

The Loop

June 2022

£1.00

Jubilee First Friday

The First Friday lunch will be going ahead as usual on the Bank Holiday, 3rd June.

It will be a little bit special with a glass of fizz and some appropriate dishes on offer. Numbers are limited so make sure you book if you'd like to join in.

Booking details are on page 18.

Explore the gardens of Church End

Biddenham



Sunday 26th June 2022, 2pm–5pm

Come and explore the variety of gardens along Church End, The Old Barns and Manor Road, Biddenham - whether pristine, everyday, interesting or just "work in progress".

Afternoon tea with home-made cakes for sale in the Church Barn.
Plants for sale.

Tickets £5 per person for all gardens, available on the day from the Church Barn (next to St James's Church at MK40 4AS), or by the postbox, The Old Barns. Accompanied children under 12 free.

*Parking along Main Road. Well controlled dogs on leads, children and buggies all welcome. **Note:** There are ponds, steps and other hazards in some gardens and wheelchair access may be limited in some areas.*

For more information, email churchendgardens@gmail.com

In aid of The Friends of St James, Biddenham

- the charity which preserves and enhances the historic church buildings for future generations



Bikes for Ukrainians

Generous donations have provided bikes for Ukrainian refugees living in the area. As of 15th May 18 bikes, mainly ladies' and children's, had been collected. The collection is being organised by St James's Church through Bicycle Co-ordinator, Manfred Saenger. All the cycles are checked over and repaired prior to distribution and any parts required are paid for by St James Church Ukrainian Support Fund.

Bikes are still needed so, if you can help, please contact Manfred via email on: manfredsaenger15@gmail.com or telephone: 07775750449.

'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 have often struggled with the phrase 'Almighty God'. It always seems to be at odds with the hard reality of life. Particularly at this time when we see a significant amount of injustice in the world.

In 2019 I encountered a child of no more than eleven on the streets of Istanbul. She was reaching into bins for food, clearly one of the countless refugees that have fled the conflict in Syria. Many would say that an Almighty God, who is also a benevolent God, would bring his might to bear to protect a child who was suffering in this way.

Over the last two months, we have witnessed the heart-breaking suffering of communities in Ukraine. It is less easy for us to ignore wars that impact on white Europeans than it is to ignore the similar circumstances in other parts of the world, including Syria. It is harder still to ignore this when we encounter large numbers of people spilling over our own borders.

On Wednesday mornings, in comfortable Biddenham, our Church Hall (the Church Barn) is filled with some of these people. They are not how you would expect refugees to be. Many of them are from middle class, professional backgrounds; intellectually and professionally better placed than us. Their conversations are stimulating and their obvious courage is exemplary, because they have fought tooth and nail to bring themselves and their families to safety from a terrible evil.

It was heart-breaking to read in a Facebook post from a friend of one of our guests: 'Where is God? Has he abandoned us?' It is striking how similar this is to the words of Jesus on the cross: 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'



The shortest verse in the Bible is in John 11:35. It comes when Jesus encounters the death of his friend Lazarus. The verse simply tells us 'Jesus wept'.

In both passages we encounter God in Jesus Christ, but this God, this Christ, is human and vulnerable rather than all powerful. One of the great theologians of the 20th century, Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote: 'This is the decisive difference between Christianity and all religions. Man's religiosity makes him look in his distress to the power of God in the world; he uses God as a deus ex machina. The Bible, however, directs us to the powerlessness and suffering of God; only a suffering God can help.'

One of our friends, a Ukrainian/British citizen spoke of the situation that her people were facing, and said to me: 'I have no more tears left. There is nothing left to cry.' I was deeply moved by this and wrote a poem for her and her people:

There are no more tears
No more tears left to cry
Our hearts recall the brightest sky
Floating dreams,
Sail across
The firmament of deepest blue,
And the sun-glazed fields
Silken land formed like waves upon the breeze,

The shock of barbarous hands
Seized the fabric of their lives,
Shredded, torn, twisted lies,
Rag-wrung the last moisture from their eyes.
And all that is sacred, all that is good,
Was cast aside.
Yet still within the depths,
A drifting cloud remains,
Another tear,
For all that land
The final, drop of rain

It may feel to her that the well has run dry, especially when a powerful God is nowhere to be seen. But if, when we have given all, Christ alone is still able to weep, then in the depths of human darkness we find that God still loves us and he is here for us. Only a suffering God can help.

God bless.

Eric

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/>



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

Vicar	Rev Eric Lomax rev.ejlomax@gmail.com	Tel: 328452
Readers	Christopher Dawe Paul Fricker Sue Richards	Tel 363890 Tel 342843
Churchwardens	Laurie Hurn Lois Nash	Tel 364251 Tel 961826
Verger	Hilary Hurn	Tel 364251
Treasurer	Michael Hurford	Tel 271746
Organist/Choirmaster	Adam Wright	
www.stjamesbiddenham.com		

A word of Thanks

Jacqui Piper has been our church administrator and PCC Secretary for a number of years now. During Lockdown in particular, it has been Jacqui who has worked hard to ensure that the message of the church in our parish has not been lost.

For personal reasons, Jacqui has decided to step down from this role. My thanks to Jacqui for all that she has done, and I am sure that everybody who is connected with our Church will agree that Jacqui will be deeply missed.

Eric

Our Ukranian guests are here

It's a great pleasure to welcome many Ukrainian families to Biddenham, Great Denham and around Bedford. The number staying with hosts locally is increasing all the time and, in order to help with their inclusion into our community, a regular Wednesday coffee morning is held in St James Church Barn, Biddenham, from 10.00am to 12 noon. These social gatherings are aimed particularly at Ukrainian guests and their hosts, and also enable volunteers to do their bit to help these people who have faced such trauma in their home country.

A particular benefit of the coffee mornings is to enable Ukrainians to meet other refugees and speak in their own language. You can almost see the bonding! And there are some extraordinary stories. For example, the two women who worked together in Ukraine, but knew they had to leave the country to save their families. So, they said farewell on their last day at work, not knowing if they'd ever meet again. They found their own ways across Europe and next met when they bumped into each other in the Barn! Many of the Ukrainians speak good English and it is a joy to meet such lovely people.

At these Wednesday events, our Ukrainian guests can also access the wide range of clothes, toys and personal products so generously donated by local residents. Most recently, we have sought and received donations of bicycles for children of all ages, as well as smartphones so that people can stay in touch with their families and friends wherever they are in Europe.

It's wonderful to see the local population respond in such a practical and heart-warming manner. Lindsey Salisbury, from Bedford Borough Council Children's Services, has also attended providing invaluable support, advice and co-ordination. You can contact her on: lindsey.salisbury@bedford.gov.uk.

You may have heard that a fundraising concert for Ukrainians was booked in the Pavilion on 9th July, but that has now been postponed. However financial donations are extremely welcome, as they enable our guests to buy the essential items that they lack. You can donate by bank transfer to the following account:

Name: Biddenham PCC
Sort Code: 60-02-13 (NatWest Bank)
Account No: 5131 7710

In the reference field, please enter "Ukraine" followed by your postcode and house number. Gift Aid will be claimed where possible, adding 25% to the value of your donation.

If you wish to help with this vitally important and hugely rewarding project, please come along on a Wednesday morning - all offers of help are gratefully received, even if it's just organising the coffee rota. You can also contact us at: stjamesukrn2022@gmail.com.

Thank you.

St James Church Ukrainian Support



Farewell to our organist and choirmaster

At the end of April the Church said goodbye to Graham Weeks, organist and choirmaster for the past ten years.

Graham has led the choir ably and with unfailing good humour. Like his predecessor, Paul Edwards, he combined his musical activities with driving school buses! Choir practices have been fun and we've always enjoyed listening to his anecdotes. We have performed concerts and joint activities with Cardington, Graham's other church where he is still at the organ loft. Annual highlights have been the Carols and Nine Lessons at Christmas, where Graham has encouraged an augmented choir to sing to a very high standard, much appreciated by the congregation. He's also played at many weddings and funeral services over the ten years, and he gently helped the choir to return to singing together after the enforced pandemic absence. Graham is a unique character and we will miss him.

However, we are fortunate to be able to welcome Adam Wright as our new organist and choirmaster. Not a bus driver this time; Adam has come from Doncaster to join the music staff at Bedford Modern School. He is clearly very talented; the choir enjoyed their first practice and we are looking forward to working with him.

Rosemary Harris

St Joseph's & St Gregory's Primary School

The Great Fire of London – Year 1



The children in Year 1 have recently been learning all about The Great Fire of London with History Off The Page who came in to school to teach and run different activities to deepen their understanding of the history of this event.

The children began the morning as young apprentices on the streets of London, learning skills that would have been common for workers of that time. In the afternoon, the children helped excavate what was left of the charred city, looking for personal belongings and important legal documents that could help the city start the process of rebuilding. The children dressed up in the style from the Tudor times to enhance the day.

Drumming with Status Quo, Years 3, 4, 5 & 6

Jeff Rich, drummer from Status Quo, gave a workshop for all our Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 children recently. All children and staff had a chance to play a percussion instrument. It was a great day!



R J GASCOYNE THE PLUMBING, HEATING AND GAS COMPANY

Boiler changes, system upgrades,
bathrooms, fault finding, servicing,
maintenance, gas safety & landlord
certificates, repairs, all heating,
plumbing, drainage and gas work
undertaken.

