





## WHAT'S IN YOUR MESSENGER THIS MONTH?

2	Editorial	
3	Readers' Letters	Kathy Hankins; John Thompson
5	News in Brief	Meppershall Rave;
7	Mad Hatters Theatre	Easter Schools
8	Notices	Who's Who & What's What; Donation
9	Meppershall Brownies	Winter Olympics; County Archivist
10	Parish Council Report	March Meeting
12	Meppershall Academy	'Save Our School' Painting and Gardening Day
13	Advert	The Orchard Children's Centre: Pop Up Cafés
14	Your Shout	
16	School Report	April 2014
18	Leisure Group	Kenwood House; Forthcoming Events & Shows
20	Financial News Update	Looking after Your Child's Interests
22	Henlow Academy	School Council 'Bake Off'
23	Denis Neilson	Where My Caravan Has Rested - Part 1
25	Jeremy Holden	Journal Entry from Sumatra (1)
27	The Lucy Pages	Evergreens
28	St.Francis of Assisi	Services
29	Sparks	Holiday Club Dates
30	Calendar of Events	April & May
31	2014 Summer Fair	News
32	Puzzle Page	Su Doku 117 & 118
33	Social Club	
34	Meppershall Festival	17 May 2014 – Tea Afternoon and Strictly Salsa
36	Puzzle Solutions	
37	Alan Rowland	Where the Water Goes Next
39	Film Review	'Only Lovers Left Alive'
41	Meppershall Players	
42	MGC	
44	Lewis Birt	The Tour of Southern England Begins...
46	Meppershall Tots	
47	Pre-school Ponderings	
48	Beds Police	Aggravated Burglary in Shillington
49	Beds Police	A507 Collision
50	Central Beds	Scams
51	The Bike Shed	Oswestry Road Racing Museum
53	Covers by Request	+ Significant Events
54	Notice Board	
55	St Mary's Church	April Services & Events
56	Message from St. Mary's	+ Dates for your Diary
57	Junior Church	Egg Hunt
58	Recipe	Cod or Haddock with Lime, Herb and Parmesan Crust
59	Birthdays	In April
60	The Team	Collating Dates

**EDITORIAL**

April is a month for making fresh starts: a month for spring cleaning and new brooms; new lambs and Easter bunnies and, for Christians, rebirth. So it is appropriate that The Messenger's new Volume, Volume 30, starts in April.



Fittingly, we have some new content too: we present the first of a new series 'Where My Caravan has Rested' (please sing if you want to!). This came about because I noticed the number of caravans and motor-homes parked around the village: I thought there must be some good caravanning stories out there. Sure enough, I struck a rich vein with Denis and Ruth Neilson who, among other trips, made two long tours in the USA in a Winnebago; episode 1 starts on page 23.

Another innovation starts on page 50 with my first selection of scams from the Central Beds Trading Standards Dept. Whether by phone, e-mail or a knock at the door, we are all as likely to be robbed by these silver-tongued operators as we are to be mugged. I intend this to be a regular page and my material will normally come from Central Beds, but if you hear of (or experience) a scam yourself, please get in touch so that more people can be warned.

Our village school, Meppershall CE Academy, is also in the spring cleaning and fresh start business. The poster on page 12, designed by a Yr 4 pupil, invites us all to lend a hand to smarten up the premises, which have become a bit dowdy. The governance of the school is also on the way up; the message from the Governors on page 11 marks the end of one phase of uncertainty for the school and, hopefully, the start of a process that will lead to a stable and lasting headship. For one or two of the Governors, this will be the third Head Teacher that they have had to select, so the school is now overdue for period of peace and prosperity, possibly boosted by an influx of new pupils from the new housing?

Dick Bulley

## LETTERS

### **Letter from Kathy Hankins:**

Dave and Kathy would like to thank everybody who came to our surprise party on 15 February, and a big thank you to our children who had organised this so brilliantly and kept the party a surprise. We could not have celebrated our Ruby Wedding Anniversary in a better way – with all our wonderful family and friends. We would like to thank everybody for their wonderful gifts.

Once again, thank you. We had an amazing evening, not to be forgotten for a long while.

Could we also thank Gill and Steve, Tracy and Russell, Alan and Laraine and Chris and Esme for their company and having such a lot of fun with us in Lanzarote – the ‘Mr and Mrs’ competition and the pink and blue spoons will be remembered for a long time.

Love, Dave and Kathy x

### **Letter from John Thompson:**

#### **PCC Faces Criminal Investigation**

A criminal investigation has been launched after a police and crime commissioner (PCC) leaked confidential information. The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) has launched an investigation into Bedfordshire PCC Olly Martins after he told a friend at the Home Office confidential details surrounding the highly publicised death in custody of Leon Briggs. The friend then divulged that information to a third party.

Mr Briggs (39) died on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2013, after he was detained and restrained by Bedfordshire Police officers and taken to Luton police station.

Mr Martins was formally reprimanded for the breach by the County’s Police and Crime Panel (PCP) in January 2014 which, after initially failing to do so, was instructed to record the incident as a misconduct matter. The matter was then referred to the IPCC to consider if an investigation was warranted. The IPCC confirmed on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2014 that it has launched a formal criminal investigation into the leaked information incident.

IPCC Commissioner John Dipple-Johnstone will oversee the criminal investigation, which is separate from the independent IPCC investigation into the death of Mr Briggs, and may take some months to complete. Mr. Dipple-Johnstone said the concern this matter will have caused to Mr Briggs’ family and the local community means there must be a fully-independent investigation

to determine the full circumstances of the disclosure of confidential information. He went on to say that the IPCC investigation will be independent and thorough, and he also wanted to reassure the community that the IPCC would not detract from the important work that was already underway in investigating what happened to Mr Briggs in police custody.

The PCP is obligated to suspend a PCC if they are charged with an offence which is punishable with a custodial sentence greater than two years' imprisonment. A PCC would be disqualified from remaining in post if convicted of any offence which may result in a custodial sentence.

The Messenger carried a detailed campaign piece from our PCC, Mr. Martins, in the lead up to his election. It would appear like several others who have been duly elected as PCCs, he has potentially fallen foul of the Law he agreed to work to uphold for his community.

John Thompson

### **Letter from Colin Veitch:**

Dear Editor,

I have a free exhibition currently on at the Central Bedfordshire Council offices, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, near Shefford, Beds SG17 5QT, which runs until 30 April 2014. The show is called HIDDEN GEMS.

It is made up of historical structures which litter central Bedfordshire. For example: the Grotto at the Swiss Garden, which is opening later this year; the make-over to St Mary's church, Clophill (the old church) which has undergone a huge transformation due to its loyal volunteers and a Lottery grant; the Thomas Archer's Pavilion at Wrest Park; much-needed TLC for Mackenzie & Moncur conservatories in the walled garden at Luton Hoo; and hidden Chicksands Priory, which can be viewed on Sundays by appointment, and the Ailsbury Mausoleum at Maulden and the structures of Houghton House. All have been given my collagraphic printing process and there are more fine examples on show. Pop along and pick up a free postcard. A framed print is an affordable £60. To see more of my work please visit [www.colinveitchart.co.uk](http://www.colinveitchart.co.uk) or visit the Cecil Higgins exhibition 'Recording Bedfordshire' where my painted postcards are on display until June 2014.



Many thanks  
Colin Veitch

*The above image is of Chicksands Priory which has become the official post card*

## MEPPERSHALL NEWS IN BRIEF

### Meppershall Rave Causes Thousands of Pounds Worth of Damage



*Strictly speaking this was not a Meppershall Rave at all, since it took place at Manor Farm, in the parish of Stondon. However, it briefly got Meppershall into the headlines, so, like the water tower, the symbol of Meppershall, we will borrow it, with thanks, from our neighbouring parish.*

Six people were arrested following a rave which took place in the early hours of Sunday morning (2<sup>nd</sup> March) in a barn in Meppershall. Bedfordshire Police were alerted to a large congregation of people in a field on Parrish's Manor Farm in Stondon Road, at around 2.30am. Officers had managed to intercept a van which was carrying a generator and audio equipment and three people were arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to cause a public nuisance as well as drugs offences. Revellers at the site – who at its peak numbered between 750 and 1000 – forced their way into a grain barn and managed to start a generator which allowed music to be played.

Officers attended the location and served Section 59 notices to a number of individuals which resulted in the rave being brought to a stop at around 2.30pm and the site had been emptied by 4pm. An 18 year old man was arrested on suspicion of possession of Class A drugs with intent to supply while two further people were arrested for possession offences. One man has been issued with a summons in relation to the Proceeds of Crime Act after he had approximately £2,500 seized, while two people were issued with summons in relation to criminal damage. A total of fourteen Fixed Penalty Notices were issued for traffic offences and one offence has been recorded under the Medicines Act (sale of Nitrous Oxide).

Inspector Russ Glenister said “The key to interrupting raves is early intervention and the facts that we were able to stop a substantial amount of audio equipment from reaching the site helped prevent this from becoming an unmanageable event. The location was in a dip and a long way from residential properties so disruption was kept to a minimum, but as a result of the actions of those in attendance, up to £100,000 worth of grain was contaminated. These ‘ravers’ may think that they aren’t causing issues but a farmer’s livelihood has been left at stake thanks to their actions. I would like to thank those members of the public who alerted us to this incident as well as officers from

Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire who worked extremely professionally in difficult circumstances to bring this incident to a swift resolution. While organisers and attendees may consider raves to be 'free parties' that they can enjoy with no harm to anyone else, residents' lives are disrupted by constant noise, vehicle nuisance and anti-social behaviour."

"While Bedfordshire Police has managed to stop a number of events before they started, thanks to early intelligence from the community, others couldn't be stopped due to a number of factors including the number of attendees and safety concerns. Raves are illegal parties that are unlicensed and often held in premises such as warehouses or unoccupied houses or in open areas such as woods, fields, agricultural buildings, quarries, business premises or any other isolated areas which don't belong to the event organisers" added Inspector Glenister.

"We get regular complaints from residents because they are being kept awake by loud music, as well as from the owners of the places where the parties are held about the damage being caused. I would urge farmers, landowners and business owners - especially over the long bank holiday weekends - to keep an eye on their properties, ensure that all entrances and exits are protected from unwanted vehicle and to report anything suspicious as quickly as possible. The key to disrupting raves is early intervention and we would urge the public to give us any help they can this spring and summer. That could include rave details spotted on the internet, or information on posters and flyers. Residents may even see convoys of cars circling an area while drivers wait for final directions."



Insp. Glenister warned organisers that "police will not tolerate illegal raves and they can expect to have their equipment seized. Raves present serious health and safety risk to attendees because they are unlicensed and are often associated with drugs. Organisers of illegal events should be aware that their equipment will be seized and anyone who commits a criminal offence could find themselves

being arrested and before the courts. If you are planning on attending raves beware, as you will more than likely be coming face-to-face with our officers."

