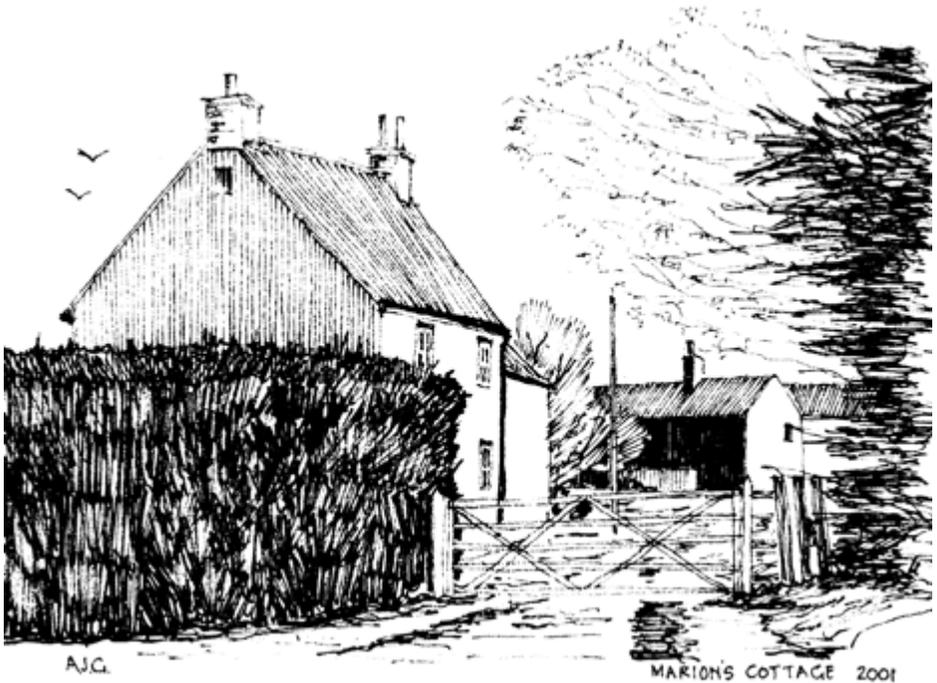


STEVINGTON MAGAZINE



MARCH 2016
Number 176

VILLAGE DIARY

March

- 6 Mothering Sunday Service. St. Mary's 9.30am
- 8 Afternoon Tea. Baptist Hall. 3.00pm
- 9 Cinema Club. Live Theatre Broadcast. Hangman. Social Centre
- 10 WI Shackleton's Forgotten Men. Church Room 7.30pm
- 10 Social Centre AGM. Social Centre. 7.30pm (see page 23)
- 20 Palm Sunday Service. St. Mary's. 9.30am
- 24 Maundy Thursday Stations of the Cross. St. Mary's. 6.00pm
- 24 Sailing Club AGM. Royal George. 8.00pm. (see page 27)
- 25 Good Friday Service. Baptist Chapel. 10.30am
- 25 Good Friday Service. St. Mary's. 2.00pm
- 27 Easter Sunday Service. St. Mary's. 9.30am
- 27 Easter Sunday Service. Baptist Chapel. 10.45am

April

- 1 Children's Baking Day. Church Room. 12.30pm (see page 25)
- 2 Coffee Morning. Church Room. 10.30am. (see page 25)
- 6 Cinema Club. Live Ballet Broadcast. Giselle. Social Centre
- 7 FOSM Children's Activities Meeting. Church Room. 7pm (see page 35)
- 7 Cinema Club. Film. Lady Killers. Social Centre
- 11 WI Hats – Historical & Hysterical. Church Room 7.30pm
- 13 Parish Council Meeting. Social Centre. 7.30pm
- 25 Stevington Carpet Bowls AGM
- 30 Eric Lugosch Guitar Concert. Social Centre. 7.30pm (see page 17)

May

- 10 Afternoon Tea. Baptist Hall. 3.00pm
- 12 WI Annual General Meeting. Church Room 7.30pm
- 12 Cinema Club. Film. Tortilla Soup. Social Centre
- 15 Stevington Road Race (TBC) (see page 10)
- 18 Cinema Club. Live Ballet Broadcast. Frankenstein. Social Centre
- 21 Woody Mann plays Pavenham Church Hall. (see page 18)
- 22 Magazine Copy Date (Sunday)

June

- 2 Cinema Club. Film. The Producers. Social Centre
- 27 Cinema Club. Live Opera Broadcast. Werther. Social Centre

Photographs as credited
Cover drawn by John Goddard

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!

You will remember that our Christmas Greetings Charity in December was the National Amyloidosis Centre and that our donation was made specifically in memory of Dennis King. Thanks to the generosity of the village we had 43 greetings and raised £880 plus Gift Aid. We have received a formal thank you letter from the National Amyloidosis Centre but the font is too small for it to be readable when scanned and reproduced in the Magazine. We have however received a thank you note which you can read on page 4.

We are very grateful to all of our regular advertisers who have signed up to continue to support the Magazine during 2016. The annual costs of the Magazine are a little over £1,000 and without our advertisers we wouldn't be able to cover costs so please have a look through the Magazine and use all of these local businesses when you have a need – it's great to support them as they support us! Remember to tell them where you found their details.

Thank you to Frances Hirst who has stepped in as proof reader for the longer articles for this edition while our regular proof reader and her new husband have been exploring the other side of the world.

The Friends of St Mary's are holding a Dinner and Auction of Promises on 17 September (see page 5). Don't forget to have a think and see what you can 'promise' and fill in the enclosed form.

As spring arrives we will be taking better care of the birds that visit our garden thanks to Sue Young's advice (on page 40) and will be ripping out those Spanish bluebells (see page 38).

Finally if anyone in the village is brave enough to take part in the charity parachute jump (see page 42) we'd be delighted to have an article from you for a future edition of the Magazine.

Heather and Keith

NEXT MAGAZINE

The next edition of the Stevington Magazine should be delivered sometime around 4-5 June 2016. The last day for receipt of copy for that Magazine is Sunday 22 May 2016. Articles should reach Heather and Keith Parkinson (Old Paddock, Church Road, Tel. 826677, e-mail stevington.magazine@googlemail.com) on that day, although we will be delighted to receive copy at any time before then.



BRIAN CATTERMOLE

Barbara, Mike and Jenny thank you for your kind letters and cards of condolence following the sudden loss of Brian.

Carers in Bedfordshire has benefited by £1,375 in Brian's memory, for which they are hugely grateful.

Your support of us has been warm and generous in every way at this sad time.

Thank you.

Barbara Cattermole

THANK YOU

A great big thank you to all my friends in Stevington who sent me cards and good wishes as well as all your prayers during my recent hospitalisation. I am glad to say that the operation went well and I am beginning to make a good recovery, although it will take a little time before I am fully recovered.

With all my love,

Hanne McDonald



National Amyloidosis Centre



We wish to thank the villagers of Stevington for their kind and generous donations to the UCL Amyloidosis Research Fund in memory of Mr Dennis King. With Gift Aid we received the total amount of £1,385. Fundraising events included Christmas greetings published in Stevington Magazine in lieu of sending cards (£880 + £136.25 Gift Aid), a charity football match (£255 + £63.75 Gift Aid), and the Royal George Christmas pub quiz plus donations (£40 + £10 Gift Aid).

The resources provided by the UCL Amyloidosis Research Fund, through the generosity of donors, will undoubtedly make major contributions to alleviating the suffering of many thousands of patients. We are extremely grateful to you all for your contribution towards this.



UCL AMYLOIDOSIS RESEARCH FUND THANK YOU FROM THE KING FAMILY

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support and generosity for the UCL Amyloidosis Research Fund in memory of Dennis.

We were overwhelmed by the level of support and amount of money raised by the various events and cannot thank the marvellous people of Stevington and those associated with the village enough. The sum of £1,175 plus Gift Aid was raised over the festive period - what a fantastic result!!!

Thank you all.

