

MERRIOTT MESSENGER

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February 2019

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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 March issue is 12th February.

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Church Street Development of 50 Houses

Statement from Paul Maxwell, District Councillor

Outline planning permission was granted by The Regulation Committee of South Somerset District Council, at its meeting on 20th November 2018, for up to 50 houses on Church Street in Merriott. This was, despite The Area West Committee, which met to consider this application on October 17th, recommending refusal for a number of reasons, including:

- The proposed scheme would result in an unsustainable form of development
- Unacceptable scale of growth which would undermine the Local Plan
- Adverse harm to the school
- Contrary to Policies, SD1, SS1, SS2, SS6, TA4, HW1, EQ2, EQ4, and Chapters 2, 15 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Iain Hall, Chairman of The Parish Council spoke at Area West against the application. In summary his comments were:

- Merriott Parish Council had already supported several significant planning applications recently;
- however if this one went ahead it would mean a total increase of 194 dwellings in the village, some 22% growth, more than the 17% required in the whole of South Somerset and this was considered too much in a Rural Settlement with no specific growth target;
- Development on this site would be detrimental to the Street Scene and Landscape;
- The application did not comply with planning policy SS2 which requires developments in Rural Settlements to provide either;
- Affordable Housing to supply a demonstrated local need;
- Employment opportunities;
- A community facility or service;
- The application did not demonstrate local support.

I also spoke against the application. My comments can be summarised as follows. The fields, hedge and bank form an integral part of the street scene and would be obliterated by this proposed development. I referred to a strong letter of objection from The Campaign for the Protection of Rural England and in particular how this rural edge of the village connected to the wider landscape and beyond. I highlighted that the site was a greenfield site and had always been designated for no development in the Village Plan and Local Plan. I made reference to the wildlife, ecological and landscape importance of the site.

I mentioned that Merriott is designated as a Rural Settlement in the Local Plan and that a 25% growth in a few years was significant and too much for the village to absorb. I also referred to the recent Housing Needs survey, which this application did not accord with. I explained that the school would be taken over capacity by this proposal and that in general terms the application was unsustainable and not in accordance with several policies.

The Area West Committee supported my proposal to recommend refusal, however, under the current planning rules, all major applications are referred to Regulation for determination.

Iain Hall and myself attended the Regulation Committee and both spoke, as before, in opposition to this application. We had support from several of the committee members, however a majority voted to approve it, which was extremely disappointing, unbelievable and we both thought that the level of scrutiny and debate was poor.

I have raised this situation with The Leader of The Council and am meeting with her to discuss the way in which this has been handled, the effect on the village of Merriott, its community and environment. I will also be arranging for her to meet with the Parish Council members.

I have always sought to do what is right for Merriott and the community and I am not against all development, however, I was extremely disappointed with the outcome in this case and that is why I am taking it further.

*Paul Maxwell
District Councillor*



Christmas celebrations at Careford Lodge



Christmas wreath making with our 'flower' residents.



Friend of Careford, Helen Rose, visits us frequently to play for our residents



Corinne and one of our carers, Xenia, enjoying a visit from the pre-school children



Our pre-Christmas dinner for friends and family where we catered for 40, not including staff



The 16 Bells Choir is looking for a Pianist

We have been very fortunate to have Emma Sale as pianist

for the choir from the very beginning, but she has now decided to stop. So we are looking for a pianist. The 16 Bells Choir meets once a fortnight on Wednesday evenings for practices and sings at a number of special events and services during the year in the four churches of the Benefice. Please speak to Bob or Julia Hicks (76406) or Rachel Crane (choir leader) if you think you can help with this. Thank you.

Rev Bob Hicks



Mobile Library @ Merriott School

Tuesday 9.30 - 10.00
12th Feb

Merriott Social Venue

Happy New Year from everyone at Merriott Social Venue. What a year it has been, with lots of repairs being done, a few ups & downs, lots of fundraising and finishing of with a fantastic party on New Year's Eve.

Now down to business and the moving forward to the Venue becoming a "Community Interest Company". Lots of forms to complete and approvals to get and we will keep you all informed of

the process all the way through. Please keep your eyes out on the notice board for details.

Future Events

26th January - Jumble Sale 11-1pm;

26th January - Bingo 6.30pm

27th January - Music Club 7pm

9th February - Indoor Market 10-1pm

9th February - Bingo 6.30pm

10th February - Pamper Evening 6pm

24th February - Music Club 7pm

Thank you to everyone that has supported "Merriott Social Venue" (club) over the last year and we hope you will continue to this year and maybe see more of you as we have lots of other things planned.

