

FEBRUARY 2012



SUCKLEY NEWSLETTER

The winter months are often a time for reflection - if nothing else to keep your mind off how cold your toes are and how there's still nothing on telly - and this month's issue of the newsletter has much to offer whichever way you want to look at things.

Looking back we have the welcome relaunch of Suckley History Society, complete with an interesting programme of events for 2012 to enlighten us on past village life. Suckley School is after your memories of old school days at Suckley. Class 3 are hoping to publish a history book of the school and this could be the chance you've always wanted to spill the beans on what really happened during class when you were there.

Bridging the gap of old and new we have Andrew Grieve's interesting reflection on the many in the parish who enjoy their equine pursuits in the beauty of the local countryside, both now and then, as well as the continued adventures of plantsman Adrian Holme's trek through China; finding the garden plants we now take for granted growing wild in their natural habitat, just as those heavily mustachioed first plant collectors found them, before they hurriedly dug them up and sneaked them through the 'Nothing to Declare' channel at customs.

Very much in the here and now, we have details of 2 great new projects - the Neighbourhood Development Plan moving on apace and the Good Neighbour Scheme going live on 1st April; as well as updates on the Church, the parish council and Pre-school and a new police telephone number to use for non-emergencies. Whilst our regular chef provides a warming dish for cold days, for those with a sweet tooth, Suckley School recipe book offers 'Miss D's Favourite cupcakes' and the chance to buy your own copy.

Lastly, looking forward, we have old Worcester variety apple trees on offer from the County Council to plant for the future, and an initiative to speed up our broadband internet connection and a vision of how this could change our village life.

So with all that exercise looking backwards and forwards and all around, and all that talk of exciting events and adventures, with a bit of luck we might have warmed those toes up - afraid we can't do much about the telly though.

FEBRUARY 2012

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Next Issue: First week in April 2012

Content for newsletter to be submitted **23rd March 2012**.

Suckley Post Office: Roger & Barbara Blackburn - 884201.

Shop Open: Mon – Fri 7.00am – 6.00pm, Sat 7.00am – 1.00pm

Post Office Open: Mon – Fri 9.00am – 5.30pm (till 1.00pm Weds)

Sat 9.00am – 12.30pm

Village websites – for up to date information on what is happening in the village as well as a list of businesses and trades: www.suckleypo.co.uk & www.suckley.net or for Parish Council business www.worcestershire.gov.uk/MyParish (select Suckley from alphabetical listing).

Village Hall: Steve Boughton - 884210

Suckley School: Mr Matthew Meckin - 884283

Suckley & Alfrick Pre-School: Joanne Hall - 884766

Church: Wardens: Dr Anne M Lewis – 884552

Parish Clerk: Mrs Diana Taylor - 01684 569430

District Councillors: Mr D Hughes - 833049, Mr A Warburton - 832753

Playing Fields: Bookings & Pitches Mr & Mrs Luton – 884558

Skateboard Arena: Mr P Beaumont – 884550

West Mercia Constabulary: Emergency 999. Non-emergencies 101. Switchboard 0300 333 3000

PC3381 Sarah Ransome-Williams, CSO 6494 Tracey Caldwell,
CSO 5481 Collin Davies.

Have YOU something to say?

We welcome all contributions to the newsletter and are very grateful to those who have written for this issue. If you would like to write something (or ask a question) for the newsletter, whether it is about a Suckley past or what the village needs for the future, please get in touch – call Hilary on 884355 or email suckleynews@gmail.com

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It's Back! Suckley Local History Society returns.

Yes... it's true, this popular local group is returning with an exciting series of interesting meetings for 2012. Andrew Grieve tells us what is planned over the coming months.

The Society was started following a superb exhibition of Local History material in the village hall in 2000 to celebrate the Millennium, and as well as organising meetings and outings, the Society ran a very successful research group, and subsequent publications were produced. We are now relaunching the Society, initially with a series of events for 2012, and look forward to restarting the research activities too.

So, have you ever wondered what the Suckley area was like in the past, what all the quarries around here were used for, how the old railway line worked, how agriculture has changed over the centuries or the history of some of our more unusual and special buildings and the people who have contributed to our heritage? You will learn some of the answers with the Suckley Local History Society and perhaps provide the Society with some answers of your own.

