

MERE MATTERS

AND SO DOES WEST KNOYLE

YOUR COMMUNITY MAGAZINE AND
GUIDE TO LOCAL EVENTS



DECEMBER 2007 & JANUARY 2008

MERE PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council meets every month in the Andy Young Pavilion. Whilst it is not a public meeting, members of the public are welcome to come and listen. The Council members are working on YOUR behalf to sustain and improve the quality of life and the environment that we enjoy in the parish - come and hear what they are doing for you! You will be permitted raise questions in a public session before the meeting starts. The next two meetings will be on **Monday, 3rd December 2007 and on Monday 14th January 2008 at 7.30pm in the Andy Young Pavilion.**

The Chairman writes:

At the November meeting, the Parish Council gave a vote of thanks to Mrs. Adrienne Howell and the organising committee of the Literary Festival for their hard work in providing an enjoyable and successful week.

The Parish Council has noticed, probably due to the ease of electronic correspondence, that parishioners are not always sending the Parish Council copies of their planning objections or representations made to Salisbury District Council (SDC). There have been instances recently where there have been objections lodged on the SDC website that the Parish Council has been unaware of when considering the relevant planning application at a meeting.

The Parish Council decided, at the November meeting, that it should not be responsible for checking SDC's website for representations on each planning application before parish council meetings begin and that it will only consider letters of objection or support for planning applications when they are sent direct to the Parish Council, electronically or otherwise.

Unfortunately, following the annual RoSPA Play Equipment safety inspection, the Parish Council has had no choice but to dismantle the children's multi-play apparatus in the Recreation Ground.

The risk assessment on this structure was high and it was recorded as being at the end of its useful working life.

I attended a Mere Swimming Club end-of-season meeting last week. Unfortunately, the Swimming Club did not have a very successful year – the summer weather was terrible and the swimming pool had grouting problems, which forced them to close for a few days in peak season. However, the committee is hoping for a better year in 2008, but it does need volunteers and sponsors to help achieve this success.

The Parish Council agreed to erect the Christmas Tree on Friday, 30th November and we will also organise the annual competition for the best residential Christmas lighting display. On that note, on behalf of the Parish Council, I would like to wish all parishioners of Mere a very Happy Christmas.

Rodney Coward, Chairman, Mere Parish Council

MERE WEBSITE INFORMATION APPEAL

www.merewilts.org will soon be 'live' or 'up and running' and we invite you to take a look.

If you have any problems with the display, please click on the 'help' button to download the latest browser and plug-ins. The Parish Council has commissioned Tim Thornley to set up the Mere website and the intention is that it should be all-encompassing; helping parishioners and visitors to find information, promote local businesses, services and attractions and help clubs and organisations to promote themselves and broaden their associations. We are anxious to include all links to associated websites.

It has become apparent that the accuracy and breadth of the website will only be as good as the information we provide. This is therefore an appeal to all residents, businesses, organisations and attractions to take a look at the website and let us know if we have missed you out or if we need to update the information we have provided.

The Parish Council has decided that businesses with an address in Mere can use the website for links and advertising purposes free of charge, but that any business based outside Mere would be welcome to add a link & advertise on the website for a nominal annual fee of £20.

Tim Thornley is very keen to put more pictures in the photo gallery and, in particular, is keen to have some photos of local people in the 'quick shots' gallery.

This is therefore an appeal to all residents to send in information and photos to either Tim Thornley, website manager at tim@teeandee productions.com or to me, the Parish Clerk at lindseywood@merewilts.org

I would also like to point out that although Mr. Thornley has been paid a nominal fee for setting-up the website and the provision of necessary software, hosts etc., he has also put in a lot of volunteer time and effort in gathering information and has agreed to continue to help maintain the website as a volunteer community contribution. We would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank him for his gracious offer and we trust that the community will appreciate this kind gesture.

Lindsey Wood, Parish Clerk



TAKE CARE THIS CHRISTMAS

Festive Fire Safety Tips from Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service

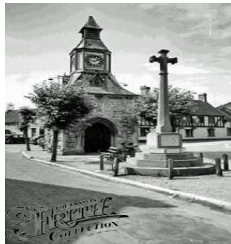
Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service would like to wish you and your family a Safe and Happy Christmas.

Christmas is a time to show your family and friends how much you care, so **Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service** is urging people to be fire safe during the festive season and protect their loved ones young and old.

Government figures reveal there are approximately seven more deaths from accidental house fires during Christmas than the equivalent period for any other time of year in England. Children and the elderly are particularly vulnerable to accidental fires in the home, which is why we are reminding people to take extra care over the festive season to ensure that their families and loved ones are protected from fire.

Christmas is a time for having fun with family and friends, however it is also a time when extra fire hazards are introduced to the home such as fairy lights, candles and decorations. Many of us will be thinking about putting up our Christmas decorations at home, so we're urging people to follow our simple fire safety tips to keep everyone safe to enjoy the festivities. Our safety leaflet, "Fire Safety – The 12 Days of Christmas", is available on .pdf form from our website on the Internet. Visit: www.wiltshire.gov.uk

For further information or advice, please contact : Melanie Jezzard – Community Safety Advisor, telephone: 01380 731188 or e:mail: melanie.jezzard@wiltshire.gov.uk.



CALLING ALL BUSINESSES'

YOUR INVITATION TO

**MERE & DISTRICT CHAMBER OF TRADE 2007 AGM
7.30 PM ON WEDNESDAY 5 DECEMBER 2007**

**AT INDIGO BLUE RESTAURANT
SALISBURY STREET, MERE**

**PLEASE COME ALONG FOR THE AGM AND THEN A SOCIAL
GATHERING AT THE RESTAURANT AT 8.00 PM
FINGER FOODS PROVIDED**

**FOR YOUR FREE TICKET PLEASE CONTACT:
BARBARA HEWITT 01747 863203**

MERE WEATHER

October was another comparatively dry month with 64.5 mms (2.54ins.) of rain, 24 mms of which fell on the 15th and 16th. Last year we had 149.5 mms (5.89 ins.). The total rain this year to the end of October is 310 mms more than last year. Generally we had fairly warm sunshine with cool wind in October.

