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23RD SEPTEMBER 2022 ISSUE 574

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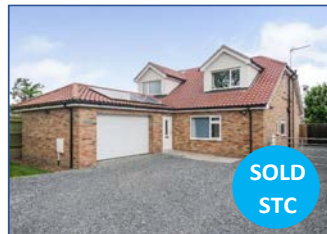
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BRANDON LIFE

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Deadline for next issue 12th October 2022 for
publication on Friday 21st October 2022



IT'S THE POST!

Dear reader,

The magazine was all finished and ready to go to print when the very sad news that our wonderful Queen has passed away was announced.

I'm sure, like Roy and I, there are many of you that feel this as a personal loss and through the magazine we would like to express our condolences to the Royal family and I am sure your thoughts, like ours, will be with them at this sad time.

It is difficult to put into words just how much the Queen meant to us. She was an inspiration with her hard work, dedication and love for this country.

You will be sadly missed Ma'am. RIP.

God save the King.

Karen and Roy Brame.

Dear Karen

The dog waste bin from the end of St. Stephen's Crescent where it joins St. Benedict's Road, vanished overnight so I went along to Brandon Town Council to ask when it would be replaced.

The answer was short. "Never". The dog-waste bins are being phased out. In future we are to put our little bags in our own bins instead. As we are instructed not to put babies nappies in the brown bin I expect dog waste is similarly classified so that leaves the black bin and landfill once every fortnight. Sadly, I feel that this will lead to people not picking-up after their dogs, or, if they do, flinging the bag into the nearest bush. I presume that this is another aspect of 'cost cutting' by the council.

Judy & Lionel Rowe.

Responsible dog owners.

Dear Karen,

Macmillan Coffee/Tea Party - 31 August.

I would like to thank all my friends, neighbours and family who came and supported me in fund raising for this special cause. I am delighted to report that £260.70 was raised.

Thank you all once again.

Janet Leech.

THE BRANDON & DISTRICT GARDEN CLUB – AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2022

The meeting held on the 22nd August opened with a welcome to members and guests from Katy Loxton, Chair, who thanked everyone who helped in any way for and at our successful Annual Flower Show in July, but especially Ann and Carol, who, as always, worked splendidly providing refreshments for all the people who came to see the Show and then stayed for tea and cakes, a chat, and then the Show Results, Auction and Raffle. Katy then went on and discussed several subjects that she thought the members might be interested in. Ray Pearce, who did a really great job as our Show Organiser, also thanked the helpers and then went on to say that the Show Entry money had been

Continued on page 6

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donated to the Children's playground charity organised by Mark Skinner and that the West Ham Coaching Staff had heard about us putting on a show and very kindly donated funds to cover our running costs. The Committee asked Ray to give them their grateful thanks for the unexpected gift and to tell them we hope that they have a good, happy and enjoyable football season. Katy then introduced our Speaker, Barry Gayton of Desert World, who really needed no introduction as he is so very well known locally and nationally on T.V. and Radio. Barry chatted about how he started his own gardening business while still at school, then getting employment in the gardening world, learning all the time, whilst also growing his own business. Many years ago he bought almost 2 acres of forestry scrub land and the first thing he did was to build a fence to keep the rabbits and deer out. He then dug a pond for the wildlife, planted an orchard and various trees whilst building paths and designing and planting the garden. He built greenhouses, did roofing and was a 'jack of all trades' learning as he went along, all in his spare time! If you tune in to Cambridge Radio you can listen to Barry giving advice as he has a vast knowledge of garden and hardy tropical plants, cacti/succulents etc.

TABLE SHOW RESULTS:
3 Tomatoes: 1st. Zena Demeza. 2nd. Karen Nichols. 3rd. Katy Loxton.
3 Courgettes: 1st. Karen Nichols.
3 Mixed Annuals: 1st. Val Cox. 2nd. Karen Nichols
Table Centre Arrangement: 1st. Jill Alsop.
Cooking: Apple and Blackberry Pie: 1st. Jill Alsop.

