



DELAMERE
& OAKMERE

ISSUE 42 | SPRING 2018

NEWS

IN THIS ISSUE

**OAKMERE HALL
DEVELOPMENTS ON THE COURTHOUSE SITE
MEMORIES OF THE FALLEN**

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Forthcoming Events

ST PETER'S CHURCH, DELAMERE

SPECIAL SERVICES

Thursday 29th March

7pm - Maundy Thursday - Holy Communion

Friday 30th March

10.30am - Good Friday - Morning Worship

Sunday 1st April

8am - Easter Day - Holy Communion

10.30am - Family Communion

REGULAR SERVICES

Every Sunday

8am - Holy Communion

Every 1st & 3rd Sunday

10:30am - Holy Communion

Every 2nd Sunday

10:30am - Family Service

Every 4th & 5th Sunday

10:30am - Morning Worship

Every 1st Tuesday

10:30am - Holy Communion

THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Date	Speaker	Title	Competition
Apr 10th	David Cummings	An Illustrated Talk	-
May 8th	Gladys Archer	Resolutions, Tasting Evening and short talk on the dementia resolution	
June 12th	Jill Addlington	How to paint a picture...	Your own landscape photo
July 10th	Ed Abrams	The Civil War in Chester	

President: Lorraine Roberts. Meetings are held at 7.30pm, every second Tuesday in the month except for August, at Delamere Community Centre. <http://delamereandoakmere.co.uk/delamere-womens-institute/>, <https://twitter.com/delamerewi>, <https://www.facebook.com/DelamereWI>

OAKMERE METHODIST CHURCH

In the main church at 10.45am every Sunday morning for a service led by a Methodist Local Preacher or Minister. One service a month includes the sacrament of Holy Communion, led by a Minister (Presbyter). Contacts: Anne or Eric Wright (01829 732950) or Rev Andrew Enison (01928 733180).

DELAMERE AND DISTRICT GOLDEN CLUB

April 18th - 1:30pm

Speaker from Age UK: Money Matters and other topics.

May 2nd - 1:30pm

AGM followed by high tea and singer Sheila Callaghan contestant in "Britain's got Talent."

May 16th - 1:30pm

Speaker: Clare Mather-Dodd B.Sc.D.C. Doctor of Chiropractic (Please bring your own aches and pains!)

May 30th

Summer Outing (trip on a steam train on the Llangollen Railway)

June 13th - 1:30pm

Card Bingo

June 27th - 12:30pm

Summer Lunch

July 11th - 1:30pm

Speaker John Baddley: "Music from the 50s and 60s."

July 25th - 1:30pm

Strawberry and Raspberry Tea.

September 5th - 1:30pm

Garden Party at The Paddock, Stoney Lane.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

We meet every fortnight on Wednesday afternoons, except August, at the Community Centre. No upper or lower age limit! For further information please contact Gloria or Robin Ackerley tel: 01829 752723.



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OPENING TIMES Monday- Friday: 9.00am-5.30pm Saturday: 10am-5.00pm



Follow us on Facebook for our latest offers!



Do you know anyone living in the area with communication problems? If so, make sure to check out Katherine MacVickers' piece in this issue about a local group that might be able to help. Check out the article anyway, as it invites us all to a sociable "Daffodil Tea" to help raise funds to keep the group going.

Elsewhere in this issue Don Wilson follows up his article about a local casualty of the First World War with one about the three war graves in St Peter's churchyard, and the stories behind them. There is something of a story in the

article about Oakmere Hall as well, or rather two stories, about the building itself and about its architect. Did you know that he was born within a few hundred yards of the grand mansion he designed?

The plans for new housing in and around the Magistrates' Court have changed a little since we last wrote about them so we've got an update on that, along with plenty more from our regular contributors. Our hearty thanks to all of them once again.

Clive George and Phil Neave

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ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

Delamere and Oakmere News is published three times a year with the support of the Parish Council. The next issue is due in July!

ADVERTISE WITH D&O NEWS!

Articles, ideas for articles, news of recent events or forthcoming ones, advertisements, photographs and any other contributions relevant to Delamere and/or Oakmere are all very welcome (inclusion subject to editorial discretion).

The newsletter is available to view on the Delamere and Oakmere Community website and you can also get a PDF file by email (contact us if you would like a copy).

CONTACTS

Editorial: do_newseditor@yahoo.co.uk

Advertising: info@neavecreative.co.uk

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All proceeds from advertisements go into the printing of the newsletter, so we really couldn't do this without you. Thank you!



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LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Friends

Thank you to everyone who shared in St Peter's Bi-Centenary Celebrations at the beginning of December last year. The Village Supper was a most enjoyable evening with splendid singing from Delamere Church of England Primary Academy School Choir, a delicious hot-pot supper followed by a fiendish quiz organised by Steve Lacey. I don't think I will ever live down the fact that I didn't know how many rows of pews there were at St Peter's although I redeemed myself by knowing that there is a sundial in the churchyard - minus the stylus and plate - which along with the church building is Grade II listed.

