

Meeting Point



January 2021



Meeting Point

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The community magazine for the villages of Olveston, Tockington, Old Down, Lower Hazel, Awkley, Ingst, Aust, Elberton and Littleton upon Severn

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From the Editor

Welcome to the first Meeting Point of 2021. At this point we cannot predict with any expectation of accuracy how the year will pan out. I believe, however, that there is some hope for optimism as a vaccination programme rolls out across the country. In fact, there is an interesting article in this edition from a local resident who was involved in one of the vaccine trials.

I would like to use this space to say thank you, on behalf of local residents, to Olveston Stores and The Crusty Loaf. Both businesses have worked really hard during the pandemic to serve the local community. The shops have been made Covid secure, queueing systems established and at the height of the lockdowns they have taken telephone orders and made deliveries to people who were isolating. We are very lucky to have them!

And finally, I hope you enjoy the collage of 2020 covers we have created in the centre pages.

Marelin

This month's cover is by the late Ingrid Jeckells
Meeting Point Founded in 1976 by the Anglican and
Methodist churches in Olveston, near Bristol.

**Meeting Point magazine and Meeting Point Directory are online at the
Community Website: www.olvestonandaust.com**

The Pine Trees of Old Down

Martin Gibson



Photograph by Les Harper

On what used to be called 'The Deer Park' on Old Down, by the cricket pitch, are some 30 pine trees. They are probably Scots pines, though some think they may be Austrian pines. They are, of course, iconic, a landmark for miles around, certainly not indigenous but important enough to form part of the logo of Olveston Parish Council. Were they planted for a special reason, a celebration perhaps? Or just for landscaping?

During the 19th and 20th centuries the Deer Park, and many miles of the surrounding countryside, belonged to the Salmon family, who resided in Tockington Manor until the start of World War 2. In 1946 they put seven farms

up for sale by auction. A Pilning family, the three Northover brothers, who were butchers by trade, bought all 7 farms and very cunningly, prior to the sale, had agreed to sell on four of these farms to the tenants. This left them with three farms, gratis. Jim Northover moved into Home Farm on Washingpool Hill and it was always his belief that the pine trees had been planted to commemorate either the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, or the Battle of Waterloo in 1815.

During a gale this last winter, the largest of the pine trees blew over. The current landowner, Mrs Louise Powell, wanted the fallen tree removed and so it came about that two local men offered to cut it up and remove the timber, partly for themselves, but also as firewood for The Swan and The Fox. It took a long while for the upper extremities of the tree to be cut up, but once the main trunk was reached they were able to count the rings. This is an acknowledged way of calculating the age of any tree. A little like the US election, it took several recounts, but the best estimate was that this, the oldest tree was 140 years old, meaning it was planted around 1880.

A look through the history books reveals that not a lot was going on in the world around that time, although the steam iron was invented then, and Queen Victoria was installed as Empress of India. So, it seems likely that planting the trees was just a bit of landscaping – albeit one that remains a very powerful statement in the 21st century.

Poppy Appeal 2020

Stan Bradburn

On behalf of the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, I would like to express my thanks to the volunteers who have been of invaluable assistance to me with this very difficult operation in 2020. Many obstacles had to be overcome, with the COVID-19 lockdown taking its toll. We did not gain access to a lot of establishments this year, such as churches and pubs, as well as other business premises.

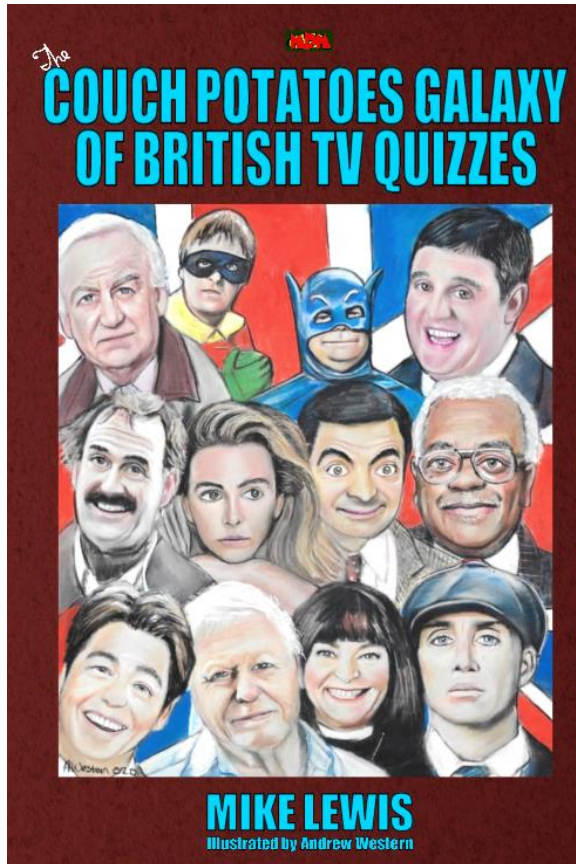
Our four schools, namely St Peters Pilning, Severn Beach Primary, Olveston Primary and Tockington Manor excelled themselves by raising a tremendous total of £996 between them. This shows that the memory of what happened in the past is being taught in our schools and that children are aware of it.

