

FOR THE RESIDENTS OF LEE & LINCOMBE VILLAGES
AND SURROUNDING AREAS AND OUR VISITORS

LEE & LINK'EM NEWS

SPRING 2006

50P



THE ILFRACOMBE TO WOLVERHAMPTON TRAIN STORMS UP
PAST SLADE RESERVOIR TOWARDS LEE BRIDGE (01 SEPTEMBER 1962)

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LEE AND LINCOMBE – FUTURE DATES FOR 2006

VILLAGE DIARY

Tuesday 28 February	W.I. Pancake and Coffee Morning – Village Hall, Pancake Races outside, all welcome
Tuesday 28 March 7.30 pm	Annual General Meeting of Lee Memorial Hall – Village Hall
Easter	Old Schoolroom Craft and Gift Shop re-opens
Friday 14 April 2.00 pm	Good Friday service – St Matthew's Church
Sunday 16 April 9.00 am	Easter Sunday Communion Service with choir and festive music – St Matthew's Church
Monday 17 April 10.00 am	Easter Coffee Morning with hot cross buns and cake stall – Village Hall
Monday 24 April 7.30 pm	Annual Parochial Meeting of St Matthew's Church – Village Hall
Monday 1 May	Flower Show Plant Sale & Coffee Morning – Village Hall
Wednesday 24 May 7.30 pm	Lee & Lincombe Residents' Association AGM
Monday 29 May 2.00 pm	Spring Fayre – Village Hall and Meadow
Fri 2, Sat 3, Sun 4 June	Exhibition of Patchwork and Quilting - Village Hall from 11am – 5pm
Thursday 27 July 2.00 pm	Flower Show – Village Hall
Saturday 29 July – Sunday 13 August	Arts and Crafts Exhibition – Village Hall Flowers and organ playing – St Matthew's Church
Sunday 17 September 6.30 pm	Harvest Festival service – St Matthew's Church, followed by Harvest Supper in Village Hall
Sunday 5 November	Bonfire and Fireworks – Chapel Meadow, followed by Supper – Village Hall

If you would like anything included in the diary for the next issue, please contact the editors (see back page)

NEWS FROM ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH

It is a great pleasure to record the success of the two special Christmas services.

The innovation of holding a village Carol Service followed by a social gathering in the Village Hall proved to be very popular. With 94 people inside, the beautifully decorated candlelit church was crowded. Everyone seemed to enjoy the mixture of traditional and more modern carols to a range of accompaniments, the variety of Christmas readings from the bible and elsewhere, and the hand-bell ringers. I should like to thank the many people who so willingly agreed to play a leading part in the service and contributed so much to making it a real village occasion. The hand-bell ringers need particular thanks for the many hours they spent rehearsing: the outcome was splendid! I should also like to thank the Village Hall committee for making the social occasion after the service so enjoyable. It was marvellous that they persuaded Father Christmas to come along, and the mulled wine was first-class!

The traditional Christmas Eve Communion Service attracted more people than ever. Somehow we managed to get about 120 people in the church though, unfortunately, a few had to spend most of the service standing outside in the porch. With the singing led by our splendid volunteer choir, the service was a joyful occasion to herald Christmas Day itself.

At present, many of the regular congregation of St Matthew's are engaged in discussions with each other and with the congregations at St Sabinus, Woolacombe and St Mary Morthoe about further developments that will ensure for the future an active presence of the church in all three communities. Many interesting ideas are emerging which, hopefully, will strengthen the life of each church and what we do together. Following a very well attended joint service of the 3 parishes in Morthoe on 29 January, the next joint service is at 10.00 am on 30 April in Woolacombe.

Regular services continue each week at St Matthew's. The normal pattern is Holy Communion at 8.45 am each Sunday and Morning Prayer at 9.00 am on Wednesdays. Notices about any changes to this pattern are always posted on church noticeboards. But, as we look forward to Lent and Easter, the following extra arrangements apply. On Ash Wednesday (1 March), there is a service of Holy Communion at 10.00 am. On Monday evenings at 7.00 pm during Lent (beginning on 6 March), the ancient service of Compline takes place; many find this quiet, reflective service a great source of spiritual comfort. On Good Friday (14 April) at 2.00 pm, there is a service of readings, prayers, hymns and silence to commemorate Christ's crucifixion. Then the joyful festival of Easter is celebrated at the Easter Sunday morning service at 9.00 am, with the singing of Easter hymns led by the choir. As always, everyone is most welcome to attend any of the regular and special services.

Finally, on Easter Monday morning (April 17), there will be a coffee morning in the Village Hall starting at 10.00 am. Hot Cross buns will be served with coffee, tea or soft drinks, and there will be a cake stall. Do come along on this bank holiday morning.

Ian Stuart – Vice-Chairman, St Matthew's Church PCC



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GREETINGS AND FAREWELLS

We are sad to report the death in January of Peter Meadows. Peter and his wife, Paula, lived at Lincombe Manor for more than 20 years. Peter was a well-known optician in Ilfracombe for many years until his retirement. He was also a member of the Rotary Club of Ilfracombe. Peter was seriously ill with cancer for the last two years of his life, and he and Paula had been living with their daughter, son-in-law and family near Bath for the last 18 months. They sold Lincombe Manor last year to Colin and Jo Gibbs whom we welcomed to the village in the Summer 2005 edition. We send our sympathy and best wishes to Paula and all the family. Paula is continuing to live with her daughter.

Suzy Ashmole has left Four Elms and has moved nearer to her business in Lynton; many of us will continue to see Suzy at the Cliff Railway Café. We welcome Andy and Pat Wislocki to Four Elms. Although they intend to live here full-time in due course, Andy and Pat are dividing their time between Lee and Kingston-on-Thames at present.



