

# *Mere Matters*

*& so does West Knoyle*



Your community magazine including  
a guide to local events

**September 2020**

*Front cover picture with kind permission of: Steve Hawkins*

## **Mere Town Council**

I am pleased to say that, since my last report, Mere Town Council has held a physical meeting albeit outside and socially distanced. However, it was necessary to hold a meeting in order to approve the Annual Return and Accounts for the previous financial year which the Town Clerk has been busy preparing. We are hoping to hold another physical meeting in September, although this will be subject to government guidance nearer the time and it may be necessary to hold this meeting virtually.

I would like to thank Stuart Walker for organising the VJ 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary wreath laying ceremony which, sadly, had to be scaled back due to COVID-19 but which, nonetheless, was very moving. I would like to thank Mary for playing the Last Post.

It was necessary for the Town Council to commission a new website in order to meet the government's accessibility requirements - [www.merewilts.org](http://www.merewilts.org). We now have a wordpress website that accepts direct contributions from the Town Council offices. This will be work in progress for the next few months and therefore, if there are any particular mistakes, add-ons, links or amendments that you would like to make to the website, please contact the Clerk.

We are aware that central government has issued guidance to Principal Authorities to prepare plans for local lockdowns if necessary. In our case, this would be Wiltshire Council's responsibility and we do not know what the criteria for local lockdown decisions would be and where the boundaries may be. However, we are still liaising closely with the Mere Community Support Group and would like to assure you all that the group is confident that the volunteer scheme will be able to continue responding to any calls for help.

Clive Hazzard, Chairman, Mere Town Council  
for information on Town Council activities, minutes, agendas etc.  
☎ 860701 [lindseywood@merewilts.org](mailto:lindseywood@merewilts.org) 🌐 [merewilts.org](http://merewilts.org)

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## **Wiltshire Councillor ~ George Jeans Writes**

Covid-19 continues to impact on us all. Few officers are allowed into County Hall. For instance: I have been contacted by someone who needs their solicitor to obtain search information to enable the sale of their property, the information is old and is on microfiche it cannot be accessed electronically and officers cannot access the area of County Hall to obtain that information on a regular basis. Staff numbers working in hubs each day as an average over the last 4 weeks is 160 in County Hall, 75 in Monkton Park, Chippenham and 60 in Bourne Hill, Salisbury. This is 16%, 24% and 19% respectively based on 100% capacity. The total capacity across all 3 hubs is approximately 1600 but social distancing measures mean that the current building capacity is reduced by approx. 50%. As a result, capacity across all three hubs is currently approx. 800 and overall usage based on this reduced capacity is 37%. In County Hall there is no food available, the only meetings socially distanced is Social Services and Registration (Births, deaths and Marriage). The registry office is in use but limited.

The Library at County Hall is open 2 week days and Saturday. Mere is still not allowed to open despite volunteers being available, I understand also Salisbury and Chippenham are open, some more are in the pipeline and Mere is likely to be as late as October, I have asked that this time scale for Mere be brought forward. The Blackmore Vale Magazine after nearly 40 years ceased at the start of Covid-19 and several have said besides missing it, many used the publication to be informed of Births, Deaths and Marriages? Mere Matters sometimes perform this function, I have had two separate people suggest Mere Matters may be able to perform this function.

*(Ed: Historically we have published short obituaries. I am equally receptive to the idea of 'boxed' notifications if people would like inclusion. Do let me know!)*

I have had complaints of the poor quality of some minor highway repairs recently done, one being from West Knoyle Parish Councillors.

Public rights of way, footpaths and bridleways are being well used at present especially during lockdown, I have received many complaints regarding their condition, types of use and so on.

Mere and West Knoyle held their meetings outside socially distance which was nice in the summer, most meetings I now join are virtual meetings on a computer, including Wiltshire Council.

In the Mere Area we have several types of broadband infrastructure which are noted by residents to me, not always being happy with theirs, especially now some work from home using virtual meetings etc. We have Wessex which uses free air as well as other means. The Mere area is largely fibre to the green road side cabinets which many now complain is inadequate. Parts of Kilmington Common have fibre to the premises also parts of Stourton are taking advantage of. It seems fibre to the house is required, Salisbury is getting fibre to the premises City wide.

I receive regular complaints about dog fouling, one on the well-used pavement in Church Street another in the rural area of Kilmington, but still outside of a house. Please clean up after your dog in public areas, dog excrement can cause blindness in children and it is not nice for others to walk in. The Wiltshire Council Dog Warden will visit offenders if requested, probably not immediately because of covid19 being a national emergency.

George Jeans 📞 07710 441599 [george.jeans@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:george.jeans@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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### **Mere Local Resilience to Covid-19**

Thanks or no thanks? Always a conundrum when one expresses thanks publicly – you will always miss someone out! So this month I am not going to name any one person, organisation or group and as I thought I made clear last month, I would like to thank all who have contributed in any way to keeping us safe, well, fed and watered.

The Mere Local Resilience Group volunteers continue with their availability to help those unable to get out and about in the community with their shopping and collecting prescriptions etc. Should you need help, the contact details of whom to contact in the first instance are on the back page of this copy.

#### **Future Lockdowns:**

In the event that our freedom is curtailed again, then rest assured that there will be absolutely no need to panic. As long as there are shops open with produce on their shelves and the Pharmacy, Doctors and other essential services are able to operate then help will be available in the same way as the last few months.

