

AUGUST 2015



Keeping busy makes you live longer!



Margaret Davies, with her lovely smile, has a steely determination to seek out the past.

Arriving in the village around fifty-five years ago, there is little about the history of Suckley that Margaret Davies doesn't know. If there is, she would be determined to find out. In the June issue of the newsletter, Margaret wrote a piece on the soldiers of Suckley who lost their lives in the 1914-18 and 1939-45 World Wars. It was a profound and moving article. In collating the information for the article, and with help from her son Tony and daughter Sue, Margaret

FREE Newsletter to Suckley Residents

AUGUST 2015

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Next Issue: First week in October 2015

Content for newsletter to be submitted 25th September 2015

Suckley Post Office: Julian and Mark - 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 to <http://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/> then select Suckley from alphabetical listing.

Suckley Good Neighbour Scheme – 840480 / suckleygns@gmail.com / www.suckley.org.uk

Village Hall: email suckleyvillagehall@yahoo.co.uk, Steve Boughton – 884210

Suckley School: Mrs Sheila Marshall – 884283

Fledglings Nursery School: Freya Marskell - 01886 884088

Church Wardens: Dr Anne M Lewis – 884552 / Liz Devenish – 884787

Parish Clerk: Mrs Diana Taylor – 01684 569430

District Councillors: Ms S Rouse – 833653, Mr A Warburton - 832753

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

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carried out a huge amount of research both locally and on the internet. There are still gaps in the research and she is eager to complete the details of three soldiers whose stories so far remain elusive. The research 'bug' as Margaret calls it, really started in 2008 – more of which later – and whilst history is a passion, she has been active in various Suckley organisations through the years, and continues to be involved in village life even as she approaches her 90th year.

Originally from Carmarthen - she still retains a Welsh lilt to her speech - Margaret and her husband Tom, were tenant farmers at a Carmarthen hospital for the mentally ill. Shortly after the NHS was established, the couple had to move on when the hospital site was sold and developed for housing. From the Welsh coast, the couple ended up on a farm near Halifax in Yorkshire where, again as tenant farmers, they bred pigs, cattle and chickens. Margaret persuaded Tom to move from pigs to chickens (no swine fever to worry about) and remembers happily walking the streets of Halifax selling eggs to households after egg rationing ended in 1953. Whilst Margaret was content in Yorkshire, Tom wanted to move south, preferable to a farm near the sea, and so they arrived in Suckley only intending to stay 6 months!

They bought Mosewick Farm, from the Brooks family in 1959 and managed a dairy herd, moving then to beef cattle before finally letting the land to Sue Penny and her charity Penny Ha'Penny Horse and Pony Rescue. Mosewick Farm remains Margaret's home today.

Life on the farm kept Margaret busy and along with raising 4 children, she began breeding Pembrokehire Corgis, having been given one as a wedding present. A few of her dogs travelled across the ocean to the US but she stopped breeding corgis in 1960 after the breed fell from fashion.

It was after the death of her mother whom she nursed for 4 years, that Margaret became more actively involved in village life by joining WI, where for a period of 25 years, she was president and later held the position of Treasurer. Her head for figures landed her the role of Treasurer to the Village Hall in 1992 and for 17 years she describes her contribution as "I kept things going, like, and was a 'general body'".

Her involvement in the history of Suckley began at a community meeting in 1999, where Margaret, along with Marnie Caine, Linda Harvey (who ran the

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village PO) and Carol Boughton set about photographing every house in the village – Margaret covered Birchwood. The photographs, along with the names of their respective inhabitants, were then placed in albums. In June 2000, to celebrate the Millennium, an exhibition was held at the Village Hall, displaying the history of Suckley through documents, photographs and miscellany. The photographs taken by Margaret and her cohorts, were displayed on boards around two parish maps. With the aid of pins and ribbons the location of each house was identified on the map. The organisers, enthused by the setting up of the Millennium exhibition, laid out a book for visitors to fill in if they were interested in forming a history society. The response was so positive that soon after the Suckley History Society was formed. The society flourished and in 2006, encouraged by one of their speakers with links to Birmingham University and with an aid of a lottery grant, published "Aspects of Suckley". The publication (now out of print) comprised of topics of Suckley before the Welfare State and was researched by society members as part of an adult part-time education programme. Margaret's topic was "Countess of Huntingdon Chapel". Margaret still has the photos of the houses in Suckley and also keeps other historical documents and photographs relating to the village hall including the Parish Council Minutes.

A few years after "Aspects of Suckley" was published, the History Society went through a lull, after both its Chairman and Secretary moved out of the village and it wasn't until the 2010 Community Plan that it got on its feet again. Margaret is now its treasurer.

However, Margaret was still enjoying being engaged in things 'historical', and in 2008, was part of the team for the Village Hall Centenary exhibition. For that event, she was trying to find out more about the Plaskett family as two of their relatives, James and his brother Thomas, were killed in 1917, and are remembered on a WW1 plaque in the church. Margaret felt that "we should know about these people, where they lived and where they died" and so began the task to discover more about those Suckley men whose lives were lost in the two world wars. Margaret's work is nearly complete but there are still three names – T Boucher, T Collins and L Hibberd, (who joined the Royal Marines Light Infantry) – whose details or life in Suckley before the war, Margaret is still determined to discover.

