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Editorial by Mick Ridley and James Read

“What’s not to love?” A phrase you might use about Meppershall and this great village has lost one of its biggest and best in the sad news of Mick Trundle’s passing. Tributes printed here are an outpouring of love and respect for a great man. Read more overleaf.



We often tell each other to “spread a little love”. If you use Facebook you might occasionally find yourself clicking on that little heart symbol to tell someone (or maybe just tell yourself) that you don’t just ‘Like’ something you’ve seen – you love it. And a generation of young people are growing up learning to make perfect heart shapes with their fingers and thumbs as the finishing touch to a photo. It’s a whole new world for many of us! Why think about love in cold February?

Valentine’s Day 2020 is coming up. In the UK this day is usually about the one person we really want to give our heart to – sending that card or giving those chocolates or flowers to someone special. Some sign their name, some do not. There is always that slight sense of mystery or secret admiration with a Valentine’s card.

In other parts of the world, Valentine’s Day is a bit different. In the U.S. children in a class at school often give a Valentine’s greeting or chocolate hearts to all their classmates. When we lived there it was a moment when people could look each other in the eye and remind themselves that they love each other – not just boyfriends, girlfriends and partners but friends and families and neighbours.

You don’t have to be a bleeding heart or a softy to get into all this love stuff. You may want to look at it very selfishly. Scientific research has shown that a person doing acts of kindness and helping others receives real personal benefits – they experience happier mood, lower levels of anxiety and greater wellbeing generally. Doctors have said that this could be due to the chemicals washing around our brains such as serotonin and around our hearts such as oxytocin. That’s one for your next Google search. Or if you are feeling really kind, try swapping Google for Ecosia – a search engine that uses its revenues to plant trees across the world and doesn’t sell your data.

If we still aren’t getting the Valentine’s Vibe, we have other ways to express ourselves. Meppershall offers a series of options for those who just don’t want to be kind. We can try the two-finger-salute as we narrowly miss oncoming traffic by the village shop! Or maybe sound our horn at cyclists or pedestrians as we race into the village from the Watertower! How about taking to the centre of the A507 at well over the speed limit to save a few minutes getting to Henlow?! But it won’t make us feel good.

Alternatively, when you next take a walk through the village, try exchanging a breezy “hello” with the first person you see. Stop and have a chat with a neighbour. Look out for someone that might need help. Not everyone has that ‘someone special’ in their lives and you may be making a massive difference when you just reach out and take an interest. There are a lot of generous-spirited folk in Meppershall and we have a community that we can be proud of. Spread the love. You’ll feel great.

Mick Trundle

Dear Friends,

I have to thank you for the many tributes and cards
 You sent when Mick died before Christmas.
 Lots of your memories are pleasant and full of laughter;
 He would be very proud that people remember him
 With smiles.
 This big man touched so many hearts and minds of the
 people around him and we appreciate your sharing of
 your memories with us.
 God bless you and keep you

Penny Trundle, Howard and family.

From Dick Bulley:

I must be one among very many in Meppershall who was saddened to hear of Mick's death; the village has lost one of its real personalities.

I first became aware of Mick during my spell as Editor of The Messenger. Mick was a regular correspondent and commentator from his country seat at Trundle Towers. He maintained this practice from the public benches at meetings of the Parish Council, commenting with a dry wit in his distinctive *basso profundo* voice – his voice had a long way to travel from his boots! Some of his earliest letters to The Messenger commented critically about “new comers” to the village, following the development that became Coneygate: to Mick, anyone who had not been in the village for 20 years was a newcomer, but he mellowed noticeably as time went by and was an unfailing friend when one was needed.

When a lady in Fildyke Road offered a harmonium to St Mary's it was Mick with his trailer who responded to a call for transport (and muscle power) and again when my car broke down on the morning of the Summer Fair and I had dozens of plants to get to the Garden Club stall.

In later years, when he became less mobile, he was usually to be found at Collating days for The Messenger, often sitting opposite yours truly operating a stapler and sometimes joining in songs from G&S, one of his abiding loves.

I can only say that I shall miss Mick personally and that it was a privilege to have known him and worked with him.

From Paul Carne:

On the 19th December we said goodbye to a great Meppershall man, Mick Trundle. Not Meppershall by birth but by choice.

I first met Mick when he moved to Meppershall in the early 70's with his wife Penny and son Howard. From the start our lives seemed to entwine. It probably started when Mick supplied a gearbox for a Mk 1 Cortina I owned - he just happened to have one. It then moved on when we appeared in plays together with The Meppershall Players. In one we played sailors and Mick, being ex-navy, made sure I went out dressed correctly.

It was, however, performing in The Players' pantomimes and variety shows that he really came into his own. Quick witted, it was a pleasure to be on stage with him, frequently way off script but always funny and every audience thought so too. It wasn't just panto and stand up though. Mick had a lovely deep bass voice and it was great to listen to him sing, anything from comedy ballads to opera and all genres in-between. I was fortunate in appearing with him many times when he and Penny joined Putteridge Gilbert and Sullivan Society.

In all the years I knew him I never heard him put anyone down or belittle them on or off stage. Outside the theatre he would always be willing to help in the village whether it was lending straw bales for the summer fete, rounding up the bonfire or collecting wood for it. I'll never forget the look on a policeman's face as he drove past the top of the road with Mick's tractor half way across it as we managed to pull up a stubborn tree stump from someone's front garden. "The brakes don't work," he informed me. I would see him at tractor rallies and auctions and many times we would meet somewhere in the village and put the world to rights. Mick was one of life's givers and I was lucky enough to count him as one of my friends.

RIP my friend.

From Paul Smith:

What an amazing send off, the church was overflowing. Howard's eulogy about his dad was a mixture of tears and laughter. The joke at the end summed Mick up perfectly.

The village has lost a great character.

He will live long in my memory. RIP Michael

From Meppershall Players:

It was with great sadness in December that one of the Players' most treasured members took his final bow. Mick Trundle was a favourite with our audiences and with his fellow actors; his quick witted ad-libs during pantomime performances were something to behold, so much so that whenever Mick was on the stage the remainder of the cast not on stage at the time, would gather in the wings (much to the chagrin of the stage manager) to listen, not only to Mick's witty repartee but also the roars of laughter that would follow from the audience, which thankfully drowned out those of the cast standing in the wings.