It would be sensible for all households to prepare ahead for any such situation.

Make sure that you have sufficient prescriptions in-hand and have some stock of food, drink etc in your cupboards. It might be a good idea to have a small amount of cash in reserve so you can reimburse any helpers who do your shopping for you. I will resist giving advice on how many toilet rolls you should have!



Richard Jefferies ☎ 863425 📠 07950 797273 [rajefferies@btinternet.com](mailto:rajefferies@btinternet.com)

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### **Christmas Shoe Box Appeal**

It is difficult to imagine Christmas gifts in the midst of a heat wave! Over several years, it has been an immense privilege for me to have collected in the Shoe Boxes for the desperately disadvantaged young and old in the Balkans. The boxes and contents have given such joy to those receiving them as they are the only gifts they receive all year round.

I have found that to be a part of the wonderful generous community in Mere has been very beneficial to the amount of boxes collected- over 100- but as I have now moved out of the immediate area I am looking for a replacement. Could you take over the collection? It is not an onerous job, very pleasurable, and so good to just give a little in a difficult world.

for further details Wendy Horne ☎ 821224 [cookwithluv4@gmail.com](mailto:cookwithluv4@gmail.com)

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## **From Mere Surgery**

### **PATIENT NEWSLETTER**

#### **Coronavirus**

We would ask for your co-operation in following the guidance below.

- Continue following social distancing guidance
- Maintain robust hand hygiene by washing hands with soap and water
- Self-isolate at the first sign of showing any of the symptoms linked to coronavirus
- Arrange a test for coronavirus at the first sign of showing any such symptoms
- Ensure every member of a household self-isolates when one person in the home develops symptoms

#### **Carers update**

Mere Surgery has been working with Carers Support Wiltshire and have been awarded the Gold Level in the Wiltshire Investors in Carers GP Accreditation Scheme.

In coming months Mere surgery will be organising Carer clinics together with Carer Support Wiltshire where Carers will be invited for an annual health check at the surgery.

There are still plans for a Carers Café in Mere with Carers Support Wiltshire as a place where Carers can meet and support one another. Due to COVID-19 these plans are on hold.

All patients registered as a Carer are eligible for a flu vaccination so please make sure you book an appointment.

#### **Flu clinics this year**

Flu clinics will be held in the surgery but will be a little different as we must adhere to social distancing guidelines.

- Patients must have a pre booked appointment
- Please do not attend before designated appointment time as we will not be able to let you into the building no matter what the weather.
- Patients will be instructed to queue outside the surgery as limited numbers are permitted inside the surgery in order to maintain a safe footfall within the surgery at all times.
- Please would all patients attending the surgery wear a face mask or covering.
- Please wear short sleeves so that it is easy for you to be ready for your vaccination.

## Eligibility

This year flu vaccinations will be offered under the NHS flu vaccination programme to the following groups:

- All children aged two to eleven (but not twelve years or older) on 31 August 2020
- People aged 65 years or over (including those becoming age 65 years by 31 March 2021)
- Those aged from six months to less than 65 years of age, in a clinical risk group such as those with:
  - chronic (long-term) respiratory disease, such as severe asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or bronchitis
  - chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
  - chronic kidney disease at stage three, four or five or chronic liver disease
  - chronic neurological disease, such as Parkinson's disease or motor neurone disease,
  - learning disability
  - diabetes
  - splenic dysfunction or asplenia
  - a weakened immune system due to disease (such as HIV/AIDS) or treatment (such as cancer treatment)
  - morbidly obese (defined as BMI of 40 and above)
- All pregnant women (including those women who become pregnant during the flu season)
- Household contacts of those on the NHS Shielded Patient List, or of immunocompromised individuals, specifically individuals who expect to share living accommodation with a shielded patient on most days over the winter and therefore for whom continuing close contact is unavoidable
- People living in long-stay residential care homes
- Those who are in receipt of a carer's allowance, or who are the main carer of an older or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill

For patients aged 50 -64 we are unable to offer vaccinations at the moment unless you are in an at risk group as we are waiting on national guidance on vaccine supply. We will invite patients in this age group when the vaccine is available. Please do not call the surgery to make these appointments until you have been notified.

Clinics for children age 2-3 year will be held in the surgery from mid September. Parents of children in this age group will be sent an invitation to make an appointment. All other children up to age 2-10 years on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020 will be vaccinated in school unless they are in an at risk category in which case they will be sent an invitation letter to make an appointment at the surgery. We would like to send text messages to as many parent or guardians as possible, so please update your child's contact details at the surgery.

Adult clinics will be held in the surgery from October onwards. On the following dates:

- Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2020
- Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2020
- Afternoon clinics will be available

### **Changes to appointments**

As you know, in light of the current situation, we have had to change the way we run our clinics recently and therefore it has been necessary to remove some routine face to face appointments.

We have introduced different types of appointments so if you have spoken to the GP before about the same issue please make this known to the receptionist when you ask for the GP to contact you.

In the same context, it would be helpful if you informed the receptionist if it is a new problem so you can be placed on the correct list.

All requests to see a GP are being triaged which means you will be put on a list and the GP will contact you to discuss your concern. Only after being triaged by the GP, if they feel it is necessary they will arrange the appointment for you to visit the surgery.

The Doctors at Mere Surgery ☎ 860001

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### **Action on Hearing Loss hearing Aid Clinic.**

Do you have an NHS hearing Aid from Salisbury Hospital?

