





## WHAT'S IN YOUR MESSENGER THIS MONTH?

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**EDITORIAL**

This month I have struggled to accommodate all the material that has come in, which must be good; thank you to all the contributors, regular and occasional. And that despite the absence – I hope temporary – of Roger's Bee article. Roger (and Mary) are taking a break from journalism after an amazing 53 articles; a sincere thank you from The Messenger and hope to be hearing from you again.

In the "occasional contributor category comes (Cllr.) Lewis Birt with another of his wartime stories from service with REME in Jordan.(P.42)

In the category of "once every few years" come the details of the proposed development on land behind the Village Hall. On page 11 we carry the Invitation for all residents to come to see the exhibition of the plans on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> October in the Village Hall. Representatives of the Developers, the Village Hall Trustees and the Parish Council will be on hand to answer your questions and there will be forms for you to record your views.

I am very pleased to be able to report (on page 8) that the Good neighbour Group is off the ground (just!). However, to be viable, it needs more members: please complete and return the form in the leaflet which is going out with this issue, to tell us either if you could be a helper or if you think you might use the service.

On the same page I have to report the cancellation, at least for this year, of the annual Bonfire and Fireworks display. This is very sad, and I know it will come as a disappointment, but the budget simply will not balance without additional fund-raising and the appeal from the Parish Council earlier in the year for volunteers to take on the organisation and fund-raising seems to have fallen on deaf ears. If you would be willing to help to resurrect the event next year, please contact a member of the Parish Council or the Village Hall Committee.

And finally, cycling achievements are not confined to France: stalwart cyclists from Meppershall have raised much needed charity funds for Churches (P.4) and for Moggerhanger Hospice (P.34); very well done to all of you who took part.



Dick Bulley

## LETTERS

Dick Bulley- Editor  
Meppershall Messenger

6<sup>th</sup> September 2013

### POPPY APPEAL COLLECTION

Volunteers are urgently needed in Meppershall to help with the Poppy Appeal Collection. If you can spare a little of your time to help raise money for this worthy cause, it would be very much appreciated. The more volunteers, the easier and quicker we get the job done!!

Contacts: Vic King on 01462 - 638675  
Gill Havers on 01462 - 50163

### Letter from Andrew Pain

Dick

perhaps you might want to put this in the next "Messenger"? An eye-opener for me...

I recently found a large number of clothes collection bags for a heart charity "Heartbeats" dumped in the ditch beside the footpath off Fildyke Road.

Normally these things make it as far as the gate, or the letterbox. I phoned the number of the collectors - DB Collections - simply to let them know their distributor had let them down this time. Their number, usefully printed on the bag (01536 - Kettering) was disconnected, so I turned to google to trace them....eventually tracking them down via another site - charitybags.org.uk.

And what a useful site that was.

DB Collections were prosecuted a while back for collecting clothes under false pretences - in that case, an air ambulance charity...along with scores of other so-called charity collectors. Many, if not most, of these clothes collectors have no connection at all with the charity they are supposedly supporting and many others simply make up a charity name. They have collecting bags printed, leave them on doorsteps, and the clothes are collected all right, but simply sold for profit. The charity, if it exists at all, gets nothing; it's a scam, a big one, taken across the whole UK, making potentially millions out of our generosity.

Charitybags. org.uk is a mine of information. marple-uk.com is another site run by a community that mentions three specific scammers posing as charity collectors. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-14724915> will take you to a BBC news article on this "business"

The moral seems to be - if you want to support a charity by donating clothes or goods - just take them to the charity's shop yourself. Then you're sure they'll end up in the right place.

## MEPPERSHALL NEWS IN BRIEF

*Following the item on the Meppershall Care Home in our last issue, we received this statement, which we are happy to publish, to provide balance.*

Statement on behalf of GA Projects Ltd.

"Our opinion that the closure of this Home was unnecessary still stands. Whilst we acknowledge that there were concerns within the Home, many of the problems had arisen following poor management by the previous manager; the new manager, as you comment, was very positive and was fully aware that changes needed to be made. All the issues raised by the inspectors could have been solved: improved systems to check cleaning, improved training, replacement of poorly performing staff etc; closing the Home should not have been the first option. The CQC now allege that the new management did not materialise; as you know we had a new manager: suffice it to say pressure was exerted upon her from the authorities to reconsider whether she wished to be associated with a Home about to be closed. She then decided on Friday that she had to leave.

Given that our main concern was that moving the residents would put them at greater risk we did in fact propose an alternative provider to take over management of the Home on Monday 15th July, which would have allowed residents to stay in situ ....but this was not accepted by CQC; one can only wonder at their rationale. Was the decision to close really about protecting the residents? We are cautious about saying too much as we have been reminded by the authorities that we do have two other homes registered by CQC. For this reason we have declined to comment on several occasions, however this has resulted in our clients and their families thinking we do not care. On the contrary, we have been increasingly anxious as clients are moved out, most against their will, but we have been told to not interfere with the running of the Home, and it appears that any staff seen to complain about what is happening are removed: we have heard that the much loved activities person was escorted off the premises.

It is a very sad end to a much loved Home, and has left a bitter taste to us as providers who have been in the care industry for over 20 years and through our organisation have provided hundreds of elderly people a safe and happy home, and yet it is only this terrible story that will be associated with GA Projects Ltd."

## **Aching Limbs and Worn Chains:**

The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Historic Churches Trust Bike and Hike Event took place successfully on 14 September and as usual Meppershall played an important role, with a dozen or more visitors to St Mary's from across the region and ten cyclists across seven teams from our own village.

Trevor and Jacqui Wilkinson gave another sterling performance, visiting almost 70 churches in one day between them. This was Trevor's 20<sup>th</sup> year in the event and his loop north through Biggleswade, Great Barford and Bedford was some 47 miles (and 35 churches) in total. Jackie toured Bedford and Meppershall, chalking up another 30 churches. Graham Jones, plus Dan Abbatt and son Max, and James and Jim Read, rode 33 miles as a team across Central Beds to cover 18 village churches, surviving the dramas of Clophill Scarecrow Festival, Flitton Village Gala and a broken bike chain. Miriam Read, Jess and Emelia also toured 7 local churches in a brief break from serving tea and cake at St Mary's. Special congratulations to Jim and Max who kept grinding out mile after mile with grim determination.

Total funds raised are TBC but will be several hundred pounds.

Thanks to everyone who supported, sponsored and volunteered to staff the church during the day. Read more at [www.bedshertshct.org.uk](http://www.bedshertshct.org.uk)."

### **Charlotte Hughes**

Congratulations Charlotte on gaining your degree in Primary Education  
and your first teaching job in September.

We are all so proud of you!

Love from Mum and all the Family

## MEPPERSHALL BROWNIES



We started this new term making plans for our Fundraising Brownie Supper, which we are holding on 30 September. The Brownies are going to give mums and dads the night off from cooking dinner and are going to prepare a two course meal to raise money for Operation Christmas Child and also earn their Brownie Hostess badge at the same time.

Our older brownies will also be helping out at this year's Church Harvest Supper on 7 October 2013.

**Reminder: We have our Tabletop, Crafts, and Cake Sale at the Village Hall from 2 pm to 5 pm on Saturday 19 October 2013, to raise money to send shoe boxes filled with toys, stationery and toiletries to children in countries affected by disaster again this Christmas. Please come and join us for a fun afternoon, pick up a bargain, amuse the children, meet up with friends and raise money for this excellent cause. If you would like a table, please call Gemma on 07968 529282.**

**Also, if you have any items you would like to donate for the shoeboxes please contact Snowy Owl on the number below. My spare room has now been cleared to make room to start collecting!**

We are now starting to plan for next year's Big Brownie Birthday celebrations. Brownies will be 100 years old in 2014 and we are already planning lots of fabulous events. We start celebrating with Starburst in January 2014 at Butlins in Skegness and brownies will have lots of fun taking part in lots of activities. There will also be a District Sleepover and a Division Activity Day. We will also have our own Meppershall celebrations and we hope to encourage ex brownies to come along and join us, however old you are! More details to follow.



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](http://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

This has been the regular slot for this much loved column. However, after producing no less than 53 articles, Roger and Mary have decided to take a break from journalism. We hope that they will be back next year, but for now we thank them very sincerely for all the work that those 53 articles represent – and don't forget the Bakery's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration on 28<sup>th</sup> September.

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### Films on Friday!

This is a reminder that the third of our “Films on Friday!” at Shefford Baptist Church is happening on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2p.m. Each of these showings is free, and there are refreshments provided afterwards. For this showing, we have chosen “Les Miserables!” [12].

This is a musical, based on the book by Victor Hugo, that has also been a hit stage production. In terms of the plot, it is set in 19<sup>th</sup> century France, and according to a review, has themes of “broken dreams and unrequited love, passion, sacrifice and redemption -- a timeless testament to the survival of the human spirit”. The central character is an ex-prisoner who, after his release, breaks his parole, is shown mercy, whilst being pursued relentlessly, and then makes, what turns out be, a life-changing decision.

There are some popular actors involved, like Hugh Jackman, Anne Hathaway, Russell Crowe & Amanda Seyfried to name just a few. It is a longer film (158 mins, 2hrs 38), but for emotional impact is considered to be outstanding.

Why not come along and enjoy watching this film in a comfortable setting, without travelling too far? Alternatively as a contrast, begin your Christmas preparations with the family film, “Nativity 2: Danger in the Manger!” on **SATURDAY** Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup>?

(For those who are into social media, check out further details and “join” the event on our Facebook page!)

Steve Summerfield  
Minister, Shefford Baptist Church



## **Meppershall Good Neighbour Group**

The meeting billed in the August/September issue of the Messenger took place on 26<sup>th</sup> August. Sadly, only 8 people attended from the village, but these now form the nucleus of what we hope will be a much larger group. Pam Halliwell volunteered to Chair the new Group, Dick Bulley agreed to be Secretary and Denis Neilson agreed to be Treasurer.

Delivered with this copy of the Messenger is a leaflet explaining what a Good neighbour Group is and how it functions. Basically, it is only what neighbours already do for each other, but organised so that no one has to depend solely on the person next door.

What the Group urgently needs now is an increase in numbers and an indication of what services are likely to be required. Please complete the central part of the leaflet to tell us that you are interested, which services you might need and what you could do, if asked; return the completed for to the Bakery or the Stores.

Meppershall Good Neighbour Group is sponsored by Beds Rural Communities Charity, who are providing some initial funding. It will not make demands on your pocket, and if we get enough people involved, it will not take up much of your time either.

