

# *Meeting Point*



*July 2020*



# Meeting Point

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

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## From the Editor

Although we are back to a printed edition of Meeting Point this month, which is great, we are not yet back to normal – whatever that is. We don't have any Diary Dates and there are no details of Church services. As the situation improves, I am really looking forward to reinstating these sections of the magazine.

Among the many interesting articles in this edition is one from the Movies in St. Mary's team, who hope to start showing films again in the Autumn. We hear how a cake stall – aimed at the many cyclists who pass through Olveston on Sundays – has raised money for the food bank. There are contributions from local Scouts and from Brownies. There is also a fascinating article about a woman who grew up in Olveston during the 1890s and then went on to travel the world as a nurse. So, plenty to read and enjoy.

This month's cover is by Nick Fear. How many readers recognise where it was taken?

*Marelin*

Meeting Point Founded in 1976 by the Anglican and Methodist churches in Olveston, near Bristol.

Meeting Point magazine and Meeting Point Directory are online at the Community Website: [www.olvestonandaust.com](http://www.olvestonandaust.com)

# A Lockdown Funeral

*Nick Fear*



On the afternoon of Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May a very moving event took place on Tockington Green. The funeral cortege of a much-loved local lady, Joyce Parker, passed slowly around the Green. She had only recently been taken ill and had died on April 27<sup>th</sup>, after 71 years in the village. The journey on the way to Westerleigh had been arranged by her family so that many of her local

friends could bid her farewell.

By the time the cortege was due to arrive, the Green and surrounding paths were filled with local friends, all being conscious to observe the correct social distancing. As Joyce passed by tears were shed and spontaneous clapping broke out amongst the mourners. The whole scene was dominated by a very smart Royal British Legion Flag Party. Stan Bradburn and Rose Brown slowly lowered their Standards in tribute to a very special fellow member and friend.



The cortege passed on and the clapping echoing around the houses was replaced for a moment by a perfect silence. Conversations then took place as many remembered a kind, loving, generous person who will never be forgotten and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

The number of people at Joyce's funeral was limited by the pandemic restrictions, but a live video link had been arranged by her family. The service was carefully crafted to recall the life of the special woman she was. There was sadness and humour in equal parts, and music which Joyce had loved. To the end, as in life, her family did her proud.

# 1st Olveston Scout Group *Hannah Cameron*

We are your local Scout Group, based in the Scout Hut at the top of Old Down Hill and founded in 1914, engaging over 80 local young people in Scouting - that is Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers, aged from 6 through to 18. We wear the different Scout uniforms for each age group and have a grey 1<sup>st</sup> Olveston Group neckerchief and yes, woggles too!

This year has brought us all surprises, some of those have been very much unwanted, but part of being a Scout is being positive and doing our best, so despite the changes in normal life just now, we have still been Scouting, in our own households and living spaces. In the last few weeks, 1st Olveston, with lots of other Groups in our Scouting District of "Cotswold Edge" have joined (virtually) to complete our District Commissioners toilet roll challenge! Why not look here to see how many local faces you recognise?

<https://youtu.be/YbRiJMVuVg4>

We have also 'Hiked to the Moon' - every Beaver/Cub/Scout/Explorer/Leader and Volunteer in the United Kingdom was invited to walk a mile in their household, up and down their stairs or in their front garden, joining together to try to do enough miles to get to the Moon while donating to Children in Need which supports those in greatest need at this time while still having fun. To date, our national Scout community have hiked to the Moon and nearly back again raising over £328,000.

We have joined in and decorated our houses, with teddies in the windows for children (and adults) to spot on their walks, made rainbow/heart banners to celebrate and thank our superhero key workers and dutifully eaten cake and scones to help commemorate VE 75 Day. The Group has also been using social media and online meetings to keep in contact with our young people; hosting information, activities, quizzes, scavenger hunts, knot practice, nature spotting and even regular news of 6 incubating hen eggs with Akela. So, while we are all 'on pause', we thought you might enjoy a few words from three of our young people about their more usual, and preferred, Scouting adventures.

## **Charlie**

I enjoy the challenge of being a Cub and learning new things. Spending time with my friends puts a smile on my face. I also really like offsite activities that includes Cub Camp and helping in the community. I think I've become a better person from going to Cubs. Cubs is important because it teaches you new skills that you will be able to use later in your life. Sometimes we learn how to tie knots, go on night hikes and we make lots of things. Being a Cub involves

learning to be innovative, creative and helps you become a better team player which is very important in all aspects of your life.

At the start of a Cubs evening we 'break the flag' and share our news and achievements. After that we do an (uniform/kit) inspection. Once we have finished that, we do some badge work. If we finish our badge work, we get to play games such as Bomb or Bucket Ball. It's always lots of fun and is different every week."

## James

I am nearly moving up to Explorers, which is for 14 to 18-year olds. I am looking forward to undertaking big expeditions and Duke of Edinburgh activities while building on our existing Scouting and community activities that we have learnt or been part of, in our Scouting Programme from Beavers, Cubs to Scouts. The main focus is still on fun, friends and new or extension of the Scout's Skills for Life curriculum. While at Scouts, I particularly enjoyed the survival camps – sleeping under a tarpaulin shelter, cooking our own meals and having to keep that campfire going – you need the warmth on a cold night and hot food is so much nicer! I have loved so many of the activities; rafting, scuba-diving (in Thornbury Pool) gliding at Nympsfield, climbing, caving, canoeing, fishing, orienteering, night-hikes, archery, wood-chopping, rifle-shooting, ice-skating, backwoods cooking, dodgeball and for my community service I take part in Remembrance parades and I usually help once a week with the younger ones at Cubs too.

