



● HALL OVER: From left, Peter Ginnever of 21st Century Halls for England hands over a cheque for £70,202, the last piece of funding needed for the new Seavington hall, to Bob Ash, Seavington new village hall committee chairman, Carol Ashley, committee member, Gail Coleshill, chairman of South Somerset District Council, and Peter Ashley, committee treasurer.

“Everybody has been working very hard for it and pulled together. And it’s still going on – there will be tables and chairs to get”

Marmalade lady is toast of village

Report by
Julie Hemmings

MORE than 20 years’ planning came to fruition on Monday when the contractors moved in to start work on a new village hall.

Villagers in the Seavingtons can look forward to a new building, the Seavington Millennium Hall, at the beginning of next year after several years of hard fund raising.

Village organisations have been hard at work to come up with £40,000 as their contribution to the scheme, including £200 from villager Ivy Bonning.

Mrs Bonning, aged 82, has put her preserve-making skills to good use and is selling her home-made jam and marmalade around the Seavingtons.

“I’ve been selling it to my friends and I’m still making it now,” she said.

“My late husband, Hubert, was born in the village and always wanted to see a new village hall. I’m doing it for his sake.”

Mrs Bonning has lived in the Seavingtons for more than 40 years and has been making jam for a lot longer than that.

Her preserves have won prizes in the village show and she has been selling blackcurrant and plum jam and a lot of marmalade.

“It will be lovely to have a new hall,” she said.

“Everybody has been work-



● PRIZE PRESERVES: Ivy Bonning has raised £200 selling home-made marmalade for the appeal. Pictures by Len Copland.

ing very hard for it and pulled together. And it’s still going on – there will be tables and chairs to get.”

Facilities in the villages of Seavingtons St Michael and St Mary have been taking shape since 1974 when the playing field association was set up. Plans for a new hall have been under discussion for the past five years.

Cheaper

Hall committee treasurer Peter Ashley said villagers were consulted in 1992 about what they wanted.

“We had a meeting to see if we should build a new hall or refurbish the old one and in 1993 the majority voted in favour of a new hall,” he said.

“The current hall is not big enough and we’re aware that with planning restrictions and new health and safety regula-

tions we would soon have to spend a lot of money on it.”

Mr Ashley said it was cheaper to build the new hall, which will feature disabled access and facilities, an information technology connection for teleworking, and changing rooms and showers for users of the playing field.

A bequest of £3,000 from a villager got the fund raising off to a good start and South Somerset District Council and Somerset County Council chipped in £70,000.

Seavington hall was unsuccessful in two bids to the National Lottery and another to the Rural Development Commission, but the £70,202 balance was secured from 21st Century Halls for England, part of the Millennium Commission.

The hall, at the playing field on Water Street, is the first to receive an award under the programme.

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