Whilst her research continues, she will be taking time out on 2nd August to

celebrate her 90th birthday with her four children, seven grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren, along with a host of friends who will be raising a glass to her continued good(ish) health and her role in preserving Suckley’s history, past and present.

.....
Suckley History Quiz

Test yourself to see if you know as much as Margaret with this village quiz put together with the help of Jane Harte-Lovelace:

1. What was the original name of Suckley Village Hall? And what year was it renamed the Village Hall.
2. Who, with his own money built the the Village Hall for the use of the local residents?
3. Next to the Hall, Squire Hill also built a home and paid for a nurse to treat local residents. True or false?
4. Did you know Suckley had a railway station? What year was it built?
5. What decade was it closed?
6. Where was all the hop picking machinery made for Suckley?
7. Where was Suckley School originally located?
8. What year was St Johns church rebuilt?
9. Did you know Suckley held a Three Day Horse Trials on Joe Roper land? What year did they start?
10. What year did they finish?
11. What year did Batchelors Bridge (100 yards from Suckley Post Office) get completely swept away?
12. What animal was buried near Alfrick Pound?
13. Suckley used to have a brass band. When was it disbanded?
14. Name three animals that were kept at Finchers Farm, during the bombing of Birmingham in WW2?

Answers after "The Ladybird" story.

SURGERY NEWS - ISSUE 26
AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2015



Surgery Announcements

We welcome Jenni Rastall, a full time Community Staff Nurse to Knightwick Surgery. Jenni has worked in the Worcester area for a number of years prior to joining our dedicated District Nursing Team here at Knightwick.

Alison Riding also joins us as part of a larger Pro-active Care Team looking at ways to avoid unnecessary hospital admissions.

We also had a very successful Carer’s Week at the beginning of June. We are now looking to hold regular drop in sessions at the surgery with a representative from The Worcester’s Care Association.

.....
Prescription Pre Payment Cards

If you know you will have to pay for a lot of NHS prescriptions, it may be cheaper to buy a prescription prepayment certificate (PPC) – effectively a prescription 'season ticket'. A PPC covers you for all of your own NHS prescriptions, including dental prescriptions, no matter how many items you need.

For example: If you need 2 items each month you can save over £90 with a 12 month PPC. For further details speak to one of our receptionists or check out the NHS choices website.

How much water should we try to drink in warm weather?

Dee one of our District Nurses has seen many patients recently who have not been drinking enough water in this warmer weather. To stay healthy, it is important to replace the fluid we lose when we breathe, sweat or urinate.

The European Food Safety Authority recommends that women should drink about 8 medium size glasses of water each day and it is 10 glasses of water for a man.



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News from Suckley Parish Council Meeting Held on 27th July 2015

COUNTY COUNCILLOR - Paul Tuthill reported that Leigh & Bransford School was being doubled in size to accommodate the increased numbers of primary school children in the area who would be starting school very shortly. A new single entry school was also going to be built on the old DERA North Site – now called Malvern Vale. This would come under the management control of Somers Park School.

DISTRICT COUNCILLORS - District Cllrs Anthony Warburton and Sarah Rouse attended the meeting. Very little to report at the moment. The new shared Chief Executive (from Wychavon) was making redundancies at senior management level, and the District Councils would be under huge financial pressure over the next few years. The Independent Group on the Council would be fighting to maintain MHDC weekly waste collections which were under threat to be merged into a partnership with the other Councils.

LENGTHSMAN - The Council now has a new Lengthsman – Rob Lambert from Cradley. He started work in the Parish on 15th June, and is doing an excellent job.

COMMUNITY GROUP - War Memorial
Everyone agreed that the Dedication Service on 27th June had gone extremely well. Thanks were due to all who were involved in the planning and the programme on the day. The oak benches for the site have been ordered, and are due for delivery towards the end of August

FOOTPATHS - Helen Philpotts reported that a number of residents had come forward to offer their help in riding the bridleways and walking the footpaths. The team now consisted of three people, and a fourth offer was in the pipeline. The Clerk would try to arrange training with Worcestershire County Council Countryside Department.

BLACKHOUSE WOOD - Following a request from the Parish Council, James Hitchcock, Central Reserves Officer from Worcestershire Wildlife Trust has agreed to attend the Parish Council Meeting on 9th November to address any concerns the Council might have about the conservation plan for this Ancient Woodland Site.

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BT PHONE BOX - The Clerk has contacted BT about future costs involved with the purchase of the BT Phone Box outside the village hall. Initially there would be no further costs involved, but if a defibrillator was installed in the phone box, BT would maintain the electricity supply for 7 years. The Clerk to find out what happens after that! However, we are still waiting for permission from MHDC to allow us to purchase the box should we wish to do so.

ELECTIONS – VACANCY FOR PARISH COUNCILLOR

Following our advertising the above vacancy, the Clerk received three applicants for this voluntary post. All three candidates were excellent, but via a paper ballot the Council voted for Mrs Victoria Bradley, who will be formally co-opted onto the Council at the next meeting on 14th September.

