

December  
2009

## Halloween Quiz Night



Another great quiz night was held on 30th October with many adults and children wearing the optional Halloween fancy dress.

Quiz Master was Andy Higgs and the scorer was John Collier who kindly stepped in at the last moment to help out.

The quiz was won by the Daring Devils who took away 8 bottles of wine and the donuts were won by M & S + Dave.

A good time was had by all and after expenses another £191 was put into the North Stifford Village Community Group funds which will be spent to make improvements in our village.

You can view more pictures taken during the quiz night on the village website [www.northstiffordvillage.co.uk](http://www.northstiffordvillage.co.uk) then go to 'Picture Gallery' - 'Halloween 2009'  
We welcome caption suggestions for any of the pictures shown.

## Thanks and farewell to Terry Croarkin

As Chairman of the North Stifford Village Community Group, I would formally like to say thank you to Terry Croarkin for the sterling work that he has carried out whilst being a Committee Member.

Unfortunately, Terry has now moved away from the village and resigned from his position. We all wish him every success and happiness in his new place.

Whilst he was with us, he was highly active, throwing himself into the work that he undertook which included editing this newsletter, organising entertainment, and raising money for the village; he is a hard act to follow.

In his going, he leaves a challenge to all who remain to carry on the good work with the same level of vigour and good humour with which he attacked it. I can assure you, as committee members, we are all missing him sorely.

However, as you read this newsletter you may notice that its style has changed considerably from what you have received in the past. From this, I'm sure you will realise that Cliff has bravely taken up that challenge and all I can say is, "Wow! Watch this space."

Dennis Brockhurst, Chair NSVCG

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## North Stifford Village



From an original sketch by Joshua Taylor Esq.

It's hard to believe that our village once looked like this. St. Mary's Church and Rectory to the left and Stifford Lodge (now Park Inn) to your right.

Is that the Local Yokel on the pathway holding his stick?

## Remembrance Service

There was a magnificent turn out for the Remembrance Service  
On Sunday 8th November at St. Mary's Church

The service was conducted by Pastor Dennis Brockhurst



**The first two minute silence (London 11<sup>th</sup> November 1919)**  
as reported in a newspaper dated 12<sup>th</sup> November 1919.

'The first stroke of eleven produced a magical effect.

The tram cars glided into stillness, motors ceased to cough and fume, and stopped dead, and the mighty-limbed dray horses hunched back their loads and stopped also, seeming to do it of their own volition.

Someone took off his hat, and with a nervous hesitancy the rest of the men bowed their heads also. Here and there an old soldier could be detected slipping unconsciously into the posture of 'attention'. An elderly woman, not far away, wiped her eyes, and the man beside her looked white and stern. Everyone stood very still ... The hush deepened. It had spread over the whole city and become so pronounced as to impress one with a sense of audibility. It was a silence which was almost pain ... And the spirit of memory brooded over it all.'

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## Village Newsletter

If you have any comments or articles to contribute.

Please contact the editor Cliff Cowin:-

Email: [editor@northstiffordvillage.co.uk](mailto:editor@northstiffordvillage.co.uk) or Telephone: 01375 376483

You can always find the latest information on the Village notice boards  
(one outside the village hall and the other on the green at Stifford Green)

Or the village website [www.northstiffordvillage.co.uk](http://www.northstiffordvillage.co.uk)

## **PUBLIC MEETING 21<sup>ST</sup> October, 2009. North Stifford Village Community Group**

Herewith, a brief summary of topics covered at the above meeting for those who were unable to attend.

James Preston, the new community policeman for North Stifford and Chafford Hundred was introduced. He reported that overall crime figures showed a decrease in the area. Police Newsletter on page 11.

Benches donated by the Dog & Partridge are now in place on the village green. The benches are second hand, but new ones may replace them in the future if vandalism is not a problem. Thanks to Martin, Graham and Lee for their renovation work and the laying of slabs etc.

A new litter bin at the children's play area has improved the rubbish problem.

