



SNITTERFIELD SPORTS CLUB PLANS START TO TAKE SHAPE

The Sports Club Project Development Group has been busy in recent weeks shaping plans for the future with the help of Club members and village residents.

VILLAGE SPORTS OPINION SURVEY

The survey of local residents and club members was conducted in December and January to obtain views on the Sports Club and its future. In total 157 responses (39%) were received from 400 survey forms circulated. The full results of the survey are shown on the Sports Club website: www.snitterfield.com/sportsclub

OPEN MEETING

A recent open meeting at the club was well attended by 71 members and village residents plus District and County Councillor, Richard Hobbs; the Chairman of the Parish Council, Gerry Stammers; Sylvia Morlidge, Parish Councillor; and the Head of the Primary School, Susan Ogden. Everyone was given the chance to have their say. The Project Development Group was most impressed and grateful for the positive way in which all present contributed to the evening. The views expressed in the discussion groups helped to confirm the results of the opinion survey in defining what is needed in the improvement project.

After an introductory briefing from Chris Gallimore and David Pryor, the meeting divided into five groups to discuss what those present felt were the good and 'not so good' features of the Village as a whole, and the good and 'not so good' features of Snitterfield Sports Club.

Reports back from each group produced valuable comment to help the Project Development Group start to build up the content of the improvement scheme.

Focusing on the sports club there was overall agreement that:

- The amalgamation of the four sections had been a big 'plus'
- The committee(s) and helpers were doing an enthusiastic and effective job voluntarily
- A wide range of ages was catered for
- There was a good social section with well organised special events



- The club was well located in the village with spare land for improvements
- The playing facilities for bowls and tennis were of a high quality
- Football and cricket were well organised
- There were positive links with the primary school
- Everyone was made welcome at the Club and no one was excluded

THE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

As a result of the feedback gained from both the Opinion Survey and the Open meeting, the Project Development Group has now proposed the content of the improvement project, subject to planning and raising the necessary funds:

- A floodlit outdoor multi sports area for a range of sports including netball, recreational basketball, 5-a-side football, additional tennis teaching/coaching etc
- A complete refurbishment of the clubhouse with multi use space to include one badminton court, short mat bowls, table tennis, an exercise/aerobics area, snooker, new changing rooms/showers/ toilets (including external access), and a refurbished kitchen
- one additional tennis court and a junior facility including practise wall
- car-parking and layout improvements

Clearly not all of the demands expressed in the questionnaire and at the open meeting can be met, but wherever possible multi use facilities will be provided to cater for as many interests as possible. There is a demand for a separate sports hall but this is seen as a longer term objective on cost grounds alone (in terms of both capital and running costs).

The architect, Steve Matthews, a resident of Snitterfield, will be preparing outline drawings and site plans to enable the Club to cost the improvements and take the project forward.

Critical to success and to obtain the necessary grants, the Sports Club has to demonstrate self-help. With a very good 'track record' in this respect, the Club will build on this by opening a Project fund-raising campaign later this year.

ADDITIONAL VOLUNTARY HELP

Although the current club management committee was praised for its energy and enterprise, if major change is to take place, more help will be required. Twenty one people not currently involved with the running of the Sports Club (representing 13% of the 157 responses) said they would be prepared to help make the development and operation of improved facilities a success. The committee will be following up these offers and we would like to thank all those who have volunteered their time.

These offers of help and practical support confirm the strength of community spirit in Snitterfield, promising well for the future. It also gives the existing Sports Club management committee, and those funding bodies that back the proposals, confidence in their management.



**DON'T MISS THE SNITTERFIELD VILLAGE FETE
SUNDAY 24 JUNE, 12-4pm, SPORTS FIELD
LOTS OF STALLS, GAMES, FOOD AND FUN!**



News From Your County and District Councillor

My role as your local District and County Councillor is very varied and interesting. Quite a high proportion of my time is spent on national and county wide issues with the rest dealing with all the local problems.

I represent 19 parishes which have regular parish council meetings which I attend whenever possible. The agendas are all quite similar with speeding traffic, flooding, nuisance youths, policing and pot holes as well as planning.

I have also had a few enquiries by email from people who live outside the county asking me as the local representative about living in Snitterfield because they are thinking of

moving in to the area. This makes me realise how lucky Snitterfield residents are to live in the village. Of all the villages in the area, Snitterfield has the best community spirit and a very wide range of activities. It has a shop, two pubs, a sports and social club, two churches, a school and a village hall which is used regularly by the countless organisations in the village. I am always impressed by the reports that are presented at the annual parish meeting. I think it is a credit to all the villagers who run the various organisations and also to the hardworking Parish Council who look after all of your interests. The SNIPE Newsletter and the village web site (www.snitterfield.com) are classic examples of what can be done in the community to bring people together.

We also have a good road and rail network nearby which means easy access to Stratford, Birmingham and London. The main A46

divides the village in two, but with the bridge linking the two it is not as much a problem as for some villages which have a very busy trunk road running through the centre of the communities.

All the activities in the village need your continued support in order to thrive so please keep an eye on the village notice board to find out what is going on and come along to the parish council meetings (every second Monday of the month excluding Bank Holidays).

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any information, help or advice.

Telephone: (01789) 730331 or email me at richardhobbs@warwickshire.gov.uk

Richard Hobbs
County Councillor, Aston Cantlow Division

PARISH COUNCIL MOVING FORWARD

A full twelve months has passed since this Parish Council was appointed and we are beginning to see some of the projects from our Parish Plan start to move.