Lola Clarke
Chairperson



Merriott First School News

Happy New Year from everybody at Merriott First School!

This term we have an interesting and thought provoking topic; Fragile Earth.

Children will be exploring the impact of human activity, such as deforestation on our environment, learning about different animals and finding out about tropical rainforests.

Later this month, we have a federation day planned with children from Haselbury School where we will be taking part in a variety of

'Forest School' activities including den building and discovering different habitats.



Mr Caswell
Deputy Headteacher



A belated Happy New Year to all residents of Merriott!

The very good news is that Merriott and the surrounding area is a relatively low crime, safe and pleasant place to live in. However the majority of crime that does take place is opportunist. So to prevent yourself becoming a victim, please take care with your security. Please lock your vehicles and do not leave valuables in them when unattended. Lock the doors of your home and outbuildings even if you are just in the garden. It takes seconds for a thief to enter through an insecure door and steal handbags or similar items. Please be aware of scams by phone, internet and post. Never give your bank or your financial details out.

As the spring approaches and gardening starts again in earnest, please consider marking your tools and lawnmowers with your postcode/house number or a chosen word. When working in the garden, don't leave your garage door open allowing all your tools and other items to be seen and possibly stolen.

Should you see anyone acting suspiciously, please report the incident promptly.

If you have any questions or would like any security advice, please make contact in the following ways: If you need to contact the police, ring:

101 (non-urgent matters) or 999 (urgent matters).

You can also make contact via the Avon and Somerset website.

*Michelle Haines PCSO 8913
Crewkerne Neighbourhood team*



Merriott Gardening Club

Tuesday 26th February

'The Gardens of Japan' a talk by Jenny Short describing traditional Japanese gardens and the inspiration to create the same principles of simplicity and tranquillity in UK gardens. Please meet at the Tithe Barn at 7.30pm - refreshments and raffle. Everyone welcome - non-members £2 at the door.



Kyoto Gardens

A reminder of the January meeting in which David Usher will be talking on Herbaceous Plants - meet as above on **Tuesday 29th January.**

For further information contact: Barbara 72298

Barbara Byford



A Night at the Races

Raising money for Merriott Youth FC

Saturday 9th March

Merriott Social Venue

First Race: 7.00pm

Come along for an evening of fun

Children welcome



Gardening Quote of the Month

"The flowers of late winter and early spring occupy places in our hearts well out of proportion to their size".

- Gertrude S. Wister

Sent in by Mo Frampton



Co-op Funding Scheme and the Merriott Messenger



Please give us your support. We are very grateful to those who have already signed up with the Co-op and indicated that they wish to support the Messenger.

Apologies from the Messenger Team to those who tried to register their support in the Merriott Co-op. We thought you could do this locally but it has to be done either online by going to www.coop.cco.uk/membership or by ringing 0800 023 4708. Your support will enable us to produce a larger and better Messenger.

John Bowman



Have You Considered Fostering?

There is a national shortage of foster carers, for the many children needing a stable and supportive home life. Fostering can be a challenging but also a hugely rewarding experience; Foster families play a critical role in supporting the emotional and behavioural needs of young people, whilst offering them a consistent, stable and happy place to live, a sense of belonging and the opportunity to experience positive parental role models.

Fusion Fostering is based in North Curry; your local team of social workers and support workers are there to provide ongoing support and training for foster carers to enable the children in their care to settle in and thrive in their new environment. For more information, please call Nigel on 0797 465 8782 or [email: nbell@fusionfostering.com](mailto:nbell@fusionfostering.com).

Haselbury Mill offers you a warm welcome

With Christmas well and truly packed away for another 11 months, we're all looking forward to warmer weather and longer days. In the meantime, Haselbury Mill has a few events scheduled to see you through February and beyond.

The fabulous Ben Waters is back with his Boogie Woogie Band on **Friday 1st February** in the Tithe Barn. Ben's legendary playing finds him much in demand by fellow musicians such as Ronnie Wood, Jools Holland, Ray Davies, Paul Weller and many more. He's taking a short break from his world tour and will be at Haselbury Mill for one night before he embarks on a tour of Australia. Tickets are £18.00 and are available from Haselbury Mill on 01460 77095.

We are holding a dinner show like no

other. Let us welcome you to an immersive world of glamour, mystery and enchantment featuring world class performers from London's West End and Europe. It's an evening of dance and entertainment with cocktails and a three course dinner. Tickets available <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/chiaroscuro-dinner-show-tickets>

Why not step back in time on **Saturday 9th February** and enjoy the popular 1940's Dinner and Dance. It's great fun and exceptional value for money at £20 a ticket for a 2 course meal and live big band entertainment from Jessica and the Rabbits. Dress in the theme, civilian or services, prizes are awarded for the best outfit. Tickets from the Mill on 01460 77095

The Volkswagen Dubbers show is back on **5th, 6th and 7th April**, the local VW enthusiasts gather to celebrate life, bringing with them a weekend packed with live music and fun for all the family.

