

January 2018

Issue 1



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St LUKE'S, STOKE HAMMOND

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|--------------------------|-------|---|
| January 7 th | 15.00 | Covenant Service at <i>Methodist Church</i> |
| January 14 th | 09.00 | Morning Worship – Phillipa Cook |
| January 21 st | 09.00 | Holy Communion – Revd John Waller |
| January 28 th | 09.30 | Café Church |

*PLEASE ALSO NOTE THE FOLLOWING DATES FOR COMMUNITY BREAKFASTS
AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, BRAGENHAM SIDE.*

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Saturday 13 th January | 08.30 – 10.30 (Last Orders) |
| Saturday 10 th February | 08.30 – 10.30 (Last Orders) |

Church Wardens:

Diane Webber 01525-270409 and Harry Davies 01234-822780

METHODIST SERVICES

Revd Donna Broadbent-Kelly 01525 240589

| | | |
|--------------------------|-------|--|
| January 7 th | 15.00 | United Covenant Service Revd Donna Broadbent-Kelly & Revd John Waller |
| January 14 th | 11.00 | Service – Revd Donna Broadbent-Kelly |
| January 21 st | 11.00 | Service – Mr Arthur Sara |
| January 28 th | 11.00 | Service – Revd Andrew Shergold |

Coffee Mornings

Wednesdays at 10.30 - 11.30
(*contact 01525-270287*)

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

So, its **2018** - what has this new year got in store for Stoke Hammond?

More housing - probably yes, although one can only hope that the much-hyped Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP to most of us) passes Government scrutiny and is adopted. All rather late for us in Stoke Hammond, but hopefully it should offer some future protection against the sort of prolific housing development we have suffered over the last few years.

Will we still have a pub - who knows, we've done our best, given the number of letters of objection sent through to AVDC planning, with none in support of the proposed demolition of the Dolphin Inn and erection of 9 new dwellings. Highways have raised concerns about the width of access and turning facilities within the site, so have asked for a swept path analysis to be produced. The Rt Hon John Bercow MP has also written in citing how it would be sad to lose this village asset. But the Heritage Asset Appraisal in its conclusion states "The significance of the building has clearly been defined by AVDC when it refused to list The Dolphin as an Asset of Community Value on the Aylesbury Vale District Council Local Register in 2011. The proposed development intends to replace The Dolphin with a structure utilising much the same footprint and style as the present building as well as add three new homes in the car park to the rear. As such, it would be beneficial to the overall setting of the site as it currently has little architectural or aesthetic value as well, as providing much needed affordable homes to the community". We now have to await notification from AVDC as to when the application is to be put before the Development Control Committee, at which your PC will speak.

What about the mobile library service - well as reported last month, it looks like Bucks CC budget constraints mean this service will be no more as of May 2018. We still await details of the alternative community based services that they intend to put in place so that users of the mobile service still have access to a library facility.

More leisure and recreational facilities - Well that's certainly on the cards, because your PC is pleased to report that we have completed on the purchase of the land adjoining the Community Centre. This secures in perpetuity this valuable recreational space for our village. Watch out for a consultation document that will seek the views of you our parishioners for the type of use and facilities they would like to see deployed on this land.

Your Parish Council working on your behalf - Absolutely, that goes without saying. It may not seem it at times, but your councillors and clerk are always beavering in the background and work very hard, against what are sometimes 'faceless' organisations. Trying to find someone to talk with or take ownership of a matter or situation within the 'blackhole' that is Bucks CC, AVDC and indeed many other organisations we have to deal with is an onerous task, and much credit should be given to our clerk Sue Severn who spends many countless hours doing just that.

So, what of the last PC meeting of 2017 held on the Tuesday 5th December - well surprise surprise, housing, specifically new housing was yet again the main topic of discussion. It was first raised in the public participation session, when a parishioner questioned about the amount of new housing in Stoke Hammond. He had written to AVDC and copied the Rt Hon John Bercow MP asking as to why he didn't see all the development happening elsewhere that Stoke Hammond is experiencing. In reply the Chair stated that everyone was waiting for the final VALP. The Parish Council had spoken at the development control meeting that discussed both the Brook Farm Close and the Fenny Road developments, stating the council's opposition, and as we know only too well, until such time as the plan is adopted it appears that developers will put in as many plans as possible. This was reinforced by attendant AVDC District Councillor Ben Everitt, who was seeing the same issues elsewhere including his home village of Newton Longville which is due to get a staggering 1855 new homes.

Another parishioner stated that the AVDC planning department is not fit for purpose. They are not implementing the planning conditions imposed on sites for example parking, access, etc. In these situations, the PC normally speaks direct with the developer or site agent, and in most cases, this resolves the matter.

Other matters raised included fly tipping to the lay by on Fenny Road and the clearing of the Brook near the Dolphin Inn and along Bragenham Side. For the former this would be reported to Bucks Highways and those present were reminded that any member of the public can easily report issues like these online. As regards the latter, this is one of the 'faceless' organisations that we referred to earlier. Our clerk has telephoned and sent numerous emails all with no response, we will however continue in our efforts to get this matter addressed.

