

The Cidder Press

JUNE 2020

VE75

How VE Day was marked in May 2020. A very different celebration than had been planned.

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Pictures by Ruth Hickmott and Hugh Nicklin



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War Stories

Albert Treuttens, a Belgian soldier, arrived in England in 1940 after the evacuation of Dunkirk.



After recovering from a shrapnel wound to his foot, he was stationed at varying places around England and Wales with a newly formed independent unit of free Belgians soldiers known as The Brigade Piron, named after the General Jean Baptiste Piron.

Albert was part of the 1st Motorised Unit (motorised Infantry). One of the places they were stationed at was Great Malvern, it was there he met Betty Jones, a Stoke Lacy girl who lived with her parents George and Dorothy Jones at Hunger Hill Farm, Stokes Lane.

Her occupation during the war, was as a telephone operator at Burghill telephone exchange.

They were married in 1943 in Hereford at St Francis Xavier church.

In 1944 he took part in the invasion of Europe, he was involved in numerous actions in France, Belgium and Holland, in particular the crossing of the Wessum canal, part of operation Market Garden and also around Nijmegen. He was around this area on VE day in 1945 and they received over 7500 German prisoners of war on that day.

When war ended, Betty went to live in Anderlecht, where their eldest daughter Jacqueline was born, although Albert was still serving in the Army of Occupation in Germany until the end of 1946, when he left the Army.

In 1948, with Betty probably feeling homesick, they returned to Stokes Lane and set up home first at The Asps and then at Chestnut Cottage. It was there they had three further children, another daughter Audrey and two sons Phillip and Christopher.

Albert went to work for Jack Smith at The Tiffins, Stoke

Lacy, a well-known agricultural contractor and Bill Jones of Bishops Frome another contractor, where one of the jobs Albert spoke about, and seems amazing now, was to blow out trees and tree stumps with gelnite, which was readily available at that time.

In 1962/63 Albert joined Hereford County Council driving machinery for the road workers, including the construction of Bromyard by-pass.

He retired in 1982 and spent the rest of his life in Stokes Lane, though he did return to visit his family in Belgium every so often.

He passed away in 1992.

Contributed by Albert's daughter in law Gail Treuttens

MEMORIES OF THE WAR YEARS IN STOKE LACY.

(1939-1945)

When war began in September 1939, I was almost 10 years old. Like most of the children in the village, I went to Stoke Lacy School. Soon after war began we were invaded by evacuees from Nelson Street School in Birmingham. At first, we found them difficult to understand. They seemed very different with their Birmingham accents and they spoke very quickly. As our school was not large enough to accommodate us all, a system of half-day schooling was introduced. One week the local children attended school in the mornings and the evacuees went in the afternoons, then the next week the system was arranged the other way round. At first we were very resentful of these new-comers who had disorganised our school, but when we saw the new modern arithmetic books and the modern desks that arrived soon afterwards from Nelson Street School, which we were allowed to share, we began to like them more and made many friends. They missed their homes and families and the big city. Some of them were very unhappy and after a short time they went back to Birmingham making it possible for everyone to go to school all day again.

Two teachers came with them, Miss Hughes, who was billeted at Tuthill Farm with the Arnetts, my late husband's parents, and Miss Long who was also billeted in the village, I can't remember where. They also taught us as well as the evacuees. They worked with our teachers, Miss Ingram, the headmistress who taught the older children, 7-14s, and Miss Abell who taught the infants, 5-7s. Miss Hughes also helped Miss Ingram and the Revd John with Sunday School. She was church organist for a while, the position being vacant because Mrs Pearce who lived in Avenbury and had been organist for a number of years, had retired from the position due to ill health.

