

# MEPPERSHALL MESSENGER



**December 2006/  
January 2007**

# THE MEPPERSHALL MESSENGER

**Volume 22 Issue 8**  
**December 2006/January 2007**

This month's edition is truly a "Bumper Issue". It is the first time I have prepared a 40 pager! There is just so much going on in the Village over the next two months, which is wonderful. I hope you enjoy reading all about the events, and go along and support as many as you can.

The Messenger AGM is being held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December. If you would like to join us you will be very welcomed. I am happy to stay on as Editor (unless there is someone out there who would like to take over). If you cannot attend the meeting but would like a matter discussed, please let me know.

Todate, I have had no positive response for my appeal to find a new home for the photocopier and paper. I have approached several people but, unfortunately, not been successful. Let's hope the New Year brings some good news. If not, well I don't think I need spell it out!

Finally, I should like to wish everyone in the village a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

The deadline for articles for the February 2007 edition of The Messenger is 12<sup>th</sup> January 2007. Please either leave them at the Post Office or drop them through my letterbox at 7 Brookmead. If you prefer, you can send articles to me at my e-mail address [lindagoldl@aol.com](mailto:lindagoldl@aol.com). Thank you.

***Linda Gold***  
***Editor***

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Editor:	Linda Gold, 7 Brookmead 811970
Advertising Manager:	Steve Ansell, Post Office Stores 811252
Distribution Manager:	Colette House, 90 Fildyke Road 815585

*Dear Editor . . . .*

I have had my first trip around our "New Estate" selling poppies. I have to say that I met some exceptionally nice people of all ages, and not a single person that was home did not donate. I don't walk too fast and I was walking around in the dark. To find children playing outside from house to house, it was exactly the same as it was in my childhood; many years ago now as I go back to three pubs, a telephone exchange and when everyone walked to school! Thank you all again for your generosity.

*Veronica Graham*

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Once again the coffee morning to raise funds for the Village Hall was very poorly supported, with only a dozen people attending over the two hour period. The event was well publicised and Gemma Chapman and her helpers put in a lot of effort to make it a success. Considering the number of people now living in the village, it was a disgrace!

*Name Supplied*

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Wishing all my friends and neighbours a very Happy Christmas and a New Year full of blessings and joy. I shall not be sending cards again this year, but will be making a donation to St. John's Hospice.

*Helen Gillett*

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The Brownies raised nearly £200 towards sending the boxes for Operation Shoe Box. The Brownies will be busy filling the boxes, and the final tally will be in the next Messenger. Our thanks to all who have contributed in any way.

*Christine Elbourne*

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*Editor's Note . . . . . I haven't received any crime incident figures from the Police for many months now - perhaps there is no crime to report!*

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## **THE MEPPERSHALL MESSENGER ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Notice is hereby given of the Annual General Meeting of The Meppershall Messenger to be held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December at 2.15pm at Meppershall Village Stores, High Street

### **A G E N D A**

Minutes of Last Meeting  
Matters Arising  
Treasurer's Report  
Other Reports  
Advertising/Charges  
Election of Officers  
Any Other Business

The meeting is open for anyone to attend. However, if you cannot attend the meeting but would like to come on to the Committee or help in any other way, please leave your name, address and telephone number with me (details can be left at the Village Shop), or drop them into my house (7 Brookmead) before the Annual General Meeting.

*Editor*

## Village Hall News

This month's village hall article has a mixed message. On the one hand, we need to stress again to you all the need for people in the village to show greater support for the Hall. However, we are pleased to report the success of the recent fundraising events which show just how much the hall is appreciated by the village and hopefully will continue to be if we are able to keep it open.

The advertised open/AGM meeting took place in October and we are sorry to say that other than committee members, only 3 people out of the whole village turned up. This was an extremely disappointing turnout, particularly as a number of people said that they would have attended the summer AGM had it not clashed with a world cup football match. Where were you? Without the support of the village, the hall simply cannot stay open indefinitely. It cost a lot to keep it running and to put you in the picture, we currently only have enough funds to stay open until Spring next year. If any major work needs urgently carrying out, we are unable to fund it and the future of the hall could be in jeopardy. This is one of the reasons that a lot of fundraising is taking place, just to keep the hall afloat.

It would be a great shame if the village did not have a village hall, and we're sure that if you think about it, someone from your family probably uses or has used the hall from time to time or on a regular basis. To give you some idea of the amount it has been used as a venue over the last year, the Social club are open almost every night, Pre-school every day during term-time, Baby & Toddler group and Brownies, weekly during term time, Darts, Pilates/Keep fit, Dominoes, Bingo, Meppershall Players

and the Snooker club every week and the WI and Evergreens once or twice a month. Also there are regular Tea dances and coffee mornings. In addition to these regular users and events, there have been many other one off or annual events held in the hall, such as children's parties, wedding receptions and all the productions by the Meppershall Players. Where would all these take place if we didn't have a village hall?

It would be very helpful if a representative from each of the regular users of the hall could attend the meetings. For those groups currently not represented, nominations will gladly be accepted.

Also, the post of Chairman has still not been filled. With this role, there really isn't any need to have relevant experience in managing a village hall or local charity. All you need is enthusiasm, willingness to chair a short meeting every couple of months and a bit of additional time between the meetings to help "make things happen". If you feel this is something you could take on, please contact Dave Birch on 817014 or Karen Lucas on 811581 to let us know. We will be very pleased to hear from you.

As mentioned earlier, a number of the recent fundraising events have been very successful. The turnout for the quiz night and Tea dance was great. The build a guy day and bonfire night went off really well too, so thanks to everyone who supported these events. We hope you enjoyed them and thank you for doing your bit to keep the hall open! Watch this space and the notice boards in the village for further information on future fundraising events and help to keep your village hall open.

The Village Hall Committee

## **Footpaths across Polehanger Farm, Meppershall.**

We thought it would be helpful to outline where it is possible for the public to walk on land at Polehanger Farm and where there is no access. We will be endeavouring to make this clear with the use of signs at the junction of paths and farm tracks. This will enable all who want to continue enjoying this particular part of Bedfordshire to be quite clear where it is permissible to walk .