The only matter of planning to be discussed was 17/04457/ADP Land East of Fenny Road, and the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the residential development of 74 dwellings. Where outline permission had been previously granted against application 14/03000/AOP. However, as reported last month, in order to appease the archaeological conditions imposed on the outline permission, a large area of public space has to be provided reducing the number of dwellings to 62 in total. Having taken onboard public remarks and discussed the matter at length, your PC intended to the make several comments to the planning office, along the lines:-

1. Egress from the site is underestimated at 3-6 cars in morning rush. This cannot be correct. The PC would ask that Highways is re-consulted before planning permission is given.
2. A pedestrian crossing is mentioned, details need to be checked for health & safety.
3. Concerns were expressed by parishioners and councillors regarding increased traffic at the junction. The recent northern M1 junction 11A has already increased traffic flows through the village with 'rat running' vehicles and Highways must be asked to re-visit traffic predictions which the PC does not believe to be accurate.

4. On the design side the vernacular does not meet existing properties within Stoke Hammond. (In particular the large windows to the blocks of flats).
5. The materials indicated are out of keeping with the village vernacular. It is at the start of the village, and is first thing visitors will see on entering Stoke Hammond.
6. The PC will submit MVAS data on traffic numbers if helpful.
7. The houses are outward-facing with retained hedge on Fenny Road with a fence behind the hedge ('secure by design'). Retained hedges MUST be retained to preserve the outlook for neighbouring properties. Cutting down existing hedges, and replacing with new hedging plants is insufficient to provide 'safe design'.
8. In the original plans a wildlife barrier was included between Tyrells Manor (a Grade II listed building) which is not shown on the detailed plans which now appear to include 8 houses on this boundary line.
9. A neighbouring landowner will contact you separately regarding the boundary hedge and land ownership in that area and has brought the issue to the attention of the PC.
10. There is a drainage ditch at the bottom of the site, which drains into the neighbouring land without access to a water course which has been blocked by development in Bragenham Side (still under construction). Rainwater run off is a concern that was raised by parishioners.
11. The PC would ask that a condition of planning permission is that any trees or hedgerows removed during construction or during site preparation must be replaced with mature hedging trees.

On a different matter, Cllr Mike Robinson gave an update on the Community Transport Scheme, which whilst still active was suffering from a lack of volunteer drivers, and as a result had on a couple of occasions not been able to accommodate a transport request. A new advertising campaign for more drivers will be put in place, noting any applicants would be subject to DBS checks and scrutiny of their driving licences. If anyone out there is interested in offering their services then please contact the PC clerk at the details below.

The date of the next Parish Council meeting is 7.30pm Tuesday 3rd January, in the meeting room, to the Community Centre on Bragenham Side.



Sue Severn, 19 Curlew, Watermead, Bucks. HP19 0WG 01296 336575 07778 473392
clerk.stokehammondpc@gmail.com www.stokehammondpc.com



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Tel: 01908 371705 E-Mail: info@careatthelindens.co.uk

Web: www.careatthelindens.co.uk

THE Lindens

At The Lindens, we enjoy Christmas and our residents and guests enjoyed seeing the beautiful white snowfall in December, which set the scene for the festivities ahead.

Our Kitchen Team prepared and cooked a fabulous Christmas Day lunch which was a choice of Roast Turkey with sausage and chestnut stuffing or Salmon and Spinach Tart. These were served with all the trimming. We always decorate our oak panelled dining room especially for the event. All the tables had special place settings with a ruby red and gold theme plus crackers, chocolate Christmas Santas and treats to enjoy between courses. For dessert, there was the old favourite of Christmas Pudding with brandy sauce or Christmas Log, delicious!

At the lunch our Director, Michael Hannelly spoke to every resident and guest personally with Christmas greetings and gave everyone a gift, as he does each year.

Every Christmas we also always have large traditional homemade rich fruit Christmas cakes, beautifully decorated with marzipan and royal icing.



CHRISTMAS DAY

Lunch

Starter

Celeriac & Chestnut Soup
with celeriac crisps
Or

Avocado Mousse & Prawns
with vinaigrette salad

Main Course

Roast Turkey
Sausage & Chestnut stuffing
Or

Salmon & Spinach Tart
With

Roast or Mashed Potatoes
Maple Roasted Butternut Squash
Parsnips and Sweet Potatoes
Roasted Red Peppers stuffed with Fennel
Pigs in Blankets
Quick Brussel Sprouts with Pancetta
Bread Sauce and Cranberry Sauce
Pigs in Blankets

Dessert

Christmas Pudding with Brandy Sauce
or Christmas Log

*Happy New Year
to you all
from us at
The Lindens!*

Looking ahead to 2018, we would like to gather together as much history as possible for The Lindens, so if you have any photos or memories of the old house, we would love to hear from you.

If you would like to call in and join us for afternoon tea or if you are interested in volunteering here, please call us and ask for Tina or Milli, we look forward to meeting you.

Michael Hannelly
Director, The Lindens.

Stoke Road, Stoke Hammond, Buckinghamshire, MK17 9BN.

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Church News

Review:

The **community breakfast** went extremely well this month. Concerns that the temporary change of venue (to the Stoke Hammond Sports Club) would reduce numbers were entirely unfounded. In fact it was yet again one of the best attended. Thank you to our regulars for bearing with our restricted service and thank you to those involved in the preparation and catering, who coped in the more cramped conditions of the sports club. It just goes to show that “where there’s a will, there’s a way”!



Christmas Fair: In last month’s report I hoped the Christmas fair had gone well. In fact, we had one of our highest attendances for a fair in many years. What was particularly pleasing to see was that many people were from the new housing in the village – we were so pleased to see you! Perhaps it was all a bit new and different - maybe you’re not familiar with this kind of Community event – if so, thank you for taking a chance and coming down to have a look. We hope you enjoyed it and will come again! If you won a raffle prize, you should have had your prize delivered. Guess the weight of the cake was won by Wynne Bigrave (Again! – she must have a secret skill we don’t know about!)

