

# BLEADON



VILLAGE NEWS 72

# Bleadon Village Monthly Market

Local Produce. Beef, Lamb & Pork. Seasonal Veg.  
Bread. Cakes. Cheese. Eggs. Preserves.  
Honey. Garden & House Plants. Crafts. Jewellery.  
Books Bric-a-Brac. Fair Trade. Refreshments and  
Much More. Always Something New.



**Saturday** 9<sub>am</sub>-12.30<sub>pm</sub>

**Dates:** Mar 24, Apr 21, May 19,  
June 16, July 21, August 18, Sept 15,  
Oct 20, Nov 17, Dec 1

**Coronation Hall, Bleadon**

**01934 812370** to book a stall  
at this popular monthly market

### THE PARISH COUNCIL

PENNY SKELLEY [CHAIRMAN]	'MENDIP CROFT', CELTIC WAY, BLEADON.	TEL. 815331
PENNY ROBINSON [VICE CHAIRMAN]	1, THE VEALE, BLEADON.	TEL. 814142
RAY HICKS	'FIDDLER'S VIEW, HILLCOTE BLEADON HILL.	TEL. 811993
MALCOLM PERRY	'WESTFIELD', 1 THE BARTON, BLEADON.	TEL. 813940
MARY SHEPPARD	'LITTLEWOOD' BRIDGWATER RD., LYMPHAM.	TEL. 812921
KEITH PYKE	8, WHITEGATE CLOSE, BLEADON.	TEL. 813127
CLIVE MORRIS	20, BLEADON MILL, BLEADON.	TEL. 811591
JUSTIN HARVEY-BENNETT	THE BEECHES, CELTIC WAY, BLEADON.	TEL. 811373
ROBERT HOUSE		TEL. 815588

The Council meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7.30pm, in the Coronation Hall. An agenda is published on the Parish notice board, and any Parishioner who wishes to, may attend these meetings. If there is a particular issue you would like to raise, could you please let the Parish Clerk know in advance and at the latest by the Friday immediately preceding the meeting. This will give him the chance to collect the most up to date information available.

#### **THE PARISH CLERK TO WHOM ALL CORRESPONDENCE SHOULD BE ADDRESSED IS:-**

BRUCE POOLE, 'THE CHIPPINGS', 21 STONELEIGH CLOSE,  
BURNHAM-ON-SEA, SOMERSET TA8 3EE  
TEL. 01278 787555 or e-mail: bruce.poole2@btopenworld.com

**This Village Newsletter is published four times a year, March, June, September and December. Date sensitive material and publicity notices should reach the Editor well in advance of the event as a definite publishing date cannot be guaranteed.**

**The Deadline for the next issue is 19th May 2007**

Our aim is to provide a copy of this magazine free to every household within the Parish of Bleadon. Those who live outside the Parish may be able to obtain a copy from the Village shop or the Church porch. I should like to thank all those who help with the distribution of the magazine and I hope I can count on your future support. If there are others out there who would like to help please let me know (01934 814142).

Unless otherwise stated the opinions and comments expressed in this magazine are those of the contributor and not of Bleadon Parish Council. Anyone who has a comment to make on the content of this publication or has a contribution for inclusion, should send it to :-

Mrs. Penny Robinson, 1, The Veale, Bleadon. BS24 0NP  
Tel. 01934 814142 | e-mail : penny.rob@btopenworld.com

Keep up to date with the Parish Council news and to see this magazine online go to...

**[www.bleadonparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.bleadonparishcouncil.gov.uk)**

## Chairman's Report

The year ahead for the Parish Council will include many projects, not least will be publishing of the village plan – my fingers are crossed. The “Sparkplug” project is close to completion and has greatly enhanced the central area close to the village halls, youth club and play park. Planning applications are continuous work for us here in Bleadon. Planning law states that local concerns and traditions must be taken into account when planning permission is sought. As a Council we are always mindful of this.

In early January 2007, the Parish Council, at the request of parents in the village, asked Mrs Sally Varley, Schools Admissions Manager, North Somerset Council, and Mr Tim Pollack, Schools Admissions Manager, Somerset County Council, to give a presentation to us on their admissions policy for Schools. The presentation was professional and informative with questions taken from some of the 35 members of the public attending. They were encouraged to contact the advising bodies of both Councils for any further advice if needed. Also in January, for the first time, we held a small businesses meeting inviting 38 village entrepreneurs to attend. Of the 40% of working people in the UK, nearly half are in small businesses, we are lucky to have so many in our midst.

The “bus terminus” plan for the western end of the village remains in its infancy and we await North Somerset’s plans and quotes for this major scheme in our village. Bridge Road resurfacing has been completed, with dropped kerbs and minor repairs to the gully gratings. Dog bins have been positioned and we hope dog fouling will now be less of a nuisance and health hazard.

A courageous scheme of establishing a Croquet Club in Bleadon is forging ahead. The support for this unique undertaking continually grows and the Parish Council feels that ultimately this will benefit our village.

The Annual Parish Meeting, in the new format initiated last year, will be held in the Coronation Hall on 2nd April 2007 at 7.30 p.m.. This is the most important meeting of the year and I hope that, as last year, many of you will be there. The intention is to have a short presentation on the Village Plan, and an update on “Sparkplug”. The Clubs, Societies and Groups will all come together to enjoy the evening and approved Grant Funding will be presented. Small businesses will also be able to network!

**Penny Skelley, Chairman, Parish Council.**

## The Parish Church News



We had some wonderful Christmas Services with large congregations and excellent music from our regular Choir as well as our Augmented Choir. The Crib Service on Christmas Eve was the noisiest ever with enthusiastic children helping me to "remember" the Christmas story.

Since then, we have had the retirement as organist and choirmaster of David Lowton, though he will continue to be a member of Bleadon Parish Church. The post has been advertised but, in the meantime, we are relying on a rota of organists for Sunday Services, weddings and funerals as well as the extra Services there will be in Holy Week.

