

The Loop

November
2020

£1.00

Remembrance Day 2020

This year's Remembrance Sunday service at the War Memorial in Main Road will be broadcast live on Zoom, as Covid-19 restrictions mean that people should not attend. However, wreaths will be laid, and the Rev Eric Lomax will conduct the service as usual. For more details see the Parish Council report on page 12.

An email link to the broadcast will be sent out to as many people as possible nearer the time using existing subscription lists. Please pass it on through village WhatsApp chats.

This service is free, does not require anything to be put onto your computer, and you simply click on the link and follow the brief, simple instructions.

Jon Smith

Services at St James's

Services will be held at St James's on Sundays 1st and 15th November at 9.30am, assuming there are no further rule changes.

Services at All Saints will be at 9.30am on Sundays 8th and 22nd November.

Zoom services are held at 11.00am every Sunday and 6.00pm every Wednesday..

End of an era at St Joseph's & St Gregory's Primary school



Les Beddall, our wonderful Site Agent retired from his role on Friday 16th October after 33 years of loyal service. He was invited to the school assembly and was presented with gifts from his work colleagues and friends before he received a blessing from the school. I'm sure you will join us in wishing him a long and happy retirement.

Thank you Mr Beddall!

Wrap up Biddenham - your spare winter coats needed

Kirsty Lister will be collecting unwanted coats on Wednesday 11th November in the Three Tuns car park between 9.15am and 10.15am, and at the Park & Ride car park, Great Denham between 2.30pm and 3.30pm.

More details on page 5.

100 Club Draw

As many will know the 100 Club Draw was suspended in the Spring because of the National Lock-Down coupled with the uncertainty at the time surrounding the 2020 cricket season.

Membership of the 100 Club covers a cross-section of the village including not only many well-wishers of the Cricket Club but also all paid-up members of the Club, including parents of the juniors, many of whom live outside the village.

The Draw was set up as a separate entity to the Cricket Club several years ago and has been ably administered for the last 14 years by Judith O'Quinn. Hopefully the 100 Club will recommence in 2021, but Judith feels that it is an appropriate time to step down and relinquish the responsibilities. We all thank her for her diligence and patience over the years.

There are legal and procedural requirements to be followed to ensure compliance with regulations as well as the financial records and register of current members. The monthly draw requires supervision and the subsequent payment of prizes (currently made by cheque).

If anyone feels able to take on Judith's responsibilities from 2021 onwards please could they contact me by email at richard.fone@yahoo.com and more information can be provided.

Many thanks

Richard Fone
Hon Treasurer



'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 once performed a lecture on humanism and began the lecture with a quotation of the nineteenth century French psychologist Émile Coué; 'Every day in every way, we are getting better and better'. By philosophy, he was a humanist who believed in the human capacity for self-improvement. I am not so sure that he is right.

A number of years ago I travelled to Northern France with a friend of mine to visit the battlefields of the first World War. We stayed close to a place called Mametz Wood. The wood is a square mile wide and deep and was of significant strategic importance for the Allies in the Battle of the Somme. The battle, or series of battles, took place between 1st July and 18th November 1916 on both sides of the Northern part of the River Somme. More men fought in this battle than any other battle in history and by the end of it there were over a million casualties.

On our first day there, Peter and I took a walk down to the wood. One of the guests at our B&B had described the wood as 'eerie' and said that when he and his wife had visited it the day before he had been anxious to move on to somewhere else. The other guest was right, though I am not sure how to quantify 'eerie'. Common with all the other places we visited that year there were piles of spent (and unspent) shells by the side of the road, ploughed up by local farmers. It was around 1995, so it was odd seeing this legacy still present seventy-nine years later. It is still reckoned that it will take as much as five hundred years to clear the remains of Somme ordinances from the ground.

It was November and there was a mild fog that had settled between the trees in the wood and it was there that we found a dragon. The dragon is a memorial, installed in 1987 by a Welsh artist David Petersen. It is a Welsh red dragon reaching out to the wood with a long, curled, pointed tongue.

The dragon is a memorial of an action that took place in



July 1916. On a direct order from Sir Douglas Haig, the 14th Swansea Battalion of the Welsh Regiment attacked highly fortified positions of Germans in Mametz wood. It was a simple head-on attack with 676 men. The attack lasted a day and, after brutal fighting, the Welsh regiment had suffered nearly 400 casualties. Over a period of five days other Welsh battalions suffered very similar losses. By 12th July the entire Welsh Division suffered overall 4,000 casualties rendering it unserviceable until 1917.

We could feel the atmosphere in this wood, just like the other visitor had informed us. Peter and I often laughed together as friends but somehow the rest of the day was subdued. I think it was the realisation of what we were capable of doing to one another as human beings. The terrible thing is that this was entirely representative of many other conflicts that took place in the war, often referred to as the war to end all wars.

Two years ago I visited Berlin for a conference on theology and digitalisation. Always with a tendency to wander, I managed to slip out of one of the discussions and accidentally slipped on to a bus to the city centre. It was here I came across a group of sculptures representing victims of the Holocaust; six million Jews, gypsies and other Nazi designated degeneratives, murdered in the death camps of places like Auschwitz-Birkenau and Dachau, twenty-plus years after the slaughter of the Somme.

I am still not sure that in time we have managed to get much better. I did, however, take a photograph of a rose that somebody had placed in the arms of one of the sculptures in Berlin. I found it moving that one individual, at the least, had reached out over the years to the victims of genocide.

Last year in Istanbul, to take part in a friend's wedding, I took a stroll over a bridge across the Bosphorus. I noticed a young girl of around ten or eleven. She had no shoes and she was sitting, cross-legged, begging. A friend tells me that she was one of the thousands of Syrian Refugees who fled across the Syrian border to Turkey, trying to make their way into Europe. If only she would receive something like the welcome she had hoped for. So far, the Syrian Civil War has resulted in over half a million deaths and an unfathomable number of displaced persons.

On 8th November, under government COVID-19 restrictions, a small number of us will be gathering to remember those who have died in human conflict. It would be good to think that genuinely, every day, in every way, we are getting better and better. The trouble is that there is little evidence for this in history. While the warplanes still bomb cities in Syria, refugees still flee across the borders, and there are still conflicts in Yemen, Afghanistan, Somalia, Maghreb, Iraq, Libya and Sudan, among many others. Please join us in Spirit at 11.00am on 8th November, because I seriously doubt that in every way, we are getting much better at all.

God bless.

