

SH NEWS

INSIDE THIS EDITION:

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

G.O.M.

SPOTLIGHT ON 'DEAN JACKSON'

MAVIS'S QUIZ

EVERYTHING BUT THE MOO

CHURCH NEWS

BOOK CLUB & MUCH MORE

JANUARY 2019 Issue 1

www.stokehammondpc.com



St LUKE'S, STOKE HAMMOND

Rector: Revd John Waller 01525 261062

January 6 th	11.00	Family Service – Revd John Waller
January 13 th	09.00	Morning Worship – Lay Leader
January 20 th	09.00	Holy Communion – Revd John Waller
January 27 th	09.30	Café Church – Lay Leader

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

Saturday 12 th January	08.30 – 10.30 (Last Orders)
Saturday 9 th February	08.30 – 10.30 (Last Orders)
Saturday 9 th March	08.30 – 10.30 (Last Orders)

Church Wardens:

Diane Webber 01525-270409 and Harry Davies 01234-822780

METHODIST SERVICES

**REGRETFULLY THERE WILL BE NO FURTHER SERVICES HELD IN THE
METHODIST CHURCH STOKE HAMMOND.**

**Should you require further information or details of Methodist Services
to be held in Stewkley, please contact the Minister.
Revd Donna Broadbent-Kelly on 01525 240589**

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MORNINGS WILL CONTINUE 10.30 – 11.30
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PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

So here we are 2019 – what does this year have in store for Stoke Hammond and your Parish Council and let's not mention the dreaded **BR*X*T** word! Well no doubt there will be much to read and report on relating to the setting up of the new Single Unitary Authority and indeed your PC is already being inundated with correspondence from various organisations and individuals as to their thoughts and how they see the timescale of progress. But one thing which has now been confirmed is the 1yr deferment from 2019 to 2020 for the Council/Local elections. We were pleased by the positive comments received for the illuminations to the Village Green Christmas Tree. We invested in some extra lights and much thanks must go to Cllrs Geoff Lane and Greg Noble who spent a cold afternoon at the beginning of December scaling a ladder to enwrap the tree with these new lights. For the PC Meeting held on the 4th December the Council was joined by 6 members of the public and AVDC District Cllr Ben Everitt. With no planning or other major items to discuss the meeting progressed at a 'fair rate of Knots' although Cllr Everitt gave a fairly length insight into what has been going on, much of which of course again centred on the matter of a Unitary Authority. Cllr Everitt advised that the current councils will disband and a new unitary council formed. Orders are to be put towards Parliament in January and by March 28th it should be completed. In the meantime, there will be a shadow authority. There will be 147 councillors to start with. A request is to be submitted for an immediate boundary change. There has not been one since 1974. He stated that delivering of services will become more efficient and more localised. Councillors will have broader jobs. The new Unitary Authority will be in place by April 2020. Provision of services for Adult Social Care is and remains a priority and needs to be covered. The new areas will be called Wards and not Districts. There have been huge changes in Buckinghamshire in the last decade with the forthcoming Heathrow expansion/HS2/M25. When questioned as to whether it will be 'business as usual' during the interim council from April 2019 and whether there would be job losses. Cllr Everitt said that unfortunately, a head count reduction will have to be looked at, but there will be natural attrition and the District Council has already been through this exercise during the past two years. There will not be a change in policy and personnel will be seconded to the merger, but expertise retained in areas such as planning.

There were no planning matters before the PC for discussion, but Cllr Turner reported on her recent visit to an exhibition organised by Highways England in relation to the proposed Oxford to Cambridge Expressway which may well in the future impact on our village. However, construction is unlikely to start until 2025 and completion is due in 2030. District Cllr Ben Everitt told the meeting that



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official plans would not be available until autumn 2019 so any suggestions beforehand as to the actual proposed route were pure speculation.

Other matters discussed included progress on the Vision Plan for the new land off Bragenham Side. A further meeting was held with the Council's architect in December, and it is very much hoped that Vision Plan will be available to present to the PC at the January PC Meeting. With regard to highways issues, the subject of the blocked drains throughout the village was again raised. These have been ongoing for many months and despite being reported to BCC Highways no action seems to be forthcoming. It is hoped that we will get a faster resolution to the failed light to the crossing which has likewise been reported to BCC via the 'Fix My Street' website. The PC is also looking into the provision of lighting to the garages owned by the PC on Bragenham Side. With no suitable mains supply available, one option to be investigated is that of solar powered lighting, the cost of which has dropped considerably over the last few years. But there are many options and variations of design so some work is required to establish what would work best.

You will no doubt notice the advertisement on the last page of this edition of the SH News addressed to the residents of Newton Leys South (NLS) whose homes fall within the parish of Stoke Hammond. Your PC is due to review in January as to whether we continue with the distribution of the SH News to NLS. It is a costly exercise and we are not sure as to how well the publication is received. We have also lost the services of Canon John Saunders who has for the last two years been kindly delivering the SH News to NLS homes. The SH News is available to download from both the PC Website and that of the Community Association.

Your PC also met separately in December to put together the budget for 2019/2020 and this will be presented to the full council at the January meeting for ratification, and this will then determine the level of precept for Stoke Hammond on your 2019/2020 Council Tax bill.

As mentioned in last month's PC News the January PC meeting is moving from the first Tuesday of the month as this is New Year's Day, to Thursday the 3rd January 7.30pm at the usual venue of the Community Centre, Bragenham Side. The February meeting will revert to the first Tuesday the 5th.



Should you wish to contact your Parish Council, please do so via our clerk:

Sue Severn, 19 Curlew, Watermead, Bucks. HP19 0WG 01296 336575 07778 473392

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ACCIDENT?

It was an accident. It was definitely an accident. Honestly it *was* an accident. However, never let it be said that I stopped anyone having a laugh at my expense.

It started with a leaky toilet bowl. A horizontal crack lowered the water level and the

little boys room became a paddling pool. I can only guess that a misdirected parking of the hoover occasioned said crack - an accident obviously.

A new toilet was ordered (together with sink, fittings etc.!) and duly fitted. Now the original was circa 38 years old and of it's time a comfortable low level design that was most suitable for those of a shorter leg length. Our new model reflects the present style of a higher seat level (and slow self closing lid/seat creating a potential danger for the unwary male).

A few days after installation yours truly was taken short and made a somewhat hurried approach to our new apparatus. Forgetting the new dimensions I did not account for the additional height difference of some 3 inches. Crashing in to my accustomed sitting position I was brought to a halt earlier than expected and still retaining some momentum. This would have been bad enough but as you are aware there are certain male appendages which need some arrangement in such circumstances. Alas too late! The better part of ten stones hit the seat crushing all that was in between.

