

The Welwyn Magazine

with Woolmer Green



July / August 2023

60p

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July/August 2023

PUBLISHERS

St Mary's and St Michael's
Churchwardens

COVER

Racing ducks in training
Rita McNeill

MAGAZINE ARTICLES

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EDITORS' NOTES

Please submit articles by the 1st of the month preceding publication. We aim to publish reports and articles that will be of interest to our local community. If you would like to suggest a theme or article please email: magazine@welwyn.org.uk

The Editors reserve the right to shorten or omit articles or refuse advertisements.

The opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Clergy, Editors or Publishers.

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The Rector's *Letter*



Dear Friends

This bumper magazine issue covers the months of July and August, which for many people mark the holiday season. I know that perhaps some of you for various reasons will not be able to get away this year, but I hope you will excuse me if I say a few words about holidays and what they are for. Of course, the most obvious thing I can say is that the word 'holiday' comes from Holy Day. Holy Days were traditionally the special days of the church in which people would be given time off for worship and recreation. Still today, most of our bank holidays are based around Christian festivals: Christmas, Easter, and the late May bank holiday which often coincides (and until quite recently always was) Pentecost or Whitsunday.

But more than that, religion recognises the importance of time to rest and recover from the rigours of our working lives – most famously when God rested on the seventh day of creation, and set that aside as the Sabbath for his people. Indeed, the idea of leisure and creation are intertwined – we talk of recreation, which is precisely that: 're-creation' time to be recreated anew.

Perhaps the best example of this is how people train for sport. People often say that training makes you stronger, but this is only half the story. When you come back from the gym or pool or run or cycle, you might feel anything but stronger – you may well feel shattered. And indeed you are – you are at the end of the sixth day. What actually makes you stronger is the rest and recovery after exercise. The body – a wonderful thing – responds to exercise by building back stronger. But to do that it needs time, rest and sustenance. If you exercise too much too soon you'll simply end up weaker and tired.

What is right for the body, is also right for the soul and the spirit. Of course, we need to work hard, to apply ourselves and to care for those people and those things which are important to us. But we also need time to rest, recover and recreate ourselves so that we are stronger to return to those things which God has sent us to do.

David



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Jessie the Rectory Dog

The first two weeks of July are for me one of the most important times of the year. Normally when Master is watching telly, I don't pay a blind bit of notice to what is on the screen (he thinks I can't see it, but frankly I can't watch the trash he watches). Sometimes my ears perk up when Crufts is on, but frankly it ranges from the showy off to the downright humiliating – and they think they are all so special.



However, this time of year marks the beginning of the one sporting event I am interested in – the Wimbledon Tennis Tournament. I'm not so keen on the stuff with the racquets, but I just love tennis balls. In fact, it is how Master claims he 'tamed' me during my early running-off phase – he realised that I would do anything for a tennis ball.

I've applied to be a ball girl at Wimbledon several times, only to be turned down repeatedly on specist grounds. And unlike some of my canine compatriots, I happily give the ball back (after a little chew and slobber maybe) ready for the next throw. What I wouldn't be so good at is that standing on the edge of the court waiting patiently thing – why don't they chase the ball from one end to the other? Is that why my applications keep being rejected?

Jess

CORRECTION

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with Woolmer Green**

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Please accept our apologies for the error which crept into last month's magazine.

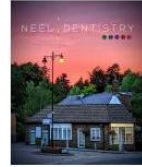
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Thank you to all the distributors and others who added correction slips or corrected by hand the details in the June magazine.

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'Second Saturday' Recitals in St Mary's Welwyn

The highly successful and well attended 2022/23 season of Saturday Recitals at St Mary's Welwyn concludes on 8th July at 12 noon with a performance by Muriel Oberhofer (violin) and Michelle Chow (piano). All concerts are free to attend, with a retiring collection for church funds.

There is no concert in August and the next season will commence on Saturday 9th September; details of that concert will be announced shortly.

Muriel Oberhofer is a prize-winning violinist from Switzerland, studying for her Master's Degree at the Royal Academy of Music in London, where she leads the Royal Academy Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra.

The Dutch-Chinese pianist **Michelle Chow** completed her Bachelor's Degree *cum laude* at the Royal Conservatoire in the Hague, before doing a Master's Degree at the Royal Academy of Music in London, where she is now a staff member.

Their programme includes solo Bach on the violin, and violin and piano sonatas by Debussy and Brahms.



Above: Muriel Oberhofer
Left: Michelle Chow

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A new national fraud strategy

In May the government published a new strategy with the grand aim to “stop fraud at source and pursue those responsible wherever they are in the world”. The target is a 10% cut in fraud on 2019 levels by the end of 2024.

According to the Home Office, fraud is the most common crime in Britain, representing 41% of all offences. One in 15 people fall victim to fraud each year, costing the British public £7

billion annually. Nine in ten internet users have encountered online scams. Amongst a number of proposals in the strategy, will be a ban on cold-callers trying to sell any type of insurance or cryptocurrency scheme. These are apparently the most common cold-call scams, particularly targeting older people. Cold-calling about pension products was banned in 2019.

There may well be a flurry of such calls before the ban comes into force, so please bear in mind that calls like this are almost certainly a scam. Fraudsters are very cruel and often try to befriend the victim by finding out why they might need money and then promising that they can achieve their dream. Victims are often rushed into making a decision and the criminals frequently pressure them to “invest” more. Fraudsters may encourage secrecy, as they try to prevent their victim from telling people who would spot the scam.