2012 Programme of Suckley History Society Meetings

Thursday 8th March	The Bromyard Branch – a local railway story
Thursday 19th April	18th & 19th century change and migration in the Hereford/ Worcester border area
Saturday 30th June	United Brethren and the early Mormon (LDS) church – field trip with tea
Thursday 13th Sept	Edward Elgar and the Malvern years
Thursday 22nd Nov	Visit to the Worcester Hive – the new home of Worcestershire Archaeology & Archive Service

Meetings will be held in Suckley Village Hall, starting at 7.30pm, except meetings on 30th June and 22nd November.

Membership

Annual membership is a bargain at £10, which entitles you to free entry to all

five meetings. Non-members are always welcome to attend; the charge on the door for meetings will be £4. Refreshments will be available at our meetings at a small charge; we aim to make these occasions sociable and fun, as well as interesting and informative, so please come along and support your local history society by joining us.

We are keen to get the Society started again and welcome ideas and input, and offers of help. Do please contact us if you would like any further information or have any suggestions or comments. We look forward to seeing you at the meetings.

Andrew Grieve, The Oasthouse, Suckley WR6 5DP, 01886 884795, andchris2@btinternet.com / Liz Devenish, Red Castle, Suckley, WR6 5DN, 01886 884787, liz.devenish@virgin.net

Worcestershire County Council - Last Chance to order 'Fruit Trees for Worcester'.

Worcestershire was a county once renowned for its orchards and fruit growing. Sadly, in recent years many of our orchards, along with the traditional Worcestershire varieties have declined. It is thought that up to 85% of our orchards have been lost in the last 50 years. In an attempt to promote and prolong our traditional varieties, Worcestershire County Council is working in partnership with Walcot Organic Nursery to carefully grow locally distinctive varieties for you to plant in your garden, field or orchard. Apple varieties include the Pitmaston Russet and Colwall Quoining, two variety of pears - Worcester Black Pear being one and two Pershore Plums, Purple and Yellow are included on the list. But you will have to hurry, trees have to be bought and collected by 16th March.

For the 2011 /2012 season, WCC has selected nine local varieties. Prices : Apples £14.25 each, Pears £15.50 each and Plums £16.50 each.

If you would like more information you can download 'Fruit Tree Leaflet 11.12. pdf' from the www.suckleypo.co.uk or contact Worcester County Council on 01905 766155 to see what varieties are still available to order.

The Suckley Good Neighbour Scheme goes 'LIVE' on 1st April 2012!

What is the Suckley Good Neighbour Scheme?

The idea came from the 'Health and Wellbeing Group'. It is run entirely by Suckley volunteers who are willing to lend a hand when other Suckley folk need some help, by just doing things that good neighbours do for each other. Suckley is one of the largest parishes in Worcestershire, but with only just over 200 households has one of the lowest populations; so it can be difficult knowing who to ask for help when problems arise.

The volunteers' time is free; but if expenses are incurred, a donation to cover these is appreciated. The scheme is not intended to replace carers, and volunteers are not able to provide personal care.

Who can use the Scheme?

Our volunteers are happy to visit anyone who needs help in the Parish of Suckley.

Who can benefit from the Scheme?

If you wish you could call upon someone to help you with a particular task, then call the Suckley Good Neighbour Scheme and tell them. If you know someone who is elderly or disabled or feeling isolated, please suggest that they give us a call. We will do our best to be useful. If you would like to be part of the Scheme's network of support (as a volunteer with time, or skills, or know-how, or if you have a useful 'something' that others could find useful too), then we look forward to hearing from you too.

How can the Scheme help you?

Here are a few examples of how the Scheme might be used:

Fetching prescriptions, help with forms or letters, practical tasks at home, shopping or doing errands, walking or feeding pets, advocacy (helping you make an informed choice about something), or sometimes just being a friendly face.



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Who are the volunteers?

The volunteers are all local people who have offered their time and their talents to help people in their community. They may be people you already know. So that you can feel confident about your safety, all volunteers have been C.R.B. checked and carry identity cards.

How can I use the Scheme?

Please call 07623 984192 between 9.30am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday. The operator will ask you to explain briefly what sort of help you would like, and then arrange for a volunteer to phone you back. This number costs approx 8p per minute to call in daytime.

So... when someone in Suckley needs help...remember the Suckley Good Neighbour Scheme.

AND if you would like to be part of the Scheme's network of support (as a volunteer with time, or skills, or know-how, or if you have a useful 'something' that others could find useful too), then we look forward to hearing from you too. **Help us to help you! Thank you!**

Marie Woodroff and Anne Lewis (01886 884552)



SURGERY NEWS - There is no Surgery News in this issue. If you'd like a copy of the latest full A4 newsletter, please contact the Sharon Salter at the Surgery on 01886 821279 or visit www.knightwicksurgery.co.uk



ANDREW JELLEY O P T I C I A N S

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Horsing around Suckley

Andrew Grieve, a keen horseman, tells us of the equine population of Suckley in the past and how today many local residents enjoy sharing the lovely countryside with their horses and ponies.

