

MENTMORE PARISH NEWSLETTER

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“DIARY PAGE”

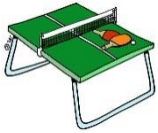


TABLE TENNIS

Are you fed up of sitting at home wondering what to do when you're bored with what's on the TV? Well why not come along to the village hall and join us for a game or two of table tennis.

We're a group of enthusiasts, of mixed ability, who meet *every Tuesday* from **6.30 pm to 8.00 pm** to have a game or two of singles or doubles. We don't take ourselves too seriously; we're in it for the fun and social interaction – not to become the next representatives on the UK team!

It costs £2 per session, per person, to cover the hire and heating costs for the hall, so if you would like to join us – come along next week at 6.30 pm and give it a go.



PARISH COUNCIL

The next meeting of the Parish Council will take place on **Wednesday 10th August** at **8.00 pm** in the Village Hall. Please note that this is a change of date!

Please check the web site www.mentmore.org for further details.

Thanks Thanks Thanks



PLANT SALE – Saturday 16th April

Despite the freezing cold and very testing weather, the Plant Sale on 16th April made over £1,000! The money will be put aside to pay for a specific project in the village hall, once the planned building works have finished. The organisers are indebted to the many people who gave their time, donated cakes and garden paraphernalia, and who turned up. It was a happy event despite the unseasonal conditions.



MENTMORE ARTS FESTIVAL – 28th to 30th May

Although a bit early for the summer newsletter, as we are just tying up loose ends from the Mentmore Arts Festival, the committee feel that it was once again a fabulous event. We estimate over 700 people visited and we had over 60 artists exhibit including 28 new ones. We are hoping that once we have done the adding up and taking away we will have some good amounts to donate to our chosen charities which are the Rennie Grove Hospice Care and the Medical Detection Dogs. We also give monies for the upkeep of the church and some of last year's festival donation bought the much needed church notice board.

The raffle had some excellent prizes and two went to local residents - Penny Hibbert won the Magnum of Champagne, Liz Dack won Tea for Four at Room No 9 and Carlita Adams won the Edward Stamp painting.

Looking forward to next year already!

The committee would like to thank all the residents of Mentmore, Crafton and Ledburn for their support during the festival and helping the weekend go smoothly.

Deborah Hall
Arts Festival Committee

YOUR VILLAGE IN FOCUS



NEWS FROM ST. MARY'S CHURCH

The Facts

St Mary's Church has 12 members on the church electoral roll and a regular worshipping community of just under the same number. The cost of running the church is out of proportion to the faithful who attend it, and for that reason we feel it is important that residents of Mentmore, Crafton and Ledburn are aware of the costs of running your beautiful and historic church. Based on last year's figures, it is expected that the total cost of running St Mary's in 2016 will be £16,500. Based on figures for the first four months of this year, (January – April), our anticipated income will be £10,500, leaving a shortfall of income over expenditure of £6,000. Last year a fabulous £3,300 was raised to support St Mary's plus, of course, the wonderful donation from the Mentmore Arts Festival, used for special projects. This is very much valued and appreciated. However our financial situation is serious and precarious.

Can you help keep this beautiful and special church open to us all? You may be able to make a one off gift, or set up a regular bank standing order. Please contact Carol Cox, St Mary's Treasurer, at carolcox48@gmail.com for further information. Anything you can do would be much appreciated.

Blue Sky Thinking Needed!

However, I feel the situation goes deeper than balancing the books. Can I invite you to join me, and the congregation at St Mary's, to do some serious blue sky thinking? How can we use the church building more fully, in a sympathetic and sensitive way? It is a beautiful, spacious and historic place, and I am sure that with some creativity and energy we can secure a healthy future for it, without compromising Sunday worship. We need to think outside of the box. Any ideas or thoughts you may have would be gratefully received - please email me at gillrowell@tiscali.co.uk or phone on 01296 708680.

