



'Working together to improve our village'

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BULLETIN FOR MARCH 2025

Monthly litter pick total – 84 bags removed by 6 people against 119 bags by 9 people for February 2024.

We have a new litter picker – a young lady who attends Griffydam Primary has joined us to help with our woodland collections.

In Oadby and Wigston, the council is taking away 147 street litter bins and poo bins to reduce spending costs. Let's hope that doesn't happen around NWL!

Meeting 6 March – 6 present. 6 apologies

Lack of numbers at meetings – Only 4% of our membership presently attend our meetings. Numbers went down when we returned after covid closures and have never recovered. Have people stopped coming because there is no bar facility any more? Coming to meetings is essential to the future of our group. We need to know what people want to see in the village, and our group are there to listen to these things, or do you feel we won't be interested or try to do something to put into action your views? Meetings are there to give people the opportunity to put their views across. Do you have views on things? Please let us know what you think. We need to know.

Planting – Bill reported that the recycling crews were driving over the daffodils planted on the part of **Main Street** facing onto Henson's Lane because of a series of overhanging bushes on land owned by the housing department. This is the same area of land where, in 2008, on behalf of Friends of Thringstone, Bernard Lee and Ray Neal planted trees. Eventually, Bill found the right person to contact to make a complaint.

Thanks go to Anne Statham for helping tidy up **Drury Lane** a bit by cutting back overhanging bushes etc. Nita has asked if the scouts would like to take on a challenge and do a tidy up in the Spring and is waiting for a response.

Our young helper from Henson's Lane, along with his dad, has started to do work to tidy up **St Andrew's churchyard** and remove the pile of shrubby cuttings from near the fence. He has removed the bags left by our stone waller under the yew trees and some strimming of the grass has been carried out.

Great British Spring Clean with Keep Britain Tidy – as our litter pick on 22 March falls inside the period for this national event, Nita has signed us up to their campaign. Remember that we are meeting on the car park on The Green at 10.30am and all children who come along to the litter pick will be able to get free chips from Ruby's afterwards. Nita has also advertised the event on facebook with North Leicestershire Litter Wombles so hopes that there might be a good turnout.

NWLDC's Love Your Neighbourhood action week – This is taking place between 30 June and 6 July, and Nita has completed the necessary paperwork for FoT to be involved in a litter pick or to do some gardening project. She has also asked for £100 towards the cost of putting on this event. In order to do this, she had to provide a copy of our constitution, safeguarding policy, and current bank statement. Nita needs people to help with a litter pick. Can you help?

Poppy project – Sarah has talked to St Andrew's about their poppies. Nita will put details of the project into the next Bauble due to go into Community Voice in May. She is still trying to arrange to meet with the local poppy co-ordinator.



Hello Heritage – We have booked for our exhibition at the centre for 20th September. We will be concentrating on our 20th anniversary year. We are trying to link this to another Heritage event nationwide to increase the opportunities for publicity.

Publication reprints - The quotes received via Community Voice for reprinting some of our publications were not feasible, and would have taken books currently selling for £2.50 up to £7-£10. We are therefore considering letting publications disappear from print when stocks run out, which is a shame. The meeting discussed running off a few copies of publications on their own printers.

Friends of Gracedieu Priory – Two members of the group went to the council's 50th anniversary celebration at the Hilton Hotel. There was a video presentation of the work and projects completed during the last 50 years by community groups and businesses in partnership with the Council which included David Whitt's presentation video of Grace Dieu Priory. FoT did not get any invitation to this event and didn't even know it was on but other than litter picking, bulb and tree planting do not have any partnership links with the council. In addition, FOGDP has been accepted as a partner of the Charnwood Forest Geo Park. They presented the group with a sign on 11th February at 3.30pm and there was a photo shoot. Dave told us about his views of this council event.

Centre – We understand that the **music event** for 2025 will be on 2 August. Some bands have already been booked and it is hoped to make this a full family event held inside the centre not outside. The centre advertised on facebook for stall holders with a £10 cost and set up from 11am. The February Charity Coffee Morning raised £131 for Canine Partners. The **14 March coffee morning** will be in aid of Alzheimers' Society. This event will also see Me and G Boutique offering a pop up rail.

There was some discussion, again, about publicity generated by the centre focussing mainly on social media posts.