We had to carry our gas masks in their boxes to school each day and sometimes we had to put them on at school and practise breathing with them. They made our faces feel



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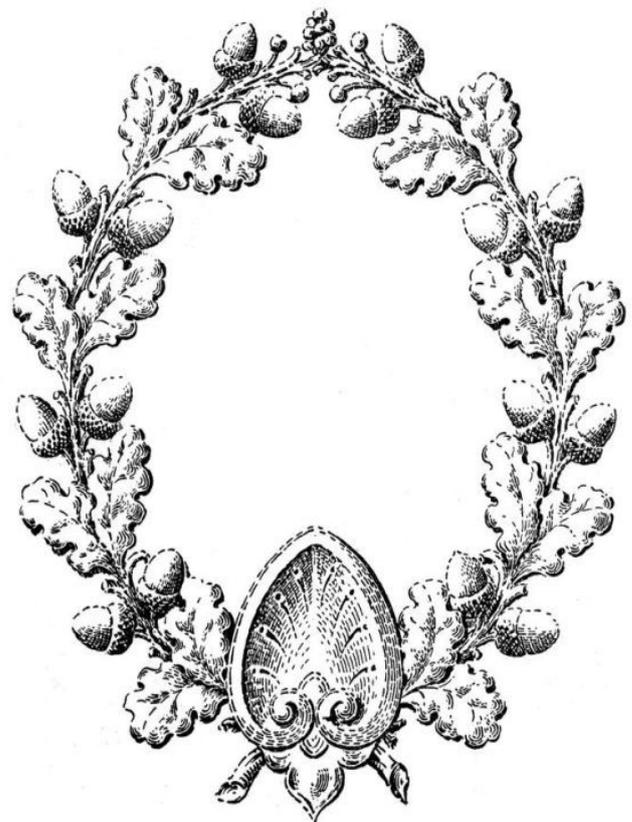
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very hot and were not very comfortable. My mother made three leatherette cases for us to carry them in. The youngest member of the family, at that time, who was born in 1940, had a baby gas mask that looked like a deep-sea diving helmet which completely enveloped her except for her legs.

We had big hanging oil lamps in school that weren't lit very often. There was a large shed in the playground, where we used to play when it was wet. Some of the children preferred playing round the back of the shed where they couldn't be seen!! The old-fashioned bucket toilets were situated some distance from the main building necessitating a dash through the rain sometimes! We had facilities for hand washing in both cloakrooms but no hot or cold water on tap, water had to be fetched from Drakewell every day, where it ran constantly from an open pipe. On a hot day we used to catch the water in our cupped hands for a cool drink. School dinners were unheard of, we all ate sandwiches at lunch time.

We lived two miles from the school. In the morning Mr. Hodges, from Mintridge, Henry's father, gave us a lift in his car with his own children, but we had to walk home in the afternoons because petrol was rationed. Lots of other things were rationed too. We had to give coupons from our ration books for food, sweets, clothes and shoes.

My mother made a lot of our clothes and we had to take care of them. When we grew out of them she put false hems on them or knitted another piece on our jumpers and cardigans. She always bought things so that we grew into them before we grew out of them. She made new clothes for us, sometimes from her own clothes, and other times out of new material from Pumphreys in Bromyard.

Not many people went out at night in the winter as it was very dark and all signposts had been taken away in case we were invaded. All the cars had special hoods fitted on the headlamps to keep lights down to the minimum. Miss Ingram was walking down the hill from the School House to church one evening in the dark, when she was knocked down. She lost one of her legs as a result of the accident. She had an artificial leg fitted and walked with a stick and a slight limp ever after. All house windows had to have blackout curtains which were drawn every evening at dusk.

January 1940 was a very cold month, with heavy snowfalls, bitterly cold winds and then freezing rain and fog. The telephone wires and all the tree branches were coated with thick ice and long icicles hung down from them. Branches were breaking and falling with the weight of the ice. A lot of the telephone posts fell down bringing the wires with them. I don't think we went to school many days that month!

