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FREE

CLOPHILL SPOTLIGHT

DECEMBER 2014



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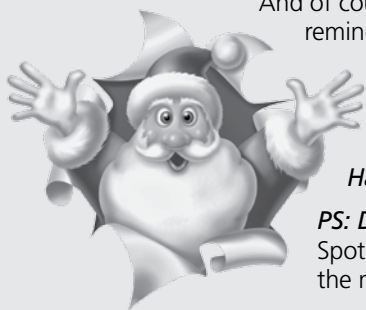


A word from the Editor...

Hello everybody...

Well, the countdown to Christmas has begun! If you read nothing else in Spotlight this month, flick to the 'Diary' page to check out all the fantastic festive events going on in and around Clophill.

One thing I never miss out on is the **annual carol singing** at the Stone Jug. In fact, I'm already gargling in anticipation. The Hitchin Brass Band will be there, and all singers will be rewarded with a mince pie. I'll also be keeping an eye out for **Father Christmas**, who'll be doing his rounds in the village on Sunday the 14th. And of course our **local churches** will be holding services to remind us all what Christmas is really about.



However you spend your Christmas, enjoy it!

From everyone here at Spotlight, we'd like to wish all our readers, contributors and advertisers a very Happy Christmas and a wonderful New Year.

PS: Don't forget

Spotlight takes a break in January so the next issue will be out early February



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COPY DEADLINE

20th of the month

Don't forget you can now read Spotlight online at
www.clophillspotlight.co.uk

Look out of your window on Sunday 14th
December between 4pm and 7pm
Santa will be touring the village on his sleigh,
pop out and give him a wave



Organised in aid of your **Clophill Village Hall**

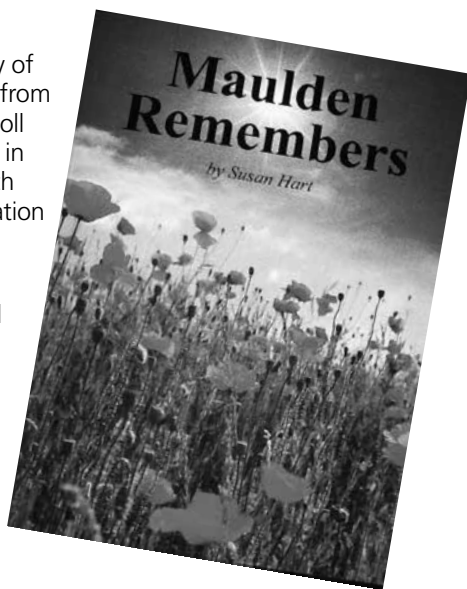
Remembering Maulden's fallen

Maulden Remembers tells the story of the men on Maulden War Memorial from WW1. It also contains the Maulden roll of honour, and what was happening in the village, the school, and the church during this time, plus further information on the village.

The book costs £10, and **all profits from the book are being donated to Help for Heroes.**

Copies of the book are available at Liquid Designs reception in the old post office building in Maulden. Alternatively, ring 01525 753558 or email sj.hart@btinternet.com

Sue Hart



Planting in Clophill shared spaces

Daffodil planting is now complete – thank you to all those who contributed their efforts and expertise.



The promised tree pack from The Woodland Trust arrived on cue and has now been used to infill the hedge between The Green and The Flying Horse car park. Hopefully, once the new plants are established in a year or two, the fence can be removed and the 'soft' barrier will be complete. The remaining whips have been used to regenerate the hedgerow alongside the A507, which was planted by Highways around the time when the new bridge was installed. It had disappeared under rampant undergrowth. We've worked hard, first to find it and then to stand the plants upright. Once that was done, we were able to infill the gaps with the stock from the tree pack, which included some fruitful/colourful species such as rowan and wild cherry to augment the existing hawthorn.

All the hedging plants and their supporting canes and guards were supplied free of charge by The Woodland Trust. They in turn were sponsored by IKEA Family. Our community has benefitted from their generosity. You can identify what has been done by looking for the tree guards along both hedges.

On a slightly less positive note, it was disappointing that someone saw fit to remove canes from The Green hedgerow within a week, leaving the young plants without support. We've applied remedial measures and hope the whips will still thrive. *Jane Breed*

Change to last collection time

In order to improve efficiency we're reviewing our mail collection arrangements and revising collection times.

From **8th December 2014**, the final collection from this postbox will be made no earlier than 9:00 a.m. Monday to Friday and 7:00 a.m. on Saturday. The latest collection time for this area is shown on the postbox notice.

For more information please contact our Customer Service Team on 03456 011399 or visit www.royalmail.com



How many people will have their mail ready to post before 9am (and 7am on a Saturday)? Is this a ploy by Royal Mail to give themselves an extra day to deliver letters (i.e. two days for 1st class instead of one), or even to reduce use of the collecting boxes so that later on they can claim that they're not needed and remove them? This applies both to the box outside the Old Post Office on High Street and the one at the junction of Mill Lane and The Slade. (As Spotlight went to press, there was no suggestion that the final collection time on The Green will be earlier.) *Michael Brooks*

Gift A Song



**Caritas Harmony Are Joined By Ladies
from Herts, Beds & Bucks To Gift A Song
For Macmillan At Christmas**

**Christmas Spectacular
6.30pm Sat 13 December 2014
Methodist Church, The Square,
Dunstable LU5 4NA**

**Tickets £5 from Brenda Wood on
01582 873656** (Children 12 and under free)

email - info@caritasharmony.co.uk

www.caritasharmony.co.uk

News from Clophill Heritage Trust

Eco Lodges

Thanks to a most generous donation from the **Frank Branston Charitable Trust** received in mid-November we're now able to proceed with connection to the National Grid and the provision of a full mains electricity supply which will provide the site with power for light, heat and enhanced security system. This will be to the benefit of the Lodges and Old Church alike.

