

June 2015



Flags and Banners—St. Georges Day Hilbre Island

District Website: <http://www.westwirralscouts.org.uk>

From the new District Commissioner

I would like to start my first report for the Wirral Horn by adding my thanks to Brian for all his hard work within the District over the last two years, a role that though he was reluctant to take makes it a hard act to follow. I would also thank Tony and David for all the hard work they have put in, not just recently but over the years their knowledge and guidance is and has always been appreciated. For those of you not at the AGM I would like to thank Brian for agreeing to become our Next District Chair and to Richard for taking on the role of President and Liam and I are looking forward to working with them and all the members of West Wirral.

On the thank you can I also say thank you to Jenny Peek and Sue Walton who have stepped down from their roles as ADC and DESC respectively. Both will still be staying with us, Jenny will be still with Scouts and Sue will be returning to 7th Moreton. I am pleased to announce that Steve Arbourn has agreed to take on the role of ADC Scouts with Jenny helping. We will be advertising later this month for a new DESC.

Liam and I have been quiet busy with a visit to the Great Escape where we had 6 troops represented and despite the rain all the Scouts were loving the experiences and activities on offer. West Wirral's base even involved a pioneering project and a ducking stool.

We have visited groups and district events and Liam has taken hours of footage of what you have all been up to, I think traditional trolleys in a graveyard at night was probably the most original, well done 1st West Kirby Scouts.

I had the privilege to go and present West Wirral's Trophies at this year's Cheshire Hike we had 2 groups 1st Barnston and 4th Heswall taking part. I must admit it brought back memories of nearly 40 years ago hobbling scouts all just wanting to go home for a well earned rest. This year congratulations go to 4th Heswall who won our District Awards for junior, intermediate and seniors.

Next came our St Georges Day, I have to say I did have doubts like many Leaders which were not helped with the weather on the day before, but we struck it luck and it turned out to be a fantastic advertisement for Scouting Not just in West Wirral but across Merseyside with the press coverage we got (thank you Margaret). As with all events I have to say thanks to everyone who helped make it a great day from those that joined me on the recces to the Island, the Explorers Section for the dragon and the re-enactment of the story, all the leaders who gave the day to take all the Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and explorers, the service team who prepared the Island for our Visit, Andy Longstaff and his team the Rangers and the Coast Guard and Police who supplied emergency services.

That just leaves the AGM and my thanks go to all for the organising of this but a special thank you to Liam who put the video together, we all hoped you enjoyed this evening.

Over the coming weeks the District team are looking forward to visiting Group AGMs

We will see you there

Phill

From the Retiring District Commissioner

This last month, due to family problems, I missed the Cheshire Hike and I would like to congratulate all the young people who took on that challenge. I also missed St George's Day and I hear that it was a very successful event. So vastly different to the church parades that we have been used to. My congratulations and thanks to Phill and Liam for organising this experience, and for the changes to the District AGM which again seems to have been enjoyed despite the 'musical chairs' that went on.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for supporting me during my two years in the role of District Commissioner. It has been a pleasure and a privilege working with you. I wish Phill all the best in his new role which I am sure he will enjoy. He will do a great job and I am sure you will support him, as you did me.

As you will have gathered from the AGM you haven't got rid of me entirely as I have been given the honour of being District Chairman until they put me out to pasture.

As District Chairman I will try to attend as many Group AGMs as I can, but I decided some while ago that when I stood down as DC I would take a nice holiday which I booked before I was asked to take on this new role, so I will miss 1st Newton's, 1st Thurstaston's (the Group where I started my Scouting) and 2nd West Kirby's AGMs - I am sorry.

I wish you all happy Scouting and trust that you will continue to provide adventure and fun for the young people and for yourselves.

Thanks again for making my period as DC a pleasurable experience.

Brian



The Gilwell Neckerchief

Anyone who holds a wood badge is entitled to have a Gilwell neckerchief.

In our District Archives we have 4 good quality secondhand neckerchiefs. If anyone would like one please contact me.

Brian

648 1714

. . . from the new President

Although many of you will have been at the refreshingly updated AGM, I am aware that many others were unable to make it. Thus (to those of you who were there) please forgive me if I repeat some of the things I said on the night and also add some of the things I might have added if I had more than my allotted 120 seconds!!

