

# The Loop

March  
2021

£1.00

## Our distribution manager retires

It was 18 years ago when I first took over the role of organising the distribution of the parish magazine in Biddenham and Great Denham.

I feel now it is time to call it a day.

Rosemary Harris has agreed to take over the Loop distribution from me and I am sure you will be in very good hands.

I would like to take this opportunity in thanking the current and previous Street Distributors for all their efforts (come rain, come shine) in delivering the magazine to your door. It is much appreciated.

We are probably entering a new era now, where many of you will have opted to receive on line. Whatever your choice, I know that there will always plenty of village interest and information.

Richard Church

*Our sincere thanks go to Richard for his fantastic work over many years, and to Rosemary for taking on the role now.*

Jean Gambold

## Services at St James's

As the lockdown continues St James's church remains closed. Services will continue to be held via Zoom on Wednesdays and Sundays and the majority of Easter services will also be via Zoom. The church will be open on Good Friday, 2nd April and Easter Day, 4th April in a Covid secure way for private prayer. For timings see page 2.

A cross has been erected in the churchyard as a focus for private reflection and it is planned to decorate this with flowers on Easter Day, for details see page 2.

Easter wouldn't be the same without an Easter egg hunt and details of an ingenious Hunt devised by St James's are on page 12. Please join in if you can.

## Green bin collections coming soon!

March brings the resumption of green bin collections. The first collection, with the orange recycling bins, will be on Wednesday 10th March.

## Mothering Sunday with St James's Church

### Can you crochet or knit?

We are decorating the main Churchyard gate with knitted and crocheted flowers to celebrate Mothering Sunday.

If you would like to make some to be included in this please either leave them in the Church Porch or in the porch at 27 St Mellion Drive, Great Denham. Thank you.

Do remember to walk past the Churchyard to see the end result!



### Children's Craft Packs

We would like to offer the children a craft pack to make a Mothers' Day card and a posy of paper flowers.

Request a pack (see below) and join us at the 11am service on Mothering Sunday when we will have a group craft session to make these items.

To join the service just log in to Zoom with meeting ID 998 074 6039.



To request a craft pack or for further details, please email [stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com](mailto:stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com) or call/text Jacqui on 0778 6886 710.

## Deliveries of The Loop

The continuing third lockdown has meant that we have had to stand down our delivery volunteers again and revert to distributing The Loop by email where we can, even if you have not expressed a preference for emailed copies.

We are sorry for this and hope to resume normal service soon.

Jean Gambold

**'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](mailto:loopeditor@gmail.com)

## Easter with St James's Church

**Sunday 28 March**

11am Palm Sunday service

**Monday 29 March**

9pm Complin with reflection

**Tuesday 30 March**

9pm Complin with reflection

**Wednesday 31 March**

6pm Holy Communion

9pm Complin with reflection

**Thursday 1 April**

11am Maundy Thursday service

7pm Maundy Thursday service

Please use our outdoor cross for prayer and reflection.

On Easter Day we will be decorating the cross with flowers. Please visit the cross during the day, bring some flowers to place on it, and celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.

**Alleluia! He is Risen!**

**Friday 2 April (Good Friday)**

12noon Stations of the Cross

10am – 3pm Church open

**Sunday 4 April (Easter Day)**

8.45am Christ Light carried into Church\*

9am – 12noon Church open

11am Easter Day Celebration

*All services except those marked \* will be held on Zoom. Use Login ID 998 074 6039. Church open for private prayer only.*



## Letter from the Vicar

Dear All

There is one thing that the textbooks do not tell you about having children and that is that your child will grow up with a mind of its own.

Some parents try to avoid this by railroading their children into uniformity, processing their thoughts and actions and shaping them into the perfect examples of what we expect them to be. Often such parents will watch their children growing up with all the qualities they hate about themselves.

Other parents recognise from the outset that the little bundle that has arrived in their house is actually a human being, who from a very early age will start to make his or her own decisions, no matter how much grief that causes you.

I will never forget my son, when he was little, packing his little bag with Lego and, the minute we turned our back on him, he wandered off across a busy road to go and see his friend Josh. We were stupid to take our eyes off him, but it took us less than a second to mobilise ourselves and rescue him.

In the twenty years that followed we have had to pick our children out of lots of their crises even when all we could do for them is to give them a hug. At times, I must add, it is us who have got lost and they have reached out to us. This is because all of us suffer from the same condition, that we are human, and humans, by their very nature, lose their way. What I can say is that by some miracle our children have survived and thrived.

It is Lent and during Lent we recall Jesus going out into the wilderness to be tempted. The wilderness, in the Bible, often represents uncertainty, unrest, isolation and even fear. When the Hebrews were freed from slavery in Egypt (the Book of Exodus) they spent 40 years wandering around in the wilderness. The Jewish law (the commandments) was established in the wilderness but mostly these people spent a significant amount of time messing up and losing their way. The Bible indicates that, despite their unfaithfulness, God remained faithful to them. Clearly Jesus' 40 day journey in the wilderness was meant to mirror the journey of the Hebrew slaves, though this time he remained faithful to God the whole time. We know that he chose to eat nothing in the wilderness and he suffered intense hunger. This has nothing to do with giving up wine or chocolate but rather it was about the hungers we all experience; hunger for human company, the hunger direction, or satisfaction, or love. In this sense Jesus' experience in the wilderness was really very similar to his experience on the cross; an intense experience of human need.

