

Community News

60 years of lollipop ladies keeping school crossing's safe for children

WE'VE all been helped by one of them at some time in our lives. But what has happened to the hundreds of lollipop men and ladies who used to help us or our children get to school safely, whatever the weather?

Nottinghamshire County Council caught up with some of them recently when it held a special Diamond Jubilee event to celebrate 60 years of school crossing patrols in the county.

All of the council's current patrols, as well as those from past decades, were invited to the celebration at County Hall and the organisers are especially looking forward to welcoming some of the

county's earliest patrols from the 50s and 60s.

"School Crossing Patrols have been providing a valuable, much-needed service since 1953," said Cllr Kevin Greaves, chairman of the County Council's Transport and Highways Committee.

"Although the role of the crossing patrol has not changed too much over the years, there is certainly a lot more traffic on our roads and we still rely on these dedicated men and women to help us and our children to get to and from school safely – in all weathers, day in, day out."

And the county's newest lollipop lady Christine Curry, who started work at

Hawton Lane, Newark at the beginning of October, will be getting some helpful advice from some of the longest-serving patrols, one of whom, Elizabeth Holmes, will be presented with her 25 years long service awards.

In total, more than 60 lollipop ladies and gents were present at the event.

Among them was Audrey Hopcroft of Beeston, who worked at the crossroads on Park Street/Bramcote Road, whose lollipop was a different flavour every day.

Audrey, who retired three years ago after 25 years service as a lollipop lady, said: "It was a lovely event and it was real treat to meet so many of the other

lollipop ladies and gents. The council made sure everyone was included, and that made it extra special

for those still dedicated to making sure our children can cross the road to school safely."

Lollipop ladies and gents gather outside County Hall at the 'thank you' celebration.



Swimming Gold for 1360 Squadron

GOLD was the reward when a Stapleford swimming team from 1360 (Stapleford and Sandiacre) Squadron ATC 'swam as they'd never swam before' after being chosen to represent the South and East Midlands Wing in the Senior Girls Relay Swimming Competition at RAF Cranwell, Lincolnshire.

Cadet Warrant Officer Abbie Jones (18) was delighted but nervous once she was selected to represent the wing in the Senior Girls Relay team recently. She said: "The day arrived for me to be up bright and early, ready for the competition ahead of me. My nerves got worse as I made my way to RAF Cranwell, knowing that I would be up against other cadet wings that would have some incredible swimmers in their teams."

Abbie continued: "South and East Midlands Wing were doing superbly well in each race and we were running for second, up against the biggest rival, Trent Wing.

"When it came to the Senior Girls race, each girl stood nervously in the line they would be swimming. The whistle was blown and each individual girl dived into the water like an Olympic professional. Then it was my turn to stand on the starting block and be ready to swim like I hadn't swam before. At this point we were in first place so we knew we had to keep the speed up. It came to the last girl and it was so close against Trent Wing, they were neck and neck to the finish! Then a loud cheer filled the swimming baths – our senior girls had come first in the reply. We could barely contain our excitement and delight as we hugged each other. However, we finally got to stand on the podium with the gold medals."

CWO Jones added: "It was a fantastic day and I made so many new friends.

"There was so much tension between each wing, which helped to make the

competition between us serious. I have never swam so fast in my life; being picked for the team meant I had to win and I had to put everything I had into those two lengths.

"Realising we had finished first was such an amazing feeling. I was a part of the team that had won gold for the South and East Midlands senior girls. Now I can't wait until next year!"



Cadet Warrant Officer Abbie Jones helped to win Gold for the South & East Midlands Senior Girls.

Stapleford Community Group forms formal committee

STAPLEFORD Community Group was first set up in late 2011 by local resident Richard MacRae as a way of helping local residents find out what goes off in Stapleford and the surrounding areas.

It wasn't long before the group started to organise day trips out for people living in Stapleford as well as organising events in local pubs and community centres to support businesses in the area.

A website was set up in 2012, which offers help and advice as well as advertising local events for those with internet access. The site now attracts an average of 1000 visits each week and can be found at www.staplefordcommunitygroup.org.uk

In the summer of 2013, the Stapleford Community Group formed a committee of 12 people who live or work in Stapleford. It comprises a chairman, a secretary and two treasurers and holds a meeting every three months. A bank account was also set up to enable funds to be raised for the purpose of holding

local events for Stapleford residents. In addition, the Community Group has successfully organised two Jobs Fairs in Stapleford. A third is already being planned for March 2014.

A number of training sessions, open to all, have been organised and are held mainly at the Montrose Court Community Centre, Stapleford. These have been realised through working alongside Central College Nottingham and the WEA and other training providers.

Stapleford Community Group organises gardening and litter picks in the area and has worked alongside members from Broxtowe Borough Council. Future events include helping to tidy up the 'Top Shops' area of Stapleford by working with local shopkeepers.

The group's chairman, Richard MacRae, said: "The Stapleford Community Group enjoys to look after Stapleford. It enjoys helping others, too."

For more information, visit www.staplefordcommunitygroup.org.uk