Rose Brown and the ladies of the RBL worked tirelessly to deliver boxes where possible, and this resulted in a grand total for our district of £5091.31. Under the present circumstances this is a truly remarkable sum which will go toward helping those who serve, and have served, in the defence of their country.

We will remember them.

Lockdown Quiz Book

Mike Lewis



This is the cover of Mike's new quiz book 'The Couch Potatoes Galaxy of British TV Quizzes'. It is a book of quizzes about British TV programmes from the 1950s up to 2020.

The cover illustrations, and many inside, have been brilliantly painted by Almondsbury artist Andrew Western.

The £9.99 book is already selling well and is on special offer to locals at just £7.99 on Amazon or just £6 if collected from the author's socially distanced collection box on his Olveston doorstep.

The book is the latest in a trilogy of quiz books produced during the lockdowns. It follows Quiz Encounters of the Trivia Kind (written with Olveston

Quiz Master Chris Smart) and Inquization 151+. Mike's reasoning for this productive spell. *"At 75 and regarded by the 'powers that be' as extremely vulnerable I had to find something to fill the hours that gave me some enjoyment!"*

For further information Mike can be contacted by email: inquizitors3@gmail.com or mobile 0790 848 3979



How 'Green' is St Mary's Church, Olveston?

Last month, Green Force was invited by the Environmental Adviser from the Bristol Diocese, Clare Fussell, to join her in a Zoom

meeting. The object was to find out how active our church is in following green guidelines and keeping up to date with them. The meeting focused on the church building.

Through the awareness of the PCC with Michael Wright at the helm of the Buildings Committee it was clear that many boxes relating to green management could be ticked, such as boiler efficiency, changing light bulbs to the LED variety, and refitting the draughty windows. Outstanding items which could be fixed are to set up an efficient heating control system, and to switch to a green energy provider when the current contracts expire.

So, what about renewable energy sources? A feasibility project was done 10 years ago with a view to installing PV panels on the roof. Sadly, at the time, it was established that the roof needed strengthening before the panels could be fixed and this was too costly to do. Panels since then have been made lighter in weight so the possibilities could be reviewed. Ground heat exchange in the churchyard has been ruled out because it is solid rock beneath the superficial layer of turf.

In conclusion it is reasonable to report that currently the church is being run as green as is affordable. Green Force is aware that the situation must be regularly reviewed, but nothing to date has been neglected. We hope that this summary will keep our community informed and demonstrate that the church is being maintained as sensitively as possible within its financial constraints.

Did you know that Iceland and Norway generate all their energy from renewables?

Wales has 14 small hydro energy generating schemes, an example of which can be seen at Osbaston, a mile north of Monmouth off the Hereford road? (Check it out on the web).

You can do the scrunch test on your Christmas wrapping paper? If it rolls into a ball and stays, it can be recycled. Tissue paper goes in the green bin.

Have you thought of looking at the labels in your clothes to find out where they are made? You might need an atlas!

News from St Mary's

Debbie Harries



We are working hard to re-open the church safely in the new year.

Please check the website: www.stmarysolveston.org.uk and posters outside the church for up-to-date information.

Olveston & Tockington W.I. Update

Vicki Townsend

The ladies of the W.I. have been keeping in touch through telephone calls and Zoom meetings. The Book Club continues to use Thornbury Library, when open, with a list of varied authors. A Committee meeting was held at the Parish Hall in November where it was agreed that it would be unrealistic to plan meetings again until the Spring. The advent of the recent vaccine news means that this may well be possible in April or May, as many of our members will qualify to be towards the front of the queue!

The Committee also agreed to send a Christmas gift of a seasonal planter to all members. Hopefully this gave a little cheer to the recipients at this difficult time.

Wishing you all a 2021 that is happy, healthy and safe as we slowly emerge from the trials of 2020.

Old Down Cricket Club

Tony Gardner 07889 727729

150 Club Winners December 2020:

£50 John Cryer

£15 Bill Finch

£5 Jeff Pulin

Latest £25 Bonus Ball Winners:

14/11/20 John Welsher

21/11/20 Bhavin Radia

Best Wishes for a Happier 2021. Up the Down!

Severn Tunnel Disaster. Part 2

IC Awkley

Those of you who read Part I of this story will recall that the collision between the HST and Sprinter trains in the Severn Tunnel happened on Saturday 7th December 1991*, at about 10.30hrs, though it was a good two hours before rescue services got to the scene. Why did it take so long? The bigger question, how the two trains had managed to collide on one of the best managed and safest railways in the world, also needed to be answered. Two of the many questions the HM Railway Inspectorate were tasked to fully investigate and report upon.