From Gill and all the King family

FRIENDS OF ST. MARY'S, STEVINGTON

DINNER AND AUCTION OF PROMISES

17 SEPTEMBER 2016 - STEVINGTON SOCIAL CENTRE

Please put this date in your diary. Plans are underway for a fundraising dinner with an Auction of Promises - an evening of community spirit and good fun you should not miss.

We are grateful for the wide support given to 'Friends' events and hope that you will participate in one way or another as donor, purchaser, attendee or helper. At this stage we are appealing for donations of promises and would like you to consider what you could offer (or contacts you have who you might persuade to support us in this way). This could be an event or an experience, your time or talent. We will be extremely grateful for donations large and small! Bidding will be possible both before and at the event.

For further information please contact:

Tricia Lennie on msl_acorn@yahoo.co.uk,
Heather Eadie on heather@eadies.org.uk or
Chrissie Galley on chrissiegalley@gmail.com.

Tricia Lennie on behalf of FOSMS

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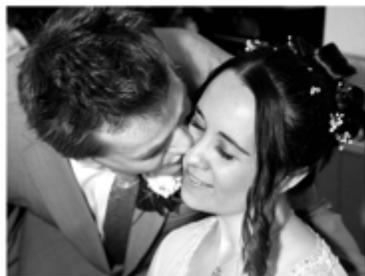
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STEVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Presentation by Police and Crime Commissioner

Our Police and Crime Commissioner, Olly Martins, gave a presentation at our January meeting about the future of policing in Bedfordshire. Mr Martins set out the inadequate funding received by Bedfordshire police but stressed that the force was, nevertheless, using its resources to the best advantage. He hoped that parishioners would sign the online petition to get Government to review the way Bedfordshire is funded.

Mr Martins gave an interesting and informative presentation and the Parish Council confirmed it would make villagers aware of the petition, which can be found by following the link on the NEWS page of our website at <http://stevington.bedsparishes.gov.uk>.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Stevington Neighbourhood Plan Working Group continues its excellent work in creating a Plan which will reflect the views of those who live in Stevington. The response to the questionnaire has been very encouraging. A big thank you is due to everyone involved, all of whom are volunteers and most of whom also work full time, for giving up their time and contributing their expertise.

There is a separate report elsewhere in this magazine from the Working Group and there is a dedicated website at www.stevington.com.

Bedford Borough Council Local Plan to 2032

Bedford Borough Council is now working on its Local Plan to 2032 to establish how much growth will be required in housing, jobs and infrastructure. As part of this exercise a 'Call for Sites' was made in 2014 and also in 2015 to see what land might be available for housing. The sites submitted have now been published and can be viewed by visiting the Borough Council website at www.bedford.gov.uk and then entering 'Local Plan 2032' in the search facility. Please note that just because a site has been put forward it does not mean it will be included in the Local Plan and there will be further consultations before the Plan is accepted.

Library Service Consultation

Bedford Borough Council wishes to develop a Library Strategy to set out its vision for the service over the next few years. To do this, they want to understand how people are using the Borough's libraries: which services are most popular, which services should be prioritised and how they could save money going forward.

The first stage in this process is to undertake a consultation with members of the public and key organisations and they are carrying out a short survey with individual users and non-users of the library service.

Paper copies of the survey are available at the following libraries:

Bedford Central	Bromham	Kempston
Putnoe	Wootton	Mobile Library

Alternatively you can access the online version by following the link on the NEWS page of our website (see above). The survey closes on 4 April.

A Note of Thanks

Finally, we would all like to thank Mary Murzyn for her years of tireless research and work on behalf of the Parish. Mary resigned as Planning Assistant at the end of January and her depth of knowledge in respect of planning and her familiarity with Stevington have been to our great advantage. Mary will be sorely missed both professionally and personally.

Parish Council Meetings

All our meetings start at 7.30pm and are open to the public, so please do come along (even if it is only for part of the meeting). There are 15 minutes set aside at the start of each meeting for public questions. The minutes of Parish Council meetings are published on our website.

Ten days before each meeting a notice will be posted on the Parish Council notice board outside the Red Lion and on the Parish website confirming the date of the meeting and giving details of whom to contact if there is an issue that you wish to bring to our attention. The agenda will be published on the notice board and the website three days before the date of the meeting.

In future all our meetings will take place in the Village Hall and we would like to thank both the Baptist Chapel and the Church Room for making their facilities available to us over the years.

Our next meeting will be on 13 April and details of all future meeting dates are on our notice board and the website.

Website: <http://stevington.bedsparishes.gov.uk>
E-mail (Clerk): stevingtonpc@live.co.uk

Contact details for the Parish Councillors are as follows:

Paul O'Flynn - Chair
823306

46 Park Road,
MK43 7QG

Sarah Bush
824007

Twin Cottage, Church Road,
MK43 7QB

Pete Fisher
825022

3 The Bakery, Silver Street,
MK43 7QH

Andrew Lockwood
825586

42 Silver Street,
MK43 7QP

Graham Read

graham_read@hotmail.co.uk

Sam Stapleton

samstapleton@hotmail.co.uk

Jane Thomas

je_thomas@btinternet.com

Roz Buchanan - Clerk

stevingtonpc@live.co.uk

STEVINGTON ROAD RACE

We thought it would be a good idea to remind everyone in the village about the Stevington Road Race which has taken place for over 30 years and seek your continuing support, either as a runner or one of the support staff.

The race takes place in May most years and is a circuit of the villages of Stevington, Oakley and Pavenham, 7.5 miles in total or 12 kilometres for those with metric minds! Last year we had almost 100 runners and the fastest man ran the race in 46 minutes, the fastest lady at just over 49 minutes and the first runner from Stevington got round in 57 minutes. Why not make the race a target to start running this year? We hope to hold this year's race on Sunday 15 May. Please keep an eye on our web site for more details www.stevingtonroadrace.co.uk.



It takes many people to deliver a successful road race: from the marshals out on the course; registration staff; the crew who erect the starting and finishing gates; through to those who help with organisation before the event. We continue to need support on the day and help beforehand with organisation. If you would like to be part of a fun event, then please get in touch with Gary Thomas on 07710 412738.

BEDFORD BOROUGH NEWS

Council tax

Bedford Borough has agreed a 3.99% rise in council tax for the year 2016/17, 2% of this is for adult services, particularly for the older members of our community. The Government has said that there will be a reduction in their support of £24.4 million from 2016/17 to 2020. This is a challenge for the Council as we have cut back, year on year, for several years now. In light of this the Executive agreed to:

- A review of adult social care to ensure that there is a cost effective, equitable service capable of dealing with the pressures of an ageing population;
- A consultation on waste and recycling on the option to go to fortnightly waste collections and the best way to provide green waste collections in the future;
- A review of cultural services - to see how the Higgins Bedford, the Corn Exchange and the Heritage sites can be provided in a sustainable way in the future;
- A review of library services; and
- A review of the support services including the potential to extend the services provided through digital interaction.

Bedford's Royal Charter and the Harpur Trust celebrations

There are many anniversary celebrations this year. It is 850 years since the Royal Charter, which provided certain liberties and independence for Bedford, in exchange for annual taxes, was given to Bedford by Henry II, the 450th anniversary of the Harpur Trust and the 21st anniversaries of both the Philharmonia Orchestra and the Marston Vale Forest Centre. There are going to be many different exhibitions and events through the year. Please go on the Borough, Harpur Trust, Higgins and Marston Vale websites for information.

Speed cameras

You will have noticed that lights and cameras are going up in Church Lane and Lovell Road in Oakley. They will be installed by 31 March 2016 but may need police approval before they become operational. Oakley will then have cameras in Church Lane, Lovell Road, Pavenham Road and Station Road.

Health review including the hospital

The Bedford and Milton Keynes joint health review has now been set up to look at both hospitals and health care in both of these areas.

They are looking at three proposals which are (1) having a major emergency centre at Bedford with an integrated care centre at Milton Keynes, or (2) having a major emergency centre at Milton Keynes with an integrated care centre at Bedford or (3) having an integrated acute community hospital services model operated in both the areas.

