

The Loop

August
2020

£1.00

Services to resume at St James's

Services in Church (or Churchyard if good weather) will resume in August on alternate weeks. They will be short, simple services with no hymns or communion. Our online Virtch (Virtual Church) services at 11.00am on Sundays (with hymns and communion) and 6.00pm on Wednesdays will continue. Services during August will be as follows:

Sunday 9th August - 9.30am Service at St James's

Sunday 16th August - 9.30am Service at All Saints

Sunday 23rd August - 9.30am Service at St James's

Sunday 30th August - 9.30am Service at All Saints

According to Government and Church of England advice, face coverings should be worn by all those who attend (if you are exempt please bring some evidence with you). If you are in a vulnerable category we advise you not to attend these physical services, but this is ultimately your decision to make.

Please bear with us! There is a lot we need to do to get the church ready and safe for you to attend and we will be working hard over the next couple of weeks. We want you to feel welcome and comfortable in coming to these services.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me on 356993 or stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com

Jacqui Piper
PCC Secretary



Cowslip Meadow in all its glory. For details of plants to be seen there and the meadow's conservation see page 12.



Cricket returns to Biddenham

Following the surprise announcement that club cricket would be allowed from 25th July a huge amount of work has gone into making all the necessary arrangements and formulating a fixture list. Details are on page 7.

The first match on Saturday 25th July was against Milton Keynes. Of course, it rained! However, a twenty-twenty match was completed with Biddenham being the victors.

The picture shows the under 13 practice match held on Sunday 26th July.

Free face masks

Now that face masks are mandatory in shops and enclosed spaces, our Village Agent has some re-usable fabric masks for those who need them.

See page 9 for details.

Three Tuns open for food and drink

The Three Tuns has reopened with appropriate social distancing and one way systems. Food is available in the restaurant and in the garden. They are participating in the government's 'Eat Out to Help Out' discount scheme on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

In addition to on-site catering they offer take away Billingsgate fish and chips, Tuesday to Saturday, pre-ordered on 01234 354847.

You can also buy Award Winning Slapton Farm Half Lamb Boxes and fresh fish boxes for home delivery.

For more details search for Three Tuns Biddenham on Facebook or, to book, call 354847.

'The Loop' is published by the Parish Church of St James as a service to the communities of Biddenham and Great Denham
The editor welcomes contributions from residents and friends via email to loopeditor@gmail.com

Letter from the Vicar

Dear All

I know I am the vicar, but to be honest, I have never been that good at religion. What spoiled it for me was going to church as a teenager. The vicar at St Stephen's Church, on the Wirral, thought it would be nice for me to serve at the communion table and believed that in order to do that work, it would be best for me to wear a red cassock topped with a frilly white surplice. For a self-conscious teenager, dressing like that in front of my peers was just humiliating and rather than encouraging me in the faith, it did more to turn me away.



I do not believe that the trimmings of religion should be written off. Many people find that religious ritual can breathe life into the ordinary through the colour and drama. When I am standing there behind the table and performing the Eucharistic prayer, I become deeply attuned to the presence of the sacred. It would best be described as being 'In the Zone'. God is present in a way that I cannot comprehend. It reminds me of the mountain top where Jesus was transfigured in front of his disciples. This has not happened for many months now and I hope that soon I will be in that place again.

I think that, ultimately, my problem with religion is that it is static, while faith should be dynamic and transformative! Religion seems like a repetitive tribute to God's immutability, while the faith of pilgrims instead leads us forward, day by day into the unknown. I see this because it is into the uncertainty that Jesus calls us.

Before I moved here, I was the parish priest in Colsterworth, Lincolnshire, the home of Isaac Newton. At the East end of St John the Baptist, Colsterworth, is an ancient broken Celtic cross. It is made of stone and predates the church building by over five hundred years. The last time I visited there, I sat briefly in the church, and light shone through the window, casting the rainbow colours of the stained glass upon the ancient carved Celtic knots. From my time in Durham and my many trips to the

beautiful Island of Lindisfarne, Holy Island, I developed what I see as an identification with what is known as Celtic spirituality, referenced by St. Patrick and St. Columba. This is a spirituality of the incarnation; Jesus joins us as we are and speaks to us in the language of our hearts. This is not a static religion, but a pilgrim faith that moves in and out with the waves of time and circumstances.

Once I remember travelling out to the Farne Islands on a boat. The boat was moored at a place called Seahouses, just a couple of miles from Holy Island. Those tiny islands with ragged rocks were occupied by thousands of puffins and guillemots that danced around the sky, taking deep, vertical dives into the sea to catch fish. The boat we were on was a deep blue and it was called 'Good Tidings,' an old English word for 'Good News' or 'Gospel.'

The truth is that the Good News of our faith has no place in a static port but belongs out in the uncertainty of the waves. Christ calls us to take his Good Tidings into the uncertainty of an unsettled world.

A long way from Holy Island, our Churches are just beginning to open again after a very British sort of Lockdown and many would say that this has caused irreparable damage to Anglican faith and worship. I believe the opposite, in that it has taught us again to raise our anchors and move again out to the sea of insecurity. We have had to come down from the mountain as pilgrims of hope. It is not our religion but our good news that is transformative, hopeful, restorative and healing. We find ourselves again, in the only kind of territory in which that good news has meaning. Maybe now we will stop placing our trust in that human construct of religion and instead place our trust in him who has called us to be his witnesses in the world.

God bless

Eric



The Parish Church of St James, serving Biddenham & Great Denham

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Treasurer	Graham Weeks	Tel 07552 052840
Organist/Choirmaster	www.stjamesbiddenham.com	

Covid-19 and mental health

The Diocese of St Albans is offering a series of free monthly webinars on mental health for everyone. The overall theme is 'making our churches and chaplaincies places of welcome and inclusion for people living with mental ill-health' and the monthly topics are as follows:

Weds 29th Jul 11.00am	Mental health during Covid-19: a space for reflection
Tues 25th Aug 7.30pm	Mental health issues coming out of lockdown
Mon 14th Sep 11.00am	Delayed trauma
Sat 10th Oct 10.00am (World Mental Health Day)	Safeguarding and Mental Health
Thurs 19th Nov 2.30pm	A theological and reflective space
Tues 15th Dec 7.30pm	Incarnation and Covid-19

The purpose is not to make decisions on these issues but to create a space where you can share your anxieties, concerns and thoughts in a supportive environment. Everyone is welcome.

If you are interested see <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/faith/mental-health-and-wellness/> for the Zoom details.

There is no need to sign up beforehand.

CORONOVIRUS SUPPORT NETWORK

Need local help? Ring 01234 815393 or email help@biddenham.org.uk

The helpline 01234 815393 is monitored seven days a week, 8.00am-6.00pm by church and community volunteers. If you can't get through, you can leave a message or email help@biddenham.org.uk and we will get back to you.

Neighbours' WhatsApp groups – the heart of the support network - are now operating in most streets. One representative from each street is also on a parish wide WhatsApp group so we can rapidly spread information across the village.

What the WhatsApp neighbours' groups do:

Carry out shopping and other practical tasks for self-isolating neighbours.

Share issues or problems – and then solve them collectively.

Share information about offers from local businesses, appeals for help and information from the police, the NHS or other key public sector services.

If you cannot get out: Do you need something delivered?