Chairs Report

Emails received/sent: Usual exchanges of information.

Promotion: We have **745 X followers**, which is 2 more than last month, and **2,330 facebook followers**, which is 88 more than last month.

Other: Nita completed and submitted the VCSE survey on behalf of our group

What's On

Please be aware that this is not an exhaustive list. Some classes and group meetings take place on a weekly or monthly basis at various venues and are not listed here. Remember there is always a coffee morning at the centre on Wednesday mornings.

St Andrew's has a coffee morning every Thursday from 10am until 11.45am with a short act of worship at 11.15am. They also offer tea/coffee at open church every 1st Sunday at 10.30am.

- 19 March - **Charles Booth Centre** – NEW CLASS – Gentle Yoga Flow Class. Starts at 10am for an hour. You will need to bring your own yoga mat and water etc. This initial class is a free taster. Afterwards, the class is £5 or £20 for a block of 4. Contact bm10333@gmail.com for further details.
- 22 March - 10.30am on The Green – **Friends of Thringstone community litter pick**. All welcome.
- 29 March – **Charles Booth Centre** – Pride in Coalville presents Ruby's drag bingo. Cash prizes and entertainment from Ruby herself. Entry £8 cash only. 7pm-10pm.
- 5 April – **Thringstone Members Club** – Easter Bingo starts at 7.30pm. Adults £12, children £6. Every adult must bring a raffle prize. This is a fundraiser for Ace Community Theatre.
- 19 April – **Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre** – Spring gift and craft fayre with ACE community theatre. 10am-3pm.
- 20 April – **Charles Booth Centre** – 2pm-6pm – family disco and karaoke. Bouncy castle, Easter hamper raffle, candy floss and pop corn sale. Bar open. £1 entry per person.
- 10 May – **Charles Booth Centre** – 1pm – 5pm - Friends of Thringstone VE day exhibition with free entry. At the same venue from 3pm-5pm upstairs will be TPADs fundraising event with songs and afternoon tea at £12 per person. You need to book for this part of the event by going onto www.ticketsource.co.uk/tpads or ringing 0333 666 3366.



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- 11 May – **Swannington Open Gardens plant and veg sale** – 11am – 1.30pm Swannington Village Hall. More info from Sue on 07914 527291
- 23-24 May – **Thringstone Members Club – Ace Community Theatre’s Murder Mystery – Death by Chocolate**. Tickets £12 to include buffet from www.ticketsource.co.uk/ace
- 11-14 June – **Charles Booth Centre – Oklahoma** - 7.30pm. Took on 0333 666 3366 or go to www.ticketsource.co.uk/tpads.

Financial

Our books will be prepared for examination at the end of March. Thanks go to Anne Statham for all her work on this.

.Gen Fund held 1st of month (bank + petty cash + float)	2514.41		
Income		Expenditure	
		Broadband	£20.00
		Bulbs	£20.00
total income received		Monthly expenditure	£40.00
		Total	£2474.41

Website

The webmaster continues to work on further updates.

Incident Report

- 8 Feb – numberplates taken from vehicle parked on **Melrose Road** whilst owner was at hospital.
- 15 Feb – Man from Henson’ Lane tragically committed suicide in Gracedieu woods and was found by local dog walkers.
- 26 Feb – Youths pulled up the waymarker to **Gracedieu Woods** situated on grass in Springfield, put this down a drain then rang someone’s front doorbell and ran off. Residents put the signage back and secured it into the ground.
- The latest police bulletin mentions regular surveillance to spot off road bikers on **Springfield, Melrose estate and The Warren**. A man, all in black, wearing a ski mask and with a back pack, riding an electric bike has been seen several times in Gracedieu Woods. He is quite an alarming figure to come across because of the ski mask.