Due to overwhelming success over the last 20 years, the Sunday Carvery is now so popular it will now be served for an extra 2 hours, through to 7pm in The Great Tithe Barn. So if you want to enjoy a delicious roast after a Sunday out with the family or just a long day in the garden you can leave the cooking to the chefs at the Mill. Make sure you call ahead to book, 01460 77095

There's always a warm welcome at Haselbury Mill, pop in for a coffee and find out more.

Julie Rideout



Holwell House, Shiremoor Hill
Alterations for the conversion of a listed barn from a store/garage to an annexe.
Number 18/03956/LBC

Oak Lea Farm, Lower Severalls Farm
Continued use of land as residential mobile home for worker at Oak Lea Farm Livery
Number 18/03480/FUL

32 Church Street
Erection of a single storey front extension to dwelling house to form a dining room
Number 18/03485/HOU

Sandy Hole, The Former Schoolhouse
Application to vary opening hours & remove the condition for obscure glazing on eastern side of building
Number 18/03718/S73A

Marion Biggs

Village Hall Going Green

The Trustees are very grateful to the many people who signed the petition in the Post Office, the Co-op and the Pharmacy in support of the planned installation of solar panels on the roof of the Hall. Plans for this project are well advanced and it is hoped that at least part of the development will take place in the next 3 months.

In addition to the existing users, the New Year sees three new users including sessions for yoga, and zumba and on Monday evenings Crewkerne Bridge Club will there from 7 to 10 pm. If anyone is interested in joining these activities please see the contact details on the noticeboard or on the Hall web site www.merriottvillagehall.org.uk.

Village Hall Trustees

Working with Shire Horses

My experience with Shire horses stems from working on farms in Cheshire when I was still at school, shortly after the end of the Second World War. On one farm there was a Shire horse used for pulling a cart to bring potatoes and mangolds from the fields to the yard and for ploughing and harrowing the fields for cultivation. I learnt to groom and harness the horse ready for use and to remove the harness, groom and feed it at the end of a day's work – quite a task. Also I learnt to plough with this horse. Unusually, my tutor was a Ukrainian blacksmith and we conversed in German, our only common language. He was a former prisoner of war, having been recruited into the German Army and subsequently captured by the Allies. He was not able to return home as many Ukrainians who had been in the German Army, were shot by the Russians if and

when they returned home.

I was learning German at school. Many farms at that time used former prisoners of war on day-release to help with farm work, especially spring cultivation and harvest.

My tutor told me that in the Ukraine he would set out in a morning with a horse and single furrow plough, along with perhaps three of his colleagues, also each with a horse and single furrow plough. They would plough in a straight line until lunch time, have a bite to eat and then turn round and plough their way back to their starting point – so vast were the fields!

Subsequently, I went to work on a farm near Caernarvon in north Wales. That farm had a Shire stallion which was looked after by Robert, one of the staff who lived in the loft over the cowshed. As I recall, at least two of the staff lived

in the loft, which was pretty spartan. It was not unusual at that time for farm staff to live on the property in such circumstances. During the horse breeding season, Robert would leave the farm with the stallion on a Monday morning so that they could walk the district. Robert stayed over in accommodation at the farms he called at. The stallion mated the mares on neighbouring farms and returned with Robert on a Friday for each to have a weekend's rest.

Quite by coincidence, my first art master at secondary school, during the war, was Charles F Tuncliffe, who had not been called for military service for medical reasons. He became a well-known artist of birds and of farm activities in Cheshire and north Wales. Many of his pictures of farm work involving Shire horses remind me vividly of the days I spent on farms in similar situations.

John Bowman

A new name and a new venue

The enthusiastic marquetarians are back in Merriott again, you will be pleased to hear!! For various reasons we changed our meeting venue and also changed our name from Merriott Marquetry Group to that of Somerset Marquetry Group, which has now been recognised by the Marquetry Society, to which we are affiliated. Thanks to the kindness and generosity of our latest recruit, Mike Burnham, our new venue is in his house, which is behind Andrew Osborne's shop in the Broadway.

