



Arms of the de  
Meppershall Family

# THE MEPPERSHALL MESSENGER



**VOLUME 25 - Issue 9**  
**FEBRUARY 2010**

Meppershall Village Website: [www.meppershall.org](http://www.meppershall.org)

# THE MEPPERSHALL MESSENGER

## CONTRIBUTIONS

The editor welcomes contributions to the Messenger, whether as letters, articles or notices. Contributions should preferably be as attachments to e-mail but hand written contributions may be sent by post, left at the Editor's address below or in the folder kept at the Village

Stores. Contributions should run to not more than one A5 page<sup>th</sup> (except by prior arrangement) and should be received by the Editor not later than the 12 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 ad 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 advert, 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 advert, article or any other contribution published in this magazine.

## THE TEAM

Editor:	Dick Bulley, 116 Shefford Road	815114
	E-mail: richard@bulleyr.fsnet.co.uk	
Advertising Manager:	Christine Elbourne, 5 St. Mary's Place	817409
	Email: mail@elbourne.co.uk	
Distribution Manager:	Colette House, 90 Fildyke Road	815585
	Email: cih@freenet.co.uk	
Treasurer:	John Thompson, 16 Brookmead	812983
	Email: jthompson244@btinternet.com	

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## **EDITORIAL**

It is only mid January as I write this, but all the Christmas razzmatazz seems months ago already. That must be partly because our minds were concentrated on problems caused by the snow; special thanks to all who kept the village running. And it did run - or at least, stepped cautiously - it is just a pity that the school could not open on the worst days. A pity, too, that for some the bad weather just creates an opportunity for crime: see readers' letters. See also the crime perpetrated against vulnerable old people (Ringmaster, page 28); when conditions are bad we really do need to think about people who cannot cope as well as we can.

Not surprisingly, there are several mentions in this issue to the very sad passing of one of our real Village notables: Michael Foster. It may be a sign of the season that Your Shout is given over entirely to Obituaries, including Michael's. We also plan to go ahead with the piece on Michael that was planned as part of the Nonagenarians feature in our souvenir issue and will now be our tribute to him.

That special issue is at last nearing completion (see page 5), thanks to the flow of contributions that became almost a flood at the last minute.

May I direct your attention to no less than 2 appeals from The Messenger Committee: on page 16 we have the notice of our AGM in April and an invitation for everyone to attend. In past years we have seen only a very faithful few, so let us change that this year. Perhaps the offer of free wine and bakery hot-cross-buns will do the trick!

Then on page 17 we are inviting volunteers to work on The Messenger itself, either as an Assistant Editor or as our Youth Editor. Your Committee works very hard to bring you the messenger each month, and from the feedback we get, you like the result. So come and join us; we can always do with fresh ideas and the opportunity to spread the load a little will be really appreciated.

Dick Bulley

## LETTERS

### Louise Bryce

*(Louise the Post they might call her in Wales) would like to tell the village that she is back in the land of the living (just about!) and wishes everyone a very Happy New Year. She would also like to thank everyone who sent her cards and good wishes when she was down with swine flu, as she will not be able to thank all of them personally.*

*(And we would like to thank Louise and all her colleagues who kept up postal deliveries when virtually all other services had given up! Ed)*

---

Trundle Towers,  
27/12/09.

The Editor,  
The Meppershall Messenger.

Dear Sir,

I have to say that I am somewhat perplexed by the actions of a certain dog walker who exercises his animals along the track behind the Village Hall and close to my estate.

This individual having gone to the trouble of picking up his dog's detritus and bagging it up then leaves the bag under the hedgerow. This is repeated for a number of days until there is quite a collection; presumably he thinks that sometime in the next millennium this stuff will disintegrate, or (as happened recently) some kind soul will pick it up for him and deposit it in the correct place

Regards

Mick Trundle

*(The original letter included various well known "Trundlisms" which the editor was not able to put into print! The gist was that Mick is concerned about recent crime in the Village. It would seem from PC Busby's report to the Parish Council meeting (see page 8) that Mick has a point. Ed)*

## **BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL**

This year (November 2009) we raised £1,034.27. Thanks to all who gave so generously.

Joyce Harris  
Village Organiser.

Letter from Dora Surridge

I would like to thank all the kind people who have helped me, and my late husband, to enjoy the 25 years spent among you.

This will come too late for Christmas greetings but I wish everyone a happy and healthy New Year.

Dora

### **Spiteful crime in the snow.**

I am afraid it should be reported that on 22nd December an elderly gentleman was driving his car along a road near us, unaware of the 'road closed' notice; he became stuck in the snow. Rather shaken he knocked on our door, but even with the assistance of spades etc. could not release his vehicle. My husband escorted the gent home, but with the weather conditions, the vehicle could not be released until we had a little rain when, in the dark and with manual work, they managed to dig the vehicle out. Unfortunately upon inspection what we thought was ice was a broken window with glass on the seat. We drove it to our drive and covered up the window only then to find a dent in the bodywork, wing mirror wrenched off, likewise the aerial. Inside the vehicle, a present of beer had been taken, also a mobile phone and a tom-tom. This incident has been reported. I just hope it has played on the conscience of whoever was responsible (if they have one!).

Name and address supplied.

## **COVER COMPETITION**

Well, this month it had to be snow! And we had quite a few snowy entries: thank you all very much.

The judges chose one which is clearly recognisable (the village sign is a dead give-away!) and is also beautifully composed, with that little bit of colour to give relief from the general bluey/white.

And this month's snapper is (again) John Chapman. (He's not on the staff, honest!)

By the time of the March issue we could be hoping for the first signs of Spring, so please keep those entries coming.

## **25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

This special issue now actually exists; indeed it is nearing completion! I would like to offer grateful thanks for all the pictures and the written pieces that have flowed in during November and December. We set out to produce a 40 page booklet: that had to be revised to 48 pages and now it looks as though it might be nearer 60! And that is all because of the fascinating material that you in the Village have provided.

However, you will have to wait a little longer to see it: we now aim to distribute it together with the regular March issue, so that it will mark our actual 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. And when it comes, there will be some very small birthday presents too, with the compliments of The Messenger, to say thank you for the support that alone makes this magazine possible.

## **SHEFFORD LEISURE GROUP**

During November, the Leisure Group made their way on three separate occasions to the Christmas Spectacular at Thursford. It is hard to believe, in this really 'wintery' weather, that those journeys were taken in the sunshine. The show as usual was great and we all left with that 'good factor'. Our new coffee stop was a success and the meal at 'The Norfolk Hero' was as good as ever. The weather certainly was not as kind on the day of the Lord Mayor's Show, but never the less it was still enjoyable, although it was disappointing that the fireworks had to be cancelled due to high winds.

By special request we changed the timing for all our trips to Milton Keynes theatre, thus giving the opportunity for shopping and a spot of lunch before the matinee performance. This time it was to see 'Dreamcoats and Petticoats' which had us 'rocking in the aisles'.

Very high winds were the order of the week for our pre-Christmas break at The Midland Hotel, Weston Super Mare. However, the hotel made us feel welcome with excellent food, warm rooms and excellent entertainment.

In conjunction with Stevenage Group Travel, we visited Welney for the feeding of the Swans; always an interesting venue. We also joined them for an annual visit to The Royal Albert Hall for John Rutter's Christmas celebration concert - another inspiring event.

The Leisure Group ended the year with a visit to 'The Music Museum' to hear the mighty Wurlitzer Organ in a concert of Christmas music, after which we were treated to sherry and a mince pie, before our guide took us around London to see an amazing array of lights down tiny streets. We also visited Brick Lane Music Hall for a satisfying Christmas lunch before being entertained to a Christmas show which included Craig Douglas, the first of the great British pop stars. We will not mention the journey home, except to say it was horrendous!!!! Snow! Traffic Jams - need we say more!

