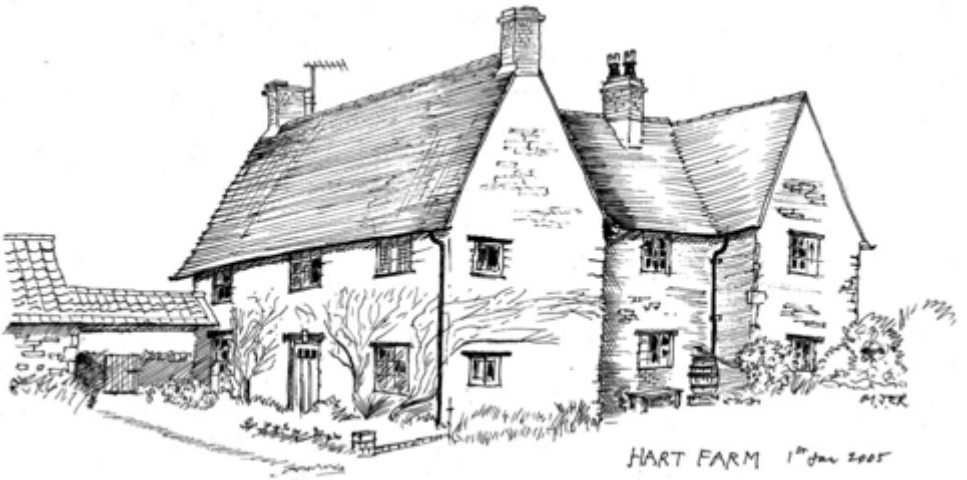


STEVINGTON MAGAZINE



JUNE 2020
Number 193

VILLAGE DIARY

Because of the uncertainty resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic there is no Village Diary in this edition. We hope that in September it will be jam packed with events taking place in the village.

In the meantime, as lockdown is eased, please keep an eye out for posters round the village and check the Stevington Support Facebook group and the websites and Facebook pages of the pubs, village organisations and the churches to keep up to date with what is happening.



**Thank you
to everyone who has
helped friends, neighbours,
strangers and the wider
community during this
difficult time.**

NEXT MAGAZINE

The next edition of the Stevington Magazine should be delivered sometime around 5-6 September 2020. The last day for receipt of copy for that Magazine is Sunday 23 August 2020. Articles should reach Heather and Keith Parkinson (Old Paddock, Church Road, Tel. 826677, email stevington.magazine@googlemail.com) on or before that day.

HELLO STEVINGTON!

This has been an odd edition of the Magazine to put together as all of the planned village events were cancelled and nothing can be planned going forward. We had no idea whether anyone would provide articles – but you did – so thank you for that! We have a new regular feature, “Farming News”, written by our local farmers.

A busy weekend of village events on 8 to 10 May to celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE Day had to be cancelled. However, in true Stevington style, the bunting, flags and balloons still went up and lots of residents enjoyed socially distancing afternoon tea in the street or their gardens. It was a lovely afternoon with true village spirit. To mark the occasion we have added a colour montage of photographs in the centre of the Magazine. Thank you to everyone who sent us their pictures – we are just sorry that we couldn't use them all.

It is wonderful how the village has come together (2 metres apart) to show our appreciation for the NHS and other key works each Thursday evening. It was called ‘clapping’ but included banging saucepans, whistles, music and singing.

Many people have found that they have been able to spend more time in their gardens and Stevington is looking wonderful. It was so disappointing that the Open Gardens had to be cancelled but instead Friends of St. Mary's have organised ‘Virtual’ Open Gardens. See page 15. The gardens are beautiful – well done everyone.

It is also disappointing that the local football season has been voided. You'll see from page 22 that Stevington was doing very well with the first team having been unbeaten this season.

Some village organisations are suffering financially at the moment so if you are able to support them please do so – Sailing Club (page 20), Village Hall 100 Club (page 27) and St. Mary's Church (page 26).

Stay safe everyone and let's hope that we will soon be able to meet all of our friends and neighbours in person and that the village can get back to some kind of ‘normal’.

Heather and Keith

Photographs as credited. Cover drawing by Mike Robinson

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.



THANK YOU STEVINGTON

What a wonderful village we live in full of friendly, helpful caring people. This awful situation has certainly highlighted our personal needs etc.

My very personal thanks go, in particular, to Jean & Richard, Julia, Anthony and to every other person who has contacted me offering help or just simply to have a chat.

I'm so pleased that we discovered this village when passing through in 1965 – what a place to live!

Take great care of yourselves Spike Islanders. Hopefully lockdown will soon be lifted and we'll return to some sort of normality. My love and thanks to you all.

Barbara Collins

THANK YOU

Chris's family would like to thank everyone for their kindness over the past few weeks. We have been deeply touched by the messages of condolence and affectionate comments. It is very clear why Chris loved the village so much, where his friends were so supportive.

There will be a gathering at the Royal George later in the summer, to give Chris a proper send-off, and we look forward to seeing you there.

Clare Page (Boniface)

DELIA ANNETTE LEE

My wife Delia died on 18 March 2020 aged 77. Delia and I moved to 7A Court Lane in September 1989. Delia was diagnosed with Alzheimers Dementia in February 2010, and in November 2016 moved to residential care in Bedford.

Delia was laid to rest in St Mary's Churchyard on 2 April as she wanted. Due to COVID-19 restrictions it has not been possible to hold the funeral service that Delia had previously documented some 15 years ago. A memorial service will be organised once restrictions have been lifted.

The family and I are grateful for the cards and messages we have received in the days and weeks following Delia's death.

Thank you

Keith Lee

DO YOU NEED HELP?

Do you require a babysitter? Or maybe help with your pets such as dog walking, cat feeding or chicken feeding? Then call Lottie Jackson on 07949 262424.

STEVINGTON COMMUNITY SHOP

As mentioned in our last communication we promised to let you know as soon as circumstances changed with regard to opening the shop.

We are pleased to tell you that as from Monday 1 June we have been opening in the mornings Monday to Saturday 10 to 12. Hopefully if everything goes to plan we will open in the afternoons in the not too distant future.

At this moment in time we have a group of willing volunteers prepared to step in, for the time being, until life gets back to normal.



We have had a risk assessment and will be running the shop according to the suggestions given.

Looking forward to seeing you all. Best wishes.

Jackie, Sarah, Doreen and June

CHRIS BONIFACE

Stevington has lost a well-loved local character with the passing of Chris Boniface after a short illness.

Chris was born in Haslemere, Surrey, and lived for a short while on the Isle of Wight. He retained an affection for the Island and regularly spent his summer holiday there.



The son of Raymond and Barbara Boniface, he was the third child and had three sisters. Raymond was Personnel Manager for the Post Office in Bedford and built the house on the Pavenham Road which was called *Tankards* (now *Midway*). This was originally the brick yard

cottage. The family lived there throughout Chris's childhood, waiting for planning permission to develop the property. Clare Boniface recalls: 'While Tankards was being built, my parents and I lived in the garden throughout the summer, and right up until Christmas. My father built a polythene construction which was like a house, and we had the furniture laid out inside. However, Chris was staying in Carlton during that time, with our sister, Anne, and her husband, John Geerts. It is quite an example of the eccentric family life we had!. For the first few years they had no electricity.'

Chris lived at 'Tankards' until 2010 when he moved into the village with his elderly mother at no. 9 Park Road.

Chris trained as an engineer and worked for a time at Harrold leather factory, maintaining the machinery.

Interested in all sorts of machinery, Chris loved tractors and for many years used to help Fred Young at *Sanfoin Farm* at Pavenham. He also helped 'Paddy' then of *The Spinney* on Pavenham Road with his traction engine at various fairs and meetings.

He worked with the Council and was responsible for the reed cutting machine which he deployed on the Ouse in Bedford. He also worked maintaining the county's water pumps. For a while he worked at Bedford Modern School in charge of maintenance.

He supported the pubs enthusiastically and the darts and skittle teams in particular.

He often ran the bar for local social events, and regularly cut the grass at Pavenham Playing field.

Chris loved the Sailing Club and was an active member for more than 50 years. As its Site Officer he kept the compound in good order and maintained the lawnmowers and outboard motors. He frequently tut-tutted over the state of the boats and their obstruction of his grass cutting.

He loved the summer barbecues and the opportunity to cook (and eat) some sizeable haunches of meat. He was always on hand to help when the club organised RYA training courses for the children at the compound or elsewhere and when they competed in local regattas.

He was a kind, helpful and decent man in every respect and will be sadly missed.

From his friends

ALAN AKA 'BONES'

After the sad passing of my beloved and cherished husband, Alan, loving father of our two daughters, I would like to thank everyone for your loyal support and respect.

Alan loved living in Stevington. He loved being part of village life from socialising in the pubs to delivering meat to neighbours, which earned him the nickname of 'Bones', not to mention the many occasions that he catered for friends and village functions, which he always enjoyed and took great pride in.

Due to these strange COVID-19 days, Alan's funeral was not as anyone would have predicted. It was both moving and heart-warming to travel to the church in the midst of so much love and respect for him. I feel so lucky that, at this time of uncertainty and isolation, I am living within such a caring community. Stevington is a very special place.

I know Alan would have been emotionally overwhelmed by the response of friends and neighbours who stood in the rain, under their umbrellas on a cold, wet day to show their respect and support for him, for me, and my family at this heart-breaking time. I wish to reiterate my greatest thanks for everyone's kind wishes, help and support. I have found much solace in the messages within the many cards I have received confirming how well Alan was thought of and reminding me of many happy memories - he was a very special man and I will miss him so much.

I hope Alan will be remembered as the kind and gentle man that I believe he was and am hoping that, in the not too distant future, we will be able to celebrate his life with a memorial service, shared with all our friends and neighbours.

Love to you all, stay safe,

Sandra

WASTE COLLECTIONS

| Month | Rubbish | Recycling | Green |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| June | 2, 16, 30 | 9, 23 | 23 |
| July | 14, 28 | 7, 21 | 21 |
| August | 11, 25 | 4, 18 | 18 |
| September | 8, 22 | 1, 15, 29 | 15 |

REMEMBERING ALAN

Dear Alan or Bones as he was commonly known when we first came to the village - he was a very dear friend to both Brian and me.