All from a friendly, reliable, trustworthy
and professional engineer.

Contact Ryan on
TEL: 07980 209587
or EMAIL



Biddenham Conservation Volunteers

This past month the conservation group has continued to be active. You might have noticed that Redgates at the end of Day's Lane has had a clean up by wire brush and sandpaper with removal of ivy. Then the painting gang moved in and completed a thorough job as well as spreading some ballast on the path.

The gate was installed to contain cattle who were kept in the field back in the days of The Parish Paths Partnership funded by the government in the 1980s. It was painted red with some stain found in a garage and so the gate remains in good condition and should now last many more years.

Recently, the botanists and aspiring botanists have also assembled and met to plan wildflower and tree surveys for Cowslip Meadow to improve the management plan. A pleasant morning was spent recently surveying all the trees planted along the western side of Cowslip Meadow as a start; flowers to follow in a few weeks time.

When we know more about what is growing in the field we can apply our knowledge to any planting or conservation plans for the future. The results for the tree survey part one (it's a big field) are being written up.

Please let us know if you would like to join the group and be advised of any tasks coming up. Training will be given and tools can be provided.

Chrishj49@gmail.com

gillycowan@btinternet.com

Chris Jones



Redgates

Auction Sales & Valuations

Valuation, collection and auction service
of individual items through to complete
property and commercial clearances.

Call for a free no obligation quote or
email info@peacockauction.co.uk

SALE ENTRIES NOW INVITED

www.peacockauction.co.uk

Eastcotts Park,
Wallis Way,
Bedford, MK42 0PE

01234 266366



The survey team

Biddenham History Society

It was a real pleasure to be able to meet in person again on 25th April and to hear the presentation that Peter Applewhite had prepared for us two years ago. We did gain from the two year gap, as Peter had obtained more information, especially photographs, in the meantime and his grandson had given him some useful IT lessons! Peter had many excellent illustrations, but he was now able to enliven them by making pages open like a book, different shapes move across the screen and sound effects come on for emphasis at key moments. We had certainly moved into the 21st century in terms of presentation technology!

One of the things that Peter had wondered about when walking round Biddenham in 2016 was whether there was another place called Biddenham in the world. He tracked down one place in Australia, a cattle station to the west-north west of Brisbane, and he discussed this place in his talk. He has since discovered another Biddenham in Australia which he is going to tell us about in his presentation in September. Once he had discovered the Biddenham in Queensland, Peter naturally wondered how it had got its name and if there was a link with Biddenham in Bedfordshire.

In the first part of his talk, Peter traced the history of the large farm called Biddenham which is about 680 kilometres west-north west of Brisbane, in Queensland, Australia. He was helped by excellent archival material which he could access online and by the Newell family, the present day owners of the station called Biddenham.

Peter was able to find out much about the early owners of the station, once it became freehold, from memoirs and other sources, such as early newspapers, though he had to deal with conflicting accounts and details becoming blurred. The first settlers in the nineteenth century had to combat adverse weather conditions, both floods and droughts. The station concentrated on sheep rearing and wool production from the 1870s. In the 1890s, when depression hit Australia, problems arose with unionisation and strikes by the sheep shearers. In 1891, 13 union leaders were charged with sedition and jailed. There was then a move to cattle rearing as well as keeping sheep on the station: Peter even found a link between one of the station managers and P.L.Travers, the author of *Mary Poppins*!

The station has constantly faced problems with flood and drought, most recently drought from 2013. Peter had photographs to show that the drought is now coming to an end and the fields of Biddenham are green again, but the drought has not yet officially been declared over. The station was divided into two parts in 2014 and Natalie and Guy Newell, who now own the new Biddenham station, which is the top half of the former station, have been very helpful to Peter in his research.



How though did this settlement get the name Biddenham and is there a link with our Biddenham? After a few ups and downs, Peter made the link. The link is the Missing family! Diana Toyn had encountered this family when she was writing about Biddenham Church in 'The Village of Biddenham Through the Ages.' In the north-east corner of the graveyard, a fine obelisk (1851) records the death of John McBride Missing, aged 29, and his father, the Rev. John Missing M.A. of

Magdalen Hall, Oxford, curate of this parish 'a monument erected by many of his deeply attached friends'. Peter discovered that the Rev. John died in 1840 and he left his wife and surviving children in very straitened circumstances. By 1843, they were destitute.



One of the children was a son, Henry, born in 1838, who had to make his way in the world. Peter managed to get useful information from Guy Newell in Queensland, who had done some research for one of his daughters, who had wondered why their farm was called Biddenham. Peter pieced together the story of Henry Missing's life from his baptism at St Paul's Church, Bedford in 1838 to his arrival in Australia in 1858 on board the 'Lincolnshire'. Once in Australia, Henry gained experience in 'pastoral pursuits', arriving in 1863 at the place to be called Biddenham. Henry seems to have had fond memories of the place of his birth and of his family, hence the use of the name, Biddenham.

However, Henry never returned to Biddenham, England: his sentimental attachment was reflected in the name that he gave to the Queensland station. He took a lively interest in the development of Queensland and a keen and active interest in local government. He married in 1871 in St John's Church, Brisbane, Elizabeth Uhr and had seven children. He died in Australia in 1910 and is buried in Maryborough cemetery, Queensland. So, with much painstaking and fascinating research, Peter was able to show that Henry Missing took his memories of Biddenham and the name to Australia.

In September, Peter is going to enlighten us about the other Biddenham he has discovered.

In the meantime, the next meeting of the Society will be on Monday 4th July from 2.30pm - 4.30pm in the Church Barn. Hugh Clifton will be talking about the Noel family of Ampthill Park in the nineteenth century and their aristocratic connections. He promises 'a cookery lesson from the Ampthill Kitchens; suggestions for making artificial flowers; tales of glamorous parties down the road at Wrest Park; a story of transportation to Australia; affairs with glamorous French opera stars; meetings with Emperor Napoleon and the Duke of Wellington; and even a story of professional heavyweight boxing, which involves the World Champion, the Boston Strongboy'. Clearly, much variety and something to look forward to.

Kathy Fricker



Henry & Elizabeth's grave in Maryborough

Badgers Chilli Kitchen Tasting Day



The Barn Cardington is a shop, deli, café and butchery on Cople Road, Cardington MK44 3SH offering the finest local produce from Bedfordshire and around. We are a social venture operated on a non-profit basis for the benefit of local communities.



On Friday 29th April, Lee, owner of Badgers Chilli Kitchen, joined us for our first tasting day at The Barn.

With lots of exciting changes at The Barn including improvements to the inside and outside café areas, changes to the menu, and new local producers stocked in our farm shop, we were really looking forward to the launch of our tasting days and events. We started off with a tasting day for chilli lovers, with Lee and his range of seasonings, relishes, sauces, and nuts.

To give customers a flavour of how to use his seasonings, Lee had mixed them with natural yoghurt so that people could try a taste. He'd also been cooking up some chicken and meatballs, so you could try the products with these as well.

All of the products ranged from mild to extra hot, so there was something for everyone to enjoy and see how hot they could handle! From the lemon drop seasoning, to the now infamous Original Reaper chilli sauce, people had lots of fun tasting different products.

Lee said:

"I had an excellent day at The Barn on Friday, getting to meet some regular customers of theirs is always a winner. I always have fun at these sorts of events as I can really get to interact with my new/future customers."

"The next event planned in the diary is a Badgers Chilli Kitchen themed BBQ, which is happening on Sunday 12th June. We will focus on flavour as well as a couple of Extra Hot dishes for the brave!!"

There were recipe cards for Chinese pan roast spicy duck with beetroot & orange rice noodles and sesame greens and Marinated Lemon Drop chicken burger with grilled courgette, spinach and feta salad available to pick up, so that people could find some recipe inspiration too. Keep an eye out for more recipe cards coming to The Barn soon for some recipe inspiration.

Lee will be back on Sunday 12th June for the Badgers Chilli Kitchen BBQ, so do come along to see him there! We'll be sharing more information on our Facebook page 'The Barn, Cardington' and at The Barn.

For more details about the Barn see <https://thebarncardington.com/>

Biddenham Parish Council



The Parish Council met on Tuesday 17th May at the Pavilion. Present at the meeting were Parish Councillors Graham Bates, Peter Chase, Karen Cotton, Harry Fowler, Chris Gee, Irina Madan-Sau and Francia Slade, the Clerk, David Brough and myself. Apologies were received from Krzys Osuch. Jon Gambold and Roger Rigby, our Borough Councillors, were also present. Seven members of the public were also present.

This meeting was our Annual Parish meeting at which Councillors elect a Chair for the year and appoint representatives for the various Committees the Parish operates. The appointment of the Chair for 2022/23 was uncontested as I was the only volunteer. So, I am either doing a reasonable job or no-one fancied the role. I suspect the latter, but you can be the judge of which applies.