I am looking forward to the Ten Tors and lots of camping and 's'mores' with Scout friends.



(Note: S'more comes from a contraction of the phrase 'Some More' and they are delicious campfire treats involving a fire-softened marshmallow squashed between 2 chocolate digestives. They are definitely not to be missed!)



## Stella

I love Scouts because we get to do lots of exciting and advanced activities and skills like; archery, fish-gutting, climbing, abseiling, caving, hiking, cycling, canoeing and kayaking. It is great fun and is different from school, we have a brilliant hut to meet in and we have lots of friends and leaders to help us. It is super fun – even the craft we do is exciting, for example we are making working rockets! (propelled by water) and we made paracord emergency rope bracelets. Survival camp was excellent, we had campfires, made our own shelters, cooked a supper of noodles and had a lesson about rabbit-skinning! We didn't get much sleep as it was really fun to chat and eat tuck – late into the night! I can't wait to get Scouting again and to meet up with all my other Scout friends.

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As Scouts we are guided by these international Scouting values:

**Integrity** - We act with integrity; we are honest, trustworthy and loyal.

**Respect** - We have self-respect and respect for others.

**Care** - We support others and take care of the world in which we live.

**Belief** - We explore our faiths, beliefs and attitudes.

**Co-operation** - We make a positive difference; we co-operate with others and make friends.

More than ever we feel that these values are shining out from everyone in our communities too, as we take part in or see people helping neighbours, volunteering, caring for our older people, thoughtfully observing the new life-rules and even giving blood! So perhaps if any long term good can come from the current situation, maybe it could be to maintain and always remember this time as the start of universal extra kindness and understanding.

So, from all of us in the 1st Olveston Scout Group – please keep positive, keep safe and keep well and we are really looking forward to getting back to our more 'normal' noisy and busy Scouting!

If Scouting is something that you or your young people would like to be involved in – please do get in contact with the following:

Adult Leader Volunteers – Viv Frampton [vivframpton2@icloud.com](mailto:vivframpton2@icloud.com)

Group Executive Committee Volunteers – Ange Young  
[ange\\_baker@hotmail.com](mailto:ange_baker@hotmail.com)

Explorers 14 to 18 years – Ruth Popham [regodden1990@gmail.com](mailto:regodden1990@gmail.com)

Scouts 10 ½ - 14 years – Simon Richardson  
[simon.richardson8@virginmedia.com](mailto:simon.richardson8@virginmedia.com)

Cubs 8 to 10 ½ years – Hannah Cameron [hannah@ashfield.farm](mailto:hannah@ashfield.farm)

Beavers 6-8 years – Andy Hollingdale – [andyhollingdale@google.com](mailto:andyhollingdale@google.com)

# A Load of Bananas!

Following the publication of last month's article on local railway stations, past and present, I have been contacted by the author, our very own Transport Correspondent, I.C. Awkley, pointing out that during the page-setting process one of the captions was misplaced which may have led to readers being on the wrong line. Never a good thing on the railway. The picture of the banana train passing New Passage Halt, should have been placed within the section on the Severn Beach to Pilning Junction line, and not the line to New Passage Pier, as was suggested. A case of too many New Passages, possibly.



Whilst talking bananas, I.C. Awkley has provided this interesting picture of 'N' Shed at Avonmouth Docks, showing a circular line of about 30 steam-heated railway wagons being loaded with bananas from an adjacent ship. The banana vans were moved by use of floor

mounted capstans. At one stage Avonmouth imported about 30% of all bananas into the UK, which were then widely distributed by rail. The banana traffic has now moved to other ports, with all inland distribution being by road haulage. Progress? One wonders.



Finally, and to round off the articles on our local railways, a picture of Pilning Low Level Station. In the distance can be seen a set of level-crossing gates, one of which can still be found if one looks closely into the undergrowth, where the line crossed Pilning Street, (the sharp double bend near to the Plough Public House).

# Cakes for Cyclists (and Others!)

*Natasha Harrod*



I started my little impromptu fundraising cake stall for fear of being a hypocrite. I had just recorded a children's video for the online St Mary's service in which I challenged those watching to consider that love is not an emotion but an action, and that they might raise money for those in need as an expression of love for others.

Living opposite the pub, I'm always struck by the vast number of cyclists zipping past our house, particularly at the weekends. Ever the opportunist, I wondered whether they might be tempted to stop by the war memorial and refuel for the next stage of their journey with homemade cakes on a Sunday, when the bakery is

closed, as a way of raising money for the food bank.

It turns out that cyclists are very tempted, and I can barely bake fast enough. I have been overwhelmed by the support for my little fundraiser, the honesty pot is usually twice as full as I would expect as people are giving more than requested for the cakes. So far the cake stall has raised about £40 each Sunday, which has been donated to the food bank. Many thanks to all those who have contributed. Of course, this won't solve the world's problems, but it will certainly help local people in need; the demand for the food bank has risen 81% since this time last year.

