



The Syresham Times

VILLAGE OF THE YEAR 2008-10, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2017



PIMLICO SNOWDROPS

50P (WHERE SOLD)

FEBRUARY 2022

SYRESHAM
SCAREROW FESTIVAL
AND
OPEN GARDENS 2022



SATURDAY & SUNDAY
25th and 26th JUNE

'Celebrating the last 70 years'



High Street between the Wars

From the Editor's Desk

TWENTY YEARS OF A43 DUAL CARRIAGEWAY! We all of us travel the A43 a lot, and the route from M1 Junction 15a to M40 Junction 10, is one of the busiest trunk routes in the country.

I was trying to remember how long since it was upgraded from the rumbling old single carriageway route that used to get blocked in Towcester for Silverstone events, and at Bank Holiday weekends when the nation upped sticks to travel southwards through Brackley town centre to the coast for some holiday time.

In fact it was back in September 2002, almost 20 years back that the route was completed and officially opened.

Brenda Bonham, was at the time our Parish Council Chairman and joined the official opening party when she named the Whittlewood Bridge that crosses the A43 at the A413.

At that time I was commuting at weekends to and from London. My first journey home after the B4525 Main Road junction for Syresham at High Cross, had changed, and I missed the very new turning and ended up in Whistley Woods car park! It was a dark and misty night and it took some time to discover my way home!

IAN DRAPER, EDITOR, JANUARY 2022

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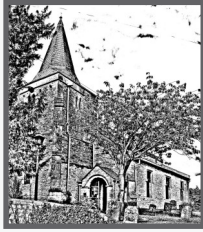
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PIMLICO SNOWDROPS—IAN DRAPER

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APRIL 27th 2022

NEWS FROM THE RECTORY



A very happy New Year to you all. I wonder if any of you have made resolutions for this coming year? I must admit, this year feels very uncertain, with the infection rate for Covid being so high and no knowing what the future will bring on many fronts – questions regarding the Covid pandemic and its trajectory, rising fuel and food bills, continuing worries over climate change – and they are only the issues the press is concentrating on at present!

It always seems appropriate that we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the coming of the light of God into the world at the darkest time of the year, but also at the time when the light of the sun is gradually returning – the days are gradually drawing out, and I can now walk the dog a little earlier each week. We had a lovely Christmas celebration in all our churches, despite the worries about Covid and having to wear masks again. It was particularly good to be able to have families in church at Syresham for the two Christingle services. We also, despite the Covid problems, had a carol service and a Christmas HC service at Syresham, both of which were fairly well attended. In the coming year, we are hoping to re-start Messy Church initially for special events in the Christian calendar, after running a Christmas Messy Church which was well received by those who came, so look out for announcements

about this.

So, as we continue with the dark and currently damp weather, let us remember that the light of God's love is always with us even in the dark days. I am always ready to listen and to visit if it is safe to do so, if you need a chat or some company please get in touch,

Going back to my initial question about resolutions, my resolution this year is to try to look for the things that energise me and make time for these things. It is so easy to get caught in a cycle of worries and ignore the good things around us – so I plan to make time for walking and running (yes – running!), and also for the craft work that I always seem to put aside as not being important – but there is something so satisfying about producing something new – back in the day, I always had a piece of knitting or crochet on the go, or even needlework, but these things got put aside when I was caring for my husband. Time will tell whether I succeed, but I've made a start with a beautiful crochet blanket – I was really pleased that my hands remembered how to work a crochet hook!

Whatever your interest is, if you catch yourself saying that it can wait – think again and make time for the things you enjoy. And remember that God is always with you, no matter how you are feeling.

The morning anthem for daily prayer for this season is that lovely hymn 'O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness' The second verse goes:

Low at his feet lay thy burden of

carefulness:

High on his heart he will bear it for thee,

Comfort thy sorrows, and answer thy prayerfulness,

Guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.

God Bless, **REVD DIANE**

Tel: 01327 226245

Email: diane.whittaker@icloud.com

**ELIZABETH, LIB, LIBBY
HARRIS,**

**SEPTEMBER 28TH 1944 –
DECEMBER 17TH 2022**

Lib was a truly local girl, born in Daventry on 28th September 1944, to Bill and Irene Harris. It was always a close family and they moved to Brackley where they

lived at the Police Station. Lib went to school in Brackley and liked to reminisce about playing in the cells. Upon Bill's retirement from the police force they moved firstly to The Grove and then after his death to 38 High Street. When Irene became fragile, Lib cared for her at home till her death in 1989. In all she must have lived in Syresham for over 60 years.

