

The Syresham Times



Sunset over South Northamptonshire

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August 2020

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From the Editor's Desk

Little did we know, that our world would be turned upside down, and preparations for a village-wide celebration for VE Day 75 in May, as well as the annual scarecrow festival and open gardens would turn out not to be possible.

The village was eerily quiet throughout much of March, April, May and June. Thursday evenings at 8.00p.m. celebrated the work of NHS and Care workers as well as other key workers.

And we are still only just really emerging from the pandemic that has ravaged the country. Daily Corona Virus briefings from Downing Street, saw the death-toll rising in frightening previously never experienced numbers.

Even now the world is still not clear, and as July approached with the hospitality industry coming back to life, we faced the prospect of everything getting completely out of hand, as the heat wave brought people out in their thousands to ignore the need for social distancing it seems.

Locally we see that new play equipment at the Swingfield has been installed, more suited to the needs of the younger children.

Thanks to the actions of the Parish Council our children have a much more attractive play space to enjoy.

Ian Draper, August 2020

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Photographs in this edition are provided by —

Cllr Phil Bignell SNC, Nick Dimbleby, Caroline Ferguson, Samantha Hosking, Alice Palmer, Gaya Patel, Pauline McKay. Chris Munsey. Bob Ray

Cover Photograph:- Sunset over South
Northants Ryan Tarratt

COPY DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE:-27TH OCTOBER 2020

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

I am pleased to report that the Parish Council has remained extremely active during the

lockdown period and, as we emerge, we are able to be more physically active too (which I hope some of the photos in this edition will show). We have held quite a number of Zoom meetings, and some were attended by members of the public and our District Councillor Paul Wiltshire, and we thank them all for the interest they have shown in our work.

One of our recent achievements has installation of been the new equipment in the Swingfield. These exciting new items for our toddlers complement the other equipment recently installed for older children up to age 12 years. This was all made possible by means of grant aid from South Northants Council plus Section 106 money from Francis Jackson Homes, and a small grant from the Grand Union Housing Association. Some councillors spent long hours completing application forms ensure we met the exacting requirements of the grant awarding bodies.

It was very pleasing to reopen the Swingfield in July after the government enforced closure. We hope that the children are all enjoying themselves there now that the summer holiday has begun. Prior to opening, we needed to ensure that all the equipment was thoroughly cleansed and sanitised, and, following one

quote of some £900 from a cleaning company, we decided to don PPE and do it ourselves, aided by some residents. We thank them for their http:// help. If vou go to www.svreshamvillage.com/swingfieldchildrens-playground.html vou will be able to view the Parish Council's risk assessment and the COVID 19 rules that should be adhered to when using the play area.

The Parish Council consulted the village children about what was wanted in new equipment. We met with a professional playground advisor, and endeavoured to meet the wishes of the children, however we were unable to make their wish for a zip wire come true. With access restrictions on-site, especially legal 24 hour access to the substation, the installation of a zip wire is just not possible.

Work continues apace on the Pocket Park project, following corona virus impact. The park provides a very different village amenity to Swingfield. Whilst the latter is a primarily a play area, the Pocket Park was established a number of years ago as a place to attract wildlife and enhance an awareness οf the importance of conservation. It is there to complement the other recreational areas of the village by providing a place of guiet enjoyment for all residents and an educational facility for groups of young people and the children of the village school. Many of you will have visited the park during the last few months and noticed that it is in great need of improvements. The Parish Council has been awarded a grant for this purpose and has already installed access steps, repaired pontoon and purchased new benches, picnic tables and safety equipment that will soon be in place. An essential detailed survey of wildlife has been completed, so new mowing can now take place. Several people have already kindly offered to join a working party to tidy up the park and we will soon be calling on volunteers to help us with this work. The whole process is being overseen by a newly re-formed parish council Pocket Park Committee. There is also a section on the village website devoted to the pocket park where you will be able to follow the work as it progresses. Recently a huge branch came down in the park: if you notice any similar occurrences, or indeed anything untoward in the park, please report it straight away to the clerk so that the Parish Council can deal with it as a matter of priority.