In addition to the east and west portals, there is a third way of entering the tunnel, via an emergency shaft at the Sudbrook Pumping Station, situated on the Welsh side of the Severn, about three quarters of the way through the tunnel when travelling towards Cardiff. At the time of the collision railway staff made a number of calls from emergency telephones situated within the tunnel. Each phone had an identifying number, together with a location marker. On each occasion, the various callers gave the location of the accident as being at MP 14 miles and 28 chains (miles and chains being the standard measurement units used on all UK railways). This location was to the west (Cardiff) side of the emergency Sudbrook shaft.

For reasons that to this day remain unclear, the first rescue crew from the Gwent Fire Service who descended the emergency shaft into the tunnel, were told by a railway employee that the accident was '50 yards inside the tunnel, Avon end'. Thus, they headed east towards the Bristol portal, and away from the accident scene. After walking almost the entire length of the tunnel they came across an Avon Fire Service crew, who had entered the tunnel from the Pilning end. The Avon crew reported that there was no accident at their end of the tunnel. Shortly after that a rescue train cautiously entered the tunnel, having been dispatched from Bristol.

A dedicated Severn Tunnel Rescue train was located on a siding leading to the Sudbrook Pumping Station. This train contained everything including emergency lighting, fire-fighting equipment and stretchers that may be required to deal with an incident in the tunnel, and was permanently connected to a locomotive, to avoid delays in responding to any accident. But delays did occur, due to finding the right number of crew to man the train, and in gaining permission to enter the tunnel from the Newport Signalling Centre. The rescue train was finally given authority to enter the tunnel at 12.11hrs, almost 1 ¾ hrs after the accident had occurred.



Above: Severn Tunnel Dedicated Emergency Train

At about 12.30hrs, two hours after the collision took place, the first rescuers arrived at the accident scene. This excessive delay was much criticised by passengers on the train, many of whom were severely injured. The two-hour wait would have seemed like an eternity for those injured, particularly since conditions in the tunnel were described by one passenger as, 'extremely cold, damp and draughty'. Remember, the accident happened on a cold December day, and there is a constant airflow through the tunnel created by the large ventilation fans located at Sudbrook.

It took about an hour to transfer the injured and other passengers from the Sprinter onto the HST. The HST then moved forwards very slowly before arriving at Severn Tunnel Junction Station where the injured were transferred into a fleet of ambulances, with the non-injured passengers being taken to the Caldicot Leisure Centre, which was the designated emergency reception point for tunnel incidents.

So much for the rescue operation. The question that now remains to be answered is, how and why did the accident happen?

The actions of the driver of the HST, the first train to enter the tunnel, were held to be correct in every regard. The big question that remained, was whether or not the driver of the Sprinter train had passed the Ableton Lane signal at green or red. Apart from the driver himself, who declined to give

evidence to the enquiry, though later was insistent that the signal was passed at green, there were no other direct witnesses who had seen the train pass the signal. The train guard said that he thought the train had slowed on the approach to the tunnel, then accelerated again. But this was quite normal and didn't cause him any concern, as trains were often 'checked' on approaching the tunnel.

Below: Injured passengers being removed from the HST at Severn Tunnel Junction



With the HST in the tunnel, the signal at Ableton Lane would be displaying a red light, and under normal circumstances this would be a fail-safe system. However, at the time of the accident engineers were working on the

axle-counters in the tunnel which automatically set the Ableton Lane signal. Due to excessive dampness in the tunnel normal electronic track-circuits were not used, instead axle-counters were in place (counting the number of axles entering and leaving the tunnel). Exhaustive testing by the Railway Inspectorate after the accident showed that the work being conducted may possibly have caused the Ableton Lane signal to change from red to green, possibly only momentarily. Whether or not this actually happened was never fully established.

The questions the Railway Inspectorate set themselves were straightforward, 'Did the driver of the Sprinter pass the signal at danger, or did he receive a clear signal? If the signal was clear, was it due to the engineer's working on the system? Following extensive investigation, the answers to these questions were left open, the conclusion reached being that the accident was caused either by an unaccountable error on behalf of the Sprinter driver or the work being conducted on the axle-counters, or by some other signalling failure which left no detectable trace. An unsatisfactory conclusion, it was agreed, but one that could not be improved upon.

As a final word, it should be noted that the Railway Inspectorate made a number of recommendations on improved safety and emergency response to tunnel incidents, all of which were later implemented. It goes without saying, that this is only a brief account of a much more complex story, and many additional factors have had to be compressed or omitted.

**Editor's note. Despite IC Awkley's forensic knowledge of all things connected with railways, he got the date of the accident wrong in last month's magazine. Many thanks to the eagle-eyed reader who got in touch to put us right!*



Oveston Parish Council

Pat Savage

Monthly Meetings

The Council continues to hold monthly meeting on Zoom. Whilst we all agree we do miss the face-to-face interaction it is none the less necessary that Council business is transacted on a regular basis. Interestingly our Meetings are definitely over in a shorter time! Members of the public are as always invited to attend. Please let the Clerk have at least forty-eight hours' notice.