Frank Branston was a journalist, novelist and newspaper proprietor, and the first directly elected mayor of the Borough of Bedford. Following his passing in 2009, his wife and family created the Trust in order to benefit other charities or voluntary bodies involved with Arts, Culture, Heritage, Science, Recreation and the Environment. They were amongst recent funders of the Higgins Museum and Art Gallery refurbishment in Bedford.

We can't emphasise how grateful we are to **Mrs Marlies Branston and her daughters** for their involvement as this represents a major funding breakthrough which will enable the project to move towards completion.

Our thanks also go to all other contributors for their charitable donations.

The Old Church

Following our success in winning the highest award in category at the October CPRE awards (see the November issue of Spotlight), on Monday 17th November we were further rewarded with a visit from **HM Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire Mrs Helen Nellis**, who had presented the award, and **The High Sheriff Mr Colin Osborne** (both pictured).

They both see the project as an important Bedfordshire landmark now that the church is completed and also want to assist with the last bit of funding. They were provided with a 'Tower Tour' and update.

Our thanks also to The Parish Council for kindly helping to install additional holly hedge and fencing at the church site in vulnerable areas.

Vacancy: Volunteer Clerk

We're looking for a volunteer clerk to help with clerical tasks, including taking minutes, preparing agendas, rotas and other administrative matters. The job will probably involve no more than two hours per week. If you're interested, please contact **info@ClophillHeritage.org** before **19th December** so we can arrange for a New Year start.

If you'd like to get in touch with us, please contact Ali Bradbury (07894 710001), John Wright (07860 839845) or Barry Breed (01525 860834).





Clophill through the years

by Colin Watt

John Howard – Prison Reformer

In last month's *Spotlight*, Colin's article began with a brief mention of the prison reformer John Howard. This month, he takes an extended look at Howard's obsession with inspecting and reporting the conditions in prisons in the 18th century.

John Howard was born in Hackney in 1726. His mother died when he was five; his father, a highly successful businessman, died in 1742, leaving John and his sister a considerable fortune. At the age of twenty, Howard went on a 'Grand Tour' of France and Italy, returning three years later with an illness that was described as 'nervous fever'. He was advised to change his diet, and from then on restricted himself to vegetables, fruit, bread, milk and tea. Eventually, Howard moved into the home of Sarah Lardeau who nursed him back to health. Although she was twice his age, Howard proposed marriage to Sarah in 1752. Sadly, she died three years later.



Nine days before Sarah's death there was a huge earthquake in Lisbon, Portugal. Howard wanted to see the aftermath and eventually set sail from Falmouth in 1757. He chose to sail directly to Lisbon to avoid the hostilities between Great Britain, France and Spain, but his ship was captured by a French privateer. Howard was taken to Brittany where he was imprisoned in the castle at Brest, though he was released a few months later and allowed to return to England.

Howard now settled in Cardington, where he'd inherited family properties, and started to improve his home and those of his tenants. He married Henrietta Leeds in 1758 and she helped with his work to improve the accommodation of villagers. In 1765, Henrietta gave birth to their only son, John (known as Jack), and died a few days later.

After a spell of ill-health Howard started travelling abroad again and made several trips over the next few years. Eventually he settled back in Cardington and in 1773 was appointed High Sheriff of Bedfordshire. One of his duties was to attend the Assizes, where he saw prisoners being brought to court in shackles. He was particularly concerned to find that debtors, having paid their debt, were sent back to prison because they couldn't pay the gaoler fees.

Driven by curiosity he visited Bedford Gaol to see how it functioned. He found it 'foul and fetid' and discovered that the gaoler wasn't paid but could charge fees. On the wall was a notice that said 'All persons that come to this place ... must pay before discharg'd, fifteen shillings and fourpence, to the Gaoler.' Howard asked the justices if the gaoler

could be paid a salary instead of relying on the prisoners for their income but they were reluctant to do this. He decided to find out what went on in other gaols, and so began the relentless self-imposed schedule of gaol visits that would continue for the rest of his life.

In 1774, after visiting over 100 gaols on horse-back, averaging 40 miles a day, Howard appeared before a House of Commons committee to answer questions about the state of the UK's prisons. Wishing to do what he could to improve prisons, he stood for parliament but wasn't elected despite a rerun of the election.

He continued to tour the country visiting prisons and also journeyed to Ireland, France, French Flanders, Holland, Germany and The Netherlands to find out how prisons in other countries compared. In 1777, he published a 520-page report on *The State of the Prisons in England with Preliminary Observations and an Account of some Foreign Prisons*. Two years later, Howard was appointed to a key role as one of three penitentiary superintendents to choose sites and design and build new gaols. Although he was the leading collector of information on prisons, Howard was out of his depth when it came to implementing reform and he resigned his post.