As mentioned in several previous reports, the replacement of streetlights in the village is another major project that the council is currently undertaking. Grant aid has been applied for this purpose, although in this instance, the Parish Council have to match-fund. Hopefully there will be some positive news on this soon. However, in the meantime the council intends to install a new light at the very dark junction with Main Road at the top of the High Street. It is necessary that this work is completed as soon as possible as the wiring will be need to traverse the High Street and Main Road by means of a trench.

Northants County Council have

informed us that they now have the finances to carry out the very much needed resurfacing of Abbey Road, Magdalen Close, Malt Lane and High Street, and we do not want to spoil the new surfacing with a trench after the surfacing work is done!

And finally, more good news! *Ability Northants* have restarted their bus services and will soon resume the services they provide to our village. For more information, please contact the Parish Clerk. *CLIR CHRIS MUNSEY*

ST JAMES CE CHURCH INTERREGNUM UPDATE

The good news is that this should be my final report after our appointment as new Rector for the Astwell



Benefice, of the **REVEREND DIANE WHITTAKER**.

Diane comes to us from the Benefice of South Cleley, including Potterspury, Yardley Gobion and Furtho, Cosgrove and Wicken, astride the A5 between Towcester and Milton Keynes, where she has been Rector for eight years.

Before ordination in 2008, Diane worked in the Information and Library Management sector. After ordination she worked in the Welwyn Clergy in Hertfordshire, as Assistant Curate including as a Foundation Governor of the local C of E school. Over her three years as part of the Welwyn Ministry team, she expanded their work into care homes in the area, introducing regular services and continuing a

regular communion service at a local community centre. Diane also started a Community Café in partnership with the Parish Council in one of the parishes. using the

parishes, using the Church Hall.

Having only ever worked in rural parishes, she understands the variety of worshipping traditions amongst different communities.



In South Cleley, Diane developed a Café Church, as well as new links to the community and she has been working on some buildings re-ordering, to support mission. Families and young people are one of her priorities, introducing informal services in two churches and a Messy Church in one parish in conjunction with the URC. She has also taken assembly once a fortnight in the local C of E school.

Diane is a member of the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Care Committee, the Diocesan Synod and the Diocesan Library Committee. She is the Bishop's representative on the Northamptonshire Archives Panel, and has also been a member of Potterspury Parish Council.

Last year Diane took a three month sabbatical, the theme of which was *eco-theology, including* a five-week stint working with the Anglican church in Fiji. This experience sharpened her concern for God's creation and her awareness of the need to live more lightly in this world.

Her hobbies include running and Pilates, long walks with her dog Tess,

bird-watching and reading. I have heard locally, that she also enjoys singing. Maybe she can bolster our Benefice choir, when it restarts! Diane has toured the Benefice's churches and will be licensed by Zoom on 19th September, by when clergy-led services should be re-starting.

She takes up residence in the Benefice Vicarage at Lois Weedon in late August. We welcome her to our village and Benefice and hope she will be very happy here.

MALCOLM ORR-EWING, CHURCHWARDEN

HAPPY BIRTHDAY Sue!

Sue Palmer was 90 on June 16th; her birthday was necessarily spread over 2 weeks to allow family to join her in small groups during lockdown.



THE CONCERT: Pre COVID -19 there should have been a celebration concert free to all the village and benefice on June 13th. Instead we enjoyed a fabulous online extravaganza of music and poetry with contributions from 22 family members interspersed with birthday greetings from local friends. The concert was private but here is a link to one public item - https://youtu.be/LvDhIGr15IM

THE BIG DAY: Awake at 8.00 with a cup of tea, a pile of presents and cards; serenaded by the school at

11:15; a distanced picnic with family; visited by a stream of beloved friends with cards and greetings from the Friendship Club right through to Mums and Tots. A wonderful day, she was overwhelmed by love and kindness.

THE STRESS: months of careful ironing and quarantining of post was broken due to the flood of good wishes. We relied on extra sanitizer squirting and prayer that everyone had stayed safe.