We enjoy our local countryside and being able to walk in it throughout the year. We are pleased that many people who live around Meppershall do too. We have a network of tracks across our land at Polehanger Farm, enabling farm machinery to get to our fields, but the presence of a track does not automatically mean that there is public access along it.

### **Public Footpaths**

You will see from the map that there are 3 public footpaths running through the farm. FP4 runs from Meppershall Village Hall , down Crackle Hill, along part of Woodhall Farm Drive and then to Campton across the river.

FP5 splits from FP4 and runs east along the top of Crackle Hill and then down towards Polehanger Farm before diagonally crossing the arable field in front of the farmhouse. It continues down towards the river along the grass track before going under the bypass and on into Shefford.

FP10/15 links these two paths along the southern bank of the river Hit.

Please note that there is **no public access** down the Polehanger Farm drive or through the farm buildings

### **Permissive Paths**

We have also put in place permissive paths. These are used at our discretion as landowners and have been registered at County Hall. They can be revoked by us. The permissive path links Shefford Rd at the north end of Meppershall Village, just beyond the Nursing Home entrance, to FP5 and FP4 described above.

Please note that it is our intention to continue to manage Nuns Wood for conservation objectives, including some replanting,, and that there is no public access to this Ancient Woodland .

### **Public Access**

In the fields that run alongside the River Hit and FP10/15, there is now a woodland planted where the dairy herd used to graze. There is Public Access through this woodland and this makes a pleasant contrast to the open field setting of the other paths.

In order for all walkers to continue enjoying the use of this path network at Polehanger Farm we would ask that the following points be recognised and followed.

1. Keep dogs under control and out of any growing crops
2. None of the paths are Bridleways and so horses do not have the right to pass along them. However we are happy for riders to use the stone tracks that are footpaths on the farm. We do not allow horses to use the cross field path, both for the safety of walkers and the avoidance of soil damage, or the grass tracks.
3. On no account are motorbikes or any other motor vehicles allowed to use the paths ; the only exception of course being those which are associated with the farm business.
4. Land may appear not to be cropped, or invitingly down to grass ; however this does not make it available for walkers. Environmental aspects of modern farming must be protected from public access, damage and disturbance.

We are aware of the problems that pedestrians have in walking up the hill to Meppershall from Shefford where there is no pavement, and we are in dialogue with the Parish Council about possible solutions to this.

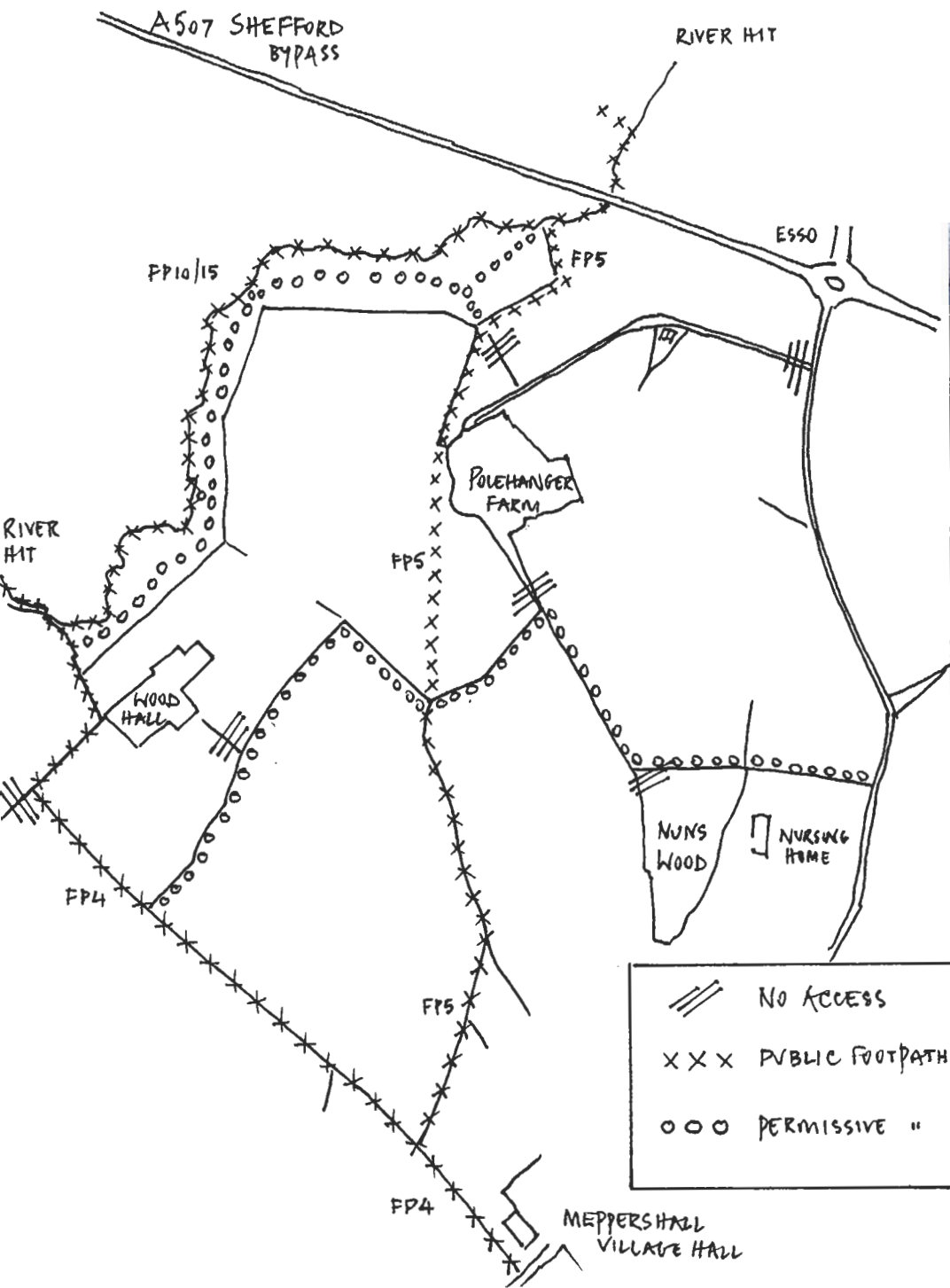
We hope that you will continue to enjoy walking on the footpath network at Polehanger Farm as much as we do.