Does the story end there? Oh no. Following on from the bruising of certain parts a water infection was contracted. An emergency

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doctor was called out and a four day holiday in Milton Keynes Hospital on an antibiotic drip ensued. People may knock the NHS but I am pleased to report that in my experience (not always personal) when a serious need arises they are normally there.

Grumpy Old Man

MAVIS'S QUIZ

Answers to last month's quiz and if you remember had a bit of a nautical theme, where you had to name the ship in question. So how did you do?



- (1) THIS WRECK WAS IN HENRY VIII NAVY AND IS BEING RESTORED – ‘MARY ROSE’
- (2) NELSON'S FLAGSHIP AT THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR – ‘HMS VICTORY’
- (3) THE TEA CLIPPER MOORED ON THE THAMES – ‘CUTTY SARK’
- (4) THE FRIGATE OF WORLD WAR II ALSO MOORED ON THE THAMES – ‘HMS BELFAST’
- (5) THE GERMAN BATTLESHIP SCUTTLED IN THE RIVER PLATE – ‘GRAF SPREE’
- (6) THE LINER THAT WAS SUNK BY AN ICEBERG ON ITS MAIDEN VOYAGE – ‘TITANIC’
- (7) THE SHIP THAT WAS INVOLVED IN THE YANGTSE INCIDENT – ‘HMS AMETHYST’
- (8) THE SHIP THAT JASON SAILED IN TO GET THE GOLDEN FLEECE – ‘ARGO’
- (9) THE SHIP THAT SIR FRANCIS CHICHIATER SAILED ROUND THE WORLD – ‘GIPSY MOTH IV’
- (10) TED HEATH'S YACHT – ‘MORNING CLOUD’

Now for something different again this month – name the composers of the following works??

- (1) OVERTURE TO THE HEBRIDES.
- (2) THE OPERA CARMEN.
- (3) THE OPERETTA MERRY WIDOW.
- (4) THE OPERA MARRIAGE OF FIGARO.
- (5) THE ENIGMA VARIATIONS.
- (6) MUSIC FOR THE ROYAL FIREWORKS.
- (7) THE CLOCK SYMPHONY.
- (8) THE LONDON SUITE.
- (9) THE PLANET SUITE.
- (10) DANSE MACABRE.

***Best of luck, and again no cheating on the internet !!
Answers next month***



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- *Lecture theatre and cinema room.*
- *Sun lounge available for our residents, guests and visitors to take afternoon tea and enjoy family gatherings.*
- *Dedicated respite/convalescence suite with private patio.*

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

Web: www.careatthelindens.co.uk

THE Lindens

At The Lindens, our residents and respite guests enjoyed the festive Christmas period.

In addition to our usual range of creative, musical and fitness activities, our residents enjoyed a flower arranging class. A local florist came in to take the class, putting together various flower arrangements with our residents. There was also a Christmas Party with a festive buffet and music. Mick was here and he entertained us with Christmas favourites and other popular melodies and songs, happy times!

The New Year's celebrations brought the festive period to a conclusion and our focus turned towards the New Year ahead. Our Kitchen Team prepared and cooked a delicious New Year's Day lunch which was a choice of Roast Lamb or Salmon and Pasta Mornay.

Work started on the latest new facility at The Lindens at the end of November, our Tea Room. This will be for the use of our residents, respite guests and their visiting families. The new area will be available for use shortly.

Looking ahead to 2019, please remember we would still love to hear from you if you have any photos or memories of the old house.

On the development side, in 2019 we are looking to landscape the grounds adjoining the latest Garden Wing extension and sympathetically renovate the old Summer House, amongst other projects.

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

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

Chris Ryan
Manager, The Lindens.

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

Tel 01908 371705 Email: info@careatthelindens.co.uk Web: www.careatthelindens.co.uk

2019
New Year's Day

Lunch

Minestrone Soup
Or
Prawn Cocktail
with avocado

Main Course

Roast Lamb
with
Garlic, Rosemary & Onion Sauce
Or
Salmon & Pasta Mornay
Creamed mashed potatoes
Buttered new potatoes
Seasonal vegetables

Dessert

Black Forest Cake Roulade
Apple Tart
Served with cream

Stoke Hammond local Store

Under new management, the local shop has been refurbished and re-opened on 1st January 2011. It is currently known as "Stoke Hammond Food and Wine".



Opening hours are: Mon-Sat: 6am till 10pm
Sun: 7am till 10pm

Our products:

News & magazines	Beers, Wines & Sprits	Pet food
Confectionary & snacks	Soft Drinks	Health & Beauty products
Bread (inc. Turney's) & cakes	Tobacco & Cigarettes	Frozen food & Ice creams
Dairy products	Groceries	Greeting cards
Medicines	Baby food & other products	Household Sundries
Sandwiches & ready meals	Fruit & Vegetable	Stationary items

Other services:

- Paper delivery available for local residents (delivery charge is 25p per day).
- Negotiation is underway to re-open the post office as "Post Office Local"
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“EVERYTHING BUT THE MOO”

Following last month's 'Middle Name Houdini' we now reach our tenth extract from the book 'Everything but the Moo' written by Hazel Turner's late mother Pam Murphy, we now enter the world of the downtrodden farmer and Pam's encounters with officialdom which as always includes the dreaded tax man!!

MAD DOGS AND ENGLISHMEN AND MILK



Pam at Tyrells Manor 1970

I do hope the pundits have not put too much time and energy into their probe into why the British Farmer continues to farm. It would take hours on a psychiatrist's couch to get to the bottom of it, if the darkest truth were to be dragged out. To the farmer it is easy; it is "The British Way of Life", and that determination to be king or queen of one's own dunghill, if not castle.

At least nobody used to say they did it for the money. Any one

misguided enough to make *that* statement would have their holding resembling Cape Canaveral before the moon rocket flight, with income tax inspectors, government officials, fellow farmers and magistrates armed with warrants under the Lunacy Act. There can not be many business owner occupiers in the business who would not be quids in by selling up, with the odd bits for houses, sewage works, schools, roads and the many other amenities of twentieth century life. Even after the payment of Capital Gains, Betterment Levy (and probably the Gambling Levy too), and anything else dreamed up by the Whitehall boys, AND the purchase of a nice modern open plan executive type semi, there would still be enough left to live on the interest in comfort, with nothing to do but the football pools or the National Lottery!