This is the table showing the options. The review will evaluate each option against agreed criteria:

	Bedford Hospital	MK Hospital
1	Major Emergency Centre	Integrated Care Centre
2	Integrated Care Centre	Major Emergency Centre
3	Integrated Acute Community Services Model	

The proposed timetable is February and March pre-consultation; April to June focused engagement with key stakeholders; July to October full public consultation; October to December 2016 decision taking.

Please visit the Bedford or Milton Keynes Clinical Commissioning Group websites for further information.

NHS

Aged 40-74? Find out about your Free NHS Health Check. It is like an MOT of your health and only takes 20 minutes. It could help prevent diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, stroke or dementia. Ask your GP surgery for more details.

Higgins Bedford

The new exhibition at the Higgins is 'Bawden by the Sea' featuring the work of Edward Bawden. You will be able to see all the preparatory works as well as blocks and the final prints of this very talented, world renowned artist. His most famous print is probably of Brighton Pier.

If you watched Sherlock you will have seen the episode at Reichenbach Falls. Turner's original painting of the Reichenbach Falls is on show at the Higgins with the eight other Turners owned by the Higgins Trust.

Both exhibitions are a feast for the eyes. Please don't miss them.

Councillor Pat Olney

Telephone 01234 824384

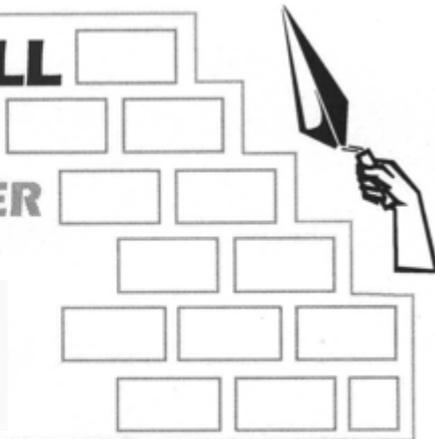
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FANTASTIC VILLAGE RESPONSE TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE

Thanks to all those villagers who filled in and returned the neighbourhood plan questionnaire. The response was amazing, as 61.4% of the village engaged with the task over the Christmas and New Year period, which is always a busy time. I am reliably informed that anything over 30% is a very big success, so Stevington has surpassed all expectations again!

Andrew Lockwood and Lucy Meakin have been busy analysing all your answers and this information is now available on the website www.stevington.com. It will form the basis for our neighbourhood plan and will reflect what the majority of Stevington residents would like to see in the way of development in Stevington over the next 17 years.

A leaflet detailing this information will be/has been delivered to every household.

The SNPWG is now considering outside help for the next phase of the plan, in order that we can present our findings in the format required by Bedford Borough Council and stand the best chance of getting our plan adopted.

Thanks again to so many of you for making the effort to fill in your questionnaire – it is much appreciated.

Don't forget to enter the photo competition (details on our web site www.stevington.com) and get your picture included in the final document. We've had lots of entries but there's still time! Entries can be left in the community shop, uploaded to the website or handed to a member of the committee: Graham Read, Andrew Lockwood, Linda Penney, Mary Morris or Heather Eadie.

Heather Eadie, SNPWG



BAPTIST NEWS

With Easter falling early this year (see advertisement on page 36) it has been a busy start to 2016, with the launch of the church's own web site, an afternoon tea and the ever-popular soup and a roll, plus pancakes on Shrove Tuesday already fading into history.



The website is very much a work in progress, but it gives details of the regular events, such as the sewing circle on Mondays, the railway modellers' meetings and of course, the prayer meeting and Bible study, plus the Sunday services. Our website is

www.stevingtonbaptistchurch.org – please take a look.

Like most Baptist churches, it is funded by the giving of its faithful supporters and seeks to give to the community. Visitors and newcomers are always welcome.

Attendance at the pancake lunch was down on the previous year, which meant that there were extra helpings for everyone and Carol's skills at tossing the pancake were loudly applauded.

The end of February saw another member welcomed into the fellowship and as this edition is probably coming through the door, it is time for another afternoon tea. This is a great opportunity to make new friends.

Denise Russell and Val Oldfield are leading a newly-formed team of home visitors offering to call on people who may feel lonely, or who cannot get out very much. The number to call is 824572.

In an upstairs room at the back of the church, the railway modellers have made good progress on their layout. The electrics are virtually complete and a start has been made on track ballasting and station building and scenery. The group meets fortnightly on Thursday evenings (details on the website). Members are currently also trying to help a person confined to a wheelchair adapt his layout to a new home.



Peter Evans

STEVINGTON GUITAR CONCERTS

Simon Hewlett Guitar

Luthier Simon Hewlett contacted me in January to say that he was so impressed with the Robert Foster gig at the church last year he has decided to build an acoustic guitar for Stevington Guitar Concerts. This is to enable us to raise money for a charity of our choice. After much thought we have decided to donate the money to Papworth Hospital, which was the beneficiary of our first ever event. The guitar will be auctioned at a special gig in November.

I would be delighted to receive bids on the instrument, just let me know what you are prepared to pay. You can keep up to date with pictures of the build by visiting our website.

Simons spec for the Stevington guitar:
Acoustic 6 steel strings, cutaway.
"I have decided to use 'Indian rosewood' for the back and sides, a good traditional guitar material. 'Monterrey cypress' for the top, this particular material was washed up as a very large log on Kifs local beach, he noticed it was rippled and took a chainsaw to it. The neck will be a three part laminate with a center beam of 'ldigbo' not quite sure about the two outer beams."



Programme 2016

Saturday 30 April

Eric Lugosch plays Stevington Village Hall

7.30pm. Tickets £12.50

Available online, at the community shop and from Barbara Collins.
Proceeds to Cancer Research

Eric Lugosch is playing at Stevington on his way from his home in Chicago to a tour in Germany. I have been trying to book Eric for a couple of years and at last we have managed to fix it.

Eric is a great ragtime, blues and gospel player with a wonderful voice and sense of humour. Eric rarely plays in the UK and a chance to hear him should not be missed.

Saturday 30 April

Eric Lugosch
Guitar workshop for
players

9.30am-3.30pm.

A chance to spend a few hours learning from a man who won the USA fingerpicking championship. Eric's workshops are great fun and suitable for players for differing abilities.



For more information about the workshop visit our website.

Saturday 21 May

Woody Mann plays at Pavenham Village Hall

St. Peters Church at Pavenham asked us to put on a concert to raise money for them, we are delighted that Woody agreed to play, Woody has played in Stevington twice and loves coming back, If you want to see him again or bring some friends who have never heard his wonderful playing tickets £12.50 available from our website.

Friday 18 & Saturday 19 November

Clive Carroll plays at Stevington Village Hall

Proceeds to Papworth Hospital.



This is a gig that I anticipate will attract an audience from across the UK. I am planning to engage at least one other amazing musician but until I can confirm it I have to keep my card close to my chest. If I can achieve my plans this will be our biggest event by a long chalk.

We are planning to auction the guitar being built for Stevington Guitar Concerts by Simon Hewlett at this event.

John Duffield

www.stevingtonguitarconcerts.co.uk



ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, STEVINGTON

THE WHEELS OF GOD are picking up speed at last! We are now making positive progress towards the appointment of a team rector and team vicar for the group of eight parishes.

All sixteen churchwardens met on 23 January and with guidance from a facilitator, the rural dean and his assistant, compiled a personality profile of the team rector we would like to find. The eight parish profiles have now been assembled as one document which, together with a video of the parishes prepared by Jane O'Connor, should be ready by Easter for advertising, interviews and hopefully an early appointment. With the guidance of the newly elected rector, the process will start again to find the team vicar for the second post.

The churchwardens will be meeting monthly to keep the impetus going, and Jane and I felt there was willingness to make our eight widespread parishes into a working team. Meanwhile we carry on worshipping under the generous leadership of our willing team of retired priests.

