

# **STEVINGTON MAGAZINE**



*A Cottage in Silver Street*

*REW January 2012*

**MARCH 2012  
Number 160**

## VILLAGE DIARY

### **March**

- 8 Diamond Jubilee Meeting. Social Centre 7.30pm
- 8 WI Rockingham Castle. Church Room 7.30pm
- 15 Health Walk. Harrold Odell Country Park 10.30am
- 18 Mothering Sunday. St Mary's 9.30am
- 20 Over 50s Afternoon Tea. Baptist Hall TBC
- 20 St Mary's Annual Meeting of Parishioners. 7.30pm Annual PCC meeting
- 25 Patronal Festival. St Mary's 11.00am
- 26 Possible Borough Council Planning Meeting
- 29 Health Walk. Harrold Odell Country Park 10.30am
- 31 Friends of St Mary's Spring Feast with Tales. Social Centre 7.30pm

### **April**

- 1 Palm Sunday. St Mary's 9.30am
- 5 Maundy Thursday. All Saints Turvey 8.00pm
- 8 Easter Sunday. St Mary's 9.30am followed by Easter Egg Hunt
- 12 Health Walk. Harrold Odell Country Park 10.30am
- 12 WI Ionian singers. Church Room 7.30pm
- 21 Hostess Supper. Social Centre
- 21 Poppy Appeal Concert. Turvey Village Hall 7.30pm
- 22 Manor House NGS Open Garden. 12.00 to 5.00pm
- 29 Health Walk. Harrold Odell Country Park 10.30am

### **May**

- 10 WI Annual Meeting. Church Room 7.30pm
- 13 Stevington 12k Road Race
- 12&13 National Mills Weekend. Windmill open 1.00 to 4.00pm
- 13 Magazine Copy Date (Sunday)
- 20 Manor House Open Garden (Chirimba). 12.00 to 5.00pm
- 28 NOT Spring Bank Holiday

### **June**

- 4 Spring Bank Holiday
- 4 Manor House Open Garden (Queen's Diamond Jubilee)
- 5 Queen's Diamond Jubilee Bank Holiday
- 14 WI Putting an end to putting it off. Church Room 7.30pm

Photographs by H&K, except as credited.  
Cover drawn by Bob Westwood.

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Opinions expressed in the Stevington Magazine are those of the contributors and are not necessarily shared by the Editor.

Some features may be kept for future issues.

**HELLO STEVINGTON!**

Most of you will know that this is our first edition of the Magazine. So far so good but please forgive us for any errors that we haven't picked up!

We want to thank Pat and Ian Pickup for all their hard work as editors and for developing the Magazine into what it is today. Until we started to put this edition together we hadn't quite realised how much they have done for the village over the years. We would also like to add our personal thanks to them for their time and patience with us during the hand over. We watched over their shoulders when they were doing their last issue and they have acted as our 'help line' since then.

Thanks to everyone who helped to raise £523 plus Gift Aid for the Elisabeth Curtis Centre through the Christmas Greetings in the December issue. If you have a suggestion for a charity for us to support this year please let us know.

In sorting through the magazine archive we've found a wealth of artwork from earlier editions which we think merits another airing. We can't identify all the artists so this is a general acknowledgement of their work. It will be used as and when we have space to fill!

**Queen's Diamond Jubilee**

The next edition will be delivered to you on 26 or 27 May, the week before the Jubilee weekend. So make sure that you get notices to us to advertise any special events you are organising in good time.

We think it would be great to look back to the village at the time of the Coronation. So if any of you have memories of the celebrations in the village at that time please send us something to include in the next edition. Perhaps some of the younger people in the village could help with typing material up if that makes it easier?

Heather & Keith

**NEXT MAGAZINE**

The next edition of the Stevington Magazine should be delivered sometime around 26/27 May. The last day for receipt of copy for that Magazine is Sunday 13 May 2012. Articles should reach Heather & Keith Parkinson (Old Paddock, Church Road, Tel. 826677, e-mail [stevington.magazine@googlemail.com](mailto:stevington.magazine@googlemail.com)) before 5.00pm on that day, although we will be delighted to receive copy at any time before then!!!



## THANK YOU

Ade and Sue Churchill would like to thank all those who helped them to celebrate their marriage and for the very generous gifts. Also, a big thank you to all those lovely people who worked so hard to make it a great party. You know who you are!! The food was fab and the hall looked lovely. And finally thank you to both bands who played so brilliantly.

Mr and Mrs Churchill

## CAROL SINGING

Many thanks to all who took part in our carol singing around the village. We raised £108.53 for St John's Hospice, Moggerhanger. Sorry if you missed out on all the fun - come and join in next year!

Steffie Field

## THANK YOU

Dave, Sara, Michael and Katherine would like to thank everyone for making us feel so welcome when we moved to Stevington in January.

Sara Hetherington  
(6 Court Lane)

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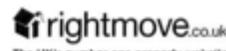
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## **THANK YOU \*\* THANK YOU \*\* THANK YOU \*\* THANK YOU**

At the village concert on Tuesday 20 December 2011 I was presented with a cheque by Pat Pickup, then Editor of this illustrious magazine, for the magnificent sum of £523 (plus Gift Aid) for The Elisabeth Curtis Centre, Riding for the Disabled at Bromham. The money had been donated by villagers in lieu of Christmas cards to friends and neighbours and I would like to thank them for their generosity.

The Centre offers riding therapy sessions for any disabled person aged five and above who would benefit from them. Riding has long been known to have many beneficial effects, both physical and mental. It boosts confidence and social skills and is great exercise. The therapy sessions are tailored to each individual's needs. The Elisabeth Curtis Centre's aim is to offer many people with disabilities the chance to benefit from riding therapy in a safe, comfortable environment.

The group is made up of volunteers and we rely totally for income on donations and fund raising and do not receive any formal grants. If anyone would like to visit the Centre or is able to offer some help, please contact me (824612) or speak to our Chairman Jan Tozer (297456).

Again, many thanks for your generosity,

Hilary O'Dell  
Organiser - Elisabeth Curtis Centre, Riding for the Disabled



### **HALL AVAILABLE**

Come and use our hall at the Baptist Church, West End. You are welcome as guests; all we ask is for a voluntary contribution towards costs.

Feel free to bring your own food and drink; providing such items are not sold on the premises.

If you are interested, simply ring **Carol Wareing** on **01234 825661**, she will be pleased to hear from you.

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## **PETER CHARLES CONQUEST** **A PERSONAL MEMOIR**

Peter grew up in Croydon and was educated at St Dunstan's College. He much regretted that he had not attended university but claimed that his A levels had not been good enough. He always referred to graduates, slightly ironically, as 'university men' or 'scholars'. Instead, he qualified as a quantity surveyor, working first for a local authority but later, in a senior role, for major oil companies. After leaving school he was an enthusiastic supporter of the Old Dunstonians Rugby Club and greatly enjoyed their Easter tours to the West Country.

I had not met Peter before he and Caroline bought the Old Vicarage and moved to Stevington from Pavenham. However, I recognised him immediately. Some 30 years previously I had attended a dinner held by the Sealed Knot, the Civil War re-enactment society, in the Banqueting Hall, Westminster. The principal speaker was a tall, bearded character resplendent in the uniform of Prince Rupert's regiment who spoke of the Roundheads in highly unflattering terms. Peter was the leading light in the Knot for many years and 'battling' was his favourite pursuit.

Peter and I got to know each other better when he became a trustee of the Historical Trust. He was the first chairman of the Friends of the Trust. He was also a first class proof reader and the quality of the final text of the Trust's publications owed much to him and his co-reader, Terry Studley. Peter was a stickler for accuracy and, indeed, for correct form and he regularly bemoaned what he saw as the sloppy standards prevalent in today's society.

Peter was a high Tory in the Disraelian tradition. However, he fell out of love with the Conservative Party over its continuing support of the European Union. He joined the Referendum Party and twice stood for Parliament, albeit unsuccessfully. Interestingly, he stood against the Labour candidate in Bedford and did not contest a Tory-held seat, out of some residual loyalty to that party. He considered it his public duty to make a stand. He was an iconoclast in other respects. He treated the global warming lobby with scorn in so far as they attributed warming to the activities of man. In his view, history showed that there were predictable cycles of warming and cooling. At the same time he was fascinated with scientists' ever increasing knowledge of the origin of the universe and he had an enviable understanding of the works of Stephen Hawking, which he devoured.

