

APRIL 2020

Staying apart
so that we will come
together again

SEMINGTON
PARISH
MAGAZINE

Minister for Semington:

Rev. John Rees

22 Warren Road

Staverton

BA14 8UZ

Tel. 01225 764365

Semington Diary Bringing the World Inside

It goes without saying that all of our normal listings that feature here are temporarily postponed due to the current Covid-19 situation. Take heart though – here's some suggestions that will hopefully keep you in touch with that big wide world we're all missing just a little bit.

Get Fit(ter)

PE with Joe - Everyday at 9.00am get on line with Joe Wicks and have a daily work out. The Body Coach TV on You Tube.

Join A Virtual Choir

Gareth Malone gives you a chance to rehearse via YouTube, register at www.greatbritishhomechorus.com

Missing Live Music

The response of musicians has been overwhelming and the choice on live streaming of music, mostly of artists at home is equally broad; start surfing at discover.ticketmaster.co.uk Many of the streams are free or ask for a donation.

Get the Zoom App or Google Houseparty

The challenge with FaceTime and WhatsApp is that the number of participants can be limited, one in the case of FaceTime and three for WhatsApp. If you are craving the company that a Friday night at the pub brings or the camaraderie of a skittles match, then the Zoom App or Google Houseparty can help bring people together. It works across Android and Apple platforms.

Take A Social Media Break

We need to stay connected but not overwhelmed – don't be afraid to take a break from Social Media, think happy thoughts, be kind to yourself, sit and just be still for some time everyday.

The Village Hall

Understandably the village hall is closed until further notice, however, the Post Office will still operate on Monday and Thursday as normal. Books and puzzles are available in the hall on Post Office mornings, 9.30am to 12.30pm.

Christians in Semington

Bev Woodward

We will still be praying for our community, but not all together! Our house group meetings will begin again later in the year.

Semington, Little Marsh and Littleton Support Group

Our fantastic village is full of fantastic people, and those same said people have set up the village support group with over 100 volunteers to make sure that we get through this crisis united by looking after each and every member of our community. The core group can be contacted via e-mail as noted on the newsletter that came out on Friday 27th March.

The Road Leads are your main point of contact and again their contact details are on the Help at Hand Leaflet. The Road Leads and other volunteers have generously offered their time and energy free of charge. The newsletter will also seek to provide villagers with information on local businesses that are able to offer specific assistance at this time, but we do note that these services will potentially be chargeable.

The newsletter is aiming to be published on a Friday via the support group FaceBook page; Semington, Little Marsh and Littleton Support Group and on the Village Website semington-village.co.uk and remember you can sign up to the newsletter at slmlsupport.co.uk

Editor's Note

Gillian Airey

When I wrote my editor's note last month I was mindful that the magazine would be going out later than normal for April and that some local events would slip through the net. Never in a million years did I think the reality would be that the pause button would be pressed on 'normal' life and yet here we are.

The magazine will be a little shorter than normal and I make no apologies for the overlap with the Semington, Little Marsh and Littleton Support Group Newsletter contents. Our joint purpose is to make sure everyone is kept informed, updated and optimistic. Right now it is vital that everyone can reach out and know we are all really still here – just think of it as playing a massive game of hide and seek! If you wish to contribute to the magazine or weekly newsletter my e-mail as always is **semparmag@icloud.com** **Stay safe – stay well**

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This Month I'm Going To Discover My True Hair Colour

Gilly Airey

As the Covid-19 crisis truly unfolded Gorgeous Hubby and I were on holiday in Thailand. The first week of our holiday was fantastic but as quickly as the virus spread so did the urgency to make sure we got home safe and sound. I was lucky I had a secret weapon – Gorgeous Hubby – the man in shorts promised me he would make sure we got home and we did. Even though there was a heart-stopping moment when he failed the final temperature check as we were about to board the plane home (along with 20 other men) thankfully it was operator error and after the longest ten minutes of my life he boarded the plane. (It was all very Hollywood, I'm not going to lie).