A casual glance over the fields around Suckley might suggest that there are almost as many horses and ponies as people living in the area. The equine population is probably the highest it's been since tractors took over from working horses on local farms some 80 years ago when they were the power source for farm fieldwork, transport and drove farm machinery and mills. Now, there are livery stables, riding schools, studs and training yards providing business and employment. Many of the horses are kept locally for pleasure riding as Suckley is rich in bridle paths and quiet country lanes which make it a mecca for hacking. Unfortunately, some of these pretty unmade up green lanes are officially designated Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs) which makes them accessible to off roaders and scramble bikes who while enjoying their recreation, churn up the ground and present a real hazard to riders and walkers.

It's always good to see youngsters riding past my house along Blackhouse Lane, often unaccompanied, to canter up the bridle path into the woods – a scene that must have been repeated many, many times over the years as they enjoy the adventure and freedom of hacking out away from the dangers of road traffic.

In 1887, the Alfrick school register reports that "In May of this year many children were absent, probably foxhunting". The local Hunt, the North Ledbury, was based in Suckley for almost three quarters of a century at the White House – the family home of the Twinberrows. This prominent local landmark was the scene of social events and Hunt Balls for generations and the White House based North Ledbury Foxhounds was one of the last few remaining private packs in the country. Coincidentally our local Hunt celebrated its centenary in 2005, the year hunting was banned! Since then the twice weekly hunt meetings (Saturdays and Tuesdays) throughout the winter have seen more riders (of all

ages sizes and shapes) than ever joining in the fun of riding through the woods, lanes and fields of the Suckley and surrounding district.

The hunt kennels and stables now form part of the barn conversions behind the historic White House, which has recently been restored to its full glory and has been the popular subject of talks organized by the Suckley Local History Society. (See article 'It's Back! Suckley Local History Society returns.')

Suckley 'Neighbourhood Development Plan' – Update

Many thanks to everyone who attended the Open Meeting on 16th January. The meeting considered and discussed the following:

- What are the Localism Bill and Neighbourhood Development Plan seeking to achieve and how might Suckley residents benefit from this?
- What have the people of Suckley already identified in previous plans, and with work already in hand, which is seeking to improve the quality of life for all of its residents?
- What might be some of the new/emerging issues for Suckley residents which any new plan should seek to take action on?

What Next?

- January/February '12 – thoughts/ideas from the Open Meeting plus other information drawn from previous plans to be drawn together in the shape of a Suckley Neighbourhood Development Plan Questionnaire
- February '12 – questionnaire to go out to all Suckley households consulting on priorities for action to go into the Neighbourhood Development Plan
- March '12 – analysis of responses to the questionnaire
- April '12 – Open Meeting to check out key messages from the questionnaire and agree priorities to be included in the Plan
- May '12 – draft Neighbourhood Development Plan to go to Annual Parish Meeting for consideration and sign off ready for publication and distribution.

Mark Molloy (Team Leader - Neighbourhood Development Plan)

Travels and Travails in China - Flying and Leaping Tigers

Adrian Holmes, our resident horticultural specialist, continues with his tale of his trip to China, scaling heights that leave him breathless at the beauty of the exotic, the abundant and the delightful plants and flowers, deep in the Chinese countryside.

Before bidding farewell to Liuku, our hosts thought it would be a “good” idea to pop a few kilometres west to Pianma to go and see the border with Myanmar. Hmmm! Based on a previous experience approaching the border from the China side is OK; coming away from it seemed to automatically arouse suspicions of nefarious activities by foreigners who needed to be detained for an hour on board their bus with armed police for company while passports, itineraries and stories were scrutinised (What? looking for lilies? A likely story).

But the Chinese like this gap in the Gaoligong mountain range where the Nmai Hka runs westwards through the mountains. It was called the Hump Route of the Second World War when the secretive Flying Tigers (Hei Fui) volunteers flew their missions to keep China supplied with the necessary materials to fight the invading Japanese armies. Secretive because it was the USA which was funding the operation in direct contradiction to the public stance of not being involved in the war. Of course, Pearl Harbour put an end to that. In recognition and gratitude for this assistance, a Flying Tigers museum has been established here and it now boasts a completely rebuilt c-53, recovered from a nearby mountain where it crashed. Today it is a significant trade route for the countries of Indo-China, including, apparently, for timber illegally logged and brought into China to help satisfy its huge appetite for raw materials.