Due to the Coronavirus and in line with current Government advice, our regular Hearing Aid Maintenance Drop-in Clinics for patients of Salisbury Hospital are suspended for the time being.

However, we are continuing to provide support by:

- Posting out batteries for free
- Giving information on how to clean. Maintain and get the best from your hearing aids
- Giving information on managing hearing loss

If you need help with your hearing aid please contact our Community Support Officer:

Gillian Drayson [gillian.drayson@hearingloss.org.uk](mailto:gillian.drayson@hearingloss.org.uk) ☎ 01722 580014  
[information@hearingloss.org.uk](mailto:information@hearingloss.org.uk) 0808 808 0123 Text phone 0808 808 9000

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### **Warminster Food Bank**

If you, or you know of someone in need of an emergency food box please contact either Rev Carol Green ☎ 861859 or George Jeans ☎ 07710 441599.

Penny Fennon ☎ 07833 131712 (after 6pm please).

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### **Battle of Britain – Wings Appeal**

This year sees the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

In normal times I would be calling on you at this time of the year seeking your support during Wings Week.

Sadly, due to the pandemic, I shall miss the friendly chats we have had over the years during my house to house collections but we have to beat this virus as a priority.

In the absence of my visit you can still continue to support us by sending any donations directly to our treasurer Mr D Curry at 19 Glyn Place, East Melbury, Shaftesbury, Dorset SP7 0DP. If you donate by cheque then please do write your address on the reverse. Thank you in advance of your help.

Until we meet again .....



Roy Sims, President of Shaftesbury Branch RAFA ☎ 863328

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## **Mere Historical Society**

This is just a brief summary of the situation and to remind you that we are still here. Unfortunately, there is little positive to report.

We are dependent on the Grove Building for our meetings and don't yet know when they will be able to open or what conditions will be imposed. Our programme is scheduled to begin in early October, although that seems unlikely, and if there is a second wave we can expect further delays. We will try to have a programme ready for when we can begin, but in the meantime please ignore any details you may have already seen because we are having to make it up as we go along.

We have decided to dispense with trying to fit in a delayed AGM this year, so the next AGM will be in early April 2021.

We would welcome members' feelings about our restart. Some members, I know, are keen to return as soon as possible, just for the chance to get out. Others may wish to be cautious about going to any meeting for a while. Our priority is to avoid any health risk and we want to avoid organising a speaker to find we have no audience. I would appreciate any feedback on where members stand on the issue of when we should start.

I would like to thank all those who have renewed their subscriptions (now expiring at the end of Mar2022 remember). There are now 86 of us who have done so, and we do appreciate your support. If you have renewed electronically but not had a card, then the message has not got through to me, so please let me know.

Let us hope for better news before too long!

Caroline Cook ☎ 861797 🌐 [merehistoricalsociety.org.uk](http://merehistoricalsociety.org.uk)

*Guess who is behind the blue facemask?*



### **Mere Snooker Club**

We are pleased to announce that the club has reopened with all the necessary safety measures in place. For membership enquiries, please contact



Mike Durkee Chairman ☎ 860163

### **Rosemary Goddard Centre**

Although we are all missing each other's company at the centre, we have still been having lots of fun doing telephone quizzes, reminiscence and poetry readings, there may have even been a bit of singing going on! We also have a buddy system in place that pairs guests with no local support or family with a volunteer who looks after them. This has been very successful and friendships have blossomed, which is lovely. One of our guests has managed to complete 24 jigsaw puzzles since our closure which has to be a record! During the last couple of weeks I have been carrying out socially distanced 'garden meetings' with each of our guests, it has been great to chat with everyone face to face and generally have a good catch up.

Sandie Hawkins, RGC Organiser 📞 07835 272406 🌐 [meredaycentre.org.uk](http://meredaycentre.org.uk)

### **Mere & District Railway Modellers**

As explained in earlier writings our annual exhibition was moved to the 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> of December. Unfortunately due to the Covid-19 restrictions in place for the opening of the Lecture Hall from September onwards, our committee has decided to still go forward with the idea but in a limited format aimed at those persons who attend our usual show from the Mere & District Area. So the new idea is for the event to happen only on **Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December** in the **Lecture Hall** from 9am to 4pm.

**The Exposition** (as we are going to call it ) will have **FREE admission** to all and due to the restrictions on the number allowed in at any one time a number of things will be different from usual.

- Only hot drinks will be available in the foyer while you are waiting for entrance to the show.
- Covid-19 checks will be carried out on entry.
- Most of the layouts will be those owned or made by members and a few will be automated and overseen by one person.
- There will be a comprehensive book stall that will also have many other railway orientated items for sale. Our usual trade support will be present.

- Some layouts will be for sale and others can be shown to individuals at the club house.

Since March a handful of members have spent many hours in improving the club house by extending the club room and fitting out and improving the ambience of the toilet! Subsequently we now have another entrance should a fire take place. The club has been completely repainted externally so we enter the Autumn in good shape.

Tom Snook ☎ 861977

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### **Library & Museum**

As of the time of writing we still have no further definite news on the opening of the library although some are beginning to open in other areas.

Don't forget I would very much like to hear from those of you who went to school in Mere with any anecdotes, school books or memories of special days would be welcome. Please contact me by email.