She joined Barclays Bank as a very young woman and her career in Branch Banking lasted three decades. Lib and her colleagues really were part of the community and she gained much satisfaction from serving customers many of whom she got to know personally. Lib made many friends during her career, and socialising at



Barclays in Buckingham must have closely rivalled that of Syresham. Lib underwent a big change in her life when she left the camaraderie of the bank to become a book keeper for local businesses. Naturally she made more friends amongst her clients whilst making use of the expertise she had gained at the bank.

Lib's life revolved around friends and family. She was not just good at making friends but also at keeping them. So many friendships were made in childhood and her early years at Barclays. She managed to remain in the lives of so many. Village friends have been very important to her over many years, and enabled her to live a wonderful social life.

Over the years friends have provided huge amounts of care and affection with both Judith and Rob giving her a home after surgery or during illness, whilst other friends have supported her towards the end of her life. Everyone was surprised at the speed of her deterioration in the last few weeks, but friends helped her make the best of the situation. Those same friends have supported the family with incredible kindness, which is very much appreciated.

Lib has kept close to family, especially cousins Ann and Sharon and to Ann's children. Gareth lives in Germany, but Rachel was able to attend the funeral.

Lib liked to introduce me as her 'sister-in-law' as my brother, Brian was her

partner before his unexpected death in 2005. They shared days out holidays and very generously hosting my father and uncle on Sundays when they lived in a nursing home. Lib has remained an important part in our lives and was a regular at Christmas and Easter gatherings. She really enjoyed time with my brother David, and the younger generation too - Claire and Tom and Eddie (to whom she was great aunt). She was disappointed not to be able to make Tom's July wedding. Her elegant wedding outfit for the day was put to good use as we said goodbye to her.

Lib was always a generous hostess and a notable baker and cook. Indeed for many years she gave her time and expertise to the Village Hall Coffee Mornings. She was a keen member of the Syresham History Society and U3A, and always enjoyed a good Quiz Night!

Something not yet mentioned is Lib's style. She always dressed very well and was a world class shopper. Her birthday and Christmas cards were very special and a Lib wrapped gift could always be spotted from the other side of the room, being expertly wrapped in very superior paper! She also chose very stylish items for her home even including her toaster! At the press of a button, the bread descends into the toaster and then with a beep it gently emerges as toast. It reminds me of Lib—elegant, capable, stylish and always with a sense of fun.

So many of us will miss her very much, but will be able to draw on lots of happy memories of times spent

together.

Well done Lib, a life well lived.

ANNE BALE

SHEDDING TIERS—HOW WE GOT TO HERE

In 2020, Northamptonshire County Council (created in 1888) and South Northamptonshire District Council (created in 1974) were both abolished. This



article aims to provide context to the move to a new unitary system of local government.

'Two-tier' and 'Unitary' are the commonly used terms for alternative local government systems but risk overlooking the important contribution of parish and town councils to local communities. Northampton recognized its importance, so recently formed a new town council.

Local government structure is controversial. Most would agree that local councils should be large enough to be efficient in providing services but small enough to be accountable to local people. Beyond that, opinions differ – not least because this is about political power. The courts have regularly been asked to intervene in disputes where councils disagree on how to restructure an area.

England last introduced a comprehensive new structure 50 years ago, under Edward Heath's government; in 1974 a complex and outmoded system was replaced with a

universal two-tier system. Counties dealt with high-spend services like schools, social care and highways, and district/borough/city councils had responsibility for more local services such as planning, housing and waste collection. Prior to losing the 1970 general election, the previous Labour government had been poised to adopt unitary councils for the whole of England (apart from London and the 'metropolitan' areas surrounding Manchester, Birmingham and Merseyside, which would be two-tier). Northamptonshire would have become a single unitary council.

Interestingly, both Labour and Conservative proposals initially proposed moving Brackley and Brackley Rural District (including Syresham) into Oxfordshire.

Conservatives quickly developed distrust of counties in metropolitan areas, usually controlled by Labour; and didn't like the 'new' counties of Humberside, Avon and Cleveland. Margaret Thatcher dealt with the first issue in 1986 by abolishing (without replacement) the metropolitan counties and the Greater London Council. Strategic coordination suffered, and elected mayors and assemblies for London and for England's large urban conurbations became necessary to fill the void.