Eric



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

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Treasurer	Michael Hurford	Tel 271746
Organist/Choirmaster	Graham Weeks	Tel 07552 052840

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St James's Church Annual Meetings

The Annual Meetings were held via Zoom on Wednesday 14th October. These meetings took place in order to deal with the formalities required by the Church of England. Because of the current circumstances it was felt that it was not really appropriate to have the usual updates on church activities etc., these are being held over to the 2021 meetings when things will hopefully be a bit more 'normal'.

At the meetings the following appointments were made:
Church Wardens - Laurie Hurn and Lois Price
Deputy Church Wardens - Edwin Martin and John Richards
PCC Members - Margaret Lowe, John Lambert and Tom Perry
Deanery Synod Representative - Christopher Haydn-Jones.

The accounts were also discussed. At the end of 2019 the church was in a reasonably good financial position. However the Treasurer warned that this would be very different at the end of 2020 (see below).

Jacqui Piper
Secretary

Church finances in 2020 and the impact of Covid-19

Generally the feeling of isolation is something to avoid but recently, in drafting the forecast of the 2020 PCC General Account (income and expenses) I instantly had that feeling!

I'm sure you can appreciate the current year finances for St James's make difficult reading; income from many sources is severely restricted and whilst some expenses are lower, the majority are not. The major expense item for St James's is the Parish Share - £42,328 payable in 2020 to the Diocese of St Albans. In summary, income is forecast to be down by almost £20,000 whilst expenses are down by only £6,000!!

Reflecting on these numbers and pondering just how we could try to improve the situation I noted an email drop in from the Bedford Deanery Treasurers Forum and having read the email, I felt the isolation lift and was able to appreciate just how fortunate we (St James's) are. There are many churches in severe financial difficulties and the Diocese itself is projecting a deficit of £2 million. Compared to many our financial position is comfortable and we clearly have a role to play in helping to meet and minimise the wider problem.

At St James's we are fortunate to have a solid monthly planned giving total by way of bank transfer and we are not heavily reliant upon other income such as Church Barn lettings and "The Loop" subscriptions. The planned giving forecast total has held up well and the total for 2020 will be very close to our budget. Other churches and dioceses are not in such good shape and support will be required. There are discussions ongoing whereby some dioceses, with good reserves, will possibly transfer reserves to other less fortunate dioceses in order to help them meet expenditure. In our own diocese plans to create a sustainable situation include a reduction in the training of curates, staff have been furloughed and all expenditure reviewed and reduced.

What Can We Do?

Because of the challenges facing the wider church it is essential that churches like St James's step up to the mark by meeting the requested Parish Share and therefore helping to minimise the deficit forecast at diocesan level.

In order to achieve this, based upon the 2020 forecast and accepting a modest deficit (fall in reserves) for the year, we **still** need additional future income of £6,000. This would allow St James's to pay the Parish Share in full. The additional £6,000 would allow St James's to support the

wider church whilst returning a modest and appropriate (given the situation) deficit on the 2020 General Account of somewhere in the region of £5,000 to £6,000, a modest fall in our reserves.

Included in the 2020 forecast income is support we have received from the Friends of St James – a donation of £4,729 to help meet expenditure incurred last winter and spring relating to major tree work and the cost of audio visual equipment and installation in the Church Barn. We have also received a grant of £2,150 from Bedford Borough Council to help meet fixed costs – essentially the building insurance premium.

We do hope that having considered the situation, you feel able to help by contributing towards the targeted additional income of £6,000 for the year ending 31st December 2020.

If you wish to support the church in this way then please contribute by one of the following methods:

1. By bank transfer direct to the membership account:
Biddenham Church Membership Fund
Account Number: 51317710
Sort Code: 60-02-13

Please quote as a reference your surname and postcode.

2. Cheque payment – please hand to a Church Warden or directly to the treasurer.

3. By way of the regular cash/yellow envelope church collection.

Thank you and if you do have any questions then please have a word with either the Church Wardens or PCC Treasurer.

Michael Hurford
Treasurer



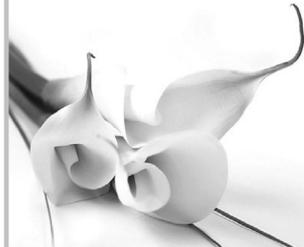
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Sue Ryder

Recent contact with the Moggerhanger Hospice prompted me to think that some readers may not remember who Sue Ryder was. During the war she was a member of Special Operations Executive. She was married to Leonard Cheshire, who also had a distinguished war record. Group Captain Leonard Cheshire was a pilot in Bomber Command. He won the Distinguished Service Order three times as well



as the Victoria Cross. He succeeded Guy Gibson as Commanding Officer of 617 "Dambuster" Squadron.

After the war Sue and Leonard set up a number of charities for people with disabilities. Subsequently, and most unusually, they both became Life Peers in their own right.

In 1961, as a Home Office Immigration Officer, I was a member of a team of seven that formed part of "World Refugee Mission III." Sue Ryder was also a member of that team. At that time there were still substantial numbers of Displaced Persons across Germany and Austria. As a result of previous missions many of those with skills and qualifications had already been relocated to other countries in Europe, to North America and Israel. But many remained in the camps, which were often disused military barracks. They, or their parents, had been forcibly removed to factories in Germany or had fled their homes as the German Army had moved East or the Russian Army moved West. Many of them spoke Polish, some spoke Russian or Ukrainian and most of them had acquired some German. But almost without exception their nationality was unknown even to the people themselves. The West German and Austrian governments had issued them with identity documents but they were described as "Stateless" or "ND" - nationality not determined. The object of World Refugee Mission III was to relocate the remaining refugees and finally close the camps. The job of our team was to interview those who had requested to come to the United Kingdom. Sue Ryder, with a German-speaking colleague, was interviewing people to come to the Cheshire homes. They were mostly in hospitals rather than the camps. I accompanied her to the hospitals on a number of occasions.

Our team started in Hamburg and over a period of six weeks we moved South through Germany and then Austria. Our guide was a former member of the German Luftwaffe who had seen London only from the air, somewhat ironic given Sue Ryder's connections. On one occasion we stayed in a hotel within sight of the watchtowers and fences of East Germany! We interviewed a large number of applicants. Perhaps surprisingly some had already become fairly well-established with good jobs outside the camps. We tended to accept those who had had most difficulty in adjusting. As a result of our visit some hundreds of people and their families came to the United Kingdom. Leonard Cheshire died in 1992 and Sue Ryder in 2000. It is good that her name lives on. I have often wondered what happened to the people we admitted to this country.