The high-light of the week-end was however, the service on 3rd December when we were delighted to welcome Bishop Peter, the Lord Lieutenant and Deputy Lord Lieutenant, former clergy, local clergy, members of the parish council, visitors from Oakmere Chapel, staff and pupils from school and many, many parishioners. The service was a splendid celebration of our church, giving thanks for the 200 years of witness and service here in Delamere and Oakmere and looking forward in hope to the future.

We had just a few days to draw breath and then it was Christmas, we were pleased to welcome so many from the parish to our services. We joyfully lit our church with candles and sang the well-loved carols with gusto and it was standing room only for Christingle when once again thanks to the generosity of Delamere Stores we were able to send all the collection from that service to the Children's Society. We

welcomed once more the birth of the Christ-child with services at midnight on Christmas Eve and on Christmas morning.

The final Sunday of our year of celebration was 31st December when at the end of the service we put the Time Capsule that is to be opened at the 250 year celebrations in 2067 (DV) away underneath the Altar.

Now we are into a new year with new challenges and opportunities. We are already well into Lent and looking forward to Easter, there are snow-drops and crocus blooming in the churchyard and soon we will be seeing the delicate primroses and the trumpeting daffodils heralds of spring and warmer days.

But 2017 as well as being a very special year in the life of St Peter's was also for many people a very dark time. There were the terror attacks in Manchester and London, Grenfell Tower and here in Delamere I was involved in 23 funeral services. Sometimes the world seems a very dark place but the message of Easter is that after the dark and terrible events of Good Friday there comes the glorious day of Jesus' Resurrection. Darkness and death have been defeated, there is new life and new hope. God has not forgotten about us or neglected us, he loves us unconditionally and he is with us whatever we have to face.

Brian joins me in sending you good wishes.

With all good wishes

Revd Elaine



1



2



3



4

1. Revd Elaine with the Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire, David Briggs, and the Bishop of Chester, the Rt Revd Dr Peter Forster.
2. Bishop Peter needs some help with cutting the cake.
3. Carols from Delamere school at the bi-centenary party.
4. Parishioners at the bi-centenary party

St. Peter's Notice Board

From the Registers Oct '17 - February '18

We welcomed by Baptism:

November - Harriet Zara Wallace, daughter of James & Zoe

We celebrated the Marriage of:

November - Ben Webborn and Emma Crabtree

We said farewell to:

November - Leslie Garrity Archer

December - Charles Edward Berry, Kevin O'Hanlon, Terry Jones,
Winston Sherman

January - Vera Ryall



Carols by candlelight, December 18th (Gloria Ackerley)

Forthcoming Events

Lent & Easter

Compline (Night Prayer) will be said each Thursday evening at 7pm. The bell will be rung before the service as a reminder that the service is taking place and that prayers are being offered for the local community.

Details of the Easter Services are in this newsletter and on the web-site.

For those who like to plan ahead! Easter Day in 2019 is 21st April. (DV)

Saturday 12th May – Plant Sale and Coffee Morning

At Delamere Community Centre from 10am to 12 noon.

Saturday 7th July – St Peter's Summer Fair

At Delamere Community Centre from 2pm to 4pm

St Peter's , Delamere Easter Services



Thursday 29th March - Maundy Thursday

7pm – Holy Communion and stripping the Sanctuary

Friday 30th March - Good Friday

10.30am – Morning Worship followed by coffee and Hot X Buns at The Rectory with the opportunity to make an Easter Garden

Sunday 1st April - Easter Sunday

8am – Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

10.30am – Family Communion – with Easter Egg Hunt from 10am.

Details of all our services are on the web-site

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/delamere-st-peter>

Ice And Snow

The cold snap in December caused a couple of Community Centre users to slip on the ice. As a result, we have purchased a grit box, gritting salt, shovel and spreader for Centre users to use on the footpath and approach to the Centre should we get a repeat of this weather this year or in the future.

Coffee Morning

Coffee mornings are held on the last Friday morning of each month at the Centre. However, the March Coffee Morning will be on the 23rd as the 30th is Good Friday. It's back to usual in April on the 27th – future dates posted at the Community Centre.

Bookings

The Centre has been receiving more ad hoc bookings this year but is still available most Saturdays and Mondays and at other times during the week. If you would like to use either the Main Hall or the Meeting Room then please call the Booking Secretary, Lorraine Roberts, on 01606 889188.

Capital Grant

As you may have read in the last Newsletter, the Community Association is due to receive a grant of £50,000 as part of the Marley Tiles site development. The Association has refurbished the Community Centre over the past 5 years, with the windows, kitchen, toilets, floor, doors and boiler being replaced, as well as a new roof and door on the Pump House. The Management Committee have a few ideas about how this new grant could be spent but would welcome suggestions from both Association members and local residents.

If you have any ideas then please write to the Chairman or Treasurer and, better still, share them with us at the Annual General Meeting on 2nd July.

Paul Dean, Chairman

pauldean02@yahoo.com

Steve Lacey, Treasurer

steve@slamonline.co.uk

QUIZ ANSWERS...