The Brits, however, are not so lauded. In 1900 we invaded Pianma from Burma, an event that obviously still rankles to the extent that it was only 25 years ago that they built the Anti-British Monument in commemoration of the invasion. We moved on quickly.

We headed west to Jianchuan and the evocatively named 99-Dragon Pool Mountain. Jianchuan is a bit off the tourist track. This has implications for the range and type of accommodation available. Suffice it to say that the friendliness and welcoming of our hotel's staff far outstripped the facilities

on offer. But, as everywhere we went, the food was second to none. Anyway, the assortment was here to get out of town and into the countryside in this botanically rich area.

It is about 2,000 to 2,500 metres above sea level, which is not high in terms of plants, and we found many trees and shrubs familiar to us such as roses, acers, hydrangeas, berberis and birches, and perennials such as impatiens (busy lizzies), primulas, eidleweiss, ligularias, persicarias, potentillas, thistles and anemones. Even so, there were others that had simply been pictures in a book: a *Ceologyne corymbosa*, a beautiful white orchid with yellow markings edged in maroon, a *Galeola lindleyana*, a 2 metre tall orchid with yellow flowers, and perhaps one of the highlights of this particular section, a plant unknown to science only two years ago, a *Meconopsis wilsonii* subsp *australis* – a Himalayan poppy carrying exquisitely coloured dusky pink flowers with deep red markings inside.



Meconopsis wilsonii subsp australis – the recently discovered Himalayan poppy, named after Christopher Grey-Wilson, a UK botanist and alpine specialist.

We went higher, above 3,000metres, where you do start to feel the lack of oxygen in the air, to 99-Dragon Pool Mountain. This is virgin woodland, the trees dripping with strands of lichen and the floor and boulders carpeted with mosses,

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99-Dragon Pool – at almost 3,500 metres, oxygen is a bit scarce.

brilliantly coloured fungi and exotic plants with equally exotic names such as lloydias, notholirions, megacodons and pleurospermums.

If you watched the Michael Palin TV series 'The Himalayas' you have been to this general area for it is near here where the Yangtse, hemmed into a narrow gorge nearly four thousand metres deep, roars and plummets and froths and foams way, way below the top. It is Tiger Leaping Gorge. Legend has it that a tiger, being pursued by a hunting party, leapt across the gorge to safety. To say that such a leap was impressive would be an understatement – prodigious would be a more accurate description!

It is time to move on: to the remote Tibetan/Zhongdian plateau, not a good place to lose one's passport.....

If you would like to see more photographs of this trip, I am giving a talk to the Malvern Horticultural Society at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 22 February this year. The venue is The Chase 6th Form Annex, Geraldine Close, Malvern. Admission for visitors £1.00 (only £5.00 for the year!) Tea/coffee biscuits at 40p in the interval.

FREE Newsletter to Suckley Residents

FEBRUARY 2012

An exciting new future for our Pre-School at the Hop Kilns...

We are delighted to be able to share the news that we have secured the services of an established and successful local setting (The Villages Child Care, Manager Katie Wiggins), to lead and manage our setting, into an exciting new future. Katie and her team come with a first class reputation and recently achieved a 'good' with 'outstanding' features Ofsted report.

"Children make excellent progress because the staff provide interesting and innovative play opportunities both indoors and outside. Children thrive and staff work very closely with families to ensure that they have a detailed knowledge of children's individual learning and care needs" (Ofsted 2010).

This is a wonderful opportunity to combine the quality of a proven setting and staff, alongside our beautiful location and with a seamless flow into our growing primary school.

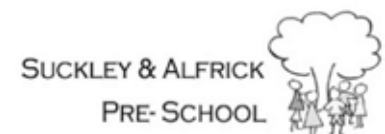
The new term started on January 16th 2012 with Katie leading the setting, alongside our two talented members of staff, Jemma and Mandy. Together they are putting in place the high quality provision that the children and families in our community so thoroughly deserve. Nursery Education Funding (for 3 and 4 year olds) is available and we have free places available to start this term.

New Opening Days

We will now be open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 am until 3 pm. You can see the new team in action within the setting, please contact Katie Wiggins on 07854 477445.

Access to child care on a Tuesday and Thursday:

The Villages are also going to be continuing their current provision at Leigh and Bransford Village Hall on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, so please enquire directly with Katie if you are interested.



