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Editorial

By James Read and Mick Ridley

In 2014 we took time to remember how the First World War began. Just a few years before that, the young men pictured on our cover were playing weekend football and posing for a team photo in front of the church at the start of the 1910-11 season. Now in 2018 we look back to the end of that war. The names of some of those same young men would soon be engraved on the stone of the memorial that remains in our churchyard today.



Some may have volunteered, many may have been conscripted, all of them made journeys to foreign lands to serve their country. What is bravery? What is sacrifice?

Bravery involves risks – putting yourself in harm’s way – for the sake of something greater than yourself and for others. Sacrifice is when that bravery requires you to give something up. First it required them to give up home comforts and relationships; to give up their sense of wellbeing in a quiet corner of rural England. Next it required them to give up their sense of security – initially by taking orders and giving up their free will and ultimately by trying to stay standing and act in the face of bullets, shells, bayonets and worse coming in their direction. Finally, for those named in our churchyard, it required them to give up their lives.

And they did. And we will remember them.

The Bedfordshire Regiment became the new wartime “family” for several of Meppershall’s young men. Private George Rainbow died on New Year’s Eve, 1914, having been injured in the First Battle of Ypres, evacuated home and ultimately buried at St Mary’s, Meppershall. Private Harry King, son of Mr & Mrs Samuel King of Stondon Lane, died at Gallipoli on 16/8/1915 in the Battle of Kidney Hill – he is remembered in Turkey at the Helles Memorial. Private Percy Lockey fell in the First Battle of the Somme (Ancre Heights) on 14/10/1916 and is remembered on the Thiepval Memorial. Private George Wagstaff (of whom different records exist) is believed to have died on 14/2/1917 and lies at Serre Road Cemetery on the Somme. Private Edward Lincoln died of his wounds on 19/10/1917 after fighting in the First Battle of Paschendale and lies in Dozinghem Military Cemetery. Private William Cakebread, son of William and Harriet of Woodview, fell in the same battle on 30/10/1917 - he lies at Poelcapelle British Cemetery in Belgium. He was 22. Private Harry Ansell, son of Arthur and Mary, fell on 27/4/1918 in the Foret de Nieppe and lies at Merville. He was 21. Corporal Harry Brice fell on 23/8/1918 in the Second Battle of the Somme (Bapaume) and lies at Gommecourt British Cemetery.

Meppershall lads served in many other regiments. In the Oxford & Bucks Light Infantry, Private Ernest Roberts died on 19/4/1917 - he is believed to have been 19 years old and lies in the Peronne Cemetery on the Somme. At the very same age, Private Samuel Lawrence was with the Royal Fusiliers; the son of James and Martha, he died at the Battle of Havrincourt on 14/9/1918 and is remembered at the Vis en Artois Memorial in the Pas de Calais. An older man at 32, Driver William Clayton died of illness (believed to be malaria)

while serving with the Australian Engineers on 23/10/1918 and lies in the Jerusalem War Cemetery in Israel.

1917 claimed the lives of five more. Private Archibald Warne died at the age of 22 on 22/2/1917 in the Second Battle of Kut serving with the Seaforth Highlanders and is remembered on the Basra Memorial in Iraq. He was the son of Charles and Louisa of The Laurels. Private Bertrand Bland died with the Machine Gun Corps on 21/10/1917 at the First Battle of Paschendale, he lies at Etaples Military Cemetery. Private Frederick Parsons was the son of Arthur and Lydia – he died serving with the Royal Fusiliers on 17/2/1918 and lies at the Regina Trench Cemetery on the Somme. Gunner William Cheshire served with the Royal Horse Artillery & Royal Field Artillery and fell on 20/4/1917 - he lies at Feuchy Chapel British Cemetery, Wancourt. Corporal Percy Poulter of the 12th (Prince of Wales) Royal Lancers was the son of Mr & Mrs T Poulter and he died of his wounds at the age of 33 on 25/5/1917. He lies at Tincourt New British Cemetery.

Proudly serving with the Grenadier Guards, Private Algernon Roberts, son of Ephraim and Sarah Jane, fell on 25/9/1916 at Lesboeuffs, First Battle of the Somme. Private Francis Bland was serving with the Leicester Regiment when he fell at the Battle of Bazentin Ridge on 14/7/1916. He was living in Leicester when he enlisted and was the son of Annie and Harry in Meppershall. Private Roberts and Private Bland are both are remembered at Thiepval Memorial.

Finally, in a different part of the churchyard, lies Percy William Pettifar – known affectionately to his friends and his beloved wife as “Will”. Private Pettifar served in France with the Bedfordshire Regiment after enlisting in March 1916 – but after almost a year he was severely injured in the chest and arm and returned home. At that time, he received a letter from his friend William Cakebread (mentioned above) and you can see that letter in the church exhibition running from 11/11 and through the month. He passed away on 29/7/1928 at home at ‘Fairview’ in Meppershall and is not mentioned on our memorial, probably because he was alive when it was engraved. We owe our remarkable cover photo to him, to his daughter the late Ann Pettifer, to her cousin Bryan Dilley and to his son Gary Dilley who kindly shared it for the church Armistice Centenary Exhibition. Thanks Gary.

Will (Percy) is at rest in St Mary’s churchyard with his wife, Minnie Pettifar (nee Dilley) who lived until 1984. A military history enthusiast, Tim Cooper, has – by chance – been researching Will’s (Percy’s) life and service and has provided additional information and pictures for the exhibition in the church.

Please come and commemorate the end of the Great War on 11th November at the Memorial, from 10.50am, including the Service of Remembrance. The church will also be staging a unique exhibition of historical items and information which will be available throughout November. Come and remember for the sake of our yesterday – the sacrifices of a generation of young men from our village and thousands like it. Remember for the sake of today – for the sacrifices still made by those serving our nation. Remember for the sake of our tomorrow – in the hope and prayer that with wisdom, strength and peace-making, we and our future generations will truly know the secure and benevolent world which brave people have fought for – and for which they have sacrificed so much.

Letters to the Editors

Open Letter to Central Beds Council regarding development and the environment in and around Meppershall, Bedfordshire

Meppershall is a small village which is seeing the beginnings of a very large increase in development which may go on for many years and increase housing stock by over 50%, despite an overlarge increase already suffered over the previous few years in line with several other neighbouring villages.

Meppershall is, however, made unique by its lofty position affording a near 360 degrees of beautiful and, as yet, unspoiled Bedfordshire country views. Attesting to this is a file of 46 panoramic photographs available to view or download for non-commercial use here:

<https://tinyurl.com/yb667ny5>

These files are in my Dropbox account and virus free. Files are arranged anti-clockwise from the Rectory.

These views of, as yet, unspoiled English countryside are a *safe* "Amenity" available 24/7 to ALL free of charge and within a few minutes' walk of the village centre for fresh air, exercise, relaxation and a general lifting of the spirits helping to offset the physical and mental struggles of modern living for all ages. All the views are taken from a legally accessible point, the map grid positions being stated. There are no parking fees, no polluting transport required for villagers to gain access and little in the way of maintenance for councils or permissive landowners to attend to provided pathways are used sympathetically. They also show quite clearly how incompatible planning, which is absolutely avoidable, can cause a serious blot on a currently blending landscape and should be seen as a lesson for future applications. Wholly unsuitable, some three-storey, properties built on a prominent, previously unspoiled, hillside which will be there *forever* (see photos 28, 29, 35, 39, 40, 41, 42, 55 & 56).

This area is as beautiful as any area in England that has protected status, such as National Parks, contains fertile farmland currently used for our much-needed food production and must surely be treasured as such as there are few other sites left which can make this claim that do not require large fees and a car journey for access.

Meppershall, with its unique position, should be preserved and protected along with its environs as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a bastion against the progressive over development of this area.

John Chapman

SPEEDING IN THE VILLAGE: THE PARISH COUNCIL'S PERSPECTIVE

Meppershall Parish Council (MPC) has received yet another complaint of speeding in the village, this time on Shillington Road. It has our sympathy, but by law the Council's powers to act are very limited. Executive authority is vested in the Highways Department of Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC).