In March 1940, I sat for a scholarship. Like several others in subsequent years, I passed and left Stoke Lacy school to attend The Queen Elizabeth Grammar School at Bromyard in September 1940. There we had school dinners which were mostly mashed potato with Spam and pickled cabbage, followed by rice pudding or semolina with a

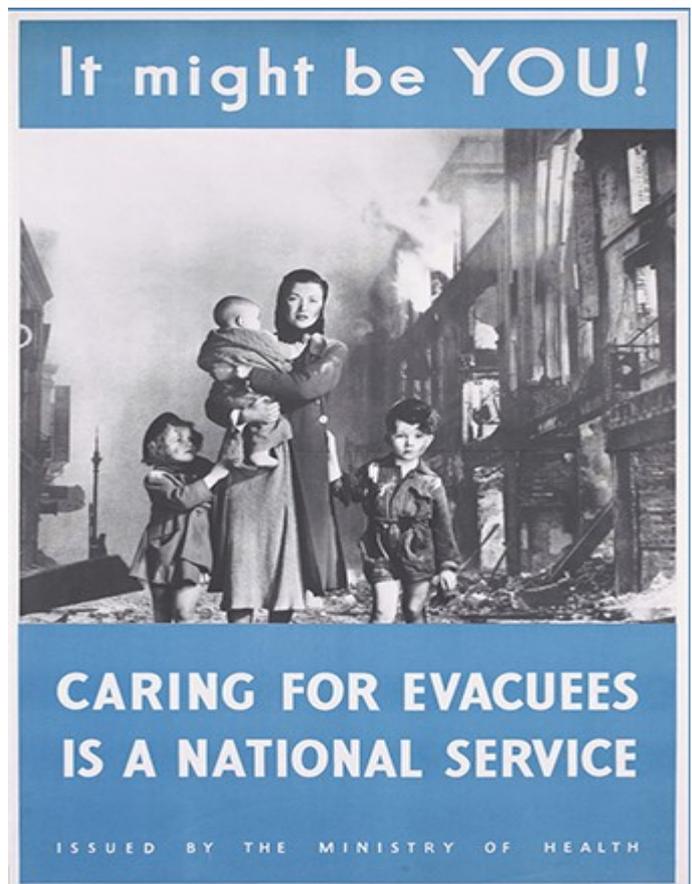
splodge of tinned jam, or prunes and watery custard. Several pupils from Stoke Lacy cycled to the Grammar School and we passed by the army camp just outside Bromyard where American soldiers were billeted.

We used to lie in bed at night listening to aircraft as they passed overhead and we tried to identify them as 'one of ours' or 'one of theirs'. One night a German bomber returning home offloaded his bombs in a line which cut across the Bromyard road near the Ledbury turn. That woke us all up! When we went to school the next day we could see one of the bomb craters in the field by Coopers Green Cottage. That was our only experience of what it was like to be bombed, thank goodness.

Going back to the beginning and thinking of evacuees, sometime around the 50th anniversary of VE Day, I noted that one of them, Betty Liddington, had signed the Church Visitors Book. Betty was a cousin of Irene Smith who lived at The Folly in Woodend Lane and Irene told me that she used to come to visit her cousin and that was how she met her husband Don Smith who was living at The Folly with his mother. Two other evacuees I remember were Pat and Joan Richie who were billeted with Mr and Mrs Amies at the Upper Sough. Pat and Joan stayed there for quite a while after the war.

When I think of what war did to some of the big cities like London, Birmingham and Coventry, I feel very thankful and very lucky that we were living in Stoke Lacy, amid the beautiful Herefordshire countryside.

Betty Arnett



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Any contributions for the August edition of the Cider Press should be submitted by 15th July, please.

Letters, articles, advertisement of events should be sent by email to :

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Parish Council meeting 11th March 2020

Present: Councillors Janet Ivison (Chairman); Anne Reece; Helen Bufton; Bill Morgan. In attendance: Mrs Alma Westwood, Clerk; Ward Cllr Jonathan Lester; PCSO Jack Davies; 4 members of the public

The Parish Council received reports from the Ward Councillor and PCSO Davies

The main item was to receive reports from the Neighbourhood Development Plan meetings held on 5th, 11th and 12th February and 1st March 2020, which were approved.

