



# The Meppershall Messenger



The Meppershall Players — 2012 Pantomime — Aladdin

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



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**EDITORIAL**

In this issue, which spans the turn of the year, I would first like to look back on 2012. I continue to be encouraged by and very grateful for the continued support of so many people. I have frequently referred to our contributors who keep the copy coming, but I would equally like to thank the people who produce The Messenger: the printers; the faithful band who turn up for tea in the Sugarloaf each last Monday and collate the magazine between sips (and thank you Jenny for having us and providing the tea!) and the last link in the chain, the distributors, without whom all our efforts would be wasted. In this context, a special thank you to Jean and Harry Ford who are retiring this month after 20 years as distributors; and thank you to Inge McConnell who is taking over their round. And I could not conclude a list of supporters without mentioning again the Messenger Committee who have provided many of the ideas that have been successful, and picked me up and put me straight when I have messed up.



In that dept., I must apologise humbly to the School PTA who sent in a poster for their Autumn Fayre in November. I somehow managed to leave this out of the last issue, but I understand that the Fayre was a great success even without our publicity.

Not my fault this time, but it turns out that the list of candidates for the Police & Crime Commissioner was also wrong because one candidate failed to register on time but another one joined the list.

This month on page 39 we feature Bromford Support, a service which has been running for 4 years but has only recently opened drop-in centres in Shefford. Its aim is to help people to maintain their independence in their own homes.

And, finally, all of us at The Messenger wish all of you a Happy and Peaceful Christmas and hope that the New Year will bring Happiness and Prosperity to you and your loved ones.

Dick Bulley

## LETTERS

Dear Editor,

I am writing to express my thanks to all involved in the organisation of this year's Meppershall Bonfire and Firework show.

I took along my young nephew and niece who have recently re-located from New Zealand. It was their first experience of Bonfire Night in the winter and they thoroughly enjoyed it. We were amazed at how many fireworks there were and how long the show lasted. It was very impressive!

Thanks once again to everyone that made it possible.

(Name supplied)

PS. The Messenger is a great read and much enjoyed by the whole family.

### **Letter from Karen Lucas**

Well, once was just not enough and after a chat with the charity I supported in the 2012 London marathon, the CMA, I've agreed to do it again! Viv is far more sensible and decided that once really was enough.

I'm hoping to raise most of my sponsorship by organising a number of fundraising events, so please look out for details over the next few months and, if you can, join me to have a good time and raise much needed funds for the Cardiomyopathy Association at the same time.

By now my first coffee morning has already taken place, so thank you to everyone that supported me with that.

Due to the success of the quiz sheets last time, I've created another one to test your knowledge and this time I also have one for the children too. These are available either from me at 51A High Street, Meppershall or from the Post Office shop for just £1 or 50p for children.

Good luck with the quiz and I look forward to seeing many of you over the coming few months, either at a fundraising event or as I train around the village again!

Best Wishes, Karen Lucas

**A Christmas Message from  
Ben  
the Cinnamon Dog  
The Cinnamon Trust**

The national charity for the  
elderly, the terminally ill and  
their pets.

[www.cinnamon.org.uk](http://www.cinnamon.org.uk)



Hello again,

Unfortunately I have some very sad news for you. After being very poorly for a number of months my owner died. Fortunately the lovely lady was able to take me to visit him a few times – Alfred and I really loved this.

Thanks to the lovely people of Meppershall and the Cinnamon Trust I am going to stay in your village. The lovely lady & funny man are going to become my life-long foster parents! Of course they can only do this with the help of my Aunties & Uncles.

So my Christmas message is to my new family of Aunties: Rhonda, Kay, Jennie, Katrina, and Colette, Uncle Mike and all you wonderful people in Meppershall who never stop asking after me.

Thank you for being so kind to me and my new parents -

We all wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Lots of love

Ben xx

### **Mystery E-mails**

If any reader has received strange e-mails recently purporting to come from me, Peter Chapman or Trevor Thorley, we apologise. A fairly plausible attachment turned out to be carrying some malware and we know that in some cases it sent out messages to people in our address books before we could deal with it. The obvious moral is to have good computer security!

A more welcome and relevant arrival in my in-box is reproduced on page 44.

Dick Bulley

### **Letter from Brian & Dorothy Bellamy**

Brian & Dorothy wish to offer ongoing thanks to all the people who are helping them during his illness.

Brian & Dorothy

## MEPPERSHALL NEWS IN BRIEF

### Horsing around at Bury Farm!

Our neighbour David Turner, one of the Messenger's team, thought that a few of you might be interested to know what exactly has been going on in the horse yard at Bury Farm!



Mark decided to refurbish the stables as they were getting very shabby, so it was an ideal opportunity to install the 'Horse Exerciser' at the same time. Basically this is a 'round-a-bout' for up to five horses. It has a special rubber flooring so is not so hard on the horses' feet and legs as road work, and we can select the speed and direction using external controls.

Our main reason for installing the Exerciser is that recent winters have been so harsh at times that it has been difficult to get the horses out at all, let alone exercise them in the ice and snow (it would help if the Meppershall to Campton road was gritted, especially since school buses use the road daily and black ice is treacherous – but that is another gripe/story!). When this happens, horses that otherwise are very fit and eating plenty of food can 'tie-up', which is a form of muscle cramps. So, by using the Exerciser we can avoid these problems, stretch their legs, and keep their fitness levels up. It is also great for 'controlled' exercise if they sustain an injury, and as an addition to their general fitness programme.

The horses have all taken to the Exerciser very well and don't seem to mind their new gym!

**Bobby Brinkley**

### Support for Carers

A unique local programme for carers of people with mild to moderate dementia will begin on 11 January 2013.

Run by the Letchworth Centre for Healthy Living with the aid of a grant from Hertfordshire Community Foundation, the programme offers weekly hour-long



sessions for both carers and 'carees'. Carers will have an opportunity to participate in classes which feature gentle movement and breath work – all hugely relaxing and de-stressing – while carees, in an adjoining room, will attend a 'singing for pleasure' group around a piano. Each group will then, separately, have time to socialise over tea and biscuits. The approaches presented are well known for their general health benefits and their calming and de-stressing effects – and are suitable for people of all ages and fitness levels.

This programme follows in the wake of a successful pilot run earlier in the year which had been funded by a grant from the Health Inequalities Fund. *'It was like the good old days when we used to go out together'*, said one participant. And another: *'We were able to relax knowing that our partners were in safe hands and enjoying themselves independently'*.

All sessions, held on six consecutive Fridays from 2:00-3:00pm, will take place at the Centre's Rosehill Hospital premises, which has ample off road parking. Cost is £15 per person for the full 6 sessions (ie £2.50 per person per session). For further information or to book a place, call 01462 678804 or e-mail Jaqui Derrick at [jaqui@letchworthcentre.org](mailto:jaqui@letchworthcentre.org).

## **MEPPERSHALL BROWNIES**

We have had another busy month at Brownies. We hired Clophill Swimming Pool one Sunday afternoon and the Brownies had a great time there splashing around with a penguin, shark, and other inflatable friends.

The next weekend we held our table top sale at the village hall. A massive thank you to everyone who came to the sale, those who hired a table and also those who were kind enough to donate items and finally to the brownies who came along to help. We raised an amazing £220 towards our shoebox appeal. We then raised a further £80 at our Brownie bingo evening – thank you to all the mums, dads, brothers, sisters, grandparents who supported us at this event as well.

Our first meeting back after the October half term was on bonfire night. We made edible bonfires, made rocket bookmarks, melted marshmallows over tea lights and finished with each Six making a Guy (some of them were very scary) which then went up in smoke on the village bonfire. We are pleased to welcome a further two Brownies, Isabel and Annie.

We were extremely proud of all the Brownies who came along to the Remembrance Day service, lots of people came up to us to say how lovely it was to have so many Brownies at the service and said how well behaved they all were.

Tonight we packed over 100 shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child and they are being collected on 14<sup>th</sup> November, together with the shoe boxes which were kindly filled and donated by Junior Church. Thank you to Helen Burr and Jean Holden and our own Gemma for wrapping up so many shoe boxes in Christmas paper – no mean feat. More thanks to Jean for donating so many lovely toys and other items - we couldn't have filled nearly so many boxes without them. Thank you to all the other people, too numerous to mention by name, who also donated items for the shoe boxes. It is great that we have managed to continue this lovely tradition, started by Christine a number of years ago, which brings joy to so many children. I know she would be really pleased. We are looking forward to finding out where our boxes ended up and will keep you posted. Here is a picture of the girls with just a few of the boxes.



Next week we are looking forward to a visit by a lady and her canine friend from Hearing Dogs for the Deaf who are coming to tell us how they train dogs to enable them to help people with hearing difficulties for our Disability Awareness badge.

Suzanne, Gemma, Rosie, Emma and Chloe  
1<sup>st</sup> Meppershall Brownies

## LATE NEWS

**In the election on 15<sup>th</sup> November, Olly Martins was elected Police & Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire**



## **MEPPERSHALL BAKERY BEES by Roger**

The year is drawing to a close. At this time of the year the days and nights are substantially colder and every sensible bee is trying it's best to stay warm in the colony! Looking back on this year and reading articles on beekeeping, the cold/wet/miserable weather has not been good for beekeeping. That having been said, it's wise to remember that there are differences depending on location and types of bees. In many locations in Britain beekeepers have been feeding bees during the summer because of the prolonged wet weather, whereas others have had very dry spells with little rain. Who said beekeeping was simple?

I read in a small article last month that a colony of bees in Yorkshire had started to produce mint-flavoured honey because they had been feeding off waste from a food processing plant. Starved of nectar because the poor summer weather had cut their supply of flowers, the bees had flown to the factory, which turns surplus confectionery into animal feed. The beekeeper traced his bees a mile to a sugar rich plant and found them lapping up mint fondant which is used to make After Eight mints. Clever little bees! The honey had an unpleasant metallic taste from the skips, so it was lost!

More doom and gloom: "Honey yields at 20 year low after summer downpours", was another headline in the paper. The Meppershall bees have also had a poor yield this year. The harvest of honey was down, with just 18lbs of honey from each hive compared with the annual average of 30lbs. The met office figures show that the three months of June, July and August were the wettest since records began in 1912. On the plus side, this year we have 9 hives going through to winter compared to only five last year. We lost 2 when the hives were blown over by the strong winds or were vandalised one way or another and one was too small and starved. This year they are looking good. I will start to feed fondant (no not mint flavoured!) in mid-December if they need it. Looking at the fields local to the apiary I can see five or six fields of rape. We will be awash with yellow and have a good honey crop next year.

May I wish you all a merry Christmas from the bees and me and a Happy New Year.

