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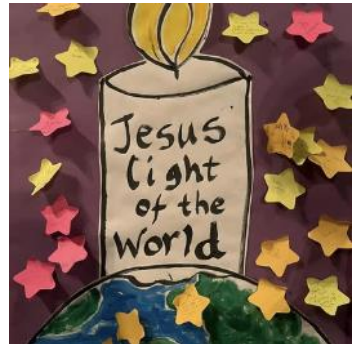


February / March 2025

£1

Photos from Connect@4 - Christingle

Below: Making Christingles, Celebrating the Light of the World, followed by Serving Drinks and Eating Pizza [and cleaning up afterwards...]



Cover Photo: The Lenten Rose - aka Hellebore - flowers around the time of Lent, Feb/March.

The Language of Love!

By the time you read this, Valentine's Day will be just around the corner—a time often associated with roses, chocolates, and cosy dinners. But not everyone is in a romantic relationship, and even those who are may not express love in these ways. Take my husband, for example. He's not one for big romantic gestures (sorry, Daniel!), but he's brilliant at doing the washing and cooking. It's a good thing too - if left to me, we'd live on toast eaten in increasingly random outfits!

It took me a while to realise that this was his way of saying "I love you," rather than just an odd passion for chores. In fact, I think it was when I was introduced to the idea of the five 'love languages' that I came to appreciate the variety of ways people connect with those they care about.

The love languages - words of affirmation, acts of service, receiving gifts, quality time, and physical touch - describe how people give and receive love. For instance, some feel most loved when they hear kind or encouraging words, while others treasure shared moments or thoughtful presents.

Like Daniel's washing, it's easy to miss someone's love if we expect it in a different form. A friend might quietly support you behind the scenes rather than saying it aloud. A



partner might listen intently after a bad day rather than planning a grand surprise. Recognising these gestures for what they are - expressions of love - can bring us closer together.

The Bible speaks powerfully about this, reminding us that love isn't just the "squishy feeling" found in Valentine's cards. Love is gentle, love is kind. It doesn't envy, it doesn't boast, it isn't proud. Love is patient, it keeps no record of wrongs, and rejoices in the truth. Love protects, trusts, hopes, and perseveres (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). God's love - and therefore our love - isn't one-size-fits-all. It takes many forms, each uniquely meaningful.

So, this Valentine's Day - whether or not you're in a romantic relationship—why not take a moment to reflect on how you express love and how those around you might be showing it too? Whether through words, actions,

(Continued on page 2)

Vicar's Message - *continued*

(Continued from page 1)

gifts, time, or touch, love is a gift we're all called to share. And who knows - sometimes, tackling the

washing-up could be the most romantic gesture of all!

Rev'd Kathryn

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Lemsford Fete Call 2025

A quick note to everyone in Lemsford and Stanborough that planning for the 2025 village fete is well underway. The event will be held on [Bank Holiday] Monday 5th May from 12 noon until 4pm. The usual popular stalls will be there, with a few new ones, including having the ride-on car arena again for the little ones.

So this call out is to say if you're having a clear out we'd always be happy to take good condition bric-a-brac, books, DVDs, etc. Equally if you'd like to offer your time as a volunteer, pay for a business stall or sponsor an attraction please contact us on: www.lemsfordfete.co.uk/contact-us/

Lent dates for your diaries

Here are a few dates coming up in lent to mark in your diaries

- ◆ **Ash Wednesday Service** - 5th March, 10:30am
- ◆ **5 Week Lent Course** - Starting Tuesday 11th March, 9:45am (St Michael's) and 7pm (St John's)
- ◆ **Connect@4 - 'Lent Discoveries'**. Sunday 16th March, 4pm
- ◆ **Mothering Sunday Service (All Together)** - 30th March, 11am
- ◆ **Holy Week** - Sun 13th April to Saturday 19th April

Connect@4 - Lent Discoveries

Join us at Connect@4 on Sunday 16th March for an afternoon of Lent Discoveries! Through creative activities, prayer, and informal worship, we'll explore what this season of reflection and renewal can teach us about God, ourselves, and each other. Perfect for all ages - come and discover something new this Lent!

