



MEPAL PEOPLE

JUNE JULY 2019

Note From The Editor

I am sad to announce this will be the last ever Mepal People Newsletter.

For the past year I have had health issues which brought me to the decision I could no longer continue to edit and produce this newsletter and expected the April and May issue to be my last. However, following great effort to find someone to take it over, as yet no one has come forward, reluctantly I agreed to do this issue only and so it will be the last ever unless someone comes forward and steps up to the plate.

It is not a hugely time consuming job, just a few hours every other month, nor is it complicated, all you need is a laptop a working knowledge of Microsoft Word and the ability to pay attention to detail.

If you would like to save the day for this traditional publication please email me Chris Catley at mepalpeople@gmail.com

Mepal Neighbourhood Watch Team On Behalf of Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service

Are your smoke alarm/detectors working properly? If not why not? Maybe they just need a new battery! £4.00 is all it costs to replace a battery which could help save your life, so treat you and your family to a new battery to help save all your lives. If you need further help or information you can contact C.F.R.S on free phone number 0800 9719994 you may even need new smoke alarm/detectors which the C.F.R.S can give you advice about the best ones to get. This service is free so please don't be afraid to give them a call.

Lionel Shepherd Mepal N.H.W team



Dates For Your Diary

St Mary's Church

June

Sun 2 nd	Holy Communion	8.00am
Sun 9 th	Parish Eucharist	10.30am
Sun 16	Holy Communion	8.00am
Sat 22	Garden Fete at Manor House	2.30pm
Sun 23	Parish Eucharist	10.30am
Sun 30	Joint Service at the Chapel	10.30am

July

Sun 7	Holy Communion	8.00am
Sun 14	Parish Eucharist	10.30am
Sun 21	Holy Communion	8.00am
Sun 28	Parish Eucharist	10.30am

Good Companions

June

4th	2.30 - 4.30 pm	Village Hall
18th	2.30 - 4.30 pm	Village Hall

July

2nd	2.30 - 4.30 pm	Village Hall
16th	2.30 - 4.30 pm	Village Hall

Gardening Club

June 17th Peter Walker -Wildflowers and their Habitats in Cambridgeshire.

July 13th Afternoon Tea 2-30pm-4pm

Camera Club

June

5th Workshop on displaying photos including triptych

19th An evening at Wicken Fen

July

3rd Watersplash, drone and perspective at a member's garden.

17th Viewing photos taken at last two meetings

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Parish Council.

To Advertise or Place Inserts into this Newsletter contact:
mepalparishcouncil@msn.com

Friendship Club

June

5 th	Bingo
12 th	Claire and Neil Callen, Horseshoe Farm
19 th	Meal out
26 th	Bring and buy sale

July

3 rd	Bingo
10 th	Quiz
17 th	Raffle and Sweet/savoury
24 th	Meal out
31 st	Afternoon Tea 2-30pm-4pm

Deadline for next issue???

As it is not yet known if there is to be an August/September issue the probable deadline would be Wednesday 17th July by 5.30pm.

A big thank you

To Jan Fishenden and her team of distributors who have been a great support over the last two years

Chris Catley

Mepal & Witcham

Primary School

Summer Fete

Saturday 15th June

11.30am-3pm

Tea room, BBQ, Refreshments, Face painting, Bouncy castles, plus many stalls and games

Contact the school office 01353 778300 to

book a stall for £5

Mepal & District Camera Club

We are a small friendly club that welcomes anyone interested in photography whatever their perceived skill level and whether they use a mobile phone, compact, bridge or DSLR camera.

Our aims are to further the knowledge, interest and skills associated with taking photographs as a hobby.

We meet on the first and third Wednesday of each month (unless we are out and about) at 7.30pm at Mepal Village Hall. The annual fee is just £5 and there is a nominal charge of £2 for each meeting.

Our forthcoming meetings can be found on The Dates for your Diary Page

For further information please contact Tony on 07717 286029

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO LISTEN TO CHILDREN READ

IN LOCAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Can you spare an hour or two a week to listen to children read in a local primary school? Schoolreaders is looking for more volunteers in Cambridgeshire to carry out this important role.

Reading time for many children at home and at school is often insufficient and one in four children are now leaving primary school unable to read to the required standard. This can have a lifelong consequence. No qualifications are necessary, just a good command of spoken and written English.

