

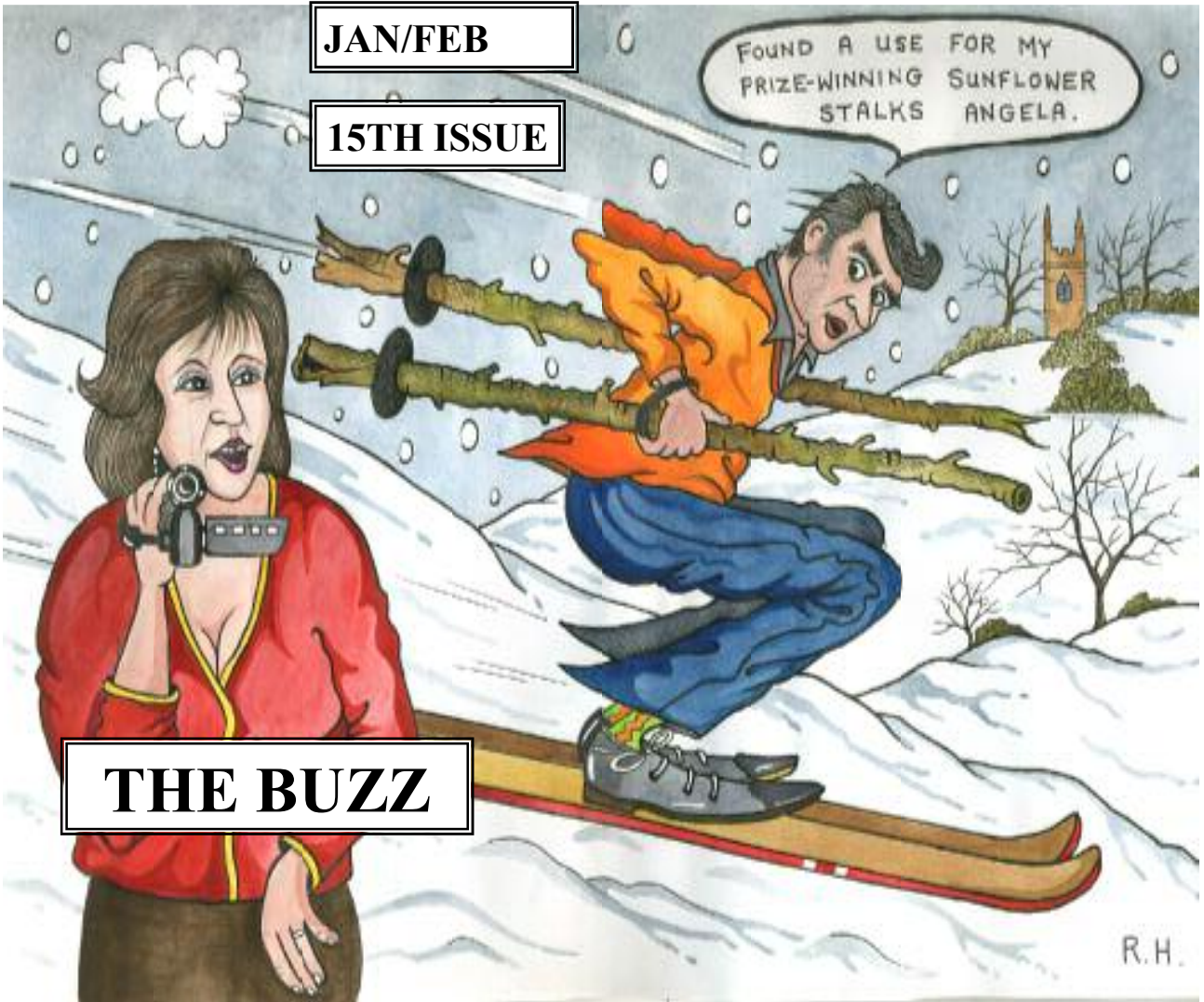
JAN/FEB

15TH ISSUE

FOUND A USE FOR MY
PRIZE-WINNING SUNFLOWER
STALKS ANGELA.

THE BUZZ

R.H.



Dear Readers,

A Happy New Year to you all.

Quite a few events took place before Christmas to raise funds for there own particular local organisation and by all accounts each one was a success.

Unfortunately we could only carol sing on one night due to the weather, meaning that some of the village missed their carollers this year. Better luck next year!

The date for the next Open Gardens has already been set for June alongside another charity event the week after at the home of Mrs. Shirley Youldon.