The stall has also provoked lots of positive comments from passing cyclists about what a lovely village Olveston is, with many commenting how refreshing it is to find a place that an honesty pot still works in the 21st century. I don't know how long the cake stall will continue, but while the sun's out, I've got the time and people want to buy, let them eat cake.

If anyone would like to donate some cakes for the stall, I'd love a baking hand, please do get in touch. My number is 07502 030554. Many thanks.



# The Bubonic Plague in Olveston

*Eric Garrett*

The great plague of London, as we all learnt during our schooldays, struck the city during the summer of 1665. Samuel Pepys, the famous 17th century diarist, reported with increasing alarm the growing number of deaths due to pestilence. However, it was generally less widely known that this disease was a frequent visitor to the major cities of England during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. This disease, Bubonic Plague, is due to a bacterium which is carried by a particular species of rat flea, which in turn is parasitic on a



particular species of rats, the black rat. Wherever this rodent was abundant, the plague tended to follow. Seaports, such as London, Bristol and Southampton were particularly prone to pestilence due to exceptionally large population of

black rats in these cities.

William Adams, a 17<sup>th</sup> century citizen of Bristol wrote a chronicled history of the city during the years 1623 to 1638. In this history, Adams noted that the plague was prevalent in Bristol during the years 1564-65, 1574-75 and 1603-05. However, the disease was not easily confined to the city due to the movements of traders and other visitors. It is therefore not surprising to find the plague in the villages on the outskirts of the city or even at some distance away.

Although the Great Plague of the late summer of 1665 struck a blow as ruinous to the population of London as the atomic bomb on Hiroshima in 1945, the outbreak of 1563 seems to have been even more severe. The constant trade between London and Bristol ensured that sooner or later the disease would make an appearance in Bristol. Within a year, the disease had spread to Olveston. The evidence for this comes from a statistical analysis of the burial register for the village. The average number of burials at Olveston during the period 1560 to 1640 was about 17 per year. However, the following years are notable for their large number of burial entries: 1566 – 42 burials, 1575 – 51 burials, 1610 – 31 burials. The vastly increased numbers of burials in these years seem indicative of a visitation of the plague.

The plague was easily spread and wiped out whole families. The following burial entries illustrate the devastating effect of the 1566 and 1575 visitations of the disease on a few Olveston families:

- Edith, the wife of Edward Benar, Edward, his son and Edith, his daughter, were buried on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1566.
- Thomas Marten of Hazel was buried the first day of August 1566. Mary, his wife was buried on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1566. Their daughter Margaret was buried on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1566.
- George, the son of George Fowler, was buried on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1575, another son John, buried 19<sup>th</sup> October 1575. A daughter Agnes buried 20<sup>th</sup> October 1575. Another son Edward buried 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1575.

The outbreak of the disease which hit Bristol in 1603 and 1605 does not appear to have reached Olveston, since the number of burial entries for the years concerned were about average – 1603 (14), 1604 (8) and 1605 (18). A few years later in 1610 the number of burials at Olveston had jumped to 31. Whether this was a local outbreak of the disease or was due to some other reason is not known, but Bristol did not suffer during that year.

The plague was one of the major reasons for the downfall of the city of Bristol during the Civil War siege, in late August 1645. Sir Thomas Fairfax, the leader of the Parliamentary forces besieging the city, mentioned in a letter to his father, Lord Fairfax, that '*the plague is much there*'. During this time about 100 persons per week were dying from the disease. Eventually, the city had to surrender. This was a great blow to the Royalist cause and King Charles the First is said to have never forgiven his nephew, Prince Rupert, for surrendering so quickly.

Olveston received another unwelcome visit from the plague in the summer of 1645. Thomas Haines, the parish clerk and village schoolmaster, entered the burials of several plague victims in the parish register. It appears that one Thomas Hill and his wife Agnes, the daughter of William Boulton carpenter of Olveston, fled from Bristol in May 1645, just as the disease was beginning to show. However, their flight to William Boulton's home was not soon enough as Thomas Hill had already contracted the disease. His burial is recorded in the register in the following manner: *Thomas Hill of the city of Bristol, joiner, was buried on Thursday in the night-time on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1645, who was suspected of dying with the plague.* This entry was followed with mother-in-law Agnes Boulton on June 11<sup>th</sup>, his wife Agnes on June 17<sup>th</sup> and his father-in-law William Boulton on June 18<sup>th</sup>.



# Oveston CEVC Primary School

*Andy Hollingdale  
Chair of Governors*

## **Vacancy – Clerk to the Governors**

Oveston CEVC primary school is looking for a clerk to the governors. The governing body is a friendly group of volunteers made up of parents, local residents and representatives from the church and the local authority. In a normal year (unlike 2020) we meet six times a year as a full governor group with additional sub-committee meetings alongside. The clerk helps to compile agendas for meetings, distribute papers and documents to governors and then takes, collates and distributes minutes following the meetings. The clerk needs to have good organisational skills and to help ensure that the board is meeting all its statutory requirements. Much of the work of the clerk can be done at times of the post holder's own choosing.

