



THE STOURTON CAUNDLER

ISSUE NO. 85

NOVEMBER 2010

<p>Stourton Caundle</p> <p>Contents</p> <p>An introduction</p> <p>Brief history</p> <p>Diary</p> <p>Useful Information</p> <p>Village organisations</p> <p>The Stourton Caundler</p> <p>St Peter's Church</p> <p>Events Committee</p> <p>Garden Club</p> <p>Play Area</p> <p>Sports Club</p> <p>Village Hall</p> <p>Welcome Club</p> <p>Local councillors</p> <p>STOP PRESS</p> <p>Tapas evening, The Trooper</p> <p>Saturday 13 November</p> <p>Book now! Details</p> <p>Please vote for fibre-optic broadband from BT. Details</p>	  <p>photos: Richard Miles</p>	<p>VILLAGE WEBSITE</p> <p>Your vote counts</p> <p>(see article inside)</p>
<p>www.stourtoncaundle.org.uk</p>		

Are you getting enough... bandwidth?

Broadband users of North Dorset unite! That's the message from a new broadband action group which is lobbying for faster broadband speeds in our part of the world. Blackmore Vale readers may have spotted a recent article about the group. The Community Partnership leading the group is the Blandford-based DT11 Forum, but don't be put off by the name. Other Community Partnerships closer to home, like SturQuest which covers Sturminster Newton and its surrounding parishes, are also involved.

In fact, since North Dorset is likely to be very low on BT's priority list for rolling out its new 'superfast broadband', ALL the communities in the district need to pull together to change the company's mind. BT had to be kicked hard before it would agree to provide superfast broadband to Weymouth in time for the Olympics – and of course, Weymouth is much larger than Stourton Caundle, or even Stalbridge, where our telephone exchange is located.

BT, or other broadband providers like TalkTalk, will certainly need their arms twisted to upgrade the Stalbridge exchange to support faster broadband services. But who knows – if we work at it, we may eventually persuade BT to bring one of its superfast fibre-optic connections into the village, allowing us to get 100 times faster than we have today.

First, though, we need to provide BT and other telecoms companies with hard evidence of the demand in this area – from local businesses, home workers, gamers, YouTube and iPlayer watchers and anyone else! If you are interested in getting a better broadband service, **please fill in the broadband survey** on the DT11 Forum web site – www.dt11forum.org.uk – it only takes a minute. The new broadband action group wants thousands of people in North Dorset to participate in the survey to give it the strongest possible mandate.

Here in Stourton Caundle there is evidence that broadband performance is very patchy with some parts of the village appearing to receive a very inferior service. To quantify the extent of the shortfall, we are proposing to carry out a more detailed survey in and around our parish. As a start if you are interested in helping, please check your broadband speed by logging onto the following website: www.broadbandspeedchecker.co.uk Do this several times over the coming few weeks and report the results by e-mailing thecaundler@hotmail.co.uk.

In particular, please report 5 pieces of information for each speed test performed, namely: Your name, date, time, download speed and upload Speed.

Thank you in advance – we'll report the results in the December issue of the magazine.

Caroline Hughes, Richard Miles

STOP PRESS: STOP PRESS: STOP PRESS: STOP PRESS:

Support Stalbridge's bid for superfast broadband

In addition to the DT11 Forum survey it would be very helpful if as many villagers as possible also vote for Stalbridge to become one of the first rural communities to have our telephone exchange enabled for superfast broadband.

BT's superfast broadband initiative is called BT Infinity – you may have seen the TV ads with all the beams of light – and is first being rolled out to larger towns and cities, like Bristol and Blandford. The only chance smaller communities like ours have of getting to the top of BT's waiting list is to enter the competition BT is running called "The Race to Infinity". Please go online to vote for Stalbridge at www.racetoinfinity.bt.com as the five communities with the highest proportion of votes win. It would be great if ours were one of them!

A day in the life of ... a furniture restorer

On the days that I don't have to do the school run or paper work at home, my day starts with feeding the chickens and collecting any eggs before breakfast, Then I make my way into the workshop usually around 8.30 - 9.00 am unless I have to call in on any clients or do any deliveries first.

I have been at Bridge Yard for five years now although it only seems like yesterday that we started restoring the workshop which is still an on-going project. Unfortunately things take a little longer when you are doing them yourself and also have to work and make a living.

In the future I would like to offer woodwork lessons for children as well as restoration classes for all ages. I am currently in the process of getting a showroom together from which I will be selling selected antique furniture as well as my own work.