But what fun would there be in it? 29% of farmers quizzed said they do it for independence. Independence? Being tied to anything up to a hundred, or more, or less, of the most cantankerous, demanding, infuriating concubines in the world if he's a dairy farmer. Their gastronomic appetites, sexual appetites, and natural functions have to be satisfied 365 days a year. Should there be a social function he particularly wishes to attend, these ladies will effect an escape that makes the Great Train Robbers like amateurs at the job. Beef, sheep and pigs can be equally awkward.



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The Oxford Dictionary defines “independent” as “not depending on something else for its validity, efficiency etc.” and “unwilling to be under obligation to others.” Farming?

To discover why anyone farms, you have only to look at the window boxes in the towns, cultivated with such loving care and attention; those soot begrimed plots to which one’s Sunday Visitors return with plastic bags filled with the best farmyard manure (known in the trade as F.Y.M.). A garden may be a “Love something, God wot?”; a farm, a million times more so. It is simply natural instinct to hang on to one’s own domain as long and with all the fervour possible.

There is the other reason. The sheer John Bull fondness for battling against the elements; Captain Oates, The Crusaders, - public schools and cold baths, no central heating and draughty houses all typified by Noel Coward in “Mad dogs and Englishmen....”

There ought to be a law prohibiting farmers from using their own produce for one month out of every three. I guarantee that in six months there would be a complete metamorphosis – in both the marketing and quality of farm produce sold to the long-suffering housewife. Take milk. The average self-respecting cow would not recognise the white pasty looking liquid dropped on the doorstep. It took me years to realise why it was every visitor to tea asked what brand I used as they had never tasted tea like it. As I have always used one of the cheapest brands I used to lie like a Trojan, until the penny dropped that given decent milk, you could practically make tea with old sweepings.

One week I stayed with a friend in London and was asked to bring some milk in. Having forgotten to bring it from home I bought a carton of what was euphemistically called “Gold Seal” milk, which I presumed to be Channel Island milk. I would care for a few words with the cow it came from! If that was the best she could do a short trip to the knackers would have been her best fate. There really is no wonder that the country is being flooded with milk and powdered milk from abroad, and that you hear the townswoman saying that “Well, milk is just powder and water put in bottles, isn’t it?” (yes, it really has been said to me!)

Eggs are almost worse. If you have the misfortune to buy eggs, and try and boil one, it requires coddling in a rather more careful manner than a premature baby, with salt and vinegar in the water to prevent it cracking, and then, sometimes, it is advisable to have the air freshener handy when you take the top off. I loathe hens, and have often threatened to give up keeping them, until I had six weeks without eggs in-between one batch going out and another coming in again. I started buying supermarket eggs – just the once; but Sulphur has never been my favourite perfume. I soon became weary of trailing round local farmers to find farm fresh eggs at more than twice the price the egg marketing board paid me and

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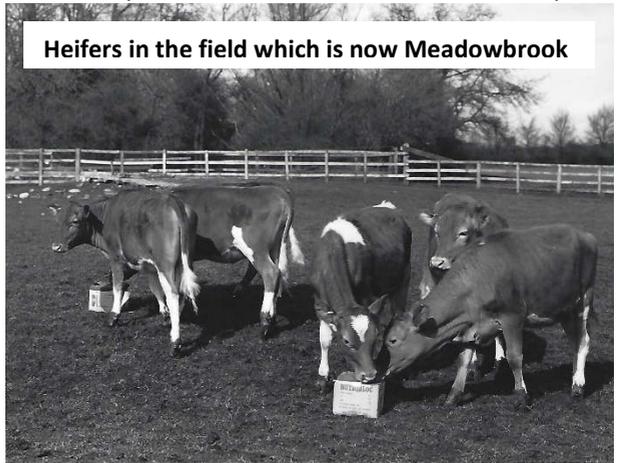
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was prepared to reward the first hen to lay me an egg for my tea with a feather bed!

There is also room for improvement in the marketing of meat. Foreign meat is more tender, frequently than British meat sold in the butchers. This is because it is immediately chilled after being killed and in effect has been well hung by the time it reaches the UK. So often English animals have either been running around the meadow the day before or it is brown from hanging in unsuitable storage conditions. I have to admit I have never bought beef locally the week I have sent an old cow to market; if it is tough, I always thought that I might be eating old Buttercup.

Vegetables musty have an even sadder, sorrier journey to market than milk, to arrive in their often flaccid, uninteresting state on the greengrocer's counter. But I still can not understand why it is necessary to import vegetables, when we have all the equipment and expertise to grow them here.

I suspect that few people in this country have ever tasted "real" cream. By the time it has been pasteurised, sterilised, homogenised and all the other things that are done to it has lost any delectability and goodness that it might of ever had. That wonderful syrupy liquid, never twice the same consistency is illegal, it does not measure up to the Inspector of Weights and Measures demands. Give



me my home-grown vegetables, milk, cream and eggs any day of the week!

As the 2working week and year decrease for 96% of the population by leaps and bounds, I am left wondering why it is that the farming community is never supposed to have a day off, a holiday, nor even go sick. Put in an appearance at the local Point-to-Point for an hour or two and you will be greeted with "You here? I should have thought you would be drilling!", even if you finished a month ago, or it is so wet underfoot that rice would be the only crop that could possibly be sown. However, your tractor or Land Rover will be in *great* demand later on to pull out those cars not designed for cross country safari.