With best wishes

Chris and Christine Foster









107 High Street  
Meppershall  
Shefford  
Bedfordshire  
SG17 5LZ

Headteacher: Mrs. M. Coomes

Telephone: 01462 813293  
e-mail: mepp@deal.bedfordshire.gov.uk

## Developments at the School

As Governors we have been working hard on behalf of the school to develop our school buildings.

In our last very good OFSTED inspection, the recommendations included, providing an accessible library and separate accommodation for our Foundation Stage Children. We also wish to develop our outside area with a covered enclosed space for our youngest children to explore. OFSTED also stated that we should provide better staff facilities, which we will do through our reorganisation of the rooms.

A generous amount of funding for this has been allocated by the Local Authority and the Diocese, but in order to access this, we have to find a percentage that amounts to £20,000. We are approaching various charities, companies and grant authorities and have already resourced a few thousand pounds in this way.

We are writing to you now to enlist your help in approaching companies or individuals who donate to charities. As a church school we have charitable status and can receive gift aid on the basis of, for every hundred pounds donated, we could claim an additional £28.00.

Our building work is due to start by January, possibly sooner and we hope to have it all completed and resourced by the end of the Summer Term.

Yours sincerely

Mrs M Evesham

On behalf of the School Governors



school  
achievement award  
Department for Education and Skills



Bedfordshire

## Meppershall Parish Council Report

Your Parish Council met on 1<sup>st</sup> November to discuss a number of items some of which I have highlighted below: -

### **Open Session**

At each meeting members of the public (Parishioners) are invited to question or address the Council on matters that concern them or the Village. Amongst the items discussed at this meeting was concern about the traffic disruption being caused in Fildyke Road by current construction works (see Planning). In addition the Clerk was asked to write to Stagecoach about their buses using excessive speed in the Village.

### **Finance**

Meppershall Lower School applied for a contribution towards the costs of building their new extension. There are a number of legal restrictions on how a Parish Council may spend its monies; the Clerk will investigate if assistance can be given for this purpose.

### **Planning & Housing**

One new application was presented to the meeting, which was passed with no objections.

The Parish Clerk reported that he had visited the Wheatley Homes site in Fildyke Road to enquire about numerous complaints that the Council had received. He was impressed by the response he received from the Site Manager who was very approachable and was keen to resolve any problems that were encountered. Unfortunately traffic congestion will continue to be a problem in Fildyke Road during the construction period because parking by contractors on site is not possible and neither is the scheduling of deliveries. He assured the Clerk any problems with particular individuals would be dealt with in an appropriate and speedy manner.

## **Highways & Lighting**

At the next meeting a representative of Aragon Housing Association will attend to discuss parking arrangements proposed for their Fildyke Road properties.

The Clerk is awaiting a response from Basil Jackson, Assistant Director Highways, Beds County Council on the long awaited traffic survey in the Village.

## **Environment & Leisure**

Work on refurbishment of the toddlers play area is planned to commence on 20<sup>th</sup> November.

## **Other Meetings Attended during the Month**

Councillors reported to the meeting on other meetings they had attended during October: -

Beds Police Authority Annual Presentation

Meppershall Village Hall AGM

BRCC Youth Participation Event

The Clerk attended the Conference of Society of Local Clerks

At the meeting in January the Council will finalise its plans, and set its Precept for the forthcoming year. Should you represent an organisation that you feel would benefit from a grant application to the Council, this should be sent to the Clerk as soon as possible.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that all Council meetings are open to the public. Your District and County Councillors who report to every meeting about District and County matters attend these. In every agenda there is always an opportunity for any member of the public to address or question the Council on any matter they wish.

Full copies of all the minutes of meetings are available on the village web site [www.meppershall.org](http://www.meppershall.org) and the current minutes are displayed on the notice board outside the Village Hall.

David Foskett  
Chairman

## **PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS**

At the recent open days for the Village Plan comments were made about the Secret Society called the Parish Council. While I accept we are not perfect, secret we are not. Details of all the regular meetings are published on the Village web site ([www.meppershall.org](http://www.meppershall.org)), in the Messenger, notices are placed in the notice boards outside the Village Hall and at the end of Taylors Close and the minutes of the previous meeting are placed in the Village Hall notice board. Members of the public are welcome to attend and are given 10 minutes near the beginning of the meeting to ask questions and raise points of interest. Our District and County Councillors are usually in attendance and the Village policeman, PC Steve Busby, attends every other month (his next visit should be at the December meeting).

Here is the real point of this article. In May 2007 all 10 Councillors are up for re-election after completing their four year spell on the Council and is then any parishioner over the age of 18 gets the chance to put themselves forward. It is always a struggle to get 10 people to stand; in fact there has not been an election for the Parish Council since 1991 so if you think you may be interested this is what you should do. Come to a couple of Parish Council meetings (next ones are 1<sup>st</sup> Nov and 6<sup>th</sup> Dec in the Chapel 7.45pm) to see what happens and ask the Councillors any questions you want. There are no Party Politics within the Parish Council and we are quite social lot with about half the members adjourning to the Social Club afterwards for a pint. Then if you are interested in standing for the Council get yourself nominated on the appropriate forms which will be available at the end of February, beginning of March 2007 from Mid-Beds District Council at their new offices at Chicksands. To help I will try and explain where decisions are made within local Government in next months Messenger.

If you have any questions come to a Council meeting or ring me, Peter Chapman, on 813497 – evenings please.