Phil and Wendy Wilcock moved from Sea View in Lincombe at the end of November and are now living in the South Molton area. Brian and Clare Berry, who have still owned Sea View since they moved to Taunton several years ago, have now put the house up for sale.

We are also sorry to bid farewell to Les and Betty Yeo from Hills View in Lincombe. Les has lived there since the house was built in 1959 with Betty joining him on their marriage. They now feel that they want to be nearer to Betty's daughter and moved to near Shrewsbury at the beginning of February. We wish them well. Unfortunately, the sale of their house fell through last month and there are no new residents to welcome yet, but Les and Betty decided that they would still move now.

In the last edition, we mentioned that Tony and Pat Seymour were soon to move from the Fuchsia Tea Rooms and Eliots to High Banks in Lincombe. They are now well established there, and the new owners of the Tea Rooms and Eliots are John and Rachel Sweeney who also own Catscull. John and Rachel are intending to carry out a lot of renovation on the property before opening for business. Rachel has told us that she does not have an opening date yet. Watch this space!

We hope we have not left anyone off this note of arrivals and departures. We apologise if we have missed anyone and promise to make amends in the next edition if they will let us know.

GOODBYE FROM FORTESCUE STORES

"WE WERE
OVERWHELMED
BY YOUR
GENEROSITY."

We would like to take this opportunity to say a very heartfelt thank you to all our customers from Lee and Lincombe for supporting the shop over the years and for the card and gifts, which were a wonderful surprise and we were overwhelmed by your generosity.

We drank the Champagne at closing time on our last day at the shop when all the family joined us (we made them watch whilst we got drunk! – Only kidding).

Thanks again to Ian and Cynthia Stuart and Bob and Elizabeth Gilliat for housing the boxes and for co-ordinating the hand-over to Shirley and to Natalie Sharpe (The Woman in Black), Adrienne Howard and Marion Thom who were a great help with the deliveries on many a morning particularly during the summer months.

It has been a pleasure to have known you all and we hope we shall see you again soon. Until then we send you our very best wishes.

Carolyn and Alison Shelley

LEE & LINCOMBE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Three matters of wide interest dealt with by the Committee since the last issue are commented on below. The public toilets on the footpath from the village to the seafront were closed at the end of October for the winter. You will remember that Ilfracombe Town Council agreed to take them over and keep them open for the season following North Devon District Council's decision to close them permanently. We are very grateful to Ilfracombe Town Council for this brave decision. The Residents' Association is in continuing discussions with the Town Council in an effort to keep the toilets open for longer but, despite the willingness of some members on the Town Council, this is unlikely because of cash constraints.

This Association has been in discussions with Devon Highways for many years over the need to have a lower speed limit in the village and especially between The Grange and the Memorial Hall where there have been several accidents in recent years and many close calls along this narrow stretch of road. At long last Devon Highways have accepted our argument saying the funding will be available in 2006. The proposal is to put a 20 mph sign coming into the village at The Grange with small repeater signs at regular intervals after this. The visual impact on the surrounding area has been carefully considered when choosing the design, size and location of these signs. Devon Highways say they will be advertising the proposed changes shortly.

Postwatch visited me recently to inform this Association that Post Office Ltd, which runs the post offices, had informed them that the sub-post office would not be re-opening at The Grampus. Postwatch is an independent organisation set up to ensure that post offices and Royal Mail give the best service possible to their customers. Their concern was the loss of the facility in the village and how it might be replaced. They suggested two possible options – someone else in the village taking on the sub-post office, which seems very unlikely in the case of Lee, or a travelling post office visits the village at agreed times and would open for business (say) in the village hall. Post Office Ltd should visit the village in the near future to canvas which of these options might be workable. We would welcome any comments and/or suggestions on the matter from residents which we can pass on to the authorities – please contact me or any committee member.

The current Committee members are shown below for your information:

David Beer (2 Whitestone Cottages)	864317
Eric Couling (Rose Cottage)	863257
Jim Hawkins (Wall Garden Cottage)	865499
Paul Jagers (Pludd Cottage)	862975
Yvan Maurel (Woodstock)	879477
Colin Wright (Ulfrid)	864485

We welcome you to join us at the AGM on Wednesday 24 May 2006.

Paul Thom—Chairman

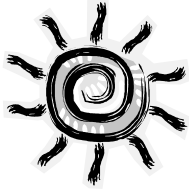


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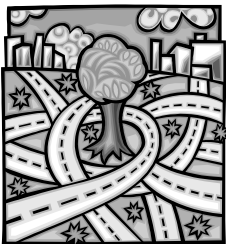


FREE TO A GOOD HOME!

Some months ago, a few tons of shale fell from the rock face behind the church and old school room. Although not a particular problem, the rock will need to be moved in due course. Anyone who would like some or all of this rock is most welcome to it, provided they take it away themselves. If you might be interested, please contact one of the Churchwardens, Paul Thom (862309) or Margaret Hill (864257).



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THE FUTURE OF AN IDYLL

The Rev George Tugwell, writing in 1863:

Having a general notion of the whereabouts of Lee, I descend to it across country ... suddenly we seem to have fallen into a “happy valley”. It is quite full of sunshine, and flowers, and bird music. I lie me down in a ferny nook, and bask..... Presently, resuming my rambles, I stumble upon as pretty a picture as one could wish to see - the village Church and School..... set like an antique cameo against a coloured background of waving tree, and climbing rose, and trailing ivy.

John Lloyd Warden Page, writing in 1895:

Crossing a stile or so we get into the cart track that passes over the downs to Lee. In places it is hardly visible, so little is it used, and, except in the “season”, the green turf is seldom trodden by any but the few folk that pass between Lee and Ilfracombe. But ere long the downs end, and we enter a long lane..... which has not one but many turnings before it drops, at an angle that no carriage person will be strong-minded enough to attempt, to Lee.

