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# Village Voice

Chris Smith - We Remember!

ISSUE 229 | OCTOBER 2025



Community magazine for Kingswinford, Wall Heath & Wordsley

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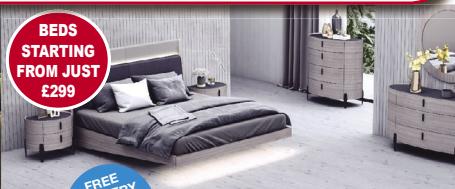


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# Village Voice

**Community magazine for  
Kingswinford, Wall Heath & Wordsley**

## Cover story

With Halloween and Bonfire Night in close succession it is expected that expenditure will be well in excess of £1 billion. Sadly over the years Halloween has become increasingly commercial and many of its traditional aspects have been discarded in favour of new ideas such as 'trick or treat' and dressing up in scary costumes. There are of course many people who are nervous about opening their door at night. With that in mind, for anyone who does not want to be bothered by 'trick or treaters' we have included on page 18 a **NO TRICK OR TREATERS** poster to attach to your front door. The 5<sup>th</sup> November is a time when the sky lights up and everyone enjoys the displays of fireworks. But it does come with the usual warning to be safe and keep to the Firework Code. Have a happy and safe time.

## Gail



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<b>34</b>	There are a couple of business opportunities for anyone looking to start a new business or perhaps you have a business and are looking for somewhere to showcase products.
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<b>74-77</b>	The Parish Pump: Read about what is going on in your area.

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MIDLANDS



**Please note that the closing date for our competition this month is  
THURSDAY, 23<sup>rd</sup> OCTOBER 2025. Entries received after this date will not be entered into the draw. Please ensure your name, address, telephone number and email address are included on your entry.**

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Each month over **2,000** copies of this edition of **Village Voice** are delivered throughout **Kingswinford, Wall Heath** and **Wordsley**. Extras are given to libraries and selected shops in each area. Be sure to look out for your copy.

### DO YOU RUN A NON PROFIT MAKING CLUB OR SOCIETY? ARE YOU ON THE LOCAL COMMITTEE OF A CHARITY?

Would you like some **FREE** publicity for forthcoming events or to recruit new members? Give us a call, send us an email or drop us a line here at **VILLAGE VOICE** – we would love to help. See our contact details on page 3.

### COPY DEADLINE

Please note that the copy deadline for the **NOVEMBER 2025** edition of **VILLAGE VOICE** is **TUESDAY, 21<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2025**.

Please book your space early to avoid disappointment.

Courtesy of **THE ROBIN** in Bilston, we have two tickets up for grabs for one lucky winner. All you have to do to be entered is to send your **NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER** and **EMAIL ADDRESS** to **villagevoice@hotmail.co.uk** or write to us at **The Robin Tickets, Forge House, 50 Redhall Road, Dudley DY3 2NL**. The lucky winner will be drawn on **Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025 – GOOD LUCK!**

WIN  
**TWO**  
TICKETS TO  
**THE ROBIN**  
IN  
**BILSTON**

Congratulations to **NICOLA ALLEN** of Wombourne who was the lucky winner of the two tickets on offer in the **SEPTEMBER** edition.

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it's a fact!

★ Until 10th April 1926 Kingswinford was well served by a tram service from Stourbridge via Amblecote and Wordsley. However, a faster (and cheaper) omnibus service had been introduced in 1924 in direct competition with the trams and inevitably the tram service was withdrawn two years later. Initially the bus service was operated by several small companies but then the Birmingham & Midland Motor Omnibus Co. Ltd., better known as Midland Red, started operating in the area. With reduced fares, more comfortable vehicles and faster journey times it was not long before Midland Red became the prime operator in the area, a situation that continued until 1981 when the company was split into smaller operations in preparation for nationalisation. Midland Red West, as the operating unit in and around the Black Country was later subject to a management buy-out.

★ In 1860 the Economic & Equitable Money Society, a mutual savings society based in Dudley collapsed causing many people in the area to lose their hard earned cash. One of the contributory factors in its failure was that the previous year a gang of swindlers had taken out a series of loans for which they never made any repayments. Several of the gang evaded capture but two—Benjamin Mullett of Bromley Lane and William Batham, a cowkeeper and shoemaker of Kingswinford—were caught and hauled before the courts where they were duly made bankrupt and all their assets seized.

★ For many years it was said that the Queen's Head on High Street, Wordsley was haunted by a ghostly figure which would flick any coins left on the bar.

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# BRAINTEASERS

Over the past few months we have set a variety of Brainteasers. This month we have concentrated on providing some moderately easy ones. Answers are on page 68 if you need them.

1. Alan, Brian, Chris and David are exploring the jungle but have lost their way. They have only one torch with a battery life of just 17 minutes and it is getting dark. They come across a rope bridge but it is clear that it will only stand the weight of two of them at a time. The problem is that they all move at different speeds—**A** could complete the bridge in a minute, **B** would take two minutes, **C** would complete it in five minutes whilst **D** would take 10 minutes to cover the bridge. How would they get themselves over the bridge without the torch losing its power?

2. You are walking across a field and because you are feeling hungry, you pick up something. It is not meat nor does it have bones. You take it

home and put it on a shelf in the kitchen. Three days later it walks away. What was the object?

3. If you are standing in front of a bath full of water and you have a teaspoon, a small jug and a bucket beside you, what is the easiest way of emptying the bath?

**Our last three puzzles are two words combined—all you have to do is untangle them. The letters are all in the right order:**

4. SHEVOERT
5. FALLAMOUED
6. BRASHFECTIFULY

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it's a fact!

- ★ How things change! In March 1915 a short news item appeared in the Dudley Chronicle saying how a single seagull had been seen flying over Wordsley and that this was unusual and was probably due to bad weather at sea. Today, of course, you can see any number of gulls in the area every day of the week.
- ★ At an inquest in Wolverhampton in September 1806 the court heard how Joseph Bennett, a boy of about 13, suffered an "accidental death". Bennett was a servant employed by Benson Wadron, a farmer of Overley near Worcester, and was in Kingswinford with a wagon loaded with lime. Apparently he leant over to get some hay for the horse, slipped and fell from the wagon and under its wheels. He died instantly.
- ★ In 1969 the Wall Heath Church of the Ascension Autumn Fair was opened by Jane Rossington (seen here right) who played Jill Richardson in the TV soap 'Crossroads'. The Fair had to be officially "opened" at 6.00pm rather than during the afternoon as the actress had to rehearse during the afternoon. The stalls, however, were in action from 2.00pm as normal.
- ★ In March 1863 the then Prince of Wales married Princess Alexandra and celebrations were held across the country. Locally the Kingswinford Rifle Corps, under the control of Joseph Pearson, paraded around the area firing "feu de joie" salutes at various sports in the parish.



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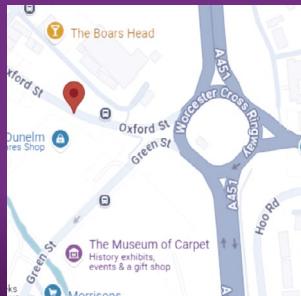
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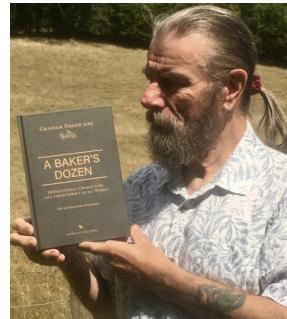
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# WIN A COPY OF GRAHAM FISHER'S LATEST BOOK—A BAKER'S DOZEN

A Black Country-born author, now resident on the Welsh border near Hay-on-Wye, has released his latest book that examines the theme of personal acquaintance through the lens of the Great Thinkers, particularly those of Ancient Greece. Almost ten years in the making, *'A Bakers Dozen: inspirational characters and their impact in my world, with philosophical annotations'*, is Graham Fisher's exploration of characters, sadly now all deceased, whom he has encountered along the way and the legacy they left him after what he describes as *'a life well led'*.



