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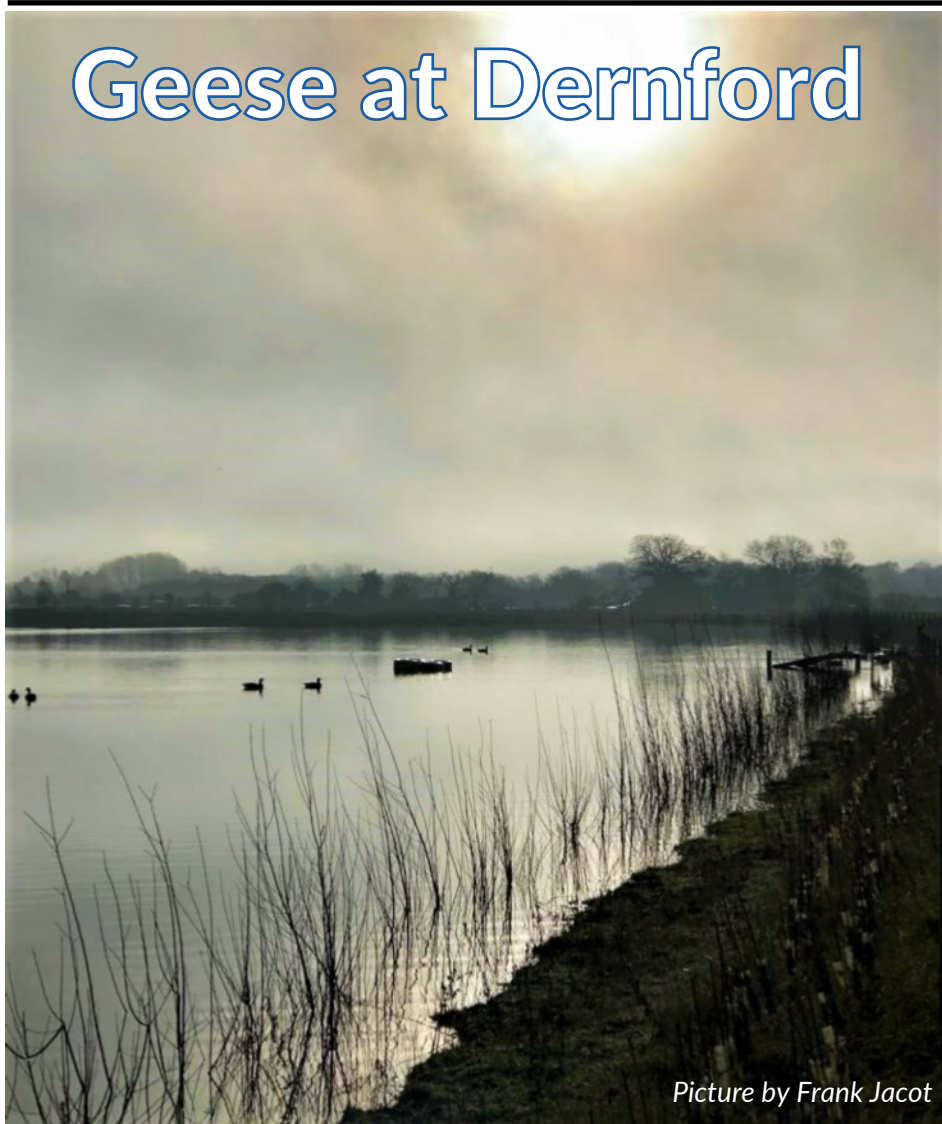
MESSENGER

March 2021

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Geese at Dernford



Picture by Frank Jacot

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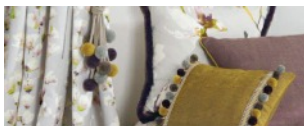
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www.standrewstapleford.org

Parish priest

Rev Dr Simon Taylor 840256

Curate

Rev Clare Coates 07818 618795

Churchwardens

Mary Cooper 842127

Alastair MacGregor
07855 269844

Parish Safeguarding Officer

Lisa MacGregor 07523 668731

Parish Administrator

Gillian Sanders 07752 373176

Youthworker

Zoe Clayton 894656

Children's Ministry

Sue Brown 01954 264246

Director of Music

John Bryden 07803 706847

PCC secretary

Nicky West 07927 531719

Treasurer

Chris Bow 841982

Verge

Clare Kerr 842984

Sacristan

Peter Green 500404

Captain of bellringers

Tony Smith 843379

Church flowers

Jackie Nettleton 721366

Liz Hodgkins 01638 570060

Stapleford-Nachingwea Link

Trish Maude 242263

Mothers' Union

Hilary Street 840548

Johnson Memorial Hall

Gillian Sanders 07752 373176

Friends of St Andrew's

Tony Hore 843796

SERVICES at St ANDREW'S

Sunday services vary from week to week and our pattern is changing as we come out of lockdown. See the St Andrew's Noticeboard for this month, and the church website at standrewstapleford.org for full details. The services include:

- 9am Book of Common Prayer Communion
- 10.30am Communion, Services of the Word, Messy Church and Forest Church
- 2pm Sunday Praise
- 4.30pm Connect

SERVICES AT OTHER CHURCHES

Roman Catholic

Sundays 10am and 5pm

Shelford Free Church (Baptist)

Sundays 10.30am

All house, prayer and Bible study groups are cancelled until further notice.

Christenings and Weddings

Christenings take place during Sunday worship.

For both Christenings and Weddings, contact the parish priest.

Stapleford MESSENGER

Editor

Contact staplefordmessenger@gmail.com

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From the Rev Dr Simon Taylor

I ADMIRE Eddie Izzard. Her latest feat is 31 marathons and 31 comedy gigs in January in aid of charities including Fareshare, Walking with the Wounded and Care International. Previous efforts include 43 in 51 days across the UK, and 27 in 27 days in South Africa. She has performed comedy routines in English, French, German, Spanish, Russian and Arabic; been a member of Labour's National Executive Committee, and received various honorary degrees and show business awards, but no public state-sponsored honour.



I also admire Harmander Singh, aged 60, who walked 500 miles for charitable causes in his back garden last year to add to the 161 marathons he has previously run. A fine man, outward-looking, community-minded. A British citizen to be proud of. Again, no public honours for him either, nor for most of the thousands of other innovative and committed charity fund raisers in our society.

Captain Tom Moore was admirable too, a small ray of light in a grim year. I loved the slightly comic but thoroughly heart-warming sight of him tottering round the garden hoping to raise a few thousand for NHS charities. The fact that his endeavours went viral and raised many millions shows how many appreciated his efforts. Farewell Captain Tom. May you rest in peace and rise in glory!

Is there any reason, then, to feel some discomfort at what has followed? Moore was a good example, resilient, optimistic and inspiring. But was he, as one commentator said, really 'the very best of us'? Were the knighthood, the minute's silence in Parliament on his death, the probable statue, possible hospital-naming and a national clap a bit OTT, not to mention the vast array of other public honours? Take a look online for the flypast, the post mark on all letters on his birthday, and the naming of things as various as a bus, a police dog, a Hornby model locomotive, a foal, and a fire service boat.

These thoughts, lurking in my curmudgeonly mind, have been brought to the fore by an offensive tweet by Revd Jarel Robinson-Brown. For those who missed the row, Robinson-Brown is one of those people who deliberately say uncomfortable things. That is his method of operating, from his black, gay, left-wing perspective. His tweet was shortly after Captain Tom died, and before the national clap was to take place. It was insensitive and poorly timed, and could have caused more grief to the family. He rightly withdrew it and apologised. Robinson-Brown wrote: 'The cult of Captain

Tom is a cult of White British Nationalism. I will offer prayers for the repose of his kind and generous soul, but I will not be joining the “National Clap”.’

Robinson-Brown was calling the furore around Moore a ‘cult’, and saying it was linked to white British nationalism. The offence to the family lay in seeming to link Moore himself to white British nationalism. But others took offence too, misconstruing the tweet as saying that all those who liked or admired Moore were white British nationalists. That is plainly not the case, and just as plainly not what he was saying. Notably, however, the pile on to Robinson-Brown included the right-wingers Laurence Fox, Nigel Farage, Kelvin MacKenzie and the blogger Guido Fawkes. When they team up the rest of us ought to wonder whether the tweeter has at least half a good point.

