



SALTASH AND DISTRICT OBSERVER

Your only truly "local" newspaper ...

December 2011 - Issue 233

Incessant trumpet of trade; armoury of fearless truth without fear or favour ...



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MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM ALL AT COTTONS

WILD WEST HEROES OF THE HEARING ROOM

Cowboys and Injuns flooded Fore Street and Saltash became a frontier town, not of Cornwall but of the Wild West. The redskins and palefaces were all from the Hearing Room and were sharing the fun and the fund raising activities of Children in Need Day.

Staff and management from The Hearing Room and their colleagues, from the NHS Hearing Centre opposite had decided on an Old West Theme. Sheriff's badges shone and squaw's feathers were flourished as they joined in a photo-shoot, bringing colour to a November Fore Street while drawing attention to the very needy children benefiting from funds raised through the many activities of Children in Need Day.



The Hearing Room staff raised a total of £110.51 and would like to thank everyone for their efforts.



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Seasonal Greetings from all at The Hearing Room

We would like to invite our existing and new clients to join us for Tea Coffee or Sherry and Mince Pies on Friday 16th December 10.00am -1.00pm

Please call in and bring a friend for a festive drink and an informal chat

A Christmas box of Delights

Students of St Mellion and St Dominic Schools shared in showing the true spirit of Christmas by thinking of children less fortunate than themselves. They collected toys and other gifts to fill 42 shoe boxes, along with £49.00 to help with the delivery charges. Saltash Observer Editor Mary Crawford who serves on Rotary International committee along with Rotarian Brian Stoyel organised transportation to needy children over seas.



ESSA FILES...

It is certainly a great relief that Cornwall Council has decided postpone its plans to slash the budget for public toilets, close one third of them and hike off the remainder to Town & Parish Councils at reduced funding – it is perhaps an encouraging sign that they are responding more to local concerns.

However this does not change the worrying fact that they suggested it in the first place – in fact it got as far as a cabinet agenda and a letter to the Town Councils demanding a decision before the end of the year on whether to take the paltry deal offered or instead risk further closures.

What concerns me the most of all is Cornwall's standard defence that 'we have no legal duty to provide public toilets?' Saltash Town Council has no legal duty to provide benches, bus shelters, Christmas lights, and the community chest for local groups, the festival fund, tourist leaflets, the Guildhall

or virtually any others of the services we provide; but we still provide them all the same.

This is because our yardstick is not 'can we legally get away with not doing it' but rather 'is it important enough to the community that we ought to do it?' Of course providing things does cost money, and yet the Town Council part of the council tax still comes in at less than 4% of what you pay each year.

Maybe it is time Cornwall starting thinking the same way – as a council for the community and the people: a provider of services not a provider of excuses.

Deputy Mayor, Mountaineer and MP all Climbing the Wall



An amazing facility to be shared by K3 Youth Club members and all local residents aged 5 to 95 was welcomed by Deputy Mayor Martin Gee. He and Sheryll Murray MP were among the first to ascend the Community Climbing Wall at the K3 Youth Club.

They were joined by Ed Buckingham who recently described to Saltash Observer readers his experiences as the first Cornishman to climb Mount Everest.

It is on a wall such as this, Ed said while carrying out the official opening ceremony, that young people can first develop not only climbing skills but also people skills and team building, self confidence and enthusiasm.

The K3 Youth Club coordinator, Gillian Furse was one of four generations from her family to climb the wall, joined by Better Bowers, Sara Parsons and three year old Bethany Parsons.

The Lottery funding which paid for the 25 foot high wall as well as for training twelve instructors, resulted from a public telephone vote promoted in the Summer by your Saltash Observer. Gillian Furse paid tribute to

the young people from the club who had distributed leaflets urging local support, the community organisations from junior schools to Age Concern who had supported it, and in particular all of the public who voted for the funding to go to the project. She thanked also various individual singling out especially Janet Turner for her efforts at fundraising and her foresight and conviction that K3 was going to win.

Sheryll Murray MP, who had spent much of her teenage time in Saltash expressed delight that the community spirit in the Town continues and thanked the Town for ensuring the facility adding her hopes that it would be well used by all age groups.

While K3 Youth Club members will be able to use the Climbing Wall in exchange for club admittance charges, the wider public are also encouraged and welcomed to use the wall during morning and afternoon sessions seven days a week. There are special rates for families and the club is especially eager to promote birthday or other group climbing sessions which can include food and drink from a choice of menus. Full details including opening times and charges are available at K3, off Church Road adjacent to Saltash College.

Mosaics are Crumbling

Some of the mosaics meticulously put together by children at local schools to decorate the Bridge over the by-pass between Fore Street and North Road are falling apart.

Sadly expert opinion is that one of these mosaics is beyond repair and others on that side of the bridge are in a similar state of disintegration.