Peter was an enthusiast for village life. He patronised both pubs ('the offices') and was a master of their respective disciplines. He upheld their role as meeting places; he liked to talk and, occasionally, to pontificate. While he would criticise the folly of others he never spoke ill of anyone as a person. He got on well with all ages and conditions of folk. He was a stickler for property rights but gave generous access to anglers via his meadow of which he was inordinately fond. He was very touched when Jackie Gooding and Bob Poulter presented him with a record of the meadow's flora.



He was proud of the Old Vicarage and the fact that it was one of the oldest buildings in Stevington. He and Caroline enhanced it with the addition of a new wing and a superb swimming pool, both products of Garrett construction.

They had hoped for children and when none came black Labradors arrived on the scene instead. Caroline bred from some of them and at one point the pack numbered four. The surviving two, Phoebe and Millie, have found good homes.

Peter had a fatalistic streak, half seriously he confessed to some fear of living until a meteor was predicted to hit Earth in the 2030s. The minutiae of everyday life he found boring and when things went wrong, when the swimming pool systems failed, he took it as a personal affront, an unwarranted interference with the calm and even tenor of his way. He was also prone to depression. Caroline's kidney failure plunged him into gloom relieved by the successful transplant. However, worse was to come as she was afflicted with a cancer, the treatment of which killed the transplant. At the same time, one of Peter's feet deteriorated and required numerous operations which proved successful only in the last year. Caroline's constant visits to the Lister Hospital in Stevenage were a complete disruption of normal family life.

When Caroline died Peter seemed to accept it philosophically. He invited me down to the Old Vic a few days after her death for a chat and he seemed to have the administrative side of things in hand. The turning point was the day he collected Caroline's ashes. He went downhill fast thereafter. It was a sad end to a loving marriage which had promised so much more.

Peter was a 'one off' and the Village is poorer for his absence.

Peter Hart

## PETER AND CAROLINE CONQUEST

I am finding difficulty putting into words the sorrow and utter sadness after the death of Caroline and followed two months later by Peter.

When they first moved into the 'Old Vic' as Peter called it we were running The Red Lion. They used to lunch at the pub two or three times a week. Peter was very high ranking in the Sealed Knots or 'silly knots' as they were affectionately referred to. He recruited the late John Geertz as a lowly foot soldier complete with blue coat and a wooden rifle. John even managed to acquire a comely wench who was one of the followers. What fun it all was and to Peter very serious.

When we 'rejoined' the village after our gap year in Spain, Caroline, who shared with me a love of the cinema, and I would regularly go for a matinee performance. She was wonderful company. Sadly her health was failing so our cinema visits stopped.

I like to think of Peter as being reunited with his beloved Caroline. Rest in Peace Peter and Caroline.

Anne Westbrook



### STEVINGTON 12K RACE

The annual Stevington 12k road race is on Sunday 13 May 2012.

1 lap through the villages of Oakley and Pavenham, starting and finishing at Stevington Village Playing Field.

Registrations from 9.30am with the race commencing at 11.00am.

Minimum age 17. See website for registration details  
[www.stevingonroadrace.co.uk](http://www.stevingonroadrace.co.uk)

Changing facilities and refreshments available.

## **STEVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**

### **PART TIME ADMIN POSITION**

Due to the increase in workload of the Parish Clerk the Council wishes to appoint an admin assistant who would work alongside and assisting the present Parish Clerk, in particular on planning matters, writing letters and covering on occasion for holidays, etc.

The hours of work would have to be flexible and variable as they would depend on workload volumes, but they would be no more than 4 to 5 hours per week on average. The rate of pay will be negotiable, but in line with normal rates of pay for assistants to parish clerks, which are as per the Local Government Services National Joint Council scales.

The successful candidate will have excellent admin skills, be prepared to work alone and be used to working with Microsoft Word for letter writing and minute taking. A small allowance will be included within the pay structure for use of home computer and printer.

Please apply to the Parish Clerk, Graham Follett, by email or letter in the first instance. An interview with some of the parish councillors will be part of the selection procedure.

**Write to:**  
The Parish Clerk  
Stevington Parish Council  
Mayfield, Park Road  
Stevington  
Bedford MK43 7QG

or      **email to:**  
[stevingtonpc@live.co.uk](mailto:stevingtonpc@live.co.uk)

### **NATIONAL MILLS WEEKEND 12 & 13 MAY**



Stevington Windmill and Bromham Watermill will be open on both days to celebrate Mills Weekend. The windmill will be open from 1pm to 4pm on both days. If the weather is suitable the sail cloths will be fitted to the mill allowing the sails to turn. Bromham Mill will be open from 1pm to 5pm and serving hot drinks and homemade cakes.

For more details contact Bromham Mill on 01234 824330 or e-mail [bromham.mill@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:bromham.mill@bedford.gov.uk).

Bedford Borough Council has backed a campaign to reduce the unfairly inflated petrol and diesel prices charged across the borough. At a Full Council meeting on 1 February, councillors agreed to back a motion from Mayor Dave Hodgson calling for fuel retailers to lower their prices in the borough and bring them in line with neighbouring counties and boroughs.

The Council's Chief Executive will now write to fuel retailers with sites in the borough requesting an explanation why Bedford Borough residents are paying more for their fuel and for their assistance in bringing prices to a level comparable with nearby towns.

Mayor of Bedford Borough, Dave Hodgson, said: 'We currently have an unacceptable situation whereby local residents in and around Bedford are forced to pay typically around 5 pence per litre more for petrol, and around 4 pence more for diesel, than drivers in nearby towns. I hope that the unanimous support for this motion will put further pressure on fuel retailers to address the shocking disparity in prices between Bedford and neighbouring towns. The fuel retailers should be embarrassed by the raw deal they are giving Bedford residents and businesses, which is plain for all to see. I am hopeful that the more that the media, the Council and residents stand up and say 'this is not acceptable,' the more likely they are to do the right thing and bring prices

### **HAVE YOUR SAY ON YOUR RIGHTS OF WAY**

A five year programme to improve the public rights of way in Bedford Borough is now open to public consultation. Bedford Borough Council is responsible for nearly 1,000km of footpaths, bridleways and byways across the borough and is now asking for local residents to give their thoughts on how to improve the routes as well as how to encourage more people to take advantage of them.



The Rights of Way Improvement Plan sets out the Council's proposed aims, objectives and practical actions for increasing public use and enjoyment of the Borough's public rights of way network over the next five years, 2012-2017.

Councillor Sarah-Jayne Holland, Portfolio Holder for Community and Regulatory Services, said: 'Rights of Way are an important community asset and it is therefore vitally important that we and all our interested local partners work together to maintain and improve them. Rights of Way provide an important leisure resource for walkers, cyclists and horse riders and we are keen to retain existing users as well as encouraging even more people to enjoy our rights of way and the great outdoors in Bedford Borough. I urge anyone with an interest in nature and the outdoors to get involved with our Rights of Way Improvement Plan and give us their thoughts on how we can improve these vital routes through the borough.'

You can respond to the consultation in the following ways:

Online: [www.bedford.gov.uk/row](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/row)

By email: [consultingbedford@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:consultingbedford@bedford.gov.uk)

By phone: 01234 228435

By post: Consulting Bedford, FREEPOST ANG5840,  
Bedford, MK40 1ZD.



## MAC 4X4 CHALLENGE

As this is delivered through your letterbox we will be taking part in the Mac4x4 Challenge ([www.mac4x4.co.uk](http://www.mac4x4.co.uk)) raising money for Macmillan Cancer Support. It is a huge navigation exercise both on road and off road on private land, a bit like a giant treasure hunt. We will spend three days in our Land Rover Defender 110, navigating round the country trying to complete the various challenges and collecting points as accurately as possible. We will be camping to get sleep when we can. We know that the start point is near Gretna Green this year but we have no idea where we will be going! To **follow us live** on the event go to <http://livetrack.skytag-gps.co.uk> and login with username: mac4x4 and password: mac4x4. It will be active from 11.00am 2 March to 5.00pm 4 March.