Now tweets are not a good medium for referencing complexity. But even so Robinson-Brown’s attempt – ham-fisted as it was - to defend Moore’s memory from those who have so obviously appropriated it to political ends is a good thing. Raising the issue of why Moore has been quite so elevated in the public consciousness above so many other worthy fundraisers is a good thing. It is likewise a good thing to wonder why he has received such vast and overblown acclaim when others, many of them people of colour - who have died in disproportionate numbers in service as health care and transport workers - have received by comparison only passing mention. Robinson-Brown used offensive language, but, as he points out elsewhere, ‘Sometimes, rage is the only thing that gets the high and mighty to notice the manifold sicknesses at work in a disordered, disunited kingdom.’

I want to give you my gospel insights into all this, but at the moment they are a little hazy. We have, I think, a national problem with idolatry – the worship of anything instead of God – and that sometimes focuses on people like Moore, and sometimes on organisations like the NHS. We should beware of that, for idolatry is a grievous sin. There is something cult-ish going on here, not least the suppression of dissenting voices. And if one of our black brothers and sisters says it feels like a cult of white nationalism to them, then we should listen to understand before shouting that they are wholly wrong. That is how we love them as we love ourselves. The forces of exploitation and manipulation that routinely oppress the poor in our society are in play in the Moore saga. Christians should condemn those more loudly than an injudicious tweet. And we should look to ourselves and our own errors and omissions – notice that beam in our own eyes - before pointing out the mote in Robinson-Brown’s.

Every blessing to you all, Simon

Deadline for the APRIL Messenger

Please submit copy **NO LATER THAN MONDAY 15 MARCH**

By email to staplefordmessenger@gmail.com

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St Andrew's Noticeboard

IN March our services will probably be online only, though we will keep the matter under review and re-start in-person once it is safe to do so. Sunday services will be on our St Andrew's Stapleford YouTube channel.

28 FEB	10.30 am	SERVICE OF THE WORD FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT Genesis 17.1-7, 15-16; John 8.51-59 <i>Before Abraham was, I am</i>
7 MAR	10.30 am	SERVICE OF THE WORD FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT Exodus 20.1-17; John 2.13-22 <i>In three days</i>
14 MAR	10.30 am	ALL AGE SERVICE for MOTHERING SUNDAY
21 MAR	10.30 am	SERVICE OF THE WORD FOR THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT Jeremiah 31.33-34; John 12.20-33 <i>We would like to see Jesus</i>
28 MAR	10.30 am	SERVICE OF THE WORD FOR PALM SUNDAY Mark 11.1-11; 14.1-15.47 <i>Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord</i>

The chancel is open every day as a place to come and pray or enjoy a moment of quiet reflection.

Information about any changes or additional weekday Zoom services will be on our website at www.standrewstapleford.org.

Want to try Alpha?



WHY is there suffering? Is there a God? Science and faith together? Want to know the basics of the Christian faith?

St Andrew's is going to run Alpha Online, using Zoom, for those aged 18 or over. It's free, and a great opportunity to ask questions, meet people and explore doubts and issues, from the comfort of your own home. No commitment necessary – you can come and go as you please. We would love you to join us for some or all of the eight weekly sessions, starting Tuesday 13 April from 7pm to 8.30pm. We have a brief welcome time, watch a short film and then have a time of discussion. Please book your place by contacting lizzie.taylor@cantab.net or call Lizzie on 07973 721106.

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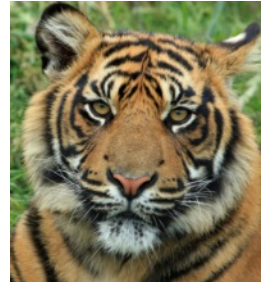
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Tech-scape

OVER the months of lockdown I have seen my computer screensaver in a different way. Years ago I had one picture which I quite liked. It showed a road twisting and turning into the distance rather like a metaphor for recent events. I imagined where it might lead and the adventures I'd have if I followed the route. Technology stepped in. Sometimes a view will appear for ten days or so. On other occasions the image comes and goes speedily. I really don't know why, but the variety is interesting, creating a sense of wonder.

Yesterday I saw a mountainous scene almost empty of vegetation. At first glimpse the rocky terrain looked unwelcome for walkers or climbers. On closer inspection horses grazed on a plateau, appearing content. How had they got there; were they looked after? Maybe they were wild. Before I could find out the picture vanished. The replacement is of a single, beautiful, grey horse, mane streaming in the wind, nostrils flared, eyes wide, galloping in waves close to the shore. A lovely photograph. Some weeks ago I saw a full screen stalking tiger, truly 'burning bright.' I wanted to see the jungle where it emerged. The animal was strong, healthy and looking out with a fixed glare almost saying, 'What are you doing here?'



I really like seeing the animals, except once when it featured prey. Another time a most unusual bird filled the screen with long, slender, blue legs and scaly talons. Its sharp beak felt menacing and the glinting eyes meant business. I was pleased when it disappeared. Rather like life we don't always have choices. I could ruin the element of surprise by somehow fixing the screensaver; my decision was technology.

We need escapism. Wandering the world 'virtually' is a very pleasant way to travel... no bookings, luggage or transport arrangements. One major difficulty, the absence of people... but COVID free!

It is good to allow the imagination space and time away from reality. Yet outdoors, even locally, shows us the truth. Snowdrops, aconites, crocus and hellebores are popping up braving the cold, heralding Spring. They have meanings. Snowdrops are known as Candlemas bells signifying darkness into light. The hellebore is known as the Lenten rose. That thought takes us into the prayerful, reflective forty days of Lent leading to Easter with the joyous daffodil. Much for us to consider as the year unfolds. **Judith Lee**

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WI news



IN February we jumped in and held our first Zoom meeting for members, at which we had a speaker, Faith Powell.

Faith became fixated with quiz shows when she was resting with a newborn baby (now 32!), and after a few months she applied to go on a show called Going for Gold. After some heats she was chosen to represent England, and ended up in the final against Mr Belgium, winning a prestigious “Golden Nugget”.

Since then she has been on 13 quiz shows, and won six. We were treated to gossip, anecdotes, and she showed us some of the prizes she had won. We were even invited to join in with some of the questions! We all had a great laugh as she regaled us with stories of Bob Monkhouse (right) on Wipeout having his make-up repaired mid-show while he whispered an answer in her ear, and how on Ready Steady Cook her friend was so nervous she grated her finger, dropped an orange into a bowl of cream, and then when Paul Rankin leant over to see what had happened his tea towel slipped off his shoulder and burst into flames on the hot plate below! It was a hilarious hour, and we will definitely be hosting more Zoom speakers as the 27 attendees, including some from neighbouring WIs, enjoyed it so much.



We also continue with our regular raffles, birthday cards to members, book group, and quizzes. The committee works hard to make members feel part of the group.

All best wishes, stay safe everyone, and please contact Sallie Dixon if you'd like any more information about the WI, on 843847. Also see staplefordwi.weebly.com. **Helen Hale**



Looking for a local venue?

The Johnson Hall, next to St Andrew's Church, is an ideal venue for small groups and children's parties. The Hall is **available for hire** for one-off events and regular bookings.

For details please contact **Gillian Sanders**:

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Mothers' Union news



WE are not able to hold a World Day of Prayer service this year (see separate notice from Joy Barnes). However, we have been invited to join in Sawston's WDP service on Zoom on 5 March (time tbc). Please contact me if you are interested in joining. Joy Barnes is putting the service booklets in St Andrew's church porch, so do pick one up even if you are not able to attend the Sawston service. There are Gift Aid envelopes in the booklets for anyone wishing to contribute to WDP funds, to be returned to Mary Cooper.

On the Feast of the Annunciation (25 March), Sawston has invited us to join in a Zoom service at 9.30am led by Petra Shakshaft. Again, tell me if you'd like details.

Now that vaccinations are well under way, let's hope it won't be too long before we can meet up. **Hilary Street**

World Day Of Prayer service



IT will not be possible to hold the annual World Day Of Prayer service on the first Friday in March. The service is postponed until later in the year because of coronavirus restrictions. Please keep an eye on the *Messenger* for more information. **Joy Barnes**

Laptops for home schooling

I'VE been working with Chris Smith (COVID support group) and Jas Hill (Parochial Charities) to try to provide refurbished laptops to local schools for home schooling.

