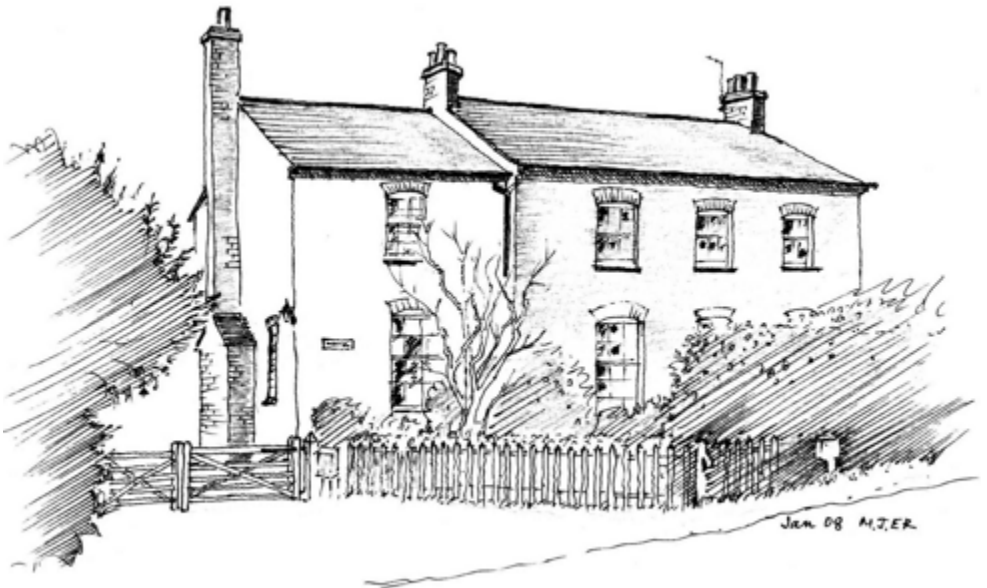


STEVINGTON MAGAZINE



ALAN and VICKI'S HOUSE

SEPTEMBER 2021
Number 198

VILLAGE DIARY

SEPTEMBER

- 4 Church Grounds Volunteers. St. Mary's. 10.00am-12 noon. (page 39)
- 9 Wl. Bill Hamilton. Church Room. 7.30pm
- 11 Sponsored Bike 'n Hike. (page 26)
- 18 Stevington Environmental Group Talk. Church Room. 2.00pm. (page 22)
- 18 - 25 Stevington Environmental Group Display. Church Room. (page 21)
- 19 Stevington 12K Road Race. (page 17)
- 19 Farewell to Chris Boniface. The Royal George (page 4)
- 22 Afternoon Tea. Baptist Chapel. 3.00-4.30pm. (page 29)
- 22 Stevington Environmental Group Farm Visit. (page 22)
- 25 Wavelength. Church Room. 11.00am. (page 36)
- 26 Baptist Chapel Reopens. 10am (page 29)
- 26 Family Event. St Mary's Churchyard. 3.00pm (page 34)
- 26 Harvest Festival. St Mary's. 4.15pm
- 29 Parish Council Meeting. Village Hall. 7.30pm

OCTOBER

- 2 Church Grounds Volunteers. St. Mary's. 10.00am-12 noon. (page 39)
- 3 Harvest Service. Baptist Chapel. 10.00am (page 29)
- 21 Wl. Harvest Supper. Church Room. 7.30pm
- 27 Afternoon Tea. Baptist Chapel. 3.00-4.30pm. (page 29)
- 30 Poppy Appeal. The Cross. 10.00am-2.00pm

NOVEMBER

- 5 Fireworks Night. Village Hall. (page 17)
- 6 Church Grounds Volunteers. St. Mary's. 10.00am-12 noon. (page 39)
- 6 Poppy Appeal. The Cross. 10.00am-2.00pm
- 11 Wl. Craft Evening. Church Room. 7.30pm
- 13 Stevington Guitar Concerts. Village Hall. (page 14)
- 13 Poppy Appeal. The Cross. 10.00am-2.00pm
- 14 Guitar workshop. Church Room. (page 14)
- 14 Magazine Copy Date (Sunday)
- 20 & 21 Stevington Art & Craft Fair. Village Hall. (page 17)
- 24 Afternoon Tea. Baptist Chapel. 3.00-4.30pm. (page 29)

DECEMBER

- 4 Church Grounds Volunteers. St. Mary's. 10.00am-12 noon.
- 4 Wreath Making Workshop. Church Room. (page 27)
- 10 Santa in Stevington! (page 30)



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.

HELLO STEVINGTON!

As this is the September issue the centre page pull out is the updated Village Directory. Please put this by your phone and keep it when you put the magazine in the orange recycling bin.

It's also time to include a tear-out form for your Christmas Greetings which will appear in the December issue. The number of greetings has increased each year since it started in 1995 and we intend to have a pull out on coloured paper again this year so you can put it on your mantelpiece with all your other Christmas cards. This year's charity is the Primrose Unit Fund at Bedford Hospital, in memory of Bob Coleman who had been raising money to support this good cause. See page 20 for further information.

Looking at the Village Diary its great to see that things are getting back to normal and that there are many events planned in the village in the coming months. At last we have two pubs, two churches and the village hall all open!

I'm sure like us you are looking forward to a proper Stevington Firework Night on 5 November. (see page 17)

There is a Casual Vacancy on the Parish Council. If you'd like to get involved see page 18.

Don't forget that if you need help getting connected to people and services via 'IT' in the widest sense, be it your phone, tablet, PC or TV, then contact the Wavelength group. See page 36.

It just remains to say – weren't the sunflowers just wonderful!

Heather and Keith



NEXT MAGAZINE

The next edition of the Stevington Magazine should be delivered sometime around 27-28 November 2021. The last day for receipt of copy for that Magazine is Sunday 14 November 2021. Articles should reach Heather and Keith Parkinson (Old Paddock, Church Road, Tel. 826677, email stevington.magazine@googlemail.com) on or before that day.



FAREWELL, CHRIS BONIFACE NEW DATE!

Sadly, we had to postpone the planned send off for Chris, due to Covid-19 restrictions. It is now 18 months since our brother died. Fingers crossed, we hope to see everyone at **The Royal George** on **Sunday, 19 September**, to raise a glass and say farewell. A buffet lunch will be served from **1pm**. Thank you, Nigel, for being so accommodating. We are also hoping The Snarling Beasts are going to give us some rousing entertainment, and a jolly time will be had by all. That would make Chris chuckle. Please, do join us.



Anne and Clare

NOISY RESIDENTS

I read the above item in the June Magazine with both surprise and interest.

What noise? Voices, music, machinery, other? Weekends were highlighted – surely it could be that people particularly enjoy meeting friends and family after a week at work. It could be the only chance that folk get.

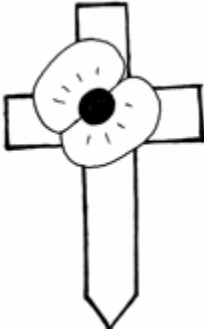
It's not surprising that events become somewhat noisy and excitable. How often does this happen? Not every weekend or any other day.

If, 'Stevington Residents', you are aware of where the sounds come from – common sense says approach the source and have a reasonable talk about your concerns. Please do not put anonymous comments in the Stevington Magazine – this only leads to dissent.

Barbara Collins

POPPY APPEAL 2021

There will be no house-to-house collection this year. Instead, as last year, there will be a stall at the Cross on



**Saturdays 30 Oct, 6 Nov and 13 Nov
10am to 2pm.**

(Remembrance Sunday is 14 Nov)

There will also be boxes in the pubs and the community shop.

Please make a note of these dates on your calendar. We do not have card facilities so if you wish to make a donation, please make sure you have cash!

Joan Hart

BOB COLEMAN

Tributes have been paid to Stevington resident Bob Coleman, who has died at the age of 74. Bob, who had been diagnosed with cancer in 2020, passed away peacefully at Bedford Hospital on Thursday 12 August.



The loving father, brother, grandfather and great-grandfather had lived in the Barringer Almshouses in Park Road for the past 10 years.

His daughter Treina Wildman said: 'Dad was loved by everyone he met. His smile lit up a room and he was always laughing and joking. It's given us all great comfort to hear how popular he was and how much he will be missed.'

Born in Bedfordshire in 1947 to parents Charlie and Edna, Bob spent much of his childhood living in Oakley. The middle of three children, he

helped his father at Town Farm and went to school in Oakley and Harrold before the family moved to Turvey. When he left school he completed an apprenticeship and worked for a tractor firm in Paxton for several years, picking up a love of the vehicles which would later take him around the country and the world. Bob went on to have a career as a mechanic, working at places including Sheffield Insulations in Bedford's Caxton Road industrial estate. In later life he delivered vehicles for Ford until his retirement.

Bob lived in Stevington's Tithe Farm Cottages for about 25 years, later living in Sharnbrook, before making a permanent return to the village in 2011.

He was a familiar face at The Royal George in Silver Street, where he would be found with a pint or two of ale and enjoyed tending to his allotment in nearby Stagsden.

Bob spent half his life tinkering with tractors, including his favourite Fordson Major, and enjoyed going to tractor shows around the country where he tried his best to pick up a bargain at auction. A keen member of both the North Bucks Vintage Tractor Club and Ouse Valley Tractor Club, Bob's passion for tractors later saw him travel to America for a tour of shows which he described as the experience of a lifetime. Anyone local who had a problem with a tractor would ring Bob for help to fix it and he would often be seen taking part in tractor runs across Bedfordshire.

Bob also enjoyed family holidays to the south coast with plenty of ice cream and fish & chips and seeing comedian Jethro every year.

His funeral takes place at St Mary's Church in Stevington at 2.30pm on Tuesday 7 September, followed by a wake at the village hall. Bob's wish was that everyone at the funeral wears a small item in his favourite Fordson blue if possible. Family flowers only with donations to The Primrose Unit at Bedford Hospital.