## ★ MEPPERSHALL PLAYERS ★

Have you got your tickets for the Pantomime? This year we are performing Hansel and Gretel on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> November 3pm, Friday 1<sup>st</sup>, Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> 7.45pm, Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> 2pm and 6pm, Thursday 7<sup>th</sup>, Friday 8<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December 7.45pm. Tickets are matinees £5, evenings £6 and £8 last performance. Tickets are available from Roger's Bakery, Meppershall but hurry! As due to popularity some performances are already sold out.

In this year's production along with the usual suspects, the Players have some very talented new members (seniors and juniors) performing panto at Meppershall for the first time, which we hope will be the first of many. Also, some new faces front of house and backstage who we hope will enjoy the panto experience as much as we always do.

Looking towards next year, as yet no-one has thrown their hat into the ring (so to speak) regarding directing, so if you fancy yourself as a Spielberg, Hitchcock, Mel Brooks or Busby Berkley give the Players a call or come to the hall on the relevant evening (see details below). We look forward to meeting you.

The Players would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year, and to thank the Messenger for enabling us to let the village know what we do and when we do it.

The Players meet every 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month and every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday at 8pm at the Village Hall. Our current membership fee is Juniors £2, Seniors £5 (per year) and we welcome anyone from the age of 9 to 90+ years to participate in any of the following activities; acting, set building, painting, costumes, directing, sound and lights, backstage, front of house. If any of the aforementioned appeals to you why not stroll over to the Village Hall or ring me, Karen Mitchell Players Secretary on 816336. We look forward to meeting you.





# Meppershall Players Present



a Pantomime by Norman Robbins

26<sup>th</sup> November Matinee 3 p.m.

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> December 7:45 p.m.

3<sup>rd</sup> December Matinees 2 p.m. & 6 p.m.

7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> December 7:45 p.m.



## Meppershall Village Hall

Tickets; Matinees £5 Evenings £6 Last Night £8

No Concessions on any Performance

Box Office: Rogers Bakery 01462 813398

## **Village Plan**

The first draft of the questionnaire has been completed and during this month it is being reviewed by the Steering Group and other volunteers. Amongst their tasks are to see that it is complete, reduce duplication and to make sure it is readable by the user. These simple sounding tasks take some considerable time to do.

All the noted suggestions must then be checked and where necessary incorporated into the document. Once we have the second draft we will check it for completeness, then it will be proof read before the final print copy will be ready.

Please bear with us whilst we go through all these stages, we feel very strongly that it is better to take a little time and get it right, rather than rush it and have a document that no one can understand or use.

John West

## **So You Like Fresh Veg!**

Many people have told us about how they like fresh vegetables, how they taste better than those from the supermarket and would like to do something about it. Well if you are willing to put in the time and effort, maybe an allotment is the thing you need?

The village has a thriving allotment field located behind the Sugar Loaf and there are allotments available and at very modest rents.

This may seem a strange time to be thinking about allotments, but now is the time to do all the preparation work, so that you are ready for the next growing season. (For this reason the rental year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> Oct one year to 30<sup>th</sup> September in the next.

If you want to know more then contact Phil Collins on 812274 (Phil looks after the allocation of the allotments), or myself on 813157.

John West for the Allotment Association



## MEPPERSHALL VILLAGE HALL



COFFEE MORNING

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December  
10am - 12 noon

~~CANCELLED~~



## CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS CRAFT DAY

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December  
10am - 3pm



£2 per child, includes present from Santa  
For more information, call Gemma on  
07870 697407

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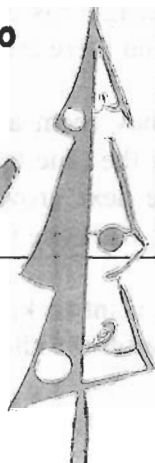
## MEPPERSHALL SOCIAL CLUB



New Year's Eve Disco  
Music by Andy Cannon



8pm 'til late  
OVER 18'S ONLY



MEPPERSHALL BABY & TODDLER

# **CHRISTMAS** **PARTY**

TUESDAY 19<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER

1.30 – 3.30pm

VILLAGE HALL



TICKETS ON SALE NOW

£1.50 PER CHILD

(UNDER 1'S £1)

INCLUDES FOOD & VISIT FROM  
SANTA

PARENT/CARER - PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR CHILDS  
WRAPPED PRESENT CLEARLY LABELED (UP TO VALUE £5)

RAFFLE

BOUNCY CASTLE

COME ALONG AND JOIN  
THE FUN



# MEPPERSHALL PRE SCHOOL

Meppershall Pre-school would like to say goodbye to Sam Hilton-Jones, Daisy Lucas, Emma Horsford and Cameron Heathfield who will be leaving Pre-school at Christmas. We wish them luck in their new schools and hope they enjoyed their time at Meppershall Pre-school.

From all the staff,

## *The Sugar Loaf*

*Christmas Eve Disco*  
8.30pm – 1am

*New Year's Eve Disco*

*Fancy Dress*  
8pm – 1.30am

*Everyone welcome!*





## MEPPERSHALL SOCIAL CLUB

### CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS EVE DISCO

6.30pm

£2 per child

(price includes present from Santa who will  
be visiting at 7.30pm)

Tickets available from Social Club or  
Sarah on 850817



Followed at 8pm 'til late by. . .

### FAMILY CHRISTMAS EVE DISCO

EVERYONE WELCOME !!!

*Christmas*

Music by Andy Cannon



## MEPPERSHALL W.I. November 2006

President Mrs. Gillian Thomas welcomed 28 members to the November meeting.

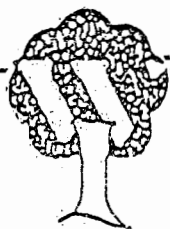
Future events include Christmas at Kew on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December – a traditional Christmas celebration including carols and seasonal fare (not included in cost). Coach leaves Bedford at 2pm and Kew at 9pm, cost £11.50 open to everyone on a first come first served basis. Christmas Tree Festival in St. Paul's Church Bedford - theme Christmas Pantomime Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December to Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December 10am – 6pm each day – 12.30 to 4.30 on Sunday, entrance £3 adults, children free raising funds for Chemotherapy Preparation Appeal.

No further news on the darts at present.