We have a small number of laptops available for children in Great/Little Shelford and Stapleford who need them for home schooling. The laptops won't be fast, but all have Windows 10, webcam, speakers and WiFi - fine for using the Internet and typing documents.

If you have a child who needs a laptop, please contact me. The machines will be provided as a long-term loan. Also, if you have any laptops you are happy to donate, please get in touch by emailing mike.nettleton@eagleanalysis.co.uk, or phoning 721366/07905 356468.

Mike Nettleton

2G3S



AT our meeting on 8 February, we did some planning but also had a short talk about the Local Plan from Brian Milnes, who is the District Councillor for Sawston and is the Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services at SCDC.

You probably know that District Councils have to formulate such a plan well ahead of when it's to be enacted, and has to fit into Government housebuilding targets. Within that, the council has control of where development happens and what kind. SCDC is very aware of the need to be as near to net zero carbon as possible, and of the pressure on our chalk aquifer for water, so these will probably be the two main determinants of the pattern of development. However much development is decided on in the new plan, there is a substantial amount of housebuilding already in the pipeline from the previous local plan, on which the Government overruled SCDC.

More details are at greatercambridgeplanning.org/local-plan - something to get engaged with during the long days of lockdown. There has previously been consultation around the villages, and there will be a further public consultation later in the year about possible patterns of development, at which you will be able to influence the future of our area.

Other topics discussed at the meeting included East West Rail (EWR), tree planting in the UK, and the busway.

You may recall that some of us attended The Time Is Now lobby of MPs two years ago, organised by the Climate Coalition, which is formed of a wide variety of groups (e.g. WWF, National Trust, Woodland Trust, Christian Aid, Friends of the Earth, Cafod, WI, RSPB, CPRE). I managed to speak to Heidi Allen, then our MP, about climate change. The lobby went online in 2020 and resulted in Anthony Browne, our current MP, holding the first of his Environmental Forums with constituents. In addition to the lobbies the Coalition organises a campaign each February called Show the Love, and it invites people to make green hearts and send them on a postcard to their MP to show their love for the planet/nature. You can also wear a heart as a badge or display some in your window. Find out more about the actions taken this year on the Climate Coalition's website - or search for Show the Love in your search engine. This is a kind of soft activism called Craftivism, and some of you may have watched Jenny Éclair's excellent programme about it on BBC4 at the end of January, available on iPlayer.

Our next event, at 8pm on Thursday 11 March is a talk by James Littlewood, the Chief Executive of Cambridge Past, Present & Future, on the Cambridge Nature Network, which is their plan to increase biodiversity in the area. For a Zoom link please email the address below.

Send an email to greengroupssss@gmail.com to sign up for our newsletter, to ask a question, or to join in any of our meetings. Also see our Facebook page. **Helen Hale**

Chestnut Club

WITH much regret we announce the permanent closure of the Chestnut Club.

The Club was formed in 1970 after several people in the village had the bright idea of forming a social friendship group for the more elderly residents and Stapleford Chestnut Club was born. From the beginning it was intended for both men and women meeting twice a month and was formally established with a constitution, a chairman and committee and a membership subscription (a modest £5 per annum).

The first meeting took place in the Johnson Hall in April of that year and proved so popular that at one stage, there was a waiting list (fire regulations limited members). There has been a wide-ranging programme of travel, history, craft and other talks, demonstrations etc. within a framework of regular dates i.e. the birthday party in April, summer outings, a harvest meeting (with apple pie and cream), the fish and chip lunch plus games, Christmas party and Christmas dinner. An important spin-off was the Chestnut Club Choir which went on to entertain other groups in the area. It is hoped it might continue. In addition, there were coffee mornings, milestone birthdays and anniversaries and taking part in the annual Flower Show. For several years, seaside holidays were organised.

However, membership has gradually decreased due to members becoming more frail, moving away, or into care homes or sadly passing away. The coronavirus pandemic has finally decided that the club cannot continue. Sadly, in its fiftieth year it is no longer viable.

Remaining funds will be donated to a good cause benefiting older people in the village. For half a century the Chestnut Club has contributed so much fun and fellowship to the life of Stapleford and leaves many happy memories.

Kay and I would like to thank past and present committee members for their hard work and dedication over the years. We wish all our members the very best for the future. **Kay Coe and Suzanne Watt**

Letters to the Editor

Please include a contact postal address with all correspondence

From: Peter Dean, Buristead Road, Great Shelford

Re: *Messenger* February edition

HAVING read the February issue of *Stapleford Messenger* I am dismayed at the political content. Lighten up guys! We need a bit of escapism at the moment. And I have just the thing: 'What to do, Percy Purr?'

This story is inspired by having lots of free time to fill. So, forget the politics for a while, and dream fun dreams.

I sent this story to Blue Peter and they sent me a badge. At 57 years old, dreams of a Blue Peter accolade came flooding back. I was chuffed. I got a lovely encouraging letter too. Why can't we all just be kind like that, I ask you?

What to do, Percy Purr?

PERCY Purr didn't know what to do?

He asked his friend, Louise Ladybird. But she buzzed off.

He asked his friend, Edward Elephant. But he trumpeted, and left.

He asked his friend, Fredric Frog. But he swam away.

No-one would tell him what he should do?

So Percy looked in a book. It had lots of colourful pictures, but no ideas on what to do?

He then saw a tree. It was a big tree. It was a tree that would be good for climbing. But Percy didn't feel like climbing.

He saw a spider making a web. He stared at the spider, and said: "Would you teach me to make a web?"

But the spider scampered off with his silken thread.

He heard a bird singing sweetly from a hedge.

He listened and his heart lifted. But, on seeing a cat, the bird flew away and Percy was left clueless.

Still no-one would tell him what he should do.

So, Percy curled up on his bed. He purred loudly and felt content. He closed his eyes and went off to sleep. And he dreamed of endless things to do... from flying and chasing, to jumping and racing. He had such fun, all in his head. Instead.

Sweet dreams Percy... Purrrrr!



From: Shelagh Woolley, Aylesford Way, Stapleford
Re: Stapleford Wildlife



HERE is a photo of a Little Egret that was sitting quietly at the bottom of my garden one snowy January morning.

When I opened the kitchen blinds I just thought it was snow on a post until it moved! We live next to a water meadow that had been flooded off and on for weeks, and there are usually about eight to ten Little Egrets visiting the meadow every day, but this is the first one that decided to visit my garden.

It sat quietly until a passing Magpie scared it away. It was a lovely sight to see on a dismal, cold, grey winter's day, especially given the strange times we are all living in.

From: Name and address supplied

Re: Dog fouling on the Recreation Ground (letter from Emma Vine in the February issue)

I, AS I would presume the majority of your readership, wholeheartedly share the author's disappointment at the unsolicited dog deposits landing on the Stapleford cricket pitch and applaud Mrs Vine's imploration that those responsible take a long hard look at themselves in their anti-fog vanity mirrors.

However, I was a little confused by Mrs Vine's eager implications that in this case such indiscretions were somehow more shocking or unacceptable occurring, as they have, in what she has 'always classed as a wealthy area'.

As far as I'm aware, one's affluence has no direct bearing on their ability to handle a pooper scooper, nor their morality, and to imply otherwise puts one on a sticky wicket - sadly in this case, both literally and metaphorically.

I recognise that complaining about nuisance dog dirt is a time-honoured cornerstone of our culture, as English as the sound of leather on willow and for many people, levels of pavement poop might be understood as a trusted barometer of wider moral decline.

However on this occasion, I'd like to call out this unnecessary casual snobbery and suggest that dog mess in public spaces is not good news... wherever it may be.

From: Bill Clark, one-time Wandlebury Warden and still a beekeeper, Gog Magog House, Wandlebury

RE: 'The sap is rising'

HAVING read the *Messenger* for February - quite a different format to usual - I thought I should point out a 'slip of the pen' by Sarah Ashworth on page 27. The tiny red flowers on the hazel nut bushes are not the male parts, that is the job of the pollen blown by the wind off of the catkins onto the little red flowers!