MPC has engaged with both CBC Highways and the Beds Police on various occasions. Speeding always features as a priority for police attention. Currently, MPC is seeking to advance Meppershall in CBC's ongoing programme to replace vehicle activated signs with ones that indicate actual speed, with a smiling or a scowling face, as these may be more effective.

In considering how funding from developers should be spent, MPC's list of projects includes serious traffic calming in Shefford Road. However, what form (if any) this might take is for CBC Highways, who have the necessary expertise and design guidance. Bear in mind, though, that it can be a mixed blessing.

To be effective, speed humps must be a significant impediment, as in Ivel Road. But then anyone with a back condition is forced to DEAD SLOW – which can enrage a following driver! Humps can also damage adjacent properties through repeated percussion whilst, when straddled at speed, cushions can cause invisible damage to the inside wall of tyres, as these are not reinforced.

Chicanes (like parked vehicles) are a nuisance. The constant stopping and starting is bad for the environment, and they have been known to have a perverse effect, when a driver actually speeds up to beat an oncoming vehicle through the obstruction.

My personal view is that the most effective control would be to hit serious offenders in their pocket, but lists of speeding convictions in the local press never mention Meppershall. Fines of £2-300 would focus minds; even a speed awareness course for a minor infringement sets you back £100. A police speed trap would be ideal, but a Speedwatch patrol accompanied by a sworn constable is enough to secure a conviction.

But resources are limited, and CBC and Beds police concentrate them where evidence shows the greatest problem, so MPC's advice is clear: parishioners should report each and every instance of speeding both to the police (dial 101), and to CBC Highways (dial 0800 0300 8049 or email Highways@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk), preferably with a registration number, and the date, time and location of the alleged offence. If we want something done, it's up to every one of us to make the case...

Roger Smith - Highways and Transport Spokesman, Meppershall Parish Council



Betty Mather's 90th Birthday

Betty celebrated her 90th birthday in October, as reported in last month's Messenger, and we were delighted to present her with our traditional cake to mark the occasion.

Many Happy Returns Betty!

MAG Update

We have now heard the result of Central Beds appeal against the Shefford Road Gladman development. The Judicial Review went in favour of Gladman, and so this development now has the green light.

Central Beds Planning were on our side, and felt strongly that this was the WRONG development, in the WRONG place, but the High Court agreed with the Inspector, and there's no more that can be done.

We would like to thank all the people who took the time to register objections, go to the appeal, display posters etc. We know how strongly we all felt, but the grounds for CBC's refusal weren't sufficient, apparently. Had there been a Local Plan in place we'd have been in a stronger place, but there wasn't, and we are where we are.

What we have learned is that how local people FEEL isn't enough - what counts is EVIDENCE.

Evidence from experts in a field, that can be quoted or referred to in official publications or previous decisions. Not for Shefford Road - that's done and dusted. But in future we need to act smarter...

So, if there are any people in the village with professional qualifications in planning, in traffic analysis/management, in health or education planning - we need you to help if you can next time an inappropriate development is proposed. Or now, in the completion of a Neighbourhood Plan...

Neighbourhood Plan

We'd like to ask villagers to engage with the team putting together the Meppershall Neighbourhood Plan.

This Plan, when adopted, would give CBC a clear indication of how Meppershall people want the village to look going forward. Building design, open spaces, leisure provisions, play areas, Green Infrastructure etc. What we want to keep, what we want to see updated or added.

These would have to be considered in future planning decisions, and will also provide the basis for Meppershall's "shopping list" for future grants from the funds clawed back from developers' profits (S.106 funding).

Keep an eye out for more notices about the Neighbourhood Plan, and do get involved if you can. The Team particularly need people with policy-writing skills at this stage, so if you can help turn fairly fuzzy wish-lists into official-type policies we'd really like to hear from you!

The Neighbourhood Plan is our chance to have a say in Meppershall's future. Not just development by development, but shaping infrastructure, environment, play and leisure areas too. Do get engaged if you can.

Development Update

Report from the Trustees of Meppershall Village Hall October 2018



Outside you can see the completed Pre-school play area and now that the hoarding has been removed the front of the building is on view to everyone. The final surfacing of the car park including the installation of the lighting will be carried out in the next few weeks.

Behind the new building the playing field has been renamed by the Parish Council as 'Centenary Field'. This is in commemoration of the end of the First World War and in remembrance of all those who fought in it.

The field has been levelled and compacted, special drainage has been installed under the football pitch site and top soil has been spread over the whole area ready for seeding.

At this point in early October we are unable to advise an exact handover date for our new building, which hopefully will be at the end of November. Croudace staff have worked very hard to improve on this but there have been unavoidable delays in the supply of fixtures and fitting for the building.

The Pre-school have advised the Trustees that to avoid too much disruption they will not be ready to move until the end of this term, as the run up to Christmas is an especially busy time in all schools.

In the New MVH we will have capacity for new activities so would now like to be talking to event, club or sports organisers, including wedding planners (we will be licensed as a venue). We have designed the building to meet the league standards for sports including indoor bowls, and to provide high quality audio visual in the Main Hall and stage with adjacent changing room facilities with showers. The meeting room is ideal for small groups and presentations, fitted out with modern IT and TV screen facilities, available for hire by the hour, day or week. Catering can be arranged, and we have lots of parking. The new café will be a focus point for coffees, eating and social gatherings. We are flexible on hiring rates, and risk sharing of costs for new ventures to assist in the first couple of years as activity builds up.

Photographs of the building during various stages of construction can be viewed using the menus of: www.meppershallvillagehall.co.uk or www.meppershall.org which are updated on a regular basis.

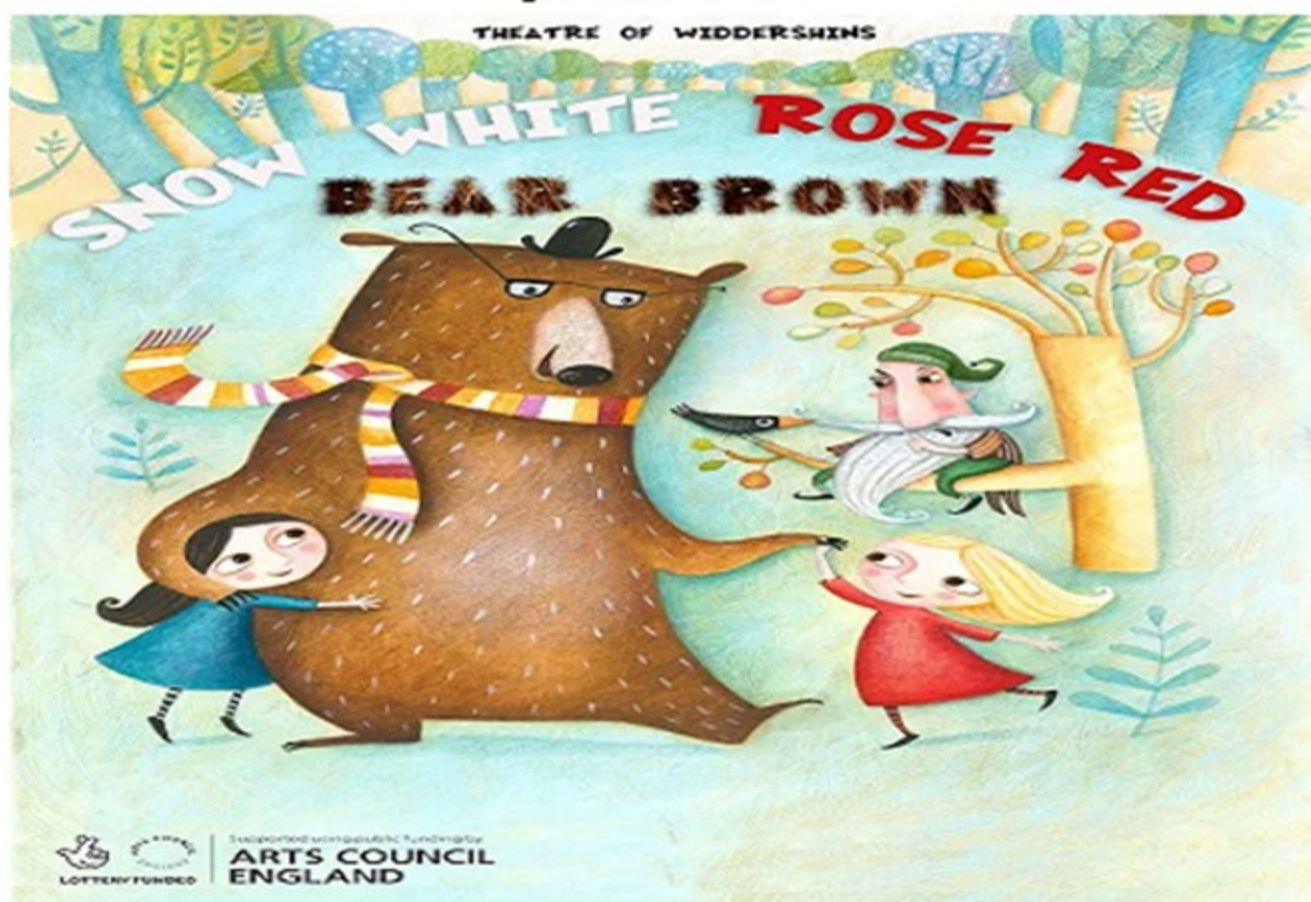
If you are interested in organising an activity to be held in the new facility from **January 2019** please contact our Booking Secretary for initial discussions.