Schoolreaders is flexible and will match your availability to an appropriate, local school. Our volunteers find the scheme incredibly rewarding, knowing that a few hours helping a child learn to read each week can have such a great impact on their life chances.

Please visit the website www.schoolreaders.org to join or call 01234 924111 for further information. Charity Number: 1159157

Mepal Friendship club

We are a club that meets every Wednesday at 10am in the village hall. We have a chat, cup of tea, play bingo, hold craft mornings and bring and buys. We also have meals out once a month and trips out to various places like garden centres or just have a good catch up with each other.

On 12th June we have Claire and Neil Callan giving a talk on How we created Horseshoe Farm. The garden club hosted them a few months ago and they were really good! so if you missed them then come along and see for yourself. It's free for members £2-50 for none members.

On July we are having afternoon tea starting at 2-30pm, members are free but if you would like to come along with a friend please do at a cost of £3-00.

Pam White



MEPAL GARDENING CLUB

We have had a good turn out at our Gardening club meetings so far this year which is great news as without people coming the club would fold which is something we do not want to happen, so thank you for supporting us.

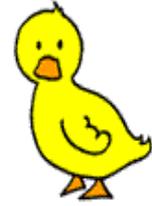
We have had some great speakers over the last few months and hope you enjoy the coming ones in the future. On 17th June we have Peter Walker on Wildflowers and their habitats in Cambridgeshire looking forward to that, on Saturday afternoon 13th July between 2-30pm till 4-00pm we are having our Afternoon Tea so why not come along and enjoy sandwiches, scones, cakes and a cup of tea or coffee, this will cost £3-00p per person so please pop in we will also have a raffle.

Going forward August 19th we have our AGM meeting, we are looking for a new committee as we are continuing this year with last year's committee as we had a very poor turn out and could not vote a new committee in, so please come and help run and organize our club, if you are interested please talk to one of the current committee members, we are always looking for new ideas and people to help.

We meet in the village hall 3rd Monday of the month from March-October, at 7-30pm the entrance fee is £2-50p.

Pam White

Mepal & Witcham preschool



Save the Preschool

We wanted to update you all on our campaign to save the preschool. We have had a number of very kind and generous donations from individuals and organisations and other charities (one such presentation is pictured below). These monetary gifts have allowed us to secure the financial future of the preschool for the next few years. We are tremendously grateful to all who have helped us with our campaign, whether you donated money or helped support our valuable preschool and fantastic staff in the many other ways that kindness has been bestowed on the team.

Our next step to fully secure the future of the Preschool is to finalise negotiations with DEMAT to secure a lease to remain on the Primary School premises. We await a decision from the Diocesan Board of Finance who next meets on the 4th July.



W. Bro. John Sinclair, Charity Steward of Descensus Aquarum Lodge, presents a cheque for £1,000 to Evelyn Woodward, Chairman of the Preschool, who was accompanied by the Managers, Helen Cooper (left) and Michelle Willson (right).

Our Sandpit

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Chris Norman Carpentry and Building Ltd for enabling our sandpit to be rejuvenated this term with a super new custom cover. In the past our sand has deteriorated due to rain getting into the sand and not being able to drain away. Now, thanks to this Mepal based company, we have a smart new cover which will allow our sand to stay in good condition. The children, especially, and the Preschool team are very grateful for the help and generosity received.

Academic Year 2019/2020

We are now registering children for the new academic year, beginning in September 2019. If your child is aged 2.5 years upwards we would love to welcome them into our setting.

We take funded twos and funded three year olds (they can start the term after they turn 3yrs). Please get in touch with the Preschool (mepalpreschool@aol.co.uk) to find out more or go online and download our registration form:

<http://www.mepalandwitchampreschool.org.uk/registration-forms/> **continued overleaf**



JOIN OUR 50 CLUB!



A 50 CLUB is way for you to support the Preschool whilst having a good chance of winning a monthly cash prize (1st prize £100, 2nd prize £60*) *if 50 join the club.

So here's how it works...

- You pay £3 a week to be part of the club. (This buys you one membership number, which enters you into the monthly draw).
- All participants must be over 16.
- The draw is open to your friends and family too!
- The draw would take place on the 3rd Monday of each month.
- The name of the winner will be published on the Preschool's Facebook page.
- The prize money will be 25% of the membership fee taken that month.
- The remaining 75% goes towards helping the Preschool continue.