The mosaics, Town Councillors agreed, should be removed immediately and placed in storage before they were damaged further.

Replacing them has been considered but under current Health and Safety regulations children would not be permitted to use materials needed to produce fully weatherproof mosaics.

Funding is to be sought to make suitable replacements on the bridge.

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CORNWALL COUNCIL
& our PL12 community
For Observer readers
From Councillor Bryan Preston
Burraton Ward Saltash

Budget

As I write this we are approaching the Council meeting that will debate and vote on the 2012/13 budget. The ruling Conservative/Independent group has again decided to go for an early Budget decision. Many of us have opposed this because we will not know what the grant from the Government will be for some weeks yet.

That means that setting the Budget now is a bit of a shot in the dark. When this was done last year it resulted in the fiasco with having to back track on car parking charges and the problems that we are still experiencing with subsidies for bus services.

Another interesting decision is whether the ruling group take up the offer of a grant from the Government so that our Council Tax bills can be frozen again, or will they propose an unwelcome increase in Council Tax for us all. Watch this space; a decision will be made in February.

Because of pressure from the public and many Councillors the decision to close many public toilets in the County, or pass them over to Parish and Town Councils in the future has been postponed. The fact is, there would be money transferred originally to maintain the facilities, this would not continue and the burden would fall on the local tax payer.

I am sure you will agree that these are essential facilities both for residents and tourists alike. There was originally little consultation on this, things have now improved but we need to keep an eye on what the future holds.

Elections

There have recently been two by elections for Cornwall Council. One in Bude because of a resignation, won by the Liberal Democrats and one in Wendron in west Cornwall because of a death, won by Mebyon Kernow. Both had a turnout of nearly 30% which although you might think is not very high is above

average for a local election in November. It shows that the people of Cornwall are interested in the issues of the day.

Domestic Abuse

The end of November was Domestic Abuse Awareness week and the launch of a coordinated campaign supported by Devon and Cornwall Police to raise public awareness of the various forms of domestic abuse and where help can be found.

The partnership has a new Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy. The Right Response is the first inclusive strategy that calls for an end to all domestic abuse against women, men and children and emphasises the importance of working together to achieve this aim.

And finally

It just remains for me to join with your other Cornwall Councillors, Bob Austin, Derek Holley and Colin Riches in wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

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Use your free Parking!

The Saltash Town-centre Improvement Group is encouraging everyone in Saltash and the surrounding area to keep taking advantage of the Christmas free parking scheme, right up to Christmas Day.

The scheme means that all four town centre car parks are free, every day from 10am, between 1st and 25th December.

Town Mayor Cllr Colin Oakes said "Saltash Town Council's highest priority is the regeneration of the Town Centre - it is of the utmost importance to our community. We are also grateful for Cornwall Council's work to allow us to carry out the scheme: working in partnership is what localism should be all about"

STIG Co-Chair Cllr Adam Killea added "Christmas is a critical period for our Town Centre and we felt that it was vital to come up with a scheme that supported local Christmas shopping in Saltash.

Keep using the free parking - it could make a big difference to the town centre!"

Trees Filled the Church with the Magic of Christmas



Young and old were entranced as the Ancient church of St Nicholas & Faith was filled with Christmas trees each decorated by a local organisation or business. For the fifth year of this annual festival a number of new comers joined to add to this very special sparkle of pre Christmas magic.

Trees featured throughout this issue were enjoyed by many at this years festival



A Message from the Editor...

As we approach our 21st year of service as your community newspaper we once again enter the time of year when Saltash takes on its special seasonal magic.

By the time you are reading this the festive lights will have been switched on and the shops fully stocked with everything needed to ensure a very special Christmas. We would like to take this opportunity, as we take a break before preparing for our special 21st anniversary, to wish all the seasons'

compliments to our advertisers, some of whom have been supporting us throughout these years, and to all of our readers and friends in Saltash and, through our website, throughout the world. May you all be filled with the joys of the Festive Season

From The Mayor's Parlour...

THEY SAY THAT variety is the Spice of Life and we have certainly had a varied and interesting month once more.

It began with a Saltash Town Band concert at St Stephens Church which was extremely well attended and we were entertained with a variety of musical pieces from both the Senior and Junior Bands. We were also invited to work in the Barnado's Charity Shop for their "Make a Difference Day" on a Saturday afternoon which was a whole new experience for us both and great fun. I worked in the pressing department and Marilyn served on the counter. We were impressed at the organisation of the shop and met and chatted to, many people during our time there and realised what a great job all the staff and volunteers of our charity shops are doing for our community.

My Deputy Mayor & Mayoress, Martin and Maggie, attended two events on our behalf this month. The first was the opening of the new climbing wall at K3, well done Martin, I believe you scaled the wall in record time and secondly, the Legal Civic Service at Truro Cathedral. Thank you both for attending.