Another proposal is a ban on so-called “sim farms”, which are computer-controlled devices loaded with hundreds of phone sim cards that criminals use to send many thousands of scam texts at once. These are used for advance-fee fraud, where criminals send messages asking people to pay for fake goods or services, such as a fee on a Royal Mail package. Advance-fee fraud has risen 700% since March 2020. Sim farms are also used for other frauds, such as texts purporting to be from banks or government departments. Again, there could be a rise in sim farm scams before the ban is imposed.

You can stay up to date with the latest scams and developments in the law by joining us at OWL using the link below.



John Mitchell and Valerie Richards
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Happy July!

Do you know what happens at Danesbury Neurological Centre and the Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital, School Lane?

Both are well known in the local and wider community but what services do they offer?

Danesbury Neurological Centre was originally called The Danesbury Home. Originally it provided a home for residents of all ages who needed full time care. In 1993 a Danesbury appeal was launched in Welwyn to provide funding for the current building in School Lane, Welwyn. Today the centre caters for both in-patients and out-patients who have a range of neurological problems. The medical team includes Physiotherapists, Psychologists, Speech Therapists, Dieticians, Occupational Therapists and Specialist Parkinson's and MS nurses.

Built in 1902 QVM hospital was a community hospital serving Welwyn, Codicote and Digswell. Now it cares for patients who need rehabilitation following a stay in an acute hospital, particularly the Lister Hospital, Stevenage.

Both hospitals are part of the of the Herts Community NHS Trust who are responsible for much of the county and in today's financial climate is obliged to juggle its resources between various sites.

The Trustees consider everything that can impact both our in-patients' and out-patients' well-being and how we can benefit them with the charitable funds, and ensure that they are used properly to support the patients.

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Ayot St Peter School

In 1871 a purpose-built school with an attached schoolteacher's house opened in our village. The Victorian rectory opposite had been completed in 1867 and the current church was built next to the school in 1875.

Various school mistresses occupied the teacher's house over the years. On 8 September 1902, when the school opened for the autumn term, two new teachers were in post – Miss Edith Alice Bott and her sister Jessie Grace.

Edith is recorded in the school log book as being a qualified teacher “certified, 2nd class”. She had trained at Whitelands Training College, which at that time was on the King's Road in Chelsea, the first college of higher education in the UK to admit women.

Jessie was allowed to teach by virtue of “article 68”. This refers to the New Education Code of 1890, which authorised untrained female teachers whose only qualifications were to be over 18 years of age and vaccinated.

The school log book tells us that the average attendance was about 63 pupils, with authorised absences for activities such as “helping with the harvest” and children “looking after their mothers”. Many children did not stay long at school – for example, in 1904 Cecil White and Ada Cooper left for work aged 12. The children of non-conformist families were allowed to miss the numerous church services and study in school instead. The Rector, Rev. Henry Jephson, had oversight of the school, and his wife and daughters were frequent visitors. Truants were dealt with by Mr Deards, the attendance officer.

In 1906 Edith obtained an LLA qualification from the University of St Andrews in Scotland. This was the “Lady Literate in Arts” – a degree level qualification that was popular for women who needed to study through correspondence, or by attendance at regional classes. In later photographs Edith can be seen proudly wearing her mortar board and academic gown. She was headmistress of Ayot St Peter school from 1902 until her retirement in 1931.

Several photographs of the school are shown on our website www.ayotstpeter.com, including one from around 1910 that has names for almost all the pupils, and another that shows the children maypole dancing. If anyone recognises family members, please do get in touch!

The school closed in 1948, and the old school and the attached school teacher's house are now private homes.



Valerie Richards

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Welwyn's Hero Plants

During lockdown when we were allowed out for our daily exercise, I decided I wanted to learn about wildflowers and pavement plants. Formerly known as weeds...

Armed with books and an App called Picture This I set forth to learn as many as I could. Lockdown began in March just as cleavers was starting to grow. Also called sticky weed, Robin-run-the-hedge or gooseweed, cleavers grows many nearly invisible hook-shaped spines on its stems which makes it stick to your skin or clothes. Very common everywhere. Also, shepherd's purse, so-called because of the purse shaped seed pods on the stem (all over verges in residential streets). Herb Robert and shining cranesbill (Mill Lane), alkanet – bright blue sprigs on verges everywhere. In woods, carpeting the ground is the very common dog's mercury, green-leaved with small white flower sprigs atop and arum or Lords-and-Ladies (Danesbury Park Road). Also, early to flower is garlic mustard, sometimes known as 'Jack-by-the-hedge' (everywhere) and three cornered garlic (London Road on the steep bank) so called because the stem is triangular. Other early plants in Welwyn include cow parsley (everywhere), cuckoo flower (in front of the BT exchange on the grass) meadow saxifrage (grassy bank Grange Hill), blue field madder – tiny, delicate sprigs of blue flowers (Carleton Rise), ivy-leaf toad-flax (walls near the Civic Centre), hairy bittercress (everywhere). Soon to come were also bladder campion (verges up School Lane and Whitehill), biting stonecrop (pedestrian flyover on the B656), greater and lesser burdock (around Singlers Marsh), stitchwort lesser and greater (steep verges everywhere usually by hedges), goat beard (Danesbury and Fernery fields), betony (Whitehill Wildflower Meadow), pennywort (Singlers Marsh), germander speedwell and birds foot trefoil (any grassy verge). The wonderfully named gallant soldier I found in Welwyn Garden City by a railing near John Lewis.