...at once it falls rapidly seaward, till half a mile from the bay it is joined by the Borough Valley – a deep combe equally beautiful..... about and above the junction of these combes lies Lee hamlet, and, with a cottage here and a cottage there, it straggles down to the sea in a purposeless kind of way, but which is indeed far more picturesque than the regulation street of the severely model village. There is a little church... built about sixty years since; a schoolhouse adjoining, an inn where you may feed on strawberries and cream, and just a handful of cottages before the stragglers begin, set among hedges of fuchsia and myrtle...

L du Garde Peach, writing in 1926:

...the road drops steeply towards Lee, past a handful of prettily embowered cottages and a long hedge of flowering fuchsia. Lee and its neighbour Mortehoe make some pretence of being fishing villages, but the renown of Ilfracombe has made them more the summer refuge of the more fastidious..... the crowds which throng the Ilfracombe promenade find little to their taste in Lee or Mortehoe; the isolation of Woolacombe..... is less assured, though its comparative inaccessibility may save it for a few years...

Lee is a pleasant little place; I hope the lane which leads to it, too narrow for the prowling char-à-banc, will not be widened just yet.

“Do you think,” I said, “that my car will climb up that?”

The blue-jerseyed fisherman looked at the travel-worn car and at the very steep, very rough road which climbs out of Lee away over the hill to Mortehoe.

“I ’ave seen cars go up en,” he said.

“What sort of cars?”

“Moty-cars,” he said. “But ‘tis a rough road.”...

It really was most incredibly steep, and the surface was beyond description.

“No fear of a char-à-banc here,” I reflected.

These are perceptions, over intervals of a third of a century, of an idyllic village, destined for “the more fastidious”. In the 1890s it is only disturbed during the “season”. By the 1920s it is the poor access which keeps the charabancs away. But what is the situation in the early twenty-first century?

The road from Ilfracombe is still steep and difficult, although not enough to discourage coaches. The road out, towards Mortehoe, is better surfaced, but a real constraint even on cars. Because of stringent safety regulations boats no longer bring trippers to Lee. We have

THE FUTURE OF AN IDYLL CONTD.

a good bus service which is only lightly utilised. There is limited parking for the majority of visitors who nowadays prefer to come by car.

The real constraints on change are no longer difficulty of access, but the application of the planning system. Lee is a Conservation Area, within the designated Heritage Coast, and within an Area of Outstanding National Beauty. Most of its coastline belongs to the National Trust. Not more than a score of new houses have been built since the 1920s, rather few by the standards of the Devon and Cornwall coastline, and permission for new building has effectively come to a stop. Because of the various designations decisions about building are made largely by local government officials. There are no caravan sites. As a result Lee is even now very quiet – most of the time anyway – and light pollution is low, so that you can still actually see the stars at night, a rarity in twenty-first century England.

There is, however, one important source of change. While many of its dwellings are occupied more or less full-time by retired people, a growing number are second homes, unoccupied for most of the year or only sporadically used for holiday lets. There are fewer actual residents, and they are getting on average older.

Lionel Hill, who has been observing the village for a lifetime, tells me that the number of visitors has declined sharply in the last ten to twenty years. The compensating point is that a growing number of residents, some by using new technology, are able to work from home.

Given all this, is Lee still the idyllic spot for “the more fastidious” that writers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries observed? Do we want it to be anyway? And, whatever we want, is there anything we can do about it? Perhaps readers of the Lee and Lincombe News could give their comments on this.

Colin Wright



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JAPANESE KNOTWEED UPDATE

"The Not-Knotweed Campaign"

The week had been mild, but on THAT morning, Thursday 29 December 2005, the temperature had plummeted. Despite waking up to a frost-filled valley and the overwhelming desire to stay in bed, over fourteen brave volunteers took up the "sea-dip challenge" to raise money for the control of Japanese Knotweed. One or two unsuspecting walkers were surprised to see a lion, a witch and a wardrobe heading into the sea, accompanied by the rest of the intrepid swimmers. Strategies varied. Some favoured the yell-then-plunge-in approach, others a more tentative inch-by-inch wade into the icy waters, cheered on by a supportive crowd.

After the swim, at Wrinklewood welcome hot drinks and food were provided, stories of the challenge exchanged, and that sense of well-being which comes from the sense of a job well done shared. To all those who undertook the "sea challenge": we salute your courage! And to those who helped and contributed to the cause: a sincere thank-you! To date, the splendid sum of £515.60 has been raised.

Currently, the Knotweed Committee is continuing to collect information and advice for the control of Japanese Knotweed. It is seeking funding from three sources, and is currently awaiting their decisions. You are welcome to contact any member of the committee with any questions or contributions relating to this issue.

Japanese Knotweed Committee: Janet Birch, Barry Jenkinson, David Perry, Mavis Rogers, Julia Waghorn

Mavis Rogers



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THE ARMSTRONG FAMILY AT LEE

I am one of the few remaining people who were actually born in Lee.

I was born at my parent's home, Broadlands, in 1937 and my parents 'Jack' and Mary Daniel ran the Tea Gardens at the Old Farm, now known as the Grampus.

My Great Grandfather Samuel Armstrong was a Surgeon born in Melton, Suffolk, as also was his Father, Samuel Armstrong, senior. Samuel junior's wife Frances Elizabeth nee Wragge, my Great Grandmother, was born in Old Swinford, Worcestershire into a wealthy family of several generations of solicitors.

Frances was brought up in a large country house with many servants, footmen etc. Frances with her parents and siblings, later moved to Teddington, Middlesex, where Frances met the new local surgeon, Samuel Armstrong, later to become her husband.