Christingle service: The **Christingle** service was an interesting affair, with children being invited to the front to help the assembly of a giant christingle! Many thanks to those who joined us for this exciting service.

Carol service: Sadly the carol service took place on the day of the heavy snowfall. This meant that our numbers were significantly dented, but fortunately the Benefice choir turned out in force to do us proud and gave us a thoroughly enjoyable service.



Carol singing: This event was organised at short notice in response to a direct request (so many apologies for the poor advertising). We are always open to requests, so please do ask if there’s a service or event you’d like us to organise. Thank you to those who came along and enjoyed singing especially the Brook Farm Close group! As you can see, in spite of a cold damp evening, there were plenty of us there to “raise the rafters” and the mulled wine and mince pies were particularly appreciated.

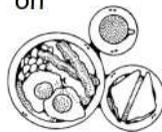


Christmas hamper raffle: The Christmas hamper raffle was drawn at the end of the Carol singing and at the time of going to press we have not been able to contact the winner. The winning ticket is number 44, which we believe was sold at the Christmas fair. There is a phone number on the reverse, but it hasn't been answered yet!



Forthcoming Events:

Community breakfast: We will be serving our Community Breakfast on **Saturday 13th January** between 8.30am and 10.30am. This time it will be back in the Community centre! The usual breakfast will be on offer in exchange for your company and whatever you feel your breakfast is worth OR what



you can afford (we all know what January's like with the bank balance – have one on us if that's you this month!). Do come and join us!

January is a quiet month for us while we recover from Christmas. We hope you enjoy a peaceful time and wish everyone a Happy , healthy and successful new year.

Church Benefice Website: www.brickhillchurches.org.uk. If you want to come to a service, all church service times are listed on the website, along with contact details for the Rector.

If you would like to come to church but have mobility problems please ring John (see below) regarding transport. If you would like to volunteer to help, have a prayer request or enquiry, please ring **Harry: Churchwarden, on 07773065271, Diane: Assistant Churchwarden (unofficial), on 270409 or John: Treasurer, on 270202.**



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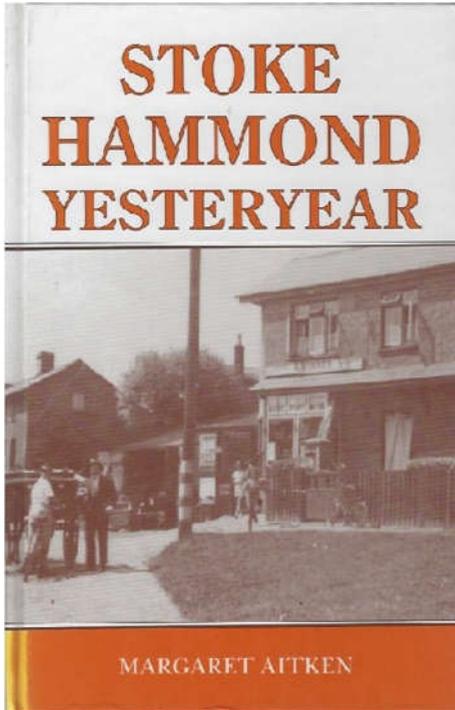
WASTE COLLECTION DATES



| Waste Bin:  | Recycling Bin:  Paper, glass, cardboard, plastics, cartons, cans & tins | Food Waste Bin:  Non-recyclable or compostable. | Garden Waste Bin:  |
|--|--|---|--|
| | Friday 29 December | Friday 29 December | |
| Thursday 4 January | | Thursday 4 January | |
| | Thursday 11 January | Thursday 11 January | |
| Thursday 18 January | | Thursday 18 January | |
| | Thursday 25 January | Thursday 25 January | |
| | | | Monday 29 January |
| Thursday 1 February | | Thursday 1 February | |
| | Thursday 8 February | Thursday 8 February | |
| | | | Monday 12 February |
| Thursday 15 February | | Thursday 15 February | |
| | Thursday 22 February | Thursday 22 February | |

STOKE HAMMOND YESTERYEAR

A PERSONAL RECORD 1925 - 1948



Stan Andrews, the baker from soulbury stands outside Bonner's with his cart. Assisting him is Raymond Kirk, who was in the author's class at school.

We are most pleased to be continuing with the publication of extracts from Margaret Aitken's book 'Stoke Hammond Yesteryear' first published in 1997 that provides an amazing insight into the life of our village in years gone by. Many thanks to Margaret for granting us permission to publish these extracts. We now reach chapter 10; 'THE WAR YEARS'.

THE WAR YEARS ++

Visual signs of the war were not much in evidence in Stoke Hammond.

When they reduced the required age young men were called up. Two local girls, Edna Kirk and Freda Williams, joined the ATS. Adults of eligible age were drafted into war work and older residents joined the ARP, Home Guard or special constabulary. Dad joined the 'specials' and loved it. He was proud of his uniform and was soon promoted to sergeant, in charge of special

constables in other villages. These he had to meet on point duty to sign their books and record that they were there. When the Royal Train travelled on the main line through Stoke Hammond, Dad had to stand on the railway bridge until it had passed safely. For his work in the special constabulary he was allowed extra petrol coupons. Some of the villagers worked at the now famous Bletchley Park where, in the most unlikely of Nissan huts, the German Enigma code was successfully broken. No one knew until after the war what went on there.

