

THE SEAVINGTONS' NEWS

May 2020



Andrew Sutton

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The Seavingtons' News

I have never lived in a 15th floor flat in a city. Thus, I can only speculate on the misery that the lockdown entails for those that do. We in Seavington, on the other hand, have a pretty comfy lockdown. Our streets are not crowded and are wide enough to exchange pleasantries with other walkers whilst maintaining the required "social distance".

Further, for our essential shopping we have our Community Shop which remains open albeit with reduced hours. Of course, many of the volunteers have had to withdraw their services because of age or other vulnerability. May I therefore place on record our community's gratitude to the stalwart handful of volunteers who are maintaining the service even including some home deliveries?

Our Village Diary, normally on page 2, would have been a blank sheet this month. Recognising that we are all home-locked, with no pub or other diversionary opportunities, I have taken the opportunity to list our local take-away or home delivery eating options instead. With no Deliveroo or Uber Eats in the area, these local businesses offer an opportunity for a quiet evening at home with little or no hassle. I salute them for their enterprise and hope that they get sufficient custom to enable them to survive the crisis.

Turning to our spiritual wellbeing you will see, on page 9, that two retired clergy Canon Ian Gibson and Rev Sue Hounsell are working hard to replace the, absent, Rev Tom Handy. Our family are already receiving Ian's weekly prayers and reflections which we find most helpful. We recommend them to you all; thank you Ian.

David Froome

The Waste Paper Skip

Our discussions with Viridor over the continuation of the monthly waste paper skip continue but have been interrupted by the Corona Virus lockdown. As you would expect, provision of our monthly skip does not count as an essential service; all the re-cycling centres are closed and there are no garden waste collections. Thus, there will be no skip in May but we are doing our best to secure a resumption just as soon as the lockdown is eased. The funds we receive from this are important to our magazine and we will keep you informed.

Take-away & Home-delivered Treats

In these unusual times, when we are confined to our homes and unable to pop out whenever we want to, we might want to give ourselves a treat with a take-away or home delivered meal.

A number of local eateries are offering take-away and some are offering delivery in the Seavingtons. The list below gives details of our nearest businesses offering this service.

1 Seavington Community Shop & Café

Our Community Shop and Café is offering both a take-away and home delivery service. The meals are packed so that, if desired, they may be kept in the refrigerator until evening and re-heated in a microwave oven. They are available until the shop closes but should be ordered before 1.30 pm. The menu was distributed with the April Seavingtons' News and is also available on our village web-site: www.theseavingtons.org; to order telephone: 01460 249730.

2 The Volunteer Inn

The Volunteer Inn is able to provide meals for take-away or home delivery and if anyone requires a Sunday roast Ruth is willing to cook one. Anyone requiring a roast please phone on the Thursday before to book. The Volunteer is also offering pasties, takeaway chips and meals such as lasagne or pies as well. You may also purchase five pint takeaway pouches of their home-brewed beer; to order and pre-book delivery please telephone 01460 240126.

3 New Farm Restaurant, Over Stratton

The New Farm Restaurant in Over Stratton is offering both take-away and home delivery in the Seavingtons for a range of ready to eat and frozen meals. The menus for both ranges of meals are available at: www.newfarmrestaurant.co.uk; orders should be placed by telephone on: 01460 240584.

4 The New Inn, Dowlish Wake

The New Inn at Dowlish Wake is offering both take-away and home delivery. Delivery to a Seavington Address costs £2. The menu is available on their web-site: www.newinn-ilminster.com and to order

please telephone: 01460 52413. You may also e-mail newinn-ilminster@btconnect.com to receive a daily menu.

5 The Lopen Raj

The Lopen Raj is offering its full menu of Indian and Thai dishes as take-away or with free delivery to a Seavington address. The menu is available at: www.lopenraj.co.uk and orders may be placed by 'phone on: 01460 242566.

St Michael's Church, Seavington

Due to the Coronavirus Covid-19 lockdown there are no services at St Michael's Church during May. Please see page 9 for information on the interim arrangements for our spiritual well-being.

