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See page
14

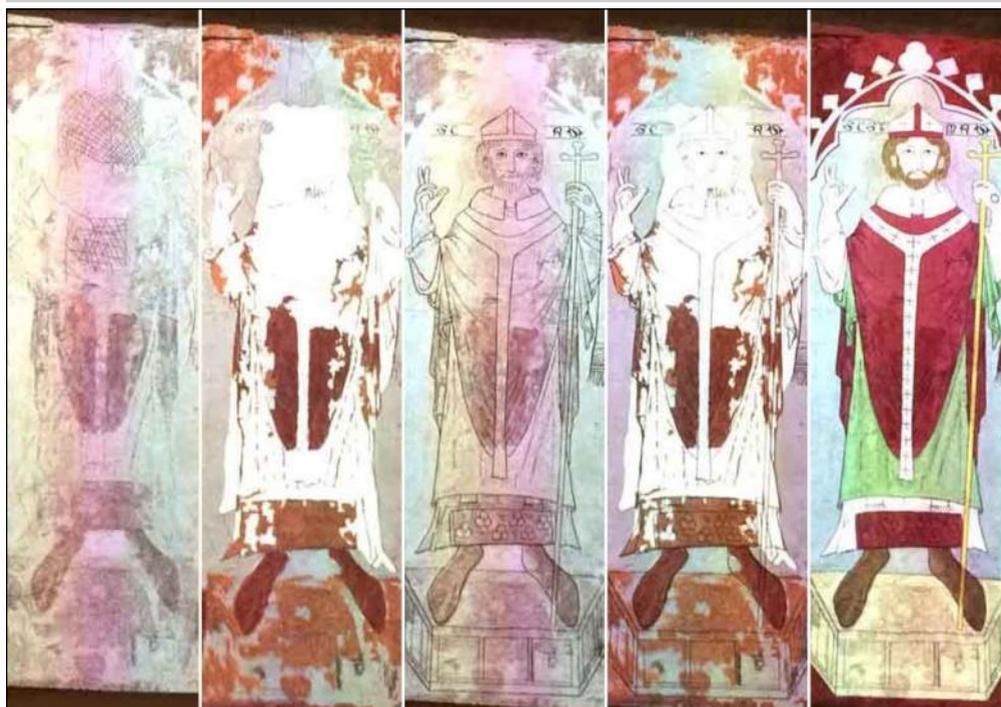


June/July 2021

£1



**The front cover and these pictures show the result of projecting digital recreations of the Norman wall paintings in the Abbey over the badly damaged originals. The images are built up layer by layer .
Not to be missed! *See page 14***



From the Editor

While we await a new Vicar I am filling in on this page. Every home in the Parish gets a copy of the Magazine through their letter box, and I would love to be a fly on the wall when it arrives. Since you are reading this at least you have opened it—so thank you for that.



Personally I have learned much from the Magazine over the years. It has been great to get to know the many people who have featured in its pages. Each one of us is unique, and everyone has a great deal to offer. As I also sing in the Choir I witness quite a few funerals and so have heard many life stories. Often I am surprised at what people have done, and regret not asking them more questions about themselves when they were alive.

We are fortunate in having a School so close. It is always worthwhile reading what Mandy has to report, and impressive to learn what children there are doing. Kevin Earl has kept us informed about his experience of Covid restrictions in the School where he works. Since these are not newsworthy many have no knowledge of the regimes that children and staff have to face up to every day.

Andy Chapman is a mine of information about Lemsford's local history and his Group's researches are valuable. The pictures inside the back cover of this issue show so clearly how a rural area was transformed by the arrival of the Motorway. His material about the formation of Stanborough Lakes—on which I knew virtually nothing—demonstrates really well how enlightened planners can bring pleasure to us all.

The labour of editing is offset by several pleasures. It is always good to find a striking image for the front cover, or to receive some interesting photos for the inside covers—many from June Copping. Latterly I have been pleased to get positive feedback on the Nature Notes, which seek to give a sideways look at the wonders of nature.

The bit that I always spend a lot of time is *And Finally* Jesus had a sense of humour and I am sure that God enjoys a good laugh every now and then at the things his creations get up to.

