

Focal Point

£1

September 2021

**A visitor to the
churchyard**



**St Mary's Church Fête
is on 11 September —
Full details inside.**

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Focal Point

Bitton Churches' Magazine

September 2021

*A monthly church newsletter serving
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Upton Cheney & Beach*

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*Deadline for the October
magazine is:*

Friday 17 September 2021

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Churchyard*** by Andrew Harris

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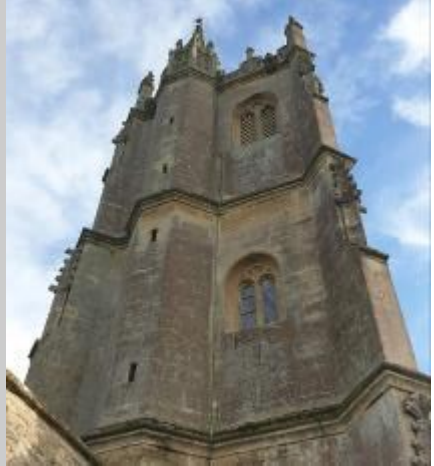
20 Westcourt Drive, Oldland Common

- Churches & Services -



**ST MARY'S
CHURCH,
BITTON**

www.stmarysbitton.org.uk



Vicar:

Rev Jeremy Andrew
The Vicarage, Warmley
0117 967 2724

Ordained minister:

Rev Richard Humphrey
Splinters, Kenilworth Drive
Willsbridge **0117 949 0502**

Lay ministers:

Ken Gibson, 8 Church Road,
Bitton
0117 932 2122

Churchwardens:

Pete Midgley
30 Kenilworth Drive, Willsbridge
0117 932 6898

David Bailey, Westover,
Bath Road, Bitton
0117 932 8949

Jacqui Harris
29 St Anne's Drive, Wick
0117 937 4706

Services for SEPTEMBER 2021

Services at St Mary's

While we continue to take care about the number of people attending services, there is no longer any requirement to book beforehand.

Sunday, 5 September

Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity
10.30 Parish Communion

Sunday, 12 September

Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity
10.30 PATRONAL FESTIVAL CELEBRATION FOR ALL THE FAMILY

Sunday, 19 September

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity
10.30 Morning Worship

Sunday, 26 September

Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity
08.00 Holy Communion
09.30 Family Café Church

From the Register



Sunday 25th July Holy Matrimony:

Clare Pearce and Richard Humphris

Sunday 8th August Holy Baptism

Charley Gordon Comley



**UPTON CHEYNEY
United Reformed Church**



Services for September 2021

Sunday services are at 3pm

Preachers for September:

Sunday 5th John Creech

Sunday 12th Steve Britten - Church Anniversary

Sunday 19th TBA

Sunday 26th Janet Donnelly

**In addition, there will be a coffee afternoon at 2pm on
Tuesday September 28th**

St Mary's Matters

If you find yourself in church either at a Sunday morning service or on fête day, have a look around the walls for some funny looking squares made up of little dots. They are QR codes and each one links to a short video clip on YouTube, explaining about an object nearby. If you have a smartphone or tablet with you, use the code to watch the video and find out about one of the many historical artefacts around the church. There are ten of them at the moment and there are plans to produce more. You may even recognise the voice of the person speaking as each one is being read by a member of the congregation. They have all been produced using our own local talent – writers, readers, sound and video editors – and thanks are due to all those who have contributed to the team effort.



Pete Midgley

Mentioning the fête reminds me that it is encouraging to find church and village activities continuing to return to normal, the fête being one of them. As the fête is later in the month than usual it's quite likely you will be reading this before it happens. May I take this opportunity to encourage you to support the fête and help make Saturday 11th September a memorable occasion.

Another church activity which is making a successful comeback is Family Café Church. We had two children and their families at the service in July and 10 children and their families at the August service. If you know anyone with pre-school age children please let them know they will be very welcome. The next service will be at 9.30 on 26th September.

