

JULY & AUGUST 2020



SEMINGTON
PARISH
MAGAZINE

Minister for Semington:

Rev. John Rees

22 Warren Road

Staverton

BA14 8UZ

Tel. 01225 764365

Where To Go To Stay in The Know

Canalside Benefice

The Canalside Benefice website canalsidebenefice.org.uk has a number of useful links on it. It has resources for worship and Messy Church resources for children. In addition there is a link through to YouTube so that you may worship from your own home. Check out the Benefice website for the most up to date link.

Semington Little Marsh and Littleton Support Group

The Support Group was founded as a direct result of the Coronavirus pandemic. The Group has a Facebook page which is the principal source of information, updates, offers of help and requests for help. Search Semington Little Marsh and Littleton Support Group on Facebook to join.

The newsletter is now published to alternate with the Parish Magazine so generally in the middle of each month. We will publish in August even though there is no Parish magazine in August. Distribution is via the Support Group Facebook page For anyone who would like a hard copy of an issue of the Support Group Newsletter, including all past issues, the spares are in the Somerset Arms and the Village Hall, which can be accessed when the Post Office is open on Mondays and Thursdays from 9.30am-12.30pm. Books and jigsaws are also available.

Semington Village Website

The village website www.semington-village.co.uk has all the latest news needed including Wiltshire Council updates, the Support Group Newsletter and the Parish Magazine. Importantly it also includes normal day to day stuff that even in the midst of these strangest of times you may need to access.

Wiltshire Council Website

For wider issues such as refuse collections, ancillary and community services, the Wiltshire Council website www.wiltshire.gov.uk should be your first port of call. There are links on the home page for service updates as well as the facility to sign up for e-mail updates.

Christians in Semington

Bev Woodward

Christians in Semington - We will be meeting via Zoom in our own homes, to pray for our community, on **Wednesdays 1st July and 5th August at 8.00pm**. Please contact Jack Woodward, 870784, for the Zoom link.

Homegroup - every Tuesday, via Zoom, at 8.00pm. We're continuing with the 'Just 10' course with Cannon J John (not to be confused with Rev John!) - all about the 10 Commandments for today's generation. Far from being a set of rules to restrict us, they are principles that bring freedom and fulfilment. The videos on YouTube are excellent. Phone Jack/Bev 870784 or David/Pam 870030 for more details.

St George's Church Private Prayer - Now that the Government restrictions have been relaxed a little, we're pleased to say that the Church will soon be open for private prayer from 10.00am - 11.30am each Friday morning. If you would like someone to pray at other times, please contact Rev John or Rev Joy (contact details on the back of the magazine).

Editor's Note

Gillian Airey

It was strange putting together the summer edition of the magazine – usually we have a lovely colour cover but 2020 will go down in the history books as the year that danced to its own tune! So there will no fete this year but it doesn't mean we can't party later in the year – so watch this space.

The deadline for September's Edition will be **Friday 20th August**. I am sure that at this point we really will have different stuff to talk about! If you wish to contribute to the magazine or weekly newsletter my e-mail as always is **semparmag@icloud.com** **Stay alert – stay safe!**

Keeping It Local

Spare a thought for all of our local independent businesses and especially those who choose to advertise in our magazine – many have re-opened after the lockdown so we owe it to them to keep them going. Please try and shop local and independent whenever you can.

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This Month I'm Full of Hugs

Gilly Airey

The divine Miss B recently posed the question 'what have you missed most since Lockdown was imposed?' The answers revealed beautifully poignant thoughts from everyone. Unsurprising and overwhelmingly the majority of people were missing family and friends and as Mrs W so eloquently said 'answering your door and saying come on in'. Me – I'm missing hugs be it as the hugger or the huggee.

I'm a tactile person at the best of times. Gorgeous Hubby will tell you I can't resist touching wet paint to see if it is indeed still wet, a bare electrical wire to see if it's live and using my finger as a temperature probe on hot food. I am, I admit something of a bit of a liability when it comes to touching things....

Starved of hugging during Lockdown I decided that the Mighty Dibs would benefit from a Gilly hug. I have learnt many things during Lockdown, one of which is cats really don't do hugs – it was a very brief and somewhat undignified encounter, but at least the scratches have healed. So when Princesses Ava and Bella came to visit in the garden after the first relaxation, this Nanny was going to do everything in her power to get a Covid-secure hug.

