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HOMES**

Please note there will be no January 2014 issue. Copy deadline for the February edition is 12th January. Thank you.

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MERRIOTT MESSENGER

merriottmessenger@gmail.com
www.merriottvillage.org.uk

**DECEMBER 2013 /
JANUARY 2014**



Potholes and Mud!

We apologise to residents of some of the outlying areas of the village if your Messenger does not get delivered in the winter months. This is due to our cars not being able to negotiate some of the lanes.

There are always copies available at Osborne's on Broadway and on the village website.

Parish Council Update

The next Parish Council Meeting will take place on Monday 9th December at 7.00pm – Merriott Tithe Barn.

COMMUNITY PAVILION:

As at the beginning of November, it was noticeable that the Pavilion was not as complete, as expected. There have been a number of unexpected and necessary extras, like the increased depth of footings that building control has insisted on, which means the funds held have been spent and the Parish Council are waiting for the SSDC grant of £12,500 in order to complete the project. The Parish Council needed to provide additional information to support the grant application by the end of October. To date (Nov 5th) a response is still awaited.

The County Councilor has indicated that he will be selecting the Merriott dropped kerb project as one of the two priorities for the highways small improvement scheme 2014/15.

The Parish Council wish to thank the volunteers who have kept the Broadway Garden in good shape this last year.

Marion Andrews

We invite all distributors of the Merriott Messenger to a buffet supper at the Tithe Barn on Friday 10th January, 7.30pm - 9.30pm to thank them for ensuring the Messenger is delivered, come rain or shine, throughout the village each month.

If you would be happy to help distributing the magazine, please contact either Ann or Peter (details on back page).

Merriott Mystery



Do you recognise this newly wedded couple? Turn to page 10 to find out more.



Poppy Appeal

Thank you to all those who contributed to this year's Poppy Appeal. The total raised across the four parishes was:

£ 2365.20

We would also like to say a huge thank you to Ann Lawrence, who for many years organised the Poppy Appeal.

Liz & Peter Fisk

If you have an interest in local issues and are able to attend monthly evening meetings (usually the first Monday of the month) then the Parish Council would love to hear from you.

For further information please Contact Marion Andrews - 01935 863240 or Ashley Wallis - 07768 615 253.

News from the Social Club

First of all we'd like to welcome Derek Court as a new, full-time member of staff – good luck in your new job Derek! This means that we can extend the opening hours to include Tuesday evenings - opening from 7.30 pm - 11.00pm.

We're still striving to make the Club as comfortable and welcoming as possible and to this end improvements are continuing. Efforts are now concentrated on providing toilets for the function room, complete with disabled access. Surprising to some perhaps, these will initially be in the form of portable toilets; not maybe as you might imagine but actually quite well appointed, fully plumbed-in and of a sturdy construction. There are similar ones at large public gatherings such as Royal Ascot. This of course will take some time, but it is hoped to be completed in the New Year.

We've had some wonderful parties over the last few months with one of particular note – the Halloween Family Disco. The function room was hung and draped with vast cobwebs, huge spiders, skeletons, zombies and holographic horror pictures. The room was full of party goers of all ages and a huge number had dressed for the occasion with ghouls, witches, avatars and zombies. There was even one with a zip in their face apparently exposing the tissue beneath – yuck! Make sure you don't miss next year's..... put it in your diary now!

Do you play table tennis? Or as Boris calls it "Whiff Whaff" – a number already do so at the Club. If you'd like to join them then Sunday is the night from approximately 7pm 'till 9.30pm. Two tables are set up and both doubles and singles are played.



Finally, we have quite a few events and discos planned for the festive period; please see below for dates and times. Those who wish for their children to attend the Christmas Party please add their names to the list held at the Social Club by Sunday 1st December at the very latest so that we can tell Santa to bring them a gift!

Dates for your diary:

Sun 8th Dec - Christmas Bingo - eyes down 6.30pm. Lots of lovely prizes with any funds raised going to the Children's Christmas Party and refurbishment fund.

Sun 15th Dec - Children's Christmas Party – 2pm

Tues 24th Dec - Christmas Eve Disco – 8pm

Thur 26th Dec - Boxing Day Disco – 12pm

Tues 31st Dec - New Years Eve Disco – 8pm



Christmas with All Saints Church



You are warmly invited to come and celebrate Christmas with us at All Saints this year, and there are a number of services to choose from. Some are more self-explanatory than others, so I thought I would just explain a couple of them:

Nine Lessons and Carols

is something we haven't done for a year or two. It will be a service with traditional readings and carols. All ages are welcome.



