



The Meppershall Messenger

Meppershall Remembers

Sunday 3rd August is the 100-year anniversary of the eve of the First World War – often called “The Great War.”

Why is this event being marked up and down the country, and what will you do to Remember?

Meppershall Remembers – in aid of

HELP FOR HEROES –

Sunday 3rd August, 2-7pm in St Mary's Churchyard

More information and sponsorship forms:

01462 857836: Meppershall.pcc@gmail.com

or usual village sources. Refreshments served.

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EDITORIAL

By the time you read this the Summer Fair will have happened, but happened too late in the month to be covered in this issue, so you will have to wait for our August/September issue for reports and our usual colour picture supplement – I hope it will be showing fine weather! But we can offer a taster this month: on 11th June a Spitfire was displaying over RAF Henlow and Chicksands, and John Chapman captured it on video. To see the film go to <http://youtu.be/UaFTvLv14Q4>.



When you were at the Fair you may also have seen your Editor perambulating with a clipboard – another attempt to get feedback to help us make The Messenger better still.

No one can have failed to notice the new road surface in the High Street, which was *almost* complete before a hole was dug in it! Under another hat I received a message from a resident of Gregory Close who praised the new surface and the way it had been done, but noted that machinery parked overnight had left an unsightly mess in his road. I forwarded his message to Central Beds who contacted the contractor. This resulted, a week or so later, in a clean-up, but unfortunately the oil stains remain. The new traffic calming markings will be put down when the new surface has ‘matured’, and although the planings of the old surface were taken away, the Parish Council has been promised that they will be returned to provide the base of the footpath extension.

I am very pleased to be able to note that more of the ideas contributed by readers are working out. We have our first Sports Page this month (p.33) thanks to Wayne Woodcock, and we have another ‘Reader's Contribution’, this time from John Chapman, giving us some really interesting first-hand information about installing solar panels. We also have another item from one of our advertisers, John R. Ford, on buying a used car (p.36), and our puzzle pages have expanded to include a word search, provided by Paul Smith.

The charity ‘Help for Heroes’ pops up several times in this issue, with the thanks on page 7 to participants in the Quiz Night and the Notice on page 25 about the commemoration of the centenary of the outbreak of WW1, which also features on our cover this month. A contribution to this charity, which supports the current generation of men and women wounded in the armed services, would seem to be a very appropriate way of doing something to acknowledge our debt to them and their predecessors.

Our next issue will be the double for August and September: this is so that the production team can have August off, not having to work on a September issue. If you have a contribution that relates to specific dates, please remember to cover both months.

Dick Bulley

LETTERS

Letter from Debbie Staines:

Hi,

I wondered if you would think it appropriate to allow this 'open letter' in the next Messenger. The Biggleswade Chronicle printed an article recently following my son's approach to them regarding the problem below; we have also approached 'Watch Dog' and want to get as much coverage for the situation as possible.

Having lived in the village for 22 years at 60 High Street, we have been burgled five times - the house, garden sheds, one sit-on lawn mower, and now my son's 'pride and joy', a BMW M3, has been 'dismantled' twice in the last month.

Our drive is small, overlooked, and well lit, yet a very sophisticated gang have been able to gain access to the car (an issue we are taking up with BMW) to take steering wheel, central console including music system, wing mirrors and almost all four wheels. The first time was in the early hours of 25th April. When the car had been repaired and returned 10 days later, in the early hours of Monday 19th May they came back, taking the newly replaced items. We now know that we are not alone, as two other BMWs have had the same treatment within the last three weeks, all on the High Street.

There are a number of CCTV cameras along the High Street, all privately owned, which have managed to identify a likely suspect - a light coloured people carrier, going very slowly through the village on the nights in question. Please could anyone with their own CCTV check on the nights concerned to see if they can spot a similar car between the hours of midnight and 4am.

What we are trying to do, with the help of other victims, is build up a case to:

1. Get BMW to realise they have an extensive problem
2. Obtain sufficient evidence to get the Police/National Vehicle crime unit to catch the culprits.

If you have suffered in the same way in the past 12 months, please could you e-mail/call me to discuss.

At the moment the said 'pride and joy' is being put back together at BMW AGAIN, but what do we do to stop them coming back in a few weeks for a third visit? We live in a beautiful rural village, not an inner city - how dare these criminals keep taking our possessions! Any information gratefully received.

I can be contacted on 07740520026 - debby.staines@thehappyplaice.co.uk

Debbie Staines

If anyone can provide information it would be in all our interests for this kind of activity to be stopped. – Ed

Letter from Denis Neilson:

Dear Editor,

On behalf of the GNOMES I would like to thank Colette House and Carolyn Holmes for organising the Evening Festival Programme on 17th May. This allowed our organisation the opportunity to introduce itself to a cross-section of Meppershall residents. My thanks also to the GNOMES support team namely Caroline MacCormick, Ruth Neilson, Joan Glanville, Dick Bulley and Carolyn Holmes for providing much needed support to Kim Tyler and me for our rendering of "There's a Hole in my Bucket". Our thanks must also go to Mick Trundle for costumes and Phillip Challinor for the bubbles in the wash tub, and Les and his good lady for the lighting and sound.

Denis Neilson (Treasurer)

Letter from Enid Pamment:

Dear Richard,

Many congratulations to Colette and her band of helpers for producing and working so hard for such a wonderful evening on 17th May for the Meppershall Festival. It was a really lovely evening with so many talented artists. We even had the pleasure of sitting on new comfortable chairs! A very big 'thank you' to everyone who took part.

From a very keen village supporter!

Letter from Geoff Jones:

Dear Richard,

My cousin, Enid Pamment, recently wrote to me and enclosed a copy of the May Meppershall Messenger so that I could see her page and what she's up to with the Shefford Leisure Group. Apart from being overawed by her efforts, I was very impressed with the Journal, which was a lively read, and how it reflected a busy and vibrant community! I have told Enid I think the magazine should be buried in a 'time capsule' so that in a hundred years a different population might see what life was like there in 2014.

Congratulations to you and all the contributors for a most interesting and absorbing read.

Cheers,

Geoff Jones OAM
Sydney, Australia

I was thrilled to learn that The Messenger had a supporter so far away. It also emerges that Mr. Jones used to be responsible for something like an Australian version of Britain's Got Talent: I am hoping to persuade him to give us some inside stories – Ed

Letter from Chris Waghorn:

Dear Mr Bulley,

I am writing with reference to the last issue of the Messenger and specifically to the published letter from Mr Roger Smith on page 3 referring to the recently installed road humps in Ivel Road Shefford.

In his letter he states that "*Meppershall Parish Council has been advised that the Fire Service is refusing to negotiate these humps because they are so vicious.../...and they take a lengthy diversion to reach our village* "

As the Clerk to the Parish Council I feel that I should correct the inference that the Parish Council has received some communication from the Fire Service to that effect. There has been no such communication but as one Councillor pointed out at the last Parish Council meeting, there is a rumour circulating to that effect.

I have therefore written to the Station Commander in Shefford requesting clarification on the point and I shall advise both you and Mr Smith (to whom I have sent a copy of this email) of the outcome.

Chris Waghorn

Clerk to Meppershall Parish Council

Letter from Colette House & Carolyn Holmes:

As organisers of the 2014 Meppershall Festival, Colette and Carolyn would like to thank the Meppershall residents, and those who came from local villages and towns, for supporting the Festival this year, for their generosity and for making it a such a success.

Thank you to Roberto from Salsa Trio who made the afternoon so special and to all the evening concert Artistes for their fantastic performances. Thanks must also go to the St Mary's Tea Ladies who raised an amazing £110 for the church funds from their teas and mouth-watering cakes, to the Meppershall Gnomes for their invaluable help throughout the day and to Beverley Aberdein, Gill Smith, Jacqui Plumley and Ruth and Denis Neilson for their support.

Our special thanks must go to Meppershall Parish Council for their generous support and to Impact Interiors of Henlow for their sponsorship.

The breakdown of the funds distributed is as follows:

£ 354.33 to the 1st Meppershall Brownies (*see presentation below*)

£ 75 to St Mary's Church for the Sparks Holiday Club Fund

£ 70. 05 to the Meppershall Good Neighbour Group

That brings the total raised for local organisations, this year and last, to over £1,000.

We were so pleased to see the photo of the Evergreens on the Meppershall Messenger's June issue front cover. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters last year, the festival committee was able to present a cheque for £536.77 to the Evergreens, towards their outings and events.



We look forward to another Festival with a new committee in 2015. Please look out for more information in the Messenger early next year.

Carolyn Holmes and Colette House

MEPPERSHALL NEWS IN BRIEF

MEPPERSHALL GOOD NEIGHBOURS GROUP

Good Neighbours Group Committee member Malcolm Batey sent this bulletin from Devon.

A Gnome's Holiday (Or a Gnome away from home!)



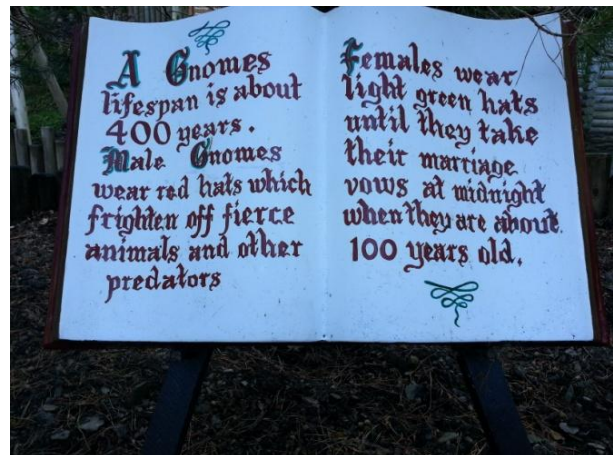
So where do GNOMES go on holiday? Well this particular committee member included a Gnome Boot Camp as part of his recent holiday package. What better way to get a refresher on what being a Gnome is all about than a pilgrimage back to the 'Gnomeland' where it all began all those millennia ago?

First, a crash course on how to behave in

committee meetings.

Note (above, on the right) what happens to disruptive attendees!

Naturally like all good training a certain amount of homework is required and in this case the reading of the ancient Gnome scrolls was the set task. Everything to be known about Gnomes



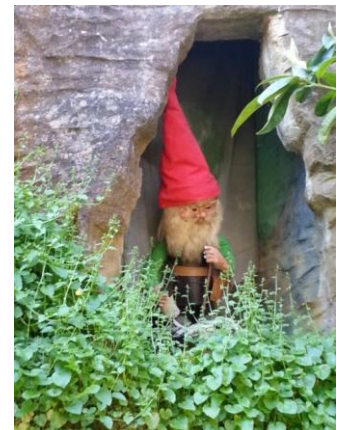
and their strange ways is to be found in this document which, I suppose, can be likened to our own Volunteer Guides. Here is a sample page to give an idea of the content.

After all that reading and reflection it was time for keep fit classes as of course Gnomes are expected to be ready and able for all eventualities in our mission to serve our Meppershall clients. To my knowledge we have yet to receive

a client request to haul heavy rocks up a tree or indeed anything that requires rope climbing but one just never knows what may be asked of us in the future.

After all this knowledge intake and exercise it was time to finish off with a bit of fun and what better than a quick game of hunt the Gnome?

I understand something similar is planned for the Meppershall Summer Fair at the end of June but I am sure that Gnome will be much more difficult to find!



Meppershall Social Club Help 4 Heroes Quiz Night, 24th May

The evening was a great success and a total of £475 was raised to help this very important and worthwhile charity in their support of servicemen and women who have suffered life-changing injuries on active duty. Talking to the two members of the Forces who made the effort to join us, both in full uniform and both Warrant Officers and veterans of Afghanistan, Bosnia and Iraq, they were astounded by the turnout and support a little village like ours could muster - even going to the lengths of posting on Facebook the next day about the "amazing night with amazing people". I didn't have the heart to explain that, apart from the usual stalwarts, who support virtually all Social Club events, the vast majority of people had made the effort to travel from outside the village, some from as far as London and Cambridge, to show their support for the charity.