RIP Joan Baraclough, RIP Pat Lewis

It brings us great sadness to inform you of the recent deaths of Pat Lewis and Joan Baraclough. Pat was a valued member of St John's church & choir and Joan was active in village life including Lemsford Local History Group and very much valued her connection with the St Johns Church. We hope to bring you tributes in a future magazine, but in the meantime we've included a highly germane article - 'How Long will we Live' written by Joan in 2018 - see page 5.

100 CLUB - October, November, December Results

Thanks to everyone, parishioners and friends, who are supporting the '100 Club'. If you'd like to join contact Nigel Johnson - see directory

Month	1st Prize	2nd Prize	3rd Prize
October	Number 88 - £102.60	Number 71 - £61.56	Number 40 - £41.04
November	Number 86 - £102.60	Number 46 - £61.56	Number 26 - £41.04
December	Number 43 - £102.60	Number 71 - £61.56	Number 94 - £41.04



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By Joan Baraclough

[We sadly lost Joan Baraclough recently, celebrating her life in her funeral on Thursday 23rd January. This reminded us all of a very poignant article written by Joan herself which we are reprinting from the Aug/Sept 2018 Magazine - Ed.]



This front page headline in a recent issue of the local paper provoked diverse and interesting reactions and led to some thoughtful reflections on the nature of life and death. The article it highlighted reported that data from the Office of National Statistics reveal significant differences in life expectancy between residents in Welwyn Hatfield depending on where they live. A comparison of life expectancy of boys and girls born between 2009-2013 showed that the best outlook for boys was 84.5 years in Welwyn East.

A nine year old girl, seeing the headline, enquired of her grandmother “how long are you going to live, grandma? Will you be able to come to my wedding?” Grandma replied “I certainly hope so”. There followed a brief conversation about the difference in ages between them and the possible date of the girl’s wedding. Reflecting later on the conversation the grandmother wondered if she should have taken this opportunity to tell her granddaughter something of the importance of living life to the full and in due time going to a better place. How long are you going to live? is a question often asked in the more practical circumstances of financial management. Do you want to invest for five, ten or twenty years? Depending on your age and ambitions, the time-frame may be easily determined and not carry any connotations of death.

For someone given a diagnosis of terminal illness, the position is very different. How they respond will be influenced by many things: physical, emotional and spiritual and to differing degrees as their time-frame shortens. Two particular people came to mind as I pondered this question. Very early on in my career as a medical social worker in a

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How long are you going to live?

(Continued from page 5)

London hospital, I worked with a lady whose life expectancy could be counted in days not months. She organised her visitors to bring things from her home. She then wrapped them up and gave them to the next lot of visitors. She wanted to show her love and appreciation for their friendship and caring, not only in those last days. It also showed that despite her illness she could give as well as take.

The other is a close friend, recently diagnosed with a life-threatening condition, whose faith is enabling her to make the most of her remaining life. Travelling to visit friends, staying with her widespread family and continuing to work within her Christian community, she radiates hope and positivity and belief in the good life to come. Reflecting on all this makes me realise even more the value of our church community. The Sunday services, the fete, the friendship teas each month, the tea in the allotment and bible reading groups all invoke a sense of worship, hope and thankfulness. Growing older often means increasing dependency on the kindness of strangers, be it in the community, hospital or hospice. I am reminded of what was known in my schooldays as the school chapter – First Corinthians Chapter 13 and being exhorted to remember in particular its last verse, that three things endure for ever, namely faith, hope and charity (love in later translations).

So the question for me is not how long am I going to live, but what shall I do with the life I've got left?

[And Joan did a lot... - Ed.]

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PRoW have been mapped and recorded since the 1949 National Parks Act, so what's new?

Any that missed getting recorded then or since, have been able to be added to 'The Map' as we've gone along; that is 'The Definitive Map & Statement of Public Rights of Way for Hertfordshire' - nice short catchy name, isn't it?

However, in 2000 the government of that time decided enough was enough, mostly under pressure from landowners and land managers griping about 'wanting certainty' - knowing if a route is or is not public, if not already recorded...