Continued overleaf

Focal Point, September 2021

Family Parade service (second Sunday) is having a makeover and will be Café style at the back of church (at 10.30) starting in September. The 14th November will be Remembrance Sunday and will be a formal Remembrance service.

As ever you will be welcome at any of our services.

Pete Midgley



St Mary's Family Café Church

Fourth Sunday of the month at 9.30 am

An informal café style event with time to relax and listen to music from keyboard and flute. Café Church is designed for families with primary and pre-school children. A Bible story is followed by a craft session and refreshments are available throughout.



**Join us on
Sunday
26
September**



**Royal British Legion Bitton
and Oldland Branch**

**Harvest Auction
Monday 6 September
at 8.00 pm at
The Upton Inn
Upton Cheyney**

by kind invitation of
Theresa and Chris Meaker

Auctioneer David Hawking
and featuring Oldland Brass

Have a wonderful night!

Proceeds in aid of the
Royal British Legion

Auction purchases payable by
cheque or cash please

Vicar's Letter

Enough



Dear Friends,

It is with the greatest sadness that I write here the news that Margaret Fletcher has died. It is tribute to her warm and friendly character that I can write about her in all three of our parish magazines as she was known and loved by people across the benefice. Margaret's quiet wisdom, warmth and openness drew many to become friends and encouraged many to give life a try in various ways. She will be much missed by our church community and much further beyond it.



Margaret Fletcher

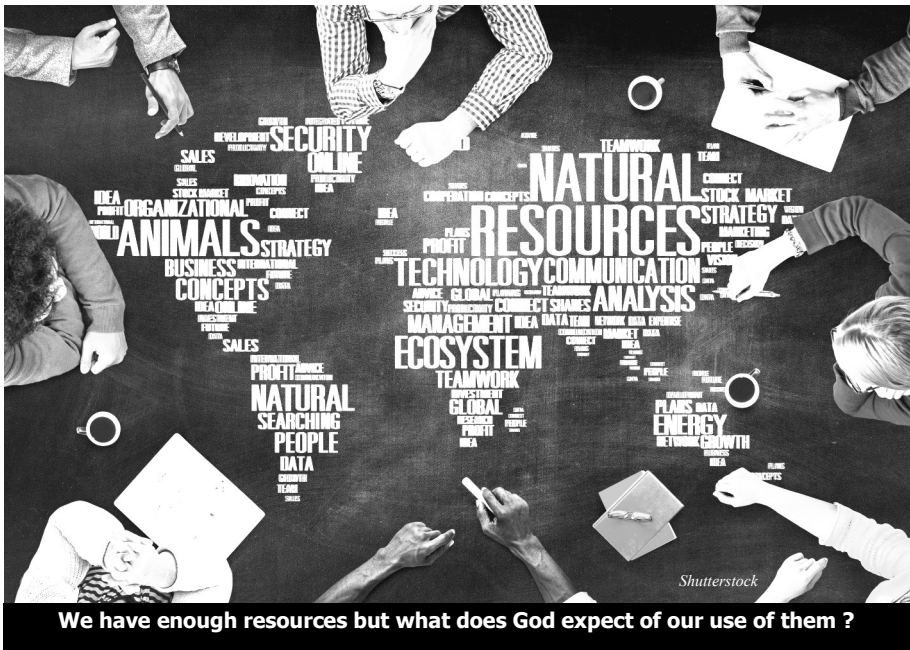
Our thoughts and prayers go out to Nicola and Margaret's family now and in the coming weeks. I know too that Nicola would be keen to express her gratitude for the messages of love and support and the practical support that they have received. Her funeral will be conducted by Rev. Canon Paul Denyer at St. Barnabas church, Warmley on Friday 10th September at 2.00 pm and then at Westerly Crematorium with refreshments served back at St. Barnabas Church Hall.