Sam Wildman



STEVINGTON COMMUNITY SHOP

Remember,
the shop is open in the Church Room.

Mon - Sat. 10am - 12 noon

Payments by card or cash.

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



Oakley.IT

maintain • IT
repair • IT
train • IT



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



STEVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

The work of the Parish Council has been ongoing over the last few months. If you would like more information please sign up to receive the weekly email newsletter which is sent out on Wednesday morning. Go to <https://stevington-pc.gov.uk/>.



Casual vacancy

The Parish Council is involved in village life and serves the interests of the community in many ways. There is currently a casual vacancy for a councillor. If you would like to become involved and work on behalf of all residents why not join us? If you would like more information please contact the clerk or one the councillors.

Planning applications in the village

Parish planning - All planning applications are considered on their merits and a response provided on behalf of the village by the Parish Council usually 3 working days prior to the end of the local consultation period. If you would like to comment on any local application then please do so by contacting the parish clerk at clerk@stevington-pc.gov.uk.

Local Plan 2040 - As many of you will already know Bedford Borough Council has published the next stage of the Local Plan 2040 for further consultation. This is a follow-on from the initial consultation last year and essentially provides further options for the allocation of land for development of housing and industry. There are four new options to be considered, labelled 2a to 2d, which include areas identified for development within Bedford Town urban area, and then urban/near urban development south of the town combined with a mix of options covering some of the larger villages along the A421 and/or major developments at Wyboston and/or Little Barford. They are also inviting comments on all sections of the plan including their vision and policies.

By the time the magazine is distributed Stevington Parish Council will have submitted a response on behalf of the village, taking into account any comments they have received.

Highways and footpaths

The Parish Council continues to monitor the traffic flow through the village and is in discussion with the Borough Council particularly

regarding the heavy goods traffic accessing the village via Silver Street. We are also aware of difficulties regarding parking and access in the centre of the village for residents.

Village hall, playground and churchyard

The Parish Council has a contract for maintaining parts of the playing field, the enclosed play area and the churchyard. We are aware of the recent problems in maintaining these areas to the agreed standard and are working to resolve the situation as soon as we can.

Stevington Environmental Group

The group has now met and their work is covered in a separate article. The Parish Council is pleased to support the work of this group given the growing evidence of the climate emergency.

Friends of Stevington Windmill

The Friends of Stevington Windmill met on 14 July and officially adopted the constitution for the group and agreed the general short and long term aims. The group will be working closely with Bedford Borough Council to actively monitor and maintain the windmill going forward, and look to help support the mill's longer term future. For more information on the group please see the website www.stevington.com/windmill or email them at windmill@stevington.com.

Unfortunately, at a recent site meeting it was discovered that there is an issue with the alignment of the windmill which will require further remediation from Dorothea Restorations before the mill can be considered for use, consequently the planned demonstration and sail turning event previously scheduled for September has had to be, sadly, postponed for now. As soon as the repairs are completed the demonstration will be rescheduled and advertised to the village, please watch this space.

Looking forward

As life slowly returns to pre pandemic normality and social events at all the venues in the village can resume we hope all residents will feel able to participate in village events. It will be good to see people gathering together including all the new residents who have moved here during the pandemic.



One event with plenty of lead in time is the Queen's Platinum Jubilee from Thursday 2 June to Sunday 5 June 2022. Some residents and groups have already started thinking about events to

celebrate the occasion. If you have an idea about an event or would like to get involved please see the letter on page 33 or contact the Clerk.

Janet Day
Stevington Parish Council

Email: clerk@stevington-pc.gov.uk

Website: www.stevington-pc.gov.uk

Windmill photo courtesy of John O'Reilly



MOBILE LIBRARY

Hello Stevington Readers!

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

The Mobile Library is now back on the road and visiting Stevington.

Currently, we are having to run a reduced service where customers pick up requested items from the door of the van. You can request specific titles, or a bundle request from our select and collect service, where Library staff will pick items for you from your wishes. Whilst we are operating this temporary timetable we'll be visiting the Cross on **alternate Wednesdays, between 11:30am and 11:50am**. For further information on this, and to request your items, you can visit us at www.bedford.gov.uk/libraries.

For when we restart the service fully, the time for stops in Stevington will be as follows:

The Cross - 1.35 to 1.55pm

For those of you who are able to drive, all Bedford Borough Libraries are open for our select and collect service.

We know a number of you have been using our digital resources through lockdown. We have a fantastic range of online material 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 Libby, 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.

BEDFORD BOROUGH NEWS

Phase Two of High Street Improvement Works Have Begun

Since February 2021, Bedford Borough Council have been delivering high quality regeneration works to Bedford High Street in order to permanently make it one lane only for traffic and create more space for shoppers and pedestrians.

Phase one of these works, which ran from St Peters Street to Mill Street is now complete and phase two began on Monday 26 July, with traffic calming measures being put in place the night before. The second phase of works will stretch from Mill Street down to St Paul's Square and is planned to last until November 2021.

As part of these works, the Council will be making the pavement wider and repaving the section of the high street with high quality York paving and granite kerbstones. Speed cameras will be installed along the road to enforce the 20mph speed limit on Bedford High Street.

Rogers Court Opens Providing Accommodation for the Vulnerable

Rogers Court, a landmark facility with 20 units of self-contained accommodation for those rough sleeping, or at risk of doing so, opens in Bedford Borough soon.

The first residents are set to move in later this week, with the facility being remodelled and refurbished by Kier Construction working with their local supply chain in less than 6 months, following a successful funding bid by the Council to the Government.

The building has been handed over to the Council and SMART Bedford, who provide services for those rough sleeping locally, and in this case, they will be providing support services to the residents of Rogers Court 24/7. After a tender process, SMART was awarded a three-year contract to develop and run this innovative service, giving a stable base for residents and allowing them a better chance of leading independent lives.

Bedford Borough Council Celebrates Local Heritage

Following high levels of interest from residents, Bedford Borough Council is highlighting some of the recent exciting archaeological findings from the local area.

The Council's Historic Environment team provides specialist advice upon archaeological matters, including investigations undertaken in connection with planning applications and those conducted for research purposes.

In line with national best practice, the Council advises on the evaluation of sites prior to the determination of a planning application to identify whether any important remains are present which may require preservation on site or investigation ahead of development. The Council will not normally grant planning permission for a development if findings of national significance are identified and cannot be preserved on site.

The Council adds findings to the Historic Environment Record, which is used when considering the impact of new developments. The record is also available publicly to local residents.

Biddenham Site

One excavation on the edge of Biddenham uncovered a number of fascinating archaeological features, which include a middle-to-late Iron Age settlement including enclosures (possibly to keep their animals), at least one round house, large storage pits, a well and small cooking pits, as well as a number of Anglo-Saxon buildings and what is either an oven or kiln.

The excavation also uncovered a large 'hengiform' monument that potentially dates back to the Neolithic or Bronze Age (4000 - 700 BC), highlighting the complex history of Bedford Borough.

Clarence Hotel

The Council also advises on urban archaeological sites, such as the redevelopment of the former Clarence Hotel on St Johns Street in Bedford. The site is located on what is likely to have been the main north-to-south road through the town.

The earliest activity on this site included late Saxon quarrying, although the presence of a possible latrine pit suggests a contemporary dwelling nearby. A similar pit from the early medieval period was also found nearby, which was likely to have been associated with the structure and possible domestic activity, suggested by the presence of post-holes and small pits adjacent to a newly dug roadside ditch alongside St John's Street.

The features revealed some exciting finds, including personal domestic objects, which appear to have been lost, broken or discarded by their owners.

Councillor Jon Abbott

Telephone 07784 549180

Email jonathan.abbott71@icloud.com

Antiques, Silver, Coins and Jewellery purchased

Marylyn and Ray Wood
01933 353517
malray@talk21.com

LEO
BOOKKEEPING SERVICES

Lucie Howard

01234 247507 07900 274690 lucie@leobs.co.uk

Bookkeeping
Accountancy
Payroll

www.leobs.co.uk



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



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

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 Guitar Concerts

Our next gig will be on Saturday 13 November when Catfish Keith brings slide blues guitar to Stevington. Tickets went on sale on 1 July and had sold out by the afternoon of the same day. We are extremely grateful for the wonderful support we receive for the gigs we arrange.

If there is enough support Catfish is prepared to do a second gig on Friday 12 November. You can

register interest on our website.

In addition to bringing some of the best acoustic music to the village we are developing a series of workshops to provide the opportunity for anyone interested in playing the guitar to learn from first class tutors.

On 12 July we held a guitar workshop in the Church room. Max Milligan, a senior examiner and tutor at the Guitar Institute, provided excellent tuition to an enthusiastic group of students. Such was the success of the day Max is planning to run a follow up session next year.



On Sunday 14 November Catfish Keith will be running a 2 hour slide guitar and finger style workshop. Please let any of your guitar playing friends know about this event. It is a rare opportunity to learn from an internationally recognised exponent of the style. More information and tickets are available from Stevington Guitar Concerts website.

John Duffield
www.stevingtonguitarconcerts.co.uk

HOW TO BE GREEN - 3 TIPS

Shopping online? Don't rush delivery

We've all seen the increase in delivery vans round the village over the last year. The extra traffic for deliveries can increase local air pollution and means more emissions. Choosing a more flexible delivery time allows the firm to plan a more efficient round. Hear more on greener delivery from this *People Fixing the World* podcast <https://tinyurl.com/BBC-PFTW> or read <https://tinyurl.com/ensia-shopping>.

Plastic in your salmon? Wash clothes less, wash lower, spin slower

Tiny plastic fibres from your clothes can reach every corner of the earth and are eaten by creatures at the bottom of the food chain – ending up in the seafood many enjoy. Washing clothes only when really needed, at lower temperatures and with a gentler spin means they shed fewer polluting microfibrils and your clothes last longer. This webpage explains the problems and has more tips on what you can do <https://tinyurl.com/plastic-microfibrils>.