A Real Crib Service is our attempt to tell the nativity story in a more life-like way. However, I



very much doubt that it will be much like the real birth of Jesus! It will be in the Rectory back garden, using the small sheep shelter for a few animals. Some of us will be dressed as characters from the nativity and telling the story. We will sing a couple of carols and then

head for the Tithe Barn to warm up and enjoy some refreshments.

If children want to dress up for this event they will be in good company with other stars, angels and shepherds! We advise wrapping up warm and bringing a torch. This service will be instead of the Crib service on Christmas Eve.

Please see details below of all our services in December.

Wishing you a joyful, peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Julia and Bob Hicks

December Services and Events

Sunday 1st - Advent Sunday

8.30am Holy Communion

Monday 2nd

7.00pm **Christingle Service** (Christingle making from 6.30pm)

Sunday 8th

9.30am Parish Communion

Wednesday 11th

7.00pm Merriott Youth FC Carol Service

Sunday 15th

7.00pm **Traditional Nine Lessons and Carols**

Tuesday 17th

7.00pm Young Farmers' Carol Service

Friday 20th

7.30pm 'Carols and Classics' Concert

Sunday 22nd

4.00pm **'A Real Crib Service'** – NB in the Rectory back garden; followed by warming refreshments in the Tithe Barn.

Tuesday 24th Christmas Eve

11.30pm **Christmas Eve Communion**

Wednesday 25th Christmas Day

10.30am **Christmas Communion**

Sunday 29th

10.00am Benefice Communion in Lopen (no service in Merriott)

Sunday 5th January Epiphany

8.30am Holy Communion

Please see The 'Church Link' magazine for details of other services in January

A Happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year from all of us at All Saints Church.



"Coffee Stop"

Come and join us **every Tuesday** 10.00 - 11.30 at Merriott Church, all year round. Only £1 for your refreshments (free re-fills). Delicious homemade cakes accompany a selection of drinks.

Why not arrange to meet your friends here after a walk round the village? Or hop in the car when you need a break from the house on a dull winter's day. Make new friends, all ages are very welcome.

OPEN GROUP

Dec 12th - Christmas Party at Janette's. Refreshments and Secret Santa. Please bring a wrapped charity shop gift up to value of £2.

Jan 2nd - Crafts and Coffee evening at Tina's. Come and see how it's done!

Jan 16th - New Year Meal at the King's Head. Book with Tina by 12th Dec.

Jan 30th - Alison will host the evening and give a talk "How to make goats' cheese". Bring your own beverage.

Enquiries - Maggie 76186



Somerset Chamber Choir

Taunton concert: 'Light out of darkness'

Somerset Chamber Choir's next concert takes place on Sunday 5 January at King's College Chapel, Taunton at 3pm. The concert promises a feast of music for Christmas, New Year, Epiphany & Candlemas, including music by Bach, Berlioz, Byrd, Holst, Matthew Owens, Vaughan Williams, Eric Whitacre and more. With Richard Pearce (organ) and conductor Graham Caldbeck.

Tickets are available from Taunton TIC (01823 336344) or online at www.somersetchamberchoir.org.uk

Household Recycling & Refuse Collections over the Festive Season

Christmas and New Year 2013/14

Usual collection day	-	Revised collection day
Monday 23 December 13	-	No change, usual collections
Tuesday 24 December 13	-	No change, usual collections
Wednesday 25 December 13	-	Friday 27 December 13
Thursday 26 December 13	-	Saturday 28 December 13
Friday 27 December 13	-	Sunday 29 December 13
Monday 30 December 13	-	No change, usual collections
Tuesday 31 December 13	-	No change, usual collections
Wednesday 1 January 14	-	Thursday 2 January 14
Thursday 2 January 14	-	Friday 3 January 14
Friday 3 January 14	-	Saturday 4 January 14



No change to subsequent dates, all collections resume on usual days.

Revised collection days above also apply to **clinical waste and assisted collections**.

Garden waste collections will **not** take place between 25 December 2013 – 7 January 2014, resuming from Wednesday 8 January 2014 on usual days.

Decoration-free natural Christmas trees under 6ft can be recycled. If you pay for garden waste collections, put them out on your usual garden waste collection day for composting. Or take decoration-free natural trees to any recycling site for composting. For landfill disposal, put out your tree next to your refuse on your usual collection day **6 - 17 January 2014**.

Recycling Sites

Recycling sites open usual times, see our website or call Somerset Direct 0845 345 9188. All sites are closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

Sassie

8 Church Street, Crewkerne, Somerset TA18 7HR
01460 74323

Ladies stylish fashions and accessories

Fashion Houses include:

Tina Taylor ~ Chianti ~ Emreco ~
The Masai Clothing Company ~ Brandtex ~
Michaela Louisa ~ Mado

Jewellery & Accessories:

Dante ~ Gabys ~ Ashleigh & Burwood
Fragrance Lamps and much more.

