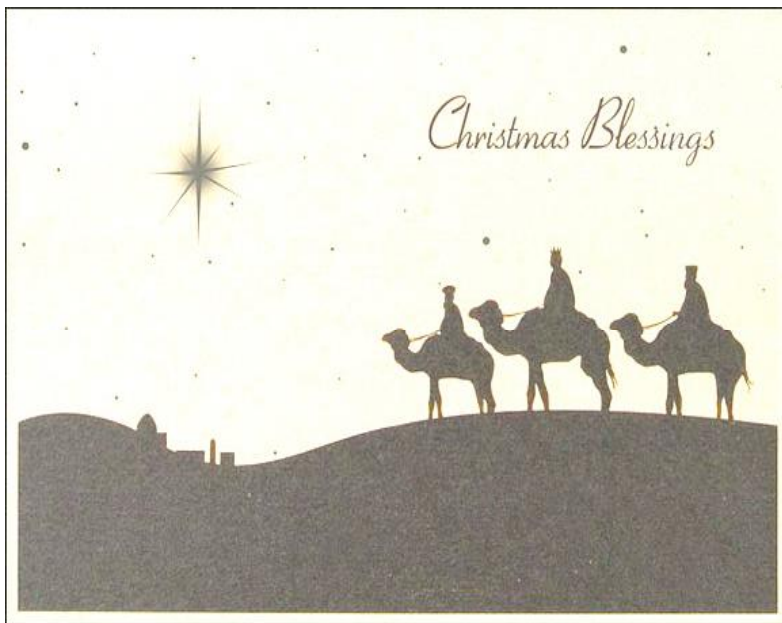


# *Pitcombe News*



*Carol service 6.30 pm on Sunday 21 December*

*St Leonard's, Pitcombe*

*December 2008*

*January 2009*

The ***PITCOMBE NEWS*** welcomes contributions from its  
readers

Articles for publication should be sent to the  
EDITOR: SUSAN CHAMBERLAIN  
Orchard Stables  
Higher Hadspen  
Castle Cary BA 7 7LX  
01963 350 616  
[sechamberlain@btinternet.com](mailto:sechamberlain@btinternet.com)

The ***PITCOMBE NEWS*** may also be read on

[www.pitcombe.org.uk/news](http://www.pitcombe.org.uk/news)

**The DEADLINE for the February issue is  
Friday 23 January  
to [sechamberlain@btinternet.com](mailto:sechamberlain@btinternet.com)**

The PITCOMBE NEWS regrets any errors or omissions that may occur, we do our best to avoid them. The information contained within this publication is published in good faith. The views expressed are those of the contributors and are not necessarily endorsed by the PITCOMBE NEWS



## **PITCOMBE NEWS**



"Tis the season to be thankful for everyone except Sue Smith who relates a tale of woe on page 15 but does it in her own style which makes the rest of us thankful for her sense of humour.

Jean and Willie Constantine are very thankful too and want to thank all those who supported the Christmas Market for MOTIVATION so generously. I wonder if we could support a small farmer's market in the village hall on a regular basis? It's a great location certainly.

And I have every reason to be thankful for the support I get for the **PITCOMBE NEWS**. Two people in particular I must thank, Maria Samuel and David Jury, without whom the magazine would be decidedly slimmer and much less interesting. Thank you too, regular contributors, Carole Wyatt, Sue Smith, Connie Earl, Wendy Crane, Willie Constantine and all those who send in articles from time to time. Don't ever stop, any of you, and if anyone else wants to be bullied each month to meet the deadline, feel free to join in ... by the due date.

The magazine could not exist without the unstinting support of Sexey's School. Thank you to the Headmaster, Bursar and Liz McCoomish and her staff who continue to provide the copying facilities at very reasonable rates.

Finally a big thank you to those who deliver it to you every month. Peter Wyatt, Ken and Daniel Spratling, Kathryn Moon, Georgina Hartnell, Ken and Jenny Elliott, and Wendy Crane. Anyone else want to join the campaign to reverse the alphabet? Why not? Go on, try it, see if you can rattle off the alphabet backwards. Remember when you could?

Thank you all so much. The next issue will be out at the end of January.

