



Hello and welcome to the spring 2008 edition of the

Blackdown Bugle

Past happenings and things to come at the B.S.G. – What's been happening behind the scenes.

A word (or two) from the Chairman

Here I am, on a Saturday lunchtime, all on my own in an empty house, waiting for the rugby to start. What to do? I know, write to all the Volunteers and Friends and get them just as bored as I am at the moment!

Didn't we have a cracking little (cream) Tea Party a few days ago in Bishopswood? That is a rhetorical question really as I had a "cracking" time and the attendance didn't fall into the "little" category. A very quick head count indicated that there was an attendance of about ninety. I didn't think ninety people knew where Bishopswood was! (joke!) It was good to see so many friendly faces in one room but with a spread like that, who could be anything but friendly. Many, many thanks to Christine and her team – I won't mention any names for fear of omitting some, and then life really wouldn't be worth living (another joke!) – but thank you to all those who contributed.

The highlight – with due respect to the "spread" – of the afternoon was the presentation of a bouquet to Sue Lambert on the announcement of her retirement from her clerking post. I'm not even going to try to guess how many years Sue has been part of the Office Team but it has been a long time and her input has been enormous. So, thank you Sue for all that you have given to the BSG and we hope that you enjoy a long, long retirement.

The incoming 'Girl Wednesday' is Lynn Morgan. Welcome to the gang, Lynn. I hope that your stay with us is long and enjoyable – the job really does get easier with time!

The next opportunity to get together will be the AGM and I think I really will have to step away from the Chairmanship after that. I will have made more comebacks than Frank Sinatra if I am not careful! This Bugle may be accompanied by your Notice of the aforementioned AGM which, I think, is scheduled for Tuesday, 3rd June in Upottery. But don't take my word for it (as if you would!), wait until you hear it from the horse's mouth. No offence, Barbara! (joke again!)

That's it for now, our Co-ordinator told me to keep it short and sweet – one right out of two can't be bad!

See you in June, if not before.

Brian

A G M

At Upottery Village Hall 7.30pm, on Tuesday 3rd June. The Chairman sees to it that the business is short, so do join us for a fun evening. If you are willing to share transport please ring the office.

Return of a much missed lunch club

We are delighted that the Dunkeswell lunch club has reopened in the Highfield Sports and Social Club on the third Wednesday of the month, with many of the original members returning.

The lunch in February, courtesy of Fay from The Royal Oak, was absolutely delicious and enjoyed by all. We are grateful to Fay and her team for subsidising the meal, which represents great value.

There is now a waiting list but do ring the office if you wish to join.

WE WELCOME OUR NEW VOLUNTEERS

JENNY DAY
LINDA HOLWAY
PAULA TURNER

CULMSTOCK
HEMYOCK
HEMYOCK

STAFF NEWS

We were sad to say farewell to Sue Lambert who has retired after several years with us. We wish her a busy and fruitful retirement. Brian presented Sue with a lovely bouquet at our Volunteer's tea party in February.

We welcome Lynn Morgan who has stepped in to fill the role of booking clerk and we wish her well.

THANK YOU

To the committee and staff, very many thanks for the gift voucher and lovely bouquet of flowers. I am very grateful to you and know I am going to miss you all. All best wishes Sue.
p.s. watch out – I may return in a different guise!

The Hemyock Community Web Site has information about the group and we will be putting this newsletter and all future news on the site at

www.hemyock.org/index.php?topic=BSG

If you have access to a computer and are happy to read this newsletter online this would save the BSG some money. And if you give us your e mail address we can send you out reminders of events in your area.

Save on your utility bills and help us at the same time.

The Support Group has joined forces with The Utility Warehouse
a discount club for some or all of your utility bills.

SAVE ON
GAS
ELECTRICITY
TELEPHONE
And many more

Join today and see your bills drop and the Support Group will receive a 5% donation from the company on all you spend over the year, giving you the chance to support us and save money.

To find out more ring
0800 1313000 and quote B11059.
Or ring Barbara in the office, (she changed over in February)

True story

A man goes up to bed, his wife tells him that he's left the light on in the garden shed, which she could see from the bedroom window

He opens the back door to go turn off the light but sees that there were people in the shed stealing things.