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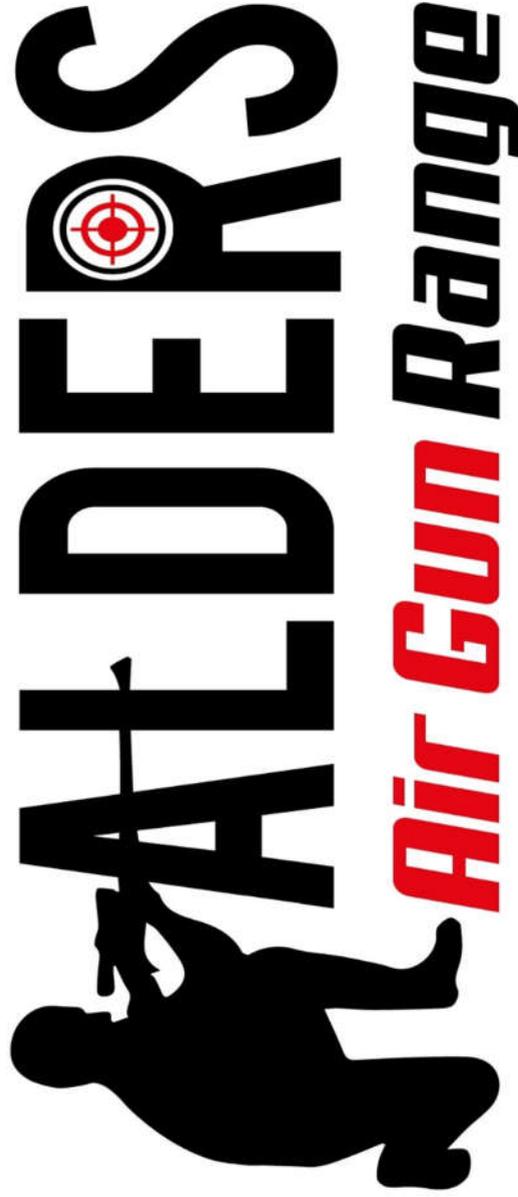
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chums about “What a lovely life you farmers lead, able to drop in for a pint at any time”. If you’ve spent all night calving a cow you can bet that if you have forty winks after lunch that it is the moment the bank manager calls to see you; and should you have the misfortune to be carted off to hospital it won’t be long before someone more or less accuses you of neglecting your stock and you awake with the grim visions of the RSPCA inspector nosing around.

I had my hair done one week and then delivered some eggs and got “And where do you think YOU’RE going dolled up like that?”

My big hate is officialdom. Every form has to be filled in and every payment made on the day THEY require it. Should you happen to be away you will arrive home to find that the most dire penalties are about to befall you. I sometimes wonder whether if you died you would be expected to send the Angel Gabriel winging back with the vital statistics of ninety four milking cows and three bulls if you made the upstairs flight, or the answer written on asbestos if the fiery furnace was your lot!

Take the June return for example, and the other one that has to be in within seven days of whatever month is required. It arrives, if you are lucky, and the pigeon post is working, on the first of the month. If you go away the day before, you will arrive home to a stack of official envelopes, the contents of which make you feel that Jack the Ripper was a plaster saint compared with your iniquities. On the other hand, you must not fill it in before you go. You might have another calf, or a hen or sheep might die, thus throwing out all the statistics for the entire countryside, price review, next census and the Joint Board examinations of the next GCSE.

No dairy farmer can possibly go away at the end of August. Since his distributor can quite legally send him notice which arrives with the second post on 31 August that his contract is cancelled from 30 September, he can well arrive home to find his best answer is to build a swimming pool that his children have been nattering about and fill it with that white liquid that often seems pretty valueless, but it is a complete embarrassment if not removed daily.

If you don’t fill the fertiliser subsidy in or the set aside information forms in and send them to the powers that be by the correct date you unleash a tidal wave that makes Hurricane Debbie look like a soft breeze. Some years ago, I made some late silage and for convenience covered it with lime. The suppliers sent me the form on the last possible day, but as a close relative had just died, I was away. I sent it in when I returned home for a brief spell. When I finally arrived home, I was met by a posse of officials who had come at least forty miles.

They were very pleasant about it but they “wished to investigate all the circumstances”. Presently I was sent a form, to be signed in duplicate, admitting all my delinquencies and deficiencies and swearing I would never do such a

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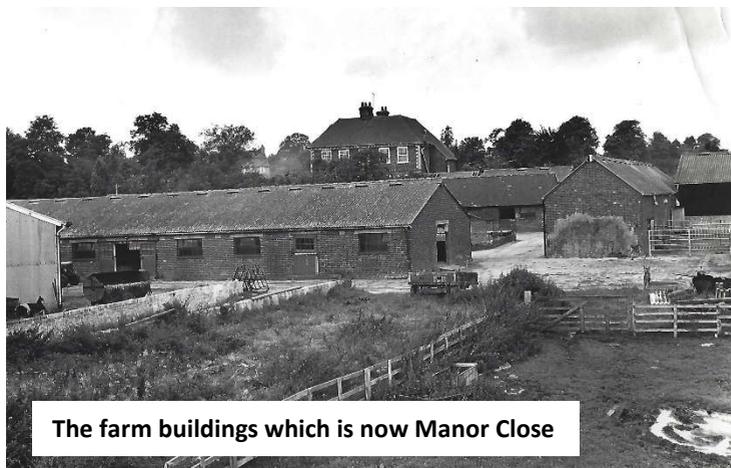
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at all venues**

terrible thing again. The value of the subsidy – a mere £.00!! I told them to forget it, but this was impossible – I had the lime applied. Finally, having become extremely cross, and spent well over the three pounds on telephone calls, it was agreed that the subsidy could be paid “without further penalty”. Actually, it took me a week to hear this decision – the gentleman concerned was on holiday!

Worst of all are the Inland Revenue. Should they owe *you* the price of a bottle of Scotch by the time you receive it the money will have been so de-valued that it will just about buy a bottle of embrocation to soothe your aged rheumatics.



The farm buildings which is now Manor Close

I have to admit I did succeed once, nearly thirty years ago, in getting paid pretty quickly. I plonked my eight and a half pregnant self in the Inspector's outer office and announced that I intended to remain there until I received my

overdue money. My bulging figure was eyed with the greatest trepidation and I heard a clerk being asked to look up the number of the ambulance service. After a couple of hours, I won the day, got my money (and arrived home safely), and incidentally, I suspect that I started this “sit in” business. However, when YOU owe them money, it should have been paid the day before the demand arrived.

Recently I received a first demand, which having checked with my accountant I misguidedly paid within the week. The following morning's post brought one of those lurid red documents, threatening to distrain my property, and blood, fire and murder, should it not be paid within eight days. A total of fifteen days, four of which cover weekends and two Bank Holidays, before, presumably the bailiffs arrived. Had I been away for three weeks (what a hope!), doubtless I would have returned to find a budding football team of them on my doorstep, or else like the ladybird, my house on fire and the children all gone.

What a down trodden lot we farmers have become. Is not it time WE demand a five day week, 37 hours, of course, and four weeks holiday a year with pay? That really would upset the proverbial apple cart!.

Next month : A small case of rape!

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'Let your light shine' Matthew 5:16

Stoke Hammond Parish News Letter - December 2018

On behalf of High Ash CE School, we would like to wish all of the Parish a very Merry Christmas and a happy 2019!

It was wonderful to see so many of the Good Companions at our Christmas Concert that was organised for them at school this week. The children across the whole school performed a range of Christmas music and poems to over 70 members of the community! They were joined by our choir and orchestra who really impressed the audience. Our choir have also performed at Stoke Hammond Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch last weekend.