The chances are one of your neighbours or other village residents will be able to help. If you don't know who to ask on your street, then just call the village helpline on 01234 815393 or email help@biddenham.org.uk and we will all do our best to help you out.

How are you coping mentally?

This matters so much. Rev Eric Lomax is providing pastoral support or just a friendly chat to all who need it. You can contact Eric directly on 01234 328452 or 07805 879537 or email rev.ej.lomax@gmail.com

We also have a team of people, some with professional expertise, ready to spend time on the phone with anyone who wants a chat. Just ring the helpline 01234 815393 or email help@biddenham.org.uk and again, we will find someone who can help, either locally or direct you to an organisation who can help.

Facebook Groups

Help, tips and local news can be found on the following Facebook Groups;

Great Denham Community

Biddenham Residents <https://www.facebook.com/groups/biddenhamresidents>

St Andrews Residents' Association, Biddenham <https://www.facebook.com/groups/166310557507200/>

St Mary's, Biddenham <https://www.facebook.com/groups/354635615475350/>

St Mary's Biddenham Residents <https://www.facebook.com/groups/690599814653173/>

St James's Church <https://www.facebook.com/St-Jamess-Church-Biddenham-428040160888713/>

Bedford Borough Council Community Hub

We seem to be pretty well sorted in this parish but if you need additional help and support or if you want to volunteer to help the wider Bedford community call the Borough Council Community Hub on 01234 718101.

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My railway carriage home

I grew up in Bristol, and during World War II, when the blitzes on Bristol began, my mother, my brother and I went to stay with various relatives, but after the worst of the blitzes were over, early in 1941 we were living in part of a rented house in Wells, Somerset. Unfortunately, by Easter my mother was seriously ill with a nervous breakdown.

By chance, while my father was visiting us in Wells for a weekend we met some people we knew from Bristol, the Duck family. My father told them that my mother had to go into a nursing home and he didn't know who would look after my brother and me. They very kindly offered to look after us. Mr Duck was living alone in Bristol, but Mrs Duck and their two children (a boy and a girl), had moved to their "holiday cottage" in Rookham, high up on the edge of the Mendip Hills above Wells. This "cottage" consisted of two railway carriages laid parallel, with a living-room built between them. One carriage served as the kitchen and the other was divided into three bedrooms; a double-sized one for Mrs Duck (and Mr Duck when he came to stay some weekends) and a standard sized compartment for the two boys and the same for the two girls. The sash windows opened when you pulled a thick leather strap. We children stored our clothes on the overhead string luggage racks. Water was delivered in milk churns from Priddy by horse-drawn cart and the lavatory was an outside earth closet. I don't think there was electricity, so there would have been an oil stove and oil lamps. It must have been hard for Mrs Duck, looking after four children in such a primitive and isolated place. I have no idea how she did the shopping with no transport. As far as I can remember, the only way we children were expected to help was in drying the dishes.

There was at least one other railway carriage home up on Rookham hill, where Mr and Mrs Balch lived. Some years ago, I decided to find out how the carriages got there. It appears that the then Headmaster of the Blue School in Wells had bought them second-hand early in the 20th century. After travelling by rail on the Somerset & Dorset Bath to Bournemouth line to Binegar station, the carriages were hauled up the steep hill to Rookham by a team of fifty horses, which must have been quite a sight. Unfortunately, I have not found any photographs of this event, nor of the carriages when they were converted into homes. Mr Balch, a noted archaeologist and speleologist, lived in Wells with his wife and children. He bought one of these carriages from the Headmaster, using it as a base for his explorations in the caves of the Mendips. He used to refer to his 26 ft railway carriage as his "Summer Palace", and later he incorporated it into a bungalow. He and his wife lived there during part of World War II, and after the war his family used it as a holiday home. Herbert Balch founded the Wells and Mendip Museum in 1893 and was the man who first brought the Wookey Hole caves to the attention of the general public.

My brother and I lived at Rookham for the whole of the summer. Anne Duck (who was a year older than me), my brother and I all attended a school in Wells, walking down and back every day with packed lunches, which was a long journey. While we were at the school, Red Cross parcels arrived from America for the pupils. I was excited when I opened my little box, containing among other things some beautiful striped pencils with erasers on the ends, a luxury then.

When the summer holidays came, my brother and I left Rookham and went to stay with our grandpa, who lived near Bristol. My mother was discharged from the nursing home and by the time my brother and I were due to start school in September we were all reunited back at our home in Bristol and we returned to our original schools there.

Things could have been much worse. We all survived and our home wasn't bombed. However, for some years I

was afraid my mother would be "taken away" from me again, and still to this day I feel fear at the sound of sirens, or if I hear planes overhead at night.

The house was still standing in 1958 when I went back to visit Rookham, but was pulled down in the 1970s, and replaced by a brick-built bungalow.

Mary McKeown

Lockdown handbell ringing - garage style



On 15th July the Handbell Ringers took the first tentative steps towards playing together again for the first time since the lockdown started. We can't meet in the Church Barn so we tried a careful and socially distanced group of 6 ringers in Anthea's garage in Day's Lane.

It was great to be able to be together and start making music again. We are planning to do some more sessions, six people at a time, over the next few weeks.

Rosemary Harris

Biddenham Show - No show for 2020

With regret, the Show Committee has decided that it will be impossible to organise the Biddenham Show this year. With large gatherings still forbidden and social distancing in place, it is just impractical.

We are planning a 'Show Gallery' on our website where we would like to feature photographs of the fine specimens of plants, fruit and vegetables, flower arrangements, baking, arts, crafts, photography, poetry and writing that we would normally exhibit at the Show.

The categories will be broadly in line with last year's classes and you will be able to upload pictures of anything produced since September 2019. Depending on response we may produce a small booklet of the finest exhibits later in the year.

Our website is currently being updated and you will be able to find details of the 'Show Gallery' at biddenhamshow.org by the middle of August.

If you were successful in winning a trophy last year, please enjoy it for another year and we will collect them before (we hope) the 2021 Show. If you are planning to leave the village please contact us through the website or via any committee member to return them.

Biddenham Show Committee

Although our activities have been limited this year for obvious reasons, we have made some progress. The benches around the pond have been repaired and strengthened where necessary and will soon be painted so they will look much better, and our thanks to David Wilkinson for doing this for us. The grass and the hedges have been cut, allowing easier access, but they now need doing again! I don't know whether you will have noticed, but the kingfisher sign at the Gold Lane entrance to the pond has been removed, re-painted by Sheila Sherwood and now replaced, and looks extremely smart. Our thanks to Sheila for doing this.



We are close to replacing the wooden gate at the Gold Lane entrance to the pond. The gate itself is on order and the volunteers to do the work are in place. On the day that the installation takes place, the footpath will not be closed, although access to the pond may be restricted for short periods of time at crucial installation moments. Committee members will be on hand to supervise the work and will be able to provide help to those wishing to walk the path. This is advance warning – the work should not take longer than a day, but the date has not yet been fixed.

Unfortunately, litter remains a problem and now we have bottles and cans thrown in the pond as well as left behind the wall. It is sad that some people think that it is acceptable to deface this peaceful haven in our village and ruin the experience for others. One of our committee members has kindly offered to do a litter pick to tidy the area, but it really should not be like this.

I am very pleased to say that after our pleas earlier in the year, we have had no reports of dogs in the pond and the problem of dog mess has improved.