FREE Newsletter to Suckley Residents

Recipes from the Suckley Masterchef

Balsamic Roasted Pork

Perfect for cheering up a cold, grey day and easy to prepare, this pork dish is best served with Pomme Purée and will feed 6 hungry people.

2.5Kg loin of pork, boned with rind and fat removed
3 onions, roughly chopped
4 cloves of garlic, crushed
1 bunch of rosemary
350ml balsamic vinegar
100ml red wine
100g butter
Salt & pepper

Preheat the oven to 220C/425F/Gas 7

1. Season and seal the pork on all sides in a hot pan.
2. In a roasting pan melt the butter and soften the onions, garlic and rosemary.
3. Add the pork to the roasting pan with **half** the balsamic vinegar and roast in the oven for 45 minutes.
4. 10 minutes before the end of the cooking time add the remaining balsamic vinegar.
5. Remove the pork from the roasting pan, cover to keep warm. Add the red wine to the pan, place over a high heat and reduce by half to make a gravy and then strain into warm jug.
6. To serve finally slice the pork with the gravy and Pomme Purée or mashed potato.



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ALL LEVELS WELCOME

What's on, what's happening in and around Suckley

...	<p>Advance Notice</p> <p>Calling all gardeners! Suckley Village Hall is hosting a gardening evening in May where a celebrity gardener will be chatting and answering gardening questions. This will be the chance to ask an expert why you can't grow Brussel Sprouts or why this huge creature is eating all your wallflowers! We shall also have a bring and buy plant sale or, if you can't bring, just come and buy. Further details will be released later so, please keep a look out.</p>
...	<p>Suckley Art Group</p> <p>Finding the long winter months a bit tedious? Do come and join us on Monday afternoons at Suckley Village Hall for a chat, a cuppa and, of course, a bit of art. Doesn't matter what craft you do, we would enjoy your company. We meet from 2 p.m for a couple of hours and it costs £2.50 per session plus 10p in the pot to keep everyone in biscuits! Just pop in or contact Carol on 01886 884210 for more details.</p>
...	<p>NLH Supporters Club - Fun Family Quiz Night</p> <p>At Alfrick Village Hall on Friday 17th February - 7pm for 7.30pm start</p> <p>Teams of up to 6, with no more than 4 adults (over 21) in any team. £7.50 per person, to include a light supper. There will also be a licensed bar and raffle. Please pre-book on 01886 884770 a few days before to help us with the catering.</p>
...	<p>Calling all ex pupils, Parents or Teachers of Suckley School - we need your help!</p> <p>For class 3's topic in January we are looking to find out about the History of Suckley School. If anyone has any information, we would love to interview you so that we have an idea about old times at Suckley School and how it has changed. We are hoping to find out about Suckley School throughout the different time periods. We will use this information to write and publish a book to sell. Here are some things that we would like to know about:</p> <p><i>School Discos, Trips, Rewards and Sanctions, Equipment, Furniture, Lessons and Uniform.</i></p> <p>If there is anything else that you know, please contact us! Thank you! Suckley School, Church Lane, Suckley, WR6 5DE. Please call 01886 884283.</p>

Local Services:

Mobile Library Timetable 2011

Fridays only at
Suckley - Cross Keys 1.45-2.00pm
Damson Way - 2.10-2.25pm
Longley Green Post Office 2.40-3.35pm

Dates: 17th Feb, 9th & 30th March
Enquiries about this service should be made to Malvern Library, Graham Road Malvern or telephone 01905 822722, or email malvernmobile@worcestershire.gov.uk

101 – police non-emergency number

Simon Edens, Assistant Chief Constable (Territorial Operations), West Mercia Police has released a letter to all Parish Councils with regard to the 101 telephone number. This number is to make it easier for the public to contact their local police force.

From Tuesday 8th November 2011, communities across West Mercia will have access to 101, the national non-emergency telephone number for the police service in England and Wales.

While 999 is a well-recognised number used to report emergencies, the 2010 British Crime Survey found that only 54% of the public know how to contact their local police if they want to talk to them about policing, crime or anti-social behaviour. The introduction of the 101 number will help communities to keep their neighbourhoods safe by giving them one easy way to contact their local police force to report non-emergency crime and disorder. Calls to 101 will cost 15 pence per call, no matter how long you are on the phone – this applies to both landlines and mobile phones. For the first time, everyone calling the police for non-emergency matters will know exactly how much the call will cost them and will be assured of equal access whether they are on a pay-as-you-go mobile or a home landline.

