

Braunston News

August 2018

Village Hall: Flat & Floor

Regular Events

- Ladies Pub Night: Meets 1st Wed of month in Blue Ball from 8pm
- Indoor Bowls: Alternate Fridays in Village Hall at 7:30 pm. Contact: Sandra Lickman 723047
- Gardening Club: 3rd Thurs of month in Village Hall. Contact: Mary Brooks 723047
- Table Tennis: Tue & Wed in Village Hall at 7:30 pm. Contact: David Smart 01664 474354
- Oakham Sings!, Mondays, 18.45. Content Brooke Peverell, 07772 055935
- Quilting & Patchwork Group: Every Wednesday in Village Hall 09:45—15:45. Contact: Viv 771020
- Pilates: Fridays 09.00 - 10.00 & 10.15 - 11.15. Contact Alison Sentance on 07496 814825

Church Events

- Sunday 5th August, 11.00am Holy Communion, Church
- Sunday 12th August, 11.00am Sunday Worship, Church
- Sunday 19th August, 11.00am Holy Communion, Church
- Sunday 26th August, 11.00am Sunday Worship, Church

Thanks this issue to...

Jim Atack, Gail Rudge, Janet Taylor

After the sudden loss of our caretaker, Steve Stafford, in April, the Trustees decided not to appoint a new caretaker and to share out the caretaker duties between the trustees and a number of contractors. This seems to be working quite well so far. Do let us know if you see any problems and we will sort them out.

During the summer the 'caretaker's' flat over the village hall is being upgraded for rental, giving a boost to income for the Village Hall. We found a number of structural issues, stemming from the building's age, that we are tackling before putting the flat back into service. The

works will take up until Christmas.

Another big project will be the replacement of the Hall floor; the old floor has served for nearly a hundred years and is now beginning to fail in several places. We have been looking at options and have landed on a preferred finish. The whole floor will be removed and replaced during August, starting on Monday the 13th, after the Flower Show. Work is expected to take a couple of weeks, taking the Main Hall out of service; the Small Hall will remain available while the work is going on.

-JA

Good Gwash

Opposite the Village Hall, you will have noticed the digger parked by the Gwash working on the weir. Last time we poked our head in, the larger concrete apron

designed to stop washout of the river bed during heavy rains and work was nearing completion.

By the time you read this it should probably all be done, with just a tidy up of the vegetation left to go.

Harvest Festival

This year we're going to celebrate Harvest Festival on Sunday 9th September. In order to make it a really special occasion, we're going to have a Flower Festival. We're inviting anybody who would like to do a flower arrangement to come and join in – we want to fill the church with flowers. You don't have to be an expert, you can use

whatever you like as a container, flowers look very good in the simplest of things. It's an invitation to anyone of any age to contribute. We shall be having a celebration Songs of Praise Service. For more details please contact Gail: 01572 755570, rudge330@btinternet.com.

-GR

Events Round t'Village

The Old Plough's themed **Friday Night BBQs** have been going down a storm this summer, and have travelled the world from Germany to the Caribbean and on to Morocco so far with some live music on the side. Fridays from 18.30 to see where the event will be heading next.

The popular **Sunday Lunchtime Jazz** sessions at the Blue Ball are going from strength to strength as well. By the time this is

printed and distributed the early August ones will be but a fleeting memory, but do check the pub's website and Facebook pages for more dates.

Sad to say that Jim Ward has wrapped up his Tai Chi classes at the Village Hall, but he still has two classes running in Oakham and a new Qi Gong class in Langham Thursday lunchtimes. More info at www.taichiforhealth.co.uk

Why Local Politics Matters

Acres of white space to fill this month, so rather than doing a crossword, ripping off a humorous cartoon from Private Eye as our own, penning a poem, or similar horrors*, here's an OpEd piece.

On 12 July last month, the Oakham South West by-election ended in a tie. 177 votes had been cast for the independent Richard Alderman and 177 for the Lib Dem Joanna Burrows. Following protocol, the Returning Officer drew lots and declared Mr Alderman the winner by a single vote.

It's not hard to imagine that Rutland County Council will have wished that 50/50 choice had gone the other way.

Cllr Alderman was sworn in appropriately enough on Friday 13th and that's roughly when the trouble started, as over the weekend it came to light that his views were a bit on the extreme side to say the least. An unguarded Facebook profile suggested amongst other things that Theresa May was "a bitch" who should be hung as a traitor for not implementing the hardest of hard Brexits, and, referring to Diane Abbot, that: "The monkey is out of the tree again send it to the animal labs."

Even by the often lunatic standards of the alt right Alderman holds some deeply unpleasant views, and RCC was understandably quick to act.

"We wholly condemn the use of racist and bigoted behaviour. This is not acceptable in our communities or our Council," council leader Oliver Hensley said in a statement.

Alderman was reported to the police and questioned, while the story quickly moved beyond Rutland's borders and made the nationals.

"It is now abundantly clear that Cllr Alderman is unfit to hold public office," said Hensley in a further statement, "and it is inconceivable that his constituents will want him to remain in place as their representative. He should therefore resign immediately."

The problem is that, following a change of law in 2011, the council cannot simply sack him; they have to wait for him to fall on his own sword or get replaced by the electorate. And this is why local politics matters. Take your eye off the ball and all sorts of unpleasantness can start to unfold in plain sight and once some genies are out of the bottle they can be very difficult to stuff back in again. At time of writing, Cllr Alderman is still just that: an elected councillor.

You have to hope that the majority of the 177 voters that put their X by Alderman's name were doing so simply because they saw he was an independent, and not because they supported his loathsome opinions. But the key to stopping this sort of thing happening again is engagement; is getting involved in the process. The turnout at the Oakham South West by-election turnout was only 33.56%. If more people had got involved, even just by trotting along to the polling station and voting on that Thursday in July, chances are we would never have heard of Richard Alderman. Which, frankly, would have been just fine...

*The Editor reserves the right to do so in the future, however. Braunston Poetry Slam anyone?

Upcoming Theatre

Here's a date for your diary - and don't say that we never give you fair warning: this one is for Sunday Jan 27th, 2019. James Rowland is returning to the Village Hall with his latest one-man show 'A hundred different words for love'.

Some will remember that James was here last year with his excellent 'Team Viking', which I think was generally reckoned to be one of the best Braunston theatre nights that we have had.

His latest offering is already getting rave reviews ('a triumph', 'stunning', and 'profoundly moving' to quote just three) so put it in your calendar and watch out for more details.

-JA