Enough

In these past weeks I have been thinking about the word enough. I remembered a book I read which prompted this thinking which was about building a stable economy in a world of finite resources. This collided with my sermon preparation and thinking about bread, known in John's gospel as the bread of life discourse, significant as the first of the "I am" sayings. To complete the trinity of thinking I heard an academic paper at an online conference which prompted all sorts of questions about church life and the concept of enough.

The book "Enough is Enough" by Rob Dietz and Dan O'Neill (2013) reimagines a world with a sustainable economy. The authors set out a model for the steps necessary for achieving a stable level of resource consumption and a stable population. This amounts to a complete transformation of society as we know it and addresses comprehensively issues of production and waste, population control, reducing the gap between rich and poor, financial reform and business models. What caught my eye in reading the book was not all the practical details and solutions but what the authors describe as a "revolutionary change in values" (p161) necessary for this to happen. I pondered on this for some time. The rich would have to accept a lower standard of living, the powerful would be less so, the finite resources of this world would be shared equitably and used sustainably, there would be enough for all.

In John 6 Jesus is dealing with the materialism of the crowd who were following him because he had filled their bellies with bread and fish, free food!! He suggests that he is offering something different, that he is the bread that they need. In doing so he reminds them and us of God's provision of manna in the wilderness. There was enough to eat for the day and only enough. On the sabbath day the double collection of manna from the day before was enough to sustain but no more. And if the people got greedy and collected more than they needed it simply rotted and was useless. This principle of enough was not in the end about food but about trust. When Jesus says he is the bread of life he is not talking about bread either, but rather he claims to be the answer to the needs of the human heart if we would but trust him with it. He is enough for us and enough is enough.



We have enough resources but what does God expect of our use of them ?

Applying this principle is easier to write about than to put into practice accept that it raises questions for us in our every day lives. The academic paper I heard posed a question that really made me think hard about faith and trust and material. What if God has provided enough in our churches to fulfil his purposes here? I am tempted to leave this question hanging...

We are often full of the “if only’s” in church life. If only we had more money or people with certain skills and talents to offer or musicians or young families or smaller graveyards or more space in them...and so it goes on. But what if we have enough? What if the resources both material and human are enough for what God is doing here and now and what he wants to do in the future? What if there is enough? How would we act differently? How would our values change? How would our lives be transformed?

Thoughts and prayers

Jeremy

Benefice Prayer Meetings

We are invited to join in praying for all that our three parishes are seeking to do and for the work of our missionary links in Brazil, Gaza and Uganda. There are two meetings each month.

The 7.30 pm first Tuesday meetings are continuing on Zoom. This month's meeting is on Tuesday 7 September and the Link is available via the St Mary's Website www.stmarysbitton.org.uk

The 9.00 am Third Saturday Prayer Breakfasts will once more be actual meetings with Breakfast provided. This month's meeting is on Saturday 18 in the Bitton Church Hall in Church Lane.

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Mid-week Groups

After 18 months of Zoom our three home groups are delighted to announce that actual home group meetings will get underway again in September.

Each group is going to have an initial social evening when we can enjoy some 'bring a plate' refreshments and compare notes on how we have weathered the pandemic. Groups will then discuss the theme and dates for their Autumn meetings.

Existing and - especially - new members will be welcome at any of the groups.

Details of their first meetings are as follows -

Wednesday Morning Group

10.30 to Noon Wednesday 15 September

At the Bailey's home - Westover, Bath Road, Bitton

Further details from David Bailey 0117 932 8949

Wednesday Evening Group

7.30 to 9.00 Wednesday 15 September

At the Gibson's home 8 Church Road, Bitton

Further details from Ken Gibson 0117 932 2122

Thursday Evening Group

7.30 to 9.00 Thursday 23 September

At the Midgley's home 31 Kenilworth Drive, Willsbridge

Further details from Pete Midgley 0117 932 6898

Nominations for General Synod



Nominations are open for General Synod, the Church of England's decision-making and governance body, for its next five-year term 2021-2026. The nomination period closes on 8 September 2021, and the votes will be counted in October.