In an emergency, the public should continue to call 999, such as when a crime is in progress, when there is danger to life or when violence is being used or threatened. The current number (0300 333 3000) will continue to operate as a general switchboard number which should be used to speak to a particular person or a department. Further information can be obtained by visiting www.police.uk/101

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Suckley Church

It has been great to see Suckley Church buzzing with life over the Christmas season. The celebrations began with the Christmas Fair (a BIG thank you to the many who brought that event together, and helped raise funds for the Church, the Pre-School, the School and the Village Hall. The raffle alone brought in £720!).

Father Christmas had lots of little visitors, while others bought home made goodies (cakes, cards, and calendars etc), tried their luck at the tombolas, or enjoyed a cup of tea and a cake listening to the carols. As well as the Christingle and 9 Lessons and Carols, this year many Suckley folk were involved in the Barnyard Nativity at Colles Place, Lulsley. Two calves, Percy the cat, and a friendly welsh collie welcomed Sooty, the miniature pony from Alfrick Pound, who brought in a weary Mary and Joseph. There were lots of Suckley shepherds with their 'sheep' (children), and the wise men followed the star on their 'camels' (bicycles!). It was SO good, it MUST happen again next year...don't miss it! Services in the next 2 months:

Sun 5th Feb 11.00hrs All Age (a lively and informal) service with a baptism

Sun 12th Feb 18.00hrs Celtic evening prayer (a quiet contemplative service)

Sun 19th Feb we go to Alfrick for their 11.00hrs All Age (lively and informal) Service

Sun 26th Feb 11.00hrs Holy Communion with Sunday School (we will listen to Bishop John's Lent message)

Sun 4th March 11.00hrs All Age (lively and informal) service

Sun 11th March 18.00hrs Evening Prayer (a formal said service)

Sun 18th March Mothering Sunday. We go to Alfrick for 11.00hrs All Age service. Bring your mothers of all ages!

Sun 25th March 11.00hrs Holy Communion with Sunday School (with the very Rev Peter Atkinson, Dean of Worcester)

Sun 1st April 11.00hrs All Age Palm Sunday. Look out for details of a donkey procession.

The plans to reorder the inside of Suckley Church to make it more useful to the wider community are moving forwards, slowly but surely. The PCC has been looking at the work of many architects, and expects to have another public meeting soon. It is important to make the right choice that will be best for Suckley's future.

Anne Lewis (church warden 01886 884552).

Faster broadband in Suckley Parish.

There are many of us in the village who use the internet every day and could not imagine being without it. We use it for various reasons: to access information, to be able to work from home, to send emails, and to download entertainment. So why do we need faster broadband? The government would like all citizens to have access to Next Generation Broadband (NGA) by the end of 2015 because it is expected to have significant positive impact on our quality of life.

Currently, broadband download speeds in the village vary from between about 1 and 8 Megabits per second (Mbps) and the upload speeds are much slower topping out at about 350 Kilobits per second (Kbps) depending upon various limiting factors such as your package, your distance from the exchange and how many other people are using the service simultaneously. This is fine for simple emailing and internet browsing and is generally good for multiple small or single medium file transfers either by email or downloading from websites. However when engaged with heavier multimedia sites, especially at times of peak use or for uploading large data files it can seem very slow or just plain impossible.

What might we do with fast broadband?

Everything that we currently do can be done faster and by more of us at any one time. Fibre-optic cable can carry vastly more data than copper wires or satellite transmissions (at a fraction of the cost of in the case of satellite) this will enable a correspondingly huge amount of choice in transmitted services.

Individual and group communications are likely to be greatly facilitated. This improves working from home whether you are a small business or tele-working. Virtual attendance at meetings, conferences and parties would be possible via high definition video conferencing. More opportunities for employment from home and greatly expanded market reach for our businesses is a benefit of faster broadband. Education would also be facilitated with access to academic resources, testing from home / school - you could even study languages where they are spoken natively.

Health care could also benefit - imagine consulting a medical or care professional from home. Imagine telediagnosics (heart-rate/ temperature/ blood pressure / skin salinity) that could allow appropriate rapid first response or not as the situation dictates. The implications for Care in the Community are far-reaching, with obvious advantages in terms of convenience and privacy.