Keep peat for the planet, not your pots

Peatlands are hugely important wildlife habitats and carbon stores and they reduce floods by storing water. Digging up peat for garden compost destroys these habitats and releases CO₂ and methane. Consumer demand drives change – so choose peat free. Read the label on growbags and compost – if it doesn't say **peat free**, it will contain peat. Many gardeners around the village already use peat-free compost, and the Royal Horticultural Society and National Trust manage their gardens without peat – so you'll be in good company! This *Gardeners' World* episode has good advice on peat-free compost <https://tinyurl.com/GW-peat-free>.

Jacky Gooding
on behalf of the Stevington Environmental Group

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**



STEVINGTON VILLAGE HALL

stevingtonvillagehall.org.uk

After a long period of closure, the hall and playing field are now open for use again. They are fully Covid-19 secure. At the recent committee meeting, it was decided to open gradually for events and to keep in place the mitigation measures: mask-wearing when moving around the hall; use of hand sanitiser; and doors open for ventilation.

A big thank you to the villagers who returned the questionnaire included in the June edition of Stevington Magazine. The committee are reviewing some very helpful suggestions and are using these to guide future planning. There was considerable enthusiasm for a gardening club and flower/vegetable show. If any green-fingered residents would be interested in getting this off the ground, the committee is keen to support you.

One kind respondent offered help with publicity/marketing and social media, but unfortunately did not give contact details. If it was you, please give me a call on 823160 or 07957 672026 to discuss further. Alternatively email secretary@stevingtonvillagehall.org.uk.

Regular activities which have already resumed are:

- **Carpet Bowls** on Monday evening, 7.00-9.00pm. All over 12 years old welcome; just turn up on the night.
- **Pilates** on Friday morning, 11.00-11.45am. Contact Jane Butcher on 07891 879571 or jnbutcher72@gmail.com.
- **Stevington Cinema** live streamings will start in the near future as live theatre reopens and performances are released to us. To receive updates and performance details, subscribe to the mailing list via stevingtoncinemaclub.uk.

To help manage the increasing number of booking requests received, we are looking to appoint a paid booking secretary. For further information, see the advert elsewhere in the Magazine or contact Steve Cole on 824571 or email chairman@stevingtonvillagehall.org.uk.

Forthcoming events - put the dates in your diary:

- **Sunday 19 September, 11.00am** Stevington 12K Road Race, starting and finishing at the hall. More information at <http://stevington12k.uk>.
- **Friday 5 November** Fireworks Night on the playing field. Doors open from 6.00pm for refreshments and food, fireworks start 7.00pm.
- **Saturday 20 and Sunday 21 November 11.00am - 4.00pm:** Stevington Art & Craft Fair showcasing the work of the many talented artists, jewellers, needleworkers and craftspeople who live in Stevington, with an opportunity to do some early Christmas shopping.

Linda Penney
Stevington Village Hall

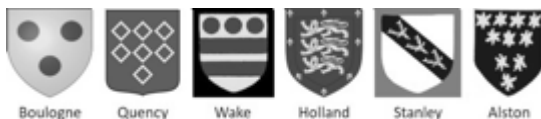
STEVEINGTON HISTORICAL TRUST

Registered Charity Number: 1086669
www.stevingtonhistoricaltrust.org.uk

Our latest publication, *Stevington: The Village History Revisited*, went to print on 31 August. The short run of 150 was well subscribed. We have, however, ordered a few extra copies for anyone who has missed the publicity and would still like to buy the book. The remaining copies will be allocated on a first come first served basis. The price remains at £30.00 and enquiries can be directed to me on 01234 823586 or to Roger Day on 01234 823081.

Our thanks to all who have subscribed so far. The current plan is to make subscribers' copies available for collection at St Mary's church on two Saturdays, 18 and 25 September from noon to 2.00pm. However, we will contact everyone concerned well before those dates which may well change.

We have not yet taken a decision on whether to resume the Friends Winter Lectures but as things stand at present it seems unlikely. So far, we have not booked any speakers for this year.



Peter Hart
Hon Secretary
01234 823586
peter2hart@btinternet.com

Make a Difference

Become a Parish Councillor

Stevington Parish Council announce a

Casual Vacancy

If you have the interests of your community at heart and would like to volunteer and take on a challenging, yet interesting role then contact the parish clerk.

Email: clerk@stevington-pc.gov.uk

Auction Sales & Valuations

Valuation, collection and auction service
of individual items through to complete
property and commercial clearances.

Call for a free no obligation quote or
email **info@peacockauction.co.uk**

SALE ENTRIES NOW INVITED

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

www.peacockauction.co.uk



W&H PEACOCK
AUCTIONEERS & VALUERS
01234 266366



Eastcotts Park,
Wallis Way,
Bedford,
MK42 0PE

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
HCPC 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

SEASONS GREETINGS

You may think it's a bit early to be thinking about Christmas, but this is our last chance to remind you about sending your Seasons Greetings to friends and neighbours in the village through the pages of the December Stevington Magazine. If you wish to avail yourself of this opportunity, please write a short message below (or on any piece of paper), put it in an envelope with your donation (**cheques made payable to Stevington Magazine**) and pop it through our door before 14 November. All donations go to charity - we support a different one each year. This year's donation will be made to The Primrose Unit Fund at Bedford Hospital in memory of Bob Coleman.

Name: _____ Donation: £ _____

Message (include any name to appear in greeting): _____



Or same message as last year

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate. If you are eligible and wish Bedford Hospital Charitable Funds to claim Gift Aid on your donation please complete the details below and return to us with your donation. If you don't want to dismember your magazine we can supply a blank gift aid declaration form, on request.

Title: _____ Name: _____ Surname: _____

Address: _____

Postcode (Essential): _____

I want to Gift Aid my donation of £_____ to Bedford Hospital Charitable Funds (Primrose Unit Fund BH7A) and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past four years. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Registered Charity: 1061003

STEVINGTON ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP

Aims and Objectives

We are a local community group whose aims are supported by the Parish Council. Our objective is to champion and support efforts to protect and enhance the Stevington Parish landscape and river which are a source of beauty and tranquillity bringing health and well-being benefits to village residents. We also aim to contribute to the UK national efforts to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and to provide a forum for consultation with village residents, parish landowners and farmers and identify local priorities for action which meet overall parish environmental objectives as well as national and global objectives.



News and Dates for Your Diary

Depending on when you read your magazine, we may already be into the Great Big Green Week which will run from 18 to 26 September 2021 under the auspices of the Bedford Climate Change Forum (<https://greatbiggreenweek.com/>)

During this week we will be launching the Bedfordshire Great Ouse Valley Environmental Trust which is a larger forum to which all river parishes and communities, including Stevington, are invited to belong. Further details on the trust are available on the Beds GOVET Facebook page at <https://tinyurl.com/BGOVET>.

A number of events organised by the SEG are also being planned for the week. Three of these (a, b and c) are described below, but more may be added by the time the event starts. For example, St Mary's Church are planning to run an environmentally themed event on Sunday 26 September. For further details on all these activities, look out for notices around the village and see How to Get in Touch below.

(a) Interactive Display – Open with Community Shop Sat 18 to Sat 25 September. 10-12 noon

There will be an interactive display and more information about Great Big Green Week in the Church Room and we would like all residents to tell us how they feel about our environment; what they love and what they do not like, what they worry about and any ideas they may have for SEG to follow up. We want to make a difference and we want

as many people as possible to be involved. Why not join us for a cuppa and tell us what you think?

(b) Talk about Beavers and River Management in the Church Room – Sat 18 Sept at 2pm

Join us from 2pm for a short talk and discussion on river management from Craig Lymm, Park Manager of Great Denham Country Park. Craig has a particular interest in the reintroduction of river beavers. His talk will cover:

- Brief history of beavers in the UK
- Ham Fen project
- River Otter project
- Beavers in the UK - the future plan.

For more information about beavers, see the Natural History Museum website <https://tinyurl.com/NHM-Beavers>.

(c) Farm Visit – Wed 22 September from 4.30pm to 6.30pm

As part of the launch of SEG we are delighted to offer an opportunity to visit New Barn Farm in Carlton, courtesy of Will and Hannah Tongue and family. A great adventure for all ages and an opportunity for families new to Stevington to meet each other. Will is an active member of the Ouse Valley Farmers Cluster Group in North Bedfordshire and, where aims align, will work with Beds GOVET & SEG to improve the environment of Bedfordshire Great Ouse Valley.

The visit will involve a tractor and trailer ride; a ride around parts of this stunning 400 acre, environmentally managed farm; an insight into the way the farm is managed for wildlife; the opportunity to see some of the animals and a home cooked pizza at the glamping site. See www.featherdown.co.uk/location/new-barn-farm/ for pictures and information.

Places must be booked in advance with johnstrutt34@gmail.com or tricia.lennie21@gmail.com by Monday 20 September, as numbers are limited. Food is also available from Will and Hannah at the following prices: £8.50 per 12" pizza, side salad £5 each and can be paid by card on the night. All money goes directly to the farm to cover costs. Directions and parking instructions will be given when you book. The visit is fully risk assessed and insured and includes handwashing facilities before we eat. You are also welcome to bring your own drinks.

Our Current SEG Activities

A number of special interest groups, open to all residents, are currently being developed including:

1. Building and maintaining our wildflower verges
2. Monitoring our parish biodiversity
3. Building our garden biodiversity
4. Carbon reduction advisory forum
5. River monitoring (pollution and biodiversity)
6. Invited environmental talks

Your participation and opinions are critical to our activities, so please do get in touch if you wish to participate or learn more about these activities, or if you would like to suggest other environmental activities (see How to Get in Touch below). Further information on the groups will be available at the Church Room during the Great Big Green Week.

Jacky's Green Tips

This will be a new regular item in the Magazine and can be found on page 15.

