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October 2022



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Focal Point

Bitton Churches' Magazine

October 2022

*A monthly church newsletter serving
Bitton, Swineford, Willsbridge,
Upton Cheyney & Beach*

*Published by St Mary's Church, Bitton and
the United Reformed Church, Upton
Cheyney.*

*Printed by The Mitre Press, Unit 2 Fantasie
Buildings, Waters Road, BS15 8BE*

To advertise in Focal Point
please contact Roger Tilley
rogerjohntilley@gmail.com

FOR ALL FOCAL POINT INQUIRIES

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*Deadline for the November
magazine is:*

Wednesday 19 October 2022

In this month's Focal Point:

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a letter box

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Reflections on the life of
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information about acts of
worship pages 7 to 11**

Dates for your Diary page 14

Cover:

The Condolence Book for Her late
Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in St Mary's
Church, Bitton, September 2022.

Photo; Jane Clapp

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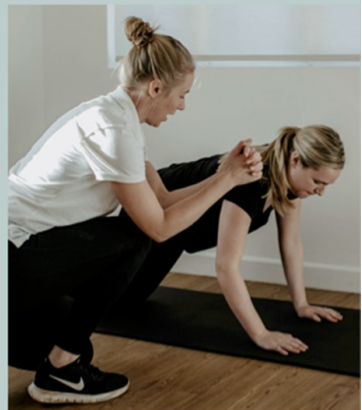
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UPTON CHEYNEY United Reformed Church

www.e-voice.org.uk/uptoncheyneychapel

Services for October 2022



Sunday services are at 3pm

Sunday	2nd	Service led by Richard Humphrey
Sunday	9th	<i>Harvest Service</i> led by Steve Britton
Sunday	16th	Service led by Janet Donnelle
Sunday	23rd	Service led by Michelle Bates
Sunday	30th	Service led by Jenny Clark

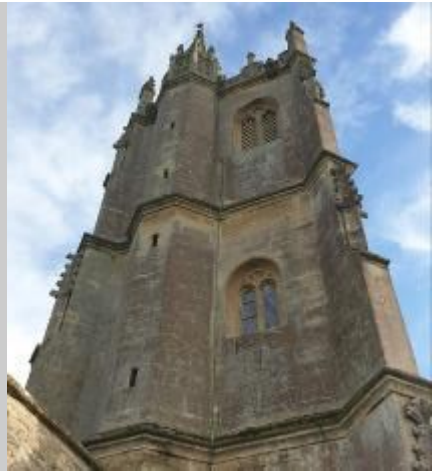
The coffee afternoon on the 25th will be subject to the school room repairs being completed.





**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

Curate:

Rev Rosemary Ratcliffe
revrosieratcliffe@gmail.com

Lay ministers:

Ken Gibson,
8 Church Road
Bitton
0117 932 2122

Churchwarden:

Pete Midgley
30 Kenilworth Drive,
Willsbridge
0117 932 6898

David Bailey,
Westover, Bath Road
Bitton
0117 932 8949

Simon Harris
41 Combe Park
Weston
BATH

Services for October 2022

Services at St Mary's

*You will be very welcome at all services at St Mary's .
For those who are unable to attend some services are provided online .*

More details on our website:

www.stmarysbitton.org.uk

Sunday, 2 October

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

10.30am Parish Communion

Sunday, 9 October

Seventeenth Sunday after

10.30am **Trinity**

Family Harvest Thanksgiving
*followed by a Bring and Share
Harvest Lunch*

See details on page 15

Sunday, 16 October

Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

10.30am Morning Worship

Sunday, 23 October

Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

8.00am Holy Communion

9.30am Family Café Church



Thursday, 27 October

9.30am **Celtic Communion** followed by
coffee, tea and cakes

Sunday, 30 October

Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

10.30am Benefice Communion Service at
St Barnabas, Warmley
NO SERVICE AT BITTON

THE SISTERS OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE CHURCH LOAVES AND FISHES MINISTRY

Gifts may be left in St Mary's Church Porch between 10.15 and 11.45 on the First Sunday of each month and will be delivered to the Sisters on the following Wednesday.

