



Arms of the de  
Meppershall Family

# ***THE MEPPERSHALL MESSENGER***



**VOLUME 27 – Issue 8**  
***DECEMBER 2011 /  
JANUARY 2012***

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



## **WHAT'S IN YOUR MESSENGER THIS MONTH?**

### **Page**

|    |                        |   |
|----|------------------------|---|
| 2  | Editorial              |   |
| 3  | Readers' Letters       | Roger Smith; Tessa heath; Enid Pamment                |
| 5  | Blowing our own Trump  | News from the Messenger                               |
| 6  | Village Hall News      | Fireworks and After                                   |
| 7  | Rogers Bees            |   |
| 8  | School Report          | Cultural Diversity                                    |
| 10 | Parish Council Report  | November meeting                                      |
| 12 | Your Shout             | Litter; Thank you; Players; Village Choir             |
| 14 | Leisure Group          | October/November trips                                |
| 16 | Financial News Update  | Greece and Italy but UK bucks the trend               |
| 18 | Polehanger Diaries     | Rhino; Feed-in tariffs; 50 years Ago                  |
| 20 | History of Meppershall | A Merry 19 <sup>th</sup> Century Christmas            |
| 22 | Life on the Wild Side  | Red Pandas  |
| 24 | Business Advice        | Advertising   |
| 26 | Wine Society           | Smell   |
| 28 | Calendar of Events     | December & January                                    |
| 29 | Christmas Greetings    | From the Messenger                                    |
| 28 | Wine Society           | Smell   |
| 30 | The Lucy Pages         | With Mervyn Morgan & Niamh Maxwell                    |
| 32 | St Francis Services    | St Mary's Mugs  |
| 33 | Advert                 | Friends of St Mary's Quiz Night                       |
| 34 | Ringmaster             | Local Burglaries and Shed break-ins                   |
| 36 | Police Report          | Local Crime   |
| 37 | Central Beds Advert    | Be Bright and Be Seen this Winter                     |
| 38 | Social Club            | Coming Events   |
| 39 | Baby & Toddler Group   | Halloween report, and a new playhouse                 |
| 40 | Meppershall Players    |   |
| 41 | Advert                 | "Not the Goat" Christmas Show                         |
| 42 | MGC                    | October trips & November meeting                      |
| 43 | Notice Board           | Robert Bloomfield Xmas Fayre; Sugarloaf               |
| 44 | Covers by Request      | +Significant Birthdays + Parish Registers             |
| 45 | Pre-school Ponderings  | Thank you and Christmas Plans                         |
| 46 | Advert                 | Community Christmas Party                             |
| 47 | St Mary's Church       | Contacts  |
| 48 |                        | December & January Services                           |
| 49 |                        | A Christmas Message from St Mary's                    |
| 50 |                        | Junior Church   |
| 51 | Advert                 | Christingle & Carol Service                           |
| 52 | Advert                 | Special Christmas JC                                  |
| 53 | Recipe                 | Sausage, Apple and Cider Suet Pudding                 |
| 54 | Garden Tips            | For December  |
| 55 | Birthdays              | In December & January                                 |
| 56 | The Messenger          | The Team, Contributions, Disclaimer & Collating Dates |

**Volume 27    Issue 8****December 2011****EDITORIAL**

Last month I had to report that half the Messenger Committee had gone into hospital. I am very pleased to report that Colette House is now out and about again and very much better in back and spirits. Sadly, I have no such report on Christine Elbourne: she is back home from hospital but very far from well. Our thoughts and prayers remain with her and Chris and their family.



On page 5 you will find a piece which could have figured here in my Editorial, but I thought it deserved a page of its own!

Please put this date in your diaries: the Summer Fair in 2012 will be on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June. It is good to see that the Summer Fair Committee is already on the ball!

I expect you find it hard to think about next summer when we have not yet reached Christmas - I find it hard to realise that this is our Christmas issue, but I have remembered to put in Christmas greetings from the Messenger – see page 27.

So next time I am writing to you it will be 2012! I am not sure if we will again enter the national competition – it might be tempting fate – but I do know that the Messenger has to keep itself fresh and varied for the sake of its readers. So if there is a type of feature that we do not already include, please let me know. Better still, if you would be prepared to contribute something new, either one-off or regularly, let me know that as well. With no disrespect at all to our regulars, I would be so pleased to hear from new contributors and very happy to help with putting pieces together, if that help is needed. Just call me or e-mail me: contact details on our back page.

So that's it for this year. A very Happy Christmas to you all.

Dick Bulley

## LETTERS

### Letter from Roger Smith

Dear Dick,

Thank you for the update from the Parish Council regarding the proposed development; although you describe it as being "behind the Village Hall", the area in question extends from Fowler's Close up to and including the playing field.

On the one hand, the update states that no planning application has yet been lodged, so there are no detailed proposals; however, the developer has submitted proposals to Polehanger Farms Ltd, and it is presumably these that form the basis of discussions with the working groups set up by the Parish Council and the Village Hall Trustees. The public will not be invited to express a view until the plans "reach a sufficient degree of detail".

There was also some doubt about whether or not a referendum was required. I thought that, as both the hall and the land on which it stands are owned by the residents of Meppershall, the Trustees could not dispose of either without one. A positive result would effectively represent consent to the terms of the sale. However, any material change to the plans would call this consent into question, so the referendum may then need to be rerun.

For this reason, we the residents should be involved at every stage, with any proposal published on the village website. Neither the Council nor the Trustees should agree to be bound by a confidentiality agreement; both represent the village, and anything disclosed to them should be in the public domain. What must not happen is that, by the time of the "consultation", both representative bodies have already been brought onside, so that the village is effectively presented with a fait accompli.

Yours sincerely,  
Roger Smith

14 High Street.

### Letter from Tessa Heath

I thoroughly agree with the sentiments expressed by “a Meppershall resident” in a letter to the editor. There should indeed be a referendum and the villagers should be given an opportunity to decide on the future development of their village.

The Council claims to give parishioners an opportunity to express their views after the developers have presented detailed plans. Surely, by this time, their proposals would amount to a *fait accompli* and the parishioners might only be able to suggest a few minor adjustments. It would be more reassuring if people felt able to exchange views openly on this very important issue without having to resort to anonymity.

Tessa Heath

### Letter from Enid Pamment

On behalf of Shefford Leisure Group, I would like to say a special ‘thank you’ to all the ‘Meppershall Messenger’ team for their help and support during the year. Each issue houses so much interest and keeps people motivated regarding history of the village and current events. We really are very lucky to have such a dedicated team. Well done and congratulations to you all. We would also like to wish our readers seasonal greetings and good health during the coming year.

Enid



## BLOWING OUR OWN TRUMPET!



I am very pleased to bring you this item that is very good news for The Messenger and will, I hope, give you, our readers some satisfaction too.

Way back in April of this year, we were approached by the National Parish Magazine Publishing Co and invited to take part in their annual award competition; we had to enter two issues from the period January to July 2011. Without any great expectations, your Messenger Committee decided to enter, and we submitted our issues from February and May: February was the issue that featured the tributes to Archie Russell plus the survey on paying for the Shefford Hill Path while the May cover featured the winner of the school's Easter Bonnet competition and was accompanied by our half-yearly update of Who's Who and What's What in Meppershall. A long silence followed and then, on 21<sup>st</sup> October – just too late to make our November issue – we received an e-mail saying that we had **come 5<sup>th</sup> out of 620** entries and been commended as “a magazine with a good mix of articles”!

I think we can all be very proud that our small village effort can do so well at a national level. People in the Village have told me that they think The Messenger is produced to a very professional standard, but I thought they were just being nice to me! What is undoubtedly true is that the “good mix of articles” that helped us to do so well is down to our contributors: without you, we would have nothing to be professional with! So a profound “thank you” to all our contributors, some of whom are in their 4<sup>th</sup> year of monthly contributions, and by no means forgetting the printers, folders, collators and distributors who turn the editorial effort into a valued contribution to the Village; and, of course, an equally profound “thank you” to my colleagues on the Committee for print setting, proof-reading and getting in the adverts that pay for it all. Well done all of us!

Dick Bulley  
Editor.

## **MEPPERSHALL VILLAGE HALL NEWS - 10**

from Linda Primett

The Bonfire and Firework night went very well. The weather was typically "November", but that did not put the crowds off from coming along and enjoying the wonderful display. It was a shame the wind decided to change direction – still, everyone went home with the authentic smell of bonfire on them!

Although the attendance was fantastic, we did make a small loss but that would have been significantly larger had we had to pay for the disposal of the bonfire. The Committee are well aware that their decision to "bring a bonfire in" this year, rather than let the residents build their own, was met with some disapproval. It was not a decision taken lightly. As Trustees we have a responsibility to manage the Village Hall as appropriately and correctly as possible. Funds are very tight and if there are ways of saving money without the drastic action of cancelling events then the Committee are obliged and happy to do this.

We should like to take this opportunity of thanking everyone in the village for their support in this and for adhering to our request that no rubbish be put on the site. The general opinion is that the decision was the right one and, hopefully, will enable the village to continue with the traditional bonfire and firework display in the coming years.

Looking to the future, a date for your 2012 diary! The Summer Fair has been fixed for **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2012**. Keep that date free – regular updates will be posted in The Messenger!