Firstly, my thanks to David Cross for taking such a keen interest in the District and enhancing the role of President over the past 8 years. It is a privilege for me to take over from him and I thank Phill for giving me that opportunity.

It is precisely 34 years since I first joined a platform party at the West Wirral AGM, when I took over as DC in 1981. This fact not only makes me realise my age (!) but also realise that many of you reading this will not have been born when I was DC. However, this is a positive fact as it shows that the District continues to regenerate with successive generations stepping up to the mark. This is amply demonstrated as Phill and Liam take over the leadership of the District from Brian (who will be a tough act to follow).

I recall that on that night in May 1981, one of the things I said was that many people had congratulated me on my promotion to DC. I explained that 'promotion' was the wrong term as it is only relevant to organisations which are organised on a system of rank, in which orders are given and are expected to be obeyed. In a Voluntary Organisation such as ours, we do not have ranks, rather differing roles and leadership is provided in a more consensual way. Those on the 'top' table may have important sounding titles (such as President, Chairman, Commissioner etc) but these roles are only important in that they provide support to the really important roles in our Movement, those played by the Leaders and Assistant Leaders who, week in/week out, provide fun-packed and fulfilling programmes for our young members, enhancing their life skills and preparing them to play a constructive role in tomorrow's society. On behalf of all these young members **VERY MANY THANKS.**

May I also take this opportunity to thank our Vice-Presidents for their continued interest. They will usually have been appointed at the conclusion of a period of significant service to the District and may be expected to sit back and put their feet up. They currently number 15 and a few statistics will demonstrate their continuing involvement. For instance:-

12 V-Ps (+President) regularly take part in the Christmas Post Sort (the other 3 either live outside the District or are prevented by health problems)

Our West Wirral Christmas Post Treasurer and Area Organiser are both V-Ps

3 V-Ps (+President) are members of the Old School Lodge Committee

The Old School Lodge Booking Secretary is a V-P

The Gang Show Secretary is a V-P

The Wirral Horn Editor is a V-P

Far from putting their feet up and taking things easy, our Vice Presidents continue to serve! The smaller Annual Report did not have room to list our Vice-Presidents this year so as a reminder they are Mr P J Brown, Mr D Barrington, Mrs N Campbell, Mr D Cross, Dr R Head, Mr K Jones, Mr P G Lewis, Mrs J MacLeod, Mr N MacLeod, Mr F A Roberts, Mr G Salisbury, Mr E W Snell, Mr B H Tucker, Mrs M Tucker, Mr W A Twemlow. (*Hint - an invitation to the occasional District or Group Event might be appreciated!*) Many thanks for reading this – **KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!**

Richard Twemlow President

A pause for thought

Have you ever experienced a plumbing problem? If the answer is yes, then I am in excellent company! I probably can guarantee that your knowledge and skill are far superior to mine. I received a complaint that a cold water tap on the wash basin in the church hall was not “working” although the hot water tap was functioning perfectly. I did promise to look at the offending tap and eventually I did. I thought that I had solved it, for the valve on the supply pipe was turned to the off position. Alas no, when the valve was turned to the on position, still no water. A plumber was summoned and during his visit the tap brought forth water! He informed me that it was a jammed “wotsit” that caused the problem.

That made me realise that before we all had a water supply piped into our homes we may have had to visit the local well. The problem with sinking a well is that you have to drill a deep, dark shaft without ever seeing the bottom before you reach the pure water.

You all in your role of Scouting Leaders always deliver the “pure water” of Scouting to young people every day of every week, I know that your well will never run dry.

“May your God join you at the well and you take His message to the depth of your heart.”

“AARON”



1st Barnston Cubs on The Burton Marsh Greenway

Trail cycling is a popular activity at 1st Barnston and this month it was the turn of the Cub Scouts to head out on the trail; here is their story.

We normally go riding on the Wirral Way but this was to be our first ride out to Wales. Four Cubs and four leaders/adults all met at Heswall train station and waited for the train heading to Wrexham. Many of us were taking our bikes on the train for the first time. As the train passed Neston and headed out over the Dee Marshes we got our first look at the trail route we were to follow. The train slowed as it crossed Hawarden Bridge and stopped at Shotton where we got off. Our trail ride from Wales home was about to begin!



