

LOPEN EYE

Lopen Parish Newsletter

APRIL 2016



LOPEN SCONATHON A HUGE SUCCESS!

Following his accident at Beer Head in July, John Milner ran a hugely successful fund raising event at Cross Tree House on Saturday 12th March. The idea was to bake and sell as many scones as possible within a 10 hour period. The weather was fair and an attendance of over 500 people enjoyed a lovely day, being entertained by the Dr. Turbeville's Morris Dancers, the Langport Mummers performing "King Alfred burns the scones", Jonathan Weeks playing medieval instruments, James Crowden's poetry and music from 'Bad Dog no Biscuit', Elise Yuill and Julian Dawson.

At the end of the day 1143 scones had been baked and an incredible £6856 had been raised for the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance and the Devon Air Ambulance who assisted him after the accident.

The event was covered by BBC Points West, BBC Somerset and Abbey 104 FM as well as the Times, Mail on-line, Mirror on-line, Metro, Western Daily Press, Western Gazette, etc. but had some stiff opposition from the Rugby! John would like to thank all those people who freely gave their time, equipment, facilities and labour to make the day a success. And to the Blackmore Vale Dairy, Cherry Tree Preserves, Stoates Flour, Blackacre Farm, Miles Tea and Coffee and Ceres Natural foods who generously provided all the ingredients.



THE SAILING ADVENTURES OF MARY ROOK CONTINUE

Some people may remember Mary after her years in Lopen as the school girl running for the bus and whipping off her tie as soon as she was out of sight of her mother! She has spent 8 years in the British Sailing Team and has recently completed her first solo race. Mary hosted our memorable village visit to WPSA Olympic venue. She is now sailing large boats solo offshore! Her blog can be found on her website - www.maryrook.com gives a graphic and humorous account of what it was like to be alone in the pitch dark on a freezing March night off the treacherous Brittany coast. It was her birthday too!!



LOPEN PARISH COUNCIL

PLANNING

We seem to be beset by planning issues at present.

FROGMARY GREEN FARM - work continues apace on the anaerobic digester and it appears that a new gasholder is being built despite the fact that the site developer, Greener for Life, has not been granted planning permission for that and other structures on the site, such as the surface LPG storage tanks. To date, no enforcement action has been taken, nor has any planning decision been made, as much information relevant to the application has not yet been submitted. The tactic of applying for permission, and then building something else and subsequently applying for retrospective permission when residents have complained, has been adopted by Greener for Life at a number of sites in Devon and Cornwall. The retrospective application for the site at Menchine Farm in Mid-Devon was turned down by the local District Council and its refusal has now been backed up by the Planning Inspector charged with hearing the appeal, who turned it down on 18th March.

At the 'business parks' (where the landscaping requirements have been neither implemented nor enforced), we have identified more planning breaches:

MILL LANE - a local resident noticed that a substantial new building was going up without permission and as a result of our report, SSDC have imposed a temporary stop notice. We have also spotted advertisements for a new carpet showroom despite the fact that retail use is not permitted there. This has also been reported to SSDC who have acknowledged our notification.

LOPEN HEAD - Meanwhile at **Lopen Head**, there is an advertisement for 'Champagne Cave' on the Lift West site. The SSDC licensing department has informed us that there is no licence and confirmed that both the licensing and planning rules have been breached.

TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES

The complaints about the size of tractors and lorries speeding through the village, (some without visible or with obscured number plates), and causing havoc are flooding in at present, with people being woken as early as 4.30 am by the noise and vibration. We would be very grateful if all residents who spot vehicles breaching the speed and the 7.5 tonne limit report the offenders to the police. We are pleased that Ben Goldsmith's complaint about one particular company has resulted in the police contacting the culprits and making it clear to them that driving their lorries through the village is an offence. Now that the weather is better, we are hoping that we can set up a more regular watch system to ensure that we alert the authorities to the problem and get some

enforcement. We can make a difference!

Christopher Le Hardy, our County Councillor, notified the parish council at its 15th March meeting that he had obtained some monies from the County Council for traffic calming measures. There were surveys under the chairmanship of Peter Little and Barry Davolls as to what residents would like, so we shall be putting the options which came out of them to you shortly.

