Heathens fans unite in bid to find home

Supporters of Cradley Heathens Speedway Club are reaching out for a new venue aimed at boosting plans to find a permanent home for the team.

The Heathens were told they could no longer use Wolverhampton’s Monmore Green track for 2015, their temporary home for the last four years. But a deal was struck for the club to move across the West Midlands to hold race meetings at Birmingham’s Perry Barr stadium next season, where houses continue to campaign to build their own stadium.

Fans were this week holding a meeting to help establish their own supporters’ trust. Organiser, Gary Willott, who helped set up a similar trust at Dudley Town Football Club, says the trust wanted to help the Heathens find a home. The club has also lost its Dudley Wood stadium.

He said: “With plans in place to keep the Cradley team racing on track in 2015, using Perry Barr as a home venue, the renamed Heathens fans have been gathering together to try and secure the long term future of the club. Cradley Heath supporters groups have agreed to merge into one organisation in order to strengthen their future backing.”

Premier Inn hotel opens

A £9.5 million hotel and restaurant development in Stourbridge will open on Monday.

More than 70 jobs have been created at the 89-bed Premier Inn and Brewers Fayre pub restaurant in Birmingham Street. Work began in April this year.

A spokesman said: “There’s been a huge number of bookings made before the hotel’s doors have even opened and the response to the hotel shows there is demand for hotel rooms in Stourbridge.”

DUDLEY North MP Ian Austin has called on the Government for extra funding to help Russells Hall Hospital in the wake of an inspection demanding improvements.

The Care Quality Commission rated the majority of areas ‘good’ at Russells Hall.

But the watchdog also said that other areas had to improve. Those included safety and responsiveness.

The commission also raised concerns about staffing levels.

The body said it was confident the hospital will meet the demands but will carry out further inspections to check progress.

The MP has written to the Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt urging him to give Dudley hospitals more money to help them keep the Cradley Heath fans united.

By Alex Ross

Festive fairytale fun at Haden Hill House

Museum staff Alison Hyatt and Anne Willets prepare for a traditional Christmas at the museum in Cradley Heath

PLENTY of Christmas cheer will be on offer to visitors at Cradley Heath’s Haden Hill House this Sunday.

Visitors can enjoy a day with a Cinderella theme at the attraction in Haden Road from 11am until 5pm when the museum will be transformed into a winter wonderland.

Children can see Cinderella’s carriage and meet characters from the fairytale. The princes will also be trying to find the owner of the glass slipper.

There will be snow to play in out in the park and lots of magic and balloons in the house.

There will also be a festive sing-along and a chance for youngsters to play instruments and take part in craft activities and trails. Santas will also be popping in to heart children’s Christmas wishes.

Museum services manager Jane Hannoy said: “We are hoping for a really magical Christmas at the museum and it is wonderful to see the wonder on children’s and adult’s faces.”

Traditional

“It is a lovely way to get into the Christmas spirit with traditional decorations and lots of sparkles.”

Haden Old Hall was originally built in the late 1600s and evidence suggests it was originally two farm dwellings. By the time the Haden-Bests inherited the house in the 1790s it was time for a more modern house to be built.

It is believed that Mr Haden-Best intended to eventually demolish the old hall but both buildings survive, although Haden Old Hall is only just restored after a major fire. The Victorian house is a museum furnished with Victorian object.

For more information on the award-winning attraction call (01384) 569 444, or visit www.sandwell.gov.uk/museum-venues.
Parking fines have ‘desired effect’

The Chronicle & Express & Star reported on a three-year order banning the practice was granted in an effort to eradicate it from the streets. The Black Country Route now joins Cannock District Council which sought a similar injunction in 2012. Mr Joseph Grist QC, representing Wolverhampton, Walsall, Dudley and Sandwell council, said: “Police don’t have the sufficient wherewithal to bring everyone involved in car cruising to book.”

Accidents

It emerged in the hearing that there had been 31 incidents in the Black Country as a result of car cruising and that as recent as November 16 there had been a problem. The Black Country Route in Bilston and Mosley, Birmingham New Road on the border of Wolverhampton and Dudley; Flood Street Car Park in Dudley have been hotspots. More than 100 witness statements from residents across the area were submitted as part of the application.

Many spoke of their concern about the anti-social impact on their lives with people swerving, littering and loud music. His Honour Judge Robert Owen QC said: “It appears to be complete lawlessness in these four boroughs where people can’t be prosecuted for nothing don’t seem right.”

Drivers are being asked to think about where they park in Dudley as the icy weather takes hold.

Dudley Council say that in freezing weather gritting crews are being forced away from smaller streets and side roads because of bad parking. Now, highway boss Councillor Khurshid Ahmed is urging people to think before they park to ensure gritters have full access to streets, keeping clear as the days get colder.

The cabinet member for transport said: “The gritting crews work all hours of the day and night in order to keep the majority of Dudley borough roads as far as possible clear as the days get colder.

nhs patients get truth good report

A HEALTH trust which cares for patients which a social health condition has been ranked highly.

Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust scored among the top 20 per cent trusts in the country for patients experience. Patients rating their experience as ‘good or very good’ in the Care Quality Commission Mental Health Survey. In a survey of 123,75 per cent of those who responded monitored mental health that they were treated with dignity and respect.

Nine out of ten reported that they felt their health or social care worker listened to them carefully. Results from the National Mental Health Inpatient Survey in 2013 also, positive, according to trust bosses.

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Hospital boss still ‘positive’ on review
THO’s chief executive at Bournem-
ville Hall Hospital says she remains positive after a review by a health watchdog demanding improvements.
"The Care Quality Com-
mision looked at the hospi-
tal and met patients, car-
cers and workers as part of its inspection which carried out in March this year.
While it rated three cate-
ergories of the hospital to be ‘good’, inspectors said two areas — safety and re-
professionalism — required improvement. The hospital trust was told to improve and was given a list of de-
mands including reviewing patient flow and ensuring satisfactory staffing levels.
Chief executive Paula Clark said she was pleased with the inspectors’ confi-
of being rated as good and if we can always do bet-
over the line into good. I
for ‘going the extra mile’.
were endorsed by patients
were ‘within the grasp’ of
improvement. The hospital
be ‘good’, inspectors said
with the inspectors’ confi-
was pleased with the inspectors’ confi-
were given a list of de-
garies of the hospital to
-approval for demolition.
Dudley Council have given
tery closed eight years ago.
and was given a list of de-
ners out there who need
of the hospital to
Figure released under the Freedom of Information Act
New businesses will also
Any2L arge £12.49
Any2M edium £9.95
AnyP izza £17.49
AnyS ize £9.95
Any2S uper £14.95
BuyO ne Pizza GET One FREE
**The English Defence League is planning to return to Dudley in protest at the decision to grant planning permission for a new mosque.**

The far-right protest group intends to hold a demonstration in the town on February 7, according to one of its Facebook pages.

West Midlands MEP and Dudley councillor Bill Etheridge has asked the group to cancel its plans and leave the mosque issue to be settled democratically.

“The UKIP MEP said: “The mosque is a controversial matter and a lot of people have their opinions on it. It is being opposed on planning grounds. Groups like the EDL have nothing constructive to add with the way they behave. I ask them to stay away from Dudley. This is a sensitive issue and it does not need people causing trouble.”

**Legal**

Dudley Muslim Association is locked in a planning battle with Dudley Council over a proposal for a mosque on land off Hall Street.

Earlier this month, the association won planning permission for the mosque. But it faces at least two court hearings and legal wrangles before it can be built.

In an attempt to avoid escalating court costs and resolve disharmony, Muslim leaders say they will consider alternative sites.

**Plea to EDL not to hold mosque protest**

**Festive events at libraries**

LIBRARY staff are gearing up for a host of festive events in the run up to Christmas. Santa will be dropping into Tipton Library on Saturday 13.30am and as part of the library’s annual fun day.

He will also be appearing at Thornhill Library from 4pm-6pm. On Monday Langley Library will be providing Christmas afternoon tea from 2pm-4pm. Pupils from St Paul’s Primary School will be singing carols at Tipton Library on Tuesday from 10am. A coffee morning takes place at Hill Top Library on Friday, December 19.

Music and comedy are on the agenda with two special events starting at Great Bridge Library on Monday with a Christmas Black Country Night Out in aid of BUDIS (Better Understanding of Dementia for Sandwell) featuring poetry from Marlene the Black Country Wench and music from Scarlet Bliss Band and Tipton Community Choir. Tickets are £3 and £1.50 concessions, book on 0121 557 3277.