Terry Platt

Andrew Charles

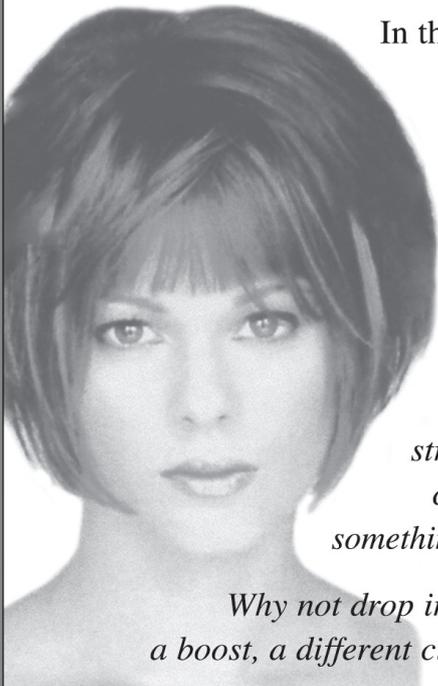
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Your spare winter coats required for 'Wrap Up Biddenham'

I need your coats! Why not donate any no longer needed coats to WRAP UP BIDDENHAM! I will be collecting unwanted coats to be distributed in December to people in need by local charities supporting the homeless. One such charity will be the Kings Arms Project, who '...deliver services to empower people on their journey out of homelessness' in Bedford.

I have a target of 50 coats to gather over the three-day campaign starting 9th November and men's, women's and children's coats will all be welcome. I'll be hanging around near The Three Tuns on Wednesday 11th November, 9.15-10.15am. If you can't make that slot, I'll be at the park and ride in Great Denham 2.30-3.30pm.

For more information on the national campaign, please visit: <https://wrapuplondon.org.uk/>

Many thanks!

Kirsty Lister



Annual General Meeting
Thursday 5th November 2020
8pm
Biddenham Village Hall
www.biddenhamvillagehall.org.uk

The AGM will be taking place as normal in the Village Hall. Attendees will need to wear masks inside the Hall and all appropriate Covid measures will be in place. We welcome members of the public to the AGM and up to 18 spaces are available. We look forward to seeing you on 5th November.

We are pleased to say that some limited activities have restarted and Covid measures have been put in place. The Committee is open to hearing ideas about ways to improve the Hall. The Village Hall "belongs" to you, the residents of Biddenham, and the short AGM gives you a chance to hear about the management of the Hall and give your views. Please come along. If you can't make the meeting but have some bright ideas please contact any of the Committee or leave a message on the website.

The opportunity has arisen for someone to join the committee in the key role of Bookings Officer. If you are interested in joining us and would like to know more please get in touch via the website. We hope to hear from you.

Biddenham Village Hall Management Committee

Don't forget the Foodbank IN THESE DIFFICULT TIMES THE NEED IS URGENT

You can find the latest list of items needed by Bedford food bank and details of how to make a financial donation at <https://bedford.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>



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St Joseph's and St Gregory's Primary School



The Ark Farm Visit

Pelicans, Puffins and Penguins were very lucky to have Ark Farm come into school as a part of our learning about The Little Red Hen. The children were very excited to see the farm arrive and talked about what they thought would be there.

When the children went to visit the farm the ladies talked about how to carefully touch the animals, how to care for them and the importance of washing their hands when they had finished. The children loved touching the animals and listening to the noises they made. They found it very funny when a chicken ran all around the outside area.

These are some of the things the children said; 'the dogs are very soft', 'the chickens' feathers are very fluffy', 'the goats have horns and they are very hard and tough', 'the donkey is dusty', 'if we make a noise it will scare the animals, and we don't want to do that'. Even children who felt a bit worried or scared of the animals managed to have a little stroke.



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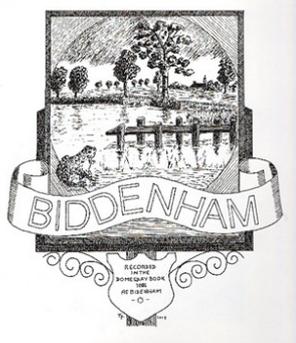
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The Biddenham Society 2020 AGM Chairman's Summary Report



For obvious reasons, it has not been possible this year to hold our AGM and lunch, which has been held annually for over fifty years. By long tradition this has always been a friendly and informal occasion at which residents can hear about the society's work for the village, learn of significant Biddenham planning applications and their implications, and raise any matters of concern. To maintain an element of continuity in these difficult times, I have summarised below some of the main issues which have occurred since the November 2019 AGM.

The most significant decision has been the unfortunate success of the developer's appeal against the planning refusal to build 249 dwellings on the agricultural land west of Gold Lane, with the sole vehicle entry/exit point off Gold Lane itself. I fear current residents who use the Deep Spinney roundabout as their main route of access out of the village will rue this decision for many years to come. Unfortunately, the writing was on the wall when the local authority earlier granted permission for 160 dwellings on a portion of the site despite receiving over a thousand written objections. The inspector's report is lengthy and makes for very interesting reading. It can be accessed through <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/searchplans>, then viewing the decision notices, and working through the links to the original 2018 application reference 18/00140/MAO.

At the time of writing thirty-five new planning applications had been submitted for village properties and land over the last twelve months, all of which have been scrutinised by the society, a formal consultee of the local authority. This does not reflect all local development as small property alterations or extensions are usually exempt under the 'permitted development' scheme. According to reports, the government intends to make the scheme even more wide-ranging in the future. In recent years householder applicants have been a little more sensitive to the desirability of blending new projects into the existing environment, and more respectful of the impact on neighbours, so that most submissions tend to be uncontroversial.

Nevertheless, there are always some which require objections, especially where they involve a loss of green space or undeveloped land (rapidly vanishing from the Biddenham scene), or where construction would be detrimental to the character of the village. For example, a request to build on land to the rear of The Old Vicarage with access alongside the existing property was successfully opposed, and strong objections were submitted against the fifth attempt of a developer to build new dwellings on the large paddock between Church End and the golf course by demolishing an existing property for access. Although this latter application was submitted in 2019, at the time of writing the local authority has still not reached a decision, resulting in the developer appealing against the delay. Other rulings are also pending, including one for an extensive remodelling of a property on Biddenham Turn which the society has opposed.

In the gaps between the wall-to-wall media coverage of the pandemic, you may have registered the government's intention to encourage a rapid expansion of new house building, placing even more pressure on local authorities. Although Bedford Borough has now released its proposed Local Plan for the period to 2030, it has also begun

consulting on an extension to 2040 to meet imminent new demands. A range of options has been published at <https://tinyurl.com/BedfordLocalPlan2030>.

Vice Chairman Will Jenkin prepared a response on behalf of the society, a summary of which was published in the September issue of *The Loop*. This included a recommendation that no further large-scale housing developments should be sanctioned in the Biddenham area, and that the borough should use the forthcoming legislation to classify the remaining undeveloped land west of Gold Lane plus the Great Denham Golf Course, as protected areas.