So we're a week behind the rest of the village in coming to terms with staying at home and staying safe. I have watched from afar our fabulous village really come into its own and form a support network that does exactly what it says on the tin.

I suppose the bit that I'm struggling the most with is the dismantling of everything you have in your head as normal. The appropriate responses right now is planning your shopping not popping out because you have run out of something, not popping round to your friends for a chat and the hardest for me no hair appointment to look forward to. I'm not going to lie I am going to finally find out just how grey my hair really is, I have been in denial for probably about five years. Of course I hear you cry you could dye your hair at home except I'm banned from dyeing my hair at home after a rather nasty accident in the bathroom back in Cheltenham in 1994. Gorgeous Hubby has offered to take a Sharpie to my hair, trouble is I don't think there's enough ink in a Sharpie to cover all my grey hair.

But there are some silver linings! I am going to perfect my bread baking, so hopefully by the end of the lockdown my bread will no longer be classed as a potential deadly weapon but edible. I am going to finish the sweater I have been knitting and I am also going to sort out my cook books and all of the flipping recipe cards I pick up in supermarkets and stuff in a pile. I may, whisper this, declutter my wardrobe. I have even promised to help Gorgeous Hubby in the garden, especially with the weeding.

So we're back where we belong, where we feel safe and where we can contribute to our community, and where I know it will be perfectly okay to find out what my natural hair colour really is!

Stay safe.



LOCKDOWN MENU

MON - SAT
6PM-8PM
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Thomas Hardy – Song of Hope

Thomas Hardy's Song of Hope reminds us that the difficult times of today will not last and will give rise to a tomorrow when things will be different, even if no one is quite sure when tomorrow will come. It's important to remember this, and to think that tomorrow might not just be different, but better.

O sweet To-morrow! -
After to-day
There will away
This sense of sorrow.
Then let us borrow
Hope, for a gleaming
Soon will be streaming,
Dimmed by no gray -
No gray!

While the winds wing us
Sighs from The Gone,
Nearer to dawn
Minute-beats bring us;
When there will sing us
Larks of a glory
Waiting our story
Further anon -
Anon!

Doff the black token,
Don the red shoon,
Right and retune
Viol-strings broken;
Null the words spoken
In speeches of rueing,
The night cloud is hueing,
To-morrow shines soon -
Shines soon!

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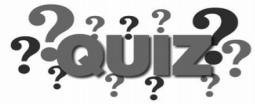
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Helen and Howard made their debut as Quizmasters, in the March Quiz, and did a very good job, so many thanks to them. There was quite a good turnout, especially considering the uncertainty surrounding the coronavirus, Covid 19.

The Marathon was all about James Bond films. You had to identify the film from just the consonants, e.g., vwtkll, Ntmtd and nhrmjstyscrtrsv. That was not all though – you had to say which actor played Bond, which singer or group sang the theme song, give the year of the film’s release and, if it was one of the 6 Bond songs which didn’t include the film title, give the song title (though we did have a list of the singers and those 6 songs, to choose from). Quite tough but good fun trying to remember! One of the 6 was “All the time in the world”, by the inimitable Louis Armstrong – for which film was that the theme song? Answers below.

Another taxing but clever round was on the Beatles’ lyrics, to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the formation of the group. What is the next line of this song and what is its title? “So we sailed up to the sun ‘Til we found the sea of green”

The Marathon was won by Terry’s Turnips (Neil and Jackie) and the main quiz was won by Tea for Two plus one (Angela, Bill and myself).

Not surprisingly, **THE APRIL QUIZ IS CANCELLED.** We will try and keep you informed about future quizzes but, **if in doubt, please ring me on 01380 870137.**

Answers: A View to a Kill, No Time to Die, On Her Majesty’s Secret Service, and again, On Her Majesty’s Secret Service. “And we lived beneath the waves In our yellow submarine” from Yellow Submarine.

