

## 2015 CITATIONS

### Maurice Berridge

Many folk in town are not aware of the importance, or even the existence of, some of our volunteers and the tasks that they conscientiously carry out on our behalf. We understand that Maurice has been a committed volunteer wherever he has made his home, but when he moved to Whitchurch it was this community's gain.

For many years the Town Council tried without success to find a volunteer Tree Warden. This is not a task that suits everyone. It involves walking the Town on a regular basis in all weather conditions, without reward. Following a round of publicity Maurice volunteered his time and energy to the task and has for some time been one of two local residents, who became the Whitchurch Tree Wardens. This task has a significant importance to us all as we are fortunate to live in an area where trees are abundant. It is the Borough Council's responsibility to ensure the safety of the public by identifying dead, dying or dangerous trees. They are also responsible for protecting local trees which are so essential to the appearance and character of our Town. Borough Officers consult with the Town Council on all applications to fell or carry out work to trees in our Parish, and Maurice's considered comments and photographic documentation of the trees, has been much appreciated.

Such has been Maurice's commitment to the task he has willingly attended training courses and meetings organised by the Borough Council and is soon to undertake a Whitchurch-wide tree appraisal for Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.

Maurice's voluntary work does not stop here. He was a guide at the Silk Mill for several years, and is still a loyal 'Friend of Whitchurch Silk Mill' who is often seen directing the traffic or helping out with other tasks at fund raising events.

We thank you Maurice for your continued support as a volunteer in the town.

**Brian Jackman** is someone who has quietly given many years of loyal voluntary support to the local community.

He is the Town Council's unofficial Town Hall Clock winder, stepping in to do the job when needed. Brian was instrumental in decorating the Town and the Town Hall for the first time for many years for the occasion of the Queens Golden Jubilee. He has helped with decorating the Town Hall and with "Turning on of the Christmas Lights" at the beginning of December for the past 14 years. He has also put up decorations along the streets for carnivals and other events.

In 2011 youngsters from Whitchurch Primary School requested a seat in the shade and a secure cycle stand at the Alliston Way Recreation Ground, utilising a small £250.00 grant, awarded to them by the Town Council in support of their citizenship classes. A recycled bench and cycle hoop was provided by the Town Council, but Brian enabled the project to go ahead by providing free labour. He removed the old seat, transported it for repair and reconstruction, laid concrete bases and patiently allowed the children to help him carry out the work, much to their obvious excitement.

In early 2014, when the Town seemed in imminent danger of flooding, Brian assisted by being on hand from early morning, loaning and installing security fencing to protect the sand bags delivered by the Borough Council to the Silk Mill Car park, ensuring that they were distributed to those most in need. He also provided a lorry and gave of his time to help with the distribution and delivery of sand bags late into the night.

Brian supports and sponsors Whitchurch Football Club and has been the Chairman of the Club for the past 2 years as it continues to gain success following its 1<sup>st</sup> team promotion to the premier division of the Wessex League.

Brian was for several years a trustee of the Whitchurch Association and continues to be on hand to help deal with building issues as they arise. Other groups and organisations have also benefited from Brian's building knowledge and emergency maintenance, and they have taken this opportunity to say a big "Thank you, Brian".

**John Rutledge** has been nominated for a community award for his services to the youth of Whitchurch, who for many years have benefited from John's enthusiasm and dedication to Whitchurch United Football Club or the 'Jam Boys' as they are known.

John's interest in football started as a lad and he was soon hooked on all aspects of the game. He with two other young men started Whitchurch United's boys and youth teams. Another of John's passions in his spare time was to teach youngsters the discipline of Aikido at Testbourne School. However football was the sport in which John continued to invest many of his free hours. Those early days with the boys' team led to a natural progression and growth of the youth teams to where we are today with teams ranging from the under 7's age group up to the under 18's, Whitchurch reserves, and the Whitchurch United 1<sup>st</sup> team.

John has been involved at all levels - as a player, coach, manager of the reserves, and assistant manager of the 1<sup>st</sup> team. He is so fully committed that on match days, the chances are you will find John performing tasks such as manning the gate, helping in the bar or the tea counter, in the kitchen, making announcements, cleaning the changing rooms ..... the list goes on.

As well as all his practical day to day support for Whitchurch United, John has been a committee member for 6 years, from which arose a new commitment for supporting the management of the Sports and Social Club. Without such support there was doubt about the future viability of Whitchurch United to which John has dedicated so many years.

Thank you John. Through your commitment many young men have matured into more active and responsible citizens, sharing in the spirit and friendship of a popular team sport.

**Mark and Cam Allinson, and Stephanie Coleman** have been nominated for their contribution towards the preparation of the Whitchurch Neighbourhood Plan.

Mark was a member of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee from the early stages of the Plan until November 2014. During this time he was responsible for the Community Consultation Events. These included the organisation and implementation of the well-received “vision” and “where do the houses go” presentations at the Parish Hall and other publicity events at the Town Fete and Silk Mill amongst others. He and his wife Cam and Neighbourhood Plan volunteer Stephanie Colman organised, publicised, and implemented these events ensuring that the views of the community were understood and remained forefront to the Neighbourhood Planning Process. With the help of others, Mark, Cam and Stephanie also organised the Neighbourhood Plan website and the online surveys which accompanied the consultation events. They were present at all the events, making sure that the community were well informed and also refreshed with tea and biscuits. Stephanie also made sure that the younger members of the community were kept entertained with crayons and scribbling pads and glasses of squash. Following these events they led in the efforts to accurately assess the results, and to publicise them on the website.

The long hours of work, and the dedication that all three expended, ensured that all of the events were of the utmost standard and were highly regarded by the vast majority of those that attended them.

Mark, Cam and Stephanie have all now completed their time on the Steering Committee, but their service to the Whitchurch Community has ensured that the Neighbourhood Plan will best represent the views of the local people it serves.

## Paul Driver

A while ago it transpired that the Sports and Social Club at Longmeadow was in serious trouble, running at a loss, and having no choice but to release its manager and manageress. It was heading for imminent closure. If that had happened Whitchurch United Football Club's future would also have been threatened due to the loss of the facilities.

Paul's love is football and he has been involved in all aspects of Whitchurch United Football Club for many years during which time he has worked with others to ensure there were youth teams for all age groups. Without the partnership of young men like Paul many a boy would not have had the opportunity to play team sport locally.

Being fully aware of the situation, and knowing that there was no money in the bank, Paul agreed to act on behalf of the Whitchurch United Football Club and to voluntarily take on the management of the Sports and Social Club. Paul has worked ceaselessly, turning a lost cause into an opportunity, using his very clever commercial management and accounting skills. With brave and creative thinking he has organised events which have increased footfall and viability at the Club. Now more than ever, with continued investment in improvements, the Centre caters for a wide range of age groups and family events including wedding receptions, parties and wakes.

Paul has turned the loss into profit and by careful planning has now created several part time employment opportunities. However this has not lessened his involvement. More often than not, he can be seen pulling pints, arranging and waiting at tables, welcoming visitors – the list goes on.

Paul's idea, hatched over a year ago, is now on its way to reality as planning is well under way for a "World Wide Whitchurch" event later this year when the Town will host the first of what may well become a bi-annual sporting event involving most of the Whitchurch's in the United Kingdom and one from Canada.

Thank you, Paul, for seeing through your vision to save and improve the Sports and Social Club, and for your plans for a unique community event.