

The Silver Street Centre's opening celebrations

THE Silver Street Centre will be opened on Saturday 9 September with a fun afternoon for all!

You are invited to come along and see the new facilities and watch Daniel Magness, the UK's football freestyle champion, perform the official opening at 2pm and then perform some of his amazing 'keepy uppy' tricks.

Daniel performs at football clubs countrywide and recently trained the professional footballers featured in the Pringles TV advert.

During the afternoon our wonderful Wiveliscombe Town Band will entertain and there will be a bouncy castle for children, cream teas, fete and game stalls, a plant stall (run by Blackmore's Nursery, Preston Bowyer), competitions and fascinating exhibitions.

The Silver Street Centre is also hosting "Take Three Artists", featuring three local artists for the whole of the Art Weeks fortnight from 9 September to 24 September inclusive - come and see Clare Rice's wonderful local scenes, Patricia Perrin's intricate textile art and Raamy Nadim's covetable pots and bowls.

As if this wasn't enough, the listed Congregational Chapel is also open all weekend under the Heritage Open Days scheme - if you've never been inside the chapel and seen the lovely interior, now is your opportunity!

For all you folk dance fans there is a Barn Dance with "Tease the Cat" in the new hall on the Saturday evening - tickets £5 (£15 family) including a light supper, available from the Post Office and Community Office.

The Centre will be dedicated at a special service in the Congregational Chapel at 11am on Sunday 10 September with Ian Rees as the guest speaker, whom many readers will remember as pastor until a few years ago.

Remember that The Silver Street Centre complex of meeting rooms and halls is available to hire - for further information see www.silver-street-centre.org.uk or Tel: 01984 623107.

For further information about the Congregational Chapel and its many activities, see www.wiveliscombe-congregational.org.uk or Tel: 01984 623487.

Living with Solar Panels No.1

DURING last winter we realised that not only was our roof insulation inadequate but we might also benefit from cavity wall insulation in our bungalow.

The first of these I could do myself, the second happened when our neighbour showed us the Taunton Deane/British Gas scheme of cavity insulation. Under this an average house can be insulated for £200 but you get a reduction of £100 on the next year's community charge.

This was such a bargain that it whetted our enthusiasm, along with an awareness of the economic and eco benefits such action could promote.

At the "Homes for Good" exhibition at SCAT in February our eyes were opened to further possibilities. We saw the Falcon Housing Association, who are building homes to rent with solar heating; solar heating installers putting in the same systems, etc. so we asked a local Exmoor firm to advise us on our bungalow's suitability and to give us a quote for a solar heating installation.

On Saturday March 25th Nich Backhouse and David Barrat of Eco Exmoor called to carry out a site survey. Following their one hour visit we agreed to their quotation of £3,614 (less the £400 grant from the Energy Saving Trust under the DTI Low Carbon Building Programme).

The Grant is available if you have adequate roof insulation, cavity wall insulation (where possible), double glazing and use low energy bulbs.

On May 11th an Apricus Solar Collector was installed on a west facing roof with a small pump, sensors and connection to the centre of our existing hot water tank. From that date we have been able to monitor the temperatures in the top and bottom of the tank and on the roof where the 22 evacuated tubes absorb solar energy and convert it to heat in the condenser from where circulating water carries it down to the tank.

Since May 11th we have not used any gas to heat water. In the cold damp days of the wettest May for 23 years our solar panel gave us ample hot water for our needs. Temperatures in the top of the tank in the morning (what comes out of the taps) were generally in the 40Cs or higher 30Cs, reaching the upper 40Cs or even lower 60Cs later in the day.

With the warm sunny weather from May 31st onwards the temperature in the collectors on the roof was often in the upper 70Cs or 80Cs with tank temperatures starting the day in the 45-50C range and rising constantly into the 60Cs. And so it continued throughout June and into July.

As I write at 10.00a.m. on a grey, wet, early July morning the temperatures are 45C on the roof, 40C in the bottom of the tank and 47C in the top of the tank and rising.

Is it worth the investment? I hope so. It is good for the conscience and gas prices are not dropping.

How will it perform in the autumn when the days get shorter and there is less daylight? I will write about that experience in a later Messenger.

B.C.

I'm Sure You'll Have Noticed . . .