Honey available at Rogers Bakery- *see you there.*

## **MEPPERSHALL PARISH COUNCIL REPORT**

The Parish Council met on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> November.

In the open part of the meeting where any resident can speak to or question the Council, our Central Beds Councillors updated us on events and projects currently being worked on by their Council.

We also heard from a concerned resident about the problem with drug dealing in the village. On a number of occasions this resident has reported to the Police the activity they have witnessed, but the police have failed to respond. I would urge everyone who sees this or any other criminal activity to report it to the police and ensure that it is logged. It would appear that the police have limited resources and will not take any action unless they see it as a major problem. By the time you read this magazine the new Police and Crime Commissioner will be in post, so let them know what you feel about the service you receive from the Police.

There have been no planning applications for the Council to consider since the last meeting, and there are no planning decisions awaited from Central Beds.

The Finance Group reported to the meeting on the accounts for the first six months of this financial year and the auditors report, its recommendations and action plan.

Discussions under the heading of Highways and Lighting centred on a number of areas in the village where parking is causing an obstruction which reduces visibility and safety. However, there is also an opinion that parked vehicles can slow the traffic down and reduce speeding, which is a benefit to safety. It is now possible to have yellow lines in problem areas which can be effectively enforced with the new Parking Enforcement Camera Cars. Central Beds are to be asked to provide a report and recommendations from a Highways Engineer on this issue.

Finally it was reported to the meeting that the annual allotment inspection is almost complete which will enable the issuing of advisory letters and rental bills in the near future. There are a number of vacant plots of varying sizes available from £12.00 per year if you would like to start 'growing your own'.

### **Future Parish Council Meeting Dates**

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2012 and Monday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2013 – 7:45 pm in Meppershall Village Hall.

**Please remember that you are welcome to attend our meetings to speak about any subject during our open public session. Or you may just wish to come along to see what we do. Maybe you are thinking about becoming a Councillor at the next election. We look forward to seeing you.**

**David Foskett**

**Chairman, Meppershall Parish Council – [chairman@meppershall.org](mailto:chairman@meppershall.org)**

## **YOUR SHOUT**

### **with Trevor Thorley**



#### **FOUR SCORE YEARS, NOVEMBER 10, 2012:**

She is a Wife, a Mother, a Grandmother, and a Great Grandmother. She is a friend and 'auntie' to every child she sees passing her door. She is a confidant, she is a person full of knowledge and advice, she is a nurse and comforter to those who need help, and she is in fact everybody's friend.

Brought up in East London, she met and married her long-time partner and husband in the 40's and has lived in Meppershall for many years. She is though a very private person and 'might' be embarrassed if I disclosed her name, which is why I am withholding it. She will recognise whom this is about, as will her friends, neighbours and people who know her. Congratulations from everyone on your 80<sup>th</sup> birthday "N", may there be many, many more.

#### **FUTURE EVENTS:**

The Friends of St. Mary's will once again be hosting their annual Quiz Night. This will take place on Saturday, January 26, 2013, 7pm for 7.30pm; the bar will be open from 7pm. As usual, admission will be £5 per head with tables of six. There will be a raffle with generous prizes and also the 'trophy' to play for once again, with prizes for the winning team. Booby prizes will also be awarded to the losing team. Its great enjoyment, with friendly banter between the teams: it's nice to win, but taking part is the important thing, which guarantees an excellent evening out. Tables go very quickly: to book yours, call 01462 813357. Later in the spring, possibly March 2013, a new band will be performing. Details are in the planning stage so watch this space for further information in the next issue of this popular village magazine.

#### **JENNY HOUSDEN:**

Friends and neighbours old and new turned out in numbers for the funeral of Jenny Housden who passed away on October 21 aged 68, after a long battle against cancer. The funeral took place at Bedford Crematorium on Tuesday November 6 2012 at 11.30am.

Many people will remember Jenny and Malcolm who moved to Hoo Road in 1972 where they brought up their children Darren and Donna. They later moved to Broom where Malcolm still lives.



Jenny had asked people not wear black to her funeral and she also had input into her own service. Music to the tune of 'A Perfect Day' followed by 'Morning Has Broken' opened the service and moving tributes were paid by Chloe and Darren Housden. The Rolling Stones song, 'The Last Time' was played and finally, after the Commendation and Committal, the congregation joined in the hymn 'All Things Bright and Beautiful'. As people left, the Gracie Fields song 'Wish Me Luck As You Wave Me Goodbye' was played. On the invitation of Malcolm and his family, people later travelled for refreshments to the John 'O Gaunt Golf Club where Malcolm had been a Full Member and Jenny a Social Member for several years.

Malcolm and family sincerely wish to thank everybody for attending Jenny's funeral and also for the many cards and messages, which were sent and received. Donations in memory of Jenny can be made to St. John's Hospice, Moggerhanger of The Primrose Oncology Unit and may be sent to the c/o Woodman and Son, Funeral Directors, 3, Market Square, Biggleswade, SG18 8AP.

#### **HAROLD DAVIES:**

A founder member and with 20 years with the friends of St. Mary's, Harold has retired from his post as Treasurer. Harold has done a great job and fellow trustees and I are extremely grateful to him for all the dedicated work he has put in over the years. James Read has taken over the post of Treasurer with immediate effect.

Here's wishing you all a Very Joyous Christmas.

**REMEMBER IT IS YOUR SHOUT Call Trevor on 01462 813357 or email:**

[trevor.thorley1@btinternet.com](mailto:trevor.thorley1@btinternet.com)

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*Extracts from Love those Church Ladies, kindly noted by John Chapman. All these are alleged to be notices that were actually displayed at a church somewhere:*

- Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.
- Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.
- At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What Is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.

**Meppershall C of E VA Lower School**  
*'An outstanding Church of England School'*  
*June 2008 and December 2010*



**School Report - December 2012**

Our partnership with our parents and families is one of the most important relationships we foster in school and this term our parents have shown their generosity by giving their time, donations of items for the Autumn Fayre, sharing their skills and expertise with the children, donations of money for our charity fund raising and by supporting us in our work in school.

The members of our PTA have been working incredibly hard to create an Autumn Fayre not to be missed! Their creativity has been both exemplary and inspirational. I hope the event will be well supported and enjoyed by all in the village. The funds raised will go towards buying iPads for the school.

Our 'Penny Line' raised £126 for the Bishop of St. Albans Harvest Appeal – 'Action for Hope'. This was more than double the amount we raised last year, so thank you to everyone who donated their small change. Some of the children in Year 4 had a great time counting the coins! We are going spotty for Pudsey bear – Children in Need – on Thursday too, so more coin counting for our oldest children.

Some of our parents have visited Beeches class to tell the children about the jobs they do including a fireman, complete with uniform which the children loved trying on, and an RAF policeman, who answered the children's questions too. We also greatly appreciate all those parents who read with their children and help at home in any way; all of this builds up and ensures success for our children.

This month our children in Cedars class will be very busy singing at two important events. The first is for Year 4 children who join with year 5 children at Henlow CE Academy and other children from local lower Schools in an 'Anti-Bullying Week' celebration of song; this was a fabulous event last year and our children are always a credit to our school in both their singing and behaviour. The second is for the Year 3 children as they too join other local Lower Schools in a 'Sing Out, Sing Up' concert organised by Inspiring Music.

Naturally, our other children are beginning to practice their songs for Christmas and we have a fantastic nativity play this year with a Western feel! Our 'Carols by Candlelight' will have a French surprise to the proceedings. We will be inviting grandparents into school for their coffee and mince pies as usual, as well as singing at Meppershall Care Home.

If you missed our 'School at Work' afternoon, please come and visit us if your child is due to join us in September; I will be very proud to show you around. The deadline for admissions to a Lower School is January 15<sup>th</sup> 2013.

Lyn Fairweather  
 Headteacher

## SHEFFORD LEISURE GROUP

By Enid Pamment



May we, from the 'Leisure Group', wish all readers of the Meppershall Messenger good health, and safe and happy travelling during 2013. We also would like to take this opportunity of thanking you for your support: without your help we could not have raised our contribution to Keech Hospice Care for Children. Our sincere thanks to you all.

We were fortunate enough to have fine weather for our Olympic Shopper trip. We met our Guide at the Thames Barrier, where we had a coffee stop before boarding the coach to take us to the Royal Docks; here a boat is permanently moored which caters purely for parties. A full English buffet breakfast was awaiting us on board. There was plenty for all, and after watching the small aeroplanes taking off from the City Airport we boarded the coach for the second part of our tour, the Olympic East End where we enjoyed good views of the venues in the Olympic Park, and the red 'helter skelter' observation tower. Unfortunately, due to health and safety concerns we were not allowed into the Park itself, and by the time we are, several of the venues will have been dismantled. The remainder of the day was taken with 'retail therapy' in the Westfield Stratford City Shopping Mall, where we were able to view some of the Olympic Park from a large window in John Lewis's furniture department. After a refreshing cup of tea we returned to Shefford.

Jeyes of Earls Barton, Northampton was a new experience for Shefford Leisure Group. Although small in number, we certainly filled their shop which has many nooks and crannies housing an enormous variety of goods. The museum, the 'fun of the fair' exhibition, Sylvanian families and their history and the Dolly Lodge, were all upstairs, served by a chairlift for those who couldn't climb the stairs. The size of the Apotho Coffee Shop meant that several of us had to sit in the conservatory, but nevertheless the very obliging staff came and took our orders for morning coffee, toasted teacakes or some of their delicious cakes. Barker's shoe factory shop was only a five minute walk from Jeyes, where willing staff were on hand to serve us; several of us purchased shoes from there. Most returned to the Apotho Coffee Shop to partake of the delicious & extensive lunch menu. As these venues were on the small side it was the majority decision to make our way home, thus arriving in Shefford in daylight.

