

MERRIOTT MESSENGER

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April 2025

Beetlemania at the Tithe Barn

If you had been walking past the Tithe Barn in Merriott during the evening of 7 March, you might well have wondered what the sounds of merriment coming from within were all about. The answer was that it was forty or so villagers taking part in the All Saints' Church Beetle Drive. This was the first event arranged by the Church Social Committee and it was judged to be a great success. Everyone entered into the spirit of the occasion which, for some at least, was a longish trip down memory lane to when they last took part in a Beetle Drive as youngsters.



The mood is neatly captured by the following letter from Merriott resident, Dorothy Cooke, who wrote in to the Messenger to express her pleasure after taking part...

"I was one of the many people who went to the recent Beetle Drive at the Tithe Barn. What a fun evening we had. We were greeted warmly on arrival and supplied with a fabulous ploughman's supper which included delicious tiger bread, cheese, ham, scotch eggs, pork pies, coleslaw, salad, pickled onions and homemade chutney. More than enough for the ploughman and his horse! A bar was available serving wine, cider and beer plus soft drinks – something for everyone. The beetle drive itself started after the supper and for some, it was the first time they'd played since childhood. Fortunately, the only skill required was rolling a dice as quickly as possible and drawing something that vaguely resembled a beetle. It was a fast-paced series of twelve rounds and once we

got into the swing of it, there was much excitement and laughter as we strove to be the first to complete all the parts of our beetles. A wonderful evening's entertainment and I would like to say a big thank-you to Alison, Marilyn and Caroline for organising such a memorable event. I can't wait for the next one!" - Dorothy Cooke

The event raised over £300 for Church funds and in view of the popularity of this first event, the organisers intend to hold similar Beetle Drives and other social activities in the future. Watch out for more details in the Merriott Messenger.

Caroline Reeves on behalf of the Church Events Committee

Merriott Heritage Trust

Were you or your ancestors glovers? As we have no wi-fi at the trust headquarters we have been busy downloading and printing out Merriott censuses. The 1841 to 1921 are available on line and you can look at the printouts if you call in. It has been very interesting reading about people's lives in the 19th and early 20th centuries. In the 1851 census there were over seventy glovers in the village. They worked at home and were wives and daughters of low paid workers, mainly labourers, trying to earn a little extra for the household. This practise of home workers continued well into the 20th century. Were you or any of your family glovers? We'd love to hear from you.



We hope to have an exhibition later in the year and personal memories would be an excellent contribution. Either call in at Heritage Headquarters, 10 Lower Street on Thursdays 10.00 to 12.00 or email on merriott.heritage.trust@gmail.com

Marion Biggs

Merriott Messenger Information

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Copy date for the May issue is 12th April.

Merriott Social Venue News

Well done to Toni-Lee and Holly Chant who organised a charity quiz night in aid of Tommy's baby charity in March. The night raised a whopping £580 for the charity. The two girls are also running a half marathon soon and we wish them all the best. It's still not too late to donate at: <https://llhm.tommys.org/fundraising/tonis-half-marathon>.



Charity quiz night on March 1st in aid of Tommy's baby charity.

It was very well attended and everyone enjoyed the evening.

We have got lots planned over the next month, here are some dates for your diaries:-

- **April 5th - EASTER BINGO** fundraiser for Merriott Social Venue. Lots of Easter prizes and a raffle. Doors open at 7pm, eyes down at 7.30pm.
- **April 12th - LIVE MUSIC** with the Ska-Kives. We can give these musicians a tick for: drums, guitars, bass, keyboards, trombone and saxophone! The band are performing at many summer festivals but have managed to fit us in and we can't wait! They are superb. An evening of quality music from the Ska-Kives is not one to be missed.
- **April 26th - WILLOW WORKSHOP** create your own beautiful leaping hare for an impressive sculpture to keep. They make amazing garden features! It's £85 per person to include materials, tuition from Jo Sadler (Forged in Willow) and a light lunch. To secure a place we require a non refundable £20 deposit which can be paid over the bar to staff or bank transfer. Please message for more details.
- **May 3rd - VE DAY** 80th Anniversary from 2pm-7pm. We are marking this great occasion with our legendary street party. All welcome. Grab yourselves a chair and come on down and enjoy the afternoon. There will be live music entertainment, hot food and plenty to amuse the children - even rides in military vehicles!