My own retirement is planned for 16th March when Angela and I will leave Bleadon after 18 very happy years. We have made many friends in both Church and wider community, but are not going far and will keep in touch. We are very grateful to the people of Bleadon for friendship, support and generosity of spirit.

My understanding of the situation following my retirement is that I will not be replaced directly because of reductions in clergy numbers (from 6 priests to 3 in this part of Weston). Discussions with Diocesan authorities will be taking place and, in due course, a decision will be made as to which priest, from which parish, will be responsible for Bleadon. In the meantime, I have arranged for other priests and lay ministers (Readers) to continue most of our Services as before.

I am informed by the Diocesan Property Officer that The Rectory is to be sold but, prior to that, the greater part of the Rectory drive and the double garage, which is attached to the Church Room, will be transferred into ownership of the Parochial Church Council and the remainder of the drive, across the front of the house, will be fenced off. Planning Permission has already been obtained, by the Diocesan Property Department, for a new entrance/drive from Coronation Road, together with a new garage.

I have arranged the following special Services for Passiontide, Holy Week and Easter:

Sunday March 25th 6.30pm Service of Hymns, Anthems and Readings for Passion Sunday led by our Choir,

Sunday April 1st	Palm Sunday: Sung Eucharist and Blessing of Palm Crosses 10.15am
Thursday 5th	Maundy Thursday: Sung Eucharist 7.30pm
Friday 6th	Good Friday: Family Service 10.15am; The Last Hour 2.00pm
Saturday 7th	Easter Eve: The Vigil (Easter celebrations begin) 8.00pm
Sunday 8th	EASTER DAY: SUNG EUCHARIST 10.15am; EASTER EVENSONG 6.30pm

For information about other Services, please see Notice Boards in Church and outside the Church Room as well as the Church Magazine.

Very best wishes and grateful thanks to all who have helped make our stay in Bleadon such a happy one.

God bless,  
Yours sincerely,  
David Parkinson

## **Bleadon Coronation Hall**

**Reg. Charity No. 14602**



The policy of our committee is always to seek ways and means of improving our Halls, to ensure that we can offer all users the best facilities that our finances permit.

In the past year or so, our running costs have increased considerably, but we are extremely fortunate that our monthly markets have helped to bolster our reserves. We are indebted to the dedicated helpers who regularly turn out on these Saturday mornings, and to those who hire tables on a regular basis.

We have recently installed (with the cooperation of the Photographic Club) an electrically operated screen, available for all to use. In the future a projector linked to a computer will also be installed, this will enable many sorts of presentations to be given and perhaps films to be shown.

We have contributed £2000 towards improvements around the outside of the Jubilee Room and to the rear of the main Hall. This entailed the clearance of over grown areas, new fencing and security lights, all in relation to the village 'Spark Plug' project.

It has been agreed that we purchase an industrial dish-washer and this will be installed shortly

The piano is to be overhauled to bring it up to the required standard.

**Len Chamberlain (Chairman)**

## **Bleadon Ladies Club**



The winter blues have nearly gone and we can look forward to Spring. It seems a very good time to join our club as we have some excellent speakers lined up for the coming year.

April 10th	'The Falkland Islands'	Mrs. Annabelle Paul.
May 8th	'Conservation of British Owls'	Mr. Chris Sperring.
June 13th	'How Green is Yeo Valley'	A speaker from Yeo Valley Products.

We meet every second Tuesday of the month in the Coronation Hall at 2.30pm. So why not come and join us for a cup of tea and a chat, and enjoy listening to some really informative speakers.

Later in the year we will be arranging our annual outing, when members and their friends enjoy a lovely day out.

**For more information call Barbara on 01934 814362**

## From Your District Councillors

By the time you read this the 2007 Council tax level will have been set for North Somerset and, even without a crystal ball, we can confidently predict that it will be no higher than 3percent! This we are pleased to say is because it is what we recommended and calculated and, it being election year, no one is going to go higher are they!!

Nevertheless there is devil in the detail and we have unsuccessfully argued against a budget that will actually cut important services to residents and removes emergency funding .We would have preferred a budget that looked at cutting the bureaucracy in the Council that we witness every day and increasing expenditure on things like road maintenance and village services. An example of the latter is the cut in supporting bus services, which will mean that Bleadon residents can no longer travel directly to ASDA to shop .We have already taken up the cudgels on this one, as it flies in the face of encouraging people to use public transport but already know that we shall probably be unsuccessful this side of the May elections.

Equally we want to continue arguing the case for Bleadon school children to be given some sort of priority when it comes to local schooling. Whilst we respect that not all parents feel the same way, we fail to see the logic in the Council spending upwards of £1500 per year to take a child by taxi to a school in Weston or asking parents to minimise school runs when the nearest schools are not available. Hiding behind Government dictats really won't do.

Ah well, Spring is coming, the daffodils are up and for all that Bleadon is not a bad place to live is it? It can't be, because we receive very few complaints!

Happy Easter.

**Cllrs. Elfan Ap Rees and Ian Peddlesden**

## North Somerset Arts

Five artists in Bleadon will be exhibiting their work as part of the **North Somerset Arts Week** from **May 4th -May 13th**.

Instead of their usual appearance at the May Day Art Exhibition, where you may have seen their work in recent years, it will now be displayed for the whole of this period in their own homes.

All the work on show will be for sale.

As the time approaches, readers will no doubt see plenty of colourful signs directing them to Celtic Way –'Tom's Cottage', where Valli and Ken James will show their work, and next door at 'Hillside Farmhouse' where Lorna and John Hickley will display theirs, and to 'Treelands' in Hillside Road where Alison Procter will exhibit her work.

Villagers and visitors who are interested will be most welcome between the hours of 10am and 5pm.



## Bleadon Beat



Identity theft is becoming an increasing problem, with an incident month occurring to a village resident. Your identity and personal details are very valuable. Criminals are able to use them to open bank accounts, obtain loans or credit cards and even claim state benefit. Be especially careful if important documents, such as your driving licence or your passport, have gone missing or items, such as bank papers, have not arrived in the post.