### **Bonfire and Fireworks Night**

In the past this event has been run by the Village Hall trustees.

The money paid to attend is around £1,600, assuming the weather is kind on the night. For a decent show the fireworks, event insurance, St John Ambulance attending, skip hire and site clearance will cost approximately £2,200. The burger van and social club bar make donations but these are not enough to meet the costs that are not covered by paying attendees. Last year the Parish Council assisted by providing funds of £500, which meant almost a breakeven, but this sum will not be available for 2013 as expenditure is cut to reflect the constraints of the current economic climate.

Earlier in the year the Parish Council unsuccessfully sought to find a willing group of volunteers to assist with raising the funding needed and help with organising the bonfire and firework night.

There is no lack of willingness on the part of the Village Hall trustees and Parish Council to stage the event; simply that without fundraising, the fixed costs make it unrealistic to continue. It is therefore with regret that we have come to the decision that the Village Hall bonfire and fireworks night event will not be possible this year. So, the end of an era in Meppershall.

There will be other similar events locally, and thus by announcing the position now there is plenty of time for those who would have attended to plan alternative arrangements for an enjoyable evening.

Meppershall Village Hall Trustees

## MEPPERSHALL PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

As explained in the August/September issue of the Messenger, the July meeting of the Council came too late to be covered in that issue; what follows therefore is a selection of highlights from the meetings on 22<sup>nd</sup> July and 9<sup>th</sup> September.

1. The use of drugs and possible trafficking around Crackle Hill Road was raised at both meetings. A member of the public explained her concerns to the July meeting, especially her concern about what children might stumble over. At the September meeting it was agreed that the Clerk would write to the police and to the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner, urging more action.
2. The Clerk had received a complaint from a resident of High Street whose car had been damaged by a vehicle taking avoiding action in the congested section of road outside the PO stores. The September meeting was told that, after a long and frustrating delay, the Highway contractors to Central Beds Council were starting on a survey of the traffic issues in Meppershall, with a view to recommending appropriate traffic management measures.
3. There have been no recent developments concerning the extension of the Shefford Hill footpath towards the village centre: the Clerk is endeavouring to contact the parties concerned. Additional signs are being purchased to warn drivers about pedestrians crossing at the top of the hill.
4. The annual Internal Audit of the Council's financial management has been completed and the independent Auditors have signed off their report, which says:  
 "We have again concluded that, overall, the Council continues to operate systems to ensure that transactions are accurately recorded in the cashbooks and reflected appropriately in the Statement of Accounts/Annual Return."
5. The September meeting noted that the long-awaited patching repairs to Fildyke Road had been completed but some promised replacement to kerb

stones at the junction with Chapel Road and by the water tower were still outstanding.

6. The annual inspection of the Wry Close Allotments was covered at both meetings. The Council agreed that in view of the number of empty plots, lettings to non-Meppershall residents should be permitted and the charge for allotments should be reviewed next year.
7. The Council has been asked by the Village Hall Committee to underwrite any possible loss if the event took place this year, up to a maximum of £1,000, following a loss of £500 in 2012. The Council noted that there had been no response to the Chair's appeal for people interested in setting up a separate Committee to run the bonfire and fireworks and that it was already too late to buy fireworks at their summer discounted prices. The Council agreed that it would not underwrite the loss requested.
8. The September meeting noted that the firm planning to develop land behind the Village Hall would be holding an exhibition in the Village Hall on Friday & Saturday, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> October. (See separate advertisement in this issue) Councillors agreed that they would make arrangements for visitors to the exhibition to record their views on the proposed development, to inform the Council's position if a planning application is received.

**The next Parish Council meetings will be on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October and Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November.**

**Please remember that you are welcome to attend our meetings to speak about any subject during our open public session. You may just wish to come along to see what we do, or perhaps you are thinking of becoming a Councillor at the next election. Whichever is the case, we look forward to seeing you.**

Peter Chapman, Vice Chairman, Meppershall Parish Council.  
chairman@meppershall.org.uk

## Housing Development and New Community Facilities in Meppershall

In the previous issue of the Meppershall Messenger we brought you a number of articles regarding the proposal for housing and new community facilities and the evolution of these plans.

As indicated at the time, a public consultation exercise is to be held to give local residents the chance for a more detailed look at the plans and the benefits their implementation will bring. The arrangements have now been made and **a public exhibition will be held in the Village Hall on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> (2pm – 8pm) and Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2013 (9am – 3pm).**

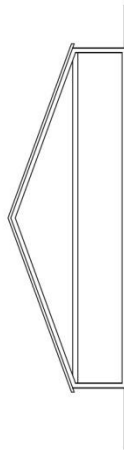
The scheme envisaged involves the construction of a new purpose-built village hall and recreational facilities. These are expected to include a number of playing pitches suitable for a variety of sports. The existing play area will be retained as will the public footpath. The plans also include an area set aside as burial ground and another to accommodate a number of recycling bins. The new village hall will be opened *before* the old one is demolished to ensure continuity of availability and use.

The associated residential development would amount to around seventy homes. This component of the proposed scheme will provide funds for the new facilities listed above.

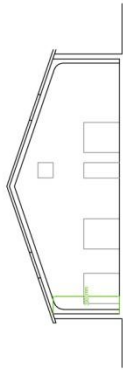
The exhibition will include plans of the new village hall, recreational facilities and the residential development. Representatives of the Parish Council, Village Hall Committee and the Foster family's development partner, Bloor Homes, will be in attendance to receive questions and collate feedback on the scheme.

Jardine-Michelson  
PR Advisers to the Developers





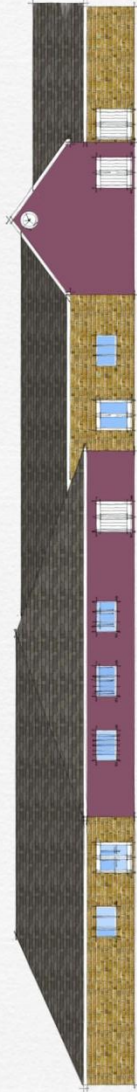
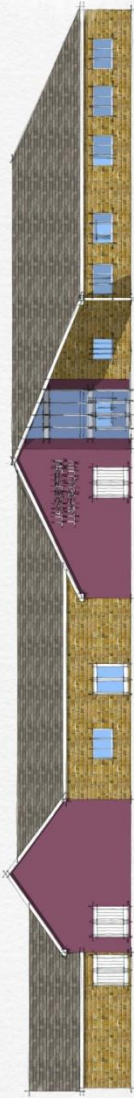
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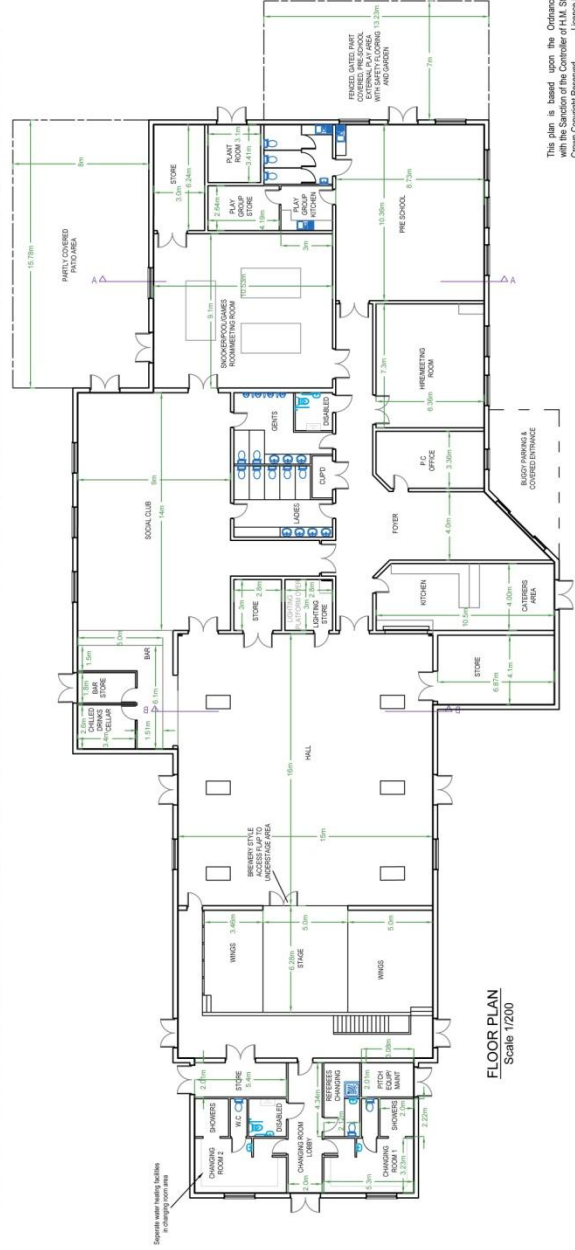
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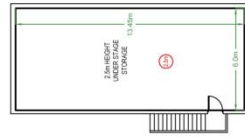
PERSPECTIVE VIEW  
Not to Scale



ELEVATIONS  
Scale 1/200



FLOOR PLAN  
Scale 1/200



CELLAR FLOOR PLAN  
Scale 1/200

<b>Revisions</b> A - Annotation amended, MAR. 11-05-12 B - Revised notes, M.C., 15-05-12		<b>Project</b> Sketch Scheme C Meppershall Village Hall Meppershall Bedfordshire		<b>Land &amp; Property Consultants</b> Bedford 01234 382201 f. 01234 362919 Ipworth 01473 831631 f. 01473 832200 Buckingham 01295 428010 f. 01295 428011 robinsonandhall.co.uk	
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The Developers, Bloor Homes, have asked us to make clear that at present (September 2013), this is a working draft to illustrate the layout of the site. It is still under discussion with the planners and cannot, therefore, be considered final, but they hope it will give readers a fair idea of what is proposed.

The Messenger thanks Bloor Homes for their co-operation.



## YOUR SHOUT

### with Trevor Thorley



**DAVID NIVEN** (15 March 1920 – 20 July 2013):

David, at the remarkable age of 93, will be remembered by many for his cycling on his beloved bike over the years and to the very end.

Born in Luton to William and Harriett Niven, David attended Denbigh High School in Luton until the age of 14 attaining the standing of Head Boy in his final year.

Leaving school at 14, his first job was with the Skefko Ball Bearing Company in Luton in the works production department on a wage of ten shillings per week (50p in today's currency).