Armed with loads of research (okay I Googled it for ten minutes) I decided that I needed to get me a hug curtain. Sanitised to within an inch of my life, masked, gloved and shrouded in three layers of cotton sheet, I was ready to hug and be hugged. Princess B, in fairness, took one look and promptly hid behind her Dad, because let's face it when you have a slightly deranged old lady looking like she forgot it was fancy dress for Hallowe'en and grabbed the nearest thing to hand, Dads are perfect for hiding behind! Princess A was braver but even she said, as only a nearly nine year old can, 'Nanny G you look like a really weird ghost, I love you and but I can wait for my hug!' As the saying goes, 'out of the mouth of babes.....'

I know in my heart of hearts that hugging is going to be one of the last things to reappear in my life but Semington I am warning you when Boris says I can hug again – you need to watch out – I have four months and counting of pent-up hugs.....



LOCKDOWN MENU

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St George's School Semington

Candida Hutchinson – Principal Seend, Melksham & St George's Semington

I have been teaching for over 25 years having started my career in Bristol. I have taught most year groups in my time and have a passion for Early Years, Infants, the creative arts and children with additional needs, be they learning or social and emotional needs. I have led many areas within the schools I have worked in including maths, assessment, Special Educational Needs and supporting children with English as an Additional Language. My leadership roles with The White Horse Federation in all four of its hub regions have included being an Assistant Head, Deputy Head, Principal of a brand new school and of an established Diocese school in an area of challenge. More recently I have worked within the primary school improvement team supporting new leaders, newly qualified teachers, curriculum development and Early Years development.

I am married to a policeman, Stephen, and we have two gorgeous daughters who are 20 and 16 and obviously love having a policeman and a headteacher for parents! As a family we enjoy camping and many sports with varying degrees of skill!

I am really looking forward to joining the St.George's, Semington community in September. I have already met many of the staff and been able to connect with some of the families through the Facebook home learning page. I have already been made very welcome by the school community and look forward to continuing the great work and high expectations that Jackie has set for me!



Candida when she herself was in Reception Class!

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Semington, Little Marsh and Littleton Support Group Update

Vicky Bodman

The Semington, Little Marsh and Littleton support group is still going strong. We now have over 300 members and its been amazing to see the community come together. This month we launched the new Foodbank collection which is going from strength to strength. It really shows what a caring, loving community we have.

The super hero weekend window displays looked great for Fathers Day. Although we have seen the end of the formal get together on Thursday nights for the clap for the NHS, it's fantastic to see everyone still partaking in community activities when more and more are now traveling for work and to see loved ones.

The group is working on ways that this can continue in to the future and how we can all celebrate our wonderful village together now and in the future.

If you have any ideas on activities you would like to put forward for the community to participate in now or something you would like to see in the future please post it on the Facebook group or email me at **victoriabodman@gmail.com**

Garden Waste Collections

Wiltshire Council

Households that pay to receive garden waste collections will receive an email or letter this week inviting them to renew their subscription by **14th August**. New customers can also sign up to receive this service. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, garden waste collection renewals were delayed this year, but customers now need to renew their garden waste subscription if they wish to continue to receive the service. The cost of having garden waste collected will be £50 per bin for the year.

Current garden waste subscriptions were due to expire on **30th June 2020**, but customers should continue to present their bin to be emptied on their usual collection day with their current 2019-2020 red sticker until they receive a new one. Garden waste bins displaying a red 2019/20 bin sticker will continue to be emptied until **31st August**. Once people have renewed, they will be sent a letter within three weeks, containing a new garden waste bin sticker. People can renew or sign up to for garden waste collections at www.wiltshire.gov.uk/gardenwaste People don't need to contact us if they do not wish to renew.

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Down The Local

John, The Landlord, John

So here we are again. Lockdown is gradually being eased and hopefully we can start to enjoy the next 'normal' and hopefully won't be too long before we have a new normal situation.

First and foremost a big big thank you to each and every one of you for the support you have given the pub through Lockdown. Far from out of the woods but at least the lights are still on and we have a good chance of bouncing back with vengeance.