I have been restoring and making furniture now for over 20 years and it is still something that gives me great pleasure and satisfaction especially when I am bringing a dilapidated antique back to life or am designing and making a piece for a client.

It is always very interesting when restoring an antique piece of furniture to see how it was made and see the tool marks of the man who made it; you can get a sense of connection with the original maker as you are working on the piece. But most pieces were never stamped with the makers name so you can't build a complete picture in your mind of the person who made it. Occasionally you do come across a maker's stamp or mark and then you can research the maker and find out a bit about their lives. One such occasion happened to me recently when I was commissioned to restore an antique mahogany writing desk. When I got it back to the workshop I discovered a paper label with the makers name and address it read: "Nehemiah Adams, Cabinet Maker, Newbury Street, Salem Common, Salem, Massachusetts."

After a bit of research I have started to find out about the maker and build a picture in my mind about his life. He was born in 1769 and died in 1840 at the age of 71. He was twice married and had two sons. He worked from two workshops, the first, which was where the desk was made, burned down so we can roughly date it to 1790 - 1800 which is in keeping with the style of the desk. It is rare to find out much about the original maker but when you do it makes the job all the more interesting.

And back in the 21st century, I am making traditional handmade furniture in both classical and contemporary styles as well as traditional wooden sledges every winter.

Joseph Harris



**All Saints CE VC Primary School,
Bishops Caundle
will be holding an Open Morning
for prospective parents and children
on Wednesday 3 November
from 9.30am - 11.30am.
Tel 01963 23450**

Naturally thinking

We had a wryneck in our garden in mid-September, crouching low long enough in one position on the grass to make a positive identification – bit larger than a sparrow, greyish with brown and buff mottling and a contrasting dark band running down from the back of the head onto the back. They're a member of the woodpecker family, though they don't often make the climb up vertical trunks or branches.

I get excited about these sort of things, so I whizzed off an email to the Dorset Bird Club, who told me that it's a regular autumn migrant but numbering only in the hundreds in Britain. It wasn't that long ago that it was on the Red List of endangered species, so I'm glad it dropped into Stourton Caundle.

When I was little, my father used to draw me pictures of a worm propped up by a walking stick, wearing a top hat and with a pipe stuck in its mouth. We all seem to know that worms pull leaves into the ground, but how? Apart from in my father's drawings, I've never seen a worm with a mouth. I looked them up in a book and found out lots of fascinating facts. For instance, they anchor their bodies in the soil with hooked hairs on each segment, force the pointed front of the body through soil crevices, and draw its rear up after it. They're sensitive to vibration so stamping on the ground will often bring them out of their burrows. They lay eggs which take 5 months to hatch, sometimes live for 10 years and they do not, as is the popular belief, grow into two worms if you chop one in half. Not many facts about their mouths though, except it seems to be just a very small mouthpiece. The next time I dug one up, I inspected it closely but I'm none the wiser. It's barely visible which makes it all the more remarkable to think that it can haul dead leaves and rotting vegetation down into its burrow.

After his second moult, Mr Bocelli has at last regained all his feathers and is once again looking handsome and sleek, though he has a touch of distinguished grey around his beak. He has a spot of bother with the sparrows that seem to have taken over our garden as one or two of them have also taken a liking to sultanas. He doesn't fight them off but so that he can eat uninterrupted, we've taken to putting them onto the mat more often. There is another male blackbird around the garden who he fights off quite regularly. I wonder whether it's one of his own offspring.

I'm not terribly keen on autumn. It has a kind of melancholy beauty that makes me a bit melancholy too, though I do go into ecstasies over the colours it produces. Sometimes, even on the greyest of days, there is a glow that makes you think you're in a golden tunnel.

A double line of horse chestnuts on the way out of Milborne Port hasn't been colouring up in the normal way, but rather turning crisp and brown which makes me wonder whether they are suffering from a disease. It's heart breaking that so many of our native trees seem to be struck down by viruses or pests these days.

Talking of which reminds me of an incident when I worked at RHS Rosemoor in Devon. A lady stopped me and announced that we were suffering from acid rain.

"Are we?" I asked in alarm.

"Look at those trees," she said, pointing to great groups of beautiful golden trees on the other side of the valley.

"Oh they're all right, they're larches."

"Quite," she said. "That's what I mean. Acid rain."

"But that's quite normal for a larch at this time of the year," I said, trying to be polite. "They're deciduous."

It's difficult arguing with a paying visitor with a bee in her bonnet. I let her rant on for a while and then gave up. I often wonder whether she still believes that larches suffer from an annual attack of acid rain.