### Tips.

1. Never give personal details to anyone who contacts you unexpectedly, especially over the 'phone. PINs or passwords should never be divulged.
2. Check bank & credit card statements as soon as they arrive and report any suspicious transactions immediately.
3. Don't be casual with your mail. Destroy all documents that show your personal details, including all credit card receipts and mail.
4. When using your credit card, do not allow it to go from your sight, it could easily be swiped twice and cloned. Be especially watchful when using independent filling stations, pubs and restaurants.
5. For around £2 you can obtain a copy of your personal credit reference file. This is recommended, especially if you have lost any important documents or move home.

For more information either contact myself, or the Home Office web site on [www.identitytheft.org.uk](http://www.identitytheft.org.uk)

### Pc 2307 Adrian Woolacott.

Tel. WsM 638123.

Police HQ 0845 4567000.

## May Fayre - 7th May

### BRIC-A-BRAC

Hoping for a bumper stall as always we are collecting bric-a-brac for this year's May Fayre. As usual anything saleable is welcome provided it is clean and unbroken. China, pictures, ornaments, kitchen ware, linen/curtains, toys/games/jigsaws, books, small electricals, garage/garden tools and as new clothes will be very welcome.

Please ring Mary on WSM 811165 or I.D. on 815182 for collection. This stall is always a great crowd-puller and makes a fantastic amount towards the upkeep of our lovely village church, so please be as generous as you can.

Thank you.

### BOOKS WANTED

The book stall at the May Fayre also proves a great attraction, so please if you have any books you would like to donate please contact Pete Williams on 812020.

Thank you.



★ Bleadon Village ★

**Annual  
May Day  
Fayre**



**BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY  
7th MAY 2007  
11.00am —4.00pm**

Bar, Refreshments, Stalls, and Sideshowes all day.  
Morris Men, and Jazz band  
Children's events including a fancy Dress Parade.

**ENTRY 25P INCLUDES LUCKY PROGRAMME DRAW  
FIRST PRIZE £50.**

## Friends of Bleadon Church



We are now looking forward to all our events during 2007.  
Look out for:

Our annual **May Fayre** will be held on Monday 7th May. Helpers are always welcome and if you feel you be of assistance, manning stalls or games, helping put up and take down or in any way, please let me or Reyn Badger know so that we can include you on the volunteers list.

24th May sees the return visit of the **Hermitage Ensemble** in the Church. A brilliant singing group from St Petersburg, Russia. If you saw them when they were here previously you will know that they are not to be missed.

Our **Open Tower** day will be on 15th July. A chance to view over the Levels to Wales and beyond

Our annual **Harvest Supper** will be held on 29th September in the Coronation Hall. As always you can expect something different!

Later in the year during the October Weston Arts Festival we will be entertaining the **Pontnewydd Male Choir**. Full details will be available later.

Our next meeting of Friends will be in the Church Room at 10.00 am on Monday, 19th March. It is a very friendly group and we do work hard to raise funds in an enjoyable way. If you would like to help, just come along or get in touch with me. We will be pleased to hear from you.

**Brian Drinkwater 01934 813636**

## Bleadon Friendship Club



Weekly meetings recommenced on January 12th 2007 with much chatter and Bingo, the 19th everyone enjoyed a lively talk by Mr. Bowen from Avon Wildlife Trust.

January 26th Our New Year Lunch was successful and we were pleased to have as our guests Reverend Parkinson and Angela the meal was excellent and was followed by a film from Mr Graham Wiltshire. February brought an afternoon with the Yatton Singers and on the 9th hilarious tales from Mr Tinney.

April 6th Good Friday – No meeting  
13th Reflections  
14th COFFEE MORNING – Stalls, Draw, etc. Everyone Welcome.  
20th Beetle Drive  
27th Quiz

Contact Beryl on 813363 to find out about this very sociable group who has occasional days out as well as regular Friday meetings.

**We have been happy to welcome three new members since Christmas**

**What's the Parish Council up to  
now then?**

**DO YOU KNOW THE  
LOCAL  
BUSINESSES ...**

**.... AND THE  
VILLAGE YOUTH**

**FIND OUT**  
**Monday 2nd April**  
At 7.30pm in the  
Coronation Hall

**BLEADON**  
**ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MEETING**

## Meteorological Report for Bleadon Hill

For the regular readers these are the monthly precipitation (rain, hail, sleet, melted snow etc) figures for last year. For those new to this magazine I'll fill in some background.

I have been recording rainfall etc. in my back garden on Bleadon Hill since we moved here in 1981.

I only quote figures for Bleadon Hill as there are slight differences in precipitation from area to area.

I record the rain etc. twice daily and I am grateful to weather watching neighbours who record the rainfall for me whenever we are away.

Month	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
2006 Rainfall	31.5	51.8	77.4	27.8	142.2	45.5	60.1	84.2	27.4	118.5	108.5	76.7
Average 1981-2005	96.0	64.4	69.9	66.6	66.2	66.2	64.9	72.6	85.6	114.2	95.7	104.1
2006 Dry days	19	16	15	19	12	22	22	17	19	10	10	14
Average 1981-2005	12	14	15	15	17	18	18	17	16	13	12	13

The total precipitation 2006 = 851.6mm (33.5in) with 195 dry days

25.4m = 1inch and a 'dry day' is one where less than 0.2mm of precipitation (a trace) is recorded.

There have only been 4 drier years overall since 1981 and only 5 years with slightly more dry days.  
Chris Cudlipp

## Bleadon Short Mat Bowling Club

We meet on Tuesday afternoon, Sunday afternoon, and Friday evening in the Jubilee Room until the end of May when we will close for seventeen weeks, to enable us to enjoy the sunshine. Last year, during the summer recess, we enjoyed some outdoor sessions at Ashcombe Park. We are all grateful to Aidan and Kath for organising this for us.

