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For details of the above, and a lot more, contact the secretary, Helena Trump on 01984 624409

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## DIARY DATES

### February

Friday 3rd: Auction of Promises, Brompton Ralph Village Hall, 7.30pm

Tuesday 7th: Garden Club Talk "Indoor Plants" by David Lucas of Chelston Nurseries, Community Centre, 7.30pm

Friday 10th: Duo Del Fuego, violin and classical guitar performing music from Italian and Spanish masters, Milverton Church, 8.00pm

Monday 13th: Historical Society talk: Convict Transportation by David Hawkins, Community Centre, 7.30pm

Tuesday 14th: Wivey Folk Dance Club, Community Centre, 8.00pm. Sue Solomon 01984 623495

Friday 17th: Civic Society - please note that the visit to Grampian Foods on Friday 17th February is postponed for the foreseeable future. The limit on numbers to the plant makes a visit unviable. More information from 01984 624564

Saturday 18th: Wiveliscombe Community Market, Community Centre, AM

Sunday 19th: Cinema Obscura, Kingsmead, 7.00pm. See article

Friday 24th: Jim Laker Fund Auction of Promises, The Bear, 7.30pm

Tuesday 28th: Wivey Folk Dance Club, Community Centre, 8.00pm. Sue Solomon 01984 623495

### March

Tuesday 7th: Garden Club Talk: "Butterflies in Somerset" by Keith Gould, Community Centre, 7.30pm

Friday 10th: Aurora Ensemble wind quintet (flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon) playing works by Vivaldi, Barber, Nielsen and Zemlinsky, Milverton Church, 8.00pm

Monday 13th: Historical Society Talk: Local Iron Ore by Mike Jones, Community Centre, 7.30pm

Tuesday 14th: Wivey Folk Dance Club, Community Centre, 8.00pm. Sue Solomon 01984 623495

Saturday 18th: Wiveliscombe Community Market, Community Centre, AM

Sunday 19th: Cinema Obscura, Kingsmead, 7.00pm. See article

Tuesday 28th: Wivey Folk Dance Club, Community Centre, 8.00pm. Sue Solomon 01984 623495

Saturday 25th: St. Andrew's Big Breakfast, Community Centre, 8.30am. Tickets £4

### April

Saturday 1st: The Hamsters at Kingsmead. Details 01984 623031

Thursday 6th: Civic Society talk: "The Revolution in Planning" - a talk by Don Alder, former Chief Planning Officer of Taunton Deane Borough Council, Community Centre, 7.30pm

If you are organising an event please email messenger@wiveliscombe.co. See also "What's On" www.wiveliscombe.com

## Support needed

THE Scallywags toddler group in Wiveliscombe has been established for over 6 years.

It was set up by a group of local parents to provide a place where mums-to-be, new mums and small children with their parent/carers could meet, for mutual support and play, in a safe informal environment. We cater for families up to school age.

We have lots of toys for the children and usually provide a creative activity each session. A drink and snack are provided during the session for both children and the grown ups!

We are based in the Scout Hut on Old Brewery Road, every Friday morning except during the main school holidays.

We are very reliant on parents to operate and are at present looking to find additional help to ensure the continuation of the group. If you would like to come along and would like further information, please email scallywags@fsmail.net or just drop in!

Kate Anstead

# News from the fire station

WIVELISCOMBE'S fire station has had another very busy year with many interesting incidents from small kitchen fires to some tragic road accidents.

The local retained personnel have been able to crew both the fire engine and the Land Rover on every incident and the station remained available for every minute of 2005, a statement not every station in the county is able to make.

This does cause a great deal of inconvenience, not just to the fire-fighters, but to the very patient employers and partners, and without their tolerance we would not be able to give the best service to our community.

Somerset Fire and Rescue Service, as we are now known, are getting busier due to the recent modernisation of the service and Wiveliscombe, along with Wellington, are the stations responsible for crewing the specialist appliances based at Chelston.

These vehicles will be noticed when driven through the town as they are considerably bigger than the normal sized fire appliance and carry a great deal of equipment.

Wiveliscombe's own appliances are both due to be replaced this summer with newer and better vehicles to assist the fire-fighters to do the task required more effectively.

