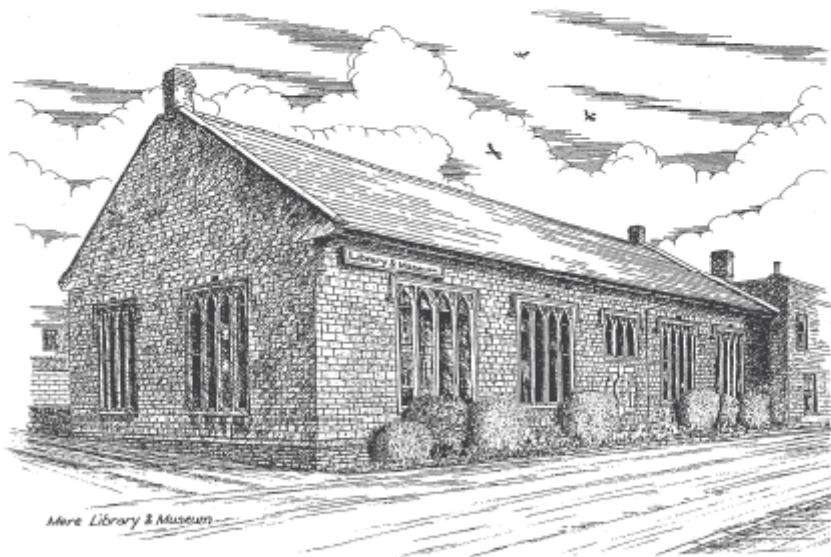


MERE MATTERS

AND SO DOES WEST KNOYLE

YOUR COMMUNITY MAGAZINE
INCLUDING A GUIDE TO LOCAL EVENTS



February 2014

MERE PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council meets every month. Whilst it is not a public meeting, members of the public are welcome to come and listen. 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 can raise questions in a public session before the meeting starts. The next meeting will be on **Monday, 3rd February 2014** at 7.30pm in the Andy Young Pavilion.

The Chairman writes:

As the New Year, so far, seems intent on carrying over the very wet weather of the last couple of months, we have seen the change in the landscape that this inevitably brings. With rivers running high and waterlogged fields, we must be grateful that we have not suffered as so many other areas have. I am aware, however, that there are, unfortunately, homes in Mere that have been affected by flooding, and I do hope things are improving for them.

The Council's Annual Budget setting meeting, held in December, to which I alluded last month, was as ever challenging and lengthy: it was where members have to consider likely expenditure over the next year in order to determine the precept requirement (parish council's share of the council tax) for 2014/15.

Central government has changed the way it pays local authorities such as Wiltshire Council, but to compensate for this they pay Local Authorities a grant, which was previously passed on to Parish & Town Councils. However, Parish & Town Councils in Wiltshire have been told that their grant will be reduced by 35% this year and there will be a further reduction year on year. On top of this, we are expecting that any rise in precept for Parish & Town Councils is likely to be capped in 2015/16.

In view of this information, the Parish Council made the difficult decision to increase its precept by 18.86% this year which will mean an increase of £1.20 per band D house, per month. Members were concerned that, without such an increase now, the Parish Council may be forced to reduce services or grants in future years.

I have learnt that the Mere Carnival is in jeopardy. This annual event has been enjoyed by generations over the years. Committee members and helpers are desperately needed. This does not involve an onerous commitment; there are only 8 meetings throughout the year. It is the week of carnival when the real manpower is needed. If you feel you could help and would like to save the carnival, do go to the open meeting at The Walnut Tree Inn on Tuesday, 11th February at 7.30 p.m.

**Richard Robbins - Trained Gardener - 25 years
experience. All aspects of Garden Care Undertaken
Tel: 01373 473008 Email: richard.robbins@live.co.uk**



For information on Parish Council activities; details of meetings and copies of minutes, please view the Mere website: www.merewilts.org; or contact the parish clerk, Mrs Lindsey Wood:  lindseywood@merewilts.org or:  01747 860701.

Mrs Lesley Traves, Chairman, Mere Parish Council

WEST KNOYLE PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council of West Knoyle decided that it would like to have a mention in "Mere Matters and So Does West Knoyle", so as their chairman, I am putting pen to paper – or rather finger to keyboard! We meet four times a year in the village hall and would welcome anyone to come and listen in at our meetings. As with Mere Parish Council you are permitted to raise questions in a public session before the meeting starts. The next meeting will be on **Tuesday, 18th March 2014** at 7.30pm in the village hall.

The Chairman writes:

We last met on Tuesday, 26th November 2013 in the village hall where much was discussed. We are trying to get a team together to train to run the Community Speedwatch. We have just been given some new training dates so we will hopefully be able to progress with that.

There have been some fairly major parking issues at Willoughby Hedge Services, which have not been helped by the new arrival of the outside toilet block with the layby right beside them. I am hopefully going to attend a meeting with the Territory Manager from the services.

There was also some discussion at the last meeting about salt boxes and road clearing. We are hoping to get a salt box for the hill. If any pavement or road clearing has been done and then someone falls over, the person who did the clearing is not going to be liable. It also sounds as if things might be going back to the old days with the farmers helping to clear the snow if we get any major quantity!

Councillor Brian Wessely suggested that the Parish Council and the village would benefit from a website. He is getting it organised so we will soon have our own web page. If anyone has any ideas as to content or wants to add any useful information please contact him at  bswessely@aol.com. The site will hopefully benefit businesses in the village as well.

Jinny Brockway, Chairman

GEORGE JEANS, WILTSHIRE COUNCILLOR, WRITES

At the time of writing, it is one of the mildest winters we have had for many years, it has also been one of the wettest. Many communities have been affected by flooding. Wiltshire Council and its partners have worked to do as much as possible to provide support, advice and to keep the roads as clear as possible. The Mere area has had

water nearly up to the doors of some houses, however it did not enter to my knowledge. It was known that with reduced funding, when Wiltshire Council faces extreme conditions, communities need to come together and support their area more than in the past. Due to the current weather situation and flooding that has occurred and is still occurring, Wiltshire Council's Operational Flood Working Group held an emergency meeting at Salisbury City Hall on 22nd January attended by Town and Parish councils.

I had assumed the inclement weather would be cold frosty weather around and after Christmas, especially after the last two years. For our area, I helped obtain two salt and grit spreaders, and for Zeals, I supported a grant to purchase a spreader. Together with extra locally funded grit bins, salt shakers, snow shovels and snow blades for tractors, I thought these would keep pedestrians and traffic flowing better than in the past when we have had ice and snow. The National Trust at Stourton and Mere Parish council have agreed to use and provide operatives for the spreaders. Training was provided at the Mere Salt Depot, to which I also arranged for Michael Jeans who lives in Mere, and the above two bodies to attend. We are now in a position to better help ourselves in frosty or snowy weather.

The South West Wiltshire Area Board (SWWAB) recently polled local people regarding what priorities the Board should support. The equal top two priorities were: Improving rural rights of way and the promotion of walking, and improving volunteering opportunities for young people, long-term unemployed and people with learning or physical disabilities.

The SWWAB is encouraging local people to create improvement programmes for Rights of Way (ROWS). The SWWAB would like to focus on improving access, especially between parishes. Once gathered, this information will be used to: Inform Wiltshire Council's future footpath maintenance programme; link in with the footpath clearing and improvement work being done by Seeds4Success, a local charity that rewards young people for volunteering. Identify improvement works, which could be taken on by local volunteers/groups, and provide evidence for the Area Board to consider funding a capital improvement programme. With regard to funding a capital improvement programme, the Area Board will liaise with Parish Councils to ensure the proposals have local approval and the consent of local landowners.