**Forthcoming Events 2012 (Kindly telephone for details)**



John Rutter Royal Philharmonic Orchestra Christmas Celebration Concert @ RAH	Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December
Lincoln Christmas Market	Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> December
Xmas Carols with the Stars at RAH (for Leukaemia)	Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> December
Harrods and the Christmas Lights	Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> December

(Kindly note: RAH is Royal Albert Hall)

### **Forthcoming Events 2013 (Kindly telephone for details)**

Cinderella(Panto)-Matinee-Milton Keynes Theatre	Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> January
Capital Curios	Thursday 31 <sup>st</sup> January
Mickie Driver's Palace of Varieties – N. London	Wed 13 <sup>th</sup> February
9 -5 - Music & lyrics by Dolly Parton Milton Keynes Theatre – Evening Performance	Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> March
Annual 'Get Together' Memorial Hall, Shefford	Saturday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March
The Cutty Sark and Cable car	Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> March
Lunch & Cruise from the Marina, Huntingdon	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> April
Westminster Abbey, with Guide	Saturday 27 <sup>th</sup> April
Household Cavalry & Windsor	Date TBA

### **London Shows currently available (Arranged by Stevenage Group Travel) are:**

Matinees - Leaving Shefford at 11am - price includes coach:

Disney on Ice (Wembley Arena)	Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup> December
Jersey Boys (inc lunch) Prince Edward Theatre	Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> February
Carmen – RAH – stalls seats	Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> February
Chorus Line – New London Palladium	Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> May
RPO – Vienna's Finest – Royal Festival Hall	Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> May

Evening Shows - Leaving Shefford at 4.15pm - price includes coach:

Mama Mia – Novello Theatre – Dress Circle	Wed 5 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2012
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### **Holidays: 2012 & 2013 (Kindly telephone for more details)**

Bournemouth (Heathlands Hotel)(in conjunction with Stevenage Group Travel)	Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup> – Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> December 2012
Lochs & Glens, staying in Dunoon	7 <sup>th</sup> – 13 <sup>th</sup> July 2013
Austria by Coach (overnight in Cologne)	4 <sup>th</sup> – 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2013

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 all in the local community who feel they would like to join us on our ventures and see places they would not see under their own steam. We are always happy to meet new friends.

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

*Enid Pamment – Shefford Leisure Group*

## FINANCIAL NEWS UPDATE

with Jon Ingarfill

### Selling Financial Products

I've just read my article from last December, in which I talked about the problems in Greece, market volatility, Comet in trouble, and improving results from major companies. In fact I could have simply reproduced it again and it would be perfectly valid! Has 2012 really happened at all?

I promised last month to cover two major changes to the way financial products are sold.....

The first is a piece of sheer lunacy from Brussels! With effect from December, insurance companies will no longer be able to differentiate their prices based on gender. What this means in plain English is that males and females must be offered identical terms for things like life assurance, annuities, car insurance and so on. Despite there being hard statistical fact that ladies live longer, have fewer accidents etc., they can no longer be offered cheaper rates. The net result is a levelling off at the higher level of the two, plus the costs of implementing all the IT changes, so a worse deal for everyone. Well done the EU!

The second is a major shift in the way financial services are paid for. We all know that there are charges and that advisers get paid commission for selling these products. In fact, the amount that is paid has been disclosed in the quotations since 1994, so nothing new here. What is different is who pays for it. Historically, the price of the product included a profit margin for the advisory firm (not necessarily the individual adviser) to cover the cost of running their business, compliance, regulation, staff etc., From 31<sup>st</sup> December this margin will be stripped from the product price and you (as the investor) will agree with the adviser on the charge, which will be deducted from your investment. The net cost to you is the same, but there's a subtle shift in how it is portrayed. Let me try to explain it by using an example of a packet of crisps – previously when you handed over your 50p, you accepted that it was the going rate for a packet of crisps. Had you stopped to think about it, you would probably have accepted that the shop was making money on it? In future, you will still pay 50p for your packet of crisps, but you would agree up front that the shop can keep 20p for themselves. And so it will be with financial products going forward: the price hasn't changed but the cost will be more visible.

Previously, the initial set up costs would typically be taken over the first five years, in future they will be taken on day one. Initially this looks like a worse deal, but in fact it is better to pay upfront, then have years of unencumbered growth, than have nothing taken up front but have the product dragging its heels for five years.

Also by 31<sup>st</sup> December, advisers will have to be qualified to a minimum standard (previously an advanced qualification), and possess a 'Statement of Professional Standing' – again a welcome development.

Another change is that advisers will also have to agree not only what on-going service you will receive, but also have to prove they've delivered it – this is a welcome development also.

In addition, the term Independent Financial Adviser will all but disappear – the costs, and additional obligations on firms who wish to operate under this banner will make it untenable for all but those dealing with very high net worth clients who can afford to pay fees for everything. Once more, a welcome move as the vast majority of firms currently calling themselves IFAs are in fact operating on a panel of providers, or a limited range, so it's nonsensical. Unfortunately, the FSA terminology for the majority of us in future will be 'Restricted Advice' – not an ideal term, but in reality is the same as you had before, it's just called something different. As a result of all this the Banks and Building Societies have virtually all withdrawn from giving face to face advice, leaving the bulk of the population with no access to financial advice!

Happy days!

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

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A seasonal offering from Denis Neilson:

#### Frozen Windows

Wife, by text message to husband at work: "windows at home frozen. What will I do?"

Husband: Spray some de-icer (in garage) on them or splash them with warm water"

Wife a few minutes later: "Done that, now computer does not work at all"



## POLEHANGER: A FARMING DIARY

### Episode 38



#### **Whither the Weather?**

How do you sum up a year like this? It started in an official drought that eventually lasted for 18 months or so; and suddenly ended with the second-wettest summer in 100 years and an autumn that has seen rain continue to fall on saturated ground.

Yet if you look at the website [www.cliftonweather.co.uk](http://www.cliftonweather.co.uk) under the subsection 'weather extremes', 2012 doesn't stand out particularly. Statistics are funny things: there's that famous quote . . .

Floods are currently affecting 2 million people in Nigeria. On its way to the NE seaboard of the United States, 'Superstorm' Sandy devastated Haiti once again, still recovering from the hurricane of 2010. Southern Spain had extreme high temperatures followed by devastating fires and then torrential, if localised, rain: all three 'events' causing fatalities.

It seems to me that extreme weather events are becoming the norm and we need to recognise this now and plan locally and globally for both very dry and very wet periods.

#### **A Year in the Life of Santiago (a Chile start !)**

Our wheat crop has emerged well and should be in a good state to survive the winter, unless we get extreme frost with no snow. Slug activity has been contained though many rape and wheat crops across the country have been severely affected. Whilst we at Polehanger have our intended cropping in place, many fields planned for winter wheat are now too wet to support machinery without causing damage to soil structure. They will now be cropped with spring wheat or barley. Seed for those crops is now in short supply!

#### **Chinese Lanterns**

DEFRA, the government department, has announced that it will investigate the level of risk that these lanterns pose to the environment, livestock and crops. Their launch at various celebrations is a recent phenomenon in this country but there is widespread evidence now of them causing field fires in dry conditions when landing on crops whilst still smouldering, and post mortems in cattle showing that wire from the lantern frame has been eaten and lodged in the gut.

**Quote**

“Never wrestle with pigs; you both get dirty and the pig likes it.”

George Bernard Shaw

**Statistic**

2.6% forecast drop in world cereal production 2012.

100 million children under the age of 5 are underweight.

**Trees**

30 alien insects and mites, fungi, viruses, disease, pathogens and invasive plants, many with the potential to devastate native plant populations, are expected to reach Britain and other European countries in the next few years, according to the European plant protection organisation. A Guardian report of 3rd November concerning the ash disease also mentions: *Massaria* fungus in Plane trees; Red Band Needle blight in Pines, Oak Precessionary moth in Oak, *Phytophthora* fungal pathogens in Pines, Yew and Cypresses; and Horse Chestnut Leaf Miner Moth.

It sounds like something out of a horror movie! Will the arboreal landscape of 50 years' time be dramatically different, or will our trees adapt successfully? I would be interested in Jeremy Holden's views.

**Michael Foster's Diary December 1962 and January 1963**

1<sup>st</sup> : Sprouts 6/6d (32.5p) per 20lb (9kg) net. V. slow trade on account of mild weather.

4<sup>th</sup> : V. sharp frosts all week. Sprouts 17/- (85p) per net but frosted and liable to 'go off'. Market agent complains of some slimy tops!

All cattle water tanks frozen first thing and need thawing.

5<sup>th</sup> : Smithfield Show, London (main winter farming event). Very thick smog causing erratic trains.

14<sup>th</sup> : Collect load sugar beet pulp (cattle feed after sugar extracted) from Shefford railway station.

17<sup>th</sup> : Filling in old river bed meanders where course straightened out (on NW farm boundary)..

22<sup>nd</sup> : Expedition to Silsoe to cut holly for Christmas.

25<sup>th</sup> : Christmas Day. Fed heifers and thawed tanks early. Family skate on frozen farm pond; ice not strong enough to bear many at once!

26<sup>th</sup> : Snow fell after very cold night. Fixing sledges for boys. (A sign of things to come, if you can remember back that far.)

30<sup>th</sup> : Much drifting snow with NE wind. Farm drive blocked. Bucketing snow out of house roof by hand. Tractors start to clear roads for Council.

Chris Foster 12<sup>th</sup> November 2012

# LIFE ON THE WILD SIDE

By JEREMY HOLDEN



## The Conservation Shaman

Entering the forest in Sumatra is not taken lightly, at least not by the locals. It is perhaps impossible for us as visitors to understand what the dark and dangerous forest means to the people that have grown up around it. Trying to comprehend this, and respecting the beliefs attached to it, is something I first learned about when I joined an expedition into the Sumatran rainforest. I was also to meet and become friends with some of the Kerincinese shamans – interesting and useful people, to say the least.

Despite the seriousness with which Islam is practiced in Sumatra, the shadow of shamanism and ancestor worship remains, especially where the forest is concerned. There are many rules and prohibitions for those entering the jungle. Small things, one might think - but likely to anger the spirits or excite the wrath of the tiger - which in Sumatra is lord of the forest - if not observed. Bathing nude is totally forbidden – a tough one to comply with when faced with a clear deep stream after a day of sweat, blood, and tears (that is 'tears' to rhyme with 'stairs', not 'fears'). Washing a pot directly in the river is also a no-no. But perhaps the most important prohibition to remember is that the tiger is never referred to directly for fear of conjuring him. Instead he is spoken about elliptically – 'grandfather' or 'he who owns the forest', or often simply, 'him'.

Even before venturing into the forest one must seek permission from the spirits and ask to be protected. This involves a small ceremony at the forest edge. Special herbs and resins are burned, and if it is a big trip, the blood of a chicken may be spilt.

Employing a shaman as one of our guides made financial sense: he was always around to conduct the ceremony and incurred no extra cost. Pak Darita, our in-house shaman, has now joined the spirits in the sky, but I like to think that due to his ministrations, I stayed safe and demonstrated to the locals that I too respected the forest laws.

Shamans can keep the tigers at bay, but on occasion they can also call the tiger. Part of the shamanistic practice is for the shaman to enter the body of the tiger. Known as *pawang*, these people are highly respected in the community. In tiger form they can travel the forest and gain knowledge. To anthropologists, this concept is known as the 'power animal'. It has its counterpart in the black cat familiar of the European witch, and with those same flighty females changing themselves into a hare.