Incidentally, I have always wondered why the hazel has bothered to give this tiny flower a scarlet colour - as if to entice insects - when the shrub is entirely trusting to the chance of a favourable wind! Are we looking at the first tree to start the change-over to more reliable 'insect pollination'?

How you can help Addenbrooke's

MY husband and I have been members of the Cancer Patient Partnership Group at Addenbrooke's for around three years. We have been involved in many projects, large and small, including proofreading patient leaflets,

assisting in the design of the refurbishment of the oncology outpatient department and sitting on a panel for staff to come forward with creative ideas for service improvement for the benefit of patients and staff.

You can offer as much or as little time as you have available. It is for a very worthwhile cause and really does make a difference. One of the big issues you could get involved with in the future is the exciting new Cancer Research Hospital.

If you are interested in becoming a member or would like more information, please contact cpgg@addenbrookes.nhs.uk **June Betts**

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Yesteryear

SYLVIA Morris provides us with another snapshot of life in the village over the centuries, this time in March. Please note that punctuation and capital letters are exactly as printed at the time.

1904

COUNCIL SCHOOL. The Government report on this school, just to hand, is as follows. *Mixed School.* The teachers are painstaking and on the whole good work has been done. Great care must be taken to check the illegal employment of children. Needlework done at examination was good. *Infant Class.* This class is in good order and is very fairly well taught. The needlework done at examination was good.

1916

EXEMPTION FROM ACTIVE SERVICE REQUESTS. (*From a whole page dealing with applications.*)

Alan Beavis, 22, a Stapleford farmer and coal dealer, applied for absolute exemption stating that he was the only son left to help his father. They had a 22-acre farm and two horses. There were 14 acres only just ploughed and it was impossible for his father to do it himself. Exemption was refused.



1941

STAPLEFORD. A practical demonstration of fire-fighting and the use of the stirrup pump was given to the voluntary fire watchers of the Stapleford section and the Home Guard. The arrangements were carried out by the police, special constabulary, and the air-raid wardens. Thanks are due to Special Constable A Giddings for the use of his meadow and shed, Head Special E Stearn, Special Sgt A White, and Head Air-Raid Warden S Smith and the regular police.

1967

SIXTY YEARS A BELLRINGER. Twice every Sunday for 60 Years Mr George Dean has rung Stapleford church bells. Now he is retiring at the age of 75

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and a fund has been opened to thank him for his long service. Mr Dean was born in the village at 22 Bar Lane where he still lives. He went to school with a girl called Maggie who later became his wife and they have one son, Kenneth, who is the church organist. He was 15 when he joined the team of bellringers at the church. There were five bells but one has since been added.



1991

“MEMBERS discussed the desirability of acquiring a copy of the Cambridgeshire Domesday Book which was offered for £225. It was thought advisable to have a copy available in the Parish and it was proposed by the Chairman (Mr Doggett) and seconded by Mr Pepperell that the Council purchase a copy for £225. (Agreed)” *From Stapleford Parish Council minutes*

Library news

WHAT do you get when you join Great Shelford Library?

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- **Business advice** from the Business and Intellectual Property Centre
- **Online events** for adults and children
- **E-audio books** to listen to on your lockdown walks!



Explore Cambridgeshire Libraries online: www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk.
 Telephone enquiries: **0345 045 5225** (8am-6pm Mon-Fri; 9am-1pm Sat).
 Great Shelford Library is open from 10am-2pm on Tuesdays and 2-6pm on Fridays (to collect and return items).

Would you be able to donate a spare laptop to help schoolchildren? If so please speak to staff at the library. **Rosemary Humby**



Steam nostalgia

I HAVE had a lifelong interest in steam railways to the extent that I am a director (unpaid!) of an organisation called Dinmore Manor Locomotive Ltd, which owns, restores and operates historic steam railway locomotives.

You may have seen steam trains passing on the main line, or on the TV. The media often refer to “train spotters” but nothing could be further from the truth. Roughly there are 120 preserved railways, 600 miles of track, 5,000 paid staff and 25,000 volunteers. There are 13 million visitors who put £400 million into the economy and some local authorities would struggle without the money steam railways bring in.

The train drivers are the pin-ups, but they depend on a vast army of people, guards, signalmen, catering, cleaning and then there are groups like mine who work away in engine sheds, and supporting outside engineering companies. Dinmore Manor Loco is only one of hundreds of small groups restoring and maintaining our steam heritage.

Why do we do it? There are lots of reasons. Britain invented the steam train and it is woven into our history. People get pleasure from being part of a team. From doing something beyond their comfort zone, from understanding history and from just turning 100 tons of apparent scrap into a gleaming working machine. No machine more clearly illustrates its purpose. The noise is in direct relation to the effort. Steam engines don't

just “go”, for despite being lumps of Victorian engineering they have to be handled with skill to get the best out of them. People wave to steam trains as they go past and children look in awe.

The engine called Dinmore Manor is based on the Gloucester Warwickshire Steam Railway near Cheltenham and it is



Dinmore Manor at Cheltenham

where our restoration group is based. We don't go on the main line as that would be like going from the village football team to the Premier League, with astronomic costs.

We started from small beginnings in the 1980s when a few members raised enough cash to buy two engines from Barry scrapyard. It then took years of fund raising and volunteer effort, plus paying for specialist engineering for safety-critical items, like the boiler. Eventually after about ten years our loco called Dinmore Manor steamed again. We then hired Dinmore to the West Somerset railway for ten years, which gave us income to start restoring a freight engine, number 3850, which took about eight years, before also going to the West Somerset.

The problem is that every ten years a steam engine needs a complete overhaul which costs £250,000 to £400,000 and a routine annual overhaul about £5,000. On top of that our youngest engine is 70 years old and specialist repairs or breakdowns can cost thousands. As an example a new steel tyre (which comes from South Africa) is about £2,000 and Dinmore has six. That's without fitting and that makes Kwik Fit look very cheap.



Our flagship loco Dinmore has not spent all its preservation life in Gloucester, having travelled, on a low loader to Essex, Norfolk, Somerset and many other places to attend steam galas.

Please don't think we are a rich organisation. We have 400 shareholders and about 20 working volunteers. Most of our money comes from renting out an engine and the rest from members' generosity either by donation or from standing orders. None of us get any income and if you consider travel, food etc. it actually costs us and that is before you take time into account.

We are a cosmopolitan bunch, retired folk, architects, engineers, ex-Rolls Royce etc. and we are very friendly and drink a lot of tea! We all have differing skills and can provide training in many different jobs and health and safety is a priority.

What of the future? We hope to get our freight loco, which is part way through a ten year overhaul, going in 2022. Dinmore needs a major overhaul in 2025. Then there are two more. We have another heavy freight still in scrapyard condition (from 1965) and we are overseeing the restoration of yet another engine which we have transferred to charitable status as it alone qualifies for some limited donations.

If you want to learn more, or even join us, please email me at ivanmartinginger@gmail.com. **Martin Ginger**



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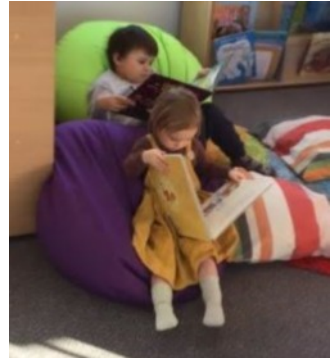
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Stapleford Community Primary School

FEBRUARY was our one-year anniversary at Stapleford Nursery. Although it hasn't been the easiest of years to open up a Nursery, we have loved every minute of welcoming children and families to become part of the journey. What started off as a newly refurbished blank canvas has become a warm and inviting environment for children aged three and above to flourish. We have permanent and friendly staff including myself (Miss Davies), Mrs Sullivan and Mrs Baines, each of us being passionate and enthusiastic about early years' education.

Within our daily routine we encourage learning through play, following children's interests, but also making the most of the fact that we have close encounters with the Reception class and can make the transition from Nursery to school a smooth and enjoyable experience for every child. As we are only just beginning we have on average ten children per session, which has given us the huge benefit of supporting children in becoming confident individuals, as well as creating close bonds with their peers and the staff in the room. We pride ourselves on the positive relationships with parents and the great feedback we receive. One parent says:



"We could not be happier with the care and education our son is receiving at Stapleford Nursery. He absolutely loves it there, and I can see from the daily feedback and posts on Tapestry how much fun they pack into a day and how well they combine learning and playing. The current small class size has meant plenty of opportunity for one-to-one interaction with the staff, and that the children are a close-knit group of friends, who will move onward through Stapleford Community Primary School together. We can't recommend the staff, Miss Davies, Mrs. Baines and Mrs. Sullivan, and the Stapleford Nursery setting highly enough."