We had to push our bikes for a short distance to avoid the busy road but soon could ride them on the quiet lane down towards the river. At the bottom we caught our first sight of Hawarden Bridge crossing the River Dee.

On the first leg of the trail we went under the bridge and rode along the river through Wepre to the quay at Connah's Quay, where we also got to see the



Flintshire Bridge. We cycled back to the bridge and this time crossed over onto the 'English' side (but we were still in Wales!) [At this point we pick up our trail, the Burton Marsh Greenway, NCN 568, coming up from Chester along the river and heading north to Neston.



The next part of the route took us on cycle-ways through Deeside Industrial Park, crossing under the busy approach road to the Flintshire Bridge, and on to Shotwick Lake. The border was now close as we rode past the Sealand Ranges and headed out over the Burton Marsh. There is no high wall, or wire fence, or guard post at the border, just a small sign saying 'Welcome to England' and a change in the colour of the asphalt of the path. This part on the boardwalk across the marsh to Burton Point is the most picturesque of the whole route and a great place for an evening cycle ride. We next headed for

Denhall, cycling past the sheep and new born lambs on the marsh, to reach the road.

The Greenway next heads alongside the marsh to the old quay at the Harp Inn before turning to climb up through Little Neston and under the Wirral Way to emerge behind the parish church in the centre of town. We ended our ride at Neston Cross and rewarded ourselves with a chip supper while waiting for the train at the station. Our train pulled into Heswall station as the sun set and our trail cycle adventure was over.



This is a great cycle ride, almost all traffic-free, and good use can be made of the train at the beginning and end. Extensions can be made along the Wirral Way in either direction from Neston. The Burton Marsh Greenway continues south-east from Hawarden Bridge as the River Dee Path into Chester, which is a popular route with our scouts and maybe one for us to try out next time!

Check out the route map at: <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/ncn/map/route/route-568>

George, Rosie, Charles and Matthew

1st Barnston Cub Scouts

Dear All

We need your help!

The Hadlow Fields Development has been shortlisted for an Aviva Community Fund grant of £5,000 to fund the renovations of the existing shop and bunk rooms into 4 new bunk and leader rooms.

There will be 24 awards for the £5,000 we have applied and winners are selected based on receiving the most votes and then impressing the judges!

We need your votes!

Voting is open NOW until 30th May.

Can everyone please send on the link to everyone they can and ask them to support us?

Each person does have 10 votes!

Division Commissioners - can you please also forward on to your teams?

[Hadlow Fields - Aviva Community Fund Application](#)

1st Barnston Scouts on the 49th Cheshire Hike

This year's Cheshire Hike took place on the last weekend of the Easter holidays and proved once again to be one of the toughest scouting challenges. This year we entered three teams in the Intermediate section (12 ½ - 14) and one team in the Senior section (14 -16), 4 girl scouts and 4 boy scouts. The weather for the weekend was forecast to be very good, maybe even a little too hot on the Saturday.

It was an early 6.30 am start from home on the Saturday morning. The Intermediate teams headed for their start at Bickerton Primary School, just south of



1st Barnston Inter teams at the Start



Bickerton Hill, and the Seniors went to their start about 10km east at the Goodwill Hall, Faddiley. Just after 9 am the teams headed out on their routes, the Intermediates covering 26km (31km with the option route) and the Seniors 29km (34 or 39km with the option routes). This year the hikers followed routes that tracked northwards across mid-Cheshire in the general direction and area of the well-known Sandstone Trail.

This year's Intermediate route comprised 5 legs (each about 5km) in the now popular figure-of-eight pattern which means that teams complete 80% of the hike on essentially two different routes, one for odd-numbered teams and one for even-numbered teams. The Senior route was designed in a similar fashion but with 6 legs. (The option routes for each section comprised a cross-over from odd to even in one section making the additional 5km legs.)

Navigation on the Cheshire Hike is tough! You have to work with a 1:50 000 OS Landranger map so you don't have the advantage of using field boundaries and clear separation of routes at junctions. The fields and twisting lanes of the Cheshire countryside demand concentration on map reading at all times and it's very easy to make a simple mistake. Navigation was challenging right from the start, particularly on the even-numbered route of the Intermediates which our teams were following, with a tricky section on Bickerton Hill and on the lanes through Burwardsley and Peckforton. It was a challenge for many teams all-day with many walking quite a few extra kilometres and the weather was also unseasonably hot! The Seniors also had a tricky route across many fields and lanes with lots of

tricky intersections to navigate.