If you think you may be interested, or indeed know someone that may be interested, please do get in touch by either email or giving me a call on 07894 074178. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

## **Old Down Cricket Club**

*Tony Gardner 07889 727729*

### **150 Club Winners June 2020:**

£50 Tracey Jarvis  
£15 John Moody  
£5 Peggy James

### **Latest £25 Bonus Ball Winners:**

30/05/20 Diane Grosvenor  
06/06/20 Dave Buckley

At the time of writing, we have no date for the commencement of the 2020 season. Hopefully we will have an update next month.

Up the Down!!

# Monday Movies in Olveston

Trevor Anderson



Greetings to all readers from the Movie Club Team in Olveston. At the moment, nothing is certain, but we hope it may be possible to restart our Movie Programme in October. So, pencil the dates in your diary: first and third Mondays at 7.30pm in St Mary's Olveston and we will confirm it all later. Meanwhile, in the hope that it will provide some much-needed cheer during this extended period of lockdown and quarantine, I'm pleased to report that the movie industry has been working hard to produce sequels to some of their best known films. Here are just a few of the titles about to be released:

- No Weddings or A Funeral
- A Royal Night In
- Do Little
- A Star is Bored
- Gloves, Actually
- Stay at Home Alone
- When Harry Met Sally – at a Distance
- Don't Stand by Me

We hope to show a few of these films if we can and will be guided by you. So send your preference, or other suggestions, to me at [trevoranderson@btinternet.com](mailto:trevoranderson@btinternet.com). These are difficult times for us all and we look forward to seeing you again in the Autumn. Our best wishes to you and stay well.

## Aust Parish Council Matters

[austparishcouncil@googlemail.com](mailto:austparishcouncil@googlemail.com)

Aust Parish Council has continued to meet throughout the lockdown period, holding remote meetings via Zoom and dealing with the many varied issues that come across a Parish Council's radar. If you have any issues that you wish to raise with the Parish please email: [austparishcouncil@googlemail.com](mailto:austparishcouncil@googlemail.com). The annual accounts for the Parish have been subject to an internal audit and are available for public inspection on the website at [http://www.olvoston.com/index.php/2-uncategorised/321-aust-parish-council-documents\\_](http://www.olvoston.com/index.php/2-uncategorised/321-aust-parish-council-documents_).

The recruitment process for a new Parish Clerk was postponed due to Coronavirus but restarted again in June. It is hoped that by the time you read this we will be well on our way to appointing a new Clerk, and further details will follow in the next edition.

# Mary Fowler: From Olveston to Distant Lands

*Nick Fear*

On April 15<sup>th</sup>, 1889, George and Emma Fowler, who lived in Aust, welcomed their first grandchild Mary Anne May, born to their daughter Margaret. The family eventually moved to Olveston and settled into Rose Cottage on the Common. Over the next few years the Fowler family grew in numbers and Mary soon had four brothers to cherish and chide in equal measure. They were all educated at Olveston School, where Mary excelled and showed promise beyond her years. After leaving she attended a private school at Llandeudov near Newport for extra tuition. Mary seemed to have found a fascination with the world and a seed of an idea of adventuring past the parish boundaries was planted in her.

Her grandmother Emma had undergone nurse training and it is probable that Mary was inspired by her. She also had plenty of experience of caring, being an older child living in such a large close family. The main teaching hospitals were in London, so Mary trained and qualified there. By the spring of 1911 she was 22 years old and an acting ward sister in Camberwell Infirmary.

Learning by experience was the main method of training and advancement in the nursing profession. Mary continued to work long hours in London under a strict and disciplined regime. There was off duty time, but even this was monitored to make sure personal and professional standards were maintained. She was regularly reported on, her progress was constant, and she was highly regarded by the medical management board. Her acknowledged abilities were to stand her in good stead with the onset of the Great War.



Mary resigned from her Camberwell post and applied to join the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve. The picture here shows a nurse in the uniform of that period. Mary's application form gave Rose Cottage as her home address. Only female referees were required by the service and alongside nursing supervisors, Mary gave Mrs Vernon the Olveston vicar's wife. She was appointed and left for continental war service in November 1914.

Mary initially served in Number 5 Red Cross Unit in Boulogne before moving to the 13<sup>th</sup> General Hospital, set up in the casino building beside the docks. The site today of the Nausicaa Aquarium. The whole area was monitored and controlled by the military authorities. Off duty nurses were restricted in their movements, trips beyond the town boundaries were forbidden. Not that there was much off



duty time. Working conditions were basic and long hours on the wards were common. Wounded men, often on their way home for treatment, whose condition had deteriorated, were offloaded to Mary and her colleagues' care.

In June 1916, it would seem that Mary's health deteriorated and she was evacuated to the UK on the Hospital Ship St. Denis. She came home to Olveston to recuperate, her leave pass was extended into August, but such was the need for nurses that she received a request to return to duty. A railway warrant took her from Bristol Temple Meads to a medical examination in London. Passing this she returned to France, serving in several general hospitals in Boulogne and as far inland as Saint Omer. Her work in the Queen Alexandra's was regularly monitored. Mary had worked in medical and surgical wards, she had become a good ward sister who was energetic, reliable, punctual, and possessed a good deal of common sense. She was conscientious, and her overall behaviour in hospital and quarters was always favourably reported.

