

Pitcombe News



June 2009

The *PITCOMBE NEWS* welcomes contributions
from its readers

Articles for publication should be sent to the
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keep up to date
www.pitcombepc.org.uk
THE PITCOMBE WEB SITE
for details of the Parish Council, Minutes etc.
details and bookings of Hadspen Village Hall
and at the moment,
photographs of the plant sale

**The DEADLINE for the July/August issue is
Friday June 19**

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

PITCOMBE NEWS

Mike Beech was elected as the new Chairman of Pitcombe Parish Council following the resignation of Mike Taylor at the annual PPC meeting in May. As a result there is a vacancy for a Parish Councillor. On page 15 you will find a form explaining the procedures that are followed, please note that the closing date is 12 June. If you want to know anything further then contact Mike Beech (01749 812 335.) And welcome to our new Parish Clerk, Rosie Morgan of Penselwood. Overleaf is a list of councillors and their portfolios.

The next issue of the Pitcombe News will be a combined July/Aug edition. If you have any dates for August then please let me know by the deadline. As soon as it is out, we're all running away even if it is only to the bottom of the garden.

From the 'now' to the 'then', with Alan Billeness as he remembers life in Pitcombe as an eight year old evacuee. Page 12.

George Bunting turned up treasure when he first moved in to Pridles Hill House, both indoors and out. See page 4.

Carol Wyatt spent a fascinating afternoon at the last WI meeting. It's not all Jerusalem and jam, it's pandas too, page 8.

Summer can not be complete without asparagus (and Maria has a recipe on page 7), strawberries and cream and, this year, Croquet at Hadspen House. Sadly, it was rained out last year, but it is such a fun afternoon and you don't need to know anything about it to play. Perfect for me. See inside the back cover for the details.

Voting day is Thursday 4 June. Hadspen Village Hall will be open from 7.0 am until 10 pm. Politicians may not be the flavour of the month, or even of the year, but we all should use our vote.

Right, I'm off to smell the roses.
Susan Chamberlain



PITCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Following the resignation of Mike Taylor from the Pitcombe Parish Council at the meeting on, Mike Beech was elected Chairman. The portfolio holders are as follows:-

Mike Beech - Chairman 01749 812335
Police Liaison
mike@mbeech.wanadoo.co.uk

Jenny Elliott - Vice Chairman 01963 350999
Environment, Primary Healthcare
kenelliott1@tiscali.co.uk

Camilla Carter 01963 351106
Parish Footpaths
cchoneywick@hotmail.co.uk

Neville Hartnell 01749 812996
Finance
hartnellneville2@aol.com

David Jury 01749812149
Highways
david@pitcombe.org

Ann Whittaker 01963 359222
Parish Tidiness - recycling, litter, grass cutting
aawhittak@waitrose.com

Martin Jennings, Tree Warden 01749-812397

Rosie Morgan - Parish Clerk
pitcombeclerk@trezemper.freemove.co.uk

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE
PITCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL
WILL BE HELD ON
TUESDAY 9 JUNE AT 7.30 PM
IN HADSPEN VILLAGE HALL

HADSPEN VILLAGE HALL

I am pleased to report that the plant sale was a huge success raising more money for our funds than ever before. Due to family commitments I was unable to help setting up on Friday afternoon and so am most grateful to all those who did the fetching and carrying, erecting the gazebo and putting out the tables and chairs that afternoon.

Saturday dawned bright and everyone played their part to make it a rewarding day. Of course the event would not be possible without all those who propagate and grow the plants especially for this sale, most of whom are in attendance to sell and advise customers on their choice of plant, advice which I know is much appreciated by everyone attending. We are most grateful to them and really appreciate all the work and effort they put in.

Sincere thanks also to the Catering Committee for providing refreshments and to those who gave cakes for sale, the car park organisers, wheelbarrow pushers, entrance fee and raffle ticket sellers and to those who cleared up afterwards, and most of all to Sue Chamberlain who organises the whole event and finally, to all those who supported us.

On a more mundane subject, we have now had the meeting to discuss the defects to the hall and car park. Jim Linden had prepared a very comprehensive list of defects down to the smallest screw! Mike Priddle, our contract manager and three members of R B Snook's team were in attendance and everything was discussed in detail.