Our Foundation and Key Stage One children were outstanding in their Nativity performances bringing a modern twist to the true meaning of Christmas. We are also taking part in Christingle Services at St Mary's Great Brickhill and reading at the Christmas Eve Service too. Busy times!

Sara J Boyce

Sara Boyce
Headteacher

headteacher@highash.bucks.sch.uk



READERS LETTERS



Dear Editor – I am writing on behalf of all those at our table at the Seniors Lunch on Saturday 8th December to thank the organisers and all the hard workers for a fabulous Xmas lunch. We wanted for nothing - the wine was flowing, the three course meal was delicious, nothing was overlooked - even serving a liqueur with the coffee to round it off. Plus, we all left with either a lovely plant or table decoration - the icing on the cake. All those cooking, dishing up and serving at table worked

tirelessly and we wanted you to know how much it was appreciated - thank you.

(Eileen, Peter, Kate, Wendy, Julie, Mike, Val and Mick.)

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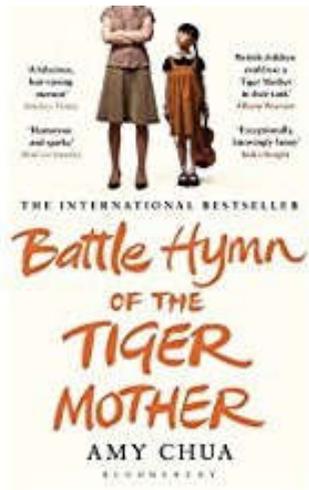
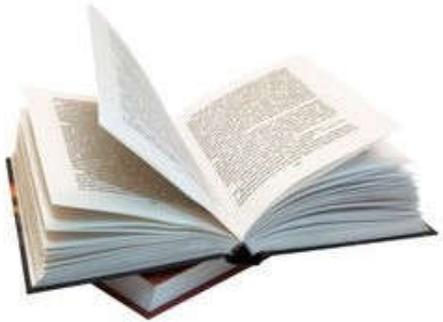


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STOKE HAMMOND BOOK CLUB



‘BATTLE HYMN OF THE TIGER MOTHER’ by Amy Chua.

Well, this was certainly different and actually was a true account of bringing up two daughters by their Chinese mother. Amy Chua is a lawyer with a Jewish husband living in America. She is convinced that the traditional Chinese way of bringing up children is far superior to the Western idea. She has great confidence in them and expects her daughters to excel at everything they do including their music and academic studies, she is satisfied with nothing but A* grades in all subjects and is sure that this is achieved by denying them the usual diversions such as sleep-overs, watching TV, joining school clubs and they are not even allowed to be in the school play.

Her husband does not share her views but agrees to let her do things her way. She is almost cruel at times, for example the girls each made her a card for her birthday but she rejected them saying that they had not put enough effort into them! She keeps your interest by hinting that things do go wrong! However, both girls grow up to be happy, very successful and do not resent her at all although when the book was published in America Amy Chua received death threats and was even accused of child abuse over a two year period!

The group found the book very well written, amusing in places and appreciated the author being self-deprecating at times. None of us agreed with her methods even if they seemed to have the desired results and found her extremely harsh. However, it makes you wonder whether her rather extreme philosophy of child-rearing is really more cruel than the laissez-faire indifference and babysitting by TV which happens so often these days. Summing up - we all enjoyed the read.

Next month's book is **'All my Puny Sorrows'** by Miriam Toews

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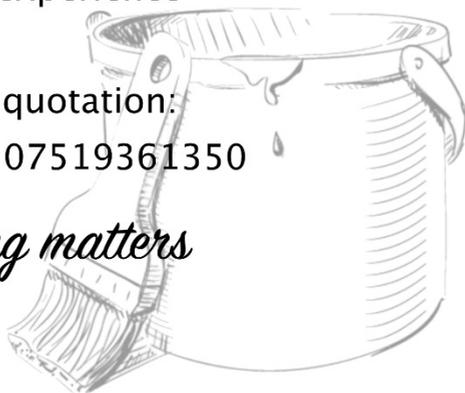
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PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE MONTH



The Village Green Xmas Tree was adorned with new lights and many said how attractive and proud they were to have this festive feature in the village.

And here we have a selection of shots from the Senior Citizens Xmas Lunch held at the Community Centre on the 8th December



Newly resurfaced and repainted courts at Great Brickhill Tennis Club!

The refurbished courts are now open for all members to enjoy so why not come along and try one of the courses on our Autumn coaching programme.

There is something for everyone, whatever age or level of tennis you are.

Adult Improvers – designed to improve your overall game play

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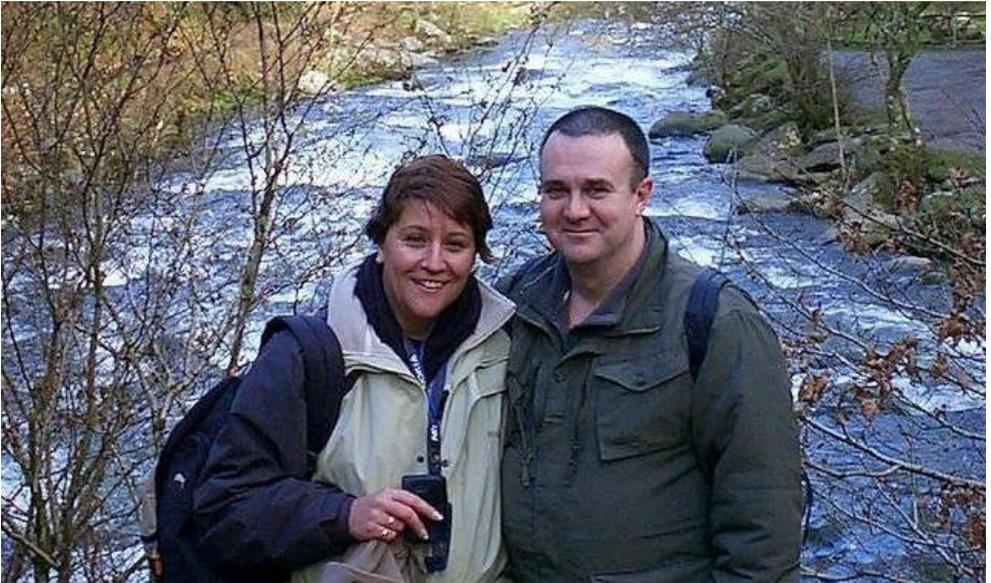




DEAN JACKSON

By Barbara Munn

A staunch supporter of the village for many years, Dean's practical and technical abilities have helped ensure the success of many shows and activities. This year saw him voted Village Show Committee Special Award 'Winner of the Year' in respect of all his hard work, dedication and unfailing support since the first Village Show.