Evacuees came from the east end of London to live in the village. I vividly remember a crocodile of frightened little children walking past our shop behind Mr Gadsden, the billeting officer. He had been dropping off one here and two there around the houses. I hoped he would bring a couple to our house, but they walked on by. Jean's Mum had two boys named Fred and Raymond billeted on her. They were several years younger



LEFT: Dad - Sergeant Bonner of the Special Constabulary - enjoyed being in the Police Force, especially as his father had been a Chief Superintendent. RIGHT: Charlie Kirk lived in Annie Green's house and was the local taxi man, wireless and bicycle repairer, and in later years newspaper delivery man. BELOW: Floss Kirk, Charlie's wife taken in 1986.

than us so we were not that interested. During the winter months however, when I spent evenings at Jean's house we played all sorts of card games and darts together. Some of the unlikeliest householders suddenly found themselves responsible for other peoples young children. Even middle-aged couples who hand never had any children of their own were allocated one or two. Once, a convoy of Churchill tanks came rumbling through the village, their heavy tracks squealing and making a deafening noise. I was working in the shop at the time and thought the Germans had invaded without my knowledge! I was even more scared when several pulled to a standstill on the village green and in front of our shop. Out of the tanks jumped young soldiers, who crowded

into the shop to buy cigarettes etc. We were packed out and in a dither I did not know who to serve first. With trembling hands and an addled brain I undercharged several of the young men, who grinned at their companions and came back for more. It was only when the terrifying noisy tanks had trundled up the hill, having cut up the green with their tracks, that I gathered my wits together and realised what I had done (I did not tell Dad).

My sister was now walking out with a young man whose name was Fred Ritchie. He was the fourth son of a family of seven sons and one daughter. The Ritchie family were farmers and lived opposite us at Tyrells Manor. Tragically, their only daughter Mary died of diphtheria when she was only 12 years old.

Fred was a handsome young man with dark hair and a thin moustache. I was 10 years younger and used to think he looked like the film star Clark Gable. Fred and my sister eventually announced their engagement and married at the Methodist Church in 1941.

Soon after, the Ritchie family moved away from the village to another farm at Astwood in Bedfordshire. For a time my sister and her new husband shared a big farmhouse with his parents until a small cottage became available for them.

My brother Fred was working on the road again with Dad, and I, with the help of Mum, worked in the shop and Post Office.

When we were not at work Jean and I spent all our time together. In the summer we went for long rides on our bicycles. We tended to cycle around the villages in hope of sighting local boys. On one occasion we had cycled through the villages of Soulbury and Stewkley when, on the outskirts of Wing, we saw two boys leaning on their bikes against a bridge over a brook. As we passed they whistled after us and we, no doubt, gave them the 'come on' signal, because they got on their bikes and began to pedal after us. As they began to catch up we pedalled faster. When we turned towards Liscombe Park, heading for home, they turned too! We flew through Liscombe Park and turned towards Soulbury. About 100 yards behind us - to our consternation - so did they! It was uphill, the road was twisty and turning and our legs felt like lead, but we did not dare ease up. On the other side of Soulbury the road dropped down steeply then rose up and over the railway bridge. We did not bother to apply our brakes but rode at breakneck until we reached the main road at the Three Locks (a public house beside the Grand Union Canal). There we turned left towards Stoke Hammond, now only a mile from home. Fortunately, on reaching the Three Locks the two boys applied their brakes, circled in thanking our lucky stars, waved them a cheeky farewell.

Another summer pastime Jean and I enjoyed was playing tennis. Jean's Uncle Tom (from whom we collected the milk) had an only daughter named Gwen, who was several years older than us. At the top of one of his fields, known as Phoebe's Orchard, Mr Simmons had a tennis court laid down for Gwen and her friends. Because Jean was Gwen's cousin, we too were privileged to play. On other occasions Jean and I cycled to Bletchley to play on the public courts in the Central Gardens. The hard courts right in the centre of the town were beautiful, with rose beds close by and seats to sit on. Sadly the tennis courts and gardens have now gone, to make way for a car-park and Leisure Centre.

Besides playing cards and darts during the long winter evenings my friend and I were keen knitters. Another pastime which gave us a great deal of pleasure was music. Jean had learned to play the violin and I accompanied her on the piano. We spent many musical evenings playing our favourite pieces and often performed in other churches in concerts organised by our church group. We were never bored.

One day in 1942 it was with great excitement that Jean told me a piece of news in confidence. 'Uncle Jack has sold some of his Dorcas land to the Air Ministry and there's going to be a RAF camp there!' I could not believe my ears. An RAF camp in Stoke Hammond, with all those lovely airmen, surely life would never be the same again!



This photograph shows part of the new estate built on Phoebe's Orchard where in Summer we used to play tennis on Mr T. Simmons grass court.

In due course lots of tall wooded pylons were erected in the fields at Dorcas. Next, some older RAF men came to lodge in the village. They were the riggers who put up the wires between the pylons. This was to be a wireless - receiving station, and an important one too. A large Nissen hut was then erected to house the equipment, followed by several smaller huts to accommodate the airmen. But before the camp was ready for occupation something else happened.

Charlie Kirk, our neighbour who lived across the green in what used to be Annie Green's little cottage, was called up into the RAF. He was an older man who ran his own taxi business, sold batteries and charged accumulators for wirelesses. He and his wife Floss had been married for many years but had no children. Charlie hated the thought of leaving his wife alone while he was away. 'Don't worry,' Dad told him, 'We'll see that she's all right. If she likes, she can come and work in the shop,' he added. Floss did 'like' and came to join the 'firm', where she became almost one of the family and stayed to dinner with us each day.