History Report

- NWLDC has a new **history trail** in town. They have worked with Coalville Heritage Society on a series of information panels which tell the story of Coalville's ‘two fathers’. These are William Stenson, who sank Whitwick Colliery in the 1820s, and George Stephenson, who built the railway to provide easy transport of coal from the district collieries to markets in Leicester and further afield. You can follow the six panels on the trail in any order but for the best effect, start at Stenson House on London Road and follow the trail along the High Street to Memorial Square, with the last board on Belvoir Road, close to the Mother and Child statue at the entrance to the shopping centre. This project, which was funded by the government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund, is the latest phase of work to celebrate Coalville's history and bring some of its unique stories to life.
- Does anybody have any details about the **Thringstone Co-operative Women’s Guild** please. This organization was run by Mrs Brotherhood in the 1940s and 1950s, and the first mention we can find of it is dated 1947.
- Following last month’s bulletin about **William Waldram** rescuing James Springthorpe from a well and winning a medal for so doing, research has shown that at the time James, or Jimmy as he was



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known, was living with his parents in the yard at the back of **Mr Henson's cottages** in Thringstone, and that the well was nearby. It is thought that these cottages, also known as Henson's Row, ran off the top of Brook Lane near to Holly Dene although this is not certain, and the well was close to there. Jimmy's mother ran to get assistance, ending up at the home of Mr Waldram who was living in Brook Terrace. He had been ill in bed for 3 weeks and was only just recovering, but still came out to help. Given the location of these places, it is assumed that she ran across Charity Gough's field (where Armstrong Amusements now are). It was **Rev. Crane** of St Andrew's that recommended William to the Humane Society for the award about which we have written before. James Henson, who we think was the owner, also had properties known as The Long Row on Talbot Street, Whitwick as these were sold off in 1886 after he died. We are also aware that James Henson was selling land he owned in Gracedieu Road in 1884, and also The Star beerhouse on Main Street at that time when the tenant was John Ward. James Henson's address in 1882 was Forest House, Whitwick, but the 1881 census shows him as a retired hosier living on Gracedieu Road at the old farm house, in 1871 he was at the same property and shown as a grazier of 12 acres and 1861 his address was Turry Log. Born in Thringstone around 1817, he died on 27 April 1885. His will, of which we have a copy, does not mention any address of property he owned at all, and leaves things to his wife and children in the main.

- **Brook Terrace**, mentioned above, apparently comprised of 8 cottages bought in 1894 by James Brewin for £550 following the death of their previous owner, Edwin Ayre. We have photos of Jack Phipps who lived at Brook Terrace in 1968 and believe Brook Terrace is where the flats now stand on Gracedieu Road. If anybody knows anything different, please let us know. In addition to Brook Terrace, some census information and newspapers refer to Brook Street, as well as Brook Lane. We have no idea where Brook Street was. Do you?
- Nita has been doing a lot of extra research in to the 3 men of Thringstone called **John Biddle**, all of whom were bakers around the Gracedieu Road area. Two were related to each other (father and son) and the other was from Leicester and married into the Webb family. John Biddle Jnr. lived at one point in Hugglescote, where we now discover he was a parish constable for at least 2 years in the 1880s. John Biddle Snr. seems to have had a bakehouse close to the old Thringstone toll gate, as he is mentioned as being there in some sales documents dated 1863. He died on 15 February 1887, and his son on 10 January 1929. The other John Biddle died on 26 Jan 1940.
- Nita has been investigating **Everard Merriman**, who for many years lived at Victoria Cottage, 83 Main Street. This property, built in 1900, was owned by Mr Merriman at a time when many miners, like himself, rented. Everard had 2 sons, Arthur and Harry, the latter living on Henson's Lane until his death in 1973. Everard and his first wife Kate who died aged 39 in 1902 also had 2 daughters who died as youngsters – Hannah who was baptised as Anna in 1892 and died in 1894 and Mary Ann who died as a baby in 1900. We have discovered that in December 1906, Everard made a complaint against Mr Turner who lived in an adjacent property. There was a privy and ashpit, full to overflowing, only 12 feet from Mr Merriman's cottage door, and despite having written to Mr Turner a month earlier, the situation had not been resolved. Mr Turner apologised for having ignored the letter, but said he had received a letter from the owner of his property saying that the work had been done, but he hadn't been to check on this and acknowledged that this was an ongoing problem. We have also seen adverts from Everard Merriman selling off clematis plants from Victoria Cottage, and discovered that he was quite a gardener – in 1892 at the Whitwick Horticultural show, he won 1st prize for window plants, 2nd prize for fuchsias, 1st prize for petunias, 1st prize for coleus, 2nd prize for pansies, 1st prize for a bouquet of cut flowers, 2nd prize for a bouquet of garden flowers, 1st prize for tomatoes and 3rd prize for geraniums. In vegetables, he won 3rd prize for carrots, 2nd prize for long pod beans and 3rd prize for red celery.
- **Feb 1898 – Faith Gough**, farmer of Thringstone, met with a serious accident when returning with her pony from a drive on 19th February. It would seem that prior to the horse being released from the vehicle, its reins fell near to its heels and as Miss Gough was leaning forward to retrieve them, the horse lashed out and struck Miss Gough in the face with serious injuries to the nose and face. Dr Burkett came out immediately and found that the wounds were so serious it was necessary for