**Stuart & Neil Hodgkins**

**Watch Repairers, Jewellers & Engravers**

IDEAL FOR WEDDING & GRADUATION GIFTS

CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS

151 HIGH STREET, BLACKHEATH B65 0EA

(Next to the new library)

TELEPHONE: 0121 559 7156
A PRIMARY school in Oldbury is looking to double in size under plans to rebuild it, in a bid to create hundreds of new pupil places.

St Hubert’s Catholic Primary will close its current site in Wolverhampton Road and move to premises off Mount Road if the proposal is approved.

A spokesperson for the school said: “Children at the new school will have a new building designed to meet the needs of the curriculum and have lots of the facilities we currently cannot offer, such as more group rooms, the opportunity to work with children in the parallel year group, more library and play space and a bright, light and comfortable environment.”

Change

The school will also change its name from St Hubert’s to Our Lady and St Hubert’s Catholic Primary following a vote by parents.

St Hubert’s is currently under-subscribed – the move will increase available class sizes to 60.

The work is expected to begin at Easter next year with a planned completion date of Easter 2018. Pupils will be moved into the new premises in September.

In Wolverhampton Road the school’s Catholic ethos will remain paramount.

DAISY Jewkes was left devastated when her teddy bear flew out of the car window as her family travelled along the M6. Little Daisy thought the little brown bear was gone forever after dropping it from the back seat window of her parents’ car while travelling through road works in the M6 near Cannock. But workmen rescued the treasured toy from the central reservation and reunited the delighted four-year-old with her precious ‘old teddy’.

She cried out as she lost grip of the bear before her mother Nicola agonisingly watched it fall onto the motorway and into our product we offer a Supply Only service on all products including free delivery.


deadline for online applications is November 28. Any late applications will not be considered.

The proposal will now be considered again, this time with all relevant information, and a planning inspector will be appointed to make a decision.

Dudley Council turned down Qamii Alia’s planning application for the site at the Full Moon and Hurl Green Road in Halesowen. Officers said the car wash would result in ‘unacceptable levels’ of noise disturbance, with the possibility of traffic, cars and equipment, needed to expand the site.

The application was re-submitted by the Allia team since appealed against the decision.

An appeal has been lodged after plans to put a car wash on a pub car park were rejected.

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Horse's get a kick out of cruel sport

Fears over fighting dogs and stray horses have been raised by the RSPCA.

IT is part of the shady underworld of the Black Country, criminals put their dogs' lives on the line in the name of sport.

Dogs are bought and sold, bred and trained all so that callous owners can get a kick from dog fighting.

And, says the RSPCA, the region has seen 'more than its fair share of cases'.

Ian Briggs, chief inspector with the RSPCA special operations unit, has been working on dog fighting cases for 15 years and is in no doubt it will go on.

"Since 2006, the West Midlands has readily had more than it's fair share of dog fighting cases," he said. "There have definitely been dog fights held in Wolverhampton and other areas of the Black Country as well."

One high-profile case, in 2008, saw Stephen Wood from Walsall convicted of having four pit bull dogs for the purpose of training them for fighting.

Abandoned

In 2010, dog fighting was said to be on the rise in the Black Country after reports of seriously injured dogs were found abandoned.

A dog believed to have been beaten to death was found dead under a paving slab in Chasewater Road, Walsall in January, while a bleeding Staffordshire bull terrier called Honey limped into a Walsall tyre and exhaust unit in Priors Road, Walsall, after being badly injured in a dog fight weeks later.

A two-year-old female Staffie-type was found dying on a stopwatch in Brierley Hill, and a dog named Rocky suffering from 'the worst case of neglect' ever seen by local vets was rescued from Churchill Road in Bentley. Elsewhere, a dead Staffordshire bull terrier was found in a box in Newhall Road, Rowley Regis, while a dead pit bull terrier covered in blood was dumped on a busy street in Smethwick.

Concerns have also been raised that thugs are training fighting dogs in Black Country parks. Clumps of bark have been ripped off trees in King George V playing fields in Walsall and in Bournpark.

Other concerns relate to stray horses, often left to fend for themselves on verandahs and shrublands, chained to trees and stakes in all weathers. Sometimes they are left to die.

Horses have been found dead, in poor condition and even literally frozen to their spot by chains around their necks in the winter. There is also the illegal act of fly-grazing, leaving horses to graze on someone else's land.

Sandwell, more than 100 horses have been removed by the council in the past three years, and the authority has spent tens of thousands of pounds on bailiffs to enforce the policy.

Pat McCadden, Wolverhampton South East MP says existing legislation does not go far enough, and that authorities do not get enough support from the government.

He claimed horses were found dead tethered to posts, or were left in such bad condition they had to be put down.

Pat, the councilor Jones said that healthy horses impounded in Sandwell suffered 'horrendous' conditions in RSPCA depots, often found new homes and even being used by training schools.

Gemma Stanford, of the British Horse Society, said fly-grazing had become a massive issue across the country and the RSPCA has been pushing for new, tougher, new legislation.

Horses can also create problems for pedestrians and drivers if they escape and make their way onto footpaths and roads.

Since 2011, more than 460 horses have been removed from public highways in Dudley alone, with the council spending £100,000 on removing them.

This year eight horses were rounded up by police after they wandered on to grassland in Wolverhampton and were agitated by traffic.

The animals were herded onto the forecourt of a petrol station in Wolverhampton Road East, Sedgley.

In February, two caused a stir when they were seen near the ring road on Poppin Road in Wolverhampton.

The most recent action in Dudley was taken in October when two horses were seized from council-owned land off Bally Grove, near Brierley Hill. The council also posts enforcement notices, warning anyone who may leave their horses on council-owned land that their animals may be impounded.

Tethered

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**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

Halesowen Chronicle
Thursday, December 11, 2014

**On way to becoming 51st state**

WHY have we gone American crazy? We are hearing more and more Americans they are to become the 51st state. What is happening, let us get the word out.

We have heard the news from TV advertising of how we have to start thinking of 51st states in this country. What has happened?

Are we that involved with our own finances? I believe that before too long we will see the 51st state, in the form of 51st states.

Is it possible for our own finances?

We are hearing the word ‘fall’ on the news, in the USA that we have to start thinking of 51st states in this country. What has happened?

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Is it possible for our own finances?
The best present you can give the NHS is your blood

Some blood donations are needed across the West Midlands this December.

A campaign has now been launched to encourage people to give blood in the coming weeks. This year, as Christmas Day and Boxing Day fall ahead of a weekend, there are worries that fewer donors than usual will get around to making life-saving donations.

Across the West Midlands there are over 50,000 registered blood donors. In total, around 210,000 whole blood donations and 12,500 platelet donations will be needed across England and North Wales over the coming six weeks to help ensure hospitals have the stocks they need to treat patients. Last year one in five donors missed their appointment - putting NHS Blood and Transplant’s critical operation under unnecessary pressure.

Improve

We’re asking new and regular donors in the West Midlands to give blood this December. The gift of a single blood donation can save or improve up to three lives. Don’t worry if you’ve never given blood before, now is a great time to sign up and start giving to help save lives.

Health chiefs say every blood donation is vital, but over winter months there is a worry if you’ve never given blood before, now is a great time to sign up and start giving to help save lives.

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Group call for better weekend rail service

Campaigned are demanding action on overcrowded trains during weekend services through the Black Country, particularly during the run up to Christmas as Birmingham attracts millions of visitors to its German Christmas market.

Members of the Steourbridge Line User Group say train operators should be looking to ease crowding on trains.

The group has approached train operator London Midland calling for them to add more carriages during and after the run up to Christmas and New Year.

Operator London Midland said many of its trains have already been lengthened to allow for more passengers at weekends — a move the group want to see extended into the New Year. User group chairman Rob Hebron said demand was outstripping supply and called on train operators to act.

“It’s bad enough that weekday commuters have to put up with overcrowded trains but at weekends the frequency of trains on the Steourbridge line is not good enough, neither are trains with two carriages,” he said.

“London Midland is promoting the service of up to six trains an hour to Birmingham on billboards, which only appears Mondays to Saturdays.”

Group member Bob Randie added: “Trains have been reported ‘full and standing’ on the London Midland website but anyone passing by Tysley sidings can often see vehicles sat idle at weekends.”

London Midland spokesman Francis Thomas said: “We are experiencing high levels of demand on the Steourbridge line at weekends. This is being driven by the Christmas markets at Worcester and Birmingham. We have been responding to this by lengthening as many trains as we can at weekends.”