I think that we are now all becoming used to, and accepting of the fact that the pond is unable to retain significant water during the summer months, and this is even after a very wet early spring this year, when we had such a high-water level that we had to cancel our plans for reed removal. What a difference three months make! However, low water and a lack of water movement has encouraged invasive weeds which are unsightly and will eventually lead to the pond silting up if they are not proactively removed. The plan is to do something about this in the early Autumn.

We are hopeful that we will be able to arrange an Autumn work morning in early November, but like so much, this is dependent on government advice, but please keep an eye on our articles in the Loop for any updates.

The process of becoming a Friend to support the work

that we do is very easy. Just send an email to Jane Knight (details below) and a standing order form will be sent to you. The minimum contribution that we request is £5 per household, although we of course welcome larger subscriptions.

Stay safe and continue to enjoy the Pond.

The Pond Team

Contact Details

Chris Jones	chrishj49@gmail.com
Paul Godden	pgodden@btinternet.com
Jane Knight	jane@80kltd.co.uk
Cathy Eckett-Brown	ceckett@gmail.com
Sophie Applewhite-Rees	dansop1@googlemail.com

www.biddenhamvillagepond.wordpress.com
www.facebook.com/biddenhamvillagepond

Margaret Platt

We are sorry to report the death of Margaret Platt on 24th June. Our thoughts are with her husband, Terry and his family.

We are grateful to Terry and Val Fitzhugh for the tributes below.



Dear Friends,

Could I take this opportunity to thank so many of you for the cards and kind remarks on the death of Margaret. Margaret died in Airedale Nursing Home after a short but very uncomfortable illness. The fact that we were unable to visit the home during the present crisis added to the difficulties. The funeral was on 21st July at Christ Church, Bedford, and the Bedford Crematorium. Again because of the crisis, attendance had to be limited to the family. But I know that a number of you were able to join us via "Zoom". We greatly appreciated your support. When things are back to "normal" we hope to have a wider celebration of Margaret's life.

Margaret and I came to Biddenham in 2008. Margaret quickly joined what was then the Women's Group, the Bedford Choral Society and the Tibbs Dementia Foundation. We both also joined the Gardeners' Association. Without exception we were greeted with warmth and friendship. Margaret loved Biddenham. There have been so many enjoyable social occasions, often accompanied by a great deal of laughter!

Thank you all for your support.

Terry Platt

It is with great sadness that I let you know that we lost a valued member of our group recently. Margaret Platt, who was the treasurer of barn@2 for a number of years, died on 24th June.

She was most reliable and supported all the activities undertaken by the committee. She was dignified, thoughtful and kind and had a lovely, gentle disposition.

Margaret will be greatly missed by us all.

Our sincere condolences go to Terry and the family.

Val Fitzhugh

This month in the garden

Because the normal pattern of publication for the Loop is to put July and August together August does not generally get a gardening article to itself so this is its moment of glory; or perhaps not, as August isn't one of the great gardening months.

My favourite garden related book is 'The Morville Hours', Katherine Swift's account of the conception and creation of her historically themed garden at the Dower House near Bridgnorth in Shropshire. While she was developing the garden Katherine Swift also wrote a weekly gardening article in the Times and a collection of these articles has been published as a companion book to 'The Morville Hours' called 'The Morville Year'. In one of these articles, with an August date, she writes "There ought to be a law against August. It's an endurance test, the month most people like least in their gardens. The roses are over, the foxgloves are standing about wanly waiting to drop their seed; even the grass has stopped growing." There certainly have been years when I have felt like that about my garden, when everything seems to be losing steam and looking unkempt, but, at the moment, writing towards the end of July, I am hopeful that neither the garden nor I will become exhausted. The flower beds are still looking pretty good and the vegetable garden is bursting with produce. The long period of lock-down and isolation has meant more time in the garden and things that often get neglected have been getting more attention.

I wrote earlier in the year about my trial with a 'no dig' regime and it has worked out incredibly successfully. I spread the whole area liberally with garden compost (or, more accurately, my gardener did) and I subsequently turned the compost in gently and spread chicken manure pellets just before sowing or planting out. Some of the cabbages are already enormous and I am getting a generous

yield from early potatoes. Even the twisted onions I wrote about earlier have recovered with liberal feeding and are getting a really good size. Pity about the cancellation of the Biddenham Show when I might have had a chance with the onions this year.

Even during this 'quiet' month there are jobs to do. Annual bedding and container plants will need dead-heading and, as dahlias get into their stride, keep nipping out the smaller buds at the side or immediately below the main buds on each stem. Don't forget to water and feed container plants. Even if it rains there is never enough water to satisfy plants in containers. You should also continue to feed camellias and rhododendrons, using rain water, and fertiliser for acid loving plants. This is the best time for cutting hedges of beech, hawthorn and leylandii. Blanket weed in ponds will not stop growing in August and you may find duck weed needs attention. Yellowing water lily leaves should be cut off and removed.

There always seems to be some pruning to do. The fruited canes of summer fruiting raspberries should be cut down to a little above ground level. The green canes which will provide next year's fruit will be well grown by now. Currant bushes (red, white and black) can have new growth cut back by a third or so. Large shrub roses which don't have repeat flowers can be cut back for a good shape once flowering has finished. Lavender and rock roses which can get 'leggy' should be cut back when flowering has finished but keep within green shoots; don't cut into harder wood.

Once plum trees have fruited, which may not be just yet, do any required pruning because waiting until winter may result in trees getting diseased. Smaller ornamental trees which may want pruning to keep a good shape or to stop them getting too big can be pruned now. Winter pruning is not harmful but may lead to more rapid growth next year.

I hope your vegetables have also done well and you have a good harvest. Sweetcorn will shortly be ready and needs to be picked as soon as it is ripe to enjoy it at its sweetest and most tender; once the tassels turn brown check readiness by pulling back the outer covering and squeezing a kernel. If milky liquid comes out it is ready. The starch content increases rapidly after picking and the advice sometimes given is to put the kettle on for hot water before you go into the garden to pick the corn.

Spend some time just enjoying your garden and, now restrictions are being eased, think about visiting a garden open to the public (appointments generally required).

Jeremy Arthern

Andrew Charles

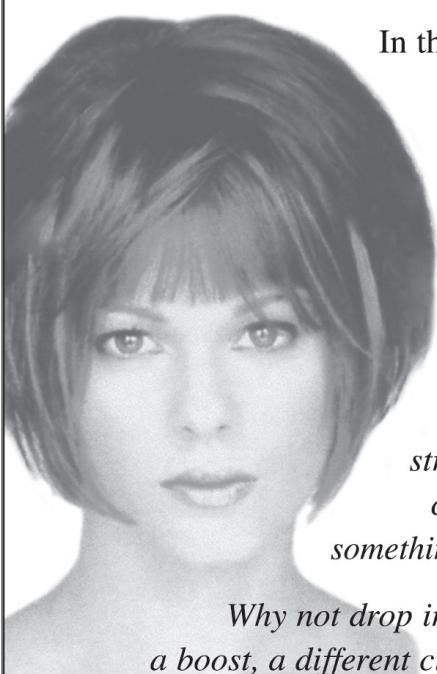
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Help with tax affairs

Local man Dennis Wren is offering free help with tax affairs to Biddenham residents during the Covid-19 crisis.

Email him at dennis@taxesclear.co.uk for more information.



