

MERRIOTT MESSENGER

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October 2017

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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 November issue is 12th October.

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News from Merriott Heritage Trust

Regular users of Shyners Lane will have noticed that long-overdue maintenance has begun with the initial trimming of hedgerows. This is just the start of an important programme which will take a number of years. The work will be funded entirely by the Heritage Trust with the agreement of Somerset County Council and the Parish Council. The next stage of the work, which is imminent, will involve cutting back the banks of the upper path to reveal the full width of the tarmac surface. A full assessment of hedgerow species will then be made to enable us to judge the need for removal and replanting with appropriate wildlife-friendly hedging, probably in the 2018-19 planting season. All this work is being managed by local contractor Mark Boucher of Church St. Finally we plan to rebuild the drystone retaining wall opposite Shyners Terrace, again with appropriate planting above.

Having been pleased to assist with the refurbishment of the Village Hall Railings, the Trust has agreed to provide funding to enable the spalled "stonework" around the main entrance to be restored. This rather tricky work is being carried out by specialist Geoff Gale, who restored the West door and window of All Saints Church last year, again with financial help from the Trust.

The Trust was disappointed that it was unable to respond positively to the Parochial Church Council's application for financial help to replace the lead which was stolen earlier this year from the South Aisle roof of the church. The PCC's fabric committee had decided to replace all the

ancient lead work on the S. Aisle, of which only a proportion had been removed by the thieves, with modern stainless steel material, as had been previously done when lead from the N. Aisle was stolen 6 years ago. This approach required the removal and disposal of the surviving lead work together with significant modifications to parts of the roof's timber structure. Our Deed of Trust allows us only to grant monies for the restoration of and the enhancement to historic buildings in the village and not for the use of modern materials such as plastic windows, doors or rain-water goods or, in this case, the replacement of lead with steel roofing. However, we did offer to consider grant aid to replace the stolen lead with new lead and for the installation of an insurance company-approved alarm system. This suggestion was not acceptable to the PCC.

I am pleased to announce the appointment of three new Trustees who bring their skills, interests and experience to the Trust; namely Louise Darlington of Lower St, Angela Venn of Church St and Nic Preston of Court Mill Lane. The Trust now has its full complement of seven Trustees.

Finally, I would like to remind you that the Trust is able to offer grant aid, not just to institutions, but to any individual resident who wishes to improve or enhance their historic fabric or would like to plant trees and hedges, provided that it can be demonstrated that the work is of public benefit. We would be pleased to hear from anyone interested.

Tony Hobbs, Chairman

You are invited Friday 29th September - Sunday 1st October 10-5pm All Saints Church



Flower Festival 'Say it with Flowers' including Tea and Cake served from 10-12 and 2-4pm daily. **Admission free.** Enjoy the flower arrangements, music and watercolour paintings by Sheila Bowman, (on sale with percentage to the roof appeal).

The **Concert** with **Stanchester Community Folk Quire** is at 7pm on Friday night. **Concert Tickets are £6 includes a glass of wine, from Osborne's. Enquiries 01460 78461 please.**

Music from our organists Friday and Saturday, between 2.30- 4pm
Songs of Praise service Sunday at 5pm.

Ann Lawrence

Searching for clues re the Merriott Cider Flagon

Following the photo posted in last month's Merriott Messenger of the cider jar with the inscription: **W.W.Webber Wine and Spirit Merchants, Merriott, Crewkerne**, I have been contacted by several readers with information and done further research myself.

The Webbers owned the nursery before selling it to John Scott in 1848. The **Merriott Families Genealogy** website is an excellent resource and there I found a reference from the 1851 census to **Willian W Webber** age 30, a Nurseryman and Brewer employing 16 hands.

He had a wife Dorcas Ann age 25, a daughter Rose age 1 and a second daughter Dorcas Ann age 1 month. They lived at Town's End Merriott.



The 1861 census, kindly forwarded by a reader, has **William W Webber**, a Wine Merchant, living at Chard Road, Merriott with his wife, 6 children, a governess and 2 servants. He was obviously doing well.

I would think that is the same address, although why that part of the village should be called Chard Road I am not sure.

The 1887 Ordnance Survey map has a

beer house situated at Townsend. In the 1891 census William was a retired Wine Merchant.

Interestingly the 1889 edition of Kelly's Directory has a **William Woolmington Webber** living in Sheepmarket Street (now Market Street presumably) Crewkerne. He was a graduate of Edinburgh University with LRCP after his name and was a Medical Officer and Public Vaccinator for Crewkerne. He was also possibly William the wine merchant's son.

