

MERRIOTT MESSENGER

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October 2021



Merriott Squash Club has been awarded £3,088 of National Lottery funding from Sport England's Return to Play - Small Grant Programme. The money will be used to provide FREE squash coaching to women and girls within the local area.

In October 2020, Sport England launched a new £16.5m Return to Play scheme, focussed specifically on supporting clubs and community groups following the challenges of returning to play during the coronavirus pandemic and to assist with getting people active again.

The grant that has been awarded to Merriott Squash Club will allow them to provide free squash coaching (every Thursday evening starting 23rd September) for six months to all ladies

Sport England awards grant to Merriott Squash Club

and girls over 8 years of age, irrelevant of their ability.

Kate Edwards, Merriott Squash Club Secretary, said "We are absolutely delighted to have been awarded this grant. This is a fantastic opportunity for us to not only help both women and young girls to get active again, but provides us with the opportunity to encourage more females to take-up squash as a sport. Sadly, we have seen a decline in the UK of women playing squash, so hopefully this funding will help us change this in our region, so a massive thank you to Sport England and the National Lottery for making this possible".

Please direct any questions to merriottsquash@btinternet.com

Kate Edwards



We moved to Merriott in April this year and are still settling in. While walking through the village up to the Church my husband saw some sunflower seeds in a bucket on the steps of the church for people to help themselves and took 6 seeds. As you can see from the photo they have grown into giant plants - the tallest being 10' tall! We are wondering whether anyone else has grown taller plants from the seeds in the bucket?

Ray & Chrissy Broom

Do let us know:
merriottmessenger@gmail.com



ARK would like to give a Big

Thank you to everyone who supported our Open Day. We were all bowled over by the level of support from those connected to ARK in the preparations in the build up, the magnificent raffle prizes and those who attended and supported on the day. It was a huge success and has provided us with a template for something similar in 2022.

On Tuesday 14th September, we started our Community Lunch club in Merriott Village Hall. The purpose of this is for those connected to ARK, to take produce grown by us to cook for and befriend members of our local community that are isolated, in need of some company or just wish to connect with others. Yet again, this is only possible by the magnificent support of ARK's volunteers and supporters for which we are very grateful. These lunch clubs will run **every second Tuesday** and booking is advisable; by email: office@arkateggwood.com or calling Nigel on 07974 658 782.

Nigel Bell

MERRIOTT MESSENGER

Merriott Messenger seeks new Editor

Would you like the opportunity of putting your Publisher skills to good use by joining the editorial team to produce the Merriott Messenger? Eleven issues are produced each year and you will be financially rewarded.

For further information, please email: merriottmessenger@gmail.com or call John Bowman on 01460 74077.

Editorial Team

Merriott Messenger Contact

Your editorial team: John Bowman 74077, Paula Bateman 271175, Marion Biggs 74170, Peter Bryans 78182, Jane Jackson 74162, Janet Lailey 271008, Eric Vose 351857 **Email:** merriottmessenger@gmail.com

Have you thought about trying a new sport?

Table Tennis is a fast, exciting game that is easy to learn, and you can now play it again in Merriott.

Merriott Table Tennis Club is starting up its sessions at the Merriott Social Venue. Everyone young and old is welcome to come and play on Fridays from 5pm to 7pm, and on Sundays from 7.30 onwards. There are four tables available so everyone can get a game. It only costs £2 for adults and £1 for under 18s.

The Friday session is designed for anyone of any age to come and enjoy the game – it's supported by a grant from the

National Lottery 25th Anniversary fund.

We are still running junior training sessions run by a fully qualified coach – beginners train at 5.30pm, with more advanced players at 6.30pm. It costs £5 a session – four of our trainees from earlier this year are now key parts of our league teams.

The Sunday session is also open to all but has in the past been used by more experienced players; we are entering two teams into the Yeovil League this season, with home matches played on Thursday evenings.