Rose Heesom 📠 07791 559674 [roseheesom@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:roseheesom@yahoo.co.uk)

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### **Mere Gardening Club**

We have taken the decision to cancel all further events due to take place in 2020. Our Secretary Janet Way, has decided the time is right for her to resign from the Committee and as a thank you for all her hard work over the years she has been given a garden voucher.

If you would like to become our new Secretary then please get in touch.

Following a request for sponsors for the flower tubs in the town the Committee have now sponsored one.

Rose Heesom Membership Sec 📠 07791 559 674 🌐 [meregardenclub.org.uk](http://meregardenclub.org.uk)

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### **Mere Theatre Club**

Refunds have now been distributed but sadly there is little good news on the theatre front. We can but hope for next year and perhaps a vaccine to frighten the virus away made from:

“Eye of newt, and toe of frog,  
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,  
Adder's fork, and blind-worm's sting,  
Lizard's leg, and howlet's wing,  
For a charm of powerful trouble,  
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

With thanks to William Shakespeare, Macbeth

Madelaine Morris ☎ 861833 [madsmorris@gmail.com](mailto:madsmorris@gmail.com)

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A little Covid quote:

*"I hope that the under belly of kindness rises to the top during this crisis' and I think they were right!"*

### **Mere Patient Participation Group**

PPG is a body, made up of volunteers, which acts as a liaison between the GP surgery and the local community. The group supports the surgery and gives it feedback from the community about what main needs and issues are. There is a maximum term of three years which any one individual can serve, but people can volunteer for less time if that suits better. Any patient from the surgery can volunteer to be a member of the committee. The committee currently meets for an hour once every other month, at a time agreed between members. In between that time, we tend to communicate via email.

Several members of the existing committee are due to stand down this autumn, and the PPG is asking for volunteers to join. In particular, we will need a new Chair, a Treasurer and a Secretary. This is a wonderful way to engage with the local community and meet people, but also to support our wonderful GP surgery - particularly vital at this difficult time. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Michele Mason at the surgery for an application form. The current committee is hoping to meet, outside and socially distanced, weather permitting, on 10th September. It would be fantastic to have any new members along then.

This is a great way to have a say in the vital issues of the community. We hope you will come and join us.

Jane Thomson

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### **Dressmaking in Mere**

Although the Dressmakers have decided not to carry on with the courses, or certainly not for now, many of them have been quite busy making Face Masks (Coverings) and emailing renewed instructions to each other which seem to fit the face and very safe and effective.

More importantly we are, as I write, about to make more Scrubs, this time for the Dental Surgery having made some for our GP Surgery in Mere and South Somerset. I will mention that the latest sets were cut out by Rachael Hansford and Susanne from The Sewing Corner in the heatwave, I think they nearly melted but all in a very good cause. Goodness knows how many sets have been cut out and sewn.

We do hope our sewing has helped to make the folk who work so hard to care for us feel safe and comfortable and how nice to do something like this together, although "working from home".

On a lighter note Susanne has been busy making Wedding Dresses at quite short notice when weddings have been able to be arranged, obtaining fabric has been challenging. We wish those brides a long and happy marriage and do hope that life one day will be back to (new) normal but for now keeping creative is fun and hopefully very productive.

Carol Lord ☎ 861923

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As we go to press, we're making final preparations for our first Suchana Support Group coffee morning since January – to be held outside, complying with safety regulations.

However, rain is forecast, and we can't meet inside if it's wet! We may try again on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> September. As always, everyone is very welcome. If you would like to come, please to be sure to ring or email first to book your time.

We hear that India is now the third-highest country in the world for its number of Covid-19 cases: by the time you read this it will be even higher as it is still increasing rapidly. It isn't quite as rampant in the countryside, such as in rural West Bengal where Suchana is situated, but it is very serious in Calcutta which isn't far away. The area is still in total lockdown two days a week and partial lockdown the rest of the time, so it isn't yet possible for Suchana to re-open its much-valued classes and support groups.

The Suchana teachers and volunteers have, instead, been busy distributing PPE as needed, together with story books in 26 surrounding villages, and transcribing for publication more local stories, (many of which haven't been written down before) in the languages spoken by most of the children, which will provide them, and other Adivasi children with much-needed opportunities for first language learning and literacy.

So the Suchana project that we support continues to be busy and productive, and is very much looking forward to welcoming the children back as soon as this is allowed, for the wide range of learning support groups and classes for these very marginalised children and communities. Mere has been incredibly generous to this project over the last 10 years, and we're very grateful to everyone who helps to make this possible.

Judith Thompson ☎ 860553 [judithvthompson@aol.com](mailto:judithvthompson@aol.com)

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## **Mere Bowls Club**

September will soon be upon us with the attendant closing of the green for the winter. In the short time that the Club is open, members and possible new members can come and bowl for free. No membership fees and no rink fees. All you need to do is a) Members should call John FitzGerald to book a rink for the required date/time or b) Non-members should contact Don Butchers who will do the rest.

For any other details about the Club please contact Don Butchers on 01747-860775 also [don.butchers@btinternet.com](mailto:don.butchers@btinternet.com) or visit the Club web site at [www.hugofox.com/community/mere-bowls-club-10160/home](http://www.hugofox.com/community/mere-bowls-club-10160/home)

Don Butchers on ☎ 860775 [don.butchers@btinternet.com](mailto:don.butchers@btinternet.com)

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## **Link Scheme**

We were saddened to hear of Diane Pringle's death. Diane was a valued Link driver for many years and we were privileged to be able to help her get to medical appointments as her health deteriorated. May she rest in peace.

