

FREE
to the residents
of Snitterfield



ISSUE FIVE

WINTER 2003

We MUST protect the future of Snitterfield!

The Parish Plan is now under way with the formation of the Steering Committee, and during the coming months this committee will be collating all the data from our Village Design Statement and Parish Appraisal, using the guidance notes as supplied by The Countryside Agency, (sponsors of the project at national level), to produce the first draft plan.

The Parish Plan, is not just about more housing in Snitterfield, it's about what you want for your Village/Parish, in the future.

The village is continually under pressure from developers and landowners wanting to profit from the Government Policy to increase house building in both urban and rural areas in the country. Only this week, we hear that developers are planning to attack the Stratford-upon-Avon Local Plan policies on the "Key Development Principles". If they are successful this will put pressure back onto sites in our Village!

This is why it is vital we have the Parish Plan in place to support our District Council Policies, such as COM.1 a policy based on Local Choice. (The views of local communities reflected in Parish Plans adopted by the District Council).

The Snipe Newsletter, produced by the village, is as a direct result of our Parish Appraisal surveying your views on key issues in the village. These views on various issues are now forming the basis of our approach to planning the development of our Village/Parish in line with the policies defined at National, County and District levels.

Issues such as local services, educational facilities, transport and traffic, the A46, road safety and noise pollution are all part of shaping your environment future!

Recently, in response to your many comments on the subject, the PC organised the introduction, and relocation of a larger Post Box close to the Village Stores, this caused considerable response from you! The PC needs you to respond in the same way to other issues and suggestions that will come from the Parish Plan, and are likely to have a major impact on your daily lives.

The Parish Council has, during the year, made steady progress in resolving its financial situation and holding the precept at last year's level. During the coming months we will be planning the budget for the next financial year, and listing the projects to be funded from these resources.

Improved co-operation is an objective we have set ourselves, and with the help of your District and County Councillor, Richard Hobbs, we are achieving a better understanding and co-operation with all departments in the District and County Council Offices, which will in the long term, benefit our community.

Returning to the plan, what are your views on subjects such as, parking on the pavements, the bus service, the cemetery, notice boards, litter, vandalism and policing. The list is endless, and if you have other issues or concerns that effect your daily lives, then please us know by letter, email, phone, or at our Parish Council meetings, on the second Monday of each month, 7.30pm, in the room at the rear of the village hall.

You will be listened to, I can assure you!

Chairman of the Parish Council.

Ask yourselves, why you choose to live in this rural community of Snitterfield? Your answer is likely to be precisely that, because it is a small rural community, with villagers appreciating the relatively peaceful village environment and the surrounding countryside.

But as a village, the pressure is on for us to protect it, or, we lose it!

Stratford seems to be creeping up on us at a daily rate, when you look at the development on the Birmingham and Alcester roads, with the surrounding traffic systems, becoming a total nightmare!

Your views, for the all-important Parish Plan shaping the future of Snitterfield, could never be more important than right now! We only get one go at this, if our voice is not given consideration, then the creeping development and all that goes with it, will totally engulf our village!

'Your help' seems to be the theme running through this particular issue.

Additional to the Parish Plan we have: Cricket captain Lee Hillier, looking for any amounts of soil for the cricket field, the club is also looking for new members, both non-playing and playing.

Parish Councillor Sylvia Morlidge, is looking for the Titchmarsh Touch in the cemetery!

Allan Morris wants to complete the story of the Snitterfield Swimming Baths, and further information on the old hand bells would be much appreciated by me.

Bob Guest and Ron Hoe of the Conservation Group need your thoughts, skills and knowledge on constructing 'The ABC of Your Place', and finally: we, the Snipe Team, need an injection of some new energetic blood, together with some good fund raising ideas, please can you help?

Most of these items can take as little time as a simple phone call, or if you are interested in getting involved and doing your bit, then everyone will benefit.

Thanking you in anticipation!