Highways and traffic featured high on our priorities list and in recent weeks we have seen the County Council Highways group hard at work rebuilding and replacing culverts in Snitterfield Lane and drains in Ingon Lane as part of the overall flood prevention plan. Housing of the young people in our Parish has moved on with an independent housing needs study by the Warwickshire Rural Community Council Housing Enabler, Mr Charles Barlow. The results were clear, we need at least 12 affordable homes and already sites are being investigated. New Housing development in the Parish is not permitted under the Local Plan unless it meets the criteria of our Parish Plan based on local need. This study has confirmed those needs.

The environment is very much in the news, almost very day someone is spouting off about Global warming or Carbon trading. We are starting our own Environmental Improvement Project for the Village under the leadership of Councillor Alister

Jones and at the Annual Village Meeting on 2 April the project was launched and a steering group formed. If you feel strongly about the future of our parish and planet then join this new and exciting team who are going to reduce the carbon footprint for our community.

The future 12 months will be interesting and if we can protect our green spaces and grass verges in the village we might consider, with help from everyone and guidance from the Garden Club, entering the Best Kept Village Competition, something we have never won.

Financial support for many groups in our community has been given. Also we managed to retain the current level of precept for the coming financial year, helping to off-set the increases by the District Council, County Council and Police Force.

Remember your Parish Council needs your input and support to operate successfully to the benefit of you all.

Thank you

Gerry Stammers
Chairman, Snitterfield Parish Council



Everyone is becoming increasingly aware of the consequences of climate change on the world but also on them and their children. We are witnessing more and more effects which are being linked to the changing climate. There is now the opportunity to look for sensible ways which we as a village can respond and do our bit towards lowering our contribution to carbon emissions.

We are looking for keen volunteers to help support a new initiative within the village. A small steering group is being formed to respond to the Global issues of Climate change at a local level within Snitterfield. Sponsored initially by the Snitterfield Parish Council it is hoped that this group can grow, like other village groups, and help develop the local actions, focused on lowering the carbon footprint of the village. The Group will look for practical ways to engage with the residents of the village and the school to promote initiatives and actions which will be

focused on carbon emission reductions. We need good ideas and practical people to help. Other villages have been successful, so can we!

If you are interested then please contact Alister for a chat on 01789 730688, alister@bellbrookfarm.com or Emma on 01789 730570. There will be a full launch of the project and exhibition in the Village Hall on Sunday 29 April, 10am-4pm, where there will be a wide range of displays, activities and much, much more. Come along and share your ideas.





METHODIST CHURCH

Snitterfield Methodist Church stands in the centre of the village on a plot of land donated by Robert Needham Phillips (who owned the Welcombe estate). He also gave £400 towards the cost of the church.



The Phillips family came to the estate in 1816, from Manchester; they were cotton manufacturers and free-church folk. Until her death in about 1928, a daughter, Lady Caroline Trevelyan, donated £25 annually. Her tomb is found in the village cemetery.

The foundation stone was laid in September 1882 and the Church was opened for worship in May 1883. The property included a caretaker's cottage, now Wesley Cottage and a church hall, now Monday Cottage. In around 1955 the caretaker's cottage was condemned as unfit for human habitation and the trustees decided the properties were a liability, so they offered them for sale. The offer accepted was for £850! I believe that about the same time the church membership was down to only two elderly ladies: Miss Amy Roberts and Mrs Ada Rollins.

When I came to live in the parish in March 1957 I cycled to the church on the first Sunday evening but it was closed, shabby and looked unused. As the bells of St James were ringing loud and clear I turned round and continued to there.

One day I heard that the Superintendent Minister at Stratford had called a meeting to decide whether to close the Methodist Church altogether. Rev John Woodward Court was invited to attend and the outcome was several folk (including Mrs Valerie Marlow who kindly plays the organ) promised their support. Mr and Mrs Tuckey senior and Mr and Mrs Tuckey junior were leaders in the revival. I met Mr Bert Tuckey, who lived at Bwlch in Park Lane and told him I was really a non-conformist, so he put me in touch with the minister, Rev Warton Parfitt, and the outcome was that I and my wife joined.

With the enthusiastic support of this friendly nucleus, the church flourished and soon had a Wesley Guild of forty members, a class meeting in private homes and a sturdy group of rambles. Our carol singing around the village each Christmas and house-to-house collections raised many hundreds of pounds for the National Children's Home.

In 1983 a new church hall was built with toilets and kitchen at the cost of £18,000 and in 1990, a new organ was built by Messrs Griffen Coley and Fox at a cost of £9,000 and dedicated at the end of that year.

Today the membership is around eighteen and enjoys a very warm, family atmosphere and the kind of friendly welcome we would like to extend to everyone who should feel the need or wish to visit us.

Our minister is Rev Jean Fletcher, her phone number is 01926 491394
Bill Collett, Glebe End Church Road

PS... An early entry in the trustee's cashbook: 12cwt coal: 8 shillings and 8 pence (43p in decimals!). In 1967 the average weekly collection was £4. In 2006 the average weekly collection was £116.82 (including tax refunds).

DON'T MISS OUT – PUT THIS DATE IN YOUR DIARY!

In past years the Friends of Snitterfield School have organised the summer fete, but this year it will be more of a combined Village Fete with the inclusion of many residents and local groups, and hosted by the Sports Club. It promises to be a fun day for everyone with lots of events and groups taking part – be prepared to enter your pet into the fancy dress competition, see the many displays, or take your chance to win a prize at one of the many stalls. Proceeds will go to the school and local groups.

Lawrence Smith 1946 - 2007



In Issue 13 of SNIPE, we heard all about The Old Vicarage from Lawrence Smith. Sadly he passed away on 4 March after a characteristically brave fight against overwhelming odds.

