

THE GRAPEVINE GREAT HINTON

February 2014

Editor Richard Clarke 870635
rclarke15@btinternet.com

Courageous Matt – our local Hero

20 September 2012 - my birthday! Matt, my husband, was serving in Afghanistan (had been there since June) and had promised to call at some point that day. I had received some lovely flowers from him (with a little help from our neighbour Rachael Lawes I think!) but as the day went on, I tried not to get anxious. I would often not hear from him on a day when I expected to ... often because of 'comms' being down due to an 'incident' or worse. They needed to stop all means of communication until next of kin had been informed. So it was with relief that I did finally hear from him that evening, he apologised as he had had a 'rather busy' day. We never spoke specifics; you aren't allowed to over the phone anyway, and our call continued with the usual exchange of information, mainly about life at home for myself and Alice, our daughter, aged 5 at the time.

Fast forward to just over a year later - 30 September 2013. Matt had returned from Afghanistan safely just before Christmas. He was away though, (only working in Cambridge Monday - Friday now thank goodness) and he rang me at work to tell me that I needed a new frock! My first thought was "oh, he must have the date for the Christmas Ball finally!" But no, it was a little more prestigious than that! He had just been told that he had been awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal - the medal is awarded for "exemplary acts of bravery" and just over 1000 medals have been awarded since its inception in 1974. We were off to the Palace!

In the following few weeks, I found out exactly just how 'busy' he had been that day in 2012 :-

(Excerpt from Daily Express)

Matt, a bomb disposal expert, spent ten hours in baking heat preventing the Taliban from blowing up a bridge by wading neck-high through water before removing his body armour to make safe the Kakar Bridge in Afghanistan's Helmand Province. He was called in to defuse the bomb on a key route to military supplies and local herdsmen after a wire was spotted at the bridge in September last year.

Fast forward again to 10 December 2013 and Matt and I (and Alice) found ourselves heading to Buckingham Palace for Matt to be awarded his medal by The Queen. On arrival, we were split up as Matt went to another room to join other award recipients (including Sir Bradley Wiggins!) whilst Alice and I were ushered to the main hall - a beautiful



room of red and gold with the most wonderful orchestra playing as we joined other family members at our seats. We had over an hour to wait before Her Majesty arrived. I enjoyed every moment soaking up the atmosphere - Alice not quite so much. Sitting still without a colouring book and pens (I didn't think!) and more importantly having surrendered my mobile phone, was not easy. There are only so many games you can play - 'count the number of chandeliers', 'guess what colour the Queen will be wearing' (It was Royal Blue by the way and Alice won!)

At last, the ceremony began - we were told not to clap or 'whoop' or anything like that and so we had to sit in 'relative' (well, she was only 6) silence for an hour and a half as we saw 88 worthy recipients collect their awards and have a little chat with The Queen - (she spoke to every single one for a minute or so). Matt was number 88! We were so proud (and relieved)!

Outside the Palace, we had our pictures taken and headed back to our lovely hotel, The Connaught, for lunch. We had been lucky enough to have been able to stay at this wonderful hotel and they had looked after us so very well. Matt and I will remember the champagne and goodies that our 'butler' brought to our room when all we had asked for was a cup of tea! Alice will probably remember the TV in the bathroom! Afterwards, we had a quick change and headed to Paddington. Our return train was around 3pm; we hoped to be home by 5pm at the latest. After all, we had another important event to attend that evening - Great Hinton Carol Service was starting at 7pm!

What a day!

The Wiltshire Times 13 October 2013

A bomb disposal expert waded neck high in an irrigation ditch before removing his body armour to make a vital bridge safe from a system of explosives. Major Matthew Long battled in the baking Afghan heat for 10 hours to prevent the Taliban from blasting the Kakar Bridge on a key route for military supplies and local herdsmen. Major Long, of the Royal Logistic Corps, was called into action when a wire was spotted at the bridge which is near an observation post and a military forward operating base in Helmand Province. He knew the area was exceptionally dangerous; only days before insurgents had killed a handful of Afghan soldiers and injured more when an IED (improvised explosive device) ripped through their checkpoint.

Major Long's heroics, in securing the devices, have earned him the Queen's Gallantry Medal in the latest round of military honours which see 117 service personnel recognised.