'We, like sheep have gone astray, each one has turned his own way,' Isaiah 53 tells us. We have done our own thing just like my son did all those years ago. We find ourselves in our own wilderness, lost, afraid, without direction and hungry for love. The experience of this COVID pandemic has made many people just like that. It is good to remember that in this wilderness experience there is a way out. These times may be difficult but if we turn our eyes on him, we will see that Jesus points, of course, to a loving Father who gives us the freedom to be ourselves, and he will never allow us to remain lost and hungry. We are loved, we are not alone, and if we let him, he will guide us through it.

God bless

Eric



## CORONAVIRUS SUPPORT NETWORK

Need local help? Ring 01234 815393 or email [help@biddenham.org.uk](mailto:help@biddenham.org.uk).



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

Vicar	Rev Eric Lomax <a href="mailto:rev.ejlomax@gmail.com">rev.ejlomax@gmail.com</a>	Tel: 328452
Readers	Christopher Dawe Paul Fricker	Tel 363890 Tel 342843
Churchwardens	Laurie Hurn Lois Price	Tel 364251 Tel 961826
Verger	Hilary Hurn	Tel 364251
Secretary	Jacqui Piper	Tel 356993
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<a href="http://www.stjamesbiddenham.com">www.stjamesbiddenham.com</a>		

# Sport at King's Field

I am the Chairman of Bedford Town FC Youth Development (BTFC-YD), the Youth section of Bedford Town FC, the premier football club in Bedford.

We are a Grassroots Youth Football Club with Charter Standard Development status, affiliated to the Bedfordshire FA. We currently have 18 teams from under 8 to under 18, run by volunteer coaches and assistants, and play in various local and regional Leagues on a Saturday and a Sunday during the season.

I am delighted to let you know that, after some months of negotiation, we have secured the lease for the Biddenham Country Park Sports Centre, more commonly known as King's Field. From our current arrangement which sees us playing on numerous facilities in and around Bedford, King's Field provides us with a wonderful facility which will be the home and hub for our teams, and enables us to grow as a Club. We also look forward to providing opportunities for the local community and beyond to engage with us and get involved. Being a part of the local community is something we are very much looking forward to.

Once the current challenges of Covid-19 restrictions have eased, we will be preparing for the youth teams to get back to regular training sessions, playing matches, and for our young players to enjoy football once again. We will also be working to hire out the facilities offered by Kings Field (indoors and outdoors) for any functions and events that can be accommodated.

As the leaseholder, we are now responsible for the management of King's Field and the costs associated with maintaining and improving the site (Pavilion and Grounds), rent and utilities etc. As an example, we have already engaged Bedford Borough Council in the maintenance and development of the pitches themselves, and have further improvements planned.

## Use of the site by residents

I know that many local residents may wish to continue to visit the site, as they have already been doing before our lease was in place. I hope therefore that you will continue to show the appropriate level of respect for our property and that its primary use is as a sports facility for children. I would therefore ask that:

- Anyone walking dogs on and around the sports field ensure that they pick up after their dogs, as dog mess is a health hazard and particularly dangerous for children;
- That visitors keep off the pitches so that they can be maintained in good condition for our club matches and events;
- You enter the site via the front entrance and refrain from climbing over any external and internal fences; some of these have already been damaged and we have had to repair these at a cost to us;

## Activity during Covid-19 lockdown

In line with government and FA guidance, BTFC-YD matches and training have been stopped until further notice. However, I am aware of a recent incident when a group of uninvited young men entered the site to play football; this was a breach of the current lockdown rules and was nothing to do with BTFC-YD. It has been reported to the Police, who attended on site, and will be monitoring the site in the future. Please adhere to Covid-19 guidelines when visiting the site.

## Working together

We are looking forward to building a strong relationship with local communities. Please direct any enquiries regarding the use of the Pavilion building and/or pitches to me:

Dennis O'Meara  
07777 641900

d.omeara@btinternet.com

Bedford Town FC Youth Development Chairman

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# QUIZ

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> April 7:30 to 9 p.m.

The Friends of St James, Biddenham



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online Zoom quiz with  
a Spring flavour!  
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family.

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GoFundMe: [www.gofundme.com/stjamesspringquiz](http://www.gofundme.com/stjamesspringquiz)

To register and for participation details, email John Barkas at:  
[stjamesquiz@mail.com](mailto:stjamesquiz@mail.com) (alternatively phone Peter Leverkus on 01234 353662)

The FOSJ is a registered charity raising funds for the fabric of St James' Church and barn

## From Our Biddenham Village Agent

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



## Need help with transport to vaccinations in Bedford or further afield?

Good news for people who aren't able to drive themselves to get their vaccine in Bedford or beyond. The Door2Door transport service, who operate minibuses for people with limited mobility, is now open to all and is free! Please pass this information on to any older neighbours, as some people have been very worried about this.

Door2Door is now available to anyone who has transport difficulties getting to vaccinations. You don't need to sign up as a member, you don't need to have limited mobility, you don't need to pay (although a donation on the bus would be welcomed). They have extended their operating hours. AND will take people to Milton Keynes, Luton & Dunstable and even Stevenage, if required. This service is available to people living within Bedford Borough or Central Bedfordshire. If in doubt, just check with Parvin or Naomi on [communitytransport@bedsrcc.org.uk](mailto:communitytransport@bedsrcc.org.uk) or 01234 834933.