November, as we all know, is a time of remembrance and we attended the Royal British Legion Festival at Saltash Wesley Church, the 2 minutes silence in Fore Street and the Remembrance Civic Service. All three events were well attended and I would personally like to thank all those involved, The Royal British Legion for organising both the Festival and supporting the Church

Service and a big thank you to all the children from St Stephen's School who attended the 2 minutes silence along with dignitaries and residents, in Fore Street despite the dreadful rain. This year it was decided to stop the traffic in Fore Street for the 2 minutes and I am pleased to report that the event went without any problems and I am grateful to the motorists who stopped in support and to the Police and The Royal British Legion who assisted.

Marilyn was invited by the Saltash Floral Art Club, to a demonstration evening which she thoroughly enjoyed and together we have attended the St Barnabas League of Friends AGM, the Saltash Sailing Club Annual Prize Giving Dinner and the Saltash Lion's 40th Charter Anniversary Dinner. Those of you that see us regularly will notice our waistbands expanding! We are always so well received at events though and it is an absolute pleasure to be able to attend.

I mentioned in my last column, that we were holding a Mayor's Charity Friendship Dinner at the China Fleet Club. I am delighted to say that the evening was a great success with 86 people attending from 16 different organisations within Saltash along with friends and family and I would like to thank everyone who attended. We all enjoyed good food, good company and it was a lot of fun. We held a silent auction and our thanks go to all those who donated items for the auction. We were entertained by the students from Saltash.net who gave us an excerpt from the Wizard of OZ, their Christmas

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production this year, due to be performed at Saltash.net from 6th to 9th December and having seen the students perform, we are very much looking forward to seeing the whole show.

The total raised for the evening was £976.00 which was a fantastic amount to be added to my Mayor's Charity Fund.

I am delighted that we have been successful in our bid to get the Olympic Torch to come through Saltash on 19th May 2012. This will indeed put our town on the map once more and will be a great opportunity for everyone to see it. We are, at present, planning events for the day and more information will be released nearer the date.

Christmas is fast approaching

and we hope to see many of you doing your Christmas shopping in Saltash. Our diary is filling up rapidly and we are looking forward to all the Christmas events within our community. As this is my last column before Christmas, we would like to wish everyone, on behalf of the Saltash Town Council, a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

*Councillor Colin Oakes
 Town Mayor*

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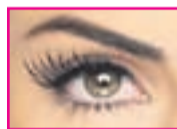
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Prepare for the festive Season with Glow's... Dazzling Diamanté and Gorgeous Lashes

Lisa and Mel of Glow Beauty Salon, together with their staff, are posed ready to welcome clients old and new to their refurbished salon, now offering an even greater range of the latest in beauty and fitness treatments as Christmas and New Year approaches.

These include the award winning Sienna spray tanning as well as the well-established tanning shower.

There are now three nail stations at which the Glow professional offer a wide range of Shellac, minx and acrylic nails and gel toes.

Clients can dazzle with diamanté at the pedicure massage station with a Sworkovski pedicure or manicure.

New to Glow are the Heaven and Angel facials, all part of the full beauty treatment which also includes the CACI non-surgical face lift, teeth whitening and - especially in demand, Glow's Gorgeous individual lashes.

Lisa, Mel, and their team look forward to advising and assisting all of their many clients, male and female, as to making the very best of themselves as the party season fast approaches. They all join in wishing all of their clients all the best for a happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

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Christmas Gift Vouchers Available for Male or Female on all Treatments...See us also at Zero Gravity, Parkway Ind Est

Elite-Feet Is the Result of...

Jayne's Design Skills and Martin's Lifetime Interest in Aquatic Marine Life!

Originally from the Mountains of Anatolia, Turkey...

Saltash can now Enjoy the Garra Spa Experience

The benefit of garra rufa foot therapy now become increasingly appreciated in the western world, had long been known in the Middle East where it originated. It was in the nineteenth century that those living in the mountains of Anatolia, Turkey, discovered that the freshwater fish living in the thermal springs around Kangal could cure skin conditions and enable those who bathed their feet in the waters to enjoy a form of relaxed and rejuvenated foot therapy that now attracts around a thousand visitors a day to those waters.

More recently advances in technology enabling the fish to be kept in freshwater tanks with filtration and hygiene beyond compare have enabled those all over Europe and America to enjoy this amazing form of natural therapeutic treatment. Now Saltash residents and visitors too can relax and enjoy, this in the assurance that Martin, of Elite Feet, has created the ideal garra spa system based on a lifetime experience of tropical fish keeping. Meanwhile Martin and Jayne have, along with their friends, created what clients are already coming to describe as the ultimate in relaxation and comfort in a salon specialising in every form of beauty treatment including the renowned garra fish spa.



Elite-Feet Offer the Ultimate in Marine Systems

It was his lifetime interest in aquatic marine life and experience in creating marine habitat systems that led the owners of two garra spa businesses to call for Martin's assistance.