The next AGM and lunch will (hopefully) be held in the Village Hall on Sunday 7th November 2021. The existing committee members of Will Jenkin, Mark Phillips, Garry Fitzhugh, Chris Hayden Jones, Monica Knight, Peter Leverkus, Jeremy Reynolds and myself, have all agreed to continue in office until then.

Tony Wood
Chairman

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.

Fungi

Autumn is a wonderful time for spotting an amazing variety of different fungi in woodland, unploughed grassland or even in your own garden. Fungi are the great 'decomposers', feeding on dead or decaying organisms and, although they lack the green pigment, chlorophyll, there are some very colourful specimens such as the very poisonous Fly Agaric (*Amanita muscaria*), with its bright red cap and white warty scales. You can look under birches and pine trees for these.

Another fungus that can be found under birch trees, in more northerly regions, is the Orange Grisette, which is edible but not pleasant.

I remember my father picking field mushrooms, wood blewits and shaggy inkcaps and then cooking them with bacon for our breakfast. They were delicious.

There are lots of edible mushrooms around but some fungi can be very poisonous, even lethal, like the Death Cap (*Amanita phalloides*).

The best rule is, if you can't go on a foray with an experienced field mycologist, never eat any mushrooms unless you are 100% sure of what they are.

Plantlife is producing a WaxApp app and is encouraging people to download their photos of fungi. Perhaps, whilst you are out on your walks, you could start snapping a few of them.

Val Fitzhugh



Val's painting of Orange Grisette

This month in the garden

The quieter winter months are a good time for planning and carrying out a garden project. Two projects that I am hoping to get done, with the help of one of my sons, are replacing broken glass in an old greenhouse and generally improving its appearance and, the big one, clearing out the silt of many years accumulation in our pond. This will also mean taking out all the plants in baskets, weeding and replanting them. It will be necessary to drain out the water in the pond and, as it is always best to use rainwater if possible, I am hoping to pump some of the existing water into dustbins so that all the refill will not be tap water. I shall put the silt on plastic sheeting round the pond edge so that the wild life in the pond has a chance of getting back where it belongs. Once dried, the silt can be spread on borders or the vegetable garden. One of my hopes is to clear out most of the roots of a rampant waterlily that has escaped from its basket and is dominating much of the pond surface. The moral is to check the ultimate size of any plants that you plan to put in the pond and to be careful to avoid invasive species.

There are also plenty of things to be done that you will probably think of as real gardening. In the veg garden there may be some harvesting still to do, maybe leeks and brassicas, but there will also be soil to clear and prepare for next year; either by digging or using the no-dig method I wrote about last month. Provided the soil is not too wet the next couple of months are a good time for bare root planting. Plants in containers can generally be sown at any time but bare root plants are cheaper and will establish well now. Summer fruiting raspberry canes and soft fruit bushes are best dealt with like this, as are roses, shrubs and trees. Make sure that trees are well staked. Last month I said that summer bedding could be cleared to make room for winter/spring bedding plants. I have a row of large flowering begonias in my front garden which need to be cleared but, after a slow start, they are currently looking magnificent, and it would be a shame to get rid of them. I have put the pansies which are waiting their turn heeled in in the vegetable garden and we and the passers-by will enjoy the begonias for a little longer.

Apple and pear trees will need to be pruned in the dormant season; taking out diseased and damaged wood and reducing the new growth on fruiting spurs. Don't cut off the tips of tip bearing apples like bramley. Take out a few of the older stems of currant bushes and reduce new growth of the others by up to a third. Gooseberry bushes are best pruned in February. Deciduous shrubs can also be pruned now. Some pruning may be desirable to keep the size and shape that you want and up to a third of main stems should be cut back to ground level to promote new growth.

Hopefully you have already brought tender perennial plants under cover but have horticultural fleece at the ready for shrubs that are at risk of damage from air frost.

Camellias are an example of this. If you have got tender plants under glass but without heat they may need covering with fleece in really cold spells.

Dahlias are likely to be blackened by frost during this month and, once this has happened, they should be cut back to a few inches above the ground. If you don't want to forget the variety or colour of your plants tie a label to the cut stems. The plants can then be dug up and brought under cover or left in the ground heavily mulched. If dug up they can be stored in dry compost in pots or boxes. Before doing this tip them upside down to ensure stems are well drained. Last year I dug up most of my dahlias and left them for the winter buried in the earth in the greenhouse. I also covered them with fleece in a cold spell. They all survived and flowered early. Leave dahlias unwatered until late March and don't plant out in the open until May when the risk of frost has passed.

If you have had the patience to delay planting tulip bulbs this is the time for getting them in, whether in pots or in the open ground. I cover bulbs in pots with wire netting to stop squirrels digging them up.

Jeremy Arthern



Only a short report for this month, but at the time of writing we are waiting for The Conservation Volunteers to start the work on removing approximately 1/3 of the reeds in the pond. At the time you are probably reading this, the work to remove the reeds will have been done, and so we hope that there was no inconvenience to visitors and we apologise for any reeds that are still drying out on the bank.

We have planned a restricted number work party on Saturday 7th November to remove any remaining reeds and tidy the site.

In the meantime we would like to thank David Wilkinson for staining the benches at the pond, giving them a new lease of life and to note that the high level of rainfall in October is having a positive impact on the water level in the pond.

If you care about the Pond, please consider either joining the Committee to help us practically or become a Friend and support us financially. The process 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.

Please carry on visiting and enjoying the pond through the Autumn.

The Pond Team

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Women in aviation

During a recent visit to the hangars at Shuttleworth, I marvelled at the skill needed to fly the old planes, especially in difficult weather conditions, as they seemed so fragile. I then had a walk outside and watched light aircraft taking off and landing, and it brought back memories of my mother's flying experiences.

At the age of 60, my parents decided that they would have some flying lessons on a light aircraft in lieu of holidays. When my mother, Constance (Connie) Fricker had her initial flight, the instructor, thinking it was a one off, was very dismissive of her. My mother said that he 'threw the plane around' so that she would never want to fly again. My mother was so angry about it that when she got down from the plane, she told him very firmly that she was going to learn to fly. Ten years later, by 1978, she had won 24 trophies, some for international competitions, and she was allowed to fly as PiC (Pilot in Charge) until she was eighty.

My mother learnt to fly at Biggin Hill which was formerly an RAF station. She was meticulous in her preparation for examinations and was always highly commended by her instructor. She very soon gained her PPL (Private Pilot's Licence) and went on to earn her IMC (Instrument Meteorological Conditions), Night and Twin Ratings. She first flew a Cherokee and later an Apache.