I am at a loss to explain why there seems to be an attitude in this village that "if it is a Social Club event it is not going to be worth supporting" and why a "them and us" attitude seems to prevail between the Village Hall committee and the Social Club members and committee. Indeed, there are certain people who would prefer that the Social Club didn't exist at all. The Social Club committee are dedicated people who work tirelessly to try and organise events to suit everyone and raise much-needed funds, as well as raising large amounts of money for charities, an example of which was the Social Evening featuring "The Wilsons" duo last October, which raised over £1000 for Bedford Hospital Critical Care Unit - once again, largely supported by folk from elsewhere.

Anyway, rant over. Time for some thanks:

- To Sharon Tingey for her amazing work securing raffle prizes, selling tickets, contacting H4H in the first place and all her work on the night, from organising nibbles, to keeping score and calling the raffle.
- To all the people and businesses that so very generously donated some fantastic prizes for the raffle (afraid again MOST were from outside the village. Prominent local businesses were contacted but failed to respond).
- Andy Cannon for organising the music round.
- Graham Walker and the Social Club members and committee for all their hard work; once again, thank you all.

And finally, everybody who made the effort to turn up. Special mention to the table of young lads who, although they came last in the quiz, showed their support and seem to really enjoy themselves-and even won a decent raffle prize! For the record, due to work constraints, I am not a committee member but do try and support what they do.

Barry Gatenby, Fildyke Road.

Elsie's Garden Party – in aid of The Spinal Injuries Association

I would just like to thank everyone who came to my Garden Party on Saturday 14th June. We enjoyed the afternoon and the weather stayed fine. Cakes were donated by all who came, and were delicious.

The 'Gnomes' did their sketch "There's a Hole in My Bucket", which made us all laugh. They also came on the Friday to help prepare the garden with bunting, parasols and banners.

Everyone was more than generous and we raised £297 for the SIA, so thank you all again and we hope to see you next year.

A special "thank you" to Jean, Marcia, Felicity and Phyllis for manning their stalls and being so helpful, and to Colette for doing the raffle, won by Brenda Wright, and to Maureen Cole and Christabel Hammond for making tea and doing the washing up!

With love, Elsie B Lawrence, 12 Fildyke Road.

MEPPERSHALL BROWNIES



We were lucky enough to choose one of the dry and sunny days for our visit to Rowney Warren Woods. The Brownies had a great time making dens, finding Winnie the Pooh's house and having a picnic.



A big thank you to the nine Brownies who sang at this year's Arts Festival. As usual it was a lovely evening with so many talented people. A very big 'thank you' to Colette and Carolyn for organising the event and for the wonderful donation. We are looking forward to thinking of ways to spend this during our Centenary year. Thank you also to the enthusiastic response from the audience joining in with our songs.



We also had a lovely evening where we were joined by a few ex brownies and helpers and reminisced. We sang songs, had a beetle (or, in this case, an owl) drive and challenged the Brownies and visitors to a quiz. An interesting fact learnt on the night is that Meppershall Brownies is now 56 years old. Snowy Owl made the mistake of asking the Brownies to guess how long she has been helping at Brownies; the first answer was 100 years! It is actually 10 (time flies when you are having fun).

If you are interested in your daughter joining Brownies or volunteering yourself, then please contact Snowy Owl (Suzanne) on 07817 392325 or you can register online at www.girlguiding.co.uk. Brownie places are limited at the moment and your daughter will need to join the waiting list.

THE VILLAGE HALL AGM

Held on Sunday 8th June 2014

A Summary of Proceedings

Chairman's Report

Steve Ansell, Chairman, reported that the Village Hall continues to be used extensively and almost to capacity during school term time, to the extent that bookings have to be turned away, as there is simply not the capacity to take on any more regular users.

He particularly thanked not only the trustees of the Village Hall for the time spent on the running of the Village Hall, but in particular the Village Summer Fair committee for their fundraising over many months in putting together and organising an excellent event in June 2013, and another scheduled for 2014.

Treasurer's Report

David Birch, Treasurer, presented the accounts for the year to 31st March 2014, which showed a surplus of income over expenditure of £974 and cash reserves of £14,554. Highlights were that a net sum of just under £2.5k was raised by the 2013 Summer Fair, maintenance costs had been kept to a minimum in the expectation of a new Hall being built (within the next couple of years), and the cost of electricity increased by c.£1,100, reflecting the ending a fixed price deal, though partly offset by a reduction of c.£500 in gas used for heating, due to the relatively mild winter. The circulated accounts were approved.

The new company which is to take over from the existing Charitable Trust has now been formed and the principle of the new Village Hall construction and land transfers approved by the Charity Commission. Formal documentation and registration of the Company as a charity are being dealt with by lawyers.

New Village Hall

The latest draft layout plans for the proposed new Village Hall, sports facilities and cemetery were circulated. These have been revised and amended three times in recent weeks to take into account practical

design considerations, and to ensure construction can be achieved within the cash budget available, also allowing for a sensible contingency sum. In particular the cost to re-site or replace the current Multi-Use Games Area was estimated at approximately £85,000 (money it was decided could be better spent elsewhere), and therefore the plans were changed to incorporate the existing facility within the overall design, thus avoiding that cost. Several other changes had been made to reduce the costs of construction with specific features restricted or no longer feasible.

The Trustees reaffirmed that they would not proceed with a new Village Hall construction if they did not consider that it to be financially viable, and further that the Village Hall charity would retain ownership of the current Village Hall and land until the new Hall was ready for use and occupation.

Concern was expressed about the new vehicle and pedestrian access road to be constructed on the existing Village Hall site and the effect of the newly constructed Village Hall on users, i.e. on the current playing fields. It was explained that there would be a period of approximately eight weeks when normal access would not be available or had to be restricted to meet safety standards but an alternative using the Crackle Hill footpath to the playing fields (suitably upgraded with hard surfaces) and alternative parking, is in hand. If construction of the access road can be timed to fall within the summer holiday period then the disruption should be minimised. It is expected that a formal Land Owners Agreement will be signed within the next few weeks, after which a planning application for the entire development will be submitted to Central Beds Council. Any interested parties will have the opportunity to submit their views to Central Beds Council as part of that process.

Trustees

The current Trustees were re-elected to serve another term.

Meppershall Village Hall Trustees

Meppershall Parish Council Report

The June meeting opened with a report from PCSO Gill Richardson on the reported crimes in Meppershall, which were higher than normal. Her full report appears elsewhere in this edition. Our Unitary Councillor Tony Brown gave a comprehensive report on the activities of CBC and an overview of cost savings implemented in the last financial year which enabled a zero % Council Tax increase.

There were no planning applications to consider and as the new Village Hall project documents are with lawyers there was nothing to report on this either.

Despite advanced planning by departments within Amey to align with the High Street resurfacing, the work on traffic-calming and the extension to the permissive path in Shefford Road did not take place. I hope both these will be underway or completed by July. CBC Councillor Tony Brown advised the meeting that new safety traffic islands at the junction of the A507 with Campton Road will be installed in the 3rd quarter of this year.

Following discussions at our last meeting the Clerk advised the meeting that he has made an application for Meppershall to be considered for the installation of a Community Defibrillator. The machine, which will be installed in a central position in the village, is always ready for an emergency. If you are in contact with the Ambulance Service via a 999 call and they consider that the machine is required, they will tell you the location and pass on a code number that will allow access to the equipment.

Following a letter in last month's Messenger from Roger Smith regarding the speed tables in Ivel Road, Shefford, the Clerk has written to the Senior Fire Officer and asked for clarification of the route taken to Meppershall by their appliances. CBC Councillor Brown advised the meeting that there are plans to redesign those tables as they were proving unsafe for cyclists.

Finally the Council was pleased to grant a donation of £300 to the Citizens Advice Bureau.

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.

David Foskett

Chairman

Meppershall Parish Council – chairman@meppershall.org.uk



Love for God, Life, Learning and for Each Other

Meppershall Church of England Academy

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

School Report – July 2014

A huge “thank you” to everyone who helped us at our second ‘Clean Up’ session on Saturday 31st March. The playground, gardens and buildings are starting to look beautifully smart now, and it has enabled the children to really relish the start of summer. They have spent lots of time learning outside – in our beautiful nature area, the outdoor classroom and the field and playground. Our weekly Gardening Club has also been kept busy and some colourful and fragrant plants are really starting to flourish.

The children are also busy getting ready for various summer events. We have enjoyed practising for Sports Day, which this year will culminate in a school community picnic on our field – weather permitting! As in recent years, the children will have the chance to participate in a number of different sporting events in teams, as well as individual running races.

The younger children in Birches and Elms Classes are also getting excited about their forthcoming trip to Whipsnade Zoo, and the Year 4 children are eagerly anticipating their first overnight camping trip! In Oaks class, the children are starting to get ready to move on to their Middle Schools, with various transfer activities taking place. They are all proudly sporting their new vibrant ‘Meppershall Leaver Hoodies’, and the 2014 Leaver Yearbooks are currently in production.

Natasha Hornsey
(Year 3 Teacher)

YOUR SHOUT

with Trevor Thorley



There was something to suit everyone at the Meppershall Festival 2014 and organisers Colette and Carolyn can take great satisfaction and credit from such a success. I'm not going to elaborate on what has already been said in the comprehensive report in the June edition of the Messenger, but I pricked up my ears when Bob Wilkins (Arlesey) told the interesting true story of life in post-war Yorkshire.

I spent my early years in a mining village. The children of that day, as many will recall with similar experiences, had to entertain themselves: no television, no computers, and with cinemas a bus ride away, for most there was only the radio and the likes of Dick Barton or The Archers to listen to. School was, for many, a two mile walk in all weathers. But, as Bob says, we did build rafts when the River Aire burst its banks, which usually happened twice a year, and occasionally we did go scrumping but more out of mischief making than vandalism; if caught we were up before the Headmaster the next day for six of the best. It was truly a great community; people helped each other in whatever way they could. Miners supplied their neighbours with coal from their free allowance; no home was cold during winter there. Coach trips to Scarborough, Bridlington and Blackpool were a treat in the summer: we had our regular choir outing to Whitby and the Curate was a regular visitor at my home for my mother's freshly home-baked bread and cakes.

I took my first job with the News of the World in Leeds and later, aged eighteen, signed up for two years National Service in the Royal Air Force. This was to be my first train journey south, to Bedford and R.A.F. Cardington.

I was only at Cardington for a short period, which included two weekends where we were not allowed out of camp - as National

Servicemen, possibly they thought we might abscond! Those who had signed on for three or more years as a career could go into Bedford. A lot of time was spent in the NAAFI with my mates, listening to Tommy Steele and Elvis Presley records on the jukebox.

The hangers (still standing and now listed buildings) were used as a medical centre and the fields were used for football and rugby. After kitting-out, medicals and the completing lots of paperwork, and the compulsory daily drills, ten days later we were taken to nearby Cardington Railway Station to embark on the long journey by steam train to West Kirby (Liverpool). That was fun: smart new uniforms covered in sooty smuts when we got to our destination!

Little did I know that nineteen months in Aden working on sea movements (with a fantastic trip to Kenya in between), a return to my old job leading to immediate promotion and a move to Southampton, followed by a further move to Derby for three years, and a career change to another national newspaper would eventually bring Janet and myself back to Bedfordshire in 1963.

Connie Lawrence (Meppershall Stores) once said "you have to live about 20 years in Meppershall to be accepted"...I think we might qualify now!

Remember, this really is YOUR shout. You don't want to hear only of my exploits - let's have some of your stories, I am sure that you have lots of interesting tales to tell us.