As most will have spotted we have given the place a fresh coat of paint. Also given the garden a spruce and some much needed flooring for our pot wash. Every cloud and all that. Jobs like that aren't easy when you are open 7 days.

As we go to print we have heard news from Boris as to when we can re-open, so **Saturday 4th July** it is, we'll post on Facebook what time we will open.

I think it will just be the garden for now and even if we are allowed to operate inside I won't open that immediately. It's a whole new way of working to ensure social distancing and we need to take baby steps to make sure we get it right. We are still awaiting guidance from official sources but our plan is to utilise our outside space and get tables and our marquee out in the car park. Most likely the inside will be a one way system so please follow the signs and bear with us if there is a bit of a queue, (just double your drinks order at the bar to minimise queue time!).

So me and the team are looking forward to being open again even with the challenges it will bring. Until we fully open up we will continue our take out menu for you to enjoy, hopefully in the garden with a pint.....

Once again thanks for the support and hope to see you real soon.

PS Don't forget we have refreshed our Lockdown menu check Facebook for details.

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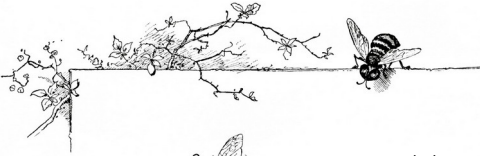
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I seem to have spent a good part of the good lockdown weather watching and listening to bees – not just the honey bee, which is only one of some 250 bee species in the UK, but all sorts of bumblebees as well. The gardens in the village will have been full of them in this last month. Unsurprisingly, given how important bees are to us, there are lots of poems and songs about them. This one is by **Emily Dickinson** (1830 – 1886) who wrote so many poems about bees and flowers that there are dedicated websites about them.



The Bee

Like trains of cars on tracks of plush
I hear the level bee:
A jar across the flowers goes,
Their velvet masonry
Withstands until the sweet assault
Their chivalry consumes,
While he, victorious, tilts away
To vanquish other blooms.
His feet are shod with gauze,
His helmet is of gold;
His breast, a single onyx
With chrysoprase, inlaid.
His labour is a chant,
His idleness a tune;
Oh, for a bee's experience
Of clovers and of noon!



Your Wiltshire Councillor News

Jonathon Seed

COVID continues to dominate but we are learning to live with the restrictions on our daily lives. We are lucky that here in Wiltshire the number of cases has been mercifully low but every death from any cause, including COVID, remains a personal and family tragedy. Many of us are also lucky that we have been able to enjoy the readily accessible stunning Wiltshire countryside and enjoy our gardens during lockdown. Furthermore the gardens that I have seen have never looked better than they do now with all the extra care and attention that they have been getting during lockdown.

Another lesson that we are learning during the pandemic is that we do not have to travel to meet face to face to have meaningful discussions. Many people who would have been unsure about conducting a virtual meeting have rapidly mastered the mysteries of Zoom and Teams. The first few Zoom Parish council meetings that I attended would not have been able to fit the members of the public in virtual attendance into their usual meeting rooms and it is good to see this new found interest in local democracy. Virtual meetings may well be something to consider again when the nights draw in and the weather worsens and people are much more likely to attend a virtual rather than a physical meeting on a cold, dark and wet winters night.

Wiltshire Council has also held its first virtual Council meeting and this worked well apart from the failure of the electronic voting method. Melksham Area Board community meetings have been well attended and we are also holding virtual Area Planning Meetings. However, the news from the Council is very gloomy in financial terms. Like central government, local government spending to look after people and services during the pandemic has been high. Sadly we will see the stark effects of this high spending on services during the coming months and years. Changes and efficiencies are being made but inevitably there will have to be cuts to services in the medium term.

Changes have also been made to democratic representation and elections. My own Police and Crime Commissioner election has been postponed until May next year but I remain determined to fight that election. Government has also legislated against any other elections or by-elections before May 2021 and this includes both Wiltshire Council and Parish Council vacancies. Parish Councils can however co-opt for a vacancy - provided residents do not call for a by-election!