I thank everyone who continues to support our newsletter and request that if you know of something that may be of interest to others please get in contact with me so that I can print it in The Buzz.

We hope that 2012 will see strides being made in conjunction with the Hall Project and with a bit of luck the next issue will have some interesting news.

Please remember that the final date for items to be included in the next Buzz is 20th February.

Sheila Cholwill
Editor

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Nursey Rhymes Revisited

LITTLE MISS MUFFET sat on her tuffet, eating her curds and whey,
 Along came a spider and sat down beside her and frightened Miss Muffet away.
 Miss Muffet came back along with a **CAT**. He was big, he was bad, he was mean.
 “If you eat the spider I’ll give you a fiver along with a big dish of cream”
 Just as the cat prepared to act, a **FIDDLE**, danced into the room.
 “You don’t need a cat to get rid of that, I’ll squash it, now give me a broom”.
 Then into the space came a **COW**, at a pace. The scene was lit by the **MOON**, a
DOG gave a bark, when into the dark, the **DISH** ran away with the **SPOON**.
 Tucked in a corner **LITTLE JACK HORNER** looked aghast at the maddening
 scene. He felt really glum at loosing his plum. So hid; so as not to be seen.
 Jumping over the gate came a **SHEEP** and his mate, closely followed by **LITTLE
 BO PEEP**.” What’s this all about? I heard someone shout! You’ve woken me from
 a deep sleep”. Amidst all the racket **JACK, JILL** and a bucket said “This is getting,
 really absurd. We’ll drown it in watter, if you think we oughta or maybe you just
 need a bird”. **FOUR AND TWENTY** were spied along with the pie, adding song, to
 the deafening noise. In marched **KING COLE** who’s merry old sole, said “Don’t
 worry, I’ll send in the boys”.

THREE FIDDLERS arrived with tears in their eyes, from the smoke he let out ..
 With each puff”. Don’t look to us to sort out this mess” and turned on their heels in
 a huff. When out of the dairy came **MARY MARY**, holding seeds ...she was going
 to sow. “I’ll help you out” she said as she clouted her pretty maid all in a row.
 Before she could try **THREE PIGS** and a sty made of sticks, came in at a run. With
 a wolf on their back and no time to chat they were off.... Like a shot from a gun.
 Then out of the mist, came a man who looked p***** with **TEN THOUSAND
 MEN** by his side. They were ready to drop, the **DUKES** lost the plot, up or
 down...who could decide.

Everyone gasped as a blast from the past, came to save the day for them all.
 First name **HUMPTY**, surname **DUMPTY**, all he had to do was....fall.
 But...as you know...what makes a good show, is the surprising twist at the end. This
 egg was hard boiled, he bounced and he rolled, driving everyone round the bend.
ALL THE KINGS HORSES ran round the courses, leaving manure all over the
 shop. The pretty maids ran, scooped it up in a pan, to enrich their gardening plot.
 Unnoticed by all, **INCY SPIDER** had crawled into the water spout.
 That’s where he stayed, and silently prayed, till the rain fell and washed him right
 out.

It may be courageous how spider outrageous, had started his antics again.
 Miss Muffin took fright ran into the night tripped over and ended in pain.
 With eyes wide open, the crowd watched her ride. **A FINE LADY** upon a white
 horse. They’d come a long way to be in a play. A musical one of course.
 “When will this end?” said Miss Muffet to her friend, who had ridden from Banbury
 Cross. Fine lady replied with a glint in her eye **I KNOW AN OLD LADY** who
 swallowed a fly!!!!!!!

By **Lin Williams** (John McDougall’s sister).

MENINGITIS UK

I am sure the Buzz readers can remember some months ago that a copy of a pocket sized meningitis symptoms checker came through everyone's letter boxes with a copy of The Buzz. This was thought appropriate at the time and to raise awareness as a Mrs. Gloria Steel of Southfields had sadly lost a sister to this illness at Christmas 2010, leaving a husband and a very young family to carry on without a wife and a mum.

Further more in our local paper a few weeks ago the Meningitis Trust in Stroud reported that there was breaking news about the introduction of a new meningitis vaccine for adults, to help protect against the pneumococcal meningitis strain. The vaccine it said was available from doctors across the UK now and asked the paper to let their readers know about the potentially life-saving vaccine.

Mrs Steel has recently contacted me and hopes that our readers can help her family and a doctor from North Yorkshire, who are still seeking answers regarding their tragic loss.

