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Meppershall Family

# THE MEPPERSHALL MESSENGER



*Spring - something to look forward to!*

**VOLUME 25 - Issue 10**  
**MARCH 2010**

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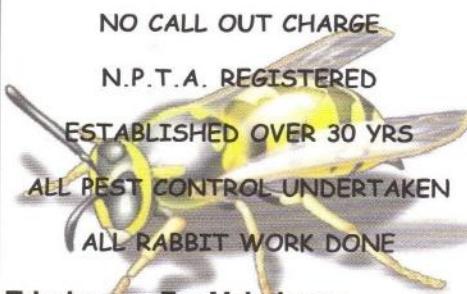
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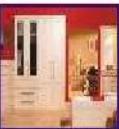
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# THE MEPPERSHALL MESSENGER

## 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 (except by prior arrangement) and should be received by the Editor not later than the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month for publication at the end of that month. Contributions received after the deadline may be held over.

## DISCLAIMER

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

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## **EDITORIAL**

No apologies that this month there is a lot about the Central Beds planning proposals for the land behind the Village Hall. These proposals would be very significant to the Village if they were implemented, but as Peter Chapman says in his article on pages 27 & 28, they will not happen in the near future, if at all. What is important now is that anyone with a comment to make, makes it now, while the opportunity is there. If the outcome were to be one that you did not like, it would be very sad to be saying "If only I had spoken out earlier"!

What is also sad right now is that, for a second month, "Your Shout" is given over to an obituary, this time to Eric Jepps. Our sympathies go out to Evelyn.

It is also sad to have to record the passing of the Meppershall branch of the WI. In February it was formally disbanded because no volunteers could be found to take on the officer positions. In the past the WI paid a major part in the affairs of the Village but obviously there is less willingness now to take on voluntary work, so it has gone the way of the Mothers' Union before it. We should be grateful that the school has such a strong body of voluntary Governors; perhaps we should also be grateful that people (at the moment) are still willing to produce a Village magazine! To have your say on that, come to our AGM - see notice on page 25.

And we are still looking for help with the Messenger: please see our other notice on page 26.

And finally.....please note the Central Beds Highways Dept phone number now included in our "useful numbers" section. Please call this number rather than a Parish Councillor if you wish to report a matter relating to roads.

*Dick Bulley*

## LETTERS

### **Letter from Graham Laming**

For any readers in and around Meppershall who would be interested in joining a well established and dynamic non-profit cycling club, we can offer a dedicated club house, training facilities and an excellent social calendar.

We are based in Cardington, but Meppershall is well within our catchment area.

Beds Road Cycling Club, contact Graham Laming (treasurer) on Meppershall 811747 or 07858 402683 [www.bedsroad.org](http://www.bedsroad.org)

Graham Laming 72  
Fildyke Road  
Meppershall SG17 5LU

### **Planning Application for land behind the Village Hall**

#### **Letter from Roger Smith**

Central Bedfordshire is required to provide 400 houses in 39 villages and large villages, an average of ten each or, say, 15-20 for a large village such as Meppershall. Such a modest requirement could be satisfied by developing the numerous other sites proposed that were within the village planning envelope. Building outside that envelope, ie on green belt land, is illegal when other options exist.

Building three or four times the number of houses required would not save the village from further development. On the contrary, future requirements would increase, as they are based on existing numbers. The effect would be to change Meppershall from a large village into a small town, when there is neither the demand nor any requirement to do so.

I do not believe that the development would be effective for several reasons. My main concern is the nature of the site, which is frequently saturated. Building on such a large area would remove its ability to soak up rainwater, which would therefore drain quickly into the River Ivel, greatly increasing the chance of flash flooding in both Campton and Shefford.

Many of the supporting developments are either not required or out of place. The new Health Centre under construction in Shefford has been scaled to accommodate the Meppershall community. The cemetery should be located on vacant land adjacent to the present one. A recycling centre is

incompatible with a residential development. To be effective, it must attract large numbers of cars, and then heavy goods vehicles to remove the waste. It should therefore be sited well away from housing - eg between Chicksands and the Clophill turn off the A507 - as are similar facilities at Ampthill and Biggleswade.

In conclusion, the proposed development is not justified by the requirement on Central Bedfordshire; is ineffective, by offering unwanted facilities to justify the development, and by posing an environmental threat to adjoining settlements; and both illegal and in contravention of national policy, by developing green belt land when there is no necessity to do so.

***See also the Parish Council report on page 8 and the article by Peter Chapman on page 26***

***Ed***

### **A Special Thanks.**

*On behalf of Mum, myself, and the family of Eric Jepps, we would like to thank everyone for the lovely cards and messages we have received. It was lovely to see so many people attend his funeral and come back to the Sugar Loaf after the service. Also, we thank everyone for their kind donations to Shefford Health Centre.*

*Dad will be very much missed by us, but his lovely nature and twinkle in his eye will be with us forever.*

*Tricia Stone (nee Jepps)*

***See our tribute to Eric in Your Shout on page 10***

## **COVER COMPETITION**

Unfortunately, in this short month, the judging panel was unable to meet to choose the cover until after this part of the magazine had gone to print.

So, with apologies to the winner, whoever it is, the announcement of his/her name will have to wait until next month.

As the next issue will be April, I hope that the recent dismal weather will have improved and that it will inspire readers to go out and take some Spring pictures: I do not want to have to keep using snow scenes!

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

Sorry, we are making you wait even longer for this, because it is so good!

I think we can say that it has stopped growing now, at 68 pages! And it really is rather special.

The Committee are now doing all the final checks, and it will be printed after this March issue has gone to press. That will allow us to distribute it with the April issue, rather than the March one. And that, in turn, means that it will be coming out exactly on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary!

Creating this special issue has been a mammoth job, largely because, in the end, you provided us with so much material. Sincere thanks to all of you who have contributed but, especially, to my colleagues on the Committee, notably John and Colette, who have worked on it with me.

Ed.

## SHEFFORD LEISURE GROUP

Although the snow surrounded us, we were still able to make our annual visit to the 'Panto' at Milton Keynes to see Cinderella, starring Mickey Rooney and the hilarious Bobby Davro. We were fortunate to see Bobby as the day before he was involved as a contestant on ITV's 'Dancing on Ice' He made a special plea for us to vote for him because he said he 'wasn't very good' and as we all know he didn't last long in the competition! He came on the stage dressed as a kangaroo and promptly fell over, having to be lifted by stage hands! Bobby really was funny and took everything in good part. Early in February we set off for Peterborough, to spend time in the City Centre before making our way to the East of England Showground for the spectacular 'Holiday on Ice'. We all agreed it was a very clever show and the costumes and scenery were exotic. Later in February we will be heading off for 'who knows where' Mystery Trip'. We only know the time we are leaving and that we will be heading South!

We had applied for tickets for 12<sup>th</sup> March for Friday Night is Music Night. Unfortunately this was not to be and we have been told we are unlucky on this occasion. We certainly will try again when I receive more information.