There has been a very good response to the Rights of Way project appeal, which was held at Dinton on the 16th January. 97 people attended one of the launch sessions hosted by the South West Wiltshire Area Board and the Wiltshire Council Rights of Way team. One function is for volunteers to complete audits and return them to their Parish Council or the South West Area Board Community Area Manager. Audit sheet and maps will be provided by Wiltshire Councils Public Rights of Way team. Initial responses are required by Sunday, 9th March 2014 (to gauge interest and commitment to an improvement programme). The Area Board has proposed to set aside up to

£10,000. Other funding is possible from Parish Councils, the Path Improvement Grants Scheme (PIGS) etc. Audits are to be investigated by the Public Rights of Way team of Wiltshire Council. Parish Councils have been asked to liaise with landowners. South West Wiltshire Area Board will consider funding for potential improvement schemes, but not for maintenance of footpaths. The Mere Footpath Group have already audited 75% of the Parish of Mere footpaths.

We have been told by the inspector for The Wiltshire Core Strategy that we are short in our assessment of housing requirements. We know many need housing locally and the price continues to climb. Amongst the many charges put on new houses, another may apply. At the last Southern Area Planning Meeting it appears the Wiltshire core strategy may allow for Fire and Rescue contributions, which I am sure are required, however I consider these charges on housing continue to fuel the cost of housing for local people. I have been to Cabinet with the support of a fellow Councillor Tony Deane, to try and get The Cabinet to accept the rural environment should be “taxed on new housing” less than urban areas. What has been put out for consultation regarding CIL (community infrastructure levy) at present puts Mere in a lower band than some in Wiltshire. I hope the consultation will leave this as an outcome. The consultation is on the Wiltshire Council’s web site and covers many topics, look out for the above.

I would remind you again the Council Tax base at present has been lowered in effect. It now depends on those claiming rebate in the area. A grant from Wiltshire Council to Parish Councils last year ensured community charge payers did not notice any increase in Council Tax. This year the grant may be less, therefore your local parish rate may rise through no fault of the parish or town council concerned. This has now been the case for most Parish Councils as many have had to increase their precepts above inflation, in some cases much above inflation.

I would like to publicly thank Mr Brian James who lives in Mere and has raised funds for Cancer Research UK for 40 years. To mark his long term commitment, he was given a celebratory party at The George in Mere. Brian is one of only about three who have served the charity for 40 years in all of the UK.

The Great Western Broadband (GWB) programme is a partnership between South Gloucestershire Council, Wiltshire Council and British Telecom (BT). The contract to provide superfast broadband across both areas was awarded to BT on 31 January 2013. The total investment for the GWB programme is £35.6 million.

Why superfast fibre broadband? The last step-change in bandwidth was the introduction of ACDL2 in 2008. This took speeds from 0.5Mbps to 8Mbps. At the time, there was scepticism that 8Mbps was necessary for general access. However, barely five years later and 8Mbps is considered only a reasonable access speed for a digitally active family.

Whilst it is true that right now 5Mbps is sufficient for the majority of people to do many of the things they want to use the internet for (e.g. iPlayer, online banking and social networking) given the speed of technological change over the past 10 years, it is hard to predict what the next 10 years might bring. We need to be ready for that to make sure that we don't get left behind. I find 2Mbps fast enough for BBC i player, which is required for smart televisions. In plain English that is a television on which you can see movies sourced from the telephone cable.

It is also important that our local businesses can access the fastest and most reliable connections to help develop their businesses. The internet can provide possibilities such as marketing, online sales and improved processes. An online presence can open up national, and even international doors, as the internet provides a level playing field and can bridge the gap between small businesses and multi-national corporations. Widespread access to superfast broadband can also open up the possibility of home and flexible working which can be beneficial to both staff and their employers.

A survey map at postcode level is available now on the web that shows which areas will be surveyed as part of the GWB investment. This map has been created at postcode level and at this stage and can only be a guide. Two premises in the same postcode could potentially receive the service differently and therefore require two different solutions.

Remember you can now use your iphone, ipad or android phone to send a highways defect report and more. The 'My Wiltshire' app is available to download at the App Store (for phones and ipads) or from Google Play™ (for Android phones). I am going to load this app to a smart phone, when we have enough signal (O2 have had low signal over Christmas, I am told it will be back to normal on the 21st January), I will try and photograph the road defects of Kilmington, West Knoyle, Stourton and Zeals and send them all in.

I attended a CATG (Transport meeting) on the 20th January where I reinforced the need for improved signs at the junction of Stourton with the B3092, which is being progressed. A metro count to measure the speed of the traffic in Kilmington will shortly be taking place. The fact that the amount of rain we have had recently has washed away sub soil below some roads in south Wiltshire, especially the verge side, was also discussed. It is a big problem and it is hoped money will come forward to help with repairs.

I am helping Mere Parish Council to achieve a skate park. We already have some planning permission, but we have applied for the further planning permission we now require above that and, we should know the outcome by Friday, 31st of January.

If you are looking for a present from Mere, Adrienne Howell still has some copies of the CD 'Love, life and lardy cake' that were Mere Voices, many from the past. The Mere

2012 Royal Jubilee DVD is also still available. They are on sale at Waltons of Mere, and all proceeds go to the link scheme.

STAYING SAFE AND WARM

The pictures of a frozen Niagara Falls were somewhat startling, so I hope the big freeze does not move over the Atlantic to us. However, even a small amount of snow or ice can have an impact on our daily lives so it is important to take precautions and plan ahead. A few simple plans can make all the difference:

- Ensure you have a battery or wind up torch available.
- At least one of your phones needs to be permanently connected (ideally the one by your bed) and if you have a mobile phone keep it switched on and fully charged.
- Ensure you have a supply of necessary medication. You don't want to run out if you can't get out!
- In case there is a power cut ensure you have bottled water and 'ready to eat' food in the house. Suggested emergency food supplies are 'ready to eat' canned meat, fruits and vegetables (make sure you have a can opener! Protein fruit bars, high energy foods, canned juices and long life pasteurised milk.
- And stay warm! Ensure spare blankets and warm clothing are easy to get at.
- Keep a record of any phone numbers that you might need in an emergency next to the phone.
- **Note** if the power is out for longer than 2 hours, a half full freezer will hold food safely for 24 hours . If the freezer is full it will hold food safely for 48 hours.

Talk to your local Good Neighbour Coordinator about other ways to stay safe and warm this winter by calling me

Ann-Marie Dean ☎ 07557 922023

Wiltshire Good Neighbours helping you to access the services you need to live a safe, comfortable and independent life



POLICE REPORT

Weather Issues in Our Area

We continue to have adverse weather in the area and this has resulted in lots of calls regarding car collisions and flood water and trees down. With the cold icy weather yet to hit us, there are a few points to take into consideration to help keep yourselves safe!

JOURNEY PLANNING Leave plenty of time to get to your destination. Lots of our calls are to motorists who were speeding and not taking the road conditions into consideration. Ice can be anywhere, bends are a particular hazard, so slow down and

take them at a reasonable speed. Flooded roads continue to be a hazard. We have had reports of cars going too fast and flooding cottages with the wash from their vehicles. You also risk flooding the engine, getting stranded or losing control of the vehicle. Don't chance it if you are not sure of the depth, go another way!

TYRES need to checked for the correct depth of tread and water washer bottles filled, if you are going on a long journey, have blankets and drink, or food in case you are stranded for any length of time.

A COLD SNAP is due. Please check on elderly neighbours and people who are in areas that could be affected, especially in isolated locations. You may be the lifeline that they were waiting for.

BIKE LIGHTS are a must at this time of year, white at the front and red at the back, and a Hi Vis top, or at least something that is light! Car windscreens can be obscured by rain or ice, so it is harder to see you when you are out and about.

JOGGERS please be aware of the conditions and wear something bright to make yourself seen.

WE AT WILTSHIRE POLICE WANT YOU TO BE SAFE AT THIS TIME OF YEAR.

Dog Poo Posters

We have a small supply of the 'There is no such thing as the Dog Poo Fairy' signs at the police station, please call in if you can help by putting one up near you. Obviously these are 'first come first served basis'. Help us to help reinforce the message to 'PICK UP'.

Our Priorities

Dog Fouling in Mere recreation area and **Anti Social Behaviour** in the school grounds when the school is closed. We continue to patrol these areas giving advice to dog walkers and watching for those who are not cleaning up after theirs.