He was able to use his expertise in overcoming problems in order to help set up and operate such systems while developing a code of practice that ensured the highest standards of safety and hygiene.



Partner Martin checks the system

This encouraged him to profit by his experience and build up his own garra spa where only the highest standards would be considered satisfactory. Having already assisted the University of Plymouth, where he has lectured, in setting up their own system and having written for various technical magazines he was able, with expert help, to achieve the ultimate in marine systems.

He was fortunate that lifetime friend Jayne, was currently looking for a career change and eager to use her design skills to set up a salon suited to set off Martin's aquaria and offer the ultimate in comfort and relaxation. Their original business venture was at Newton Abbot and is already a

popular success. They then decided upon Saltash, where Jayne had many friends, as being an ideal venue to open a salon in the heart of a friendly and vibrant community and a small but active shopping centre.

Look out for our Special Offers! Christmas Party Feet for December

Elite Feet are open to suit you and accordingly have extended hours from 10am to 6pm Monday to Saturday and 10am to 4pm on Sunday, but with special evening opening for groups by arrangement.

Keep a look out for special offers, December we are offering Long fish sessions and Minx toes, at a reduced rate, to include a free mini pedicure.

For that Christmas or birthday gift with a difference, a gift voucher will enable a friend or family member to discover the unique experience of the Elite Feet Treatment, or just a great opportunity for families to share a wonderful and unique experience.



Partner Jayne

Party, Party, Party!

For the very young, to the Young at Heart

For that party with a difference that will be remembered and talked about far into the future, bring your party to Elite Feet!

Children will love to dip their hands and feet in the Garra Spa, face painting and to sample some of the treatments on offer. Ages from seven upwards are welcome with party food and soft drinks provided.

For more mature party-goers the Elite Feet salon can be instantly converted from a sophisticated and relaxing pamper experience, by the flick of a switch into a cool and



trendy night time indulgence theme. Adults can bring their own drink to go with food provided at Elite Feet's personalised parties planned to perfection. Already not only hen but also stag and mixed groups are discovering a visit to Elite Feet as being the perfect start to an evening. Jayne, Martin and their colleagues will be delighted to discuss individual requirements and arrange a party to suit you by day or by evening on any one of seven days a week. The salon can be adapted to suit any party persons into a fun and vibrant atmosphere or quiet and relaxing ambience.

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Garra Treatment

Professional Sporting Personalities are Regular Visitors to Elite-Feet

The garra spa treatment offers three natural benefits. Dead skin is removed naturally and painlessly. The live skin is then enhanced with the benefit of an enzyme naturally released by the tiny fish. The circulatory massage which ensues, ensures a relaxing treatment to the nerve endings on the feet. In all it proves a natural and kind way of looking after ones feet.

Before undergoing treatment clients are asked to complete a health questionnaire to confirm that they are suitable for treatment.

As they then discover the soft and natural power of touch will have amazing effects on all from the young to the elderly. All can benefit from the marathon athlete to the seriously ill, the busy stay at home mother and the stressed business person. Massage has the power to relax, heal and help to release emotions and tensions without the aid of drugs.

It has been reported that the fish can battle skin diseases, muscle trauma and joint diseases as well as rheumatic and neuralgic disorders. They can prove a therapeutic aid to Psoriasis.

Before being in contact with the fish tanks each client undergoes a thorough cleansing of the feet in a foot spa which also softens the skin to ensure greater effect for the treatment. The water in the fish tanks is thoroughly sterilised at least three times between each treatment and fully changed daily to ensure the highest standards of hygiene are maintained.

While all are able to benefit athletes in particular including Manchester City's Roberto Mancini are coming to appreciate the garra spa treatment, while Torquay United professionals are regular visitors to Elite Feet's Newton Abbot salon.

Relax, Refresh and Revitalise with a Full Range of Beauty Treatments

A full range of beauty treatments to relax, refresh and revitalise those of all ages and both sexes is offered alongside the hygienic fish pedicures, unique in Saltash, at Elite Feet. Proprietors Jayne and Martin have sought to ensure that the newly established salon while paying full attention to detail from coffee machine to subtle lighting, has the ambience of a fun and relaxing space in which to enjoy professional pampering. The bespoke design extends to all areas from beauty room to the Garra spas. Waiting to welcome you are two fully trained beauty therapists, Lorraine, a fully qualified reflexologist with seventeen years experience, and Lois who specialises in particular in eyelash and eyelash extensions, hair extensions and acrylic nails.

There is a choice of massages for men and ladies, ranging from back and full body, aromatherapy or with hot stones, to an Indian head massage and Swedish half body massage. From facials to waxing and from manicure and pedicure to spray tanning, the friendly professionals at Elite Feet, will be pleased to discuss and recommend and ensure that every client leaves the salon looking and feeling their very best.