As I have mentioned in previous letters to the Messenger, this is a nice quiet and gentle hobby and is open to men and

women, any age - there is no discrimination of sex or age in marquetry. Where any disabled person is able to use their hands and have the ability to handle a sharp knife, it is also something they can do. We meet at Mike's every Thursday and visitors will be very welcome - don't be shy!! I have a stall at the monthly indoor market in the Merriott Social Venue, so come and have a chat with me and also see a very small selection of my marquetry output. Contact me at Mike's, at the market, or on 0146074567, or williken@btinternet.com

Ken Smart

Another huge thank you

to all who supported this year's Shoe-Box appeal. We were able to send 141 beautiful boxes to very needy people in Romania, from babies to the elderly. (The South-West area sent about 7,500 boxes!) Our Ilminster co-ordinator was able to go to Romania and to see the joy that the boxes gave to all those who received them. We know that many of you spend hours making beautiful gifts, or collecting items throughout the year. Everything is greatly appreciated.

We would appreciate any shoe-boxes you don't need - we can accept them at any time.

Beryl Bellamy, 74574 or Beryl Virgin 74917

Raising money for Children in Need



We would like to say thank you to everyone who came to support me and donated to my fund raising for Children in Need. We raised a massive £1396.40.

Vanina Cooper
Merriott Childcare

Minnows Toddler Group

We are sorry to tell you that the Minnows Toddler Group is no longer running. This is because we could not find enough volunteer leaders to make it viable.

Providing space and support for families and toddlers is important to us. We hope that this group, or something similar, can start again if we have people who want to help lead it.

Please do get in touch if you want to discuss this.

Rev'd Julia Hicks

Future Dates for your Diary

May 11th – Swing Into Spring at the Social Venue raising money for the church

May 18th – Summer Fayre in the Church
Details to follow.

Jean Crisp

Scottish Country Dancing Comes to Merriott

Ever fancied having a go at Scottish Country Dancing? It's great fun, and a great way to exercise too. If you don't know what it is, it's a bit like barn dancing with its reels and jigs but the steps are a little different – though not so difficult that you can't pick them up in half an hour or so.

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (Somerset Branch) is holding a series of 'taster' events in South Somerset throughout 2019 to introduce people to the fun of Scottish Country Dancing. Their first event is at Merriott Village Hall on **Sunday 24th February** at 2:00pm. All are welcome, and attendance is free of charge; it is great fun for all ages, children love it, and all the dances will be easy to pick up.

It couldn't be simpler; no experience or equipment is needed; just turn up and have a great afternoon experiencing the joys of Scottish Country Dancing.

Steve Garrett

OPEN
GROUP

February

7th - Coffee and board games

21st - Pie night at The Admiral Hood, Mosterton

For further information contact Marion Biggs on 74170 or marionbiggs169@btinternet.com.

Marion Biggs

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News from All Saint's Church



Warm greetings and best wishes from all of us at All Saints to you and your families for this new year of 2019. Christmas already seems like a distant memory, but I do want to

say that we had a wonderful time as a church celebrating with many different local groups and people. Thank you to everyone who came or contributed in any way.

2019 may prove to be an even more turbulent year than 2018! As I was thinking about what lies ahead for this country and the wider world, these words returned to me:

"Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honour everyone; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen."

This is a blessing from *The Book of Common Prayer*, but it is also an outstanding manifesto for Christians to live by in difficult times. If you are not a Christian, no matter, because if we can all have a go at practising the first eight lines this year, these times of uncertainty and

chaos would be transformed. I am especially drawn to "hold fast to that which is good". Rather like clinging to something strong and safe as the storms rage around us. Let's not give up on goodness. Let's not give up on being small lights in the darkness. *Rev Bob Hicks. 76406.*

Church Services in February

Sun 3rd - Candlemas - 10.30am Sung Communion

Sun 10th - 10.30am Parish Communion

Sun 17th - 10.30am Family Service

Sun 24th - 9am Holy Communion; 4pm *Cafe Church @ St George's Church, HSG*

Rev Bob Hicks

Standing ovation for The Fisher Sinfonia Finale

As storm Deirdre swept across the South West on Saturday 15th December, little did people realise the festive storm that was about to be unleashed inside All Saints Church Merriott that night.

A small orchestra of 11 strings plus pianist, namely The Fisher Sinfonia, mesmerised a capacity audience of 220 with their musicians' skill and musicality, producing an unforgettable evening of Classical and Festive arrangements. Vivaldi's Winter, from his Four Seasons, with William Melvin of the LSO as the Violin Soloist, produced a dramatic start to the evening. In contrast The Sinfonia also produced a beautiful "Strictly-worthy" waltz from Tchaikovsky's - Serenade for Strings and finally, after the interval, a rendition of Beethoven's Piano Concerto no.5 (Emperor) 1st movement

Allegro produced a standing ovation from the audience for the performance by piano soloist Gamal Khamis.