They enacted a cut-off date (ouch!) for all unrecorded paths to be either applied-for, or fully recorded by 2026, with a clause to extend that to 2031 if the Secretary of State could be bothered to make some Regulations. After all we'd been doing this since 1949 and The Map is called 'definitive' so there should be some level of certainty surely? - or surety certainly? and anyway we were given a further 26 years to get it finished, so that'd be all right wouldn't it?

Defra pulled-together a balanced Stakeholder working Group (SWG) of one-third land managers, one-third user groups (Ramblers & riders etc), and one-third local authority practitioners (no not yours truly - I managed to be busy that

day!). They worked tirelessly to reach all-party agreement and eventually published a balanced package of RoW reforms called the Stepping Forward Report, so all Defra had to do was turn them into Regulations (the longed-for new 'Regs') and Bob's your uncle, etc, etc., all would be well in the world of PRoW.

Scroll forward 24 out of those initial 26 years and we are still waiting for the Regs to be written, Defra cannot hold onto staff, and the SWG is moribund, not having met for months / years.

Meanwhile the user groups have geared-up to research 'lost ways', unrecorded routes in-use, and under-recorded routes (footpath only, rather than bridleway or byway); then make applications and submit them to the poor under-resourced local authorities - in the hope they can still be added to The Map, even after the cut-off date.

So, a change of regime up in 'the big smoke' and a new Secretary of State, and lo and behold under lobbying from the user groups, the cut-off date extension was announced, so now we have until 2031. Great I hear you say, but still no Regs or new resources to help actually process the avalanche of new applications being received.

The Welsh Gov't, by the way, had

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Your Public Rights of Way - continued

(Continued from page 7)

the sense to scrap the provisions of the 2000 Act and announced there would be no cut-off date in Wales.

So, another change of regime up in ‘the big smoke’ and another new Secretary of State, and lo and behold under more lobbying from the user groups, the cut-off date has now also been scrapped in England – a little boxing Day announcement I’m sure you all heard on the day and listened to intently?

So, we now have the aforementioned avalanche of Applications to work through and still no new Regs, a vacancy in the role at Defra to be filled, and no new resources to process the growing backlogs.

All may not be well in the local authority world of RoW, but the users are happy and the landowners are miffed; same old, same old then...



+

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By Kevin Earl, Chair of the Finance Committee, 15/1/25

A year ago I mentioned the ongoing difficulties that we, as a rather typical church, have to deal with – an old building, ongoing repairs and maintenance, as well as sizable bills to fund clergy and to support the wider church in the Diocese of St Albans. But I also mentioned some clear positives. This year I want to focus on those positives as I guide you through a few financial highlights from 2024.



Cold, wet, and a little miserable at times – that was fete day 2024, and the poor weather certainly impacted our finances, with our income only half of that achieved in 2023, at £3800. However, to counter that we achieved top line income growth from donations from the congregation of £700 in 2024 and also received a very generous (albeit one-off) gift, leaving our core income from collections up by £4500 from 2023. We also achieved an excellent contribution from a very successful summer strawberry teas event held in the garden of a home in the village, which raised over £900 for the church, and was enjoyed by all those that attended. Our 100 Club completed its first full year in 2024 and contributed almost £4500 to help our buildings fund, a huge achievement. Thanks must go to Nigel Johnson for organising it and to the members who support it each month.

It might just be me but I think that church feels more lively and is busier. We welcomed new families and individuals during the year and there is a real sense of developing growth. As I said last year I hope that growth in numbers will, ultimately, translate into improved income. Without growth it will remain incredibly difficult to cover our costs each year, and we will again have yet another deficit year.

I would like to finish by saying a very sincere thank you to all those who gave money to support the church in 2024. It is these regular weekly and monthly gifts, as well as one-off donations and legacy gifts that collectively allow us to survive, and we are most grateful for this ongoing support.

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The Christmas lights are all packed away now, and January can feel a bit gloomy and dull after all the excitement. But there are already green shoots in the earth and buds forming on the trees, and still lots to enjoy and lots to celebrate at church in the next couple of months.