Lawrence was an immensely popular figure in the village and a pillar of our community. A regular visitor to The Foxhunter and The Snitterfield Arms pubs, he would happily chat to anyone at the bar whether he knew them well or if they were just passing through the village.

Lawrence, together with his brother, built up a very successful contract painting business, he was a well-known figure at many construction sites across the West Midlands. He was a great supporter of St James the Great Church, supplying the scaffolding for the maintenance of the clock for the Queen's Jubilee. He welcomed visitors and if he was at

home on New Year's Eve he always ensured the local bell ringers had a little tippie at midnight.

Lawrence loved his home and with his wife, Janet, he hosted many village events. Supper parties for the W.I. (which were reported to be 'Wonderful Do's') and also the British Legion's 'Poppy Party'. When Lawrence and his wife first moved to The Old Vicarage the Sunday School was held in the attic rooms.

He was a very compassionate person and a number of local people have benefited from his caring support.

Lawrence had recently established a beautiful garden and ornamental lake which remain a tribute to him. The lake has encouraged a great amount of wildlife to the area and Lawrence was heard to say he had recently seen Snipe birds visiting the vicinity.

His funeral, at St James', was attended by over 300 people which was a fitting tribute to a warm, charismatic man.

Our condolences go to his wife Janet and his children Griffin, Conor and Harriet.

Sonnet on the Birthday of William Shakespeare (born 23 April 1564)

In Bridge Street on the Birthday of the Bard,
 Long poles stand gaunt and naked in the dawn,
 Like girders in the ribcage of a yard
 At Govan, ere Leviathan is born.
 And men with mallets bustle to and fro,
 And flags rolled tight, go whizzing to the sky.
 And soldiers march and bugles blow
 As sergeants bawl and Stratford reasons why.

The lads from Shakespeare's School will lead the band
 Then Beadle, photogenic in his stride.
 Then Mayor and District Council looking grand,
 Aglow with 'Bristol Cream' and civic pride.
 Whilst in his tomb below that marble gaze
 He sleeps, unmoved by daffodils and praise.

Harry Marlow First published in April 1978



TURNING OVER A NEW LEAF



While we are thinking about going green and recycling there is a lot we can do for ourselves, particularly in the garden.

Spring is a good time to start a compost heap: one of life's most satisfying jobs is the annual garden spring clean to get everything ready for summer and this creates rubbish from herbaceous borders, ponds and veg patches, to name a few. Left to its own devices garden refuse has a habit of turning into slimy, smelly sludge and attracting flies or worse, which puts a lot of people off making compost. However, by following a few simple do's and don'ts you can produce sweet-smelling, nutritious organic matter for your borders and help save the planet – all for free!

If you have a small garden it is better to use one or two small compost bins which you can fill quickly in order to allow them to warm up and start the decomposing process. If you have nowhere to hide a plastic bin then wooden 'beehive' bins work very well and look pretty in the garden. These are available from garden centres and online stores such as www.greengardener.co.uk. Larger gardens are better off with several large timber bins: as one batch of compost is rotting down, the second one can be filled and so on.



Do add anything of a vegetable nature such as annual weeds, lawn mowings, soft hedge clippings, kitchen peelings, egg shells and teabags. Natural materials can be added, such as unprinted paper, torn up cotton or woollen fabric and eggboxes. Farmyard manure

and the sludge and weed from ponds add beneficial bacteria to help activate the heap in just the same way as packets of compost-starters from garden centres.

Don't add branches and woody stems (unless you shred them first), perennial weeds, seedheads, diseased plant material or cooked food (which attracts rats and flies).

Do stand your bin directly onto the soil, so that red manure worms can find their way in: they help to digest the contents. Add moisture to your heap if the material is dry, using a hose to damp each layer of compost ingredients as you add it. Firm each layer down gently. Cover your heap with either a manufactured lid, tarpaulin or piece of old carpet to keep heat and moisture in. A two inch layer of soil on top of a full bin helps too. After three months (summer) or six months (winter) fork the undecomposed material from the top and side of your heap and use it to start your second bin. The rest of the bin will be ready to use as a fantastic garden mulch.

Don't use too much of one material: soft materials such as lawn clippings need to be alternated with firmer debris such as plant stems and cuttings or the heap will become slimy. Don't add too many leaves to your heap: they rot down too slowly, especially horsechestnut and oak leaves. It is much better to add well-dampened leaves to a black plastic bin liner. Prod a few air holes in the side and stack them out of sight. They will take longer than conventional compost but after a year or so you should have black, crumbly, delicious leafmould. To make homemade potting compost: sterilize the leafmould in a roasting bag in the oven, set at the lowest temperature for an hour. Mix equal quantities of your well-rotted leafmould, John Innes potting compost no. 2 and horticultural grit and you have a mix perfect for filling pots and tubs ready for a beautiful summer display. Hey presto: going green in more ways than one! Recyclenow.com



WHAT YOU CAN PUT INTO YOUR BLACK RECYCLING BOX

Paper • Newspapers, magazines, catalogues, brochures, envelopes, junk mail, letters, and telephone directories including Yellow Pages. Make sure any sensitive documents or papers are shredded to protect your personal details. Don't put loose shredded paper in your box, place in large envelopes or wrap it in sheets of newspaper.

According to the latest SDC figures, we are still putting out over half a tonne of rubbish per household each year that is not recycled, well above the national average.

So to help sustain the future of our planet by reducing the waste sent for burying in holes in the ground remember to use your recycling boxes and mini recycling centres more.

Recycling Boxes can be obtained from SDC, telephone 01789 262616.

