

Chalfont St Peter Village Voice January 2010

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THIS is the card sent by our MP Cheryl Gillan this Christmas and it carries the attribution:-

"Well done to my constituent Lucy Bunker, Age 9, from Chalfont St Peter C of E School, who designed this card. Lucy was both the Chesham and Amersham AND the national winner of the Big Ben Christmas Card Competition this year!"

Well done Lucy. It is a super Christmas Card.

ST PETER Players have a reputation to maintain and they certainly kept it high with their production of **Into the Woods**, at the Community Centre – 10-12 December. The award winning musical with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and book by James Lapine, was taxing and challenging, but they rose to the task and provided a well acted and enjoyable presentation.

Sondheim doesn't make it easy for those who interpret his work, as the music demands a lot from the singers, but The Players tackled it effectively and followed the tradition of famous names who have performed in this play, since its first production at The Old Globe Theatre in 1986.

The regular team slipped into their new characters effortlessly and were assisted by a group of young students from Bucks New University, studying for careers in acting. They were good singers also, with strong and attractive voices. I took my 11 year old grandson, Thomas, to see the play and he really enjoyed it, which was good considering the unusual mingling of stories such as Cinderella, Babes in the Woods, Jack and the Beanstalk, Little Red Riding Hood and Rapunzel, with the Baker and his Wife providing a lynchpin through which the story is carried.

The first act introduced all the facets and faces and came to a happy ending, but that wasn't the end at all. Act 2 brought reality to the stage and the fantasy characters became more like the people around us, with their likes and dislikes, fears and fancies and a tendency to blame others rather than themselves.

Thomas took it all on board and made comment about the rights and wrongs that were discussed. I hadn't expected him to see it as realistic, as I'd told him we were going to a pantomime, but it is a tribute to the piece and to the actors who presented it, that even for a youngster it was thought-provoking and interesting.

The singing was also impressive, with some very good voices, notably Tom Telford as the Baker and Helen Sherlock as Cinderella, though all the singers did a sterling job with demanding music.

Comedy was also enjoyable and Thomas laughed spontaneously in the right places. If a child is entertained, I take it as a compliment to the actors. I must mention Tina Barclay's Witch. Excellent portrayal and the mask she wore was amazingly convincing. The Players are a skilful and experienced group and handled the switch between fantasy and reality well, as the interval 'triggered' the change of mood. The students who joined the troupe also showed talent. Jack, played by Steve Element, was a difficult part to which to give a natural flow and he handled it very well and got the pathos just right, without it being overdone.

The scenery was well designed and changed fluently. The music duo did a super job and, in tandem with the sound effects and lighting operators, created an effective atmosphere so that the actors had the tools they needed to give a proficient performance.

Thomas is now nagging me to make sure that I book up for the Players' next production – **We'll Meet Again – which is to take place 6th-8th May**. If anyone wants to join in this, Auditions will be held on Monday 1st February at 8pm in the Community Centre. If you can sing, "The Players need you". Any questions or more information are available from the director John Draper on 01753 888666.

I TRIED out the new A30 bus which comes through Chalfont St Peter every hour, over the run up to Christmas, as it was less hassle than driving to and parking in Uxbridge. It is also useful to go to Chesham, in the opposite direction and, if you have a bus pass, the ride is free. The bus runs every hour, though not on Sundays and you can get the timetable up on the internet, by going into Carousel Buses. If you need to go to Heathrow, it's an ideal way to avoid the traffic and the hassle of having to pay to park while you are away. If you are getting a lift, it still is easier, as the bus journey is direct and takes about 40 minutes.



THE Chilterns, South Bucks & High Wycombe Self Help Group for Managers and Professionals Seeking Work Careers Springboard meetings take place 7.15 for 7.30pm each Monday at St Andrews United Reformed Church Hall, Packhorse Road Gerrards Cross. New members are always welcome – Membership - free.

Jan 11 New Year New Decade - re-launching your job search Making plans and setting goals for the year ahead. Speaker: Richard Lambert (Volunteer)

- Jan 18** Building a winning CV Advice on how to make your CV an interview winning tool.
Speaker: David McMullan (Volunteer)
- Jan 25** Tell me about yourself.....How to polish your response to this frequently asked question.
Speaker: Peter Roycroft (Volunteer)
- Feb 1** "Who says you can't be a lion tamer?!" Exploring new career options and pursuing your dreams!
Guest Speaker: Graham Smith
- Feb 8** Networking Making and keeping contacts – an essential ingredient to an effective and sustainable job search. Speaker: Peter Roycroft (Volunteer)
- Feb 15** Get to know *your* skills Your skills are your key assets in your job search. This session is about realising your true value, discovering your hidden talent and creating your key skills profile as the basis for your job search. Speaker: Tony Hodgson (Volunteer)
- Feb 22** Using technology to support your job search Making the web work for you and an introduction to the LinkedIn Group for Careers Springboard members Speaker: Jeremy Fletcher (Volunteer)

AN ADDITIONAL six road repair gangs have been drafted in to help repair the potholes left in Buckinghamshire's roads following the severe weather conditions which have blighted the county since before Christmas.

