

Meeting Point



November 2020



Meeting Point

Volume 45, Number 2, November 2020

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

EDITOR:

Marelin Orr-Ewing
Courtlands
Olveston
Bristol BS35 4DU
Tel: 01454 610081
meetingpointeditor@gmail.com

ASSISTANT EDITOR:

Angela Williams
Ashlea
Haw Lane
Olveston
Bristol BS35 4EG
Tel 01454 612850
meetingpointmagazine@gmail.com

ADVERTISING:

Bernard Amos
Tel: 01454 620388
meetingpointadvertising@gmail.com

Publication date
1st of each month

Material for November
2020
to the Editor or Deputy Editor
by 9th November 2020.

From the Editor

The temperature is dropping, leaves are turning from green to yellow, red and brown, and they are beginning to fall. This is the last month of Autumn and yet, on bright dry days, we are still able to enjoy being outdoors. Don't forget that the Olveston Parish Walks leaflets (available from the porch of St. Mary's, Olveston) and noticeboards in Tockington, Old Down and Olveston, are there to help you with ideas for local outings.

Two of our local historians have written articles which give us food for thought this month, at a time when many Remembrance services will be reduced or possibly cancelled. One is about the losses suffered, during WW1, by a family in Northwick – which is just outside the Aust Parish boundary. The other, which is enhanced with memories and anecdotes, tells how the Meeting Point area was affected by bombing raids during 1940 and 1941.

Marelin .

This month's cover picture is by Les Harper.

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.olvostonandaust.com



News from St. Mary's

Debbie Harries

Remembrance Sunday November 8th

Sadly, due to the restrictions this year, we are unable to have a parade service. There will be a minimal service outside at 10.45am, with the reading of The Fallen and the Last Post played by the bugler. Social distancing will be observed.

Advent Windows

Celebrating this Christmas may be a little different this year. So having our annual Advent Windows to light up the village will be even more special. If you would like to create a window for a date in December please contact Debbie Harries for more information: 01454 613273 or email: ofoe-debbie@live.co.uk

Floral Tribute in Tockington

A Tockington village character has passed away at a great age.

Kenny Neale lived on the Green all his life.

He worked on the land and was a gardener for many local people.

He was famous for standing on the corner of the Green waving to every person, cyclist and driver who passed, regardless of whether or not he knew them.

He is buried in the churchyard of St. Mary's, Olveston, alongside his mother, Elsie.



R.I.P Ken 1932 - 2020

Thank You

Fennella Tait would like to thank all those who sent good-will cards, messages and prayers while she was in Hospital and since returning home.

The Empty Grave at Northwick

Nick Fear

It is believed that the first church in Northwick village, dedicated to St. George, dated back to the 11th century. In 1370 a chronicler recorded that it was in ruins and it took until 1840 for a replacement to be built, this time dedicated to St. Thomas. The site on marshland was perhaps unfortunate, as by 1962 subsidence made the building unsafe. After being declared redundant by the diocese it was demolished, although the stout ornate bell tower was left. Today this still stands, guarding the open floor of the church and the graves around it.



On entering the site through a tight gate, a slender white marble headstone almost bars your way and gently asks for attention. Within its pointed top is a beautifully carved military montage. A Gloucestershire Hussar's cap rests below a bright shining star. Diagonally across the face of the panel is a rifle, its action apparently covered in safety, with crossed bandoliers of bullet pouches intertwined with fruiting laurel leaves, the latter symbolic of victory. The lead lettered wording on the stone expands the significance. It reads: *'In loving memory of Francis H Ball. Royal Gloucestershire Hussars who fell in Gallipoli August 21st, 1915. Aged 23 years. Also Alfred J Ball.*

8th Gloucestershire Regiment who fell in France June 14th, 1918 aged 23 years. For ever with the Lord.' The bottom half of the stone is starkly blank, possibly left this way so more names could be added.

Francis Ball had initially worked with his father on their farm in Northwick, but then followed the family blacksmithing trade. He had joined the D Squadron of the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars at Old Down. His blacksmith skills were welcomed and gave him the rank of a shoeing smith. This was an essential and important position for any mounted unit. At the outbreak of war in August 1914, the troop was mobilised and performed home duties at Bury St.

Edmunds, Newbury and Kings Lynn. On the 10th of April 1915 it received orders to go to Egypt. Sailing from Avonmouth as part of a larger Mounted Division, it reached Malta on the 21st. After taking on stores, it proceeded onwards arriving at Alexandria port three days later. Encamped here and later near Cairo, equipment was checked and training undertaken. Acclimatizing through a hot summer tested many, but in August Francis and his comrades returned to Alexandria following orders to go without horses to Gallipoli. Leaving by sea on the 14th of August, they arrived a day later in Mudros, the main harbour of the then Greek island of Lemnos. The troops were taken directly to Suvla Bay on Gallipoli where they billeted on the coast in Kangaroo Rest Camp. After six days it moved further along the coast, bivouacking on the small Lala Baba Hill. This was within sight of the battle lines and under shell fire from Turkish positions ranged high above them in the distance. The next day the troops were ordered forward to capture a small indistinct sandy outcrop marked on the map by a contour, 112. At 3 pm the advance began and neared an exposed mound called Chocolate Hill, where it came under very heavy shrapnel fire from shelling. The hill was passed and Hill 112 sighted, but the attack stalled and at 2 am a withdraw back to Lala Baba was ordered. Casualties were heavy; in the Gloucestershire Yeomanry alone 9 were killed, 49 wounded and 1 man was missing. Amongst these was Francis Ball.