John Major's administration in the early 90's, had the Banham commission carry out a phased review of English local government structures. Unitary councils were set up in former Humberside, Avon and Cleveland as well as some

urban areas (including locally, Milton Keynes, Peterborough and Leicester). Rutland (population 37,000) was re-created as a unitary council. Banham recommended that the existing two-tier structure in Northamptonshire be retained but that Buckinghamshire should be split between three unitary councils; he resigned when these, and other, recommendations were referred back by the government. Banham's successor initially recommended that the town of Northampton be given unitary status, but dropped the idea concluding "the separation of Northampton from its county would have a significant and detrimental effect".

Patchwork re-organisation continued under Tony Blair's government with, in 2009, single unitary councils being created in Cornwall, Wiltshire, Shropshire, Northumberland and Durham. Bedfordshire and Cheshire were split into two unitary councils each.

Conservative-led governments from 2010 adopted a policy of initiating change only where there was local agreement on a new structure. There hasn't been a rush. So, now we reach the recent restructurings for Buckinghamshire and our own Northamptonshire.

In Buckinghamshire the former county council promoted a single council. District councils agreed that structures needed to change and proposed two unitary councils – one to cover the existing Aylesbury Vale area and another for the rest. The government

preferred one council and, after first considering legal challenges, the district councils acquiesced. The new council covers a population of about 550,000.

In Northamptonshire the proposal for re-organisation came after a government inspector examined finances at the county council and concluded that there was *“evidence that the council had failed in its best value duty ... failures at the council were not due to a lack of funding, but a result of poor management, a lack of budgetary control and a culture which discouraged challenge”*.

The inspector advised that two new unitary councils be formed. The government asked the county’s local authorities to submit a proposal for restructuring and the submitted proposal was agreed by government and implemented in 2020 with the first elections in May 2021.

West Northamptonshire Council (population circa 400,000), comprises the district areas of Daventry, Northampton and South Northants.

North Northamptonshire Council (population circa 350,000), comprises the rest of the old Northamptonshire.

So, after this 50-year game of musical chairs, here in Syresham, we are back where we very nearly started – with a unitary council. Good local government involves accountability to service users, council taxpayers and voters. In the past county councils, particularly, have been accused of being remote and unresponsive to their population. It remains to be seen

how well the new councils will manage accountability.

ANDREW NORTH (BRADBERRY CLOSE)

The Friends of St James

are pleased to welcome the delightful choir: **NOTE-ABILITY**, conducted by Caroline Palmer

Concert on Saturday May 14th at St James’ Church.

Look out for further details.

GEORGE TIMMS TRUST

We are currently experiencing a significant rise in inflation with notification of further increases to come. The rise in the cost of gas, electricity, petrol, food and other needs are highlighted.

The George Timms Trust is eager to support those who are finding the burden of higher costs increasingly challenging.

We would hope that they would feel comfortable in approaching the charity in order that we may be able to help and support them and their families.

An easy approach can be made by either placing a note in the post box on the outside of the Chapel Sunday School Room or alternatively sending an email.

The address is:

info@GeorgeTimmsTrust.org.uk

Your name and contact details would be needed. *However, please be assured that all our work and the*

contacts we make are confidential.

THE GEORGE TIMMS TRUST, January 2022

SYRESHAM CE ST JAMES SCHOOL

– FOSS



It was so wonderful to be able to hold our first 'proper' event for a very long time.

We had a thoroughly enjoyable evening at The Towcester Young Farmers family bonfire and fireworks display in aid of Syresham School. There were delicious hot chocolate, mulled cider, tasty hot dogs and sweet treats. All set in the magical setting amongst the fairy lights and straw bales. All brilliantly organised, once again by the amazing Claire Turnham (Clip board and walkie talkies in hand!!) and the fireworks were fantastic too!!

Thank you to all our local sponsors, supporters, volunteers and clean-up crew, who all made this night possible. We raised a whopping £1,972. This is an incredible amount, and puts it right up there as one of our biggest ever fundraisers... so a big THANK YOU for coming out to support this event.

SPONSORS: TG Turnham, The Kings Head Syresham, Whittlebury Bakery, Janet Eames, OW & RJ Vernon, Ultimate Bars, Oliver Gregory Farriery,

SDRB Joinery Ltd and Wappenham Farm.