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Thank you for your Support, Take care & Stay Safe



Thank You

Biddenham Cricket Club

Thanks to the Loop being published at the start of August we are able to bring you news of the return of cricket to Biddenham. As a result of high level discussions between the Government, medical experts and the England and Wales Cricket Board the news that recreational cricket could be played in 2020 was announced on 3rd July.

This announcement came as a surprise to many given that so many activities are still not permitted, but welcomed by those who felt that the cricket season was perhaps slipping away with the chance that no play might be possible at all in 2020.

Since the announcement early in July clubs, including Biddenham, have been working their way through the stringent rules and procedures that will need to be followed before, during and after matches. The focus has been on protecting the welfare of those taking part and also those in close proximity to the match. This is particularly important in Biddenham where there are many who normally use the field who will be passing by, or present on other areas of the field during the matches.

There has been much to do to prepare for our games – David Watson has led the way with his maintenance of the cricket square and pavilion field to a high standard throughout the lockdown. His work has made our task much easier than for many clubs to prepare for cricket to return. Thanks also go to Chris Spurgeon and the other junior team managers for organising fixtures at short notice. The senior team is being organised by David Morrish and Will Lowerson and we have been fortunate to be invited into an eight team competition organised at short



notice by Elstow CC. Our home fixture and training dates up until the end of August are listed below.

Just as importantly we could not be playing cricket now without the co-operation of the Parish Council, particularly from Deborah Slade and her cleaning “team” who have made arrangements so that we can have limited use of the Pavilion during training and matches. We are grateful for these efforts.

So we look forward to games across all age groups down to the under 11s in a modified format that includes sanitiser breaks every 20 minutes during matches, and separate zones for home and away teams, scorers, umpires and spectators. Hopefully circumstances will allow the under 9s to be welcomed back in 2021.

The plan is for clear signs to be in place at the field during matches and training to indicate to everyone the best routes to take.

We would ask that if the match ball does go beyond the boundary during a match that, as a passer by or spectator, you do not pick it up as this will be a risk to you and also precipitate a break in play to sanitise the ball.

Richard Fone

A reminder that club news, fixtures and results appear on the website at:

<http://biddenham.play-cricket.com/home>

Unfortunately the 100 club draw is currently suspended and there will be news about this in a future issue of the Loop.

Contact numbers:

Chairman	Glenn Taylor	07778 479479
Cricket Secretary	Richard Fone	07818 678697
Junior Chairman	Chris Spurgeon	07707 771606
Club Welfare Officer	Maija Bissett	589473

DATE	DAY	START	OPPONENTS/TRAINING	TEAM
25-Jul	Sat	12.00	Milton Keynes	Elstow Inv
26-Jul	Sun	09:30	Practice Match	Under 13's
27-Jul	Mon	18:00	Junior Training	Under 11's
31-Jul	Fri	18:00	Junior Training	Under 15's
01-Aug	Sat	12.00	Elstow	Elstow Inv
02-Aug	Sun	10.00	Harrold	Under 11's
03-Aug	Mon	18:00	Junior Training	Under 11's
05-Aug	Wed	17:30	Olney Town	Under 13's
07-Aug	Fri	18:00	Bedford	Under 15's
08-Aug	Sat	09:30	Bedford	Under 13's
10-Aug	Mon	17:30	Olney Town	Under 11's
13-Aug	Thu	17:30	Harrold	Under 15's
15-Aug	Sat	12.00	Olney Town	Elstow Inv
17-Aug	Mon	18:00	Junior Training	Under 11's
19-Aug	Wed	18:00	Junior Training	Under 13's
21-Aug	Fri	17:30	Olney Town	Under 15's
22-Aug	Sat	12.00	Thurleigh	Elstow Inv
24-Aug	Mon	18:00	Junior Training	Under 11's
26-Aug	Wed	18:00	Junior Training	Under 13's
28-Aug	Fri	18:00	Junior Training	Under 15's
30-Aug	Sun	12.00	Blunham	Elstow Inv



Peter's Picturehouseis back in September....

Date: Tuesday 1st September 2020

Due to Covid-19 related guidelines, pre-booking of tickets and refreshments is required for this event. See contact information below for John or Marihelen Esam.

Time: Doors open 7:00pm, Film starts 7:30pm
Location: Biddenham Village Hall



Bridge of Spies © 2015 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. All Rights Reserved

Future Showings at Peters Picturehouse will be advertised in the September Loop, on the Biddenham Village website and on village noticeboards.



Certificate: 12A

Ticket price: £5

To pre-book your ticket and for further information about our Covid-19 related precautions and refreshments please contact:
John - johnesam@btinternet.com 07900 218900

or
Marihelen - marihelen@btinternet.com 07710 288933

Peter's Picturehouse

Stephen Spielberg (director), Tom Hanks and Mark Rylance (actors) and the Cohen Brothers (script writers) welcome you back to Peter's Picturehouse at 7.30pm on 1st September with a showing of the Academy Award Winning *Bridge of Spies*.

Bridge of Spies is the true story of three extraordinary characters whose fate helped to define the conflicts of the most dangerous years of the Cold War: William Fisher, a British born KGB agent arrested by the FBI in New York City and jailed as a Soviet superspy for trying to steal America's most precious nuclear secrets; Gary Powers, the American U-2 pilot who was captured when his plane was shot down over Russia; and Frederic Pryor, a young American in Berlin mistakenly identified as a spy, arrested and held without charge by the Stasi, East Germany's secret police.

We will be following strict Covid-related guidelines and total numbers will have to be restricted to 30, on a first come first served basis. To manage this, we are introducing a new booking system and we are asking you to pre-book your tickets and refreshments. The hall will be laid out with pre-allocated seats according to "bubbles", ie people that can sit together without social distancing. The "bubbles" will be appropriately spaced. Please bring the correct money with you when you arrive at the hall.

Tickets are £5 each and doors will open at 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start. To order your tickets and any refreshments, either phone or email:

John Esam: johnesam@btinternet.com 07900 218900 or
Marihelen Esam: marihelen@btinternet.com 07710 288933

Refreshments are priced as follows:

Red or White Wine - £3.00 per glass or £12.00 per bottle

Beer - £2.00

Soft Drinks - £1.00

Ice Creams - £1.50

Tea, coffee - £1.00

We will supply you with full details of the Covid related precautions we are taking and ask you to fill in an information contact form when you book.

Rose Houghton

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Café B...



Weather permitting we will be serving coffee and cake in the garden at 17 Biddenham Turn on **Tuesday 18th August** between 10.30am and 12.00 noon.

It would be lovely to see our regular customers again and brilliant to welcome some new ones!

From September we hope to be back in the Village Hall but will confirm that as soon as we can.

Biddenham History Society

55 years ago, in August 1965, according to the WI scrapbook for 1965, a quarter peal was rung by the Church Tower bellringers in honour of the 86th birthday of Miss Evelyn Steel of Kings Close, Main Road, Biddenham. The scrap book records that 'she is a founder member of the Ladies Guild of Ringers; a past President of the Bedfordshire Association of Change Ringers (she was President from 1946 to 1960) and was the Tower Captain of Biddenham for many years. She is now an old lady and has been incapacitated with a broken leg during 1965, but through sheer willpower and dogged perseverance has managed to keep mobile, and in December could walk as far as the Post Office from her house and back'.