Cycling and dancing were his passions and in his earlier years he was an active member of the Luton Wheelers.

In his teens, David took up ballroom dancing and through professional examinations; he achieved the Gold Medal award.

During World War 2 David joined the local Home Guard where his father was Company Quarter Master Sergeant. His ambition to join the Royal Navy was thwarted by bad eyesight but David eventually joined the army where he was posted to Blackpool as Gunner Niven, Royal Artillery 11413950. Over the next few years he was posted to several locations throughout the United Kingdom, part of which time was at the Battery Headquarters in Lowestoft.

Some of his happiest times were when he was posted to Baldock where he worked during the day and danced the nights away.

On 8 June 1945, David was posted to Egypt and set sail from England on the SS Ranchi. He enjoyed incredible opportunities as one entry in his diary read "pyramids, sphinx and zoo".

He spent the remainder of the war in Kenya and was promoted to Sergeant, achieving several war medals including the King's Badge.

Returning to Luton, he took his post as Skefko and became Senior Systems Analyst in a career spanning 25 years.

Through his love for dancing, David dazzled a certain young lady with his quickstep; this of course was Jessie, and they married on 26 March, 1949. One year later their first daughter Marilyn was born.

They settled in Meppershall and committed themselves to building their perfect home. With the arrival of their second daughter Melanie they decided to buy a plot of land and spent several hard winters in a small caravan on Polehanger farm while their home was being built. They eventually moved into it in 1960 and two years later their third child David was born.

David and Jessie spent years together, raising their three children, immersing themselves in village life and giving support to the Methodist Chapel and St. Mary's church.

When Jessie sadly passed away in 1996, David took up new hobbies including listening to live jazz, attending coffee clubs and sequence dancing. Trips to seaside in his eighties were countless and he could recount stories of having to push the 'elderly' around in their wheelchairs. David was a friend to anyone who knew him; he was a fiercely loyal man who valued honesty and integrity. David's funeral service took place in a packed St. Mary's Church on Tuesday 6 August 2013, afterwards everyone gathered at the Airman Hotel for refreshments.

#### **KEITH BALL & HIS JAZZMEN (A Tribute to Kenny Ball).**

At the time of going to press, tickets are selling briskly. You would not wish to miss out on what will be a momentous occasion on Saturday, 19 October 2013 at 7.30pm. Fantastic lighting, unique sound effects and a fine arrangement of music with all the hits! Give me a call 01462 813357. Tickets are £20 and £15. The Bar opens from 7pm

Remember - It's 'YOUR' SHOUT!

01346 813357 [trevor.thorley1@btinternet.com](mailto:trevor.thorley1@btinternet.com)





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- September 2013

Yesterday a delicious smell of baking spread throughout the school as Oaks and Hazels classes cooked Naan bread as part of their 'Stunning Start' to their



Magic Carpet topic. They dressed up in saris, had henna patterns drawn on their hands, made fantastic photo frames and completed many other exciting activities with the help of their teachers, support staff, mums and nans. Later on in the term, the children will also be learning dancing Bollywood style with the help of some sixth form pupils from Redborne Upper School.

Our youngest children in Birches class have now begun their learning journey with us and are having lunch this week and staying for the whole day at school next week. We welcome them and their families to our school community. We also welcome Mrs Alyssa Gunn and Mrs Joanne Lyon who are teaching in Key Stage One.

This year we are starting a new initiative suggested by Reverend Roni of having a church service every term, with the children taking part by reading Bible passages and the intercessions. This will add another dimension to our worship, as the children learn about the different parts which make up an Anglican service. We are also preparing for a visit from Bishop Richard in October, when he comes to bless our new Academy.

Meppershall CE Academy has always taken part in many inter school sporting events through the Redborne School Sports Partnership and because of this participation and the PE taught in school and the after school clubs we run, we have been awarded a silver kite mark for being an Active School from the Sainsbury's Schools Games team. This year we will look to improve this status and go for gold!

The Governors, staff and I are looking forward to another successful year at Meppershall CE Academy.

Lyn Fairweather Headteacher



## **Meppershall Church of England Academy PTA Update On Our Fashion Show**

Everyone in the village is invited to attend: we would like you all to join us on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2013 in the Village Hall. Doors open at 7.00 pm for a start of 7.30. The show is a ladies fashion show and we now have ladies clothes only but we hope to be able to offer some great discounts on high street labels. Tickets are £6.00 per adult and the contact numbers for tickets is 07909694121.

There will be refreshments and we hope that it will be a relaxing and enjoyable evening for all;

All money raised will be for the school. The PTA is continuing to save for more laptops for the school, contribute 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.

### SATURDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – AUTUMN FAYRE

We would like to ask that you put the date on your calendar and come and join us to experience our wonderful year 4 café and browse the ever growing variety of stalls.

## **SHEFFORD LEISURE GROUP**

By Enid Pamment



A drizzly day was suddenly brightened by the flowers at the Sandringham Flower Show. There were two marquees given over to the entries from children and adults showing their flower arrangements, fruit and vegetables, jam making and cakes. Outside were the various companies supplying plants, ornaments and artificial grass! Also there were many competitive gardeners showing off their garden designs and stalls selling goods not necessarily related to gardening. The church was small, compact, very pretty and homely and certainly well worth a visit with many interesting artefacts.

Our four days in Austria began when we left our overnight hotel in Cologne to travel to our hotel, the Mesnerwirt in the picturesque chocolate box village of Westendorf. The excursions were many and varied, including a local guided tour of Innsbruck, and a visit to the Olympic Vergisel Ski Jump by cable car for panoramic views over Innsbruck. We also had a visit to the Swarovski Crystal Museum, after which we travelled to Achensee by a rare steam cog railway for a boat trip on the shimmering waters of Lake Achensee. On another of our trips we travelled by train along the picturesque Ziller Valley from Mayrhofen to Fügen. We then visited the Krimmler Waterfalls, a magnificent sight; it was a long walk but well worth the trek. Our last day was a tour of Salzburg, the home of Mozart, and where some of the scenes of The Sound of Music took place. After lunch we took the funicular railway to admire the Old City from the panoramic Fortress of Hohensalzburg. All too soon we were at the end of our holidays and making our way back to our overnight stay in Cologne. After breakfast, we headed for the Channel Tunnel crossing and home.

A few of us visited the Village Hall in Flitwick for the Ampthill and District Lions Club 'Sing Along', an event the Lions Club stage annually, free to the audience. Although fewer in numbers, everyone received a warm welcome and musical entertainment from 50's 60's and 70's. Everyone enjoyed their evening especially making all the noise they were encouraged to do!

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

Boundary Mills, Grantham	Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> October
Lord Mayor's Show	Sat 9 <sup>th</sup> November
Ely Cathedral Christmas Gift and Food Fair	Saturday 16 <sup>th</sup> Nov
Thursford Christmas Spectacular	Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> Nov.
John Rutter – Royal Albert Hall (Matinee)	Thurs 12 <sup>th</sup> December
Essex Highlands Christmas Special	Wed 18 <sup>th</sup> December
Get-Together, Memorial Hall, Shefford	Sat 22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2014
Man-Made Wonders at the Heart of Essex	(TBA) May 2014

### **Holidays: 2013 (kindly telephone for more details)**

Bournemouth, staying at The Sands Hotel for a Tinsel & Turkey break	4 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> December
Jersey – flying from Luton and staying at the Metropole Hotel on half-board basis	20 <sup>th</sup> -26 <sup>th</sup> 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 <sup>th</sup> October
Wicked – Stalls Seats – Apollo Theatre	Wed 13 <sup>th</sup> November
Thriller – Stalls Seats – Lyric Theatre	Tues 17 <sup>th</sup> November
Jersey Boys – Stalls Seats – Prince Edwards Theatr	Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> November
Disney on Ice; O <sup>2</sup> Arena – First Price Seats	Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup> December

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

From Here to Eternity – Shaftsbury Theatre - Royal Circle seats	Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:Enidpamment@aol.com).

*Enid Pamment – Shefford Leisure Group*



## FINANCIAL NEWS UPDATE

with Paul Savuto

### **Care Home Fees**

***Q): My father is becomingly increasingly ill and will probably have to go into a Care Home. What are the likely costs?***

A): Currently, the cost of an average residential care home is around £26,000 per year. If nursing is required, this figure could rise to over £36,000. Local authorities can provide some funding support, but eligibility is means-tested. Only those with assets of less than £14,250 (including property) can get all their care funded. Above £14,250, your father will have to make a contribution towards the costs. If he has assets in excess of £23,250, he will have to fund the full cost himself. Moreover, even if he was to qualify for full local authority support, there could still be a shortfall between the actual care home costs and what the local authority is willing to pay.

***Q): How can I meet the costs of my father's care home fees?***

A): You can meet the costs through existing savings and investments or your father can sell his property and utilise the proceeds. The local authority will usually disregard the property from the cost of care for the first 12 weeks. They may agree to continue funding past this timescale, but they will look to recoup the costs when the property is sold. Alternatively, you can consider an annuity-based Care Fees Plan. This involves making a one-off lump sum payment to a Care Fees Plan provider and in return they pay a guaranteed income for the rest of your father's life. The income is currently received tax free if paid directly to the care home. It makes sense to seek advice from a qualified Independent Financial Adviser if you want to consider a suitable Care Fees Plan.

***Q): Can my parents put their house in trust to myself and my sister in order to remove it from their estate, thereby potentially avoiding future care home fees?***

A): Your local authority will probably ask questions about historical property ownership. If it deems that the property was put into trust in order to avoid paying care home fees, they may still include it in the means-testing process. Using trusts is a complex issue, not simply because of care home fees but because the Inland Revenue is keen to prevent people avoiding inheritance tax, therefore, always seek legal advice first.

***Q): If my father goes into a care home, will my mother be forced to sell their home to pay the fees?***

A): No. If your mother remains living in the property it will not be included in the means-testing process. However, half of their joint savings will be included, plus assets your father owns solely.

### **Wine as an investment**

***Q: My friend has said that investing in wine is a good investment. What do you think?***

A: Is it possible to enjoy the option of a supreme taste experience or the realisation of a capital profit? The answer is yes – sometimes. Though it could be argued that wine could more accurately be described a speculation rather than an investment.

Some wine experts are known to visit the Hospices de Beaune wine auction in Burgandy each year and sample the wines before they go into cask, in the expectation, which is realised more often than not, of being able a year later to sell half the tranche purchased when the wine goes into bottle, and recoup the entire cost. But those are insiders.