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Faith to go to the infirmary in Leicester, after initial treatment. Miss Gough was taken to Coalville in a conveyance and from there to Leicester by train. The lady was a sister, amongst others, to Mr Gough, butcher of Hotel Street, Coalville and also sister to Charity, Agnes and Hope. Reports from a week after the accident said that Miss Gough was improving but a considerable time must lapse before she will be able to get about again.

- **Nov 1910** – The body of **Joseph Bradley**, a collier of 60 years old, was found on 28 November in the snow at 6.30am. He was found by William Watts who was leaving to go to work and found the man face down in the snow by his gate. With the assistance of a Mr Robinson, the body was turned over and found to be Joseph Bradley. At the resulting inquest, Dr Burkitt said that he had been treating Mr Bradley for 12 months for valvular disease of the heart and death might have occurred at any time. A verdict of natural death was recorded.
- **Dec 1913** – **St Andrew's parish church** was bright with holly, evergreens and plants kindly sent from Gracedieu Manor and the services were of a hearty character. The total number of communicants on Christmas Day was 81. The Sunday school prizes were distributed to the children on Holy Innocents' Day (Sunday) and on New Year's Eve a watch night service was held in the church conducted by the Vicar. An interesting event on the Saturday afternoon prior to Christmas was a Christmas tree in Thringstone House for the children of the kindergarten Sunday School. Mrs C. Booth, Mrs George Booth, Mrs Shrewsbury and others were present. Miss Saunders, the superintendent, gave an address of "Good King Wenceslas" and the teachers sang the carol for the children. The Vicar, the Rev. C. Shrewsbury, distributed gifts to 61 infants from the tree and after the delighted youngsters had gone home the teachers had tea and games.
- **Nov 1914** – Private **Thomas Arthur Commons** of the Leicestershire Regiment who left Fox Terrace, Thringstone on 9 September to fight is a patient in the Western Hospital in Liverpool, having been shot in the hand. He is a cousin of Menty Commons, well known Coalville footballer and was born in 1886. It would appear that he had been in the military before the war, as the 1911 census shows to be in the 2nd Leicester regiment at that time. On 4 October 1913, he married Thringstone widow Elizabeth Ann Upton nee Griffin at St Andrew's and their son, also called Thomas Arthur, was born in last January, but died in April 1914 at 3 months. From his hospital bed, he wrote to his wife Elizabeth and told of an incident where he and his comrades had been in one position for 21 days and 23 nights in trenches and during this time they were forbidden to write home saying where they were. He had had some hard times, especially walking through a village and seeing it shelled to atoms, and the houses burnt down. People had to leave their little homes for anybody other than themselves. Furniture too was burnt, and farmers had to leave their beasts and cattle and flee for safety. He himself had sheltered in a farm house and told of how the farmer had to leave as the enemy advanced. The Germans were dead shots with their shells and artillery fire, but useless with their rifles, and 'could not hit a haystack'. He said he had been shot straight through his left hand 'that's all' and it would not be long before he was better, if the knuckle bone was not broken. Whilst in action, he was buried twice, 8 feet in the ground by the gun they called the Jack Johnson or coal box, and it had taken men quite a time to find him. He was glad to be back on English soil. On returning to the UK after the war, Thomas moved to Waterworks Road in Coalville. His wife, Elizabeth died in 1921 towards the end of the year, and after the 1921 census was taken, and he died on 20 June 1926. Elizabeth had previously had a son called Thomas James born in Talbot Lane in 1907 whilst she was married to her first husband James Upton, and with Thomas Arthur Commons she adopted a child called Phyllis May White. They had their own son, Patrick, in 1920.
- **Feb 1947** – **Snow** fell for well over 24 hours in Leicestershire at the beginning of the month, leaving 50 villages cut off. Coalville car ambulance driver, E Holmes, taking a pregnant lady from Thringstone to Market Bosworth, found the road in Ellistown completely blocked by buses embedded in a snow drift. Whilst turning back to Thringstone as safely as he could, the lady gave birth to a baby boy in the vehicle. Another Thringstone woman gave assistance, and the mother and baby were taken home to await the arrival of a doctor. Temperatures overnight did not go above 33 degrees Fahrenheit which is zero Celsius, and there was 3 degrees of frost overnight.