They would like to start a charity called **SEPSIS UK** but to do it they need 100,000 signatures. Sepsis is the presence of pus forming bacteria in the body—it makes the blood sticky, causing Septicemia. In order to get charity status, these signatures are required to present to the House of Commons to get an Early Day Motion to discuss this.

Mrs. Steele would like all the Buzz readers with computers to please go to **Sepsis UK** and sign up. Therefore on Gloria's behalf I urge all of us to do this. Bacterial meningitis cases increase during the winter months so now I believe is an important time for us all to show our support.

Sheila Cholwill

THANK YOU SO MUCH EMMA AND JANE

The Parish Hall committee wish to thank **Emma Moore and Jane Lymer** so much for the recent donation to the hall for the refurbishment fund of £185.00.

Emma and Jane organised a very successful Christmas Gift and Craft Fair before Christmas at Hedley Wood Caravan Park with any profits going to The Devon Air Ambulance and Bridgerule Hall Refurbishment.

Emma and Jane also wish to thank Hedley Wood for the use of their facilities and for all their help.

When **Michael Moore** was 8 years of age his late grandmother, for a birthday present, gave him his first Meccano set. It proved very popular and Michael has been hooked ever since.

Although it wasn't until the birth of his daughter, Kaylie that he purchased a large No.10 Meccano set costing then, some twenty years ago, about £1000. Linda, his wife came out of the shop with the baby pram; Michael came out with the Meccano!

Each of his constructions are made on a especially made base in his garage. All the mountains of various shape and sizes of Meccano he has accumulated are labelled and placed in neat containers as if in an office filing system.

The latest construction, pictured below is a Fairground Waltzer. It has taken Michael 8 weeks to build. It is complete with a moveable turntable, steps and lights. It measures 4' diameter and 18" high. The Waltzer is made up of 2800 pieces and 4000 nuts and bolts! It is truly a labour of love.

Michael will keep each construction when completed for about two to three weeks. He then painstakingly takes it all apart and then begins working on the next project, which I believe is going to be a very high crane.

The editor took her grandson to see the Waltzer and he was fascinated, especially when Michael switched it on. As it is set in motion the chairs that we would sit on at the fair on the Waltzer also turn round on their own turntable. It was a very specialist piece of Meccano.



I thank Michael, who lives on The Green, for allowing us to see his Waltzer and look forward to being able to show our readers his next construction.

Sheila's Mention's

At a recent baptism of **Mayzie Rai Gough** and **Charlie Oliver Ridgeman** the Rev. Street welcomed them and their families into the Methodist Chapel.

Bill and Linda Keeley and their youngest son, **Ryan** came over from **Canada** to spend Christmas with Linda's family in Bridgerule and Holsworthy. This was the first time that Ryan had met granddad and grandma Abbott (Ron and Marion).
I am sure the family had a wonderful time.

Happy Birthday to **Joan Marshall** for the 24th January.

Happy Birthday to **Mr. Ron Cameron**.

Happy **91st** Birthday to **Mrs. Kate James** for 6th February.



Birthday wishes also to **Tony Wallis** for the 16th February.

Thank you to **Pam and her band of helpers** for the village Christmas Tree again.

Audrey Bewes—Poppy Appeal Co-ordinator for Bridgerule wishes to thank **Rose, Julie, Amanda, Liz and the Post Office** for their recent poppy collections. £435 was raised in the parish. She thanks everyone who donated to the 2011 appeal.

A group of adults and children led by Mr. Chris Hitchings did some carol singing recently around the village and raised £149. This will be divided equally between the Primary School, St. Bridget's Church and the Methodist Chapel. Thank you to all who took part. *(see picture)*

The Launceston Male Voice Choir together with the Bude Metric Band entertained an audience before Christmas in the hall to raise funds for our hall refurbishment. Those that went joined in with singing some carols and at the close everyone enjoyed some refreshments. The great sum of £500 was raised for the hall project.

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Jill and Bill Knightley were married in London in 1962 and continued to live there until 2003. Bill then felt that he would like to retire early from his career and so it was decided to leave London and buy a small holding in North Tamerton with views overlooking Dartmoor. That was four years ago. Today Jill and Bill live in Littlebridge Meadows.