Up to the 18th November it continued dry with only 19 mms (0.75 ins.) of rain. Two mornings of frost, which soon cleared. Getting colder.

Peter Durkee

MERE DENTAL PRACTICE

The practice currently has **NHS appointments** available to anyone with a Wiltshire postcode or to anyone outside of Wiltshire registered at Mere Doctors Surgery.

The practice at present has two Dentists:

Mr Stephen Sherrard
Ms Jacqueline Barnes

Contact Details: -

Mere Dental Practice

Duchy Manor, Springfield Road, Mere, WARMINSTER, Wiltshire, BA12 6EW

Telephone: 01747 860365

Reception open 8.45am – 5.30pm, Monday to Friday

The practice is sited in the school grounds, first building on your left when you go through the school gates.

MERE FILM SHOWS

Our film this month is British Comedy at its best and has been hugely popular. Details on page 18.

As you are all probably aware by now, the Lecture Hall is closing for three months for further renovations from the 1st January until the 1st April and because of this arrangements have been made to show our

films in the Grove Building for those three months. However, it is a smaller venue with a smaller audience capacity, so it will be necessary to Book Early to Avoid Disappointment! But, I hope you will agree that this is better than not to have the filmshows at all.

At the time of writing, we do not yet have confirmation from the Moviola organisers of our films for the New Year. Those on the list include: 'Atonement' (15) with Keira Knightley and James McAvoy; 'Elizabeth – The Golden Age (12A) with Cate Blanchett, Clive Owen and Rhys Ifans; 'Ratatouille' (U) with the voices of Peter O'Toole and Ian Holm; together with 'The Lives of Others', 'And When Did You Last See Your Father' and 'The Jane Austen Book Club'.

The film dates for the new-year are Friday, 11th January; Friday, 8th February and Friday 7th March.

Have a lovely Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Mary White

MERE GARDENING CLUB

Christmas Social Evening

Our next meeting is a Christmas Social evening on Wednesday 12th December 2007 in the Grove Buildings.

Members are invited to a social evening. Come and enjoy a glass of wine and an opportunity to get to know each other better. Drink will be provided, but ***please bring a plate of food, and a table decoration*** for a little competition. Pip and Di Potter are each compiling a quiz to test your wits.

I am sure members will want to join me in thanking our Committee for all their hard work, especially Winnie Bevington, for organising such interesting speakers.

There will be no meeting in January

Caroline Cook 01474 861797



MERE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Tuesday, 11th December 2007

“Spinners Galore”

Today’s News Stories are tomorrow’s history

by Professor Tim Traverse-Healey

AND

Tuesday, 8th January 2008

“Jane Austen”

The great writer and her times

by Jackie Holland, Jane Austen Centre

Both meetings at 7.30pm in the Grove Buildings

MERE DRAMA SOCIETY

Thank you everyone who supported - and survived unscathed - our recent autumn-production-with-a-difference: the ‘Murder Mystery’ evening. This brought to a close our action-packed Diamond Jubilee year; next year we start planning for our 70th.

Because the Lecture Hall will be closed in the early months of 2008, we shall be launching the next decade with a similarly extra-ordinary spring production.

More next year!

Jenny Wilding:01747 860908



MERE MUSEUM

A new exhibition entitled *Mere's Churches: History, People, Events*, opened on November 6th. It is packed with artefacts, photographs and information not only about the churches that are still active in Mere, but those which are now part of our recent and distant history. Make sure you go to see it – and take Christmas visitors too! The exhibition will run until the end of January 2008.

We are very pleased to announce that we have been awarded a grant of £3,000 from The Pilgrim Trust towards the cost of new showcases. These have now been ordered and will be inaugurated at the opening of the next exhibition in February

Jenny Wilding:01747 860908

THE FRIENDS OF MERE MUSEUM

At the packed-to-capacity AGM in October we welcomed eight new members, and several more have joined our ranks since then. May we remind Friends - and everyone else for that matter - to put **1st April** down in their new **2008** diaries; this is the date for the next fund-raising event, which we hope will appeal widely - especially for those who are interested in historic ships!

All the details will appear in the next issue of Mere Matters. Before this, however, don't forget the next exhibition preview (and inauguration of the new showcases), which will be on Monday 4th February 2008.

Jenny Wilding:01747 860908

MERE & DISTRICT LINKSCHEME LITERARY FESTIVAL 2007

Many thanks go from the Linkscheme to all those individuals, businesses, organisations and venues who contributed to the success of the 2007 Literary Festival. The Link is most grateful for the support of the community for the festival, which is its major fund raising event of the year.

The sun shone for most of festival week and there was definitely a sunny atmosphere at the events and particularly at the launch of *Primary Poetry*. This book of poems by local children has now been reprinted and copies are available at Mere Library.

All our speakers commented on how receptive and friendly the audiences were and how much they enjoyed their visit to Mere. The Antonius Players wrote of 'a brilliant audience'- a feeling that was reciprocated.

Jenny Wilding, one time art critic of *The Hamilton Spectator* (Hamilton, Ontario) writes:

"Mere's justly famous Literary Festival was brought to a sparkling conclusion by a memorable concert devised and performed by Louis de Bernières and Ilone Antonius-Jones. Playing a dazzling variety of instruments, they gave us an evening of music interspersed with anecdotes, poems and genuinely funny jokes, read in a delightfully understated way by Louis de Bernières, to which the audience responded rapturously from start to finish. This was without doubt one of the best evening's entertainments ever."

Entries for the poetry competition came from all over the country and overseas and there was an increase in both local and junior entries. Lack of space prevents listing all the competition and certificate winners but full details are on the Link notice board. Winners of this year's quiz were again *The Bookers* from West Knoyle with teams from Shaftesbury's Reading Group tying as runners-up.