Finally, entertainment. TV on demand is likely to become the norm – watch the programmes that you want, when you want, pause for comfort breaks, rewind to repeat the best bits etc. It would be possible to experience richer multimedia applications without delays: High Definition (HD) TV and HD Three Dimensional (3D) TV will be delivered online, effectively meaning that anybody with NGA can enjoy multi-channel cable TV via a service named YouView (currently being developed in the UK - see www.youview.com). Other applications may include virtual reality experiences (tourism, museum, sports and concert experiences) and High Definition games.

Suckley Parish Council, through Hilary Pitt, has submitted an Expression of Interest (EoI) to Worcestershire County Council for a grant to upgrade broadband in the Parish. If the EoI is accepted, the village needs to put together a project team to investigate the various improvement options available, including costs, timescales etc. The application is still at an early stage at the moment but Hilary would like to hear from you if you would like to be part of the project team, offer advice or register your support for the improving broadband speeds in the village. The more support shown, the better the likelihood of a grant being awarded. You can contact her on suckleynews@gmail.com or on 01886 884355.

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Suckley School Cookbook.

Suckley School has published a cookbook with recipes submitted by the children, families and teachers from school. Organised by Suckley Friends Association - a group of parents who arrange events and activities to raise money to support the school - copies can be ordered from Mrs S Johnson on 01886 884226.

We are happy to print a recipe as suggested by the school council – Miss D's Favourite Cupcakes – they do sound delicious!

Miss D's Favourite Cupcakes!

Ingredients

- 110g/4oz butter or margarine, softened at room temperature
- 110g/4oz caster sugar
- 2 free-range eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 110g/4oz self-raising flour
- 1-2 tbsp milk

For the butter cream icing

- 140g/5oz butter, softened
- 280g/10oz icing sugar
- 1-2 tbsp milk

Method:

- Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4 and line a 12-hole muffin tin with paper cases.
- Cream the butter and sugar together in a bowl until pale. Beat in the eggs a little at a time and stir in the vanilla extract.
- Fold in the flour, adding a little milk until the mixture is of a dropping consistency. Spoon the mixture into the paper cases until they are half full.
- Bake in the oven for 10-15 minutes, or until golden-brown on top. Set aside to cool for about 10 minutes, then remove from the tin and cool on a wire rack.
- For the butter cream icing, beat the butter in a large bowl until soft. Add half the icing sugar and beat until smooth.
- Then add the remaining icing sugar with one tablespoon of the milk, adding more milk if necessary, until the mixture is smooth and creamy.
- Spoon the icing into a piping bag with a star nozzle and pipe onto the cup cakes in a large swirl. (Remember to lick the bowl and spoon afterwards!)

FREE Newsletter to Suckley Residents

Farm Troughs

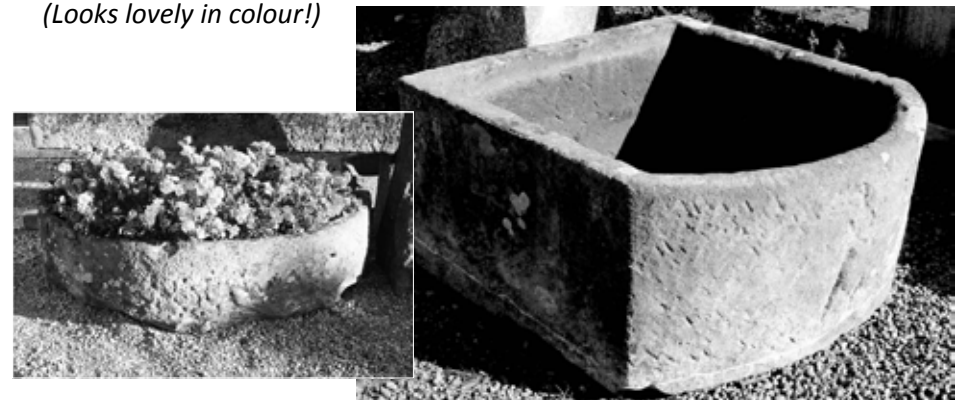
Prized today as decorative planters, stone troughs were once common everyday items on local farms. Edward Holloway tells us more.

If asked to identify his favourite objects in the yard of Holloways Garden Antiques, Edward immediately points out the collection of old stone farm troughs. 'For hundreds of years these were commonplace objects on every farm – like a plastic water butt or galvanized feeding trough would be now', he explains.

Carved with great skill from solid blocks of stone, using only a hammer and chisel, the stone troughs were put to many uses around the farm – from collecting apple juice during cider making to providing drinking water for farm livestock. Travelling stonemasons were kept busy making swill troughs, water cisterns, staddle stones, cider mills and millstones – all the vital equipment needed for a working farm.