ALICE PALMER

FUND RAISING FOR 'YOUNG MINDS' MENTAL HEALTH FOR THE YOUNG

www.youngminds.org.uk



My brother and I (Ayrton and Elliot Patel of Magdalen Close) set ourselves a tough challenge: raising funds for *Young Minds*, on Saturday 16th May. The challenge was to complete a 12-hour land

-row, splitting sessions between us.

We can see the effect that Covid-19 is having on mental health amongst young people. The work that *Young Minds* do will become even more important.

In fact we smashed our goal of £1,500 with the help and support of friends, family and neighbours in Syresham, and will do a further 24 hour one once we are able to.

Our aim is to raise awareness for mental health amongst young people.

To support our challenge please visit our Just Giving page, https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ ayrtonelliot-24hour-row.

Or search Ayrton Patel on the Just Giving website:- www.justgiving.com

Young Minds are leading the fight for a future where all young minds are supported and empowered, whatever the challenge.

Their aim is to make sure young people get the best possible mental health support and have the resilience to overcome difficulties in life.

We raised a huge £2,485.00, easily beating the initial target of £1,500.00.

We trained on our rowing machine daily to the run up to our 12 hours row. We woke up at 7.00 a.m. set up the rowing machine, and gave it a final check before we began, making sure we had food and drinks on hand! We had breakfast and warmed up, and the last thing was setting up the live stream!

Elliot kicked off at 8.00 a.m. with neighbours cheering us on! And Ayrton took over at 9.00 a.m. for his first stint. The live stream was in full swing with many more donations coming in than expected!

Around midday cramp set in and we

just wanted to go back to bed! With fantastic online and physical support we kept going and pulled through. This was by far the hardest part of the day. We had also had 1,200 views on one of



the live streams by this time.

By 6.00p.m. we were both starting to feel the pain again. But knowing we were doing this for a good

cause, helped such a lot.

Ayrton started the final hour at 7.00 p.m. He was mentally drained, but kept his spirits up and the muscle cramps off his mind.

Over the final few minutes, Elliot coached Ayrton to the end, counting down the strokes. With one minute to go and the neighbours and family cheering them both on, Ayrton finished the 12 hours, marking 146.94 km

rowed together. It was the end of a very successful day, with a celebratory drink in the street, with the people who



had supported us all day and toasted to a whopping £600 raised on the day totalling over £2,000 raised at that point.

We then headed inside for a much needed shower and rest, with barely enough energy to eat before we fell into bed and asleep!

Thank you to everyone who supported us, by whatever means—it was greatly appreciated. Here's to an even more challenging 24 hour row which we hope to complete in late August or

early September when lockdown is lifted.

Lastly, a big thank you to our parents who have supported this venture from the start. They sat outside for 12 hours keeping us fed, hydrated and motivated for the whole row. Couldn't have done

it without either of you! ☺☺



AYRTON AND ELLIOT PATEL SYRESHAM & DISTRICT HISTORY SOCIETY

Our last meeting was on March 4th, a week or so prior to the Prime Minister's instruction to the country to "Stay at Home, Protect the NHS and Save Lives". Our last talk was about how Winston Churchill developed what became the MI5 and MI6 secret weapons services, under the cute title of Churchill's Toy Shop. We heard about some of the items that 'Q' might have created in the Bond movies.

We were pleased to support the work done to enable the VEDay75 celebrations around the village and thank those who made the celebrations come to fruition.

A special tribute goes to Jason Rush for his detailed research and displays around the village on the 4 Syresham men who sadly perished in WWII.

We are hopeful of starting our meetings again, with Martin Heath from BBC Radio Northampton on September 2nd, giving his talk on the history of local radio. In October we have the AGM and a talk on Bailey Bridges in WWII. Steve Dimmer returns to Syresham to share the mysteries of Hallowe'en on November 4th.

December will see the usual Wassail evening with an exhibition and talk about old metal toys.

We have made the annual presentation of a history prize for a pupil at the school, we congratulate Evie Fowler in Y6 who was this year's recipient. Well done Evie!