Connie preparing to take off

I always found her very skilful and calm as a pilot. She was very adept at navigation which can be more challenging on a light aircraft than a larger plane used by an airline. She always remained calm when the weather was not the best for flying. I remember one particular flight. We had flown down the French coast and had stayed three nights there before returning to Biggin Hill. The flight back along the French coast was one of the most beautiful experiences I have ever had as we were only about 1,000 feet up and could see the beaches so clearly. My mother had forewarned me that when we reached the English coast, it would be bumpy because of the adverse weather conditions. She was totally undaunted when we hit the bad weather and to occupy my mind, she gave me things to look out for from the plane window. As we were coming into land, I could not see how she could make a safe landing as the plane was swaying so dramatically in the wind but when we were a few feet above the runway, she glided the plane until the wind dropped for a few seconds and she made the most perfect landing! I left the plane with a sense of awe.



Connie with other '99' pilots

My mother was very much involved with the British Women's Pilots' Association and she was vice chairman of 'The Ninety-Nines' which is an elite organisation for women pilots. She attended national meetings of the two organisations and got to know many other women pilots. She was invited to attend meetings of The Ninety-Nines in different countries such as at San Francisco, USA. Someone she got to know very well was Sheila Scott who broke over 100 records which included being the first British person to fly over the North Pole in a small aircraft and the first British pilot to fly solo across the world. It was

interesting to meet Sheila as she sometimes came to our home.

My mother entered many national and international competitions. One of her favourite competitions was in Malta and she entered her first competition after only 30 hours flying after qualifying as a pilot. (I always felt a little apprehensive about her flights to Malta as she had to fly over the Alps but she took it all in her stride.) My mother's greatest skill was her precision in navigation and this was the main element in her many successes in the competitions which included those in the Isle of Man, the Shamrock and Malta. Amongst my mother's awards was the prestigious Sir Alan Cobham Trophy and the Special Achievement Award from the British Women's Pilots' Association.

My mother was very adventurous and I read this story from an American pilot magazine. On one race across Europe to Libya, competitors could not vary by more than a quarter of a mile on the flight path. She touched down one second before her estimated time of arrival and won the race. Libyan airforce pilots were so fascinated at seeing a woman pilot, an older one at that, winning the race that they insisted on sitting at the table and were 'staring with unabated gaze'. Three of them had a little English and tried to communicate. An English contestant who had been watching the scene with some amusement, or perhaps apprehension, came over to the table with a timely warning: 'You should be careful, Connie. The going rate for a woman pilot is seven camels!'

Looking through albums, I have come across pictures of my mother flying a helicopter and a seaplane. Perhaps one of her most interesting experiences was being on an airship which flew from Cardington over Bedford in the early 1980s. My parents had booked in to be on a flight and during the flight, my mother was allowed to sit at the controls and fly for a short time.

I have wondered if my mother had lived more recently whether she would have become an airline pilot. What was interesting was that I once went with her to Heathrow where airline pilots were having training on simulated controls for emergencies that might occur on flights. After being given some basic instruction as to how to fly a Boeing plane, she did a simulated take off and with help from an instructor flew the aircraft for an hour. When it came to a simulated landing, my mother did a very successful one. I was convinced after that experience that she would have made a good airline pilot if she had been much younger.

My mother had many successes in her flying. Above all, she gave much encouragement to other women pilots through her membership of the British Women's Pilots' Association and helped to pave the way for aviation to be a career for women.

Paul Fricker



Connie receiving the Sir Alan Cobham Trophy

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9 What's in a name?

In the UK we have two names to identify us - our first name and our surname. Back in biblical times people were often identified by their first name and their father's name eg. *David son of Jesse*.

Joseph and Mary were engaged to be married when Joseph learnt that Mary was pregnant.

"Joseph was a man who always did what was right, but he did not want to disgrace Mary publicly; so he made plans to break the engagement privately." Matthew 1:19 (GNB)

But an angel of the Lord said to him:

"... do not be afraid to take Mary to be your wife. For it is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived." Matthew 1:20 (GNB)

- So God was the father of the child, - and his first name was to be Jesus:

"She will have a son, and you will name him Jesus" Matthew 1:21 (GNB)

In other words His name is:-

Jesus Son of God.



Worth a second thought?

I have produced a set of small hand-outs, in the style of a pack of playing cards, to give out to anyone I meet. Each card draws attention to a miraculous event in the life of Jesus, as recorded in the Bible - some directly addressing a miracle whilst others are more general. The aim is to prompt a second thought about the implications of what actually happened. Some have seasonal themes, as with the one printed here.

A lot of people have been offered one of these cards and almost everyone has received them gladly, often with a smile. Several times when walking through the village someone has stopped me to ask for directions and has gone away with a card in their pocket. Sometimes people who have previously received one ask for another.

The cards are printed in the style of playing cards to add a little to the presentation. This set me a target to aim for, to produce all 52 plus two 'jokers'; eventually, over a period of about two years, the pack was completed.

Tony Burton

We will be printing a selection of Tony's cards over the coming months (and years, probably!). The first is shown above.

barn@2

All barn@2 meetings have been cancelled until after Easter, when the situation will be reviewed again.

The committee sends good wishes to all members and friends.

Lest we forget

In 1915 Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae wrote his poem *In Flanders Fields*, its poppies blowing between the crosses, row on row. In 1921 the British Legion held its first ever Poppy Appeal and on 11th November its first Poppy Day. But how did one lead to the other?

John McCrae was a Canadian poet, physician, author, artist, and during the Great War a medical officer in the Canadian Field Artillery. But he's best known for his poem introducing Flanders' evocative poppies.



John's 1968 commemorative stamp

Whilst there are other stories, the most commonly held is that John wrote his poem whilst sitting on the back of a field ambulance near an advance dressing post at Essex Farm, just north of Ypres, on 3rd May 1915, the day after the funeral of his friend Lieutenant Alexis Helmer, killed during the Second Battle of Ypres. Poppies grew in great numbers in the ravaged earth of the battlefields and were already beginning to bloom between the crosses marking the graves of the soldiers who had died.

The poem was first published on 8th December 1915, anonymously, in the magazine *Punch*, though in that year's index John McCrae was named as author. A little over two years later, John died of pneumonia at the British General Hospital in Wimereux, near Boulogne, on 28th January 1918.