Most of the problems are small matters, but outside some of the rendering needs replacing, paving slabs will be laid along the wall at the kitchen end (instead of the pallets which are there at present) and some filling in will be done at the bottom of the car park. The over riding problem is that the water at the entrance cannot get away but simply goes into a soakaway ditch along the lane. We are endeavouring to get the Highways Authority to route this ditch into the main road drain which should help considerably.
Peter Wyatt, Chairman Trustees

HIDDEN TREASURE

There was only the one, a wooden soldier carved out of a bit of old stick and with faded red paint daubed on to suggest a uniform. I found him under the floorboards, soon after moving into Priddles Hill House and whilst making a minor repair. Was he the sole survivor of a wooden army, fashioned by an indulgent parent, or was he always alone and, if so, how did a child play with a single warrior? We'll never know.

As we worked in the house other little oddments came to light, a few coins from seven different reigns, George III, Victoria, Edward VII, George V, Edward VIII, George VI and Elizabeth II. Two rather battered medallions turned up, both coronation souvenirs, George V and Mary and Edward VII. Shades of empire there. I also found a single musket ball. Hard to imagine a musket being fired in Hadspen, maybe it was collected by a Napoleonic war veteran.

The garden too, when Mabs turned her attention to it, yielded its own hoard. A few yards from the kitchen door was a huge mound of earth several feet high. Its removal took an age and it turned out to be a disposal site for empty bottles. There was masses of broken glass but also dozens of perfectly preserved bottles of all shapes and sizes, none particularly old. Plain glass predominated but there were many in brown, green and blue glass and just one in red. A number bore inscriptions, "Not To Be Taken" on green bottles, "Poison" on blue. Of those in plain glass some were marked "Stomach Powder" others "Eiffel Tower Lemonade" and others still with "Mandrake Embrocation". Many medicine bottles had dosage levels marked on. Lots of small phials had obviously held other medications. The whole collection gave the impression that previous occupants had been a sickly lot. The garden also gave up more coins, the remains of clay pipes and masses of broken crockery.

It wasn't until later that we made further discoveries in the house. I was working at the top of one of the attic staircases when a shower of plaster cascaded down from an adjacent wall, revealing wooden panelling. With all the plaster removed an aperture a foot or so wide appeared with a previously unknown space behind. I got a torch and, feeling a bit like Howard Carter peering into the

tomb of Tutankhamen I pushed my head and shoulders in. Quite a large area but alas, no golden casket, not even a chest of sovereigns. But there was a baby's highchair, Victorian, a dilapidated bagatelle board with most of its pins missing, a long row of glass preserving jars and an old suitcase— empty. Nothing more, just the mummified remains of sundry rats, mice and birds.

Our last, and best discovery was in the dining room. Incongruous and hideous was a 1950's tiled surround. With much labour I took it out. Behind it was a Victorian fire basket with a metal surround. It didn't go well with the much older panelled dado in the room, so it too, I took out. Revealed was the original stone open fireplace. The huge arched lintel was cracked so I had a steel bar set deep in the stone restoring its shape. The result is really pleasing. I wonder, sometimes what future occupants may find of us. Perhaps I should put together a small time capsule and hide it in a secret place.

George Bunting



**PITCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL HAS A SMALL
AMOUNT OF MONEY AVAILABLE
TO FUND COMMUNITY PROJECTS**

**IF YOU HAVE ONE IN MIND, OR ARE THINKING
OF ONE,
CONTACT THE CHAIRMAN, MIKE BEECH
FOR FURTHER DETAILS**

fifth annual hadspen plant sale

It could not have been a better day, sunny, warm, just perfect for a plant sale. So perfect, in fact, that Jenny Elliot opened the doors at 9.45 and welcomed in the early birds.

And from then until 11.30 it was non stop. There was not time to turn around except to pick up more plants from behind to replace those that were selling so fast. By 12.30 we were almost ready to go home.

Inside and outside, under the gazebo, it was the same. It was a very successful day with just about £2,000 raised for the Hall. But it didn't just happen, it was the result of the hard work of a lot of people.

Firstly, the main growers and sellers, Kathleen Apperty, Camilla Carter, Biddy Coghill Smith, Wendy Crane, Tina Harley, and Erica Holt, who raised most, and sold virtually all, the flowering plants and Roy Wheadon who raised the vegetable plants which he, with his two sons Nigel and Stephen sold, on the day. It was a lot of propagation and sowing of seeds months ahead of time. I cannot think how many plants were sold, it was mind boggling ... really.