Building your Garden Biodiversity

As well as being beautiful places to relax, gardens are also a vital source of food and shelter for many forms of plant and wildlife and a key means of building up the biodiversity of our local environment. SEG is keen to support and encourage residents to do as much as they can to build up their garden biodiversity. We are therefore very pleased to announce that Susan Young, a local professional garden expert, has offered to provide 30 minute in-garden expert guidance for individual residents in exchange for a donation to the SEG. The final details of this scheme are still being developed but if you are interested in taking advantage of this or simply want to find out more about it please get in touch (see How to Get in Touch below).

How to Get in Touch

We are looking at how best to communicate with the community but for the time being, if you are interesting in participating in meetings or events, making suggestions or simply wish to get more information about SEG or Beds GOVET, please get in touch with John Strutt at johnstrutt34@gmail.com or, for information about GOVET, email bedsgovet@btinternet.com.

John Strutt



THE VILLAGER MINIBUS (SHARNBROOK)



The Villager Community minibus is a great way to get out and about. From Stevington we go to Olney Market, Milton Keynes and Peterborough. The trips make a good social break and if you need help with the shopping, the drivers are always ready to help. The days and times we run from Stevington are below.

It is a simple way to get out and about and, of course, free to ride if you have a concessionary pass. If you know folk who don't use Facebook, do let them know about the Villager Minibus. There is full information at www.sharnbrookvillagerminibus.co.uk/ and timetables are on some bus stops.

Every Thursday to Olney Market

Depart the Cross at 10.10, leave Olney for the return at 12.10

4th Tuesday of the month to Milton Keynes

Depart the Cross at 09:20 leave MK for the return at 12.30

2nd Friday of the month to Peterborough

Depart the Cross at 09:12, leave Peterborough for the return at 14.00

If you have any questions or require more information or a hard copy of The Villager timetable, please contact the Secretary Andrew Gell on 01234 708191.

WASTE COLLECTIONS

Month	Rubbish	Recycling	Green
September	7, 21	14, 28	14, 28
October	5, 19	12, 26	12, 26
November	2, 16, 30	9, 23	9, 23
December	14, ?	7, 21	None

THE
RED LION
FREE HOUSE
STEVINGTON



NOW HIRING!!

The Red Lion at Stevington is looking for bar and waiting staff to deliver outstanding customer service to our restaurant and hotel guests.

This is a general role working as part of our small, friendly team and will involve waiting tables, working behind the bar and looking after hotel guests.

Experience in a similar role preferred, reliability and a good positive attitude are essential.

Flexible shifts available, evening and weekends.

An exciting opportunity for those wanting to start out in hospitality; to mature candidates wanting to bring their wealth of experience to the role. Equally, shifts can be tailored to mums and dads looking for term-time work only.

Please email hello@redlionstevington.co.uk with contact details and a CV.



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

Visit: www.redlionstevington.co.uk

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



Sponsored Bike 'n Hike

BEDS AND HERTS HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

LAST YEAR WAS BIKE 'N HIKE'S BEST EVER RESULT!

SUPPORT THIS YEAR'S EVENT ON SATURDAY 11 SEPTEMBER

Last year's unusual, but very successful, mid-Covid-19 Bike 'n Hike event raised more across the two counties than ever before in a single day - £112,809! Stevington's contribution was an exact £1,000 plus Gift Aid, of which 50% has been returned to St. Mary's Church, together with a Silver Certificate for raising over £1,000.

The Trust's whole purpose is to build up a fund for the ever-needed fabric repairs that are essential to keep our wonderful medieval churches in good condition. St Mary's has already applied for and been awarded a grant towards stonework and other repairs which will soon be starting on site.

This year's event will be on Saturday 11 September, and anyone can take part on their own or in a group, the aim being to visit as many of our wonderful village churches as they can between 9am and 5pm, either by walking, cycling or by car. There are no rules about having long lunch breaks followed by siestas - have a good day out and get your friends and family to support this really worthy cause!

Time is short, so please contact me by phone (01234 823169) or email (roberthart234@btinternet.com) and I will provide an information pack which explains all the workings.

Robert Hart
Stevington Representative
Beds and Herts Historic Churches Trust

Sponsored
Bike 'n Hike



The Friends of ST MARY'S CHURCH

Covid-19 restrictions have had a big impact on our traditional fundraising events but work has been ongoing. Our grants group has been meeting regularly to prepare grant applications to help fund improvements to the facilities and access at the Church Room.



A wreath making workshop is planned to be held on Saturday 4 December. This year a number of interesting additions are being introduced to this popular workshop. See our website for more information <https://fostmstevington.uk/>.

We are pleased to have recently delivered our annual report to all Stevington households.

Plans are afoot to restart our fundraising events later this year.

Thank you to everyone for their support during the difficult times we have encountered.

John Duffield.

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

THE ROYAL GEORGE

The Royal George is fully operational once again after a very interesting 18 months of lockdowns and restrictions. I'm very grateful for all the support received during the pandemic, especially the very many who regularly bought fish and chips every Friday and to Kate and Lucy Atkin, Amy Bentham, and Leo Agbame who did most of the delivering. Gareth King and Lottie Jackson continue to produce very good quality fish and chips, and if you haven't tried them yet you should.

We shouldn't forget those we have lost during this difficult time.



Chris Boniface was a Royal George regular for many years and supported the skittles, darts, and crib teams. Please come along on 19 September when there'll be a long-delayed chance for everyone to have a pint in his memory.

Thank you

Nigel Stead

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



STEVEINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH

Reopening of Church

We are delighted to announce that Stevington Baptist Church is reopening for public worship on Sunday 26 September at the new time of 10am. We thank God for this much needed good news.

The service will be a shorter and more informal version than usual and all are welcome.

Your safety and security is our top priority so we will continue to follow the government guidelines and recommendations which include sanitising your hands on entry to the church, only sitting in designated areas and leaving your contact details every time you attend. The wearing of masks is a personal choice. If you have any Covid-19 symptoms, please take care of yourself and keep others safe by not attending church.

Afternoon Teas

Things will soon be stirring up at the chapel in the sweetest possible way: one lump, or two, or maybe more. The good news is that the church afternoon teas are coming back. Put a note in your diaries for 22 September. That's right, it's a Wednesday and it is worth remembering that future teas will be on a Wednesday afternoon - the fourth Wednesday of every month in fact, which means 27 October, 24 November. We'll take a break in December, returning on 27 January. The teas will start at 3pm through until 4.30pm.

It's the tried and tested formula of tea and cakes and, of course, the quiz. As before, there will be no charge. It's part of our service to the community. Who knows what Covid-19 restrictions will still apply as time progresses, but we will be following the government guidelines to ensure that everyone is safe. The one rule we all will need to observe is to stay away if you have a high temperature, a new and persistent cough, or a loss of or change in your sense of taste or smell. Please keep Stevington safe!

Harvest Service

Sue Ives will be leading our Harvest Service on 3 October at 10am when we look forward to hearing all our favourite harvest hymns.



Santa Sightings!

While we are talking of forthcoming events, here is something new. In December, we are challenging all the scarecrow designers - and as many others as like a bit of fun - to offer hospitality to the familiar figure in his red coat and with his white beard. Make one to put on show for a couple of weeks, perhaps starting on 10 December, in your garden, on your roof, sitting on the wall, climbing in through a window, riding on a sledge, up a ladder, anywhere you like perhaps. There are no judges, no prizes, no real deadlines, but it's all for the fun of it. Obviously, at that time of year, Santa needs to be weatherproof and if he can be seen after dark, so much the better. Let's make Stevington the Santa centre.

Peter Evans



ST MARY'S MATTERS

Services have been gradually getting back to a more regular pattern, and we have started singing hymns again, which many appreciate, and we're beginning to talk tentatively about some sort of choir for Christmas.

We have continued to open St Mary's daily for private prayer or just quiet contemplation thanks to a team of 8 volunteers, now from 10am till 4pm, and it is clear that the facility is appreciated by a steady trickle of visitors.

As I write, work on the tower and other major repairs is due to start on 31 August, which will involve scaffolding for some time. We intend to keep the church open every day as far as that is possible.

The Church Room working party continues to work towards the planned developments. Details are on the St Mary's web site.

For news about the maintenance of the Churchyard please see page 39.

From the Register:

Interment of Ashes

30 July 2021

Ken and Nuala Sutliff

Robert Eadie, Churchwarden

PROUD TO BE AWARDED
AS ONE OF THE UK & IRELAND'S

ttg

TOP

50

TRAVEL AGENCIES 2021


SelectTravelHolidays

Home of Cruise Select
24A Mill Street, Bedford

PROUD TO BE AWARDED
AS ONE OF THE UK & IRELAND'S

ttg

TOP

50

TRAVEL AGENCIES 2021

Thanks to popular demand -

Be captivated by a NEW Tokyo roundtrip cruise for
2023 onboard the world's most luxurious ship, Regent
Seven Seas Cruises' *Seven Seas Explorer*

**10-night 'Captivating Japan' from 25
April 2023**

**Veranda Suites From £7,109pp - including
flights & pre- or post-cruise land program**



Rachel



Bella



Sharon



Amy

Discover an Unrivalled Experience with *Regent
Seven Seas Cruises*, with every luxury included:
*Return flights | Unlimited shore excursions | 2/3 night
land programmes | Unlimited beverages | Gratuities |
speciality restaurants | overseas transfers | Wi-Fi*

Contact Us To Find Out More:

Tel: 01234 326778
sales@selecttravelholidays.co.uk

www.selecttravelholidays.co.uk



BOOK WITH CONFIDENCE
ABTA & ATOL protected





BEDFORD SAILING CLUB

A bumper summer at the sailing club with record attendances, despite lockdown restrictions, some of which have been eased recently. We have welcomed many new members, particularly young families new to the village.

The clubhouse has been fully refurbished since the Christmas flooding and the grounds have recovered so well that some croquet games were possible again!