OLD QUARRY SITE - The Clerk received an enquiry from Malvern Hills AONB to obtain permission to do some maintenance work at the Old Quarry to reveal its geological wonders. This would be funded by the AONB, with a group of geology volunteers led by Dr John Payne of the Earth Heritage Trust, cutting back vegetation to reveal the geological features on this special site. The rocks at the site would not be disturbed, so all features would be retained in good condition. The Council agreed to give permission for this work to be done.

DIANA TAYLOR
Clerk to Suckley Parish Council

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Tel: 01684 569430 E-mail: dtaylor@suckley@msn.com

Next Meeting of the Parish Council will be on Monday 14th September 7.00 pm in Suckley Village Hall. There is always time at the beginning of the meeting for parishioners to make a short address to the Councillors for discussion in the meeting.



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The Ladybird.

Summer reading from the creative hand of Kim Jolley - a woman of many talents! She wrote it after attending a writing course. Her teacher presented the students with a tray of jewellery and were then asked to write a poem, a factual piece or a story about one of the items on the tray. Kim chose a ladybird brooch.

Monique was unique.

We called her "Auntie Mon": a term of endearment rather than a truism. An old family friend, known forever, who would appear from time to time, with tales of lands travelled, and people met. Lavish dinners with princes, operas with film stars, then trails on horse- back through native villages. She was a cross between Dervla Murphy and Marie-Claire, the girl Peter Sarstedt sang about in "Where do you go to my lovely?" She had money, but no-one knew whether she had inherited from family, or maybe her husband, who'd died many years ago, had left her well-provided for. But, between trips, she drifted, like a nomad, in and out of our lives.

She was small, with shrewd dark eyes, and her long, wild hair, tamed into a plait running half-way down her back, was pure white when she died. We all loved her visits: she was kind and funny and after she left us for another adventure, we felt the sun had been our guest. Home, for the time Mon spent in England, was a cottage in Devon. A pretty little place, a treasure chest full of objects and curios she'd collected. It was pure pleasure to stand and stare, and be in Moscow, Peru or Tanzania. Armchair travel, Monique-style.

A tribal shield, the colour of black coffee; a small, multi-hued woven bag, containing a tiny carved horse; an enamel ladybird, glowing with iridescence, as if lit from within. Most of her treasures had a story, which would unfold over a cup of tea or a glass of port. She was always mysterious when it came to telling us about the ladybird.

I wondered where it came from, who had given it to her, and I loved it. When I touched it, a warmth seemed to spread from my hand, and up my arm, as it glistened with its ruby rosiness. The golden legs and antennae, and diamond-bright eyes shimmered with life. Eight jet-black spots on her back. Eight?

Biologically incorrect artistic licence, anything goes.

A light went out when Auntie Mon died. It was as if she would go on forever. She'd requested a woodland burial, wholly appropriate. Not for her the factory dis-assembly line of the crem. Her spirit would be free in the forest, within the sight of her beloved Dartmoor. She left me the ladybird, and I couldn't have been happier with it as a keepsake, a reminder of our friendship. I proudly pinned it on my black cashmere jacket.

We had just returned miserably from the funeral in Devon, and I was running down to the shop for milk when I noticed something fluttering around in front of me, as though it was dancing. Stopping to look, I saw it was a twenty pound note. A fortune. With such unexpected wealth, I decided to buy a take-away curry: what a treat.

A few weeks after the funeral, life was still grey and featureless. I couldn't settle to anything, work was suffering, and relationships strained. Money was beginning to be a problem. Then, one rain-drenched morning, the postman brought with his cheerful whistling, and a clutch of brown, dispiriting envelopes, an epistle of joy. My modest investment of £100 in premium bonds had at last yielded five thousand pounds. My first and only award after twelve years of optimism gone stale.

Two months after all that excitement we heard that the "Antiques About" programme would be visiting Witney Court. We had a few bits and pieces we wanted valued, along with some unusual pieces from Aunt Mon that hadn't found a home. It sounded like an interesting way of dealing with the stuff, and we needed our spirits lifting.

So we packed everything up carefully, and stood in snaking queues for hours. Finally it was our turn with the expert. We were showing him the cameo necklace that had belonged to my mother, which I thought was pretty old and valuable, when he suddenly emitted a noise, a squeak, and asked me where I had acquired the ladybird glowing on my lapel. I told him about Aunt Mon, and her travels, and how she had bequeathed it to me.

When you see the programme on television, you miss the thrill of excitement

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that spreads through the assembled crowd when something interesting is discovered. As I finished my account of Mon, the expert called the production team over, and had a few words. Suddenly a table and two chairs magically appeared and I was sitting down listening to a fabulous description. Could this really be my ladybird he was talking about? Twenty-four carat gold, giant exquisitely cut diamonds; black spots of rare jet, set in Cloisonné enamel. And how many spots? Of course, eight; so very important. Why, I asked. So he told me.

Faberge enjoyed designing his little trinkets; fun, bright pieces of jewellery. He loved mystery and practical jokes, and carried his sense of fun through into his designs. The expert went on to tell me about Faberge's ladybirds. They were produced in considerable numbers, though for some artistic merriment, he decided to change the design on one hundred of his ladybirds, from seven spots to eight. Sixty-four are known of, in private collections or museums. And here, he told me, we have number sixty five.