One of the reasons the sale is a fixture on many calendars now, is because the morning is so enjoyable. Carole Wyatt and the Catering Committee provide delicious cakes and drinks at the cafe at the far end: the Trustees of the hall are outside to help people park their cars to avoid complete gridlock at the junction: Kevin and Daniel Spratling, ready to help with the wheelbarrows: Maria Samuel, selling the raffle tickets (and we had some very good prizes donated this year) all contribute to creating a wonderful friendly atmosphere which is noticed and commented on and makes so many people want to back again. And , of course, it showcases the Village Hall which helps with rental income.

We found that visitors came from as far away as Glastonbury and Cerne Abbas. They knew of the sale because so many of you were kind enough to give invitation cards to friends in garden clubs, discussion groups, exercise classes, bridge groups and so on. In fact, bridge and gardening seem to go together, well, let's just say, it's the new peaches and cream.

A huge huge thank you to everyone for making the day so very successful.

Same time, same day, same place next year, Saturday, 8 May.

Save the day!

sec

Grilled Asparagus Platter



700 gr asparagus
extra virgin olive oil (to drizzle)
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
8 - 10 slices of Parma ham/prosciutto
A block of Parmesan (parmigiano reggiano) for slicing
Good quality balsamic vinegar (to drizzle)

Bring a large pot of salted water to the boil. Trim the asparagus and peel off the skins at the lower half of each stalk if the asparagus is old. Blanch the spears in the boiling water for 2 minutes. Drain and refresh in a bowl of iced water, then drain well, again.

Heat a griddle pan until hot. Put the asparagus in a large bowl and drizzle over a little oil and a sprinkle of salt and pepper. Toss to coat evenly. In several batches, griddle the spears for 1 - 2 minutes on each side.

Pile the griddled asparagus on a large platter and arrange the Parma ham slices around it. Shave the parmesan over the asparagus using a vegetable peeler. Finally, drizzle over some more balsamic vinegar and olive oil and serve immediately.

*Courtesy Gordon (Bleep) Ramsay (**!/*!**)*

You have until 23 June to make this recipe when the English asparagus season officially ends.

Maria Samuel

Also in season in June

Strawberries, gooseberries, outdoor rhubarb,
Cornish new potatoes and broad beans.

HADSPEN & SHEPTON MONTAGUE WI

At the end of April we had a joint meeting with the Castle Cary branch in the Community Room at Millbrook Gardens.

The speaker was Angela Pitt, a retired teacher who wanted to do something interesting in retirement so decided to spend some time in Central China working voluntarily at the Giant Panda Sanctuary. She spent two months there arriving in early autumn and leaving just before the snow. She spent a week in Beijing to get acclimatised and then took a 20 hour train journey with only one stop to the edge of the mountainous region in central China where the main Panda Sanctuary is located.

One of the contributing factors to pandas becoming an endangered species is the fact that they don't breed very well. The females are in season fleetingly and the males not very interested or quick enough when they are! In the sanctuaries they use Artificial Insemination to produce the young. Baby pandas are tiny in relation to their mothers. You can hold a newborn baby in your hand which is amazing when the mother is about 6 feet tall.

Another factor is that of the one hundred and fifty types of bamboo growing in China they only eat three varieties and eat copious amounts of them. For one meal, one panda will eat as much as a man can carry on his back, they are fed three times a day and the bamboo has to be kept wet or they don't find it palatable. They are also fed egg in milk, which they love, to help keep them in good condition.

They are actually members of the bear family but on a different line of the family tree from all other bears and there are now only approximately 1000 left in the wild. Even though they look very cute and cuddly they are aggressive wild animals and have to be treated with great respect. Volunteers are never allowed to enter an enclosure with the bears.