To help us move from Christmas into these January days we had a fabulous and joyful **Christingle** celebration on Sunday 19th January with music, lights, sweets and pizza. We celebrated Jesus' light in our world and thought about how we can be light in the world around us, through friendships, acts of kindness and generosity. Check out some pictures in this magazine, and see you next year!

What's on this term?

Sunday Club continues to meet on the second Sunday of the month during term time at 11 for Bible stories, games, crafts, fun and friendship. Our next sessions are on **9th February** and **9th March**.

Everyone is welcome to join us. This term we will be hearing the stories of some amazing women and girls in the Bible. There were great leaders, warriors, a judge, women of daring and adventure, but ordinary women too, some old and some young, who didn't stop trusting and praising God, and who became part of his great salvation story, from creation to the new creation.



Our all-together services are on **2nd February, 2nd March** and again on **30th March** for **Mothering Sunday**. We'll have pancakes to mark the beginning of Lent, and our next **Connect@4** on **16th March**, a relaxed and interactive gathering for all ages, with food and music, creativity, and space to explore and connect with God, each other and the world.

Contact: Rev'd Katherine Alford revdkathrynalford@gmail.com or Jo Brooks at joholifield@gmail.com for more information about these events or our children's activities at St John's.



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Why Not Become a Foundation School Governor?

New Year, New Opportunity: Why Not Become a Foundation School Governor at St. John's Primary School, Lemsford?

Whether or not you have children in the school system, becoming a school governor is a rewarding way to contribute to education and the community. For just a couple of hours a month, you can shape the future and gain a fulfilling experience. Having been a governor for over a year, here are seven reasons to join us at St. John's!

Make a difference: You'll influence decisions affecting education quality, from reviewing policies and overseeing finances to supporting teachers. Your involvement will help create a positive learning environment.

Contribute to the local community: Be part of making St. John's a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive place. You'll help ensure the school serves all students, fostering pride and unity in our community.

Develop new skills and share expertise: Gain experience in strategic decision-making, leadership, and teamwork. Whether you're a seasoned leader or looking to grow, this role offers valuable opportunities

Work with a diverse team: Collaborate with governors, school leadership, teachers, and parents. The teamwork and community spirit are some of the most rewarding aspects of the role.

Help bridge the gap between home and school: Governors help ensure the school meets the needs of students and parents, working with leadership to find solutions that support students and parents alike.

Enjoy flexibility: Many hesitate, thinking it's too time-consuming, but the role can fit around other commitments. Meetings are outside school hours, and whether you can give a few hours a month or more, your contribution matters.

Find fulfilment: Seeing the impact of your work on student success and school growth is deeply rewarding. You'll know you've helped shape young lives and strengthened the educational system.

Foundation governors, appointed by the church, play a unique role in preserving the school's religious character. At St. John's, this means supporting the Christian ethos, promoting values like compassion and respect, and ensuring the school remains distinct as a faith community.

If you're interested in finding out more and possibly volunteering please contact Rev. Kathryn Alford (revkathrynalford@gmail.com).

Tom Coales - Foundation School Governor

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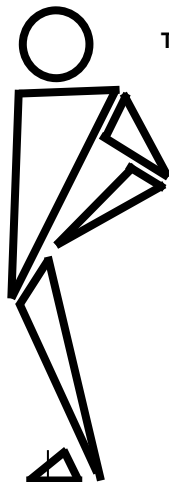


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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

I hope you all had a lovely Christmas – a long distant memory I know! We have had a busy start to the term.

We started the new school term with an INSET day part of the focus of which was our planning of Collective Worship. We were grateful to Revd Kathryn for joining us and together we planned the sequence of Collective Worship for the first half of this term. We chose Jesus' 'I am' statements for example 'I am the bread...' 'I am the light....' and 'I am the way, the truth and the life.' For each we planned a week's set of Collective Worship considering carefully how the sequence built over the week and considering our acts of Collective Worship in school, in church and our Celebration Assembly on a Friday. So far it seems to be working well – we will keep you informed as the term progresses.



creation and the call for each of us to look after this world. In our school hall Miss Noonan, one of our talented teaching assistants is creating a display which will show some of the artwork created in our first Religious Education enrichment day last term. The background is on display in the hall and the children's pictures will be added in the coming weeks.