For his family at home the news was heart-breaking. To cause further grief at first Francis was reported as wounded and missing, then to everyone's delight that he was not missing. Silence ensued and it was not until May 1916 that it was finally discovered that he had been killed. Francis had been buried by comrades beside a position known as Green Hill alongside Chocolate Hill. His grave was marked, but its exact position was subsequently lost after Gallipoli had been evacuated. Today his name and unit is carved on an angled flat headstone in the spacious peaceful Green Hill Cemetery, recording that he had been buried there.

Alfred Ball had also worked on the family farm. He had gone to war with the 13th Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment, known as the 'Forest of Dean Pioneers', in March 1916. He had transferred to the 1st Battalion and finally to the 8th. In June 1918 Alfred and his comrades were engaged in fierce fighting with groups of retreating German troops in an area south west of Reims, in France. Records detail confused situations, many men had simply disappeared in action. We now know that in June at least 33 men of the 8th Battalion were killed and one of these was Alfred. The news which reached his family was terrible and once again inconclusive as Alfred was 'missing'. At this time many men had been hospitalised in haste or taken as prisoners of war, so there was a chance he had survived. It was not until 1920 that a battlefield grave was discovered. Four men had been buried by French troops, marked with crosses captioned for unknown British soldiers. When the bodies were

disinterred three men remained unknown, but Alfred was identified by his uniform and identity bracelet. He was buried with care in Marfleux British Cemetery, not far from where he fell. Marfleux British Cemetery is on a small green hill in open windswept countryside. Like Green Hill Cemetery on Gallipoli it has no wall around it. It seems highly likely that the Ball family sang the much-loved hymn, 'There is a green hill far away without a city wall' at St Thomas's. How poignant that this had a tragic connection to the fate of Francis and Alfred. Both men are commemorated on the Pilning War Memorial.



Today the tower of St. Thomas's is in a perilous condition and needs expensive restoration, which is being considered by local councils. It is hoped that it will be renovated and not demolished.

Francis and Albert's stone is described as the, 'war memorial', in the parish cemetery records. Whatever happens, this unique memorial should always mark the empty grave at Northwick, for future generations to remember two local men's ultimate sacrifice.

The tower of St. Thomas' with the headstone in the foreground.

Jim Hallett

During lockdown, after a fight with cancer, Jim Hallett of Elberton sadly passed away. His funeral was on the 26th June at St. John's Elberton, but numbers had to be limited. Jim was a popular local figure, so many people stood at the entrances of their houses, waving, as a tractor took Jim's coffin from his home down to the graveyard.



Oveston Parish Council

Pat Savage

Monthly Meetings

The Council continues to hold its monthly meetings via Zoom. Members of the public may attend the meetings by accessing the relevant codes which are shown at the top of the Agenda. This is posted on the website forty-eight hours prior to the meeting. Please inform the Clerk if you are attending by email: clerk@olvestonparishcouncil.gov

New Councillor

The Council is very pleased to announce the appointment of Tony Turnbull as a Councillor. Tony has lived in the Parish for over forty years. His roles in the community include being a founder member of The Countryside Group and Membership Secretary for Thornbury U3A. He has been a past Editor of Meeting Point. Welcome Tony! We do need to recruit two more Councillors, By the time you receive this publication you will have received a flyer urging you to consider becoming a Councillor, illustrating the benefits to be enjoyed and the contributions which can be made to Parish life.

Speed Watch

This has now commenced under the guidance and enthusiasm of Martin Gibson. At the time of going to press, the exercise had been carried out at the bottom of both Washingpool Hill and Old Down Hill. In time we hope to install a 'smiley face' sign.

Road Traffic Survey

The Council has now received a report from the Group who have made a series of recommendations highlighting the problems encountered in the surrounding villages. Once the Parish Council has approved the recommendations, the report will be sent to South Glos. Council for implementation of a wider Consultation.



Oveston CEVC Primary School

'Rooted in Love'

Is your child starting school in September 2021?

If you would like to look around our beautiful school, we are able to offer families a one-to-one tour. These tours will be socially distanced and will take place outside the normal school day. Tours are available throughout November on every Monday and Thursday evening. Tours are by appointment only, please contact the school office to make your booking: 01454 613299



What our Year 6 School Ambassadors say:

'I want to show everyone how amazing Oveston School is!' Daisy

I am really supportive of this school. I have been here for 7 years and I've loved it.' Evie

RESPECT * KINDNESS * FRIENDSHIP * HAPPINESS * COURAGE * SUCCESS



ST MARY'S CHURCH TOWER RESTORATION PROJECT

St Mary's Church Tower Restoration Project

Our church has always been the focus of village life, not only for worship, but also for community and family events and even as a safe place in times of danger.

The Normans built the church's tower as a landmark in the Severn Vale; adding its spire made it even more visible; with its bells and with its clock marking the time made it the best way of contacting everyone and at a distance.

After the fire in 1605 when the spire burnt and the 'five sweet bells' crashed down, St Mary's church ceased to be seen or to be heard; the village had lost its visibility; its time-keeper and its 'voice'.

The first article of our series described the awful disasters happening at the time. The second considered what sort of spire St Mary's might have had. This article is about how St Mary's 'voice' was replaced, since, like the building, bells and their associated clocks must be used, maintained, and occasionally replaced at great cost.