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

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

Hi. Meppershall hives are 7 and all are clustered. Feeding has stopped and there is very little to do apart from keeping an eye out for damage. In winter the hives are virtually dormant. The adult bees are in a tight cluster for warmth and their queen is snugly safe in the centre of it all. But as the days lengthen and the spring season approaches, the bees begin feeding the queen royal jelly. This special food, secreted from the glands near the workers mandibles, is rich in protein and stimulates the queen to start laying eggs. Like butterflies, honey bees develop in four distinct phases, egg, larva, pupa and adult. The total development time varies slightly among the three castes of bees, but the basic miraculous process is the same, 24 days for the drones (male bees), 21 days for worker bees and 16 days for the queen.

It all begins when the queen lays an egg. The queen lays a single egg in each cell that has been cleaned and prepared by the workers to raise a new brood. The cell must be spotless or she moves on to another one. If she chooses a standard worker-size cell, she releases a fertilized egg into the cell. That egg develops into a worker bee (female), but if she chooses a wider drone-size cell, the queen releases a non-fertilized egg that will develop into a drone bee (male). The worker bees that build the cells are the ones that regulate the ratio of female worker bees to male drone bees by building smaller cells for female workers and large cells for male drone bees.

Three days after the queen lays an egg it hatches into a larva. The larvae are snowy white and resemble small grubs curled up in the cells. Tiny at first, the larvae grow quickly. These helpless creatures have voracious appetites, consuming 1300 meals a day: within just five days they are 1500 times larger than their original size. At this time the worker bees seal the larvae into the cell with a porous capping of tan beeswax. Once sealed in, the larvae spin a cocoon around their bodies.

The larva is now officially a pupa and here's where things really begin to happen. Of course the transformations now taking place are hidden from sight under the wax cappings, but if you could, you would see that this little creature is beginning to take on the familiar features of an adult bee. The eyes, legs and wings take shape. Coloration begins with the eyes, first pink then purple then black. Finally the fine hairs that cover the bee's body develop. After 12 days the adult bee chews its way through the wax capping to join its sisters and brothers - the entire cycle of the three castes of honey bee from start to finish.

Wishing you all a Happy Christmas and New Year, from me and the bees.



# Meppershall VA CE Lower School

*'An outstanding Church  
of England School'*

*June 2008 and December 2010*



## School Report- November 2011

In our Oaks and Hazels classes (Years Three and Four) we have been studying India as our topic this term. Last week we found out some interesting facts about the festival of Diwali which was celebrated on the 26<sup>th</sup> October.

Here are seven fascinating facts about Diwali...

### Fact One

The word Diwali is from the name 'Diva' which means lines of light.

Abbie Bradshaw Y4

### Fact two

Diwali is the start of a new year, so people give sweets to each other.

Rachel Andrews Y3

### Fact three

Diwali is on different days each year. Last year it started on the fifth of November and this year it started on the twenty sixth of October.

Lucy Wallace Y3

### Fact Four

At Diwali Hindus celebrate the time when Vishnu the protector was born as Rama. The Ramayana tells how Rama's beautiful wife Sita was kidnapped by a Demon and was rescued by Rama.

Keira Thomason Y4

### Fact Five

You can make some Rangoli patterns in your house or outside your house to welcome someone in.

Elise Simpkins Y4

### Fact Six

Hindus and Shikas make Rangoli patterns to welcome gods and people into their home.

Georgia Nesbitt Y4

### Fact Seven

Many Hindu festivals are linked to stories of gods and goddesses. Hindus believe that the god Vishnu preserves and protects.

Olivia Mardell Y4

The children have learnt so much about other cultures and lifestyles throughout this topic and are sharing their research and knowledge with their families. Over the half term holiday the children made the most fantastic models of the Taj Mahal I have ever seen. We saw models made of cake, plastic bottles and boxes, Lego and Hama beads. They were truly inspiring; well done children.

At this time of year we are preparing for Christmas with our traditional Nativity Play and a service of Nine Lessons and Carols. We are however also thinking of the future and I am aware that the deadline for admissions to a Lower School is January 15<sup>th</sup> 2012. Please come and visit us if your child is due to join us in September; I will be very proud to show you around.

Lyn Fairweather  
Headteacher

## **Meppershall Parish Council Report**

This report is for the latest meeting of the Parish Council which was held at Meppershall Village Hall on Monday 15th November 2011.

The Central Beds Councillors reported that recycling had remained above 50% for the last four periods which is an excellent achievement. They also stated that the Council would not be returning to weekly bin collections but were looking into whether it was practicable to use the money on offer from the Government to provide waste food collection in the former South Beds Council area. It was also Central Beds' intention to have a zero increase on the Council Tax for 2012/13.

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

Recent Applications - three received:

102 Fildyke Road – Erection of a rear conservatory (retrospective); no objections.

62 Shefford Road – Erection of 2 storey rear extension and single storey front porch: no objections.

5 Fildyke Road – Garage conversion with raised roof and dormer windows (retrospective): on a previous application for this site, the Council had felt it was an over development and the planning officers had agreed. Nothing has changed with this application even though the work has been completed.

Previous Applications:

Land adjacent to 37 Fildyke Road - change of use of the land from paddock to garden use. REFUSED.

The plans for the site to the rear of 47 Hoo Road have unfortunately been passed on appeal. There are a number of stipulations to be observed and the PC will assist the enforcement section at Central Beds to ensure they complied with.

The matter of the illegal house known as the Pigling is now subject to another prosecution which the PC hopes will end the matter once and for all.

### **Finance**

An anonymous donation of £1,000 has been received and consideration will be given on how this wonderful gesture will be used to the benefit of the Parish.

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

Further news on signage for Shefford Hill footpath is awaited.

Several drain covers were stolen recently and Highways have used cones and a barrier as temporary protection at each site.

Talks with Central Beds on a “sleeping policeman” device which collapses if the vehicle approaching is travelling at less than the speed limit has been concluded, with CB stating they did not think they were suitable for the proposed locations and that there were cheaper options available. The Council await the details of alternatives from Central Beds.

Salt Bins – three have been supplied and filled by Central Beds; the ones purchased by the Parish Council are to be placed at the junction by the water tower, the junction of Fildyke Road and Chapel Road and near the bridge by Hoo Farm. Please remember that the salt in all these bins is to be used only on public roads and paths.

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

The repairs to the play areas on Fosters’ Field have been completed.

The two new metal picnic table and bench seats for Fosters’ Field and Old Road Meadow have still to be installed.

Allotment Land:

The new tenancy agreements will be distributed by the end of November and the gate will be locked from then on.

The next Parish Council meetings will be held Mondays 12th December 2011 and 9th January 2012 at Meppershall Village Hall, both commencing at 7.45pm.

Peter Chapman - Chairman of Meppershall Parish Council

## YOUR SHOUT with Trevor Thorley



**LITTER:** 'KEEP BRITAIN TIDY': this was a slogan I seem to remember in the middle of the last century, but is a practice that could so easily be applied to Meppershall today.

Pam Halliwell instituted a litter campaign earlier in the year with some success and a further litter clean up followed in October 2011. While, in an ideal world, it would make life easier and Meppershall cleaner if people were to take their litter home, we all know, sadly, that this is not going to happen overnight. It has therefore been decided that another Litter Clean-up will take place in May 2012 and hopefully more beyond.

While so far this initiative has been taken up by just a few church members, it is hoped that other residents in the village will feel pride to join this campaign and help to make Meppershall tidy. It will only take up an hour or so of your time, gloves and plastic sacks are provided, along with refreshments. You will be surprised how rewarding this can be with heaps of personal satisfaction that you are doing something worthwhile for your village and community. Further details can be obtained from Gary Maddern on 01462 732415; he would very much like to hear from you.

**THANK YOU:** The Friends of St. Mary's would like to say a big thank you to those of you who came and supported the Abba Revival concert in St. Mary's Church on Saturday October 10. A great and successful evening was had by everyone as they rose to their feet and sang, waved and danced during the programme of songs from the 70's. It is extremely rewarding that while giving so much pleasure to many, the profit from the event will go towards the maintenance and upkeep of the church. Not many of you would be aware that the Abba Revival group entertained us after a long and no doubt tiring journey from Amsterdam where they were on stage at a gig on the night before, October 9. They certainly get around and warranted the reputation they have developed in the entertainment world. Future events include the Quiz Night on January 28, 2012 in the Village Hall and then the return of Kenny Ball and His Jazzmen on March 10, 2012; back again in St. Mary's Church where they performed for us so energetically in 2009. Interest is already building up and it is hoped that tickets should be ready and available towards the end of January 2012.

**MEPPERSHALL PLAYERS:** tickets for their 'Christmas Variety Show' are available from Roger's Bakery: £5 on Thursday December 1; £6 on Friday December 2 and £7 on Saturday December 3.

**CHRISTMAS PLAY:** On Saturday December 10, in Meppershall Village Hall at 2.30pm, there will be a Christmas play for all the family entitled 'Nearly the Goat' by Nigel Forde. This will be staged by The Riding Lights Theatre Company, which is based in York, but travels around the country. Tickets can be obtained from Roger's Bakery, The Post Office or by phoning 01462 813310.

**MEPPERSHALL VILLAGE CHOIR:** - message from Wendy Corns:

Christmas is a coming! It's that wonderful time of year when we begin to rehearse songs and carols for the Christmas celebrations. We have chosen some very traditional carols and a number of rather beautiful, but lesser known ones. When choosing for such an occasion, I am always totally surprised by the wealth of lovely music available for this time of year – almost spoilt for choice! Of course, I have to consider the music arrangement and its suitability for our small, but enthusiastic village choir.