As usual we had our Christmas cum New Year dinner at Worlebury Golf Club. As we have found before, it was both an excellent venue and meal. We thank Ann and Celia for arranging it so expertly.

Our open days were very successful with two new members, and four more still to decide for certain.

Currently both our league teams are holding their own, and enjoying the challenge of the variation in the performance of the mats to be found away from home.

Looking to the future we have a busy time organised. In March 26 members are having a six day bowling holiday in Torquay. There will be bowling every morning and time, with the afternoons free to enjoy the area and do holiday things. On two of the mornings we shall have friendly matches against other visiting clubs, on the other mornings there will be social bowling among our selves.

On the 18th May we hold our annual Fish and Chip supper in the Jubilee Room. Then in June or July Pete and Celia Williams hope to arrange a day trip to London and include a visit to the houses of Parliament.

As usual we shall have our skittle evening in August at the Red Cow, to prepare us for the start of our new season on 18th September.

**A list of organisations which regularly use the Coronation Halls**



<b>Mondays</b>		<b>Contact</b>	
2-5pm	Bleadon Bridge Club	Mr D Munden	812772
10am-noon	Marie's Mini Movers**	Mrs M Keele	07939 038 071
7-9pm	Exercise Class **	Mrs M Keele	07939 038 071
7.30pm 1st Monday	British Sugarcraft Guild W.S.M. Branch	Mrs F Hatcher	620784
7.30pm 2nd Monday	Bleadon Parish Council	Mr B Poole, Clerk	01278 787555
<b>Tuesdays</b>			
10am-noon	Tatty Bumpkins**	Mrs S Hancock	815157
2-4pm 2nd Tuesday	Bleadon Ladies Group	Mrs B Pugh	814362
2.30-4.30pm	Bleadon Short Mat Bowling Club** Sept-June	Mrs J Tiney	813893
6-7.30 pm	Bleadon Brownies**	Mrs R Hemmings	811891
7.45-9.00 (term time)	Bleadon Guides**	Mrs B Ware	811545
7.30 pm 1st,2nd,4th,5th	Bleadon Photographic Group Sept-May	Mr K Tapley	623877
7.30 pm 3rd – Oct-June	Bleadon Horticultural Society	Mr C Cudlipp	813152
<b>Wednesdays</b>			
10am-noon 2nd & 4th	Infant Welfare Clinic & Toddler Group	The Health Visitor at the Clinic	
10am-noon 1st,3rd & 5th	Toddler Group	Mrs E Knight	625089
1.30pm	Yoga Class	Mrs D Marsh	750438
7.30pm	Bleadon Players/Rehearsals	Mrs S Kelly	645135
7.45-10pm (term time)	Ballroom & Sequence Dancing	Mr L Masters	811976

## A list of organisations which regularly use the Coronation Halls

### Thursdays

10-12 noon	Art: Watercolour painting class**	Weston College	01275 810659
8.00pm 1st & 3rd Thurs	Bleadon Folk Dancing Group Sept-June	Mrs J Thorne	814007
7.30pm 4th Thursday	Bleadon Sugarcraft Club	Mrs P Webb	01278 684484

### Fridays

2-4pm	Bleadon Friendship Club	Mrs B Davies	813363
7.00pm Sept-June	Short Mat Bowling Club**	Mrs J Tiney	813893

### Sundays

2.30 Sept-June	Short Mat Bowling Club**	Mrs J Tiney	813893
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\*\*in the Jubilee Room

The Halls are available for hire by private individuals or organisations.

There is a reduced rate for Bleadon residents. ENQUIRIES: 812370

## What's On - In the Coronation Halls - Make a note in your Diary!

Date & Time:	Event:	Organisation/Contact:
Thurs 3 May 10-5	Local Government Elections	Parish Clerk 01278 787555
Mon 7 May 10-5	MAY FAYRE Art Exhibition and Bumper Bric-a-Brac	Bleadon Church 811490

An electronically operated drop down screen, purchased in conjunction with the Bleadon Photographic Group, will be especially useful for clubs and societies wishing to show films, slide shows and computer presentations. Please ask your Hall Representative for a demonstration!

### WANTED

#### A treasurer for the Youth Club.

A few hours a month.

Please ring Keith Pyke for details

01934 813127



Allotment Holders



Bleadon Children 1936



Edwin Clogg 1938



Ploughing at Lake Farm





Hay Wagon



Loan Diments Father pre 1940



Milking



Graham milking cow

**The additional cost of reproducing these photos has been met by the generous sponsorship from Marshall's Quarry**

## **Bleadon Harvest Home**

Somewhere in Bleadon lives an anonymous hero whose acute response to a question in the Village Plan Questionnaire may well lead to an annual village event in perpetuity.

This hero, presumably a parent, pointed out that the only regular event that the whole family can attend is the May Day Fayre, going onto suggest a Harvest Home.

The Coronation Hall Management Committee, always an enlightened enterprising body, immediately took kindly to the idea and has set aside Saturday 8th September for the new venture.

Obviously at this early stage many details remain unsettled, but the basic outline is that there will be a mid-day event, including a sit-down lunch and an evening session, for which a hearty country folk band has been booked. The Hall bar will be open on both occasions.

Since the original idea came from a parent the mid-day event will try to cater for children as widely as possible. They will certainly be most welcome at the lunch, but an alternative, will be to picnic outside (or in the youth club if raining), with soft drinks and snack foods available from the Youth Club. After lunch the intention is to arrange numerous enjoyable activities for all ages, out of doors if possible, so the Parish Council has kindly given permission for the car park to be closed for the duration of the mid-day session (for obvious reasons of safety and enjoyment). The Guides, Brownies and Toddler group have all been notified, and some football and rugby expertise will be on hand to impart a more masculine flavour. Refreshments will remain available throughout. The idea is for as many people as possible to enjoy the event, so put the date on your calendar and watch out for more details.

If you would like to help in any way (and that includes the anonymous hero), please ring me, Les Masters on 811976.