The provision of a chair during such a consultation and subsequent valuation is a considerate act. My legs trembled and my heart beat as if I'd run a hundred metre sprint. What was he saying?

Is it insured? No? There are many collectors who'd give their right arm to own this. At auction, it would fetch in the region of three hundred to four hundred, thousand pounds.

Dear Aunt Mon. She must have known. It is sad that I will never know the truth about the ladybird, but I like to think that maybe on one of her journeys, possibly Russia, she had a friendship with someone who loved her deeply. Deeply enough to bestow on her a precious little red and gold beetle.



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Suckley History Quiz - Answers

1. The Suckley Club Room. It was renamed in 1908.
2. Edward Hill, affectionally known as Squire Hill.
3. True, now a private residence called Hill View. There was no doctor in Suckley at this time.
4. 1878
5. The early sixties, during Beechams time in office.
6. The Bruff Factory. Their machinery was sent all over the world.
7. In a building attached to the original St John the Baptist Church.
8. 1878/9
9. 1969
10. 1982
11. 1924
12. An elephant
13. The beginning of WW1
14. Bears, monkeys, lions & tigers.

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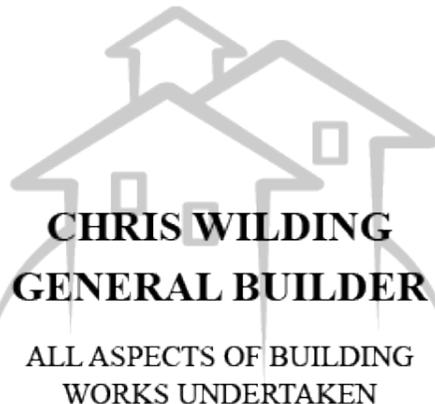
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A garden commentary by the garden rover (& two dogs)

We must cultivate our garden. When man was put in the Garden of Eden, he was put there to work; that proves that man was not born for rest. Let us work without question, that is the only way to make life tolerable.

Voltaire 1694-1778

It is generally acknowledged that gardening is beneficial to mind and body. An extension to this premise is to deliberately plan some of your gardening time with purpose and intention, in order to achieve not only a delightful space, but a fitter, supple, relaxed you.

Consider your surroundings: a beautiful, peaceful landscape, filled with flowers and greenery, serenaded by birdsong and maybe an evening frog, croaking and eating pests. Surely this is an Eden we all inhabit, a natural haven for exercise, away from distraction.

So, we have the aromatherapy treatment: rich, heady perfume of an old fashioned roses, or sweet peas, fresh and reminiscent of childhood gardens. Honeysuckles that scent mornings and evenings mingle with orange- blossom Philadelphus and sweet Dianthus. Daphne, Choisya, Lavender and Viburnum add to the fragrant cacophony, and many other herbaceous plants fill the air with heavenly perfume. Freshly mown grass and even the earthy whiff of newly turned soil add to the "scent-sation" of well-being.

Then, of course the physical side of things contributes enormously to the full work-out. There is a marked similarity between the postures attained during the course of gardening and a session of yoga. We find ourselves standing and bent at the waist, reaching left and right as we pull weeds; kneeling and stretching, maybe arching the back, maybe concaving the back; regaining a standing position, we may push up with our hands while we straighten legs, all actions that echo various yoga disciplines. Add some thoughtful breathing, and there you have 'garden yoga'.

For some aerobic work there's mowing, barrowing, spirited digging, using shears to cut a hedge, or maybe chasing cats off your newly sown vegetable plot. However you look at it, every moment spent working in the garden is improving your health.

So let's start the work-out...

Summer has been warm and dry so far, with a few thundery storms, making it necessary to water and feed pots and vegetables, either early in the morning or last thing at night. Feed woody potted plants with a high potash feed to promote ripening of wood: soft sappy growth is susceptible to winter damage. Stop feeding altogether towards the end of September.

Pests and diseases love hot dry weather: I have observed countless infestations of aphids, with few ladybirds to predate them, and powdery mildew has been rife. Continue to check and treat for problems. Top up ponds, removing any yellowing leaves and spent flowers to prevent them from rotting in the water, which raises the nutrient content, encouraging unwanted algae growth. Keep dead-heading roses and trim lavender as it finishes flowering, shearing it to about 2.5cm of the leafy growth. Lavender rarely grows back from old wood, so take a few cuttings with a view to replacing old tired plants in the future. Trim hedges, and cut back wayward perennials that have sprawled: they may flower again in autumn. Towards the end of September divide them, and maybe plant some new ones. Take cuttings of things like pelargoniums, fuchsias and other tender perennials. Collect seed from hardy annuals and store in paper bags, in a cool dark place. Using an old sieve makes sorting the seed from the chaff a little easier. Some hardy annuals, like calendula, cornflowers and Californian poppies, can be sown in situ, for next year.