Don't forget our Weekly Wednesday Cash Bingo in the front bar, eyes down 8pm, and Friday nights are free pool nights. We wish you all a very happy Easter and look forward to seeing you all soon.

If you are interested in any of the activities or events above, or wish to book our function room for a private party, please call in and see a member of staff, contact us on our Facebook page, email: merriottsocialclub@hotmail.com or phone 07471 593040.

Penny Gibbs, Secretary



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Local builder available for general building, extensions, painting and decorating, renovations, repairs and maintenance. Happy to undertake new build work as well as experience with listed/older properties which need sympathetic restoration.

Summer Skittles

£££ Cash Prizes £££

Starting in May
Assemble your team of 4
Register at the bar
All skill levels welcome



£5 per
Game
Team Size
4

Merriott Social Venue

Health Alternative

REMEDIAL TREATMENTS

• Sports & Remedial Massage • Deep Oscillation Treatment • Myofascial Release Therapy • Pregnancy Massage

WELLNESS TREATMENTS

- Foot Reflex Assessment & Massage A deeply relaxing treatment includes foot reflex points & massage.
- Lymphatic Drainage Massage A very gentle & relaxing treatment that can help boost the immune system.
- Facial Rejuvenation Massage Incorporating Indian Head massage and lymphatic drainage techniques helping to brighten and relax the face.



Victoria Waight established for 20 years & based in Merriott

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Gardening quote of the month

"The beautiful Spring came; and when Nature resumes her loveliness, the human soul is apt to revive also." -Harriet Ann Jacobs

Sent in by Mo Frampton

The Mobile Library will visit Merriott on
Tuesday 1st April and Tuesday 29th April
outside the church
10.50am - 11.10am



London Marathon

We are delighted to announce that William Darlington (formerly of Lower Street) will be running the London Marathon on Sunday 27th April to raise money for the charity Hearts Together.

Will's father, the farrier and Merriott resident James Darlington, who people will remember often driving his horses through the Merriott streets, sadly passed away following a short illness in the Summer of 2023 with his funeral taking place in September of that year.

Will said: "When our Dad, James was sick in Derriford Hospital (Plymouth), Hearts Together provided us with a caring and supportive place to stay. The team were incredibly kind and we really owe a lot to the charity for their wonderful support during the time that dad was in the ICU. I want to raise these funds so the charity can continue to support other families and friends who find themselves stuck when a loved one is taken ill."



Hearts Together is a registered charity that provides more than just a place to stay. They provide accommodation and wrap-around support for patients, carers and relatives when they, or a loved one are receiving treatment at a local medical facility or Hospital. Hearts Together offer a home-away-from-home, providing practical, financial and emotional help to make what can be a very challenging time a little bit easier. To support Will, and in memory of his dad James, a much loved Merriott resident please donate at:
<https://www.justgiving.com/page/william-darlington-1?newPage=true>

For further information on what Hearts Together do: www.heartstogether.org.uk

Niamh Darlington

Merriott Bowls Club

Preparations are well underway at Merriott Bowls Club for the coming season. Fortunately the green has not suffered from the enormous amounts of rain we have had, and is looking fantastic. Lots of love and work goes into cutting and treating the green to make sure it is in best possible condition when play starts in April.

The club has taken advantage of the quiet winter to install solar panels and a battery, which make the club effectively self sufficient for electricity. In fact most days considerable amounts of green excess power are being exported out to the national grid.