The Link Scheme continues to provide transport during this period of relaxation of the coronavirus lockdown, taking clients to hospital or other medical appointments and delivering prescription medicines in our weekly dossette box run for Mere and Silton surgeries.

The number of available drivers has reduced to 10 as many of our volunteers are over 70 and not available to drive at present. There is beginning to be an increased demand, but we are still coping. We primarily cover people living in the local villages.

We continue to regularly review the changing advice from the Government and Community First who oversee Link Schemes for Wiltshire Council. The safety guidelines we introduced to protect both clients and drivers from the risk of spreading the virus are still in operation. Both driver and passenger have to wear a face covering while in the car and clients have to sit in the back where this is practical. Drivers carry hand sanitiser and wipe down all surfaces that may have been touched by the client while in the car.

Donations continue to be received and for the present we remain in a sound financial position. However, we do need more drivers. **We would appreciate hearing from anyone who is under 70 and wishes to help others.** Contact me on the Link Scheme number for more information.

John FitzGerald, Chair ☎ 860096

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## **Mere Film Shows**

Thank you very much to everyone who gave me feedback about re-starting our films. Based on this we have decided to re-start in early 2021. This year we were able to show 2 films, Downton Abbey [PG] and The Good Liar [15] and I know which one I preferred! A positive from not being able to show any further films is that we are still in profit and able to continue into next year!

In the mean time I would encourage you all, if able, to have a regular look at the **British Film Institute** website which has many interesting articles for cinephiles. ([www.bfi.org.uk](http://www.bfi.org.uk)).

Two that recently caught my eye were about the late Alan Parker:

<https://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/news-bfi/features/sir-alan-parker-1944-2020> and also one about the silent cinema:

<https://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/features/deep-focus/peak-silent-cinema-1926-1930-highpoint>

Rosie 📞 861567

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Seeds4Success are looking for local people who have a passion to improve the lives of young people, to join our team of volunteer mentors.

Young people living in a rural area such as ours can face additional barriers to achieving their goals and Seeds4Success exists to support those individuals. The impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on young people's lives in our community means our role is more vital than ever. An independent role model in their life will be all the difference many may need.

Our mentors meet with a young person regularly for a year or so and use their skills and experience to build a positive relationship with a young person, helping them to develop their social skills, self-esteem, confidence and resilience, as well as achieving their goals and reaching their potential.

Our mentoring programme has been possible thanks to the generous donations of many local people, including the family and friends of Jamie Mackaness. During his time in the military, Jamie mentored young recruits and peers, leaving a lasting impression and legacy. He wanted to put these skills into practice in the local community through his support of Seeds4Success. Following Jamie's sad passing in 2018, his family and friends raised and continue to raise a significant amount of funding in support of Seeds4Success.



If you are 18 or over, able to attend three training sessions during weekends or evenings as well as a first aid course, commit to a few hours per week for a year or so and want to change the lives of young people in your community for the better, then mentoring may be for you.

Please visit our website to find out more about mentoring with Seeds4Success or get in touch.

Lee Cherry. Mentoring Manager [lee@seeds4success.org.uk](mailto:lee@seeds4success.org.uk) ☎ 07570 819140  
[seeds4success.org.uk](https://seeds4success.org.uk) Registered Charity number 1151541



## **Way to go Janet!**

If you have seen someone walking up and down each flight of steps 2/3/even 4 times, don't worry or think someone must be mad! It is only me in training for my next walking adventure! As you are well aware through the many issues of Mere Matters, I have been a committed supporter of the Fair Trade Movement.

Traidcraft celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> birthday last year and this year I

celebrate my 40<sup>th</sup> year as a Voluntary Rep. When the opportunity arose to join a challenge of a sponsored trek along the Camino de Santiago Trail, I jumped at the opportunity to combine my love of walking and raising money for the invaluable work of Traidcraft Exchange, Traidcraft's sister charity. I had 4 walking holidays planned this year to help get into the routine of donning walking boots every day but of course the coronavirus has put a stop to all of these and still the possibility of being able to travel to Spain in October is uncertain.



The work of Traidcraft Exchange, particularly with smallholder farmers, the disabled and other vulnerable groups has been integral in helping these groups to weather the virus and some of them have even been in a position to support others in their communities. It has been heartening to read some of their stories.

Through the generosity of family and friends I have managed to raise much of the £1,650 sponsor money and had hoped to be able to organise a few fund-raising events in Mere over the next 2 months to make up the balance. If anyone would like to support me, please let me know – I would really be so grateful.



Should it not be possible to travel to Spain, I plan to walk the Pilgrim's Way from Winchester to Canterbury: certainly an alternative pilgrimage without the worry of travelling by air! So the training must continue and that mad woman will still be seen climbing the heights of Castle Hill!

Janet Way ☎ 860884

- ☎ = Landline telephone
- 📱 = Mobile telephone
- ✉ = Email Address
- 🌐 = Website Address
- 📘 = Facebook

## **Merely Women**

I trust all you ladies are keeping well and looking forward to the resumption of Merely Women. Unfortunately, the decision has been made that we will not resume before the New Year - hopefully by then, the issues of social distancing etc will have eased. I know this will be disappointing but our safety must come first. This cannot be until the Grove Building reopens and we consider it safe for large groups like us to meet.

When we have more information, I will be in touch with you through Mere Matters.