Financial and Planning reports were received and Highways and footpaths and flooding issues were discussed. The Parish Council's GDPR Policy was approved. A meeting to make arrangements for VE75th Anniversary celebrations was made.

Annual parishioners' meeting to be held on 29th April; Annual Parish Council meeting: 13th May.

Due to the current Coronavirus pandemic, Parish Councils had been given permission to hold future meetings virtually, with access to the public, to and hold their Annual Meetings over until 2021

Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 16th April 2020 virtually by Zoom at 7.30pm.

All Parish Councillors were present, together with the Clerk and 4 members of the public

James Wilson was co-opted as a Parish Councillor, replacing John Westwood who resigned in February. Councillor Wilson signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was witnessed by the Clerk by video-link.

Messrs Kirkwell & Co were approved as the Planning Consultants for the NDP (Neighbourhood Development Plan)

Following proposals from councillor Anne Reece, it was agreed that during the current situation the Clerk's hours be reduced from 7 to 4 per week and the Clerk be given devolved powers to deal with minor Parish Council matters, including paying invoices up to a value of £300 and replying to planning applications following emailed discussions

The next Parish Council meeting was set for 13th May, but following discussion with Councillors it was agreed this was not necessary. The next one was set for 10th June; an extra-ordinary meeting would be arranged if anything urgent cropped up beforehand

Alma Westwood, Clerk

parishclerk@stokelacyparishcouncil.org.uk

STOKE LACY PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT MAY 2020

What an extraordinary two months we have all been living in and trying to cope with. It has been hard for us all not being able to see and be with our families in these strange times when we needed them the most. Thank you to Ruth Hickmott who through the Stoke Lacy Heritage group page, set up a list of people who were willing to shop, collect prescriptions, be a listening ear and anything else they could do to help all those people who were self isolating. Thanks also go to those who were quick to offer their services as volunteers, we do have some really good souls in Stoke Lacy.

As we have not been able to hold either the Annual Parishioners Meeting or the Annual Parish Council Meeting this year for the public to attend, I am writing this report so you are aware of what the Parish Council has been up to on your behalf in the last year.

We have held twelve ordinary Meetings, one Extra Ordinary Meeting and one remotely throughout the last year. Agenda items have included finance, planning, traffic and speeding concerns, road maintenance, Village enhancements and the setting up of a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

We have dealt with six planning applications this year and can only express an opinion on these. Herefordshire Council's Planning Authority decide whether an application is passed or refused.

The Parish Council are grateful to Jonathon Lester our Ward Councillor for attending our meetings and keeping us up to date with Herefordshire Council's matters and offering us advice and good practice. We also thank our local CSO's Sue Berrett and Jack Davies for also attending meetings and keeping us updated with Police matters.

We have also hosted presentations from Estelle Stock on the Smart Water marking system, Sam Banks head of the Neighbourhood Development Team at Herefordshire Council, Craig Cornish Waste and Recycling Officer and the presentation with Ian Baker on setting up a Community Resilience Plan was cancelled due to his work load after the floods and the outbreak of Covid19. Unfortunately the uptake by Parishioners for the Smart Water marking kits was not sufficient enough for this to be viable for the Parish Council to undertake. However, we have been successful in getting enough people interested to help to undertake the task of creating a Neighbourhood

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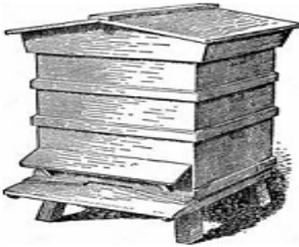
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Development Plan for the village after the open meeting hosted by Lynda Wilcox from HALC in February where we had an attendance of 62 members of the public attend. The team led by Councillor Bill Morgan have already been busy beavering away since then and have got the Parish Council's approval to appoint the Consultant and secured a Grant towards this project.