He was a very good butcher and supplied the pub and most of the villagers with top quality meat usually delivered to your home or collected from the Lion at early doors on a Friday. I do however remember one memorable occasion when he delivered Bill and Joan Wills finest sirloin steak through the letter box when they had gone away for the weekend. He wasn't that perfect!

Alan and Sandra were superb cooks and if you were fortunate enough to have them catering for your event you knew nothing could go wrong. When I became chairman of the village hall I decided to launch the season with a May Ball and enlisted Alan and Sandra on a volunteer basis. The evening was a great success and I helped in the kitchen and Alan made no bones about it (excuse the pun) that I was never to help him in the kitchen again!

Alan loved to fish and he and his mates (Micky was one of them) used to book a cottage and set off for a weekend of fishing. This was a men only event and on one occasion they took Brian - I can't imagine why as he was no fisherman. He made a big mistake however of becoming enchanted by the sheep in the adjoining field and was even giving them names. In a party of men this was not a good idea. For years after he got sheep themed cards and gifts on his birthday.

Alan was a very romantic man; he adored and was very proud of his wife Sandra and when he was well he bought her flowers every week.

He was a film buff and an avid reader - he was never a member of our book club but he submitted more reviews than Sandra. He was also a very clever man if you were struggling with the meaning of a big word he would always have the answer. Terry and he would always be doing the Telegraph crossword early doors in the George.

Sadly, we haven't seen much of Alan in the past few years as his health deteriorated. I have always called round when I walk Winnie. I rather think Alan looked on it as a mixed blessing but when he was well enough he always made a coffee in the morning but on a sunny afternoon it could be a glass of wine.

Alan we are going to miss you but you have left us with some wonderful memories.

Anne and Brian Westbrook



The Garden Rooms

BED & BREAKFAST. STAGSDEN

Luxury guest accommodation for you or your guests.
Homemade cake on arrival.

All rooms ensuite, bathrobes, homemade biscuits on hospitality tray.
Flat screen TV's, own guest lounge.
Top quality breakfast served with eggs from our own chickens.
Doubles, twins, and a family room available.

Please ring Joanne for room rates

01234 823454

email: gardenrooms10@hotmail.co.uk

www.gardenrooms-bandb.co.uk

10 Bedford Road, Stagsden



W&H PEACOCK AUCTIONEERS & VALUERS

Weekly Auctions

Visit the Bedford Auction Centre to enjoy
the excitement of a live auction.

Antique & Modern Furniture • Clocks • Books
Ceramics & Glassware • Pictures & Prints
Bicycles • Jewellery & Watches • Collectables
Garage Tools & Equipment • Household Electrical Items
Office Furniture & Equipment • Retail Products & Stock
Vehicles • Horticultural & Commercial Equipment
Building Materials • Garden Furniture & Effects

Eastcotts Park, Wallis Way, Bedford MK42 0PE 01234 266 366 peacockauction.co.uk

THE
RED LION
FREE HOUSE
STEVINGTON



The destination is
on your doorstep

**Now serving takeaway food
Wednesday to Sunday**

We are offering delicious gourmet takeaway dishes, from curry and pasta to pub classics and mouth watering daily specials, as well as our renowned Sunday roasts.

To the many of you who have already enjoyed our food through these tough times we want to say a huge thank you for your support from all of us at the Red Lion.

Please see our website and Facebook page for our menu, serving times and information about our daily specials.



The Red Lion. 1 Park Road, Stevington, Bedford, MK43 7QD

Visit: www.redlionstevington.co.uk

Tel: 01234 823946 Email: hello@redlionstevington.co.uk



STEVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Councillors:

Paul O'Flynn (Chair)

Pete Fisher (Vice Chair)

Janet Day

Andrew Lockwood

Lucy Norton

James Lockwood

Jane Thomas

Tricia Lennie (Clerk)

Neighbourhood Development Plan

We are delighted to inform everyone that the Stevington Neighbourhood Development Plan has been submitted to Bedford Borough Council. Our understanding is that owing to COVID-19 restrictions voting on the plan is unlikely before May 2021. As the plan has now been submitted to the Borough it will hold some weight in planning decisions. We would like to thank everyone for all their efforts in getting the plan to this stage.

Stevington Support during the COVID-19 pandemic

At the last Parish Council meeting it was agreed we would set up a group of volunteers to support any residents in the village who might have to self-isolate. We have 20 plus volunteers who have undertaken tasks such as shopping. One of the regular jobs has been collecting and delivering prescriptions for any residents over the age of 60 from Harrold Medical Practice. The Parish Council would like to thank them all for their support and willingness to respond quickly to any requests for assistance. Their input has been so helpful to many residents and the Parish Council will be considering continuing to maintain a small pool of volunteers once all the restrictions are lifted.

As well as these volunteers the Parish Council would like to acknowledge the support offered by many others to friends and neighbours. The village has provided a safety net during the restrictions and many people have used the Stevington Support Facebook group to keep in touch.

As well as the kindness and neighbourliness of residents to each other the Parish Council would also like to thank The Royal George, The Red Lion and the Reggae Hut for providing delicious take away meals. We hope the support for their services will help them to keep going until business can resume as normal.

This continues to be a difficult and challenging time for us all though we have the compensation of living in a beautiful place with opportunities to walk and enjoy our surroundings. The Parish Council would like to thank everyone for doing all they can to help contain the pandemic by observing the social distancing guidance. We look forward to a lifting of the restrictions when we can all meet up again. Until then if you or a neighbour requires support please contact Janet Day on 07843 642867.

The Village Hall

The village hall is now closed until further notice. The committee has been working hard to undertake some maintenance and improvement during this time of closure.

The William Barringer Charity

Stevington Parish Council is pleased to announce the appointment of Daniel Norton as the Parish Council representative on the William Barringer Charity. As someone very interested in constitutional matters Dan will ensure that the Parish Council's interests are upheld and will work with the trustees for the greater good of the people of North Bedfordshire. We wish him well in his new role.

Playground

The playground has now been closed for several weeks in line with government guidance. The annual safety report prepared by ROSPA has been received and will be reviewed by the Parish Council to set up a programme of work to keep the playground in a safe condition.

Windmill

The renovation and restoration of the mill sails to the windmill body has been delayed due to the ongoing restrictions around COVID-19; we are in communication with the Borough Council who will provide us with a further update once the works are rescheduled. We are hopeful the work can be completed before the Heritage Weekends in September and that a demonstration of the mill sails turning can be arranged, but again this is dependent on the easing of current restrictions. We will look to provide a more detailed update in the next edition of the magazine.

Planning

We have had several planning applications over the last few months and we would like to thank residents for their support.

Jane Thomas

Email: clerk@stevington-pc.gov.uk

Internet: www.stevington-pc.gov.uk

Windmill photo courtesy of John O'Reilly

BEDFORD BOROUGH NEWS

My first 12 months as your new Borough Councillor has been very interesting! With no one expecting Stevington, the borough or country to be in the situation we find ourselves in today, we can also be certain that when this is over things will not return to how they were.

The last twelve months started with Pat Olney standing down after 16 years as the Borough Councillor for Stevington, Pavenham & Oakley (plus a previous 17 years as Councillor for the old Oakley Ward). Pat served the community tirelessly over this time and has left big shoes to fill. The Borough Council officially recognised Pat's service to the community by making her an Honorary Alderwoman at a ceremony held in January, at the Harpur Suite. The overall shape of the council did not change at the election, with a Liberal Democrat/Labour executive plus Doug McMurdo the independent Councillor for Sharnbrook. This has meant continuity for the Borough and the services provided.

Transport

There has been major infrastructure work carried out on roads across the borough, with the implementation of the Transporting Bedford 2020 plan, which has looked to improve traffic flows on some major roads in both the north and the south of the town. The works on Manton Lane were designed to try and improve traffic flows around Bedford Modern School, by increasing the width of the road, providing a dedicated filter lane for the school and reinstating the footbridge that was removed over 10 years ago. All works apart from the footbridge have now been completed and the bridge is still due to be installed over the summer. There will also be further improvement works carried out to the roundabout at the end of Paula Radcliffe Way to install traffic lights to help the peak-time flows.

Work has also been ongoing at Britannia Road by the hospital to help improve the flow on this major artery; due to finding additional utilities under the road that required moving and also the COVID-19 pandemic this work has slipped and should now be finished by the end of June. Works will then start at the Cowbridge Junction and on to rebuilding Ampthill Road. The Council also found itself having to rebuild the A6 Bypass at Wilstead after the road collapsed and now that work is completed, they will start on the Ampthill Road beyond the Interchange Park.

Unfortunately, as all of this was going on Network Rail, as part of their plans to electrify the Midland Mainline north of Bedford, decided to

close Bromham Road to replace the central part of the road bridge over the railway. This was done with little consultation to the Council and caused additional traffic to be funnelled through the village and over the narrow river bridges. This work is finally due to be completed in the summer. As part of this the bridge parapets on overbridges have had to be raised or replaced, this has led to the parapets on Highfield Road, Oakley being raised with GRP pieces that the Council does not feel is appropriate for the location, and this has been raised a number of times by the Borough with Network Rail to see if a more suitable alternative can be found. This currently has temporary planning permission, with the hope that something more suitable will be put forward for the permanent permission.

Local Plan

This was finally adopted at the Full Council held on 15 January, with work starting immediately on the next Local Plan to run until at least 2040. The inquiry for the Bedford Borough Plan was held over the summer of 2019, and there were few major changes recommended by the inspectors, before the plan could be formally made. During the time of the plan being inspected Bedford Borough was subjected to a large number of speculative applications for major development, due to a change in how the potential land supply for housing was calculated; this meant that some schemes that would not have been part of the Bedford Borough Local Plan, or individual Neighbourhood Development plans had to be passed by the planning committee.

Council Tax

Just prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Borough Council budget was agreed with an increase of 1.85% in Council Tax plus 2% for adult social care. This allowed for a balanced budget that meant that at the time there would be no cuts to services. Events have overtaken the Council since then and a further budget is now proposed for June 2020.