New Councillors

As mentioned in last month's Meeting Point, we have had an encouraging number of applicants. This has now been reduced to four persons. The interviews will take part via Zoom during weeks commencing 7th and 14th of December.

Old Down Play Area

The project to replace the very old and worn-out equipment has now been re-launched. This is being led by Councillors Di Buckley and Robert Harris.

Community Grants

A gentle reminder that the Council makes an annual grant of £10,000 to projects which will benefit the local community and parishioners. Whilst COVID19 has had an impact on all our activities throughout the lockdowns this could be an opportunity to submit an application and plan for 2021. To date we have just one application.



ST MARY'S CHURCH TOWER RESTORATION PROJECT

St Mary's Church Tower Restoration Project

Peter Floyd

At last, through the generosity of many, St Mary's has enough money promised to begin designing the work – though more will still be needed to finish it! Much has yet to be done on preparing for the main contract works, of which more in future issues, but one of the most exacting, detailed, and noticeable parts of the work will be the huge pinnacles.

To get things moving, the PCC has instructed the sculptor, Mark Hancock of Centreline Architectural Sculptors, to draw the pinnacles in preparation for their detailed carving. (*The picture below shows Mark on a site visit.*) Mark has measured the pinnacles, drawn a typical

crocket and contributed the following article telling us about Centreline and what he is going to do.

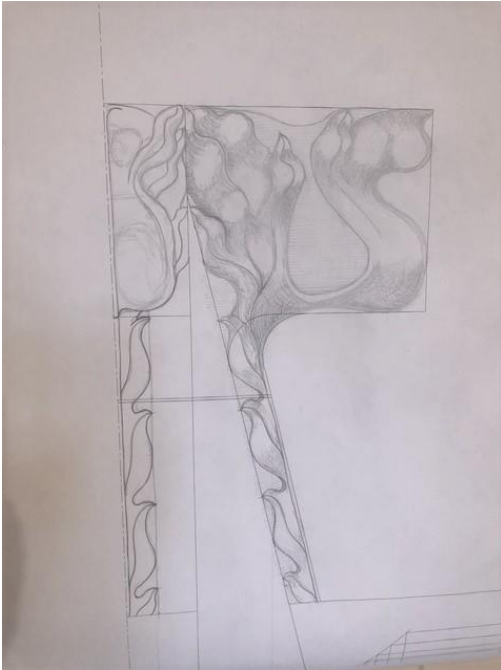
Mark Hancock



It was May 2007 when Centreline Architectural Sculpture was first invited to St. Mary's to examine the pinnacles. The letter we sent following our visit describes them as 'severely eroded and potentially dangerous.' As a stopgap we supplied some very strong netting to wrap round the badly eroded pinnacles and it has done a sterling job of collecting thirteen years' worth of loose stone elements which parted company with the main shafts.

Centreline is a stone carving / stone masonry business based on an old dairy farm near Stroud. St. Mary's Olveston is an important task for us and as usual we turned first to the famous

architectural bible *The Buildings of England, Gloucestershire 2*, by David Verey (3rd Edition 2002) to check St. Mary's history. The description of St. Mary's notes the 'overlarge pinnacles of 1606.' Knowing just how many pinnacles David Verey must have seen in his long career, he probably knows best: at least he seems satisfied that what we see today on the four corners of the tower are the glorious, if slightly diminished remains of the post-fire 1606 rebuilding. The 'overlarge' size of the pinnacles may have been dictated by the generosity of the donor, let's hope so!



It is possible that the large gothic pinnacles with their sixty-four projecting crockets were in some way a visual compensation for the loss of the former spire. Pinnacles are both beautiful and practical architectural elements: they draw the eyes up to heaven, crowning spires, buttresses, and the angles of parapets but importantly their weight also provides an essential downward thrust which counteracts any destabilising sideways thrust of a heavy roof structure. Crockets are the projecting, typically curled and foliate elements which embellish the inclined sides of the pinnacle. (See *drawing on the left*.) Interestingly, the word crocket derives from the Old Northern French word *crochet*

which means hook and the Middle English word for a curl or roll of hair. The curled and hooked forms of the crockets represent leaves growing and unfurling and as they rise up to the emerging bud form at the top of the finial.