Handbags:

Gorjus

Carols & Classics 5



Friday 20th December

In its 5th year, this annual treat of Carols & Classics by the Bowen Ensemble will again be performed at All Saints Church, Merriott. The Bowen Ensemble, consisting of young professional and post graduates from London Music Colleges, will again provide an evening of Carols & Classical music with organ, piano, and strings from composers such as Schuman, Haydn, Debussy and more.

These talented musicians are at the start of their professional careers and individually perform regularly in London at all the major venues and across the UK and Europe with leading orchestras such as the LSO, Southbank Sinfonia and the Philharmonia.

With mince pies and mulled wine to start the Christmas Festivities, this is a Friday evening not to be missed. Being a popular event, with over 160 attending last year, be sure to book / reserve your tickets early. **Tickets £7** available from Osborne's Store, Broadway, Merriott; or the Town Hall, Crewkerne. or Tel. 07870 404 631 or 01460 76360 . 7:00pm Refreshments for a 7:30pm concert start .



Crewkerne Country Market

Takes place at the Henhayes Centre, every Friday, 9 - 11 am. Home-baked cakes and savouries, jams, marmalades and chutneys. Seasonal fresh fruit and vegetables as well as a variety of unique crafts.

Fundraising for African Expedition 2014

Christmas Quiz Night at the Tithe Barn in Merriott on **Tuesday 3rd December** at 7pm. Entry fee £2 per person for teams up to 6 people. Hamper prize for winning team with raffle and refreshments.

Look forward to seeing you there.

Thomas Bending

Hinkley Point C update



Following Sam Wycherley's article on the "Hinkley Point C" Debate in the October issue of the Merriott Messenger, we thought you might be interested to read this statement from Christopher Le Hardy:

Massive Boost for Somerset's economy -Hinkley Point

"SCC, the Government and energy provider EDF have reached commercial agreement on the key terms of a proposed investment contract that brings the prospect of a new nuclear reactor at Hinkley Point a big step closer.

This is a huge step forward on what has been a very long road towards the development of Hinkley Point C. Somerset is at the forefront of the UK's new generation of nuclear development and the proposed Hinkley Point C nuclear power station is an extremely important opportunity for our County. The proposed development could eventually generate 7% of the nation's energy needs over the next 60 years, as well as provide major benefits for Somerset, including:

25,000 jobs created over the construction period; 5,600 construction jobs plus 1000's of supply chain jobs; £128m is to be made available for community benefit projects over 40 years, once the plan is operational; investment in housing, education and transport; £100m per year will put into the regional economy during peak construction; £40 million per year will go into the regional economy, reaching more than £2bn over the lifetime of the project; 900 permanent workers will be required when Hinkley Point C is operational and 400 new apprenticeships will be created."

Christopher Le Hardy

County Councillor, South Petherton and Islemoor Division

HELP a Young Person & Prevent Homelessness



Can you offer a room for the night to a young person, aged 16-24 years old ? With breakfast and use of washing facilities? If you can, we will pay you £15 per night. Become a Host and Help prevent Homelessness for a Young Person.

To find out more about Emergency Host Family Accommodation

Alison Cox 07921387082

Alison.cox@knightstone.co.uk





Family fun and games for the festive Season

Peter Bryans has supplied this Christmas quiz for you.

Answers can be found on page 11.

1. Good King Wenceslas was king of which country?
2. Which Patron Saint's feast day is celebrated on 6th December?
3. Which Christmas carol contains coded references to, amongst others, the four gospels, the Pentateuch, the eight beatitudes and the ten commandments?
4. If you were a Pagan which would be your favourite carol?
5. Which character in what film said - "Cancel kitchen scraps for lepers and orphans, no more merciful beheadings and CANCEL Christmas"?
6. When was nothing stirring in the house, not even a mouse?
7. Christmas trees were first introduced into Britain in 1841 - by who?
8. Wassailing was the custom of poor people going around the village singing songs and begging for food and drink. What do we call wassailers today?
9. What question did a song by Bob Geldof and Midge Ure ask?
10. Which three Ghosts do you associate with Christmas?
11. The traditional old English carols "O little town of Bethlehem", "Away in a manger" and "We three Kings" were in fact from where?
12. On Christmas Eve 1914 British Soldiers in the trenches joined in with German soldiers singing "Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht". By what name do we know it?

Good Luck!

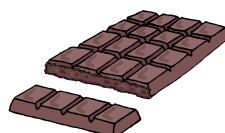


We've hidden 10 snowmen in this month's Merriott Messenger - can you find them all?



Here's a fun game for the whole family. You will need a dice, big bar of chocolate, hat, scarf, gloves, knife and fork.