Books Wanted!

Village Hall

Any donations of paperback books for the bookcase in the village hall would be greatly appreciated. Drop off at the village hall during Post Office hours on a Thursday. Many thanks!

Planning Application 20/01306/OUT Land North of St George's Road

Peter Smith Vice-Chair Semington Parish Council

The Parish Council has objected to the proposal to build up to 20 entry-level affordable dwellings on this field because [i] no evidence was put forward that these are needed in Semington at this time; [ii] the applicants took no note of the affordable properties to be built by Hannick Homes along St George's Road where construction starts this year; and [iii] affordable housing should be built in places where people need it and not in villages with few employment opportunities, no shops, and comparatively poor public transport.

The Council also thinks that the reasons for turning down previous applications to build on this field remain valid. For example:

- The field is outside the limits of development defined for Semington.
- The development would protrude into the open countryside and would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of Semington and the surrounding rural landscape.
- The proposal conflicts with Core Policy 1 of the Wiltshire Core strategy because it is not sustainable development. It also conflicts with Core Policies 51 and 57, and with paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The proposal is essentially the same as the previous applications that have been made for the development of this field, and it seems likely that were this proposal to succeed, the applicants would then seek to build on the whole field.

We know from our previous experiences that village opinion matters when Wiltshire Council planners are considering issues. Whatever you think, we urge you to make your voice heard. Please do this by April 10th. The details of the application are here: tinyurl.com/rxga56u (where you can see existing village comments) and you can submit your own comments here: tinyurl.com/rbyxf1j

From the Church Register

Bev Woodward

The funeral service and burial of Frances Lilian Mortimer, took place at St George's Church on Wednesday 11th March. Frances had lived in Littlemarsh for many years. We pray for her family and friends, that they will know God's love and peace at this sad time.

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Parish Council Minutes

Abridged minutes from meeting held on Wednesday 4th March 2020

Present: Councillors B Smyth (Chairman), R Blake, P Bowyer, M Kasasian, R Oglesby, S Rimmer, W Scott, P Smith and the Clerk Roger Coleman. There were two members of the public present initially.

Apologies: Apologies from non-attendance were received and accepted from Parish Councillor C Wade and Community Policing Team PCSO J Gould.

Community Policing: PCSO Gould of the Community Policing Team had sent the Clerk the February monthly report that he had subsequently sent to all councillors. One report for Semington - St Georges Primary School. Unknown male has been seen by various parents hanging around outside the school gates carrying a big camera around his neck.

Wiltshire Council Report: In the absence of Cllr. Seed no report was given.

Planning: Councillors noted that the decision regarding the Village Green will be made at the forthcoming Western Area Planning Committee meeting due to be held on 18th March 2020. The Clerk was asked to place this item on the Agenda of the next Parish Council meeting. Councillors also noted that the Planning Appeal in respect of Planning application 19/02147/OUT is to take place on 13/14th May 2020. The Council resolved to investigate the current progress of the Wiltshire Council enforcement action in respect of Lansdowne and the letting of caravans for hire.

Cllr. Scott stated that the meeting of the Wiltshire, Swindon and Oxfordshire Canal Partnership is to take place on 5th March, and that he would be attending that meeting. He explained that there does appear to exist a conflict between the Partnership and the Environmental Agency regarding the Melksham Link and its access to the River Avon that needs clarification and resolution.

Finance: Balance as at 4th March 2020 £31,816.36

Environment: Councillors noted that the Litter Pick will take place on 14th March and those individuals taking part should meet at 10.00am, Village Hall. The Clerk tabled the Wiltshire Council Green Infrastructure Survey Form for discussion. There ensued a lengthy discussion regarding the nature of this survey and how the views of parishioners are to be sought. Cllr. Scott agreed to complete the Survey Form on behalf of the Parish Council but would beforehand obtain extra copies of the form for distribution at the Village Hall Coffee Morning for parishioners to also offer their views and that he would make reference to this Survey on the Village website.