Then I read an article about a rising international force of rebel botanists armed with chalk, which has taken up street graffiti to highlight the names and importance of these diverse flora growing in the cracks of paths and walls in our towns and cities. The movement started in France where the government banned pesticide use in parks, streets and other public spaces in 2017 and in gardens from 2019, leading to a surge in awareness of urban wild flowers in the country. A ban in the UK would make a massive difference to our biodiversity which we are losing at an alarming rate.

Because whatever your feelings about these 'roadside survivors' the truth is every single flower and plant counts and is needed for our pollinators and

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Welwyn's Hero Plants (continued from p. 15)

biodiversity generally. Even a patch of nettles can be swamped with caterpillars. Bird's-foot-trefoil is a food plant for more than 160 different invertebrates. A dandelion flower (reviled by many) can be a lifeline to our bees in early spring. A study by pollinator researchers revealed that many wild urban 'weeds' rank very highly for the quantity of nectar and pollen each flower provides, often much higher than a variety of garden plants. There is a change happening, including even at the Chelsea Flower Show where they are rebranding weeds as 'hero plants'.

Then on June 6 last year, when walking the dog along a residential street in Welwyn, I spotted a bee orchid growing on a grass verge. Bee orchids are so-called because they resemble a bee and encourage bees to approach and pollinate them, thereby proliferating the species. I have never seen a bee orchid in Welwyn before even though I'd been told they had been found on the Danesbury reserve. This one was just growing alone with no other orchids nearby. I'm glad I took a picture of it because one week later when I went back the council had mowed the verge and it was gone.



Bee orchid

Photo: Sarah Butcher

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10 top tips for a healthy weight



Keeping a healthy weight can help cut your risk of cancer and other serious diseases. The good news is that small changes to your lifestyle that you keep up over time can lead to a reduction in bodyweight.

Keep to your meal routine – eating at roughly the same times each day helps avoid unplanned meals or snacks.

Go reduced fat – cut down on fat and go for small amounts of healthy fats from plant oils, nuts and oily fish instead.

Walk off the weight – try reaching 10,000 steps a day.

Pack a healthy snack – this could include things like fruit, plain yoghurt or a small handful of plain nuts.

Look at the labels – pick options higher in fibre and lower in fat, salt and sugar

Caution with your portions – fill half your plate with colourful vegetables, fill a quarter with high fibre wholegrain foods (eg brown rice or whole wheat pasta) and a quarter with a healthy protein (eg fish, fresh chicken or pulses).

Up on your feet – stand more anywhere, anytime.

Think about your drinks – make water your first choice. Alcohol, fizzy drinks and energy drinks are high in sugar and calories.

Focus on your food – try to eat slowly at a table. Overeating is very easy while on the go or sitting in front of the TV.

Don't forget your 5-a-day – having fruit or veg at every meal makes this easier.

This information has been taken from www.cruk.org

If you would like further information about the Bridge Cottage Surgery Patient Participation Group please email ppgbridgecottage@gmail.com

The lucky journey of a silversmith... in conversation with Deirdre Woolgar

It was a miserable cold January in 1970 when young Deirdre, already working as a trained silversmith and jewellery designer, visited her cousin in Highgate. “You look pale and pasty,” he declared, “you need the sun!”

So it was that a short time afterwards Deirdre stepped out onto the top steps of an aircraft and declared, “This looks like God's own country and I'm not going back!”

That country was then Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and Deirdre's mother had bought her a three-month ticket to stay with her aunt and uncle.

Sun and odd jobs were not enough; Deirdre was determined to stay and work in her chosen profession. “I wrote letter after letter to the largest jewellery company in Salisbury (now Harare). Rejection after rejection came. But eventually the owner got fed up, and said, 'Come in on Monday and we'll find something for you to do'.”

That Monday was November 1, 1971. The owner called a young Englishman into the office, saying “Find this English girl something to do...”

That young man was Arthur Woolgar.

So, Reader, she married him.

Well of course she did! In 1972 they were married by the District Commissioner of Salisbury. But that's not the end. There's more to come of this story of young love in Rhodesia.

“Arthur's speciality was precious stones and the company, which made gold jewellery, was in the process of building a large factory,” explained Deirdre “I was given a silver workshop in the new factory, even an apprentice called Clever (not so clever!), and we turned out cups, bowls, hole-in-one trophies, even crowns for Miss Rhodesia.”

Time for a bit of history... In 1965 Ian Smith, prime minister of Rhodesia (formerly Southern Rhodesia) had announced a Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI). By 1972 the Rhodesian Bush War was raging, and whether you call the African nationalists guerrillas or freedom fighters doesn't matter now; it was nasty and Arthur, as a young white man, was called up to fight.



Deirdre's silversmith's hammer

The lucky journey of a silversmith... in conversation with Deirdre Woolgar

So the life in God's Own Country ended, Deirdre and Arthur returned to England in 1973, setting up home in St Albans.

Here they brought up their two sons and Deirdre set up her number one workshop as a silversmith, as well as teaching at De Havilland College of Art. Since then she has had three more workshops, always teaching as well. The second was at their next home in Lemsford, the next was in Dubai where she and Arthur lived and worked for two years before returning to Hertfordshire and settling in Welwyn 12 years ago. Here they converted Gothic House in Church Street back into a beautiful home with attached workshop (it had been flats and then offices for a number of years), and until quite recently Deirdre had continued teaching from here. It is now shut.