On September 20 last year the officer was called at night time to assess the situation after the suspicious wires were discovered. Realising the complexity and sophistication of the bombs - "the most sophisticated device I have seen in my tour," - Major Long decided to take action at first light even though it increased the risk of exposure to Taliban small arms fire. Major Long had to wade through a wadi filled with effluent - while searching for booby traps - to approach the detonators on the bridge's underside. It took him almost three hours to be sure no explosives were lurking in the water.

"It's pretty daunting, but I just had to get on with it," he said. "I was just thinking the sooner I get it done the better."

He disconnected the first charge, connected to 20kg of explosives, and recovered "dangerously unpredictable detonators". However, the second charge, containing another 20kg, was jammed into a confined space under girders at the opposite end of the bridge. The soldier was unable to access the second charge because of his protective layers - so he took them off and worked in just his fatigues.

His citation reads: "With astounding courage, Long exposed the device and remotely pulled it from its position revealing what appeared to be an anti-handling device attached to the underside."

Major Long destroyed the device in situ with a controlled explosion, before collecting Taliban materials for forensic analysis in the hope it would reveal clues about the bombmaker's identity.

(Continued on inside back page)

GREAT HINTON YOUTH CLUB

After a fantastic start, the youth club is continuing to grow from strength to strength. On the 25th of September, we were very pleased to be awarded the Community First / Youth Action Wiltshire's Phoenix Trophy, an award to recognize all of the hard work that the young people and adult volunteers have put into launching and running the new club.

At the youth club we enjoy participating in many different activities each week, including: table tennis, baking, cards, board games and quiz nights. We made our own Guy Fawkes for the village's bonfire night last October, which was great fun and also completed our hours of community work. As a result of our community work, we went on a reward trip ice-skating at Swindon Link Centre. It was a thoroughly enjoyable evening, and a really festive way to celebrate our last youth club meeting of 2013. This January, a few members recently went to an Arts and Crafts day at Lacock, learning some ideas for activities that can be used in the future.

We would like to thank Debbie and Rosie for all their hard work and support in the setting up and running of the youth club, as well as Youth Action Wiltshire for all their help.

The youth club takes place on a Friday evening from 7.30-10.00pm in the village hall.

For further information, please contact Debbie Scott 870410 or Rosie Keith 871772.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH NEWS

A very big thank you to all NHW distributors for passing on the newsletters and forwarding the rural crime information to your neighbours.

Thankfully NHW has been quiet on the domestic front, but I am still hearing of many burglaries of trailers/4x4's and quad bikes mostly in rural/farm areas.

With spring fast approaching, please ensure as you start getting out into the garden again that all your sheds/outbuildings are locked up and items secured to avoid unwanted visitors.

Please listen to the advice on cold calling and email scams as they are still on the increase. The advice from the police is to not give anyone any of your personal information over the phone or online no matter how much they seem to know about you. If they are genuine, they will not mind giving you their details for you to get back to them.

If you would like to be alerted by text/email of any local incidents, please either call or email me your details to

deb.scott@virgin.net

Debbie Scott
NHW Area
Coordinator
870410



MEN'S CHRISTMAS DINNER

The Lamb on the Strand was again our venue for the Men's Christmas Dinner, and what a successful evening we had! Everybody enjoyed the excellent food and hospitality from Brian and his staff. We were delighted to be joined by Stan Tarrant and Richard Haddow from Cold Harbour. We were of course saddened by the death of John Fennell who had booked and was looking forward to being with us.

The raffle, and auction of Kevin's framed photograph of Steeple Ashton petrol pumps, raised a combined total of £127.00 for the Ladies chosen charity "Stepping Stones."

I have decided that after five years organising the dinners, to let someone else take over, and am delighted that Matt Long has offered to step in, so that the dinners can continue.

Thank you everyone for your support.

Mike T.

Village Website

A volunteer is required, and this could be a teenager, who would be willing to wear a 'Press' badge at events and keep the website updated with news and details of forthcoming events. It is based on a simple format and uses a free website design service provided by BT for local communities. Full training given. It attracts readers from as far away as Sweden. If interested, please contact Kevin (870906)

Badminton Group

We play for an hour at the Christie Miller Sports Hall on Fridays at 8 p.m. We are of mixed ability and there's room for others to join the fun of playing doubles. So if you are interested give me a call.