Everyone takes it in turn to roll the dice until a 6 is rolled. That person then has to put on the hat, scarf and gloves and then cut off chunks of chocolate and eat them before the next person rolls a 6.



Just how much chocolate can you eat?!

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



Tom and Lucy heard a noise downstairs and went into the sitting room where they got the surprise of their life! There was Santa drinking a glass of milk!

See how many differences you can find between these two pictures.



(We found 10!)

Caption competition

What do you think these two penguins are saying to each other?

Send your answer to: merriottmessenger@gmail.com by 12th January 2014.



Knock Knock!
Who's there?
Police!
Police who?
Police don't make me eat Brussels sprouts this year!

Why was the Turkey in the pop group?
Because he was the only one with drumsticks!

What lies in a pram and wobbles?
A jelly baby!

What does Rudolph want for Christmas?
A pony sleigh station!



Short Story Competition

Chloe Tuck's winning story



Congratulations to Chloe Tuck for winning the Short Story Competition in the 12 - 18 years category. We publish here her story:

FINDING HOPE

The morning mist was slow to clear and the hot weather seemed to be about to change. I'm surrounded by trees towering above me reaching for the clouds. The sun is peeping

through the trees overpowering their attempts to conceal the light. Golden beams dance upon the ground as the wind delicately blows through the tree tops. It's been seven days since I ran away from home, seven days with no one for company but myself.

I only have a mother, no brothers or sisters but most of all I don't have a father. That's why I am here in this forest right now; searching for the other half of me. Mother would not divulge any answers, only that he was dead; I won't believe that though, I can't. Seven days before, I discovered that this forest, this particular part was where my father was last seen alive. With barely a handful of friends at school, finding and locating a mere trace of my father means the entire world to me. All I have is one photo that proves I had a father. I keep it in a silver locket the falls directly on my heart.

The sun has vanished, the weather has taken a sorrowful turn as dark rain clouds have obtained residency of the sky. Rain begins falling, a slight drizzle but still enough to sprinkle the leaves like a gardeners hose. Tear drops of rain glide down my rosy cheek, tickling me before diving to the forest floor. My copper red hair has transformed back into its natural state; wild and curly. In amongst the pitter-patter of raindrops I hear a twig snap. I dart my head in every direction searching for the source. The hairs on the back of my neck stand up like soldiers sensing danger. I crouch under the nearest oak tree, hugging my knees tightly to my chest. Adrenaline surges through my veins. The birds chirp blissfully above me, I've always admired their audacity to continue their song when many of us struggle with the prospect of reality. Something catches my eye, etched into the oak tree is a message directed to me, it reads 'Dearest Rosalie, I knew you'd find this. Walk 25 metres ahead and dive down the hole. Love Charlie (Father).' Thoughts racing through my mind I break into a run; grinning from ear to ear thinking about finding my father.

Chloe Tuck - age 16

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Does anyone remember Winifred Lampit or Ena Newman? These two ladies lived in Shiremoor Hill, Merriott and were both ex-school teachers.

If anyone has any information or photographs of them, would they please contact Alan Keene on 01460 73077 or alankeene@tiscali.co.uk

Moped Loan Scheme



By the very nature of the work they do with young people in rural areas, transport has always been a significant problem for the Somerset Rural Youth Project. Public transport is often very limited and in many cases non-existent, young people often cannot afford their own and may rely on parents or friends, or may simply miss out on the opportunity for work, training or socialising with their peers.

Somerset Rural Youth Project's innovative **Moped Loan Scheme** supplies them with an economical moped at reasonable cost, while supporting the young person and helping them towards organising their own transport. In most years, demand has often exceeded supply. As from October 2010, reinforced by its new fleet of 18 machines, SRYP can help more young people towards independence.

For young people, certain conditions apply for eligibility; to find out if they can help you and if you live in a rural area in Somerset, telephone the Moped Loan Scheme office, 01278 722100 and speak to one of their staff. You may want to find out how the scheme works and what you need to do and you can download and read or print out information from their website: www.sryp.org.uk, or email: mopeds@sryp.org.uk.

Before you apply, you also need to have applied and have been issued with a provisional driving licence. If you have not already done so, you can apply on-line: www.gov.uk/apply-first-provisional-driving-licence



Living in Bower Hinton meant that 17 year old Jack Forrester was looking at a future on benefits. "There are so many young people looking for jobs" he said "and with no way of getting to work or college I was stuck. I left school in 2010 and have only had temporary jobs since then, now I have a real career in front of me".

Jack was fortunate to be one of those to be loaned a moped, who now have an additional 5 bikes available thanks to intervention from the Yarlinton Housing Group.