## Forthcoming Events 2010

Holiday on Ice - Peterborough	Saturday 6 <sup>th</sup> February
Mystery Weekend	Fri. 19 <sup>th</sup> - Mon. 22 <sup>nd</sup> February
That'll be the Day, Grove Theatre, <u>Dunstable</u>	Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> February
Mountbatten Festival of Music, Royal Albert Hall	Friday evening 5 <sup>th</sup> March
Get Together' Memorial Hall,	Saturday 27 <sup>th</sup> March
Ham o' Sheffprodn Court	Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> April
Palace	Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> April
Camden Market, London	Saturday 15 <sup>th</sup> May
Buddy Holly - Grove Theatre, Dunstable	Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> May
Tour of the Cotswolds (with Guide)	Saturday 29 <sup>th</sup> May
Chelsea Flower Show	June (TBA)
Forty Hall & Gardens	7 <sup>th</sup> - 14 <sup>th</sup> August

Rivers of Wine (Cruise)

If you are not sure whether to be a subscriber of the Shefford Leisure Group, why not come along to our Annual 'Get Together' where you will have the opportunity of meeting people from various communities. Enjoy a super buffet, entertainment and the presentation of a cheque to Keech Hospice Care (for children.

For all holidays, which include hotel accommodation, Shefford Leisure Group acts as an agent for the Tour Operator, their terms and conditions apply.

Enid Pamment  
Shefford Leisure Group

*(Shefford Leisure Group is open to everyone in the local community who feels they would like to join us on our ventures. We are always happy to meet new friends. Raffles are held and the proceeds are for Keech Cottage Children's Hospice. For further information regarding dates, prices and availability or to receive our monthly newsletter, please contact Enid on*

01462 851397 or e-mail [Enidpamment@aol.com](mailto:Enidpamment@aol.com).)



## **Meppershall Parish Council Report**

This report covers the December 09 and January 10 meetings of the Parish Council which were held at Meppershall Lower School.

At the December meeting PC Busby gave us a rundown on the crimes committed in the Parish during November. At seven incidents it was highest for sometime and included two burglaries committed at about the same time.

### **Highways & Lighting** (spokesman Cllr. Roger Bryant)

The drain in Shefford Road has now been repaired along with, at last, the manhole cover in the path in the High Street. The hole in Chapel Road, near the waterworks, has been reported but the bad weather has stopped minor jobs being repaired. All problems caused by the bad weather will be reported as soon as they are known.

### **Environment & Leisure** (spokesman Cllr. Paul Merryweather)

The play equipment, which is the responsibility of the Parish Council, will now be checked by an independent company every 3 months.

Six companies were asked to submit a price to cut the grass in and around the Parish. The preferred bidder was not the cheapest but did have direct supervision on site so that problems can be resolved quickly. This was not the case with the previous contractor.

Following the complaint regarding the gate at the entrance to the allotment land the gate is going to be moved further up the track and replaced by a height restrictor.

The seat on Foster's Field has been repaired following the vandalism by local youngsters at a cost of £110.

**Planning & Housing** (spokesman Cllr. Peter Chapman)

December - One application for change of use and conversion of the Methodist Chapel into a single dwelling. No objections provided the front aspect of the building is retained along with the date stones.

January - One application for change of use from business to residential. The land off Campton Road is very close to Campton. Objection; due to the land being outside the development envelope.

**Finance** (spokesman Cllr. David Foskett)

The Council agreed a precept for 2010/11 of £37,000

**Health & Safety** (spokesman Cllr. Michael Castle)

Comments were passed about the state of the roads and paths in the Parish during the recent bad weather. The Council agreed to obtain a price for additional salt bins and to look into the possibility and price for clearing the paths during period of snow. Once a price is known Parishioners will be asked via these reports if they are prepared to fund the expenditure through the precept.

Peter Chapman  
Chairman of Meppershall Parish Council

The next two Parish Council meetings will be held on Wednesday 3rd February and March 3rd at Meppershall Lower School commencing at 7.45pm.

## YOUR SHOUT

### **JOHN LOUIS PETER ROSSI**

(known simply to his family and friends as Peter), passed away on November 21 aged 78.

Peter was born in Broom in 1930 and at the age of 13 he won a scholarship to the Luton Technical College. At the age of 14 he took a holiday job with H.A. Wright and upon leaving school was taken on in full time employment after serving a four-year apprenticeship.

National Service followed which led to a posting to Khartoum in 1942 where he attained the rank of Warrant Officer. Keen on many sports such as running, swimming, football and boxing; with the latter he became the Middle East Forces Champion. He later boxed at Seymour Hall London where he collected more trophies.

His football career with Shefford earned him many accolades and it was written in the Daily Telegraph of December 18, 1954, in Shefford's best season to date, that Peter Rossi, their centre forward had scored 26 goals in only 10 appearances.

Peter and Sheila (the boss's daughter) got together when Peter returned to H.A. Wright, with the relationship developing and culminating in marriage in September 1955. They had three daughters, Christine, Susan and Anne.

In 1969 they purchased a plot of land in Meppershall and built the bungalow in which Sheila continues to live.

When Sheila's father retired Peter took over the business.

Peter was always recognised as a hard worker. He was always willing to help others and the business continued to flourish until he too retired.

He was cheerful, and forever optimistic, believing that life was good and there was never any need to worry about anything, believing that all would eventually work out well.

Peter was a big man, with a big heart and a huge sense of humour.

...oOo...

## **MICHAEL HENRY FOSTER:**

An extremely popular man in the village, Michael passed away peacefully, at home, on Wednesday December 30 aged 95 years. He was dearly loved by his family and by his devoted wife Kathleen of 62 years and will surely be missed by them.

He will be remembered as the owner and resident of Polehanger Farm until retiring some years ago and passing the business on to his son Christopher (Chris), who now writes the regular piece for the messenger. Many will also remember Michael for all the sterling work he did on the Parish Council, both as Chairman and Parish Councillor. Michael's Funeral took place on Monday, January 18 in St. Mary's Church followed by his burial in the churchyard.



*This picture of Michael & Kathleen was taken at the Village Fayre in July 2009*

...oOo...

**WINTER SNOW:** We are currently experiencing prolonged severe weather, not seen for many years. Let me know your experiences, how you have coped, with any helpful tips you can pass on to others. Have a great 2010!

Trevor Thorley (01462 813357) [trevor.thorley1@btinternet.com](mailto:trevor.thorley1@btinternet.com)

## **School Report**

### **Meppershall VA Lower School**

### **'An Outstanding Church of England School'**

Christmas at Meppershall School is always a wonderful time. This Christmas was no exception as we celebrated our 'Victorian Christmas' with many memorable experiences. As I mentioned in my last newsletter, we were awaiting a special visit. In addition to a visitor in red and white with a long beard, we were privileged to welcome another famous visitor a few weeks before. Ruth Goodman from the BBC's 'Victorian Farm' series spent the afternoon with us, talking about living the life of a Victorian farmer's wife for a year. She showed us the clothes she wore for the series. The children were especially interested in the underwear, particularly the authentic Victorian corset! It was a happy coincidence that the BBC chose to produce a 'Victorian Christmas' of its own which was shown over the Christmas period. Ruth answered many keen questions from the older pupils, played parlour games with the younger children and promised to wave back at us from the telly!



After their own research and equipped with authentic costumes, the children were then ready for their own Victorian Christmas production. A cast of characters including Parlour maids, chimney sweeps and lamplighters performed spectacularly. It was then time for the younger children to tell a story within the story by reminding us of the real meaning of Christmas in a traditional Christmas Nativity play.

Well done to all the children .You surpassed yourselves!

During the last week of term a delicious Christmas dinner was enjoyed by staff and children alike and party day provided fun and games in traditional style. The term ended with a very successful disco organised by the School Association.

The children very much enjoy showcasing their many talents. Last term, our Oaks class, who have been receiving weekly guitar lessons, demonstrated their skills to their parents in a special interactive concert. The Hazels class represented us in an inter school concert at Etonbury Middle School in November and did us proud with their exciting repertoire.

The Oaks and Hazels girls learnt more new skills in their Combat Fitness course including counting in Japanese. This term it will be the boys' turn when they have the opportunity to learn Street Dance at a lunch time club.