*Susan Chamberlain*

**HAPPY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE**

## **PARISH COUNCIL NEWS**

### **Pitcombe Hamlet Telephone Kiosk**

After consultation with the community the Parish Council presented to SSDC valid reasons why the kiosk should not be removed by BT. SSDC agreed with the Parish Council and used their veto to object to its removal. BT do have a right to appeal against this veto but at the moment the situation looks encouraging. As future proofing the Parish Council has approached the Pitcombe Trust and asked the Trust to seek a listed status for the kiosk.

### **Fly Tipping**

Fly tipping is becoming more prevalent. There have been a number of incidents recently with large amounts of rubbish being deposited within the green lanes and other areas of our parish. Can we please ask all parishioners to be aware that this is happening and to record and report to the Parish Council any suspicious incidents that they may observe.

### **Sunny Hill Lane**

After an approach from the Parish Council, Somerset County Highways agreed with the railway's contractor to complete remedial works to the section of the lane that was damaged during the railway works. These have now been completed and Somerset Highways hope to include the whole of the lane into their surface dressing programme in 2009.

### **Next Meeting**

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 7.30pm  
Hadspen Village Hall

All parishioners are invited to attend

The councillors have not yet discussed a January meeting and any notice of a meeting in January will be noted on the Parish Council website [www.pitcombepc.org.uk](http://www.pitcombepc.org.uk)



## **HADSPEN VILLAGE HALL**

The AGM of the Village Hall was held on Friday, 14 November with 17 residents in attendance. In giving his report, the Chairman said that it had been an historic year for the Village Hall Committee as a new village hall had been built and this had been achieved within the overall budget.

At the start of the year we still had another £18,000 to raise to complete phase 2, the new entrance and car park. As a result of further applications for grants we received a another £7,000 from the District Council Community Fund, £8,700 from Awards for All, £1,000 from the Local Councillor scheme and £3,000 from an anonymous source. £1,500 was donated by the Country Gentleman's Association to build the natural stone wall to the front elevation and most importantly a further £3,100 from the Parish Council.

We were also given a £5,000 interest free loan from a parishioner. All this, together with the considerable savings we made by collecting and installing the expensive fire screens ourselves, mean that the hall and kitchen are fitted out to the highest standard.

We took possession of the hall from the builders on Friday afternoon, 2 May and spent the following week moving back in to be ready for the Plant Sale and Open Evening on the following Saturday. Other fundraising events during the year, included for the first time a gourmet raffle at Shepton Montague Village Hall and our annual harvest supper held in the new hall at the end of September.

Our official opening was on 20 June when Lady Elizabeth Gass, Lord Lieutenant of Somerset, unveiled the donors plaque. It was a great pleasure for us that day to welcome as our guests many of those who had helped with the planning and building of the hall and, of course, those who had contributed funds towards it.

The hall committee are indebted to all those people and organisations that have helped build this new hall and we are particularly grateful to the residents and the parish council who contributed 40% of the cost.

I should like to thank the Committee members for all their support in the past year. We are now losing five members - Fran Madelin, Constance Earl, Carole Wyatt, Mike Taylor and Rob Comer are all standing down. I would like to thank them all for their contribution over the years to this Committee. Connie has served 10 years, Mike 9, Carole 7, Fran 3, and Rob 1 year.

I hope that all committee members both past and present and the whole community will look upon this village hall with pride over the years to come.

*Peter Wyatt*



Congratulations to Willie and Jean Constantine for organising such a terrific Christmas Market with a variety of foods and other goodies at Hadspen Village Hall on Saturday 22 Nov.

The Hall looked very festive, decked out with a Christmas Tree with Jean's quilts on the walls. Willie decorated himself making a slim Father Christmas directing traffic which got quite complicated at times.

It was great fun for all those who were shopping and for those who were selling, but most importantly it raised over £1,000 for **MOTIVATION**.

# **CHRISTMAS PARTY**



**Bar**

**Raffle**

**Tombola**

**Carol Singing**

**First Drink Free**

**Super Hot Supper**

**7 o'clock for 7.30pm**

**Hadspen Village Hall**

**Saturday 13 December**



**Tickets £9.00**

**Peter Wyatt 01963-350222**

**Ken Chamberlain 01963-350616**

**Willie Constantine 01749-813103**

***\*No stiletto heels, please\****

## **HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS**

On one of my river walks I met Tom Spratling who was busy laying scalplings to help improve a waterlogged access to one of his fields, a remarkable man well into his eighties and still doing an honest days work. We started chatting about the river Pitt and he recalled his time as a boy playing in the river at the spot of a long gone mill and he also said "there used to be a road across this field before the building of the railway" and sure enough if one looked closely, the grass in a section of the field running from the railway embankment to the river was a different colour and was probably where the old road ran. Thus my interest in the history of our local roads was born.