Services in March

Sun. 6 (Mothering Sunday)	9.30am – Holy Communion
Sun. 13 (Passion Sunday)	9.30am – Holy Communion
Sun. 20 (Palm Sunday)	9.30am – Holy Communion
Thurs. 24 (Maundy Thursday)	6.00pm – Stations of the Cross
Fri. 25 (Good Friday)	2.00pm – Passion Readings and Hymns
Sun. 27 (Easter Day)	9.30am – Holy Communion with Choir

Autumn Outing to St Albans Cathedral

Please join us for the evening pilgrimage to the cathedral on Wednesday 12 October, commencing at 7.00pm. It will start with a light buffet, followed by a pilgrimage prayer trail around the magnificent building. We have reserved 15 places and tickets (£7.50) will be sold on a first come, first served basis. We can organise shared transport nearer the date. More details to follow later. There are only a few pilgrimages each year around this famous building, so it could be a popular trip!

Women's Refuge

Two large boxes of gifts plus a rocking horse were delivered to Butterfly House at Christmas time. They were gratefully received and will be distributed throughout the year. Do read their newsletter, on the board in the Church Room. Thank you for your generosity.

Children's Society

Thanks have been received from the Children's Society for the donation of £131.49 from the Christingle service. Many thanks to Mary who organises these important events.

Primrose Delight

The Garden of Remembrance is becoming more established and the churchyard is looking beautiful with snowdrops and aconites. Jackie Gooding has kindly offered some of her primroses to plant. If anyone would like to join us for a planting session, it will be good to see you. See Jane or Tricia so we can arrange a date.

THANK YOU from BeCHaR, the Prebend Day Centre

The following message has been received from the Chief Executive:

'I have the pleasure of writing to say thank you for your kind donations. We are touched by the generosity you have shown towards the individuals we support. Your gifts enable us to help our guests make positive changes in their lives. More importantly your gifts make all the difference to individuals who would otherwise be alone on the street this Christmas.

With your support we can continue with our commitment to provide a service to the local area this winter. The single largest contributor to the charity is the public. It's through their goodwill we achieve as much as we do.'

Thanks to Chrissie Fitch for organising donations to the Prebend Day Centre.

A Little Help

If you would like to help make our church more beautiful with cleaning or flowers and can afford a little time, there are rotas in the church and church room.

Easter Lilies

As usual, St Mary's will be dressed with flowers for Easter, the highlight being the Easter lilies in memory of loved ones. We shall be taking orders in church up to Sunday 20 March, or contact Robert Hart.

From the Registers

Baptism	Zennor Evelyn Mary Brown	1 November 2015
Funeral	Christel Marianne Woods	11 December 2015
Interment of Ashes	Evelyn Maud White	21 December 2015
	John Edward Rogers	21 January 2016

Robert Hart. Churchwarden (823769)



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STEVINGTON SOCIAL CENTRE

Hello all. As an opener, we are holding the Social Centre AGM on 10 March at 7.30pm, at the centre. We will be pleased to welcome anyone who wants to attend, or even volunteer to stand on the committee. Being on the committee is not very onerous, but we are always looking for more hands and fresh ideas.

I think that the centre is really building a momentum in providing entertainment and activities in the village. We have, over the past decade (really that long?) built up the centre so that it now boasts some of the best facilities around. I am proud that almost all of the funds raised to get us to where we are today have been raised by ourselves. Thank you to all who have supported us, and we look forward to more exciting events.

The Cinema Club goes from strength to strength. Our evenings are now getting quite full and we are pleased to see so many regular and new faces. If you haven't been yet, give it a try out – the vision and sound are almost cinema quality, and we do have a bar serving a selection of wines and beers. Thank you to all of the volunteers that make it happen – there are a lot of people without whom these evenings just wouldn't work.

The upcoming events at the Cinema Club are:

Date	Screening	Production	Genre
9 March	Hangmen	The National Theatre	Comedy
6 April	Giselle	The Royal Ballet	Live Ballet
7 April	The Lady Killers	Film	Comedy Drama
21 April	TBA	National Theatre	TBA
12 May	Tortilla Soup	Film	Family Drama
18 May	Frankenstein	The Royal Ballet	Live Ballet
2 June	The Producers	Film	Musical Comedy
27 June	Werther	The Royal Opera House	Live Opera
7 July	Romeo and Juliet	Kenneth Branagh Theatre	Live Theatre

Tickets are available from the community shop or visit the Stevington Cinema Club website at www.stevingtoncinemaclub.uk.

Future events in the planning include celebrating the Queen's 90th Birthday with a Beacon Lighting on the 21 April. We are also looking at bringing in some Morris Men to give us a bit of rattle and roll.

Burns Night was held on 23 January. This was well attended and all enjoyed the bagpipes, Scottish country dancing and a plate of haggis, chapped tatties and bashed neaps, with the obligatory toast to Rabbie and a snifter. Our thanks to Iain for the toast and trying to control the dancing, Richard on the bagpipes and all who helped out on the night.

Roger Penney

STEVINGTON YOGA CLASSES

Regular yoga classes have started in the Social Centre every Monday from 10.00am to 11.00am, hosted by Frances Newman.

You are invited to make time for yourself and join me on your mat. A time to discover space in the body & mind. Time to move and time to be still, time to sit and breathe.

Frances Newman (07815 643366)
www.francesnewmanyoga.co.uk

MOBILE LIBRARY VISITS

The Mobile Library visits The Cross from 2.15 - 2.45pm on alternate Wednesdays and the dates for the coming months are:



March	2, 16, 30
April	13, 27
May	11, 25
June	8, 22

Pop along to see Arthur and join up to your local Library!

There are plenty of events happening at Kempston Library too. Visit the Virtual Library via www.bedford.gov.uk/libraries to discover more. Did you know we also offer the Bedfordshire Libraries App for your smart phone or tablet? Go online to the Play Store or App Store and download to find out everything it has to offer, including renewing, requesting and what's on!

James Smiles, Library Manager

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S

CHILDREN'S BAKING DAY

Want to do something fun in the Easter Holidays and meet up with old and new friends?

Then come and join us for a Baking Day on Friday 1st April 12.30 in the Church Room

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Saturday 2nd April
Church Room 10.30am
Proceeds to Children's chosen charity

Come and join us

Contact Jane: jojo2.oconnor@gmail.com
or John Duffield: duffieldjc@aol.com



Book early!

STEVINGTON FOOTBALL CLUB

Unfortunately the weather of late has been causing havoc with fixtures for both teams. We have seen a number of games being postponed due to waterlogged pitches and those games that have been played have been spoilt by very strong winds. This has meant that both our teams have lost some continuity of play since the early part of the season and been prevented from playing the fluid passing game we are used to and saw week in week out last season. However it's been a good season so far, there are still a lot of games left to play and another promotion is a real possibility for the First Team and a top three finish and good cup run possible for the Reserves.



As at 20 February the statistics read as follows:

- First Team League Division 1: Currently second having played 14, won 9, drawn 3, lost 2, scored 42 goals, conceded 20 goals, goal difference + 22, and 30 points.
- Reserve Team Division 4: Currently fifth having played 14, won 8, drawn 0, lost 6, scored 45 goals, conceded 34 goals, goal difference + 11, and 24 points.

The First Team is doing really well in the league and was very unlucky not to beat the current top team, Sundon Park Rangers, when we played them at home. Division 1 is a much harder league than last year so we are pleased to be challenging at the top of the league. Now we no longer have the distraction of any cup football we are hopeful that we can continue the challenge for both promotion and the league title.

Having only re-formed this season the Reserve Team is performing really well, holding a good position in the league, still in the Watson Shield (League Cup) and extremely unlucky 2-1 losers in the County Cup Semi Final to a team two divisions above them. They outplayed Cutler Hammer Sports and thought they had managed to take the game to extra time after scoring an equaliser with the very last kick in the game with the opposing goalkeeper clawing the ball back from behind the goal line. It was a frantic finish and unfortunately the referee and linesman said they couldn't see the ball cross the line. To say we were robbed is an understatement!!