Buckinghamshire County Council will now have a total of 15 gangs out on the roads, repairing 25 -30 potholes a day - that's around 2000 potholes repaired per week across the county. They will be using permanent repair materials to provide a long-lasting replacement.

At a cost of £3,000 per gang per week, it will cost £45k a week to keep all 15 gangs operational. The situation will be reviewed after three weeks. The strategy will be the same as it is for salting - priority routes will be done first, then secondary routes.

Members of the public can report potholes on 0845 230 2882. For more information please visit the Buckinghamshire County Council website: www.buckscc.gov.uk/winterdriving

REPORT from CSP W.I. - "What a lovely afternoon we had for our December meeting. All contributions for the Festive lunch were collected and seats were found at the decorated table. Mrs. Lyme said Grace and a delicious meal was had by all. Tealights, crackers and Holly on the table and various drinks completed the occasion.

At 2.15 we began the afternoon meeting. a special Christmas raffle was drawn. Mrs. Sara Oliver set up her keyboard to entertain us with stories of her times as a luckless Church organist and as an equally luckless farmer's wife. She sang, most beautifully, Carols and evocative songs. we were invited to join in the choruses. A really charming lady rounding off a happy afternoon.

We meet next, **on January 13th** in the church Hall at 2.15 pm. the talk will be "Rationing in World War Two. Visitors always welcome.

VOPAG - for the over 55's, meets next on Tuesday, January 19 in the Parish Council Building in Gravel Hill. Coffee is at 10am and the meeting begins at 10.30. The students from The Community College provided great entertainment at the Christmas meeting, with some clever magic and a young troupe of actresses acting out an unusual presentation and also. The audience gave them enthusiastic applause.

THE Probus Club is for retired men of all occupations and meets at the Colston Hall, The Memorial Centre on the first and third Wednesdays of the month 10am for 10.30am, finishing at noon. The first meeting in January is Wednesday 6th when Robert Askew will present Gilbert & Sullivan – their lives and the Savoy Operas. On Wednesday January 20, the speaker will be Geoff Roberts and the subject will be The History of the Building and Restoration of Westminster Abbey.

PARENTING Support - Improve your parenting skills and enjoy your family life even more by attending an 8 week practical course in Chalfont St Peter. For parents or carers of 0 - 6 year olds (Monday mornings and evenings from 18th Jan) and for 7 - 13 year olds (Thursday mornings from 21st Jan). Places are limited so book as soon as you can or obtain more information by contacting Katrina Reading at Gold Hill Baptist Church on 01753 887173 or katrina.reading@goldhill.org.

WOULD YOU like to help to come to terms with Divorce or Separation and move forward? Why not attend our 6 week course in Chalfont St Peter (commencing on Monday 22nd February) which is equally helpful for those who are newly separated and those who have been divorced for many years. Most people say they wish they had come earlier as they find the advice and support invaluable. Find out more or book a place by contacting Katrina Reading at Gold Hill Baptist Church on 01753 887173 or katrina.reading@goldhill.org.

THAMES Valley Community Messaging - Amersham - G-12/004

We are continuing to receive reports of cold calling, usually by phone by companies selling intruder alarms. Police have been speaking with one of the companies, Direct Response as concerns were raised about the way these salespersons are operating. They tend to ask a lot of personal details, such as "do you live alone?" or "do you have a dog?" and this has caused anxiety particularly among elderly more vulnerable people.

Please be aware the police do NOT endorse or promote individual companies.

If you are registered with the Telephone Preference Service tell the caller this and ask them to remove your details from their list.

Police would like to hear from anyone who receives a phone call where the caller either claims they are working with the police, asks a lot of personal questions or is very pushy. Please provide details of the date and time of the call, the company they are representing and if possible the name of the caller.

You can report the incident via the non emergency number 0845 8 505 505. (make sure you get a crime reference number) or alternatively contact the Watch office either by email at chiltern.ringmaster@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk or phone 01494 736642.

BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR Bucks County Council is asking residents to help them keep the elderly and other vulnerable adults safe during this period of bad weather.

The council's social care team continue to work tirelessly to provide essential services to our most vulnerable clients. However, we are asking for the help of our residents to check on vulnerable people in their community.