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

*The report above and the picture of the helicopter come from Bedfordshire police; David Turner took the other picture.*

# **EASTER SCHOOLS** **ARE OPEN FOR BOOKINGS!**

After a very successful year last year, Mad Hatters Theatre School are running 'Easter Schools' during the Easter Holidays for 4-5yr olds and 6-18yr olds!!

## **Mini Hatters (4-5yrs)**

**Date: Tues 8<sup>th</sup> – Thurs 10<sup>th</sup> April 2014**

**Time: 10-2.30pm**

**Price: £45 for 3 days!!**

*Includes Dancing, Singing and Acting, PLUS arts and Crafts!!*

## **Main School Hatters (6-18yrs)**

**Date: Tues 15<sup>th</sup> - Thurs 17<sup>th</sup> April 2014**

**Time: 10-4pm**

**Price: £55 for 3 days!!**

*Includes Dancing, Singing and Acting, PLUS a filming workshop.*

Places are limited so if you are interested in your child/ren joining us, please contact me via this email asap with their name/s and age.

**Mad Hatters Theatre School**

**07789 510 899**

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



# **WHO'S WHO & WHAT'S WHAT IN MEPPERSHALL**

The next issue of our invaluable guide to organisations and businesses in Meppershall is planned to come out with our May issue. If there are changes to the committee or officers of your organisation, or if there are changes in the other items of information shown in the current guide, please notify the Editor or Assistant Editor by the copy date of 12<sup>th</sup> May

## **THANK YOU TO THE FORESTERS FRIENDLY SOCIETY**

**THE MESSENGER IS VERY GLAD TO  
ACKNOWLEDGE THE DONATION OF  
£250 VOTED TO US AT THE RECENT  
AGM OF THE ABOVE SOCIETY**

## MEPPERSHALL BROWNIES



This month we have had our own Winter Olympics. We had to improvise our activities somewhat due to the general lack of any mountains or snow, so with a great deal of imagination we competed in our own versions of bobsleigh, curling and ice hockey, which was fun and very noisy. We also invented a new winter sport involving eating chocolate, which definitely

should become an Olympic event, and one that Snowy Owl would be particularly good at and happy to practice daily.

We also had a very interesting visit from the County Archivist this month, Paul told us about the different uniforms and traditions of Brownies throughout its one hundred years and the girls were able to try on some of the old uniforms. Some of the girls came in their mum's uniforms complete with all the badges they had earned, and some even had the 10 items all brownies used to have to have to keep in their pockets. It was a really interesting evening. The girls really liked the dresses their mums would have worn and said they preferred them to their current uniforms.



We are currently busy planning for all our fun events to celebrate this year's Big Brownie Birthday. The preparations for the Big Brownie Boogie at the end of March are now nearly complete and we have a dance to learn. There is a Division Activity Day at Boyd Field being arranged for May, where the girls will have the opportunity to take part in archery, climbing or rafting, there will also be bouncy castles and slides, craft, outdoor cookery, a treasure hunt followed by a barbeque, and campfire singing in the evening. We also have our Big Brownie Stay Away at Etonbury School at the end of June to look forward to.

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.org.uk](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk) and select the parent tab. Please note that Brownies is very popular at the moment and places are limited and you may need to join a waiting list.

## MEPPERSHALL PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

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The March meeting of the Council received a report from our PCSO Gill Richardson who advised us of the Crime Figures since our last meeting, which were raised by the recent rave. It was pointed out that the event was held in Stondon Parish and should not be counted in the Meppershall figures. Gill was also pleased to inform us that across Bedfordshire 88 new full time officers will start their training in April and the numbers of PCSO's are also being increased. If you wish to be kept informed of incidents in our area please sign up for Ringmaster Alerts on their web page. <http://tinyurl.com/p7vq9k6>

Unitary Councillor Tony Brown was able to advise us that there will be no increase in the Central Beds Council Tax this year, whilst maintaining the same level of front line services. They have also managed to retain the 24 hour usage of concessionary bus passes which may have been changed to off peak travel to save costs. I would like to point out that like Central Beds, Meppershall has not increased its precept. However, Council Tax may still increase due to demands from the Police and Fire Service precepts.

In the Planning section of the meeting, the Council raised no comments or objections to an application for a new grain store at Bury Farm, Meppershall. You can easily find out about any planning application on the Central Beds Planning web site. <http://tinyurl.com/p44uyk8>.

The Highways working group reported that the new traffic calming scheme detailed last month will be implemented at the end of April when resurfacing works will be carried out in the High Street. This will result in temporary road closures, please look out for signs that will provide full information of the closures.

The Council agreed to refurbish the five Meppershall village signs that are at the entrances to the village as they are now very faded.

Wry Close allotments have 23 vacant plots which are available for rent from £12 per year. If you are interested please contact the Clerk at **01462 637531** or [clerk@meppershall.org](mailto:clerk@meppershall.org).

The new Village Hall project is still working its way through the legal process. At the meeting the Council agreed that the path to the rear of Crackle Hill could

be used as a temporary access during construction of the proposed access road. The surface will be improved so it will not be just a muddy track.

Over the past couple of months the Council has been examining a proposal from the Howard Cottage Housing Association for 15 new affordable dwellings at Coneygate. This land is surrounded by a pre-enclosure hedge which is protected by law. There is also at least one tree that is subject to a preservation order. However, the Council reviewed the 2010 Meppershall Housing Needs Survey which recommended the provision of 12 affordable dwellings, which will be provided by the proposed development behind the Village Hall. We have therefore put these points to the Association.

**Please note that the web links above use Tiny URL which is a safe way to shorten very long web addresses and send you to the correct page.**

Please remember that you are welcome to attend our meetings to speak about any subject during our open public session. Or you may just wish to come along and see what we do. Maybe you are thinking about becoming a Councillor at the next election. We look forward to seeing you. Our next meetings will be on 14<sup>th</sup> April and 12<sup>th</sup> May at 7.45 pm.

David Foskett

Chairman,

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

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### **A Message from the Governors of Shefford CE Academy**

Mrs Lyn Fairweather has retired from her post as Head Teacher at Meppershall Church of England Academy and the Governing Body wish her a long and happy retirement.

The Interim Headteacher, Mrs Nickie Moore, is in post until at least the end of the summer term and the Governing Body will be working with HR to make a permanent appointment as soon as possible.



# SAVE OUR SCHOOL

PLEASE HELP OUR SCHOOL TO BE CLEAN AND TIDY

DATE: SATURDAY 5<sup>th</sup> APRIL

TIME: 10:00am—2:00pm or longer

DRINKS AND SNACKS WILL BE PROVIDED

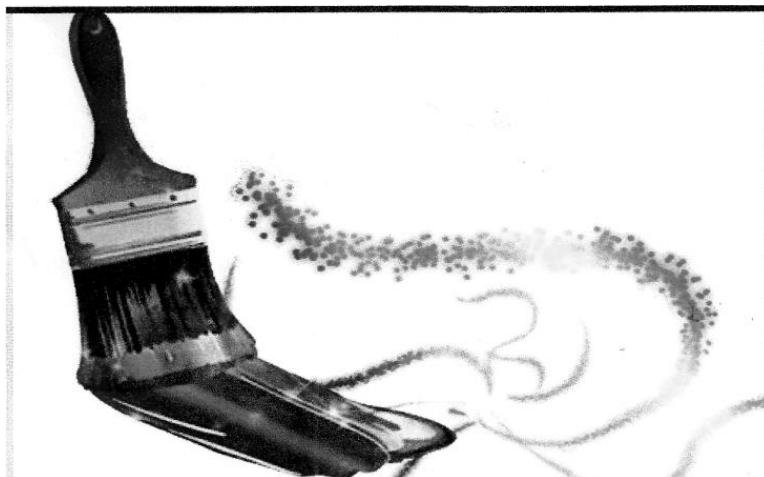
IF YOU ARE COMING YOU ARE MOST WELCOME

IF YOU HAVE ANY SPARE PAINT OR

GARDENING THINGS

CAN YOU PLEASE BRING THEM TO

MEPPERSHALL C.E. ACADEMY



Text and design by Stacey Butler – Yr 4.

# POP UP CAFÉS

Come along and try our **FREE** coffee mornings!

• Scones	• Tea
• Muffins	• Coffee
• Crumpets	• Children's Drinks

Meppershall Village Hall: 1:30 – 3:00pm

Thursday 10th April

Thursday 1st May

Thursday 5th June

Everyone welcome - Ages 0-99

Toddler and Baby area

Orchard Children's Centre

Shefford Lower School, School Lane, Shefford,  
Beds

SG17 5XA

Tel. 01462 615115/07504657383

Donations welcomed

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# **YOUR SHOUT**

## **with Trevor Thorley**



What a difference a few days can make! After all the heavy rain we have at last got some sun. Taking advantage of this Janet and I today managed a cycle ride followed with a walk over Crackle Hill and down to the river in Campton. We can all plead guilty at some point in time to taking-for-granted this wonderful scenery we have in Meppershall; we are so, so fortunate.

On 1<sup>st</sup> April it will be Janet's birthday and as a treat we are going down to Wembley Arena to see the Torville and Dean 'Dancing on Ice' show. Our daughter and family have also bought her tickets for later in the month for the Robin Cousin's 'Ice' show in Milton Keynes so be assured she will have a 'n'ice time. As a teenager, Janet got all the necessary medals at the Southampton ice rink and was invited to join the ice shows (before we met) but her father, being protective at the time, wouldn't give permission. She tried to teach me to skate but I was a bit like Todd Carter, I could go forward but not backwards and I soon learnt that reversing really was a necessity. We started going on skiing holidays and that was something that both of us could do well. By a strange quirk of coincidence my sister's husband was also born on 1<sup>st</sup> April; they moved to Australia in 1966. Gordon is younger than Janet by one year.

### **SUNDAY STROLL:**

The third of the strolls took place on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March. It started from St. Mary's Church at 10.30am with a healthy gathering of participants and took a route over Crackle Hill to Campton, passing through Chicksands Woods and on to Haynes, finishing at The Greyhound pub for refreshments. If this interests you and you would like to join in, call James on 01462 857836; these walks take place on the second Sunday of the month.

## JOHN WINTER:

A regular member of St Mary's congregation, HAPPY BIRTHDAY was sung in church for John who was 90 years of age on 25<sup>th</sup> February. John hails from Cumbria but moved to Meppershall some time ago with his wife; sadly his wife died a few years ago. John was overwhelmed by the many cards he received from friends in the village and told me that he had these on display around his bungalow. John spent the day quietly by taking a special lunch with his daughter and grandson.