All vehicles have been made as Covid-secure as possible. Socially distant seating, screens to separate the clients from drivers, masks, hand sanitizer, disposable seat covers, regular cleaning regime that includes both daily of grab rails, headrests, etc and occasional anti-bacterial spraying by an outside organisation. To book, contact the bookings line on 01234 832611, 9am-4pm Mondays-Fridays.

## Would a helpful gadget make your life easier?

We have a range of handy gadgets to distribute to people who may be struggling to manage on their own during the Covid crisis, including a jar opener, button hook and zip puller; automatic night light; handy reacher; long-handled shoe horn; shoe remover; or seat belt helper.

## Do you need a washable mask?

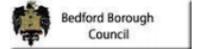
Once again we are able to offer free washable cotton masks – now with adjustable ties. Our masks are made locally, in coloured floral fabrics and also black prints, with an aluminium strip which shapes them over the nose to help reduce misted glasses.

## Need help with filling in forms?

If you are struggling with paperwork, such as Blue Badge, Bus Pass or Attendance Allowance applications, our Village Agent is happy to help you.

## Contact our 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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Thank you to all of you who responded to our request for donations to help us fund a further session of reed clearance down at the Pond. Your generosity has already exceeded an amazing £1000, and the aim is to carry out the work towards the end of September. We are planning to put the excess raised towards future pond projects that we need to undertake which include a new store to house our tools.

We would also like you to know how much we appreciate the kind notes of support and thanks for our efforts that we have received, some of which we will share here, without mentioning any names.

*"Happy to help. Good luck with the appeal."*

*"..... I enclose a cheque towards the upkeep of our lovely village pond."*

*"We love spending time at the pond, it's been a real 'lockdown' saviour."*

*"I would like to thank you and the others for giving up your time to help maintain the pond as it is a very peaceful place where I go to relax with my dog."*

We are always raising funds, and if you would still like to help, any donations can be sent c/o Jane Knight at 59A Day's Lane, with cheques made payable to The Friends of the Biddenham Village Pond. Alternatively, donations may be made by bank transfer, please email [jane@80klt.co.uk](mailto:jane@80klt.co.uk) and we will send you our bank details.

Our normal programme of formal activities remains suspended for the foreseeable future, but we are hoping to re-start the mowing rota at Easter. All equipment will be provided, and as this is a solitary activity carried out in the fresh air, it will not breach the current restrictions. If you are willing to help with 2 hours to spare and would like to spend that time in a peaceful environment, please email [pgodden@btinternet.com](mailto:pgodden@btinternet.com).



*Thanks to Nigel Orton for this picture of the frozen pond. Nigel says 'I noticed when dog walking today that the village pond water level is the highest it has been since we arrived in 2017, almost up to the jetty and the '4' marker.'*

We are aware that the soil has sunk at both gates creating muddy puddles and making access a little difficult. We plan to contact the local footpath warden to see if we can source some gravel/small stones to infill the puddles and strengthen the ground around the gates.

We will be submitting comments to the Borough Council regarding the housing development on our boundary. The field next to the pond is proposed as open space but we are seeking clarification regarding the protection and enhancement to the ecology of our site and its wider environment. We will let you know how we get on.

The good news is that after all the rain that we have had, the pond is full, almost to over-flowing. Whether frozen or not, it is looking lovely and we look forward to welcoming the ducks and moorhens back very soon. Please be careful while the water level is so high, the banks are very muddy.

We hope that you continue to enjoy your winter walks by the Pond in the knowledge that spring will soon be here.

The Pond Team

#### Contact Details

Chris Jones	<a href="mailto:chrishj49@gmail.com">chrishj49@gmail.com</a>
Paul Godden	<a href="mailto:pgodden@btinternet.com">pgodden@btinternet.com</a>
Jane Knight	<a href="mailto:jane@80klt.co.uk">jane@80klt.co.uk</a>
Cathy Eckett-Brown	<a href="mailto:ceckett@gmail.com">ceckett@gmail.com</a>
Sophie Applewhite-Rees	<a href="mailto:dansop1@googlemail.com">dansop1@googlemail.com</a>

[www.biddenhamvillagepond.wordpress.com](http://www.biddenhamvillagepond.wordpress.com)

[www.facebook.com/biddenhamvillagepond](http://www.facebook.com/biddenhamvillagepond)

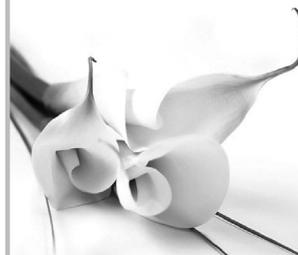


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# Biddenham History Society

## A master craftsman, Arthur Harry 'Biscay' Burton

### 1889-1950

The writers of the Women's Institute Scrapbook for 1956 listed the Burtons amongst the families who had lived in Biddenham for generations and could trace their forebears back two or three centuries. Arthur Harry 'Biscay' Burton was a particularly talented member of the family, who was remembered by his friends for his 'good sense, good humour, good nature and courage in adversity.' They all referred to him as 'Biscay, but I do not know how he got this nickname.



'Biscay' Burton

Arthur Burton was apprenticed to Messrs J.P. White and Son of the Pyghtle Works and he was employed there all his life, apart from his time in the Army in the 1914 - 1918 War. In 1896, J.P. White (1855 - 1917), a successful cabinet maker and friend of the architect and designer, Baillie Scott (1865 - 1945) moved his joinery, metalwork and stonework business to the Pyghtle Works, an acre of land on Bromham Road near the railway station, as it was a larger site than he had been able to operate in Hassett Street.