How does anyone go about the job of carving four large and imposing pinnacles and then putting them in place? How can anyone know what the design was after possibly four hundred years of wind and weather have taken their toll on the carving? What kind of stone will last the next four hundred years and how can we be sure? Did the original 17thC masons know how long that stone might last in such an exposed position and where was the stone quarried? These are the sorts of questions I am often asked as I now have over forty years of stone carving experience. (*Continued on page 27*)

To start at the beginning, the stone, limestone in this case, would undoubtedly have been sourced from a quarry or mine as close as possible due to the difficulties and therefore expense of transporting the heavy stone blocks in carts along rough and stony roads. Carving would have taken place near to the Church as, again, transporting intricately carved stone would have been perilous. The 17th century masons were well aware of the different beds, or layers, in a quarry or mine and would have requested a weathering stone which is harder and more impervious to water, usually from lower down in the limestone seam. Though it looks from the ground as if the pinnacles might be carved from one massive cone of stone, this does not usually happen as the beds of suitable stone are usually too shallow. The pinnacles' component stones, in this case five, need to be cut from a bed of limestone and then be carved 'naturally bedded' for a long life, that is with the layers of stone lying horizontally as it was laid down in the warm Jurassic sea.

The existing pinnacles were carefully measured on site using a mixture of hi-tech laser and traditional measuring equipment. This establishes an overall shape and mass in order to produce templates for cutting and working the stone prior to carving the various components of the pinnacle. I was one of a team of five masons carving the 1,275 crockets needed for the repair of the West front of York Minster, so I have spent many long hours studying and carving these elements!

When all the carving is finished scaffolding can be erected around the tower and electric hoists and weight tested straps used to carefully lower the individual stones of the old pinnacles. Today's scaffolding is a far cry from that used by stonemasons in the 17th century, who used wooden poles lashed together with rope and had to haul stones to the top of the tower using ropes and pulleys, but in many ways the carving process is just the same as four hundred years ago.

This last year has been a challenge to most of us in this traditional industry but it does encourage a long and reflective view on life. Let us hope 2021 brings St. Mary's tower, and all of us, a new lease of life.

Appeal Update

David Prothero, Treasurer, St Mary's Church Olveston

A big 'thank you' to all who have donated so generously in response to the Appeal published in recent issues of Meeting Point. We have so far received 27 donations from individuals, families and companies, totalling £12,700. This is a wonderful response from the local community at a very difficult time for so many, and takes the total amount raised to-date, including grants, to £178,700. As a reminder, if you would like to help, donations can be made in one of the following ways:

By bank transfer to the St Mary's Church bank account, the details of which are: Sort Code: 40-52-40, Account Number: 00029936, using the reference "Tower Project"

By cheque made payable to "St Mary's PCC Olveston", and sent to David Prothero, Treasurer, St Mary's Church Olveston, Rose Cottage, Buckover, Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire, GL12 8DX.

If you wish to Gift Aid your donation, please e-mail me at dlprothero@talk21.com.

A Good Experience in these Trying Times

John Clayton

A few months ago, I noticed that Southmead was asking for volunteers for the Oxford COVID vaccine trials from people over 70. As I am 76 and in reasonable health and, most importantly, a strong advocate of the sciences, I volunteered. My background is heavily science based and I had a firm belief that this research could provide some valuable insights into the COVID pandemic.

Throughout my 'recruitment', I was treated with extreme dignity and given all the relevant information that I needed. So far I have had an injection and a booster, and nurses have taken blood three times. In each case, the person administering the procedure was very skilled. Several injections/blood lettings were almost unnoticeable. Another thing that exemplifies the careful way I, and I presume other volunteers, have been treated, is that when I am asked to come in for a procedure, I am directed to a gated car park which is just a short walk to the research centre.

My other 'duties' are to fill in a weekly survey of my activities and to send in a COVID test swab, which I have used on my throat and nose. I was also encouraged to report any minor symptoms I might be experiencing. I believe there are at least two other members of the local community taking part in the vaccine trial and I hope they are having a similar positive experience.

During my time on the trial I often had questions and, if the nurse was unable to answer, I was immediately put through to a doctor and all was explained. In fact, I apologised to one nurse for asking so many questions – I am a bit on the inquisitive side – and she assured me that it was just the kind of thing they needed.

I have no idea whether I had the Covid vaccine or the standard vaccine for meningitis, which they are using as a control. One nurse explained that she believed it was a win-win situation because even if I did not get the COVID

vaccine, there was also evidence that the meningitis jab gives some protection from sepsis.

When the vaccine is authorised*, I would encourage everyone who is offered a jab to grab the chance. It was great to have good news recently of the effectiveness of the vaccine and I'm really pleased to have played a small part.

** As Meeting Point goes to print the Pfizer vaccine has been approved and the vaccination programme has just begun.*

Local Businesses and Covid

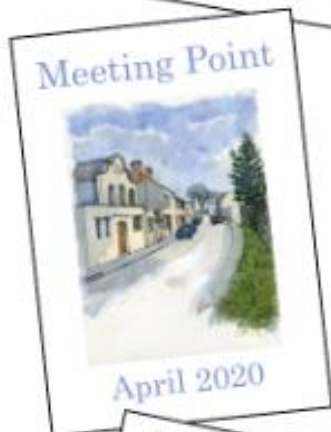
We have asked some of our regular advertisers to let us know how they are coping during the pandemic. This month we hear from Dunkley's in Thornbury.