Call me on 01462 813357 or email trevor.thorley1@btinternet.com

Trevor is being modest (as usual) – his reminiscences this month and last have been fascinating, but he is also right: we would like to hear from you as well, on any subject you like. Ed.

SHEFFORD LEISURE GROUP

By Enid Pamment



We ended the month of May on a beautiful day by taking a look at where the Olympic billions have been spent.

First of all we met our guide who took us to a roast beef carvery for lunch with coffee. We then boarded the coach for a sightseeing tour around the new residential district created from the Olympic Athletes' Village, giving us a great overview of what is, in effect, the beginning of a 25 year master plan for a whole new district of the Capital. Our guide was very knowledgeable but she did present our driver Lee with some navigational headaches, although he coped very well with them. We were set down by a gigantic piece of Olympic art to walk into the Park, where the guide told us of what was here before, how it all came together for the games, what it looks like now and where it is going for the next generation.

The change from the first time we saw the Olympic Park really was an eye-opener. There is a beautiful new leafy landscape with grassy banks where many families were picnicking, and children running in and out of the cascades of water. Some of the flower beds were set and looked magnificent. The tour finished at the Westfield end of the Park where the guide took some of us for a stroll around the River Lee and over the bridges. We were able to buy refreshments close to an enormous children's playground. They certainly have catered for those who choose to use the Olympic Park.

Forthcoming Events 2014 (kindly telephone for more details):

Singing in the Rain – MK Theatre – Matinee	Wed 2 nd July
Bedford River Cruise, with lunch	Tue 29 th July
Sandringham Flower Show	Wed 30 th July
Hunstanton and Norfolk Lavender Fields	Wed 20 th August
Twinwood Festival (Glen Miller)	Sun 24 th August
Top Hat at MK Theatre (Evening Performance)	Wed 3 rd September
Lord of the Dance (Michael Flatley's last show)	Tue 23 rd September
Flower Festival at St Albans Cathedral	Sat 27 th September
Waverley Paddle Steamer	Sun 12 th October
Highgrove House garden Tour	Fri 17 th October
Brick Lane Music Hall	Thur 6 th November
The Lord Mayor's Show	Sat 8 th November
Thursford Christmas Spectacular (Matinee)	Wed 26 th November
Waddesdon Manor Christmas Lights	Wed 3 rd December

Holidays 2014 (kindly telephone for more details):

Scarborough – Hotel Esplanade – inc 2 day-excursions	September 8 th -12 th
Tinsel & Turkey at the Claremont Hotel, Eastbourne	Thursday 11 th to Monday 15 th December

London Shows currently available (arranged by Stevenage Group Travel) are: Evening Shows – Leaving Shefford at 4.15pm – price includes coach:

Miss Saigon – Prince Edward Theatre – Stalls Seats	Monday 1 st September
Memphis – Shaftsbury Theatre – Royal Circle Seats	Thursday 16 th October

Please telephone for availability and prices of any outings or shows above.

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

Enid Pamment – Shefford Leisure Group



11th to 14th August 2014

St Mary's Church — 10am till 2pm

The fun Christian Holiday club

for those aged 5-12

Stuff you should know!

We really look forward to meeting all our new astronauts in August.

Please read the following to ensure a smooth takeoff!

Please book your child's place in advance by returning the booking form and payment (preferably cheque) to one of the locations on the form.

Please wear old clothes and trainers or other closed shoes as our training ground is uneven and prickly. Remember to bring a packed lunch and, depending on the weather, a hat and sun cream or coat and wellies!

This year we are introducing a new booking system so please wait for confirmation of your child's place by e-mail or telephone.

If you have not received confirmation by Tuesday 5th August please contact Dawn on 01462 816962.

Booking forms are available in The Messenger or at the back of St Mary's Church

Please understand that while we do try to put Astronauts with their friends, this is not always possible; we rely on having groups which are a mixture of ages so the older children are encouraged to help the younger ones.

Please remind your child that EVERYONE at Sparks is friendly and that we will spend plenty of time all together as well as in groups.



New recruits wanted

Do you have what it takes to join Space Academy?

Join us as we blast off into space for an
adventure that is out of this world!

Taking off Monday 11th – Thursday 14th August 10-am – 2pm

Tick the days you wish to attend:

Mon 11th	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tues 12th	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weds 13th	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thurs 14th	<input type="checkbox"/>

To secure your place, please return form and payment
by Monday 4th August to

Dawn Abbatt, 28 Brookmead, Meppershall or
Morag Deluca, 26 Eisenhower Rd, Shefford

£3 per day

Cheques preferable (made payable to **Meppershall PCC**)

**Please provide an e-mail address
or phone number so we can confirm your child's place.**

Name of Child Age

Address

Parent's Name

Home phone number

Mobile (Emergency Contact)

Allergies / Medical conditions

If possible could I be with my friend

(We can only attempt to satisfy requests where possible, and on a first come basis, but we are all very friendly!)

I give permission for my child to join in with all the activities.

I give my consent for medical treatment or first aid arising out of illness or accident.

I understand that this takes place on an open site.

I give/do not give permission for my child to be photographed.

Signed Date

E-mail (for confirmation and future events):

Places are limited, booking and pre-payment essential, sorry no admissions on the day!

Please wear old clothes, trainers/closed shoes and bring a packed lunch.

Contact Dawn (816962) or Morag (643387) for any further info.

Bring your parents and please join us for our graduation service on Sunday 17th August and come and hear all about our adventures! 11am-12noon

WHERE MY CARAVAN HAS RESTED

By Denis Neilson

Part 4 – Texas, New Orleans & Florida



Next stop El Paso, a romantically named city and one of the many gateways into Mexico. A sign at the Roadrunner Trailer Park where we stayed read: 'El Paso, Tx, 50 miles from water, 2 feet from Hell'. And that about sums it up. The Rio Grande here forms the border between Texas and Mexico and the banks of the river in the USA are all concreted and brick shored, the reason being that the banks were continuously changing due to erosion and silt build-up which caused some very serious land disputes, so it was decided to make the banks as permanent as possible to solve the problem. We had a trip into Ciudad Juarez (Mexico) which had some beautiful big houses. Since then it has become the drugs and murder capital of Mexico but when we visited, there did not appear to be anything untoward.

As we left El Paso for New Mexico we passed the cattle feed pens which house thousands of animals being fattened up for the beef sales. The ranches around are so large and the grass so sparse that cattle arriving at El Paso require this 'beefing up'. The aroma from these pens spreads a long, long way!

Carlsbad, New Mexico, is justifiably famous for its limestone caverns - they are fantastic! Huge caves, one as large as a football pitch, well lit with mood lighting complimented by non-intrusive music - a pleasure to both the eye and ear. Unfortunately it has spoiled us for visiting other caves and caverns, as most do not even come close. From here we went back into Texas, to San Antonio with its very pleasant river walk through the centre and on to The



Alamo where many famous names of the West were involved in the fight for the formation of Texas as an independent country, free from Mexican rule. The siege lasted approximately 13 days and all the Texans lost their lives - a complete rout. Despite Walt Disney and John Wayne's efforts to convince you otherwise, Davy Crockett was not there (even though the tourist centre has plenty of his hats for sale!), the primary leaders were James Bowie and William Lee Travis.

We travelled across the entire width of Texas before coming into Louisiana and dropping down into Baton Rouge, over the Mississippi using the Huey P Long Bridge and on to New Orleans, with its trolleys, steamboats, levees and, best of all, street musicians. This was before Hurricane Katrina struck and we

found a bustling city full of noise and intrigue. Lafayette (the privateer's) house, the leafy Garden Quarter, the gambling French Quarter and the above ground graveyards all requiring a visit, pleasantly rounded off with coffee and beignets at Cafe du Monde. Unbelievable!

The coast road from New Orleans through Mississippi to Florida is a mixture of Mangrove swamps and seaside resorts. On entering Florida we still had just over a month of our first stint to go so we crossed to the coast at Fort Augustine and headed for the Keys, that group of little islands connected by causeways which take you to Key West, within 90 miles of Cuba and which forms an Atlantic barrier for Florida Bay. A very pleasant spot with spectacular sunsets, no wonder lots of Canadians come to winter here each year; there is an abundance of fish, the temperature is perfect, and it's out of the hurricane season. What could be better? The ride down was charming as we followed the A1A coastal road which, in some cases, separates the houses on the seaboard side with their gardens on the landward side. Fortunately, it is not a busy road so this does not seem to present a hazard for the homeowner. Miami was big and bustling, as were the beaches in January. We had a very pleasant time watching pelicans dive for fish.



Back on the mainland we turned left along the Tamiami Trail, through the Everglades, where the wildlife is very prolific. Alligators bask in the sun on the banks of the rivers, and sometimes the edges of the roads. The Everglades is not a swamp (as we had thought) but a network of wetlands and forests fed by a river flowing at a rate of 0.25 miles (0.40 km) per day, out of Lake Okeechobee, southwest into Florida Bay. We had the obligatory airboat ride in this amazing area, a thrilling experience in a flat bottomed aluminium boat with a huge motorised fan behind that propels you over the surface of the water. You do not sail you skim. Both the engine and the fan make a lot of noise so wildlife just scatters before you.

Before long it was Tampa and then Orlando to meet Judy and Eric, one of the couples we had last seen at the Millennium. Soon we were climbing on the aircraft ourselves and going home, a very interesting and trouble free 3 months behind us. However, the next trip was to prove to be a little different!

Thank you very much to Ruth & Denis for these fascinating glimpses. Readers only have to wait until next month to follow them on their second trip. - Ed

LIFE ON THE WILD SIDE by JEREMY HOLDEN

Vulture Tale



An hour before dawn on a remote mountain in Turkmenistan, Venus blazed brightly over the plateau. At 2000 metres the air was cold. But if a shiver passed through me it was caused not by the chill, but by excitement at finally achieving a long-held dream – to try and photograph a lammergeyer.



The day before we had fashioned a hide beneath a juniper tree at the edge of a deep canyon. As we worked griffon vultures and a single lammergeyer passed overhead. Success seemed certain, if not for the lammergeyer – which often comes to carcasses later than other vultures – then for

one or more of the other three species present: Griffon, black, or Egyptian.

We loaded up the Russian UAZ with gear and set off towards the hide. Pipits blazed up from the road, caught in the headlights like sparks, and in the dried puddles we could make out the faint shadows of wolf prints. By 5 am I was installed in the hide and the carcass of a goat, scavenged from a local herder, lay in position 20 metres away. I settled myself down on a canvas sheet and waited for the light and the vultures.

People often remark on the patience needed to spend all day in a hide. It seems a feat, to sit motionless for 13 hours without becoming restless or bored, but in fact quite the reverse is true. There is always something to look at, and being hidden means that wildlife can be observed behaving naturally. The time literally flies by.

The first visitor was a magpie. Corvids are smart and this one knew something was up. It circled chattering, but never came down to the goat. Later a pair of ravens arrived. They landed simultaneously and left seconds later. The sun rose and the good light burned away as the shadows shrunk. No vultures came. At noon a single Egyptian vulture landed. I activated the video function on the

camera, fearing the clunk of the shutter might spook the bird. It took the goat's eye and swallowed it like a greedy child with a gobstopper. Then it dropped off the ledge and drifted away down the canyon.

At 6 pm the rangers arrived to drive me back to camp. The lead ranger Shanyaz was grinning and giving me a thumbs-up, believing I had been successful. I explained that only one vulture had come, and then only for a moment. He was astonished. "But all day there has been a column of vultures circling above you", he explained. "We saw nine black vultures pass over with bulging crops. I thought they must have been feeding on your goat. Don't worry, they will definitely arrive tomorrow".