The Seavingtons' Weather in March 2020

This year—2020

Previous year—2019

Temperature

Average Minimum	2.62°C	4.66°C
Average Maximum	11.03°C	12.10°C
Mean	6.83°C	8.38°C

Rainfall

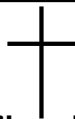
Monthly Total	49.8 mm (1.99")	78.2 mm (3.13")
Total for the year	278.3 mm (11.13")	163.9 mm (6.56")

A more average month except for it being unseasonably windy

Advertising Rates

	Annual	Monthly
Full Page	£ 100	£ 12
½ Page	£ 50	£ 6
¼ Page	£ 28	£ 4

Advertising enquiries to: adverts@theseavingtons.org



Thandi Wilson 1967—2020

Thandi was born in 1967 in Durban, South Africa. After completing her schooling, she worked in the family laundry business and as an assistant in a cookery school. She then went travelling through Israel, Europe and the UK, cementing her love of art, historic buildings, churches and cathedrals.

Thandi also had a lifelong love of reading and cinema. As a teenager she had worked at the annual “Durban international film festival”. (Even though some of the films may not have been “appropriate” for a young lady.) Soon after returning to South Africa, while again working at the film festival, she met her future husband Gerald. They married in 1997.

This was a difficult time in South Africa’s past and the attitudes passed on to her by her grandmother and mother gave her a great deal of compassion for others.

Together with her mother she managed an informal program assisting rural African women to market their traditional beadwork. It was not unusual to see Thandi driving a somewhat overloaded car, rushing ladies to the bus station, to catch their last bus home.

Gerald and Thandi immigrated to the UK in 2003, they settled in Seavington in 2010.

Thandi loved living in the UK and was grateful for the opportunities it provided. She also loved living in this beautiful village and like many newcomers, she volunteered at the Seavington Village store. This gave her the opportunity to meet a wide range of people, making numerous friendships.

Thandi worked as a passenger assistant, escorting children and young people to and from school. Her compassion, calm nature and sense of humour stood her in good stead in this role. When in town, it was not unusual for her to receive warm greetings from parents, carers or children, prompting Gerald to ask yet again “who was that?”

Thandi’s illness came as a shock to her family and those who knew her. The love and sadness expressed by so many people after her death, is due in no small part, to the person she was and the impression she left on others.

Cancellation of Parish Council Meetings

Pauline Parsons (parishcouncil@theseavingtons.org)

In light of the present situation with regard to Covid-19, and following Government Advice, open Parish Council meetings may not be able to be held. Accordingly it has been unanimously agreed to cancel the Parish Council Meetings that were planned for:-

Tuesday 21st April 2020

Tuesday 19th May 2020

Tuesday 16th June 2020

The following motion was passed at the meeting on 17th March 2020 which will enable the day to day management of Parish Council matters to continue.

(a) Should the council be unable to meet for whatever reason, the Clerk be given delegated authority to progress all ongoing matters and projects and authorise all regular payments and incur expenditure in line with the council's agreed budget.

(b) Any decisions taken under resolution (a) above will be taken, whenever possible, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of council. A record of all decisions and expenditure incurred under delegated authority will be kept and reported to members when the council next meets.

(c) The Clerk will advise all Councillors, by e-mail, of any planning applications by advising them to look at the Planning web-site of the SSDC. Comments from a majority of Councillors will be sent to the Planning Authority.

(d) The provisions outlined in resolutions (a-c) above will override any requirements to the contrary in the council's standing orders, financial regulations or terms of reference.

(e) Should government allow councils to meet virtually (online), the council will take all reasonable steps to facilitate this.

However, whilst there will be no open public meetings for the next three months you can still contact your Parish Councillors by phone [numbers were printed in the March edition of The Seavingtons' News] or by e-mail at parishcouncil@theseavington.org

We're going on a Bear Hunt

A mass teddy bear hunt is under way around the world to help distract the millions of children locked down because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Inspired by the children's book 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' by Michael Rosen, stuffed toys are being placed in windows to give children a fun and safe activity while walking around their neighbourhood with parents.

With the current lockdown extended and no word on when schools will reopen, it would be so lovely for our village children to enjoy a bear hunt of their own in Seavington. So if you have any teddies, we'd love to see them hiding in your windows or gardens!

Isolation Photojournalism

Tom Davies (07875 052398)

We are currently living in the middle of a global pandemic which has halted most of society in its tracks. During times of such uncertainty it is the duty of a Photojournalist to observe and record the situation as it unfolds. My colleagues and I are currently isolated all over the world and we have taken it upon ourselves to record the daily lives and activities of people living in isolation in the communities where we are staying. I am staying in Seavington St Michael for the duration of lockdown and am looking to get in touch with people in the Seavington's area.

I am therefore asking if anyone who would be willing to share their isolation experience and have their photos taken to please contact me using the information provided. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Due to the dangers of Corona virus I will be maintaining a 2-metre distance at all times from everyone and will not be entering anyone's house while I am taking photos.