From the editors:

Mick (holding the mic) is pictured here presiding over 'Scruffs' in 2013 – one of the highlights of the annual Meppershall Summer Fair. With Paul Carne he served as an excellent Master of Ceremonies for many years and the picture will recall happy summer memories for many of us. In hats, to the right of Mick in the picture, are our current co-editor James and the late Councillor Lewis Birt, long-time Shefford Town Councillor and Central Bedfordshire Council representative for Shefford.



Michael William Trundle (5th April 1939 – 7th December 2019)
With kind thanks to Penny for allowing us to include this wonderful photograph.

Letters to the Editors

Dear Editors

I wish to offer a heartfelt thank you to all my family, friends and neighbours who made my 80th birthday so memorable. Special thanks to Donna, Simon, Elsie and Vanessa for their help in making the new Village Hall look so wonderful. It is a great venue that I thoroughly recommend for a fun private party - especially with a well-chosen selection of music by Andy Cannon's Vinyl Disco, and the excellent buffet supplied by Roger's Bakery – thank you both.

Lastly, a big, big thank you for all the donations I received in lieu of presents. We raised £440, which in memory of my two brothers, will go to help fight prostate cancer.

Cheers, and a Happy New Year to you all.

Jean Holden

Dear Editors

I feel that I have to express my feelings regarding the current state of our village. I have lived in Meppershall for 35 years which has been very pleasant until the last 2 years, however now we have large scale housing development and the village is expanding greatly. I do understand that people have to have somewhere to live but the investment in the village infrastructure has not been maintained at the equivalent rate. For example, Fildyke Road has not been resurfaced properly during the 35 years of my residence. Also, some of the private property hedgerows along the footpath on Fildyke Road are a disgrace, overgrown and encroaching the path. This can cause a pedestrian to have to step onto the road to avoid getting wet or when passing other users. The footpath itself is also in a shocking condition, especially for the less mobile of our community, and people with prams, as it is now so uneven and hazardous to use.

I feel that there is so much incompetence, from both the Parish Council and Central Bedfordshire Council as recently a tree that had been blown over in Fildyke Road has taken 8 days for it to be removed despite some of it obstructing the footpath. The bulk of the tree has been removed but I am waiting to see how long it takes for the remaining part of the stump to be dealt with as this is still a safety hazard.

I am sorry I have had to be so critical but I feel that it is such a shame that a once lovely village has changed so much within the last 5 years and is becoming a less pleasurable place to live with no action being taken for even basic amenities.

Yours sincerely

Mr A.E. Edwards

To The Messenger "Posties":

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to deliver the magazine each month! We have 35 volunteers doing the posting, some of whom have been with us many years. We would also like to thank those posties who after many years are stepping down and welcome the volunteers who are replacing them. ***The Messenger Team***



JOIN MEPPERSHALL'S SPRING CLEAN

Let's bin the litter together!

Saturday 4th April 2020

Start time 10am at Meppershall Village Hall

Sign up to help by emailing

lovemeppershall@meppershall.org

be a volunteer



Old Coins from Meppershall by Jeremy Holden

Coins have been used and lost in England for over 2000 years. Old coins turn up in gardens and fields giving us a clue as to the peoples that came before us. This month's cover image features a collection of coins spanning almost the entire history of British coinage, and all were found within the village of Meppershall.

It is likely that coins were first used in what is now Meppershall in around 30 BC when Celtic tribes began minting their own money. A number of these coins have been discovered in the village close to the High Street and are pictured on the front cover. The small bronze example featuring a pig (top left) was recovered in 1980 from land farmed by Frank Wymark and now owned by Sandra Reed of Manor Farm. It dates from between 10 BC and 20 AD and was minted in Verulanium (present day St Albans) by the tribal king Tasciovanus. This area of the village seems to have been the centre of Celtic activity, as Sandra also found a silver Celtic coin in her garden.

After the Roman occupation of Britain, Meppershall would have become a Romano-British settlement. Small bronze Roman coins are common in the village fields, mostly from the 3rd and 4th Centuries AD. There are a number of known archaeological sites dating from this period - most notably the rural industrial site that now sits beneath the housing development at Gregory Close. The earliest Roman coin recovered from the village is a huge bronze sestertius of the Emperor Hadrian dated at 130 AD. It appears that there was not great wealth in Meppershall at this time, as coins like the silver denarius featured on the cover (top middle) are scarce. This example shows Lucius Verus and dates to around 162 AD. The following coin (top right) was minted in 330 AD. It is a commemorative issue showing a bust of Roma. It was found on a field belonging at the time to Donald Simpkins of Chapel Farm.

Following the collapse of the Roman Empire the use of coins became rare. To my knowledge, no coinage from the Saxon period has turned up in the village. It is not until the Norman invasion that coins once again begin to appear, albeit rarely. I know of one silver penny from the reign of Henry I (1100-35) that was found in the village. The hammered silver penny at bottom left features Edward I and dates from the late 1200s. Both this coin and the beautiful groat, or four pence, of Richard III (bottom centre) came from land farmed by Tony Primmet at the top of the village. Finally, at bottom right, is a chunky farthing of George I from 1723 when coins began to take on a more familiar appearance.

Meppershall is littered with history, so keep a lookout while gardening and you might find something interesting.

Jeremy Holden

Parish Council Precept

At the Meppershall Parish Council meeting on Monday 13th January, it was agreed to request a precept of £48,886 for the financial year 2020-2021. This is the total amount to be raised through council tax payments from all the dwellings within the parish area to help support parish council services and activities.

Councillors have looked carefully at what is needed in order to keep any increase to a minimum, and to ensure that the reserves are sufficient to cover any unforeseen expenses as well as the agreed level of running costs.

The 'precept' is converted into an amount per council tax band and this forms part of the council tax bill. The amount payable for a Band D Council Tax dwelling in 2020-2021 will be £60.31 per year. This represents an increase of 1.95% (£1.15) on the 2019-2020 contribution of £58.98 per Band D dwelling.

The precept requested by the Parish Council will be added to funds requested by the Police, Fire Services and Central Bedfordshire Council.

Alessandra Marabese – Clerk to Meppershall Parish Council

Junior Church at St Mary's, Meppershall



**Junior Church is back on
Sunday 2 February**

11am at St Mary's Church

(ages 3 to 12)

Ali Baba and The Forty Thieves Panto – HATS Drama Group

Stumbling upon thieves while out in the forest, Ali Baba watches as they come and go from a magic cave filled with exotic treasure which they have stolen. He learns the secret message ("Open Sesame"), opens the cave and plunders it himself when the thieves aren't around. He is discovered by his greedy brother, Cassim, who forces him to reveal the cave's location. The thieves return to the cave, find Cassim stealing from them and kill him! Discovering Ali's home, they arrive hidden in large oil jars but a slave girl, Safiya, finds the thieves and pours boiling oil into the jars! Ali Baba and Safiya are now wealthy and they move into Cassim's house to live happily ever after...