Mentmore Creative Arts Retreat

This summer St Mary's is hosting the first Mentmore Creative Arts retreat (<http://mentmoreretreat.weebly.com>). I believe this will be transformational for the individuals participating, and I am hoping it will bless the village in ways beyond our imagining too. It seems to me to be a natural extension of the Arts Festival. It won't raise lots of dosh, but it is a toe-dip into using the church sympathetically and more creatively mid-week.

Please do come and see me, or invite me around for coffee, if you have any ideas about the future of St Mary's.... Revd Gill Rowell, Team Vicar, Parish of Cheddington with Mentmore, gillrowell@tiscali.co.uk 01296 708680.

Rev. Gill Rowell

The Parish website, www.mentmore.org, has minutes and agendas for meetings, upcoming events and wildlife reports, contact details for AVDC and BCC, a booking service for the village hall and much more. If you have an issue you would like to see on the agenda please contact the parish clerk.

Mentmore Parish Council

VILLAGE HALL

The work on the Village Hall extension will start shortly after the Arts Festival and will last up to 3 months. We would like to apologise in advance for any disturbance from the works being carried out. We would like to point out that the hall will still be open, less the kitchen, for most of the build so table tennis, yoga and other regular users will not be too badly affected. The rowan tree in the hall garden has gone but will not be forgotten; we have saved the wood for use as memorial items and hope to plant a replacement in a new site.

MENTMORE VILLAGE HALL

The hall has disabled access, can accommodate up to 50 adults and is ideal for children's parties, family get-togethers and educational or social functions.

Hire includes the use of a fully equipped kitchen, tables & chairs and a garden area.

Price: from £7 per hour for parishioners (commercial rates negotiable)

Hall furniture and marquees are available for separate hire, rates on application.

To book and for all hire enquiries please call **07707 218 719**

or book online at www.mentmore.org

KEEP BRITAIN TIDY – An evening at The Royal Geographic Society

As a consequence of my regular support for the Keep Britain Tidy Group's litter-picking campaigns Steve and I were invited to attend the launch, in February, of an initiative which focuses on engaging with young people, with the aim to encourage them to reduce litter and waste and help them to get involved in improving their local parks and green spaces.

The event, held at the Royal Geographical Society in London, was hosted by Keep Britain Tidy together with representatives from Lidl, who are helping to fund the campaign with proceeds from their single-use bag charge. Nature photographer and TV presenter Chris Packham unveiled a series of specially commissioned images he took which show the impact of litter on wildlife and the natural environment. You can see Chris' photographs by going to this link <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10153888945738798.1073741855.88051928797&type=3>

We had an interesting evening listening to the various statements from the attending organisations and, of course, the very passionate views of Chris Packham regarding litter and how it affects our environment and wildlife. The latter part of the evening was spent talking to other like-minded attendees about how we, as individuals, try to "do our bit" in solving the ever increasing problem of litter in our environment, viewing the stunning photographs of Mr Packham and chatting to him about how he set about getting the results he wanted with regard to the photographs.

It is good to know that there is an army of people out there who are in agreement that litter has a huge impact on the natural world and that we should do something about it. Not only is it unsightly and sometimes a health hazard, but it seriously affects wild animals both on land and in our oceans.

Karen Thomas

So if you feel the same come along and join Liz and her helpers on the next parish litter pick!



LITTER PICKING – in our parish

We now have a strong team of over 20 volunteers who did a grand job on 10th April when we had a concentrated effort to clear the parish of litter. Although, frustratingly litter starts to re-appear almost immediately, we cleared the ditches of mountains of tyres, building materials and other fly-tipped items, most of which Aylesbury Vale workers have now collected, with some prompting. AVDC is willing to collect the filled sacks in future. Generally our sacks were mostly full of discarded drink and fast food containers, with a (to me) surprising number of bottles and cans which had contained wine, spirits and strong lager.

There is an enormous amount of good will and community spirit involved, as well as encouragement from passers-by, so thank you everybody. I will be in touch later in the year for an autumn session! Don't hesitate to get in touch if you would like to volunteer!