St Mary's 'Voice'

Peter Floyd

Bells - Then

1605 The tower was known to have had bells since medieval times, probably rung by chiming - pulled by ropes through a small arc and possibly from the crossing floor as happened at Almondsbury, and as can still be done on one Olveston bell today. Bells could have been replaced in the repaired tower, but the protection of the church building after the fire by reroofing would have been most urgent - and much cheaper without spire or bells, helping its rapid rebuilding in only one year- by 1606. There were continuing references to work in the belfry and the provision of an access stair, but no record of bells. This may have been partly due to the development at about that time of the new idea of full circle ringing, where the bells are swung through almost 360 degrees as it is today. 95 percent of bells rung full circle in the world are in English churches - 6000 of them!

1732 Over 100 years after the fire, a new peal of five bells was cast by W M Evans of Chepstow. The perils of ferrying the bells across the Severn may well be imagined and it is said that Elberton once lost two bells in the river.

1774 The Feofees (an ancient church charity, of which more in later articles) recorded that *'the loft immediately under the bells be ceiled'*, presumably to avoid deafening the ringers, (the sound proofed ceiling is three feet thick) whilst the Vestry minute book records that *'ringers and singers shall have 12s to spend, one half in Tockington and the other half in Olveston'*, perhaps at The Bell, a popular beer house in Olveston at the time, possibly in what is now Cromwell House.

1811 A sixth bell was added from London. Major works were carried out to the church in 1840 and again in 1887-9 - but not to the tower. By the time of the church's grand re-opening in 1889 it had become clear that the bells, belfry and tower pinnacles all needed urgent attention as well. This was once again carried out with help from the Feofees, who in 1891 accepted an estimate of £45 *'for repairs to the 4 pinnacles ...the work to be carried out without delay'*. We have no details as yet of what was done and hope they may emerge during this project.

1906 The Feofees accepted *'an estimate from Mr J Sully of Stogumber to convert the present 6 heavy bells into a peal of 8 bells and to frame them so as to protect the tower from further injury'*. Imagine the difficulty of lowering the

bells 60ft down to the floor, one by one, and transporting them to the railway station by cart, each transfer taking a whole day. The new 8 bell peal was supported by the massive structural engineering necessary to cope with three and a half tons of swinging metal. There was great rejoicing in the village when the new bells were raised in the old tower for the first time, with much competition among the village young to learn to ring, so that for many years there was a waiting list. The photograph on the left shows the smallest bell, inscribed 'Glory to God in the Highest'.



1940s During the Second World War the bells and clock were silenced by the government. In 1942 an open peal was rung by the authority of the Prime

Minister in thanksgiving for victory in the Battle of Britain and the Battle of Egypt. Sending messages by bells still took place. Percy Addis said that his

father 'on hearing of a death in the parish would go to the church tower and toll : 3 for a child; 2 for a male, or 1 for a female, followed by about 10 minutes on the tenor or Passing Bell', which always caused concern in the village as to who might have died".

Bells - Now

Olveston is lucky to have such a fine eight bell peal since there are only 20 towers in the country with 8 bells, which are highly regarded by visiting ringers for their smooth action and fine sound. Bell Captain, Philip Coward, with Olveston Ringers and with others from Tytherington, ring the bells before Sunday morning services and for many other national and local occasions.



Bell Ringers in Action, 1953

In normal times the ringers practice their skills on a Friday evening, but only until 9pm to avoid annoying the neighbours. It takes less than three seconds for all eight bells to ring, beginning with Rounds, each bell being rung in turn, before moving on to more complex changes, each with its own name such as Cambridge Surprise Minor. A Full Peal requires 5000 changes and takes over three hours, non- stop, on all eight bells. Whilst ringers often find the mathematical complexities of ringing fascinating, Quarter Peals are a lot more popular! When pandemic restrictions are lifted, and it is safe to do so, anyone wishing to learn will be welcome in the tower, ensuring that the bells will continue to ring out across Olveston and the Severn valley as they have done for over 400 years.

Churches and belfries have been closed during the pandemic and the bells silenced, but if you would like to hear St Mary's 'voice' again, please follow this link: <https://youtu.be/BxerOjWLZh8> or go to the St Mary's website: www.stmarysolveston and in the search box enter 'bells'.

Facts for this article have been provided by Jennifer Bone, Eric Garrett and Rodney Williams

How to donate

David Prothero

A big thank you to all who have donated so generously in response to the appeal published in the September and October editions of Meeting Point. We have so far received donations from 18 individuals and companies, totalling just under £9,000. This is a wonderful response at a time when fundraising is very difficult and takes the total amount raised to date, including grants, to almost £175,000. We intend to look in more detail in the December edition at the many ways in which the generosity of the community has kept the roof on and the church up to date for at least the past 400 years.

As a reminder, if you would like to help, donations can be made in one of the following ways:

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

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

If you wish to Gift Aid your donation, please e-mail me at: diprothero@talk21.com. Many thanks.