One tale that beggars belief, at least among the more scientific minded types - but that seems quite reasonable to those of us who have worked with the Kerinci shamen - concerns a field trip a friend of mine took in a remote area of the park. She employed the grandson of a local tiger shaman as her guide. They trekked deep in to the forest and camped beneath a huge fig tree. During the night a tiger paid a

visit to their camp. This is not unusual; tigers often do this on the first night in a new area – a reconnaissance to find out who is in their territory. It prowled around the camp before disappearing into the night. As the only woman, she habitually slept at the far end of the camp, a vulnerable position, but one she was used to. After a week or so they returned to the village to find grandpa looking very disgruntled with his grandson. “Why did you let the woman sleep at the edge of the camp”, he grumbled. “When I came to visit in my tiger body, I saw she was sleeping on the outside. If I had been a bad tiger I could have eaten her. Never do that again,” he added.

This may seem a bit ethereal, but it has profound conservation relevance, too. In Sumatra, the local tiger is known as the ‘village tiger’. It is the one that the shaman is familiar with. In the old saying, it is ‘the devil you know’. Trapping this animal for its skin or bones is avoided. Slaying the village tiger allows other tigers – ‘the devil you don’t’ – to enter the territory. This tiger may not be as respectful to the village: goats may go missing, or worse. Harnessing these beliefs for conservation purposes is important. Respecting and working with local lore can often be the key to conserving both habitats and endangered species.

It can also be a wonderful cultural experience. The most famous of the Kerincinese shamans is Pak Yerti, a colourful character who appears to conduct his rites looking like a cross between Noel Coward and King Lear. He is young for such a respected wizard, wearing a thin moustache rather than the Dumbledore beard. The last forest rite he performed for me was in suitably mysterious-looking gulley on a Sumatra volcano. He arrived in a gold brocade coat and a miraculous hat decorated with fur and sprigs of vegetation. Over a fire of sweet-smelling herbs he sang in a high, clear voice, calling the tiger spirits, while three of his companions danced and changed, inwardly at least, into the striped beasts.

On other occasions I have seen Pak Yerti dance with a pile of plates balanced on his head. These are then smashed with an axe while he dances on. Slashed with a kris (the long wavy dagger usually seen in the hand of some gaudy Hindu deity) he does not bleed. After one all-nighter, Pak Yerti stumbled up to me at 3 am and said ruefully, ‘that is another pair of trousers ruined’. Indeed his trousers were full of holes inflicted by the kris, but there was no blood. I don’t know how he did this; how he could grasp the razor-sharp blade without injury, or make water pour from the end of a walking stick. Tricks no doubt, but I could forgive him if they were: why should the spirits be any more amenable to be called at whim than the poet’s muse? But the belief bespeaks a bigger picture, one which sets the scene for man’s relationship with the forest, its animals, and its spirits.

Whether we believe in the shaman’s power or not is immaterial. Pak Yerti knows he can travel the night time forest in tiger form; the local people believe in a notion of tiger justice; while, as conservationist, I know the value the tiger has within a forest ecosystem. And we all need to know is that the tiger is there, in that dark, dangerous forest.

# **MEPPERSHALL VILLAGE HALL NEWS**

## **NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**MEPPERSHALL VILLAGE HALL**

**Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2012  
6pm**

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

**Approval of Previous Minutes**

**Treasurer's Report**

**Chairman's Report**

**Elections and Replacements**

**Any Other Business**

**Date for Meeting of New Committee**

**Everyone Is Invited To Attend**

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



# THE LUCY PAGES

By Lucy Standbridge

Aged 11



Want to stay warm indoors but need something to do this winter? Then read on as I have listed a few activities for the cold season.

1. You could make Christmas decorations using salt dough: 230g plain flour, 200g salt, 250ml water. Mix together flour, salt and half the water in a bowl. Knead the dough well adding more water until the dough has a smooth and firm consistency. If it's too dry- add more water. If it's too sticky- add more flour. Roll out the dough with a rolling pin to about 1cm in thickness. Cut out the shapes you want with cookie cutters or a knife. Prick each shape with a fork and then put into the oven at 120C/250F/Gas1 until hard all over. Check about every 10 minutes. Once cool, paint with poster or acrylic paint. If you want, you can coat your shape in varnish.
2. Another suggestion is to invite some friends over and have a movie night with popcorn and hot chocolate.
3. Make your own snow globe: using a hot glue gun, stick a small toy or ornament to the inside of the lid of a small jar. Allow it to dry then fill the jar with water and add silver or white glitter. Screw the lid on tightly and seal with a piece of ribbon.
4. Why not dig out those dusty board games and have a family games night?

I have also interviewed some local people about what they like to do on a cold winter evening:

**Mrs Hilary Holloway (from Lyspitt Common):** I like to warm up and watch some TV. I also do the housework.

**Mary (from the bakery):** I like to sit by the fire and watch some TV. After that I go to bed early.

**Thomas Clark (aged 10):** I like to play on my PlayStation 3.

**Mr Bryant (from Orchard Close):** I do jigsaw puzzles then I sleep by the coal fire.

**Casey-Rose Holloway (aged 11):** I used to like decorating pine cones.

**Milli (from Fildyke Road):** I do my ironing to keep me warm then I watch TV.

**I like to curl up and watch TV in bed.**

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***INCLUDING CREATIVE WRITING***

***Contact: Susan 01462-811419***

***(BA, PhD, PGCE)***

## PUZZLE PAGES

1	5				8		9	2
	8			6				
				7		6	3	
2								4
					7			
5	9		8					
6						2		
	4						8	5
					5	3		

### SUDOKU PUZZLE Medium

#### No. 6

The objective is to fill a 9×9 grid with digits so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3×3 sub-grids that compose the grid contain all of the digits from 1 to 9.

**No Prize Crossword this month. The puzzles opposite are for fun.**

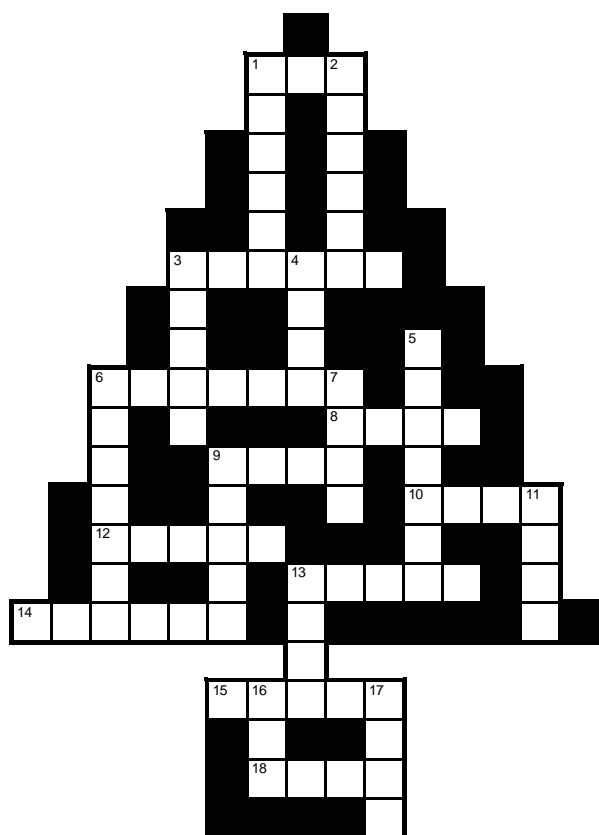
*Solutions on page 35. See page 34 for the winner of last month's prize.*

8		5			1		6	
	7	9				1		2
							5	
5	4				2	9		3
		8	5	4		2	7	
				3		5	4	
	2		3	5				1
7		1	9		4			
		3	2			6		4

### SUDOKU PUZZLE

#### Very easy No.4

## CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD - 1



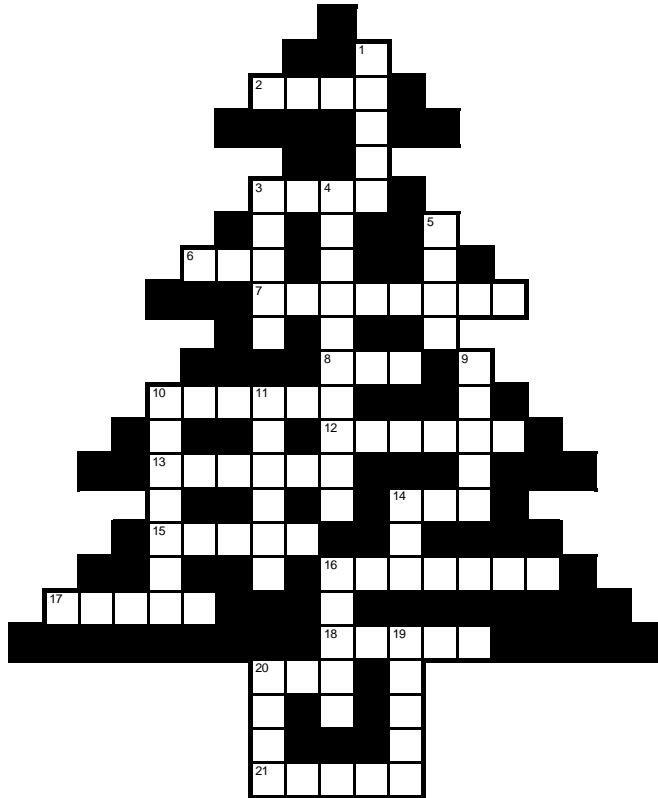
### ACROSS

- A1** Rudolph's nose colour (3)  
**A3** Somewhere to be away in (6)  
**A6** Belgium's capital vegetable (7)  
**A8** Nelson was one of these (4)  
**A9** Type of Christmas tree (4)  
**A10** Baby's bed that sounds like a card game (4)  
**A12** Goes with Frankincense (5)  
**A13** The Christmas ones seem to start earlier and earlier (5)  
**A14** The male is a jack, the female a jenny (6)  
**A15** This happened on the 25th (5)  
**A18** Gallagher and Edmonds (4)

### DOWN

- D1** It's yellow, I must tie it (6)  
**D2** Worship of a deity (6)  
**D3** Word heard a lot just before Christmas (5)  
**D4** Never look this type of horse in the mouth (4)  
**D5** Amazing occurrence (7)  
**D6** Usually leaves two pieces of coal and a carrot when he goes away (7)  
**D7** Pulled by dogs over the snow (4)  
**D9** I never really enjoy the office version of this at Christmas (5)  
**D11** Human equivalent of a chick (4)  
**D13** A thing in the sky to follow (4)  
**D16** Some people stay in them, I prefer to drink beer there (3)  
**D17** Associated with a divine power (4)

## CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD - 2



### ACROSS

- A2** Winter period and event celebrated by the historical Germanic peoples without the tide (4)
- A3** Measure of an object's resistance to the change of its speed in a catholic church (4)
- A6** Evergreen conifer (3)
- A7** Rudolph is a red-nosed (8)
- A8** Jambon de Paris is a wet-cured type (3)
- A10** The opposite of summer (6)
- A12** Frozen water spike (6)
- A13** Considered worthy of spiritual respect (6)
- A14** Accompanies 9 down (3)
- A15** Northern line underground station that has been drinking Red Bull (5)
- A16** These can be made out of beeswax (7)
- A17** A human between the stages of birth and puberty (5)
- A18** A natural blend of an essential oil and a resin carried by the three wise men (5)
- A20** One way of using up the turkey (3)
- A21** Grilled bread (5)

### DOWN

- D1** Christians worship him (5)
- D3** And you should be this after drink (5)
- D4** Christmas journey on a sled (6,4)
- D5** Presenter of Multi-Coloured Swap Shop (first name) (4)
- D9** Accompanies 14 across (5)
- D10** Old fashioned word for punch made with wine heated with spices and roasted apples; (7)
- D11** Gobble gobble bird (6)
- D14** Ask are any rooms here? (3)
- D16** Dromedary or Bactrian, one hump or two (5)
- D19** Cook with dry heat (5)



## MEPPERSHALL SOCIAL CLUB

### **Christmas Bingo**

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> December

Doors open at 6:30 pm Eyes down at 7:15 pm

ALL WELCOME

Entrance non-members £1 members free

(plus £7 for books)

Includes supper

Prize fund of £450 approx.