We have lots of exciting events and



During this year we are using the Diocese of St Alban's project 'Heart of the World.' It is a series of resources that look at different aspects of our amazing world God's



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News from St John's School - Jan 2025 - Continued

(Continued from page 17)

themes planned for this term. We will be celebrating Chinese New Year on Wednesday 29th January with each class taking part in a Lion Dance workshop. We will be taking part in our annual Feeling Good Week and Safer internet weeks in February. March will

bring us the annual World Book Day celebration and we will also be having the second of our Religious Education enrichment days on Ash Wednesday.

We have so much to look forward to.

Michelle Boylan

Head teacher at St John's

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This issue's THEN & NOW on the inside back cover is Brocket Park, London Gate Lodges, and the entrance to Brocket Hall, opposite the Church.

Brocket Park, London Gate Lodges

These two lodges and gates, designed by James Paine, were built in the 1760s at the same time as Brocket Hall was extended. Their structure remained unchanged, at least up to the 1930s. This description comes from Florence Weston, nee Webster, who was born in the lodge on the left.

“The lodges each had 1 large room downstairs, with a pantry off. The large kitchen range was always gleaming, and tantalising sights of freshly baked cakes were too much for Florence's father and his friends to resist. Upstairs was one large bedroom with a double and a single bed for my parents and I. My brother slept in the other lodge with great Aunt Jane.

Photo of Great Aunt Jane (Thompson, nee Bunnage). Gate Keeper from 1909 following her husband's death, until she died in 1936 and her nephew in law, Arthur Randall Webster

There was no running water, father fetched water from the well on the right side of Brocket Drive for drinking, using a yoke to carry the buckets. For other water the well to the left of the lodge was used. Behind the lodge was a shed with a copper and mangle where the dogs slept on a stage and behind that a toilet.



The lodge keepers' duties included opening the gates when gentry arrived. Jane would curtsy as their carriage drove through and the gentlemen would doff their hats.

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Previous occupants of the lodges (taken from census)

- 1851 Sarah Brown age 81, widow and daughter Maria Brown, single, age 51 Essex
 Alice Chamberlain, widow, age 88, gatekeeper, born Hatfield
 Ann Eagles, widow, visitor age 67, a straw platter, born Hatfield
- 1861 Maria Brown, single, age 66, lodge keeper, born Saffron Walden
 Sarah Gurney, widow, age 49, charwoman, born Hatfield and her son
 William Gurney, age 20, gardener, born Hatfield
- 1871 Maria Brown, single, age 76, gatekeeper, born Saffron Walden
 Sarah Gurney, widow, age 60, gatekeeper, annuitant, born Hatfield
 Joseph Mardell, married, age 57, gamekeeper, born Welwyn
 Elizabeth Mardell, age 55, straw plaiter, born Cromer Hyde
- 1881 Sarah Gurney, widow, age 70, born Cromer Hyde
- 1891 Joseph Mardell, married, age 69, woodman, born Welwyn
 Elizabeth Mardell, age 66, born Cromer Hyde
 Joseph Spriggs, married, age 60, carpenter, born Digswell
 Sarah Spriggs, age 50, born Gustard Wood
- 1901 Elizabeth Mardell, widow, age 75, park gatekeeper, born Cromer Hyde
 Sarah Spriggs, widow aged 60, park gatekeeper, born Gustard Wood
- 1911 Mary Ann Adams, widow 66 lodge keeper born Hertford Heath
 Jane Thompson, widow, age 58, Lodge Keeper born Brocket Laundry Yard Lemsford
- 1924 Arthur Randall Webster, married, age 28, gardener, born Coleman Green
 Winifred Jane Webster, age 27, born Dover
 Stephen Webster, age 4, born Coleman Green

(Continued from page 20)

Arthur Webster and daughter Florence near their lodge in Brocket Park - Right

The Gatekeeper's duties included opening the gates and curtsying when gentry came through, the gentry would doff their hats.

As a small boy, Stephen Webster was presented to Queen Mary when the gates were opened for her. The Queen later sent him a little toy garage set.