The Hike has a finishing cut-off time on the Saturday to ensure that no teams are walking in the dark. As the evening approached our Seniors just made it into base camp at Forest Camp, Sandiways, but our Intermediates were struggling to make their base camp at Prior's Heys having wasted time earlier in the day due to navigation errors. The Hike Marshals were strict this year and retired quite a few teams at the cut-off time; sadly this included all three of our Intermediate teams.

After a good night in camp, the next day all our teams were off again heading on routes generally northwards through Delamere towards the finish at Helsby High School, which they all successfully made without any difficulties. The Sunday routes were shorter (14km for Inters and 19km for Seniors) and navigationally much easier. Again they followed general figure-of-eight routes: 3 legs for Inters and 4 legs for Seniors, largely separated again into odd-numbered and even-numbered routes.



1st Barnston Cheshire Hikers at Helsby

By early afternoon the teams started coming down from behind Helsby Hill into the finish. Very tired and with sore feet we welcomed the end of this serious challenge and congratulated all the winning teams at the presentation on the fields at Helsby High School later in the afternoon.

Our congratulations to the winning West Wirral Junior, Intermediate and Senior teams from 4th Heswall; well done!

Maya, Oneli, Kirsten, Rosie, Thomas, James, Ben, and Joe

1st Barnston Scouts



Cheshire Hike Award presentation 2015--- to 4th Heswall

Some Cheshire Hike Observations

I have been involved in preparing teams for the hike for some years and it was an unusual Cheshire Hike this year. The navigation challenge was arguably tougher than in previous years; the event was later in the year than usual; and the weather was hotter and drier than usual. Here are some of my observations in numbers:

- Just 65 Junior teams took part with 78% completing the Hike. Normally there are about 100 Junior teams and last year over 95% completed the hike.
- With 101 teams taking part the Intermediate section was full and was the most competitive. For the first time ever the first three overall places were taken by Girl Guide teams from Cheshire Forest. Just 59% of the Intermediate teams completed the hike and the 41% that didn't was the highest non-completion figure for many years. Curiously, nearly three-quarters of those teams who were retired by the Marshalls were odd-numbered teams.
- The 83% of Senior teams who completed the route was only slightly down on average, however, there were just 35 teams taking part in this section. Normally there are over 80 Senior teams.
- The Senior+ section teams achieved 100% completion; however, only 15 teams took part, one of the smallest entries seen in a section.
- 216 teams out of a possible 400 teams entered the event this year, the lowest number for quite some years.
- Just four troops from Wirral (old West Cheshire), comprising 12 teams, took part in this year's event. There were no entries from Wallasey or Birkenhead districts and even some Cheshire districts were missing teams too.

The full results, hike pictures and video can be seen at: <http://www.cheshirescouts.org.uk/events/cheshire-hike-2015.aspx>

Quite clearly the timing of the event, possibly clashing with the approaching public examination season, saw reduced numbers in the older age sections. Hopefully this will improve next year when the event switches to the week after Easter, 2nd-3rd April 2016.

Dave Gorman, GSL & HQV

1st Barnston

Following in Bears Footsteps



Scouts celebrate St. George's day in many ways, from bag packs to parades. But this year our district of West Wirral in Merseyside organised a hike, 3 miles out into the Dee Estuary to visit Hilbre Island, an old signalling island once used by the Liverpool Docks and now a birdlife reserve.

Over **350** Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers took the walk in their stride, with groups joining in the fun using the hashtag #TheIsland on Twitter and Facebook. Supported by a huge range of volunteers; active support, group leaders and members of the newly formed network unit the young people reaffirmed their promise and took part in a range of activities on the island before taking up their flags and making their way back to the mainland closely followed by the incoming tide.

But that's only half of the adventure that #TheIsland had in store. That night I was lucky enough to join a team of 7 other intrepid Explorers and 2 leaders who headed out to the island to spend the night getting ready for the arrival of the rest of the district the next day. It's strange to see the old buildings that once used to be so important to the port of Liverpool now collecting dust but these would be our home for the night! We spent the Saturday cleaning out the old buoy masters house and making it in to a usable base to work out of, then, in the afternoon we built a structure out of pioneering poles to house the flags of the **17** groups who would be attending the next day.