In the late 1800's Samuel and Frances rented Chapel Cottage, in Lee, for several months every summer, for several consecutive years. Their permanent home was still in Teddington, Middlesex where Samuel had his medical practice and at that time my Grandfather, George Ernest Armstrong worked in the city of London.

Samuel was a well-known character in Teddington, owning a large house with many servants and noted for riding a tricycle around the town, to visit his patients. The Census records, throughout Samuel's life, all show that he had a very full and busy household. One Census also shows a nursery nurse for my Grandfather, a small child.

The whole family thoroughly enjoyed their summer holidays in Lee and even after Samuel's death in 1898 in Teddington, Frances and her adult children still came to Lee and eventually in the early 1900's they moved to Lee, to live at Chapel Cottage.

My Grandfather much admired Lee and Devon and the farming way of life and he gave up working in London to work as a farmer in Lee. He met a girl, from Cornwall, Mabel Nicholas, who was working at the Old Farm Tea Gardens for Mrs Stapledon. They married in the Parish Church of her home village of Calstock, Cornwall and then emigrated to Canada, as George Ernest had developed a great love of farming while at Lee, as well as a 'taste of adventure'. Canada was an adventure at that time.

My Great Grandmother Frances, remained at Lee with her daughter Maud, living at Chapel Cottage. Her other daughter, Agnes, was a boarding school matron and her other son Percival, 'Percy', was a photographer. Maud's closest friend in Lee lived at Southcliffe and they spent a great deal of time together.

After spending a couple of years in Canada, my Grandparents, George and Mabel Armstrong, returned to Lee to live at the Gwythers, and set up a farm there. My mother Mary Elizabeth Armstrong and her older brother Stephen were born at the Gwythers. They also had an older brother Christopher who had been born in Canada.

When they were old enough, all three children were sent away to boarding schools, by their father, following the family tradition. My mother, Mary, went to a girl's boarding school near Exmouth. But all three children looked forward immensely to returning to their home in Lee for the school holidays.

George Ernest became known in Lee as 'Farmer' Armstrong and was quite a character! He was also known by some in the village as 'Farmer Hard Times' for his reluctance to spend money! After five years spent at the Gwythers, 'Farmer' Armstrong and Mabel moved into, the Old Farm where he continued farming using fields he had acquired while at the Gwythers, and also took on other fields. His wife, Mabel, was now the proud owner of the place where she had originally worked and she was determined to make much more of a success of the Old Farm Tea Gardens in the future. After her school years my Mother helped Mabel with the Tea Gardens.

My Great, Great Grandmother Frances remained living at Chapel Cottage with Maud until

THE ARMSTRONG FAMILY AT LEE CONTD.

her death. Maud also remained there with her housekeeper, until her own death. At hay making time Maud was well known for organising picnics in her meadow next to Chapel Cottage. All the village children were invited to make a giant birds nest of the hay, followed by an enjoyable picnic in the centre. I remember thoroughly enjoying myself at these picnics! During the war years evacuees also joined us.

My family owned quite a lot of property in Lee at this time. 'Farmer' Armstrong and Mabel owned the Old Farm, Maud owned Chapel Cottage plus Old Maids Cottage, where her brother Percy, his wife Edith and her famous white cats, lived. Maud also owned Briarwood. My Grandfather also owned the village car park, behind the present village hall and acquired the only hand operated petrol pump in the village, which had been originally situated outside the Old Post Office.

Percy and Edith, who was Irish, decided to bring to life the legend of the Three Old Maids of Lee. Edith would show visitors around her home, carrying one of her white cat, who opened door latches etc., as she told the Old Maids Tale.

Farmer Armstrong's only daughter Mary, my Mother, met my Father at Lee when he stayed each summer at the Scout Camp held in a field above the Manor House. My Father was one of the Scout Leaders from Hendon.

My parents married on August 6th 1934 at Lee Church. It was a large wedding of local interest at that time and the reception was held at the Old Farm (now the Grampus). My parents lived in London for a few years and returned to Lee in May 1937.

Although I was born at my parent's home, Broadlands, while my Father served away in the Army during the war, I spent most of the war years living with my Mother at the Old Farm with my Grandparents, and later, my younger sister. My Grandmother also had three girl evacuees, at the farm. We were quite a large houseful at the time! Broadlands was let out for the duration of the war to an Army Colonel.

After the war my Father returned to Lee from the Army and we all moved back into our home at Broadlands. Grandmother Armstrong was finding running the Old Farm Tea Gardens difficult by this time, even with the help of my Mother. Therefore both my parents took over the running of the Tea Gardens from the end of the war.

Robert Armstrong Daniel



"MARY, MY
MOTHER, MET
MY FATHER AT
LEE WHEN HE
STAYED EACH
SUMMER AT THE
SCOUT CAMP
HELD IN A FIELD
ABOVE THE
MANOR HOUSE."



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ALL SERVED WITH COMPLIMENTRY FANTASTIC VIEW



A CHRISTMAS TALE

Younger generations may not have heard of the tradition of putting old silver threepenny pieces in the Christmas pudding – to be discovered with shouts of glee by the finder whilst munching her/his share of the pudding.

It was therefore quite exciting to hear that our hosts at this years Christmas dinner were going to revive the tradition, having, over the years saved several genuine silver threepenny coins, one of which was going in the pudding.(1894 solid silver!)

After a sumptuous main course of duck, the moment duly arrived when the flaming pudding was brought to the table. To ensure that the portion containing the threepenny piece was given randomly, I was asked to name the recipient of each portion as it was served. This was to ensure complete secrecy as to the destination of the lone coin which had been carefully inserted into the pudding. So we munched away eating the very tasty homemade Christmas pudding, whilst surreptitiously watching the other diners for signs of the errant 3d appearing. In due course, it came down to the last guest whose pudding eventually disappeared and still no coin! We all thought that it must be in the small helping of pudding left on the sideboard. However, our hostess carefully mashed and searched but to no avail!! So the mystery remains – perhaps readers will keep their eyes open in case that elusive coin has gone to ground – or perhaps, in this village, UNDERGROUND!