Our Breakfast club will be running every day this term providing sporting activities to start the day. Dance, Netball and other after school sports clubs continue and the Key Stage 2 children will be receiving football coaching in class time from the FA.

The months are flying past and once again we are making arrangements to welcome the next Acorns class to start our school.

**If your child's birth date falls between 1/9/05 can now apply for a place in our 'Outstanding' class for September 2010. Please contact the 01462 813293. We do still have a few spaces in this year. You can read our excellent report website.**

**and 31/8/06 you Foundation Stage school office on other classes for on the OFSTED**

## Financial News Update

As promised in the last article, I am going to look at Inheritance Tax (or IHT for short). This is arguably the nastiest tax we are subjected to for a number of reasons; firstly there is only one rate to pay, and that's 40%. Secondly it taxes wealth that people have accumulated throughout their lifetimes, and may well have already paid tax on as they acquired it. Thirdly it does not discriminate between young, and old, male and female, rich and poor (read on).

So how does it work?....In its simplest form, when someone dies everything they own (property, cars, investments, savings, jewellery, personal possessions etc.,) are totted up, and this is known as the person's Estate. If the total exceeds the threshold (currently £325,000), the balance is subject to IHT at 40%. There are numerous exemptions, and reliefs, the main one being that there is no IHT to pay when assets pass to a surviving spouse. If, as is quite common, everything is left to the survivor, then the deceased hasn't used any of their £325,000 and this can be passed to the spouse who then effectively has £650,000 of assets that can be owned before IHT is due. This sounds a lot, but once you start deducting the value of the house, it quickly gets used up. Two points to note here are firstly that un-married couples currently do not have this luxury, and secondly if there is no Will in place, it is not certain that the surviving spouse will receive everything (a very common misconception). Having an up to date Will is a vital part of IHT planning.

IHT is no longer the preserve of the rich and famous. This is largely because the threshold has not increased as fast as people's wealth, particularly the value of people's homes. There are a great many pensioners who are struggling financially, who are living in houses worth over £325,000, and so are sitting on an IHT time-bomb (hence my comment above about it not discriminating between rich and poor)!

The duty of paying the tax normally falls on the children as they try to sort out their (now deceased) parent's affairs. To make matters worse it has to be paid before Probate is granted, and this all too often means borrowing it from the bank. Probate is the formal document that allows the estate to be distributed (but only after all tax due is paid).

Having said all of this, with expert planning there is much that can be done to avoid a hefty bill, and next month I'll outline some of the common strategies used, and dispel a few myths. Most so-called wealthy people pay little or no IHT because they plan ahead to avoid it. It is the unsuspecting people who pay most of the tax because they do not believe it will apply to them - until it is too late!

The late Roy Jenkins MP once described Inheritance tax as...  
"A voluntary tax paid by those who hate their relatives more than they hate the Inland Revenue".

This may be amusing, but it is absolutely true. It is not uncommon for the Inland Revenue (or HMRC as they are now known) to be the largest beneficiary, receiving more than the children. Most people I meet want to pay as little tax as possible (preferably none at all), and leave as much as possible to their children. This can all be achieved with planning, and next month I'll look at some simple things people can do to reduce their IHT liability.

Jon Ingarfill

Tel: 07870 564115 or email: [jon@rutherfordfinancial.co.uk](mailto:jon@rutherfordfinancial.co.uk)

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

**First Mass of Sunday**  
**Saturday Evening**

6pm                      **RAF Henlow**  
9am                      **Shefford**  
5.15pm                  **Shefford**

**Weekday Services**

See notice at Church or telephone

**Parish Priest:**

**Parish Secretary:**

**Fr. Bennie Noonan 813436**

**Rose Boulton 811547**

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### **Polehanger: A Farming Diary**

For totally understandable reasons, Chris Foster has not been able to make his usual contribution this month.

We send sincere sympathy to Chris, Christine and to Kathleen on their sad loss. Our appreciation of Michael appears on page 11.

## **THE MEPPERSHALL MESSENGER**

# **AGM**

Our Annual General Meeting this year will be  
held on

**TUESDAY 13<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2010**  
**AT 7.30 PM IN THE SUGAR LOAF**  
**(Free wine, plus hot-cross buns from Rogers**  
**Bakery!)**

Please come and hear our report to you, the sponsors of The Messenger. Come and tell us what you like about it, what you do not like, and how we could improve it. A special invitation to the many that make each issue possible by printing, collating or delivering it.

# HELP NEEDED!

## THE EDITOR WOULD LIKE SOME OCCASIONAL SUPPORT!

We are looking for one or more **Assistant Editors** to do part of the job each month and to be able to take over in months when the Editor is away or falls sick.

The job requires access to a computer and reasonable familiarity with MS Word. There is a template for each month's issue that simply needs to be completed.

## WE ALSO NEED A

# YOUTH EDITOR

Someone to put together a page for our younger readers, with puzzles, competitions, pictures and anything else that your young imagination can suggest!

This would not have to be done each month: a batch of pages to last for several issues at a time would be very welcome.

Full training will be given for either of the above positions. The appointee would join the magazine Committee and have their say in running the magazine.

## **Meppershall Bakery Bees by *Roger***

Why is the honey bee such an effective pollinator? Because she is uniquely adapted to the task. Here are several examples.

- The honey bee's anatomy is well suited for carrying pollen. Her body and legs are covered with hairs that catch and hold pollen grains.
- Most other insects lie dormant all winter and in the spring emerge only in small numbers. Not the honey bee. Its hive is perennial. The honey bee over-winters with large numbers of bees feeding on stored honey. Early in the spring, the queen begins laying eggs and the already large population explodes. When flowers begin to bloom, each hive has tens of thousands of bees to carry out pollination activities by mid summer. Each hive contains approx 50,000 bees.
- The honey bee has a unique habit that is of great value as a pollinator. It tends to forage on blooms of the same kind as long as they are flowering. In other words, rather than hopping from one flower type to another, honey bees are flower-consistent. This focus makes for particularly effective pollination. It also means that the honey they produce from the nectar of a specific flower takes on the unique flavour characteristics of that flower. That's how we get specific honey flavours such as orange blossom honey, rape honey, blackberry and lavender honey. The honey bee is one of the only pollinating insects that can be introduced to a crop at the farmers or gardeners will. You can nestle a colony of honey bees in a corner of your garden or crop and ensure good pollination. Many fruit growers do this.

Meppershall hives are now six and look okay. I noticed some damage from woodpeckers and I think a badger, and had to make some speedy repairs in early January. The fact that keeping a hive in the backyard dramatically improves pollination and rewards you with a delicious honey harvest are by themselves good enough reasons to keep bees. But today, the value of keeping bees goes beyond the obvious: in many areas millions of colonies of wild bees have been wiped out by urbanisation, pesticides and parasitic mites, devastating the wild honey bee population. The beekeeper has become vital in our efforts to re-establish lost colonies of bees and offset the natural decrease in pollination by wild bees.

Honey still available at Rogers Bakery - see you there!

## Computer Tips:

### **Broadband Speeds - 2**

Raw speed is not everything. You can pay a little extra and go for a business ADSL package where you only share with up to 5 others which may help your overall speed.

Large companies exchanging data between servers use dedicated DSL lines (not ADSL) where the upload speed and download speeds are the same and guaranteed. Usually the speed is a minimum of 2Mbps but with no sharing. These connections are generally available to everyone but at a premium price, usually over £25 per month. There is also no limit to the data exchanged. Of course, your line must test out as capable of more than 2Mbps in the first place. Go online and search for *Broadband Speed Testers*.

If you have a member of your family who is "file sharing" or downloading masses of music or video files or gaming on line, possibly without your knowledge, your Service Provider may well "throttle" your connection at certain times of the day or constantly. This may well be done without telling you; if you suspect this, because your speed has suddenly decreased, get in touch and discuss it with them.