Editor

The Reverend Livingston I Presume!

By now most of you, I expect, will have heard that there is a new vicar for Snitterfield. I have been invited, therefore, to tell you something about myself.



I was born in Birmingham, where, after leaving school, I worked in the Health Service for 16 years as a Microbiologist. It was there that I met my wife Janet. We then went on to produce one daughter, Rachel, who still lives at home and teaches History to secondary school children in Coventry.

Following a mission in the parish church where we were living at the time, I began to explore the road to ordination. I trained at The Queen's College in Birmingham, an ecumenical theological college, where Anglican, Methodist and United Reform candidates trained alongside each other and shared the benefits of each others traditions.

After college I became a curate in Hobs Moat, Solihull, where we enjoyed four happy years learning the joys and sorrows of parish ministry. We then moved to quite a different parish in Manchester for my first incumbency. This was in Droylsden, on the east side of the city near to Ashton-under-Lyne. Depending upon your view the parish could be described as an old Lancashire mill area, or alternatively as coronation Street country. Most of the local industry, though, had long since disappeared, the only place remaining of note being the Robertson's Jam Factory.

It was during this time that I became drawn into ministry amongst deaf people. Although I had previous contact with deaf people and the church's involvement with them, I had not been in any official capacity. Now began a period of ministry in which my time was divided between two very different styles of being church. It proved a very stimulating and challenging time, but was not without its rewards.

One of those rewards came after eight years when I was invited to return to the Midlands, to Coventry Diocese, where the work amongst deaf people was in need of some new direction. Bishop Clive, the then Bishop of Warwick, telephoned me to ask if I would be interested in this job, then went on to say that he was sorry but it would be based in a rural parish, after eight years in a somewhat difficult inner city parish

the thought of rural Warwickshire did not take too much consideration.

So began another period of ministry, with new challenges to face, not least in the work with deaf people, but also learning the skills and



ministry style appropriate to a rural setting. Eight years in that situation is again changing.

I believe it right to now stand aside from the deaf work, so that someone new can build upon the foundations that have been laid over this period of time. My role will now be as a full-time parish priest, although still be called upon to divide myself and my time, this now being between the three parishes and five churches. This will mean, therefore, that some change is inevitable, for all of us, but at this stage it is too early to predict what changes may be necessary.

Perhaps the most significant change that will be noticed in Snitterfield will be that 'the Vicar' will not be living in the Vicarage. The family will remain in the Rectory at Wolverton, while Roger Morris, a clergyman working for the Diocese, will be living in the Vicarage. Although Roger and his family may choose to worship at their local church, Roger's responsibilities will mean that he will not be a spare pair of hands who can be called upon to make the new parish arrangements work.

The other ingredient that I believe is vital for any of us is that life ought not to be just work. I try, therefore, to maintain interests in things outside the church and ministry. My main involvement is in railways, with gardening following a close second, which these days seems to be more mowing grass and battling with weeds. Walking when it happens and reading, less so these days, are other things that I enjoy.

As a family we have greatly enjoyed living and working in a rural setting and are very happy to continue to do so. I look forward to working among you and gradually coming to know you.

Richard Livingston

When is a vicar not a vicar?

As news of the appointment of a new vicar in Snitterfield was announced, so people also noticed that a man dressed as a vicar was seen moving into the Vicarage at Snitterfield. If the man in our Vicarage isn't our new vicar then we wanted to find out who his is and what he does.

The man in question is the Reverend Roger Morris. In September, he was appointed as the Director of the Forum for Parish Development and Evangelism for the Diocese of Coventry (an area covering practically the whole of Warwickshire). The Church of England in Warwickshire has four Directors. Roger's job is to head up a team of people who will enable churches to be healthy and to grow. His work covers everything from helping churches improve their Sunday worship to encouraging their members to share their faith with others. It also covers things like Bible study, spirituality, Christian giving, research, children's work and youth work. By the end of October, Roger had visited over 50 clergy on a one-to-one basis to look at the life of their churches, he had led a number of Church Council (PCC) meetings and was also planning a number of exciting initiatives for the new year. Roger said, "Unless I am of use to the parishes, my job will disappear. The church cannot afford to employ bureaucrats. They need people of action who will have a positive effect on the life of our parish churches."