### **ADVERTISING IN THE VILLAGE NEWS (A5 Page)**

<b>Full page</b>	Village £100	Non Village £120
<b>1/2 page</b>	Village £60	Non Village £80
<b>1/3 page</b>	Village £50	Non Village £60

These rates are for 4 insertions starting with the June Issue.

Please note - new rates will apply as from June 2007.

Please contact the editor for more details

## Two Months in Nepal

**By Sam Jones (ex Bleadon Toddler Group, Playgroup, Cubs and brief bell ringer)**

*Last November, I travelled to Nepal with three climbing friends; Dave, Polly and Tom. Our main aim was to spend three weeks on a trek in the Everest region, followed by climbing and exploring other parts of the country. The following is an account of the highlights:*



"Hi there chaps! Sorry for the delay, been here long?" Our first meeting with Dan, who was to become our guide, translator and guru in all things Nepali, set the shape of things to come. We quickly found ourselves falling hopelessly behind in the conversation, overwhelmed by an onslaught of energy and enthusiasm, and before we knew it we were striding confidently off to book the 6am flight to Lukla, 30 miles from Everest.

I had flown into Kathmandu the day before with three friends, and arranged to meet up with Dan, a friend of a friend who has lived, on and off in Nepal for 8 years. The reason for his lateness was that he'd been trying to buy a motorbike, the preferred means of transport in Nepal. The ownership of a vehicle is a matter of local pride and consequently, the streets of Kathmandu are crammed with traffic of every conceivable type. Also, there are the limpet-like street vendors, "Chess set Sir, chess set? Real sandalwood. How much? 100 Rupees? 50? Sir? Sir?" Pause, then in undertone, "You like hash?" Add to this the warm climate, bright colours and the liberal smattering of culture and it does feel a very long way from home.

The following day we flew to Lukla, a precipitous little village with a runway improbably tacked onto the end. There was hardly time to think, "Surely we're not landing there!" before we touched down and applied all the anchors in order to stop before the cliff got in the way. This is the classic 'wimps' access point to the Khumbu Himal region, home to such giants as Everest, Lhotse and Cho Oyo. The alternative was an 8 day walk. We were due to be in the mountains for three weeks, and had been teamed up with Dawa, a Nepali climbing guide. He proved to be very competent, although he had somehow managed to avoid learning almost any English

## Two Months in Nepal [cont]

in his career up to now. Coupled with the Nepali trait for answering 'yes' to everything for fear of disappointing, many an evening was spent listening to Tom, one of my companions, trying gamely to communicate. After an enthusiastic session, Tom reported back to us that Dawa was 23 years old, his oldest sister 65 and his mother 85. I'd like it to be true...

Over the next week we steadily gained altitude, the trees thinned to be replaced by grassland, which eventually gave way to a jumble of boulders and scree. The mountains which had hazily lined the horizon now blocked out the sunlight and sent unseen avalanches into neighboring valleys with distant rumblings. The scenery was stark and desolate, not at all like the picture post-card valleys in the Alps. It brought to mind landscapes described in J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings".

We climbed two mountains, more Scafell Pike than the Eiger, but each around 5,600m so not to be sniffed at. We also crossed a high pass into the Everest valley which has to be one of the least fun things to do with a 15kg rucksack at 5,300m; a three hour climb to a boulder field and a 60 degree ice-slope. We gazed upon Everest and the route which Hilary and Tensing took to the summit in 1953; we even scrambled across the glacier to the base.

Altitude is of course ever-present; it dulls your thinking, fills your head with snot and makes every step uphill a chore. In short it's a real pain and not what you need when you want to climb a mountain. Nights at altitude were in the region of -20C and punctuated by back-to-back crazy dreams that junkies would pay good money for. Your brain is not getting quite the oxygen it ought to and feels it should overcompensate!

The yak are ever-present. They get hairier as you get higher up, are extremely long suffering and are often found either hauling trekking gear or indulging in their favourite pastime, holding down the ground. They occasionally got a bit shirty with our attempts at yak whispering. They haul enormous loads without complaint and, like cows are sacred and not to be eaten. However, to quote the Lonely Planet guide: "When one of these sure-footed animals 'falls off the track', their tasty meat appears in steaks throughout the mountains." The people in the mountains are friendly and accommodating to unwashed trekkers, and will supply a B & B style service for the equivalent of a couple of pounds. We found the food to be good and surprisingly varied, although mostly based on rice and lentils.

We returned via the classic Everest Base Camp Trek. The villagers along here have cottoned on to the potential fortune to be made from tourists, and sell t-shirts, walking poles, postcards, CD's of Tibetan monk mantras...you name it.

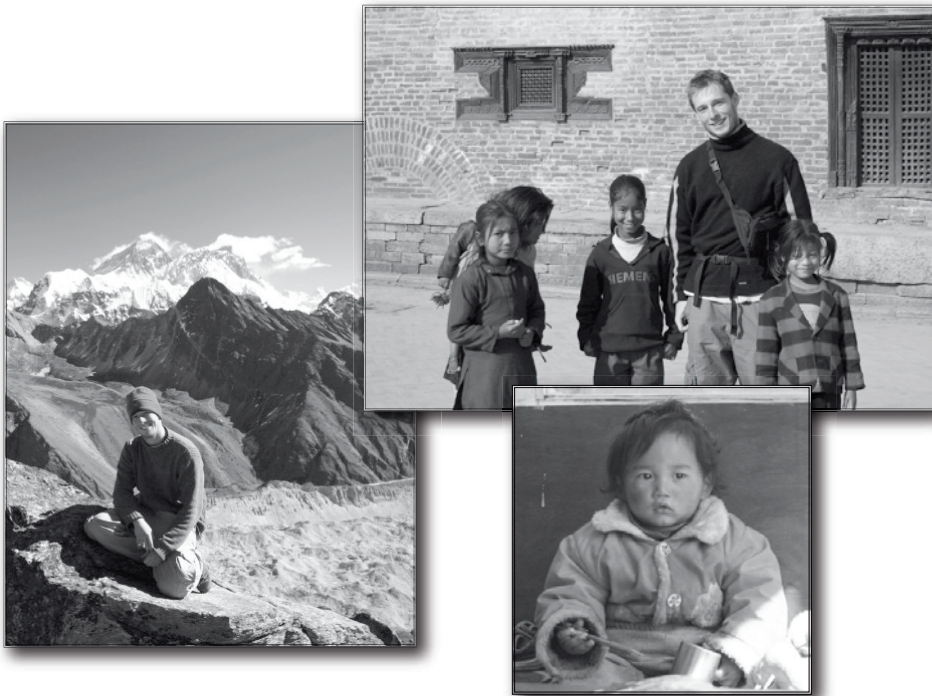
The flight out of Lukla was much more enjoyable now we knew what was coming. There is the exhilaration of barreling downhill with houses and people streaking past, then the lurch in your stomach as the end of the runway falls away to a distant river and, as you re-adjust your