Howard returned to travelling, during which time he experienced people's fear of the plague and the reluctance of ports to allow ships from known plague ports to enter without a period of quarantine for crew and passengers in a lazaretto – which was similar to a prison. Howard wanted to inspect a lazaretto, but the only way he could gain entry was by boarding a ship with a bill of ill-health and go into quarantine himself, so he sail from the ancient Turkish city of Smyrna to Venice. This was an extraordinary risky thing to do, but it typifies Howard's obsession with accessing all aspects of prison life.

Howard had hoped the Venetian ambassador would rescue him when he arrived at his destination, but instead he was forced to spend 40 days in a stinking cell. While he was there he received a letter telling him that his son, Jack – who was later admitted to a lunatic asylum – was behaving in a wild and dangerous manner. Howard was eventually released without contracting the plague and returned to England.

In 1789 Howard set off for what was to be his final tour, which included Holland, Germany and Prussia. The following year, while staying in Kherson in Russia, Howard agreed to visit a woman who was suffering from fever (typhus). The woman died and Howard became ill. After his death, he was buried near Kherson (now in the Ukraine). Despite Howard's

insistence that he wanted a simple funeral, it was attended by the Prince of Moldavia.

John Howard had always insisted that he didn't want a permanent memorial after his death but in 1795 a monument was placed in St Paul's Cathedral, London. The great prison reformer, who holds a key and book, is rather incongruously depicted bare-legged in classical robes. The bronze statue in St Paul's Square, Bedford was unveiled on 28 March 1894 to commemorate this extraordinary man's contribution to prison reform.



Unveiling of statue in 1894



Christmas Concert

Greensand Community Choir
and Chicksands and Henlow
Military Wives Choir

Saturday 13 December '14

at 7.30 pm

St. Mary's Church, Clophill

Interval and refreshments

A retiring collection will be taken and the proceeds shared
between CLIC Sargent (for children with cancer),
Military Wives Foundation and
St Mary's Church.

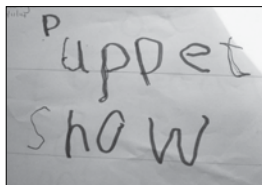
www.greensandchoir.co.uk

Clophill Preschool News



Hello everyone

What a busy time we've been having! We started practising our Christmas play as soon as we got back in November while we were still busy rolling golf balls in paint as well as chalking onto black paper to make firework pictures.



Our children have been very engaged in mark making and phonics, especially our older ones. They've been recognising initial sounds in words, playing with rhyming words and **writing their own names and labels in pen**, in the sand and even in shaving foam.

Our children have been bringing in lots of interesting things for our Talk About Box. They've been building their confidence and developing their communication and language skills as they tell us about their chosen object and answer questions that we ask to promote language and thinking.

Some children have also brought back their investigation pots. These have **little task cards** in asking the children to collect numbers of found objects or to make patterns or shapes with stick and stones – a great way to share learning between Preschool and home.

We've made the most of the weather and have planned our outside area so that we're able to access it come wind or rain. We've **jumped in piles of leaves**, been on a nature hunt, caught the rain on our tongues and used our imagination in the sand tray to pretend we're at the beach and make sand castles. But our favourite thing to play is 'What's the time Mr Wolf?' where we develop counting skills, turn taking and gain confidence to call out the time to our friends.



We also remembered the fallen soldiers of conflict on November 11th when we all stayed quiet for a minute (well nearly) and made **tissue poppies** to take home.

Graham the Methodist Minister is coming to tell our children the Christmas Story, which will be a real delight as usual. The Children's Centre will also come to do a Christmas song time. We also have lots of parents and family members coming to join us for our **Christmas Craft Week** – a whole week of making yoghurt pot snowmen and all manner of up-cycled and repurposed beautiful things. One thing's for sure, there will be a lot of glitter involved! Keep an eye on our Facebook page to see what we make.

Before we know it we shall be performing our Christmas Play and having our Christmas party for all the children, with Imajica Theatre Company providing the entertainment (thank you Julie!) There's a rumour going around that Santa's elves might even pop in!

We're really looking forward to the New Year and spring term which brings even more new children and exciting adventures into learning. We wish you all a very merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year. *Chris & Imogen*

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14th and 20th December at 2.30pm**

Adults £8 Concessions £6

For tickets call 07952 633234 Or Book Online at www.tadstheatre.org



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We would like to offer you services that will make your lives easier. We are currently offering singular services as well as bundle deals. These include:-

**Babysitting/Leaf Sweeping
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Christmas Card Delivery/Grass Cutting**

Requests are also taken.

Prices:-

Babysitting: £20.00 for an evening (7pm-midnight)

£30.00 for past midnight (7pm-1am)

All other singular services: £5.00 an hour

All other singular services x2: £8.00 an hour

All other singular services x3: £12.00 an hour

(If you choose not to take advantage of our babysitting evening deals, the rate is £6.00 an hour)

Please contact us through our FB page or email us on lydiaflack1@gmail.com

www.outlookexpeditions.com for more information

News from St Mary's Church



Food Bank Donations

Bedford Food Bank were delighted with the tins and packets of food donated at Harvest time from our congregation and families and children from the School. We also sent the collection of £130 from the Harvest Festival Service to the Bishop's Harvest Appeal. Thanks, too, to the many people from the village, including our friends at the Methodist Church, who regularly contribute to the much-needed local Food Banks.