With an emphasis on local personalities including Wesley Perrins MP, peace campaigner Bert Bissell and Halesowen artist Ray Stimpson the repertoire also includes those of more national prominence such as broadcaster Alistair Cooke, comedian Spike Milligan and eccentric writer Daniil Kharms. Graham describes it as *'sauntering along life's avenues to recount a medley of acquaintances that have left singularly affirming impressions of wisdom and virtue.'* Graham says: *'This has taken me a long time to pull together so I feel it is something of a magnum opus and a fitting testament to just some of the people whose lives have greatly influenced both mine and others. I believe their examples offer lessons for us all'.*

The book is available in hardback through the usual outlets including Amazon or direct from the publisher at £15.00 (+p&p) [sparrow@mac.com](mailto:sparrow@mac.com). 104pp with colour & b/w illustrations ISBN 9781739921248. More about the author can be found at: [grahamfisher.co.uk/about](http://grahamfisher.co.uk/about)

Graham has very kindly set aside three copies of his books for three lucky winners. All you have to do is answer a simple question: *'What famous broadcaster can be found in Graham's book'*. Simply drop your entry into the post (Book Competition, 50 Redhall Road, Gornal Wood, Dudley DY3 2NL) or email your answer to [villagevoice@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:villagevoice@hotmail.co.uk) Please remember to include your full address and telephone number. The three winners will be drawn on Thursday, 23rd October. Good luck everyone.

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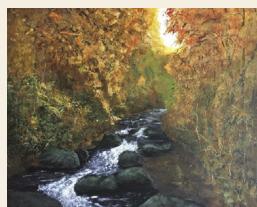
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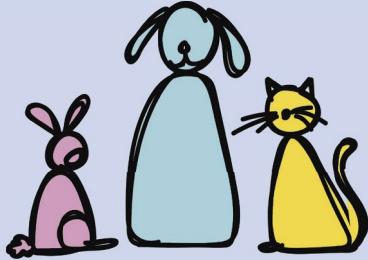
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Photo courtesy of Celina Taylor Photography



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**A FUN FESTIVE VIBE!** While browsing the stalls, finding something exciting around every corner, you'll quickly get into a Christmassy mood... welcomed by Father Christmas on his amazing sleigh, The Grinch... up to his usual menacing antics, Dinosaurs roaring, Christmas characters roaming **AND** an amazing line up of **LIVE** musicians from Retro to Jazz Bands.

**OVER 130 NEW STALLS!** We can't mention them all but, to get your inspiration flowing here's a sample of some great **NEW** stallholders and old **FAVOURITES** (left) to see! You won't be stuck for ideas! There are so many beautiful handcrafted gifts...there truly is something for everyone.

Tickets for the show are priced from £8.00-£14.00 for adults but we have got 20 PAIRS of tickets to give away **ABSOLUTELY FREE** (for entry to the Show on Thursday 13th and Friday, 14th November)! All you have to do is answer the simple question "*How many new stalls are there this year?*" and send the answer—together with your name, address and telephone number to: FGF Tickets, Forge House, 50 Redhall Road, Dudley DY3 2NL or alternatively email your details to [villagevoice@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:villagevoice@hotmail.co.uk) The closing date for all entries is Thursday, 23rd October. For further details about the show be sure to check out their website at [www.festivegiftfair.co.uk](http://www.festivegiftfair.co.uk)

# Your Local Councillor Update

We're pleased to share some good news this month as we've secured further funding for essential road resurfacing in our area. Foundry Road, Berkley Drive, and Summerhill have now been added to the schedule, with resurfacing and pothole repairs either already underway or due to start shortly.

## **Wall Heath Halloween Trail & Village Spirit**

We're also proud to be supporting this year's Wall Heath Village People Halloween Trail, which has become a fantastic fixture in the local calendar. Events like this bring the whole community together and are a great example of what makes Wall Heath such a special place to live. Huge thanks to the volunteers who make it happen.

## **Wall Heath Show in Bloom**

Cllr Mark Webb had the pleasure of attending the annual Wall Heath Show and was genuinely blown away by the quality of the floral displays, crafts and community spirit on show. A big well done to the organisers, volunteers and stallholders who made it such a brilliant event once again.

## **Remembrance & Christmas – Save the Dates**

Looking ahead, Remembrance Services will be taking place across both Kingswinford and Wall Heath in November. Please keep an eye out for the finalised dates and times which we'll share via social media and noticeboards as soon as they're confirmed.

Meanwhile, Christmas planning is well underway, and we're working closely with local volunteers and groups to make sure both Kingswinford and Wall Heath feel festive and welcoming in the run-up to December.

We'll also be holding another councillor surgery before Christmas to give residents the chance to raise any local issues or ideas—details to follow soon.

Phil, Ed & Mark

## **CONTACT YOUR LOCAL TEAM BELOW**



Cllr Phil Atkins  
Tel: 07929 662888  
Email: [cllr.phil.atkins@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.phil.atkins@dudley.gov.uk)

Cllr Ed Lawrence  
Tel: 01384 818007  
Email: [cllr.ed.lawrence@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.ed.lawrence@dudley.gov.uk)

Cllr Mark Webb  
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For many people Counselling can be viewed as a negative thing as we are often taught "not to air our dirty washing in public" however unlike talking to a friend I am able to offer a non-judgemental listening ear in a confidential environment there will be no bumping into me at a party and worrying about what you've said.

Counselling can support you to look at where you want to grow and make changes, helping these autumn and winter months seem lighter and brighter.

If you would like more information about me visit [www.kaleidoscopecounselling.co.uk](http://www.kaleidoscopecounselling.co.uk) or email me at [www.kaleidoscopewellbeing@outlook.com](mailto:www.kaleidoscopewellbeing@outlook.com). I offer a free 15 minute chat to tell you about what I do and answer your questions.



## BRIERLEY HILL ROOTS

Until the 1840s the parish of Kingswinford was truly enormous, stretching from Himley to Quarry Bank and incorporating what was then the relatively small village of Brierley Hill. With the advent of the industrial revolution, however, and the establishment of the Earl of Dudley's Round Oak Ironworks in 1857, Brierley Hill grew regularly and in 1894 became an Urban District separate from Kingswinford Rural District Council. In fact in the later large scale re-organisation of local authorities in 1938 Kingswinford lost its RDC status and itself became part of Brierley Hill UDC.

The relationship between Kingswinford and Brierley Hill has always been close and it shared many aspects of life. For example, the Brierley Hill Wakes were firm favourites with those from Kingswinford—the local paper in 1883 reported that of those 126 arrested during the Wakes Week at Brierley Hill over half were from Kingswinford! From 1852 until 1962 the nearest railway station to Kingswinford was at Brierley Hill and when the Kingswinford and Wordsley magistrates courts were closed in the late 19th century all minor criminal cases for Kingswinford were heard at the Brierley Hill Police Court which initially just sat on Mondays and Thursdays each week. The influx of cases from Kingswinford and Wordsley, however, meant that more sittings had to be arranged and by the turn of the century it operated five full days a week.



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**it's a fact!**

- ★ June 1900 saw Samuel Cooper, William Challingsworth, Thomas Jackson, Harry Price, Albert Price and David Nicklin, all of Wordsley, appear in court for playing cards on the highway. They were observed by PC Hill playing cards in the street in Kingswinford and he saw money passing between them. When he confronted them they ran off but he caught Cooper and grabbed Challingsworth's hat. In court all apart from Nicklin pleaded guilty (he said he was 50 miles away at the time). All were fined 3/11d each or seven days imprisonment.
- ★ Since it was formed in 1978, Kewford Eagles FC has become one of the area's leading junior football clubs with almost 600 registered players. It got its name when it was formed out of the amalgamation of two Under 12 teams from Quarry Bank and Kingswinford Scouts (hence Q-ford or 'Kewford')
- ★ In November 1970 kind-hearted Kathleen Benson handed over £1,300 to Wordsley Hospital for the purchase of a new kidney machine. She had raised the money by selling 300 woollen poodles and 1,000 doll decorations that she had knitted herself.
- ★ In the mid 19th century the parish of Kingswinford was divided into seven separate areas— Wordsley, Kingswinford, Brierley Hill, Brockmoor, Hart's Hill, Pensnett and Quarry Bank.



