



SUMMER FAIR SPECIAL



WHAT'S IN YOUR MESSENGER THIS MONTH?

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EDITORIAL

This issue has more than its Fair (ho ho!) share of good news.

First, the Summer Fair on 29th June was a huge success. After a grey start we were blessed with warm sunshine and the crowds came out to enjoy it. The piece from Kim Tyler on page 40 tells of the success from the organisers' point of view and our colour supplement in the centre pages shows how good it was from the point of view of those attending. And the Hurricane and the Red Arrows were the spectacular icing on the cake. Well done to all those involved in making it happen.



I hope everyone will find something to identify and enjoy in our colour supplement of pictures from the Fair. A very special “thank you” to my Assistant Editor, David Turner, who put it together; he and John Thompson also took most of the pictures.

Second, we are at last able to bring news of the development behind the Village Hall. Three parties are involved by contributing land to the development: Polehanger Farms Ltd; The Trustees of the Village Hall and the Parish Council. Starting on page 9, each of these three has written a piece from their point of view of the project.

And third, there have been some results from my pleas for suggestions for new items and new contributors. The Messenger Committee had a very constructive meeting at which several new subject areas were adopted and writers assigned to them, which, hopefully, will lead to new series in the future. We have decided not to unveil these until several of all are actually written and ready to go: we only want sustainable development! But we are unveiling a new writer in this issue: on page 42 Eddie Kingham has produced an item that we hope will be of help to parents faced with distracting their children during these Summer holidays. Eddie will be starting at university this Autumn (all being well!), so he cannot undertake a monthly series at this stage, but he likes writing and we look forward to calling on that talent again in the future when his studies allow.

Dick Bulley

LETTERS

Letter from John Chapman

Hi Dick,

Reference the message from Olly Martins, Police and Crime Commissioner (page 9 of your July issue). Whilst it is nice to know that we have an active Commissioner as a guiding light for law and order in Bedfordshire, I find his attitude of blaming lack of funding for any problems which may occur to policing rather crass, particularly as the Bedfordshire force has obviously worked very hard to achieve some very respectable results *despite* having less money. Perhaps *because* less money has been available they have, like the rest of us, made more of what they *have* got with better planning, up to date equipment and a can-do attitude. Our Commissioner should take a leaf out of their book, stop being so political and get on with finding more cost-effective ways to police on the available budget; after all, he is *in* the post now.

The new, additional police telephone number 101 is available to report incidents that are not exactly an emergency but give rise to suspicion, or to report a minor accident, criminality or disturbance. I feel that this information would have been far more useful in the Commissioner's Report (along with his contact e-mail address, perhaps) and would have shown that he really is interested in rousing our support.

Regards

John Chapman

Meppershall Summer Fair

I am sure I speak for many people who, like me, had the pleasure of attending the Meppershall Summer Fair. So much hard work must have gone into the organising, not to mention all the voluntary hours given to make this the Village highlight of the year. From the opening fly-over by a Hurricane to The Red Arrows, swooping down over Meppershall with the coloured vapour as they disappeared into the distance at the end of the afternoon, were sights not to be forgotten. Everyone had worked so hard to make this event so successful. Congratulations and well done to all on the Summer Fair Committee.

A very grateful Meppershall resident (name and address supplied)

And so say all of us - Ed

MEPPERSHALL NEWS IN BRIEF

Brenda Wright retires.

Many of you will know that Brenda retired as a Churchwarden of St Mary's earlier this year after nine years in the post.

On Sunday 30th June the Church community presented Brenda with a 'photo book' in recognition of her service. Current Churchwarden James Read has copied the pictures from Brenda's book onto his Flickr site, at the following link:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/jamesstracey/sets/72157634408955627/>

Of course, retirement from her official post has not stopped Brenda contributing, as was very evident in St Mary's tea tent at the Fair.

Edited from a report in Beds on Sunday 07/07/13 -

Shocking report reveals horrific nature of neglect at Meppershall Care Home

During an unannounced inspection of the Meppershall Care Home, run by G A Projects Limited, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) found that its 70 residents were being seriously neglected by staff with some OAPs lying in soiled bed clothes for up to 10 weeks.

Some of the more shocking discoveries included one case where inspectors found human faeces on the floor of a bathroom and one instance where they observed a staff member picking up spilt porridge from the floor and putting it back into a resident's bowl for them to eat.



The CQC ruled that the Home had failed to meet the required standard of care in all categories and has taken enforcement action against the provider over staffing levels, the state of the premises and care and welfare practice. The Commission's report states that they found "a number of areas where practice was unacceptable and people living in the Home were put at potential risk of harm". Other concerns raised by the health watchdog included residents' choices not being respected, records being falsified, a high risk of spreading

infection, stained mattresses, and staff not being properly trained to deal with dementia sufferers.

Meppershall Care Home is now forbidden by Central Bedfordshire Council from admitting any new residents until further notice and was required by the CQC to submit an improvement plan by last Thursday. Julie Ogley, Director of Social Care, Health and Housing at Central Beds Council, which monitors the home, said: "We have raised concerns about the home's ability to improve care quality on a number of occasions. On each of these occasions we have restricted the Home from admitting new residents until the concerns have been addressed through an improvement plan. Since the CQC inspection in May, the Council has been sending in teams of social care professionals on a weekly basis to assist the Home in making the progress needed against the improvement plan. In the meantime, we are continuing with our more intense review and scrutiny of the Home and are taking the necessary action to ensure it puts residents' care at the centre of everything it does".

Since the report was published the former manager has left the Home. Sue Attley, who has now been brought in as new manager to make improvements, said: "We have had a lot of help and support from social services at Central Beds Council. This was all before my time as I've only been here a couple of weeks. The staff morale is very low at the moment and I am here to lift that. We are having two training programmes now every week and a new manager is coming in to help me. Most of the issues have now been addressed and we are working very hard on our improvement plan".

A spokeswoman for the CQC said: "The Commission carried out an inspection at Meppershall Care Home on 13th May, in response to concerns raised about the service. The CQC is taking action with regard to this service; however, our legal processes do not allow us to go into further detail at this time". The CQC has a range of enforcement powers which include restricting the services that a provider can offer or, in the most serious cases, suspending or cancelling a service.

PS. We now understand that the Home will be closing altogether. This news came too late for us to get details - Ed.

MEPPERSHALL BROWNIES



We have been lucky enough with the weather this Half Term to be able to venture out and about, which was particularly handy as we were doing our "Out and About" Brownie badge.

We had a particularly fun-filled and busy evening in Barton-le- Clay playing in the park there and having a picnic, then walking to the woods to paddle in the stream and race the sail boats we had made a few weeks earlier. The girls got quite a bit wetter than anticipated but this seemed to add to the overall enjoyment!



On another evening we made and decorated a kite each and flew them in the field behind the Village Hall. Thankfully there was just about enough wind for them to take flight. We also enjoyed cooling down on a particularly warm evening with water games. The girls have also enjoyed playing on the play equipment in Foster's Field and a scavenger hunt.



We raised an amazing £215 with our tombola stall at the excellent Summer Fair this year. We will put this money towards our Big Brownie Birthday celebrations next year. Thank you to everyone who bought tickets and donated prizes.

We finished off our Crazy Moose Challenge badge themed around Canada, learning about and making our own totem poles and then decorated pancakes, which the girls particularly enjoyed. We finished off our busy term with a party night where the girls dressed up in their party clothes, and we played lots of party games and dancing.

We don't meet during the school holidays so the Leaders are putting their feet up for a few months before we return on 9th September for what is going to be another busy term.

If you are interested in your daughter joining Brownies, then please contact Snowy Owl (Suzanne) on 07817 392325 or you can register online at www.girlguiding.co.uk; select the parents tab and make sure you put Monday afternoon and evening as an option. Places are limited at the moment and you may need to join the waiting list.

MEPPERSHALL BAKERY BEES by Roger

Hi.

August is the time to remove our main honey crop and start to prepare for winter. I know it's still summer but to the bees August is already Autumn. In fact, the whole aim in life of a colony is to maximise its chances of survival over winter. Once we have removed the main honey crop, whatever honey the bees collect from now on is theirs to keep, so this is a good time to start our 6 week medication for varroa, check for any signs of disease and take action to help the bees to stay healthy. The queen can also be assessed and replaced if she is not a good one ie. old, bad tempered (sounds familiar?) or not a good layer. Replacing the queen now gives them time to make strong colonies to get through the winter ready for next spring. Here I am already in next year.

This year started late but picked up well with a good honey crop from the oilseed rape and horse chestnut, with some late spring flowers. It averaged about twenty pounds per super which is very good for this year. We will have to wait and see what the main crop will bring; not twenty pounds, I fear. Oh well, keep fingers crossed.

At the Summer Fair, I had an observation hive with some queen cells which I thought would hatch out on the day. Unfortunately they did not. I placed them in a nuc (a small hive) and they hatched three days later. We now have a small hive with this year's new queen coming along nicely. All the other hives are okay. One did swarm in the first week in July, somewhere over Meppershall. That hive also has a new queen, not laying yet, as I write this. She looks very big which is a good sign she is carrying lots of eggs. The last two years have seen very small queens because of the bad spring and summer and this has caused a lot of supercedure and small colonies. When a queen mates she will mate with a large number of males and hopefully lay eggs for the next two or three years or longer: when she only mates with a small number we get small colonies and small honey harvest. (Let's hope she had a good time with lots of males!)

In the last week or so, people have expressed concern that beekeepers may be at fault for the decline of the honey bee. How can we be blamed when we look after and keep them healthy and check their wellbeing over the course of the year? The honey we take is the surplus they make!

Honey available at Rogers Bakery – see you there!

We all saw how popular your observation hive was – not to mention the honey (and the bee masks!) Don't miss the bakery's 30 year celebration - see page 8.