We were seventh overall from 80 teams last year and would love to beat that this year – but we will see as competition is pretty stiff.

We would really appreciate it if you would **sponsor us** to support this good cause. Please visit our Just Giving page at [www.justgiving.com/sauceandnuts2012](http://www.justgiving.com/sauceandnuts2012) or let us have a cheque made out to 'Mac 4x4' – or give us some cash! Thank you.

Heather & Keith

# *The Friends of ST MARY'S STEVINGTON*

You will have had a leaflet delivered to your door recently from The Friends of St Mary's Church. If you have not yet taken the opportunity to start or renew your membership of the Friends for 2012, may we respectfully remind you that membership dues for January to December 2012 are currently being collected. Many thanks for your continued support.

Janet Day & Tricia Lennie



## Royal British Legion -Turvey and District Branch POPPY APPEAL CONCERT



by  
**HEART and MUSIC**



**7.30pm Saturday 21 April  
Turvey Village Hall**

We are starting our Poppy Appeal earlier this year, and will be donating all the profit from this concert to this worthy cause.

HEART and MUSIC performed in Stevington last year for The Friends of St Mary's, and were an enormous success. They are all experienced singers, and have been 'on the road' since September 2010, raising over £3,500 for the benefit of charities.

I'm sure that many of you will wish to enjoy their widely varied programme of songs from musical theatre, traditional numbers and some 'funny pieces' too!

**Tickets £7.00, available after 1 March from me on 823769 or Frank Goddard on 881334.**

This includes soft drinks and nibbles, but please bring your own favourite tipple!

Robert Hart  
Branch President

## **PARISH COUNCIL REPORT**

It has been a very busy few months for the Parish Council with numerous planning applications, not least the most recent application for the Red Lion. The last year has seen more planning applications from the village than for many years.

Thank you all for coming to numerous meetings to discuss the Traveller Site and the two Red Lion applications. It provides us with a strong mandate to object to these applications. We would also like to say thank you to all those who have helped the PC with these applications. We could not have responded to these applications in so much detail and with so much knowledge without your help, determination and support.

There is quite a strong likelihood that these applications will be heard by the Planning Committee in the next couple of months. Hopefully many of you will be able to come with us to the Planning Meetings for both of these sites, to show the strong views of the village. We will let you know the details as soon as we know the likely dates.

The increase in applications, correspondence from other Councils, Government Bodies and the Borough Council has made us realise that we need to extend the hours of our Clerk. It has been decided that having an assistant to the Clerk would be better, as holidays etc can be covered, and our Clerk can resume his training, which in turn leads to a stronger Parish Council. (If you are interest please let us know and see advert in this magazine.)

We are very pleased that all the funding has now been found by the Social Centre, including a Contribution from our Borough Councillor's budget, to do the final top surfacing of the Social Centre Car Park.

On Saturday 21 February the Parish Council hosted a meeting for Parish Councils in North Beds to meet Alistair Burt, our MP, and discuss the planning applications for traveller sites in the area. It was a successful meeting attended by over 70 people from 26 Parish Councils and 7 Borough Councillors. Alistair Burt has taken our questions to the Minister, Eric Pickles, and will be meeting us again in March to discuss the responses. We agreed that we would continue to pressurise the Borough Council and The Mayor to ensure that every effort is made in ensuring that the Council provides a site for the travellers, and so reduces the chance that they will be given permission in Stevington and other rural sites. The Council has now submitted a planning application for Meadow Lane, we will be writing in support of this. It is likely it will be heard at the

Planning Committee Meeting on 26 March 2012. We intend to take a bus full of supporters for the Meadow Lane site to the planning meeting, do please join us.

At our last PC Meeting we set the budget for the next financial year. We want to continue to provide our services to you. We have decided that due to the increased planning work and that we have been relying too much on voluntary hours of the Clerk and others, we will employ an admin assistant for additional hours each week. This year we have paid for professional advice on planning issues, and there is still the likelihood that we will need to continue to fight both the Red Lion and the Traveller Site applications in the new financial year. There is also the imminent implementation of the Localism Act which will extend new responsibilities to the Parish Council and our neighbourhood. So in consideration of all these issues we have therefore concluded that we will increase the precept slightly. We have not done this lightly, we still raise far less per person than other villages in our area.



### Diamond Jubilee

If you are interested in helping with the village celebrations please talk to Rob Puckett or other members of the Social Centre Committee, they are coordinating the events in the village and have our full support. Their next meeting is on 8 March in the evening at the Social Centre, with a special agenda item for the Jubilee. There are many events already planned.

The Parish Council has applied for a Jubilee Wood from the Woodlands Trust. If we are successful this will be a long term project commemorating the Queen's very long and continuing reign. It will include a sapling from one of the Royal Gardens. We will know later in the year. We will then be looking for a planting team in the autumn.

### Hedges

Please can we ask everyone whose gardens back on to footpaths, bridleways and indeed roads to trim their hedges NOW, before birds are nesting? We have received complaints about those at the back of Burridges Close and those behind Silver Street and Court Lane. Please remember that they cause a hazard to others and could be dangerous.

### Dog poo

There are still some inconsiderate dog walkers in the village. Please clean up behind your dog. There is regularly muck on the

pavement outside the almshouses, there is still muck on the playing field, where children play. There is a dog warden at the Borough Council, complaints can be made directly to them by telephone on 01234 227270. They can and do pursue offenders, even to court. If you own or just walk a dog PLEASE BE RESPONSIBLE.

Happy Easter

Helen Prentice  
Chairman Stevington Parish Council

## Bedford Guild House

# 50/50 Auction

With Auctioneer David Fletcher  
from the BBC's FLOG IT!



12.30 Sunday 22 April 2012

Refreshments Available.

Lots received between Monday 16th April and Thursday 19th April (10am-4pm) or by arrangement.

Viewing Saturday 21st April from 12—4pm  
and Sunday 22nd April from 10-12.30pm.

For further details please contact

Bedford Guild House

56 Harpur Street, Bedford, MK41 2QT.

01234 352038 or e-mail [maggie.goodchild@talk21.com](mailto:maggie.goodchild@talk21.com)

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## SINGLE NON-EMERGENCY 101 POLICE NUMBER NOW UK WIDE

A single non-emergency 101 number has been rolled out to all police forces across England and Wales to help the public to access the police when they need them.

Bedfordshire Police launched '101' in September 2011. It gives the public a memorable number for their local police to report crimes and concerns that do not require an emergency response. It will also help the police to deal more efficiently with calls for help from the public.

At 15p per call from both mobile phones and landlines, no matter how long the call or what time of day, the public will be spared the cost of traditional 0845 numbers previously used by many forces which can cost up to 40p per minute.

With only 25 per cent of 999 calls to the police requiring an emergency response, ministers and chief constables are confident that the 101 number will also ease pressure on 999 services. Police forces in England and Wales have gradually gone live with 101 on a phased basis. The last of the 43 forces have now adopted the number and it is already proving popular with more than two and a half million calls.

Commander Ian Dyson, ACPO lead on contact management, said: 'Having just two phone numbers - 101 for reporting a crime that has happened, to get advice or to raise local policing issues - or 999 if it's an emergency, makes calling the police a lot easier and makes our services more accessible.'

'It's also expected to reduce the number of inappropriate 999 calls the service receives, enabling us to respond to genuine emergencies more effectively. 999 should only be used in an emergency, that is when a crime is happening, when someone suspected of a crime is nearby, or where someone is injured, being threatened or in danger. For all other matters the public should call us on 101.'

### CRIMES FOR BEAT 735 (STEVINGTON) COMMITTED BETWEEN 31/12/2011 AND 14/2/2012

Incident	Date & Time	Location
Improper use of public telecommunication system /	29/01/2012	Church Road
Nuisance telephone calls	17.37	

Carlton to Riseley Safer Neighbourhood Team

## VILLAGE CHRISTMAS CONCERT

'Twas the night before Christmas (well, a few nights, actually)....

