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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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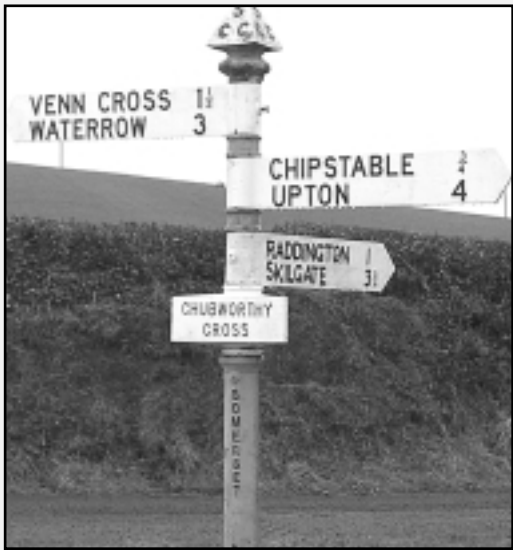


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77859

Fingerposts at Chipstable



THE Chipstable Parish Council has arranged for the crossways in the parish to be identified by attaching triangular nameplates to the relevant fingerposts.

The project is funded by the Somerset County Community Budget which is administered in our area by our County Councillor, Caroline Smeaton.

At present, only two have been installed, at Chipstable Cross and Chubworthy Cross, but more will follow as funds become available.

Hospice needs wool

ONE of our regular hospice outpatients is busy knitting for the children affected by the earthquake in Pakistan and Kashmir and she is running out of wool.

Has anyone got any wool that they don't want? She will take any amount and any colour and any type of wool.

If you can help please contact me, Bridget Turnbull at St Margaret's Somerset Hospice, and I will pass it on to her.

She is very immobile, so spends a lot of time watching television, but says that if she just watches TV she goes to sleep, so she knits to keep herself awake.

She is spending a fair proportion of her pension on wool and can't afford to spend any more, but has time to knit more if she had the wool.

Some people make you feel very humble - or they do me!

Talking Tomorrow's Taunton Deane

TALKING Tomorrow's Taunton Deane is a conversation about the "Quality of Life" in Taunton Deane.

The Borough Council and the Local Strategic Partnership want to hear your views about community safety, health and housing, transport, the local economy and the environment.

Your responses will inform the review of the Community Strategy and the production of the Local Development Framework (which replaces the local plan).

There will be a display at Wiveliscombe House from

Open Garden at Burges Meadow, Maundown

ON Bank Holiday Monday, 29th May, from 2 - 5.30pm, there will be an open garden event in aid of SSAFA Forces Help and St Andrew's Church, Wiveliscombe.

Attractions include: Beggar's Roost Plant Stall, Cream Teas, Croquet and ample parking. £2.50 per person, school age children free. Very limited wheelchair access. No dogs, thank you.

May 2nd to May 6th, comprising an exhibition and leaflets. Staff from the Borough Council will be present on the 6th May (10.00 am to 12.30) to explain the consultation and answer your questions.

For more details please visit www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/talking-tomorrows, or telephone 01823 356383.

Wivey Guides need you!

AFTER many happy years, Wiveliscombe Guide Leaders have decided to "retire" in July.

The thriving unit of girls aged 10 to 14 will not be able to continue unless new leaders are found. No experience is needed as training is available with a mentor to support you.

As well as providing fun for the Guides, it is rewarding, you will make new friends and learn new skills.

If you think you have the enthusiasm to lead the Guides, phone Jenny 01984 624139, Pauline 01984 624026 or Angela 01984 623302 for more information.

Going 'Down under' and going underground

AT the February meeting of Wiveliscombe Historical Society, David Hawkings told the story of a member of his family who suffered the fate of many petty criminals in the 18th and early 19th centuries of "transportation beyond the seas".

John Hawkings came from Oake, but was a farm labourer at Wiveliscombe. One Christmas around 1800 he bolstered his family's meagre food supply by taking a pheasant.

He was reported, it is thought by someone who bore him a grudge. He was arrested, charged and committed to prison to await trial. The initial court proceedings and the trial which followed three months later were reported in the local newspapers.

David Hawkings explained that once a person is in prison he becomes a charge on the state, and detailed records are kept of the costs of keeping him there, down to clothes issued and medical treatment.

By patiently sifting through many piles of official records in several government offices (Home Office, Treasury, Admiralty, Colonial Office) he was able to trace his relative's progress after his trial.

This led to a prison hulk in Portsmouth harbour, the long voyage to the colony of New South Wales, and his time there until his release at the end of his sentence.

Years later there was a report of his death in an Australian newspaper.

We may find it difficult to imagine now, but the quiet countryside along the top of the Brendon Hills was once a hive of industrial activity.

Mike Jones came to the society's March meeting to talk about the mining of iron ore there in the 19th century and the Mineral Railway that was built to carry the ore

down to the coast.

He illustrated his talk with slides showing maps, documents, and a fine collection of old photographs.

The Romans had an eye for mineral extraction wherever they went, and they left behind evidence of opencast workings there.

After them, no-one took any interest until the coming of railways created a strong demand for steel. At the Great Exhibition of 1851 a display of iron ores contained a sample from the Brendon Hills which aroused interest.

Preparations were made to sink shafts to reach veins of ore at lower levels, and also to provide a means of transport to take the ore down to Watchet from it could be shipped across to South Wales for processing.

So the Mineral Railway came to be built with an inclined plane at the steepest part, where a fully-laden truck going down would haul a returning empty to the top, together with any needed supplies.

Mining of ore started in the early 1860s and continued for little more than twenty years, when ore could be imported from Spain at less cost.

No attempt was made to bring in skilled miners. At first, local men were employed, who knew nothing of mining techniques.

Later on there was an influx of Comish miners, unemployed because of a slump in the price of tin. They brought much-needed expertise.

A village complete with church and shop stood near the head of the incline, housing up to around 250 people.

No-one made a fortune from the enterprise. Indeed, most of the hopeful investors lost heavily.

JRB

A special note for your diaries



THIS year Somerset Art Weeks run from Saturday 9th September until Sunday 24th September.

Following the success of the 2004 two weeks of open studios and exhibitions, SAW Ltd. are well set for Art Weeks 2006. Artists, designers and makers all over Somerset will once again open their homes and studios and the numbers involved are at an all-time record.

Wiveliscombe and the surrounding area has more than its share of talent, including some exciting new venues.

In Brompton Ralph, Peter Massa will be opening his studio to the public for the first time. Peter's outstanding work is not to be missed.

Originally from London, Peter visited this part of Somerset in his youth and was immediately struck by the rolling landscape and dramatic coast.

His thoughts would often turn to the green hills and sea cliffs when stuck in grim city traffic.

Eventually, in 1990 Peter and his family took the challenge to uproot from London and move to the Wivey area. Since then, in his drawing, print-making and painting, Peter has increasingly reflected his fascination with the way local geology, weather and tides shape the landscape.

Having graduated from the University of Plymouth in 2005 with a degree in Fine Art, Peter will be showing a variety of subtly coloured abstract painting from small-scale acrylics on paper to larger oils on canvas.

Opening times for Peter's studio will be published in the SAW catalogue and to arrange a viewing of the work at any other time please call 01984 623743 or email peter_messa@yahoo.co.uk