### **Stifford Green Development.**

Planning permission is being applied for again for 80 dwellings plus another 150 dwellings for flats. This has already been opposed, and a petition submitted. There does not seem to be much else we can do now but wait.

### **Social Events.**

It was felt that the successful barbeque evening held on the village green on 21<sup>st</sup> August could be repeated next year, but would possibly be better earlier in the summer.

*You can view pictures taken at the 2009 Barbecue night on the village website [www.northstiffordvillage.co.uk](http://www.northstiffordvillage.co.uk) then go to 'Picture Gallery' - 'Barbecue 2009'*  
*We welcome caption suggestions for any of the pictures shown.*

### **Communication.**

It is hoped that the new village website will be a useful way of communicating local information to the community. [www.northstiffordvillage.co.uk](http://www.northstiffordvillage.co.uk)

### **The Rainbow Park Project.**

The Chafford Hundred and North Stifford Forum are raising money to turn this parcel of waste land between Warren and Rainbow Lanes into a park for the community.

Volunteers to help on land clearing days are very welcome.

Contact: Philomena 01375 481308 or [www.chaffordhundredcf.org.uk](http://www.chaffordhundredcf.org.uk)

### **Guest Speaker**

Steve Mitchell, warden of Davy Down gave an update of recent events and planned future events at the riverside park.

He reported that there has been recurring pollution from leaking sewage pipes. Steve has repeatedly complained to the Anglia Water/Sewage Authority, but this does not seem to have much effect, but he said complaints from residents might make them take more notice.

Flooding at the Field of Peace has been caused by dredged mud being piled on the river banks and preventing proper land drainage. Steve advised that the Environmental Agency should be contacted.

Steve commented in respect of The Stifford Green Development, that we need to protect what little green areas are left, and there are laws to protect certain species of plants grassland and reptiles. Audience members confirmed sightings of snakes, bats and lizards. [www.davydown.org.uk](http://www.davydown.org.uk)

### **Village in Bloom.**

The Manager of the Park Inn has agreed to pay for bulbs to be planted on the green outside the hotel.

Further plants have been ordered and planting areas identified. Some money from fund raising events could be allocated to the project. The overgrown war memorial on Stifford Green is in much need of tidying up.

It was not thought likely we would be ready to enter 'Village in Bloom' next year as much work needs to be done to bring the village up to standard. Volunteers are needed for clearing and planting work, also donations or plants to help with this project are very welcome. Please contact Maureen 01375 384315 or Lee 01375 398928.

### **Other Business:**

Replacement of the flag pole in the churchyard was suggested.

Flood lights were suggested for the church.

### **Insufficient Local Support for Funding.**

The entire Annual Forum Budget of £8,900 has now been spent.

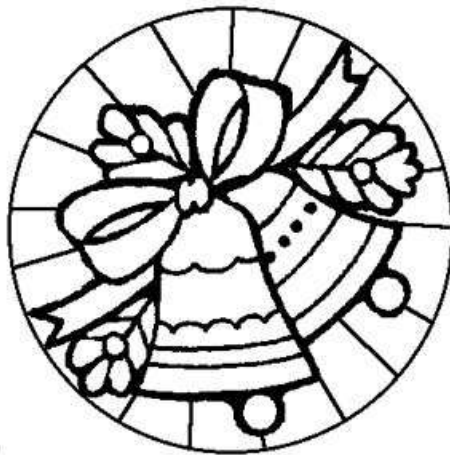
At previous meetings other groups had put in bids and had good representation for voting. North Stifford received very little (only one planter when two had been requested and a small amount for administration).

This was because the village was not well represented and there were not enough villagers present to support our bid. It is essential that our residents turn up at the Chafford Forum meetings especially when North Stifford is requesting funding.

Communication is imperative and we should ensure that all meetings and information must be regularly updated on the notice boards and the North Stifford Village website.