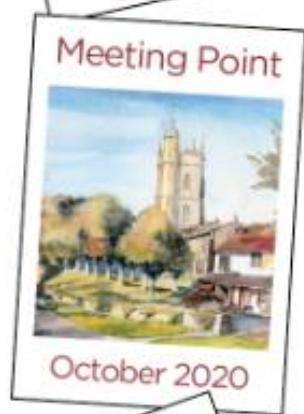
The COVID-19 pandemic has affected both businesses and individuals. At Dunkley's, we have done everything we can to provide the highest level of support for our clients throughout. We have provided weekly, if not daily, communications about the Government grants, supported clients with furlough claims and worked with businesses to re-strategise and rethink their next steps. For us, clients are at the forefront and we are just doing what we can to help them through this challenging time.

Samaritan's Purse - Operation Christmas Child

The churches in the North Severnside area of Alveston, Aust, Elberton, Littleton and Olveston, together with support from Revd. David Moss and Revd. Simon Edwards, have filled 30 shoe boxes. These boxes contain basics such as soap, flannels, toothbrush, pencils, crayons and stationery, along with a ball and a toy for those in countries where they are needed. This year the boxes from the UK have gone to Eastern Europe and Africa. Donations totalling £250 have also been sent from our villages.

Thank you. www.samaritans-purse.org.uk





Robins

Trevor Cook

Back in March* the Guardian reported that numbers of robins were at a twenty year high this year. In which case we should see plenty of them around our gardens this winter in addition to the many pictures we will find on our Christmas cards. They are an integral part of the Christmas season.



We British do have special relationship with robins for elsewhere in Europe the robin is a shy bird, skulking in the bushes and amongst the trees. But as our national bird we give them a special place in our hearts, and I am sure they respond to that special relationship.

I am not sure whether it's their good looks or their apparent fearlessness that endears them to us; either way most people have had a close encounter with one at some time. They will come really close to find food and many a gardener will tell you a tale about a friendly robin rooting around in recently turned earth. But don't be fooled, robins are very private, solitary birds (until it's time to raise a family that is) and will fight each other viciously to maintain their territory.



When young birds come along they can be hard to identify, looking like the one pictured to the left. That they don't have a red breast is thought to be to prevent the parents from attacking them as potential rivals.

They are the only bird that sings all year round, with a beautiful warbling song that sounds sweet to us but is in reality a warning to other robins in the neighbourhood to keep away. And if you hear a sharp 'tick, tick, tick' in the hedgerow it is invariably a robin maintaining its pecking order and announcing its presence.

**This article first appeared in December 2017*

Aust Parish Council

Emma Pattullo, Parish Clerk

Happy New Year to all our residents! We wish you all a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2021.

Aust PC does not hold a meeting in December, so we do not have much to report this month, except that the council is looking forward to a more productive year after so much normal activity ceased in 2020.

Councillors recently attended briefing sessions on the new Local Plan for South Gloucestershire. The Local Plan is being developed by South Glos. Council and is an important opportunity to:

- shape the places that we live, work and socialise in,
- have a direct impact on quality of life, the natural and built environment,
- have positive impacts on climate change, inequalities and encourage a green economy,
- discuss choices and make decisions about where significant levels of growth for new homes and jobs might be located, and which areas should be protected.

South Glos. Council is consulting local residents on the issues which should be included and the approach they should take in developing the Plan. Aust PC will be responding to the consultation, but we would also urge residents to respond personally if they wish. You can find more details at www.southglos.gov.uk/Localplan2020.

Whilst we look ahead with hope of being able to meet in person soon, for now Aust PC will continue to meet online (via Zoom). Residents are welcome to attend these meetings. It is possible to join via a telephone call if you do not have internet access; please contact the Clerk for details. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 12th January @ 7:30pm.

You can contact the Council on austparishcouncil@gmail.com or 01454 837271.

Ready, Steady, Census

Households across the Meeting Point area will soon be asked to take part in Census 2021. The census is a once-in-a-decade survey that gives us the most accurate estimate of all the people and households in England and Wales. It has been carried out every decade since 1801, with the exception of 1941. It will be the first run predominantly online, with households receiving a letter with a unique access code, allowing them to complete the questionnaire on their computers, phones or tablets.

“A successful census will ensure everyone from local government to charities can put services and funding in the places where they are most needed,” Iain Bell, deputy national statistician at the Office for National Statistics, said. *“This could mean things like doctors’ surgeries, schools and new transport routes. That’s why it is so important everyone takes part and we have made it easier*

for people to do so online on any device, with help and paper questionnaires for those that need them."

Census day will be on March 21st, but households across the country will receive letters with online codes allowing them to take part from early March. The census will include questions about your sex, age, work, health, education, household size and ethnicity. And, for the first time, there will be a question asking people whether they have served in the armed forces, as well as voluntary questions for those aged 16 and over on sexual orientation and gender identity. Results will be available within 12 months, although personal records will be locked away for 100 years, kept safe for future generations.