### **Children Christmas Activity Afternoon**

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> December

1 - 3 pm

Free for member £1 per non members

### **Christmas Eve Family Disco**

6:30pm till late

ALL WELCOME

Children are the responsibility of their parents and inappropriate behaviour may result in you being asked to leave.

### **New Year's Eve Disco & Karaoke**

8pm till late

Tickets £5 each Under 5 years free

Price includes buffet

Ticket available from behind the bar or by calling Gemma on

07968529282

**NO TICKET - NO ENTERANCE**

Children are the responsibility of their parents and inappropriate behaviour may result in you being asked to leave.

### **NEW Monthly Quiz Night**

WITH PAUL CARNE AS QUIZ MASTER

Starts on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> January at 7:30 pm

£1 per person No maximum Team size

Half money taken will be 1<sup>st</sup> prize - the rest will go to Keech Cottage

## CALENDAR OF MEPPERSHALL EVENTS

### December 2012

<b>Saturday 1<sup>st</sup></b>		
Southill Lower School Xmas Fayre	12.00 – 3.00 pm	Southill Lower School
Aladdin	3.00 & 7.45 pm	Village Hall
<b>Friday 7<sup>th</sup></b>		
Aladdin	7.45 pm	Village Hall
<b>Saturday 8<sup>th</sup></b>		
Indoor Boot Sale	9.00 am – 1.00pm	Shefford Memorial Hall
Aladdin	3.00 & 7.45 pm	Village Hall
<b>Monday 10<sup>th</sup></b>		
Parish Council Meeting	7.45 pm	Village hall
<b>Thursday 13<sup>th</sup></b>		
Evergreens Tea Club	2.15 pm	Sugar Loaf
School Carol Concert	7.00 pm	St Mary's Meppershall
<b>Friday 14<sup>th</sup></b>		
Christmas Bingo	6.30 for 7.15 pm	Meppershall Social Club
<b>Saturday 15<sup>th</sup></b>		
Night of Fun, Laughter & Music	7.30 pm – 11.30 pm	Shefford Memorial Hall
<b>Sunday 16<sup>th</sup></b>		
Children's Christmas Activity	1.00 – 3.00 pm	Meppershall Social Club
Village Hall Committee AGM	6.00 pm	Village hall
<b>Monday 17<sup>th</sup></b>		
Town Carol Concert	7.30 pm	St Michael's Shefford
<b>Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup></b>		
Tots Christmas Party	1.15 pm	Village hall
<b>Thursday 20<sup>th</sup></b>		
Evergreens Christmas Party	2.15 pm	Sugar Loaf
<b>Friday 21<sup>st</sup></b>		
Quiz Night	7.30 pm	Shefford Memorial Hall
<b>Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup></b>		
Service of 9 Lessons & Carols	6.00 pm	St Mary's Meppershall
<b>Monday 24<sup>th</sup></b>		
Family Disco	6.30 pm 'til late	Meppershall Social Club
Midnight Service	11.59 pm	St Mary's Meppershall
<b>Monday 31<sup>st</sup></b>		
New Year's Eve Disco & Karaoke	8.00 pm	Meppershall Social Club

### January 2013

<b>Sunday 13<sup>th</sup></b>		
New Monthly Quiz Night	7.30 pm	Meppershall Social Club
<b>Monday 14<sup>th</sup></b>		
Parish Council Meeting	7.45 pm	Village hall
<b>Saturday 26<sup>th</sup></b>		
Friends of St Mary's Quiz Night	7.00 for 7.30 pm	Village Hall

## **A MESSAGE FROM CENTRAL BEDS UNITARY COUNCIL: 'GET READY FOR WINTER'**

As the weather starts to get colder and the nights draw in, Bedfordshire and Luton Local Resilience Forum (BLLRF) is joining a campaign urging all local residents and businesses to check they are prepared for winter and to look out for their neighbours.

The 'Get Ready for Winter' campaign is encouraging everyone to plan ahead and make sure they are well prepared, if Bedfordshire experiences severe winter weather. To help everyone stay warm, healthy and safe 'Get Ready for Winter' tips, advice and links are available on the What Would You Do If website, [www.whatwouldyoudoif.co.uk](http://www.whatwouldyoudoif.co.uk)

Severe weather, such as cold, snow, ice, high winds and flooding can have a huge impact on daily life and there are huge benefits to planning ahead. The winter of 2010 was extremely harsh as snow and temperatures consistently fell below freezing creating serious problems across Bedfordshire. Roads were often icy and public transport experienced problems and all our lives were impacted in some way. Bedfordshire Police Chief Superintendent Mike Colbourne, BLLRF chairman, said:

"Winter weather can create significant problems and challenges for all of us, especially the vulnerable. That is why it is so important for everyone to plan ahead and make sure they are well set before the winter weather and longer nights arrive. By taking a few simple steps we can all make sure we are well prepared for the winter."

'Get Ready for Winter' is a national initiative to encourage individuals, families and communities to think about what winter preparations they can make to help them stay warm, healthy and safe. The campaign aims to provide advice on issues including winter-proofing your home, preparing for severe weather, flooding, travelling in winter, the flu virus and how people can support the more vulnerable members of the community during the winter.

For further information please contact: Louise Manders, on 0300 300 5830 or out of hours on 07875 430164



<b>Incident Type:</b>	Burglary.
<b>Location:</b>	Fildyke Road, Meppershall.
<b>Date and Time:</b>	Overnight on the 16th to the 17th October.
<b>Incident Details:</b>	<p>The offender gained access to the rear garden, forcing open a sliding door to a conservatory. Property in the conservatory was moved but a locked door prevented entry to the main house.</p> <p>It appears that no property has been taken.</p>
<b>Crime Reference:</b>	J D / 3 6 4 3 5 / 2012.
<b>Crime Reduction Advice:</b>	<p>Make sure that the front of the house is in clear view from the street.</p> <p>Make your boundaries difficult or impossible to climb over. Check that side gates are locked. Keep bins, ladders and garden furniture locked away.</p> <p>Keep Doors and Windows locked at all times. Remove all keys from the locks and keep them in a safe place out of view.</p> <p>Keep hallways clear of valuables like keys, handbags and laptop where they may be seen.</p> <p>If your house will be empty after dark leave a light on or set a timer.</p>

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If you have information about any crime or suspicious activity please call the  
Control Room on 1 0 1

Text your message to 07786 200011

Alternatively you can contact the independent charity **Crimestoppers**,  
anonymously, on 0800 555 111, or online at [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)

No personal details are taken, information is not traced or recorded and you  
will not go to court.

---

## Witnesses Sought To Meppershall Burglaries

Bedfordshire Police are appealing for witnesses after two properties in Meppershall were targeted by burglars in October.

The first incident happened at a property in Fildyke Road sometime between 10pm on Tuesday October 16 and 6am on Wednesday October 17. The offenders were able to force open a patio door in the conservatory at the rear of the location but strong home security ensured that they could not access the rest of the property and they left empty handed.

A second offence took place in Church Lane, Meppershall, sometime between 6.30pm on Thursday October 11 and 6.15pm on Wednesday October 17. The offenders were able to access the garden at the rear of the property and then prize open a ground floor kitchen window. Once inside the property the offenders searched the bedrooms and took a quantity of jewellery and ornaments.

Detective Constable Lynn Adams, who is investigating these incidents, is keen to hear from anyone who was in Meppershall and may have seen something suspicious during the time periods mentioned.

DC Adams said: "Meppershall is a relatively quiet village, so to have two incidents of burglary take place in a short period of time is unusual. We would really like to hear from anyone who was in the area at the time or anyone else who may have information – however small or insignificant they think it is – that could help us. Don't dismiss your information as unimportant – even tiny details which don't seem relevant now might become useful later on in the investigation."

If you have information relating to this incident, contact DC Adams, in confidence, on 01234 275357, 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).





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

## **CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2012**

**MONDAY 24 DECEMBER - CHRISTMAS EVE :**  
**6.00PM : CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS MASS**  
**11.30pm: CAROLS**  
**MIDNIGHT: FIRST MASS OF CHRISTMAS**

**TUESDAY 25 DECEMBER - CHRISTMAS DAY:**

**MASS AT 9.00am & 11.00am**

**NO EVENING MASS.**

**\*\*\*\*\***

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## CHRISTMAS AT THE SUGAR LOAF

### Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> December:

Christmas Charity Quiz – 7.00 pm

### Christmas Eve:

Julian Parker, Soloist & Guitarist –  
 8.30 pm

### New Year's Eve:

Andy Boom Boom Cannon. Disco –  
 8.30 pm

## **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.

Contact: Brenda Wright on 816446.