Funding of £28,000 in 2012 from the housing association enabled the Youth Project to supply the extra mopeds to young people to help them get into work or training, and within days of hearing the good news, Jack secured himself a place as an apprentice mason.

Some Good advice from SCLT on Crime Prevention

The Senior Siren Magazine is published by SCLT (Senior Citizen Liaison Team) – a voluntary organisation based in Bristol, whose remit is to help the older adult population feel safer in their homes through 3 primary objectives: Crime Prevention, Victim Support and Social Advocacy. They can be contacted on 07879 116009 or via their website.

The Senior Siren is a free, bi-monthly magazine available online and in some areas and contains information relating to avoiding doorstep and cyber-crime, as well as other tips for home and personal safety. The content is also enriched with many lifestyle articles on subjects such as gardening, cooking, health and celebrity interviews, to ensure its 'readability' with the target audience.

<http://www.sclt.moonfruit.com/#/senior-siren-editions/4573598653>

If you have information about any crime, phone the police on 101 or you can call anonymously to the independent charity CRIMESTOPPERS 0800 555 111.

For general information about Neighbourhood Watch nationally visit their website: www.ourwatch.org.uk

Crewkerne & District Twinning Associaton

April 10th/13th 2014 will see us visit our friends in Igny/Bures Sur Yvette and anyone wishing to join us is most welcome. The price will be £90 (maximum) but ultimately this will depend on numbers responding. Please contact Cheryl on 01460 75025 for further details on this trip and other Twinning activities.



Kings Head News



Firstly Paul and I and our other staff and customers would like to wish Derek all the best in his new job. Yes, he's leaving us, but not the village, so if you want to see him for anything I'm pretty sure he's going to be working at the club down the road! Our loss is their gain! Good luck Derek and thanks for everything.

Secondly, I'd like to amend the hours I gave everyone for opening! It read as though we are not open during Saturday and Sunday lunch, but can I reassure you we most definitely are - between 12-3 unless you contact us in advance for that something special and then we can stay open longer! The only alteration should have been to Sundays hours where we now open at 7pm instead of 6pm.

We have also reinstated the dart-board! Any players out there fancying a game for fun or even getting into a league - we're here and it's available!!!!

Although the 'buy two get third free' offer has been taken down this is just a temporary blip! Paul and I need to look closer at the offer so that more of you get a choice of drink! Keep your eyes peeled! We're feeling a bit Christmassy in our house too so may have to spread the festive joy. Come in over the next few weeks and see what we have to offer!!!

Hoping you all enjoyed the return of Barry Paull - AKA Elvis? He will be back but sadly not until next year! Bless him - he always saves us a couple of dates - loves the crowd here and we're one of the few places that don't charge you ticket money to

see him!

Of course our music nights continue right through to next year but we'll just give you a quick rundown up to Christmas!

We've been lucky enough to book JMDISCO just to keep the merry merry! He'll be here Saturday 7th December. Come and make a request for whatever you like and challenge him to find it!!!!

And on Saturday 14th December we have the amazing OKEY DOKEY KARAOKE returning to hear us all scream and wail! Spot prizes will be given - what and why and to who we don't know yet!!!

And back to get us into the Christmas Spirit we have ONE TREE HILL again on Saturday 21st December. Can't help but have fun when they're around so perfect to get that party mood going.

To see us right into Christmas we have JMDISCO back in on Christmas Eve and New Years Eve too!!!

Through that whole time we have our wonderful KIM'S KITCHEN sorting out your hunger pangs! Christmas menus available - I will put them onto our FACEBOOK page too, so go and take a look on there if you want to whet your appetites!!! There are a couple of spaces left for the Christmas Lunch she's doing too - 5 amazing courses for only £35 with a guest appearance by the man himself (SANTA!) at 3pm!!!

It would be lovely to see you over the Christmas season, but even if we don't, we wish you all well for now and the future. Thanks for a wonderful two and a half years and a very merry Christmas to you all.

Gabbie Hirst

Merriott Gospel Hall



Every Tuesday
10am - 11.30am



Toys, crafts, fun
& refreshments for
carers and toddlers.



For children aged 8+
7.00pm-8.30pm
2nd/4th Fri each month
Resumes Fri 13th Sept

Phone for more details:
Phil & Jo 271763
Andrew & Julia 72211



Broadway, Merriott
www.merriottgospelhall.org

Cycling in South Somerset

by Sam Wycherley



Cycle way in Catalonia

Over the half term, I had a cycling holiday in Catalonia, Spain. While the experience was very enjoyable, it struck me as such a contrast to South Somerset, where cycling is not so popular an activity. In Catalonia (more specifically, Banyoles and La Garrotxa), there is a culture of cycling and it is something both widely practiced and provided for. Cycling takes many forms, from mountain biking to getting from A to B and cycle paths and mountain bike tracks are in good provision.