## Two Months in Nepal [cont]

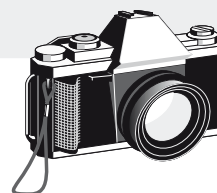
perspective, the view opens up to reveal dazzling white peaks as far as you can see. The plane grazes the top of each valley, so close you feel the bump of air flowing over it and see people at work in fields or tending animals.

And so on to Pokhara for Christmas, a 7 hour bus journey from Kathmandu, set on a picturesque lake and overlooked by the Annapurna range. After much searching, we found a restaurant willing to serve Christmas dinner, as we felt it was important to preserve some festive spirit. New Year was spent on the Tibetan border, with more climbing and trekking in the mountains.

My impression of Nepal is of a developing country with a busy history, and despite recent political turmoil, a very safe place to be. You can wander around alone at night and not feel threatened, at least by the locals (who are much more concerned with selling you something). The Nepali people are industrious, quick to laugh and easy going. All told a fantastic trip and a suitably unorthodox way to spend Christmas and New Year!



## Landscape Photography



Since I received no adverse comments regarding my last article on Landscape Photography, I thought I would push my luck a little further in the hope that it may be of interest to someone. It is my hope that some of you readers may have followed up comments I made by looking up some of Ansel Adams great masterpieces. If you did, then I am sure

that you will agree with me of the magnificence of those images. Ansel Adams himself said "Landscape Photography is the supreme test of the Photographer, and often the supreme disappointment."

One thing about Landscape images is that they require more thought than most other forms of photography. There are so many pitfalls which can make a very mediocre end result out of a potentially great opportunity. Here are a few things to consider when attempting to record a landscape. First what about the light? To get the best results don't think that the light source has to be coming from behind. This will only have the effect of reducing the modelling and texture of the image. It is better that the light source comes either from the side or even in front of you, but never have the sun shining directly into the lens, keep it to one side, just out of shot, and don't think that you can't take pictures in low light conditions, because you can, and often this sort of light produces the best results. They can be very moody.

What about the composition? This is where you need to give the greatest thought. A well constructed landscape photograph should comprise a foreground, a mid distance and a far distance. Get something of interest in the foreground to lead the viewer into the picture. This may be a tree, a gateway (but make sure the gate is open) a monument, or anything else that gives scale and adds to the overall interest of the image. If the foreground is a little on the dark side, then employ the flash to put some light into it. Try to get a centre of interest in the picture and place it in a position to enhance the image. A good guide for this is the "Golden Thirds" rule. Imagine your picture divided into three equal spaces both vertically and horizontally, where the lines cross is what is known as the Golden Thirds and any subject matter places in these positions has the greatest impact on the viewer. Oh, and by the way, NEVER put the horizon in the centre of the picture it cuts the picture in half and reduces the overall impact. Try to consider the sky and any interesting clouds there may be which can enhance the image. If there are some spectacular clouds, the horizon can be kept very low in the frame so as to make a feature of them. Conversely, keep the sky to a minimum or even out of picture altogether especially if there are no clouds to enhance the picture. A blank sky area destroys a good image.

And finally colour. Make use of it. Try to include a strong colour within the most important element of the picture, by doing this you concentrate the viewer's attention to that part which is compositionally the part you are trying to emphasise. If you have a choice of colour, then use a complimentary one. This is usually only possible when you include a person in the frame and have a choice of clothing for them to wear. And on the question of people, always have them walking into the picture, never walking out.

With the approach of Spring we will have ample opportunities to express ourselves with Landscape photography. The light is beginning to get stronger, the leaves fresher and greener and not too many on the trees to restrict any view. So why not give it a go and see if you can improve your efforts and when you do, bring them along to the Group meetings, you never know, you might produce better results than the members and we are always pleased to welcome new members and visitors

**Ken Tapley. Chairman. Bleadon Photographic Group.**

## Short Story

### Storm Force

THIS short story was highly commended in the 2006 Weston Arts Festival Short story competition.

I would have been killed on that hill in the Lake District with Roger and the rest of the crew if I hadn't been off duty with flu. In the aftermath I just couldn't stay on at Lulsgate, in the familiar surroundings he and I had shared, so BEA found me a place working in Ground Operations at Prestwick and not long after offered me the Campbeltown job.

"It's another world over there Jean," Captain Newing told me as we discussed the transfer, leafing through the documents. "You're driving across I see. Well it's a lovely trip," glancing out at the sky as airmen do, "as long as the weather holds."

The weather was perfect and the Mini was behaving well until climbing the 'Rest and be Thankful' its engine began to steam. I sat at the top to let things cool, enjoying a sandwich and the view across Loch Fyne to the Isle of Mull where picturesque banks of cloud were gathering, then drove on downhill to

Cairndow. Stopping for fuel I also asked for someone to look at the engine. A mechanic raised the bonnet and began busily tightening this and that.

"Beautiful day," I said.

"Tae good fer the time o' year," he muttered, "yon fan belt's slippin'. How far were ye wanting?"

"Campbeltown."

"Ye'll be getting some weather afore then," rubbing a bristly chin, "that'll be five shilling."

