

Village Life

The community magazine for Aston Clinton,
Buckland and Drayton Beauchamp
No.11 Dec-Jan 2012/13



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The Editor is always pleased to
receive local news of people,
clubs and events.

Village Life

The bi-monthly community news magazine for Aston Clinton,
Buckland and Drayton Beauchamp
(formerly The Parish Magazine)

FOR Christians, December 25th is the day to celebrate the birth of someone who has embodied the light and hope of the world for over two thousand years. For others, December marks the end of the old year, bringing with it, in our part of the world, the hopeful expectation of a renewal of the natural cycle of life in the Spring to come. For everyone, this is a time of renewal of hope, despite man's capacity both for depths of wickedness and peaks of greatness. In this issue of **Village Life**, you'll find glimpses of the entire range.

Our sense of awe is inspired by Revd. Downing on page 2 as he contemplates the night sky. On page 5, we learn from Helen Shepherd how the expanding Aston Clinton School community is forging ahead under her enthusiastic leadership.

The comradeship as well as the sacrifices and horrors of war are evoked by the account on page 7 of Terry Rowe's life as a young RAF conscript. He also reminds us of our long neighbourly association with RAF Halton as does Janet Tye on page 12.

Blowing away the cobwebs and filling our lungs with pure Chiltern air is what we are encouraged to do by James Adam on page 11. Those of you fortunate enough to have been in the audience for "Coward at Sea" on November 10th will enjoy reliving the evening via Margaret Ross's evocative review on page 13.

Despite this season of goodwill, we are reminded that the baser side of human nature is ever-present. On pages 15 and 18 we are prompted to recall the old aphorism that the price of freedom (from distress in these cases) is eternal vigilance. Last, but not least, do read Monika's account on page 19 of the less-publicised yet momentous goings-on in China.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Alec Just
Editor

A seasonal message from the Baptist Minister

As winter begins to bear down on us, we are all aware of how much darker and colder the nights have become. Whilst I am not one for cold weather and prefer warmer climes, this time of year is very important to me. It matters because at night the stars shine more brightly, as far as our perception is concerned. I am always amazed at the Universe—galaxies, nebulae, star clusters and even comets. I am reduced to awe and wonder as I look up and see the vastness of it all.

Looking through a decent telescope, especially toward the Milky Way, the numbers of stars that one sees appear innumerable. What is remarkable is that each of them is like our Sun—the sizes and types will change—but each is like our own star. Are you not astonished when you gaze upwards and study the 'macro'?

I was looking only recently at some statistics

about life and the complexity of the DNA molecule. It struck me that even non-Christian scientists admit that life starting by chance, especially considering the levels of intricacy of each living thing, is beyond impossible—although many still hold that it did. The 'micro' of our world also fascinates me.



As a Christian minister, everywhere I look, whether on the macro or micro level, I see design. What is even more stunning is that the Bible informs us in Psalm 8, v4: *"What is man that you [God] are mindful of and care for him?"*

As Christmas approaches these words take on a particular meaning for me, and for many others. God bless you all.

Simon

Revd. Simon Downing
Baptist Minister

Aston Clinton Baptist Church

Church Office Hours

Monday to Thursday 8am–4.30pm

Simon's contact details are:

office 01296 631824; home 631823

Activities for the Young

Weekly Totspot

For people with babies or very young toddlers;

Tues and Thurs 10–12 noon

Activities for Youth

Weekly – in term time

Youth Café: 3–6pm on Wednesday

Youth Group: 7.30–9.30pm on Friday

Monthly

Youth Church: 6pm on 3rd Sunday

Escape: 10.45am on 4th Sunday



St Michael and All Angels

Regular Services:

9.15am and 6pm each Sunday

and Evening Prayer at 7.30pm each Friday

Forthcoming Christmas Events

Date	Time	Event	Location
Sun 2 Dec	6pm	Advent Carols	St Michael's Church
Sun 16 Dec	6pm	Nine Lessons and Carols	St Michael's Church
Fri 21 Dec	9.15am	AC School Carol Service	St Michael's Church
Christmas Eve	5.30pm	Crib Service (younger children)	St Michael's Church
Christmas Eve	7.30pm	Carols by Candlelight	St Michael's Church
Christmas Eve	11.30pm	Midnight Mass	St Michael's Church
Christmas Day	9.15am	Christmas Communion	St Michael's Church

More details about all these events on the church website www.s-michaels.org.uk

'My life as a TV director'

Saturday 26 January 2013

St Michael's Church at 7pm

Carole Peters spent over 20 years onscreen and behind the camera making tv programmes. During that time she has flown around the world and found herself in war zones as well as holiday spots. Along the way she had a host of adventures that included burning planes, land-mines, dressing up as Marilyn Monroe and even dinner with a mass murderer.

She has worked on everything from popular shows like *Changing Rooms* and *Time Team* to award-winning documentaries on a whole range of subjects from serial killers to the Vietnam War. She'll recount some of her hilarious and, at times, hair-raising adventures in aid of the Benefice Churches.

Tickets are available from Marion Richards on **01296 630577** and cost £10 to include a Bring-and-Share Supper.

Keep Aston Clinton tidy and be proud of your village!

The British weather hasn't been too kind this year and for many it has been hard to tend to overgrowing hedges and trees; please be mindful of pedestrians – footpaths and pavements are well used in the village. We kindly ask that you keep your trees and hedges in good order to save those walking past your property having to step out into the road.

Bins are provided in and around the village; any rubbish that is not placed in a bin is unsightly and could cause harm, please pick up all litter and use the bins provided. Any overflowing bins should be reported to the Parish Council who will advise the contractor.

You can contact the Parish Council at: parishcouncil@astonclinton.org.

Thank you.

Claire Hill

Clerk, Aston Clinton Parish Council



Stop the Traffik

St Michael and All Angels Christmas Charity 2012

Stop The Traffik is a global movement fighting to prevent human trafficking. It was set up in 2006 with three basic aims:

1. **To educate** by raising awareness and understanding of human trafficking;
2. **To advocate** by engaging with communities and professionals to create an environment where it is harder to traffic; and
3. **To fundraise.**

It all started in Mumbai in India. A man called Philip Lane worked in a day centre for vulnerable children who live with their families in a railway station in Mumbai. A brother and sister aged nine and seven started visiting the centre. They played, they laughed, they fought – they were children. After a few months they stopped attending.