As for his role in Snitterfield, Roger is cautious as he doesn't want to queer the pitch for Richard Livingstone. He says, "Snitterfield is one of 240 churches in the diocese and my role brings me into contact with all 240 in one way or another. As a result of being spread so thinly, I cannot have a specific role in any one church. Snitterfield is the church to which I go when I am not taking services elsewhere. My family go there and my daughter was even a mouse in their harvest play. But beyond me being a member of the congregation, I have no specific role here."

Roger is married to Sally, an assistant headteacher at Chipping Norton School, and they have two daughters; Imogen (who is 3) and Fiona (who is 6 and goes to Snitterfield Primary School). Roger says, "We were housed here because the Vicarage was available, but we couldn't have chosen a better place to live. The area is beautiful and the people are very friendly." Given that Roger is not the vicar, he has still thrown himself into the life of the community. He is one of the vice chairs of FOSS (Friends of Snitterfield School) and recently ran a quiz night in aid of school funds. "Snitterfield is a wonderful place," he says, "And I'd like to do what I can to help it continue to thrive. I may not have a role in the local church but Snitterfield is where I live and that's important to me."

Roger Morris

News From Your County Councillor



One of my roles as a County Councillor has been working with and supporting the Warwickshire Fire Service. The recent the Fire Service dispute has brought home the problem of fire and I have, therefore, been actively looking at the fire risk to our homes and places of work. In Snitterfield we have been lucky not to suffer a serious injury or loss of life in recent

years, but we must not be complacent. It has been proved that smoke detectors in the home can dramatically reduce the chance of death or serious injury and speaking to people in the village before the fire dispute many talked of buying a smoke detector. I wonder just how many have one now that the strike is nothing but a memory! Remember that for the sake of a few pounds you could greatly increase you and your family's

chances of survival in the event of a serious fire – two smoke detectors will be enough for the average family house.

In the event of a fire in the village it is always helpful to know where the nearest fire hydrant is to your home. Be conscientious of where you park your car so that fire engines can get to all the houses in the village. It could be your property, which the emergency vehicle cannot reach because your car is blocking the way to your house or preventing access to the fire hydrant to get more water.

Tragically two people died in Bearley sixteen years ago. Please don't let it happen in Snitterfield.

For help and information please ring the Fire Safety Department on 01926 410800

Richard Hobbs County and District Councillor
Telephone: 01789 730331

Cricket Update - State of Play

PLAY

Our season finished on a high note on September the 6th, having convincingly beaten the Stratford Bards. Ben Smith produced the batting performance of the season with 92 not out, being well supported by Nick Hayter 39 not out. This ended a good season for us, finishing with 3 victories from our nine matches.

Although this may not sound wonderful, most of the teams we play are well-established sides that play league cricket, and we are very much a Sunday village team.

The end of season has just been completed with the batting average being topped by Nick Hayter with 62, followed by Ben Smith 49, the only other two batsman making double figures were Tim Hartwell 16.5, a good performance from a lower order spin bowler, and James Durnian (all rounder) who would feel a bit disappointed with his average of 16. Other innings of note was a fine knock of 49 from Tim Cox, and a good all-round performance on his debut from Daniel Fell. Also a mention must be given to our stand in wicket keeper Phil Briggs, who in the twilight of his career decided to have a go behind the timbers. He did a good job despite taking a few on the chest and one in the mouth at Welford. After the Welford incident he appeared at the next fixture sporting a very impressive gum shield, which made Leslie Ash's botox lips look quite normal. I think a refit might be in order Phil!