Becoming a professional working woman was probably the automatic choice for Deirdre, an only child raised by one professional parent, her mother. "I'm actually Scottish and was born in North Berwick but we moved to Birmingham when I was two where my mother was GP in practice with Dr Solly Wand, early instigator of the NHS. We tried out Canada when I was seven, but the weather was too cold, then too hot! So we returned when I was nine. My Canada memories are of a bigger, different sort of school, playing marbles and wearing long woollen stockings with suspenders in winter. Meanwhile my mother worked as a consultant anaesthetist. On our return to Selly Oak Hospital she had to retrain. As doctors often had to live in hospital, I spent a couple of years living with relatives in Surrey."

Next it was up to North Yorkshire to a co-educational Quaker boarding school. Here Deirdre learnt metalwork, woodwork and her first love, pottery.

"It was to study pottery at the home of Studio Pottery started by David Leach (son of Bernard Leach) that took me to Loughborough College of Art for four years. We had to have a second subject, so I chose silversmithing."

Everything about Deirdre's life comes back round to her talent as a silversmith. Many in Welwyn and Hertfordshire have her to thank as they delight in wearing the jewellery they have made under her tutelage.

Vernonne Allan

The Holiday Club is Back!



Calling all Craftpersons!

We are pleased to announce the next edition of our popular Holiday Club

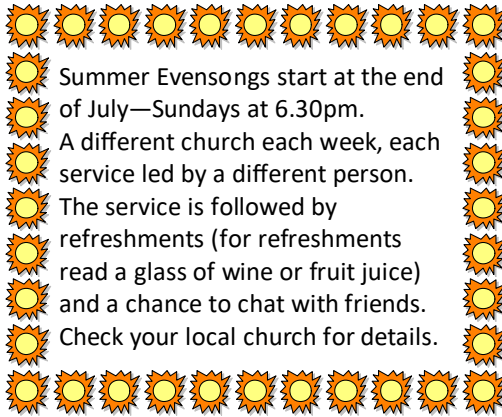
Join our team of craftpersons and repairers this summer in our **holiday club** 'Restoration Station' at St Mary's Church in Welwyn

We meet at 10am to noon every morning from **Monday 24th to Friday 28th July** for lots of games, crafts, activities and songs

The club is for primary school aged children and we ask you to pay £5 per family towards our expenses

This event has 40 places, so it's vital to book your place. You can find the forms in church

We hope to see you then! Do tell your friends and get them to book too.



Summer Evensongs start at the end of July—Sundays at 6.30pm.

A different church each week, each service led by a different person.

The service is followed by refreshments (for refreshments read a glass of wine or fruit juice) and a chance to chat with friends.

Check your local church for details.

Our Christian Aid Week appeal raised £3,503.05.

This included a quiz (£735), donations, gift aid and sponsorship for eight swimmers, who between them swam over 20 miles with two wild swims. Earlier this year £130 was donated by the Big Breakfast and £416.90 at the Soup Lunch, so £4,049.95 has been raised for Christian Aid this year. **Thank you!**

In conversation with...YOU?

Would you like to chat about your life or experiences to one of our team?

If so, contact us at magazine@welwyn.org and we can have a conversation.

Parish Registers

St Mary's Welwyn

Baptisms

21st May

Oliver Sherrington

Toby Wiper



The Welwyn Ambulance

Thanks to the pantomime team and many others the ambulance destined for Ukraine was purchased. Team Alfs then packed it with life-saving equipment and treats for the men: Coca Cola and chocolate. Tina Banks, who heads up Alfs, drove it, with a broken toe, across Ukraine, a soldier driving in front to guide her and bring her back to Poland. On her return home, Tina came to tell us about her trip. It was a journey from hell, she said, a 2,000 mile round trip. She drove the ambulance alone on roads full of potholes and craters, at 60-70mph, and each day she drove 13-14 hours. Tina said the concentration was exhausting. Then, five or six hours rest at night. One night she stayed in Dnipro, and was horrified to discover that two days later the town was bombed, demolishing a children's hospital.



Dnipro burns

Eventually she arrived at Kostyantynivka where the soldiers rest between sessions in the trenches, two days on and two days off. The town is 27 kilometres from Bakhmut where the ambulance will serve the front line. She was amazed to see people calmly going about their lives with the racket of war going on all around. They had become immune to the noise. She met the chief medical officer there and delivered the ambulance to him on behalf of Alfs. He and his soldiers were so grateful that the ambulance had been blessed by the

The Welwyn Ambulance

Rev. David Munchin before it left for Ukraine. He told her that there are not enough medics and they have to rely on help from people not medically trained.



The ambulance reaches its destination

Help is also much needed as it is insect time and soldiers in the trenches are desperate for insect repellent. The hospitals are full and so many wounded soldiers have to be brought to abandoned buildings adapted as “hospitals.” We saw a picture of a shack with bunk beds made out of pieces of wood, no mattresses. There is no water supply and no electricity. In one of these “hospitals” Tina was asked if she’d like to stay for a meal - this was a big platter of mashed potato propped beside the toilet. She declined with as much gratitude as she could muster! She met a very young man with a shattered elbow, his lower arm full of shrapnel. His blood pressure too high for an operation. “There must be a lot of screaming,” we said. But no. The men say “With every last breath we will die fighting this war.”

Tina saw people living in “houses” with no roofs and no windows. A missile

The Welwyn Ambulance

had recently landed on their water supply, yet they carry on somehow. Everyone is courageously determined that this war will be won. And it's not only people who are suffering. Poor abandoned animals, hungry and homeless, wander about, covered in ticks and wounds and also needing help. Alfs is supporting two vets so some help for the animals can be brought.