While the club members don't play outside in Winter, many play at one or other of the local indoor and short mat venues. During the winter we have had numerous social events, a four day indoor bowling trip to Torquay and many members are just returning from a bowls tour to Portugal. But what we look forward to most is getting back outside for some friendly sociable bowling in the fresh air. Bowls is a great form of exercise, a great social activity, and can be as competitive as you want. Certainly at Merriott no one is pushed to play more than they want, or at a level they are uncomfortable with. There are internal club games, and then friendlies with other clubs. As you gain more confidence there are league games, and this year we have several members trying their hand in County and National competitions. One of our ladies is the current Somerset Ladies Beginners Champion.



Barbara English who won last year's Somerset Ladies Beginners Championship

To find out more and to have a go yourself, come along to our open day at the club (in the recreation ground) on Saturday 26th April from 10:30am to 3:30pm. All you need is a pair of flat soled shoes such as trainers, we will supply everything else. For more information see our website merriottbowls.com

Jim Greenfield, Membership Secretary

April's Programme

- 3rd April: How to – Long Exposure*
- 10th April: Water Droplets*
- 17th April: Star Trails – Ham Hill
- 24th April: Competition – Water

*venue: the pavilion, 7.30 pm.

It has been a busy few weeks for the Club, we have enjoyed giving talks about photography to other Merriott based groups i.e. the Cubs and the Open Group. We have had some interesting Club nights at the pavilion, including a macro night where we learned how to take close up photos. The Club also enjoys trip out, we went into Crewkerne one evening and took photos of the church which was fun. Other trips are planned (weather permitting) including going to a beach, Barrington Court and Sculptures by the Lakes.

All welcome, contact us through our Facebook page or by email: merriott_camera_club@yahoo.com.

Merriott Camera Club

Merriott Camera Club



Macro image of a snowdrop by Jayne Scott.

Right: St Bartholomews Church by Judy Peach





Merriott Village Hall presents

EASTER QUIZ & SUPPER NIGHT

Saturday 12th April 2025
at Merriott Village Hall

Doors open at 6.30pm and
food served at 7pm

Tickets available from Q & Co, The Feed Station,
Merriott Service Station or Budgens,
or by contacting:
MerriottVEvents@gmail.com - 07885 424588

Bar available and all profits for
ARK at Egwood CIC

Price: only £12.50 - maximum team size 6
(with delicious two course supper provided by ARK)

Menu: Beef or veggie chilli (dairy free & gluten free)
Please contact above email with any other dietary requirements





Manor Farm

Exciting updates at Manor Farm! Our farm shop has had an upgrade.

- Dedicated space for fresh veg, free-range eggs, apple juice, jams, chutneys, honey, and more.
- We've added oils, vinegar, herbs, spices, handmade crafts, and gifts!
- We are also picking our own flowers for bunches, and bedding plants are back this year.
- Looking for a special gift or just need fresh eggs? Come and explore!

Open: Mon-Sat, 8:30 AM-6:00 PM (ish), Closed Sundays

Manor Farm, Lower Street, Merriott, TA16 5NP – see you soon!



A Little From Everyone Helps Enormously



I am writing this in mid March and it is gratifying to report that ten full car loads of your donations have been driven to Raft (Refugee aid from Taunton) in the past six weeks. Winter clothing and

footwear and blankets and suitcases were destined for the Middle East, Southern Europe and Ukraine, the last taking most of the blankets. Further visits will deliver some remaining suitcases.

Needless to say, Raft volunteers sent their thanks as they sorted and boxed the items, ready for collection. They will soon be collecting for warmer temperatures and from April onwards they ask those who can donate to give unwanted summer clothing and footwear for all ages and sizes – adults, teenagers, children and babies, all clean and in good condition. And they are always in need of new socks and underwear for all ages and toiletries and hygiene products.