Ken 870403

ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION

Our Village Hall proved to be a wonderful venue for a staggering display of a wide variety of the products of our villagers Arts and Crafts skills. Displays ranged from jewellery to stained glass leaded lights, traditional upholstery, watercolour and acrylic paintings, photography, tapestry and quilt work, iced cake decoration etc. etc... A special display area was designated to exhibit several of the late Mike Dodd's art works including pencil drawings, some of which were prepared at our Thursday Art Group when he was the Art Group Administrator.

Richard Clarke's winning raffle ticket for the print of the watercolour by Mike Truman of Devizes Market Place, was picked out as he took the photo.



VILLAGE KIOSK LIBRARY

We hope everyone is still enjoying our unique village library – we review the books on a regular basis and any that have been on the shelves a while we take to The Mind Charity Shop on Paxcroft.

Whilst we are very grateful to those of you who donate books may we please make a request that only books in good clean condition are donated. Sadly, lately we have been left quite a few that have had to be rejected and are not suitable for the Charity Shop either, meaning we have to dispose of them

Novels and biographies are very popular and there is also a good selection of children's books.

Your comments and suggestions on the future running of the Library would be very welcome.

Gwen and Anne

WHY NOT HIRE THE VILLAGE HALL?

We have a well-kept Village Hall which is available for anyone to hire at very reasonable rental charges. It is fitted with all the modern facilities including a fully equipped kitchen.

The Hall is the right size for family parties, with the use of the skittle alley if required.

For a small charge you may also hire chairs, tables, crockery and cutlery for parties in your home.

If you are a 100 Club Member, you are contributing to the upkeep of the Hall, so why not enjoy your investment by using it!

For Bookings, please contact Rebecca Locke on 01380 870588

We were able to hand over £181.00 to the ladies club chosen charity "Stepping Stones" from a percentage of the sales and the raffle.

Our thanks to all those who helped set up and dismantle the exhibition, and to the "Wiltshire Guild of Spinners and Weavers and Dyers, and the Methodist Church, Steeple Ashton, for the loan of the display screens.

Parish Council Business

Wiltshire Council is preparing a new development plan called a Core Strategy which has been in production for some time. In the first proposals it was intended to include the village in the countryside and remove our village development boundary. This proposal was strongly opposed by the Parish Council and Wiltshire Council changed its mind so the status quo remained.

Last year there was a public inquiry into the proposed plan and the inquiry inspector has now informed the Wiltshire Council of where he considers changes should be made. He considers there should be an extra 6,000 houses and said that the settlement boundaries are to be reviewed. These settlement boundaries are those which show the limits of the village development. It is not clear at this stage whether villages like Great Hinton will be part of the review and the Parish Council will keep a close watch on this. The purpose of this review is to find possible further housing sites. The additional housing figure rises to 43,000 houses to be built in Wiltshire Council area by 2026 (but some of these have already been built).

The Council was pleased to see the speed restrictions on the A361 had been implemented but disappointed that the weight restriction had not been brought forward.

George McDonic Chairman

WILTSHIRE COUNCILLOR NEWS FROM JONATHAN SEED

The meeting of the full Council on 3rd September approved the Business Plan which provides a framework for all our activity over the next four years. It is an interesting document and one which really will keep Wiltshire at the forefront of local government and more importantly will enable us to deliver the services that residents want, deliver these services locally and deliver them in the way that they tell us they want them delivered.

Locally we seem to be having an interesting time with planning issues and particularly big projects that will affect the residents of Summerham and Seend. The RAF Keovil tactical runway seems to have a delay whilst the Council obtains answers to the impact of construction on villages and the surrounding areas.

I am currently spending a much of my time on the local solar farm issue and have found this debate both interesting and challenging. I have listened to the views of many local residents including those with strong views either way and also those who have talked to me but who are not prepared to enter the public debate. Awareness of the solar farm issue has been helped by the Wiltshire Protect pressure group who oppose all solar farms on

agricultural land in the area. I also continue to oppose the concept of the solar farms in our area and I oppose them for several reasons. These reasons include concerns that they blight our beautiful local countryside, that they remove large acreages of land from agricultural and amenity use, concerns about the effects on local businesses, and concerns about residual pollution levels. Most importantly to me many local residents also oppose these solar farms. However the reality is that Government policies mean that we cannot prevent them and the concerns which I have are, regrettably, not sound planning reasons for objection to the applications.