For more information, visit: www.census.gov.uk

Friends of St. Mary's

The prize winners in the December draw, held on 3rd December 2020 were:

Amount	Number	Name
£150	338	Mrs C Phillpott, Tockington
£75	171	Mrs C Healey, Olveston
£25	201	Mrs E Jackson, Olveston
£25	368	Mrs J Bendall, Tockington
£25	441	Mrs E Dobson, Rudgeway
£20	351	Mrs M Evans, Olveston
£20	396	Mrs I C Phillips, Olveston
£20	531	Mr & Mrs M Scott, Olveston
£10	312	Mr & Mrs A Maunder, Newquay
£10	504	Mrs S Farr, Olveston
£10	187	Mrs E Marsh, Tockington
£10	355	Mr P Savage, Olveston

If you are not yet a member and wish to join the lottery, please telephone Andy Phillips on 01454 614890 or email andisp28@hotmail.co.uk.

Don't forget if you're not in – you can't win!



Fundraising takes off at Marlwood School

Melinda Rackham

Like so many other charities and organisations, Friends of Marlwood School (FOMS) has had to do things differently this year. For an organisation that depends on being able to gather for activities such as gardening mornings, holding quizzes and supporting school events, 2020 has been a challenge. Our first meeting back in September was time to welcome new parents and carers to the school, and time to put on our thinking caps.

It turns out, virtual balloon races exist. This is certainly something for our times: a race of hundreds of virtual balloons across Europe that is also eco-friendly, as no real balloons are released. Over 360 Marlwood balloons were purchased by the Marlwood community in time for the Halloween start time, smashing our sales target. Looking carefully at the list of Marlwood starters, there was definitely a whiff of teacher competition with *Dastardly (Mr) Dyer*, *(Mr) Richards Retribution*, *C equals Pi x D* and *Magnificent Mrs Morgan* taking off, as well as many members of Marlwood families such as *Grandad*, *Daddy C* and *Mum Shrimp* to name but a few, all racing – floating - alongside a field of thousands of other balloons. In all, FOMS raised over £780 with this event, a marvellous result. These funds will be used to buy much need equipment for the school's teaching kitchens, wrapping up our recent focus on improving these facilities. Thank you to everyone who supported FOMS with this event.

Not everything has needed to adapt, and we are very fortunate to carry on benefiting from the generosity of the Marlwood community through donations to the school. Following a plea from the PE department for a replacement tumble dryer needed to help with lots of extra Covid-related washing, FOMS was delighted that Team Knowhow stepped in to donate a brand-new machine. The new dryer was installed within a week of the original appeal on the FOMS Facebook page.

Our Amazon 'Wish List' continues to bring in many donations, too many to mention here although one eye-popping donation we would like to acknowledge was for 130 science goggles. Rolls Royce also donated 30 pairs of safety glasses for the DART (Design, Technology and Arts Faculty) classrooms. It is no coincidence that eye safety equipment features in our list of donations. In March, Marlwood School gave away all of its safety glasses to community groups to help with Covid PPE shortfalls. Since coming back in September, pupils had been unable to do some elements of science or DART

as a result. This has now been overcome because of these two donations from the community. Thank you Team Know How, Rolls Royce and everyone who has purchased anything from the Wishlist, your generous support of Marlwood School is appreciated.

And finally, apologies to Louisa Berrington, Food Technology teacher at Marlwood School, who was incorrectly called Louise Beveridge in our article last month. This writer will lose 10 house points!

Co-op Supports Breaks for Local Young Carers

Local charity, Carers Support Centre, is delighted to have been selected by the Co-op local community fund this year. This gives Co-op members the chance to support breaks for young carers just by shopping. Simply select Carers Support Centre as your cause and, for every £1 you spend at any Co-op store, 2p will go to back to you and 2p is donated to young carers breaks.

Caring is a huge responsibility that should only ever be expected of an adult. Young carers do a fantastic job of caring for someone at home, but it has a big impact on a young life. Young carers struggle to keep up with schoolwork and suffer with stress, anxiety and depression. This is why breaks mean so much to young carers, as they give them the chance to take some much-needed time away from their caring role and socialise, relax and just enjoy being kids for a while. As Joss Tagg, Young Carers Service Manager of Carers Support Centre, explains: *"Having a break increases young carers' resilience, so they can continue caring for sick and vulnerable family members in a robust and safe way. Joining in with activities helps their wellbeing and creates lasting friendships and peer support. Activities provide a fun and entertaining break, as well as life skills and training. Activities also decrease anxiety, loneliness and isolation."*

You can help young carers get more breaks, simply by getting a Co-op membership card and choosing Carers Support Centre as your cause. Becoming a Co-op member is easy. Join and choose Carers Support Centre here: <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/49881>

Word Search

In this month's Word Search, can you find 8 local place names? They are all outside the Meeting Point area, but the furthest is only 9.5 miles away - and most are a lot nearer. They are all one-word answers, so it won't be, for example, *Oldbury on Severn*!