COVID-19

It would be remiss not to finish on this current topic. This has caused the most major change in lifestyle that pretty much anyone alive will have experienced. The way local communities have rallied round to support one another has been very heartening to see. At the end of March the Council set up The Community Hub, in conjunction with CVS, to help ensure that the elderly and vulnerable people were supported. This has been (and continues to be) manned by Council staff, who along with over 600 volunteers, have been delivering food parcels, care

packages and offering assistance with shopping and other services. Thank you to everyone who has been involved, either offering support within the village or with the Hub or any one of the other groups who have been providing assistance.

Councillor Jon Abbott

Telephone 07784 549180

Email jonathan.abbott71@icloud.com

The Friends of ST MARY'S CHURCH

Virtual Open Gardens

Social distancing and the subsequent lockdown caused the cancellation of the open gardens event we had planned to take place in June. Ironically, inspired by the beautiful spring weather and facilitated by large amounts of time spent at home an unprecedented amount of gardening took place in the village.



In an effort to record the beautiful gardens we decided to hold a virtual open gardens, the gallery of photographs can be seen by visiting the Friends of St. Marys Church web page: <https://fosmstevington.uk/gardens/>

At the time of writing around 30 Stevington gardens have been submitted, they are absolutely lovely and a credit to their owners.

Viewing the photographs is completely free but we have added an option on the website for anyone to make a voluntary donation if they wish to.

Disabled access to the Church Room

Friends of St. Marys Church has awarded further funding to this project to facilitate the PCC in obtaining planning permission and building control drawings for disabled access to the Church Room.

We have no fund-raising activities planned due to the present COVID-19 circumstances but we are committed to bringing some great events to the village and get back to our fundraising activities as soon as we possibly can.

John Duffield

LOCAL POLICING

I'm PC Kerry Jones and I work alongside PC Amanda Harvey and PCSO James Dancer as the local community officers for a number of areas, including Stevington. We want to take this opportunity to reassure you that although the last few weeks have been strange and worrying, the coronavirus pandemic hasn't stopped us from policing and we are still out and about on regular patrols.



Although it is an incredibly challenging time for us at the moment, we continue to carry out the day-to-day work protecting people in our communities, as well as making sure that people are adhering to the government guidance during this time.

However, there have also been a lot of positives, as we have seen the very best of communities looking out for each other and clapping for carers every Thursday evening. It has been lovely seeing all the rainbows in the windows and the chalk artwork on the ground that children have taken their time to create.

So as we continue to battle this virus, we are asking you to continue playing your part in helping prevent the spread by staying alert and taking a reasonable approach to the government's latest guidance. If you do wish to report breaches of activity, you can do so via the force's online reporting centre (www.bedfordshire.police.uk/report/Report) rather than contacting us on 101, as this will help us prioritise incoming reports and allocate appropriate resources. Any information you do provide will help us to inform our proactive patrols and gain intelligence on the pattern of COVID-19 breaches. For information visit the government guidance section on the Coronavirus pandemic.

Don't forget you can also get up-to-date information on the work we are doing in your area by following us on Twitter at @bedspolicerural.

You can also follow Bedfordshire Police on Facebook, on Twitter @bedspolice or on Instagram @bedspoliceuk – we are continuing to use the hashtag #KeepingBedsSafe to highlight the work we are doing alongside our partners to protect our communities.

Please stay alert and do what you can to help us keep Bedfordshire safe.

PC Kerry Jones

Stevington Guitar Concerts

For the first time since we started putting on gigs in Stevington we had to cancel a concert. J P Cormier was travelling from Cape Breton in Canada and Tim Edey was coming for a second visit to the village in May, but COVID-19 scotched those plans. We have reimbursed our sell out audiences and as a thank you for the tremendous support we receive decided not to deduct the online sales costs we incur.

We have rearranged the gig to take place on 7 and 8 May 2021.



Our next gig is planned for 14 November when Catfish Keith will be bringing some traditional slide blues to the Ouse delta.

Cutting-edge blues singer, songwriter and bottleneck slide guitarist Catfish Keith has established himself as one of the most exciting country blues performers of our time. Catfish's innovative style of foot-stomping, deep delta blues and American roots music has spell-bound audiences the world over.

He has reinvented the guitar with great power and artistry and brings a rare beauty and vitality to his music.

Handing down the tradition, Catfish continues his lifelong journey as one of the brightest lights in acoustic blues and roots music.

As things stand Catfish is planning to come to the UK in the autumn but keep an eye on the website and our Facebook page because a great deal has got to change for the gig to be able to go ahead. We are keeping positive thoughts but will keep you updated.

Thank you for your fantastic support.

John Duffield

www.stevingtonguitarconcerts.co.uk

COWLEY Di GIORGIO

SOLICITORS

63 HARPUR STREET
BEDFORD
MK40 2SR

Telephone: (01234) 218171

Fax: (01234) 327632

email: cowley@cowleydigiorgio.co.uk

Local, friendly and professional hair and beauty at affordable prices.

Offering quality colouring, cutting and styling services, as well as beautiful nails and pampering. All in the comfort of your own home.

Manicures £20 (£25 with gel polish)

Pedicures £20 (£25 with gel polish)

Eyebrow Shape and Tint £17

Blowdry £12

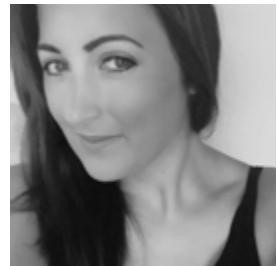
Eyebrow Shape £10

Now offering an introductory offer for 1 month only on a 1 hour Spa Facial either in the comfort of your own home or in my beauty room at home in Milton Ernest at only £20. An offer not to be missed.

Price list of all services coming soon.

For other services and prices, or to book an appointment, please call 07763 098730

Find some time for you



**Rhian Elizabeth
Beautiful You**



Frances Newman
yoga • meditation • relaxation

Support your natural path to health and wellness with Restorative Yoga, meditation and essential oils

www.francesnewmanyoga.co.uk
email: francesnewmanyoga@gmail.com

07815 643 366

Save your time & money

For All Household Needs!

**Professional Affordable
Domestic Cleaning Company**

Regular / One off Cleans

Spring/After Party/House Move Cleans

Friendly Efficient Trustworthy Reliable
& Local!

Fully insured No contracts

References can be supplied

**Call for a free no obligation home
appraisal**

01234 306485 or 07821 700320

saveyourtimeandmoney@yahoo.co.uk
www.save-your-time.co.uk

**Remember to tell
advertisers you
found their details in
Stevington
Magazine**

**Antiques, Silver,
Coins and Jewellery
purchased**

Marylyn and Ray Wood
01933 353517
Malray@talk21.com

MS Tree Care



Martyn Smith
Arboriculturist with
over 10 years
experience

- All tree and hedge work undertaken
- 24 hour emergency call out
- Hedge cutting
- Stump grinding
- Fully insured



01234 851235 / 07712 050068
mstrecare@btinternet.com

BEDFORD SAILING CLUB



We're open! Strange times, unusual circumstances, different methods.

Observing government COVID-19 advice, the Sailing Club has recently re-opened its gates to members with various precautionary systems in place. For the time being, members are able to book an allocated time slot to allow for social distancing and can use a selection of club equipment for swimming, canoeing and kayaking to explore the river Great Ouse or just enjoy a picnic and BBQ at our idyllic riverside spot. We hope to return to normal free access as soon as the government restrictions are lifted.

A family membership is an absolute bargain at only £45 for the year! Villagers wanting to join the membership of this fantastic local facility or to book a time slot can contact Dave on daveabrear@aol.com or Hugo on hugovankempen0@gmail.com.

Chris Boniface RIP

The club is sad to have lost one of its longest serving members, Chris Boniface. Chris kept the club facilities in fabulous order for more than 5 decades. The sailing club will shortly erect a seat on the river bank in memory of Chris. See article on page 5.

Hugo van Kempen

VILLAGE DEFIBRILLATORS

To access these in an emergency situation, **please dial 999 immediately**. The call handler will provide you with the code for the cabinet lock.

The defibrillators are located in:

- Red telephone box near the cross in Church Road
- Yellow cabinet on front of Village Hall
- Yellow cabinet on front of Baptist Chapel Hall, West End.



STEVINGTON HISTORICAL TRUST

Registered Charity Number: 1086669

www.stevingtonhistoricaltrust.org.uk

As soon as the lock-down has eased sufficiently, the Trust will publish *The Stevington Enclosure Award 1807*. This will be the second work in the series *Stevington Historical Documents*.

The enclosure of the great mediaeval fields and the creation of many small fields with quickset hedges changed the landscape of the Village.

The book contains an explanation of why and how enclosure took place and the consequences. It also contains the full annotated text of the Award and the text of the *Carlton Chellington and Stevington Enclosure Act* of 1805 which enabled the Award. The Appendices show how the allotment of land by the Award Commissioners altered the holdings of individual landowners and also illustrate how the smaller farmers and cottagers lost out.

The book is spiral bound in 140 A4 pages with two A2 maps of the fields of the Pre-Enclosure Village and the Award Village. This work is not one for the faint-hearted and, accordingly, we are printing a very short run. The cost will be £20.00. Copies can be ordered on line or direct from Peter Hart.

A few copies of *St Mary's: History and Architecture* are still available at £25.00.

Peter Hart. 01234 823586

STEVINGTON CARPET BOWLS CLUB



Very little to say this quarter. Our AGM was postponed along with our club nights. There would not have been much on the agenda. Presumably the committee would have remained as it was as it is difficult to get new people to come forward. All other details would have stayed the same i.e. weekly subs of £2.00, raffle £1.00 and annual subs of £10.00 although the members were to decide whether this was to go down.

We have been in touch one way or another and we all appear to be missing each other - AAH!

Looking forward to seeing you all as and when we are able to reopen. Take care of yourselves.

Barbara Collins

STEVINGTON FOOTBALL CLUB

After what's been happening across the world with people facing the unprecedented challenges of coping with the COVID-19 Pandemic, everything else really pales into insignificance.....



As a result of the growing health concerns the Bedfordshire Football Association postponed all league fixtures after our games on 7 March. They then cancelled all league and cup competitions and voided all results to date shortly after the COVID-19 Lockdown was imposed on 23 March.

At that time both teams were having a very successful season so far and were well positioned in their respective cup competitions and the Premier and Third Divisions of the Bedfordshire County Football League as follows:

First Team

- Top of the **Premier Division** of 16 clubs – played 18, won 13, drawn 5, lost 0 with 44 points.
- **Bedfordshire FA Senior Trophy** – Runners up following 2-0 defeat to Stotfold First Team.
- **Britannia Cup** – through to quarter finals v Biggleswade FC Reserves.