Highways: The Council **resolved** to take no further action at present in respect of the Traffic Survey and steps to secure a lower speed limit (i.e. 20mph) in Semington. This view was prompted largely by the expressed views of parishioners.

World War 2 – End of Hostilities Commemoration: The Council **resolved** not to plant additional oak trees to commemorate the end of hostilities but it **resolved** that the deaths of the five local WW2 servicemen during that conflict and the one serviceman who died during the Korean War would be commemorated by the addition of a brass plaque recording their sacrifice to be placed on the Memorial Bench. It was agreed that Cllrs. Rimmer and Kasasian would decide on the appropriate wording for the plaque.

Footpaths: The Chairman reported that the Ramblers Association members under the auspices of Wiltshire Council plus some parish councillors had cleared paths SEMI14 and SEMI17 in Semington as an ongoing project to clear/reopen existing Rights of Way in Semington and that he had personally thanked those involved. The Parish Council **resolved** that those involved should also be thanked by the Parish Council. The Chairman stated that he would take the necessary action. Cllr. Smyth stated that the Semington Footpath Survey Sheet had been updated accordingly.

Wessex Close Play Areas: The Council noted that Wiltshire Council had contributed £6000 towards the Play Area – as promised. The Council **resolved** that the Clerk takes action for the repair of the Tornado play equipment. Further discussions on the future of the Wessex Close Play Area was deferred until a subsequent meeting. The Chairman, Cllr. Smyth, stated that there had been no response from parishioners to date regarding the establishment of a Community Group to promote and manage the Wessex Close Play Area. The Chairman asked the Clerk to place this matter on the Agenda for the next Parish Council meeting. Cllr. Smith stated that he would be visiting St Georges School and to discuss the subject of Play Equipment with the Headteacher and with the PTA (Parent Teachers Association) in order to inform the various options available to the Parish Council. Cllr. Rimmer added that he was also intending to visit the school for discussions regarding the Play Area and the planting of trees at agreed sites in the village.

Semington Post Office: Cllr. Oglesby reported that negotiations/discussions are continuing regarding the future of the Post Office. Cllr. Scott added that he and a number of parishioners had made representations to Post Office Ltd and, in this case, to the MP, Michelle Donelan, regarding the importance of maintaining the Post Office at Semington.

Any Other Business: There were no matters raised.

Date of Next Meeting: 15th April 2020 (Covid-19 measures dependent)

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Parish Council Matters

Peter Smith, Vice-Chair of the Parish Council

Brian Smyth, retiring Chair – many of you will know that Brian has been a member of the Parish Council for over 20 years, serving as Chair for the last 3 years. He has been a terrific servant to the village during that time. Many thanks and good wishes go to him on his retirement from the council.

Coronavirus support group – please see the article on page 3 of the magazine, if you don't have access to email and need help, you can contact any of these numbers: Emma Putnam 07895 455673; Vicky Bodman 07815 015470; or Siobhan Chown 01380 870197.

Post Office – this remains open and serving us all on Monday and Thursday mornings, 9:30am to 12:30pm.

Planning Application 20/01306/OUT; Please see the separate note on page 10, explaining the reasons for the Parish Council's decision to object to this latest proposal to develop this land.

Not Down The Local

John, The Landlord, John

Never thought the word 'not' could mean so much. However we are still here just nobody else is. As most of the village should hopefully be aware due to current circumstance we have morphed into a take out /delivery service.

Simply call the pub before 6.00pm any day Monday to Saturday, place your order and your tasty treat will be ready for collection from our special isolation zone, or if you prefer we will drop it carefully on your doorstep.