If you are interested in joining please contact Evelyn Woodward on 07808921562 or email mepalwitchampreschoolchair@gmail.com

St Mary's Parish Church

Rector: Reverend Mary Hancock tel. 01353 778722
Churchwarden: Mrs Elizabeth Stazicker tel. 01353 778129

For all church services & events please see the Diary Dates page and our notice boards at the church and at Mepal PO & Stores.

Garden Fete

St Mary's Garden Fete will be held on Saturday 22nd June at 2.30pm in the garden of Manor House, School Lane. Come along for Cream Teas and to browse the stalls – cakes, plants, books, bric-a brac, children's stall, Grand Draw, and more! All funds are raised in aid of St Marys Parish Church.

Should the weather be wet the fete will be held in the Village Hall.

MEPAL'S GRAVEYARDS

In response to a question in the Community Plan survey, 122 people responded that they would like the Parish Council to take over the graveyards.

The legal position

The graveyards to the west of the church path are an extension of the graveyard around the church. The larger area was purchased at the end of the 19th century, the smaller (closer to the river) some 20 years ago. Both are consecrated as Church of England burial grounds. That means that they are open to everyone in the parish, or with a connection to the parish. They remain however subject to the oversight of the Chancellor of the Diocese (who is very strict about gravestones), and cannot be sold or given away from the church. The maintenance of a closed graveyard transfers legally and automatically to the parish or district council. However, since a churchyard can only be closed when it is full, and it is now only possible to close a complete churchyard and not just part of it, St Mary's churchyard cannot be closed for some years.

Finding the money

Sadly we no longer have any church members who are able to do much mowing or strimming. We are very grateful to those who maintain their own and others' burial plots and the land around them but beyond that, maintenance is therefore a matter of money. Unfortunately, the local parish church has to finance the maintenance of the church (including insurance, all the running costs and repairs), and our share of the costs of the rector and their housing, etc, and the services provided by the Diocese to the local parish, for example, on safeguarding, as well as the maintenance of the churchyards. The Diocese, and the national church, do not give money to parish churches, and the Church Commissioners (who of course own a lot of land here) are a separate trust body, and do not fund local churches. Last year our costs were £14,280, without doing any repair work. That is a lot of money to find from the now about 10 people who attend church regularly, from a few generous others, and from what the 'core team' can raise from the various social events we run. (We like running them; they bring together enjoyably a lot of people who don't come to church and I am aware that many of you are generous at them, but we raise almost all we can that way.)

Car parking

Car-parking at the church is at present difficult, especially at larger events. A number of people who attend find it difficult to walk down from the village and of course the welcome development of the Manor Farm site has made parking even more difficult there. We got Diocesan permission to use the consecrated graveyard for that purpose some time ago (it is common to do this in the Diocese, there would still be space for burials for the next 50 or so years, and of course the conversion to a grass carpark can be altered again when necessary). (If we can find people willing to help open the church in the mornings and close it in the evenings, it would make it easier for visitors as well. It's a lovely ancient church, and we should like to attract some gentle tourism, as well as offering anyone who wants some peace and quiet a place to sit, think and read – the church is for everyone, not just for services, and we should like to have it open every day.) We have now started to mark out a parking area, and are adding that into the costs of our next repair jobs, which we need to start on soon.

Maintaining the graveyards in the manner the village wants

We (under the supervision of the Diocesan Chancellor) have to continue to hold the responsibility for the graveyards. However, it would be a very great help, and give parishioners what they want, if we could negotiate with the Parish Council a detailed agreement whereby the Council took over for us grass and hedge cutting in the graveyards west of the path. **Continued overleaf**

The parish would then have more control of the frequency of cutting and so on, and could find the most economical ways to do it. We are therefore, in the light of the Community Plan response, asking the Parish Council to consider this suggestion at a meeting soon.

Elizabeth Stazicker, churchwarden, on behalf of Mepal Parochial Church Council.

VILLAGE HALL NEWS

As usual, crowds weren't exactly fighting to get into the Hall for our Annual General Meeting on 10th April. In fact not a single person apart from existing Committee members turned up, so we are all there for another year. We understand the pressures on people's time from work and family commitments, but it would be good if more of you could join in running this vital facility for the local community. We meet about every six weeks, the meetings don't last very long, and the proceedings are good-humoured, usually with a good deal of laughter. It's not too late; we can always co-opt new members during the year.