The senior team is called the Hartley Harriers, to remember team stalwart and local footballing legend Phil Hartley, who died last year. "Phil brought so much enthusiasm to the club, and encouraged and helped along many of our youngsters," says team captain Michael Fox.

"I think of him every time I pick up a bat so it will be an honour to play in a team named after him."

For more information contact Michael Fox on 01460 74113.

Michael Fox

Gardening Club meetings to resume this month

Well it looks like Summer, what there was of it, is coming to an end. Certainly the early morning air smells as though Autumn is approaching. Despite that, we do have the Gardening Club meetings to look forward to once again.

Our first meeting will be on the **October 5th** at the Tithe Barn, but after that, it will revert to our usual Tuesday slot of the last Tuesday in the month.

Meetings will begin at 7:30 pm unless previously advised.

For our October meeting on the 26th we have booked Sharandys:



www.sharandysbirdsofprey.com to come to our meeting with some owls.

We are opening the evening up to anyone who would like to come. Members

will be free of course, but guests will be £2 and children £1. As we are still constrained by COVID to some extent, we are limited as to how many people can attend, so tickets must be registered for, in advance to me - email helentv@btinternet.com

Money will be collected at the door on the night. I shall need to know how many adults, members plus guests and how many children. The doors will be open for at 6:00pm and the demonstration will begin at 6:30 and will last about an hour.

Helen Tre-Vett

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Merriott Coffee Stop

We hope to restart the coffee morning in church on:

Tuesday 12th October
10.00 to 11.30

This will depend upon there being no additional restrictions or concerns regarding COVID.

In order to provide as safe a service as possible, there will need to be some alterations in how we operate. The seating area will be restricted to a maximum of 20 people. Any additional people will sit in the church pews.

Service will be from a counter and only those involved in serving will be allowed into the servery.

If you would like to be involved in helping, whether you have helped previously or not, please contact Jean Crisp on 01460 279654.

Hopefully this popular and successful coffee morning will be able to start as planned and we hope to see many of you there. Thank you.

David Woods



Now and Then



estate agent stated that it was thought to be the oldest house in the village and to date from about 1450. That is just the thatched part of course, which itself was once two cottages.

David Brown



Dear Editor

"I've just been looking through recent issues of the Messenger and came across the contribution you received from Anne Wren regarding the Beaumont School. My mother used to work at the school when it was evacuated to Marks Barn and although at a mere 87 years of age I am somewhat younger than Anne I have a few memories of the school and of particular people that I would like to share with her. Obviously I cannot ask you to pass me anyone's email address without their permission, but I wondered if you would be so kind as to forward this email to Anne so that she or her son on her behalf could get in contact with me if she so wishes?"

It's good to be able to access the Messenger online again, keep up the good work.

David Gibbs

I forwarded David's email to Mark, Anne's son who wrote in to us and have put them in touch with each other. I then received this email from David Gibbs:

"I hope to see Mum over the weekend and I'm sure that she will want me to liaise with David Gibbs.

Interestingly I came across a letter from Mark's Barn written to my grandmother on September 12th 1940 which starts "In view of the fact that bombs have been dropped during the holiday in the surrounding district and on one occasion in the village of Merriott, we are having our already well built cellars adequately reinforced, so that they may be used in case of necessity".

Mark Uren

Hopefully there will be more stories to report on in the near future.

Jane Jackson

"It's great to be part of a well-run guide. Thank you".

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"Nature red in tooth and claw" (Alfred Tennyson)

I am wondering if, like me, other Merriott residents have been experiencing 'Sparrow-Hawk strikes' at their garden bird feeding stations and would like to pass on my tip to mitigate this natural, yet awfully upsetting occurrence.

I have recently had success with mounting 'kiddies plastic windmills' on long canes and have placed just one adjacent to my hanging seed feeder and another beside the pedestal bird bath. Surprisingly, the Sparrows, Starlings etc., are unperturbed by the twirling windmills, but the



Sparrow-Hawk is definitely deterred by them and I am unaware of any further kills in my garden since installing them two weeks ago.