The Diocese of Bristol has been looking for both clergy and lay members to stand for General Synod; for interested, engaged people from all different backgrounds and with varied experiences, who want to help the Church of England become a better church. Any church member over the age of 16 is eligible to stand for election, as well as all licensed clergy.

No previous experience of or knowledge about being a synod member is necessary and there will be support and guidance for new members, and

time and space for them to develop their understanding.

The Rt Revd Vivienne Faull, Bishop of Bristol, said: "Every organisation needs good governance and the Church of England is governed by synods. At this time of year we are beginning the process of looking for those prepared to stand for election to the General Synod of the Church of England."

"Come and join us nationally as in our synods we seek God's will. We need your energy and your commitment."

Dates for your Diary

Saturday 11 September

Church Fête

Saturday 2 October at 3pm

Saturday Box of Delights— *featuring The Magpie Music Group & Singers*

Sunday 10 October

Harvest Festival

Sunday 14 November

Remembrance Sunday

Saturday 27 November

An evening concert to celebrate the life of David Harris

APPEAL FOR ST MARY'S FUTURE



Readers of Focal Point will know that for some years work has been taking place to look at the future needs of the church and plan some much needed changes. The purpose of this work is to ensure that the building can continue to serve the community as a place of worship and as a hub for a wide range of activities.

With the launch of the Development Appeal in June, the task begins to raise money for Phase 2 of work – which is estimated to cost around £375,000.

Under Phase 2 it is planned to make some significant changes to the way the interior of the church is laid out, so that it can be used in a more flexible way while retaining its traditional and historic character.



The removal of the rear pews has allowed experimentation in the use of a more flexible space. But it is intended to retain most of the remaining pews, to maintain a traditional look.

What will Phase 2 achieve?

- The church will have a fully level floor allowing easier accessibility, particularly for people with disabilities.
- It will give us heating and lighting systems to enable a variety of activities and will be much more energy efficient.
- Deep cleaning of the walls and windows will make the whole interior more welcoming and brighter.
- Finally, mobile pews will enable us to use the space in a more adaptable way. It will mean that on most days when you come into the church it will be arranged much as it is now with pews facing forward in a traditional manner – but when they need to be moved for an event they can easily be set up in very different configurations.



When the rear pews were removed it was found that there was no substantial floor beneath—just rubble and a raft. This provides the opportunity to install a new floor with modern heating systems

PHASE ONE

45,000

Work complete



The first phase of the work costing over £45,000 is now complete. No money was sought from the local community to pay for this work which included the removal of the rear pews, archaeology and architects and other fees.

PHASE TWO

£375,000

To be raised

A long way to go



The cost of the next phase is estimated at present. We won't know the actual cost until work is tendered. The largest single item will be the installation of a new floor.

Details of costs and work is shown below

PHASE TWO —Reordering inside the church for more flexible

The second phase of work is internal and focuses on the nave and chapel. It is intended to ensure that the church is safe to use, has utilities updated to modern standards and is reordered to allow more flexible use for the community, and a wider range of services for worship. This work includes:

- Repairing and levelling the floor so that it can be fully accessible to all for the space to be used flexibly by the community as well as a place for worship. The pews will be retained but made mobile.
- Cleaning and repair of internal stonework and windows to provide a cleaner atmosphere.
- Updating of utilities including the wiring and heating to improve the energy efficiency of the church and to improve efficiency, as well as the installation of a sound and projection system and Wi-Fi connection.
- Additional work to the vicar's vestry, choir vestry and the upstairs "muniment" room to provide a small office space and improved storage.

THE APPEAL



Raising £375,000 is not going to be easy, particularly in the wake of a global pandemic. We hope to be able to raise most of the money from national funders, in addition to local fundraising.

We currently have about £13,000 available for Phase Two, so there is still a long way to go and many national funders are only willing to fund if it is in addition to what has been raised locally. Some will even match fund to double local contributions.

If you feel able to contribute there are several ways you can do this and details are on the following page.