The Parish Council meeting always includes a public open session and I am pleased that we were able to devote three quarters of an hour hearing from residents in Thorpe Close about the problems they were experiencing from the Dandara development. We discussed with them how we can support them to mitigate the problems they were experiencing which ranged from querying the extent of the hedge removal, inconsiderate parking and light pollution at the sales entrance to name a few. It is disappointing that the developer of the site doesn't demonstrably appear to be embracing the role of a 'good neighbour'. We heard in detail from residents about traffic problems at the entrance to the development in Gold Lane and related traffic and parking problems they were regularly experiencing at the entrance to Thorpe Close. Some may recall the Parish Council opposed this as the development entrance, but this objection, despite being fully argued, was rejected and we have what we have.

After much discussion, the Parish supported in principle the residents' desire to have double yellow lines along Gold Lane to mitigate current and future potential problems. One issue to be resolved is the extent of the double yellow lines in Gold Lane. The Parish Council agreed to undertake a limited consultation with the affected properties that front Gold Lane to seek their views before we approach the Borough Council who would ultimately decide if the request should proceed.

At this meeting, the Council approved the end-of-year accounts for 2021/22 and the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) which demonstrates that the Council is correctly managed and provides assurance that the financial management is robust and follows good practice. Thanks go to our Clerk for bringing all this together and providing Councillors with confidence in how our business is conducted and funds are managed. The budget for the Parish Council is not large at just under £56,000 (we are one of the lowest precepts of the 47 parishes in the Borough). After taking into account staffing and various fixed costs like insurance the residual sum available to invest in the Parish is limited, but we do encourage local groups to contact us if they need support as we may be able to either directly help them or, if not, use our voice to try and persuade others to assist.

Finally, I hope that everyone enjoys the Jubilee Holiday and that we are lucky enough to have great weather to make those four days really enjoyable for families and our community.

Date of the next meeting

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 14th June (the second Tuesday) at 7.30pm at the Pavilion in Deep Spinney and all are welcome.

Stewart Briggs
Chair



Have you been down to the pond recently? If not, you really should go – it is looking lovely. If you are not sure where the pond is, follow the footpath at the junction of Main Road and Gold Lane, where there is a signpost with a kingfisher. Alternatively, it can be reached from the footpath behind St James's Church along the ancient coffin path that takes you across the fields and back to the village. There are benches to rest awhile and to just contemplate the beauty on our doorstep.



Why not take a walk on Sunday 12th June and stop in at the Church Barn where the Friends of the Biddenham Village Pond will be hosting their Summer Tea and AGM (3-5pm). Everyone is invited and there is no charge, although donations towards our work are always welcome. We will be very happy to share with you what we do at the pond and why we do it. Children are welcome and there will be a display of pond life, so that using a microscope you will see in detail what is living in the pond.

If you can't make the 12th, why not join Chris for a spot of pond dipping on the afternoon of Saturday 25th June (2.30pm), where you will have a second opportunity to see the life that our pond supports. Children of all ages are very welcome, but they **must** be accompanied by an adult who will be responsible for their safety. Please do not bring dogs with you as they disturb the wildlife.

Sadly, Sophie has resigned from the Committee, but we thank her for her valued contribution, particularly the refreshments she has provided for us at various work parties, which have been most welcome. If you are interested in joining us please email one of the Committee members or if you would like to join our WhatsApp Pond Workforce Group and volunteer for occasional projects down at the pond (which supplement our Spring and Autumn work mornings) please send your mobile number to Cathy at ceckett@gmail.com.

The Pond Team

Contact Details

Chris Jones chrishj49@gmail.com
Cathy Eckett-Brown ceckett@gmail.com
Jane Knight jane@80kltd.co.uk
Jonathan Field jfield21st@mail.com

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



The Friends of the Biddenham Village Pond invite you to their **Summer Tea** on Sunday 12th June

3pm to 5pm in the Church Barn.

You don't need to be a member to come and enjoy tea and scones with us and find out a little more about what we do.

There is no charge, but we welcome donations.

(At about 3.30pm we will hold our AGM and give a review of our activities since June 2019).

TRUSTED
CARE
IN YOUR OWN
HOME



- Alzheimer's & Dementia care
- Specialist care
- Medication Support
- Washing & Dressing
- Post Hospital Discharge
- Respite & Holiday care

Our wide range of services support people to continue living happily and independently at home. We can call in for a chat and a cup of tea or support with more specialist care needs from one hour to 24 hours a day.

We actively seek out CareGivers are employed on the basis of their passion for caring and their 'life experience', before being given market-leading, in-house training.

Call in today for a no obligation assessment and support plan.



01234 481 360
rightathome.co.uk/bedford



FARM SHOP

Manor Farm, High Street, Stagsden, Beds
(01234) 822330
www.brownsfstagsden.co.uk

HOME REARED & LOCALLY PRODUCED

MEAT, POULTRY, GAME, SEASONAL VEGETABLES, EGGS & MILK.

HOMEMADE PREMIUM QUALITY BURGERS & SAUSAGES

REGIONAL CHEESES, HAM, PIES, JAMS, SAUCES, OILS & MORE

Tuesday - Thursday 9am – 5pm, Fri 9am – 6pm and Sat 9am -4pm

This month in the garden

As I write this, I have just returned from RHS Malvern Garden Show. The ticket was a Christmas present from my daughter. We were accompanied by my son and my sister, tickets courtesy of Abigail as well, so it was a jolly band of keen gardeners. As Abigail put it 'Out for a day of Floral Fun'. I think Malvern is my favourite show, a lovely time of the year when there is the promise of everything to come.

Last month in my article I sang the praises of umbellifers and here they were at Malvern in abundance. The show gardens were awash with wild flowers and cow parsley featured strongly, soft planting - so different from the manicured plots of the show gardens of yesteryear - and what a delight they were.

We played a guessing game on the way as to what would be the 'in' plant this year. Well, it was Camassia. I had not seen these until I went to Prince Charles' garden at Highgrove many years ago. The Biddenham Gardeners Association had arranged a visit. Security was very tight in those days and clutching our passports, which had been checked off by the police who boarded our coach, and leaving all cameras and mobile phones behind we set foot in the gardens. We were amazed by the sea of blue in one of the meadows and not one of us knew what the plant was. Now Camassias are everywhere and what a lovely blue/violet show they provided at Malvern, especially as many of the displays were paired with the orange of Geum 'Totally Tangerine' on the opposite side of the colour spectrum; no wonder they looked so good. Geums have been having a resurgence for the last couple of years and the frilled varieties like 'Pink Petticoat', which I am growing this year, are just lovely.

But back to Camassias; they are in the same family as asparagus and are native to North America. Plant out the bulbs in the Autumn roughly double the depth of the size of the bulb and they will produce their lovely flower spikes from mid-April to mid-June. They do need a moisture retentive soil so if your soil is light some compost into the planting hole will help them. After flowering, cut down the whole of the flowering stem and let the foliage die back as you would do for any other bulbous perennial. The good news is that slugs and snails do not touch Camassia!

Talking of slugs and snails; have you tried a garlic wash to deter them? My friend on the Isle of Wight suggested to me that I boiled a cut up garlic bulb until it was soft, strained the cooled liquid into a spray bottle and used that as a deterrent. I couldn't face the smell of garlic throughout the house so I have just cut up a garlic bulb and put it into my spray bottle with the water. I am currently using it on my hostas - I will keep you posted as to how it works.

Thankfully, I am having extra help with keeping the snail population down. I have a beautiful thrush who visits my garden on a daily basis. Any snails I find I just throw them into a particular area of the garden where he has a favoured stone for bashing them and I hear him tap tapping on a regular basis, a very pleasing sound I have to say. Actually, I quite like slugs and snails and I am more than happy for them to chomp away around by my compost bin and woodland area; just please keep off the plants I have specially nurtured in my plant house!

June - what a fabulous month in the gardens and the countryside; the hawthorn is so lovely at this time of the year and good for Autumn berries to feed the birds. I think we should all grow more of it in our gardens. The year is progressing so fast. Already, although I am writing this at the beginning of May, my rose bushes are budding up even though they have had very little care and attention. Out and about some early roses are already in flower.

Some years ago, I was lucky enough to visit David



Austin's nursery. As well as the plant centre, the site has five wonderful themed gardens where over seven hundred rose varieties are shown in garden settings. There is also a lovely restaurant for lunch. It is so worth a visit at this time of the year when the roses are at their peak. It is a little way off at Albrighton in Shropshire, but well worth a detour if one is travelling in that direction.

At this time of the year, when the spring bulbs are over and before the summer plants come into flower, alliums provide an excellent source of colour. The first alliums to appear tend to be Purple Sensation and, as their leaves die back before the flowers are fully open, it is a good idea to plant them amongst something else, say forget-me-nots so that their shabby foliage is hidden. A backdrop of lime green euphorbias is a good combination. Making an appearance a bit later will be Allium Cristophii and then Allium Schubertii with its huge firework display, quite a short stem so plant it towards the front of the border. Last of all comes Allium Sphaerocephalon with its small egg shaped claret flowers on tall stems. It flowers between July and August so it is possible to have alliums in the garden over a long period.

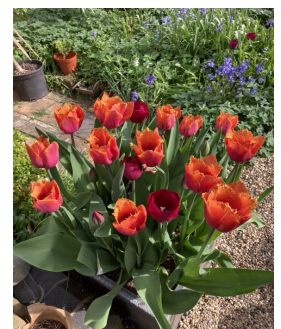
Some of my alliums grow alongside my grasses. If you have grasses, now is a good time to divide them. If done too soon before the plants have started to shoot they will be a long time taking off again.