The next meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Monday,
26th September at the Church Institute when we will be
holding a garden quiz, so, if you need to, like I do, get
those gardening brains brushed and polished up and
come and join a team. We are sure to have a laugh and
a bit of fun as we try to answer some of the questions.
Alice

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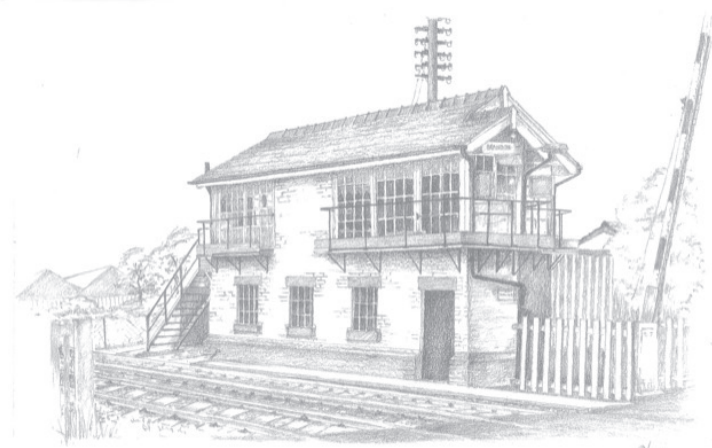
Report By Victor Lukaniuk

Town, District and County Councillor

A personal opinion

Many of us were shocked as well as angry with the demise of our iconic signal box, the biggest stumbling block was that our friends Network Rail were refusing to communicate with us. At one stage they were clinging onto a scheme where it may be possible to dismantle the building and relocate it somewhere in Norfolk. Simply a pipe dream, something I maintained from day one. Not one solitary person or group came forward with a credible scheme which included any funding.

Before the diggers made their move on demolishing the signal box Rosemary Jacob, who is known by countless Brandonians (and Weetingites) as she is the proud owner of the Corner Shop and, may I add, ran it along with the photo shop next door for many successful years, has completed a superb pencil drawing of the signal box and the detail is breathtaking (see below).



Rosemary has given our Heritage Centre permission to utilise the image on all manner of items including tea towels, cups, plates etc. We at the Heritage Centre thank Rosemary for her kind gesture and I for one certainly look forward to purchasing a souvenir of our gone but not forgotten signal box.

Secondly, I am not the only Brandonian who has noticed that our Citizens Advice Bureau has failed to open after lock-down. I have been reliably informed that the CAB at Bury St Eds and Newmarket are now open five days weekly, Haverhill and Mildenhall are now open two days weekly. We are on a par with Mildenhall yet our CAB doors remain firmly closed. My blood was beginning to boil.

Armed with the facts, I swiftly contacted the head honcho and a meeting was arranged for a later date, which was sensible otherwise my blood vessels would have been tested to the limit. Apparently there seems to be a lack of volunteers who operate within the CAB, and that is where the problem lies. However I have been given an assurance that these issues will be resolved and a walk-in facility will be re-instated in Brandon, leave it with me fellow Brandonians, I will do my

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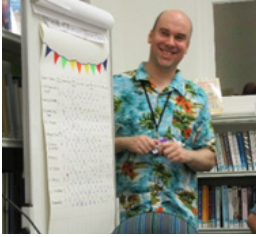
Date	Service/Event	Time	Location
2	Praise Service for Harvest Harvest Meal	10 am 5 pm	Church Church Institute
4	Tiddlers Repair & Share Shop (with lunch)	9 to 11 am 11 am to 2 pm	Church Institute
5	St Peter's Youth	6.30 to 8.00 pm	Church Institute
6	Coffee Caravan	9 am	Market Hill
9	Communion	10 am	Church
16	Praise Service	10 am	Church
18	Tiddlers Coffee Drop In (with lunch) Repair & Share Shop	9 to 11 am 11 am to 2 pm 4 pm to 8 pm	Church Institute
19	St Peter's Youth	6.30 to 8.00 pm	Church Institute
20	Coffee Caravan	9 am	Market Hill
23	Holy Communion Café Church	9 am 10 am	Church Church Institute
27	Coffee Caravan	9 am	Market Hill
28	Old Skool Youth Club	7 pm	Church Institute
30	Praise Service	10 am	Church

Sunday services in Church are followed by refreshments and a chance to stay and catch up.

We look forward to welcoming you!

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**Quiz Night ???
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On 23rd July we performed at the Brandon Festival where our members, including the junior chorus from our last pantomime, did an amazing job and performed with lots of energy to really impress our audiences!