When one finds a pile/circle of feathers in the garden, it is easy to identify whether it is a Sparrow-Hawk kill as they pluck their prey; whereas a Fox bites and snaps off the feathers.

Being only two weeks into my experiment I acknowledge that it may, of course, fail as a permanent solution and it would therefore be interesting to hear of any other Sparrow-Hawk deterrent tips from readers.

Mary Kelly

Do let us know if you have any other useful tips to share with fellow readers. Email: merriottmessenger@gmail.com.

Thank you.


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Thank you Merriott Heritage Trust

We moved to Merriott in January 2020 to a house and garden that we had literally fallen in love with when we first saw it in June 2019. Really, we bought a garden and the house came along with it! Our house has some history to it, apparently having once been an unlicensed Cider House (or Kiddlywink as they were known!) It's fair to say the house was in need of modernisation and we knew we were taking on a big project when we moved in. We wanted to do all we could to restore the house and to keep as much of the original character as possible. We have since uncovered the original flagstone floor, with some stones over 5ft in length, restored the inglenook fireplace to its former glory, landscaped some of the garden and even found a 2.4 metre deep well when we dug out the kitchen floor!

Some things were more urgent than others, so we tried to prioritise our list of



jobs and finances accordingly. In the garden is a 30ft stone barn which was in a really sad state of repair, with an asbestos roof which only covered part of it, stone walls that were crumbling and subsidence on the front wall (see photo). One morning last year after a bad storm we walked outside to find the windows had fallen out at the top and smashed on the floor – you are probably getting the picture by now! Some lovely residents in the village told us one day about the Merriott Heritage Trust one day and

suggested we got in touch and so we did. We completed a grant application form and provided the Trust with the relevant quotes. When restrictions allowed, the Trustees came to see the house and barn and offered us a grant to help with some of the costs to replace flat roofs with pitched ones; to install wooden windows which are more in-keeping with the stone mullions on the ground floor and support with some of the barn renovations so that it will be watertight and secure.

We feel truly indebted to the Trustees and to the late Cathy Herriman, it is impossible to say how grateful we are for their support and encouragement. We feel Merriott is a really special place to live and we are so lucky to have the Heritage Trust here to help keep the character of the village – thank you Merriott Heritage Trust!

Verity McLelland

All Saints' Church



It is **Harvest Festival** time of year again and we are celebrating outdoors at ARK@ Egwood. Please do come along to this lovely place and bring a picnic to enjoy after the service (details below).

If you wish to donate produce, please continue to leave food donations for the Lord's Larder in the church porch.

Our **All Souls Service for the Bereaved** will be on **Sunday 7th November** at 4pm. In this service we recall loved ones who have died, bring their names up to the altar and light candles. We send out invitations to those we know have had a bereavement, but it is open to anyone. Please get in touch with Bob or Julia if you would like to come.

October Services

Sunday 3rd - 4pm Café Church in Merriott Tithe Barn (an informal service with cake!)

Sunday 10th - 12 noon: Harvest Festival, at Ark@Egwood

Sunday 17th - 10.30am Parish Communion

Sunday 24th (Climate Sunday) - 9am Holy Communion

Sunday 31st - 10.30 Benefice Communion for All Saints Day

Julia Hicks



14 Granary Barton Close

Installation of an external staircase to the existing detached outbuilding 21/02752/HOU Status: Awaiting decision

Plot 2 Boozer Pit

Non-Material Amendment to approved application to change window material from timber to UPVC 21/02699/NMA Status: Awaiting decision

Land adjoining Moorlands Road

Discharge of condition No 6 (tree protection measures) No 8 (vegetation cutting) and No 9 (Orchid species protection) 21/02579/DOC Status: Awaiting decision

Marion Biggs

Merriott Evergreen Club

This is a long-standing Club in our village, having been established in the spring of 1957, according to records.