Biennials can be sown at this time of the year so that they can form a good root system and foliage base before flowering the following Spring. Sow them in seed trays and place outside in a sheltered spot over the Summer. They can be pricked out and potted on before planting into their final positions in the garden in Autumn. Most biennials set seed freely so, once established, they will continue self-seeding from year to year.

Many gardens in Biddenham will have been a sea of blue with forget-me-nots in April and May; they provide a lovely foil for narcissus and tulips. As the forget-me-nots go over and are taken up, just give the faded plants a shake to release the seeds. They will produce new plants freely (if we ever get any rain) and in the Autumn just pull up the plants you don't want and leave small clumps to provide a beautiful display next Spring. It is easy gardening.

Good biennials to sow at this time of the year are hollyhocks (Alcea rosea) and foxgloves (Digitalis). The Halo series is a group of selected hollyhocks that have single flowers with darker throats. Single flowers are always better for the pollinators. Colours range from apricot and maroon - Halo Apricot, to white and green - Halo White. For foxgloves I really like Sutton's Apricot with its soft pinky-apricot flowers. Hollyhocks and foxgloves once planted out in the Autumn won't need protection over winter as they are fully hardy. When pricking out seedlings handle only the seed leaves - never the stem of the plant as this bruises very easily. Get a pencil or stiff plant label right under each plant and tease out as much root and soil as possible. Hollyhocks love the sun and if you plant them beside a fence or wall this will give them protection and reduce the chance of them blowing over in a strong wind. Foxgloves love shady positions.

My tulips have been a great source of joy to me this year and I have included some photos of them on the BGA



website. For the last few years I have grown Tulip Ballerina, an orange, lily-flowered tulip that was recommended by Nick Bailey, on Gardeners' World, and it is certainly worth considering. I have grown it in pots and in the ground and it seems to do well in either. It has an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society, always a good sign that one is on to something special. In case you are interested Nick Bailey will be in Biddenham in the Autumn. He will be our speaker at the BGA on 18th October and everyone is very welcome to attend that and, of course, any other meetings. Just a further reminder that the Biddenham Show will take place on Sunday 11th September. So, whether you are growing flowers or vegetables, do have a think about what you might enter in the Show. A dahlia or tomato plant given a little extra TLC from now onwards could be a winner!

Linda Truscott

Room for Ukrainian refugees

Homelessness charity Emmaus Village Carlton has signed up to the government's Homes for Ukraine scheme, offering up a three-bedroom house, a one-bedroom flat and three single-person flats at their site near Carlton.

The scheme allows people to host Ukrainian refugees who don't have family ties in the UK, for up to 12 months. Emmaus Village Carlton has already welcomed one family group, with another group arriving soon, totalling 13 people from Ukraine.

Speaking about the plans, Chief Officer Angela Foll said: 'We're so pleased we're able to help in this way and it's been moving to see people in our local community come together to help with this important project. Our first guests have settled in well and are being supported by volunteers. We're in regular contact with the other Ukrainian family and are offering support as they make visa and travel arrangements to get here.'

Volunteers were initially tasked with helping to clean and furnish the previously vacant buildings. The Ukrainian guests are being offered the accommodation rent-free, in addition to clothing, food and other essential supplies.



Martin Clitheroe is one of many Emmaus volunteers working on the project: 'A lot of people have put in an enormous amount of work to overcome all the hurdles the government has put up, making it so difficult to get desperate people into the UK. The experience we have gained will help us to advise others.'

Emmaus Village Carlton is now seeking local volunteers who are willing to offer help and support to the Ukrainian families. To find out more please contact: martinclitheroe@emmausvc.org



ARE YOU A LAWN LOVER?

From as little as
£15*
per treatment

* Based on a lawn size up to 40m

HELP YOUR LAWN TO THRIVE, NOT JUST SURVIVE

Over the last 30 years our love for lawns has grown and grown (just like our grass!). We combine our passion and enthusiasm with innovative technology as we continue to revolutionise UK Lawn Care.

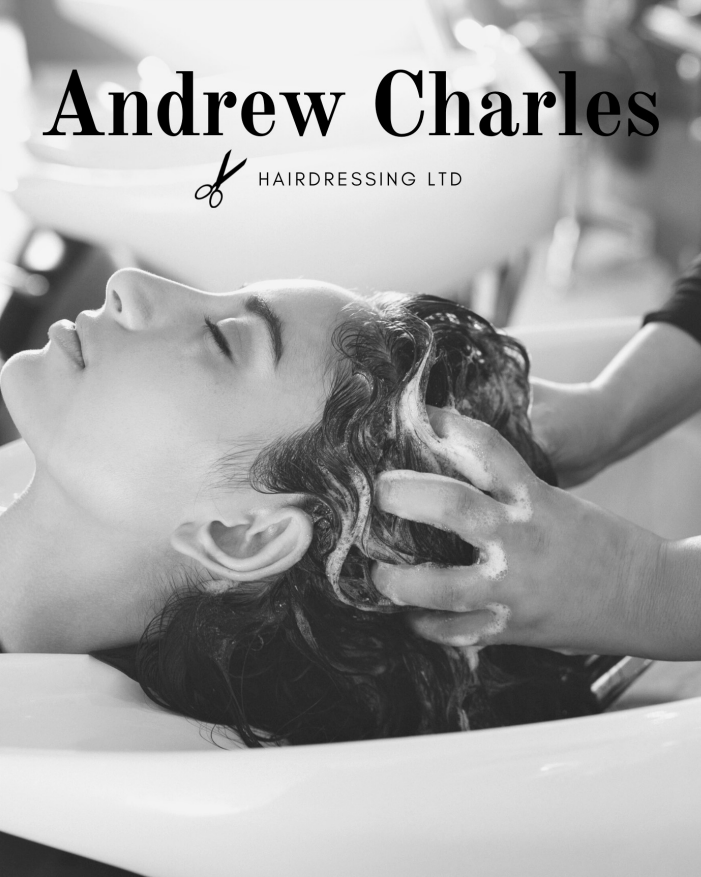
Our groundbreaking 12-month **Lawn Treatment Programmes**, keep your grass looking its best all year round, ensuring your lawn receives the love and attention it deserves.

Let's create the lawn we both love

Start your Lawn Care journey today:
Call us on 01234 709345/01480 597432
email: bedford@greenthumb.co.uk
visit: greenthumb.co.uk/bedford

GreenThumb
LAWN TREATMENT SERVICE





Andrew Charles

✂ HAIRDRESSING LTD

We have moved to -
📍 6 Ison Close, Biddenham, Bedford

☎ 01234 325938

Biddenham Cricket Club



The excellent weather we have enjoyed for most of May so far has meant that every Biddenham team has played at least two matches, and all have won at least one of these.

New recruits to the junior section have been plentiful, but school and other exams seem to start earlier every year so it's a challenging time for youngsters and their parents to find time for sport. The good weather has kept cancellations to a minimum so that all junior cricket matches have been played when both ourselves and our opposition have been able to find enough players.

The senior team has found raising eleven players for the early season fixtures challenging. This is perhaps not surprising because of the pressures of modern life and the time commitment required for playing. Reading an article this week published by the Club Cricket Conference, it seems this is an issue for very many clubs across the country. In spite of this, our new captain, Ross Cunningham, has worked tirelessly to raise teams and has included some youngsters who have all contributed to the team's efforts in recent matches.

At Biddenham, we are fortunate to be in an area with an increasing population and therefore a focus for boys and girls who wish to take up the sport. We hope that the momentum of the junior section can be maintained and that parents continue to come forward to volunteer their time as coaches and administrators of the game.

As highlighted last month, if anyone feels that they would like to become involved in helping with the junior section of the club, please contact me or Chris Spurgeon. A separate DBS certificate from the England and Wales Cricket Board will be required to be obtained by anyone wishing to become involved. This is now a much-improved online process and details can be provided on how to access this.

Details of June's home fixtures are included for information. These include one of the two traditional annual matches against Bedford School Ousels on Friday 17th June from 5.45pm. This is normally an entertaining match and hopefully it will be played in good weather.

Richard Fone

Club news, fixtures and results appear on the website at:
<http://biddenham.play-cricket.com/home>

The 100 Club, provides the club with useful income and also raises its profile within the village amongst the residents for an annual fee of £12. If you would like to join the cricket club as a member, you will also gain automatic entry into the 100 Club draw, which is held each month.