I need to do more research to establish the exact train of events. Perhaps a visit to Somerset Heritage centre in Taunton is called for. Watch this space!

Marion Biggs

News from All Saints Church



This year's Harvest service will take place at 10am and be followed by a 'bring and share' lunch in the tithe barn from midday. Between the service and the lunch you can have a go at using an apple press to make your own juice. Bring some apples if you have an excess!

As in previous years, we are collecting for the local Pilsdon Community who support and accommodate people with a variety of problems. They will gladly receive any of our harvest produce, but non-perishable goods are most helpful to them.

Please come and enjoy all or some of the Harvest celebrations.

Church Services in October

- Sun 1st** 8.30am Holy Communion
6.00pm Flower Festival Songs of Praise (with choir)
- Sun 8th** 9.30am Communion
- Sun 15th** 10.00am Harvest Festival
- Sun 22nd** 10.00am Sung Communion

Rev Julia Hicks

News from Scott's Nurseries!

As we all know, walking the dog is good exercise and enjoyable. We are lucky enough to have many paths in Merriott.

The owners of the former Scott's Nurseries land are very happy to welcome walkers into their private land, **BUT...** recently, more and more dog walkers have been straying from the public paths (paths no CH/32&33).

Here they leave a trail of poo and endanger themselves and their pets among debris of wire, broken glass and the many hazards alongside the path. Some have been diligently picking up the poo, bagging it and throwing it into tanks, hedges, onto roofs!! and in to people's gardens.

The nearest bin at the moment is in Church Street or Shiremoor Hill – not too far to carry it for the sake of your safety and community spirit? New bins may be installed soon.



J.Chidley



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Notes from the Merriott Archives held by Crewkerne Museum & Heritage Centre : Part 2

This was not the first school in Merriott. Records show that in 1618 the vicar, Alexander Atkins, was teaching 9 boys; by 1819 there was a day school for 20-30 children and in 1825 there were 55 pupils. It appears, however, to have been the first purpose-built school. When the first stage of the "new" school in Church Street was built for infants in 1876 the "Little School", as it was later called, had already been established for forty-two years.



the infants for 17 years until the end of WW1 and Florence Winch was head-mistress from 1919 to 1947, but the prize for dedication must go to Bessie Bunstone who taught the infant class for 49 years, most of which I assume were spent in the little school. I am sure that she is still remembered by older members of the community.

Originally in 1834, it was both a Day School and a Sunday School supported by voluntary subscription and catering for 160 pupils. In 1861 it became an Anglican National School. The Elementary Education Acts of 1870 changed education for good. Compulsory education for all children was introduced, although not at first entirely free, and the little school became a Mixed Board School for Juniors. Its first-recorded master was John Pamphlett and in 1908 it was he who must have over-seen the transfer of the

Juniors to the extended Church Street school, at the same time as the little school, became the Infants under the headship of Maggie Scaife. It remained independent from the Junior School until 1947, despite Somerset County Council replacing the Boards in 1903.

Two world wars created difficulties for both schools with staffing problems during WW1 and the influx of evacuees in WW2. Apart from these periods of disruption, the little school saw few changes in staff. Mary Pamphlett taught

Gradually, as the Church Street School expanded and educational aspirations increased, the little school became less relevant, latterly being used only for P.E. and school meals. Now, this historic building, which has served Merriott so well and for so long, is For Sale and its future is uncertain. We cannot halt change but we can value and remember with affection the important role this building has had in the education of generations of Merriott children.

Pat Hobbs, Merriott Heritage Trust

Merri the Bat



Little did Martin Davies realise, when he rescued an injured bat lying beside his house in Merriott, that he had found one of the rarest mammals in Britain.

He took it to the RSPCA centre at West Hatch where bat specialist, India Long, recognised it as a Grey Long-Eared Bat of which there are around only a thousand in the country.

Marion Biggs

Autumn Clean - Work Party

Saturday 14th October

9.30am - 11.30am

Merriott Church

We would very much welcome lots of volunteers at our Autumn Clean work party. There will be jobs in the churchyard, like hedge trimming, wilderness taming and general tidying – and also we will be cleaning inside the church too.

Refreshments will be available.

Please bring suitable clothing and tools.

More details from Tom Jones (240615) and Robin Gilkes (75549).

Poppy Appeal 2017



There will be a house to house collection as usual in Merriott commencing 28th October for two weeks leading up to Remembrance Sunday on 12th November. For further details please contact Liz/ Peter Fisk, tel. 01460 72595.