Prior to moving from London and trying to come to terms with a family bereavement Jill felt she wanted a new outlet. So through connections at work she took up the sport of table tennis. Success did not come at first but over a period of time Jill as a veteran table tennis player has risen through the ranks to become an international player competing all over the world. (a veteran table tennis player has to be 40 and over). At present Jill plays locally twice a week for North Tamerton in the North Cornwall League and Sutcombe in the North Devon League – both teams being in their top divisions. Twice a year, over two weekends, Jill travels to play for her county of Berkshire. Over the weekend that I visited Jill she was travelling to play county table tennis at Milton Keynes. She has represented England on numerous occasions as a veteran player and has her England Badge. She has also travelled to Guernsey to play in the 6 Nations. Furthermore she represents her Country at International Level. She has competed in Istanbul, Liberec in Prague and in the World Championships, where her team consisting of three players got through to the final 8. Here she said she could compete with other veterans up to the age of 90. All the tournaments she has taken part in are self financed with just the entry fee being found for her.

In 2008 with a view of looking ahead to when she may no longer be able to compete as a team member but still very much interested in the sport, she applied to become a table tennis umpire. She had to travel to Bristol to complete a test paper and to St. Austell for her practical before she qualified.

Her success as an umpire has enabled her to officiate at County and National Level. This year she has umpired at the UK Schools Games and the Paraplegics 4 day Sports Tournament in Sheffield.

This determination then made her think of the 2012 Olympics in London – the challenge was on!

So in January 2011 Jill applied, alongside 75000 others, to become a 'games maker' at the Olympics. Her synopsis to be part of this huge event was that she had a keen interest in sport, especially when it involved her country. She hopefully had the qualifications required by the Olympic administrators and could prove that she was a 'team person'. Jill waited until August before a letter arrived inviting her for an interview in Plymouth.

The interview completed she was then told that no decision would be made of whether she had been successful or otherwise until November. Fortunately for Jill the news came in October and it was positive. She has been chosen to become a 'team member' in the Olympic Village and also to be part of the paraplegic table tennis teams. At present she is not officiating as an umpire but as a 'team member' she will be required to check kits etc. The decision of whether she gets to be an umpire is still under review. Prior to that Jill will undergo 3 days training. At the time she will travel to London and stay with friends; travelling in daily to the Olympic Village in her official uniform.

Home in Bridgerule she says that she and Bill are very much enjoying living in the village. They enjoy the quietness and have made some good friends. They have both enjoyed some wonderful holidays abroad. The favourite countries they have travelled to are New Zealand and Malaysia.

They much prefer to mingle and meet with the natives of their chosen country and not keep to the typical tourist route.



It was lovely to meet Jill and her husband. On behalf of the Buzz readers I congratulate Jill on her success as a table tennis player and wish her well in the Olympics. Hopefully she will be able to report back after the event. Jill's main reason in contacting the editor was to see through The Buzz if anyone else in the community are going to the Olympics. We wait and see!!

Bridgerule Open Gardens 2012

Would you like to join a group of friendly people who open their gardens to raise money for Devon and Cornwall Air Ambulance Trusts.??

The Open Gardens Day in Bridgerule in 2012 is Sunday 10th June from 10.00am to 5.00pm and is great fun. We are a group of enthusiastic amateur gardeners and have regular meetings to ensure we all know what we are doing. We get support from the Church and Chapel and last year raised nearly £3000.

If you would like to know more then contact Chris Hitchings at Meadows Barn (opposite Post Office) - 01288 381129 or
Rosie Beat at the Mill- 01288 381341.

We would love to hear from you.

Bude Music Society presents Rhys Matthews, Percussionist

Rhys Matthews graduated from the Royal Northern College of Music with distinction and now has a demanding career playing as a soloist, in ensembles, and with leading orchestras. This rising star of the percussion world will be performing an entertaining and imaginative programme featuring music from across the world, including film music from Taiwan, favourites by Rimsky-Korsakov and Piazzolla, and a fascinating work for plant pots by American composer Frederic Rzewski.

Join us on Sunday 22nd January at 3 pm, at Minstrels Music Centre, Canworthy Water. Admission £12, students free.

DO YOU KNOW THIS PERSON?

putting her right leg out and shaking it all about....

Or is she just putting in some practice for next years
Carnival Line Dance!!!!



Keep an eye on the village website

WWW ● **BRIGERULE.CO.UK**

See what's happening in the village, local council meetings,
the Bridgerule Tomorrow project, and much, much more

Holsworthy Motor Club's Chairman's Trophy Trial

The Chairman's Trophy Trial has been run each February for over forty years. Up until the early eighties it was the club's only classic road trial. For most of this time the Holsworthy Cattle Market served as a start and finish venue but for the last ten years we have started nearer to the North Coast.

The hill at Bridgerule gives us a gentle first competitive section. We call it Rolly Polly as most of our sections have been given names but I expect there is a proper local name for it.

