

The Welwyn Magazine



February 2021

www.welwyn.org.uk

60p

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February 2021

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Danesbury Fernery Notice board

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Editor's Note:

We normally publish reports on activities and meetings occurring in the village but these activities have inevitably been cancelled due to Covid-19. Hence, therefore, there is little to report!

We would welcome any articles on local matters from our readers. Please send details on e:mail to:

magazine@welwyn.org.uk or contact St Mary's church office on **01438 840964**

EDITOR'S NOTES

Articles by the 1st of the month preceding publication, see details above.

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

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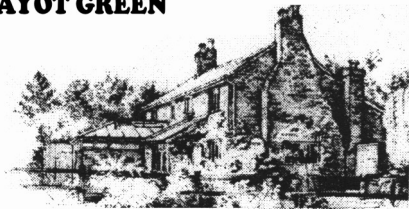
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The Rector's Letter

Dear Friends

I sit at my desk writing this article ahead of the busy Christmas period and anticipating what it might look like when readers view it in February 2021. So just a reminder at this point we look as though we are heading for a no deal Brexit – or is it last minute brinkmanship to get the best possible deal? And the first vaccines for front line workers and the most vulnerable are being administered.

My theme then is hope, one of the three great theological virtues of which St Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 13 – faith, hope and love. Of these probably hope is the most easily forgotten or overlooked. Indeed the word has become rather diluted to a sometimes vague aspiration – when someone says: ‘I’m hoping to make it’ or ‘I hope to be there on time’ it nearly always sounds like someone getting their excuses in early, and reassuring you that whilst the heart is willing the flesh is nowhere to be seen.

What then of these two ‘hopes’ – Brexit and an effective Vaccine? One of these I would contend, is far more like the biblical use of the word ‘hope’ than the other. Whatever we might individually ‘hope’ for in Brexit – and I realise that differs significantly – no one is sure they are going to get what they hope for. It’s on a knife edge, and given different people want different things – a large proportion of people are going to be disappointed whatever the outcome – we just don’t know which proportion it is yet. That is not like biblical hope.

The hope of the vaccine is however rather different. I might have to eat my words I suppose, but the vaccine does seem to promise the end of the present health crisis. We all know it will take months to roll out, and that in the meantime we will have to be patient, abide by the restrictions and prepare for bad outcomes. But we can clearly see the light at the end of the tunnel and that light is not a vague aspiration or mirage – we can see it being administered day by day.

That is much more like the biblical use of the word hope – in the bible hope is something which God has promised, but which has not yet arrived. However because God has promised it, it is certain that it will come. We aren’t there yet, but God promises a kingdom of righteousness and justice, a city where tears and sadness, suffering and death will be no more. And it is in that sense in which I wish you a hopeful new year.



David

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JESSIE - The Rectory Dog

Every New Year I am very happy, because, just before, I have to go for my annual check up at the vets and I have to have my 'jections. I don't like 'jections. I must be rather careful not to say that I don't like vets, because I might get into trouble with them – and so might Master.

I think it's fairer to say I don't like vet's places – they smell funny. And I know they are going to give me 'jections. So sometimes I do a nervous wee on the floor. I never get on the scales like a good dog when they want to weigh me – because it isn't nice to congratulate a lady on 'putting on a few pounds' whilst everyone in the waiting room can see. Once when they were feeling my tummy for nasties I even turned round and tried to bite the vet – which was a bit embarrassing for Master, and I had

to wear a muzzle.

But this year it all went very well. The lovely vet complimented me on my teeth, tickled my tummy than poked, and gave me treats before *and* after

'jections. So I was very happy. But I did do a little wee. And I was very pleased to leave. Now I am all bouncy and healthy for 2021.



Jess



Parish Registers

Ayot St Peter's

Wedding

5th December Clare Robinson & Joseph McEigott

St Mary's Welwyn

Funerals & Cremations

2nd November Barbara Jean Sheppard

9th December Diane Claire Winwood

11th December Irene Jean Tanner

22nd December Rhoda Reay



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WELWYN ST MARY'S FOOTBALL TEAM



Tommy Taylor heads clear from a corner

An update on Welwyn St Mary's FC has not been sent to the magazine since the the 2019/20 football season was curtailed back in March. In line with regulations, St Mary's returned gradually to training in the summer and the squad has been strengthened with several new additions.

So far it has been a stop-start season. St Mary's has played four pre-season fixtures against opposition from the county leagues and have had several fixtures postponed. We entered the Christmas break in third place in the league with two wins and two draws, just two points off the top with two games in hand. The most recent match to be played was on 12th December when Welwyn beat FC Cornerstone of Stevenage 3-2. The new signings contributed well with Matt Wren taking on the entire Cornerstone defence to pull back the ball for the captain Tom Reason to finish well. Cornerstone struck back just before half time. However Welwyn went ahead again with a sublime chip from James Stevens and then a second for Tom Reason, this time from the penalty spot. The penalty occurred after new signing Dammy Oluwadamilola had been bundled to the ground. Robbie Oldham almost broke the crossbar with a thunderous drive to nearly make it 4-1. The opposition almost snatched a point by scoring with five minutes remaining and then almost equalising with the final phase of the game as our 'keeper Brad Cook blocked a point-blank header with his feet.