*(He also received a Messenger cake – see p53)*

## ON THE MAP:

This time, for the 'wrong' reason, the Illegal rave earlier in March put Meppershall on the map in circumstances we could have well done without. Recalling other occasions when we were briefly famous, The Meppershall Messenger had a national award a few years ago, and the late Kenny Ball concerts did Meppershall heaps of good. I understand too, that a lady in the village 'showed' one of her dogs at Crufts in March; I'm sure she deserves congratulations from all of us for this great achievement and hope that she enjoyed the occasion.

We look forward to what the summer has in store for us with the fly-past of the Spitfire being a great attraction to the Summer Fair.

Remember It's Your Shout! Call Trevor on 01462 813357 [trevor.thorley1@btinternet.com](mailto:trevor.thorley1@btinternet.com)

*(In my roll-call of contributors in the last issue, I unaccountably omitted Trevor. This was pure oversight (call it a senior moment!) because Trevor deserves thanks for his continued contributions every bit as much as all those I listed. Very sorry, Trevor - Ed)*

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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- April 2014**

Meppershall CE Academy held its first Pancake Races on Shrove Tuesday. This was an event where the children were able to watch and cheer as their Mums and Dads provided the entertainment! We had individual races and relay races and all competitors wore silly hats and aprons. This was a lovely occasion and everybody had lots of fun and enjoyment. The MAPTA (Meppershall Academy Parent Teacher Association) ladies were busy providing drinks and pancakes and we appreciate all the support they continue to give the school. The races finished off with a special race. Two very trusting mums were blindfolded and led over an obstacle course by children that were not their own! This was to demonstrate our Christian Value for this month which is 'Koinonia'.

'Koinonia' is a hard word to translate and comes from Ancient Greece, but it roughly means fellowship, community, working together and sharing. The school is working hard to demonstrate this Value and we were lucky to attend a special service on Ash Wednesday at St Mary's Church where we were able to worship together as a school community. Rev. Roni taught us how to get closer to God during this season of Lent: "Pick yourself up, brush yourself down, turn around and get ready to start again."

The following plea for help is an extract from a Newsletter to parents: "On Saturday 5th April Meppershall CE Academy is holding a "Spring Clean Event". We would like to work together to tidy up the school grounds and make the school environment more attractive. For example, we are hoping to re-paint some of the benches, get rid of the weeds, sweep up last year's Autumn leaves, throw away broken or unwanted equipment. We have already had various offers of help, which is lovely. The school will be open from 10.00am-2.00pm on this day. If you are able to support us, please turn up. It doesn't mean you have to be here for the full four hours! Any time you can give the school is fine. Please be aware that this will be a 'working event' and whilst your children are

welcome to come and help they cannot come to play on the equipment etc. I hope you will support us with this request.

We would be delighted if any members of the Meppershall Community would like to help us on this day.

We held a competition in School for an advertisement for this very significant event and the winner was Stacey Butler whose entry appears on page 12 of this magazine. *(Sorry we were not able to print it in colour, Stacey – Ed)*

The school website has pictures of the Pancake Races and various events that have happened at the school, including World Book Day. Please have a look - <http://www.meppershallschool.org.uk/> .

Finally, Lynn Fairweather, the previous Headteacher has retired and we wish her well.

**Nickie Moore**  
**Acting Head Teacher**

## THE BEDFORD MODEL ENGINEERING SOCIETY SUMMERFIELD MINIATURE RAILWAY

*(Off A600 just past Haynes bend)*

### PUBLIC RUNNING DAYS IN 2014

From 11.00 am to 4.00 pm

<b><u>April</u></b>		<b><u>August</u></b>	
Sunday	6 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	6 <sup>th</sup>
Bank Holiday: Sun & Mon	20 & 21 <sup>st</sup>	Wednesday	13 <sup>th</sup>
<b><u>May</u></b>		Bank Holiday: Sun & Mon	24 & 25 <sup>th</sup>
Bank Holiday: Sun & Mon	4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	31 <sup>st</sup>
Sunday	18 <sup>th</sup>	<b><u>September</u></b>	
Bank Holiday: Sun & Mon	25 <sup>th</sup> & 26 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	21 <sup>st</sup>
<b><u>June</u></b>		<b><u>October</u></b>	
Sunday	8 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	19 <sup>th</sup>
Sunday	22 <sup>nd</sup>	<b><u>December</u></b>	
<b><u>July</u></b>		Saturday & Sunday <b>Santa Specials</b> <b>Pre-booking essential</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup>
Sunday	13 <sup>th</sup>		
	27 <sup>th</sup>		

## SHEFFORD LEISURE GROUP

By Enid Pamment



In February we visited Hampstead and Kenwood House, an English Heritage property.

We made our way to The King William IV Public House to meet our guide Owen before going in for coffee and refreshments. After this our Guide began a walking tour of Hampstead Village, stopping many times to give us the benefit of his vast knowledge of Hampstead, the famous people who have lived and were buried there. The tour took us on a circular trip around the village so that we found ourselves back at the pub for a Roast Turkey lunch. We then boarded the coach for Kenwood House, passing through parts of Hampstead we had not previously seen.

On arrival at Kenwood House we had a short walk to enable us to view the skyline of the City of London, before Owen gave us the history of the house, which had been closed to the public for a considerable time to be refurbished by English Heritage. There was time to view the many famous paintings and to visit the refectory for a last 'cuppa' before saying our farewell to Owen and returning to Shefford.

At last we have been given a date for the Thursford Christmas Spectacular, Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2014, matinee performance commencing at 2pm. I am pleased to say that we have been allocated good seats, so once again we should all be able to enjoy a superb day.

We regret we are unable to report on our 'Get Together' in this newsletter as the event took place after the copy date, so a full report will be given in the May Newsletter.

*A colleague of mine from Langford, also a member of Group Travel, has a 5-day break going to Weston Super Mare from Monday 19<sup>th</sup> – Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2014. Staying in a comfortable hotel, half board with day trips included - £299.00 per person. If interested please contact Joan on 01462 636626 for further information. Just a few places remaining.*

### **Forthcoming Events 2014 (kindly telephone for more details):**

Man-Made Wonders at the Heart of Essex	Wed 9 <sup>th</sup> April
The London Olympic Legacy Tour	Sat 31 <sup>st</sup> May
City Cruise, Lunch & The Tower of London	Sat 14 <sup>th</sup> June
Singing in the Rain – MK Theatre – Matinee	Wed 2 <sup>nd</sup> July
Bedford River Cruise, with lunch	Tue 29 <sup>th</sup> July
Harry Potter	Date TBA
Waverley Paddle Steamer	Sun 12 <sup>th</sup> October
Highgrove House garden Tour	Fri 17 <sup>th</sup> October
The Lord mayor's Show	Sat 8 <sup>th</sup> November
Thursford Christmas Spectacular	Wed 26 <sup>th</sup> November

### **Holidays: 2014 (kindly telephone for more details)**

Jersey – flying from Stanstead and staying at the Metropole Hotel on half-board basis, near to beach and town centre.	Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup> to Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> April
Scarborough – Hotel Esplanade – inc 2 day-excursions	September 8 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>
Tinsel & Turkey at the Claremont Hotel, Eastbourne	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> to Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> December

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

#### **Matinees – Leaving Shefford at 11am – price includes coach:**

Lion King – Lyceum Theatre – Stalls	Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup> April
Tchaikovsky Gala + Fireworks – RAH – Arena Seats	Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> May
Les Miserables – Queens Theatre – Dress Circle	Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> May
Thriller Live (Michael Jackson) – Lyric Theatre – Dress Circle	

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

Miss Saigon – Prince Edward Theatre – Dress Circle	Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> June
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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 [enid.pamment@gmail.com](mailto:enid.pamment@gmail.com)

***Enid Pamment – Shefford Leisure Group***



## FINANCIAL NEWS UPDATE

with Jon Ingarfill

Raising a child is a costly business - nappies, clothes, pocket money and school trips. It doesn't get any easier once they reach adulthood age. The chances are high that they will need financial help to fund a gap year, or to get a foot on the property ladder.

Looking after your children doesn't end when they start work and have a family of their own. You may want to ensure that the wealth you have created is preserved, and passed on to them. Preserving as much of your wealth as possible requires careful estate planning, otherwise you may not pass on as much as you anticipate. Inheritance Tax (IHT) is a 40 per cent tax imposed on the worldwide estate of anyone who is UK-domiciled on all assets above the nil rate band of £325,000. The nil rate band can be passed to a surviving spouse if not used, increasing the survivor's nil rate band to up to £650,000. The threshold is normally updated each year in the Budget, but the Coalition has said that it will now be frozen until at least April 2015.

One of the simplest mitigation tools is a Will. Not only can a well drafted Will mitigate IHT, it is also crucial for anyone wanting to protect their family from a huge headache after they die. Only with an appropriately drafted Will can you be certain that your estate will go to the right people. If you do not have a valid Will, you risk depriving your family of their home, increasing their Inheritance Tax (IHT) burden and leaving parts of your estate in the wrong hands. In addition, Trusts can also help you to protect and preserve your estate as they allow you give away assets but restrict or direct how and when they are used. There are many different types of Trust, some straightforward and others complicated. A common use is to hold assets on behalf of a child until they are old enough to look after their own money. However, it is vital that you seek expert help before you take the plunge as there may be income or Capital Gains Tax as well as Inheritance Tax to be considered.

To ensure that the assets are invested in accordance with the terms of the Trust you should appoint trustees who have the necessary skills and knowledge. It often makes sense to use professional trustees. Family members often find it difficult to act objectively. Money and family arguments are often driven by emotion rather than what is correct and appropriate. The appointment of a neutral, professional trustee would avoid such conflicts. Professional trustees will also have the expertise, knowledge and experience to identify potential problems, provide solutions and promote good governance.

Another method for helping to reduce any potential IHT is gifting away money before you die. This can be done through potentially exempt transfers (PETs) which revolve around the famous 'seven year rule'. Put simply, if you wish to pass assets to family and friends during your lifetime, these gifts will only be free of IHT if you survive seven years from the date of making the gift. If you die within this period, potentially the full value of the gifted assets will be added back into your estate (albeit only the value as at the date of the gift and not any subsequent growth in value). There are some lifetime gifts that are exempt from IHT. You can gift up to £3,000 a year, which can be divided between as many people as you like. You can also use the previous year's allowance if it has not been used. Parents are each allowed to give away £5,000 to their children when they get married, while grandparents can give £2,500.

