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EDITORIAL

Well, here it is: my last Editorial.

As you might expect, I have mixed emotions at this stage: relief that I will no longer be where the buck stops, and that I am handing over to safe hands and a fresh mind: and sadness that I will no longer be receiving so many messages around the 12th of each month.

It is those messages and the contributions that came with them that made this job not only possible but enjoyable. I make no apology that the rest of this Editorial is going to be acknowledgements and thanks; so, in no particular order (as they say):



Thank you to all my regular contributors:

David Foskett for more Parish Council reports than he probably cares to remember; **Debbie Jones** for so many Pre-School reports (and until recently, the Tots pieces as well); **Gillian Marshall-Davies** (and occasional others) for the JC pieces; **Haley Metselaar** for recent Tots reports; **Nickie Moore** and all her predecessors for School Reports; **James Read** for being the mouthpiece for several others (not least Roni) at St Mary's; **Jeremy Holden** for contributing our first Tiger cover picture and some fascinating wildlife pieces since; **Karen Long** for news of Evergreens; **Karen Mitchell** for reports on the Meppershall Players (and often without a reminder!); **Kim Tyler** and all the MGC gang for their many and varied contributions; **Louise Hutson** for keeping track of all those birthdays and for getting the ages right; **Lucy Standbridge** for the regular supply of interviews with local people, starting when she was incredibly young and maturing into a seasoned writer; **Paul Savuto** for his Financial News; **Paul Smith** for all kinds of puzzles, word-searches etc; **Suzanne Brightwell** for all those reports on the Brownies; **Brenda Putwain (& Ted)** for a series of recipes that started long before I became Editor; **Trevor Thorley** for his Your Shout which never really got the shouts that he was hoping for; **Wendy Sherry** for reports from Henlow Academy; **Wayne Allen** for The Bike Shed which recently expanded to accommodate all kinds of engines; **Wayne Woodcock** for providing Sports Pages with no support from any other sports leaders; and **Sharon Wolf** for news of Meppershall Social Club.

And that is just current contributors; no role of honour would be complete without noting **Roger Revels** who told us so much about his Bakery Bees; **Chris Foster** who wrote his Polehanger Diaries for almost as long as Mrs Dale; and **Jon Ingarfill** who brought us his own distinctive take on the financial scene.

Those are the "front of house" people, whose prose appears or has appeared in the pages of the magazine. Not so visible are the people who print the magazine each month and bring it to you. The list of printers and folders must be headed by Phyllis Kidger, even though she has just retired at the age of 96, but also includes Ruth & Denis Neilson; Inge McConnell; Beverley Aberdeen, Jan Thomas and Viv Thorne.

The next stage is collating, and here the regulars on the last Monday of each month include Joan Wood, Barbara Horwood, Mick Trundle, Linda Parker, Joyce Smith, Glenis Holland, Elizabeth Wilson, Anita Darby and Pauline Brignall. Last link in the chain are the distributors who bring the Messenger to your door: Anne Parsons, Inge McConnell, Barbara & Maurice Horwood, Carolyn Holmes, Pat Butler, Elsie Lawrence, Peter Lambley, Jane Stephens, Elizabeth Wilson, Louise Woodcock, David Heath, Pauline Henderson, Jean Holden, Dawn Addams, Karen Lucas, Louise Hutson, Jacqui Plumley, Viv Clark, Fay Ingber, Matt & Becky Taylor, Jacqui d'Amico / Mrs Maxwell, Peter & Shireen Longland, Wendy Jones, Pat Fox, Mick Trundle, Richard Ivory, Glenis Holland, Joan Wood, Diane Lancaster, Marian Fairweather, Jan Thomas & Janet Davies. (You see what a huge team it takes to bring you The Messenger; and they are all volunteers!)

I have deliberately left to the end the Magazine Committee, that stalwart group who have supported me in so many ways since I have been in the job. Taking ladies first, **Colette House** has been constant and painstaking with her proof reading, usually against a pressing deadline, but Colette also masterminds the distribution and manages the advertising as well as keeping me briefed on those "Significant Events". **Enid Pamment** is a more recent comer to the Committee but has made a huge contribution by organising the rota of printers and folders, and that besides contributing her Shefford Leisure Group piece each month. **Martin Randall** is of the same vintage as Enid and has been involved with fund-raising and advertising as well as being a regular at collating. **John Thompson** really is the Mr Fix-it that every committee needs: formally he is the Treasurer but he extends that function to include sourcing our paper supplies and, every 3 years or so, our printing machine; he also finds room for that machine in his own house and liaises with suppliers over maintenance and breakdowns, and loads the electronic documents onto the printer to produce a proof copy and, ultimately, the pages ready for collating, in which he also participates. And that only leaves **David Turner**, my Assistant Editor. Like any good assistant, he turns his hand to anything but his regular responsibility is the overall layout of the magazine each month, the index and where the pages come. He also looks for and fixes the goofs that the Editor makes from time to time and acts as a consultant when I need an opinion and he takes pictures when needed – just like that!

You might think that everyone has now had a mention, but there are two more groups that are essential to The Messenger. The first is our advertisers who keep us financially afloat; our advertising covers all our production costs, so a very big thank you to them. And finally, there is you, our readers. Some of you read some of it, a few read all of it and even fewer get inspired to write in it, but what keeps us all going is our belief that there are people out there who find some value in our efforts. Please support our new Editor with contributions, letters, comments, and complaints: those responses are the life blood of the magazine.

To each and every one of the above, and any that I have inadvertently left out (failing memory is another reason for retiring!) I say thank you very much for your help. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with you all. Very best wishes for the future.

Dick

LETTERS

Letter from Marcia Bairstow

In last month's Messenger there was a letter stating how some owners of dogs allowed fouling or urinating on private property. I am the person mentioned who has a cone outside their house to ask the owners to refrain from letting their dog urinate on my brick pillar gate post. If I remove the notice the problem recurs. Today, however, the cone was placed by my pillar and once again a dog urinated there, probably on the cone as well as the pillar!

I sell cakes on a Friday afternoon and my customers have to pass through my gateway to my front door. Today my pavement board was close to this pillar advertising my cake sales. Whoever had allowed their dog to urinate there must have seen both the cone and the board. Unbelievable! I also sell eggs etc in a gate sales box close to the aforesaid pillar.

This 'dog' problem could be a health and safety issue.

I have a CCTV camera and I shall be tempted in future to name and shame.....

I am optimistic, all dog walkers, for your co-operation in this matter.

No. 43 High Street.



R COTTON BUILDERS
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MEPPERSHALL NEWS IN BRIEF

Meppershall Village Hall Trustees – New Hall Update

On Monday 9th February 2015, the Trustees were informed that Bloor Homes has decided not to pursue the residential housing development any further.

The contracts between the parties to include the finance for a New Village Hall were close to finalisation and similarly we understand negotiations over the residential housing scheme layout and design specifications were well advanced with the Central Beds Planning Department.

The Trustees now hope to work with Chris & Christine Foster and their company Polehanger Farms as well as the Parish Council to identify another reputable developer and agree terms to move the project forward as soon as possible.

The Trustees would like to make it clear that throughout the negotiations and since we received notification of Bloor's decision we have been very well supported by our professional advisors, both lawyers and land agents, whose fees and expenses are only payable once a formal agreement has been signed. This decision by Bloor Homes does not therefore adversely affect the users nor day to day finances of the Village Hall.

13th February 2015



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 – February 2015

On Friday 16th January a team of 12 KS1 children were taken to Cranfield University to compete in an athletics event. The children competed against 10 other teams and were placed 6th after the final event. They had to compete in a range of events which required many different skills. These included, throwing, catching, balancing, running and skipping tasks. The children were really well behaved both on the coach and during the event. All of our competitors tried their very best and some were very tired at the end of the day. We were so proud of our team and were really pleased with their positive attitudes and sense of fair play.

Caitlin plans to raise £1000 for "War child" - The Charity for children affected by war

Caitlin in Year 3 has set herself a target of raising £1000 for the charity "War Child". She was affected by the terrible news of the Pakistan School Shooting in December 2014 and wanted to do something to help. Caitlin is seven years old! She has had lots of ideas of how she can raise money...these include waxing her Dad's legs, organising a Superhero Run and a 5K run where paint is thrown over the runners at each checkpoint. We are really proud that she has such a caring and determined personality and will support her every way we can. To date (10/2/15), she has raised £292.60!