bookings@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk . If you would like to use the sports field, please contact the Meppershall Parish Clerk to register your interest. clerk@meppershall.org

The Pre-School, Bar, Snooker, Social Cub, Bingo, Brownies, Kickboxers and Meppershall Players continue to thrive in the Interim Village Hall and are looking forward to operating in the new Hall as soon as they can. New members and participants are welcome, contact details are available at www.meppershallvillagehall.co.uk follow the links in the left-hand column.

Meppershall Village Hall

presents



Snow White and Rose Red – sisters, twins, best friends – have lived in the forest since they were Babes in the Wood. Brought up by their hardworking Mother to be kind, caring and forest fluent... if sometimes a little over enthusiastic in their deeds! When their quiet life is interrupted by a friendly bear a new chapter begins. But why has the bear chosen them as playfellows? Why is there sadness in his eyes? And who on earth is that rude little man with a ridiculously long beard that they keep bumping in to?

All questions will be untangled in this new show from the Woods of Widdershins, using puppets, storytelling, original music and a fantastical fairy tale forest.

Suitable for ages 4 and up

Saturday 10th November 2018

Doors Open 2pm

Tickets £5

Available from the Village Stores.

Parish Council Report

Here are the main points from the Council meeting held on Monday 8th October 2018 in the Interim Village Hall:

Ward Councillor Brown reported the following:

- CBC is conducting a Digital Survey which is open to all until 30th November.
- Crematorium facilities – CBC has earmarked a site behind Steppingley hospital as the location of a potential first crematorium in the district.
- Digital planning applications – CBC hope to move to a paperless system which will mean supplying parish councils with only the planning application form in hardcopy. All other documentation will be available online.
- Local Plan – Updates are online. No hearing dates set yet.
- CBC will be conducting a survey of village and community halls to ensure that CBC departments are aware of the potential for halls as venues for events, meetings, public inquiries etc.
- Inland Homes – Ward Cllrs Brown and Liddiard have met with Inland Homes and asked for: a raised junction at Shefford Road entry point and 3 parking spaces on the entry road as a layby.

In addition, they have asked the Highways Officer to look at providing a footpath from Meppershall to Shefford. As this location is a site allocated in the submitted Local Plan they believe it will be difficult to refuse a planning application.

Planning and Housing

Appeals:

- Gladman / Stocken House site – Cllr Brown reported that all were disappointed with the rejection of the request for a judicial review, which means that planning application is granted, with potential implications for others in the district. Money has also been spent to no avail. This site will now be treated as a ‘windfall’ and does not mean that other sites allocated in the Local Plan will be removed.
- Arran Park Fishery - The Clerk will write a letter in support of CBC’s position but MPC representation was not thought necessary.

New applications:

- 59 Fildyke Road, SG17 5LU - Rear single storey extension. Lean to with bi fold doors and velux roof lights. The council has no objections to this application
- 84 Fildyke Road, SG17 5LU - Demolishing of 1.5 storey cottage and erection of 5 no. 2 storey dwellings with a new access road and car parking - The Council will make comments requesting that due to congestion and current parking arrangements on Fildyke Road that a limitation (as a condition in the Traffic Management Plan) is placed on developer vehicles to the site parking on Fildyke Road and that access and exit is via Chapel Road.

Granted:

- 10 Hoo Road, SG17 5LP – Variation to Condition 2 of planning application regarding materials to be used. Granted.

Capital Projects List

Projects approved in order of importance:

- Installation of serious traffic calming measures on Shefford Road. Any survey undertaken must take into consideration prospective developments (including Gladman Stocken House – 145 dwellings and Inland Homes Shefford Road – 64 dwellings) so that design and location is appropriate.

- Protection of Hoo Road Bridleway from vehicular traffic (noting that access is required by Anglian Water and Central Power Networks vehicles, and that any type of bollards installed must be key operated). Safe pedestrian and cycle route from Meppershall to Shefford. Via Savills, their representative, Polehanger Farms have advised that land can be made available to fulfil the missing link from the existing permissive path to the edge of the A507 and have provided a plan for Parish Council consideration. Whilst they have the ability to make land available for this project, they would need in the first instance to agree suitable terms.

Street Naming

Street naming of land rear of 6 High Street, SG17 5LX (4 new dwellings). Proposals were Chapel Drive and Glovers Drive.

Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr. Parsons reported that the group have started on a revised Green Infrastructure Plan and the writing of policies.

Highways and Transport

Cllr. Smith reported on various road closures and train timetable amendments in the area over the coming months.

CBC Highways have advised that they are assessing the vehicle speeds at all current VAS (vehicle activated sign) sites. At sites where the average speed of vehicles is 30mph or less or where the 85th percentile is less than 36mph (police prosecution level) the recommendation will be to remove the VAS. A copy of data specific to Meppershall VAS's has been requested. Data has been received from Inland Homes regarding the traffic survey they conducted in March 2018; however, the data is not consistent with Speedwatch findings and previous data.

Environment and Leisure

Council approved the Meppershall Leisure Strategy as submitted by the Clerk and Cllr Merryweather with a single amendment – tennis court to be extended so that it can accommodate a netball court. The Clerk has been asked to consult on the priorities of the Leisure Strategy projects with residents.

Councillors agreed that they are lacking information regarding how much of the £89k of build costs allocated to parish facilities in the Conditional contract between Croudace Homes and MPC has been spent and if any funds remain. The Clerk has been asked to obtain information from Croudace on how the £89k of build costs allocated to parish facilities has been spent and if what funds remain, and report back to MPC. This is to be included as an agenda item at the next meeting.

The Foster family have requested that Fosters Field be renamed. Council have agreed that the field be renamed Centenary Field.

Health & Safety and Risks Management

An annual play equipment inspection has been completed at Old Road Meadow. The issues and recommendations arising from this are all identified as low risk and will therefore be noted and kept under review.

Finance

Council will be starting work on the 2019/2020 budget for review at the next meeting.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 12th November in the Interim Village Hall at 7:45pm
Peter Chapman – Chairman chairman@meppershall.org

Give your views on broadband in Central Bedfordshire



Our lives are more connected every day, with so many more gadgets and appliances reliant on the internet, even kettles! Alongside that, broadband is now essential for all sizes of workplace, and schools are acknowledging the role that technology plays in how teachers teach, and students learn.

Superfast broadband roll-out was launched in Central Bedfordshire in 2014 to meet the high demand for faster fibre connections for homes and businesses in the region. We've now connected more than 25,000 premises in hard-to-reach places that would not be able to get good broadband otherwise.