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- **Jan 1955-** A painting of **Jack Hurst**, from Thringstone, was amongst work exhibited at the first ever exhibition of paintings from members of Thringstone Art Club. The exhibition took place at Coalville Library. The artist, centre warden Leonard Sealey, said that the library were asking people to vote for the pictures they liked the best and whilst many of the artists whose work was being exhibited had only been painting a short time, it was hoped that people would see the benefit in taking part in something creative. Mr Sealey was also the headmaster of the local primary school, and was the only experienced artist whose work was being exhibited.
- **March 1968** – Milk was flowing across the North Street, Whitwick following a crash between a stationary Northern Dairies milk lorry and a lorry belonging to **A W Waldram**, coal merchant of Gracedieu Road, Whitwick. The two men in the cab of the coal lorry, Mr C Fern of Coalville and John Billington of Henson's Lane, Thringstone. were injured and taken to hospital. One of those injured was trapped in the crushed cab and was released with a crowbar used by neighbours after Coalville Fire Service had been alerted to come for rescue work. The milk lorry struck a pavement and then went into the front of a house causing slight damage to a wall.
- **April 1962** – A review of Wild Violets by the **Thringstone Musical Comedy Group** was very positive about the improvements made by the group since their previous performance of The Arcadians, which included improvements to the mechanical effects and the fine theatre switchboard, purchased since their previous performance, which was worth every penny spent. This was the third annual production by the new group at Thringstone, and their first modern musical. By setting such a high standard, the group which is away from the main stream and operating in a village, has won audience support, and they have full houses for the whole of the 8 day run. Whilst not a perfect performance, the reviewer suggested it came pretty close. 5 or 6 of the leading players were experienced and their lead allowed others to raise their game. The prologue and epilogue, carried out in flashback sequences, were said to be the only handicap in the production. Dropped lines by some of the younger people gave the show a poor start, but the men's chorus of 'A girl has got my heart' gave the show a lift. Tenor Eric Marriott was Paul, and Margaret Lillyman as Leisel was excellent with her dancing and singing but Norma Savage was the show stealer. Part of the production team along with Ron Smith, Norma was excellent at ad-libbing and her over the top performance as Augusta also allowed her to show her skills at slapstick, along with Roy Burton as her peasant boyfriend. John Brooks played Otto and received good results with Anne Hicken taking equal credit for the comedy. For Margaret Lillyman the production completed a spring double, as her lead in South Pacific with Coalville Operatic Society was only a few weeks ago. Kathryn Brown's movement and accent as Mademoiselle Dupres were outstanding but she wasn't able to add the years to look older than her pupils. Margaret Smith on the other hand who played Mary moved and sang delightfully and made herself look like the schoolgirl she played. Finally Eunice Brabin-Smith as headmistress was an excellent choice and you could believe she was actually the head of a finishing school. William Brooks was also excellent as Colonel Rutherford. The chorus work and dancing was of a high standard and had an excellent musical backing under the directorship of Don Hambleton and George Benniston.
- **25 June 1982** – Falklands hero, 23 year old **Robert Davies**, a leading physical training instructor, returned to his home in Thringstone to find his house festooned with flags and banners. Family from Leicestershire and Wales crowded into the home which Robert shares with his wife Patricia and her parents (Cllr and Mrs Kane). A surprise party was held at The Storey Arms, Osgathorpe. He spoke about his time on the HMS Alacrity, and the fears of the crew when they heard that war had been declared. They spent most of the time escorting the carrier battle group. His ship was the first through the Falkland Sound which he said was absolutely terrifying, and whilst they were in there, they had to sink an Argentinian ship. They were attacked by 3 Mirage jets on 1 May and 2 bombs were dropped, but luckily they both missed. The other two frigates with the Alacrity were hit, and Robert said he was glad to be home safe and sound.

Next meeting 3 April at 7pm at Charles Booth Centre. All welcome.