We are very much looking forward to sharing this music with you all. However, I can't help feeling a touch of sadness that more of you do not seem to want to share the experience of singing in a choir. If you are one of those people who is always humming a tune or singing a song in the shower, then you should certainly consider joining us for a couple of rehearsals or so to see if you might enjoy singing in the choir with us. We meet in St. Mary's Church on Tuesday evenings at 7.30pm.

Please feel free to contact me if you require any further detail about the choir. Ring Wendy - Tel: 01462 850142.

**REMEMBER IT IS YOUR SHOUT** Call Trevor on  
**01462 813357** or email:  
[trevor.thorley1@btinternet.com](mailto:trevor.thorley1@btinternet.com)

## **SHEFFORD LEISURE GROUP**

By Enid Pamment



Our final 'write up' for 2011 covers our visit to East Anglia Christmas which took place on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November. Having joined the coach at Shefford we made our way to the Copdock Interchange where we met our Guide for an onward journey to The Crown at Manningtree where morning coffee and biscuits awaited our arrival. Following this welcome break, we rejoined our coach for a drive along the walls by Mistley Towers on our journey to Harwich. We visited several villages and hamlets accompanied by the expert commentary of our Guide. It was then back to The Crown at Manningtree where we found the tables set ready for our Christmas turkey lunch, complete with crackers. Feeling replete we rejoined our coach for a short tour to Ipswich where we were given the option of spending the rest of the afternoon shopping or joining our Guide for a gentle town trail, finishing at Christchurch Mansion for a short visit. On the way our Guide showed us architectural features which were common to that part of the country; we also came across a bronze statue of Grandma and the family made famous by Giles the cartoonist. Christchurch Mansion housed many interesting collections and entrance to this very large property is free. Before returning to our coach for the homeward journey we had time to enjoy a last 'cuppa'

Our annual visit to London for the Lord Mayor's Show was really magical. The weather was fine and warm and we were able to view both the outward journey to The Mansion House and the return of the procession which was as usual spectacular and grandiose. The floats were superb, as was the general atmosphere and everyone was so friendly. The Lord Mayor resplendent in his regalia duly arrived and was greeted by much cheering. At the end of the procession we made our way back to the bridge overlooking the River Thames for a spectacular firework display. Making our way home, our driver Colin from Chambers coaches kindly drove us through Regent Street and Oxford Street in order that we could see the Christmas lights. This really was a bonus to our truly delightful day.

## Forthcoming Events 2011

|   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Christmas in the Royal Landscape            | Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> December  |
| Thursford Xmas Spectacular (evening)        | Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December  |
| Shopping in Norwich                         | Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> December   |
| Carols with the Stars at RAH                | Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> December  |
| John Rutter Xmas Celebrations RAH (Matinee) | Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> December |
| Brick Lane Music Hall, including lunch      | Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> December  |

## 2012

|                                       |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| The London Museum/Covent Garden       | Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> February |
| Thriplow Daffodil Weekend             | Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup> March   |
| Get together, Memorial Hall, Shefford | Saturday 24 <sup>th</sup> March   |
| Greenwich                             | Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> May     |
| Cambridge River Cruise with Lunch     | Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> July    |

## HOLIDAYS

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Images of Poland (Krakow)                | 3 <sup>rd</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> June    |
| Warners – Hayling Island (Hotel Accom'n) | 1 <sup>st</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup> October |

London Theatre trips are available with a coach 'pick up' in Shefford. If there is a particular show you would like to see, please don't hesitate to contact me. I am only too happy to help.

Shows currently available are:

Matinees – Leaving Shefford at 11am

The Nutcracker – Royal Ballet – London Coliseum - Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> Dec.

Million Dollar Quartet – Noel Coward Theatre ~Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2012 (Circle Seats)

Crazy for You – Her Majesty's Theatre – Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2012 (Stall Seats)

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

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

*Raffles are held and all the proceeds are for Keech Hospice Care for Children. For further information regarding dates, prices and availability or to receive our monthly newsletter, please contact Enid on 01462 851397 or e-mail [Enidpamment@aol.com](mailto:Enidpamment@aol.com).*

Enid Pamment – Shefford Leisure Group



## Financial News Update

with Jon Ingarfill

I started last month's article by stating that nothing much had happened! Well what a contrast October turned out to be.....

After nineteen (yes I really did write 19) meetings of European finance leaders and Heads of State, they finally stopped dithering and reached a proposal to tackle the Greek debt problem. Admittedly it was lacking in fine detail at that point, but the sheer relief that they had reached some sort of deal was enough to send the markets sharply up. Unfortunately that proved to be very short-lived, as immediately the Greek Prime Minister announced he wanted to hold a referendum! Greece is drinking in the 'Last chance saloon', they are on the last barrel, and there is very little left in that, so to ask the people if they wanted higher taxes, more spending cuts, and job losses or not, was only going to get one answer - on the basis that turkeys don't vote for Christmas, this was never going to be allowed to happen, and under pressure from those who spent those 19 meetings thrashing out a deal, he finally stepped down.

No sooner had Greece been pushed to one side than Italy stepped up to the plate. Now Italy is a far worse problem than Greece ever was: it is Europe's third largest economy and just too big to bail out, so other solutions need to be explored. As with Greece, their charismatic PM finally stepped aside and the Italian President appointed a prominent economist rather than hold elections. We have to hope that he can slowly turn Italy back onto the path to growth. Their economy has not grown for around ten years; in fact I read the other day that only Zimbabwe and Iran had poorer economic performance over the same period!

Underneath all of this there have been some pretty good results reported by a number of large companies – Sainsbury's, Next, and Primark being just three of them - all reported improved figures and performance, so the picture is not necessarily as bleak as the media would have us believe. Sure, things are still bad and there's a long way to go to get back to anything like 2007 levels, but slowly the better news keeps coming.

This has without doubt been the most challenging period in living memory for most firms, but those that adapt their business model to the ever-increasingly technological world, embrace new challenges and streamline their businesses are going to spearhead the recovery which will eventually come. Some old favourites may not make it (Comet was sold for just £2 as its new owner agreed to take on its debts, and numerous others have already fallen by the wayside), and new ones will step in.

The country as a whole is also not doing too badly in terms of its borrowing. We are being restrained from moving forward by the issues in Europe. The EU is our largest trading partner, and the Greek problem has been rumbling along for over four months but hopefully now things can begin to settle down? Yes, it's an uncomfortable time, but in economic terms the UK is strong, foreign banks, and companies want to invest here, and that too is vital to the eventual recovery. We must keep looking and moving forwards.

This is the last article of 2011, and I don't think many of us will be sad to see the back of it – it's been a very difficult and unpredictable year for a great many people. With inflation running at 5%, every bank and building society account is losing money (in real terms), and with the markets having been extremely volatile, it's difficult to convince people to invest new funds. However, for those prepared to take a 3-5 year view, there could be some attractive returns to be had. Let's hope 2012 turns out to be a better year.

Tel: 07870 564115 or email: [jon.ingarfill@pocockrutherford.com](mailto:jon.ingarfill@pocockrutherford.com)

## Polehanger: A Farming Diary

### Episode 28



### Weather . . . or not

BBC website weather summary on 4<sup>th</sup> November:

“One of the warmest October months on record gives way to a mild start for November. It will turn colder as we move through the month and this will bring some night-time frosts. It looks set to be a rather unsettled month with showers and longer spells of rain.”

We need the rain and there hasn't been enough of it yet to make up the deficit from the first 5 months of this year.

There is also talk of a spell of severe winter weather. By the time I write again in 2012 we will know whether it has arrived or not.

### Rhino; a month in the life of an Oil Seed Rape plant

Rhino is on target for going into and through the winter. Not too advanced but not lagging behind either. There is grass weed control and fungicide to apply in November and then daily pigeon patrols start. As the temperatures drop and other sources of food decrease, pigeons flock together and love to 'attack' rape crops causing extensive damage if allowed to.

### Elsewhere on (and off) the Farm

Feed-In Tariffs:

we were well on the way to installing a 50KW solar photovoltaic system on one of our barns to generate electricity for on-site use, based on the government's Feed-in Tariff scheme. The 'FiT' scheme nationally was adjusted at the beginning of August to concentrate on smaller schemes. A further adjustment, just announced, reducing the tariff payment, has thrown the basis of many proposals and plans up in the air and they may well not proceed. Whilst understanding the logic behind yet another change in Government support for 'green energy', it does nothing to encourage longer term planning in reducing our carbon footprint. We may continue with a smaller 25KW scheme that can be installed before the new deadline in December 2011

Common Agricultural Policy:

Initial proposals have now been published for the policy post 2014 (or '15 or '16, depending when the 27 countries involved can agree something!). One of the main proposals is to have a compulsory 'greening' of 7% of farmland taken out of food production for environmental benefit.

The aim to maximize food production (surely a good target in a growing and hungry world) and bring environmental/ wildlife benefits from setting some land aside from crop growing is, in my view, trying to square a circle. The National Farmers Union President, local farmer Peter Kendall, has described these CAP proposals as 'absolutely bonkers'!

## Interesting Statistic(s)

In 1804 there were 1 billion people in the world (apparently!). By 1927 that had doubled and by 1960 there were 3 billion. More children survived into adulthood and people were living longer. In early November the 7 billionth turned up, possibly in the Philippines. Cause for celebration or alarm?

The UN's optimistic forecast for 2100 is 6 billion and falling: its pessimistic forecast is 15 billion! (What assumptions are used in calculations like this? Do they have any meaning?) One of the key demographic variables affecting a society's economic well-being is not the absolute number of people but the ratio of dependents to those in work.