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**Housing group launch a £500k social fund**

Investing in skills for youth — Black Country Housing Group chief Amanda Tomlinson with apprentices

**A COST-SAVINGS programme at the Black Country Housing Group (BCHG) is to raise £500,000 over three years for community projects and new social enterprises.**

Chief executive Amanda Tomlinson said that £165,000 a year was being identified by staff at the not-for-profit organisation, which employs around 200 people.

Blackheath-based BCHG will use the funds in the local community to fund apprenticeships for young people and build skills through its ‘Young Blood’ initiative. This aims to double the proportion of younger people in the housing group’s workforce, under the age of 25, from five per cent to 10 per cent by 2017.

BCHG also intends to create two social enterprises, to support local community projects and fund local job clubs, as well as a hardship fund for vulnerable customers.

BCHG, now in its 40th year, operates primarily in Dudley and Sandwell but also has homes in Birmingham and Walsall. It currently provides more than 2,000 homes and supports more than 13,000 people with employment advice, care, support and home improvements. It has contracts with local authorities to provide home improvement and maintenance work as well as running care homes.

Amanda Tomlinson, who took over the £13 million a year business as chief executive a year ago, said surpluses were reinvested into the business to fund growth. It has just secured £12 million of private sector lending to fund new housebuilding – around 200 new homes – and the creation of two care homes in the Dudley area for 130 people with dementia.

**Take That fans have shown a great deal of Patience**, but Thatters’ eyes will Shine when they hear that the band who could probably Rule The World has just announced their first UK tour as a trio, after four years away. Jason and Robbie will be missing, but Gary, Mark and Howard will be there to sing you A Million Love Songs on your Greatest Day of the year! Could It Be Magic at an Arena near you? Just Pray for a terrific night out, and hope they’re Back For Good. The wait is over. Happy Now?

**TAKE THAT in Concert 2015**

at Birmingham LG Arena

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**Evening excursions**
Monday 11 & Saturday 16 May 2015

- Ticket with a face value of £35.70
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Recycle all these items in your blue lid bin at Christmas and all year round.

Happy Christmas to all Sandwell residents.

Christmas & New Year bin collection dates

- Monday 22 December: No change
- Tuesday 23 December: No change
- Wednesday 24 December: No change
- Thursday 25 December: No change
- Friday 26 December: Saturday 27 December
- Monday 29 December: Saturday 3 January
- Tuesday 30 December: Friday 2 January
- Wednesday 31 December: Friday 2 January
- Thursday 1 January: Saturday 3 January
- Friday 2 January: Saturday 3 January

There will be no garden waste collections between Monday 22 December and Friday 2 January.

All collections will return to normal from Monday 5 January 2015.

If you would like FREE text updates to your mobile about the bin service please text your postcode only to 07860 019 200.

www.sandwell.gov.uk/recycling
Pioneer journalist has died aged 83

A FORMER Dudley Grammar School boy who went on to be one of the founding pioneers of the Shropshire Star, John Beck, has died at the age of 83.

Mr Beck, of Condover, near Shrewsbury, retired in 1991 after a journalistic career of nearly 33 years with the Midland News Association, during which he worked on several different titles including the Chronicle.

His interests in retirement included photography and foreign travel. He had a lifelong love of classical music, and also wrote an autobiography called “Perhaps I’m Really Mervyn Davenport,” the story behind the title going back to the day of his birth in 1931.

School

“Mrs Beck had gone in an ursing home in Tipton. The lady in the next bed had a little boy on the same day called Mervyn Davenport,” said John’s widow, Jean Mary Beck.

“Both John’s family and Mervyn’s family moved away from Tipton into the same school. As a teenager, when he was playing up a bit, mum Beck used to say ‘I think they gave me the wrong baby at that nursing home. You must be Mervyn Davenport.” And that stuck.”

The book largely focused on his earlier years in the Black Country and his early years of journalism, which were broken by a spell of National Service. On his return to civilian life in 1953 he was back into journalism and was soon writing for the Express & Star.

In the last three years I have lost all three men in my life,” said Mrs Beck.

Pioneer journalist has died aged 83

The funeral is at noon next Friday (December 19) at Emstrey Crematorium, Halesowen.

In his younger days John was a keen cyclist and a member of Dudley Cyclists Touring Club. He was for a time on the committee of Condover Village Hall and used to organise a fundraising annual ball.
Young readers booked their place to win final

PUPILS at a school in Stourbridge have proven themselves the best with books after winning a quiz on what they had read.

Youngsters in Years 5 and 6 represented The Ridge Primary School, Wollaston, in the annual Primary School Book Quiz. They saw off six other primary schools in three heats for Stourbridge before six pupils from The Ridge went on to compete in the final. Other finalists were The Glynne Primary School, Kingswinford, and Newfield Park Primary, Halesowen.

After they proved their knowledge and teamwork skills, the Wollaston pupils bagged themselves the win. Headteacher Mrs Deb Hudson said: “I am incredibly proud of our students. They worked very hard to learn as much as they could to win the contest.”

The rounds were hosted by the School Library Service, which helps to promote reading in schools across the Dudley borough and requested that students studied six books and their authors.

During the heats and final they were asked very detailed questions about each book and author, meaning they needed to know each book inside out.

Mrs Hudson added: “They were all so extremely dedicated. They all stayed after school once a week to have a study group on the books with a teacher. Both parents and teachers have been so supportive and they were thrilled to win, they really deserve it.”

“It is so amazing that we now have these role models in the school, hopefully their win will encourage more of our students to read.”

The pupils were each awarded an individual medal, plus books, a bag and a trophy to take back to the school.
They also served — Sedgley Fire Watchers in front of The Limes in 1944

A wagon holds the Black Country’s longest chain

War years — Sedgley Civic Defence General Services at The Limes in April 1945

Glimpse into past at Black Country mansion

IT was Sedgley’s own Downton Abbey – a mansion built for the family owners of an iron empire making everything from chains, anchors and nails.

Eliza and Thomas Tinsley, the hugely successful Eliza Tinsley firm now based in Wednesbury, had The Limes built on the grounds of a former pub in Sedgley Upper Green 163 years ago.

Over the years the building has been used by the Catholic Church, local councils and even became the headquarters of the Auxiliary Fire Service during the Second World War.

Thirty years after Eliza Tinsley died, the house was taken over by three other illustrious figures — Henry Fowler, an iron and coal master from Benthall, William Arthur Foster, a solicitor, and finally Eliza Gibbons, widow of John Lloyd Gibbons of Ellows Hall.

“Also used to pass the building every day whilst taking my children to school which was my only real association with the building.

“When I saw there were moves to restore it I made enquiries and started to compile the history of the building which is how I became involved.”

Mr Jones was just one of many budding historians who contributed to the information board.

Converted

Although the building has now been converted into flats Mr Jones said he is pleased with it.

“I think the developers did a wonderful job,” Mr Jones said. “Other than the demolition of the outbuildings to make room for some extra buildings, the building itself remains identical to the way it would have looked in Eliza Tinsley’s day.”

“It really is one of the last remaining important buildings in Sedgley and I think it is wonderful that it has been preserved for the future.”

Eliza Tinsley — matriarch of the chain making iron master family

Historians George Blackham and Martin Jones with Margaret Wenlock, a descendant of Eliza Tinsley
Our Plaice Fish and Chip shop

is located on Dudley Road, Halesowen B633NJ and is living up to its reputation of serving the Finest Fish & Chips by far. The stylish detached bungalow style shop standing in its own grounds with car parking for in excess of 40 cars is being run by 3rd generation Oliver Howard. The recent make over by Ollie is just the start of things to come for the Family run shop, which has come a long way since its starting point back in 1968 when Ollie’s Nan spotted an opportunity to fire up the frying range in the front room in Colley Gate in the Black Country.

To this day Traditional Fish & Chips are delivered to Parties, Weddings and functions in our custom designed boxes and we will not be beaten on price.

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**Christmas Opening Hours**

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Then back to our normal 7 days opening hours

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**Berlin**

Four days various departure dates

**PRICE FROM £419**

Berlin has a unique atmosphere created because of its remarkable history and of course this year marks the 25th anniversary of the fall of the infamous Berlin Wall which once divided the city in two.

It is possible to see the difference between the old East and West Germany and even now Trabant cars, synonymous with the East, have been renovated and considered trendy.

The guided tour introduces visitors to the old heart of the city including Unter den Linden; the beautiful green area of the Tiergarten; the cathedral and the university, once numbering Albert Einstein amongst its professors; and the new seat of Government, the Reichstag, covered by an immense glass dome designed by Sir Norman Foster.