Lionel Hill

“SO WE
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AWAY EATING
THE VERY
TASTY
HOMEMADE
CHRISTMAS
PUDDING”

INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL ADVICE

INVESTMENTS

INHERITANCE TAX PLANNING

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please contact Gina-Luisa - details on back page

The Old Schoolroom Gift & Craft Shop



For gifts, local crafts, souvenirs & a large selection of cards
Open: Sun-Fri 11:00am - 5:00pm, Sat 2:00 - 5:00pm
Please come in and browse

Carol looks forward to seeing you at Easter
 when the shop will re-open for the 2006 season

THANK YOU

May I, through the Lee & Link'Em News, thank all my friends including the editors for the best wishes sent to me through The News on the occasion of my move to Little Torrington.

I have settled in my new bungalow very well & have joined the local W.I., the Church & am learning line dancing! We have great fun once a week. I have also joined RHS Rosemoor going there quite often as it is only 10 minutes away & it's lovely walking around the garden where I so often pushed my Dad in his wheelchair when we lived at Lee.

The W.I. is a thriving one with 22 members &, like the Lee W.I., does many interesting activities; I have already made some good friends there.

The Church of St. Giles is very old & very large; I have been asked to prepare the altar for communion twice a month (Margaret Hill will know what that involves). They are very short on congregation & have only 6 PCC members & one Churchwarden.

I'd be very happy to see anyone who would like to make the journey to Little Torrington.

Best wishes.

Mary P. Newcombe. 10 Town Meadow. Little Torrington. EX38 8RD



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“THEY REFUSE
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GOING TO DO
WHEN THEY
GET HERE”

THOUGHTS FROM SOUTH WEST FRANCE

The generally accepted statistics are that of those British who move to France, 60% return to the UK in the first two years.

Statistics are, of course, notorious. They don't tell us how many, in fact, only intended to stay for two years or less anyway due to the nature of their move. Work placements, sabbaticals, etc., are all thrown into the statistical pot, but even so, that percentage seems extremely high to me and must surely mean that a large number of expats don't find their dream home or 'place in the sun' here in France. I suspect they don't find it in Spain, Portugal, Bulgaria or Croatia either. So is there a secret of a successful move?

In the short time we've been here I could divide those who move here loosely into two groups: Those who have their finances in order and those who don't.

The first group have been planning their move for maybe fifteen years or more as they see out a significant proportion of their working life in a safe pension-funded job which does nothing to inspire or excite them anymore but allows them to plan an equally safe well-funded retirement in a place they have visited, possibly, for years. A place which, when they came in high summer offered up excitement and inspiration in spades. It will, they assure themselves, eventually be the place of their dreams and make up for all the long years they have spent in the office/classroom or hospital ward dreaming of just such a move.

When they eventually make their move, they have money safely invested in property/investments in England. They have worked out their day to day needs in rural France - the cost of the Sunday Telegraph, meals at the local restaurant, ('What do you think? Twice a week dear? And of course a little more often when the children come over?') Easyjet/Ryanair flights home, and that one big holiday every year that will take them to whichever exotic location is being pushed in the Sunday Times this year as the place to go.

They make frequent trips back to see the grandchildren/aging parents but other than that will be found tripping across the village square with obligatory straw basket on market day. Having tasted cheeses, stroked aubergines and planned the weeks menus accordingly, they meet under the arches of the medieval 'place' and drink 'grande cremes' with the other ex-pats in the sun. They are all taking French lessons, of course. Topping up the 'O' or 'A' level they got so many many years ago.

They are, in the main, well tanned, relaxed and happy.

The second group come almost on a whim - or a sense of desperation. Unable to hack the crime or mortgage rates (or both) in the suburbs of their large British town, or ground down by long hours on the trains, not seeing each other or the children due to the pressures of work, or finding themselves in a difficult financial situation of their own making or not, they hold their noses, take a deep breath, sell up and run for it! They refuse to take the 'sensible' advice to plan what they are going to do when they get here. They will have a bit put away which will tide them over for a year or so while hopefully things 'work out'. Something will turn up. Or they have a dream to run a business of some sort and dare not do real financial planning on the grounds that if they did, they know they would never be so stupid as to take the jump. And they know they are going to go anyway so what the heck. This second group of course make fantastic television viewing! They also fit into the French psyche perfectly. Their houses are rarely finished (money ran out). Their cars are falling to bits. They do loads of work on the black just to get by or they become another British builder. They never go 'home' because they

THOUGHTS FROM SOUTH WEST FRANCE CONTD.

can't afford to so their aging parents or children come out to see them. But they look out of their door on a summer's morning over the top of the cement mixer into rolling hills, oak woods and lakes and can't believe their luck.

They too will be found under the arches on market day, but not so often.

This may sound like a trite generalisation of the 'English abroad', but think on. It's ever so true among incomers in the villages and countryside of Devon too isn't it?

Some of the first group go home because they miss their grandchildren too much, they are dismayed at the meagre selection at the supermarket or hanker after their standing/friends in the local community. Two or three trips 'home' a year can't make up for the lack of theatres, real full-on consumer spending and Waitrose.

Those returning of the second group have to be dragged kicking and screaming to the ferry ports. They very rarely want to return home and blame French bureaucracy for all their problems.

The secret of a successful move?

Of course there is no secret. There is only you, me and our own lives.

Some of both groups can be equally well suited to a life in France. Some of both groups will return to Britain.

It all depends on your own interpretation of success and maybe whether you were ever searching for success in the first place.