After this success, we were all brimming with Christmas plans. Unfortunately, these plans had to be adapted after a high number of School families were having to self-isolate. But thanks to Tina Nesbitt and her team the Elves returned to the village. We had a visit from Pixie Mixie the sweet shop owner and Elvis McJingles landlord of the Elven Tavern, to name but a few. Maps were purchased and the children (and adults) had a magical time looking for the 10 letters that made up a Christmassy word to be in with a chance to win a Hamper.

Congratulations to the winners - Caro Scott and Charlie Powell. A big thank you to everyone who supported us with this event and all the lights around the village looked fabulous. The school council were in charge of choosing the best lit house in the village. We were glad they had to make the decision! Congratulations to Lynn and Brian Archer, the worthy winners.

The nativity looked a little different this year and was held outside in the playground. The audience were kept warm with mince pies and mulled wine. The Children and staff put on a fantastic show. Thank you to the behind-the-scenes gang - Claire Turnham and her team who made the event so memorable for the children and parents. We had a raffle and the winners of some luxurious hampers were Gemma Brown, Laura Creed, Tierma Santhera, Sophia Raitu and Oliver Vernon.

The children all enjoyed a fabulous

Christmas party in their class bubbles. This would not have been possible if it was not for Gemma Trofimov, who made ALL the packed lunch boxes and organised Father Christmas to visit the school.

Such a fun filled few months that has injected some joy and continues to remind us of the importance of not only our school but also our wider community. We are so lucky to have an amazing 'can do' committee and support from parents and the friends of Syresham School.

We are in the planning stage for the coming year ahead so please come and support us when you can.

SARAH PATERSON, CHAIR FOSS

CHRISTMAS GIFTS AND CARDS

Yet another Christmas of amazing numbers of cards and presents. It is truly heart warming to read how much you all appreciate what I do for the community.

I always feel guilty for not writing individual thank you letters, but with so many, the Syresham Times is the only answer!

Thank you all so very much, and may I wish you a very healthy 2022!

RUTH GROVELL



SYRESHAM SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB

It's been a good festive season at the club, we managed to keep safe and do all the normal Christmas events including children's Christmas party, Christmas Prize Bingo, Christmas Dinner Party, Christmas Eve and Boxing Day charity football, raising money for Brackley community hospital and saw the new year in with another fantastic Billy Dawson Disco.

We have an exciting year ahead as the **Sports and Social Club turns 40 on the 10th of April** - the official opening date. We have decided to make a celebration long year with the official birthday party being 13th August,

But we have plenty going on still with the normal activities at the club, **Beer Festival** is back this year planned for **Friday 3rd -5th June**.

Member's evening 9th July

Club's 40th Birthday Party, 13th August

Roy Hawkins Horticultural Show 21st August

Annual Classic and Modern Motor Show 11th September

With regular events such as prize Quiz Nights on the **3rd Friday** of the month and Sunday carvery **2nd Sunday** of the month although subject to change .

Food evenings and BBQ's all being Planned see our Facebook page or Ruth's shop window for details of them Thank you to all that have supported the club over these difficult times and its nice to see you all again.

SARAH WHITEHEAD



TAKE YOUR SEAT FUND RAISING



I know it's some time ago, but I just wanted to reflect on the super Cabaret evenings enjoyed by the village at the end of last July. Take Your Seat and the Village Hall committee worked together and collectively raised £600 for Katherine House Hospice.

The money raised came from ticket sales and donations. The organisers were hugely grateful to those who attended and so generously boosted the funds with additional contributions.

Katherine House Hospice sent a lovely letter of thanks together with a certificate of donation. Thank you!

LIZ MOUNTAIN-TOWN

RESIDENTS' EMAIL CONTACT LIST

The Parish Council is looking at an email alert system, direct to residents where required. The alerts would include parish announcements that are currently displayed on the village website (www.syreshamvillage.com) or posted on the village Facebook page.

If this type of communication would be useful, please can you send your contact details to the Parish Clerk on 01280-851178 parishclerk@syresham.com.

**SAMANTHA HOSKING, PARISH CLERK
SYRESHAM KNITTERS**

The opportunity has arisen again for hand knitted jumpers or cardigans to be shipped to the Queen Elizabeth Children's Home in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

I know that the Covid pandemic has lasted far longer than anyone expected so if you have



spare wool, any colours, and want to pass some time making a jumper for a boy or girl, age 2-10 years, loose-necked, please do. Once knitted Ruth would be happy to accept the knitwear and I will collect them from her. Happy clicking. I know the children really look forward to trying on their new jumpers.