Away from the city the itinerary features a visit to Potsdam and the Sanssouci Park housing the palaces of the most famous Prussian monarch, Frederick the Great, including the well-known Palace of Sanssouci. This delightful park now rises from the park and crowns a series of ascending terraces affording a panoramic view of the spectacular 740-acre park below.

The holiday includes three nights accommodation at the four-star Meierpark hotel, in the former Siemens factory. It is centrally located near Potsdamer Platz, with easy access to plenty of shops, restaurants, bars and cafes.

**Pompeii, Capri and the Bay of Naples**

Eight days various departure dates

**PRICE FROM £809**

Italy is a superb destination for a holiday, with its stunning blend of excellent food and wine, gorgeous scenery, together with an enviable climate and a phenomenal cultural legacy.

The Sorrento peninsula and the Bay of Naples is simply one of the most beautiful corners of Europe, attracting visitors for centuries in search of its outstanding scenery, tranquility and some wonderful historic sites.

Sorrento, the base for this holiday, is delightful and so typical of the south of Italy, with tiny cobbled streets, quaint squares with flowers, tubs of geraniums and winding streets lined with tall, seemingly crumbling buildings, new home to superb shops and cosy restaurants.

**Price includes:**
- Return flights
- Seven nights half-board accommodation in Sorrento
- Guided tour of Pompeii
- Waking tour of Sorrento
- Cruise to Capri
- Tour of Amalfi coast
- Visits to Vesuvius and Ravello
- Visit to Naples Archaeological Museum
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability – supplement applies

Certain entrance fees payable locally.

The Bay of Naples skyline is dominated by the majestic and still-active Vesuvius, which rises to over 4,000 feet and has erupted in spectacular fashion several times in its history, including the obliteration of Pompeii.

In the cosmopolitan city of Naples the Archeological Museum houses some of the historical treasures excavated from Pompeii and Herculanum. And of course, Pompeii itself, is astonishingly preserved and visitors are moved by the sheer scale and eerie atmosphere.

The journey along the legendary Amalfi coast, which is said to be Europe’s most beautiful, takes in the clifftop resort of Positano, the picturesque village of Amalfi itself and Ravello, where visitors can see amazing views over the coastline.

Capri, an island renowned the world over for its outstanding natural beauty, attracted Roman emperors and many famous people and it is not difficult to see why, especially with the chance to visit the famous Blue Grotto, a large cavern which can only be reached by boat.

**India and Nepal**

15 days various departure dates

**PRICE FROM £2,159**

This 15-day touring holiday encompasses the very best that Northern India has to offer – from fascinating Delhi and the Taj Mahal to Varanasi, one of the oldest cities in the world. And then, in complete contrast, there’s Nepal for the chance to see out rhinos, bears and tigers, share the peace and tranquility of the Buddhist monasteries and take a once-in-a-lifetime flight to see Mount Everest.

Tours of New and Old Delhi introduce the major sights. New Delhi is a wonderful city that clearly reflects the legacy of the British Raj. Surprisingly green, it is divided by wide tree-lined avenues with the Presidential Palace at its centre.

While in Old Delhi there’s the Red Fort, one of the world’s great fortifications with huge walls nearly two miles long. And the city is also home of the Raj Ghat, a memorial to the great Mahatma Gandhi.

For most, the highlight of the trip will be the chance to visit the Taj Mahal, undeniably one of the world’s most stunning buildings. Built from dazzling marble its colour changes from white to yellow, cream and almost to orange. Nearby is the 11th century Agra Fort, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Constructed from red sandstone, the building dominates the surrounding area.

A visit is made to Orchha to discover the 14 cenotaphs with parrots and vultures circling these mystical buildings and the chance to marvel at the palaces of the Orchha Fort complex and admire the fine architecture.

There’s also the chance to see some of Khajuraho’s remarkable temples, one of the seven wonders of India and another UNESCO World Heritage site. Originally 85 temples were built between the 10th and 12th centuries and today, 22 of these mystical shrines survive.

The tour of India concludes in the city of Varanasi, a labyrinth of tangled alleys, shops and workshops and it’s from here an exciting rickshaw trip down to the river gives an insight to the pilgrims washing in the holy waters and a boat trip takes in the incredible waterfront to see the Aarti, an impressive Hindu ceremony.

Nepal is completely different to India, and a visit is made to the famous 14th century Boudhanath Stupa, one of the holiest Buddhist sites. Here the gentle sound of chanting and praying fills the air.

Kathmandu, capital of Nepal, is one of the world’s most naturally beautiful countries, set in a bowl-shaped Himalayan valley 4,500 feet above sea level. This captivating city and Nepal’s cultural heart is surrounded by breathtaking snow-capped mountains and from here a flight, weather permitting, gives passengers the chance to photograph Mount Everest from the cockpit of the aircraft.

Take the scenic drive to Chitwan National Park, Nepal’s most famous wildlife reserve and one of the finest in Asia. From here visit a local village by ox cart to learn how local people live in a sustainable manner and cross a river on elephant back to observe the animals in their natural habitat and hopefully see the elusive Bengal tiger – a truly unforgettable experience.

Pokhara in central Nepal, is another highlight of the holiday, a charming lakeside town, located in a beautiful area with unbeatable views of the Annapurna mountain range.

Accommodation ranges from a three-star lodge in Chitwan National Park to five-star luxury in Delhi and Kathmandu.

**Price includes:**
- Return scheduled flights
- 13 nights accommodation in a selection of hotels with daily breakfasts and five meals
- Visits to the Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, Orchha Fort and some of Khajuraho’s temples
- Boat trips on Ganges and lake in Pokhara, rickshaw ride and elephant-back safari
- Tours of Old and New Delhi, Kathmandu and Varanasi
- Early morning trip to see sunrise over the Annapurna mountain range
- Flight to see Mount Everest and the Himalayas (weather permitting)
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Certain entrance fees payable locally.

Riviera Travel is just one of our tour operator partners. Established for over 30 years they offer fully escorted tours to a number of countries near and far.

Destinations are carefully selected with each holiday featuring a comprehensive itinerary ensuring travellers see the very best the country has to offer. These are further enhanced by experienced tour managers who accompany passengers throughout the whole trip.

Here are just three holidays taken from their 2015 brochure.
Injured woman is taken to hospital

It's Blue Suede pews at mission

Finance boss is new deputy leader

AN elderly woman was taken to hospital following an attack on Saturday. Police closed off a busy street in Dudley following the incident that happened in Highgate Road, close to the Church of England Children's Home, around 9pm.

The driver of the car, a 20-year-old, was arrested in relation to the incident and has been charged with robbery, violent disorder and a public order offence. He appeared before Dudley Magistrates’ Court yesterday (Monday) and has been remanded in custody.

The woman who was injured in the attack was taken to hospital for treatment to a head injury. She has since been discharged from hospital and is recovering at home.

Mr Dolby said: “False reports of armed robbery have been reported to us. We are currently investigating the incident and I would like to reassure members of the public that there is no ongoing threat to the community.

We are grateful to everyone who has come forward to help us with our inquiries, and we would like to remind all members of our community to report any suspicious activity.

You can contact us through our website, phone or social media. You can also call 101 to report any concerns and our staff will be able to provide you with further advice.

We would like to thank everyone for their cooperation and patience during this time. We will continue to keep you updated on any further developments.”

In the meantime, the church is urging people to stay vigilant and report any suspicious activity. They are asking members of the public to be extra alert and report any incidents to the police.

Guitar

As well as the concert and church service, musician Kevon Craig was also playing guitar and getting the church singing along.

Chairman of the society, Ray Brothwood MBE, said: “The ‘Bobby’ Jesus is subject of service centre is always full.”

The service has been well-received by the community, and is a popular event in the town.

The concert will take place on November 18 and 19. It is Mr Stritchman’s first time in the church to re-shaping the school to

FUTURISTIC designs of a £20 million scheme for Dudley which aims to change the face of rail travel nationwide has been unveiled.

The decision was made as a result of a pioneering Very Light Rail (VLR) line as well as Dudley’s existing rail hub.

The service linking passengers to the national rail network for the first time in 50 years will be used to part-ner the development technol-o-ogy, which is based on the Stourbridge Shuttle, while also bringing more tourists to Dudley Zoo, the Black Country Living Museum and Dudley Canal Trust. It is hoped the line could be extended to Dudley town centre.

This is the first image released by architects architects, which featured a futuristic, seven-car VLR train.

Headteacher Ben Stitchman said: “This is the first step along the way to becoming a very good school.”

“While we understand that the school has been removed from special measures, we recognise and feel the report is a fair reflection of improvements made.

We aim to continue to work on our school’s improvement and our students.