As previously mentioned we've been lucky to see an influx of new players join us this season. They have settled in very well with our established players and collectively both teams strive to play attractive football. Like last year we've seen some great individual and team performances and some very good goals. We've also had impressive goalkeeping displays when needed (especially Tom Cox in the Reserves). We are hoping all this continues until the end of the season.

The final three months of the season are going to be rather hectic and will see a number of 'top of the table' clashes, so it's likely that there are going to be some really high tempo and difficult matches for both teams.

As always we would like to thank our followers for their on-going support, especially during the recent wet and windy weather. Everyone at the Club also sends best wishes to Ralph Jeffries and we hope he has a speedy recovery as we look forward to seeing him back watching our games.

Finally thanks for the on-going support from Elaine, Denzil, Gareth and Jane at the Royal George for their continued support of the Teams and the refreshments after games.

Shane King

BEDFORD SAILING CLUB

Now that spring is nearly here, so is the Sailing Club AGM, so the first date for your calendar is Thursday 24 March, 8pm in The Royal George. We are hoping to plan some river activities early in the season, but we do have a social event booked on Saturday 25 June - the boys are back in town! By popular demand Stevington's very own band **The Snarling Beasties** will be playing at The Sailing Club - not to be missed!! More details nearer the day....



For details contact me on 01234 822119 or check out our website at <https://sites.google.com/site/bedfordsailingclub/>. New members are welcome.

Liz Stammers

THANKS FROM MALAWI

Pastor Eric Machila wrote to thank us for the money we sent on your behalf at Christmas time. Sally and Ray's sale of vegetables enabled us to send an extra £100 in addition to the money for the school fees, which we had raised with help from so many of you at Kathy Brown's late summer Open Gardens. We enclose Pastor Machila's letter and a photo of the children.

Dita and Tony

Dear Mr & Mrs Hollins and Friends,

It was a great day to us 1st January 2016 when we got together celebrating with children because of the help you gave to us, please may thanks to you, Sally and Ray Cox, may God bless them indeed.

Those who go to school have now attending school after we have paid their fees for this term.

We have sent you some photos which were taken on New Year's Day when we were together with the kids, please feel that we really appreciated what you do for us here in Malawi, please may god bless you and all friends over there, Thanks.



Here is our breakdown:

AMOUNT RECEIVED – MK362,567.80

1.	5 Children @ K52,900 each	=	MK264,500.00
2.	5 Children bags @ K6,750 each	=	MK33,750.00
3.	2 Ladies helping kids & orphans	=	MK12,000.00
4.	1 ½ Bags of rice for kids on New year	=	MK12,900.00
5.	5 Chicken for kids on New year	=	MK12,500.00
6.	Cooking oil, tomatoes & onions	=	MK 5,500.00
7.	Sugar, T/leaves, soap, T/paste, b/lotion	=	MK14,367.20
8.	Firewood, water & salt	=	MK 5,500.00
9.	Washing powder	=	MK 1,500.00
	Total		<u>MK362,567,20</u>

Please Mr & Mrs Hollins pass our New Year's greetings and thanks to each and every body there, God bless them.

*Best regards
Pastor Eric & Ireen Machila*

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We started our New Year on a very happy musical note in January, when Clive Rudd transported us back through the decades with his 'Songs and Stories' presentation. We found ourselves dancing along to the rhythm of the songs albeit sitting down in our chairs. We discovered the hidden talents of two of our members with an impromptu performance of mime. A very successful and enjoyable evening! Highly recommended.

Our February speaker was David Gunn from Gunn's bakery. He narrated the history of the bakery from 1928, when his grandfather first moved the bakery to Sandy, up to the present day. He explained how ingredients have moved forward to accommodate the different dietary requirements of today. Samples of breads, delicious cakes and Bedfordshire clangers were tasted. Having learned that tours of the Bakery are available at Sandy it maybe that our WI will be arranging an outing in the not too distant future. Highly recommended again!

At the end of February three members of the group will be attending the WI County Quiz. In early March two members will be attending the Speakers Day auditions which has, in the past, helped us to arrange our programme for the forthcoming year. During March several members will be attending an event, 'An afternoon with Michael Portillo', which we are looking forward to with great anticipation. Also in March Stevington WI will be hosting a group meeting of five local WIs which involves reports from each WI and County, entertainment and refreshments.

We have also conducted a litter pick and as part of the national 'Clean for the Queen' campaign and will be taking part in another litter pick on Friday 4 March, 2pm at the Cross.

Dates for your Diary:

- March 10 Shackleton's Forgotten Men
Talk by Debbie Horsman
Competition theme - A recipe for a frozen dessert.
- April 11 Hats - Historical and Hysterical
Talk by Zena Herbert (Zena has spoken to us on a previous occasion. She is a very entertaining lady)
Competition theme - A homemade hat.

- April 19 WI Group meeting at Stevington
(Please note this is a CHANGE OF DATE)
- May 12 WI Annual General Meeting
Competition theme - A poem about the WI

Over the coming months we will be providing walkers' lunches for three different groups. They are enjoyable events and provide funds for our WI. As the weather improves we will begin our outdoor activities again with walks, etc.

Our County events are advertised in the Bedfordshire WEye (copies of which are always available in the Church Room). Our meetings are displayed on WI notice board in the Church Room.

Pat Gibson

OAKLEY DAY CENTRE

The Day Centre is a very exciting place to be at the moment with lots of enjoyable activities. We will be making homemade chocolates, pot-pourri, daffodil brooches along with a reminiscence week, beetle drive, competitive quizzes, bingo, games to name just some of the activities. At Easter we always hold a raffle, where hopefully all our clients will receive a chocolate egg. Our popular bring and buy, with lots of eclectic items for sale, will be held on 5, 6 and 7 April. It is a great way to boost our funds. Hopefully with better weather on the way we will be able to look forward to some local outings, our Tuesday group recently enjoyed a visit to the Bacon Butty morning at Oakley Methodist Church, where we helped support their chosen charity.



We have celebrated Chinese New Year with a delicious sweet and sour chicken followed by chocolate sponge with strawberry sauce and cream, a favourite for all our clients. Healthy nutrition is very important to us at the day centre and with our 5 star rating received by Environmental Health we cater for many different tastes and dietary needs.

If you would like to come and join in the fun on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday please give Lynne a ring on 07733 227374

A NIGHT AT THE OPERA

Who would ever have imagined a couple of years ago that we would have a night at the opera in our village hall? I enjoyed Dangerous Liaisons (I have given up struggling with the French pronunciation) streamed live from the Donmar Theatre. It is a wonderful enjoyable play with Dominic West playing the part of a dastardly cad. I was now ready to tackle La Traviata.

My first dilemma was what does one wear to the opera? When I have seen audiences, in the past, in films the dress code seemed to be tiaras and ball gowns with the men in tails. However not wanting to be OTT I settled for the LBD.

I arrived early to secure a seat in the stalls and brought a cushion as I thought that sitting on a chair for this three and half hour marathon might be a bit daunting. I purchased a bottle of Malbec, the village hall's finest red, and settled down to enjoy the opera.

After Simon Callow's hugely entertaining introduction it was time for the fat lady to start singing. I was in for a very pleasant surprise because I thought all opera sopranos were huge ladies but no this ethereal beauty - Violetta started to sing and she was stunning. She was then joined by the handsome young Alfredo - another myth shattered as I thought all leading men in operas were old.

I am sure you all probably know the story (I didn't). Violetta is a quite wealthy courtesan (tart) with terminal consumption (TB), while Alfredo is from a very respectable middle class family. The story was easy to follow with the help of the printed synopsis and sub titles. Violetta sang for about five minutes and the subtitles said 'I love you a lot' and then Alfredo joined her for another five minutes and said 'I love you lots more'. Sorry, I am being flippant but as the tragic story unfolded with the wonderful familiar music, beautiful sets and lavish costumes, I was enthralled.