Following Gillian's request at our last meeting for members to come forward to form a new Committee next year, unfortunately no response was received and therefore our Branch will be closing in March 2007.

Our evening entertainment was provided by a group called Patchwork in Concert. They gave us a wonderful evening of songs, all well known and well loved, including some from musical shows plus some very humorous monologues and instrumental items performed on keyboard and drums. The evening concluded appropriately with "What a lovely way to spend an Evening" – it truly was and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone.

Our next meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> December will be our Christmas Party. Visitors and new members are always welcome.



## OPEN GARDENS 2007

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2007



Are you proud of your  
Garden?

Well how about sharing it with others whilst at the same time raising money for two worthy causes: Meppershall Lower School and St Mary's church.

All Meppershall residents are invited to take part in this village event no matter how large or small their garden. The plan is for the gardens at the Church-end of the village to be open on the Saturday afternoon and the gardens at the Shefford end open on the Sunday afternoon. This will cut down on the walking involved on each day and allow the "exhibitors" to see each other's gardens.

If you are be prepared to open your garden or to help raise additional funds by selling some of your unwanted plants, providing teas, running a tombola etc then please contact either:

Linda Parker – 116 Shefford Rd (01462 812144)  
Wendy Reece – 118 Shefford Rd (01462 816557)

**Let's make this a village event to remember**

## *Calendar of Forthcoming Events*

### **DECEMBER/JANUARY**

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<b>Friday 1st</b>	Meppershall Players Panto at Village Hall	7.45pm
<b>Saturday 2nd</b>	Meppershall Players Panto at Village Hall	7.45pm
<b>Sunday 3rd</b>	Meppershall Players Panto at Village Hall	2pm and 6pm
<b>Thursday 7th</b>	Meppershall Messenger AGM	2.15pm
	Meppershall Players Panto at Village Hall	7.45pm
<b>Friday 8th</b>	Meppershall Players Panto at Village Hall	7.45pm
<b>Saturday 9th</b>	Meppershall Players Panto at Village Hall	7.45pm
<b>Monday 11th</b>	Bible Society Group 5 Westfield Road, Henlow	7.45pm
<b>Tuesday 19th</b>	Meppershall Baby & Toddler Christmas Party at Village Hall	1.30pm
<b>Thursday 21st</b>	Meppershall Village Hall Children's Craft Day	10am
<b>Christmas Eve</b>	Meppershall Social Club Children's Disco Family Disco	6.30pm 8pm
	The Sugar Loaf - Disco	8.30pm
<b>New Year's Eve</b>	The Sugar Loaf - Disco Meppershall Social Club - Disco	8pm 8pm
<b>Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January</b>	Bible Society Group The Rectory, Meppershall	7.45pm
<b>Saturday 27th January</b>	Friends of St. Mary's Quiz Night, Village Hall	7.30pm

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## WHO'S WHO AND WHAT'S WHAT IN MEPPERSHALL

### CHURCHES

#### St. Mary's Parish Church

Rector:	Rev. John Harper	
	The Rectory, Church Road	813334
Church Wardens:	Mr. Brian Bellamy, 125 High Street	815944
	Mrs. Brenda Wright, 75 High Street	816446

#### Parochial Church Council

Secretary:	Mrs. Linda Chillman, 76 Shefford Road	850543
Treasurer:	Mr. D. Bartlett, 14 Taylors Close	811191

#### Methodist Chapel

Minister:	Rev. P. Snelson, 79 Ampthill Road, Shefford	813284
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#### Roman Catholic Church

Priest:	Father Bonnie Noonan	813436
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### SCHOOLS

Meppershall Lower School		813293
Henlow Middle School	Head	Mr. Payne 813733
Samuel Whitbread Upper School and Community College		629900
	Adult Education Tutor	Mrs. Robinson 629906

### DOCTORS

Cakebread & Partners, The Health Centre, Iveldale Drive, Shefford	814899
Puritz & Collins, The Surgery, 109 Station Road, Lower Stondon	850305

### LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES

County Councillor:	Cllr. Robin Younger	
	Jesmond House, High Street, Flitton	01525 717090
	Email: <a href="mailto:robin.younger@bedsec.gov.uk">robin.younger@bedsec.gov.uk</a>	
Surgery/Advice Centre: 1 <sup>st</sup> Friday each month (except August), Shefford Library 10am – 11.30am		
District Councillor:	Mr. Paul Carne, 6 Hoo Road, Meppershall	857803
	Email: <a href="mailto:paul.carne@midbeds.gov.uk">paul.carne@midbeds.gov.uk</a>	Fax: 01462 857804
District Councillor:	Mr. Tony Rogers, 3 Poppyhill, Henlow	816305
	Email: <a href="mailto:tony.rogers@midbeds.gov.uk">tony.rogers@midbeds.gov.uk</a>	Fax: 01462 816510
Parish Council meets 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday each month, Methodist Chapel at 7.45pm		
Chairman:	Mr. David Foskett, 11 Orchard Close	851770
Clerk:	Mr. C. Waghorn, 15 Church Lane, Letchworth	637531
	Email: <a href="mailto:waggers.uk@ntlworld.com">waggers.uk@ntlworld.com</a>	
Member of Parliament:	Mrs. Nadine Dorries, House of Commons	
	London SW1A 0AA	0207 2194239
Member of Euro Parliament:	Christopher Beazley (Con)	
	C/o Herts & Stotfold Conservative Ass, 4a Swains Mill	
	Crane Mead, Ware, Herts. SG12 9PY	01920 463064

### SHOPS

Roger's Bakery & General Store (next to School)		
	Mon-Fri 8.15am – 5.30pm / Sat 8am – 1.30pm	813398
Post Office & Village Store, 6 High Street		
Post Office:	Mon-Fri 9am – 1pm & 2pm – 5.30pm (half day Sat)	
Shop:	Mon-Thurs 6am – 6pm, Friday 6am – 7pm	
	Saturday 6.30am – 7pm, Sunday 6.30am – 1pm	

### PUB

The Sugar Loaf	25 High Street (Mark Askham)	07724 243109
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## ORGANISATIONS