The leading wicket taker was myself, Lee Hillier, with 14 wickets at an average of 10.3 per wicket, this was due mainly, as I have

been reminded many times, to shall we say, picking my moments to come on and bowl. Although he didn't take many wickets, James Durnian, opening the bowling nearly every week, and against some good opening batsman, bowled 55 overs, getting 7 wickets and a average of 1.75 runs per over. Also notable performances with the ball were from James Swords bowling 48 overs for 2.6 runs per over, Ben Leefe taking 3 wickets in his 10 overs for 30, and Ian Wyllie Bowled very well 18 overs 4 wickets for 85.

STATE OF THE PITCH

At present (early November), we have reached the stage where a seeded cricket square has been laid, this has been fenced off and hopefully should grow between now and May next year, when all being well we can begin to cut and start to roll the square. Could everyone please keep an eye on the fenced off square as we have already had a couple of incidents of damage, fencing being thrown across the field, and poles being broken Please contact Lee if there are any more incidents!

There is one major thing left to do before we can forget about things for a few months, approx. 60-80 tons of soil is needed to take some of the slope off the out field up to the square, we have access to 60 tons of soil from a building site in Stratford, if anyone is able to help with transport, or if anyone has a large amount of top soil they wish to get rid of, then please contact me.

We shall be having occasional meetings through the winter (see notice board) to discuss future plans and everyone is welcome to attend. Should anyone like to become a member, either to play, watch, or just simply support the idea of cricket in the village, there will be joining details displayed in the shop and on the notice board in early spring

The club would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have helped us set up and reach this stage. Thank you to all the individuals and companies who have donated financially, and to those who have helped with time and equipment in the preparation of the net and the square. We could not have achieved this without such support. Well done everyone! **Lee Hillier** Captain



The 'Titmarsh' touch in the cemetery...

It's been a wonderful summer, and many of you will have taken the opportunity to walk round our beautiful village. You may have walked past our lovely church, through the churchyard and passed through the cemetery, taking in the peaceful atmosphere and delightful views over the park. If you have, you will have noticed the cemetery is in need of some tender loving care.

The Parish Council, with a set budget, pays for it to be mown regularly and the contractor to do a limited amount of maintenance. The large yew tree is to be trimmed shortly, and members of the Parish Council are planning to do some work on the paths themselves.

The more recent graves are regularly cared for, allowing the contractors to mow and strim around them, leaving them looking neat and tidy. However, there is a problem with a number of graves, in particular the very old ones, which are completely neglected and overgrown. Where the graves have edging stones, it's impossible to carry out proper maintenance, and the PC cannot afford for them to be manually weeded out of parish rates.

After much consideration and discussion, the PC believes there are two possible ways of dealing with this problem;

The first, is to ask for volunteers from the village who would be willing to take over the maintenance of a grave, in effect 'adopt a grave', this would mean tidying and weeding it on a regular basis.

The second is to move the edging stones, so that after an initial tidying up session, the contractors are able to maintain the whole cemetery by simply mowing and strimming round the headstones.

What are your views? Are willing to help? Please ring me if you are willing to help, or come along to our next Parish Council meeting and add your views!

Sylvia Morlidge Parish Councillor,
telephone 01789 731279

Waterlife in Shoe Field

Mists of time shroud the date and origins of the pond at the rear of Church Lane, and how it came into being. Sited in Shoe Field, a small valley through which Bell Brook flows, it could well have been a natural pond used as a food source for the village, or maybe, it built as a parkland feature? A map dated 1766 clearly marks the pond on this spot.

The near by Bell Brook, to the west and separated by a raised path, supplies a regular flow of water controlled by a brick built dam (which has been restored), together with a brick sluice enabling the pond to be drained for cleaning purposes no longer. This is now impossible as the outlet pipe has been covered by new water levels in the brook. Living memories can recall a bucket and steam engines set up carrying out this operation.