The contrast with how we live here in Britain is off the scale. Tina has arrived home physically unharmed but the sights she's seen and the people she's spoken to - these things remain. She is so very grateful for all the people supporting Alfs Ukraine. Let's make sure the next lorry can go with all 20 pallets full once again. Come on, Team Alfs! We can do it!

Gay Carpenter



Signs of hope as life goes on in Chernihiv

(Editor's note: ALFS stands for Animal Larder Food and Shelter, but as you can see, they do much, much more than help animals—although they do that too! All donations gratefully received. They are desperate for monetary contributions and “stuff” - anything that you can donate—paracetamol, cough/cold tablets, insect repellent, activated charcoal.... [PayPal.me/alfsherts](https://www.paypal.com/alfsherts) or BACS AlfsHerts sort 55-50-44 Acc 72569522)

Summary of the PCC meeting 17th March 2023

The meeting began in the customary manner with a welcome and a prayer. The minutes of the March 20th meeting were approved without comment and signed by the Chairman.

Various offices on the council were required to be formally appointed. The following were appointed accordingly; Maggie Varco as treasurer, Diane Jenkin as vice chair and Louise Hughes as secretary. Those posts, together with Stuart Westley (St Mary's churchwarden) and the clergy make up the Standing Committee which was approved.

Finance – Jackie Davis, treasurer for St Michael's church, encouraged all present to sign up to 'easyfundraising' as a means of increasing income to St Michael's. This is a means by which, when making purchases online, the vendors will make a small donation to your cause, in this case St Michael's church. For more information please go to: easyfundraising.org.uk Click on: Find a cause – and enter: St Michael's Church - Woolmer Green As the well-known catchphrase goes – every little helps and St Michael's will be grateful for it.

Maggie Varco's finance reports for Jan-April 2023 had been circulated prior to the meeting. MV pointed out that in the first four months of the year a deficit of nearly £13,000 has been accrued, mainly due to the increased utility costs. MV will lead a sub-committee to create an action plan to raise income and encourage donations to St Mary's and St Michael's.

Barclays Bank has asked for proof of the existence of the bookstall at St Mary's. The

wording of a statement aimed at satisfying this demand was approved.

The possibility of cash going missing when only one person is receiving, counting, recording and banking cash was brought to the attention of the PCC, but now that the majority of donations are made electronically the amounts of cash are generally quite small and handled by trusted people, so the council accepted and agreed that it is an acceptable risk. Turning to **fabric reports** Stuart Jenkin reminded the meeting that at St Michael's there is a problem with some roof tiles shaling (flaking) that will need to be replaced. He is inviting quotations for this work but noted that it is likely to be quite expensive.

As regards St Mary's Stuart reported that the Trend Building Energy Management (computer) System that controls the church heating system is not working correctly. It is a software problem but finding someone to attend to it at a reasonable cost is not proving easy. Church House kitchen deep clean was carried out on 30th March.

Church buildings insurance was due for renewal soon and it was suggested that the policy should be checked as to whether an independent inspection of the lift, gas boiler, and pressure vessel is required by the new insurers.

Crystal Lam asked to discuss ideas for net zero carbon actions for the church. It was agreed that this would be discussed with SJ outside the meeting and suggestions be presented to the PCC.

Turning to **Rector's items** – DM presented

Summary of the PCC meeting 17th March 2023

the **Mission Action Plan** that was created on 25th March 2023. All three priority goals were adopted by the PCC. They are; (1) to explore a once a month non-Eucharistic, more informal service – probably linked to third Sunday baptisms. Mavis Francis was keen to encourage this by inviting school children and their parents as was Crystal Lam who presented CoE statistics identifying target demographics that could help attract local people beyond the current congregation. Diane Jenkin noted that she would not want the existing congregation to be discouraged by a more informal style of service while Colin Hull suggested that an informal service could be helpful to those unfamiliar with the Eucharist service and as it would undergo an experimental stage if the concept was not a success it need not be continued.

(2) To relaunch a mid-week after school club along the lines of the previous CraF Tea which worked well pre-pandemic.

(3) Take a realistic look at church finance, particularly with regard to regular giving in a time of inflation.

The Welwyn Festival will run from 24th June to 1st July. A Scratch Messiah is being organised by Rob Milner, Director of Music. St Mary's makes a significant contribution to the running of the festival so the PCC hopes that the festival organisers recognise that and will make a suitable contribution to at least cover the church's costs. The Rector has been nominated by the organisers to judge the duck race.

The ordinations of Christie and Ryan Gilfeather will be conducted by Bishop Jane

of Hertford and hosted by St Mary's on July 2nd.

Holiday Club plans are in place for it to start from July 24th.

Six summer evensongs have been planned across the clergy team.

Safeguarding: The safeguarding officers are Rachel Wadey, Vicky Jenkin and David Munchin.

Appointments and resignations: Nigel Howes has taken on the organisation of grounds maintenance at St Michael's but a vacancy remains for a cleaner there. If you know of anyone that might be interested please speak to Christie Gilfeather.

Any other business: Christie Gilfeather noted that as Sue Keach has now resigned as churchwarden at St Michael's she should not be contacted with queries or any matters relating to St Michael's. It is hoped that a new churchwarden can be appointed before the end of the year.

Crystal Lam continues with her project on Ageing Well in our community and showed the poster/ leaflet that she has designed to publicise the discussion meeting that she is organising at the Civic Centre.