Becoming concerned, Phil went to the station to ask their father if they were alright. The children had been sold to 'a nice man' offering work for the equivalent of £12.50. They have never been seen since. Mumbai children often disappear. They are kidnapped, sold into prostitution, forced labour, adoption or even child sacrifice.

Of course this is not just an Indian problem. It happens all over the world including here.

What is Human Trafficking? It is being bought or sold against your will – transported into slavery for sexual exploitation, forced begging, sacrificial worship or removal of human organs; as child brides or into circuses, farm labour and domestic servitude. And of course, it's not just children; it's men like the cockle pickers drowned in Morecambe Bay, as well as women, who are trafficked.

Since 2006, **Stop The Traffik** has also been running a campaign which focuses on ending child trafficking in the chocolate industry.

Over a third of the world's chocolate comes from the Ivory Coast in West Africa. Thousands of children from this area, who pick and harvest the beans, have been trafficked. They are forced to work long hours on the cocoa plantations without payment. They are beaten and work in dangerous conditions, using machetes to open the cocoa beans. Through **Stop The Traffik's** campaign and consumer pressure, Cadburys, Nestlé, Mars, Swiss Noir and Verkade now supply us with 'traffik-free' chocolate bars. The next target is to persuade Kraft, the world's largest buyer of cocoa, to produce 'traffik-free' Toblerone. Supermarkets are being called upon to fill their shelves with 'traffik-free' Easter eggs in 2013.

Over the last few months we have been appalled by the discovery of young girls being exploited for sex in South Yorkshire. **Stop The Traffik** works to help communities make their areas harder for traffickers to operate in and hide themselves and their victims.

At St Michael's, the congregation don't send cards to each other but put one collective card on a "Christmas Card Tree" in the church and give the money saved to our chosen charity. It would be wonderful if you could join us.

Tilla Adam 01296 623239





Aston Clinton School

Head: Mrs Helen Shepherd



New opportunities

THIS TERM we have quite a number of new staff in school. These include five new teachers, four new teaching assistants, five new midday supervisors and a post new to the school: a family support worker. This last post is in response to the changing needs of our school community and new expectations from central government.

The government last year gave extra money to schools with children from a service family background or in receipt of free school meals. This money is called the Pupil Premium and is to provide those children with additional support to ensure they make the best progress they can. Nationally, children on free school meals are less successful academically than their peer group. Service families obviously have their own stresses and strains. Often their children do very well academically, but during times of deployment or relocation, the children may need additional support to deal with what is going on. The Pupil Premium is a small amount of money per child, but, for our school, it adds up to a sum enabling us to do something really valuable for many children.

The family support worker role evolved from a need for all our children to achieve as well as they can. Like all schools, we monitor children's progress, but now there is an expectation that we monitor the different groups of children in school such as those eligible for free school meals, specific ethnic groups, service children, etc. So we did, and found that we

had a few vulnerable individuals in some groups who needed more than the provision we had on offer. Sometimes they needed more emotional support to be able to achieve academically. So in the summer term, Mrs Ali Astle was appointed to this new post. She comes from a service background and so fully understands service life—the positive aspects and the challenges. Her remit, however, is a broad one. Children identified in school as falling behind or needing some personalised support are referred to her. Working alongside the class teacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), she targets those areas where the child needs extra support.

Of course we have not stopped there. Part of her remit is to support family members too, so parents of children across the school can talk to her for advice or support. She also runs our new induction programme, undertaken by all children joining the school, other than in reception. It involves regular meetings over the first week or so with Mrs Astle and the completion of a 'passport' which tells everyone in the school about the child. There are also activities to familiarise the children with the school layout—a real challenge this term as it has changed three times since September due to the building work!

We are very excited about this new post as we feel it will benefit our school enormously and all the children who come here.

Helen Shepherd

It's Christmas !!!

There will be no Christmas-bashing from me. I just LOVE all things festive. You will never hear me complain about the shops being full of Christmas decorations in October, or the number of times you hear Slade on the radio during any given day in December. I would eat mince pies all year round if I could. My husband will likely disown me for confessing this but I would illuminate the whole front of my house, complete with an inflatable snowman and

some lit-up, grazing reindeer if I physically could. Luckily for him, I'm rubbish with exterior electrics.

I suppose my love for this holiday season can be credited to a family who have always embraced the spirit of Christmas. From hanging up stockings (my mum filled mine until I had turned thirty) to extending our festive lunch to those we called the 'waifs and strays' – friends who were without a family to spend the day with. Thoughtful gifts, a delicious roast turkey dinner, crackers with silly hats and ALWAYS board games later on where the same accusations of cheating fly, year-in year-out and no-one wants to be on Uncle Nick's team because he's such a sore loser.

So when my children reached toddler age, my younger brothers were genuinely sad to hear that we wouldn't be staying over on Christmas Eve at my parental home. I explained that I wanted to my kids to believe that Santa knows exactly where they live – plus I like using the intermittent light on the house alarm sensor as a warning light: "look, the

light's on, he's watching you NOW!"

The result, of course is that Christmas morning in this house is utter chaos with not nearly enough adults present. We've tried bribing the childless uncles and aunts to come and stay here but strangely they don't much fancy getting up before they've even gone to bed. We've calculated that we need at least seven other adults in the house. One to catalogue presents for thank-you purposes, one per child to be poised with sharp scissors

and/or screwdrivers to break into the packaging of said gifts, another to manage the rubbish/recycling, sorting and disposal and lastly one to make tea. This would allow my husband to take photos whilst consuming the entire contents of a selection

box for breakfast while I ice the Christmas cake and pack the overnight bags.

The car journey will be fraught with over-excited children reaching unacceptable decibels. There will be the inevitable row over the behaviour of said children which will not entirely be helped by me throwing chocolate coins at them in an attempt to buy some quiet. And then Slade will play, causing my husband to explode with rage at the car stereo. At least when we arrive, the requisite number of grown-ups will slowly appear, refreshed and ready to play while we take a step back, catch our breath and reflect on how thankful we are to have survived another year. I can't wait.