So where did it all start? Although there is no clear local evidence I can imagine early man residing in our valley and creating the first trackways formed from the natural ground. (on the Somerset Levels a 6000 year old wooden trackway has been discovered). Generally communities were self sufficient and road systems tended to be local with little interlinking between the communities, and although wheeled traffic ( eg Boudicca's chariots) was well established it was not until the Roman invasion that a need for greater linking was required. The Romans continued to use the local trackways but also built their own road network for military purposes, being well constructed with graded layers of stone almost 3 feet in depth!

With the decline of the Roman empire, longer distance movement and transportation reverted to riders and packhorses, wheeled traffic was mostly local, and with no one to maintain it the road network built by the Romans collapsed. The Normans made limited attempts to repair roads and make them safer for users and during the Medieval period long distance movement of goods was generally by sea and rivers.

Parishes first became responsible for the upkeep of local roads around the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The only funding available being the use of Statute Labour, parishioners were obliged by law to give 6 days service each year in the repairing and improving of roads and bridges. With such limited resources, repairs were basic and disorganised. It was not until the growth in wheeled traffic in the

17<sup>th</sup> century caused by the introduction of the springless carriage that greater attention to road construction and road repair was needed. Clearly more funding was required and thus the first charge system by use was devised, the Turnpike road and tolls. The first Turnpike Act being for a section of the Great north Road in 1663.

Unfortunately it did little to help support the parishes. The Turnpike Trusts although permitted by law to collect the tolls had no responsibility at law to carry out any repairs nor account for any monies raised and in any event had absolutely no technical ability to do the work, so things were a bit chaotic but surprisingly some improvements were made. One of the major turning points in the governments approach came as a result of the failure to maintain the roads built by General Wade in Scotland after the Jacobite rebellion resulting in the English army getting stuck in the mire when trying to stop Bonnie Prince Charlie's advance. They determined that Turnpike Trusts were the best way forward without the use of government funds.

The first Turnpike roads in our parish were established in 1756 with the creation of the Bruton Turnpike Trust and in the next edition of the Pitcombe News I will give more detail regarding the Trust and it's involvement in the history of our local roads.

*David Jury*

Wealth I seek not, hope nor love,  
Nor a friend to know me:  
All I seek, the heaven above  
And the road below me.  
*The Vagabond*  
*R L Stevenson*

They shut the road through the woods  
Seventy years ago.  
WeAther and rain have undone it again,  
And now you would never know  
There was once a road through the woods.  
*Rewards and Fairies, The Way th rough the Woods*  
*Rudyard Kipling*

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH**

It's that time of year when a small number of people, mostly those with criminal tendencies, think that the rest of us can be easily hoodwinked. Why else would they try the same scams year after year?

No one in the parish would be taken in by any of their schemes but in case you have a vulnerable friend or two, do remind them to beware of a note left about a parcel requiring a call to a 900 number before delivery. That is a premium number, it costs a lot of money and there is not a parcel anyway.

They should also be aware of people calling to repair TV sets, offering goods for sale, (cheaply of course) etc. The aim is to gain entry to the house and the pocket. Identities should always be checked against the card reputable workmen carry. Various such scams are operating in the Castle Cary area at present so everyone should be aware. In addition, PCSO Tim Russell reports that there have been a few incidents of vandalism in both Castle Cary and Bruton recently.

Finally, do not ruin your Christmas by losing parcels from your car. Keep them hidden from temptation, always keep the windows closed and your car locked even outside your front door. And if you have a SATNAV device on the dashboard, or any other expensive toy for that matter, remove it, — before someone else removes it for you.

*Happy Christmas*

*Susan Chamberlain*

*Neighbour Watch Co-ordinator,*

*Hadspen*



"I think the one lesson I have learned is that there is no substitute for paying attention."

*Diane Sawyer, US television presenter*



## **COMPUTER BYTES**

**View Hidden Menu Options:** When Word 2003 is first installed, only part of each menu is displayed; to see the hidden commands on any menu, you have to expand it by clicking the chevrons at the bottom. To reveal the full menus, open the TOOLS menu and click CUSTOMISE, then in the CUSTOMISE dialogue box, select the OPTIONS tab. Tick the 'ALWAYS SHOW FULL MENUS' box and then click Close. This tip does not apply to Word 2007, because its new ribbon organises menu options more efficiently.