- ***EARLY LIFE.***

Dean was born in the bar of a hotel in Ramsgate to Angela and Derek who was the manager at the hotel. Three months later Dean and his mother moved to Welwyn Garden City where Dean was educated and lived until he was 24. Dean's interest in all things technical started very early. At the age of 5 he built his first radio and by the age of 10 his enthusiasm led him to almost to burn the house down when using a soldering iron which he had left on when he went out to play with friends.



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TEBBUTT PAINTINGS



Despite doing well at school Dean was keen to make a practical start to his engineering career rather than study for A levels and so took up an apprenticeship with Marconi Instruments in St Albans. Working and studying via day-release Dean gained a degree in Telecommunications Engineering. Then, partly because his father said that if the opportunity arises to take a qualification then grasp it he opted to do just that; taking first an HND in Electronics and then an ONC in Mechanical Engineering. As a result, he gave himself a very practical as well as an academic basis for his future career. In 1984 Dean left Marconi to work for Securicor where he designed, installed and maintained alarm systems. Sometime later he took a week's holiday to Kos and ended up staying for 6 months because he got a job as a club DJ – being a DJ was something which had been a hobby and extra source of income for some years prior to boost his pittance wage as an apprentice. In October at the end of the holiday season Dean returned home and decided to become a licensed Hackney cab driver – to add yet another string to his bow. It took him just eight weeks (of very hard work) to gain The Knowledge. His logical mind meant he could see the street patterns immediately in the same way he could understand electrical circuits.

Next, he joined Phillips primarily to work on the design, installation and maintenance of the camera systems to be used on the M25. At the time it was the largest single fibre camera system in the world. Another aspect of the work was the installation of street cameras in London for Scotland Yard. Dean and his colleague were given special parking permits allowing them to park anywhere as long as they didn't obstruct traffic or pedestrians. They took the freedom literally and often parked in the middle of a roundabout and took great pleasure watching a traffic warden spend about 10 minutes struggling to cross the road, waiting for a gap in the traffic – only to discover they had the right to be there.

It was while working on a Scotland Yard camera that Dean had a truly terrifying experience. Twenty six storeys up on top of the Gas Building in London is a parapet with a cannon like structure cantilevered off supporting a 15 foot "muzzle." Tracks led to the end of the roof where the "muzzle went through a small hole in the short wall" where a camera was placed through. Unfortunately, it was stuck in the wrong position and couldn't be brought back through the hole. Once strapped into his safety harness it was Dean's task to climb over the wall, crawl out along the boom/muzzle, push the camera back into the correct position and then do the whole route in reverse. Once safely back he would be able to fix the camera while safely on the roof. It was only after he got back that his colleague told him that they had failed to anchor the harness and he was effectively free climbing! His very worried colleague had realised Dean's predicament too late and it would have been physically impossible for him to secure the safety line once he was underway. With great trepidation he decided to say nothing, making the judgement that Dean

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Three generations. One sense of duty

would be safer not knowing. With a fair amount of understatement Dean commented that the experience caused him to lose his head for heights. It also prompted him to take another break from his career. This time he travelled through France and on to Italy before ending up in Magaluf which wasn't quite the party capital it has since become (but it was still quite wild). Although he intended just a regular holiday Dean was offered a 3 month summer contract working in 3 bars owned by the same person and doing a DJ set at the club and bars. On his return to England in November Dean took up taxi driving again and continued to keep his licence current for many years.

In 1996 he returned to IT taking a job in Welwyn Garden City with a company which reconditioned commercial computers, usually only 3 years old, to the latest standards before selling them on. During his 3 years there Dean became the Engineering Manager before moving to take up a similar post with a firm in Letchworth. Whilst working there Dean bought his first house in Dunstable in 1998.

Things took an unusual turn in 2000 as the company Dean was working for was involved in a take over by a much larger company, Dean was offered a transfer to the new company with a demotion from manager of engineering to senior engineer (but with a 5K pay rise), his knowledge and commitment soon proved "useful" to this new company and he quickly became "new projects manager" and then "data centre manager". He was involved in many major projects. Unfortunately, his technical ability was to be his downfall (and rise) as he made all the data centres unmanned with visits only required if a physical part failed and all systems, temperature air conditioning etc were remotely monitored and redundancy was built in and also automatically "replaced temporarily". Two weeks before Christmas 2015 Dean was made redundant and decided to semi - retire and start his own company working remotely as much as possible. He was fortunate to gain his former company's largest contract and now looks after the internet and phone needs of 149 garden centres. In addition, as newsletter readers will spot, he provides a support service locally as TD – Techdean Limited.

- ***FAMILY LIFE.***

One Friday in December 1999 Dean took a call from a lady at a hat manufacturer in Luton. While trying to organise the Christmas wages for 300 staff she had tipped lime juice over her keyboard and broken it. Usually as manager he would send one of his technicians but, hoping to get home early he decided to go himself. Thus Dean met Alison. 18 months later they married in Dunstable Registry Office. Alison sold her house in Luton and they settled into Dean's house in Dunstable.

Dean's parents who had lived in Welwyn Garden City moved to Houghton Regis and 6 months later Dean and Alison moved to be 4 doors away from them. This made life much easier for Dean as he had been going to check on their home regularly while they spent six months of each year at their home in Minorca. Sitting together



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in the garden one Sunday his parents suddenly announced that were contemplating moving to Stevenage and downsizing. At that point Dean and Alison proposed that they all look for a house with an annexe. After searching for 6 months over a wide area the family found Little Orchard in Hillersdon Chase in the village. It didn't have an annexe but it did have potential so the whole family moved here in 2006 and the annexe was completed in 2007. For a very short time the family were very happy but unfortunately his father, who had been finance director at Sellotape, was diagnosed with asbestosis related mesothelioma and sadly died in 2009 at 67. His father had spent his whole working life at Sellotape and it is believed that he contracted the disease when, as an office junior, he used to dust boxes prior to stock taking. The heating pipes above the boxes were covered in asbestos which had degraded into dust. After the disease had lain dormant for many years his father, who was climbing trees in October 2008, was confined to a wheelchair by April 2009 and died within months. In 2013 his mother in law passed away. Then in 2014 his mother developed pancreatic cancer. Following treatment, she felt well enough to travel to her home in Minorca. Her doctor said she was fit to fly but advised her not to. Within weeks Dean got a phone call asking him to go there immediately. He and his eldest daughter took the next available flight and arrived at her bedside at 2pm the following day. She seemed well and cheerful, so after an hour they decided to go to the villa and freshen up with the intention of returning in the evening. Within 20 minutes they learnt she had died and feel she had waited to say goodbye. Then in 2016 his father in law passed away.