PC Richard Salter and PCSO Peter Tscherniawsky  101 (24hrs)

 richard.salter@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk or
 peter.tscherniawsky@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk

NEW! AGEUK SALISBURY DISTRICT HOUSING OPTIONS SERVICE for older people living in South Wiltshire



- Are you beginning to think about your future housing needs?
- Are you beginning to struggle in your current home but don't really want to move?
- Are you overwhelmed by the thought of moving?

We can help you explore all the options available to you so that you can make an informed choice that may allow you to stay in your current home **or** move to somewhere more suitable.

We will discuss your current housing situation with you, provide you with information and advice and then support you to make those choices happen.

If you are happy living in your current home, but need a little extra practical support such as help with housework; gardening; meals; aids to assist you; or perhaps you are feel a little lonely or isolated and would like a little social support. Whatever your concern we can talk it through with you and help to find a solution.

If you think you would like to explore the options of moving either to sheltered accommodation or to residential care we can discuss the process of what is involved; give you information on homes available to you, and if at some point you would like to go ahead with a move, we can help you to make that move possible.

We want you to have a choice about your housing needs both now and in the future, so if you think we can help you please do contact us at: 21 Brown Street, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 2AS. Monday to Friday 09.30 – 16.00  enquiries@ageuksd.org.uk
 01722 335425

Volunteering opportunity

As with all our services, the new Housing Options Service will also be supported by a number of dedicated volunteers. If you would like to find out more about volunteering with Age UK Salisbury District and how you could help, please contact us, we would love to hear from you.

Age UK Salisbury District is working in partnership with EAC First Stop

MERE LIBRARY

National Libraries Week - 3rd to 8th February 2014.

Love your Library Activities at Mere Library. 'Blind Date' with Books Activity during the Week for Adults

'We live in the Library- Who Are We? - Children's Quiz (Running from 3rd to 22nd February). Sally-Ann Hooper, Mere Library Supervisor  01747 860546



*The practice has Dentists - Stephen Sherrard & Christopher Davies
and Dental Therapists Wendy Hester & Jay Lonsdale*

*Contact Details: - Mere Dental Practice, Duchy Manor, Springfield Road,
Wiltshire, BA12 6EW, ☎ 01747 860365,*

*E-mail: meredental@btconnect.com, Website: meredentistry.co.uk,
Opening hours: - Monday – Thursday 8.45am – 5.30pm, Tuesday
8.45am – 7pm & Friday 8.45am -5pm*



*The practice is sited in the grounds of Mere Primary School, first building
on your left when you go through the school*

WEATHER REPORT

In November, after the middle of the month, we had only 15mms (0.59ins) of rain giving us a total of 84mms (3.31ins) for the month. Last year, we had 139mms (5.47ins).

December started drier with only 1.5mms (0.06ins) up to the 13th. Then it started to be wet with 57mms (2.24ins) on the 21st after a morning of frost, giving us a total of 173mms (6.81ins) for the month. Although it was the highest monthly rainfall of the year, last year it was 175mms (6.89ins).

The total rain fall for the year was 908mms (35.75ins), which compares with 853.5mms (33.6ins) for 2011 and 1242.5mms (48.92ins) for 2012.

January started very wet with 175mms (6.89ins) up to the 18th {last year we had 111mms (4.37ins) over the whole month}. We had thunder on the 7th. Whilst the rain was usually at night, the dry days were sunny with a cold wind. Does this heavy rainfall in January mean we are in for above average rain for the year? Who Knows! Any way, we wish our readers a Happy New Year. Peter Durkee. ☎ 01747 860363

NO MORE CARNIVALS IN MERE!!!

If you enjoy Carnival and want to see it continue, Mere Carnival Committee needs your help **NOW**. Our very small Committee has struggled to keep Carnival going over the last few years and due to retirements the existing committee now feels unable to carry on.

Anybody who is interested in helping, please come along to our open evening and meet us at the **Walnut Tree Inn on Tuesday, 11th February 2014 at 7.30pm** and hopefully together we can secure the future of **MERE CARNIVAL**.

Clive Hazzard and Carol Payne ☎ 01747 861639

LINK LITERARY FESTIVAL

Dates for Your New Diary

As always, this year's Mere Literary Festival starts on the second Monday of October, which is 13th October 13th and finishes on Sunday, 19th October. Do please mark up the dates in your new diary.

Adrienne Howell & Lit. Fest. Group ☎ 01747 860475

Merrell's Mobile Foot Health Clinic.

For the professional treatment of: Corns • Callus/Hard Skin • Nail Trimming • Fungal & Thickened Nails • Athletes Foot • In growing toenails • Qualified to treat diabetics and those taking Warfarin and steroids • Massage given to make your feet feel fitter in the comfort of your own home. **Contact Mary on 07809 738237**

£10,000 FUNDRAISING FOR MERE LAUNCHED

A Community Support Card (CSC) scheme has been launched by The Southern Co-operative's store in Mere to raise £10,000 over this year for the town's girl guiding and scout groups. It was launched at a free community party, held on Sunday, 24 November which raised £248 on the day.

The Community Support Card (CSC) scheme relies on the backing of customers, but without costing them a penny. Customers wanting to support it simply need to request a free CSC card at The Southern Co-operative's Mere store and have this swiped each time they shop there. The more the cards are swiped, the quicker funds are donated by The Southern Co-operative. The guides and scouts have already given out lots of CSC cards but please do ask in the store if you'd like one.

If the CSC scheme is successful, 1st Mere Scout group will receive up to £7,500 and Mere Girlguiding up to £2,500. Mere scouts intend to use the funds to buy new tents and camping equipment including stoves, pots and pans, lanterns and furniture. Mere Girlguiding also plan to purchase lightweight camping equipment as well as sports and games equipment.

This is the second time the CSC scheme has run in Mere; last year The Southern Co-operative donated £7000 to Rosemary Goddard Centre and £3000 to Mere Pre-school.

www.thesouthernco-operative.co.uk

Sophie Boxall, Press & Publicity, Southern Co-op ☎ 023 9222 2591

THE FUTURE OF MERE LECTURE HALL

The Mere Lecture Hall Trust, in its pursuance of the future use and management of the Mere Lecture Hall, and subsequent to an enthusiastic response to the survey questionnaire that was put out, have determined to organise a Public Meeting to discuss and debate the issues raised in the survey. To that end a meeting has been arranged to be held at:-

**THE MERE LECTURE HALL AT 7.00 PM
ON MONDAY, 17TH FEBRUARY IN THE SMALL HALL.**

It is hoped that as many people as possible will attend to meet the Trustees and to discuss the matters and issues raised so that the Mere Lecture Hall can move forward to provide the best use of its facilities.

REMEMBER THIS IS YOUR HALL FOR YOUR BENEFIT, SO COME AND HAVE YOUR SAY.

Trevor Lucas, Secretary to the Trust, ☎ 01747 860859

THANKS FROM CHURCHES TOGETHER

On Christmas Day 2013, 54 members of the Mere community enjoyed a lunch served in the Grove Building hosted by a number of folk from Churches Together. The lunch, traditional roast turkey with all the trimmings, was followed by Christmas cake and a visit from Santa Claus. Churches Together would like to express their gratitude for the numerous donations from individuals and businesses in Mere which made the event possible.

Peter Mason, for Churches Together ☎ 01747 861296

COMMEMORATION OF THE OUTBREAK OF WWI

No doubt many organisations in Mere will be thinking of marking the outbreak of WWI in some way during this centenary year. George Jeans, Lesley Traves or I would, in due course, be glad to hear from anyone who is making such plans, and from one or two people who would be willing simply to help co-ordinate these events so that Mere presents a cohesive commemoration during the year. Thank you for your help.

Jenny Wilding ☎ 01747 860908

POPPY APPEAL DETAILS

Details of the 2013 Poppy Appeal collections for the Mere and West Knoyle area.

House to House collections:	£1208.00
Static Points; ie, Shops, Public houses and other locations;	£1114.29
Church Collections:	£554.01
Wreaths:	£204.50
Total;	£3,080.80

I would like to say a very big thank you to all those who worked very hard to collect on behalf of the Poppy Appeal and those who donated funds.