Glass bottles and Jars • Clear or coloured, not broken with the lids removed and rinsed out. Broken glass should be wrapped and put into a separate stout box marked 'SHARP OBJECT/ GLASS - WITH CARE'

Food and drink cans • Rinse out first.

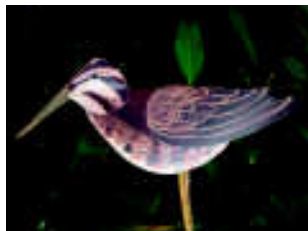
Textiles • Clean only, tie up securely in a bag.

WHAT YOU CAN PUT IN YOUR GREEN GARDEN WASTE BIN

Grass cuttings, leaves, hedge trimmings, dead household and garden plants or shrubs, flowers and weeds. Tree stumps and branches up to 100mm (4") in diameter, providing they will fit in the bin with the lid closed.

A BIRD IN THE HAND...

Snipe are secretive, highly camouflaged birds with straight bills and short legs adapted to their wading nature. They are about 23 to 28cm in length, with a 3cm long bill. Weighing between 72 and 169 grammes they spend much of their time in the cover of the wet, rushy meadows and the tall, marshy grass, in which they nest.



And I've got one! Or, to be more accurate, thanks to a kind and generous present for a recent landmark birthday, I've the proud adoptee of a snipe residing with the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust. I've got a certificate and a cardboard cut out model to prove it and I've christened my sponsored bird *MescherSNIT*. It's a good feeling to know that even in a small way we can help to preserve the species from which our village takes its name.

Because the Snipe is not exactly thriving. On the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) Birds of Conservation Concern listing it's classified as an amber list species. Snipe numbers have declined by 60 per cent in the last 25 years and they have disappeared entirely from large areas of lowland wet grassland. The species has not been known to breed in Warwickshire since 1980 – hence the conservation effort needed by Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and its partners. They're undertaking habitat creation and enhancement to encourage a breeding population and working

with landowners to help create the conditions to enable the bird to survive and thrive.

According to a leaflet that comes with the sponsorship package the main reason for the decline has been the habitat loss due to drainage and changes in agricultural practice. Being ground nesting birds they are also vulnerable to disturbance by people, dogs and predators such as mink, foxes and weasels.

So, if you too want to help and adopt a snipe contact the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust at its Brandon Marsh Nature Centre, Brandon Lane, Coventry CV3 3GW. Tel: 024 7630 2912. Fax: 024 7663 9556. E-mail: enquiries@wkwtr.org.uk. Or visit the website at www.warwickshire-wildlife-trust.org.uk. But don't think you can call your's SNIT Ekland – that name's reserved for my wife's snipe.

Above: The cut-out-and-keep cardboard snipe, part of the sponsorship package from the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust. In the real world both males and females are mottled brown above, with paler buff stripes on the back, dark streaks on the chest and pale under parts. They feed on small invertebrates, worms and insect larvae, and use their bills to search for food in wet soil. They can live up to 16 years.

Andy Hopkinson



FROM SNITTERFIELD TO THE VALLEY OF A THOUSAND HILLS



In December student Josh Noble, from Frogmore Road, travelled to South Africa for six weeks to work in an orphanage called 'God's Golden Acre' founded in 1993 by Heather Reynolds. It works to keep the unfortunate children affected by aids, violence and poverty, in their own communities.

Josh intended to raise an initial £1,000 to take children to the coast for a Christmas break, but thanks to generous donations was able to achieve a great deal more...

"There is no doubt that my time in South Africa has been the best experience I've ever had in terms of personal development and self-fulfilment and I'd also like to think that I made a commendable contribution during my time there.

"The most rewarding aspect of the trip was gaining the trust and the respect of the children. When I first arrived the kids may have seen me as just 'another volunteer' who will come and eventually go. However, by the end of the trip the kids were all asking 'when will you be back? It must be so hard for them to have to constantly undergo the cycle of getting close to a volunteer and then having to say goodbye. However, these kids are the lucky ones – they are loved and catered for, there are still plenty of kids in Africa that are living in poverty and suffering from violence.

"Thank you to everyone who helped me to help the children at God's Golden Acre over the Christmas period. In total I raised £3,600 in the month prior to leaving for South Africa. The majority of money was spent on sports related projects. Whilst I was there I was constantly looking to develop sporting opportunities and provisions, which I knew the kids would really appreciate."

A note received from afar... "I read your article 'Over the garden wall' with great interest, describing the Park House gardens and the two red May trees planted by HRH The Duchess of York. This instantly brought back memories to me when Thomas Lewis (Geoffrey Lewis' Father), Geoffrey Lewis and I were walking around the gardens and came across the memorial stone and the inscription. We jokingly commented that this visit of a ROYAL, fleeting though it was, should entitle the park to be called Royal Snitterfield Park. In my childhood mind, I wondered why a future Queen of England should choose such miserable specimens of Hawthorne tree to commemorate her visit. At that time, Summer 1952, the trees were only 15 feet tall and not very robust. Why not choose an oak or horse chestnut or other trees noted for its longevity, as might be expected from the advice Capability Brown, I thought? It was only later that I discovered that Mary of Teck was always referred to as 'May' by her close friends and family with respect to her birth month. The Hawthorn Tree - Queen of the May, was therefore of special significance for her. Unfortunately, the Hawthorne (*Crataegus laevigata* var. *Paul's Scarlet*) is not noted for its longevity and I fear the impending demise of these living reminders since they must be well over one hundred years old. Please correct me if I am wrong about the species and lifespan. I surmise that May visited Park House between 1893 and 1911 as guest of Lady Trevelyan. I wonder if anyone has given a thought to providing for the descendants of these significant May trees in The Park; perhaps further plantings of young May trees and a prominent stone commemorating the Royal visit for the pleasure of the residents of Snitterfield in the next 100 years."

