It must be true

It must be true…Russ told me!

I have received the following story in from Russ about a previous Speed Watch group. He swears it is true…

Back in 2003, (the time of the Iraq war and terrorist high alert) when we last ran a speed watch in the Village, I was part of the organising committee and responsible for the radar guns we were issued with.

A Highway's chap delivered the radar guns and gave me instructions, one of which was to ensure that no one pointed a gun at any military aircraft.

At that time we did have regular flights of Hercules transports out of Lyneham practising low level flights round the edge of the escarpment. Apparently a few weeks before at a site in the middle of Wales near where fighter pilots were trained, an elderly and probably bored, speed watch volunteer casually aimed his radar gun at a fighter plane.

Military aircraft are immediately aware if they have radar locked on to them as it usually precedes a missile attack! The pilot in this case took evasive action and wheeled round to strafe the presumed terrorist.

Fortunately as he approached the location he realised that the radar source was an elderly man in a yellow jacket!

Fact Checking

Having tried to check the facts on this story I have found references about it

- A Snopes article and

- A Youtube Video

I leave it to you, but I believe you Russ!

Older Drivers after Lockdown

Gloucestershire's Older Drivers Forum

Older Drivers are one of the groups most isolated by lockdown. It is also the most at risk on Gloucestershire's roads once lockdown lifts. That is according to Gloucestershire's Older Drivers Forum. It suggests that drivers are more at risk of serious collisions as they age, due to the pressures added by the Covid-19 lockdown.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner is working alongside Gloucestershire Constabulary and Gloucestershire Older Drivers Forum as part of its commitment to Safe and Social Roads.

From Monday 16 November through to Monday 23 November 2020, there will be **free online webinars offering support to families concerned about the driving abilities of older relatives. Or for those drivers feeling like they are losing confidence behind the wheel.**

The Webinars will run be run via Zoom. Guests can register online for the three events taking place on:

- Tuesday 17 November 2020 from 6pm – 7pm
- Thursday 19 November 2020 from 6pm to 7pm
- Saturday 21 November 2020 from 12pm to 1pm.

More information from the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner

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Local Builder Required

A Stable for the Holy Family

This Christmas we want to make the Nativity Scene more of a focal point in the church as it is made up of beautiful hand-painted pottery figures. We are looking for someone with **carpentry skills and creativity**. The font is ideally placed as it is opposite the entrance. A circular wooden base about 71cm/28" would need to be fixed onto the top of the font and a stable to house the figures placed and secured on top. The tallest figure is about 38cm/15".

If anybody is interested, please could they contact me on 01453 545355. We can discuss the project in more detail.

Cherry Brown

Poppy's Day

Poppy's Day by Jayne Kirkham

I have just listened to Poppy's Day on BBC Cbeebies read by Falklands War veteran, Simon Weston. Written by our own Jayne

Kirkham it is a special story all about remembering for the young at heart!

Poppy finds out about why we wear poppies and watches a remembrance parade. The story introduces little listeners to the importance of remembering not just things, but people too.

Window Swap

Different Views from world windows during pandemic

My sister sent me an email with different views on the world which was a bit of fun. So I sent her back a picture looking out of my window describing all I could see. However just doing a bit of research on the internet and I came up with this site…

Window Swap – Open a new window somewhere in the world

This is where all the photos came from, but the site itself is fascinating. Each window is a “live” view from someone’s house, somewhere in the world. I love it! Try it….

You can also follow on Instagram but I prefer the site. It’s the background noises when people forget….

Remembrance Sunday 2020

Unlike any other

This year as 55 people of village gathered around the Stinchcombe war memorial to partake in an act of remembrance it was like no other before. Everyone was careful to maintain their “Social Distance” and most were also “Masked”. As requested by the vicar. As we all stood apart in the rain, it somehow added to the somber occasion. Even the Bugler blowing the “Last Post” for the two minutes silence from the graveyard somehow added to the mood.

About the Speedwatch Group

A personal point of view

A couple of months ago I had a chance conversation with Don, a parishioner, who lives, like me, on Taits Hill Road. We discussed the volume and speed of the traffic, both of which seemed to have increased in the past few years.

What to do?

I contacted the Parish Council and things took off from there. Kath Hudson has been extremely supportive and along with Trudy Chinn, Don, and myself we conducted traffic volume counts. There are approx 49,000 vehicles using Taits Hill Road each week. Staggering isn’t it?

The Next Step

The next step was to register us as a ***Community Speed Watch group***, which I have now done. There is an online training test, after which the local police force contact you and practical training in the ***use of equipment*** takes place.

We are now looking for **at least five other volunteers**. Training is given which consists of

- Health and safety, concerning both the public and volunteers.
- There is emphasis on data protection.
- The need to educate not enforce is paramount.
- The data, which is speed recorded above the speed limit, is fed back to the police.

It all sounds quite intimidating, in reality it's just common sense. It helped to give me a better understanding by watching YouTube videos of other speed watch groups in action, prior to the training.

So now we wait, governed by Corona virus and the availability of police officers to respond, I hope that will not be too long.

What we hope for

I was asked what we hoped to achieve. I suppose the answer has to be to save lives, educate, and hopefully create a calmer environment which is beneficial to all.

For me personally, I have always been active in the wider community, scouting, over many years, school governor, and at present ***league of friends at The Vale Hospital***. I had also just started to help with art therapy for the stroke patients when the Corona virus stopped us in our tracks.

Let’s make a difference, however small.

Ava Walker