Use	ESTIMATED COSTS	
	Preliminaries	£25,000
	Font restoration & repositioning	£5,000
	Pew repair and mobilisation	£15,000
	Flooring sub structure and surface in stone and timber	£90,000
	Carpentry in vestries and muniment room	£10,000
	Electrical works (including sound and lighting)	£35,000
	Heating	£30,000
	Stone cleaning	£20,000
	Window cleaning	£20,000
	Plaster repairs & decorations	£15,000
	Access Improvements	£30,000
	Fees and preliminary costs	*£55,400
	Contingency	£25,000
	Total (not including VAT except where	£375,400

Focal Point, September 2021

How to Support the Appeal

We can take a donation through our *Give a Little* donations page. You can access that by using this QR code or through the church website.



We can take donations at the Fête or the Church, or, if you would prefer to give a cheque, please send it to John Bennetts, Treasurer, Springfield Villa, Brewery Hill, Upton Cheyney, Bristol, BS30 6LY.

You can boost your donation through *Gift Aid* which enables the appeal to reclaim tax on the donation. If donating by post please complete and enclose the following:

I want to Gift Aid my donation of £ _____ to St Mary's Church, Bitton for the Development Appeal.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Title _____

First name or initial(s) _____

Surname _____

Full Home address _____

Postcode _____ Date _____

Please notify St Mary's Church if you: (1) want to cancel this declaration; (2) change your name or home address; (3) no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains. If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

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SATURDAY BOX

of

MUSICAL DELIGHTS!

**With the Magpie Music Group
and Singers**

At St Mary's Church, Bitton

On 2nd October at 3.00pm

Entrance free with

Donations to Church funds

And Children's Hospice



Picnic in the Park— **Bitton Community Picnic**



Bitton's first *Picnic in the Park* held on the Poundfield, proved to be a great success and attracted a good crowd of all ages.

The event on Sunday 22 August was organised by the Bitton Village Residents' Association. The free event included 7 live bands playing a mixture of familiar music, and made excellent use of the field's ready made stage of grass covered medieval foundations. All you had to do was pack a picnic and turn up.

Best of all, after a week of heavy rain, the afternoon was dry and mainly sunny, so those attending could sit comfortably in the August sunshine listening to music. There was also plenty of room for youngsters to run around on the rest of the field.

A great event— thank you.



Excitement builds for the Fête on 11 September



Celebrity opening—Joe Sims will open the fête

There is not long to wait now before a special date in Bitton's calendar on September 11th. That's when the Annual church Fête makes its return following a year's absence due to Coronavirus.

We are particularly pleased to welcome actor Joe Sims, who grew up locally but has gained an international following in many TV and theatre roles. Joe will be opening the fête so be there at the start to see him.

The fête will, of course, include a dog show (details opposite). Many regular favourites will be there including Morris Dancers, the Companions of the Longbow and a special Punch and Judy for younger fête goers.

As always some of the most popular stalls are those selling books, clothes, and a wide selection of other goods (The White Elephant). Donations to these and other stalls are still needed, and a list of contacts is below. All help, donations and assistance are greatly appreciated.

How brave is your teddy?

**BRING YOUR TEDDY
TO THE FÊTE AND
FIND OUT**

Who dares—wins!

But not every teddy will be up to it. This year's fête will feature a *special teddies event* providing your teddy with the unrivalled opportunity to sail across the churchyard on a zip wire.



Not a feat for teddies of a nervous disposition, the wire will stretch across the churchyard from the tower to a tree and teddies who make it across will be awarded with a special sticker award for an *extra brave teddy*.

For those without a teddy on the day, volunteer teddies are prepared to brave the zip wire for you—for a fee.

The dog show is always very popular, so make sure you get to the fête early to enter your dog for one of the eight classes :

1. Waggiest tail
2. Best 6 legs (Handler and dog)
3. Prettiest bitch
4. Handsome Dog
5. Best trick
6. Prettiest Eyes
7. Child Handler (under 15 years)
8. Sausage Retrieve

There will be rosettes for 1st, 2nd, 3rd in each class.