- ***PARTICIPATION IN VILLAGE LIFE.***

In 2011 Dean became heavily involved with SDLT – Stop Dorcas Lane Turbines. (At the time the village thought it would be blighted by a huge wind farm on its edge). He became a member of the executive committee and says he got to know more people through it than he had in all the years he had lived here before, and made many lifelong friends. To raise funds for the fight a range of events was held including two Woodstocke Festivals for which Dean helped organise everything electrical such as the PA and lighting systems.

At the same time, he and another villager, Malcolm Newing, Chair of SDLT, decided to investigate ways to make the village's poor broadband both faster and more reliable. They met senior BT officials who, according to Dean, thought they would easily hogwash the pair. Little did they know who they were dealing with. In fact they were "dealing with" an expert in IT and all things electrical – and a retired manager of BT's Complaints Team! Dean provided the technical and Malcolm the commercial evidence which proved that the reason for the problem was that the phone/IT signal was regularly interrupted when trains, in particular Virgin trains travelled along the line between Soulbury and the Three Locks. It meant that contact was cut between 5 -120 times per day. BT then promised Superfast Fibre



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Local references available upon request.

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Broadband within a year as fibre is not impacted by electrical interference. In fact, it took rather longer because the BT cabinet was on the main road at what would become the entrance to Brook Farm Close and it took a year for BT to get the developer, Bellway, to pay to re-site it. For the less technical amongst us (like me) the smaller cabinet on the road contains copper wires and is for landlines. The larger has the fibre (internet) connection. As a result of Dean and Malcolm's efforts 98% of the village now has very good broadband.

Dean has assisted with the village show since it started in 2014. He provides the PA system for most events in the village such as on The Nativity on the Green, the Thankful Village Bikers (a group visiting all those villages fortunate enough to lose no servicemen during WW1) and St Luke's Church fetes for many years as well as the Armistice Day Commemoration in November.

- ***HOUSE MOVE.***



Recently Dean, Alison and their 14 year old daughter, Taylor decided to leave their house in the village. They have very good but obviously also very sad memories of their time here and they also felt it was far too big. Despite searching for 2 years they were unable to find what they were looking for in Stoke Hammond and have had to leave us – but are now just a few minutes away. So, Dean will be able to continue his

activities here as will Alison who is the Treasurer of the Community Centre.

- ***HOLIDAYS.***

The family always holidayed in Minorca because of their connections there. Now however everything has been sold and they plan to buy a motorhome which will make it easier to travel with their dog. They have also discovered what they describe as the joy of cruising and plan to do more.

- ***EATING OUT.***

Italian food is the family's favourite; they are sad that Jamie's in Milton Keynes has closed but enjoy Mirafiore in Dunstable where Dean and Alison went for their first meal together.



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- ***DESERT ISLAND CHOICES.***

I was unable to agree to Dean's first wish – internet connection is against the rules. His second, a little boat, is questionable but perhaps it could be more ornamental than functional. His food choice was easier, a good quality, properly cooked fillet steak. For music Dean immediately answered – Jeff Wayne, War of the Worlds as he did for a book; anything technical. His other request was to have his best friend with him for company "Bouncer".

- ***MOST UNUSUAL FACTS.***

Well he answered with 3 facts that are not general knowledge. He is a licensed radio amateur. He was a licensed hackney carriage driver and he has 4 tattoos the first done at age 50!

- ***HOBBIES.***

Radio (of course) electronics, repair of old DJ equipment, Jukeboxes, Pinball machines, fruit machines etc, in fact any old electronics in particular from the 70's-90's. In his words "I am an engineer, if it is not working nothing gives me more pleasure than getting it working".

Building "Nixie" clocks is the latest facet to his electronics hobby. A Nixie clock is apparently a clock using the old/first electronics "orange" symbols as the display.

STOKE HAMMOND GARDENING CLUB



Our Christmas dinner took place on Friday the 14th December at the Community Centre and it was great to see so many of our members gathered there. The tables looked so festive and the meal was very tasty and enjoyed by all. There were some lovely things in the bumper raffle including a beautifully decorated Christmas cake made by our committee member Laraine who also made all the table decorations. We must thank all those who regularly bring prizes to enhance what is on offer and, of course, to everyone who bought raffle tickets. Every table had a go at the quiz and all in all it was a great evening.

Our next happening will be the A.G.M/social evening at the beginning of March and letters will be going to all members in February.



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Church News

Review:

Christmas Fayre: The fayre went particularly well this year thanks to Santa in his grotto (and the mulled wine and refreshments probably helped too!). Thanks to all who helped out, especially Tracie and her helpers.



Christmas tree festival: Back by popular demand, there were some extremely creative displays this year on the theme of “All things bright & beautiful” Many thanks to Hazel for organising this enjoyable event.

Christingle service: This year’s service was well supported, although there were disappointingly few children (though plenty young at heart)! Let’s hope for a younger audience next year.

Carol service: A well supported service meant the church was full and joyful singing filled the air with particular thanks to the Benefice choir. The Christmas hamper raffle was won by long term village local, Alison Sheehan who was delighted!

As we go to press, the Carol singing, Crib and Christmas midnight service have not yet taken place but I’m sure they’ll be as popular as ever!

Forthcoming events:

Epiphany Family Benefice service: We will be holding our family service at **11am on Sunday 6th January**. This falls on Epiphany Sunday, “What’s that?” you ask. Sometimes called Three Kings’ Day, it is a Christian [feast day](#) that celebrates the Wise men’s visit to baby Jesus. The visit signified Jesus birth to the world (not just the Jews) and the nature of the Wise men’s gifts showed that Jesus would be a king, religious leader and that his death would be significant. The start of Epiphany follows Twelfth Night - the twelfth day of Christmas and the last day of the Christmas season, which is why Christmas decorations are taken down on 5th January. In Europe, Epiphany is celebrated with more significance than in the UK, (although historically it was celebrated more in this country) and there are many traditional Epiphany recipes. Come and see what Frankincense and Myrrh really look like!



Prayer meetings: You don’t have to be Church of England to attend our prayer meetings, all denominations welcome! There will be meetings at **8pm on Wed 9th and 23rd Jan at The Birches, Church Rd** this month. If you’d like prayers for someone, or if you’d like to join us, please call John Bowler, as we sometimes change times and dates last minute.