ROGER'S BAKERY
30 YEARS
SEPT 1983 – 2013

Inviting all our friends and
customers
to help us celebrate
with a cheese & wine (and
bread) evening.

On forecourt of Bakery

SATURDAY 28TH SEPT.
7.00PM

MEPPERSHALL PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

The Parish Council meeting in July was on the 22nd, put back so as to reduce the gap between it and the next meeting in September. The 22nd was too late to include the report in this issue, so this meeting will be covered in the report on the Council's September meeting.

Housing Development and New Village Hall in Meppershall

1 - A Message From Meppershall Parish Council

In the near future, you will be able to study the proposals from Polehanger Farms Ltd and their developers, Bloor Homes Ltd. The Parish Council would like you to be very clear about where it stands. Basically, it stands on the sidelines. You might imagine that, as the lowest tier of local Government, the Council can dictate what happens with planning in Meppershall - that is not true; the Planning Authority is Central Bedfordshire Council, who will be conducting their usual consultation on this planning application if and when it is submitted. Anyone who believes that the housing development should not go ahead at all should contact CBC and make their views known. Your Parish Council will make sure that the dates of that consultation period are published within the village.

The planning regulations provide that there will be a 'planning gain' for the Village arising from the housing development. In so far as the Parish Council has an objective in this development, it is to do our best to make sure that this "planning gain" is used for the good of all Parishioners. The requirements to allow planning permission for the houses specify that funds will be provided for the benefit of the Village, and the PC has agreed with the Village Hall Charity that they will use the majority of these funds to build a new multi-purpose Community Centre, while the Parish Council will construct match-quality playing fields, changing rooms which will be part of the Centre, together with a Civic Burial Ground.

There is one area where the Parish Council is directly involved; it owns a parcel of land that will be used for the new Community Centre and part of the access road, i.e. the area known as Fosters Field. At a public exhibition in the Autumn, you will be able to see plans for the proposed development. This will require the Parish Council to lease the land to the Village Hall Charity, who will continue to own and operate the new Community Centre. The Council has debated extensively whether we should do that and we will be taking careful note of the comments and reactions of villagers at the exhibition. After that, the PC will decide whether or not to lease part of Foster's Field to the Village Hall Charity in exchange for a larger piece of the adjacent land, to

be provided by Polehanger Farms Ltd. This new Parish land will allow the new sports and play facilities shown at the exhibition to be constructed.

The Parish Council has no direct involvement with the housing development which will also be shown; that is entirely on land owned by Polehanger Farms Ltd.

At this exhibition, you will have the opportunity to complete a Parish Council questionnaire that will give you the opportunity to tell the Parish Council what you believe is good or bad about the proposals and if you would like to see any changes made to the plans. These will be fully reviewed and discussed by the Parish Council before it makes a final decision whether or not to enter into a contract with the Village Hall Charity and Polehanger Farms Ltd.

This will be your only formal opportunity to let your Councillors know what you think. Your opinion will be valued so please visit the exhibition and let us have your views.

Meppershall Parish Council

2 - The Evolution of the New Village Hall

The current Village Hall stands on land originally owned by my father, Michael Foster. That land was donated to the Village Hall Trustees at the time of construction in 1960.

During the 1990s, both Meppershall Parish Council (MPC) and the Village Hall Trustees (MVH) were in a number of conversations with Christine and me over the possibility of providing land in our ownership to facilitate extended recreation facilities and the construction of a new, larger Village Hall. However, this didn't overcome the major hurdle of the additional and substantial funding required for construction of a new hall. Various avenues were pursued but all fell short of those requirements.

In 1998/9 MVH, together with a developer, introduced the idea of building on an acre of our land to the west of the track and behind Hilltop View to raise funds for a new Village Hall. We were not convinced by that particular proposal and it went no further. We did continue discussions with MPC about the potential recreation land, and a quotation for drainage was commissioned together with a report from the Bedfordshire Playing Fields Association.

Between 2001 -2003 various letters and e-mails went to and fro saying that 'matters were moving on' or that 'matters were not moving on'. Problems with funding were the constant refrain.

In 2004 it all went quiet. Christine and I, however, remained keen to continue our family's long standing support of the village community. We hoped that whatever scheme might eventually develop, with any of our land that might be included, would be imaginative, long-lasting and having significant community benefit. Around the year 2006, two processes came together to give new momentum and progress to that concept. Mid Beds District Council (MBDC), as it still was then, began to develop its Local Development Framework (LDF), requesting Expressions of Interest: and MPC commissioned the Village Plan with a questionnaire sent to every household.

From the published results of the Plan, we began to see how a number of the stated objectives and desires of respondents could be caught up together with what we understood to be the increasingly urgent need to replace the ageing and original Village Hall, and the continuing desire for larger and more formal recreation facilities, especially football pitches. In particular we noted the following 'needs' highlighted: a new Village Hall; more sports facilities including changing rooms to enable the formation of local sports clubs; more bungalows, affordable homes and starter homes; a roadside footpath from Meppershall to Shefford; a satellite medical surgery in Meppershall.

Therefore, we started talking again with the Parish and District Councillors to try and develop a robust scheme in which we could combine most or all of those needs and overcome the difficulties experienced over the previous 12 years or so. It was recognised that if the area of Polehanger land between Hilltop View, the Fowlers Farm boundary, the track and the fall-line of Crackle Hill could be incorporated to develop a residential element, this would provide the significant funds needed to meet the overall objectives.

So, in consultation with MPC, we submitted a proposal to the MBDC LDF for councillors', officers' and eventually public scrutiny. The proposal went through all the stages culminating in being selected as a preferred site within the LDF. This was followed by the opportunity for objectors to submit their concerns to an independent Inspector. In 2011 the Inspector published his report on the LDF concluding that the whole process, including our proposal, was legal and sound; and accordingly, the Meppershall site received 'allocated status'.

Since that point, the three landowners concerned, namely Meppershall Parish Council, Meppershall Village Hall Trustees and Christine and I, as Polehanger Farms Ltd, have taken time to make sure that their respective interests will be protected and that the proposal will truly reflect the original ideas and objectives.

Chris Foster 10th July 2013

3 - Update from the Meppershall Village Hall Trustees and our planning for the future

Three years ago it was decided by Central Bedfordshire Council that house building should be allowed on the fields belonging to Polehanger Farms Ltd at the rear of the current Village Hall. This has given the trustees of the Village Hall, working together with both the Parish Council and Mr & Mrs Foster of Polehanger Farms, a unique opportunity to provide the new village hall, sports facilities and civic burial ground that the village needs now and for the future. Whilst the current hall has served Meppershall very well for many years, it is expensive to run and maintain, and inherently restricted in terms of both space and facilities.

We have carried out detailed research into the role that a village hall needs to fulfil in the 21st century, including visits to other similar community facilities, and we have worked with existing users and professional surveyors to create an agreed design that not only meets all of the aims and objectives which have been identified, but will provide one of the best community buildings around.

The proposed eco-friendly building will include a larger hall, stage and bar area, together with separate space for the pre-school, a separate smaller meeting room, changing rooms to Sport England guidelines, and a larger car park.

The hall and facilities will be built within the available financial resources without imposing additional burden on either fundraising or local taxes. The building has been designed to be more efficient to run than the current hall, and the increased and improved spaces will also allow for new and increased letting opportunities.

The new hall will be built on the Playing Field land owned by the Parish Council at the rear of the current hall, with the current site providing access to the development. There will continue to be a play area with equipment for all ages.

We are close to finalising the details of the agreement and lawyers will be addressing the legal documentation in the next few weeks. The detailed proposals and design will be the subject of a village exhibition to be held in the autumn. The proposals are naturally subject to formal planning permission, although early indications are that the proposed hall should receive a favourable response.

We have been mindful of our obligations as trustees of the charity that owns the land and runs the Village Hall, and in our view the proposals that will be showcased in the autumn will be entirely in keeping with those obligations and will provide the best provision for community facilities in Meppershall for the foreseeable future.

Meppershall Village Hall Trustees

JOIN THE BIKE AND HIKE IN 2013!

Saturday 14th September

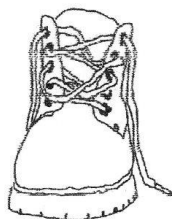
***Each year Meppershall enters a team for the
Beds & Herts 'Bike and Hike' – will you join us?***

On bikes or in walking shoes, each participant raises sponsorship based on the number of churches visited throughout the day. Almost **every church in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire is open** to sign your form and (often) to give you a drink! It's a beautiful way to see more of our local region and lose yourself in the great outdoors - all for a very worthy cause.

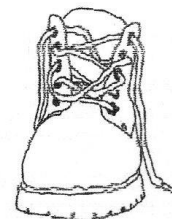


Beds & Herts Historic Churches Trust raises and manages money to help with the repair and restoration of churches and chapels across Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire – for more information go to www.bedshertshct.org.uk.

Walk to one or two neighbouring villages or spend the day covering the county, individually or in teams – it's up to you, and it is a great day out for all ages. For information:



**Call James on 857836
Email: meppershall.pcc@gmail.com**



YOUR SHOUT

with Trevor Thorley



BRENDA WRIGHT:

At a special Benefice Service in St. Mary's Church on Sunday 30th June, Rev. Roni Goodman thanked Brenda Wright as she retired after 10 years of unstinting work and devotion in her role as Church Warden. James Read presented Brenda on behalf of the community with a beautiful 'photo book' containing pictures of the church covering every aspect of St. Mary's architecture. Brenda was also presented with a cake made and decorated by Dawn, which she was invited to cut: "I haven't done this before" she said, with some amusement. Truly grateful and understandably with some emotion, Brenda thanked everyone for her lovely gift which she will treasure. She has retired as Church Warden but no doubt will continue in another role for a little while, helping out in the ever demanding running of the church.