Colonel Peter Douglas OBE
✉: peterdouglas157@btinternet.com

THANK YOU

Flavia Ebbisham's family would like to say how grateful they are for all the wonderfully generous contributions of cakes after the funeral service at St Michaels on 17th January from so many of Flavia's friends in Mere. The family are extremely touched by all the support they have received and the warmth and love that everyone so clearly felt for Flavia.

Catherine Spencer ☎ 01747 840153

SITUATION VACANT!

Are you good with figures?

Do you have a good working knowledge of accounts?

If so, St Michael's Church in Mere needs YOU!

After 6 years in post, our Honorary Treasurer is stepping down and we will need someone to step into the breach from April 2014.

The job can be done in your own time at home, either using a computer or a manual ledger system.

You won't be left on your own to figure it all out, as full training and support will be available.

If you think this is something that interests you, please ring Peter Dethick, our current Treasurer,  01747 863498 for an initial chat

A JOURNEY FOR “DOH”

13 year old Joseph Wigley from Combe Martin, Somerset, would like to thank everyone who supported his journey in memory of his Grandpa, John Turnbull, who died of a brain tumour. (See October 2013 edition of *Mere Matters*.)

After cycling 100 miles across Devon from Ilfracombe to Plymouth over a 5 day period in September, then sailing for 20 hours on Durleigh reservoir, as he had agreed to match every pound raised with a minute of sailing, and finally collecting in the Bridgwater carnival, he is delighted to have raised £1,720.33 for Salisbury Hospice!

Joseph took on this challenge in memory of his grandpa, John (Doh) Turnbull, who died in 2011, just seven months after being diagnosed with a brain tumour. John had retired to Mere in 1999 with his wife Monique.

We'd also be pleased to provide any extra information needed.

Nicole and Graeme Wigley (on behalf of Joseph) ☎ 01278 653431

I CAN'T PAINT!

At least - that's what everyone says when the subject of art comes up but, if you can make a mark on a piece of paper, members of The Mere Art Group can show you how. We are a mixed ability group but everyone has some useful tip on how to start. Whilst I run the group, I am not a tutor and have learned so much from others. The simplest of techniques can create amazing results. Start with a "doodle" and take it from there – there are no rules in art! We have lots of fun and laughter on the way and many friendships are forged in the process.

For further information please see our poster in The Post Office window or in Mere Library. Alternatively, contact me.

Judy Hingley ☎ 01747 861596

SO WHERE ARE YOU DASHING OFF TO NOW?

Picture the scene. 10.00am in the Post Office. I'm asked: "You are going where exactly?" "To the Grove Building, the Lip Reading Group", I say, trying to hurry myself up. They may look puzzled or even embarrassed, or they may not hear what I have said and smile with that easily recognisable puzzlement. "Why?" is rarely spoken, but it may hang in the air. May I explain?

Hearing problems affect many or most people at times or permanently. They are generally not mentioned, treated as a guilty secret, or as an uncomfortable failure; But most of us realise that it seems to be easier to understand what someone is saying to us IF WE CAN SEE THEIR FACE CLEARLY!

Mere Lip Reading Group is led by Liz who understands how to help all of us to refine that skill of reading faces and gestures. Importantly, the group is of very mixed ability with lots of hilarity ("I buried my dog this morning". "Did you say you married your dog

this morning?"). Much funnier and some really serious mistakes help us all to share and be less afraid of being silly.

So why do I go to Mere Lip reading Group? I enjoy the friendship, the fun and even the freedom to say sometimes, "I haven't any idea of what is going on" without feeling embarrassed or silly.

Anyone is welcome to try out the group for a session without charge. Terms are 10 weeks for a fee of £30 per term. The current term began on the 14th January. Please contact Sheila Thomson ☎ 07760 731406 or by ✉ SheilaT@bishopstrow.org.uk

Rachel Hyde

HEAR TO HELP

Hearing Aid Clinic

The Hearing Aid Clinic is held on the first Thursday of the month at Mere Surgery. The next session is on Thursday, 6th February 2014 from 10.00am -11.30am. It helps us if you could bring your brown book or white card with you. Thank you.

For further information please contact me.

Gill Drayson ☎ 01722 580014

NEW LIBRARY MEMORY LOSS GROUP

A new Library Memory Group has started for people with memory loss and their carers in Mere. The weekly group meets every Wednesday from 2.30 – 4.00pm in Mere Library. Run by The Reader Organisation, the free sessions are designed to provide an enjoyable environment where people with memory loss and their carers can meet with each other to enjoy stories and poems.

For further information, contact Josephine Corcoran on ☎ 07812 238503 or ✉ josephinecorcoran@therader.org.uk, or Rebecca Bolton ✉ rebecca.bolton@wiltshire.gov.uk *Rebecca Bolton* ☎ 01225 713706.

THE TRUSSELL TRUST

A HUGE 'thank you' to all of you kind, generous, thoughtful people who filled the Christmas Shoe boxes last year. There were so many that we had to do a double journey to Salisbury, with about 140 boxes, and also several bags of the most beautifully knitted garments. I also had the pleasure of handing over very generous donations from a few people who were unable to go out and shop for a box. All of these went to people who live in orphanages, refuges, prisons, schools and roma communities where living is so basic and sometimes, not even basic. They really do brighten the lives of so many people - this year 7,230 smiles lit up the faces of men women and children.

The Trussell Trust has recognised that when the children leave the schools and orphanages, they have nowhere to go, and no jobs to go to. Consequently, they are now setting up houses of opportunity where the young people can be safe, trained for a job, and set off on a life which does not involve living on the streets and going into crime or prostitution. These young adults are very involved in running the houses and decorate their own rooms, clean and cook for themselves, all with help from the Trussell Trust. So, you will be hearing more from me this year and I hope that you will feel you might be able to help with the funding of this very necessary project.

Thank you all so much.

Wendy Horne ☎ 01747 861712

'FAIR TRADE' NOTES

Fair Trade in Mere:

I would like to thank all those who have supported Traidcraft and Fair Trade over the past year. Sales have increased over the year with stalls at the URC, St Mary's and St Michaels's and regular customers within the town including the Grove Building. Sales for the year have totaled almost £3,000 which means as a Community we have supported over 20 families enabling them to live a sustainable, and dignified life.

Fair Trade Fortnight

Runs this year from Monday, 24th February - Sunday, 9th March. Again Paul from the Angel Café has agreed to host a 'Big Brew' event on Wednesday, 5th March from 3.00-4.30pm. Come and enjoy a Fair Trade cuppa and piece of cake and help make a difference to even more families around the world. *Janet Way* ☎ 01747 860884



THE MERE AND DISTRICT CHAMBER OF TRADE



Mere Chamber had a very successful Networking Evening on 27th November, which followed on from the AGM held at the Grove Building in Mere. The Chamber will be hosting more events during 2014 which we hope will be of interest to you. We are planning a combination of business meetings, social networking events and training courses. All details to be confirmed in future editions, so watch this space!

One of the training courses planned for 2014 is Emergency First Aid at Work which is a day long course and is HSE approved. If you have any training needs please do not hesitate to contact us.

If you would like to know more about the Chamber and its activities as well as details and benefits of membership, please contact Julie Cousins on tel no: 07856 700 576

Date of next Committee Meeting

To be held at Mere Social Club for 7.30pm

Wednesday, 12th February 2014 Julie Cousins, Secretary, ☎ 07856 700576



MERE FOOTPATH GROUP

Walks 2014

Sunday	23rd March	2.00pm - local walk
Sunday	13th April	2.00pm
Sunday	18th May	2.00pm
Sunday	22nd June	2.00pm
Saturday	12th July	7.30pm - moonlight walk
Sunday	20th July	2.00pm
Sunday	17th August	10.00am
Sunday	31st August	2.00pm
Sunday	21st September	2.00pm
Sunday	19th October	2.00pm

Friday 2nd January 2015 New Year's walk (details later)

Walks start from the main car park in Mere. Please share cars where possible.