STEPH BRACKPOOL

A43 AND ROADWORKS

Back in late 2019 the A43 from the M40 junction 10 to north of Towcester was in an appalling condition. With

hundreds of potholes, loss of wearing surface and other defects.

I carried out a complete survey in both directions. Following this I made a formal complaint and issued a Section 56 legal notice under the Highways Act on Highways England, as it was then.



Following this action there have been multiple major works starting on the A43. Which is seeing much improvement over the last 18 months and with hopefully more to come.

The current northbound works from Brackley to Silverstone are due to be completed by mid March. Tarmac Ltd who are carrying out this project have worked hard to minimise disruption to residents, businesses and road users. They have had to accommodate many HS2 works which has impacted their programme.

MARK MORRELL, "MR POTHOLE"

GARDENING CLUB

Following a welcome increase in our membership numbers, we have outgrown the village hall meeting room and now meet in the main hall on the **THIRD WEDNESDAY** of each month at 2.30 p.m.



In November of last year we had a return visit from Chris Day of Buckingham Garden Centre who gave a very interesting talk on 'The Gardening Influences of Beatrix Potter'. Our

annual Christmas social event followed in December when we went to Wilton Locks Garden Centre for Christmas lunch and an opportunity to do some Christmas shopping. After some two years we were able to hold our Annual General Meeting in January, followed by a fun quiz. We have a full programme of meetings and visits for 2022. On Wednesday February 16th we will visit Evenley Woods to see the lovely snowdrops in bloom and then in March we will have a film afternoon in the village hall – the film will have a gardening theme!

SUDOKU SOLUTIONS - SEE PAGE 21

MEDIUM

9	2	6	1	3	8	4	5	7
2	5	6	4	7	9	6	1	5
8	3	7	2	1	5	9	6	4
6	4	2	8	3	7	8	9	5
3	7	8	5	4	9	2	1	6
5	1	9	6	2	8	7	4	3
4	9	3	8	7	2	6	5	1
7	8	5	4	6	1	3	8	9
1	2	6	9	5	3	4	2	7

EASY

7	1	8	4	9	2	5	6	3
6	4	5	7	1	4	9	8	2
2	9	3	6	5	6	2	4	9
1	7	4	3	8	5	7	9	6
8	3	9	1	2	7	4	5	6
5	2	6	9	8	1	7	3	5
3	6	1	5	7	8	4	3	9
4	8	2	9	6	3	5	1	7
9	5	7	8	4	5	6	8	1

In April, we will visit Barn Farm Plants for a demonstration of making hanging baskets.

We welcome more members – our annual subs are £15 per year. Or, if you do not wish to commit every month, you are most welcome to come along as a visitor for £3. We always have a raffle and tea/coffee and biscuits. If you would like to join us on the visit to Evenley Woods, please let me know. We will also be visiting the Malvern Spring Show at the beginning of May. Again, if you would like to join us, please let me know. **CHRIS MUNSEY**

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT



The Parish Council wishes all residents a belated Happy New Year! We have a lot of positive things to look forward to in 2022, and now that Covid restrictions are being lifted, we very much hope that the coming year will be one that we will remember for the right reasons.

First of all this is the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Year – a remarkable and unique British achievement of 70 years on the throne. Many of you will remember taking part in the full weekend of celebrations we had in 2012 celebrating the Diamond Jubilee. The Parish Council is now heading up a Platinum Jubilee Committee inviting all village organisations and individuals to participate. We hope that this will enable us to organise something for everyone to take part in and enjoy

during the forthcoming long Bank Holiday weekend in June. If you would like to join the committee, please contact the Parish Clerk parishclerk@syresham.com and you will be warmly welcomed.

After a break of 2 years, the Northamptonshire Best Village competition is being revived. The Parish Council has entered and we hope that village residents will support us when judging takes place – date to be announced.

One 'positive' result of the pandemic is the fact that we have all become more aware of our surroundings and the need to 'protect our planet'. With this in mind, the Parish Council has formed an **Environment and Climate Change Committee**. This committee has already met and has some very positive ideas as to how we can all play our part in order to reduce our carbon footprint and help to counteract the effects of Climate Change. Again, in order to make this a success, we need the support of all residents and in due course we will be contacting you with information about what you can do to help. In the meantime, if you have any ideas you would like to be considered, please contact the Parish Clerk.