But we want to increase coverage of superfast and ultrafast broadband still further: our aim is for 97.4% coverage by March 2019, and greater levels beyond that.

We're now seeking feedback to gauge perceptions of the current levels of broadband speed and coverage in the area. This survey will help us assess what our community wants and needs, and is open until 30 November 2018. You can have your say by answering our online market research questionnaires for [residents](#), [businesses](#) and [schools](#), or picking up a paper copy from your local library or leisure centre.

You can take the survey here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9ea2qty>



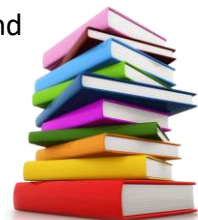
Everyone has had a successful and fun-packed few weeks!



Some of our older children took part in a Harvest celebration for schools in St Albans Cathedral, while our youngest children enjoyed their visit to the bakery to make a beautiful harvest loaf. We are grateful to Roger and Mary for their time and generosity. Following this we all enjoyed a wonderful time of thanksgiving and worship during our Harvest Festival in St Mary's. All our children sung Harvest sings while some older children did readings, led the prayers, and took part in a dramatization of "Handa's Surprise" led by Rev Roni. The many donations of non-perishable food we received will be used by the NEED Project to support local families.

As well as hosting our very popular Parent Breakfasts, we have recently welcomed some grandparents to our school. They enjoyed a delicious school lunch with their grandchildren thanks to the hard work of Mrs Geary, our cook and the Midday Supervisors. Several families joined some of the staff for a morning of fun and fresh air last Saturday to smarten up our grounds. Despite a rainy start to the day, the sun came out in time for us to finish tidying up the front of the school. We are sure this will help provide bright start to each day as the children come up the path and make a good first impression for any visitors to the school. **If you love being outside or have green fingers we would love to hear from you as there's still plenty more to do!**

A good library with high quality books should be at the heart of any school and so we have decided to give our library a facelift and refresh our book stocks, to make it more enticing and engaging. **Any donations of suitable books in good condition would be appreciated.**



This half term ends with a disco at the Village Hall organised by our fantastic team of parent volunteers (MAPTA) to raise much needed funds for our school.

Finally, we are aiming to increase our intake of children from now on, as more children in our school will result in higher funding to enable us to continue providing the very best education for our children. In that connection in November we will welcome prospective parents to our school on one of our **OPEN MORNINGS**, when they will be able to see us in action! Please pass on the details below to any families you might know who have recently moved into the area or are planning to do so, and have a child ready to start school next September.

OPEN MORNINGS - 8th November and 22nd November.

Please contact our friendly staff in the School Office for more details - 01462 813293

Thank you
Caroline Sledge

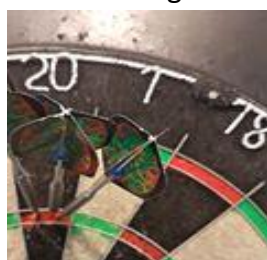
Meppershall Social Club

November 2018

Behind the scenes in the next couple of months there will be lots going on preparing for the move into the new village hall. We would like to welcome all the new faces into the village, everyone is welcome at the social club.

We have a number of regular events going on which include Bingo on a Friday Night (eyes down at 7.30pm), Barbeques, Quiz Nights, Karaoke, Discos & Vinyl Nights.

We are fortunate to have snooker tables and will be re-joining the Biggleswade & District League again next year, once in the new village hall. We have a number of crib and domino players and play in a local league.



We also have a darts team which has been dormant while we have been in the interim hall as there isn't the space to play matches but the dartboard is available for use **most** evenings after 9pm.

And, of course, we have a bar.

Every year we also host a events raising £800-£1,000,

two charities, a local and a national one.

We laid on a Race Night in July and with the business and the money taken on the night we raise £400 for the 1st Meppershall Brownies.



number of charity split between our

sponsorship of local were delighted to

In August we went pink for our national charity, and raised £226 at a Quiz night, again many prizes were donated by local businesses and £121 at our Car Treasure Hunt.

Breast Cancer Care

We are a very small committee and always welcome new ideas for future events, new members or people who are willing to help at our events. If you are interested please leave us a message on our new page <https://www.facebook.com/meppershallsocialclub/>

Coming up for 2018:

DATE	EVENT DETAILS	TIME
27 Oct	Halloween Disco - £3 entry for adults, children free. All proceeds from ticket sales will be split between our charities	Children's disco 6-8pm. Disco continues 8pm till late
3 Nov	Karaoke – Choose you track and sing along, all are welcome. Members free entry non-members £1	8pm till late
11 Nov	Quiz - £1 per person, teams as big or small as you like. 50% goes to charity and the rest to the winning team	7.30pm

Future events being planned are: -

The opening of the Social Club in the New Village Hall – all drinks will be at special prices.

An event on or around Christmas Eve.

A disco on New Year 's Eve.

MEPPERSHALL SOCIAL CLUB
CHILDREN'S HALLOWEEN DISCO &
AFTERWARDS AN ADULTS' HALLOWEEN
DISCO

SATURDAY 27 OCTOBER

TO RAISE MONEY FOR OUR TWO NOMINATED CHARITIES



CHILDREN'S DISCO – 6-8pm – CHILDREN FREE ENTRY, ADULTS £3 (children must be supervised).

There will be a couple of games & a prize for the best fancy dress.

ADULTS' DISCO – 8pm till late – £3 PER PERSON (children can stay & enjoy the disco at no extra cost).



THE MEPPERSHALL PLAYERS



Life is ticking along quite happily in the Kingdom of Adria for young Princess Snow White and the castle cook Cassie but all that is about to change, as Queen Demonica brings her magic potions and plots into play, Prince Ethan and Bunny arrive to save the day and Snow White, but Queen Demonica is not easily thwarted and hatches a plan to rid herself of Snow White once and for all.

Under orders from the evil Queen, Otto the huntsman, Snow White & Bunny venture into the forest. Will they all return safely to the castle? Will Cassie find out who is trying to kill Snow White? And who are the Magnificent Seven?

Find out the answers to these questions, and many more, in the 2018 Panto

'Snow White & the Magnificent Seven'

Matinees: Sat 24th Nov & Sat 1st Dec 3pm all seats £5

Evenings: Fri 23rd, Sat 24th & Fri 30th Nov 7.45pm £8, Concessions £7

Last Night: Sat 1st Dec 7.45pm all seats £10

Box Office: Book your seats on Wednesday evenings at Meppershall Interim Village Hall from 7pm-9.30pm or telephone 01462 816336 (until 31st October). Any tickets remaining will then be available on-line only from 1st November at ticketsource.co.uk/themeppershallplayers. (nb. booking fees will be charged when ordering online). Thereafter, any unsold tickets will be available to buy on the door on the respective performance nights.

Find the Meppershall Players on Facebook (Meppershall Players Community) Instagram, Twitter and Meppershall Village Hall Website.

The Players meet every Wednesday evening at 7.30pm at the Interim Village Hall. Membership is currently free and we welcome people from the age of 9 to 90+ to indulge in all areas of theatrical performances, set-building, costumes, directing, acting, make-up, song & dance, etc. Interested? We look forward to meeting you!

Karen Mitchell (Players' Secretary) 01462 816336

Snow White and the Magnificent Seven

THE MEPPERSHALL PLAYERS PRESENT A PANTO BY KAREN MATHCELL

Snow White and the Magnificent Seven



At Meppershall Village Hall on following dates:
Matinees: 24th Nov & 1st Dec 3pm. Tickets £5
Evening: 23rd, 24th, 30th Nov 7:45pm. £8, Concessions £7
LAST NIGHT 1st Dec. All tickets £10
Box Office: Wednesday 7pm - 9:30pm at Village Hall
or Telephone 01462 816336 (Until 31st Oct)
Tickets online from 1st Nov at ticketsource.co.uk/themppershallplayers

Church News and Events

Parish Church of St Mary The Virgin (Church of England)

Church Road, off Campton Road, Meppershall

www.stmarysmeppershall.org.uk ✕ facebook.com/stmarysmeppershall



Rector: The Reverend Veronica Goodman

01462 339962 – ronigoodman@gmail.com – usual day off Monday

Churchwardens:

Dawn Abbatt 01462 816962 Chris Valentine 01462 815971

Email: Meppershall.PCC@gmail.com

PCC Secretary:

Anne Parsons 01462 813333 Email: annie10639@gmail.com

Message from St Mary's...