For people outside the trade, buying wine as an investment means selecting classified growths and paying for them to be warehoused securely at the appropriate temperature, and insured, and hoping that the cork will not succumb to deterioration which could contaminate the precious product. Meanwhile, the “investment” is producing no income.

Selling, probably by auction, will incur additional costs, including possible capital gains tax, and prices will be subject not only to market factors such as economic crises, but also the vagaries of changing taste and fashion in international markets.

The alternative is to invest through a wine fund and bear the management costs, though most such funds are small and several have gone bust over the years.

You could of course get lucky and, subject to hanging on for a sufficiently lengthy period of time, find yourself with an impressive increase in value, particularly if the holding is in a robust wine such as port. Indeed there is much to be said for laying down a box of port for a new child or grandchild.

For most people, however, it makes sense to ignore the apparent glamour of wine investment and buy the liquid gold for the purpose for which it is intended – drinking!

*Any questions for Paul, on these or any other subjects, should be addressed to him at DGS Chartered Financial Planners, **01923 853774 or [dgsifa.com](http://dgsifa.com)***



Love for God, Life, Learning and for Each Other

## **Meppershall Church of England Academy**

As of 1 July 2013, Meppershall Voluntary Aided, Church of England, Lower School became an Academy. This short note is to explain to the wider village why we did this and also to explain the advantages of doing so.

The decision of the Governing Body to apply to become an academy stems from a policy decision made by Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) a couple of years ago; namely, that arising from their need to reduce expenditure, CBC was going to, and now have, reduced all support for non-council maintained schools to the statutory minimum i.e. provide only school/pupil allocation and child protection services. If a non-maintained school did not apply for academy status, under which funds are allocated directly to the school from central government, then funding would still be via CBC, who would continue take 10% of the money allocated to the school per pupil, even for this minimal service. The school would be and is responsible for sourcing and paying for other services formerly provided by CBC, for example, Human Resources and other support functions, from the remainder of their allocated budget.

So to maximise the efficient use of our budget, the decision to become an academy was made after a consultation process involving the staff, pupil's parents and the wider village.

We have had an interim budget between July and September, as part of being an academy means the school's budget is allocated at the start of the school year in September rather than annually in April. The new budget has been allocated and is currently being finalised and approved. Once it has been, it will be a public record available for inspection at the school and on our soon to be updated website.

The advantages of these new arrangements are immediately apparent in our ability to use our funds more efficiently. For example, we have been able to source Human Resource services from Luton Borough Council and new insurance policies from commercial providers, both providing more comprehensive service at better prices. We are free to seek further efficiencies by being able to choose the best service provider for the school rather than

being tied to CBC suppliers and can investigate economies of scale with other local schools.

As part of the founding of the Academy Trust, the composition of the Governing Body has also changed; there will be the opportunity for an extra parent and an extra staff governor to join. Nominations and elections will take place later this school year. If you are interested in participating in guiding the future of the school, then please do make yourself known via the school office.

What will not change is our school's Christian ethos and curriculum. We are still a Church school and will remain so under the St Alban's Diocese. All that the school's staff, Head Teacher and Governing Body continue to do is in the best interests of the pupils, for whom the school exists. As our last OFSTED inspection stated, we are a good school with outstanding features and we aspire to becoming outstanding overall. This can only happen with the continued support of our pupils, their parents and the wider community.

Martin Morris

Vice Chair

Meppershall CofE Academy Governing Body 11 September 2013

## **Advertisement**

### **TAI CHI EXERCISES AND MEDITATION – WITH IAN DEAVIN AND JUDY HAMMOND**

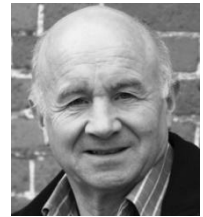
We are pleased to announce a one-day seminar covering Tai Chi related exercises and meditation with the added benefit of Alexander Technique, hosted at The Letchworth Centre for Healthy Living on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2013 from 10 – 4pm.

The mix of meditation and movement combines to create internal awareness and understanding of our body usage - this seminar will take time to explore how we can develop this mind-body link. Ian Deavin teaches Chen Style Tai Chi and has a particular interest in Zen Meditation. Judy Hammond is a highly experienced Alexander teacher who has a very hands-on approach to internal meditation.

The cost will be £50. For further information or to book your place contact The Letchworth Centre for Healthy Living – [www.leitchworthcentre.org](http://www.leitchworthcentre.org), also see [www.movingmindfully.com](http://www.movingmindfully.com) and [www.sheffordtaichi.org](http://www.sheffordtaichi.org).

## POLEHANGER: A FARMING DIARY

### Episode 46



#### Ode (Owed?) to Seamus Heaney: and with apologies!

Harvest Home. Away. In store. Devoured and hidden  
by monsters venturing voracious in done and dusted camouflage.  
Another year.  
We wait another year.  
Harvest Thanks. Giving for fruit, a rain kissed, sun blessed miracle.  
Another year producing planted plans.  
Dead dormant grain lies soil-side down. We hold our breath whilst nature  
breathes hers; resurrecting spirit, a pregnant pause.  
A moistened germ stirs again in silent mystery.  
The rainbow promised seedtime, harvest;  
Soil picture of a soul journey?

#### Harvest Sequel

. . and so the interval since the last issue of The Messenger has seen our harvest completed in 4 days starting 30<sup>th</sup> August - (just 4 days; incredible) with no rain interruptions and ground prepared and ready to drill another, second, crop of wheat.

On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, The Daily Telegraph carried an article headed 'Make or break harvest after 18 months of pain for farmers as they struggle to make up for last year's disastrous yields and the loss of livestock in the coldest March on record. Farmers are hoping for the sunshine to continue in order to avoid another poor harvest after the worst 18 months for the industry since the 2001 foot-and-mouth outbreak'.

I believe, in general across the country, this 'hope' has been met, with 'kind' weather enabling a late harvest to be finished.

Yields have been average, though better than expected. Grain prices, however, have slipped back from those at the end of last season on the back of good U.S. yields of maize and wheat.

#### Albania

From 16<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> August I was in Albania as part of a team of 6 from the church I go to in Stopsley, Luton. We were there to help finish internal construction and decoration of a pre-school as part of a small village church linked to ours. It was a fascinating trip in draining temperatures of 40°C. I did more wall painting than I have done in my entire life I think (it's not my specialty!).

I was also able to see some of the local farming which is small scale and labour intensive. When communism collapsed in the early '90's all adult males, it seems, were given 1,000 sq. m. of land; a tenth of a hectare or quarter of an

acre. Some strips can be rented but it is not easy to build up a contiguous block in order to develop the economies of scale that we would recognise. Small scale mechanization is possible but much harvesting is done by hand. On the roads, horse drawn carts jostled for space with bicycles and pedestrians, with the occasional Range Rover and Mercedes. Many young people go to Italy and send money back home from there.

## **Fire**

Whilst I was away, Christine texted to say that there had been a fire in our standing wheat crop, started by flames dropping from the combine where oil, dust and heat had been fanned by the wind. You will probably have been aware at the time. There is a clip on the internet if you Google Meppershall Field Fire!

Quick thinking by Mark's harvest team and the prompt response from the fire brigade contained the fire to about 12 acres. No-one was hurt and insurance should cover the loss.

This has not been the only case in the country this year. The last time I can recall a field fire at Polehanger was in the heat-wave drought year of 1976. We also had a combine fire in 1990.

## **Milk**

I saw this strap line on a plastic milk container that we recently bought from a leading supermarket chain: "Produced by farmers who share our values". It irritated me!

This supermarket has had a long history of driving down prices paid to suppliers in order to increase market share and shareholder value. Milk has regularly been sold more cheaply than bottled water! Some supermarkets are most particular about the traceability of their products from producers that meet certain standards. Others, I suspect, will only moderate their standards up or down in response to their customers' demands whether on price or welfare. So it seemed to me that a more honest strap line should read: "Sold by us who share our farmers and customers values"!

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

Sunday 6<sup>th</sup>: drove to Preston. Noticed 3 pieces corn not yet harvested.

Friday 18<sup>th</sup>: so wet can only plough one way, turning furrow downhill. (*Modern ploughs are 'reversible' with an opposite set of shares on either side of a horizontal beam so that the tractor can turn the plough over at the edge of the field and keep ploughing backwards and forwards. The old ploughs were 'one way' and had to go round and round a 'land'.*)

Chris Foster: 10<sup>th</sup> September 2013



## LIFE ON THE WILD SIDE

By JEREMY HOLDEN

### Leopard Seal



One of the most striking memories I have from this year, and one that I know will endure, was seeing a leopard seal pirouette in the clear water underneath my boat. The boat was a Zodiac, a small inflatable craft used to ferry passengers from the ship to the shore - an unsettling platform for viewing a ten-foot predator with inch-long canines.

I was on my way back to the ship after spending a few hours on Point Wilde in the Antarctic, the desolate strip of rocky shore where Shackleton's men spent four long and hungry months waiting for rescue. Just off shore the skipper had spotted a leopard seal. Before setting out, I had hoped above all to see this mysterious animal, but felt far from certain that I would. The skipper told us it was a big individual, and it was hunting. We stopped the boat and sat quietly scanning the water. Suddenly a group of penguins heading for shore began to porpoise frantically, spending almost as much time shooting through the air as they did underwater. When they hit the rocks there was a desperate scramble as they tried to get clear of the surf. The leopard seal hit them then, slithering up the rocks like a tube of water made flesh. It missed and melted back into the sea.

Without warning it suddenly came towards our boat, its head low but with its back arched out of the water, giving it the aspect of a sea monster. Was it curious, threatening, or irritated that we were there and spoiling its chance of a successful hunt? I had no idea.

In fact, until recently, no one was sure how leopard seals might react towards humans. One of Shackleton's men was chased across the ice by a leopard seal, and one explorer had been bitten, but there was only one recorded fatal attack in which a snorkeling researcher was dragged down to her death. It was with much trepidation that the first wildlife cameramen filmed leopard seals underwater. The outcome was surprising: the huge seals appeared to either enact some underwater ballet or offer captured penguins in a gesture that seemed both friendly and intelligent.

I knew all of this, but when the animal's head reared out of the water a foot from my own I felt extremely vulnerable in our flimsy rubber boat. It looked at me with huge glaucous eyes then sank into the clear aqua sea. It was at this point that I gazed down to see it pass, twirling gracefully like a ballerina fashioned from mercury.

