Calling all Green-Fingered Gardeners

Summer is the time for colour and fragrance and the town has been decked out in some pretty impressive displays. But we believe there are, as yet, unknown beautiful oases of sculptured greenery and floral delights hiding behind garden fences. If you’re proud of your gardening skills, why not throw caution to the wind and throw open your garden to our judges? By entering the ‘Warminster in Bloom, Jubilee and Olympic Garden Competition’ you could win garden vouchers. There are different classes such as ‘Most Celebratory Hanging Basket or Container’, ‘Best Allotment’ and ‘Most Celebratory Garden (Jubilee or Olympic theme)’. All you have to do is to pick up a form from the Civic Centre or download it from the Town Council’s website, complete it and send it in. You don’t have to have a big garden and the only condition is that you have to be a resident of Warminster. So if you’re Alan Titchmarsh and you’re bursting to enter – sorry, Alan, you’re barred!

A warm welcome to our new PCSO, Mary Moore. Look out for her on the beat!

Wiltshire Citizens Advice

In the current economic climate and with the major changes to the benefit system the demand for our service is ever increasing. Last year we dealt with over 75,000 enquiries from our clients across Wiltshire and we expect this number to rise over the next year. With this in mind we need to recruit more volunteers for a number of roles within Wiltshire Citizens Advice. To find out more about the volunteering come to one of our open days:

**Devizes:**
Wednesday 13th June 2012 10.30am–12.30pm
New Park Street Devizes SN10 1DY

**Salisbury:**
Wednesday 13th June 2012 1.00pm–3.00pm
18 College Street Salisbury Wilts SP1 3AL

**Trowbridge:**
Thursday 14th June 2012 10.30am–12.30pm
1 Mill Street Trowbridge BA14 8BE

**Chippingham:**
Friday 15th June 10.30am–12.30pm
3 Avon Roach Monkton Hill Chippingham SN15 1EE

**Further details:** Email: volunteer@cabwiltshire.org.uk
Web address: www.cabwiltshire.org.uk
Advice: www.adviceguide.org.uk

**EVENTS DIARY FOR 2012**

**2–9 June**
Flower Festival at St Lawrence Chapel

**16/17 June**
Warminster Wibble

**24 June**
Carbines Fun Day (Olympic theme)

**6 July**
Closing date for Garden Competition (Judging 10 & 13 July)

**11 July**
Olympic Torch Relay at Salisbury (§ Wilton 12 July)

**27 July–12 Aug**
Olympic Games

**The Big Ding Dong** – bells will be rung across the country to celebrate the start of the Olympics. Join the Town Crier outside the Chapel of St Lawrence and bring any bell – bicycle bell, handbell, cowbell – and ring as loudly as you can for three minutes from 8am.

**July–Aug**
Festival Treasure Hunt – family search around Warminster for clues – £100 prize and a bustard hunt in the summer holidays

**6 Oct**
Launch at the Lakeside, opening of Festival

**Warminster Festival** – over 50 events planned

Festival sets sights on a treasure trove of talent

With over 50 confirmed events, it can truly be said that there is something for everyone in this year’s rejuvenated Warminster Festival. The official launch was in May and early indications are that interest is spiralling upwards.

This year it is set to be all-inclusive with a focus not only on the people and the buildings of Warminster, but on the ‘Hidden Treasure’ of talent that is coursing through the highways and byways of the town. Warminster’s community has always been rich with gifted people – musicians, artists, poets – who often veer away in backrooms giving expression to their particular craft. Well, with this year’s festival these hidden talents have a chance of coming out of that backroom and into the limelight – to their advantage and for our enjoyment. That’s because, peppered throughout the programme, there will be workshops and masterclasses, demonstrations and performances, when they will be able to learn from more established artists and performers; and even to work alongside them.
PIP RIDOUT MAKES WAY FOR NEW MAYOR ROB FRYER

The Mayor’s role is such an important one in local politics. For one intense year, they are a figurehead for the Council and for Warminster as a community. They must exercise a variety of skills, including diplomacy and stamina. Certainly, Pip Ridout’s last year in office is a testimony to hard work and dedication. During her tenure, she attended over 200 events and met innumerable people from all walks of life, ranging from the important dignitaries – such as Prince Andrew! – to the ordinary man and woman in the street.

There were fêtes, concerts, church services, dinners and civic functions to attend, during which she was an important linchpin connecting local government with the people. The presence of the military is another significant feature of our community, one links us as a town to world events. We have long borne this connection with pride, but it is those same world events that can bring home to us all the harsh realities of life. This was shown most poignantly in the parade that Pip attended to bid farewell to the 3rd Battalion the Yorkshire Regiment prior to their tour of duty in Afghanistan, and the church services and repatriation ceremony for the six soldiers from the regiment killed on 7th March.

“It’s so difficult,” said Pip, reflecting on her year, “to single out a particular event for mention. This is what makes the role of Mayor so rewarding. You are in a position to meet so many wonderful people and to feel humbled by the work they do for the community.” Pip is in no doubt that her successor, Rob Fryer, will be fully tested; but she is equally certain that he will enjoy his year of office and not be found wanting. “I know Rob will make an excellent Mayor and he certainly has my full support.” Rob’s deputy is Paul Batchelor, a long-serving Member and an active cog in Warminster’s commercial community.