Reserve Team

- 5th in **Third Division** of 14 clubs – played 16, won 10, drawn 0, lost 6 with 31 points.
- **Bedfordshire FA Junior Challenge Cup** – beaten by Sharnbrook FC who are currently a well placed 2nd in Division 2
- **Watson Shied** – Round 3 v Lidlington United Sports Club Firsts

Those that follow football will be aware of the rave reviews that Liverpool FC were getting for going so long unbeaten in the Premier League. Those that follow little Stevington FC will know that we surpassed their record and went the season unbeaten in the league, were runners up in our senior cup competition and still in the quarter finals of the prestigious Britannia Cup competition. We may not have received much coverage or acclaim in the local press (or indeed on the Bedfordshire County Football League or Bedfordshire FA websites) but everyone associated with the club is immensely proud of our achievements and the standard of football played throughout.

Unfortunately we were not able to retain the Bedfordshire FA Senior Trophy when we played Stotfold FC First Team (who play the equivalent of two Divisions above us) at Bedford Town's New Eyrie ground on 11 March. Although we had the first shot at goal further chances were hard to come by and we found ourselves 2-0 down at half time. Despite the team playing better in the second half we were unable to recover the deficit and the game finished 2-0, with the better side winning on the night - well done to all at Stotfold FC.

The Club will look back on the 2019/20 season with immense pride on what was achieved and what could have been achieved had the season been allowed run its normal course.

At present there is a lot of uncertainty as to when the 2020/21 season will commence, with the Bedfordshire FA already advising it is highly unlikely that the season will commence in September and that clubs will not be allowed to begin group training sessions until further notice (due to lack of insurance cover).

The club will spend the next few months preparing for next season and decide if there are enough players interested in signing on and committing themselves to be available week in week out to run two teams again.

Thanks to everyone that comes along and supports the team, whether it be at the matches or for the after game de-brief and special thanks to Nigel and the Royal George team for their continued support and sponsorship after all our matches.

Finally the Club would like to acknowledge how difficult the COVID-19 Pandemic has been for everyone, condolences to those that have lost loved ones and best wishes to all of you going forward.

Special thanks to all the key-workers; NHS, carers, emergency services, haulage, public transport, shopworkers, postal workers, refuse workers etc. that have kept the nation going. As well as all those that co-ordinate and give time helping with the local community support groups that have helped look after people in the village and local community. So be sensible, follow advice and guidelines so that we can all collectively beat this COVID-19 problem - Stay Safe and continue to support those that have supported you all during this difficult period!

Shane King

STEVINGTON WAVELENGTH PROJECT

When we launched the Stevington wavelength project in January 2019 we had no idea what a significant role it would play during a period of international lockdown a little over a year later.

The aim of the project was to help people in the village to be able to access online services and keep in contact with friends and relatives, share photos, download apps and combat isolation. The wavelength group held helpful and friendly monthly meetings until the lockdown and social distancing made such a huge impact to everyday life. Fortunately, by that time our wavelength WhatsApp group was well established and became a terrific alternative to our meetings. It has been used to share information, help fix bugs and glitches and even give advice about baking!



We are looking forward to being able to hold our monthly meetings again as soon as we can but until that time we will do our best to support anyone in the village who needs a bit of help to use the internet to keep in contact with friends and family or access services.

If you want to know more you can contact John Duffield by email duffieldjc@aol.com or phone 01234 822617 or get a message to Bob Collins, Robert Eadie or Roger Day.

John Duffield



ST MARY'S MATTERS

St Mary's is a member of the Chellington Team Ministry. The team clergy are the Revd. Jacqueline Curtis and the Revd. Peter Turnbull who live at 3, The Moor, Carlton MK43 7JR. Tel: 01234 720961 or email: chellingtonteam@gmail.com. The vicars have now been joined by the Revd. Lynne Sandle. If you need them

or require a pastoral visit at home, please don't hesitate to contact. For general enquiries contact the team office in Carlton. Tel: 01234 720262 or email: teamoffice@gmail.com.

It is an understatement to say that these last few months have brought about huge changes in the way we live and think. It has been a time of anxiety and concern for our families and friends and for all those across the country and the world who are at risk and have had to face very challenging conditions. We are all aware of and don't need to dwell on the negatives but on the positive and inspiring - on the way people have been able to show their compassion and willingness to come together and help each other with a good hearted desire to be of service. There are so many examples of people's amazing ability to cope with adversity and Stevingtonians have been more than equal to the occasion in their willingness to be a good neighbour. Thank you.

Many of us have been able to enjoy this wonderful Spring. Never have the countryside and our gardens been so abundant and beautiful and isn't the birdsong more noticeable?

It was with much regret that we had to close St Mary's over this time. All services and events had to be cancelled, and we were sorry that a planned Wedding at St Mary's had to be postponed. Two funerals have taken place and, although we couldn't participate, our thoughts and prayers have been with the families of Delia Lee and Alan Proud. The Churchyard is still open and is a place for quiet reflection. Although services will not be taking place in the Church, we are hoping that we may be able to open the building soon for people to come and sit quietly for personal prayer and contemplation.



Even though we have not been able to get together, our small band of merry parishioners have been keeping in touch by postcard, email and facetime - even that old fashioned device - the telephone! A socially distanced chat across the fence or a pathway has made all the difference. Our Chellington Team Clergy has provided online Zoom services from their home and meetings which have been successful and well attended. If you would like details of these, or help connecting, please ask.

A few years ago the Archbishop of Canterbury set up a new initiative called 'Thy Kingdom Come' to bring people together through prayer. In these uncertain times it is an opportunity to unite in prayer and care. It is a simple thing that we take for granted and are doing all the time in our community; let someone know we care and that we are praying and thinking of them. Pass it on!

Reverend Lynne, our Curate, has recently been furloughed. This has been hard for her as she is so committed to pastoral and spiritual care and adds so much help to our vicars and to our community, so we hope it won't be too long before she is able to recommence her job.

As yet, we cannot begin to plan for the way ahead and starting afresh with a new 'normal' but we do look forward to a time when we can enjoy the opportunity to get together in true Stevington fashion. In the meantime, keep well, stay safe and keep smiling.

Deep peace of the running waves to you

Deep peace of the flowing air to you

Deep peace of the quiet earth to you

Deep peace of the shining stars to you

Deep Peace of the Son of Peace to you.

A Celtic Prayer

From the Register:

| | | |
|------------------|------------|----------|
| <i>Funerals:</i> | Delia Lee | 2 April |
| | Alan Proud | 28 April |

Jane O'Connor and Robert Eadie, Churchwardens

STOP PRESS

We now have a method of making on line donations. If you go to St Mary's web site, <http://stmarysstevington.org.uk/>, you will find a link to the website where you can make an online donation to St Mary's.

STEVINGTON SOCIAL CENTRE 100 CLUB YOUR VILLAGE HALL NEEDS YOU!

Help your village hall and WIN £100! For only £5 per month you are helping to raise valuable funds to keep your fantastic village hall in good order whilst helping yourself to the chance of winning £100!

Unable to operate and raise revenue due to the current lockdown the village hall is in desperate need of funds. A dedicated team of volunteers help keep the building in good order throughout the year and with your help we can secure the future of the building until we re-open with our usual programme of films, theatre, ballet, opera, carpet bowls, table tennis, yoga, Pilates and private functions.

EVERY MONTH 4 lucky winners get £100, £50, £25 or £15 cash.

The 100 Club has several numbers available, so go on, try your luck and help save your village hall!

Contact Hugo on hugovan Kempen0@gmail.com or 01234 824894

These are the most recent lucky winners:

| | | | |
|------------|-----|------|------------------|
| Mar | 1st | № 43 | Heather Robinson |
| | 2nd | № 85 | Anna Hart |
| | 3rd | № 21 | Hillary O'Dell |
| | 4th | № 18 | Heather Eadie |
| Apr | 1st | № 32 | Dicky Sear |
| | 2nd | № 21 | Hillary O'Dell |
| | 3rd | № 84 | Bob Hart |
| | 4th | № 57 | Mary Murzyn |
| May | 1st | № 85 | Anna Hart |
| | 2nd | № 36 | Christine Sear |
| | 3rd | № 53 | James Surtees |
| | 4th | № 14 | Bob Westwood |



Hugo van Kempen





emmaus

DON'T BIN IT- DONATE IT

If you have things that you no longer want, or need, that can be reused don't throw them away. Donate instead and give them a new life.

Emmaus at Carlton has reopened for donations. Emmaus Village Carlton provides a home and meaningful work for formerly homeless adults. The site is open Wednesday to Sunday from 10.30am to 4pm. Items accepted include clothing, books, upholstered furniture with a fire label attached, electrical items less than 10 years old in good working order. Currently, Emmaus is not able to offer their collection service.

People wishing to make a donation **must book an appointment** before visiting. You can book an appointment by calling 01234 720826 during opening hours.

Angela Foll, Emmaus Village Carlton says "The closure of our site due to COVID-19 has closed our ability to generate income. We rely on the income from good quality donated items that we can sell in our shops to support up to 42 formerly homeless people living and working on our site". Visit www.emmaus.org.uk/village-carlton to find out more.

The Old House Building Company

Building & Restoration

Extensions & Renovations

12, Silver St, Stevington,
Bedfordshire, MK43 7QP

Tel: 07794 450 110

rogangeary@btinternet.com

Website: theoldhousebuildingcompany.co.uk



the 
café

AT
W&H PEACOCK
AUCTIONEERS & VALUERS

Eastcotts Park, Wallis Way,
Bedford, Bedfordshire
MK42 0PE

Visit
www.peacockscfe.co.uk
for more details and to view
our current menu.

01234 266 366



**View the salerooms for our upcoming auctions
and then relax with a coffee and a slice of cake.**

Our unique café in Bedford Auction Centre with free wi-fi and views
of the salerooms, comfortably seats over 100 customers.

We serve cooked breakfasts, paninis and sandwiches, light lunches
and snacks plus a range of hot and cold drinks.