Our event on 26th.Feb.starts from the Cattle Market once again this year at 09.00hrs. There are usually just over eighty competitors. The first to arrive at Bridgerule will be the motorcycle combinations, at about 09.20, and these will be followed at minute intervals by solo motorcycles and then cars.

They will have a sixty mile route to follow. After Rolly Polly they go to three sections at Leigh Woods, on private land near Grimscott. Then the route takes them via Bush, Kilkhampton, Morewenstowe and Hartland. The last section of the day will be at Smallbrook Wood on land belonging to Rude Farm Pancrasweek. They will have completed eighteen sections and two special tests and the first of the bikes should be back at the cattle market by 14.30 hrs. For many years this event was organised by Mr Bill Vanstone. Bill had been a great stalwart for the club as a competitor, marshal, organiser and its president.

Bill died in November and as a tribute to him this event will be known, in future years, as the Bill Vanstone Chairman's Trophy Trial.

Jim Wood

President of Holsworthy Motor Club / Secretary of this Event.

Pyworthy and District Garden Club

**Meets 7.30pm, 2nd Monday of the month,
Pyworthy Village Hall**

Guest speakers, quizzes and trips
Membership £7.00 and £2.00 a night.
Guest £3.00.

**ST. BRIDGET'S CHURCH SERVICES
JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2012**

1st January	Bridgerule	11.00am
8th January	Pancrasweek	10.30am
Plough Sunday		
15th January	Bridgerule	11.00am
22nd January	Bridgerule	11.00am
29th January	United Benefice - Pyworthy	10.30am
05th February	Bridgerule	11.00am
12th February	Bridgerule	11.00am
19th February	Bridgerule	11.00am
22nd February	Ash Wednesday	7.30pm Bridgerule
26th February	Bridgerule	11.00am

At a recent Christmas Wine & Wisdom held in the Parish Hall for Church Funds the sum of £355.90 was raised.

PLEASE REMEMBER that on the 1st Saturday of each month between 2.00pm and 3.00pm outside the Parish Hall any newspapers etc are collected to raise funds for St. Bridget's.

Mr. Ben Ashton celebrated his 96th birthday on 21st December 2011. Ben and his wife Barbara have been married for 66 years and live at Southlands Bridgerule.

Mr. Ashton still drives his car and regularly attends the Methodist Chapel.



BELGIUM BATTLEFIELDS TRIP

By David Jones of Holladon Farm.

I am in Year 9 at Holsworthy Community College and was given the opportunity to go to Belgium to see the battlefields, memorials and graves of the First World War.

Before we went to Belgium we all had to write a poem about the war to leave on the grave or a monument to a soldier over there. The pupils who wrote the best two would be able to take part in a wreath laying ceremony at the Menin Gate in Belgium and mine was chosen.

Early one morning we travelled through the night to Dover. As everyone was so excited I don't think hardly anyone got any sleep.

We arrived, after quite a rough crossing, in Calais and drove up to Vimy Ridge National Park in France. In 1917 it was the scene of one of the fiercest battles in the war. Although allied soldiers took part it was mainly Canadians that fought in the battle and they were incredibly brave. The Canadians won the battle and took back Vimy Ridge which was then given to them after the war as a National Park. When we arrived we were shown around the original tunnels underneath the battlefield and went into the trenches, which are now made of concrete. We also saw the holes which the artillery shells had made. They were absolutely massive. Next we went to see the Vimy Ridge memorial which is made out of marble and towers above everything else. I would say it is at least 2 maybe 3 times the height of Bridgerule church tower. Engraved all over this memorial are the names of every Canadian soldier who died in the war. It was really moving to see this great monument dedicated to all those fallen soldiers.

After this we drove to the Thiepval Memorial which remembers 72000 missing English soldiers. This memorial was shaped like a building which we could walk around, but every single wall was covered in names. It is horrible to think that everyone of those names represented a person, and most of them would have only been in their early 20's. There was even one 14 year olds name on the monument. This shocked everyone.



The next day we travelled to Tyne Cott cemetery which was a cemetery for all the Commonwealth soldiers in the area. There was about 12000 graves. The cemetery was huge and went as far as the eye could see.

Wherever you turned you could see the white grave stones, row upon row upon row. But the majority of the men in these graves are unidentified. This I thought was the worst part. The soldiers regiment may have been identified but nothing more!