Broadband connections can suffer terribly from interference from other equipment. If your router or modem is close to a wireless telephone, move them as far apart as possible. Try not to run your incoming telephone connection to your router or modem close to an electrical cable as these emit interference, and keep chargers well away. Do not put your modem or routers on an extension cable as this will impair the signal transfer; always plug them directly into the incoming line socket. If you have internal WiFi problems go to *Ethernet over Mains wired* connections for stability (you can mix and match these connection types).

Many of the problems I encounter with shared computers stem from one or more users accessing dodgy internet sites and either purposely or unawares downloading programs which have malevolent content. If you wish to remain in overall charge of your computers you may simply give each person their own login and only allow yours, protected by a very secure password, to load programs. To do this go to *Start / Control Panel / User Accounts* and follow the easy steps shown. For your account choose "Administrator" and all others "Limited". The others do not have to have passwords but if they are childrens' be sure you know their passwords.

John Chapman [www.ceekay.co.uk](http://www.ceekay.co.uk)

## **Calendar of Forthcoming Events**

### ***January 2010***

<b><i>Saturday 30<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
<i>Friends of St Mary's Quiz Night</i>	<i>7.00 pm</i>	<i>Village Hall</i>

### ***February 2010***

<b><i>Wednesday 3<sup>d</sup></i></b>		
<i>Meeting of Parish Council</i>	<i>7.45 pm</i>	<i>Meppershall Lower School</i>
<b><i>Saturday 13<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
<i>Valentine's Razz</i>	<i>8.00 pm</i>	<i>Village Hall</i>
<b><i>Saturday 13<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
<i>Launch of Alpha 2010</i>	<i>7.30 pm</i>	<i>Meppershall Lower School</i>
<b><i>Thursday 18<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
<i>Green Planning Workshop</i>	<i>7.30 pm</i>	<i>Village Hall</i>

### ***March 2010***

<b><i>Wednesday 3<sup>d</sup></i></b>		
<i>Meeting of Parish Council</i>	<i>7.45 pm</i>	<i>Meppershall Lower School</i>
<b><i>Friday 19<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
<i>St Mary's Village Choir Concert</i>	<i>6 pm</i>	<i>Meppershall Nursing Home</i>
<b><i>Saturday 20<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
<i>Terry Lightfoot</i>	<i>7.30 pm</i>	<i>St Mary's Church</i>

### ***April 2010***

<b><i>Sunday 4<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
<i>St Mary's Village Choir</i>		
<i>Easter Day Family Communion</i>	<i>11.15 am</i>	<i>St Mary's Church</i>
<b><i>Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
<i>Messenger AGM</i>	<i>7.30 pm</i>	<i>The Sugar Loaf</i>

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

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### CHURCHES

#### St. Mary's Parish Church

Rector:	Rev. John Harper	
	The Rectory, Church Road	813334
Curate:	Rev. Patsy Critchley	
	39 Rooktree Way, Haynes	01234 381510
	(normally available Wed, Fri & Sun)	
Church Wardens:	Mr. Brian Bellamy, 125 High Street	815944
	Mrs. Brenda Wright, 75 High Street	816446
Lay Reader:	Pam Halliwell, 15 Buxton Close.	817069
Junior Church leaders	Alex Sinfield 97, High Street	851473
	Gillian Marshall-Davies, 9 Brookmead	850947

#### Parochial Church Council

Secretary:	Mrs. Carolyn Holmes, 19 Buxton Close,	07868 530221
Treasurer:	Mr. D. Bartlett, 14 Taylors Close	811191

#### Methodist Chapel

Minister:	Rev. D. Haseldine, 79 Ampthill Road, Shefford	813284
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#### Roman Catholic Church

Priest:	Father Bennie Noonan	813436
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### SCHOOLS

Meppershall Lower School	Interim Head Teacher Mrs. Smith	813293
Henlow Middle School	Head Mr. Payne	813733
Robert Bloomfield Middle School	Head Mr. Rogers	628800
Samuel Whitbread Community College	Head Mr. Rob Robson	629900

### DOCTORS

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

### LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES

Chairman, Parish Council	Peter Chapman, 9, Brookside	813497
Council meets 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday each month, in Meppershall Lower School at 7.45pm		
Clerk:	Mr. C. Waghorn, 15 Church Lane, Letchworth	637531
	Email: <a href="mailto:waggers.uk@ntlworld.com">waggers.uk@ntlworld.com</a>	
Central Beds Councillors:	Tony Brown 11 Clifton Road, Shefford. Beds	816254
	<a href="mailto:anthony.brown@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">anthony.brown@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a>	
	Lewis Birt 165 Clifton Road, Shefford Beds	819948
	<a href="mailto:lewis.birt@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">lewis.birt@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a>	

Surgery/Advice Centre: 1<sup>st</sup> Friday each month (except August), Shefford Library 10am - 11.30am

Member of Parliament:	Mrs. Nadine Dorries, House of Commons	
	London SW1A 0AA	0207 219 4239
	Organising Sec: Mrs. Andrea Gordon	811992

**SHOPS**

Roger's Bakery &amp; General Store (next to School)

Mon-Fri 8.15am - 5.30pm / Sat 8am - 1.30pm 813398

Post Office &amp; Village Stores

6 High Street

811252

Post Office:

Mon-Fri 9am - 1pm &amp; 2pm - 5.30pm (closes 12.30 Sat)

Shop:

Mon-Thurs 6am - 6pm, Friday 6am - 7pm

Saturday 6.00am - 6pm, Sunday 6.30am - 1pm

**PUB**

The Sugar Loaf

Andy, Jenny &amp; Pete, 25 High Street

813513

**ORGANISATIONS****Babysitting Circle**

Vacant

**Beavers**

Tuesdays 6.30pm - 7.30pm

Shefford Scouts HQ

Leader:

Mrs. Hayley Henshall

817446

Leader (Shillington):

Jan Montgomery

712386

**Brownies**

Mondays 6pm - 7.30pm

Village Hall

Brown Owl:

Mrs. Christine Elbourne

811964

Snowy Owl:

Mrs. Suzanne Brightwell

815752

**Cubs**

Shefford

Wednesdays 6.45pm

David Cousins

811441

Shillington

Pauline Goodman

711943

**Friends of St. Mary's Church**

Chairman:

Mr. Trevor Thorley, 9 Hoo Road

813357

Secretary:

Margaret Evesham, 107A, High Street

814291

Treasurer:

Mr. H. Davies, 15 Hoo Road

812127

**Meppershall Baby & Toddler**

Tuesdays: 1.45pm - 3.15pm

Village Hall

Chairperson:

Sam Hefford

07590 290078

Secretary:

Catherine Turner

812134

Treasurer:

Jo Mitchell

813146

**Meppershall Garden Club**3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday in month

Linda Parker

812144

Kim Lee Tyler

811750

Sarah Till

817176

**Meppershall Lower School Association**

Chairperson:

Sarah Saunders

850817

Secretary:

Lorraine Jarvis

811216

Treasurer:

Karen Lucas

811581

**Meppershall Players (Amateur Dramatic Society)**

Chairman:

Vacant

Secretary:

Alison Heath

850191

Membership:

Colette House

815585

Treasurer :

Graham Scrase

813966

**Meppershall Pre-School**

		Village Hall
	Monday - Friday	9.30 - 12.00
	Mon, Wed, Fri:	12.45 - 3.15
	Lunch Clubs: Mon, Wed, Fri:	12.00 - 12.45
	Contact during session times:	817359 & 07816 357159
Chairperson:	Damian Slade	850592
Secretary:	Rachael Bamford	819403
Registrar:	Louise Hutson	814148

**Meppershall Social Club**

	(see Notice Board for opening times)	Village Hall
Chairman:	Mr. G.R.Walker, 37 Brookmead	815183
	Tuesdays: Darts & Snooker - 8.30 pm	
	Thursdays: Crib & Dominoes - 8.30 pm	
	Fridays: Bingo 7.00 - 9.00 pm	