Either pay on collection or we can take a card over the phone. Order by Friday for a delicious roast on Sunday. Don't forget for the time being we are offering take out on your favourite tippie in four pint pitchers, while stocks last. Thank you so much for the support so far it really does make a difference and gives us a fighting chance of opening the doors to welcome the whole village back again whenever that time may be. As long as we are able we will continue to provide whatever service we can or you need.

It really makes me proud how this tiny community has pulled together to make sure this thing doesn't beat us. Everyone who has collected from the pub obeys the rules and no-one takes offence if you stop and wait for them to move or take a step away from them. We have got this Semington, we can hold our heads high and be proud of our village.

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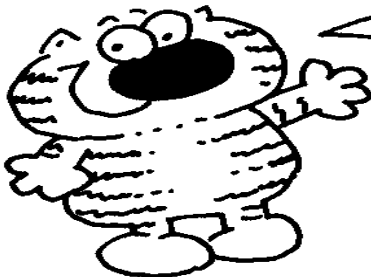
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To everybody living in Semington I'm Les the postman. I've delivered your mail, packets and parcels for four years, and now I'm 68 this year I am retiring! I've very much enjoyed meeting all of my customers, it's a lovely village and you're all special to me.

In the present situation of Covid-19, I hope you all stay safe and keep well. My last day of work will be Tuesday 28th April. I hope from a distance to be able to say goodbye to everyone. I will miss you all – you're a great bunch of people, stay safe, good bye and best wishes, Les, The Postman.

Paws for Thought



This I declare about the Lord: He alone is my refuge, my place of safety; he is my God, and I trust him

It's in the Bible; Psalm 91, verse 2

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Semington WI met on Thursday 12th March when we had our Annual General Meeting. It was well attended. We went through a reminder of the things we'd done over the last year and realised what a varied program we had.

We went from making and tasting gin in April, converting some ladies who didn't even like gin, to the business of bones in March, keeping good bone health by doing very simple exercises. A games night in June and afternoon tea in July. Making glass decorations in August and learning dozens of ways to tie our scarves differently in September. We had a very instructive first aid evening with a paramedic in October and gift bag making ready for Christmas in November, followed by a skittles night in December. A birthday lunch at the Westbrook in January and finally candle making in February. All the events were well attended and a lot of fun and laughter was had.

We very much enjoyed supporting the Semingtones at their concert by providing a cream tea in November. A donation from the Semingtones was given to the Air Ambulance.

However, we would not be able to do so much without a very active committee, two very organised tea ladies (who were presented with flowers and wine) and of course all the other members of Semington WI, all of whom are extremely supportive.

The business part of the evening saw the election of the committee. Results were as follows. Deb Hurn President, Sue Connor Secretary and Cassandra Reynolds Treasurer. Annie Martin, Angie Houghton-Jones and Sue Taylor Committee members. Angie and Sue replacing Sue Gibbs and Lesley Vooght. Thanks to Sue and Lesley for their work and encouragement on the committee over the past couple of years.

As with everything we don't quite know when the WI will be meeting again but rest assured we will be back!

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Catholic News

St. John The Baptist Trowbridge & St Bernadette's Westbury (inc villages)

St John's (Trowbridge) & St Bernadette's (Westbury) Catholic Churches are physically closed and all Easter Services are cancelled.

Further information is available on these websites:

www.stjohnthebaptisttrowbridge.co.uk and www.cliftondiocese.co.

Father Thomas Finnegan (Parish priest) is uploading his celebration of Mass on YouTube

Sick and Housebound: Any catholic who is sick or housebound should let Fr. Tom Finnegan (01225 752152) know as he would be pleased to arrange a visit and bring Holy Communion, if desired.