As one festival comes to an end, the Lit.Fest.Group start thinking about the next, which will be **13th. – 19th October 2008** and the writing competition is for a short story. Please put the dates in your new diary and do send us your comments or suggestions for Mere's 12th. Literary Festival. Thank you all once again for your support of the 2007 festival.

Mere Lit.Fest.Group

**THIS PAGE IS SPONSORED BY
MARILYN and SAM of
THE FRUIT SHOP in THE SQUARE, MERE
TELEPHONE: 860300**

MERE AND DISTRICT LINKSCHEME

We have been particularly busy in recent weeks and some of you will already have spoken to our new Transport Co-ordinator, Judy Hingley, whom we are pleased to welcome as a Linkscheme helper.

We would like to thank Maiden Bradley Parish Council for its recent donation, and also the family and friends of Michael Morgan-Rees for their contributions to the collection taken at his funeral service.

Please note that the Linkscheme will be closed from Friday, 21st December until Wednesday, 2nd January. During this time requests for transport early in January may be left on our answerphone - telephone number 860 096.

Molly Burden 01747 860007

MERE SCHOOL

November 2007

Many of you might have seen our Walking Bus at the beginning and end of the school day. A group of children 'catch' the walking bus every day so that our mums and dads do not have to use the car to bring us to school. It also saves all of our parents taking us - parents take it in turns to supervise the whole group. It is fantastic fun and we have a Walkodile, a plastic walking frame, to help. On the way home, we have an apple to help us along.

Before we broke up for half term we had a great music week. We had a visit from Bell Street Jazz, and 2 jazz composers came to work with us. We also had a music evening when we were given the chance to play our instruments. Everyone said it was wonderful. Mere Osteopathy ran a competition to choose the theme of their skeleton in their window - Dell the Skell. The winner was Ethan Pennell from Blue Class with his theme of 'Children in Need'. Well done Ethan!

St Michael's Church ran a competition to design a Christmas card to be sold to raise money to repair the stained glass window in the chancel. The winning cards were designed by Matthew Davey, Emily Maidment,

Klara Jenkins, Rhys Newman, Katie Godfrey, Emily Price and Sophie Kelly. Please do go to the library to buy the cards to raise money for the window.

The school football team played a match against Stour Provost. We won 5 - 2. In the first half Stour Provost had the advantage and they were ahead by 2 goals. In the second half, we scored 5 goals. Player of the match was Jake Francis who scored 2 goals. Mere School tag rugby team played in a competition at the North Dorset Rugby Club and came second. This meant that the team got through to the next round. We were not quite as successful in the second round. Better luck next time!

We have started rehearsing for our Christmas productions. The younger children will be doing 'Scarecrow's Christmas' and KS2 are doing 'The Stars Come Out for Christmas'. We are really looking forward to getting our costumes and learning our lines!

Mere School would like to invite you to a Carol service. This will be on Friday 21st December at 9.30 am in St Michael's Church. We hope to see you there.

Charlotte Emby, Emily Maidment, Lauren Hillier, Edward Ford, Jonathan Wells, Gary Gatehouse, Nicole Gent and Megan Cotton.

**FRIENDS OF MERE SCHOOL
CHRISTMAS QUIZ**

£1 PER QUIZ ,

30 QUESTIONS

AVAILABLE FROM :

MERE FIRST SCHOOL & HAMBLEDONS

FROM 15TH NOVEMBER.

1ST PRIZE = CHRISTMAS HAMPER

DONATED BY HAMBLEDONS

For more information call: Sharon Bocker 01747 861557

HOLLYFIELD SCHOOL

What must be one of the country's most unusual schools opened this term. The school has its roots the small private school, Stourbridge House, which for 25 years was run by Elizabeth Coward in Castle Street, Mere. When Mrs Coward announced her retirement in February 2007, it put in motion a flurry of activity on the part of Anne and Geoff Miller who farm at West Bourton. The result has been Hollyfields School, their joint private venture.

Anne taught at Stourbridge for 17 years and with many parents asking her to continue teaching their children, this seemed the ideal time to diversify on the farm. Therefore they converted a unused cattle stall into a light and spacious school for four to nine year olds. With permission from the LEA and OFSTED they have opened their doors to 23 pupils and have room for further seven children. Mrs Miller has four staff assisting her, all of whom worked at Stourbridge House, and amongst their number is a qualified special needs teacher.

The pupils have plenty of space outside for exercise in a traditional farmhouse setting, complete with hens, geese and sheep. Technology is not forgotten inside with an astonishing interactive board and plenty of computers. The children are looked after, if required, from 8am until 6.00pm on school days with lots of after school clubs ranging from sport to music, which are open to non-pupils.

The Millers would welcome visits from any past members of Stourbridge staff or ex pupils who are interested to see the new school. For full details, contact Anne Miller on 01747 841278/841316 or email: hollyfields@btinternet.com



MERE CARNIVAL – FATHER CHRISTMAS

Come and meet Father Christmas on Saturday 15th December at the Clock Tower, The Square, Mere, from 10.00 - 12.00pm. £2.00 per child (to include gift). Mince pies and Festive spirits! Proceeds to Mere Carnival

Sue Jeans 01747 860215

TWELVE STEPS TO A FAIRTRADE CHRISTMAS

- 1) Begin your Christmas in a Fairtrade state-of-mind by purchasing fairly traded Christmas cards from either Oxfam or Traidcraft.
- 2) Why not try some Fairtrade ingredients in your Christmas cake and other holiday recipes? (Dried apricots, mango, pineapple, sultanas, nuts, sugar, etc.)
- 3) Give your postman and any other helpers some Fairtrade chocolate or pralines as a gift. (Divine chocolate, Dubble bars, Maja Gold or Traidcraft pralines, etc.)
- 4) Remember to order your Fairtrade Advent calendar early. Traidcraft make a traditional calendar or order a Divine Chocolate Advent calendar.
- 5) Stock up on Fairtrade coffees and teas for the Season. (Cafedirect, Teadirect, Percol coffees, Brian Wogan Fairtrade Coffee, Clipper Tea and Hampstead Tea)
- 6) Toast the holidays with a glass of fairly traded wine. (The Co-Op has two Fairtrade red wines and two Fairtrade white wines. Traidcraft also sells fairly traded wines by the case.)
- 7) Looking for that special piece of jewellery? Order some Fairtrade earrings or a necklace from a Traidcraft catalogue.
- 8) Decorate your hall with fairly traded Christmas ornaments and items from Traidcraft or Oxfam.
- 9) Stock up on Fairtrade coffee and tea for your holiday visitors.
- 10) After a busy day sit down to a warm cup of Fairtrade cocoa. (Cocodirect, Oxfam, Sainsbury's Own, Divine or Traidcraft)
- 11) Wrap your purchases in some Fairtrade gift-wrap or use a fairly traded tea towel.
- 12) Remember that by giving a fairly traded gift you are actually giving twice.