Our 'Get Together' at The Memorial H Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> March. We all look forward to this evening where we can chat with friends and people we have not seen for sometime. As always, we have arranged for a representative from Keech Hospice Care for Children, to say a few words and we will present the cheque saved from our raffles during the year. There will be a good buffet and entertainment - so if you would like to join us please let us know. Don't forget our 8-day Cruise on the Rhine in August. This year's overseas holiday will be on the Princes Christina. The all-in price includes, coach from Shefford, tour manager throughout, return tunnel crossing, daily excursions, full board and luggage handling.

## Forthcoming Events 2010

Mountbatten Festival of Music, Royal Albert Hall	Friday evening 5 <sup>th</sup> March
Get Together Memorial Hall, Shefford	Saturday 27 <sup>th</sup> March
Hampton Court Palace	Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> April
Camden Market, London	Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> April
Buddy Holly - Grove Theatre, Dunstable	Saturday 15 <sup>th</sup> May
Tour of the Cotswolds (with Guide)	Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> May
Chelsea Flower Show	Saturday 29 <sup>th</sup> May
London Museums	Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> June
Capel Manor Gardens & Forty Hall	Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> June
Rivers of Wine (Cruise)	7 <sup>th</sup> - 14 <sup>th</sup> August

London theatres are available and if there is a particular show of interest, please contact me and we will see what can be done. Always open to new ideas and offers.

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 is for the February 2010 meeting of the Parish Council which was held at Meppershall Lower School.

PC Busby was present and he gave the run down on the crimes committed in the Parish during January. There were two, a great improvement on the November figure: an assault as part of an argument and a theft from a motor vehicle. The Council was asked what priorities the Police should target in Meppershall and was given speeding motorists as the number 1 priority.

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

As you may have seen from the information in the Post Office window, the proposed development behind the Village Hall has passed to the next stage of the consultation within Central Beds Local Development Framework up to 2026. The Editor has detailed the timeline for this process elsewhere in this issue, but here are some of the Council's thoughts behind the decision to support the proposals, as detailed at the Council meeting following questions raised by Parishioners:

- As part of any new build, whether it be one dwelling or a hundred, there is a levy to help improve the local services, highways, health provision, education, local initiatives etc, and this is known as a section 106 agreement. Some of the 106 money received from the Gregory Close/Coneygate development came to the Parish Council and was used on play equipment in Foster's Field. The outline proposal for the framework document assists the Parish Council in its need to provide a Cemetery, a replacement Village Hall (possibly upgraded to a Community Centre) and the possibility of a new school would give Central Beds the opportunity to retain Primary education in the Village if it goes to a two tier system. Putting these ideas forward at this point in the process will ensure that more of the 106 money is spent on what is needed in the Village rather than benefiting others, if the proposal is taken to its conclusion.

- As for some of the comments that have been raised: while it may be preferable to site a new cemetery close to the existing church yard, the land there is in a Conservation Area so any development, even a graveyard, would have severe limitation put on it and the road access on to Shillington Road would not be ideal.
- Traffic congestion is always raised as an issue but is rarely as bad as it is perceived to be. Nobody likes people speeding in the village but they probably do it themselves and there would be more people going at higher speed if it was not for all the parked vehicles around the village. From my personal point of view (this is NOT Council policy) parked cars are the cheapest form of traffic calming.
- As for the Village being without a Hall for 18 months this is not true. These are outline proposals and it will not be known until any final plans are submitted, if ever, just how they will impact with the existing Village Hall and then the plans will have to be agreed by the Trustees of the Hall.

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

A long discussion took place on what gritting had taken place during the cold spell and what the Council could and should do. Firstly, a letter is to be sent to Central Beds complaining about the decision to grit only A and B roads thereby excluding most of the villages. Secondly, is the procurement of more salt bins to be placed around the village which will be filled before the onset of any cold weather. (I should add this will not happen until next winter). Thirdly, the Council is to look into the cost of undertaking footpath gritting themselves.

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

Foster's Field is still much too wet for the installation of solar powered light and it will be done as soon as machines can get on the field without causing too much damage.

Peter Chapman  
Chairman of Meppershall Parish Council

## YOUR SHOUT

### ERIC JOSEPH JEPPS:

Everybody's friendly milkman! Eric was probably the first friendly face we encountered when we moved to Meppershall in the summer of 1972 and he quickly acquainted himself to bring us our regular 'pinta' or two. Eric died sadly on the morning of 25<sup>th</sup> January 2010 aged 93 years.

He was indeed a very popular figure in the village, as the people who attended his funeral in St. Mary's Church on 3 February would testify. His service was a thanksgiving of his life and commenced with introductory music 'Time to say Goodbye' sung by Andrea Bocelli and ended similarly with 'Goodbye' sung by Lionel Richie. Eric's granddaughter read a lesson and Eric's daughter Patricia paid tribute to her father in an address to the congregation.

Eric was born in Hexton to Lillian and Joseph Jepps. He grew up and went to school in Hexton. His first job was with Moss's in Hitchin and met and courted Evelyn for two years before he was called up for Army duty on June 6, 1940, they married in St. Mary's Church on September 4, 1940.

Eric was in the army for 6 years and served in France and Germany, riding a motorbike clearing the way for the following medical team; he was known fondly as Doctor Jepps.

Upon demob, he worked for the Co-op, and then Vauxhall in Luton, eventually turning to his own business of milk delivery in seven villages. Commencing at 5.30am each day, he did this for 26 years. At the age of 60 he decided to sell the milk rounds and he and Evelyn bought a shop in Old Welwyn, which they turned into a mini grocery store and ran for five years until his retirement.

They had two children David and Patricia. David had three children: Lorna Paul & Mark while Patricia had daughter Danielle who presented her with a grandson, Kyle.

Eric was a very popular man in Meppershall. He had a passion for snooker and played regularly every Monday with Herbert Carter. He also enjoyed a game of cards with the Evergreens.

After the service, everyone was invited by Evelyn and her family for refreshments in the Sugar Loaf.

Eric will be sadly missed by his family and friends, as he was 'their' best friend.



***Eric Jepps: 1916 - 2010***

**WINTER SNOW & ICE:** I haven't received any comment on how you coped with the snow and ice from anyone since my appeal in the February issue. The snow has been the worst for years and from a personal viewpoint was extremely dangerous. As an example, leaving Hoo Road to turn left up the High Street, one day last month, and driving very carefully, the car slid across the road and almost into Cracklehill, upon examination, it was black ice. There were many parts of the village that were very hazardous and I can't ever remember Hoo Road and Fildyke Road being closed before. How were your experiences?

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

Remember, it's **YOUR SHOUT**

## **School Report - Meppershall VA Lower School**

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

The winter weather was not without its challenges but we managed to stay open for most of the snowy days. Years ago of course most of the teachers lived in the village and were able to walk to school in their wellies!