Liz Dack (elizadack@outlook.com)



We do not have a major problem with dog mess in our parish but, if you do have a dog you take for walks locally, please remember to say 'Poo Poo to Dog Poo' and carry a small plastic bag for removal of evidence and subsequent disposal in the bins provided in our parish.

AVDC BIN COLLECTION DATES CHANGING

As of 7th June 2016 your bin collection day is changing from a Friday to a Thursday! Your **first new collection** was on **Thursday 9th June**. The next collection will be on **16th June** and will be for recycling and food waste.

WALKING THE PARISH FOOTPATHS: MEN/10/1 Mentmore Green to the Railway

This path is well marked and starts on the corner of the Village Green by The Orchard. Walk down the drive as if to go to Haselden House. As you reach the gate, turn sharp right and walk down the narrow path between gardens. There is a dog waste disposal bin at the top, in case your pet is caught short. Continue straight down until the path opens up into a field. Continue going straight. The field slopes down gently towards the railway line in the distance and you will see trains frequently sliding by.

During this walk you may see rabbits, hares, deer, foxes or badgers and all manner of bird life. In the autumn, there are blackberries and purple, yellow and red wild plums, all sweet and delicious, and sloes which are neither. You may well find a four-leafed clover if you care to look. At the bottom of the field, turn left and walk along a secluded pathway between hedges and at the end where the path opens up, look for the way-marking post which will indicate that you now cross a field to your right, walking diagonally across, cutting off a corner and aiming for a sturdy ash tree at the far side. Except when the earth has only just been ploughed, the path is clear.

When you reach the tree, cross the solid bridge over the ditch and you will see a railway bridge a short distance ahead to your left. This is where the Mentmore part of the path ends and as you go under the bridge you cross into the parish of Slapton, way-marked if you wish to continue. The walk to this point will take you about 20 minutes. In good weather, it can be enchanting, not so pleasant in driving rain as there is little shelter.

Please visit the web page at www.mentmore.org and for the latest news and information follow us on twitter at <https://twitter.com/MentmoreBucks> and our facebook page is <https://www.facebook.com/Mentmore-Crafton-Ledburn-586819177995318/?fref=ts>

WILDLIFE REPORT

For those of you interested in reading the latest wildlife update please refer to Steve's latest article, which can be found on the Parish web site www.mentmore.org.



Bucks Owl and Raptor Group – BORG
(www.giveahoot.org.uk)



A little late this year, due in part to the weird weather we've been having, but on Friday 6th May Lynne and I finally made a start on checking nest boxes for signs of occupation and nesting.

We had mixed results; the first box we checked looked encouraging as there were relatively fresh pellets on the ground nearby, but disappointingly the only resident was a jackdaw with three eggs. Throughout that first afternoon we had further disappointing results, with a few boxes showing signs of occupation by stock doves (another at-risk species) and others with no evidence of occupation of any kind whatsoever. However, we ended that first day on a positive note – a box with a pair of barn owls and three eggs.

Our second round of visits was carried out with the help of colleagues, Simon & Bill, and the extra-long ladders from our headquarters in Aylesbury. Our first stop was to check on a tawny owl box which, from previous inspections, we expected to be occupied by squirrels or jackdaws. However, on approaching the location it was obvious that during the winter months the weather had finally got the better of the box as part of the roof was missing and there was a hole in the rear panel. As a matter of course, and completeness, Simon climbed up to the box in order to check it and, to everyone's surprise, reported that it contained two quite large tawny owl chicks! Under the watchful eye of the landowner the chicks were duly ringed and weighed before being returned to the safety of their box. Due to the condition of the box the landowners have agreed that they will sponsor a new box, which we will return to put up during the autumn.

We continued with our box checks throughout the morning, but unfortunately the next three boxes were less fruitful. The first had a family of very small jackdaw chicks in a barn owl box, the second, a kestrel box, had one stock dove on a single egg and the third, another kestrel box, had two jackdaw chicks. These latter chicks were ringed and weighed as part of my ringing training.