On Tuesday February 10th we held our second annual Pancake Races. This event was great fun and 13 brave parents took part in the obstacle races, flipping pancakes and wearing silly hats whilst the children cheered them on. The adults then stayed and had hot drinks and pancakes. Caitlin then organised a pancake tossing competition for adults and children. She raised £27.60 towards her target.

Our parents have been enjoying the opportunity to come into school each term and share lunch with their children. They are currently enjoying the roast dinners that Louise our cook produces. No stewed cabbage and semolina these days!

The children in our Early Years class have been learning all about “Where does the snow go?” They have been busy building an igloo out of milk cartons and were able to play inside it before it sadly collapsed. Children in Years One and Two have been learning about different dinosaurs and made a model of a Tyrannosaurus Rex which could replace Dippy in the Natural History Museum. Years Three and Four have been studying a topic “1066 and all that”. The work they have done is lovely, with child sized shields and battlements making the classroom look fabulous.

On 24th March, we are holding a “Shakespeare Day” and this will involve the whole school performing “A Midsummer’s Night Dream”.

We are also holding our Spring Fayre on Saturday March 7th in the afternoon. All welcome.

I would like to finish by wishing Dick Bulley all the best for the future and I look forward to working with Mike McConnell as he steps into the role of Editor.

Nickie Moore

Meppershall Parish Council Report 9th February 2015

Your Parish Council met on Monday 9th February and were pleased to welcome PCSO Gill Richardson, who gave details of the latest crime figures for Meppershall and took questions from the parishioners attending the meeting.

During the financial section of the Parish Council meeting, the Council was happy to make a grant of £150.00 towards the cost of the Meppershall Festival and £1000.00 to the Meppershall Summer Village Fair Committee to assist with the cost of providing marquees for the event.

In the Highways section the Clerk reported that he was in discussions with Central Beds regarding improvements that are needed to the signage where the permissive path crosses Shefford Road.

He also reported that the 30mph road signs will be installed in the next couple of months, weather permitting. The Clerk also reported that he is trying to formalise the arrangements for the maintenance of overgrown shrubs in Coneygate which are obstructing the footpath.

Are you considering becoming a Parish Councillor?

In May 2015 there will be national and local government elections. Meppershall Parish Council has not been able to hold an election for many years due to a lack of candidates. This year a number of currently serving Councillors are not standing for re-election and we urgently need residents to come forward and assist with the running of our Village.

The Parish Council is a non-political group which meets on 11 occasions per year for a couple of hours. If you are considering standing for the Parish Council and would like more details, please do not hesitate to contact me 01462 851770.

Nomination forms will be available from the Parish Clerk from the 17th March 2015.

Any resident is welcome to attend our meetings to speak about any subject during our open public session at the beginning of the formal meeting. Or you may just wish to come along and see what we do. We look forward to seeing you at our next meeting on **Monday 9th March 2015 at 7:45 pm in the Village Hall.**

David Foscett

Chairman, Meppershall Parish Council – chairman@meppershall.org

Meppershall Festival 2015

Save the date Saturday, May 16th

Find your dancing shoes!

Don't be shy, no partner or experience required!

This year its **Street Dance** 1.45 for 2-3pm

& Traditional Folk & Country dance

3.30 for 3.45 – 4.45pm

Or just come and watch...

The famous St Mary's Tea, Coffee & Cake
will be for sale

Contact Carolyn on 07868530221

meppfest@gmail.com

All profits to local charities and groups



SHEFFORD LEISURE GROUP

By Enid Pamment



Our first trip out for 2015 found us heading towards Northampton and 78 Derngate, the site of The Charles Rennie Mackintosh House. Charles Rennie Mackintosh the great Glasgow designer and architect dramatically remodelled the house in 1916/17. Commissioned by the thoroughly modern Bassett-Lowke, 78 Derngate was Mackintosh's last major commission and the only house he designed in England. This building features his extraordinary modern and striking interiors transforming the interior into a house of unique charm. Wenman Joseph Bassett-Lowke was the founder of the prosperous model making business and was recognised as one of Mackintosh's most demanding knowledgeable and progressive patrons. A collection of his models and trains are on display, and an exhibition of his work will be on display from May 2nd-4th. After this most fascinating tour, we were able to lunch either in the house or in one of the many restaurants available. The afternoon was spent in the Museum where we were able to view an extensive collection of shoes through the ages, all made in Northampton. What an interesting day.

Roll up! Roll up! to our Shefford Leisure Group's 'Get Together' where you can meet old friends and greet new ones. There will be the usual tombola, tasty buffet and the entertainment will be by Caritas Choir and of course our usual presentation of a cheque to Keech Hospice Care for Children.

Forthcoming Events (At a Glance) 2015

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Kew Gardens Annual Orchid Festival | Sunday 1 st March |
| 'Get-Together' Memorial Hall, Shefford | Saturday 21 st March |
| BBC Tour – London | Monday 23 rd March |
| Camden Market | Sunday 12 th April |
| Dance 'till Dawn – Milton Keynes Theatre (Matinee) | Wednesday 15 th April |
| England's smallest County (with lunch) | Wednesday 17 th June |
| Ride a Cock Horse (with lunch) | Wednesday 22 nd July |
| Thursford Collection | Wednesday 5 th August |
| Mid-Summer Murders Country & Goring Gap Cruise | Tuesday 8 th Sept. |
| Guildford Cathedral & City | Wednesday 30 th Sept. |
| Thursford Christmas Spectacular | November – Date TBA |
| John Rutter RAH | Monday 14 th Dec. |

| | |
|---|--|
| HOLIDAYS – 2015 | |
| Dubrovnik – Riviera and a taste of Montenegro , staying at the 3* Valamar Club, Bavin Kuk, Dubrovnik. The price includes a coach from Shefford to Stansted Airport and return. | May 9 th – 16 th 2015 |
| Tinsel & Turkey – Weymouth – Russell Hotel | December 14 th – 18 th |

London Shows Currently Available (organised in conjunction with Stevenage Group Travel)

MATINEE PERFORMANCE – 2015 Leaving Shefford at 10.45pm (unless otherwise stated)

| | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| The Phantom of the Opera including a 2-course Meal at The Strand Palace – Leaving Shefford at 9.15am | Thursday 26 th March |
| Lord of the Dance Dangerous Games – Dominion Theatre, Dress of Circle Seats. | Wednesday 1 st April |
| Gypsy – West End's Savoy Theatre | Wednesday 6 th May |

EVENING PERFORMANCE – 2015 - Leaving Shefford at 4.15pm (unless otherwise stated)

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| RPO – Best of Broadway– Classic Hits from Broadway Shows – Royal Albert Hall (RAH) – Arena First Priced Seats, also Circle Seats | Wednesday 18 th March |
| CATS – London Palladium – Dress Circle Seats | Monday 6 th April |
| Mountbatten Festival of Music – RAH – Choir & Circle Seats. | Friday 17 th April |
| BRICK LAND MUSIC HALL – incl. afternoon tea – Based on St George's Day | Tuesday 28 th April |
| RPO Symphonic – Rock & Pop hits – Arena & Circle Seats. | Friday 1 st May |
| RPO – Film Music Gala – RAH – Arena and Circle Seats. | Friday 26 th June |

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

For all holidays which include transport and hotel accommodation, Shefford Leisure Group acts as an agent for the Tour Operator, their terms and conditions apply.

Shefford Leisure Group is open to everyone 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

MEPPERSHALL BROWNIES



The Brownies have started working towards their circus badge this term and we had a fun night making juggling balls, which were surprisingly easy to make using balloons and rice and were very effective. Amazingly we didn't have rice everywhere! We also did plate spinning, which the girls really enjoyed and Tawny Owl became an expert plate spinner in next to no time. We will be continuing our circus themed activities later in the term.