Rev. Roni Goodman warmly welcomed the new Church Wardens, James Read and Dawn Abbatt, into their new roles of responsibility. Rev. Roni also paid tribute to all those who had worked so diligently during the interregnum to keep the church running, with particular reference to Church Wardens Brian Bellamy, now sadly deceased, Brenda, and also Pam Halliwell as Lay-Reader. The combined congregations of St. Mary's and St. Michaels were able to celebrate the occasion with a glass of wine and cake, plus a delicious lunch served by St. Mary's ladies.

KEITH BALL AND HIS JAZZMEN:

I am delighted to confirm that Keith Ball and his Jazzmen WILL be performing in St. Mary's Church, Meppershall. Keith took up the reins of his father's band following the death of Kenny Ball on 7th March this year. It was Kenny's wish that Keith should follow in his footsteps, and they are doing so with sell-outs everywhere they go. It will be a great privilege to welcome them to Meppershall. They are booked to come on Saturday 19th October, commencing at 7.30pm. There will be a bar, which will open at 7pm.

The theme of the evening will be a tribute to Kenny Ball with all the hits such as 'Midnight in Moscow', 'March of the Siamese Children', 'The Green Leaves of Summer', 'Sukiyaki'. 'So Do I'. 'Samantha', 'Jazz Band Ball', and much, much

more. They are travelling the length and breadth of the British Isles, with five concerts booked in Germany in August, and on the night before coming here, they have a gig in Clacton. It promises to be a unique and happy event for ALL jazz lovers. Meppershall is their only venue in Bedfordshire this year so we can expect a huge demand for tickets. Seats will be individually numbered and available from myself, Trevor, by telephone on: 01462 813357, trevor.thorley1@btinternet.com, and other trustees; tickets will be available from 1st September 2013. Please book early to avoid disappointment. It most certainly will be a night to remember and savour. Watch out for postal publicity in August with further details.

MEPPERSHALL SUMMER FAIR:

Congratulations to the organisers of this year's Summer Fair, it really does get better and better. The weather was glorious and the fly-past of the Red Arrows and the Hurricane was the icing on the cake...another fine example of putting Meppershall well and truly on the map.

REMEMBER IT IS YOUR SHOUT Call Trevor on 01462 813357 or email:
trevor.thorley1@btinternet.com

ARE YOU A GOOD NEIGHBOUR?

Of course you are, but would you consider widening your neighbourliness? If the answer to that is also "yes", come and meet some people of like mind in the Sugar Loaf on Tuesday 6th August at 2.30 pm. Under the auspices of the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity, this is a meeting to explore whether there would be support for a formal Good Neighbour group in Meppershall. The intention is to form a group of volunteers prepared to help folk out with odd tasks such as shopping, doctor's appointments, form filling, simple DIY (light bulb/fuse changing), dog walking etc. Schemes along these lines are already operating in other Bedfordshire villages. If you might be interested, come along on 6th August.

More details from Ms Rosie Kind on 01234 834936



Love for God, Life, Learning and for Each Other

Meppershall Church of England Academy

'An outstanding Church of England School' June 2008 and December 2010

School Report- July 2013

We are one week away from the end of another school year and I cannot believe how time has flown by! Yesterday I was sitting in the middle of the woods at Bromham camp site with our Year 4 class on their first ever camping trip and next week it will be their last day with us at Meppershall. I am sure they will take many happy memories of our school with them on their next step of their learning journey and



we all wish them every success for their future. Here they are with their special cake after their Leavers' Service. Thank you Reverend Roni for your inspirational speech, I'm sure it helped the children think about what they will carry with them at Middle school and in life.

We also say goodbye to some members of staff too. Miss Di Iorio leaves us to take up a promotion to the Senior Leadership Team of a slightly larger school. In her time with us she has worked very hard to qualify as a SENCO, coordinated our links with the Redborne School Sports Partnership and of course taught in our Early Years and Year 1 classes. We wish her the very best for her future career.

Two of our fixed term members of staff leave too, Mrs Skerman-Gray and Mrs Featherstone. They have contributed greatly to our school and we thank them for their hard work.

As you will see we now have a new logo to mark our conversion to an Academy. We have kept the 'Love for God, life, learning and each other' motto as this underpins everything we do at school.

Let's hope this lovely weather continues so as you go on your holidays you can relax in the sunshine.

With best wishes from us all for a happy Summer!

Lyn Fairweather, Headteacher



Meppershall Church of England Academy PTA would like to thank all those who supported our stall at the Summer Fair and just say how amazing we all thought the Fair was this year. Thank you to all those who organised it.

We mentioned in our last update that we would be organising a fashion show and we are pleased to say that we have managed to secure our date now and would like you all to join us on Saturday 12th October 2013. Tickets are £6.00 per adult and we will have a range of both ladies', men's and children's fashions available to buy. There will be refreshments and we hope that it will be a relaxing and enjoyable evening for all. Everyone in the village is invited to attend and nearer the time we will provide further information. It will be held in the village hall and start time will 7pm (TBC). All money raised will be to the school and we hope to be able to offer some great discounts on high street lables.

IF you would like tickets for the fashion show please contact the school, Kate or Millie who are members of the PTA.

It will soon be that time of year when we hold our Autumn Fayre and we would like to ask that you put the date on your calender and come and join us to experince our wonderful year 4 café and browse the ever growing variety of stalls.

The PTA is continuing to save for more lpads for the school, contirbute towards the christmas panto and enable the children to have new play equipment. We recently set up a free Film Club where on a number of evenings throughout the month the children come together and watch a film, eat popcorn and then write a film review. So far Film Club has been a huge success and the children are really enjoying it.

IMPORTANT DATES:

SATURDAY 12TH OCTOBER – FASHION SHOW (TICKETS NOW ON SALE)

SATURDAY 16TH NOVEMBER – AUTUMN FAYRE

If you would like to hold a stall at the fayre please contact Debbie Bavister on 814316, or if you or your company would like to donate a prize please let us know – we are grateful for all donations.

SHEFFORD LEISURE GROUP

By Enid Pamment



Our tour of the Kent countryside started when we were joined by our Guide who took us first to a pub in Higham for morning refreshments. We then boarded our coach for a tour of the Chalk Downs and vast vistas of marsh and estuary. The church where we stopped is no longer in use for worship, but is a tourist 'stop off' to see where Dickens set one of his best known scenes: the meeting between Pip and the convict at the start of Great Expectations. During our drive we passed a ruined castle with a house set in the grounds, which was the home of Jools Holland. We returned to the pub for a chicken lunch before boarding our coach for a short drive into Rochester. One of the most interesting places was the 'six poor travellers' house, an unusual survivor of an old form of English hospitality. One could also look around the Castle, the Guildhall or the Guildhall Museum and the Cathedral, or perhaps do a spot of shopping in one of the many speciality shops. There were several tea rooms where you could enjoy a cuppa before boarding the coach for home.

'Man-made wonders of the heart of Essex' promises to be another of our most interesting outings. It really is surprising what one can learn from these outings and the Guides are always first class. Places are still available, so why not join us on Thursday 15th August.

After many requests we have arranged a 'Tinsel and Turkey' break to take place at The Sands Hotel, Bournemouth. All rooms are en-suite, with entertainment each evening, a mulled wine reception and a visit from Santa – December 4th – 8th £156.00 per person covers coach and accommodation.

Forthcoming Events 2013 (Kindly telephone for details)

Man-made wonders at the heart of Essex	Thursday 15 th August
Amptill & District Lions Sing-along (FOC)	Tuesday 3 rd September
Centenary Floral Fanfare (NAFAS) - Central Hall, Westminster	Saturday 7 th September
HMS Belfast & the Cabinet War Rooms	Sat 21 st September
Lord Mayor's Show	Sat 9 th November

Ely Cathedral Christmas Gift and Food Fair	Saturday 16 th Nov
Thursford Christmas Spectacular	Wednesday 27 th Nov.

Holidays: 2013 (kindly telephone for more details)

Austria by Coach (overnight in Cologne), including 4 superb excursions.	18 th – 25 th August
Bournemouth, staying at The Sands Hotel for a Tinsel & Turkey break	4 th – 8 th December
Jersey – flying from Luton and staying at the Metropole Hotel on half-board basis	20 th -26 th April <u>2014</u>

London Shows currently available (arranged by Stevenage Group Travel) are:

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

RPO- Great Classic Grand Opera Gala – RAH Choice of front Arena or Front Circle seats	Sunday 27 th October
John Rutter Christmas Celebration – RAH – Arena & Mid Choir seats	Thursday 12 th December
Disney on Ice; O ² Arena – First Price Seats	Sunday 29 th December

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

From Here to Eternity – Shaftsbury Theatre - Royal Circle seats	Wednesday 9 th October
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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.

Enid Pamment – Shefford Leisure Group

FINANCIAL NEWS UPDATE

with Jon Ingarfil

YOUR FAMILY SHOULD INHERIT YOUR ESTATE – NOT PROBLEMS

Most of us don't want to think about dying, so it is perhaps no surprise to learn that 6 out of 10 British adults do not currently have a Will. It is easy to defer this crucial decision by thinking it can always wait for another day, but delay can prove costly.

Most of us will die leaving some sort of direction as to who should inherit our assets. What actually happens will depend on whether you have chosen to write a Will; if you haven't your assets will be dealt with according to the rules of intestacy, in which case the State will determine how your estate is divided up. This is unlikely to match your wishes.

Making a Will is crucial to protect the family from unnecessary anxiety and expense after you die. Only with a valid Will can you be certain that your estate will go to the right people. If you do not draw up a proper will, you run the risk of depriving your spouse or partner of their home, increasing their inheritance tax (IHT) burden and leaving parts of your estate in the wrong hands. One of the most common misconceptions is that if you do not have a Will, your nearest and dearest will decide how your assets are split. Sadly, this is not the case.