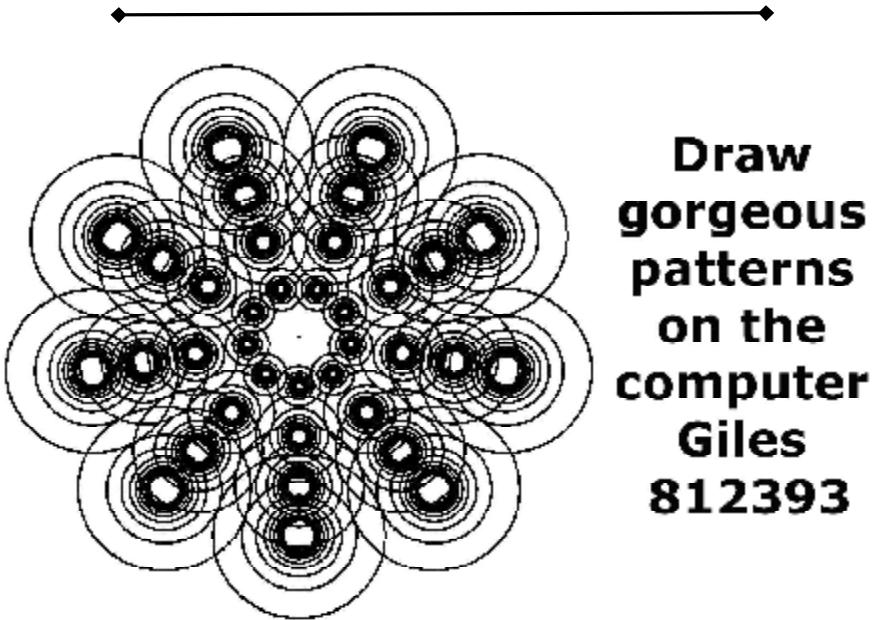
Unfortunately in the last week of her stay in China Angela was bitten by a panda. In an unthinking moment she forgot that they are essentially wild animals and tried to feed an apple in the same way you would a horse, flat on the hand. The panda grabbed her whole

hand in its mouth and she was badly bitten. However fortunately she made a good recovery but has the scars to remind her of the experience!

Angela illustrated her talk with wonderful photographs of the area, the pandas and other endangered species in the sanctuary such as snub nosed monkeys, cranes, white lipped deer, takins (related to the musk ox and sometimes referred to as a goat antelope as it has things in common with both goats and antelopes and is very aggressive!) orphaned moon bears and red pandas, (not a bear at all but the size of a large cat with whiskers and a striped tail and related to the raccoon family).

A very enjoyable meeting concluded with tea and biscuits and an invitation from our hosts to the group meeting at Caryford Hall on 28th May and to join them to play skittles at the Horsepond Inn, Castle Cary on 23rd June.

Carole Wyatt





St. Leonard's Church

Services for June 2009

7 June 9.30am	Matins BCP Trinity	Old Testament Isaiah 6 v 1 - 8 Gospel John 3 v 1 - 17	Philip Pidsley Charles Brook
14 June 11.0am	Holy Communion BCP Trinity 1	Epistle Corinthians 2 5 v 6 - 10 Gospel Mark 4 v 26 - 34	Connie Earl Clergy
21 June	CLUSTER SERVICE Wyke Champflower Trinity 2		
28 June 11.0am	Holy Communion BCP Trinity 3	Epistle Corinthians 2 8 v 7-15 Gospel Mark 5 v 21-43	Peter Wyatt Clergy

CHURCHWARDEN'S NOTES

At the annual general meeting of St Leonard's church Pitcombe, Professor Charles Brook and Mrs Wendy Crane agreed to stand again as churchwardens for the year 2009/10. After an election for the six places on the parochial church council, Mrs Biddy Coghill-Smith, Mr George Bunting, Mrs Merida Drysdale, Mr Peter Wyatt, Lady Tina Harley, and Dr David Bates were elected.

Many thanks to everyone for their help in keeping the church and surrounding areas tidy and clean, especially to Mrs Jean Constantine for maintaining the church linen in good repair, and to Harriet Reed for playing the organ each Sunday and choosing the hymns.

On 19 April we said farewell to Father Michael Brown, who left to take up a position in the Plymouth diocese. He will not be replaced with a full-time support for Father Justin, but hopefully a 'house for duty' priest will come along to give Father Justin all the support that he requires. This being the way things are in the Benefice, then 'cluster' services will remain.

We look forward to celebrating the wedding of Chris Samuel and Kathleen Clarke on Saturday 30 May. Both are serving members of the Royal Navy, stationed at Portsmouth.

