



MENTMORE PARISH NEWSLETTER

Volume 23, Issue 4

December 2016

“DIARY PAGE”



PARISH COUNCIL

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held in the Village Hall at **8pm** on **Wednesday 7th December**. Please see the website www.mentmore.org for full details of parish council minutes. Agendas are published on the website and posted on noticeboards prior to each meeting.



CAROL SERVICE

You are invited to the Nine Lessons and Carols service, accompanied by St Giles Church Choir, at St. Mary's Church, Mentmore on **Thursday 15th December**. The evening will begin at **7.30 pm** with festive drinks and nibbles followed by the *service* which starts at **8.00 pm**.

YOUR VILLAGE IN FOCUS



www.mentmore.org

Your Parish Councillors are:

Chairman: Peter Brazier
Councillors: Jonathan Langley
Elizabeth (Liz) Dack
Rob Fletcher
Iain Butler

Clerk: Bridget Knight clerk@mentmore.org

We were sad to say goodbye to Maxine Hayes who is moving to the Norfolk coast. Maxine has served as our Parish Clerk on more than one occasion. She will be replaced by Bridget Knight who is also clerk for Ivinghoe.

To contact the clerk or any of the parish councillors email: clerk@mentmore.org

MENTMORE VILLAGE HALL - Extension Update

The extension is well under way. With the roof on and waterproof, the internal work has now started. We have decided to replace all the flat roof sections, so we will have a fresh, dry installation. We are hoping to retake possession by Christmas – and then the hard work for the volunteers starts to get the hall back to a usable and comfortable standard.

Thanks to those who have continued to use the hall despite the inconvenience, and thanks to the builders, John Hawley and Rebecca, for taking such care to minimize the disruption as far as possible.



BOOK SALE – 3 BOOKS for £1

Just a reminder that the book sale in the hall continues every weekend when the hall is not otherwise booked. Your chance to grab a bargain!

METAL DETECTION ON THE VILLAGE GREEN

Recently, we had an interesting and unusual visitor to Mentmore Green – a man with a metal detector. This was a one off and he did ask for permission, which was given on the understanding that he would share any findings with the council. He found nothing of any great value, although he did find what we think is a shawl pin. Here are some photos of his findings:



COLLECTIVE SWITCHING SCHEME - SAVINGS OPPORTUNITY FOR HOUSEHOLDS

This December, Buckinghamshire County Council will again invite residents to see if they can make savings on their energy bills through the **Government's Collective Switching Scheme** and we need your help to spread the message.

It is a national scheme, which will join our residents, families and friends with other people from around the country in a large pool and then invite energy suppliers to bid in an auction to provide energy to this pool of people at a preferential lower rate. Once the supplier has been confirmed they will write to everyone with a personalised quote. There is no obligation to switch.

Bucks County Council have a website www.buckscc.gov.uk/switchedon where people can find out more and also register their interest. Households can start registering for the auction on the **6th of December 2016** and the deadline for registration is **13rd February 2017**. The auction for suppliers will take place on **14th February 2017**. Please note that residents will need their existing energy bill(s) to complete your registration.

Filipe Fernandes
Energy & Resources Officer
Transport, Economy & Environment



NEWS FROM ST. MARY'S CHURCH

Advent is the season of hope. It's the time when we look back to the birth of Christ, and also forward to the time when Christ will come again. That's prophetic!

The Christmas story is one that does give hope, eternal hope, hope which undergirds our lives and strengthens us for all that comes our way - if we will allow it. The tinsel and decorations (which I do love, by the way) sometimes stop us seeing that the Christmas story is about a baby born to a very young woman, maybe in a stable, maybe under the stars, lying in an animal feeding trough. A baby that was anticipated through prophecies to the people of Israel, soon to become a fleeing refugee family, fearful for their lives, escaping to Egypt because of persecution. A baby whose birth was proclaimed by angels and celebrated by shepherds and who was given prophetic gifts at his birth. Gold, a gift for a king; frankincense, a fragrant offering for a priest; myrrh, an embalming spice for one who has died – even at his birth, his death was in view. A baby that was to become the Saviour of the world.

Come and celebrate his birth this Christmas.

Thank you so much to everyone who responded to our financial appeal for St Mary's, your generosity is very much appreciated. I am grateful to Carol Cox and Martin Gates for highlighting the needs, and I am delighted to report that the year will end with us breaking even - which is a huge achievement. This has also been made possible by the generosity of the Mentmore Arts Festival committee; and the now defunct Village Fundraising Committee, who allowed us to put their gifts into the ongoing mission and maintenance of the church, rather than to specific projects. However, we do need a toilet and running water in the church to make it viable for the future; and I shall be in touch again in the New Year to share more and seek your thoughts.