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Partying at the Ploughboy



Mayor & Mayoress were pleased to join new owners of the Ploughboy Mike and Joan along with Mike's daughter and head Chef John for the official opening Party.

Regulars and newcomers to the "Ploughboy Inn" came together to party and celebrate the re-opening of the traditional Saltash pub and restaurant under the new ownership of Mike and Joan.

There was standing room only, and little of that to spare, as crowds came together to share the party atmosphere and music of disc jockey Lawrence as well as live music from the Saltash Choir Barbershop singers. The buffet was frequently replenished and the bar staff were kept busy satisfying the thirst of the dancers, many of whom were in fancy dress reflecting the approach of Halloween.

"An excellent evening," summed up new Landlord Mike, thanking all who came along to share the fun and help launch the new Landlord and Landlady into a busy pre-Christmas season.

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Seasonal Greetings from Mike Joan & the Staff

NHS Changes but Hospital Still Values its Friends

While health care and the NHS are undergoing great changes there is no change in the relationship with hospital leagues of friends who help continues to be valued.

This was the promise to St Barnabas League of Friends from Kevin Baber, Chief Executive of Peninsula Community Health which in October took responsibility for thirteen community hospitals in Cornwall including St Barnabas.

As the guest speaker at the League of Friends' Annual General Meeting he assured all present of the continuing commitment to high standards of health care as exemplified by the Independent Care Quality Commission which after an unannounced visit to St Barnabas this year reported favourably on treatment and care.

The hospital continues to provide rehab for in patients as well as an ever growing number of outpatient clinics and day care facilities, said the Friends' President Dr Colin Randall. Many friends and family of patients

continued to comment on the high standard of care as well as the convenience of having the facilities in Saltash.

The hospital's active physiotherapy facilities had been enlarged by gifts from the Friends this year. They had also donated a television and gazebo for patients' use as part of their ongoing programme of fundraising for medical equipment and patient comfort.

The last year had seen success in fund raising with an enhanced social programme of events, announced Chairman Mrs Joyce Mepsted and this programme was to be enlarged further in the coming year by the highly active committee.

The Mayor, Cllr Colin Oakes, who has selected the Hospital Friends as one of his main Mayor's charities thanked the Friends for all their efforts and the staff for their commitment and dedication in keeping a hospital in Saltash.

Conundrum Corner

Try our Christmas themed Quiz this month!

Taking the initial letter to the one word answer to the following Christmas themed nine questions can you rearrange them to make a nine-letter word?

1 Mary's sister who was "also with child" at this time?

2 Leader of the sleigh pullers?

3 She sings a Christmas song with Ivy!

4 Leon comes back for Christmas!

5 Who was Aladdin's wicked uncle?

6 Which sauce is traditionally served with Turkey?

7 In the carol Once in Royal David's City what was the status of the stable in which Jesus was born?

8 What name is given to the Christian season leading up to Christmas?

9 Mary received a messenger from God - what was his name?

Answers to Conundrum on page 7

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**SHERYLL
 MURRAY
 MP
 WRITES...**



THE MEMBER of Parliament for Harlow, recently nominated a motion for a debate in Parliament and whilst I fully supported the motion, I was not called by the speaker. The words of the motion are very relevant to South East Cornwall.

That this House welcomes the 1p cut in fuel duty at the 2011 Budget, the abolition of the fuel tax escalator, the establishment of a fair fuel stabiliser and the Government's acknowledgement that high petrol and diesel prices are a serious problem; notes that in the context of the Government's efforts to tackle the deficit and put the public finances on a sustainable path, ensuring stable tax revenues is vital for sustainable growth; however, believes that high fuel prices are causing immense difficulties for small and medium-sized enterprises vital to economic recovery; further notes reports that some low-paid workers are paying a tenth of their income just to fill up the family car and that high fuel prices are particularly damaging for the road freight industry; considers that high rates of fuel duty may have led to lower tax revenues in recent years, after reports from leading motoring organisations suggested that fuel duty revenues were at least £1 billion lower in the first six months of 2011 compared with 2008; and calls on the Government to consider the effect that increased taxes on fuel will have on the economy, examine ways of working with industry to ensure that falls in oil prices are passed on to consumers, to take account of market competitiveness, and to consider the feasibility of a price stabilisation mechanism that would work alongside the fair fuel stabiliser to address fluctuations in the pump price.

I thought it would be useful to share my speech with you. The Government did not oppose the Motion. I think it was very important that MPs like me send a strong message to the Chancellor when we feel things like fuel duty are causing excess hardship to our Constituents.

This is what I had planned to say, "Thank you Mr. Speaker. I must thank my Honourable Friend, the Member of Parliament for Harlow, for nominating this motion for a debate. The cost of fuel effects everybody; from the parent taking their child to school to the small business trying to flourish in an already unstable economic climate.