'Beauty of Clophill' Exhibition

We were enormously grateful to our skilled and talented artists and photographers, who set up the 'Beauty of Clophill' Exhibition in church on 1st and 2nd November. It was a beautiful weekend and a lot of people came along to enjoy the displays (including a live demonstration!) as well as to talk and partake of the delicious home baking on offer.

Tree felling

October 28th and 29th saw the felling of the last two grand old Scarlet Oaks in the churchyard. They were planted in 1919 by Rev H R Meyer, a former Rector of Clophill, to replace some of the avenue of felled elms. These elms had been planted in 1849, during his incumbency. It was very sad to see the oaks go, but they had become unsafe due to gannoderma fungus. The rot inside the base of the trunks was obvious to see on felling. Thanks to kind donors, we will be planting a new specimen opposite the Garden of Remembrance and also a Rowan tree, on the tower side. We are advised that the second oak to be planted must wait a good year or more, since the planting site is between two recently felled trees. We're also very grateful to the Parish Council and Clophill United Charities for help towards the cost of the felling, as well as to those who gave donations from the sale of the logs.



Remembrance Day

The 122 people attending the United Service with the Methodist Church on 9th November were joined by a further contingent of 20-plus at the war memorial for the Act of Remembrance – the 100th Anniversary of the start of WW1. The names of the fallen were read out and the Last Post and Reveille were sounded, played on the bugle by Martyn Dunn. The Union Jack and standards of the Royal British Legion and the Brownies were lowered and wreaths were laid, led by the chairman of our Parish Council, Peter Clarke. The service was conducted by the Reverend Eric Shegog and the preacher was the Methodist Minister Reverend Graham Claydon-Knights.

A **WW1 Exhibition**, with information and photographs of the fallen, together with many of those who served from this village, was on display in church for the whole week. The village is very grateful to villagers Sue and Richard Pearson, who researched and staged this very interesting display. *Elizabeth Henman*



St Mary's School News

Chestnut-Oak value for November is *Commitment*

This is the quality of being dedicated to something – for example a cause, activity or faith. It's also known as a pledge or an undertaking. A commitment is never supposed to be broken. If it's broken that means it was never a commitment but more of a pretention. We'll be thinking about commitment over the month and particularly considering how we can make personal promises and keep them. We'll also be spending a lot of time thinking about the commitment shown by people in the Bible, but especially through Advent and the Christmas story.

If you'd like to support your child's learning, you may wish to discuss the commitments you hold as a family and what these mean for you. You may wish to think about how it might feel to break a commitment and how it feels to keep one.

Fireworks night

We're very proud to report that, even with less than perfect weather, our Fireworks Night this year raised £3,506! I'd like to say a huge 'thank you' to The Friends of St Mary's (formerly known as the PTA) as they worked exceptionally hard and provided an event that was both very well organised and enjoyed by parents, friends and family from within school as well as from our wider community. I not only want to say 'thank you' to our parents in school who helped set up, clear up and run stalls on the night but also for contributing in various other ways such as baking cakes, supplying old crockery and bringing in soft toys to help supply the stalls. I'll update you as to how the money will be spent to benefit the children of St Mary's.

Tag Rugby Tournament

I'm very pleased to report that the Year 4 team, who recently took part in a Tag Rugby tournament at Ampthill Rugby Club, won after competing against 20 other local schools. I'm particularly proud of the fact they demonstrated good sportsmanship throughout the day. Very well done to Toby Robinson, Reuben Birch, Tobin Marshall, Milly Sharman-Court, Isobelle Jones, Jemma Oldroyd, Sofia Waywell-Barker, Felix Moon, Evan Hunt and Ethan Downing.



Poppy Appeal

The poppies that the children and staff purchased raised £65.74 this year.

Children in Need

On Friday 14th November the children came into school dressed as 'Super Heroes' and through their efforts raised £125.

Christingle Service in Church

We're hoping that as many children and families will join us as possible at the Christingle Service in Church on **Sunday 7th December at 3pm**. Volunteers from the Church will be coming into school on Friday 5th December to make Christingles with the children and they will then be taken to Church for the service.

Operation Christmas Child

Our parents and children very generously filled 45 shoe boxes this year. This is a fantastic and very generous effort. Our boxes will be going to children in Belarus in Eastern Europe. You may also be interested to note that the Wilstead collection, where our boxes went, received 587 boxes and they're still counting.

Christmas Play and Other Activities

The children have been busy in school working toward this year's Christmas production which is called 'Christmas Recipe'.

The children are doing three productions and as always we'll be holding a 'Christmas Tea Party' for the over-65s in the village after the dress rehearsal on **Monday 8th December at 2pm**. If you're over 65 and haven't received an invitation through your door please call Sharon to let her know you'd like to attend and if you need transport. If you've received a ticket please confirm with Sharon that you'd like to attend and if you require transport. Phone 01525 860206 or email skempson@clophillstmarysschool.co.uk.



