



Dazzling prospects

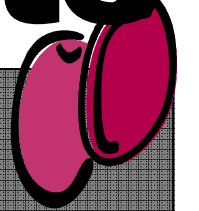
PUDDLETOWN WILL have more to celebrate this year than the Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics. We are now well on the way to taking over the library this autumn. Then we will run it by and for ourselves, entirely through the voluntary efforts of the people of our community.

When Dorset's library bosses came to talk to the management committee of the Friends in May they confirmed that the county council is to hand over the building to us in September or soon after. We will then be able to begin to extend the library's opening hours – we plan to open the place every weekday afternoon and stay open on Saturday mornings too.

'This is an enormous challenge to our community,' says Mike Chaney, the Friends' chairman, 'but it's a challenge that offers us dazzling prospects.'

Mike says the committee was heartened by the talks with the county's library bosses.

PLUM



The Newsletter of the Friends of Puddletown Library

'Our plum logo has served us well for the past four years.' writes our Newsletter editor, 'but now we are on the threshold of such grand new opportunities, the time has come for something a little more sophisticated.

'In fact the Friends need a whole new visual identity. We need a new logo and new signs to put over the door of the library telling the world that is now

Puddletown Community Library

and no longer an outpost of the county council.'

The friends therefore appeal for inventive suggestions and offer a £25 prize for the best ideas on how to present ourselves to the world. Suggestions to chaneatley@tiscali.co.uk asap.

'They seemed to bend over backwards to be helpful and even solved our immediate money worries by offering us a £2,000 start-up grant.'

Committee member Bill Maunder says he was pleased to hear that the Dorset Library Service will continue to refresh the books on our shelves.

'We were assured that the choice of books will continue as good as it is now. Sadly, though, we will no longer be able to offer DVDs or CDs or talking books off the shelf. These items will have to be ordered, in person or on line, and delivered to us from Dorchester.'

Amid all the good news, there's sadness for us too

MARILYN WHELLER, our popular and long-serving library manager will be leaving Puddletown in early September to take over as manager at Crossways. She has been a good friend to and a firm supporter of the Friends and has patiently tolerated our efforts as volunteers. We're therefore very sorry to see her go. We'll miss her but we wish her every success in her new job in a library that the county council is going to continue to fund.

If you have an e-address please send details to chaneatley@tiscali.co.uk.

Small space gives us big choices

THE DELEGATION that met the team from County Hall felt much more confident about the future of Puddletown's library after the talks.

'Now we can definitely see how we can keep the library open and at the same time develop of community centre that will be available to any community group that needs a small space,' says treasurer Stephen Buck.

'We have enough volunteers and we know that we want to extend both the opening hours and the uses of the library. With the £2,000 grant from Dorset County Council and the success of our fund-raising we are confident we can provide Puddletown and the surrounding villages with an asset to be proud of.'

His enthusiasm is echoed by management committee member Roy Bennett who says 'Even if we only produce somewhere warm and dry where people can meet for a gossip we will have achieved something of great value at a time when so many village amenities are closing down.'

Both point out that although the space in the library is limited it can be made more adaptable by making the book shelving more mobile. This would produce a meeting area ideal for small groups which find the Village Hall overwhelming.

'The library is easy to heat and with the backing of Village Hall committee we can even provide tea to go with our sympathy.'

'We have no idea yet quite what we are going to make of the place,' says Roy. 'It looks like becoming a really exciting journey of discovery.'

The story of a life in the fast lane

If you haven't got your ticket to hear a former BBC chief news correspondent tell the exciting story of her life (*Village Hall, Puddletown, 7pm for 7.30, Saturday 9 June*) you'd better get one soon as the tickets are selling fast.

Kate certainly has a tale worth telling. She made her name by her reports on the storming of the Iranian embassy by the SAS in 1980. Since then she has sent despatches from every major trouble spot in the world. She is a best-selling author and is spending the evening with us because of her deep love of books.



Kate Adie, ace reporter

Here's how you can lend a hand

Kate Adie's generous gift of her time to talk to us is a great opportunity for us. To make the most of it we need help with preparations and on the day. If you can provide food or drink please call 849073.

If you can help on the 9th call 848352 or 849146. If you have a prize for the raffle please call 848419.

Chairman Mike Chaney points out that there are still things to be done before the hand-over can take place but these, he says, are all problems for the county council, not the Friends.

'One big turn-up for us is the fact that the council's property people did not give the Village Hall notice in time of its intention to give up the library lease. This means that the council must go on paying the rent until next May, saving us several hundred pounds.'

If we are to pull off all the brave ideas listed above, we will need money. Kate Adie's visit will help our funds but we rely on subs. Yours are now due. If you haven't paid yet, send to 3 High Street DT2 8RT