The weather provided lots of fun and besides building a large selection of snow sculptures, the children investigated the effectiveness of gloves made of different materials and wrote exciting stories based on the Snow Queen. The Willows were amazed to find that the Snow Fairy had been in their class overnight, sealed up the door and written them icy notes! Following the visit they created wonderful stories and art work

There were more opportunities for creativity in our whole school ART WEEK at the beginning of term. The week began with a visit from a group of Year 7 Henlow Middle School pupils who visited with their teachers to share the ideas from their own Art Week. The task was to design and produce a sculpture to represent our school and its values. After a lot of hard work, collaboration and some very sticky fingers, it was time for the exhibition. All the children voted for a winner from each class. They were: Lucy Standbridge, Lucien Sinfield, Marcus Hart, Maisie Slade and Amy-Rose Cooper. Lucy was the overall winner with her sculpture representing 'Friendship'. Later in the year she will have the opportunity to recreate her design in ceramics at Henlow. It will

then be returned to school as a permanent reminder of a very exciting week and a very important value.

The Acorns have had an exciting time this term celebrating Chinese New Year with noodles and sushi. They also went on a bear hunt around the school field and found there were bears hiding in the undergrowth!

Once again the children have been very active in their PE sessions and clubs. Our Breakfast Sports club runs every morning and our After School Sports club and Netball club both run weekly.

Representatives of the Willows and Hazels class took part in a Gymnastics Festival this month and performed brilliantly. Well done to them all! The boys in the Oaks and Hazels class have also been using lots of energy and developing their skills in their Street Dance sessions this half term. The Key Stage 2 children have been taught by a FA football coach who has also been scouting for talent in readiness for the football tournaments that we will be taking part in soon.

At Meppershall School we take the Safeguarding of children very seriously. Children are taught about keeping themselves safe in many different ways. Road Safety, Fire awareness and many other issues are taught through Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education lessons. They also learn how to keep safe when using the computer and have all signed their own Acceptable Use Policy. We will be holding a parents' forum later in the term to provide opportunities for parents to ask any

questions they may have about internet safety for children.

Hopefully, the winter will be nearly over as you read this. We are looking forward to the spring so that we can concentrate on our next project- developing a new garden using the children's own designs.

**If your child's birth date falls between 1/9/05 and 31/8/06 you can still apply for a place in our 'Outstanding' Foundation Stage class for September 2010. Please contact the school office on 01462 813293. We do still have a few spaces in other classes for this year. You can read our excellent report on the OFSTED website.**

## **Financial News Update**

Last month I set out the bare essentials of how Inheritance Tax (or IHT for short) works, and impacts upon us. This time I am going to look at some of the steps people can take to reduce or avoid the bill.

The first thing to do is make sure you have a valid, up to date Will. Next try to make use of the various exemptions and reliefs available to reduce the value of your estate. Everyone can give away up to £3,000 each year to anyone they choose. Indeed if you didn't give anything away last year you can roll that in too, making £6,000 this year. You can also make gifts in consideration of marriage. These are £5,000 to your children, £2,500 to grandchildren, and £1,000 to anyone else. These are ignored in calculating your estate value even if given within seven years of death.

For those fortunate enough to have surplus capital and/or income, gifts which do not reduce your standard of living are also exempt. This might include regular payments to help grandchildren's school fees, or other regular payments as long as they do not impinge upon your own lifestyle.

Most people have heard of the seven year rule, which in simple terms means that if you survive for seven years after giving something away, it falls outside your estate. These gifts are known as 'Potentially Exempt Transfers' (PETS) and become fully exempt after seven years. Therefore if you intend leaving an asset or legacy upon your death (e.g. jewellery, money), why not consider giving it to them while you are alive and likely to live at least seven years?

Finally, any legacies that you leave to Charities, Museums, Political Parties, Universities etc., are exempt from IHT.

Okay, everything so far has been free to do (except perhaps making a Will). Once you have done these, you need to consider other ways to reduce your estate. One of the most popular is gifting money into

trust, so that following your death it passes to the beneficiaries. You may even be able to draw income from the trust to help you live on, but you will generally lose access to the capital. Gifts into trust are normally PETS as well, so forward planning is essential here.

One under-used strategy is to effect a life assurance plan in trust so that upon your death the proceeds are paid directly to your beneficiaries (usually your children), enabling them to pay the bill. That way you do not have to tie up any of your other assets.

This is only intended to give you a flavour of some of the ways that you can reduce the IHT bill, and it is essential that you seek professional advice, and give yourself time to make your planning effective. There are even schemes which can work in as little as two years, but they are much higher risk. I have many clients who have taken steps to virtually eradicate their entire IHT liability over the coming years by firstly planning a strategy, then regularly reviewing that it is on course.

So, in summary, don't be caught out, don't leave your children a large bill. Seek advice, use the exemptions, and reliefs above, make gifts now, and don't let the Chancellor take a large slice of everything you've lived and worked for!

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**

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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 - Episode 10

I missed the February edition, apologies. You might even have missed me!

The weeks of January are fast becoming a distant memory as Snowdrops and birdsong herald Spring, but the snow that fell and laid for an unusually long period for these parts put a soporific blanket over crops. By the middle of February as I write, however, they are starting to look up and 'think' about the growing season to come.

As many of you will know my father, Michael, died on 30<sup>th</sup> December. He would have been 96 at the end of January. The immediate weeks following his death, including the deadline for Messenger copy, were hectic and hard going. The Editor kindly gave me a month off.

We had a great Thanksgiving Service at St Mary's, which we feel honoured God and Dad. Recently I have been thinking about legacy and at this time, specifically his legacy. I have come to the conclusion that a good legacy is fundamentally about influence and inspiration, not empire or edifice. Where Christine and I have shaped the farm and business you read about in these articles, we have been colouring in the design he drew on a blankish canvas when he arrived in Meppershall in 1936; and we are very grateful for that foundational work to which we have come and continued the stewardship and business aspects of Polehanger. We miss him.

Following up on the theme of legacy, there have been a lot of words written in the press recently, leading up to and since the Copenhagen Summit on Climate Change.

What is going on? Who should we believe?

Has human activity so affected the atmosphere that change is imminent and irrevocable? Has scientific data been manipulated or selectively published to further particular dogma and interests? More to the point, what is going to happen, if anything? Do we need to change the way we do things for the sake of our grandchildren?

What do you think? Who do you believe? Are you confused?

My views on this subject are still developing but, for what it's worth I will try and outline where I've got to.

- Climate Change is not new. We have historical and geological evidence for it.

- Carbon Dioxide does seem to act as a greenhouse gas and trap solar heat reflected from the earth's surface.
- Deforestation is going on at a significant net loss of tree cover worldwide. Trees are a major absorber of CO<sub>2</sub> through photosynthesis.
- Most icecaps and glaciers worldwide are retreating. Last summer, I believe, merchant ships travelled the sea route north of Canada for the first time. It is normally frozen over.
- Hydrocarbon fuels when burnt give off CO<sub>2</sub> but are also a finite resource. At some time relatively soon reserves will be exhausted.
- The world population is predicted to grow from 6 billion to 9 billion by mid century at projected rates of increase.
- Drastic weather events appear to be increasing in frequency. Global warming does not mean everywhere will get hotter.
- Scientists and innovators will continue to come up with answers to many of the potential problems if encouraged politically and financially. Some "dodgy" science doesn't discredit all science.