Jean Eyles ☎ 863450 [jseyles2@aol.com](mailto:jseyles2@aol.com)

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## **Mere Rivers Group - Wildlife Sightings for 2020**

Thank you once more for sending us all your sightings, which have been interesting. June in particular proved to be a wonderful month for seeing butterflies, and flights of marbled white and meadow brown butterflies were reported. Also people seemed to be noticing more bird calls. Other nature sightings are listed below:

**June** - seen daily: mallard and her five baby ducklings and eight older ducklings on the Shreen at Waterside.

A pair of moorhen were first reported on their nest and, later in the month, with their three chicks. Goldcrest seen three times, chiffchaff seen three times and flights of marbled white and meadow brown butterflies.

Seen once were: water rail, green woodpecker, grey wagtail, a buzzard circling, a group of four sticklebacks, light emerald moth and a scarlet tiger moth.

The calls of blackcap, whitethroat, bullfinch, goldcrest and chiffchaff were heard.

**July** – seen daily: pair of moorhens, initially with their three older chicks and later in the month building a new nest with six baby chicks appearing towards the end of July. Subsequently it was lovely to see the older chicks helping with rearing the babies!

Other sightings in July: water vole seen twice. Seen once were: - heron in flight, small trout, holly blue butterfly, bullfinch and polecat.

## **Nature Notes**

Because of the fabulous weather throughout May there was an abundance of wild flowers which led to many butterflies being observed in the area. These included marbled white, meadow brown and holly blue, already mentioned, but others seen further afield were peacock, red admiral, tortoiseshell, comma and various skipper butterflies.

Also seen further afield were a family of four kestrels, a pair of ravens and a drove of four hares.

The other thing noticed, during July, was the huge amount of berries forming on so many bushes and shrubs. This and the quantity of flowers seen earlier in the year are a result of a mild winter and warm spring and we would hope this should result in a fabulous feeding source for masses of small mammals and birds, including those on migration, so do please keep your eyes peeled and let us know. Thank you!

Lynne Bann ☎ 860174 [mereriverwildlife@btinternet.com](mailto:mereriverwildlife@btinternet.com)

### **St Michaels Fundraising**

Mark Green is swimming the Channel in a 4-person relay between 2 - 6<sup>th</sup> September and is raising funds for St Michael the Archangel Church in Mere. This was a practice swim on 1st January 2020 to welcome in the New Year at Lyme Regis. Baloo was certainly enjoying himself in all that cold water but he won't be accompanying Mark.

The Channel Swimming Association have said that despite the quarantine arrangements in France as long as they don't go near anyone on landing they'll be ok. Can you support Mark please?

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/swimstmichaels>.

Otherwise please contact the church's treasurer Nigel Leek on 860490 [nigel.leek@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nigel.leek@yahoo.co.uk). Follow Mark's progress on St Michael's website and Facebook page



### **Mothers' Union and Open Members' Group**



I wish I could tell you of our plans for the next few months. The committee of Mothers Union are holding a Garden Committee Meeting in September if the weather holds. We pass our best wishes to all who usually attend our monthly meetings and those reading this.

There is such a thing as an "Indoor Member of the Mothers Union" We all seem to be Indoor Members right now so have more empathy of how that feels. We celebrated Mary Sumner Day, Mary Sumner was our founder, this year on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> August by sharing in a service on Zoom or just reading the service received by email. Some of us have seen each other, behind the face masks in our Church Services, how nice to see most of a familiar face and share in worship. Sometimes members share a poem so I would like to share this one, stay well and we really hope to see you soon.

The best and sweetest things in life are things you cannot buy;  
The music of the birds at dawn, the rainbows in the sky;  
The dazzling magic of the stars, the miracle of light;

The precious gifts of health and strength, of hearing, speech and sight;  
The peace of mind that crowns a busy life of work well done,  
a faith in God that deepens as you face the setting sun;  
the pearl of love, the gems of friendship as the years go by you find the  
greatest blessings are the things you cannot buy.

Carol Lord on behalf of the Mere Mothers Union.

Christabelle Kiriticos ☎ 861065 Christine Marsh ☎ 861212 Carol Lord ☎ 861923

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### **Friends of Mere Museum**

We are not surprised - but quite determined not to be downhearted - that we have to announce the postponement of our planned October talk by Martin Papworth. We shall just make the most of having longer to look forward to it! But October 2020 remains our 30th Anniversary date, Covid or no Covid, so our thoughts are turning to ways in which we might be able to mark the event, virtually perhaps. Meanwhile here's a bit of history, courtesy of the Minute Book and Dr. David Longbourne!

The inaugural meeting of The Friends was held as part of an Museum Open Evening event in the Library/Museum on Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup>. October, 1990, chaired by the Revd. Ben Elliott and attended by 77 people (we were always popular!). The main business was to confirm the setting up of the Friends of Mere Museum as a fund-raising group for the Museum (which had, and still has, no other source of income), and the acceptance of a constitution. Officers were also elected: Tom Stedman as Chairman, Rosemary Price as Vice-Chairman, Colin Anderson as Secretary and Mike Willis as Treasurer. From a long list of volunteers to serve on the committee, Rex Roberts, Bill Walworth, Sonja Cassell and Diane Pringle were elected. Cllr. Giles Brown was nominated to represent the Parish Council. At the first committee meeting on 23rd October, there were 65 members, and counting. There was an amazing £860 in the bank! In those days! An auspicious beginning! The first Newsletter was issued on October 30<sup>th</sup>, probably compiled by Colin Anderson. So we already have three possible dates for a celebration event of some sort next month! Please send ideas and/or memories to Jenny Wilding (email preferred if possible please.) All details in the next issue. We'll have a proper celebration event when 'all this' is over!