### Meppershall Village Hall Committee

Treasurer:	Mr. D. Birch	817014
Secretary:	Karen Lucas, 51A High Street	811581
Booking Secretary:	Kate Hall, Culpeper House, Chapel Road	812869
Village Hall Telephone Number		817359

<u>Babysitting Circle</u>	Mrs. Sharon Edwards	814326
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<u>Brownies</u>	Mondays 6pm - 7.30pm	Village Hall	
Brown Owl:	Mrs. Christine Elbourne		811964
Snowy Owl:	Mrs. Suzanne Brightwell		815752

### Beavers

	Tuesdays 6.30pm - 7.30pm	Shefford Scouts HQ	
Leader:	Mrs. Hayley Henshall		817446
Leader (Shillington):	Jan Montgomery		712386

<u>Bingo</u>	Fridays 7pm	Village Hall
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### Mid Beds Conservative Association

Chairman:	Mrs. Pippa McLuskie, 4 Stondon Road	813417
Secretary:	Mrs. G. Bird	811260

### Cubs

Shefford	Wednesdays	6.45pm	David Cousins	811441
Shillington			Pauline Goodman	711943

<u>Evergreen</u> (over 60s)	Alternate Thursdays 2.30pm	Village Hall	
	Miss E. Ashton (Poppy), 20 Fildyke Road		07931 636544

### Friends of St. Mary's Church

Chairman:	Mr. Trevor Thorley, 9 Hoo Road	813357
Secretary:	Jill Wright, 9 Rectory Road	850253
Treasurer:	Mr. H. Davies, 15 Hoo Road	812127

<u>Shefford Leisure Group</u>	Mrs. Enid Pamment, 112 High Street	851397
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### Meppershall Players (Amateur Dramatic Society)

Contact:	John Nye	814113
Secretary:	Karen Mitchell, 11 Crackle Hill Road	816336
Treasurer:	Lin Hurst	811533

### Meppershall School Association

Chairperson:	Gail Fairey	817594
Vice-Chairperson:	Lorraine Jarvis	811216
Secretary:	Lisa Frost	851058

### Meppershall Social Club

	(see Notice Board for opening times)	
Chairman:	Mr. G.R. Walker, 37 Brookmead	815183

<u>Meppershall Baby &amp; Toddler</u>	Tuesdays 2pm – 3.30pm	Village Hall	
Chairman:	Claire Penney		850987
Secretary:	Louise Hutson		814148
Treasurer:	Nicola Metcalfe		816785

<u>Meppershall Pre-School</u>	Monday – Friday 9.30am – 12 noon	Village Hall	
Chairman:	Marian Fairweather		814516
Secretary:	Michelle Nesbitt		812102
Registrar:	Viv Thorne		850821

<u>Scouts</u>			
Shefford	Diane Landau	01234	381153
Shillington	Paul Major		834251

<u>Tennis</u> (at Langford)	Neil Franklin		815735
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<u>Womens Institute</u>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday in month 7.30pm	Village Hall	
President:	Barbara Horwood, 8 Rectory Road		816177
Secretary:	Doreen Pritchard	Press Secretary: Betty Mather	

### AMENITIES

Banks	Barclays, 6 North Bridge Street, Shefford	01438 202122
	Monday – Friday 9.30am – 4.30pm	
Dentist	Mr. Lakhani, High Street, Shefford	814020
Fishmonger	Les Braithwaite (Mobile Van) – Thursdays approx 11.45am	
Greengrocer	Nigel Mann (Mobile Van) – Fridays 2pm – 6pm	711802
Hedgehog Rescue	Beds & Herts Hedgehog Rescue – call Jeanette	711370
Mobile Library (alternate Wed)	High Street/School 1.55pm – 2.10pm	
	Village Hall 2.15pm – 2.30pm	
	Fildyke Road 2.35pm – 2.50pm	
Library	High Street, Shefford	639070
Kennels/Cattery	Wayside, Chapel Road	813261
Newspapers	Meppershall Village Stores & PO	811252
Plumbers	Alan Dellar	814584
Police	Emergencies/Police attendance required	01234 841212
	Shefford Police Post (non emergencies)	Or 01582 471212
		01234 841212
Livery Yard & Training Centre	Caroline Carter, Fildyke Road	07747 686118
Whitbread Wanderbus		701700

## **THE FRIENDS OF St. MARY'S**

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2007**

**QUIZ NIGHT**

**Village Hall, 7pm for 7.30pm**

**BAR, RAFFLE, PRIZES**

**Tickets At £5 from Trevor Thorley 813357**

**The Rectory 813334, Roger's Bakery,**

**The Post Office and Committee Members**

**Enjoy the experience of friendly village  
rivalry. Do come along and join in the fun.  
You will be most welcome.**

***Are you in need of someone to talk to?***

***For a Confidential, Non-Judgemental, Respectful, Low  
Cost Counselling Service***

***Based in Clifton, Please Telephone***

***Pat, on 01462 816575***

# The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin Meppershall

## SERVICES for December and January

For more information please ring 01462 813334

(Rev John Harper, Rector of Meppershall and Shefford  
The Rectory, Church Rd, Meppershall )

### Sun Dec 3 Advent Sunday

11.15a.m. Parish Communion; Sunday School at  
Rectory for 3- 12's

6p.m. **Christingle** for Advent

The candlelit 'Christingle' this year will have an Advent flavour to it, though as usual will focus on the giving of lighted 'christingles' to all young people. United Benefice Junior Choir. Collecting containers for the work of the Children's Society will be available from School and Rectory. Ring 01462 813334.

### Sun Dec 10 8.30 Holy Communion

11.15a.m. Family Service.