The Parish Council continues to liaise with Silverstone Circuit, MEPC and HS2 in order that we can keep up to date with developments regarding these two major projects taking place in our area and advise and inform residents accordingly.

**WE STILL MANAGED TO
HAVE A FUN TIME DE-
SPITE THE COVID RE-
STRICTIONS**



CHRISTMAS ELF DOORS 2021

PAULA GREEN Congratulations to Syresham's Brown Owl on receiving a presentation for 30 years service to Guiding. Well done Paula! It is a voluntary job when you begin, only about 2 hours a week. But everyone forgets the planning of meetings, sourcing materials etc., and the training you have to attend.

Paula was a brownie in Syresham and moved on to helping at Guides and then becoming Brown Owl.

The pack would have been forced to close without her. We know the last 18 months has been difficult but brownies are up and running and I'm sure there are many parents and girls in the village who have appreciated all your hard work. **CONGRATULATIONS FROM THEM ALL!**

DOT



Finally, for your information, the Recycling Centre at Farthinghoe will be closed from 29th January for refurbishment and is expected to re-open in March. During the closure residents can continue to arrange removal of large household items such as sofas, fridges and washing machines by booking a bulk waste collection from West Northants Council.

CLLR CHRISTINA MUNSEY

Live entertainment with
Chris the "HOMBRE"

AT SYRESHAM VILLAGE HALL

On Saturday 2nd April 2022, 7.30pm -
11.00pm

Tickets £8 payable in advance by 25th
February

Please bring own drinks, glasses and
nibbles

Any profit from the sale of tickets and
raffle will be donated to Katharine
House Hospice in memory of a dear
friend, Elizabeth Harris.

Also in memory of all past residents of
Syresham and surrounding area who
were cared for by the charity.

For further information and tickets
please: email:

roneegftr@hotmail.co.uk

or mobile/text: 07758-270171

**All welcome but please book early
as numbers are limited!**

Veronica (Ronee) and John
Robinson

VICTOR BROOKS 25TH MARCH 1925 - 9TH DECEMBER 2021

My father, Victor Brooks, passed away just before Christmas. His funeral took place in the village church on January 7th and was attended by around 40 friends and family.

Dad moved into Syresham with my mother, Jo, in 2014. They had previously lived in Water End, a small hamlet near Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire, for over 50 years, but felt as they got older that the time had come to move to a larger village with more amenities and family support.

Dad was born on the 12th March 1925, in Fyfield, Oxfordshire. He spent his formative years growing up in Kingsbury, north London. In 1943, he enlisted in the RAF and, after the usual military induction, was transferred to Oban in Scotland where he trained on PBY Catalina flying boats. The following year he was posted to India, where he remained until the end of the war, returning home to be demobbed in 1946.

In India, he crewed Catalinas with the rank of Flight Sergeant and then, later, Warrant

Officer. His principal role was as Flight Engineer, which basically made him responsible for keeping the engines



and other critical flight systems running so the plane stayed in the air!

After he left the RAF, he secured a training placement at the Hertfordshire Institute of Agriculture studying all aspects of horticultural practice and science. He subsequently worked for Wembley Council as Head Gardener, before being offered a job with Lambeth Council in south

London. A few years later, in 1954, Dad married my mother, Jo Baker, in Keynsham, near Bristol.

Dad remained with Lambeth Council for over 25 years, where he became a senior Local Government Officer with responsibility for parks and cemeteries. He was also one of the leading organisers of the Greater London Horseshow that took place every year on Clapham Common.

After he retired, he was busier than ever! He worked as a Steward for the Royal Agricultural Show, with responsibility for organising the Flower Show. He was sought after as a highly respected judge at many of the town, county and regional shows, and for several years judged Britain in Bloom.

If that wasn't enough to keep him busy, he was a valued member of Great Gaddesden and Water End Parish Council, becoming Chairman for many years, helped to found the Water End Conservation Society, and took an active role in many community events.

It was only in his last few years that

Dad became increasingly infirm and, together with Mum, moved into Syresham where they were soon involved in various groups, including the History and Gardening societies, the Friendship Club and coffee mornings. He delighted in spending time in his garden and greenhouse, and in 'recovering' afterwards with the assistance of a single malt whiskey!