Everyone very welcome, including dogs if on leads. Bring small picnic if you wish.

Further details of destination and distances will be posted on a board outside the Post Office nearer to the dates.

Liability Disclaimer - As the group has no insurance, walkers should be aware that they take part in walks at their own risk and that neither the walk leader nor the group can accept liability for any injury or loss howsoever caused.

Ann Newberry, for Mere Footpath Group, ☎ 01747 861184

BREAD MACHINE AVAILABLE

During Real Bread Makers Week last year we were able to distribute two donated bread machines. A generous donor, (unknown to me but please accept our grateful thanks), has offered a Morphy Richards bread machine to anyone who thinks they really would use it. If you would like it please get in touch. If there are several people who answer I will draw lots! George Jeans has very kindly offered to test it to ensure its safety.

Judy Phillips ☎ 01747 860835

COMMUNITY LUNCH

The next Community Lunch will be held at The Walnut Tree Inn on Tuesday, 11th February at 12.00 for 12.30pm. The price will be £8.99, drinks are not included in the price. To reserve your place please book in advance by phoning The Walnut Tree Inn ☎ 01747 861220

Community Lunches are an opportunity to meet old friends and make new and everyone no matter their age is very welcome. For further details, please contact me.

Lynette Elliott ☎ 01747 861646



T@3 Community Tea Party



T@3 is a great opportunity to forget about those dark evening and grey days by brightening up your life by joining us for T@3 in the Angel Tea Rooms on Wednesday, 19th February.

This is a time for meeting old friends and making new ones. Everyone is welcome to join us young or old, however this event is very popular, so please let us know you are coming or we may have to turn you away at the door. Popularity has also encouraged us to book the event well into 2014.

If you would like to attend the February tea party please contact local coordinators Ann-Marie Dean ☎ 07557 922023 or Emma Curtis ☎ 07557 922026 **no later than the morning of Monday, 17th February**

FEBRUARY SHORT WALK

Weather, floods and mud permitting, there will be a Short Walk of 2-3 miles on MONDAY, 17th February. Meet at 2.00pm in the Surgery Car Park.

Janet Way ☎ 01747 860884

MERE THEATRE CLUB

The late winter/spring programme is now underway, but at the time of writing, we still have a few tickets left for a live broadcast from the Metropolitan Opera in New York of Borodin's Prince Igor, at the Regent Centre in Christchurch on Saturday, 1st March. Cost including coach and ticket is £30 per head. You don't have to be a member to buy a ticket, so if you're interested contact Madelaine or Wendy, numbers below.

Members, don't forget your subscription for 2014 is now due!

Madelaine Morris ☎ 01747 861833 or *Wendy Horne* ☎ 01747 861712

MARIE CURIE CANCER CARE

Great Daffodil Appeal 2014

I am appealing to your readers to volunteer for Marie Curie Cancer Care's Great Daffodil Appeal, and help people with terminal illnesses in Wiltshire get the care they need.

We're looking for people who can donate an hour of their time this March to collect for Marie Curie by simply giving out daffodil pins in return for donations.

Marie Curie Nurses provide free care to people with terminal illnesses in their own homes. To ensure we can continue to provide this vital care we need people to help make this year's Great Daffodil Appeal a great success.

If you're able to donate an hour of your time to help someone in their final hours then please contact me on or visit: www.mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil.

Thank you for your support,

Natalie Taylor, Community Fundraiser ☎ 01179 247 275

SHREEN HARMONY

Shreen Harmony would like to thank everyone who attended their Christmas Concert. They were delighted to receive so much support from the local community particularly as it coincided with the final of Strictly Come Dancing!

Your generous support enabled a donation of £400 to be made to the Gillingham Food Bank. Grateful thanks also to the manager of The Co-op in Mere for the donation of wine for the refreshments. Also, Shreen Harmony's concert on 19th December at St Mary's church in Gillingham raised £233 for the Deanery Link with Lui, South Sudan.

Singing is known to be very good for your health and there are currently a few vacancies in the choir if you would like to give it a go.

Rehearsals are held at Mere United Reformed Church from 7.30 – 9.00pm on Thursday evenings. No audition is required and you do not need to be able to read music. Newcomers will be given a warm welcome and a free trial session.

As a community choir, Shreen Harmony performs at various events and venues in and around the local area, mostly for charity.

It is not a 'drop in' choir and a regular commitment is required from choir members who also pay an annual subscription fee, but where else can you enjoy an evening of song, laughter and health benefits for the equivalent of just £2.25 a session!

The choir sings a variety of musical genres from traditional English folk songs to African lullabies. Recordings can be found on their website: www.shreenharmony.co.uk along with contact details if you would like any further information.

Jane Edwards ☎ 01380 830918



MERE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Postcards and Messages

By Ian McLellan

Tuesday, 4th February at 7.30pm in the Grove Building

Ian has been collecting postcards for many years and will talk about their meanings and messages.

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, 4th March 2014 at 7.30pm in the Grove Building

Subscriptions for 2014 due (£7.50)

Drinks and subs before AGM, followed by 'From Feast to Famine': Tudor food from sowing to banquets, table manners and courtly behaviour. By Jenny Peet

£3 entry for non-members who will be very welcome

Morning Talk

Our morning talk for Tuesday, 18th February, to be held in the small room of the Grove Building at 10.15am for 10.30am, is: , "Bringing the Past to Life; a personal view" Dr Julian Richards. **£1 entry for non-members who will be very welcome**

Caroline Cook ☎ 01747 861797

MERE AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY

A brand new date for your brand new diaries: MADS' Spring production, now in rehearsal, will be Dylan Thomas's '**Under Milk Wood**' to celebrate the centenary of the Welsh poet's birth . Production dates are Thursday to Saturday, 20th – 22nd March 2014. Tickets will be available at the Library at the end of the month.

Jenny Wilding ☎ 01747 860908

MERE FILM SHOWS

On Thursday, 13th February at 7.30pm we are screening the film '**Le Week-End**' (15), starring Jim Broadbent, Lindsay Duncan and Jeff Goldblum. Nick and Meg (Broadbent and Duncan) decide to return to Paris to celebrate their 30th anniversary to see if they can rejuvenate their marriage in the city where they spent their honeymoon. Will their search for the romance they once enjoyed overcome the itches and scratches encountered in the course of their marriage? When they bump into a former student of Nick's they begin to see life and love from a new aspect. The film opened to good reviews from the critics and was described by one as 'painful to watch at times, but

delightful at others – a bit like life', and both Jim Broadbent and Lindsey Duncan are excellent in their respective parts. Full details on page 30.

Dates for your diary: Friday, 14th March: 'Philomena' with Judy Dench and Steve Coogan. Thursday, 10th April: 'Saving Mr. Banks' with Emma Thompson and Tom Hanks. **Mary White** ☎ 01747 861257

MERE GARDENING CLUB

Dig for Victory

Wednesday, 12th February 7.30pm Grove Buildings

Chris Smith of Pennard Plants will talk about wartime gardening and how it can be of use to gardeners today. It will deal with how growing has changed, the importance of growing your own both then and now, and what was grown. **£2 entry for visitors who are very welcome.**

Potato Day Plus!

Sunday, 16th February
Grove Building
10.30am – 2pm

Pennard Plants renowned Potato day and Seed Swap; huge variety of seed potatoes for sale along with some plants, seeds etc. Soup, jacket potatoes served to warm you up.

Janet Way ☎ 01747 860884

INTERESTED IN BIRDS AND WILDLIFE?

Come and enjoy "The RSPB's Natural Secrets"

Presented by Peter Holden MBE

Recently retired from the RSPB, Peter is an author, TV presenter and lecturer. He advised *Blue Peter* and often appeared in their garden. He devised the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch and presented *Bird in the Nest* with Bill Oddie. He has contributed to *Springwatch*. Peter will be presenting films and pictures illustrating some of the amazing wildlife found on RSPB Nature Reserves and how it is surviving today.