IAN DRAPER, CHAIRMAN

SYRESHAM VE DAY-75 APPRECIATION AND THANKS

I just wanted to thank the Parish Council, Village Hall Committee and History Society and all the other volunteers, who helped to make VE day something very special in the village, amongst all the sadness and worries surrounding the Coronavirus outbreak.

It was like going back in time, with no cars dashing about, no noise from the A43 - families playing in their gardens, or out walking together. It made us feel very nostalgic for the 'old days'!

The displays around the village giving details of families who used to be a big part of Syresham life, were also very interesting and gave such a clear picture of how life would have been in those dark days. There's always a wonderful sense of Community here in Syresham, and although the VE day celebrations may have been muted, they still brought people together.

We owe very grateful thanks to the kind volunteers who brought round beautiful cakes and meringues for us to enjoy. We don't know who baked

them, or delivered them, but I can tell you they were a lovely surprise and truly delicious!

Finally, I think we all owe Ruth a huge thank you, for keeping the shop open; for finding products which no supermarket had available and for her commitment to all her customers, old and young alike!

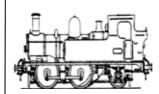


I wish there was something the village could do, which would show Ruth how much she's appreciated. I'm sure everyone would be pleased to

contribute towards it. Even something personal which would help her in everyday life? Thanks again to everyone who organised and helped on this special day. **PAULINE MCKAY**

PIMLICO LIGHT RAILWAY

It is with the greatest regret that we



have decided to stop running trains for the public, so sadly

our open afternoons which we have run for the last 20 years will come to an end.

We were thinking of stopping anyway in a couple of years or so as we're not getting any younger and the virus has brought things forward. We do want to thank all our loyal supporters, many of whom come from Syresham, who have

encouraged us over the years by their presence chiefly, but also by their financial support which as well as helping to keep the trains running have donated a total of over £10,000 to the charity Send a Cow.

The model engineering club will continue and trains will be run but it will very much be a club activity for members only and for invited guests. When that will be able to happen is anyone's guess at the moment.

JOHN ROBERTS



Thank you John and the team for all the enjoyment over recent years! Editor

SYRESHAM ST JAMES CE SCHOOL

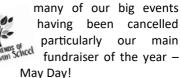
It was with a heavy heart that The Friends of Syresham School had to cancel or postpone all of their Spring and Summer events due to Covid-19 this year. However the easing of restrictions at the beginning of July made it possible for them to seize a window of opportunity before the summer holidays and to tackle some of the jobs on the Big Springtime Tidy Up "to do list"! They were able to spend two evenings working in the school grounds clearing up and tidying. It all looked AMAZING!

Thank you so much to everyone who came along and helped, and special thanks go to various friends of the school who turned up to help in the rain even though they have no children at the school. Thank you also to Billy Turnham for taking away the

considerable green waste and saving a fortune on skip hire. Your hard work will make the environment so much more pleasant for the children to play and learn in next term and the staff and I are now really looking forward to using all of our grounds as much as possible. I cannot thank you enough.

KATHERINE CLOUGH, HEAD TEACHER AT SYRESHAM SCHOOL

It has been a bit of a tricky year for the Friends of Syresham School. With



Despite all of this and thanks to the hard work of our committee members and the amazing support of this community, The Friends of Syresham School were still able to raise a hugely impressive £6,188 this academic year.

These additional funds are increasingly important to help pay for the extras that make our village school so special. Extras like weekly French lessons, outdoor play equipment, resources for physical and mental wellbeing and for phonics and very many more. Please take a little look at what the money raised has bought.

