



# Brizlincote Parish Council Newsletter

Issue 23 December 2016

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our readers**

## Mrs Lily Thomas, founder of the Burton on Trent and District Prisoners of War fund

*Researched by Teresa Wain of Stapenhill WI*



In 1915 Mrs Lily Thomas of Stapenhill founded the Burton on Trent and District Prisoners of War Fund sending parcels to POW from Burton who were facing shortages of food and clothing. After the war Lily said that her committee had sent out 5,000 parcels independently and then 20,750 parcels under the Red Cross scheme.

Lily Thomas was born Heny Lily Fridel Harris in 1875 at St Peter Port Guernsey and on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1906 Heny Harris married Edward Thomas of 34, St Leonards Street, London. Edward was a brewery manager at brewers Salt and Co. In 1911 the couple were living at 31 Malvern Street, Stapenhill.

In February 1915 Lily decided something should be done to help Burton prisoners of war in Germany. Lily sent five parcels with five shillings worth of food in them and received acknowledgment back in five weeks. She opened a subscription list in a letter to the local newspapers, but public sympathy was slow to realise the need and respond to the appeal.

Lily founded the Burton on Trent and District Prisoners of War Fund in 1915 and was the secretary of the organisation. From February 1915 to June 1918 she sent 16,120 parcels to Burton Prisoners of War at a cost of £7,000. Packing was first done at a storeroom in Lily's house in Stapenhill; each parcel required labelling and the completion of three government forms. During Easter 1916 the parcels depot moved to a lock-up shop in Main Street which still stands today facing St Peters Bridge. The depot remained there until June 1918.

In May 1915, the Mayor, Alderman J S Rowland gave his support to the establishment of a committee, whose members included Alderman T E Lowe, H W Stein, S H Evershed, Mrs J J Stockley and Mrs Webb.

*Continued on page 3*

## WINTER IS ON ITS WAY!

Autumn is upon us and soon we shall be experiencing adverse weather conditions, which mean that the roads will need attention. With this in mind, the County Council will be filling up the grit bins which are strategically placed throughout the Parish area. Parishioners are reminded of the fact that this facility is for the use of the community and not for individual use for instance, not for use on residents' drives. In the interest of everyone please observe this rule.

Staffordshire County Council has an initiative called Ice Busters. The Council provide a backpack sprayer to the Parish and we then arrange for volunteers to use the spray units to treat small amounts of footways for the benefit of all within the Parish – this may be a small area where a village shop is located or perhaps an area where there are a high number of senior citizens. To find out more about this please contact our Clerk by either: telephone 01283 814648 or email [clerk@brizlincote-pc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@brizlincote-pc.org.uk)

## Stapenhill Post Office – use it or lose it

Your local Post Office has seen a reduction in trade. Opening hours have been reduced to three days a week, please help them to keep it open by giving them your custom.





## GOOD NEIGHBOUR AWARD

### The Winners!



#### **Mr and Mrs John and Joyce Lyons are The winners of our Good Neighbour Award 2016**

They were nominated by their neighbour Mrs Wilma Burnett. She says that for the past eleven years, since her husband passed away, they have been her rock. They bring her paper every morning and check to see if she is ok. Mr Lyons cut their lawns for two years before her husband passed away and continues to do so. Every Monday morning, she goes to Mrs Lyons for coffee, as her family are not local she says it is nice to have that to look forward to.

Any little things that Mrs Burnett cannot do such as opening jars, sorting out refuse trips and putting items in the loft are sorted by Mr Lyons. She says she can call on them day or night if she has to.

She says they make her life so much better to know that she has such neighbours who are always there for her.



Brizlincote Community Speed Watch has recently agreed to expand its operating area to include Winshill, and is now renamed Tower Community Speed Watch. New Brizlincote and Winshill volunteers have recently received training at Burton Police Station to enable them to carry out Community Speed Watch. Speed Checks will be carried out in the Brizlincote and Winshill areas at sites designated by Staffordshire Police.

## December growing tips

**LAWNS** If the grass has still been growing it may be necessary to give the lawn a cut but not too close. Remove fallen leaves off lawns so they don't block out light and air to the grass. Try to avoid walking on the grass after a frost as it can damage it. Consider repairs to damaged areas and edges.

**THE GARDEN** Gather up fallen leaves from lawns, pond and borders and compost them. A great time to take hardwood cuttings. Clay soils can be improved by digging in composted bark and well-rotted manure. If shrubs need moving now is the time to do so, but don't damage the roots. It's worth checking that tree ties are secure.