We are grateful to *Highcroft Vets* for agreeing to run the show for us again this year.

How ready is your dog ?



Great Raffle Prizes to be won

There are some great prizes to be won in this year's Annual Summer Raffle, which is drawn at the end of the fête .

1st prize this year is a lavish Fortnum & Mason Hamper filled with expensive treats, generously donated by *Fine & Country, Bath*.



If you miss out on the hamper the second prize is a real treat. Kindly donated by Douglas MacDonald, is a ride in his restored 1954 Wolsey 6/80. The trip will be to Bradford on Avon where a delicious cream tea will be served.



Douglas' Wolsey, along with some other classic cars, will be on the Glebe Field during the Fête.



Many other prizes will be awarded to the lucky winners. The raffle will, as usual, be drawn during the St Mary's Fête on 11 September.

Tickets, priced at £1 are available from Barbara Merritt and will also be available for sale at the fête itself.



Making a return appearance in the Children's Tent will be *Professor Hudd's Punch & Judy*. The show proved a big draw in 2019 and a traditional show really can't be beaten. Also not to be missed is ta Bitton tradition—the last event of the fête —**THE EGG THROWING COMPETITION**

DONATIONS STILL REQUIRED FOR THE FOLLOWING STALLS

Books	<i>Sarah Heavens</i>	0117 932 5376
White Elephant	<i>Nicola Bennetts</i>	0117 932 4696
Nearly Nu (clothes)	<i>Annette Vowles</i>	0117 932 6352
Tombola	<i>Alison Wride</i>	0117 932 4931

A wide range of items would be welcome for the tombola, including toiletries, games, children's toys, soft toys, sweets, chocolates, household items or gardening.

Bottles	<i>Sarah Craddock</i>	0117 932 8644
Jams	<i>Janet Ballinger</i>	0117 932 4728

Items can be left in the church porch when the church is open, but please don't leave them outside the church door when locked.

CAN YOU HELP AT THE FÊTE?

There are so many ways you can assist both before after and during the fête – even for just an hour or so. There's the heavy gang to set up the tents on the Friday and dismantle after the fête closes. Programme sellers and stall helpers are also wanted.

If you are able to spare some of your time please contact Helen Pugsley 07767 777019.

News from Bitton WI

It is nice this month to be able to write about events that we can look forward to, after approximately seventeen months of inactivity. I have written before about St Mary's church fête on September 11th; now I would like to ask our WI members to provide cakes to help the stall we are having on the day to be a great success, by baking some delicious cakes or any savoury treats like sausage rolls etc. The cakes and savouries can either be taken to Roz's house or taken directly to the WI stall on the Saturday morning, all donations will be gratefully received.

The second eagerly awaited event is on September 13th at 2pm when our WI meetings will restart, please remember that we have changed from meeting on an evening to meeting at 2pm. We would love to welcome some new members and can assure anyone wishing to come along that they will receive a warm welcome and enjoy an entertaining afternoon. The first speaker will be Sally Britton who will talk to us about Phyllis' War an evacuees experience during the Second World War. It will be at this meeting that members will have the opportunity to buy a ticket for the group tea party that Bitton WI is hosting.

This is the third event we are able to look forward to, and I am sure we will have a most enjoyable afternoon. We will be really spoilt, because not only will we be able to enjoy a delicious selection of cakes and tea but there will be a flower arranging demonstration with a raffle, the first prize will be a flower arrangement. I hope many of you will be able to attend this tea party which is being held at the Community & Youth Building at the rear of Redfield Edge Primary School.

Now for this month's recipe which I thought would be good to make for our stall at the church fête .

I am sure you will agree it would be nice to walk around the fête whilst eating a slice of Junior Jam Cake. I hope to see many of you at the fête and at our first meeting, until then please stay safe.