Liz & Peter Fisk



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Hello and Goodbyes at Merriott School

Staff and Pupils of Merriott School had to say goodbye to Mr Pearse at the end of term. Mr Pearse had been at the school for 8 years, both as a teacher and later as senior teacher and assistant Headteacher. Mr Pearse has now taken up a new appointment at Ashlands School in Crewkerne.

Mr Jamie Caswell joined the school in September as the new Deputy Headteacher and Year 2 teacher. He was previously at Norton School before taking up this new exciting appointment at Merriott. Mr Caswell is a keen musician and will be leading English across the federation. Joining alongside him is Mr Andrew Wood who comes to the school to teach Redstreak Class (Year 1 and 2 pupils). Mr Smith, Headteacher said: "We are so pleased to welcome our new staff to our school and they have settled really well into our team. We look forward to them sharing their talents and interests with the whole school community."

Class arrangements have changed at the school this year with the children being arranged in their 5 year groups for English and Maths lessons and in their mixed aged classes for other lessons.

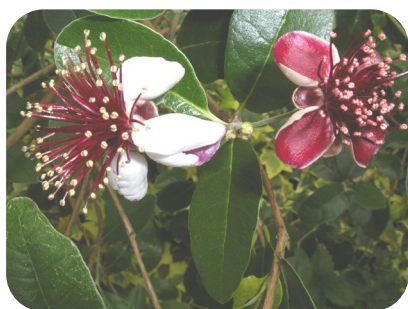
"The new reception intake have also settled well into our school community and we are delighted to welcome our 27 new reception pupils to our school family", Mr Smith, further added.

The School will be having an open day on **4th October** starting at 9.15am and the whole community is invited along to see our new school team and see typical learning at our school.



Philip Smith - Executive Headteacher

Identified



Mo Frampton emailed to let us know that her mystery plant, mentioned in the September issue of the Messenger, was identified by three individuals as an Acca Sellowiana or Pineapple Guava, a native of Brazil. Thank you for getting in touch with her.

Editorial Team

Merriott Gardening Club



A convivial evening in August - Club members and guests enjoying a lovely meal at the Gardening Club's Summer Evening held at the Kings Head.

Our next meeting will be held on **Tuesday 31st October at 7.30pm**

This meeting should prove very popular as we have Dave Usher from Hestercombe Gardens talking about Trees and Shrubs and the correct way and when to prune. Don't forget to bring your favourite flower for the Flower of the Month competition. Meet at the Tithe Barn, Church Street, Merriott – refreshments and raffle. Non members very welcome at £2 entry.

Barbara Byford 72298

Social Club News

Club memberships are now due, please pop in to renew or contact us by email:- merriottsocialclub@hotmail.net

Up-coming events are:

Merriott's Monthly Market and indoor car-boot on **7th October** in aid of Merriott First School from 10am-3pm.

On the **14th October** we have live music from 9pm with the ever popular, Sounds like Silver.

28th October - Halloween disco from 7pm, come dressed in your best spooky outfit.

Teresa Braley



Correction

The contact details for booking the hall, printed in the September issue of the Merriott Messenger, were out of date.

For all bookings please contact:
Michelle Rowswell
T. 01460 72508
E. merriottvillagehall@gmail.com

Merriott Gospel Hall



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SIS (Small Improvements Scheme) for Merriott – Highways and Pathways Proposals Presented by Merriott Parish Council

(Note text in bold blue is feedback from the Traffic and Transport Development Group for Somerset County Council in response to MPC Proposals)

1. Install 'Gateway' on pinch points at either end of the village with bold signage. **Could be achievable (depending on community priorities)**.
2. Install raised Rumble strips on approaches to Gateways. **Not usual to install rumble strips, but countdown bars are sometimes included. Engineer to advise of appropriate features for gateway.**
3. Install shallow platform within each of these two pinch points. **Engineer to advise of appropriate features for gateway.**
4. 30MPH Limit extended Northbound to inc. Hinton St.G junction. **Unlikely to meet with 30 mph limit criteria – MPC still want to investigate this further as similar limits have been done elsewhere.**
5. 30MPH limit extended Southbound to meet Crewkerne speed restriction. **Unlikely to meet with 30 mph limit criteria – MPC still want to investigate this further as similar limits have been done elsewhere.**
6. Extend white line inside Village Hall pedestrian pathway southbound to layby 500mm from pavement. **For the purpose of improving Pedestrian Safety and will need assessment?**
7. Coloured surface 'safety buffer' laid within it to protect pedestrians on narrow pavement LHS from the Village Hall Crossing on Broadway down into the village. **Sounds like the intention is to achieve a virtual footway, this would require assessment.**
8. Pavement extended North at Southern end of village (Pye Corner to Coop) to enable safe crossing and transit. **Costly element that has already been looked at as a school danger point. It didn't satisfy criteria then, but could be achievable as a SIS.**
9. Pinch point installed on Merriottsford Bridge, inc. shallow platform, priority Southbound. **Engineer to advise.**
10. Install pavement on East side of carriageway across Bridge

extending to Co-Op. **May be level issues and could be costly to tie back into existing accesses etc. Engineer to advise.**