One morning just after Christmas when she came in to work she confided to me, 'Elsie's got a lodger - he's ever such a nice young man and has got curly hair'. Elsie was her sister-in-law and lived in the village. At 17 and unattached, I pricked up my ears. Further enquiries established that the 'nice young man' was the new tractor driver at Tyrells Manor Farm and, furthermore, that he liked prunes and custard! I yearned to know more (being partial to prunes and custard myself). Early next morning the shop doorbell rang and in walked a curly-haired young man who I had not seen before. I



ABOVE: The RAF Wireless Station at Stoke Hammond was at Dorcas on this site; here the buildings and pylons used to stand. BELOW: Dorcas Lane in springtime; it led to the RAF Camp.

guessed who it was at once. He came to the Post Office counter and asked for a tuppenny-ha'penny stamp. While he was sticking it on his letter I had a good look at him. He was tall, dark and (in my opinion) handsome and wore a dark green boiler suit.

It did not take long for me to find out that his name was Andrew Aitken. Every morning he came into the shop for a tuppenny-ha'penny stamp and I soon felt at ease talking to him and telling him of the things that went on in the village.

'There's a whist drive in the village hall every Friday', I said,

'why don't you come?' - and the following Friday I met him at the village hall. The next Friday, Andy asked if I would go to the pictures with him.

We met on top of the hill and set off for Bletchley on our bikes. As we cycled along I found out that his home was in Sussex and that his father was farm bailiff on a large estate. He had a younger brother named Hunter and a younger sister called Elizabeth and before her marriage his mother had been a school teacher. Over the next few weeks we went to whist drives, the pictures and for walks together along quite country lanes.

Where are you going then?' I asked. I got another shock for he said 'South Devon', but when he invited me to Sussex to meet his parents he looked at me hopefully. The invitation set my heart racing but I knew I would have to get my parents' permission first. I was 18 and had never been away from home on my own.

The anticipated weekend arrived and dad took us in his car to Bletchley station to catch the Euston train on our way to the family's cottage at Old House Farm, Turner's Hill, near Haywards Heath.

There I was warmly welcomed, put at my ease, and learnt something of farm life away from Stoke Hammond.

The Aitken family were Anglican and attended Turner's Hill Church on Sundays. Andy and Hunter when younger had been choirboys there. On Sunday morning I was asked if I would like to go to church.

The lovely old church was perched on the hill and had a commanding view of the rolling South Downs. The service was different from our Methodist one. I did however enjoy the pipe organ music and was envious of the beautiful instrument.

After lunch Andy and I had to think about getting back to Stoke Hammond. Mr and Mrs Aitken took us to the station in their car and saw us off from the platform. The weekend had flown by.

By the end of the week Andy had packed his belongings and was on his way to South Devon.

Meanwhile, back in the village, the young airmen had taken up residence at the wireless station. They came into the shop for cigarettes and stamps so I was able to tell Jean all about them. A few came to the weekly whist drive and, when a dance was held in the village hall, it was pleasant to have different partners, but I kept faith with Andy - if anyone asked me for a date my stock phrase was, 'I don't think my boyfriend would like it!'

We got to know some of the boys really well because several of them came regularly to the evening service at Chapel. After the service Auntie Wi (Mum's youngest sister) invited them and us around to her house for hymn singing around the piano. I would play everyone's favourite hymns. We had a real choir going and used to let rip! I don't know how she managed it out of her rations, but my aunt provided tea and spam sandwiches for us all.

One morning towards the end of 1943 my expected letter arrived from Andy and in it he told me he had received a letter from his mother telling him there was a vacancy at Old House Farm for a tractor driver - and that he was going to take it. For some time he had realised how isolated he felt living in Devon. With this in mind he had handed in his notice and moving back in Sussex and I went to spend Christmas with the Aitken family.

NEXT MONTH, CHAPTER ELEVEN

HERE AND THERE

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READERS LETTERS



SENIOR CITIZENS XMAS LUNCH – *May I personally say a big thank you to everyone concerned with the Xmas lunch. It was absolutely delicious (even I didn't need seconds!).*

The new format of vegetables at the table for self-service was very good and the dress-code for most of the servers added to the occasion.

Let's also not forget the young singers who were very good; bring tears to Mavis (whom I'm sure won't mind me saying).

Very well done, roll on next year.

Hugh Standen

STOKE HAMMOND YOUTH FOOTBALL CLUB



STOKE HAMMOND FC

Stoke Hammond Youth Football Club are looking for additional land to train/play matches on within Stoke Hammond or the surrounding area. If you have any land that you would potentially be willing to rent that would suit this purpose, please contact David Ruland on 07801 446039.



Increase in tool thefts from vans – Aylesbury Vale

Thames Valley Police is advising local van owners to be vigilant after a recent increase in tool theft from vans across Aylesbury Vale.

PC Dean Kingham from Aylesbury Police Station said “We have recently seen a spike in vans being targeted by thieves for their tools and as a result of this patrols have been increased across the Local Policing Area, targeting key locations, educating the public and targeting those committing these offences within our community”.

“Tools are extremely valuable possessions and when stolen, can impact hugely on small businesses. Van owners are reminded to remove their tools from the vehicle when it is left unattended for long periods of time and overnight”.