Lyn Coles



Junior Jam Cake

Ingredients

8 oz/200g. self raising flour
2 oz/50g. sugar
2 oz/50g. lard or white flora
2 oz/50g. margarine
Pinch of salt
1 egg
Milk to mix
Jam

Method

Set oven - Gas 6/400f/200c

Mix flour, sugar and salt together in a mixing bowl. Rub the fats into the flour until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Add the egg, and then the milk to a firm dough.

Divide the dough into two. Roll one piece out on a floured table to an oblong 8" by 4". Put this on a baking tray. Thickly spread jam over pastry but not up to the edges, leave 1/2" border without jam.

Roll out the other piece of pastry to fit the jammed piece. Brush the edges with milk. Put the second piece of pastry on top to make a lid seal the edges by pinching together. Press out a diamond pattern with the blade of a knife: do not cut through the pastry or the jam will escape during cooking. Bake in the oven for 15 to 20 minutes. Serve hot with ice cream or cold in slices.



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August's Quiz Answers

Last month's quiz was about the Tokyo Olympics.

The correct answers are:

(1) Sports; (2) Countries; (3) Skateboarding; (4) Rugby; (5) Swimming; (6) Miraitowa; (7) Archery; (8) Rowing; (9) Boxing; (10) Canoeing; (11) Equestrian; (12) Netball; (13) Athletics; (14) Water Polo; (15) Football; (16) Golf; (17) Venues; (18) Gymnastics; (19) Handball; (20) Sailing.

Correct answers were received from:

Terry Matthews; Jan, Diane & Teresa; Frank FitzGibbon; Jill & Ken Gibson; Sue & Rob Nethercote; Pam & Jon Booth; Margaret & Bryan Garlick; Sarah Craddock.

This month's winner is:

Frank Fitzgibbon.

The September Quiz

This months quiz is anagrams of stalls or activities at
Bitton Church Fête on Saturday 11th September

- No. Clue**
1. Mice race
 2. Homeopathic Prototyping
 3. BQB
 4. Mirrored Scans
 5. Tycoon Such
 6. Gorging Whet
 7. Try cha flatlands
 8. Secret ama
 9. Plaster That
 10. Decline Crab
 11. Letts Ski
 12. Pinwheel Theta
 13. RAF Elf
 14. His Quo Ritzy
 15. Lamb too
 16. Fog photonics noble woman
 17. Dogs Who
 18. Dad Jun Dunphy
 19. Jan lastly unmatched
 20. Out crush crowther

Name:

Contact:

Please send your answers to Carolyn Russell at
Martin House, Church Road, Bitton (the yellow
house) or email mrsrussell@icloud.com by 15
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The last word



Leaving aside the national news—not least the evacuation of Afghanistan by the US and its allies, August is a month when not much happens and so content is somewhat limited for our September edition. This has provided the opportunity to cover, at greater length the St Mary's Development Appeal. I should say that I wear two hats on this one both as editor of FP and as chair of the Future Group—but after a number of years of discussion and experimentation, we feel that now is the moment to start moving ahead with the project and to start raising the funds to make it happen. I have no doubt it will take some years to achieve what we have set out to do.

As we have worked on this project, I have learned more about the very rich and unusually lengthy history of St Mary's. Celebrating this rich heritage is part of this work. But there are few people who simply want to see it become a museum when it could be much more and enable the building to meet a whole range of community needs that people can value for years to come.

If you can, please give generously to this appeal so that the church can be (as the publicity states) *a thriving hub for the community, an inspiring place of worship, heritage, pilgrimage and activity—welcoming, accessible and well resourced.*

Jim Heavens

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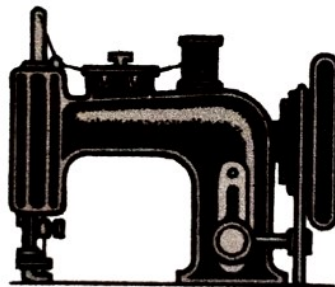
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