



Wightlink (again)

Wightlink are having problems with both staff and ferry reliability. It seems every week or so some ferries are cancelled and the company policy is to redirect customers to another route, or give a much later sailing time. It's the airline approach offering compensation if you ask for it (details on the Wightlink website). If this happens to you please do make a claim and tell everyone else on the ferry to make one. Paying out large sums in compensation may help focus the mind.

What of the future? – the St. Faith may have three more years before being sold off leaving 3 small and two large ferries to operate two routes. In addition to this Portsmouth City Council are intending to introduce charges to drivers of older lorries, taxis and buses who enter the city. The charge has been set at £20 per day. These proposals have been scaled down from the original suggestion. However once these are in place the scope may be expanded to include older cars if the air quality in the city does not improve significantly. The City Council have suggested to Wightlink several times that the company should relocate to the international ferry terminal and this may be nudging Wightlink towards

this so their customers avoid the congestion charge. It's also possible Wightlink may build a freight only ferry (as Red Funnel have) which could operate from the international port. This move has always been resisted as the extra sailing time would make the two hour round trip nearer to two and a half hours and thus reduce capacity on the route.

As always, we are seeking answers (a meeting was arranged with them before Christmas but cancelled by Wightlink) but maybe the Directors have yet to agree their strategy, or indeed are awaiting to see exactly what Portsmouth City Council actually do. Rest assured we will continue to pursue this.

Malcolm Hector (Chairman)

RVYC Spring 2020

Spring is just around the corner and much hard work preparing boats is taking place in gardens and on the creek in anticipation of Easter activities on the water!

The Commissioning Cup on 29 March will see the RVYC fleet back afloat, after our Fitting Out Supper on 21 March. Sunday racing then starts in earnest with the Island Ales series. The Scows take to the water on 28 April for their Thursday Spring series.

The bar and galley remain open with superb Wednesday night talks, fun quizzes plus ongoing exhibitions by Club artists. Our prize giving in December and AGM in January were both well supported. Congratulations to all prize winners. Thank you to all committee members and volunteers for supporting their Club's activities.

The Cadets have enjoyed a winter of talks and theory. A gentle first session afloat is scheduled for 17th April as part of our new RYA 'On Board' programme. Wednesday Adult sailing starts then too and will see a wide range of craft getting folk out on the water.

As for the social calendar, summer opening hours resume on 1 April and the Club chef, Dino, and his team have a host of events planned for the coming months. Do join members for

the monthly ladies lunch and new for 2020 – gentlemen's lunch on second and fourth Thursday

2020 also marks a very special year for the RVYC – our 175th Anniversary! There's a range of events on and off the water during the year but centred on the weekend of 23 to 25 May when we will host an Anniversary Race, sail past and a series of social events. We'd like to see many of the club's former flag officers, officers and members who may no longer belong to the club over this weekend. If you do know any former members who you think would like to come along, please ask them to contact the office so we can keep in touch.

We also plan to have a photo display, so if you have any photos of your time at the club, please drop them into the office or email them to office@rvyc.org.uk.

We look forward to welcoming Fishbourne residents and their family and friends to the Club for any of our sailing and social functions. If you are bringing guests to the club, we do ask that you sign them in using the book in the lobby,

Call Rachel or Jim in the office on 882325 with any enquiries or visit the website on www.rvyc.org.uk



The winter talks are interesting and sometimes very entertaining!

Winter Talks at the RVYC

Wednesday February 5th and 12th
Story of the hovercraft – Part 1 and Part 2. The development and early experiments of the hovercraft

Wednesday February 19th
Ski Touring in the Alps Everthing you wanted to know about ski touring

Wednesday February 26th
Barging through Europe

March 4th
Norris Castle a chequered history

March 11th
Desperate Island Discs – Reprise
Members choose their special music



Clerk's Corner

Firstly, let me introduce myself and wish you all a very Happy New Year! Although not a Fishbourne resident I am a true Caulkhead and originate from Binstead, so almost local! I was Clerk to Newport PC for 10 years and have been Clerk to Chillerton and Gatcombe Parish Council for 12 years, so I hope, at least from the admin viewpoint, I can fill the gap left by Sheila.

I'm still getting my feet under the table but have a few things to bring to your attention:

The Dragonfly Project:

The Dragonfly Project started in 2016 with delivery across Dorset to identify victims of domestic violence and abuse (DVA) who are isolated within their own communities.