**We look forward to seeing you at the next Public Meeting  
Wednesday 20th January 2010, Village Hall 7.30 for 8 p.m.**

**Christmas**  
**Colouring**  
**2009**



The North Stifford Village Community Group  
wish all the residents of North Stifford a  
Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



# The Explorers at Chafford Gorges

By Maureen Nicholas

It was a cold autumn day when the three explorers set off on their journey. The older member was the leader, driver, navigator and carrier of all survival needs for the day, who gave last minute instructions such as don't forget coats, boots and gloves.

The youngest was really more intent just getting himself to the venue as quickly as possible and had no thought of those important items that would be needed for the venture ahead of them. The other explorer claimed the rucksack full of vital equipment that would be needed for the hunt. The journey was only about twenty minutes, but this didn't deter the usual questions, "is it far" and "are we there yet"?

Once at the destination there was extra equipment to be purchased from the store, so as to ensure that there would not be any disputes about who had what, that would disrupt the day.



Warren Gorge

The journey began with a steep decline that wound down to a gorge. It was reasonably safe, but the path was gravelled and the youngest explorer, over keen to reach the bottom, ran into trouble, despite warnings from the leader. The fall wasn't too bad and the injury small and with a quick wipe down of hands, he was up and thankfully, not running. When reaching the end of the path, there was a decision as to the best route to take. The leader allowing younger members of the party to choose which path they should take; the eldest took one look down the narrow and shadowy option and decided it looked too dangerous. The choice appeared to be a good one as the youngest group member had already run off towards the open plain.

## The Explorers (continued)

They came across a lake with species of wild birds that waddled expectantly towards them. They stood their ground and armed with a bag of seed they decoyed the assault, and were soon on their way. The birds now eagerly feeding, they continued with their adventure, looking for smaller species that would fit in their little nets. They dragged these through the grass capturing spiders and insects. It took some time as at this time of year the undergrowth was a little sparse. The eldest explorer gleefully emptied his catch into the magnifying pot to study and reach for his special bug book and with the leaders help set about to identify them.

The youngest explorer was impatient to do the same; therefore the first catch was set to one side so the exercise was repeated. However, he was not too impressed by the selection of bugs and ran off towards a small group of trees to try and find something more interesting, like dinosaurs! So the others went back to study the first catch, where they discovered that in the magnifying pot one of the spiders had made a web. With interest the eldest explorer, on seeing that he wasn't the only one to make a catch, exclaimed, "Some of the insects are caught in the spider's web" to which the leader retorted "It looks like the spider's having his dinner"

Perhaps, being reminded about the feelings of hunger in their own stomachs, they emptied the contents and decided to find the dinosaur hunter, hoping that if he had found one he hadn't become the dinosaur's dinner!

If anyone has any other articles for inclusion in the next newsletter, please forward to: [editor@northstiffordvillage.co.uk](mailto:editor@northstiffordvillage.co.uk)

Can anyone help?

If anyone has had any experience or information about the running of a Horse Racing Night please email to: [info@northstiffordvillage.co.uk](mailto:info@northstiffordvillage.co.uk)

**Councillor Surgeries** - First Saturday each month  
North Stifford Village Hall - 10:00am - 11:00am  
Councillor Garry Hague and Councillor Neil Rockliffe

### Save this newsletter for your Christmas & New Year waste collections for North Stifford

Monday	December 21st	Normal
Wednesday	December 31st	Changed
Wednesday	January 6th	Changed
Tuesday	January 12th	Changed
Monday	January 18th	Normal



## Christmas Presents

By Pastor Dennis Brockhurst (07958 765598)  
North Stifford Family Church

Do you have the same problem as me?

Every year it is the same problem, Christmas is just around the corner and I haven't got a clue what presents to buy for the family.

It's normally OK with friends; we seem to know them well enough. We remember the little things that they say; the things that make them laugh, even sometimes the things they don't like. You know, the turned up nose of rebuff as they look at some things that are not just quite right for them. It isn't hard for us; we just seem to instinctively know what they would really like and money is seldom the problem.

But for the family - my mind just goes blank! You so much want to get it right and buy something that they would like, but what on earth is it and how much should you spend on it?