Fran Nustedt - www.gasconyretreat.com



“THOSE
RETURNING OF
THE SECOND
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THE FERRY
PORTS.”

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NEWS FROM THE GRAMPUS INN

As many of you will know, we have been carrying out extensive renovations and alterations to the Grampus. Life has been very hectic! The deadline for this edition of the Lee and Link'em News has come before we have finished all the work. However, we should be back in business before it is published.



We apologise for the inconvenience caused by our temporary closure, but we hope you will enjoy the changes we have made. There has not been time to devise a proper article for this edition. But, we shall be sending a note to all houses in the village when we are back in business. This note will give full details of opening hours, special events and other information.

Many thanks for all your support!

Mark, Mandy and family

“ANNUAL
SUBSCRIPTION
(3 ISSUES) TO
NON-RESIDENTS
WHO ARE
UNABLE TO
VISIT OUR
BEAUTIFUL
VILLAGES”

SUBSCRIBE TO THE LEE & LINK'EM NEWS

Our thrice-yearly newsletter is free to residents, and available to non-residents at 50p from The Grampus Inn and The Old Schoolroom Gift & Craft Shop.

We can also now offer two types of annual subscription (3 issues) to non-residents who are unable to visit our beautiful villages. Choose between:

- A paper copy delivered to your door for £3.00 per year
- A PDF document emailed to your Inbox for £1.50 per year

If you would like to subscribe, please contact the editors with your details and remittance.

HANDBELL RINGING

MORE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

After the great success of reviving the group of Handbell Ringers for the Carol Service, we are hoping to continue with the group and are looking for some more volunteers to join us.

Depending on everyone's availability, it has been suggested that the Spring Fayre on Monday 29 May might be a good occasion to perform.

No experience is necessary, but you need to be able to count! You also need to be able to make a commitment to regular rehearsals over the next few months.

It's great fun! If you are interested, please contact Cynthia Stuart, Lincombe House, 864834 as soon as possible.

LEE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

We all said a very sad farewell to Jean Jones and Mary Newcombe in October 2005. Both ladies were born in the village and had been members together for a combined 120 years. What an achievement! They were presented with pictures painted by Brenda Keeble of their homes. In their turn they had done most of the important jobs in the institute, treasurer, secretary etc. They will be sadly missed.

The institute starts 2006 with 32 members, and a full and interesting programme ahead. Highlights of which are:-

Talks on Homeopathy, Teaching in China, Delving into the History of Embroidery, and making Scrapbooks and Memory Albums.

We also have the serious stuff, like the "Resolutions" meeting. These are always thought provoking and encourage lively debate. The speakers for the January and February meetings were a member of the "Youth Offending Team" and a "Reuter Correspondent"

Tuesday 28th February. We are having a Pancake and Coffee morning with pancake races for ladies, gentlemen and children (separate races of course) with prizes! At the same time some ladies will be having a "KNIT IN" for the local hospice. Please come and support this worthy cause.

Thursday 4th May. Our institute is 80 years old this year and we're having a special birthday lunch in the Memorial Hall.

Saturday 24th June. Safari Supper. For members and one guest only. There will be starters in one members larger home, main courses in several smaller homes, ending at Lincombe House for puddings and coffees.

If you think this sort of programme is for you and you are not a member, and would like to be, please contact me on 864257. We are a very friendly bunch and would welcome new members.

Fuchsia Valley Quilters

About 10 years ago Lee W1 started several small group activities, for example swimming, poetry and patchwork, and I am pleased to say that they are still thriving, so much so that we now have waiting lists to join any of them.

I can only speak for the patchwork group as I am their leader.

We now have a much "posher" sounding name!

We used to meet once a month between late September and Easter. Now we meet fortnightly between early September and well into April no matter where Easter comes in the calendar. This means that we have more than doubled our number of Saturday sessions in the Memorial Hall. I think the WI must be the biggest user one way or another of the Hall, and very comfortable and warm it is too. We very much appreciate the new hot water system for endless cups of coffee and tea and the new curtains.

For the first time in our history we are having a Quilting Exhibition in the Memorial Hall on Friday 2nd, Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th June following on from the Spring Fayre. We are negotiating with the hall, with regard to the rent for the exhibition in return for making a patchwork quilt for the Arts and Crafts Exhibition raffle.

Margaret Hill - President





LEE VILLAGE HALL NEWS

The popular bonfire night event was held again this year. Fortunately, a break in the weather allowed spectators to enjoy a great range of fireworks and an excellent bonfire organised by our master bonfire-maker Roy Dyer, despite the inclement weather. This was followed by a delicious supper in the village hall and the usual good company such events generate.

“THE
COMMITTEE IS
CURRENTLY
RESEARCHING
THE UPGRADE
OF THE
KITCHEN”

A strong sense of community and of shared celebration was clearly evident in the new venture where the church and village hall combined to celebrate Christmas with a carol service in the church, followed by a social in the village hall with mulled wine and traditional refreshments. The new format was so popular it is likely to be repeated this year. The committee would like to thank all those who helped to make these events so successful.

The new curtains in the village hall have proved a great success. Following this trend to provide an excellent venue for all hall users, the committee is currently researching the upgrade of the kitchen to meet pending new legislation requirements and to extend catering facilities in the kitchen.

If you wish to hire the village hall, please contact Caroline Weekes (863 257).

Mavis Rogers - Chairperson of the Lee Memorial Hall Committee

WORRYING INCREASE IN DEVON ROAD DEATHS

A total of 47 people died on Devon's roads in 2005, compared to 37 the previous year.

There were 46 accidents, one resulting in a double fatality. Six were on trunk roads managed by the Highways Agency; 32 were on Devon County Council managed A class roads, most with speed limits of 60mph; 2 on B roads, 3 on C roads and one on an unclassified road.