Other events in school over this very busy and exciting half term include a trip to the pantomime in Milton Keynes to see Peter Pan. Choir are once again visiting Beverley Court to sing carols. After Christmas dinner on 17th December, Father Christmas is coming into school to visit the children in Chestnut to Oak. On Thursday 18th December Acorn, our Nursery class, will also perform its own Christmas show and will then be visited by Father Christmas. Chestnut is then performing the Nativity in church on 19th December at 1:30pm, which is also our last day in school this term.

Admissions for September 2015

- **15 January 2015** National closing date for applications to be received by School Admissions.
- **16 January to 30 April 2015** Late applications received during these dates will be processed in the late allocation round.
- **30 April 2015** Parent/carers who are declining the place offered or wish to change their preferences need to submit a change of preference form by this date to be considered in the late allocation round.
- **8 June 2015** Late allocation round offer day – decision letters posted out via a 2nd class post, so will arrive a few days later.
- **June 2015** Late applications received after 30 April will be processed during this month.

Paper application forms are available from website, schools and by contacting School Admissions. For online applications go to <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/onlineadmissions>

Acorn Nursery News

Our value for December is Caring

We're looking at how we care for ourselves – staying safe, healthy and clean. We've learnt about fire safety with a real fire in the garden which was kept in line by Derek our firefighter visitor. The children enjoyed dressing up in a real firefighter uniform, too. Thank you to Derek. We've also had a visit from a Mother and Baby – to see how we've changed and grown, looking at our similarities and differences. Thank you to Aoife Mantini and Illaria for your time.

The children have really enjoyed visitors and so if you feel the children would benefit from a visit by you, please let me know at the school. Over the half term we had a track built for us in the garden for us to ride our bikes and scooters around and this also aided us to learn road safety as it has a zebra crossing.

St Mary's Church. Clophill

You are invited to

**Noise
of the
1960's**

a 60's At Home

23rd January 2015

7.30pm



at 59 High Street, Clophill



©Julius - Illustrations01.com/55396

Cheese, wine and 60's music

played on a Wurlitzer jukebox

Admission by ticket and a donation

available from Heather 860548 or Christine 860912

Proceeds in aid of

St Mary's Restoration

Fund



How to take the stress out of Christmas



In-laws coming? Gifts to wrap? Spuds to peel? If you're feeling stressed at the thought of Christmas, just follow these tips from life coach Glynis Kozma

- **Plan ahead.** Most food can be bought or home-cooked well in advance and frozen. Avoid last-minute dashes to the supermarket – and don't forget to delegate shopping to other people as well.
- Be realistic. Having three or even four generations in a house for several days is always going to be tricky. If it's practical, why not **make one room a quiet zone**, which is child-free and TV-free where anyone who wants to can find some peace and quiet for an hour.
- Don't put yourself under financial pressure by trying to conform to other people's expectations of the right amount to spend on gifts. **Set yourself a budget** and spend what you can afford. There's nothing wrong in explaining to children that you can't afford the toys they want even if their friends' parents can.
- If you **haven't time to bake mince pies for the PTA** or help at a charity fair, don't be afraid to say so but acknowledge the other person's disappointment to soften the blow.
- Accept help. It's easy to play the martyr and struggle on with all the cooking but if **your guests want to help peel the spuds** or bring a pudding, be grateful.
- Find some **'you' time** every day. It's easy to focus on your guests and end up feeling resentful about all the work you have to put in to keep everyone happy. Don't feel guilty if you want to escape to the bedroom for an hour to read a book or just 'be'. Be upfront and tell everyone you need some time alone.
- Try to **fit-in some exercise**. The Boxing Day walk is always a good plan, but getting everyone out of the house for some fresh air at least once a day can relieve all the tension and children can work off some of their energy.
- If staying with relatives is tricky, **book yourself into a local hotel**. This can save a huge amount of stress; you still see each other but not 24/7.



Glynis Kozma is a qualified life and career coach. She's offering Clophill residents and their friends and family **10% off a block of three sessions** booked before the end of February. www.glyniskozmacoaching.com 07952 724 299



Tower tours

St. Mary's old church, Clophill

**Climb the tower
Learn our history
Savour spectacular views**

Now open for bookings

Tours are available 10am and 2pm, daily

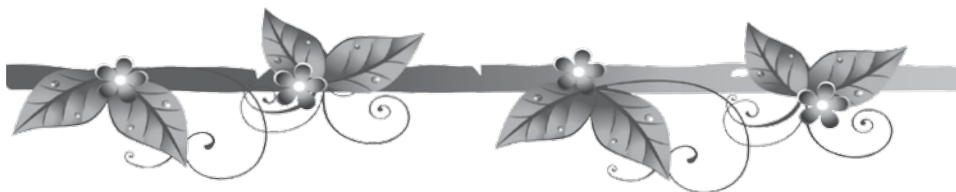
**Max. group size 8*

Adults	£3
Children	£2

info@clophillheritage.org
07935 911207

Very limited parking on site; please walk if you are able.