You can see the full story in the hilarious family pantomime presented by HATS which opens on Fri 31 Jan; it's the very first to be staged at the new **Meppershall Village Hall**, see the poster for details. Just 1.5 miles from Shefford, Meppershall Village Hall is off Walnut Tree Way in the centre of the village. There are accessible toilets and a bar, all

on one level with direct access from the on-site free car park with dedicated spaces for disabled adjacent to the entrance.



Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves

A pantomime by Ben Crocker

Friday 31 January 7.30pm
Saturday 1 February 2.30pm & 7.30pm
Sunday 2 February 2.30pm
Friday 7 February 7.30pm
Saturday 8 February 2.30pm & 7.30pm

Meppershall Village Hall
Walnut Tree Way SG17 5AB

TICKETS

£10 Adults £7 Children
Family Ticket £30 (2 adults & 2 children)

Book on-line at www.ticketsource.co.uk/hats-drama
or phone 0333 666 3366

(No fee when booking on-line £1.75 fee for phone booking)

Follow us
on
Facebook:
Henlow
Theatre






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

Church Road, off Campton Road, Meppershall

www.stmarysmeppershall.org.uk ✝ facebook.com/stmarysmeppershall



Rector: The Reverend Veronica Goodman

01462 339962 – ronigoodman@gmail.com – usual day off Monday

Churchwardens:

Dawn Abbatt 01462 816962 Chris Valentine 01462 815971

Email: Meppershall.PCC@gmail.com

PCC Secretary:

Anne Parsons 01462 813333 Email: annie10639@gmail.com

Message from St Mary's

The weeks following the celebrations of Christmas and new year always strike me as some of the darkest and the drabest of the year. Once the colour and the sparkle of Christmas lights are put away, we are left with that 'back to work' feeling with many of us leaving our village of Meppershall each morning whilst it is still dark and often returning home each evening in a similar state of darkness. But as the days move forward into February, we start to see glimmers of brightness as sunrise inches earlier and earlier and of course suggestions of new life and growth as some of our garden plants begin a new season of life. The hope of warmer days and lighter evenings draws our attention to the coming weeks.

This hope is reflected too in the Church's year. Sunday 2nd February is referred to as Candlemas. It refers to the account in the Bible when Jesus was taken to Jerusalem by his parents and presented to God in the Temple. It was also the time when candles to be used in the Church were blessed for the coming year - hence Candlemas! The blessing of church candles was literally a blessing signifying the light of Jesus dispelling the darkness of the world but it was also significant that it occurred at a time of year when (in homes without electricity) candles would have been a much-needed blessing as the darkness of winter continued. In America this day is referred to as 'Groundhog Day' and many of us will have watched the film starring Bill Murray reliving the same day in an apparently never-ending season of winter. But for me, I prefer the traditional term 'Candlemas Day' reminding us of the promise of light and warmth, both in the seasons as well as spiritually. As we look to the future, the coming weeks in particular remind us of the return of light as well as the return of the plants and flowers to our gardens.

But in February we are also reminded of the need for relationships built on love and trust. On 14th February the Church, along with people of many faiths and none will celebrate the feast of St Valentine. Another signpost to the hope of new life as winter

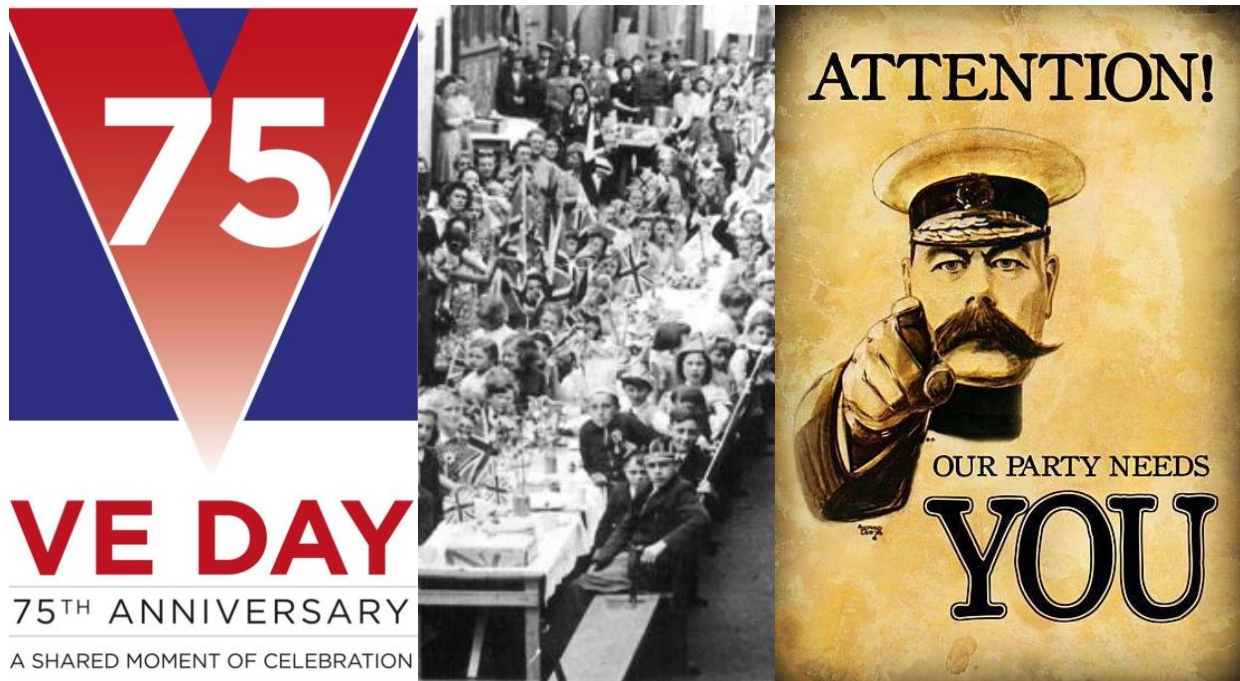
turns to spring. If you are celebrating this Valentine's Day - and especially if you are intending to 'pop the question' (it is of course a leap year on 29th of the month) I hope that you will use the day to focus on the joy and love of relationships both new and old....and whether February is a celebration of relationships, extra daylight hours or new shoots in the garden we can all be amazed by the gift of new life which God offers to us.