Not leaving a Will can also mean extensive legal costs for your beneficiaries; failing to provide for a partner or dependant will mean they will have to consult a lawyer to contest the State's decisions, with no guaranteed result. Complex cases can require a genealogy expert, at great cost, to clarify relatives' rights to your estate.

It is particularly important for unmarried couples to have a Will - an unmarried person will receive nothing if their partner dies intestate, regardless of how long they have lived together or whether they have children. (There was a time when you couldn't go past a bus shelter or stand on a railway station platform without seeing a poster for 'The Girl with a Dragon Tattoo', written by the late Stieg Larsson. But the Swedish author did not leave a Will, so when he died his considerable estate went to his father, rather than his partner of thirty years.

Source: www.guardian.co.uk November 2009).

There is an old saying in the legal profession: "Where there is a Will there is an argument; or better still, litigation". This does not mean that there is no point in making a Will; it simply refers to the fact that many Wills contain elementary mistakes. These mistakes may mean disgruntled relatives can challenge the Will after your death, generating more work - and fees - for the legal

profession, so seeking professional advice at the outset is always the most sensible approach.

Many people opt for a so-called do-it-yourself Will, on a form which can cost as little as £10 from your local supermarket. Not surprisingly, many people who opt for the DIY route make basic errors: something as simple as naming someone in the Will by a shortened name may create later problems when the Will does not match the name that appears on their birth certificate. Such errors can be costly, both financially and emotionally.

Arranging for a Will to be drawn up is relatively straightforward and, in most cases, should not take much more than an hour or two. A Will needs to be accurate, unambiguous and comprehensive. Arranging a Will which specifically sets out your wishes will give you the certainty that your assets will be passed to your intended recipients. Importantly, if there is any change in circumstances once the Will has been drawn up, for example if you divorce, have more children, or your financial situation changes, then your Will must be updated accordingly.

In addition to writing the Will, you will need to appoint executors to make sure your wishes are carried out properly after your death. It is advisable to appoint more than one executor and ideally both should be younger than you. If you have children who are under the age of 18 then you should also nominate a Legal Guardian in your Will to look after your children. Whilst it is extremely unlikely both parents will die at the same time, it is wise to have arrangements in place. Some people may also want to specify their funeral arrangements, to reflect their wishes and to take into account religious beliefs.

Bereavement is a distressing time so it is crucial to do all that you can to ease the upset and worry for your survivors. Seeking specialist legal advice when arranging your Will, is one, if not the most important aspects of estate planning.

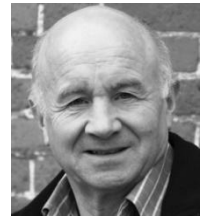
Jon Ingarfill 07870564115

Email: jon.ingarfill@sjpp.co.uk, website: www.joningarfill.co.uk

Welcome back Jon! From now on, Jon will alternate with Paul Savuto in providing this column - Ed

POLEHANGER: A FARMING DIARY

Episode 45



Harvest Prequel

Following my upbeat comments last issue, we now have done all we can to influence this harvest's yield. Final fungicide was sprayed to protect the wheat ears in the second half of June. The crop is likely to be a little later than average to harvest date. Until then it will ideally need plenty of sunshine and no torrential thunderstorm rain that can flatten the crop. This then makes the ear difficult for the combine to pick up from near ground level and consequently straw remains long and rooted in the ground rather than cut and chopped, presenting potential blockages to cultivating equipment.

A high yield is only a good yield once it is safely in the barn!

Blackgrass patches are showing above the crop canopy. It is potentially a very aggressive competitor and not cheap to control. The dreadful Autumn weather meant that control was not as good as it should have been. These patches will be noted for particular attention in the Autumn. One seed head can produce 200 seeds!

Footpaths and Conservation

On 20th June we hosted an evening walk for The Council for the Protection of Rural England; or CPRE for short! Having met up at Polehanger, we walked to the top of Crackle Hill, down to Woodhall Farm and along the river bank before diverting into the riverside plantation to return to the farm. The contrast between mature woodland, open hills and fields, and then the river-side grass and trees was an 'eye-opener' to those on the walk who didn't know the area. More than one remarked that they didn't know Bedfordshire could be as varied as that within such a short distance!

You may recall that we have put 6 metre grass margins on the edge of fields where there is a ditch. As well as developing wild life corridors and insect 'sanctuaries' this prevents chemical spray and fertilizer from accidentally drifting or leaching into the watercourses and thus carried down to rivers. When these margins were established, we tried to incorporate wild flowers into them but the vigorous growth of the grasses has suppressed most of the flowers.

Next year we will try and see if we can re-establish some flowers by altering the cutting dates of the grass (which are controlled by Natural England who 'police' the grant payments for the Entry Level Scheme of conservation measures) and planting additional flower seed.

Motorbikes continue to be a nuisance on our tracks and paths from time to time, usually at weekends. I think I have mentioned before that we never give permission for motor bike access and would encourage walkers to point this out explicitly to riders if you come across them!

Future of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

After almost two years of negotiating, the EU has finally reached agreement on the way forward. With 28 member states (Croatia joined on 1st July) and 3 layers of officials and Ministers it is a wonder that this ever happened, even if much compromise was needed.

The budget has been cut, 'greening' (environmental measures) will be compulsory and member states have been given the freedom to tailor and deliver changes to their individual needs within certain parameters.

That should be a good thing except that our DEFRA minister, Owen Patterson, has signalled his intention to 'disadvantage' English farmers in comparison with our counterparts on the continent. He intends to transfer 15% of the direct payments into higher environmental standards and rural development projects. This is not a bad thing in itself, but other EU members have signalled that they will transfer monies into direct payments (not out), thus putting them at a competitive advantage in what is now a global marketplace.

I would much rather we could operate in a subsidy free market but whilst we don't we should be able to compete on a level playing field!

Do subsidies distort markets or underpin strategic industries?

Or do you think this farmer 'doth protest too much'?

Michael Foster's Diary, August 1963 (*Italics = my comment*)

Saturday 3rd. To Luton airport to inspect 1000 bales of hay made on the airfield. It would be a good buy if there is no more rain to come: but it started whilst up there and continued all day

Tuesday 6th. Rogueing (*pulling up*) Wild Oats; (*an aggressive arable weed if not controlled.*)

Wednesday 14th. Went to Northampton with 9 members of the Sunday School cricket team to watch match against West Indies. Play delayed by rain until 1pm (*Fieldwork on farm delayed all day!*)

Friday 23rd. Start combining with Winter Oats behind Crackle Hill Rd. Some over-ripe and shelling out on the floor and some under ripe and still soft. Estimate third to half of crop lost. (*This was probably 10 days later than average and consequently put pressure on the rest of the harvest as days get shorter and morning dews get heavier.*)

Chris Foster: 10th July 2013

LIFE ON THE WILD SIDE

By JEREMY HOLDEN



Ascension Island

Locating Ascension Island on Google Earth without first typing in a coordinate is almost impossible. Like a cake crumb on a huge blue bedspread, it is tiny point lost in the wilderness – in this case the vastness of the South Atlantic. The nearest mainland is over a thousand miles in any direction. It lies almost equidistant between the coasts of Brazil in South America and Angola in Africa, and is a nine- hour flight from RAF Brize Norton in Oxfordshire. But it is not quite alone. It shares the ocean with two siblings: its older sister St Helena – famous for being the place Napoleon was incarcerated – and its bigger brother Tristan Da Cunha – whose claim to fame is being the "remotest populated archipelago" on earth.

Ascension is the smallest of the three. It is so small (only 35 square miles) and lies so far from any mainland that it seems amazing that it was discovered so early. The Portuguese stopped there in the early 16th Century, and within a couple of hundred years it was an important stopover for British ships plying the trade route to India. These early mariners brought the usual vermin responsible for so many island extinctions: rats and cats and goats. There wasn't much for goats to feed on as Ascension is a relatively recent volcanic cinder cone and is almost barren. The rats and cats had a better deal. Huge colonies of seabirds once covered the volcanic lava flows and were easy pickings. The birds are now long gone, but the remains of the colonies can still be seen as a spectral white stain on the otherwise black lava. They are known locally as the 'ghost colonies'.

By the end of the 19th Century both Ascension's endemic birds were gone from the mainland: the flightless Ascension crane became extinct, while the frigate bird was extirpated. Luckily for the Ascension frigate bird – which is found nowhere else – there was one small rock offshore where they could breed in safety. Known as Boatswain Bird Island, it is no more than a chunk of rock, undercut by the rough swell and stained white by guano and the dust from generations of bird bones and eggshells. The frigate birds laid claim to Boatswain Bird Island and it has been their saviour.

As with many small isolated islands, conservation work has started with the removal of destructive alien species. Feral cats are no longer tolerated on Ascension (they were eradicated in 2006) and as a consequence in Spring 2013, when I visited, I saw a single frigate bird chick on a bare cliff above the pounding surf. It was the first mainland-born chick in over a century. By next year there will undoubtedly be more as the squabbling Boatswain Bird Island residents realise there is plenty of empty real estate on the mainland.

Although Fauna & Flora International (the conservation NGO I work with) has no projects on Ascension, they do similar work in the Caribbean, removing vermin species. This seemed enough of a reason to put together a small gallery of photographs I took while I was there. These can be seen on the FFI website: <http://www.fauna-flora.org/the-stunning-seabirds-of-ascension/>.



The Ascension Island Frigate Bird

It is well worth clicking on the above web site to see the range of birds and other fauna that Jeremy has put with this piece. - Ed

THE LUCY PAGES

By Lucy Standbridge

Aged 11



For my article I have written about this year's Meppershall Summer Fair. I have interviewed members of the committee, stall holders and members of the public who went to the Fair.