We gave 2 performances during the event. The first was a re-run of our Queen's Platinum Jubilee performance in June singing and dancing to Surf's Up, Dancing Queen and We Are the Champions.

The second included more dance, expertly choreographed by Mia, to Beautiful Bizarre followed by a medley of songs; True Colours, Pure Imagination, You Will Be Found & From Now On.



Photo by Jean Chenery Betts

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This was our summer project for this year, which meant we could spend more time perfecting and creating more pieces and routines to perform. Mia has encouraged and pushed our members to try new styles of performance from what they are used to, in preparation for our 2023 Pantomime, Snow White!

Going by our audience's reaction, it was a very successful day!

If you have an interest in any aspect of amateur theatre, on stage or backstage, we would love to hear from you.

Contact Jill, our Secretary on 07985 379645 or shoestringsecretary@hotmail.com

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Personal View...



Intro ...

Britain is in the throes of a wave of vandalism, illegal and inane protest groups, unions calling out their members on strikes that will just (in my view) lead to job losses, obscene energy rises, inflation and, worryingly, increases in interest rates. Since the start of the Covid years this country seems to have degenerated alarmingly and greed appears to have taken over. Now we have an uncalled-for leader election in Parliament and Russia doing what it always does, snubbing its nose at the world, followed by China. It does not auger well for the future.

I am returning to vandalism and the crime rate as they could be solvable in the UK if only the police would get off their backsides, stop taking the knee, dancing in the streets, and start investigating these crimes, particularly burglaries – which they have all but given up on! I read a report recently that vandals had poured washing up liquid into a fountain in the Esplanade Gardens in Hunstanton and this has poisoned more than one hundred fish. I ask the question 'Why'? Is it boredom that provokes these actions? Or is it something more basic?

I see gangs of youngsters strolling about Brandon as if they own the streets and I wonder where the parents are. Maybe they don't care what their offspring are doing. This may be the explanation of the crime in Sunny Hunny! If you look at the crime rate in London you will realise this a dangerous place to live. There have been increases in muggings, shootings (knife crime is through the roof!) and the Met does not seem to be able to cope with this, or even try to solve the problems. As for the Mayor, he has embarked on many initiatives in the past year, none of them related to solving this crime wave.

I ask a question of Brandonians. When did you last see a bobby on the beat? When I worked in the Community Safety Office at Thetford police station the beat officers were a vital part of information gathering and acted as a deterrent to serious crime. This state of affairs needs to be corrected. Brandon has no Neighbourhood Watch any more as I think the local fuzz lost interest in it many moons ago. We no longer have a front office in our police station where you can go and report your concerns and, in these uncaring times, a new policing approach is desperately needed – right now!

Good News ...

After the doom and gloom of my Intro I have some excellent news about Glade Academy: This school, where reading is a high priority, has been praised as 'good' across all areas by Ofsted. The primary school in Brandon was recognised for its 'ambitious curriculum' after an inspection by the education watchdog earlier this year. The Principal said she was proud of everything her team had achieved and, despite their journey not being easy, they had 'exemplified' the school's core values of respect, resilience and teamwork. As a past governor of this school I can confirm that I am not at all surprised at Ofsted's evaluation. It always was a good school, and I take my proverbial hat off to them.

*A Personal View of
events and happenings
in Brandon Town (and
further afield) by Eddie
Stewart on behalf of
nobody in particular but
himself.*

Breckland Crime Crackers ...

Hate crimes in Suffolk have risen in recent years according to police figures – but activists have warned that the numbers could be far higher due to 'significant under reporting'. So far this year there have been 370 hate crimes recorded 674 last year, 671 in 2020, and 550 in 2019 This was something we regularly tackled at Crime Cracker sessions. Social media have helped fuel this nefarious behaviour and the rise in anti-Semitism, and transgender woke attacks also. We always told our members that 'hate crime' would increase as long as the authorities allow this to go unpunished. The response of the youngsters was very positive and action is now urgently needed to stop the media from helping to fuel this criminal activity by preventing the biased reporting by some of their broadcasters on political figures. This does not help!

A Brave Moo-ve ...

Firefighters had to leap into a canal near Newport, Gwent, recently to rescue a cow that was stuck up to its neck in the muddy water. I guess it was udderly soaked!