Keith Callard, Reader, St Mary's, Meppershall

Church Services and Events – February 2020

At St Mary's unless stated below

Date	Time	Service / Event
Sun 2 nd February Candlemas	11.00am	Holy Communion, plus Junior Church
Weds 5 th February	10.00am	Holy Communion
Sun 9 th February 5 th before Lent	8.30am 11.00am 2.15pm	Holy Communion Morning Worship – all welcome! Second Sunday Stroll – a 3.5-mile loop: Cow Bridge, L. Gravenhurst, Shillington, Shillington Bury. Maybe with tea at Lordship Farm. From St Mary's church gate, 2.15. More info, tel. 857836.
Mon 10 th February	7.15pm for 7.30 start	Bible Society: Workers Together – Fellowship and Challenges. With Revd Roni Goodman, at St Michael's, Shefford.
Tues 11 th February	2-4pm	Rectory Tea - Chat and a cuppa, all welcome
Weds 12 th February	10.00am	Holy Communion
Fri 14 th February	9pm	Silent Together Enjoy the presence of God in the tranquillity of the church - 30 mins.
Sun 16 th February 4 th before Lent	8.30am 11.00am	Holy Communion Morning Worship – All Welcome!
Weds 19 th February	10.00am	Holy Communion
Sat 22 nd February	9.00am	Celtic Morning Prayer (breakfast from 8ish)
Sun 23 rd February 3 rd before Lent	11.00am	Holy Communion, plus Junior Church.
Tues 25 th February	2-4pm	Rectory Tea - Chat and a cuppa, all welcome
Weds 26 th February	10.00am	Holy Communion
Sun 1 st March 2 nd before Lent	11.00am	Holy Communion, plus Junior Church St David's Day



Meppershall VE Day Street Party & Fireworks – Friday 8th May

The Meppershall Events team have volunteered to coordinate the village celebrations to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of VE Day. The event, on Friday 8th May, will be held in the grounds of the Village Hall and will incorporate a 'street party' on Centenary Field behind the Village Hall in the afternoon followed by a firework display in the evening.

The team have started planning the event but would love to hear from as many people and organisations from the village for ideas and volunteers on the day.

Their next meeting is on **Tuesday 11th February**, in the Meppershall Social Club at the Village Hall, and they would love to see as many people from across Meppershall there.

If you have any questions in the meantime please email them at meppershall.events@gmail.com or call Mick on 07590 685673

Be a part of the nation's celebration of this historic occasion!



The Airman, Meppershall



The Barley Mow (now The Airman Hotel) – about 1925

DID YOU KNOW...?

The Airman Hotel (now under new management) has been on this site since at least 1843 albeit under several names. The 1876 licensing register recorded it as an “unnamed beer house, close to brickworks” on a spot known as “The Hoo.”

The Rating and Valuation Act 1925 specified that every building and piece of land in the country was to be assessed to determine its rateable value. The valuer visiting the beer house discovered that it was by then called “The Barley Mow” meaning that there were actually *two* licensed houses of this name in Meppershall parish, the other being in Meppershall village (and doubtless remembered by some readers!) The tenant, Alfred Dear, had been there 13 years (landlords in Meppershall seem to have been at their establishments for long periods around this time). His rent was £12 per annum; not much even then. The valuer commented: “near brickworks but they leave at 5 o’clock and he opens at 6 o’clock.” Fortunately, things have changed since then – not least the opening hours and facilities!

The beer house was rebuilt and the name changed to “The Airman” by the then owners, Bedford brewers Charles Wells, in 1930-1931, reflecting and capitalising on the presence of nearby RAF Henlow. In February 1957 a full license was granted to The Airman, turning it from a beer house into a public house. In 1989 the Shefford-Clifton-Henlow bypass (A507) greatly changed the road network in the area. The Airman had always stood at a crossroads where the road from Meppershall to Clifton met the road from Bedford to Hitchin but this road was now enlarged and a roundabout built right outside the pub.

The pub was enlarged and renamed “The Carriage House Hotel” in 1999, reverting to “The Airman Hotel and Restaurant” in 2010.

Remember to support our advertisers!



The Meppershall Players at S.T.M.A.



A big THANK YOU to everyone who came to see our December & January performances of "Cinderella" We will be performing the Pantomime Aladdin on the 5th & 12th December 2020. More details of that later in the year.

After staging the Ultimate 80's Disco last year, we were asked to do a 60' and 70's and another 80's. So, as we don't have time to do all three, we thought we'd combine them to make The Ultimate Decades Disco with the best sounds of the 60's, 70's & 80's on Saturday, 14th March 2020 at 8pm, at S.T.M.A Hall, 10 Hitchin Road, Shefford SG17 5JA. Fashions of the decades optional (but fun) with prizes for best dressed. Doors will open at 7.30pm.

Tickets are on sale at ticketsource.co.uk/themeppershallplayers. Online ticket sales will cease 24 hours before the event starts. For non-internet sales, contact 01462 816336

We now meet at 7.30pm on Monday evenings at the S.T.M.A and welcome any new members who want to join in the fun of any or all aspects of theatrical performances.

If you want to join our merry band of thespians whether it's on or off the stage contact Karen on the number below or pop in and see us on Monday evenings 7.30pm-10pm at The S.T.M.A Hall (Junior members usually finish at 9pm due to School the next day).

Sat 14th March 2020 - The Ultimate Decades Disco (60's, 70's & 80's) 8pm at S.T.M.A.

Fri 8th May & Sat 9th May - V.E Musical Play at S.T.M.A.

Fri 14th & Sat 15th August - V.J Variety Show at S.T.M.A.

Sat 5th & 12th December - Aladdin Pantomime at S.T.M.A.

*Do you play the piano? The Players would like a pianist for the VE & VJ productions. Interested? We'd like to hear from you!

You can find the Meppershall Players on Face book (Meppershall Players Community), Insta-gram and Twitter.

The Players meet Monday evenings 7.30pm-10pm at Shefford Town Memorial Hall. Membership is currently free and we welcome people to indulge in all areas of theatrical performances, set building, costumes, directing, acting, make-up, song & dance, etc. Interested? We look forward to meeting you!

Karen Mitchell (Players' Secretary) 01462 816336



GNOMES (Meppershall Good Neighbour Group)

Welcome to 2020. Santa and his elves have finished now until next December but your GNOMES continue to provide help to villagers who need it. Just call and we will try our best to help.