The fire engine will be replaced by another, newer Volvo with more adaptable equipment for road traffic incidents and increased stowage capability.

The Land Rover, which is used as a command unit in the west area of Somerset and some parts of Devon, will be changed for a brand new transit-sized vehicle to give a

better working environment with all the up to date electronic communication facilities.

### Pro-active as well as Re-active

The crew from the fire station pride themselves on being ready and able to attend an incident at anytime of the day and at a second's notice.

This commitment will always be available, but prevention is considerably better than the cure. The local fire-fighters are trained to give home fire safety advice and where the need arises are able to supply and fit smoke detectors.

If you are over 60, on low income, a single parent or disabled, you are eligible for a FREE visit that will be carried out by Wiveliscombe's fire station personnel.

During the visit we will help you identify potential causes of fire and give general fire safety information on making your escape plan, if required will we supply and fit a smoke detector.

To request a free visit call 0845 3459188 and we will make an appointment with you.

Wiveliscombe Fire Station has been very successful in encouraging as many as possible to take up the offer and even if we haven't got to everyone who has asked, rest assured we will be contacting you shortly.

If you are a member of a community group such as the Women's Institute we would value the opportunity to come and talk to your group about fire safety. If you are interested please write to the Station Commander requesting a talk, there will be no charge for the input and the information will be interesting and it may even save your life!

REMEMBER: FIRE KILLS. MAKE YOUR ESCAPE PLAN NOW!

NP



Another sighting of the world-famous Wivey T-shirt

## Bevin Boys tell their story

AT the Wiveliscombe Civic Society Supper Talk on 3rd December - which this year was a joint event with the Wiveliscombe Historical Society - we were delighted to welcome two gentlemen who served this country during the Second World War in a gritty and unsung area of work - Britain's coal mines.

Warwick Taylor and Ian Ferguson were both called up to serve in late 1943, but not for them the uniforms of the armed services - they were both sent to the British coal mines as Bevin Boys.

During 1943, Britain's coal miners and reserves had run down to a dangerously low level. To combat this, Ernest Bevin, Minister of Labour, instigated a conscript scheme to send men into the mines to replace those who had left for the front . . . these men were quickly named Bevin Boys.

There was no choice about this form of service, no choice about where they were to go and there was no doubt about the hard work which they were going to endure. But their contribution to the 2nd World war was to fuel the war effort from the coal face.

Warwick was sent to a barrack block style camp in the Welsh valleys where, along with other young men, he learned the basics of coal mining and lived a life of military discipline but without the ultimate aim of fighting in



Warwick Taylor (left) and Ian Ferguson - the two Bevin Boy guests at the Civic Society Supper Talk

some way for his country.

Ian, on the other hand, was billeted with a very poor mining family in Wigan, where he was given the most meagre of rations (jam sandwiches were his usual fare) and did not even "enjoy" a barrack block life.

The story of the Bevin Boys has been long under-represented in our remembrance celebrations and until recently, it was an aspect of World War Two that often was absent from museum exhibitions representing the conflict.

So it's perhaps unsurprising that few of us realise that Bevin Boys represented 10 per cent of male conscripts aged between 18 and 25 called up in the last two years of World

War Two.

For Warwick Taylor, historian and Vice President of the Bevin Boys Association, the lottery of being picked for mining work during World War Two was a bitter pill to swallow; not least because of the lack of public recognition and understanding about the vital role the Bevin Boys played in contributing to the war effort.

"I call it having served in the secret underground movement - because nobody knew about us," he says. Warwick and a few like-minded colleagues set up the Bevin Boys Association in 1989, to campaign for greater recognition. Bevin Boys were at last invited to march past the Cenotaph during remembrance ceremonies during 1998.

In 1948 the last of the Bevin Boys were demobbed into 'Civvy Street' - no medals, no associations, and no real sense of camaraderie. "We've not had the recognition we deserved really," says Warwick, "because I think people forget that we were conscripted to go down the mines but gradually that's changing and there has been some form of recognition."

A heartfelt recognition to these two gentlemen was awarded them at our Supper Talk - their stories were remarkable and told with a self-deprecation that was humbling. We thank them and were very pleased to mark the end of VE/VJ60 commemorations with such a unique meeting.

PH