easy one. Four of us made it for the village barn dance this year, and everybody agreed that it really was as easy and trouble free as I promised, and the recipients were all delighted.

The "hard work" bit: - In a coffee mill or small processor, whizz up:- 4 tablespoons fennel seeds, 3 small dried chillis, 2 tbs rock salt, 4 or 5 torn bay leaves, ideally fresh, 1 lemon (zest only).

Rub as much of this mix as you need for your joint. I used whole shoulders of Hazeldene Farm British Lop pork, but we also rub this on chops! I keep leftovers in a jar for months. Place the pork in the pan on top of some chopped carrot, celery, garlic, rosemary, onion and the lemon you have zested, with ½ bottle white wine poured over it, though water will do, as you will produce a lot of juices. Cover with foil, and cook on moderate heat (or top oven of Aga) for 30 minutes, then turn oven down to low (or bottom oven of Aga) and leave for 12-24 hours. We left the whole shoulder for 24 hours, for a smaller joint, leave for less. Be aware that it will shrink quite a bit.

To get fabulous crackling I always peel the skin off when pork is cooked, and put it on a baking tray in a hot oven for 10-15 minutes to crisp up, but watch it, it will turn very quickly! For our event I collected lots of pork skin from the farm earlier in the week and cooked that ahead of time. It all went! I don't rub with salt or oil - just make sure that the skin is dry.

The pork will keep warm for ages, especially if you wrap it in a blanket or towel on top of the foil. We had to do this to get to the hall, and they all remained lovely and hot. The meat will probably not carve into neat slices, but as we were putting it into buns with stuffing and apple sauce that really didn't matter. I believe the trendy name for this is "pulled pork"!!!

Each whole shoulder fed about 30 people one big bap.

Tales from the Past

Lancaster Bombers

Did you notice, during the summer, a low flying Lancaster Bomber that slowly circled Bellingdon a number of times?

It was in May - a day of commemoration, when a plaque was laid on a puddingstone in the fields between Bellingdon and Asheridge as a memorial to the six lives that were lost here on the night of 6th March 1945. The crew of a Lancaster bomber, returning home from a mission in Germany, and 10 minutes away from landing, crashed in these fields when a fire started on board. The crew included young airmen from the RAF and the RAAF.

If you would like to find out more, there is a 17 minute video of the ceremony that was held in May and the wreath laying at:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_yEUszkei0



Photo: Joanne Richardson

Zebras in Bellingdon?

How much do you know about Bellingdon's history? Have you heard that there used to be Zebras in Bellingdon? Do you know why?

One of our residents, Katharine Dallas, has recently started the herculean effort of unearthing fascinating snippets of history from centuries gone past to try to weave together a more cohesive picture of Bellingdon's history. Her research has proven that there is very little actual published information and she has pursued many channels to find out more about the past of our village, its homes and inhabitants.

Rev Dr. Tim Yates, Minister at St John's Bellingdon and President of the Chess Valley Archaeology and Historical Society is also extremely knowledgeable about the history of our village and will be repeating his talk on Bellingdon's past, which was sold out in November at the Chesham Museum. Come along to this free talk on January 19th at 11 a.m. at the Bellingdon & Asheridge Village Hall - everyone is invited.

Katharine will bring some of her research to this talk for your interest. She has photos, wills, deeds, census data, old maps etc and has invited other residents to bring along any other items of interest which they would be prepared to display on the day.

Topics include the Village Hall and all its activities; the Pubs (The Bull and Golden Perch) and St John's Church. Also of interest are the older homes (like Sun Cottage and Peppetts) and the Farms (Bank, Bellingdon, Bellingdon End, Bloomfield, Johnson's, Mount Nugent, Peppetts and Savcroft) which have hundreds of years of history. Do you own one of these? Do you know who the house builder was and the date your house was built? Do you have a plaque on your house with a date on it?

It would also be fascinating to know more about the people who lived and worked here – the landowners, the tenants, the occupations of villagers, their births, marriages and deaths. What sports did they play here? Were there any major teams? And what happened in Bellingdon during the wars? Do you have any stories to share?

If you are interested in hearing more about the history of the village, make sure you come along to the meeting in January. Also, if you are interested in helping Katharine with this project, and/or have stories to share, please get in touch with her at: - kdundridge@peppetts.co.uk.



Hall bookings: www.bellingdon.com
Please send your comments, submissions and ideas for future articles
to the Editor at newsletter@bellingdon.com.

A VERY HAPPY XMAS AND 2013 TO YOU!