Evelyn Steel and her sister Miss Dorothy Dyne Steel, known as D.D. Steel were remarkable ladies. Evelyn (1880-1973) was noted for her achievements as a lady bell ringer in what was traditionally an all male preserve. In 1912, she took part in London in the first all women's peal and became nationally known. She later taught young people in Biddenham to ring.

She was one of the first Biddenham residents, and certainly women, to buy a car. She volunteered her services in World War 2. In 1939, she joined the Biddenham first aid team that met once a week in the grounds of Biddenham House. Visiting officials praised them for their bandaging, splinting and general knowledge, though fortunately the skills they acquired were not tested out in a large-scale local bombing raid! Evelyn Steel's home, Kings Close on Main Road was also where Albert Church's wife and his sister-in-law, Alice Church, took the vegetables that they collected in a wheel barrow, going round the village once a month. Miss Steel supervised the filling of hampers and took them in her car to Bedford, ready to be sent to the coast for use on one of the minesweepers. She died in 1973 aged 93 and is buried in Biddenham Churchyard.

Evelyn's sister, D.D. Steel (1884-1965) became a legend in the croquet world. Before World War 1, she was already considered the finest exponent of the game in the world. She dominated English croquet in the 1920s and 1930s. She won the Open Croquet Championship (for men and women) four times between 1925 and 1931. She was the winner of the Women's Championship 15 times. She was described as vigorous, small, sturdy, with red country cheeks and Irish blue eyes, she hunts in winter and croquets in summer. In 2011 she was inducted into the World Croquet Federation Hall of Fame. Clearly two very interesting and remarkable ladies who lived at Kings Close!

I have used these sources of information for the Misses Steel:

- The Women's Institute - A Scrap Book of Biddenham, 1965.
- Dorothy Richards, Biddenham - A Parish History and Guide.
- Katherine Fricker, Mary McKeown and Diana Toyn - The Village of Biddenham Through the Ages.

Finally, a reminder that because of the situation with Covid-19, all meetings of the Biddenham History Society for 2020 have been cancelled. I hope you will all stay well and safe.

Kathy Fricker



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Biddenham Village Hall

We are working hard to allow for the reopening of the Village Hall and are pleased to let you know that the Hall is reopening for some regular classes from the end of July.

The Hall remains closed for private hirings at the moment although we hope to resume most classes in September.

Thank you for your continued patience and support.

For any queries regarding bookings please contact the bookings officer via the Contact Us link on the website <https://biddenhamvillagehall.org.uk/>

From the Biddenham Village Agent

Our Village Agent, Teresa Moon, is here to help older people in Bedford Borough Council villages to access the services and support they might need. Her services are free. Just call 0800 039 1234 and she will return your call.



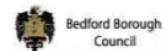
Do You Need a Reusable Face Mask – or a spare to put in the wash? We are now all required to wear a face covering on public transport, or in enclosed public spaces, including shops hairdressers, chiropodists, doctor's surgeries etc. It's best for us to use face masks which can be washed and reused, leaving disposable masks for the professionals. Washable masks avoid creating unnecessary waste, since disposable face masks are not recyclable, and end up in landfill. Once worn, a reusable mask should be washed before being used again, so it is best for everybody to have at least two.

If you would like a reusable fabric mask, we have some to distribute to people who need them. We have been kindly given a grant by our two Borough Councillors, so we are able to make these available **free of charge**. However, if you wish, you can make a contribution, as all profits from the masks are donated to Tibbs Dementia Foundation. Our masks are made in Bedford, using 100% cotton fabric - plain white on one side and printed fabric on the reverse. We have coloured floral fabrics suitable for women, and also black prints which are preferred by men. They have an aluminium strip which enables the wearer to shape them over the nose - this does not affect the mask's washability. They are supplied in a hygienic resealable bag, with usage instructions.

Do you need a Made-To-Measure Mask? We can provide masks adapted for special needs. Eg, if you wear hearing aids, we can provide you with a mask with elastic which goes around the back of your head, leaving your ears free. You might also need a mask which is larger or smaller than average. Just call our Freephone 0800 039 1234.

Need Help With Filling in Forms? If you are struggling with paperwork, such as Blue Badge, Bus Pass, Council Tax Reduction, Housing Benefit and Attendance Allowance applications, our Village Agent is happy to help you.

Any queries or worries – contact your Village Agent on Freephone 0800 039 1234
(This is an answerphone service, so please be ready to leave your name, address & telephone number, & we will aim to call you back within 48 hours.)



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Lantra

Biddenham Parish Council

The most recent Parish Council Meeting was held on Wednesday 8th July 2020 using the Zoom conferencing facility. Present were Parish Councillors Graham Bates, Stewart Briggs, Peter Chase (Chairman), Harry Fowler, Chris Gee, Alan Jacobs, Krys Osuch, and Joe Warren. Apologies were received from Councillor Francia Slade. Borough Councillors Jon Gambold, Roger Rigby and Jim Weir, Clerk Lyn Lyman and 24 members of the public were also present.

Public Open Session

Someone keeps pulling signposts down. First it was the 30mph repeater sign near Kings Corner, now the rather classic green signpost on the corner of Vicars Close. Cllr Gambold raised this on behalf of Mr Culverwell at the meeting. If the culprits are seeking publicity then they've got it (by virtue of this article). Perhaps that'll make them stop, but I doubt it. Borough are just going to cement the thing in using double the normal amount of concrete. Like graffiti under the A428 road-bridge at the river, zero tolerance will be shown for this sort of thing. We will just keep repairing and cleaning things until the vandalous delinquents get bored or grow up.

Another concern raised by Cllr Gambold came from the cricket club, whose outfield mower is now utterly beyond repair. Jon and Roger have kindly offered £5,000 from their "ward fund" towards a second hand replacement machine, and as the Parish Council, we will apply to the



Borough's Rural Fund to match that, to get us up to the asking price of £10,000. New ones are £30,000. Cllr Briggs kindly offered to complete the paperwork for this.

Mr Glasper, who heads up the Biddenham Speedwatch posse, noted that the government have now lifted the rather draconian restriction of not permitting over 70-year-olds to hold a speed gun by the side of the road with an associate two metres away. So the team will be back in action shortly. Any speeding motorist nabbed gets noted to the police and, if they become a repeat offender, will be contacted and potentially prosecuted.

RIP(?) Great Denham Golf Course

The main concern, and the reason for such a high attendance at the meeting, was the recently received news that the Great Denham golf course operator had heard their lease was not to be renewed by the landowner. This means the course will close in mid-October, the land will become fallow. Worst of all, it opens up the possibility of the land being put forward for housing. We do not want to lose this green lung in our midst to yet more houses. Borough Cllr Weir, whose ward is Great Denham, attended to give us all an update and noted that in only 10 days his online petition had been signed by over 2,500 people.

I have to tell you that the reason we keep losing land to housing in our area is down to two significant factors. Firstly, the Borough Council's own policy is to deliberately prefer housing development within the town boundary. This is in order to try to reduce development in outlying villages. Sadly, Biddenham is not a "village", nor Great Denham, by their definition; we are both within the town (or "urban") boundary and classed as "urban settlements".