I have thus taken the view that if we really cannot prevent these solar blights on our local countryside then we should negotiate as many advantageous changes and conditions to the plans as possible and I will continue to work in support of that position. These conditions include more natural fencing, community benefit payments, better landscaping, reducing total areas of panels and most importantly imposing a Bond on the developments. This Bond will ensure protected funding to enable the return of the solar farm site back to agricultural land either at the end of the 25 year period granted or if the situation changes sooner and the solar farm is no longer viable. This may be making the best of a bad job but I believe that in the absence of Government policies to stop these applications then negotiation of better conditions is the only responsible course of action available to responsible local Councillors.

I returned from a Christmas break spent with relatives in South Africa and arrived straight into a period of dreadful weather and resultant floods. I had to get out and about quickly and to visit the local and County affected areas. I spent time in villages where roads were flooded, drains were blocked, water was being pumped and I also visited some houses that were sadly flooded. All our thoughts should be with these members of our community whose houses flooded as the effects of flooded dwellings are experienced for months after the event and we wish them all well in the recovery from these local and personal disasters.

As the Wiltshire Council Cabinet Member responsible for flooding I am also heavily involved in dealing with flooding across the County and in particular how we can improve flood resilience and alleviation as well as communicating our policy on flooding to the press. Wiltshire Council spends hundreds of thousands of pounds a year on small flood alleviation schemes and each one makes a difference to dwellings and small communities and their flood risk, and so slowly we are reducing the overall flood risk. The vital work on flood alleviation and emergency response is

undertaken by our hard working teams of officers at all levels who have done a great job 24/7 over the Christmas and New Year period and then for the following two weeks manning the operations room, helping on the ground and keeping our road network as free as possible whilst at the same time giving all the help that we can to affected residents and communities. We all owe them our sincere thanks for the work that they do both to keep our highways open and the vulnerable members of our community protected from the worst of our weather extremes.

Finally the issue of Travellers has again surfaced locally. My view is that sixteen pitches are more than we can reasonably cope with locally and I strongly object to the perception that travellers have more planning rights than the settled community. I have called the latest expansion and retrospective application for two more pitches on the A350 roundabout to the Western Area Planning Committee and will again make my concerns publicly at that meeting next month.

Jonathon Seed
Cabinet Member for Communities,
Campuses, Area Boards, Leisure, Libraries
and Flooding
Member - Summerham and Seend Division
Wiltshire Council
Tel. 01380 850696 Mob: 07770 774463
www.jonathonseed.com

LUNCH CLUB

*If you'd like to
come along to
the lunches
every first*

*Thursday of the
month from September through to April,
do let me know. We enjoy a two course
menu with soft drinks and coffee for £6
which produces a little extra income for
the Hall funds.
Audrey 870586*



Village Hall Film Nights

We have two excellent films coming up in Steeple Ashton village Hall in the next few weeks:

SUNDAY 16th February at 2.30.

Captain Phillips (not our usual time or day, please note) *The true story of Captain Richard Phillips whose ship was hijacked by Somali pirates.*

Saturday 8th March at 7.30 **Philomena** - starring Judy Dench. *The story of a woman whose son was taken away from her decades ago after she became pregnant.*

We anticipate having **Saving Mr Banks** in April, about the filming of Mary Poppins, date yet to be confirmed.

As usual, we are giving the profits from our film nights to Keovil school PTA and the Church Preservation Trust.

For more info, phone Gill on 870302

Christmas Charity Donations.

Once again the village has done well and a cheque for £337 will be going to Stepping Stones. This is made up from Collection in lieu of Christmas cards - £115; Carol Service - £71; Christmas raffles/auction at Men's and Ladies' Christmas meals - £151.

Footpaths

I am your Parish Council footpath officer. If you know of any footpaths in our parish which need any TLC please let me know on 870302. Although I walk the footpaths there may still be some that are unknown to me!

Gill Verschoyle

The Ladies Club

It has been a busy few months with the Ladies Club with a variety of events, including Belly Dancing, Craft Evening and of course the traditional Ladies Christmas Meal. The Belly Dancing was a great evening and many thanks to Tracey Jones who taught us some new moves on the dance floor. We also made Christmas wreaths which was extremely well organised by Di Drinkwater who helped us all with her expertise and made it a very enjoyable evening.