(Pyghtle is an Anglo-Saxon word for small parcel of land.) He soon expanded the site so it extended to over three acres of land in Queens Park.

While Arthur Burton worked there before 1914, he was helping to produce quantities of carefully crafted furniture for house and garden. In 1906, showrooms and offices were opened in Bond Street, London. Several beautiful pieces that are now in Biddenham Church were also made there in the early twentieth century. They included the lectern, the Vicar's stall, and the altar table. From 1912 - 1914, the large wooden cross, which is above the chancel arch, was carved at the Pyghtle Works from oak grown at Southill Park, Old Warden. It was fixed up in the church by some of the workers at the Pyghtle Works, who lived in Biddenham.

Arthur Burton's career as a skilled joiner and cabinet maker was interrupted by the 1914 - 1918 War. He volunteered for military service in September 1914 and three months later was serving in France with the East Anglian Royal Engineers. He was a sapper, engaged in road making and pontoon bridge building. Remarkably, he survived the Battles of Ypres, Festubert, Loos, Somme, Arras and Cambrai. He returned to Biddenham to be photographed with the other surviving Biddenham men, who had served in World War One on Peace Day, 19th July 1919. This was the celebration after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in June 1919. Arthur Burton held the 1914 - 1915 Star, the General Service and Victory medals.

Arthur Burton returned to work for J.P. White and Son. The war years, 1939 - 1945, were difficult. In 1939, the firm practically closed down as there were no new standard contracts. However, soon the craftsmen were employed making aircraft parts including rudders and doors for Spitfires. According to the W.I. Scrapbook for 1956, Arthur Burton became the firm's 'right hand man'. Much of his work was not for local buildings: he helped to produce splendid panelling for the Northern Ireland Parliament building, the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, the Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon and Worthing

Town Hall.

His most famous work is to be found in Westminster Abbey. He made the altar in the Battle of Britain Memorial Chapel, which was dedicated in 1947. In 1949, along with other craftsmen from J.P. White and Son, Richard Bass, Leslie W. Gilbert and Alfred Hardiman, he helped to carve from English walnut, the William Carey Memorial Lectern for the Abbey. The lectern was designed by Professor Richardson. Arthur Burton was invited to attend the service in a place of honour when the lectern was dedicated.



William Carey Memorial lectern

As a member of a long standing family in the village, 'Biscay Burton' played an active part in village life. He was a keen cricketer and he played for the Pyghtle team in 1910 that won the Bedford Cricket League Championship for the first time. In the early years of the twentieth century, he played on the Biddenham Village cricket team that also included J.P. White, his brother, Charlie, and the Rev. W.E.B. Norman.

'Biscay' Burton was also a Special Constable for 26 years and a Parish Councillor. By the summer of 1938, he was sadly involved in making preparations for another war, as the Council was busy discussing the air raid precautions that might be required.

When Bedford was featured on the popular BBC programme 'Down Your Way', Arthur Burton was chosen as the very skilled local craftsman to be interviewed by Richard Dimbleby. He died in 1950 at the age of 61, but his legacy will be seen as soon as it is safe for us to go back into our church and sit and admire the striking wooden cross above the chancel arch.

Kathy Fricker

#### References:

Katherine Fricker, Mary McKeown and Diana Toyn. The Village of Biddenham Through the Ages.

Dorothy Richards. Biddenham. A Parish History and Guide.

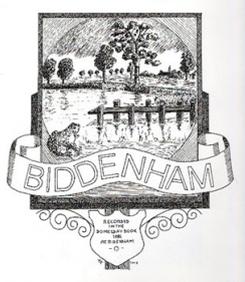
A Scrapbook of Biddenham compiled by members of Biddenham Women's Institute in 1956.

Jean Parker. The Pyghtle Works. Bedfordshire Magazine vol 20 pages 265 - 273.



Altar in Battle of Britain Memorial Chapel.

# The Biddenham Society



## Chris and David remembered

In common with many residents, I was saddened to learn of the recent deaths of Chris Gleave and David Slark, both of whom made substantial and significant contributions to the village and the well-being of those who live here, as well as to the wider Bedford community. We should be very grateful to them both. The numerous ways they supported groups and individuals were well documented in the February issue of *The Loop*. Here, I want only to amplify a role they shared as members of the Biddenham Society committee.

When I took on the chairmanship of the society from Doug Kitchen in 2006, both Chris and David were already on the committee, and I was so pleased they agreed to continue. As long-standing residents of Biddenham, their detailed knowledge of the village subsequently proved invaluable to our routine scrutiny of planning applications, but it was in relation to the society's annual AGM and lunch that they uniquely excelled. As some other village groups will know from their own experience, organising an event which incorporates the consumption of food at some stage is no mean task, and requires much personal commitment and initiative from those involved both before, during, and after the event.

Both Chris and David possessed such qualities in abundance. For year after year, until they finally stepped down for personal reasons, they became central to this annual event. David enthusiastically assumed responsibility for promoting it, receiving and recording bookings and payments, and then willingly trudged around homes delivering the admission tickets. He was also very adept at persuading his wife Anthea to join the washer-uppers – the extra help being most welcome. For her part Chris became the supremo of the kitchen: sourcing the supplies, managing the preparation and serving of the food, and of course organising the clearing up afterwards. She absolutely refused ever to emerge from her territory to receive well-deserved applause from diners except on a single occasion. I cannot recall how she was enticed out, but I must have resorted to some kind of subterfuge to achieve it!