Like any PTA our success depends upon a continual cycle of new parental involvement, every year we need new parents to step up as our year 6 parents leave, otherwise ultimately it is the children that miss out. The FOSS now needs new members, particularly as we will be

losing 4 amazingly enthusiastic and active members ... Lisa Dimbleby, Shirley Astle-Portlock, Dee King and Nic Fowler, all of whom have been on our committee for many years and have contributed immeasurably to the lives of the children at the school. Being part of the FOSS Committee isn't all hard work however we have social gettogethers throughout the year and it is a chance for people to make new and lasting friendships. Being part of the FOSS committee can be a very rewarding and satisfying experience and as a Friends organisation anyone can join! So if you're interested in getting involved please do let us know! We will be holding our AGM via Zoom on Monday 12th October 2020 at 8pm. SARAH EAMES, CHAIR FRIENDS OF SYRESHAM SCHOOL

FOSS WORKING PARTY AT THE SCHOOL

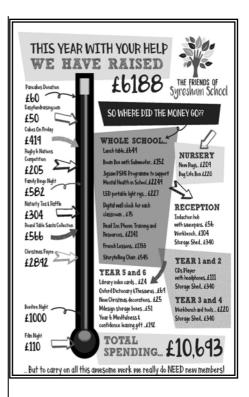
At the beginning of July, as lockdown restrictions had





eased, a group of volunteers, (not all of them parents of children at the school), arrived to give the grounds a

make over. Thanks to Steph and Geoff Brackpool, Dave and Nicola Billingham, and Peter and Liz Mountain, along with others, plus Billy Turnham who took all the green waste away!



VILLAGE HALL REPORT

Great News! After some four months of



closure, the village hall opened its doors again on Monday, July 27th. We know and understand that

many people are reluctant to gather in numbers in an inside space, so we are having a gradual opening procedure. As the weeks progress we hope that more people and groups will want to use the hall again for society meetings. recreational activities and celebrations and you will all be very welcome. There are quite a lot of notices, especially in the entrance porch, indicating the rules that we

must all adhere to when we use the hall. At first, this may seem rather daunting, but I can assure you that this is in accordance with government guidelines to make the hall 'Covid secure' and safe for us all to use.

As yet we are unable to reopen the popular Thursday Coffee Shop, but I hope that we will be able to do so in the not too distant future, and once again you will all be very welcome.

We were of course unable to organise our annual popular Scarecrow Festival in June and we will not be able to hold it this year in its usual format. However, I know that there are Scarecrow Festivals still happening across the country, and, if people would really like us to do so, it is still possible that a 'toned-down' festival can take place in the autumn.

We are, planning to have an Art Exhibition in aid of the village hall, over the weekend of 28th and 29th November. I personally have resumed an old hobby of mine during lockdown—oil painting. So some of my own paintings will be on display! A new watercolour painting class started just before lockdown and some members will exhibit their paintings. So the exhibition will have a 'local' flavour.

We all appreciate having such a great community facility in Syresham and it has been very sad to see it lying unused during the last few months. Now the trustees are looking forward to seeing our community becoming active and vibrant again as it was before this dreadful pandemic. Hope to see you all soon.



Sylvie Essame was delighted to be able to start dance classes again in the Village Hall from 27th July and Pilates from 2nd August. Strict distancing and hygiene measures are in place to ensure safety and give everyone the confidence to return to exercising. After 4 weeks there will be a two week break before the Autumn Term starts of Monday 7th September.

Sylvie is also hoping to re-start the seated (chair) Pilates for older residents in September. Hopefully the hall will return to be the valuable community asset it has always been.

Sylvie Essame School of Dance Brackley, Northants 01280 850293 www.sylvieessame.co.uk

SUDOKU ANSWERS - SEE PAGE 21

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The Swingfield has reopened following the requirements under Covid19 regulations to remain closed during lock down. New Toddler equipment has been installed, and there are sanitising requirements in place for users to follow.

PARISH CLERK

VILLAGE FOOTPATHS

Geoff and Steph Brackpool are our village Footpath Wardens.

They are monitoring access and availability for all local footpaths, and will publish reports. There isn't space here to publish their first report, but a copy will be available in the shop window. More details in November.

EDITOR



RUTH GROVELL

In May we carried a well deserved tribute to the way in which Ruth Grovell has maintained an essential service to the community through the Shop and Post Office. We are extremely lucky to have this facility and to know that it is



available almost without a break.