I have had many of my constituents in South East Cornwall come to me and explain how the cost of fuel is adversely affecting them in their day to day lives. I am sure that other Members of Parliament will sympathise with the plight of my constituents, living in such a rural area where public transport is sparse. In my constituency, more than four out of five electors use their own motorised transport.

The fact that in my constituency, only 353 people said that they took the train to work in the last census shows that the majority of the people in my constituency rely on their cars. The fact that the price of unleaded petrol has increased by so much over the past year is placing an unnecessary burden on families and businesses.

"I acknowledge that in this context of economic uncertainty, the Government is making great progress in tackling the deficit and putting the public finances in a more stable direction. However, the Government is ultimately losing revenue, as petrol prices are so high that people are abandoning their cars as they simply cannot afford to drive anymore.

This is fine when you have a choice to use a public transport system. Many in South East Cornwall, and many rural areas across the country, do not.

"I feel it is important that we mention inflation. Many people in employment are seeing no increase or indeed a decrease in their income. Low interest rates mean any income off savings is

Inner Wheel

Mary Doody, Chairman of Inner Wheel District 129, visited our club at our October meeting. She gave us a brief outline of her life before becoming District Chairman. She complimented us on our friendliness and wished us luck for the coming year. Mairead Lavelle gave the vote of thanks.

Later in the month a number of our members and some members of Saltash Rotary Club were given a conducted tour of The Little Harbour

minimal. People on fixed incomes are concerned. Fuel prices going up is a key player in what people can afford both directly at the pumps and indirectly because it so greatly effects the cost of getting goods to market. In these difficult times we must be mindful of inflation and the key role fuel price plays in its determination.

"The revenues from fuel duty were £1 billion lower in the first 6 months of 2011 than they were in 2008. The high fuel prices are also causing huge strain for medium and small sized businesses which are vital to our economic recovery. It is also giving the average family in Britain less disposable income, which would otherwise be spent in Britain and put back into the economy. 58% of the UK's diesel pump price was accounted for by tax and duties, which is the highest in the EU. When you hear these figures, it is not surprising that some low paid workers are using a tenth of their family car. We must examine the tax on fuel to make a difference to the lives of so many people and also stimulate the economy.

"I support this motion."

Hospice (Children's Hospice South West) at Potrhean, which is due to open shortly. We were amazed by the structure and furnishing of the building which can accommodate six sick children and their families for respite care. The attitude of the people involved in this project, their kindness and their caring has to be seen to be believed. On November 2nd seven members attended the District Rally in Plymouth. The Service in the Congress Hall was lead by Major Dawn McGarvey of The Salvation Army. Lunch at The Duke of Cornwall hotel followed. District Chairman Mary Doody chaired the meeting and Maxine Stoyel, District Governor of Rotary District 1290 brought greetings from the district. Maxine is also an Inner Wheel member of the Saltash Club. After lunch Inner Wheel Association President, Phyllis Charter addressed the meeting. She thanked every member of every club for working together, sharing the goals of " Friendship and Service". Her motto "Act Now Act Positively" ! The vote of thanks was given by Margaret Bryant, Vice Chairman of District 129. Mary Doody then presented a cheque for £300 to Major McGarvey of the Salvation Army. The Speaker at our November meeting was Sue Worth, who spoke about her experiences as an extra in the filming at Morwellham Quay of The Edwardian Farm, which was shown on BBC2. She described how they filmed various parts of the film, a Service in the Chapel, making pastys, Cream Teas, even a séance! They had great fun. What amazed her most was how long it took to film each scene. The Chair was taken by Vice President Pauline Skinner and the vote of thanks was given by Maxine Stoyel.

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A total of five hundred million vehicular crossings of the Tamar Bridge have been made in its first fifty years.

These facts were put by bridge general manager David List to an interested audience at Ashtorpe as part of the bridge anniversary celebrations. He outlined the history of bridge building and engineering from the first clapper bridges to the earliest suspension bridge in eighteenth century China. A film showed one of the more disastrous experiments in the United States before the design was perfected with such bridges as that which spans the Tamar and which was when opened the longest suspension bridge in Britain (though soon exceeded by the Severn and Forth.)

Picture of the construction showed the amazing raising of the concrete road sections and the equally amazing disregard of modern safety standards. Sadly these resulted in seven deaths, five from a boat, and Mr List advised that a memorial to those seven was soon to be erected on the Plymouth side.

More 'firsts' were achieved when the cantilevers (the

'Nippon clip-ons') were added, a major engineering initiative, and the bridge was the first to remain open while being widened, strengthened and having a full deck replacement. Subsequent new toll booths and 'tagging' now means that the bridge's capacity is limited only by that of the A38 road itself.

Further work anticipated next year will include full repainting of the steel work and replacement of the lane studs which should support the overhead signals.