“Vehicle criminals are opportunists, and you can help prevent vehicle-related crime by taking the following simple security measures”.

- Make sure you lock the doors and shut the windows whenever you leave your van unattended.
- Never leave any valuables visible – keep all possessions out of sight.
- Remove tools from your van when left overnight.
- If removal of tools is not possible, fit a tool safe and ensure it is fully secure.
- Consider parking your van close to a hedge or wall in order to restrict access for anyone trying to get inside. Always park your van in well-lit areas.
- Engrave or mark tools and their box with your details. Use a Postcode as this will make it easier to return recovered items.
- Fit additional external locks to van doors.
- Keep a list of tools, together with serial numbers and any identifying marks. You can do this at the immobilise website, to help trace them back to you if they are recovered

For more crime prevention advice and information please visit the [Thames Valley Police](http://ThamesValleyPolice) website.



STOKE HAMMOND WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Tuesday, 12th December was our Christmas meeting and must be described as 'bitter sweet'. Unfortunately, it was our final meeting and so Thelma Sackman from the BFWI attended and officially suspended our Branch. It was very sad, especially in our 70th year, but it is quite possible that after some reorganisation it will rise, like the Phoenix, from the ashes - fingers crossed.

Now for the sweeter bit - after the official part of the meeting was over we saw that our committee had made a sterling effort by decorating the tables, providing lots of extra raffle prizes and giving everyone a gift of a lovely hyacinth. We had a delicious pot luck supper with Bucks Fizz and took the opportunity to thank Hazel, Dawn and Krystyna for their efforts not only tonight but throughout the year.

A group of us had been to the Wing Xmas Concert which we enjoyed and by now have attended the Great Brickhill evening on Wednesday last when we were entertained by David Fletcher from Flog It. He was an engaging speaker managing to tell us some tricks of the auctioneer's trade, some tips about recognising and valuing items we may have at home and anecdotes about the filming of 'Flog It' plus we had a mock auction to see how much we knew. All this was delivered with humour and we thoroughly enjoyed it. Mulled wine and a Xmas buffet was part of the evening so we were pleased we went.

Our members were looking forward to their Xmas lunch at the Three Locks later in the week and again we trust that SHWI will re-emerge at some time in the future.

Happy New year to all.

STOKE HAMMOND COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Why not hire the **Community Centre** or the **Meeting Room** for your party or business meeting. Discounted rates for residents of Stoke Hammond. To book or discuss your requirements please call **01525 270501** or email: shcommunitycentre@gmail.com



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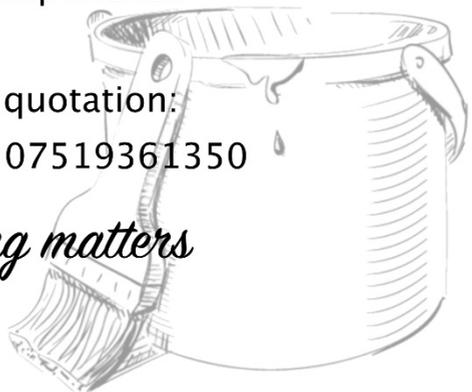
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Reminder not to leave running vehicles unattended while you defrost them – Aylesbury Vale



This is just to remind residents not to leave running vehicles unattended, while they are being defrosted.

A vehicle has been stolen in the early hours, yesterday (14/12) in the Aylesbury area. The driver started the vehicle and then nipped back into his house to get water.

The car was only left unattended for a matter of moments, which is all it takes if an opportunist criminal happens to be in the area.

Even if you have locked your vehicle you are still not safe as it is easy to smash a window to get in.

If your car is stolen in this way, not only will you have the inconvenience of arranged other transport, but your insurance company will probably not pay out.

For crime prevention advice and information please visit the [Thames Valley Police](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk) website

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STOKE HAMMOND GARDENING CLUB

On Friday 8th December we held our Xmas get together and were delighted to see our tough and loyal members turn out in below zero temperatures !

The tables were beautifully decorated by our artistic committee member Laraine, the traditional turkey meal was great and we were entertained by Ann Nightingale singing ballads from the Sinatra era right up to date. The raffle prizes ranged from a home made Christmas cake to flowers and booze and it was good to see everyone. We hope the evening was enjoyed by all and we ended by wishing all members a Happy Christmas and great gardening in 2018 not to mention some good outings and events. On that note we take this opportunity to say that our next event will be our A.G.M at the Sports Club on March 8th so pop that in your new diaries - all members will, of course, receive a reminder letter.



MAVIS'S QUIZ

Answers to last month's quiz:

(1) Back (2) Break (3) Breast (4) Cast (5) Chain
(6) Cheek (7) Civil (8) Clock (9) Close (10) Coal



Now for something different for 2018, put the following words into a logical order:-

- | | |
|--|--|
| (1) Service, Fishing, Room, Net, Ball | (2) Up, Switch, Cut, Light, Off |
| (3) Bar, Mouse, Door, Trap, Handle | (4) Lightning, Razor, Fork, Sharp, Knife |
| (5) Cat, Milk, Butter, Saucer, Cup | (6) Toffee, Sugar, Tea, Sweet, Spoon |
| (7) Santa, Ladder, Christmas, Stocking | (8) Up, Bird, Cloth, Table, Dish |
| (9) Nest, Whiskey, Hen, Egg, Scotch | (10) Rink, Board, Ice, Skate |

Hope you can work them all out !!

Answers next month.