Additionally, if you have unwanted items unsuitable for refugees but suitable for Raft to sell on Ebay, say party clothes, high heeled shoes, business suits, Raft can use the money for shipping costs or for babies nappies, for example.

Grateful thanks to all.

Geraldine Downey, Refugee Support Group, 01460 271358

All Saints Church - Merriott

Easter Egg Hunt

Wed 16 April between 2pm & 3pm

Start and finish at the church

The hunt will be around the village
(Will be held in church if very wet)

Raffle Refreshments Easter Crafts

Plus

Easter treat for all the children

Free Entry

Children up to age 12 years welcome
(must be accompanied by an adult)

Contact Caroline on 07914 008858 for any further information

All Saints Church Services in April

Sun 6 th April	6.30pm Praise Service, Tithe Barn (5.30 for informal supper)
Sun 13 th April	Palm Sunday 10.30am Communion Service with 16 Bells Choir, Merriott Church
Tues 15 th April	8pm Compline (Night Prayer) for Holy Week, Merriott Church
Thurs 17 th April	Maundy Thursday 7pm Communion Service, Lopen
Fri 18 th April	Good Friday 10am Easter Story Walk (with readings and activities) starting from Merriott Church
Sun 20 th April	Easter Sunday: 5.45am Easter Sunrise Service at ARK@Egwood (followed by refreshments) 10.30 All Age Easter Communion, Merriott Church
Sun 27 th April	10.30am Parish Communion, Hinton St George
Sun 11 th May	Annual Meeting at approx. 11.30am (after a 10.30am service). This is when we vote for Churchwardens, present accounts and share information about what has been going on in the life of the church. Attendance is open to all.

Rev'd Julia Hicks



Planning Applications



59 Lower Street - Notification of intent to fell 1 tree within a conservation area. 25/00411/TCA Status: Awaiting decision.

Manor House, Higher Street – Notification of intent to carry out Tree Surgery works to 3 trees within a conservation area. 25/00414/TCA. Status: Awaiting decision.

Land OS 0420 Part Tail Mill – Erection of three dwelling houses with new vehicular access. 25/00010/FUL Status: Awaiting decision.

3 and 4 Moorlands Court - Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for the proposed conversion of two first floor flats into single flat. 25/00351/COL Status: Awaiting decision.

Agricultural Barn, Moorlands Road – Application to fell 169 Ash Saplings and fell 3 trees as they all have ash die back as shown within the South Somerset District Council Tree Preservation Order (MERR 1) 2010 Tree Preservation Order. 25/00286/TPO Status: Awaiting decision

Old Barn House, Merriott Road – Notification of intent to fell 1 tree within a Conservation Area AMENDED SPECIFICATION (24.02.25) Amended notification of intent to re-pollard back to previous pruning cuts. 25/00095/TCA Status: Decided.

Old Barn House, Merriott Road – Notification of intent to fell 2 trees within a conservation area. 25/00013/TCA Status: Decided.

Land North East of 23 and 25 Orchard Drive – The erection of two self build detached houses. 23/03191/FUL Status: Approved.

Springfield Cottage, Church Street – Conversion of existing carport to annex accommodation. 25/00030/FUL Status: Approved
For further information go to Somerset.gov.uk and “Search for planning application”

Marion Biggs

Merriott Primary School

This month at school has seen us celebrating World Book Day. The whole school took part in many book related activities including virtual author visits, dressing up and creating books in boxes – it was a fabulous week where we all shared some wonderful books on the theme of windows and mirrors. Books are both windows to new worlds and experiences whilst also being mirrors into our own lives, thoughts and feelings.

Our Year six class have been busy creating some wonderful pieces of art-worked titled Layered Portraits, they built on skills to create backgrounds and then used observational drawing skills to sketch portraits and then pieced them together – as you can see from the selection featured this month they are very impressive.