The Bible Course: It’s not too late to sign up for the Bible course. The course can be completed by anyone; you don’t have to know anything about the Bible! It’s an 8 session course produced by the Bible Society in Britain to help participants understand the Bible for themselves. **It aims to show the big picture of the Bible storyline** – from Genesis to Revelation, **The Course is free**. Each session is structured with informal



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The majority of guests at The Orchard choose to be self sufficient and prepare their own meals or eat at nearby pubs and restaurants. However, hotel staff are happy to cater for guests providing this is arranged in advance.

The Orchard is fully accessible for anyone with limited mobility. It is regretted however that pets cannot be accommodated.

For more information please contact:

The Orchard Private Hotel, Stewkley, Buckinghamshire LU7 0HR

Tel: 01525 240 240 Fax: 01525 240 464

Email: orchardstewkley@supanet.com

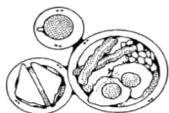
refreshments before the start. After a brief introduction there are video talks on the week's theme by Rev Andrew Ollerton (who devised the course) with breaks to discuss a suggested question or topic or two in small groups. The session lasts about 2 hours. There will be a little "homework" which consists of reading Bible passages in preparation for the next session!



More information is available online at: <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/explore-the-bible/the-bible-course/>

If you can't make the introductory session, don't worry, you can join in later. We'd love to see the Methodist Chapel filled to bursting, so even if you're not really sure it's for you, just come to the introductory session, with no obligation on **Tue 8th Jan at 7pm for supper and 8pm start in the Methodist Chapel, Newton Rd. Contact John, Diane or Harry below.** For the first session, we're having a light supper beforehand so if you'd like to come along, **please let us know for catering purposes** (with any dietary requirements).

Community Breakfast: We will be holding our Community Breakfast again on **Saturday 12th January**, serving breakfast **from 8.30 till 10.30am.**



There's no charge, but you can make a donation if you wish (but we appreciate that after Christmas that could be difficult!) We're also hoping to start a regular collection for the **food bank** at Community

Breakfast, so please bring your donations with you.

Bible verses of the month: Matthew 5 v 16: *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven (KJV)*

What does it mean? One interpretation is that Christians are called to be active in their faith by doing charitable or community work for others so that people recognise that their actions are a testament to their faith and a reflection of God's munificence.

Those of you who are eagle-eyed will notice the letters KJV at the end of the Bible quotation. This means that I have used the older King James version (or translation) of the Bible. There are many translations of the Bible, and those of you who are bilingual will recognise that you can translate things in many different ways – often subject to the translator's interpretation. You can read the full passage at:



<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+5+&version=KJV> (after the Sermon on the Mount), then scroll back to the top to change to the modern NIV (New international version) to compare.

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. His phone goes straight to an answerphone but he will reply as soon as he's able. The Rector's day off is Monday.

Church news articles are available to read on the benefice website (click on Stoke Hammond in the list and scroll down to Stoke Hammond Newsletters)

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 **Churchwardens: Harry, on 07773065271; Diane, on 270409 or Treasurer: John, on 270202.**

VILLAGE DIARY

Thursday 3 rd January	Parish Council Meeting – Community Centre 19.30
Tuesday 8 th January	Bible Course (Introductory Session) – Methodist Chapel 19.00
Saturday 12 th January	Community Breakfast – Community Centre 08.30 – 10.30
Tuesday 5 th February	Parish Council Meeting – Community Centre 19.30
Saturday 9 th February	Community Breakfast – Community Centre 08.30 – 10.30
Tuesday 5 th March	Parish Council Meeting – Community Centre 19.30
Saturday 9 th March	Community Breakfast – Community Centre 08.30 – 10.30

ORGANISATIONS THAT USE THE COMMUNITY CENTRE

High Ash Scouts, Cubs, Beavers

Every Thursday 17.30 - 21.30hrs
Contact: John Till 01525 261444

Buttons Pre-School

Monday - Friday
Monday - Friday

Pilates - Group Matwork

Monday's 09.25, 10.30, 11.45, 19.10 & 20.15hrs
Contact: Louisa Harris 07941 203589

Slimming World

Wednesday's 19.30 – 21.30hrs
Contact: Emma Yorke 07933 790954

To Hire the Hall please telephone 07555 711929 or e-mail: shcommunitycentre@gmail.com

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Social Care Services (<i>Emergency Duty</i>)	01494-817750
MK General Hospital	01908-660033
Stoke Mandeville Hospital	01296-315000
Luton & Dunstable Hospital	01582-491122
SH Gardening Club (<i>Eileen Curry</i>)	01525 270858
Clerk to the Parish Council	07743-355484
Parish Council Chairman (<i>Greg Noble</i>)	01525-270744
County Councillor (<i>Janet Blake</i>)	01525-261288
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District Councillor (<i>Ben Everitt</i>)	07817-756158
High Ash School	01525-261620
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EDITORS NOTE

I trust all our readers had a fantastic Xmas and that 2019 will be a year to remember but for all the right reasons.

Well it would seem that last month's front cover stirred a few fond memories, and most could not believe it was five years ago that we held the Nativity on the Green. Apologies (not really!) for any embarrassment caused to Dave, Alan and Mick for resurfacing the picture of them in their Three Wise Men finery. If nothing else I believe there are now many calls for a Nativity to be held again next Xmas.

Well this issue reveals everything you wanted to know about Dean Jackson in another splendid 'Spotlight On' put together by Barbara Munn, plus further insight into Pam Murphy's life at Tyrells Manor in another extract from her 'Everything but the Moo'.

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



WASTE COLLECTION DATES

**EDITORS NOTE: APOLOGIES TO THOSE FEW WHOSE
NORMAL COLLECTION DAY IS A TUESDAY**

Waste Bin: 	Recycling Bin:  <small>Paper, glass, cardboard, plastics, cartons, cans & tins</small>	Food Waste Bin:  <small>Non-recyclable or compostable.</small>	Garden Waste Bin: 
	Friday 28 Dec	Friday 28 Dec	
Friday 4 Jan		Friday 4 Jan	
	Thursday 10 Jan	Thursday 10 Jan	
Wednesday 16 Jan		Wednesday 16 Jan	
	Wednesday 23 Jan	Wednesday 23 Jan	
Wednesday 30 Jan		Wednesday 30 Jan	Wednesday 30 Jan
	Wednesday 6 Feb	Wednesday 6 Feb	

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