Come and join the Mere contingent of the Blackmoor Vale group at: Gillingham Primary School, School Road, Gillingham SP8 4QR on: Friday, 28th February 2014 at 7.30 pm

All are welcome: Blackmoor Vale group members £2.50; RSPB members and visitors £3.50. For more information: www.rspb.org.uk/groups/blackmoorvale ✉ rspb.bv@gmail.com or ☎ 07825 747546. **Myrene Coward** ☎ 01747 860445

REMEMBER! COPY DATE FOR MARCH ISSUE
MONDAY, 17th FEBRUARY 2014

GROVE BUILDINGS RESTORATION FUND

The result of the '100' Club Christmas Draw, drawn on Monday, 2nd December 2013 by the Rev'd Carol Wilson-Barker was:

1st Prize (£60)	-	No. 85	Dr W Price
2nd Prize (£40)	-	No. 96	Mrs C Kriticos
3rd Prize (£20)	-	No. 196	Mrs J Fisher
4th Prize (£10)	-	No. 90	Mrs M Durkee
5th Prize (£10)	-	No. 161	Mrs G Garbutt

The result of the '100' Club Draw for January, drawn on Tuesday, 7th January 2014 by Mrs Rose Cox was:

1st Prize (£20)	-	No. 189	Mr & Mrs D Stokes
2nd Prize (£15)	-	No. 126	Mr & Mrs TLloyd
3rd Prize (£10)	-	No. 162	Mrs J Woodouffe
4th Prize (£5)	-	No. 68	Mrs S Phelps

Valerie Ransley ☎ 01747 860964



WOMENS INSTITUTE

Another year gone and February already.

Looking back to our December meeting we held a very enjoyable evening, together with visitors from Deverill Valley and Milton on Stour, celebrating our 95th birthday and Christmas. We were entertained by Mere Melodies, our local hand bell ringers and tested our knowledge with several quizzes, interspersed with

seasonal refreshments. We did not have a meeting in January but instead held a New Year lunch at the Bell and Crown, Zeals.

Our next meeting on Thursday, 6th February at 7.30pm in the Grove Buildings is entitled "Dragons, Darwin and the Far Side of the World", a Power Point presentation lasting about an hour by Hilary and Mike Gladding. Hilary is a member of Mere WI and Mike was a teacher of Biology for 37 years before retirement a few years ago. He has been telling stories about the Galapagos Islands to several generations of children during those years.

Hilary and Mike were fortunate to visit this magical place two years ago and so they thought that they could share their memories of the unique wildlife with our members as well as proposing a couple of contentious issues about how they managed to be so unique - needless to say this has something to do with a man called Darwin. Mike is sure that not everyone will believe in what they say, but they are looking forward to some interaction and questions from the audience. All the photographs were taken by

them on their trip, along with a few extras. We are sure that the evening will be very entertaining and informative.

Hopefully the weather will be kind to us on Wednesday, 12th February, when we plan to visit Heale House to see the snowdrops.

You would be most welcome to these events and indeed at any of our future meetings. We should be very pleased to see you.

Janet Fisher ☎ 01747 861323



MOTHERS' UNION AND OPEN MEMBERS' GROUP

Thirty-two of us enjoyed a happy meal out together at The Walnut Tree in January – good food, good company and a very pleasant way to start the New Year.

Our February meeting, though different, promises to be just as good! The Rev'd Paul Arnold, new Methodist Minister for Mere and other towns and villages in the area, has very kindly agreed to come and talk with us on the subject of 'sowing for the future', with the title *You shall not live by bread alone*. Intrigued? Come and spend a worthwhile and enjoyable afternoon discovering the connection, on Tuesday, 11th February at 2.30pm in the Grove Building.

Judith Thompson (MU Branch Leader) ☎ 01747 860553

MERE MUSEUM

A new year, a new project. 2014 will see the gradual implementation of a Museum enterprise called '**Mere Museum: Inside Out**'. The idea is to exploit digital technology to make it easily possible for people, wherever they are, to access the Museum, its collections and, eventually, its exhibitions. The first phase of this project is already up and running.

In the clocktower there is now a digital photoframe which shows in a continuous loop photographs of 50 Museum objects. Do go and look and tell us what you think.

While you're there you will see that a second phase of the project is also on trial. A QR code (one of those black squares with apparently random square dots inside it) below the photo frame will enable anyone with a smart phone or i-pad to scan the code and access two photos relating to the clocktower and a tiny bit of its history. If this is successful, we would like to expand this idea throughout Mere. Again your views would be appreciated.

As if this were not enough, an album containing a selection of the photographs exhibited last year under the title 'Mere Vistas' is now available in a special file for visitors to enjoy. You will find it with the other Museum albums near the Mere Map.

Jenny Wilding ☎ 01747 860908

FRIENDS OF FIVES COURT

First and foremost, don't forget our Burns Night Supper on Saturday, 1st February at 7.30pm in the Grove Building. Advance tickets are essential and, if any are left, they are available at the Library.

Next, we would like to thank everyone who posted their green Waitrose 'Community Matters' tokens into the Fives Court box during December. We are delighted to announce that we are to receive a cheque for £300 - an amazing result which, once again, we owe to all our supporters in Mere and elsewhere.

The money will be put into the '5K for Fives' transport fund - a 10th-anniversary Friends project. Thank you, and 'A Happy New Year' Jenny Wilding ☎ 01747 860908

ROSEMARY GODDARD CENTRE for the over 60s

Mere and district Day Centre, Lynch Close, Mere
Mondays and Fridays 10.30am - 3.00pm

Our guests enjoyed a trip to the pantomime during January to see 'Dick Whittington and his cat' it was a lovely way to finish off our festive celebrations.

Many thanks to all who supported our annual quiz which raised £146 for activities. The winner was Ann Newbery. A date for your diaries - we will be holding a **Silent Auction on Saturday, 10th May** in the evening. Don't miss this fun event! We have already collected a number of items and promises for auction, but if any of you can contribute something we would be more than grateful. How about offering to iron or garden for the highest bidder? Or maybe you have a skill you can offer. For more details and offers please ring Chris Dillon ☎ 01747 823088.

We are looking forward to welcoming a mystery guest to a 'Desert Island Disc' session during February, and will also be enjoying our usual pottery and singing sessions.

We have spaces for new guests on Fridays, if you would like some more information please contact me on the number below. Website: www.MereDayCentre.org.uk

Sandie Hawkins, RGC Organiser ☎ 07835 272406

MERE SNOOKER CLUB

Looking for a new activity this year? Mere Snooker Club has room for enthusiastic new members with or without previous playing experience. We are a friendly club and if you are keen to learn or develop your skills then do contact me for information.

Kevin Smith ☎ 01747 860305

MERE CROQUET AND BOULE CLUB

Last season was, in spite of so much adverse weather, a very successful one and it was possible for play to go on right up to the end of November. The Boule players in particular had a great time, both on the court and socially.

Our 'Between Seasons Get Together' will be held this year at The Home Guard Club in Kilmington on Saturday, 15th February commencing at 7.30pm. Entrance is £4 per person, which includes a sandwich and snack buffet., plus use of the Skittle Alley for the evening. Everyone is welcome as it promises to be an enjoyable evening. If you fancy joining us, please ☎ 01747 860873.

The 2014 season will begin on Saturday, 5th April, which, as always, will be an Open Day with a glass of wine and nibbles. Visitors will be most welcome.

The AGM will take place on 26th or 27th March in the Andy Young Pavilion. The finalised date will be published in the next edition of Mere Matters.

Rex Roberts ☎ 01747 860873

WILTSHIRE MOVIOLA
in association with
MERE PARISH COUNCIL
proudly presents

'Le Week-End' (15)

Lindsey Duncan Jim Broadbent
Jeff Goldblum

As their 30th anniversary approaches, Nick and Meg Burrows (Jim Broadbent and Lindsay Duncan) decide to return to Paris where they spent their honeymoon. There they run into Morgan (Jeff Goldblum), a successful former student of Nick's. Morgan invites them to a dinner party that ultimately opens up a new vista of life and love for the ageing couple.