The GNOMES would like to say a big thank you to all who supported and took part in our December coffee morning with songs and carols.

Your rendition of 'The 12 days of Christmas' was fantastic. Our next coffee morning will be on Valentine's Day.

For those who do not know, we hold these coffee mornings so that our volunteers can meet villagers and vice versa for a chat and to get to know each other. Individuals buy their coffee and whatever as they wish. No pressure to join our Group but we always live in hope. If you enjoy meeting people and having a chat then this could be for you.

So, make a note, Thursday morning in the Walnut Way Café (Village Hall) on 13th February 2020 between 10.30am and 11.30am. See you there.

Should anyone need transport to and from our coffee morning please call us, in good time on 07760 793921.

Can You Help? (Your village magazine needs you!)

We are fortunate to have a very lively and successful village magazine at the present time.

But we need more help! Do you have spare time to help print, collate individual copies, make deliveries or contribute writing, marketing, photography or other skills...? We need all of that, and more! Email us at mepp.messenger@gmail.com or see our contact info at the back of this issue. We'd love to meet you! Get involved! It's fun!

Thanks, as always to The Sugar Loaf for hosting our monthly collating session to prepare the upcoming issue of The Meppershall Messenger!

TRUGS & TROWELS'

Campton Gardening Club

**Monthly meetings start at 7.30pm
at Campton Village Hall, Gravenhurst Road, Campton.**

Non-members welcome - Admission £3

You don't have to be a member to attend our meetings,
so why not come along with a friend or neighbour
to see what it's all about.

We have a 'Free & Swap' table for any unwanted plants,
tools, pots or anything garden related.

You can also browse through our free library of gardening books,
whilst enjoying a nice cup of tea or coffee and biscuit.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS: -	
Monday, 3rd February	Talk by Nic Garner (Freelance Journalist) 'Unusual Vegetables'
Monday, 2nd March	Official talk on 'Warden Abbey Vineyard'
Monday, 6th April	Talk by Connie Price, gardener at the 'Swiss Garden'
Monday, 4th May	Talk by Martin Towsey (Garden Manager) 'The Bedfordshire Estates'

For more information, please contact.....

Maryika 01462 851729

Shefford Leisure Group by Enid Pamment

By the time this reaches you we will have settled into 2020, and with the lead up to Christmas, sorting presents, food shopping and of course the Christmas decorations. We were lucky here as we were able to see Santa and his helpers from St. Mary's Church pass our house. Our village has grown so Father Christmas has to sweep around the village for two nights instead of one!



Now we are back to reality with 2020, a new year ahead of us and of course the evenings gradually getting lighter. Hopefully there will be some of the outings that appeal to you. One in particular is Tutankhamun: Treasures of the Golden Pharaoh on Tuesday 3rd March. This event is open to Groups for a limited period and closes on the 3rd May for ever! All these wonderful pieces were uncovered in the early 1920's. The only part missing from the collection is Tutankhamun's golden death mask as it was deemed too fragile to travel. After the show it will be transported back to Egypt and 'home' in the Pyramids where it will remain forever. We will be leaving Shefford at 8.30am and will meet a Blue Badge Guide at 10.30am. There are tickets still available, but they are limited and I can only take a smaller party than I would normally do. If anyone would like to join us, please contact me for further details.

I thought 'The Flicks' would prove most interesting, again we leave at 8.30am and make our way to the City of London to meet our Blue Badge Guide. The British Cinema was born in London in 1896 when the first moving pictures were shown in Regent Street in 1914, the pictures were replacing Music Hall and Variety as a night out of choice for millions of Londoners. We also visit the wonderful Cinema Museum in the old workhouse where a young Charlie Chaplin stayed.

We also have on the agenda, the Mountbatten Festival of Music – on Saturday March 7th at the Royal Albert Hall. This is a Matinee Performance. Hairspray – Thursday 18th June and still awaiting a date for Pretty Woman at the Piccadilly Theatre. We are running 'Creeks, Cockles & Cockneys' on Sunday 17th May, also with a Blue Badge Guide we will meet just outside Southend – this will be a fun day. Last on the day trip list at the moment is 'The Strictly Tea Dance' on Wednesday 8th July, held at the Royal Docks in London's East End. We will be entertained by a professional ballroom and latin couple who will teach you to dance (even if you have two left feet!) Also included is an impressive afternoon tea. We will leave Shefford at 10am and should be back to Shefford by 6pm. There may be still time to do a last-minute booking on our cruise to Paris, Normandy and the River Seine. Please telephone for details.

May I take this opportunity to thank our Meppershall Messenger editors and of course all the volunteers who do their little bit to produce such an interesting and informative magazine.

Wishing everyone a happy and healthy 2020.

Enid xx

THEATRES & EVENTS IN 2020 – (Stevenage Group Travel)

MOUNTBATTEN FESTIVAL OF MUSIC – Saturday March 7th- Coach leaves Shefford at 10.45am.

BRICK LANE – ST. PATRICK’S DAY – Tuesday 17th March – Show including afternoon tea – Coach leaving Shefford at 10.45am.

HAIRSPRAY – Thursday 18th June – Matinee Performance – Starring Michael Ball as Edna Tumbblad, at the London Coliseum. Will play for 12 weeks only. Stall Seats. Leaving Shefford at 11.15am

(Coming soon) PRETTY WOMAN - The Musical Showing at the Piccadilly Theatre. *(Tickets not available until September 2020)*

THEATRES & EVENTS IN 2020 (Shefford Leisure Group)

(Please Note) It is with sincere regret our Christmas Cockney Matinee due to take place on Tuesday 10th December, then altered to Tuesday 3rd December had to be cancelled due to lack of numbers able to attend. Any payments made will be refunded in full. *Please accept my sincere apologies.*

THE RED SHOES by Mathew Bourne – Thursday 30th January 2020 – Leaving Shefford at 1pm for 2.30pm performance. Back to Shefford by approximately 6pm *Sold out*

THE KING & I – SATURDAY 7TH March 2020 – Leaving Shefford at 1pm for 2.30pm performance. Back to Shefford by approximately 6pm. *(sold out)*

PARIS, NORMANDY & THE RIVER SEINE - Wednesday 1st April – Wednesday 8th April, travelling by Eurostar and staying on the AMADEUS (Diamond River Cruises).