Swimmers, kayaks, canoes and scullers have enjoyed wonderful river conditions and the BBQs have been in good use!

Following requests from members the club has invested in two stand up paddleboards (SUPs) and these have proved to be incredibly popular.

Villagers wanting to join the membership of this idyllic local facility can contact:

Dave on daveabrear@aol.com or
Hugo on hugovankempen0@gmail.com.



Hugo van Kempen

STEVINGTON CARPET BOWLS CLUB

Good news at last! We will definitely be reopening the club on Monday 6 September 2021.

We play every Monday (except Bank Holidays) from 7.00pm at the Village Hall.

Let us hope that we have not lost the old 'skills' and that by the time we have finished gossiping we'll get at least one game in!

Looking forward to 7.00pm on Monday 6 September at our lovely Village Hall - welcome back!



Barbara Collins



STEVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk – Tricia Lennie,
The Briars, 21a, Court Lane, Stevington, Bedfordshire, MK43 7QS
Email clerk@stevington-pc.gov.uk



24th August 2021

To all interested groups of Stevington residents

Re: Stevington plans for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, 2nd to 5th June 2022

Cc Ouse Valley Arts Society, Sallie Cox (Church Road residents), Stevington Sailing Club, Stevington Social Centre Charity (the Village Hall), Stevington Baptist Church, St. Mary's Church, The Community Shop, The Friends of St. Mary's Church, The Friends of Stevington Windmill, The Red Lion, The Royal George, Stevington Book Club, Stevington Environmental Consultation Group, Stevington Football Club, Stevington Social (Facebook page), Stevington Community (Facebook page), Stevington Historical Trust, Stevington Magazine, Stevington Writers Group, Wavelength, The WI.

Dear representative,

Stevington Parish Council discussed plans for Stevington's celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, which takes place over a four-day bank holiday weekend from 2nd to 5th June 2022, at their recent meeting. Attached you will find some of the national information regarding planning for events that weekend. Some Stevington groups are already making plans, for example Church Road plan a street party on Sunday 5th June. Councillors wanted to give an opportunity to all interested village groups to co-ordinate and have input into the nature of Stevington celebrations. Some may be local celebration events such as street parties, others may be longer lasting improvements enacted in honour of the Queen's 70 years of public service.

Please feel free to discuss this with other interested residents and pass on the invitation to be involved if you feel there are omissions in the invitation list.

Action steps

- Discuss ideas within your group
- Reply to the clerk@stevington-pc.gov.uk by mid-September outlining any ideas your group would like to
 - a) Organise
 - b) Be involved in
- Put the date of the next Stevington Parish Council meeting in your diary: **Wednesday 29 September 7.30pm at the Village Hall**. Planning for the Queen's Jubilee will be an Agenda item. Residents are welcome to speak during the 15-minute Public Discussion period. If you cannot attend, your written input will be considered.

If you have any questions, you are welcome to contact clerk@stevington-pc.gov.uk for further clarification.

Let's make 2022 a year to remember in Stevington for generations to come.

Best wishes,

Clerk, on behalf of Stevington Parish Council.

Editors note: The attachments referred to have not been reproduced and can be obtained from the Clerk

**Family Event
in the Churchyard**

Sunday 26th Sept.



3.00pm – ‘Cream Teas’

and children’s activities

4.00pm – ‘Holy Well’ Blessing

4.15pm – Short Harvest Festival

STEVINGTON FOOTBALL CLUB

With the recent relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions coming into effect in mid-August it looks like we can all start to get back to some sort of normality, so we are all looking forward to the forthcoming season.

The last couple of seasons have been frustrating, disappointing and difficult. A couple of seasons ago we were unbeaten in the league with only a few games remaining and were denied being winners by a club we had beaten twice and our nearest neighbours - who we subsequently beat and drew with to prove a point in a mini competition at the end of last season. Last season was difficult in many ways, not least because I don't think anyone expected the season to be played through and concluded, as well as lack of changing rooms, the use of showers and the traditional after match get togethers.



We are all looking forward to the start of the new season which is currently scheduled to start on Saturday 4 September.

With the vast majority of our players signing on again, together with some new faces we are confident that we should be well placed for another competitive and rewarding season.

Aaron Coker, our manager and coach for the last 10 seasons has decided he needs to focus more time on his business and stepped down from the role at the end of last season, handing the over reins this season to players Ian Collins and Tommy McGirl. We are confident they will do well in the role and will always have Aaron available for some advice and support if needed.

Due to the Football Association and Bedfordshire County Football League rules we are unable to play home matches at Stevington Playing Field as the changing rooms do not meet the minimum standards for a National Step 7 league, so once again all our home games will be played at Pavenham Playing Field.

Details of our fixtures can be found online on the Bedfordshire County Football League website at:

www.bedfordshirefootballleague.co.uk/

and details of fixtures can be found at

www.bedfordshirefootballleague.co.uk/currentseason.php

On a sad note, the club would like to pass on its sincerest condolences to Johnny Pepper (former club stalwart and club manager) and his family on the sad loss of his wife Jean recently. The club will be looking to support his chosen charity in future fund-raising events.

We would like to thank everyone for their ongoing support of the Club and look forward to seeing you at this season's matches, (home or away), joining us for after match reviews at the Royal George and at our future Charity Fund Raising Events.

Shane King

PARISH COUNCIL EMAIL NEWSLETTER

Do you ever feel there is too much information but still wish you knew what was going on? Why not sign up on the Parish Council website www.stevington-pc.gov.uk to receive a free weekly email newsletter. Agendas, minutes and the latest local notices will be sent straight to your inbox each Wednesday.



WaveLength

Stevington

Now that Covid-19 restrictions are more relaxed we are looking forward to restarting our wavelength meetings. Our first get-together will be a coffee morning at the Church Room on Saturday 25 September at 11.00am. As well as catching up with each other we can use the opportunity to make plans about issues that people would like to cover during the autumn.

Everyone is welcome to come along to get some help about IT niggles, avoiding scams, using the internet to access services and to communicate with your friends and family, near and far.

Through a grant from the national lottery we have been able to install a tablet in the Church Room which is free to use by anyone in Stevington. If you have never used a tablet to go online Wavelength volunteers will be pleased to help you.

If you want to know more about our Wavelength project speak to Robert Eadie, Bob Collins, Roger Day or John Duffield.

John Duffield

Friendly Local Hair Salon in Stevington



- ✂ Ladies Hair and Colouring service
- ✂ Gent's Barbering & Grooming
- ✂ Competitively priced
- ✂ Relax in a comfortable and unique setting

Contact us at:

Tel: 07305 848884

Email: thegardenroom14@gmail.com



Official Stockist

Browns of Stagsden

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

Support your Local Farm Shop in 2021

- ◆ Home reared and local meat & poultry
- ◆ Fruit & Vegetables
- ◆ Deli counter
- ◆ Homemade pies
- ◆ Extensive range of tasty accompaniments

Opening Times: Tuesday - Saturday 10am - 3pm

To place an order, please phone 01234 822330
or email info@brownsofstagsden.co.uk
(Local Deliveries & Contactless collections also available)



www.brownsofstagsden.co.uk
Manor Farm Stagsden MK43 8SH



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



In May we once again held a very successful plant and produce stall. We would like to thank all those who provided plants, cakes and other produce and to all who bought and supported us.

Also in May we held our annual meeting and the appointment of President, Treasurer and Secretary plus other members of the committee remain unchanged.

Our speaker in June, on Zoom once again, was Jennie Jordan who told us about the Body Shop which was established in 1976. It exists to fight for a fairer world and the empowerment of women and girls. Their products use natural ingredients and are produced without the use of testing on animals. Jennie sells their products online and she demonstrated some of them, in particular, their cleansers and moisturisers. It was a pity we were unable to appreciate their perfumes but the members attending enjoyed her talk.

Our July BBQ was held in my garden and although the weather was dry it was a little cool as the evening progressed. As you can imagine, there was a lot of chatter and exchange of news as some of us had not met up since lockdown had started.

In August we take a break but we shall be returning to our usual venue in the Church Room for our September meeting. We will welcome Bill Hamilton who will give us a talk on his experiences of 50 years as a journalist, broadcaster and BBCTV news correspondent.

Our members are continuing to go on local footpath walks.

We have recently learnt that our darts league will start up again in the Spring but will be restricted to the Spring and Summer only - there will be no play during the winter months.

We are also hoping to restart our Book Club meetings in September or October.

Dates for your diary:

Thurs 9 Sept	Man on the Spot - Bill Hamilton
Thurs 21 Oct	Harvest Supper
Thurs 11 Nov	Craft evening.

Please see our noticeboard in the Church Room for forthcoming events and information.

Marilyn Billett

CHURCHYARD

We, like many villagers have been concerned about the state of the churchyard this year, and I wanted to explain exactly what we are aiming for, and what's happened. As you may know the Parish Council kindly pays for grass cutting in the churchyard but there have been some comments about the management of the churchyard by the contractor this year.

We aim to provide a churchyard that is welcoming, especially to those who come to visit loved ones and tend family graves. We also seek to manage the biodiversity of our ancient site through the God's Acre programme. As in many areas of life this needs delicate balance.

Firstly, we are not aiming to turn the churchyard into a wildflower meadow! Where graves have become overgrown with long grass or wildflowers, that was not our intention. Families are welcome to tend their own graves and bring floral tributes but please do not add anything in glass or breakable containers as this can be a hazard. The God's Acre programme does not encourage planting directly into the ground as the grass is very special. It is an undisturbed sward which is rare. If in doubt, please ask.

We are encouraging the spread of the long area of snowdrops near the gate, the violets under the yews and an area of celandines and lady's-smocks on the north side so these will not be mown in the spring until they have flowered and dropped their seeds.

In the summer months two 3 metre circles either side of the path near the War Memorial, another on the north side, and a rectangle in the far northwest corner, where the graves are centuries old, are marked with small white pegs to indicate that these areas should not be mown until the field scabious, black knapweed and burnet-saxifrage have finished flowering.