For many of us, it doesn't really feel like Christmas until the village concert starts. This year's annual jamboree got off to a ripping opening with the choir singing 'Gloria in Excelsis'. One after another, excellent performances, too numerous to mention, entertained us magnificently. The carols were heartily sung by all, with the choir in particularly good voice, treating us to five harmonious pieces and unexpectedly (for them) supporting Bob Westwood's increasingly (and justifiably) irascible Emily as gifts of drummers drummed her out of house and home.

Our young musicians have bloomed during the year. Tom Lennie gave us an impressive display of simultaneous transposition with 'An Atheists Christmas Song', poignantly revealing his mellifluous tones and Alex Eadie showed how much her voice is growing in strength and depth as she sang the haunting 'Jar of Hearts'.

With only a few days left to Christmas, presents featured heavily. As Pat Pickup conjured images of illicit holly and action men tensed for warfare, David Fitch wondered how to find the mot juste for that 'different' powder blue jumper and Austin Powers (or was it Rob Puckett?) reminded us that 'All I Want for Christmas Is You' - baby.

We welcomed Peter and Sara Mackenzie to their first Christmas extravaganza. Sara's brilliant characterisation of a nativity double booking nightmare has ensured that we shall demand an encore in future.

Which innocent song would be the lamb to this year's slaughter by Malcolm Macdonald, Philip Bond and Tom Lennie? We all swooshed and jingled to Prokofiev's 'Sleigh Ride', but it was Fats Waller who would have been spinning in his grave as the trio took on 'Your Feets Too Big' while we giggled helplessly. Only Peter Stileman could have followed this act so stylishly with the so nearly true Stevington Quadrille!



Stevington has always been extremely generous in its fund raising and this year we took over £240 on the door and raised another £169 on the raffle. Thank you everyone!

The concert is an annual delight and we are so lucky to have so many people who give their time, stress and energy in its organisation, all hugely appreciated in the run up to Christmas. Tricia Lennie is our marvellous impresario who cajoles and coaxes it into being, while the long-suffering Philip Bond accompanies the performers and rehearses the choir. Joan Hart and Marion Hext marshalled the orchestra, Marina and Albert the raffle and Pat and Ian Pickup laid out the programme. Thanks for our interval deliciousness go to Anna Hart, Janet Day and a host of willing helpers and finally, thank you to everyone who gave so much time and energy, especially the performers and our lovely audience.



Sally Macdonald

#### HELP BEDFORD BOROUGH ACCELERATE

**W I T H   F A S T E R   B R O A D B A N D**

The Borough Council is working on a project using nearly £1m of Government and Local Partnership funding to significantly improve broadband speeds across the Borough and especially rural areas where commercial forces aren't making it happen.

A whole range of benefits can come from this including economic growth and improved access to a full range of public and other services.

You can help this to happen by registering your interest in faster broadband on the Council's broadband web page at [www.bedford.gov.uk/broadband](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/broadband). It will encourage broadband infrastructure providers to respond positively to the invitation to work with us which we will issue to them in a few months time.

It only takes a minute or so to complete the very simple form so please help if you can.

Thank you.

## SATURDAY MUSIC CENTRE

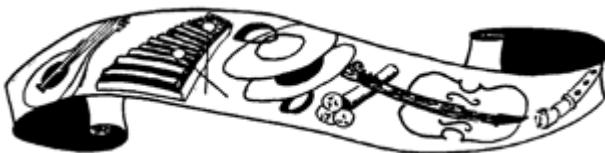
The ability to play a musical instrument is a wonderful thing and you can never start too early. It was with this in mind that I attempted to teach my twins how to play the recorder. I had imagined that with an understanding of the basics of both the instrument and music it would be a breeze. Half an hour later I had made an oath that never again would I try to teach them music and I would definitely never teach them how to drive. I had not counted on their impulsiveness, and enthusiasm and excitement.

The prospect of teaching music can be even worse, if you're having one of those days with your children. One of those days when you have to say everything three times and they still look at you bewildered as if you're talking Swahili or they've just re-emerged from deep-sea water.

That is why I have found Saturday Music Centre, now at the Grey's Education Centre, Chestnut Avenue, in Bromham so useful. It's run by Bedford Borough Council. Every Saturday morning in term time from 9.15 till 12.30 their highly qualified peripatetic music teachers deliver what is to my mind one of the hidden gems of the Borough's music service.

My children began at the age of 5 with 'Rhythm is Fun' and over the years they have had the chance to experiment with guitar, percussion, recorder and keyboard. As they get older they will have the opportunity to muck about with different types of musical genres – orchestral, jazz, soul and rock. Many parents have cautiously asked about joining these sessions and have been surprised to find that the music school is open to everyone, novice or non-novice, adult or child. The cost is less than £60 per term and is inexpensive for what you get. Up to 3 hours of music on Saturday mornings in term-time - for about a fiver a week.

If you are interested please pop in one Saturday morning. Or you can ring either the music service or myself, Jen Foley, the convenor of the user group, on 01234 718088 . The tuck-shop is well-stocked, the tea is nicely-brewed, and you will get a friendly welcome.



Jen Foley



## FRIENDS OF HARROLD MEDICAL PRACTICE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2010-11

The meetings of the Friends continue to be well supported by our existing members. We have again had some generous 'In Memoriam' donations this year and received over £800 from book sales. Our continued thanks go to those who donate and read these books. This income enables us to continue financing the servicing of equipment which we have already purchased, in particular the blood pressure monitor in the waiting area, the automated check-in system and the liquid nitrogen equipment. However our major expenditure this year was to help finance the refurbishment of the waiting area, which has proved a great success with both staff and patients.

For anyone interested in having an input into how Harrold Medical Practice is run and the services that it provides the surgery has recently launched its Virtual Patient Reference Group. Information on the group and how to join is available from the Surgery's website [www.harroldmedicalpracticeprg.co.uk](http://www.harroldmedicalpracticeprg.co.uk).

If you would like to find out more about the Friends and the work that we do please contact: Frances Hirst tel 01234 825212

Frances Hirst

### HARROLD SURGERY PRESCRIPTION COLLECTIONS

Here are the dates (Wednesdays) to the end of 2012. Please remember to tick the items required on your repeat prescription forms and write a large letter 'S' on the front page of your form.

#### **Barbara (822296)**

4 & 11 April  
30 May & 6 June  
25 July & 1 August  
19 & 26 September  
14 & 21 November

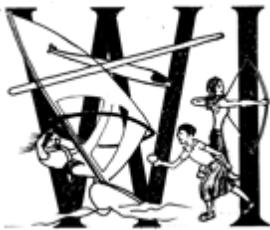
#### **Pat (823250)**

7 & 14 March  
2 & 9 May  
27 June & 4 July  
22 & 29 August  
17 & 24 October  
12 & 19 December

Barbara Collins & Pat Pickup

## STEVINGTON WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

'Happy New Year everyone' and what a year it promises to be; with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics!!



The darkness is beginning to lift thank goodness with more daylight brightening up our days and our thoughts turn to New Year's Resolutions - what about visiting and then joining WI as your (Late) New Year's Resolution?

We are planning our next programme choosing speakers and competitions that link up to be entertaining, educational and thought provoking.

Our Christmas meeting was a social one with cheese & wine and quizzes which gave everyone a chance to mingle and chat.

Our January meeting was all about 'belly dancing' - with a talk about its origins and afterwards some audience participation! We discovered that, after donning some very colourful scarves around our waists and with music that got us 'in the mood', we have some real 'naturals' and one of our more senior members proved that age has nothing to do with it!! She surprised herself with her agility and well-deserved the round of applause we gave her. Gentle exercise it is classed as!!

Talking of gentle exercise, we continue on our walks which we try to organise weekly - our last one was around Chellington where we followed the footpath near the river, up the hill around the back of the church, over the road and along to Frees Wood. It was a lovely afternoon in winter sunshine. We chatted and pointed out the wildlife as we walked - fieldfares and a heron which seemed as surprised to see us as we to spot it.

Other events include litter picks (we have done one already this year), regular suppers out, our book club, our darts team and the county quiz.

You can always find out what is happening at WI by popping down to the Church Room to look at our noticeboard or see the posters in Sally Macdonald's window. All meetings start at 7.30pm.