In South Somerset, this is not the case.

While there are some cycle routes – there is one going through Merriott, in fact – they mainly fall on roads, which is not ideal. Many of the small lanes on which the cycle paths lie are busy and narrow, making them ill-suited for cyclists. This presents a problem of personal safety for the cyclist and makes the existing cycle routes in our area impractical.

I feel that cycling is something to be encouraged. Not only is it low cost, and helps reduce carbon emissions, but it also encourages exercise – something becoming increasingly important in modern day life. However, I also see a need for a more coordinated and safe network of cycle routes near Merriott – perhaps incorporating some of the walking trails, e.g. the Parrett Trail. Through such a scheme, we can also widen the range of cycling routes (there are relatively few), and so further encourage cycling as a sport and means of transport.

Merriott Gardening Club

The pre-Christmas lunch will be held at The Crown and Victoria at Tintinhull on **Tuesday 10th December**. If you missed the meeting on the 26th November, but would like to book for the pre-Christmas lunch, please ring Mo on 07967 028277. You will need to select your menu and pay £19.95 per person for two courses or £22.95 per person for three courses, in advance please. Non members welcome.

No meetings in January or February. The Gold Card Club operates during these two months with 25% discount on a selection of goods to all members at The Gardens Group Garden Centres (Brimsmore, Sherborne and Poundbury) and 10% at Groves in Bridport and Little Groves at Beaminster.

Everyone on the Committee wishes you all a Happy Christmas and a healthy 2014.

Mo Frampton 07967 028277



WEA Course - Arts & Craft Movement starting 11th February 2014 for 6 weeks

The Arts & Crafts Movement of the late 19th century, sought to bring together high quality design and craftsmanship. Local examples will be used to encourage students to go out and see these wonderful buildings and works of art for themselves. 6 sessions starting Tuesday 11th February 2014, 2.30pm-4.00pm - Dampier Room, East Coker Village Hall, Halves Lane, East Coker. Course Code: C3524728.

Cost £31 - free to anyone in receipt of means tested benefits.

To enrol or for further information contact:

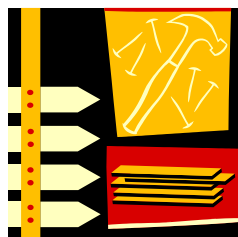
Sarah Smith 01935 862466 or go to: www.wea-sw.org.uk



Merriott Tea Towels

- the ideal gift to say 'Thank you', 'Welcome' or 'Happy Christmas' Still only £4 available from Osborne's and the Spar shop. Add them to your shopping list today!

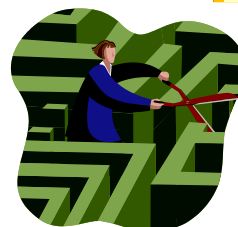
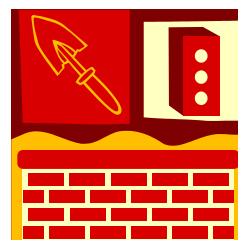
GKH Home & Garden Maintenance



Shed and fencing repairs / replacement,
brick and stone work, patios and pergolas,
grass cutting & hedge trimming

we do it all!

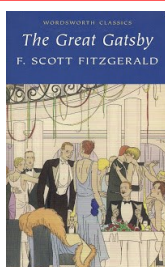
**Call Gary on
07545 257 186**



Book Review by Sheila Bowman

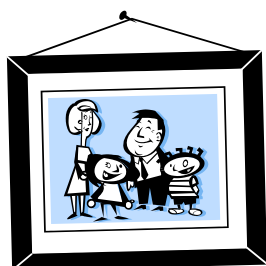
The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald

One benefit of belonging to a book group is that you are sometimes led to revisit old favourites and this was recently the case when our group read *The Great Gatsby*. It's one of those books that people often read in their teens as a recommended classic, or maybe have seen a film version. However, it is a delight to rediscover the quality and insight of F. Scott Fitzgerald's writing.



The book is written through the eyes of Nick Carraway, himself a member of an American "old" established family, who is taking a holiday at West Egg on the coast near New York. His neighbour is the enigmatic Jay Gatsby, very rich and host to lavish weekend parties attended by socialites, intent on the trivial pleasures of the 1920s. The source of Gatsby's wealth is suspect and he is clearly regarded as "nouveau riche".