Answers to quiz

1. Malta, 2. Portugal, 3. Austria (Vienna), Slovakia (Bratislava), Hungary (Budapest) and Serbia (Belgrade), 4. Albania (obviously!) and Kosovo, 5. Norway, 6. Montenegro, 7. Portugal, 8. Iceland, 9. Switzerland (respectively in Zurich, Lausanne and Nyon), 10. Spain

Answers to crossword

Across: 1. ogive, 4. aloft, 6. cameo, 7. earth, 8. locum, 10. undergo, 11. lentil, 13. ascent, 16. greed, 18. elks, 20. lost, 21. drains, 22. polish.
Down: 1. outer, 2. enchanting, 3. Pam, 4. apologised, 5. Thame, 9. key, 11. legend, 12. nick, 14. echo, 15. thatch, 17. ego, 19. ski, 20. LOL

As we wait for spring to arrive we have some new daffodils popping up in different places around Delamere and Oakmere, these being English daffs found by our local garden expert Tony Overland, and planted by members of the Parish Council.

The Court House is slowly progressing and the Marley site is getting ready for the first stage. It will be interesting to see these developments going forward.

I would like to welcome Gary Smith as our new Councillor, filling the vacancy left by Robin Ackerley. He brings a wealth of experience to meetings, and I would like to thank Robin for all the work he has done for the Council over the last

few years .

It was great to see the repairs to Sandiway traffic lights. With the new tarmac it would be nice to see all the pot holes repaired all around the county.

Many thanks to all the Councillors for their support, to our Clerk Joanne for keeping us informed, and Councillor John Leather for updating us on Cheshire West events . Finally thanks to Clive and his team for the excellent magazine they produce.

David Rutter

Chair, Delamere and Oakmere Parish Council



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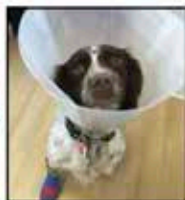
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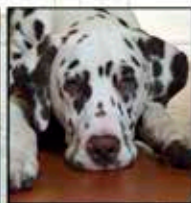


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A cycle ride along the Camino de Santiago de Compostela was the subject of our first talk of 2018. No relaxing beach holiday for Ellen Piercy and her husband but an energetic and exhausting journey along this ancient pilgrims' way. Not only did Ellen share their experiences, photos and video of the trip, but she also made Tarta de Santiago for us to sample with our cup of tea. Delicious!

In February we had our games meeting. Great fun was had by all as we ran our pancake races. We all managed to toss our pancakes without dropping them onto the floor! Our esteemed Editor, Clive George, put on his chef's hat and very kindly came along to make pancakes for us all – thank you, Clive, for giving up your evening. We all enjoyed them very much. You will notice that food does feature quite a lot in our WI life!

In March our speaker will be from the Blood Bikes charity and in April Mr. David Cummings will be giving an illustrated talk on the wildlife and scenery of the Pembrokeshire coast. He always has stunning pictures to show us.

We are looking forward to the second meeting of our book group which will be on 28th February. This month's book is 'The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society', a strange title for a really good read.

We have other interesting speakers booked for our meetings so do look out for our notices. Don't forget you can find us on Facebook, on the Delamere and Oakmere village web site and in the Delamere Community Centre on the second Tuesday of the month. We'll be waiting to welcome you.

IN OTHER NEWS...

Mains gas - correction

In the article on the Marley development in the last issue we reported that the mains gas supply would come down Station Road from the Four Oaks development, and that other residents in the vicinity might be able to apply for a gas connection. **WRONG!** We have since been told that the Four Oaks connection doesn't have enough capacity. The gas will instead be brought in from Hatchmere.

Speed Watch

Cheshire Constabulary are looking for volunteers to take part in a Speed Watch campaign, which aims to deter motorists from speeding in the area through the use of speed indicator devices. Members of Delamere's Parish Plan group took part in a similar campaign a few years ago, which is thought to have had a significant (though temporary) effect. Anyone who would like to take part in a new campaign should contact the Parish Council Clerk, Joanne Monks, 01928 732062 or at delamereandoakmereclerk@yahoo.co.uk.

OAKMERE HALL



Oakmere Hall seen from the A556

Lurking behind the trees at the A556/A49 crossroads is one of the most striking buildings in the parish - the Grade II listed Oakmere Hall. Built in 1867, its imposing style has been variously described as High Victorian, French Gothic, French Baronial, or simply château-esque.

Both the building and its architect, John Douglas, have stories to tell. Douglas was born just round the corner in Park Cottage, Sandiway, where he learned his trade from an early age by working

in his father's building yard and workshop, which were attached to the family house. In his mid to late teens he was articled to a firm of architects in Lancaster, and went on to start his own practice in Chester.

One of Douglas's first commissions was to design a garden ornament for the Honourable Mrs Cholmondeley, sister-in-law of Hugh Cholmondeley, the 2nd Baron Delamere. The Baron was sufficiently impressed to give him his first major commission, to design a new



The château-like south-western facade



John Douglas in late middle age
(Wikimedia Commons)

wing for Vale Royal Abbey. After that his career took off, with a flow of commissions from other wealthy patrons including the Earl of Sefton, the Earl of Ellesmere, two successive Dukes of Westminster and the Prime Minister, William Gladstone. In all he designed over 500 buildings, most of them in Cheshire and North Wales, including Sandiway church, the village school in Bunbury, many of the black and white timbered buildings in Chester, and the Eastgate Clock on Chester's city wall. This is said to be the second most photographed clock in England after Big Ben.