Violetta died beautifully - sorry if I spoiled the end but we all know that operas have tragic endings. She even managed to hit the top notes in a reclining position. Alfredo was heartbroken as they sang their last duet and the magical night was over.

When the curtain was raised and they all came back on stage for their bows I was relieved to see that Violetta was very much alive but looking very poorly. I was so pleased that we applauded this

performance even though we were not in the audience at Covent Garden - but as far as I was concerned we were.

I was so pleased to see that there were quite a lot of people in the audience that I didn't know. They are discovering what is happening in our lovely village.

A big thank you to Steve and his team for bringing the Arts to Stevington.

Anne Westbrook



STEVINGTON CARPET BOWLS CLUB

Hello Stevington! We hope that 2016 has started well for the majority of you.

Our membership has now reached 19 with the addition of a new member in January – welcome to the club Jonathan Roff.



Once again our annual dinner was a great success. 25 people sat down to dine – 17 members, 5 wives and our 3 marvellous chefs. Jean, Richard and Steve produced a wonderful meal. Many many thanks to you. The dinner was on 7 December and was followed by our mince pies and wine night on 14 December – 14 members attended and we had a really enjoyable evening.

Jake and Toby contested the county pairs in January but were up against really seasoned competitors. Well done for trying.

We have temporarily abandoned the club championship and are now contesting our singles and pairs knockout competitions. Hopefully we will complete these before our AGM on Monday 25 April.

The club will be closed on 28 March (Easter Monday) and 2 and 31 May (Bank Holidays).

There is still room for more bowlers – why not come and 'give it a go' on Mondays at the Social Centre from 7pm to 9pm. Your first 2 visits are free. No need to phone – just turn up. Hope to see some of you soon.

Barbara Collins

The Friends of ST MARY'S STEVINGTON

The Friends of St. Mary's have a well-earned reputation for organising great events for the children of the village. The children have had lots of fun, learned new skills, had adventures, made friends and raised money for their chosen charities. Many of you, as their parents and grand-parents, have supported and joined in some of our activities and we would very much like you to help us build on the sound footing that this partnership has created. To that end, Jane O'Connor and John Duffield will be holding a meeting in the Church Room on Thursday 7 April at 7pm. We hope that some of you will be able to come along to find out what we have planned for 2016 and how you might be able to be involved in supporting the successful activities which the children have enjoyed so much. We would love to see you on 7 April but if you can't be there but would like to be involved, please get in touch with Jane (jojo.2oconnor@gmail.com) or John (duffieldjc@aol.com) to find out more.

Please look out for the flyers which will be coming your way advertising the Auction of Promises, a new fundraising venture which will take place on 17 September. So start thinking 'outside the box' and see if you can come up with some inventive Promises, or suggest an organisation or individual who might be approached to donate a Promise to help us with our fundraising.

As you will know, the Trustees of the Friends of St. Mary's are all unpaid volunteers and the money you help us raise goes towards maintaining and improving the fabric of our two historic Church buildings, which are well-used by the whole village community. If you would like to help with the Auction, or any of the events that the Friends organise, we would really love to hear from you. We don't require a major commitment but if you feel you would like to contribute even in a small way, you will be very welcome.

Looking forward to seeing you at our next fundraiser!

Chrissie Galley, Chairman of Trustees



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EASTER SERVICES:

Good Friday – 10.30am Rev Peter Eyre:

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Easter Day – 10.45am Jesus Christ is risen today: Hallelujah!

Celebration led by Rev David Shaw

AFTERNOON TEAS: from 3pm – March 8 and May 10



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WILDLIFE CUTTINGS

Blue Tits and the Woodpecker - May 2007 - Jean and Arthur Webb

Jean and Arthur Webb are amazed at the number of birds in their Farley Way garden. Previously they lived in Enfield but now they have a garden, which backs onto a field, has a large ash tree and plenty of bushes. At the end of May 2007 they had been thrilled to have a family of Blue Tits in a nest box. Then early one morning they heard a strange hammering noise.

Arthur got up and saw this red headed bird attacking the box. He rushed out in his boxer shorts and the blue tits were saved. They had to go out later that day and when they came back the nest box was empty. We checked Arthur's description against the illustration in his Lambert's 'Birds of Garden and Woodland' which showed the culprit was a great spotted woodpecker and in addition it said that they had been attacking nest boxes in recent years. Arthur had kept the front of the nest box as evidence.

The White Toad - May 2012 - Maggie Reeves

I was forking through the soil of a shallow, oval urn, when I struck something hard. Peering into the soil I saw a white object that felt like plastic, so I proceeded to dig it up when, to my horror, I realised that it was an *ENORMOUS* toad. Immediately its normal colour returned and it jumped onto the tarmac and started hopping towards the undergrowth. I quickly collected the toad in a flowerpot and took it to a wet drain in the garden then went inside my house to recover.

Bluebells on the Railway Walk May 2002 – 2014

A few Spanish bluebells were found in seven sites east of the bund in 2002. In the two wetter years, 2013 and 2014 these suddenly begun to spread in the four areas where they had survived. Now the one plant near the east end of the walk has become two clumps, the four plants under the field maples in the next wider section now cover two metres. Five plants a little further west have spread to a good metre wide patch and three more plants in have spread to another two metre long area under the group of three ash trees. Now there are enough to confirm that some have the wide, pale bells of the Spanish variety, a few in the same patch, have the narrower, darker flowers of the English bluebells and the rest have an intermediate form. Pollen could have come from the large colonies of native bluebells in Great Oaks Wood or Woodcraft; both two miles away, within the foraging range of a honey bee. More worrying, is the realisation that pollen from the Spanish

bluebells could easily be taken to our native species which is less robust and spreads very slowly. I am getting rid of the Spanish bluebells in my garden.

Collated by Jackie Gooding

STEVINGTON WI

Meet in the Church Room
Every 2nd Thursday of the month
At 7.30pm

ALL ARE WELCOME

HARROLD MEDICAL PRACTICE PRESCRIPTION COLLECTIONS

Here are the dates (Wednesdays) to the end of 2016. 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. The surgery needs at least three working days to prepare your medications, so please send your forms in early enough.

Barbara and Pat visit the Harrold Surgery two weeks in every four. If you would like to have your repeat prescription delivered to and/or collected from the surgery, please give one or other of us a call. The collected prescriptions are delivered to your door immediately on collection.

Barbara (822296)

30 March & 6 April
25 May & 1 June
20 & 27 July
14 & 21 September
9 & 16 November
4 & 11 January 2017

Pat (823250)

2 & 9 March 2016
27 April & 4 May
22 & 29 June
17 & 24 August
12 & 19 October
7 & 14 December

Barbara Collins and Pat Pickup

GARDEN BIRDS DISEASE AND HYGIENE

Disease

Wild birds are susceptible to a range of different diseases. Outbreaks of disease may occur in those visiting gardens. It is important to be able to recognise the signs of disease and to do what you can in your own garden to minimise the problem. Salmonella damages internal organs and may result in death within a matter of days. Colibacillosis is a disease caused by faecal contamination during March to May. Trichomonosis, a single-cell parasite spread via food and drinking water freshly contaminated with saliva or possibly droppings. Growths on legs and feet from a number of agents of disease.

Feeding stations can be a source of disease to birds in gardens. Salmonella and E.coli bacterias are of particular concern because they can be infectious and may lead to a severe outbreak in bird populations under certain conditions. There are some general signs to look out for that would indicate that the bird is suffering from some form of disease. Affected birds often appear lethargic and reluctant to move away from the feeder and may be fluffed-up and show difficulty in swallowing food (food debris around the bill) or swallowing water.

Evidence suggests that some bird species, such as greenfinches, chaffinches, siskins, house sparrows and collared doves who are gregarious and tend to feed in flocks, may be more susceptible to disease than others. In winter months when food can be scarce, disease transmission can be increased where birds gather together near a food source.

Prevention

As treating sick birds is not practical for the owners of domestic gardens, it is helpful to take a proactive preventative approach to stop an outbreak occurring in the first place. It is also worth knowing that some birds are thought to act as carriers of disease and when they feed at bird tables or hanging feeders, may contaminate the food.