**Add items to your toolbar:** The Office (Word) 2007 ribbon may change all the time, but the Quick Access Toolbar does not. This toolbar is also visible if the main Ribbon has been hidden to save screen space. To speed up your work in Microsoft Office, you can add items you use frequently to this toolbar at the top of the screen. Right-click on the item, such as Spell Check, and select ADD TO QUICK ACCESS TOOLBAR. An icon will appear on the toolbar at the top of the page and you can click it to perform your chosen task. To remove them again, right-click on the icon in the toolbar and click REMOVE FROM QUICK ACCESS TOOLBAR. If you wish to add lots of icons to the Quick Access Toolbar, select CUSTOMISE QUICK ACCESS TOOLBAR from the menu instead.

### **Useful Websites:**

[www.kitchenclearout.co.uk](http://www.kitchenclearout.co.uk) Sells end of line stock at a huge discount to high street prices. It claims to have £500,000 of stock to sell every month.

[www.myvoucher codes.co.uk](http://www.myvoucher codes.co.uk) One of a new breed of website that has proliferated in the credit crunch. Retailers send out online discount-voucher codes to beat high street offers, rather than staging general sales. Discounts are often short-lived, so it's worth checking regularly!

*Maria Samuel ([woodcott13@btinternet.com](mailto:woodcott13@btinternet.com))*

## St. Leonard's Church



### Services for December 2008

7 December 9.30 am	Morning Prayer The Rector 2nd Sunday after Advent	Isaiah 40:1-11 Mark 1:1-8	Peter Wyatt Jenny Elliott
14 December 11.0 am	Holy Communion The Rector 2nd Sunday after Advent	Thessalonians 5: 16 -24 John 1:6-8 & 19-28	Ken Elliott TBA
21 December 6.30 pm	<b>CAROL SERVICE</b>	Service sheet	
25 December Christmas Day 9.30 am	Holy Communion The Rector	TBA	Charles Brook  Clergy
28 December	<b>NO SERVICE</b>		

### Services for January 2008

(readings and readers to be notified)

4 January	09.30 am	Morning Prayer
11 January	11.00 am	Holy Communion
18 January	09.30 am	Morning Prayer Cluster Service
25 January	11.0 am	Holy Communion

## **CHURCHWARDEN'S NOTES**

We approach Christmas with caution, especially in this stricter financial climate. Are the good times gone? No. We just need to re-evaluate our basic human principles and needs. We have not been forgotten, even though we may have forgotten GOD.

The birth of a new baby is always a special event. Think of the joy of parents at their new arrival; of smiles of family and friends; of flowers, cards and presents that crowd the home. What cause for celebration!

But the birth of Jesus was a birth like none other before or since, and what a cause for celebration like no other. For the New Testament tells us that Jesus was not like any other human being; nor was he simply a 'chosen one'; rather he was the Son of God, the one who had been with the Father right at the beginning, but who came into this world – not pretending to be a man, nor a sort of half-god, half-man – but as a real human being, as fully human as us. The conviction of the early church was that when you were looking at Jesus you were looking at no one less than God himself!

At this season of Christmas, we remember once again that the one who has come to us is no mere prophet or holy man; he is none less than God incarnate – God with us. Let us thank Him that such was his love for us that He did not send another, but came Himself.

'For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form'  
*Colossians 2:9*

Our Annual Carol Service is on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December at 6.30pm. Please come and bring our family and friends, and stay for a glass of refreshment and a mince pie or two.

Christmas Day Service is at 9.30am – ALL are welcome, especially any children in the parish.

Have a peaceful Christmas with you family and friends  
*Wendy Crane*

## **A CHRISTMAS PAST**

At the back of the safe in St. Leonard's was found what appears to be one of the first Pitcombe Parish magazines.

Pasted into a notebook inscribed in gold lettering, Newspaper Cuttings are printed copies of the Pitcombe and Wyke Parish Magazine. The first is dated September 1914 when Rev Francis Peter Syngge became Vicar of the two parishes. By way of introducing himself he wrote that he "was born in Ireland of a very clerical family", spent most of his childhood in Switzerland, took a degree at Cambridge and had spent nearly all the twenty one years of his clerical life in English country parishes. Introducing his wife, he writes "although I love the country, I should not like to live in it alone. I need hardly introduce Mrs Syngge, for she comes from a family well known to you all, some of her ancestors on her Mother's side having been Hobhouses of Hadspen."