South of Tarbet the clouds came rolling in from the sea and rain was speckling the windscreen as I took my first wrong turning. The road grew narrow and bumpy though occasional signposts showed that Campbeltown was still ahead. The next junction was unmarked and I instinctively turned left and within minutes was on a rutted track leading directly to the sea. The engine stalled when I tried to reverse and turning the key only produced an irritable rattle, whatever had been tightened had come loose again. Getting out and looking up and down the track, the wind whipping at my hair, I saw it was deserted. Yet tyre marks suggested it was used and it must lead somewhere I thought. It was fast getting dark and digging a torch from the glove compartment I went forward. The storm soon burst about me and though the torch was producing only a minute beam through the slashing rain I saw the whitened walls of a lighthouse. As I drew nearer a light from a high window glowed in the darkness. Someone was in – a gnarled old seaman perhaps, whiling away the time putting ships in bottles. He'd have rum and talk in short salty sentences. I loved him already.

The man who answered my pounding on the rough-hewn door was not old or gnarled, but young, tall and lean, a tanned good-natured face and sharp blue eyes looking down at me in amazement.

"Lost and ... s saw your light," I stammered, dragging sopping hair from my eyes.

"Come in, come in, ye must be fair soaked," briskly helping me over the threshold and slamming the door behind. The room was half-round, containing a crudely made table and a couple of much-painted chairs. "Where ye heading?" but not waiting on an answer he crossed quickly





## Short Story cont.

to a battered wooden wardrobe set beside the staircase, dragging out some towels and a faded terrycloth robe. "A brandy and a mug of coffee's what ye'll be needing. Come upstairs, dry yerself and get warm."

His name was Mike, a farmer's son and part-time fisherman. He stayed at the disused lighthouse when working the farm and shared a boat at Tarbet with an older brother. A shower in his surprisingly tidy bathroom revived me whilst my clothes dried before an open fire.

The storm slackened and he got Mini started insisting he accompany me in his Landrover the five miles to Campbeltown, the 'Wee Toon' he called it. I'd booked at the White Hart Hotel for the weekend and Mike came in too, carrying my luggage and introducing me. Changing quickly I returned downstairs and over a drink thanked him for his kindness.

He was charming and quick-witted, clear about what he said and did, and appeared thoroughly nice. To say he captivated me was exaggerating but I was attracted.

"The boats in toon, had a survey done for the new season. I'm here again in the morn, taking it back to Tarbet," he said smiling, "mebbe see you then?"

From my bedroom window slated roofs glistening from the overnight rain stretched toward the loch and after breakfast I made for the harbour. Deserted deep-sea fishing boats lined the inner reaches, their decks littered with jumbles of wires, nets and rusting machinery.

A waiting, watchful, lifeboat polished and pristine was moored inside the harbour's sheltering arms. Then I saw Mike, standing alongside a small coastal vessel tied close in beside the town quay. He waved and I made my way across.

"Moirra Anne, "Lovely name," I greeted him. "Mae Mothers," he said shyly.

He introduced brother Tam who'd be taking the Landrover back to Tarbet. "We've been waitin' on ye," Tam said grinning, "Why don't yous go along with Mike for the trip?" I looked at Mike, his carelessly tended hair catching the breeze. "Perhaps it's nae the best time ..." he began. "Ach ye'll be fine!" Tam interrupted. "Just a couple of hours an' ye can drive the lass back this afternoon."

"I'd love to," I said, though concerned at his hesitation, "if Mike doesn't mind."

The Moira Anne thrust across the loch and I shivered, the gusting wind now carrying a spit of rain with it. Mike called; unwinding his scarf and tucking it beneath my coat then reached down and passed me a lifejacket. The tang of salt was in my nose, standing together in the tiny wheelhouse, gulls soaring and shrieking overhead as he steered out past Davaar Island to the open sea.

"I noticed several fishing boats in the harbour," I ventured, "they seem out of use."

"Aye, the big boats have all been laid up because of the quotas. With the cost of diesel, the inspections and the lack of fish, even the wee boats bare make a living now."

Northwest we went, a mile or so offshore, Mike leaning into the wheel to meet the strong seas now running onto the starboard bow. The sky had been growing more dramatically black by the minute with scudding clouds that seemed low enough to touch. The waves were full and rising,



## Short Story cont.

parallel patches of windblown foam being lifted into driving spray as water began to sweep over the bows.

“Storm Force!” Mike shouted, “have tae go back!”

We were both hauling at the wheel to turn the boat into wind when the engine stopped. As Mike frantically tried to restart it a flickering red light mocked him from the wheelhouse panel. The motion of the boat increased as the sea took control and a mountainous wave came rushing toward the bows, breaking over us and stopping the boat with a crash. White water surged across and filled the deck-well, now awash and level with the surrounding sea. Dead in the water we were helpless and the next wave finished it, crashing down and driving the Moira Anne under, lifting it again briefly as a pyramid of water passed beneath before swamping and finally upending the waterlogged hull. Swept overboard I was propelled to the crest of a swell that broke about me, filling my eyes with stinging foam, my face feeling as if struck with splinters of glass. I saw Mike briefly, a cresting wave towering over him as he seemed to call out and raise an arm, then he was overwhelmed and was gone.

Tam had taken the coastal road back to Tarbet and keeping pace with our progress had seen the trouble we were in and alerted the Coastguard. I was snatched from the sea by a helicopter within fifteen minutes and taken to Hospital in Campbeltown . The lifeboat searched all day for Mike with no success, his body not found until it washed ashore on Davaar Island together with the wreckage of the Moira Ann.

Traditionally looking after their staff, BEA wanted me taken to Glasgow by the air ambulance but I felt I'd be cared for no better there and the local paper soon proudly reported that 'Rescued Air Girl Prefers Wee Toon Treatment'. At the inquest the pressure of getting the Moira Ann back to sea quickly was blamed but I think my fleeing the effects of one tragedy has been the cruel cause of another. Without the notion of both pleasing his brother and me surely Mike would have heeded the worsening weather and not sailed that morning? But the effort of overcoming the pain of another funeral and another inquest has made me strong again. No more running away, I'm determined to stay and continue my job. I've received kindness and understanding here in Campbeltown and for the first time since Roger's death I see a future, and the future I see gives me hope.