If there is a 100% certainty that significant climate change and global warming caused by CO<sub>2</sub> emissions will impact my grandchildren negatively, then I must do my utmost to change my behaviour and influence others to do the same. But there isn't 100% certainty.

However, by the time there is that certainty it will surely be too late to do anything to reverse the situation quickly, if at all.

What about 75% certainty? I will still do the same.

What about 50% certainty? I think I still want to act. I do not want to consider the possibility that my grandchildren will ask their parents why I, their grandfather (and my generation), didn't do anything to prevent a dreadful legacy of climate change and weather disaster and their effect on them and in particular the poorest and most vulnerable communities world wide.

My thoughts above are not a fully reasoned argument. They are developing. In general I am a cautious person but I feel a sense of urgency. I want my legacy to be a significant and responsible one for future generations.

How do you see yours?



## **Meppershall Bakery Bees by Roger**

March is probably the most critical time for bees, as this month will see their food reserves at the lowest level when demand for food is growing for brood rearing. Increasing opportunities to forage and the need to bring in fresh pollen and water add to the workload and the consumption of food. Most of the few remaining winter bees will die during this month.

March sometimes includes some lovely warm sunny periods which encourage plants to thrive and flower early, and bees can forage ahead, producing more brood. That is fine if it goes on but sometimes these fine spells are followed by a sharp return to cold weather, causing the bees to reform the cluster. Usually the colony can cope and the result is simply a slow down in its growth, but in prolonged cold spells some of the brood may be abandoned, become chilled and die. The colony usually recovers as the weather improves.

Meppershall hives are 7 and looking very busy. I will do a first inspection to see if the hive is queen right which means, is the queen in the hive and laying eggs? This should only take five minutes and is just a very quick look in the hive when the daytime temperature reaches 10 degrees C. I have been feeding the bees all winter with fondant and shall give them a sugar syrup feed in early spring, which will encourage the queen to start laying and help the bees with the food. We feed fondant in the winter and sugar syrup in the spring with added medication to help keep them healthy and free from disease.

Honey bees keep their hives clean and sterile. If a bee dies, the others remove it immediately. If a larvae or pupa dies, out it goes. During the early spring the weather can be unstable. A cold snap can chill and kill some of the developing brood. When this happens, the bees dutifully remove the little corpses and drag them out of the hive. Sometimes the landing board at the entrance is as far as they can carry them. We may spot several dead brood at the entrance or on the ground in front of the hives. The bees are doing their job. A few casualties during the early spring are normal.

Honey available at the Bakery - see you there.

## Cloud Computing

Lots of talk about "The Cloud" of late. This is where you carry out most of your computing using your web browser. There are two basics: keeping your data on some distant server computer and using software applications on the web. Much is free currently.

**The first** uses an on-line source to upload, synchronise and store your data for access from anywhere by anyone whom you authorise. You can synchronise your files and folders across several computers / mobile phones / PDAs to keep them updated.

**The second** allows you to use on-line software such as word processing, spreadsheets, photo manipulation, email, etc. so that you do not have to buy your own. Your computer just becomes a "thin client" with very little software on it.

**Upsides:** *very low cost option when buying a new computer as you do not have to purchase any software other than the Operating System & your PC security.* Your **data** is in the safest place as it will be encrypted (by most services) and on secure servers. The **software** can be free and is constantly updated for application and security.

**Downsides:** you MUST have a broadband connection wherever you wish to use The Cloud from. Your connection could go down leaving you unable to access your data. The transfer of large amounts of data can take an inordinate length of time depending on your connection speed. Free services now could be charged for later on. Your service provider could cease to offer the service / go bust / have a lot of downtime where you cannot access your information / read your information.

The best data centre on offer currently is free from Microsoft:

[www.mesh.com/welcome/default.aspx](http://www.mesh.com/welcome/default.aspx)

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

# Calendar of Forthcoming Events

## March 2010

<u>Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup></u> <u>Meeting of Parish Council</u>	<u>7.45 pm</u>	<u>Meppershall Lower School</u>
<u>Thursday 11<sup>th</sup></u> <u>Thursday Tea Club</u>	<u>2.30 pm</u>	<u>Sugar Loaf</u>
<u>Sunday 14<sup>th</sup></u> <u>Mini Sparks</u>	<u>10.30 am</u>	<u>St Mary's Church</u>
<u>Monday 15<sup>th</sup></u> <u>Baby &amp; Toddler Group AGM</u>	<u>7.30 pm</u>	<u>Sugar Loaf</u>
<u>Friday 19<sup>th</sup></u> <u>St Mary's Village Choir Concert</u>	<u>6 pm</u>	<u>Meppershall Nursing Home</u>
<u>Saturday 20<sup>th</sup></u> <u>Terry Lightfoot</u>	<u>7.30 pm</u>	<u>St Mary's Church</u>
<u>Saturday 27<sup>th</sup></u> <u>Meppershall School Assn</u> <u>Family Race Night</u>	<u>6.30 pm</u>	<u>Village Hall</u>
<u>Monday 29<sup>th</sup></u> <u>Messenger Collating</u>	<u>2 pm</u>	<u>Village Hall Snooker Room.</u>

## April 2010

<u>Sunday 4<sup>th</sup></u> <u>Easer Day Family Communion</u>	<u>11.15 am</u>	<u>St Mary's Church</u>
<u>with St Mary's Village Choir</u> <u>Mini Sparks</u>	<u>10.30-12.30 pm</u>	<u>St Mary's Church</u>
<u>Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup></u> <u>Messenger AGM</u>	<u>7.30 pm</u>	<u>The Sugar Loaf</u>
<u>Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> &amp; Saturday 24<sup>th</sup></u> <u>Players: Ritual for Dolls</u>	<u>7.45 pm</u>	<u>Village Hall</u>
<u>Monday 26<sup>th</sup></u> <u>Messenger Collating</u>	<u>2 pm</u>	<u>Village Hall Snooker Room.</u>

## 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 (normally available Wed, Fri & Sun)	01234 381510
Church Wardens:	Mr. Brian Bellamy, 125 High Street Mrs. Brenda Wright, 75 High Street	815944 816446
Lay Reader:	Pam Halliwell, 15 Buxton Close.	817069
Junior Church leaders	Alex Sinfield 97, High Street Gillian Marshall-Davies, 9 Brookmead	851473 850947

#### Parochial Church Council

Secretary:	Mrs. Carolyn Holmes, 19 Buxton Close,	07868 530221
Treasurer:	Mrs. 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, Puritz & Collins,	The Health Centre, Iveldale Drive, Shefford The Surgery, 109 Station Road, Lower Stondon	814899 850305
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### LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES

Chairman, Parish Council	Peter Chapman, 9, Brookside Council meets 1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday each month, in Meppershall Lower School at 7.45pm	813497
Clerk:	Mr. C. Waghorn, 15 Church Lane, Letchworth GC Email: <a href="mailto:waggers.uk@ntlworld.com">waggers.uk@ntlworld.com</a>	637531
Central Beds Councillors:	Tony Brown 11 Clifton Road, Shefford. Beds <a href="mailto:anthony.brown@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">anthony.brown@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a> Lewis Birt 165 Clifton Road, Shefford Beds <a href="mailto:lewis.birt@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk">lewis.birt@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</a>	816254 819948
	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 Organising Sec: Mrs. Andrea Gordon	0207 219 4239 811992

**SHOPS**

Roger's Bakery & General Store (next to School) Mon-Fri 8.15am - 5.30pm / Sat 8am - 1.30pm 813398

Post Office & Village Stores 6 High Street 811252  
 Post Office: Mon-Fri 9am - 1pm & 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 & 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

**Beds Road Cycling Club**

Treasurer Graham Laming [www.bedsroad.org](http://www.bedsroad.org) 811747

**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 815114  
 Sarah Till 817176  
 Kim Lee Tyler 811750

**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:	07816 357159 & 817359
Chairperson:	Damian Slade 850592
Secretary:	Rachael Bamford 819403
Registrar:	Louise Hutson 814148

**Meppershall Social Club**

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

**Tennis (at Langford)**

	Neil Franklin	815735

**Thursday Tea Club**

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

**AMENITIES**

<b>Bank</b>	Barclays, 6 North Bridge Street, Shefford	0845 7555 555
	Monday - Friday 9.30am - 4.30pm	
<b>B&amp;B</b>	Old Joe's, 90 Fildyke Road	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 Thur)	High Street/School Village Hall Fildyke Road	1.55pm - 2.10pm 2.15pm - 2.30pm 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
Central Beds. Council	0300 300 8118		QE2 Hospital	01707 328111
Central Beds. Highways Dept	0300 300 8049		National Rail Enqs	0845 484950
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 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.

### 2010 Collating Dates for your diaries

March	29		August	No
April	26	September week early	27 May	24
June	28		October	25
July	26	double issue	November	29 double issue
			December	No

# HELP NEEDED!

## THE EDITOR WOULD LIKE SOME OCCASIONAL SUPPORT!

(No connection with his drinking habits!)

We are looking for one or each month and to be able or falls sick.

The job requires access to Word. There is a template completed.

more **Assistant Editors** to do part of the job to take over in months when the Editor is away

a computer and reasonable familiarity with MS 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 will join the magazine committee and have a say in running the magazine.

## Current Planning Applications

*Below is the slightly edited text of a message from Peter Chapman, Chair of Meppershall Parish Council, in reply to an enquiry from me - Ed*

I think it might help if I give you a brief resume on "planning" generally before being specific. New housing requirements and their distribution are set by Central Government and local planning authorities such as Central Bedfordshire are set targets for the provision of new houses within their area of authority over a given period of time. In 2005 these Authorities were advised of their targets for the 15 years from 2010 to 2026 and asked to submit to the Secretary of State their proposals for meeting their targets by the end of the period.

Here is the approximate time line for this planning process.

**2005** Central Government decreed its policy for new houses advising all Planning Authorities of its requirement for new homes by 2026

**2005 December.** Mid Beds District Council set up the Local Development Framework and invited applications from land-owners with possible sites for development in the area. During the following two years nearly 400 potential development sites were submitted across Mid Bedfordshire

**2008 February.** Mid Beds produced a schedule of 14 sites in Meppershall that it was prepared to consider. With mobile exhibitions throughout the District and information available on the website, the public was invited to make its views known during the initial Issues and Options Consultation. At the end of the 6 week consultation period 4 more sites were added to the original 14 making 18 sites available for further reference during the next consultation period.

With this publicity at the time of the first stage of the consultation, approximately 50 Meppershall Parishioners took the time to pass comments on some or all of the 14 proposals that had been received. While 50 out of about 1200 may seem a low percentage it is very much in line with what was received by the other Towns and Parishes in the area.

The highest number of comments, 39, was for the land behind the Village Hall with 11 (28.2%) in favour, 23 (59.0%) against and 5 (12.8%) maybe.

For all the other proposals the percentage was 85-90% against

**2008 October.** Mid Beds produced a summary suggesting that only about 50 of the 443 sites will eventually be allocated for development, stating that:

*"The next step in the site allocations process is to undertake a full analysis of the consultation responses received, detailed site assessments and*

*involvement from other consultees, such as infrastructure and service providers. Following this, the Council will publish a list of preferred sites. There will be an opportunity before the document is submitted for members of the public to make further representations on those preferred sites".*

The fact that this proposal had been taken through to the second stage of the process was in my report in the Dec/Jan edition of the Messenger. As there had been no changes to what is an outline proposal and Lew Birt, when passing on the information, did not know the consultation dates, it was not possible to give exact details.

**2010 January.** Central Bedfordshire Unitary Council, having taken over the role of Planning Authority from Mid Bed District Council, produced a Site Allocations Development Plan Document. This sets out the Council's chosen sites for allocating housing and other needs that will meet the targets set in 2005. As stated above, **there will follow a further consultation period ending on 8 March, following which the revised document will be submitted to the Secretary Of State to be considered with similar documents from other Planning Authorities.** The Parish Council has not yet formulated any plans for facilitating local understanding

since it was not aware of the timing of the latest consultation until the draft document was received by the Clerk yesterday (29<sup>th</sup> Jan)

I hope that this (unavoidably long) discourse will have helped you to appreciate that this is not a normal planning application to be approved and implemented almost immediately as a one-off, but is a suggestion put forward for consideration as part of a wide ranging plan proposed by the Unitary authority as a means of fulfilling the housing requirements of Central Government. Even if finally agreed it will only then become part of an approved plan for implementation sometime before the year 2026. Another point for you to note is that **Meppershall, for planning purposes, has been designated as a "large village" and as such it will be expected to take some development before 2026.**

As you can see, the whole process is the work and the responsibility of the Planning Authority, which decides how, when and where meetings and consultations should take place.

Regards,  
Peter

*Thank you, Peter for this comprehensive explanation. As Peter says above, there are 6 weeks at this stage for further consultation. It is important that everyone with a point of view makes it known to Central Beds, either by calling them at Central Bedfordshire Customer Services Centre 0300 300 8000 or, as they prefer, email*

them on <http://www.talktocalcentralbedfordshire.co.uk> before 8<sup>th</sup> March 2010.

*Ed*



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

A vehicle crime took place in Shefford Road, Meppershall, Shefford, between 6:30 in the evening of the 14th and 7:35 in the morning of the 15th of January. Offenders have entered the front garden and used a hydraulic jack to jack up the vehicle before removing its two front wheels. Bedfordshire Police remind vehicle owners to remove all property from vehicles when parked.