Having checked us out, it began hunting again and had soon captured a hapless penguin. Without the use of hands the leopard seal must dismember its prey as a bird does, by flinging and shaking the corpse until it is manageable. For the next few minutes I watched this spectacle: the penguin finally rent to pieces in a spray of blood-spume.



*A Leopard Seal, from the web.*

## CALENDAR OF MEPPERSHALL EVENTS

### October 2013

<b>Friday 4<sup>th</sup></b>		
Les Miserables	2.00 pm	Shefford Baptist Church
Exhibition - proposed Development	2.00 – 8.00 pm	Village Hall
<b>Saturday 5<sup>th</sup></b>		
Exhibition - proposed Development	9.00 am – 3.00 pm	Village Hall
Henlow Academy PTA Race Night	7.00 pm	Henlow Academy
<b>Monday 7<sup>th</sup></b>		
Harvest Supper	6.30 for 7.00 pm	Village hall
<b>Saturday 12<sup>th</sup></b>		
Indoor Boot Sale	9.00 am – 1.00 pm	Shefford Memorial Hall
PTA Fashion Show	7.00 for 7.30 pm	Village Hall
<b>Saturday 19<sup>th</sup></b>		
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
Art Exhibition	10 am – 4.00 pm	Northill Village Hall
<b>Saturday 20<sup>th</sup></b>		
Art Exhibition	10 am – 4.00 pm	Northill Village Hall
<b>Saturday 26<sup>th</sup></b>		
The Wilsons	8.00 pm	Meppershall Social Club

### November 2013

<b>Saturday 16<sup>th</sup></b>		
Autumn Fayre		Meppershall Lower School
<b>Friday 29<sup>th</sup></b>		
Players' Panto – Sleeping Beauty	7.45 pm	Village hall
<b>Saturday 30<sup>th</sup></b>		
Players' Panto – Sleeping Beauty	3.00 pm & 7.45 pm	Village hall

**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](mailto:rosedene@talktalk.net)

# THE LUCY PAGES

By Lucy Standbridge

Aged 11



This month, I have been interviewing people about Sparks, which is a children's summer holiday club held at St Mary's church in Meppershall. The children get involved in a variety of different activities, like arts and crafts, music and cooking. There were 6 groups, each having a colour; they were blue, orange, yellow, green, red or purple. This year's theme was pirates and on the last day, they had a treasure hunt!

I interviewed Morag De Luca who helped run Sparks, and was being Yo-Ho, the friendly pirate, for the week. She goes every time she can because she enjoys it so much. Morag said "It's a great thing to be part of, I loved seeing all the children over the four days, getting involved, and it's a great experience for helpers and the children joining in". She helped Dawn (who was Captain Heave-Ho) run Sparks this year and she told me that planning for next year is already underway and she will be coming next year.

I also interviewed 4 children who went this year. They are Sophie Germann (age 6 who was in Green group), Archie Zimmerman (age 9, who was in Purple group), Alison Watson (age 9, who was in Blue) and Georgia Nesbitt (age 10, who was in red). They all had a great time and came because they had so much fun last time. Alison liked making the parrots, Archie had fun in games, Georgia's favourite thing was being in the drama team and Sophie said "I loved doing the pirate warm up, making the swords, the treasure hunt and making the pirate tree". I asked them if they would recommend Sparks to someone who hasn't been before. Georgia said "Definitely, there are lots of really fun activities and everyone is very friendly". Sophie would recommend it because you get very messy! Alison would definitely recommend it because it was excellent and Archie said "Yes because you get to do cooking, games, lots of other activities, make things and meet new friends". Finally, I asked if they were thinking of going next year. They all said that they wanted to, and Alison said "Definitely, I had lots of fun this year and made some new friends!". Everyone enjoyed themselves this year and they thought that the pirate theme was a good idea.

I went along this year and helped out. I was in purple group and my favourite session was arts and crafts and I also liked games. I would recommend it to someone who hasn't been before because it is great fun!

---

#### Letter from Holly & Emily Saunders

During the summer holidays my sister and I went to Sparks at St Mary's Church for the week. I was really excited to go and had been looking forward to it. When we got there it was really busy with lots of children, and some of the helpers were dressed as pirates. The two main adults were the captains. We were all put into groups and given a timetable of activities: each group was named after a colour. I saw some of my friends from school but made lots of new ones as well, especially the "sash", Gemma, who had been before and was very helpful.

Every day we had something new to do: baking, painting, singing and dancing to action songs. My favourite was getting to make an animated film using stop-frame. My sister's favourite was baking cookies and pizza and then eating them – yummy!

I would like to say a big Thank You to all the Sparks team for making the time so much fun. Next year I would like to be a "sash" myself because I really want to be able to help out and to sing on the stage. Looking forward to the fun next year!

Holly, (10) & Emily (7)

## PUZZLE PAGE

### Su Doku 107

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

### Su Doku 108

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

(Solutions on page 33 – with thanks to Paul Smith)



## **MEPPERSHALL SOCIAL CLUB**

### **1<sup>st</sup> Monday**

#### **Games Night**

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

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday**

#### **Quiz Night**

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

### **3<sup>rd</sup> 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  
October menu is Beef Stew and Dumplings

### **Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October**

#### **THE WILSONS**

Who sing Elvis, 50's, 60's, 70's & Motown  
8.00 pm till late  
Members £3 each, Non Members £5. Includes buffet  
Tickets on sale now from the bar, any Committee  
member or  
By calling Gemma on 07968 529282

## Solution to Su Doku 107

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

## Solution to Su Doku 108

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

## **Graham's 24 hour cycle ride - win a £100 hamper!**

Just a note to thank everyone for your generous donations, which are going to Sue Ryder's St John's Hospice at Moggerhanger, just up the road.

The donations page is still open for a short period, as the £2500 target wasn't quite reached and I don't want to short change on my promise to such a deserving cause - plus, if you can donate, you now have a very good chance of winning a John Lewis hamper worth £100!

Please see <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/GrahamLaming>

I managed to cycle 326.6 miles in a day (think London to Edinburgh), on a much harder course than was originally intended. The event was originally planned to be run on the almost flat Silverstone F1 Grand Prix track, but the organisers cancelled it at late notice. Having trained for it for most of the year, and canvassed for donations, I was reluctant to abandon the challenge, so instead rode on a local Time Trial course on public roads, from Cardington to Old Warden, to Ickwell, to Northill, to Cople, back to Cardington.

That loop is 11.3 miles long, is far from flat (try cycling it!) and I rode it almost 29 times from noon Saturday 14 Sept to noon Sunday 15 Sept. I celebrated my 52nd birthday about 270 miles into the ride!

You can see a graph of my speed versus distance on the donations page, plus heart rate throughout the challenge. The temperature dropped to 4C at night and I found I was badly unprepared for such cold conditions, particularly at around 3am when my brain kept telling my body to just go to sleep. I couldn't put in enough effort to warm up, so had to stop and wrap up in a blanket for 90 minutes, wasting valuable cycling time. Lesson learned.

I had fantastic moral support from locals cheering me on, plus cyclists who tagged along for part of the challenge. I had no physical help (no pushing, towing or drafting / slipstreaming) and all food was arranged by myself, replenishing at intervals by stopping at my parked car, opening the boot and taking on fresh bottles.

My 'fuel' for the 24 hours might seem bizarre - I used 6 litres of skimmed milk and 4 litres of coca cola (to keep me awake at night) which I drank through a tube so I could stay in an aerodynamic position without having to reach for a bottle regularly. I also ate the occasional banana or handful of dates. That is all. As I write this on the following day, I feel good, and look forward to doing something similar next year.

Thanks again - and please, if you can donate, you WILL make a difference plus you stand a good chance of winning a John Lewis hamper!  
Thanks

Graham Laming, 72 Fildyke Road, Meppershall 01462 811747.



## Henlow Church of England Academy



### Welcome Back

Hello, we return to school for a new academic year, refreshed and raring to go after the summer break. We welcome back all our pupils and staff but especially our new Year 5 children, their parents and some new teachers.

We have a very busy term ahead and would like to keep you informed of the special events coming up that may be of interest to you:

On **Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October** the P.T.A have organised another Race Night for adults and children, starting at 7.00pm, with the first race at 7.30pm. Each "bet" at the tote will cost 50p, and there is a licensed bar for adults. Tickets cost £1. This promises to be a fantastic evening for all the family, so please book your tickets early.

There will be another Bags 2 School collection on **Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October**. Please sort out any old clothes, bedding and soft furnishings. The School receives payment based upon the total weight of clothes donated.

A big thank you to everybody who sent in Sainsbury and Nestle tokens in the last academic year. We have been able to obtain basketballs, rounders bats and items for the Food Technology Dept.

Morrisons supermarket is now giving out tokens for this year's 'Let's Grow' promotion. Please collect and send these into school as our science garden and gardening club really appreciate the tools and seeds that we acquire through these tokens.

If you would like more information on any of the above please contact the School Office on 01462 813733  
email:henlowacademy@schools.bedfordshire.gov.uk






**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<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 pm. Bar open 7.00 pm.  
Tickets £20 and £15 (Numbered seats) from:  
01462 813357 [trevor.thorley1@btinternet.com](mailto:trevor.thorley1@btinternet.com)

**08450 008007**

**[www.jazzco.co.uk](http://www.jazzco.co.uk)**



## FILM REVIEW

By Carlie Newman

Combining elements of a cop movie with those of a buddy film, **2 GUNS** (cert. 15 1hr 42 mins.) manages, in the main, to do this successfully. It also has some of the expected action sequences that we look for in a cop movie. Robert "Bobby" Trench (Denzel Washington) and Michael "Stig" Stigman (Mark Wahlberg) have been working together for a while. The only trouble is that neither of them knows that the other is something other than the person they seem to be, which is a bank robber. Each works undercover for the United States government. Trench is a DEA agent, Stigman a US naval intelligence officer.

They get on well but distrust each other without knowing exactly why. In trying to infiltrate a drug cartel, run by the bullish Papi Greco (Edward James Olmos) the two rob a small-town bank and discover not the small amount of cash they expect but millions of dollars. When Bobby and Stig find themselves disowned by their respective bosses, they have to rely on each other to survive. They also want to find out what has happened and why so much money has been placed in the bank. Obviously, the villains are also after the two comrades.