© Andrew Lee LRP'S



Clophill & District Flower Club

Autumn is here and the dark evenings are upon us but in Clophill Village Hall on November 6th there was light and plenty of stunning colour courtesy of Joanne Poulter from the East of England Area of NAFAS who gave a skilful demonstration on the theme of **Alice in Wonderland**.



Joanne started with 'the rabbit hole', a design on a ring with natural materials at the base including some large mushrooms which she told us she'd purchased from Waitrose because she was 'posh'. Roses flowed across the top of the ring to complete the design.

Her innovative arrangements included one to depict the smile of the Cheshire Cat and a delightful cake with the most beautiful mix of flowers on the top, which was part of the Mad Hatters Tea Party.

and a plant pot. Once covered in foliage she was ready to insert the flowers. Dark red roses were used which Joanne collected in her hand in the form of a tight tied bunch.

Joanne deftly produced a topiary tree from a floral foam sphere, a pole and a plant pot. While doing this she talked about bridal bouquets. We wondered how she was going to use this with the tree but she surprised us all when she cut the stems to about 25cm and then inserted them evenly around the ball of foliage.



At the end of the evening the stage looked stunning with a variety of lovely flower arrangements. We'd gained information and had been entertained with Joanne's humour and creativity.

Carolyn Cranswick

Christine's quick 'n' easy recipe

Zuppa di Frutta Rossa

(Red Berry soup)



INGREDIENTS Serves 6

- 1 punnet each of strawberries, raspberries, redcurrants, blueberries, blackberries (or whatever's available)
- 1 tbsp runny honey
- yogurt or single cream
- sprig of fresh mint

1. Liquidise one-third of each punnet of the red fruits (not the blueberries or blackberries) and add the honey.
2. Place this 'soup' in a glass serving bowl.
3. Retain a branch of redcurrants for decoration.
4. Add the whole raspberries, redcurrants, blueberries and blackberries to the 'soup'.
5. Cut the strawberries into quarters lengthways and add to the bowl.
6. Decorate with the retained redcurrants and a few mint leaves.
7. This fruit 'soup' should be served chilled and can even be prepared in advance.
8. Serve with a blob of yogurt or a drizzle of single cream.

Casa Fellini would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family and friends a very happy Christmas and wonderful New Year



Lost an issue of **SPOTLIGHT**?



Remember that you can read your local magazine online. Just go to **www.clophillspotlight.co.uk** and you can dip into all the articles and ads from previous issues.

And if you know anyone who would be interested in seeing Spotlight, don't forget to let them know!

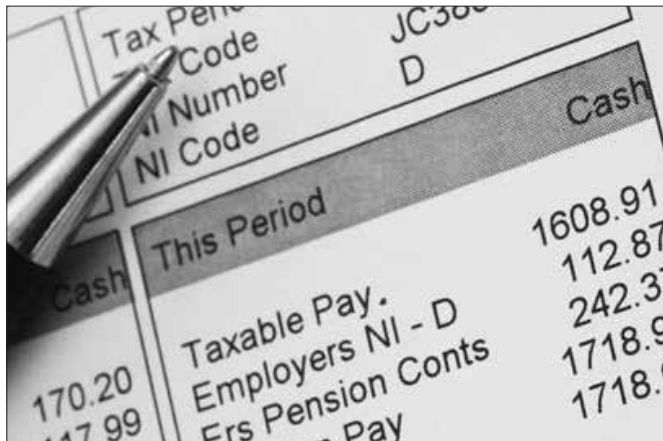
Let's talk about National Insurance

with Sally Cobban



Wow – December already! Where does the time go? I hope you're all looking forward to Christmas and the start of a new year. I thought I'd write this month about some changes that are happening to national insurance for the next tax year.

Firstly, national insurance for the self-employed is going to be changing in the new tax year after 6th April 2015. Those of you who are self-employed will be (should be) paying your class 2 national insurance. This is currently paid either monthly or quarterly and amounts to around £140 per year. This is going to be collected at the same time as tax and class 4 NI contributions – ie, when you do your tax return and pay by 31st Jan



(or 31st July and 31st January for those of you on payments on account). I think this does at least simplify this payment as the Class 2 NI does contribute to your entitlement to a state pension so it's important to keep up to date.

It's possible to check your National Insurance record for those of you who are worried about whether you

have made enough contributions. You need 30 qualifying years of NI contributions or credits to get full state pension. To check this, go to **www.gov.uk/check-national-insurance-record** This will take you to a page where you can click on 'Ask for a National Insurance Statement online' – make a cup of tea and have about an hour to spare, as it's quite a form to fill in!

You can also apply for a statement by ringing 0300 200 3500 or writing to: HM Revenue and Customs, Individuals Caseworker, Benton Park View, Newcastle upon Tyne NE98 1ZZ. When you've read through it, if there are gaps or errors in it then please ring them as they do make mistakes. You can make voluntary contributions to catch up any gaps and there will be details of how to do this at the **www.gov.uk** site.

Lastly, I have to remind everyone to remember to submit their tax return for the **April 2014 tax year by 31st January.**

If you need any help then please do get in touch with me at
sally@sjtax.co.uk or **07899 808592**

Clophill Parish Council

Notes from the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 25th November 2014

Readers are reminded that this is a resume only of the meeting. The parish council minutes are published and can be found on the internet after they are authorised (approximately five weeks after the relevant meeting).