Parish Council Matters

Peter Smith Vice Chair of Parish Council

Joint Working – In the June magazine, I wrote about the council’s resolution to work with the Semington, Little Marsh and Littleton Support Group to identify issues we care about in the village and improvements we’d like to see, so that we can work together on these once life resumes some semblance of normality. Some preliminary work has been done. We have put together a note about this and inserted into your magazine is a questionnaire to ask all parishioners to send in their views and ideas. So look out for this insert and please, do join in this discussion.

Rights of Way – There is an item elsewhere in this edition on how to help keep our rights of way open. Please read and join in if you’re able to.

Guttering and Pavements – Some of you have been clearing and tidying the road and pavement edges. It’s very noticeable around Highfield Close – well done! I know many of us clear around our own patch of road frontage, but this was a much bigger effort. If you do want to do this work, please make sure you do so safely. When parishioner working parties have done this in the past, we have worn hi-viz vests as well as gloves.

Best wishes, and stay safe, Peter Smith

Semington Sports Field

Kevin Lockwood

A big thank you to Martin Bray, Tania and all who are working so hard keeping the Semington football pitch and changing rooms immaculate. Your efforts and dedication are appreciated. Thank you so, so much.



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Melksham Foodbank

Julia Wade

As lockdown progressed, being aware of the increased need, people in our village wanted to increase their support for the work of the Melksham Foodbank. As all of you will know, hopefully, there has been a collection point for donations to the Melksham Foodbank outside the Somerset Arms pub on Wednesdays for the last few weeks. Many thanks to John Adams for this, which has really helped boost donations. The regular box for donations has also been moved from inside the church to the church porch. This is available all the time.

As you can imagine the need for food has increased hugely, with demand going up by 164% in April and continuing at a much higher level. The volunteers are so grateful for the massive increase in food donations during this time, and I would like to sincerely thank you all on their behalf.

All **in date** tinned and packet food, as well as toiletries, etc., will be welcomed. No fresh food at all, please. Please take to either the Somerset Arms pub between 12.00pm and 8.00pm on Wednesdays or put items in the box in the church porch, any time, but it is better if that is also done on a Tuesday or a Wednesday to avoid food sitting there for several days. Please do keep an eye for any changes to these arrangements, in the Support Group's Newsletter and on the Facebook page.

For the full list of what items to donate, please see the notice in the church porch or contact me on 01380 870137. There is also a Facebook page and website **www.melkshamfoodbank.org.uk**

What Semington Did Next

Firstly a big thank you to the volunteers who deliver the Parish Magazine and especially Sue and Geoff who are the distribution point for this edition as there is a little questionnaire we've slipped into the mag and we'd like to draw your attention to it. All we're asking is for five minutes of your time to tell us what you would like to see happen to next in the village. You can answer online as well with good ole-fashioned pen and ink.

The best bit? It's a great excuse to visit the pub to drop of your completed questionnaire!

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Maintaining Rights of Way

Peter Smith, on behalf of the Semington Rights of Way Group.

During lockdown, many of us have been walking the footpaths and bridleways around the village, getting exercise and enjoying the lovely spring. There are some great walks to be had around here.

We've also come across some challenges that have made our walks a bit tricky: overgrown paths, field edge rights of way ploughed, wobbly stiles and so on. This has led to a strong interest amongst some of us to help in keeping rights of way accessible and well maintained.

There already is a small group in the village that is active and knowledgeable in trying to keep our rights of way open. It seemed, therefore, a good idea to find a way of widening membership of that group so that anyone in the village can join in if they so choose.

The main activities of the group are:

- a) to walk the RoWs in the parish to keep them all open.
- b) when doing so, to monitor them for any problems.
- c) to keep paths clear where doing so can be done within the law.
- d) report any serious problems to Wiltshire Council.

The group also keeps a record of RoW problems so that we have a parish overview, members of the group can join in, where possible, with Wiltshire Council/Ramblers Association working parties when they are working within the parish.

How to join in with the village RoW group: If you'd like to join in and help, it's very straightforward. Just send your name and email address to: Brian Smyth, email: **bryansmyth1951@gmail.com** Brian will add you to the mailing list and arrange for you to get the terms of reference for the group together with links giving information on RoW law (dos and don'ts), local footpaths maps, and how to report problems. Happy Rambling, and hope to hear from you soon!