Traidcraft cards and gifts are still available from:

Janet Way 01747 860884

MERE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

AGM & PUBLIC MEETING to be held on 14TH JANUARY 2008

at 7.30PM - FOX & HOUNDS, EAST KNOYLE

WILTSHIRE MOVIOLA
in association with
MERE PARISH COUNCIL
proudly presents

Grow Your Own (PG)

When social workers decide that two refugee families should be given allotments to help them deal with their traumas, the Middle England locals are up in arms. But eventually bigotry and prejudice are overcome by kindness and community spirit, and locals and immigrants are brought together by their shared love of gardening. A warm hearted British comedy.

In the Lecture Hall
Thursday 13th December at 7.30pm
(Doors open 7.00pm)
TICKETS £4.50

Available from the Tourist Information Office
(in the Library)

For more information call Mary White on 01747 861257

Visit our website at www.moviola.org



FOOTPRINTS Celebration

To celebrate our very successful first term of adult education at Mere & District Footprints, we have decided to have a “Festive Season Get Together” to say “thank-you” to all students, lecturers and users of the Centre for coming out and supporting us this autumn.

Accordingly we will be throwing open our doors on Tuesday 4th December at 12 noon and offering a warm welcome to any one (and everyone we hope!) who would like to come and share refreshments with us, and the chance for a chat. Members of staff will be on hand to hear any suggestions you might have for ways of enhancing our service to the community – perhaps a course you would particularly like to see included, or suggestions for ways of enticing all community members into Footprints. To get us all in the mood for Christmas we are hoping that our Tree will be up and decorated. Copies of the 2008 Spring Syllabus will be available to pick up, and we will be happy to start taking bookings!

We look forward to welcoming friends old and new to Footprints on Tuesday 4th December from 12.00 – 2.00pm.

forthcoming courses for adults

Start the New Year with a new venture and sign up for one of our ever popular courses for adults. Courses planned include:

Gardening	Keeping Going in Spanish
Dressmaking	Digital Photography
Computer Courses	Beginners & Advanced Internet Use
First Aid	Interior Design
Workers Education Association courses: Giotto: the Arena chapel Frescoes An Introduction to Looking at Paintings Helping in Schools	Level 1 & 2 qualifications in Maths & English

Look out for our brochure through your door, or in the library, in December or ring Jan or Eileen at FOOTPRINTS on 01747 861108 for further details and to secure your place.

**USBORNE CHILDRENS BOOKS
at FOOTPRINTS on**

**Thursday 13th December
10.00am - 12.00pm**

**STOCK CAN BE TAKEN AWAY
ON THE DAY OR ORDERED!!**

for more information call: Sharon Bocker: 01747 861557

**1st MERE BROWNIES
Mobile Phone Appeal**

If you have received a new mobile phone - please recycle the old one by bringing it to Mere Post Office, Mere Library, Jeans Electrical Shop or Chapel Showroom. We will be very pleased to receive them. Money raised will be used for unit funds for 1st Mere Brownies.

Did you know:-

1. There are currently around 90 million mobile phones circulating in the UK.
2. That's an average of two unwanted handsets per household.
3. As well as precious metals like gold and silver, mobile phones contain highly toxic substances such as cadmium and mercury.
4. If mobiles are thrown in the dustbin, they end up in landfill, where they can leak and pollute the environment.
5. One mobile phone battery could potentially be enough to pollute 600,000 litres of water.

This is what happens to your re-cycled phone:

At the recycling centre the phones are sorted for either recycling or reuse. The dead batteries are sent to a specialist battery recycler. All materials are recycled safely and reused in industry. Obsolete and unrepairable handsets are sent to a specialist recycler in the UK, and every part of the handset is recycled or reused.

Recycled handsets are sold second hand and re-used around the world. In developing countries, getting a fixed landline can be expensive. Second-hand mobiles are an affordable and sustainable means of communication that help businesses to run more efficiently and families to stay in touch more easily.

Sue Jeans 01747860215

THE FRIENDS OF FIVES COURT

It won't have escaped the notice of our near neighbours - perhaps even of our far neighbours - that the Residents of Fives Court held a fireworks party at the beginning of November. Bonfire night is the one occasion during when the Friends are positively delighted to see their

money going up in smoke! We hope you enjoyed the display as much as the Residents did.

Thanks to your support at all our fund-raising events during the year, The Friends (with the generous help of Jeans Electrical) have been able to purchase two state-of-the-art 42" plasma television sets for the benefit of the Residents, just in time for Christmas. They are pretty spectacular – not so much televisions, more a way of life – and they already making a difference. Fund-raising starts again in the New Year!

Jenny Wilding:01747 860908

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING NIGHT

With stalls from

**Usborne, Avon, Phonix Cards,
Cakes, Perfumes, Fairtrade,
Pampered Chef, Games & Puzzles .
Jewellery & Accessories + More**

14th December at FOOTPRINTS, Mere

**6.00 -9.00pm, Refreshments & raffle
in aid of "FOOTPRINTS"**

for more information call: Sharon Bocker: 01747 861557

MOTHERS' UNION & OPEN MEMBER'S GROUP

We shall be holding our Carol Service on Tuesday 11th December at 3.00pm in the church of St Michael the Archangel. Included in the service will be the commissioning of the Rev'd Ann Bennett-Shaw as our Deanery Chaplain.