Meanwhile, if you are saving on behalf of your child or children it makes sense to ensure that the method used is as tax-efficient as possible – and to start as early as possible. A Junior ISA offers parents, grandparents, etc. the opportunity to invest regular contributions or lump sums on behalf of a child in a tax-efficient way. Replacing the Child Trust Fund, the Junior ISA provides the same tax advantages as a standard ISA: tax-efficient interest on cash deposits, no further liability to tax on dividends and no Capital Gains Tax. Of course, the favourable tax treatment may not be maintained in the future.

Another solution is a Bare Trust, which can be used to shelter investments in funds, single shares, or even property, on behalf of children, grandchildren, godchildren, nieces or nephews, and which can be accessed at 18 years of age. The Trust can be used to offset any gains against the child's annual Capital Gains Tax allowance and any income against their Income Tax allowance. If you are the parent, however, you are liable for tax on any income above £100 a year from the investments.

Setting up a pension for a child (maximum contribution of £3,600 p.a.) is one of the most tax efficient gifts you can make. You get tax relief on the contribution and the child benefits from tax-free growth. Because the money is invested over such a long term – up to 55 years or more – you have the luxury of taking a long view on the investment, which allows you to really go for maximum returns. Plus, if your child is financially dependent on you, you need to make sure you have provisions in place to replace your income in the event of death, illness or disability.

## FOCUS ON: THE SCHOOL COUNCIL

The School Council provides a forum where children have a voice, and an opportunity to express their opinions on various issues, including suggesting ideas to make the School even better. One or two representatives are chosen from each class to be on the School Council. There are several different roles within the Council, such as the chairperson, vice chairperson, treasurer, secretary, VLE editor, newsletter editor and website editor.

The Council meets every Tuesday lunch time to discuss the issues that are presenting themselves and to consider how to deal with them, as well as talking about further improvements that could be made.

This year the School Council are trying to raise money for the Teenage Cancer Trust. They will be holding two events in the Summer Term, including one at the Summer Fair. Their second goal is to raise £100 to buy new books for the Library (to be chosen by pupils). After the Christmas raffle and the Cake Bake off they have already raised an amazing £140

## THE SCHOOL COUNCIL 'BAKE OFF'

Below are some of the amazing entries for the Cake Bake Off.



Congratulations to the winners Poppy Soden and Ben Byers.

## WHERE MY CARAVAN HAS RESTED

By Denis Neilson

### Part 1 - in which we meet Ruth, Denis and Winnie

Ruth and I have been camping, caravanning and motorhoming for most of our married lives. Why? Well, it's a way of travelling where you don't have to live out of a suitcase and if a place does not come up to expectations, you can move on. It's also nice to have personal things around you and, most important of all, you can have a cuppa when you want one!

We had decided long ago that when we retired we would travel, so a couple of years before we left work, we changed our caravan for a motorhome, deciding that was the best option for what we had in mind. Bertha, for so we christened her, was 10 years old and German built but came with no handbook or other information. We decided to join the owners club, primarily to get information on our purchase, which led to us joining a group of hardy fellow members to welcome in the new Millennium in the wilds of Scotland. One evening at a group meal we heard two couples talking about a planned trip to the USA. It appeared that, along with another couple, they had bought a used Winnebago Chieftain motor home in Florida and were going to share it for two years, then sell it. The idea was that each couple had three months' use per year and it would be stored for the fourth quarter. We expressed an interest and since they had already got their plans worked out we would accept the winter months for both years. This was readily agreed to, so we paid our share of the purchase price and set-up costs, and waited eleven months to have our first taste of Time Sharing a motorhome.

The whole plan was undertaken on trust. No paperwork. One couple was designated as owner and they paid the insurance, road tax and other fixed costs. These were then split four ways. Everybody paid for the fuel they used and the call costs on the group's mobile phone. We all agreed to have the oil changed every 6000 miles at our own expense but tyres and major repairs would be evenly distributed. The method of changeover was simple: the following couple would fly out to where the first couple would be flying home from. We knew early on that our pick up would be Phoenix Arizona and we booked flights for 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2000.

November came and we were on our way. It was nice to be met at the airport by John and Jen (the couple we were taking over from) and to be taken directly to the motorhome where we immediately settled down to a gin and tonic.



How many times can you start a package holiday like that? We saw Winnie (her nickname) for the first time and she looked big compared to Bertha back



home, she was 27ft long, 12ft high and around 9ft wide with big armchair seats in the cab, separated by a huge engine cowling which I was convinced was as big as a Robin Reliant. The refrigerator was larger than we had at home and the TV was a hulk of a beast. The bath was hip style but the shower was a standard walk-in cubicle

and the bedroom contained a queen size island bed, a second TV, a radio and wardrobes – sheer luxury. This mobile palace was also equipped with two bikes strapped to the rear so we could potter about at our leisure. Being the last couple in the year meant that most of the ‘essentials’ in the form of bedding, cutlery and the like had been accumulated over the previous nine months, so we really wanted for nothing. In order to make the vehicle a little ‘British’ we had a nodding bulldog mascot on the ledge in front of the windscreen called Winston (naturally), who was flanked by two Union Jacks. Communication with home was mainly through e-mails using an e-mail device with a keyboard on which you composed your message. To send or receive you had to use a public telephone as the machine had a fold-out ear/mouthpiece that cupped onto the phone handset; the messages went down the line and a mobile phone would be the wrong shape. It worked very well.

We have already said that Winnie was big (to us, not being truck or bus drivers) but for the more technical among you, a few statistics: she had an unladen weight of just over 7 tons, was pushed by her 7.4 litre Chevy (V8) 290HP petrol engine, via an automatic gearbox, which provided enough deep-throated ‘plop plop’ noise to sound comforting. The fuel tank held 75 gallons and consumption was around 9 miles per gallon which, in 2000, was a lot cheaper than it would be now. You soon learned how to fix the trigger on the petrol filler hose so that you did not have to hold it in all the time. Believe me; gripping a fuel trigger while you pump in something near to 300 litres was more torture than paying for it! The fresh water tank held 76 gallons and the waste tank 55, plus a toilet holding tank of reasonable capacity. This storage capacity, coupled with a built-in generator (running off the vehicle's fuel and start-able from the cab seat), meant that you could easily have lived in Winnie for a week without any outside help, but she was old, she leaked (we never completely solved that problem but we did significantly reduce the effects) and she rattled like nobody's business, but she was our home, our constant companion and part of our adventure. Simply put, she was our WINNIE.

*To be continued*

## LIFE ON THE WILD SIDE

By JEREMY HOLDEN



Journal entry from Sumatra (1)  
13 February 2014:

The sky is uncharacteristically white and the mountains appear on the horizon like faded shadows. Our driver tells me it is smoke from burning forests in Sumatra's eastern Riau province. The huge cone of Gunung Kerinci, Indonesia's largest volcano, is wraithlike, its lower slopes lost in an opalescent haze, above which the exposed summit seems to float. This should be the monsoon season, not a time for forest fires. It feels like a grim portent that perhaps the loss of forest in places like Sumatra is now affecting the climate.

Gunung Tujuh, where we are heading to conduct high altitude mammal surveys, is also a gauzy shadow. Leached of detail it appears huge – a trick of perspective, as I have noticed on clear days after rain how small and close the mountains look.

As we climb we leave behind the sounds of civilisation as the signal strength bars on our phones slowly vanish. Incommunicado, we board pirogues to cross the lake at the crater summit to our campsite. Travelling like this, through a timeless environment in a hollowed out tree trunk, gives me a visceral sense of the past. Pirogues were probably the first mode of transport ever fashioned by humans. To know they are still used in landscapes that haven't changed since the dawn of our species gives me hope that all is not lost just yet.

A lapse of memory this morning in town meant I forgot to collect our field supplies from the shop where they were waiting, bound in a cardboard box. This means we are without the luxury items – tinned fish, coffee, and the local potato sweets known as *dodol*. The candles were in the box, too, so once the sun sets we are in darkness but for

the camp fire. The moon rises overhead and one of my guides asks if there is jungle there. It is dead, I explain, but once it was part of Earth, knocked into an obsequious orbit by some unimaginable collision. I want to laugh at his next question. 'If it was knocked off the Earth why is it up in the sky and not down?' But of course it is quite a reasonable one for someone almost completely unschooled. Using a tomato as the Earth and the campfire as the sun I demonstrate planetary motions, the albedo, and why the length of Sumatra's days and nights are almost the same. The conversation spirals out into the vastness of the Universe until all our minds are twisting like wrung towels and our planet feels tiny and precarious. The fragile tomato Earth has grown warm in my hands. I eat it, guiltily aware of the symbolism.

*To be continued*

#### Danau Sakti Morning



# THE LUCY PAGES

By Lucy Standbridge

Aged 12



For this month's issue, I interviewed Karen Long who runs the local Evergreens group. You may have seen their article in the Messenger, so I thought I'd find out more.

I found Karen very approachable and chatty. She works as an occupational therapist, so she often works with older people.

The Evergreens is group where senior citizens can go and have a chat, play cards and other games like Scrabble; every week they also hold a raffle. They all sit round one big table, and half way through they have afternoon tea which Jenny, the land lady of The Sugar Loaf, kindly makes for them.

The Group originated from Meppershall's WI, but for older people. The Evergreens has been running for several years now, but they only have 7 members at the moment, as people come and go. I asked what the age range is, and Karen said "It is mostly people who are around 80-90 years old, but any OAP's are welcome".

They have 2 months off in the winter, because of the cold, and sometimes go on a day out in the summer when the weather is better. Last summer the Evergreens went out for lunch, and they all said they had a great time. At Christmas they have a Christmas Party, where the Village Choir come and sings for them. Last year The Village Festival gave them a donation of £500 and this year they are in partnership with the Meppershall GNOMES (The Good Neighbour Group), because the Evergreens are quite likely to use them. "Our members really appreciate donations, for example, one gentleman donated eight boxes of chocolates and some toiletries. They were really grateful." Karen explained.

I found out on [ageuk.org](http://ageuk.org) that "Some older people don't see anyone for weeks" and "Half of all people aged 75 and over live alone, and 1 in 10 people aged 65 or over say they are always or often feel lonely – that's just over a million people". According to Age UK's surveys, half of all older people consider the television their main form of company, so the Evergreens is a good way to meet new people and make some friends.

They meet in The Sugar Loaf on Thursdays from 2:30 to 4:00pm. Karen told me that "it's a good way to meet new people and it brings the community together". If you're shy, Karen is happy to pick a few people up along the way. If you are interested or have any questions contact Karen on 01462 850182.