Secondly, no matter what protections Borough themselves put in place on urban green spaces, if they don't keep up a steady supply of new housebuilding across the whole of their region to satisfy central government quotas, they are in big trouble. Financial trouble. What we saw in connection with the development of 250 houses west of Gold Lane is that even if Borough don't agree to allow developments, landowners will appeal to the Planning Inspectorate who will then permit these things anyway. This is apparently for the "public benefit" of construction jobs and houses for people, and trumps almost all environmental, social and infrastructural (schools, traffic, etc.) concerns, every time.

Our fear, therefore, and that of Great Denham's Parish Council and residents, is that a few years will go by and the owner of the golf course land will put it forward for development. They will carefully choose their moment to be a time when Borough are struggling to meet their housebuilding quota. And the result will be the loss of 70 hectares (or 173 acres in old money) to the bulldozer.

So, the meeting heard and, indeed, considered what we can do about this situation.

Firstly, Cllr Weir was encouraged to try to mediate between the landowner and the golf course operator. Surely if we can persuade the parties to review their decision, we remove any concern about housebuilding. But some considerable damage has already been done to the membership of the club by the uncertainty of the last few months, and this creates issues of its own in trying to sustain the operation.

Secondly, we try to fire up the Borough politicians to chime in with our concerns. Cllr Weir attended a full Borough Council meeting a few days after our Parish meeting, and I am pleased to say both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor spoke in support of our concerns. Indeed, the Mayor correctly pinpointed housing supply as the key issue.

Thirdly, our MP Richard Fuller might help influence national housebuilding policy. It is a mystery to many of us why so many houses still need building every year. And, as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, I for one feel that that policy should now be reviewed. My day job is working for one of the myriad of small companies who occupy a suite of rooms in central London (Holborn to be

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precise). Our senior management, in common with many others, have already decided that the home-based methods of the last four months have been working very well, thank you, and thus we will be letting go of our Holborn office. Permanently. I therefore have a firm conviction that commercial property is going to be one of the hardest hit sectors in what people are coming to call “the new normal”. Millions of square feet of office space are going to be left empty. Owners have virtually no option but to convert them to residential space; there are quite enough hotels already, too, and a lot of people only come to stay in them to visit people in their offices (who won’t be there anymore).

So, the world is going to be a different place post-Covid. Whilst some differences will create difficulties for previously prosperous business sectors, other changes will definitely be a blessing. Why carpet-bomb green belts with houses when our inner cities are going to be awash with flats?

We ended our meeting by considering whether we need an extraordinary meeting in August to discuss the golf course land issue further. We are still, at the time of writing, unsure if it’s needed. If it is, it will be at **7.30pm on Wednesday 12th August**. If you would like to attend, then please follow the same instructions as those below for September’s next full Council meeting. If the August meeting isn’t needed, I will nevertheless turn up to the Zoom room in the cloud to greet you and answer any questions or concerns you may want to raise.

Our next meeting – IMPORTANT INFO

The Parish Council meets every second Wednesday of most months. We very much welcome hearing from residents, there being a public “open session” near the start for anyone wanting to say something. Please call in and let us know anything concerning you about our village, or just listen. The date for the next full meeting is **Wednesday 9th September at 7.30pm**.

To participate, please ring **0208 080 6592** and then use your phone keypad to enter the code **524 544 164** followed by the # key. Calls are national rate, I’m afraid. We cannot stretch to a service where we pay for your phone call via a toll free number.

Alternatively, and at no charge, you can use a computer or tablet by accessing the Internet and carefully entering <https://zoom.us/j/524544164>

This information is provided on the village website at biddenham.org.uk.

Peter Chase
Chairman

St Joseph’s and St Gregory’s Primary School



I am proud to announce that two of our pupils have had amazing success in the Art-a-Track Magic Train competition.

Victoria Dobrynska won first prize and Adoration Nwosu won second prize, by designing a poster of a magical day out. Both will receive a family day out by train, later in the year.

The judges were very complimentary about the entries from our school, so well done if you entered the competition.

Congratulations to both our pupils for their brilliant artwork!

Mrs. Tyrrell
Art Lead (Upper Site)

Is it immoral to build a community around an amenity and then take that amenity away?

The 172 acres of open green space that is the Bedford Golf Course, and was the s106 requirement which allowed Richard Wingfield’s trust (Old Ford End Trust) to build a golf course to enable the development of the Great Denham Golf Village, is now under immediate threat of closure. The buffer between Biddenham and Great Denham is currently a protected Open Gap which prevents coalescence between the two parishes.

Closure of the golf course, planned by the landowner to be 16th October 2020, will mean the land being eventually identified as of “no defined use” and thus become more susceptible to residential development. Whilst the agent (Bidwells) states that “there is no immediate plan for development”, it then states rather ominously “there is potential in years to come”.

Both the Parish Councils of Great Denham and Biddenham along with your Ward Councillors, Jon Gambold, Roger Rigby, and Jim Weir are working hard to both engage with the landowner and seek solutions which could change the landowner’s planned closure. Despite the many letters and emails to the agents and landowner all have gone unanswered and we have to assume ignored. The petition which now stands at over 2,700 signatures and can be found on <http://chng.it/2CnqFM8y> was presented to Bedford Borough Council on Wednesday 15th July and whilst it had the support of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Planning Portfolio Holder it still has to be given a full debate at the next Full Council meeting.

There are many conditional and planning policy challenges for the landowner which we and many residents have pointed out to the agent and their client. The golf club which is used by many residents of both Parishes was described by Richard Wingfield as suffering from a “decline in popularity”! Nothing could be further from the truth, before the threat of closure there were 504 members on the books. Sadly, most of those members have now joined other clubs so some time will be needed to attract them back. This was and is, I believe, part of the plan towards the end game of eventual development by the landowner. As stated earlier we can only assume what the future holds if the agent and landowner refuse to engage.

For the Facebook devotees more information can be found on <https://www.facebook.com/Save-Great-Denham-Golf-Course-106074074510303>.

This site will be regularly updated with latest news on progress and further info can also be found on the Great Denham PC website

<https://greatdenhamparishcouncil.gov.uk/category/news/>

Please support your parish council and make your voices heard.

Jim Weir

Nick Sleap
Proprietor

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Conservation in Cowslip Meadow

I hope many of you will have noticed the wonderful display of wild flowers in the meadow this year. Conditions have been very suitable for a long flowering season and the results are spectacular.

Cowslip Meadow is neutral grassland and was sown with a conservation mixture when it became part of the Ouse Valley Country Park (OVCP). This is an area that covers the river meadows from Bromham bridge all around the Biddenham loop.

The Cowslip Meadow of the OVCP was a large arable field and part is now under the bypass. We manage the eastern part of the field but a smaller piece survives to the west of the bypass road and is not currently under management so is gradually naturally converting to scrub. At this stage it is beneficial to wildlife in general but in future may produce climax vegetation less friendly to wildlife. As this field is not used for grazing neither is it cut.