10% OFF WITH THIS ADVERT
Mon-Thurs only T&C's apply Ref: Stevington

Open Monday to Thursday from 8.30am - 3.30pm
Extended opening on Friday to 7pm. Saturday 8.30am - 4pm
(Last orders 1 hour before closing)



Oakley.IT

maintain • IT
repair • IT
train • IT



3 in 1 recommended
pc repair company

Jan Rymarz – Principal IT Technician / Trainer

Fast PC and Laptop Repairs

Clear and Friendly Training

Fast and Efficient Service

Years of experience and services covering everything!

A few recent customer comments

"Great service"
"Trustworthy & reliable"
"Efficient & Affordable"
"Highly recommended"



07401 250 118

help@oakleyit.co.uk | www.oakleyit.co.uk





STEVEINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH

It has been three months since the last issue of Stevington Magazine and so much has happened in that short time. In the March issue we reported on our Shrove Tuesday soup and pancake lunch and gave out details of our planned VE Day Celebrations. Since then we have all learned new words - coronavirus, COVID-19, furlough, lockdown, self-isolation, super spreader and pandemic. The world has moved on at an amazing pace and as this magazine goes to press more than 363,000 people have cruelly lost their lives to this deadly disease. We have been unable to hold church services or even meet in small numbers and, of course, our joint VE Day church service and afternoon tea with St Mary's had to be called off.

A difficult time for everyone but we mustn't despair. Rainbows are very much in the news at present. They have become the unofficial campaign ribbon of the NHS and reappeared in many places to mark World Nurses Day on 12 May, highlighting the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale. There is something breath-takingly beautiful about that arc in the sky, especially set against the awesome darkness of a black thunder cloud and a bright sun emphasising the contrasting colours. In the Bible (Genesis 9) God makes a promise to Noah that He will never again flood the earth to destroy all living creatures. The sign of that covenant was the rainbow. God said: 'Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures. This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth.'

God's promises are as certain as His purpose. The cloud is man's sin; dimming or even blotting out the light and surely to be judged, but the rainbow speaks of grace, God's forgiveness and the hope of everyone who calls on the name of the Lord. We have so much for which we should be thankful.

In addition to our NHS what else have we to be hopeful and thankful for during this difficult time? Here are just a few things: courageous key workers, friends, neighbours, helpers, our houses and gardens, the fact that it isn't winter, blessings of spring flowers and fresh air, social media and technology, more time to read and do projects and more family time. Now we've had to slow down we notice so much more. With social distancing and isolation, we realise the importance of everyday small things and we recognise how much they matter. Remember, life is like a rainbow - you need both the rain and the sunshine to make its colours appear.

Many houses in Stevington joined the 75th VE Day Commemorations by decorating their houses with flags and bunting, with a few hosting socially distancing afternoon teas. Many thanks to Carol who decorated the outside of the church on behalf of the members and friends. Included on the notice board were poems, bible readings and photographs of veterans.



If you would like us to pray for you or a family member, in confidence, please email office@stevingtonbaptistchurch.org or telephone 824572.

Barbara Courtney



STEVINGTON VILLAGE HALL

As you all know we had to lock up the Hall and cancel a number of upcoming events following the Government advice. We were very sad to see the 12k run get called off, especially as so many people had already put in so much effort in early planning and volunteers were offering their services. Hopefully next year it will return even bigger and better. The Guitar Concert featuring J P Cormier & Tim Edey also had to be called off, not least because both guitarists were travelling internationally (Canada and Ireland). The good news is that both have agreed to try again on 7 and 8 May next year, by which time we hope the world will be in a better place.

Sadly, cancelling these events, together with the Cinema Club films and live streaming and growing commercial rentals meant we have lost a lot of forecast revenue. With the closure of the Hall we have closed or turned off everything we can. This has resulted in cutting our fixed costs to the bone. We successfully applied for a grant to tide us over from the Borough Council. This, together with reserves, means that we are confident we will be in a good position to open up again when we are able and we hope you will support the various events we are able to hold according to Government guidance.

On that point, the ongoing Hundred Club is a very valuable source of revenue that contributes to our fixed costs. Thank you to all who contribute. Anyone else who fancies a flutter with the opportunity to win fabulous prizes please get in touch with anyone on the committee, or info@stevingtonvillagehall.org.uk. Please also see the article on the 100 Club written by Hugo.

Whilst the Hall has been closed we have taken the opportunity to freshen up the toilets and entrance hall. The ladies, gents and disabled toilets have all been painted and we have smartened up their appearance with suspended ceilings and new lighting. The disabled toilet has also had an alarm fitted, and we are installing baby changing facilities. Thank you for the many people who volunteered to help with

this work, but with social distancing we felt we couldn't really put together a team. But our thanks go to Stuart Penney who put in a lot of time and effort. We have also replaced the ancient main fuse box (which we all believed to be a hazard) with a modern consumer unit. Our next job while the hall is closed is to freshen up the changing rooms.

We are planning a 'For What it's Worth' event. During the current lockdown I am sure many of us have put the time to good use and had a good clear out. A great way to dispose of all these unwanted items would be a 'For what it's Worth' event at the Village Hall - as and when restrictions allow. The benefits are twofold - you get rid of unwanted items and the Village Hall benefits from the proceeds. No fixed prices, items are literally sold for what someone else thinks it's worth. We ask that you stay with your goods on the day and take home those that don't sell - no clothes please! Further details when we are able to fix a date.

One upcoming event is the Guitar Concert featuring Catfish Keith on Saturday 14 November 2020. Catfish Keith is a virtuoso slide blues artist. See the Stevington Guitar Concert website for details (stevingtonguitarconcerts.co.uk).

We are very much looking forward to opening again when we can. We will be planning a big event to welcome all back to the Hall, along with our regular Cinema Club screenings.

We miss you all,

Roger Penney

SAALA

ALLOTMENTS



HEALTHY HOME GROWN FOOD. CHEAPER THAN A GYM MEMBERSHIP.

**Why Not Have Your Own Stagsden Allotment?
It's Great Fun & We Have a Vibrant
Social Association!**

**For more information contact:
Shane Hodson: 07885 439164 / 01234 823454**

**Full Plot £57 Half Plot £31
Qtr Plot £20**

STEVINGTON WOMEN'S INSTITUTE
TODAY'S WOMEN WORKING FOR TOMORROWS WORLD



The subject of our March meeting was a Holiday in Antarctica. Heather, one our members, and her husband Keith had visited Antarctica last year and gave an excellent talk accompanied by some stunning photographs of the area. The journey followed them from setting off from the southern tip of South America to Antarctica itself. It was a most detailed and informative talk and was enjoyed by all that attended.

Eleven days after this event we were in lockdown - all of us social distancing and keeping safe!

Recently a newsletter from Jacky, our president, together with our monthly magazine the W-Eye, was delivered to our members. Its format was somewhat different and included a quiz, gardening tips, a recipe and a craft project. From the archives there was a report of the AGM held on 6 June 1939. It was the last annual meeting before the war and none were held during the war years.

The committee this week attempted a Zoom meeting and thanks to Hilary's husband, Peter, we all eventually were able to see and hear one another! We have now arranged a further meeting in two weeks time and hopefully practice makes perfect.

We are hoping that in the Autumn we will be able to hold a plant and produce stall once the social distancing has been solved and flour supplies are more abundant for cake making. Any news of future events we will try to display at the Cross.

Please stay safe everyone.

Marilyn Billett

Affordable Occasions

Quality catering to suit your budget

01234 855272 01234 823764

www.affordable-occasions.co.uk

info@affordable-occasions.co.uk

~
*Finger & Fork
buffets for: birthdays,
weddings, christenings,
corporate functions and
all other occasions!*

~

OUR LOCK DOWN LIBRARY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STEVINGTON BOOK CLUB

Well who would have thought that since our last village magazine the world would have changed so much! Little did we know at our last book club meeting on 3 March that it would be the last for who knows how long!

However, our Book Club has not been inactive and we have been busily reading and recommending books to fellow members who now suddenly have time on their hands and can actually take time to read during the day! Something I have to admit I have always felt guilty in doing up till now. With Audible and BBC Sounds there are so many different opportunities to enjoy fiction. Some of us have found audio books a very special diversion and have accessed audio and ebooks from The Bedfordshire Virtual library.

Between us all we were creating quite a list and so it was Heather Parkinson's brilliant suggestion that Stevington Magazine readers might like to while away the time between exercise and Whatsapp/Skype/Zoom meetings to delve into this list from our village Book Club.

Our recommendations do relate to the state of mind of the reader at the time. Our April Book Club book was meant to be, 'My Dear I Wanted to Tell You' by Louisa Young – a highly acclaimed and gripping tale of the scars, both physical and mental, inflicted on soldiers and those at home during the First World War. Yes, you've guessed it! Many of us decided that this was not quite suitable material in the current circumstances.

However counter intuitive it may seem; it is true that many are searching for books that do mirror our present condition so, 'Love in the Time of Cholera' and Camus' 'La Peste' have been promoted in the media. Generally though, our approach has been to search for books providing escape in the time of virus. For this, many members have leapt to the crime/detective/murder mystery novel.

How strange that tales of murder have provided us with the most popular form of escape! The Peter James detective series featuring Superintendent Roy Grace of Brighton CID has been widely enjoyed. The Bryant and May Mysteries by Christopher Fowler are quirky and not in the general run of murder mysteries. Susan Hill's Simon Serrailer Detective Novels have been a favourite for many of us over some time.

If you're into forensics how about the Dr Ruth Galloway series about a forensic archaeologist called Elly Griffiths? 'The Lost Man' and 'The Dry' by Jane Harper will take you to the Australian Outback for your fill of intrigue and crime. Other titles recommended in this genre are 'The Mother-in-Law' by Sally Hepworth and the LJ Ross Mysteries about DCI Ryan. 'The Hunting Party' by Lucy Foley – features murder in the Scottish Highlands and lovers of crime thrillers will enjoy 'The Frieda Klein Series' which has been an out and out favourite.

If you're into Gallic charm 'The Red Notebook' by Antoine Laurain might touch the spot. Then back to Blighty perhaps you've been catching up on your long-standing reading list so that 'The Cazalet Chronicles' - an English Country house saga (there are 5 novels in the series) - by Elizabeth Jane Howard might scratch that itch. If you want to continue with a novel about genteel English village life, 'Major Pettigrew's Last Stand' by Helen Simonson might fit the bill though beware when explosions in village life lead to anger, resentment and prejudice – can that really happen in an English village?