If you have any questions about Stapleford Nursery please contact us on the nursery@staplefordprimaryschool.org email.
Lauren Davies

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Stapleford Water Gardens

THIS year has already been a memorable one on the weather front, with rain, snow and floods interspersed with a little sunshine.

The Granta burst its banks in January (see the February edition for pictures) and the cycleway to Sawston was impassable for a while.

Efforts were quickly made to prevent this from occurring again, with, as you can see from the picture of a startled dogwalker (right), a new surface put down to remove the water-catching dip, and drains installed underneath to funnel precipitation to the sides.



Just how wet was January, I hear you ask? John King keeps rainfall records and reports that it was the wettest since 2014.

The first month of that year saw rain fall on 21 days; this year we had it on 15.

Snow fell in January and again in February, with the portion of the allotment that had been

turned into a 'water garden' (above) – or should that be a paddy field? - briefly becoming an ice rink (for ducks), pictured below.



It snowed on 24 January this year; in 2019 there was just one snow day in that month as well. There were three days of snow in January 2013 and 2015, and five in 2010 when everyone headed to the Gogs for a little light sledding.



The effects of this year's rainfall were nothing compared to the Great Flood of October 2001 however, when the Grove and the Rose public house were suddenly awash and the main road was blocked.

David Pepperell, a long-time resident of the village and a long-serving parish councillor, shares his memories of the occasion.

"If memory serves me right, several days of heavy and prolonged rainfall on to already-saturated ground resulted in a dramatic rise in the level of the River Granta. Records show that at around 8.45pm on 22 October 2001 a highest-ever level of 1.49m was recorded at Stapleford; about 80% higher than the normal average.

"The degree of the very extensive flooding in Stapleford, arising from the banks of the Granta overflowing, was totally unexpected. I remember seeing the roads leading into Bury Farm, and Joscelynes, as well as the bridleway to Babraham, being impassable. Coming down Bury Road, the water level was already going into the Vine Farm development whilst the Grove house was like an island location! The main road near to the Rose



was completely covered past the telephone box while the Rose car park was two-thirds covered.

“The Rose public house itself was not spared with around a foot or so of water covering the inside of the premises. Even Aylesford Way did not escape with water from the flooded



fields making its presence felt at the bottom, near to the turning circle. Excellent photos showing extensive damage to properties in the vicinity of the Bury Road /London Road junction can be found on historysociety.staplefordvillage.org.uk.

“Many villagers, young and old, turned out in Wellington boots, to witness this scene.



Our postman at the time, Stefano, being quite a village character, posed for action photographs on his red post office bike, coming down the road from the river bridge at speed, in at least three feet of water with his legs spreadeagled out at 180 degrees!

“This year’s extent of flooding to the cycleway and nearby fields, compared with 21 years ago, was in a different league although still gave rise to significant disruption to walkers and cyclists. Let us hope that a preventative water-holding feature in the upper reaches of the Granta offers sufficient relief in the future.” **Jon West**



Flood pictures from both 2001 and 2021 kindly submitted by David Pepperell, Keith Dixon, Wendy Elsbury and John and Polly Stanton.

A clutch of birds

ANOTHER piece from local author and playwright Fraser Grace.

READERS who have been paying attention – I try not to be complacent about this – will recall me noting last month that a bird of prey has taken up residence in our local field. Well, I can now confirm this pancake of a landscape is, unlikely though it seems, the haunt of a buzzard.



Aldrin, as I privately think of him (or her - sexes are alike, it says in the guidebook) has been busy over the past few weeks, making do without open hillside and wooded valley, lording it over the flatlands instead - and dodging the mobbing of crows. It's not just crows that take exception to Aldrin – or

maybe being alone is just a buzzard's way. It could even, for all I know, be a conscientious response to lockdown. Whatever the cause, Aldrin maintains a solitary life; if I walk along the hedgerow, and fail to look left at the corner, (s)he will launch from a favourite roost high in a beech tree, and soar into the wide open sky – anything to escape my company.

For the past ten days, I have seen neither hide nor hair of Aldrin, nor even a feather. Then, just yesterday, while walking the Roman Road a few miles away (a birthday walk for my beloved) I saw him/her. Binoculars out, I track the unmistakable form, and realise I am in fact mistaken - this bird is speaking with forked tail. Not Aldrin the Buzzard, but a kite. As this much bigger bird swoops around, almost too slowly to remain feasibly airborne, I see there is a something snagged in his claws. (definitely a 'he' - kites are more differentiated by gender). I can't see what is clutched in those talons – a weasel? A rabbit? Whatever it is, or was, its struggle is done.

Kites, like buzzards, may be a fairly unusual sight around here, but both have become more common in recent years, partly, in the case of kites, as a result of reintroduction schemes.

Kingfishers are likewise a pretty rare sight, but that's definitely their own fault. Kingfishers are quick, as quick as a kite can be, but shy. Like a well-designed car, a kite looks fast when stood at the kerb. A kingfisher, not so much. The over-large head, the stumpy body; the kingfisher's fusing of parts doesn't look made for agility. But walking in Shelford park extra-early the other morning, I reached as far as the strip of river lapping the further reaches of the turf. It took me a moment to realise what it was I had just

seen, a flash of iridescent blue and a burst of orange darting along the opposite bank. Sure enough, a few moments later, back it came, zipping past barely a foot above the water. Out came the phone (no binoculars this time, even if I had been quick on the draw). I stood and stood and stood some more, giving it a full ten minutes before accepting the kingfisher had no



Kingfisher chicks in a burrow
(www.robertefuller.com)

intention of being videoed, choosing instead some moments of privacy. It was gone now, just yards away towards the Mill, probably holed up in its burrow.

It's a fact not often appreciated that a kingfisher's nest is an underground chamber, at the end of a burrow drilled into the riverbank. That burrow can be as much as one metre long. The chamber at the

burrow's end is soon strewn with regurgitated bone from fish and other prey; on that nutty mattress the kingfisher – muddy from all its tunnelling – lays its clutch of pearly white eggs. Then it's back out into a world of speed and violence and purification, dousing itself in the river to purge mud from its feathers. Cleansed and freshly cruel, it catches a fish, smacks the glistening head against a branch to kill it – and so provides its subterranean young with food. Who said mother's milk is best?

Whenever I see a picture of the kingfisher's burrow – always in diagrammatic form, I've never seen one in real life - I am back in the pyramids of Giza, which I have been lucky enough to see in real life, and even been inside. I think of myself stooping my way through a long and dusty tunnel to the promised chamber of the kings.

One other thing about the kingfisher; where kite and buzzard defend themselves against maddening crows with beak and claws and mid-air gymnastics, the kingfisher has few enemies. The book further informs me this is because a kingfisher's flesh is unpleasant to taste. I wonder when, and by whom that theory was tested.

Foul-tasting or not, my friend X, who has lived in the village for more than fifty years, and walked in the park daily for most of the last thirty, has never seen the kingfishers flying here. She has seen them elsewhere - Cherry Hinton Park, for one - but never here, on our own tiny snatch of riverbank. I feel truly privileged and carry my privilege – my sighting of that blue-orange Pharoah - clutched to my heart, all the way home.

Victorian and Edwardian Cambridge

A Zoom talk by Tony Kirby



AT the end of January Tony Kirby gave a talk about the development of Cambridge during the 19th Century looking at the growth in population, the spread of the town and university and some of the streets and buildings which were copiously illustrated.

The 1801 census listed the borough as having a population 10,000. Fifty years later it had increased to 27,000 and in 1901 it was 38,000. There were a number of reasons for this increase: a lower mortality rate after the improvement in medical care, better water quality and sewage, and an increase in student numbers. Chesterton, Trumpington and Cherry Hinton were not part of the borough at this time.