To all who knew him, he was a kind, generous and warm-hearted man. He had a wicked sense of humour and, when we were children, delighted in finding ways to amuse us, or play practical jokes. In many respects, although the jokes may have matured over the years, he retained his good-humour, positive outlook and abiding warmth right to the end.

When sorting out Dad's papers recently I came across the letter of recommendation from the Principal of the Hertfordshire Institute of Agriculture, who wrote in 1949:

'I recommend Victor for his capacity not only to give loyal services, but also because he is courteous and well-spoken – a man who is genuine, possessing great character and a wonderful personality.'

I think that it's fair to say that Dad lived up to that assessment throughout his life. **NICK BROOKS** 17-01-22

SNATRA -South Northants Active Travel Association has been actively working towards a safe shared use pathway, or active



travel route, alongside the A43 from Brackley to Towcester and from Syresham to Crowfield, beside the B4525. Our Facebook page is SNATRA43 with 168 members.

SNATRA is also pressing for safe crossings at Whitfield and Syresham (High Cross/Pimlico junction).

Thanks to everyone who signed the letters for Andrea Leadsom MP and Shane Snow. They helped us reach the position where we are able to announce the following progress:

- ◆ The shared use pathway has been incorporated into the draft plan of the LCWIP, Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, from Brackley to Silverstone,
- ◆ The provision of a shared use path crossing over HS2 rail line is closer to being resolved,
- ◆ The Parish Council in Syresham is fully supportive and actively engaging with HS2 liaison groups in the stakeholders' meetings.
- ◆ The B4525 (Welsh Lane) path is to be audited and considered for inclusion in the Brackley draft LCWIP.

However, to progress this into reality, requires further action and support.

SNATRA is proposing to form a not-for-profit association and needs your help to form a steering group. If you can become actively involved as part of the steering group, particularly if you live in Crowfield, Pimlico, Brackley Hatch, Whitfield, Radstone or Helmdon, please contact SNATRA43@gmail.com.

As Shane Snow of the Department for Transport has said: "*this is an opportunity that, if missed, may not occur for another 120 years or so.*"

You can contact your local MP, Rt.H Dame Andrea Leadsom, Andrea.Leadsom.mp@parliament.uk (not forgetting to add your contact details) to request her to continue to lend her support. It is also invaluable to contact your West Northants Councillor and your local Parish Council if you live in Syresham (parishclerk@syresham.com) to let them know that you support this ecologically sound and safe pathway for us and future generations.

STEPH BRACKPOOL, SNATRA43

SYRESHAM BROWNIES

The Brownies have once again embarked on an exciting new programme for the term. All of the new recruits made their Promise on the 1st February with parents invited to watch. They have now joined an organisation of 6 million girls and women all round the world.



We celebrated **Burns Night** by making Scottish Shortbread and playing Haggis Hockey! Later in the term we will continue working on our communication badge and celebrate Thinking Day which is a special Guiding day where we remember Brownies from other lands and our founders Lord and Lady Baden-Powell. Our annual Easter Egg hunt is planned along with various other games and creative events. If you

have an interesting job or exciting hobby that you would like to chat about or share, we would welcome you getting in touch so that we could arrange a time for a visit. **PAULA**

GREEN

MUMS AND TOTS

The children at Mums and Tots have been exploring nursery rhymes and toddler songs this term. We have learned *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*, decorated star biscuits with icing and sprinkles and made a star mobile.

The children got together and created a garden for *Mary Mary Quite Contrary*, by colouring in flowers, modelling shells with playdough and covering egg boxes to make bells. They also printed a picture of a beautiful flower garden using paints and sponges. They had lots of fun the week we created *The Wheels on the Bus* in the village hall. We set up the chairs to create a bus, with pretend wheels, a steering wheel, a real horn and bell, a driver in a hat and lots of dressing up clothes, so the children could pretend to be the passengers!

Mums and Tots is a welcoming group where children, Mums and Grandparents can come together and have fun and a chat. We've had four



new families start our group since the beginning of January and hopefully we will see even more newcomers in the months to come.

TINA NESBITT

SYRESHAM AND DISTRICT HISTORY SOCIETY



Normality is coming back to the History Society with face to face meetings in the village hall, albeit with sanitising and social distancing being observed. Is this the new normal? Or will we eventually get back to the old normal.

Our committee is still short of members. However we did welcome Betty Stubbs from Whitfield onto committee at the AGM in October.