We have had a joyful and exciting October... The church has looked lovely with its harvest loaves, beautiful harvest flower arrangements and harvest gifts for the Need Project.

It was lovely to have all the school in church too, the children filling the church with their prayers and praises and thanking God for all his good gifts. My thanks to all who helped clean and decorate the church and who came to worship. There were many comments too, about how bright and comfortable the new cushions are - our thanks to The Polehanger Trust for their kind gift.

At time of writing the Village Pet Blessing Service has not taken place yet - but it continues the theme of thankfulness to God that runs right through October.

November begins on a high point with us praising God for all the saints whom we believe already enjoy being with God face to face.... but our mood quickly changes to one of more sober remembering.

Firstly, personal remembering with our All Souls Service of Special Memories at 6.30pm on November 4th - when we remember all those we have loved and see no longer.

We especially invite the families of those whose funerals we have taken during the last year. Then of course, we move to a remembering which is both personal and community - national and international - remembering all those who have lost their lives in time of war.

This year our commemorations have a particular focus as we mark the Centenary of the end of the First World War and pay tribute to the millions killed or wounded in battle, and those on the home front who struggled amidst pain and loss to help ensure freedom survived and peace returned.

You will already have seen our 'There but not There' Silhouettes (generously donated by The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust) and know that for some time we have been trying to collect information and mementos particularly of the men whose names are inscribed on our own War Memorial for display in the Church.

In Meppershall we will begin as usual at the War Memorial. Please gather by 10.50 for the reading of names, the silence and the placing of wreaths. We will then move into the church for the rest of our Service, where Keith, our reader, recently returned from a visit to Passchendaele and the Somme, will be speaking to us.

As part of the wider national plans, St Mary's bells will be rung at 7.05pm in celebration of the return of peace in 1918.

For those who are interested there will be a bigger programme of events in Shefford in the evening including:

6.00 pm. A gathering in St Michael's Church. Tea, coffee and cakes available.

At the War Memorial:

6.55 pm. The Last Post - 1000 individual Buglers will sound this historic tribute at WW1 Beacons of Light locations across the Nation and UK Overseas Territories.

7pm. WW1 Beacon of Light - over 1000 Beacons of Light will be lit symbolising an end to the darkness of war and a return to the light of peace.

7.05pm. Ringing Out for Peace - 1000 cathedrals and churches will ring out their bells across the nation, and beyond, in celebration of Peace.

7.05pm. A Cry for Peace around the World - 100 Town Criers throughout the United Kingdom and other countries around the World will join together in an International Cry for Peace around the World.

As we all remember - let's not forget the need still, to pray and to work for a world where there is peace and justice for all.

Best wishes

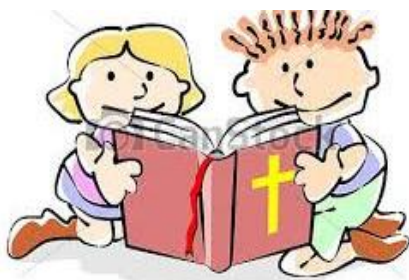
Rector Roni

Junior Church
Our next sessions are:
Sunday 4 November &

Sunday 2 December

11am at St Mary's Church

(ages 3 to 12)



~ A ONE-MAN PERFORMANCE OF ~

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

ST MARY'S CHURCH
MEPPERSHALL
5.30PM - SUNDAY
2ND OF DECEMBER

NO TICKETS REQUIRED
JUST COME ALONG!

WWW.VINTAGEVERSE.CO.UK

Church Services and Events – November 2018

At St Mary's unless stated below

Date	Time	Service / Event
Weds 31 st October	10.00am	Holy Communion
Sunday 4 th Nov 4 th before advent	11.00am 6.30pm	All Saints, Holy Communion, plus Junior Church. Service of Special Memories (for everyone thinking of someone they've lost and especially families of those whose funerals we have conducted during the last 12 months)
Weds 7 th Nov	10.00am	Holy Communion
Friday 9 th Nov	9pm	Silent Together Enjoy the presence of God in the tranquillity of the church - 30 mins.
Saturday 10 th Nov	Come anytime!	Churchyard Working Party – do you have a few minutes to come and be part of the community clear-up of our beautiful churchyard? Bring your own tools – trimming, raking, sweeping – lunch provided, fun guaranteed. Anytime between 9am and 4pm.
Sun 11 th Nov Remembrance Sunday	8.30am 10.50 for 11am 2.15pm 7.05pm	Holy Communion Remembrance Day Service Gathering at the war memorial in the churchyard Second Sunday Stroll – Shillington and back. Call 857836 for more info or contact via Facebook @MeppershallStrollers. St Mary's bells join with more than a thousand across the UK, ringing out for Peace.
Mon 12 th Nov	7.15 for 7.30pm	Bible Society. God speaks through dreams. Joseph the dreamer. Speaker: Eddie O'Callaghan at 17 Langford Road, SG16 6AF.
Tuesday 13 th Nov	2-4pm	Rectory Tea - Chat and a cuppa, all welcome
Weds 14 th Nov	10.00am	Holy Communion
Sun 18 th Nov 2 nd before advent	8.30am 11.00am	Holy Communion Holy Communion Morning Worship – All Welcome!
Weds 21 st Nov	10.00am	Holy Communion
Saturday 24 th Nov	9.00am	Celtic Morning Prayer (breakfast from 8ish)
Sunday 25 th Nov Christ the King	11.00am	Holy Communion - Junior Church in the vestry
Tuesday 27 th Nov	2-4pm	Rectory Tea - Chat and a cuppa, all welcome
Weds 28 th Nov	10.00am	Holy Communion

Leisure Time Survey

CALLING ALL RESIDENTS!

The Parish Council has identified projects for new or improved recreational open spaces and outdoor sport facilities within the village. We need to submit this information to Central Bedfordshire Council to enable us to secure contributions toward these projects and stop money going to projects outside of our village.

HELP - WE NEED YOUR FEEDBACK!

Please tick your top 3 priorities from the projects listed below:

Project	Where	Ages	Tick
Tennis and netball court	Fosters Field	All	
Outdoor gym equipment	Fosters Field	All	
Allotment security fencing	Allotments	All	
Allotment water system	Allotment	All	
Allotment ECO toilet	Allotment	All	
Junior Play equipment	Fosters Field	8+	
Infant play equipment	Fosters Field	2+	
Picnic benches and seats	Old Road Meadow	All	

Idea not listed above? Add in details in box below.



Completed forms can be cut out and dropped off at Rogers Bakery and Ansell Village Stores. Alternatively, you can email the Clerk (clerk@meppershall.org) who will collate your ideas. Submission deadline is 30th November.

Remember – Great ideas create great results!

Shefford Leisure Group

By Enid Pamment

NOVEMBER 2018



By the time you managed to read this page, Halloween will be passed, parties for the fireworks frantically being arranged – Poppies can be seen and proudly worn by so many people as we remember the sacrifices made by families and friends to improve the standard of life, the opportunities and the freedom we are allowed to enjoy today.

It was such a pity when on our proposed trip to The National Memorial Arboretum could not take place as our coach suddenly felt a 'little unwell' and by the time all was well again it was too late to complete our journey so decided to return to Shefford. All is not lost!! As we now have booked a further trip to include the road train ride, this time for next May 2019 which I hope it will prove successful on a nice sunny day! All I can say is the 'best laid plans can go wrong' and I can only apologise!

We did enjoy a nice weekend away to the Isle of Wight and the only 'wet' day was Saturday! and everyone got wet! We stayed at Bembridge Warners and we were very well looked after with superb accommodation. It was announced on Saturday evening that on Sunday morning the largest American aircraft carrier was coming into Portsmouth Harbour and that a cruiser boat had been hired to take interested spectators around the ship which would enable them to take photographs etc. Later on, when I returned to my room, I popped the television on to the news and the Captain of the airship was being interviewed saying how much he liked everything about the UK and the people (but not the weather) he was getting soaked whilst the interview was going on!! This all added to the excitement!