In the Lecture Hall
Thursday, 13th February, at 7.30pm
(Doors open 7.00pm)
TICKETS £5.00
Available from The Library

For more information call Mary White ☎ 01747 861257
Visit our website at: www.moviola.org

SILVER CLASS

REPORTS



STOP PRESS!
Look on our website for latest news and pictures:
www.mereschool.co.uk

A great start to the New Year at Mere School

We are all excited about the start of the New Year which means new class topics!

New topics

Our new topics are: Blue Class – People who help us, Yellow Class – Animals, Silver – Heroes, Gold Class – Adventures and Explorers, Green Class – India, Red Class – Africa and Purple Classes – Angry Aztecs!

Out and About

Last term Year 6 went to visit @Bristol. They explored lots of exciting science activities. They also visited the planetarium and learnt lots about the sun, moon, earth and stars.

Blue Class have been on a visit to the Post Office and sent a letter home to their families. "It was fun trying to reach up and post our letters." Edward (Reception).

Each class has exciting activities and trips planned for the Spring Term. Gold Class are planning a trip to visit a climbing wall and we are planning a 'Superhero Day' in Silver Class.

Strictly Come Dancing

Both Purple Classes were busy at the end of last term perfecting their dancing skills in preparation their 'Dance Off'. The whole school was invited to watch the incredible talent and assist the judges in the final vote. "They had epic outfits and the music was old-fashioned but cool!" Ella and Maxi (Year 5).

Glee Choir

Our school Glee club also performed at our Christmas Carol service and in school. "It's fun because you learn all about singing. Our new song is very exciting." Lily and Alice (Year 1). "They sing really well altogether and sound nice." Lola (Year 2).

Jack and the Beanstalk

At the beginning of this term we were very lucky to watch a performance of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. Anne Rich organised for a travelling theatre company, Treehouse Theatre, to come to our school. We were joined by lots of children and adults from the local community. "It was so fun! The best bit was when the Giant had a fight with Jack." Jack PW (Year 2)

We are looking forward to a great 2014!

MERE BOWLS CLUB

The Bowls season opens on Saturday, 19th April at 3.00 pm. Before then we have a Barn Dance at the Grove Building on Saturday, 1st March at 7.00 pm. Tickets are available from the library at a cost of £10, which includes a Fish and Chips supper.

We look forward to seeing you at both events.

For any information regarding the club, please contact Alan Inwood ☎ 01985 844215, Don Butchers ☎ 01747 860775 or ✉ don.butchers@btinternet.com or me Jeff Vigars ✉ jeffcarolvigars@hotmail.co.uk

Jeff Vigars, Fixtures Secretary ☎ 01747 860976

FRIENDS OF ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

Mere has many attractive and historic buildings, one of which is the Parish Church of St Michael the Archangel. It is important for us to maintain and refurbish this beautiful Church and its furnishings for future generations. The Friends of St Michael the Archangel was formed in 1976 to foster interest in this and to help to provide funds to achieve it.

If you appreciate this wonderful building, even if you do not worship here, why not become a life member of the Friends of St Michael? Friends receive annual newsletters and are invited to events held several times each year. Individual Life Membership still costs only £30 and pink application forms can be obtained in the Church, from Mere Library or by contacting me.

Jean Eyles, Membership Secretary ☎ 01747 863450

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL CHOIR TO PERFORM AT ST MARTINS CHURCH, ZEALS

A unique Concert of Cathedral Music by the Salisbury Cathedrals Boy Choristers and Lay Vicars on Monday, 10th March at 7.15pm will celebrate the start of the Parish of Upper Stour's restoration programme of their William Sweetland 1866 pipe organ in St Martins Church, Zeals.

Ross Coad, Chair of Friends of St Martins Church said, 'This is a real one-off opportunity to hear this wonderful choir in our delightful local church.' He went on to say, 'The choir's director David Halls has chosen music that will form a glorious celebration of the huge fund raising activity that has gone into enabling us to save this important church organ.' Over £50,000 has been raised by the Friends.

The concert will be directed on the night by David Halls with John Challenger, organist, and will feature music of Blow, Lloyd, Purcell and Vaughan Williams

In recent months St Martins Church has received major boosts of funding from a number of Grant Giving Trusts in addition to generous local fundraising. The Money has been principally raised through the Heritage Lottery Fund, The Wiltshire Historic Churches Fund, Church Care, the Church Buildings Council, The Landfill Communities Fund which is administered for The Hills Group Limited by Community First, the Rural Community Council for Wiltshire.

These grants are on condition that many people (old and young) have the opportunity to appreciate the art of our own piece of Victorian History. Ross Coad commented, 'To emphasise this intent we are delighted that children of our own Whitesheet C of E Primary Academy choir will start the concert with their own short concert.'

Andrew Fearn, organ restorer, is planning to start the dismantling of the organ over three days in late March and opportunities will be provided for all ages to visit and see the work. The organ will then be rebuilt at his factory at Ottery St Mary and an opportunity will be made for all those interested to spend some hours in the factory, in May. The organ should be returned in late June and hopefully we will have a rededication service in September.

Tickets for the concert, priced at £10.00 – which includes a glass of celebratory wine – are available at Zeals Post Office or from me.

David Corbin, Friends Trustee ☎ 01747 840847

CAFÉ WORSHIP

On Wednesdays at 10.30am there is a coffee morning at the Methodist Church, but on the last Wednesday of the month there is an extension of the Pause for Thought to a worship time, beginning at 11.00am. The next worship time will be on Wednesday, 26th February. Everyone is welcome to share in this short time out in a busy week!

Mary Siderfin ☎ 01747 861370

REV'D PAUL ARNOLD, METHODIST CHURCH MINISTER, WRITES:

If you are of Welsh, Scottish or Irish descent you will almost certainly know the feast days of St. David, St. Andrew and St. Patrick, although oddly many English people cannot remember the date of St George's Day! However, there is a Saint's Day that just about everyone knows, whatever their nationality and whether they are people of Christian faith or not – St Valentine's Day!

On 14th February each year we celebrate a person about whom almost nothing is (reliably) known! Valentine of Rome was supposedly killed in the 3rd Century AD for helping Christians in the face of Roman persecution. One of the things he is supposed to have done is perform marriage services for couples, thus making the man ineligible for conscription in the Roman army. Whilst he was imprisoned it is said Valentine

befriended and healed the daughter of his guard. On the day of his execution he left a note for her signed, 'Your Valentine.'

All the cynics out there will start muttering about 'just another day' for card manufacturers and retailers to cash in! I can't deny the truth in all that, **but...** I also want to affirm the importance of love at the heart of our humanity. Many young (and not so young!) lovers will be waiting with fluttering hearts to see if they receive a message of love and some sort of romantic gift. Some will be disappointed, and I am not so old or jaded to have forgotten how hurtful that felt. However, I believe the most important question that any of us ask in life is, 'Am I loved?' This is not purely a question about a romantic attachment – many single people (through choice or circumstance) can still answer 'yes' to that question.

The Christian faith dares to affirm that ultimately each person is loved by the God who is made known in Jesus Christ. He is the message that says – 'You are loved, forever.' So, if you love someone, don't forget to tell them (and you don't have to wait until Valentine's Day to do it!).



**Mere Suchana Support Group invites you to a
COFFEE MORNING**

**on Tuesday, 11th February from 10.30 am
at Hillcrest, Hazzards Hill
(Elisabeth and Rob Barrett's house) ☎ 01747 863324**

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A CHARITY TRUSTEE?
Friends of Suchana is Seeking 2-3 More Trustees.**

We're a fundraising Trust, (Charity Commission registration 1138960), supporting **Suchana**, a 10 year old, flourishing and exciting, small education and health NGO, in a deprived part of rural India, which has strong local connections in Mere.

If you'd like to express an initial interest in this possibility we'd be very pleased to hear from you and will send you full information about both Suchana and about what is involved in being a Trustee for Friends of Suchana. Or just call for a chat about it.