Vernonne Allan thanked all the swimmers and those who had sponsored this fund raiser for Christian Aid.

David Munchin reminded everyone to attend the quiz evening also in support of Christian Aid.

He then led the grace and closed the meeting.

David Hughes
6th June 2023

Sue's Magical Mystery Tour

Sue Knowles organised our theatre outings, worked in John Lewis and, like husband Geoff, had always lived locally.

Recently they moved to Crantock, Cornwall. Keen to show off her new county, Sue organised accommodation in a hotel overlooking the top surfing Fistral Bay near Newquay in late May, inviting any who could, to visit for a mystery holiday.

Thirteen from Welwyn said yes. Each evening Sue revealed the next day's destination. First was Tintagel, crossing the new bridge up to the sculpture of King Arthur, then exploring the village. Next day Tremenheere Sculpture Garden, the gold winners for succulents at Chelsea last and this year. The gardens occupy a tropical valley overlooking St Michael's Mount, where we went next, walking across the causeway to wonderful gardens. Some of us made the steep climb to the castle.

Our final packed day was in Crantock. We walked on the beach, paddled, explored the pretty village with thatched cottages, roses round doors (sadly all holiday lets, not occupied by locals). Hot Cornish pasties for lunch in the sunny ancient meadow pound, then to the local pub before visiting Sue & Geoff's home for tea and scones in the garden, meeting neighbours and, as a surprise, the fabulous Cornish sea shanty singers entertained us.



It's no surprise that Sue has already established herself in the community. She is the new Church Warden at the village's beautiful church, our last destination. The congregation comprises eight people, but also has a good team of bell-ringers who gave us a display. To thank Sue and Geoff for all their organisation we presented flowers and wine to them at our last evening meal...

...in Cornwall!
Vernonne Allan



Woolmer Green Parish Council

Annual Meeting of the Council

The May Parish Council meeting was the first of the new Council year and the main responsibilities were allocated. The members of the Parish Council remain unchanged as follows:

Andy Gribble – Chairman and responsible for Transport, Young Persons' Liaison and a member of the Staffing Committee

Phil Corke – Deputy Chairman and responsible for Community, Village Hall and a member of the Staffing Committee

Tim Dix – responsible for Planning, Environment and Grounds

Sarah Hall – responsible for Finance, Allotments Liaison and a member of the Staffing Committee

Rob Horton – responsible for Planning and Environment

Grant Pinney – responsible for Community and Village Hall

The Council also approved the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 and the Accounting Statement for 2022/23.

Wheels on Woolmer Green

Wheels on Woolmer Green returned for another year on the first May Bank Holiday and was bigger than ever. Around 300 vehicles attended, including motor bikes and a tractor as well as cars. There was food and entertainment including The Woolmer Green Band.

The Best in Show was awarded to a 1953 Chevy (top picture).

The show was free to attend as a visitor or with a



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Woolmer Green Parish Council



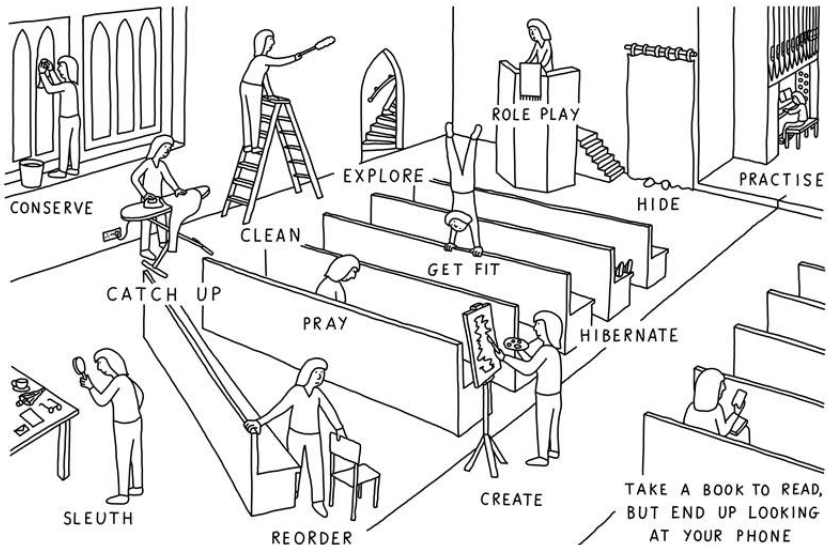
car but there was a collection for Just One Click Away, a mental health charity. An amazing £943 was raised and presented to Justin Burgess and Chris Bowden from the charity by Councillors Andy Gribble and Grant Pinney and local resident, Rob McGuinness.

Thanks in particular to Councillor Grant Pinney for organising the event and to Jackie Castle from The Red Lion for providing the bouncy castle and running the bar.

Sarah Hall
Woolmer Green Parish Council
sarah.hall@woolmergreenpc.org.uk

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Summer Quiz

Here is a quiz for you to puzzle over in July and August. The answers will be in the September magazine. The first set is all related to Summer—however remotely!

1. Whose Summer residence is Castel Gandolfo?
2. Which British pop group had a big hit with “In the Summertime”?
3. Which Shakespearian sonnet has the first line “Shall I compare thee to a Summer’s day?” ?
4. By what name is the character Puck in *Midsummer Night’s Dream* also known?
5. Compo was the nickname of a character in *Last of the Summer Wine*. What was the character’s proper name?
6. What term is used for a period of hot dry weather in Autumn?
7. On what date does Summer officially begin?
8. Which saint’s day falls on 15th July each year?
9. What old wives’ tale is associated with that day?
10. In which country is the First Day of Summer an annual public holiday, celebrated in April?
11. Name the cities which hosted the Summer Olympics in the following years: a) 1952 b) 1960 c) 1972 and d) 1988.
12. Where is the UK’s longest pier?
13. Who wrote the lyrics to *Summertime* from *Porgy and Bess*?
14. In which month and year did the first Glastonbury Festival occur?
15. What is the fictional town in which the Australian sitcom “*Home and Away*” is set?