There have been problems this year (you may have noticed with your own lawns and hedges) following the very wet spring, and then hot May. Grass did get out of hand, and the contractors were not able to cope satisfactorily.

So on Saturday 3 July we were very grateful to the King brothers Gareth, Daz and Shane, Paul Haggerwood, and Mark Jackson, who arrived with much machinery, together with our usual team of volunteers including Hugo, Jacky, Keith Parkinson, Stella Healey, Geoff Lawday, Frances Hirst, Colin Griffiths, Megan King (with apologies to any I have

forgotten) who were tidying up the Garden of Remembrance, digging up a mass of elder saplings and other invasive weeds and building compost bins. Many thanks to all of them, and to the many individuals who come and tend the graves, mowing, strimming, laying flowers and generally ensuring that the churchyard looks neat and is a pleasure to spend time in. Thanks to Phillip Cox who comes every week and keeps a number of graves looking neat and cared for.

Please use the compost bins for dead flowers and other things which will compost, and the green bins (now two) for weeds with seed heads, perennial roots, brambles etc. If flowers are still wrapped in plastic or plants are in plastic flowerpots, please remove the plastic and put it in the black bin, before using the compost bin or green bins.

We would very much welcome more volunteers to come and join us at 10am on the **FIRST SATURDAY** of each month to do general maintenance and a tidy up under the expert supervision of Jacky Gooding to ensure the rich and delicate fauna and flora of the church grounds are not disturbed.

We have recently received a donation of children's gardening tools to complement our selection of adult garden tools, but feel free to bring your own favourite shears, rakes and trowels for a great morning of community spirit; meeting neighbours, a chat, a cup of tea and some exercise for the benefit of the entire village, not least to respect and honour villagers from the past!



Theo, Francesca, Jack, Ivy and Adriana with parents tidying up around the Barringer grave using the new children's gardening tools

For more information or if you'd like to donate some of your surplus tools, please contact Hugo on hugovankempen0@gmail.com.

Hugo van Kempen, Working Party Coordinator
Robert Eadie, Churchwarden, on behalf of the PCC.

STEVINGTON VILLAGE HALL JOB VACANCY

Booking Manager

Booking Manager Job Description

Manage booking enquiries for Stevington village hall and playing field.

The manager will be required to:

- Respond to enquiries to use the hall, playing field or car park in the process detailed below.
- Ensure all quotes and final pricing are copied to the treasurer for invoicing.
- Keep the website calendar up to-date.
- Arrange site visits for hirers to view the hall with a member of the village hall team.
- Arrange access and closure of the site for hire events.
- Arrange for any additional cleaning by appointed contractor.

Hall enquiry process.

- Booking enquires will be delivered via a dedicated email account or referrals from the village hall team.
- Manager to send the enquirer a copy of the hire pro-forma.
- Evaluate the hire request meets the hiring criteria.
- Complete and send hirer documents covering the terms and conditions of hire, pricing schedule and hire agreement.
- Arrange site visit.
- Update the hall website calendar with confirmed bookings.

Time requirement initially 8 hours per month @ £10.00 per hour subject to review.

Home based.

The applicant should be confident in the use of basic computer applications (word processing, spreadsheets, PDF documents) and internet.

Please contact below for more information:

Steve Cole 01234 824571
bookings@stevingtonvillagehall.org.uk

Or

Linda Penney
secretary@stevingtonvillagehall.org.uk

STEVINGTON SOCIAL CENTRE 100 CLUB CONSIDER THIS.....!

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

The 100 Club still has a few numbers available, so try your luck and help maintain your village hall. Although the Covid-19 restrictions are gradually being eased, the 100 Club remains an important means of guaranteed revenue so your continued support is crucial.

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 can again start our customary programme of concerts, films, theatre, ballet, opera, carpet bowls, table tennis, yoga, Pilates and private functions.

EVERY MONTH four lucky winners receive a cash prize.

To join contact Hugo at hugovan Kempen0@gmail.com or on 01234 824894.

These are the most recent lucky winners:

Jun	£100	Nº 97	Anne Westbrook
	£50	Nº 74	Rosie Stanbridge
	£25	Nº 64	Heather & Keith Parkinson
	£15	Nº 21	Hillary O'Dell
Jul	£100	Nº 43	Heather Robinson
	£50	Nº 49	June Homer
	£25	Nº 89	Sandra Sample
	£15	Nº 37	Susie Clifton
Aug	£100	Nº 38	Pete Fisher
	£50	Nº 11	Steve Cole
	£25	Nº 57	Mary Murzyn
	£15	Nº 35	Marina Markham



Hugo van Kempen



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



Stevington Baptist Church



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

From Sunday, 26 September at 10.00am -
Morning Worship

Wednesdays at 3pm – **Afternoon Teas**

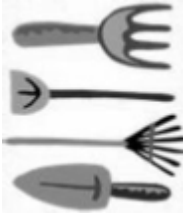
Join us for our afternoon tea on the fourth Wednesday of every month. The next one is on 22 September at 3pm. Come along and make new friends and try the quiz.

Baptist Church Hall MK43 7QU

An ideal venue for quiet retreats, meetings,
or family parties.

£25 a day, or hourly rates.
For details, call Carol Wareing: 825661

www.stevingtonbaptistchurch.org
office@stevingtonbaptistchurch.org



GARDENING TIPS AND INSPIRATION FROM PARK END THATCH

The past few months have been very wet with periods of heat, typical tropical conditions resulting in fantastic growth in our gardens. If you don't have a water butt already installed now is the time to consider getting one to make use of these gifts from the skies. Watering soil (not leaves) in the evening ensures the water goes down to the roots. Watering in the morning rejuvenates the plant but much of the excess just evaporates into the air. If you have a greenhouse with plants growing in it, water the floor of the greenhouse regularly to maintain humidity which cools the plants. Autumn is a good time to put in new plants and especially to divide and transplant those which have become a bit scraggy. Remember to water any new plants daily in hot weather and for at least three weeks until they have become established.

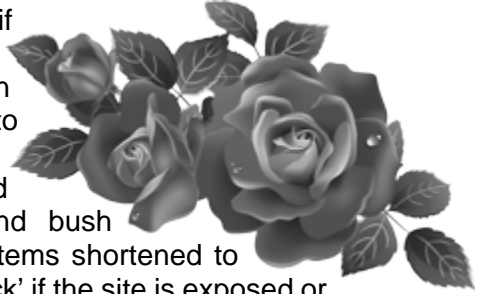
September is a popular time to aerate the lawn with a fork to 10cms or so, or use a hollow-tine tool to get air to the roots. Brush in horticultural grade sharp sand to improve drainage. If you have moss, use a moss killer and scarify the dead moss and thatch out together, followed by an autumn lawn food ideally just before rain is forecast. The trouble with leaving scarification until October is that the grass plants have insufficient time to recover before the cold and wet of winter. Personally, I prefer to carry out these cultural jobs in late February and March, when the grass plants benefit from the increasing warmth, spring rains and we see all those wonderful new blades of grass appearing in April and May.

Here are some suggestions and ideas to consider for your gardening 'to do' list.

SEPTEMBER

- Deadhead your flowering perennials to prolong their display. It is worth deadheading buddleja back to the tiny new flower buds in the axils of the next pair of leaves. Butterflies can live until the first frosts in early November so they need your help in providing fresh blooms of their favourite plants for as long as possible.
- Asters are just coming into flower, some of them grow very tall and will need staking or tying back to an existing support to keep them tidy. You may be lucky and see a late butterfly feeding on the nectar of sedums. Hollyhocks have caught my attention this year with their wide-open flowers attracting bees and butterflies.

- Keep deadheading roses if you want to enjoy those late blooms we sometimes see in October. Now is the month to train and tie in those long flexible stems of climbing and rambling roses. Shrub and bush roses can have their taller stems shortened to avoid damage or for 'wind-rock' if the site is exposed or in a wind tunnel.
- When late flowering clematis has finished blooming prune the plant back to its allotted space. Cut back other climbing plants to keep them away from downpipes, gutters and from growing under roof tiles or into thatch.
- If you have forgotten to trim your evergreens, do it in early September but not as severely as spring or early summer which are the best times to shape them.
- Keep container soil moist and free from those autumn leaves which collect and prevent rain from getting at the roots of your plants.
- By September, some herbaceous perennials can show signs of dying back. To tidy up cut off the dead leaves, stems and compost them. If the compost bin is dry give it a bucket of water to reactivate the biological processes.
- Look out for buxus dieback caused by pathogens or caterpillars. Best to dig up the plant and put the whole thing in the wheelie bin for landfill or incinerate. Leaving a diseased plant in the ground would spread the problem.
- Now is the time to buy new bulbs such as scilla, chinodoxa, muscari, narcissus and crocuses all look wonderful when growing in short grass. Try planting spring bulbs in broad drifts under trees. Alliums come in a wide variety of sizes and colours combining well with summer flowering herbaceous perennials or between lavender plants.
- On the vegetable plot clear all spent foliage and compost it. Fork over the ground and plant pak choi, lambs' lettuce and perennial spinach. Leave the rhubarb plants to take the goodness from the stalks back into their roots ready for next year. Pick the last of the cultivated blackberries. Pick runner beans every day and if you



want seeds for next year leave a few on the plant to mature then dry them off in the greenhouse before extracting the seeds.

- Harvest from your tree fruit, wash and dry the fruits before keeping in the fridge for a few weeks or boil and freeze in small blocks for longer storage. The dwindling crop of wild plums here will be made into pickle, a fruity brown sauce or a chutney. Try wrapping apples in newspaper and storing in a cool, dark and airy place. They will need checking once a week for going soft or growing mould. I usually put old stored apples out for the birds to peck at in the lean months of January and February.