As many will know, Chris lived in the pretty house of 1 Gold Lane, sited in a prominent position facing the village green. At great personal effort, her garden and borders both inside and outside her boundary were always immaculate and festooned with flowers, creating a marvellous impression of the village for us all to enjoy. I hope her successors in the property, whoever they are, will wish to continue this fine tradition.

We shall miss them both.

**Tony Wood**  
Chairman

[tony.wood@redrobin.me.uk](mailto:tony.wood@redrobin.me.uk)

*Founded in 1965 by a group of concerned residents, The Biddenham Society remains committed to the continued preservation of the beauty, history, character and heritage of the village.*



*The Biddenham Society Committee in December 2014. David Slark is third from left and Chris Gleave third from right, but can you name the others?*



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## Winter in the parish

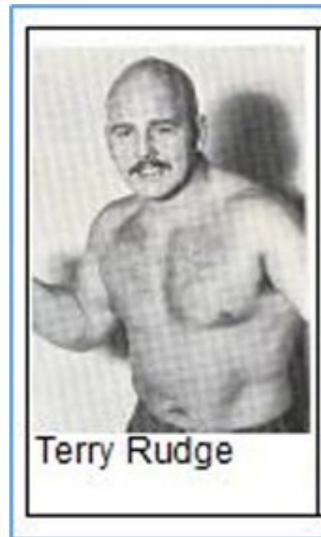
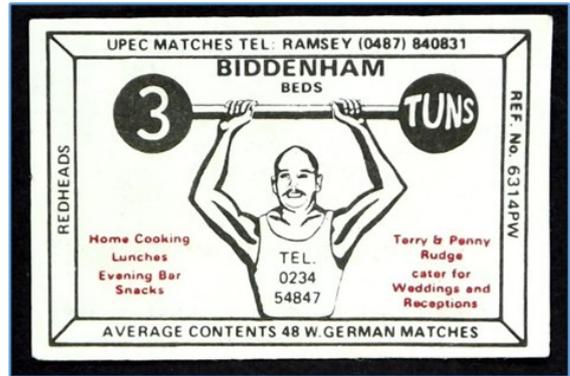
The snow came as a welcome distraction to many of us, especially for those with children since it was perfect snowman snow. Thanks to Richard Moxon for these photographs of Biddenham and Great Denham



## Strike a light!

Here's a label for matchboxes that would have been sold in our village pub, the Three Tuns, when Terry and Penny Rudge were the licensees from 1981 to 1985.

Now, you might be wondering if Terry is the man portrayed on this striking label. The answer is yes, he is!



Terry, born in Dunstable, was a mid-heavyweight professional wrestler, with a career spanning some 25 years and some 462 matches, latterly fighting in Germany until 1991. He started wrestling at the young age of 14 years although then too young officially to join his local club in Dunstable. He was a fighter well regarded by his fellow wrestlers. Unless you know any different, Terence Richard Rudge is likely the only licensee during the long history of the Three Tuns also to step into the ring as a professional wrestler.

Peter Applewhite



#40for40



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# This month in the garden

As the weather warms up and Spring moves through its various phases, gardening will once again keep many of us busy and provide the stimulus and relaxation that will keep us happy and fulfilled during lockdown. The therapeutic benefits of gardening have had a good press during the pandemic and it may even be that I have acquired some new readers. If so; welcome and I hope you are finding that gardening is bringing you a lot of pleasure and satisfaction.

The first thing for this month is that the unusual combination of extreme cold and a lot of wet weather will mean that many things will be happening later than usual. In particular, the soil will be cold and wet and it should be trodden on or worked as little as possible until it has warmed up and dried out a bit. Seed sowing directly into the soil should be left until it is friable, that is able to be raked level and a shallow seed row easily scraped out. You can make up for lost time by starting many things off in a greenhouse (which doesn't have to be heated) or in a conservatory or windowsill. Follow the instructions on the seed packet with regard to the temperature needed. In some cases a normal house temperature will be adequate but often you will need extra heat. This is best provided in a temperature-controlled propagator but a warm airing cupboard is a good alternative. Seeds are normally sown in a small seed tray in multi-purpose or sowing compost but smaller seeds can be started on a damp layer of kitchen towel, blotting paper or other soft fabric. After three days or so check every day for signs of germination and bring out of the propagator or airing cupboard immediately to stop plants getting leggy. Grow them on in light and warm conditions. On a windowsill or anywhere where the light comes from one side it helps to stand a reflective backing behind the seed tray. Kitchen foil fixed over cardboard will

do this. Mustard and cress and some other shoots can be grown on a windowsill. Salad crops and brassicas, leeks and spring onions and annual flower seeds can be sown under cover now while beans, cucumber, courgette and sweet corn should be left until April. Root crops like carrots, parsnip and beetroot are best sown directly into soil outdoors. Onion sets also need to be planted outdoors where they will grow.

A vegetable plot can be prepared when the soil is sufficiently dry by digging over lightly before raking or just hoeing the surface to remove weeds and create a tilth. Add manure, compost chicken pellets or a fertiliser like Growmore. Finish tidying flower beds by weeding and gently forking over the surface on patches of bare soil. Cut back dead grass on ornamental grasses and finish cutting down any dead stems of perennial flowers. Evergreen shrub foliage can be pruned now but flowering shrubs should not be trimmed until they have flowered. Shrub roses should be pruned now.