### **"Christmas 1914**

The Festival was observed under difficulties, amid battle scenes, inclement weather and illness. At Pitcombe and Wyke Churches, the decorations were very pretty and we thank the large band of helpers who gave and arranged the flowers and evergreens. The congregations were diminished at Pitcombe by rain and dangerously slippery roads, which made it a matter of some risk to go to Church, and there were many broken bones throughout the country. At the time of the Wyke services, the weather was better, and by evening the roads had thawed, so congregations were better there. Let us hope those who did venture will have the reward of a closer love and intercourse with Him Who was born on that day so long ago, but Who lives now, and meets those who gather together in His Name".

On Christmas Day, the Church collections, in aid of the Poor, amounted to £1 8s 4d at Pitcombe and 10s 10p at Wyke. (Which everyone over 40 knows is £1.42p and 55p). If anyone can work out how much that would be worth today, let me know.

And just to cheer you all up, 7.46 inches of rain fell in 26 days in December 1914.

*Two Fine Fellows*  
*present*

***A CHRISTMAS CAROL***

*by*  
*Charles Dickens*

starring  
*Christopher Kelham*  
BBC Carleton Hobbs Award Winner

In a unique one man adaption suitable for adults,  
teenagers and older primary school children

*The Hobhouse Theatre*  
*Bruton School for Girls,*  
*Sunny Hill*

**Saturday 20 December at 7.30 pm**  
Doors open at 7.00 pm

Tickets from Bruton Pharmacy or call 01749 812 281  
Adults £8.50 Concessions £8.00, family of four £26.00  
(price includes a glass of mulled wine or a soft drink and  
a mince pie)

Proceeds in aid of Joybells

## **HADSPEN & SHEPTON MONTAGUE WI**

November's meeting was held at the new Hadspen Village Hall at 2.30pm. The President went through the business of day before introducing the guest speaker Eileen Hurd, the County Representative of Associated Country Women of the World. Known universally as ACWW, it is the world's largest organisation for rural women with 9 million members in more than 70 countries.

She gave a brief history of the organisation, Madge Watt was the founder of WI and joint-founder of ACWW in Canada in 1897. She came to the UK in 1913 and attempted to start WI but found little interest. Eventually she started her first Institute in Wales and gradually established 350 more. In 1921 she formed ACWW International and acted as president from 1933 to 1947. Hence the close link between WI and the ACWW.

ACWW reaches out to women all over the world and aims to help make life easier by funding projects which directly affect women. Since 2005 Somerset has funded water projects in both Kenya and Uganda and has also helped fund a disabled infants school as well as a vanilla farming project, again in Uganda. Two more projects have also been funded in India. Many of the projects involve the provision of clean, fresh drinking water as carrying water is considered to be 'womens work' in these countries.

Funds are raised through fees paid by member organisations and individuals and WI organise special events such as coffee mornings, lunches..There is a 'Pennies for Friendship' scheme where members put their loose change in a special tin at their monthly meetings.

Eileen also gave an amusing account of her visit to the ACWW International Conference in Finland which over 600 women attended from all over the world. The Conference lasted for ten days and is held every three years in different countries.

WI meetings are held on the second Monday in every month and ad guests and new members are always welcome. Please ring Sylvia Reed on 01749 812768 if you are interested – she would love to hear from you! ACW

## **When Things Go Wrong.....!**

I can't remember the last time, if ever, that I have had to claim on my car insurance.....until the last two months.....when I have had to do it three times! To make matters worse, the fastest I was going on all three occasions, was 2 mph!

Firstly, I was parked outside mother's house, when a noise told us that someone had reversed from the houses opposite into my truck – result – new wing needed.

Secondly, and this was the one in which I was reversing at speed (2 mph) out of my own drive – double checked – clear to go, except that a car had pulled up on the wrong side of the road, right behind me – result – heated argument.

Last week, driving home up Honeywick Hill, I pulled into one of the well worn sections in the side as I saw headlights coming down – by the time I realised that 12ft into 10 ft didn't go, I was hemmed tightly in by a Belgian milk tanker heading for Wyke – squeezing out of my car and clambering over the lorry's wheels, I headed for the driver – French and speaking no English. You may be surprised to learn that the basic French I remembered did not include any of the phrases I wished to pass on to the driver!!!