Colin Toombs, Pondok Indah, Jakarta, Indonesia.

The three main projects I undertook were as follows:

- To transform the current overgrown football pitch into a neat and playable combined rugby/football pitch. This was done by having the grass cut, marking lines and purchasing rugby posts.
- At GGA it was all about football! So therefore opportunities were limited for girls and others who wanted to participate in sport but not football. Consequently, I managed to get a ground-levelling company to come to GGA and flatten some ground on which I implemented a tennis, volley ball, netball and basketball court. They are by no means perfect but an improvement and if future funding can be secured then someone can lay astro turf etc.
- Finally, in order to play basketball, netball, volleyball and tennis two multi-purpose sports posts were created that allowed hoops and nets to be interchanged to suit each of the four sports. I designed the posts and then liaised with a local engineer to get them constructed.

In addition to these sporting provisions, money was spent on funding a five-day camping trip to the beach and safari over the New Year period and towards buying Christmas presents for the children. By the end of



the trip I was able to see the kids reaping the benefits of my visit.

Caroline Horn, Educational Projects Manager at GGA, described my visit: "In a mere 6 weeks Josh managed to fire a passion for rugby into the boys at GGA, he brought kit and enthusiasm from Warwick School. He also levelled a whole area of land and created a tennis court, basketball, netball and volleyball courts and also got official rugby posts and soccer nets. In addition to that he designed and arranged for special posts to be built to be multi-functional for basketball, netball, tennis and volleyball nets. They are quite amazing and maybe will be the next big thing in sport! In his spare time he managed to jump off Oribi Gorge with a bungee and out of a plane to skydive over Durban, catch a zebra being eaten by 12 lions on camera and create the perfect pizza combo at Primi Khaya. All in all a successful time. He will be missed. He'll be back."

The Zulu Warriors will be in the UK this summer performing their musical at various locations in the UK. I was lucky enough to see them perform and they are truly amazing! Go and see them if you get the chance!

Once again thanks to all for your support.



Heaps of rubbish on Kings Lane, litter strewn throughout the village – who is responsible?



SNIPERS CORNER

I've just heard – it's such a shame that Snitterfield may not be entering the Best Kept Village competition as planned – is there no pride in the village any more?

People are destroying green areas and verges by parking cars on them, litter is dropped everywhere and bottles and rubbish tossed in the hedgerows. The place is beginning to look as if the residents no longer care. Come on Snitterfield – tidy up!

PICK OF THE BUNCH Sally Hopkinson chooses three of the best of this season's plants.



Fritillaria meleagris (snakes head fritillary)

The *Fritillaria* genus gets its name from the Latin word *fritillus*, meaning a dice box, probably because its petals are covered

with a chequered pattern similar to those on Roman dice boxes. During April and May, *Fritillaria meleagris* produces beautiful bells varying in colour from white to dark pink and purple, all with tessellations in dark purple. They grow singly or in pairs on delicate stems to about 30cm tall. Although looking exotic they are a native wild flower which have been cultivated for garden use and look wonderful naturalised in orchards or wildflower meadows or planted in drifts under shrubs.

Cultivation: Grow in light shade or sun, preferring humus-rich, moist soil but tolerating dry. **Propagation:** Sow seeds in autumn in a cold frame or collect and sow bulbils in late summer after foliage has died down.



Erysimum 'Bowles Mauve'

This wonderful easy-to-grow perennial wallflower provides almost non-stop flowering from early spring onwards. This year, with its mainly mild

winter, there wasn't a month when mine didn't have a flower or two on it, and by March it was a riot of long racemes of mauve flowers above the grey-green leaves. It combines very well with blues, pinks and even vibrant yellows, attracts bees and looks equally at home in the herbaceous border or rock garden.

Another huge bonus is that it is evergreen, which more than makes up for the fact that it is a short-lived plant, easily replaced every few years with young plants from cuttings. **Cultivation:** Grow in well-drained alkaline or neutral soil in full sun.

Propagation: Take heeled softwood cuttings in the spring.




Viburnum x carlesii 'Aurora'

If you walk past my hedge in Smiths Lane during April or May and get a belt of strong fragrance then it is likely to be the irresistible *Viburnum x carlesii*. While

nothing to look at in the winter when its leaves have dropped it comes into its own come spring, when large heads of white, pink-budded flowers release their heavenly scent. Easy to grow, this bushy shrub sits comfortably in most medium to large borders, reaching a mature spread and height of two metres. I have kept mine to around 1.2 metres and it has responded well to pruning after flowering. By growing a short clematis up it you can extend its seasons of interest into summer and, with luck, the leaves will redden before falling in the autumn. **Cultivation:** Tolerates most soils and aspects but prefers full sun. A sheltered position will retain the scent best. **Propagation:** Softwood cuttings.

Snitterfield specialities for delicious spring meals . . . from Abbe Sturnam



The transition from winter to spring means a shift from root crops to leafier vegetables. Many of Snitterfield's vegetable patches will contain purple sprouting broccoli, spring cabbage, sorrel, watercress, rhubarb (yes it's a vegetable) and fantastic young asparagus. Snitterfield Stores will have tasty new season English lamb.

Don't hide the flavour of fresh spring foods. Steam vegetables until *al dente* (still crunchy) and drizzle on good quality olive oil, and then toss in some grated

raw/roasted garlic or ginger or freshly ground pepper. The flavour should come from the vegetables.

In Snitterfield we have access to wonderfully fresh herbs, vegetables and meat. We should highlight their flavours not hide them.