**Meppershall Village Hall Committee**

Chairman:	Steve Ansell 6, High Street	811252
Treasurer:	Mr. D. Birch	817014
Secretary	Linda Primett 18, High Street	815629
Booking Secretary:	Alex Stock, 9, Orchard Close	813241
	<a href="mailto:pintybinty@yahoo.co.uk">pintybinty@yahoo.co.uk</a>	07799 737217
Village Hall Telephone Number		817359

**Mid Beds Conservative Association - Meppershall Branch**

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

**Neighbourhood Watch**

Village Co-ordinator	Tanya Clark	07890 307063
	<a href="mailto:tanya@tanya3.orangehome.co.uk">tanya@tanya3.orangehome.co.uk</a>	

**Scouts**

Shefford	Diane Landau	01234 381153
Shillington	Paul Major	834251

**Shefford Leisure Group**

	Mrs. Enid Pamment, 112 High Street	851397
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**Tennis (at Langford)**

	Neil Franklin	815735
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**Thursday Tea Club**

	Thursday afternoons at the Sugar Loaf (any age)	
Contact:	Pat Bass	851609

**Womens Institute**

	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday in month 7.30pm	Village Hall
President:	Gillian Thomas	815979



**AMENITIES**

<b>Banks</b>	Barclays, 6 North Bridge Street, Shefford Monday - Friday 9.30am - 4.30pm	0845 7555 555
<b>B&amp;B</b>	Old Joe's	815585
<b>Dentist</b>	Mr. Lakhani, High Street, Shefford	814020
<b>Fishmonger</b>	Les Braithwaite (Mobile Van) - Thursday's approx 11.45am	
<b>Flower Workshops</b>	Joanne Sheppard, 74 High Street. Booking essential. Children: Saturday 10.30-12.00; adults Tue & Wed 7.30-9.00	816849
<b>Greengrocer</b>	Nigel Mann (Mobile Van) - Fridays 12.30pm - 2.30pm	711802
<b>Hedgehog Rescue</b>	Hedgehog Trust St. Tiggywinkles	01584 890801 01844 292292
<b>Henlow Bowls Club</b>	Denis Neilson	851208
<b>Kennels/Cattery</b>	Wayside, Chapel Road	813261
<b>Library</b>	High Street, Shefford	639070
<b>Livery Yard &amp; Training Centre</b>	Caroline Carter, Fildyke Road	07747 686118
<b>Mobile Library</b> (alternate Wed)	High Street/School 1.55pm - 2.10pm Village Hall 2.15pm - 2.30pm Fildyke Road 2.35pm - 2.50pm	
<b>Newspapers</b>	Meppershall Village Stores & PO	811252
<b>Police</b>	Emergencies/Police attendance required Shefford Police Post (non emergencies)	999 01234 841212
<b>School of Dance</b>	Positive Moves Saturday Mornings Emma Scott, 29, Fildyke Road	Village Hall 07914 063892
<b>Whitbread Wanderbus</b>		01767 318444

**USEFUL NUMBERS**

Bedfordshire Police	01234 841212		British Transport Police	0800 405040
Lister Hospital	01438 314333		Bedford Hospital	01234 355122
Beds County Council	01234 363222		QE2 Hospital	01707 328111
National Rail Enqs	0845 484950		Central Beds. Council	0300 300 8118
Gas Emergency	0800 111999		NHS Direct	0845 4647
Fire Safety Advice	0800 0435042		Electrical Emergency	0800 838838
Emergency Plumber: D R Eaton: 01462 812668 or 07778 447873				

## THE THURSDAY TEA CLUB

We meet once a fortnight on a Thursday afternoon at 2.30 pm in the Sugar Loaf pub. The landlady, Jenny, serves an excellent finger buffet and tea.

A lively exchange of village news and memories of times gone by is the norm. We play cards and have a raffle. There is no age limit and all are welcome.

We are delighted that twelve members of the tea club were some of the original Evergreens who have now been joined by some new faces. Pop in, if you have time, and join us for a cup of tea and a chat.

Pat Bass

### **Meppershall Village Hall Committee Needs Your Help!**

We are starting preparations to organise a Village Summer Fete to be held at the back of the Village Hall on:

Saturday 26th June 2010.

- \* Does anyone have any events organising experience?
- \* Does anyone wish to participate in the organising of such an event?
- \* Does anyone wish to contribute in any way, e.g. help setting up or clearing away?

If the answer to any or all of the above is "yes", please get in touch with Steve Ansell, Linda Primett or Alex Stock (contact details in The Messenger) or leave your name, address and telephone number in the folder at the shop. The more people involved the better. A meeting will then take place in February to get things moving! Let's make this a Spectacular Summer Event for everyone to enjoy.

**Remember, it's your Village. It's your Village Hall!**

# **Free, confidential help from Mid Beds Citizens Advice Bureau.**

Every Thursday morning from Mid Beds Citizens Advice Bureau operate an outreach service in the

## **Orchard Children's Centre in Shefford.**

The service offers free, confidential sessions to help people receive the help they need on issues such as debt, redundancy, benefits and relationship problems.

**Every Thursday  
9.30am-12.30pm**

You don't need to book an appointment - just turn up!

Shefford Lower School,  
School Lane, Shefford, Bedfordshire, SG17 5XA.

Our base is in Acorn Pre School's building  
between Shefford Lower School and Robert Bloomfield  
School.

Access is via School Lane off the Amphill Road.

# Meppershall Village Hall

Presents

## RAZZ

to celebrate

Valentine's Night

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2010

8pm till late

Tickets only £6 per person or

£20 for group of 4 people

(incl. complimentary glass of bubbly)

Available at Village Stores in advance.

Limited number, so buy early

to avoid disappointment.

Come and enjoy an evening of

live music and entertainment.



**Adults Only!**



This is a Ringmaster message from Bedfordshire Police. Please pass the details of this message, onto any friends and neighbours.

If you live near to an elderly, or vulnerable person, please take the time to think about who might be calling at their home.

A Distraction Burglary took place in Orchard Close, Meppershall, during December. The elderly victim is very distressed and not able to remember exactly when this crime took place. Two females, called on the elderly resident, claiming to be visiting relatives. They were allowed into the house, and a purse was taken.

Bedfordshire Police are urging all residents to be extra vigilant, and to consider the safety of elderly residents in their street. Sadly these offenders target the elderly, tricking their way into homes.

Becoming a Nominated Neighbour, can help to protect vulnerable residents, and send a strong message to would be burglars that people in the street are watching. For more information on becoming a nominates neighbour, please call (01234) 275273

For advice on door step security and to find out more visit  
[http://www.safer-beds.org/rmwebportal/rm\\_desktop/files/Crime%20Reduction%20-%20Door%20Step%20Security.html](http://www.safer-beds.org/rmwebportal/rm_desktop/files/Crime%20Reduction%20-%20Door%20Step%20Security.html)

If you have any information about this crime or other suspicious incidents or crimes, please call the Police Control Centre on (01234) 841212, and quote U R N of the 23rd of December.

Alternatively text your message to (07786) 200011 or email your message to [chc@Bedfordshire.pnn.Police.uk](mailto:chc@Bedfordshire.pnn.Police.uk)

Thank you for your support.



# The Meppershall Players

## *Something to look forward to in the New Year!!!!*

On Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> and Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> of April 2010, the Meppershall Players are pleased to present two, one act plays.

The first is called: **Ritual for Dolls.**

A short play about four Victorian dolls, which come alive at the last stroke of midnight. They enact the story of ..... well, why not come and see for yourselves.

The second play is called: **The Walking Dead.**

This is about a couple who wished for a quiet weekend away but all is not as it seems. The quiet weekend becomes rather scary!

For more details please contact Pat Bass on 01462 851609.

...oOo...

The Players meet every 1st, 3rd and 4th Wednesday of each month and every 2nd Thursday at 7:30 pm at the village hall. Our current annual membership fee is juniors £2.00, seniors £5.00, family membership (minimum 1 adult) £8.00. We welcome anyone from age 9 to 90 + years to participate in any of the following activities: acting, set building, painting, costumes, directing, sound & lighting, back stage and front of house. If any of the aforementioned appeals to you, we look forward to meeting you or call:

Graham Scrase 01462-813966  
Colette House 01462-815585

Claire Piller

# Meppershall Baby and Toddler Group

## News

We ended last year with our Christmas party and visit from Father Christmas. The children had a fun time and the Christmas hamper was won by Jane Nash. Thank you to everyone who donated to the hamper.