Angela Stoddart ☎ angela@claresforstal.plus.com, or ☎ 01795 890210

CHURCH SERVICES IN MERE AND WEST KNOYLE

FEBRUARY 2014

The Parish Church, St Michael the Archangel:

Priest in Charge: Rev'd Carol Wilson-Barker ☎ 01747 861859,

✉: carolw953@aol.com

Churchwardens:

Mrs Jean Knapp ☎ 01747 860142

Mrs Elizabeth Howden ☎ 01747 863424

Each Sunday		8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
Each Wednesday		10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
Each Thursday		8.00am	Holy Communion (CW1)
Each Friday			The Rev'd Carol Wilson-Barker has a rest day
Sunday	2nd	9.15am	Said Eucharist followed by coffee
		10.30am	Family Praise
		6.00pm	Evening Prayer
Wednesday	5th	6.00pm	"Start the month" Holy Communion (BCP)
Sunday	9th	10.30am	Parish Communion (CW1)
Sunday	16th	10.30am	Parish Communion (CW1)
Thursday	13th	8.00am	NO Service
Sunday	23rd	10.30am	Parish Communion (CW1)

The United Reformed Church

Mere Contact: Mrs E Burfitt ☎ 01747 860685)

Sunday	2nd	11.00am	Rev'd Margaret Laurie
	9th	11.00am	Rev'd Elizabeth Kemp
	16th	11.00am	Holy Communion
	23rd	11.00am	Rev'd Stella Sivyour
			Rev'd Hazel Barkham

The Methodist Church (Tel. Gillingham 01747 823777

Mere Contact: Mrs M Siderfin ☎ 01747 861370)

Sunday	2nd	3.00pm	Rev'd Gordon Elford
	9th	3.00pm	Rev'd Paul Arnold
	16th	6.00pm	Songs of Praise at St Michaels
	23rd	3.00pm	Rev'd Paul Arnold
			Holy Communion

**The Roman Catholic Church, St Mary's. (☎ Warminster 01985 212329 –
Fr. Tom Smith)**

**Mere Contacts: Teresa Read ☎ 01747 860289 or Margaret Thompson
☎ 01747 860291**

Every Friday	10.00am	Mass
Every Sunday	5.00pm	Mass

On the 4th 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 (☎ 01747 830534)

Sunday	2nd	9.15am	DIY
	9th	9.15am	Holy Communion (BCP)
	16th	9.15am	DIY
	23rd	9.00am	Bishop of Ramsbury Holy Communion

Note: BCP indicates Book of Common Prayer 1662

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

DIARY DATES

FEBRUARY 2014

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; MSC Mere Social Club; RGC-Rosemary Goddard Centre; YC-Youth Centre

1	Sat	10.00am - 11.00noon	Mere Credit Union (also 16th)	Lib
		10.30am	Drop In Coffee Morning (also 8th, 15th & 22nd)	CC
		7.30pm	Friends of Fives Court 'Burns Night Supper'	GB
3	Mon	9.30am	Tiddlers & Toddlers (also 10th & 24th)	L
		10.00am	Chair Based Zumba (every Monday)	L
		11.00am	Zumba Gold (every Monday)	L
		2.00pm	Pilates (every Monday)	GB
		6.00pm	Beavers (also 10th & 24th)	GB
		6.45pm	Cubs (also 10th & 24th)	GB
		7.00pm	Scouts (also 10th & 24th)	GB
		7.00pm	Slimming World (every Monday)	L
		7.30pm	Parish Council Meeting	AYP

4	Tue	10.15am - 12.15pm	Lip-Reading (also 11th)	GB
		6.00pm	Pilates (every Tuesday)	GB
		6.20pm	Zumba (every Tuesday)	L
		7.30pm	Mere Historical Society	GB
5	Wed	9.30am	Tai-Chi (every Wednesday)	GB
		10.30am	Tai-Chi (every Wednesday)	GB
		10.30am - 12.30pm	Coffee Morning (every Wednesday)	MH
		11.00am	Pilates (every Wednesday)	GB
		2.30pm - 4.00pm	Memory Loss Group (every Wednesday)	Lib
		6.00pm	Karate (every Wednesday)	L
6	Thur	9.30am	Tiddlers & Toddlers (also 13th & 27th)	L
		10.00am - 12.00noon	Mere Art Group (every Thursday)	GB
		10.00am - 11.30am	Hearing Aid Clinic	Surgery
		2.00pm	Bridge Club (every Thursday)	L
		2.00pm	Castle Hill Quilters (every Thursday)	GB
		6.30pm	Weight-Watchers (every Thursday)	MSC
		7.30pm	Womens Institute	GB
		7.30pm	Shreen Harmony (every Thursday)	CC
7	Fri	10.15am - 12.00pm	St Michaels "First Friday" Coffee Drop in	GB
		6.00pm	Zumba (every Friday)	L
		6.30pm	Barn Buddies (every Friday)	BSF
10	Mon	7.30pm	MADS Meeting (Green Room)	L
11	Tue	9.00am	Foot Care Clinic	L
		12.00pm	Community Lunch	Walnut Tree Inn
		2.30pm	Mothers Union	GB
		7.30pm	Mere Carnival Survival Meeting	Walnut Tree Inn
12	Wed	1.45pm	Friends Together - Whist Drive	GB
		7.30pm	Gardening Club	GB
		7.30pm	Camber of Trade Committee Meeting	MSC
		5.00pm	Rainbows (also 27th)	GB
		6.15pm	Brownies (also 27th)	GB
		7.30pm	Girl Guides (also 27th)	GB
		7.30pm	Mere Filmshows/Moviola "Le Week-End"	L
14	Fri	10.00am	Merely Women (also 28th)	GB
15	Sat	9.00am	Carpet Sale	L
16	Sun	10.30 - 2.00pm	Potato Day – Gardening Club	GB
17	Mon	2.00pm	February Short Walk	CP
		7.00pm	Future of Lecture Hall Public Meeting (small hall)	L
18	Tue	10.15am	Mere Historical Society Morning Talk	GB
19	Tue	3.00pm	T@3 Community Tea Party	Angel Tea Rooms
22	Sat	10.30am	Drop In Coffee Morning + Traidcraft stall	CC
25	Tue	9.00am	Foot Care Clinic	L
26	Wed	10.30am - 12.00noon	Café Worship	MH
		1.45pm	Friends Together	GB

BOOKING MEETING HALLS IN MERE

Grove Building:	Richard Jefferies	01747 863425
Lecture Hall:	Sally Johnson	01747 861063
Methodist Church Schoolroom	Mary Siderfin	01747 861370

MERE INFORMATION

For full information on the businesses, organisations, societies, attractions and activities in Mere, together with current and back numbers of *Mere Matters*, please visit Mere's own website; www.merewilts.org

MERE INFORMATION POINT, THE LIBRARY

The following Clinics/Advice Centres are held on a regular basis

CITIZENS' ADVICE:	Tuesdays: 10.00am to 3.30pm
HEALTH MATTERS	
ADVICE	Tuesdays: 1.30 to 4.30pm
MEMORY LOSS	
READING GROUP	Wednesdays: 2.30 to 4.00pm
CARER SUPPORT	1st Friday: 10.30am to 12.30pm
ALZHEIMERS SUPPORT	1st Friday: 2.00 to 4.00pm
REGISTRAR OF BIRTHS & DEATHS:	<u>By appointment only (</u> 01225 713007)
CREDIT UNION	Thursdays: 9.30 to 11.30am 1st & 3rd Saturdays 10.00 – 11.00am

COPY DATE FOR MARCH 2014 ISSUE

Editorial contributions for the March 2014 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') by 4.00 pm on **MONDAY, 17th February 2014**.

E-mailed contributions will be most welcome. Please send to: merematters@inbox.com from Monday, 10th February 2014 onwards.

Would ALL contributors, however they provide copy, please add their name and a contact telephone number to ensure inclusion.

ALL ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES to:

Mrs Jane Kennedy

✉: jane.kennedy83@btinternet.com

☎: 01985 844740

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