## SOLUTIONS TO PUZZLE FROM PAGE 24

## SUDOKU - Medium, No.6

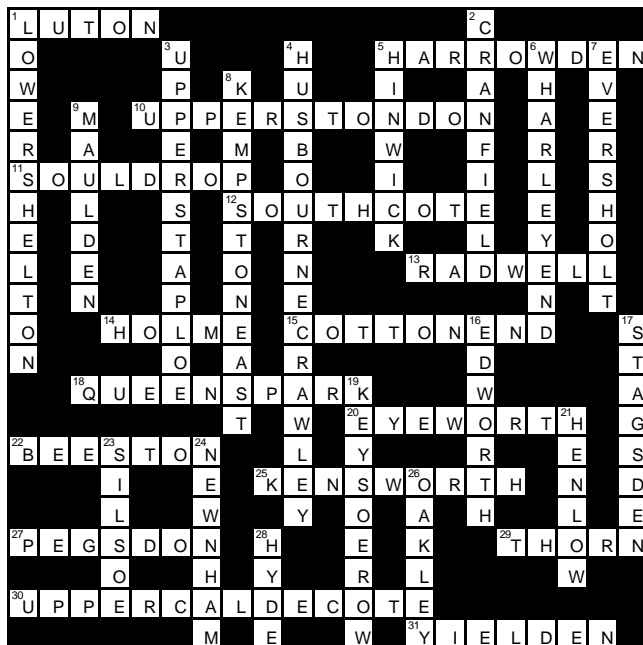
1	5	6	4	3	8	7	9	2
7	8	3	9	6	2	4	5	1
9	2	4	5	7	1	6	3	8
2	6	8	1	9	3	5	7	4
4	3	1	6	5	7	8	2	9
5	9	7	8	2	4	1	6	3
6	1	5	3	8	9	2	4	7
3	4	2	7	1	6	9	8	5
8	7	9	2	4	5	3	1	6

## Very Easy, No. 4

8	3	5	7	2	1	4	6	9
4	7	9	6	8	5	1	3	2
1	6	2	4	9	3	8	5	7
5	4	6	8	7	2	9	1	3
3	1	8	5	4	9	2	7	6
2	9	7	1	3	6	5	4	8
6	2	4	3	5	8	7	9	1
7	8	1	9	6	4	3	2	5
9	5	3	2	1	7	6	8	4

## CROSSWORD

*Solution to last month's  
Prize Crossword No. 7*



*There were four correct entries this month, including all the usual suspects.*

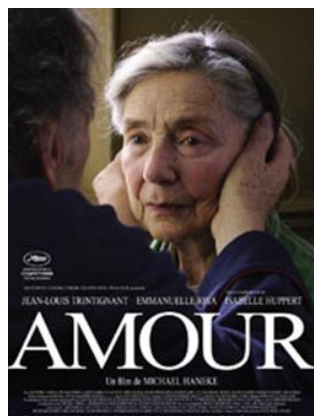
*I am very glad to report that the lucky winner, for the first time, was Sarah Till.*

*There will be no prize for  
our Christmas Tree puzzles.*

## FILM REVIEW

By Carlie Newman

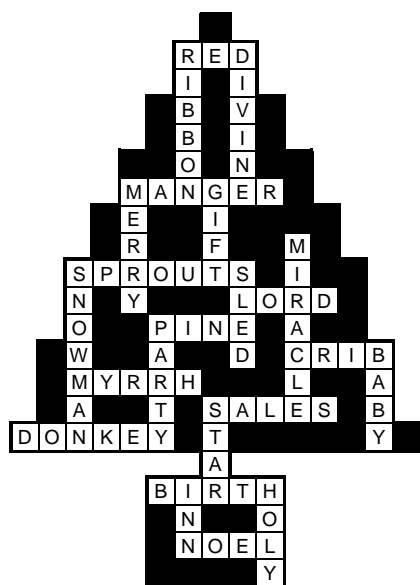
The most moving film at this year's LFF must be Michael Haneke's **AMOUR** (LOVE) (2 hrs 7 mins). It stars Jean-Louis Trintignant as Georges and Emmanuelle Riva as his wife, Anne. The devoted couple, now in their eighties, have a good life together, enjoying music and attending to the preparation of their meals together.



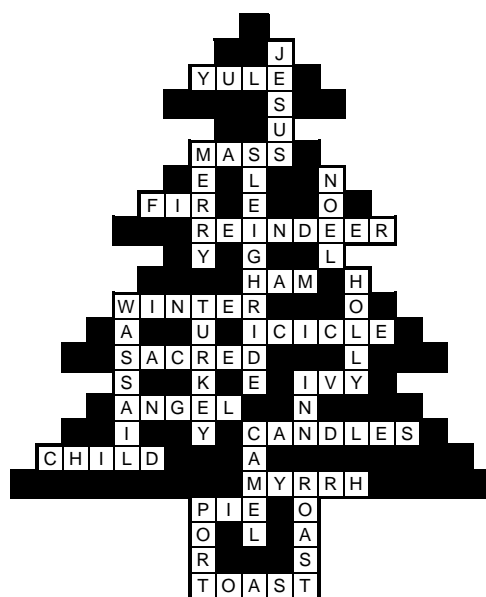
The couple have money but that doesn't do much to alleviate their troubles when Anne suffers a series of strokes, which leave her progressively less capable of moving and speaking. Although the couple's daughter (Isabelle Huppert) visits, Georges finds her presence unhelpful especially when she suggests her mother goes elsewhere to be looked after. He has promised his wife that she will not return to hospital. Even the music, which they both love, provides no comfort and Georges struggles to cope. At one point Anne refuses to drink although her husband points out that she will die without liquid.

Unsentimentally, the director shows Georges's struggle to look after his wife and also to do what is best for her within his own capabilities. The two lead actors perform with grace and tenderness towards each other and with their individual situations. A truly excellent film, sad but filmed with compassion, it has marvellous performances from Trintignant and Riva.

### Christmas Crossword - 1 Solution



### Christmas Crossword - 2 Solution





# The Meppershall Players



Well, we're here. All the preparation and rehearsals have culminated in the opening of 'Aladdin'. If you haven't got your tickets yet don't despair. Just pop into Roger's Bakery to buy your tickets for the following performance dates:

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> Nov. 7.45pm (£6)

Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> Dec. 3pm (£5) & 7.45pm (£6)

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> Dec. 7.45pm (£6)

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> Dec. 3pm (£5) & 7.45pm (£8) - no concessions for this date

Will Aladdin marry the Princess? Will Widow Twankey ever find romance in the laundry? And who is the evil villain trying to spoil everything? All will be revealed - alright, not quite all - we are a family show (oh yes we are!). Get your tickets and find out the answers to these and lots more as the fun unfolds.

Are you good with your hands? Are you a D.I.Y. enthusiast? If you are we are looking for you. We need people who are Handy Andy's or Andrea's, to build sets for plays. We have all the bits for making rooms with doors; we just lack people with the D.I.Y knack to put them all together. If you think this is for you, contact the Players.

The Players will be having their winter break after Aladdin finishes and will meet up again on Wed 9<sup>th</sup> January 2013 at 7.30pm

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) 1462 816336*



## THE WINTER GARDEN

The garden may appear to sleep in winter, but there is still much to enjoy, especially on those crystal mornings when the sun shines on frost or snow. Outside is a fascinating world of patterns and shapes, with the garden stripped bare to reveal its bones and structure. Delicate, often fragrant winter blossoms, handsome evergreens and the bewitching colours of stems and bark entice the gardener out to experience the crisp air and winter sun. In a well-planned garden, winter is foreshortened by the appearance of snowdrops or cherry yellow aconites, by fragrant winter honeysuckle and daphne, as well as early flowering rhododendrons. Spring is just around the corner.

**Evergreen splendour** – the outlines and foliage colours provided by evergreens add substance to a garden all year round, but their shapely domes, spires and mounds are most rewarding during winter.

**Bark, berries & flowering shrubs** – Shrubs with colourful stems, bark and twiggy outlines lend a permanent beauty, while those with berries and flowers give a succession of surprises.

**Cold-weather containers** – Use containers to bring colour right up to the house, even in winter. A microcosm of all that is good in the garden can be admired, whatever the weather, just outside the door or window.

*We are sorry to report that Viv Harvey of Meppershall Garden Club who usually contributes her top 10 Garden Tasks in this spot, has been unwell. We wish her a speedy recovery.*

*The above has been contributed by her MGC colleague, Linda Parker.*

# Meppershall Garden Club

Our last meeting included discussions and feedback from our recent activities and planning for the New Year. We are now looking forward to our Christmas social, kindly hosted by one of our group. I am sure it will be a very enjoyable evening.

## Activities:

A number of us were able to attend a workshop using the plaiting technique – we made some containers – you may well have purchased one at the school Autumn Fayre!



Above: Maureen Gravell and friends at the workshop.

We were invited to have a stall at the Meppershall Lower School Autumn Fayre. Members chose to design and make up planters to sell specially for the event. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, some of us used our plaited containers as pot covers! As you will see, some of our group have now replenished the Village hall planters with smiling pansies etc., something to keep us going until those spring bulbs appear!

**All of us at the MGC wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.**

Kim

Linda Parker	01462 815114 or
Kim Lee Tyler	01462 811750 or
Sarah Till	01462 817176 or
e-mail at: <a href="mailto:meppershallgardenclub@hotmail.co.uk">meppershallgardenclub@hotmail.co.uk</a>	

## Do you need support to live independently in your own home?

**Bromford Support can help.**

### **Drop In for support and advice**

If you live in Central Beds, we can support you to live independently in your home. This can include:

- Help with preventing eviction and staying safe in your home
- Advice and support with claiming welfare benefits and housing benefits
- Support with sorting out debt, budgeting and managing your bills
- Support in managing your physical/mental health and drug/alcohol problems
- Help to access employment, education and training
- Get involved in your community
- Support with filling out forms and post

**Our service is Free and can be used by anyone aged 16 and over**

### **Local Drop-In Centres are:**

**Wednesday 9.30 am – 11.30 am** at Orchard Children's Centre, Shefford Lower School

**Thursday 2.00 pm – 4.30 pm** at Shefford Library

**Friday 9.30 am – 11.30 am** at Shefford Town Council Office

### **Want to find out more?**

**Call 01582 476840/01525 862802 or email [beds.info@bromford.co.uk](mailto:beds.info@bromford.co.uk) to find your nearest drop-in location.**



## BROMFORD SUPPORT

The service aims to promote and increase the independent living skills of vulnerable people in Central Bedfordshire and prevent the loss of accommodation and/or homelessness. By providing prevention-related advice and support via our multi-tiered service, customers are encouraged to develop life skills and overcome obstacles to living independently in their own homes. We also promote social inclusion through signposting to other services and assisting in developing customers' self-confidence and social skills.

The service is available to customers who are:

- Aged 16 and above and living in any housing tenure.
- People at risk of losing their home, are homeless, living in temporary accommodation, or moving on from supported housing or custody to independent living.

### The service

We work in partnership with other organisations, such as Central Bedfordshire Council, Housing Providers, Health Services, Community Mental Health Teams, and Voluntary and Community organisations, to ensure a multi-agency approach is delivered. We are a generic service funded by Central Bedfordshire Council and we operate a short term system offering four levels of support, depending on the customers' needs:

- Tier 1 – Telephone advice or support with a piece of work via a drop-in.
- Tier 2 – Support via a drop-in with up to three pieces of work.
- Tier 3 and 4- customers with complex needs who require additional support over a longer period of time.

### Accessing the service

For customers receiving support via Tier 1 or 2, a referral is not necessary and support can be accessed via our drop-in service without an appointment.