Snitterfield Spring Menu:

Watercress and Spring Onion Soup

Roast Leg of Lamb stuffed with Snitterfield Rosemary

Grilled Asparagus Rafts

Mushrooms sautéed with butter

Steaming Rhubarb with cinnamon

Tips: Get the barbeque out. Grilling vegetables takes no time and barbequing really accentuates their flavour. Toss raw vegetables (asparagus, onions, and broccoli) in oil and throw them onto a flat skillet or wrap the vegetables in foil and cook for a few minutes. Add to pasta with chopped tomatoes, garlic and freshly ground pepper.

Wonderful.

WATERCRESS AND SPRING ONION SOUP

6 spring onions, trimmed and sliced
450g/1lb potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
600ml/1pt chicken or vegetable stock
2 x 85g bags watercress
150ml/¼ pt milk
pinch of grated nutmeg
salt and freshly ground black pepper

Place the onions, potatoes and stock in a large pan and bring to the boil. Simmer for 5 - 6 mins or until the potatoes are just tender. Add the watercress, cover and simmer for 3 - 4 mins or until the leaves are tender and wilted. Season well with salt and pepper.

Transfer the mixture to a food processor and blend until smooth. Add the milk and nutmeg and blend again until mixed. Return to the pan, adjust the seasoning to taste and gently reheat until piping hot. Serve in bowls and top with thick Greek yoghurt and a sprig of watercress. (If you're cooking with asparagus add the discarded tips to the onion and potato mixture).



ROAST LEG OF LAMB WITH ROSEMARY AND GARLIC

Lamb trimmings and chopped bones (ask at the shop)
1 head of garlic, halved horizontally
1 leg of lamb bone in, (2kg/4½ lb)
6 garlic cloves, halved
1 bunch fresh rosemary (if you don't have any ask a neighbour, there is lots of rosemary in the village)
15g/½ oz softened butter
salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 220C/425F/Gas 7. In the bottom of a roasting tin scatter the chopped bones, trimmings and garlic head. Make 2.5cm/1in deep incisions in the lamb, into each incision insert the garlic cloves and rosemary sprigs. Rub the butter over the lamb and place the leg on top of the bones, season and place in the oven for 1-1½ hours (15 minutes per 450g/1lb for rare and 20 minutes for medium) turning over half way through. Remove the lamb from the oven, season again and transfer to a cutting board to rest.

To make the gravy - place the roasting pan over a moderate heat to caramelise the juices for 2-3 minutes. Strain off any excess fat. Pour in 350ml/12fl oz cold water. Reduce heat and simmer gently for 5 minutes. Strain through a sieve and serve.

MUSHROOMS SAUTÉED WITH BUTTER

Fresh mushrooms of your choice
Butter, Salt and pepper

Wipe dirt from mushrooms and slice off hard tip. Slice each mushroom in half. Heat some butter in a pan. Add salt and pepper. Throw in mushrooms and sauté until browned.

ASPARAGUS RAFTS

Wooden skewers, bunch of asparagus, Salt and pepper, Extra virgin olive oil, 1 garlic clove, peeled and crushed.

Remove any elastic bands and wash asparagus under cool running water, a few spears at a time, to remove any soil or sand. Hold the top half of a spear in one hand and grasp the bottom half with your other hand. Bend lightly and the tough lower end will snap off where it meets the more tender part of the spear. Although this method sometimes produces more waste, the otherwise discarded ends can be cooked and pureed to use in the watercress soup.

Soak the skewers in water for about ½ hour. (This prevents them from catching fire). Break the asparagus as described above. The spears should be around the same length. Mix together the oil, garlic and salt

and pepper. Place 4 spears side by side. Thread a skewer through all 4 spears at the top and then use another skewer and thread through the bottom. Brush generously with the oil mixture. Place on a piece of foil and grill for about 2 minutes on each side. If using the barbeque place asparagus directly on the grill. Instead of oil and vinegar try using soy sauce, sesame oil and ginger.



RHUBARB COMPOTE

3 lbs/1.4k 1-inch pieces fresh rhubarb
10oz/286g sugar
2.4 fl.oz/70.5ml water
Dash of cinnamon

Combine all ingredients in heavy large saucepan. Bring to boil, stirring until sugar dissolves. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer until rhubarb is very soft and begins to fall apart, stirring occasionally, about 20 minutes. Divide into individual bowls and serve with vanilla custard sauce or thick honey flavoured Greek yoghurt. Add a couple of spoonfuls to your morning hot/cold cereal. Delicious.



The Village Hall was packed to capacity on 4 April when the world-famous garden designer, Roddy Llewelyn, joined the Garden Club for the evening.

Roddy's relaxed and fascinating descriptions gave us an insight into his favourite plants, planting and gardens. We shared his enthusiasm for plants as he took us through his selection of photographs – ranging from rampant clematis and wisteria, golden ivies, poppies and clouds of forget-me-nots in his Oxfordshire garden to the late Queen Mother's Sandringham 'green rooms', and intricate French Chateaux parterres. The evening was rounded off with an informal question time before Roddy helped to call the raffle prizes. The event was a great success with Garden Club members providing a superb introductory slide show, refreshments and home-made cakes, a plant stall and raffle. Roddy is pictured here with Margaret Tweed (right) and Yvonne Hanson who organised the enjoyable evening.



Margaret Tweed has delved into the 'Works' and shares these observations with us.

I know a bank where the wild thyme blows Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows

Midsummer Night's Dream, William Shakespeare

How familiar are these words written by our local lad.

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford yet his grandparents, father and uncle were born in Snitterfield. The whole world can conjure up a picture of his childhood environment as his written works celebrate the natural landscape, hills and woods, springs and streams, fields and flowers that surround our village.

