

# RETTENDON & BATTLESBRIDGE NEWSLETTER

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The views expressed in this newsletter are entirely those of the contributors and are not necessarily those of Rettendon Parish Council

## Parish Council Elections

May 5<sup>th</sup> is election day however, as there were only six nominations for the nine vacancies the Returning Officer at Chelmsford Borough Council has deemed that those nominated be elected unopposed.

The Parish Council has therefore to co-opt to the three vacancies. Persons resident within the Parish wishing to be considered for co-option should therefore contact me for further information before submitting their written or emailed applications.

The following persons have been elected unopposed effective from the 2011 annual parish meeting.

Kathryn Clark, Marks Lane  
Jacky Copsey, Meadow Road  
Ron Fallows, East Hanningfield Road  
Jonathan Havard, Sonters Down  
Pat Prebble, East Hanningfield Road  
Bob Sankey, Southview Road

**Barry Summerfield, Parish Clerk, Sutton Hall Cottage, Sutton Road, Rochford SS4 1LG, 01702 547783 or email bsummvint@hotmail.com**

**All Saints, Rettendon** Once again our Spring Festival is upon us. The dates are Sunday & Monday, May 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> from 10-30 am to 4pm and it is rather a special festival on two counts. Linda Benson has been involved with the flower arranging for the last 27 years and retires from this task at the end of the year. So our theme is 27 years of flowers & those of us who will be decorating have chosen titles from the past. An example - Famous women, Hobbies, the Church Calendar, Anniversaries etc.

The other important reason for this event to be a success we need both your support and your money to help clear our debts. See our Treasurers explanation "Your Parish Church needs YOU" on page two.

The usual facilities will be available - refreshments, home made cakes, plants, gifts, bric-a-brac (new stock), second hand books, toys and cards.

**Churchwarden Jane Fallows 01245 400394**

## Rettendon Horticultural Society

**Our Spring Show** held on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> March was the best ever with over eighty entries and produced a really wonderful display.

The mini quiz kept us amused while the exhibits were judged and over a welcome cup of tea or coffee our horticultural queries were answered. We were pleased to welcome entries from people new to exhibiting and delighted that some were awarded prizes.

Gabrielle Church received the cup for most points in the show and was also awarded the cup for the best exhibit.

Our thanks to Ray Purkis for judging our show.

**The April illustrated talk** by Harry Brickwood was very good covering the merits of individual plants and posh gardens were on show. Harry brought some plants for us to buy so we will remember his efforts well.

**Our Plant Sale & Coffee Morning** will be in the village hall on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May from 10-30 am to 12-30. Members will have received a pre-order list saving them searching and carting and will be able collect them on that

morning. Most tender plants need planting out mid to late May to avoid frost hence our timing of this event. So - look forward to seeing you there.

**Two Coach Trips** this year with the first one on **Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> June** to Eltham Place & Gardens, Greenwich and the second one on **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> August** to Parham House & Gardens, West Sussex. Each trip will cost £20 per person which includes coach travel & entrance to garden & house. Please note no concessions. A £10 non returnable deposit is required when booking. To reserve your seat call Jean on 01268 763183.

**Hazel Dale Evans, Secretary 01245 401538**

## Rettendon & Battlesbridge Village Party 9<sup>th</sup> July 2011 from 7-30pm till late.

After the Show in the marquee on the Cricket Field. A Barbie & drinks. Dancing to a top London D J's music. A grand raffle and karaoke too.

**Advance bookings** £5-50 a ticket aged 11 and upwards; £3-50 OAP's, £2 children aged 5 - 11, under 5's free.

**On the night** £7-50 a ticket aged 11 and upwards;

**OAP's £5-00, Children age 5 - 11 £3 , and under 5's still free. The ticket price include a burger or a hot dog in the price of the ticket. Remember - No Ticket, NO Entrance so Book early for a fun evening . For more information please call Kathryn Evans, Rawlings, Main Road, 01245 400244.**

## Rettendon Pre School

We are all looking forward to our Royal Wedding party on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> April when we have invited parents to join us. The children are going to make some cakes and decorate them in Royal style to celebrate the wedding of Wills and Kate.

We have a new little girl joining us after Easter and we look forward to lots of sunshine so that we can explore the woods and find some wild life, which the children really enjoy.