It's time now to meet Moina Michael, an American professor and humanitarian, who in November 1918 was working at the YMCA Overseas War Secretaries headquarters in New York two days before the Armistice was declared on 11th November. In a magazine she came across John's poem, and although she'd read it many times before this time she was particularly struck by the final lines: *To you from failing hands we throw the torch; be yours to hold it high. If ye break faith with us who die, we shall not sleep, though poppies grow in Flanders fields.*

At that moment Moina made a pledge to keep the faith and vowed always to wear a red poppy as a sign of remembrance and as an emblem for keeping the faith with all who had died. To make a note of this pledge she hastily scribbled down on the back of a used envelope a response, entitled *We Shall Keep the Faith*:

*Oh! you who sleep in Flanders Fields,
Sleep sweet - to rise anew!
We caught the torch you threw
And holding high, we keep the Faith
With All who died.*

*We cherish, too, the poppy red
That grows on fields where valor led;
It seems to signal to the skies
That blood of heroes never dies,
But lends a lustre to the red
Of the flower that blooms above the dead
In Flanders Fields.*

*And now the Torch and Poppy Red
We wear in honor of our dead.
Fear not that ye have died for naught;
We'll teach the lesson that ye wrought
In Flanders Fields.*



Moina's 1948 commemorative stamp

Moina was determined the poppy should be adopted in the United States as a national memorial symbol and, after years of campaigning at her own expense, the poppy was adopted by the American Legion at its Convention in 1920 as the national symbol of remembrance. Thereafter the poppy emblem was adopted progressively by organisations in other allied nations, including in Britain by The British Legion.

So there you have it, the story as it's often told, of John McCrae, the poet, and Moina Michael, known as the Poppy Lady.

But is it that simple? Of course not, and now you must meet Anna Alix Boulle, better known as Madame E Guerin, a French lecturer, humanitarian, fundraiser, and known as the Poppy Lady. Oh!

Until recently Anna has been rather in the shadows, but research by Heather Johnson has revealed much more of her life and the significant role she played in the poppy story.

Very briefly, whilst lecturing in America after the Great War had begun, Anna raised funds for French war causes, for food for France, and for widows and orphans. After the war she continued to fund raise in America, with the poppy as the charity's chosen emblem, holding poppy days with artificial poppies made in France by women, children and war veterans, and distributed by poppy sellers wearing sashes with the words *In Flanders Fields the poppies grow*. A dynamic presence, she spoke at the American Legion Convention in 1920 and in May 1921 she held the first ever nation-wide poppy day, with poppy days in each American state.



Anna next visited Canada to speak about her Inter-Allied Poppy Day idea, and the Canadians were the first in the British Empire to adopt it. She visited Britain in 1921 and convinced The British Legion, founded earlier that year, and its president and a founding member, Earl Haig, to adopt the poppy emblem and Poppy Day: the poppies distributed that year on the first national Poppy Day were made in France, funded initially by Anna. Encouraged by her other nations followed.

Ninety nine years on another Poppy Day is approaching when we will remember those who served and died for us. Perhaps we could take a moment to remember too John McCrae and his inspirational poem, Moina Michael for her response, Moina and Anna Guerin for their tireless efforts in promoting the poppy as an emblem of remembrance, and Anna for our and other nations' Poppy Days.

Peter Applewhite

Biddenham Parish Council

The most recent Parish Council Meeting was held on Wednesday 14th September 2020 using the Zoom conferencing facility. Present were Parish Councillors Graham Bates, Peter Chase (Chairman), Harry Fowler, Chris Gee, Alan Jacobs, Francina Slade and Joe Warren. Apologies were received from Councillors Stewart Briggs, Krys Osuch and Borough Councillor Roger Rigby. Borough Councillor Jon Gambold, Clerk Karen Cotton and two members of the public were also present.



Parking hell

As a Parish Council we are acutely aware of occasional parking difficulties in Deep Spinney caused by people coming to the Pavilion. We were, indeed, aware of the chronic situation that developed on Saturday 10th October. A member of the public raised the matter, which we all agreed is a problem that needs dealing with.

The Pavilion is a community asset, of course, and we want it to be used to promote healthy pursuits such as sport on the field. When the very successful Oakley Football Club approached us in search of an overflow ground to complement their own (in Oakley) we cautiously said yes. For much of their time, their practice sessions do not generate any significant parking problems. But when matches are played, the away team players add a lot more vehicles into the mix. The results are not good.

The problem is made worse by the current Covid situation, as no-one can car share. The Pavilion car park is also still being used by Manor Hospital staff (who pay us for the privilege), although that is stopping soon.

Our Pavilion Manager already talks regularly to the football organisers, and they in turn try to get people to park considerately. This does not always seem to work. These same organisers are now, we understand, in discussion with the Three Tuns pub to use their car park on Saturday mornings, which I'm sure would be a big help on days like 10th. We can only hope their talks bear fruit.

Remembrance Day, Sunday 8th November

I, for one, am gutted about the national advice being given out that people should NOT attend Remembrance Day services in their local communities. Covid is a global disaster, and this just adds insult to injury. As a Parish Council, it falls to us to organise things each year, and our Clerk reported at our meeting that she has been busy doing so.

However, Borough won't let us shut the road to traffic this year, as that would apparently encourage attendance, and national guidelines also say we cannot have a bugler for fear that spittle from their instrument may cause the spread of the virus. Really?

Suffice to say I anticipate people will make their own minds up about the advice being given out; there is little we, as the organising Parish Council, can do to influence people who feel strongly about commemorating our war

heroes. And who can criticise them for that?

We are therefore keeping the officiating party who are giving the service to as small a group as possible: the Reverend Eric Lomax from St James's who will officiate, two wreath layers and someone to lower and raise the flag. A local resident has also offered to stream the ceremony using Zoom, so will attend with microphone, camera and Internet gizmology to make all that happen. We are extraordinarily grateful for the offer they have made of their services.

Two other Parish Council members will attend to ensure that social distancing rules are observed. If you are thinking of coming, do please bear in mind the advice being given. If you still decide to attend, please behave responsibly. To be honest, at the distance you may have to stand from Eric, you may well be better off following things via an iPad in the comfort of your own home.

Golf Course RIP

The Great Denham golf course closed its doors on Friday 16th October as a result of the landowner's refusal to negotiate renewal of their lease. Since our last meeting, I was able to update Councillors that we, alongside Councillors from Great Denham PC, had met twice with Bidwells, the landowner's agent, and once with Bedford Borough Council.

The Bidwells meetings were useful in understanding that the owner's concern is to diversify their income off the land. The clubhouse is now being offered to a nursery operator, and the greenkeeper's compound is likewise set to be offered up for let. The land is apparently to be used for sheep grazing and hay production, and a contract farmer is lined up so to do from the new year. The sheep, should you be concerned about invasions of your back garden, are to be contained by electric fencing. We will see how well we all get on with that...