The Brownies showed off their designing skills with a recycled fashion show. The girls were given lots of leftover material, black and white rubbish bags, and Snowy Owl had a clear out of all her leftover crafty bits and pieces which the girls used. They all did really well, and made some super outfits, which they modelled at the end of the evening. Snowy and Tawny Owl were very impressed with the way the girls worked together to design their very creative outfits.

We also started our virtual trip to 'Euro Disney' with our Little Mermaid themed evening. We made a jelly fish from paper bowls and ribbons, and learnt a few interesting facts about them - *did you know a group of jelly fish is called a "smack"*. We also played lots of under the sea themed games.

Some pictures of the Brownies taking part in the above activities:

Some of the Brownies showing off their designs



Charlotte and Amie plate spinning



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.org.uk.



New Staff

Kam Parmar - Finance Team

I am delighted to be part of the school finance team, and I have thoroughly enjoyed my first week at Henlow Academy. Before coming to Henlow, I worked at Shephalbury Park Primary School, Hertfordshire. I live in Bedfordshire where I enjoy walking in the lovely countryside. My interest includes travelling, dancing and reading.

Kelly Jando – Admin

I am very excited to be working at Henlow Academy in the Admin department. I used to work at Derwent Lower School as a TA and it's lovely to see some of the children I used to look after again - some of them are taller than me now! When I'm not at work I love to bake cakes and spend time walking my lovely dog Molly.

Adriana's Taste of Success

Henlow Church of England Academy is nurturing new culinary talent in the form of Adriana di Bernardo.

The 13 year old Year 8 pupil from Stotfold was Runner Up in the regional Future Chef competition, held at Bedford College on the 12th January.

Competing against GCSE Food Technology students from around the county, Adriana and fellow Henlow pupil Caitlin Saunders prepared and cooked a delicious two-course meal for two for under £7.



Set up by industry celebrities, such as Brian Turner, to encourage students to take up cooking in a professional capacity, Springboard's Future Chef encourages pupils to create interesting, healthy and cost-effective meals in just one hour.

Adriana produced a delicious chicken curry with rice, naan and homemade mango chutney, followed by fruit samosas, which wowed the judges and gave her second place.

England Ladies Football Captain at Henlow

England Ladies Football Captain at Henlow Casey Stoney, Arsenal Ladies player, England Women's National Football Team Captain and Captain of the Team GB squad at the 2012 Olympics, was welcomed to Henlow Church of England Academy for a day of team building, exercise, training and fun as part of the SKY SPORTS FOR LIVING programme. Twenty Year 7 and Year 8 pupils participated in the day, which was extremely well received by all the pupils.



GNOMES Coffee Mornings

Malcolm Batey

To all members and residents,

I am delighted to announce that starting from March 12th 2015 we are planning to hold regular coffee mornings on the second Thursday of each month. These will be held at the New Meppershall Care Home who have very kindly agreed to let us use their facilities for this purpose.

The event will be held between 10:30–11:30am and will be an excellent opportunity to catch up with other GNOMES on a social basis and also get an update on our activities to date.

For those of you that prefer tea don't worry that beverage will also be available.

This will be open to all Meppershall residents so please pass on the word to anybody you know that may like to attend. This will be a good opportunity to socialise with other village residents and perhaps make some new friends.

I hope that you will plan to come along on 12th March and to the future coffee mornings so why not mark up the second Thursday of the month in your diaries now?

When you arrive at the home as you open the outer door a bell rings throughout the Home and someone will come and let you in.

Finally, as I understand it, the Mobile Library will not be providing a service to the Care Home this year so if anybody has any books they could loan or give to residents of the Home these would be gratefully received.

Regards, Malcolm.

Beer Review: Broughton Champion Double Ale



What do we have here? For the final review in this Scottish ales review series, it turns out that Tesco was holding back on their batch of Scottish ales. As here, we have a nearly missed *Broughton* beer from the Borders. And this one promises to be something special. If you haven't read the reviews of



Broughton Old Jock or *Black Douglas*, (Messenger December/January and February issues) then you can still find them online at the village website, if you don't still have your copies of the Messenger. They were both good beers and the bottles and labels look the same as this one. That saves me time on the description here so we can get to the contents faster.

The front label sticks to the ultra-Scottish theme as before. The roundel is surrounded by illustrations of hops and the brace of Saltaires. Unlike *Old Jock* or *Black Douglas* however, the centre illustration isn't as stereotypically Scottish. The medieval knights could be from anywhere. Traditionally, Scots are depicted as red-haired and wearing tartan. But look closely enough and you'll see what makes this one different to the others. Tucked away at the bottom of the front label, it says "*Tesco Drinks Awards Best Beer*". That and the 5.5% ABV give the impression that this should be a cut above the rest.



Presumably, the fact that there are two knights and that this brew is called *Double Ale* have a connection. Let's see what the rest of the label says... Around left-hand-side of the big label that is wrapped around the bottle, we get the explanation. And it's a long-one, so allow me to



attempt a summary. The two knights on the front label are supposed to be Sir Alexander Ramsey of Dalhousie and Sir William Douglas, Knight of Liddesdale. They were very good at what they did, and were popular with King David of

Scotland in the 14th Century. This legend, *Broughton* has twisted to explain this, their blend of two beers. Hence, the name *Champion Double Ale*. What they have done is blend a traditional strong Scottish ale with a Porter style ale. Apparently, they brew and ferment them separately, before blending and maturing the result.

They go on the promise drinkability with complex tastes and aromas. I'll take a guess that the result will be malty, hoppy and unusual. Place your bets now on how close that guess is, because it's time to open the bottle. Once in the glass, the head is just where you want it to be. And the colour is about what you'd expect. Not that I really knew what to expect. The smell is what you'd expect. Mostly of malt and hops. It's exactly how you'd expect a big old ale to smell. Although maybe not as remarkable as I'd been hoping. As you'd expect from a split-personality blended ale, the flavour is complex. It starts with a big malty hit, then just a bit malty and this is entwined with a bitterness and sourness to the taste and aftertaste. It has all these things, yet none particularly dominate the others. That is fairly unusual, as most that I've tried have an element of the taste that towers above the others. It might not sound it, but *Champion Double Ale* tastes good. Nothing in there is too strong to offend all but the most timid palates. It's not too gassy and there's enough body to fill out its 500 millilitre bottle nicely. Add to that, the easy to drink quality that *Broughton* do so well, and we've got a beer here that is undoubtedly above average. But is it deserving of Best Beer status?

There is a lot to like about *Champion Double Ale*. But would I give it a Best Beer award? I'm not sure. There are a lot of special British beers out there. I'm going to say that *Champion Double Ale* is a very, very good, but the sour aftertaste can be a bit of a put off for those with an exceptional palate. So I'm going to say that this is excellent, but some people out there will want to look for something slightly easier to drink perhaps one of the other *Broughton's* that have been reviewed? I'd give this a very close "*Runner Up award*" at worst, but for many it will have earned the Best Beer title it carries. One of *Broughton's*, outstanding ales.

*Abridged from the first publication on Hywel's Big Log 2008 by John Thompson.
Broughton Champion Double Ale is available from Tesco.*



| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Incident Type: | Burglary. |
| Location: | Shefford Road, Meppershall. |
| Date and Time: | Tuesday the 20th of January, between 2:00 p.m. and, 5:59 p.m. |
| Incident Details: | <p>Two incidents were reported during this time period.</p> <p>In both cases the offenders gained entry by forcing open kitchen windows.</p> <p>Messy searches were made.</p> <p>Jewellery has been taken from both locations.</p> |
| Crime Reference: | J D / 2 5 4 3 / 2015. and, J D / 2 5 4 5 / 2015. |
| Crime Reduction Advice: | <p>Make your boundaries difficult or impossible to climb over.</p> <p>Keep doors and windows locked at all times.</p> <p>Remove all keys from the locks and keep them in a safe place out of view.</p> <p>Keep hallways clear of valuables like keys, handbags and laptop where they may be seen.</p> <p>Check that side gates are locked.</p> <p>Keep bins, ladders and garden furniture locked away.</p> <p>Fit Window Restrictors to fan light windows.</p> |

Have you thought about joining a Community Watch Scheme? Find out more [here](#).