First I asked the people who went to the Fair about the time they had there. I asked them why they had come to the Fair and Liberty Simpkins (age 12) came because she lives down the road, Niki Thomason came to support the village and for a great day out, Neve Moan (age 10, who came from Barton) came because she comes most years with her friend; and Dylan Roberts (age 3½) came to see the Red Arrows fly past. He also loved the motorbikes and bouncy castles; Liberty liked the bungee jumping and also a toy stall because "there are lots of cool things like aliens". Niki loved the chocolate tombola because she loves chocolate and Neve liked the bakery's honey stall. The arena events were also super; Neve liked the dog agility and Niki said "the Meppershall Players flying display was really good and very funny!" I'm glad Niki enjoyed the display because I was part of it!

Then I interviewed 3 stall holders. Sue Thomas, who is from Luton, was selling her knitting work and her cards. It was her 4th year of selling her work there. Sue's favourite stall was the handbag stall and she also liked the tea and cake tent. Jemma Dalton (age 7) was running her own stall which was a teddy and toy tombola to help her mum (Karen Dalton) buy things for her new baby brother, Liam. The Meppershall Brownies held a tombola to raise money for the village Brownies so they can go on outings. There are 23 girls who attend every Monday night 6 to 7:30pm. Last year the Brownies went swimming with the money they raised.

Finally, I interviewed two members of the Summer Fair Committee, Alison Roberts and Mike Till. Alison has been on the committee a long time! She takes the minutes of the meetings, recording what's been discussed, agreed or declined and notes what everyone says.

Mike is the chairman of the committee and keeps the others focused. The committee met once in the three months before last Christmas, and then after Christmas once a month until June and then they had fortnightly meetings. The night before the Fair they were up on the field marking the stall spaces and on the day Mike was up there at 7:30am and other committee members came at 8am to make sure they were ready and had everything they needed. The expenses of the Fair were for marquees, printing, raffle tickets, programmes, the events licence, St John's Ambulance and more. The committee contacted local businesses to see if they wanted to advertise in the programme. The village hall is a charity so the money raised from things like programmes and raffle tickets will go to the village hall to buy new furniture. This year was the biggest Fair yet. Apart from the beer tent, tea tent, lifestyle tent and the fairground attractions there were 41 other stalls.

One of the main attractions to this year's Summer Fair was the fly-past of the Red Arrows. The committee had written to them for 5 years running and as Mike said "It was our lucky year"; they didn't know until early June that the Red Arrows would be flying over on their way from Brize Norton. The committee's aim this year was to have a bigger, better and more memorable fair and they say thank you to everyone who helped them to achieve that. Mike said "anybody with new ideas for the Fair can come and join us on the 23rd October at the Sugar Loaf".

I was at the Fair all day because I was with the Meppershall Players. My favourite type of stall was tombola. It was nice to see so many people of all ages from babies to the elderly and all of them enjoying the Fair. We were really lucky with the weather: it stayed warm and dry. There were quite a lot of people. I saw many people who live in the village and there were quite a few from other places. I had a great day and I'm sure everyone who went did too.

CALENDAR OF MEPPERSHALL EVENTS

August 2013

Saturday 3rd		
Karen's Karaoke	8.00 pm	Meppershall Social Club
Monday 5th		
Orchard Children's Centre Toddler & Baby Freeplay	1.00 – 2.30 pm	Foster's Field
Tuesday 6th		
Good Neighbour meeting	2.30 pm	The Sugar Loaf
Friday 15th		
Film on Friday - Quartet	2.00 pm	Shefford Baptist Church
Wednesday 28th		
Orchard Children's Centre Toddler & Baby Freeplay	10.00 - 12.00	Foster's Field

September 2013

Sunday 1st September		
Gift Sunday	1.00 – 5.00 pm	St Mary's Church
Monday 9th September		
Parish Council Meeting	7.45 pm	Village Hall
Saturday 14th September		
Bike and Hike	All Day	Any Church in Herts & Beds
Saturday 21st September		
Charity Quiz Night with Ploughman's Supper	7.30 for 8.00 pm	Village Hall
Saturday 28th		
Bread, Cheese & wine	7.00 pm	Rogers Bakery

October 2013

Saturday 12th		
PTA Fashion Show	7.00 pm (TBC)	Village Hall
Saturday 19th		
Brownies' Table-top Sale	2.00 – 5.00 pm	Village Hall
Keith Ball & his Jazzmen	7.00 for 7.30 pm	St Mary's Church
Saturday 26th		
Elvis Night		Meppershall Social Club

PUZZLE PAGE**Su Doku 105**

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

Su Doku 106

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

(Solutions on page 31 – with thanks to Paul Smith)

MEPPERSHALL SOCIAL CLUB

WANTED

Darts and dominoes players for leagues starting in September. Darts matches are played on Tuesday evenings and Dominoes are played on a Thursday evening. For more information or to sign up, pop into the club or call Gemma on 07968529282.

1st Monday

Games Night

Cards, dominoes, board games
Challenge a friend to a game over a drink

2nd Sunday

Quiz Night

Quiz Master Paul Carne at 7:30 pm
£1 per person. No Maximum Team size
Half money taken will be 1st prize, the rest will go to Keech Cottage

3rd Wednesday

Food Night

Food served at 7.00 – 8.30: £3 per person
Tickets available from the bar or by calling Gemma on 07968 529282

NO FOOD NIGHT IN AUGUST

September will be Chicken Curry, served with rice & Naan bread

Saturday 3rd August Karen Karaoke 8.00 'til late – in the bar area

Saturday 21st September

Quiz with Ploughman's Supper in aid of Cancer Research
7.30 for 8.00 pm sharp start. £4.00 per person – max team = 6.
To book a table call Gemma on 07968 529282

Saturday 26th October

Elvis Night

8.00 pm till late
Members £3 each, Non Members £5. Includes buffet
Tickets on sale from 1st September

Solution to Su Doku 105

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

Solution to Su Doku 106

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

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

I apologise for mentioning the word Christmas in the title above, but as the next edition of the Messenger will not land on doormats until October, I thought it was worth reminding people that Meppershall Brownies will be taking part in Operation Christmas Child again this autumn.

Every year Operation Christmas Child sends over a million shoe boxes from the UK to children in hospitals, orphanages, homeless shelters and poor communities in other countries. The shoe box is often the only Christmas present the children will receive.

Last year Meppershall Brownies sent over 120 shoe boxes to children in Africa and you can see below the brownies holding just a few of them.

What do we do:

- We collect empty shoe boxes
- We cover them with Christmas wrapping paper
- We sort the toys and clothes donated into age groups and suitable for a girl or boy
- We fill the shoe boxes with donated items
- We include a Christmas card from the brownies
- We donate £2.50 per box to cover the transportation costs
- Boxes are collected by the Samaritans and transported to the children
- We receive an email back telling us where our boxes went to.



We would therefore be really grateful of any donations of shoe boxes, wrapping paper and items for the shoe boxes, such as small children's' toys, jewellery, hats, gloves, stationery, toothpaste, toothbrushes and soap.

We also need to raise money to send the shoe boxes and we are holding a tabletop sale, craft event and games afternoon at the village hall from 2 pm to 5 pm on Saturday 19th October 2013. If you would like a table at the sale please contact Gemma on 07968 529282.

We also plan to hold a supper evening in October where the brownies, as part of their hostess badge activities, will prepare and serve a dinner and provide entertainment.

Please contact Snowy Owl (Suzanne) on 07817 392325 if you have items you would like to donate for the shoe boxes or the table top sale.



Henlow Church of England Academy



30 pupils from Henlow Church of England Academy were invited to participate this year in the E2BN conference. E2BN supply broadband connectivity and online resources to schools in the East of England, and their annual conference provides an opportunity for teachers and ICT staff in schools to see a range of products from ICT suppliers throughout the country.

Our pupils (15 on each day) were able to look at, and in many cases use, many of these products. They were particularly impressed with the 3D printer, and most of them took away an example of an item produced on this. “The 3D printer was the coolest thing there,” said one pupil. “We think we should definitely have one at Henlow!” They also tested a printer powered by a bicycle, which they thought would be fantastic for our link school in Utange, Kenya.

Several pupils had the opportunity to interview celebrities attending the conference. Lord Jim Knight told them about his work in the House of Lords, and Maggie Philbin was very informative about her interest in ICT, particularly for young people. Six of our pupils also gave a presentation to the conference about their current ICT unit, Shakespeare’s Agent, for which they have used E2BN resources.

Pupils demonstrated some of the online resources produced by E2BN, including their Picture Teller and Making the News applications, both of which are available for students to use in and out of school. They wrote articles about items they had seen and people they had interviewed, and these can be seen online at <http://mtn2.e2bn.org/mtn/school/view/35> and [http://tools.e2bn.org/pictureteller/player/player.swf?xml_name=09astone%203d printer ash and joe](http://tools.e2bn.org/pictureteller/player/player.swf?xml_name=09astone%203d%20printer%20ash%20and%20joe)

The pupils themselves thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and came away with many experiences and ideas to share with their peers. Congratulations to all involved.




JazzCo.
JAZZ AGENCY
presents

Keith Ball and his Jazzmen

a tribute to Kenny Ball

ALL THE HITS!

Midnight In Moscow
March Of The Siamese Children
The Green Leaves Of Summer
Sukiyaki
So Do I
Samantha
Jazz Band Ball
+ much more

St. Mary's Church, Meppershall, SG17 5NA
Saturday, October 19 at 7.30pm. Bar open from 7pm.
Tickets on sale from September 1
01462 813357 trevor.thorley1@btinternet.com

08450 008007

www.jazzco.co.uk

FILM REVIEW

By Carlie Newman

Following on from the first Despicable Me we find Gru (voiced by Steve Carell), who was once evil, but is now a kindly family man looking after his three sweet little girls, Edith, Margo and Agnes in DESPICABLE ME 2 in 3D (cert. U 1hr. 38mins.). Aided by his very funny little creatures the Minions, Gru has left his life of crime.