Merry Christmas!

Kelly Cornish



Aston Clinton Ladies' Group

Forthcoming events:

19 December Carol Service at St Michael and All Angels at 8pm followed by coffee and mince pies at Janet's

16 January Our annual New Year meal. Venue and time to be advised

If you are interested in joining us please contact Sue Sanders **630740** or Janet Watson **631014**

Another wartime story

In the last issue of **Village Life**, James Adam told us about Peter Proctor, the 17-year-old member of the Aston Clinton 1941 Home Guard platoon. Peter still lives in Aston Clinton, with his wife Evelyn.

Your editor had a phone call, following last month's issue, from someone who had also served in the Aston Clinton Home Guard, but in 1939, two years before Peter Proctor. Intrigued by this further revelation, I went to see ninety-year-old Terry Rowe. He, too, remembers long hours spent in look-out trenches off Aston Hill, by the golf club. Like Peter, he found himself among the older Home Guard volunteers, many of whom were survivors from WW1.

After a few months, and after reaching his 18th birthday in 1940, Terry was conscripted into the RAF, following his father who served in the RAF in India after WW1. Terry was born in India and returned to Halton Camp with his family at the age of two. His father was based there and Terry went to school, first in Wendover and later at the Camp. After his



Terry Rowe, RAF, in 1940

father's demob, the family moved to Aston Clinton. In the RAF, Terry trained as a fitter and armourer and spent the first few years of WW2 stationed at Manston, Kent, with 607 Squadron, in the hazardous work of

arming 90-pound rockets and fitting them to Hurricanes for anti-submarine missions over the English Channel.

In 1944, soon after the D-Day landings, he was posted to France to help with the laying of airstrips to facilitate the Allied advance. He

had many narrow escapes as German planes strafed the new airstrips as they were being laid. Through 1944 and early 1945, Terry's squadron advanced through France and into Belgium and Holland. Stationed at an airfield near Eindhoven, he lost a close friend at this time. During an enemy attack his friend decided to sprint across the airfield to get something from a hut. He was killed outright by enemy cannon fire.

On another occasion at Eindhoven airfield, he recalls how a damaged Hawker Typhoon fighter-bomber was returning from a mission at dusk when a tyre burst as the pilot attempted to land. The aircraft cartwheeled into a building and exploded in a ball of fire. The heat was so intense that it was impossible for anyone to get to the pilot. The memory of that horrific experience remains with him to this day. Remember, Terry was still only a 22-year-old young man at that time.

At the end of the war, in 1945, Terry and his comrades were invited by the Danish

government to enjoy a few weeks of rest and recuperation in Denmark in recognition of the debt Denmark felt to the RAF for its part in the liberation of their country. Eventually, Terry was demobbed from the RAF and returned to Aston Clinton in



Terry Rowe today

1946. He worked for a while in a building partnership with a friend and later for the AVDC Building Department helping to maintain the Council's houses. He lives with his wife Doreen in Aston Clinton, opposite Peter Proctor!

Alec Just

Aston Clinton, Buckland & Drayton Beauchamp

Horticultural Society

ANOTHER gardening year is coming to a close and again it has been very challenging because of the weather. But then we gardeners always complain and looking back, what is normal?

When I came to Aston Clinton looking for a place to live we were going through a long drought with big cracks in our lawns and some years ago there was an article in the RHS magazine saying that winters were going to be drier and the summers more unsettled.

This year we had a very dry cold spring when the fruit did not pollinate well and crops in fields suffered badly. The period of drought led to hosepipe bans but then the heavens opened and we had a wet summer with lack of sun to make the plants grow. For me this meant that the sweet peas that I germinated in pots would not grow when planted out.

Our Chairman reported that the Society is thriving with numbers at our meetings increasing.

Runner beans reacted similarly but came on later so that we did not start cropping until September and were still picking in October when usually I have pulled them all out. My garden peas did not fare much better but I think the pigeons got at them. In the end I got one picking from them.

My dahlias also suffered from slow growth such that I was only able to enter one class at our August show because none of the others had flowered! In October, I had a fine display of flowers until the frosts came. Perhaps the worst thing was the potato blight that we all suffered from. I thought I had escaped the worst until my harvested potatoes started smelling and rotting. Now the professionals are unfairly blaming we amateurs for spread-

ing the disease! I had reports from others of tomato blight, but fortunately, I escaped though I only managed five ripe tomatoes for the show. I am glad to say they won a prize.

However it is not all doom and gloom and I had a good show of annuals and perennials in my garden. My trees have continued to grow well as have the Society trees in Aston Clinton Park. The Parish Council are planning to sow wild flower seeds in this meadow.

Coming up, we have our **Christmas talk on Wednesday 12 December** at the Anthony Hall at 8pm. Our speaker, Russell Bowes, will talk about the A-Z of garden history. This is followed by our Christmas buffet. Visitors are welcome at £2 per head though we would hope you will join the Society for £5 per year. Next year's programme has not been finalised, but by then we hope to have our own website up and running.

Our Annual General Meeting was well attended. Our President, Mrs Lorna Price, was in attendance. Our Chairman, Sue Lipscomb, reported that the Society was thriving; that our Spring and Summer Shows were successful; and that the numbers at our monthly meetings were increasing. Thanks were expressed to our Officers and Committee and other volunteers for their hard work during the year. Interest in our Society is spreading and we have now people coming from Tring. Our AGM was followed by a very interesting talk by Jill Carey. Her subject was 'Verges from a Vehicle' and she showed some wonderful pictures taken from the roadside of plants and wildlife. How she remembered all the names, I really don't know.

Ralph Weston

* * *

Mail or email?