In the time of goodwill to all people why not be neighbourly and check on your elderly relatives and other vulnerable people in your area to see if you can do anything to help them.

For further information contact: Rebecca Goody, Communications Email: rgoody@buckscc.gov.uk

Telephone: 01296 382055 Fax: 01296 382005 County Hall, Walton Street Aylesbury, Bucks HP20 1UA

BUCKS Choices4me: helping young people with their options

Buckinghamshire's young people can find out more about their future learning options at 'Bucks Choices4me' information events to be held at Aylesbury College on **11 January**, and at Amersham and Wycombe College on **12 January**.

Aimed at young people in Years 8/9 and 11, the events will focus on Diplomas, the new national programme that widens the choices available to young people to gain the skills they need to succeed in work and life. Developed with employers, schools, colleges and universities, Diplomas provide a route into further or higher education or employment, combining learning with practical experience currently in 10 different subject lines across Buckinghamshire.

Natalie Ellis, Buckinghamshire's 14-19 Entitlement Coordinator, said the events will include drama productions and interactive touch screens, and there will be opportunities to discuss options with student ambassadors, tutors and Connexions Personal Advisers. Young people and their parents or carers do not need to register and can turn up anytime between 4pm and 9pm on either day.

For more information young people can visit www.buckschoices4me.com to search for courses and training opportunities by subject and provider. They can also contact their Connexions Personal Adviser in school or call 0845 313 3413.

THE Waste Partnership for Buckinghamshire is supporting the Woodland Trust recycling scheme and throughout January everyone can get involved by recycling cards in special bins in W H Smith, TK Maxx and Marks & Spencer. And by recycling cards, people will be helping the charity reach its target – to plant 12,000 native trees or an area of woodland half the size of London Zoo!

Since the Woodland Trust started its Christmas Card Recycling Scheme 12 years ago, a total of 659m cards have been recycled, 13,080 tonnes of cards have been collected, allowing the Trust to plant 155,000 trees. Last year alone 59 million cards were recycled, which funded the planting of 14,000 trees.

The great news for local residents is that this year if people visit the Woodland Trust web site and pledge to recycle, they can choose the planting region for the trees they are helping to fund.

To find out what you can recycle where you live go to www.recyclenow.com/woodlandtrust

CHALFONT St Peter Garden Club will meet at 8pm on Wednesday January 20 in the Parish Church Hall, Church Lane, to hear Norma Desmond talk about "The Life of Lancelot Capability Brown". The Club also arranges outings to gardens of interest and it's well worth becoming a Garden Club member because they offer perks to members and provide garden products at discount. Their website is www.gardenclub.org.uk. For membership enquiries call Richard on 01494 871308 or for further information about meetings contact Nigel on 01494 873839.

WOMEN need to talk about things that matter and they do this at breakfasts held bi-monthly on Saturdays from 8.30am until 10am. This is in Gold Hill Church Hall at a cost of £5 per person. There are speakers and topics to interest all, in a relaxing and enjoyable atmosphere. Everyone is welcome and the next breakfast is on Saturday, January 23, when Fiona Castle will be the speaker. To book your place, or for further details please call - 01753 887173.

THOSE of you who have supported the Sunday and Wednesday coffee at the Parish Church may like to know that the proceeds have enabled donations to: St Paul's Church, white cords for robes, mobile telephone for the Vestry, Easter flowers, Christian Aid, William's Fund, and refreshments for church functions.

GOOD News for the Chalfont St Peter Ladies Group is that subscriptions will remain at £10 for this year. Details of the new programme will be given out at the A.G.M. on Wednesday January 27 at 2.30pm and this will be followed by entertainment from the children of the Middle School, always enjoyable. Also important to note is that their second Antiques Road Show will be held on Wednesday February 24 at 2.30pm. Please take along no more than two items per person to obtain a valuation. There is a charge of £1 for each item valued and this money will go to the nominated charity of Amersham Auction Rooms, which they have specified is Cancer Research. Last time was most successful with lots of visitors, so do support this occasion.

FRIENDS OF Chiltern Open Air Museum – WINTER TALKS

Wednesday 27 January – "**Buckinghamshire's Rotten Boroughs; Bribery and Corruption in Local Elections before the 1832 Reform Act**" by Julian Hunt, well known Researcher, Lecturer and Writer on English Local History

Wednesday 24 February – "**Birds of the Colne Valley**" by Steve Carter

Wednesday 24 March – "**Past & Present**" Work of the CVAHS Chess & Misbourne Valley Landscape Characterisation Group", by Richard Hoyle

All talks (except that in Hedgerley) take place in the Mary Smithells Room, Chalfont St Peter Community Centre, Gravel Hill at 8 pm. A small admission charge of £2.50 is made - £2 for Friends of the Museum. Light refreshments are available. All welcome – pre-booking not necessary.