As night set in and the tide surrounded us on our little island in the Dee estuary, there we found ourselves all alone. What else would 8 explorers do in a situation like this but set about exploring the island, with Jake and Rob explaining to everyone about the geology of the island, 'It's better than having your head in a book, you can experience your school work for real.' said Kieran and 'Exploring the beaches was amazing, and with the sunset it made for the perfect night'

After some fun taking photos we spent the rest of the night lit only by the log fireplace in the old Buoy Masters house. Dan who came out with us is lucky enough to be a unit member attending the Jamboree in Japan this summer and we spent most of the night talking about his upcoming adventures. It was a weird feeling, being surrounded by water on the island, with no way of leaving for the next few hours. But it was a good feeling, experiencing something new in Scouting. All explorers should get a chance to stay here some day

In the morning we donned our uniforms and prepared for the swarm of ant like young people we could see making their way out to us across the beach. Dan, our jamboree unit member took the St. George and stood at the headland waving them through.

Once everyone had arrived and had a huge picnic lunch, we cheered as Colin Ratcliffe, the GSL of one of our Scout Groups arrived in the middle of an Ultra Marathon he was running in aid of his group. He was running to every Scout Group in the district, over 30 miles and Hilbre Island was his half way point. After a brief food and water break he was on his way again across the sand. The rest of the district explorer unit then performed a display for the Beavers and Cubs, re-enacting St George and the dragon (the dragon cleverly constructed out of old tents and bamboo canes!) and the Scouts took part in games trying to act out George's life, and key moments in scouting.

Finally as the tide turned, we quickly packed up our island base and trooped back across the sand with the rest of the district.

It was a great event for all involved, a chance for the district to come together take part in our own mini island adventure.

Dan, Rob, Kieran, Jake, Jack and Daniel , West Wirral Explorers



The Activity Centre Number Club Draw

The draw has taken place and the winners are:-

MAY

1st Pat Chettenden

2nd David Hulme

3rd David Cross

4th G & M Dutton

Their cheques are in the post

Congratulations

So have you got your numbers yet?

If you don't have your numbers yet contact

Christine Kenyon

0151 677 1820

christine.kenyon@talktalk.net



HMS Raleigh Trip

Friday 30th January saw 6 scouts from 4th Heswall Sea Scouts and 4 West Wirral Explorers heading down to HMS Raleigh in Plymouth for the Royal Navy Sea Scout Swimming Gala. It was a long six and a half hour journey. Once we arrived at HMS Raleigh it was all go, we had a briefing where we discovered that people from Heswall have an accent that no one in the room seemed to understand, making explanations of who we were and where we came from very difficult.

We then marched/walked to our dorm in the Ganges block and met the people who would be our roommates for the weekend. They appeared to be quite normal people but as the night progressed it was obvious we were sharing a room with mad men. Even after the lights were turned off at half one our roommates continued their madness and when we eventually dozed off it was to the sound of loud music!

We were warned that it would be an early start in the morning. The unofficial wake-up call was a Gollum like figure sitting on top of the locker muttering "hello sleepy head" (I have already said they were mad men) The official wake-up call came at half five – it was going to be a long day! Five minutes to get dressed and outside in the freezing cold ready for the day's activities. By 11am it felt like the middle of the afternoon!

The main event - The Swimming. Waiting for the various heats to get underway gave us an opportunity to size up the opposition. Having seen how well the swimmers in our group were doing we were hopeful of some success. After a few hold ups our heats got underway. The Explorers did well in their heats proving good enough to compete in the finals. Unfortunately, although our Explorer Relay Team smashed the time and won the race by a full length ahead of their opponents, our time was not counted as we only had 3 swimmers in the team instead of having six. Note: more explorers needed next year!

I was expecting the rest of the day to be sporty activities in the drill shed but to my relief it was knot tying and other more laidback activities that I was awful at! The day finished with us watching a film "How to Train Your Dragon 2" By this time I was desperate to go to sleep, it seemed such a long time since I had seen my bed. I frightened my roommates as I had a nose bleed as I was falling

asleep, I must have made an interesting sight, with blood smeared across my face.