Great enjoyment was had by all at our Easter Egg hunt in the back field where the children found eggs, feathers, sticks, weeds etc, but who says you can't fill up your bag with other goodies ?

Our music and singing sessions still take place on Wednesdays so please come along with your rising 2's and join in with us. If you have a small child and want him/her to come along to Pre School just drop in at any time for details or call me **Pat Prebble, on 01245 401328 or 07762 909351**

## RETTENDON VILLAGE SOCIETY

Here are the results for the 200 Club draw which took place on Friday 25th March, 2011.

1<sup>st</sup> £65 Sarah Copsey, Meadow Road, Rettendon

2<sup>nd</sup> £30 Pauline Tensch, South View Road, Rettendon

3<sup>rd</sup> £20 Brenda Harris, Meadow Road, Rettendon

4<sup>th</sup> £15 Mrs Dyson, South Hanningfield

The next Bingo sessions and 200 Club Draw will be held on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> April and then on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May. Do come along and pay us a visit you will be more than welcome.

Good Bingo prizes a great raffle and a good gossip - oh and that dress, and what about that hair do, may just be mentioned in passing on the 29<sup>th</sup> between catching up with all the local news and goings on in the Village.

Don't forget the more people playing Bingo the bigger the prizes and more funds raised to help to maintain our village hall. So now the lighter nights are here there is no excuse but to come and give your local Bingo night a visit. Look forward to seeing you there, Eyes down 7.45pm SHARP !! **Jacky Copsey 01268 765357**

### **Violet 'Vi' Benson, 30 May 1913 - 17 March 2011**

Thank you to everyone who sent us cards and messages of condolences after the death of Vi.

The donations for Rettendon School are still coming in and to date we do not have a final figure but the amount will be published in the next R&B newsletter. Thanks for your kind generosity. **Keith and Maureen Benson.**

### **YOUR PARISH CHURCH NEEDS YOU !!!!**

Are you aware how much it costs to keep All Saints Church, Rettendon going. You would be surprised - in 2010 it was a great big fat **£25,598.**

Every year this is funded by a range of things. In 2010 there were wedding and funeral fees of £1,815. Fund Raising events such as Bazaars and Fetes raised £7,725 and as every penny counts do please support them, they are all put on by volunteers.

Planned Giving raised £7,001. That is people in the community who sign up to regularly give to support the church. Donations & Service collections raised £3,319.

A grant was received from the Parish Council of £375 towards the maintenance of the churchyard. Interest from investments produced £397 and Gift Aid was recovered from the Tax Man of £1,403. THIS LEFT A DEFICIT OF £3,563.

In 2010, the church had to dip into the small reserves it has to cover the costs of the church. If this trend continues, the church will not be able to continue to be a viable concern. Within three years and in extreme circumstances Rettendon could lose the use of it's Church.

Whilst people are very generous when they use the church for Weddings, Baptisms and Funerals, they forget about it at all the other times of the year. **So, how can you help?**

**Well there are many ways that you can.** Why not make the effort and attend the events which are advertised in this Newsletter ?

**Ever considered Planned Giving** - a small regular donation can make such a difference. Why not get a planned giving form from Ron or Jane Fallows should you wish to support the church on a regular basis.

**Why not do a sponsored event** to raise funds for the Church ? How about a Sponsored Walk or a Treasure Hunt in Little Baddow when all funds go to the charity of your choice.

If you would like any further information, please do not hesitate to contact either Ron or Jane (01245 400394) or myself and we will be happy to help.

**Liz Jones, Treasurer All Saints 01245 400539**

**I'm in a good mood today. I just entered a competition and won a years supply of Marmite. One jar.**

THE RETTENDON ALMSHOUSE CHARITY  
REGISTERED CHARITY NO.255289  
ALMSHOUSE ASSOCIATION NO 1717

## **VACANCY**

MEESON BUNGALOWS, RETTENDON

A vacancy has occurred at the above almshouse.

Applications for the accommodation are being sought from qualifying persons.

The accommodation comprises a single storey, semi-detached cottage with a bedroom, sitting room, kitchen and bathroom. There is full central heating. Weekly Maintenance Contributions (rent equivalent) £90 per week. To apply, persons should be resident in the village of Rettendon, in need of housing accommodation. Applicants should be over 60 years of age and be able to illustrate their need to the Trustees.