The next completely random set of statements has nothing to do with Summer and each statement requires a True or False response.

16. In *Star Wars* Darth Vader says “Luke I am your father.” T/F
17. There is a turtle that can breathe through its bum. T/F
18. Oprah Winfrey’s real first name is Susannah. T/F
19. Mercury is the hottest planet in the solar system. T/F
20. Ants have extremely large lungs compared to their body size. T/F
21. The leading role for *Forrest Gump* was first offered to John Travolta. T/F
22. The planet Uranus was almost called George. T/F
23. Elephants can’t jump. T/F
24. Hamsters are illegal in Hawaii. T/F
25. Wild hippos can only be found in Africa. T/F

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Welwyn Parish Council



As Councillor Bill Morris wrote in the June article the elections are now over. This means that with councillors signing their “declaration of acceptance of office” all 11 positions have been filled. I’d like to welcome a new Councillor, Penny Barrington, who has joined the Parish Council, representing Welwyn Village.

If you’d like to know who “your councillors” are you can go the Welwyn Parish Council website <https://welwyn-pc.gov.uk>, there are five councillors for Welwyn Village and two for each of the wards of Digswell, Mardley Heath and Oaklands.

Our new chairman—Alex Bardett

I’d like to thank my fellow Councillors for appointing me Chair (I think!) and I hope that I’m able carry on the great work that Marj did in her three years in the position. I am very pleased that she is staying on as a Councillor and trust that she’ll gently guide me down the right track while I’m finding my feet.

In Borough news, the local elections bring a change at Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council. With no one party having an overall majority, a coalition council has been formed with a change of leadership and executive committee. With Purdah over (the pre-election period where there are restrictions in communications), the long running saga of the local plan (housing) rumbles on, with the Government Planning Inspector issuing his response (post-election) to the Main Modification Consultation (none of which affect Welwyn Parish areas), meaning that the Borough Council will need to do some more work before the local plan can be adopted. We don’t expect that this will affect our Neighbourhood Plan which Councillor Bill Morris has drafted but we will keep this under review.

Continued on page 40

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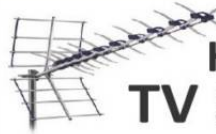
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Welwyn Parish Council

Continued from page 38 With an eagerness to “go green” the Parish Council has agreed locations for the Borough Council to install electric vehicle chargers in two of our carparks. These will shortly be installed outside the front of the Civic Centre (six) and in the Whitehill carpark (eight). The Borough scheme is aimed at providing overnight 7-22 kW EV charging for homes without their own parking or charging facilities such as Prospect Place, Mill Lane and part of School Lane. We selected these carparks so that parking for the village shops and restaurants wouldn't be affected and so that they could be used during the day for visitors using the Civic Centre, Whitehill Centre, the Bowls Club and Tennis Club. For those wanting faster charging, The White Hart in Welwyn is installing three 75 kW rapid chargers for open use against the wall opposite the Stables accommodation in their carpark.

In further “pub wall news”, the rebuilding of the lengthy collapsed Church wall at The Rose and Crown beer garden has finally been completed, a great job by all those involved. Thankfully 70% of the cost of this was covered by the Parish Councils insurers with the rest funded from the Council reserves. More work needs to be done on the north wall and we are currently working with the Church to progress this. It's interesting to note that under the Local Government Act 1972 when a churchyard is closed as it becomes full, responsibility for the walls amongst other things is passed to the Parish Council. St Mary's churchyard was closed to burials in 1882.

By the time that you are reading this Welwyn Festival will have been and gone. We hope that it was enjoyed by all. Many thanks to the Welwyn Festival Committee for organising this charity event again. It isn't too late to donate if you'd like to. You can do this and see the 2023 charities at www.welwynfestival.org.uk/charities

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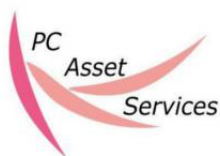
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News from the zoo

There has been a lot happening at Whipsnade Zoo in recent months and most of it is very good news.

The Przewalski's mares have both foaled, so we have not one but two delightful Przewalski foals (a male called Luujin and an unnamed female) which you can see in the drive through "Passage through Asia". Whipsnade plays an important part in the breeding of these endangered wild horses and thanks to the international breeding and reintroduction programme there are now herds of Przewalski's horses roaming the steppes of Mongolia, Central Asia and Eastern Europe, where they were formerly declared extinct.



Three new, young European brown bears have arrived from Sweden. Sisters Mana and Minion are four years old and are still mostly segregated from our seven year old, Cinderella, while the third and youngest bear, Naya (one year old) has been introduced to Cinderella and seems to be enjoying her new surroundings. At least, since all four of them came from Sweden, they should speak the same language!

Khari, the lion who had been staying at Whipsnade while his enclosure was being redeveloped, has gone back home to Blackpool and his place has been taken by two young lionesses from Antwerp Zoo – Waka and Winta. They are sisters and they will soon be joined by Malik, a young lion from Neuwied Zoo in Germany. It is the first time there will be a breeding pride of lions at Whipsnade in decades. Lion gestation takes 110 -120 days, so next year we could, perhaps, hear the patter of lion cub paws...