Over the years it has had its own committee and officers providing many forms of entertainment: afternoon teas, speakers, coach outings and holidays. Recent times have seen the group meeting twice a month in the Sherlands Centre on a Wednesday afternoon.

We now find ourselves in the position, after the COVID-19 lockdowns, of requiring help in the organisation of this previously active and very worthwhile group. It would be a real shame to see such a long and established group close.

We need an Organiser/Leader for the group, someone with new ideas of updating what we already have and moving forward.

If you feel you would like more information, please call either Wendy Brown (01460 76756) or Ann Down (01460 72316) who would be happy to meet and discuss any way forward.

Thank you.

Ann Down/Wendy Brown

Shoe-Box Coffee Morning 2021

You are warmly invited to join us on

Saturday 23rd October from 10.00 - 12.00

at 35 Shiremoor Hill, Merriott

We're very happy that we can meet again this year and look forward to seeing you! There will also be a Bring & Buy and a Raffle.

Beryl Bellamy Tel: 74574

Beryl Virgin Tel: 74917

New Sponsor

The importance of regular ear and hearing health checks:

People have become accustomed to attending various appointments to ensure they maintain a good standard of health and wellbeing. It is considered normal to regularly assess the eyes and teeth, so why are ear and hearing health check-ups less common?

The loss of hearing has huge implications for social isolation, quality of life and the safety of individuals. However, it is not uncommon for people to wait 5-7 years before seeking help for a hearing loss. By attending regular ear and hearing health check-ups you could prevent a permanent hearing loss. After all, it could just be wax!

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Samantha Haynes

Snapshots of the Village Sale



A fine day saw villagers and stall holders alike out to bag a bargain and make some money.

Marion Biggs



My virtual London marathon



Sunday 3rd October 2021

Hi. I'm Eve. I'm 20 and I live in Merriott. Some of you may know my dad, Nick and my grandparents, Peter & Liz Fisk and you may have seen me running around the village.

I have built up to 18 miles so far in my training. It takes a long time and we get up early but it is fun, at least at the start.

On Sunday 3rd Oct I will be running the Virtual London Marathon. That means on my own route, but the same day as the real thing and I hope to get the real medal and T-Shirt of course.

Our route will start from and finish in Merriott. My 26.2 miles will visit as many family members on route as possible, for encouragement, energy food, drink and if necessary toilet stops! My route will be Merriott to South Petherton, Martock, Tintinhull, Montacute, Stoke Sub Hamdon, Norton Sub Hamdon, Over Stratton, Merriott, Crewkerne, Hinton and Merriott again.

I'm doing it in aid of **Guide Dogs for the Blind**. It is a great cause to help people gain independence. If you would like to support me, below is my sponsorship page. Anything would be fantastic. And or a shout out on the day if we run past you!

www.justgiving.com/fundraising/eve-sale1 or you can ring Nick Sale on 76489.

Thank you!

Eve Sale

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Merriott Stream Restoration



Work is in progress to open up the Moorlands Road culvert by creating a meandering channel with backwaters (to temporarily store flood water) including a variety of in-stream habitat, seeding species-rich meadow mix on the banks and tree planting. The Merriott culvert is a major factor contributing to the catchment's poor ecological status. The status is poor because of high phosphorus and sediment concentrations in the stream as well as low fish numbers caused by barriers to migration, low habitat values and pollution.

Construction updates



The river restoration works are progressing well, albeit being behind schedule:



- * With the pandemic, Brexit, lorry driver shortages and subcontractors jumping ship, sourcing construction material has been challenging and has delayed the start date of construction and progress on site.

- * Construction is being undertaken in phases: starting at the flood alleviation dam and working downstream. Generally, stream flow is piped across a section in which the new channel is formed and the old culvert is destroyed. Then flow can be sent through the new channel and the pumping is moved to the next section.