If a higher level of support is required, and a customer has more complex needs, then a referral can be made to our tiered 3 and 4 service. We welcome referrals from any agency or organisation working with the customer. Self-referrals are also accepted.

Once a referral is received, we will make contact with the customer for an initial telephone assessment to assess their level of need and to determine if the service is suitable for them. We assess on a priority needs basis and there may be a waiting list; however support can be accessed immediately via our telephone or drop-in service.

If we believe a statutory agency has a duty of care, or a customer requires support with personal care, a referral will be made to a specialist service such as Social Services.

All declined applicants have the right to appeal. Information on the full appeals procedure is available from the contact address below.

#### **Contact**

For more information on our service and to make a referral please contact Bromford Support on:

**Tel: 01582 476840**

**Email:**

**[centralbedsreferrals@bromford.co.uk](mailto:centralbedsreferrals@bromford.co.uk)**

**Bromford Support**

**Central Bedfordshire Council**

**Watling House**

**High Street North**

**Dunstable**

**LU6 1LF**



It has been a fun-packed term so far with the themed weeks working well and the new faces settling in nicely. The children are enjoying the messy play sessions, and the babies now have a new play mat and some new books to enrich their imagination. We also now have a large garage which has been very popular with all the children, and can be borrowed by any carer on request, free of charge.

We would like everyone to feel they can input their views and ideas when they come along, and we are always happy to accept more offers of help to set up at 1:15 if you can join us before we start. We would also really appreciate a coffee/snack helper from 1:15 till 3:15 if anyone has this time available and feels they would enjoy helping out. Please ring Debbie on 07713 627376 if you need any further information.

Exciting plans are now unfolding for our Christmas party on 18<sup>th</sup> December! We are having a Snowman theme, with a frosty house, bouncy castle, Christmas trees to decorate, Christmas dressing up competition, festive music, party food and biscuit decorating, and a special sleigh full of presents! Tickets will be on sale from Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> November, or request a ticket on Facebook by looking for Meppershall Baby and Toddler group. £3 each child, or £1 under 1's (present included).

**Parents, Grandparents, & Child-minders are all welcome.**

**Come and join the fun at Meppershall Village Hall**

**Every Tuesday in term time from**

**Under 1's: 50p \* Under 3's: £1.00 \* Under 5's: £1.50**

**FIRST VISIT FREE - MAX ENTRY £2**

Craft, drink & snack included each week

[meppershalltoddlers@gmail.com](mailto:meppershalltoddlers@gmail.com)

## NOTICE BOARD

### **SCRABBLE PLAYERS WANTED**

I wondered whether 2 or 3 ladies would care to join me in a weekly scrabble game on an agreed afternoon. Very informal - just a game and cup of tea. I live in Meppershall and my name is Pam Sheridan. Tel 01462 851681

### **SHEFFORD EVENTS**

**ALL HELD IN SHEFFORD TOWN MEMORIAL HALL  
HITCHIN ROAD SG17 5JA (OPPOSITE THE WOOLPACK PUB)**

#### **INDOOR BOOT SALE**

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> December. 9.00am – 1.00pm. £5 to book pitch. Contact Linda

#### **QUIZ NIGHT**

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> December. 7.30 pm. Teams of up to 8: £5 – all ages welcome. Free mince pie to each team member. Contact Brenda

#### **CHRISTMAS NIGHT OF FUN, LAUGHTER & MUSIC**

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> December. 7.30 – 11.30 pm

A night of entertainment from Maggie Landon, all round entertainer, singer & disco. Christmas Raffle.

Tickets: Adults £6. Under 14s £4. Contact Linda or Brenda.

**Contact Linda: 01462 814582**

**Contact Brenda: 01462 813264**



**Southill Lower School  
Christmas Fayre at the School  
Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> December 12noon until 3pm**

Variety of stalls including jewellery, books, cards, home wares/gifts, handbags, Santa's Grotto (gift and photo taken, to be provided by email for you to print as many as you like), children's craft activities, light refreshments and more.

**Supporting the Friends of Southill Lower School**



# WATCH YOUR CHILDREN GROW

## Meppershall Pre-School Ponderings

We have been doing lots of exciting activities with the children this term, like cooking, making lanterns for diwali, and learning sign language for some of the activities we have out at each session. We also created a beautiful poppy collage to mark Remembrance Day which has been up on the wall. Christmas lead activities are now in full swing and we are all building up to our Christmas party and show with great anticipation.

This half term we will sadly be saying goodbye to our leader. Joy Donachie has been at the setting for 10 years and will be greatly missed by everyone. We wish her well and thank her for her loyalty and hard work over this time.

Thank you to everyone who supported us at Meppershall Bonfire night! Congratulations to Reverend Andrew who won our hamper. We raised £100, and along with a Dads golf day, and a few indoor sales we are getting closer to our fundraising target of £1000 to reach by Christmas, so if you would like to support us please donate to any of the following: we are collecting textiles for a bags2school pick up on the 5<sup>th</sup> December, and any old CDs or DVDs in their cases will be gratefully received. Or you can order a special bag of reindeer food for £1. Please ring Debbie on 07713 627376 any time.

If you have a child aged between two and a half and four who you feel is ready to try something new, please ring **Debbie on 07713 627376 to book your free taster session.** They are welcome to start mid-term.

We open in term time on Monday & Wednesday from 9:30am until 3pm, and on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday until 12:30pm. Lunch club is each day from 12 until 12:30pm.

**Meppershall Village Hall, SG17 5LX**  
**01462 817359 (in session time)**

[www.meppershall-ps.co.uk](http://www.meppershall-ps.co.uk)

Registered Charity: 1031913

## **From Computer Security firm, F-Secure: 5 ways to protect your bank account while banking or shopping online**

For years, nearly anyone who is online has shopped through a web browser. And now nearly 3 out of 4 internet users do some banking online. And while banks and retailers have got better at protecting your private financial information, online criminals have got savvier at stealing it.

As we prepare for the holiday season, we thought we'd review a few smart tactics to make sure that the only one who is spending your money is you.

### **1. Make sure your PC is patched and protected**

This is a standard piece of advice we always share but it's especially crucial for people who rely on their PC for their financial transactions. Keep your PC updated with the latest system, application and security software. Our free [Health Check](#) makes this easy. With an updated and protected PC, you'll avoid more than 99% of the trouble you might face online.

### **2. Go directly to the site**

When you're shopping online, it's always best to stick to retailers you know and trust. Go to the site directly and search there. Avoid clicking on links in your email to go to a store or your bank so you don't end up at a scam site. If your bank contacts you with a problem, go to the site on your own, or just pick up the phone and give them a call.

### **3. Look for the "s" in "https:"**

Only enter your information in if you see that extra "s" in your URL. It stands for secured and it's an extra layer of protection that keeps your account information private.

### **4. Shop and bank when you're secure**

Only shop when you know you're on a network and a PC that's protected. A computer in an Internet cafe may have a keylogger that tracks your credit card number or password. An open "free Wi-Fi" network, may be convenient. But it's also risky for shopping or banking. If you use your smartphone or tablet to shop or bank, make sure you have [security software on it that includes anti-theft protection](#) that will allow you to deactivate your device if you lose it. That way when you lose your phone you don't lose control of your money.

### **5. Check your accounts**

Try to limit your online shopping to one credit card, and make sure you check that account on a regular basis. Make it a weekly chore to check your account statement and your bank account. Then you'll be ready to contact your institutions as soon as you notice a problem. The longer a criminal has access to your account, the more trouble they can do—of course.

With these few precautions, you can worry less about your security and more about what you'd actually like to buy.





**At Meppershall Pre-School we are dedicated to providing a safe, happy and stimulating environment, where children from two years six months can learn and develop through play.**

# **Relief Staff wanted at your local friendly Pre-school**

**If you feel you could  
add something to our team  
please ring Debbie on 07713 627376  
For more information**

**We are open in term time on Monday, Wednesday from 9:30am until 3pm, and on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday until 12:30pm.**

**Meppershall Village Hall, SG17 5LX  
[www.meppershall-ps.co.uk](http://www.meppershall-ps.co.uk)**

Registered Charity: 1031913

## THE BIKE SHED

### CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE MECHANICS SHOW and a WIN!

By Wayne Allen

December 2012

In the classic bike world there are shows to satisfy the most demanding appetite - those that wish to view the most amazing machines from the past, be they original or restored, or those who are looking for that elusive spare part to complete the rebuild of their own cherished machine. Such shows are also a great stage for nostalgia by way of meeting and hearing the stories from the past masters of bike racing. One such show is the Classic Motorcycle Mechanics Show (held in October) which is our key event of the year. To put this in to context, it is the Crufts of the classic bike community in the UK. Unfortunately this year I was unable to attend due to business travel overseas but even that venture will give rise to a future article involving a Harley Electra Glide and ride through Nevada.

The show is held at the Staffordshire Showground, which in my view provides the perfect backdrop for this event. Yes, it is primarily an agricultural showground but this show would simply not work at any other venue. Our usual accommodation is by way of a tent (yes in October it is very cold) but we are fortunate to be part of a number of other bike enthusiast that makes the social side of the event so unique and memorable despite the cold evenings. Some 30,000 bike fans pass through the event over the weekend including many from mainland Europe, such is the kudos of the event. It is supported by a vast number of trade stands, club stands, food vendors, biking celebrities and an auction of the most exclusive classics by Bonhams Auction House. Check their website for some eye watering prices of very rare bikes.

<http://www.bonhams.com/departments/MOT-CYC/>

I mentioned at the beginning that this show delivers a very comprehensive range of bikes on display. I have been fortunate to have been part of the show for the past 4 years with my Suzuki as part of the X7 forum display. Sean was also invited to display his recently restored Yamaha LC350 on the LC club stand. This stand was not only in the main hall but was theme based on street specials, whereby the bikes although extensively restored are to the owners personalised specification. Like most of our other classic bike projects, it had arrived in boxes in the back of his car after collecting it from the seller near Ipswich. It was barely a bike at all, with no engine, but it did have the frame, tank, wheels and some basic parts. A second bike and a later version of the

Yamaha LC, with a YPVS engine was secured. Significant frame modifications allowed the fitment of yet another model Yamaha swing arm and rising link suspension, for which Sean had designed and fabricated the frame mounts. Many hours of work completed the detailing of this bike and its unique identity. Contributions for birthdays and Xmas presents also produced much needed tools and parts. Sean had been working on this project for the past 3 years with many late nights and challenges along the way.

As a result of all this work, it was recognised by the show judges and Sean won an award for the "Best Street Special" for the whole show. This is a very prestigious accolade, considering the competition from experienced and professional restorations that were entered in the same category. Even better, the trophy, proudly displayed on the bike pictured below, was presented by Graham Crosby, the legendary grand prix motorcycle racer. Crosby has won the Daytona 200, the Imola 200, the Suzuka 8 Hours, and the Isle of Man TT.