As well as having fun we have worked hard to raise money for our charity for this year Stepping Stones through Ladies Club and Christmas Raffles, Carol Singing and Audrey's Christmas Card Project and so far have raised £488 and another £181 through the Art Club event which is amazing.

So as we go into 2014 we have already held a very successful skittles evening where the competition was fierce but in good spirit. Well done to our winners Sylvia Baker and Ken Young.

Future dates for your diary:

19th February – Pottery Evening (10% of money paid going to Stepping Stones)

19th March – Gourmet Dinner (theme to be decided)

16th April – Ladies Club AGM

Any new members to the Ladies Club are welcome anytime. We meet once a month on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 8 pm in the Hall or you can contact me for further details.

Debbie Ellis 07717 363043

100 CLUB

What would we do without your membership of the 100 Club?Yes your membership is important to the Village to keep our only community facility going, namely The Village Hall which is there for you to use, and it's thanks to the 100 Club members and other organised events that the Hall can afford its running costs, and remain open. Of course it is regrettable that we are not all winners each year, but as a good villager, we know you will wish to continue to contribute to the Hall through the 100 Club - with a good chance of winning monthly prizes ..and bonuses as well! We will be calling on you soon to invite you to renew your subscription.

Mike T.

BOWLS CLUB

It's hard to believe that it was five years ago when the Bowls Club was formed. We then had 22 active members, and today we have 21, and needless to say, none of us have actually mastered the game! In the run up to Christmas the singles knock out competition was won by Doris, and we are just starting the "Champions Cup" singles knock out competition finishing on April 14th when the fifth winner's name will be inscribed on the cup. I think the reason that the club has kept strong is because it is not taken too seriously, and although competitive in competitions, is always good fun.

Thanks to all members for their continued support and cooperation. Long live the bowls! *Mike*

Great Hinton Village Quiz Night

Sat 8th March

Teams of 4-6 people

(arranged on the night if need be)

Bring your own drinks and nibbles

Pit your wits against Great Hinton's finest and strangest!

Please contact Catherine Cooper

by Friday 28th Feb

01380 871470

catherine_bunn@hotmail.com

Is tradition enough?

In 2013 the traditional events associated with Great Hinton took place and at the same time funds were raised to support the new hot water system in the Hall and cover the costs of the Bonfire event. Mike took a much appreciated lead in the Arts & Craft Exhibition which you will have read about elsewhere.

At the end of 2013 two events were publicised but numbers meant that these were not going to be adequately supported to warrant the effort of organising or possibly providing sufficient fun for those involved.

The first of these was for the Safari Supper which has been organised by Sandra for all of the 21st Century and sometime before that. Sandra is keen to promote the 45th Safari Dinner and a new date will be published in an email and a snail mail flyer. It's a great way of meeting other villagers; you get a three course meal plus a starting drink; wine, port, coffee at the end and only have to cook a single course. If you're new in the village talk then talk to Sandra (870906) who will guide you through what happens. She works hard to ensure newcomers have an easy start.

The second event that almost didn't happen was the Hangover Party but persistence by Carol and numerous communications means the event will be happening on the 1st February. The evening always follows a 'traditional' format. Five or six teams battle for celebrity status plus the odd bottle of wine. It starts with the 'wall game' which involves solving/guessing answers to twenty questions which has ranged from photos from around the village (best score was 15!), company logos, curious facts, numerical challenges etc. Everyone complains about the devious mind of the question setter and his scoring methodology on the night.

The next game involves meeting a challenging objective using only limited paper, glue, sellotape, elastic bands etc. Recently the challenge was to help Lego men escape from Colditz!

It's then a break for food (with several desserts including treacle tart & custard) during which time cocktails are made and the teams have to guess the drinks involved. You bring along your own drink but there's nothing like a free cocktail.

.... And finally the final game would rank highly on the 'silly' scale and some have been truly memorable (e.g. The Truth Machine).

All of this takes time to plan and it's great to see the interest this year. I suspect that the first attempt to organise this would have happened if everyone looked to their emails or noted the intended dates.

2014 will undoubtedly see some changes in the village with a high number of properties being sold. This means that the village will lose some of those who work to make Great Hinton 'fun' and a sociable place to live. Besides securing sufficient funds to build the Village Hall, several thousands of pounds have been raised and donated to local charities. The latest achievement was the defibrillator located on the outside wall of the Village Hall.