'The House We Grew Up In' by Lisa Jewel and 'Into the Water' by Paula Hawkins author of 'Girl on a Train' had several book clubbers all reach for the word 'compelling'. The psychological thriller, 'The Dinner Party' by RJ Parker came under this description too. In 'Transcription' by Kate Atkinson we learn about an MI5 agent in Second World War. Jodi Picoult fans will enjoy 'The Pact' where she shows that she is not afraid to delve into controversial subjects. It is particularly pertinent with our present concern about mental health for all age groups but specifically young people.

Of a cheerier nature many members have taken to a non-fiction read. Biographies of John Peel, 'A Life in Music' and of Syd Barrett, 'Madcap' come highly recommended. 'Fingers in the Sparkle Jar' by Chris Packham is a different type of biography and shows how his Asperger's syndrome allows him to relate better to animals than to humans. The latest from Bill Bryson, 'The Body' has been wildly acclaimed – what talent that man has – it's been read by the author recently on Radio 4. 'Between Stops' by Sandy Toksvig, as one would imagine, is thoroughly entertaining – 'the view of my life from the top of the Number 12 bus' the book jacket announces. Jo Jo Moyes has long been on our radar. We raved about 'Me Before You' several years ago and now 'The Giver of Stars' gets our 5-star ticket.

For historical drama there's no need to go further than Kiran Millwood's 'The Mercies'. It is a gripping powerful historical drama and set in the remote Norwegian settlement of Vardo in 1600 when all the village men are killed in a catastrophic fishing accident and the women have to do what they will to survive.

During this time of 'freedom for the mind' many of us have taken to the classics with either a first or repeat read. 'The Diary of a Nobody' by George Grossmith could feature in my 8 desert island books. It is such an entertaining read and so worthy of rereading. We read a modern version in book club, 'The Diary of a Somebody' by Brian Bilston - a diverting read in current circumstances when we are apt to look back on life; even back to books we studied at school. With this in mind members have been rereading the classics and books they studied for GCSE and A level. I've enjoyed hearing Stephen Fry reading The Harry Potter Series – thanks to the Bedfordshire Virtual Library.

Contemporary TV series have encouraged us to either read prior to or after the dramatization. 'Normal People' by Sally Rooney has proved highly popular on the small screen with our members madly trying to read ahead of transmission.

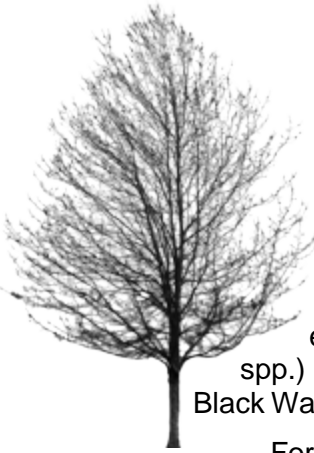
As a book group we have enjoyed several novels based on the classics. 'The Other Bennet Sister' by Janice Hadlow and 'Northanger Abbey' by Val McDermid fall into this category. For a Pakistani version of a Jane Austen how about 'Unmarriageable' by Sonia Kamal?

For several of us 'Where the Crawdads Sing' by Delia Owens has come at the very top of our lockdown list. Many of us have found it to be unputdownable and have had to ration our reading to prolong pleasure—this is what lockdown has done to us! The novel is set in the marshlands of the Carolinas and features a girl who has been gradually abandoned by family members and how she survives through her growing understanding of her amazing environment.

We are all very mindful that our august Book Club is very much of a certain and specific demographic but we do hope that that this list might be helpful and provide opportunities for many entertaining hours of reading be it in lockdown or not.

Jan Follett and The Stevington Book Club

TREES FOR SMALL GARDENS



Trees in small gardens offer structure to the garden, dappled shade and shelter for wildlife.

Some offer more carbon capture than others. There is currently insufficient research to give a definitive list. It is suggested that those which have large leaves, grow fast and live long are better - the larger and older the tree the most effective at carbon capture. The Oak (*Quercus* spp.) is the best tree, followed by Horse Chestnut, Black Walnut, London Plane, Liquidambar and Douglas Fir.

For now we are concerned with the relatively shorter term, small tree for our domestic gardens in Stevington. Generally speaking, it would be wise not to site a tree close to a building, path or roadway. Before we go to the garden centre it is important to consider the ultimate required height and spread of the new tree. As well as its season of interest including flowering, attractive fruits, autumn colour, attractive foliage or bark. Deciduous trees give you leaves to make into leafmould or add to the compost whilst evergreen leaves take longer to rot down in a black plastic sack.

Those small garden trees which seem to be the most carbon friendly would be Dogwood such as *Cornus kousa* John Slocock, the *Catalpa bignonioides* (Bean tree) or Maple species.

Royal Horticultural Society's top smaller trees include:

- *Acer griseum*: slow growing small spreading tree, Chestnut brown peeling bark, interesting summer foliage, autumn colour.
- *Amelankier x grandiflora* Ballerina: small branching tree, spring flowers, small fruits, attractive to wildlife.
- *Arbutus unedo* Atlantic (Strawberry Tree): compact, dense, free flowering evergreen, flowers for bees, berries for birds, shelter.
- *Crataegus persimilis* *Prunifolia* (Hawthorn): 'Prunifolia' is a small, broad-crowned deciduous tree with long thorns and glossy broad-oval leaves. Flowers in spring for bees. Dramatic red and orange autumn colour. Flowers white; fruits deep red.
- *Malus Evereste* (Crab apple): 'Evereste' is a small deciduous tree, broadly conical in outline, with more or less lobed leaves. Flowers white, opening from red buds; fruit yellowish-orange.

- Prunus Amanogawa (Cherry): is a small, narrowly fastigiata deciduous tree with slightly fragrant, semi-double, pale pink flowers in late spring; in autumn, the leaves turn orange and red.
- Prunus mume Beni-chidori (Cherry): is a small deciduous tree producing notable deep pink, highly-scented flowers in late winter/early spring that fade to paler pink with age. They are occasionally followed by edible but bitter, yellow fruits.
- Salix purpurea 'Pendula': is a small deciduous tree, usually grafted as a standard at 2-3m, forming a broad, pendulous crown of slender arching purple shoots with narrow leaves, glaucous beneath and slender catkins, to 2.5cm, opening with the leaves. Shelter for wildlife.
- Sorbus Joseph Rock (Mountain Ash): 'Joseph Rock' is an upright tree with pinnate leaves which turn orange, red and purple in autumn, contrasting with the butter-yellow berries for birds.
- Stewartia sinensis (Chinese stewartia): is a small, spreading deciduous tree with peeling papery brown and purple bark, and ovate leaves 5-10cm long turning bright crimson in autumn. Slightly fragrant white flowers 4-5cm across, open in mid-summer.
- Styrax hemsleyanus: An attractive, spreading, open branched tree with racemes of white bell shaped flowers that have golden stamens in May-June. Foliage is medium sized and mid-green making a good foil for the white flowers and other plants before turning red and gold in the autumn. Casts light shade. Bee friendly.

Susan Young



Anne Stileman Bursary Fund

Are you a resident of Stevington, studying art, photography, graphic design or visual arts?

Would a grant help you with equipment, travel or research costs?

**Applications for support are open all year round.
For information about how to apply email the Clerk at
clerk@stevington-pc.gov.uk**

Browns of Stagsden...

A proper farm shop on a proper working, family run farm...

YOUR LOCAL FARM SHOP FOR 2020

- ◆ Home reared and local meat & poultry
- ◆ Local vegetables
- ◆ Deli counter
- ◆ Homemade pies
- ◆ Tea room (Breakfasts, Light Lunches & homemade cakes)

OPENING TIMES

Tuesday - Thursday 9am - 5pm

Friday 9am - 6pm

Saturday 9am - 4pm

Manor Farm Stagsden MK43 8SH

Phone: 01234 822330

www.brownsfstagsden.co.uk



Save Your Time

PROFESSIONAL QUALITY IRONING SERVICES

- 24h service available
- Free collection and delivery direct to your home or office

All work guaranteed – references available
Fully insured service

A LARGE BAG COSTS £35

Tel: 01234 306485 or 07821 700320
saveyourtimeandmoney@yahoo.co.uk
www.save-your-time.co.uk

LEO

BOOKKEEPING SERVICES

Lucie Howard

01234 247507 07900 274690 lucie@leobs.co.uk

Bookkeeping
Accountancy
Payroll

www.leobs.co.uk



Mason's Walling

All kinds of **dry stone** and **mortared stone walling** work, from repairs to new build, from field walls to garden features.



DSWA professional member, fully insured.

Visit masonswalling.co.uk, call Tim on 07852 230745 or email masonswalling@hotmail.co.uk

... for beautiful walls that last

Stevington Baptist Church



Here to serve, support and encourage our community: seeking to bring fun and joy to church life

In light of the Government guidance around non-essential contact, we regret to announce that public worship at Stevington Baptist Church is suspended until further notice. Please check our Facebook page for further updates. We will put posters up in the village when our services and events are able to resume.

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy, in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may rejoice in your comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

www.stevingtonbaptistchurch.org

www.facebook.com/stevingtonbaptistchapel

office@stevingtonbaptistchurch.org

FARMING NEWS JUNE 2020

Some of the farmers working land within the parish thought it would be a good idea to keep everyone briefed with what we are doing every three months. This will keep you all involved with what's going on and hopefully explain why we do what we do and how it may affect you. We are not going to hold back - for example, if we are applying pesticides or fertilisers which may make you anxious, we're going to tell you why we do it - sprays and fertiliser cost a great deal of money so we'll always try **not** to spray anything without much consideration first.

This is the time of year when the first surge of spring growth has ended and the arable crops you can see in the fields are reaching their seed or grain development stage. There will be another surge in grass's vegetative growth in September but not as fierce as the one between March and the end of May. You may notice this corresponds with the regularity of mowing your lawn.

By now all the nitrogen fertiliser will have been applied to the wheat but if anyone is growing hard milling wheat for bread-making, about 40 Kg nitrogen per hectare will be kept back to keep the protein levels above 13%. If necessary, one more fungicide will be applied to the cereals' ears to protect against fusarium, mycotoxins and other late ear diseases such as mildew.