We are pleased to note the formal recognition of her contribution to the village through the

pandemic. South Northamptonshire Community Champion status is conferred on Ruth, and we congratulate her and thank her for all that she has done for Syresham during this difficult period. Thank You Ruth!

Ed

BIRTHDAY SURPRISES, JULY 17TH

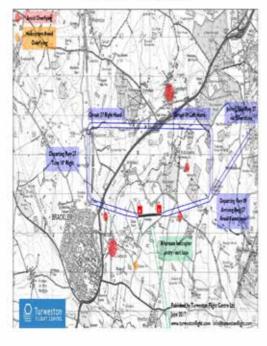
I would like to thank everyone for their good wishes in making my birthday such an extra special day. It was quite a shock to see all the gifts, cards and balloons on the day—it seems my daughter Kerry-Ann took to Face-Book to let you all know. I know you all appreciate what I do, but I do love rising to a challenge myself. Many thanks to everyone for your kind support.

RUTH GROVELL, POST MISTRESS





Turveston Aerodrome
Circuit and Noise Absterners Circuit Height 1000 ft QFE



TURWESTON AIRCRAFT OVERFLYING THE VILLAGE

As we all know, Turweston Airfield is close by, and we get quite a lot of flights in the vicinity of Syresham. While the Circuit to be followed by pilots does not go directly over Syresham, we do appreciate that for various reasons, aircraft are sometimes off course or can be perceived to be so.

We are keen to get along with our neighbours so we have taken steps additional to those already in place which we hope will help:

- We have added a red 'no overflying' circle over the village on our Circuit map.
- A further note has been put on our website asking pilots to avoid the village: https://www.turwestonflight.com/flying



BRACKLEY COMMUNITY HOSPITAL PROGRESS REPORT

The trustees of the recently formed charity were able to visit the new building on 11 June. Excellent progress is being made, although work is understandably behind schedule. principally due to lockdown. Certain contractors have been able to continue to work throughout if they could access the site and adequate materials, and if their work can be carried out whilst socially distancing.

The building is officially due to be handed over during the first week of September after which the fitting out will take place, and that is scheduled to last four to six weeks. By autumn, Brackley Medical Centre will have a new home and the Brackley Community Hospital will be open to the public.

Of particular interest are the large number of solar panels on the roof which will ensure that the building is as green as possible and that running costs are accordingly reduced.

The fundraising efforts and generosity of everybody – individuals, clubs, organisations or parish councils – who has given. They are just examples of local ingenuity to keep the impetus

going especially when no public fundraising events can be held.

The Trustees are so very grateful to everybody who has given in any way – every penny counts – and they look forward to your continued support as we head towards our first target and then move on to the next one. Thank you for your very kind generosity.

CARYL BILLINGHAM, MBE

Syresham Parish Council has made a donation on behalf of the village. Editor

SYRESHAM POCKET PARK

Work will be starting soon to bring the Pocket Park into better condition. Residents volunteering to help the committee are asked to contact the Parish Clerk on 01280-

851178 or parishclerk@syresham.com

DOG FOULING

Dear Editor, I am writing to the Syresham Times to ask that people use the numerous dog-poo bins around the village rather than people's black bins.

Following the last two collections I have found numerous bags of dog poo left in my black bin on Main Road, it's horrible. There are two dedicated bins either end of Main Road, so rather than touching my bin which at the moment is highly inappropriate, and it being in there for the next two weeks, please use the bins that are there for that purpose. It is obviously the same person every time who must walk past our house as a lot of bags are all the same pale blue.

Name and address supplied.

-1/ppr-customs/

From page 15

Pilots based at the airfield have been contacted particularly to avoid Syresham. We are briefing visiting pilots about our procedures when they call. The team at Turweston Flight Centre is always willing to try to address problems. There are certain things that are out of our control but we do our best to keep disturbance to a minimum.

If residents would like to visit the Tower to see how we operate we are happy to organise this, following the Covid 19 guidelines to keep everyone safe.

Could we please ask that anyone calling on 01280 705400 selects *Ext 2 for the office rather than Ext 1 for the Tower*. At weekends callers can either leave a message or email:-

info@turwestonflight.com.