Pat Gibson

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Harrold,  
Beds.  
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Tel: 01234 720225**



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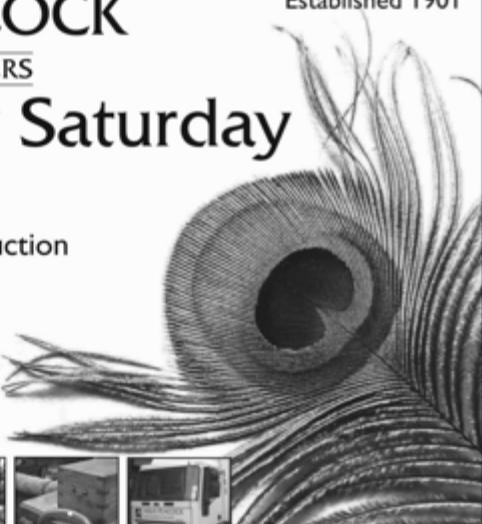
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## NEWS FROM HARROLD ODELL COUNTRY PARK



It's been brilliant seeing so many people out and about blowing away the cobwebs this winter. Unfortunately we've had one or two irresponsible dog owners who have caused problems with fouling and failing to control their pets to the detriment of others. We provide free poop bags at great expense at every dog bin so there is really no excuse. Richard and I are authorised to issue fixed penalty tickets for fouling but we hope we're not forced to issue any more.

Thanks to Nina Bransgrove-Knight, Chairman of our Friends Group, we have been awarded 420 new trees by the Woodland Trust. They will be planted around the park to replace the ones we have removed or pollarded this year. 60 of them will be set aside to create a Jubilee hedge in honour of the Queen's jubilee celebrations. We have yet to decide where that will go.



For the last four months we have been creating almost 1km of low hurdle fencing (spiling) around the northern shore of the large lake. This is because constant wave action caused by the prevailing wind has undercut the bank. If this is allowed to continue, more of our trees will fall into the water as their roots become exposed and eventually the damage will begin to eat into the footpath. Once the fence is complete, we will backfill with hardcore, soil and twigs to reinstate the banks. Our thanks go to the various Friends' volunteers for their assistance in this mammoth task.

The raw material we've used has come from the willow coppice plots in the nature reserve. These are harvested on a 10 year rotation. They will re-grow vigorously over the next year and provide new products in the future. The same applies to the mature willow that has been cut down along the lake edge. Any mature timber arising will be seasoned and sold next year for firewood. All proceeds are returned to the park.

The holiday period has furnished us with a large amount of lost property. We keep a logbook of everything handed in and after two months unclaimed goods are either taken to a charity shop or written off. All high value items are passed on to the police. Please can we ask that people enquire if they think they may have lost something in the park?

Your car park donations have helped to buy a much needed generator. This will allow us to operate electrical tools and lighting from any location in the park. In the past we have been constrained by having to use hand tools for heavy duty tasks. Other purchases this year have included two new storage containers, a small trailer and a water pump to assist us with tree watering. Our thanks go to everyone.

We were visited by professional tree surgeons in February to carry out urgent works in the roadside shelterbelt, Otter Holt Wood at the back of the Odell playground and along the northern shore of the large lake. We apologise for the minor inconveniences with restricted access but these works were ordered to remedy urgent safety issues.



Finally, while you are out walking, look out for all the birds that are about this winter. There is a sightings board located to the right of the café entrance that will give you a hint as to what's about. There are information sheets available to download from the website [www.hocp.co.uk](http://www.hocp.co.uk).

**Health Walk dates:** Thursdays 15 & 29 March and 12 & 29 April.

Meet at the café entrance at 10.30am and walk for an hour to improve your health and well-being and meet new people. There is an option afterwards to have coffee and a natter in the café. Leader Janet Munro Tel. 01234 720016 or e-mail [janet.munro@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:janet.munro@bedford.gov.uk).

Janet Munro  
Ranger

*Photos courtesy of Harrold Odell Country Park*

## STEVINGTON CARPET BOWLS CLUB

On 15 December 2011 we held our adults annual dinner at the Royal George. Once again many thanks to Rob who produced a very good three course meal for us. (Sorry if there was some noise from certain members.) Our members only mince pies and wine night was held on Monday 19 December, virtually all the members attended. Thank you ladies for the food and thank you gentlemen for the raffle prizes. The two boys were taken to the Royal George on Tuesday 20 December and given their choice off the menu. Would you believe they chose cheesy chips, coke and games of pool? Anyway I think they enjoyed themselves.



Unfortunately over the last 12 months we have lost seven members for various reasons and, although we had four new members during that time, the club number have become sadly depleted. We meet every Monday (excepting bank holidays) at the social centre from 7.30pm. The first two visits are free, thereafter £1 per week seniors, 50p per week under 16's and £3 per annum. We run a raffle rota weekly with tickets selling at £1 - by keeping this rota running we are able to keep subscriptions down.

Please come and 'have a go', we run a very good evening and subs include tea, coffee and biscuits. This year we will have been in existence for 22 years. Please don't let the club die, come and visit us, meet old and new friends, develop a different sporting skill, you may well be pleasantly surprised.

Barbara Collins

## MOBILE LIBRARY VISITS

The Mobile Library visits The Cross from 2.10 - 2.40pm on alternate Wednesdays and the dates for the next three months are:



March 7, 21  
April 4, 18  
May 2, 16, 30

***Please*** continue to support this service.

## **ST MARY THE VIRGIN, STEVINGTON**

The parishes of Turvey and Stevington have recently suffered some sad losses in the deaths of Caroline Conquest, after a long illness; Celia Hanbury, in a tragic motoring accident on 12 January; and Peter Conquest on 31 January. Caroline Conquest's funeral took place at Stevington on 30 December, that of Celia Hanbury at Turvey on 27 January, and that of Peter Conquest at Stevington on 23 February. Our thoughts and prayers are with both families at this sad time.

On 18 March, being the fourth Sunday of Lent, we pay homage to the Virgin Mary and the Mother Church. It is also a celebration of motherhood. To this end we will be holding a special service for all mothers and their children, so please bring your families on this special day for mothers and their families. Then on 25 March our Patronal Festival will be combined with Holy Communion at 11.00am. An invitation is extended to the parishioners of Turvey to join us on this occasion. On Saturday 31 March The Friends of St Mary's will be running a 'Story Telling' event including an evening meal. Further details are advertised elsewhere in this magazine.

Frugal Lunches will be served during Lent in the Church Room on Mondays from 27 February to 26 March, both dates inclusive. Anyone who would like to assist by making and serving soup, setting up and clearing away, providing transport etc. please contact Mary Ronald. Otherwise, just turn up and enjoy some home-made soup and a roll. All donations will be to the benefit of Christian Aid.

Easter services will be displayed in good time on the notice boards at the Church Room and at the Church. As is our usual custom, Easter Lilies will be available at £2.00 per lily in memory of our loved ones, who will be remembered during the Easter Day Service. Please add your name to the list in the Church, or contact Frances Beard by Sunday 1 April.

Flower arranging for Easter will be on Saturday 7 April. The Church will be open from 10.00am to 12 noon for flower arrangers. Children who would like to assist will be more than welcome.

Dates of the PCC meetings and Annual meetings are as follows:

PCC Meeting	Tuesday 20 March at 7.00pm
Annual Meeting of Parishioners	Tuesday 20 March at 7.30pm
Annual PCC Meeting	To follow Annual Meeting

Twenty of us enjoyed an evening dinner at the Three Cranes at Turvey on 17 January. This was a most successful event, and we are grateful to Frances Beard for making the arrangements.

Village choirs have been rehearsing in preparation for services. All under 16s were invited to attend a workshop on Thursday 16 February. This was led by Tom Lennie and supported by Claire Stapleton and Tricia Lennie. If they are keen, the junior singers may perform at the Mothering Sunday service.

Adult choir rehearsals began on Tuesday 7 February, 7 - 9pm in the Church Room. We hope that all who sang at Christmas will be available to sing at the Patronal Festival on 27 March. New members are also encouraged to come along.

Claire Stapleton and Mary Ronald have taken the initiative in preparing a 'Children's Corner'. We do hope that Mums and Dads will encourage young children to come to church and enjoy this special corner.