To be followed by tea and mince pies in the Grove Buildings.

January 2008. Information about our New Year meal will be available later.

Thelma Ings 01747 860262

MERE WOMENS INSTITUTE

Members have enjoyed two recent meetings when they heard talks by very different speakers.

At the County Meeting in Salisbury the speaker was Bob Flowerdew from "Gardener's Question Time" and at the Wessex Group Meeting a talk on "Art Appreciation" was given by Leo Macey.

Our next meeting will be in the Grove Buildings at 7.30 p.m. on Thursday, 6th December, when Marion Emery will speak about "A Victorian Christmas."

We have enjoyed a talk from Mrs. Emery on a previous occasion and can recommend her as an interesting speaker. We should be pleased to welcome visitors to this meeting.

There will be no meeting in January but on 7th February we aim to put our New Year Resolutions to good use when Teresa Amey presents "Line Dancing - Health Benefits from Dancing."

Put this date in your diary if you would like to join us then.

Molly Burden 01747 860007

ROSEMARY GODDARD DAY CENTRE

The Trustees would like to wish our hard working Organiser, Lynette Elliott, volunteers, Guests and supporters a very happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

Lynette will be on long-planned extended leave in the antipodes over the festive season. For this reason, although we will manage as best as we can while she is away, we will be closing the Centre for two weeks starting 24th December 2007.

Caroline Cook (Secretary) 01747 861797

~ MARMALADE MAKERS ~

It's that time of the year again! The oranges will soon be in the shops so could I ask all marmalade makers to remember to make a few extra jars for the Church Fete Stall. Just let me know and I will be happy to collect – Jams and pickles also very welcome.

Thanks very much [in anticipation!]

Pat Isom 01747 861776

FRIENDS TOGETHER

On Wednesday, 23rd January 2008, The Wyndham Musicmen will be entertaining us from 2.00-4.00pm in the Grove Building. Everyone welcome. There will be a retiring collection for Cancer Research.

S. Thomas 01747 860586

SHREEN HARMONY

Shreen Harmony will again be putting on its Christmas Concert this year, performing Christmas Carols, songs from other lands and poems/readings. This concert has become part of the Mere seasonal scene and we hope that many of you will come along; we might even tempt you to join in.

Mulled wine, soft drinks and 'nibbles' will be available. The concert is to be held in the Grove Building on Thursday, 20th December, commencing at 7.30pm. There is no charge but donations are welcome. So please come along.

Barbara Bourne 01747 861558.

SLIMMING WORLD

The new Slimming World group in Mere has had a great first 9 months with brilliant weight losses and a really friendly group. As some people will know the Lecture Halls are being closed to use for refurbishment for the months of January, February and March, so the group will move for those months into the United Reformed Church, in Boar Street, Mere.

I would love to welcome all the original members and any new members (who have made new year resolutions to lose weight) into that building during that time. Until then we will continue as normal including Christmas Eve and New Years Eve at the Lecture Halls on Monday nights at 7.00pm. If anyone wants to shed a few pounds before Christmas - contact Caroline for any other information: 01747 840013

MERE SWIMMING CLUB

Fresh news from the club. There is a New Kid on the block – Sally Howell, is the new secretary. Many thanks to Traci for her help throughout 2007.

What a summer!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Let's hope 2008 is better.

We will be meeting in the NEW YEAR, on Friday 18th January at the Pavilion at 8.00pm. Please come along and help us run a successful year for the pool. If you have any questions or would like some further information regarding joining our enthusiastic committee, please contact Sally on 01747 860644. We look forward to meeting you in the New Year.

Sally Howell 01747 860644

PROPOSED MERE CROQUET AND BOULE CLUB

There has, very regrettably, been a long delay in reporting developments regarding the formation of this venture. It has taken many, many months to get a firm offer of a lease on the ex Bowling Club site in North Road from Salisbury District Council, this has now finally been achieved.

Due to the enormous time lapse since a list of possible supporters was compiled we do feel that the viability of the club should be re-established. During the next few days it is intended to circularise all the people we know of, should you not be of that number and are interested, please let us know, kindly contact Rex Roberts. Sadly, the ground has

deteriorated very badly in all this time, a great deal of work will be needed to bring it up to a useable standard once more. Nevertheless, the ambition is to be up and running during 2008.

Rex Roberts 01747 860873. - For Mere Croquet and Boule Steering Committee

GROVE BUILDINGS RESTORATION FUND

The Result of the '100' Club Draw for November, drawn after Family Service at St Michaels' church on the 4th November 2007 by Felicity, Madeleine and Joshua Howden was:

1st Prize	(£20)	No. 73	Generously Returned
2nd Prize	(£15)	No. 174	Ms B Kimm
3rd Prize	(£10)	No. 146	Mrs A Sainthill
4th Prize	(£5)	No. 67	Mr D Clark

Valerie Ransley 01747 860964

TIGER CONSERVATION STALL at Christmas Charities Fair 17th November 2007

TIGER HUNT WINNERS

1st Prize - Longleat tickets - Dorothy Fricker

2nd Prize - Cricket St. Thomas tickets - Ruth van Sloten

3rd Prize - Tiger Photo autographed by Sir David Attenborough - Rebecca Sharp

A big thank you from The Satpuda Foundation, India, to all those who took part.

Derek Remington 01747 860401

BARN BUDDIES

The Barn Buddies held an Open Evening on 16th November where we were pleased to welcome representatives from local businesses and organisations who have supported us over the past year. The Bishop of Ramsbury was there, with representatives from Screwfix, The Hill Brush Company, Mere and Simali Stone in Shaftesbury. It was good to also see many friends and parents, all of whom support us in many ways.