Oakmere Hall was Douglas's first commission for a large country house, built for the owners of a chemicals and shipping company in Runcorn, John and Thomas Johnson. Unfortunately for them, the Johnsons got involved on the wrong side of the American Civil War.



The Eastgate Clock
(Mike Peel, www.mikepeel.net)

When Union forces blockaded the Confederate port of Charleston they lost all their ships and went bankrupt before they could move into their new house. Its next owner, John Higson of Higson's Brewery in Liverpool, never lived there either. He became ill and went to Australia, leaving the hall to John Hayes Higson. He passed it on to Captain William Higson, who resigned his commission in the 4th Hussars and moved in, living there from 1893 until the mid 1920s. He was a keen sportsman, playing polo, riding in steeplechases, and eventually becoming Master of Foxhounds for the Cheshire Hunt. The house was equipped with a 35 ft billiard room, so we can assume he applied his sporting talents to that too.

The last private owner of the hall was Charles James Lamb, another shipping merchant in Manchester, who died in 1942. The hall and its grounds were then bought by the Miners' Welfare Commission, for use as a rehabilitation



*Captain William Higson, JP, MFH
(from Baily's Magazine Jan 1914)*

centre for injured miners. After the centre was taken over by the NHS in 1951 its facilities were made available to all adults and children. When it was threatened with closure in 1976 the local MP, Alastair Goodlad, spoke on its behalf in the House of Commons, saying that there was no other centre in the area with such a complete range of provisions for physiotherapy, gymnastics, hydro-therapy, swimming, and indoor and outdoor games. A reprieve was granted, but the centre eventually closed in August 1987.

In December 1993 Vale Royal Borough Council granted permission for the hall to be converted to its present use as a set of luxury apartments, on condition that key features of its internal and external architecture be retained. The grand billiard room with its vaulted ceiling is now an open plan living space in one of the apartments, while the entrance hall is accessible to all the residents and retains many of its original features. These include a pillared arcade and an open well staircase up to a gallery on the first floor.



The entrance hall (Savills estate agents)

The exterior differs little from Douglas's original design, including the grandiose front entrance through a "porte-cochère", a coach gate through which a limousine (or horse and carriage) could in theory pass, sheltering its alighting occupants from the rain or the snow.



Preloved parent, children and baby goods

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**Sunday
20th May
1pm-2.30pm**

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"That most ancient Briton of English Beasts"

This is how Edward Thomas, the war poet, described the badger in his 1914 poem "The Combe".

I think this is a very fitting description for one of the most iconic animals of the English countryside. It came to us after the last ice age across the land bridge on what we know as Dogger Land in the North Sea. How the Irish Badger managed to cross to Ireland is something of a mystery.



Photo Daily Mirror: PA

Whilst visiting one of our local badger setts recently, I was made aware that this is the time of year when most sows give birth. Two or three cubs are born in the first two weeks of February or maybe a little earlier or slightly later. What led me to believe there was a sow with young in this sett was the large amount of bedding (ie dry grass, bracken or other herbage) being dragged from a rough grassland area on the woodland edge, across a road, up a bank and into the woodland again and into the sett where she lived. Quite a feat when doing this backwards!

I was lucky to see her out and about that night. They are not easily followed, because you need to be downwind of them at all times, as they easily pick up on human scent.

Although classed as our largest carnivore, the badger will eat almost anything it comes across depending on the season, with young rabbits, young birds and eggs to fruit, roots, seeds, earthworms, grubs and insects accounting for most of its diet.

The badger has long been persecuted by man. Digging out the animals from their setts and baiting them with dogs used to be called sport. Sadly, this still goes on. Two men were jailed in North Wales on 5th February 2018 for baiting a badger. Poisoning and gassing are now illegal, but cases of poisoning still happen. It seems to depend on whether the perpetrator can get hold of these substances. The poor badger is still being demonised to this very day with false information that they spread disease, information that is published and promoted by the government. This information has no scientific basis whatsoever and has caused thousands of badgers to be killed for no reason and stigmatised the animal for decades to come.

However, science may well come to the rescue of the badger with advancement in research with better testing methods and bio-security measures. Let's hope we can eradicate bovine TB in cattle and badgers and leave this ancient Briton in peace.

The Combe was ever dark, ancient and dark.
Its mouth is stopped with bramble, thorn, and briar;
And no one scrambles over the sliding chalk
By beech and yew and perishing juniper
Down the half precipices of its sides, with roots
And rabbit holes for steps. The sun of Winter,
The moon of Summer, and all the singing birds
Except the missel-thrush that loves juniper,
Are quite shut out. But far more ancient and dark
The Combe looks since they killed the badger there,
Dug him out and gave him to the hounds,
That most ancient Briton of English beasts.

WINTER WEATHER

Photos by Gloria Ackerley



Agapanthus



Crispin apples



A rose with a nose

NATURE NOTES

from Claire Huxley , Cheshire Wildlife Trust

Cheshire Wildlife Trust have been busy evaluating the impact of their Delamere Lost Mosses Project recently which culminated in the presentation of their achievements to a packed community centre in January. Thank you to everyone who came along – it was great to see you.