We would like to thank everyone for their support and encouragement, and we look forward to the future.”

Fare hike is condemned

The education watchdog rated categories of leadership and the behaviour of pupils as ‘good’.

By Alex Ross

Artist’s vision of Very Light Rail hub in Dudley

The financial concerns, this does serious crimes.

or those who are reporting consistently and inaccuracies

police time

fined for

Pair are fined for wasting police time

AN elderly woman was taken to hospital with an injury after she was struck by a car in Stourbridge.

The woman was taken to Dudley’s Russel Hall Hospital following the incident that happened in Highgate Road, close to the Church of England Children’s Home.

The driver of the car, a 20-year-old, has been charged with robbery, violent disorder and a public order offence. He appeared before Dudley Magistrates’ Court yesterday (Monday) and has been remanded in custody.

We would like to thank everyone for their cooperation and patience during this time. We will continue to keep you updated on any further developments.”

In the meantime, the church is urging people to stay vigilant and report any suspicious activity. They are asking members of the public to be extra alert and report any incidents to the police.

Guitar

As well as the concert and church service, musician Kevon Craig was also playing guitar and getting the church singing along.

Chairman of the society, Ray Brothwood MBE, said: “The ‘Bobby’ Jesus is subject of service centre is always full.”

The service has been well-received by the community, and is a popular event in the town.

The concert will take place on November 18 and 19. It is Mr Stritchman’s first time in the church to re-shaping the school to

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FROM a disillusioned Father Christmas to a James Bond parody of saving a kidnapped Saint Nicholas and the true meaning of Jesus told from the perspective of a sheep – the traditional nativity play in schools has survived as the years have gone by.

And at least one Black Country school has dispensed with the entire nativity scene altogether, although stressed it was still keeping the spirit of Christmas alive.

The only school that responded to an E&S putting on a nativity but also doing Aladdin as a Christmas pantomime. He said: “We are staging a Christmas play focussing on the birth of Jesus.

Political correctness in a multicultural society and it’s right children learn about it – the modern take on the festive story.

The last few years we have hosted a Christmas carol concert at our local church, St Marks.

“Hey Ewe tells the story from a sheep’s perspective. Angel Express is a modern nativity for infants and a version of A Christmas Carol. Hey Ewe is one such play, being put on by Cannock’s Chadsmoor Community and Staffordshire, although some schools tell political correctness in a multicultural society and it’s right children learn about it – the modern take on the festive story.

From Striking Santa and Angels who read all about it – the modern take on the festive story.

True meaning of Christmas still alive and well, despite claims made in survey.

And Anne Elledge from Emmanuel School, Walsall, said children had plenty of tradition in their plays too. She said: “We are staging a Christmas school nativity has evolved from the perspective of Jesus told from the perspective of exploring website who believe just doing a nativity play was Ocker Hill Academy in Tipton.

The junior school’s principal Adam Murphy said: “The children at Claregate are putting on by Cannock’s Chadsmoor Community and Staffordshire, although some schools tell political correctness in a multicultural society and it’s right children learn about it – the modern take on the festive story.

Some have brought in plays such as ‘A Wriggly Nativity, which is a modern nativity called Angel Express and a version of A Christmas Carol.

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From Striking Santa and Angels who read all about it – the modern take on the festive story.
Hundreds take on fun events to raise vital funds for charities

Tis the season for Santas to get running boots on

By Charlie Benton

Involved with charity work and it has been going on for three years, getting bigger each year.

We have done some fundraising but we specifically wanted to do the Santa Run for the hospice because not many people know about it, especially the Journey Appeal, which does great work for bereaved families.

The event was also attended by Vicki Wootton and Simon Cater from the Compton Hospice.

Miss Wootton said: “We found out a month ago that the school had chosen to do it for Compton Hospice.

“the service helps so many families through bereavement so any money raised is fantastic.”

Mr Cater said: “The Santa Run has always been very successful and for Tettenhall College to support the hospice is absolutely fantastic. We need to raise over £15 million a year just to keep the doors open, most of which is donated by the local community.

“Events like this are great because it all adds up and goes towards the final pot. We are so appreciative.”

Councillor Andrew Wynne, who joined in with the race with his children, said: “I think it is a wonderful cause. It will raise lots of money for the charity and the turnout was absolutely fantastic. It is particularly good fun for the kids, too.”

The event was supported by Western Power Distribution which means all monies raised will go directly towards funding the £8 million plus a year it costs to run the three Acorns hospices.

Hundreds of people also turned out for the 5km run in Stourbridge, which raised money for Mary Stevens Hospice.
THE three ‘Rs’. Rest, relaxation and recuperation. That’s what Champneys is all about. A countryside escape to recharge your batteries with ‘me time’. This was my first visit to Champneys Springs in Leicestershire. I’ve been to day spas before but it never really feels all that relaxing because of time restrictions.

Enticing
So the chance of an overnight stay was particularly enticing. It was a good opportunity for some mother and daughter bonding time. The approach to the spa is down a very long driveway. How grand.

We found the spacious and luxurious reception area at the end of a pretty walkway over a pond complete with fountains and plenty of vibrant flowers. A beautiful entrance to start your stay along with cheerful and attentive staff. After a welcome tour of the facilities, dinner booked in and 

**TRAVEL FOCUS**

**By Lisa Williams**

**essential information given, we were ready to go. There is loads on offer. Gym, workout classes, pool, steam room, sauna, spa treatments, like to relax around the grounds or just lounging around. We wanted to start off with some energetic exercise so ventured to the well-equipped gym. It was time to find our room and get ready to relax and enjoy a bit of a pamper. It felt peculiar at first, wandering around in a regulation robe and flip flops in the company of strangers. But it’s what you do, so we did, and it’s amazing how quickly it feels perfectly normal. We ambled about taking in the different areas. The playground and green are features of the idyllic Trevella Park, Cornwall. The Safari tents have been set up for that extra adventure at the site. whatever one’s preferred accommodation, Trevella has it covered, with two lodges also available for extra luxury.

Trevella has for 10 years in a row won a David Bellamy Gold Award and claimed a bronze award in Cornwall Tourism Holiday Park of the Year 2014. General manager Karen Lynch, said the park’s setting and its ‘Simple Pleasures’ maxim were the main reasons behind its success.

Trevella welcomes touring caravans, motorhomes and campers. Pets are also welcome. Holidays at Trevella Park start from just £51 in June for seven nights staying in a Luxury-grade static caravan with three bedrooms. Caravan and camping pitches start from only £18.50 per pitch per night. In keeping with its aim to make a holiday a simple pleasure, the park has introduced safari tents and a guide to 50 Great Adventures. Find out more at www.trevella.co.uk or call 01637 830 308 to check availability. 

Mark Shipps

The playground and green are features of the idyllic Trevella Park, Cornwall.
Seann to be wild with comic as long as he goes to right city

Cinders already a success

PANTO season is as us
common and this year at Wolverhampton’s Grand Theatre it’s Cinderella, which is set to beat box of

The show stars camp
comedy pantomime ‘It’s a Trap!’ which is set to be one of the most enjoyable. For it to work the cast has
to really feed off each other and bring the audience into play. You always get so many unexpected things

Wulfrun

With support from Mark Simmons, the comic says he is enjoying the tour as far

Wulfrun’s Wulfrun Hall on

he arrived in Hereford in-

Romney veteran Ken Dodd per-

I don’t really work

The Glory of Christ-

It’s all happening for comedian Seann Walsh

Seann Walsh was forced to call off

Chris

Friday. Call 0870 320 7000.

Bach. See www.thesh.co.uk

mas. Wolverhampton is

Sanchez brings his Per-

In his words: ‘I don’t really work

I had to sit down the

Sundays, Mondays and Wednesdays

Saturday, December 18.

Over half the tickets gone

Expect a famous night with Buster Bloodvessel and co when Bad Manners play the Robin 2 in Bilston (Thursday). Guitar legend Michael Schenker plays the Robin 2 on Tues-

As he prepared for his role as Dandini, Clary explained his love of pantos.

It is a true art form, something that is very dif-

Wulfrun’s Wulfrun Hall on

Web: www.wolverhampton-Theatre.co.uk

It’s all happening for comedian Seann Walsh

Wulfrun’s Wulfrun Hall on

Sundays 6.30pm

Tickets £4.95, £5.95, £7.95, £10 and £15, with concessions and family tickets

New Year’s Eve

Family Party, Disco and Buffet • Cheaper than a baby sitter!