At the top of the cemetery was a huge curved wall with the regiments and the names of the soldiers in those regiments who were not found. We found the Devonshire Regiments memorial and this is where I read out my poem in front of everyone. Marley Cutter laid a wreath. I felt very nervous but very proud at the same time to be able to do this. We then went on to Sanctuary Woods trenches. These were exactly as they would have been during the war. You could hardly move for getting stuck in the mud. There was also a tunnel which the soldiers would have used. It was very low and pitch black. I didn't envy those soldiers that had to live in the tunnels. It must have been really horrible.

We then went back to the hotel to get changed for the Menin Gate ceremony. The ceremony takes place around a memorial which has the names of 54896 British and Commonwealth soldiers. With the exception of the Second World War this ceremony had happened every night since 1928. It was a huge honour to be able to take part in it.

Then the traffic was stopped, the buglers sounded the last post and we crossed the road with about 600 people watching, laid the wreath, stepped back bowed our heads before returning to our original position. I felt very nervous doing it but it was a once in a lifetime opportunity and I am extremely glad I got chosen to do it. The whole trip had been a great experience and one which had been very humbling and thought provoking. I am so glad that I went. If you have the chance please go.

David's poem: Men and boys a long way from home,
 Marching onwards, towards the unknown.
 To do your bit for the war what they were told,
 So on they went as brave as they were bold.
 Into the trenches and into the mud,
 Into the place soaked with other men's blood.
 Awaiting the order to go over the top,
 To keep walking and never to stop.
 To head for the enemy line straight for the trench,
 Trudging through the mud despite of the stench,
 Of the bodies of friends and foe covered in blood,
 Lying there on top of the mud.
 Up ahead were the sounds of exploding shells,
 But still on they walked, on through this hell.
 The enemy line was straight up ahead,
 But already so many of the brave soldiers were dead.
 So some of them reached the unknown,
 Some of those boys and men a long way from home,
 And that's where they fell,
 Down into the mud escaping this hell.

The Buzz Congratulates David and thanks him very much.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH NOTES

I hope you had a crime free Christmas and will have for the New Year. To report a crime dial 101 and the cost is only fifteen pence. From a landline or a mobile. Still dial 999 if a crime is happening or there is danger to yourself or anyone else or you need rescue.

A reminder of the co-ordinators for the village and parish:-

Alan Bryant	Hedley Wood Caravan Park	381 404
Alec Johnston	31 Southfields	381 054
Cliff Seymour-Smith	Bevills Hill	381 690
Ken James	Merrifield	381 279
Paul Dymond	Borough Cross	381 309
Shirley Abbott	Mill Road	381 564
Sid Parnell	Jewells Cross	381 770
John McDougall	Furze / Dux Cross	381 237

Having a Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator close by could get you a discount on home and contents for insurance. If anyone would like to volunteer for the areas without a co-ordinator please contact any of the above named.

Meanwhile I'm old enough to remember Shaw Taylor and his final comment "Keep 'em peeled".

John McDougall - Bridgerule Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator.

CAROL SINGING



After the wind and rain had caused the first session of the village carol singing to be cancelled a very enthusiastic band of children and adults made up for the previous disappointment. At Southfields the children sang 'Little Donkey' on their own.

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<p>MOBILE LIBRARY</p> <p>Uplands 10:00</p> <p>Village Hall 10:35</p> <p>January 3rd, 17th and 31st.</p> <p>February 14th and 28th</p>
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<p>BLOOD DONORS</p> <p>Parkhouse Centre Bude</p> <p>FEBRUARY 9TH 2012.</p> <p>Sessions 15:15 and 17.00pm.</p>

Can you remember THE GREAT TRAFFIC JAM?
Christopher Darwin spoke on behalf of us when he wrote to the following.

Dear Torridge Councillors and Mr Parsons in particular,

May I invite as many of you as possible to travel by road from Holsworthy to Bude this week.

I suggest you wait until a lorry leaves the town so that you can follow the fascinating tourist route; don't bother to clean your car first, but make sure your screen wash is full. Allow yourself plenty of time – possibly 30 minutes for the few miles.

You will find the route passes the scenic Holsworthy golf club and then turns left into a leafy byroad to Bridgerule. Leave plenty of space behind the lorry as it will have to stop suddenly as the road is not wide enough to allow two vehicles to pass.

You will observe the agricultural nature of the verges as these have all been ploughed up by vehicles obliged to leave the tarmac. Much of this mud is now on the road, making it slippery – so remember your car control course.