For more information on reducing vehicle crime visit [http://www.safer-beds.org/rmwebportal/rm\\_desktop/files/Crime%20Reduction%20-%20Vehicle%20Crime.html](http://www.safer-beds.org/rmwebportal/rm_desktop/files/Crime%20Reduction%20-%20Vehicle%20Crime.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 crime reference, JD./,1,7,3,7,/2010. Alternatively text your message to (07786) 200011; email your message to [chc@Bedfordshire.pnn.Police.uk](mailto:chc@Bedfordshire.pnn.Police.uk) or call Crime stoppers in Confidence on (0800) 555111.

Contact Ringmaster on (01234) 275288 or email [Ringmaster@Bedfordshire.pnn.Police.uk](mailto:Ringmaster@Bedfordshire.pnn.Police.uk) for a free property marking kit.

Visit [http://www.safer-beds.org/rmwebportal/rm\\_desktop/files/Crime%20Reduction%20-%20Burglaries.html#changeClass5](http://www.safer-beds.org/rmwebportal/rm_desktop/files/Crime%20Reduction%20-%20Burglaries.html#changeClass5) for property marking advice.

Thank you for your support.



# The Meppershall Players

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 7:45 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**

**The AGM for Meppershall Baby and Toddler group will be held on Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> March in The Sugar Loaf pub at 7:30pm.**

Meppershall Baby and Toddler group is run by a committee of volunteers - and we need new committee members.

The more committee members that there are to share the responsibilities - the less work there is to do! Being on the committee involves jobs such as setting up at the beginning of sessions, helping to run the weekly craft table, organising our parties - which the children enjoy so much and clearing away at the end of sessions. It can be a very rewarding experience. Being on the committee means that you have a say in how your Toddler group is run.

We are looking for people to fill the positions of Secretary and Treasurer. For more information about what this involves, please speak to one of our committee.

Meppershall Baby and Toddler group is open to all parents, grandparents, childminders, nannies and carers of children under five years of age. We meet in Meppershall village hall from 1:45 - 3:15pm on Tuesday afternoons during term time. Come and join us for a tea, coffee and a play - we provide a range of toys, a craft table, refreshments and end our session with a group activity - such as singing, parachute games or active games.

Sam (Chair) - 07590290078

Jo (Treasurer) - 813146

Catherine (Secretary) - 812134



## Family Race Night



**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> March**

**From 6:30pm at the Village Hall**

**Tickets only £1 per person**

**(available from the School)**

***Come along and enjoy a fun-filled family evening!***

## The Treasurer's Charity

This month, I am looking beyond Bedfordshire for my charity. Recently at a conference and exhibition, I was fortunate enough to meet Lynn Griffiths, the President of CO-Awareness. CO-



Awareness is a registered charity that supports the many victims of Carbon Monoxide (CO) poisoning and other products of combustion (POC), their families and friends. Lynn's husband died from long-term exposure to carbon monoxide and her children suffered a variety of debilitation effects from carbon monoxide poisoning. CO-Awareness campaigns for the greater awareness of the dangers of carbon monoxide and other products of combustion associated with the burning of Gas, Oil, Coal and Wood. Co-Awareness also campaigns for changes in the

legislation covering the manufacture, installation and servicing of appliances burning the above fuels. They lobby the Government and Industry to improve safety and raise awareness. They are also calling upon industry and Government to carry out further research into the long term health consequences of exposure to carbon monoxide. Along with many of the victims they support, they believe exposure to CO to be grossly under reported, possibly affecting millions of people in this country each year. Almost all of the victims are completely unaware that they have and are being poisoned every day. They and their doctors are completely unaware that their illnesses are probably due to exposure to carbon monoxide. You can read Lynn's and many other harrowing stories of how lives have been permanently affected by carbon monoxide poisoning at [www.COvictim.org](http://www.COvictim.org) Enclosed in your Messenger this month, is a leaflet giving more details of the signs and symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning and what you can do to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.



## **THE MEPPERSHALL GARDEN CLUB**

### **(The MGC)**



The MGC turned out in force for the Friends of St Mary's Quiz night in January. We had a really enjoyable evening but we did not cover ourselves in glory - perhaps we only know about horticulture!

Unfortunately, the weather in January and February hasn't been very suitable for gardening, but it has provided a good opportunity to sit and plan for the future.

Hopefully, by the time you read this we will also have made a visit to Benington Lordship to see their spectacular snowdrop display.

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

Linda Parker	01462 815114
Sarah Till	01462 817176 Kim
Lee Tyler	01462 811750

**From Bourbon Street to Broadway and  
many other parts of the world, and now to  
MEPPERSHALL**

**TERRY LIGHTFOOT**

**and his Jazz Men, plus**

**Star Vocalist**

**MELINDA**

**LIGHTFOOT**

**will be performing in St. Mary's Church on  
Saturday, March 20 at 7.30pm**

**with the music of Louis Armstrong,**

**Fats Waller, Duke Ellington, Louis Jordan and  
much more**

**TICKETS £15 from Trevor 813357,  
Roger's Bakery and The Post Office**

## Meppershall Pre-school Ponderings

### Enjoy working with children?

Meppershall Pre-school is looking to expand our team of relief staff.

We rely upon a team of relief staff to come and work at short notice on days when a member of Pre-school staff may call in sick. The role would be ideal for a retired person, or someone with children in full-time school who has spare time during the day. This is a paid position. If you would be interested in hearing more about the role, please call Emily Slade on 850592. We are always keen to have helpers come in to play or read to the children. Please get in touch if you would like to play a part in your village Pre-school.

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.

#### **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

# 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](mailto: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 March

**Sun 7** 11.15 a.m. Parish Communion &

**Lent 3** 'JC' in Rectory

**Sunday 14** 8.30 a.m. Holy Communion

**Lent 4**

**Mothering Sunday** 11.15 Family Service

**Sunday 21** 8.30 a.m. Holy Communion.

**Lent 5** 6.00 pm Evensong

**Thursday April 1** 10.00 a.m. School Easter Service

**Maundy Thursday** 7.30 p.m. At St Michael's Shefford  
Commemoration of the Last Supper

**Friday April 2** 2.00 p.m. "Before the Cross"

**Good Friday**

**Saturday April 3** 7.30. p.m. Easter Vigil Service

**Sunday April 4** 11.15. a.m. Communion with choir & JC  
**Easter Day**

### **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**

This year's local 'Alpha' programme kicked off with a tasty Introductory Supper last month. Ian Pierce, presenter of Three Counties Radio 'Melting Pot' spoke enthusiastically of his Alpha experience, and all involved looked forward to the first of the regular sessions on March 1<sup>st</sup>. If you would like to try Alpha this year but didn't get along to the introduction it's not too late - we would love to see you when you can make it. Each evening comprises a hot supper, a talk on screen on a topic that is key to Christian belief, and a chance to reflect on what has been heard within an informal group. If you would like to come along the cooks would be grateful to know - just ring 813334 or e-mail [revjohnharper@talktalk.net](mailto:revjohnharper@talktalk.net)