*Denzel Washington & Mark Wahlberg*

Icelandic director Baltasar Kormákur employs his cast well and uses the very good chemistry between Washington and Wahlberg to put across a story which is full of twists. The two work so well together that it is impossible to tell just what is improvised and what part of the script. There are some very amusing moments in the banter between the two stars and a lovely touch when Washington kisses a baby's head during the bank robbery. Denzel is now a master at putting across funny lines in a dry manner and he manages to lift up Wahlberg to accompany him on the various rifts he indulges in.

The supporting players like Olmos and Bill Paxton, who plays a somewhat villainous, Russian-roulette-loving government operative, make the most of their parts. Paula Patton is the love interest and reacts nicely to Denzel's remark that he has "tried" to love her.



# The Meppershall Players



Rehearsals are now well underway for this years Pantomime "Sleeping Beauty". (Oh no they're not) Oh yes they are. Costumes are nearly all done, backdrops are all sorted, the side flats will be going up soon, we're having a set-painting day on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October 10am-6pm (if it doesn't move we paint it) If you are interested in this side of the Players, pop in and say hello (we promise not to paint prospective new members, just keep moving and you'll be fine)

The dates of the Pantomime are as follows

Fri 29<sup>th</sup> Nov, 7.45pm, Sat 30<sup>th</sup> Nov, 3pm & 7.45pm

Fri 6<sup>th</sup> Dec, 7.45pm, Sat 7<sup>th</sup> Dec, 3pm & 7.45pm

Ticket Prices are Matinee's £6 concessions £5, Evening's £7 concessions £6.

Last night £9 no concessions

Concessions are Senior Citizens and Children 16 years and under.

Tickets are on sale at Roger's Bakery now.

Would you like to assist front of house at the pantomime? Give me (Karen) a call 01462 8166336

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 email Claire Piller, our Programme Co-ordinator at [clairepiller1@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:clairepiller1@hotmail.co.uk)

Meppershall Players do have their own page on Face book, which will be updated the first Monday of every month.

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

## Unlocking Your Full Potential

By Chris Proctor



It's been a busy few months for me – leaving the Army after a 28 year career, celebrating my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday and 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary and moving into Meppershall. When I finally left my uniform and ID card at Chicksands, I had to face the big question of 'what next'? Well, part of that 'what next' for me is training to become a professional coach.

What attracted me to coaching? After attending an introduction to coaching session, I was struck by the power of coaching in helping a person to unlock their full potential and achieve their goals. I was also struck by how closely some of the skills that I had acquired over my military service were aligned to those required to be a successful coach.

Now, before we go too much farther, I suppose I should explain what coaching is. Let me start by saying what it isn't! It is not therapy, counselling or mentoring. Neither is it anything to do with sports or bus driving! Coaching is working with well people who want to change their lives in a particular area – building confidence, moving between jobs, dealing with redundancy or retirement, getting fit, losing weight, and so it goes on. Coaching is based on the premise that everyone has it within themselves to improve their lot and the coach looks to unlock that potential through listening, questioning and prompting the 'coachee' to discover the way ahead.

I am not sure how coaching will play a part in my future career. Before I can decide that, however, I do need to complete the training first and it is this that has prompted me to put pen to paper (figuratively speaking – putting ink through a laser jet printer does not sound quite so poetic).

As part of my training, I am looking to establish a training client portfolio, a group of volunteers who agree to be coached on a regular basis to allow me to consolidate the key learning points from my professional training – after all, you can't learn to swim simply by reading a book – at some stage you actually need to get into the water! So..... What I am asking for is whether there is anybody out there who feels that they could benefit from coaching to help them realise a particular goal, to address a particular problem or to simply open up their potential? What I am offering is up to six 45 minute coaching sessions, free, (I'll say that again, completely free) for anyone who could commit to a regular coaching session.

If this sounds like something that you are interested in, grasp the opportunity and give me a call on **07800 554487** and we can chat through how coaching could help you get more from your life.

*The Messenger is always glad to assist new ventures in the Village - Ed*

# Meppershall Garden Club

We have had a busy summer watering plants and maintaining our gardens and allotments. Recent meetings have included sharing our garden produce and seed swapping.

## Activities:

In July many of us enjoyed our very own garden safari. We visited a number of members' gardens throughout the day, ending with a get-together with partners, as can be seen in the photo.



As promised in the last issue, below is a write up on a highly recommended garden to visit. Many thanks for this to Sarah, one of our members.

## Easton Walled Gardens, Easton, Lincs.

Turn off the A1 about five miles south of Grantham, drive along a sleepy country lane, pass some pretty stone cottages and nestled in a valley you will discover the 'lost' garden of Lincolnshire. The house, belonging to the Cholmely family, was destroyed years ago after it was requisitioned and ruined during the Second World War, now the only buildings remaining are the gatehouse and stables. Twelve years ago a member of the family started restoration work on the 12 acre gardens.

There is an aptly named 'Pickery' garden full of flowers for cutting (they have 70 varieties of sweet peas), a vegetable garden with raised beds full of produce used in the tearoom and a pretty little cottage garden with herbs, perennials and roses. When standing on the site of the old house you are faced with an amazing aerial view of the large red-bricked walled garden on the opposite side of the valley which is planted with roses and fruit trees. An old stone bridge arches over the river which meanders through the garden where birds and other wildlife dip in and out of the water. This is a beautiful and tranquil garden and is well worth a visit.

We are still enjoying the tomatoes & runner beans from our garden, long may they continue.

Take care,  
Kim.

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

## 10 Top Gardening Tasks for October

1. Cut down herbaceous perennials - those with attractive seed heads can be left for birds and 'frosted sculptures'
2. Divide spring-flowering perennials if they are overcrowded and losing their flowering impact
3. Remove annuals and bedding plants, and fork in well-rotted compost or other soil improver into the beds
4. Continue to plant spring bulbs, leaving tulips until very late in the month
5. Collect fallen leaves from lawns, paths and patios. Store in a black bin liner with a few holes, until they turn into wonderfully useful leaf mould
6. Bring in tender plants such as pelargoniums (geraniums) to a bright frost-free place, and reduce watering over winter. Begonias in containers can be moved undercover and allowed to die back
7. Plant spring bedding, e.g. wallflowers, in the gaps left by tender plants. For colour before spring, try winter-flowering pansies and violets
8. Dahlia tubers, chrysanthemums and gladioli corms can be lifted and stored in a frost-free greenhouse or shed. Some gardeners take a chance by leaving them, well-mulched with compost or bark, in the ground
9. Lift the last of the root vegetables, and harvest apples, pears and autumn raspberries
10. Plant a large (frost proof) container to brighten up the darker days. Choose a compact evergreen shrub as a centre piece - sweet box (*Sarcococca*) and *Skimmia* 'Kew Green' are both scented. Small bulbs eg snowdrops and crocus can fill in gaps, and trailing small-leaved variegated ivy will soften edges. Always use 'pot-feet' in winter, to encourage better draining.

### **BEASTS:** Watch out for:

Powdery mildew, grey mould, 'fairy rings' of toadstools, honey fungus (suspect this if a dead shrub has honey-coloured toadstools nearby)  
 Rosemary beetle on rosemary and lavender from early autumn until spring  
 Vine weevil grubs, especially in pot plants. Temperatures are now too low for effective biological control, so chemicals (Provado) are needed, but must NOT be used on edible plants

### **BEAUTIES:** Enjoy in flower:

Herbaceous: *Sedum spectabile* (ice plant), Japanese anemones, Michaelmas daisies, *Phlox paniculata*, *Rudbeckia*, *Heleniums*

Bulbs: *Nerines*, Autumn Cyclamen, Autumn Crocus

Shrubs and Trees: *Acers* (Japanese maples), *Cotinus* 'Flame', *Amelanchier x grandiflora* 'Ballerina', *Ceratostigma willmottianum*, and last but not least: ***Rosa rugosa*** - an easy rose with little disease and purple, pink or white flowers followed by bright red autumn fruits. If space is limited it responds well to a serious cut-back every 3-5 years

*Contributed by Viv Harvey*



## **Another Chance Encounter.**

*Following his description (Vol 28, issue 9) of how he met Glubb Pasha, this is the second in an occasional series in which Lewis Birt recalls his military service in REME*

It took some two days to get back to Tefila and our little patch of sand on the wrong side of the railway track appeared like home! Priorities, servicing our faithful Scammel 19RH14 and then getting our dhobi sorted out, scrounging for vegetables to make the bully beef look a little appetising, took a couple of days, then came the cry of "sayeeda".

It was our local Trans Jordanian Policeman accompanied by a camel-mounted Jordanian soldier. With lots of 'Inta, yalla and im she", together with magnificent hand gestures and brief prayers to Allah, we were able to establish that an Army Lorry was stuck on the railway line and holding up a train, some ten miles to the north.

We dismantled our bivvies and cooking gear, loaded up the Scammel and with the policeman grinning happily as he perched on the top of it, we set off following the camel mounted soldier. Some fifteen minutes later we could see in the distance a thread of black smoke curling upwards. It proved to be the stationary locomotive with many Arab passengers milling around under temporary makeshift sunshades. Straddling the rails in front of the loco was a Leyland Hippo ten ton transport lorry, renowned for its relatively small diameter wheels and poor ground clearance.

In a parlance understood only by lower military orders, we asked why and how they had managed to achieve this unique balancing act. We were advised to join the Foreign Office and get their magnificent vehicle off the rails "toot sweet", this was all observed with great hilarity by the passengers.

We assessed the problem: the railway sleepers were laid straight onto the sand with steel pins driven through the sleepers to hold them in place. If we carried out a straight pull on the lorry, we would also distort the rails.

Strapped to the equipment boxes on the rear of the Scammel we carried four perforated steel sand channels. If we raised the lorry we could slide a pair of channels in and then drive the lorry off. Praying, we reversed the Scammel up to the rear of the lorry, chained an "A "

frame to the back of the lorry, hooked up the "A" frame to the jib of the Scammel and took up the strain to stabilise the lorry and raise the rear wheels to clear the rails. We had two ten ton hydraulic jacks in the lockers; once unloaded with the assistance of the Leyland crew, we placed some thick wooden blocks across the sleepers to support the jacks under the front cross member. Very cautiously we raised the front of the lorry. Now the tricky bit. We slid in the sand channels and located them under the wheels. First the front wheels, then the rear set were very carefully lowered onto the channels; front jacks removed, followed by the "A" frame. Utilising the Arab passengers from the train we packed in sand under the channels to provide a firm base. We then invited the lorry crew to board their chariot and to very carefully reverse off the railway lines; very gingerly they did so - mission accomplished!