The enclosure acts of the early 1800s released land for development of a town which was contained in a small area. Slowly the town spread towards the east where Jesus and Caius Colleges released land. Maids Causeway and Newmarket Road, and the various side roads were built at this time. Slum clearance led to the building of new houses in Eden Street and Orchard Street. In 1825 New Square was built although it was always intended that the third side would not be built but left open with a view of Christ's Pieces.

As traders and shopkeepers became wealthier they improved their lifestyle by moving to bigger premises so that they could live above their shops. This is evident in the Mill Road area and the Panton family, who were lords of the manor, released land next to Mill Road. The status of the families can be seen in the houses where they lived. The grand houses in Bateman Street and Park Terrace overlooking Parker's Piece are very different from the houses in the Mill Road area where many houses were built for the railway workers who arrived in the 1840s.

The colleges grew and different styles of architecture were used. New Gothic was the most popular as seen in Gonville and Caius but the New Court of King's College looks medieval to match the chapel but was built in 1828. Gradually the teaching moved from the colleges to the university so faculty buildings were erected, especially along Pembroke and Downing Street where the museums were also built.

Chesterton on the north side of the river and not part of Cambridge until 1912 also grew steadily and had tightly packed houses near Magdalene bridge and grander houses in the east around De Freville Avenue.

The Victorian era was also the time of building and rebuilding churches in the Gothic style: St. Paul's and St. Matthew's Anglican churches, the Catholic Church Our Lady and the English Martyrs and the Zion Baptist church. The Round Church originated in the 1200s but was rebuilt in Victorian times. It was interesting to note that the Christian denominations sometimes combined to build missions and Sunday schools.

The talk ended with a look at some other important buildings such as the Corn Exchange, which was something of a white elephant as it was completed at the beginning of the agricultural depression in the 1880s when cheap corn from abroad was being imported. The railway station and the grand Fosters Bank on the corner of Hobson Street and Sydney Street - now a Lloyds bank - are other notable Victorian buildings. **Keith Dixon**

Brownies on Zoom!



THIS time last year, lots of us had never heard of Zoom, and yet for many it's been a lifeline for keeping in touch with family and friends during the pandemic. It's been a lifeline for Brownies too!

Lockdowns and social distancing restrictions have meant Brownies haven't been able to meet up in the usual way for almost a year. But Zoom's provided a successful and fun alternative! Stapleford Brownies and Shelford Brownies have combined to run weekly virtual meetings.

There's been lots of craft, games and fun so far this term with activities from a challenge badge based on "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory". Pancakes, codebreaking, scavenger hunts, and chocolate crispy cake making are still to come!

We have more girls wanting to join Brownies, so we'd love to hear from anyone interested in helping to inspire girls and have fun with online meetings. And we also want to be ready for new adventures as soon as we can meet in person again. To find out more go to girlguiding.org.uk/get-involved/ or contact Lisa and Joanne at shelforddistrict@gmail.com. **Lisa MacGregor**





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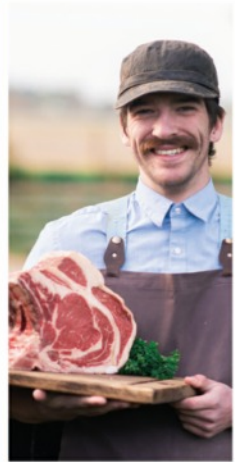
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Kings and queens of our little kingdoms

MANY of us may feel we have little sense of control over our own lives... what with politicians... big businesses... not to mention the Coronavirus restrictions “...*but in the garden or allotment we are king or queen! It is our piece of outdoors that lays a real stake to the planet.*” Monty Don.

If you care to embrace this metaphor, we can look at our own little garden kingdom and choose how to rule it: choose what we plant or build in it and what we take away from it. There are plenty of gardening rules to follow – it makes sense to use them, but don't forget to use your *humanity*.



As king or queen you can choose to consider all the living things on your land as your beloved subjects, not just the plants. You could be a great ruler! Hospitable and nurturing, but also tough and decisive when you know what needs to be done for the greater good. You could allow your subjects a place to shelter and a place to forage, and during hard times you might even lay out food and water for them.

In the olden days gardens were places of sanctuary from the wild scary beasts over the hedge, now there are barely any wilds, instead mostly human development: houses, roads or agriculture. How we decide to rule our gardens does matter; our gardens make up a huge area of Britain, and together we could make such a difference to our dwindling British wildlife. **Sarah Ashworth**, *Designs For Life*, sarahashworth.co.uk

Simple steps to help wildlife without sacrificing your garden

1. Allow homes: leave hidden areas untidy, or leave piles of wood, leaves or rubble undisturbed
2. Allow natural processes: Leave the chemicals in the shed, or even better in the shop!
3. Allow native plants: Plant a tree and add flowers for pollinators
4. Allow long grass: decide a nice shape with your mower, it can look great!
5. Allow access: check if hedgehogs can get through your fence
6. Allow water to pool: create something that holds water with a gentle slope on one side



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Threes

FILL in the 3-letter sequences so that two 6-letter words are produced. In each group, the three 3-letter sequences form a 9-letter word. e.g.

TAM [PER] SON

CRE [TIN] GLE

PAR [ENT] IRE

tamPER + PERson, creTIN + TINgle, parENT + ENTire

PER + TIN + ENT = PERTINENT

- | | | |
|--------------|----------------|------------------|
| RI [...] UE | MAN [...] GIC | CANA [...] TION |
| EV [...] RY | MAR [...] VET | INCI [...] TIFY |
| UR [...] PT | CUR [...] GER | POST [...] HUNT |
| VI [...] CH | BUR [...] NIE | POLE [...] ARRH |
| AR [...] GS | FRA [...] TOR | ANOM [...] SSUM |
| IM [...] NT | POE [...] KET | CHAS [...] SIER |

In the groups below, the three parts of the 9-letter word are jumbled up

- | | | |
|--------------|----------------|------------------|
| VO [...] TY | SET [...] THE | CONS [...] HMUS |
| PI [...] LL | HER [...] HER | FORE [...] BAND |
| AG [...] WL | SIT [...] PEL | SERV [...] PACK |

Set by Hermes – Answers on page 48



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Stapleford Strollers: Walk 92

Lockdown special: a circular walk from Great Shelford

To get to start of walk

THE walk starts from in front of The Square and Compasses in Great Shelford High Street.

Length of walk

About 4.3 miles. This has been a particularly wet winter but quite a bit of this walk takes place on solid surface. However, there is a section that is likely to be a bit more squelchy, so wear appropriate footwear.

OS Map

Explorer map 209. The usual free extracts can be obtained by using footpathmaps.com or maps.the-hug.net. I've also put the route on Mapometer, a free route-creating website.

Extra Information

The name Shelford comes from a corruption of "shallow ford", the ford in question being a crossing point of the River Granta back in the day, when such places were of considerable importance.

Route of walk

From The Square and Compasses cross the road and walk right, on the pavement. Turn left at a footpath sign and walk along a path between high fences until it emerges into Elm Avenue. At the end of the avenue, cross the main road very carefully and go left.

Turn right shortly, at a footpath sign and walk along a path, again with more high fences. This path comes out into Shelford Park Avenue. Turn right and walk to the end. Then go left across the level crossing at Shelford station; carry on, turning left when Chaston Road is reached.

At the far end keep ahead along the cycle/footway with the railway immediately to the left. Cross over Granhams Road and carry on along the same cycle/foot route, going left across the footbridge over the railway line. Beyond the bridge, carry on along the path as it crosses an open area until, just before the first houses, take the grass path to the right. This section of path is unofficial but is clear and is widely used. Turn left after a short time and walk down the side road known as The Hectare, until Cambridge Road.





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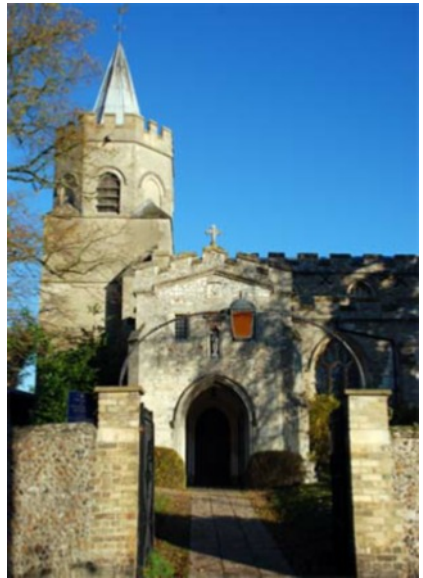
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Cross over when safe and walk for some time, passing the Rugby Club and Scotsdales. Carry on and, some way beyond Westfield Road, look for a metal farm gate with an information board attached. Take the path beyond the gate ignoring another track which shortly joins from the left. Keep on until the route turns sharp left and follow this, swinging right when yet another track joins from the left.