THE FLICKS – British Cinema born in London 1896 - **Monday** 20th April 2020 – Leaving Shefford at 8.30am

CREEKS COCKLES & COCKNEYS – Sunday 17th May 2020. **Leaving Shefford at 8.30am.** Meeting our Blue Badge Guide in Hadleigh Farm for coffee and a muffin, just outside Southend. See the cockle boats and cockle sheds In Leigh on Sea. Lunch included.

RIVERDANCE – Saturday 30th May 2020 – Watch this thrilling energy & passion in the new 25th Anniversary Show composed by Bill Whelan. Leaving Shefford at 1pm for 2.30pm performance. Back to Shefford by approximately 6pm.

THE STRICTLY TEA DANCE – Wednesday 8th July 2020 at the Tereza Joanne in the Royal Docks in London’s East End. (Part Show & Part Get up & Dance plus 100% fun.) professional ballroom dance couple, tea and cakes, (bar available at reasonable prices). from noon to 3.30pm. Anticipating to be back to Shefford by 6pm.

Shefford Leisure Group is open to everyone in the local community, who feel they would like to join us on our ventures and see places they would not see under their own steam. We are always happy to meet new friends.

KINDLY NOTE

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

Raffles are held on outings and all the proceeds are for Keech Hospice Care for Children. For further information regarding dates, prices and availability or to receive our monthly newsletter, please contact me on 01462 851397 or e-mail enid.pamment@gmail.com.

Looking forward to meeting you,

Enid x

Birthday Greetings

The Messenger Team sends birthday best wishes to:

Pat Langan who will be 93

John Winter who will be 96

In Memoriam

William 'Bill' Tingey passed away on the 26th November.

Condolences to Marion and family.

Michael 'Mick' Trundle passed away on the 7th December.

Condolences to Penny, Howard and family.

Wanted - Meppershall Village Hall Booking Secretary

MVH is recruiting a Bookings Secretary. The role involves:

- Responding to enquires about hiring by email or phone
- On site meetings to show potential hirers the facilities
- Arranging bookings using the I.T.-based booking system
- Meeting on site at start of hire to welcome hirers

The hours are flexible, approx. 5-10 hrs per week, and it is a paid role. The ideal person will have a positive can do/will do approach, a friendly personality. You will be someone who enjoys meeting people and finding solutions to their requirements, happy using I.T., organised, effective and reliable. For an initial chat, meeting and more details, contact:

enquiries@meppershallvillagehall.co.uk or call 07485 102727.

Financial Matters by Paul Savuto

Financial advice provides '£47k wealth uplift' over a decade

Financial advice provides an average £47,000 wealth uplift in just ten years, according to analysis by Royal London and the International Longevity Centre (ILC). [1]

The research also found the proportionate impact of taking financial advice is greater for those of more modest means. Of 4,100 people surveyed, those who 'were just getting by' with their wealth had a 35% uplift from taking advice, while those who were defined as 'affluent' had a 24% gain.

When it came to pension wealth, the affluent group had an uplift of 11% and those who were just getting by had an uplift of 24%. The research followed on from a detailed analysis of the government's Wealth and Assets Survey, which tracked the wealth of thousands of individuals over two yearly 'waves' since 2004-06.

The wealth uplift from advice comprised of an extra £31,000 of pension wealth and over £16,000 extra in non-pension financial wealth.

Royal London said it challenged the ILC to compare those who received financial advice and those who did not despite the often-different personal finance characteristics. One of the reasons for the greater wealth of those receiving advice was the likelihood they would invest in riskier assets, according to the life giant. Across the whole sample, it said, those who received advice were eight percentage points more likely to invest in equities.

Royal London director of policy Steve Webb said: "This research uses the latest statistical methods to identify a pure 'advice effect' and it is strikingly large. If financial advice can add £40,000 to your wealth over a decade compared with not taking advice, it is incumbent on government, regulators, providers and the advice profession to work together to make sure that more people are sharing in this uplift."

ILC director David Sinclair said it was a "simple fact" that those who take financial advice are more likely to be richer in retirement. He added: "But it is still the case that far too many people who take out investments and pensions do not use financial advice. And only a minority of the population has seen a financial adviser."

[1] Article reproduced by kind permission of Sophie King, Reporter, Professional Adviser

Pension Top Tips

It's never too early to start saving into a pension...

You should start saving for retirement as early as possible as the sooner you begin the longer your savings have to grow. While other financial challenges can make this difficult, investing regular amounts in a pension throughout your working life gives you the best chance of enjoying a prosperous retirement.

...but better late than never

Never think it's too late to start saving for your retirement. The favourable tax treatment pensions enjoy and their potential for investment growth means any contributions you make later in life can still make a huge difference to your standard of living in retirement.

Retirement planning is vital for the self-employed

As the self-employed are inevitably responsible for their own pension provision, it's particularly important that this section of society takes full control of their retirement planning. So, if you belong to the growing band of self-employed workers make sure you don't delay saving for your retirement.

Keep track of how your pensions are doing

It's good to regularly review your pension arrangements to ensure they continue to meet your retirement objectives. Your pension provider(s) will send out annual benefit statements detailing your entitlements and you can also request a State Pension forecast. This information will allow you to assess your provision and decide whether you need to take further action, for instance, increasing contributions or setting up an additional pension. Many people only review their pensions when they're about to retire, by which time it's too late – don't fall into this trap.

Plan your inheritance

It's important to plan what will happen to your pension benefits if you die. Passing on your pension wealth is now relatively easy and some pensions can be inherited tax-free. It's therefore essential that you keep your beneficiary nomination forms up to date as your providers will use this information when deciding who will inherit your pension savings.

Take control of your retirement

When you reach 55, it's important to carefully consider what you can do with your pension pot. For instance, you could: keep your savings invested; take a cash lump sum; draw a flexible income (drawdown); buy a fixed income (an annuity), or do a combination of these things.

While this flexibility may enable you to retire earlier or semi-retire, it's vital you take full control of your retirement options at this stage. This should include seeking advice and discussing the pros and cons of the different avenues available to you.

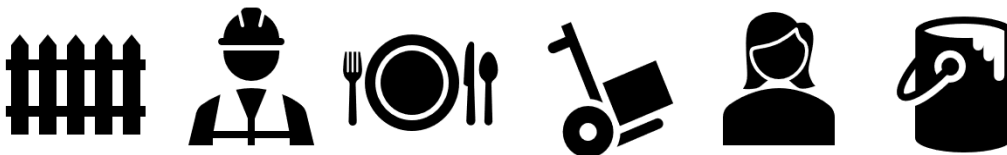
Get good advice

Retirement planning is never a case of 'one size fits all'; so, it's vital you obtain sound financial advice tailored to your individual needs. We offer advice and help with all aspects of pensions and retirement planning, whether you're just starting out and want help choosing the most appropriate pension products, or you're approaching the stage of life when you need to utilise your pension pot and want to know the most efficient way to access your funds. Remember: we're here to help.