Jenny Wilding ☎ 860908 [jenny@flaxmill.org.uk](mailto:jenny@flaxmill.org.uk)

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### **Mere Amateur Dramatic Society**

Looking on the Bright Side (of Life), we're all (cautiously) encouraged by the recent news that indoor performances are to be allowed to resume! So, having found a space somewhere and set up a platform of sorts, here's the plan. We find a suitable play with as few characters as possible, one being the minimum and the preferred option but no more than three. This way we minimise the social distancing problems and there's no need for controlled breathing. No singing in any case. Minimal costumes, and ditto props for that matter, so no sanitising on 'stage'. No 'stage

manager' either, sanitized or not. Make-up optional. Prompt? We don't need a prompt. Rehearsals in the open air regardless of ambient temperature. Performances possibly likewise but not if it's raining, or snowing. Tickets and programmes, virtual only. Audience capacity - easily as many as 20. Sub-titles provided so that words can be understood through the actors' masks.

Doable? We're working on it! Watch this space!!

Jenny Wilding 📞 860908 [jenny@flaxmill.org.uk](mailto:jenny@flaxmill.org.uk)

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# Something different for a change ...

## COVID-19 Wordsearch.

APOCOLYPSE  
CAREER  
CONTAGIOUS  
DISTANCE  
FURLOUGH  
GOWNS  
HOSPITAL  
IMMUNITY  
INFECTION  
INOCULATE  
INTENSIVE  
LOCKDOWN  
MASKS  
NIGHTINGALE  
PANDEMIC

PATIENTS  
PPE  
QUARANTINE  
RECOVERY  
RESILIENCE  
RESPITE  
SCRUBS  
SOCIAL  
STERILE  
TESTANDTRACE  
VACCINE  
VENTILATOR  
VIRUS  
VOLUNTEERS

N	V	M	H	U	Z	Y	T	I	N	U	M	M	I	Z	H	S	S	N	N
Q	Y	R	E	C	O	V	E	R	Y	M	Q	S	C	M	O	U	F	L	F
E	Q	H	K	S	V	C	B	F	K	K	B	Y	T	O	S	X	K	O	O
Q	C	G	R	V	M	N	E	N	I	C	C	A	V	P	P	C	S	J	T
X	U	U	E	G	E	N	I	T	N	A	R	A	U	Q	I	B	U	M	V
H	R	O	E	W	S	R	E	E	T	N	U	L	O	V	T	W	R	D	E
B	D	L	R	E	S	P	Y	L	O	C	O	P	A	W	A	R	I	N	C
D	D	R	A	P	Z	T	C	U	M	S	X	F	P	I	L	S	V	K	N
S	E	U	C	C	S	U	O	I	G	A	T	N	O	C	T	U	Q	M	E
J	V	F	E	K	D	J	O	C	L	X	S	B	N	A	N	L	U	L	I
I	I	J	K	A	C	Q	R	C	C	J	V	K	N	X	V	N	X	Y	L
E	S	T	N	W	O	D	K	C	O	L	B	C	S	K	E	R	N	M	I
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I	E	H	R	E	S	P	I	T	E	F	S	E	J	U	T	V	X	C	E
R	T	C	J	N	I	G	H	T	I	N	G	A	L	E	I	S	U	R	R
E	N	O	V	I	N	O	C	U	L	A	T	E	G	R	L	B	I	U	T
T	I	N	R	L	A	I	C	O	S	P	O	Y	O	I	A	L	P	B	D
S	T	E	S	T	A	N	D	T	R	A	C	E	W	T	T	G	P	S	Y
F	J	Q	Z	F	S	T	N	E	I	T	A	P	N	J	O	M	E	K	X
A	B	C	I	M	E	D	N	A	P	B	Q	V	S	P	R	B	H	W	W

## **Booking Meeting Venues**

Grove Building:	Derek Fisher <a href="mailto:administrator@grovebuildingmere.com">administrator@grovebuildingmere.com</a>	☎ 07935 266375
Lecture Hall:	Sally Johnson	☎ 861063
URC Church Hall:	Eileen Burfitt	☎ 860685

## **Mere Information Point @ The Library**

The following Support/Advice Centres are held on a regular basis:

Wiltshire Dementia Adviser Service	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday	2.00pm – 4.00pm
Registrar of Births & Deaths	By appt. only Thursdays	☎ 0300 003 4569 9.30am – 11.30
Health Trainer	Last Tuesday in month	10.00am – 12.00pm

## **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 [merewilts.org](http://merewilts.org)

## **Church Contact Details – No services until further notice**

### ***The Parish Church, St Michael's the Archangel:***

Priest in Charge: Rev'd Carol Green ☎ 861859  
[vicar@stmichaelsmere.org.uk](mailto:vicar@stmichaelsmere.org.uk) *Saturday is Rest day*  
 Churchwarden: Mrs Lynette Elliott ☎ 861646  
 PCC Secretary: [office@stmichaelsmere.org.uk](mailto:office@stmichaelsmere.org.uk)

### ***Church Services in September for St Michael's Mere and St Mary's West Knoyle***

We are very happy to be open again for church services although in a limited way. Access is through the door beneath the Tower inside there is hand sanitiser. We practise social distancing and safe seating is indicated. Communion bread only is given after the priest has carefully sanitised their hands. Services are quiet and contemplative as singing is still not permitted.