If you ask what they would like, you know the answers you will get: Harry wants a Ferrari (he always does), Alice wants a holiday in the Bahamas (oh yes, wouldn't that be nice!) What are they thinking of - are we made of money? The answer that irritates me the most is when they say, "Oh Anything will do." Maybe one year I should buy them a turnip just to see how much that will really do.

Why is it that we can get it right with our friends so easily, but for our families it is so much of a problem? Could it be that we know our friends well enough, or could it be that we know our families just a little too well? Maybe the difference is because we like our friends but we love our families.

Whatever the difference is, it really does seem to affect us when it comes to buying Christmas presents.

It used to be bad enough when I made fruitless shopping trips looking for a present for one member of the family, but now – with the benefit of modern technology – I can spend twice as long searching the Internet for that elusive present and still not find it. Doesn't it make you want to scream?

**AAAAAAAARGH!!!**

Is it just us, or is this a world-wide problem that everyone suffers from?

You know, God never seemed to have this problem. At exactly the right time, when He needed something really special for us, He found it with no problem at all. At Christmas, God gave His only Son to die for us and He gave us a promise that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Price wasn't a problem for God, the cost was enormous and He paid it in full.

Wow... What a fabulous present to give and how great it is to receive it?

If you haven't received that present yet, talk to someone in a church. Have a great Christmas and a prosperous New Year.



## Police Newsletter for Chafford Hundred and North Stifford

Officers dedicated to your area to reduce crime.

Neighbourhood Specialist Officer  
**(NSO) James Preston**

Police Community Support Officers  
**(PCSO) Sam Harrington & (PCSO) Stacie Williams.**

Our aim is to reduce crime in the area and to make Chafford Hundred & North Stifford a safer place to live.

Fireworks can not be used outside the hours of 11pm – 7am, exception are Fireworks Night, New Years Eve, Chinese New Years and Diwali ending at 01:00am. Anyone using fireworks outside the hours shown above are committing an offence for which they can get a £80 Fixed Penalty Notice.

### Crime Prevention

If you would like to meet your Neighbourhood policing team to get some crime prevention advice then please get in touch with us. Details below.

If you are having problems or you are a victim of crime please DO report it. If we do not hear from you then we cannot help.

If you need any help do not hesitate to contact us on:-  
0300 3334444 ext 70164 NPT Mobile 07779319907

or by e-mail. james.preston@essex.pnn.police.uk  
samantha.harrington@essex.pnn.police.uk  
stacie.williams@essex.pnn.police.uk

**0300 333 4444** – New phone number for Essex Police

The latest crime reports can be found on [www.northstiffordvillage.co.uk](http://www.northstiffordvillage.co.uk)

### Car Windscreen Smashed

On Saturday 7th November at approx 11pm, two 'hoodies' set a bunch of fireworks off in the front garden of a house in Clockhouse Lane and returned later, at approx 12 midnight, to smash the windscreen of a car. The vandals were seen running off into the Stifford Green estate.

If we work together we can stop these mindless idiots from ruining our village. If anyone has any information please contact NSO James Preston (details above).

*All that is required for evil to prevail is for good men (or women) to do nothing !*

# Christmas Services

St Mary's, High Road, North Stifford  
St Cedd's, Crammavill Street, Stifford Clays

## Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December

10:30am 'Christingle' Family Worship, St Cedd's  
4:00pm 'Christingle' Holy Communion, St Mary's



## Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December

9:00am said Holy Communion, St Mary's  
10:30am Nativity Presentation, St Cedd's  
6:30pm 9 Lessons & Carols, St Mary's  
*Mulled wine and mince pies served after the service*

## Christmas Eve - Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> December

5:30pm Family Carols by Candlelight, St Cedd's  
11:30pm Midnight Communion with Carols, St Mary's

## Christmas Day - Friday 25<sup>th</sup> December

10:30am Family Communion, St Cedd's  
[an informal communion for all ages]

## Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December

11:15am Family Communion, St Mary's

Rector: Andy Higgs,  
The Rectory, High Road, North Stifford, Grays, RM16 5UE  
01375 372733 [rector@parishofstifford.co.uk](mailto:rector@parishofstifford.co.uk)