They train Champions living and working in our communities so they are able to receive and respond to disclosures of DVA and work together to end misplaced stigma to enable people in our communities to access support and help for themselves if they are experiencing DVA.

They hope to roll this out across the Island and have organised workshops in January at Millcourt in Newport on Wednesday 22, from 12 to 2pm, and Wednesday 29, from 10am to 12.30pm. Please contact Susan Marsh if you would like to attend – susan.marsh@theyoustrust.org.uk

IW Housing Needs Survey

Following publication of the draft Island Planning Strategy for consultation earlier in 2019, there was significant concern expressed about the number of homes being planned for the Island. Many residents have already responded to the consultation draft planning strategy and the Isle of Wight Council is continuing to work on the evidence-base for this work and on Monday 6 January 2020 will launch a local needs housing survey (running for six weeks). They will be encouraging households to complete this survey.

To access the survey please use the link below: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/IWHousingNeeds2020>.

Southern Water

Southern Water offer a number of schemes to help residents save on their water bills.

■ Water efficiency home visits – these last for up to 2 hours and are completely free. They involve an assessment of water usage in your home and the installation of products worth over £100 by a qualified engineer where needed to save water, energy and money.

For more details tel: 0333 240 0255 or Email: waterefficiencyteam@southernwater.co.uk

Priority Services Register

■ Priority Services ensures that people in special circumstances can access water services – such as extra support if there's a disruption to their water supply and large print, braille bills, audio (CD) or digital bills.

Maxine Warr



Plant a tree and save the planet

If you have room in your garden for another tree the website of the Woodland Trust may be of interest. They have a wide range of trees that can be purchased online from £6.95 (including postage and packing).

shop.woodlandtrust.org.uk

What's happening in our area in the coming months

Quarr Abbey Art Gallery

Below are the dates for forthcoming exhibitions in the gallery at Quarr.

13-25th February

Lyn Pearce

27th February – 3rd March

Totland Bay Mosaic Arts Company

5th – 10th March

Finding Solitude-Island to Island

Lilly Louise Allen

12th – 17th March

5 Bells Art Group

26th – 31st March

Br. Duncan Smith

2nd – 7th April

Dee Cooke

9th – 14 April

Gerald Hinchliffe

Gallery will be closed on Good Friday 10 April

The Fishbourne

February

After abstaining during 'Dry January' why not enjoy a 'Full on February', 25% off a selection of drinks available all month.

March – 2nd to 8th

March is The Fishbourne's 'Pie and Pint week'. Feast on a selection of pies and wash down with a selected pint of lager or real ale.

You can also continue to take advantage of our special "Two for One" offer. Visit our website for details.

Book online www.thefishbourne.co.uk

Reservations for all events can be made at the pub or by telephone 01983 882823

The Church of the Holy Cross, Binstead

Social Programme

1st February 12.30pm for 1pm

Candlemas Lunch at Appley Manor Hotel

11th February 12 noon

Food, Friends and Fellowship Lunch at Holy Cross

7th March from 10 to 12 noon

Holy Cross Crafts Coffee Morning at Holy Cross

14th February 7.30pm

Showing of the film 'Chocolat' at Holy Cross

10th March 12 noon – 1.30pm

Lent Lunch at Holy Cross in aid of the Bishop's Lent Appeal

21st March 12 noon – 1.30pm

Lent Lunch at Holy Cross in aid of the Bishop's Lent Appeal

Nature Notes

What to see in January



Dark-edged Bee-fly nectaring on narrow-leaved lungwort at Briddlesford Woods NR

Photo: Jim Baldwin

The larger environmental charities are normally associated with trying to raise awareness of problems to the environment like habitat loss, climate change and species extinction. However there are some excellent smaller charities on our doorstep, all of whom are making great contributions both locally, nationally and internationally.

A lot of people may be unaware of the work of the People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) who own the 100 acre Briddlesford Woods nature reserve at Wootton Bridge.

Locally, the work at Briddlesford Woods to this ancient, semi-natural woodland over the past twenty years has resulted in one of the few places in the UK where endangered dormice and red squirrels can both be found. Two species of rare bat, *Barbastelle* and *Bechstein's*, also breed there. Consequently the woodlands have been designated as both a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Special Area for Conservation. This gives it the highest legal protection.

The site is also of interest for its insect and plant life. One of the most important features of the woodland plant life is the abundance of narrow-leaved lungwort. This species is restricted in Britain to ancient woodlands on the shores and tributaries of the Solent.