The church remains open all day for private prayer. We are conducting modest weddings and funerals too.

### **St Michael's services**

6<sup>th</sup> September 10.30 CW

13<sup>th</sup> September 8am (BCP) and 10.30 (CW)

20<sup>th</sup> September 8am (BCP)

27<sup>th</sup> September St Michael's Feast Day 10.30 (CW)

**West Knoyle Parish Church, St Mary the Virgin:**

Priest in Charge: Rev'd Carol Green ☎ 861859

[vicar@stmichaelsmere.org.uk](mailto:vicar@stmichaelsmere.org.uk) *Saturday is Rest day*

Churchwardens: Mrs Jill Randall ☎ 830534, Mr Colin Seaford ☎ 830263

**All Saints Church, Maiden Bradley – Services Cancelled until further notice**

Priest in Charge: Rev'd Carol Green ☎ 861859

[vicar@stmichaelsmere.org.uk](mailto:vicar@stmichaelsmere.org.uk) *Saturday is Rest day*

Churchwarden: Mrs Celia Blay ☎ 01985 844817

**St Mary's Services**

20<sup>th</sup> September 9.30 (CW)

Annual Parochial Church Meetings

St Michaels at 7pm on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September in the church

St Mary's at 6pm on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September in the church

**The United Reformed Church**

Minister - Rev'd Duncan Goldie

Mere Contact: Molly Burden ☎ 860007

Pending final approval, we hope the renovations to the church will commence in the autumn. Details of arrangements for services whilst work is taking place will be announced as soon as possible.

**The Roman Catholic Church: St Mary Queen of Peace.**

Father Louis Beasley-Suffolk: ☎ 01963 34408

[hope@stlukeswincanton.org.uk](mailto:hope@stlukeswincanton.org.uk)

Contacts: Carole Marshall ☎ 861905 or John Fitzgerald ☎ 860867

**Copy date for October 2020 Issue - CHANGE TO SCHEDULE!**

Closing deadline is: **4:00pm on FRIDAY 18th September.** Email contributions are preferred, to the Editor, Richard Jefferies ☎ 863425 [editor@merematters.co.uk](mailto:editor@merematters.co.uk) or deliver to 16 Underhill, Mere, BA12 6LU.

Please be sure to state your name and a contact telephone number to ensure inclusion.




## Mere Local Resilience Group Telephone Coordinator Details


Name	Home Phone	Mobile
Ann Rich	01747 861493	07413 512023
Isabel Page	01747 860297	
Jane Batten	01747 860583	
Joanne King		07740 858923
Julie Norris		07503 525954
Mary Wilson	01747 229609	07550 076240
Rachael Hansford	01747 860168	07989 470278
Rose Heesom		07791 559674
Roy Beavis		07878 903178

If you are self-isolating and have absolutely no other family, friends or neighbours who can help you, then please contact one of these between the hours of 8.00am - 6.00pm.

If you can volunteer in any way or wish to make any comment then please contact:

Richard Jefferies

 01747 863425

 07950 797273

 [rajefferies@btintemet.com](mailto:rajefferies@btintemet.com)

### The Butt of Sherry Update from the Butt of Sherry Preservation Society.

Firstly we were told that the pub had been sold and that Dawn and Brenden would be leaving on August 28<sup>th</sup> however it seems that at that point it wasn't actually the case and nothing had been signed or finalised. So after we gathered for an emergency committee meeting we had news that we could place a new bid with the Estate Agent and raised an incredible amount in 48 hours along with a letter of support from our finance company which we believed was sufficient to make a bid.

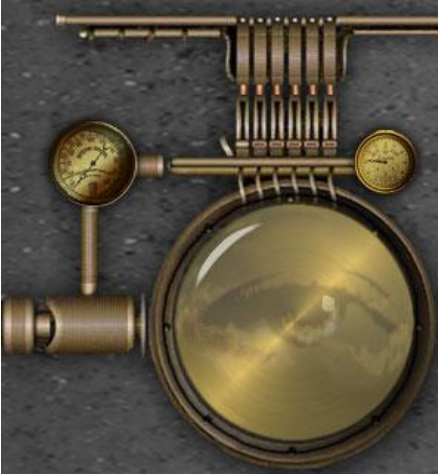
It is however with great regret that I have to report that the initial bid was accepted over ours as it was a cash offer without further hindrance or delay and the transfer would be going ahead with the initial bidder.

Dawn and Brenden have secured a new but temporary property in Somerset and as of August 28<sup>th</sup> if the new owner hasn't himself secured a new tenant the Butt of Sherry will close. We wish the Bromillows all the best for the future and thank them for their efforts.

We are trying to work with the new owner to secure the appointment of a new tenant but we feel this may not be easy in the current pandemic climate. We will still work tirelessly to maintain the Butt as a hostelry and will further fight any efforts to overturn the Asset of Community Value order and any future change of use applications, this will be carried out under the banner of the Butt of Sherry Preservation Society with the Mere Community Benefit Society being mothballed once share monies have been repaid.

Huge thanks to all those in Mere for the way you have supported us and hope we can rely on your support in any future efforts to keep the Butt of Sherry for the community.





# Teeandee Productions

## Web Design

Promotional Videos  
and Computer Services

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