## ONE COMMUNITY UPDATE BY SHAZ SALEEM

Hey wonderful people of Kingswinford and Wall Heath, I'm very proud to be part of the Village Voice writing a monthly blog to highlight amazing community groups and community champions.

As the founder of the Saleem Foundation charity and recipient of The High Sheriff Award, I believe volunteering makes me feel as though I am an ambassador for my area; I feel a sense of pride for where I come from.

### **Morrisons Kingswinford celebrates completion of £2m refurbishment!**

The busy community store known as Kingswinford Morrisons 250 has completed a £2m new refit. I was invited to see the amazing new look and had the pleasure of meeting managers Mike Banks and Kate Flynn.

The store looks incredible, and I am very pleased that Morrisons have made this investment to their Kingswinford store. Morrisons are a very important part of our community and with Morrisons Community Champion Kingswinford-based Helen Nicholls leading the way in building community relationships, this investment shows their commitment to Kingswinford.

I would like to wish Morrisons the very best of luck, and a huge thank you for being such a huge part of Kingswinford.



### **Alina Naz Saleem is proud to support #TsfAwardForHeroes winner Millie Turner**

Millie and her friend were at Tesco Bromley Lane as they raised over £500 for Birmingham Children's Hospital and Charity. The bake sale took place on 31<sup>st</sup> August.

Thank you to Territreatsretro for donating cakes to this important cause.

### **The Wombourne Kids Fest 2025 was incredible!!**

The sold-out packed event was epic. It was lovely to be joined by my minions, we had so much fun, and they had everything; Street Food, Fun Fair Rides, Bouncy Castles, Market stalls, Live entertainment And they had our favourite ice cream guy Richard from Midland Super Cream.

A huge thank you to Donna, Charlotte, and the team from Tipsy Turtle Events for organising this amazing community event!!

### **Upcoming community events**

**10<sup>th</sup> October** - Kuppa Club- 9.15am to 11am at Wall Heath Tavern • **12<sup>th</sup> October** - Kingswinford & Wall Heath Litter Pick - 10am • **24<sup>th</sup> October** - Kuppa Club - 9.15am to 11am at Wall Heath Tavern • **26<sup>th</sup> October** - Kingswinford & Wall Heath Litter Pick - 10am • **Every Saturday and Sunday 10am** - Kingswinford in Bloom meet by the library

**Contact me**

 **07786 196666**  **askshaz@hotmail.co.uk**  **@shazsaleem001**

# BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES AT TOWNSEND PLACE MARKET

Kingswinford market at Townsend Place is situated in the heart of Kingswinford. Privately owned, the market has been trading for over 40 years and has a thriving outdoor market with regular stallholders attending Thursday through to Saturday each week.

We have a couple of business opportunities here at Townsend Place. Firstly, an established card business has become available. If you would like further information about this please give Richard a call on the number below. Secondly, with a limited number of spaces available on Thursdays we are now looking to expand what the market currently offers. Are you a crafter who is looking to be able to showcase your products? We would like to invite crafters and traders (there may well be upcoming trade opportunities) to join us. We offer competitive rates.

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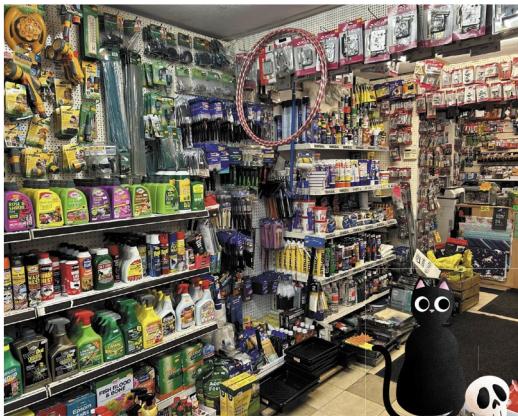
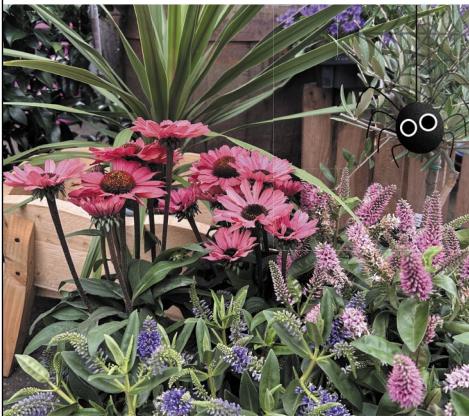
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This is an article that Chris first published in October 2016 which tells the story of a 'Smelly Ghost' from Brewery Street.. We have been asked to feature it again...so here you go.



Until about 1990 there was a house in Brierley Hill Road (formerly Brewery Street) that was reputed to have been haunted...by a smell.

Field House was the home of the Ensell family who ran the Dob Hill glassworks and later built the Redhouse Cone and the story goes that one of the Ensell women used to sit in the upstairs window watching the employees as they worked. She would time them by turning an hourglass and, at the end of the week they would be paid accordingly.

A dispute arose one week over the wages and it became known that she was prone to falling asleep and would frequently not turn the hourglass as soon as the sand had filtered to the bottom. As a result the men worked longer than they had to for less pay than they were entitled.

The story goes that they became so enraged that they stormed the house, picked up the old lady and threw her into the furnace. From that day, it was said, that Field House was haunted by her spirit and when it was present there was a definite smell of burnt flesh in the house. This was reported by several subsequent owners and tenants of the property. Indeed it was also said that sometimes late at night you could see the shape of a woman with an hourglass in the unlit upstairs window of the house. Whilst certainly subsequent owners of the house did report a strange odour on occasion there is little doubt that the story is untrue as no hard documentary evidence exists and there was no record of a court case involving the murder of the woman. But of course, you never know...especially with Halloween on the horizon!

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Over the years various companies have created worldwide reputations for their goods and services. In 1869 Benjamin Wood's Wordsley Foundry won a substantial order for 15,000 axle boxes and 9,000 axle brasses for the East Indian Railway Company. Also enjoying a strong export trade was local photographer A. Harrison Hill who operated from a studio in Rectory Street in the 1870s. He undertook a number of trips to Europe where his portrait photographs were much sought after. Established in 1888, E.C. Whitney (who had premises in High Street) became the leading supplier of cassocks, surplices and clerical clothing in the country as well as supplying almost 20 countries across the world.

In 1847 the schools in Kingswinford were inspected...and were found somewhat lacking. Although the inspector, Rev Muirhead Mitchell said that the school buildings were adequate he did say that of the 113 pupils examined only 5% were capable of simple arithmetic and none could write.

In 1816 a 'Soup Charity' was set up in Kingswinford to provide for the families of those killed in the Napoleonic Wars. The charity provided meat (especially mutton and bacon) at reduced rates to the poor.

The 'Kingswinford diamond' was one of the largest found in South Africa during the 1960s. It was reportedly named after the birthplace of John Mann, the supervisor of the mine in which it was found.

As well as having a chemist shop in Market Street, Kingswinford, Alan Hickling had a factory in Sedgley to manufacture 'Minex' snuff.

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will be dotted around the village

Daisy Chain will be hosting the ever-popular Christmas  
Pudding Trail ...more details in the November edition.