New members are always welcome. The Barn Buddies is a community Youth Club for boys and girls in school year 2 and above. We are supported by the Parish Churches and the Parish Councils in Mere and West Knoyle . We meet each Friday evening from 6:30 until 8:00 in The Barn at Barrow Street Farm, on the edge of Mere.

Further information is available from Tim Merrell, or if you want to find out more, please visit us on a Friday.

Tim Merrell 01747 860195

THE REV'D PAUL BARNES WRITES:

*If I'd been born in Bethlehem and lived there long ago,
I might have seen the travellers passing to and fro.
I might have been in bed one night and heard the shuffling feet
of weary people passing by along the village street;
and just along the alleyway a shouting and a din,
and someone saying, 'No more room, there's no room in the Inn!'*

Thus begins a lovely story written by Joan Gale Thomas in which a child imagines what she might have done had she been living in Bethlehem at the time of Jesus' birth. In the story, the child notices the bright star in the night sky and follows the shepherds to the stable where Mary allows her to kiss her new born son, and in the child's imagination they go on to become friends and play together.

It is a lovely story and one I used to enjoy reading to my sons, but it always left me asking myself the question, 'if I had really been there in Bethlehem at that time would I have known this momentous event was taking place?'

Would I have seen Mary and Joseph's arrival in town, and their desperate search for accommodation?

Would I have noticed the star? Would I have heard that a baby had been born in a stable and that shepherds had arrived from the hills telling a strange story about angels announcing the child's birth?

The honest answer to those questions has to be no. Had I been in Bethlehem at that most crucial moment in human history, I, like virtually everyone else would have been totally unaware that the Son of God had silently entered our world.

I know that I would have been so wrapped-up in my own concerns that even if I had passed Mary and Joseph in the street, or witnessed them being turned away from another Inn; even if the bright light in the night sky had woken me up, or I'd seen the excited group of shepherds heading for the stable, I still would not have taken any notice. I would have been blind to what God was doing right in front of my eyes.

I know that is how it would have been had I been in Bethlehem because I know that were it to happen here and now in Mere, God's mighty work would still go unnoticed.

We would, I fear, still be so wrapped-up in our own lives, with our own concerns, with our own celebrations, to notice what God is doing right in front of our eyes.

But one of the most amazing things about our amazing God is that he doesn't stop working, doesn't stop doing amazing things just because we don't notice.

God continues to pour the light of his love into our world.

God continues to work through the poor, the weak, and the humble, those on the margins of society. Christ continues to enter by the backdoor, and quietly overcome the darkness with his light.

My prayer for this Advent and Christmas season is that God will open our eyes so that we can recognise the signs of his activity, and work with him for the coming of his Kingdom.

I hope you have a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year.

REMEMBER! COPY DATE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

MONDAY 14th JANUARY 2008

CALL MY BLUFF''

IN AID OF THE MERE CHURCH EAST WINDOW APPEAL

*Saturday 2nd February 2007 @ 7.00pm
in The Grove Buildings*

- Gentlemen v. Ladies -

Once again, by popular request two teams will attempt to deceive each other about the meanings of some unusual words. Keeping order will be Michael Hannon as Chairman. The Rev'd Paul Barnes will lead the team of 'Gentlemen', Peter Knapp and Mark Dunham. Mrs Jenny Wilding, aided and abetted by Angela McDonald and Wyn Richardson, will represent the 'Ladies'.

This promises to be another entertaining evening. There will be a bar, and light refreshments will be served in the interval. Tickets are available at £7 each [which includes your first glass of wine] from the Information Desk in the Library or from 16 Homefield, Mere [01747-861776]. Tickets are limited, so get your bid in early!

St Michael's Parish Church Mere

BATH PHILHARMONIA

**and CHORUS ANGELORUM
CHRISTMAS TOUR 2007**

HANDEL'S MESSIAH

Wednesday December 5th - 7:30pm

Book early to avoid disappointment

**Ticket Prices £18 and £14 (concessions less £1) from the Mere
Information Point, on the door, or online at: www.bathfestivals.org.uk**

**St. Michael the Archangel, Mere
YOUR PARISH CHURCH!**

Starting this month on **Sunday, 2nd December**

Morning Praise

on the first Sunday of every month

at 10.30 am

This will be an informal time of praise and worship, which we hope will be accessible to all.

Families are especially welcome.

St. Michael the Archangel, Mere

The Christingle Service

will be held on

Sunday, 9th December at 4.00 pm

Help us to light up the church as we remember Christ the Light of the World.
There will be a retiring collection in aid of The Children's Society.

Service of Lessons and Carols

the perfect start to your Christmas celebrations

Thursday, 20th December at 7.30 pm

Why not join us for this service of traditional readings and carols old and new?

The Crib Service

Monday, 24th December at 6.00 pm

We invite you to come and share with us the first Christmas:
do come dressed as a shepherd, a wise man or an angel –
or come as yourself.

All are very welcome

Warminster War Memorial

The Warminster Town Council have asked the Royal British Legion [Warminster Branch] to ascertain who in the BA12 postal area are known to have died on active service since the of World War II [ie August 1945]. The intention being that a memorial be placed in the area of the Warminster War Memorial on Portway with the relevant names inscribed upon it.

It may well be that others who have died in these areas of warfare, but were not in the Armed Forces, also ought to be commemorated. For example, those who served with NAAFI, Royal Naval Auxiliaries, Church Army and Salvation Army canteen staff, etc.

All information should be sent as soon as possible to Rev'd Eric R Littler, Chaplain – Warminster Royal British Legion, 1 Pound Row, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 8NG
Tel: 01985-218818

AFTERNOON GET TOGETHERS

There will be no Methodist Church Afternoon Gatherings in December but there will be mince pies at Coffee Morning on the 20th. There will be no coffee morning on Christmas Day - our Christmas Dinners will be waiting.

Coffee mornings will resume as usual on 2nd January 2008 and our **Afternoon Get Togethers** will start again on 30th January when the subject will be "The Somme Revisited". Shirley Reynolds and her sister will speak to us of the War poets and this poignant chapter in history. We meet at 2.30 p.m.