- * European eels, a critically endangered species, were spotted by the flood alleviation dam. This is great news, as it means they will quickly colonise and thrive once we have improved their habitat. With permission from the Environment Agency, we are rescuing eels as and when they are found and translocating them upstream.



- * You may notice some discolouration of the stream in the village which is absolutely normal and is to be expected while construction is underway and the site is unvegetated. Measures are being put in place to limit the amount of silt lost during construction, including silt curtains which are cleaned twice daily and we will place woody debris in the channel to capture sediment. Any sediment deposited downstream of the works will be temporary and easily remobilised during the first higher flows during autumn.



Aerial images taken by South West Drone Images

- * Project completion is expected to be beginning-to-Mid-October. We apologise for the inconvenience of the footpath being closed for longer than expected. Next time you walk the footpath, it will look very different. It will take some time but once the site turns green again, it will look much nicer and provide wildlife habitat as well as a lovely space for dogwalkers.



Thank you to all landowners involved: for their land, time, effort, and cooperation, and to anyone else who has helped this project progress.

For further information contact Sabine McEwan on 07769321135
or sabine.mcewan@fwagsw.org.uk





A Change of Outline: The Village Hall Roof

Until recently you may have noticed a cupola on the middle of the ridge of the Village Hall and a broken chimney pot. Most people, when asked, seem not to have been aware of such details.

However, the Hall will be celebrating its centenary in 2024, and the Hall Committee are taking steps to make the building as presentable as possible. To this aim, the broken chimney pot has been replaced. This was not easy because finding a pot to match the existing whole ones was a matter of luck. Such pots are also expensive.

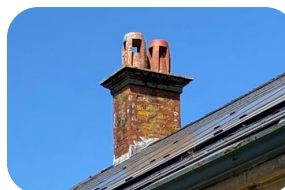
The cupola presented a different set of challenges. Its original purpose is not known, but was probably to provide ventilation to the Hall in times when heating was provided by open fires. Heating is now by air source heat pumps and the ventilation no longer goes out via the cupola. So, the plan was to repair the cupola in situ. Scaffolding was erected and close inspection of the cupola indicated that it was corroded at the base and inside. The Hall Committee decided

that the best solution was to remove it and re-roof where it had been. This has now been completed by SR Scaffolding of Wellington and Rowsell Roofing of Yeovil. The Hall Committee is also very grateful to the Merriott Heritage Trust for a grant towards the cost of both these repairs. The top of the cupola has been transferred to the Trust for safe keeping.

John Bowman



The Hall in 2021 without the cupola but with solar panels and a new chimney pot



The Hall in 2016 with a broken chimney pot (below) and the cupola in situ



It has been so good to receive articles of forthcoming events and activities. Long may it continue! Don't forget to send in your news and photos.

Editorial Team

The information and views in the Merriott Messenger are those provided by the named individual contributors and are not necessarily supported by the Editorial Team. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the information given is accurate, the Merriott Messenger cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions.

Copy date for the November issue is 12th October.

Please send copy/photos to:
merriottmessenger@gmail.com

Merriott Social Venue News - new opening hours

Tuesday - Saturday 7pm - 10pm



All welcome - NO MEMBERSHIP NEEDED!
FREE POOL now on Friday evenings.
Cash bingo Wednesday evenings.
Doors open at 7pm. Eyes down 7.30pm

We have a newly formed committee voted in at the September AGM. Executive positions are:

Katherine Rooke - Chairperson
Zephaniah Elson - Treasurer
Penny Gibbs - Secretary
Issac Lisney - President

For private bookings and all enquiries: tel 01460 74376 or email merriottsocialclub@hotmail.com

Check out our Facebook page for latest news and events.

Penny Gibbs -Secretary

Gardening quote of the month



"When the bold branches bid farewell to rainbow leaves - welcome woolly sweaters".

B. Cybrill

Sent in by Mo Frampton

The Mobile Library will visit Merriott on 19th October 9.30am - 9.50am outside the school



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