One of the best things you can do is provide several feeding sites within your garden and not to place all the feeders in just one spot. This helps disperse the feeding birds over a larger area and reduces the potential for disease to build up. It is also important to move the feeding sites around, especially for where birds feed on the ground. By allowing areas to 'rest' you will be helping to reduce levels of contamination. Also think about where you position feeders in relation to other garden features, for example avoid placing a bird table under a tree where

pigeons perch or roost as it can soon become heavily contaminated with droppings.

Design

Hanging seed feeders often retain food within a clear plastic tube, giving a very low risk of the food becoming contaminated with droppings or getting wet and going mouldy. The RSPB offer a good range of this type of feeder which can be easily disassembled to wash in hot soapy detergent, rinsed and left out to dry.

With good hygiene practice ground feeding trays can be made safe from disease; look for one which keeps food dry.

Hygiene

Regular cleaning and disinfecting of bird tables, bird baths and hanging feeders is an important part of good hygiene practice when feeding garden birds. It is also important not to provide more food than the birds visiting your garden need in a day. Ideally the bird tables should be swept clean each day to remove uneaten food and droppings. Table and other feeding surfaces should be disinfected on a weekly or fortnightly cycle using appropriate disinfectant for wildlife, thoroughly rinsed and air dried before reuse. Cleaning equipment should not be used for another purpose and kept and used outside. Rubber gloves should be worn and hands and forearms washed thoroughly after handling or cleaning feeders. The ground between feeders may be kept clean by regular sweeping and disinfected. Bird baths should also be cleaned in a similar manner.

Food Safety

Purchase foods from reputable sources, especially peanuts. Any sign of mould is to be avoided as it contains dangerous toxins. Bird food should be stored in a clean, dry and cool environment inaccessible to pests. This will minimise the risk of fungal or bacterial contamination and will also avoid encouraging rats and mice. Keep a regular check on food provided in hanging feeders and try not to overfill your bird feeders; otherwise uneaten food may remain there for too long a period.

For more information about the birds in your garden, contact the RSPB on 0345 034 7733 or the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) on 01842 750050. For bird products also look at Vine House Farm 01775 630208.

My thanks to the BTO for their Garden Birds Hygiene and Disease leaflet used to compile this article.

Susan Young - Park End Thatch



The Forest of Marston Vale are looking for **thrill-seeking fundraisers** to take on a once in a lifetime challenge and enjoy the exhilarating and unforgettable feeling of a skydive – **flying through the clouds from over 10,000 feet at up to 120mph!** As the charity is celebrating its twenty first anniversary this year, it's looking for 21 **adventurous volunteers** to take part in the tandem skydive in June.

Organised through Skyline, a professional events organiser who specialise in organising fundraising events for charities, the tandem skydive will be held at Brackley airfield in Northamptonshire on Sunday 5 June. No experience is required to take part as the volunteers will be harnessed to a qualified British Parachute Association tandem instructor, who does all the hard work, allowing the volunteers to enjoy the invigorating feeling of freefalling down to 5,000 feet before gliding to the dropzone. By raising a minimum of £395 of sponsorship for the Forest of Marston Vale, the volunteers will get to jump for free!

To find out more about taking part in the tandem skydive please contact Robina, Fundraising Officer, on 01234 762605 or email robina.b-d@marstonvale.org.



THE FOREST OF MARSTON VALE - WHAT'S ON

Sunday Strolls (6 March, 3 April, 1 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.

Volunteer Tasks (10 March, 10 April)

A variety of practical projects. Meet at the Forest Centre at 10.00am. Wear old clothes and bring lunch if you are going to stay all day. For details and to confirm attendance contact volunteers@marstonvale.org or call 01234 762614. There are other volunteer tasks off site. Ask for details.

Health Walks (Wednesdays 10.30am)

Free, no need to book. Most walks start at reception but some elsewhere - see noticeboard or ring 01234 767037 to confirm.

Farmers Market (20 March, 17 April, 15 May)

Third Sunday of each month. 10.30am to 3.00pm. Local suppliers bringing a host of quality goods to the Forest Centre.



There are lots of other exciting events planned for both adults and for children.

For information on other events visit www.marstonvale.org/events.html



LENT LUNCHES

St Mary's Church Room
Mondays 7 and 14 March
12.30 to 1.30pm

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Donations to Christian Aid



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IN DEI NOMINE AMEN

The sources of the history of Stevington differ greatly according to the historical period. Practically our only source for the early modern period, extending from about 1485 to the Reformation, is the wills proved in the court of the Archdeacon of Bedford (which had jurisdiction until 1858). From 1955 to 1997 the Bedfordshire wills were collected in three volumes by the Bedfordshire Historical Records Society covering the years 1480 to 1533. These contain 396 wills of which 13 were made by Stevington men and women and for the first time real people emerge from the mediaeval shadows.

The wills follow a standard pattern dictated, no doubt, by long usage and the requirements of the Archdeacon's court. They begin with the standard formula: *In dei nomine amen* (In God's name so be it). What follows is the request to be buried in the churchyard dedicated to "Our Lady of Stevington" and, in one case, that of Joan Wiffe (1522), "before the image of St Katherine" (the location of which has not been identified). Then there is the debt to the church for burial which, "as custom requireth", is the testator's "best beast". A number of testators bequeath a sum for "tithes forgotten" in case there is an account outstanding which St Peter might raise at the pearly gates. There follow bequests to the "mother church of Lincoln" in sums varying from 2d. to 8d. according to the means of the testator rather than any value judgment of the Bishop and his administration. Next there are bequests to the church itself, invariably to the high altar in the sum of 12d.; "to the lights before the crucifix 12d.; to the sepulchre lights 12s.; to the upkeep of the bells 12d." Quite often the bequest of lights was in the form of wax by weight e.g. a pound or half a pound.

One will, that of a testator by the name of Fysshier (no Christian name supplied) (1501) bequeathed 20d. to the repair of "the chapel of St Mary within the churchyard." Thomas Russell (1509) left two bushels of barley for the same purpose. This raises a problem as the chapel of St Mary was considered to be the lady chapel probably occupying the chapel (now ruined) flanking the south side of the chancel, as in the will of Thomas Packe (1530) "to the five tapers in Our Lady chapel 'to be repaired agane and to burne styll there". There is no mention in Packe's will of "in the churchyard". There was a chapel attached to the hospice located on the edge of the churchyard but not within it.

Joan Wiffe (1522) bequeathed a sheep for the rood loft and John Darlyng (1529) left 3s for its upkeep. This was the loft above the rood

screen which bore a picture or effigy of Christ on the cross. The loft provided access for lighting candles to illuminate the crucifix. The blocked off stair to the loft can be seen in the south east corner of the south aisle in St Mary's. The rood screen survived the Reformation and the Commonwealth but was pulled down in 1826 for no apparent reason when Thomas Orlebar Marsh was vicar and dismantled in 1872. Parts were used to provide screened areas at the west end of the nave, particularly at the entrance to the tower.

A significant number of testators left money or goods for the upkeep of bridges of especially those of Turvey, Harrold, Stafford (Oakley) and Biddenham, typically two or three measures of barley or 6d. each. Barley figures prominently in the wills as a form of currency in lieu of specie.

Finally, in this part of the will there is usually the "obit" as in the will of William Church of Pavenham (within the manor of Stevington) "to an honest priest 4 marks (£2 13s. 4d.) to sing for the souls of testator, his friends and all Christians for half a year". An obit was more than a memorial service. Prayers for the dead were intended to assist the soul of the departed in purgatory and help it on the road to heaven. Joan Wiffe bequeathed 4d. each year for a priest to say mass for the testator's soul to be paid by her son, George. John Darlyng specified that his wife Margaret was to provide an obit once a year for the souls of the testator, his father and mother and all Christians and his son Richard was to continue this after Margaret's death as well as having a trental sung for himself and his mother. A trental involved celebrating a mass on 30 consecutive days and the usual fee was 10s, equivalent now to about £200. The reformed church denied that purgatory had any biblical basis ("a fond thing vainly invented" Article XXII) and prayers for the dead were deleted from the Book of Common Prayer in 1552.