Geoffrey Hollis

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JUNE

6th. 8 am HC led by Rev Edward Cardale;
11 am HC led by Fr Darren Collins
Isaiah 6. 1-8; John 3.1-17

13th. 8 am HC or MP led by TBA;
11 am HC led by Rev Fiona Souter
Ezekiel 17. 22-24; Mark 4. 26-34

20th. 8 am HC or MP led by TBA;
11 am MP led by Rev Roger Chapman
Job 38. 1-11; Mark 4. 35-41

27th. 8 am HC led by Rev Susan Marsh;
11 am HC led by Rev Edward Cardale
Wisdom of Solomon 1. 13-15, 2.23-24; Mark 5. 21-43

JULY

4th. 8 am HC led by Rev Edward Cardale;
11 am HC led by Fr Darren Collins
Ezekiel 2. 1-5; Mark 6. 1-13.

11th. 8 am HC led by Rev Susan Marsh;
11 am HC led by Rev Fiona Souter
Amos 7. 7-15; Mark 6. 14-29.

18th. 8 am HC ;led by Rev Edward Cardale;
11 am HC led by Rev Ron Ingamells.
Jeremiah 23. 1-6; Mark 6. 30-34, 53-56.

25th. 8 am HC led by Rev Susan Marsh;
11 am HC led by Rev Sue Stilwell
2 Kings 4. 42-44; John 6. 1-21.

LEM FEST 2021

Ticket sales are going well, but you can still buy yours by contacting lemfestadmin@lemsfordfete.co.uk or speaking to Gina Butler. Local bands/musicians will be performing in the grounds of St John's School from 1-7pm. The event will be limited in numbers and by pre-purchased tickets only. Food and drink will be on sale at the event.

Alzheimer's Society

Jackie Spry is organising a special Cup Cake afternoon for the Society—details opposite. Donations may be made using the QR code if you cannot make it in person.

Ron Ingamells writes

I very much look forward to a return visit to St. John's on 18th July. It is hard to believe that it is over 40 years since I arrived in Welwyn Garden City and had the pleasure of being at St. John's Church for over 23 years!

On Trinity Sunday I marked 63 years as a priest. Not sure where the years have gone but also I am thankful as in the hymn 'Lord for the years your love has kept and guided.'

Derek Fitzhugh

Please see the tribute on pp 8 & 9.

Derek and Jean were a tremendous support to St John's over many years. Although he had not been able to worship with us latterly Derek will be much missed.

Annual Parish Meeting

Held on 2nd May and Chaired by the Team Rector, as the Vicar had resigned to move to another Church within the area.

Lucy Earl reported that despite Covid numbers on the Electoral Roll are holding up at 88, compared to 91 in 2020.

Gina Butler gave the Treasurer's Report. Without services for long periods, the Fete cancelled, and weddings postponed, income was substantially reduced. On the plus side a generous legacy of £20,000 from **Lesley Elliston** was very helpful. Our annual contribution to the Diocese was over £45,000 but £9,400 of this had been deferred to 2021. With worship still restricted the forecast deficit for 2021 was over £20,000.

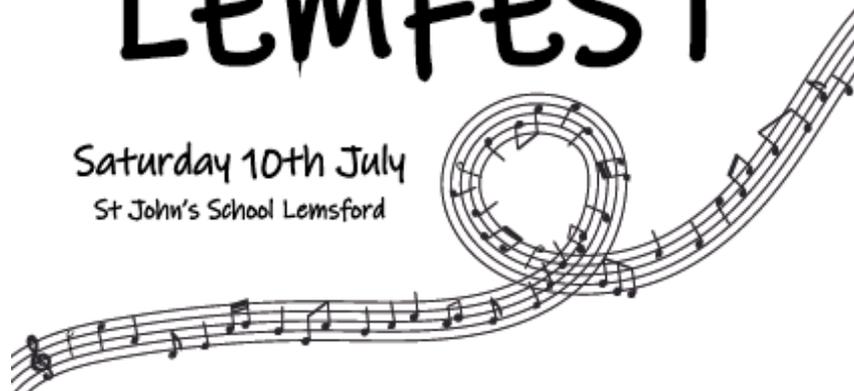
There were some changes in the Parochial Church Council.

Barbara Taylor who had been a member for over 30 years, including a period as a Churchwarden, stood down as did **Geoffrey** and **Ann Hollis**.

Parish Magazine copy date for the next issue: **18th July**

LEMFEST

Saturday 10th July
St John's School Lemsford



Guests open at 1pm. Music at 2pm. Food, beer and wine available. Event will be run in accordance with covid regulations at the time. Close at 7pm.

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I have written a couple of recent articles for the magazine, the first about life at Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School during lockdown, and the second as we returned in March. Having now been back for a couple of months life continues to evolve.