Over 125 hectares of mossland habitat were enhanced during the project, much of the work centred on increasing the number of peat basins that were being restored and in total 14 new sites were established. The great benefit of this is that it provides a network of connecting habitats making it easier for mossland species to multiply and traverse the landscape.



What a difference a few years makes

Many mossland and wetland plant species have benefitted from this increase in space from ragged robin, water mint and bittersweet through to 12 species of sphagnum – two of which are rare within the Cheshire region. Invertebrates have also benefited including the return of the green hairstreak butterfly to two restoration areas within Delamere Forest, as well as an increase in dragonfly species. Surveys on the sites have also revealed a number of rarities including a rare mossland hoverfly *Orthonevra intermedia* confirmed to be using five mossland sites within the Delamere area, currently the only known sites for this species in the UK!



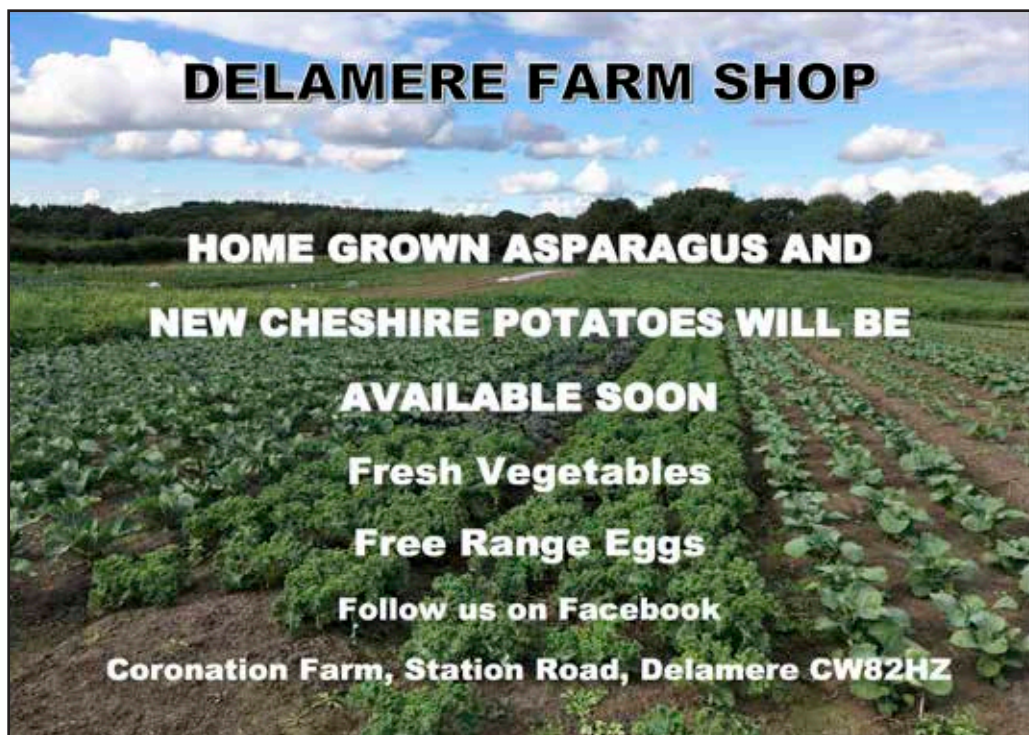
Not just forest – wet grassland and meadow flowers around Delamere

What's been truly inspiring has been everyone's enthusiasm for the project. The Trust held over 2000 volunteer days where more than 100 volunteers took part. Volunteers made such a difference to the amount that was achieved.

The Delamere's Lost Mosses project was run in partnership with the Forestry Commission, WREN, Natural England and Cheshire West and Chester Council. The project which began in November 2013 was completed in January 2018 and achieved a number of milestones.

The Trust has been working with partners in Delamere for the last couple of decades on mossland restoration work and the Delamere's Lost Mosses Project grant funding provided a real boost. There is still much more to do though. There are lots of volunteering opportunities available including continuing the mossland restoration work and helping out on surveys.

If you are keen to get involved contact Cheshire Wildlife Trust on info@cheshirewt.org.uk or telephone 01948 820 728.



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THE MAGISTRATES' COURT - *Another Step Forward*

Little by little the plan to rescue the historic former police station and magistrates' court on Chester Road has been taking shape.

The revised plan mentioned in the last issue has been completed, and was submitted to Cheshire West and Chester Council in November. Meanwhile, work has started on laying the foundations for the first phase of houses to be built on the adjacent land.

The original proposal, which was approved in October 2013, was for a terrace of four 3-bedroom town houses facing onto Chester Road and six 4-bedroom semi-detached houses to the rear of the site. The new proposal has four semi-detached houses facing Chester Road, with another four on the land to the rear, and a terrace of three town houses between them. Six of the new houses are 3-bedroom, three are 4-bedroom, and two are 2-bedroom.