Gill Rowell
Team Vicar, Cheddington with Mentmore
01296 708680 or gillrowell@tiscali.co.uk
Parish ministry normally on Sundays, Mondays and Thursdays

MENTMORE 200 CLUB

YOUR CHANCE TO WIN

£300 in December, £200 in June

£100 in Feb, April, Aug and Oct

All other months £30

PLUS an extra prize of £10 per month

£24 Per Annum or £2 Per Month Per Ticket (Max 10 tickets)

If you would like to support our village church by purchasing a 200 Club ticket, please contact Carol Cox on 07920 140740 or email carolcox48@gmail.com.

September winners:

The 1st prize of £30 went to – Sally Smith of Mentmore.

The 2nd prize of £10 went to – Bob Ager of Drayton Parslow.

October winners:

The 1st prize of £100 went to – Sally Smith of Mentmore.

The 2nd prize of £10 went to – Caroline Picton of Berkhamsted.

November winners:

The 1st prize of £30 went to – Elsa Hill of Mentmore.

The 2nd prize of £10 went to – Jill Nutkins of Cheddington.



December/New Year Services

Sunday 4 th December	Eucharist at 9.00am at St. Mary's, Mentmore
Thursday 15 th December	Carol Service at 7.30pm at St. Mary's, Mentmore
Sunday 18 th December	Eucharist 9.00am at St. Mary's, Mentmore
Saturday 24 th December	Midnight Communion 11.30 pm at St. Giles, Cheddington
Sunday 25 th December	Eucharist at 9.00am at St. Mary's, Mentmore
Sunday 1st January	Eucharist at 10.30am at St. Giles', Cheddington

WALKING THE PARISH FOOTPATHS: MEN/4/1, SLA/17/1

The path starts at Ledburn junction, opposite Cornflower Cottage. There is a green footpath sign and a walkers' access through the gate which brings you onto a wide track. The track runs through farmland on either side, at an angle to the line of pylons, visible some distance away to the right. As you go forward, you pass intermittent hedging and some young oak trees on your left. The view across open farmland to your right is uninterrupted. The track slopes gently uphill and continues round the edge of a large field.

Where it veers slightly to the right, you will see a way-marking post in front of you which directs you across the field when it would be so much easier to use the track. You are not mistaken. Rather than skirt the field, walk straight across it in the direction you are going. The field is on a rise and, if recently ploughed, the way ahead may not be obvious, but have faith! Continue to walk over the rise and you will soon see a second way-marking sign post on the far side of the field. Aim for that. The railway line runs across in front of you. If you are accompanied by a dog, be assured that there is a fence which prevents any access to the line. Turn right at the post and walk along the edge of the field, parallel to the railway line. After a short distance, the path continues rather improbably between two rows of rough hedging, bringing you out at the railway bridge after about 200 yards.

From this point, you are in Slapton Parish (footpath SLA/17/1). The final short section takes you through Network Rail property, and a blue barrier style gate (you can exit to the left of it), to the B488 road which links Ivinghoe and the Leighton Buzzard bypass. The footpath sign indicates back the way you have come. Retrace your steps to return to Ledburn. The whole walk will take about three quarters of an hour in all.



UPDATES THANKS UPDATES THANKS



MENTMORE'S BIG TIDY-UP - October

Thanks once again to the group of enthusiastic volunteers who helped clear the accumulation of litter deposited on the verges of this parish since our last foray in April. Encouragingly, we filled significantly fewer black sacks. Less positively, a few weeks later, the verges are again awash with plastic, bottles and cans and snack debris. The signs erected by Bucks CC warning against flytipping appear to have some deterrent value as the volume of fly-tipping has decreased, at least for now.

Thanks are also due to the diligent member of the public who reported fly-tipping on the Green where we deposited the bags (by arrangement) for AVDC to collect. Credit goes to the Neighbourhood Policing Team who attended promptly the same day to investigate.