Our numbers are down, because of the sad death of probably our longest-serving member, Ernie Barlow. Our records aren't complete back to the foundation of the Hall in 1968, but it's likely that Ernie served as Chapel representative from the first AGM. Certainly he chaired the Committee in 1984-1985 and had served continuously since then. He will be greatly missed on the Committee as well as in the many other roles in which he served the village with such dedication.

Numbers were slightly down at the breakfast morning on 13th April. It seemed a good idea to have the annual Parish Assembly following on from the breakfast, and we welcomed this proposal from the Parish Council, thinking that it might boost the numbers at both events, but that wasn't the case. Perhaps people were away for Easter holidays. We haven't yet decided the date of our next breakfast. It was also disappointing that we had to abandon the quiz night on 17th March because of lack of support. However, it is pleasing to see that the revived Youth Club has become firmly established and other new activities are taking place regularly in the Hall.

We are delighted to say that Awards for All have generously accepted our application for a grant towards the cost of new fire exit doors on to the car park. Work will go ahead shortly, and this will make it much easier for events in the Hall to spill out into the car park when weather permits. We shall take the opportunity to paint the new doors in a bright colour to liven up the appearance of the Hall.

To hire the Hall contact Bookings Clerk Rowena Pleasance (01353) 777275. Local community groups and private parties £10 per hour, reduced to £8 for local community groups before 6 pm. Commercial bookings please enquire.

Chairman: Allen Sallis, Treasurer: Tony Pleasance, Secretary: David Stazicker 778129 david.stazicker@gmail.com Other members – Lynne Read, Gordon Reid, Rosemary Wells.

MEPAL PARISH COUNCIL



Councillors: Mr Brian Rollason (Chairman), Mr Alan Catley (Vice Chairman) Mrs Diana Bray, Mr Stephen Green and Mr Mark Brill

Clerk: VACANT POSITION. Tel: 07842 499377

Email: mepalparishcouncil@msn.com

Website: www.mepalparish.org.uk

- Elizabeth Stazicker did not stand as a Parish Councillor at the recent Parish Elections. Elizabeth had been on the Parish Council for 16 years and 12 as Chairman. Liz was thanked at the Annual Parish Assembly for all her hard work and presented with a thank you gift. We would like to say a big thank you for all the initiatives that Liz has been involved with, for her passion to make Mepal a better place and for all her support to past and present Parish Councillors and Clerks.
- The Parish Elections were uncontested and we had five current Parish Councillors re-standing. There are two vacancies which will be advertised in June for co-option at the July meeting.
- Mr Brian Rollason was elected as Chairman and Mr Alan Catley was elected as Vice Chairman at the Annual meeting of the Parish Council on the 13th May.
- Emma Harris, our Clerk for the last 2.5 years is leaving on the 6th June to start a new role. We would like to thank Emma and wish her success for the future. Interviews will take place mid-late June for the position to be filled shortly after.
- The Parish Council have been looking at the results from the Community Led Plan in detail and will be preparing an action plan. The Parish Council are very keen to support local groups if they wish to respond to their own results of the questionnaire so please get in touch.
- The Mepal Community Sports Pavilion function room is NOW available to local groups, parties and sporting clubs with access to the kitchen, toilets and outside space. More information is on the Mepal Parish website. Please contact the mepalparishcouncil@msn.com if you are interested in using the venue. The pavilion also houses impressive changing rooms with showers which will be available to sports clubs from the end of 2019 when the playing field work is complete (due to start May/June 2019).
- Please remember anyone can contact the Parish Council by email or phone if they need any information, have any queries or want to provide any feedback about anything the Parish Council is dealing with.
- The next two Full Council Meetings will be held on Tuesday 18th June at the Mepal Community Sports Pavilion and Monday 8th July 2019 at the Village Hall at 7.30pm. EVERYONE WELCOME



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Are you struggling to move on following a separation or divorce?

Gen Loaker is a relationship coach with more than 8 years' experience in supporting individuals facing separation and divorce.

Having experienced divorce personally, Gen understands the pain and distress that relationship breakdown can bring and is passionate about helping clients to move forwards with greater resilience and self-confidence.

For more information or to book a coaching session with Gen contact:



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