View our online booklet for crime prevention advice

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

Text your message to 07786 200011

Alternatively you can contact the independent charity **Crimestoppers**, anonymously, on 0800 555 111, or online at www.crimestoppers-uk.org

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

WHERE MY CARAVAN HAS RESTED

By Denis Neilson

Part 6: Chattanooga, Cape Canaveral and home

This was Winnie's last trip as a timeshare, and arrangements to sell her had been made with a campground operator in a small village called Christmas. Our route took us through Chattanooga and boy have they reaped the benefit of the song of the same name. The words and the music are engraved into the pavement (sidewalk) within a railway track. There is also an old steam locomotive on display (named Chattanooga Choo Choo) and carriages that have been converted into a restaurant and coffee house aptly named Track 59.

Atlanta came next as we entered Georgia. We visited the sites dedicated to Martin Luther King including the exhibition centre. There were no more really significant stops until we reached Orlando and turned left down the Cheney Highway towards Titusville to the small village of Christmas whose proud boast is that it is the only place in the world where Christmas is Christmas all year long! Whilst there we went on regular trips around the Florida Birding Trails. These marked trails, with descriptive boards, are fantastic and we saw a wide variety of birds. It was on one of these trips that we were able to sit and watch a vulture that could not have been more than 5 ft. away and, on another occasion, a group of roseate spoonbills. We also saw an alligator consume a whole turtle in a very short space of time, shell and all. Foolishly we walked around "Mosquito Lake" but forgot to take repellent (the clue's in the name)!

A visit to Cape Canaveral was extremely interesting and we were impressed by the exhibits. What a complex, so large that visitors are transported around by shuttle bus. We saw the preparations being made to launch a rocket that was due off any day, weather permitting, to send up a satellite. We were fortunate to be able to watch it blast off. The rocket was a medium sized one (according to the experts in the crowd that gathered by a lake some 5 miles away from the launch site) that was taking up the satellite. It was early evening and all we could see of the site were lights moving around on the ground in a haphazard fashion. When the rocket fired we saw a faint glow amongst these lights and then the sky around us lit up as bright, if not brighter, than day. Fish started jumping out of the water in their hundreds and the ground literally shook. Goodness knows what the effect would be when they launched the space

shuttle. We watched the rocket for a long time, entranced by the spray of sparks as each stage of the rocket blew off, until finally the speck of light that it had become disappeared from view.

It was soon time to return to the UK. Eric and Judy flew out again and we met up with them once more. They were heading for Louisiana (Baton Rouge) to help a group of friends design and build a float to appear in the city's carnival parade. It was because of this that they decided to buy Winnie, rather than place her on the open market, and keep her going until the carnival was over and then put her up for sale. This turned out to be OK with all parties so the deal was done. Eric and Judy kindly took Ruth and me to the airport for our flight home and that ended our never to be forgotten association with Winnie.

It was because of these trips that we had the confidence to rent out our home, pack everything away and go off for 4 years visiting Australia, America/Canada and Europe all from a motorhome or caravan. We are still travelling in our caravan. Some short and some long trips. Recently we saw the following words on a motorhome and thought how very true they were "There is no road to happiness, happiness is the road"

Thank you Ruth & Denis for a fascinating series. Ed



Chatanooga Choo Choo

THE LUCY PAGES

By Lucy Standbridge, aged 13



How Much Do You Support Local Businesses?

After reviewing the New Year disco and questioning why people aren't using the hall enough; I was wondering how much our community supports the village businesses and what they have to offer. So, for this issue I have interviewed Meppershall's own Marcia Bairstow (Marcia's Homemade Cakes) to hear her views about people in the village helping their local businesses.

*In the spirit of supporting local businesses,
I bought a cake from Marcia.*

Marcia's business is making and selling cakes on a Friday afternoon from 2-6pm from her home in the High Street, and she also makes cakes to order. Marcia started about 18 months ago with 'Marcia's Homemade Jams and Chutneys' with the fruit she grew from her allotment, but a few months after that, she decided to make cakes as well. She is very Meppershall focused, with about 80% of her orders are from the village.



In her cakes she uses eggs from her own hens. The cakes are always freshly baked, tasty, and with no chemicals or preservatives; it's definitely worth paying that little extra for. Her best sellers are the Victoria Sponge and the Lemon Drizzle cake, but the school children like the cupcakes.

She told me that "My customers have changed over time. When I first started, it was mainly the older people who came but now I get mixed ages, and quite a few people on school run". She thinks that supporting all the businesses within the village is important for the community to advance. Marcia told me that she provides cakes for the Sugar Loaf and Evergreens, as well as getting involved with the preschool. It is good to hear that the local businesses are supporting each other.

If you want to find out about any other Meppershall based businesses, remember that there are always the adverts in the Meppershall Messenger.

MEPPERSHALL SOCIAL CLUB

February/March 2015

A promising start to the new year - many new people, local & beyond, have joined as members. Membership is still available to anyone wishing to join, and is significantly lower-priced than many other village halls. Member benefits include free or reduced entry to our events, low drink prices and your chance to have your say at our Annual General Meeting.

We are now taking names for our annual snooker competition; pop in or email to reserve your place.

Like rock'n'roll? We have a fantastic evening planned for Saturday March 21st, Chrissie Cadillac will be performing rock'n'roll covers from the '50s & '60s, fancy dress optional, prize for best, inflatable instruments, a fun packed night from 8 till late & tickets are just £2 for members & £5 for non-members. Pop in or email to reserve your tickets.

Future events are Karen's Karaoke on March 7th and Paul Carne's quiz on March 8th, non-members welcome, 8pm & 7.30pm respectively.

We are having our Easter eggstravaganza bingo on Saturday 4th April & Almost Abba tribute night on Saturday 20th June, more details to follow.

Your input regarding entertainment is vital to help us plan what YOU would like to see, so please email your suggestions.

Finally, our bottle on the bar for 2014 raised £768 (which the social club topped up to £800) and was divided between Macmillan oncology nurses & Bedford Critical Care. Thank you.

Contact: sharon1805@hotmail.co.uk

FINANCIAL UPDATE by PAUL SAVUTO

TAX (YEAR END) PLANNING: WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DAY MAKES

Well, it's been a year since I last updated you on things you should consider before and after the tax year end – 5th April. Here are some things to think about.

PENSIONS ALLOWANCE

With pensions entering into a new world from April, there has never been a better time to think about paying money into a pension.

The annual allowance of £40,000 for the current tax year can be combined with additional contributions in respect of any unused annual allowances from the three preceding tax years. This is subject to clients having sufficient earnings in this tax year.

Don't forget, for every **£80** a basic-rate taxpayer puts into their pension this tax year, the government will top it up by **£20**, so that the total contribution to your pension is **£100**. This is because you get basic rate tax relief on pensions at 20 %. Higher rate earners do even better because they can get up to 40% % tax relief, so **£100** paid into a pension will only cost **£60**, and top rate taxpayers receive 45% tax relief, so **£100** paid into a pension will only cost **£55**.

INDIVIDUAL SAVINGS ACCOUNT (ISA) ALLOWANCE

Up to £15,000 can be invested in an ISA this tax year, all of which can be in a cash ISA or all in a stocks & shares ISA, or a combination of both. All investments held in ISA's are free of Capital Gains Tax.

CAPITAL GAINS TAX (CGT) ALLOWANCE

Capital gains tax is a tax on the profit when you sell or 'dispose of' something- an 'asset' that's increased in value. It's the gain you make that's taxed, not the amount of money you receive. For individuals' capital gains in 2014/15, under £11,000 is tax-free. Married couples who own assets jointly can claim a double allowance of £22,000.

Capital gains tax is charged at 18% on your total taxable income and gains (up to £31,865) if you are a standard-rate taxpayer, and 28% if you pay tax at a higher rate (from £31,866). Claims may be made on more than one occasion up to a current 'lifetime' total of £10 million.

IT'S GOOD TO GIVE

The Gift Aid scheme is for gifts of money to charities by individuals who pay UK tax. Gift Aid donations are regarded as having basic rate tax (20%) deducted by the donor. If you are in a higher tax bracket, you can claim back the difference between the basic and higher rate of income tax on any Gift Aid donations.