The unsightly extension to the rear of the courthouse building will be demolished, and the main building will be converted into apartments. The demolition and a strip-out of the remaining building has commenced, to secure the dangerous structure. The strip-out of the interior will be a manual process to retain as many of the existing features possible.

The access road was originally going to pass between the courthouse building and

the houses fronting onto Chester Road. In the new plan it goes down the western side of the site, with a cul-de-sac across the middle.

At the public consultation in 2016 the architects (Jennings Design Associates) said they were hoping to submit a joint proposal including additional houses to be built on the former haulage yard behind the site (see issue 38). This remains a possibility, and further ground investigation is being carried out. However, the current proposal covers only the land occupied by the former courthouse.

The new houses will be constructed in light steel frame and manufactured off site, allowing each house to be erected within 2 to 3 days and made watertight for its subsequent completion. The historic frontage of the courthouse, which was built in 1892 as the headquarters of the Cheshire Police Eddisbury Division, will stay almost unchanged.

The foundations have now been laid for the seven houses on the southern side of the site. Residents living nearby have expressed concerns about their height, but no decision has yet been made. The developers are currently awaiting approval from CWAC before proceeding further.





Plans for the courthouse development.

DELAMERE FOREST PLANNING APPLICATION

The Forestry Commission's on-again-off-again plans for developing the recreational facilities in the forest are back on again. The proposals drawn up in 2013 (issue 28) were accepted by Cheshire West & Chester Council, but then rejected by the Planning Inspector after the Secretary of State called for a Public Inquiry. The Forestry Commission challenged the decision in the High Court, but failed to reverse it. They then revised their plans to take account of the Inspector's objections, and re-submitted them in 2016 (issue 38). This time CW&C rejected the proposal. The Forestry Commission lodged an appeal, and in February this year the Planning Inspector announced his decision, that planning permission should be granted. It is possible that the on-again could again become off-again, if another challenge is raised in the High Court. This has to be

within 6 weeks of the Inspector's decision, and can only be done on the grounds that the process by which the decision was made was unlawful.

There are two main components of the proposals: a new visitor hub at Linmere (together with extra recreational facilities at Whitefield), and construction of 67 holiday cabins at Kingswood. The Forestry Commission needs the income from the holiday cabins in order to pay for the visitor hub.

If the development does indeed go ahead it must begin within 3 years of the Inspector's decision. The new visitor centre must then be delivered within 5 years of when the first holiday cabin is occupied. So unless on-again goes off again, Linnere should have a new visitor centre in eight years' time.



History Web Page

More resources have been added to the D&O website's history page: an account of Delamere Forest in 2003, and a new sub-page with 16 historical maps from 1577 to 1912.




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Happy Easter everyone! Nic x

MEMORIES OF THE FALLEN *By Don Wilson*



St Peter's has been contacted by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC), requesting permission to place a sign/notice at the entrance to the churchyard to advise visitors of the presence of war graves within the churchyard. The aim is to increase awareness that war graves are at home in parish churches, as well as the many familiar sites abroad. The nationwide project is aimed to coincide with the centenary of the ending of WW1.

The function of the CWGC is to honour the 1.7m war dead of the Commonwealth forces from both WW1 and WW2, to ensure their memory is preserved and will never be forgotten. To date they maintain cemeteries and memorials at around 23,000 locations in 150 countries. A glance at the world map gives a good indication of their achievements worldwide.

The Commission owes its existence to the vision of one charismatic man, neither soldier nor politician, Sir Fabian Ware. At the age of 45, being too old to join the forces, he became a commander of a mobile unit of the British Red Cross. Saddened by the number of casualties, he was inspired to ensure the final resting place of the dead would not be lost forever. Under his leadership they began to record and care for all the graves they could find, and by 1915 their work was given official recognition. Encouraged by the Prince of Wales, in May 1917 the War Graves Commission was established by Royal Charter, and by 1918 some 587,000 graves had been identified and a further 559,000 casualties, as having no known grave. After the Armistice the work of the Commission began in earnest, as this enormous task was undertaken and since then over 2,500 war cemeteries have

been constructed with the familiar uniform grave stones and magnificent memorials such as those designed by Sir Edward Lutyens for the missing. More than 1 million burials are now commemorated at military and civil sites worldwide. Casualties are buried together, irrespective of rank or position, the headstones being of standard design. At that time it was a revolutionary policy, as previously, individual graves were for officers only, other ranks being buried in mass graves.

At St Peter's we have three war graves, from both World Wars, one of which is a bit of a mystery - a pilot and two soldiers.

Squadron Leader Andrew T Smith 610 Squadron.



Andrew can definitely be described as belonging to Churchill's Few, who fought in the Battle of Britain in the early part of WW2. He joined 610 Squadron Auxiliary Force in 1936 and was called to full time service in 1939 on Spitfires.

Over Dunkirk he destroyed an ME109 and probably another. When his

squadron leader was killed in action in May 1940, Andrew was appointed Acting Squadron Leader, but just two months later, Andrew himself was killed. On 10 July 1940, after an encounter with German fighters over Dover, he successfully managed to nurse his damaged Spitfire back to RAF Hawkinge, but two weeks later on 25 July, after being in action with ME109s over the English Channel, he again tried to nurse his damaged aircraft back to Hawkinge but lost his life when his Spitfire stalled on landing, hitting a disused engine testing bed and bursting into flames.