- afternoon and early evening -the annual **Father Christmas float** visits the streets of Meppershall. Please give him a festive welcome

3pm United service at the Methodist Chapel

### Sun Dec 17 8.30 Holy Communion

6p.m. **Christmas Carol and Lessons**, Joint adult and United Benefice Junior Choir. (adults invited to join rehearsal Weds 6<sup>th</sup>, 7-8.30p.m. and Sun 17, 3-4p.m). see over

**Weds Dec 20 7p.m. 'Traditional Nativity'** - performed by the people of Meppershall, including seasonal refreshments. Bring a lantern or torch (pencil torches for sale at door). Tickets £2.50 from Post Office, Bakery and Rectory. Info - Pat 851609 - see over

### Sun Dec 24 - Christmas Eve 8.30 Holy Communion

11.15 **Crib Service** - the Christmas story around the crib for the young at heart. See over

11.30p.m. **Midnight Mass**

Mon 25      11.15a.m. Christmas Day Family Communion

Sun 31.      9.45a.m. United Benefice Family Communion at St Michael's Shefford, with breakfast from 9a.m. - please ask for lifts - 813334 (united services are held whenever there is a 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in the month at alternate venues).

Sun Jan 7    Epiphany 1. 11.15a.m. Parish Communion;  
Sunday School at Rectory for 3- 12's

Sun 14      Epiphany 2. 8.30 Holy Communion  
11.15a.m. Family Service.

Sun 21      Epiphany 3. 8.30 Holy Communion  
6p.m. Evensong

Sun 28      Epiphany 4 8.30 Holy Communion  
11.15a.m. Family Communion and Sunday School

#### Weekday services....

Wednesdays    10a.m. Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

Fridays          7.30p.m. Compline (night prayer 15 mins)

Saturdays       9.30a.m. Morning Prayer (20 mins)

The Alpha course in Shefford continues on Monday evenings with supper at 7.15p.m. at Shefford Baptist Church. This course is endorsed by all the Shefford churches. Not too late to take part, though a further course will take place in 2007. For more details please contact Phil Vass on 01462 626101 or [shefford.alpha@ntlworld.com](mailto:shefford.alpha@ntlworld.com).

#### Also in Shefford:

An ecumenical service of prayer for healing and wholeness takes place at St Francis RC Church on Tues Jan 23, 7.30p.m. All are welcome. These services take place quarterly, and are held in rotation in each of the town's four churches.

To view details of events at St Mary's sister parish of St Michael's and All Angels Shefford in the United Benefice see [www.sm3a.org.uk](http://www.sm3a.org.uk).

John Harper

Dear friends,

This is a Christmas and New Year edition, and our thoughts are naturally tied up with these special (and expensive!) times. Having said that, even though Christmas lights and advertising have been with us for weeks, most of December is marked in Christian eyes by another season, namely Advent (Dec 3rd-24<sup>th</sup>). Perhaps you or your children use an Advent calendar, and enjoy the fun of seeing what each day will reveal, chocolate goodies or whatever. But the word Advent takes us further - it is linked with adventure, and its purpose is to remind us of the adventure of living with a sense of anticipation - the prospect of what God is yet to reveal to us. The Lord who became a child in Bethlehem will come in a new way to make sense of all that has gone before. He will come to make sure that God's righteousness - his gracious justice connects with his creation for all time and beyond time.

Many find this is a difficult or uncomfortable theme and so choose to ignore it, preferring immersion in the busy-ness of all the Christmas goings on. And yet the gospels, indeed the whole New Testament, presses home that God's judgement is to come, and that it will be expressed through what we know of God in Jesus Christ.

In one sense our judgement has already begun. The choices we make, the compassion we express, the lifestyle we pursue, all help to shape the person God sees. So Advent isn't simply a reminder that at some distant point there will be a heavenly 'final's' to sit. Advent comes to help us recognise that there is in fact 'no time like the present'.

This overlooked Advent season invites us to look at ourselves afresh. To see, as though through God's eyes, what Christ will make of us when he comes in glory. This is the time for preparation, not just for Christmas, but for the adventure of eternity.

With every good wish for the 3 weeks of Advent, the 12 days of Christmas, and then a very Happy new Year.

## Candlelit CHRISTINGLE

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December at 6pm

St. Mary's, Meppershall

Start preparations for Christmas with an  
**EXPERIENCE FOR ALL THE FAMILY**

Hear the story of the Christingle.

Carol singing and The Junior Choir.

**CHRISTINGLES** will be given to all children.

You may bring a torch or lantern.

Collecting candles available from

Meppershall School and The Rectory.

Donations made are for The Children's Society.

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## THE VILLAGE CAROL SERVICE



With the Villagers Christmas Choir.

Join with Meppershall's very own Christmas  
Choir to worship God in our magnificent,  
medieval church. Sing Christmas Carols and  
hear the Christmas Story afresh.

**SUNDAY 17<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 6pm**

Mince pies and refreshments will be served  
afterwards.

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# Traditional Nativity

PERFORMED

BY THE PEOPLE OF MEPPERSHALL

starring

Mick Trundle as an angel !!

*or is he a cherub !?!*

Wed.  
20<sup>th</sup> Dec. 7pm

at

**St. MARY'S**

**TICKETS: £2.50 from P.O. & BAKERY  
inc. HEAVENLY REFRESHMENTS**

**BRING A LANTERN or TORCH**

**MORE INFO: Pat 851609 The Rectory 813334**



# CHRISTMAS EVE CRIB SERVICE

Christmas Eve is a special time for everyone  
ESPECIALLY OUR CHILDREN.



This year St. Mary's is having a **CRIB SERVICE** especially for our children and their families. There will be opportunities for children and their families to:

- gather round the CRIB to hear the Christmas Story
- to decorate star biscuits either to eat or to hang on the Christmas tree
- to hear The UB Junior Choir and to sing carols

## CRIB SERVICE

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December 11.15am – 12noon





**ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH  
HIGH STREET, SHEFFORD**

**CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2006**

**CHRISTMAS EVE:**

Masses 9.00am and 11.00am

Confessions after the Morning Masses

3.00pm – 3.30pm

Childrens Mass: 6.00pm

Carols: 11.30pm, followed by

Midnight Mass

**CHRISTMAS DAY:**

Masses: 9.00am and 11.00am

No Evening Mass.