Michael Chegade

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MARDLEY HEATH WI



By chance some of us have crossed paths while out shopping, but there have been no 'proper' meetings since the garden ones last August. The usual October produce show did take place, but virtually, with members submitting their entries via photographs. County Office have kept us in touch by means of Zoom meetings covering Speakers' Auditions, next year's proposed National Resolutions, a gin tasting (!), and an illustrated talk about the ghosts of Hampton Court Palace.

Members were surprised and delighted when boxes of assorted treats for Christmas were delivered to each of us by our hard-working Committee members. Much time and thought must have gone into assembling them.

A card was sent congratulating a founder member and one-time President on her 100th Birthday. She is Betty Banks, now living in the Midlands, whom many will remember as the cook at Oaklands School, our present meeting place.

The Air Ambulance was sent a donation as we were unable to attend the usual fund-raising event hosted by Diane Jenkins.

The custom of presenting birthday flowers has continued, and six beautiful arrangements by Betty Wiffen were delivered in December. In happier times these would have formed the table decorations for our Christmas party before being given to the lucky ones to take home.

Doreen Bath has completed the programme for 2021. We wait to see if and when it can be implemented.

Marjorie Sandiford



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New OWL members

In our last article before Christmas, we reported that 2020 had seen a further increase in members registered with OWL to receive alerts about scams and crime in our neighbourhood. If you're not yet registered but received a smartphone, tablet or even a new desktop computer for Christmas, please consider joining Neighbourhood Watch now using the link at the bottom of the page.

As well as writing for the Welwyn Magazine, we include articles in the quarterly Welwyn News, distributed to every household in Welwyn. In the Winter 2020 edition, we appealed for new members to come forward in Clockhouse Gardens, Windsor Road, Harmer Green Lane and New Road where members were thin on the ground. Our appeal drew a few positive responses, but more would be very welcome. Do you know anyone who lives in these roads or apartments? Whilst maintaining social distancing, could you ask if they know about Neighbourhood Watch?

As to the other areas of Welwyn, it's quite likely that your neighbour next door or opposite is not yet a member. Could you do them a favour and invite them to join? Since the pandemic hit us and we began taking more care to look out for one another, lots of WhatsApp groups have sprung up covering roads or areas. If you belong to one, could you post an example OWL message for your neighbours to see? Or maybe you're in touch with local friends and contacts who share other interests such as tennis or walking, and might perhaps be interested in Neighbourhood Watch too?

Before the pandemic hit us last year, it had been the practice for the police to periodically canvass whole roads in Welwyn Hatfield, knocking on every door to encourage residents to sign up for OWL messages. That helped us to grow to the 47% coverage we now have in Welwyn. We don't know when it might be possible for the local police to resume their visits. In the meantime, it's up to us – and you – to spread the word that the more people receiving Neighbourhood Watch OWL messages, the safer we all are.

John Mitchell and Valerie Richards
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WOOLMER GREEN PARISH COUNCIL



Entech site – The building works on the shops and office complex are making good progress and the Parish Council understands that a convenience store is likely to open around mid February 2021 although this has not been officially confirmed.

Marshalls site – The car dealership has closed but the lease on the site expires in July 2021 so the site remains Marshalls' responsibility until then. The owners have submitted the area to be considered for residential or a mixed development and this is under consideration as part of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan.

Village Hall – The hall remains closed for most activities but there are some that are allowed to take place. Please make enquiries for bookings to bookings@woolmergreenpc.org.uk.

Woolmer Green Farmers' Market

Woolmer Green Market 2021

24 January
28 February
28 March
25 April
23 May
27 June
18 July
26 September
24 October
28 November
12 December

The Christmas market was a great success and well attended. The market adheres to Covid-19 secure guidelines so there is a track and trace form to complete on arrival (or the QR code to scan) and a one way system in place through the Hall.

Please wear a mask indoors, keep your distance and use the hand sanitiser available.

A number of stalls are outside for those who prefer not to go indoors.

Thank you to Tracie, the market manager, for all her work to make the market so successful and popular.

Sarah Hall
Woolmer Green Parish Council
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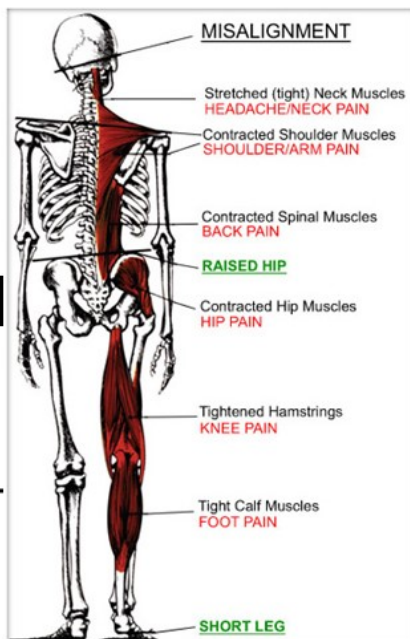
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NOVEMBER PCC MEETING

The PCC met, or perhaps we should say convened since this meeting took place entirely over Zoom, on Monday evening the 16th of November, efficiently chaired by the Rector, David Munchin, .