1. Review all signage, improve as needed, particularly where 'give way' is involved. Remove redundant ones. **Discuss with Area Traffic Engineer.**
2. Renew all worn white lines. **Ongoing maintenance most of which has already been completed after the reports highlighting issues by MPC were sent to highways.**
3. Create formal parking on N. Bound carriageway approaching Co-Op, inc. Disabled bay. **Engineer to advise.**
4. Review the operation and function of the mini roundabouts to improve safety and traffic flow. **Engineer to advise.**
5. Installation of zebra crossing at Osbornes along Broadway. **Can't be accommodated where suggested by MPC.**
6. Review and propose further Improvements to the existing Lower Broadway Traffic Calming Scheme. MPC are awaiting feedback from Second Safety Audit. **Unlikely to be part of and SIS Scheme.**

Whether we can implement all or some of them remains to be seen. It is important that we can balance the number of platforms, pinch points or any other traffic calming methods along Broadway to ensure that we achieve the desired effect to slow vehicles down, still keep traffic flowing at a reasonable level with clear priorities in both directions and improve pedestrian safety. These proposals are only our initial suggestions and ideas and we welcome any constructive feedback before trying to obtain further feedback from highways engineers regarding the feasibility and costs to implement any of these proposals. We also need to agree what will be submitted for the SIS. Please send any feedback to MPC Clerk (merriott-clerk@hotmail.com).

The full report with photographs can also be found on the Village website (www.merriottvillage.org.uk) or on the MPC Facebook page (www.facebook.com/MerriottParishCouncil). We look forward to receiving your comments.

*Cllr Grant Wright MPC Highways Working Party
and MPC CSW Coordinator*

OPEN GROUP

5th October - Talk on becoming a 16th century kitchen maid

19th October - An orthopaedic surgeon talks about the hip joint.

New members are always welcome to this friendly and supportive group. We meet in each others houses and the evenings include coffee and biscuits and time for a natter.

For details contact Marion Biggs 74170 or marionbiggs169@btinternet.com

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Did you know

Gloucester cattle were an important part of the rural economy of the Severn Vale as far back as the thirteenth century. They were used to produce milk and beef and as draught animals. Since then their numbers have fluctuated, being most numerous in the eighteenth century but by 1972 had dwindled to less than 100 cows and 10 bulls. In 1972 the Dowdswell family in Gloucestershire had the last large herd at that time which was sold that year. A few farming enthusiasts were able to buy these animals, to resurrect the breed and to re-establish the herd book. Today there are about 700 Gloucester cows.

Gloucesters are ideally a dark brown or 'mahogany' colour but some are black or red. They are very distinctive, having a white line or 'finching' extending between the shoulders, down the back,

the tail and between the hindlegs, and then extending forwards over the udder to the brisket. The horns are fine and forward sweeping with dark tips.



These cattle produce milk of high fat and protein content. The small size of the fat droplets in the milk means that it has been prized for Gloucester cheese production for centuries. Single Gloucester cheese now has an EU product recogni-

tion which requires this cheese to be made only from Gloucester cattle milk though Double Gloucester cheese may be made from milk from any breed.

The breed is also renowned because in 1796 Sir Edward Jenner took the first anti-smallpox serum from a Gloucester cow called 'Blossom'. He did this because he had noticed that milk maids were free of smallpox. Blossom's hide is still preserved in the Medical School Library of St George's Hospital in London.

The outbreak of foot and mouth in 2001 caused much concern amongst the Gloucester owners but fortunately few of the animals were lost to the disease. The Rare Breeds Survival Trust still has the breed on its watch list.

John Bowman

What Stays the Same by Janet Lailey

A cliff-top terrace from which to gaze.
Eyes claimed for hours by the glitter
of a sea blue beyond imagining,
beyond a peacock's iridescence.
Marble pillars once supported
pedimented shade,
over a mosaic floor cool to the feet.
A constant little breeze –
here, it must be a zephyr –
twirls dust and, I now see, cigarette
ends.

Some things have changed since
those others
kicked off their sandals and sipped
their wine,
she arranging her pleated tunic
to recline on cushions,
he shading his eyes to assess distant
shipping.