OCTOBER

- Most jobs remaining on the September 'to do' list can be done early in October.
- Cut back buddlejas to shoulder height to reduce the damaging effects of 'wind-rock'.
- If you would like a cheerful evergreen container by the door, plant it up before winter and choose some violas to smile at you each time you pass by. Remember to water the container regularly.
- If we experience an early leaf drop, do collect up those leaves which fall on your lawn. If left they inhibit light and moisture to the lawn grass and can encourage lawn moulds. Put the collected leaves in a black plastic sack, prod once with a fork, close the top and put out of the way. In a year or so the leaves will have rotted down into leaf-mould which can be used in potting or in improving the texture of heavy soil.
- Collect up and compost fallen, rotting fruit from your trees. If left it can introduce disease into your fruit tree e.g. brown rot in the apples which remain on your trees.
- Keep mowing the grass, now on a higher cut and collect the leaves at the same time. Together they will rot faster in a black plastic bag or a covered compost bin.
- There will be berries on your garden shrubs and in the field hedgerows for birds and small mammals to eat.
- If you would like to plant something to benefit wildlife, look around your friends' gardens and in the garden centre to see which



berrying shrubs you like that would suit your garden. Make a note to go and buy and to put in those plants next spring.

- Insects and small creatures will be looking for safe places to hibernate. Many head for trees and areas thick with shrubs. Moths can also hibernate in long grass if it can be left undisturbed. I recently learned that spiders can predate on butterfly chrysalis, maybe it's time to clear the cobwebs out of the shed?
- On the vegetable plot tidy up any remaining debris, fork over the ground and top-dress with well rotted farmyard manure or garden compost. The rain and frost will continue to improve its decomposition and the worms will take down all the small pieces into the soil.

NOVEMBER

- Now is the time to plant tulip bulbs in the ground. Plant them really deeply and follow the planting instructions which come with them. I have more success with lilies in pots than with tulips, so this time I am going to find some short stemmed varieties and plant up a couple of containers which will be on trial for their performance next summer.
- Lift begonias early in the month and before the first frost and dahlias after it. Clean off all soil and dead pieces, put them in a cardboard box in compost and keep in a dark airy place over winter.
- Some of us like to cut down the dead herbaceous plant material at the start of winter, others prefer to leave it until late spring knowing that this will provide cover and protection for wildlife throughout the cold winter months. One year the local song thrush found a vast number of snails to eat from our garden in February, we found dozens of broken shells around flat stones I had left there for the purpose. I hope it will do the same this winter as we had far too many snails these past summers.
- Keep fleece to hand ready to wrap around camellias, rhododendrons, bay or any other tender plant you have left outside which needs protection from frost, cold winds or low temperatures. I find fixing the fleece with clothes pegs quick and easy especially if the job has to be carried out at short notice in the dark!

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

FARMING NEWS

Although climate change has altered the weather over the past 10-20 years, some things show no signs of changing such as rain at harvest time. Torrential storms just over a month ago smashed the oilseed rape to bits (none in the parish this year) and, in some places, knocked down a bit of wheat where the fertiliser was overlapped on the headlands. This was followed by a heatwave for 10 days which ripened crops up very quickly, then just as the combines were poised to go in, it has started to rain again. Grain needs to be sold on a 14.5% moisture basis and as well as that the straw needs to be dry and stiff to enable efficient and quick cutting.

So - as well as inclement weather reducing yields and quality, it also leads to higher harvesting costs (more diesel), supplementary drying (more diesel). This is clearly a problem for the farmer in the first instance but as you can see it is also a problem for us all as more carbon is released.

At the time of writing, all winter barley and oilseed rape is harvested and I'd estimate about a third of the winter wheat is in (albeit at well over the 14.5% moisture level) and it will need drying and conditioning to make it saleable. So far bushel weights (the crop's density) are lower than normal and therefore yields are not going to break any records.

Where possible, fields that have been cleared will be cultivated to stimulate germination of weeds so they can be killed by subsequent cultivations and to form the basis of a seedbed for the following crops. The non-selective weedkiller glyphosate is in very short supply this autumn, so will have to be eked out so there's enough to go around. This product is likely to be banned within the next 5 years, so tractors will be burning a lot more diesel in the future to deal with pernicious annual and perennial weeds in the autumn. Another response to this ban is an increase in the use of 'stacking' residual selective weedkillers in the autumn crops, which is very expensive and not always as efficient as they need to be.

On a lighter note, the sunflowers at Mill Farm appeared to cheer most people up and brought in a lot of people from outside the village to see them. As I correctly predicted in the last magazine issue, a scene of the sunflowers with the windmill in the background appeared on Look East Weather News. Unfortunately, no one took me up on my wager ☹.

I'm not 100% sure of the rotational benefit of sunflowers followed by sunflowers but I suspect if it's possible, they'll be back again next year?



Returning to the subject of global warming and carbon release, farmers and especially livestock farmers

are getting a lot of the blame which is only to be expected as they are an easy target and invariably cannot afford the time or money to fight back. Fortunately, Jeremy Clarkson has recently come to the rescue and given farmers and farming literally millions of pounds worth of good PR, free of charge with his 'Clarkson's Farm' TV programme. Quite how a stuntman like Clarkson has managed to explain the inner workings of British farming is unclear but farmers are generally pretty pleased with what he's done. There were obviously a few overdramatised bits for effect but most of it was spot on. The only serious inaccuracy was the level of red tape and hoops that farmers have to jump through to grow their own crops on their own land - in reality it is 10 times worse than it was portrayed!

As usual, what you read in the papers and the media is usually only half true - yes agriculture is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas pollution (and by no means the worst) but the notion that livestock production contributes the largest share is not true - it is the production and application of artificial fertiliser that is to blame. You'll be pleased to know that manufacturers and farmers are working hard to implement the use of 'protected' nutrients, especially nitrogen and phosphates, that provide the same effect of traditional fertilisers but with less diffuse and atmospheric pollution. One of the biggest problems however is that to reduce our dependence on artificial fertiliser and rely instead on organic livestock manures actually creates more acute nitrogen and phosphate pollution. New regulations just coming in this autumn will attempt to drive this down but of course someone needs to pay for the storage of livestock and, in some cases, human poo whilst we wait for the best time to apply it. If the public are serious about reducing carbon, they must buy locally and seasonally - fresh strawberries in your pavlova on Boxing Day may be no more.

The Farmers

COWLEY Di GIORGIO

SOLICITORS

63 HARPUR STREET
BEDFORD
MK40 2SR

Telephone: (01234) 218171

Fax: (01234) 327632

email: cowley@cowleydigiorgio.co.uk

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

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



THAT WAS THE NEWS THAT WAS

The Bedfordshire Times & Bedfordshire Independent - 16/01/1869 - Inquest

On the 14th inst, at Mr. James Keech's, the Cock Inn, Stevington, an inquest was held by Mr. J. P. Piper, Esq., deputy-coroner, on the body of John Fobee, farmer, aged 71. The deceased had complained on Tuesday evening of a pain in his chest and was assisted upstairs. Having been partially undressed he went to bed, where he died so quietly that although he had been visited at frequent intervals his attendant assumed he was sleeping. Disease of the heart was the cause of death assigned by the medical evidence, and the jury returned a verdict in accordance with the facts.

Northampton Mercury 16/09/1871 - Charge of Cruelty to a Pig

Jesse Cox, 30, Stevington, was charged with having cruelly ill-treated and tortured a pig, at that village, on August 19th. He was defended by Mr. W. A. Stimson. The prosecution was conducted by Mr. George Choyce, of Leicester, one of the officers of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Mr. John Horrell, farmer, was the first witness. He deposed that, between six and seven pm on August 19th, while going from his farm to Stevington, he saw defendant's pig lying on the road outside his field, and having gone to the defendant, told him that he had better go and look after it.

Charles Bowyer, (a boy, who said he is now in his 12th year) son of a labourer on the Bedford and Northampton Railway, was now called. In reply to the magistrates, he said he could not read, but that he goes to chapel school on Sundays. He did not know what book the Bible was, and said that he did not read it on Sunday, but that he was learning to read the Testament. He had been taught to speak the truth, but he did not know where people go who tell untruths, although he had been taught that it was very wicked to lie. He did not understand that, when he kissed the book, he called upon God to witness that he would tell the magistrates the truth. The Bench declined to hear the evidence of the youth, and directed him to be taken outside and taught the nature and responsibility of an oath. He was accordingly tutored for a time by his uncle, but it was of no avail, for, on the lad's return, he repeated off-hand the instructions he had received, that "he had to tell the truth, and that if he told a lie, he should go to hell." The Bench refused to have him sworn, although it was stated that the boy was a most material witness.

Stephen Harding, a boy some few years older, was then sworn, and deposed that he saw the defendant beating the pig, on the evening of the 19th of August, with a nut hazel rod as thick as his little finger, and the rod broke. Defendant then borrowed a whip from this boy, and beat the pig with it. The animal got into a dyke, and when it got out, it "walked on its knees." The pig was left in Mr. Horrell's pea field, where it was seen lying by this witness on the next morning (Sunday), on the Monday, and on the Tuesday, though its position had been changed slightly on each occasion.

Mr Choyce deposed that, on August 25th, he went with Police-constable Mardlin to defendant's house, and charged defendant with cruelty to the pig by beating it and allowing it to remain in a field three days without food. Saw the pig in the sty and perceived that it was injured apparently about the loins, across which he found a bruise. The pig was totally unable to stand for a minute together. Defendant said he beat the pig because it was very stupid, but that he was very sorry for having left it so long in the field, having fetched it home on the Tuesday in a barrow. Police-constable Mardlin corroborated, and added that the defendant asked his advice as to what steps he ought to take, saying that he did not care what he paid if he didn't get into Court. Mr. Stimson having argued that there was no evidence to prove that the beating by defendant had injured the pig, the Bench dismissed the case, cautioning defendant, however, to be more circumspect in future.