PAINTINGS DRAWINGS & PRINTS

By
Julian Clark

Can be seen at The Grange, Lee
11am–1pm & 2–4pm

Entrance facing main lawn

LETTER TO THE EDITOR—FROM “FARMER” AUTHOR OF “THOSE GOOD OLD DAYS!”

Dear Heather & Denny,

Thank you for your kind words in your letter to me. Although I have never met you, Heather, I recall memories of days of at least 40 years ago when Denny formed the Sub-Aqua Club & was building trials cars ...more of that when we meet!

You have opened up yet another of the threads that link me to the village of my birth. It is over 70 years since we left Pludd & then The Iron House Farm on Lee Downs. We left by horse & cart & moved into a rented farm six miles inland.

Denny's brother Norman, was our next door neighbour with his wife & three children. He followed our landlord, Tommy Millman who was followed by Farmer Ludlow, the previous owners of Norman's farm, Francis Farm, Two Potts.

My proud pronouncement to all & sundry is that I am one of the few who can still say that they were born in Lee & educated at St. Wardrede's. I think Dick Kift & his family lived at 2 Whitestone Cottages next to No:1, Jim Dyer, then they probably moved down to Pludd when we left.

At Pludd, I recall, my elder brother, Dennis, falling in the barn & he bit through his lip; doctor was worried he'd get the dreaded "lock-jaw", fortunately he didn't.

Miss Green lived in the School House at the foot of Windcutter & taught all of us, from three year old me, in a smock with a handkerchief pinned to it, to the oldest fourteen year old. Sadly the school closed in about 1938. I remember the following pupils:

MICHAEL DOWN moved to a farm at Bittadon with his parents.

ROBIN HENDRY became a fighter pilot & died during the Second World War.

RAYMOND JONES now lives at Knowle; he married a lovely lady who fostered backward children at Seymour Villas in Woolacombe.

GLENYS KIFT, elder sister to BETTY, who was shy, freckled, soft auburn hair, moved from Pludd to Higher Slade with DICK KIFT. Dick was Quarter Master Sergeant in the Army Cadets & handed out rifles & bullets to me & my fellow cadets in the late 1940's.

MARY MILLS & her brother GERALD. Mary was small like me, & rosy cheeked. My mother made me a rag doll to present to her. 60 years later, I met her on holiday in Woolacombe & she remembered that doll! I still blush!

CHARLIE LEY became a top class ballet dancer with the famous "Ballet Rambert"& lives in Sweden.

FREDDIE LEY became a car salesman & lived in Bristol.

BARBARA KINGDON, full of freckles & very pretty, married Dennis Tarran, a boffin who worked on RADAR at Flat Point during the war.

BETTY DYER married Hector Laramy.

Whitestone Farm had a very chequered history after 1945; a rich businessman owned it & lived with his family in Miramar (*ed: now The Grange*) with a private Chapel in the garden. He built two detached farmworkers' cottages & the long low 80 cow parlour opposite, the red brick building which is still there. Pushed down many hedges too,...all grant-aided.

DEREK JEFFERY & his wife Jane, had the village home farm, The Old Farm not The Grampus, & lived there with their two daughters, Melanie & Sarah. Although I had moved away, I came back to help "sell-up" Whitestone in the 1950's when it was bought by Mr & Mrs Wing, soon to be Derek's parents-in-law & I milked Derek's cows for him at The Old Farm when he went off on holiday. I also helped with his haymaking when he built his new farm house on the Downs in 1972.

The Wings moved down to Pludd when they stopped farming in the early '70's.

I did manoeuvres-fighting in Lee woods with the cadets & was involved with Lee, strangely enough (as I'd moved away), all my life. It was even suggested, at one time, that I take up the "Lord of the Manorship" which was then vacant!!

Yours sincerely

"Farmer"



ON THE BEACH AT LEE

Sat on the rug on the beach at Lee
With the children, and grandchildren numbering three
Who fished the pools and clambered about
Running as they heard the shout
"A fish - a crab" and "shrimps galore"
"Let's go down to the sea once more"
Ice creams in hand we oldies smiled
Remembering our sea-side days as a child
When a great grey cloud loomed overhead
"Oh why aren't we indoors instead!"
The rain pelted down - now isn't this jolly!
On with our 'macs' and up with the 'brolly'.
Under the rug, now a sheltering tent
We finished ice creams 'til the rain was spent.
Away went the cloud and out came the sun
Shining and drying everyone.
The rocks they steamed and the 'brolly' dried
The 'macs' were folded and everyone sighed
It's good to be on the beach at Lee
Under the sky, in the sun by the sea.
Time went by and up went a shout
"Here's another grey cloud - watch out- watch out
On with the 'macs' and up with the 'brolly'
The rain came down - now isn't this jolly!
The grandchildren they did not care
About water, water everywhere.
For out would come the sun again
And dry up all that fallen rain
So we stayed on the beach all together
There on the sand - whatever the weather
And Grandparents and children's children agree
It is great to be on the beach at Lee.

Lynn Money



BLUE TITS IN DECEMBER

In these dark days, we both arise
Before the sun has lit the skies,
But I am very pleased to say:
You brighten up the leaden day.

I know how short the day will run.
Your food's a fight that must be won,
So I must fill that empty space,
My breakfast taking second place.

Now, even when I've got the flu,
I fill the sunflower seeds for you,
Hang the fatball, and break the ice
To keep the bird bath fresh and nice.

My charming garden acrobats,
With bright black eyes and tight blue hats,
Eat all the spread that you behold,
I couldn't bear your death from cold.

Then let's look forward to the spring,
When yellow ping pong balls with wings,
Will decorate my flowering shrubs,
And wait with gaping mouths for grubs.