Adults £15, Children under 14 £7.50

Tickets now on sale

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MONDAY 15TH DECEMBER

THE QUEST FANTASY DISCO

TUESDAY 16TH DECEMBER

PREDATORS KARAOKE

WEDNESDAY 17TH DECEMBER

WEDNESDAY NIGHT WITH ANA

THURSDAY 18TH DECEMBER

STARMAKERS KARAOKE

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ROOM FOR HIRE

NEW YEAR’S EVE

FRI 1/2 PRICE

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This is it then – the first stage of remaining acts battling to ut in who has the right stuff to walk the 2014 sing-off when we see Dermot O’Leary, while Simon Walsh will be passing judgement.

The X Factor (ITV, 8.30pm)

This is it – the first stage of remaining acts battling to ut in who has the right stuff to walk the 2014 sing-off when we see Dermot O’Leary, while Simon Walsh will be passing judgement.

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(2013) Dine with Me. (R)

9.00 Mix Crazy Christmas Obsession.

Fiction

1.50 The Making of Modern Britain. (R)

11.20 Film: The Christmas Bunny. (R)

12.20 Film: Forbidden Planet. (1956)

SATURDAY’S TV DECEMBER 13

11.00 Top of the Pops. (R)

12.00 Film: The Simpsons. (R)

5.30 Film: Dinge with Me. (R)

10.50 Film: Doctor Who

12.20 Film: You’ve Been Framed!

11.25 Film: Bomb Girls

1.30 Film: Canimals. (R)

4.35 Film: Top Gear

11.15 Film: Storage Hoarders. (R)

7.45 Film: Columbo: Fade in to Murder. (R)

6.35 Film: Under the Shadow of the Milkman. (R)

7.15 Film: You’ve Been Framed!

2.00 Film: Doctor Who

8.30 Film: Doctor Who

9.10 TV’s 5 Greatest Magic Tricks.

2.50 Film: The Making of Modern Britain. (R)

8.00 Storage Hoarders. (R)

1.00 Film: Last Man Standing

6.00 Film: Storage Hoarders. (R)

8.05 Film: Secret Santa (2003)

7.00 Film: You’ve Been Framed!

8.00 Film: My Crazy Christmas Obsession.

8.15 Film: You’ve Been Framed!

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5.00 Telephone Closed.

3.30 Film: Bomb Girls

6.30 Film: Storage Hoarders. (R)

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**FILM CHOICES**

**MONDAY**
The Real St Nick, Channel 5, 2pm
An injured man is brought into hospital dressed as Father Christmas, and when he comes round, he claims to be Santa, landing himself in the psychiatric ward. Romantic comedy, with Torrey DeVitto and Callum Rixman. (2007)

**TUESDAY**
Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, ITV, 7.30pm
The young wizard struggles to convince his fellow psychiatric ward. Romantic comedy, with Torrey DeVitto and Callum Rixman. (2012)

**WEDNESDAY**
The Bandito of Sherwood Forest, Channel 4, 2.35am
The Robin of Hood reunites his father’s merry men to carry out a rescue mission at the request of the Queen Mother. Swashbuckling adventure, starring Cornel Wilde and Anita Louise. (1946)

**THURSDAY**
Father Christmas decides it is time to hang up his hat and the remaining days of the festive season into double. Festive comedy, starring Kelsey Grammer, Charles Durning and Elaine Hendrix. (2002)

**FRIDAY**
Shout ‘Em Up, Channel 5, 10.35pm
A gun-toting mysterious stranger delivers a baby, which is forced to protest from a horde of heavily armed assassins. Embittered by a prostate, he sets out to discover why the child has been marked for death. Action adventure, starring Clive Owen, Paul Giamatti and Monica Bellucci. (2005)

**MONDAY**
Bette Midler: One Night Only
ITV, 6pm
It’s hard to believe that The Divine Miss M is a year away from her 70th birthday, so when she turned 69, we’d give her that – but in all this time in the spotlight, she’s never done a UK television special. Until now. It’s been 42 years since Bette Midler released her debut album, so she’s bound to have plenty of stories for us tonight, as well as stories about her life and career. The Grammy Award-winner will also be performing various hits, including Wind Beneath My Wings and From a Distance, as well as songs from her new album, It’s the Girls, including a cover of The Ronettes’ Be My Baby. The whole thing is hosted by Joanna Lumley.

**Tuesday**
Steph and Dom Meet Nigel Farage
Channel 4, 10pm
Steph and Dom Parker, owners of plump B&B The Salutation, have caused quite the stir on tiny favourite Gogglebox. So what would happen if they were to come face to face with another of Britain’s most opinionated personalities, UKIPs Nigel Farage himself? For more... This spin-off sees the Parkers joined by their local MP candidate, Farage, in a-nine-fuelled evening, that’s sure to leave him rather hot under the collar, thanks to all the questions they have got lined up for him.

**TUESDAY**
Black Mirror: White Christmas
Channel 4, 8pm
Charlie Brooker’s dark drama series may seem like an odd choice to give a Christmas airing. However, there is a proud tradition of TV channels scaring us at Christmas. It’s just that Brooker tends to do it via bleak visions of the future rather than ghost stories. This feature-length installment brings us three tales for the price of one, as a remote family outpost, charismatic Matt (Merlin Jones) and sadistic Potter (Ptau Spa) swap the youngster to disappear into the night. Now, the investigation comes to an end, but will Tony, Emily and Julian finally get the answers they’ve been waiting for?

**WEDNESDAY**
Surprise Surprise
ITV, 9pm
Pop supergroup McBusted surprise one of their biggest fans with a performance on top of London’s O2 arena, and former JLS member Marvin Humes makes a dream come true for an inspiring aid worker who came to the rescue of a Somerset village devastated by floods. Holly Willoughby presents.

**THURSDAY**
George Clarke’s Amazing Christmas Spaces
Channel 4, 8pm
Architect George Clarke loves this series – it brings him in contact with some amazingly inventive souls who have dreamed up some mind-boggling projects, and usually on a budget. George prunes off the series with some bulbs with a Christmas theme. He’s off to visit a 135-year-old tin church, one of the earliest takes on flat-pack construction in the country. His main Warthake takes a tour of another chapel, although this one has been transformed into a luxury home. The guy then help the UK’s only female ice carver create a winter wonderland ice bar in Liverpool before looking back at their favourite builds of the series over drinks in Joes Brolly Shed of the Year-winning construction.

**FRIDAY**
Text Santa
ITV, 8pm
The festive fundraising extravaganza returns, with the evening’s presenting duos – Ant and Dec, Phillip Schofield and Christine Bleakley, and Paddy McGuinness and Alesha Dixon – joined by a host of famous faces to raise money for six deserving causes. Highlights include George Clooney making a surprise visit to Detmold Abbey, the residents of Corinna Street appearing in a comedy sketch with a Tana Sax twist, Ant and Dec hosting a ‘Vuk Tucker Trail’ for an unsuspecting celebrity while serenaded by a choir of former jungle contestants. The Birds of a Feather stars also got involved, The Cube welcomes some unexpected visitors and there are appearances by the casts of Mr Selfridge and Ermelinda, plus plenty of live music throughout the show.

**PICK OF THE WEEK**
Jonathan is dishing out the gags and the gongs

Jonathan Ross hosts the 25th annual British Comedy Awards. The ceremony celebrates the best in comedy, with the winner will also be performing her various hits, including Wind Beneath My Wings and From a Distance, as well as songs from her new album, It’s the Girls, including a cover of The Ronettes’ Be My Baby. The whole thing is hosted by Joanna Lumley.

**BEST OF THE REST**

**MONDAY**
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Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:
Across
1. The Sahara Ex- mission (5,5)
2. Learner gets hor- ribly sore, because he's been beaten (5)
3. French brass-hat sounds warlike (7)
5. Marks of sover- eignty in various respects (8)
7. This is used for shooting slow-mov- ing creature (4)
8. Rubbery gang in front of it (8)
9. & 18AC. A way of acquiring goods that sounds more expensive (4-8)
10. See 17 Across
11. One of the key players (7)
12. Curses a shot that has gone astray (5)
21. A storm seen to 23.