M Siderfin 01747 861370

CHURCH SERVICES IN MERE AND WEST KNOYLE

DECEMBER 2007

The Parish Church, St Michael The Archangel (Tel. Mere 863313)

Each Sunday	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
Each Wednesday	10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
	6.30pm	Stillness & Silence
Each Friday	8.00am	Holy Communion (CW1)
	4.30pm	Evening Prayer

Sunday Club is held in the Grove Buildings at 10.30am Services

Sunday	2nd	10.30am	Morning Praise: A service of Celebration for the beginning of Advent
		6.00pm	Evening prayer with hymns
Wednesday	5th	7.30 pm	Bath Philharmonia: The Messiah
Sunday	9th	10.30am	Parish Communion (CW1)
		4.00pm	Christingle Service
Tuesday	11th	3.00pm	Mothers Union Carol Service
Wednesday	12th	7.30pm	Holy Communion (CW1)
Sunday	16th	10.30am	Parish Communion (CW1)
		6.00pm	<i>Lessons & Carols at West Knoyle</i>
Thursday	20th	7.30pm	A Service of Lessons and Carols
Friday	21st	9.15am	Mere School: Carols & Readings
	23rd	10.30am	Parish Communion (CW1)
Monday	24th	6.00pm	Christmas Eve The Crib Service
		11.30pm	Midnight Mass
Tuesday	25th	8.00am	Christmas Day: Holy Communion (BCP)
		10.30am	Family Communion (CW1)
Sunday	30th	10.30am	United Benefice Service in Mere – Parish Communion

The United Reformed Church (Tel. Shaftesbury 853304)

Mere Contact: Mrs E Burfitt Tel: 01747 860685)

Sunday	2nd	11.00am	Rev'd Colin Marsh Holy Communion
	9th	11.00am	Rev'd Stella Sivyour
	16th	11.00am	Rev'd Margaret Laurie
	23rd	11.00am	Rev'd Morris Munns
		6.30pm	Rev'd David Bridge United Carols
Tuesday	25th	10.00am	Christmas Day Rev'd Colin Marsh United Service
Sunday	30th	11.00am	Rev'd Colin Marsh Holy Communion

The Methodist Church (Tel. Gillingham 823777)

Mere Contact: Mr D Lawley Tel: 01747 860338)

Sunday	2nd	6.00pm	Rev'd David Bridge Holy Communion
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Sunday	9th	6.00pm	Mr A Beale
	16th	6.00pm	Mr M Rawlins
	23rd	6.00pm	Rev'd David Bridge United Carols at URC
Tuesday	25th	10.30am	Christmas Day Rev'd Colin Marsh United Service with URC
Sunday	30th	6.00pm	Mrs Kate Shotter

The Roman Catholic Church, St Mary's. (Tel: 01985 212329 – Fr. Bede Rowe

Mere Contacts: Mrs T Read 01747 860289 or
Mrs W Richardson 01747861004

Every Sunday		11.30am	Mass
Every Friday		10.00am	Mass
Monday	24th	6.00pm	Christmas Eve Mass
Tuesday	25th	11.30am	Christmas Day Mass

Children's Liturgy Service on the 2nd & 4th Sunday of the month.

On the 1st Sunday of the month - there will be Coffee after Mass together with the sale of Fairtrade produce.

West Knoyle Parish Church, St Mary the Virgin (Tel 01747 830534)

Sunday	2nd	9.25am	DIY Matins (BCP)
	9th	9.25am	Holy Communion (CW1 trad)
	16th	6.00pm	Candlelit Carol Service
	23rd	9.25am	Holy Communion (CW1 trad)
Tuesday	25th	9.25am	Christmas Day Holy Communion (CW1 trad)
Sunday	30th	10.30am	Benefice service in Mere

JANUARY 2008

The Parish Church, St Michael the Archangel (Tel. Mere 863313)

Each Sunday		8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
Each Wednesday		10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		6.30pm	Stillness & Silence
Each Friday		8.00am	Holy Communion (CW1)
		4.30pm	Evening Prayer

Sunday Club is held in the Grove Buildings at 10.30am Services

Wednesday	2nd	7.30pm	NO Holy Communion
Sunday	6th	10.30am	Epiphany Morning Praise – We welcome the Three Kings
		6.00pm	Evening Prayer with Hymns
Sunday	13th	10.30am	Parish Communion (CW1)
	20th	10.30am	Parish Communion (CW1)
	27th	10.30am	Parish Communion (CW1)

The United Reformed Church (Tel: Shaftesbury 853304

Mere Contact: Mrs E Burfitt, Tel: 01747 860685)

Sunday	6th	11.00am	Dr Geoffrey Tapper
	13th	11.00am	Rev'd Hazel Barkham
	20th	11.00am	Rev'd Margaret Laurie
	27th	11.00am	Rev'd Colin Marsh
			Holy Communion

The Methodist Church (Tel. Gillingham 823777

Mere Contact: Mr D Lawley Tel: 01747 860338)

Sunday	6th	6.00pm	Rev'd David Bridge
			Covenant Service
	13th	6.00pm	Mrs Coral Ryalls
	20th	6.00pm	Mr D Webb
	27th	6.00pm	Rev'd Helen Caine

The Roman Catholic Church, St Mary's. (Tel: 01985 212329 – Fr. Bede Rowe

Mere Contacts: Mrs T Read 01747 860289 or

Mrs W Richardson 01747861004

Every Sunday	11.30am	Mass
Every Friday	10.00am	Mass

Children's Liturgy Service on the 2nd & 4th Sunday of the month.

On the 1st Sunday of the month - there will be Coffee after Mass together with the sale of Fairtrade produce.