The Leighton Buzzard Observer - 16/02/1892

Cowman Wanted: Must be a good milker: one with two or three boys preferred. 16s. per week and cottage to good man. Apply to Mr. Sharratt, Manor Farm, Stevington, Bedford.

Bedfordshire Times & Standard - 19/06/1953

DAIRYMAN FOR 40 YEARS - Mr. H. Middleton - The Rev. H. E. R. Wassell of Bedford, officiated, at the funeral service on Wednesday for Mr. Harry Middleton who died at his home, 44 Silver Street, Stevington, on Sunday. He was 66 years old and was taken ill while delivering milk at Pavenham on 8th June.

He was educated at Pavenham School and had been in business in that village as dairyman and smallholder for about 40 years. Mr. Middleton was known and liked in the district, especially for his willingness to help those in need.

He leaves a widow, formerly Miss Bertha Ann Aspley, three sons, Charles, James and Hugh, and a daughter Sheila.

Mourners were: Mrs. B. Middleton (widow); Messrs C. J. and H. Middleton (sons); Mrs. G. Thompson (daughter); Mrs. J. Hulatt, Mrs. King and Mrs. Surrige (sisters); Mr. G. Middleton, Mr. J. Middleton (brothers); Mrs. C. Roberts, Mrs. S. Middleton (aunts); Mr. Joe Middleton, Mr. C Roberts (uncles), Mrs. C. Middleton, Mrs. J. W. Middleton (daughters-in-law); Mrs F. J. Aspley (sister-in-law); Mrs. Hackney (niece); Mr. L. Aspley, Mr. L. Hulatt, Mr. F. Hackney (nephews); Mrs. Joe Cox (nurse and friend).

Messrs. P. W. Keech and Son of Stevington were responsible for funeral arrangements.

All the above articles found (and copied verbatim) using the resource of the British Newspaper Archive. Copyright owner: © 2021 Findmypast Newspaper Archive Limited - Proudly presented by Findmypast in partnership with the British Library.

Mark Jackson



FRIENDS OF HARROLD MEDICAL PRACTICE

After years of receiving generous donations The Friends of Harrold Medical Practice have been in a position to install automatic doors at the surgery. When you visit the surgery both the outside and inside doors will open as you approach. We hope that this will make your visit to the surgery easier if you are in a wheelchair, pushing a pram or just walking in.

The cost of the installation has used all of the accumulated funds held by the Friends and it has been decided to close the charity. The charity was formed in 1997 and has supported several projects at the surgery and bought and maintained a number of pieces of medical equipment. None of which would have been possible without the generosity of the patients and some very generous bequests which we have received over the years.

Thanks must go to Brenda Alexander who has been Chairman for a number of years and the other longstanding committee members Fay De Vries and Alison Fowler and to all the families that have made donations and bequests.

Frances Hirst
Secretary

ARE YOU A LAWN LOVER?

From as little as

£15*

per treatment

* Based on a lawn size
up to 40m²

HELP YOUR LAWN TO THRIVE, NOT JUST SURVIVE

Over the last 30 years our love for lawns has grown and grown (just like our grass!). We combine our passion and enthusiasm with innovative technology as we continue to revolutionise UK Lawn Care.

Our groundbreaking 12-month **Lawn Treatment Programmes**, keep your grass looking its best all year round, ensuring your lawn receives the love and attention it deserves.

Let's create the lawn we both love

Start your Lawn Care journey today:

Call us on 01234 709345/01480 597432

email: bedford@greenthumb.co.uk

visit: greenthumb.co.uk/bedford

GreenThumb
LAWN TREATMENT SERVICE 

HARROLD ODELL COUNTRY PARK NEWS



We are now nearly at the end of the school summer holidays. The time seems to have gone by extraordinarily fast this year. The Christmas floods and all the damage they did are still fresh in my memory. For the most part, the birds have finished nesting and most, with the exception of the swans, seem to have had a very successful breeding season this year. We don't know why there have



Graveling the Tern Raft

visitors fed them. Now that the goslings have reached adulthood, they have dispersed around the country in order to find food ahead of winter in other areas.

Visitors have reported numerous sightings of Grass Snakes this year, especially during the hot weather. Reptiles are cold-blooded and are most active in hot conditions. They swim very well and can be seen hunting along the lake edges and ponds or sunbathing on logs. We have worked with several school parties this year and the snake's favourite prey, baby frogs, have turned up in good numbers in the children's bug boxes when they've been searching for insects along the hedgerows or pond dipping in the lakes.

One bit of bad news as far as the wildlife is concerned is an upsurge in reported sightings of Mink. Several years ago, animal rights activists released a number of animals from fur farms. Rogue fur farmers also released them and they have since devastated Water Vole and ground nesting bird populations all over the country. They are members

been so few cygnets this year. The new tern rafts anchored in both the lakes were utilised straight away by Common Terns and Oystercatchers. It gave us great joy to see the chicks being fed by their parents and growing fat on a diet of small fish and dragonflies.

Greylag and Canada Geese were present in large numbers in July, fattening up on a diet of grass, water weeds and whatever the



Mink

of the Weasel family and therefore very aggressive and versatile hunters.

They are perfectly capable of swimming across to the island, are slim enough to get into rabbit burrows and badger setts. They can catch fish and climb trees to raid bird nests. Please can anyone spotting one of these note the location and time of any sightings and report them to us? They are like Stoats, smaller than Otters but jet black. Sometimes there might be white markings on them as well depending on genetics.

The volunteers have most recently been working on restoring and installing rustic signs, painting and repairing benches, clearing viewpoints and footpaths and keeping the grass cut around the car parking areas. Now that the nesting season is coming to an end, we were committed to a significant number of days just on trimming hedges.

Having spent several winters laying the hedges in various parts of the park, we don't want them to get out of hand again. You can imagine what a mammoth task this was. The circular walk around Grebe Lake alone is 1.5miles! This generates a huge volume of cuttings. We have two designated fire sites within the park for disposal of this sort of material. The activity is carbon-neutral because the new growth absorbs the carbon generated in much greater quantities than mature growth.

Going forward, we have two major repair jobs to do. The Friends of the Park are funding repairs to the roof and floor of the main bird hide which is leaking and replacing the rotting footbridge over the dyke in Otter Holt Wood. Timber is in short supply at the moment but we are gradually amassing the materials we need. The money needed is coming from your generous car park donations.

Money has also been spent on a new noticeboard in the picnic area with info about archaeology of the park and a new noticeboard and poster now on display in the small bird hide. The poster was created by volunteer Trevor Sudds and shows the main bird species found in the park.

To complement the material in the display boards, the website, managed by the volunteers, has downloadable resources on various aspects of the park under the heading Information Sheets. Feel free to

print off and use during your visit anything that may be of interest. With all the new artworks now in place, we will need to update the 'Structures in the Park' resource sheet. We will do that as soon as possible.

You might have noticed two newly installed fish benches in the main picnic area? They were commissioned by the Friends Group from a local chainsaw artist called Peter Schwartz. They have replaced a previous bench that had rotted badly underneath. He has also donated a carving of a Kingfisher which has been installed in the woods just along from the outdoor classroom. It replaces an old carving that had rotted and been torn apart by badgers looking for beetle grubs. The old one has been left on the ground as habitat for insects and fungi.

Installing Benches



At the moment he is working on another project with Peter Hall from Carlton to carve a story-telling chair to go in the outdoor classroom area which we can then use to host events in the future. The volunteers have nicknamed it 'my throne.' All this artwork has been created from a single 120yr old cedar tree. It was felled a couple of years ago in Sywell, Northants and was purchased by the Friends Group from Willie Penn, the woodsman based there. The money needed came from a generous legacy bequeathed to us by someone who really loved the park. The bespoke artworks have been paid for out of car park donations.

Jette (pronounced Yetta) Randall, a Friends Group member has been working with the Borough Council's Reprographics Department to produce display material about the volunteer activities and the wildlife to be seen. Booklets have been printed covering volunteer achievements from March to May. They are free and can be picked up from the spinner just inside the door of the café during opening hours. There are plans to produce other editions covering the rest of a typical working year in the park.

All that remains for me to say is that I am due to retire at the end of October after 13 very happy years managing the park. The people here are phenomenal, and I have made so many friends during that time. It has been an absolute privilege to have worked

here and I'm going to miss it all dreadfully. Altogether, I have worked for 30 years in countryside management looking after a number of different sites around the county and the years have simply whizzed by.

Dates for your Diary

Health Walks (September 9 & 23, October 7 & 21, November 4 & 18)
These happen every other Thursday. They start at the woodland entrance of the Dragonfly Café at 10.30am and last for an hour. This is a national scheme that aims to improve people's health & wellbeing and provide opportunities to meet new people for friendship. Leaders: Janet Munro & Lindsey Alton. For more information, please email janet.munro@bedford.gov.uk or telephone 01234 720016 and leave your name and contact details.

Friends Task Days (September 27, October 25, November 29)
These occur on the last Monday of the month (a week earlier if it's a Bank Holiday). Meet at the park office at 10am bringing a packed lunch and wearing old clothes and sturdy boots appropriate to the weather conditions. Wellies are not recommended unless specified as they do not protect your feet. We provide instructions, work gloves, tools and refreshments. For more information, please email Richard.dowsett@bedford.gov.uk or call 01234 720016 and leave your name and contact details. You can join in just for a morning or afternoon or stay to the end, about 3pm.

Janet Munro - Country Park Warden

Photos courtesy of HOCP

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.





Dixon & Sons

CONSTRUCTION LIMITED

- Extensions and Alterations
- Garage Conversions
- Groundwork and Brickwork Contracts
- Landscaping
- Driveways
- Chimney Repointing and Repairs
- New Builds



We take great pride in maintaining a reliable and friendly service.

Call today for a non-obligatory quote.

References are available on request.



City &
Guilds



Call for a free quote: 01234 840879 or 07712121493



info@dixonandsons.co.uk or www.dixonandsons.co.uk