At 5 am the next morning I was back. Any fears I had that the hide was somehow obtrusive were relieved when a magpie and the ravens used it as a perch. At one point an Orphean warbler alighted on a branch in front and delivered its song a foot from my head. I could see its throbbing shadow on the hide fabric.

By noon it was hot. A dark stench rose as the goat began decaying in the sun; but still no vultures came. At 3 pm the Egyptian vulture reappeared. He stayed for longer this time and I was able to get photographs. At dusk I packed up again, knowing this time I had failed. But it was a light pang: the real dream had been to **try** and photograph a lammergeyer, and I had done that, sitting silently in this beautiful place for two whole days. Unfortunately there would be no third day, as we had to leave the mountain that night.

Once again Shanyaz arrived and was amazed that nothing had come down - there had been even more vultures around, apparently. They had clearly been feeding on something else close by, but what?

The mystery was solved later when we passed the herder who had supplied the goat. "Bad timing for you", he said. "The wolves killed three cows on the next plateau and all the vultures for miles have been having a feast."



Henlow Church of England Academy



At the time of writing, the end of the school year is just over six weeks away. Pupils in Year 8 and Year 6 have just returned from very successful residential trips to the Lake District and a Kingswood Activity Centre in Kent, respectively. Year 7 pupils are looking forward to their weekend trip to Paris, and at the end of June Year 5 children will dress in Tudor costume as they travel back in time to visit Kentwell Hall in Suffolk.

A programme of visits has been organised for the next year's new pupils to visit and familiarise themselves with life at a middle school. Hopefully all their fears and apprehension will be greatly eased, and they will look forward with great excitement and expectation to transferring to Henlow in September. A similar programme of visits is scheduled for our Year 8 pupils who will be leaving and transferring to upper school.

Sports Day is scheduled for Wednesday 16th July and parents are invited to attend. The Tug of War, long jump and high jump will take place in the morning and the track events will commence at 1.00pm.

At the end of term, we say goodbye to Mr Payne, who is taking early retirement after 35 years in the teaching profession. Mr Payne has been the Headteacher at Henlow since 1997, having previously worked at Etonbury Middle and Streetfield Middle, Dunstable. During his 17 years of leadership the school has undergone nine successful inspections; remained focused on providing a high quality child-centred approach to education; had several major resource and building developments; and converted to academy status. We wish him a long and happy retirement.



Mrs Earp, currently the Vice Principal at Samuel Whitbread Academy, will become the School's interim Headteacher in September.



Meppershall Remembers

Sunday 3rd August is the 100-year anniversary of the eve of the First World War – often called

“The Great War.”



Why is this event being marked up and down the country, and what will you do to Remember?

Tucked away in a quiet corner of Meppershall stands our village's memorial to young people who left their cottages and farms in 1914-1918 and never came back. They were not alone. By the time the war had ended, British Government records showed 1 million deaths in war, with no grave for half of these people; 2 million more were wounded. It was a devastating conflict.

There is no easy way to explain why The Great War happened. In the days before war began, Germany prepared to attack France, requesting British neutrality and safe passage through Belgium for its forces. Britain pledged support to France and Belgium and declared war at midnight on 4th August 1914. It was critical to keep the near parts of Europe free, and the English Channel safe, as our artery to the outside world. We succeeded, but the country and the Commonwealth would be consumed by the war effort for four years.

Remember: because we can trace part of our freedom today to the wartime sacrifice back then - you can see it in each name on the memorial.

Remember: because in modern conflicts, brave men and women continue to sustain life-changing injuries and lose their lives in the name of our country.

What can you do? The Meppershall **Help for Heroes** WW1 Centenary Memorial Event will take place on Sunday 3rd August, 2pm-7pm, centred on the Memorial in the Churchyard, all proceeds going to **Help for Heroes**. Drop in, make a donation, enjoy some refreshments, complete the 1km memorial walk, and/or get sponsored for the number of laps of the memorial walk you complete (a great fun family challenge in the beautiful surroundings of the church). The event will end with a short ceremony at 7pm.

Meppershall Remembers – in aid of HELP FOR HEROES – Sunday 3rd August, 2-7pm.

In St Mary's Churchyard. More information and sponsorship forms: 01462 857836 Meppershall.pcc@gmail.com or usual village sources. Refreshments served.

THE LUCY PAGES

By Lucy Standbridge

Aged 12



This month, I thought I would find out more about our village pub, The Sugar Loaf. I have interviewed Jenny the landlady, some customers and some people who don't use the pub, as well as finding out some facts about it.

Jenny has been at the Sugar Loaf for 5 years in August. The busiest days are usually Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings. The most popular drinks they serve are IPA, Fosters and Carlsberg. Jenny would like to update the pub a bit, given that it hasn't been modernised for a while. Jenny told me that she would like to attract families and a cross-section of Meppershall life to The Sugar Loaf to promote the village environment. Each week there is a game of dominoes, and every Tuesday night, darts is held there.



I went up to the Sugar Loaf on a Saturday night, and interviewed some of the customers there. I have interviewed Franco (aged 58 from Meppershall), Garry Jones (from Arlesey), Dave Hankins (aged 61, from Meppershall), Paul (aged 52, from Meppershall) and one man who wished to remain anonymous (aged 24 from Meppershall). Garry and Franco both go to the Sugar Loaf about once a week, Paul and anon. about 3 times and Dave comes every now and then.



Dave said "I come to the Sugar Loaf to enjoy the village and the community". The anonymous gentleman goes to the Sugar Loaf because it's the only pub in the village, and Paul goes because it's a nice way to meet others and it's more sociable than other pubs. Garry comes to the Sugar Loaf instead of closer pubs because he is originally from the village,

all his friends drink here and he likes the personality the pub has. My final question was "Are there any changes you would like to see at the Sugar Loaf?" The Anon and Franco would both like food to be served, Garry would like to see more people from other villages using the pub, Dave likes it just as it is and Paul said "I would like it to be more family friendly to make you feel more comfortable to come in here".

I have also interviewed Jill Foskett (in her 50's, who lives in Meppershall), Mr. Harvey Curtis (aged 40+ , who lives in Meppershall), one anonymous lady aged 39 (who lives in Meppershall), and another anonymous lady aged 40 (who lives in Biggleswade).



None of them go to the Sugar Loaf, so I asked them why not and what would encourage them to spend more time in there. The younger anonymous lady said that "I would go there if there was a family -friendly beer garden instead of a large car park". The other anonymous lady said that she had only popped in there to use the toilets and it seemed very friendly but it could be a little brighter. Harvey doesn't use the pub mostly because of childcare, but he would go there if it served food, was more family orientated and had a beer garden. Jill said that "I would use the pub if it was more of a restaurant because I like to have a few drinks with a meal rather than a drink on its own".



The Sugar Loaf is now the only pub in the village, but there was a total of 5 in the past: The Sugar Loaf, The Red Lion, The Five Bells and two called The Barley Mow. One was located at Hoo Road and closed in 1970; The Sugar Loaf was built in 1870 as a beer house by Wells & Co, a brewing company based in Biggleswade. It was taken over in 1961 by Greene King, and it is due to change ownership soon.

From my experience, I think that The Sugar Loaf is a very friendly pub, and Jenny was very welcoming, so why not go along and see what you think of our village pub.

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

<u>July</u>		<u>September</u>	
Sunday	13 th	Sunday	21 st
<u>August</u>		<u>October</u>	
Wednesday	6 th & 13 th	Sunday 19 th	
Bank Hol Sun & Mon	24 th & 25 th	<u>December</u>	
Sunday	31 st	Saturday & Sunday	6 th & 7 th
		Santa Specials.	
		Pre-booking essential	

Crime Type	08/05/13 to 08/06/13	08/05/14 to 08/06/14
Violence against the Person	0	2
Domestic Burglary	1	1
Burglary Other	1	2
Vehicle Crime	0	2
Other Theft	0	0
Criminal Damage	4	0
Drugs	0	0
Total	6	7

Meppershall Crime Report

As presented by PCSO
Gill Richardson to the
Parish Council meeting on
9th June.

Violence against the person:

- An assault took place between a member of staff and a customer at the Airman.
- A local resident suffered a minor dog bite around the Crackle Hill area.

Domestic Burglary:

- There was a burglary in Fildyke Road. The victim is elderly but is receiving support from her family and friends. I too have visited and given reassurance and advice. Items of jewellery and a TV was stolen.

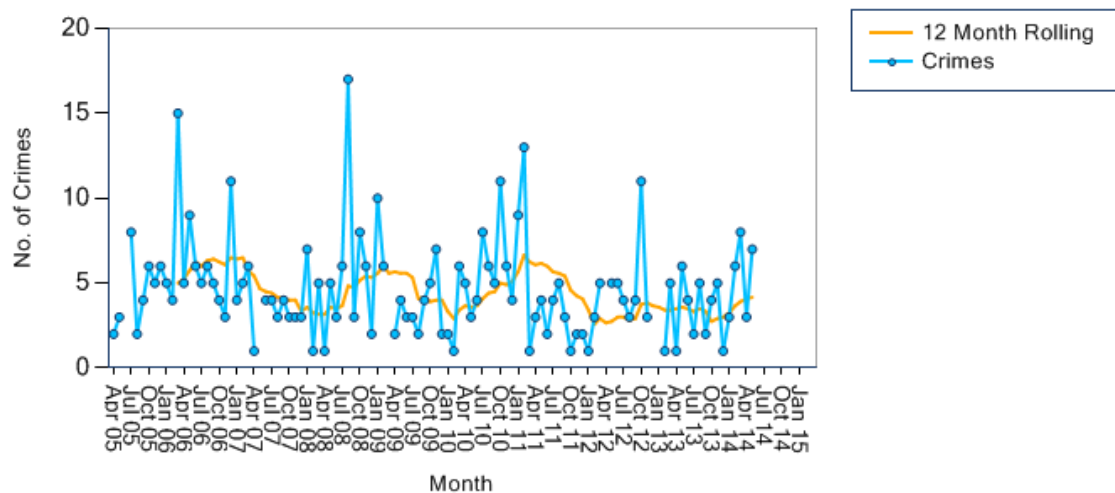
Burglary Other:

- A shed was broken into also in Fildyke Road however nothing was stolen.
- The Airman was broken into, cash and spirits were stolen.

Vehicle Crime

- There have been 2 thefts from vehicles in the High Street. Both vehicles were BMW's and both had the steering wheel stolen. Also stolen were wing mirrors and a Sat Nav. *(See letter on Page 3 – Ed)*

Long Term Trend (5yr)



Crime Type Breakdown in last 12 months

Financial Year	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total	Avg
Current Financial Year: 2014/2015	3	7											10	5.00
Financial Year: 2013/2014	1	6	4	2	5	2	4	5	1	3	6	8	47	3.92
Financial Year: 2012/2013		5	5	4	3	4	11	3			1	5	41	3.42
Financial Year: 2011/2012	3	4	2	4	5	3	1	2	2	1	3	5	35	2.92
Financial Year: 2010/2011	5	3	4	8	6	5	11	6	4	9	13	1	75	6.25
Financial Year: 2009/2010	2	4	3	3	2	4	5	7	2	2	1	6	41	3.42
Financial Year: 2008/2009	1	5	3	6	17	3	8	6	2	10	6		67	5.58
Financial Year: 2007/2008	1		4	4	3	4	3	3	3	7	1	5	38	3.17
Financial Year: 2006/2007	5	9	6	5	6	5	4	3	11	4	5	6	69	5.75
Financial Year: 2005/2006	2	3		8	2	4	6	5	6	5	4	15	60	5.00

FINANCIAL UPDATE by PAUL SAVUTO

Investment

Do you have a long term investment strategy? Some things to consider when investing....

One of the world's wealthiest investors

Warren Buffett is one of the world's richest people and is a highly successful investor. He's achieved this partly by identifying companies that he believed were worth more than their market value, investing in them and, crucially, holding that investment for the long term. It sounds simple, but given the ups and downs of the global markets, it takes a high level of discipline, nerve and conviction in your decisions.