Non-perishable food and toiletries will be welcome and the Sisters' Top Ten requests are:

Tinned fruit	Long-life milk	Tinned custard	Tinned rice pudding
Shower gel	Toothpaste	Deodorant	Shaving gel
	Sanitary towels	Nappies	

Any other non-perishable gifts will be gratefully received

Benefice Prayer Opportunities

Saturday 8 October at 9.00 am Prayer Breakfast at Bitton Church Hall

Tuesday 25 October at 7.30 pm on Zoom

From the Register

30th August

Thanksgiving for the life of Lesa Lord

1st September

Funeral Robert (Bob) George Wilmot



St Mary's Matters

September was, of course, dominated by the sad news of the death of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

I, along with many millions of others, watched the funeral on TV with awe and wonder at the solemnity and grandeur of the occasion. But perhaps most inspiring was the way in which the occasion was able to emphasise Her Majesty's deep and steadfast faith which supported her throughout her life, carrying her through both the good times and the challenging times. It was heartening to witness a ceremony unashamedly Christian in its message when sometimes, as a nation, we can be apologetic for our rich Christian heritage.



Pete Midgley

Since she was the Head of the Church of England and Defender of the Faith it was our duty at St Mary's to make sure the occasion was marked appropriately. Some were surprised to find that we had our own "Operation London Bridge" plans in place. Those who heard the bells ringing on news of Her Majesty's death and on the morning of the funeral may have noticed that they were "double muffled". For funerals they are normally singled muffled, but the death of a Monarch requires double muffling. Some while ago the ringers had purchased a second set of muffles in anticipation.

Another advance purchase was a book of condolence which was being kept in storage in preparation. We were able to respond quickly and have this set up by the morning following the announcement of the Queen's death, allowing local people to come into the church to pay their respects, light a candle and lay flowers if they wished.

Instructions for raising and lowering the Union Jack were also in place. Although mostly flying at half-mast from the evening of 8th September, the flag was raised on the proclamation of the new King, and then lowered again.

Sunday services were, of course, planned a little more hurriedly. However, we tried set the right tone at the two services which occurred during the period of mourning.

I hope we managed the occasion appropriately. May Her Majesty rest in peace.

Post Office to recognise that St Mary's exists

It may be the oldest building in the village (maybe even South Gloucestershire) but, according to the Post Office, St Mary's Church really doesn't exist - until now. The reasons being that the church doesn't have a letter box, so mail cannot be delivered and thus no postcode is required.

For years that was not a problem, but in the age of sat nav and broadband, without a postcode it is difficult to apply for anything, including funding or the installation of equipment.

Soon this will be rectified and the Archdeacon has given approval for the erection of a small post box in the churchyard. Not that anyone expects much post.



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Dates for your Diary

Sunday 9th October	Harvest Thanksgiving—see opposite
Monday 10th October at 2pm	Bitton WI Meeting—Church Hall
Friday 14th October at 7.30pm	QUIZ NIGHT - see page 27 Bitton Sports & Recreation Ground
Monday 17th October at 7.30pm	Bitton Gardening Club Meadows School Hall—see page 26
Friday 21st October at 7.30pm	Flick in the Sticks Meadows School Hall—see page 31
Tuesday 25th October at 7.30pm	History Group St Mary's Church—see page 23
Saturday 29th October	Autumn Fayre—Stallholders' Fair <i>with an emphasis on Christmas items</i>

Church & Church Hall Bookings

The Church Hall is available for hire and is a popular location for children's parties as well as regular events.

For larger events such as community meetings or concerts the Church itself may be more suitable.

For Church Hall bookings contact Jill Gibson on
0117 932 2122.

Rates from £12.50 per hour.

For Church bookings contact the Social Secretary, Jenny Harris by email on **djacharris@hotmail.com**

Rates from £25 per hour (2 hour minimum hire).



St Mary's Church Bitton



HARVEST THANKSGIVING SUNDAY 9 OCTOBER AT 10.30

Harvest Festival Family Special

You are invited to bring a gift of produce or non-perishable food especially:

Tins of meat, fish, vegetables baked beans, rice pudding or soup; spaghetti hoops, pasta, and packets of rice; cereals, tea bags, coffee, biscuits and UHT milk.

Men's and women's toiletries and nappies of all sizes.