Just before the River Granta is reached, go left on a cross path and follow this under the railway line (it divides after the railway; take either fork) and carry on all the way back to the road that links Great and Little Shelford. Turn left on the pavement, passing the Primary School and St Mary's Church (above) and keep on the same pavement until the starting point, The Square and Compasses, is reached once more. **David Barnes**

The Stapleford Strollers do not accept responsibility for any accident or mishap that may happen to ant person who follows this route





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IT'S amazing to think that the UK has been in an emergency state for a year. We are now in our third national lockdown, and everyday life has changed beyond all recognition.

There is, however, a tiny light at the end of this long, dark tunnel and it is shining just a little brighter day by day with the introduction of the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

As of the first week of February, we have vaccinated around 7,000 of our patients in cohorts 1 to 4. We continue to work our way through the priority groups, as instructed by NHS England.

You may be invited by us, or you may receive an NHS England letter inviting you to attend a mass vaccination centre. It is entirely your choice where you would like to go. All vaccinations are recorded on a national database so please be assured you will not be missed.

Information about the virus and the vaccine changes daily, sometimes even hourly. To keep up to date with the latest guidance it is advisable to look at the Government website www.gov.uk and the NHS UK website www.nhs.uk. If you know of someone who does not have access to a computer and you do, please help them access the latest information.

If you have any queries contact me direct on 627743 or sandra.east@nhs.net

Our new Automated Prescriptions Collection Point in Sawston is now open! You can collect your medicines seven days a week, 52 weeks a year, including weekends and bank holidays. You will need a mobile telephone number, to which a unique pin number will be sent when your prescription is ready for collection. It's as simple as that.

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If you can't get out to collect your medicines, you can take advantage of our **free home delivery service**. Ring 727530 for further information and to sign up. **Sandra East**

We're waiting for your story!

HAVE you a story to tell or an event to publicise? Or perhaps you have an opinion to share on an issue that is important to you. If so, drop us a line on staplefordmessenger@gmail.com - after all, it's your magazine and we would love to hear from you.



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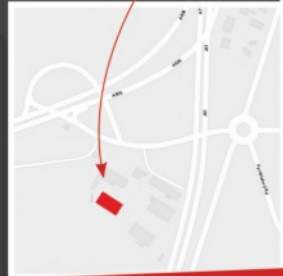
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Stapleford Bird Club

THE need for these bird walks to be undertaken following COVID regulations is likely to continue for a few months yet, unfortunately. I'm missing my companions and undoubtedly a few birds are being overlooked. Unlike the previous month's conditions with dense fog, it was just overcast yet only a few Woodpigeons and Carrion Crows were flying overhead, with no birds of prey in the air. In the car park, the birds were making much more hustle and bustle than in January. Some birds such as the Dunnock, Robin and Great Tit were singing, waking up to the fact it is nearly Spring. Robins nest particularly early and egg laying might be starting as soon as late February (a call to late garden hedge trimmers to finish their tasks). The feeders have at times attracted a Great Spotted Woodpecker (female pictured right) dwarfing the smaller birds as it clings to the mesh sides flashing a huge red patch on its lower underside and showing black and white markings on its upper parts. Other birds in the area were Greenfinch, Chaffinch, Goldfinch, Blue Tits, Blackbird, Magpie, and Woodpigeon.



Walking up North Down alongside the wood, Hazel trees were putting on a great show of catkins. A flock of nine Meadow Pipits, yet to breed but regular here as winter visitors, were active over the down, and a Skylark was singing over it, signalling the start of territorial grabs. A Skylark singing over Feoffee's Fields was also noted. Sightings of one of the winter thrushes, Redwing, have been rare this winter, and two Redwings at Little Trees Hill were the first I have seen since October. The clumps of Snowdrops among the trees there were a welcome sight.

As many as four Song Thrushes were singing at different sites. Numbers have dropped alarmingly since the 1970s, but it is still considered to be a common bird albeit being given a 'red-listed' status because of its decline. The South Down arable fields have few birds at the moment. One piece is emerged winter wheat and next to it is bare, cultivated land, neither presenting much food for birds. By the wood is the wild bird seed strip, now past its best as a source of seeds.

A 'drove' of four hares in one of the paddocks was a record number for me. **Mike Foley**

Quiz time

THIS month's quiz is short, and so are some of the answers on page 48.

1. The stars of the 1986 movie 'Three Amigos!' were Steve Martin, Chevy Chase and...?
2. Which two words best describe the Short Sunderland?
3. 'Get Shorty' is a 1990 novel by which American novelist?
4. Whose catchphrase, one of many, is 'Eat my shorts'?
5. What does SMS stand for, for a point? For another, in which year was one first sent?
6. 'Night Shift' is the first collection of short stories by which US author?
7. Pepin the Short was king of which Germanic people from 751 to 768?
8. Captain Holly Short is the protagonist of which series of books by Irish author Eoin Colfer?
9. Who was Secretary of State for International Development under Tony Blair from 1997 to 2003?
10. Name any two clubs that Craig Short played for between 1987 and 2007.

Cambridge Flower Club

ALTHOUGH at the moment we cannot foresee when Cambridge Flower Club (which meets at Whittlesford Memorial Hall) will be able to start meeting again, the Club has remained in touch with its members by means of a monthly newsletter. This has included lovely photos of members gardens though the seasons, their house plants which have benefited from more TLC and flower arrangements they have done.

They have also been taking part in 'virtual' flower competitions. Three flower arranging competitions have been set by the President Yvonne Lamb. The first one was to create a flower arrangement using the poem 'The Glory of the Garden' by Rudyard Kipling as a starting point, using flowers and foliage from the garden only. See photo of the winning design. The second was either an arrangement without using floral foam (oasis) or a tapestry(pavé) design and the third was a Christmas Table Centre. The winning design was used to create a Christmas Card which was sent to all the members of the Club as well as to the NAFAS Group and Area Chairmen.

We look forward to the time when we can all meet again to enjoy flowers together. **Freda Orgee**

Parish councillor diary

MICHAEL Gatward is this month's diarist in our series highlighting the aims and activity of our parish councillors.

WHAT strange times we live in at the moment with all these Covid lockdowns. How people have changed since the first lockdown in March last year when other villagers you met while taking exercise always passed the time of day and had time to talk with you from a distance, but now we are all getting totally tired of the restrictions and our mental health is suffering. So many people don't even acknowledge you now as you pass by although, in saying that, we have had quite a few kind people around the village who with little recognition have been collecting shopping and looking after vulnerable people throughout the last year and to all those I pass on my thanks.

I joined the Parish Council three years ago as I entered semi-retirement and wanted something to occupy some of my time and benefit the community in which I live. My duties include general maintenance of the PC's buildings, including the cemetery and the pavilion. I meet with contractors, discuss the PC's requirements and get quotes for the different projects around the village. I've been in the building industry all of my working life so I think I can make a good judgement as to exactly what's needed and whether the quotes are reasonable. We always have a minimum of three quotes to put forward to a vote by the full PC. I try not to get quotes from my sons who have now taken over my building business as I need to remain impartial, but I do price the work so the PC has a good guide as to the funds it may need for upcoming projects.

I have had quite a lot to do with getting the new cemetery up and running, including the new paths, gates and fencing, setting out the new grave layout, and marking out plots. I was very impressed with the high standard of work, mostly done by Colin Butler of Butler Bros from Whittlesford.

At the Rec, we intend to restore and update the cricket shed to give independent storage so the cricket/football teams and PC can have their own designated areas. We are also looking at making physical alterations to the pavilion to make it more user-friendly and, as of mid-February, we will have broadband installed to give free wi-fi to anyone who would like to use that facility while using the Rec or pavilion.