In 1975 Giles Whalley, who sadly died last September, occupied the London Lodge and lived there until a few years ago when he moved to Mill Close.

On 30th November 2024, I attended the celebration of the life of Giles Whalley with the burial of ashes at St John's Church, Lemsford. The service was conducted by our Vicar Kathryn to a packed church. Five

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(Continued from page 21)

people shared their memories of Giles and all of them showed the love and affection they had for him and that he was a real character and friend of Lemsford. This article ends with a eulogy -

Remembering Giles Whalley, 3rd July 1946 to 21st September 2024, by Peter Craven.

The eulogy described how Giles' life revolved around Lemsford and allows us a glimpse of the true local history of the area. It also provides us with a connection to Brocket's London Gate which I referenced at the start of this article.

I knew Giles for over 30 years, firstly bumping into him in various hostelrys around the Parish. In later years, we had long chats when we attended the fete, seniors Christmas meals or went on days out with the seniors. The last few years we would wander around the various seaside towns enjoying the odd pint. These days allowed Giles to talk about his many interests, number one being motor bikes. We visited many bookshops in Canterbury looking for a Billy Bunter first edition, which he collected.

The story that fascinated me was the time he lived at the London Lodge Gate and Inspector Morse paid him a visit. The episode was called 'Who Killed Harry Field'. Morse investigates the death of free spirit and artist Harry Field, and in doing so gets dragged into Harry's world. Harry was a struggling artist who was found murdered and thrown off an overpass, but recent rains and a dry body led Morse to conclude he was killed over a week earlier. The episode was filmed in March 1991. The locations were The Crooked Chimney pub, Cromer Hyde, Lemsford, Welwyn Garden City, (pub where Morse finds Harry Field's motorbike) and Brocket Hall, Lemsford. What made this special was a scene where the security guard of Brocket Hall invites Morse into his Gate Lodge. It showed Giles' living room. Giles explained how he had to move out while they filmed the scene. Giles was the perfect connection with local history facts and real life.

All who knew him will miss Giles. We end with his eulogy, which was read at his funeral and memorial service.

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Giles' Eulogy. Remembering Giles Whalley. 3rd July 1946 to 21st September 2024. By Peter Craven.

“I have known Giles since 1961 and also rode in motorcycle trials in the 60’s and early 70’s. No single portrait will be a complete reflection to those who knew him.

Lemsford. - As boys, Giles and I played in Lemsford together. We ran amok all over Brocket Park without any fear of getting caught by the estates game keepers. There was a plantation of young conifers in Brocket Park where pheasants often fed. We learned how to trap the pheasants by constructing a simple enclosure with ground level openings. It was easy to walk slowly to herd the birds into the trap. On one occasion we caught 5 pheasants in one go. We cooked the pheasants in the Brocket Park woods. Eventually our gang was caught by the gamekeeper Mr Rodgers who went absolutely ballistic.

On another occasion, our gang made a Molotov cocktail out of a two pint cider bottle filled with petrol and a piece of rag stuffed in the bottle top. One boy lit the rag and another threw the bottle at the Brocket Park boundary brick wall. A massive ball of fire about 30ft in diameter was generated as all the petrol was quickly consumed.

Giles' Employment. - Giles worked for different employers in various driving and gardening roles including: Brocket Estate. Welwyn Garden City Council.

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Giles' Lodgings and Housing. - Following his mother's emigration to Portugal Giles spent many years as a lodger. Later he was offered a tied cottage in 1973 when he started to work for the Brocket Estate. The cottage at Waterend Lane was near the Ayot Green Sawmill owned at the time by "Williams the Timber". Giles held a party at the cottage. About 40 people turned up. Most got drunk including Giles. The party was such a success it became known thereafter as "The Legend". Giles moved from the Ayot cottage to the Brocket Estate owned London Lodge tied property in Lemsford in 1975.

Giles on The Dust. - Giles was employed as a gardener by WGC Council. In the early 90s the council wanted Giles to work on the refuse collection service as a dustman. He refused to do this, and he was suspended by the Council. Giles was adamant the he would not "work on the dust". After about a week his suspension was lifted and Giles returned to his duties as a gardener.