The following were appointed;

New treasurer – Maggie Varco,

New secretary – Louise Hughes,

New safeguarding officer – Vicky Jenkin

New person responsible for Fabric - Stuart Jenkin

Continuing in post as vice-chairman - Sue Keach.

In addition the three lay leaders of worship – Jo Fozzard, Wendy Lawrence and Joy Hanratty have kindly agreed to continue in post.

More difficult to fill is the acutely felt vacancy left by the departure of Dominic Holroyd-Thomas. The formalities involved in appointing a new curate mean that it is unlikely that a replacement will be appointed earlier than mid-summer 2022.

The outgoing treasurer, Don Bell, reported on the state of the finances. In this year of need the finances have been greatly helped by a generous gift and a legacy to St Mary's.

Mr Bell had also been investigating suppliers of 'green' energy (electric power). He had concluded that it came down to a straight choice between EON and Octopus Energy. There is very little or no difference between their offers. The meeting agreed to leave it to Mr Bell to enter into a supply contract for St Mary's with one or the other of them

As a result of far fewer or none of the congregation being able to attend church in person and make a contribution to St Mary's during the offertory hymn, many have taken to donating online via the St Mary's Virgin Money Giving page using a debit or credit card and as a result donations online have increased appreciably.

In addition to this and for the benefit of those who are able to attend St Mary's, now and in future, but may not care to donate via Virgin Money, Maggie Varco is investigating the possibility of placing a contactless card payment terminal in church to make it easier to donate without the need for cash.

Otherwise there were two main topics considered by the meeting; the ongoing matter of replacing the old heating boiler, which is proving less than straightforward. It was under discussion at the July 2020 PCC at which time it was

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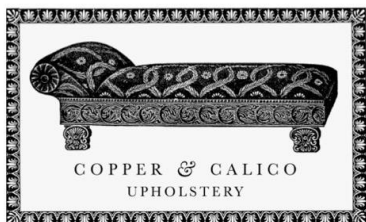
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NOVEMBER PCC MEETING

Continued from p 15

hoped to have the replacement up and running in time for this winter but that has not been possible for a number of reasons, some foreseen, others not. The project continues but now one company will handle the removal of the existing boiler, another, the re-lining of the flue and a third the installation of a new boiler. Meanwhile it was also decided to have the inoperative ground source heat pumps overhauled and brought back to serviceable condition.

Hopefully, once those projects are completed we should have a warm and cosy church once more.

The Rector mentioned that plans were in place for the Christmas services to accommodate the various possibilities that the Covid-19 regulations prevailing at Christmas time might necessitate.

The other matter under review is the possibility of upgrading the audio-visual equipment used for live-streaming the church services via YouTube and other media. The Rector is receiving advice and assistance from two local companies. Of course, any new equipment bought or hired will have a cost. Those who rely on the broadcast services would appreciate the improvement in audio quality.

David Hughes

WHY IS VACCINATION SAFE AND IMPORTANT



Vaccination is the most important thing we can do to protect ourselves and our children against ill health. They prevent up to 3 million deaths worldwide every year.

Since vaccines were introduced in the UK, diseases like smallpox, polio and tetanus that used to kill or disable millions of people are either gone or seen very rarely.

Continued on p 19

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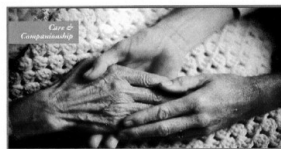
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WHY IS VACCINATION SAFE AND IMPORTANT?

Continued from p 17

Other diseases like measles and diphtheria have been reduced by up to 99.9% since their vaccines were introduced.

However, if people stop having vaccines, it's possible for infectious diseases to quickly spread again as the number of unvaccinated people increases. Measles is increasing in groups where vaccination levels have fallen.

Vaccines:

- Protect you from many serious and potentially deadly diseases.

- Protect other people in your community – by helping to stop diseases spreading to people who cannot have vaccines.

- Get thoroughly safety tested before being introduced – they're also monitored for any side effects.

- Sometimes cause mild side effects that will not last long.

- Reduce or even get rid of some diseases – if enough people are vaccinated

Vaccines:

- Do not cause autism – studies have found no evidence of a link between the MMR vaccine and autism

- Do not overload or weaken the immune system.

- Do not cause allergies or any other conditions – all the current evidence tells us that vaccinating is safer than not vaccinating

- Do not contain mercury (Thiomersal)

- Do not contain any ingredients that cause harm in such small amounts – but speak to your doctor if you have any known allergies such as eggs or gelatine

The World Health Organization (WHO) recently listed vaccine hesitancy as one of their top 10 biggest threats to global health.

Information taken from - www.nhs.uk

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A booklet published by the NHS has been brought to our notice. The front cover of the booklet is reproduced above. It certainly contains a large amount of useful information. Unfortunately, as yet, we have not been able to identify a source of “hard copy” but an electronic version, as a pdf file, is available from the following web site:
<https://www.enhertscg.nhs.uk/document-type/leaflets>.