We will tackle the problem again in April (date to be confirmed). New volunteers are always welcome. Contact Liz Dack elizadack@outlook.com

Liz Dack

DOMESTIC RECYCLING

Christmas Waste - don't forget you can still recycle most items including:

- Christmas Cards (but not foil or glitter ones)
- Paper plates and napkins (unsoiled)
- Paper crackers, hats, card inners (but not snap)
- Clean aluminium foil
- Wrapping paper and gift tags (remove bows and ribbons first)
- Card packaging
- Wrap turkey carcass in old newspaper and put straight in the food waste bin

Recycling & Waste Collection Schedule:

Date: Please make sure your bin is out for 6:30 am	Food Waste Bin:	Recycling Bin: paper, glass, cardboard, plastics, cartons, cans and tins	Waste Bin: non-recyclable or compostable
Thursday : December 01	Collection	Collection	No Collection
Thursday : December 08	Collection	No Collection	Collection
Thursday : December 15	Collection	Collection	No Collection
Thursday : December 22	Collection	No Collection	Collection
Thursday : December 29 2017	Collection	Collection	No Collection
Thursday : January 05	Collection	No Collection	Collection



MENTMORE ARTS FESTIVAL

The success of the Mentmore Arts Festival continued with a 20% increase in sales and a 22% increase in profits in 2016. The Committee were delighted to announce that they donated a total of £9,000 to worthy causes this year.

Allocated as follows in 2016: £5,000 to the Rennie Grove Hospice Care
£1,500 to Medical Detection Dogs
£2,250 to Mentmore Church
£ 250 to Mentmore Village Hall

The income for 2016 was £11,806 compared to 2015 of £12,566 and 2014 of £10,562.16. Since the first Arts Festival in 2008 we have given a total of over £50,000 in donations to Charity and Village causes to date.

We had some fabulous new art and artists and also the hugely successful craft sales of popular items such as earrings, necklaces and ornaments. The church and hall were packed to the rafters with no space untaken.

The preview evening was a huge success, although the sales on the preview evening amounted to some £2,325 which was lower than in 2015 at £3,528. It must be noted that in 2015 there was one major purchase of nearly £1,000 which of course helped the figure. However, it was still a great evening with many visitors coming from far and wide. The increase in the bar takings was evident as visitors had to pay for their drink which will be the norm for the future.

I would like to thank the committee for all their hard work and commitment shown in this year's event. My thanks also go to the people who put up posters around all the villages, which we all agree push the festival really hard and puts us on the map! We perhaps need a dedicated person to do this for next year with more posters going to a wider audience and that dedicated person with help must also take them down soon after the festival. It may also be a better idea to make the posters more simple and less cluttered.

We have a great website with updated pictures and a good Facebook page. We know that social media, including Twitter, is a good platform for getting our message out. We thank Mark Smiddy for his time and efforts on the website.

At the end of this year's Festival two committee members, Lorie and Nigel, retired and we would like to thank them for their unstinting support and work over the many successful years.

I am looking forward to our festival in May 2017 and once again am grateful for all the support, loyalty, and friendship the committee has given me which naturally makes for a fun, competitive and social weekend of the festival.

The Mentmore Arts Festival is becoming widely known and promotes art both locally and from afar – the artists are coming from much further afield and Mentmore is becoming known for its Arts Festival annually and we hope it will continue for many years to come. Whilst saying this I would like to thank all the villagers of Mentmore for their patience and support at our festival not just in buying raffle tickets, art but just by being tolerant of all our visitors. Our thanks also must go to the Village Hall Committee and especially Jonathan Langley who we rely on very heavily during the weekend and to whom we are truly grateful.

Now onto my vice chair – Caroline Gates who not only acts as my rock but also organises all the catering and bar and without those elements the festival would be nearly £3,000 down on turnover and the poorer in other areas too. Thank you Caroline.

Finally, our thanks to Gill Rowell, the vicar for allowing us the use of St Marys the Virgin Church.

Deborah Hale - Chairman



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



As those who read my article in the summer newsletter will already know it has been a reasonably successful year for owls in our area this year – far better than last year. By the end of the breeding season we had ringed a total of 28 birds, 21 of which were owls.

Really great news this year was the finding of a three year old, female barn owl with five healthy chicks nesting in one of our oldest boxes. The female had already been ringed in Stanbridge in the summer of 2014. Four of the five chicks were ringed, but the smallest was too small and unfortunately, due to personal circumstances, we were unable to return to ring the smallest member of the family. We had two other successful barn owl broods this year. The first of these used another of our older boxes and we successfully ringed the adult female and three chicks. Unfortunately, the other pair of adults used a home-made box which does not have an integral inspection door so, although we know it was used to successfully raise a family, we were unable to either ring the birds or determine exactly how many chicks were reared.