The passengers were all whooping with joy and helped us to clear the track. They presented us with fresh dates and fresh onions in thanks for our efforts. With loud flourishes of the whistle and steam release from the piston chambers the train pulled away to continue its journey to Ma'an.

We, meanwhile congratulated each other for ensuring the continuity of the Jerusalem/Medina railway, laid down by the Ottomans, blown up many times by Lawrence, and its integrity ensured by a recovery crew of R.E.M.E. wallahs.



Corporal Lewis Birt. R.E.M.E.  
1952. Hashemite Kingdom of the Jordan.

*Note.*

*Lewis Birt tells me that this is the same railway but not the actual place where his heroic rescue took place. - Ed*

## THE WASSLEDINE HERD

*This month there is a new advert on our advertisement pages for beef from the Wassledine Herd. Guy Lambourne provides some background.*

I spend a great deal of time looking towards Meppershall. Our small farm faces your way and in many odd moments, sometimes armed with a cup of tea or a banana, I ponder the view. And very wonderful it is too. One of our fields lies within Meppershall Parish so we can almost claim to be natives. If you enjoy a walk and have ventured out this way, you may have wandered amongst our Red Poll cattle during the summer months, grazing the old meadows where Shillington, Gravenhurst and Meppershall meet.

We bought our first animals from a farm on the Suffolk coast in 2003 and the ten years since then have been eventful, fascinating and emotional. We chose Red Polls for a variety of reasons. First they are East Anglia's rare breed and it seemed fitting to choose a native. Second they were billed as low-maintenance, easy-calving cattle that could do well on relatively poor grazing. The clincher though was our acquaintance with a certain Mr & Mrs Trundle of Meppershall Parish, who keep Red Polls themselves and were persuasive in a very laid back kind of a way. Their support and encouragement has been invaluable and it's certainly good to have a friendly voice on the end of a phone line in moments when, as happens occasionally, we need to know "what's going on?" and "is now the time to call the vet?"

It's probably fanciful but it does seem that these cattle (whose ancestry can be traced back well into the Nineteenth Century and are the result of a cross between the now extinct Suffolk Polled and Norfolk cattle), just look right here. In early summer, their deep earthy-red coats gleam in the sunshine, providing a perfect contrast to the vivid spring green of the grass and the dazzling yellows of buttercup and vetchling.

Whilst I remember driving slowly past Ipswich pulling trailer full of pregnant cows, being quite alarmed at the amount we had to learn, there has been a great deal that's unexpected – the 'unknown unknowns'. Top of that list is cookery. Over the years Jane and I have eaten little or no meat and actually cooked rather less. So it's surprising now to be enthusiastic fans of the cheaper cuts of beef: slow-cooked, pot-roasted and stewed. The likes of stewing steak, brisket, silverside and flat rib have been a revelation.

We still don't eat much meat. But the meat we eat is good meat that tastes excellent and is produced from animals that have been raised with respect and minimal inputs. That's certainly true of our own beef and we apply the same standards to other meat we buy. It makes a difference.

If you'd like to try some of our beef please contact us - details below.

Guy & Jane Lambourne, Wassledine, Gravenhurst. Frozen beef available now. Please visit [Wassledine.co.uk](http://Wassledine.co.uk) to find out more or call 01462 711815, [info@wassledine.co.uk](mailto:info@wassledine.co.uk) Join our electronic mailing list to be informed when our next fresh beef will be available.



**Parents, Grandparents, & Childminders are all welcome.**

This is a wet and windy time of year, so we have lots of fun indoor activities planned for Tots this month. A member of the Sure Start Team is coming along from the Orchard Centre in Shefford on Tuesday 1st October. This session will be free to all, so please come along and find out more about other things to do and see with your little ones, and join in the activities they bring.

We are also very excited about Mad Hatters, the local Theatre School, coming later in the month to give us a taster of their dancing, acting and singing classes for children and young people.

Then on 22nd October we will have a bit of Halloween fun just before half term, with our party pack, spooky jelly, biscuit decorating, banana ghosts and clementine pumpkins.

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.

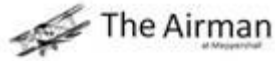
**Come and join the fun at Meppershall Village Hall  
Every Tuesday in term time from 1:30 till 3pm.**

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](mailto:meppershalltots@hotmail.co.uk)  
**Please ring Debbie on 07713 627376 for more information**

## NOTICE BOARD



TWO COURSE MEAL FOR £15  
MONDAY – THURSDAY 6 – 9PM

FISH & CHIP FRIDAY EAT IN OR TAKE AWAY  
12 Noon – 9PM

To book a table or pre order your take away please call 01462 850 853  
[www.theairmanhotel.com](http://www.theairmanhotel.com)

**Shefford Town Memorial Hall, Hitchin Road, Shefford** - Fund Raising Events:  
Saturday 12th October - Indoor Boot Sale 9am till 1pm. Pitches are £6, booking essential. Refreshments available and homemade cakes.

Sunday 1st December - Christmas Craft Fayre 12 noon till 4pm Free Entry to buyers, pitch booking in advance only. Licensed bar, Christmas carols, homemade cakes and lots more.

**Bookings or enquiry's** for any Fund raising events to Linda 01462814582  
Hall Hire Sheila 01462815495

We are also looking for a booking clerk, Secretary, and any new people that would like to join our Committee to help fund raise or help with the day to day running of the Hall.

### **Immaculate Car for Sale - £10,500 ono**

Silver Mercedes-Benz Kompressor Auto SLK 200 (2005)

One owner

Under 15,000 miles

Many extras

Please telephone 07976 294711 (Meppershall)

Biggleswade & District Art Society

### **30th Autumn Art Exhibition**

**Northhill Village Hall**

(opposite the church)

Saturday 19th October (10.00–4.00) and Sunday 20th October (10.00–4.00)

Free Admission

Original Paintings for sale

Refreshments



## Ponderings

October is a colourful month with lots of change in the air. We will all be kicking up the leaves on the way to the allotment. We welcome William and Alfie who started in September, and hope they have enjoyed making new friends and trying different activities. We have been using chopped logs for stepping around on this term, and playing sea-saw using a big cardboard tube. The children have also enjoyed potato painting and playing with our new space rocket.

We would like to congratulate Julia Roberts our wonderful Relief Assistant, on passing her level 3 Diploma! She has worked extremely hard, and put in many extra hours to achieve this level.

The fundraising team have their work cut out for the term ahead, and we are always looking for more parents to get stuck in and help us with some new ideas. We will be organising a shopping/pamper evening for November, so if you or anyone you know would be interested in booking a stall please ring Michelle on 07772 531642.

We would like to put a request out to the local community for a handy person to make the shed water tight at our 'Mini Diggers' allotment, and ask you all to collect the Morrisons Let's Grow vouchers for us. Also look out for our next bags 2 school run in December.

Finally the government now have more funding available for 2 year olds, so if you receive benefits and would like to find out if your family qualifies, please visit your local Children's Centre, or call Central Beds on 0300 300 8119.

**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](mailto:info@meppershall-ps.co.uk), or visit  
[www.meppershall-ps.co.uk](http://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

### **An Event (Festival of 1000 Bikes), A Signature (Phil Read), A Youtube Video and Sean's debut as a writer for a Bike magazine**

Wow, the last few months have been manic, as previously indicated in the last edition. We had back to back shows for 4 weekends running but I am not complaining as the great weather was completely in synch with our plans and topped up the vitamin D.

Our key event was the Festival of 1000 Bikes held at Mallory Park in July. Last year was potentially a near miss where we were finally registered as numbers 1204 and 1205. Considering it is for 1000 bikes you don't need a degree in maths to work out how flexible the organisers were to accommodate the increasing amount of entrants. I have to put my hand up and confess that had been my fault. Previously we had sent applications in by March and had no problems but applying in late January last year and we only made the shortlist! Better planning prevailed towards the end of 2012 and we consistently monitored the VMCC website for the announcement of the entry forms being released. Towards the end of December the forms had barely hit the doormat from being posted, where they were filled in, the entry fee cheque cut and then a large envelope posted the same day in a closely focused exercise. This swift action resulted in gaining the entry numbers of 12 and 14, phew!

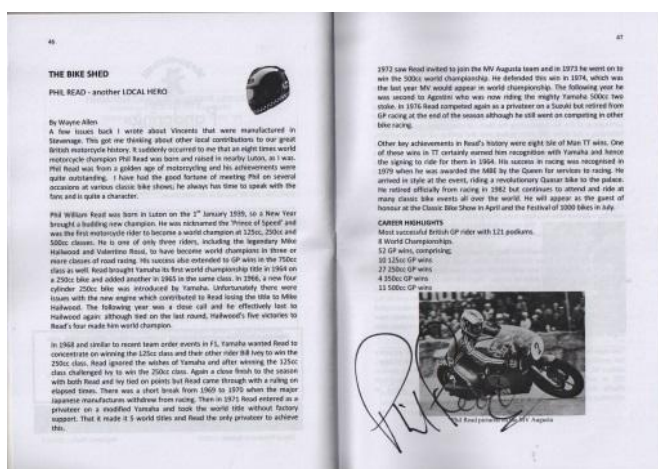
All seemed plane sailing until the week before the event when the Suzuki X7 fell ill. Luckily Sean had booked some time off work and was able to nurse it back to health while I was way on business. This year at Mallory we both had the bonus of gaining press passes by prior arrangement. This gave us all area access, including the best vantage points within the track to capture some very satisfying pictures of the past masters, including the guest rider Wayne Gardner. There is nothing worse than trying to photograph these events when you get the head of a fellow spectator in frame at the crucial moment as you hit the shutter. That said we were very privileged to have this access and thoroughly enjoyed our VIP treatment by the VMCC and track officials. It is amazing the effect of day glow orange bib and a press lanyard has when navigating the crowds for the best vantage point. If you would like to see the results of our efforts they have been edited into a high res video on Youtube. I have the link below but you can search on the Youtube landed page by entering- " Festival of 1000 Bikes 2013 – One Weekend in July".