The second meeting with Bidwells focused on security of the land. Again, we are sceptical that enough is being done, and it may not be until something bad happens that it is taken seriously. If that involves the Clubhouse, an asset the landowner is keen to exploit, then I'm sure they will step things up. If travellers come visiting on the wider land, we can only hope they are booted off quickly. Any problems should be reported to the clerk of either Parish (see websites for details) who will engage directly with Bidwells at any time of the day or night.

The Borough meeting was with the Mayor and Head of Planning. I was heartened at the time they devoted to the subject, indicating their own concern for what happens to the land. Borough Hall works in mysterious ways, its wonders to perform, and our conversation was helpful in anticipating how things may develop.

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 11th November at 7.30pm.**

To participate, please use a computer or tablet by accessing the Internet and carefully entering <https://zoom.us/j/524544164>

Alternatively, use a phone to ring **0208 080 6592** and then use its keypad to enter the code **524 544 164** followed by the # key. Calls are national rate, I'm afraid.

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

Peter Chase
Chairman



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Biddenham History Society

The Biddenham War Memorial

In November, our thoughts turn to remembrance. Just over a hundred years ago, by 1918, the Imperial War Graves Commission, the forerunner of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, had recorded around 587,000 graves of those who had fallen in the First World War. The names of those who were missing, presumed dead, or whose bodies were never identified were carved in stone on memorials such as the Menin Gate in Ypres and Thiepval on the Somme. By 1919, families were allowed to visit the graves and memorials, to pay their respects, but not all of them were able or could afford to do so. As a consequence, communities throughout Britain started to raise money for their individual memorials, so that people could have a place where they could grieve and remember, both individually and as a community.

In Biddenham, the war memorial, on the north side of Main Road was unveiled by Lady Wingfield on 18th May 1922. It is in the form of a Celtic cross, standing on a plinth mounted on three stone steps. Thirteen men are commemorated; ten from World War One and three from World War Two. Their names are inscribed around the base of the cross, along with the words 'to the greater glory of God in proud memory of Algernon Armstrong, John Davison, Alfred Dudley, Wilfred Herring, James Plain, Thomas Riddy, Walter Rowney, Giles Shaw, Greville Shaw, Richard Wright men of Biddenham who died for the honour of their country 1914 – 1919'. Some of them had died on active service, but some had died of wounds sustained during the War, hence the date 1919. Three more names were added after World War Two – Terence Creed, Douglas Everett and John Campling.

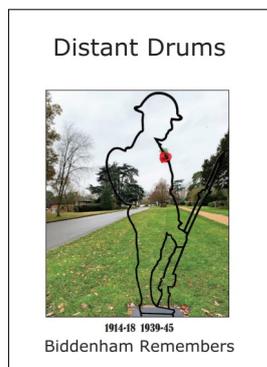
The memorial was designed by Frederick Landseer Griggs (1876 – 1938). Griggs had grown up in Hitchin, Hertfordshire and trained as an architectural draughtsman. When he was 19, he went to work in the office of C.E. Mallows in Bedford. Mallows was an architect who designed number 17 Biddenham Turn for his father-in-law, H.J. Peacock and later went to live in the house with his wife, Sybil. Griggs flourished under Mallows, eventually setting up his own studio in Hitchin.

In 1904, Griggs moved to Chipping Campden in the heart of the Cotswolds to join some friends and make the most of rural life which he enjoyed. However, although living in Oxfordshire, Griggs did not lose contact with Mallows and Biddenham. He did not fight in the First World War as he was declared unfit. When Mallows died in 1915, Griggs designed Mallows's tombstone in Biddenham churchyard. He then went on to design the War Memorial. Both designs used the Celtic cross. Whilst living in Chipping Campden, Griggs had converted to Catholicism and had dreamt of a pre-Reformation England and the glory of this past, hence the use of the Celtic cross in his designs.

More information about the men who are commemorated on the War Memorial can be found in 'The Village of Biddenham Through the Ages' by Katherine Fricker, Mary McKeown and Diana Toyn. Information about relatives of Biddenham residents who were involved in the First World War and the Second World War can be found in 'Distant Drums, 1914 – 18 and 1939 – 45. Biddenham Remembers' edited by Jon Smith.

There can be no meetings of the Biddenham History Society for the foreseeable future because of the Covid pandemic. Hugh Clifton's talk about Lady Augusta Mary Noel of Ampthill Park and her family that would have taken place in January 2021 has had to be postponed. Hugh has kindly written a preview, which I am sure will inspire many of you to come and listen to his talk when we can meet again.

Kathy Fricker



Jon's book is available on Amazon or you can buy a copy, priced £10, by emailing Jon at horseshoe50@btinternet.com.

Lady Augusta Mary Noel of Ampthill Park - Preview

If you take a train from Bedford to London, and sit on the left of the train, about five minutes after departure you will see an imposing redbrick mansion on the hillside, perhaps a quarter of a mile from the track. This is Ampthill Park, and in the 1860's it would have been a delightful spot to live. The rural view over the plains of Bedfordshire towards the distant Honey Hills would have been breath-taking. One might have picked out the spires and rooftops of the county town of Bedford on the horizon, and a little to the left, one could plainly see above the treetops the tower of St James's, Biddenham, with its gold weathercock shining in the sun.

Twenty years later things would have been very different. Back in 1860, there would have been no noisy, smelly express trains of the Midland Railway, full of the poor of London in their third class carriages, no forest of chimneys at the Stewartby brickworks pouring out dense clouds of smoke, no cavernous pits where clay was dug out by armies of grimy workers and loaded into innumerable wagons to make the bricks that were soon to construct the slums and manufactories that were spreading across the once green and pleasant land. Let us return then to an age before this scene of desolation had been thrust upon rural Bedfordshire, and meet the denizens of Ampthill Park: the Honourable Gerald James Noel MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury under Disraeli, and son of the Earl of Gainsborough, and his wife, Lady Augusta Mary, nee Lowther, together with their two infant sons, Gerard and Henry. I must stress that the members of this distinguished and respectable family are models of Victorian propriety. It is when we look at their close relations that the shadow of scandal spreads across the scene.

As we meet Lady Augusta's family and hear their colourful stories, we will see that each one of their lives throws light on some aspect of the rich tapestry of nineteenth century British society. We will learn about such varied topics as duelling, transportation to Australia, foxhunting, professional boxing, cricket at Lord's, arranged marriages, infidelity amongst the aristocracy, the railways, and politics before and after the Reform Bill. We will even have a face-to-face meeting with no less a personage than the Emperor Napoleon himself, and we shall surprise his conqueror, the Duke of Wellington, in a highly embarrassing situation.