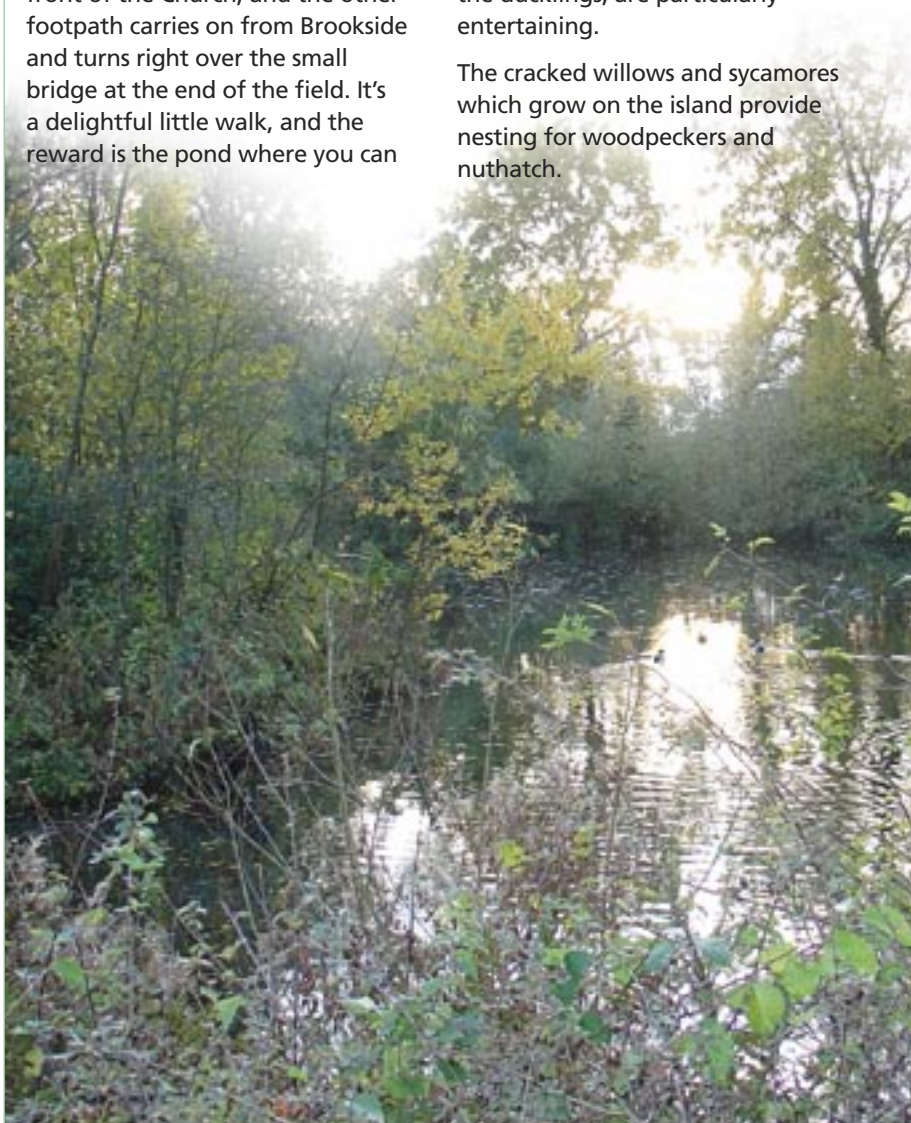
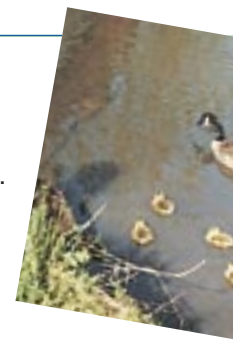
The pond can be approached by two public footpaths. One drops down from Church Road just in front of the Church, and the other footpath carries on from Brookside and turns right over the small bridge at the end of the field. It's a delightful little walk, and the reward is the pond where you can

stand, watch, listen, and enjoy the peace.