The speaker on 7 June will be Michael Balfour of Bruton. His topic will be "The Medium is the Message – or is it?"

'And become useful and helpful and kind to one another, tender-hearted (compassionate, understanding, loving-hearted.) *Ephesians* 4:32

We are containers capable of being filled to overflowing with the Spirit of Jesus, who dwells in our hearts. If we understand that everywhere we go we can demonstrate His character and virtue, we will be as the Word says lights in the darkness. Jesus called US the salt of the earth Be salt today - at home, at your job, wherever you go.

May God be with you all in everything you do.
Wendy Crane

An evacuee remembers

I understand that "Old Nim" (Alan's great uncle, Nehemiah) originally came to Pitcombe from Devon to work on the railway as a plate-layer, hence the fact that all the outbuildings were constructed principally with railway sleepers. No wonder they lasted so long.

Auntie Gertie was always busy catering for us all, and produced marvellous meals from our very meagre rations. A number of tradesmen called at the house although as time went by their regularity lessened as petrol and goods became more scarce. There was the milkman, the baker who also delivered delicious sausages, the Co-op butcher, "the BP Man" who brought fizzy drinks (sadly that luxury disappeared fairly early on) and the battery man who called once a fortnight. Consequently we only had enough battery life for our radio for selected programmes like News Bulletins, Sunday Half Hour and just occasionally Tommy Handley. There was also a Mr. Pearson who owned a shop in Bruton and cycled round on a trades bike with two huge and heavy suitcases packed with tinned goods.

I'll never know how my aunt managed it (hot breakfast, hot lunch, a splendid tea and supper which was often another hot meal) with the facilities she had available - no gas, no electricity, no hot water, only the range in the living room which kept us all warm as well. She often cooked for a minimum of eight and when further family visitors came, up to thirteen (they had "sleepovers" with friends in the village!). Visitors were always welcome with or without invitation. We were always made to feel welcome, but they were not alone in the way they worked and cared for us, it was typical of the way people were in Pitcombe at the time. Laburnum Cottages provided something of a respite centre for all the family, as well as those of us who were living there all the time.

My mother joined us in 1942 when my father was called up to serve in the RAF and my Dad would spend his leave with us. Sometimes the cottages were crowded with other relatives too. How we all managed in those two small cottages is difficult to imagine. Just one small kitchen, no bathroom, just a tub in front of the fire in the next house, and furthermore, just one earth closet at the back of each house. It was quite a trek especially in the night and very cold in winter.

The idea of leaving my parents, my home and my friends in Portchester to return to the safer haven of Pitcombe, didn't go down very well with me at first. However there was an exciting taxi ride with my aunt and her new baby and of course those fizzy drinks on the table every lunch time to look forward to and arrangements had been made for a school friend, Trevor, to come with us. Pitcombe was not unknown to me, unlike many

other evacuees who stayed there. For a small boy of eight, it was something of an adventure.

My friend couldn't settle, he was very unhappy and spent a great deal of time plotting to run away, returning home after about three weeks. What proved to be the last straw was a particularly long walk with "Old Nim" which took us through masses of stinging nettles and of course, we were wearing shorts trousers! I didn't really miss Trevor at all as I was making new friends and I now had a room to myself.

However we were starting to look forward to Christmas and as all was quiet again at home I went back and there I stayed until the defeat at Dunkirk. It was good to be with my parents particularly as school was on a part time basis while air raid shelters were constructed. For quite a time I was a very busy Cub Scout and collected huge quantities of waste paper. As we returned to school on a permanent basis I began to wish for the tranquility of Pitcombe. School at Portchester was not very pleasant, in fact a bit brutal at times.

There were other compensations for a small boy though. It was quite exciting, what with barrage balloons, gun emplacements, air raid shelters and static water tanks being constructed all over the place. Of course there was a great deal of movement amongst the troops and sailors. My father was head warden in the ARP and our home had been used as a base for issuing gas masks and with the installation of a telephone, life was changing rapidly. We had not been subjected to many air raids at that stage but the effects of the war were being felt in other ways. Life at home was still happy for a nine year old boy but the focus was on other more important things and I found it distressing to see many classmates deeply affected as so many of them lost their fathers at sea. Many of the ships based in nearby Portsmouth were sunk with a terrible loss of life. Families we had known would never be the same again.