These will be distributed in the St Paul's area of Bristol by the Sisters of the Church.

followed by a

Bring and Share Harvest Lunch

Bring a plate of something sweet or savoury.

Harvest Loaf and Cheese will be provided plus Cider or Wine or Apple juice



John Sibley

Reflection on the life of Queen Elizabeth II

Incorporating John 14, 1-8

On April 21st 1947 on her 21st birthday, the then Princess Elizabeth said:

"I declare before you all, that my whole life, whether it be long or short shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great Imperial family to which we all belong".

Well her life was long and she carried through that promise right to the very end. She said goodbye to one Prime Minister and welcomed a new one less than 48 hours before she died. She was our longest serving monarch and the second longest in world history. She was our queen for 70 years and was almost certainly this country's greatest monarch.

She came to the throne in 1952 at a time when we were trying to rebuild our nation following the second world war.



The Queen meeting well-wishers in 2007. She remained faithful to her promise of devoted service

Shutterstock

She was constant, she was faithful, she was our rock, she was OUR Queen. Now she has gone and it is time to remember that she was also a mother, grandmother and great grandmother.

We could all see the raw emotion etched on the face of our new king in his first broadcast to the nation. He made no attempt to hide it and why should he. It was a wonderful speech, beautifully delivered and we could all see his grief.

Focal Point, October 2022

Everyone who saw it, I know I did, just wanted to put our arms around him and give him a big hug.

We need to reflect on the impact of her passing on her family. All of us know what it is like to lose someone we love. That feeling takes you to the very darkest of places. Which is why the passage from John's Gospel is so important and so relevant.

Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself, so that where I am you will be also".

Our dear late Queen Elizabeth had a very strong and profound Christian faith, as does our new King Charles III. Those words of Jesus will be of great comfort to The Royal Family because our Queen is now with Jesus, he said so. He made us that promise and he stands true and faithful to that promise just as The Queen stayed faithful and true to her promise made all those years ago.

We will never see her like again. Now we must support our new King, we must pray for him and his family in their grief. We must mourn the loss of our great Queen but we must say with one voice,

GOD SAVE THE KING.



The Union Flag at half mast on St Mary's Church Tower during the week of mourning between the late Queen's death and her funeral on 19th September

Think you know Bitton?



Then try this quiz, and see if you can identify the landmarks and features in the photographs.

There is a cash prize of £100 that will be awarded in at the Autumn Fayre at the end of October.

Copies available for £3 at the fête, in the church and at the village shop.

Come to the
Autumn Fayre

**in St Mary's Church, Bitton
Saturday 29th October
2022**

11am to 3pm

**Gifts and other items
Fun for all the family**

**Tea, coffee and light lunches
served**

*In aid of the St Mary's Bitton
Development Appeal*



There is still room for more stall holders. If you have a business or like to sell crafts etc, stalls are still available at £10 for the day.
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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
23rd
October

History Group learns about Bristol's Riots

Nothing to do with last year's disturbances in Bristol, but about a far more serious set of riots in Bristol in 1831. This was the subject of a talk at the History Group in September by Prof Alan F Jocelyn. Professor Jocelyn's research has uncovered much recent primary evidence that this was the largest and most bloody riot in English history. At the more famous riot near Manchester, *The Peterloo Massacre*, in 1819, less than 20 people were killed, yet in Bristol, 12 years later, 500 were hacked to death.

He cited one example of the treatment of some Kingswood miners:

'One body of dragoons pursued a rabble of colliers into the country, and covered the fields and roads with the bodies of wounded wretches...'

Two History Group members, Helen and Mary, couldn't resist the temptation to brandish the sabre and musket, as shown in the photo.



Mike Gates

Further meetings are planned for October and November:

25 October: David Noble who will talk about Fry's Chocolate Factory (later to become Cadbury's) based on his 41 plus years of service there as man and boy. In St Mary's Church, Bitton.

On 25 November: Alan Mathews of Avon Valley Railway will talk about the amazing feat started in 1972 to restore Bitton station building and to re-lay track and operate trains. North Common Village Hall.