**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI  
CATHOLIC CHURCH  
HIGH STREET, SHEFFORD**

**Sunday Masses**

First Mass of Sunday

Saturday Evening

6pm

9am

5.15pm

RAF Henlow

Shefford

Shefford

Weekday Services

Parish Priest:

Fr. Bennie Noonan 813436

See notice at Church or telephone

Parish Secretary:

Rose Boulton 811547

2006 is fast drawing to a close, with the festivities for Christmas and the New Year about to begin. We would like to take this opportunity of wishing the local community, family and friends a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. During 2006 we had many successful day trips which included one or two tours London with knowledgeable and humorous guides. Amongst them being a tour of Wellington Barracks and Hampstead Heath and Kenwood House. Other day trips covered the River Deben which included a boatman's lunch, a tour of the BBC Television Centre, Bletchley Park, The Fens and Villages which included the butterfly park. Theatre and musical trips included the ever popular Mickie Driver with his roast lunch and variety shows, Wickstead Park where we also enjoyed a ride on the carousel. London theatres included Sinatra, Billy Elliott, Friday Night is Music Night, Disney on Ice and most recently the wonderful performance of Swan Lake on Ice, performed at the Milton Keynes theatre. Holidays and short breaks were spent in the Lake District and Sicily. During the remainder of 2006 we have two full coaches visiting the ever popular Thursford Spectacular, a Turkey & Tinsel visit to Folkestone. We will then be singing carols around the Christmas Tree at Kew Gardens and the time of going to press there are still a few seats available on the coach for a festive day at Wimpole Hall on 17<sup>th</sup> December. This will bring our year to a close.

2007 starts with our usual visit to Milton Keynes theatre for their Pantomime Cinderella. A tour of London Docklands has been arranged for the 21<sup>st</sup> February. A further visit has been arranged to Mickie Driver for lunch and 'Memories of the Minstrels show' (21<sup>st</sup> March). Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> March will be our Annual 'Get Together' where we will present a cheque to Keech Cottage Children's Hospice. Holidays to include Toronto and Niagara Falls in April and the Isle of Wight in October. Raffles are held on trips in aid of Keech Cottage Children's Hospice and we would like to thank everyone for their raffle donations. We are a friendly group and everyone is welcome! For further information please contact Enid on 01462 851397 – Why not come and give us a try!

*Creating opportunities with disabled people*

**LEONARD CHESHIRE** 

Although it's only just past Bonfire night as this is being written, this has prompted me to think about Christmas and the new year fast approaching and also give rise to reflection on the past twelve months.

We get so much pleasure and support from the community, both around us in Ampthill and further afield - now seems a fitting time to say a very big **thank you** to all our friends volunteers and all the very kind people who do so much to make residents, staff and the service of Leonard Cheshire feel so supported. With such involvements and commitments all of us at Agate house find our lives to be enriched and so much more enjoyable and fun. We do greatly value all that everyone does for us and look forward to very many more happy times ahead.

Our sincere thanks to everyone and our very best wishes for a very **Happy Christmas & a Peaceful New Year.**

## **Mobile Phones - Functionality that you may not know about.....**

- The Emergency Number worldwide for a mobile phone is 112. If you find yourself out of coverage area of your mobile network and there is an emergency, dial 112 and the mobile will search any existing network to establish the emergency number for you, and this number can be dialled even if the keypad is locked.

- Have you locked your keys in the car? Does your car have remote keys? Have you left the spare set of keys at home? If so, call someone at home on their cell phone from your cell phone. Hold your cell phone about a foot from your car door and have the person at your home press the unlock button, holding it near the mobile phone on their end. Your car will unlock. Distance is no object - you could be miles away.

- Imagine your cell battery is very low, you are expecting an important call and you don't have a charger. Nokia instrument comes with a reserve battery. To activate, press the keys \*3370# and your cell will restart with this reserve and the instrument will show a 50% increase in battery. This reserve will get charged when you charge your cell next time.

- How to disable a stolen mobile phone. To check your mobile phone's serial number, key in the following digits on your phone \*#06# and a 15 digit code will appear on the screen. This number is unique to your handset. Make a note of it and if your phone gets stolen you can phone your service provider and give them this code. They will then be able to block your handset so even if the thief changes the SIM card, your phone will be totally useless. You probably won't get your phone back, but at least you know that whoever stole it can't use/sell it either. If everybody does this, there would be no point in people stealing mobile phones!





**A very HAPPY BIRTHDAY to those of you  
celebrating birthdays in December ...**

Ellie Roberts who will be 8 on the 1<sup>st</sup>  
Lee Britton who will be 4 on the 7<sup>th</sup>  
Andrew Blaxell who will be 15 on the 9<sup>th</sup>  
Megan Myers who will be 3 on the 9<sup>th</sup>  
Hugo Norris who will be 4 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
Eliza Norris who will be 9 on the 15<sup>th</sup>  
Adam Parrish who will be 11 on the 20<sup>th</sup>  
Benjamin Jarvis who will be 6 on the 24<sup>th</sup>  
Daniel Adams who will be 12 on the 27<sup>th</sup>  
Bethany Daniel who will be 12 on the 31<sup>st</sup>  
Nathan Fleetwood who will be 12 on the 31<sup>st</sup>

**...and those celebrating in January**

Harry Rose who will be 4 on the 5<sup>th</sup>  
Glen Fergus who will be 14 on the 9<sup>th</sup>  
Scott Bray who will be 11 on the 9<sup>th</sup>  
Ewan Cooper who will be 9 on the 10<sup>th</sup>  
Sam German who will be 3 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
Georgia Rose who will be 8 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
Rachel Holmes who will be 9 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
Matthew Bull who will be 10 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
Georgia Edwards who will be 10 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
Ryan Bray who will be 10 on the 18<sup>th</sup>  
Luke Britton who will be 9 on the 20<sup>th</sup>  
James Frost who will be 10 on the 21<sup>st</sup>  
Joshua Savory who will be 11 on the 25<sup>th</sup>  
Emily Frost who will be 6 on the 28<sup>th</sup>

If you are under 16 and would like your name added to  
the birthday page, please call Tracey Norris on 815 694