DGS are Independent and Chartered Financial Advisers. I am also a Chartered Financial Planner with over 20 years financial services experience, so you are in safe hands. For a free review of your financial situation and to discuss your plan, please contact me, Paul Savuto, AFPS, Chartered Financial Planner. DGS Independent Financial Advisers Ltd.

07834 499 595 or email ps@dgsifa.com, I'll be happy to talk to you and answer any questions you have. FCA 225814.

Let's Hear It For The Advertisers!



When it comes to looking for good local services, tradespeople and businesses – look first in The Meppershall Messenger. We are proud to carry advertising from a range of local contacts supplying a wide variety of goods and services in our area and **who are often part of the community**. Why not try them out?

Take a moment NOW to look through the useful ads in the centre section and also in the colour section.



Clophill Heritage Trust Update

We would like to thank everyone that took part in our village survey at the end of last year to identify additional heritage projects that they would like to see in the village. The results were clear with 85% of respondents voting for additional interpretation signs at old St Mary's Church and an investigative project to look into uncovering the ancient footings of the old chancery chapel. 60% also voted for interpretation of the History on our High Street leaflet into a Victorian garden in the pound. We will now start to scope these projects and will keep you updated!

Our 2020 events list is now complete and we have more Pamper Evenings, Foraging Workshops and new for this year some introduction to herbal medicine classes. For the younger ones we have the Teddy Bear Hunt back and a family foraging day in the May half term. Our Pumpkin Festival falls on Halloween this year and so we are planning something very special!

All tickets are available online, so book now at www.clophillecolodges.co.uk/events or call us on 07935 911207.

Remember that The Eco Lodges and the ruins of old St Mary's church can be hired out for private events and photo shoots, we already have weddings, birthday parties and a naming ceremony booked in for next year so think of us if you are looking for a beautiful, unique venue for your event.

If you would like to know more about us and what we do, or volunteer to be a helper please contact either Emily or Louise on 07935 911207 or email info@ClophillEcoLodges.co.uk

The CHT Team

NEXT EVENTS:

April	May
12 th Easter Sunrise Service	2 nd Spring Foraging Workshop
19 th Animal Encounter	15 th Prosecco & Pamper Evening
25 th Earth Day Open Day	17 th Spring Foraging Workshop
	23 rd Spring Foraging Family Workshop
	25 th Countryside Crafts Cafe
	28 th Teddy Bear Hunt

Useful Contact Details in Meppershall

DEFIBRILLATORS – outside School and Post Office/Village Stores

DOCTORS, DENTISTS, PHARMACIES

NHS Direct	111
Dr Cakebread & Partners	
Shefford Health Centre, Robert Lucas Drive, Shefford SG17 5FS	
Appointments	01462 810034
General queries, prescriptions etc.	01462 818620
Drs. Collins, Garragher and Neal	
109 Station Rd Lower Stondon SG16 6JJ	01462 850305
Shefford Dental Practice, 34 High St Shefford	01462 814020
Shams Moopen Dental	
Shefford Health Centre, Robert Lucas Drive Shefford	01462 648465
Lloyds Chemists, 7 High St Shefford	01462 813283
Shefford Pharmacy	
Shefford Health Centre, Robert Lucas Drive	01462 818633

Police Emergency 999, non-emergency 101

Report crime online at www.bedfordshire.police.uk/report

Hospitals

Bedford Hospital	01234 355122
Lister Hospital, Stevenage	01438 314333

Utilities

Gas Emergency	0800 111999
Anglian Water	03457 145145
Electrical (power cuts, overhead cable down etc)	0800 838838

Central Beds Council 0300 300 8301

CBC councillors:

Tony Brown	anthony.brown@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Mark Liddiard	mark.liddiard@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Meppershall Parish Council

Parish Council Clerk Alessandra Marabese clerk@meppershall.org

Member of Parliament

Nadine Dorries dorriesn@parliament.uk

St Marys Church

Rev. Veronica Goodman, The Rectory, Church Road 01462 339962
(see the church section of The Meppershall Messenger for full details)

Library

High St Shefford 0300 300 8067
Opening times: Tues - Fri 9am – 6pm, Sat 9am – 4pm, closed Mon & Sun

Whitbread Wanderbus Service

Stephanie Kirby thewanderbus@gmail.com

Shops

Village Stores, newspapers, Post Office, High Street 01462 811252
Rogers Bakery, High Street 01462 813398
Mobile Fish & Chips, Tuesdays 3.30 -7.00, Sugar Loaf car park

Schools

Meppershall Academy, High Street 01462 813293
Meppershall Pre School (Village Hall) Tamsin Osborn 07816 357159
meppershallps@gmail.com
Robert Bloomfield, Shefford 01462 628800
Samuel Whitbread, Stotfold 01462 629900
Henlow Academy 01462 813733
Redborne Upper 01525 404462

Organisations

Meppershall Players - Karen Mitchell 01462 816366
Meppershall Good Neighbours (GNOMES) 07760 793921
Meppershall Brownies, Suzanne Brightwell 07817 392325
Shefford Guides, Angie Griffiths 07957 462519
Shefford Scout Group (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorers)
Kathy Georgiou 01462 629313



New to Meppershall? If you have recently moved into Meppershall then welcome!

For your information the **Wanderbus** operates regular routes and is a normal bus operation open to all passengers whether you pay for a **cash fare** or have a **concessionary travel pass**.

The difference is that we are run entirely by volunteers and offer **direct services** to a variety of destinations where we wait and return after approx. 1.5-2.5 hours stay.

We stop at all stops along Shefford Rd / High St / Rectory Rd – or if you signal/wave to the driver he/she will stop for you along the route!

Every Monday - W3 – d. 09.27/09.29 to **A1 Retail Park** and central **Biggleswade** (Asda superstore)

Every Tuesday – W12 - d. 09.18 /09.20 to **Hitchin** centre (via Barton Le Clay)

Every Wednesday – W2 – d. 09.00/09.03 to **Bedford** Town Centre

1st Thursday of each month – W14 – d. 09.14/09.17 to **Welwyn Garden City**

2nd Thursday of each month – W10 – d. 09.15/09.18 to **St Neots** (Market day)

3rd Thursday of each month – W11 – d. 09.08/09.10 to **Milton Keynes**

4th Thursday of each month - excursion to a variety of destinations. See The Messenger or contact us.