By our correspondent Jas

I'M sure you'll have noticed that this Jas column has been turning up in the Messenger for quite some time now. In fact this thought has dwelt on mind lately and the approaching deadline turns up faster as each two-month gap rushes along.

What is the prime subject for the next one, I ask? Well, I sit at the keyboard and start tapping out whatever comes into mind and, somehow, after much deletion and rewording, around 500 words, give or take, result.

In truth it's not really "whatever comes into mind" because there's always been at least one little niggle on which I want to expand in the hope that something will happen to rectify whatever it is I'm having a go at.

So, given that, assembling the words is easy enough and what follows you can read the about in the last dozen or so words

of the first paragraph.

I've heard it said that some Messenger readers archive their copies and I do admire that. We all throw out the daily detritus if only because we know we'll never again return to it even though there may be a lurking suspicion that one day certain things will be useful.

Even just when a certain event in the town took place a few years ago and it was in the Messenger but . . .

Anyway, I have carefully clipped and filed the Jas columns down the years and that statement may well have you saying that I'm anxious to preserve my own words and phooey to the rest. Not really!

These words emanate from a room which is heavily stacked with much other "important" material which is not allowed elsewhere in the house. Somehow, priorities have to be established

and followed.

What amazes is that there have been just about 40 Jas rambles since the first in 1999 and dipping into them at random leaves me with a few misgivings about my wordings and astonishment that somehow topics have surfaced.

Some may appear to have had an effect but, then, who knows, that may have been because whatever needed rectifying was already organised.

Generally, though, giving such topics an airing seems to have been welcomed if only because there has been little comeback from readers disagreeing with anything trotted out. Or that perhaps some of the things weren't too important anyway so why's Jas doing all that moaning!

Well, the time has come for me to stop that moaning. Other contributors have

added their weight and will, I'm sure, continue to do so. In any case, it may well happen that I'll find the need to put my oar in on something so keep an eye over your shoulder just in case.

senger editorial team and all our readers, I would like to thank Jas for keeping us all on our toes with his perceptive, amusing, and often challenging column.

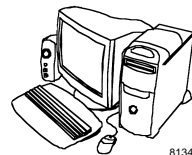
As well as sharing his thoughts and wit with us Jas always met his deadlines. Thanks, Jas. Hilary

Jas
● On behalf of the Mes-

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Garden Gaze

THIS year's Garden Gaze organised by Wiveliscombe Garden Club took place on Sunday 2nd July.

The weather had been hot and sunny for the whole week but Sunday must have been the hottest day of the year!

There were eight gardens open, five in Richard Beadon Close and three in Langley Marsh, and we are most grateful to those who were prepared to open their gardens for our enjoyment.

The Richard Beadon Close gardens were very interesting - all but one had a pond or water feature and one even had a fountain and they all had very different views over the town or over the Quantocks.

There was a wonderful variety of flowers, shrubs and vegetables and everywhere a friendly welcome. Delicious teas and a huge selection of tempting cakes were served in Mr and Mrs Hill's garden in aid of the Wiveliscombe Floral Art Group.

Nutkins is a mature garden full, and I mean full, of fruit flowers, vegetables and also pots and hanging baskets. Reeth is a newly laid out garden



Shirley Collingridge, Joan Trott and Veronice Worthington with a customer

The Gardens in Langley Marsh were beautiful and varied - Pear Tree Cottage has a real cottage garden with flowers, fruit, vegetables and young trees. St Luke's church is next door and it also has a pretty garden.

Nutkins is a mature garden full, and I mean full, of fruit flowers, vegetables and also pots and hanging baskets. Reeth is a newly laid out garden

and already has raised vegetable beds and herbaceous borders that are filling out well.

There was a steady stream of local visitors but the very hot weather probably deterred people from further afield from coming.

However we all had a nice time and £106 was raised to support 'Wivey Link', which is such a useful asset to our town.



THIRTY Wiveliscombe Garden Club members visited Rosemoor, the RHS garden in North Devon, where they were treated to a wonderful tour of the garden by one of the garden's long-standing volunteers.

After lunch, members were able to wander around the garden enjoying the absolutely immaculate presentation of every area.

The roses were, of course, beautiful but the hit of the day was the fruit and vegetable garden, where the profusion and health of everything was quite staggering. Mixing fruits, vegetables, and flowers, this was the ideal productive and attractive plot!

This was voted a most fitting to end this season's Garden Club events. See you all in the autumn!