There is still quite a bit available to enjoy during 2018, although Thursford and the Classical Spectacular is now fully booked with a reserve list only. Seats are still available for 'Cruising into Christmas' and the St. Albans sixth Christmas Market.

To me it seems hardly possible that when the next Meppershall Messenger is printed we will say farewell to 2018 and welcome the new year commencing January 2019.

If any of our residents existing or new to the area would like to know a little more about the Shefford Leisure Group, please give me a telephone call and I would love to talk to you and explain how we work and what we do and of course why!!

Incidentally, if there is anywhere specific you would like to go, either for a day trip or a holiday, please let me know and I will see what can be done. After all these are your trips, and your holidays to hopefully enjoy.

Take care of each other

Enid x

FORTHCOMING EVENTS PLANNED FOR 2018

CAMDEN MARKET – Sunday 4th November – Camden Lock Market – Leaving Shefford at 8am.

THURSFORD CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR – Sunday 11th November 2018. (*reserve list*)

CLASSICAL SPECTACULAR – Sunday 25th November (Matinee) Leaving Shefford at 12.30pm. This includes the famous 1812 Overture, Music, Lasers, Lights, including fireworks at the Royal Albert Hall. The seats are Row 9 Choir. We anticipate arriving back to Shefford by 7pm approx. (*Reserve list only*)

JOHN RUTTER'S CHRISTMAS CAROL CONCERT (MATINEE) - ROYAL ALBERT HALL – Tuesday 4th December – Arena, Circle & Choir seats available. *

CRUISING INTO CHRISTMAS – Sunday 9th December 2018 Leaving Shefford at 11am to Greenwich and meet at the Pier for our cruise to London and meet the Guide and coach for a tour finishing at Covent Garden.

ST. ALBAN'S CHRISTMAS MARKETS, – Sunday 16th December 2018 – Leaving Shefford at 9.30pm. Coach will drop off near the Cathedral and the usual Saturday Market, will meet us at 2.30pm to take us down the Holywell Hill to see the Christmas Markets set within Meraki Christmas Festival. We will leave the Market at 4pm so be back in Shefford by 5.30pm.

2019

Coming to Milton Keynes Theatre:

ANTON & ERIN – ONE NIGHT ONLY – Dance those magical musicals – Wednesday 13th February 7.30pm performance. Leaving Shefford at 5pm.

JOSEPH & HIS AMAZING TECHNICOLOUR DREAMCOAT – (Matinee) – Wednesday 10th April 2019. Leaving Shefford at 1pm

LES MISERABLES – Thursday 30th May (Matinee) Leaving Shefford at 1pm

***THE MOUNTBATTEN FESTIVAL OF MUSIC** (Matinee) – Saturday 16th March 2019 - Royal Albert Hall. - Choir and Circle Seats – Leaving Shefford at 10am.

NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM – Thursday – 16th May 2019

LONDON SHOWS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE – ALL MATINEE PERFORMANCES

(organised in conjunction with Stevenage Group Travel) - 2018

Kindly note: As Shefford is not a regular pick-up point arrangements may be made to transport you to either Baldock, Letchworth or Hitchin to collect the coach, this depends solely on how many people require Shefford as a pick up for any particular show.

***KINKY BOOTS** (EVENING) Tuesday 30th October. Brit.with five-inch sequinned red heels on takes you from the factory floor to the glorious catwalk of Milan. Showing at the Adelphi Theatre – Stall Seats – Coach will leave Shefford at 4.15pm. (approximately)

***MAMA MIA** – (EVENING) – Tuesday 30th October. This ultimate musical has been seen by over 7 million people in London where it continues to break box office records. Showing at the Novello Theatre – Stall Seats – Coach will be leaving Shefford at 4.15pm (approximately).

***RPO Verdi Requiem:** Tuesday 20th November (Evening) at The Royal Albert Hall. Don't miss the opportunity to experience the thrill of Verdi's powerful music in the glorious surroundings

of the Royal Albert Hall. Arena Seats row 2 and Circle Seats row 1. Coach will leave Shefford at 4.15pm. (approximately)

***TINA TURNER** – Monday 10th December (evening). – Stall Seats – Leaving Shefford at 4.15pm. (*Reserve list only*)

***THE SNOW MAN** – Wednesday 12th December – Stall Seats – Peacock Theatre – Leaving Shefford at 10.30am

***9 – 5 THE MUSICAL (MATINEE)** – Wednesday 20th March. – Dolly Parton’s rollicking musical. Stall Seats, Savoy Theatre – Coach leaving Shefford at 10.30am

***VALENTINE’S DAY OPERA GALA** – Thursday 14th February (One night only) Stall Seats – Rows J.K & L Cadogan Hall – Leaving Shefford at 4.15pm.

***LET’S FACE THE MUSIC** (Matinee) – Royal Philharmonic Orchestra – Sunday 17th March – Arena Seats rows 11 & 12, Circle Seats row 2 - Royal Albert Hall – Leaving Shefford at 11am. Please telephone for prices and availability of any holidays, outings or shows listed above.

Kindly Note: Trips marked with a * have been arranged by Stevenage Group Travel.

If there are only a few people booking their trips, so save time their ‘regular’ pick-ups are Baldock, Letchworth, Hitchin and Stevenage as sometimes it is not viable for a coach to come to Shefford first and makes it difficult for driver’s hours etc. We do hope you understand.

For all holidays, including transport from Shefford and hotel accommodation, Shefford Leisure Group acts as an agent for the Tour Operator; their terms and conditions apply.

Shefford Leisure Group is open to everyone in the local community, who feel they would like to join us on our ventures and see places they would not see under their own steam. We are always happy to meet new friends.

Raffles are held and all the proceeds are for Keech Hospice Care for Children. For further information regarding dates, prices and availability or to receive our monthly newsletter, please contact Enid on 01462 851397 or e-mail enid.pamment@gmail.com.

Kerbside garden waste suspension

Central Beds has confirmed that kerbside garden waste collections will be suspended as usual through winter - between **Monday, 10 December 2018** and **Friday 1, March 2019 inclusive**. The service will resume as normal on **Monday, 4 March 2019**. During this period all other waste collections will take place as normal.

Look out for a “bin hanger” notice on your black waste bin sometime between 5th and 17th November, two weeks prior to the suspension. There will also be information on how people can recycle their “real” Christmas trees over the festive period.

Financial Matters

By Paul Savuto

WHAT ARE THE MAIN ASSET CLASSES?

With investing, the old saying ‘don’t put all your eggs in one basket’ rings true. To improve the potential for long-term gains and spread risk, the best advice is to diversify your investment across a range of companies, asset classes and geographical regions. This helps to minimise the impact a poor performing economic region or company may have on your overall portfolio. When it comes to choosing asset classes there are the ‘traditional’ asset classes – cash, equities or shares and bonds – together with commercial property and commodities.

Cash

The advantage of cash is its liquidity. Money held in cash accounts can be accessed easily and present a low risk for the investor.

Bonds or fixed-interest investments

These are investments that provide a fixed, regular income over a set period of time in the form of interest. Some are government-backed.

Stocks or equities

Equities are shares of ownership issued by publicly-traded companies that are bought and sold on stock exchanges. You can potentially profit from shares through a rise in the price or by receiving dividends from them. Of course, you also risk losing your money too if the stock performs poorly.

Property

Investing in property can be as simple as owning your own home. However, when it comes to portfolio investments, typically property investments are made in commercial property. This includes warehouses, offices, industrial estates and shopping centres, often owned through pooled investment funds.

Other asset classes

This category covers investments that don’t fall into the main asset classes shown above, and can include commodities such as oil or gold, foreign currency, or even art and antiques. These are generally high risk because their value depends on conditions within a specific market.

IS YOUR FAMILY FINANCIALLY-SAVVY?