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

**HOLY WEEK SERVICES**

<b>PALM SUNDAY OF PALMS (13th APRIL)</b>	<b>9.00am</b>	<b>BLESSING &amp; PROCESSION</b>
		<b>MASS, with Reading of Passion of Christ</b>

	<b>5.15pm</b>	<b>As above.</b>
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<b>MAUNDY THURSDAY (17th APRIL)</b>	<b>8.00pm</b>	<b>EVENING MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER</b>
	<b>followed by Watching at Altar of Repose until Midnight. Compline at 10.00pm</b>	

<b>GOOD FRIDAY (18th APRIL)</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>MORNING PRAYER</b>
	<b>11.00am</b>	<b>SHEFFORD TOWN WALK OF WITNESS</b>
	<b>3.00pm</b>	<b>SOLEMN LITURGY OF PASSION OF THE LORD</b>

<b>HOLY SATURDAY (19th APRIL)</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>MORNING PRAYER</b>
	<b>11.00-12 Noon</b>	<b>CONFESSION</b>
	<b>3.00-4.00pm</b>	<b>“ “</b>
	<b>8.30pm</b>	<b>EASTER VIGIL</b>

<b>EASTER DAY (20th APRIL)</b>	<b>9.00am &amp; 5.15pm</b>	<b>MASS.</b>
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The Sparks team are pleased to announce that the  
dates for this year's Sparks holiday club are  
**Monday 11th-Thursday 14th August 2014**

10am-2pm

For ages 5-12

@ St Mary's Church

Please make a note of these dates!

Dear Parents,

This year's Sparks sees a change of date from our usual slot, but there will still be the same lively mix of fun and games whilst exploring a bible theme. Please save the dates in your diary and look out for registration forms nearer the time.

Volunteers needed! Please contact Dawn 816962, Morag 643387 or e-mail [dawn.abbatt@gmail.com](mailto:dawn.abbatt@gmail.com)

Best Wishes

The Sparks Team



## CALENDAR OF MEPPERSHALL EVENTS

### ***April 2014***

<b><i>Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup></i></b>		
Evergreens	2.15 – 4.00 pm	The Sugar Loaf
Annual Parochial Church Meeting		
<b><i>Saturday 5<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
Regenerate the School Grounds	10.00 am	Meppershall C E Academy
Art Exhibition	10.00 – 4.00 pm	Northill Village Hall
<b><i>Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> – Thursday 12<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
Mini Hatters (age 4-5 years)	10.00 am- 2.30 pm	Shefford Methodist Ch Hall
<b><i>Saturday 12<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
Quiet Day	10.00 am – 3.30 pm	Providence Baptist Church, Shefford Rd, Clifton
<b><i>Sunday 13<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
Second Sunday Stroll	2.30 pm	From St Mary's Car Park
<b><i>Monday 14<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
Parish Council Meeting	7.45 pm	Village Hall
<b><i>Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> – Thursday 17<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
Hatters Theatre School ( 6 -18 yrs)	10.00 am – 4.00 pm	Shefford Methodist Ch Hall
<b><i>Thursday 17<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
Evergreens	2.15 – 4.00 pm	The Sugar Loaf
<b><i>Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
Tea & Coffee Social	2.00 – 3.30 pm	St Mary's Rectory

### ***May 2014***

<b><i>Thursday 1<sup>st</sup></i></b>		
Evergreens	2.15 – 4.00 pm	The Sugar Loaf
<b><i>Monday 12<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
Parish Council Meeting	7.45 pm	Village Hall
<b><i>Thursday 15<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
Evergreens	2.15 – 4.00 pm	The Sugar Loaf
<b><i>Saturday 17<sup>th</sup></i></b>		
Meppershall Festival:		
Tea Afternoon & Strictly Salsa	From 2.00 pm	Village hall
Evening Concert	7.30 pm	Village Hall

# Meppershall Summer Fair News

Red Arrows at  
Meppershall Summer Fair 2013  
Photo by Bryan King.



**Well, that was last year!**

...and we already have confirmation that an **RAF Spitfire**  
**will do a fly-past this year!**

So put the date in your diary: **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> June**

We are looking forward to welcoming back many of our loyal stallholders and local organisations offering various products and activities.

**Below is an article from Steve Elliott, one of our regular stall holders:**

Lana Bags always look forward to returning to the Meppershall Summer Fair. It has been a springboard of popularity for the Lana name brand within the local area. We have made many contacts which in turn have helped to grow our business. The fair is always run with professionalism and has an excellent array of quality stalls and attractions. Lana Bags are looking forward to showing our latest range of fashion handbags, satchels, purses and scarves at the fair this June.

Best wishes, Steve and Esther, Lana Bags

Thank you very much Steve & Esther for your kind feedback. We look forward to seeing you in June.

**We are constantly seeking new and different stalls**, so if you know of someone who would like to join us please do ask them to **contact Linda Primett by email on**  
[lindaprimett@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lindaprimett@hotmail.co.uk) Or Tel 01462 815629

## NEW FOR 2014

In addition to all the usual wonderful things you see at the Fair,  
we have something new...hot off the press (or out of the oven perhaps!)

**THE GREAT MEPPERSHALL BAKE OFF will debut.**

A new marquee 'jam' packed with a vast array of **foodie stalls** will also be home to  
**our first baking competition.**

**Whether you're amateur or novice**, 5 or 105 all you need is an interest in cooking  
and an entry form!

Get your thinking caps on and recipe books out...we have **two certified WI Judges**  
coming all the way from Northamptonshire to judge your wonderful creations...be it  
bread, pastries, cakes or a show-stopper signature bake along the theme of  
'Meppershall'!

**Completely fun, for all ages...**with even the odd soggy bottom!

**More details to follow but if you can't wait 'til then, contact**

[alli.roberts@hotmail.com](mailto:alli.roberts@hotmail.com)

## PUZZLE PAGE

### Su Doku 117 - Hard

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

### Su Doku 118 - Medium

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

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

(Solutions on page 36 – with thanks to Paul Smith for a fresh delivery of puzzles)

## MEPPERSHALL SOCIAL CLUB

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Sundays : 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 charity – see below.

Meppershall Social Club is resuming its Annual Snooker Tournament,  
Check your closets and get your cues out and dust them off.  
Please contact Luke Harris on 07527 594145 to enter your name  
into the Draw.

Open to 18+ years of age with a £3.00 entry fee.

Alternatively if snooker isn't your game how about an Annual Darts  
Tournament? Luke would gladly arrange this for you if you contact  
him on the above number.

Meat & Fish raffle: Draw every Friday at 9.00 pm, after Bingo.

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April: Karen's Karaoke

The new Committee and Club members have decided that the  
charities for this year will be:

Bedford Critical Care & Macmillan Uro-oncology Specialist Nurses.  
Proceeds from the bottle on the bar and selected charity events will  
be split 50/50 between the above charities.

Meppershall Social Club now has an email address of:-

[meppershallsocialclub@outlook.com](mailto:meppershallsocialclub@outlook.com) for any queries or enquiries.

# MEPPERSHALL FESTIVAL 2014

**SATURDAY 17TH MAY, VILLAGE HALL from 2pm**

In aid of  
St. Mary's Church, Meppershall Brownies and Meppershall GNOMES  
(Good Neighbour Group)



## TEA AFTERNOON and STRICTLY SALSA!!!

Join us for tea and cake and a bit of 'Strictly' action,  
with **Salsa Trio**,  
the best kept secret **Salsa** club in Bedfordshire.

All welcome – spectators and dancers.  
Just drop in at the Hall between 2 and 5 pm.  
**Tea & Cake** – donations to St Mary's Church  
**Dancers** (especially beginners) - tickets from Colette and on the door:  
adults £3, children/students £1.50  
**discount** for families and groups of 4 or more

For more info, please contact:

Carolyn Holmes, 07868 530221

[carolynmholmes@btinternet.com](mailto:carolynmholmes@btinternet.com)

or

Colette, 07831 111062

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

**MEPPERSHALL FESTIVAL 2014**  
**SATURDAY 17TH MAY, VILLAGE HALL**  
**at 7.30pm**



**EVENING CONCERT**

Do you sing or play a musical instrument?

Are you interested in showcasing your musical talents?

Everyone is welcome: singers and instrumentalists,  
beginners and experts; performing classical, jazz, rock  
and more...

For more information, please contact:

Colette, 07831 111062  
[colettehouse@gmail.com](mailto:colettehouse@gmail.com)

or

Carolyn Holmes, 07868 530221  
[carolynmholmes@btinternet.com](mailto:carolynmholmes@btinternet.com)

**FANCY JOINING THE FESTIVAL COMMITTEE?**

We would love to hear from you.  
Call Colette or Carolyn.



### Solution to Su Doku 117

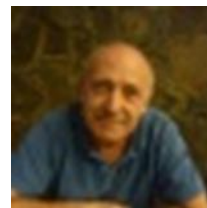
2	6	4	1	9	7	5	8	3
3	9	7	5	8	6	4	1	2
5	8	1	3	4	2	9	6	7
4	2	6	9	5	1	7	3	8
7	1	3	4	6	8	2	9	5
9	5	8	7	2	3	6	4	1
8	7	5	6	1	4	3	2	9
6	3	2	8	7	9	1	5	4
1	4	9	2	3	5	8	7	6

### Solution to Su Doku 118

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

## Where the Water Goes Next

By Alan Rowland



With a population of over 1,750, taken from the 2011 census, Meppershall produces approximately  $350\text{m}^3$  (77,000 galls) of sewage per day which disappears into the drainage system, out of sight and forgotten until there is a blockage and the manholes are overflowing.

How many people know what happens to our waste water after we have pulled the chain (to coin the phrase) or pressed the button on the lid of the cistern as we do these days.

Our household drains are connected to the main sewer infrastructure located under the roads which directs the sewage from the village to the foul pumping station in Hoo Road. A few houses at the Shefford end of the village are exceptional in being connected directly to the pumping station by a pipe under the field. The pumping station is a large sewage holding tank normally fitted with 2 pumps which operate at set levels to discharge the sewage to Shillington Sewage Treatment Works for further processing. A chemical is added into the pump chamber for odour control. The operation of the pump station is monitored 24/7 by the Anglian Water telemetry system in case of a failure.

**Sewage treatment** is a natural biological treatment process for removing contaminants from wastewater and household sewage domestic runoff (effluents). Other types of treatment are used for effluents from commercial and industrial facilities where special processes are required.

The treatment includes physical and biological processes to remove those biological contaminants in the waste water. The treatment process produces an environmentally safe and clean liquid waste stream (or treated effluent) suitable for discharge into a water course (rivers or streams) and solid waste (or treated sludge) which can be reused, usually as farm fertilizer. The discharge to water courses is controlled and monitored by the Environment Agency to ensure it is compliant with the high standards required for the river outfall.

Due to these stringent high standards imposed by the EA our streams and rivers are now environmentally very good, great for Plant life, Fish for Otters and Kingfishers etc.