CIVIC CENTRE IS A BUSY CENTRE

Interest in the Civic Centre is booming. With the paint scarcely dry on the walls, people were eager to inspect the newly refurbished premises last year. Now, less than six months after its official opening, the venue is being booked on a regular basis by all sorts of people from sporting youngsters to more sedate, senior citizens. The variety of activities taking place at the centre is truly staggering. Sequence Dance, Martial Arts, Warminster Floral Art Society, Rugby Tots, Boreham W1, Pilates and the University of the Third Age are just a sample of the groups meeting on a regular weekly basis. And, of course, one mustn’t forget that all Council meetings are now held at the Civic Centre.

The Civic Centre is perfect for wedding receptions, not only because of the modern, streamlined interior facilities, but also thanks to the redesigned exterior. Unsurprisingly, people are choosy where to stage their important occasions – especially when there’s a camera involved. Nothing takes the shine off nostalgia as a series of photographs of the ‘happy day’ set against an unappealing or nondescript background.

But there are no such worries here with the new, stylish, endearing, complete with canopy over the frontage and the freshly landscaped flower-beds. It all makes for an attractive location to host matrimonial gatherings and similar celebrations like anniversaries. The first wedding fair was held at the centre in March, with another booked for September, and the centre has received its first wedding booking as a result. More, no doubt, will follow.

WARMINSTER BUSINESS GETS SUPPORT

It’s been tough for businesses throughout the UK in recent times – as we are all painfully aware. And it’s quite clear that the repercussions of our troubled national economy have not bypassed Warminster. But, as they say when the going gets tough, the tough get going – and Warminster is made up of some pretty hardy characters, renowned for their determination, not to mention their positive outlook.

Which is a perfect description of the sort of people who make up the newly formed steering group, Enterprise Warminster, focusing on entrepreneurship and enterprise. The body is split into different sub-groups representing the multi-coloured tapestry that comprises Warminster’s commercial and communal hub. There’s Youth, Retail, Business Innovation, Marketing, Planning and Tourism. But don’t think this is another one of those sleepy, bureaucratic organisations whose sole purpose is to tick boxes. Enterprise Warminster is a vibrant body of dedicated and professional businessmen and women who meet regularly to discuss ways of progressing business. They are also taking over the running of the Warminster Parking Partnership Scheme and will be responsible for monitoring it. The scheme, which is still relatively new and proving quite popular, allows for a free hour of parking if used in tandem with a 40p voucher. This voucher can then be exchanged in one of the participating retail outlets throughout the town.

FOODBANK FINDS NEW HOME

In times of general economic hardship, it seems the poor and the needy suffer particularly badly. That’s why an organisation like Foodbank, which helps people who simply don’t have enough to eat, deserves a good home. And none is better than Dewey House where the Council offices used to be based. Foodbank have taken two offices and agreed a five year lease in this lovely building, which is part of Warminster’s heritage.

Foodbank works on a system of food vouchers, which can be obtained from a number of charitable bodies and government agencies; in this way the organisation has helped literally hundreds of local families to get by in straitened times. This move into Dewey House represents a significant development for Foodbank and will help to underpin all their important work in the community.

In Wonderful Stereo!

We all knew that history has put Warminster on the map, but did you know we’re on the air as well? On April 1 – and we’re not fooling – ‘Warminster Community Radio’ or WCR was launched. It’s been a long hard road, involving public trials and research, but after sixteen years WCR was granted a licence to broadcast full-time, 24/7. From their home adjoining the Civic Centre where they have a suite of modern studio facilities, a whole range of programmes are broadcast on 105.5fm. The emphasis is on local, so expect local news and reports on activities of local organisations, clubs and charities. There are also interesting lifestyle programmes made up of a mix of guests and chat interspersed with information and music.

WCR additionally has an educational brief, so if you want to learn radio skills and can spare a couple of hours a week as a volunteer, you could find yourself on air. Contact Barry Mole, Station Director, on 01985 845111 for more details.

Continued – As part of this inclusive theme, there are the competitions designed to spring from obscurity laten stars and hidden talents. Take the poetry competition, which, if you’re an unrerecogised bard, could be the making of you. Enter and you could win £100. Not an insignificant sum. Just think how many quills that could buy you. Joking apart, this promises to be a serious enterprise as judging will be carried out by professional writer and local author Lucy English. Lucy is best known as a performance poet, but has also published novels and is a senior lecturer in creative writing at Bath Spa University.

Other events include a Grand Opening in Warminster Park, a folk concert at the Athenaum, and a rugby match. And what goes with rugby? Beer of course! So why not pop along to the Rugby Club’s second annual beer festival for a glass of something you’ve never heard of.

The varied programme is down to the new committee members, who have shown off their own talents with ideas to stimulate interest and organisational skills to make them work. Of course, all this costs money. Warminster Town Council and Wiltshire Council have both given grants of £2,000 towards running costs, the Fudge Trust and Lions Club has also made donations and the committee has additionally been able to generate sponsorship from an assortment of local businesses and organisations.