Margaret Waddingham

Advent 2010

Advent is the run up to Christmas. Many of us as children, parents or grandparents have enjoyed an Advent Calendar, and this year we would like to turn our village into one by asking families to decorate one window of their home with either a lit tableau or a back-lit cut-out scene. Clearly homes with a window close to the street are very suitable but anyone is most welcome to take part. The plan would be to light up one window on the first evening, a second on the next, and so on until December 23rd.

A workshop will be arranged on a Sunday afternoon in the church for children and families to make their decorations and share ideas, if folk would like this. Decorations do not need to be elaborate and simple ones are often the best.

The purpose of this early warning is to introduce the fact that one or more of us will be calling on families hoping to enlist them in the scheme. We hope that you will feel that this is an innovative and fun activity for our village.

Jane Colville, Eric Dummett, Gill Sanders, Julian & Anita Shardlow

Calling all carol singers

For all those who like to sing or listen to carols, here's a note for your diary. We shall be singing round the village on Tuesday 21 and Wednesday 22 December. This year we shall not be knocking on any doors asking for money as there's been rather a lot to pay for lately so we thought we'd like to sing just for your pleasure (we hope!) and ours. More details next month.

Margaret Waddingham

Trooper news

We will be holding a Tapas Evening on Saturday, 13 November, with a guest chef preparing typical Spanish dishes. Places for this event are limited and at the time this issue of the Caundler is distributed there may not be many left, so do please book now for what promises to be a fun occasion.

An excellent quiz on 17 October, with some novel rounds of questions – for example 'General Knowledge' turned out to be about military leaders and places and events with the word general in them – was set by the Bar Stewards and a close contest was won by the Cat Lane Irregulars. The next quiz will be on 21 November when the questions will be set by Over the Hill. Come along, it's always good entertainment and not too serious, and teams often form on the night so don't feel you have to have a ready-made team before you arrive.

Do remember to come to the next Sunday music night on 28 November, when you can take part or just listen to good folk singing and playing.

Our Christmas menu is now available and we're now taking bookings for lunches and evening meals. Book early to make sure you can have your preferred day and time.

For New Year's Eve we are proposing to take over the Village Hall instead of trying to cram everyone into the bar at The Trooper. There will be a full bar and music that will appeal to all ages. Join us with friends and family to see in the New Year.

Do you fancy suggesting a guest beer for the pub? If so, please let us know your favourite pint and we will see what we can do to get a barrel or two on tap for a while.

Cheers Kevin and Zena

Events Committee meeting, 21 September 2010

A well-attended meeting was held to consider the future direction of the Events Committee, with representatives from all the other village organisations present. All those present were asked in turn to give their views, and a broad consensus was reached by the end of the meeting.

In essence, the conclusion was that the Events Committee as presently constituted had run its course, and the village in general was suffering from "event fatigue" as a result of the fund-raising initiatives of recent years. Other village organisations are running their own events now, so the need for a specific event-running group had declined. However, there was a strong sense that there was still a role, albeit on a reduced level, for a body of people able and willing to run occasional events for the benefit of the community. Many people referred to Tony Bond (whose vision and generosity started the committee) and his desire to see events organised to bring the community together.

The result is that there will be a Summer Fair next year, with Chris Holdstock kindly agreeing to oversee its organisation, and there will be other, occasional events in the future which will be run first and foremost as social events for the village. We still have some work to do to get the shape of the Events Committee's successor finalised, but the good news is that there are still people in the village prepared to pull their weight in the future to help run the fantastic events we've been lucky enough to enjoy in the past.

John Waltham

Garden Club visit 15 September

On 15 September, more than twenty members of the Garden Club enjoyed the last visit of 2010 with a trip to Manston Old Rectory. We have enjoyed a long summer this year, and the weather was again perfect for strolling around somebody else's garden. Parts of the house have been standing for many years, but the garden is very much 'work in progress' as a major redesign begins to take shape under the guidance of new owners. Before being taken around, we were shown a montage of photographs by the owner, Mrs Judith Hussey, which demonstrated the extent of the clearance that had already occurred and how new hard landscaping had been introduced.

Stunning views, particularly towards Melbury Hill, have been created, and these frame and define the new layout. There has been much planting of trees and shrubs, as well as a new perennial border backed by a south-facing wall, and the enormous walled kitchen garden is being brought back to life. A wonderful display of outdoor-grown tomatoes clearly demonstrated not only the quality of the local river alluvial soil, but also of the skill of the Husseys' gardener. After an hour or so spent strolling around with Mrs Hussey happily answering questions we retired to the kitchen where a team of helpers served refreshments.