Meppershall Baby and Toddler Group is open to all parents and carers of children under five years of age. We are a friendly group who meet in the village hall on Tuesday afternoons during term time - from 1:45 to 3:15pm.

We offer a variety of toys and activities - including craft table, dressing-up clothes, baby area, ride-on toys (first Tuesday of the month) and much more! A drink and biscuit for the children is included and our sessions end with a rhyme and song time. The first session is free of charge.

We are looking for a volunteer (or two!) to come and help us prepare the refreshments in the kitchen during our sessions - and join us for a cup of tea and a chat! If you are able to help us, please call one of the numbers below:

Sam (Chair) - 07590290078

Jo (Treasurer) - 813146

Catherine (Secretary) - 812134



At the Meppershall Lower School Association Annual General Meeting, held on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2009, Sarah Saunders (retiring Chairperson of the School Association) presented a cheque to Gill Smith for the grand sum of £2000, towards the cost of the second phase of the School's Outdoor Play Equipment.



The School Association works hard fundraising throughout the year and contributions such as this could not be made without support from parents of children at the school as well as many others from our village and beyond. Our thanks go to all who have supported our efforts over the past year.

Our recent Autumn Fayre was a great success: many people took up the opportunity to start their Christmas shopping at the many and varied stalls, the children enjoyed the activities on offer, and it was great to see so many people from the village catching up with each other for a chat over tea and cakes....and we raised some money! Thanks to everyone who helped and to all who came along.



## **GRANDAD MEETS THE WOLF** (Well, gets pretty close!)

Grandad and assorted grandchildren were in their seats near the front at the Village Hall on 6<sup>th</sup> December to see the Meppershall Players 25<sup>th</sup> pantomime. Having had a wonderful time at last year's panto, we were really looking forward to Little Red Riding Hood, and we were not disappointed. (Oh no we weren't!)

From the first entrance of Alison Heath's elegant but wonderfully sinister Wolf to the sing-along song (which went mercifully over the heads of innocent grandchildren!) we bathed in the traditional pantomime, complete with village idiot aka Muddles, (convincingly acted by John Stinson!), the comic duo, Sir Cecil & Sir Sydney, a beautiful leading lady in the person of Gemma Parr-Smith playing the title role opposite a dashing Prince Rupert (Christian Borthwick), and Mick Trundle excelling in his usual "wisest fool in Christendom" role, and doing some scene-shifting when the need arose!

We had known we were in for a good time musically when I read in the programme that Dave Stacey was credited with banjo *and* spoons, and what a revelation Gemma's voice was!

Grandad must also make a special mention of the scene that reduced his eldest granddaughter to tears of real terror - the luminous masks which opened the second half: a wonderful effect but what was its relationship to the rest of the plot?

The supporting cast of villagers, sheep (my party especially loved Larry!) and all the essential people behind the scenes and front of house combined in the proper pre-Christmas magic to give us all a wonderful time; thank you, Players - we look forward to your 26<sup>th</sup> season.

THE FRIENDS OF ST. MARY'S  
PRESENT

# QUIZ NIGHT

**Meppershall Village Hall**

**SATURDAY, 30th January 2010**

**7pm for 7.30pm - Bar 7pm**

**Prizes and Raffle**

**TABLES of 6, £5 Per Person.**

**Contact:**

**Trevor Thorley 01462 813357**

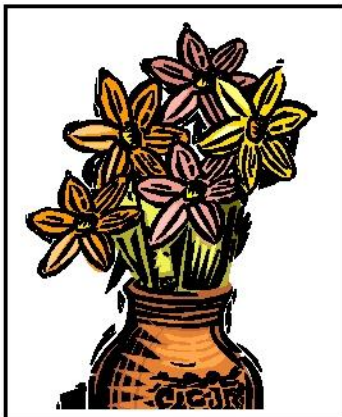
**Margaret Evesham 01462 814291**

**Enjoy this unique experience of friendly  
rivalry**

**DO COME ALONG AND JOIN IN THE FUN!**

## THE MEPPERSHALL GARDEN CLUB

### (The MGC)



We had great fun at our November meeting when Kim, our professional florist, showed us how to make Advent or Christmas table decorations. (It all depends on the number of candles!) We took some of the saleable products to the St Mary's Christmas Fayre, where we had another enjoyable afternoon trying to sell some of our wares. Janet Thorley was lucky enough to win a magnificent Christmas door wreath as a raffle prize.

For our December meeting we gathered (with "Significant Others") for a Christmas social evening. All participants (including, notably, some of the "Others") contributed to the refreshments, which resulted in a buffet table groaning under the load. Especial thanks to Colette House, not only for hosting the evening but for providing fiendish quizzes that kept us all pondering when we were not eating or drinking.

If you would like to join the MGC, please ring:

Linda Parker	01462 812144
Sarah Till	01462 817176 Kim
Lee Tyler	01462 811750

The Friends of St. Mary's  
Delight in Welcoming:

**TERRY LIGHTFOOT  
& HIS JAZZ MEN &  
STAR VOCALIST  
MELINDA LIGHTFOOT**

**on Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup>  
March 2010  
7.30pm**

**in St. Mary's Church, Meppershall**  
Bar Available - Tickets £15.00 - **from:**

Trevor Thorley 01462 813357, Roger's  
Bakery, The Post Office and Trustees.

**CALLING ALL MEPPERSHALL RESIDENTS:**

## **Are you interested in the future provision of:**

- footpaths, bridleways & cycleways?**
- parks, playing fields & wildlife areas?**
- heritage sites & important views?**
- allotments & cemeteries?**
- any other 'green' feature?**

**Then read on...**

You have an opportunity to give your views on the future provision of environmental assets within your parish.

Your ideas will form the basis of the Meppershall Green Infrastructure Plan; a plan which will be used by local organisations including Meppershall Parish Council and Central Bedfordshire Council to identify local needs and aspirations and influence planning decisions.

The development of a Green Infrastructure Plan for Meppershall is being led by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) in partnership with Meppershall Parish Council and Central Beds Council. Cliff Andrews, Green Infrastructure Team Leader for BRCC said "The whole Green Infrastructure Planning process is exciting as it is based on local people being given an opportunity to identify issues and prioritise actions for the

area in which they live."

On **Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> of January** at 7.30 pm in Meppershall Village Hall, you are invited to attend a workshop and produce a draft plan, mapping aspirations for the future 'green' provision of the parish. We would like many people, of all ages and backgrounds, to come along, look at a series of maps and discuss improvements and new ideas with other local residents.

On **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> of February** at 7.30 pm in Meppershall Village Hall, a second workshop, again open to the whole community, will be held, to look at the draft plan, put forward any additional ideas and prioritise actions. Please put these dates in your diary and come along to at least one, preferably both of these events.

For more information call

Beni Wright, Community and Environment Officer, BRCC

[beniw@bedsrcc.org.uk](mailto:beniw@bedsrcc.org.uk) 01767 626456;

or

Mike Fayers, Community and Environment Officer, BRCC

[mikef@bedsrcc.org.uk](mailto:mikef@bedsrcc.org.uk) 01767 626453

## Meppershall Pre-school Ponderings

The January weather did not keep the children of Meppershall Pre-school from having a super time playing in the snow in our outdoor play area. We would like to thank our wonderful Father Christmas, who visited the children with a bag full of presents at their end of term party. Thank you also to everybody from the village who supported our Big Christmas Raffle by buying tickets and donating prizes. The funds we raised will buy new equipment, a Chunky Digital Camera and a large puppet for interaction and storytelling with the children.

Do you own an animal?