Do you discuss financial matters with your children? In the UK, we can be very reticent when it comes to having family conversations about money. But as our children grow, they need to know the financial basics in order that one day they can successfully manage their own money.

So, knowing how to draw up a budget and what should go into it, how interest rates affect the amount of money you pay back on a loan or mortgage, and how compound interest can help savings grow, are all good life skills to learn at an early age.

Starting the conversation

Data suggests 58%* of parents report finding it difficult to talk to their children about financial matters. One of the main reasons parents give is that they feel children shouldn't be burdened with adult responsibilities, like concerns about money. It can in fact be very empowering to give your children the skills and confidence they need, so that they don't face money worries in the future.

With so many financial transactions now carried out by the swipe of a card, gone are the days when parents could use a shopping trip as a chance for children to learn about how much things cost. So, it's more important than ever that children understand from a young age that money is finite and sometimes hard choices have to be made in order to keep within a sensible spending limit.

However, there are practical ways to encourage children to save, such as a Junior ISA, which gives children the opportunity to see how a savings account operates, and how their money can grow over the years. Explaining how much family treats such as holidays cost, and how they are budgeted for, will give a child an understanding of the rudiments of money management. When interest rates rise, explaining to a child what the implications are for your mortgage and the family budget will help prepare them for the day when they take their first steps on the housing ladder.

*The Money Advice Service

WOMEN ARE BETTER SAVERS THAN MEN

Women, it seems, are heeding the message about saving for retirement and are saving more for their future than men, after adjusting for earnings. However, the fact that women are saving more as a percentage of their earnings, but still achieving lower balances in their pension plans, shows the effect that the gender pay gap continues to have.

Women also tend to be hampered in their attempts to save for a comfortable retirement by disrupted work patterns as they take time out to raise a family, or look after ageing parents. A survey conducted by Prudential showed that women's expected retirement income has hit a record high this year, but they still have an average retirement income that's likely to be around £5,000 lower than men.

As part of the service at DGS, we take the time to understand our client's unique planning needs and circumstances, so that we can provide you with the most suitable solutions in the most cost-effective way. For a free review of your current plans and financial situation, please contact Paul Savuto, AFPS, Chartered Financial Planner. DGS Independent Financial Advisers Ltd. 07834 499595 or email ps@dgsifa.com. I'm based in Meppershall and I'll be happy to talk to you.

A NEW community transport service Improving your travel capabilities

Connecting our Communities in



How do I find out more?

RING 01234 834933 for a Membership Form and details of how we can help you:

- Travel around the area to shops, health services, visit friends and relatives, or just enjoy a day out
- Access Bedford for a greater range of destinations
- All our high-quality vehicles are accessible for those with impaired mobility
- All staff are friendly, caring, fully trained, DBS checked & MiDAS assessed

Where do we serve?

Amphill – Arlesey – Biggleswade Blunham – Cranfield – Flitwick – Houghton Conquest – Lidlington - Marston Moretaine – Potton – Sandy - Shefford – Shillington – Silsoe – Southill - Stotfold – Tempsford – Woburn & into Bedford

When can I use it?

We start on Monday 15th October 2018. We will be operating Mondays to Fridays (but not bank holidays or evenings). But trips can be booked a week in advance. You can sign up now, so that everything is ready for you when you want to travel.

Am I eligible?

Our service is available to those over state pension age or anyone with a disability that means they have limited mobility. We have a simple application process, which is designed to ensure we can understand your particular needs, provide the best level of care and have relevant information should we need to contact yourself or any carers.

How much does it cost?

We have a simple two-tier fare structure, with charges per customer per single journey of £2.25 or £3.75 depending on distance travelled. There is also an annual membership fee of £20. ***Special introductory offers apply for the first few months!***

Who are BRCC?

We are a local charity providing a range of Community based transport services across Bedfordshire, including similar schemes in Bedford Borough, Good Neighbours Schemes, and a transport brokerage. We have much experience of providing high quality transport to the community.

RING 01234 834933 for a Membership Form and details of how we can help you

Connecting our Communities in Greensand Country is provided by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity, supported by and working in partnership with Central Bedfordshire Council.



Notices

'TRUGS & TROWELS' **Campton Gardening Club**



Our next meetings will be on: -
Monday, 5th November – 'Britain in Bloom'
talk by John Crawley
Monday, 3rd December – 'Quiz Night' at
Campton Village Hall, 7.30-9.00pm.
Everyone Welcome - Admission £3. For
more information, please contact...
Maryika 01462 851729

Meppershall Good Neighbour Group

The GNOMES and their supporters will be helping the residents to make Christmas tree decorations in the dining room of the New Meppershall Care Home on **Thursday 8th November between 1045 and 1145.**

We would welcome your support. Materials and refreshments provided and anyone requiring transport to and from the Home are asked to call 07760 793921.

We welcome newcomers to the village and details of our Group appear on the village Web site www.meppershall.org. Simply click on GNOMES where you will find welcoming detail and essential local information

Warden Abbey Vineyard

Thanks to all who attended our recent Open Day and helped to make it such a success, we trust you enjoyed your day as much as we did. Thanks to the glorious summer weather we have very good crop this year, now safely harvested and delivered to our wine maker.

Why not join us for our Christmas Wine Sale?

9th Dec 2018 11am -4pm. The Stable Yard, Southill Park Southill SG18 9LJ

Free entry, parking and mince pies (whilst stocks last)

Ideal for Christmas gifts or your own festive celebrations

FUTURE
EVENTS



LIVE
MUSIC

Saturday 10th November – Live music with Bad Bones, an acoustic duo from St Albans area.

Bad Bones have played at the Ale House a few times a year for the last 3 years Both Steve and Dave are very accomplished musicians and always put on a great performance for our customers.

300 HITCHIN ROAD, HENLOW, BEDS SG16 6DP
www.theoldtransporter.co.uk - 01462817410

Summerfield Miniature Railway - Bedford Model Engineering Society
Off the A600 just past Haynes Turn

Public Running Days in 2018 from 10.30AM to 4 PM

DEC	Sat & Sun 8 th /9 th Santa		For further information,
	Specials – pre-booking		see our website:
	essential		www.bedfordmes.co.uk
			*On our Wednesday openings, only limited
			catering will be available.

Birthdays in November

Poppy Ashton will be 90 in November. Many congratulations!

The following will also be celebrating significant birthdays in November:

Margaret Evesham will be 88 **Jean Ford** will be 86 **Stephen North** will be 82
Ann Hutchinson will be 84 **Ann Gilmour** will be 87

Obituaries

Eric Bygraves 17.12.19 – 13.10.18

It is with great sadness we announce that Eric Bygraves passed away on Saturday 13th October aged 98. His funeral will take place at St Mary's, Meppershall on Monday 12th November at 1.30pm.

Eric was born on 17th December 1919 at Christmas Hall Farm, Lakenheath, Norfolk and spent his boyhood days in Biggleswade. He left school aged 14 and worked in Hepworths (*Gentlemen's Outfitters*), Biggleswade. He worked in his uncle's leather and sports goods shop, D F Jackson Ltd at 17, High St. Hitchin, for four years from 1935. When the war came in 1939 he joined the Cambridgeshire Regiment in Bury St Edmunds, as a Private in the Technical Stores. He was also a 'look out boy' on the Sheringham cliff tops, Norfolk. Eric was then posted via Dumfries, Canada & Capetown to Singapore where he was captured by the Japanese. As a PoW, he spent three years working on the notorious Burma railway, existing on two bowls of rice per day. He was transported by sea back to England in 1945/6, suffering from malaria and berry-berry due to starvation.

Eric returned to work at his uncle's shop in Hitchin, which he took over on his uncle's death in 1954. In 1953 he met Gwen at the Bedford dance hall, over the grocer's shop Dujon. They were married on 26th Sept 1957 in Wootton and moved to 13 Offley Road, Hitchin, moving to Meppershall in 1966; they have a son, Ian and daughter, Jane and two granddaughters. Due to ill health, Eric retired and sold the business in 1982 after 40 years' service, aged 63. Congratulations on your 90th in December 2009!