Words go in all directions and some letters are used twice.

I	M	V	N	Z	H	N	N	B	Z	D	G
T	T	Q	N	Y	O	V	L	U	J	G	N
C	R	O	M	H	A	L	L	C	T	J	O
H	M	O	R	T	O	N	A	K	E	H	T
I	T	S	W	K	X	B	E	O	W	H	S
N	L	E	Y	H	I	L	L	V	C	J	E
G	D	R	K	A	I	N	M	E	A	C	V
T	R	E	J	C	H	L	H	R	Y	I	L
O	A	L	N	R	I	N	L	P	C	N	A
N	I	J	T	S	H	I	I	J	A	N	E
B	A	N	O	E	T	L	A	E	T	R	L
N	O	T	G	N	I	R	E	H	T	Y	T

Good Luck!

Yours Faithfully

Revd. David Moss

St Mary's, Olveston

I feel I can really say 'Happy New Year' now that a vaccine to protect us against Coronavirus has been found. And soon, very soon, we can put our worries and concerns behind us and life will go back to normal. We can have guests to our homes, go shopping without a face mask, go on holiday and be grateful for things we have previously taken for granted! Well, not normal really, because we will never forget our fight against the virus. A war won not with weapons of mass destruction, but by scientists with test tubes and full PPE. But we must not forget those who have lost loved ones, as life for them after the virus will sadly never be the same.

2021 like every year will leave us with the opportunity to make new year's resolutions. Maybe resolutions to help those at home, abroad and to grow in love and faith:

Helping those at home. One of the good things about the pandemic is that it has helped us to think about those less fortunate than ourselves. It was encouraging that so many of you donated so generously to the food bank collection in the Church porch. Britain is an economically poorer place because of the virus, so I really hope we will continue to care.

Helping those abroad. One of the resolutions of the Green Task Force group at St. Mary's Church Olveston has made, is to do with those who live in developing countries and are most affected by climate change. On ZOOM the group heard about the work of Climate Stewards. Climate Stewards believe that we are called to be good stewards of God's earth and they encourage us to "carbon offset". What this means is that as we burn fossil fuels to heat the church, we are encouraged to give a small amount of money to Climate Stewards. They use this money to plant trees in countries where the impact of climate change has been worse.

Helping us to grow in faith. Covid has left many of us with unanswered questions about life, the universe, and everything. If you are in this category, then I would like to encourage you to make a resolution and to join the new on-line Alpha Course that we are running. We won't be able to answer all your questions, but it is good to be with others who want to grow in love and faith. The course is every Monday 8.30pm starting 11th January by Zoom, just for an hour. Hope you can come? Please email me for the ZOOM code: mossds@gmail.com

Church News

NB. At the time of writing it is not known when church services will resume. Please check with the contacts shown below.

ST MARY the VIRGIN, OLVESTON

Please check the Church website or Facebook page or Church Noticeboard. Church open for private prayer on Wednesday and Sunday from 9am to 5pm.

Contact: Rev Steve Oram, 07830 151622; email:

steve.oram@blueyonder.co.uk or Rev David Moss, 01454 415190; email: *mossds@gmail.com*

CHAPELRY OF ST JOHN, AUST

Contact: Trevor Cook, 01454 618442

Church Wardens: Jenn Dickens 632312 & Clive Roberts 632238

ST MARY DE MALMESBURY, LITTLETON-ON-SEVERN

Contacts: Tracey Black 417660 & Tim Pyper 416422 /07802 419451

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, ELBERTON

Contacts: Judith Heybyrne 616725 and John Gunnery 413225

OLVESTON AND TOCKINGTON METHODIST CHURCH

Contacts: Rev Simon Edwards 418176, email:

simon.edwards@methodist.org.uk

and Trevor Watkins 416528

THE VINE House of Prayer, Pilning Street, Awkley BS35 4HL

Contact: Mike and Barbara Matthews, 07512 917229 or email:
thevine_awkley@hotmail.com

THE OASIS CHURCH, OLD DOWN

Contacts: Jenny Parfitt *jennyparfitt@ymail.com* & Sue Tett
stett56@hotmail.co.uk

AUST EVANGELICAL and LITTLETON EVANGELICAL CHURCHES

Contact: Danny Bamfield 01454 419324 e-mail *danny@thebamfields.co.uk*

RC CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING, Thornbury

Tel 01454 412223, *www.ctk-thornbury.org.uk*

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS), Thornbury

Contact: Brian Hawkins, *hawkinsb863@gmail.com* 01454 854867



Contact details for any clubs or organisations in the Meeting Point area can be found in the Meeting Point Directory on the community website: www.olvestonandaust.com. If you would like to update your organisation's details, please email: meetingpointsecretary@olvestonandaust.com

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