Friends of St. Mary's

The prize winners in the October draw, held on 8th October 2020 were:

Amount	Number	Name
£150	556	Mrs S Chick, Olveston
£75	173	Mrs B Morgan, Tockington
£25	206	Mrs G Olewicz, Ceredigion
£25	396	Mrs I Phillips, Olveston
£25	229	Miss J Davies, Olveston
£20	180	Mrs S Farr, Olveston
£20	176	Mrs D Hedges, Pilning
£20	413	Mr R Lloyd, Tockington

£10	286	Mr R Thorne, Dorchester
£10	345	Mrs C Mason, Tockington
£10	369	Mrs E Screen, Rudgeway
£10	200	Dr D Shaw, Olveston

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

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

Old Down Cricket Club

Tony Gardner
07889 727729

150 Club Winners October 2020:

£50	Bill Finch
£15	Neil Cross
£5	Greg Welsher

Latest £25 Bonus Ball Winners:

12/09/20	Richard Panes
26/09/20	Diane Grosvenor
03/10/20	Paddy Gardner

Up the Down!!



Did You Know?

Many brands of tea bags have some plastic in them. Here are some examples:

Those *with* plastic include Tetley's, Twinings and Yorkshire.

Those *without* plastic are PG Tips, Clipper and Pukka.

Have you thought of reverting to canned pet food instead of pouches?

Richard Powell

Pat Thirkettle

Richard was born in Wembley and when he was two, the family moved to Henleaze, but not before he remembers his grandmother holding him up to see an airship. His father ran a butcher's shop with his mother's help, so Richard and his sister had a maid to look after them. Richard remembers being woken up to see the Aurora Borealis, and on another occasion the maid was talking to someone about the Albert Hall and Richard piped up 'Daddy goes there', meaning the local pub....actually his father went to the abattoir! He remembers going with his school to wave to King George VI and Queen Elizabeth as they drove past. One day while playing at Horfield School he managed to get his head stuck in the railings; luckily two men prized them apart and twenty years later Richard stopped at the scene and they were still bent! Like most families they had an air raid shelter outside which he remembers being rather full of relatives; the family moved to Sea Mills and he doesn't remember being frightened by the bombs which were not too dangerous out of the city centre.

Eventually the family moved to Redwick to get away from the bombing, where they rented three rooms in our Assistant Editor's father's farmhouse. Richard's father sold his shop and became a meat allocator (rationing continued until 1954) and left home each day at 4am. Richard was very happy in Redwick, as he was allowed to have twelve sheep that grazed the farm's three orchards and he was taught how to handle dipping, worming and lambing. He had to drive them three miles for dipping, which was tricky as they kept running up and down the banks of the deep rhines. When he got there the farmer realised there was a pet lamb among them and advised Richard to walk in front with the now grown up lamb on the way back and the sheep easily followed.

Richard cycled to All Saints School in Clifton every day, except if very wet, when he caught the train from Severn Beach. He left school at sixteen and worked in the family's grocery business until National Service. This took him to Egypt, Palestine and Libya. In Egypt they swam in the Great Bitter Lake, which was good, if rather salty. One day he and a friend were walking over the barren terrain to the lake when they came across a woman in labour. His friend went for help, but Richard stayed and delivered the baby, using his lambing experience. He reckons he was very naive, and the others took the mickey out of him until the time they encouraged him to have a boxing match expecting him to lose. What they didn't know was that he had had boxing lessons and he went on to win seventeen matches.

After the army Richard worked as a buyer for the family grocery business but soon tired of it and looked for other jobs. He applied to the Police, went to train at Hendon, but failed the eye test. Next, he trained at Wakefield to be a Prison Officer but hated it and left after two weeks. Finally, he tried the Fire Service, passed the exam but there was a three year wait to join Bristol Fire Service,



so he became a butcher in his uncle's shop in Bishopston. His family helped him buy a butcher's shop on Gloucester Road which was successful until he turned it into a mini supermarket and was robbed by all and sundry, which was upsetting as many were former customers. He moved into partnership with Spar but really wanted to sell meat, so the family company bought a shop in Stoke Lodge. He had married Pat, who did the books for him at the Gloucester Road shop, and her son Roger eventually took over the Stoke Lodge shop when Richard and Pat moved to Alveston to open the butcher's shop when the Parade was being built.

Eventually he installed a manager there because he thought he wanted to be a Bookmaker. He was good at figures and had a lifelong interest in horse racing so, having formed a partnership with a friend, they looked at betting shops to buy. However, what they saw killed the idea; they realised that their potential customers were betting above their means and it all felt wrong.

In 1970 he saw the butcher's shop in Olveston for sale. Roger bought their house in Alveston and helped in the Olveston shop, Mike Perry bought the Alveston shop and Richard and Pat moved to Olveston. Initially the business was not popular; the shop was old-fashioned; it had been delivering and giving credit up to £15,000. Richard stopped this and trade halved but it soon became profitable. In 2001 Richard retired and he and Pat moved over the road to Rose Cottage. Unfortunately, Roger then had a heart attack so Richard came out of retirement and ran the shop with part time assistants that some readers will remember - Julie Arkey and Rebecca Bailey. Pat died in 2006 and the next year Richard sold the business to Scot Edmonds, and finally retired.

Retirement meant more opportunity for racing at Cheltenham, Chepstow, Bath and Wincanton; nowadays he watches it on TV and bets with himself, usually in the black! He has done two Alpha courses and enjoys reading. His carers come every day and they love him because he is so easy. Every birthday he used to hold 'Open House' which was always bursting, sadly no longer possible. However, friends and relations regularly beat a path to his door and they always receive a great welcome.

What is it?

Nick Fear



Walking along the grass verge between the road and the football pitch at Old Down, I came across a hole in the turf.