He phones the police, who ask "Is someone in your house?" and he says "no". Then they said that all patrols were busy, and that he should simply lock his door and an officer would be along when available. He said "Okay," hung up, counted to 30 and phoned the police again.

"Hello, I just called you a few seconds ago because there were people stealing things from my shed. Well, you don't have to worry about them now because I've just shot them." Then he hung up.

Within five minutes three police cars, an Armed Response Unit, and an ambulance showed up at the Phillips' residence and caught the burglars red-handed.

One of the policemen said to George: "I thought you said that you'd shot them?"

He said: "I thought you said there was nobody available!"

'WHERE DID IT ALL SPRING FROM' – by Sue Lambert

I go back a long way! I first heard about the BSG before it was officially formed. Ann McQueen, wife of the former Primary School Head, talked about how she had been discussing the possibility of forming such a group with Dr Meads. She sadly died soon after, and the collection at her funeral was the first donation to the Support Group

Muriel Hudson, wife of the former Baptist Minister, David, was the first "Office Clerk", and I followed her. Brian was co-ordinator already, and along with Heather and the committee, was building up new services. We had only just been "given" a room in the surgery to work from (it seemed to be just" cupboards under the stairs" before that!). I believe Culmstock Lunch Club was just coming into being and we were about to get more wheelchairs, the Toe Nail Cutters were being trained and the cooks were taking their Kitchen Hygiene Certificates.

It's amazing to think that in those days we worked on two diary pages per week for the volunteer drivers/ requests - and had space. With increased demand, we progressed to an A4 page per day, and, eventually, with Barbara's help and persuasion, on to the computer. The deterioration of the Patient Transport System and the Car Ambulance Service has meant that for essential transport, the BSG has become invaluable to the dwellers in the Blackdown Hills. The B.S.G. social and community events, organised by willing helpers, have increased and are much appreciated.

Throughout my time in the Group, I have never ceased to be amazed with the willingness, and the generosity of the volunteers. They are a wonderful group of people and I have been honoured to work with them. May the Blackdown Support Group continue to thrive!

Notices

Regular driving to Musgrove Park Hospital.

Remember you can borrow a blue badge from the office

The BSG Tea Party for Volunteers and Friends at Bishopswood gave everyone the opportunity to meet and catch up with another year of news. Some of you joined us at the excellent Hank Marvin Tribute Show in Hemyock on the 1st March which raised the great sum of £500. Thank you all for supporting us and a big thank you to Alice Hodges for organising it.

We look forward to seeing you at other events that we will be running throughout the year. Please put these dates in your diaries.

Christine Meads
Fundraising Chairman

Blackdown Support group
Blackdown **fun events**
2008

17th 18th 19th May	
National Garden Scheme Mr and Mrs Salmon Open Garden Springdale, Smeatharpe (park in Village Car Park) 2.00 – 6.00pm	
1st June Mr and Mrs Nick Strange Open Day Beechayes Farm 10.00am	3rd June BSG A G M at Upottery Village Hall 7.30pm
10th June Lobwood Garden Party Blagdon Hill 2.30 – 5.0pm Cream Teas and Stalls Christine and Jonathan Meads	14th June Margaret & Brian Wheaton's Garage Sale 20 Hollingarth Way Hemyock Bric a brac & plants
29th June Cream Tea The Cottage, Marsh (Off A303) Michelle Button Stevens With plant and Bric-a-brac stalls	5th 6th 7th July National Garden Scheme Open Garden Mr and Mrs G Salmon Springdale, Smeatharpe (Park in Village Car Park) 2 – 6.00pm
14th September Churchinford Walk led by David Dobinson meet at 2.30pm Village Hall Tea afterwards	14th November Meat Bingo organised by Barbara Simpson Churchinford Hall Eyes down 7.30pm

TRANSPORT TO HOSPITAL APPOINTMENTS

All patients in receipt of benefits are eligible to have their transport costs to hospital appointments refunded.

Just ask for a receipt when you book your car and take that to the main reception at the hospital to get reimbursed. Hospitals vary in the amount they will pay, but do claim. You must take proof of your benefit, e.g. a letter stating you are eligible.

The Blackdown Support group thanks the friends and volunteers for all their support

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