Also at the Rec, I'm looking forward to seeing the new multi-use sports facility – where the old tennis courts are at the moment – getting underway shortly. I feel so many more people in the community will be able to benefit



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from the broader spectrum of sports soon to be catered for. Thanks to Cllr Paul McPhater for making all the arrangements to bring this to fruition. It has taken a considerable amount of effort and work on his part to get to this point. In fact, I would just like people to know how much work to improve the village goes on behind the scenes by all PC members in their own free time for no financial reward, especially as we do not have a full quota of councillors at the moment. I would urge anyone with community spirit who would like to help benefit their parish to come forward and join as a councillor and have your say on the future of Stapleford. We would all welcome your input.

Changing the subject slightly, over the last few years I have also been involved in arrangements for the village weekend, which I hope many of you have enjoyed. Unfortunately, we had to cancel last year due to Covid. However, even if it's not possible to have the village weekend this year, I hope we may be able to have a band or some kind of event on the Rec or in the pavilion. When this is over, we all need to be able to let our hair down and embrace our friends and family, and hopefully have a jolly good knees-up. So, for now, let's keep following the rules and looking forwards to a return to normality in the near future (fingers crossed).

I have lived and worked in Shelford and Stapleford all of my working life and through my work I have probably been in most of your homes and made so many friendships around the village. I'm proud to be a part of this community and look forward to keeping it that way for many years to come.

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Stapleford Tennis Club - get involved in our rejuvenation!



MARCH should see the Parish Council's work starting on refurbishment of the Tennis Courts into a swish new, floodlit MUGA; it's expected to be finished and handed over ready for play by late April, weather permitting.

This exciting development will give the Tennis Club an opportunity, finally, to get on and become once again an active and thriving club in the village: organising coaching courses and club sessions, maybe even some tournaments, and generally fulfilling our mission of "**getting more people playing tennis more often**" on the six days of the week when tennis is available on one or both of those lovely new courts.

This would be a great time for new people to join in with overseeing the club and helping to shape its future! Being an LTA-registered venue, we have backing and support from the LTA's dedicated team, such as their Regional Participation Development Manager, who we 'met' recently [via Zoom, of course!] when he helped us with the gate lock application. He's at our disposal to help with such questions as: "What should we charge for membership?" "How can we attract more members?" "What coaching courses can/should we run, and when?"

So, you needn't feel daunted or that you don't know anything about running a tennis club. If you're enthusiastic about encouraging healthy, outdoor exercise, which is both sociable and readily accessible to anyone in our village whatever their age or gender, then do make yourselves known to the current committee. Email us at: committee@staplefordtennisclub.org.uk or you can phone me for a chat on 504378.

We look forward to welcoming you to the team! **Miranda Fyfe**

Answers

Word Games - Threes

VALENTINE, TRAVELLED, STATESMAN; PERSONAGE, SARCASTIC, CATALYSIS; GROTESQUE, COMMITTEE, ARMISTICE

Quiz answers

1. Martin Short 2. Flying boat 3. Elmore Leonard 4. Bart Simpson 5. Short message service; 1992 6. Stephen King 7. The Franks 8. Artemis Fowl 9. Clare Short 10. Scarborough, Notts County, Derby, Everton, Blackburn, Sheffield United.

From the Chair of the Parish Council

THIS covers many of the issues raised at the meeting on 10 February. For full details go to staplefordparishcouncil.gov.uk. which also has minutes of previous meetings. The next meeting is on Wednesday 10 March. Access details will be on the website nearer the date.

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning: Local Plan: Call For Sites

There are eight sites in Stapleford that have been put forward by landowners for development in response to SCDC's Call For Sites and all of them are in the green belt.

At the Parish Council meeting Cllr B Kettel explained that the Council is being asked to respond with any relevant local information covering such aspects as:

- site accessibility and transport links
- site constraints such as flood risk, noise, air or light pollution or opportunities regarding development
- landscape, townscape or heritage opportunities or constraints
- green infrastructure opportunities or constraints
- opportunities or constraints regarding suitability, availability or deliverability

The Clerk will collate comments based on the above before submitting this additional information to SCDC, and SCDC will be undertaking a public consultation later this year.

Stapleford Conservation Area review

Stapleford's Conservation Area includes St Andrew's Church and parts of Mingle Lane, Church Street, Gog Magog Way and Dukes Meadow. The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service plans are proposing to reduce the size of our Conservation Area by around 20%; no reasons are given for excluding specific areas, other than that they do not meet the criteria for Conservation Areas set out in national legislation.

At the meeting councillors expressed concern that without protection there could be significant impact on the street scene and protected views looking west towards the heart of Stapleford's Conservation Area. The wide well-kept grass verges could be jeopardised and there could be greater vulnerability to infill development.

All this could be under threat by the removal of these properties and this removal should be objected to. The Parish Council is submitting its own comments to the consultation.

East West Rail and CSET Busway

East West Rail is a significant threat to Great Shelford and there is a movement to change the route to come in from the north which would avoid destruction and disturbance.

An interesting development is a proposal that the line continues to Haverhill thus avoiding the need for trains to reverse and this would provide the essential access to Cambridge South Station. Railfuture are lodging a bid for the Government's Beeching Fund for a study into reopening the Haverhill line which would provide significant benefit in terms of comfort and reliability over the proposed busway.

Climate emergency is a reality and it is hard to see how the proposed busway which depends upon a 2,000 space car park is sustainable. It will draw people into their cars to travel many miles and in the process will weaken existing bus services. Moreover, the carbon footprint in constructing a busway is many times heavier than that of laying down a steel rail track. And a bus uses up to seven times the power required for light rail and generates pollution from particulates, a serious health issue, caused from running buses on rubber tyres.

Is building the GCP's busway the right response to the climate emergency? We would welcome your views.

COVID-19

The Pavilion will remain closed until we are advised that it can open. The playground is open and remains subject to Central Government directive on social distancing and hygiene. Please adhere to the regulations.

MUGA

The MUGA is due to commence installation, with completion due by the end of April, all subject to weather conditions. There is increasing interest in bookings from various clubs.

Recreation Ground

Plans for the refurbishment of the shed which offer designated space for sports clubs have been approved and a local architect is being formally appointed. Three building firms will now be invited to a competitive tender. Planning for public toilets is progressing as is new equipment for the children's play area but given the potential budget there will need to be fundraising.

Highways

Cllr Flynn is undertaking a detailed review of the condition of the roads and pavements in the village and building a working relationship with

Cambridge County Council's Engineer to encourage essential repairs to be carried out in a timely fashion.

Great Shelford and Stapleford Neighbourhood Plan

Volunteers are needed to resurrect the Neighbourhood Plan. If you are interested in helping the Parish Council finish this important document, please contact the Clerk and volunteer your services.

Failure to have a Neighbourhood Plan in place could mean it is more difficult to influence the appropriateness and the quality of any development. Community support for the decisions taken as part of the Neighbourhood Plan is demonstrated to the District and County Council once the document is made, but we really need more residents to come forward to get it finished.

Grounds Maintenance Contract

Herts and Cambs Grounds Maintenance Ltd has been awarded the grounds maintenance contract for three years.

London Road: flint wall removal

Cllr B Kettel advised the meeting that the wall had been undermined by tree roots and was unstable. All flints have been retained, and will be used in the rebuild by a specialist cob builder.

Planning Applications

20/04788/HFUL Mingle House, 22 Mingle Lane, Gt Shelford Revision

Two storey rear extension: *It was pointed out that this property is in Gt Shelford. Objection: the detached two storey new dwelling that was connected by a glass walkway is now joined by a brick walkway which can still be demolished to create a separate dwelling.*

21/00024/HFUL 15 Priams Way, Stapleford

Single storey rear extension: *No objection*

20/05169/HFUL 42 Church Street, Stapleford

Minor amendments to some window and doors. New rooflights added. Glass wall and roof to the existing utility, to be replaced with a brick wall and solid roof to facilitate WC. Existing timber weatherboard cladding replaced with timber effect fibre cement weatherboard cladding: not previously advertised: *No objection.*

Financial difficulties?

Are you in need, hardship or distress? Do you live in Stapleford? Then the Feoffees Charity may be able to help you.

Contact: Rev. Simon Taylor at simontaylorstandrews@gmail.com.

Stapleford Parish Council

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