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# DRINKS: IN THE CARIBBEAN RUM SPIRIT

A review by Trevor Langley

And now for something totally different! We were approached a couple of months ago by Trevor Langley. Trevor is an independent reviewer of all things drink—he sources his own companies and has absolutely no connection at all to the brands which he chooses to write about. We thought it was a little different to our normal articles and so we start with the Caribbean and their love of rum.



Caribbean rums are highly respected and hugely appreciated throughout the world. Jamaica and the Dominican Republic are well known producers of Caribbean rums, as well as other Caribbean islands, that create delectable beverages of this type. The Caribbean is very much recognised as the 'birth place of rum' and the distilleries located in the Caribbean are amongst the world's very best. Differing ingredients and different processes of production define the appearance, bouquet, pleasure for the mouth and add to the sensations on the palate.

Multi award-winning Diabeslesse Rum is UK based and was founded by Cleo Farman. The Diabeslesse Company produces small-batch blends of fine, aged rums, especially selected from Barbados, Guyana and Jamaica. The quality plus several unique profiles of flavour, that create distinctive productions, are now globally recognised. The rums are created using historic methods and are matured in charred American Oak ex-bourbon casks.

**DIABLESSE CARIBBEAN RUM (40% vol)** is a very regular choice for rum lovers. Caribbean rum is renowned around the world and this production (in my opinion) justly deserves the high rating it constantly receives. Little introduction is required for this delightful, small-batch rum, which is produced utilising a blend of fine, aged rums, from Jamaica, Guyana and Barbados, to a great advantage.

**DIABLESSE CLEMENTINE SPICED RUM (40% vol)** is a favourite with many spiced rum devotees. I found the Clementine contribution, for this popular beverage, to be evident throughout. Flavoursome and with a blend of warming Caribbean-inspired spices, including a hint of ginger, this small-batch production continues to gain in popularity.

**DIABLESSE COCONUT & HIBISCUS RUM (38% vol)** I found to be most pleasant indeed. From the bouquet to the mouth's delight, with the flavours of fresh, natural coconut, plus hibiscus and ripe, red berries certainly coming through. The palate's sensation continues, with the pleasures of this unusual, small-batch delectation.

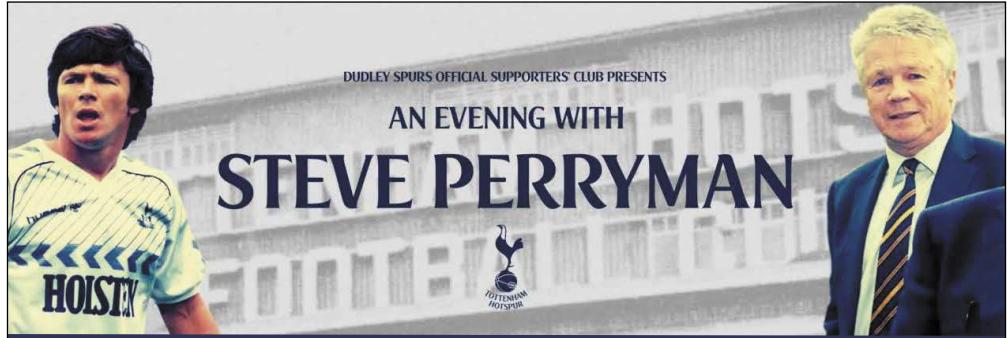
The very informative website has all details of stockists and information about long-standing, proven methods of production. Personally speaking, I found the website enlightened me about the centuries-old stills, which are used in the production process. Online ordering is easy and orders are dispatched efficiently and quickly. [www.diabeslesserum.co.uk](http://www.diabeslesserum.co.uk)

**COMING UP IN THE NOVEMBER  
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“Make mine a Gin”



As always,  
Enjoy!

*Trevor Langley*



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AN EVENING WITH

# STEVE PERRYMAN



We are pleased to present an evening with **TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR LEGEND** and **RECORD APPEARANCE HOLDER**, the one and only **STEVE PERRYMAN, MBE**. Steve was a former captain of the club and has won two FA Cups, two League Cups and two UEFA Cups during a decorated 17-year spell, before later transitioning into management and directorship(s), in both domestic and international football.

**Friday 14th November 2025**  
**7:30pm (Doors open at 6:45pm)**

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All you have to do is search out the square below for the 16 words associated with **WEST MIDLANDS SAFARI PARK** on our list. Fifteen of them are hidden in the square (spelt forwards, backwards, up or down or diagonally) whilst **one is not there at all – or it may be misspelt!** Once you have identified which one is missing just fill in the form below and send it to us. Alternatively send us an email at [villagevoice@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:villagevoice@hotmail.co.uk) (remember to include your name, address, postcode, telephone number and email address).

The winners will be the first two correct entries drawn at random after the closing date of **Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025**. Good luck!

Y	E	L	D	W	E	B	K	S	T	S
O	W	L	E	Z	E	R	Z	S	I	D
T	S	S	E	W	A	C	E	D	S	N
P	A	B	D	P	E	W	B	R	A	A
S	R	L	L	C	H	O	U	I	F	L
A	Y	C	I	L		A	A	V	A	D
F	R	O	V	O	S	G	N	E	R	I
A	B	L	I	O	N	E	O	T	I	M
R	E	O	N	L	E	I	S	U	R	E
I	Z	I	G	L	L	T	H	I	R	D
L	D	N	E	H	G	U	O	R	H	T

#### HIDDEN WORDS

1. SAFARI
2. LIVING
3. PARK
4. WEST
5. RHINO
6. LODGES
7. AGE
8. DRIVE
9. LION
10. BEWDLEY
11. THROUGH
12. ELEPHANT
13. DINOSAURS
14. MIDLANDS
15. ICE
16. ZEBRA

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# THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT!

We came across a fascinating article from the online edition of the Daily Mail that highlights some remarkable reports of 999 calls received by West Midlands Police...

**In the West Midlands there were 15 calls saying that ghosts had been seen. Of them the largest number (7) occurred in 2013.**



Fortunately in the three years under review there were no reports of werewolves seen anywhere in the region. Equally interesting is the areas from where these reports were received. The most came from East Birmingham (11) although Wolverhampton was just one behind. Only eight reports came from Sandwell and Dudley accounted for just three calls to the police.

Although not included in this report, it should be remembered that Dudley has long since been a "hotspot" for sightings of UFOs. Indeed, in 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2013 a UFO (nicknamed "the Dudley Dorito") was seen over various parts of the borough. Again, it may be no coincidence that two of these sightings were around Halloween.

Perhaps more worryingly, in 2013 there were two separate reports of zombies being seen in the Black Country. However, both happened to coincide with television programmes about the subject!



So, if you are out and about this Halloween make sure that not only do you look out for ghosts and ghouls but strange flying phenomena as well. You have been warned!



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# FIREWORK FACTS!



By Chris Pearce  
of Jubilee Fireworks Ltd

'Firework season' is fast approaching – with Diwali and Bonfire Night just around the corner. Fireworks play a big part in both of these culturally important celebrations, as they have done for centuries. Here are ten interesting facts about fireworks that you may not be aware of.

**1. Who invented fireworks?** It is generally agreed that the Chinese first produced very primitive fireworks (by accident) around 200BCE. However, proper fireworks as we know them were not developed until gunpowder was invented – around the 9th century. The Chinese were again involved but fireworks didn't really appear in Europe until around the 13th century. Marco Polo is often credited for introducing gunpowder to Europe, from which the production of fireworks developed.

**2. Have fireworks always included bright colours?**

Surprisingly, no! Very early fireworks produced only gold and silver effects. Colours appeared when chemistry was better understood. Different metal compounds are responsible for the colours; strontium (red), barium (green), sodium (yellow), calcium (orange), copper (blue). Aluminium, titanium and magnesium both produce bright white sparks.



**3. Which is the hardest colour to produce?** Blue presents pyrotechnic chemists with the greatest challenge. It only appears in a very restricted range of (quite low) temperatures. If the reaction is too hot, the blue effect becomes very pale.