Yet overall the bridge is in good shape, Mr List assured his audience. The concrete pillars, unusual for their era most then being made of steel, are stronger now than when built. Recent work means that the bridge is in good shape, it has for fifty years done exactly what it was built for, and it is anticipated to be sound for continuing use for at least the next hundred and ten years.

Spirit of Africa Soared in Saltash School

The exuberance and rhythms of Africa brightened a dull November evening for the crowds that packed saltash.net.community school hall to enjoy the colourful spectacular put on by the Pearl of Africa.

The school was hosting the young people of this Ugandan ensemble for a week while they brought their own blend of African music and dance to schools in the area. The sixteen children, aged ten to seventeen, plus four teachers were staying with Saltash School student's parents or staff who kindly made their homes available for the week.

They had just spent a day at the Saltash School where they performed to the students as well as guests from junior schools at St Stephens and Bishop Cornish. They also led four workshops in singing, dance, drumming and craft making.

Yet they still had the energy to put on an evening show that had the capacity audience enthralled by these young people's amazing sense of harmony and rhythm as they

performed continuous sequences of lively song and frenetic dancing to the rhythm of ever faster drums. The audience was equally enthralled to see some of the Saltash School students, including cast members of the upcoming 'Wizard of Oz' showing off skills in singing, dancing and drumming to an African beat acquired just that day.

So full of life and joy did the ever-smiling young people appear to be that it was hard to remember that they represented a number of schools maintained by Pearl of Africa Child Care, a British Charity providing education largely for Ugandan orphans, often those orphaned by HIV related disease, as well as those from families unable to afford the cost of education. The Saltash audience was fascinated to hear from headteachers from the vocational school in the Pearl of Africa settlement as well as other schools in the capital Kampala and by Lake Victoria. All told of their students' eagerness to learn



The winning team consisting of Colin Squires, David Coles, John Parsons, Martin Lister, Kevin Hale & Andrew Barrett, were presented with their shield by the Mayor Cllr. Colin Oakes and Len Maddox organiser.

and how a basic education can mean the difference between leading a useful family life and starvation.

The audience contributed generously through a raffle and a retiring collection as well as being encouraged to set up regular donations to bring a brighter future for those who have suffered the scourges that plague this beautiful East African commonwealth country.



Ex Deputy Mayor Remembered

Saltash town Councillors observed a minute's silence prior to their November meeting in honour of a former Deputy Mayor.

The previous week had seen the death of Ben Schikowsky. He had served as a town councillor culminating in his service as Deputy Mayor in 1994/95.

He was the widower of Marjorie Schikowsky, herself a town councillor and Mayor of Saltash in 1990/1991.

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Answers to Conundrum

1 Elizabeth 2 Rudolph 3 Holly 4 Noel 5 Abanazar 6 Cranberry 7 Lowly 8 Advent 9 Gabriel Nine-letter word: Archangel

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Seasonal Greetings

Heritage hold Town Quiz Shield

What was David Copperfield's aunt's pet aversion? What sort of herb is pennyroyal? And who had a pet parrot named Polynesia?

These were three of the mind bending questions in the twelve rounds set to test the knowledge of Saltash's great and good in this year's annual Town Quiz.

Once again John White was the quizmaster with local scouts assisting in the grilling of twenty-five teams. The winning team proved to be Saltash Heritage including Saltash Observer reporter Martin Lister. The runners up were the Stooges, one point behind followed by St Nics, Noshers and Beer Hunters all tied for third place.

The Mayor, Cllr Colin Oakes, presented the trophy to the winning team. And the answers to the above questions are donkeys, mint and Dr Dolittle.

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Youngstagers... "Don't Stop Believin" Win at Cornwall Drama awards

There was a lot of excitement amongst all those involved with Youngstagers from Saltash, when they were nominated for six Cornwall Drama Association's Annual Theatre Festival Awards. So to win three of these coveted awards and a special youth award for the production: "Don't Stop Believin!" was "like all our Christmases and Birthdays coming at once" said Co-Producer/Director Alison Hill. Youngstagers was set up in 1991 is comprised of a young

cast aged from 5 to 16 along with affiliated group Stage-Rite for the older members. Cornwall Drama Association was formed around 50 years ago. Its elected Committee members come from all over the county, representing affiliated amateur groups and individual members interested in drama. Their Annual Festival is designed to assist groups and improve standards through written adjudications. The awards won and presented at the Bristol Hotel in Newquay recently were:

CDA Trophy for the Best Musical Show, The Christine Woolf award for fine Ensemble Playing, The Award for Best Costumes. The Special Roy Crosley Award for outstanding youth performance was awarded to two members, Hannah and Adam for their Performances as narrators in "Don't stop Believin!"

Neil Bailey, the other Co-Producer and Musical Director said that these awards were testament to the amazing support from the parents and

volunteers as well as the wonderful cast because, without their help, he and the rest of the production team would not have achieved such spectacular results.