It provides a wonderful year-round refuge for wildlife, and is a centre of activity for an almost endless list of birds and animals who enjoy the generally clear, clean water and a safe haven.

Early springtime brings Canada Geese, handsome with their beautiful brown and white plumage. Swans then appear (same pair every year) and immediately begin to harass the geese, which have now settled on their island nest and produced goslings (a record seven this year). The parent geese shepherd their young on to the field where they gorge on grass and in particular, buttercups - and the young goslings grow rapidly on this succulent feast. Tufted ducks also visit and nest each year, and their diving practice, especially the ducklings, are particularly entertaining.

The cracked willows and sycamores which grow on the island provide nesting for woodpeckers and nuthatch.





The Autumn heralds the return of the Mallard drakes and their courting flights begin. Likewise the moorhens and coots return and start arguing over the nesting sites, but usually settle for the same site each year. Herons

make regular visits in search of food through-out the year, flying the gauntlet of diving crows, and a visiting kingfisher can often be glimpsed with its startlingly blue plumage as it flashes by. One special visitor recently, was a shag or cormorant who rested a couple of days and could be seen diving and swimming under the water feeding on fish.

The winter is no less interesting and the lack of leaves mean it is much easier to see the birdlife. Whatever time of the year you visit you are never quite sure what you are going to see, but it is always a delightful, beautiful and interesting place.

Bill Parnham



Yes believe it or not, the village had it's own swimming baths up until the early 1940's!



Allan today, standing in the deep end! - and left is Allan's mother, Daisy Morris and young Allan

Situated behind The Green, in the narrow strip of field leading on from the small playground, the baths were controlled by the Parish Council, it being the first Parish Council to adopt the Baths and Washhouses Act. A sub-committee was formed to deal with the maintenance of the baths, which were rented for £2.10s. from Lady Trevelyan (local landowner). The baths were surrounded by a wooden hoarding, with conveniences including, two dressing-rooms, roofed shelter, diving platform, and constantly changing water. In 1915 a hedge was planted on either side. The upkeep had always been difficult, but realising the great benefit to the villagers the Parish Council made every effort to keep it going. It was fully and regularly used, with many boys and girls having learnt to swim there, but the downside being frequent cases of wilful damage.

Apparently the baths were kept full the year round, but an experiment made in 1919 left them dry for the winter. In 1921 it was agreed to reserve the baths for ladies from 2-4pm daily, except Saturdays and Sundays. In April 1926 an attendant was engaged (at £1.10.0d. per annum) to 'skim the surface at least once a week, keep the grass and hedges cut, clean out baths twice a year, keep the dressing rooms clean and generally look after the place'.

In 1929 the Parish Council considered purchasing the baths in lieu of renting it, but as two fields went with it, it was

Swimming baths for Snitterfield!

considered best to wait until after the sale of the Trevelyan Estate. The baths together with the fields appear to have been sold to a Mr Harvey in 1931, and the Parish Council agreed to buy the baths and fields from Mr Harvey (who would not sell them separately) for £100, and the deposit of £10 was duly paid out of the surplus funds of £12.19.7d left over from the Jubilee celebrations. Some of the money was raised by selling the children's 'small playground'. The baths continued to be used regularly and damage continued to be done, especially to the woodwork. In 1939 the baths were visited by representatives of the Parish Council and it was unanimously decided that in view of the damage done, the absence of Police Control, and unavoidable unhygienic conditions generally (specially due to the failure of the Syphon System), an estimate was obtained for putting the pool back in good order, but this has never been done owing to non-approval by the medical authorities.

This information, produced in the W.I.'s 'Snitterfield History Scrap Book' of 1956, provides a good illustration of the Snitterfield Baths. We understand the Parish Council ordered the filling in of the baths at some stage. If anyone have any further information please contact Allan Morris on 01789 731415.

There are still copies of the W.I. book available, to purchase please contact Marilyn Follis on 01789 731407.