In March 1917 Mary requested a transfer back to the UK, preferably London. The tide of war casualties increased, however, and her request was denied. It was not until December 1918, after passing a fitness examination, that she left the continent and was posted to one of the military hospitals in Devonport. In November 1919 she again requested a transfer to London as the local climate was trying for her health. In February 1920 she was officially demobbed from the restrictions of war service regulations and gained her wish to nurse again in London. The Queen Alexandra's put her on a reserve list with a good report, stating she was suitable for future employment.

In 1921 Mary was working in the Paddington Infirmary, but before long her overseas adventures began again. In February 1922 she accepted a post in China under the Shanghai Municipal Council. Leaving England in March, she worked there until the autumn of 1925. On leaving, Mary worked for eight months nursing for the Sir Robert McAlpine building organisation at Sepang on the Gold Coast of Malaysia. She then considered the chance of a post in Nigeria but chose instead to return to our shores. News of the death of her grandmother Emma had reached her.

In early 1929 she was working as a sister in Lewisham Hospital, showing a good administrative knowledge and ability to instruct and train orderlies. By the end of the year, she applied for the senior post of Home Sister at The West Middlesex Hospital. Mary gained the post of a Night Superintendent, covering either maternity ward or theatre duties in Hackney Hospital. A report describes her as energetic, willing, with a good influence, and she was suitable for further promotion in due course.

India had always held an attraction for Mary, and in April 1930 she took up a post as Assistant Nursing Superintendent at the Lady Harding's Hospital in New Delhi, India. (See picture overleaf)



Still in existence, this hospital has become known for the advancement of women in medicine. I think Mary would have approved.

Travelling to India held an unseen destiny for Mary in the nicest possible way. On September 30<sup>th</sup> 1930, aged 41 years, she married a widowed British Indian Army Captain, Charles Allen Tice, in St Stephen's Church, Bareilly. As a married woman, she had to resign not only from the Queen Alexandra's, but from her nursing career. She was thanked for her many years of service and wished every future happiness. Mary and Charles lived in the colonial military world of India and travelled extensively. After her hectic nursing career, the life of a military wife may have been a quieter one.

When the outbreak of World War Two was predicted, Mary returned to England, although Charles had to stay in India. She set up a home in Torquay, where she served as an ARP warden. She made risky sea journeys to visit Charles in India in 1940 and 1941, but as the war progressed travel there became too dangerous.

At the end of the war, Charles retired and Mary, who had joined him in India, came back to Torquay in 1947 via Cape Town in South Africa. In Devon they lived in quiet retirement, becoming part of the local social community. It is unknown how often Mary returned to Olveston, but in 1952 her mother died and the couple attended her funeral. Charles died in early 1967 aged 78, Mary in the spring of 1970 just before her 81<sup>st</sup> birthday.

Mary was a local girl, whose ambitions had taken her to distant lands and places far from home. The seeds of adventuring planted in Olveston had certainly grown and borne fruit.

# Thornbury Volunteer Centre

The virus pandemic this year has made volunteering even more important, with the need growing, almost overnight, after the scale of the problem became known. The response of local people through informal mutual aid support groups as well as established organisations has been amazing and heart-warming.

The NHS volunteer scheme attracted more than 750,000 volunteers in the space of a few days. Volunteer Centres countrywide recorded an estimated 250,000 extra people between the lockdown starting and Easter. At the Thornbury Volunteer Centre — despite our offices being closed and having to work from home — we registered and referred more volunteers in the first three weeks than we would normally expect in six months.

The Thornbury area saw community-led groups spring up via social media with people offering to help their street or the wider community. The aid they have given to those self-isolating or at high risk has been immeasurable. Many have responded to calls to help local care homes with vital supplies, residents' prescriptions, or just a friendly voice at the end of a phone. Local churches and food banks have been working harder than ever.

Most new volunteers coming forward proved to be those prevented from going to work normally, and who wanted to put something back while keeping themselves occupied. These new volunteers are much younger than our normal demographic. We hope that once the emergency is over many will continue to volunteer.

To all the new volunteers who have come forward over the past three months and to all those who volunteer regularly, you are the people who make our communities strong. Please accept our incredibly grateful thanks. For more information visit our website: [www.volunteer-thornbury.co.uk/](http://www.volunteer-thornbury.co.uk/)

## Puzzles

*Jan Winter*

These puzzles appeared in last month's online magazine. They are repeated here (with the answers on page 20) in case you missed them. They may look a bit mathematical, but just think about shapes! Draw some pictures to help.

1. An equilateral triangle of area  $99\text{cm}^2$  has three equilateral triangles cut from it, one at each corner. The resulting shape is a regular hexagon (with six sides). What is the new area?
2. What is the greatest number of circles of radius 1cm that can be drawn inside a circle of radius 5cm?

3. A diagonal of a shape is a line joining two corners that does not run along an edge. For example, a square has two diagonals in a cross and a pentagon has 5, making a star shape. Can you find a pattern in the number of diagonals a shape will have for bigger numbers of sides? It's easier to stick with regular shapes, ie ones whose sides and angles are all equal, so they don't have any 'dents'.

## Intriguing, Entertaining....Get Involved

While our local museum is shut, one lively way in which the museum is continuing its conversations with local people is via Facebook (and Twitter and Instagram).