If you have been overwintering plants like dahlias, begonia or fuchsias under cover now is the time to start them into life by watering them. Keep under cover, though, until the risk of frost has passed; probably in mid-May. Dahlias are likely to throw up a number of shoots and these are best cut back eventually to no more than two or three. Shoots cut off can be used as cuttings to create new plants. Put several cuttings round the edge of a compost filled small flower pot. Water them and cover with a plastic bag and keep in the light in a fairly warm place. Turn the plastic bag inside-out every day to prevent condensation causing the cuttings to rot. You are likely to lose some cuttings but those that survive will flower this year. You can dip the moistened ends of the cuttings into rooting powder before putting in the compost but this is not essential.

This is the best time to buy new perennial flowers. Nurseries and garden centres may still be closed but you may be able to get local delivery or buy on-line. Delivery charges may be fairly high so you need to be buying several plants to make it worthwhile. Alternatively you can increase plant numbers by dividing your own plants. With old and large clumps discard the centre of the clump and use the outer edges. New plantings of trees, shrubs or perennials need to be kept well-watered.

A few other jobs in summary. Start lawn cutting on a high setting and trim edges. Mulch soft fruit and feed. Dead-head daffodils and fertilise. Tidy a rock garden and add new plants as necessary. Tidy up pond plants and add oxygenating plants to combat green water. Remove blanket weed as it starts to grow. Dig a runner bean trench two feet wide and work in manure, compost or newspaper.

Jeremy Arthern



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*Daffodils coming into bloom at Deep Spinney roundabout. 23rd February.*

# Biddenham Parish Council



The most recent Parish Council Meeting was held on Tuesday 16th February 2021 using the Zoom conferencing facility. Present were Parish Councillors Graham Bates, Stewart Briggs, Peter Chase (Chairman), Harry Fowler, Chris Gee, Alan Jacobs, Krys Osuch, Francia Slade and Joe Warren. Borough Councillor Roger Rigby, outgoing Clerk Karen Cotton, incoming Clerk David Brough and several members of the public were also present.

## King's Field Sports Centre

After several false starts, the King's Field Sports Centre, accessed from the Great Ouse Way roundabout down the hill from Deep Spinney, has been leased. The new tenants are the youth section of Bedford Town Football Club, who have no less than 18 teams of kids ranging from the ages of 8 to 18. It is amazing that we now have the developing talent of Bedford Football Club amongst us, and I hope you'll join me in welcoming them to our community.

Dennis O'Meara, youth development chairman, attended our meeting and explained how the organisation will operate. Dennis is placing information on our website, Facebook and in this august publication, so I will not steal his thunder. Our only advice was not to call the sports centre a Pavilion (as we have one already, and two would be confusing) and to provide as much information as possible so we can all support him and "BTFC-YD" in any way we can.

## Houses west of Gold Lane

Also attending our meeting were Chloe French of Bidwells and Amy Atkins of Dandara. Bidwells are the land agent for the site off Gold Lane where diggers with very large buckets are now exploring the archaeology of the site. Having watched the excellent film "The Dig" the other day, in which teeny-tiny trowels scrape away to reveal the treasures of Sutton Hoo, I am mystified how such "heavy plant" can do the work of hunting for buried artefacts. But we are assured that this is all that's going on at the moment – and for several months more. Indeed, they have apparently unearthed some interesting relics. The Bedford Historical Society are working with them.

Dandara are the house builder. They have recently submitted their plans for the layout of the site, mainly a first phase of 119 houses. Amy and Chloe were rather taken to task by yours truly, and others, about the incredibly stupid idea of making access to the new estate to be situated off Gold Lane, within a stone's throw of its junction with Deep Spinney. We have bitterly opposed this idea ever since it was first mooted. Rather than use Deep Spinney instead – a wide, open road with a less historic hedgerow – the idea of using Gold Lane seems unsafe and a likely traffic nightmare. I think we said our piece, and I have no idea if we will have any effect. Only the developer can choose to change this though, and the time is really "officially" past when this could be altered. But in the face of such nonsense, we will not shut up!

More amicable discourse took place in relation to the treatment of the field immediately north of the village pond. Chris Haydn Jones, who is acting chair of the pond committee, thanked Dandara and Bidwells for the ecological survey work and drainage treatments proposed, which are mainly down to a well-respected Bedford company called the Landscape Partnership. We appealed for more dialogue directly with Chris and his associates going forward, which I am confident will happen.

A resident of Duck End Lane made some good points about how cars are, already, regularly parking in the lane to access the field off it, now that those north of the lane are off limits due to the works. This is chewing up the verges,

creating disturbance and, given dogs that are being allowed to roam, will potentially suppress natural wildlife in the field in question. We are going to write to Bedford Borough Council to ask them to consider making Duck End Lane "access only" for traffic. We don't mind pedestrian access, but the lane cannot become a de facto car park.

If you're keen to comment on the plans under consultation, please use the Borough's planning website to search for application 21/00236/MAR.

## Our Clerk

We are very grateful to Mrs Karen Cotton who, last August, agreed to become Parish Clerk. Since starting in September she has worked very hard on a number of issues, including our audit, re-opening the kids play area at the Pavilion, sorting out numerous jobs around the village such as de-weeding the sundial and de-mossing the war memorial, coordinating the rather abnormal Remembrance Sunday ceremony in November and organising the Christmas tree.

