

**BOROUGHBRIDGE MAYOR'S DIARY**  
**Councillor Craggs's Weekly Diary**

**10 December 2010**

I was astonished to discover that at least two people actually appear to read the "Diary" - they both asked me over the weekend why I had not written one for last week's "Gazette". When the only things to report on were three cancelled meetings and the fact that the weather was less than clement (of which most people were aware) there was little point in wasting newsprint when we are being urged to "Save the Planet" because of global warming.....quite!

Whilst on the theme of the current result of "global warming", which has resulted in the coldest and longest spell of winter weather which I can remember at this time of year, could I point out to all the many people, who are justifiably complaining about the uncleared footways and roads in the township, that the Town Council does not have either responsibility or a budget for this service, which is entirely the remit of North Yorkshire County Council. Whilst most of the main roads have been cleared, side roads and footpaths have been ignored- disregarding the quad bike and trailer which from time to time has been driven up the middle of the road in the town centre with its salt spinner turned off, when it should have been salting pavements. Now, I know I am a dinosaur but until quite recently the County Council -whether the old West Riding or the current North Yorkshire body- took snow clearing very seriously. All roads had a visit from a plough and salter, pavements were cleared either manually or by a small plough, and again were salted.

In the terrible winter of 1947, when we were all reeling from the aftermath of the 1939/45 war, roads and footpaths were quickly cleared- even Aldborough's Front Street which has always been a bus route, and which has had no treatment this time. Traders in town are frequently exhorted to clear the pavements in front of their premises, but the legal position on this is very much a "grey area" in terms of responsibility for any accident, according to the latest NYCC newspaper. I realise that "financial cutbacks" will be cited as the reason for the lack of clearing but there have been no cutbacks in the domestic and commercial "rates" we all have to contribute to County and Whitehall!

Despite the weather, most Boroughbridge shops took part last Wednesday in the traditional late night opening, and with true Yorkshire grit, a gratifying number of people turned out to see what our town has to offer- most were suitably impressed, going home replete with hot chestnuts, punch and soup and an insight into the diversity and quality of our businesses. A great effort by everyone involved (and the lights are superb, thanks to the Chamber of Trade). On Saturday Betty and I were guests of the "Hightimers" at "Jack and the Beanstalk" staged as usual at the Coronation Hall. The show was brilliant, and thanks to everyone: cast, backstage and front of house for a great evening; we even won a raffle prize! In the morning we attended St. James's Christmas Fair, where we were able to replenish our library, buy more raffle tickets and sample a particularly good "soup and sweet" lunch. One slightly jarring note was struck by Santa who, when he emerged from his grotto, turned out to possess a strong East London accent, thought by both the Mayoress and myself to be unsuitable for the location. He has promised to attend elocution lessons to learn to develop a Yorkshire accent. We are not holding our breath, John!

Finally, next Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, is "Carols on the Square" at 4 p.m. in Hall Square- another great traditional event in the town, when we all get together to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas with carols led by the High School Band and the Church choir. Whilst this is going on, the draw will be taking place for my raffle in aid of St. Michael's Hospice (the main Mayor's charity). Tickets are still on sale at many shops in the town, and we will be in the foyer at Morrisons on Saturday 11th) so if you have not already bought tickets for this very worthwhile cause, please hurry! There are some excellent prizes to be won.

Could this go in either with the Diary or (preferably) as a separate item, please?

I would like to thank members of the public, business, door-to-door and Morrisons collectors and everyone else who has given so generously to this year's Poppy Appeal in the Boroughbridge area.

Whilst there is still a considerable amount still to come from church collections and wreath sales, the interim total stands at £11,461-26 and is confidently expected to exceed £12,000-00 - another record for our generous community,. Be sure that the Royal British Legion will spend it wisely and well where it is most needed. Thank you all again.

Geoff Craggs,  
Poppy Appeal organiser, Boroughbridge Area