

Methodism in Irby



Original Methodist Chapel 1881-1936

This year sees 150 years of Methodism in Irby. John Burton told *Heswall Magazine*: “The primitive Methodists first met at the home of Mr and Mrs George Cooke, in 1869, when they opened their home at Irby Hill Farm to friends and neighbours to join them for worship.

“Through their faith and witness they were able to build a chapel in the stockyard across the road from the farm in 1881. This became affectionately known as the ‘Tin Chapel’. Services continued here until 1936.

“As the village grew, so did the church congregation and we moved to our present church to accommodate the larger number of worshippers.”

There will be an Anniversary Dinner on Friday 25th October and an Anniversary Service, led by former minister the Rev. Charles New on Sunday 27th October.

John continued: “On June 7th, 8th and 9th, we are holding a Flower Festival and the theme is ‘Lord for the Years’. This is a truly huge undertaking, and our thanks go to The Wirral Flower Club and Anne Williams for their enthusiasm and skill in leading us in this project. We would like the occasion to be inspiring and uplifting and to stimulate a community spirit. All are welcome to visit. The doors will open at 10am.”



Irby Hill Farm



The Pet Column

By Abbas Hussain of Principal Pets

Spring is in the Air

As the days start to warm up we all have the opportunity to open our eyes and get closer to nature. We are starting to see many signs of spring – from birdsong and bumblebees to boxing hares and bluebells.

Ponds come alive at this time of year, attracting frogs, newts and dragonflies, as well as giving wildlife a place to drink and bathe. Frogs emerge from hibernation in March and the transformation of jelly-like frogspawn to mini froglets is surely one of nature’s miracles and a great bit of drama unfolding right in front of our eyes.

Lots of wildlife will start to venture out. Ladybirds that may have sought shelter in sheds will start to appear, much to the delight of many gardeners because of their aphid diet. We can also help bumblebees and other insects by providing them with nooks and crannies for shelter and safety.

One of the great wildlife sights of the year is the carpet of bluebells that transforms woodlands into a place of magic and wonder. Daffodils may be the flower normally associated with spring, but there are plenty more to enjoy in the countryside.

As well as a time of new growth, it’s also mating season for many animals, and this can result in some bizarre behaviour. Great Crested Grebes, for example, perform an elaborate courtship display. First one bird approaches the other underwater, emerging by its side. Head shaking follows, then the birds start mirroring each other with their heads bobbing up and down. An amazing aquatic dance sees them swim together and apart before the pair rise out of the water, bellies touching, offering a gift of weeds in their beaks. This spectacular performance can be witnessed across the Wirral and Cheshire.

If March is famous for one thing, it’s boxing hares! These ‘Mad March Hares’ are in their mating season and the males seek out those females that have come into season. These fisticuffs in the fields are usually the females fighting off unwanted attention – telling a male to back off.

Warmer spring weather often leads to an increase in natural food for wild birds, so many of us might feel we can stop feeding our feathered friends. However, if they have a regular supply of food they can spend more time on courtship, singing and nest building and will need to spend less time and energy foraging, so please don’t forget to keep feeding your birds.

Why not head to Burton Mere Wetlands, run by the RSPB, where you’ll be able to discover many of the signs of spring.

Lungworm affects dog on the Wirral

A case of lungworm has been reported on the Wirral. It is more prevalent in the south, but cases have been reported across the north and now on the Wirral. Please be aware of this – especially if your dog scavenges for food, such as windfall apples. Symptoms include coughing, loss of appetite, losing weight and becoming generally unwell. Lungworm is preventable and treatable. Please see your vet for more information.



184 Telegraph Road, Heswall CH60 0AJ • Tel: 0151 342 9635
Email: info@principalpets.co.uk • Web: www.principalpets.co.uk