Autumn Fayre for early Christmas shopping



Plans are now well under way for the **AUTUMN FAYRE** to be held in the church on 29th October. Nearly a dozen stalls with a good range of interesting and sometimes unusual items have already been booked and include jewellery and Swedish designed products, as well as a variety of handicrafts. It should be an excellent opportunity to do some early Christmas shopping and perhaps find that unusual and special gift for a family member or friend Christmas will be less than 2 months away and the early birds get the very best selection.

There will be light refreshments on sale throughout the day, which begins at 11am and lasts until 3pm.

This is a stallholder fair so stallholders pay a fee to the church (£10 this year) and trade independently. If you are a small or local business with items that may be of interest to local people, please get in contact with Stephanie Bailey 0117 923 8949.

And find out where those places are in the quiz launched the fête ... have you seen them before, but can't quite remember?

At the AUTUMN FAYRE we will be able to find out where all those places listed in the *How well do you know Bitton Quiz*. There are some easy ones but also some quite obscure places photographed by Alison Wride.

Correctly identify more than anyone else and you could win £100.

Quiz books are available in the church and village shop It is a great way to see Bitton and good exercise.



You may know where this is.



...but is this one so easy to spot?

Church Development Plans: Application waiting on the Chancellor

The PCC is still waiting to hear the final decision about the application it made in February for reordering of the church, with a new floor, wall cleaning and making the remaining pews mobile.

The application received favourable support from Bristol's Diocesan Advisory Committee, but with the backlog of applications that arose from the pandemic, the process is taking much longer than anticipated.

Each diocese has a Chancellor who acts as the final arbiter on applications, assessing each proposal and listening to any objections. If he feels appropriate the matter can be decided through an open consistory court process,

It is hoped that a result will be known this month.



Bitton Gardening Club

invites you to our next meeting on

Monday 17th October

at

THE MEADOWS SCHOOL HALL

Doors open 7.15pm

Meeting starts at 7.30pm

Our speaker at the meeting is

Timothy Walker

**Retired Director of Oxford Botanic
Garden & Harecourt Arboretum**

the title of his talk is

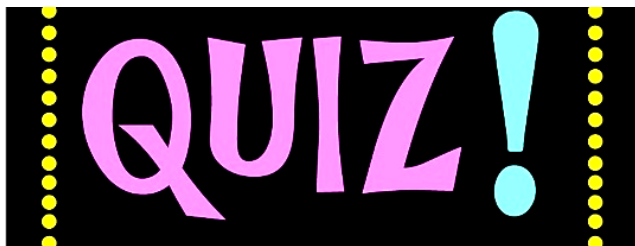
A Rockery in the Garden

A Rockery can transform a difficult area in a garden and Timothy will be giving us the inspiration and know-how to create our own. This will be our third talk

by this very popular speaker who has won 4 gold, 2 silver-gilt and one silver medal at the Chelsea Flower Show during his successful career.

New members and guests are always welcome

This meeting is FREE to members



Friday 14 October at 7.30pm
Bitton Sports and Social Club

**An invitation to
Teams of 4 for a *Fun Quiz* in
support of the
Bitton Recreation Ground**

Tickets at £5 a head
including a Ploughman's
Supper are available from Paul
Cooney
on 0117 403 6845

Church Fête pulls a crowd!



Tatters & Tails Morris

St Mary's Annual Church Fête and Dog Show, on 3rd September, proved as popular as ever with record takings.

It was a fine day, and although rain had been forecast earlier in the week the weather held for a dry and comfortably warm afternoon.

There were all the usual favourites, including Professor Hudd's Punch & Judy which has become an established draw for children. All the stalls saw strong trading with fête-goers keen to get a bargain or something especially delicious to take home. Speaking of delicious items, there were cream teas in Church House (kindly provided by Martin and Bridget Hetzel) and in the church there was an excellent range of cakes donated by many bakers.

Continued overleaf

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Focal Point, October 2022



Cream teas in Church Farm



Raffle winner– Wendy Stone

Entertainment was provided by the Oldland Brass and a new Morris Group, *Tatters and Tails* – with a slightly different approach to dancing and attire than had been seen at the fête before, but were greatly enjoyed..

The Summer Raffle also proved very popular, with first prize being won by Wendy Stone, who received a beautiful hamper of goodies. The fête ended with the traditional egg-tossing contest.