This term we will be looking at animals in pictures and books. It would be wonderful too if we could have some real animal visitors. Do you have a pet (maybe an unusual one?) that you would be happy to bring along to the village hall to see our Pre-schoolers? Please give Joy a call on 817359 - we would love to meet them!

Welcome to our newcomers this term - Kierah Janczuk, Sian Doherty, Sophie Germann, Ellison Hunt and Charlotte Rose.

If your child is aged between 2&6 months and 4 years and would like join in the fun at Meppershall Pre-school, please call 817359 to arrange a visit.

# ST MARY THE VIRGIN MEPPERSHALL PARISH CHURCH (CHURCH OF ENGLAND) Church Rd, off Campton Rd

Rector: (Meppershall & Shefford) Rev John Harper, Rectory, Church Rd,  
Meppershall. revjohnharper@talktalk.net 01462 813334

(usual day off: Monday)

Curate: Rev Patsy Critchley; 01234 381510

(Patsy's usual ministry days are Weds, Fri & Sun)

Lay Reader: Pam Halliwell 01462 817069 (usual day off: Friday)

Churchwardens: Brian Bellamy 01462 815944 (Pastoral Assistant); Brenda  
Wright 01462 816446

## Services for February

**Sun February 7**  
**2<sup>n</sup> before Lent**

11.15 a.m. Parish Communion &  
'JC' in Rectory

**Sunday 14**

8.30 a.m. Holy Communion

**Sunday before  
Lent**

11.15 Family Service and baptism.

**Wednesday 17**

10.00 a.m. Holy Communion.

**Ash Wednesday**

Also at 7.00 pm at St Michaels

**Sunday 21**

8.30 a.m. Holy Communion.

**Lent - 1**

6.00 pm Evensong

**Sunday 28**

8.30 a.m. Holy Communion.

**Lent - 2**

11.15 am Family Communion with JC in  
Vestry

## **Weekday Services:**

Wednesdays : 10 a.m. Holy Communion (B.C.P.)

Fridays : 7.30p.m. Compline (Evening Prayer)

Saturdays 9.30a.m. Morning Prayer

## Alpha 2010

After a successful launch in Meppershall last year involving 30 local people, a new Alpha programme gets underway with an Introductory Supper on Saturday Feb 13, at 7.30 pm in Meppershall School.

Alpha is an enjoyable and non-threatening approach to exploring the gist of Christian belief, and has been effective in encouraging faith in the lives of many people the world over. At the Supper we will hear from local people who took part in Alpha in 2009, and watch a brief film outlining the Alpha approach, including an interview with Bear Grylls, the explorer, having recently taken part in an Alpha course.

For those who wish to begin the programme, the first of the weekly sessions will be on Monday March 1, 7.30 pm, (mostly Wednesdays from then on) with hot meal provided. If you would like to attend the Introductory Supper (without any obligation to continue) please ring The Rectory 01462 813334 or e-mail [revjohnharper@talktalk.net](mailto:revjohnharper@talktalk.net) if possible by Sun Feb 7. There is no charge - donation if wished.

**[www.challenge2010.org](http://www.challenge2010.org)**

Dare to make a difference by living the words of Jesus.

Make a difference in 2010. The Challenge to the people, schools and churches across the Diocese of St Albans is : Dare to make a difference in your lives, in your communities and in the world by living the words of Jesus.

**READ** a verse from the bible each day in Lent,

**LEARN** it,

**PRAY** about it and then

**DO** something to make a difference.

Share what you have learned and what you have done.

You can register on the Challenge website [www.challenge2010.org](http://www.challenge2010.org) .

The verses, which are all from Luke's Gospel and record something Jesus said, will be sent by email or by text (for a small charge) or will be available through Twitter and RSS.

Alternatively the verses will be available in printed form from St Mary's or via The Rectory - just ask if you would like them delivered - 813334

For those with computer access the website will give further details and ideas about how to make the Challenge a shared exercise within your congregation or among your friends. In particular you will be able to write comments on the website and upload short video clips, via YouTube, so



that you can share with others what the verse means to you and how you are seeking to act on it.

It's simple, it's risky, it's life changing: are you up for it?

### **Lent lunches**

Once more the Churches of Shefford are working together to provide simple meals at Shefford Community Hall on the Saturdays of Lent, beginning February 20, 12.30—1.30p.m. No charge or need to book - donation if wished for Christian Aid. A brief Lent reflection will be given at 1p.m. each week

### **Shefford Deanery Lent Communion Services**

Will be held in different local Churches on Tuesday evenings during Lent, beginning Feb 23. Details from The Rectory - 813334

### **News from JC (Junior Church)**

Christmas marks a new beginning for so many things: focusing on our families (again), good resolutions, typically born out of over-indulgence and under-exercise over the Christmas days and most of all, for us Christians, Jesus being born to us; God's gift of love. The greatness of His gift to us is quite difficult to grasp for us adults and more especially the children. None the less, this is the true meaning of Christmas. Of course children love the nativity story, the dressing up, rehearsals and the excitement building up in the days leading up to their performances - who wouldn't? And for us parents: who can claim to not be touched by our children's stage presence, especially the little "incidents" that help us remember these performances for ever? My personal new year's resolution is to hang on to the magic of Christmas all year, to spread the good news and to be more grateful and aware of His gift to me. I hope to relearn to look at the world and its wonders again with children's eyes, exploring and explaining it, learning from our JC children as much as they learn from us leaders.

Alex

## **Letter from St Mary's - Pam Halliwell**

As I write this we are still in the Christmas season but by the time you read it we will be approaching Lent. The bulbs will be showing and growing. Did you know that another name for daffodils is Lent Lilies? I find it interesting that Lent is not just a time when Christians take stock of their lives but when many people clean up their houses ( we used to call it Spring cleaning). They take stock of their gardens and plan for the new season. Holidays are planned, if they can be afforded in recessionary times! And while we are getting rid of clutter here are a few suggestions:

- Take unwanted items to the Charity Shop
- Don't throw all those seed catalogues in the bin - they may help with the garden re-vamp
- Maybe the time saved by means of the Spring sort-out will enable you to do other things.

You will have seen (page 37) that we are running a second Alpha course with an Introductory Supper on Feb 13. Do consider giving it a try - there's a good free meal and there's no pressure to continue with the programme if this isn't for you. One of last year's Alpha groups is still meeting as a new House Group. We meet monthly in each other's homes and share a simple meal before we discuss a faith related topic. New members will always be welcome in any of the three current house groups.

You may also like to sign up for Bishop Alan's Lent 'Challenge' ( see page 37 again) to access daily words from St Luke's gospel and relate them to the way you experience each new day. In former times when Christians fasted in Lent all meat and some other things had to be eaten up on Shrove Tuesday - the day before Lent ( so don't forget to buy the lemons for the pancakes !)

As there was no January Messenger a very happy, peaceful and blessed New Year from us all at St Mary's.

Pam

## St. Mary's VILLAGE CHOIR

*The aim of the choir this year is to alternate between*

- *singing for worship at St. Mary's and*
- *singing for the community.*

*NEW PEOPLE WELCOME. JUST COME ALONG TO A PRACTICE. NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY. A JOY OF SINGING AND PRAISING ESSENTIAL.*

### Spring 2010

<b>Tues 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb</b>	<b>8pm to 9.30pm</b>	<b>Practice at The Rectory</b> [church if warm enough!]
<b>Tues 2<sup>nd</sup> Mar</b>	<b>8pm to 9.30pm</b>	<b>Practice at St. Mary's</b> [Rectory if church too cold!]
<b>Tues 9<sup>th</sup> Mar</b>	<b>8pm to 9.30pm</b>	<b>Practice at St. Mary's</b>
<b>Tues 16<sup>th</sup> Mar</b>	<b>8pm to 9.30pm</b>	<b>Practice at St. Mary's</b>
<b><u>Fri 19<sup>th</sup> Mar</u></b>	<b><u>6pm</u></b>	<b><u>Meppershall Nursing Home Concert</u></b>
<b>Tues 23<sup>rd</sup> Mar</b>	<b>8pm to 9.30pm</b>	<b>Practice</b>
<b>Tues 29<sup>th</sup> Mar</b>	<b>8pm to 9.30pm</b>	<b>Practice</b>
<b><u>Sun 4<sup>th</sup> Apr</u></b>	<b><u>11.15am - 12.30 Easter Day Family Communion</u></b>	

### **EARLY SUMMER** **VILLAGE MUSICAL CONCERT & ART EXHIBITION**

A village musical concert and art exhibition is in the planning stage. If you live in Meppershall and would like to take part either by;

- exhibiting some of your own art work or
- doing something musical

Please contact Sandra Harper. Watch out for more info.