INHERITANCE TAX PLANNING

If you haven't done anything about inheritance tax planning, you should do so now. Currently, inheritance tax (IHT) is charged at **40%** on anything you leave over **£325,000** when you die. Soaring house prices in recent years have pushed more and more people into the inheritance tax trap so don't assume only the super-rich are affected.

You can give away a lump sum of up to **£3,000** in each tax year without paying inheritance tax - known as your 'annual exemption', or **£6,000** this year if you haven't used last year's allowance. Most importantly, you should write a Will, making it clear who you want to leave your money and possessions to when you die. If you die without a Will, the intestacy provisions will apply and may result in your estate being distributed in a way you would not have chosen. You should write a Will and keep it up to date to reflect changes in the family situation.

REMOVING VALUE FROM AN ESTATE

Life assurance arrangements can be used as a means of removing value from an estate and also as a method of paying inheritance tax liabilities. A policy written under an appropriate trust can be arranged to cover an inheritance tax liability due on death. It is particularly useful in providing funds to meet an inheritance tax liability where the assets are not easily realised.

Above are just some of the tax (year end) planning opportunities that exist. Tax planning can be complicated, so if you would like any guidance, please contact me for a no obligation-no cost meeting. Paul Savuto, AFPS, Chartered Financial Planner. DGS Independent Financial Advisers Ltd. 07834 499595 or email ps@dgsifa.com. I'll be happy to talk to you.

INFORMATION IS BASED ON OUR CURRENT UNDERSTANDING OF TAXATION LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS. ANY LEVELS AND BASES OF, AND RELIEFS FROM TAXATION ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. THE VALUE OF INVESTMENTS AND INCOME FROM THEM MAY GO DOWN. YOU MAY NOT GET BACK THE ORIGINAL AMOUNT INVESTED. PAST PERFORMANCE IS NOT A RELIABLE INDICATOR OF FUTURE PERFORMANCE.

CALENDAR OF MEPPERSHALL EVENTS

March 2015

| | | |
|---|------------------|-------------------------|
| Thursday 5th | | |
| Evergreens | 2:15 – 4:00 pm | Sugar Loaf |
| Saturday 7th | | |
| Spring Fayre | 1:30 - 4:00 pm | Meppershall Academy |
| Karen's karaoke | 8 pm | Meppershall Social Club |
| Sunday March 8th | | |
| Second Sunday Stroll(~4 miles) | 10:30 am | St Mary's Church Gate |
| Paul Carne's Quiz | 7:30 pm | Meppershall Social Club |
| Monday 9th | | |
| Parish Council Meeting | 7.45 pm | Village Hall |
| Thursday 12th | | |
| GNOMES Coffee Morning | 10.30 – 11.30 am | New Care Home |
| Sunday 15th | | |
| Mini – Sparks – Making Mother's Day Cards and Gifts | 10:00 – 11:00 am | St Mary's Church |
| Thursday 19th | | |
| Evergreens | 2:15 – 4:00 pm | Sugar Loaf |
| Saturday 21st | | |
| Shefford Leisure Group Get Together | | Shefford Memorial Hall |
| Saturday 28th March | | |
| Churchyard Working Party | From 8:30 am | St Mary's Church |

April 2015

| | | |
|--|------------------|-------------------------|
| K | | |
| Evergreens | 2:15 – 4:00 pm | Sugar Loaf |
| Thursday 9th | | |
| GNOMES Coffee Morning | 10.30 – 11.30 am | New Care Home |
| Saturday & Sunday 11th & 12th | | |
| Art Exhibition | 10:00 – 4:00 | Northill Village Hall |
| Monday 13th | | |
| Parish Council Meeting | 7:45 pm | Village Hall |
| Thursday 16th | | |
| Evergreens | 2:15 – 4:00 pm | Sugar Loaf |
| Election Hustings | | St Michael's, Shefford |
| Saturday 18th | | |
| Karen's Karaoke | 8 pm | Meppershall Social Club |

PUZZLE PAGES

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

Su Doku 1410

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

Arithmetic Square puzzle 104

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|----|---|---|---|-----|
| | - | | - | | - | | -44 |
| + | | - | | + | | + | |
| 7 | + | | + | | + | | 43 |
| + | | - | | + | | - | |
| | + | | + | 9 | + | | 30 |
| + | | - | | + | | - | |
| | + | | + | | + | | 26 |
| 19 | -20 | 42 | 22 | | | | |

Try to fill in the missing numbers.

Use the numbers 1 through 16 to complete the equations.

Each number is only used once.

Each row is a math equation. Each column is a math equation.

Thanks to Paul Smith for the puzzles

FILM REVIEW

By Carlie Newman

THE LAST OF THE UNJUST (cert. PG13 218mins.), is a documentary by 87-year-old Claude Lanzmann about the fate of Jews in the Holocaust, World War 11. The film is mainly a long interview with Benjamin Murelstein. Lanzmann filmed Rabbi Benjamin Murelstein in 1975 in Rome. Murelstein was the last President of the Jewish Council in the Theresienstadt ghetto. He was the only surviving Jewish Elder. Theresienstadt was the model concentration camp, to which the Red Cross and high up Nazi officials were brought to view the ideal conditions in which the Jewish prisoners were housed. In reality it was a death camp. Lanzman also visits sites associated with the story of the inhabitants of Theresienstadt. It is a difficult film to watch - long and full of terrible facts about the Jews who perished under Hitler's command.

As Holocaust Memorial Day, which this year marks the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp was 27 January, may I add a personal note.



My neighbour the pianist Alice Sommer, who died last year aged 110, was the oldest Holocaust survivor in the world. She was in the Theresienstadt concentration camp with her son aged 6. They were both in the camp orchestra, he in the children's choir and thus escaped removal to extermination in Auschwitz.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

Solution to Su Doku 1410

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

Arithmetic Square Solution 104

| | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| 1 | - | 16 | - | 15 | - | 14 | -44 |
| + | | - | | + | | + | |
| 7 | + | 13 | + | 10 | + | 13 | 43 |
| + | | - | | + | | - | |
| 6 | + | 12 | + | 9 | + | 3 | 30 |
| + | | - | | + | | - | |
| 5 | + | 11 | + | 8 | + | 2 | 26 |
| 19 | -20 | | 42 | | 22 | | |



The Meppershall Players



Take a trip back in time and follow the lives of two families caught up in a war that they thought would never happen, share their tears and laughter, ups and downs, fears and triumphs. Sing along to catchy tunes of yesteryear in this uplifting musical play for all ages.

'When the Lights Go On Again' Fri 8th & Sat 9th May 2015 7.45pm at the Meppershall Village Hall, Tickets £10 (No Concessions). Includes Food and much more. On sale at Rogers Bakery NOW!

Do you play piano and would you like to play songs of the 1940's for the Players to sing to in 'When the Lights Go On Again'? We are not looking for a concert pianist, just someone who enjoys playing the piano. If you are interested please contact Karen 01462 816336.

Players' AGM is on Wednesday 17th June at 8pm at Meppershall Village Hall.
Robin Hood Pantomime 2015 - Friday 4th 5th 11th & 12th December.

The Meppershall Players have their own page on Facebook, which will be updated the first Monday of every month.

If you use the Village Hall, don't forget to check out the notice boards in the front entrance. We always have plenty of information about the Players on the board.

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 7th Mar, 18th Apr, 2nd May, 6th June, 4th July, 1st Aug, 5th Sep, 3rd Oct, 14th Nov. and 19th Dec. So come along and enjoy a sing song in a friendly atmosphere.

The players meet every Wednesday evening at 7.30pm at the Village Hall. Membership is currently free and we welcome people from the age of 9 to 90+ to indulge in all areas of theatrical performances, set building, costumes, directing, acting, make-up, song & dance.

Interested? We look forward to meeting you.

Karen Mitchell (Players Secretary) 01462 816336

What'sit?

Solution to What'sit No. 7 - High Street/Campton Road junction



Now where is What'sit No.8?...



Meppershall Festival 2015

Evening Concert Saturday, May 16th

Are you performing this year?

Have you booked your slot yet?