Application forms may be obtained from:

Michael Siggs MA FRICS, CLERK TO THE CHARITY  
P O Box No. 993, Colchester, Essex. C03 3TQ  
Tel. 01206 765138. michael.siggs@btclick.com

### **Battlesbridge Free Church News**

We give a resounding thank you and congratulations to the Youth Club members (formally Pilots) for putting on a wonderful evening three course meal on Friday April 15<sup>th</sup>. This was to raise money for the Wishing Well charity which aims to make the dearest wish of terminally ill children, come true. Our small church was transformed into an elegant restaurant with little glitter shapes scattered on the tablecloths to give a sparkling effect. Large silver balloons seemed to float over the tables. The attention to detail was amazing.

The young people had baked the delicious bread rolls themselves, there was a great choice of menu and the service was excellent. Everyone was served with the meals of their choice and the food reached the tables promptly, was hot and extremely good. All thoroughly enjoyed a wonderful meal and the atmosphere of a lovely shared evening.

A very talented young lady pianist provided a most enjoyable medley of popular music throughout the evening. Chocolate mints along with tea or coffee rounded off the evening with many taking home prizes from the extensive raffle. This amazing effort was rewarded by takings of £500 to send to the Wishing Well appeal.

**The Harbour Club** will have held their open day on April 27<sup>th</sup>. We hope that many interested visitors were able to gain an insight into the activities which will be offered to the elderly people living with dementia who will become members of the club. We pray for God's blessing on this venture.

**Spring Fayre** - this will be held on Bank Holiday Monday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> commencing at 10 am. There will be plants, cakes, nearly new, etc and tea/coffee will be available. Please come and bring a friend.

**Sunday lunches** There will be no Sunday lunch during May as our two chief providers will be away on a well deserved holiday.

**Christian Aid week** is 15<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> May. Please give as generously as you can. We can't all go out to dig bore holes to provide fresh, safe water or take mosquito nets to the countless under fives who die of malaria each year but our donations can provide the funding for Christian Aid in

partnership with the other aid agencies to help combat disease and poverty,

**Rayleigh Brass Band** The next Concert is planned for May 28<sup>th</sup> and will be held in Battlesbridge Free Church hall at 8pm.

All are welcome to Sunday morning services at 11am.

**June Edwards 01245 426122**

## RHS HYDE HALL EVENTS

**Bank Holiday Craft Fair, Saturday 30th April to Monday 2nd May 2011, from 10am to 4pm**

Join us for a three-day craft extravaganza organised by the Guild of Essex Craftsmen! All Guild members are selected for the outstanding quality and originality of their work. Normal garden admission applies. Booking not required.

**Malvern Spring Gardening Show 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> May.** At the Malvern Showground, Worcester. Fancy a day out then why not visit this spring gardening show. The venue provides a perfect day out with inspirational ideas for avid and novice gardeners alike.

**RHS Members' Event - Summer Containers**

**Wednesday 18 May from 11.00am to 12.30pm,**

Exclusive to RHS members, this FREE event will offer ideas and advice on creating colourful containers. Please book early as numbers are limited. Booking essential on 0845 612 1253.

**RHS Budding Gardeners' Exhibition, Saturday 28 May to Sunday 5 June from 10am & 4pm**

See an avenue of highly creative mini show gardens designed by local school children. Small but perfectly formed, you're bound to find some novel ideas for family flower beds. Visitors can vote for their favourite in the 'People's Choice Award'. Normal garden admission applies. Booking not required.

**Children's Event - Mini Butterfly Garden, Wednesday 1 June. Pre-bookable sessions at: 11am & 2pm**

A fun 'hands-on' activity that gets children making their own butterfly themed mini garden to take home and enjoy. RHS Member Children £6. Non-Member Children £8.

Normal garden admission applies for adults. Booking essential on 0845 612 1253.

**Picnic Evening & Lecture by Dr Robert Liddiard, Thursday May 11<sup>th</sup> from 6pm to 9pm.** Organised by the Essex Gardens Trust, this picnic evening concludes with a lecture on "Reflecting on great landscapes: the use of water in medieval residences". It will examine the many uses to which water was put in the elite landscapes of the middle ages. RHS & EGT Members: £10. Non-Members: £15. Booking essential on 0845 612 1253.