If you're on Facebook, just search for Thornbury Museum Facebook. If you're not (and don't want to join), just Google the same phrase and click 'Not Now' when Facebook asks you to log in or create an account. You'll still be able to see what's being posted. A vast range of fascinating pictures, stories and requests for help in identifying places or people is posted daily and sometimes more frequently than that.

At the time of writing, recent posts have included: the finding of a 5,000 to 6,000 year old auroch horn in the River Severn; a signed poster of David Vine from when 'It's a Knockout' came to the Mundy Playing Fields; a black and white photo of young men in old-fashioned bathing gear on the diving board at The Bathings in Thornbury; a dramatic photo taken the morning after the tragic Severn Railway Bridge disaster; a Sharpness tug marooned on the Oldbury Power Station lagoon wall, while it was under construction; a photo of the International Stores in Thornbury; a picture of cars queuing for the Aust ferry; and lots of pictures of local people in past decades.

Whenever the museum asks for information about a particular picture, there is usually someone who knows something about it. It's definitely worth checking in regularly to see the latest mystery picture or fascinating fact. And if you want to dig deep into your own family photo albums, the museum really appreciates being sent pictures and information that we can keep in our archives for people to see in the future - old school photos, sports teams, buildings, street scenes, vehicles, people, signs, events - anything relating to the museum's collecting area -which includes the whole Meeting Point area.



### Lockdown Collecting Project

In addition, the museum would like to capture something of the great diversity of our local experiences during the pandemic. We invite you to send photos and/or written accounts of your experiences (good, bad, funny, sad) to an

email address specially created for this project:

*museum.thornbury@gmail.com* or by post to: *Thornbury & District Museum, c/o The Town Hall, 35 High Street, Thornbury BS35 2AR.* By submitting information, we shall assume you are giving permission for the material to be used in the future. This could be in print, on-line or in one of our exhibitions. When the museum re-opens, we shall start going through all that we have received from you. We do hope you will be able to help with the project. Thank you.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Olveston Brownies 'Camp at Home' Challenge

On 30th April 1st Olveston Brownies joined in the attempt to set the world record for the largest virtual camp. We have been meeting weekly via Zoom since 22<sup>nd</sup> April and encouraged the girls to participate in the challenge by building a 'den' to sleep in overnight. The Brownies sent us pictures of their dens and we had a wonderful array, with the girls sleeping in all sorts of places!

One of our Brownies, Daisy, wrote an account of the event: -

*On Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April. Lots of children from all over the globe took part in a virtual sleepover. The theme of our sleepover was Disney. So there were a lot of Mickey and Minnie Mouse's and some Dumbo and other Disney characters. We all had to sleep in an unusual place. Scarlett actually slept in the bath!!*

*This Coronavirus is keeping us apart but we are still staying connected in other ways. Soon this will all be over and we will be able to hug each other and do our secret handshakes!*

*Stay home, stay safe by Daisy.*

Following the camp, it was announced that 68 Countries took part in #CampAtHome, with 95,342 people from all around the globe, setting the record for the largest camp ever!



# John Hodges

*Pat Thirkettle*

John was born in Bristol in 1928 and grew up in a house on Kingsdown with a wonderful view of the city from the sitting room, where he liked to sit and watch. One day he saw the R100 airship float over the city. He remembers the family catching the tram down to the Floating Harbour, taking the penny steamer down to the end, then walking along the Portway and taking the cliff railway up to Clifton. From there they walked to Christchurch and then caught the tram back to Kingsdown.

When the war started, Bristol became the target for air raids. The family had no shelter, so used the cupboard under the stairs. The first raid started on a Sunday at 6.30pm and John, then eleven years old, was curious, so he and his father looked out from the living room to see fire upon fire. The next day John wondered why Union Street had so many lines running down it; they were hosepipes drawing water from the docks. Air raids interrupted his schooldays, at the sound of the siren pupils were marched to an area with several shelters. On one occasion John, and a few other curious lads, sneaked out and saw German bombers during a daylight raid.

John left school at fourteen in 1942 and his postman Dad got him a job as a telegram messenger boy. Often the telegrams contained bad news and his supervisor seemed to have a sixth sense when this was so, and John was warned not to linger.

In 1946 he started his National Service in the RAF. The first novel experience was going by train to Lancashire for induction – he still remembers his service number! He was sent to Cardington in Bedfordshire and, curious as ever, he wanted to know why there were enormous aircraft hangers; in fact this was where the airships were based. After demobilisation he returned home and worked as a postman for two years, but after those new experiences he never settled back. From 1950 he held several jobs until he became a draughtsman in a drawing office. In 1959 he met his wife Margaret while dancing at the Grand Spa, Clifton; they married in 1961 and bought a bungalow in Yate when it was just starting to be developed.

In 1972 John was made redundant - by then he and Margaret had two children – but he managed to secure an interview for a post as a medical representative for a pharmaceutical firm. Before the day of the interview he attended the funeral of a Roman Catholic manager from the drawing office and suddenly, during the service, he heard a voice say 'two years ago you had your son baptised and you made a promise and you have done nothing about it'. John then bought several Christian books and a bible, which he read as far as Mark's Gospel, where mothers are bringing their children to Jesus and Jesus says 'unless you become as a little child you cannot enter the kingdom of God'. Before the interview he went to the Cathedral to ask God to guide

him. Although hardly qualified, he got the job and was back in the Cathedral saying thank you when suddenly he felt enormous pressure and ended on the floor crying like a baby. When he pulled himself together, he knew everything would be OK, but was too embarrassed to tell anyone immediately.