**THE GREENHOUSE** Disinfect the greenhouse, after removing the last crops and debris. If you use the greenhouse in the winter then insulate as well as heat. Look carefully at plants for pest and disease, perhaps each week. Keep well ventilated and the air moving to help prevent the spread of fungal disease. Avoid getting the leaves wet when watering. Dead leaves and faded flowers should be removed, to help avoid disease.

**VEGETABLE GARDEN** Stake up any sprout stalks that are leggy. Remove any plant debris to help prevent the spread of disease. Dig over empty areas and apply organic matter, giving it time to be ready for next year. Parsnips can be left until needed, as can Turnip, Swedes, Parsnips, Celery, Brussel sprouts and Beetroot, bear in mind getting them out of frozen ground maybe impossible. Apple and pear trees like to be pruned at this time of year as do gooseberries, red currants and autumn raspberries. Check all stored fruits and vegetables on a regular basis for rot and disease. It can be a good time to plant new fruit bushes and trees but not if the ground is frozen or waterlogged.

**HOUSEPLANTS** Reduce watering of houseplants. Check that they are getting enough light; perhaps move to a sunny windowsill. It's a good time to plant Amaryllis bulbs. Cyclamen prefer a cool room and watered from below on a tray, not in the pot. Place Poinsettias in warm room, away from draughts to help them last longer. (on the day you buy them, avoid the cold) Hyacinths like a cool room, if it's too warm the flowers may not last.

Adrian Cowan

## Beaufort Road Accidents

Staffordshire County Council is pushing forward with plans to reduce speed and accidents near Hargate Road and £4,500 has been secured this financial year for the initial design phase to commence. County highways engineers will be on site on 18 November to understand what the residents and local Councillors would like, they will then produce plans ready to go out to consultation. Following some great feedback from local residents to my last update; we may be looking at two sets of full width speed humps to reduce excess speed on the dangerous bend. Attention will be paid to the size and shape of the bumps to ensure they slow speed down but not damage vehicles. As soon as the design phase is over, the plans will then be taken to Brizlincote Parish Council for scrutiny. As ever I will keep you posted through these updates and please do contact me if you have any concerns about this or indeed any issue in Brizlincote.

Conor Wileman, Staffordshire County Councillor

Last year the Parish Council participated in Heart of England in Bloom on behalf of the Parish. This year we are going to continue with the volunteers but work towards including our efforts as part of Brizlincote in Bloom. Whilst you, the Parishioners, work hard on your gardens to enter into our competition, the volunteers will work on borders and beds within the Parish especially the older part of the Parish.

We would also like to include shops and businesses throughout the Parish helping them 'dress' their properties with hanging baskets/tubs.

With this in mind we are adding two more judging sections - Best Floral Display Shop/Business and also for gardens there will be a section Best Floral Display of a large container – this could be something like a wheelbarrow.

Some of you may feel that your garden is not good enough, we know that many gardens that deserve to be rewarded are not entered into our competition, if you have a friend or neighbour in the Parish who you think should win, please encourage them to enter and we will do the same.

### Chairman's Christmas Message



Winter is here and I would like to ask you all to be neighbourly and keep an eye on the most vulnerable members of our community. If they need support and do not know where to go, we can offer guidance on the most appropriate service to call.

Your Council is working hard to make Brizlincote a more attractive and safer place to live. "Brizlincote Volunteers" are doing a great job to help make the area more attractive.

We are working with Staffordshire County Council to provide traffic calming measures at the top of Beaufort Road to make the road safer for vehicles and pedestrians. We are also in discussion with the Landlord of the shops in Woods Lane, especially the empty "Dragon Inn" take away, to also make this area more attractive. We are working with East Staffordshire Borough Council to celebrate the work of Lily Thomas and help with the restoration of her grave in Stapenhill Cemetery.

Your Councilors have not been idle and I can assure you that we will continue to work for the benefit of the whole of the Brizlincote Parish.

On behalf of all the Council I would like to wish you all a good and peaceful Christmas and a very happy New Year.

*Brian Judd, Chairman of Brizlincote Parish Council*

An Act of Parliament in August 1916 required the registration of war charities, the establishment of a committee and the appointment of an auditor. The Burton Prisoners of War Relief Fund was established and held its first meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1916 when Lily Thomas was appointed Secretary and the Dowager Lady Burton became first president. Lily Thomas' first report showed that there were 65 names on the register of POW and that 1,684 parcels had been sent.

On 1<sup>st</sup> December 1916 the government instituted a new scheme whereby privately sent parcels were discontinued and three authorised parcels per fortnight were sent to each POW. Only food and tobacco could be sent, not clothing, boots or medicine. The postmaster of Burton, Mr R H Burt arranged for postmen to collect parcels from the depot on a handcart with a maximum load of 300 lbs.