Tawny owls also had a good year within our parish, with three of our boxes providing homes for breeding adults. Each of the sites successfully fledged two chicks – a total of six, all of which were ringed. Unfortunately, one pair chose to use a box that was severely damaged, but luckily this did not interfere with the raising of their family. We have now removed the remains of the old box and erected a new box in its place in readiness for next season, when hopefully the adults will return. In fact, as many of you will have heard, the tawny owls are already calling in the surrounding woods, setting up territories, confirming their mates and finding new homes in readiness for next year's breeding season.

Little owls returned and successfully reared a family of three youngsters in the same barn owl box as in the previous two years and, during the late summer, I was lucky enough to spend three weeks in a specially built hide photographing the antics of the family as the chicks grew to independence. Our second family of little owls took up residence in another barn owl box, this one in Edlesborough, and they too reared three youngsters. It seems the local little owls prefer the larger dimensions of a barn owl box to those designed specifically for them!

The breeding season is now over, but Lynne and I will no doubt be out and about during the winter months checking on the boxes and making sure that they are ready for next year's breeding season. If you know you have owls in your area, are interested in having a box on your land and would like some advice please feel free to contact me.

Latest News: A short-eared owl was sighted in mid-November in the fields to the rear of Mentmore Courts.

WANT TO GET INVOLVED

It will soon be that time of year again when those of you who like to take a more active role in wildlife observation and conservation can try one of the following:

RSPB – Big Garden Bird Watch Saturday 28th and Sunday 30th January 2017: The survey provides the RSPB with an important snapshot of garden bird populations in winter and has helped to highlight some dramatic declines in UK garden birds. You can register to take part at www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch.



BTO – National Nest Box Week: National Nest Box Week, is organised by the British Trust for Ornithology and founding sponsor Jacobi Jayne & Company and runs from 14th to 21st February. For more information visit the BTO/NNBW web site at: www.bto.org/nnbw/index.htm.

Karen Thomas

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IN MEMORIAM

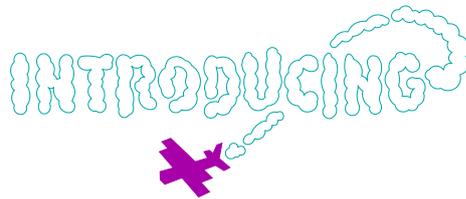
It is with sadness that we announce the passing,
on 28th October 2016 of George Kent.

GEORGE KENT
23rd September 1937 - 28th October 2016

George, of Crafton Lodge, was remembered at his funeral at St Mary's Church, Mentmore on Friday, 11th November. He is buried along with his wife Jenny in the churchyard at St Mary's.

Sadly, George passed away after several years of care in Avondale Nursing Home, Aylesbury. Many of you will know or know of George who was part of this community throughout his life. He is survived by his son, Simon.

Our thoughts are with his family at this sad time.



BIRTHS

If you know of any families who have been blessed with a birth,
we would love to announce the details in the newsletter.
Please do let us know.

EVENTS TO LOOK OUT FOR SPRING 2017

Mentmore Plant Sale - 22nd April 2017

Mentmore Arts Festival – The 9th Mentmore Arts Festival will be held from Saturday 27th May to Monday 29th May 2017 and we are raising funds for The Thames Valley Air Ambulance Trust together with local charities.

*If you have an item which you would like included in the next Newsletter (March, April and May) please contact either Elizabeth Dack (Tel 661309 /email crackerdack@aol.com) or Karen Thomas (Tel 661509 / email karen.thomas@dial.pipex.com)
Newsletter deadline: 15th February 2017*

To offset costs we are looking for small business advertising. Would you like to sponsor an issue? Your ads could be anything from one liners to more striking boxes and graphics. For more information please contact Liz or Karen.

This newsletter was sponsored by MC²Electrical Limited and Broadnet Systems & Solutions Ltd.

Bucks County Council

People across Buckinghamshire are being asked to help the County Council make important spending decisions about next year's budget, in a consultation launched today (Monday 7 November).

The online consultation, which runs until Sunday 8 January, aims to get local people involved in helping to decide which areas of the Council's work future spending should be focused on.

The short survey which only takes a couple of minutes to complete can be accessed at:www.buckscc.gov.uk/budget

People who don't have access to the internet or a computer can still take part in the consultation by visiting any of the county's libraries and using the computers there for free.