Rehearsals for their next production "Alice in Wonderland" are already under way despite being very busy in the run up to Christmas with numerous appearances in the local community for charity and church groups. In addition, they were scheduled to appear at Radio Plymouth's Christmas Gala evening.



Sisters "Reflections" Recording Aids Aspiring Musicians

A fifteen year old songstress with her twelve year old pianist sister have put their combined talents into producing a recording which will bring musical delight to many and help many other aspiring local musicians to achieve their ambitions.

"Reflections" reflects Florence and Rose Bonners' eagerness to help the Sue Hooper Charitable Foundation of which their grandmother is the founder. Many will have already heard them perform locally and now

can enjoy the sisters' talents on CD. Florence's ten songs range from the softly romantic to the challenging Latin American beat of 'A night like this.' Her wistful voice is perfectly suited in particular to the poetic magic of 'Fields of Gold' previously recorded by several singers ranging from Eva Cassidy to Sting. Florence seems perfectly to recapture here the rich golden summers that the song evokes. In contrast she lets her voice rip into 'Isn't she lovely' before concluding with the rich

romantic tones of 'Make you feel my love.'

Following Florence's variety of modern and classic popular songs her sister Rose suitably concludes the recording with two finely played piano solos.

The studio recording is highly professionally produced with suitable backing and all profits will go to the foundation which aims to assist young people in Saltash and throughout Cornwall in enhancing their talents in the performing arts, may having gone on to professional careers through this support.

Letter to the Editor... Military Wives Choir

When the men of our armed forces go off to fight, whether it is by Air, Sea or Land, there is always someone left behind. It is easy to forget about the wives and partners of our men, and how they are left for many months to raise children, and run a household when before it was a two person job.

For many women who have moved into an area following their partner through their career it can also be a very lonely time. It was for this reason that the Military Wives Choir was formed, so that the partners left behind would meet new people, and has a distraction from the constant worry of what was happening, or indeed what could happen.

Hopefully many of you will have heard of the BBC TV show the Military Wives Choir, and you may have even seen us on TV. What you may not be aware of is that due to the positive result we received from singing at the Royal Albert Hall, we have now been asked to release a single in time for Christmas. The single is called "Wherever you are" and the lyrics are made up of lines from the letters we both sent and received from our partners out on operations in Afghanistan. The single was written by Paul Mealor, and was conducted by Gareth Malone. I ask you to please buy this Single; all proceeds will be going towards the Royal British Legion and to the Soldier, Sailor, Airmen and Service Families Association (SSAFA). Thank you *Thais Janes*

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Welcome to a great way of keeping fit, staying healthy & most importantly, having fun!

Christmas Pool Party

Come along and enjoy some festive time in the pool on Thursday 22nd December 10am - 12pm £3.50 per person.

Saltash Leisure Centre Christmas Opening Times

Normal Times:

Mondays to Friday 6.30am-10.15pm
Saturdays 6.30am-9.15pm
Sundays 7.30am-7.00pm
Bank Holidays 9am-4.00pm

Christmas Opening Times:

Saturday 24th December 9.00am-2.00pm
Sunday 25th December Christmas Day Closed
Monday 26th December Boxing Day Closed
Tuesday 27th December Bank Holiday Closed
Wednesday 28th December 7.00am-6.00pm
Thursday 29th December 7.00am- 6.00pm
Friday 30th December 7.00am-6.00pm
Saturday 31st December 9.00am -2.00pm
Sunday 1st January 2012 New Years Day Closed
Monday 2nd January Bank Holiday Closed

And to help you on your way, to fitness we can offer you:

- Saltash Fitness Suite
- State of the art fitness suite. Cardio and weight training. Fully qualified instructors.
- Saltash Exercise Classes
- 29 weekly classes including the popular 'Zumba' dance class
- Saltash swimming pool
- 25 meter pool with side learner pools
- Junior swim lessons
- Weekly half hour sessions that run in 10 week blocks for children 3 years plus. Fully qualified instructors.
- Children's Parties at Saltash Leisure Centre

Give a Membership Gift Voucher this Christmas

Tel: 01752 840940

www.cornwall.gov.uk/leisurecentres



Visit your local leisure centre



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New DVD Releases for December

- 1 Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2.
- 2 Captain America.
- 3 The Smurfs.
- 4 The Hangover Part 2.
- 5 The Rise of the Planet of the Apes.
- 6 Inbetweeners.
- 7 Conan the Barbarian.
- 8 Spy Kids 4.
- 9 Mr Poppers Penguins.
- 10 Final Destination 5

2 FOR THE PRICE OF ONE 7 DAYS A WEEK FILMS FROM £1.00 PER NIGHT

Order Your Christmas Party Drinks Now!

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Look out for more new offers 10/1/12

for more info visit www.bargainbooze.co.uk

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