Please let me know if you do NOT want to receive a hard copy of the Society's quarterly newsletter and we'll just deliver it by email. My email address is: dianekolonko@f2s.com

Diane Kolonko

Christmas Thoughts ...

from the December 1915 Parish Magazine

“EVERY YEAR, in our Christmas number, we have wished our readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Here we are on the eve of Christmas Day, and find it hard to pen that greeting. Somehow, it seems to strike a wrong note. Say what we will, this is a heart-searching Christmas for us all; for many a home it is a sad one, with so many hearts sore with bereavement, so many torn with anxiety. Yet the Christmas bells will ring as usual, and we shall have our carols.

“Here are two voices speaking to us within our own hearts; one all but hushed through tears, bidding us stop the old Christmas greeting and mirth. The other, a clear voice full of comfort and hope, and these its words: ‘Fear not, sorrow not on Christ’s birthday. Trust Him, be of good courage, and He will turn your darkness into light, man’s war and hatred into peace and goodwill. Quench not the old greeting: A joyful Christmas to you all!’ Which of the two voices shall we heed?”

Those words were written in December 1915 and, of course, refer to the suffering of the First World War. However, in December 2012 there are still men and women far from home in conflict situations. It will also be a worrying Christmas for many families struggling to make ends meet in the financial climate affecting us all.

On a lighter note, the following extract from the January 1906 magazine may make you smile. The article was saying that the number of weddings in Aston Clinton Church was down during the previous year.

“Perhaps our young people share the opinion of a little girl who, on being asked by her Bishop what matrimony was, answered: ‘A state of terrible torment, which those who enter it are compelled to undergo for a time to prepare them for a brighter world.’ ‘No, no,’ remonstrated her parish priest, that is purgatory.’ ‘Leave her alone,’ said the Bishop. ‘Maybe she’s right.’”

Tilla Adam

‘Be bright, be safe and be seen’

CHILDREN and others who walk or cycle to school or work on these dark mornings and evenings are encouraged to ‘Be bright, be safe, and be seen’.

Tips on how to be bright and be seen include:

- ◆ Wear brightly coloured or fluorescent clothing as it shows up well in daylight and at dusk;
- ◆ Wear reflective clothing if out after dark to ensure you can be seen in car headlights;

- ◆ Clip-on reflectors, arm bands and stickers on clothes or school bags improve visibility;
- ◆ Cross at pedestrian crossings whenever you can;
- ◆ If you are walking in a poorly lit area, it is safer to carry a torch.



For more information about School Travel Planning, visit the website:
www.schooltravellingplanning.com

Please mention *Village Life* when responding to advertisers

Sports and Social Club reborn as 'The Hub'

ASTON CLINTON based Gary Brennan and his family have come to the rescue of the old Sports and Social Club facility in Aston Park. Much-needed investment has transformed the building, both inside and out. Now re-named "The Hub", it offers refreshment and dining facilities to local residents and park users in an unrivalled setting looking out over Aston Park and the countryside beyond.

The Hub represents an important new addition

to the leisure amenities available locally.

Gary's son Ben is also fully involved in the venture. Readers of **Village Life** will recall that last year we featured skier Ben in his quest to represent GB in the 2014 Winter Olympics in



Ben Reid

Moscow. Sadly, recurrent injury has forced him to retire prematurely at international level from his beloved sport.

The Hub has ambitious plans to become the hub of social and business life for the local community. A new venue, where local people can pop in for anything from a cooked breakfast, a morning coffee, an evening drink to a Sunday roast, can only enhance the range of amenities on offer in Aston Clinton.

Ben told **Village Life** that the work involved in transforming the old Sports and Social Club premises into the stylish Hub was completed in only ten days! It's well worth a visit. For more details, see their advert on p.22. Also, visit www.TheHubAstonClinton.co.uk

RAF Association Aylesbury and Halton Branch

Meetings held in Building 259 at RAF Halton on first Wednesday in every month at 7.30 for 8pm. Bar also open every Thursday and Saturday evening 7.30-11pm.

For further information please contact :

Ray Mockford on 07771 591 586 or

Derf Mockford on 07775 664 064.

Family Information Service

A revamped user-friendly website has been launched to provide information on a wide range of subjects – from Ofsted-registered childcare providers, nursery admissions, schools and colleges to leisure activities and events for families. The website also includes information for children's centres, young people, parents and carers.

According to Bucks CC, the new website,

www.bucksfamilyinfo.org is packed with more than 3,000 new entries, has improved searching facilities, has a modern look and feel, and is easier for people to use.

Mike Appleyard, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills says: "We are very proud to be relaunching this important service and hope that families, parents and carers find our new revamped website a useful and helpful resource. If you haven't had a look for a while, take a look, we think you'll be impressed!"

If you are the chairperson or secretary of a local club or society, **Village Life** is your platform to tell the rest of us what you are doing. Active local voluntary organisations catering for a wide spread of interests are a sure sign of a thriving and healthy community. Share the good news! To get something in the February issue, email the Editor at: alec.just@btinternet.com

A Water, Water Walk

A walk along canals and around reservoirs. All on the level and measuring 5½ miles and taking 2½ hours.

Park at or walk to the canal bridge near Drayton Beauchamp church. Follow the footpath sign turning east along the canal footpath. After one mile the footpath turns away from the canal to a six-bar gate leading onto Little Tring Road. Turn right and in 12 yards cross the road to a gap in the hedge (signposted 'Footpath').

After 200 yards the path joins a track. Turn left over a low stile and follow the footpath on the left. Very soon you will pass a hide where birds on the Tringford Reservoir can be observed. Follow the path round the reservoir until it comes out onto Tringford Road. Cross this road with great care (it's on a nasty bend) and go left down some steps to the path leading round Startop's End Reservoir and Nature Reserve. When you reach the Car Park at Startop's End you can have a break either at the Angler's Retreat Pub or at the Bluebell Café.

Alternatively, you can carry straight on around the reservoir until it meets the Grand Union Canal towpath. Carry on along this path for 1.3 miles until you reach the bridge at

the junction with the Wendover Arm. Cross the bridge and then double back under it to come onto the Wendover Arm tow path. After 1,000 yards (0.9 km), the towpath rises to Tringford Road. Turn right over the bridge and immediately left back onto the towpath.