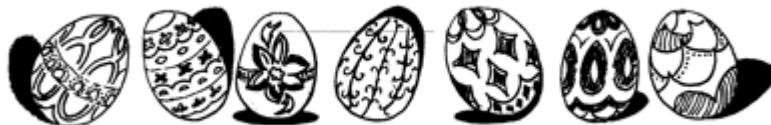
Teas will be served in the Church Room when Kathy Brown opens her garden on Monday 4 June (the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Holiday). All proceeds will go towards renovation of the interior of the Church Room. If you are able to help serve teas on that day, please let Tricia Lennie know.

### **From the Parish Register**

Funeral: 3 December  
23 February

Caroline Conquest  
Peter Conquest

Bob Westwood  
Churchwarden



### **Room REQUIRED**

Professional woman working in the village and studying at Bedford University is seeking a room to rent in Stevington.

Please contact:- Emily on 07527 997418.

## STEVINGTON BAPTIST MEETING

'Let them eat cake!' That might have been the scornful comment of Marie Antoinette, but it was also the reality at the Baptist Church on 24 January for the first afternoon meeting for anyone from the village over 50. The idea was to give people an opportunity to get out and meet up, perhaps having a break from winter afternoons and loneliness - not a bad way to open the 2012 programme. Such were the cake-making skills of the church fellowship that none of the 20 or so people went home hungry! Another tea is planned on Tuesday 20 March, so watch for further details.



service.

The church recorded another landmark at the carol service just before Christmas when Eileen Townsend stepped down from the formal position as organist at the church, a post she has occupied for well over 50 years. 'But I'm not giving up entirely' she said. At the end of the service she was presented with a floral tribute to her years of

There were other presentations too. Following the church's offer to present a Bible to any potential reader under 12, two made the request and David was delighted to hand the books over.

The service followed a traditional pattern of lessons and carols and was followed by coffee or tea and mince pies before the braver members of the gathering tried their skills at handbell ringing, with considerable success.

Some 50 ladies gathered in November for an evening in the church hall, with the chance of buying special gifts from a variety of stalls including hand-made jewellery, special soaps, home-made cakes and hand-made gift cards. They had great fun 'sniffing out' the right answers to a quiz which was to guess which spice/flavouring was in about a dozen bowls.



Our other 'big event' before Christmas was the theatre trip. The withdrawal of the planned show meant much hasty rearrangement, but 49 people filled the coach and headed for the West End where the Gielgud Theatre was the venue for *The Ladykillers*. It proved a highly successful evening at a very entertaining show where the stage set was one of the stars. One by one, the 'baddies' duly got their desserts as they sought to do away with the little old lady in whose house they had taken lodgings while they planned and carried out their train robbery.

As this edition drops through letter boxes we will be in Lent and evening services are resuming in the chapel at 6.00pm as well as the usual mornings at 10.45am.

Peter Evans

*Photos courtesy of Baptist Church*



## HOW ABOUT A HOLIDAY IN COSTA BRAVA?

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or e-mail [gjfollett@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gjfollett@yahoo.co.uk) for more info.**

## SOCIAL CENTRE CHRONICLES.....JUST A FEW BITS

### Haggis shoot

Now we can really call him Dead Eyed Dick. Richard Blayney hit nineteen out of twenty clays and that's some shootin' boy. So this year's Haggis shoot was convincingly and unequivocally won by our friendly Mr Fixit. As I mentioned last year if you want to have a go in Jan 2013 plant the idea in Steve Cole's mind now and I'm sure he will be only too glad to include you. The event raised £100 for the village hall so special thanks to Steve and John Duff for the guns and Mike Robinson who so kindly allowed us to use his land again.

### Burns night

The haggis was offaly good again this year and the event attracted some fifty (what can only loosely be termed) dancers. Linda P, Richard G and Ian M did a sterling job adding that little touch of tartan and the event raised £368 for the village hall funds. A big big thanks to those special members of the committee who worked so hard dressing the hall, mashing spuds and bullying people to buy tickets. Well done you!!!!

PS Can't wait to roll on the floor again with you next year JANET

### Car park resurfacing

We have a date for this long awaited event - Ray Bell & Sons start work on Monday 5 March and the area will be out of bounds for a week if all goes to plan. The gully at the entrance to the car park will also be repaired at that time.

### Hostess Supper or 'Come Dine with Us'

We are proposing to do another one of these on 21 April. So get your culinary skills sharpened up and come and book a table to cook for. If you are up for cooking please contact Jean Blayney 827044, Barbara Collins 822296 or Rob Puckett 824973.

### Diamond Jubilee

We have some ideas for this event and so do other bodies in the village. So that we don't tread on each others' toes it might be a good idea to have some coordination so we are proposing to hold a small meeting of interested parties at 7.30pm on 8 March in the village hall. It would be helpful if you gave your name to me before the meeting so that we can rationalise numbers to form a workable committee and plan crowd control.



## **The nearly One Hundred Club** (for those not in the club)

Every month we want to offer you the opportunity of winning a first prize of £100 or a second of £50 or a third of £25. The odds of winning the national lottery are about 6,000,000 to one but the odds of winning the Stevington One Hundred Club draw are a very favourable 28.6 to one. (If you know how good at sums I am you will realise that the previous statistics are complete rubbish.) As an additional satisfaction you will be helping the community to maintain one of our greatest assets, the village hall. All this fun and excitement for a paltry £5 a month.

At present the money raised from the One Hundred Club goes towards cleaning and general maintenance costs, as the hall receives no formalised funding from the community or the parish council. The money raised from events like Burn's night goes towards developmental projects like resurfacing and lighting the car park. So, in short, membership of the One Hundred Club could ultimately benefit you and would certainly benefit your community.

To take part all you need to do is obtain a form from the village shop, the internal notice board of the village hall, ask Rob Puckett or Anna/Bob Hart and fill it in and pop it into Anna and Bob's letter box. Don't just leave this golden opportunity on your sideboard, meaning to do it at some far off later date, get a form today! You know you will feel better for it.

PS Richard S you have won far too many times.

Rob Puckett

## **STEVINGTON SOCIAL CENTRE 100 CLUB**

Winners of the last four draws are as follows:

<b>Nov</b>	1st	No 87	G & M Billett
	2nd	No 39	J Ward
	3rd	No 22	L Penney
<b>Dec</b>	1st	No 74	R Stanbridge
	2nd	No 10	V Aspley
	3rd	No 78	J Garrett
<b>Jan</b>	1st	No 34	M Hughes
	2nd	No 32	R Sear
	3rd	No 74	R Stanbridge
<b>Feb</b>	1st	No 43	S E Robinson
	2nd	No 94	D Gifford
	3rd	No 78	J Garrett

Anna & Bob Hart (823769)

## BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL NEWS

### Council tax

The good news is that your Borough Council tax will not go up. The Government has withdrawn their funding of the Council by £36 million over 4 years. This has meant that the Council has had to relook at how they allocate resources.

It was agreed at the budget setting that there would be a freeze this year on the Borough tax you pay. There will be no additional borrowing. However there will be £0.9 million a year extra for vulnerable children looked after by the Council, £41 million to bring improvements to school buildings and facilities, almost £6 million a year to enhance and restore roads and pavements, funds to deliver the final section of the Western Bypass, 0.9 million a year extra for support for an ageing population, and an additional £200,000 a year for adaptations to help people stay in their own homes and live comfortably. Inevitably the scale of the removal of the government grant means there are cuts elsewhere. Please go on to the Bedford website for changes in hours at the Leisure Facilities and price increases.

### Gypsies and travellers

It has been great to work with all of you on the issue of the site in Stevington. I am sure Helen Prentice will be reporting in the magazine. This site will not go to planning until after March and the decision on Meadow Lane.

I am pleased to report that the Borough Housing Department has made an application to have a permanent site for 14 pitches at Meadow Lane, Bedford. The application will be heard on 26 March at 6.30 at the Corn Exchange Bedford. This is very important as if it is passed there will be less pressure for the development of rural sites and will give the Council time to assess other sites for the future. The government has set down criteria for the Council to follow, firstly sites should be in the urban area or next to the urban area and only if there are no urban sites available can they be sited in the rural area. Also sites should have enough room to allow travellers to carry on their business if needed. If you wish to attend the meeting on 26 March, please do so.