Very sadly, for a combination of reasons, Karen has felt she can't carry on in the role. We are really sorry to see her go, and so grateful for the amazing energy and organisation she has brought. She finishes just before the next meeting, so this one was her last. We wish her all the best for the future and know she will continue to take an active interest in the Parish Council's work.

In her place, we are delighted to welcome Mr David Brough. David was pipped at the post last August by Karen, having impressed us equally at interview. David is a resident of Harrold; he is their Parish Clerk and also that of Melchbourne & Yelden. This was David's first meeting, having started on 1st February, and he has clearly already got his head around a lot of ways in which we work. We very much look forward to working with him going forward.

## Meeting dates

As a result of David's appointment, we are having to change the dates on which we meet. Unfortunately, Harrold PC also meets on the second Wednesday of the month – our normal date. I have joked several times (and I think it's wearing a bit thin) that Harrold should move their date so we can keep ours. Unsurprisingly, I have been ignored. So, we have elected to meet in future on the third Tuesday of each month.

The meeting *after* next will be the Annual Parish Meeting, to be held on Tuesday 20th April. This is customarily a larger meeting at which leaders of our many community groups have a chance to say a few words about their activities. It will still be held using Zoom, and if anyone would like to be included, could they please contact me or David (email [clerk@biddenham.org.uk](mailto:clerk@biddenham.org.uk)).

## Our next meeting – IMPORTANT, CHANGED INFO

Please consult the [biddenham.org.uk](http://biddenham.org.uk) website for agenda and details of each meeting. The next one will be on Tuesday 16th March at 7.30pm. 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.

To participate, please use a computer or tablet by accessing the Internet and carefully entering <https://zoom.us/j/6877285966> (NB this is a new meeting number).

Alternatively, use a phone to ring **0208 080 6592** and then use its keypad to enter the code **687 728 5966** followed by the # key. Calls are national rate, I'm afraid.

Peter Chase  
Chairman

# Biddenham Gardeners Association

## Gertrude Jekyll

On 16th January forty-three members took part in our BGA Zoom session. We were joined by Andrew Sankey who gave us an insight into the life of Gertrude Jekyll, one of the most well-known horticulturalists of the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century and recipient of the RHS Victoria Medal of Honour.

Gertrude, who was born in 1843, came from a very wealthy family who were interested in art and music, in fact her mother had studied music under Felix Mendelssohn. Gertrude was a clever, inquisitive child whose earliest memory of a garden was the shared garden at the family home in Berkeley Square. Following their move from London the family owned a number of large houses and gardens. Gertrude studied Art at Kensington School of Art and subsequently travelled through Europe studying gardens. It was during this time that the family relocated to Wargrave Manor and Gertrude's father asked her to design part of the garden. Following her father's death in 1882 her mother moved to Munstead House and Gertrude created a garden for her. Opposite the house was Munstead Wood a 15 acre woodland site which was purchased for Gertrude by her mother and it was here that Gertrude made her own famous garden. Gertrude subdivided the garden into 'rooms'. Water gardens, rock gardens, spring gardens, herbaceous borders - some hot, some cool all became features of her designs. The garden at Munstead Wood included a nursery where Gertrude did her propagation and ran her nursery business.

Whilst living with her mother at Munstead House Gertrude had met a young architect, Edwin Lutyens, and she asked him to design a house for her at Munstead Wood. This had a pergola, semi-circular steps, sun dial, rills and other features that are characteristic of Lutyens' designs.

Gertrude and Edwin collaborated on many more projects including Bois des Moutiers in Normandy, Woodside at Chenies Buckinghamshire, Deanery Garden at Sonning and Hestercombe in Somerset. Some of the gardens were captured on canvas by Gertrude's friend the artist Helen Allingham. In 1895 the editor of The Guardian asked Gertrude to write a column for the newspaper. In all she wrote 2,000 articles for various publications, she wrote 15 books and completed over 400 garden designs. Her "Colour in the English Flower Garden" published in 1908 is one of her best-known works.

Gertrude was a plants woman with a keen eye for new or better plants. She loved scented cottage garden flowers. Wild and woodland gardens were her favourite but she is also known for her herbaceous borders, her drifts of colour repeated so that the garden had a unified feel. Very few of the gardens that she designed can now be seen. During the First World War it was impossible to provide the man power they needed to maintain them. Many were transformed to grow vegetables and at the end of the war many were grassed over. Sadly, Gertrude's garden designs and plans were sold for a small sum and are now in America. However, her influence is to be seen in the gardens at Sissinghurst as Vita Sackville West, as a young girl, visited the garden at Munstead Wood with her mother, Lady Victoria. The garden was also visited by the seven year old Christopher Lloyd with his mother - apparently he loved the 'hot' borders and subsequently recreated them at Great Dixter. And, finally, I suspect that if we looked in the gardens in Biddenham we would find dwarf Lavender Munstead, Pulmanaria Munstead Blue and Nigella Miss Jekyll alba. The influence of Miss Jekyll - plants woman, writer, photographer, artist, nursery woman and business woman lives on. Many thanks to Andrew who really

captured the life and times of this very energetic and enterprising woman.

Please join us next month on Zoom on 16th March when Alec White will be talking to us about growing peonies and alstroemerias. Details can be found on our website. As usual this meeting will be open to all members and visitors.

Linda Truscott

New members and visitors are always welcome. For more information contact: Linda Truscott on 01234 270747 [www.biddenhamgardenersassociation.org.uk](http://www.biddenhamgardenersassociation.org.uk)

## Duck End Lane

Duck End Lane has been featuring lately with a current picture on the Biddenham website of the Gold Lane housing development.