Ludicrous ...

The recent comments about Fengate Drove was, in my view, not very well thought out. Firstly, there are important businesses down there, and the comment that it should be flattened to build houses on is irresponsible. Secondly, it is of no relevance to Brandon as it is Norfolk. Thirdly, if this ever happened (which it won't), it would put even more strain on our infrastructure, clog up our roads and our car parks. I don't think Breckland District Council would take too kindly to this idea – do you?

Fantasy News ...

Did you hear that the seven dwarves, or should I say height-challenged, have been told that they can now meet in a group of six. One of them isn't Happy!

Potholes ...

Although we in Brandon have not been suffering these in the recent hot weather the news from councils is not encouraging. Drivers should strap in for bumpier rides as the cost of filling in potholes soars, they warn motorists. Rocketing inflation and energy prices are hitting repair budgets. The cost of filling in one of these has risen by 22 per cent – largely due to Poo-tin's illegal invasion of Ukraine. This is according to a Local Government analysis, and they are usually accurate. Previously 60 per cent of bitumen for fixing roads came from Russia, but now this has dried up and councils urgently need to find other sources. Yet another example of the USSR failing the rest of the world.

Finally ...

Did you know that more than 175,000 drivers have been caught flouting the Blue Badge parking rules? Perhaps that's a consequence of there being too many disabled parking bays, plus the fact you can virtually get one of these if you've got a nasty case of athlete's foot! Goodbye from little old me in my new home. I am enjoying sunbathing at the moment, but I think my tan will soon fade if the predicted thunderstorms drown us. As for the Blue Badge fiasco: I wonder if my runny nose qualifies!

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TOWN TOPICS

BRANDON TOWN keepers

The rain finally came, when I was halfway through baling the Churchyard hay! Fortunately, the sun soon returned and it quickly dried out,

enabling us to get the rest of our harvest in. I was joined by a lovely group of volunteers, and a couple of photographers who managed to capture the mood perfectly! Thank you Andrew Stringer and Marcus Leeder for the photographs!



September is hedge cutting season. We don't cut them between March and August inclusively, because we don't want to disturb the nesting birds. We have several due to be trimmed, in the Orchard, Cemetery and Lode. Unfortunately, I managed to break the hedge cutter, exactly 45 seconds

after firing it up, which was more than an inconvenience. I hope it won't take too long to fix as I need to get back on schedule!

Finally, we picked up a hitch hiker in the Gator the other day. A tiny hedgehog that was sat trembling, in the middle of Bury Road. How she didn't get run over is beyond me. We took her immediately to Karen's Hedghogspital for a once over and she is now under her expert care. That's one very lucky Hoggie indeed!!

It's hard work raking the hay into piles and our two youngest volunteers did an amazing job! I hope they will come back next year and help, too. We also baled the Orchard hay and yet again, I got stung by a wasp after disturbing a nest in the ground! I've lost count of the times I've had to down tools and leg it!

Our hay is for sale. You can email me at brandontownkeepers@gmail.com or visit Mark Skinners stall at the Thursday market to buy some. All proceeds will go to



Liam's Playground Fund.

I've been working with the Green Access Assistant for Suffolk County Council, to produce an official leaflet for the Nine Stiles Walk. When published, we will receive some proper glossy leaflets and way-marker discs which will be put in place to ensure the route is easy for people to follow. It will then be promoted on the Discover Suffolk website. There is room to promote two more walks, so I am also working alongside our lovely local history expert, Darren Norton, to produce a Heritage Walk for Brandon! If anyone has an idea for a third walk, please let me know ASAP and I will see if it can be added to the list.

Whilst re-painting the churchyard gates, we noticed that a couple of the finials are missing. After pondering this one night, when I couldn't sleep (happens quite a lot for me these days!) I had an idea. I would try casting some new ones..! With the help of Reverend Dennis Coburn, who is far more proficient at this type of thing than me, we have come up with a plan to make the replacements out of aluminium. I've sourced a supply of suitable metal and made the flask ready to do the sand casting! Hopefully by the time I write my next article, I'll be proudly showing off the finished product! And it will actually look like all the other finials.. not a melted, unidentifiable blob.. We shall see how it goes..!

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