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RmjmU-CpTvU>

*(Wayne's press accreditation was to the Meppershall Messenger!)*

The event again was blessed by the recent heat wave and made the camping experience more comfortable and the track condition was excellent. One downfall was an extended wait for my afternoon session as a result of minor accident at the hairpin. The delay of 30 minutes in full leathers without airflow in the burning sun shine was uncomfortable, but it beats getting drenched from the rain any day. Both of the track sessions were great and the Suzuki behaved very well. This will be the last year for the Suzuki as I want to move up the ranks of the speed sessions so one of the larger bikes in the collection will be entered next year, most likely the Kawasaki GPZ900. However the Suzuki X7 still gains much attention and has appeared in Classic Motorcycle Mechanics August 2013 edition in an article called Show Stopper. Another 15 minutes of fame preceded by many hours of polishing for the photo shoot. This leads nicely on to the story of Sean who will have his first article as a contributor published in same magazine due out later this month (Classic Motorcycle Mechanics September 2013). This will be to report on the Bikers Classic Event we attended at Spar Francorchamps in Belgium during July. We hope to see more articles being requested by the editor in the future. Other bikes in the collection are also due to appear in the same edition the most likely being the Kawasaki Zephyr 1100 in the buyer's guide.

Some months ago I completed a piece on Phil Read, 8 times world motorcycle champion who was born and raised in Luton. Armed with a copy of the messenger in which the article appeared, I approached Mr Read at Mallory and he duly signed my copy and posed alongside it for the picture below. Sean was thankfully in tow to capture this moment. What a summer so far!!!



*Phil Read promotes the Messenger at Mallory and signs the story....*

## COVERS BY REQUEST

The bumper crop of Discovery apples illustrates the Summer we have just had, which ended firmly on 1<sup>st</sup> September! This month's cover picture was sent in by Pauline Henderson but the location of the tree is not being revealed – for its own good! (It is NOT in the Community Orchard in Old Road Meadow!)

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## SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

### Birthdays in October

Charlie Taylor will be 85 on 4<sup>th</sup>  
Frances Wright will be 94 on 15<sup>th</sup>  
Betty Mather will be 85 on the 18<sup>th</sup>  
Sylvia Mumford will be 89 on 19<sup>th</sup>  
John Pontin will be 96 on 24<sup>th</sup> October

Congratulations to all of the above.

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If you know of a significant event in the village, please let the Editor know: we are looking for things to celebrate! 80<sup>th</sup>, 90<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> 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.

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## RIP

David Niven died on 20<sup>th</sup> July aged 93.  
See Your Shout on P 14.

## 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 E-mail: [meppershall.pcc@gmail.com](mailto:meppershall.pcc@gmail.com)

### PCC Secretary:

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

## Services & Events – October 2013

Date	Time	Service
Sunday Oct 6 <sup>th</sup>	11.00am	Parish Communion
19 <sup>th</sup> After Trinity	11.00am	Junior Church
Harvest Sunday		
Monday Oct 7 <sup>th</sup>	6.30pm for 7pm	St Mary's Harvest Supper and Sale of Produce at The Village Hall Tickets £7.50 from the Bakery or Post Office
Saturday Oct 12 <sup>th</sup>	8.00am	Celtic Morning Prayer
Saturday Oct 19 <sup>th</sup>	7.00 for 7.30pm	Keith Ball and his Jazz Orchestra in A Tribute to Kenny Ball Bar opens at 7pm. Numbered seats £15 and £20, tickets from Trevor Thorley tel. 813357.
Sunday Oct 13 <sup>th</sup> 20 <sup>th</sup>	8.30am	Holy Communion
After Trinity		
Sunday Oct 20 <sup>th</sup>	8.30am	Holy Communion
21 <sup>st</sup> After Trinity	11.00am	Bring Your Pet Service!
Friday Oct 25 <sup>th</sup>	9.00pm	Silent Service All welcome for a time of silent reflection
Sunday Oct 27 <sup>th</sup>	11.00am	Parish Communion
22 <sup>nd</sup> After Trinity		
Sunday Nov 3 <sup>rd</sup>	11.00am	Parish Communion
All Saints	11.00am	Junior Church at the School

### St Mary's weekday service - Wednesdays:

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

### **An Autumn Message from St Mary's...**

I love this time - partly because of the changing kaleidoscope of colour that graces our landscape again - another genuine feast for the eyes after the floral colours of spring and summer.

I love it also, because it is the time of year we indulge in thankfulness in a big way. Often in our prayers we remember to praise and worship, to repent and to confess, to ask for ourselves and others, even to meditate on the mystery and majesty of God - I'm not sure that we always remember to be thankful. Even articles on prayer sometimes miss out "Thankfulness".

There is something very warming and satisfying about being thankful - it encourages us to count our blessings, to see what we have, and to cherish those we love.

October in our village church begins with Harvest: a big thank you to farmers and to all those whose hard work produces food for our tables, and a big thank you to God for the good earth, the sun and the rain that produces harvest in due season, and for the variety of plants and animals that serve our needs.

In that same vein, on October 4th we remember St Francis, widely adopted as patron saint of animals and the environment. Pope John Paul II said of Francis: "It is my hope that the inspiration of Saint Francis will help us to keep ever alive a sense of 'fraternity' with all those good and beautiful things which Almighty God has created. And may he remind us of our serious obligation to respect and watch over them with care...." (1.1.90) (Francis was also particularly known for the creation of the Christmas Crib).

Sunday 20th October will be a Pet Service to give thanks to God also for the joy, love and companionship we enjoy with animals. Please bring your pets along to church on that Sunday (or their photo if for some reason that isn't possible...) so that we can pray and thank God for all that our animal friends add to our lives. Finn, our own dog, is looking forward to seeing them there!

So please do come and join in a "thanks-filled" October.

I think it is a Psalm 150 month:

Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary;

praise him in his mighty heaven!

Praise him for his mighty works;

praise his unequalled greatness!

Let everything that breathes sing praises to the Lord!

**With all good wishes, Rector Roni.**

## JUNIOR CHURCH

It's hard to believe that the new school term has already begun and the summer holidays already seem like a distant memory.

We pray for all of the children starting a new school or joining a new class.

The summer holiday's brought SPARKS back to St Mary's and what a swash buckling time everyone had. A huge 'Thank you' to Dawn for continuing this wonderful Christian experience at St Mary's.

At the beginning of September Junior Church had its mini beast hunt incorporated into the annual Gift Day.

Our guest mini beasts, provided with compliments from Shuttleworth and accompanied by Charlotte, included millipedes, which the children were much more enthusiastic about holding than the adults, some hissing cockroaches and locusts were also amongst our 'guests'.

After enjoying our 'guests' the children hunted for local mini beasts around the grounds of the Church yard before enjoying the activities of the Gift Day which included a bouncy castle the traditional abseiling teddies, tombola to name but a few.

On Sunday 6 October Junior Church will be at St Mary's from 11am to 12noon celebrating Harvest Festival.

Godly Play will be returning soon so watch this space.

In the meantime, we hope to see you on 6 October. If you have any questions, please contact Gillian on 850947.

Blessings

The JC Team



**CARAMEL APPLE JAM****OCTOBER 2013**

6 cups peeled diced apples.

½ cup water

½ teaspoon butter.

1 (1.75 ounce ) packet powdered fruit pectin. (use 1 bottle Certo)

3 cups sugar (white)

2 cups brown sugar.

½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg

**DIRECTIONS**

- 1) In a large thick bottom pan, combine the apples, water and butter. Cook and stir over a low heat until apples are soft. Stir in pectin and bring to a rolling boil, stirring constantly.
- 2) Add the sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg and return to a rolling boil. Boil for 1 minute.
- 3) Remove from the heat and skim off any foam. Ladle hot jam into hot sterilized jars, leaving ¼ inch head space. Adjust caps.

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

*Brenda has maintained the supply since volume 24 in 2008, so that is 60+ different recipes so far! What a record! Thank you so much, Brenda!*

*Brenda would welcome feedback from readers on her recipes.*

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

Orla May Thomas who will be 4 on the 1<sup>st</sup>  
 Katie Johnson who will be 13 on the 1<sup>st</sup>  
 Samuel Derrick who will be 11 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 Caitlin Saunders who will be 12 on the 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 Phoebe Brinkley who will be 5 on the 4<sup>th</sup>  
 Matthew Geneux who will be 13 on the 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 Megan Thomas who will be 1 on the 5<sup>th</sup>  
 Chloe Brightwell who will be 14 on the 8<sup>th</sup>  
 Hannah West who will be 14 on the 8<sup>th</sup>  
 Harry Plumley will be 6 on the 9<sup>th</sup>  
 Isabel Savuto who will be 8 on the 17<sup>th</sup>  
 Georgia Nesbitt who will be 11 on the 18<sup>th</sup>  
 Kitty Cullen who will be 8 on the 19<sup>th</sup>  
 Luke Merryweather who will be 9 on the 19<sup>th</sup>  
 Olivia Jones who will be 3 on the 20<sup>th</sup>  
 Dylan Woodcock who will be 11 on the 27<sup>th</sup>  
 Alexander Davies who will be 11 on the 28<sup>th</sup>

...

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



### **AMPTHILL & DISTRICT LIONS CLUB**

We are now gearing up for the annual Moonraker Sponsored Night Walk  
 around Flitwick Moor on 12<sup>th</sup> October and to date we have in excess of 100  
 walkers taking part in their teams. This is run on a 50/50 basis with 50% going  
 to our charity for this year East Anglian Air Ambulance and 50% going to your  
 own charity or cause.

Ampthill & District Lions Club is always on the lookout for people who enjoy  
 having fun whilst at the same time find pleasure in helping others less  
 fortunate than themselves. We meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month  
 at The Jolly Coopers in Flitton at 8pm. If you would like to attend a meeting  
 please contact us on 0845 8332 883 or visit our website

[www.ampthilllions.btck.com](http://www.ampthilllions.btck.com) for more information.

Tony Davies – PR, Ampthill & District Lions Club

## THE MEPPERSHALL MESSENGER

### CONTRIBUTIONS

The editor welcomes contributions to the Messenger, whether as letters, articles or notices. Contributions should preferably be as attachments to e-mail but hand written contributions may be sent by post, left at the Editor's address below or in the folder kept at the Village Stores. Contributions should run to not more than one A5 page (except by prior arrangement) and should be received by the Editor not later than the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month for publication at the end of that month. Contributions received after the deadline may be held over.

### DISCLAIMER

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

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<u>Collating Dates for your Diaries</u>					
<u>2013</u>			<u>2014</u>		
October	28	<b>Double</b>	January	27	
November	25		February	24	
December	None		March	24	
			April	28	
			May	26	
			June	30	
			July	28	<b>Double</b>

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