We have also had meetings with Christian Meanwell Project Manager for Balfour Beatty and Paul Hunter the Locality Steward to discuss the ongoing speeding issues, road repairs, ditches and drainage and the new speed limit signage and road markings related to the Newlands development but it does seem to take a time to get these jobs done! We have also been lucky to have appointed a new Footpath Officer who has already provided us with a very comprehensive report on all our footpaths and has undertaken to get work done on some of them too. In August all the Parish Councillors and The Clerk undertook an In House Training Course with Lynda Wilcox from HALC on many aspects of Parish Council Business which we all found very informative.

We have awarded Grants to the Cider Press and Community News Letter this last year who are both in need of some help with distribution. So if you could spare an hour once a month to help distribute one these publications in or around your vicinity, please contact Jo Davies for The Cider Press or Alma Westwood for The Community Newsletter they would love to hear from you. It's also a great way to get to know your neighbours.

This time last year we were watching the bricks and mortar emerging into houses at the Newlands and now the builders have left and we already have some residents who are well established there. The Parish Council extends a warm welcome to Stoke Lacy to you all, and hope you will be very happy here. We hope to be able to meet with you all at some point in the near future. It was unfortunate that we weren't able to hold the planned Celebrations for VE75 Day where it was hoped that we would have met you all then.

We as Councillors did a litter pick from Stoke Cross to the Church, cleaned all the road signs on the main road, cut back the vegetation and do try to keep the bus shelter tidy on a rota basis. We purchased the Community Concern signs and erected them, and after the Speed Camera having to be recalibrated we finally got a speed check in March by the Church where 6 tickets were issued within an hour! We did extend our thanks to

Balfour Beatty and the Contractors for getting the Bridge repaired and opened much quicker than was forecast but what a great excuse for a Street Party that was! Well done the organisers.

In February we said a fond goodbye to Councillor John Westwood who resigned after six years serving the Parish. We wish him well and know he was looking forward to spending more time with his beloved dog and playing with wood. Thank you John for your contribution to the Parish Council. In April we co opted and welcomed James Wilson as our new Councillor and look forward to working alongside him. As you can see we have been quite busy serving the Parish one way or another!

It now remains for me to thank my fellow Councillor's and the Clerk for their time, commitment and patience over the last twelve months and look forward to another interesting year ahead of us.

Janet Ivison Chairman of Stoke Lacy Parish Council

Ditch and Drain Responsibilities

It has been brought to the Parish Council's attention that some of the roadside ditches and drains are not functioning as they should be. With the loss of the Lengthsman scheme, the responsibility now passes to all property and landowners to ensure that boundary ditches and drains are maintained to allow excess water to flow away and not onto the carriage way. We are encouraging all residents, businesses and landowners to consider the information leaflet <https://>

www.herefordshire.gov.uk/ditches-and-drainage-guidance issued by Herefordshire Council, on ditch and drainage responsibilities and thank you for your cooperation. The owner of land or property that adjoins a watercourse, such as a roadside ditch, is known as the Riparian Owner. Although the Highways Authority is responsible for the highway, we do not own the 'sub-soil' of the highway. The owner of the land or property adjoining the highway is normally the sole Riparian Owner.

- ◆ For more information (Riparian Owners) visit www.gov.uk/guidance/owning-a-watercourse. Call Herefordshire Council Customer Services Team on 01432 261800 to discuss problems.



VILLAGE HALL NEWS

As you would expect due to the Coronavirus outbreak the Village Hall was completely closed down from the 23rd March. We were unable to go ahead with our 'Spring Breakfast' but will keep our fingers crossed we may be able to hold our 'Autumn' one. It was disappointing that we were unable to celebrate the VE75 Day with our planned Tea Party and Entertainment for all the Parishioners of the village. We did put up the bunting and put some flags in the windows to show that we had not forgotten those who had made sacrifices for us all.