Clearly, another key issue is the ability of resources to support those people and of science to develop ways to use them.

Do you worry about the effect this will have on the next generation of your family: are you able to put yourself in the position of a drought affected mother trying to feed her family in Ethiopia; or flood affected father attempting to provide shelter in Bangladesh? What can (should) I / you do?

## 50 Years Ago: Michael Foster's Diary Extract from 1961

7<sup>th</sup> December: Smithfield Show (indoor livestock and farm equipment). Just managed to jump on 11:10 train as it was moving out of Hitchin station. Enjoyed getting away and looking at things from a distance.

25<sup>th</sup> December: everyone (except him) in bed with nasty colds. Cancel lunch with wider family (in spite of the) 20lb turkey!! Spent much of the day feeding cattle and thawing pipes.

Chris Foster, 7<sup>th</sup> November 2011

*Comments in reply to any of Chris's points will be welcome - Ed*

## The History of Meppershall – 15

### A Merry Christmas in Old Meppershall

Meppershall Rectory  
21<sup>st</sup> December 1810

My Dear Henry,

Dorothy and I send you our blessings and wish you both a very merry Christmas. Our home is filled with our nieces and nephews this year so the girls will have a very enjoyable holiday. They are planning some very jolly games and entertainment for Christmas Eve and we would all be delighted if you could join us. The merriment is planned to end in time for the youngsters to dine and rest before Midnight Mass so you could return to your Church in time for your own Mass. We understand if you would prefer not to be so rushed therefore please consider the invitation to apply to any day that is convenient.

I have had some of the new kaleidoscopes sent down from London for the young people. I have experimented with them myself and find them quite enchanting, even though they are made of tin. I must admit that I have decided to keep one for myself and have secreted it in my desk drawer so I can amuse myself when I need a break from writing my sermons. Alas, now Dorothy will know and tease me as I must pass the letter on to her so she can write to Anne, I just wished to add a few words at the beginning for you.

My best wishes,  
James

My Dearest Anne,  
Josephine and Humphrey have come to visit from London with some friends. They have been teaching me the new dance, the quadrille that the Duke of Devonshire introduced, but I am not sure whether James will approve.

We have been most busy in the kitchen. Cook has made the puddings for the workers and we have also cooked hams, roast beef, roast fowl [stuffed with sweet plums, breadcrumbs, eggs, onions, apples and herbs], cinnamon buns, spiced apple pies and many large mince pies ready for Christmas. The puddings together with beef, fruit and mince pies will be laid out in the barn for the workers to collect tomorrow.

I have tried the cheese pudding recipe that you sent and found it delightful. I do hope the following ones will please you. My hams were cooked in a new way this year. I did remove a large slice from them, spread in herbs and plums and tied the slice tight back on the ham to keep it together whilst it boiled for 45 minutes. Then cool and slice as usual.

Josephine showed me a most dainty cold pudding that I beg you to try. Slice some apples, with the skins but no pips, very thin and put on the bottom of a dish. Spread over dark sugar and some small pieces of suet. Soak bread crumbs in brandy then add to the dish and so the same layers once again. Beat three large eggs, with some brandy, pour on the pudding and cook for 30 minutes. Allow it to cool then cover with softly whipped best cream when cold.

I can highly recommend these honey cakes. In small balls of bread dough poke a hole and fill with honey. Knead a little but do not lose the honey and add sweet plums to the dough. Flatten slightly, decorate with the same plums and a little sugar and bake until golden.

Barbara and Pen have been amusing themselves in the kitchen and have just come to me with the most delightful birds they have made from pieces of the sugar loaf. I am heartily glad we have many sugar loaves in the store for the other young ones are also making small sculptures to place on the table. Oh dear, I need to go and be stern, I did say they should not paint the sugar or they might poison themselves but my nephew Mark is painting his piece red – oh dear, the poor boy has cut his finger on the knife, it is not paint at all - Cook is tying up his finger now. I think I must go and find the younger ones another activity.

Please come over, I am longing to spend some time with you at this very special time of the year

Wishing you all a very merry Christmas.

Dorothy

*Copyright Sandra Read, Manor Farm. Not to be reproduced without permission.*

*Recipes taken from "The Diary of a Farmers Wife 1796-1797", by A. Hughes, [Lane, London 1964] and not tried!*



# LIFE ON THE WILD SIDE

By JEREMY HOLDEN

## Red Pandas

'If you step into a trap, don't move. The more you struggle the deeper the teeth with bite into your leg.' This potentially good advice was one of the first things my guide said to me before we set off from Pade village in Burma's far north eastern mountains. I had seen these traps in the village, huge rusting gins with wicked interlocking teeth. They are designed to catch bears, but are indiscriminate, trapping red panda, monkeys, and even people who are careless enough to step on one. I had measured the height of the jaws against my boot: they closed just above the ankle.

My guide was also a hunter, a member of the Lisu minority group of Burmo-Tibetan ethnicity. He spends most of his time in the mountainous forests catching animals, either with these iron traps or with a crude local musket. For the most part he is not hunting for food but to fuel China's insatiable trade in traditional medicine. The motorbike propped up outside his bamboo hut was bought with the cash raised from selling bear gall bladders and smoke-dried macaques. He also occasionally catches the rare Burmese snub-nosed monkey, the animal we had come to look for.

Despite their skill in decimating the local wildlife, these hunters are also crucial to conservation efforts in remote places like northern Burma. Their knowledge of the local terrain and the animals that occur there has been fundamental in the first wave of biodiversity surveys. It was through these local hunters that we first learned about the new species of snub-nosed monkey.

Armed with a dozen traps of our own – more environmentally sound camera traps – we hoped to get the first photographs of this elusive primate. By early 2011 the only evidence we had of this species was a series of skulls collected from various remote villages and a single dead specimen, which was used to describe the Burmese snub-nose monkey *Rhinopithecus strykeri*. I knew this was going to be a difficult job and I had little faith that we would capture an image of a live monkey. The terrain here is tough: step-sided valleys soar to over 3000 metres and are covered in dense forest. Local hunters claimed there were perhaps fewer than 300 snub-nosed monkeys left.

The elections held in November 2010 had made travel in Burma difficult and we were forced to delay the expedition until January and the depths of winter. The monkeys are reported to live high up on mountains in the bamboo and coniferous forests above the tropical evergreen zone. We had no idea as we set off from Pade that this area was also now deep under snow. Two day's walking took us to the snow line and we made camp on a blustery ridge too narrow for tents. We spent that night under the stars shivering and listening to the wind roaring through the trees. The next day we struggled through ever deepening snow until we came to a clearing among giant trees draped with trailing lichens. Above the sky was a mesmerizing blue and flocks of bright Himalayan birds blew through the trees. It was silent and beautiful, but I realized we could not set camera traps here – the snow was too deep. The guides refused to go any higher, fearing a further snow fall might trap us in the mountains. They also pointed out that there were iron traps set beneath the snow! We had no choice but to turn back and abandon any hopes of photographing the monkeys.

Although capturing images of the monkeys was a primary focus of the expedition, another equally important part was to train my Burmese counterparts in camera trapping techniques. The snub-nosed monkeys were not the only interesting mammals living in this area. Red panda, the rare tufted deer, and the strange-looking Takin were also reported by the hunters. We had seen tracks of red pandas in the snow so I decided for the purpose of both research and training we would target this species, which in Burma occurs only in these northern most mountains.

A few days later we had descended the mountain and climbed to almost 3000 m on an adjacent peak where the snow wasn't as deep. Here in the rhododendron forests we set the cameras, targeting red panda where possible. We were lucky enough to discover a panda latrine where the animals regularly came to defecate, clear evidence that the species still occurred. My counterparts Saw Soe Aung and Thet Ngai Aung were excellent students and within four days we had all the cameras set. A month later the two Aungs returned to recover the traps. I met them two months later in Myittha, the capital city of Kachin State, and we looked at the results: images of tufted deer, Chinese serow, Gongshan muntjac, and the beautiful pheasant Temminck's Tragopan. But best of all, a stunning image of a red panda looking directly into the camera and feeling grateful, perhaps, that the traps we had set were harmless.



## Business Advice – 5: Advertising



By the time you read this article, Christmas will be at the forefront of your mind. However, for the Messenger team, the December-January double edition is also a sign that it will soon be time to contact the businesses which advertise in the magazine. Therefore, it is an excellent period for me to give you a few tips to make your ads more effective.

### Less is more

Our culture is utterly visual. Full of TV ads containing more special effects than the early episodes of Star Wars and billboards larger than most gardens. So you must grab the reader's attention.

A busy advert doesn't get read. If you need more room, buy a bigger space. Don't try and cram too much information into a small one.

Stick to essential information: company name, phone number (faxes are no longer used), email, website. And, of course, what you offer. This should be kept to the absolute minimum (5-6 words) and can take the form of a catchphrase. Have a look at the ad from Shefford Osteopathic Clinic: simple and impactful.

Remember, the point of your advert is to get people to call or visit. When they do, you can tell them more.

Use simple fonts. Complicated fonts distract the reader from the contents. Arial is always better than Times New Roman, for example. Also, for small ads (i.e. in newspapers and magazines), choose a single font and stick with it: you can vary the size, use bold or italics, but don't mix and match radically different writings.