Dahlias and Chrysanthemums are in full swing and are ideal cut-and-come-again blooms for the house, but attract earwigs. So, to minimise the chance of bugs on your tablecloth, put pots filled with straw or shredded newspaper on canes amongst the plants. Earwigs like dark places in the day and will crawl in, then you can dispose of them as you see fit.

Rake the lawn, aerate with a fork, and top-dress with a sharp sand-loam mix, working it in with a broom or the flat back of a rake. It will look messy for a

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week or two, but the grass will soon grow through. Feed with a high phosphate fertiliser to promote root growth. In dry weather, cut the grass a little higher and leave the box off: the clippings act as a mulch, helping to preserve moisture and returning a little organic matter into the soil.

Start pruning climbing roses. Take out any dead or diseased wood, or very old branches, and tie in new shoots. Prune side-shoots to two or three buds. Make your own free fertiliser from comfrey (*Symphytum officinale*) but beware it is invasive stuff. Fill a large bucket with leaves, wait for around three weeks by which time the leaves have broken down and produced a liquid. Strain this and use as a root feed (two tablespoons per litre) or foliar feed (one tbsp. per litre.) Now is the time to start Hyacinths bulbs for winter flowering. Put in pots, in a dark place for about six weeks, and when there's 2.5cm of growth, take them inside. You can also start planting other bulbs outside, such as Narcissus, Leucojum and Fritillary.

Lift main-crop potatoes and onions ready for drying and storing. Plant autumn onion sets, and suitable cultivars of winter lettuce under cloches. Spring cabbage and spinach can be sown for winter use, and sow the last salad crops for this season. Your garlic can be put in now, either in the ground or in modular trays, to be kept in the greenhouse to be planted in spring. New strawberry plants can be potted and grown on.

Keep harvesting fruit and vegetables, freezing, bottling and making jam as you go, or treat friends and family with gifts of fresh produce. Sit in your garden and enjoy the fruits (vegetables and flowers) of your labour, take a deep breath, and relax. Meditate on the wonders of the yearly cycle, and stretch your mind towards new plans for the next growing season as you salute the sun.

Happy gardening.

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A thank you from all at Pewcroft

THANK YOU, SUCKLEY NEWSLETTER READERS, update from the TB disaster zone! John and I would like to thank everyone who has sent us flowers, cards, phone and text messages, emails, chocolates and even wine recently. Our TB ordeal continues, but the kind concern we have received is very gratifying and much appreciated by our whole family. Many of you will have seen the emotional article as the first item on TV Midlands News at 1.30, 6.30 or 10.30 in May. It was interesting to see how the media works. Kate 7, and Jessica 4, enjoyed being on TV and also radio Hereford and Worcester, despite knowing that the cows will be gone soon. The newsreader Sarah Falkland was with us for 4 hours, and we all found her delightful. She was kind to the girls, fair as a journalist, and appreciative of the coffee and cake!

Curly the Hereford Bull and nine others were loaded at 6am on Tuesday 2nd June. They went to Wales to be killed, then apparently, to Ireland as meat. Despite being condemned as TB reactors, John had to sign a form to say that they were fit for human consumption. *That is so the government can sell the meat. Apart from the upset, we feel it is disgusting that they are doing that.* We have asked our MP and the CLA to look into it.

We were very cross that eight other newly calved cows were supposed to be killed on June 12th, including Creamy who has twins. Luckily (!) two of the other cows were lame, so John injected them with antibiotic, meaning they are not now fit for human consumption. That is good news, as the cows are no longer lame, it gives them another month of life, their calves another month of mother's milk, and us a month less feeding them on milk powder (£40 per bag and lots of extra work). After about 5 phone calls and lots more form filling, the Animal Health authority in Stafford have now agreed, the literal 'stay of execution' has been moved to the end of June. The next TB test for our few remaining cattle is in the middle of July. We dread it.

The most impressive part of the media circus that day was Sarah Falkland sitting in our kitchen, phoning the head man at DEFRA London. He was out, so she asked him to phone back. And he did! If we, mere farmers, try to contact even a junior DEFRA person it's hopeless, (press 1, press 2 etc.) so I told her I would be using her name next time we need to contact them. I had better not tell you

what some farmers think D.E.F.R.A. stands for! (For an insight on DEFRA, see the next article!)

Jill Hammonds.

PS In early June we had communion service in the rectory garden. It was most enjoyable and very well supported. That may be because we all missed our normal church service, or it may be because there was a barbecue lunch with yummy puddings to follow. Either way there were three main stars: 1. Rev Anne for putting together a lovely service, 2. her husband Mike for preparing the garden and barbecue and 3. the star shaped tent which they used. The PCC and SPACE COMMITTEE please note : problem solved – church services can be held in the village halls in winter, and that lovely tent in summer. No need at all for 4 expensive buildings to heat / insure / re-order? (I jest!)

.....

'Big Brother' is watching us.

Farming is not dominated by farmers, the weather or falling prices. We know we have to cope with bovine TB, but just as much of a problem are the following government authorities who are all bombarding us with work, both on paper and online, and with 'helpful advice' to justify their existence and decent salaries. We can't find out how many each agencies employ but DEFRA alone has more than the total number of farmers in UK.