Public Question Time

There were no questions. Matters were dealt with as part of the surgery prior to the main meeting.

Police Report

The council received a report from Bedfordshire Police regarding crime within the village. Our crime rate is low compared to other like areas. The council would like to thank the police and the many villagers who turned out at Halloween to ensure that the old church didn't have large numbers of unruly visitors causing damage and antisocial behaviour.

The Lands Committees

Trevor Barker has been contracted and is in the process of clearing the **Old Burial Ground** site of brambles and undergrowth.

Building work has commenced on the land next to the old waterworks.

The council is still waiting for a reply to its request for **speed control measures** on the Shefford Road.

Our contractor has now cleared and cut back the overgrown hedging and brambles on **the recreation ground**. Work is in hand to clear the site of rabbits, which have caused so much damage to the junior football field. If this remedial work doesn't take place, it may result in our junior football team not being able to play in our village.

After a visit to **the children's home** on the A6, the parish council has happily offered the use of an allotment for residents there. A villager has offered to help to ensure those that who use it are taught best practice for growing fruit, vegetables and perhaps even flowers. We wish them well.

Planning – October 2014

CB/TCA/14/000437 & 8

Location: 24 The Slade, Clophill

Proposal: To fell and prune trees. This is classed as essential work. One hardwood tree is to be planted in addition. **SUPPORT**

CB/TCA/14/00450

Location: The Old Watermill, High Street, Clophill

Proposal: To fell two willow trees. These trees are by the river. **SUPPORT**

Clophill Parish Council

Continued

CB/14/04313/FULL

Location: Little Field, Kiln Lane, Clophill
Proposal: To extend the dwelling and build a large two-storey detached garage in the garden. The parish council supports the extension of the house but objects to the perceived overpowering planned two-storey garage.

CB/14/04462/FULL

Location: Kiln Farm, Old Kiln Lane, Clophill
Proposal: Replacement of three antennas. The replacement of the existing antennas is due to the change in technology. There'll be a small increase in size but the existing masts aren't being replaced. There will be little or no further impact on the surrounding countryside.

SUPPORT

The Lakes Site

This site has now been purchased by Gallaghers, a building and housing developer. Representatives from the parish council have met representatives of the company. Your parish council has expressed a desire to be kept informed of any liaison meetings with CBC. The company has agreed and would like the parish council representatives to be present at such a meeting. The parish council would like to stress that attending such a meeting wouldn't mean that it was there in a negotiating role or to either make or seek conditions on any planning. This is not within the gift of the parish council. What we are trying to ensure is that the council, and indeed the village, are kept abreast of any developments.

The Parish Precept

The budget has been prepared for next year. After reviewing the council's estimates for expenditure it was formally agreed that the parish precept would again be held.

This was the last formal parish council meeting of 2014. The parish council would like to wish all villagers a Happy and Joyous Christmas.

The next Parish Council meeting will take place in the village hall at 7.45pm on 27th January 2015, with a surgery at 7.30pm

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See 'Village Groups' for contact details**



What's on in and around Clophill



Saturday 6th

Christmas Market Noon-4pm at Clophill Methodist Church.



Thursday 11th

Carol Singing at the Stone Jug, Clophill. Get into the Christmas spirit with a mince pie, mulled wine and carols with Hitchin Brass Band



Friday 12th-Sunday 14th; Friday 19th-Saturday 20th

Calamity John by TADS Theatre Group, Toddington

See this issue for matinee and evening performance times, plus ticket details



Saturday 13th

Gift a Song Christmas Spectacular 6.30pm, Methodist Church, Dunstable.
See this issue for details



Saturday 13th

Christmas Choir 7.30pm, St Mary's Church, Clophill. *See this issue for details*



Saturday 13th

Live Music with Amy B at the Stone Jug, from 9pm. Put on your dancing shoes and expect a lively performance from this talented vocalist



Sunday 28th

Christmas Jumper Competition at the Stone Jug. Bring out your best (or worst) Christmas jumpers. Three categories – children, adults and other! Judging at 4pm



New Years Eve

Live Music with Alex from Spellbound at the Stone Jug. See in 2105 with an upbeat performance from this singer with a belting voice

DECEMBER

JAN



Friday 23rd 2015

60s Night in aid of St Mary's Restoration Fund. *See this issue for full details*

On every month...

Tuesdays and Fridays

- **Boxing Club** Kids' club: 4-11-year-olds, 6pm-7pm; senior club: 12 upwards, 7pm-8pm. £2.50 a class. See 'Village Groups' for contact details

Every Wednesday

- **'Tea and Chat'** in Clophill Methodist Church Schoolroom, 10.30am-noon
- **Zumba Toning** 8pm-9pm, Clophill Village Hall

Every Friday

- **Clophill Toddler Group** Clophill Village Hall, 10am-noon See 'Village Groups' for contact details

One Saturday a month

- **Messy Church** Clophill Methodist Church, 4pm-6pm, 13 December 2014; 17 January; 7 February; 14 March; 18 April; 16 May; 20 June; 18 July; 12 September; 10 October; 14 November; 12 December

All-age craft activities, worship and a meal for all the family. No fixed charge, donations welcome to cover costs, children must be accompanied by an adult. See 'Village Groups' for contact details.