Places are limited this year

so please contact

Colette to register

815585/07831 111062 / colettehouse@gmail.com





The Classic Combustion Shed – By Wayne Allen Brooklands Museum

Brooklands is a very special place. It is considered the true birthplace of British motorsport, aviation and the home of many 20th century technologies, it is truly unique.

In 1907 construction started on the motor racing course which was a wonder of its age. Much of the Track and many of its original buildings and features have survived to this day, some as Listed Buildings or part of a Scheduled Monument.

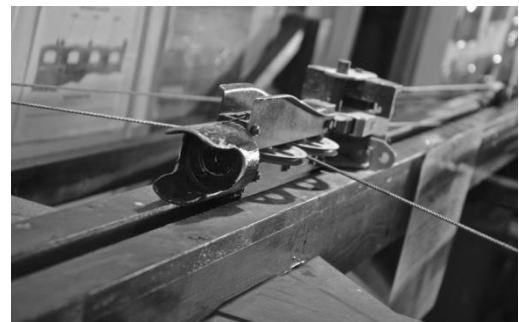
Constructed at Weybridge, Surrey, by wealthy landowner Hugh Locke King in 1907 as a motor-racing circuit, Brooklands very soon became much more than that. Throughout the following 80 years it was to remain a world-renowned centre of technological and engineering excellence.

The heyday of the racing circuit was undoubtedly the nineteen twenties and thirties, when record times were being set and broken by Malcolm Campbell, John Cobb and others, in such magnificently crafted machines as Napier, Delage, Mercedes, Bentley and Bugatti which were themselves lovingly tended by the finest mechanics in the land. Motorcycles and pedal cycles too had their devotees and many records were established on the Track. Brooklands was then a very fashionable place to be seen and became known as the 'Ascot of Motorsport'.



Although the outbreak of war in 1939 saw the end of racing on the legendary Circuit, Brooklands maintained its position as the home of pioneering aviation development until British Aerospace ended aircraft production there in 1987. The Brooklands Museum Trust was formed that same year and continues to preserve the spirit and traditions of this unique heritage location today.

Brooklands was a major centre for aircraft design, construction and flight testing for most of the 20th century. From A V Roe's first trials here in 1907-08, through many decades of manufacture by such companies as BAC, Bleriot, British Aerospace, Hawker, Sopwith and Vickers, no other place in Britain, possibly even in the world, has seen such achievements. Some 18,600 new aircraft of nearly 250 types were first flown, manufactured or assembled at Brooklands. In addition to this there are some great exhibits to celebrate the genius of Barnes Wallis, inventor of the "Bouncing Bomb". These include a rescued and



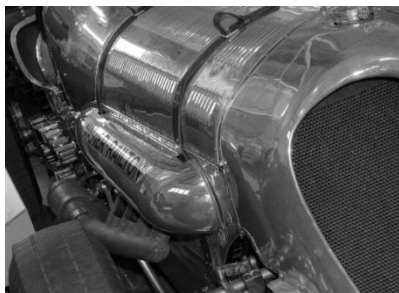
partially restored Wellington bomber and some replicas of the original test jigs to prove his theories for producing the bomb which was eventually used in the Dambusters raid.



In June 1908 A V Roe made significant taxiing and towed flight trials in his Roe 1 Biplane at Brooklands and at Lea Valley in 1909 he became the first Englishman to fly in a powered aeroplane of his own design. In 1909 the BARC arranged for an area in the middle of the Track to be cleared to create one of Britain's first aerodromes, enabling Louis Paulhan to give Britain's first public flying demonstration that October. Soon other pioneers were attracted to Brooklands.

The best known of these was Tommy Sopwith who learned to fly here in 1910 and subsequently formed and led first the Sopwith and later the Hawker aircraft companies which produced the majority of Britain's fighter aircraft in the the 20th century.

In 1911 the world's first Flight Ticket Office was built in what soon became known as the Brooklands Flying Village. Here groups of simple wooden sheds housed many of the greatest pioneers of British aviation from 1910 to the outbreak of World War One. These were immortalised in the 1960s film 'Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines' which was based around The Daily Mail Circuit of Britain Air Race held at Brooklands in 1911.



Certain other museum exhibits (for example, the flyable Bleriot XI and Sopwith Camel replicas built by Mike Beach and Viv Bellamy, respectively) are maintained in 'live' condition and perform regular engine running demonstrations at museum events during the year. An exhibition about Grand Prix motor racing which features a Formula One simulator can also be seen. A major new visitor attraction, 'The Concorde Experience', opened in August

2006, centenary celebrations occurred in 2007 and a full-size modern working replica of Alliott Verdon Roe's 1908 'Avroplane' was completed and unveiled on 7 June 2008.

The Museum also owns and, until late 2009, operated an airworthy Vickers Vimy replica which was built in America in 1994 to re-enact the design's three record-breaking long distance flights of 1919-20. Having helped commemorate the 90th anniversaries of the world's first Transatlantic flight and the first flight from England to Australia, the aeroplane was finally retired and flown into



Brooklands on 15 November 2009. Less than a week later it was on display with a supporting exhibition in the Museum's main hangar. A great day out and with the bonus of Mercedes World on the same site makes it a varied and interesting visit for all the family.

Meppershall Summer Fair

Saturday 27th June 2015

We have already started our plans for this year's fair.

In addition to many of your favourite attractions such as Scruffs, Fairground rides and of course the Bake-Off, this year we are looking to have **Street entertainment**.

Perhaps you Stilt walk, Juggle, or have a little magic up your sleeve?

Are you a Balloon model artist? Or a Hoola hoop fanatic?

Whatever your talent we are keen to hear from you.



If you know of someone who would love to entertain at our fair do ask them to contact us – they do not need to live in Meppershall.

It's your Village Fair, so let's make it the best yet!

Contact: kim@randall-tyler.org.uk, Tel: 0795 255 7203

MEPPERSHALL GARDEN CLUB



February can be a frustrating month for keen gardeners. Although a good time of the year for pruning deciduous trees and shrubs and planting out spring bulbs, it is often too cold to tackle these jobs. Suddenly March will be upon us and we can start gardening with a vengeance.

We had a good turnout for our February meeting which was held in the Mount Pleasant Golf Club in Stondon. We planned our year ahead which is to include several outings and social events. Hopefully by the time this article is published, we will have held our much delayed and highly anticipated Christmas lunch!

At the end of the month, a small group of our members will be joining a commercial coach trip to Kenwood House and gardens in Hampstead and later in March for some of us, there will be a trip to Kew Gardens. Hopefully the sun will shine on us on both occasions so we can come back with photos to prove that spring is just around the corner.

If you would like to find out more about joining the group then contact details are given below:

Linda Parker 01462 815114

Sarah Till 01462 817176

Kim Lee Tyler 01462 811750

Email address:

meppershallgardenclub@hotmail.co.uk

Spring Fayre

Meppershall Academy

Saturday 7th March

1.30 – 4pm

Family Photos Mother's Day & Easter Gifts
Paintball Shooting Alley Beauty Treatments
Glitter Tattoos Cards & Stationary Refreshments
Candyfloss & Slush Cart
Home Pamper Products
Pocket Money Toys Raffle & Many More!



NOTICE BOARD

Biggleswade & District Art Society

16th Spring Art Exhibition

Northill Village Hall (opposite the church)

Saturday 11th April and Sunday 12th April 10.00 am - 4.00 pm

Free Admission Original Paintings for sale
Refreshments

**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

Josie Lane has some language tapes no longer
required – French, German, & Spanish.
If interested, please call 01462 850802

Lewis's Further Adventures

Not quite out of the blue!

Following our holiday, we settled back into the work routine; there were a number of modifications to carry out to the Yellow Fever units which involved stripping out the centre assembly carrying the slip-rings - not too difficult, but time consuming.

A three line whip came out from the Adjutant and all the Officers and Warrant Officers assembled in the Mess. The C.O. was on holiday in Yugoslavia so the (good?) news that in 72 hours we would be emplaning for Borneo was given to us by the 2 i/c. President Sukarno of Indonesia had attacked the Malasian States on the Island of Borneo or Kelamantan as the Indos called it, so we would be defending the Airfields in Borneo and Singapore.