However, reading Kathy's article last month has enlivened a link with the past.

When we arrived here in 1975 Mr Searle had retired but his son, who I think taught DT, or woodwork as it then was, at Bedford Modern School, used to appear in his father's old sheds to remove bits of wood for use in his teaching. The sheds gradually fell into decay and indeed the footprint is still there under the ivy, maybe awaiting excavation and perhaps an interpretation board!

The photo taken nearly 40 years ago shows some of the sheds opposite our house.

There were also sheds in our front garden and a wheel pit.



The wheel came out of the sheds many years ago and is quietly decomposing in our garden.

The sandstone from his sharpening tool is now in our garden wall. (Ignore the railway fish plate attached.)

There were other sheds and a small yard in our front garden with the old gatepost surviving in the wall.

The cottages were indeed knocked down but re-emerged as the present properties, numbers 22 to 24 with the wall surviving as shown in the original picture.

Much of the old stone was reused some under our lounge floor and when excavated has gone back into a rejuvenated garden wall.

Chris and Jan Jones

# What's On?

## March

**11.00am Sundays and 6.00pm Wednesdays:** St James's church is continuing to hold services via Zoom. Go to Zoom and enter the meeting ID 988 074 6039.

- Sun 14 Mar Mothering Sunday,  
11.00am Zoom service, see p1
- Tue 16 Mar Biddenham Parish Council via Zoom,  
7.30pm, see p10
- Tue 16 Mar Biddenham Gardeners Association via  
Zoom, 7.30pm, see p11
- Sun 28 Mar Palm Sunday  
11.00am Zoom service, see p2
- Mon 29 Mar Complin with reflection, 9.00pm Zoom  
Service, see p2
- Tue 30 Mar Complin with reflection, 9.00pm Zoom  
Service, see p2
- Wed 31 Mar Holy Communion, 6.00pm Zoom Service  
Complin with reflection, 9.00pm Zoom  
Service, see p2

## April

- Thu 1 Apr Maundy Thursday,  
11.00am Zoom Service, see p2  
7.00pm Zoom Service, see p2
- Fri 2 Apr Good Friday  
12.00noon Stations of the Cross, see p2  
10.00am-3.00pm church open, see p2
- Sun 4 Apr Easter Day  
8.45am Christ Light carried into church,  
see p2  
11.00am Easter Day celebration, see p2  
9am-12noon church open, see p3
- Fri-Mon 2-5 Apr Easter Egg Hunt, see this page
- Sat 17 Apr Quiz, Friends of St James, 7.30pm, see p4
- Tue 20 Apr Biddenham Parish Council Annual  
Meeting, see p10

## 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](http://www.biddenhamvillagehall.org.uk)

### Church Barn

Contact the Booking Officer, Jan Burns on 344019 or [janburns@gmx.com](mailto: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](mailto:biddenhampavilion@hotmail.co.uk) or Debs Slade on 07808 579330.

### Great Denham Community Hall

[www.greatdenhamcommunityhall.co.uk](http://www.greatdenhamcommunityhall.co.uk)

**Welcome Packs for  
New Biddenham Residents**  
Contact Richard Church Tel: 214805

# Get Involved in the St James's Church Easter Egg Hunt

## Be an Easter Egg Host!

Could you create a large (at least A4) size Easter egg picture and display it in a clearly visible window over the Easter weekend? If the answer is yes, then we would love you to take part as an Egg Host!

Please complete the Egg Host Form\* and email it to [stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com](mailto:stjameschurchbiddenham@gmail.com) no later than Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March. We will then add your egg to the Easter Egg Hunt list.

Decorate your egg however you would like to and clearly display it along with a letter that we will give to you nearer the time.

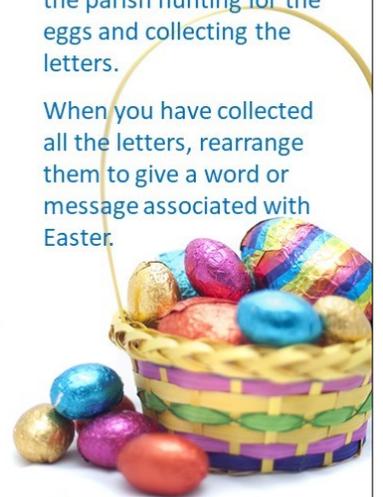
\* Available on our Social Media pages or by emailing us.

## Take part in the Hunt

Over the Easter weekend we will publicise a list of all addresses displaying Easter Eggs.

Walk/cycle/scoot around the parish hunting for the eggs and collecting the letters.

When you have collected all the letters, rearrange them to give a word or message associated with Easter.



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

Membership	Peter Leverkus	Tel: 353662
Treasurer	Paul Fricker	Tel: 342843

## The Loop

Editor	Jean Gambold	Tel 349849
Proof Reader	Jacqui Piper	Tel 356993
Church correspondent	Peta Martin	Tel 348718
Advertising	Clare Sugars	Tel 355262
Subscriptions	Richard Harris	Tel 210434
Distribution	Rosemary Harris	Tel 210434

All **April** articles, preferably by e-mail in Word format, to [loopeditor@gmail.com](mailto:loopeditor@gmail.com) or to 22 Day's Lane and adverts to 3 Queen's Close ([cj.sugars@talktalk.net](mailto:cj.sugars@talktalk.net)) by

**Thursday 18th March 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.*