DUALLING OF THE A303

Roger and Teresa attended Highways England's presentation on the proposals, not that Teresa heard much because, yet again, no induction loop was provided. We were advised that the first phase involved Salisbury Plain, the Sparkford-Podimore stretch and the dualling of the A385 that links the A303 to the M5. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/find-out-more-about-improvement-plans-for-the-a303a358>.

Our County Councillor has told us that plans are being considered to widen the Ilminster by-pass, but we are not clear yet on what this might entail.

EGWOOD

The acquisition of Egwood was discussed at length at the March PC meeting. Barry continues to investigate the alternatives for the required insurances.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Parish Council meetings will take place at the School Room at 7.00pm on the following dates:

May 17th - AGM

August 16th

October 18th

December tbc - Budget

January 2017 tbc - Precept

MEETING MINUTES

Please note that Parish Council minutes, audited accounts and other statutory information, which must be made available to the public, are available on the village website -

<http://www.lopen.btck.co.uk/LopenParishCouncil>

MORE COUNCILLORS NEEDED

With the impending loss of one or possibly even two councillors, Barry Davolls and our Chairwoman Teresa Sienkiewicz, we need to recruit more volunteers to serve on the Lopen Parish Council. Parishioners are elected to serve on the council for four year periods. The new Chair Person is selected annually by the councillors from within the existing members.

This is a rewarding and sociable position that ensures we have a voice with the District and County Councils and helps to ensure we continue to have an enjoyable and functioning village to live in. If you are interested please contact Teresa at tsloopenpc1@btinternet.com or telephone 241 363.

MP's SPRING TOUR

Marcus Fysh will be on his local Spring Tour in April and will be visiting Lopen on **Friday April 8th**. You can visit him at the Lopen Sunday School Room, All Saints Church, Church Lane TA13 5JX, where he will be in attendance from 11.00am to 12.00 midday.



UPDATE ON LOPEN WAR MEMORIAL.....

As you may know a local historian (Peter Forrester) has been making a survey of all the War Memorials in Somerset and he identified four men born in Lopen who were killed during the First World War, but were not listed on Lopen's memorial. However one was listed on Merriott's memorial, and one was listed on South Petherton's. This left two brothers who have not been listed on any local memorial at all. As a joint initiative, both Lopen Parish Council and Lopen P.C.C. have undertaken to rectify this. To that end work will be started in the better weather to add their names to the memorial.



It was felt that just like the erection of the memorial in 1920 it was only correct that cost should be opened up to voluntary public subscription, with the cost being underwritten by both councils.

If anyone feels able to make a contribution, please make all payments to Lopen P.C.C. via the Treasurer, Steve Chapman. Also, if you are a UK Tax payer and Gift Aid your donation, this will enable your donation to be increased by 25% at no cost to you.

CAR ACCIDENT IN THE HOLLOWAY

Due to driver error a car smashed into the telegraph pole at the junction of The Holloway and Broomhill Lane on Easter Monday afternoon, March 28th. The car ended up in Broomhill Lane upside down on the bank, and the telegraph pole was leaning across the lane. No injuries were reported.



COUNTRYSIDE CODE FOR THE PUBLIC

Spring is a lovely time of year when we 'break out' from the winter and enjoy the countryside. Daffodils, lambs, and the lovely fresh air. So, just a reminder to think of the farmers too when out walking. Remember:

- Leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths.
- A farmer will normally close gates to keep farm animals in, but may sometimes leave them open so the animals can reach food and water.
- Leave gates as you find them or follow instructions on signs. When in a group, make sure the last person knows how to leave the gates.
- Follow paths unless wider access is available, such as on open country or registered common land (known as 'Open Access' land).

QUEENS BIRTHDAY STREET PARTY

There will be a street party in Lopen on Sunday 12th June to celebrate our Queen's 90th birthday. Make a note in your diary now - **more details next month**. It will be fun!