Tony Keach
Editor

DANESBURY FERNERY – AN UPDATE

DANESBURY FERNERY

“THE BEST TO BE FOUND IN THE HOME COUNTIES”

In 1859, William John Blake commissioned James Pulham and Son of Broxbourne to construct a fernery in an old chalk pit at Danesbury. Once built, the new fernery was planted by the head gardener Anthony Parsons and maintained alongside ornamental gardens, a palm house, walled gardens and extensive parkland. The grounds were well planted, as shown by the two watercolours reproduced here. The one below depicts the view from the house towards where Welwyn Garden City is today. Both watercolours were painted by William's daughter Fanny Blake.



There is no doubting the continuing success of the Danesbury Fernery, which reflects the immense amount of work and dedication put in by a team of hardworking volunteer gardeners. The volunteers wish to express their appreciation for the many favourable and encouraging comments they receive from the numerous visitors to the Fernery.

As the days lengthen and we can think positively to the joys of spring, please make sure you visit the Fernery which has been restored over the past five years by volunteers in partnership with the Borough Council. You will not fail to notice the massive changes that the volunteers have achieved.

In October 2020 the volunteers completed a further phase of planting many thousands of bulbs, which has been gathering pace over the past few years.

DANESBURY FERNERY – AN UPDATE



We planted vast numbers of iris Reticulata Pixie, crocus Tomassinianus, and more daffodil varieties including ‘February Gold’, ‘Tête à Tête’ and ‘Golden Bells’.

Additionally, we have planted huge numbers of white wild daffodils, - Pseudonarcissus Lent Lily narcissus, that will easily be viewed from the field, which will hopefully draw passing walkers into visiting the Fernery.

The October 2020 bulb planting adds to the numerous snowdrops, Blue Crocus, Winter Aconites, Narcissus, Blue Cammasias and delicate pink cyclamens, that were planted in previous years.

This bulb planting will hopefully bring the Fernery back to life and raise our spirits after a long and difficult winter with a fabulous display.

Meanwhile, we have also continued to plant many more varieties of ferns, and where possible these reflect the ferns likely to have been originally planted.

Those readers who have not visited the Fernery recently will see that many changes have taken place during 2020.



These include:-

The installation of a rustic bridge over the gorge, replacing an original long lost bridge, together with some lovely new planting on the north bank.

Continued on p 24

DANESBURY FERNERY – AN UPDATE (Continued)

Continued from p23

A grill over the dropping well water tank, so visitors can marvel at its Victorian brick barrel roof construction, together with some surrounding protective Victorian wrought iron fencing.

Restoration of the dropping well, so that on open days, water will be turned on for visitors to enjoy.

Reinstatement of the missing pieces of Victorian estate fence panels and the entrance gate into the Fernery, thus creating an ‘air of antiquity’ as visitors enter the Fernery. The fence panels and gate have been kindly donated by a near neighbour, Dennis Goldsmith.



Provision of an Information Board, which is located beside the middle kissing gate entrance to the field off Digswell Park Road - the bumpy road. The Information Board will provide visitors with a brief historical background to the Fernery, together with an overview of the recovery work and restoration plus the subsequent planting of ferns, wild flowers and Victorian themed plants. (See Magazine front cover)

In the Spring of 2021 the volunteers hope to purchase a second garden bench out of donations received. This will be sited on the south bank to complement the existing bench on the north bank.

The Friends of Danesbury Fernery gratefully acknowledge the continuing support they receive from Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, and particularly for allocating funds received from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government for the purchase of the rustic bridge, the dropping well grill and the information board.

Finally, more volunteers are always welcome. If you have some spare time, whatever your gardening skills, please do visit the website which will tell you how to find us - www.danesburyfernery.org.uk/about

Harry Ward

LENT COURSES

For the February magazine we would normally be including all the church material for Lent, Holy Week and Easter – this year from Ash Wednesday on 17th February to Easter Day on April 4th. This would include details of services and the Lent course which we would be running.

Understandably with publication deadlines and a fast changing corona virus situation it is not possible to say how such courses and services will take place. They will take place, but at this stage they may be virtual or ‘real’, or most probably a combination of both, and it may shift during the course of Lent.

What we can say is that our Lent course will begin from Monday 22nd February, and will be based around some very imaginative material from the Diocese of Norwich. Susannah Gunner is chaplain to the Bishop of Norwich and is a prominent Christian educationalist. She worked at St Albans Cathedral as Education officer when I worked there. She is a good friend of Susannah Underwood with whom she trained for the ministry. She has just published a course called ‘Connect! Contemporary Crises and Everyday Faith’, looking at issues such as work, home life, food, and the environment. It’s a colourful and accessible course – when we give out details please do feel to join it. We have plenty of copies for people to use.

Sorry not to be more definite on nuts and bolts, but I hope you will understand why, and please do join in – details can always be found on our church’s website and Facebook pages.