**4. Have fireworks ever been used in warfare?** Yes – as soon as gunpowder was invented (along with artillery), the use of fireworks became part of warfare. There were early experiments with rockets but fireworks were also used for signalling purposes. Illuminating flares, suspended from parachutes, were commonly used in the trenches in World War One. Generally, though, a 'firework' is now considered to be a device used only for entertainment.



**5. When did the first proper firework display to take place in England?** There is some debate about this. Very primitive firework effects were used at the wedding of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York, in 1486 (well before Guy Fawkes!). Fireworks became very popular in the reign of Elizabeth I – so much so that she appointed an official 'Fire Master'. Many historians suggest that the show staged for Elizabeth by suitor Robert Dudley at Kenilworth Castle in 1575, was the first 'proper' fireworks display to be



held in England. It was possibly an attempt to impress Her Majesty, with a view to marriage, and featured many of the fireworks that we would recognise today but also cannons and elaborate theatrical effects.

**6. Who is the world's biggest user of fireworks?** If we think of a single organisation, this accolade probably goes to Disney. They fire displays regularly at their theme parks throughout the world and are very much involved in the use and development of more environmentally friendly fireworks that produce lower debris and minimal smoke. At one stage, they also experimented with the use of compressed air to launch aerial 'bombs' (called shells).

**7. Was it ever compulsory to celebrate 5<sup>th</sup> November?** The answer is Yes! Following the failed gunpowder plot in 1605, an Act of Parliament was introduced, entitled *An act of public thanksgiving to Almighty God every year on the fifth of November*. This required every parish to hold special church services. The day was marked by sermons, bell-ringing, and later bonfires and fireworks. It was finally repealed in 1859.

**8. Why can't you buy traditional 'bangers' anymore?**

This is a surprise to many people, but the old-fashioned 'bangers' that were available in shops (to the delight of every schoolboy) were banned from sale in 1997 – the reason being that they were classed as 'nuisance' items. They were also responsible for many injuries and anti-social behaviour. 'Jumping Jacks' (considered dangerous and unpredictable) and mini-rockets were also banned.

**9. What is the world's largest firework?** The record is currently held by a 62inch diameter aerial shell – launched in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, in February 2020. It weighed 1,270kg and was launched from a 26ft long steel tube. The result, which made the Guinness Book of Records, was a giant red and white burst at a height of 2,200 feet.

**10. How many fireworks are sold in the UK each year?**

A reliable estimate is in the region of 70 million! This includes sparklers, fountains, roman candles, rockets, wheels and 'cakes' – a relatively new invention which was unknown before the 1980s. Cakes are popular multi-shot devices which produce a continual series of aerial effects and are effectively a display-in-a-box.



**Images:** Blue Fireworks are the most difficult to produce (Fact 3) Steamboat Shell Tim Borden, designer of the world's biggest firework, admires his 62inch diameter shell. (Fact 9) 1950s Standard Fireworks Box This modest box of 'Standard Fireworks' from the 1950s contained Bangers, a helicopter and a 'Jumping Jack' – all of which are now banned from public sale! (Fact 8)



# HALLOWEEN

## FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS TO A MULTI MILLION POUND INDUSTRY

Although Halloween is now a multi-million pound industry its roots go back to pagan times when the festival of 'Samhein' celebrated the end of the summer. All Hallows Day became the official start of winter and All Hallows Eve (the evening before All Hallows Day) became shortened to Halloween.

There are, however, regional variations—in Cornwall it is known as 'Allantide' whilst on the Isle of Man the traditional name for the celebration is 'Hop-tu-Naa'. The Irish refer to it as 'Pooky Night', a pooky being a little mischievous elf. Indeed, originally Halloween had no real connection with ghosts or ghouls. It was about the imps and elves who, before hibernating for the winter, would go on one final foray to cause as much mayhem as they could. People would bribe them to stay away (the original of 'trick or treat') and the food that was given to them was used to

sustain them throughout the long winter.

In the United States the town of Anoka in Minnesota claims to be the modern "Halloween Capital of the World" and has introduced a by-law

that says that anyone not giving 'trick or treat' gifts is liable to a fine. They also insist that all the representatives on the local council are expected to dress up as witches, ghosts or ghouls.

One of the relatively modern customs that is popular is the making of Jack o'Lanterns out of pumpkins by placing a candle inside the hollowed-out shell of a pumpkin and this seems to have started in Ireland where, instead of pumpkins, turnips were used. Once the custom had been taken up by the Americans in the 1940s and 50s

the pumpkin (or other squashes) became the most frequently used vehicle for this form of



'art'. One of the most interesting aspects of the celebration of Halloween is the various traditions that are associated with it. The tradition of dressing up and wearing masks at Halloween dates back many hundreds of years and its roots came from a common belief that around this time ghosts returned to the earthly world and could then be encountered roaming the streets. The masks were worn by people to stop the ghosts recognising them and to fool them into the mistaken belief that they were other spirits. To keep the ghosts away from the houses people would leave bowls of food outside for them to eat—the early form of 'trick or treat'.

Also at Halloween any sighting of a black cat was deemed to bring bad luck as it was believed that witches had the ability to turn themselves into black cats in order to spy on the local population. So if this Halloween you happen to see a black cat be careful what you say and do!



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it's a fact!

- ★ An advertisement appeared in the Birmingham Daily Post in September 1976 thanking a local company—Wordsley Print—for their actions in reporting an attempt to forge some drinks labels. It appears that they were approached by an individual asking them to print Johnnie Walker Scotch whisky labels but rather than take the order they reported it direct to the makers of the whisky who then informed the police. The advertisement praised the Wordsley company for their actions.
- ★ At the end of July 1816 the sad news was reported that the body of a newly born female child had been recovered from the Forge pool in Wall Heath. An investigation showed that the body was that of an illegitimate child born to Jane Taylor, a servant in the employ of Mr J. Taylor of Kingswinford. At the inquest the coroner's jury returned a verdict of wilful murder by the mother.
- ★ In June 1846 at Wordsley Police Court Sarah Pearpoint of Kingswinford was fined one shilling plus costs and Elizabeth Pearpoint five shillings (and costs) for assaulting a 77 year old woman called Elizabeth Bill. The next case heard by the magistrates, George Bates and William Trow, involved George Pearpoint who was also fined one shilling and costs for assaulting Elizabeth Pearpoint.
- ★ At a meeting of Kingswinford's Council in 1932 there was much debate about a bill for £3/15s/0d that had been received from Brierley Hill UDC for “ambulance services”. After much debate and amidst dark mutterings about overcharging it was agreed—reluctantly—that it should be paid.

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13 | LUTTERWORTH | **AWAY**

20 | BANBURY | **HOME**

OCT

04 | NEWPORT (SALOP) | **AWAY**

11 | NUNEATON | **HOME**

18 | BRIDGNORTH | **AWAY**

25 | BOURNVILLE | **HOME**

NOV

08 | DRYBROOK | **AWAY**

22 | BROMSGROVE | **HOME**

29 | NEWENT | **AWAY**

DEC

06 | STOURBRIDGE | **HOME**

13 | LUTTERWORTH | **HOME**

20 | BANBURY | **AWAY**

JAN

10 | NEWPORT (SALOP) | **HOME**

17 | NUNEATON | **AWAY**

31 | BRIDGNORTH | **HOME**

FEB

14 | BOURNVILLE | **AWAY**

28 | DRYBROOK | **HOME**

MARCH

07 | BROMSGROVE | **AWAY**

21 | NEWENT | **HOME**

28 | STOURBRIDGE | **AWAY**

APRIL

11 | LICHFIELD | **AWAY**

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## “THE RICHEST OF THE RICH”

Although the Kingswinford, Wall Heath and Wordsley areas have been home to a number of extremely wealthy individuals few can compare with William Orme Foster who, when he died in 1899 had in excess of £4 million in the bank and owned the magnificent Apley Hall (seen here right) near Bridgnorth. Indeed between purchasing it in 1888 and his death he had reputedly spent almost £500,000 restoring it to its former glory.