Malcolm Darrock gave a very interesting talk about WW2 Bailey bridges, their design brief so that each individual panel could be transported on a small vehicle and be carried by 6 men. November saw a return visit from Anthony Poulton Smith on the subject of Watling Street. Although we think of Watling Street as a Roman road, it only follows the route of the Romans and was named many centuries later.

The usual Wassail celebration was cancelled for the December meeting due to the pandemic, however Roger Brown gave a very good talk about the history of toys, bringing along a large selection of toys. He worked for Mettoy in Northampton so most of his collection were for boys rather than girls. This was only 10% of his total collection.

In January Bob Farey told us about Alfred Cockerill, a 19thC entrepreneur in Northampton who gave a lot back to the town, travelling from his Leicestershire village with almost nothing. He grew vegetables and eventually bought land and a shop to

sell his own produce. Amongst the beneficiaries were the county cricket ground.

In February we welcome Bob Kendal who will talk about 16th-20th century theatre in Northampton.

March sees Roger Butler talking about canal history with specific reference to Oxford and Grand Union canals.

Sean Callery visits us in April to take us on a guided tour of several Cotswold towns and villages.

Meetings take place on the first Wednesday of the month at 7.30 p.m. - we look forward to seeing you there.

JOHN GIBBINS, TREASURER

SYRESHAM CHAPEL



Several members of our chapel fell ill with covid over Christmas and services were held by zoom. We had a wonderful time on Christmas Eve when so many people came to our outdoor carols and cake service. Some of our carols have been handed down for over 100 years and we love to keep these alive as well as singing the traditional carols. The chapel was decorated for Christmas and has been open every day for anyone wishing to go in. We are again worshipping in the Chapel every Sunday.

Breakfast Church is up and running again and it is so good to see different families. Thanks to everyone for all their hard work for enabling this to happen.

We are looking forward to the joint Mothering Sunday service at The Parish church and to the walk of witness on Good Friday. **Dot**

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE VILLAGE NOW?

MON-DAYS	<p>6.00pm to 8.30pm Dance Classes</p> <p>6.30pm to 8.15 Water colour group (<i>Small Meeting Room</i>)</p>	<p>TUESDAYS</p> <p>2nd Tuesday</p> <p>2nd 3rd & 4th Tuesdays</p>	<p>11.00am to 2.30pm Dance/Pilates</p> <p>4.30pm to 7.00p.m. Dance</p> <p>6.00pm till 7.15 Brownies, Sunday School Room,</p> <p>7.30pm to 9.00pm Taekwando V Hall</p> <p>Friendship Club 2.00pm to 4.00</p> <p>Craft Group, Sunday School Room, 7.30pm till 10.00pm</p>
<p>WEDNES-DAYS</p> <p>1st Wednesday</p> <p>2nd Wednesday</p> <p>Last Wednesday</p>	<p>10.00am till 12.00pm Mums & Tots <i>Term-time only</i></p> <p>12.15 to 1.15pm Pilates</p> <p>2.30pm to 4.30 Gardening Club</p> <p>5.00pm to 7.00 Dance</p> <p>7.15pm to 9.00 Ballet</p> <p>7.30pm till 9.30pm History Society</p> <p>7.30pm to 9.30 Gems Womens' Group</p> <p>7.30 to 9.30 Parish Council</p>	THURSDAYS	<p>10.30am to 12.30pm Coffee Shop</p> <p>7.15pm to 9.15pm Bowls Club</p>
FRIDAYS	<p>Various activities</p> <p>Sports Club Monthly Quiz</p>	SATURDAYS & SUNDAYS	<p>2nd & 4th Sundays</p> <p>10.00am till 12.00pm Seidokan</p> <p>Various parties etc</p>
SUNDAYS	<p>St James Church 11.00</p> <p>1st & 3rd</p> <p>2nd Sunday</p> <p>4th Sunday</p>	<p>Holy Communion</p> <p>Morning Worship</p> <p>Praise and Prayer</p>	<p>Syresham Chapel</p> <p>Weekly Sunday Service 6.30p.m</p>



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SOLUTIONS SEE PAGE 12

The Syresham Times

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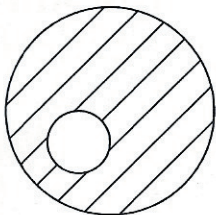
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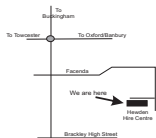
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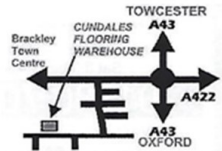
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