AHVLA (animal health and veterinary laboratories agency) send us at least two letters a week. Recently we had two closely typed pages of advice including:.... wash hands thoroughly after finishing work,minimise handling of cattle especially around the head, (but they insist we put two ear tags in) also.... do not eat, drink or smoke in animal areas. Gosh! How have we survived 45 years of farming without such wisdom?

DEFRA (department for the eradication of farming and rural activity) That may not be the exact title, but it's the most polite one for printing here. They insist we keep a herd register and a medicine book which can be inspected at any time without warning. We don't object to that, as now traceability is important. We can be penalised heavily if we have a one digit mistake, but they frequently

blame mistakes on their very expensive new computer programme. It's so brilliant that they have now reverted to a paper system.

Trading Standards. These people, in their wisdom (?) chased us continually for over two years because we had a bullock with two teeth too many, so they gave us both a proper police type caution saying we had falsified our records, and the bullock was a year older than our records said. We refused the caution as we'd done nothing wrong, and they eventually took us to court. We had to hire a barrister and the top UK cattle tooth expert costing us a total of £16,500, and went to the court. Of course, they totally collapsed in a heap and withdrew as soon as they were formally asked to put the case. We finally got most of our costs back months later, but it didn't endear us to that department, or the way they spent a huge lot of time and taxpayers' money on such a ridiculous and trivial matter.

BCMS (British cattle movement service) We think they must be the main employers in Workington. They are paperless, so we have to email to notify them of all animal movements, births and deaths. (We are waiting for them to want to be told of all bowel movements and all marriages / matings too!) They issue passports for each animal, luckily not with photos yet, with ear numbers which have to correspond with tags in each ear.

FABBL (farm assured British beef and lamb) If you register with them you can be inspected once a year which you have to pay for (!) to enable you to sell to the supermarkets without a hefty deduction. We wonder if the supermarkets insist that imported foodstuffs are 'Fabbl assured' to the same standards.

Natural England. An offshoot of DEFRA. They advise us on what to do with our ancient cherry orchard. Sadly it is riddled with honey fungus which is gradually killing all the trees. Their advice was to plant more cherry trees in the same field. Wow! That was sensible, how many years at university did it take them to work that one out? Then a woman came round and told John off as he hadn't marked a very small ditch in one small field on his map. She had probably picked it up on the satellite imaging. Natural England love ditches, but RPA (see below) don't like them as they are classified as non-productive areas. You can't win!

RPA (rural payments agency) *This is the only one we actually want to hear*

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from! As long as they accept we are 'active farmers' they kindly issue us with 'entitlements' so that we can do farming! But can you believe this? Last Sunday morning we were on holiday on Bute (the island not the medication) and John got a call on his mobile to say our whole farm would be inspected in the next two hours, ie 12.30pm on Sunday, and (gee whizz) we are entitled to walk round with them. He said we were away, but that was deemed irrelevant. Apparently someone came to check up on all our fields etc. Needless to say everything was found to be completely in order. Why this has to be done on a Sunday, when presumably civil servants are on double or treble time, it is totally ridiculous. Do we dare complain and risk losing the money they owe us?

Through Harriet Baldwin MP we had a personal letter from George Eustice, the minister of state. He says "...TB is having a devastating effect on many farm businesses and families..... if we were to receive more from the slaughterhouse for a TB reactor than we have paid the farmer we would pay the difference back to the farmer." That, of course, cheered us up no end, well, it gave us a good laugh, it's not been heard of amongst any farmers we know.

Jill Hammonds.

Village Hall News

4th July – American Independence Day Supper.

Very many thanks to all those people who attended this event especially as there were so many other events going on that day. It was a thoroughly enjoyable and toe-tapping evening, largely thanks to the Appalachian dancers and their musicians who entertained us. Our American style supper was much appreciated and the picture quiz was a big hit. So many people said that they knew next to nothing about America but they surprised themselves once they started looking at the picture quiz.

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17th October - LOVE LABELS.

Our next big event is the return of LOVE LABELS. Their visit last March was a great success so we are giving those people who would have liked to attend and couldn't, a chance to enjoy the buzz. I am sure those who did attend in March, will welcome the opportunity to stock up their wardrobes at very reasonable prices again. Do look out for further details nearer the time, but, in the meantime, do make a note of the date in your diary.

ART GROUP

It is a busy time for the Art Group with the Alfrick Show getting ever closer. We are all endeavouring to enter each of the four art classes and finishing touches are being made to our exhibits.

We still meet at 2 p.m. on Monday afternoons to put the world to rights, exchange plants, produce and news but, mainly to brandish our paint brushes! Anybody who feels they would like to join our happy little band, please call in and see what we are up to – you don't need an Art degree or even a GCSE in Art, just an interest in "having a go". Yours truly dropped Art at school at the age of 14 and didn't pick up a brush again until I retired!

The more observant inhabitants of Suckley will have noticed that the garden of the Hall is looking more cared for and that our gates have been resurrected and re-stained. We are indebted to Mr Howard Ormerod who has kindly taken on the task of keeping us neat and tidy. The upkeep of the Hall is a big commitment particularly with limited funds. We are aware that there is much to be done but we are endeavouring to make improvements little by little.