They are occasionally dated and Edward has seen stone troughs with genuine dates, generally from 1750 to 1850, but there is no reason why some may not be much older than that. They make wonderful planters for today's garden – and will survive for a good few more years yet!

Examples of a farm troughs at Holloways Garden Antiques. (Looks lovely in colour!)



FREE Newsletter to Suckley Residents

Suckley Parish Council Meeting 9th January 2012

COMMUNITY/NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - Mr Mark Molloy reported to the Council on the progress being made since his last report in July 2011. The Group were busy working towards an "Open Meeting" to be held on Monday 16th January in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm. Flyers had been distributed to all households in the parish and he was hoping for a good response. Cllr Andrew Grieve would be opening the meeting and this would be followed by a presentation explaining what Neighbourhood Planning/Development was all about. Flip charts would be placed around the hall for people to write on their comments and thoughts as to what is of importance to them in Suckley. This information would then be collated into a Questionnaire to be circulated around the Parish and form the basis of the Neighbourhood Plan or "Business Plan" for the Parish Council. This would then enable the Parish Council to bid for new monies to be made available by Central/Regional Government, although no established figures had yet been released. It was hoped that a draft of the Neighbourhood Plan would be ready for presentation at the Annual Parish Meeting in May. All Councillors present fully supported Mark's initiative and thanked him for taking the time to attend the Parish Council Meeting.

SPEEDING - The Clerk reported that as we now had all our locations approved for the VAS camera, she had been trying to contact Co Cllr Clive Smith to find out when we could have the camera in place. So far, she had been unable to get hold of him, despite e-mails and telephone calls. She hoped to have a schedule in place for the next meeting in March.

HIGHWAYS - The Clerk reported that Graham Signs were able to produce plastic labels marked "Suckley Parish Council" for the grit/salt bins at a price of £8 each plus VAT. These had to be pop riveted onto the bins and/or glued. The Council agreed to purchase three labels and Cllr J Green agreed to fix them to the bins in the best way possible. The replacement domed metal cage at the bottom of Birchwood Lane (at the side of the water depth gauge) had been ordered by Worcs County Council. However, this was a special order and it would, therefore, take a bit longer to be made. The Clerk was liaising with Gerry Brienza from Highways on this. Cllr J Green had reported to the Clerk that a hole in the tarmac two feet deep had appeared in Blackhouse Lane which could cause the lane to collapse. The Clerk reported this to Highways, stressing the imminent danger. A team had been sent out and had filled in the hole.

WOODLAND ROAD - The Clerk reported that as requested she had contacted Worcs Co Council Highways and Severn Trent. Gerry Brienza had agreed to look into the question of providing a wider culvert under the road, but was not hopeful of a positive result. Severn Trent Water, however, had promised to look at the ditch from Knightwick Road to the sewerage works and if it needed clearing, then it would be done. The Clerk would be chasing this up in the next few weeks. Meanwhile, our Lengthsman had done a really good job of clearing the ditch along Knightwick Road to help alleviate any future road flooding problems.

HM QUEEN ELIZABETH DIAMOND JUBILEE - The Clerk supplied details of Commemorative mugs and coins/medals for the Jubilee. The Council decided, on a vote, to purchase 80 38mm gold plated solid brass medals in a Perspex case to be presented to pupils at Suckley School and other children resident in the parish up to the age of 11.**

SUCKLEY PLAYING FIELD - Cllr C Luton reported a major mole problem on the playing field. She had contacted a "Mole Man" who would be coming out to assess the situation and hopefully deal with it.

SUCKLEY SCHOOL - Cllr L Devenish reported that the number of pupils enrolled was now 61. There had been lots of activity over the Christmas period with the pantomime, nativity play and carol concert. Suckley Post Office had made a generous donation towards the cost of the Travelling Theatre coming to the school. This coming term, the children were focusing on local history, with a trip to Hartlebury Castle planned.

PLEASE NOTE** Since the Parish Council Meeting on 9th January, the Clerk discovered that the Friends of Suckley School had also planned to present coins to the pupils at Suckley School. The Parish Council will, therefore, be purchasing commemorative mugs instead of the medals. If you live in the Parish and would like your child to receive a commemorative mug and he/she does not attend Suckley School, please contact the Clerk, Diana Taylor at dtaylorsuckley@msn.com Tel 01684 569430 or any of the Parish Councillors so we can register your request.

NEXT MEETING DATE - MONDAY 12th MARCH at 7.00 pm Suckley Village Hall.