Contact numbers:

Chairman	Glenn Taylor	07778 479479
Youth Chairman	Chris Spurgeon	07707 771606
Club Captain	Gary Linton-Walls	07891 493342
Cricket Secretary	Richard Fone	07818 678697
Club Welfare Officer	Katie Ulvert	07739 286783
100 Club	James Gardner	07928 478563

BIDDENHAM CRICKET CLUB - HOME FIXTURES - JUNE

Date	Day	Start Time	Biddenham Team	Opposition
07-Jun-22	Tuesday	18:00	Under 13 B	Elstow CC - Under 13 B
09-Jun-22	Thursday	18:00	Under 15	Biggleswade CC - Under 15
12-Jun-22	Sunday	10:00	Under 11	Bedford CC - U11 County A
12-Jun-22	Sunday	13:00	Sunday League XI	Potton Town CC - 1st XI
14-Jun-22	Tuesday	18:00	Under 13 B	Amphill Town CC - Under 13 B
16-Jun-22	Thursday	18:00	Under 15	Langford CC, Beds - Under 15
17-Jun-22	Friday	17:45	Midweek	Bedford Ousels
19-Jun-22	Sunday	10:00	Under 9	Queens Park Youth Cricket, Beds - Under 9
21-Jun-22	Tuesday	18:00	Under 13	Bedford CC - U13 County B
23-Jun-22	Thursday	18:00	Under 15	Practice Match
26-Jun-22	Sunday	10:00	Under 9	Bedford CC - Under 9 Development
26-Jun-22	Sunday	10:00	Under 11	Harrold CC - Under 11
26-Jun-22	Sunday	13:00	Sunday League XI	Eggington Foresters CC - Sunday 1st XI

Bedford National Trust Association

The next meeting will be our AGM held at the Addison Centre in Kempston at 2.30pm on 21st June. There will be the AGM, refreshments and a speaker for 30 minutes.

Mike Muncaster will talk on "Gone for a Burton". He has come as our speaker in the past and we always enjoy his talks.

There is no admission charge for the AGM.

Everyone is welcome. There is plenty of parking. For further information ring Robin Salter on: 01234 261897.

e-voice.org.uk/bedfordnt/

Nick Sleaf
Proprietor

N.A.Sleaf Plumbing & Heating

7 Ison Close
Biddenham,
Beds MK40 4BH

Tel: 01234 959472

Mob: 07990 598154

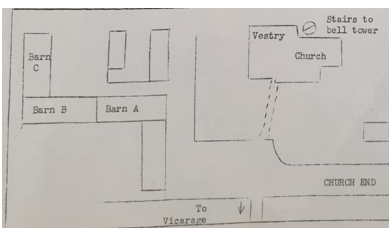
Email: nicksleaf@live.co.uk



Did you know?

You may be aware that St James's Church Barn had two new Church Barn Bookings Officers (Jane and Rebecca) when it reopened after the Covid lockdowns in September 2021. Since we are new to our roles, we are keen to learn more about the history of the Church Barn, which we thought we could share with you on an irregular basis.

To start the process, we recently met with Chris and Jan Jones who shared lots of interesting information and insights into the Barn and we learnt that until 1977 St James's did not have a church hall at all. The then Vicar Donald Flat, come up with the idea of converting one of the adjacent barns belonging to Church Farm into a suitable hall for the Church and Sunday School.



So, Barn A, as seen in the old diagram, was purchased for £5,000 from Mr Kilburn, the owner of Church Farm. A further £5,000 to £6,000 was spent on the conversion to create a hall with kitchen, toilet and a committee

room with a minstrel gallery over-looking the hall. Although the barn is now a hall, its origins remain in the name St James's Church Barn.

By 1981, the barn was finished and inaugurated in a dedication service on 18th October by John Taylor, Bishop of St Albans. As you enter the Barn, on the right-hand side wall you can see pictures of the service, with some local familiar faces in the crowds too. Since then, the Barn has hosted many church-related activities and provided a focal point for the local community.

If you have any interesting facts about the Barn that you would like to share with us, please let us know using the email address below.

If you would like to hire the Barn or find out more about the facilities it offers, please contact us at stjamesbarnbiddenham@gmail.com



From Our Biddenham Village Agent



Our Village Agent, Teresa Moon, is here to help people in Bedford Borough villages to access the services and support they might need. She can also help with money issues. Her services are confidential and free and she can visit you at home. Just call Freephone 0800 039 1234.

Do You Struggle with Online Applications to Bedford Borough Council?

Recently I was contacted by a lady who needed to apply to Bedford Borough Council for her Council Tax Rebate and Housing Benefit. As she doesn't use a computer, she was very distressed when she was told by the Council Helpline that she could only do this online, and they could not assist her.

I have now been reassured that an error was made, and that anyone needing assistance with online applications should call the Council Helpline on 01234 267422. People will be offered help by phone, or else a face-to-face appointment at the Borough Council's Customer Service Centre in Horne Lane.

Councillor Stephen Moon has asked to be informed if a resident who cannot use the Borough Council website fails to get the support they need. His number is 01234 870061, or email Stephen.Moon@bedford.gov.uk

Energy Subsidies

Households in Council Tax Bands A to D are entitled to an energy subsidy of £150. If you pay your Council Tax by Direct Debit you should have already received payment.

• What If You Haven't Received your Payment?

There are approximately 3,000 households whose names on the Council Tax register are not the same as the name on the Direct Debit bank account. Where this is the case, the Government guidance states that payment cannot be made. If this is you, contact the Council so that you can provide them with additional details and further evidence.

• Non Direct Debit Payers

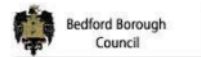
You need to apply for your payment by completing a form on the Borough Council website. To complete the form you need an access code, which you should have received by post. You cannot receive your access code over the phone from Customer Services - it is a 2 step identification process to prevent fraud, therefore you will need to wait for the code to be sent to you. Payments were made from mid-May onwards.

£200 Energy Rebate to be Paid to All Households

All households with a domestic electricity connection will be automatically eligible for a £200 reduction in their energy bills from October 2022. However, this payment will then be recouped from 2023 over 5 years. You will still get the reduction if you switch supplier.

Contact your Village Agent on Freephone 0800 039 1234

(This is an answerphone service, so please be ready to leave your name, address & telephone number, and I will aim to call you back within 48 hours.)



Café B...



Tuesday 21st June
Biddenham Village Hall
10.15 am - 11.45am

Selection of teas, coffees,
hot chocolate and juice
Home baked cakes
Book Swap

Next café 19th July

St James's Church Barn

Ideal for small events, classes and meetings

£10 per hour (Regular Bookings)

£15 per hour (One off Bookings)

Includes full use of kitchen

AV system available for a small additional charge

Contact us for further details

Email:

stjamesbarnbiddenham@gmail.com

(preferred contact method)

Tel:

Jane - 07831 172320

Rebecca - 07769 944727

Church End, Biddenham MK40 4AR



Medals and memorabilia help veterans' charity

Being relatively new to Biddenham, I was intrigued by the Military Medals and Books shop housed in a bungalow on Deep Spinney. So, I called in and met owner, Chris Murphy, who was happy to share his vast knowledge of all things military over coffee in his wonderful treasure trove of a shop.



Chris, a local businessman and former officer in the British Army, has been collecting military memorabilia for many years. After filling three rooms of his house, he decided to put his collection to good use. He set up the shop to sell part of his collection to raise funds for Woody's Lodge, a charity which supports veterans and reservists.

What sparked your interest in military memorabilia?

As a young boy, I helped my mother to distribute Christmas gifts to old soldiers in the 1950s and 60s in Ireland. That sparked my interest and I ended up in the military.

I enjoy medal collecting and history. With each item I collect, I'm interested in researching the person and story behind it, and I include that information with each item I sell.

How do medals fit in with your other businesses?

Medals and military books are my hobby. Volunteers help to run the shop and all profits go to Woody's Lodge.

I like nattering with people and here customers can browse and have a coffee and a chat. I also help people to research their own medals.

I sometimes do talks for the WI, the British Legion, the University of the Third Age etc. And children often come in to learn about the war for school, so we have a children's corner.

Where do all the medals come from?

From years of collecting. I pick them up at antique fairs, car boot sales, a bit of internet dealing and medal auctioneers around London. I also keep an eye on various sources who bring items in from overseas.

What are your criteria when buying medals and memorabilia?

Pre-1922 is my main area of interest and where I focus my research.

With the books, I focus on non-fiction military books. They often contain useful information and footnotes that I can later use to connect with some of the medals.

What's your favourite item you've collected?

I've got two. The first is connected to Biddenham. I was doing some research when something caught my eye. It was the beer jug of Lieutenant F Carpenter of the Royal Irish Fusiliers. I bought it and did some research and found out he had lived at 6 Church End, Biddenham and was JP for Bedfordshire. Then his uncle died in Wales leaving his estate to him provided that: a) he changed his surname by deed poll to Carpenter-Holland-Griffiths; and b) he moved

to Anglesey. Which he did.

My other favourite involves some medals I bought at an auction many years ago. Two years later, I received a letter from the auction house advising that a client in Australia had the sword of the officer whose medals I owned, and was I interested in purchasing it. So, I did. Subsequently I was doing some research and noticed the same officer's sketch book was for sale. He did sketches of the Burma campaign and the Indian campaign in the 1880's and sent them to the London Illustrated News together with articles he wrote. I bought it and now had his medals, sword, and original sketch book.

How do you go about researching medals?

In the early days, I visited the National Archives in Kew and scrolled through reams of information. Nowadays you can download a Medal Index Card (MIC) from the National Archives online. A MIC can reveal lots of information such as name, rank, unit, medal entitlement, which theatre of war they served in, etc. You can then do research on census reports.

You can also look on sites like *Ancestry* and *Find My Past*.

I've even done research from postcards I've picked up at antique fairs if there's a date stamp and the sender has included their regimental number.

Why do people sell medals? They seem very personal.