Most domestic Sewage Treatment Works consist of the following:

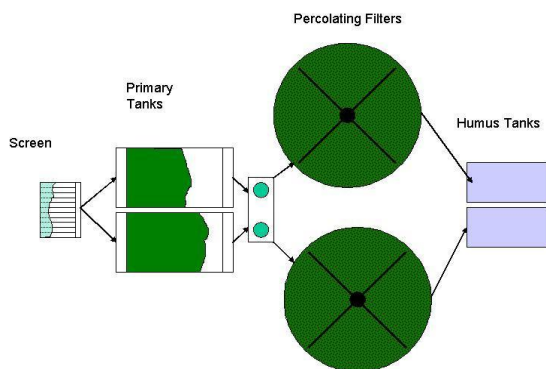
**Inlet Screen:** For the removal of large rag and non-decomposing materials

**Primary Settlement Tank:** To allow heavier solids to separate and sink to the tank bottom where they are removed as sludge.

**Percolation Filters:** For the removal of pollutants from the wastewater stream by adsorption of the organic compounds using a layer of microbial biofilm or biomass on the filter bed media.

**Humus or final settlement tank:** For the separation of finer solids left after percolation which are reused and pumped back to the primary tank as they are full of nutrients.

### Typical Treatment Plant Layout



### Percolation or Trickling Filter Beds



### Grey Water Recycling

On new build housing developments such as multi communal flats water recycling is now being considered where the bath and shower water can be separately collected and used again for toilet flushing. This requires 2 water systems to be installed during construction and a small pumping set to deliver the re-cycled water to a separate storage tank in the roof space connected to the toilet cisterns. Rainwater could also be collected from the property roof areas for the same use which in the long term will have a substantial saving on water bills.

## FILM REVIEW

By Carlie Newman

**ONLY LOVERS LEFT ALIVE** (cert. 18 2 hrs. 3 mins.) is not your usual type of vampire movie.

Sure the main characters are vampires, but the whole film and depiction of the chief characters is very subtly done. This film has standout performances from Tilda Swinton and Tom Hiddleston, a witty script and a great soundtrack. Director Jim Jarmusch has made the movie a very personal take on the vampire genre.



*Tilda Swinton and Tom Hiddleston in Only Lovers Left Alive*

Tilda Swinton plays Eve and Tom Hiddleston is Adam, a pair of British vampires who have been in love for centuries (at one

point we see a photo from their third wedding, in 1868). As the film begins, Eve is spending time in Tangiers with Christopher 'Kit' Marlowe (John Hurt), while reclusive Adam, a sort of rock star, is holed up in a Gothic house in Detroit, endlessly listening to vinyl records and occasionally buying vintage guitars from his friend Ian (Anton Yelchin). When Eve returns to Detroit, the pair are delighted to be back together and settle into a routine of sex, obtaining high quality blood from Doctor Watson (Jeffrey Wright), driving around the ruins of Detroit and reminiscing about what happened in past centuries. However, their vampiric idyll is disrupted by the arrival of Eve's thrill-seeking younger sister Ava (Mia Wasikowska), who appears to lack anything resembling impulse control. She causes trouble.

Swinton is excellent as a vampire. She looks just right and is super as Eve, while Tom Hiddleston is delightfully deadpan as Adam, reminding us a little of Mick Jagger, and a bit of Bowie. They also work really well together and you can feel the chemistry between them. Their mutual passion still burns after centuries. The supporting cast are also very good. John Hurt looks right and makes a convincing Marlowe, even referring to how he was the one who wrote all of Shakespeare's plays, and Mia Wasikowska gives a really great performance as Ava, despite only appearing in a small number of scenes.



# The Meppershall Players



Well, by the time you read this our Spring production will have been and gone, (unless your Messenger's been delivered early; then you might still catch the Play on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> March at the Village Hall). To all of you who supported the Players by coming to see this production, thank you very much, we hope you enjoyed it. A big thank you also to the Messenger for printing our programmes for the play, and to the lovely Mary and her girls at Roger's Bakery for selling our tickets once again. We really appreciate it.

The Meppershall Players do have their own page on Facebook, which will be updated the first Monday of every month. If you use the Village Hall, don't forget to check out the notice boards in the front entrance. We always have plenty of information about the Players on the board.

If it is indeed the 1<sup>st</sup> April when you read this, we will now be writing this year's Pantomime, "What is it?" I hear you cry - well in all honesty we don't know yet; the group has yet to decide, so we'll tell you in next month's issue. The dates for this year's Pantomime are Fri 28<sup>th</sup> & Sat 29<sup>th</sup> November & Fri 5<sup>th</sup> & Sat 6<sup>th</sup> December.

The Players will at the Summer Fair with their "anything tombola" guaranteeing something for all ages.

For those of you who enjoy singing, Karen's Karaoke is at Meppershall Social Club once a month throughout the year on the following Dates: Sat 5<sup>th</sup> April, Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> May, Sat 7<sup>th</sup> June, Sat 12<sup>th</sup> July, Sat 2<sup>nd</sup> Aug, Sat 13<sup>th</sup> Sep, Sat 4<sup>th</sup> Oct, Sat 1<sup>st</sup> Nov. So come along and enjoy a sing song in a friendly atmosphere.

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

Karen Mitchell (Players Chairman)  
01462 816336



# Meppershall Garden Club

As I write this in early March I think *thank goodness the weather has cheered up*. Perhaps we can all now get out into our gardens and get on with those jobs that need doing. I know that some of our members have been able to cut the lawn a little and start tidying up after all those wet and windy days.

With regard to club gatherings we are hoping to have a practical pruning theme for our next meeting; it will be good to have a hands-on session in the fresh air. More news on this next time.

As you will have read elsewhere in the magazine, Meppershall Academy are planning a tidy up etc. in the areas around the school grounds. A small group of our members have volunteered to offer the school advice with garden design and a number of us are looking forward to helping out on the 5<sup>th</sup> April – see you there!

I do hope that some of you were able to enjoy some of Marcia's suggestions for snowdrop visits. Now it's time to enjoy the daffodils and wonderful blossoms which are at last showing through!

So over to you Marcia.....

Kim Tyler

Spring is in the air;

Well hopefully! Having been in sunnier climes for a month I have come back to a wealth of daffodils in my garden so I am beginning to think so. They are in full flower or just about to burst open. Trees are beginning to show blossom and in the hedgerows there is a glimmer of green. This time of year is one of eager anticipation for the gardener! Seed packets are laid out in order and potatoes are chitting in the shed.

If you would rather enjoy the efforts of others then here are a few suggestions for places worth a visit in order to feel that 'Spring' good factor:

## Stocking Springs Wood –

Ayot St Lawrence, Nr Codicote, for wild daffodils and other early spring flowers late March to May. This small wood is a traditional Hornbeam coppice. In March/April it is alive with clumps of our tiny native wild daffodils, wood anemones and violets.

Directions: B653 from Wheathamstead to Codicote, about 2km, along the lane on the left, parking in the lay-by opposite. Access at all times, no charge.





Pasque flowers, Hertfordshire's 'county flower' bloom in April at **Therfield Heath** near Royston. A walk over the Heath and you can see these flowers blooming in abundance. No charge!

### **Hatfield House:**

The gardens will open from 5<sup>th</sup> April for the season. Visitors can enjoy the spring bulbs in the Lime Walk along with the Woodland Garden and Sundial Garden.

Admission: Adult £10 Senior £9 Child £6

Open: 10am-5pm

Coffee and lunches will be available in the Coach House Restaurant.



Enjoy.....By Marcia Bairstow

### **Contacts for The Meppershall Garden Club:**

Linda Parker 01462 815114 or

Kim Lee Tyler 01462 811750 or

Sarah Till 01462 817176 or

e-mail at: [meppershallgardenclub@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:meppershallgardenclub@hotmail.co.uk)

## Lewis's Further Adventures

The tour of Southern England begins.

Having formed a working knowledge of 'Yellow Fever', I had to commence my liaison visits as ordained by my Officer Commanding. R.A.R.D.E at Fort Halstead in Seven Oaks would be the first; there was a R.E.M.E. Military Advisor Group based there and it was only an hour's run from Highgate. I made my salutations to the Officer Commanding the unit, who was most helpful and introduced me to another AQMS who was to be my point of contact. It turned out we had both served in the Canal Zone so we had some common ground. We delved into the development area and got to work. The Group was responsible for the tracker/computer code-named 'Red Indian' which had originally been a Royal Navy project. They had passed it over to the Army as unsuitable for shipboard duty – they weren't daft! The Group was also responsible for the L.A.70 chassis, buried inside which was a hydraulic motor which powered the very fast and accurate movement of the platform in azimuth: it was a complex device with tilt plates with multiple pistons connected to it.

'Red Indian' weighed three quarters of a ton; the unit had an aluminium frame within which a complex of ball-resolvers, torque amplifiers and magnetic clutches were interconnected by many shafts. It crossed my mind that if we were to maintain this creature in the field, perhaps an in-depth course in prayer would help! At the end of the day I bid them all farewell and drove back to Highgate.

Visits to all the other establishments continued with many miles to cover and to relieve the pressure a few nights in various messes where the lubrication was of the alcoholic genre. My visit to R.R.E. at Malvern where Radar Branch R.E.M.E. was located enabled a renewal of friendships again. The initial development of the two radars used on 'Yellow Fever' was carried out here and I was able to see the development models in the flesh. The Acquisition Scanner was of a unique design of double cones which precluded any rotational movement external to the radar. The composite plastic scanner was being manufactured at Filton, Bristol, and it was suggested that it would be advantageous to visit this Company. I found this quite rewarding when subsequently I had to carry out repairs to a scanner in Borneo!

I arranged my visits so that Manorbier and 22 Regiment at Pembroke Dock took place on a Thursday and Friday so that I was able to return to Ty-Croes via the western coast road; it turned out to be a hell of a run.

22 Regt were still equipped with the 40/60 Bofors guns mounted on a self-propelled vehicle: they were nominated as the first Light Air Defence Regt to be equipped with 'Yellow Fever'. Little did I know that I would be serving with them as part of the 7<sup>th</sup> Artillery Brigade in Germany!

The two repair vehicles were still in the early development stage so I decided to leave them alone for a couple of months,

One evening returning to Ty-Croes, it was pouring with rain and I had just reached the boundary of the Gwydyr Forest when the charging light on the dashboard illuminated. Fortunately I had my heavy mackintosh in the car. I released the bonnet, raised it and discovered that the fan belt had disappeared. In the boot I kept an extensive tool kit, a little rummage and I found a lady's stocking – salvation! I attached one end to the bonnet stay and wound up the stocking to make an improvised fan belt. I fitted the stocking around the pulleys, joined it and lashed the join with a piece of thin wire from the tool kit. The rain was still pouring down with a pattering noise off the trees, when all of a sudden over my shoulder I heard a 'hoot'. I swung my head up and gave it a hell of a bang on the radiator grill, which was attached to the bonnet. I turned round, looked up, and there, perched on a low branch was an owl with the most enormous eyes. I closed the bonnet and started the engine, the warning light extinguished and bidding farewell to the owl, I very gingerly continued my journey. The temporary belt held up. However I had to endure a cross examination as to the source of the stocking!