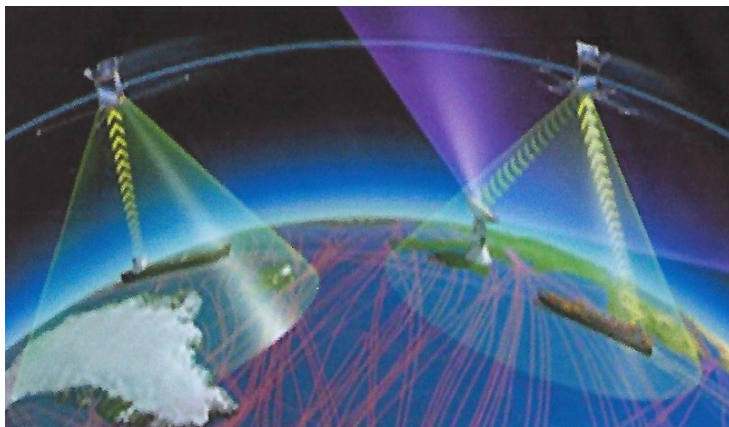
Further details of the course can be found here: https://www.networknorwich.co.uk/Articles/593022/Network_Norwich_and_Norfolk/Opportunities/Resources/Everyday_faith_and_contemporary_crises_booklets.aspx

David Munchin

Rector

"Satellites for Seafarers"

Philip Molloy



The Men's Breakfast continues on-line. Thirty four gentlemen joined the Zoom talk, after their breakfast, to hear a talk by Philip Molloy, to give him his full title BSc Mech Eng. (London). Member BIS. College Lecturer formally of Rolls Royce Aero Engines. He moved on to become a 'Rocket Scientist' working for 38 years in the UK spacecraft industry. He has worked on communications, environmental, scientific, interplanetary and military spacecraft. Before he retired to do lecturing, he was Chief Engineer on a \$1.5bn space program for the UK MOD. He is one of the most eminent rocket and satellite scientists in the UK and in Europe.

The story of maritime satellites begins with the formation of ESA, the European Space Agency. In 1975 it started building the first of two satellites. Marecs A was built at BAE in Stevenage. It was completed in 1980 and launched successfully by an Ariane French rocket to cover shipping in the Atlantic. This rocket travelled at 7,000mph and consumed 5 tons of fuel per second!

Construction then began on a more advanced satellite Marecs B to cover the Pacific Ocean. It was completed in 1982 and launched in 1982 from French Guyana. Unfortunately, the Ariane rocket exploded scattering parts of the satellite over West Africa. Unbelievably, some components were recovered and were reused together with some spare and some new parts. The third satellite was not named Marecs C but Marecs B2 to embarrass the Ariane rocket builders! It was launched successfully in 1984.

ONLINE MEN'S BREAKFAST - October 2020

The Marecs satellites had 60 channels and one emergency channel. It soon became clear that there was a huge demand from shipping, which needed to be met. So the next generation of satellites was provided by INMARSAT a commercial company based in London. Four were launched between 1990 and 1992 to cover all the oceans. They will last between 10 and 15 years. The programme has continued with INMARSATs 3,4,5 and 6. Thirteen satellites are currently in orbit. 40,000 ships are connected to its system and 9 out of 10 aeroplanes feedback technical information on each flight.

Phillip has given this talk on cruise ships and on one occasion a lady approached him with tears in her eyes and introduced her husband whose life had been saved after his yacht was wrecked by a storm in the Caribbean. He had pressed the button on his transponder on the emergency channel and he was picked up by the nearest vessel which was an oil tanker.



Satellite Construction in Stevenage

During questions he was asked about the UK having to leave the Galileo project as a result of Brexit. It has had a troubled history in its bid to create a European GPS system to provide an alternative to the American military owned GPS. After years of bickering between the countries, the project was started by Surrey Satellites, a small company based in Guilford, now owned by Airbus. There are now 5 satellites in orbit but 20 to 25 are needed for complete global coverage. ESA is separate from the EU so the decision to exclude the UK is entirely political, but it may also be due to the UK losing its lead due to a lack of government backing. France, Germany, Italy and other EU countries currently invest ten times more than the UK government. The future of companies such as Astrium in Stevenage, now foreign owned, are in doubt. The UK stands to lose £12bn a year in exports and thousands of jobs.

Philip must be glad that he is now retired! His talk was one of our new series of on-line get togethers. The next will be in late January. We are hoping that 2021 will see us resume our breakfasts in Church House.

Peter Lee

If you are not on the Men's Breakfast list and would like to be notified of future speakers, or if you would like to watch a recording of a Breakfast talk please email Jim Read -- jimread55@gmail.com

FRIENDS OF DANESBURY & QVM HOSPITAL

With Christmas and the New Year now only a memory we have had no escape from the reality of the turmoil which the Covid-19 pandemic has taken on the nation. However with the positive news of the vaccine, we can start to foresee our lives returning to something like normal.

For the patients and staff at Danesbury Neurological Centre and QVM Hospital, and other similar facilities which are part of Hertfordshire's NHS Services, the turmoil caused by Covid-19 has been very keenly felt. Resources have been extremely stretched, clinical staff became poorly with Covid-19 and had to take time off, affecting staffing levels. This is where the support given by the Friends has been really appreciated.