The evening was also punctuated by performances of Christmas Carols, and festive arrangements such as "Sleigh Ride", all showing the virtuosity of the players who play regularly with leading

UK Orchestras. The evening's concert was the final concert of the Carols & Classics series performed over the last 10 years at All Saints Church that has raised £14,000 towards the Church's Fabric Fund.

The concert closed with an acknowledgement of the very special evening's performance of The Fisher Sinfonia by Reverend Bob Hicks. Thanks were also given to the team of support that made these series of concerts so successful and to the loyalty of the audience over the years. Finally Reverend Hicks said that the evening will be remembered for years to come and that Merriott, and the larger community, have been privileged to experience such a performance.

Paul Fisher

Merriott Childcare - Charlotte Hamlin

We are a registered childcare provider in Merriott. We strive to provide flexible, and ad-hoc, professional childcare in a safe home from home environment.

All children have the right to be understood as individuals and given opportunities for imagination, creativity & play. We have a large garden with climbing equipment and space to explore.

We are now offering forest school sessions for the children at the setting. This involves lots of outdoor activities: learning about nature, arts and crafts with natural products, exploration and discovery in the local outdoor environments and respecting the environment.



01460 73361
07721 018335
www.charlottehamlin.co.uk

For the older children we may also use tools and fire to learn important life skills. Children are involved in animal care, enabling them to have an understanding of the animals' needs.

We regularly visit the local community facilities, the aqua centre in Crewkerne and small holdings in the village. Outside providers visit the setting bringing individual skills and activities.

Opening times are 06.00-18.30 Monday to Friday. We provide school runs to Merriott first school and Merriott pre-school. we accept early years funding. please visit the website for more information.

FLIX in the STIX



Hinton St. George 'Flix in the Stix' proudly presents

'The Children Act' (12A, 105 minutes)

Saturday 9th February – 7.30 pm

Emma Thompson, Stanley Tucci & Fionn Whitehead

Tickets £5 in advance from the Village Shop and Dorothy's Tea Room, or £5.50 on the door. Doors open 7.00 pm. To reserve tickets please contact Bob Kefford on 01460 72563.

Directed by Richard Eyre from Ian McEwan's novel, the film tells the story of Fiona Maye (Thompson) who is an eminent High Court judge in London presiding with wisdom and compassion over ethically complex cases of family law. But she has paid a heavy personal price for her workload, and her marriage to American professor Jack (Tucci) is at a breaking point.

In this moment of personal crisis, Fiona is asked to rule on the case of Adam (Whitehead), a brilliant boy who is refusing the blood transfusion that will save his life on religious grounds. Adam is three months from his 18th birthday and still legally a child. Should Fiona force him to live? Fiona visits Adam in the hospital and their meeting has a profound emotional impact on them both, stirring strong new emotions in the boy and long-buried feelings in her.

Andrew Overhill

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DRIVERS WANTED

Wartime Herb Supplies by CB Plants

During both WW1 and WW2, there was a shortage of plant material for drug production in Britain due to the cessation of herb imports from countries such as Germany, Hungary, Italy and Yugoslavia. In both wars, a shortlist was drawn up of plants most needed, among them, Foxglove containing digitalis for heart conditions, Deadly nightshade for atrophine used in the treatment of conditions of the eye and Valerian for anxiety and insomnia.

In the WW1, commercial growers and farmers were instructed to grow more of the most needed herbs. The herbalist Mrs Maud Grieve – author of A Modern Herbal - ran courses at her herb garden in Hertfordshire and The National Herb



Vegetable Drug Committee at Kew Gardens in liaison with The Women's Institute. Country Herb Committees were set up each having their own collection and drying centres with grants available for equipment. The committees co-ordinated collections from local Women's Institutes, Scout and Guide Groups and the elderly. By the end of the

Growing Association was set up under the auspices of The Women's Farm and Gardens Union.

In WW2, the collecting of herbs was organised by the governments

war there were 250 drying centres across the country supplying the British pharmaceutical industry.

It was not only herbs for drug production that were collected. Sphagnum moss was known to have mild antiseptic properties and was used extensively during WW1 as a wound dressing, being particularly soothing when applied to burns. The moss was collected from boggy places throughout the British Isles and dried before being sent to the military hospitals.

Other plant material in demand included nettles for dying of military uniforms, and in WW2, rosehips for their high vitamin C content.

Catherine Bond

Merriott Gospel Hall



Every Tuesday
10am - 11.30am

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