

# BLUNDELL'S MAGPIES RIFLE CLUB

## NEWSLETTER - MAY 2012

Dear Magpie

Even though Spring this year has (yet again) got it wrong, and we are now facing the late tail-end of Winter, I must nevertheless anticipate better weeks ahead and prime you as to our forthcoming 'season'.

Firstly, for those who may not enjoy the benefits of modern electronic wizardry, I attach a copy of the 2011 end-of-season report on Magpie activity which appeared on the OB website in the Autumn. Last year many things happened of note, but the 'bottom line', as it were, is that (as far as we know) there is no further open-range shooting activity at Blundell's, and that for the time being we Magpies must plough our furrow at Bisley and hope, as we did for so many years, that the School may one day once more come alongside.....

One event has already taken place this year: an excellent London Lunch was organized by David Bentata in March, again at the Special Forces Club. Beside David, chewers of the cud included Ben Wrey, Linda Smith, Peter Moore, George Tilley, John Batten, Tim Motion, James Postle, Mike Chandler, Diane Davey, David Condy, Alec Rainey, David Willoughby and Peter Ward. Lt Col Tim Courtenay sent his best wishes from a battlefield tour he was away leading, and hopes for a quick recovery were voiced by all to Dr Peter Jones, then currently in hospital for eye surgery. This was a very pleasing turnout, and again proved to be a most enjoyable occasion in what David has established as a series of memorable such Lunches in quietly esoteric settings.

OB Day at Blundell's will take place on June 16<sup>th</sup>; however, despite the impressive programme of events planned during the rest of this year at, or by, the School, there is no mention of any shooting: presumably, no match between the Magpies and current pupils is scheduled to occur. However, should anything change in this respect, I will liaise with Col Tim (Chevithorne Captain) and alert those who may be interested in due course.

The Public Schools' Veterans match will be shot rather earlier than usual this year (I assume owing to the looming Olympics) at **17.00 on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2012 on Bisley Century**. As per usual, the standard 'pleases':

- bring wet weather kit;
- bring your Certificate of Competence, if you have one;
- be prepared to register-keep for some other team for at least part of the shoot (extremely tedious, I know);
- arrive some time before kick-off if at all possible;
- bring a target rifle if you legally can!

Two teams have been booked, which means that the first 10 competent shooters will have a chance to perform if they wish (old age, heavy rain, dyspepsia, etc, are all perfectly acceptable excuses for not doing so), and we are likely to have some post-shoot socializing for those able to stay for an hour or two in the evening.

It may be of interest that the cost of entering a Veterans' team has risen almost exponentially during the last decade or so - from £22 in 1996 to £92 in 2012 - and we have not managed to field a full B team since 2008. If that trend continues, I think we may have to consider restricting ourselves to a single team as from 2013, as the rising cost has to be shared between the falling number of team members! The NRA will not even allow us to take away unused cartridges from the range, even though several of our number are legally qualified to retain them under their Firearms Certificates - which saves it a lot of money despite its soaring charges (that's enough moaning - Ed).

A final acknowledgement I should perhaps make is to those who have troubled to get in touch after a period of a few (or many) years of obscurity - we have recently met, or heard from, Mike Hallows, Chris Barker, Chris Laughton and Colin Krieger. Very nice to have your news, gents, and perhaps this Diamond Jubilee year may produce other contacts, be they per the grapevine, internet or other means. For the time being may I send greetings to all Magpies in whatever outpost you happen to be, and maybe look forward to seeing/hearing from you in the course of the next few months.

Yours with most studious attention to diversity, equality, and eco-awareness,

Peter G C Ward  
Bisley Captain

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