Many years before he had fallen for Daisy, a girl of "good" family who had loved him in return, but his lack of money and background made him an unsuitable match. Gatsby had gone off to fight in the First World War and then studied at Oxford. Daisy however did not wait for him to return having made his fortune, but married Tom Buchanan her social equal but, we gather, rather a bore and an unfaithful one at that. The novel brilliantly evokes the hectic pleasure seeking social whirl of this level of society and follows the rekindling of Daisy and Gatsby's love to its tragic conclusion. Fitzgerald's writing is extraordinary. It is spare and elegant. Describing Gatsby's party that Nick attends, he writes "In his blue gardens, men and girls went like moths among the whispering and the champagne and the stars." The book is short - only 180 pages - but he manages to draw the reader in to depths of insight into the character, both of people and the society they inhabit. The recent film with Leonardo Di Caprio had such bad critical assessment that I haven't seen it. Sometimes when reading the book I found it difficult not to have the images of the Robert Redford /Mia Farrow version in my head. But the book - as is so often the case - really does it better!



Family photo event

Merriott Tythe Barn
Monday 9th December from 4pm.
Photos burnt to disc for you to reproduce.
£30 per 15 minute session.
Call Jo on 07968 276 870
to book your session.
Fantastic Xmas gift.



Hinton St George "Flix in the Stix" presents:

'Robot and Frank' (12)

on Saturday, December 14th in the Village Hall at 7.30pm. Tickets £5 in advance from the Village Shop and

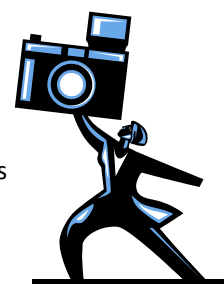
Dorothy's Tea Room, or £5.50p on the door. To reserve tickets please contact 01460 72906.

Frank is a retired jewel-thief, living alone. His son tries to care for him from afar and finally gets a robot caretaker. But Frank soon learns that it is as useful as a burglary aide.....

NEW TO THE MERRIOTT MESSENGER - PHOTO OF THE MONTH

Last month we launched a new feature in the Merriott Messenger and we are delighted to announce that the U3A Photographic Group has offered to judge them. Please send your photo to:

merriottmesseger@gmail.com. Do remember to send in your name and, if under 16, your age and confirm that you are happy for us to print your masterpiece!



Line Dancing For Fun and Fitness - your first New Year's Resolution!

Starting in the new year, every **Wednesday 7:30pm to 9pm** in the Tithe Barn, Merriott.

A small but friendly group of mixed ability dancers would welcome anybody who would like to learn to dance to Country and Western music.

To find out more just pop along and watch us dance one evening*, or contact Denise Preston on 01460 72732.

*Note: the last dance session for 2013 is on 4th December. We start again on 8th January 2014.



Christmas Cheer

Christmas is i-cumen in
Merry sing Wassail?
Mince a pie
And slap a thigh
And quaff a stoup of ale,
Sing wassail,
Sing wassail!

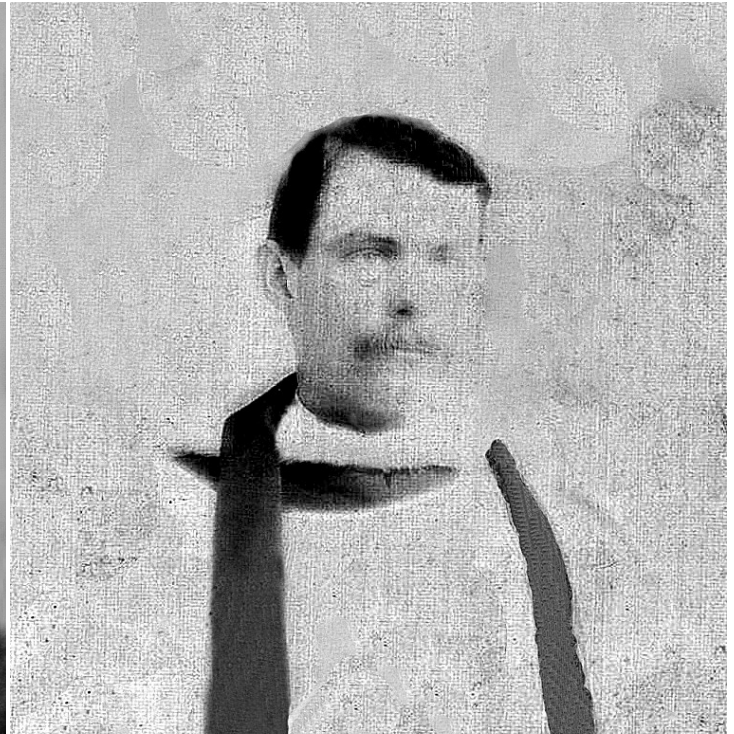
Christmas is a-coming in:
Strikers at Heathrow.
Folk arrive
More dead than alive,
In need of Ho-ho-ho -
Go, Claus, go -
Ho-ho-ho!