Andrew lived at New Pale Lodge and was a regular attender at St Peter's. Shortly before his death he presented the church with the RAF flag. At the Church Council a vote of sincere sympathy was extended to his wife, the council standing for a short time in silence.

Fusilier Thomas Stretch 2/5 Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers.



Thomas, son of William and Annie of Oakmere, enlisted with 2/5 Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers.

We do not know the exact circumstance of his untimely death at 25, probably in

this country, on 15 Oct 1941. His battalion was evacuated from Dunkirk in 1940 and seems to have been deployed in Eastern England on defensive roles during that very anxious time.

He was held in high esteem, as can be seen in a tribute in the Parish News

"The death of Fusilier Tom Stretch came as a great shock to his many friends in the parish, and not least to the members of our choir. He was regular in his attendance as a boy and as a man in the choir over a number of years. In one of his letters to the rector he said: "I go to church every Sunday. It reminds me of being in the choir at Delamere". The colonel of his brigade in a letter to Mrs Stretch says; "He was my batman and always carried out his duties well and faithfully. The whole Brigade's sympathy is conveyed to you. Your son was popular with all who met him." The whole parish will join in offering their heartfelt sympathy with Mrs Stretch and her family."

***Sapper George Cawley, 41st Signals
Royal Engineers.***



George is somewhat a mystery. He was from Alraham, where his funeral was planned for on 17 Dec 1918, but was interred in St. Peters. His name is not on

our war memorial in church.

George joined the Royal Engineers in 1915 at the age of 30, and was appointed as a Telegraph Linesman, a very exacting and dangerous job, keeping telephone communications open between trenches, fixing damaged cables and establishing new ones, often in No Mans Land.

Sadly, in the last weeks of WW1, George was gassed and was evacuated to a War Hospital in Bradford, suffering from paralysis and bronchitis, where he passed away on 11 Dec 1918.

He gave excellent service and was "Mentioned in Dispatches", although he did get into trouble once for disobedience by drinking in a hostelry against orders!

His documents show his body being sent to Tarporley Station for a funeral in Alraham on the 17th, but ground not definite. How he came to be buried here in Delamere is a mystery.

CAROLS AT DELAMERE STORES

Gloria Ackerley

Thank you to all who sang carols outside Delamere Stores just before Christmas, and thank you to everyone who supported them. £105 was raised and shared between St. Peter's Church, Oakmere Methodist Church and Delamere Community Association. We always say that each year is a rehearsal for the following year! You are welcome to join us next Christmas Eve, 10am until 12 noon.
Gloria Ackerley

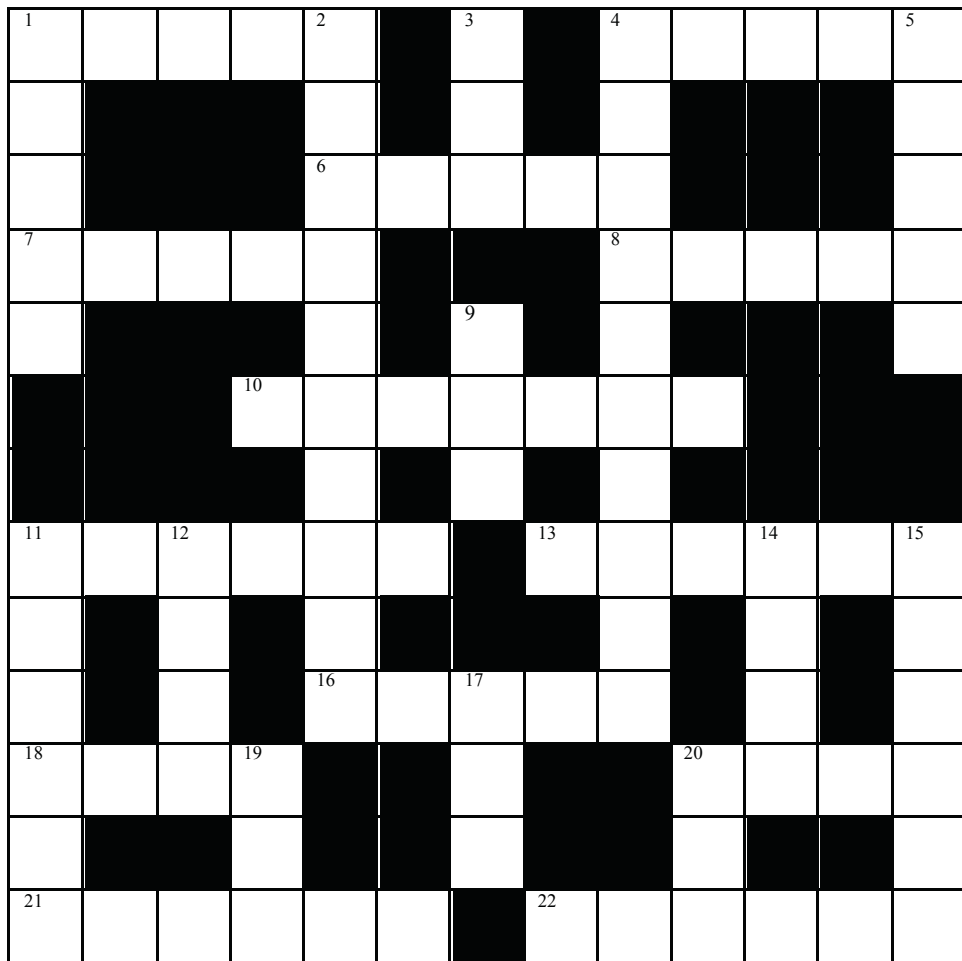
How would you feel if it was no longer easy to talk to your friends, write e-mails, read a book, speak on the telephone or pay at the check-out? Though not everyone who has had a stroke, or head injury, has these problems, many have some of them. People who flew high in their careers have not suddenly become the village idiot, but find it difficult to communicate. Many are physically disabled also.