Village Green Application Outcome

The Friends of Great Lees Field

Wiltshire Council's Western Area Planning Committee met on Wednesday June 17th and voted to accept the Inspector's recommendation that the application to grant village green status for Great Lees Field be refused. This brings to an end a process that began in early 2016. Those of us who made the application would like to thank everyone in the village who provided encouragement, support and evidence during this long process.

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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. Further information is available on these websites:

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St John the Baptist - Trowbridge

Sunday & Weekday Masses:

For the duration of the Corona Virus lockdown Mass will be celebrated in St John's Church Trowbridge and uploaded to YouTube. Search 'Mass in Trowbridge'

Fr. Tom will occasionally upload a Children & Young Person's Exercise Prayer service.

St Bernadette's – Westbury - All services are suspended

Private Prayer & Reflection:

Opening Hours: At present, St. John's Church is open each day from 11.00am – 1.00pm and 5.00pm – 7.00pm. (Sundays 4.00pm – 7.00pm) St. Bernadette's Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Sunday 10.00am – 11.00am. However, these times will change as we discover what times are more popular. To extend opening hours, we do need more volunteers to act as stewards. The duties of what stewards are asked to do are available on the Parish Website. If you can spare an hour or two each week, please let Fr. Tom know and he will pass your details onto the rota organisers.

YouTube Masses: As you know, during this time of Church closure (open now for private prayer) Fr Tom has been saying Mass privately each morning and posting it on You Tube. People have expressed their deep gratitude for this and it has helped many keep in touch and feel connected to St. John's and St. Bernadette's. Fr. Tom is happy to announce that very soon we will be able to live stream our Masses at St. John's and this will continue permanently This means that our sick, housebound and those who are and will continue to shield will be able to continue to feel a part of our parish community by using this online service. He is drawing up a description of roles and responsibilities for those who wish help.

Parish Website: Please visit our Parish Website when you can. There are many links on it that you may find helpful during these days and also important Parish and Diocesan News. Also, sign up to receive the Diocesan Newsletter via email. Again, this newsletter helps us keep in touch with the wider Church community.

Thought From The Rectory

Anne Rees

In one of our online services recently, we sang the well-known hymn Amazing Grace, written by John Newton. Newton turned his life around from being the captain of a slave ship in the middle of the 18th century to being part of the slave trade abolition movement later in his life. He was converted to Christianity following an experience on board ship and later ordained as an Anglican priest. He subsequently worked with William Wilberforce to bring about the abolition of the slave trade. In February 1807, when the act to abolish the slave trade finally became law, John Newton, nearly blind and near death, "rejoiced to hear the wonderful news".

One of the verses of Amazing Grace says:

The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

In recent weeks, we have heard the word "SHIELD" a lot. The most vulnerable members of society have been advised to shield, to protect themselves from the danger of Covid-19. Although staying at home for such a long time must be very difficult, the risk of catching the virus with the probable consequences gives the vulnerable little choice. I looked up the meaning of the word "shield":

To Shield (verb) - Protect from a danger, risk, or unpleasant experience.

A Shield (noun) - A broad piece of metal or another suitable material, held by straps or a handle attached on one side, used as a protection against blows or missiles.

The vulnerable are shielding to protect themselves from Coronavirus but John Newton used the word as a noun, describing God as his shield. In the Bible, the book of Psalms uses the word shield frequently to describe the protection God can provide to those who believe in him, words which would have been familiar to John Newton:

In Psalm 28 verse 7 we read:

The LORD is my strength and shield.
I trust him with all my heart.

In the sixth chapter of his letter to the Ephesians in the New Testament, St Paul advises Christians to put on the armour of God, including to “hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil”.

Being a Christian does not mean that awful things won’t happen to us, but we believe that when the difficulties of life do hit us, God will protect us and help us cope. This can be hard, but the shield of faith does help me. So whether you are shielding or not, I encourage you to remember the words of John Newton, the Psalmist and St Paul and trust in God, our strength and our shield.

Anne Rees

Paws for Thought



Now may the Lord of peace
himself give you his peace at all
times and in every situation.
The Lord be with you all.

It's in the Bible; 2 Thessalonians 3 verse 16



Please visit our **Canalsidebenefice.org.uk** website page and the 'canalsideparishes' Facebook page to include prayer and worship resources and activities for both adults and children.

Check the website for the most up to date link to YouTube for the online services. 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**

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