Our final stop of the day was to another kestrel box which, like the first tawny box, has never been used by anything other than squirrels or jackdaws since it was put up some five or six years ago. The box has long since lost its incorporated "perch" and we were not hopeful of a positive outcome, so imagine our surprise and delight when Simon once again reported the presence of two large tawny owl chicks! Like the previous tawnies these were also ringed and weighed before being returned to their box.

This was our last stop of the day, but what a day – really positive and very encouraging results for the local tawny owl population. Given the size of the owlets it is our expectation that they will leave their respective nests sometime during the two weeks following our inspection.

As we now have over twenty boxes to check, our visits continued throughout May and early June to ensure that all boxes and locations were checked. In early to mid-June, weather permitting, we will begin our return visits to those boxes that had adults sitting on eggs – so fingers crossed that we continue to get positive results and healthy chicks.

If you see us while we are out and about please do come and say hello.

Karen Thomas BORG Monitor/Trainee BTO Ringer
East Bucks Region

A SWARM OF HONEY BEES - WHAT DO I DO?



Honey Bee Swarms: Swarms such as the ones pictured are merely colonies that are in transition. Normally these swarms are found hanging from tree branches, fence posts or any place where the swarm can gather close to the queen while scouts are sent out to look for a more permanent home. A swarm left alone will only be in place from just a few minutes to a few hours and occasionally a few days. Generally swarms are very docile and the swarming bees usually will not sting. When honey bees swarm they gorge them-selves with honey before leaving the hive which makes it very hard for them to double over and sting.

What Causes Honey Bees to Swarm: Honey bees have a natural instinct to survive by sending out new colonies. They may also swarm through overcrowding or because an old queen is thought to be failing and they wish to raise a new one. Honey bees usually swarm in early spring just as the colony is building up numbers in anticipation of the upcoming honey flow but swarming can happen through to late summer. It is difficult to predict if weather conditions will lead to a large number of swarms in a particular year.



If You See a Swarm: Declining honey bee numbers make the collection of swarms an important part of the work of bee keepers. You should never interfere with a swarm and pest control companies will not kill a swarm unless absolutely necessary.

Please contact: **MBBKA Swarm Hotline 07770370132** or use the British Bee Keepers Association website, <http://www.bbka.org.uk>

Brian Bush – Mid Bucks Beekeepers and BBKA Swarm Officer




WORLD OCEANS DAY 8th JUNE

The day has been officially recognised since 2008 by the United Nations, and was hosted by a wide range of organizations, as well as Keep Britain Tidy's Beach Care East programme, which is funded by Anglian Water. United under this year's theme, 'Healthy oceans, healthy planet,' many of the events also invite people to take action to prevent plastic pollution.

Better Bag Challenge - The Better Bag Challenge asks people to promise to avoid disposable plastic bags for at least one year. More than 8 million tons of plastic rubbish ends up in the ocean every year, including millions of disposable plastic bags and bottles. If you are already avoiding plastic bags – then please try to reduce the use of disposable plastics in other areas of your lives. Here are just a couple of ways you can help:

- Choose cosmetics and personal care products, like face washes, that are free of microbeads. Microbeads are little pieces of plastic that are particularly harmful to the ocean and its animals.
- Avoid disposable bottles, utensils, and wrappers, as these items often end up as plastic trash in our ocean.



CONGRATULATIONS

Heather Shaw & Alistair Davies
26th March 2016

Charlie Gates & Carly Strules
30th April 2016



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⅛ Page 8.8 x 6.25cm landscape	£1	£3	Free	Free

20% discount is given on all commercial advertisements which run for a year (4 issues)

If you have an item which you would like included in the next Newsletter (September, October & November) please contact either Liz (Tel 661309 / email crackerdack@aol.com) or Karen (Tel 661509 / email karen.thomas@dial.pipex.com)

Newsletter deadline: 15th August 2016

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