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ADVERTISING II

I head this II as I see back in February 2009 I noted furniture sales started in Summer, ran into Autumn sales which turned into Winter sales followed by Boxing Day sales becoming early Spring sales etc.etc. Well no change there then. Looking back, it strikes me that anyone paying “full price” for furniture really had to try hard for the opportunity to do so. However, if the furniture companies are still advertising 365 days a year it must be profitable and someone must be buying. I’ve still got the suite inherited from mother-in-law (donkeys years old then) reupholstered once and still going strong (suite not mother-in-law). On the other hand, my daughter must be on her 4th suite at least (fashion?) and my son not far behind. I think I’ve answered my own question.

But sales are not just seasonal any longer. It’s far worse and I think the Yanks are to blame. It took me some years to cotton on to Black Friday, the first day after Thanksgiving and the start of the Christmas “let’s get money out of the punters” campaign. This year Black Friday went on for at least 3 days if my junk mail is to be believed. AND it’s not only Black Friday – we now have Cyber Monday, the first Monday after Black Friday. Also, Small Business week end (1st Saturday in December), Blue Monday (16th January) and Buy British Day (1st October).

The start of this rant against advertising came from the use of statistics in advertising. Have you noticed some of the really small, small print underneath television adverts notably women’s cosmetics? How do they choose the number of women to be ask? Do they stop interviewing when they have enough of the right answers or do they interview thousands and “select” the results? I noted:

| | | |
|---------|-----|--------------|
| Garnier | 71% | of 100 women |
| L’Oreal | 82% | of 134 women |
| Clarins | 77% | of 362 women |
| Avon | 76% | of 52 women |

I can understand 71% of 100 women as that is 71 women. But 76% of 52 women? That’s 39.52 women. I’m looking for .52 of a woman who looks better for using day cream – it must be very effective!

G.O.M.



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Bette Davis

Wrinkles should merely indicate where smiles have been.

Mark Twain

One of the good things about getting older is that you find you're more interesting than most of the people you meet.

Lee Marvin

Growing old is compulsory, growing up is optional.

Bob Monkhouse

When people tell you how young you look they are also telling you how old you are

Cary Grant

A man had reached middle age when he is advised to Slow down by his doctor rather than the police.

Anonymous

The key to successful aging is to pay as little attention to it as possible.

Judith Regan

If you resolve to give up, drinking and loving, you don't actually live longer. It just seems longer.

Clement Freud

First, you forget names, then you forget faces, next, you forget to pull your zipper up and finally you forget to pull it down.

Leo Rosenberg



The problem with the world is that everyone is a few drinks behind.

Humphry Bogart

They say the first thing to go when your old is Your legs or your eyesight. It isn't true. The first thing to go is parallel parking.

Kurt Vonnegut

They tell you that you'll lose your mind when you grow older. What they don't tell you is that you won't miss it very much.

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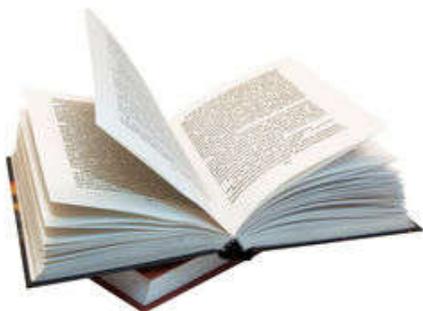
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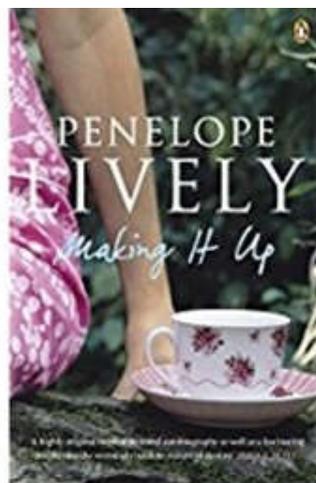
STOKE HAMMOND BOOK CLUB



‘Making it Up ‘ by Penelope Lively was a highly original form of fictional autobiography which we hadn’t come across before. We have all wondered at one time or another how our lives would have turned out had we chosen even a slightly different route or made different decisions along the way and this book was a mixture of real life and fictional slants.

The Author gives us a true idea of her actual life at different times, her relationships etc. and then we get to read the fictional story of someone who took a different path or chose an alternative direction resulting in eight very varied tales.

Opinions amongst the group were mixed. Everyone thought the book was an original and clever concept and we all enjoyed most of the stories. Strangely enough the one mentioned by us all as our least favourite was about an archaeological dig ! One person enjoyed the fact that it was often set in Egypt which she could connect with, others liked some of the stories and not others but the general consensus was that it was a good experience and we were glad to have had the opportunity to read it. One of the good things about the Club is that we get to read books that we would not normally take down from the shelf but having done so get enjoyment from them.



Next month’s book is **‘The Wondering Falcon’** by Jamil Ahmad.

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STOKE HAMMOND COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

December was a busy month for the Community Association, starting off with the Senior Citizens Xmas lunch on Saturday 2nd December. More than 30 of our more senior residents, were thoroughly well fed and watered at this annual gathering.



A glass of bubbly on hand for all as they arrived, following by a full 3 course lunch (with wine of course!) finished off by a medley of Christmas songs and carols, delightfully sung by more than twenty members of the High Ash Choir. As a parting gift, all diners were provided with a seasonal Poinsettia plant. Much thanks must go to the large band of volunteers who helped out on the day. We must also

reserve special thanks to Tesco's Bletchley who kindly donated so much of the food and Costco's Milton Keynes who also provided a most helpful monetary donation.