The next section typically deals with bequests to lay people, family and friends, usually beasts, goods and land rather than money. John Russell (1521), left to his son Robert a cow, two sheep and two hives of bees "at his mother's deliverans", to his daughter Anne two sheep and two hives of bees, to his daughter Margery Purrey 13s. 4d. and the residue to his wife Alis. Honey was a valuable resource as the best available sweetener. John Darlyng was wealthy and a considerable landowner. He left his "purchased land" (possibly land purchased during his marriage) to his wife Margaret. But he left 54 acres of "fynable" land (presumably definable or enclosed land) to his brother Richard and his

son Robert along with all his other land “within the fields of Stevington and without”. In contrast Richard Packe left his cousin Margery West a “brass pan with other trash” and his daughter Margaret a coffer with a “virgins barrel”, probably a painting of the three wise virgins on the inside of the barrel lid of the coffer.

Many Bedfordshire testators of the period left money to the friars minor of Bedford (the Franciscans or Grey friars) but for some reason, they do not figure at all in the wills of prudent Stevington men and women.

One other interesting facet of the wills is the mention of place names long since forgotten. Richard Fisser (1522) mentions a close called “Westcroft” of two and a half acres and six roods of arable abutting “Shotcroft grene”; and one acre lying by “Cokkes lane”. Only Westcroft is mentioned three centuries later in the Enclosure Award of 1806 i.e. “...a Close of pasture called Westcroft with the lane there containing five acres and the half of one rood of meadow in the Town meadow...”. Cokke (Cox/Coke) was a Stevington family name of the period. Thomas Russell specified that if she so needed his wife could sell five roods “lying above Forley”. Forley is a reference to the field called Furzen Farley in the Enclosure Award. Interestingly Richard Wyght refers to the “Fullyng mylle” as a working mill.

Finally, the executors are listed as well as a “supervisor”, who was usually the vicar of Stevington (Richard Green 1476-1524 or, after him, Thomas Bothall 1524-39), and lastly the witnesses.

With these wills we enter a different world, the world we have lost, and it was a world different in many respects from the post-Reformation world of only a few decades later. Moreover, comparatively few of the family names contained in these wills reappear in the registers of Births, Marriages and Deaths when they begin in 1603, only a century on.

Peter Hart

RECYCLING COLLECTIONS		
Month	Orange	Green
March	7, 21	14, 28
April	4, 18	11, 25
May	2, 16, 30	9, 23
June	13, 27	6, 20

HARROLD ODELL COUNTRY PARK NEWS

MARCH 2016



We're coming to the end of a very busy winter. We've been laying hedges in various areas around the lake and bridleway paths. The whole length of the hedge along the far side of Grebe Lake had been laid once upon a time but at least 15 years have elapsed since this was done.

The Management Plan dictates that much of the hedge line be returned to a manageable condition i.e. that once laid, staked and bound that we then trim once a year to promote the sort of thick growth favoured by nesting songbirds. A thick hedge helps to keep out nest-raiding magpies and grey squirrels. The base of the hedge where it meets the ground is also a haven for wood mice and other small rodents wishing to avoid the attention of marauding birds of prey.

The mild winter weather has really affected some of the winter bird migrations. Compared to previous years we've seen very few of the winter thrushes like fieldfares and redwings. They cross from Scandinavia to feed on worms and hedgerow berries. March is the time they are thinking of returning to Scandinavia and we should be looking out for the spring migrants like chiffchaffs. Let's hope the weather returns to something like normal. Spring flowers we'd normally see about now, like daffodils, have already flowered. The early flowering shrubs like cherry plum and blackthorn were also in flower a month early, at the beginning of February. I should think that many of you are seeing similar stories in your own gardens.

The new boardwalk overlooking the Dragonfly Pond, alongside the main bridleway, has been completed. As it was designed to accommodate pushchairs and wheelchairs we had to get it inspected by the Borough Council's Disability Access Officer. He had pledged a grant of



£1,000 towards the cost subject to this inspection. On January 26 he met with park staff, the Chairman of the Friends Group and the contractor who built it, Peter Hall. He was delighted with the finished article and we have informally opened it to the public.

At Easter, we're hoping to have a formal opening ceremony involving the press, Cllr. Alison Foster who gave a grant of £400 towards the cost, the Friends Group who pushed for this project and contributed funds and representatives of the Borough Council who also contributed.



Sometimes in the park we see unusual wildlife. We like to keep records whenever possible. We currently have a pair of goosanders occupying the river. They came last year and actually raised several chicks. This is highly unusual as they generally breed much further north. We're hoping that we will see chicks again this year.

We know that there is an awful lot of love for the park because you regularly tell us. You only have to go for a walk and count how many memorial benches there are. Lately we have had incidents that are really heart-warming like the lady who is about to move to the USA and wants to sponsor an owl box to compliment the one on the oak tree in the river meadow. She said the park has been a place she has really enjoyed with her little boy and wanted to give something back. What a compliment!

On February 13 we held a traditional Wassail event to bless and awaken the apple trees. This involved parading along the bridleway singing, shouting and banging musical instruments and old saucepans. The idea was to drive away any evil spirits and ensure a good crop of fruit this year. A total of 45 people took part so you can imagine the racket. The chosen tree was anointed with cider by the Wassail king and queen with eating, drinking and making merry occurring amongst their more lowly subjects. It remains to be seen whether it works but we did get an excellent crop last year when we did it. We will be keeping a sharp eye on progress.

Dates for your Diary

Health Walks (March 10 & 24, April 7 & 21)

These free walks happen every other Thursday. We meet outside the café entrance at 10.30am and walk for an hour to improve health and wellbeing, provide an opportunity to socialise and if you want, have a coffee and a natter at the end. Leaders Janet Munro and Lindsey Alton. For more information please call 01234 720016 or e-mail janet.munro@bedford.gov.uk.

Friends Group Task Days (March 21, April 25)

There are opportunities to get involved with conservation tasks like hedge laying and coppicing on the last Monday of every month (a week earlier if a Bank Holiday). We meet at the staff office inside the café at 10am. You will need a packed lunch, sturdy footwear and warm clothes. We provide refreshments, gloves and tools. For more information call 01234 720016 or e-mail Richard.dowsett@bedford.gov.uk.

Events

Easter Egg Hunt (Sponsored by the Friends of Harrold Odell)

On Easter Monday March 28 we will be running our Easter Egg Hunt. As usual it will be over two sessions each with 25 places available. **Booking is essential.** The morning one is 10am–12pm and the afternoon one is 1pm–3pm. The entry cost is £2 per child. To book please call 01234 720016 or e-mail janet.munro@bedford.gov.uk.

Pond Dipping with Beds. Natural History Society

On Saturday April 16 2pm–4pm, Beds. Natural History Society will be running pond dipping sessions in Kingfisher Lake. In the first instance participants should come to the table that will be set up on the picnic site in front of the café to register their interest. For more information contact Janet Munro on 07585 908821.

Janet Munro - Country Park Guardian

Photos courtesy of Trevor Sudds

STEVINGTON SOCIAL CENTRE 100 CLUB

Winners of the last three draws are as follows:

Dec	1st	No 79	M Stalley
	2nd	No 99	R Cox
	3rd	No 62	C Atkin
	4th	No 80	A Sutcliff
	Hamper	No 8	B Pheasant



Jan	1st	No 5	M Morris	Feb	1st	No 2	R Penney
	2nd	No 11	S Cole		2nd	No 5	M Morris
	3rd	No 23	J Blaney		3rd	No 17	G Puckett
	4th	No 29	W Dickson		4th	No 52	J Day

There are still some numbers available so come and join - you might be lucky. Application forms from the Church Room or Bob and Anna Hart (823769)

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