TANYA COLES, TURWESTON FLIGHT CENTRE LTD

SYRESHAM OLD POST MILL— DEMOLISHED c1908

Does anyone know anything about the history of the village Post Mill? It was located in a field at Old Park Farm, Wappenham Road. We had an enquiry from a researcher



who would like to know more.

Please get in touch with Editor

ROSEMARY SMITH

I first met Rosemary at the Village hall in Whitfield around 1990 when John



Roberts
was
chairing a
meeting
which
included
discussion
on the

dissemination of information in Syresham and Whitfield. Rosemary and I suggested a quarterly newsletter about church, chapel and village affairs which was launched soon after with Philip Pettit and Rosemary as editors. The Syresham Times was born. Jill Dixon took over the editorship in 2002 and the rest, as they say, is history.

Rosemary and Graham bought *The Haven* in 1983 as an 'ultimate retirement destination', approximately half way between London, where they worked, and Manchester, where they had family.

From 1982 to 1992, Rosemary had been Headteacher at Wimbledon High School and Graham was a Canon in the tough London Diocese of Southwark.

They became full time residents here in 1992. Rosemary became Chair of the Governors of Syresham School and Graham took many services in the benefice, helping John Roberts and Will Adams, and introducing what became known as 'Graham's Service'—quiet contemplation on Easter Eve.

Rosemary's mother, Joyce Wincott, moved to Syresham and her brother Nick to Brackley, worshipping in Syresham.

Joyce died in 2004 and Graham and Nick in 2008. The Haven continued to be a *Haven of Hos*pitality, hosting the annual Friends of St James Christmas evenings and numerous PCC meetings, especially during the pre- Carole interregnum. I used to call Rosemary 'M' for her brisk chairmanship of these meetings, born of her years at Wimbledon.

It was also a Haven for her numerous grandchildren who were sent to 'Syrebia' by their parents to revise for examinations under Rosemary's watchful eye. Sometimes these reluctant students were brought to church for a breather!

Rosemary was Chair of the Friends of St James from 2005 until 2012 and together with Sue Palmer and other committee members, came up with an increasing range of activities to help St James Church with repairs and improvements. During her churchwardenship 2009-2013, Syresham introduced a Stewardship Plan for regular giving, the first parish in the benefice to do so.

There were 11 grandchildren, ranging in age from 12 to 41 and three greatgrandchildren. She moved to Chorlton-cum-Hardy in Greater Manchester in 2014, to be near her daughter Debbie and granddaughter Rebecca. But she missed her friends in Syresham and retained the e-mail address smithsyresham for a number of years.

It was not long before she joined the St Clements Church PCC and she was active in organizing prayer groups. Daughter Veronica, known as *Poppy*, is the much-loved Rector at Tetbury in Gloucestershire, so Graham's tradition lives on. Rosemary became poorly earlier this year and was moved from hospital to a care home for the last month of her life, where she sadly contracted the Covid 19 virus. She died in April, aged 88. Her ashes will be buried with Graham's in our cemetery and a memorial service will take place in Chorlton when conditions allow.

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A BATTLE WE WILL WIN



As I conclude this article in July, I am convinced that when this terrifying Covid-19 pandemic is over, we as

a nation will have changed dramatically and for the better, because I am one of those who worships at the altar of positives which come from any negatives. The whole seismic shift of how we live under state-imposed isolation, how the virus has forced a reshaping of society and how we have to learn to live within it, has swept the planet as this virulent monster extends its tendrils across the globe, via its vengeful pursuit to strangle mankind.

Never before have we seen the state take such control over our everyday lives setting aside our precious liberties. Each time I left the house in the early days of lock-down, it felt like I was acting in a Ridley Scott film about a dystopian world. Except it was the real world. It is a poignant reminder that not all wars involve guns and bullets.

The eventual economic cost of beating the virus can only be guessed at. It will be in hundreds of billions and is money that will have to be repaid. It is current and future generations who will be left paying for decades.