This is a garden with rich potential, the skeleton of which is rapidly filling out. Many of us left looking forward to a further visit in a few years time, which will offer an opportunity to see how bold ideas can be developed over the years.

Broken Nails

Sky at night

I can report that the first Stourton Caundle Star Party held on the evening of Sunday 10 October proved a great success thanks to the 20 or so people who turned up outside The Trooper, the marvellously clear skies and the unseasonably warm weather at the time which avoided anyone catching their death of cold!

For around 80 minutes while the outside lights were turned off, I was able to show the assembled through a few of the wonders of the night sky as well as to point out Comet Hartley, a temporary visitor to our neck of the solar system and which could be seen as a fuzzy blob with the aid of a 4-inch refracting telescope that I had set up for people to view through. Although rather a disappointing and vague visual appearance through the telescope, I was able to take images of it from home later that evening using a sensitive digital camera, the result of which is shown in the accompanying photo.



Here you can see the bright nucleus of the comet surrounded by the diffuse light of the 'coma' which is made up of gas and dust escaping from the nucleus into the vacuum of space, it having been warmed by the sun. The picture took 50 minutes to expose during which time the telescope followed the moving comet so that the background stars are seen as short streaks on the image. The coma shown here is just a little smaller than the apparent size of the full moon but of course, very much fainter. I was able to explain that come 4 November, a NASA spacecraft will fly past the nucleus at a distance of almost 400 miles relaying back pictures in the process. It should be quite some news story if successful.

Probably the most dramatic stage in the proceedings was the sighting of the Andromeda Galaxy seen with the unaided eye by most if not all the participants – the fact that the light from the galaxy had taken over 2 million years to reach the earth was a pretty staggering thought especially when considering the fact that light travels at a speed of over 186,000 miles per second! Jupiter and three of its satellites were also a fine sight in the telescope, the fourth Galilean satellite, named Io, being invisible as it happened to be passing in front of

the bright disk of the planet at the time.

N.B. We still have another stargazing date in the diary, namely **Sunday 7 November**. Hopefully we shall have clear skies once again – let's hope so. Do come along as all are invited.

Richard Miles

Garden Club report

The first meeting of the season was well attended and we all enjoyed a very interesting talk by Picket Lane Nurseries on Twelve Months of Perennial Colour, when, among other things, we were told how to delay plants flowering by cutting them back.

Next month's meeting on 10 November is the AGM, followed by Neil Gillard talking about his trip to Uganda with the Scouts.

There will be plants to swap so if anybody has any spare plants do please bring them along.

Nikki Hale

Garden tip

The manure, hay, straw and silage which has been deposited onto the road by farm vehicles has conveniently collected into the gutters and verges. This makes excellent organic material to add to your compost heap or to spread onto your flower beds or vegetable gardens.

Rainfall for August and September 2010

August 49 mm/1.9 inches similar to 48 mm/1.89 inches in 2009.

September 32 mm/1.25 inches compared with 21mm/.83 inches in 2009.

Do you keep records of the weather?

The Stourton Caundler is looking for a new weather reporter—to report on daily average temperatures. Can you help?

Please contact the Editor or Margaret McKay

The village's allotments – a different approach

As a result of a recent Caundler report on Parish Council matters, I've found myself nominated as the contact person regarding our allotments. At the Flower Show in early September, an appeal was made for anyone interested in taking on all or part of one of them to come forward. To date, the response has been a deafening silence, which leads me to wonder whether a new approach is needed.

Currently there are five separate areas, each quite large, only one of which is committed for next year, leaving a potentially large area uncultivated, and the fear is that, if they remain unused, the owners (NDDC) may well decide to develop them.

In order to work, the plan needs a minimal commitment from fifteen to twenty people. Basically, the idea would be that the entire vacant area would be worked in common, with each person putting in a sum of money to cover rotovator hire, seeds, bean sticks, etc. In return, everyone gets the chance to have a say in what they want grown in the way of vegetables, so that we grow the majority of what different people want. Each week, a designated team would hoe, weed, etc. Hopefully, a team of four or five could keep things under control in a couple of hours, and no team would have to do more than one week in four. For the sake of a couple of hours per month you'd get a substantial proportion of your vegetable requirements and reduce the housekeeping bills.

So this is your opportunity to get the benefit of a large variety of fresh, good vegetables with zero food miles and the knowledge that you've put in a little bit of effort to help grow them. If this all sounds like a reasonable idea, please contact me soon, it'll take time to fine tune the idea to suit everybody. I'm on 362890 – get in touch.

John Waltham

Parish Council notes

A meeting was held on 29 September, to approve plans formally for an extension and new access at Hill Cottage. There were no objections.