The busy month continued with many bookings taken for the centre, which included both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

All of this along with funds raised from this years Car Treasure Hunt, the Quiz Night and a donation from Waitrose Leighton Buzzard, has allowed the committee to at long last invest in some new tables and chairs. So, in January look out for the delivery of 10 new circular banqueting tables and more than 80 upholstered chairs – should be so much nicer on the backside than those hard-plastic ones.

We also have to make mention that Management Committee Member Chris Page has regrettably had to step down from his role as our Treasurer. We must give much thanks to Chris, who has done so much to get our books in order. If there is anyone out there who might be interested in taking up the role of our Treasurer, then please do get in contact with us.

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Mrs Sara Boyce

E.Mail: office@highash.bucks.sch.uk
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Parish News - How lovely it was to welcome the 'Good Companions' to our Christmas Concert. It was great to hear how much everyone enjoyed the performances by our choir, orchestra and individual performers. It certainly showed the amount of musical talent we have here at High Ash! As the new Headteacher of the school, it was also a super opportunity to meet members of the wider community and to hear of the many connections our residents have had with the school over the years, either as parents, previous Governors or through the church.

Thank you as well to all our local residents for your patience and tolerance with us as we try to work so hard with you and the Parish Council to ease congestion and improve parking outside the school at peak times. We have, as promised, sent out numerous text, email and newsletter reminders about parking away from the school and walking up the hill. We shall continue in 2018 to be as committed to this as ever and continue to liaise closely with the Parish Council and PCSO on this.

We also hope some of our local residents received their Christmas cards from school designed by a selection of our children.

Wishing you all the very best for 2018 on behalf of all the children and staff at our school.

Mrs Sara Boyce
Headteacher



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Village Green

Unfortunately even if you use it we're going to lose it!



ORGANISATIONS THAT USE THE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Women's Institute

19.30 - 21.30pm

Contact: Joan Simmons 01525 270432

High Ash Scouts, Cubs, Beavers

Every Thursday 17.30 - 21.30pm

Contact: John Till 01525 261444

Pilates - Group Matwork

Monday's 09.25am, 10.30am,

19.10pm, 20.15pm

Contact: Louisa Harris 07941 203589

Metafit

Tuesday 9.30am and 10.00am

Wednesday 7.30pm

Friday 9.30am and 10.00am

Contact: Lizzy 07753 138276

Buttons Pre-School

Monday - Friday

Contact: 01525 270501

To Hire the Hall please telephone 01525 270501

or e-mail: shcommunitycentre@gmail.com

SH NEWS – ADVERTISING RATES

For 12 editions: FULL Page - **£85.00** HALF Page - **£50.00** QUARTER Page - **£30.00**

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Bucks County Council | 01296-395000 |
| Community Transport Co-ordinator | 07729-699488 |
| Registrar (<i>Births, Deaths & Marriages</i>) | 01296-382581 |
| Aylesbury Vale District Council | 01296-585858 |
| Gypsy Hotline | 01296-383774 |
| Litter Enforcement Officer | 01296-585395 |
| Social Care Services (<i>Emergency Duty</i>) | 01494-817750 |
| MK General Hospital | 01908-660033 |
| Stoke Mandeville Hospital | 01296-315000 |
| Luton & Dunstable Hospital | 01582-491122 |
| Clerk to the Parish Council | 07743-355484 |
| Parish Council Chairman (<i>Greg Noble</i>) | 01525-270744 |
| County Councillor (<i>Janet Blake</i>) | 01525-261288 |
| District Councillor (<i>Neil Blake</i>) | 01525-261288 |
| High Ash School | 01525-261620 |
| M.P. (<i>John Bercow</i>) | 020-7219-6346 |

Police non-emergency number 101

EDITORS NOTE

So first, I hope all of our readers had a great Xmas and are looking forward to what 2018 may bring. If you think anything looks different this month as regards the layout, fonts, images etc, then apologies but this the first month where I have taken full ownership for the SH News and literally put the whole thing together. Previously the printers have assisted with the editorial layout but because we have been growing in size with more pages, it was becoming too much to expect the printers to do all of the setting out. Having taken several days to get this SH News 'put to bed' I now know what the printers meant. Hopefully it will get easier as the months progress.

I'd like to 'ring some changes' for 2018, I have some thoughts but would welcome yours, so please do get in touch if you have an idea for something new, remember the SH News is for you the residents of Stoke Hammond. The SH News needs to be informative and interesting as well as being a means for local businesses to advertise their services.

May I please have copy for the February issue by **20th January**

Greg Noble, Oak Farm, Bragenham Side, Stoke Hammond. MK17 9DB
01525-270744 E-mail: gregnoble1980@aol.com

VILLAGE DIARY

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Tuesday 2 nd January | Parish Council Meeting – Community Centre 19.30 |
| Saturday 13 th January | Community Breakfast – Community Centre 8.30 – 10.30 |
| Tuesday 6 th February | Parish Council Meeting – Community Centre 19.30 |
| Saturday 10 th February | Community Breakfast – Community Centre 8.30 – 10.30 |
| Tuesday 6 th March | Parish Council Meeting – Community Centre 19.30 |
| Saturday 10 th March | Community Breakfast – Community Centre 8.30 – 10.30 |
| Tuesday 3 rd April | Parish Council Meeting – Community Centre 19.30 |