Trials in the 1960s and 1970s. - Giles and I joined the Mid Herts Motorcycle Club in the 1963 when riders were classified as either novices or experts. Giles became an expert trials rider in a trial held on the Duke of Bedford's Estate near Woburn in 1968. Giles won the Best Novice award with a total of 138 marks lost.

Giles' Legacy. - Giles, thank you for your friendship. We had memorable times being naughty boys, riding in trials and socialising. You are irreplaceable and will forever be remembered by us all as a remarkable and completely unique person. Your spirit lives on with us all."

Peter Craven - 21/10/2024.

The group is happy to share its archive and research with the community and provides walks and talks to groups. For more information, contact us on info@lemsfordhistory.co.uk. Please use the same email address if you want to share memories.

The Chinese New Year fell on January 29th, and we are now in their Year of the Snake. Snakes have a mixed reputation the world over; calling someone a snake in the grass is not a compliment, but the universal symbol for healthcare stems from Asclepius, a Greek god associated with healing and medicine who carried a rod with a snake entwined around it. In ancient Egypt, the serpent on the crown of the pharaoh was thought both to render him immune from harm and enable him to heal. Israelites, like other Semitic peoples, associated snakes with life and healing because they emerged renewed after shedding their skin.

Whatever one's views of snakes they are remarkable. They smell with their tongues, using an organ on the roof of their mouth that allows them to smell by flicking their forked tongues. They hear with their jaws, using vibrations from their jaw bones to send information to their inner ear. They strike quickly, hitting their target in 50 to 90 milliseconds and have a mobile skull with many joints that allow them to absorb the impact of their strike. Further, they can mimic the appearance of other animals, such as spiders and worms, to lure in prey. They can climb too by wrapping their bodies around objects and shimmying up. They are adaptable, occupying almost every habitat on Earth.

Their one big drawback of course is that some possess a venomous bite, which has always scared mankind.



The snake (sometimes referred to as a serpent) has many prominent references in the Bible. The best known is its role in the mythical Garden of Eden, where it speaks to Eve to tempt her into eating an apple from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil Genesis ch 3.

In the New Testament Jesus has harsh words for hypocritical religious leaders who do not practise what they preach, calling them "You snakes! You brood of vipers!" Matthew 23.33.

The Snake is the sixth in the 12-year cycle of the Chinese zodiac, and so cropped up in 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, and 2013. People born in these years are considered to be rational, calm, thoughtful, and loyal to loved ones. Perhaps snakes are not so bad after all.

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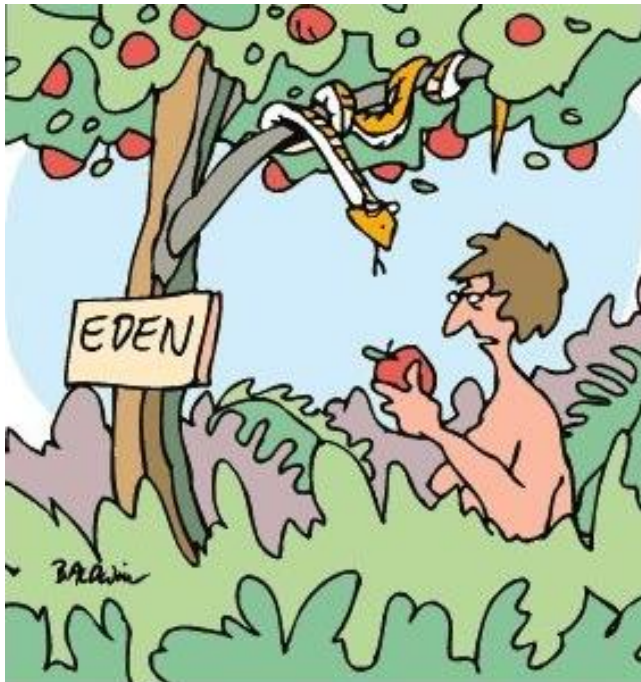
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And finally



"Gosh, I dunno. You sure it's organic?"



Brocket Hall, London Gate Lodges
Then (above): ~ 1930s, Now (below): today



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