There is no charge - donation if wished. The sessions run from 7.30

- 9.30 ish, and this month they take place on :  
Monday March 1 ; Weds 10; Weds 17; Weds 24; Weds 31

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

This is the Lent challenge issued by the Bishop of St Albans , namely to

**READ** a verse from St Luke's gospel each day in Lent,

**LEARN** it,

**PRAY** about it and then

**DO** something to make a difference.

It's not too late to participate, either by visiting the website

[www.challenge2010.org.](http://www.challenge2010.org.) ( from which the verses can be printed or sent by text) or by using the weekly leaflets available from Church or Rectory . Please ask if you would like them delivered - 813334

**An ecumenical Lent course** is being held in Shefford, based on the material ' Challenge 2010' provided by St Albans Diocese. All are welcome to come to some or all of the five sessions at Stuart and Winifred Hodgson's home, 58 Ivel Road, Shefford, from 7:30-9pm on four Mondays

& one Tuesday: February 22nd; March 1st; 9th; 15th; & 22nd. Please phone Dave Haseldine on 813284 or Jim Ragless on 812200 if you plan to come and would like a copy of the course, or visit [www.stalbans.anglican.org/Mission/Lent-Course-2010](http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/Mission/Lent-Course-2010) if you want to see the course and/or print your own copy.

## Lent Lunches

are being held at Shefford Community Hall every Saturday of March - 6,13,20 and 27 from 12.30—1.30p.m. No charge or need to book - donations for Christian Aid. A brief Lent reflection will be given at 1p.m. each week. Organised by Shefford Churches working together

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

## preaching theme : 'The Challenge of Lent'

These take place every Tuesday evening during Lent at 8p.m., as follows:

March 2nd at All Saints Stowdon; 9<sup>th</sup> at St Mary's Henlow; 16th at St Michael's Shefford and 23<sup>rd</sup> at St Mary's Clophill. For details/ lifts please contact The Rectory - 813334

This year's local Women's World Day of Prayer<sup>th</sup> service takes place at Shefford Methodist Church on Friday March 5, 2.15p.m.

## ***Junior Church ('JC')***

As you read this article we have just had another successful mini Sparks event. On the 20<sup>th</sup> February J C and children aged from reception - year 5 enjoyed 'HOOKED' based on Jesus calling Peter to be his friend. We looked at how Peter the Fisherman was hooked by Jesus, how he obeyed and followed him. We thought about our friends and how Jesus can be our best friend. I'm HOOKED by him. Are you?

Looking forward to Mothering Sunday on 14<sup>th</sup> March, a great opportunity for all our Children think of and thank their Mums for all they do, sometimes we all forget!

## Pilgrimage to Taize

### ***Article by Mary Topley - part of the St Albans group in 2007 & 2009***

Leaving the typical English Summer behind us, we made our way to Dover for the ferry crossing. This would take us to Calais and then it would be a further nine hour trip to our destination of Taize in the South of France. Spirits were raised as old friends were reunited and new ones were being made. We were a group of varied ages and also had two families with young children who continued to bring laughter to the group throughout the week.

In the not too early hours of Sunday morning, fighting off the urge to fall back to sleep, we arrived at the Taize community. As we stumbled off the coach memories of previous years came flooding back and expectations for the week ahead were high. We pitched our tents together and it became apparent that, out of the 4000 pilgrims that come to Taize from all over the world, English groups were few, as snippets of German and Polish were heard from other pitches.

After a reasonable night's sleep we were able to start the day and Taize routine proper. Each day in the Taize community is centred on three half hour services at 8:30am, 12:30pm and 8:30pm. The services offer a chance for meditation, stillness and prayer and off course the beautiful Taize chants. There are options for how to spend the rest of the day; Bible study or helping with chores around the campsite and kitchens. Meals in Taize are communal and everyone mucks in to help serve the 4000 pilgrims and to join in the task of washing up, which usually involves an international water fight! The brothers of the community provide a Bible study for everyone after breakfast each day, this is always an engaging and rewarding hour. The afternoons are set aside for chores, workshops run by the brothers and meetings in small groups with people from around the world to discuss the mornings bible readings; this gives the opportunity to learn more about different countries and people's relationships with God. Evenings can be spent at the onsite cafe "Oyak", continuing conversations with new friends, joining the community singing, or simply personal reflection in the church.

The week at Taize was eventful both spiritually and physically, with a member of our group injuring themselves whilst attempting some ninja moves! The experience that Taize provides is unique because of the international aspect and the simplicity of community life that still manages to be conveyed despite the numbers of people. Everyone in our group got

something out of the week, whether it was the opportunity to renew our connection with God, or simply enjoying the time out from the chaos of regular life.

*(Mary is sometimes seen at St Mary's organ keyboard, and more recently 'up front' as Meppershall's visiting preacher. She is currently studying at York University and is taking steps towards training for ordination) J.H.*

### Taize 2010

We will travel by bus from St Albans leaving mid-afternoon on **Saturday 24th and returning around 6am on Monday 1st August**. The pilgrimage is open to young adults between the ages of **15 and 29**. You are welcome to bring your children and there is a special families' programme and camping area. Costs will be around £175 (please ask for costs for families) which includes travel and all food. Accommodation is in tents, and for those who do not have their own tent there are big dormitory tents available. Group leaders are The Revd Philippa Segrave-Pride ([philippa@segrave-pride.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:philippa@segrave-pride.freeserve.co.uk)) and The Revd John Kiddle ([john.kiddle@stalbans.anglican.org](mailto:john.kiddle@stalbans.anglican.org))

**For information, or to request a booking form, please contact:**

The Revd Ysmena Pentelow on 01727 818151 or

[ysmenapentelow@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:ysmenapentelow@tiscali.co.uk)

[www.taize.fr](http://www.taize.fr) (the Taize website); [www.gotaize.org.uk](http://www.gotaize.org.uk) (our website)

**The Thursday Afternoon Group** (formerly 'Evergreens') meets up again this month for tea and socialising on March 11<sup>th</sup> at the Sugar Loaf from 2.30 - 4p.m. New comers welcome . Details from Pat 01462 851609

### **St Mary's Village Choir**

Meets in Church to practice every Tuesday of March, from 8-.9.30p.m., in preparation for Easter. We will also be visiting Meppershall Care Home to entertain the residents on Friday March 19. New enquiries welcome - Sandra [Sandray.harper@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Sandray.harper@yahoo.co.uk) - 01462 813334



## **Mothering Sunday**

**Sun. Mar. 14<sup>th</sup>**

**£1 / child**

**5yrs. – 12yrs.**

**St. Mary's Church**

***NO NEED TO REGISTER.  
JUST COME ALONG.***

**10.30am *make your own  
special gift for Mum***

**11.15am *Mothering Sunday  
Family Service***

**12.15 *refreshments***

**QUESTIONS? Sandra Harper 01462 813334  
[sandray.harper@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sandray.harper@yahoo.co.uk)**