Lots of reasons. Families die out. And in the 1920s there was a recession and one of the British war medals is 925 silver and has a market value.

A number of years ago, there was a dearth of silver and silver prices rocketed, which triggered lots of medal sales.

Also, many people who'd served in the war didn't want to be reminded of it, so they sold their medals. Many of those who emigrated to Australia threw their medals over the side of the ship.

Who are the buyers?

People who are interested because there's a history behind them. I'm holding a medal for a customer who needs it to match up with a set.

Another man came to the shop and bought a group of medals because they were from a village two miles from where he lived. So, he could do all the research and read the regimental histories.

Why did you choose Woody's Lodge to support?

My wife and I acquired a farm in Wales with a view to helping veterans, people with PTSD and single dads where they could have camping holidays. But Covid put a halt to this.

Then we were introduced to Woody's Lodge, who needed a space to help veterans, and that's how it started.

I'm currently putting together 100 lots, all donated, to put to auction to raise around £20,000 for Woody's Lodge.

And through my business, Dunster House, we're donating ex-display log cabins to Woody's Lodge.

Janet Field

Military Medals and Books, 20 Deep Spinney, is open Thursday to Saturday, 10.00am to 4.00pm:
www.militarymedalsandbooks.co.uk
www.woodyslodge.org





New sunflower contest

Save the Date for The Biddenham Show on Sunday 11th September. The show will be held at St James' CE (VA) Primary School on Main Road from 12 noon to 4.00pm.

For those who haven't been before, this is a traditional show dating back to c.1865. The show will incorporate a wide variety of stalls, entertainment, food and drink. Tea and cakes will be served in the Village Hall and the popular beer tent will provide alternative refreshment.

As in previous years, the show will feature a series of competitions including Arts & Crafts, Photography, Gardening, Preserves, Baking, and the Fun Dog Show.

As well as being a great day out for all the family, the show is an important fundraiser with any surplus used to fund local groups and societies.

New sunflower competition

This year will see the introduction of the new sunflower competition.

The competition is open to everyone, and prizes will be awarded in both children's and adult classes.

But you will have to get a move on if you would like to take part. Now is the ideal time to start planting your sunflower seed (see poster alongside).

Prizes will be awarded for Tallest Sunflower and Widest Sunflower Head as measured on 1st September.

For an Entry Form and competition details, please email: biddenhamsunflowers@gmail.com

Book & DVD donations

If you have any books and DVDs lying around the house in good condition that you no longer need, please donate them to the show. Drop off dates at the Village Hall are:

Café B: 19th July, 16th August
First Friday Lunch: 1st July, 5th August, 2nd September

Calling all bakers

The show wouldn't be complete without the fabulous cake stall which is always a highlight. Start practising your favourite recipes as the show committee will need the help of volunteers to bake lots of cakes, biscuits, and goodies.

For details, please contact: sradicenewton@gmail.com.

Separately there will be various baking and cooking competitions to enter. For details, please refer to the Biddenham Show website: www.biddenhamshow.org

Janet Field



BIDDENHAM SHOW SUNFLOWER COMPETITION! (Although aimed at the schools, anyone can enter – let's make Biddenham sunny!)

Competition rules:

1. Plant your sunflower seed (ideally now!)
2. Photograph the milestones of your sunflower growing
3. Add a few words to your photographs to explain what is happening, where it is growing (your house, grandparents' house, school etc...) and how high it is reaching.
4. Height measurement is from the base of the stem at soil level to the top of the stem (where the stem meets the flower). The stem can be extended to measure the full height of the plant.
5. Width measurement is the diameter of the seed head over the front of the flower (excluding the petals).

If you would like to email your progress, please ask your parent/carer to email the address below and we will post your updates on the Biddenham show website <http://www.biddenhamshow.org/>.

6. By 1st September, measure your sunflower **height and seed head width** by taking a photo with a **tape measure by the side** (a person may be in the photo holding the measure).
(photographs will appear on the website and at the Show, so by emailing you are giving us permission to use your photograph)

Please don't forget to include your school year (or state over 18 if an adult), your name and address in your entry.

7. Post your diary (if you kept one) and final photographs to biddenhamsunflowers@gmail.com by 1st September.
8. Show judges will visit the top 3 entries in each category to verify their measurements, before the results are revealed on 11th September at the Show!



OVAL LAW

Your local legal advisory firm

A new law firm run by Paul Hillier, a very experienced and responsive solicitor now working from his home office in Biddenham, offering a personal service for individuals and businesses on *any* legal issues.

Call 01234 860856

or email: info@ovallaw.co.uk

Authorised and Regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority No. 613473

www.ovallaw.co.uk

NB
NEW BOMBAY
01234 218 218
ORDER ONLINE AT
www.newbombay.co.uk

Three Tuns renovation



The Three Tuns was packed to the rafters on Friday 6th May as last orders were called before closing for renovations.

The pub will re-open on 1st July under new management from the Black Diamond Pub Company which runs The French Horn in Steppingley and The Crooked Billet in Newton Longville.

Lars de Wijngaert, Operations Manager, gave us a sneak preview of what's in store.

Why did you decide to take over the running of The Three Tuns?

Firstly, Biddenham is a beautiful village, and we always aim to find pubs in great locations that have struggled. It was the same with our other two pubs.

We take them on with Greene King and reenergise them.

What are you planning to do with the pub?

We're planning, as we've done with our other two pubs, to make it a real community pub where people love to come for a drink or for beautiful food, with a great team looking after them. We want people to think: 'The Three Tuns is the place to go'.

We faced similar challenges with Steppingley and Newton Longville, and both now get great reviews.

What are you going to do with the interior?

Everything is going to be rebuilt – front of house, the restaurant and both bar areas. We're changing the layout of the two bars which will make it cosier.

We're putting in new flooring and new furniture and the kitchen will be completely renovated and brand-new equipment installed.

How about the garden?

The garden is great as it is, but it will have completely new furniture and new decking. We also have plans for the beautiful barn at the back, as well as the children's play area.

We've taken on a gardener who'll be looking after the outside area weekly.

What changes are planned for the façade?

It's all going to be repainted. It looks very tired so we're going to completely refresh it and install hanging baskets.

What are your plans for the restaurant?

The kitchen team is already substantially in place. The team have been with us for many years and are currently based at The Crooked Billet. The head chef, sous chef and kitchen porter will all be moving to The Three Tuns, and we're looking to recruit commis chefs.

We've also recruited a very experienced General Manager who has been in the pub and restaurant trade for many years. He'll be spending time in our other venues before moving to The Three Tuns.

How about the food?

We're very focused on good food. We use locally sourced produce from a butcher and fishmonger in Bedfordshire, and all our vegetables come from Northampton.

We also cater for vegans and vegetarians. And all our staff are trained on what we call the 'allergy guide' so they can deal professionally with any allergies.

Will you be doing bar food as well as the restaurant menu?

We'll be doing bar food, restaurant food and daily specials. We also plan to do Steak Nights where everything on the grill menu will be half price. We do this at Steppingley and Newton Longville so we're looking to do the same at The Three Tuns.

Will there be any new beers on tap?

The main beers will be similar because they are Greene King beers.

In our other pubs, we listen to suggestions from locals and if they ask for specific beers we try and get them in.

Customers are welcome to come to us with any suggestions; not just beers but theme nights or anything they think locals would enjoy.

Taking care of our customers is our aim and that's what we're good at.

What about events - could people hold parties or other celebrations there?

Events are the backbone of our company. At our other venues, we do lots of weddings, celebrations and even wakes. We offer customers lots of different packages. We think this is great for the community.

Your other pubs do Music Nights. Is this planned for The Three Tuns?

Absolutely, yes. We already have our resident singer, Alison Carter, booked in for some events. Alison does soul and jazz nights as well as Sunday afternoon jazz and we're looking to do the same at the Three Tuns.

Will dogs still be allowed?


Yes, we are very dog-friendly at all our venues. At our pub in Newton Longville, we even have horses coming into the huge garden, and riders just knock on the window to order their drinks.

What about the future?

We're leasing from Greene King and have committed to a 10-year contract. Between Greene King and the Black Diamond Pub Company, we're investing substantially because we're committed for the long-term.

Janet Field






A L & G ABBOTT
Funeral Directors
~ Established 1832 ~



WITH YOU WHEN IT MATTERS MOST

A small and independently owned funeral directors who are proud to have served the local community for over 180 years and will continue to do so with the highest standards of care, respect and dignity. We now offer a Bereavement Listening service to our families.

A L & G Abbott is run with family values at the very heart of the business.

- 24 Hour Personal Service
- Private Chapels of Rest
- Funeral Plans
- Home Arrangements



T: 01234 843222

150 Bedford Road, Kempston, Bedfordshire, MK42 8BH
www.abbott-funerals.co.uk support@abbott-funerals.co.uk

Onward with Ernest

Ernest Smith, born in Biddenham on 8th January 1889, was the youngest of the four children of Elizabeth and John Smith, an agricultural labourer.

In 1911 and living in Biddenham with his parents and older sister Emily, Ernest worked as a bookbinder. He married Vera Faulkner in 1925 in Luton and by 1939, still a bookbinder, was living with his family in Dunstable, where he died in 1980.