At bridge number three do not continue on the towpath (it's an unmarked dead-end!) but climb up to Little Tring Road and turn right down past the cottages and up the slight hill for 400 yards to the six-bar gate on the left. Cross the road, rejoin the Wendover Arm towpath and walk the last mile back to Drayton Beauchamp Bridge.

I did this walk on 1st November. Members of the Wendover Arm Trust were busy digging out and lining one stretch of the canal. I was told it would take another two years before they reached Drayton Beauchamp.

Our three villages are among those that are furthest from the sea anywhere in England. In a few years' time we may be able to take our boats to the sea not only via the Aylesbury Arm of the Grand Union Canal but also the Wendover Arm by a circuitous route all the way to the Thames and the sea! *James Adam*

More Pot-Shots

by *Ashleigh Brilliant*

Ashleigh Brilliant is a self-styled epigrammist who invents humorous and philosophical phrases in 17 words or less.



Royal British Legion Branch

Since my last article in Village Life, our Branch has been out and about again. As well as our usual meetings in The Hub (formerly the Aston Clinton Sports and Social Club), we have been privileged to have had two meetings at RAF Halton. The first was in Halton House, followed by an interesting walk round the house with Trixie, our guide from the Heritage Trust. She told us some of the history of the house and how the RAF came to be in residence. Our second meeting was in September in one of the conference rooms, due to the Sports Club being refurbished. The Commanding Officer very kindly gave us permission to hold our usual branch meeting.

On the 7th August, nine members including guests, together with our President, Paul Crook, attended one of the fortnightly graduation parades at RAF Halton. This Graduation was No 485 Course – Thompson Intake, named after Flight Sergeant George Thompson (9 Squadron) who died on the 21st January 1945 at the age of 24, from injuries sustained during a daylight attack on the Dortmund-Ems Canal on the 1st January 1945 when hit by enemy shell fire. He saved the lives of his crew, although badly burned by the fire himself, and died of his injuries three weeks later. He sacrificed his own life to help his crew. He was posthumously honoured for his bravery. Unfortunately, one other crew member also died later from his injuries.

Thirty-four airmen and airwomen paraded before the reviewing officer, Group Captain Richard Fogden and eight of the intake were awarded special prizes for outstanding achievements in their particular field. We were given lunch in one of the messes, had a look round the Trenchard Museum and our photograph was taken by the official photographer. In all, a very enjoyable day.

On Sunday, 16th September, 19 members including guests, attended the RAF Battle of Britain Service at Westminster Abbey in the presence of the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall, together with many war widows, retired RAF personnel and other distinguished guests. Some of us had not been inside Westminster Abbey before and most of us had never before attended a Battle of Britain Service.

Many of our members attended the Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial on this year's gloriously sunny Remembrance Sunday, 11th November.

If you require any further information or wish to become a member, please get in touch with the Secretary: Mrs Janet Tye on **01296 434866** or e-mail: tye154@btinternet.com

Our meetings are usually held on the second Tuesday of every month, except January, at The Hub commencing at 7.30pm.

Janet Tye

Can you help?

Aston Clinton Luncheon Club meets at the Anthony Hall on Wednesdays between 12 and 2pm. This popular and successful club is much appreciated by all those who attend. As well as a delicious meal, it is also an enjoyable social occasion. The club can only exist with the generous support of our teams of volunteers.

At present we are in urgent need of a driver and also of someone to help move and put away the chairs. It only requires two hours of your time once a month and yet provides an enormous amount of pleasure to many people.

If you are interested in helping, please contact Marion Richards on **01296 630577**.

Coward at Sea

On November 10, over 100 people made their way to the Anthony Hall in Aston Clinton to enjoy what was described as a nautical musical comedy based on Noël Coward's narrative poem *P&O 1930* presented by Michael Lunts, a longstanding performer with Theatre in the Villages. The evening was introduced by Jeannette Baxter, co-ordinator of Theatre in the Villages, a rural touring scheme founded 14 years ago and consisting of a partnership of Aylesbury Vale District Council, Wycombe District Council and South Buckinghamshire District Council. This performance of *Coward at Sea* was organised by Drayton Beauchamp residents David and Helen Lonsdale and was the last of the season for Michael Lunts.

Michael, an accomplished and experienced singer, pianist and actor, held his audience spellbound from the start. Like the wandering minstrels of old, he travels with his "ship in his car" as he tours from one venue to another. With a few well-placed props – a lifebelt, a brass gong, a wooden travel trunk, and assorted hats, jackets and so on – he invited us to observe and delight in the goings-on aboard the *SS Madeira* as she sailed from Shanghai to Tilbury. There were even bugles, foghorns and the grating American whine of Georgina whose hen-pecked husband Horace laments the lack of clout to which a size-thirteen collar and size-three shoes will always condemn him.

In a seamless performance, Michael played the piano (without ever needing to look at the keyboard), sang, recited and presented pen pictures of some of the passengers who might have found themselves spending long weeks together on such a ship. Michael's ability to present such a diverse cast of characters in quick succession by changing only an item of

clothing or his position on stage showed him for the accomplished professional that he is. One minute we were introduced to Colonel Wintringham whose air of military correctness is rather undermined by his visit to "Singapore Sue". The next minute he was painting a sad picture of poor elderly Mrs McCoomber who has nothing left but her memories and who dies on board ship. The fully engaged audience listened intently, laughed and applauded. There were some familiar songs and some not, all presented with crystal-clear enunciation so that every nuance and clever rhyme could be savoured to the full.



Photo: David Lonsdale

The evening illustrated beautifully a village hall being put to its ideal use as the setting for an occasion which brings local people together for entertainment and socialising. Neighbours and friends met to share an excellent performance by Michael Lunts and to catch up with each other's news during the interval over refreshments provided, appropriately for a local event, by local caterers John and Evelyn Seaton. Who needs to travel to London or Oxford when we can have such thoroughly enjoyable evenings on our own doorstep?