Foster's wealth came from inheriting the businesses of his uncle James Foster in 1853. At the time these included both the Stourbridge Old and New Works, Stourbridge Foundry, Shutt End Colliery, Brierley Hill Iron Works, Scotts Green and Baptist End Collieries as well as John Bradley & Co. which at its peak ran 95 puddling furnaces across the area. Originally he lived at Himley but then moved to Stourton before acquiring Apley Hall. In 1857 he became MP for South Staffordshire (which at that time included Kingswinford), in which capacity he served until 1869.

By the time of his death he had disposed of many of his business interests and was described by the Birmingham Post as “the richest of the rich”

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*Annie Rose - The Travelling Florist*

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THURSDAY OCTOBER 30<sup>TH</sup> 6:30-8:30PM  
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### □ *Crafting for a Cause: Adult Craft Evening October 30<sup>th</sup> - 6:30pm-8:30pm: Swan Pub, Stream Road, Kingswinford*

This year, Annie is kicking things off with a unique and heartwarming event designed just for grown-ups. The **Adult Craft Evening** invites people of the community to learn some new crafting skills with an Autumn theme while supporting an incredible cause. The twist? Instead of a traditional ticket fee, guests are asked to bring a brand-new toy suitable for a child aged from a few months to 16 years old. This thoughtful exchange means every crafter at this event directly contributes to a child's joy on Christmas morning.

□ **This is a ticket-only event and spaces are limited**, so early booking is essential. To reserve your place, please contact Annie Rose, The Travelling Florist.

### □ *A Community Celebration: The Christmas Charity Market—Saturday November 8<sup>th</sup> : 9:30am-1pm: Swan Pub, Kingswinford*

The second event promises fun for the whole family with the first ever **Christmas Charity Market** at

the Swan Pub, Kingswinford. Open to all in the local community, this festive market is packed with activities, creativity, and plenty of holiday cheer. Visitors can browse beautifully curated craft stalls, enjoy handcrafted gift shopping, and pre-order custom Christmas wreaths. A **dedicated children's Christmas stall** will raise funds exclusively to purchase new toys for children in care, while **Annie is also offering a series of free children's activities**, including:

- **Letter writing to Santa** – with a reply guaranteed for every child
- **Creating gift tags** for the children's toy gift bags
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And that's not all! Kids can enjoy **face painting**, and there's even a rumour that the **Grinch** himself will be making a mischievous appearance!

## ■ Making a Difference – Together

These events are more than just dates on a festive calendar. They're the result of months of planning, coordination, and passion—all with one aim: **to make sure no child goes without a gift at Christmas.**

Whether you're crafting for a cause or soaking up the festive spirit at the market, every toy donated and every pound raised helps bring a smile to a child's face. So come along, get involved, and be part of something truly special this Christmas.

**To donate, participate, or volunteer, contact Annie Rose – The Travelling Florist.**

**It would be particularly wonderful if anyone could donate some craft materials for the children's activities or prizes for the raffle.**

Let's make this year our biggest one yet. Together, we can turn kindness into magic.

Facebook link

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Sat 22 Nov	Melton Mowbray & Leicester £23

Sat 29 Nov	Glow at RHS Bridgwater £41
Sat 6 Dec	Yuletide coffee & mince pies £28
Sat 13 Dec	Festive Hereford £25
Tue 16 Dec	Broadway Festive Lights £24
Sat 20 Dec	Worcester Christmas Tree Trail £17
Thu 1 Jan	New Year Tour & Lunch £51



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30 Nov	ADVENT AT PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL	2 days	£190
8 Dec	FESTIVE SIDMOUTH	5 days	£500
16 Jan	WINTER WARMER IN TORQUAY	4 days	£375
1 Feb	CHESTER	2 days	£190
16 Feb	EARLY SPRING IN BOURNEMOUTH	5 days	£400
8 Mar	VICTORIAN LUXURY—ISLE OF WIGHT	5 days	£690
17 Mar	SIDMOUTH IN SPRINGTIME	5 days	£520
30 Mar	ISLES OF SCILLY	5 days	£980
9 Apr	DUTCH FLOWERS & WINDMILLS	5 days	£875

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**DUDLEY WINTER  
ALES FAYRE**  
St James's Road,  
Dudley DY1 1HP  
27-29 November  
2025

The Dudley Winter Ales Fayre is returning to Dudley Town Hall in November!

The three day beer festival runs 27-29 November and is organised by members of the Dudley and South Staffordshire branch (including Sedgley, Kingswinford and Wombourne) of the Campaign for Real Ale and neighbouring branches

There will be in excess of 70 real ales and ciders featured this year.

The doors will open at 1.00pm on Thursday and 11.00am on Friday and Saturday. Doors close on Thursday and Friday at 10.00pm.

Admission is free for all CAMRA members who book in advance for Thursday and Friday and is free to all without pre-booking on the Saturday.

To buy advance tickets please visit  
[www.dudley.camra.org.uk](http://www.dudley.camra.org.uk)

The festival this year celebrates the 200th anniversary of Priory Hall in Dudley and the bare knuckle boxer 'The Tipton Slasher'. In honour of these milestones there will be a special glass featuring them at the festival.

There will be live entertainment on the Friday and Saturday together with hot and cold food available each day.

Another plus point for visitors—anyone joining CAMRA at the event will receive two free pints!

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# BRAINTEASERS ANSWERS

1. A and B go across the bridge (time taken 2 minutes). A returns with the torch (1 minute). C and D go across the bridge (10 minutes) and then B goes back with the torch (2 minutes). A and B then return across the bridge together (2 minutes). This means that all four have ended up on the far side of the bridge in a total of 17 minutes.
2. An egg which has hatched after the three days.
3. If the question asked for the quickest way of emptying the bath the answer would be the bucket...but it asks for the easiest way of removing the water. The answer therefore must be to simply remove the plug!
4. SHOT and EVER
5. FLAME and ALOUD
6. BASHFUL and RECTIFY

Watch out for more tricky Brainteasers in the November edition.

## COMPETITION WINNERS

The answer to our Wordsearch Competition in the **SEPTEMBER** edition was **CINEMA**. The lucky winner who each receives a **FAMILY PASS** to the **ODEON CINEMA, MERRY HILL** are:  
**PATRICIA ROGERS** of Kingswinford and  
**SAM JONES** of Sedgley

You can find this month's competition on page 44.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Only one entry per person per month is allowed – multiple entries will be disqualified. Winners are chosen at random from all correct entries received by the closing date.



**Pattingham Drama** presents  
The Farndale Avenue Housing Estate Townswomen's Guild Dramatic Society's  
'Rather Silly' Production of Dickens'...

# A Christmas Carol

(A Comedy)  
by David McGillivray and Walter Zerlin Jr

3rd to 6th December 2025 at 7.30 pm - Pattingham Village Hall

Tickets are £12 online at [www.ticketsource.co.uk/pattingham-drama](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/pattingham-drama)  
or phone line: 0333 666 4466

# OR WHATEVER by John Sparry

## *Heavy Metal*

In 1066, besides the invasion by William of Normandy, in the heavens appeared an object, leaving behind it a trail of dust and gas. Astronomers of the time christened it 'The Star with Hair'.

This space-travelling rock was correctly forecast in 1682 to be next due to zoom by Earth in 1759, by Edmond Halley, after whom the comet is now known.