The latest change in the slow unwinding of Covid-related measures has been the removal of the requirement for students to wear masks during lessons. This change was effective from 17th May and has improved communication with students and has made it easier to gauge how the students are reacting to lesson content – facial expressions are a huge help! Masks are still worn in corridors between lessons and whilst queuing for lunch, but lesson time does feel more normal. However, a major part of my role is working closely with children who need learning support and this often entails sitting next to a student to explain a task or to help them complete some work. Inevitably such close contact work indoors does work better if both the student and I put on a mask for a few minutes.

Twice-weekly Covid testing became a feature of school life when we returned to school in March. The tests were initially conducted at school but the routine now is for students and staff to test twice weekly at home, and then to supply their test result to school electronically and also to NHS Test and Trace. The students now receive a box of lateral flow test kits every three or four weeks to enable the home testing to continue. Covid inevitably still frames much of school life despite the gradual moves to return to normal. School trips still haven't been re-instated yet, nor have gatherings in the school hall for assemblies, but the changes made so far have helped to make the core learning aspect of school life more like it used to be before Covid.

As we this week wave off our departing year 11 and year 13 students, who have experienced such a difficult GCSE and A-Level examination year, we all just hope the steps back to normality can continue in the weeks ahead.

Kevin

Derek Fitzhugh 10.9.1929 – 26.3.2021

Part of the address by his son Robert, given at Derek's funeral, which was conducted by Edward Cardale at Harwood Park on 23rd April. We offer sincere sympathies to Jean Fitzhugh in her loss.

Derek was born in London, and as a young lad tragically lost his mother. During the war, he was evacuated to Northampton. On his return, he spent all his holidays with cousins Caroline, Bill and Mary. It was their father, Uncle Bill, who encouraged Derek to become a Chartered Accountant in the City of London, where he had a successful career.

Dad was introduced to Mum at a cricket match and, whilst on leave from the Airforce, married her on 1st January 1955. For most of their married life they have lived in Welwyn Garden City. Dad was a very supportive neighbour and friend, and always happy to offer help and support. When the garage door was open, they all knew they were welcome to come and chat and borrow tools from his extensive range.

Dad was a former member and Chairman of Stevenage Round Table. He was Founder President of the Rotary Club of Welwyn and Hatfield. He served as District 1260 Conference Treasurer in 1986, joined the District Club Service Committee and became the Chairman the following year, before being appointed District Vice Chairman in 1989 and District Governor in 1992. Dad then became the National Treasurer which was the pinnacle of his time in Rotary. He raised vast sums of money for Rotary and local charities and was often seen around Welwyn Garden City rattling his collection tin.

My Mother has been told many times how inspirational he was in developing new members. The solid friendships he forged, the commitment he made to Rotary affairs and the great esteem in which he is held to this day. He will be greatly missed.



Both Dad and Mum were keen churchgoers at St John's Lemsford, where they were confirmed. Dad was always active at the annual Fete raising money for the church in one of his spectacular outfits.

Never one to sit still, Dad was a Paul Harris Fellow and a Freeman of the City of London. He was particularly proud to be a London Guide. He was also a Wood Warden and Treasurer of The Mill Green Museum.

The great love of his life was his family - his wife Jean, daughter Sarah, son Robert, grandchildren Amy, James, Gemma, William, Becky, and great grandchild Louie. He was immensely proud of them all and never happier than when he was taking the dog for a walk in the woods, playing Poo Sticks with the children, and smoking his pipe. Sadly, he suffered from dementia at the end of his life, but we will always remember him with great admiration and love.

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We are almost half way through the summer term as I sit and write this report...and it is feeling like the middle of March! However awful the weather has been though, we have been so grateful to have the children back in school and to rebuild some semblance of normal again for them and their parents.



We have found that the vast majority of children have returned to school with positivity and enthusiasm and, in some case with great independent attitudes to their learning. We are making every effort to distance ourselves from the media narrative of 'lost generation' or 'lost learning' and whilst working hard to plug gaps and reshape learning, we know these children will bounce back and will acquire the skills and learning they need to flourish.

We have been able now to have educational visitors in school and Class 4 have had the pleasure of a visit from Cassie, our link with North Herts Museum, to bring to life their topic on The Tudors. This was a hands on experience for the children and really enhanced their understanding and enjoyment of the topic.