There may not now be the right balance of events to match the changing profile of the village and for this reason we could do with a couple of 'Apprentices' who could develop ideas to continue the 'fun'. You will be gratefully hired but never fired! For further details please get in touch with me.

Kevin (870906)

LAURENCE KITCHING
2013 COMPETITION FOR WINNERS OF THE
BEST KEPT
WILTSHIRE VILLAGE

As the winner of the best small village category in 2012, we were entered in the winner of winners competition which was judged last summer and we came 3rd out of 5. The judges have provided us with a general report followed by their particular comments on Great Hinton - not only useful to bear in mind for our next entry but also to keep our village looking well cared for all year round.

ALL VILLAGES

This was a tough competition with some very close placings and difficult decisions to be made. The majority of features which depended on the individual, such as hedges, walls, residential gardens, etc, were in very good condition though there were just a few that could have done with some attention. The allotments were in all cases well-used, well cared for and productive. We are delighted that there is so much interest in them.

The condition of the public buildings, and public open spaces (especially recreation grounds) and indeed the private sector of offices, workshops, public houses was excellent and the schools were very good also. And the churches and burial grounds were mostly very well looked after. There was some litter, though, we are pleased to say, not much. But the areas which came under most scrutiny were bus shelters and notice boards. With notice boards we found a surprising lack of community information (unlike in the Best Kept Village competition proper where there was plenty). We wondered if it was down to the fact that it was August and many community clubs might take a break. However we would point out that it is by two things that we attempt to measure community spirit - what is said in the Village Report and what we find on village noticeboards.

I will finish with footpaths! We know they are someone else's responsibility but, just maybe, the upkeep of footpaths by the community might be seen as the ultimate demonstration of community spirit. Please do not dash pen to paper. We know that this is a very difficult area which would require administration, organisation, equipment and a large amount of volunteering. This is only a suggestion, perhaps more accurately a dream, and we would fully understand if villages found it an impossibility.

How can you do better next time, whichever competition you are in?

With each village we note areas where some extra attention would help to improve your placing - but working to improve in all categories would help even more!

GREAT HINTON

Hedges, trees, walls, banks, verges were all very well maintained as were the residential

gardens and outbuildings, though there were a couple of properties down Back Street where a bit of work would have helped to maintain the generally high standard. We particularly liked the mown verge leading to the Great Hinton village sign with the colourful flowers below the sign, a nice welcome to the village. The area including the former telephone kiosk was very attractive with its large pot of flowers, its neat kiosk library and comfortable seat to read the books if the weather permits. The notice board there (a bit of paint would spruce it up) held a good mix of items. At the stile down Back Street an effort had been made to remove the surrounding nettles but it was a shame that not all had been removed leaving the bare-legged walker open to stinging. The village pump and its attendant seat were very well maintained. We wondered if, when the flood problem in that area is tackled, it might be possible to make more of a feature of the stream which, at the moment, is an almost hidden asset? The village hall and its surrounds were well-maintained and an obviously well-used asset to the village. The war memorial plaque looked good placed on the village hall wall but there was some discolouration - we weren't sure if there was any way of removing this. The defibrillator on the wall indicates a village that cares and works to provide these extra amenities.

We saw no litter and no unwanted advertising. The map was easy to read, though highlighting the main features (Hall, Tele Kiosk, Pump) might have made it even easier for someone who did not know the village.

As always, the results of a community working together were evident in the consistent high standards shown around the village.

Areas to improve:

- 1 Noticeboard
- 2 War Memorial
- 3 Footpaths (and stream)

O-O-O-O-O

ART GROUP

Can you draw a straight line? No? Well it's not necessary as there aren't many straight lines in nature but there is plenty of beautiful scenery to try to portray around us. We would love some new members from the village. Our group is very relaxed with no formal tuition, but plenty of encouragement from our members.

We meet regularly on a Thursday evening, 7.30-9.30pm in the Village Hall. You can just draw, use watercolours, watercolour pencils, acrylics or pastels. We usually have some background music on, make a hot drink half way and enjoy a chat, though sometimes if we are really concentrating we are as quiet as mice!

If you are thinking about having a go, do give me a call.

Carol Clarke 870635

(from front page) - *Heroic Courage*

"The Taliban planned to devastate international troops and the bridge itself," the major said. "The enemy intention was for the next resupply to the observation post to be hit on the bridge when the vehicle went over it. Then the guys climbing out of the vehicle would be killed by the next device or soldiers coming to help would have been targeted."