Down
1. The social distinc- tion of dramatic characters, we hear (5)
2. Record the hour, but make no progress (4,4)
3. Make flexible part of a gun carriage (6)
4. A combination of artist and engineer is seldom found (4)
5. Indiged in some inspiration? (7)
6. Union ploy, maybe, shut down the store (6)
7. Lines in illuminated letters? (5,5)
8. Concern about horse for slaughter (7)
9. Name the man who's very narrowly elected (8)
10. See 20 Down
11. Take in at top West End show and have some free time in London (4,5)
12. Competent (10)

Quick Clues:
Across
1. Recover (10)
7. Mountain ash (5)
8. Case (7)
10. Aweful (8)
11. Correct (4)
13. Imped (6)
15. Run (8)
16. Sole (4)
18. Unbound (8)
21. Rescuer (7)
22. Lift (5)

Down
1. Gansman (5)
2. Persuade (8)
3. Preserve (6)
4. Down (4)
5. Shoot (7)
6. Voluntary (10)
7. Done wrong (10)
8. Unworried (8)
9. Be idle (4)

Sudoku

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Luxury home complete with a swimming pool

AN EXTENDED five-bedoomed residence in Hagley, at 28 Kinver Drive, has an indoor swimming pool.

It is for sale through The Lee Shaw Partnership at £855,000. It has a reception hall and staircases off to a galleried landing, an office with fitted furniture, WC, lounge with a granite wall mounted fire, a pool complex with heated swimming pool, changing area and steam room, screen and projector and sound system. There is also a dining room, a kitchen with granite work tops, integrated appliances, feature vertical radiator and five bedrooms (master en suite). Contact 01562 889111 or visit www.leeshaw.com

Imposing farmhouse in a lovely village location

THE Old Mill Farmhouse in Bromsgrove Road in the village of Clent is an imposing and versatile property with lots of features.

It is for sale through Andrew Grant at £895,000. It has an entrance hall with stairs and ceiling beams, a sitting room with ceiling beams and wooden flooring, a dining room with a brick fire surround and ceiling beams, a kitchen with two Belfast sinks, space for a range cooker with beams surrounding and an extractor, utility, ground floor WC, inner hallway, ceiling. There are five bedrooms (master with dressing room with ceiling beams, a living room with sofas, fitted kitchen, house bathroom with shower, double glazing, gas central heating, driveway and garage.

Contact Andrew Grant on 01384 376333 or visit www.andrew-grant.co.uk
Why not pay Santa a visit at Halesowen Motors and whilst you are there, take a look at the great choice of quality used cars on offer and when visiting Halesowen Autos, you are asked to ensure you get a guaranteed great value for money.

Their friendly sales team have over 20-years of experience in the motor trade. They are open most days for viewing, test drives or just some friendly advice. There is no high pressure selling and they guarantee a test drive with no obligation to buy.

Halesowen Autos pride themselves on the presentation of their cars. All their vehicles are prepared to the highest standards. You can also part exchange any vehicle, even if it is of greater value.

Halesowen Autos are a licensed credit broker, so if you require finance to assist with the purchase of your car, then they can offer you a range of competitively priced packages at great interest rates that can be tailored to your specific circumstances. All their vehicles are HPI and VOSA checked for outstanding finance, accident history and mileage discrepancies.

A comprehensive warranty is available on most cars and AA, RAC or any independent inspection are welcomed. Delivery is also available in the UK for a reasonable charge.

Why not call into Halesowen Autos this winter and take a look at the great selection of cars they have on offer? You can find them at 1 Cross Street, Halesowen, West Midlands B63 4RT or, for further information, telephone them on 0121 501 3840.

You can also visit their website at www.halesownautos.co.uk

Great used cars and more....

It’s obviously always a good time to find lots of cars and plenty of choice when visiting a used car dealership.

The Car Lot can offer you all of this and a whole lot more.

Established in 1995, The Car Lot is owned by business partners Neil Foxhall and Keith Arnold who joined forces with the aim of providing high quality used cars at affordable prices. They opened for business at their first site in Old Hill in November 1995 and expanded just two years later by buying a workshop on the Waterside Industrial Estate in Dudley.

In 2002, with the business thriving, they purchased the premises in Netherton where they operate today. In 2006 Neil and Keith purchased a building across the road, and a new workshop, MOT centre and tyre bay was created. This meant that they were able to convert the workshop facility into a showroom where a selection of vehicles is displayed.

Proton arrived in 2007 and very soon after taking on the franchise The Car Lot was acknowledged by Proton as one of its top performing UK dealerships. Impressive, all-new models are on the way from Proton in 2015 which promises to be a great year for the Malaysian manufacturer as it will be offering some outstanding new models at exceptional, value for money prices.

As a Proton main dealer this company has supplied new cars to customers through the Motability scheme. As an established Motability dealer, The Car Lot is able to supply ex-Motability vehicles that have been superbly maintained.

There’s an enormous choice of used cars displayed covering every market sector, all of which will have been prepared to an impressively high standard having been subject to an HPI vehicle history check, safety inspections, a full service and when needed, an MOT. What’s more, all come with reassuring AA warranty guaranteeing high standards. Prices are extremely competitive and finance can be arranged for most customers, even for those who may have struggled to find finance facilities.

Neil Foxhall says: “We take great pride in our preparation and aftersales care, and place an emphasis on delivering customer satisfaction. This has enabled us to build up an enviable reputation over the years, and as a result, we’ve managed to attain great customer loyalty with many of our sales arising through repeat business and word of mouth recommendation.”

Continues: “Our skilled technicians can maintain and repair any make or model of car. They have the facilities to perform all work to a high level and access to the best diagnostic systems to track and correct faults quickly. A considerable number of local company fleet customers rely on us to keep their fleets where they belong, on the road.”

If you’re looking for great savings on quality used cars, or need your current vehicle maintained, why not pay The Car Lot a visit. The Car Lot is at 205-215 Halesowen Road, Netherton, Dudley DY2 8PU. They’re open from 9.00am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday, Saturday from 9.00am to 6.00pm while on Sundays the car sales department is open between 10.00am and 4.00pm. Call 01384 241222 or visit www.carlotmotors.co.uk to find out more.
French flair, c’est si chic

By Ian Donaldson

It looks good in a cheeky, proper modern way and its little engine lives under the boot floor, to intrigue the techies among us; both features giving the new Twingo a promising start in life.

The success of their baby may even have surprised its parent, for no right-hand drive was ever offered. Didn’t stop some Brits buying, and loving, the left-handed models, whose comparative narrowness helped a helmetsman sitting on the wrong side of the car.

Twingo II in 2007, was available with UK-sided steering and sold tolerably well, despite losing its charm and looking like any number of other small family hatchers.

Now comes Twingo III and Renault has found its small car mojo again, with added practicality thanks to a bold decision to switch ends for the engine.

That move pays off in several ways, from allowing a stretched passenger cabin despite being shorter overall (and now with four passenger doors for the first time), to letting the front wheels turn much more sharply, for a turning circle that will make drivers chuckle the first time they make a U-turn on a narrow country road.

Other car makers stick to the usual front engine, front-wheel drive formula because using the same 1.0 litre engine and clearly says the popularity of two-door city cars is falling by the month and has styled its new baby with hidden releases at the rear, for the more coupé look of a two-door but with added practicality. Mums with bobbies to clip into the rear will thank Renault particularly.

Prices of the new Twingo range from £9,495 to £11,695, with all but the dearest using the same 1.0 litre engine and clearly aimed at a life in the city. The most expensive version actually has a slightly smaller (898cc) engine but with a power boosting turbo fitted for more convincing out of town performance.

The smaller engine is expected to take most sales and was a charming car to see on the test route that took in hills and countryside and a decent stretch of dual carriageway too.

‘Renault has found its small car mojo again, with added practicality thanks to a bold decision to switch ends for the engine.’

It makes the familiar thrills of other three-cylinder power units and, allied to a crisp gearchange and light steering, soon had this driver smiling at the brio of this little charmer.

The more powerful version was noticeably quicker but felt coarser and the gearchange and steering were less user friendly.

It did, however, record 46mpg on the briskly driven test route compared to a disappointing 40mpg of the smaller engine Twingo, perhaps because it needed less peddle to the metal cooing.

Like many new small cars, there is a world of personalisation for buyers, who can add different coloured parts all around the interior and body flashes and bolder alloys on the outside. Smartphones can be attached to a dashboard cradle, adding satellite navigation and your music library at a fingertip stretch. The top Dynamic trim of the test car includes cruise control, alloy wheels and air conditioning.

By Ian Donaldson

Halesowen Chronicle

Thursday, December 11, 2014

3COPSA SAVERS

3 AMAZING DEALS ON VAUXHALL CORSA

VAUXHALL CORSA EXCITE 1.2 16V 3DR A/C

Specification includes: Mobile phone system with Bluetooth, 18'' alloy wheels, Front fog lights, Air conditioning, Cruise control, CD player/USB/iPod/aux-in.