The 'country smell' you may have experienced on VE day came from Top Field and Shining Hill at Duck End Farm where the spring barley had Anaerobic Digestate (AD) from Biogen applied. AD is the product that is processed from out-of-date waste food (mainly yoghurt and pre-pack sandwiches). It is very high in nitrogen and other plant nutrients, it ticks all the latest **sustainability** boxes and it is very cheap. The disadvantages are that it's not for every farm as the large and heavy kit required is difficult to manoeuvre up narrow access roads and if the fields are hilly the service tankers struggle for grip - we probably will not do this again as we were lucky with the weather - if it were wetter it would have ended up a right mess.



In these strange times it is certain that sheep carry on their lives. This spring we have been lambing in lockdown! The arrival of the new lambs joining our flock was a great joy and kept us busy. Due to the warm spring weather, the ewes and lambs found themselves out on the fresh pasture quickly after lambing. This allows the ewes to gain vital nutrients from the grass and pass it on to their lambs through their natural milk. Most of our lambs are now eight weeks old and are growing rapidly! Last week, we were shearing the ewes in the heat to relieve them from another year's worth of wool and to prevent any risk of Flystrike – flies laying eggs on the sheep's wool that then hatch into maggots, which can cause ammonia poisoning in the sheep and can be fatal. We shear our sheep primarily for the welfare of the flock as unfortunately the value of the wool does not cover the cost of shearing. However, other breeds of sheep, for example EasyCare sheep, have a characteristic of their wool naturally being shed without the requirement of shearing. The wool decomposes into the ground acting as a soil conditioner. Both our ewes and lambs have been wormed and are back out in the field, discovering shaded trees in the heat of the day. Please continue to use footpaths this summer and enjoy the countryside, but please keep your dogs on a lead.

All villagers are welcome to watch what we do from the recognised public rights of way. However please do not assume that the grassy strips you may see around the edges of fields are permissible paths – they are nearly all environmental areas that are managed to promote biodiversity and also double up as buffer zones to prevent agrochemicals and fertilisers from drifting onto surface waters and regularly wet ditches. We have found they also harbour ground-nesting birds all year round, so any more human and/or dog presence than necessary is a bad thing. If you're really keen on finding out more, you can always call round and ask one of us directly.

Finally, Peter and Hilary's shop in Stagsden has been running flat out since the lockdown and shows that even when the chips are down, you can still get good food with a local provenance without having to travel too far. Fresh fish on Fridays, too.

All the very best, hope it rains soon...

Tim, Damian, Will, Jeremy, Peter, Joe, David and Ben

COURT LANE LANDSCAPES LTD.

**All types of garden work undertaken
Maintenance, Renovation, Design, Lawn and
Hedge Contracts, Tree Felling, Paths, Patios &
Sheds**

Call Magnus Lennie

Tel: 01234 825169 Mob: 07713 257409

MOBILE LIBRARY

Hello Stevington Readers!

Firstly, we hope you are all safe and keeping well during these difficult times.

Like with many other services, at the time of writing, we're unsure as to what dates we will be able to resume the Mobile Library visiting you. Those of you who are signed up to our text local service will receive a message when we are due to start visiting again, and we'll also be announcing this through our social media streams (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram). For when we restart, the times for stops at Stevington Cross (1.35 to 1.55pm) are as follows:

| | | | |
|--------|--------|-----------|-----------|
| June | 3, 17 | July | 1, 15, 29 |
| August | 12, 26 | September | 9, 23 |

In the meantime, until we return (or after if you still wish!) we have a fantastic range of digital resources available via the Virtual Library. Using either your Mobile Library or static branch card, you can register for thousands of free audio books, ebooks, digital magazines and daily newspapers, from our suppliers at RB Digital, Borrowbox and Press Reader. For further information on these, visit

www.bedford.gov.uk/libraries and browse the eResources section of the virtual library.

Stay safe, and we look forward to you borrowing from us soon!

The Kempston Mobile Library team.





GARDENING TIPS AND INSPIRATION FROM PARK END THATCH

If there is an upside to COVID-19 it is the increased interest in gardening that has also swept across the nation. For those of you with smaller spaces to garden, do consider using large flowerpots which also work well for growing tomatoes, potatoes, carrots and the shallower ones for the fast-growing salad crops and chard. Spinach is a perennial and can be used as a cut and come again food source. Strawberries are lovely grown in hanging baskets but beware of allowing them to dry out. Do let me know how you get on with a new gardening hobby!

JUNE

- Ideally mid May but certainly by now, put pheromone traps to trap apple and plum codling moths in your fruit trees. These look like little green tents and attract the male moths which get trapped onto a sticky pad inside.
- Complete any pruning of spring flowering shrubs and cut back Clematis Montana if it's getting out of hand. That way you should maximise their flowering potential for next year.
- Plant out hardened off modules of tomato and vegetable plants and keep well fed and watered.
- Provide fresh water for birds to drink and bathe. The parents give most of the insects they catch to their nestlings so put out sunflower kernels to boost their energy resources.
- Position hanging baskets. Feed, water and deadhead flowers weekly.
- Hoe regularly to keep on top of weeds. Irrigate thoroughly one or twice a week in the evenings, especially newly planted specimens, vegetables, fruit and any trees under 4 years in the ground.



- Finish planting containers and water regularly with a little liquid feed.
- Plant out dahlias and cannas.
- Put in new plants with some granular fertiliser, irrigate and then mulch with home-made compost to provide micro nutrients, keep in the moisture and suppress weeds. If you have plenty of compost spread it over the borders to help retain soil moisture in hot or dry weather.
- Cut the lawn once a week and if the grass is weak or patchy apply a summer fertiliser just before rain is forecast, otherwise water it in. Clip the edges to add the finishing touch.
- Prune deciduous magnolia once it is in full leaf. Members of the prunus family such as cherry, plums and gauges must be pruned when they are in leaf, otherwise there is a chance that they could suffer from silver leaf disease which is fatal.
- Deadhead faded roses to encourage further blooms. If you look carefully you will see the next flower bud in the leaf axil two leaves below. Cut off the flower stalk just above that leaf, which also removes the top leaf which fed the faded flower.
- Thin out vegetable seedlings which have been sown in the ground. The thinnings of course can be washed and eaten.
- Delay trimming hedges where birds are nesting until August when the late broods should have fledged.

JULY

- Early in the month: try cutting back hardy geraniums for a second flush of leaves and flowers later in the summer.
- If you want large potatoes remember to water the plants. To improve the keeping quality of onions stop watering them after mid-summer and bend the tops over in hot weather before they start to bolt.
- Reduce the length of finished flowered stems of shrubs such as philadelphus, deutzia, kolkwitsia and weigela.
- Check hedges for nesting birds and leave them in peace until fledged and flown before trimming.
- Thoroughly irrigate your containers in dry weather. If over dry plunge in a bowl of water, water the top as well until bubbles cease.
- Stop feeding roses after the end of July.

- Take cuttings of penstemon, fuchias and other softwood and semi-ripe plants now and they should produce sufficient roots to pot up and harden off before winter.
- Add thin layers of lawn cuttings alternated with cut up prunings and vegetable waste to the compost heap, cover and water if it looks dry. Try not to disturb wildlife such as grass snakes or bank voles, which may be living or breeding in the warmth and safety of the heap.
- Enjoy the butterflies if you have planted enough of their favourite feeding plants to attract them into your garden.

AUGUST

- Trim conifer hedges leaving a few centimetres of green leaf. If you cut back to brown stems the hedge is unlikely to recover.
- Prune wisteria's new long shoots back to 5 buds. Prune outdoor grape vines back to 2 mature leaves in front of the developing grapes. These provide the energy to swell the grapes.
- If weather is hot, irrigate to keep plants alive, even hedges and especially vegetables and any young trees. Feeding now is a waste of money unless you want to keep the summer planted containers and hanging baskets looking good until autumn.
- Clip over lavender bushes taking off the dead flowers complete with stems and the top few leaves leaving at least 5 cms of green growth to harden before winter.
- Mid to late August brings the start of autumn, so later in the month scarify the lawn to remove dead grass roots and moss, aerate it with your garden fork and brush some horticultural lawn sand into the holes to assist with drainage.
- Check the packet instructions for sowing winter vegetables now, this will give them a couple of months to establish before cold and short days.
- Retrain climbing roses now that the new stems from the base are flexible and to allow room for further growth until October. The stems will harden in cold weather.

Please let me know if there is a subject you would like me to write about, by email to info@susanyoungdesign.co.uk or contact the editors.

Susan Young

Alex Stubbs Flooring

**Carpets, Vinyls,
& Laminates.**

Supplied & Fitted.

07976 260572

01234 240954



lisa@digdogs.uk

www.digdogs.uk



DIG DOGS

DOG GROOMING

Lisa Harrington
Long Acre House
Court Lane
Stevington
MK43 7QS

07952 592 609





SECURITY ISN'T EXPENSIVE IT'S PRICELESS



Electronic Security:

- Smart Alarms
- Audible Only Alarms
- Monitored Alarms
- CCTV and Access Control

Response:

- Key-holding
- Response and Patrol
- Lock & Unlock
- Mobile Patrol

NO OBLIGATION
QUOTES

01234 608 400
HQ@AKITASEcurity.CO.UK

CONTRACTS
AND AD-HOC
WELCOME



YOUR LOCAL
INDEPENDENT FAMILY RUN
SECURITY PROVIDER



THE FOOT CLINIC

For a wide range of chiropody/podiatry care of the highest quality from a specialist with 30 years of experience in both NHS and private practice.

Graeme A Paterson FCPod(S)
Podiatric Specialist
HPCP registered

For further information, to arrange a consultation or home visit please contact

The Harrold Medical Practice
Peaches Close,
Harrold,
Beds.
MK43 7DX
Tel: 01234 720225



THAT WAS THE NEWS THAT WAS

Bedfordshire Times & Standard - 10/02/1950

ESCORTED FROM MEETING - Election Incident - Mr. Skeffington-Lodge the Labour candidate for the Bedford Division, had to be escorted by supporters to his car on Monday night after interruptions at a Labour Party meeting at Stevington.