Bob Guest - Exploring far afield, but always returning to Snitterfield

*Seven weeks of sea, and twice
seven days of storm
Upon the huge Atlantic, and once
more
We ride into still water and the
calm...*

from 'Gibraltar' by Wilfred Scawen Blunt

Experienced by Bob as a very young man with a taste for adventure and aboard a tramp steamer bound for Newfoundland, so sea sick that he tied the knob of his cabin door to the ablutions door opposite in order to exit fast. Bob, a good vintage raconteur, spun his stories as we ate supper recently, sometimes in recalling his experiences he could hardly sit still as he gave his deep characteristic chuckle. A chartered engineer by profession, he worked for several large companies in the UK and abroad before establishing his own business, manufacturing machinery for the rubber, plastics, and metal tube industries. Now retired from a regular routine, but with a great enthusiasm for life, he remains active, swimming early each day, and regularly indulging his passion for hill & mountain walking.

Settling into Park Lane in the early 1960s, with his wife Jean, and three small daughters, Bob soon became active in village life. He was a Parish Councillor with Bob Gardner, Alan Morris, Pat Foster, Derek Marshall, and later with Keith Lambert among



others, he was also a member of the Parochial Church Council when the Rev. Woodward Court was incumbent at St James the Great, Snitterfield. The village had a Preservation Association founded in the 1960s, when an attempt was made to develop the Park in Snitterfield. Bob as Chairman, served with such characters as Roy Dunston, John Shelby, David Morris, and Graham Ogg, with an aim to protect the village from inappropriate development. The Association organized Snitterfield's entry into the Annual Best Kept Village competition, and held well-attended meetings addressed by guest speakers on subjects relating to conservation. Bob was Chairman of the Snitterfield Conservative Association for many years, and has more recently taken the Chair of the Snitterfield Conservation

Group, which was born out of the 2002 Village Appraisal. Bobs reports on the groups activities can be seen in Snipe.

Travelling initially on business and latterly in pursuit of his great interest in filming wildlife, Bob has visited many countries in the world. He regularly visits parts of Africa and India on safari in search of the prolific animal and bird life, and to witness the spectacular scenery, in the form of rivers & lakes, savanna, vast plains, forests & mountains. His interest in mountains dates back to student days, when as a member of his university's mountaineering club he was introduced to Snowdonia, the Lake District and the Cuillins on Skye. Subsequently he took up an appointment in Switzerland partly to advance his career, but also to provide ready access to the Alps! In later years, he has been privileged to explore many fine mountain ranges including the Torridon mountains in Scotland, Mount Kenya, The Grand Teton in Wyoming and above all, the majestic Himalayas, stretching from Nanda Devi in the west, to Kanchenjunga in the east

Coming much nearer home, and on a more modest scale, Bob's current project is making a video recording of the new herd of deer in Charlecote Park, for the National Trust.

MEF

SNIPER'S CORNER

Dear Snipe - About three times a week I walk from the Bowling Club down Wolverton Road, through Hales Close, through the footpath to Highfield Close, down Bearley Road to the end of the Snitterfield Arms' car park, and then home to Woodward Court. I carry a 'carrier' bag with me and start to pick up rubbish - bottles, cans, cigarette packets, chocolate wrappers and even plastic milk bottles. Why throw your rubbish down?

Come on everyone - make an effort... why not try to keep the village tidy!

PS I walked through the playing fields on Wolverton Road at the weekend, no bag with me, but honestly, I would have needed a black bin sack - I could have quite easily filled it!

Sylvia Moore



A TREASURE CHEST

A set of 16 handbells, more than seventy years old, were discovered in an old chest in Snitterfield during 1945.

A team of seven, including 4 members of the Bloxham family, quickly learnt the techniques of 'ringing' and became a regular sight and sound in Snitterfield, particularly at Christmas time. Over a period of 9 years they raised over £400 (a great deal of money at that time) for various church funds. So, where are they now, and are they still being rung?