It is about 20 centimetres in diameter (8 inches in old measurements.)

The construction is very purposeful, with a metal outer lined with an inner metal sleeve.

Across the centre is a hinged metal bar with a hole as if it once supported a pole or other upright structure. Does anyone know what this is?

Where is it?

These two photographs were taken within four miles of the Parish Hall in Tockington. Do you know where they are?



Almondsbury's Spire and Tower

Gerry Annis
Almondsbury Steeplekeeper

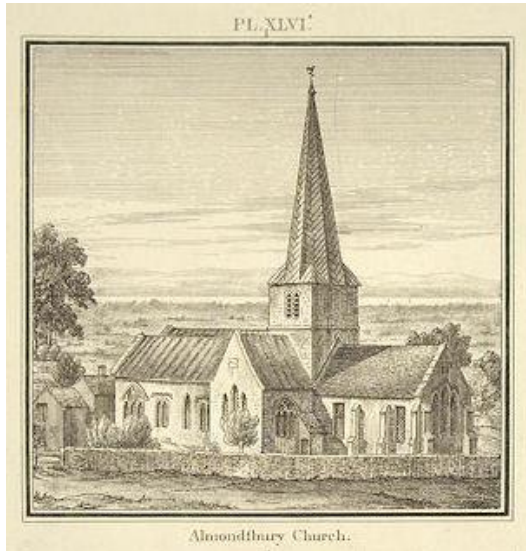
I read with interest Peter Floyds beautifully illustrated article in last month's Meeting Point '*St Marys Tower – What might have happened?*' and took another look at what had happened to Almondsbury's spire and tower. The lead covered timber framed twisted spire at St Mary's Almondsbury is fairly unique in its design, I am led to believe it is called 'broached.'

The spire was not without its problems and in the autumn of 1923, it became evident to the incumbent Canon G R Wood that it was in need of some attention. In February 1924, a full report on its condition was made by Mr Hartland Thomas the Diocesan Architect which was laid before the PCC who decided that there was no alternative but to go ahead and do what was necessary. On Michaelmas Day 1924 a parish meeting was held in the school at which general approval was given to the PCC plans and Mrs Chester-Master started the fund raising by launching a £3 card scheme. By Michaelmas day of the following year Canon Wood was able to announce at the Parish meeting that £1,350 had been given or promised.

Work started and the entire covering of lead was taken off, a matter of one and a quarter tons, recast and refitted. When the lead had been removed it was possible to see inside more clearly it was discovered that some of the main beams had rotted to a greater extent than previously imagined, the spire was indeed in a dangerous condition and the work had not been taken in hand a day too soon. The entire structure of the spire was greatly reinforced by the addition of several new beams and the insertion of 4 oak columns 10" square and 30 feet long supported by new concrete corbels in the belfry greatly enhanced its stability. The work took over a year to complete and the total cost was nearly £1,700 paid for entirely by public participation.

Until 1836 the bells were rung from the crossing under the tower. The choir up until this time was at the singing gallery above the West door and the organ was in the Nave. By that time Almondsbury had eight bells. In 1816 the roofs of the North and South transepts were lowered. A window with 2 lights in the North and an access door in the South were inserted into the tower walls above the new roofs level. An octagonal ashlar turret stair was built with a connecting walkway to the door with wooden steps down to a new floor level and thus the ringing room was created.

I imagine that the arrangement for ringing the bells at St. Marys, Olveston, was similar and that the installation of a clock necessitated a clock room to be created with access for the clock winder. This then led to the building of a turret stair and the creation of a ringing room.



The etching (left) of 1791 by Samuel Lysons shows the sundial on the south face of the transept above the 3 light lancet windows. The pitch of the roof above it was lowered during 1814-1816 to its present-day position. This was done to allow a door to be inserted to provide external access to the clock and later the ringing room. A lean-to porch, which covered the exit door which the ringers used after ringing, was subsequently filled in when the octagonal turret staircase was built in the corner between the transept

and the chancel. The etching shows the arrangement before all this work was done, and maybe at a time when the sundial was the only means of telling the time.

Local Food - What's So Good About That?

How can we best respond to concerns about the environmental impact of what we eat? One of the best ways is to buy local produce. But is local better than organic? What about all the plastic in a poly tunnel? Where does gin stand in the ethical line-up?

Two local groups, Climate Action Thornbury and Surroundings (CATS), which is part of Sustainable Thornbury, and the Thornbury and District Make Poverty History group are coming together to organise an online celebration of local food and drink.

The event will mark both One World Week and Ethical Consumption week, which were both held towards the end of October and aimed to highlight the benefits of shopping locally, both for us and the wider international community.

The event will take place on Zoom on Monday 2nd Nov, from 7:30 - 9:00pm and will feature local suppliers, producers and growers. After a short presentation from each, there will be time for questions and debate. All are welcome to join - if you'd like to, please email: danny_bonnett@yahoo.co.uk

Landing Ground at Old Down Eric Garrett

Did you know that Olveston Parish played a part in the Battle of Britain? Read on to find out more.....

In the 1930s Bristol Aeroplane Company had a flying school, training young men for a pilot's licence. Part of the training included flying Tiger Moth biplanes from the 501 Squadron, which was based on the airfield at Patchway and emergency landing was part of the training.