Keep focused on your end goals

It's important to have in place a sound investment strategy and keep focused on your end goals. If appropriate, invest at regular intervals over the long term. Don't be afraid to invest when the market dips or when share prices are lower, so you gain more wealth when markets rise.

Your attitude towards investment risk

Understand your time horizon and your attitude towards risk. They affect how you invest. We're all different, and our personal risk attitude can change with our circumstances and age.

Spread risk through diversification

Diversify your portfolio by not putting all your eggs in one basket. So when one part of the market does not perform, it is balanced out by another part of the market that does. View your investment portfolio as a whole. Asset allocation is the process of dividing your investment among different assets, such as cash, bonds, property and equities (shares in companies).

Assets that behave differently

Balance your portfolio and maintain a sensible balance between different types of investments. To benefit from diversification, you need to invest in assets that behave differently from each other. Each asset type has a relationship with others and typically, if one asset type goes up, one goes down.

Benefit from compound growth

Think long term. It is time in the market that counts, not market timing. The longer you are invested in the market, the greater the likelihood of making up for any losses. The sooner you start investing, the more you will benefit from compound growth.

Invest as tax efficiently as possible

Different investments have different tax treatments. Tax is consequential to many wealth management decisions. Our understanding and experience can help you manage and protect your wealth, whatever it takes. We can advise you about the tax treatment of your current investments, and of any investments you are considering, to ensure that you are investing tax -efficiently. Remember your requirements are unique to you and what's a good investment for one individual, is not automatically a good investment choice for you, so don't follow the latest investment trends, unless they fit with your plan.

Require advice?

We offer a range of services that we tailor to our clients' investment requirements. Please contact me, Paul Savuto on 07834 499595 or email me ps@dgsifa.com

Past performance is not necessarily a guide to the future. The value of investments and the income from them can fall as well as rise as a result of market fluctuations. You may not get back the amount originally invested. Tax assumptions are subject to change and any tax relief will depend on your individual circumstances.

CALENDAR OF MEPPERSHALL EVENTS

July 2014

Wednesday 2nd		
Players' Panto Read-Through	7.30pm	Village Hall
Saturday 5th - Sunday 6th		
24 Hour Bike Ride for Sue Ryder's St.John's Hospice, Moggerhanger		
Wednesday 9th		
Players' Panto Auditions	7.30pm	Village Hall
Friday 11th		
Southill School Fun Night	5.00 – 7.00 pm	Southill Playing Field
Saturday 12th		
Karen's Karaoke		Social Club
Sunday 13th		
2 nd Sunday Stroll	10.30 am	St Mary's Church
Saturday 26th		
Churchyard Working Party	From 8.30 am	St Mary's Church

August 2014

Sunday 3rd		
WW1 Centenary	2.00 pm	Meppershall War Memorial
Mon 11th – Thursday 14th		
Sparks Holiday Club	10.00 am – 2.00 pm	St Mary's Church

SPORTS PAGE

We hope to run a regular sports page and thank Wayne Woodcock very much for launching it for us. If you play a sport locally or belong to a local club, please use this page to publicise your events, fixtures and results. - Ed



SHEFFORD SAINTS JUNIORS FOOTBALL CLUB

Shefford Saints FC (SSFC) was founded in 1989 by Les Small so that his son James could play football with his friends on a regular basis. Since then the club has gone from strength to strength, now consisting of development squads at U5 and U6 age groups, and in excess of 20 teams playing from U7s up to U21s, including girls teams. In June 2008, the club was granted Charitable Status and 2010 saw SSFC get to the next level of FA Chartered Standard clubs and achieve Development Status.

With an emphasis on football for all, SSFC has grown to become one of the biggest clubs in the area. This has been further added to with the opening last year of the club's new ground and clubhouse by Jack Collison of West Ham, a former player of SSFC. The ground is situated on Hitchin Road in Shefford and consists of a clubhouse with fully stocked bar (available for private functions), a full size adult pitch, training area, a 9-a-side pitch, and 4 mini soccer pitches. More information can be obtained regarding the clubhouse by contacting Roy Hayday on the e-mail address or phone number below:

info@sheffordsports.co.uk or phone: 07443 486247

Over the years SSFC has gone on to arrange one of the biggest summer football tournaments in the area each year, with the help and support of Robert Bloomfield Academy (RBA). This year the 2-day tournament will be held on the grounds of RBA over the weekend of 19th and 20th July. The club has also accepted a request from Bedfordshire FA to host this year's Fair Play Tournament at the new ground on 5th July. Spectators are welcome to come down and watch.

As the 2013-2014 season draws to an end the club can reflect on another successful season which has seen, amongst others, the U11 Reds reach the Chiltern Junior Sevens Cup Final, U12 Reds win the Chiltern Junior Sevens Division 1 title, the U18s reach the Youth Challenge Cup Final and the U21s just missing out on winning the Centenary Cup Final in a dramatic penalty shoot-out.

If you are interested in finding out more about the club, would like your child to play for one of the teams, or are interested in helping out in another capacity take a look at the website below which has full contact details for committee members and squad managers.

www.sheffordsaints.co.uk

PUZZLE PAGES

Su Doku 123 - Hard

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

Su Doku 124 - Medium

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

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 40 – with thanks to Paul Smith for a fresh delivery of puzzles)

Paul Smith has branched out into fiendish word searches. Can you find the names of the 66 counties below? Solution next month.



Angola	Fiji	Italy	Panama	Togo
Aruba	Gabon	Japan	Peru	Tuvalu
Austria	Gambia	Jordan	Qatar	Uganda
Benin	Georgia	Kenya	Rwanda	USA
Brazil	Germany	Laos	Senegal	Wales
Bulgaria	Ghana	Macau	Serbia	Yemen
Canada	Guam	Mali	Sierra Leone	Zaire
Chad	Guinea	Malta	Spain	
Chile	Haiti	Mongolia	Sudan	
Congo	Hungary	Namibia	Sweden	
Cote	India	Nauru		
D'Ivoire	Iran	Nepal	Switzerland	
Cuba	Iraq	Niger	Syria	
Egypt	Ireland	Norway	Taiwan	
Ethiopia	Israel	Oman	Thailand	



Buying a Used Car – Why Use a Dealer?

Buying a car from a dealer is the safest way to buy, as you get the maximum protection the law allows. But there are dodgy dealers, so make sure you buy from a reputable dealership. Our reputation for excellence has been built over 50 years, during which time we've grown to 4 sites and over 60 staff - which we think speaks for itself!

When you are looking for a quality used car at a reasonable price it can be very tempting to go straight to the classified ads in the local newspaper to find out what is available from private individuals in your area. It is true that many good deals can indeed be found in this way, however buying a car from a dealer gives you peace of mind.

Essentially, buying a vehicle from a dealer eliminates many of the risks that can be inherent when purchasing a used car. There is, perhaps, no way to eliminate risk completely, but going to a reputable local dealer, with a significant trading history (like us), can certainly go some way to reducing any problems.

Expertise

A dealer will have access to greater technical and mechanical expertise than a private seller. For example, all our used Fords have gone through a

thorough technical inspection and will have any significant faults corrected. You, the buyer, can and should request a written guarantee on any repairs carried out – this is something we provide as standard.

Finance

Second, a dealer can arrange suitable financing for the purchase of your car – something a private seller will be unable to provide. In the vast majority of cases they are unlikely to accept anything other than cash. At John R Ford, we have a range of finance packages available to suit all pockets.

Further, dealerships are also very familiar with the requirements of transferring car ownership from one person to another. This assistance with the paperwork is something we offer free as part of the service and should ensure that there is no nasty surprises further down the road.

Better Selection

Also, a dealer offers a wide selection of used cars in one place, saving you from having to trawl through lots of newspaper advertisements and speaking to/visiting a number of different people. For example, we have a huge selection of used Fords at our two sites, so whatever

your budget and requirements, we'll be able to show you a number of cars that fit. And if we don't have that perfect Ford, we'll do our best to source it!

After Sales

Once you've bought a car from a private seller, you're on your own – there's no level of after sales care or help should something go wrong. OK you can take it to an independent dealer but buying from a franchise dealer gives you peace of mind knowing that you're getting in-depth product knowledge, dedicated workshops and manufacturer-trained mechanics. This allows us to look after your car in the way you would want it treated, whether it's choosing the correct tyres or a major service.

For more information, help or advice please contact us:

Royston

Sales - 01763 250100

Aftersales - 01763 242084

Rapid Fit - 0845 4 000 555

Sheffield

Sales - 01462 629629

Aftersales - 01462 628628

Rapid Fit - 01462 628862

www.johnrford.co.uk

Beer Review: Atlas Brewery Three Sisters Scottish Ale



In response to the Editor's request for "Community" pieces for the Messenger, I thought I'd share with you some well-chosen words about some of the less well known liquid exports from my homeland, Scotland.

Going by the front label, Three Sisters certainly stands out. (Sorry you can't see it fully in the Black and White Photos). The typeface and pink-ness make sure that the Three Sisters aren't shrinking violets. The 4.2% volume is clearly visible, as are some statements that remind the drinker of Orkney's labels. Specifically the "Brewed in small batches" reference. It is the sort of thing you like to read about your ale. More common beers, manufactured in huge vats and massive volumes, are probably to be avoided.

In the place of the 'authenticity stamp' favoured by Orkney and some other Scottish brewers, we have something more straight to the point. We learn that it will be "dark ruby" in colour. And that it will have "roast malt", "fruity" and "hop" flavours. The rear label is big and crams a lot of information on. Prominently placed is the symbol telling us that this 500 millilitre bottle contains 2.1 units - if that's something you waste your time counting.

The right-hand side of the rear label mentions a couple of other Atlas beers. The left-hand side gives us the story: that the Three Sisters are in fact three peaks of Glen Coe, somewhere that is presumably not far from their Kinlochleven address. The last thing to note on the rear label is that they use Styrian Golding hops. These are for fruitiness and a crisp aftertaste. Once in the glass, it looks ever so slightly red. The head is good and frothy, if you know how to pour your beer, but it dies down a lot moments after it is poured.

If you take time to smell your beer, you'll probably enjoy the complex mixture of malt, hoppiness and fruits all muddled together. Fans of Scottish ales and those on the darker end of the ale spectrum will probably like this smell, but it's a little strong.

The taste and flavour are satisfyingly full and strong. The first tastes that hit the drinker are the malt and the bitter. But it manages to avoid most of the bitter and sour aftertaste that accompanies a lot of ales. It isn't a gassy drink.

This is one of those ales that will grow on you. For ale, it is surprisingly refreshing, possibly due to its "Purest Highland Water", or the low-ish alcohol volume.

Three Sisters is a rewarding ale. Good flavour, high quality and drinkable. Recommended for fans of Scottish ales and for beer drinkers wanting an easy introduction to them. People less keen on strong-ish maltiness and bitterness might want to look elsewhere.

Abridged from the first publication on [Hywel's Big Log](#) 2008 by John Thompson.

Three Sisters Scottish Ale is available from Tesco, Baldock



MEPPERSHALL SOCIAL CLUB

2nd Sundays : Quiz Night

Quiz Master Paul Carne at 7:30 pm

£1 per person. No maximum team size

Half money taken will be 1st prize, the rest will go to 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 12th July and Sat 2nd Aug: 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 e-mail address of:-

meppershallsocialclub@outlook.com for any queries or enquiries.

Don't Get Sent Off During the World Cup!

England's first game in the World Cup is fast approaching but for a lot of organisations the tournament began a while ago. Working with pubs and clubs, councils and the UK Football Policing Unit to ensure all aspects of the tournament are fun and safe for all to enjoy is a long-term project.