The money that we raise – through our shop and by donations- enables us to fund a range of 'things' which directly benefits both inpatients and patients in the community. As well as funding equipment which the NHS cannot provide, we have directly supported patient welfare and comfort.

The greatest source of income for the Friends is from our shop but, as you all know, we were unable to open the shop for six months of 2020 which has meant a substantial loss of income. We are relying more and more on other income streams. The trustees have had to start thinking 'outside the box' to try and find new ways of raising funds for our charity. If you shop online and would like to support us, one of the easiest ways to do so, at no cost to you, is by easyfundraising.org.

We would like to thank everyone who supported our Christmas raffle and Christmas Market. We raised £522 from the raffle, which was won by a nurse at Danesbury Hospital, and £283 was raised at the Christmas Market.

At the end of December 2020 the Friends launched a new updated, streamlined website which can be accessed on danesburyqvm.co.uk. The instructions on how to donate via easyfundraising.org are available on the website under Donations. You can also easily access the shops Facebook page and eBay shop from the website.

To achieve our aims, we rely on your support.

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WELWYN PARISH COUNCIL



I would like to start by wishing you all a peaceful, healthy, safe and happy 2021.

As I am writing this on New Year's Day I can't know what the next 12 months will bring but I am hoping that we will all be able to get some normality back into our lives.

The Parish Council, like many individuals, businesses and organisations has suffered financially due to the pandemic. Loss of hiring revenue from our facilities is impacting this fiscal year's performance and the continuing uncertainty makes forward planning difficult. Nevertheless, we are optimistic that this will change, enabling us to move forward with our Action Plan for the benefit of all our Parish residents.

Climate Emergency:- We will be talking to residents and businesses about how we can all contribute to making our Parish more environmentally friendly. Our Climate Emergency Group, made up of Councillors and volunteers from the Parish, is enthusiastic about our work to make Welwyn Parish carbon neutral by 2030. When we made our Climate and Environment Crisis Declaration we noted the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warning that failure to act in the next 12 years to limit a rise in global temperatures to 1.5 degrees centigrade would have a devastating impact on the planet. We would see marked increase in sea levels and flooding, extreme and abrupt changes to weather patterns, crop failures, extinctions of plant, insect and animal species and global economic disruption. This would detrimentally impact on the people of Welwyn Parish and billions of people around the world. We hope that we can all work together to help in any way we can.

Neighbourhood Plan:- When you read this article I expect you to have received a copy of our survey for completion and return. Ideally, we would have held public meetings to discuss the various aspects of the Plan but Covid 19 has prevented this. Please take the time to complete the survey. This is the only way we will know what you want to see happen in our Parish, what you like about living here and your ideas for any change. Hopefully, by the time we have analysed your responses we will be able to hold public meetings to discuss our next steps.

Whitehill Wildlife Site:- We are delighted to have been given the support of the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust which has helped accord the site, locally known 'the dog walking field', the status of Local Wildlife Site. There is a comprehensive article about this site in the winter edition of the Welwyn News which is delivered to all Parish Residents. This includes details of the site as it is now and I would encourage you to read this article.

Continued on p 32

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WELWYN PARISH COUNCIL

continued from p30

Our thanks go to Bill Morris and Leo Boon for their work on this project.

In my next article I hope to be able to tell you more about these and the other projects with which your Parish Council is keen to get involved.

Please look after yourselves and others.

Marj Otty
Chair Welwyn Parish Council

A SPECIAL THANK YOU.

This is a personal thank you to each and every one who sponsored, supported and encouraged me to achieve my 1200 laps of Codicote Churchyard. The objective was to raise funds for the purchase of sanitizers, masks etc to help keep St Mary's open: I owe special thanks to our dear friend Mike Carpenter whose enthusiasm and confidence in me, when I first broached the idea, inspired me to continue and also to Geoff Cummings and his committee whose approval allowed it to happen!

I completed the 1200 laps in December 2020 – totalling some 114 miles - equivalent to over 4 marathons, but I have been waiting to receive the final total for sponsorship which now stands at £522.25. This is an amazing amount and thank you all for being so very generous.

I shall continue to walk but now looking for a new challenge

Joan Shelley
January 2021

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Furthermore, when I lived in Africa in the 1960s, one of the most anticipated times of the year was when the flying ants emerged out of the ground. They were bigger than the ones we have in this country with an abdomen so large they could barely fly – and these ‘sausage flies’ were eagerly scooped up by the local population who squeezed out the contents and made a sauce to accompany the boiled leaves of pumpkins.



Continued on p 36

WE CAN SUPPORT YOU AT HOME



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More people are returning to work and are unable to care for their loved one as much as they were during lockdown anxieties can creep in.

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WELWYN NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY (Cont)

Continued from p 34

Did you ask if I tried it? Answer: I am ashamed to say that I didn't!

As you know, it's a little difficult to hold our meetings in the flesh as it were but I am delighted to say that we are to be Zoomed all the way from Stirling in Scotland on the evening of Wednesday 24th February at 8pm.

Douglas Moore from Nottingham University will be giving us the low-down on why it is important, and it might possibly save the planet, for us to be thinking about the farming of insects for inclusion in our diets. So... what's new? After all, the farming of snails is a big enterprise on the continent and I, for one, thoroughly enjoy snails - baked in butter and with some nice crusty bread together with a glass of good French wine.