**For more information on each of these activities please the RHS Garden at Hyde Hall on 01245 400256**

## Twitichers and Shrikes in Rettendon.

Did you all see the parked cars and people wandering about at the turnpike roundabout from Sunday 10th April. Did you think as I did that it was a traffic census? How wrong can you be? It was a Shrike that was the centre of attraction pursued by a small crowd of Twitichers. To explain, a Shrike is a small European bird of prey. There are four types, Greater and Lesser Grey. Woodchat and Red-Backed. I wasn't told which type it was. They are also called Butcher Birds as they impale their larger prey on

thorns making it easier to tear them apart. They eat mostly insects but Lizards, small Mammals and Birds are also on their menu. They are quite distinctive with a black bar from beak to ear and a white throat, about 7 1/2" to 8 1/2" inches long. I hope the local Sparrow Hawks don't fancy a continental meal.

Twitichers are bird spotters. **Paul Coulter**

## Garden Notes

Tackled my compost heap. Not too keen on the myriads of worms therein. Clearly they are still mid feast so must turn and leave it to be digested further. Yuk! Got out a sack of fertiliser and felt I had cheated..... **Mrs McGregor**

**Battlesbridge Matters** Well Friday the 29<sup>th</sup> April is a public holiday for the Royal Wedding, this is a great occasion. If the weather is good ask your neighbour round for a cup of tea or a glass of wine and raise a small toast to our future King & Queen. It's a once in a life time event and part of English History.

We now have a bus service on Saturdays through Battlesbridge. The No 3 going to Southend will start at 7.45, 9.15, 11.15, 13.15, 15.15 and last bus at 16.40.

The No 1 going to Chelmsford will start at 8.07am and every hour, the last bus leaves at 9pm. Telephone Regal Busways 01245 249001 for any further information.

The warm weather is a real joy & the ducks are all mating. I really feel sorry for the ducks as the drakes gang up on them and nearly drown the poor birds. One Mallard has ten chicks & already we have three pairs of black and white tufted ducks & shell ducks. The Peregrine Falcon killed a Crow outside our house, the first time I had ever seen him close up, like a very big Sparrow Hawk.

On the Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> May, we have a traditional Sailing Boat Rally at Battlesbridge. Lots of Tan Sails and Vanish Spars, probably 30 boats from the smacks to gaff barge boats. About 12 - 2pm.

Every year we always get cold easterly winds and then a wonderfully calm sunny period, lets hope it lasts, but it never does!

**Roy Hart, Parish Councillor 01268 768282**

## SWITCHOVER IS COMING & HELP IS AT HAND

The digital switchover is coming to Rettendon & Battlesbridge soon and if you don't convert your TV to digital by the time the switchover happens you wont be able to watch any TV programmes.

The BBC run switchover help scheme can convert one TV for you if you are eligible for the help scheme. You are eligible for the help scheme if you are :- Aged 75 or over; or live in a care home (for 6 months or more); or receive (or could get): Disability Living allowance (DLA), or Attendance or Constant Attendance Allowance or Mobility Supplement, or are Registered Blind or Partially Sighted.

If you are eligible then the Help Scheme will write to you directly. All you need to do is to reply to the letter by sending back a completed reply form or telephone for free on 0800 40 85 900. Please remember if you receive a letter please reply even if you don't need any help.

The scheme can provide and install easy to use equipment to switch one TV. It includes an approved installer, aerial upgrade if needed and a 12 month aftercare service with a free helpline.

Most people will be asked to pay £40 towards the service but it can be free for those who receive certain income related benefits.

Do you know someone who needs a helping hand switching to digital TV ? Please talk to them and make sure they get the help they are entitled to by telling them about the Switchover Help Scheme. If you need any further information or help or know someone who may then please contact your designated support volunteer for Rettendon, Runwell & the Hanningfields, John Peart on [john.peart@vaessex.org.uk](mailto:john.peart@vaessex.org.uk) or telephone 07540720611. For further information on the Switchover help scheme visit [helpscheme.co.uk](http://helpscheme.co.uk) or call 0800 40 85 900. Text phone users can call 080040 85 936

Village Agents are employed by the Rural Community Council of Essex which is a registered charity no 1097009.

### Mobile Libraries Consultation

More information later on the outcome of the review of mobile library services which is understood to be completed by the end of June with any changes to days and times of visits coming into effect from Monday 4th July 2011.

The dates and times of the routine visits are as follows.

**Battlesbridge Goose Cottages**, Alternate Fridays - 6<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> May & 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> June from 14-40 to 14-55 hrs.