Lopen Plant Fair

In aid of the Sunday School and Church Fund

Saturday 7th May

10.30am - 12noon



For a wonderful selection of locally sourced flower and vegetable plants at special prices for your garden, vegetable plot, tub and basket. Delicious cakes for sale and refreshments to be enjoyed. Donations of plants and cakes would be much appreciated to support this fund raising event and will be gratefully received at the Schoolroom on the Friday afternoon or before the event on the Saturday.



Our next meeting will be at
7.30pm on Tuesday 12th April
 at
The School Room



Simon Frackiewicz will talk about the charity work he does providing eye-care for local people in a small village in East Africa. Simon is an Optometrist/Orthoptist with the opticians Robert Frith. When Simon and his family came to live in Lopen a couple of years ago he kindly agreed to come and give this talk about his experiences.

Anyone wishing to join is more than welcome - membership is £3 for the year and £2 for each meeting thereafter (if held in The School Room).

For further information please telephone Margaret Linton : 241 162.

OPEN MEETING MONDAY 9TH MAY 7PM SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM

We want to hear your views and ideas about the place of the church in our community. We also want to discuss how to make best use of the church building and Sunday School Room in the future. So we are inviting all Lopen residents to an open meeting to share suggestions. The evening will begin with a fork supper. No need to book - just come along.



A NEW CHOIR

We are delighted to have found someone who can lead a new choir for our village churches. The initial idea is to meet fortnightly, to enjoy learning to sing together and to sing at occasional special services in our churches. This choir is open to everyone, whether or not you usually come to church, both children and adults. If you are at all interested, please contact Bob or Julia Hicks or come along to Merriott Church 7pm on Thursday 5th May.

CONTACTS

Village website - www.lopen.btck.co.uk

PARISH COUNCIL

Chairwoman	Teresa Sienkiewicz	241 363	tslopec1@btinternet.com
Vice Chairman	Stephen Crane	241 412	scrane1@hotmail.co.uk
	Sarah Mason	249 219	sarahmason6@yahoo.com
	Nick Jones	241 643	nick.jones.lopec@outlook.com
	Barry Davolls	242 297	b.davolls.lopec@btinternet.com
	Jenny Feeney	419 569	jfeeneylopec@gmail.com
	Ed Moore	394 583	ed.moore.lopec@gmail.com

Parish Clerk	Roger Gurner	249 253	clerktolopenpc@freeolamail.com
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DISTRICT COUNCIL	Cllr Adam Dance	07767 224 213	adam.dance@southsomerset.gov.uk
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	Cllr Crispin Raikes	07968 291 588	crispin.raikes@southsomerset.gov.uk
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COUNTY COUNCIL	Cllr Christopher Le Hardy	01935 850 212	clehardy@somerset.gov.uk
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MEMBER of PARLIAMENT	Marcus Fysh		marcus.fysh.mp@parliament.uk
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ALL SAINTS CHURCH

Benefice Office	Issy Welsh	73226	
Rector	Rev. Julia Hicks	76406	juliahicks1@gmail.com
Rector	Rev. Bob Hicks	76406	bobhicks66@gmail.com
Churchwarden	Angela Naunton Davies	240 921	nauntondavies@btinternet.com

JUST WOMEN

Chairwoman	Lynn Benfield	929 205	lynn.ian@virgin.net
Treasurer	Zena Morgan	77259	zenam1@hotmail.co.uk
Secretary	Margaret Linton	241 162	margaretlinton79@yahoo.com

POLICE CSO	Ceara Sturt	Dial 101	ceara.sturt@avonandsomerset.police.uk
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ask for PCSO 8340

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH	Valerie Canton	242 751	mvcanton@talktalk.net
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ARCHIVE & HISTORICAL GROUP	Nigel Potts	240 369	nigelpotts@talktalk.net
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LOPEN EYE TEAM

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COFFEE TIME
 at the
 School Room

Only £1 for a hot drink
 (including refill) and a slice
 of homemade cake.

APRIL DATES

Wednesday

13th & 27th

10.30am to 12.00 midday



Everyone welcome -
 including parents with young children.

All proceeds to charities including
 Macmillan Nurses, Bliss, The Stroke
 Association, Somerset Air Ambulance
 and The Alzheimer's Society.