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The New 300 Club 2020 Subscriptions: £50 annually - £13 quarterly - £4.33 monthly. New members are most welcome to join at any time. **Prizes are: £200-£70-£50-£10.** For information and application form contact Francis Geraghty 01380 871083 email: f.geraghty303@btinternet.com

A Date for Your Diary: July is a long way off but please note that St. John's Parish will be hosting the National Exhibition of the Turin Shroud. 5th - 10th July. This exhibition has visited many Cathedrals and Parishes over the years. In this Diocesan Year of Communion, we welcome the Exhibition as it will invite us to reflect on the sufferings of Christ and the prelude to the glorious Resurrection of Jesus's Body from the Tomb. Pope Francis recently called the Shroud 'An Icon of Love'. With a full size replica of the Shroud, the Exhibition will display the fascinating history of the Shroud. More information can be found on www.shroudofturinexhibition.com

Thought From The Rectory

Throughout my life (and I'm 61) I have been fortunate enough to live in a stable, democratic society. Although I have often thought about and prayed for those living in fear, amongst the chaos of war, civil unrest or natural disaster I have never had to face it personally. And yet, in a few short weeks, we are living in what still feels an unreal situation.

Jesus, at the first Easter, lived with fear, suffering and death. He knew that the crowds who cheered him into Jerusalem were going to turn on him. He knew that those in power would conspire with one another to lead him to an unjust trial and death. He knew that his followers would think that he had been defeated – and that evil and suffering had triumphed.

That was Mary Magdalene's view as she went to Jesus tomb: -

“Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.”

Initially she was terrified, fearing that Jesus' body had been stolen. In despair she ran to tell Jesus' friends. It was only later, after asking a figure outside the tomb if he knew where Jesus had been taken, that she realised this was Jesus – now risen from the dead! She was filled with new hope and joy.

Ever since people have discovered new hope, peace and purpose through daring to believe that faith in Jesus can make a positive difference to their lives. And it is often during times of fear and suffering that people turn to God for help. Through this people frequently find that God gives them a peace that passes human understanding and a resilience that helps them cope.

The Bible teaches that times of suffering and challenge can result in something positive. I am already sensing a desire in our villages to become stronger as a community and to support each other – it is good that networks are being formed to assist with this.

I would like to leave you with a poem which sums up what I hope will be the legacy of this difficult time: -

*"When this is over, may we never again take for granted
A handshake with a stranger
Full shelves at the store
Conversations with neighbours
A crowded theatre
Friday night out
The taste of communion
A routine check-up
The school rush each morning
Coffee with a friend
The stadium roaring
Each deep breath
A boring Tuesday
Life itself.*

*When this ends
may we find
that we have become
more like the people
we wanted to be
we were called to be
we hoped to be
and may we stay
that way — better
for each other
because of the worst."*

Laura Kelly Fanucci

Although we are not able to hold services at present, St Michael's (now the Parish Church of Hilperton and Staverton) and St George's, Semington remain open as usual and there will be resources in them to help you reflect and pray. There are also resources for prayer and worship on our website:
www.canalsidebenefice.org.uk

Do get in touch if you would like to chat or need support, best wishes John.



We have been developing our Canalsidebenefice.org.uk website page and the [canalsideparishes](#) Facebook page to include prayer and worship resources and activities for both adults and children.

Today we have added a link to our first online Sunday service:

<https://youtu.be/RCPraoqk3sl>. We will upload a new service every week until St George's is open for worship again.

If anyone wishes to have a friendly chat at this time of physical isolation I would be pleased to talk to them on 01225 764365 John Rees

Contact Details for The Canalside Parishes

Administrator – Michael Gamble, please contact Michael for initial enquiries about baptisms, weddings and general matters on **07795 400262**

E-mail: canalsideoffice@gmail.com

PCC Secretary/Treasurer - Jack Woodward **01380 870784**

Church Warden – Mr David Wildsmith

Lay Pastoral Assistants are co-ordinated by Marilyn Stubbs. Please contact Marilyn on **01225 753118** or John if you would like a visit.

Curate: Revd. Joy Albone **07931 638524** email canalsidecurate@gmail.com

Rev John Rees, Rector, Canalside Benefice **01225 764365**

Email: canalsiderector@gmail.com www.canalsidebenefice.org.uk