Binding books wasn't though occupying his time in 1918 when he was included in the Absent Voters' List for the Bedford Division, his qualifying residence being Day's Lane, Biddenham, and his description revealing the reason for his absence: *16503 Pte 7th Beds (P of W)*. There was more in the Bedfordshire Times and Independent of 26th July 1918: *'Pte. Ernest Smith, Beds Regiment, was reported wounded and missing, on April 24th. News has now been received that he is a prisoner of war, with bullet wound in foot and ankle, and in hospital at Darmstadt, Germany.'*

The 7th Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment had left for France on the SS Onward in July 1915, and Ernest, a sniper and scout in the Battalion's C Company, was captured almost three years later, in April 1918. He was held in both the military hospital (Kriegslazarett Abtl 61) in Darmstadt and the Czersk prisoner of war camp (Lager Czersk) in what is now Poland. The camp held mainly Russian PoWs in, it is said, notoriously bad conditions.

The 7th Battalion served entirely in France and Flanders between its arrival in July 1915 and its disbandment in May 1918. It was involved in major battles every year of its service, during the Battles of the Somme, including the Battle of Albert and the storming of the Pommiers Redoubt in 1916, and at the Battle of Arras and at Passchendaele in 1917.

1918 saw the Battalion heavily engaged in the Battle of St Quentin, the Battle of the Avre, and on 24th April in the action at Villers-Bretonneux when Ernest was wounded and captured at Cachy nearby.

The Second Battle of Villers-Bretonneux took place from 24th to 27th April during the German spring offensive to the east of Amiens, and is noted for being the first occasion during which tanks fought against each other. Villers-Bretonneux was a key village on the Western Front, serving as the gateway to Amiens and an important railway junction. Holding the village would give the German Army an open route to Paris.

A week earlier the Germans had bombarded the area by the village with mustard gas causing substantial casualties amongst the Australian troops there. On the evening of 23rd April the Germans fired an artillery barrage, again using mustard gas together with high explosive rounds, and on the morning of 24th April they attacked and took the village.

During the night of 24th/25th April, after an earlier counter attack around noon, the Allies again attacked capturing German positions around the village and then the village itself, which remained in Allied hands to the end of the war.

Ernest is included in the 2012 village history book in a photograph which was taken on Peace Day 1919 of men who had served in the war and survived to return home. He was awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal, his army number, rank, name and regiment being inscribed on the reverse of the 1914-15 Star.

Wondering what had happened afterwards to SS Onward, I discovered a fascinating story and an heroic role in another war.

Before taking troops to France during the Great War, Onward was already very familiar with the channel crossing. Built in 1905 as a ferry for the South Eastern & Chatham Railway Company and operating primarily between Folkestone and Boulogne, her most prestigious



Thanks to John Wainwright on whose Military Bedfordshire Facebook page I first encountered Ernest Smith.

Ernest to France) was the first ship to leave Dover for Dunkirk, and the first ship to complete a round trip, her mission taking some 15 hours. During the return journey she came under fire from German shore batteries, was hit and suffered damage, and was strafed by a Messerschmitt Bf 109, killing 23 on board and wounding 60 others.

She made a second round trip to Dunkirk bringing back a further 1,200 troops, making a total of 2,634 brought home on the two trips. After those epic crossings she continued her war service as either an armoured boarding vessel or an accommodation ship, and was released finally in March 1946. She worked with the Steam Packet fleet for two more years, until being withdrawn from service and broken up in 1948.

I wonder if Ernest ever knew that the ship which took him to France in July 1915 had played such a significant part in Operation Dynamo, the evacuation of troops from Dunkirk, some 25 years later?

Peter Applewhite

Spring Teas at St James's




It was a lovely afternoon on Sunday 8th May and St James's Church Spring Teas was very well attended.

The plant stall was as popular as ever with brisk sales.

Afternoon teas were served in the Church Barn which was decorated with a fine display of commemorative tea towels organised by Hilary Hurn and Trissa Willmott.


Jean Gambold





Peter's Picturehouse In June

Date: Tuesday 7th June 2022
Time: Doors open 7:00pm, Film starts 7:30pm
Location: Biddenham Village Hall



Tickets available
on the door,
price: £5

Certificate: 12A

To join our mailing list, or for further information, send an email to peterspicturehouse@gmail.com

Coming soon...
Tuesday 5th July Spencer (12A)

Peter's Picturehouse

On Tuesday 7th June, we are pleased to be showing the film *Belfast*, which was released in the UK in January 2022.

It was written and directed by Kenneth Branagh from his own experience as a young boy growing up in Belfast and won Best Original Screenplay at the Oscars, being nominated in seven other categories. Included in the cast are Cattriona Balfe, Judi Dench and Jamie Dornan. It is set in 1969 at the start of The Troubles and shows the young boy, Buddy, trying to make sense of the conflict in his working-class neighbourhood.

As always, doors of Biddenham Village Hall open at 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start. We are delighted that people are supporting Peter's Picturehouse on the first Tuesday of each month and we are busy planning our future films. If you would like to be kept in touch with our programme, please do join our email list by sending an email to: peterspicturehouse@gmail.com

The film planned for July is *Spencer* (12A).

Dates for your diary:

Tuesday 7th June Belfast
 Tuesday 5th July Spencer

Rose Houghton

Jubilee Street Parties

Jubilee celebrations

The excitement is building as residents across Biddenham and Great Denham gear up to host street parties with neighbours and friends to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

To mark the Queen's 70 years on the throne, there will be a four-day bank holiday weekend from Thursday 2nd to Sunday 5th June.

If you haven't already planned a party, it's not too late. For tips and ideas on how to organise your street party visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/get-involved/take-part/organise-a-street-party>

Road closures

Several roads in the area will close for street parties. Bedford Borough Council has waived the usual administrative fee for street party road closures.

Remember to submit your request for a road closure via email to: road.closures@bedford.gov.uk so that the council can plan around this.

Photos

Don't forget to send us your favourite street party photos. In the next edition of The Loop, we will be featuring as many of your photos as possible. If you would like your street to be included, please send your best party photos to: loopreporter@gmail.com.

Janet Field



We're cutting the cost of living in retirement!

Make the most of the best years of your life at a beautiful Elderswell property, and we'll give you up to **£50,000*** towards your living costs in your new home. Most of our residents wish they'd moved with us sooner!

So visit us now, make your choice and reserve by the end of June. Don't miss this £50,000 opportunity. Call us today.

Think moving is too much stress? We can help

- We buy your property at 100% of its independent valuation
- Or pay estate agency costs and help you sell your property
 - Pay your panel solicitors fees
 - Pay your removal costs
 - Pay for a downsizing service
- And more!

One and two bedroom apartments from £330,000
 Call us to arrange a visit.

Call 01234 817 753 or visit www.elderswell.co.uk

Elderswell, Station Road, Turvey, MK43 8BH



*Terms and conditions apply. This offer is on selected units and for a limited time only.

Scan here



to visit our website

Biddenham Gardeners Association

Have garden will travel

On Tuesday 17th May we had a good sized socially-distanced audience, including a several new members, to welcome our speaker, Steffi Shields, an accomplished writer, speaker, garden photographer and historic landscape consultant, talking to us primarily about the several house and garden moves she has made over the duration of her long marriage to a gentleman in the Royal Air Force. Naturally, her talk was titled *'have garden, will travel'* and so she did.

The trouble with moving so many times is that she had little chance to put down plans for planting schemes and see them develop; therefore she had to adapt to what was left by the previous occupants, knowing that in possibly a couple of years' time, she would be moving on to pastures new. There was little point in investing in expensive purchases at garden centres, buying a greenhouse or a shed. For the most part, a packet of seeds and cuttings from previous gardens or planting in pots were the best solution.

Life in the Air Force started in Bentley Priory, near Stanmore in London. Steffi mentioned she had a particular liking for blue and yellow flowers, which of course are representative of Air Force colours. She mentioned that in almost every garden they had a periwinkle and additionally they had an abundance of feverfew. Their married quarters consisted of an old house with metal framed windows. There she learned to do plant portraiture and foxgloves were her first attempt in this field. As a tip to budding photographers, Steffi advises that photography is best done on bright, cloudy days when the light is even.

Highly recommended is the *Anthemis Cupaniana*, an evergreen perennial with fine silver frothy foliage and an abundance of daisy like flowers. This is one that Steffi replanted in various gardens. Also highly versatile and a 'good doer' are the *Primula Wanda*, which Steffi said she took on her travels – easy to move and divide.

From Bentley Priory to Bradenham Beeches near High Wycombe (now closed as an RAF base), and then shortly afterward to Northumberland. In the north of England Steffi found her rather windy overgrown garden had at least one peace rose and many other roses besides. She took cuttings here from various existing shrubs and within two years they proved their worth. Steffi mentioned an outstanding nearby garden which she visited, Howick Gardens and this comes highly recommended, where the owner had the foresight to plant a wild meadow effect in the 1980s.

At nearby Alnwick, Steffi discovered Capability Brown and embarked on compiling a photographic archive of his landscapes, which after some 20 years culminated in her book, *'Moving Heaven and Earth: Capability Brown's Gift of Landscape'*.