Christmas is a coming in;
Boiler's on the blink.
Roast the bird
E're speech be slurred:
'Tis later than you think.
On the brink;
Pass the drink!

Christmas is a-coming in,
Bringing peace and joy.
Gifts to give,
And life to live,
So praise the Blessed Boy -
Bless the Boy!
Peach and Joy!

Written by Janet Lailey
December 2012

Can you help solve a Merriott Mystery?



A number of glass negatives and several photographs have been found in a house in Boozer Pit, Merriott. They are all in poor condition, but I have scanned them and reversed them to a positive. Now I have tried to enhance them and these are a few examples. At least one of them was taken at the Adelphi Studios, which was in business at 60 The Strand, London from 1912 to 1928. It may have been a photographer at the Studios who took them, because they are all of different people. I am asking does anyone recognize any of them – are they of any of your ancestors?

If you can shed any light on who they are, then please contact Alan Keene on 01460 73077 or alankeene@tiscali.co.uk





Useful Telephone Numbers

We intend to update the Useful Telephone Numbers list, last published in August, which includes contact details of the Merriott Clubs, Organisations, School etc.

If you are aware of any change in these details, could you please let us know, either by contacting a member of the editorial team (details on back page) or emailing: merriottmessenger@gmail.com

Thank you.

ANSWERS to quiz on page 5

1. Bohemia (now in the Czech Republic).
2. St. Nicholas (Patron saint of children - Santa Claus).
3. The "Twelve days of Christmas." a secret restatement of the Roman Catholic catechism banned during the 16th century.
4. "The Holly and the Ivy" Sacred imagery from pre-Christian pagan rites.
5. The Sheriff of Nottingham in the film "Robin Hood - Prince of thieves".
6. The Night before Christmas from the poem "a visit from St Nicholas" by Clement Moore.
7. Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria.
8. Carol singers.
9. "Do they know it's Christmas time at all" (Single by Band Aid.)
10. The ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future from "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens.
11. The good old United States of America.
12. Silent Night, Holy Night.

What's On elsewhere



Henhayes Community Centre

Friday 13th December 7.00pm

Grand Concert featuring Simon Twiselton (piano) with Melanie Armitstead (soprano) performing English Song, Cole Porter and Opera. Wendy Partridge (guitar) with Richard Hill (guitar) performing Spanish and Latin repertoire and the music of Django Reinhardt. Plus the three most promising musicians from the Young Peoples Music Festival will be invited to take part.

Tickets from the Centre office @ £12 each including light refreshments (or £10 each if purchased by 7th December)
Telephone 01460 74340

oooOooo

WI Hall - Misterton

Saturday 7th December

Christmas Social 7.00pm for 7.30pm. Local caterers will supply the supper and there will be some quizzes etc.

Tickets £ 10.00, bring your own beverage.
contact Cheryl 01460 75025

oooOooo

Children's Christmas Workshop - Lopen

Sunday 8th December 3pm

Christmas activities will take place in Lopen Church and the Sunday School for the children of our four parishes.

If you have any news or views you would like to share in the next edition, please send them to:

merriottmessenger@gmail.com or talk to one of the editorial team.

Merriott Village Plan 2014 - have your say

Following the questionnaire of 2012, preparations are underway for the production of an updated Merriott Village Plan in 2014. This is an important document because it shows to the District and County Councils, as well as to the Health Authorities and other organisations, what services and facilities the residents wish to have in the years ahead. In the absence of a Village Plan, the planning authorities can assume the village community is not interested in the extent and location of new development.

In particular, a Plan sets out the sort of housing and business development which the people who live here want or don't want. It is fine for a village to grow but new housing has to be accompanied by additional facilities such as a bigger school and recreation facilities.

Merriott has grown very little since the last Plan in 2007. However, there are already planning approvals for over 80 new houses and there are several sites which could accommodate perhaps 200 or 300 new properties – both housing and business properties. Some of these may be welcome if they are in the right place and of the appropriate size and cost.

The Parish Council has designed a short questionnaire – ONLY 4 QUESTIONS - seeking your views about new development, which is contained in this issue of Messenger. PLEASE SPARE A FEW MOMENTS TO COMPLETE IT AND RETURN IT TO OSBORNE'S BROADWAY, MERRIOTT PHARMACY OR THE POST OFFICE.

YOUR OPINIONS DO MATTER –

TAKE THIS CHANCE TO HAVE YOUR SAY

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Copy deadline for the February issue of the Merriott Messenger is 12th January. There will be no issue in January 2014.

Articles received after this date may not be included. Please include any artwork or photographs.

Please send copy to: merriottmessenger@gmail.com
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