I believe and hope that our country will re-boot itself when we emerge from this nightmare, and some changes will manifest in the following ways:-

◆ We will redefine what we believe is important, beginning with well – being and greater valuing of friends, family and neighbours and the importance of looking out for each

- other. At the bottom of the list will be the 'me, me, me' and the 'I want it now' attitude.
- We will appreciate our NHS and its staff more, no longer taking this treasured institution for granted, and we'll be more tolerant and appreciative of each-other in general and will better understand the difficult job our teachers do.
- Working from home will very much be the norm, and commerce and industry will restructure to adopt new ways of working.
- We will all make food go further and have learned that not all meals come with a tear-off film. We will have learned to cook more and overall be much more appreciative of where food comes from, how it gets to us and be less ready to bin it.
- ◆ FACT—currently, we throw away 6 million tonnes of food each year— YES you did read that right!
- We may have developed new hobbies or pastimes, and our homes will be in better condition, with decorated rooms, trim lawns and weeded beds, painted sheds, fixed fences and gates!
- Finally on a more personal note we will have realised how much we do not need those 'reality TV characters' who offer nothing in terms of entertainment or talent, and who are in crisis when their Wi-Fi and phone battery goes down!

I am so looking forward to getting back to normal—meantime keep safe and well!

MIKE MAUND, ABBEY ROAD

Alas! No Panto this Year!

THERE WILL BE NO TAKE YOUR SEAT PANTO IN FEBRUARY 2021

It's not a decision that Take Your S.E.A.T. has taken lightly, but the obvious reason is the Covid-19 virus and the current social distancing regulations. We simply do not know, nor can we confidently predict, any timelines as to when things will be back to normal again, so we've decided to take back control of the situation and cancel the panto.

But TYS will still produce a Panto (which, by the way, will be Aladdin) and we'll start rehearsing in September 2021 for a show in February 2022, when hopefully things will be nearer 'normal'.

And in place of the panto, we've decided Take Your S.E.A.T. will host another Syresham Talent Show, probably, in February Half Term, when we would have normally performed the Panto. The exact date of the show is to follow, when we know the government guidelines at that time.

Take Your S.E.A.T. with the Village Hall Committee, always hosts the Talent Show, and we normally provide most of the acts, with the village and surrounding area, providing acts as well. The show will be performed over two consecutive nights, (possibly more nights, depending on audience restrictions)

in the style of a cabaret and for which, we'll be putting up the full panto stage and lighting/sound system, in Syresham village hall.

We've not decided yet what acts TYS will perform, but get ready for one or two comedy sketches, reprising several medleys and dance routines as we involve as many children as we can. When it is safe to do so, we will start rehearsing the various acts. So, if any TYS cast members, friends or family or anyone living near the village, have a particular individual talent, no matter what it is, we'd love to hear from you. Seriously, we want as many Syresham societies and clubs to enter an act in the Talent Show.

By working this way, we can be far more flexible with any restrictions still in place and at the same time nourish our yearnings to perform on stage. It

will be a show
Syresham
will never forget and a lot of fun!

That just leaves us to say we're



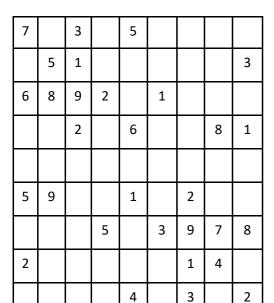
sorry to have to give the bad news about the panto next year but I'm sure you'll all understand why we had to take the 2020 decision.

So, in the meantime, all stay safe and look after yourselves till we meet again.

KEITH WATTS, DIRECTOR

tyssyresham@gmail.com or

Text 07831-537717



SOLUTIONS PAGE 12



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192 HARD

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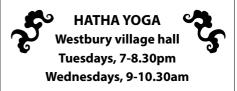
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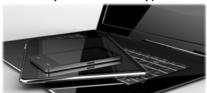


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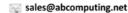


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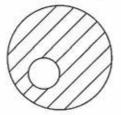
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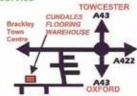
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