All classes are enjoying extra sporting activities delivered by Jo Moxham from the Stanborough Sports Partnership, Class 3 are now enjoying the restarting of whole class First Access cello and violin lessons once a week and much more. After half term we are going to be combining Art and RE in our Spirited Art project and look forward to other opportunities continuing to open up more opportunities for our pupils.

This week we are experiencing another visit from our Forest School provider, Down the Woods and all children are getting the opportunity for another outdoor skills session within our school grounds. The children thoroughly enjoy these sessions and we are grateful that these brilliant experiences are funded by our generous LSA.





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We are holding our weekly St John's Church Service outside as a whole school, with the support of the Bishops Hatfield team, including Jo Brooks from St John's Church Lemsford. The children have loved these services and it has been such a joy to sit together outside and worship as a whole school.

We are busy making preparations for as normal as possible end of summer term, especially for our Year 6 leavers. We have a residential trip booked to Hudnall Park near Berkhamsted for Class 4 which only accommodates one school at a time. We hope that we can enjoy many more of our usual events and activities like Sports Day and the KS2 Performance. We are still in our class bubbles but hope that this may be able to change after 21st of June if guidance allow.

We wish you all a good summer as we look forward to the half term holiday.

Mandy Evans Headteacher

Thoughts on holidays restarting, from Ted Webb

Spain holds no thrill for me;
far, far too touristy.
English ex-patriots
crowding the beach.

Inland it may be
a country of mystery;
reality remains to me
just out of reach.

Croatia inspires me!
It calms me, excites me.
A land full of beauty,
tranquillity and peace.

A language which fascinates me;
full of complexity.
Yet children speak it,
with fluency and ease.



Defaced medieval wall paintings that made pilgrims "fall to their knees" have been recreated at St Albans Abbey and Cathedral for the first time in nearly 500 years using light projections. The new colour images are being projected over what is left of the original paintings on the walls. Dating from about 1080, the Norman originals were defaced and whitewashed after the Reformation.

Starting with high quality digital photographs of the paintings, experts recreated the more colourful light projections. For the spectator the lighting builds up layer by layer over a minute or so, gradually transforming the worn and often indecipherable originals into what they might have appeared in their prime. Guides can demonstrate this on request.

The picture on the cover shows the result of this work on one wall painting of the two saints whose shrines were venerated by medieval pilgrims to the Abbey—St Alban and St Amphibalus. On the right is a picture of the original, which is practically impossible to make out.

Your editor can attest that this experience is most definitely worth making a special trip to see.





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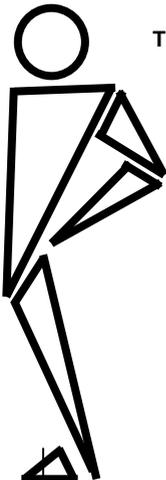
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With summer approaching we are fortunate to have on our doorstep Stanborough Lakes. I like to walk my dog around them, and thought it might add to your enjoyment of them to learn how they came to be.

A park beside the River Lea featured in the city's 1949 expansion plan, and was finally opened in 1970, covering 126 acres with two lakes. *This image from Welwyn Garden City Heritage trust shows the opening day.* The lakes are man-made,



created by gravel extraction for the construction of the A1 (M) motorway. However the plan to use this gravel on the motorway fell through and instead it was used to build the hillocks at the back of the North Lake.

The Boating Lake to the north at Stanborough is 11.3 acres in size. It is shallow, less than three feet deep, with several small islands. It is fed by water from the River Lea at its north end and from a spring located in the old watercress beds in the Great North Road.

The Sailing Lake to the south is 15.3 acres in size and more than six and a half feet deep in places. Before the Lakes were built the River Lea used to flow through part of this Lake but it was re-directed to the west side. Many water sport activities take place here, including sailing, windsurfing and angling.

In my youth a fond memory was the impressive 120 metre high fountain in the North Boating Lake. I seem to remember going out in boats with friends and trying to force them under the fountain with the aim of sinking their boats.

From a local history view point, the lake is not in the Parish today but was in 1859 when the parish was formed, as part of Stanborough Farm. This can best be seen from an image *inside the back cover* donated by Ken Wright of Stanborough Lane in 1965; it shows farm buildings on the right and the entrance to the old Bull on the left. A similar view *also inside the back cover* but taken only two years later in 1967 shows the building of the A1 bridge, which helps to locate the Lakes today .