The officer, who has been married for seven years to wife Kirste has a daughter Alice, aged six. He does not speak to them too much about his work, he said. "I have to tell little white lies. It is harder for families than soldiers because we are trained to do the job. They are not privy to the training and only see Hollywood movies like The Hurt Locker which don't depict what it is like in reality."

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Keevil to the Continent

Not only is 2014 the 100th anniversary of the start of WWI but also the 70th anniversary of D-Day. As we make the safe journey from home to our holiday crossing the Channel to France, we should remember the role of Keevil Airfield from which many brave servicemen left in Horsa gliders to secure bridgeheads for the troops landing on the Normandy beaches. The airfield was built in 1941 on requisitioned land and during the war it had a permanent staff of over 2,500 and had over 400 buildings. In 1944, RAF Stirling glider tugs were based on the airfield and joined by a large number of Horsa gliders, crewed by Army pilots of the Glider Pilot Regiment.

Staff Sergeant Harold Angier recorded that around 50 or 60 glider combinations took off from Keevil on September 17 and 18, 1944, bound for Arnhem. "We had an excellent Channel crossing, but once we were over the land the Germans threw some flak at us. We made a good landing on a potato field, and I landed the glider as close to a wood as possible to avoid detection." Only a small force managed to hold one end of the Arnhem road bridge and after the ground forces failed to relieve them, they were overrun on 21 September. The rest of the division, had to be evacuated on 25 September. The Allies had failed to cross the Rhine in sufficient force and the river remained a barrier to their advance until the offensives in March 1945. The failure of Operation Market Garden ended Allied expectations of finishing the war by Christmas 1944. Harold was injured and taken prisoner until liberation in 1945.

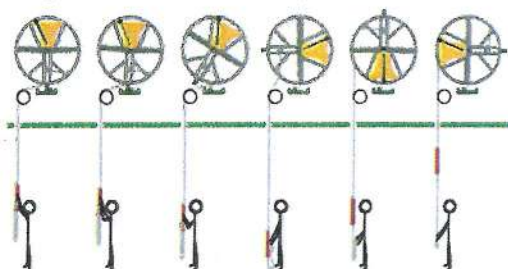
July 1947 marked the end of RAF Keevil as a fully staffed and equipped operational airfield, but after the war some of the accommodation sites were acquired by the National Assistance Board for housing Polish Displaced Persons. The camp (as it was called) eventually closed some time in the late '50s. Many of the inhabitants moved to near by Trowbridge establishing a new Polish community.

100 Club Lucky Winners										
	No.	£20.	No.	£15	No.	£12.	No.	£10.	No.	£8.
September	106	Hilary Davis	102	Carol Clarke	107	Steve Adams	88	Linda Unsworth	94	Dorothy Young
October	96	Jonathan Tapper	31	George McDonic	72	Colin Ramsey	79	Gillian Fennell	55	Debbie Burston
November	11	Beryl Frances	4	Gwen Harnott	18	Peter Doel	80	Sarah Lukas	101	Mike Lawes
December	120	K & E Shepperdson	2	Steve Haynes	61	Paul Haynes	93	Julia Newman	30	Eddie Knight
January 2014	84	Lisa Cornelius	96	Jonathan Tapper	65	Sue Andrew	49	Veronica Francis	123	Dr R Jones
CHRISTMAS BONUS PRIZE £50.00 – WINNER: CATHY BAKER (6)										

CAMPANOLOGY

Being reliably informed that "sound" knowledge of bell ringing would be useful for the forthcoming village quiz, here are some facts worth knowing to fill the back page of this bumper colour issue of the Grapevine.

Learning bell ringing is all about technique - much more than it is about strength or mathematical ability.



English bell ringing is called full-circle ringing, as the bell's mechanism on a wheel allows it to rotate 360 degrees.

First the bells are rung 'up', with the angle of swing gradually increased until the bell is swinging full circle and it can be balanced mouth upwards on the stay - known as being 'set'.

For the bell ringers, they must pull the bell at each 'stroke' to make it rotate again for another full circle swing. Each time the bell ringer pulls the rope the bell swings and sounds.

In Change Ringing, it is possible for the bell ringers to adjust the time at which they pull their rope to control the speed of striking to produce the pattern of changes.