We would love you to join us and there is no charge to do so. Please contact Claudia Harflett beforehand so that she can let you in to the meeting:

claudia.harflett@gmail.com (preferred) or ring her on 07754145029 after 7pm.

And... just a few more words.. I couldn't believe it when I opened the magazine of the Sunday Times yesterday to find a double-page spread on this very subject with the sub-heading "Creepy-crawlies can provide a growing population with protein and take the heat out of global warming". It's written by an entomologist in Pembrokeshire, Dr. Sarah Beynon, who, together with her team, produce a range of insect foods including crunchy crickets, edible mealworms and bug biscuits; I'll keep the article so that you could borrow it should you wish to read more. The picture is taken from the Sunday Times article ... one very happy bug!

Judith Watson



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NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SURVEY



By the time you read this article, if you are resident in the civil parish, you should have received the survey form for our Neighbourhood Plan through your letterbox. If not, please contact our Clerk (01438 716667 or e-mail clerk@welwynpc.org.uk) or download a copy from the Parish Council website (<https://welwyn-pc.gov.uk>); an online version is also available from there. It should take about an hour to complete and provide intellectual stimulus during Covid Lockdown and a great excuse to enjoy a mug of good coffee with your soul-mate!

There is no hidden agenda; the Parish Council want to know YOUR preferences, opinions and ideas. Post-Covid, we will organise public meetings and focus groups to discuss the Plan content, but we first need your views to give us somewhere to start.

The Plan is a vision for the future and will help us formulate and establish policy that residents have had a major hand in shaping. It cannot challenge the overall number of dwellings which the Borough's Local Plan specifies but it does give the community a say in defining the look and feel of new developments and the type of housing required, to make it more acceptable for the community at large. It also enables us to identify key strategic issues and solutions facing us: e.g. traffic, environmental, sustainable living; how we want our green spaces and leisure facilities to develop and our commercial centres and employment. It will help prioritise the use of our share of the Community Infrastructure Levy (charged on new developments to help improve local infrastructure). It will help prevent speculative development and is being developed with sustainability and the Climate Emergency at its heart.

The survey was funded by a central government grant. Completed forms may be posted back (using the envelope provided) to the Parish Council, or dropped in the letter box at our offices in Lockleys Drive, or left in a box outside the Civic Centre in Prospect Place (during opening hours). We have asked for responses by 8 February, but a good response is more important than the timely return of only a few. We want the results to be properly representative, so please tell us what you think and shape the future of our Parish for the next 15-20 years.

Bill Morris
Chair Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group



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NEWS FROM AYOT ST PETER



Agnes Bonham - a Victorian sculptress

Visitors to our church are often surprised to learn that the beautiful Caen stone pulpit was the work of a lady sculptor. Agnes Bonham completed a number of large works for churches, but

remains a relatively unknown artist. She never mentioned her work in any census return, simply listing “of independent means” - but she was not a lady of leisure!

Agnes was the youngest of six children of the Revd. John Bonham and his wife Barbarina (née Norris) who married in 1827. Revd. Bonham inherited Ballintaggart estate, Co Kildare, from his father, another John Bonham. Barbarina’s father was John Norris Esq. of Hughenden Manor, Buckinghamshire (later the home of Benjamin Disraeli and now a National Trust property).



Pulpit at Ayot St Peter

Revd. Bonham was curate at Dunsby parish in Lincolnshire. The couple’s first two children - Margaret Louisa and Mary - were born there. Around 1830 the family relocated to Ireland, and a further four children arrived – Francis, Anne Blanche, John and lastly Agnes Jane Susan born in 1837.

By 1861 the family were living in Cheltenham. John - now retired - was listed on the census as a clergyman “without the cure of souls”.

The timing of some of Agnes’ work is unclear, but her sculptures at St Margaret’s Church, Whitnash (Warwickshire) are dated as 1862 (a pulpit plus other carvings in the chancel). The book “A history and description of the parish of Whitnash” by James Reynolds Young (1865) features a lengthy description of the beauty of the new pulpit, but the artist is not named. Agnes is mentioned only as “a young lady, a friend of the Rector’s.”

Continued on p 42



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NEWS FROM AYOT ST PETER (Continued)

Continued from p 40



Pulpit at Bangor Cathedral

A newspaper article in “The Queen” dated 16 June 1888 stated that Agnes studied at “South Kensington, the Royal Academy and afterwards in Rome”.

Agnes enrolled at the Royal Academy of Arts in 1870. Her profession was “sculpture” and the address was 24 Ovington Square, Chelsea. At 33 years, Agnes was at least a decade older than the other students, but she was already an accomplished sculptress.

Agnes’s father died in 1875, the same year that the pulpit was installed at Ayot St Peter. In 1878 Agnes completed a carved pulpit of Caen stone for Bangor Cathedral, designed by Gilbert Scott.

By the time of the 1881 census Agnes was living with her mother at ‘Hillside’, South Norwood Hill. Barbarina died in 1882, and later Agnes moved into 9 Cypress Road, South Norwood, which was her final home.