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Initial payment of 9 months rental (£2,065.93) followed by 35 monthly payments £229.55 PER MONTH ON PERSONAL CONTRACT HIRE. Total payment of 30 months (£2,065.93 followed by 35 monthly payments £229.55) payable to Vauxhall Financial Services Limited, Old Reliable, 19000. Trenchard Road, Swindon, Wiltshire. If the vehicle is returned at the end of the agreement, there will be a final payment of £2,065.93. The customer will have an option to purchase the vehicle for an agreed price of £2,065.93.

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**Old Hales Thirds hand out a rout**

**OHHC 3rds 11 Stone 1**

*With both the Men and Ladies’ 1st XI games falling foul of the weather, it left the Men’s 3rd XI as the only remaining home fixture, for Old Halesians HC.*

Old Hales opened the scoring when Adam Hill turned in the D and fired through the Stone keeper.

Hales doubled their lead when Tom Hickman intercepted a pass from the Stone defence and drove into the circle before squaring the ball for Adam Hill to tap in at the back post.

Jack Wolancroft made it 3-0 before Steve Butler scored from a penalty corner.

Butler got his second and it soon became 6-0 when Alex Evans found the back of the net.

In the second half Old Hales chased more goals, Adam Hill completed his hat-trick Wolancroft got his second.

Captain Nic Pean scored and Steve Butler also got a hat-trick to make it 7-0 before Alex Evans completed the rout with a hat-trick.

Stone got a consolation late on.

**Wolves get Fulham in Cup draw**

**M Drayton 2 Tividale 2**

TIVIDALE ended a run of four straight league Evo-Stik Division One South defeats but squared up a two-goal lead at Market Drayton.

Despite plenty of Tividale possession and looking threatening, the first chance on 10 minutes fell to Market Drayton as Aidan Haughton fired wide and six minutes later it was Michael O’Reilly’s turn to shoot wide.

Tividale’s first clear chance came when a Deqwon Ebanks effort was saved by Drayton keeper Daniel Read. Tividale went ag-

**Old Halesians 68 Dudley Kingswinford 0**

**THE Christmas festivities began on President’s Day at Wassell Grove in National League 3.**

The home side took the field in no doubt as to what was expected. Old Hales kicked off up the slope in what were perfect conditions for rugby.

From the outset Hales went on the attack, forwards and backs immediately went hunting for the ball.

Almost immediately they gained a line out just on half way which was won by the second row’s Tim Ring.

He presented a clean ball to scrum half Nathan Jones who started a series of 15 phases of up front driving by the forwards led by Tom Jordan, Len Breeze, Matt Evans and Jay Martin.

Winger Luke Smith out ran the defence for his first try, converted by Chris Hooper.

It was apparent that Smith was on a roll and after eight minutes left the D Kingdom defenders behind for his second try and another conversion for Hooper.

Smith then went on to score his hat trick.

Andy Robinsondrove to the line for Hales with players hanging off him to score his first try of the season and a bonus point score, converted by Hooper.

Five minutes later Hooper dummied his way through the D Kingdom defence to score under the posts and convert.

The second half started pretty much the same as the first ended. Tom Dempsey came on at prop for Louis Padgen, Nigel Burrows on for Lou Breeze.

**Christmas arrives early for Old Hales**

**Morgan is facing an FA charge**

**Greeves coming back to Heathens**

**Tividale squander two goal lead**

**Wolverhampton Wanderers advance to the 3rd Round of the FA Cup.**

**Christmas arrives early for Old Hales**

**Wolverhampton Wanderers**

Morgan is facing an FA charge

Wolves get Fulham in Cup draw

Old Hales hand out a rout

Christmas arrives early for Old Hales

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Greaves coming back to Heathens

Morgan is facing an FA charge
**Jordanne joins sporting best at awards**

**Tennis**

which were presented alongside this year’s National Championships.

After ending her season with a career-best Masters performance, Whaley and Kamiji stayed in London for the Lawn Tennis Writers Association Awards at Wimbledon, where Whaley was honoured with a special presentation after becoming the first British tennis player in history to win a calendar-year Grand Slam. The same day her dad Keith collected her Female Player of the Year award in Gloucester and, after sitting out this year’s National Championships following her phenomenally busy season, Whaley visited Sunday’s final day of the event to receive the Jim Cochrane Award.

“My dad has always inspired me, he’s a former Paralympic medalist, too, and the reason I started playing wheelchair tennis, so it was perfect that he could collect the Female Player of the Year award, with my boyfriend collecting the Players’ Player award,” said Whaley.

Dad Keith went on to finish runner-up in the men’s consolation singles at the National Championships after being drawn to meet British No. 1, world No. 3 and eventual champion Gordon Reid in the first round.

“Each awards ceremony I get invited to after what’s happened to me and you this year, I have to keep pinching myself.

“But I want to do it all again in 2015 and I want to win my first Grand Slam singles title, starting with the Australia Open at the end of next month.”

That’s the goal and I couldn’t do any of it without the support of family, friends, and coaches.

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**DK downed Old Hales hand out a real thrashing**

**Football**

The Yeltz claimed yet another win on the road, as two half goals from Halesowen put the game out of reach for Grantham.

The Yeltz made two changes to the side that overcame Gresley last Saturday, as Ben Halsey and Tom Tonks returned to the side, taking the place of Robert Thompson-Brown and Elliot Turner.

Halesowen dominated the first half, and they had their opening chance on 14 minutes.

Halsey played the ball through to Iydestone Christie who skipped past two Grantham players before his shot crashed off the underfoot of the bar and came back out into play.

**Denied**

Grantham had their chances as well, as Stefan Bondy managed to find space, a couple of yards out and smashed the ball towards goal, but he was denied brilliantly by Matt Surjyn.

The Yeltz kept up the pressure on the home side and eventually found the crack in the home side’s defence with less than half an hour of the game gone. Grantham could only hold out for so long, and on 27 minutes the game turned with Yeltz taking control of the game away from Grantham.

Tonks threw a long ball into the box, and Halsey was there to tap up and nod the ball into the net to give the Yeltz a lead which they refused to relinquish and even went on to consolidate their lead 15 minutes later.

The Yeltz doubled their lead on 42 minutes, as goalkeeper Dan Haystead hit the ball up to the half-way line, but he failed to get back to his line quick enough, as Christie hit the ball back upfield almost instantly, and he was able to watch the ball fly into the net.

The second half was a different affair between the sides, as it turned out to be a quiet 45 minutes.

The best chance of the half came from Grantham’s Rhys Lewis.

With an eye on sparking a come back he ran with the ball up to the 18-yard box, but he could only hit the ball wide of the right hand post leaving the Yeltz in the lead.

Halesowen fortunately didn’t have any more injury worries and claimed all three points and they moved closer to the top half of the table.

The Yeltz have moved up to 14th place, while Grantham have only claimed one point in their last seven games.

**Knockout blow as bouts are called off**

Dudley lost in semi-final

BIRMINGHAM and Districts amateur boxing club..com

The first three clubs now stand at WRH 186 points, MF 325 and Black Pear Joggers 333 points.

The club had its first ever league winner in James Jefferson in a time of 33.42, from second placed Andrew Blakounus of Sphinx AC by 24 seconds, a gap of some 150 metres, over the 10k course at Walsall Airport, hosted by Aldridge Running Club.

James was very ably supported by Richard Powell sixth in 35.44, Ural Khalil seventh in 36.19, Gary Whithouse 12th in 37.89, new boy, Adam Hancock 20th in 37.55, with Lee Harris making up the team 58th in 38.33.

Others who finished were, Matt White 37th, Daniel Morgan 5th in 38.22, Morgan on 111th, Adam Misslely 120th, Andy White 141st, Clark Woodhall 142nd, Dave Birch 150th, and Jim Jones 167th.

The next race is at Drought on January 10, 2015.

**Streke strikes like lightning**

**Wellington Amateurs 0 vs Halesowen 2**

Wellington Amateurs, fast on making up, were Joel Ambabi scoring the Robins’ fastest ever league goal in eight seconds.

They racked up the away win to leapfrog their hosts into 10th place in the West Midlands Premier Division.

Ambabi opened the scoring in dramatic fashion after Wellington defender Nathan Taylor’s intended back pass was gathered before he could kick Scott Hoof full short.

The striker doubled Town’s lead on 27 minutes with Lee Smith adding a third 10 minutes later.

A superb close range volley by Connor Morgan on 65 minutes ended any hopes the championship leaders had comeback.

And Arnold celebrated the Robins’ fifth ninth minutes later.

**No let-up - Ricky Summers at Priory Park Boxing Club, Dudley**

**Boxing**

No let-up as Ricky Summers at Priory Park Boxing Club, Dudley