With such a multi-cultural place as Bedfordshire, it's not just England games that the police have to plan for. This year of course there's added interest with England and Italy playing each other in the opening game of Group D on Saturday June 14 and the uncertainty about how the various teams are going to progress makes it a challenge for even the most experienced of planners. At home, football tournaments always bring extra people into the town centres to soak up the big match atmosphere.

"We have planned to have extra officers on duty for the initial group games because it's likely the town centres are going to be very busy. The first group game also comes on a Saturday night at 11pm so that, combined with the regular weekend trade, will mean even more people out than usual," said Chief Insp. Greg Horsford. "More people means more police so officers will be noticeable, although they will be operating with a low-key, friendly approach. However, they will deal firmly with anyone who causes trouble."

Most towns have "BANNED" schemes operating in licensed premises – which means that anyone who causes problems in a pub or club will be subject to a ban in licensed premises across that town. An interim ban begins immediately, before licensees meet to discuss whether a longer ban is appropriate, so causing trouble means that those involved will miss the opportunity to enjoy the rest of the World Cup atmosphere in the pub. Many licensees will be displaying posters reminding people about good behaviour in their premises. In Bedford, where the England-Italy rivalry is well established, some will be participating in the Respect campaign – asking fans to respect each other as they do in everyday life.

The police also have the ability to ask for Football Banning Orders (FBO's) on those who cause trouble when watching the game – even if it's on television at home or at a pub. When someone is given a FBO it means they have to surrender their passport at certain times of the year that coincide with big international games and they can also be banned from attending professional football matches. This year's passport surrender started on Friday May 31 – meaning that people with FBO's may not travel abroad until the England team have come home from the tournament.

A FBO is an immediate civil order granted by magistrates and offenders will be in court within hours of their arrest. There are over 3000 FBOs in place across the country and 27 people in Bedfordshire have one.

Stopping people who have FBOs, or others who may cause trouble abroad, using London Luton Airport as a starting point to attend the World Cup is also part of Bedfordshire Police's work during the month of June.

"The World Cup only comes round every four years so we want everyone to have a great time watching it – but to remember the usual precautions about having a safe night out. If you're going out, plan how to get home, drink sensibly and stay aware. It's also worth remembering if you plan to watch at home with family and friends, perhaps with a beer and a barbecue, again being aware of alcohol intake is a good idea. Unfortunately, we do have upturns in calls to domestic disputes during football events – often because of excessive drinking."

Find out more at bedfordshire.police.uk or follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) #staysafe.

Solution to Su Doku 123

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

Solution to Su Doku 124

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

FILM REVIEW

By Carlie Newman

FADING GIGOLO (cert.15 1 hr. 30 mins.), although directed by the actor John Turturro, is really Woody Allen's film.



Woody Allen plays Murray, a book store owner, who talks his friend Fioravante (John Turturro) into becoming a gigolo in order to earn extra cash. His first customer is a dermatologist, Dr Parker (Sharon Stone) so Fioravante doesn't find his task too difficult. Progressing to Dr Parker's equally attractive friend Selima (Sofia Vergara) Fioravante is more than happy he agreed to Murray's suggestion.

A different kind of client comes to Murray's attention: Avigal (Vanessa Paradis), also lovely looking, but the widow of a Jewish Hassidic Rabbi. She lives a cloistered life and is finally aroused by Fioravante's touch on her back. She is watched over by the jealous Dovi (Live Schreiber). Suddenly Murray is confronted by complications in his work as a pimp.

It's great to be able to enjoy Allen as an actor after seeing so many of the recent films that he has directed where another actor does a somewhat poor Woody impression. Here we get Woody himself speaking lines that seem to have been written by him but are in fact Turturro's. Very funny, Allen puts in a superb performance and Turturro is a good foil. The only really unbelievable part - well, the whole film is an older male's fantasy - is that the women are too beautiful to ever need to pay for sex!



The Meppershall Players



As I write the Players have not had their AGM so I will report on that in the August issue, and will also comment on the Players at the Summer Fair.

2014 Pantomime 'Beauty & the Beast'

- The read-through is on Wednesday 2nd July 2014, 7.30pm, at the Village Hall - come along if you're interested in appearing in this year's Pantomime (9-15yrs must be accompanied by an adult).
- Auditions are on Wednesday 9th July 2014 at the Village Hall, 7.30pm 9-15yrs (Children in this age group must be accompanied by an adult), 8.00pm 16- 90+yrs.
- The Pantomime Dates are as follows: Fri 28th & Sat 29th November & Fri 5th & Sat 6th December.
- Tickets will be on sale at Roger's Bakery from Monday 15th September 2014. Tickets can also be purchased from the Players on Wednesday evenings at the Village Hall from Wednesday 2nd July from 7.30pm-10pm (No Tickets on sale 13th & 20th August). Prices: Sat Matinee's £6 Con £5 Evenings £8 Con £7 Last night £9 No Concessions.

The Player's will be having a two week Summer Break to recharge batteries before Pantomime rehearsals start in September so there will be no Players meeting on Wednesday 13th & 20th August 2014.

Are you handy with needle and thread? Do you like to Paint? Are you good with make-up? The Players are Making Costumes, making and painting Scenery, and practising facial make-up designs on Wednesday 23rd & 30th July, Wednesday 6th & 27th August & Wednesday 3rd September from 7.30pm-10pm at Meppershall Village Hall. We would be grateful for any assistance, as there is a lot to do. And we really are a friendly lot.

Future Productions:

VE/VJ celebration/commemoration production (title still to be decided).

- Auditions: Wed 14th January 2015, at the Village Hall 7.30pm
- Read through: Wed 7th January 2015, 7.30pm at the Village Hall.
- Performances: Fri 8th & Sat 9th May 2015 7.45pm at the Village Hall
- Tickets £10 No Concessions but includes Food.

Pantomime 2015- 27th & 28th Nov & Fri 4th & 5th Dec Robin Hood

The Meppershall Players do have their own page on Face book, 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.

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 12th July, Sat 2nd Aug, Sat 13th Sep, Sat 4th Oct, Sat 1st Nov. So come along and enjoy a sing song in a friendly atmosphere.

Wanted: One Pianist for Musicals and Pantomimes. Does not need to attend every rehearsal, only six musical rehearsals per production and then performances (2-3 on musicals & variety's, 6 on Pantos)

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 all areas of theatrical performances, from set building to costumes, directing to acting, make-up to song & dance.

If you are interested in any of the above we look forward to meeting you
Karen Mitchell (Players Chairman) 01462 816336

Meppershall Garden Club

One of our recent meetings was themed 'herbs'. We had a good selection of hand-picked herbs from our gardens and we were able to share many ideas on how we can use them in everyday life. Much research and preparation had taken place prior to our meeting and we shared information sheets on herbs and some mouth-watering recipes from a cordon bleu cookery course. One member brought along a mixture of dried herbs that she makes up and uses in her cooking. We remembered the tip on drying herbs that was given to us by Linda after visiting Provence: this is listed below. Thanks to our host the meeting ended with samples of herb-flavoured snacks.

Our next themed meeting is using cut flowers from your garden. More about this next time.

Here are some more of the tips that Alan Mason gave on Linda's a trip to Provence:

♣ The quickest way in the world to dry herbs: just lay a sheet of newspaper on the seat of your car, arrange the herbs in a single layer, then roll up the windows and close the doors. Your herbs will be quickly dried to perfection. What's more, your car will smell great.

♣ To remove the salt deposits that form on clay pots, combine equal parts white vinegar, rubbing alcohol and water in a spray bottle. Apply the mixture to the pot and scrub with a plastic brush. Let the pot dry before planting anything in it.

♣ To prevent accumulating dirt under your fingernails while you work in the garden, draw your fingernails across a bar of soap and you will effectively seal the undersides of your nails so dirt cannot collect beneath them. Then, after you have finished in the garden, use a nailbrush to remove the soap and your nails will be sparkling clean.

Now over to you Marcia,
Kim Tyler

This month of July there are several interesting gardens close by with 'special events' to enjoy.

Wrest Park, Silsoe, Beds MK45 4HR

Here there are over ninety acres of grounds to explore with French/ Dutch and English styles of both landscaping and planting. There is a tour bus with a guide which is available at various stops around the garden.

There is a cafe with an extensive menu available, plus a shop and plant centre.

However the highlight must be that on Sunday afternoons in July live music will be performed outside, where you are able to picnic and listen. What could be better on a summer's afternoon?

Admission prices:

Adult £9 Concessions £8-50 Child £5

Opening times: 10 am - 6pm

Swiss Gardens, Old Warden, Beds.(Shuttleworth) SG18 9EP

This is very exciting piece of news many of us have been waiting for!

On Thursday July 11th the Gardens re-open after eighteen months of extensive garden refurbishment. This has resulted in beautifully restored buildings and landscaping. There is a focus on interaction with the garden, i.e. local schoolchildren have been involved with submitting designs for the new



Sculpture Trail. The original garden was created in the 1920's as a late Regency garden with a strong Swiss influence. In the 1870's it was bought by Joseph Shuttleworth who introduced Victorian improvements.



Within the ten acre is a collection of rare and unusual plants including Britain's largest *Pieris japonica* (lily of the valley) bush. However over the years time and lack of investment have taken their toll. A grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund has enabled the repair and conservation of the Garden's thirteen listed structures plus reorganisation of the planting areas.



Opening times: 9.30am – 5pm daily

Definitely worth a visit.....

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

Lewis's Further Adventures

Movement Orders

The War drums were beating rather furiously. An old pal at R.E.M.E. records office based in Leicester gave me a call and asked if I would like a posting to B.A.O.R. as a request had come through from 7 Artillery Brigade for me to be drafted in. The Brigade Headquarters were at Gutersloh, sharing the base with 22 Light Air Defence Regt and its R.E.M.E. Workshop.

I talked it over with the other half of the partnership and her reply was that she had enjoyed Singapore so why not give the Fatherland a go! I got down to some serious investigation of the ramifications not only for myself but also for the family: we now had three children together with the dog on the family strength.

It transpired that the married quarters situation was not good: housing of any type was in very short supply, new flats were being built at high speed but there were long waiting lists. Our old friend Albert and his wife Barbara had been posted to 36 Heavy Ack-Ack Regt. in Duisburg some three months previously and they were living in a flat in Essen-Mulheim. A number of highly illicit signals passed to and fro, B&A volunteered to squash up to accommodate Fran and the children while I would have to arrange accommodation in the Mess at Gutersloh for myself and the dog.

The word soon passed around on the jungle telegraph and we received many calls from the local residents in Aberfrau village who wish to purchase white goods, televisions etc at knock down prices. Because the reception of television signals was very poor, I had installed a high-gain antenna. Sunday morning in pouring rain was spent dismantling this device followed by a great deal of haggling with potential purchasers.

All R.E.M.E. personnel leaving the country had to pass through the R.E.M.E. Depot at Arborfield for processing, including many inoculations, (mine from Singapore were out of date). As we would be travelling under our own steam, the family were virtually disowned by the Army and we had to fend for ourselves. Another Instrument 'tiffy', a close pal from Egypt days, was living in Yateley with his family; they agreed to look after our family for a week - I had the dog!

Another acquaintance from Egypt had left the service and was employed as a Sales Manager by a reasonably large Car Company in Reading. He was quite taken with the Singer Gazelle which was in excellent condition and offered me a good price for it. His Company were Vauxhall Distributors who were agents in a special scheme for sales of Vauxhall cars for service personnel travelling to B.A.O.R. and the prices were particularly attractive. I settled for a VX 4/90, a

rather sporty saloon in a light blue colour, it had a very capacious boot which was ideal for the family, a full spares kit and breakdown triangles were supplied f.o.c. Due to some special requirement of the scheme, I had to pick up the car and sign the purchase documents from a premises in Wardour Street in the West End. This at the time was also the haunt of other activities and when I drove out in my splendid new vehicle it attracted the attention of a number of the 'ladies'.