We are always happy to welcome new Committee members or people who are willing to share their skills on an occasional basis but, most of all, we need your support for our events. The only income the Hall has is from hirings and fundraising events.

Carol Boughton.

Memories of Suckley

Julie Jinks took her mum, Joan O'Boyle (nee Bullock), on a trip full of memories, visiting the places around Suckley where she lived as a child. Julie and Joan popped into the Village Hall where they met Nessa Haworth. Nessa encourage Joan to write down her memories of Suckley. Here is Joan's story:

"I spent my childhood living in and around Suckley. My father was a carpenter and I can just remember living with my parents for a while, before I started school, at "the clubroom" in the house adjoining the Village Hall. I believe my parents were the caretakers.

Recently my family took me for an afternoon drive around Suckley and Cradley - it was a real trip down memory lane.

It is more than eighty years since I was at Suckley School and I was delighted to see that the school is still open. The church looks exactly the same. My only real memory while living at the "clubroom" was one day I was sitting on the doorstep and decided to cut my hair - my mother was very cross with me! We moved to another house in Suckley and from there I remember walking to school. When I was nine years old my father died - he had started to build a house in my grandparents' garden at the Halesend, but then of course it was never finished.

My thanks for allowing me to step into the Hall and reminisce."



Joan standing outside the Village Hall.

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Suckley Local History Society visit Whitbourne Hall.

What a wonderful visit!!

Alec & Sue Haywood gave our members & visitors such a warm and joyous welcome. Alec took our group around, described the house which was built by architect Edward Wallace Elmsley around 1860 for Edward Bickerton-Evans, who owned the Vinegar works in Worcester.

The Vinegar Works was founded in 1830 by William Hill and Edward Evans, but it was their sons, Thomas Rowley Hill "a popular and highly esteemed" M.P. FOR Worcester and Edward Bickerton-Evans who transformed the works to the most important type on an international scale.

The first impression of the house with huge porticos was of landed grandeur. This impressive house was built from bricks made from clay excavated a few hundred yards away which was then made into the lake that you see today. The building was then clad in Portland Stone. It was nick-named by the locals as 'Vinegar Hall'.

In the Evans's heyday, they had 11 gardeners supplying the house with vegetables, fruit and flowers. The ground around the house (some 3 acres) was divided in distinct areas by yew hedges. The vast amount of yew hedge today means that someone comes from London every year to prune them and these pruning's are used as part of the treatment of cancer.

Outside, we were treated to a walk through various gardens with large original greenhouses. These greenhouses had specially shaped glass panes to draw the rain away from the sides and still had the original hand-wound ventilation. We were shown the elaborate drainage and waste water system, still as it had originally been built and still working today. The Palm Tree house, was built about 10 years after the house and was Whitbourne's own version of 'Crystal Palace'. It was designed to impress the visitors with its scale and height.

Inside, we visited the different rooms that are used for functions, such as weddings, to provide a glamorous backdrop for such occasions. The main reception hall was stunning, with its patterned tiles, grand marble staircase and innovative glass panelled ceiling. The dining room, with its 20 seat table and the red room with its magnificent glass chandelier.

FREE Newsletter to Suckley Residents

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By this time it was 'time for tea' and we were treated to delicious cakes & refreshments which we ate sitting out around tables & chairs on the lawn feeling like the Lords & Ladies of yesterday.

For an adventurous few, there was a guided tour of the extensive cellars which was very much appreciated by all. A lovely visit on a lovely summer's day!

Our next meeting is to St Giles Church, Acton Beauchamp, - a field trip and a guided tour on 13th August and as always visitors are welcome. Tel Andrew Grieve 01886 884795.

Stocks Farm Open Day

Stocks Farm in Suckley is having an Open Day on Saturday 12th September 2015, at 14.00.

This is a great chance for the local community to see what happens on the other side of the farm gate. The open day will be in the middle of the hop harvest, and the apple harvest may well have started too.

Hops are part of the local history, and all are welcome to see how hops are harvested for brewers throughout the UK and worldwide. To start the afternoon, there will walk through the apple orchards and the hops yards, while the harvest is in progress. The tour will include seeing the Bruff hop picking machine in action and the working hop kilns following which there will be a short walk back to the farm for tea & cakes in the garden.

Everything will be explained from the growing systems and structures in the orchards and hop yards, to pest and disease management, through to the economics of modern fruit and hop farming. This is a great chance to learn all about the local farmed environment. Be prepared for 1½ to 2 hour walk.

Entrance will be free for children, with a paper donation from each family. All funds raised by the open day will go towards two local initiatives, the SPACE project and Fledglings Nursery.

To find out more: <http://stocksfarm.net/open-day> or <http://suckleyspace.org.uk> or <http://www.fledglingsnurseryschool.co.uk>

FREE Newsletter to Suckley Residents



Do you need a Helping Hand?