Now, to reach the villa, we climb
a stony little track, which we would
never have found
if we hadn't had the guide-book.
Up a steep slope, from the dump
where dust lorries are parked:
where slaves once swept the courtyard.

Pushing between oleanders
to the cliff top, we find that
the pillars have long rolled away,
eroded,
gone. Only their footprint has persisted,
level with the tattered tessellated floor:
we trace a line of seamed marble discs
burnished by centuries of sand-blasting,
shining up into the sun's eye.
Some things have stayed the same
--the mesmerising sea, far below,
seemingly sloping up to join paler sky
at a dark line of horizon;
the silhouettes of ships,
- tankers or triremes.

And the particle of grit blown
into my eye -
- that's the same!

Long before guide-books,
or the parked lorries,
her sympathetic husband, putting
down his wine,
would have carefully dabbed her
flinching iris;
then as now, that would hardly shift
the unendurable, timeless irritation,
of the grain of sand, blown into my eye
by that everlasting zephyr.



Not sure what to do with your used stamps?

Thank you to everyone who has provided used postage stamps and postcards for the Children's Society. The sale of stamps has now raised over **£11,000!**

More stamps are always needed, especially foreign and commemorative stamps. They can be left at:

South Petherton - in the box at the back of St Peter and St Paul's church, the doctors' surgery **or** the pharmacy at South Petherton Hospital

Ilminster - Just Things - the Fair Trade shop in Silver St. or Adorn Hairdressers

Crewkerne - The Children's Society shop

Seavington - The Community Shop

or they can be sent or delivered to:
Gill Beveridge, Whiteridge, Upton Lane,
Seavington TA19 0PZ.

Gill Beveridge

Date for your Diary Carols & Classics 9

Saturday 16th December

at 7.30pm

All Saints Church

Look out for further details in the next issue of the Merriott Messenger.



Copy Date

May we please remind you that copy date is always the 12th of the month and that we may not be able to accommodate any articles received after this date. Thank you.

Editorial Team

Shoe Box Appeal 2017

We are fast approaching Shoe-Box time again and we would be delighted if you could help once more with our 2017 Appeal. We are so grateful for your generosity every year, and we know that many desperately poor and marginalised people in Eastern Europe will be deeply touched as they receive their shoe-boxes this Christmas.

Boxes can be sent to every age-range, from babies to the elderly, so the choice is yours! Leaflets giving more details will be avail-

able from mid-September in the Church and in the Broadway Garage.

Completed boxes, as well as 'fillers' can be dropped off at the addresses below - final date for collection is **November 4th**. We would also be grateful for any extra empty shoe-boxes. These can also be dropped off to us at any time.

Thank you so much.

Beryl Virgin - 12 Higher Beadon, Merriott Tel: 74917
Beryl Bellamy - 35 Shiremoor Hill, Merriott Tel: 74574

Shoe Box Coffee Morning

You are invited to join us for our coffee morning on **Saturday 21st October** from 10.00am - 12 noon at 35 Shiremoor Hill in support of the Christmas Shoe Boxes. Bring and Buy, Raffle and plenty of good company. We look forward to seeing you.

For more information please contact Beryl Virgin 74917 or Beryl Bellamy 74574.

Beryl Bellamy



Merriott Village Hall
invites you to a

QUIZ
NIGHT

Saturday 25th November @ 7.30pm

Tickets available from
Osborne's Broadway, Merriott Pharmacy and
Premier Garage

£10 - Two Course Supper (with veggie option)
Licensed Bar from 7pm No Bring Your Own

All Saints' Church, Merriott

New to You Sale

**Saturday
28th October**

10am to 11.30am

In the Tithe Barn,
Church Street, Merriott

Clothes, Books, Toys, Bric a Brac
and Other stalls



Tea and coffee
will be available



In aid of Church funds

We have been advised that names in the caption of the photo in the "Looking back ..." article were wrong; Pipman should have read Pitman. Our apologies to John Pike and his family.

Merriott Messenger editorial team

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Gardening Quote of the Month

sent in by Mo Frampton

"It is a greater act of faith to plant a bulb than to plant a tree..... to see in these wizened, colourless shapes the subtle curves of the Iris Reticulata or the tight locks of the Hyacinth.

Clare Leighton



Merriott Tea Towels - still only £4.00

These useful gifts, illustrated with beautiful sketches of the village by Merriott artist Beryl Virgin, are for sale at Osbornes and the garage Premier Shop.

Easy to post, they make an ideal gift.

Proceeds go to All Saints Church.



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