A great weekend, shame I missed it though....but not through choice!!!



The Yamaha LC350 and trophy....

## COVERS BY REQUEST

By the magic of pantomime we are able to bring you a picture of this year's Players' production of Aladdin before it has actually happened! Oh yes we are! Full details of performances are on page 36, and by the time you read this the show will be well under way. If your appetite is whetted by our magic picture and you have not yet got your tickets, hurry along to Roger's Bakery now. For the picture, we are grateful to The Players and to David Fosskett behind the camera.

*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 EVENTS

### **Birthdays in December & January:**

Douglas Powney will be 90 on 15<sup>th</sup> December

Eric Bygraves will be 93 on 17<sup>th</sup> December

Joyce Smith will be 84 on 27<sup>th</sup> December

Maurice Horwood will be 82 on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2013

Phyllis Kidger will be 95 on 16<sup>th</sup> January

Brenda Wright will be 82 on 20<sup>th</sup> January

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

*Congratulations to all of the above, and to Jean Ford on her 80<sup>th</sup> last month.*

### **Diamond Wedding**

Barbara and Maurice Horwood achieved this milestone on 15<sup>th</sup> November. Many congratulations to them both.

**THE FRIENDS OF ST. MARY'S  
PRESENT**

# ***QUIZ NIGHT***

**Meppershall Village Hall**

**SATURDAY, 26th January 2013**

**7pm for 7.30pm = Bar Open 7pm**

**Prizes, Raffle. Trophy.**

*TABLES of 6, £5 Per Person.*

*Contact:*

**Trevor Thorley 01462 813357  
or other trustees**

**Enjoy this unique experience of friendly rivalry,  
COME ALONG AND JOIN IN THE FUN!**

## St. Mary The Virgin

Meppershall Parish Church (Church of England)  
Church Road, off Campton Road, SG17 5NA

**Rector:** The Reverend Veronica Goodman 01462 339962 – usual day off: Monday

**Churchwardens:**

Brian Bellamy 01462 815944 (Pastoral Assistant);

Brenda Wright 01462 816446.

**Reader (Licensed Lay Minister)**

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)

### Services – December 2012

Date	Time	Service
Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup> Advent 1	11am	Parish Communion Children in Church – not in school
	4pm	Christingle Service
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> Advent 2	8:30am	Holy Communion
	10:30	Junior Church meets in school
Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup>	7pm	School Service – Carols by Candlelight
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup> Advent 3	8:30am	Holy Communion
	11am	All Age Service
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup> Advent 4	11am	Family Communion
	6pm	Nine Lessons and Carols
Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> Christmas Eve	2:30pm	Crib Service
	11:30pm	Midnight Mass
Tuesday 25 <sup>th</sup> Christmas Day	11am	Family Communion
Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup> Christmas 1	11am	United Benefice Communion and Baptism Bring and Share Lunch

### Services – January 2013

Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> Epiphany	11am	Parish Communion Children in Church – not at school
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> Epiphany 2	8:30am	Holy Communion
Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup> Epiphany 3	8:30am	Holy Communion
	11am	All Age Service
Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	7:30pm	Healing and Wholeness Service in <u>Shefford Methodist Church</u>
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> Epiphany 4	11am	Family Communion

**St Mary's weekday service - Wednesdays:** Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer), each Wednesday, 10.00am.

## A Message from St Mary's...

Suspense games are lovely aren't they - I play them with my granddaughter all the time and she has understood the idea now and plays them back with me... Ready .... steady..... and ..... tickles and cuddles and laughs.

Well it is as though Jesus said ready.... steady..... wait.... and 2012 years on we are still waiting!

Advent is that time when the Church invites us to pause and reflect and to make sure that we are ready....

So why still get ready? Why not give up and go home? And can we remember what we are waiting for anyway?

Well there are three reasons why getting ready now is important....

1. Most of us in reality see Advent as the time we get ready to remember that first Christmas. Remembering in the Jewish and Christian traditions is not only about casting your mind back to something that happened long ago. Jews and Christians believe that in re-enacting some of the key God-events of our past we can somehow share in them in the present. We remember that first Christmas night so that we can share in the wonder and grace of that first coming.
2. Secondly, we can wait for God to come in the present because just as we say in our communion prayers "it is the nature of God always to have mercy", so it is the nature of our God "always to come now to every person who invites him into their heart and life" Our God is the God who comes NOW!
3. The third reason we can wait for God is because Jesus said that he is coming back. One day Jesus will come back not as a helpless baby, but in power and great glory to reign as King of earth and heaven. And of course it is that "second coming" - that we are really waiting and getting ready for now. When will he come? We are told, *"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."* But he will come again!

In the meantime - I love to go back to the stable (for example, at the crib in the church) again and again - year after year - and it is always "Christmas" there. One writer says, "it is the one special day, when we can relax into the peace that is holy, and into a time where time itself seems to stand still and the winds and tides of change are held back, with the sounds of angelic voices drifting through a starry, cold night"

But on the night when all seems so still - what we are actually seeing is the moment when everything changes; the moment that all creation was waiting for.

And in the peace and the stillness of the simple human story of a young woman and her baby, the God of earth and heaven entered into human history and offered **to all of us** the chance to be different... to be transformed. Today still, we can open the door of our hearts and lives to let him in.

Roni Goodman – Rector.

## **JUNIOR CHURCH**

During this harvest season the children have been exploring the gifts given to us by God, and thanking Him for His wonderful generosity towards us.

We have learned together that we are very blessed in having our most basic needs met: water that is safe to drink, good food to give us energy and help us grow, homes to keep us safe and protect us from bad weather, families to love and care for us and Jesus to love us, lead us and forgive us.

In this November's JC, we began by thinking of other children who do not have enough of their needs met to survive: water far away and often full of germs, bad harvests, lack of food leading to empty bowls and stomachs. We also thought of all the children, who lost parents and childhoods, in war torn countries, and those in countries where children are working long hours to simply exist. Medicines are too expensive in many areas and schools are few and far between. The younger children had a story reflecting some of these issues, while the older children identified what ALL children should have.

It was then that the children were given shoe boxes which they covered in Christmas wrapping paper and filled with gifts to send, through Operation Christmas Child, to children who had never had Christmas gifts in their lives. JC's shoe boxes will be added to the Brownie shoe boxes (the Brownies are hoping to fill 50 boxes!!!) and will then be collected and dispatched.

In this special giving, from child to child, Jesus's spirit touched us all, both children and adults alike and we felt that giving was pretty cool and that the children who received the gifts would enjoy them.

The JC Team.

Why not join us, Junior Church, on Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> December (Please note: the SECOND Sunday, in December) at the school, for a craft and activity Sunday. Please see advert in Messenger for details.



# STOP - JC news - STOP:



## Special Christmas JC:

- **Longer session: 10.30 am to 12.00 midday**
- **Sunday, 9th December**
- **at Meppershall Lower School**
- **Meaningful Christian teaching**
- **Fun packed activities galore**
- **For children between 3 and 12**



**Come and join us  
in our exciting  
worship with a twist**

**FROZEN CHRISTMAS OR NEW YEAR PUDDING     DEC/JAN 2012/13****Serves 8 people****INGREDIENTS:**

60g (2 ½ oz) Dried ready-to-eat apricots. Chopped.  
60g (2 ½ oz) Dried ready-to-eat figs. Chopped.  
75g (3 oz) Dried ready-to-eat prunes. Chopped.  
60g (2 ½ oz) Maraschino or glace cherries. Halved.  
1/2 plus 3 tbsp juice from a finely grated orange.  
2 tbsp Orange liqueur, Brandy or Sherry,  
300ml (1/2 pint) Double cream.  
1 tsp vanilla extract.  
90g (3 ½ oz) icing sugar.  
110g (4oz) dark chocolate roughly chopped.  
20g (3/4 oz) unsalted butter.

**METHOD:**

- 1) Soak fruits with orange rind, juice and liqueur for 2 hours. Line a 1.5 litre (2 ½ pint) pudding basin with cling film.
- 2) Whisk cream, vanilla and icing sugar until softly peaks. Mix in fruits and spoon into basin. Cover and freeze.
- 3) Place chocolate, butter and 3 tbsp of water in a bowl and melt over a pan of simmering water, stirring until smooth. Allow to cool.
- 4) Carefully dip basin in warm water and un-mould onto a plate lined with non-stick paper. Remove cling film and cover with chocolate. Freeze uncovered, then over-wrap with cling film and foil.
- 5) Remove from freezer 25 minutes before serving.

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

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

*Ellie Roberts who will be 14 on the 1<sup>st</sup>  
Breindel Cullen who will be 3 on the 4<sup>th</sup>  
Liberty Sheppard who will be 7 on the 4<sup>th</sup>  
Lee Britton who will be 10 on the 7<sup>th</sup>  
Amber Ridley who will be 3 on the 8<sup>th</sup>  
Megan Myers who will be 9 on the 9<sup>th</sup>  
Hugo Norris who will be 10 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
Piper Leverett who will be 5 on 13<sup>th</sup>  
Millie Chessum who will be 8 on the 15<sup>th</sup>  
Eliza Norris who will be 15 on the 15<sup>th</sup>  
Elise Simpkins who will be 10 on the 20<sup>th</sup>  
Thomas Manning who will be 4 on the 27<sup>st</sup>  
Benjamin Jarvis who will be 12 on the 24<sup>th</sup>  
Finlay Caddick who will be 5 on the 28<sup>th</sup>  
Rose Jones who will be 4 on the 29<sup>th</sup>*

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

*Louis Bradshaw who will be 13 on the 4<sup>th</sup>  
Harry Rose who will be 10 on the 5<sup>th</sup>  
Ella Clark who will be 7 on the 9<sup>th</sup>  
Olivia Mardell who will be 10 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
Ewan Cooper who will be 15 on the 10<sup>th</sup>  
Sam German who will be 9 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
Georgia Rose who will be 14 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
Rachel Holmes who will be 15 on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
Luke Britton who will be 15 on the 20<sup>th</sup>  
Jonny Ward who will be 12 on the 25<sup>th</sup>  
Emily Frost who will be 12 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.

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<u>Collating Dates for your Diaries</u>					
	<u>2012</u>			<u>2013</u>	
November	26	Double	April	29	
December	None		May	28	Tue
			June	24	
	<u>2013</u>		July	29	Double
January	28		August	None	
February	25		September	30	
March	25		October	28	

Please note that dates in the above table indicate the month in which the collating will take place, at 2.00 pm in the Sugar Loaf. The issue being collated will relate to the following month, e.g. on 24<sup>th</sup> September the October issue will be collated.