# mini SPARKS

FOR



## EASTER Sunday

**Sun. APRIL 4<sup>th</sup> 10.30 – 12.30**

**£1 / child 5yrs. – 12yrs.**

**St. Mary's Church**

**10.30 painted glass; egg hunt;  
the Easter story & worship**

**12.15 refreshments**

QUESTIONS? Sandra Harper 01462 813334

[sandray.harper@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sandray.harper@yahoo.co.uk)

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*Please RETURN FORMS to school, St. Michael's, St. Mary's, or The Rectory,  
Meppershall.*

*NAME[S].....*

*Age[s] on 20<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2010.....*

*Address.....*

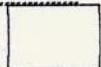
*Tel. No[s].....*

*Name of additional contact & tel No.....*

*Details of any regular medication or medical problem .....*

*Please TICK if you DO NOT want your child to be in any  
photographs, etc.*

*Signature of person with parental responsibility:*



**STEAMED WILD ALASKA SALMON, CHINESE STYLE**

Serve 2

300ml (1/2 pint) vegetable stock  
2 tbsp soy sauce  
1 garlic clove, crushed  
1 tsp grated fresh root ginger  
½ tsp Chinese five- spice powder  
4 spring onions, finely sliced  
1 small red pepper, deseeded and thinly sliced  
2 celery sticks, thinly sliced  
Handful of bean sprouts  
2 heads pak choi, roughly shredded  
2x100-150g (4-6oz) fillets wild Alaska salmon  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

**Method:**

- 1) Pour the vegetable stock into a wok or sauté pan. Add the soy sauce, garlic, ginger, Chinese five-spice powder and all the vegetables. Bring up to simmering point.
- 2) Lay the salmon fillets on top of the vegetables and put a lid on top, or cover with a sheet of foil.
- 3) Cook for 6to8 minutes, or until the fish is done. The flesh will be opaque and should flake easily when tested with a fork.
- 4) Taste the broth, seasoning with salt and pepper if needed, or add a little more soy sauce .Ladle into warm bowls and serve at once
- 5) Serve with rice or egg noodles...

## **GARDEN TIPS FOR MARCH**

(With acknowledgements to the RHS)

- Mulch bare soil in beds and borders
- Move evergreen shrubs
- Prune bush and shrub roses
- Propagate shrubs by layering
- Increase stock of perennials by taking basal stem cuttings from the new shoots
- Lift and divide overgrown clumps of perennials
- Split polyanthus after flowering
- Take cuttings from dahlia tubers
- Plant summer-flowering bulbs
- Sow sweet peas out of doors, or plant out young plants raised under cover. Pinch out growing tips of young sweet peas to encourage side-shoots
- Sow hardy annuals where they are to flower
- Reseed bare patches in the lawn
- Start mowing lawns regularly
- Take pumps out of store and put them back in the pond; begin feeding fish
- Sow vegetables outside and harden off young plants to put outside
- Plant early potatoes and asparagus
- Protect fruit blossom against frosts
- Sow half-hardy annuals and other frost-tender bedding plants under cover
- Water indoor plants regularly, now that the weather is warming up.

### **LAST CHANCE**

- Finish planting bare-root trees and shrubs and new fruit trees and bushes
- This is the latest time to plant snowdrops and winter aconites

### **GET AHEAD**

- Put grow bags in the greenhouse to warm up before planting

- Put stakes and other plant supports in to support new growth before it really needs it.

### 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.

Route 79 to Shefford - Meppershall - Barton - Luton					
<b>Shefford, High Street.</b>				153	174
<b>Meppershall, Sugar Loaf</b>	092	1118	1328	153	174
<b>Meppershall, Rector Road</b>	0728	093	1120	154	174
<b>Meppershall, opp. Sugar Loaf</b>	0730	093	1125	1335	174
<b>Shefford, High Street.</b>	0735	093	1125	1335	1847
<b>Barton, Windsor Parade</b>	0801	100	1153	1403	175
<b>Luton, Silver St</b>				155	1859
<b>Luton, Galaxy Centre</b>	0838	103	1221	1431	182
					1925
Route 79 to Luton - Barton - Meppershall - Shefford					
<b>Luton, Galaxy Centre.</b>				144	1750
<b>Barton, Windsor Parade</b>	085	1040	1230	150	165
<b>Shefford, High Street.</b>	0712	091	1102	1252	1812
<b>Meppershall Loaf, Sugar</b>				1320	1740
<b>Meppershall, Rector Road</b>	0728	092	1118	1328	1840
<b>Meppershall opp. Sugar Loaf</b>	0730	093	1120	1330	1745
<b>Shefford, High Street.</b>	0735	093	1125	1335	1845
					1747

**Route 89 Henlow Camp - Meppershall - Hitchin**

Sch = School Days. NSch = non-school days

Henlow Camp

Meppershall - Sugar Loaf

**Hitchin. Bancroft****Hitchin. Station****Hitchin. Grove Road****Rd****Hitchin. Wilbury Way****Hitchin. Wilbury Way**

Train departs to London

	<b>Sch</b>	<b>NSch</b>	<b>Sch</b>	<b>NSch</b>
	06:45	07:45	07:45	10:00
		08:20	08:25	13:35
	07:19	08:23	08:35	
	07:22			10:35
			14:10	
	08:30	08:42		
	07:32			

**Route 89 Hitchin - Meppershall - Henlow Camp**

Sch = School Days. NSch = non-school days.

Train arrives from London

**Hitchin. Wilbury Way****Hitchin. Grove Road.****Rd****Hitchin. Station****Hitchin. Bancroft.****Meppershall - Sugar Loaf**

	<b>Sch</b>	<b>NSch</b>	<b>Sch</b>	<b>NSch</b>
	15:54B	15:57	17:12	18:16
	16:00	16:00	17:15	18:20
	12:35	16:33	16:33	
	13:08			17:48
				19:03

Times correct as at 02/11/09

A very Happy Birthday to those of you  
celebrating birthdays in March

Archie Underwood who will be 6 on the 6<sup>th</sup>  
Tyler Ball who will be 12 on the 7<sup>th</sup>  
Alexanda Cocks who will be 8 on the 7<sup>th</sup>  
Genevieve Cocks who will be 7 on the 7<sup>th</sup>  
Marcus Hart who will be 7 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
Ella Bryant who will be 5 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
Emma Burr who will be 13 on the 14<sup>th</sup>  
Katherine Gower who will be 12 on the 14<sup>th</sup>  
Emma Horsford who will be 8 on the 14<sup>th</sup>  
Aaron Vernon who will be 6 on the 16<sup>th</sup>  
Brigid Holmes who will be 14 on the 18<sup>th</sup>  
William Roberts who will be 13 on the 19<sup>th</sup>  
Daisy Lucas who will be 8 on the 27<sup>th</sup>  
Kate Aberdein who will be 15 on the 28<sup>th</sup>  
Chloe Scott who will be 13 on 30<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)