After passing the picturesque village church (mind the dog) you will reach the most exciting part of your journey – Bridgerule and its narrow streets with cars parked. First you will have the traffic jam on Bridgerule hill; expect plenty of waiting if any traffic is coming up the hill – there is no verge, but steep banks preventing escape. You may have to pull rank, take charge and get the cars in the queue behind you to reverse. Remember your safety – some of the drivers on this tour are very impatient.

In Bridgerule I suggest a visit to the excellent shop. Your parked car will conveniently slow the rush of traffic through the village.

Eventually, you will reach Red Post crossroads. Instead of continuing to Bude, why not turn towards Holsworthy on the important A3072 and find out what the hell is going on. The road has been CLOSED since Monday.

When you get back to the office, you may wish to work out the cost of repairing the Bridgerule lane. Who will pay for that?

I DON'T BELIEVE IT!!

Mr Colin Cholwill has dug up this fine specimen from his garden!!





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Mon/Tues/Thurs/Fri	9.00am - 5.00pm.
Wednesday	9.00am - 12 noon.
Saturday	9.00am - 12.30pm.

Our journey with Chris and Rachel ends with this edition. They are now home safe and sound (but freezing)!

From Sydney we went to Melbourne to stay with a friend from Worcester who had just moved out there. Melbourne was very modern with spectacular architecture which was lit up at night and looked amazing. Rachel had her birthday there and we hired a car and drove south to Phillip Island, where there was a koala reserve, and we also saw some wild wallabies. In the evening we sat on the beach and watched 1000's of blue penguins come out of the sea and find their nests in the sand dunes all around us. It was a very unique sight albeit a smelly and noisy one. Next was a flight to Alice Springs and a camping trip to Ayres Rock natively known as Uluru. We visited some canyons before going to Uluru and saw some fascinating sandstone formations. We got up to see the sunrise over Uluru and then we did a base walk which took three hours, quite a big rock! From Alice we flew to Perth and got to see the Queen and Prince Philip, as they were there for a meeting with other Commonwealth leaders. Perth was a good city but there wasn't much to do though we had heard that the surrounding areas are fantastic. I think if we came back here we would hire a van and go exploring.

Our next flight took us flying over a very busy shipping port to land on the island of Singapore. Our plans for Asia changed due to the floods that had hit Thailand, so we took each day as it came with the knowledge we had four weeks till our next flight from Bangkok. We discovered that we are very slow travellers and didn't see as much of Asia as we had expected. So for information on Asia Andrew Youldon has covered a few miles here and would be your best bet. Singapore was a good introduction into Asia with English being spoken and on signs. There were very distinct areas in the city from China town and Little India to the very affluent business section. In Singapore we visited a diverse botanical garden and enjoyed a night time gondola ride over a multi coloured lit city.

Singapore was a very multi-cultural, clean city with good public transport which was a world away from Kuala Lumpur, our next destination. We could feel the trend move from Western to Eastern and we started to see a different culture in play. We visited Batu Cave, a large spacious limestone cave which houses a Muslim temple. Monkeys run wild mugging tourists for food as you walk the 236 steps up to the entrance. Inside are intriguing and foreign statues with excessive incense burning and we felt like we were in an Indiana Jones film. On our last night we were part of a studio audience for an Australian game show similar to Total Wipeout on the BBC. Many people from our hostel also went as we got paid equivalent to a nights accommodation (a whopping £8) and it was a hilariously good night.

Next we took a sleeper train to Hat Yai in Thailand followed by a bus to Krabi. Four countries in two weeks our passport was filling up and our mental arithmetic was improving for the currency changes though we were no Mervin 'quicker than a calculator' Snowdon. South East Thailand was beautiful, very green and lush, limestone mountains covered green with vegetation.

Krabi was a small town on the river that had a good night market. We were fortunate to participate in Loy Krathong described as Thailand's most enchanting Festival. It pays homage to Mae Khongkha, goddess of water ways. We let off Chinese lanterns and sent off a Krathong (a small lotus-shaped boats bearing offerings of flowers, a candle, incense and a coin) on the river. From Krabi we took a Thai long boat to a peninsula called Railay and we stayed in bungalows on stilts in a small jungle cove called Tonsai. The limestone formations here were amazing and with a little exploring caves could be found with great stalactites in. Little limestone islands and kharsts littered the coast so we went sea kayaking one day and found some more caves forged by sea erosion. Cruising into these dark tunnels with crabs running all over the walls was an experience. Tonsai had a great atmosphere in the evenings as when the tide went out a reef was exposed and no one could enter or leave. Fire shows and parties were to be had every night with a great small collection of people. It was hard to drag ourselves away but Phi Phi Don (all Ph's are pronounced hard) was our next stop by ferry. We went on a day trip around a smaller island called Phi Phi Le. We did some snorkelling in warm crystal blue water and I even got bitten by a fish. Also here on Phi Phi Le was Maya Bay used as the setting for the film 'The Beach'.