Margaret Ross

All Saints' Church, Buckland

Regular Services:

8am Holy Communion each Sunday

11am Morning Worship – First and Third Sundays

6pm Choral Evensong – Fourth Sunday each month

10am Midweek Communion each Wednesday



Forthcoming Christmas Events

Date	Time	Event	Location
Sun 2 Dec	4pm	Christingle Service	All Saints' Church
Fri 14 Dec	7.30pm	Christmas Film Night – 'Hugo'	All Saints' Church
Sun 16 Dec	11am	Advent Carols	All Saints' Church
Christmas Eve	4pm	Carols around the Crib	All Saints' Church
Christmas Day	8am	Holy Communion and Carols	All Saints' Church

More details about all these events on the church website www.allsaintsbuckland.org.uk

Parish Council Meetings

The next meetings are scheduled to be held at Buckland Hall on Mondays 10 December, 14 January and 11 February. Meetings are held in the Committee Room and begin at 7.45pm sharp. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

Speed limit through village

Buckland Parish Council has made enquiries about the possibility of a 20mph speed limit through the village. Bucks CC is still awaiting the outcome of Dept of Transport's guidance on 20mph speed limits before finalising their own policy on the same issue.

Church Christmas decorations

Decorating for Christmas this year will be on Saturday 22 December from 10am. The theme will be yellow flowers with greenery, gold baubles and gold-sprayed seed heads, cones etc. All donations welcome along with anyone who would like to help. Thank you. *Frances*

Buckland Village Hall

Buckland Village Hall is available to hire. To make bookings, please contact Paula Graves on **01296 630310**

Buckland PC planning list

Decisions made by AVDC and current as of 5 November 2012

New applications

12/01368/APP – 226 London Road, Aston Clinton. Conversion of loft with new dormer to rear and roof extension.

Householder approved

12/01595/APP – 224 London Road, Aston Clinton. Erection of detached bungalow and garage – amendment to previously approved scheme ref 09/01304/APP. *Approved*

12/01511/APP – 61 Buckland Road. Two storey and first floor side extension, single storey front porch extension and detached garage/workshop to rear. *Decision pending*

12/01597/APP- Murray Cottage Main Road Buckland. Alterations to roof line to provide first floor accommodation. *Approved*

12/01919/APP - Icknield House, Tring Hill, Buckland. Extension to existing 4-car garage block to provide storage at first floor level; demolition of timber frame garages and erection of replacement 3-car garage, demolition of garden machinery store and erection of replacement store and erection of new 2-car garage. *Decision pending*

12/01598/APP - 41 Buckland Road, Buckland. Two storey extension. *Decision pending*

Amendments

12/01597/APP - Murray Cottage, Main Road, Buckland. Amendment - Alterations to velux windows. *Approved.*

Thank you

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who attended David's funeral in August. Also for all the cards, messages, flowers and donations, both in memory of David and for the Memory Walk which Naomi, Sophie and I took part in for the Alzheimer's Society in September. We raised over £500 for the walk and donations in memory of David amounted to over £400. We are all very grateful for everyone's kindness and generosity.

Jane Preskett and Family

A nasty con-trick

A READER who wishes to remain anonymous reports a nasty experience she suffered at the hands of a clever con-man in Tesco's car park at Tring.

"On Saturday 29th September I went to Tesco's in Tring and paid for my shopping with my credit card. When I was putting my bags in the boot of my car I was approached by a man who pointed down to the ground and asked, in what I took to be an East European accent, if I had dropped the £10 note which was lying on the ground. I told him that it was not mine. He insisted that I check my "roll", as he referred to my purse.

"I took my purse/wallet from my handbag and it displayed my cards - my bank notes were in the pocket behind my cards. He then asked me where the nearest hospital was as his wife was expecting a baby. I thought that was a strange question in the circumstances.

"The next day I looked in my purse for a stamp only to find that both my Visa and

Mastercards were missing. I immediately telephoned Natwest Bank who put a stop on both cards. The man had already taken a few thousand pounds from my credit card account. I also reported the matter to the police and Tesco's.

"The man must have taken my cards when I opened my purse/wallet which had been in my hands at all times. I was totally unaware of what he had done. It must have been a very clever sleight-of-hand.

"It appears that my PIN number had been noted by the man or his accomplice whilst I was at the till inside Tescos.

"Fortunately my lost money was refunded by the credit card company."

* * *

The lesson to be drawn from this very unpleasant experience is to ensure that you always cover your fingers from prying eyes when tapping in your PIN number, whether shopping or at a cash point.

St Mary the Virgin, Drayton Beauchamp

Regular Services:

10.45am each Sunday

6pm Evening Worship each Monday



Forthcoming Christmas Events

Date	Time	Event	Location
Sun 2 Dec	10.45am	Advent Carols	St Mary's Church
Sun 23 Dec	4pm	A Celebration of Christmas	St Mary's Church
Christmas Day	10.45am	Christmas Communion	St Mary's Church

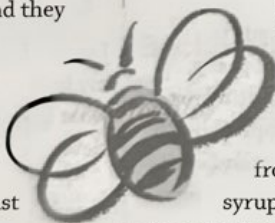
More details about these events on the church website www.s-marys.org.uk

Beekeeping update

THE Drayton Bee-champ Bees are going great guns following a rather soggy start to their foraging year. Bucks County Councillor, Bill Chapple very kindly gifted a donation which has enabled the Parish to buy a hive and I was able to spend the wet early spring days hammering it together and painting it duck egg green. I picked up a nucleus of bees from the Bucks Beekeepers Association and they were installed in the new hive in late June. As June was still rather damp they were fed a sugar solution via a bucket feeder inside their hive to keep them fed on those days when they couldn't fly (June, July & August being their main foraging months).

The farmhouse cottage garden has been alive with bees ever since and they have taken advantage of the clover out in the pasture. In preparation for the warmer weather we planted the walled garden with borage which the bees located very quickly. Borage has

many health giving qualities and their very pretty blue flowers provide a constant supply of nectar. The bees have been swarming all over them since they first started to flower. In addition to our farm bees we have observed every other type of bee including vast numbers of bumble bees busily going about their business amongst the flowers.



Because they are a new hive of bees, every drop of honey they store in the hive will be needed to keep the colony fed through this coming winter (if I take it from them and substitute sugar syrup, as a new growing colony their chances of survival are not as good). Sadly this means that the honey crop will not be until next year. However, as we already have another hive on the farm from last year there will be some honey for the Parish when the time comes to remove any excess from them.