Shakespeare constantly referred to flowers with an amazing power of observation and knowledge of their form. No wonder if he wandered too and fro to his relatives, over the Welcombe Hills or along Kings Lane. His childhood seems typical for a child with an enquiring mind and thirst for knowledge.

Did he explore the many woodlands and spinneys? We can only surmise, probably Withycombe Woods at Wilmcote and Gospel Oak noticing the primroses and violets whilst scrambling through the undergrowth. "*Primrose, first born child of Ver(spring), merry spring times harbinger*" (The Two Noble Kinsmen). The first primroses and violets were blooming in early February this year in Bearley woods and by April the bluebells are at their best. In this haven of peace and beauty, other treasures such as the rare herb paris, early purple and spotted orchids grow on the banks amidst the velvety ground ivy, cuckoo pints and cinquefoil "*crowned with burdocks, hemlock, nettles and cuckoo flowers*" (King Lear).

Would he have run through the meadows near Sherbourne Brook, carpeted with Ladies smock "*And Lady smocks all silver white*" (Love's Labours Lost) and yellow rattle, knapweed, vetches and clover? No doubt, he would forage for roots, herbs and fruits for his mother to

use for culinary and medicinal purposes

"*The strawberry grows underneath the nettle*" (Henry VI). Whatever, these observations were stored in his mind to be used later when writing his poetry and plays claiming him to be the greatest writer in history.

These pleasures can still be ours today. If you do not know flower names, buy or borrow a simple Flora. Visit the local woods, notably Bearley, Oversley and the woods at Wootton Wawen (Yew Tree Farm) at bluebell time.

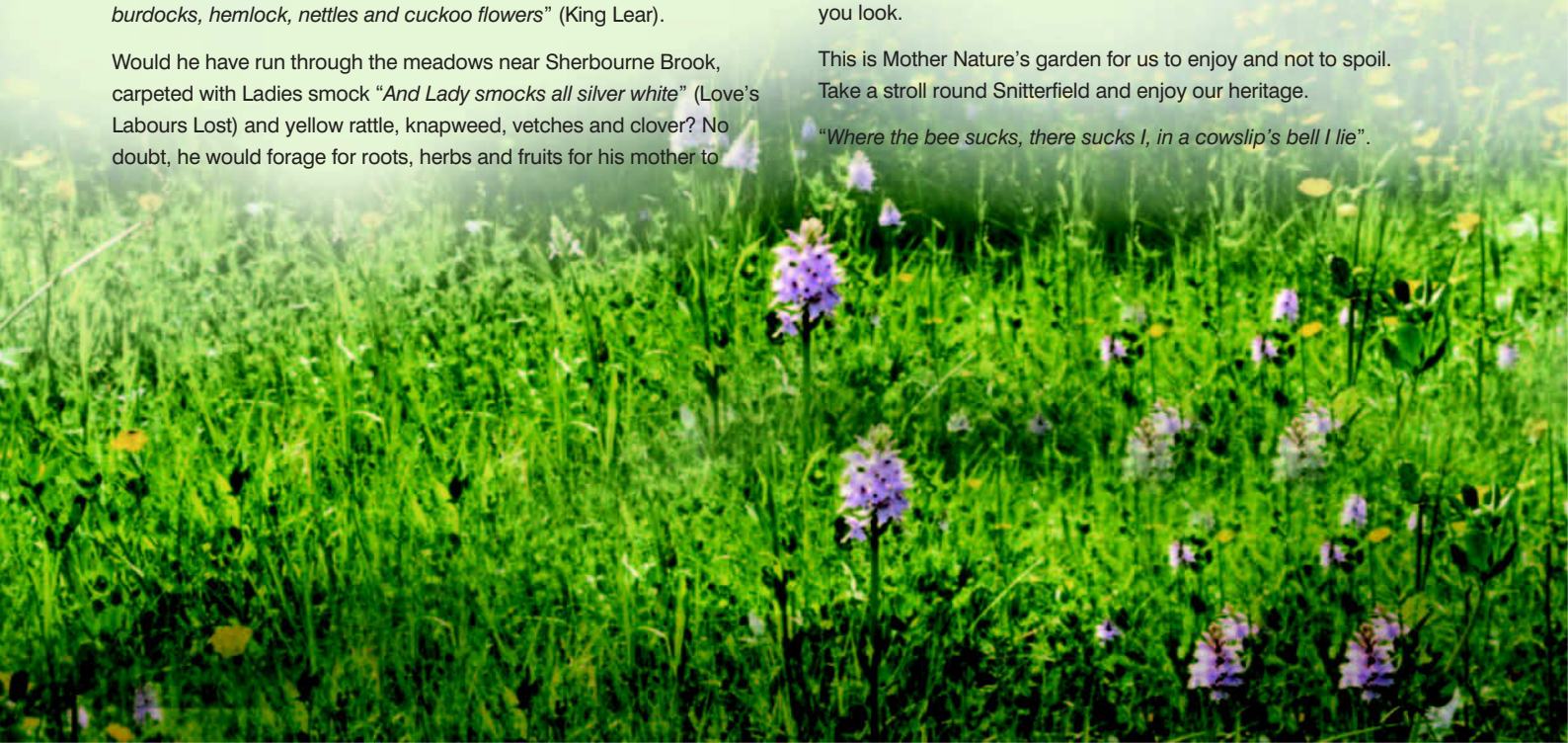
Orchids can be seen at Feckenham in the ancient meadows (a breathtaking sight as there are so many varieties, possibly third week in May this year). Also, surprisingly at Ettington roundabout there are green winged orchids.