The newly-formed Northwich Aphasia Self Help Group has morphed from Northwich Speakability, a national charity. When the Stroke Association took this over, the extra bureaucracy was daunting and many Speakability groups nationwide have become independent.

The members of NASHG are people with aphasia and their spouses/carers. We meet monthly and go on outings through the summer to art galleries, steam trains, stately homes or the seaside. We have fun and companionship and welcome new members. BUT we have to raise funds to pay for coach travel.

PLEASE come to a "Daffodil Tea" at Forest House Farm, Gallowsclough Lane, Oakmere on Saturday, 21st April from 2-5pm. There will be various stalls, home-made produce, and Bring and Buy. Undercover if wet. For info contact Katherine MacVicker on 01606-883652 or katmacv@btinternet.com





Across

1. Ring, donate pointed arch (5)
4. It's up above, a room in roof (5)
6. Miniature arrived followed by duck (5)
7. No start for shortage, leaving bare ground (5)
8. See with Roman, temporary post holder (5)
10. Foreign articles then start! Experience (7)
11. The Italian follows fast legume (6)
13. Like small coin uphill (6)
16. Concurred, lost head – voracious appetite (5)
18. Two thirds of shellfish make European moose (3)
20. Find these boys in Neverland (4)
21. Daughter precipitates sewers (6)
22. East European elbow grease (6)

Down

1. Peripheral tricky route (5)
2. Bewitching two directional singing (10)
3. Girl turns chart upside down (3)
4. A game played on horseback followed by US soldiers, journalist said sorry (10)
5. Oxfordshire town doesn't sound wild (5)
9. Composer chooses this to open door (3)
11. Story of where the foot is (6)
12. Old devil cut (4)
14. Heard lizard losing gravity, reflection (4)
15. Roof covering where PM lost Queen (6)
17. I am self-important (3)
19. Local factory now gone – to Winter Olympics? (3)
20. Laugh at Cameron for getting this abbreviation wrong (3)

EUROPE QUIZ *by Steve Lacey*

(Answers on page 13)

There is a lot of talk about Europe in the news at the moment – too much for some of us! The answer to each question is a European country, not necessarily in the EU.

1. What is the smallest country in the EU?
2. Where will this year's Eurovision Song Contest be held?
3. The River Danube flows through 4 capital cities. Of which countries?
4. Of which two countries is Albanian the official language?
5. Which country decided against joining the EEC in a referendum?
6. Of which country is Podgorica the capital?
7. The Azores are part of which country?
8. The Althing is the oldest parliament in the world. Which country does it govern?
9. In which country are the Headquarters of FIFA, the IOC and UEFA?
10. Which country is the home of manchego cheese?

If you have enjoyed the questions, why not come along to the next Quiz Night, in aid of the Delamere Community Association. It will be on Friday 4th May at the Community Centre.

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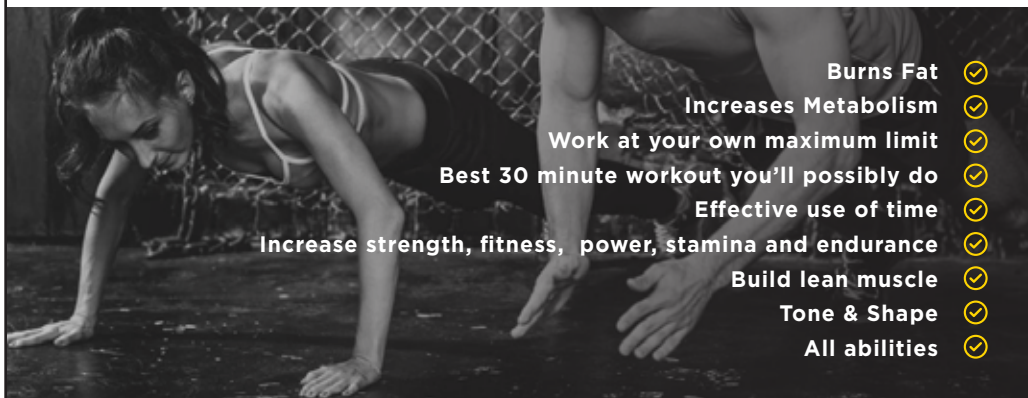
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