Only add logos or pictures if they really help convey the message, or make your brand stand out. Avoid pictures overlapping the text. I forgot that in my current Messenger ad. See for yourself how the watermark distracts the eye. If your advert is to be printed in black and white, use outline pictures to avoid messy shades of grey.

## Tailor your ads

With only a set budget to spend on marketing, you need to choose your media wisely. Everything depends on your target customer and the nature of your business.

For example, if your company sells mostly to youth, it may be effective to contact local schools and clubs, and distribute leaflets there. But have you also considered using social media? By setting appropriate search criteria on Facebook, your advert could come up on the screen of your dream customer every time they log on. That's about twice every hour for your average teenager: can you achieve such a hit with other methods?

With regards to your products or services, consider trade magazines and specialised ads sections. Contrary to popular belief, advertising alongside your competitors is not a bad thing. Being part of a group is more powerful and draws the attention of a greater number of punters. This is the principle used by estate agents and car dealers in the local papers: they advertise together, so the customers know where to find the info. Your promotional material is sure to be read.

If your services vary seasonally, or you propose different special offers on your products, identify which publications allow you to change your ads for each issue.

If you wish to advertise your company in the Messenger, please contact the Editor rapidly. In addition, do not hesitate to contact me if you want a quick review of your ad before it goes to press (all part of our £1 a minute local business advice scheme).



Albane Quesnot

01462 850518

[albane.quesnot@just-A.co.uk](mailto:albane.quesnot@just-A.co.uk)

your local Business Coaching and Support partner

*"Advertising doesn't create a product advantage. It can only convey it."*

*William Bernbach (1911-1982), advertising creative director, USA*

## **The Wine Society's Guide To Wine Tasting - 8**

*The benefits of learning how to taste wine are both immediate and tangible. Being able to interpret appearance, smell and taste in the glass, and recognising the characteristics of the small number of grape varieties which lie behind most wine labels not only enhances enjoyment, but boosts wine confidence, two excellent reasons for learning the ropes. Anybody with working faculties and the will to succeed can do it, and, with a little practice, achieve a good standard of wine appreciation. In our sensory journey, this month we take a look at smell!*

### **Why?**

We may call it wine tasting, but the nose takes centre stage, for smell is an infinitely more sensitive and complex sense than taste. While the taste buds efficiently separate sweet from bitter, and sour from salty, the 10 million or so receptor cells which make up the olfactory organ, high in the nasal cavity, are stimulated by sensations which can't be tasted. In wine terms, these could include pungency, mustiness or rot, as well as the more pleasurable aromas of oak, spice and grape fragrance.

An initial 'nosing' or sniffing of the wine establishes its cleanliness and good health. Corkiness, oxidation or bacterial spoilage (see Common Wine Faults) will be readily detected at this stage. New oak will be apparent, and some of the more communicative grape varieties will announce themselves.

Seasoned tasters swirl the wine in the glass for a very good reason. This agitation releases volatile compounds in the wine, which intensifies the 'nose', also known as the 'bouquet', and enables more information to come through. Primary fruit aromas give way to subtler, more complex notes of spice, flowers and other elements such as cedar (common in cabernet sauvignon, for example) or leather (a regular find in syrah-based wines). Whether animal, vegetable or mineral, all aromas have something to impart, and because the nose is closely linked to the brain, these sensations are automatically stored for future reference.

## How ?

- Don't swirl the wine in the glass just yet. First, take a good sniff to check for cleanliness, intensity, clues to the grape variety and signs of oak.
- Next, swirl the wine in the glass and sniff immediately as it settles. Compare the difference in the wine now. Are there any aromas which were not previously apparent?
- Now try to pinpoint what you can smell. Apart from fruit aromas, can you identify other smells? If you can smell spices, for instance, try to work out what they are aniseed, cloves, ginger, pepper, nutmeg, and so on. With practice, you will be able to identify an increasing number of grape varieties from specific aromas. For now, check the glossary and see if you agree.
- Consider the intensity of the aromas present, but don't try to find something that may not be there. A youthful wine, which still has to evolve, may well be 'dumb' on the nose, in which case describe it as such. Try it again later when it has had more air contact. Decanting also helps, notably in the case of white wines which haven't much to say.
- Jot down your impressions.

*For more information about The Wine Society, including how to join, go to [www.thewinesociety.com/join](http://www.thewinesociety.com/join)*

*Life membership of The Society can be yours for a one-off payment of £40, giving you a share in this co-operative business.*

## Calendar of Meppershall Events

### *December 2011*

|  |                 |                                     |
|--|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Thurs<sup>1<sup>st</sup></sup> - Sat 3<sup>rd</sup></b> |                 |                                     |
| Players Christmas Variety Show                             | 7.45pm          | Village Hall                        |
| <b>Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup></b>                             |                 |                                     |
| Christmas Lights   | 5.30pm – 7.30pm | High Street, Shefford               |
| <b>Sunday 4<sup>th</sup></b>                               |                 |                                     |
| Christingle Service  | 4.00pm          | St. Mary's                          |
| <b>Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup></b>                            |                 |                                     |
| Read through of "Gaslight"                                 | 8.00pm          | Village Hall                        |
| <b>Saturday 10<sup>th</sup></b>                            |                 |                                     |
| PTA Christmas Fayre  | 10.00am - 1pm   | Robert Bloomfield Academy, Shefford |
| Nearly the Goat – Family Show                              | 2.30pm          | Village Hall                        |
| <b>Monday 12<sup>th</sup></b>                              |                 |                                     |
| Parish Council Meeting                                     | 7.45pm          | Village Hall                        |
| <b>Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup></b>                             |                 |                                     |
| Baby & Toddler Grp Xmas Party                              | 1.30 – 3.00pm   | Village Hall                        |
| <b>Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup></b>                           |                 |                                     |
| Auditions for "Gaslight"                                   | 8.00pm          | Village Hall                        |
| <b>Saturday 17<sup>th</sup></b>                            |                 |                                     |
| Village Christmas Party                                    | 7.30 – Midnight | Village hall                        |
| <b>Sunday 17<sup>th</sup></b>                              |                 |                                     |
| Carol Service  | 6.00pm          | St. Mary's                          |
| <b>Saturday 24<sup>th</sup></b>                            |                 |                                     |
| Xmas Eve Disco with A/C                                    |                 | Village Hall                        |
| Mischief Sings to his Guitar                               | 8.45pm          | Sugar Loaf                          |
| <b>Saturday 31<sup>st</sup></b>                            |                 |                                     |
| New Years Eve Disco with DJ Ben                            |                 | Village Hall                        |
| New Years Eve – All Age Disco                              | 8.45pm          | Sugar Loaf                          |

### *January 2012*

|                                 |              |              |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Monday 9<sup>th</sup></b>    |              |              |
| Parish Council Meeting          | 7.45pm       | Village Hall |
|                                 |              |              |
| <b>Saturday 28<sup>th</sup></b> |              |              |
| Friends of St Marys Quiz Night  | 7 for 7.30pm | Village Hall |
|                                 |              |              |

THE MESSENGER WISHES A  
**VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS**  
AND A  
PEACEFUL & PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR  
TO ALL OUR READERS.



**WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK ALL OUR  
ADVERTISERS, VOLUNTEERS AND**

## **CONTRIBUTORS FOR THEIR SUPPORT DURING THE PAST YEAR.**

### **THE LUCY PAGES**

**By Lucy Standbridge**

**Aged 10**

(Lucy also took the pictures)



#### **Hobbies**

Life isn't all about the Xbox, Wii, DS or any technology. Look at some amazing hobbies some of us have!

**First I have interviewed**

**Mr. Mervyn Morgan:**

**What is your hobby?**

Astronomy.



**What age did you start your hobby?**

I had my first telescope when I was 8. I first started in the early 1960's.

**What made you start this hobby?**

Watching all the men going into space on T.V.

When I moved into the village, because the skies are so dark here compared to where I lived previously, I decided to build an observatory for my telescope in the back garden.

**Have you seen any other objects in the sky?**

I have seen meteors and looked at other galaxies.

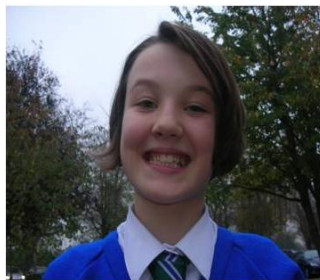
I'm now trying my hand at astrophotography, but it's still early days!

**Do you look at the star constellations?**

Yes. My favourite is Orion. It's about midnight and is in a cross shape. You can see the gas clouds and new stars.

**I have also interviewed Niamh Maxwell from Gregory Close:**

Niamh Maxwell is 11 and her hobby is Guides.

**What age did you start your hobby?**

I started at the age of 10 because you have to be 10 or over to join.

**What made you start Guides?**

Because of the trips to go on, the arts and crafts and because my sister came home saying how good it was.

**What trip have you enjoyed the most so far?**

I have been to guide camp which is in Bromham, Bedford. My favourite activity yet is when we went raft building and got to go in the water to test it.

**What do you do at Guide camp?**

We went to the mill and made cake, had a party and played some games, just to mention a few things.

**Is there any trip coming up that you are excited about?**

Yes, we are going on a train trip to Peterborough to do some Christmas shopping.



**ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI**  
**CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
**HIGH STREET**  
**SHEFFORD**  
**Tel: 01462 813436**  
**CHRISTMAS SERVICES      2011**

**SATURDAY 24 DECEMBER CHRISTMAS EVE :**  
**6.00PM : CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS MASS**  
**11.30pm: CAROLS**  
**MIDNIGHT: FIRST MASS OF CHRISTMAS**  
**SUNDAY 25 DECEMBER CHRISTMAS DAY:**  
**MASS AT 9.00am & 11.00am**  
  
**NO EVENING MASS.**

\*\*\*\*\*

**St Mary's Church Meppershall tea towels and mugs for sale!**

Did you know that the Village Stores sells mugs and tea towels commemorating our beautiful church of St Mary's? Please have a look! The quality Linen Union tea towels also show other important village institutions (village hall and the school, to name a couple) drawn by a local artist. Both mugs and tea towels have the attractive traditional blue colour of St Mary.

Prices are as follows:

Linen Union St Mary's Tea Towels: 1 for £4.50, 2 for £8.00, 3 for £12.00, 4 for £15.00. St Mary's mugs: £3.50 each or 3 for £10.

Rest assured that all proceeds from the sale of these items go towards church funds. With thanks for your valued support.

The Friends of St. Mary's

# **QUIZ NIGHT**

**Meppershall Village Hall  
Saturday January 28, 2012  
7pm for 7.30pm  
Bar – Raffle - Prizes**

**TABLES OF 6,  
£5 PER PERSON**

## Contact Trevor on 01462 813357 or any Committee Member



This is a Ringmaster message from Bedfordshire Police. Please pass the details of this message on to any friends and neighbours. Residents are asked to be vigilant and to review the security of all doors and windows, after a burglary took place in Fildyke Road, in Meppershall, on Sunday the 23rd of October. The offence took place between 5:20 and 5:45 p.m. It is not known how the offender gained entry to the house as there are no signs of damage. Some money and a man's watch were taken.

Many Burglaries can be prevented:

- Keep doors and windows locked at all times.
- Remove all keys from the locks and keep them in a safe place out of view.
- Avoid leaving property like handbags, keys, or laptops in hallways, or where they can be seen from outside the house.
- Keep garden furniture, ladders, and wheelie bins in a secure garage or shed, or locked up away from the house, where they might be used to climb onto a roof or access a first floor window.
- Be a good neighbour. Be aware of sounds like breaking glass.
- Report any suspicious activity, or vehicles, in the area.

If you have any information about this crime or other suspicious incidents, please call the Force Control Room on 1 0 1, and quote crime reference, J,D/,4,3,2,2,0,/2011. Alternatively text your message to (07786) 200011 or Email your message to [chc@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:chc@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk)

Bedfordshire residents are also being warned to check their sheds and garages are secure after a series of break-ins across the county. Bicycles and mopeds are at the top of burglars' lists of things to steal, but gardening

equipment and other household items are also popular and easy to get at if people continue to leave their outbuildings and gardens insecure.

Neighbourhoods across the county have seen an increase in the number of thefts, which in turn sees crime figures rise dramatically because people are not making sure their sheds, garages and gardens are secure or locked, and property within it secure.

Bedfordshire Police Crime Reduction Officer Lesley Johnson said: “We would encourage everyone who keeps a bicycle or moped in their garage or shed not only to lock the door but to secure the bike as well. In addition, don’t leave bolt croppers, lopping-shears or other such items lying around, making it easy for burglars to free your property and run off with it in a matter of seconds. We must all take a common sense view of security and do our bit to reduce crime.”

Many householders do not consider the value of the goods in the shed and therefore look after them accordingly. If your shed only contains a few broken pots and seed trays then closing the door with a bent nail might be adequate. However, if like so many your shed contains the mower, strimmer, power tools, barbecue and kids’ bikes, then the old bent nail is woefully inadequate. Thieves are not averse to stealing items which need a trailer or van either – ride-on lawnmowers and particularly quad bikes are very popular.

However, there are steps to take that will deter most thieves:

- Check gates and fences; are there any weak spots? A high back wall and a thorny hedge are two great deterrents.
- Side passage - fit a strong gate.
- Sheds and garages – buy and **USE** a good quality lock, padbolt or hasp and staple with padlocks.
- Consider an inexpensive alarm system.
- Do you really need a window in the shed or could it be boarded up?
- Mark your property with postcode. You can buy cheap kits from most DIY stores, which enable you to etch the number on – or simply paint it on. This is more effective than “invisible” marking which can fade. You could share the cost of the kit with neighbours and friends.

Bedfordshire Police and Crime Reduction co-ordinators continue to actively target the problem but anything that can be done to prevent the problem in the first place is invaluable. If you

have information relating to any burglaries, contact Bedfordshire Police, in confidence, on 01234 841212, the non emergency number 101, or text information to 07786 200011. Alternatively contact independent charity Crimestoppers, anonymously, on 0800 555 111, or online at [crimestoppers-uk.org](http://crimestoppers-uk.org).

A number of Ringmaster members have reported to us that they are receiving telephone calls from Security Companies claiming to be working with, or for, the Police. Some Residents have been told that the Chief Constable is specifically involved in these projects. Other callers have claimed that they are selling products that raise money for the Police or Police Charities.

Bedfordshire Police do not employ any private companies to undertake security checks on peoples homes. If you have genuine concerns about the security of your home and property, please contact your Local Policing Team, or a Crime Reduction Officer, by calling 01234 841212.

Bedfordshire police offers the following advice: never buy goods or services as a result of a cold call from a company over the phone.

If you are interested in a product ask for a number that you call back, when you have had time to think about the offer. Never disclose personal details over the phone, like bank account numbers, maiden names, or dates of birth. Do not discuss times and days that your home will be empty.

Cold Calling can be reported to Trading Standards on (08454) 04 05 06.

## **Police Report for Meppershall Messenger**

During the month of October there was one recorded crime in Meppershall which was a burglary. There were five recorded ASB incidents. The ASB incidents were in various locations around Meppershall but do not appear to be linked. Three of the ASB incidents were involving vehicles and this includes the A507 area.

We are now in a position to offer Speedwatch in Meppershall. If any members of the community are interested please contact 01234 842567 and ask for PCSO Leigh Iddon. Speedwatch is now active in Shefford, Clifton and Arlesey and a team of members (police vetted) are able to borrow police equipment and monitor the speed of traffic in various locations around the village.

The new non emergency number 101 is now active and 999 is still to be used in the event of an emergency. The local policing team can be contacted on 01234 842567 and

[LPT.SheffordStotfold&Arlesey@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:LPT.SheffordStotfold&Arlesey@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk)

Kind Regards

Leigh Iddon

PCSO 3660 Shefford, Stotfold and Arlesey LPT, 01234 842567

## Be Bright and Be Seen This Winter

As the clocks go back and evenings get darker we are urging road users to Be Bright, Be Seen in Central Bedfordshire this autumn.

The clock change means brighter mornings but darker evenings and the number of traffic collisions often rises during this time. It can be particularly dangerous for school pupils who are making independent journeys, often for the first time.

Central Bedfordshire Council in partnership with their Highways Contractor, Amey, are encouraging road users, especially children and motorcyclists, to be safe on the road this winter by ensuring they wear, brightly coloured or fluorescent clothing as it shows up well in daylight and at dusk; reflective gear if out after dark to make sure you can be seen in car headlights - fluorescent clothing doesn't work after dark. And clip-on reflectors, arm bands and stickers on clothes or school bags to improve visibility.

Cllr Budge Wells, Deputy Executive Member for Sustainable Communities Services at Central Bedfordshire Council said: "With darker evenings now upon us, it is important that road users remember visibility will reduce. Wearing brightly coloured, fluorescent or reflective clothing and accessories enables road users to see each other more clearly; improving visibility and helping road users stay safe on our local roads.

"We are also encouraging parents and children to take part in the interactive road safety competitions and games by visiting [www.talesoftheroad.direct.gov.uk](http://www.talesoftheroad.direct.gov.uk)".

For more hints and tips on how you can stay safe on the roads this autumn visit the Department for Transport website at [www.dft.gov.uk/think](http://www.dft.gov.uk/think)

*This is obviously especially relevant when walking in the road because there is no pavement. Avoid walking in the road when you can, by using the new footpath up Shefford Hill. - Ed*

## MEPPERSHALL SOCIAL CLUB

### Regular Activities:

|            |               |
|------------|---------------|
| Tuesdays:  | Darts         |
| Thursdays: | Dominoes/Crib |
| Fridays:   | Bingo Night   |

If you don't fancy any of the above, why not pop in on any night for a friendly chat and a drink? And become a member:

|                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Family membership     | - £15.00 |
| Single membership     | - £ 7.50 |
| OAP Family Membership | - £10.00 |
| OAP Single Membership | - £ 5.00 |

See a member of the bar staff for a membership form.

We also have two full size snooker tables open to members only, so why not become a member and come and enjoy yourself?

## SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS FOR 2011

|                      |                                     |                                   |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 24 <sup>th</sup> Dec | XMAS EVE DISCO<br>with A/C          | All Welcome –<br>Mums, Dads, Kids |
| 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec | NEW YEAR'S EVE DISCO<br>with DJ Ben | All Welcome –<br>Mums, Dads, Kids |

Watch out for posters & banners around the village and in the Social Club for these fantastic events. For tickets and any queries, call Louise Savory on 07909 600199 or call round to 8, Hill Top View, Meppershall.

## Meppershall Baby and Toddler Group



Wow! What fun everyone had at the Halloween party! There were some great costumes and lots of fantastic entries in the best carved pumpkin competition! The new bouncy castle was popular with lots of the children.