They feel so good to be alive,
But they must learn how to survive,
Tell them they have no cause to fear:
I am their friend, and I am here.

Andrew Ailes, Myrtle Cottage.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED WHO HEAR THE CALL OF THE WILD

Volunteers are needed across Devon to help run highly successful wildlife activities this summer. Wild Nights Out are run by Devon Discovery, which provides outdoor and residential education for Devon County Council.

Volunteers are vital to the successful running of each event and Devon Discovery is currently recruiting for the coming season which runs from May to September. For more information and to book a place on the induction day, contact:

The Wild Nights Out Coordinator, Devon Discovery, The Dartmoor Training Centre, Prince Hall, Princetown, PL20 6SA or phone 01822 890761 or e-mail devon.discovery@devon.gov.uk

LEE'S SIBERIAN HUSKY RACING TEAM



Siberian Huskies are very beautiful but they are NOT an easy breed to own. Lee resident Stuart Groce is owned(!) by three, and says, "These special animals require a huge amount of dedication. They cannot be let off the lead or allowed ANY opportunity to escape. Sadly, many huskies are killed either on the roads or by farmers because a new owner thought their husky was different, but all have the same instincts, especially as they mature. A bored husky is incredibly destructive, left alone all day it will easily eat not just the contents of a kitchen cupboard, but the kitchen itself, even the walls! They moult very heavily, and do not get on with anything small and furry. Many new owners are unable to cope, which is why we support Husky Welfare, volunteers who ensure that every unwanted husky is looked after in experienced foster care until the right home is found, where they are more rewarding than most people could imagine." For more information on the good and bad points of owning huskies, please visit www.siberianhuskyclub.com.

Many owners find that the very best way to exercise a husky is to race it, it is what they have evolved to do and they thrive on it. So, on a very early morning in January, at the culmination of months of training, Stuart and his team of huskies set off from Lee for the short drive (approximately 11 hours) to the Highlands of Scotland to participate in the biggest sled-dog race in Europe, the Siberian Husky Club of Great Britain (SHCGB) Aviemore Rally 2006.

Over 220 mushers, aged from just 8 to 60, compete in various classes, running from 2 (or 1 for the youngest juniors) to a maximum of 8 dogs - the main difference being the level of exhaustion displayed by the musher at the finish line!. Siberian Huskies are the predominant sled-dog breed in the UK and therefore have their own classes, but others also take part, including Alaskan Malamutes (about 50% larger and fluffier than a husky), Samoyeds (smaller with a huge white coat), Greenland Dogs and Canadian Eskimo Dogs.

Teams reach speeds of over 20 miles an hour, and although many mushers have their sleds on standby, there surprisingly isn't usually any snow at ground level for the event, so mushers stand on a three-wheeled 'rig' that looks like a bike without a seat.

The race is a timed event with mushers going off at one or two minute intervals. A random draw determines start times on the first day, and then the fastest team is first out on the second day. With over 1200 dogs in attendance, the excited haunting howls and piercing wailings by the dogs on the start line truly show the hundreds of spectators that this is what the dogs LOVE to do, they cannot wait for...5...4...3...2...1...GO! Over 4 miles of winding forest trails, exciting smells and hard work are ahead of them as the snubber unleashes the rig and the musher shouts "Hike on!"

Everyone is focussed on the well-being of their dogs above everything else. The whole course is marshalled by volunteers who check that all teams are progressing safely. Sometimes the trails are rough and the dogs wear boots to protect their paws, and if the temperature even threatens double figures (yes, even in Aviemore) then the race is shortened or abandoned. Line tangles are quite common, and the biggest cheer at the prize-giving ceremony is always reserved for the Good Egg Award, usually won by someone who throws away their own race to help a competitor out.

Stuart came a respectable 36th out of 49 in the 2 dog class, which was particularly good seeing as his lead dog is preferring the sofa to her harness nowadays! With the new addition to the family, a lovely 10 month old (too young to race) Husky Welfare bitch looking like a veritable Ferrari in training, there may be a change to the team for next year!





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WHERE TO STAY IN LEE & LINCOMBE



BED & BREAKFAST

Mrs Ginny Potts - The Orchard _____ (01271) 867212
Carolyn Weekes & Eric Couling - Rose Cottage _____ (01271) 863257
Mr & Mrs Cowell - Lower Campscott Farm _____ (01271) 863479
Julia Waghorn - Grey Cottage _____ (01271) 864360

SELF CATERING (MAX. PER UNIT)



Mr & Mrs Stuart - Lincombe House (2,6,5) ____ (01271) 864834
Chapel Cottage on Beach Lane (9) _____ (01271) 864257
Mr Y. Maurel - Woodstock (6,6) _____ (01271) 879477
Mr & Mrs Cowell - Lower Campscott Farm (8,6,6,4,4,4) ____ (01271) 863479
Mr & Mrs Rogers - The Blue Mushroom (2,3) _____ (01271) 862947
Penny Measures & David Perry - Wrinklewood (4) _____ (01271) 866535
Mr & Mrs Duffield - Crowness Cottage (4) _____ (01268) 742162
Brookdale Villa (11) _____ (01923) 266989

VILLAGE SERVICES

The Grampus Inn & Village Shop - (01271) 862906 - *please see article inside*

The Old Schoolroom Gift & Craft Shop - *please see advert inside*

Catering Services—Julia Waghorn, Grey Cottage - *please see advert inside*



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*The opinions expressed by authors of the articles in the Lee & Link'em News are not specifically endorsed
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SUMMER 2006 ISSUE DEADLINE - 01 JUNE 2006

Preferred formats for articles: typed in any PC text program and emailed to Gina-Luisa or delivered on a CD.
Please avoid using floppy disks or handwriting if possible, thank you.