All in all the fête raised £10,436 for church funds. A BIG THANK YOU to all who assisted.

Next year's fête is due to be held on

Bitton Village Residents' Association

Invites you to

Flicks in the Sticks

on

Friday 21 October

when we will be screening

Death on the Nile

starring

**Kenneth Branagh, Annette
Bening, Tom Bateman, Dawn
French and Jennifer Saunders**

Belgian sleuth Hercule Poirot's holiday aboard a glamorous river steamer turns into a terrifying search for a murderer, when a couple's idyllic Egyptian honeymoon is tragically cut short. Set against stunning desert landscapes of the Nile and the pyramids, this tale of passion and jealousy twists and turns to leave you guessing until the final, shocking denouement. It's beautiful, we loved it.

Doors open 7.30pm. Film starts 8pm.

At the new location the

Meadows School Hall Bitton

**Drinks will be available from the Licensed
Bar, Choc Ices will be served in the interval
and there will be time to chat with friends**

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News from Bitton WI

Bitton WI came back together on Monday 12 August in the Church Hall after our break in July. We were welcomed back by our President Jean Hook, who took the opportunity to recognise the loss of our Queen and to read a touching poem in her honour.

A number of the WI members attended the Bitton Fête earlier in the month. Jean thanked those who had helped on the day and everyone who had baked and donated the delicious cakes and savouries which completely sold out. Everyone who attended said they had enjoyed the day immensely and it was lovely to see so many people at the Fête enjoying themselves.

Our speaker on the day was Andrew (Andy) Stow from East Bristol Auctions. Andy gave us a brief history of auctions, telling us that it was one of the oldest professions going back as far as 1560. East Bristol Auctions opened their doors in 2002 and Andy said their intention is always to get the best possible price for the goods they auction for the customer.

He spoke of how things have changed rapidly in the past few years, especially since Covid when this accelerated the way auctions were held. The majority of auctions now are done on-line and this has continued to be the case since restrictions have lifted. This has meant that they are no longer dependant on just those turning up on the day, but can now advertise the auction lots all over the world. This in turn benefits the customer as higher prices are often achieved for goods sold. Andy also told us about the importance of ensuring each item is properly labelled (tagged) on-line with good photographic evidence so that customers can find exactly what they want. Andy explained why they need to charge a commission which allows them to ensure every item is promoted widely and the best price is achieved.

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Andy then told us about one of his best auction lots to go under the hammer. You will no doubt have read about Gandhi's spectacles! Back in 2020, Andy arrived into the office to find an envelope flapping about in the letterbox. When opened he found a pair of very old spectacles with a note saying they belonged to Gandhi and explain how they had come into their possession. These were added to the sale outlining how they had been found and who they might have belonged to. Before too long the media had got hold of the story and it became one of the biggest stories to hit the news at a time when Covid was the only other big news story! It is unbelievable that when they did go under the hammer they actually sold for a massive £250,000! Andy met the purchaser personally and explained again that there was no proof (or as they say in the trade – provenance!) but the purchaser just replied – “but I have the most famous pair of glasses in the world!”. East Bristol Auctions are now one of the few auction houses who have dedicated Gandhi memorabilia sales.

If you have anything tucked away in the attic, a drawer or the back of the wardrobe now might be the time to them along to the auction house and you might be pleasantly surprised at it's value today. Big thanks to Andy who kept us amused throughout his very informative talk.

Our next meeting will be held on Monday 10th October 2022, 2pm in the Church Hall, Bitton. Our speaker will be Brian Caskie on SS Great Britain.

Karen Davidson



This months' WI recipe is a delicious pie and is a great way to use up all those blackberries you have been out picking. A good choice for autumn meals.

Apple & Blackberry Pie - Serves: 6

Ingredients

250g Shortcrust Pastry, either homemade or ready made

500g Cooking Apples, peeled and sliced

250g Blackberries or Brambles, washed

50g Sugar, Granulated

Method

1. Divide the pastry into 2 and roll out to fit a 18cm ovenproof plate, base and top.
2. Simmer the peeled, sliced apples and brambles for a few minutes in a pan to soften, then sprinkle in the sugar.
3. Cool the fruit then pour into the pastry lined plate.
4. Brush the edge of the pastry and place on the pastry top, securing the edge by pinching together with finger and thumb.
5. Use the excess pastry to make a decoration for the top.
6. Brush the top of the pie with beaten egg and make a slit to allow the steam to escape.
7. Bake in a fairly hot oven, Gas 6 200°C for 20 mins and then reduce to Gas 4 175°C.