### Faster broadband ([www.bedford.gov.uk/broadband](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/broadband))

How can you help the Borough get faster broad band in our area? Please reply to the Bedford Borough's consultation on an exciting project which is set to improve the availability of fast broadband speeds particularly for the rural areas where, as Pavenham, Stevington and Oakley

experience, speeds and availability can be very poor. The project could access over £1 million of funding to support the roll out of faster broadband.

How can you help? Please register your interest in faster broadband to encourage infrastructure providers to invest. The Council is also asking your views about how the funding should be used. I am sure Pavenham Parish Council will put forward that the infrastructure between Oakley and Pavenham needs considerable updating. Oakley and Stevington residents could help them by also putting that suggestion forward amongst others. Please go on to the Council's web page at [www.bedford.gov.uk/broadband](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/broadband).

### **Speeding**

A big 'thank you' to everyone who offered to be trained to use speed devices. I am sorry it has taken so long to move this forward. The police and the Borough have now agreed an effective way to train people to operate the devices. It is hoped (keep your fingers crossed) to have the training in late March or April. As always there is a system the police should follow;

- We operate the devices. Keep a log, inform the police.
- They write to the offenders and keep a record.
- If there is a re-offence then the police visit and after a third offence they prosecute.

The best bit is that by monitoring speeding the police will acknowledge there is a problem in a certain area and they will set up speed traps. Hooray!

### **Temporary road closures**

If you are planning an event for the Queens Diamond Jubilee, The Big Lunch or the Olympics there is a simple form to fill in - by 18 May 2012. Please contact Jason Holdsworth on 276691 or [Jason.Holdsworth@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:Jason.Holdsworth@bedford.gov.uk).

Councillor Pat Olney

To find out more about Community Speed Watch:

Telephone 01234 718276/7

Email [prideinbedford@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:prideinbedford@bedford.gov.uk)

Visit [www.bedford.gov.uk/volunteering](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/volunteering)

## NEWS FROM MALAWI

Here is a letter from Pastor Machila thanking us for the money raised at our Quiz Night, which we sent them at Christmas. We were later able to send them another £55.00, which friends had donated as a Christmas present to enable them to buy the extras for the new school-children. Many thanks indeed to all those of you who have been so very generous. We are delighted that Malcolm Macdonald decided to donate the profits from his Jazz & Chips concert on 18 February and we had a wonderful evening.

Dita and Tony

*Dear Mr and Mrs Hollins,*

*This is a quick summary of our breakdown from the money you sent to us amounting to £400 = MK85,926*

	<u>MK</u>
4 Children fees @ MK18,500 each	74,000
½ Bag rice for the kids (orphans)	5,000
6 kgs meat for the kids	2,500
3 bottles Drinks (Sobo)	1,500
4 packets snacks	2,000
Cooking oil, tomatoes, onions	700
Firewood for cooking	<u>300</u>
	86,000

*I have paid school fees for all children but nothing left for soap, tooth-paste, body lotion, exercise books, pens and pocket money for them, these are most important items for school learning.*

*Our newcomers at secondary level are: Lameck Maliseni and Yamikani Barre, as new comers they need uniforms as well. Maria Sato and Thokozani Kapangama have now finalized their secondary school level.*

*Lastly but not least, God bless you for your generous support to us. Happy new year to all.*

*Best regards,  
Pr. Eric & Ireen Machila*



**STEVINGTON BAPTIST  
CHURCH**

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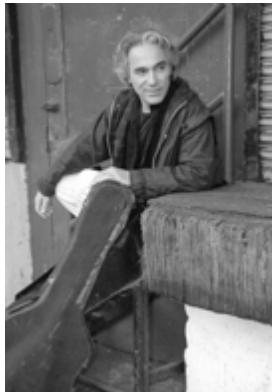
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Courtesy of Woody Mann

## WOODY MANN CONCERT NOVEMBER 2011

Thank you to everyone who came to see Woody Mann on the 18 November. The concert raised £900 which was shared between the Social Centre and Friends of St. Mary's Church.

Woody very much enjoyed his visit to the village and wrote:

*'The gig was absolutely great, enjoyed every minute of it; you have a wonderful community of friends and supporters. I met a lot of nice folk. The fact that it was a fundraiser for good and important causes makes the whole thing very special. A gift being there, thank you for the offer to be part of it'.*

I am indebted to my helpers, without them the concerts could not be arranged, particularly Steve Cole for providing professional quality sound and Barbara Collins for all the help she gives.

This year's concert is booked to take place on Saturday 13 October when Frank Vignola and Vinny Raniolo have agreed to come. It is hard to believe Frank and Vinny, who live in New York, have agreed to play. They have an amazing show which combines musicianship of the highest standard and great humour.

This concert would almost certainly sell out to people from outside of the village so I am going to put tickets on sale within the village from 1 August for a month before we make them available to the outside world to ensure that our loyal supporters get first chance to be there.

John Duffield  
Pavenham!

## CPRE LIVING COUNTRYSIDE AWARDS 2012

The Bedfordshire branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) is calling for entries for projects which improve the county's appearance, preserve its character and promote sustainability. Details at [www.cprebeds.plus.com/lcawards.pdf](http://www.cprebeds.plus.com/lcawards.pdf), email [ann.cw@cprebeds.org.uk](mailto:ann.cw@cprebeds.org.uk) or call 01234 353331. The three categories for entries are Landscape Improvement,



Historic & New Buildings and Sustainable Living. Deadline for entries is 21 May.

## STEVINGTON FOOTBALL CLUB

Unfortunately once again the bad weather since Christmas has played havoc with fixtures with games being called off due to waterlogged or frozen pitches.

Overall the team continues to make good progress, with all the new players and the youngsters that have joined us this season settling in well and beginning to gel well as a team. In early January we played the team at the top of the league and lost rather convincingly, but when we played them the following week, with a team that might not have been considered first choice, we played them off the park and beat them easily ourselves.

Generally performances continue to improve and in mid February we currently sit in fourth position in the league, having played seventeen games, won eleven, drawn one and lost five, with a total of thirty four points. The league leaders are three points ahead of us with a game in hand. We are confident of finishing the season in the top four positions in the league and doing well in the remaining cup tournament.

As reported in previous editions of the magazine the club's 'back-room team' is now supported by Aaron Coker who took on team management duties at the start of the season. We are pleased to report that these arrangements are working really well at the moment, with good footballing performances on the field, and good spirit amongst all those involved with the club off the pitch. The club have re-introduced training sessions and this obviously has a positive impact for the club and is evident in the improved fitness of players and our results. Therefore any suggestion that the manager has received the club's dreaded 'vote of confidence' is wide off the mark..... for the moment anyway!

Last week we had to transfer the training from the playing field to Lincroft Sports Hall - can anyone explain to us why it is so expensive for local clubs to hire the facilities there?

As always we would like to thank our followers for their on-going support, especially during the recent wet and cold weather and look forward to seeing you at games for the remainder of the season.

Shane King



## THE MANOR HOUSE GARDEN

After a snowy February it is good to look forward to warmer spring weather. This year we have decided to hold our National Garden Scheme Charities Day on Sunday 22 April when we can celebrate a splash of colour with vibrant tulips and a host of late flowering daffodils. Once again Doreen Pendlington (822796) has very kindly agreed to organise the teas and I am sure she would appreciate any offers of cakes. All the monies we are able to raise are so valuable in helping finance nursing and caring charities especially Marie Curie Nursing Service and Macmillan Cancer Support.

We have several other open days planned for 2012 which promises to be an exciting year. Our Wisteria and Spring Clematis Day will be on Sunday 20 May. Refreshments will be masterminded by Dita and Tony Hollins (823489) who are again supporting the Chirimba Orphanage in Malawi.