The couple moved to Olveston in 1977 and John worked for two pharmaceutical companies until he retired at the age of sixty-five. In 1972 he had met a lady from Canada who was visiting with a choir and they met on and off until 1992, when he and Margaret (now also a Christian) visited Canada for five weeks. They loved it so much they went another four times and saw each of the Canadian seasons. Visits had to stop when John turned eighty and insurance became impossible, so their last overseas trip was a remarkable holiday in Israel and thereafter they explored England.

Since 1935 John has played the harmonica which is his constant companion. He had the honour of accompanying a well-known jazz pianist in Canada and was asked to play when visiting the Upper Room in Jerusalem; he played 'Breathe on me breath of God' to an audience of three busloads of tourists. He has played for several churches and still played in local jazz groups until lockdown.



Unfortunately, Margaret's health deteriorated a few years ago and she is now living in a care home. John lives by himself and drives occasionally to Thornbury. Lockdown has been difficult - mostly because he can no longer visit Margaret weekly - but he is grateful to friends and family for phone calls and visits.

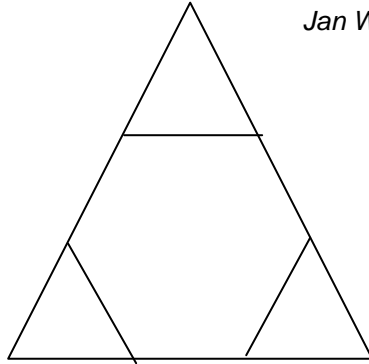
Photography has always been a hobby and John processes and prints photos himself which look very professional; a recent example was the Meeting Point cover for last September of squirrels on his bird feeder.

*\*The picture was taken on the day we conducted this interview. You will see that my chair was the correct 2m social distance from John's.*

# Puzzle Solutions

*Jan Winter*

1. Here is the triangle with three corners cut off. The hexagon could be divided into six triangles, making nine of the same size, so each is  $11\text{cm}^2$ .  
So the area of the hexagon is  $66\text{cm}^2$ .



2. Imagine a plate of round biscuits. One will fit in the middle, then six around that, then twelve around them. So 19 will fit altogether.

3. Here are the first few results:

Square:            4 sides            2 diagonals

Pentagon:        5 sides            5 diagonals

Hexagon:        6 sides            9 diagonals

In each case you can imagine drawing a line from each corner to every corner except three (itself and the two adjacent which would go along the side of the shape). This will give double the answer you want as you have drawn each line twice (from both ends). Using algebra, if  $n$  is the number of sides, the number of diagonals is  $\frac{n(n-3)}{2}$

## And one more puzzle.....

What is the total of the numbers from 1 to 100 inclusive?

And how did the seven-year-old Gauss (a great mathematician, 1777-1855) work it out in his head in a few moments to the amazement of his teacher?

# Green Force

*Jo Amos*

Green Force is a group of people from St Mary's church who would like to make a positive difference to our beautiful planet. We are soon to be part of a scheme within our area (in some cases under the larger project run by TerraCycle) which will support local schools to benefit either from money or vouchers, to go towards education.



Currently, in South Glos. all the items in the bulleted list below must be put into our black bins and are taken to landfill. Plans are currently being discussed to have a collection point in our village in the early autumn. Further details will be published once these have been finalised. We hope you will join us in reducing the waste going to landfill and having our local schools benefit instead.

In the meantime, if you have space to temporarily store at home and can help us to support local schools, please start collecting:

- Crisp wrappers including multipack outer packaging (Walkers scheme, but all brands accepted)
- Dental waste – floss containers, toothbrushes, toothpaste tubes and caps, electric and battery toothbrush heads, any plastic or carton outer packaging (Colgate scheme, but all brands accepted)
- Writing instruments – all pens, highlighters, markers, felt tips, but NOT wooden pencils and chalk (BIC scheme, but all brands accepted).

If you wish to see what happens to these items once the schools pass them on, please go to [www.terracycle.com](http://www.terracycle.com).

## St Mary's Church Tower Restoration Project

*Mike Wright*

The church tower has been the focal point of village life for baptisms, weddings, funerals and festivals for over 500 years. It had a spire that was famously destroyed by lightning and fire in 1604, a time of huge unrest in the country. Nevertheless, four decorated pinnacles and a pyramid roof were quickly built.

Centuries of winds and rain have since taken their toll and pieces of masonry are now falling onto the roofs. The church council set up a restoration project

that has now been approved by all the relevant authorities. New pinnacles will be carved, the tower walls re-pointed, damaged stonework replaced and new foundations for the staircase leading to the bell chamber. All this will cost £200,000 and £166,000 has already been pledged by local, regional, and national conservation trusts.



All national charity funding is currently going to desperate Covid 19 needy causes, so now is the time to ask local people for help in raising the remainder of the funding needed to secure the tower for future generations. Community fundraising events will be organised in imaginative new ways and volunteer helpers will be needed. Please contact the Churchwardens Debbie Harries (07870557961) and Martin Gibson (07990970725).