We are awaiting the next update on the 1st June to see whether we will be able to hold our A.G.M. on Wednesday 24th June, even if we all have to sit 2 meters apart! We will wait to be advised by the Government and Community First as to when it will be safe to reopen the Hall and any new measures we may need to take.

Stay Safe and Stay Alert everyone and we hope that we can welcome you all back in the not too distant future.

Janet Ivison Chairman of the Village Hall Trustees

STOKE LACY PCC 100 CLUB

Dear members,

Due to the sad situation we find ourselves in, I cannot draw the monthly 100 club as it has to be drawn in a public place.

When we can have a small gathering I hope to draw all the months that we have missed.

Thankyou for your understanding

Tina Lifely



A huge and heartfelt thanks to the local 'food fairies' for your help and support when needed during these strange times. I cannot thank you enough.

Deb, The Mill, Stoke Lacy

Due to the Covid 19 Lockdown, the NDP Steering Group and the Parish Council have been unable to physically meet during the last few weeks. However, we have been able to make some progress, albeit slowly and at the last Parish Council Meeting (which was held over video and audio conference) the Parish Council approved the NDP Steering Groups recommendation of the appointment of the Planning Consultancy.

In addition to this, we have also now applied for and been successful in gaining a grant of £7,636 from Localities to undertake the first stages of the NDP work. We are expecting the formal offer to arrive next week after which we will hold an online meeting with the Planning Consultancy to discuss the Steering Groups next actions. (This meeting is provisionally scheduled for 3rd June at 6:30pm and if you would like to listen in by audio conference, please let me or Alma know.)

Is the Stoke Lacy NDP still important?

With the recent enforced changes in working society, it will be interesting to see if housing demand increases across our countryside now that people realise they do not need to commute to cities, they do not need huge glass and chrome offices and they do not need to fly across the world for business meetings. Instead they can have a better quality of life and enjoy the open space living somewhere like Herefordshire. Food for thought!

Bill Morgan

NDP Steering Group Lead Coordinator.

Cider Press August 2020

Please send contributions to the August Cider Press to jjpw.davies@gmail.com by 15th July. All articles, letters and notices will be gratefully received .Any opinions expressed within the articles contributed are those of the individual contributor.

Thank you for your support

A MESSAGE FROM KINA

I hope this message find you well and adapting as best as possible to the new challenges, as together we do all we can to end the spread of the Coronavirus pandemic. Thank you so much to everyone helping out in our community, the people receiving the support truly appreciate the support being shown by our community.

I am writing my first message to you in unusual times. The coronavirus pandemic has not only caused physical harm and emotional pain, but there has been a huge economic, political, and social fallout. Life as we've known it has been completely reshaped.

The church buildings remain closed.

As the lockdowns that we have all been experiencing start lifting, the church buildings remain closed for public worship, in line with Government advice. The Bishops agreed to a phased approach to lifting restrictions. The current phase allows limited access to church buildings for activities such as streaming of services or private prayer by clergy in their parishes. Weddings and baptisms have been postponed. Funerals can take place, but with no more than ten mourners at the graveside or crematorium. No church service.

Practical care for the Benefice

Several years ago, St Peter's Church Bromyard set up a Food Bank – also known as Helping Hands. It has been a great blessing, especially during this difficult time. Over the past three months, Allyson and Suzette with a new team have led Bromyard Food Bank, during April, the Food Bank helped 137 families in Bromyard and the surrounds areas, and this help will continue to be needed during the coming months.

Practical care for the congregations of our two churches

As well as caring for the wider community, we have also been trying our best to make sure everyone in the

congregation has contact with at least someone from the church community regularly. Much of this has been happening through phone calls, and I've heard lots of lovely feedback from people who are having deep conversations and building great friendships. It has been particularly lovely to see the heart-warming pastoral instincts of our congregation for those who are in vulnerable groups and so need to be self-isolating and yet do not have anyone else to help them with their shopping.