If you have any diary dates that you would like included on this page, please email clophillspotlight1@hotmail.co.uk

Parish registers for December

1814

Baptisms	
December 27	Eliza Tingey
Burials	
December 30	William Wilstead (4 mths)

1864

Baptisms	
December 4	Frederick William Grummitt ? Colman (?) Elizabeth Gobey (?) Joseph Gobby (?) Thomas ?
Total for year 43:	21 men, 22 women
Marriages	
December 3	Richard Chapman, 19, to Emma Clark, 18 William Summerfield, 20, to Rebecca Cakebread
December 4	George Clark, 20, to Eliza Walker, 25
December 24	Charles Horn, 21, to Caroline Mann, 21

1864 continued

Burials	
December 21	Robert Farmer (?)
December 30	Thomas ?

1914

Baptisms	
December 26	Wilfred James ?
Burials	
December ?	Priscilla Eddy, 50
December 31	Rebecca Richardson, 65

1964

Burials	
December 1	Frederick Sharman, 77
December 2	Ernest Harris, 79

Village groups

Beverley Court
Boxing Club
Brownies
Christians Together in Clophill
Clophill Community Care
Clophill Heritage Trust
Clophill Parish Action
Clophill St Mary's C of E Lower School & Nursery
Clophill Toddler Group
Clophill United Charities
Conservation Group
Flower Club
Friends of the Cheshire Home
Funzone After School Club
Indoor Carpet Bowls
Messy Church
Neighbourhood Watch
Pre-school
St Mary's PTA
Scouts and Cubs
Tuesday Club
Village Hall Booking Secretary

Sharon Soper	860920
Loraine Freeman	07714 014484
https://enquiryym.girlguiding.org.uk	
Fergus Milne	860894
Duty Contact	07791 773705
Ali Bradbury	07894 710001
Ali Bradbury	07894 710001
Sharon Kempson	860206
Emma Topliff	07921 810424
Gillian Hill	860539
Brian Adams	862297
Gillian Hill	860539
Sue Pearson	861110
Rosemary Ilett	860274
Tony Meredith	860754
Victoria Higgins	07920 568861
victoriajhiggins@hotmail.co.uk	
Mick Everitt	861049
clophillpreschool@gmail.com	07732 872685
Lindsey Jones	07879 430956
Ralph Rayner	403956
Betty Hampson	860750
Marilyn Browning	07821 643936

Useful numbers

Gas (Emergency)			0800 111999
Electricity (Emergency)			0800 7838838
Emergency Fire/Police/Ambulance			999
Water/Sewage (Anglian Water)			0845 7145145
Telephone	(Customer Services) 150	(Faults)	151
Highways Department (Central Bedfordshire Council)			0300 3008049
Benefits Agency (Bedford office)			01234 361500
Registrar's Office (Births/deaths/marriages)			0300 3008089
Rail (Enquiries)			0845 7484950
Buses 01234 262151	(Link A Ride) 01525 840511	(Flittabus)	01582 406561
Luton Airport			01582 405100
Swimming	(Flitwick) 01525 717744	(Robinson Pool)	01234 212479

LIBRARIES

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	Barton	01582 881101	Flitwick	01525 715268

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Central Beds Offices (Chicksands)			0300 300 8000
Mid-Beds MP		Nadine Dorries	01462 811992
Central Bedfordshire Councillors		Michael Blair	01525 404513
	Paul Duckett 07988 184061	Mark Smith	01525 402560
Clophill Parish Council		Peter Clarke	01525 861179
	(Clerk)	Mrs Lyn Lyman	01908 584159

HOSPITALS

Bedford (North & South)	01234 355122	Admissions	01234 261150
		Appointments	01234 359012
Luton & Dunstable			0845 1270127

DOCTOR'S CLINICS

Amphill	(Houghton Close) 0844 8151055	(Oliver Street)	01525 631395
		(Greensands)	01525 631390
Shefford	Enquiries 01462 818620	Appointments	01462 810034
Barton 01582 528700		Flitwick	01525 715300

POLICE

County Police HQ		Non Emergency	101
Amphill Station			01234 841212
Clophill Local Policing Team			101
			01234 842613

CHURCHES

St Mary's Parish Church	(Gill Jones) 01525 861058	or (Liz Henman)	01525 860108
St Francis of Assisi Shefford			01462 813436
Clophill Methodist Church		(Mr Jim Davies)	01525 860829

SCHOOLS

Clophill St Mary's C of E Lower School & Nursery	(Headteacher Mrs K Bingley)		01525 860206
Harlington Upper School , Harlington			01525 755100
Redborne Upper School , Amphill			01525 404462
Robert Bloomfield Middle School , Shefford			01462 628800

Telephone
**01525
860526**

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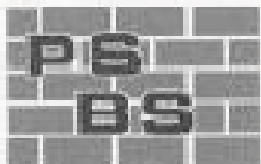
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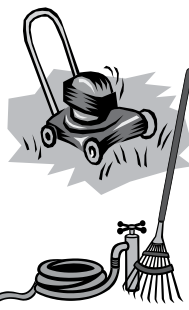
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