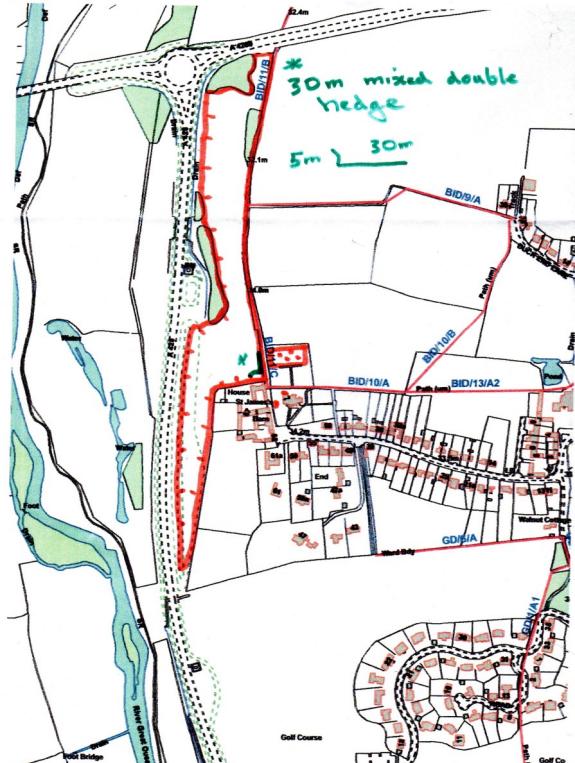
Once again, Cowslip Meadow will be cut and baled in August by a contractor and the bales removed for use elsewhere. Work to clear ragwort has paid off so the plant is now at a much reduced level making the hay more suitable for livestock use.

This cutting and clearing is helping to lower the fertility of the meadow and thus reduce the impact of invasive grass species allowing other more delicate herbs to gain a stronger foothold.

The best species-rich part of the meadow is the top western corner which is damp and so is dominated by sedge species.

We have cut a number of access paths into the meadow to encourage its recreational use.

Part of the damper area of the meadow is being used for an ecological survey this year which will give further insights into its strengths and weaknesses as a habitat.



There are lists of plants available and if you would like to get involved in any aspect of the work to look after the meadow please get in touch.

The map shows the meadow and the other smaller part beyond the road

Chris Jones
chrishi49@gmail.com

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A tale of two cities

Ever been to Vancouver, gazed over Burrard Inlet, walked Burrard Street, crossed Burrard Bridge? The first Europeans to explore the area were the Spanish in 1791, then Captain George Vancouver of the Royal Navy who, in June 1792, sailed up the inlet that became Vancouver's main harbour. Europeans didn't settle there until 1862, and the city was not named Vancouver until 1886.

Lumbering was an early industry along the inlet, providing ships' masts and beams for the Gate of Heavenly Peace in Beijing's Forbidden City. A sawmill opened in 1863 and a small saloon in 1867 just beyond the limit of the mill's 'dry' policy. The saloon was very popular and a settlement built up around it, known as Gastown after 'Gassy Jack', the saloon owner, noted for his loquacity and entertaining customers with stories of his time at sea. It is said he persuaded thirsty millworkers to build his saloon in return for all the whisky they could drink in one sitting.

Gassy Jack, John (Jack) Deighton, born in Hull in 1830, left home at 14, went to sea, and later turned to prospecting for gold. From California he went to what is now British Columbia after news in February 1858 of gold there. His health suffering, he abandoned prospecting for running bars, arriving in 1867 in a dugout canoe with his native wife and barrels of whisky on the shore of the inlet where he built his saloon. Still known as Gastown it is a national historic site within Vancouver, crowned by a statue of Gassy Jack.

As the settlement grew, the colonial government decided in 1870 to lay out an official town, named Granville in honour of British Colonial Secretary, Lord Granville, though it remained popularly known as Gastown. On a natural harbour, the Canadian Pacific Railway selected the town as the terminus for its railway, the company president suggesting Vancouver would be a better name, in part as people in Toronto and Montreal knew where Vancouver Island, named after Captain George, was but had no idea where Granville was.

The city was incorporated as Vancouver on 6 April 1886 and two months later most of it was destroyed in the Great Vancouver Fire, which meant though that it could be rebuilt with modern water, electricity and streetcar systems. The opening of the railway was delayed and the service to Vancouver began in May 1887. That year its population was some 1,000: in 2019 it was estimated to be some 634,750.

George Vancouver was born in 1757 in Kings Lynn. It's commonly accepted that the family name Vancouver originates from the Dutch 'Van Coevorden', denoting somebody from the city of Coevorden, Netherlands, from whence George's ancestors came. He joined the Navy at 13 and sailed with Captain Cook on his second and third voyages. After nine years in the West Indies he commanded the expedition that led him in 1792 to what is now the city named after him.

Leaving England in 1791 he sailed via the Cape of Good Hope, Australia, New Zealand, Tahiti, and the Hawaiian Islands, reaching the coast of North America and heading north.

From southern Alaska in 1794, the northernmost point of his voyage, George sailed home arriving in England in 1795. He died aged only 40 in 1798 and is buried at St Peter's Church, Petersham.

Jumping forward to July 1932, in Vancouver a new \$3 million bridge is being opened. Vancouver history records that the architect, G L Thornton Sharp, told a reporter that on the two piers supporting the central gallery '*are moulded the prows of boats with figureheads to represent Captain George Vancouver and Captain Harry Burrard ... both so closely associated with earliest history on Vancouver.*' It continues '*Not quite. Harry Burrard never came within 5,000 kilometres of this area. He'd been an acting lieutenant with Vancouver on the Europa in the West Indies; George was just honoring an old chum.*'

George had named the inlet up which he sailed in 1792 as Burrard Inlet. Later, starting near Burrard Inlet, the central street of downtown Vancouver and the financial district was named Burrard Street, and leads to the new bridge opened in 1932, the Burrard Bridge. Acting Lieutenant Harry Burrard, later Sir Harry Burrard, the 2nd Baronet of Walhampton on the death of his uncle in 1791, then Sir Harry Burrard Neale following his marriage to Grace Elizabeth Neale in 1795, a rear admiral and MP for Lymington, died in 1840 aged 74, never having visited Vancouver.

On his return home George suffered many difficulties, not least public and private harassment by Thomas Pitt, a cousin of Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger, whom he had disciplined for numerous infractions on board and sent home in disgrace. Sadly George Vancouver, amongst Britain's greatest explorers and navigators,

died in obscurity. His grave has since been renovated, a memorial plaque placed on it and is Grade II listed. He is remembered not only by the naming of the city of Vancouver but also of other places around the world, including Mount Vancouver in New Zealand. There are statues of him in Kings Lynn and Vancouver, and a postage stamp was issued in Canada to commemorate the 250th anniversary of his birth.

But what's this, 300 miles south of Vancouver is ... Vancouver! This is Vancouver in Washington State, USA, with a population in 2019 of some 183,000. Established in 1825 around Fort Vancouver, named for Captain George, located on the Columbia River on the Washington/Oregon border, and incorporated in 1857 this is the older city but the lesser known. Once with the slogan '*We're not the Vancouver you're thinking of, but there's still fun stuff to do here*', it has recently adopted a new slogan '*Visit Vancouver USA. Discover the Original.*'

George Vancouver could never have imagined how widely he would be remembered around the world. Nor that Harry Burrard would be commemorated not only by the inlet but also with a street, a bridge, and on buildings and businesses there. Nor that 140 years later another Harry Burrard would appreciate a consequence of George in 1792 thinking of his old chum: shortly after the opening of the Burrard Bridge '*the city received a letter from Sir Harry Paul Burrard, a justice of the peace in Worthing, Sussex, thanking them for naming the bridge after his ancestor.*'

Peter Applewhite



Sir Harry Burrard-Neale
KGCB



Captain George Vancouver

Biddenham Gardeners Association

The joy of gardening (and Zoom)

On 21st July we held our second distanced meeting using Zoom. Paula Church, our secretary, hosted the meeting and the speakers were our Chair, Paul Fricker and a former Chair, Peter Carter.