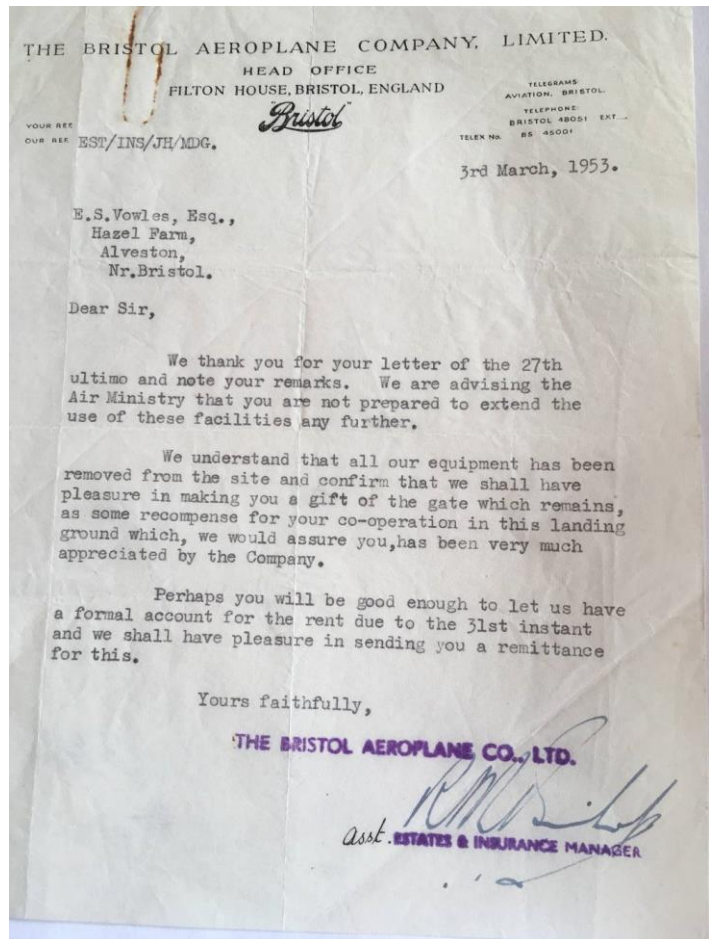
Bristol Aeroplane Company had a written agreement with Edwin Vowles of Hazel Farm, Old Down, to allocate some 35 acres of grass land for use as a landing strip alongside the Vattingsstone Road.

The land was very flat and with no obstacles or trees, as the training involved circuits of landings followed by instant take-offs.

The farmer was notified of each landing exercise so that all animals could be removed from the landing zone.

This landing strip was in use for some 18 years and ceased in 1953 when Edwin Vowles decided to retire from farming.

Many of the young pilots trained at the Bristol Aeroplane Company flying school took part in the Battle of Britain in 1940.



Bonfires

An item for Meeting Point arrived last month, just too late to be included in the October magazine. It drew attention to the fact that, on a number of occasions in the Old Down and Olveston areas, bonfires had been lit in the daytime. When the weather was better, with windows open, washing out, and people spending more time in their gardens this was a nuisance and for those with chronic breathing conditions it was much more serious. Although it is not against the law to light bonfires in the daytime, some consideration for neighbours would be appreciated by many.

November 5th is, of course, Guy Fawkes Night when, traditionally, there are fireworks and bonfires. In recent years organised displays have begun to replace smaller events in back gardens. This year, however, with the restrictions on gatherings of more than six people, large events have been cancelled and families may decide to run something for themselves. Bonfires can be a risk for wildlife and, if Meeting Point readers are considering having a family Guy Fawkes party, then the following websites offer useful guidance, and are worth checking out before you proceed:

<https://wildlifeambulance.org/wildlife-bonfire-worries/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/blog/2012/nov/05/bonfire-night-protect-wildlife>

<https://news.rspca.org.uk/2018/11/02/remember-remember-to-check-no-wildlife-is-hiding-in-your-bonfire-rspca-plea/>

Christmas Trees

Nordman fir 'Super Premium' Christmas Trees supplied by Frenchay Forestry will be on sale at Olveston School on Friday 4th and Saturday 5th December.

In line with current guidelines, and to ensure social distancing, we will be offering time slots to collect your tree. We may also be able to offer delivery for £2 per tree – ideal for those self-isolating. If you would like to pre-order a tree, then please email: foospta@gmail.com or contact the School Office on 01454 613299

Size (cm)	Size (ft)	Price
150 - 175 cm	5ft	£30.00
175 - 200cm	6ft	£35.00
200 - 225 cm	7ft	£40.00

By buying your Christmas Tree through us, you are helping to raise much needed funds for the School. Thank you!

World War Two: Local Air Raids

Eric Garrett

With the commemoration of 80 years since the start of air raids over our country, what follows are details and memories of some of the raids that directly affected the Meeting Point area and its immediate surroundings.

August 28/29, 1940, 2 high explosive bombs fell in the farmyard at Hill Farm, Ingst. Stan Livall and his wife had just arrived home and were inside the front door, which shattered with breaking glass. A crater of 20 feet in diameter and 12 feet deep was made in the farmyard, the rear wall of the house was cracked, there were gaps in the roof and shattered windows, an outhouse was badly damaged and the car they arrived home in was lifted over a 6 feet high wall and was left balanced on its radiator. A second car was buried beneath debris. Ingst road was blocked for many hours with farmyard debris, stones, and tiles. Two air raid wardens were the first to arrive on the scene and they heard a low humming noise coming from a spot near the crater. After checking the house for injured or trapped persons, they returned to the humming noise, to discover it came from the buried car horn by pressure of the rubble. The only casualty was one duck wounded. This was the first night that bombs fell within Olveston Parish, which tested all the emergency services.