But just as he is settling into his new proper life as a family man, he is recruited into an ultra-secret organisation dedicated to fighting evil around the globe. Agent Lucy Wilde (Kristen Wiig) comes to get him and together they set out to discover who has the special serum which could destroy mankind. Gru and his partner meet with various strange and hilarious characters in their quest to save the world. A host of good actors, including a number of Brits voice these characters.

Ken Jeong voices Floyd Eagle-san, proprietor of the local hair replacement club for men and a key suspect in this despicable crime. Steve Coogan is Silas Ramsbottom, Lucy's boss in the Anti-Villain League and a superspy whose surname offers an endless source of amusement to the Minions; Moises Arias plays Antonio (the young lad who captures the heart of Margo); and Benjamin Bratt is Antonio's father, owner of Salsa & Salsa restaurant, and is also the big villain known as El Macho. Dr Nefario who moves from working with Gru to the other side is played by Russell Brand.

As with the first film this is directed by Chris Renaud and Pierre Coffin. They make good use of the 3D format and have managed to create a film as funny and with as lovable characters as the first film. It is well-written and amusing. Go and see it at one of your local cinemas. Great outing for the whole family!



The Meppershall Players



It's no good, I can't start the Players bit without mentioning the Meppershall Summer Fair. It was amazing - so much to see and do for all ages. I personally want to say a big "thank you" to all those involved in the organisation and smooth running of the event; I particularly liked the placing of our stall close to the Shefford Town Band, who played beautifully (big hint for placing us near them again next year). Well done to Les and co for providing the marvellous sound system (thank you for getting our music to work, Les) which was enhanced by the dulcet tones of our very own Mr Mick Trundle.

Thank you for all the kind comments we have received for our arena display; apart from the odd case of altitude sickness, the Players Flying Corps are all fine, but would like hang up their wings and try something different for next year's Fair. If you have any ideas please let us know.

Now back to the serious business of this year's Pantomime, 'Sleeping Beauty'. This is now cast (Oh no it isn't) Oh yes it is! Rehearsals start in September, until then we will be set painting, making costumes, props etc. on our Wednesday evenings, so if you have an artistic streak or an urge to make things with sticky back plastic, cardboard and sellotape (otherwise known as BPS - Blue Peter Syndrome) come along and join in.

The dates of this year's Pantomime are as follows:

Fri 29th Nov, 7.45pm; Sat 30th Nov, 3pm & 7.45pm

Fri 6th Dec, 7.45pm; Sat 7th Dec, 3pm & 7.45pm

Ticket Prices are: Matinees £6, Concessions £5; Evenings £7, Concessions £6.

Last night £9 - no Concessions.

Concessions are Senior Citizens and Children 16 years and under.

Tickets will be on sale at Roger's Bakery from 18th September.

The Players will be having their annual Summer break of two weeks so there will be no meeting on August 14th & 21st, but it will be business as usual from Wednesday 28th onwards.

We are still looking for a pianist to play our electric piano, which you may have seen in full use at the Meppershall Music Festival back in May. The Players are

looking to perform a VE/VJ musical/variety show, which requires a lot of songs from the era. You don't have to decide now - you have a whole sixteen months to decide, but please give it some serious thought. We could do it with backing tracks but it wouldn't have the same effect.

This is addressed to all you DIY enthusiasts: we will be performing a two or three act play next Spring, and we have all the flats and doors to construct for rooms of our choosing, we just need people with the know-how to screw them all in to place securely (they mustn't move at all). So if you think you might like to have a go but you're not sure, take your time, mull it over, we start the Spring production the second Wednesday in January, hope to see you there.

Advertising! Would you like to advertise in the Players' Programme? For a small donation you can place an advert in our programme for the next two years. If you are interested please e-mail Claire Piller, our Programme Co-ordinator at clairepiller1@hotmail.co.uk

The Players are trying to access their old website but unfortunately it was set up so long ago that the password has been forgotten, temporarily (we hope). Rather than keep opening websites right left and centre the Meppershall Players do have their own page on facebook, which will be updated on the first Monday of every month.

Do you Like Karaoke? The Meppershall Social Club has Karen's Karaoke on Saturday 3rd August 8pm till late, in the Social Club area at the Village Hall. Lots of tracks, lyrics displayed on a large screen; a fun evening out in a friendly atmosphere.

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

Karen Mitchell (Players Chairman) 01462 816336

Meppershall Garden Club

Recent meetings have included various hints & tips on planting. One such tip came from correspondence between one of our members, Viv Harvey, of The Messenger 'Top Tasks' fame, and Alan Gray of East Ruston Old Vicarage Garden. He confirmed the advice given in Gardening Which, that newly planted perennials should be gently 'puddled in' rather than the ground around them being firmed down. This prevents air gaps round roots. This treatment works equally well with perennials that are moved whilst in flower. If you want to know more do contact us.

Activities:

We had a wonderful day on our stall at the Meppershall Summer Fair. Attendance was great and we sold many of our flowering plants, herbs and vegetables. Here is a photograph of Sarah Till and Linda Parker on the stall.



One of our members, Sarah Till, recently visited Easton Walled Garden. Sarah highly recommends visiting this garden and has kindly agreed to tell us more about it in the next issue of the Messenger – thank you, Sarah.

As I write this I am taking a break from weeding - the sunshine is glorious, but it does mean a lot of watering and with that come the weeds!

Hope you are enjoying the sunshine too – assuming it is still with us when you read this!

Take care,
Kim.

If you are interested in joining the MGC do contact us.

Linda Parker	01462 815114 or
Kim Lee Tyler	01462 811750 or
Sarah Till	01462 817176 or
e-mail at: meppershallgardenclub@hotmail.co.uk	

11 Top Gardening Tasks for August/September

1. Ordering and buying autumn bulbs early means you get the best choice and healthy specimens. Catalogues have a wider variety than garden centres.
2. Continue to dead head, especially roses and annuals.
3. Feed late flowering plants such as asters and dahlias, using the same feed you give your tomatoes.
4. Prune ramblers and climbing roses that have flowered once in early summer. Cut some of the oldest branches to ground level, to encourage new shoots.
5. Harvest onions, early apples, and keep picking beans, peas, cucumbers and courgettes, or they will stop cropping.
6. Remove the tops of outdoor tomatoes after 4 trusses have set. In the greenhouse, stop tomatoes as they reach the roof, but keep feeding them.
7. Later: keep an eye on the weather forecast in case of cold nights. Tender plants might need some protection.
8. Take cuttings of tender plants like pelargoniums and fuchsias, into September.
9. Divide spring-flowering hardy perennials, and re-plant. Also plant new ones whilst the soil is still warm.
10. Plant the bulbs you ordered in August. Lilies, Alliums and Daffodils will especially like getting their roots down before autumn sets in.
11. Hoe weeds that still appear in September. If we ever get a fine dry morning this is the best time to do it, before you sit down with a cup of coffee and admire the results of your hard work. This activity is also good for your waistline (the hoeing, not the sitting down!)

BEASTS: Watch out for:

Black spot on roses. Damp days create the perfect conditions for this fungus. Pick up infected leaves, but do not compost them.

Potato and tomato blight can become a problem if late summer turns wet.

Clematis wilt can cause the plants to collapse quickly. There is no chemical cure, but try cutting all affected stems down to the ground, and new ones might grow in their place. Planting very deep can help prevent this devastating disease.

Slugs and snails seem to be finding it a perfect summer. Encouraging birds and hedgehogs into the garden helps - and this is safer for pets than chemicals.

Vine weevils, or more accurately their grubs, can cause pot plants to die. Always use fresh potting compost when making up your autumn pots.

BEAUTIES: Enjoy in flower:

Bulbs and Perennials: Agapanthus, Crocosmia, Dahlias, Evening Primrose and later on: Anemone japonica, Amaryllis, Cyclamen hederifolium, Aster, Red Hot Pokers, Chrysanthemum and Rudbeckia

Shrubs: Buddleia, Fuchsia, Hydrangea, Roses, Clematis, and towards the end of summer the less well-known but easy and wonderfully fragrant, ABELIA, which has been hardy in Meppershall for at least the last two cold winters

Contributed by Viv Harvey

Meppershall Summer Fair

WOW!

Thank you to all of you for supporting this village event. Entertainment, activities and interests for everyone – not to mention the TWO fly-pasts!

A huge thank you to Linda Primett for persevering for the last four years with her requests for a fly-past; it just goes to show 'everything comes to (s)he who waits'!

We could not have done it without all of the committee, who willingly gave their time to make this year's Fair such a day to remember.



Committee members pictured above, (left to right):
Mike Till (Chair), James Read, Steve Ansell, Graham Jones, Kim Tyler, Steve Gibbs, Marcia Bairstow, Linda Primett, Linda Parker, Alison Roberts.

Thank you to The Messenger for creating a picture supplement of this special day and to all of you who have shared your wonderful images with us. This is what makes it a Village event.

Kim Tyler, on behalf of the Summer Fair Committee

- ♦ How can we improve? If you have any thoughts please let us know.
- ♦ Can you help? Even if you can only spare an hour or two on the day of the fair next year please let us know.
- ♦ If you would like to join us with your ideas why not join our committee? Come to our meeting on Wednesday 23rd October in The Sugar Loaf.

♦ **Don't Delay – Act Today!**

We are *already* starting to plan for next year's event

We can be contacted through Linda Primett at the Village Stores or, if you prefer, you can email us on kim@randall-tyler.org.uk

'SCRUFFS' 2013 RESULTS

Class 1: Prettiest bitch
Lola (*Akita/Husky*)
Mathew Clarke

Monty-Simon (*Yorkshire Terrier*)
Rita Webb

Class 2: Most Handsome Dog
Teddy (*German Shepherd*)
Eileen Chapman

Class 5: The Dog the Judge would
like most to take home:
Bailey (*Crossbreed*)
Chloe and Alex Thorne

Class 3: Dog with the Waggiest Tail
Parsley (*King Charles Spaniel*)
D Gray

BEST IN SHOW

Lola, Winner of Prettiest Bitch class

Class 4: Veteran over 9yrs:

Letter from Jean Holden:

Once again I should like to say a big "Thank You" to the village friends who came along with their most colourful and beautiful MGs.