JANUARY 2004 HERALDS BROADBAND!

At last, an end to not being able to use the phone when another member of the family is on the internet, and to all the other frustration's that go with the one-line access.

WE'RE INTERESTED IN A PROJECT!

New York, Hong Kong, Paris... Redditch. Perhaps not the most obvious choice of career moves but we were delighted at the opportunity to return to the Midlands after seven years abroad.

'The fruit farm', my old school friends from Solihull cried, when I told them about my visit to Snitterfield this time last year, recollecting trips down the Stratford Road in the days before the M40. I'd been to see a house on The Green for sale and my husband and I - needless to say - loved the village.

Cosy Cott had been suggested to me when I told the estate agents we were interested in a 'project'. My parents had built their own house in Canada and more out of naiveté than practical experience; we thought we were up to the task. Our offer was eventually accepted in December.

The paperwork in the end took almost as much time as the build has done. As the house was without both kitchen and bathroom, no high street lender was interested. Fortunately I had been devouring self-build magazines and read up on financing. A specialist mortgage broker in Scotland (where self-build is more common) put us in touch with a bank willing to take us on despite having been out of the UK so long. Self-build mortgages release money in stages - land purchase, foundations, eaves, wind and water tight, completion - either in advance or in arrears so a detailed budget and timetable were crucial.

Site insurance also proved tricky due to the culvert, which ran directly below the proposed extension. Again, magazine articles pointed the way to various foundation specialists who were called in as the sale progressed. Though 325mm diameter continuous flight augur piles didn't mean much to me then, they meant enough to the insurance broker to cover us in time for completion at the end of March.

We had one last hurdle before starting work. The detailed planning permission granted in 1999 incorporated retention of a clumsily built bay window and a doorway off to the right. Looking around the village, it was clear that the

original house



would have had a central hall and porch, which we found very attractive and wanted to restore. I spent many hours with tracing paper and pen reworking the interior layout and our amendments were approved an agonising eight weeks later.

The builders started in late May as we cleared ten year's bramble growth and the remains of the previous extensions which were abandoned in 1995. The foundations were in place in just over two weeks, with the piles driven to a depth of 7 metres.

Simultaneously, I started work at the Stratford District Council in Heritage & Design, (formerly known as Conservation & Landscape) on a part-time basis. My reading and experience to date with Cosy Cott stood me in good stead at the interview and I hope to be able to help the parish on these issues in the future.

You may have noticed our single glazed windows? Though building regulations do stipulate double-glazing, we were able to obtain special dispensation for the street elevation to be in keeping with the historical street scene.

By early June we were out of the ground and the house had a roof by July. At this point, the weather was both kind and cruel to us. Cruel in that such a dry summer brought about a national shortage of plain clay tiles. Our next-



door neighbours have patiently borne scaffolding on their drive for months longer than should have been necessary. Kind in that we were able to continue work internally; so much so that we were plastered out before the roof was completed just a few weeks ago as I write.

Now that the scaffolding has gone, a flood of trades has been released. The gas men have been in to reinstall a meter, though it took five of them to find the connection! Apologies in advance for Severn Trent who will also be digging up The Green to replace a lead pipe in the road. Though the windows have been in for months, we can now have the glass fitted. And at last the pile of builders' rubble has been cleared. We hope that Cosy Cott is looking more attractive to those of you passing by.

In the next few weeks we should have heating and hot water and it will be good-bye to the builders vans and hello paintbrushes as we aim for inevitable 'in by Christmas' deadline. Many thanks to those of you have stopped by with good wishes and mugs of tea; we are really looking forward to moving and returning the favour!

Claudine and Eric

The Snitterfield exchange has a 'ready for service' date of 21 January 2004! Well done all you 'tec's' who have been registering your interest, we have a result!

To find out more information view either:

www.bt.com/broadband/ns or www.broadband4snitterfield.co.uk