August 30/31, 1940, Cattybrook Brick Works received 30 incendiary bombs, causing slight damage. At Aust, two bombs fell, one tight to the Church tower that caused a split to the tower. The damage was estimated at £400/500. The other bomb fell opposite at Hill House, some 15 yards from the front door. George Wood, County Councillor, and his wife had been standing in the garden some 10 yards from where the bomb fell.

September 3/4, 1940, one bomb fell behind The Brake, Fern Hill (Vicarage Lane) causing damage to the property. Nearby was the emergency wooden hut for Home Guard night duty, it was thought that a light was showing which caused the bomb to be dropped.

September 19/20, 1940, with no air raid warning and with the car ferry in operation, mines were dropped both ends of the Aust to Beachley ferry at 19.20 to 19.35 hours.

September 25, 1940, the first major daylight raid occurred at 11.40 hours on the aircraft factory at Filton and Patchway. 58 Heinkel 111s caused substantial damage, dropping 168 bombs that resulted in 91 workmen killed and 200 injured. 5 of the aircraft were shot down as they returned to base.



Olveston School senior boys had been allocated jobs to assist with the war effort. (*The picture above is from another part of the country but shows how schoolchildren helped out.*) On September 25th we were all picking up potatoes at Church Farm, Elberton, and could see the air raid taking place. After dropping all their bombs, the aeroplanes headed in our direction. The farmer, Jack Vowles of Green Farm, Olveston Green, slightly panicked and shouted to us all to run to the hedge and squat in the ditch. Running over the potato mounds caused many to fall. The aeroplanes were so low the pilots could be seen. Everyone escaped without injury. The horse pulling the potato unearthing machine remained unattended in the field.

November 28/19,1940, 2 parachute mines fell on Sunday morning on Olveston Common at 00.03 hours. One exploded, damaging 25 houses and the Church. The tail cap of the mine was found half a mile from the crater which was 15 feet deep and 24 feet in diameter.

During the Sunday virtually all the parishioners viewed the crater and the unexploded mine in an adjoining field. Police Special Constables were on duty to stop visitors from touching the mine. When the mine disposal team arrived on the Monday to remove it, they were horrified to hear that people had been walking around the mine. All the villagers living on The Common were evacuated until the mine was removed. When the lorry carrying the defused mine arrived at the top of Church Hill, a large group of villagers applauded the men on board.

January 2/3,1941, Without warning of an impending air raid, 2 high explosive bombs fell at Aust at 03.20 hours, demolishing a cottage opposite the Boar's Head Inn. The occupant, Albert Tudor, was on fire watching duty at Villa Farm and his wife, for the first time, had decided to visit her husband whilst he was on duty, which resulted in no casualties. The cottage was reduced to rubble leaving only the rear wall standing. Many windows of the Boar's Head were shattered.

April 3 /4,1941, 2 bombs fell on Littleton at 23.00 hours.

April 4/5,1941, 4 bombs fell near Cattybrook Brick Works at 23.45 hours. One incendiary bomb fell at Awkley House, Tockington, home of James Millard at 23.00 hours with little damage.

May 3 /4,1941, 2 bombs fell at the end of Catherine Hill in fields along Awkley Lane (now part of the motorway) at 23.15 hours.

June 14/15,1941, A one-hour air raid at the start of a Sunday morning from up the Severn estuary. 28 high explosive bombs fell on Olveston Parish, 6 fell close to Merebrook cottage, Tockington Lane, at 01.03 hours, 7 to the west of Port Farm, Hardy Lane, Tockington, which blocked the road and severed telephone cables at 01.24 hours.

15 bombs fell on Olveston village in different locations. Several bombs fell at Port Farm, Catherine Hill, and across the road into an orchard. A bomb exploded in the farmyard that caused damage to the farm buildings, machinery, and the occupier Jack Whelpton's car. A bomb fell at the market garden of Lower Hawleaze that borders New Road, destroying a storage barn, a lorry and all the greenhouses on the site. The two adjoining dwellings received slight damage. The lorry was loaded with strawberries and spring vegetables, ready for Harold Haskins - the owner - to take to Bristol market that morning.

A string of bombs also fell across fields at Olveston Court to Ley Lane at 00.50 hours. Cyril John Bowkett aged 18 (known as Jim Fowler, an adopted son of the Fowler family living on Olveston Common) was returning home after attending a dance at the Parish Hall, was killed by blast of the last bomb by the horse pool.

Books for Christmas

Tony Cherry

Two of the bestselling books at Thornbury and District Museum tell the stories of the local salmon fishing industry and of Thornbury Castle. Because of current restrictions, the museum has not been open since March, but the books are still available by special arrangement. If you're trying to think of Christmas presents for yourself, for local family, or for people at a distance (to whom you could post them), these books would be great for anyone with an interest in the history of this area.

'The Glorious Uncertainty: Salmon Fishing in the River Severn' charts the story of a local industry which flourished for many hundreds of years and



rapidly disappeared within the last 50 years. The book was written by Nick Large, who sadly died shortly before its publication. Nick studied the fishing methods for over twenty years and accumulated an

extraordinary wealth of knowledge which is displayed within the book. He describes, in an engaging style, five different ways that commercial fishermen went about their trade. It is illustrated with over 100 stunning photographs.