A swathe of purple sweeps across the snakes head fritillary meadows at Cricklade, approximately second week of May.

And of course our own hedgerows and verges around Snitterfield are garlanded with honeysuckle, dog-rose, hawthorn, agrimony, meadow sweet, champions and you may spot musk mallow near to the junction of Gospel Oak Lane and the Green – there are so many flower varieties if you look.

This is Mother Nature's garden for us to enjoy and not to spoil. Take a stroll round Snitterfield and enjoy our heritage.

"*Where the bee sucks, there sucks I, in a cowslip's bell I lie*".



CRICKET

Snitterfield Cricket Club

enjoyed its best season to date, finishing the season in mid September having played nineteen matches: won nine, lost nine and tied one. These all being 40-over Sunday matches. In addition there were ten 20-over Wednesday night games, mainly against teams from local businesses and other groups. These proved to be very popular, mainly because of the after-match BBQ!



Tony Morris • Ben Leefe • Mike Chamberlin • Glen Richards • James Hicken Lee and Catherine Hillier • Les Beesley • Richard Yendall • Ian Wobbley • Krish Kumara-Singh • Tim Hartwell

The club ran indoor cricket nets for adults and juniors on Sunday evenings 5pm to 7pm, from 28 Jan - 1 April (newcomers were made welcome).

Outside nets will start in early April opposite the Sports Club on Wolverton Road, as will our junior coaching sessions. At present we have two Level 1 ECB coaches and we aim to increase this to four during the forthcoming season.

Catherine Hillier and Oliver Matthews



Our aims for this year are:

- to expand our junior coaching
- update/replace the outside cricket net
- install drainage to the cricket outfield and football pitch.

The club has come a long way in the last two years and we hope to build on what we have achieved so far in the 2007 season. We consider ourselves a friendly, open club and welcome new members of all ages and abilities.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ian Wyllie on being elected Sunday Captain, and Mike Chamberlin for doing such a great job last season (everyone at the club wishes him the best of health).

If you would like to join the club as a player or a social member, or maybe just want to spend a relaxing time watching a game, pick up a membership form or fixture list from Snitterfield Stores, view the latest information on the village website: www.snitterfield.com or telephone 01789 730372.

Lee Hillier, Chairman

SNITTERFIELD BOWLS CLUB OPEN DAY SUNDAY 13th MAY

Snitterfield Bowls Club is looking for new members

- All ages welcome
- Ladies and gentlemen
- With or without experience
- Coaching available
- League and friendly matches
- Club competitions
- Casual roll-up sessions
- Automatic membership of Snitterfield Sports Club



THE GREEN WILL BE OPEN AND MEMBERS WILL BE ON HAND TO WELCOME VISITORS AND TO ASSIST ANYBODY WISHING TO TRY THEIR HAND - BOWLS WILL BE AVAILABLE ON LOAN. PLEASE WEAR FLAT SHOES SUCH AS TRAINERS

In the event of inclement weather we will be able to play short ten pins in the clubhouse

NEW BOWLERS ARE OFFERED A FIRST YEAR SUBSCRIPTION OF £25
(Juniors - £2.50)

The day starts at 10am

The bar will be open and refreshments provided. If you are interested but unable to attend please ring any of the following numbers

- Terry Whitehouse - 01726 831028
- Dave Gale - Solje Bar Steward - 01789731731



Snitterfield Cricket Club Fixtures 2007

Sunday fixtures
2.30pm start unless stated otherwise

April 29 Bearley (A) 2pm
May 6 Norton Lindsey (A)
May 13 Harborne (A)
May 20 Ashorne (H)
May 27 Kings Norton (A)

June 3 Darlingscote (H)
June 10 Ashorne (A)
June 17 Wellesbourne (A)

July 1 Kings Norton (H)
July 8 Bidford (A)
July 15 Great Aine (H)
July 22 Darlingscote (A)
July 29 Rowington (H)

Aug 5 Harbury (A)
Aug 12 Bards (H)
Aug 19 Grosvenor XI (H)

Sept 2 Norton Lindsey (H) 2pm
Sept 9 Wellesbourne (H) 1.30pm
Sept 16 Rowington (A) 1.30pm
Sept 23 Stockton (H) 1.30pm

There will be limited overs evening matches on Wednesdays during June, July and August, starting at 6pm.

Wednesday fixtures
6pm start unless stated otherwise

May 30 Haselor Seculars (H)
June 6 tbc
June 13 Post Office (H)
June 20 Great Aine (A)

July 4 Justin Seaborn XI (H)
July 11 Great Aine (H)
July 18 Haselor Seculars (H)
July 25 Coventry Architects (H)

Aug 1 tbc
Aug 8 tbc
Aug 15 AP Leamington (H)
Aug 22 Justin Seaborn XI (H)

For further information contact:
Fixtures Secretary,
Andy Hopkinson,
01789 731852

Available for hire SNITTERFIELD Village Hall

Situated in the heart of the village, the hall is the ideal place to hold meetings, events, parties and family gatherings.

The facilities include: main hall, meeting room, kitchen, toilets, electric piano, stage and microphone.

For more information, rates and booking please telephone the secretary, Renata Stephens.



01789 731426

SNIFE STANDING ORDER AND PAYMENTS:

A big 'Thankyou' to everyone who so kindly sent in donations towards the cost to produce Snipe.

We haven't sent out individual receipts as this would incur further costs, but be assured, we are extremely grateful to you.

You can donate at any time - just leave an envelope in the gate postbox at Taxus, Smiths Lane (three houses up from the FoxHunter Pub) or contact us by email at studio@smart-works.co.uk. Cheques should be made payable to 'SNIFE NEWSLETTER', please include your name and address details.