**Chalk Street**, Alternate Thursdays - 12<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> May & 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> June from 13-15 to 13-30 hrs.

**Rettendon Salforal Close**, Alternate Thursdays 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> May and 2<sup>nd</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> June from 4-05 to 4-25.

**Meadow Road** visits will also be on alternate Thursdays 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> May and 2<sup>nd</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> June from 3-45 to 14-00.

Look out for any changed dates and times for these visits to the parish. The details of the consultation will be given in a future copy of this newsletter.

Trevor Legg, Group Manager Basildon Libraries Service  
01268 288533 or email [trevor.legg@essex.gov.uk](mailto:trevor.legg@essex.gov.uk)

### Mobile Customer Information Service

Chelmsford Borough Council's mobile customer information service (MCIS) provides parishioners with access to all information and right on your doorstep.

Rettendon is one of the ten rural communities around the Borough have been targeted and focusing on areas where public transport is infrequent. Those with the greatest need for advice and support - the elderly, young families and those with mobility requirements, have access to information and advice. No need for an appointment, just turn up at the village hall between 10am to 11-30am on the second Wednesday in each month (11<sup>th</sup> May & 8<sup>th</sup> June). Duties permitting, the local PCSO from Essex Police will also be on hand to answer any Police related enquiries.

You can find more information about this service on Chelmsford Borough Council's website at [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/mobileinfo](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/mobileinfo) or alternatively please contact Cheryl Blake 01245 606891 for any further advice.

**Why won't horse riders use the bridleway as opposed to making a complete dogs breakfast of the grass areas near to the Bell pub, which are maintained by local businesses and nearby residents ?**

**" Battlesbridge** is not a village in itself, it is a hamlet of Rettendon. Even as late as 1937 the directory was showing it as two separate words. One reason for its development was its situation on the bank of the Crouch and the use of that river for transport from the earliest times. Later, a station was built here on the Maldon and Southminster branch of what was then the London and North Eastern Railway, to take on that role of goods transport and to serve the people of Rettendon and its hinterland. The directory also shows that the Matthews, well known as milling and cattle and dog food manufacturers were living at the Mill House and the mill, one of ten they owned, was in full production. Another name of note was Meeson, for William Taylor Meeson was the miller before Matthews took over.

The interesting point about the old, water driven mill that stood astride the creek is that it was not a river mill. The Crouch flows so slowly that it does not have the strength to turn a wheel, but there is a strong tidal flow well past Battlesbridge. So some clever fellow, whose name is lost in the mists of history, built a tidal mill - the only mill ever to work on the Crouch. It must have required many men and much effort to dam the creek with an embankment and to build a rough, wooden mill upon it. Time brought improvement and development. By 1775 it had been rebuilt with four floors and four pairs of stones, grinding wheat into flour as fast as the barges could unload it.

It would have been burned down in 1815 but for the quickness of a workman who slammed a door to stop the draught and disengaged the stones. The flames of a candle caused a 'flash-over' in the dusty atmosphere, but that brave man prevented its spread. The Meeson's came with new ideas for new times. They demolished the old tide mill around 1902 and turned over to steam in a new mill on the seaward side of the bridge which takes the road across the creek. The only reminder now left of the old mill is the remnant of brickwork on the bank which formed the dam, and a piece of broken wall of the mill itself.

Battlesbridge has been bypassed, so now it is a pleasantly quiet place to visit, and very worthwhile, not just for its scenery and two old pubs, the Harp and the Barge, but also for the large collection of antiques and 'bygones' shops which have congregated here. One can stand by the river and muse that the Crouch had been a regular route for smugglers from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. They were still creeping up the Crouch as late as 1833 when the brig *Mary*, searched here at Battlesbridge was found to have a vast quantity of tobacco and brandy worth £3,000, in the money of the day, hidden deep under its legitimate cargo of coal.

By the way, there was no battle fought out here to give the bridge its name. It is thought that Battlesbridge originated from the fact that the Battaile family were the local landowners from as early as 1300." **'Hidden Essex' by Stan Jarvis (published in 1989). With grateful acknowledgements to Countryside Books, Newbury, Berkshire**

Contributions for inclusion in the June newsletter to be with me please no later than Friday 20<sup>th</sup> May either in writing or by email. Ron Fallows 01245 400394

The right is reserved to accept or reject items either in part or whole and to edit contents as space allows.