We have also had a lovely wooden play house made by Amber and Jennifer's Grandad – which the children have really enjoyed using to role-play “home” and we look forward to it becoming a post office, ice-cream shop and more! We have been very fortunate to receive a generous donation from The British Transport Police Federation Lottery Fund – though John Thompson, the Messenger's Treasurer, which has been used to pay for the new wooden house.

We are now looking forward to our **Christmas party** on the 13<sup>th</sup> December where the children can make their own party hats, join in Christmas games, there will be another chance to have fun on our bouncy castle and we are hoping for a visit from Father Christmas. For more information about the party – look out for posters around the village or find us on Facebook (Meppershall Toddlers).

The Baby and Toddler group welcomes all parents / grandparents / carers with children under 5 years of age.

**Merry Christmas to Everyone!**





## The Meppershall Players



Tickets for our Christmas Variety Show are on sale at Roger's Bakery at the following prices Thurs 1<sup>st</sup> Dec £5, Fri 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec £6, & Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec £8. This Variety Entertainment (like our Pantos) is suitable for all the family, with a table layout (each table seats eight people). You are welcome to bring your own food for you and your family/friends to share at your table (not a share with all event) so book your table and start your Christmas party season with the Players. Doors open 7pm, curtain up 7.45pm

Our Spring 2012 production will be the play "Gaslight" which will be directed by Mr Graham Scrase. The read through for this production will take place on Wed 7<sup>th</sup> Dec at 8pm, with auditions taking place on Wed 14<sup>th</sup> Dec at 8pm. Rehearsals for this production will begin on Wed 4<sup>th</sup> Jan, with the performances taking place on 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> March. This play is a well written thriller that requires five adults, so if you are eighteen or over and are interested in acting please come along on the 7<sup>th</sup> December.

The players meet every Wednesday evening at 7.30pm at the Village Hall. Membership is free and we welcome anyone from the age of 9 years to 90+ to indulge in acting, singing, directing, choreographing, sound, lighting, set building, scenery painting, front of house, backstage, stage managing, make up, costumes, etc.

If you are interested in any of the above we look forward to meeting you.

Karen Mitchell (Players Chairman) 01462 816336

# Meppershall Garden Club

We spent our October meeting visiting the delightful gardens of Docwra Manor in Shepreth, Cambridgeshire followed by well earned lunch and a spot of shopping at the Bury Lane Farm shop in Melbourne. But we have found time to care for the Village Hall planters as well, and they are suffering from the drought. If anyone near the hall could help us by undertaking to give them a drink now and again, could they please contact one of the numbers below. We and the plants would be very grateful!

Our November meeting was held in the Fairway golf club house, Stondon, which has become a popular venue for the expanded group. We finalised details of our Christmas Social and our January 2012 meeting, and yes, planning ahead, considered our participation in the Meppershall Summer Fair for next June!

And on that note - doesn't time fly? I cannot believe that it will be three years ago in January since I first met up with Linda Parker and Sarah Till to discuss setting up the MGC! I know I speak for all the members when I say that it has been a very rewarding time and that we all have made some very good friends in the village. Here's to next year and many more.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all  
Until next time.

Kim Lee Tyler

For more information on the Garden Club, call:

|               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| Linda Parker  | 01462 815114 or |
| Kim Lee Tyler | 01462 811750 or |
| Sarah Till    | 01462 817176    |

# NOTICE BOARD



**ROBERT BLOOMFIELD  
ACADEMY**

**PARENTS  
SCHOOL  
ASSOCIATION**

**CHRISTMAS FAYRE**

**Saturday  
10<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2011**

**10am to 1pm**

**Bloomfield Drive  
Shefford**

## CHRISTMAS AT THE SUGARLOAF

**Dec 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve – 8.45 pm**  
Mischief sings to his guitar – songs from 60s to now

**Dec 30<sup>th</sup> – 8.45 pm**  
**Soul Man**

**Dec 31<sup>st</sup> – New Years Eve – 8.45 pm**  
**Disco for all ages**

## COVERS BY REQUEST

I have finally been able to do justice to John Chapman, who has sent me dozens of pictures in the past which I have been unable to use. Our cover this month shows his picture taken on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2009, i.e. too late to feature at Christmas that year. This year I am very happy to present it. Will it be a picture of Christmas 2011? Some forecasters suggest that it will: we can only wait and see, but it is a lovely picture in its own right.

Thank you, John, for this and all the others.

*If you would like to see a specific picture on our cover, please get in touch in time for us to arrange with one of our in-house "paparazzi" to do the business.*

*Ed.*

## SIGNIFICANT BIRTHDAYS IN NOVEMBER

Congratulations to:

Harry Ford who will be 87 on 9<sup>th</sup> December

Douglas Powney who will be 89 on 15<sup>th</sup> December

Eric Bygraves who will be 92 on 17<sup>th</sup> December

Joyce Smith who will be 83 on 27<sup>th</sup> December

Maurice Horwood who will be 81 on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2012

Phyllis Kidger who will be 94 on 16<sup>th</sup> January

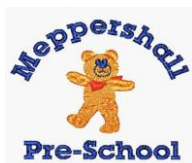
Brenda Wright who will be 81 on 20<sup>th</sup> January

Phyllis Corns who will be 85 on 21<sup>st</sup> January.

A very Happy Birthday to you all.

### **St Mary's Parish Registers:**

No new entries this month.



## **Meppershall Pre-school Ponderings**

We would like to start by saying a massive thank you to the British Transport Police Federation Lottery Fund, who very kindly donated £150 towards the Pre School through John Thompson, the Messenger's Treasurer; we will be using it for the allotment and other activities.

We had a cake sale recently which raised enough money to buy 8 watering cans for the children to use at the allotment.

Over the next few weeks the children will be doing lots of fun and exciting things at Pre School, these will include a Thomas the Tank Engine week and making Christmas cards for the festive time ahead of us!!

At Meppershall Pre-school we are dedicated to providing a safe, happy and stimulating environment, where children from two and a half years old can learn and develop through play, whilst being encouraged and cared for by our friendly experienced staff.

### **Session times (term time only):**

|                              |                   |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Monday to Friday             | 9.30am – 12.00pm  |
| Monday to Friday LUNCH CLUB  | 12.00pm – 12.30pm |
| Monday, Wednesday and Friday | 12.30pm – 3.00pm  |

**If you are interested please contact Joy and come along for a visit!**

Meppershall Village Hall, High Street, Meppershall, Beds, SG17 5LX  
 01462 817359 (in session time), or [www.meppershall-ps.co.uk](http://www.meppershall-ps.co.uk)  
 Registered Charity: 1031913



# Meppershall Community Christmas Party

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December  
Meppershall Village Hall 7.30-12.00

\*Do you fancy coming to a great Xmas disco and buffet; without the worry of transport and expense?

\*A group of parents who go out each Xmas, but are disappointed with poor food, music, venue etc..... have grouped together to arrange a party – here in Meppershall

\*Tickets can be purchased for just £10 – any profits made will be donated to the Lower School and Pre-school.

\*We ask for each person to bring a selected dish to make-up a delicious Xmas buffet.

\*The bar will be open for refreshments.

\*A chance to party, save money and support your local charities

\*Tickets to be purchased before the evening – Adults only please.

\*If you would like to join us and purchase ticket or find out more contact

Jaqui Derrick 812181 ([jaquiderrick@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jaquiderrick@hotmail.co.uk))  
or Louise Hutson 814148 ([louhuts@btconnect.com](mailto:louhuts@btconnect.com))

or tickets can be purchased from the village shop.



# **St Mary The Virgin**

Meppershall Parish Church (Church of England)  
Church Road, off Campton Road

## **Contact information during interregnum**

Churchwardens:

Brian Bellamy 01462 815944 (Pastoral Assistant);

Brenda Wright 01462 816446.

Lay Reader:

Pam Halliwell 01462 817069 [pamhalliwell@talktalk.net](mailto:pamhalliwell@talktalk.net)

(usual day off – Monday)

PCC Secretary:

Anne Parsons 01462 813333 [annie10639@gmail.com](mailto:annie10639@gmail.com)

PCC contributions to The Messenger, Parish Records CD etc:

James Read 01462 857836 [meppershall.pcc@gmail.com](mailto:meppershall.pcc@gmail.com)

## **Looking for something new in your life in 2012?**

St Mary's is currently in the process of appointing a new Rector, but it is very much business as usual in the church. You can use the information above to make contact, or just come along!

Everyone is welcome at each service. 11am services usually have some special JC (Junior Church) activities for children, and they are always followed by tea, coffee, biscuits and chat!

Meppershall is fortunate to have an ancient church which traces back to the Norman settlement here in the 1100s. Today, the church community here is drawn from across the age range and everyone shares in the friendship and fellowship of our wonderful village.

So whether you are a Christian already who wants to check out the local church, or whether the new year is just making you feel reflective and in need of some spiritual exploration – please consider dropping in to a service and saying hello. There is lots going on!