Did I mention that when I pulled over on Honeywick, I pulled my handbrake on – it came on more than usual, in fact it kept coming and coming – one snapped cable and no brake!

After a period of arm waving and various other gestures, les plonker decided he could get through – by this time my rear wing was scratched and the rear light was hanging on by the wires. Les plonker took the hint that I was none too pleased so stopped again.

Shortly, I think I met one of our new Hadspen residents who had joined the queue – fortunately – and I thank him – his French was far superior to mine, and as I was losing the will to live, I decided to cut my losses and try and move myself – which I did!

Bearing in mind that I had reversed into a skip two weeks previously, the truck and my temper were not in good spirits.

So I was thrilled last week when I parked with mother in the disabled bay (marked disabled!!) outside Marks and Sparks in Yeovil – blue badge correctly displayed – and I came out to find a parking ticket on the windscreen! My search up and down the street could not find the offending officer for an explanation, so I have filled in the appropriate bit to attend a court hearing, and await details with interest.

So if you see me and the poor blue truck in the valley – please don't be upset if I am not smiling.....! Happy Christmas.  
*Sue Smith*



## THANK YOU

Our thanks are due to Pitcombe Parochial Council, the Friends of St. Leonard's and the Trustees of Hadspen Village Hall for their extremely generous donations this month. We are both pleased and delighted to be supported so strongly by these three bastions of the parish.

Our thanks are due also to the following readers who have also donated to the PITCOMBE NEWS recently

Kathleen Appery  
John Clothier  
Tina Harley

John Burroughs  
Susan Duncan  
Brian Tipping

Donations keep the magazine going. Our needs are simple, As everyone volunteers their services, our only costs are for printing. If you enjoy the magazine and find it useful and would like to make a donation, please send one to me at Orchard Stables, Higher Hadspen, Castle Cary, BA7 7LX or leave one in the mail box at the front door next time you are passing. Cheques should be made payable to the **PITCOMBE NEWS**. Many thanks.  
*Susan Chamberlain*



## CELEBRATING OUR TENTH ANNIVERSARY

Jubilee Hall, Batcombe

Doors open 7.15pm - Screening 7.45pm

PLEASE NOTE WE HAVE TWO EVENTS IN JANUARY

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2009

### ***WATER***

(dir. Deepa Mehta – 2005 – 117 mins – Cert. 12A)

Set in the holy Hindu city of Varanasi in 1938, *Water* tells the story of a group of widows (some only children) living in the House of Widows presided over by the venal Madhumati. Under Hindu tradition the widows are expected to survive in poverty and pay penance for the deaths of their husbands but Kalyani, Shakuntal and eight year old Chuya challenge their fate. When Kalyani attracts the attention of an enlightened lawyer who follows Gandhi, there are consequences for them all.

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January - Members' Choice

### ***TWO DAYS IN PARIS***

(dir. Julie Delpy – 2007 – 96 mins – Cert. 15)

French photographer Marion and American interior designer Jack have just had an unsatisfactory romantic break in Venice and arrive in Paris to stay with Marion's parents before returning to their New York home. Jack is not only meeting them for the first time but also has to deal with Marion's former boyfriends . . . A witty, off-beat and funny film which pokes fun at both America and France.

**Licensed bar - Soft refreshments**

**Free parking - Wheelchair access - Hearing loop**

**For more on our films/special events: ELIZABETH HUNT**

01749 850 304 or [ehunt@mbzonline.net](mailto:ehunt@mbzonline.net)

**For membership enquiries: ROB SAGE 01748 850 934**

[robsage@uwclub.co.uk](mailto:robsage@uwclub.co.uk)



WELCOME TO THE 2008-2009 SEASON  
& OUR TENTH ANNIVERSARY

Jubilee Hall, Batcombe

Doors open 7.15pm - Screening 7.45pm

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December

*Join us for a complimentary glass of mulled wine  
and mince pie!*

## ***SON OF RAMBOW***

(dir. Garth Jennings)      2008 / 95 mins / 12A

It's 1982 and two school boys, Plymouth Brethren raised Will and rebellious Lee, develop an unlikely friendship as they attempt to win the BBC Screen Test competition by recreating the exploits of Sylvester Stallone. However, the arrival of a French exchange party threatens to upstage them ... Some slapstick humour in this jolly, good-hearted film (and look out for a cameo role from Eric Sykes).

Licensed bar - Soft refreshments

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