Sunday morning we were given the luxury of a 45 minute lie in, until 0615!! before being marched to the canteen to be served really good food, An English breakfast and vats of baked beans – Navy style!

After breakfast we needed to pack up ready to leave and to make sure that there was no mess in our dorm. Then on to the swimming finals. A very successful time was had. Tom James 2nd in freestyle, Alex Youngston 2nd in Backstroke and George Cain 3rd in breaststroke, and we came 1st in the team relay, our points scored from these results made us the Under 18 Explorer winners and we were presented with a nice salver and medals.

After showing off the salver we boarded the bus to head home. To break the long journey we made an all important food stop, stopping at the poshest service station I've ever seen (M5 North Jct 11a /12 Gloucester) no Burger Kings at this stop! Having stocked up we continued on our way. Another long journey but a much quieter one for our driver as the majority of the bus slept.

All in all an excellent weekend and a very good experience. Many thanks to Martin and Caroline for giving up their weekend to take us to Plymouth.

George Cain. West Wirral Explorer.

A note from the Editor:

This article was really intended for a much earlier edition of the newsletter but seems to have been lost somewhere in the system. My apologies to 4th Heswall & the Explorer Group for the delay.

To minimise delays or losses can I ask everyone to send their articles directly to me at ewsnell@btinternet.com and not via other members of the District.

Eddie.

Dates for your Diary

2015

June

1	7 th Moreton's AGM	
12/14	West Wirral All Section Camp	Sandiway
19	1 st Newton's AGM	
19	2 nd West Kirby's AGM	
20	1 st Thurstaston's AGM	

July

14	District Executive	DHQ	19.45
25	Amsterdam Adventure		

August

September

11	Beaver Camp	Sandiways	
24	District Executive	DHQ	19.45
25/27	Cub Camp	Queen Charlotte Wood	

October

17	Beaver Skills Day	St. Andrews
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November

14	Beaver Christmas Craft Day	St. Chads, Irby	
18	District Executive	DHQ	19.45

December

6	Beaver Carol Service & Party	St. Andrews
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Copy deadline for the next newsletter is
10th June 2015

The Editor's Bit.

Congratulations to Phill & Liam for the new look Annual General Meeting. I found the videos showing what the District had been doing during the year very interesting. The departure from the usual St. Georges Day parade was also a great success, and the account on page 11 outlines what was achieved that day on Hilbre Island.

Although the appeal deadline for votes, on page 7, for the Hadlow Field's Development may be out of date by the time you receive the newsletter, please support the project by using the facilities there.

On a personal note:

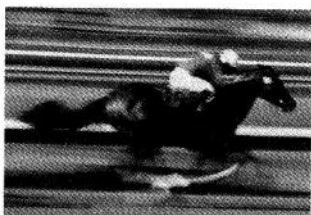
I have served West Wirral in various roles for the last 50 years so I am getting a "little old in the tooth". By the end of this year, I would like to pass on the job of editing the Wirral Horn to a younger member of the District. If you are a computer "techie" and would like to volunteer please contact Brian Tucker or Phill Richardson.

Eddie.



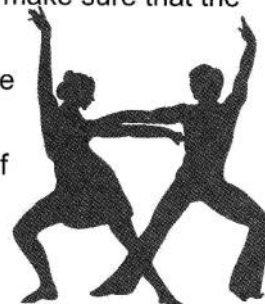
RACENIGHTSRUS

Race nights are fun, exciting and a great way to raise money for any reason. Servicing the North West of England, we aim to provide the complete race night service and will supply everything you need to make your event a great success. A well put together race night is tremendous fun for everyone especially if raising money for charity or associations.



To book a disco/karaoke call 07960 388144
or email racenightsrus@ntlworld.com

Mobile discos and Karaoke for all occasions, Music to Suit All Tastes, Fantastic Light Show and Smoke Machine, Highly Recommended. Not only do we want to make sure you & your guests have a great night, we also want to make sure that the Mobile Disco or Karaoke Disco you hire from us is worry free, and that you, and all of your guests, have a night that you will



To book a disco/karaoke call 07983 626045
or email racenightsrus@ntlworld.com