West Knoyle Parish Church, St Mary the Virgin (Tel 01747 830534)

Sundays 9.25am Holy Communion (CW1 trad)

Note: BCP indicates Book of Common Prayer 1662

CW1 indicates Common Worship Order 1 (trad. Indicates traditional language)

DIARY DATES

DECEMBER 2007

AYP-Andy Young Pavilion; BSF-Barrow Street Farm; CC-United Reformed Church Centre; CP-Main Car Park; DMS-Duchy Manor School; GB-Grove Buildings; L-Lecture Hall; Lib-Library; Lynch - Lynch Community Centre; MH-Methodist Church Hall; YC-Youth Centre

1	Sat	9.30am	Cake Stall	The Square
		10.00am	RSPCA Christmas Sale	L
1	Sat	10.30am	Drop In Coffee Morning	CC
3	Mon	6.45pm	Cubs (Also 10th & 17th)	GB
		7.00pm	Slimming World (every Monday)	L
		7.30pm	Mere Parish Council	AYP
4	Tue	7.00pm	Bowls Club AGM	L
5	Wed	2.00pm	Alabaré	GB
		6.00pm	Karate (also 12th & 19th)	L
		7.30pm	Bath Philharmonia“ The Messiah”	St. Michael’s
		7.30pm	Pennybank Writers	MH
		7.30pm	M&D Chamber of Trade	Indigo Blue
6	Thu	2.00pm	Bridge Club (every Thursday)	L
		2.00pm	Line Dancing (also 13th)	GB
		7.30pm	Women’s Institute	GB
		7.30pm	Shreen Harmony (also 13th and 20th)	MH
7	Fri	10.00am	Merely Women (Also 14th)	GB
		7.00pm	Flying Club AGM	L
8	Sat	10.30am	Drop In Coffee Morning	CC
9	Sun	10.30am	Sunday Club (also 16th)	GB
11	Tue	9.00am	Foot Care Clinic	L
		3.30pm	Approx - Mothers’ Union Tea and Mince Pies	GB
		7.00pm	Mere Historical Society	GB
12	Wed	2.00pm	Friends Together (Whist Drive)	GB
		7.30pm	Mere Gardening Club	GB
13	Thu	10.00am	Childrens Book Sale (until 12.00pm)	Footprints
		5.00pm	Rainbows	GB
		6.15pm	Brownies	GB
		7.30pm	Guides	GB
		7.30pm	Moviola “Grow Your Own (doors open 7.00pm)	L
14	Fri	6.00pm	Christmas Shopping Night	Footprints
15	Sat	10.00am	Father Christmas, until 12.00pm	The Square
		10.30am	Drop In Coffee Morning & Traidcraft Stall	CC
20	Thu	7.30pm	Shreen Concert	GB

21	Fri	9.30am	Mere School Carol Service	St Michael's
22	Sat	10.30am	Drop In Coffee & bric-a-brac stall for RG Centre	CC
		10.30am	Drop In Coffee Morning	CC

JANUARY 2008

AYP-Andy Young Pavilion; BSF-Barrow Street Farm; CC-United Reformed Church Centre; CP-Main Car Park; DMS-Duchy Manor School; GB-Grove Buildings; L-Lecture Hall; Lib-Library; Lynch - Lynch Community Centre; MH-Methodist Church Hall; YC-Youth Centre

1	Tue		A reminder that the Lecture Halls are CLOSED until 1st April	
3	Thu	7.30pm	Shreen Harmony (Every Thursday)	MH
5	Sat	10.30am	Drop In Coffee Morning	CC
7	Mon	6.00pm	Scouts (Every Monday)	YC
		6.45pm	Cubs (Every Monday)	GB
		7.00pm	Slimming World (every Monday)	CC
8	Tue	9.00am	Foot Care Clinic	CC
		2.30pm	Mothers Union	GB
		7.30pm	Mere Historical Society	GB
9	Wed	2.00pm	Friends Together	GB
10	Thurs	2.00pm	Bridge Club (Also 17th, 24th & 31st)	CC
		5.00pm	Line Dancing (Also 17th, 24th & 31st)	GB
		2.00pm	Rainbows (Also 17th, 24th & 31st)	GB
		6.15pm	Brownies (Also 17th, 24th & 31st)	GB
		7.30pm	Guides (Also 17th, 24th & 31st)	GB
11	Fri	10.00am	Merely Women (Also 25th)	GB
		7.30pm	Moviola Film Shows	GB
		10.30am	Drop In Coffee Morning	CC
13	Sun	10.30am	Sunday Club (Also 20th & 27th)	GB
		7.30pm	Parish Council	AYP
16	Wed	2.00pm	Alabaré (also 30th)	GB
19	Sat	10.30am	Drop In Coffee Morning with Traidcraft	CC
22	Tue	9.00am	Foot Care Clinic	CC
23	Wed	2.00pm	Friends Together – The Wyndham Musicmen	GB
		6.00pm	Karate (Also 30th)	L
		7.00pm	Elders Meeting	CC
		7.30pm	Church Meeting	CC
26	Sat	10.30am	Drop In Coffee & bric-a-brac stall for RG Centre	CC
29	Tue	7.30pm	St Michael's PCC Meeting	GB

MERE INFORMATION POINT, THE LIBRARY

THE FOLLOWING CLINICS/ADVICE CENTRES ARE HELD ON A REGULAR BASIS

CITIZENS' ADVICE: Tuesdays: 10.30am to 4.00pm
Private Appointments telephone 01722 327222

REGISTRAR **By appointment only**
OF BIRTHS Thursdays: 9.30am to 11.30am
& DEATHS: For appointments telephone 01985 213435

COPY DATE FOR FEBRUARY 2008 ISSUE

Material for the February 2008 issue should be sent to Graham Avory, Little Tawny, Pettridge Lane, Mere, Warminster, Wiltshire BA12 6DG (tel. 01747 860439) or alternatively handed in at The Information Office, The Library, Mere (in an envelope marked 'MERE MATTERS') before 4.00 pm on MONDAY, 14th January 2008. E-mailed contributions will be most welcome, but please telephone the Editor for details. Would contributors please add their name and a contact telephone number.

ALL ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES to:

**Mrs Jane Kennedy, Ash Tree Cottage,
Kilmington Common, Kilmington (tel. 01985 844740)**

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