Agnes was a member of St John the Evangelist church in Norwood and completed a reredos (a large decoration behind the altar) for them in 1888. “The Queen” states that Queen Victoria had “graciously accepted” a photograph of the work. Also in 1888 Agnes started on a reredos for Holy Trinity Church, New Westminster (British Columbia).



Altar and Reredos at St John’s the Evangelist , Norwood

Agnes died on 7 October 1906 aged 69, and was buried in Hughenden on 10 October. A plaque in St John’s records the gratitude of the congregation for her service to the church.

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Church Notice Board

Worship has now resumed in our churches.

*Please continue to follow the social distancing guidelines,
use of hand sanitiser and the wearing of face coverings is mandatory, unless you are exempt.*

Details about Virtual Church, which continues at 9.30 am each Sunday, can be found at:

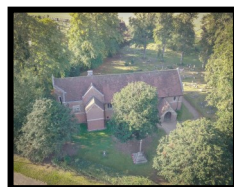
www.welwyn.org.uk

Sunday Services

	ST MARY'S - Welwyn
8.00 am	Holy Communion
9.30 am	Parish Communion / Junior Church
6.30 pm	Evensong (2nd , 4th & 5th Sundays)



	ST MICHAEL'S - Woolmer Green
11.15 am	Parish Eucharist (1st & 4th Sunday)
	Family Service (2nd Sunday)
	All Age Eucharist (3rd Sunday)
	Morning Prayer (5th Sunday)



Weekday Services

ST MARY'S - Welwyn

Current week's services are on the notice sheet
in church and on the website www.welwyn.org.uk

Tuesday	8.00 am	Morning Prayer (St Mary's)
Wednesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer (St Mary's)
Wednesday	9.30 am	Holy Communion (St Mary's)
Saturday	9.00 am	Parish Prayers (St Mary's)

ST GILES - Codicote

Tuesday	8.30 am	Morning Prayer (St Giles)
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Common Worship used at all Communion Services except where stated

Children

ST MARY'S - Welwyn

3.30pm	Craftea (see Diary on back cover for dates)
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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

Saturday	10.00 am to 11.00 am
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A member of the team will be available in church for any
enquiries. Mainly intended for Baptisms or Weddings but is
not exclusively restricted to those matters.

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Church Notice Board *continued from p44*

ALL SAINTS' DATCHWORTH

09.30 Sundays Holy Communion
 18.30 1st Sunday Sacred Space
 11.15 4th Sunday Family Service
 17.00 Thursday Evening Prayer



ST PETER'S TEWIN

09.30 Sundays Holy Communion
 11.15 3rd Sunday Family Service
 18.30 3rd Sunday Holy communion
 17.00 Monday Evening Prayer



AYOT ST PETER

11.15 Sundays
 1st: Matins:
(Book of Common Prayer, King James' Bible)
 2nd: Holy Communion
(Book of Common Prayer, King James' Bible)
 3rd: Family Service
(Common Worship, NRSV Bible)
 4th: Parish Communion
(Common Worship, NRSV Bible)
 5th: Holy Communion *(BCP, King James' Bible)*

ST GILES' CODICOTE

08.45 Sundays Holy Communion
 09.30 1st Sunday Worship 4U at Peace Memorial Hall
 10.30 2nd,4th Sun Informal Worship
 3rd Sunday Informal Worship with Communion

EVANGELICAL CHURCH WELWYN

09.45 Sunday Bible Classes *(All ages 7+)*
 11.00 Sunday *(facilities for young children)*
 18.30 Sunday *ditto*
 20.00 Wednesday Bible Study *(except 3rd Wednesday)*

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MEDITATION

The truth

Earnestly sought after by some, feared by others

Worshipped by some, treated as an optional extra by others.

The truth.

Despite being eagerly sought after by scientists, detectives, jurists, teachers and parents, I fear that it may be under threat.

Whilst there is a move within the medical and veterinary professions to use evidence-based medicine whereby currently held beliefs are reviewed by critical analysis of the underlying research; whilst we all rely on it for fairness and justice within society; and whilst honesty and openness are essential for harmonious relationships it appears that the value of the truth is being undermined in favour of personal opinion.

Without it we are lost, confused and cannot progress and yet it is frequently undermined by some for personal gain – self-preservation, fame, political and financial gain and popularity. Governments rise and fall due to votes cast on the basis of “fake news”. Relationships are broken, reputations are ruined and careers destroyed by malicious lies or manipulation of “the facts”. Both deliberate deceit and incorrect beliefs cause harm – physically, emotionally, financially and politically.

In this “internet-age”, there are many who use social media to pronounce their opinions.... and there are many who follow blindly. The voice of the true experts, those whose efforts are focussed on discovering the truth, are drowned out by a tidal wave of voiced opinion based on nothing more than anecdotes and popularity.

Is it not time for those of us who value the truth, and those of us who worship One who claims to be the Truth, to stand up for it, protect it, support it, insist on it and search for it?

It takes effort to find it, it may not be as palatable as what we want to hear.... but only with the truth does the light dawn.....

LT