During the meeting, the Chairman Mr. P.W.G. Keech turned to Mr. David Smith Vice-Chairman of Stevington branch of the Conservative Association, who had been noisily interrupting when questions were being asked, and said, "If you persist, you will leave this hall."

Mr. Smith was later escorted from the hall, Mr. Skeffington-Lodge left a few minutes later and a man was seen to approach him. Supporters surrounded the candidate and escorted him to his car, but before he drove off, the man opened the door of the car and appeared to threaten the candidate.

Later Mr. Keech said, "This was completely unexpected and I believe that but for prompt action a very ugly and dangerous situation might have developed."

REPORT TO POLICE - Interviewed the following morning, Mr. Skeffington-Lodge said a report of the incident had been placed in the hands of the Police. Comments made by the candidate at a subsequent meeting are reported on page five.

Mr. T.W.H. Hood (Bedford Division Conservative Agent) said, "I strongly deprecate anything of such a personal nature against Mr. Skeffington-Lodge, and would dissociate the Conservative Party from this alleged incident, which seems to be a personal matter concerning Mr. Smith."

Asked by a reporter if he had any statement to make, Mr. Smith replied, "I am a busy man and haven't any time to say anything to you."

Bedfordshire Times & Standard - 17/02/1950

TWO SUMMONSES AGAINST FARMER DISMISSED - Stevington Incident Described as "Storm in a Tea-Cup" - Bedford Divisional Magistrates yesterday (Thursday) dismissed two summonses against Mr. David Smith of Duck End Farm, Stevington, alleging behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace at a political meeting addressed by Mr. T.C. Skeffington-Lodge. The case lasted more than

four hours. Mr. E.J. Chennells prosecuted and Counsel for the defence was Mr. R. Wynn.

Mr. Smith, a 40 year old farmer, pleaded not guilty to summonses alleging that on 6th February at a public meeting and in the public highway he unlawfully used abusive behaviour whereby a breach of the peace was likely to be occasioned.

Prosecuting, Mr. Chennells said that a certain amount of unruliness was allowable at political meetings. But in this case, defendant was not content with having indulged in abusive and unruly conduct in the meeting itself. He had followed the candidate to his car on the public highway, shouted abuse in his face, prevented the car from being driven off and had to be forcibly restrained. When that sort of thing happened, it was the suggestion of the prosecution that there was a real danger of a breach of the peace being caused by defendant and action had to be taken.

Mr. Skeffington-Lodge said that after the meeting Smith approached his car, opened the door and said, "I don't like your face." Defendant put his head inside the car and raised his fist. He appeared to be about to strike witness, who shouted for help. Two or three people closed with defendant and dragged him away.

POLICE PROSECUTION. Cross-examined by Mr. Wynn, the candidate said that he thought it was right the matter should be reported to the police. It was a serious situation. Defendant was a member of the Special Constabulary. However, he himself did not ask for proceedings to be instituted.

Mr. Chennells: I must make it clear that this is a police prosecution.

Mr. Wynn: "But none the less I am given to understand that the police took action only upon receipt of Mr. Skeffington-Lodge's complaint."

Corroborative evidence was given by P.W.G. Keech and Mr. W.E. Bowyer both of Stevington.

Mr. Bowyer, asked by Mr. Wynn if he thought the matter was a storm in a tea-cup, said, "Yes."

Mr. Walter Warwick a stockman, said that Mr. Skeffington-Lodge in his address criticised his Conservative opponent for not allowing Labour supporters enough time to ask questions at Conservative meetings. At question time which the chairman of the meeting warned

would have to be short, as the candidate had to go to another meeting, Mr. Smith exclaimed, "Now you are going and not allowing us time to ask questions."

Mr. Frederick Charles Coleman, of Church Road, Stevington, who said he was a special constable, said that throughout the whole of the incident Smith appeared to be quite normal and was never in a fighting attitude.

NO EVIDENCE FOR DEFENCE. There was an air of excitement in the packed public gallery when Mr. Wynn, defending, said he would call no evidence as he considered that there was no case on which the Bench could find that as a result of what happened that evening, a breach of the peace could have occurred.

"After all", added Mr. Wynn, "the public life of this country still has red corpuscles in its veins. Ever since the days of Dickens and Trollope, tempers have risen at political meetings. Maybe Smith was heated and said Mr. Skeffington-Lodge was sanctimonious but we can all remember one or two things that were said in the last Parliament."

"Mr. Bowyer, who gave evidence for the prosecution was right when he said it was a storm in a tea-cup."

After a retirement of twenty minutes, Mr. W.S. Brocklehurst, 'Chairman' announced, "We have carefully considered the evidence and we dismiss both summonses."

All the above articles found (and copied verbatim) using the resource of the British Newspaper Archive. Copyright owner: © 2020 Findmypast Newspaper Archive Limited - Proudly presented by Findmypast in partnership with the British Library.

Mark Jackson



Due to the current crisis all Villager services have been suspended until further notice and it is not known when services will resume. We are monitoring Government guidelines regarding safety and social distancing.

We shall post an update on our website when there is any change to report.

Website: www.sharnbrookvillagerminibus.co.uk

Secretary: Andrew Gell - 01234 708191

HARROLD ODELL COUNTRY PARK NEWS



What strange times we've been living in! COVID-19 has certainly made its presence felt. Everything we took for granted has become very precious and we've been seeing visitors who have never been to the park before coming for the first time. This may be because many of the Northamptonshire parks remained closed.

The trouble is, with the stay at home advice and social distancing rules at the beginning of the pandemic, some of those visitors were found to have travelled much too far to get here and then sunbathing and picnicking. The local police spent quite a bit of time speaking to people advising them that this was totally inappropriate. By the end of April, they had started issuing fixed penalty notices to those really flouting the rules.

That being said, our work continues unabated as nature waits for no man when it comes to managing the 8 sites we are responsible for. The burden has fallen entirely on Richard and me as all the volunteers have had to be furloughed for the time being. Needless to say, they are all champing at the bit to return so I have been writing regular blogs about what has been happening to keep them all in the loop.

The Dragonfly Café closed its doors around 20 March and therefore, like thousands of other businesses they are losing a lot of money just at the start of the peak tourist season. Ultimately, the Borough Council will be similarly affected as business rates and rents dry up. No local authority could possibly have predicted this disaster when they set their budgets and their costs have rocketed as they try and support their communities through all this.



*Photo
Courtesy of
Trevor
Sudds*

The café management are trying to organise a takeaway facility but are currently awaiting test results on the water supply. When taps haven't been used for a couple of months, there's a danger that bugs could develop. Treatment will be carried out if necessary before opening.

So - what could WE have possibly been doing for the duration of this crisis? Let me think? At Harrold, we have been mending fences, moving timber from the winter tree works, mowing and strimming the rapidly growing vegetation (seemingly every 5 mins). Liaising with the police and Borough Enforcement Officers where necessary and updating information about the park on the website. The cattle came back into the river meadow on 25 April and seem to be a very handsome bunch. We erected signs about their presence pretty much straight away. All the play and exercise areas had to be closed off to ensure social distancing but the grass still needed to be kept cut back.

Sadly, the Easter Egg Hunt and all my fortnightly health walks have had to be cancelled until further notice. So did a planned maypole dancing event at the end of May. Coupled with that, several planned school visits were scuppered. The educational opportunities available in the park are very important additions to a child's experience of nature. Often, their teachers and support staff get just as much pleasure out of a visit as the children.

The Borough Council have now amended their website to allow anglers to return to the park. The new fishing season is due to start on 16 June and nobody knows whether restrictions on travel etc. will still be in place then. The Borough Council sells season permits (no day tickets) via their website. There is a link from the park's website www.hocp.co.uk in the explore section but the purchase facility on Bedford Borough



Council's website still wasn't live at the end of April. Once a permit has been purchased, make an appointment to show it to a member of staff in order to be given the new combination to the padlock to the overflow car park gate. The number has been changed from last season.

The other sites we've been working on and have responsibilities for are as follows:

- Daisy Bank Picnic Site, Felmersham - mowing, strimming and collecting fly-tipping and general litter.
- Stevington Country Walk - cutting back the edges of the old railway line to maintain access, strimming the bramble on the banks of the car park, litter picking and removing fly-tipping.
- Bromham Nature Reserve - checking lifebelts, checking fence line (cattle in the next field) litter picking and maintaining the footpath. During the winter, storm damaged trees had to be dealt with over there.
- Bromham Water Mill - monitoring river levels and operating the inner and outer sluice gates when needed and checking the grounds for additional issues.
- Pavenham Bury - tree surveys, cutting back excess laurel and ivy infestation.
- Brown's Wood, Clapham - winter tree thinning, storm damage and coppicing, dealing with vandalism, fly-tipping and litter.
- Judge's Spinney, Oakley - As above.
- Yelnow New Wood, Odell - As Brown's Wood.

In the 12 years since I came to Harrold, I have never had to write an article like this. The only situation I've had to deal with that comes close was during the 2001 foot & mouth epidemic. I was based at Dunstable Downs in the south of the county at the time and I had a flock of sheep trapped on one of my sites for 3 months longer than they should have been. Then, I had to wear a hazmat suit and wellies and disinfect myself and my vehicle after every journey to check on their welfare.

We came through that and we will with this. Richard and I wish everyone well and look forward to being able to welcome people with open arms again. Maybe we will appreciate the joys of nature much more in the future and truly value the things that really matter.

I cannot say when we can resume our normal volunteer tasks, health walks or events but please keep an eye on the noticeboards, website Facebook etc. We will post information as soon as there is anything definitive to report.

Janet Munro - Park Warden

Want the best lawn ever?

What we do:

As lawn care experts we apply bespoke, seasonal treatments to keep your lawn continually nourished and weed free. Whatever the size or condition, we ensure that every lawn receives the **love and attention it deserves**

Find out more and visit greenthumb.co.uk/treatments

Prices from

£15*

per treatment



Who are GreenThumb:

As pioneers in British lawn care, we are the UK's largest and most recommended provider with millions of treatments taking place across the UK every year. With over 30 years of experience, you can rely on us to provide your lawn with the **very best** care

For a **FREE** lawn analysis call 01234 709 345 or email bedford@greenthumb.co.uk

*Based on a lawn size up to 40m²

greenthumb.co.uk