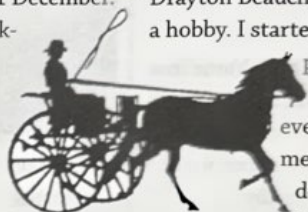
James Mawson

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WHEN RESPONDING TO OUR ADVERTISERS**

Pony Express 2012

THE PONY EXPRESS will start to deliver Christmas cards in Drayton Beauchamp and Buckland during the week of 17-21 December. I will do a final delivery on the week-end of 22nd/23rd.

Cards can be left at my house, The Dray House, Drayton Beauchamp, or with Peter and Janet Elwin at The Old Plough in Buckland. Please get cards to me or to Janet and Peter by Friday 21st at the very latest. I will do my final sorting on Friday evening and you will understand that it makes it really difficult if people come with bundles of cards just as I am setting out. Please put the surname and house name or number on the



envelope. As usual, any donations will be divided between an equestrian charity and a human one.

For those new to the Pony Express I live in Drayton Beauchamp and drive small ponies as a hobby. I started delivering my own cards by pony trap. Then I thought it would be nice to do it for everyone. Most people who leave me cards also leave a charity donation but I do the deliveries for fun.

Erica Godman (630066)

Editor's note: Our front cover photo shows Erica and her Pony Express ready to take Father Christmas (Ralph Weston) on his rounds. *Photo by Hilary Weston.*

Have you ever considered foster-caring?

AT the end of September, there were almost 400 children and young people in the care of Bucks County Council.

It's a sad fact that many children, through no fault of their own, cannot live with their families, either in the short term or permanently. Local foster carers are critical to the welfare of Buckinghamshire's most vulnerable children and young people, as it enables them to stay close to their communities so they can maintain vital links with family and friends, and remain in their school.

There is a desperate need for new foster parents including ones that can take on sibling sets so they don't have to be separated. Foster parents come from a variety of backgrounds. They can be single, married, divorced, widowed or even an extended family. As well as training, carers receive high-level support and guidance.

If you are interested and would like to know more, contact Keith Francis, Head of Children's Care Services, at County Hall, Walton Street,

Aylesbury, Bucks HP20 1UA.

Telephone: **0845 3708090**



Additional trustees sought for local nursing home

The Leonard Pulham Nursing Home at Halton is well-rated by the Care Quality Commission. Currently the Home has two vacancies on its Board of Trustees. In particular, they are looking for people with professional backgrounds in finance, law, and allied disciplines.

If you are interested, see advert on page 24



Leonard Pulham
Nursing Home

Cunning scammers

RECENTLY, I had a phone call from someone who said that he was from "Express Couriers" asking if I was going to be at home because there was a package for me. The caller said that the delivery would arrive at my home in roughly an hour. Sure enough, about an hour later, a delivery man turned up with a beautiful basket of flowers and wine. I was very surprised since it did not involve any special occasion or holiday, and I certainly didn't expect anything like it. Intrigued about who would send me such a gift, I enquired as to who the sender was. The delivery man replied that he was only delivering the gift package, but a card was being sent separately (the card has never arrived!). There was also a consignment note with the gift.

He then went on to explain that because the gift contained alcohol, there was a £3.50 "delivery charge" as proof that he had actually delivered the package to an adult, and not just left it on the doorstep to be stolen or taken by anyone.

This sounded logical and I offered to pay him cash. He then said that the company required the payment to be by credit or debit card only so that everything is properly accounted for.

My husband, who, by this time, was standing beside me, pulled his wallet out of his pocket with the credit/debit card, and 'John' the "delivery man", then asked my husband to swipe the card on a small mobile card machine which had a small screen and keypad where Frank was also asked to enter the card's PIN and security number. A receipt was printed out and given to us.

To our horrible surprise, between Thursday and the following Monday, £4,000 had been



charged/withdrawn from our credit/debit account at various ATM machines, particularly in the London area!

It appeared that somehow the mobile credit card machine which the delivery man carried now had all the info necessary to create a dummy card with all our card details, copied after my husband swiped our card and entered the requested PIN and security number.

Upon finding out about the illegal transactions on our card, of course we immediately notified the bank which issued us the card, and our credit/debit account had been closed.

We also personally went to the Police, where it was confirmed that it is definitely a scam because several households have

been similarly hit.

WARNING: Be wary of accepting any "surprise gift or package", which you neither expected nor personally ordered, especially if it involves any kind of payment as a condition of receiving the gift or package. Also, never accept anything from someone you do not personally know or there is no proper identification of the sender.

Above all, the only time you should give out any personal credit/debit card information is when you yourself initiated the purchase or transaction!

There is a new and clever credit card scam. Be wary of those who come bearing gifts. This account is from one of our readers.

The Christian Church in China

How Jesus is making a difference ...

My active interest in the growth of the Christian Church in China received a significant impetus recently when I was able to spend a week with someone directly involved with the indigenous church there. The growth of the Chinese Christian Church is one of the most exciting developments in the history of Christianity and it is particularly stirring against the backdrop of the generally declining membership throughout the Western Church in the context of its increasing secularisation. Napoleon is quoted as saying once: 'China – let it sleep, for when it wakes it will move the world'.

“... there are already more Chinese at church on a Sunday than in the whole of Europe.”

The Radio 4 series 'God in China' in September 2011 reported that the numbers of Christians are exploding and that there are already more Chinese at church on a Sunday than in the whole of Europe.

Initially there was rapid growth in the rural areas but now educated intellectuals are increasingly embracing Christianity as the country faces a serious moral crisis with increasing affluence and materialism. There is a spiritual vacuum as communist ideology with its promotion of atheism is declining.

Another revolution is sweeping across China 35 years after the Cultural Revolution. Ironically, the very movement that sought to destroy faith has actually provided the infrastructure which has greatly facilitated the explosive growth of the Christian faith.