To be continued.

W.O.2 AQMS Lewis Birt R.E.M.E.





Parents, Grandparents, & Childminders are all welcome!

March has been very busy. It has been wonderful to see so many new faces as well as our regulars. The children had great fun picking up wobbly jelly in their hands and painting their junk models at the beginning of the month, then really enjoyed pretending to serve food at their café, whilst Mums enjoyed afternoon tea for Mother's Day at the end of the month. We also bought lots of new dressing up outfits which will be out again for our theatre week on 29th April.

On 1st April we have our Easter Party with an animal theme. All can come dressed as their favourite farm animal, or have their face painted as an animal by a professional face painter. We will also be providing a party buffet, making paper baskets, biscuit decorating and getting out our party pack equipment, including the bouncy castle and ride-on's. Party entry is £2 each child over 1, or £1 under 1. No booking required.

We then have a two week break for Easter, and one more week off for a teacher training day. So we are not back until 29th April.

Happy Easter to you all,  
and we hope you all enjoy this lovely spring weather.  
**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 & healthy snack included each week

Look for Meppershall Tots on facebook, or email [meppershalltots@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:meppershalltots@hotmail.co.uk)  
**Please ring Debbie on 07713 627376 for more information**



## Ponderings

Happy Easter to all. What a lovely spring it has been so far. We will be aiming to get to the allotment regularly after the Easter break. We would like to welcome Seren and Noah who will both be starting Meppershall Pre-school later this month. We really hope they enjoy their time here, and I would like to correct my previous mention that Seren started in February.

A huge thank you goes out to the staff this term who have again put in lots of extra effort to make everyday interesting and exciting for the children. We would also like to thank all the parents who have given up some of their valuable time to help at Pre-school, or visit with something interesting for the children to look at. I have realised when typing this that many more parents have got involved this term than previously, and this reflects the great communication between staff and parents. To avoid the risk of missing a name, I would just like to say that without these parents the children would not have sat in a police van, or in a huge yellow JCB tractor, or for that matter have an upright shed at the allotment after the storm blew it over.

We are now collecting Sainsbury's Active Kids vouchers. If you have any you would like to donate to us please drop them in. We also have a bags2school collection of all unwanted material, on the 4th June at around 9am in the village hall car park, and have plans for lots of fun at the summer fair this year. More information to follow in the next issue.

With such a busy start to the year we would really like to get a few more qualified relief staff onboard who could work at short notice. If you would be interested in applying, please ring Debbie on 07713 627376. We are committed to offering Equal Opportunities in Employment, and follow strict Safeguarding and Safer Recruiting Procedures.

Meppershall Pre-school has a few places left to fill. If your little one is ready to make new friends and enjoy our stimulating, safe environment, please ring Tamsin our fantastic level 4 leader any morning in term time on the number below to book a visit.

**Meppershall Pre-school located in Meppershall Village Hall, can take up to 24 children in each session from in and around the surrounding areas.**

**Priority is given to funded children,  
but we also have limited spaces for 2 year olds.**

**Please ring Tamsin on 07816 357159, 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.**







February 26 2014

### **Aggravated Burglary – Shillington**

Detectives are investigating a burglary where a couple in their seventies were threatened with kitchen knives and a gold watch stolen on Saturday evening. (Feb 22).

The couple were at home in Apsley End Road, Shillington, at about 8.15pm when there was a knock at the door, which the woman answered. When the door was opened two men barged their way into the house, both holding knives in front of them. They demanded money and the woman's handbag. Although she said there was no money, they insisted on waking up her husband, who was ill in bed upstairs and demanded money from him too. They then made a messy search of the house and stole a gold watch, along with the phone handsets so that the woman could not call the police. She went to a neighbour after they had left and called for help from there.

The men are described as:

1. White, around 5ft 8ins tall wearing a balaclava, black top and grey trousers
2. Black, chubby, around 5ft 8ins tall, wearing a balaclava, black top and grey trousers.

If anyone saw anything suspicious at the time, or knows anything about this incident, they should contact Det. Con Alison Whitworth at Bedford CID on 01234 275333.

Alternatively, use the 24 hour police non-emergency number 101, text the force control room direct on 07786 200011 or contact independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.



17 February 2014

## Witnesses Sought to A507 Collision

Officers from the Roads Policing Unit are appealing to a white van driver to come forward after a collision happened on the A507 road between Clophill and Beadlow Manor. The collision happened on Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> February at approximately 5.30pm when a bright orange Mini Cooper S classic car left the road and turn over. The 49 year old driver was not injured but the car was significantly damaged and required recovering from the scene.

The officer in charge of the collision investigation, PS John Poppleton, is keen to trace other motorists who were in the area at the time of the collision. PS Poppleton said "The driver of the mini believes a white van was travelling towards him at the time of the collision and I would urge this driver and other motorists who witnessed the collision to come forward and help piece together exactly what happened."

Anyone with information relating to this collision can contact PS Poppleton, in confidence, at Bedfordshire Police on 101, or text information to 07786 200011. Alternatively contact the independent crime fighting charity Crimestoppers, anonymously, on 0800 555 111.

<b>Incident Type:</b>	Garage Burglary attempt.
<b>Location:</b>	Church Road, Meppershall.
<b>Date and Time:</b>	Overnight on the 27th to 28th February.
<b>Incident Details:</b>	<p>The offender has climbed a wall to access the garage.</p> <p>A side window has been smashed and the door damaged.</p> <p>No entry has been gained and no property has been taken.</p>
<b>Crime Reference:</b>	J D / 7 7 6 4 / 2014.
<b>Crime Reduction Advice:</b>	<p>Check that all doors and windows are locked at all times.</p> <p>Ensure that Security lighting covers the building.</p> <p>Make sure that any connecting doors in the house are secure at all times.</p> <p>Consider fitting a Garage Alarm.</p> <p>Valuable property can be secured in a cage or bolted to the ground.</p> <p>Report suspicious activity in neighbours gardens.</p>



***These are two of the scams reported to Central Beds Trading Standards Dept in February. For more information on current scams and how to recognise them, visit the Trading Standards page of Central Beds website.***

The Trading Standards team would like to remind small businesses to act with caution if they receive an approach about advertising in community-based publications.

We have received information from the Council's Building Control team regarding a potential scam that has been reported as currently operating in the Bedfordshire /Buckinghamshire area.

A number of small businesses, specifically those related to the construction industry, have been approached by a business called '*Community Print*', purportedly located at *2 Sheriff's Orchard, Coventry*, with regard to advertising in a publication called '*Construction Guide (Bucks)*'. The approach takes the form of an advert proof being emailed to the small business, along with an invoice for payment. The invoice is not marked with any Company registration details or VAT details.

Although, it may be common practice in the advertising industry to sell advertising space by cold-calling, we would warn small businesses that this practice is also commonly used by scam operators. In some cases, these publications do not exist and the only copies that get printed, if any at all, will be 'courtesy copies' sent to the businesses placing an advert.

Our advice to small businesses would be to think twice before agreeing to anything during a cold-call by telephone. Don't be pressured into making a decision you may regret – consider shopping around for reputable and well-known publications to advertise in. Ask the caller to send you a previous issue of the publication for you to look at. Finally, do not provide your bank account details to any cold-caller unless you are absolutely sure of their intentions, or at least until you have had an opportunity to check whether the call is genuine or not.

The Trading Standards team would like to warn residents of a potential telephone scam whereby the caller is posing as a legitimate energy company. We've had a report from a concerned Kensworth resident who has recently received a telephone call, whereby the caller claimed to be from the '*Scottish & Southern Energy*' company. The caller was attempting to sell '*green energy*' to the resident which would also entitle them to '*a £1000 cheque as cashback*'. The caller was using a with-held telephone number and the resident reported that the line was very bad, with the caller possibly using a mobile telephone. The caller ended the call stating that they would call back at a later date. Fortunately, after the call the resident contacted the energy company to verify the call and they confirmed there was no such offer available and nor would they contact customers by telephone.

Based on the information we have received, this telephone call has all the hallmarks of a scam and we would advise anyone to act with extreme caution when receiving such a call. Our advice to residents would be to never provide your personal or bank account details to anybody over the telephone unless you are absolutely certain of their intentions – do not be tricked into thinking they may already have the details and are just looking to confirm them. Never be intimidated into making a quick decision, for example, because the offer is available for a limited period only.

Finally, if you are ever unsure as to whether the call is genuine, do not be afraid to end the call by hanging up.

## THE BIKE SHED

by Wayne Allen

### OSWESTRY ROAD RACING MUSEUM



The one thing I am never short of is stories for the Bike Shed. The problem I have is which ones go to the top of the must-print pile. This edition is about one man's passion for all things related to road and track racing. That man is Phil Morris and this is a story about a unique collection of bike racing history that Phil has made into a trust for future preservation. So what inspired such a fascinating collection?

Phil Morris has been a very successful businessman over many years, which obviously requires drive and determination. These attributes have resonated through and dovetailed with his passion for the world of motorcycle racing. Since 1998 Phil has been dedicated to preserving not only bikes but associated items, including riders' leathers, helmets and race winners' medals and trophies. What is unique about this collection though, is that it is housed in a purpose built garage in Phil's garden. Let me expand on what may appear, to most people, to be a shed. It is a large outbuilding over two stories with a dedicated workshop and plentiful supplies of tea, thanks to Phil's wife Gwen.

The ground floor displays not only a multitude of bikes but wall to wall riders' leathers, including those of Barry Sheene and Kenny Roberts competing side by side for attention as did both riders many years ago. A classical juke box is also present under a large TV which plays bike racing videos and creates a race day atmosphere within the museum.

Phil's pride and joy is Valentino Rossi's Aprilia 125 (pictured top left) proudly sticking its fairing out amongst the other machines as though to say "I have special history"! But this should not steal the limelight from the other bikes in the collection. They have all earned their place here and were ridden by the best riders, including Mike Hailwood, Phil Read, Robert Dunlop, Tommy Robb, David Jefferies and many others. This is also where Phil's collection comes to life. These bikes are far from the dust-gathering exhibits seen at most museums. They are all live and ready to go ripping around the track. Even more impressive, they are reunited with some of their original riders at the classic events at which Phil is very much a hub of activity. Phil has his own racing team that attracts many fans including Sean and myself. Last year at Mallory Park no less than John McGuinness, 20 times TT winner, was piloting one of Phil's Hondas to great applause from a very appreciative crowd.