The farmhouse is still there and located down the old Great North Road on the left as you approach Coopers Green Lane. (*Old print below*). It is the headquarters of the Bakers Union. On the 30th May 1919, a large part of the outlying land belonging to the Panshanger Estate was sold by auction at the public hall, Hatfield by order of the right Honourable Lord Desborough K.C.V.O. According to the sale catalogue, Stanborough Farm (lot 3) was occupied by Mr



34. An early 19th-century picture of Stanborough Farmhouse.

Herbert Titmuss and the acreage was 123 acres. This was sold for £6,100 to the tenant. This auction also saw the sale of land to HRDC for building Bury Cottages and to one Ebenezer Howard for building a new town called Welwyn Garden City.

Two **local landmarks** were required to complete the Stanborough Lakes. The first was the **River Lea** which is relevant to Lemsford as the land around it where it was shallow became a crossing for travellers (ford). This was first known as Leas ford which became Lemsford over time.

The Domesday book for the Lemsford area informs us that land was held by the Abbot of Ely, “The free fishery of the Bishop in the river extended in 1277 from Hatfield Mills (Mill Green Museum, also worth a visit this summer) to the Bridge of Stanberue (Stanborough), and from there to the mill of Simon Fitz Adam (Lemsford Mill) where the latter had joint rights of fishery with the Bishop.” The free fishery means that the sole and exclusive right of fishing was held by the Bishop; in 1538 the same fishery rights and extent existed.

The second landmark was the **water cress beds**. First evidence of water cress beds in the area comes to light at Michaelmas 1859 when “Watercress Beds, Hatfield, late of Langton & Townsend” which amounted to 6s or 30p was rented to George Tims.

Two cottages, garden and meadow at Lemsford Mill including the watercress bed was purchased by the Salisbury Estate from someone called Chennell. In the 1878 edition of Kelly’s Directory, Robert Tims had replaced his father as the watercress grower at Stanborough.



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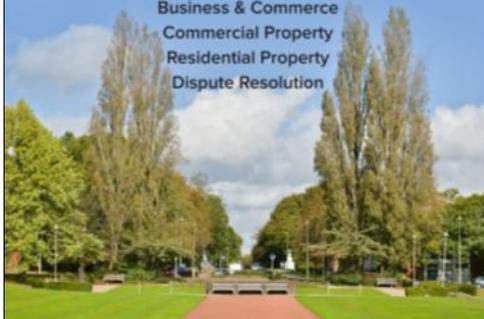
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Until 1902 (from 1886 to 1902) the Kelly Directory had included Mrs Bessie Tims of Lemsford. In the 1906 directory there are two watercress growers in Lemsford, Mrs B. Tims and Arthur Eagles; whether they had different beds or the same is not known. The beds were a commercial success and in Victorian times watercress was the only green winter veg. In the late 1950s and 1960s, the Ashbey family took over. I have met the family and they kindly donated many photos including this one. The Lakes need a feed of clean water and the springs (water cress beds) provided this. At a meeting of the Welwyn Garden City urban district council Recreation Committee on the 10th June 1969, it was stated that the council was purchasing the Lemsford watercress beds from the owner, Mr Ashby, so that they could use the water, as it is independent of the river Lea, to supply the Stanborough Lakes. They also said that they were interested in the site being sold to the Trust and becoming a nature reserve. A short report was presented to the trust by P. Moxey in July 1969 assessing the site so they could decide whether to purchase it when it became available.



The Trust finally purchased Lemsford watercress beds in May 1970 at a price set by the district valuer, £2,500. The money was all donated; £500 by the World Wildlife Fund and Cadbury fund, with the rest being private gifts. A management committee was immediately formed to look after the reserve and improve it ecologically and with regards to conservation. This was the beginning of Lemsford Springs which is also worth a visit this summer. Please note, this reserve is accessed by a key - contact the Trust on 01727 858 901. For a full history of the water cress beds go to our website www.lemsfordhistory.co.uk/Article_Lemsford_Springs.html

I hope knowing a little more about the history of the Lakes will encourage you and your family to enjoy them this summer. For me, the best time to visit is early morning, no crowds, sun rising and the quiet only punctuated by the noises of nature including the vast variety of wild birds including hundreds of parakeets which fly around in vast flocks or the solitary common crane checking out breakfast.

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Recently an immediate neighbour texted me: “My dogs have been going crazy around the fence by your shed. I have seen two rats, one a good 9” without the tail.” It turned out that these rodents were holed up in an electricity sub-station that adjoins our gardens, attracted by the warmth from the transformer. The very next day an employee of the Electricity company was on the scene, hunting them down. Apparently rats have a habit of chewing cables which does them and the cables no good at all.