End.



## Bleadon Horticultural Society



The now annual beetle drive and social with its customary American style supper in December was enjoyed by all. There was great competition to be the first to complete their artistically drawn beetle in the shortest possible time. At the end of the 'drive' first time player Royston Walters won the top prize, while Ian Peddlesden (also a first timer) was presented with the now infamous gnome as he was unlucky enough not to have many high rolling partners throughout the evening! The supper itself was a great success the good food being enjoyed by all.

How to build a pond from scratch as well as many other water features were discussed by John Addison in his illustrated talk on water gardening. Everyone found the talk to be most interesting and informative and I have heard of at least one person who is preparing to drain their pond and start again!

All the teams that took part in the friendly quiz against Lympsham Gardening Club in February enjoyed themselves as round by round the time quickly passed. The 'Odd Man Out' team from Bleadon edged out the top team from our neighbouring village 'The Lympsham Pirates' by three and half points, thus avenging the overall result when we last played in Lympsham. Thank you to everyone who helped make the evening go with a swing.

The April 17th meeting will be as usual in the Coronation Hall at 7.30, and the topic will be the 'Herbaceous border', a talk by Cindy Tratt.

The 'bring and buy' plant sale and social will be held on Tuesday May 15th at the usual time. Would those bringing plants to sell please label them so that those buying know what to expect when their purchases get bigger and reach maturity.

On Tuesday June 19th at 7.30pm Don Everitt will be treating us to an illustrated talk with specimens to compliment his title of 'Summer colour in the garden'.

As usual I remind you that all of our meetings are open to anyone at £1.00 per talk By the way.... Better late than never ... 'Happy New Year' and 'Happy gardening'!!

**Chris Cudlipp**

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## Bleadon Post Office and Country Stores and Tiffin Coffee House

This New Year 2007 brings with it the prospect of quite a few changes at the shop and surrounds. We hope you like our extended range of vegetables many of which are organic. Andrew has found many new and interesting lines which include some for special diets (diabetic, gluten free etc.). We held an apple juice tasting on National apple day, which proved very popular so we intend to carry on this theme with tastings for cheese and other local produce on the way.

Tiffin has seen some staff changes - Jenny has brought a wonderful reputation for breakfasts, - we are particularly sorry to lose Cynthia who has returned to her antipodean roots to continue with University, but would like to give a big welcome to Sophie now joins us from up state New York!

We are very excited though about having more space at Tiffin - the upper room can be reserved through Mandy for birthdays, meetings, discussions or even private classes. One suggestion is to hold a computer class for beginners (and we have an internet access point).

We were proud to have had the chance to provide the Harvest Supper at the Coronation Hall last year, and ask that you remember us if a similar occasion crops up!

Finally, we are thankful that our planning permission to extend the car park was granted in October, and we are pleased so many of you are taking advantage of the extra spaces. We hope that the similar goal of extending Tiffin will be equally well received by the planners!

Andrew, Mandy and their brilliant team look forward to bringing you the best of local produce for the months to come and join the House Family in thanking you for your custom.

Happy Easter!

**Alistair.**

### Help Yourself at the Post Office

It must be at least seven years since Lloyds/TSB arranged for their customers to enjoy banking facilities at all Post Offices, yet I recently met a customer who was still unaware of this. I suspect he is far from the only one and what of all those people with Barclays or Nationwide current accounts? There must be quite a number of people in Bleadon who drive to a bank or a cash point elsewhere when they could go along to our local Post Office for their money, incidentally helping the said Office to remain viable.

Tesco is not the only place where 'every little helps'!

LM

## Bleadon Players



Congratulations to the cast and crew of our Panto 2007, "Tom the Piper's Son" which was a colourful and enjoyable show. Thank you to all our audiences who laughed boomed and clapped their way through each performance. You are just as important as the performers.

### **Our next production is a farce by Derek Benfield called "Fish Out of Water".**

The action of the play is set in a hotel on the Italian Riviera, in which Agatha an outspoken widow and her timid sister Fiona, round up various guests and insist they play communal games. All the inevitable complications, including late flights, double bookings and foreign food contribute to this evening of fun.

It will be staged in the Coronation Hall on 10th, 11th and 12th May.

Hope to see you there!

### **Stop Press!**

In the Avon Association of Drama One Act Festival, the Players won through to the next round with their performance of 'The Winter of 1917' by David Campton. They came home to Bleadon in shock with a cup and a great deal of pride.

Good luck in the divisional final in Clevedon on April 21st . Ed.



## 1st Bleadon Brownies Report



Christmas was an exciting time for us as we went Ice Skating followed by a Sleepover in the hall where we prepared face masks out of cucumber and smothered each other! We also held a Carol Concert for our families and visited the Pantomime (Oh! No We Didn't!!)

The next few months are to be no less hectic. We are working towards the Fire Safety Badge – you may have seen large groups in the telephone box practising making an emergency call! We have been producing escape plans for the hall and our own homes and will visit Weston Fire Station in March. With Mothers' Day coming we are preparing a special treat for our mums (it's a secret so we'll tell you all about it next time) and we are having another Sleepover before holding a Jumble Sale in the Coronation Hall on Saturday 31st March to raise money for the garden works being carried out at the moment behind the hall.

Any jumble will be gratefully received. Just drop it off during Brownies (Tuesday 6-7.30pm) or on Friday evening 30th March. We are also collecting Sainsburys Active Kids vouchers, and printer cartridges and mobile phones for recycling.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Reverend Parkinson for his support, help and guidance with 1st Bleadon Brownies and wish him, and his family, good health and happiness for the future.

For more information on the Brownie Pack ring :-

**Rachel Hemmings (Brown Owl) on 811891**



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