The play area has 'passed' its annual R.O.S.P.A. inspection and the Parish Council's accounts have been audited with no issues raised.

A new Parish Councillor will be co-opted at the next meeting. Please apply in writing to the Clerk (see page 5) if you are interested.

The date of the next meeting is Wednesday, 24 November 2010, at 7.30 pm, in the Village Hall.

Welcome Club report

At the October meeting the club held its AGM. The Chairman gave his annual report followed by the Secretary and Treasurer's report. The club goes from strength to strength and now has 40 members. We have had a good variety of speakers and invite anyone who would like to hear a specific speaker to join us as a guest for the afternoon. A list of future speakers will be on the notice boards .

After formalities were completed we were entertained by Margaret Adams, "a farmer's wife" from Castle Cary. Margaret writes and performs her own humorous verse about her life on the farm with her husband the "Boss". It was good to hear everyone laughing.

Next month we have Mickey Fitzpatrick giving a talk entitled Nine to Five, an illustration of life with a collection of monologues.

It is also nearing the time for our Christmas bazaar so if anyone has unwanted gifts or other items suitable for the stalls please get in touch with Helen, Olive, Delia or Margaret. We have several new stalls this year, cards, preserves, Advent calendars, Christmas stockings, crafts etc so please come along even if it's only for a mince pie and a cup of tea.

Helen Bennett

2011 Calendars

Helen Bennett now has a supply of her 2011 Stourton Caundle Picture Calendars available. A4 size. Price £6.00 each. Proceeds to the Welcome Club. Please ring 01963 362929 for information.

Dorset Historic Churches Trust cycle ride

This year our cyclists raised £603.50. Half of this amount goes to the Dorset Historic Churches Trust and the other half to St Peter's Church Stourton Caundle. Well done everybody.

Olivia Bastable

We plough the fields

Another year has gone by and it was time to gather again for the annual harvest supper held in the village hall on Saturday 9 October.

The evening was kick-started by Rev. William Ridding suggesting, instead of saying grace, we all sing it and a fine rendition of 'We plough the fields and scatter' ensued.

Eighty-eight people then sat down and tucked into shepherds pie accompanied with various salads, followed by a feast of splendid desserts, with coffee and mints to finish. Jeffrey Archer was famous for his shepherds pie and champagne parties, but the ladies of Stourton Caundle and their shepherds pie would put him a distant second.

The meal was followed by a raffle and an auction of a fine old bottle of whisky. The auction was conducted by John Waltham with his usual aplomb.

Then the action really started with the Barn Dancing.

With seventy people on the floor all doing their own thing it was like 'Strictly Come Dancing' on the M25. Thanks to everyone who contributed to the food, all masterminded by Chris and Gerry Holdstock, and to the volunteers who helped with the mountain of washing up. Thanks also to Kevin for providing the bar.

A grand evening. Here's to next year.

Colin McKay

Recipe of the month

WITCHY FINGERS FOR HALLOWEEN (Makes approx 26-28)

220g (7 ¾ oz) butter	425-450g (15oz- 1lb) plain flour
125g (4 ½ oz) icing sugar	1 tsp baking powder
1 egg	1 tsp salt
1 tsp almond extract	About 30 flaked almonds
1 tsp vanilla extract	Red decorating gel (optional)

Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas Mark 4. Line 2 baking sheets with baking parchment.

Cream the butter and icing sugar in an electric mixer until light and fluffy. Add the egg together with the almond and vanilla extracts and beat until smooth. In a separate bowl, sift the flour with the baking powder and salt. Add to the butter mixture and stir to combine. Add a little more flour if the dough feels sticky.

Roll the dough into tablespoon-sized balls, then form into index finger-shaped logs and place on baking sheet. Flatten slightly at the knuckles and make little wrinkle lines with the tip of a knife. Put a drop of red decorating gel at the tip of each finger, if using, and stick a flaked almond over to form a fingernail. Don't worry if the almonds are cracked – that only adds to the creepiness of the fingers!

Bake for 12-15 minutes, until the fingers are golden and cooked through. Allow to cool on the baking sheets, then transfer to wire racks to cool completely.

Store in airtight containers for 3-5 days, or freeze for up to 2 months.

Nikki Hale



Christmas Bazaar



Village Hall

20 Nov 2010

2.00 pm

Toys
Cards
Cakes
Tombola
Preserves
Christmas Gifts
Books

Cakes and small items for the tombola would be gratefully appreciated.

Please contact Helen 362929 or Margaret 364621 or any member of the Welcome Club.