The possibility of this intrusion had been on the cards for some time and we had carried out various exercises to sort out in advance various equipment deployments. Regiment and workshop equipment would travel by a mix of Air and Sea freight with the exception of the Ack Ack guns, gun tractors and recovery vehicles: these would be drawn from MOB stocks held in 3 Base Ordinance Depot in Singapore.

My immediate problem was to get all the equipment (which was in various states of repair in the workshop) assembled and ready for transportation, and of course to ensure the families of my men were briefed and the arrangements made for their welfare whilst we were deployed to the Far East. The Colonel's wife and Fran were friends from Ty-Croes days, so they got together to set up an advisory committee to assist the families of the younger wives in the Regiment. This was the first time that many of them had been separated and never at such short notice, but meetings twice a week helped, where grievances could be aired and group solutions put forward. Unfortunately my O.C. threw a wobbly and said he would not be travelling and told me to sort out everything for the Workshop and R.E.M.E. personnel – nice one Sir.

As a result the family saw little of me in the run up to our departure, but fortunately Fran was a brick and took it all in her stride. In with all the other tasks, I rang Walter Meisse in Herford and asked him to collect the BMW and take it back there and sell it. Sea freight equipment was all checked and inspected and mustered under guard on the main square: it was to be driven/towed to Rotterdam by one of the other Regiments. Air freight Land Rovers were all checked and packed with essential test equipment and the usual last minute items needed to ensure a reasonable standard of living for the first few days after our arrival in the Far East. The vehicles were driven in convoy to Dusseldorf Airport where Britannia Aircraft were lined up ready for loading, which was accomplished in relatively quick time. Buses had been hired to take us back to Hubbelrath for our last night with our families when we had carried out our personal packing.

The next morning was somewhat sombre, with more than a fair share of red eyes around - the children clung on to Dads and our wives put on a true Brit show – very stoic! Final kisses all round and we boarded the buses for a quick run down the road to the Airport. For some reason I turned out to be responsible for all the R.E.M.E.

personnel, so I appointed a W.O.2 to be responsible for each aircraft, which had a 50/50 load of personnel and Land Rovers. Engines were run up and soon we were looking down on Hubbelrath as we headed for El Adam in Libya. Virtually everyone sacked out for the flight and had to be roused up on landing in El Adam, where it was early evening and fortunately the flies were in abeyance after an active day annoying everyone. We disembarked to be led to a rather dismal mess hall where the first of a succession of bacon and egg meals cooked in olive oil appeared. The toilets were of the Arab variety, to the consternation of the unseasoned travellers. We re-boarded the aircraft which had been fuelled up and the toilets refreshed. We took off in darkness and headed East over Egypt and the Red Sea, a quick nod at Aden and we flew up the Arabian Gulf to Bahrain. It was now morning and our palates were tempted with yet more bacon and eggs - get it down lads and smile!

Another evening take off with a fully tanked up Aircraft and we headed off over the Gulf and Iran, thence into the Indian Ocean and the very small atoll of Gan. The pilot invited me up to the cockpit to watch the landing and to say the least it was impressive: from 10,000 feet the landing strip looked far too small to accommodate the aircraft, however we were soon down and taxiing along the runway to approach a cluster of buildings. Into the inevitable mess hall and for a change we were offered a delicious chicken curry; it made a most acceptable change to the B&E!

Yet another evening take-off and we headed north-east to Bangkok where we landed with the dawn to see the mystical temples appearing through the early morning mist. This time we were accommodated in the civilian airport facilities attended by delightful Thai ladies in their diaphanous dresses - my chaps were in seventh heaven! There was a choice of a number of different meals and Thai beer – greatly appreciated.

Take-off this time was at ten A.M. a relatively short hop to RAF Changi in Singapore. On landing, the Land-Rovers were soon unloaded without mishap and with most of the personnel in TCV's, we were off to Nee Soon where we spent a few days acclimatising and drawing vehicles and equipment from the MOB stocks in the various depots. 42 Battery of eight guns and Fire Control equipment was deployed around RAF Seletar on the north side of the Island; it had very good facilities and I was allocated an enormous Hangar for my Workshop. I was not in sole occupation for long, the Army Air Corps brought in Single and Twin Pin Pioneer Aircraft followed shortly by Gannet Surveillance Aircraft which had been flown off from the Air-craft Carrier Eagle. The Hangar was soon chock-a-block with little spare space: inter service co-operation was of a high order with the khaki – jobs in charge!

To be continued,

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



Parents, Grandparents & Childminders are all welcome!

We have had lots of fun so far this term. The children have particularly enjoyed painting with their hands, rollers and brushes at messy play and also planting some spring bulbs in decorated pots. We also had a visit from Orchard Children's centre and they brought along indoor sports equipment. Just before half term the party pack came out and everyone had fun playing in the ball pool, hiding in tents and tunnels, and jumping on the bouncy castle!

This is what we have coming up:

3rd March – It's messy play week! Stickle bricks, junk modelling, hand printing with poems, animal feet painting!

10th March – We will have the wooden house as a café, work bench and tools out and dolls and buggies. And to celebrate our wonderful mums, grandparents and carers on Mother's Day we will have an 'afternoon tea' table with some lovely cakes and tea and coffee.

17th March – School theme. House as a school with dressing up. Puzzles, laptops and instruments. Making clocks.

24th March – Easter Party! Children can come in fancy dress – hopefully with an Easter bonnet! The party pack will be out and there will be games, egg decorating and a small treat for the children.

Thank you to everyone who comes and enjoys the sessions. We could not do it without your support. A special thanks to those who have recently joined our committee to allow us to plan ahead and continue running the group.

**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



Welcome to Beau, Conner and Hollie who will all be starting with us this month. We would also like to say a big welcome to all their families. We have had a wonderful term so far with our 'Winter' and 'Frozen' theme. Our theme this half term is 'Mini Beasts'. We will be searching for these at our Mini Diggers allotment.

At Pre-school we spend a lot of time talking about letters & numbers with the children during their play, and appropriately for their stage of development. To promote letters and sounds at Pre-school we have a 'sound of the week'. We focus on the 'sound' of the letter as this needs to be learnt before the letter name. The letter we focus on changes each week, and we encourage the children to bring something in from home that starts with the 'sound of the week'. We then put these on a special table and talk about this sound throughout the week. The children have really enjoyed playing with these sounds.

We are currently looking for a Temporary Pre-school Assistant who could work Tuesday to Friday 10:30 till 12 noon. If you would be interested in applying please ring Debbie on 07713 627376. We are committed to offering Equal Opportunities in Employment, and follow strict Safeguarding and Safer Recruiting Procedures.

We now only have a few places left to fill at Meppershall Pre-school. If your little one has turned 2 and is ready to make new friends and enjoy our stimulating, safe environment, or if you would like them to join our waiting list please ring Tamsin our fantastic leader during session time on the number below for more information. We are open every morning from 9:15 till 12:15, and each Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoon from 12:15 till 3:15 (term time only).

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.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Birthdays in March:

Peter Lambley will be 82 on 1st March

Evelyn Jepps will be 95 on 3rd

Ron Mitchell will be 82 on 4th

Barbara Horwood will be 81 on 10th

Peter Longland will be 83 on 11th

Richard Ivory will be 81 on 22nd

Congratulations to all of the above

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

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

A very Happy Birthday to those of you celebrating birthdays in March

Alessandra D'Amico who will be 4 on the 5th

Alexanda Cocks who will be 13 on the 7th

Genevieve Cocks who will be 12 on the 7th

Dylan Caddick who will be 10 on the 8th

Marcus Hart who will be 12 on the 12th

Ella Bryant who will be 10 on the 12th

Emma Horsford who will be 13 on the 14th

Aaron Vernon who will be 11 on the 16th

Gracie Sue Bavister who will be 9 on the 18th

Caitlin Gouck who will be 8 on the 20th

Daisy Lucas who will be 13 on the 27th

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

Parish Church of St Mary The Virgin (Church of England)

Church Road, off Campton Road, Meppershall
www.stmarysmeppershall.org.uk ✝ facebook.com/stmarysmeppershall



Rector: The Reverend Veronica Goodman

01462 339962 – ronigoodman@gmail.com – 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

Things to Watch Out For...