Wildlife monitoring takes place throughout the year at the woods to ensure that the woodland management is helping the flora and fauna to thrive. I count myself fortunate to cover a weekly butterfly survey at the woods from March to September, weather permitting.

Obviously due to the sensitive nature of the site, the majority of the reserve is private but PTES do run occasional events during the year when the public can come and see the beautiful flora and fauna. Hurst Copse and Briddlesford Parkland are open throughout the year to the public and have an impressive variety of species which we will cover in later newsletters.

PTES also run a number of national surveys for hedgehogs, stag beetles, mammals in the garden, water voles, dormice, hedgerows, orchards, wood pasture and parkland. Further details of these surveys can be found at <https://ptes.org/get-involved/surveys/>.

The data from these surveys is uploaded to the national databank for biodiversity each year, the NBN Atlas, and make the records accessible to all Local Records Centres. This allows other people to use the information to guide conservation action. Locally PTES has a data sharing partnership with the iWatch Wildlife project run by the I.W Natural History & Archaeological Society so your sightings are invaluable.

The winter months sees the arrival of large numbers of waterbirds to the northern coastline and estuaries of the Isle of Wight.

Ryde Sands is a site of national importance for Sanderling, the delightful little waders who scurry along the tideline like clockwork mice busily searching for food.

The site suffers from heavy recreational use with walkers, dog walkers and watersport activities. This can cause disturbance problems to the birds trying to feed during the limited daylight hours and governed by the tidal cycle if people hug the tideline.

It can prove fatal with the birds using up their energy reserves flying away from the disturbance if they do not have enough time to feed. This is the equivalent of sitting down to a meal then the doorbell rings. You return to eat your meal and the phone rings. By the time you return to the table it



Sanderling at Ryde Sands (the colour leg rings will feature in a future newsletter)

Photo: Jim Baldwin

is time to leave and you do not have another opportunity to eat for another six hours during which time you are outside braving the winter elements. How would you feel?

Bird Aware Solent is a brilliant initiative to raise awareness of the birds that spend the winter on the Solent, so that people can enjoy the coast and its wildlife without disturbing the birds.

You will see the rangers along our coast, the Island ranger is Charlotte Goswell aided by her colleagues, engaging with visitors and communities to help people learn about the different species of bird and understand the impact of bird disturbance.

Bird Aware Solent has provided the following tips to reduce disturbance:

- Look out for birds feeding and resting on the coast
- Take care not to scare or disturb them
- Move further away if a bird becomes alert and stops feeding
- Stay on the paths where they exist
- Always follow requests on signs
- Exercise your dog away from resting or feeding birds to avoid disturbing them
- Keep your dog in sight and on a short lead if you cannot rely on its obedience
- Don't forget to clean up after your dog
- If you are going out on the water contact the local harbour authority for special guidance
- Tell your friends and family about Bird Aware Solent

For further details please visit their website <http://www.birdaware.org>

Recent sightings

I am pleased to see that the Curlew and Brent Geese have returned to the Mill Pond and the adjacent fields for the winter. The high tide wader roost at Fishbourne, the shingle bank behind the ferry terminal, holds good numbers of Oystercatcher and Curlew.

The mild winter weather has resulted in butterfly sightings up to the end of December and into the beginning of January on the Island. Red Admiral, Peacock and one of the white species have all been recorded.

Jim Baldwin

Copy for the next issue of the Newsletter by 14th March at the latest. Please send to sarah.talbot44@btinternet.com



News from Quarr Abbey

As we now enter 2020, fond memories of the Christmas Season stay with us. The fantastic Nativity scene created by Br. Duncan, the ever popular carol service, the Christmas meals enjoyed in the Teashop and the fine Christmas party provided to thank the Staff, Volunteers and Friends that make everything possible.

Thoughts now turn to the projects and challenges ahead of us for this year. Discussions have already taken place with regard to priorities for 2020, and these include roof works on the Abbey building, a Teashop facelift, that will see a larger service counter and kitchen, as well as painting and decorating.

The 'Nammet Room' is a new addition for 2020 which will provide a comfortable space for volunteers and staff when working at Quarr. This was part funded by the 'Down to the Coast' grant and Fishbourne Parish Council. Thank you. We will also be relaunching the Volunteer programme. We hope to welcome lots more volunteers over the years to come, to ensure Quarr Abbey continues to flourish.

We at Quarr wish you all a very happy new year and we look forward to seeing you soon.