Our display was even bigger and, I am pleased to say, mostly Meppershall cars: eleven MGs and five others, not forgetting young George with his little car, which is a great attraction for dads and kids.

Thanks also to the many willing workers who give many hours to make a bigger and better show each year. What next?

Jean Holden

Local Attractions for the Kids this Summer – By Ed Kingham

Shuttleworth Collection

This world renowned collection of flying aeroplanes is well worth a visit for anyone with an interest in history or aviation. The Collection houses roughly fifty aircraft, most of which are in flying condition and are regularly flown throughout the summer months. Prices may be higher on flying days.



See the website www.shuttleworth.org for more information.

Prices: Adults £12.00, Seniors £10.00, Accompanied Children (under 16) Free

Opening Times: 9:30 – 5:00

Journey Time: 15 mins from Meppershall

Rowney Warren

Rowney Warren is part of Ampthill Forest and is an ideal place for walking and cycling. It is owned by the Forestry Commission and parking and entrance are free. There are various trails for cyclists of all abilities on the North side of the wood, while the South side is for walkers only.

Opening Times:

The main car park in Sandy Lane closes at 7:00pm but there is a small area for parking which remains open at all times.

Journey Time: 5 mins from Meppershall

Fairlands Valley Park

Fairlands Valley Park in Stevenage is a great place to spend a sunny day. With boats, a climbing wall, grass sledging, a high ropes course and various walks around the lake and surrounding area, there should be something for everyone. See the website www.stevenage-leisure.co.uk for more information.



Picture credit:
www.information-britain.co.uk

Prices:

Vary according to activity; entrance to the park is free.

Journey Time: 30 mins from Meppershall

Woburn Safari Park

Woburn Safari Park is a great way to get up close to wild animals with a drive-through safari and numerous displays, talks and opportunities to see the animals at feeding time throughout the day.

Prices: Adults £19.99, Seniors £17.99, Children (3-15) £14.99. Children under 3 Free

Opening Times: 10:00 – 6:00 (last entry at 5:00)

Journey Time: 30 mins from Meppershall



Picture credit:
www.woburn.co.uk

RSPB The Lodge, Sandy

The RSPB reserve at Sandy has five miles of walking trails with some suitable for pushchairs and wheelchairs. Over the summer, you could see: greater spotted woodpeckers, green woodpeckers, hobbies, chiffchaffs and nuthatches.

There is also an Iron Age fort on Galley Hill that you can walk around, and where many ancient artefacts have been discovered.

There are numerous events and activities taking place throughout the summer, see the website www.rspb.org.uk and click on “Reserves” to find out more.

Prices: Non-RSPB members £4 per vehicle, RSPB members free

Opening Times: 7:00 – 9:00 (shop 9:00-5:00 weekdays, 10:00-5:00 weekends and bank holidays)

Journey Time: 20 mins from Meppershall



Green Woodpecker
Picture credit: RSPB

The research as well as the writing for this item was done by the latest addition to our team, Eddie Kingham.

We hope that parents looking for something to entertain children in the school holiday will find at least one idea here that they can use - Ed.



St Mary's Gift Sunday

Featuring the famous Teddy bear abseiling!

Refreshments from our lovely new kitchen!

And much more fun and games.

Save the date: Sunday 1st September 1-5pm
Watch this space for more details



Parents, Grandparents, & Childminders are all welcome.

We have all thoroughly enjoyed the summer term. What with messy play, parties, music entertainers, a trip to Standalone Farm, it has been a busy year so far. Not forgetting the hugely successful Stay 'n' Play at this year's local Summer Fair on 29th June.



Thank you to everyone who helps to make the sessions run so smoothly, and the committee who meet up and think of all the new ideas. It would not work without you. Meppershall Tots are meeting at Letchworth water park on 12th August from 1:30 onwards if you would like to join us. If not please do come along in September and see what we are all about. We will also be running a few free sessions with Shefford Orchard Centre in 2013/14. We start back on 10th September. In the meantime have a great summer!

Come and join the fun at Meppershall Village Hall

Every Tuesday in term time from 1:30 till 3pm.

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

FIRST VISIT FREE - MAX ENTRY £2 (EXC. PARTIES)

Craft, drink & snack included each week

Look for Meppershall Tots on facebook, or e-mail meppershalltots@hotmail.co.uk

Please ring Debbie on 07713 627376 for more information

NOTICE BOARD

For sale: Garage door, £150 ONO

Hormann, white steel, up and over, pristine condition.

Door: height 197cm (6'6") x width 210cm (6'11").

Frame: height 205cm (6'9") x width 229cm (7'6").

Contact Albane: 07792 557121

Films on Friday!

Do you enjoy a good film, but have found it expensive or difficult to get out to see one at the cinema? Well, here is a solution: why not come to 'Films on Friday!' at Shefford Baptist Church?

We held our first event back in June, and the date for the next film is Friday August 16th, at 2p.m. The film is 'Quartet', a comedy set in the fictional Beecham House for Retired Musicians, and has as its main characters four opera singers, played by Pauline Collins, Billy Connolly, Tom Courtenay & Maggie Smith. This is lovely, gentle, 'feel-good' film, yes, with the music, but also humour & romance. So why not come along & watch this film? Entrance is **FREE**, and there is tea & coffee provided afterwards!

Just as a preview, our 'Films on Friday!' for October is scheduled to be 'Les Misérables!'. More in the next issue of The Messenger.

The Orchard Children's Centre will be running a summer toddler and baby free play session in the Meppershall Park (Fosters Field) on Monday 5th August from 1pm to 2.30pm and on Wednesday 28th August from 10am to 12 noon. Both sessions are open to all parents, grandparents and carers and are free of charge. Furthermore, the session on Wednesday 28th August will be also attended by a speech and language therapist who will be there to answer parents' questions.



Ponderings

Reflecting over an extremely busy summer term, the children have grown up so much and have particularly enjoyed music, making camps, story-time, playing on the ride-ons, group craft activities, cooking, or their trips to the 'Mini Diggers' allotment. We now have lots of flowers and vegetables that will need watering over the summer, so if you are ever walking past the allotments please do look out for the 'Mini Diggers' sign and water away. We are right next to the tap☺

The staff have worked extremely hard so far this year. We have an incredible team and our children are thriving due to all their fantastic ideas, and willingness to put in that little extra effort. The committee and parents would like to thank them all for making such a difference to our children's lives!

The fundraising team have also worked amazingly hard to raise over £2,000 since Christmas! Some of this money has enabled us to invest in new equipment and toys for the children. I would like to thank them very much for all their efforts. Look out for some more great events in 2014!

We also cannot forget all the very kind people who have donated their time, or something, to Meppershall Pre-school this year. Thank you very much indeed, it has been much appreciated. We hope everybody has a really lovely summer break, and look forward to seeing you in September.

Meppershall Pre-school, located in Meppershall Village Hall, can take up to 24 children in each session from in and around the surrounding areas from the age of 2 years 6 months. We also have limited spaces for funded two year olds. Please ring 07713 627376, email info@meppershall-ps.co.uk, or visit www.meppershall-ps.co.uk to find out more about the Early Years Foundation Stage and exceptional care we offer.



THE BIKE SHED

By Wayne Allen

Meppershall Summer Fair

I would like to kick off with a big thanks to the organisers who allowed us a slot in the arena and the stand space to show the bikes. I would like to extend that gratitude to the other enthusiasts for supplying their bikes, trike and time. I could not believe how the time went as we had so many people drop in raising questions on the bikes and requesting general info for their own projects. Judging by the number of classic cars, bikes, trucks and planes, this could be snowballing into something big. It was a great afternoon, whether you are a petrol head or not. Who can fail to like sound of the 27 litre Rolls Royce Merlin engine pushing the Hawker Hurricane gracefully around the Meppershall airspace, and for dessert, The Red Arrows?

The Bikers Classic – Spa Franchorchamps

Well just less than a week later Sean and I were getting ready to drive across to Belgium to attend our first Bikers Classic at Spa. We had been made aware of this event through the inner circles of the classic racer world by our colleague Richard Grantham. Richard is highly regarded for his Honda race replicas that he builds with his father John. The quality of the bikes and the faithful use of genuine HRC (Honda Racing Components) parts, where available, are truly outstanding. Richard also has some great connections with the x-factory riders such as Freddie Spencer. Spencer was invited to ride one of Richard's Hondas (at Spa) and despite the cautionary note to take it easy in the wet, down went Spencer and Richards's hard work. The bike was rebuilt and both Richard and Freddie remain good friends. The event is over 3 days with a number of qualifying and practice sessions for the various classes of bikes. We first came across a number of naked muscle bikes (yes that is the term). These are based on large capacity engines with no or very small handle bar fairings. This group was part of a large German contingent which competed all over Europe. They ride their bikes like they have stolen them. It was some of the best racing we had seen for some time and no doubt we will be paying this closer attention.

Richard Grantham's Honda NC30 poses in the pit lane.



Moving through the old pit lane (located on the straight leading to the frightening Eau Rouge corner) and garages, the price of the bikes on display escalate to lottery winning values. Many are x-GP bikes with significant and unique history. In support of these great machines are the best riders from the past. The guest of honour was Wayne Gardner (World GP 500 Champion 1987). Both Sean and I managed to get some autographs. Other big names included Giacomo Agostini, Wil Hartog, Freddie Sheene (son of Barry), Terry Rymer, Christian Sarron and Steve Plater. We also had the bonus of a four hour endurance race practice and qualifying on Friday evening. To race on this demanding track in the daylight is a feat in itself: imagine trying drive through the country lanes of Bedfordshire at 160MPH with just headlights guiding you, hopefully remaining on the track. It truly was a great spectacle with bikes lights shimmering off in the distance of the heavily wooded track.