Every Friday – W6 – d. 09.18/09.20 to **Shefford** (including on request - Shefford Health Centre)

2nd & 4th Friday of each month – W5 – d. 13.38/13.40 to **A1 Retail Park** (via Biggleswade Town Centre). Why not have lunch at The Walnut Tree Café and join the bus right outside at 13.38!

For more information and timetables please contact us:

Tel: 0300-123-3023

E: thewanderbus@gmail.com

Web: www.wanderbus.org.uk

Or pick up a timetable from The Walnut Tree Café.

NB. Our 16-seater buses are also available for private hire to Clubs, Schools, Societies, etc.



Why not join our new W5 route through to:

A1 RETAIL PARK – BIGGLESWADE

Nearly two hours to roam through all the shops!

(Also stopping at Asda Superstore, Biggleswade)

2ND & 4TH Friday afternoon of each Month.

Meppershall, New Village Hall	13.38	RR
Meppershall, High St. adj Crackle Hill Rd	13.39	RR
Meppershall, Shefford Rd, All Stops	13.40	RR
Shefford, Ivel Rd, o/s Fire Station	13.42	RR
Shefford, Clifton Rd, opp The Steamer PH	13.44	RR
Shefford, Southfields House	13.45	RR
Clifton, Shefford Rd, opp Post Office	13.48	RR
Clifton, Clifton Park	13.50	RR
Henlow, Clifton Rd, opp The Crown PH	13.55	RR
Henlow, High St, adj Five Bells PH	13.57	RR
Henlow, Langford Rd, adj Newtown	13.58	RR
Langford, o/s Riverside Gardens	14.00	RR
Langford, Station Rd, adj Flexmore Way	14.01	RR
Langford, Church St, All Stops	14.03	RR
Langford, Langford Rd, All Stops	14.04	RR
Biggleswade, Asda Superstore	14.11	16.05
Biggleswade, London Rd, All Stops	14.13	16.02
Biggleswade, A1 London Road Retail Park	14.16	16.00

Service open to all passengers. Cash fares & travel passes accepted.

Timetable Info - Tel: 0300-123-3023

E: thewanderbus@gmail.com

www.wanderbus.org.uk



ST NEOTS – TIME CHANGES

Please note the following time changes for pick-ups for St Neots
(2nd Thursday of the month) as **of Thursday 13th February 2020**

W9 ST NEOTS	OUT	RETURN
2ND Thursday of each Month	RR = Return Stop on Request	
Shillington, Bury Rd, opp Woodmer End	09.10	RR
Shillington, Hillfoot Rd	09.11	RR
Shillington, Marquis Hill	09.13	RR
Meppershall, Rectory Rd	09.16	RR
Meppershall, High St, all stops	09.17	RR
Meppershall, Shefford Rd, all stops	09.18	RR
Shefford, Ivel Rd	09.21	RR
Clifton, Shefford Rd, opp Post Office	09.26	RR
Clifton, Newis Crescent	09.28	RR
Clifton, Stockbridge Rd	09.29	RR
Henlow, Langford Rd, Newtown	09.31	RR
Langford, o/s Riverside Grdns	09.34	RR
Langford, Station Rd, all stops	09.35	RR
Langford, Church St, all stops	09.37	RR
Broom, High St, opp Village Hall	09.42	RR
Southill, Stanford Rd, opp Memorial	09.45	RR
Stanford, o/s Green Man PH	09.46	RR
Upper Caldecote, opp G&M Growers	09.49	RR
Upper Caldecote, o/s Post Office	09.50	RR
Roxton Garden Centre – On Request	10.00 OR	12.20 OR
St Neots, Market Square.	10.10	12.10

W10 ST NEOTS	OUT	RETURN
2ND Thursday of Each Month	RR = Return Stop on Request	
Lower Stondon, Station Rd, o/s Village Hall	09.29	RR
Lower Stondon, Station Rd, all stops	09.31	RR
Clifton Park	09.36	RR
Stotfold, Hitchin Rd, opp Borton Ave	09.41	RR
Stotfold, Hitchin Rd, opp Recreation Ground	09.42	RR
Stotfold, Hitchin Rd, opp Hallworth Drive	09.43	RR
Stotfold, Regent St, all stops	09.44	RR
Astwick	09.46	RR
Roxton Garden Centre – On Request	10.05 OR	12.30 OR
St Neots, Market Square	10.15	12.20



MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT

Mid Beds Cancer Support Group **MEPPERSHALL & ALL surrounding areas**

Informal cancer group for patients, families, friends and carers who wish to meet others for support & information.

Come along to our monthly meetings on the first Saturday, 11am -1pm, Village Hall, Walnut Tree Way, Meppershall, SG17 5AB.

1 February 2020

7 March 2020

We'd love to talk to you! Daksha & Phil Trivedi

Email: daksha.trivedi@btconnect.com

Tel: 01462 813943; M: 07961 377526

Macmillan Cancer Support, registered charity in England and Wales (261017), Scotland (SC039907) and the Isle of Man (604). Also operating in Northern Ireland

The Team and Collation Dates

CONTRIBUTIONS

The Editors welcome contributions to the Messenger, whether as letters, articles or notices. Contributions should preferably be as attachments to e-mail (address below) but handwritten contributions may be sent by post, or left in the folder kept at the Village Stores. Contributions should run to not more than one A5 page (except by prior arrangement) and should be received by the Editor not later than the 12th of the month for publication at the end of that month. Contributions received after the deadline may be held over.

DISCLAIMER

The Editors reserve the right to omit or alter any advertisement or article and to change the content, format or issue date of the magazine without prior notice. The Editors cannot be held responsible for the factual correctness of, or for any libellous comment or statement made in any advertisement, article or other contribution published in this magazine. Every effort will be made to avoid any deliberate attempt to mislead or otherwise cause harm or damage to any person or persons by any advertisement, article or any other contribution published in this magazine.

THE TEAM

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Collating Dates 2020			
March	February 24th	June	June 1st
April	March 30th	July	June 29th
May	April 27th	August-September	July 27th

Please note that dates in the above table show when collating will take place, at 2.30pm in the Sugar Loaf, for the corresponding month, displayed to the left. The issue being collated usually relates to the following month. Collation in January, February and March is subject to change owing to the works that will be taking place at the Sugar Loaf. Watch this space!