'Thornbury Castle Revisited' tells the story of Thornbury Castle throughout its 500 year history, as well as the



preceding 250 years when the Stafford family were accumulating sufficient wealth and a high enough position in society to build a castle. Next year marks the 500th anniversary of the execution of its builder, Edward Stafford, third Duke of Buckingham, by Henry VIII. The story of Stafford's beheading - and of the same fate that befell his father, a grandson

and a great grandson - are told within the book, along with accounts of others associated with the Castle who met a similar grisly end.

Both books are available by post, each priced £20 plus postage and packing, or by collection.

Please email:

enquiries@thornburymuseum.org.uk



Yours Faithfully

Revd. David Moss,

Vicar, Olveston, Alveston, Littleton, Elberton and Aust.

On Wednesday last week I wandered to the village shop in Alveston, with the dog, to collect our daily paper. Recently, the Post Office within the shop has re-opened and we have all been very grateful. When I finally got a chance to look past the headlines, I noticed an article on the importance of community buildings to the life of a community. It seems that as the Corona Virus continues its grip on the nation, we are waking up to the sense of identity that local parks, churches, village halls, shops, schools, pubs, and doctors' surgeries, give to our communities.

At the Annual General Meeting at St. John's, Aust, one of their questions was about St. Mary's, Littleton, because they had heard across the fields that the church's future in Littleton was uncertain. Of course, the nature of the church in many villages has had to change. In some villages the church has had to become a community hall, village shop, or post office during the week and church on Sunday in order to survive.

In Alveston many have spoken about the sad loss of the Cross Hands pub which had closed before I arrived. The future of village pubs, in most cases is in the hands of the breweries, but the future of the village church is in the hands of the village community. Please get in touch with me if you would like to support your village church.

Church News

Details are believed correct at the time of printing. Please use contact details provided for further information.

ST MARY the VIRGIN, OLVESTON

Nov 1	10am 4pm	Holy Communion Evensong	Rev Steve Oram TBA
Nov 8*	10.45am	Remembrance Service at War Memorial	Rev Steve Oram
Nov 15	10am 4pm	Morning Prayer Holy Communion	Rev Steve Oram Rev David Moss
Nov 22	10am	Holy Communion	Rev Steve Oram
Nov 29	10am	Holy Communion	Rev Steve Oram

Every Wednesday 10am: Holy Communion with Rev Steve Oram

*On Nov 8th, there will be no Remembrance service in Church. The road will be closed.

Contacts: Rev Steve Oram, 07830 151622 email:

steve.oram@blueyonder.co.uk & Rev David Moss, 01454 415190 email:

mossds@gmail.com

CHAPELRY OF ST JOHN, AUST

Nov 8	10am	Remembrance Service	Trevor Cook
Nov 22	10am	Holy Communion	Trevor Cook

Contact: Trevor Cook, 01454 618442

Church Wardens: Jon Burnett 633835 & Jenn Dickens 632312

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, ELBERTON

Nov 8	9am	Morning Prayer	Judith Heybyrne
Nov 22	9am	Holy Communion	Rev David Moss

Contact: Mrs Judith Heybyrne 01454 616725

ST MARY DE MALMESBURY, LITTLETON-ON-SEVERN

NB. There will be no services in November

Contacts: Mrs Tracey Black 417660 & Tim Pyper 416422

OLVESTON AND TOCKINGTON METHODIST CHURCH

All services are at Olveston

Nov 1	10am	Morning Worship with Holy Communion	Rev Simon Edwards
Nov 8	10.45am	Remembrance Service at the War Memorial	Rev Steve Oram
Nov 15	10am	Morning Worship	Mr Trevor Cook
Nov 22	10am	Morning Worship	Miss Rosemary Clews
Nov 29	10am	Morning Worship	Mr Peter Jones

CONTACT: Rev Simon Edwards tel 01454 418176, email:

simon.edwards@methodist.org.uk

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

Meetings on Sundays at 10.30am and 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 2.30.

Contact: Mike and Barbara Matthews: 07512 917229 or email:

thevine_awkley@hotmail.com

THE OASIS CHURCH, OLD DOWN

Services each Sunday at 6.30pm. Speakers to be arranged

Contacts: Jenny Parfitt, *jennyparfitt@ymail.com* & Sue Tett,

stett56@hotmail.co.uk

AUST EVANGELICAL CHURCH

Contact: Danny Bamfield, 01454 419324 email: *danny@thebamfields.co.uk*

LITTLETON EVANGELICAL CHURCH

Contact: Danny Bamfield, 01454 419324 email: *danny@thebamfields.co.uk*

RC CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING, Thornbury

Contact: 01454 412223, www.ckk-thornbury.org.uk

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS), Thornbury

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

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.olvostonandaust.com. If you would like to update your organisation's details, please email: meetingpointsecretary@olvostonandaust.com

Advertisements Neither Meeting Point, its editor, nor management committee accept any responsibility or give any guarantee in case of any dispute or claim as to quality, condition or delivery of commodities or services advertised in this magazine. It is not to be taken that publication implies recommendation. It is always advisable to check prices when ordering goods or services.

Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the editor or Meeting Point magazine.

Copyright Meeting Point 2020. Copyright remains with the author(s) and Meeting Point. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form without the prior permission of the copyright owners.

Meeting Point is printed by Motion Printing Ltd.