Lent Discussion Groups - every Wednesday through Lent at 7.30pm, St Michael's, Shefford (March 4, 11, 18, 25 and April 1) – based on the film 'The Kings's Speech.' Interested? Just come along, we'd love to see you!

Churchyard Working Party (see page 44 below) - play your part in the upkeep and enjoy the oldest part of the village with friends, in beautiful surroundings. Saturday March 28th, bring your own tools, refreshments provided.

Easter is here already! See our table of events below to help you plan your Easter – lots of great opportunities to come and enjoy the church.

Election Time – Hustings in Shefford – St Michael's will play host to all the local candidates seeking your vote in the upcoming General Election. Lively public debate on Thursday 16th April.

A Message from St Mary's...

Firstly this month I would like to thank all those who organised the Friends January Quiz Night and all who took part and helped to make it such a success. The Church really values, I really value - all the support - from everyone in the village who quietly and faithfully does so much to enable the church to be and work among us. I am just sorry that this time, I was unable to be at such a fun event.

Now we're in the season of Lent, the time of the Church's year when we remind ourselves of the events leading up to Jesus' crucifixion and death before we celebrate his resurrection at Easter.

I know that some people ask “Why remember still something that happened nearly 2000 years ago? The world has moved on 2000 years and there are enough things to worry about and to celebrate in our own time - why celebrate something which is such old news?”

For me, one of the answers to this question links to something both immediate and quite personal. We remember and we celebrate because the life, death and resurrection of Jesus offered a promise and a new hope to all...

The Bible teaches that Jesus freely chose to accept a life that for him led to death on a cross. But death was not the end for Jesus... and because of that... death is not the end for us. Jesus overcame death not just for himself, but for all of us. He is the first to rise from the dead, but we may all follow him... it is a promise that is open to all.

Through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus we can know that death need not be the end for us, but only the final part of the earthly journey to our heavenly home and future living place... alive in God... and, however we conceive it, living a life more real and beautiful than this one.

St Paul said: We want you to be quite certain brothers about those who have died, to make sure that you do not grieve about them like other people who have no hope.With such thoughts as these, you should comfort one another (1 Thessalonians 4).

I have recently been to my own father's funeral. And my own hope of heaven for him, for my Mum and my step mum - for all I have loved and lost - indeed for myself, is to be found as the sad and grisly drama of Good Friday unfolds into the excitement and glory of the empty tomb in the early hours of Sunday morning, the third day...

Easter is not old news - it is now and always light in our darkness, joy in our sadness, comfort in our grief, life overcoming death, “strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow”. Because of all it promises - may the words “Happy Easter” “Christ is Risen!” “He is Risen indeed!” hopefully and joyfully ring out in our hearts, and all around the village with the bells of Easter.

Rector Roni

Services and Events – March 2015 *at St Mary's unless stated below*

| Date | Time | Service / Event |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Sunday 1st March | 11.00am | Parish Communion |
| 2nd of Lent | 11.00am | Junior Church at the School |
| Weds 4th March | 10.00am | Holy Communion |
| Sunday 8th March | 8.30am | Holy Communion |
| 3rd of Lent | 10.30pm | Second Sunday Stroll. Wrest Park via the Cow Bridge and Upper Gravenhurst – just under 4 miles. Meet at the church gate, call James for help with return lifts. |
| Tues 10th March | 2-4pm | Rectory Tea – chat and a cuppa – all welcome |
| Weds 11th March | 10.00am | Holy Communion |
| Sat 14th March | 9.00am | Celtic Morning Prayer |
| Sun 15th March | 8.30am | Holy Communion |
| 4th of Lent | 11.00am | All Age Family Service |
| Weds 18th March | 10.00am | Holy Communion. Ash Wednesday. |
| Sun 22nd March | 10.00am | United Benefice Service, St Michael's, Shefford, breakfast served from 9am – all welcome. |
| 5th of Lent | | |
| Tues 24th March | 2-4pm | Topical discussion at the Rectory over a cuppa, all welcome |
| Weds 25th March | 10.00am | Holy Communion |
| Friday 27th March | 9.00pm | Silent Together – join friends to sit for a few minutes to enjoy the tranquillity of the church |
| Sat 28th March | From 8.30am (Join anytime!) | Churchyard Working Party - join us for another day with friends, refreshments, tidying up the churchyard, trimming back, ready for Spring. Bring your own tools, join anytime for as little or as long as you can. |
| Sun 29th March | 11.00am | Parish Communion |
| Palm Sunday | | |
| Weds 1st April | 10.00am | Holy Communion |
| Thurs 2nd April | 7.30pm | Maundy Thursday Holy Communion |
| Friday 3rd April | 2pm | Good Friday Service |
| Sat 4th April | 7.30pm | Easter Vigil at the Church |
| Sunday 5th April | 11.00am | Easter Sunday Holy Communion |

St. Mary's Church Meppershall

JC JC JC JC JC JC JC

Dear All,

As I am writing this, we are preparing for this year's Lent season, starting on Tuesday, 18th February, the day after Pancake Day. I'm sure that most of us are hugely looking forward to Pancake Day and are planning the filling of our pancakes already. I do.

However, what does the Lent season starting on the day after mean for each one of us? Do we have to give up something we really like, such as for example eating chocolate or (for the parents) drinking wine? Or do we have to take up something we don't like very much like helping our parents with chores around the house such as Hoover-ing or taking the rubbish out without moaning? It is clear that none of us, no matter how disciplined and determined we are, stands much chance resisting temptation like Jesus did in the desert. After 46 days and nights without chocolate, speaking personally, I have to have some the very moment I am allowed to eat it again. On the other hand, the **Love Life Live Lent** – Lent resource has a very different approach to living the Lent season. It suggests different activities for adults and children, such like keeping in touch more with people we haven't seen for a while or thinking of a handful of people and then pray for them. Very thought-inspiring stuff for every new day. Now, I like to think of Lent as a season of filling my life rather than abstaining. If you agree, why not try out if JC could be for you and your children too? We (ages 3 to 12 and adult helpers) are meeting once a month (usually the 1st Sunday) in the school hall and celebrate being together and learning about Jesus. For those, who have time constraints, why don't you join us when you next can? If you have any questions about the format of the sessions or other details please feel free to contact

Gillian: 850947, Julie: 814487 or Alex: 851473

We are happy to discuss any questions and help.

Your JC team

Gillian, Julie, Morag and Alex

JC JC JC JC JC JC JC



Mothering Sunday

Mini - SPARKS 2015

Where? In St. Mary's
church

When? On Mothering
Sunday, 15.03.2015

From 10.00am to 11:00

Please stay on for our All Age
Worship from 11:00 to 12:00 if
you like!!!

What? Making Mother's
day cards and gifts

ORANGE AND LEMON CURD**MARCH 2015**

2 lemons.

1 orange.

250g (9oz) caster sugar.

3 eggs, beaten.

100g (4oz) butter, cut into small pieces.

METHOD

- 1) Finely grate the zest from one lemon and the orange and place in a medium-sized heatproof bowl. Add the sugar, eggs and butter.
- 2) Halve the lemons and orange then extract the juice with a lemon juicer. Add to the bowl and stir with a wooden spoon to combine.
- 3) Place the bowl over a pan of barely simmering water and stir for 15-20 minutes, or until the curd is thick enough to coat the back of the spoon. Do not allow to boil.
- 4) Pour into clean, sterilized warm jars and seal. Leave to cool then store in the fridge and use within 2-3 weeks.

Recipes are kindly supplied each month by Brenda Putwain.

Brenda would welcome feedback from readers on her recipes.

COVERS BY REQUEST

This month's cover celebrates that very welcome first floral visitor of the year in gardens and roadside undergrowth - beautiful snowdrops. Don't just take our photographer David Turner's word for it that these were found in Shillington Road, Meppershall - why not take the air and go see for yourself?!

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>2015</u> | | | | |
| April | 27 | Tuesday | September | 28 | |
| May | 26 | | October | 26 | |
| June | 29 | | November | 30 | Double |
| July | 27 | Double | December | None | |
| August | None | | January 2016 | 25 | |

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.