The next ferry was to Phuket the largest of the islands on the South east side. Here we met with a friend who works at Bangkok University but due to the floods he and his one year old daughter had retreated to Phuket. He took us to some fantastic view points on the island and to the worlds largest Buddha statue currently being built. All these places had been wonderful to visit and time had caught up with us so we had to fly our next leg to Chang Mai in the North of Thailand. One of the oldest cities in Thailand and was surrounded by a wall and a moat. There we got our fill of Buddhist temples as you couldn't walk more than two minutes before coming across the next one. The reason to leave the gorgeous beaches and come to the jungle north was a three day stay on an elephant reserve in the countryside. Here we were allocated one elephant called Maddong who we fed, washed, walked and cleaned up after for three days. She had come from the logging industry and it has only recently been made illegal to use elephants to move felled trees. She was slightly grumpy when being washed but apart from that she was a gentle giant. All the elephants are looked after by Burmese mahouts (elephant keeper). These men could not speak a

word of English but we would sit with them after a days work as they cooked corn and bananas on a fire. They were very poorly paid and would fish, hunt squirrels and rats for their meat intake. It was very humbling to sit with them and watch how they lived. After feeding they would play music and sing, we felt most connected to them when they played 'Joy to the World' on pipes. American missionaries had taught them Christian songs when they lived in Burma.





From Chang Mai we flew over the floods to Bangkok, where a wall was constructed to keep the water out of the city. Unfortunately this meant that the water was left in residential areas and not drained through the river running through Bangkok. Apart from the flight in and precautionary sandbags around shops we saw no signs of floods. We enjoyed haggling in the markets and seeing the Kings Palace and temple grounds before flying to Hong Kong.

Hong Kong was similar to Singapore due to the UK's occupation but it was heavily overcrowded. We stayed in an area called Kowloon in large towers that would have a guesthouse, supermarket and school all on different levels. You had to be careful that you got off on the right level or else you could get lost for hours. We saw where the Orient Express stops and again went around some markets. Our gambling crave was satisfied with a ferry ride to Macau, dubbed the next Las Vegas. Macau was owned by the Portuguese and was very different to Singapore and Hong Kong in the sense that there were brightly decorated colonial buildings, churches and cobbled streets. We could have been in mainland Europe if it wasn't for all the Asians and Chinese writing. After Macau we went back to Hong Kong and on our final night we went to the Happy Valley races and I bet on a horse due to its name 'Regency Winner'. It turned out that Frankie Detouri was the rider so no wonder I won.

From HK we flew to Shanghai for our final week of our trip, and as Singapore was a good introduction to Asia, Shanghai was a good introduction to the cold weather we would be facing in England. So one more swap from shorts to trousers was in order. Christmas was everywhere in HK and we were getting into the spirit of things. Shanghai was mainland China and Buddhism was prominent so Christmas decorations were sparse. This was the biggest culture shock of the whole trip. In one day we counted 19 Westerners and not many people spoke English, we learnt basic Mandarin but it was tricky to talk to locals. Our last week was very relaxing and we didn't do much apart from reminisce about the fantastic past year.

So now I'm back in England shivering in front of a fire typing away.

We thank you very much for reading about our travels and would recommend it to everybody.

Chris and Rachel

On behalf of the Buzz readers thank you so much Chris and Rachel. Your in- depth descriptions of the countries you have both visited have been great!

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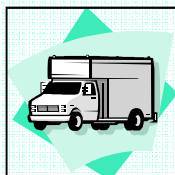
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February 12th	Rev. John Henry	9.30am
	(Sacrament)	
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beeeeeppp ...

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If you want to borrow the car, press 3

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If you want the grandchildren to sleep here tonight, press 5

If you want us to pick up the kids at school, press 6

If you want us to prepare a meal for Sunday or to have it delivered to your home, press 7

If you want to come to eat here, press 8

If you need money, dial 9

If you are going to invite us to dinner or take us to the theatre, start talking, we are listening !!!!!!!!!!!

Messy Arts Club

Jan Spencer, Rev'd Chris Hardwick and Lesley Wheeler are seen below serving baked potatoes with beans and cheese as a part of a very successful



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