Back to Stanmore in London during a heatwave, she was nervous about the move and the effect of the weather on her plant pots, which indeed survived. There she had a barbed wire fence in places, which she did her best to disguise with climbers. A friend had given her a lavatera cutting and, within only two years, this had grown to a promising, sizeable shrub. Ground cover was welcomed in the form of *lamium*, which is more interesting for its foliage than the flowers.

There then followed a spell in Aberdeen, in the north east of Scotland, situated on the cliff and near a power station. A surprise came in the form of an abundance of autumn crocus which appeared out of nowhere. Next stop was Lincolnshire where at the age of 50, Steffi planted a tree in the garden for the first time; a silver birch. There she found it hard to make a feature and used pots to good effect. After that they settled in their own property near Grantham, which has been a project over the last 20 years

or so. Her hero or inspirational gardener, if I can call him that, and mentioned at various times, was Geoff Hamilton of Gardeners' World fame in the 1980s and 1990s.

As Steffi said, she no longer has an appetite to move homes and her talk might be better titled, 'have garden, did travel.'

Our next speaker, on 21st June, will be garden historian Russell Bowes speaking on *A Portrait of a Victorian Garden*. Members and visitors are warmly invited. Do please join us.

Josie Duchenne

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



Need some help
with your
trees?

STS
Simply Tree Services

- All aspects of tree maintenance to BS3998
- All hedge work undertaken
- Tree removal and stump grinding

☎ **01234 765 000**
☎ **07866 554 673**

enquiries@simplytreeservices.co.uk
www.simplytreeservices.co.uk

Fully NPTC qualified staff and all work is covered by comprehensive public liability insurance

First Friday Lunch



Soup, sandwich or baked potato,
pudding and a drink,
on the first Friday of every month
in Biddenham Village Hall
from 12.15pm
£8.00

Draw for 2 free lunch tickets every month
Book swap

Numbers limited - booking essential:

email firstfridaylunch@outlook.com
or text/leave a message on **07412 559584**

3rd June, 1st July

No Fear Duplicate Bridge

Biddenham Village Hall Fridays at 2.30pm (intermediate),
Sundays at 6.00pm.

Contact Bernard Henry 07866 456759 or
bahenry0309@gmail.com

100 CLUB April draw

The winners were:

1st	Sam Kumar	149
2nd	Denise Burgess	22
3rd	Steve Gilder	35

Drawn by Maureen Sackett



CORONAVIRUS SUPPORT NETWORK

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



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

Membership
Treasurer

Peter Leverkus
Paul Fricker

Tel: 353662
Tel: 342843

Quilting & Sewing Group



Biddenham Village Hall
10.30 a.m.

Last Friday of each month

Pop in and see what goes on



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

The Church Barn is available for parties, small events and
classes, with a capacity for up to 50 people. Comprising a
main hall, full kitchen use, two toilets, ramp access, baby
changing and disabled facilities. To check availability
contact our Booking Officers via email on
stjamesbarnbiddenham@gmail.com (preferred contact) or

Jane 07831 172320

Rebecca 07769 944727

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.

You can check availability and book on the website
www.biddenhampavilion.co.uk. Contact details for regular
events are also there.

Great Denham Community Hall

www.greatdenhamcommunityhall.co.uk

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

Regular Events in Biddenham Halls

For contact details see the Hall websites

www.biddenhamvillagehall.org.uk

www.biddenhampavilion.co.uk

www.stjamesbiddenham.com

Monday		
Cha Char Chimps	10.00am	Village Hall
Yoga	10.00-11.30am	Pavilion
Gentle Yoga	2.00-3.00pm	Pavilion
Storm Martial Arts	7.00-8.00pm	Pavilion
Guides	7.15pm Termttime	Village Hall
Tuesday		
Over 50s fitness	10.00-11.00am	Pavilion
Caf� B	10.15am-12noon (3 rd in month)	Village Hall
Calm Baby Massage	10.30am	Church Barn
Peter's Picturehouse	7.00 for 7.30pm (1 st in month)	Village Hall
HIT Fitness	7.00-7.30pm	Pavilion
Biddenham Gardeners Association	7.30pm (3 rd in month)	Village Hall
Country Dancing	8.00pm (2 nd & 4 th in month)	Village Hall
Zumba	8.00-9.00pm	Pavilion
Wednesday		
Coffee morning for Ukrainian Community	9.00am	Church Barn
Kensington Ballet	10.00-11.00am	Pavilion
Baby College	10.00am, 11.00am & noon Termttime	Village Hall
Handbell Ringer Practice	2.30pm	Church Barn
Table Tennis	2.00-4.00pm	Pavilion
HIT Fitness	6.30-7.30pm	Pavilion
Adult Yoga	7.00-8.00pm	Village Hall
Thursday		
Under 5's	9.30-11.30am (Termttime)	Village Hall
Line dancing	9.30-11.30am	Pavilion
Oasis	9.30am (1 st & 3 rd in month)	Church Barn
Mum & Baby Movers	1.00pm	Village Hall
U3A Handbell Ringer Practice	2.00pm	Church Barn
Fetch Puppy Club	7.30-8.30pm	Pavilion
Friday		
Pilates	8.30am & 9.30am	Village Hall
Jo Jingles	9.30am-12.30pm	Pavilion
First Friday Lunch	12.30pm (1 st of the month)	Village Hall
Quilting & sewing	10.30am-2.30pm (last of the month)	Village Hall
Brushstrokes Art Group	2.15-4.15pm	Pavilion
No Fear Bridge (intermediates)	2.30pm	Village Hall
Choir Practice	7.00pm	Church Barn
Storm Martial Arts	7.00-8.00pm	Pavilion
Saturday		
Pregnancy Yoga	9.15am	Village Hall
Oakley Football	9.00am-12.30pm	Pavilion Field
Socatots	9.45-11.15am	Pavilion
Lucy Hunt School of Dance	2.00-3.30pm	Pavilion
Sunday		
St James's Explorers	10.00am	Church Barn
No Fear Bridge	6.00-9.00pm	Village Hall
Revive	7.00pm (3 rd in month)	Church Barn

For details of events at Great Denham Community Hall please visit
www.greatdenhamcommunityhall.co.uk

June

- Fri 3 Jun First Friday lunch, Biddenham Village Hall, 12.15pm, see pp1&18
Sun 5 Jun All Age Worship at All Saints, 10.00am
All Age Worship at St James's, 10.00am
Holy Communion at All Saints, 11.15am
 Tue 7 Jun Peter's Picture House, Biddenham Village Hall, 7.00pm, see p16
Sun 12 Jun Said Holy Communion at All Saints, 9.00am
Holy Communion at St James's, 10.00am
Evening Prayer at St James's, 6.00pm
 Sun 12 Jun Badgers Chilli Kitchen BBQ, The Barn, Cardington, see p6
 Sun 12 Jun Friends of Biddenham Pond AGM, Church Barn, 3.30pm, see p7
 Tue 14 Jun Biddenham Parish Council, Pavilion, 7.30pm, see p6
Sun 19 Jun Holy Communion at All Saints, 10.00am
Morning Worship at St James's, 10.00am
Revive: Coffee/Bible/Fellowship, Church Barn, 7.00pm
 Tue 21 Jun Café B, Biddenham Village Hall, 10.15-11.45am, see p11
 Tue 21 Jun Bedford National Trust Association AGM, Addison Centre, Kempston, 2.30pm, see p10
 Tue 21 Jun Biddenham Gardeners Association, Biddenham Village Hall, 7.30pm, see p17
 Fri 24 Jun Quilting & Sewing Group, Biddenham Village Hall, 10.30am, see p18
 Sat 25 Jun Pond dipping, 2.30pm, see p7
Sun 26 Jun Said Holy Communion at All Saints, 9.00am
Holy Communion at St James's, 10.00am
Explorers, Church Barn, 10.00am
 Sun 26 Jun Open Gardens, Church End, 2.00pm-5.00pm, see p1

July

- Fri 1 Jul First Friday lunch, Biddenham Village Hall, 12.15pm, see p18
 Fri 1 Jul Three Tuns reopens, see p14
 Mon 4 Jul Biddenham History Society, Church Barn, 2.30pm, see p5
 Tue 5 Jul Peter's Picture House, Biddenham Village Hall, 7.00pm, see p16
 Tue 19 Jul Café B, Biddenham Village Hall, 10.15-11.45am, see p11

Biddenham Cricket Club fixtures are on page 10

For regular events at the Church Barn, Pavilion and Biddenham Village Hall see page 19

Contributors please note that the next edition will cover both July and August.

Zoom Church Services every Monday & Wednesday

Every Monday at 9.00am Morning Prayer via Zoom.
 Every Wednesday at 6.00pm Virtch, online Zoom service.
 To access Zoom church services enter meeting ID 998 074 6039.

The Loop

Editor	Jean Gambold	loopeditor@gmail.com	Tel 349849
Reporter & Proof Reader	Janet Field	loopreporter@gmail.com	
Advertising	Clare Sugars	loopadverts@gmail.com	Tel 637281
Subscriptions & distribution	Rosemary & Richard Harris	loopsubs@gmail.com	Tel 210434
Church liaison	Laurie Hurn		

All **July/August 2022** articles, preferably by e-mail in Word format, to **loopeditor@gmail.com**
 or to 22 Day's Lane and adverts to **loopadverts@gmail.com**
 by **Wednesday 22nd June 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.