CHALFONT St Peter and Gerrards History Society will have its next meeting on Friday, January 29 at 8pm, in the Gerrards Cross Memorial Centre, when Ian Currie will be speaking on Frost, Freeze and Fairs. Further details from Evelyn Batho on 01494 873831

SATURDAY, January 30 is the Beetle Drive, with Fish & Chip Supper in the Parish Church Hall, Church Lane, starting promptly at 7pm. Tickets (Adults: £10, under 16s: £6) will be available after the 10am Sunday services or contact Grenville and Sally Dixie on 01753 400075. Tickets limited, so don't leave it too late.

CHALFONT COMMON WI meets on the first Thursday of each month in the Tony Graham room at the Chalfont Community Centre at 7.30 for 7.45. Visitors most welcome.

SNOW checks on the vulnerable. As the snow fell and temperatures dropped below zero, a small team of Buckinghamshire County Council staff was methodically checking the welfare of more than 700 vulnerable people.

The emergency telephone check kicked in like clockwork, involving more than 20 social care workers and staff from the 'In Touch' service. While some ensured around 500 people with substantial and critical needs were all right, others checked more than 200 vulnerable adults who might have been affected by a power cut in Princes Risborough on Tuesday.

Care staff, joined by Head of Service Provision Kerry Stevens, trudged through snow to make home visits, while other staff worked late into the night. One went out in her own time at 10pm to visit a vulnerable woman to ensure she was coping, while another walked for two hours to check an elderly resident in the rural area near Amersham.

And some 30 home care staff, who were not on duty, volunteered to make visits during the day and evening. Mike Colston, Cabinet Member for Adults and Family Wellbeing, had nothing but praise for the team: 'I'm very proud of them,' he said. 'Going beyond the call of duty is second nature to our team, and we don't take this for granted. Their care and concern ensured everyone known to us received reassurance during the extreme weather conditions.'

Kerry Stevens, Head of Service Provision, said a 24 hour service was maintained throughout the snowy conditions. 'It was absolutely outstanding,' he said. 'Every day our staff go the extra mile but at times like these you realise what a great contribution the whole team makes to the community.'

FRESH Funding for the walk to school. Twenty three walk-to-school schemes have received a cash boost for another year from a £15,000 grant.

The money comes as the last instalment in a three-year government-funded Walking to School Initiative, and has been distributed by Buckinghamshire County Council to support qualifying school schemes during the academic year 2009/10.

In the first year of the Walking to School Initiative, 36 schools in Buckinghamshire received a grant to help reduce single-occupancy car journeys to school. Seven schools set up new Crocodile or Allig8or trails, which involve pupils walking in high visibility jackets escorted by adults along a risk-assessed route.

Other schools used the money to support existing walk-to-school schemes by buying incentives for pupils, or improving pedestrian entrances. One school bought permits for a nearby car park so that parents could walk their children to the school gate.

The 23 schools that qualified for second year funding have now been given their final year's grant to continue supporting their schemes. Results from these schemes are monitored through annual feedback from schools.

In the last academic year 66% of pupils in the participating schools travelled sustainably by walking, cycling, catching a bus or sharing a lift.

CHALFONT St Peter Parish Church has a Prayer Group that meets every Tuesday from 10-11am in the Lady Chapel of the Parish Church. An informal, friendly group who sing, pray and talk together. All are welcome to join in.

BINGO is in the Community Centre on Friday evenings 8 – 9.30 pm in the Mary Smithells room in the Chalfont St Peter Community Centre. All welcome.

SOUTH BUCKS Choral Society has been established for 28 years under the leadership of conductor Iain Ledingham. New members having a reasonable knowledge of music and sight reading are most welcome. Rehearsals are held on Tuesdays at 7.45pm in St Joseph's School, Priory Road in Austenwood. Further details please contact Ann Whaley on 01753 883684

CHALFONT Fine Arts meets on the third Wednesday afternoon of each month (apart from July, August & December) for a lecture on Fine Arts in the Main hall of the Chalfont St Peter Community Centre. In addition outings are arranged to exhibitions and historic buildings during the year. Two study days are also held at the Centre when a particular subject is explored in more depth. Contact is Pam Dodd - Telephone : 01494 725831 Email : pam@pjdodd.net Web Site : www.chalfontfinearts.co.uk

THE Citizens Advice Bureau provides a drop-in advice session is run at the Chalfont St. Peter Community Centre Contact They offer free, confidential, independent and impartial advice on a range of subjects including:- Benefits, Consumer Issues, Debt, Employment, Housing, Immigration, Legal Issues, Relationships, Tax.