Prayer and worship – online

We have been broadcasting a service every Sunday morning on St Peter's website. Encouragingly, like many other churches, we seem to be experiencing considerable growth in our online congregation. We also have Sunday 6 pm evening prayer via Zoom. Zoom has proved a useful tool for meetings.

We are learning so much through all of this. Online worship is here to stay, and even when we return to our church buildings. I am confident that we will continue to broadcast online Sunday by Sunday, rejoicing in the fact that those who cannot make it to the buildings, and those who would not have otherwise thought to, will be joining us.

I look forward to seeing you all again at Stoke Lacy before too much longer and meanwhile hope that all from St Peter's & St Paul's are joining in with the online services and will continue to do so in the future.

Let me also take the opportunity to let you know that Bishop Richard Jackson has offered to extend my licence beyond the normal end (June 2020) of my curacy. He will licence me as an Associate Vicar in Bromyard and Stoke Lacy this will allow me to continue my ministry as long as it is needed. Shalom,

Kina Robertshaw

Locked down in the countryside



We are lucky to be locked down with a garden and beautiful weather, so plenty to keep us busy but I miss people and the unexpected. Each day is very much the same as the previous one. So to have ducks visiting our pond for the first time has been a great distraction. First came a female persuaded by two males, a pair was established who spent most days rooting around probably eating our abundant supply of newts. Google searches informed me that the male stays with the female until she has laid her eggs then departs to meet up with other males to moult. The female will sit on the eggs for 28 days then after a day or so she will lead the ducklings to water. At the time of writing the male occasionally visits but we haven't seen the female in the last 3 days, so the count-down has started.

Fingers crossed the ducklings will visit to complete the story. As a sad postscript - the drake found dead in the pond with no signs of injury.

Carole Leonard

A note from Jonathan Lester

With so much uncertainty and such loss of life it is difficult to comprehend what we are going through at the moment. Also, it is difficult to understand at this stage what the long term effects will be on our communities and the country as a whole. As we have learned this has been a global crisis and the implications will be felt across the world. However, what is positive to note is that local communities, Herefordshire Council, the NHS, supermarkets, local shops, emergency services, and a whole host of organizations have been mobilized in such a fantastic way to deal with everything that the challenges of the lockdown has created. There are so many people to thank. It is heartening to see what can be achieved despite the outbreak of such a dreadful disease. In terms of Council business, I have been very busy zooming in and out of video meetings, also attending virtual parish council meetings, and generally keeping in touch with many people in Herefordshire to carry on as normally as the technology allows. Despite the proposed dates and predictions I think that this restricted society will be with us for some time to come. Therefore, we must plan for the long term. When

an easing of the lock down becomes more apparent I know one thing will be high on my list of priorities and that will be to encourage councils and communities to continue to support their local businesses. Herefordshire Council has been quick to deliver the grants to businesses but this is only a small part of a recovery plan and businesses will need all of the support they can get. Meanwhile, please contact me if you have any issues that you think I could help with. Also please share good news stories, or indeed any experiences during this lock down period as the Council needs to reflect on what is going well and what could be done better in future.

Jonathan Lester - Herefordshire Councillor – Three Crosses Ward jlester@herefordshire.gov.uk.

Peewee the Puppy



The fire service visits the Nether regions of Stoke Lacy for the second time in as many months, this time to rescue a Dachshund puppy who went awol on a rabbiting spree. He was trapped beneath a large, heavy container storage shed from about 4pm. In spite of his owner's anxious persuasion he just barked continuously. Until about 8pm. Something had to be done as darkness was drawing in. A fire appliance with the latest equipment and five strong chaps spent two hours tunnelling beneath the container. At last they reached the little sausage, buried up to his waist (where would that be?) in a collapsed rabbit hole. They brought him out, he shook himself, cocked his little leg, trotted off back to his basket and fell fast asleep. Peewee's owner, Amanda Darby, would like to say thank you again to the heroes who saved her puppy. She is very happy that their excellent work has been acknowledged on Radio Hereford and Worcester. Fame indeed for young Peewee.

Chris McNaught