Thus as the state of the war in France was deteriorating rapidly, I was once more packed off to Pitcombe. Although I did not like leaving my parents and friends, I was better prepared for life in Pitcombe, more or less carrying on where I had left off. Returning to Pitcombe School proved to be something for which I have forever been grateful. It was the start of an education which equipped me well for the future and something I am sure I could never achieved had I remained in Portchester.

Alan Billenness



COMPUTER BYTES

Adobe Issues Reader Flaw Alert: Adobe has issued a security alert about a serious flaw in all versions of its Reader software, including both PC and APPLE. The flaw concerns Reader's execution of JAVASCRIPT, and allows attackers to run code on targeted systems or crash the application. The company has given no timeline for the release of a 'patch', but has said that it hasn't seen anyone abusing it. Concerned users can download the free Software Inspectors tool from SECUNIA, which will alert them to any updates for a number of third-party applications, including ADOBE-READER. www.secunia.com

Genealogy goes Direct: People can now trace their family history through the Directgov website. The site, which gives access to public services and information, now includes details about births, marriages, civil partnerships and deaths in England and Wales. It also explains how adopted adults can access their birth records or place their details on the Adoption Contact Register. People can get a free 'get started' pack and click on links to the National Archives and Census Information site. These provide information from 1841 to the present day. Birth, death and marriage certificates can be ordered from the General Register Office for £7.....apparently this is cheaper than some sites which can charge up to £30. www.direct.gov.uk
Maria Samuel (woodcott13@btinternet.com)



'At least my pencil never crashes!'
Author Unknown

"If everything seems under control, you're just not going fast enough. — Mario Andretti, Italian race driver"

PITCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

NOTICE OF VACANCY

1. There is a vacancy in the above Council caused by

The resignation of Cllr Mike Taylor

2. A bye-election to fill the vacancy will be held if, within 14 working days from the date below, TEN electors of the Parish give notice in writing claiming such an election to the Returning Officer.

3. The address of the Returning Officer is:

The Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil, Somerset,
BA20 2HT

4. If no such notice is given the Council will fill the vacancy by co-option.

Dated: *23/05/2009*

Signed *...R.Morgan.....*

Clerk

Address: Pen Corner, Penselwood, BA9 8LZ

FAVOURITE THINGS

Questions from Sue Smith

Responses from Jenny Mellor – Honeywick Barn, Hadspen

What are your three favourite places?

Cephalonia – 3 lovely holidays with Phillip

Donegal – "Growing Up" family holidays

Portugal – More lovely memories of times with the family

(Jenny revealed a hankering to visit St Petersburg - I suggest you go for it. SS)

What are your three favourite foods?

Eggs in any shape or form!

Crab/Lobster

Lamb

If you could invite three people to dinner (dead or alive!) who would you choose and why?

Lord Byron (1788 – 1824)

John Keats (1795 – 1821))

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792 – 1822)

I studied all three, including reading many of their works. I would love to know what they thought of life in general and how they saw people's appreciation of their work.

If you could pick just one of your favourite things, which would it be and why?

It would have to be Byron – a dashing and attractive man.

*She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.*

WHO'S FOR CROQUET?



on
Sunday 26 July 1.00 pm
at
HADSPEN HOUSE



**Make up teams of four,
invent a name for yourself
and come along
no experience necessary**

Tickets are £20 a team and will
include a glass of Pimms
or soft drink **and** a cream tea.

No charge for children under 16 but all
must be accompanied by adults. If there are enough
children, special teams will be organised

You are most welcome to bring a picnic lunch.

Each match will take about 15 minutes and
each team will play at least twice.

Tickets from Tina Harley 01749 813 262

This will be a fun afternoon run by
The Friends of St. Leonard's

Hadspen Village Hall

new class starts June 2

Stretch 'n' Flex
Tuesdays 5.00pm - 6.00pm

* Designed for **ANYONE & EVERYONE**
at **EVERY** fitness level!



* Increase **STRENGTH, BODY TONE,**
FLEXIBILITY & ENDURANCE!

* Combine **YOGA, TAI CHI & PILATES TOGETHER**
for a **GREAT FULL BODY WORKOUT!!**

* **FANTASTIC MUSIC, GREAT FUN**
& as beneficial as a strenuous gym workout!

for more info
phone Sue 07801 279074