Serve with custard, cream or ice cream.

Tip: Other fruit can be used instead of blackberries, if they are not available, such as raspberries, rhubarb etc. It is a way to use small amounts of fruit that are available.

Enjoy



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The October Quiz

By Carolyn Russell

This month I've set cryptic clues to parts of cars

No. Clue

1. Something worn on the hand, often a cube shape with a lid.
2. A group of eggs and the nest; often followed by pushers if referring to trousers.
3. A focus of activity, could be baseball or flat.
4. Often referred to as a bright one, inserted to stop leaks.
5. Birds use these to fly, used to view oneself.
6. A rhinoceros has a central one.
7. Digits, ceramics to eat off.
8. A hat worn by ladies many years ago.
9. Often found in selections including thousand Islands, the sound a clock makes.
10. Used for cooling, To hold up trousers.
11. A type of car on an amusement park.
12. At the end of an arm, to stop.
13. To point out or show.
14. An egg cracking from within, reverse the front.
15. A swish lounge area maybe in the Wild West.
16. Quentin Blake wrote about Mr. Magnolia only having one of these.
17. Kangaroos have a very strong one, a closable access to one's land.
18. Our very own star, the very top of a building.
19. The gas all around us, often done after shampooing.
20. Brand of swimwear and swimming accessories.

Focal Point, October 2022

Name:

Contact:

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

September's Quiz Answers

Last month's quiz was about book titles.

These were the original answers but I allowed anything that was the title of a book:

(1) The Man in the Iron Mask; (2) The Catcher in the Rye; (3) The boy in the Striped Pyjamas; (4) The Body in the Library; (5) The Lady in the Van; (6) Love in the time of Cholera; (7) The Wind in the Willows; (8) Flowers in the Attic; (9) The Footprints in the Snow; (10) Lincoln in the Bardo; (11) A Walk in the Woods; (12) The Cat in the Hat; (13) Murder in the Library; (14) A Bend in the River; (15) The Man in the High Castle; (16) The Sword in the Stone; (17) The Man in the Brown Suit; (18) Murder in the Mews; (19) The Room in the Attic; (20) The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time.

Correct answers were received from:

Richard & Terry; Sue & Alan; Pam & Jon Heyes

This month's prize goes to:

Richard & Terry

The last word



It was the placing of a stamp on a letter this week that symbolised to me that change had come. It was just a stamp- but sticking a perfectly ordinary first class stamp made me pause, much more than I had over the news of the Queen’s death or the extraordinary amount of material, eulogies and pictures of her life have brought.

The picture of the Queen on our stamps is not a recent one. In its time it was revolutionary. First issued in 1967 and without the words “*Postage Revenue*” it was modern – a new look in an era when so much was on the move. For 55 years that picture, a simple relief portrait by a sculptor named Arnold Machin has remained unchanged. The price has gone up – when first class postage (as opposed to postage by weight) was introduced a year later, in 1968, the cost was 5d (2p in decimal money), today, one costs 95p.

Constant in a changing Britain— a first class stamp of 1968 and one of today



In many ways it is the image that symbolises her reign. During a period of significant change in technology and society she remained the same: a constant in our lives and in her leadership. The stamp I fixed to the letter recently, had a digital code on the right side; but the portrait was still that of the 1960s. Now, like the Queen, I realised it will be no more. What I have known for over half a century will go and we must move on – by the end of this new reign will stamps even exist at all?

Jim Heavens



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Focal Point, March 2018

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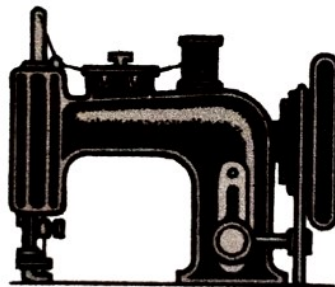
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