Most of us had never heard of Zoom before March this year but we are beginning to get used to it and, in many of the ways that we used to meet together, it has proved a great blessing. It will never replace face to face contact but we can see and chat to each other and still appreciate the activity that would have brought us together in other circumstances. A drawback is the amount of work involved in setting up a meeting and we have to thank Paula for all the work of setting up a meeting, preparing the speakers' material for presentation and holding everything together while the meeting is in progress.

Peter Carter was the first speaker and his subject was the roses in his garden. It has been a splendid year for roses and Peter had good things to show us. He started with an introduction to the main categories of roses, often referred to as the nation's favourite flower. The main categories are wild roses, old garden roses and modern roses and these are further divided into climbers, ramblers, hybrid teas and floribundas and Peter spoke about the characteristics of each group. A particular feature of climbing roses is that, although their natural tendency is to grow vertically, they flower most prolifically if trained horizontally.

When Peter moved to his present garden there were five roses, one of which has died, and he has added seven more. Roses are noted for having thousands of named hybridised varieties and, although the naming habit is by no means confined to roses, their names do seem to

have particular resonance, particularly for remembrance or celebration. Peter's significant wedding anniversaries have featured strongly in the named roses in his garden. We were shown pictures of all the roses in his garden as Peter described their characteristics, talking particularly about a magnificent, unnamed, red rose which has created great interest in Day's Lane.



Paul Fricker's subject was the Joy of Gardening and he put his particular sources of joy into five categories; spring colours, making compost, summer colour, growing (and eating) herbs, vegetables and soft fruit and illuminating the garden at night.

A feature of Paul's garden is the sheer number and variety of plants that he and Kathy have packed into a good sized but by no means large garden. He has added to the fenced bounds of the garden by creating a narrow border that runs along the grass verge the entire length of the garden and, although Paul did not specifically mention it, it is obvious that another source of his joy in the garden is the pleasure that this border gives other people and the opportunity it gives him to chat about the garden to the people who pass by.

For Paul, the joy of the spring garden is enhanced by the long period of anticipation it provides through autumn and winter with the need for soil preparation and ordering spring bulbs. Spring itself offers a changing succession of plants through hyacinths and other spring bulbs and forsythia to tulips, plus tadpoles in the pond and then frogs. Paul attributes a large part of the success of his plants to a magical source; alpaca manure, which he has to admit is not widely available.

Paul has five separate bins for making compost and he likens the particular joy it gives him to his pleasure in cooking; selecting the right ingredients and mixing them together to get the right results. Kathy, though, says it is because it is like making mud pies.

The source of summer joy for Paul lies especially in colour. This was amply demonstrated in pictures of the great number of herbaceous perennials that he grows, using a style of single examples of many different plants.

The fourth category of joy comes from edible plants. Paul makes great use of containers here and, once again, he crams a great variety of things into a fairly small space where thyme, hyssop, feverfew and mint and other herbs jostle with tomatoes, courgettes, corn on the cob, onions, beetroot and rhubarb, not to mention strawberries, raspberries, blueberries and black currants.

Finally, night falls and Paul loves to light up the garden with solar lights that bring delight without tapping in to the electricity supply.

There are no further plans for future meetings of the BGA at present but they will continue with Zoom if necessary and it is hoped that some outside speakers may be persuaded to use Zoom as well as having the valued contributions of our own members.

Jeremy Arthern

New members and visitors are always welcome. For more information contact: Linda Truscott on 01234 270747
www.biddenhamgardenersassociation.org.uk

M&JP *Garden Care and Home Maintenance*

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Biddenham Gardeners Association

Since the 'lockdown' (and subsequent cancellations to date of the BGA's 2020 programme of talks), members have been busy in their gardens and have sent in their photographs to be published and available on the BGA's website.

Currently there are over 200 photos available via the following link:

www.biddenhamgardenersassociation.org.uk

menu option: Photo Galleries, Members Photos



'Distant Drums' - out now

The collection of WW1 and WW2 memories contributed to The Loop has, as promised, now been bound into a handsome book with some longer versions of the contributions, along with colour pictures, added. It was compiled and edited by Jon Smith, with the title 'Distant Drums 1914-18, 1939-45 Biddenham Remembers'.

It is a 117-pages long, glossy A5-sized book and all proceeds after printing costs will be donated to village charities. A copy will also be deposited with the Bedfordshire Archives so that the memories shared will be available to future generations.

To buy a copy, priced £10, please email Jon at horseshoe50@btinternet.com. The books are available now and Jon will arrange COVID-safe door to door delivery for the village, and for others further afield will organise the requisite shipping.

An electronic version of 'Distant Drums' may be available at a later date.

Jon Smith

One Village, Shared Memories



Thank You.

What's On?

11.00am Sundays and 6.00pm Wednesdays: St James's church is continuing to hold services via Zoom so keep an eye on your email for details.

August

- Sun 9th August** Service at St James's, 9.30am, see p1
Wed 12th August 7.30pm Biddenham Parish Council may be meeting via Zoom. Details of how to join the meeting are on page 11
Sun 16th August Service at All Saints, 9.30am, see p1
Tue 18th August Café B, 17 Biddenham Turn, 10.30am-12noon, see p8
Sun 23rd August Service at St James's, 9.30am, see p1
Tues 25th August Webinar 'Mental health issues coming out of lockdown' 7.30pm, see p2
Sun 30th August Service at All Saints, 9.30am, see p1

September

- Tue 1st September** Peter's Picturehouse, 7.00pm, Biddenham Village Hall. **Booking essential**, see p8
Wed 9th September 7.30pm Biddenham Parish Council meeting via Zoom. Details of how to join the meeting are on page 11
Mon 14th September Webinar, 'Delayed trauma', 11.00am, see p2

Cricket fixtures on page 7

Some classes are restarting at Biddenham Village Hall, see the website <https://biddenhamvillagehall.org.uk/>

Biddenham Pavilion is open for bookings.



Thanks to Val Fitzhugh for her picture of Harvest Mice.

Hall Booking Details

Biddenham Village Hall

From the Village Hall website you can check availability on the diary, look at the facilities and fill in a booking form. Contact details for regular events are also there.
www.biddenhamvillagehall.org.uk

Church Barn

Contact the Booking Officer, Jan Burns on 344019 or janburns@gmx.com if you would like to hire the barn. Smaller than the Village Hall, it is ideal for a small party or meeting.

Pavilion

The hall is available for children's parties, anniversary lunches, christening receptions, meetings etc. We can also hire the small upstairs meeting room which has tea and coffee making facilities.

Booking enquiries to biddenhampavilion@hotmail.co.uk or Debs Slade on 07808 579330.

Great Denham Community Hall

www.greatdenhamcommunityhall.co.uk



The Friends of St James
- the charity which helps conserve the church, churchyard and barn for future generations

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Treasurer

Peter Leverkus
Paul Fricker

Tel: 353662
Tel: 342843

Welcome Packs for

New Biddenham Residents

Contact Richard Church Tel: 214805

The Loop

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	Wednesday 19th August please.	



The views expressed in 'The Loop' by various community groups do not necessarily represent the views of St James's Church or the Parochial Church Council.