Back at Yateley I booked our passage from Dover to Ostende for the next day; packing commenced, the dog's basket went into the passenger well to be shared by the dog and my good lady's feet while with little argument the children sorted out their pecking order on the rear bench seat and the boot and rear foot-wells were filled to capacity. The next morning with tearful farewells we headed east for Dover, as always with young children the stops were frequent; amazingly they can never all evacuate their bladders at the same time!

The formalities at Dover were quickly undertaken: Fran kept her skirt draped over Manny the dog, who behaved impeccably and her presence was not declared. I identified the boarding master, slipped him a fiver and asked him to keep his eye on the dog: he saluted and the fiver disappeared from view. The children loved the ferry and ate a good meal - we had booked bunks for them and they settled down well. Early morning and Ostende hove into view, I was wearing uniform, just in case of any problems, however Belgian customs as ever were at their most efficient and we breezed through with Manny again under Fran's skirt. Do not forget to drive on the right! The motorway was not in the best state of repair and in many cases reduced to one carriageway but the ring road around Antwerpen had just been resurfaced and was a delight to travel on. Brussels was interesting, through the tunnels and over the bridges with the magnificent dome of the Domaine Royal up on the hill.

In a short space of time we came to our first border crossing from Belgium into Holland, Fran camouflaged Manny the dog and our passports were quickly stamped. Once more everyone was loaded up and an hour later we were into the border crossing at Venlo, the passports were stamped with great efficiency with no search of the car and we drove into Deutschland, another hour and I was searching for A&B's residence in Essen/Mulheim, What a greeting! Barbara took Lesley our daughter into her arms and never let her go. The car was unloaded and bidding goodbye to everyone, Manny and I took to the Autobahn and drove on to our next temporary home at Gutersloh.

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

To be continued



A Big 'Hello' and 'Goodbye'!

Hello, my name is Hayley and I would like to introduce myself as the new Chair of Meppershall Tots. This is my first Messenger page as Chair and I have some big shoes to fill as we sadly say goodbye and thank you to Debbie Jones for all her amazing work with Tots, including this page, over the past 3 years!

What's happening in July?

Tuesday 1st July sees us bringing out the towels, aprons and washing up bowls for our monthly Messy Play session! Please remember old clothes as we will be painting, feet printing and play-dohing! After a wonderful joint Messy Play session with Orchard Children's Centre in June, we will again be teaming up with them on 8th July, where we will have a soft play area, giant building bricks and making pretend dinners for our craft. There will also be a dietician attending the session for informal chats and any help or advice. This will again be a free session. Tuesday 15th is our Standalone Farm visit. And finally, on Tuesday 22nd July we will be having our Summer Party! We will have our party pack out with bouncy castle and ride-ons. We will also have a party buffet instead of just our usual snack. The cost of this session will be £2 per child (£1 under 1yr).

Standalone Farm Visit.

We now have only two weeks until our annual farm visit! We have had much interest, with many people coming to Tots each week to fill their loyalty card. All fingers are crossed for some lovely weather, as we had last year! **This will replace our usual session in the village hall.**

**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

Please ring Hayley on 07749 970742 for more information



Ponderings

We would like to welcome Athena and Winnie to our setting who both started with us after half term. We hope they have already made some new friends! The children have all been enjoying the fine weather so far with lots of trips to the allotment and park, or just playing with the new sandpit picnic table. They particularly loved picking the strawberries they have nurtured.

On 25th June we held our 'Mini Sports Day'! The children were really excited on the day and loved racing in front of family and friends. Well done to all our mini racers!

What's happening in July?

This month we will all be sounding out the letters 'Rr, Ww, and Kk'.

On Wednesday 9th July we will be taking the children for a walk to the vicarage for a picnic with Reverend Roni.

On Friday 11th July those starting at Meppershall Lower School in September will be going to the school for a transfer day.

We are planning a BBQ for 20th July. All staff, children and their families are welcome and we even have the hall booked in the event it rains.

Finally we have our leavers show and end of term party on the 23rd July. This will be an emotional day for many, but lots of fun too! Marcia will be selling her delicious homemade cakes, so do come down at 12:15 to try one!

We are still looking to recruit more qualified relief staff to join our thriving village pre-school. Successful candidates may be required to work at short notice to cover staff sickness, holidays and training. If you really enjoy working with children, please ring Debbie on 07713 627376. We are committed to offering Equal Opportunities in Employment, and follow strict Safeguarding and Safer Recruiting Procedures.

We are now enrolling for September. If your little one is ready to make new friends and enjoy our stimulating, safe environment, please ring Tamsin any morning in term time on the number below to book a visit.

Meppershall Pre-school is a thriving village Pre-school with its very own 'Mini Diggers' allotment. We take up to 24 children in each session, from in and around the surrounding areas. Priority is given to funded children, and we have limited spaces for two year olds.

Please ring Tamsin on 07816 357159, email info@meppershall-ps.co.uk, or visit www.meppershall-ps.co.uk to find out more about the Early Years Foundation Stage and exceptional care we offer.

TO SOLAR OR NOT TO SOLAR....? by John Chapman

Having recently gone through this process I can shed some interesting light on the question.

Currently if you have between £5K and £6.5K to invest, then installing solar panels on a suitable roof will give you between about 10% and 12% return on capital expenditure over 20 years, fully backed by the government and partially RPI protected. Make no mistake, simply generating your own electricity will not produce this return: it is the government subsidy and the payment from your utility company for EVERY kWh that comes off your roof, regardless of whether you use it yourself or not, that makes this all worthwhile, and there is no tax to pay on the payments you receive! If you re-invest the return, your capital will be reinstated within about 8-9 years.

This is a Government scheme aimed at encouraging people to generate their own electricity by an environmentally-friendly method and thus reduce the load on existing power stations. The bones of the scheme are like this:

- *The Government has set up a Feed-in Tariff that sets prices that you will be paid for the electricity that your panels generate and at which you can sell any surplus electricity back to your utility supplier. For the period 01/07/13 to 04/14 the rates were between 13.5 p and 14.9 p (depending on the size of your installation) for each kilowatt hour (kWh) that you generate, regardless of whether you subsequently sell it to the utility company or not..*
- *Of the electricity that you generate, you keep as much as you need in your own house. If there is a surplus you can sell this to the utility company at a maximum of 4.5p per kWh. See below for how to make the most of your free electricity.*
- *To participate in the scheme you have to get an Energy Performance Certificate for your house, and the house must be rated at level D or better.*
- *Once you have registered your installation, the rates applicable to you are guaranteed for 20 years and are linked to the RPI.*

Solar is in its infancy, rather like double glazing was in the 70's, but with continuing official support it will become commonplace in a few years time as all new houses built will have to incorporate some solar. We use about 5,000kWh (kilowatt hours) of electricity a year; our solar array will produce about 3,500kWh+ in a year, depending on the weather of course. Your bill will show you your annual usage. The official support entails a high degree of regulation governing the solar providers so that you get information for your installation based on the same standard formula from each company. It is advisable to get at least three quotes though, as installation costs and guarantees vary.

The best situation for panels is on a south east to south west facing roof and you will need 14 to 16 panels to get up to the government maximum of 4kWh output (to get your subsidy). Our panels are spread over two roofs as space was limited. Panels with silver aluminium surrounds and fixings tend to be cheapest but all-black panels tend to look better on most roofs and also tend to give better output. Solar panels produce DC current which is turned into the AC current used in your home by an INVERTER. There are two types of inverter, a single one that deals with all your panels or ones that are fixed to each panel. The latter have the advantage of losing less DC current than the former (more efficient) and with the 'enPhase' inverters we have fitted, we get detailed information on our array from the manufacturer every 15 minutes over the Internet; they also continuously monitor our installation for faults (at no extra cost) and inform our installer if things go wrong.

The power off the roof comes down to a small box which is placed close to our consumer unit (fuse box); this measures the amount supplied and is the figure which we give to our utility company every quarter and on which we are paid. The same power is available for us to use, so we get a double whammy. To make full use of our power before we sell any back to the grid, there is an additional item called an 'iBoost' which is fitted to our immersion heater. This little box diverts unused solar power to heat our water until the thermostat kicks out when the water is hot enough. It works by having a little WiFi sensor fitted around our mains electric cable in the meter box which sends the required information to the box by our immersion heater. This box has a readout which gives interesting real-time information. iBoost is a bit like a battery, saving power in the form of hot water, and ours works extraordinarily well. This also saves some gas which we normally use to heat our water.

You will need an EPC certificate for your property (this is now a requirement for selling a property) and a Band D is the minimum for subsidised solar. Most post-1960's properties with double glazing and loft and cavity wall insulation will meet this band. With solar installed you should achieve a Band B which will increasingly become a good house-selling point. You can transfer your solar benefits to a future purchaser of your property.

Changing your habits to suit solar power can make best use of this 'free' energy by using your high power-using washing and dish washing machines and tumble dryer when the sun is shining, using cheap timers if required. For safety reasons, your solar switches off during grid power cuts.

All the above information can be validated on the website of the Renewable Energy Consumer Code, www.recc.org.uk and your investment in solar energy will also help the planet by reducing your carbon emissions.

John Chapman

What'sit?

The first picture was ridiculously easy – especially if you live at the Shefford end of Shefford Road. It shows the first street lamp in Meppershall.



So where in Meppershall can you see the sign below?
Answer next month.



Central Bedfordshire Scam Aware



The Trading Standards team would like to warn residents of online offers for free trials of cosmetic products and diet pills. We have received a number of complaints recently where residents think they have signed up for a free trial of cosmetic products or diet pills, with only a small delivery cost paid using their debit or credit card, only to find at a later date that money is regularly being taken from their bank account, without their knowledge.

These offers can appear on social media or in the form of internet “pop up” advertising, as well as by email. Many of them will quote UK addresses, when in fact these are just mailing addresses and the operators are actually located overseas. By taking up the “free trial” residents may find they have inadvertently agreed to a rolling contract (this is known as a ‘subscription trap’). The terms and conditions, which are usually well hidden, tend to state that if the contract is not cancelled before the end of the free trial period, a monthly subscription payment, usually in the region of £80 - £100, will be made from the bank details they have provided.

Our advice to residents is:

- be very wary if you’re asked to enter any bank card details for a free offer,
- make sure you check the small print before agreeing,
- if you have any doubts about the offer, search for online reviews,
- if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is,
- check your bank and credit card statements regularly to make sure that you are aware of what payments are being made. If you notice any transactions you’re not sure about contact your bank or card provider at once,
- stop any future payments being made by contacting your bank or card provider. If your bank says this is not possible insist that you are withdrawing your consent to any further payments and request a new card.

THE BIKE SHED

by Wayne Allen

The Isle of Man TT

As a motorcycle enthusiast I am ashamed to admit that I have never attended the TT races on the Isle of Man. It has not been by choice that I have never made the pilgrimage, it's one of those "maybe next year I will go". Because of the popularity of the event, booking a year in advance is the norm just to get you across the water. This is one of the most unique race events on the calendar, backed up by a very extensive history.

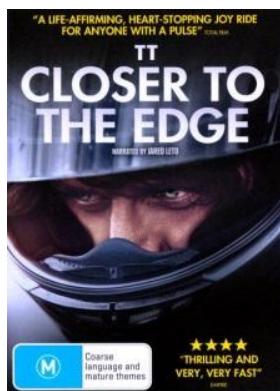


The race is held on a large loop of public roads, cutting through villages and mountain terrain. There is nothing on Earth quite like the Isle of Man TT Races. No other motorcycle race is held on such a challenging track as the 37 mile+ Mountain Course with its seemingly never-ending series of bends, bumps, jumps, stone walls, manhole covers and telegraph poles. The skill, bravery and concentration levels required are immense, with speeds approaching 200mph and, while difficult to learn and even harder to win, the rewards

for winning on the world famous course are like no other. Even more staggering is that despite the extreme dangers of taking part the financial reward for winning would probably not cover the hourly rate of a premiership footballer. This is what makes the TT a true passion of achievement. There is though, a very high price to pay, with some 220 + riders paying the ultimate

price for their sport. Tragically this year both Karl Harris and Bob Price added their names to those that have lost their lives at the TT.