Rats have a mixed press. Many people hate and fear them. In Leviticus Moses included them in the list of animals that Jews must not eat (doubtless to their relief). They do not feature in the animals welcomed onto the Ark by Noah, perhaps because they have already smuggled themselves on board. James Cagney in a 1932 film “Taxi” made famous the phrase “You dirty rat”, although he actually said something a bit different. In his book 1984 George Orwell imagined a torture chamber, room 101, named after a conference room at the BBC where he had sat through many excruciating meetings. In his room 101 victims were threatened that rats would be set loose to chew their faces.

On the other hand for the Chinese the Year of the Rat is the first in the 12-year Zodiacal cycle. According to legend the Rat used his intelligence to trick other animals so as to arrive first at a party given by an Emperor. People born in a Year of the Rat are optimistic, energetic, and liked by all. (Not me though—I was born in a Year of the Sheep).

Rats do serve a purpose as part of the food chain, making tasty snacks for predators. They serve mankind by helping with trials of medicines, and one variant, the Giant Rat, has actually been trained to sniff out land mines.

Their big problem is that their incisors never stop growing. Rats must gnaw on things constantly to wear their teeth down. If unchecked they would grow continuously in a spiral at an 86 degree angle, making it impossible for the rat to close its mouth or eat, resulting in death.

Although it must be a good sixty years ago I still remember a footnote in a Chemistry text book. Seamen on ships bringing mercury in sacks from South America noticed rats who had chewed through these sacks being poisoned, and falling overboard. That is all I recall from that book!

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I will give you shepherds after my own heart,
who will lead you with knowledge and
understanding.

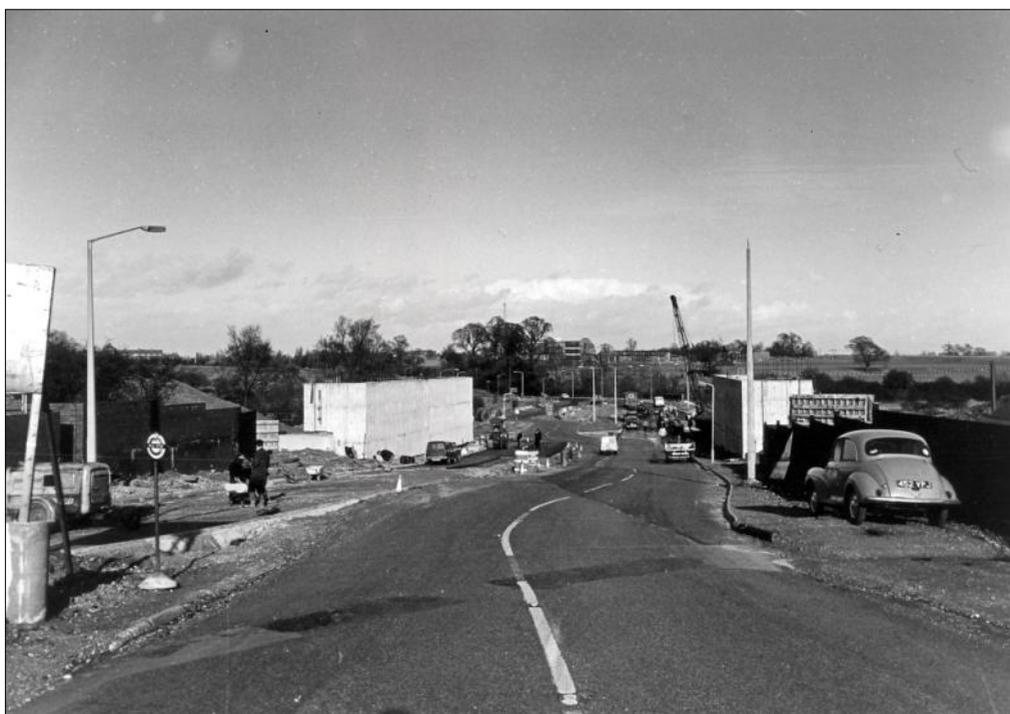
Jeremiah 3:15

And Finally: Jesus The Good Shepherd& his dog





*See page 16, Lemsford Local History Group
Top 1965, bottom 1967.*





TOGETHER

A moment to pause. Breathing in clear air. Sharing interests and conversations as you ponder the hills ahead. We have your passion for exploring worldwide and in the UK.

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