Similar to the Roman roads and the Greek language at New Testament times, the communist government constructed railways,

roads and airports through which indigenous evangelists can more easily access every part of the country and they introduced Mandarin as China's official language replacing the many local dialects which greatly enhances the communication of the gospel. It is no longer considered a means of Western imperialism, but as one Chinese Christian expressed it: 'in the first place Jesus is relevant to me as a human being and then as a Chinese'.

When communism took over in 1949 all western missionaries were expelled from the country and the government kept close control over the registered churches. Attempts to eradicate all religion drove most of the Church underground where it started to grow rapidly, yet at the cost of many experiencing imprisonment and torture. Estimates suggest that there are now between 80 and 100 million believers (both Protestant and Catholic) in both registered churches and illegal house churches (against 700,000 in 1949) with further growth continuing ('it spreads like wildfire', was my friend's comment).

A four-part documentary can be found under 'The Cross – Jesus in China' (video on Google).

Find out how Jesus can make a difference in your life this Christmas by attending one of the services held in our village churches. Or find out more in the informal setting of an Alpha course (www.alpha.org) or by exploring the websites www.lookingforgod.com and www.bethinking.org

May God bless you and keep you this Christmas and throughout the New Year.

Monika Faranda Bellofiglio

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Useful telephone numbers

<i>Name</i>	<i>Contact/Line status</i>	<i>Telephone no.</i>
1st Aston Clinton Brownies	Tracey Howe	01296 630099
2nd Aston Clinton Brownies	Cheryl Muirhead	01296 630827
Amersham Hospital		01494 434411
Anthony Hall (Bookings Sec)	Valerie Owen	01296 630303
Aston Clinton Badminton Club	Maureen Davison	07958 479690
Aston Clinton Baptist Church	Simon Downing	01296 631824
Aston Clinton Parish Council	Claire Hill	01296 631269
Aston Clinton School	Helen Shepherd	01296 630276
Aston Clinton Sports & Social Club		01296 631818
Aston Clinton U3A	John Bullard	01296 436403
Aston Clinton Youth Club	Brian Churchill	01296 630142
Aston Park Tennis Club	Luanda Bury	01296 630169
Aston Wine Club	Penny Ginger	01296 630383
Ballet, Tap and Jazz Classes	JoAnn Latus	07800 518654
Ballroom Dancing	Yvonne Domican	01296 630467
Baptist Church Hall	Jo Drury	07813 106205
Beavers, Cubs and Scouts	Hilda Higenbottom	01296 632586
Bowls Club	Rosemary Stratfull	01296 631339
Buckland Bridge Club	Viv Barton	01296 630776
Buckland Village Hall (Bookings Sec)	Paula Graves	01296 630310
Buckland Parish Council	Christine Jensen	01296 626073
Buckland Society	Kelly Cornish	01296 632119
Childline		0800 1111
Citizens Advice Bureau		0870 126 4056
Cricket Club	Mike Parsonage	01296 631788
Crimestoppers		0800 555 111
Dentists' Surgery		08443 756336
Dial-a-Ride		01296 330088
Doctors' Surgery		01296 630241
Drayton Beauchamp Parish Meeting	Meryl Nodes	01296 630396
Electricity emergency		0800 7838 838
Environmental Health	Out of hours	01296 585093
Environmental Health	Helpline	01296 585605
Fly tipping	Hotline	0845 330 1856
Football: Aston Clinton FC	Mark Foster	07831 765738
Football: Aston Park FC	Ken Workman	01296 631504
Football: AC Colts	Ray Lucas	01296 630076
Gas emergency		0800 111 999
Green Park Life Saving Assocn	John Lessingham	01296 622613

Name	Contact/Line status	Telephone no.
Guides	Sue Wall	01296 632142
High Wycombe Hospital		01494 526161
Highways on Call	9am – 5pm	0845 230 2882
Highways on Call	Out of hours	01296 486630
Horticultural Society	Maureen Ridler	01296 633376
John Radcliffe Hospital		01865 741166
Ladies Group	Irene Wharton	01296 630195
<i>Local Councillors:</i>		
Bucks County	Bill Chapple OBE	01296 426814/382095
Aylesbury Vale District	Carole Paternoster	01296 630710/585717
Aylesbury Vale District	David Thompson	01296 425656
Aylesbury Vale District	Phil Yerby	07769 621507
Luncheon Club	Marion Richards	01296 630577
Marsworth Pre-School Group		07506 179658
MP for Aylesbury	David Lidington	020 7219 3432
Neighbourhood Watch Administrator	Helen Thomas	01296 396262
Neighbourhood Watch, Buckland	Edwin Domican	01296 630467
NHS Direct		0845 4647
Old Friends	Selly Clarke	01296 630207
Police	Non emergency	0845 8505505
Pre-School	Anna Fryer	01296 632369
RAF Association (local branch)	Selly Clarke	01296 630207
RAF Halton (Mon-Fri)	0800–1700hrs	01296 656367
RAF Halton	At all other times	01296 656211
Rector	Revd Elizabeth Moxley	01296 632488
Royal British Legion	Janet Tye	01296 434866
SSAFA Forces Help	Ann Smith	01296 631030
Stoke Mandeville Hospital		01296 315000
Tot Spot (Baptist Church)	Nicky Downing	01296 631824
Trading Standards		0845 4040506
Veterinary Centre		01296 630600
Women's Institute	Anne Floyd	01296 434372

Any error or omission in this list should be notified to the Editor

Police information

The Police Community Support Officers who have been assigned to the area are Mandy Aplin and Christina Pringle. Wendover Police Station is open to the public: Monday to Friday, 9am–1pm. The non-emergency number is 0845 8505505.

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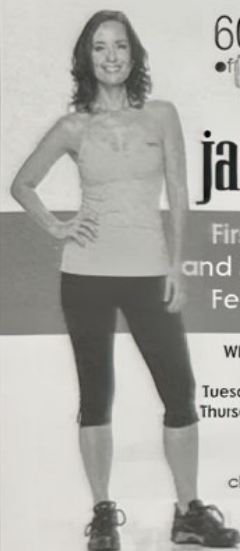
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**This second half of Village Life
is packed with information
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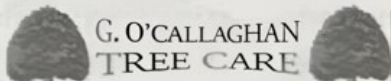
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

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