Hoover, our adult male common hippo, has moved on to a new home and a new lady friend – called Godzilla! You can visit him at Flamingo Land in Yorkshire. Lola, Hoover's son Hodor, and Tapon, the pygmy hippo, are still with us.

Makari, one of our tiger "cubs" has also moved on to further the breeding

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News from the zoo

programme of the highly endangered Amur Tiger. Czar, his brother, is the remaining tiger at Whipsnade.

Our Mangalitsa sow has farrowed and her piglets are all doing well. Like wild boar, the piglets are stripy when first born but soon develop their striking, curly sheep-like coats. Mangalitsa pigs come in three colours, red, white and black. So far, it looks like ours will be a mix of red and white piglets.



The rockhopper penguins have hatched two chicks which are beginning to be visible around the pool.

The Pere David deer have produced 13 fawns! This species of deer is extinct in the wild, so that is particularly good news. The fawns can also be seen in the Passage through Asia drive-through. It is hoped that it will be possible to re-introduce the deer to their native territories in China once a sufficiently large captive breeding population has been established.

Koko, our oldest chimpanzee, has just celebrated her 50th birthday. She likes blowing raspberries at visitors!

The babies I mentioned in a previous article (Visayan Warty Pig, Wilfred the Giraffe, Peanut and Pistachio the otters, Nang Phaya the elephant) are all thriving and welcome visitors, each in their own way.

If you visit Whipsnade Zoo, your entrance fee helps to support the breeding and conservation programmes run by ZSL throughout the world – not just in the UK. It is a wonderful day out, with so much to see and do. Please come and see us, if you can.

Rita McNeill

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Church Notice Board

ST MARY'S - Welwyn www.welwyn.org.uk

Sunday	8.00 am	Holy Communion
Sunday	9.30 am	Parish Communion / Junior Church
Sunday	6.30 pm	Evensong (2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays)
Wednesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer
Wednesday	9.30 am	Holy Communion
Saturday	9.00 am	Parish Prayers

Confessions By arrangement with the Clergy.

The Ministry of Counsel and Absolution is available to anyone who seeks it at any time.

Clergy Surgery Hour

Saturdays 10.00 am to 11.00 am

A member of the team will be available in church for any enquiries. Mainly intended for Baptisms or Weddings, but not exclusively restricted to those matters.

ST MICHAEL'S - Woolmer Green www.stmichaels-wg.org.uk

Sunday	11.15 am
1st and 4th Sundays	Parish Eucharist:
2nd Sunday	Family Service
3rd Sunday	All Age Eucharist
5th Sunday	Morning Prayer

AYOT ST PETER www.ayotstpeter.com

1st Sunday	11.15 am	Matins: (<i>Book of Common Prayer, King James' Bible</i>)
2nd and 5th Sundays	11.15 am	Holy Communion: (<i>Book of Common Prayer, King James' Bible</i>)
3rd Sunday	11.15 am	Family Service: (<i>Common Worship, NRSV Bible</i>)
4th Sunday	11.15 am	Parish Communion: (<i>Common Worship, NRSV Bible</i>)

EVANGELICAL CHURCH - Welwyn www.welwyn-evangelical.org.uk

Sunday	9.45 am	Bible Classes (All ages 7+)
Sunday	11.00 am and 6.30 pm	(Facilities for young children)
Wednesday	8.00 pm	Bible Study (except 3rd Wednesday)

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Meditation: The Power of Nature

“Trees make us happy” said Robert Macfarlane on the radio today. Mike, Nadia and I walked the Ridgeway in May and on that walk we encountered some lovely beech woods, their new leaves a pure shade of translucent green. What was it that got to us weary walkers and lifted our spirits? R.L. Stevenson writes of “that subtle something, that quality of the air, that emanation from old trees, that so wonderfully changes and renews a weary spirit.”

At one point on the walk, we stopped to take in the view of a steep hillside crossed with hedges. You could pass by and not see it. You could see just a hill and miss all the shades of green, the hedges crammed with creamy hawthorn blossom, the dappled sunshine. Ralph Emerson writes: “Many eyes go through the meadow, but few see the flowers.” What else would we miss? Rachel Carson writes: “There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature—the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter.” Going at nature’s pace means slowing down, breathing in the fresh air, our only focus on the whole tapestry of life going on at its own pace. Nadia, whose eyesight was so much better than ours, spotted a deer standing in a hollow among bluebells and buttercups, looking across at us. Thanks to her that is one of the most treasured memories of our walk.

Is beauty only found in visible things? A line in a hymn comes to mind: “the beauty of Thy peace.” Can peace be beautiful? I don’t know, but both visible beauty and the experience of peace have this in common: they can lift us from our daily concerns. Katie Macleod writes, on a visit to Iona, where we spent four days in March: “It was palpable, the beauty and the serenity and the peace washed over me.” Our experience was equally powerful—Nadia said it had gone into her heart. Perhaps being a place of pilgrimage since the 7th century had something to do with it as well as the unspoilt loveliness of the island.

Most children have no problems engaging with nature. I love these words of E.E.Cummings: “The world is mud-luscious and puddle-wonderful.” It reminded me of our son, aged four, walking through a farmyard exclaiming “I love muck!”

We live in a beautiful place. What is nature up to today?

“What is this life if full of care

We have no time to stand and stare?”

Gay Carpenter