For some, even more interesting is the cookery that took place in the kitchens of Ampthill Park under the direction of Cook Mary Pester and Butler George Skiffington. We will be able to offer you a selection of choicest and most sumptuous delicacies from Augusta's elder sister's hand-written cookery book that we know were served in the stately dining room.

Hugh Clifton

Gold Lane fields

Once again planning blight in the fields off Gold Lane results in no agricultural crop being planted in Autumn 2020.

The first photograph shows how the fields looked in October 2018. Look at them now!

Weeds have some nature conservation value but a field margin can suffice.

Chris Haydn Jones



2018



2020

Café B...

Tuesday 17th November

Biddenham Village Hall

10.30 am - 12.00 noon

We've really missed you and would love to see you again so we are hoping to re-open our (Village Hall) doors on Tuesday 17th November

Covid guidelines will be observed so there will be socially distanced tables of 6 (maximum) and numbers will be limited to 25.

Booking is essential so please call Maggie on 346550 to reserve a place.

We know it can't be quite like 'the old days' but the friendly cheerful atmosphere won't have changed so please come and join us for coffee, cake and a chat!



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OPENING MINDS



Biddenham Gardeners Association

Yours and my need for plants

On Tuesday evening 20th October 35 members and visitors were joined, on Zoom, by Rob Brett the Curator of RHS Garden Hyde Hall. Several years ago BGA members visited Hyde Hall and it was interesting to note that, when we arrived, most people made a beeline for the dry garden. Rob, who started off in farming, has had a career in horticulture which has taken him from Kew Gardens to the Cambridge Botanic Garden, Sainsbury Laboratory Plant Science Research Facility at Cambridge University and the Eden Project in Cornwall. Rob's talk was in three parts; focusing firstly on the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), he then gave illustrations as to why plants are so important in our lives and ended his presentation with information about the gardens at Hyde Hall.



Many of the BGA members are also members of the RHS and in the Society's Garden Magazine this month Rob describes some of the planting plans at Hyde Hall which capture the colours of Autumn. Even though Hyde Hall Gardens were closed from March until June in 2020 there have been a total of 160,908 visitors since the gardens reopened. This year the pandemic has promoted a new interest in horticulture and all the RHS gardens have seen a record number of visitors. The RHS is involved in many projects including Community Outreach Projects like the Britain in Bloom Campaign, the Greening of Great Britain Campaign and the Horticulture Matters Programme where the RHS has taken on responsibility for training students and apprentices. Rob updated us on RHS Bridgewater, a new 154 acre garden at Worsley, five miles west of Manchester. The site has been designed by Tom Stuart Smith and will be officially opened in May 2021. Of particular interest will be the 11 acre walled garden.

Rob then went on to the main theme of his presentation "Why plants are important to us and why we need them" Well - we need them for food, fuel, shelter, building and construction, medicines, herbal remedies, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals and technology. Rob went on to discuss plant research, natural and applied variation, climate change plant protection, plant culture - art work, plant education and our enduring need for connectivity with plants. Each aspect was well illustrated by lovely photographs and examples showing a real in depth knowledge of plants and their characteristics gleaned over many years by studying them and working with them in different settings in this country and abroad. Rob transported us to the mangrove swamps around Singapore, to the deserts inhabited by cacti, to the bushfires of Australia. Rob illustrated the power of plants by the example of the Titan Arum, endemic to the steep hillsides of rainforests in Sumatra, but grown also in the glasshouses at Cambridge Botanic Garden. It's the largest flowering structure on earth producing a flower only once every seven to nine years. The flower grows up to three metres tall and survives for one night only - such is its plant power that it attracts enormous crowds to see it when it is in bloom. Rob summed up our need for plants as a way of "filling our souls". We need plants to utilise our landscape and to surround and immerse ourselves - this year more than ever one would think.

The third part of Rob's talk featured Hyde Hall gardens in Essex. In 1993 Mr and Mrs Robinson donated 1000 acres of farmland to the RHS - the couple had already

started to make a garden on part of the site. The RHS kept 365 acres to continue to develop as a garden and sold the rest for farming. The garden has evolved over the years with a rose garden, dry garden, winter garden, courtyard garden, an education and learning centre and a restaurant.

Around 4,500 children take part in educational activities each year. Fruit and vegetables grown in the garden are used in the restaurant and there is close collaboration between head gardener and chef. Since 1996 shelter belts with 60,000 trees have been planted over 60 acres which surround the edges of the garden and now attract 93 different species of birds as well as butterflies and native orchids. The habitat has completely changed since the trees have become established - a great achievement in an arable farming setting.

It was such a joy to listen to a speaker who was so knowledgeable, so enthusiastic and so passionate about plants and their impact and influence on us all. Thank you to Rob for an excellent presentation. Hopefully the BGA will be able to arrange another visit to RHS Hyde Hall and, who knows, one day we may be able to visit RHS Bridgewater as well.

On Tuesday 17th November we will be joined, on Zoom, by Lucy Hartley who will give a presentation entitled "Designing a Border from Scratch". 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

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What's On?

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

November

Sun 1st November Service at St James's, 9.30am, see page 1

Wed 4th November Virtual open evening, Biddenham Upper School, see page 14

Thu 5th November Village Hall AGM, Biddenham Village Hall, 8.00pm, see page 5

Sun 8th November Service at All Saints, 9.30am, see page 1

Sun 8th November Remembrance Day Service, 10.50am, see pages 1 & 12

Wed 11th November Winter coat collection for Wrap Up Biddenham, see page 5

Wed 11th November Biddenham Parish Council meeting via Zoom, 7.30pm, see page 12

14th-28th November Red Cross Virtual Christmas Fair, see page 4

Sun 15th November Service at St James's. 9.30am, see page 1

Tue 17th November Café B, Biddenham Village Hall, 10.30am-12.00noon, **BOOKING ESSENTIAL**, see page 14

Tue 17th November Biddenham Gardeners Association meeting via Zoom, see page 15

Sun 22nd November service at All Saints, 9.30am, see page 1

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

Biddenham Pavilion is open for bookings.

The Church Barn unfortunately remains closed for the foreseeable future. Due to the size of the space and the narrow entrance/exit we do not feel it would be safe to reopen. Please be assured that we are keeping the situation under review and will notify you of any changes.

Jacqui Piper

Contributors please note that next month's edition will cover both December and January. I am not planning a January edition unless there are any significant changes to Covid-19 regulations that affect village activities.

Jean Gambold

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

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

Wednesday 18th November 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.