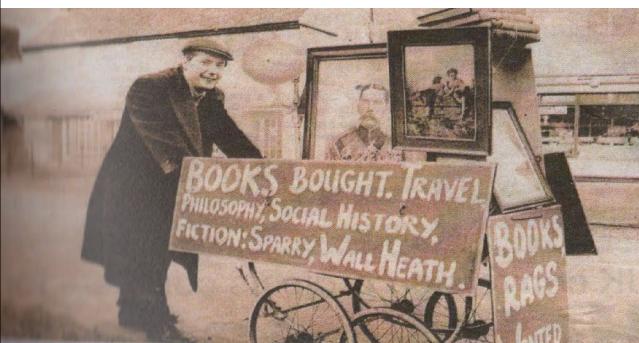
Currently, the hunt is on for fragments of the meteor which exploded and landed in Scotland. This sudden visitor was believed to be 30 million years old. What secrets of the universe will be revealed when located samples are scientifically examined?

In the misty past, perhaps around the time when flint knives from England's East Coast were being traded for amber from the forests of the continent, it is thought that the iron retrieved from meteors was being worked into weapons and tools.

Lands in the Middle East were the cradles for men who made swords which were believed to hold magical and invincible power, being made in *an'bar*, the ancient Sumerian word meaning '*iron from the skies*'.



Was King Arthur's legendary sword made of meteoric iron?



The iron I collected in my old pram (left) was more likely to have come from an old bedstead rather than the sky. One day a local doctor looked in the pram and remarked, "she'd never have lived, she was too heavy at birth!"

**By John Sparry, Ridge Cot, 15 Enville Road, Wall Heath  
Mobile: 07831 342209**



OCTOBER 2025

BETTER Dudley

**DUDLEY LIBRARIES**  
in conjunction with  
**THE BLACK COUNTRY SOCIETY**  
**DUDLEY HISTORY FESTIVAL**  
**11th-25th OCTOBER 2025**



Coming soon to Dudley Libraries, The History Festival returns for 2025 with a host of fantastic speakers to meet. **ATTENTION** all History fans because Dudley Libraries have an announcement to make and we really want to share it with you. We have 34 events including talks and exhibitions for the History Festival 2025. We are really excited to be hosting some of the most well-known History speakers in the Midlands. So keep checking Dudley Libraries' website and our social media feeds for more information and announcements. To book your free place for any of the talks listed or to find out further information, please contact your local library.

There are 34 talks in total at the various libraries and Dudley Archives and Local History Service centre. Dudley's 'star' speaker is **Professor Carl Chinn** (right) who will be joining us at **Dudley Library** on **Friday, 17th October at 1.30pm**. He will be giving a talk about the Real Peaky Blinders. The talks are varied and range from Wren's Nest and the Stourbridge Glass Industry to James Whale an errant clergyman in Pensnett! It's not all local either, with general history talks on recipients of the Victoria Cross and the Dickin Medal, the Cavaliers and Roundheads and Vile Victorians exploring the darker side of daily life in Victorian Britain—definitely something for everyone.



Moving to **Gornal Library**, on **Wednesday, 15th October at 7.00pm** **Damian Carter** (left) will be talking to audiences about daily life in Victorian Britain—a place filled with hazards such as dangerous workplaces, the risk of disease, crime, drowning and starvation. He also delves into “strange dangers” - clothing which could injure, wallpaper which might be toxic and makeup which could be poisonous.



On **Thursday, 16th October at 2.00pm**, **Sedgley Library** will be hosting **Paul Floyd** (right), who will be talking about Wren's Nest National Nature Reserve which is of exceptional importance and is one of the most notable geological locations in the British Isles. It has been visited and studied by geologists from all over the world. Paul is a walk leader at the Wren's Nest Nature Reserve.

Also on **16th October at 6.45pm**, **Judith Davies** will be giving a talk at **Dudley Library** on the ‘Retail Revolutionaries—the struggle for power and influence in the mid 19th century in Dudley’. Many of their leaders were shopkeepers of whom Samuel Cook is the best remembered but most of the others, such as Thomas Hill, Thomas Lester, the Twamleys and the Wood family, are almost entirely forgotten. This talk looks at the personalities and events which shaped the period.

Over at the **Archives and Local History Service** from **10.00am-3.00pm**, **Kevin Goodman, Brendan Clifford** and **Paul Ford** are hosting **Local History Day**—a step back in time to explore the Borough's intriguing past at Dudley Archives and Local History Service. The day will include talks by Kevin Goodman 'Cholera in the Black Country 1832', Brendan Clifford 'The Black Country 500 years in 50 voices' and Paul Ford, Archivist, who will be delivering a talk on 'the place names of Halesowen and Lenches Bridge'. Throughout the day there will be family and local history exhibitions and publications for sale by local authors.

On **Wednesday, 22nd October at 2.00pm** **Dudley Library** will be welcoming **Brian Carr** whose talk will be "Local public artwork in Dudley". Brian started to build the Dudley Public Art website in his retirement. Initially it was just to fill the online gap where little was recorded. Brian explored further, finding artworks not often seen and eventually spread out of Dudley Borough to cover the whole of the Black Country. Large or small, permanent or transient, he has tried to cover as much as he can find. As Brian will say, he is not an art expert nor a historian, just an enthusiast hoping to share what is out there.

The wonderful **Craig Denston** (right) will be at **Dudley Library** on **Thursday, 23rd October at 7.00pm** with his talk "From Kate's Hill to California—James Whale, the Father of Frankenstein". How did a working class lad born into 19th century Dudley become, for his time, the highest paid director in Hollywood? This tells an extraordinary life story that goes from a factory to a war, through art to the theatre, to the making of some of the most influential movies of all time, and, yet, ultimately to a heartbreakingly tragic end.



On **Friday, 24th October at 2.00pm**, **Paul Ford** will be appearing at **Sedgley Library** for his talk "Silence! - 3 stories from the Staffordshire Coroners". History is about the written word but sometimes it is equally about what is not written. Here we look at three cases from Staffordshire Coroners where silence plays a huge part in a series of events... *Mustn't Talk: Fit for Military Service - Cheslyn Hay 1916. Won't Talk: The Curious Case of Maud Minnie Mills—Walsall 1912. Can't Talk: The Silent Skeleton of Murder Mine—Dudley 1961.*

On **Saturday, 25th October at 1.00pm** **Quintin Watt** will be joining **Gornal Library** for 'Tales from the Coroner's Casebook—Life and Death in Georgian South Staffordshire and the Black Country'. This presentation examines the cases of unexplained deaths, presided over by Henry Smith Esq—Coroner of the County of Stafford between 1801 and 1842. These included: accidents, manslaughter, murders, suicides and 'visitations of God'. Join Coroner Smith's Jury and reconsider some of the cases he dealt with during the first part of his long career.

From **Saturday 11th October to Saturday 20 December** **Dudley Archives and Local History Service** will be hosting an exhibition from Agenoria to Beeching –the first and last days of steam in Dudley. The exhibition will consist mainly of two sets of photographs –one illustrating the first days of steam railways in the Dudley area between 1830 and 1860 and the second illustrating the final days of steam in the area, from the late 1950s and early 1960s.

**Wednesday, 1st October to Friday, 31 October** will see an exhibition at **Dudley Library** (Reading Room) 'Bound by roots, divided by paths'. This project seeks to bridge historical and contemporary migration narratives, creating a space for cultural understanding and artistic expression. The exhibition will amplify the voices of displaced and migrant communities, exploring both personal and collective reflections on identity and belonging. Please see website for Library opening times.

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## **READ ALL ABOUT IT**

Born in Birmingham during 1830, the story of John Howard Clark is quite remarkable. Son of Francis Clark, an accountant, and his wife Caroline (who was Roland Hill's sister), John became one of the leading citizens in South Australia—and all because he went to work in Kingswinford. After finishing school and college in Birmingham, John Clark got a job at Corbyn's Hall colliery and iron works between Pensnett and Kingswinford.

Whilst working at the colliery his health deteriorated and in 1850 he emigrated to South Australia with his parents, looking for a better climate. Initially he worked as a chemist and then joined with his father to form an accountancy practice. Later he was to purchase the South Australia Register newspaper and become a major business figure in Adelaide.