Festival of 1000 Bikes – Mallory Park

As I write this piece we are preparing to go to Mallory Park for the Festival of 1000 bikes where will be on the track. Some last minute issues with the Suzuki X7 have been sorted, fingers crossed, by Sean today. Wayne Gardner will also be appearing here along with Carl Fogarty, John Cooper, Phil Read and many others. - Happy days.

COVERS BY REQUEST

Our cover this month shows a superb picture of the Hurricane over-flying the Summer Fair. This proved to be a very hard subject to capture, but Bryan King managed to take this great picture, which we were happy to include in our Fair Supplement as well as using on our cover. Thank you Bryan.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Birthdays in August & September:

David Drummond will be 89 on 3rd August.

Ida Taylor will be 95 on 14th August

Congratulations to all of the above.

If you know of a significant event in the village, please let the Editor know: we are looking for things to celebrate! 80th, 90th and 100th birthdays we mark with the presentation of a cake from The Messenger.

We would also love to hear about big anniversaries or any other cause to celebrate.

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

SATURDAY MASS

6pm RAF HENLOW

SUNDAY MASSES

9am & 5.15pm AT SHEFFORD

For weekday services and confessions please see notices in the church or telephone:

Parish Priest Canon Noonan on 813436 or

Parish Secretary Rose Boulton on 811547 or email

rosedene@talktalk.net

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:

Dawn Abbatt 01462 816962

James Read 01462 857836

meppershall.pcc@gmail.com

PCC Secretary:

Anne Parsons 01462 813333 annie10639@gmail.com

Services – August & September 2013

Date	Time	Service
Sunday Aug 4 th	11.00am	Parish Communion
10 th After Trinity	11.00am	Junior Church at the School
Sunday Aug 11 th	8.30am	Holy Communion
11 th After Trinity		
Sunday Aug 18 th	8.30am	Holy Communion
12 th After Trinity	11.00am	All-Age Service
Sunday Aug 25 th	11.00am	Parish Communion
13 th After Trinity		
Sunday Sept 1 st	11.00am	Parish Communion
14 th After Trinity	Until 5.00pm	Junior Church at School GIFT DAY – St Mary's will be open for a range of activities throughout the afternoon.
Sunday Sept 8 th	8.30am	Holy Communion
15 th After Trinity		
Sunday Sept 15 th	8.30am	Holy Communion
16 th After Trinity	11.00am	All-Age Service
Sunday Sept 22 nd	11.00am	Parish Communion
17 th After Trinity		
Sunday Sept 29 th	9.00am	United Benefice Service – free breakfast!
“Back to Church Sunday”	10.00am	Service at St Michael & All Angels, High St, Shefford
	6.30pm	SONGS OF PRAISE – a special event fundraising for Christian Aid, followed by complementary Cheese & Wine!

St Mary's weekday service - Wednesdays:

Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer), each Wednesday, 10.00am.

Do you have a favourite hymn? Now is your chance to nominate it for our **SONGS OF PRAISE** event on Sunday 29th September at St Mary's – and join us for Cheese and Wine afterwards in support of Christian Aid.

Send your hymn requests by email to ttandjat@aol.com, or tell us at the church, with the reasons for your choice and what it means to you – deadline Wednesday 18th September.

A Summer Message from St Mary's...

Summer always turns my mind to holidays, and to rest and recreation.

Rest and recreation are essential for all of us at some point, but I remember one Summer when my children were small and we decided that we neither had the money to go and stay somewhere (in these shores) nor had we the money to pay entry fees for the attractions we hoped might fill our days when we got there!

We decided to stay at home and sleep in our own beds (with all the comfort that gave us!) – as tourists in our own neighbourhood. We were living in the West Midlands at the time, and we found so many things to see and do – things we had never looked for before, waiting to be discovered. We really enjoyed finding out where we lived, dividing up our “expensive days” and “cheap days”, “wet days” and “dry days”, to suit our purse - and the weather.

I realised then that investing everything in two weeks in the Summer, and depending on those two weeks to refresh and sustain me for the rest of the year, is not the best way to live.

I realised that we do need to be able to find God, and rest and recreation, in the place where we are planted - in and around the routine of daily life - day by day and week by week. And obvious though it seems, in order to find it I need to look; for there to be time I need to make time or protect time.

With these two thoughts in mind I have decided to become a tourist again, here, where I am planted now – collecting information about places to go and things to see. Expensive or cheap, wet or dry – are still good categories –but now also “full days,” “half days,” or just “a few free hours”! And not just for Summer ... but making time and space to be renewed and restored through the months of Autumn and Winter and Spring as well.

If you have ideas of things that Andrew and I might like to do and see, places for us to go - please do stop us, have a chat, and share your knowledge and experience of this beautiful place where we've come to live.

Looking forward to hearing from you.... **Rector Roni.**

Start on page 42, Roni! Ed.

St Mary's Church, Meppershall
Junior Church

STOP - JC news - STOP: Mini Beast Hunt



- **Join us at the St Mary's Gift Weekend**
- **Sunday, 1st September – 1pm to 2pm**
- **at St Mary's Church, Meppershall**
- **Meaningful Christian teaching**
- **Meet our guest mini beast**
- **Followed by a mini beast hunt**
- **For children between 3 and 12**



JUNIOR CHURCH

Dear All

On a beautiful Sunday morning Godly Play returned to JC, and once again proved popular, engaging and fun.

The children were transfixed by the story of the Good Shepherd, from the time the beautifully hand-made sheep pen and sheep were introduced right up until the Good Shepherd, all the sheep and people were assembled around a large table. On the table was a wooden goblet for wine and a plate, perhaps for some bread.

Have you ever been in this sort of place/situation?

We listened and we wondered. We wondered whether or not the Good Shepherd would leave the gates of the pen open: who was the Good Shepherd?

When we had finished our listening and wonderings, the children used play dough, painting and colouring to reflect on the session and demonstrate their understanding of the story. The ideas that came from the children showed a clear depth of understanding.

The feast was shared together and all were invited to pray – some shared their prayer out loud, others kept their prayers private.

The next Junior Church session is taking place on **Sunday 1st September at 1pm to 2pm** at St Mary's Church with our Mini beast hunt. This coincides with the **St Mary's Gift Weekend** therefore our session will be part of the Gift Weekend activities. So come along and meet some mini beast then we'll go hunting! There will not be a Junior Church held on 4th August, but children are welcome in Church on this date.

Hope you can join us, but have a safe and happy summer break. As always, there is a short JC during the Services held on the 4th Sunday.

Blessings

The JC Team

CORNISH PASTIES**AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2013**

Ingredients - makes 4 pasties.

1 potato, peeled and finely diced
1 carrot, peeled and finely diced
1 small onion, peeled and very finely diced
225g (8oz) lean beef steak, trimmed and cut into small pieces. (or minced beef)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
450g (1lb) shortcrust pastry
1 egg, beaten

Method

- 1) Preheat the oven to 220°C /425°F /Gas 7. Mix together the potato, carrot, onion and steak and season well.
- 2) Roll out the pastry thinly on a lightly floured surface. Cut three saucer-sized circles, then use the trimmings to make a fourth. Divide the meat and vegetables between each circle, and brush the edges with egg.
- 3) Bring up the edges of each pasty to meet at the top. Crimp together the edges by pinching gently with the finger and thumb to seal.
- 4) Place on a baking sheet and brush all over with beaten egg. Bake for 10 minutes, then reduce the heat to 180°C /350°F /Gas 4, and cook for a further 15-20 minutes until golden and cooked through. Allow to cool for 10 minutes before serving.

Recipes are kindly supplied each month by Brenda Putwain. Brenda would welcome feedback from readers on her recipes.

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

Megan Maxwell who will be 14 on the 6th
 Thomas Clark who will be 11 on the 8th
 Jessica Myers who will be 7 on the 11th
 Matthew Turner who will be 6 on the 12th
 George Lumbis who will be 5 on the 14th
 Lucy Standbridge who will be 12 on the 14th
 Billy Gower who will be 12 on the 15th
 Manishka Hart who will be 13 on the 21st
 Noah Flint who will be 7 on the 22nd
 Georgia Thomason who will be 12 on the 23rd
 Toby Standbridge who will be 9 on the 23rd
 Archie Zimmerman who will be 9 on the 23rd
 Lucy Edwards who will be 13 on the 24th
 Kate Chappell who will be 13 on the 25th
 Max Chappell who will be 13 on the 25th
 Ethan Kovacs who will be 15 on the 26th
 Chloe Bryant who will be 6 on the 28th
 Owen Steeley who will be 15 on the 31st

...and September

Joshua Turner who will be 8 on the 4th
 Chloe Burr who will be 14 on the 9th
 Niamh Maxwell who will be 13 on the 11th
 Ben Horsford who will be 14 on the 13th
 Jack Gregg who will be 12 on the 17th
 Leah Metcalfe who will be 8 on the 19th
 Fern Sheppard who will be 15 on the 21st
 Thomas Cordes who will be 6 on the 21st
 Liam Sturgeon who will be 11 on the 22nd
 Katie Halford who will be 14 on the 23rd
 Lewis Bridger who will be 11 on the 24th
 Marc Neilson who will be 13 on the 27th
 Charlotte Turner who will be 3 on the 28th

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@gmail.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 12th 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>2013</u>			<u>2014</u>		
June	24	Double	January	27	
July	29		February	24	
August	None		March	24	
September	30		April	28	
October	28		May	26	
November	25	Double	June	30	
December	None		July	28	Double

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 24th September the October issue will be collated.