Questions? Sandra Harper: [Sandray.harper@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Sandray.harper@yahoo.co.uk) 01462 813334

**2010 Collating Dates for your diaries**

January	25	July	26	double issue
February	22	August	No	
March	29	September	27	
April	26	October	25	
May	24	November	29	double issue
June	28	December	No	

**CYPRUS**  
**5 STAR APHRODITE HILLS Nr. PAPHOS**

**Two bedroom, two bathroom hi-spec apartment to rent. Prestigious resort, pool, golf, spa, tennis academy. 5 star Hotel on site.**

**For availability and full details:**

**Peter Davies**  
**24 Foxglove Drive**  
**Biggleswade**  
**Beds SG18 8SP**

**Tel: 01767 317683**

**e. [24foxglove@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:24foxglove@tiscali.co.uk)**

**Judith Jackson**

Dip Mus, CTABRSM: EPTA

**Piano and music teacher**

18 years experience with students of all ages and abilities, from beginners to grade 8.

Music theory at all levels and assistance  
 With GCSE and A Level Music.

References available Tel:

01462 813977 Mob:

07808 521854

**CHEESE AND VEGETABLE SOUP**

Serves 4

4 medium carrots, finely diced.  
2 medium onions, finely chopped.  
2 celery sticks, finely chopped.  
450 ml (3/4 pint) water. 25g (1oz)  
flour.  
300ml (1/2 pint) fresh milk.  
100g (4 oz) English Cheddar, grated.  
25g (1oz) butter  
Salt and freshly ground pepper.

Method.

- 1) Put vegetables into a saucepan with 300ml (1/2 pint) water  
Bring to boil, cover and simmer for 20-30 minutes or until  
vegetables are tender.
- 2) Pour in remaining water.
- 3) Blend flour to a smooth paste with milk and add to  
vegetables.
- 4) Cook, stirring, until soup boils, then simmer for 5 minutes.
- 5) Remove from heat, add 75g (3oz) cheese and butter. Stir  
until both have melted.
- 6) Season to taste and ladle into warm soup bowls. Sprinkle  
with remaining cheese.
- 7) Mary at the Bakers has some lovely bread or rolls to serve  
with the soup.

Recipes are kindly supplied each month by Brenda Putwain

## GARDEN TIPS FOR FEBRUARY

With acknowledgements to the RHS

- Make sure garden birds have food and water.
- Apply organic-based fertilisers.
- Continue planting trees, shrubs and fruit trees and bushes as the weather allows.
- Firm newly planted trees and shrubs if lifted by frost.
- Prune winter-flowering shrubs that have finished flowering, including winter heathers.
- Prune summer-flowering shrubs that flower on new wood.
- Prune hardy evergreen trees and shrubs.
- Prune jasmines and late-summer-flowering clematis. •
- Prune off old stems of herbaceous perennials. • Start dahlia tubers into growth. • Divide and plant snowdrops.
- Repot or top-dress shrubs in containers.
- Bring in the last of spring bulbs being forced. •
- Prepare seed beds for vegetables. • Lime vegetable plots if necessary. • Mulch fruit trees after feeding.
- Protect gooseberry bushes from bird damage. •
- Prick out or pot up seedlings sown last month.
- Start tender perennials under cover into growth.

## LAST CHANCE

- Cut-back overgrown shrubs and hedges before the nesting season starts.
- Finish pruning fruit.

## GET AHEAD

- Check tools and equipment and plant supports are sound before you need them.
- Make sure all pots and seed trays are clean.
- Check on stocks of pots, compost and labels.

**Bus Timetables - (Weekdays only given here)**

In developing the Meppershall Village Plan it was clear that there was a lack of knowledge about the buses serving Meppershall. The following information has been taken from published timetables and has been abbreviated to show the main stops, including Meppershall. Correct as at Jan '09

Full information can be obtained from the bus companies or their websites.

<b>Route 79 to Sheffield - Meppershall - Barton - Luton</b>									
<b>Sheffield. High Street.</b>									
<b>Meppershall. Sugar Loaf</b>									
<b>Meppershall. Rectory Road</b>									
<b>Meppershall. opp Sugar Loaf</b>									
<b>Sheffield. High Street.</b>									
<b>Barton. Windsor Parade</b>									
<b>Luton. Silver St</b>									
<b>Luton. Galaxy Centre</b>									
	0838	1031	1221	1431	1622			1533	1740 1840
								1538	1745 184
								1540	1747 184
	0728	0928	1118	1328					
	0730	0930	1120	1330					
	0735	0935	1125	1335					
	0801	1003	1153	1403	1554			1759	185
								1825	192
<b>Route 79 to Luton - Barton - Meppershall - Sheffield</b>									
<b>Luton. Galaxy Centre.</b>									
<b>Barton. Windsor Parade</b>									
<b>Sheffield. High Street.</b>									
<b>Meppershall Loaf. Sugar</b>									
<b>Meppershall. Rectory Road</b>									
<b>Meppershall opp. Sugar Loaf</b>									
<b>Sheffield. High Street.</b>									
	0712	0912	1102	1252	1502			1630	175
				1320	1530			1656	181
					1538			1740 <b>p</b>	1840
								1745	1845
	0728	0928	1118	1328	1540			1747	1847
	0730	0930	1120	1330					
	0735	0935	1125	1335					

<b>. Route 89 Henlow Camp - Meppershall - Hitchin</b>					
Sch = School Davs. NSch = non-school davs					
Henlow Camp					
Meppershall - Sugar Loaf					
<b>Hitchin. Bancroft</b>	06:45	NSch	Sch	10:00	13:35
<b>Hitchin Station</b>	07:19	07:45	07:45		
<b>Hitchin. Bancroft</b>	07:22	08:20	08:25		
<b>Hitchin. Grove Road</b>		08:23	08:35	10:35	14:10
<b>Hitchin. Wilbury Way</b>					
Train departs to London	07:32	08:30	08:42		
<b>Route 89 Hitchin - Meppershall - Henlow Camp</b>					
Sch = School Davs. NSch = non-school davs.					
Train arrives from London					
Hitchin. Wilbury Way				17:05	18:16
<b>Hitchin. Grove Road.</b>					18:20
<b>Hitchin Station</b>			15:54B	15:57	18:27
<b>Hitchin. Bancroft.</b>		12:35	16:00	16:00	18:30
Meppershall - Sugar Loaf		13:08	16:33	16:33	19:03
Times correct as at 02/11/09					



## A very HAPPY BIRTHDAY to those of you celebrating birthdays in FEBRUARY

Elodie Hunt who will be 6 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> <sup>th</sup>  
 Gemma Parr-Smith who will be 13 on the 6<sup>th</sup>

Keira Thomason who will be 7 on the 6<sup>th</sup>  
 Joseph Fairy who will be 12 on the 14<sup>th</sup>

Evie MacCormick who will be 12 on the 15<sup>th</sup>  
 Benjamin Saunders who will be 6 on the 16<sup>th</sup>

Abbey Lowden who will be 12 on the 18<sup>th</sup>  
 James Wallace who will be 11 on the 19<sup>th</sup>

Emma Brightwell who will be 14 on the 25<sup>th</sup>  
 Jesse Gold who will be 14 on the 28<sup>th</sup>

If you are under 16 and would like your name added to the birthday page, please call Louise Hutson on 814148 or email at [louhuts@btconnect.com](mailto:louhuts@btconnect.com)