The TT race was at one point in its history part of the Moto GP series of races when, through rider protest, it was removed because of dangerous nature of the road circuit. It is fair to say that road racing demands and attracts a different breed of motorcycle racer. Road racing is a very popular sport in



Northern Ireland and as a result has spawned a dynasty of domination by the Dunlop family, most notably Joey. Joey Dunlop, O.B.E, M.B.E. still remains the most successful rider in the TT with 26 wins. Joey is closely followed by John McGuinness with 21 wins, but due to an ongoing wrist injury John will have to wait to next year to add to his tally on the conventional bike races. John did claim a win in the TT zero (electric bikes) with an average speed of 117.366 mph on the Mugen Shinden machine.

The emerging hero of the TT is Michael Dunlop, nephew of Joey, who this year has added another 4 wins to his rapidly increasing tally of success. There are many others in the hall of fame including Mike Hailwood MBE, Geoff Duke OBE, David Jefferies, and David Molyneux of sidecar fame. There are many more that have made major contributions to this great event.



If you need to get a feel for why this sport grabs the attention of both riders and fans then look no further than the film Closer to the Edge (2011). Even if you are not a race fan this compelling film is a true insight to a passion fuelled sport.

Stop Press:

Just an update on the Meppershall Summer Fair: we have been offered a number of interesting bikes for display and more recently an historic drag bike called Shotgun, owned by Nik Fisk from Poddington. This is one loud bike!

COVERS BY REQUEST

This month's cover is taken from the notice on Page 25 contributed by James Read. As far as I am aware, the event at our War memorial is the only one in the village marking the centenary of the outbreak of "The Great War". It comes in August, when the mood generally is of fun, but there is no more choice about that than there was for the millions who were eventually caught up in the war. Please remember them and support the current generation of service men and women through Help for Heroes. - Ed.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Birthdays in July

On 1st July Alan Pritchard will be 84

On 27th July David Corns will be 93

Many congratulations to all of the above.

The Messenger was very pleased to deliver our congratulatory cake to Fifi Simkins on the occasion of her 80th birthday on 27th May. Fifi preferred not to be photographed.

Recent Marriages at St Mary's

On 17th May: Emma Smith & Jamie Turner

On 24th May: Natalie Winter and John Cockrill

On 13th June: Nicole Gibbs & Perry Jansson

We wish long life and happiness together to all of the above.

RIP

We are very sad to record that Florrie Vintner died on 19 April, aged 96. Her funeral was at St Mary's.

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

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

NOTICE BOARD

THE FRIENDS OF SOUTHILL LOWER SCHOOL



Annual Fun Night
Friday 11th July - 5-7pm
Southill Playing Field, School Lane, Southill

Come along for a great evening of family fun. On offer will be a Kids Zone with lots of games/activities including coconut shy, hook-a-duck and more, BBQ and refreshments, bouncy castle, family raffle, punch balloons, kid's tombola, lucky dip, face painting/tattoos and more.

FREE ENTRY!

Thank you for your support.

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH HIGH STREET SHEFFORD

SATURDAY MASS 6pm RAF HENLOW
SUNDAY MASSES 9am & 5.15pm AT SHEFFORD

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

Parish Priest Canon Noonan on 813436 or

Parish Secretary Rose Boulton on 811547 or email rosedene@talktalk.net

St Mary The Virgin

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



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

PCC Secretary:

Anne Parsons 01462 813333 Email: annie10639@gmail.com

Services and Events – July 2014 *at St Mary's unless stated below*

Date	Time	Service
Weds 2 nd July	10.00am	Holy Communion
Sunday 6 th July	11.00am	Parish Communion
3 rd after Trinity	11.00am	Junior Church at the School
Weds 9 th July	10.00am	Holy Communion
Sat 12 th July	9.00am	Celtic Morning Prayer
Sunday 13 th July	8.30am	Holy Communion
4 th after Trinity	10.30am	Second Sunday Stroll, meet at Church, 4-mile loop walk via Polehanger Woods & return to church.
Weds 16 th July	10.00am	Holy Communion
Friday 18 th July	9.00pm	Silent Together – all welcome
Sun 20 th July	8.30am	Holy Communion
5 th after Trinity	11.00am	All-Age Family Service
	6.30pm	Deanery Evensong - All Saints Church, Clifton
Weds 23 rd July	10.00am	Holy Communion
Sat 26 th July	From 8.30am	Churchyard Working Party – come for any time you can spare to tidy and clear in preparation for the WW1 Centenary events (3 August).
Sun 27 th July	11.00am	Parish Communion
6 th after Trinity		
Weds 30 th July	10.00am	Holy Communion
Sun 3 rd August	11.00am	Parish Communion
7 th after Trinity	11.00am	Junior Church at the School
	2.00pm	World War 1 Centenary Events – see article.

St Mary's weekday service - Wednesdays:

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

Things to look out for at your Parish Church

Second Sunday Stroll – Sunday 13th July, 10.30am

A local loop walk this month – see the table of events below.

Churchyard Working Party – Saturday 26th July

Come and help prepare the churchyard for the First World War Centenary Events and for SPARKS later in August. From 8.30am and all day - bring your own tools and come for as little or as long as you can spare. Refreshments served. Thanks as always to our band of churchyard supporters – a great day in the fresh air awaits anyone able to pitch in!

First World War Centenary – Saturday 3rd August

Please see the separate article in this copy of The Messenger.

What will **you** do to remember? Join the Meppershall Help for Heroes Centenary Walk from 2pm and through the afternoon, from the War Memorial in the churchyard. Come to make a donation or to join other sponsored walkers completing the Memorial Loop. Ending with a short remembrance at the War Memorial at 7.00pm.

SPARKS – 11-14 August

Please see the information and registration form in this edition of The Messenger, and read Dawn's message below.

A Message from St Mary's: SPARKS, to boldly go.....

Hello Meppershall! Dawn, churchwarden here, and this month I am stealing Rev Roni's regular slot to write to you about SPARKS Holiday Club.

SPARKS is an energetic, exciting Christian holiday club run at St Mary's Church which has been going for many years in Meppershall. I have had the privilege of taking this on since 2012 from Sandra Harper who did an amazing job and injected her own special brand of energy for many years. Many will have fond memories of Sandra's SPARKS work.

In 2012 (when I was six months pregnant) I started planning and organising SPARKS with Morag Deluca – now here we are on our third one together! We both feel really passionate about having a holiday club at St Mary's. It's a service to our community, and it's a project that touches all involved. At SPARKS you will find in action everything I believe it means to be a Christian: love for God: love for our community and an eagerness to share this with

others. We move the pews aside and really USE the church! The church is filled with colour and noise and children.

At 10am the car park outside the church is chaos, and a large number of children arrive, packed lunches in hand, and are registered by Joyce and Barbara. You may know them as the church tea ladies, but what you don't know is that they are the slickest and smoothest part of the operation (and very neat with a felt tip!) They know all the kids' names by the end of the week, and are always the first people to say yes when I ask for help.

Then the fun starts! The children are divided into 6 groups; they build dens and spend time in these groups over the week. The groups are a real mix of ages and the older kids help the younger ones. We have periods of time together where we sing, watch sketches by our fab drama team and play energetic or yucky team games. Over the years we have made catapults and vaulted sheep across the field, played on an inflatable gladiator joust, hunted for treasure, as well as cooking, dancing, woodworking, sewing, painting, modelling..... Somewhere in all of that we grab a very quick lunch before the fun resumes until home time at 2pm. This year the church will be transformed into a Space Academy - blasting off to explore the unknown.

Interwoven into all that fun is our bible theme. This year it's Daniel - how he stood firm in his faith in God, had faith and courage, and God protected him.

SPARKS is a team effort, and I mean a major team effort. By the end of the week even the youngest and fittest helper is left gasping for breath and needing a very large cup of tea and a lie down. But it is amazing; it brings together all the creative and kind and clever people in our church family and our community. I could not have taken SPARKS on without the team of ready volunteers who already knew what they were doing and were ready to leap into action. Really I am just bossy, they are the ones who make it happen, and I am always so grateful to anyone who helps in any way.

So if you have children in the village or local area and they would like to join us on our interstellar mission then please use the information and booking form in this edition of The Messenger. Perhaps you would like to join us at our celebration service on Sunday 17th August, 11am.

So, I wish you a very happy summer, and may God smile down on you and all of the many wonderful events happening in our village over the coming months.

Dawn x

St Mary's Church, Meppershall

Junior Church

After a warm welcome and serene prayer time together, it was time to read the story of 'The Coming of the Holy Spirit' or 'Pentecost', found in the book of Acts 2 1:13.

We talked about after Jesus had risen and the forty days during which he appeared to his disciples in so many different ways and while he was with them he told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father.

So, when the day of Pentecost did come, everyone was in one place and suddenly there was a sound like a great wind filling the house and the Holy Spirit filled the room giving each of them the ability to speak a different language.

The children created their own flames using bright colours and lots of creativity to be displayed on a large Pentecost flame.

After working so hard, the children enjoyed a drink and snack before going home.

Our next Junior Church session will take place in School on 6 July.

If you would like to join us, please do come along – no pre-booking necessary.

Blessings

The JC Team

CHEESE AND APPLE PARCELS

JULY 2014

500g pack ready-made puff pastry.

1 egg, (beaten to glaze).

175g (6oz) Cheshire cheese.

1 large, peeled, quartered, cored and cut into small dice.

Dessert apple.

4 tbsp chopped parsley.

Salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Method

1) Preheat the oven to 220oC/425oF/Gas 7. Make the filling. Crumble the cheese into a bowl and mix the apple into the cheese with the parsley and seasoning.

2) Roll out half the pack of pastry thinly on a lightly floured surface and, using a saucer or bowl as a guide, cut out four, 12cm (5in) rounds. Stack the trimming on top of each other then roll them out and cut out another two rounds.

3) Brush the edges of the circles with a little beaten egg then spoon some filling onto one side of each of the rounds. Fold the other side over the filling and press the edges together well to seal. Knock up the edges with a knife blade then flute them.

4) Place the pastries on a baking sheet and brush with beaten egg. Score each pastry three to four times across the top. Bake for 15-20 minutes until risen and golden.

5) While the first batch of pastries is cooking, roll out the rest of the pastry and make the second batch, as above. Serve warm.

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 July**

**Charlotte Rose who will 7 on the 3rd
Oliver Zimmerman who will be 15 on the 6th
Charlotte Watson who will be 13 on the 12th
Chloe Watson who will be 13 on the 12th
Joshua Wright who will be 14 on the 13th
James Metcalfe who will be 12 on the 14th
Erica Ward who will be 15 on the 17th
Scott Metcalfe who will be 10 on the 17th
Elysia Warner who will be 9 on the 20th
Cameron Maxwell who will be 12 on the 26th
Kerys Henderson who will be 12 on the 26th**

**If you are under 16 and would like your name
added to
the birthday page, please call Louise Hutson on
814148**

or email at louhuts@gmail.com

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

THE MEPPERSHALL MESSENGER

CONTRIBUTIONS

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

DISCLAIMER

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

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<u>Collating Dates for your Diaries</u>					
	<u>2014</u>			<u>2015</u>	
July	28	Double	January	26	
August	NONE		February	23	
September	29		March	30	
October	27		April	27	
November	24	Double	May	26	Tuesday
December	NONE		June	29	

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 2th September the October issue will be collated.