If you are looking for an alternative to residential care or extra support for those everyday tasks that are becoming difficult for you or a loved one – then we're here to help - **from 30 minutes per week to full time Live-in Care.**

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Suckley Church

Services in and around Suckley church in August and September:

Sunday August 2nd, 11.00am, All Age worship, a more informal service with baptism of Edyn Bradley

Sunday August 9th, 6.00pm, Evening Worship, a service in various styles

Sunday August 16th, We go to Knightwick Chapel for their 3pm Evening Worship

Wednesday August 12th, 10.00 am, a said service of Holy communion

Sunday August 23rd, 11.00 Family Communion, Common Worship style

Sunday August 30th, 11.00am, we go to Alfrick church for their 11.00 Family Communion, Common Worship style

Sunday September 6th, 11.00am, Family Communion, Common Worship style

Sunday September 13th, 6.00pm, Evening Worship in various styles

Wednesday September 16th, 10.00 am, A said service of Holy communion

Sunday September 20th, We go to Knightwick Chapel for their 3pm Evening Worship

Sunday September 27th, 11.00am, All Age Harvest Festival, followed by a Bring and Share lunch

SPACE update

The weekend of September 26th, 27th, 28th there will be a "**Kitchen, Pew and loo display**" in church. Now that we have received the go ahead and personal recommendations from the Worcester Chancellor, this event will display the latest developments, including mobilised pews, to make our church more user friendly both as a church and as a space for the school and wider community too.

Please come along and see the new layout display.

Anne Lewis (884552, 07957 388926, annelewis@doctors.org.uk)

Wanted - recipes for newsletter

Do you have any favourite recipes that you could share with readers of the newsletter? Recipes for a quick supper, using left overs, a few ingredients, family favourites or indulgent cakes? Please send them into the newsletter at suckleynews@gmail.com or telephone Hilary on 884355.

.....

Suckley Celebrates Summer

(and raises much needed funds for the upkeep of our church too!)

Suckley Summer Soiree

Bill and Cleone Holden very kindly hosted this year's Soiree, and as the day approached their garden looked really beautiful. As 24th July dawned the rain started, and gave us a month's rain in a day! Despite the weather a happy evening was enjoyed by all, and spirits were not dampened, especially when everyone's efforts were rewarded with proceeds of over £1000!

Bill led the 'brolly tour of the garden' and also provided lots of fascinating historical information about the development and planning of the grounds and also some entertaining stories from the early years and how they acquired the then somewhat dilapidated Diocesan property ... thanks to a penny from Cleone.

These fundraising events are always a great way for Suckley folk to meet together and really enjoy each others company, and the proceeds go to the general upkeep and financing of the church. Don't miss more events this winter and next year too!

Liz Devenish.

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

...	<p>Suckley History Society - August meet</p> <p>Our next meeting is to St Giles Church, Acton Beauchamp, - a field trip and a guided tour on 13th August and as always visitors are welcome. Tel Andrew Grieve 01886 884795.</p>
...	<p>Stocks Farm - Open Day - 12th September</p> <p>Stocks Farm in Suckley is having an Open Day on Saturday 12th September 2015, at 14.00.</p> <p>This is a great chance for the local community to see what happens on the other side of the farm gate. The open day will be in the middle of the hop harvest, and the apple harvest may well have started too.</p> <p>Entrance will be free for children, with a paper donation from each family. All funds raised by the open day will go towards two local initiatives, the SPACE project and Fledglings Nursery.</p>
...	<p>Suckley Church - "Kitchen, Pew and loo display" - September 26th, 27th, 28th</p> <p>Come along and view the latest developments for the re-ordering of the church. Examples of how the pews will be re-fashioned and mobilised will be on display, along with the re-designed kitchen and toilet layout.</p>
...	<p>Suckley Village Hall. LOVE LABELS on 17th October.</p> <p>Our next big event is the return of LOVE LABELS. Their visit last March was a great success so we are giving those people who would have liked to attend and couldn't, a chance to enjoy the buzz. I am sure those who did attend in March, will welcome the opportunity to stock up their wardrobes at very reasonable prices again. Do look out for further details nearer the time, but, in the meantime, do make a note of the date in your diary.</p>

Suckley Church Summer Fair – 10th July

The Fair at the Church was blessed with good weather, although we did have to compete with the Andy Murray versus Roger Federer match at Wimbledon. The blood pressure was safe though for those of us who couldn't watch!

The stalls were well laden with cakes, plants, books, raffle, bric a brac and tombola and there were games for all. The teas and barbecue provided everyone with something to eat to their taste, washed down with a drink of choice. The walk into Suckley Hills, led by Louise Cox, was enjoyed by twelve adults and a few dogs in quite warm weather. They were glad of refreshments when they returned after their hour long walk.

I would like to say a great big thank you to all for your donations, your time in helping set up and clear away and for all the support in spending your money. We are delighted to have a total of over £1,100 for the maintenance of our lovely church, with gift aid able to be added to the donations. It was lovely to see so many friendly faces, many had come from Worcester, Bromyard, Whitbourne and our Benefice family. We couldn't have achieved it without you. Suckley really did have a great Community event.

Many thanks, Jenny Taylor and Mildred Griffiths.

Local Services:

Mobile Library Timetable 2015

Orchard Bungalow - 10.10 - 10.25
 Cross Keys 10.30 - 10.45
 Suckley School - 10.50 - 11.10
 Post Office - 11.15 - 11.35

Dates: 3rd Thursday in the month

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