## **Services for December**

| Date  | Time                            | Service  |
|---|---------------------------------|--|
| Sunday 4th<br>Second Sunday of Advent             | 11.00am<br>4.00pm               | Parish Communion & Junior Church<br>Christingle Service  |
| Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup><br>Third Sunday of Advent | 8.30am<br>4.30pm                | Holy Communion<br>Santa's Float – touring the village through the evening                              |
| Sunday 18th<br>Fourth Sunday of Advent            | 8.30am<br>11.00am<br><br>6.00pm | Holy Communion<br>All Age Service with baptism of Harry Bavister<br>Service of Nine Lessons and Carols |
| Saturday 24th<br>Christmas Eve                    | 2.30pm<br>11.30pm               | Short Crib Service with Pam Halliwell<br>Midnight Mass with the Bishop of Bedford, Richard Inwood      |
| Sunday 25th<br>Christmas Day                      | 11.00am                         | Family Communion with L.Washington   |

## **Services for January**

| Date                      | Time              | Service   |
|---------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Sunday 1st<br>Christmas 1 | 11.00am           | Parish Communion & Junior Church                            |
| Sunday 8th<br>Epiphany 1  | 8.30am            | Holy Communion  |
| Sunday 15th<br>Epiphany 2 | 8.30am<br>11.00am | Holy Communion<br>All Age Service                           |
| Sunday 22nd<br>Epiphany 3 | 11.00am           | Family Communion  |
| Sunday 29th<br>Epiphany 4 | 11.00am           | United Benefice Communion followed by Bring and Share Lunch |



## ***St Mary's Weekday Service:***

A Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) service is held every Wednesday at 10am.

## **A Christmas message from St Mary's...**

The nights are drawing in and it will soon be the shortest day of the year – and the darkest! It is easy to start feeling depressed! So much to do and – it seems – less and less money to do it with. But December brings a lot of light to look forward to as well. The Christingle service will be on Sunday December 4<sup>th</sup>, and the oranges we see on the shop shelves will become the symbol of Christ the Light of the World as the children light their candles. Then the following week brings the Father Christmas float with its carols around the village. The Carol Service comes soon after, bringing more candlelight as we get really close to Christmas – and there are nativity plays and Christmas lights to watch and admire.

But it is not until late on Christmas Eve that we see the culmination, as the skies, if we have eyes to see, are lit by the glory of the angels heralding the birth of a baby. Across the world many children will be born as refugees or to parents made homeless by floods, earthquakes or wars and I hope we will remember them as we share our presents and eat too much! We are told that the darkest hour is the one just before the dawn and I like to light some candles while it is still dark on Christmas Day. Every act of kindness this month, and every gift we give to those less fortunate than ourselves, makes the Christmas lights shine that little bit more brightly.

I can't promise that it will be warmer in Church by Christmas but we are planning to renew the heating system at St Mary's and trying to eliminate some of the draughts! If you join us, as we hope you will, you could always bring an extra jumper - but you probably won't need it! The more people that come, the more heat and light there will be! There will be a warm welcome for you.

Best wishes from everyone at St Mary's for a peaceful, happy and blessed Christmas.

With every blessing,  
Pam Halliwell,  
Lay Reader.

## Junior Church

As we JC Leaders prepared, we prayed for a good reception and first session on Sunday the 6<sup>th</sup> November in our new home in Meppershall Lower School.

Then, at 11am, we finally welcomed in a good-sized group of excited and enthusiastic children. After the welcome we shared a non-biblical story about light that provided the theme for our learning and worship. Next, the children were split into groups and enjoyed a busy “hunt for light” that led them through the school, searching for clues, shapes and objects. The Spirit was definitely amongst us, when we shared the children’s findings and what they learnt, over homemade star-shaped biscuits and drinks. At the end of our session, we prayed around our tea light-filled JC-cross. All children were able to take home their own masterfully decorated tea light holder to shine the Light of Jesus into their own homes.

On Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> December, we will be meeting next in Meppershall Lower School Hall for our special Christmas JC. This time, with a slightly earlier start for 10.30am, wrapping up for 12 noon.

Hope to see you there.

Alex, Gillian, Julie and Morag

# St Mary's at Christmas



## Christingle Service

Sunday 4th December 2011, 4pm.

## Carol Service

Sunday 18th December 2011, 6pm.

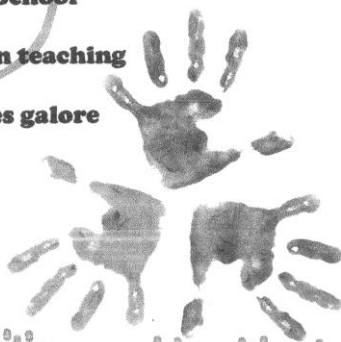
For full details of December and January services, see the church pages in this issue of  
The Messenger

# STOP Junior Church news STOP:



## Special Christmas JC:

- **Longer session: 10.30 am to 12.00 pm**
- **Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> December at**  
**Meppershall Lower School**
- **Meaningful Christian teaching**
- **Fun packed activities galore**



Come and join us in our exciting worship with a twist

All children between 3 and 12 invited

**Mums corner**

## **SAUSAGE, APPLE AND CIDER SUET PUDDING**

### **DECEMBER 2011**

#### **Serve 8**

1lb (450g) SR flour  
8oz (225g) shredded suet  
1 tsp salt  
1 tbsp chopped parsley

#### **For the filling**

2lbs (900g) pork sausages sliced and chopped (the best you can afford.)  
8oz (225g) diced bacon  
1 tin of bake beans  
1 large apple, grated.  
¼ pint (150 ml) cider  
1 onion, sliced  
Sage or thyme.

#### **Method**

- 1) Make the pastry crust by mixing all the pastry ingredients together with cold water to make a firm dough.
- 2) Roll the dough out onto a floured board
- 3) Grease a 1.2 litre pudding basin, and line with the rolled out dough, reserving enough for the lid.
- 4) Fill the pastry with alternate layers of the chopped sausages and other ingredients; they should not fill the basin completely.
- 5) Wet the edge of pastry liner and place the pastry lid in place, squeezing them together.
- 6) Cover loosely with a sheet of foil or greaseproof, and tie around with string. Wrap the whole bowl in a square of muslin, and tie a handle on top.
- 7) Place the basin in a saucepan half- fill with simmering water. Steam for about 2 hours.
- 8) Serve with vegetables of choice.

*Recipes are kindly supplied each month by Brenda Putwain.*

## GARDEN TIPS FOR DECEMBER

With acknowledgements to the RHS

(For January tips, see December issue last year)

- Prune woody ornamental plants and fruit trees and bushes, and shred the prunings if possible.
- Feed birds in cold weather, and do not allow ponds, water features and bird baths to freeze over.
- Continue winter digging, incorporating organic matter into the soil.
- Clean paths and repair sheds and fences.
- Spray fruit trees and also roses with tar oil winter wash.
- Shake snow off trees, shrubs and hedges.
- Prune ornamental vines and grape vines.
- Continue taking hardwood cuttings.
- Sow seeds of alpine plants.
- Repair lawns if weather conditions allow.
- Lift and heel in celery for winter supplies.
- Earth up tall Brussels sprout stems to support them.
- Water plants overwintering undercover sparingly, now that they are dormant, to avoid the risk of overwatering and rotting.
- Take care of pot plants to get the best of their winter display.

### LAST CHANCE

- Protect plants and pots vulnerable to frost damage.
- Insulate garden taps and exposed pipes.
- Prune tall bush roses to guard against wind rock.
- Bring in Christmas bulbs for flowering.

### GET AHEAD

- Sow pelargonium seeds under cover for next year's plants.
- Sow some early crops under cover for the first plants to put out in the New Year.

Watch out for chilled pot plants – pot plants that have been standing in the open outside shops and on market stalls may not be the bargain you think since they'll have come straight from a warm sheltered greenhouse into a biting cold wind, and probably won't last long when you get them home. Poinsettias are especially vulnerable.

## **A very happy birthday to those of you celebrating birthdays in December**

Ellie Roberts who will be 13 on the 1<sup>st</sup>  
 Liberty Sheppard who will be 6 on the 4<sup>th</sup>  
 Lee Britton who will be 9 on the 7<sup>th</sup>  
 Megan Myers who will be 8 on the 9<sup>th</sup>  
 Hugo Norris who will be 9 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
 Millie Chessum who will be 7 on the 15<sup>th</sup>  
 Eliza Norris who will be 14 on the 15<sup>th</sup>  
 Elise Simpkins who will be 9 on the 20<sup>th</sup>  
 Thomas Manning who will be 3 on the 21<sup>st</sup>  
 Benjamin Jarvis who will be 11 on the 24<sup>th</sup>  
 Finlay Caddick who will be 4 on the 28<sup>th</sup>  
 Rose Jones who will be 3 on the 29<sup>th</sup>

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

Louis Bradshaw who will be 12 on the 4<sup>th</sup>  
 Harry Rose who will be 9 on the 5<sup>th</sup>  
 Ella Clark who will be 6 on the 9<sup>th</sup>  
 Olivia Mardell who will be 9 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
 Ewan Cooper who will be 14 on the 10<sup>th</sup>  
 Sam German who will be 8 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
 Georgia Rose who will be 13 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
 Rachel Holmes who will be 14 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
 Matthew Bull who will be 15 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
 Georgia Edwards who will be 15 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
 Ryan Bray who will be 15 on the 18<sup>th</sup>  
 Luke Britton who will be 14 on the 20<sup>th</sup>  
 James Frost who will be 15 on the 21<sup>st</sup>  
 Jonny Ward who will be 11 on the 25<sup>th</sup>  
 Emily Frost who will be 11 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)

# 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.

## THE TEAM

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|                      |                           | Email: jthompson244@btinternet.com    |        |

### **Collating Dates for your diaries**

#### **2011**

December      No

#### **2012**

Jan              30

February       27

March           26

April            30

May             29

June            25      **(Tue)**

July             30      **Double**

August         No

September    24

October        29

November     26      **Double**

December     No