*Courtesy of Kathy Brown*

Wonderful floral displays are planned for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Weekend besides the ancient Holy Well with Stevington's very own 'Well Dressing', a tradition more often seen in Staffordshire and Derbyshire. It is 750 years since the nuns welcomed pilgrims to stay at the Stevington Hospitium to bathe their eyes in the crystal clear water; 750 years since they established their vineyard and garden. In all that time the Holy Well has never been known to run dry. The vineyard no longer exists but the garden has been revived, not in ancient form but as a modern country garden extending to over 4 acres with swathes of roses and clematis on its pergolas and walls, a wild flower meadow, cottage garden, formal garden and with colourful displays of containers.

We would like to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee by opening on Monday 4 June with a 'sparkling' fun filled garden. This is our 25th year of living in Stevington and thus making the garden, and on this happy occasion we would like to welcome as many friends and neighbours and villagers as possible in the hope of raising funds for the refurbishment of the Church Room. It is here that the Diamond Jubilee Teas



and Cakes will be served under the guidance of Tricia Lennie (825169). Entrance to the garden will be free for those living in Stevington (look out for the special free passes in the next Magazine) but it is hoped that many outside paying visitors might come as well (the more the merrier as all proceeds will go to the Church Room!) and that everyone will help to raise money by drinking lots of tea and eating lots of the delicious Diamond Jubilee Cakes.

We are also open on 22 July and 16 September and on 'informal afternoons' on Tuesdays through May to mid-September from 1 to 5pm when people can bring a picnic along if it is fine and enjoy a relaxing afternoon as the seasons change. I generally leave some spare leaflets in the Church Room if anyone wants to send one to a friend.

A final note; two of our bee hives were invaded by wasps in the warm late autumn and our other two hives might well have been depleted. Let's hope they survive. Beekeeper, Chris Lewis from Milton Ernest, sells the honey at our open days with profits going to Arthritis Research. I use some of the honey to flavour and sweeten marmalade and I also use it to make a tasty filling for my ginger cakes.

Simon and Kathy Brown

## THE FOREST OF MARSTON VALE - WHAT'S ON

### **Sunday Strolls** (4 March, 1 April, 6 May)

A gentle Sunday walk. Meet at reception at 10.30am. Walk lasts approx. 2 hours. Cost £1 no need to book. Call 01234 767037 for details.

### **Conservation Tasks** (17 March, 29 April, 19 May)

A variety of practical projects. Meet at the Forest Centre at 10.15am. Wear old clothes and bring lunch if you are going to stay all day. For details and to confirm attendance contact anna.charles@marstonvale.org or call 01234 762614.

### **Easter Trail** (Easter Sunday and Easter Monday)

11am to 4pm. Put your wellies on and follow the trail answering the wildlife quiz as you go. Then check your answers back at the Forest Centre. Cost £2 per child no need to book. Call 01234 767037 for details.



For information on other events visit  
[www.marstonvale.org/events.html](http://www.marstonvale.org/events.html).

## STEVINGTON BOOK CLUB

Six years ago I put the idea forward via the magazine to start our own village book club. The idea took off with great enthusiasm which has not waned and the same group, with a few additions, is still meeting on the first Wednesday of the month and reading a variety of choices.



We all take a turn to select a book which is brilliant unless you have selected a real turkey and you almost think you are responsible for writing it when it receives a panning from your fellow members! However it is a good discipline to read other people's choices. Sometimes your heart sinks when you see the current 'read' but it is a good because you get to read and enjoy books you would probably never chose yourself.

As book clubs go it is rather large with between eighteen and twenty members but fortunately not everyone comes to every meeting. Although it is a big group we all have our turn to review the book then it is thrown open for discussion over a glass or two of wine.

Although when the club was formed it was not intended to be women only sadly no men chose to join us so we have become a bit of sisterhood with the men forming the alternative book club at The Royal George. They are also included in the summer barbecue and the annual dinner where they are encouraged to perform a poem or party piece which many do and they are very good. We have not had any singers or dancers yet but who knows what next year will bring.

Thank you to all our members (friends) for making our club so special - see you all in March.

Anne Westbrook

## STEVINGTON BOOK CLUB DINNER

On the evening of Saturday 14 January 2012 members of Stevington Book Club and their partners met for their annual celebration dinner and what a splendid and memorable evening it was.

For those of you who don't know, this book club was started by Anne Westbrook and she has overseen its development to the point where we have so many members we can hardly squeeze into each other's houses on the first Wednesday of each month. Currently Dita Hollins has the honour of being Anne's PA and she gamely tries to keep

us all in order, finding venues and keeping track of the books. She has never once mentioned 'herding goldfish'.

Alan and Sandra Proud cooked a beautiful three course meal and the Social Centre was transformed into a bijoux candlelit restaurant for the evening. The dinner is a highlight but I think this year's entertainment, provided by members and their partners, was the best ever. Trish O'Brien started us off with a haunting version of an Irish traditional song (she has the voice of an angel!) and as the evening developed the many comic performances left me with aching sides. We have such talent in this village!

It has been traditional at past dinners not only for the men to provide the entertainment but also to move places after each course. This has been 'a good way of getting to know each other better' and definitely not 'a way of moving Brian round the room'. It may be because 2011 was the year of the Arab Spring, but this year there was rebellion in the ranks. In fact, Paul O'Flynn was lucky to escape unscathed when he related the incident of Anne and the book delivery, especially as he was not 'on the list'. Moments like these separate women who did their pelvic floor exercises from those who did not.

I love book club and everything about it. I just want to thank Anne for starting it, for being the powerhouse who keeps it going and all those who made this such a memorable night.

Tricia Lennie

### **Gardeners' Question Time**

featuring

**Nicholas Warlike**

BBC Radio Northampton

& former Head Gardener

**MONDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> MARCH**

In

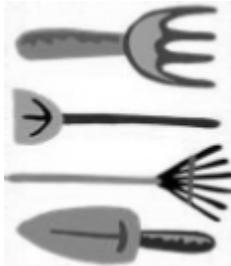
**Bromham Village Hall at 7.30pm**

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## TIME TO GET OUT IN THE GARDEN



It is, as I am writing this, bitterly cold, the sun is out and frost is decorating the corkscrew hazel which looks beautiful. All the shoots of spring are buried by a blanket of snow and it is hard to imagine that this monochrome world will soon burst into colour. However, I need to get out into the garden soon because any work I carry out now will pay real dividends later in the year.

Here are some of the things which should be done:

- Plan borders and vegetable patches (my favourite winter task), sort out old seed packets, buy new seed and order summer bulbs.
- Dig over vegetable plots and flower borders when it is dry and top dress with well-rotted farm manure.
- Since most weeds start into growth at lower temperatures than garden plants, take them out from now on, by hand or by hoe. Thorough weeding in March to May really reduces the workload in the summer.
- Collect and burn any twigs and woody debris. This will help to prevent fungal diseases.
- Take root cuttings of plants like *Dicentra* (Lady in the Bath), *Papaver orientale* (Oriental Poppy), *Verbascum* (Mullein), *Bergenia* (Elephant's Ears) and *Echinacea* and grow them on until the autumn when they will be mature enough to add to your borders.
- If you have taken hardwood cuttings check to see that the frost has not lifted them. If it has, gently firm them back into the ground.
- The end of February and early March, after the hardest of the winter weather has passed, is a good time to prune. With apples and pears take out any dead, damaged or diseased wood and remove crossing branches. Most (but not all) apples and pears bear fruit on spurs, the fruiting wood of which is two or more years old. Shorten lateral growth from the main branch system by a quarter (stronger growth) to a half (weaker growth) to stimulate fruiting side shoots (spurs), and thin out existing over-crowded spurs by taking out the older and more complicated growth. Prune Group 2 and 3 Clematis (those that flower from mid-summer on growth made this year) to a strong pair of buds 6-12 inches above the ground. Prune shrubs that flower on new wood (like Buddleja

and Lavatera) cutting out weak growth and reducing the rest by around two-thirds. And, of course, prune roses.

- Start dealing with slugs – the sooner the better.
- Cut back or divide herbaceous perennials and replant borders if necessary.
- Cut back grasses and pull out dead flower stalks.
- Sow sweet peas, tomatoes and peppers.
- In March, start sowing and planting vegetables and onion sets.

Enjoy your gardening!

Anthea Harper

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Enquiries and tickets please contact Janet Day 823081  
[janetday51@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:janetday51@yahoo.co.uk)  
or Tricia Lennie 825169

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