Matt Noyce - Estate Manager

Presentation by Amey and the Footprint Trust

The Royal Victoria Yacht Club is hosting Simon Butler from Amey and Ray Harrington-Vail from the Footprint Trust on the 28th February at 1830hrs. They will be talking about what happens to our waste, how we can reduce the waste mountain, and help the environment. All residents in the Parish are welcome to attend.

Those interested in contributing further to the environmental debate are invited to attend the Environmental and Sustainability Forum – the next meeting of which is on the 20th February and will be held at 1730hrs in County Hall. You can get more details from Councillor Talbot.

Eleanor of Aquitaine *A Local Connection*

Continued from last issue

The match between King Louis and Eleanor was ill starred and the Queen complained that she was wedded to a monk. Only a daughter had been born by 1147 when King Louis and Queen Eleanor embarked on the second disastrous Crusade. The French army was badly mauled in Anatolia and limped across to Syria. There King Louis was infuriated by the intimacy of his wife with her uncle, Prince Raymond of Antioch. Eleanor sought the annulment of her marriage on grounds of consanguinity. Pope Eugenius III persuaded husband and wife to reconcile and a second daughter was born.

By 1152 King and Queen were equally keen to cut loose. The annulment was agreed. Eleanor immediately took a new husband – young Henry Plantagenet, Count of Anjou – making him the largest landowner in France. Two years later Henry was King of England.

At one level, Eleanor's second marriage was a great success. She gave Henry five sons and three daughters. Richard and John would in turn be Kings of England. Two of the daughters would become Queens in their own right – Eleanor of Castile and Joanna of Sicily. Matilda would marry the future Emperor Otto IV of Germany.

Yet their marriage became utterly toxic. Eleanor incited her sons to rebel against their father. Henry retaliated by depriving his wife of her liberty. For the last fifteen years of her husband's reign, from 1174 to 1189, Queen Eleanor was kept in closeted isolation from the Plantagenet court. Only when King Henry's death brought his second son, Richard, to the throne did she regain her freedom.

Nobody knows where the Queen was confined. Her association with Quarr seems conjectural. Possibly the New Copse owners base their claim on a lecture given by Fr. Francis Davis on Quarr Abbey in May 1903 – in which he stated that Queen Eleanor was imprisoned at Quarr, wrongly speculated that she might have died and been buried there, but supplied no evidence of her presence beyond the fact that the secluded grove of trees south of the abbey ruins was marked on maps as 'Alender's Grove'.

'Legend', therefore, but not a wholly implausible one. Quarr Abbey, quietly remote on the Isle of Wight, would

have been an ideal 'safe house' for immurement of a Plantagenet Queen. Its patrons included Matilda, mother of King Henry II, and Bishop Henry of Winchester, brother of King Stephen. In 1216, William de Vernon, Lord of the Isle of Wight, died at Quarr. He had been a friend of Eleanor's son, King Richard 1.

King Richard 'the Lion Heart', lived and died a French prince. During his nine year reign, he spent just weeks in England. Was there another king less sympathetic to English nationalism or parliamentary democracy? Richard was besieging yet another castle in France when, in 1199, he was struck in the shoulder by a crossbow bolt fired from its walls. He died thirteen days later – in the arms of Eleanor of Aquitaine.

There were now two claimants to the English Crown; Richard's brother John and his nephew Arthur, offspring of Eleanor's third son, the deceased Duke Geoffrey of Brittany. When, in 1202, with the support of King Philip of France, Arthur renewed his claim to the throne, Eleanor took up arms in support of King John. The fifteen year old prince besieged his grandmother in her castle of Mirebeau, only to be captured by John, moving fast to Eleanor's rescue. Arthur was imprisoned in Falaise Castle. No one knows his fate. It may be that, as one chronicler wrote, he was blinded and castrated. One must assume his death. For Eleanor, it will have been a desperately sombre tragedy.

Eleanor's life ended on 1 April, 1204. By then she had outlived all ten of the children of her two marriages, save King John of England and Queen Eleanor of Castile. In an age when most died before forty, the redoubtable Queen Dowager was entering her ninth decade. She was buried in Fontevrault Abbey, next to her husband Henry and son Richard.

Let us recall the vivid distinction of Eleanor of Aquitaine. In her youth she was described as 'perpulchra' – more than beautiful. When she was thirty, Bernard de Ventadour, a noted troubadour, acclaimed her as 'gracious, lovely, the embodiment of charm (with) lovely eyes and noble countenance'. We can yet hold before our eyes the image of a proud princess from southern France, stepping gracefully among the trees in the secluded grove to which local tradition has given her name.

Councillor Patrick Tobin