Sadly, some of Phil's exhibits are personal items belonging to the great riders who have now departed as a result of their dangerous sport. That said, these items are tastefully displayed and serve as a reminder of not only of their great achievements but stamp their place in history amongst this fantastic collection. Where else could you go and view race helmets belonging to Read, Redman, Hailwood, Joey Dunlop and Robert Dunlop in one display cabinet? Every inch of the museum is covered with signed pictures, and the doors of fame. Even the landing at top of the stairs has a number of engines beautifully restored by Phil. Another by-product of this operation is that Phil has raised £200,000 towards a number of charities. Unfortunately, due to space my article simply cannot do justice to this great collection. You can see more via my video on YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xy44hihc1F4>

More information on Phil Morris racing and the museum details can be found on his website. [www.philmorrisracing.co.uk](http://www.philmorrisracing.co.uk)



Should you wish to visit please make arrangements directly with Phil. Entry is free but a donation to one of Phil's charities would be appreciated. I would like to thank Phil (pictured) and Gwen for the invite and making us feel most welcome during our tour.

### ***Downstairs in Phil's garage***



## COVERS BY REQUEST

Inspired by Stacey Butler's poster and the huge effort being planned to spruce up our school, I thought that this month's cover should show it when it was Meppershall C of E Lower School (picture by David Foskett).

After 5<sup>th</sup> April we will all be able to see how Meppershall CE Academy compares with its old self.

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## SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

### Birthdays in April

On 10<sup>th</sup> April Shireen Longland will be 83

On 29<sup>th</sup> April Pam Sheridan will be 91

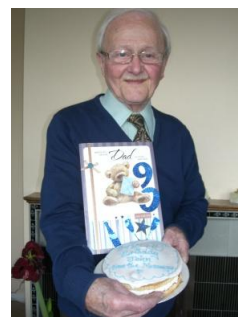
Many congratulations to both of the above.

Since the March issue we have had pleasure in presenting two of our Messenger cakes (from Roger's Bakery) to villagers achieving special birthdays:

On 25<sup>th</sup> February **John Winter** achieved his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday...



...and on 10<sup>th</sup> March  
Barbara Horwood  
celebrated her 80<sup>th</sup>



*(Pictures by Colette House)*

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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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## NOTICE BOARD

### QUIET DAY

The Shefford & District Bible Society Group will be holding a Quiet Day on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> April from 10.30 am (coffee at 10.00) until 3.00 or 3.30 pm. The venue will be Providence Baptist Church – just past Samuel Whitbread and the S bend – on Shefford Road, Clifton.

The Bishop of Bedford, the Rt. Rev. Richard Atkinson will lead the sessions. Everyone will be welcome, either for just the morning session or the afternoon one or, of course, both. Tea and coffee will be available but please bring sandwiches if you will be staying over the lunch period.

There is no actual charge, but donations for the work of the Bible Society will be welcome.

Esther Buss – 01462 816823 or  
Brenda Wright – 01462 816446

Biggleswade & District Art Society

15<sup>th</sup> Spring Art Exhibition

Northill Village Hall (opposite the church)

Saturday 5th April (10.00–4.00) Sunday 6th April (10.00–4.00)

Free Admission    Original Paintings for sale    Refreshments

### **Shefford Town Memorial Hall, Hitchin Road**

**Sunday 1st June**, 1pm: Shefford Summer Fete, Shefford Memorial Grounds.

Arena events from local schools, stalls, bouncy castles, classic cars, pony rides, barbecue, licensed bar & lots more.

A music festival will start at 5pm till 8pm where you are all invited to picnic in the park. FOC.



## St Mary The Virgin

Meppershall Parish Church (Church of England)

Church Road, off Campton Road



**Rector: The Reverend Veronica Goodman**

01462 339962 – usual day off Monday

**Churchwardens:**

Dawn Abbatt 01462 816962

James Read 01462 857836 Email: [Meppershall.PCC@gmail.com](mailto:Meppershall.PCC@gmail.com)

**PCC Secretary:**

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

### Services and Events – April 2014

Date	Time	Service
Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April	7.30pm	Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> April	11.00am	Parish Communion
Fifth of Lent	11.00am	Junior Church at the School
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> April	8.30am	Holy Communion
Palm Sunday	11.00am	All Age Service
	2.30pm	Second Sunday Stroll: Meet at the Church Gate – 4 miles to Wrest Park (for tea/coffee) via Upper Gravenhurst.
Saturday 19 <sup>th</sup> April	9.00am	Celtic Morning Prayer
Easter Eve	7.30pm	Easter Vigil Service
Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup> April	11.00am	Parish Communion
Easter Day		
Friday 25 <sup>th</sup> April	9.00pm	Silent Together – all welcome to enjoy the church in stillness and silence
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> April	11.00am	Parish Communion
2 <sup>nd</sup> of Easter		
Tuesday 29 <sup>th</sup> April	2.00 - 3.30pm	Tea and Coffee – social at the Rectory All welcome
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> May	11.00am	Parish Communion
3 <sup>rd</sup> of Easter	11.00am	Junior Church at the school

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

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

## Things to look out for!

### ***Second Sunday Stroll – Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2.30pm at the Church***

This month takes us to Wrest Park on Palm Sunday, via the Cow Bridge and Upper Gravenhurst. At just under 4 miles, some will also walk home via Whitehall Woods and Lower Gravenhurst. Alternatively, return transport is available – please coordinate via James on 857836.

### ***Easter!***

We hope you find an opportunity to visit St Mary's this Easter – we have lots of events and services going on. The church is there for you – so feel free to make the most of it – we would love to welcome you.

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

I love looking forward to the coming of Easter. I was brought up in quite a "Churchy" family - I guess it was the time of year that we went to church more than any other, but there was also a sense of the story we were walking through and remembering day by day. From Maundy Thursday and Jesus' last meal with his friends, his arrest and trial, then Good Friday, his journey to Calvary with his cross, his crucifixion and death, and into the solemn quiet of Holy Saturday... when at some point the mood changed from the desperate sadness of Good Friday to the excited anticipation of the joy of Easter Sunday. The accounts tell us that early on the first day of the week just after sunrise, the women came to anoint Jesus' body and found it gone. The resurrection of Jesus heralded a new first day, of a new first week...

In Church here at St Mary's too, we will remember and walk through those last days of Jesus' life, re-exploring the meaning of the death and resurrection of Jesus for us today. It is a solemn journey, but I love it when we light the Easter fire - with the greetings "Happy Easter" "Christ is Risen!" "He is Risen indeed!" ringing out with the bells of Easter.

In this country I think we are so fortunate that Easter falls in the Spring when our whole countryside is bursting with new life; when it is truly the season of eggs and chicks and daffodils and baby rabbits (I guess that should be bunnies!) amongst other things. Life and colour are all around us once again as we celebrate with family gatherings and traditional Easter foods.

So with your hot cross buns, Easter eggs and Simnel cake, I wish you all the joy and hope and new life that Easter brings.

**Rector Roni**

## St Mary's Church, Meppershall

### Junior Church

It's hard to believe that March is drawing to a close so soon; it seems like yesterday when JC were celebrating St David's Day and learning how it came about, exploring other saints and eating authentic homemade Welsh cakes! (delicious!).

We are well into Lent and Easter Sunday looms in the not-too-distant future when JC look forward to celebrating the rising of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**JC will be celebrating with a  
Mini Sparks activities and egg hunt  
held before the  
Easter Sunday service in  
St Mary's Church  
10am to 11am**

***(please note: the egg hunt will be held in the field so sensible  
footwear is advised)***

We look forward to welcoming children to share our celebration!  
If you need any more information regarding the Easter event, please contact Gillian on 850947.

Blessings  
The JC Team

**COD OR HADDOCK WITH LIME, HERB AND PARMESAN CRUST****Serves 4****APRIL 2014****4tbsp olive oil****4 portions (4 to 6 oz) of cod or haddock fillets****1 lime finely grated zest and juice****50g (2oz) white breadcrumbs****1 tbsp fresh dill, oregano or chopped parsley****50g (2oz) parmesan cheese, finely grated****Salt and ground black pepper****4 thin slices of lime****Method**

- 1. Preheat the oven to 200C/fan oven 180oC/Gas Mark 6 Grease a baking sheet with a few drops of the olive oil, and arrange the fish fillets on the baking sheet.**
- 2. Sprinkle them with the lime juice.**
- 3. Mix together the lime zest, breadcrumbs, herbs, most of the grated cheese and remaining olive oil. Season with a little salt and black pepper**
- 4. Share between the fish fillets, spreading it over the surface of each one.**
- 5. Sprinkle the reserved parmesan cheese on top, and then add the lime slices.**
- 6. Bake for 12-15 minutes, or until the fish is opaque and flakes easily when tested with a fork.**
- 7. Serve with lightly cooked fresh vegetables of choice.**

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

# **A very Happy Birthday to those of you celebrating birthdays in April**

Rebecca Myers who will be 9 on the 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Teya Warner who will be 5 on the 4<sup>th</sup>  
Amie-Lee Lumbis who will be 7 on the 5<sup>th</sup>  
William Rogers who will be 11 on the 11<sup>th</sup>  
Kate Fleming who will be 8 on the 13<sup>th</sup>  
Katrina Brennand who will be 14 on the 17<sup>th</sup>  
Harry White who will be 13 on the 19<sup>th</sup>  
Jemma Dalton who will be 8 on the 20<sup>th</sup>  
Sophie Hing will be 4 on the 28<sup>th</sup>  
Charlie Lodge who will be 10 on the 30<sup>th</sup>

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

## THE MEPPERSHALL MESSENGER

### CONTRIBUTIONS

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

### DISCLAIMER

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

### THE TEAM

Editor	Dick Bulley	116 Shefford Road	815114
		Email: richard.bulley@btinternet.com	
Assistant Editor	David Turner	2 Campton Road	813613
		Email: davidturner25@hotmail.com	
Advertising and Distribution	Colette House	90 Fildyke Road	815585
		Email: colettehouse@gmail.com	
Production Co-ordination	Enid Pamment	112 High Street	851397
		Email: enid.pamment@gmail.com	
Treasurer	John Thompson	16 Brookmead	812983
		Email: jthompson244@btinternet.com	

<u>Collating Dates for your Diaries</u>					
<u>2014</u>					
April May June July	28	<b>Tuesday</b>	August	NONE	
	27		September	29	
	30		October	27	
	28	<b>Double</b>	November	24	<b>Double</b>
			December	NONE	

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 2<sup>th</sup> September the October issue will be collated.