Although he was active in politics he turned down the chance to become an MP and concentrated on developing the artistic opportunities in the city. This included founding the State Library. In 1878, however, the consumption that had been with him since his days at Corbyn's Hall finally took his life.



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# The Kingswinford, Wall Heath & Wordsley PARISH PUMP



## WALL HEATH COMMUNITY CENTRE

Envile Road, Wall Heath DY6 0JT

Telephone: 01384 273744 : Email: [wallheathcommunityassoc@gmail.com](mailto:wallheathcommunityassoc@gmail.com)

## OCTOBER 2025

8th October: The Wednesday Club, 2.00pm. Andy French, “A Life Lived - Just Like That”. From humble beginnings in South Wales to becoming one of the most loved post-war entertainers, Tommy Cooper’s life journey will surprise you with its numerous highs and lows, both personally and professionally. Either way it will leave you with a smile.

16th October: Thursday at 2 Club, 2.00pm. Craig Denston, “My life as a Ghost. Craig will be talking about his experience of being a ghost at Dudley Castle.

22nd October: The Wednesday Club, 2.00pm. Andrea Burley, “Yes Matron”. Andrea will be taking us on a nostalgic and sometimes light and funny trip down the years from when she started at Corbett Hospital in 1968 as a 16-year-old Cadet Nurse to finishing in 2012.

The Community Centre boasts a varied programme of groups and associations who meet there on a regular basis. A cross section of what is available is **Kurling**, **Sgt Peppers Friendship Club**, **TaeKwon-Do**, **Adult Beginners Ballroom Dancing for Couples**, **Musicians Club**, **Tai Chi—Active Seniors**, **Crafty Chatters** and so much more.

Be sure to see their website ([wallheathcommunitycentre.co.uk](http://wallheathcommunitycentre.co.uk)) for a full list of groups and associations together with dates and times or give the Centre a call on the number above.

## DUDLEY PROBUS CLUB

lunch meetings are held on the **2nd Thursday** in the month starting at 12.30pm and are held at **The Lodge, Wellington Road, Dudley DY1 1RD**.

## COMING UP...

**9th October—Andrew French—‘Life of Norman Wisdom’**

13th November—‘Hearing Solutions’

**11th December—Christmas Lunch with entertainment provided by  
The Sedgley Strummers.**

Further details can be obtained by emailing [dudleyprobus@gmail.com](mailto:dudleyprobus@gmail.com) or by visiting the Dudley Probus website.



# The Kingswinford, Wall Heath & Wordsley PARISH PUMP



**THE “GET TOGETHER CLUB”**  
meets **2.00pm-4.00pm** every 2nd and 4th  
**Wednesday of the month** at Wordsley

Green Community Centre,  
Wordsley DY8 5BN

If you are interested in crafting and games then this is the club for you. Get together with like-minded people and enjoy a social chat, good company and tea, coffee and biscuits.

Contact: Joan (Secretary) 01384 278251 or  
0777 398 7024 or  
Mary (Treasurer) 01384 288219 or  
Janet (Chairman) 01384 431902

**CONGRATULATIONS** to John and the team at the Royal British Legion in Kingswinford. Their Harvest Home celebration last month raised in excess of £1000!

**Very well done to all involved.**



Would you like to join a local group of lovely women, some of which love to craft, some want to bake, some want to learn or share these skills, some love the chat and company, others are keen to help raise funds and others want to feel they are part of the community as well as being part of a national institution that helps to change people's lives. Wombourne Women's Institute may be just want you're looking for and we're certainly looking for you! This group has been running for over 100 years and is very much a part of Wombourne village. With the village increasing in size, we want our group to reflect the same. We are looking for new members to ensure the group continues for many more decades to come. If this appeals to you, come and join us for a free taster session.

Please do get in touch.

Our Facebook page can be found at **Wombourne WI**

Our email address is **WombourneWI@outlook.com**

Or contact **Liz, Lynda or Donna** on the following numbers

**07711 093081 – Liz : 07584 432148 – Lynda : 07837 719502- Donna**

**COME AND MEET US AND HAVE SOME FUN!**



# The Kingswinford, Wall Heath & Wordsley PARISH PUMP



## WEDNESDAY SENIORS GROUP 50+

invite you to enjoy afternoons of speakers and entertainment on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday each month at 2.00pm at Wordsley Green Community Centre, Wordsley DY8 5BN

### COMING UP!

15th October: **Royal British Legion.** The 'British Legion' as it was once called, the history, work and military involvement will be explained by our local ambassador, **Bob Townsend.**

5th November: **Never work with children and animals.** An anecdotal and light-hearted look at some of the many hilarious situations **Alan Peace** has been in after over 40 years working with both.

19th November: **Kays Catalogue.** Mr Kay opened a jeweller's shop in Worcester in the 19th century and forged ahead adding different lines to his stock. This led him to publish the well known catalogue as told by **Bernard Mills.**

3rd December: **Christmas Party Time**—an afternoon of entertainment by a delightful singing group and a company of hand bell ringers with audience participation. Seasonal refreshments during the interval.

**Happy Christmas everyone. See you back at 'Open House' on  
21st January 2026.**



### MEN'S BOWLS AT WORDSLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE—YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS YOU!

If you have time on a Friday afternoon, why not pop along to see us between 1.00pm and 4.00pm and join this highly popular group for Short Mat Indoor Bowls, Cards and Dominoes. There is always lots of laughter and jollity with this group and it is the perfect way to meet new friends and enjoy a nice cup of tea/coffee and, of course, cakes and biscuits! All equipment is supplied. If you have never played before that is not a problem as the group welcome all abilities. There are subsidised subscriptions.

If this is of interest to you, please give **Bob** a call on **07572 321401** and leave a message with your phone number or call the Community Centre on **01384 273186.**



# The Kingswinford, Wall Heath & Wordsley PARISH PUMP



## KINGSWINFORD & DISTRICT u3a

Retired but not retiring? u3a could be for you ...

Your local u3a has a new website at:  
<https://kingswinford.u3asite.uk>

There you can find details of a wide range of weekday activities to choose from, mostly at Kingswinford Community Centre.

We have around 30 different groups from Architecture to Walking, Poetry to Art and also Bus Safari and MOTO (Members on their Own) - meeting once or twice a month.

We also have monthly Coffee Mornings and Speaker Meetings.

New members welcome.

**LEARN, LAUGH AND LIVE  
with your local u3a.**

THE NEXT PARISH PUMP  
WILL BE IN THE **NOVEMBER 2025**  
EDITION AND THE COPY  
DEADLINE IS **Tuesday, 21st  
October 2025.**

Don't forget that insertions are free if you run a Group or Association that is non-profit making. Please send your details via email to Gail at  
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[kmc.enquiries66@gmail.com](mailto:kmc.enquiries66@gmail.com)

**October 12th** is our All-Age Worship, Harvest Festival with a parade for the uniformed organisations who meet at the church. All are welcome, and donations of tinned food will be gratefully received for the Black Country Food Bank.

**October 27th** is the next family fun morning - it is essential to book early. Contact details are available via the Church. All enquiries please email:  
[kmc.enquiries66@gmail.com](mailto:kmc.enquiries66@gmail.com)

All are welcome at our Coffee Mornings on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month and our Coffee and Craft mornings on the 1st Saturday of the month.

If you have prayer requests we would be glad to pray with and for you. Just email  
[kmc.prayers66@gmail.com](mailto:kmc.prayers66@gmail.com)

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME**  
**We would love to  
meet you!**

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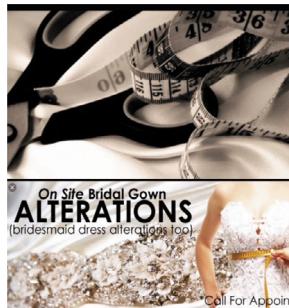
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