Lily eventually got a grant of £60 from the Mayor's Fund. This was welcome as by October 1917 she had 120 POW on her list. The breweries did not subscribe until 1918, but this was because they were not asked to. Lily feared a take-over and relied on unsolicited donations. Among the many organisations which assisted were the Railwaymen's Relief Committee, Silver Prize Band and the Excelsior Band. Other bodies who helped included No 1 and 2 Company Boy Scouts, Guild St Boys School who contributed a guinea a week and the girls a guinea a fortnight, plus socks. The Viola Concert Party also raised money and Mrs Gee organised scores of whist drives.

Expenditure jumped from £3,600 a year to £12,000 and the work was still growing when the cease-fire came on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918.

Burton prisoners began to arrive home in December 1918 and had a civic reception at the Town Hall. In her speech, Lily said that the Burton Committee had sent out 5,000 parcels independently and then 20,750 parcels under the Red Cross scheme.

There was another reception at St Pauls Institute on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1919 when Lily was presented with a silver tea service in recognition of her work and a number of other workers also received gifts. The presentation to Lily was made by Corporal Murkin who had been taken prisoner as early as October 1914. In her reply Lily said that the work had been a labour of love and was taken up at a time of personal bereavement. She assured the ex-POW that looking after their welfare had done her as much good as them.

She died aged 66, after a brief illness on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1941 at Spring Dale, 37 Bretby Lane (the home of her daughter and son-in-law, Thomas and Marguerite Spencer.) Her funeral took place at Stapenhill Cemetery.



*Have you even wondered who looks after the flower beds and wild flower areas located through-out Brizlincote?*

*The answer is the Brizlincote Volunteers, and they would appreciate any help you can offer. They also need sponsors, equipment and ideas. If you can help, or know someone who can call us on:*

**07572685741 or 01283814648**

### Brizlincote Parish Council Chairman Resigns

On Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2016, at the monthly Parish Meeting, our Chairman Paul Presley-Brooks tendered his resignation as both Chairman and Parish Councillor as he has now moved to a different area to pursue a new business interest.

We would like to wish him the best of luck in his future plans and thank him for all his work on the Parish Council both as Councillor and Chairman.

A new Chairman was unanimously voted in on the same evening – Councillor Brian Judd will now take over this new role. Councillor Colin Wileman was unanimously voted in to take over the role of Vice Chairman.

### New Parish Councillor

Graham Lomas, a former member of Brizlincote Parish Council has been recently co-opted back onto Brizlincote Parish Council.



Graham is married with two daughters and two grandchildren; and retired in April 2009, after 41 years of public service in the NHS as a Biomedical Scientist/Laboratory Manager. He was also an accredited Unite union representative, representing Healthcare Professions at Burton Hospitals.

Graham originally joined the Brizlincote Parish Council in April 2009, and was an active member of the Website & Publicity Committee. He commissioned the new website, and helped produce and distribute the quarterly newsletter; which have been beneficial in raising the public profile of the Parish Council. In 2015 Graham was elected as a Winshill Parish Councillor, but continued to run the Brizlincote Parish Council website and edit and publish the newsletter. He is pleased to have been co-opted back onto Brizlincote Parish Council.

### DIAL 105 TO REPORT POWER CUTS

A new phone number has been launched by electricity networks. From 6<sup>th</sup> September 2016 dialling 105 will connect callers to their local electricity operator. 105 is available to electricity customers in England, Scotland and Wales. The number can be accessed from most landlines and mobile telephones. Regardless of whom you buy your electricity from – anyone can call 105.

### Brizlincote Parish Councillors' Contact Details

Brian Judd	01283 533052	Adrian Cowan	01283 530472	Vera John	01283 542008
Colin Wileman	01283 529281	Arthur Goldstraw	01283 567974	Graham Lomas	01283 538721
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Bob Bidgood	01283 511788	John Hoddy	07597116390	Barbara Roe (Clerk)	01283 814648

### ESBC & Staffordshire CC Councillors' Contact Details

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Colin Wileman	01283 529281	colin.wileman@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk
Conor Wileman	07907 182477	conor.wileman@staffordshire.gov.uk

Brizlincote Parish Council meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month, in the ICT Suite, Violet Way Academy and Nursery, with a 7.00 pm start. (ICT Suite is situated at the rear of the Academy).

### Can We Have Your Feedback Please?

Contact Barbara Roe, Clerk, Brizlincote Parish Council;  
email **clerk@brizlincote-pc.org.uk** ,  
Phone 01283 814648 ,  
online **www.brizlincote-pc.org.uk** .

### Editorial Committee

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