Local school children at Olveston CEVC and Tockington Manor School will be learning about historic building design and construction and will produce some of their own design ideas that will be incorporated. The

pinnacles will also be used for training apprentice masons to dismantle, draw, carve and erect specialist masonry. The Olveston programme will also include;

- A history of the tower prepared by Jennifer Bone and Peter Floyd,
- A new church guide prepared by Audrey Shepherd,
- The Olveston Historical Society's new online churchyard grave database,
- The Fine Arts Society's records of the important contents of St Mary's will be re-presented in accessible form.

For further information about this project, please contact Mike Wright PCC Project Rep. (07967473020) We look forward to hearing from you.



# Yours Faithfully

*Rev. David Moss*

*St. John the Evangelist, Elberton*

As I write this, the drowning of Colston's statue in Bristol harbour is very much in the news. I am very aware that there will be very polarised views. Some will react to what happened in Bristol as a frightening story of civil disobedience, others will see it as a righteous response to the glorification of a wicked slave trader, and I get both responses.

Statue smashing and the release from slavery has its history both in the Bible and in local history of Elberton. The book of Exodus describes both the release of Jewish slaves from persecution in Egypt, and the smashing of the statue of a Golden Calf by Moses.

The Elberton Church Handbook places the responsibility for the lack of statues in the church on Bishop Hooper, a protestant reformer and iconoclast who in 1571 demanded all statues and effigies to be removed. As for the release of slaves, the church records of 1784 note the connection of one Quaker family with the church. This is almost certainly the parents of Joseph Sturge. Joseph Sturge (1793 – 1859) founded the British and Foreign Anti- Slavery Society. He worked tirelessly throughout his life for the universal emancipation of slaves. I am rather proud to find that the community I now serve has a history of fighting for the freedom of slaves.

The drowning of Colston's Statue is not an activity I would engage in, but I am proud of the fact that as a response to the recent debates about slavery Bishop Viv (of Bristol) is encouraging the church to:

- Acknowledge and repent of the Church's past involvement in and benefit from the slave trade;
- Challenge and address institutional racism, listening to and learning from the experiences of Black, Asian and minority ethnic people;
- Recruit and support more Black, Asian and minority ethnic clergy, staff and volunteers;
- Make our churches truly welcoming to everyone, taking responsibility for the need for profound cultural change in our Church.
- Work with others in the Diocese of Bristol and the Church of England to bring these things about.

# Church Contact Details

## **ST MARY THE VIRGIN, OLVESTON**

**Rev David Moss**, 01454 415190; email: [mossds@gmail.com](mailto:mossds@gmail.com)

**Rev Steve Oram**, 07830 151622; email: [steve.oram@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:steve.oram@blueyonder.co.uk)

**Verger:** Mrs. June Robbins, 01454 617491

[www.stmarysolveston.org.uk](http://www.stmarysolveston.org.uk)

## **CHAPELRY OF ST JOHN, AUST**

**Focal Minister:** Rev Ann Parker 01291 329569

Email: [annatdibley@btinternet.com](mailto:annatdibley@btinternet.com) or Trevor Cook, 01454 618442.

**Church Wardens:** Jon Burnett 633835 & Jenn Dickens 632035

## **ST MARY DE MALMESBURY, LITTLETON-ON-SEVERN**

**Contact:** Mrs. Tracey Black 01454 417660

## **ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, ELBERTON**

**Contact:** Mrs. Judith Heybyrne 01454 616725

## **OLVESTON AND TOCKINGTON METHODIST CHURCH**

**Contact:** Rev Simon Edwards tel 01454 418176 or email:

[simon.edwards@methodist.org.uk](mailto:simon.edwards@methodist.org.uk)

## **THE VINE House of Prayer** Pilning Street, Awkley

**Contact:** Mike and Barbara Matthews, tel. 07512 917229 or email:

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## **THE OASIS CHURCH, OLD DOWN**

**Contacts:** Jenny Parfitt [jennyparfitt@ymail.com](mailto:jennyparfitt@ymail.com)

Sue Tett [stett56@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:stett56@hotmail.co.uk)

## **AUST EVANGELICAL CHURCH**

**Contact:** Danny Bamfield 01454 419324 or [danny@thebamfields.co.uk](mailto:danny@thebamfields.co.uk)

## **LITTLETON EVANGELICAL CHURCH**

**Contact:** 01454 413247

## **RC CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING, Thornbury -**

**Contact:** 01454 412223 or [www.ctlk-thornbury.org.uk](http://www.ctlk-thornbury.org.uk)

## **SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS), Thornbury**

**Contact:** Brian Hawkins, [hawkinsb863@gmail.com](mailto:hawkinsb863@gmail.com) or 01454 854867

1

## MEETING POINT

At Bank:

T. W. Wadell

14/2/2020

**Dated**

Treasurer

# Churches to Open for Private Prayer



Elberton, St John's Church

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St. John's Church, Elberton

Just as Meeting Point is going to print, it has been announced that Churches will be allowed to open for private prayer. Details that are available at this point include:

St. Mary's Olveston will open two days per week – Wednesdays and Sundays – between 10am and 12noon.

St John's Elberton, St Mary's Littleton, and St John's Aust will open on the second and fourth Sundays of the month between 9am and 10am.

Olveston and Tockington Methodist Church is awaiting guidance from the Methodist Church authorities.

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

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