As mentioned last month our year 3 class enjoyed a visit to the local twine works where they were shown how twine was made. They enjoyed listening to the process of how the flax was cut, washed in a lake, dried, washed in the lake again and then re-dried before being turned into twine. However, they were not impressed that the twine was soaked in human urine or that children worked there from 12 years old! The year 5 children were full of interesting snippets from their trip to Shepton Mallet Prison last half term and couldn't wait to tell us all about the prison's famous inmates – Cornelius Minty, Mabel Capper (one of the suffragettes) and Ronnie and Reggie Kray!

Nicky Taylor, Senior Teacher



All Saints Church Merriott Work Party Day

Sat 5th April
9am-1pm

Please could you spare the morning,
an hour or even half an hour to help
spruce up the church and the
churchyard?

There will be jobs to do both inside
and out with plenty of tea, coffee and
cake to keep you going

If you would like to know more, please
contact Mark Bunting, Churchwarden.
01460 76553 / 07799 736857
markjbunting@gmail.com

Merriott Social Group

for partially sighted people and carers

We meet monthly for coffee and cake, to socialise and chat about issues that might be of concern, to share ideas and problems. The Group meets at the Feed Station, Church St, on the FIRST Thursday of each month at 2.00-3.30pm.

For more information, please call Rob Wright 07771 643350,
or Somerset Sight on 01823 333818.

Crewkerne Wednesday Market – Now Expanding!

Exciting news for shoppers and traders alike! Crewkerne's Wednesday Market is expanding, bringing even more variety and unique finds to our community. In addition to the outdoor market outside the Town Hall, we are pleased to introduce a brand-new indoor market at Victoria Hall.

What's inside Victoria Hall? Step inside and discover a treasure trove of handcrafted and one-of-a-kind items. Whether you're looking for a special gift or something to treat yourself, you'll find a diverse range of artisan goods, including: crochet items and gift cards, needle felting and decoupage, handmade pens and pyrography, embroidery and papercraft, jewellery and hair accessories, crystal art and memory bears, children's clothing.

What's outside the Town Hall? The outdoor market continues to bring you a fantastic selection of food, drink, and unique products from our regular traders, including: authentic wood-fired pizza and fresh Italian and Sicilian pasta, bespoke interior design and quality meats, homemade preserves and fresh bread, cheese straws, doughnuts and baked goods, tea, coffee and refreshing cold drinks.

Join us every Wednesday from 10am to 2pm. Whether you're a fan of handmade crafts, delicious food, or just love browsing a market, there's something for everyone!

Please note that stallholders may vary from week to week. Are you a trader? We are always looking for new traders to bring fresh and exciting products to the market. If you're interested in having a stall, please contact us at towncouncil@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Gemma Hughes for Crewkerne Town Council



The Fleet Air Arm Museum – RNAS Yeovilton - A Grand Day Out

Located just 12 miles East of Merriott lies the largest naval aviation museum in Europe, part of the wider National Museum of the Royal Navy and within the perimeter of the Air Station at Yeovilton. The museum hosts around 90 aircraft, of which 50% are on display across its four exhibition halls, together with thousands of records, artifacts and stories across a timeline that span from the Wright Brothers first flight, through both World Wars and to more recent conflicts in the South Atlantic and Middle East.

Hall 1 begins the pioneering story but also holds three helicopters that saw action in the Falklands War; Hall 2 majors on WW2, but includes an exhibition relaying a story from the Korean War; Hall 3 offers a glimpse of what life was like on a 1970s aircraft carrier; whilst Hall 4 is the home of Concorde 002 (which visitors can walk through and see some of the technology from its first flight in 1969 until it arrived at the Air Station in 1979). Hall 4 also offers a detailed commentary on the Air War of the Falklands Campaign in 1982.

The museum is open five days a week (Wednesday to Sunday) and seven days a week during school holidays; from 10:00 until 16:30. Once a ticket is in hand it allows an unlimited number of visits for a full 12 months.

Steve Bateman



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