Eric passed away on the 75th anniversary of the completion of the Burma railway. Our condolences go to his wife, Gwen, children Jane and Ian and granddaughters.



In Memory of Wendy Reece, 1949 - 2018

Wendy, who passed away in September 2018, will be missed across so many areas of village life. Born Wendy Cheesbrough in Luton in March 1949, she was proud sister to Peter who went on to make his life in North America. As a young woman she excelled at tennis and swimming and attended St Albans High School. She had a passion for science at a time when few women were encouraged in that direction, and she read Pharmacy Science at Leicester Polytechnic – forging lifelong friendships and meeting Philip Reece who she married soon afterwards.

Sons Kevin and Richard completed the Reece family unit in the years that followed and many who knew Wendy here will have heard her proud stories and loving remarks about them.

Early in her career, she worked in the Leicester City Centre branch of Boots but careers led to a series of moves for the family. In 1979, husband Phil's job took them to Dartford in Kent and Wendy swapped Boots for Co-Op. At her funeral, her sons recalled their happy mum, who "spoiled us rotten and was our greatest cheerleader." Wendy and Phil enjoyed skiing – including a trip with first grandson, Matthew. They also loved the Lake District and Wendy loved walking, exploring many of Britain's most beautiful spaces. She particularly enjoyed a trip to Iona.

The family moved to Eynsford in 1989 where she took up a hospital pharmacy role at Medway in Kent and was very happy. Her son Kevin married Catherine in 1995 and provided four grandchildren in the following years. In 1997 Wendy and Phil came to Meppershall as his job relocated to Hertfordshire, although he was promptly seconded to Verona where Wendy learned Italian and got to know the city. In those years, son Richard got together with wife Sarah.

It was November 2002 when Wendy's life – the whole family's life – changed forever with the sad loss of Phil who died in Wendy's arms at home. Yet through her grief and beyond the devastating impact of such a loss, she went on to make a profound impact on village life here. In the years afterward she was blessed with more grandchildren. She continued to travel - temples, mountains, safaris, nature reserves – and her broad experiences in later life must have been part of the reason that, to anyone who knew her, she was a source of interesting conversations, joyful moments, inspired ideas and stoic contributions to all manner of community activities. Despite the pain she must have felt after 2002, she became a shining light in the lives of so many neighbours and friends here.

Linda Parker, Meppershall Garden Club, remembers Wendy with the following thoughts:

"I knew Wendy in many capacities; as a friend, a next-door neighbour, a member of the "Shuttleworth Garden Gang" and then latterly as a member of the Meppershall Garden Club.

"I first met Wendy in the year 2000 when she and her husband Phil returned to Meppershall from Verona where Phil had been working for Glaxo. Being next-door neighbours, we soon became friends and in 2002, being keen, but somewhat novice gardeners, we decided to sign up for a 1-year practical horticultural course at Shuttleworth College where we met a small group of like-minded ladies. Following

Phil's death, the group quickly jelled and we soon became firm friends. So much so, that following the course, we arranged to meet up once a month for a coffee and a catch-up and once a year take ourselves away on a short break without other halves. With Wendy doing much of the organising and driving for the away break, you can imagine that we ended up in some very interesting places including a barge trip on a Dutch canal and biking on the towpath.

"When the Meppershall Garden Club started up in 2009, it was a given that Wendy would join. She soon became a valued member of the core group and will certainly be remembered not only for her gardening skills, her thoughtfulness and generosity but also for the wonderful Pavlova and Tiramisu that she provided for our social events. Wendy will be sorely missed."

Roma Lester recalls Wendy's special involvement in another part of village life:

"Wendy was an enthusiastic member of our book club for the last 16 years. We were enthralled with tales of her travels. Sadly, Phil died before they retired and Wendy was determined to travel to all the places she and Phil had on their "bucket list". She took the bull by the horns and started travelling on her own, along the way meeting many like-minded people, many of whom became good friends.

"She had a great 'can-do' attitude and didn't let her illness define her or stop doing all the things she loved doing. She was determined to live life to the full and did that until the end. On a personal note, she was a dear friend for over 20 years, and I will miss her immensely."

At church, Wendy was a consistent, solid presence – never seeking the limelight. A trustee of the Friends of St Mary's Meppershall charity for many years and PCC secretary for a period of time, she enjoyed Rector Roni's company and counsel in recent years and she could always be relied upon to provide an excellent cake or other delicious refreshments as part of church events. The church was not just a building for her – one younger friend, after having a baby and trying to get back up to speed with life – found Wendy on her doorstep one day with food and encouragement, not because Wendy had been asked to do that, but because she just knew what was needed and was happy to help.

Her love of walking was shared with the Second Sunday Strollers church walking group, and she pounded out some miles with friends on a hike just months before her recent bout of ill health. She was reliably excellent company on a hike. Always something new to share and talk about. Always an even-paced stride and a determination and excitement about the next stretch of the journey. In life, as in walking, that was Wendy.

She endured cancer treatment for more than 5 years – never complaining, always brave and patient. She drew special support from life-long university friend Marilyn and, with help from friend Jo, was able to spend some precious weeks at home in her final months. She passed away at Garden House Hospice in September.

At her funeral on 1st October, son Kevin concluded the eulogy: "Mum was a kind, loving, intelligent, giving, energetic and resilient woman. She was the bedrock of our family, a fantastic Mum, Grandma, Godmother, Sister, Auntie and friend. These words today do not and cannot remotely cover all of things she accomplished and brought to the world."

Compiled by James Read, with sincere thanks to the contributors.

Making a Difference - Rotary

It is within living memory that Polio was the most worrying of all childhood diseases because it caused muscle weakness resulting in permanent disability or death. Many of us can still remember children in leg callipers and the 'Iron Lung' which was the machine that enabled a paralysed child to breathe.



Rotary International decided to do something about polio, to eradicate it in the same way that Smallpox had been eradicated from the whole world. Polio vaccine is cheap to produce and easy to administer as a drop by mouth, so in 1979 the first project to vaccinate children began. In 1985 the Rotary Polio Plus programme was launched and in 1988 the World Health Organisation, the US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, and UNICEF joined in. At that time Polio was present in 125 countries and it affected 1000 children every day. By 2017 the incidence of Polio had plummeted by 99.99 % to just 22 cases in that year from only 3 remaining countries: Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria, and up to the end of August 2018 there have only been 15 reported cases in the world.

It is very important not to be complacent now that the end is in sight. It would be so easy for Polio to take hold again with global travel and military personnel moving backwards and forwards from Afghanistan. World Polio day is 24th October every year. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation have joined the campaign and now donate £2 for every £1 raised by Rotary, and even when there are no more reported cases the vaccination programme must continue for another 3 years, just to be sure. Purple for Polio was made a slogan because every child vaccinated has their little finger dipped in purple dye as a way of making sure that no child has been missed.

Rotary clubs would welcome your involvement as we need help in any way to finish what was started all those years ago.

For more information telephone Pamela on 07817 014865



The Team

CONTRIBUTIONS

The Editor welcomes contributions to the Messenger, whether as letters, articles or notices. Contributions should preferably be as attachments to e-mail (address below) but handwritten contributions may be sent by post, or left in the folder kept at the Village Stores. Contributions should run to not more than one A5 page (except by prior arrangement) and should be received by the Editor not later than the 12th of the month for publication at the end of that month. Contributions received after the deadline may be held over.

DISCLAIMER

The Editor reserves the right to omit or alter any advertisement or article and to change the content, format or issue date of the magazine without prior notice. The Editor cannot be held responsible for the factual correctness of, or for any libellous comment or statement made in any advertisement, article or other contribution published in this magazine. Every effort will be made to avoid any deliberate attempt to mislead or otherwise cause harm or damage to any person or persons by any advertisement, article or any other contribution published in this magazine.

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<u>Collating Dates for your Diaries – 2018/2019</u>					
2018			2019		
Nov	26	Double	Jan	28	
			Feb	25	
			Mar	25	

Please note that dates in the above table indicate the month in which the collating will take place, at 2.30 pm in the Sugar Loaf. The issue being collated will relate to the following month.