Bells are the largest and loudest instrument in the world. The way they are hung is what makes English change ringing unique and so different to anywhere else in the world.

Bells are made from an alloy of copper and tin and are arranged in the tower down the musical scale from the smallest (called the 'treble') to the biggest ('tenor') which is the lowest note. The average tenor weight is 510kg, although they can weigh up to 4,200kg.

Bells are hung within a wooden or steel frame and attached to a wheel. They rotate around the centre of the wheel, with the 'clapper' in the centre striking the inside of the bell to sound.

The special feature of English bells is that they have a 'stay' which allows them to pause in an up-right position. This means the ringer can control when they strike by pulling them from this 'set' position to swing at the correct time.

At over 400 years old, bell ringing has a rich and long history which, often, reflects many of the major changes the country has also gone through during this time. After the Reformation (1547) many sets of bells were repaired and re-hung for 'change ringing' (it was the latest technology at the time!). Ringing became very popular with 'lay' people and various Associations were formed. The Ancient Society of College Youths (founded in 1637) is the oldest surviving Association.

During the reign of James II (1633-1688) bell ringing became extremely fashionable amongst the aristocracy as it provided physical exercise and intellectual stimulation. The first true peal (a extent of ringing with over 5,000 different variations) was believed to have been rung on May 2nd 1715 at St Peter Mancroft, Norwich.

During the Second World War bell ringing was banned, but was quickly reinstated with peace. And more recently, all over the world bells were rung on January 1st 2000 to celebrate the new millennium.

Bell ringing music is like no other. It is not written on a standard score, is performed entirely from memory and is learnt by the path of the order that each bell sounds. Bells start out by ringing down the scale, the familiar sound of bells we all know. This is written out as 1 2 3 4 5 if there are five bells involved. But to ring 'changes' bells change their 'place' in the order each time they strike. So, for example, the first strike after ringing down the scale would be 2 1 4 3 5. The first four bells have all swapped place with neighbour. Next the combination goes to 2 4 1 5 3. This time it is the leading bell, number 2, which does not move and all the others move places.

In bell ringing, a 'peal' is a period of ringing, usually lasting around three hours and with over 5,000 changes - all rung from memory. Bell ringers learn the path that their bell makes through the sequence. They remember the line of the route, which is known as the 'blue line'. These sequences are known as 'methods' and have names such as Plain Bob Minor and Cambridge Major. They are often rung for special occasions and commemorated with boards in towers.

Once gained, bell ringing is a skill for life you'll never forget and can open up a lifetime of experiences and enjoyment.

New ringers follow the ringing curriculum to learn to ring, and are taught by accredited instructors through the national ITTS programme. Initially, ringers are trained in how to correctly and safely control the bell, often with it silenced so it does not sound. Then once this has been mastered, ringers are integrated as part of the band and learn to control the bell as part of the sequence of striking. From there skills are increased to be able to marginally speed up or slow down the bell's swing to be able to progress to method ringing where the bells sound in a different order each strike.

Did you know that Salisbury Cathedral does not have any bells? Originally the cathedral had a lower tower and a separate campanile or bell tower which survived until 1790. Significant changes to the cathedral were made by the architect James Wyatt in 1790, including replacement of the original rood screen and demolition of the bell tower which stood about 320 feet north-west of the main building. Salisbury is one of only three English cathedrals to lack a ring of bells, the others being Norwich Cathedral and Ely Cathedral.

On the other hand here in Trowbridge St James' Church has twelve bells. The original eight bells in the church had been increased to ten by adding two war memorial bells after the First World War. In 1934 they needed re-hanging and it was decided to increase the peal to twelve. A town fund raising campaign was a great success and each bell was adopted by an individual or a local organisation. Usher's Brewery adopted the tenor bell, named the 'T.C. Usher Bell' and also named their new pub in Shails Lane 'The Twelve Bells' in honour of the event.

Bell ringing is an ancient art carried out in almost every town, city and village in the UK. There are over 4 000 churches with bells hung for bell ringing, so you are sure to be close to one. Many local towers, especially St James Trowbridge, are looking for more ringers to join their band. It is said that you can ring from 9 to 90, so if you would like more information contact Chris Purnell 01225 704934. Or to find out more about ringing and where is best for you to learn to ring, go to www.bellringing.org