Tom Davies, Photojournalist, 07875 052398, tcdavies10@gmail.com

Village Mart

The Seavingtons' News is pleased to offer a free advertising service to village residents provided that the advertisement is of a non-commercial nature.

Wanted: 12 600mm X 600mm X 50mm plain concrete slabs. We will collect—please call: 01460 242058

Seavington Villages Oil Run

Nigel Key (01460 241540; oil@theseavingtons.org)

Lockdown, Easter, and high demand generally delayed our delivery this month. However, it was much quicker than other suppliers were able to offer. The price, though, was the lowest we have seen for many years.

The longer time for delivery caused some concerns which I need to raise. I contacted all our customers by email or telephone and arranged earlier deliveries when requested. Our suppliers should ring you the day before delivery to let you know when the oil is arriving. This has been raised several times in the past but with this delivery I fear that many of you did not receive a call. Please let me know if this is the case and I will raise the concern.

To help with efficiency we do not have one tanker on one day delivering to everybody on our order. There can be several tankers driving around on several days to satisfy our demand. Therefore I am not in a position to tell you when your oil will be delivered and the suppliers should give you this information.

When the tankers arrive in the villages they each have their own delivery schedule to follow. This means that you may see a tanker on your road, or at your neighbours, but you do not get your delivery at that time. Do not panic, it will arrive, but it really helps if you have had the phone call telling you on what day the oil is arriving.

Please let me know if this is not working for you and I will try to sort it out.

Our next order will be placed on Friday 3 July followed by Friday 2 October.

The Rainbow Connection

Pictures of rainbows have started springing up in windows throughout the village with a message for people to keep positive and stay safe.

It's thought the rainbow trend started in Italy, but it has rapidly spread across the world with schools encouraging children to display their artwork as a way of connecting with their community. In the Queen's message about the current pandemic, she paid tribute to how "the United Kingdom has come together" and that when we reflect of these times the "symbol will be the rainbows drawn by children."

Seavington is such a beautiful place to be "locked down" and, as we enjoy our daily exercise, it's such a lovely sight to spot rainbows in people's windows!

Basic Beekeeping

Ken Dewsbury (01460 241155)

Following on from my previous article relating to swarming, of course the bees do not always decide to swarm onto a convenient tree or shrub. Sometimes they will decide to swarm onto a solid object, which cannot be shaken, such as a wall or gatepost. In these instances the sheet should be spread under the swarm, and the bees brushed into the container using a soft bee brush. In the past I have collected swarms from the roofs of tall buildings and even chimneys, but not anymore.

When the swarm is safely in the container, and it is determined that the queen is present by fanning of the bees, it should be left in place to receive all the flying bees of the swarm. If possible some shade from the sun is beneficial. In the evening / dusk when the flying has finished for the day, the sheet on which the container is sitting, can be drawn up enclosing the container and securing the bees within. They can then be removed and hived.

The hive to receive the swarm should be prepared in advance and what is called a single brood chamber will usually suffice (this is the box with the suspended frames of comb) The brood frames are deeper than the frames that will be in the boxes (supers) above. I tend to place drawn comb cell frames whenever possible rather than single sheets of what is called foundation as they will accept it more readily.

A temporary ramp is placed from the ground to the hive entrance, and the white sheet placed over the ramp. The container can then be lifted and the bees shaken on to the ramp, when after a short while a couple of scout bees will enter the hive out of curiosity, once they are happy with what they have observed they will return to the swarm indicating all is well. Then the huge mass of bees slowly walk into the hive entrance, this is a very satisfying event and never ceases to amaze me. However nothing is certain, it is not unknown for them to reject their new home and will regroup on a branch, or fly off to where they were headed before the interruption. This is why personally I always ensure that there is some drawn comb within rather than just plain sheets of foundation. A sure-fire way of keeping them in place however is to give them a frame of very young brood taken from another hive. This is irresistible to worker bees, to be presented with hungry young larvae that need feeding, and almost always results in the swarm taking up residence.

If the source of the swarm is unknown, then the bees should be watched

for signs of disease. One of the problems which is always worth looking for, is the varroa mite. There is never a better opportunity of control, than on a swarm. All the parasitic mites are on the bees, there is no brood where the mites can hide, so if treated, a hundred per cent eradication can be achieved.

Within the following day or two once the swarm has accepted its new home, anything that shouldn't be in the hive such a cobwebs, dead flies, spiders etc. are all rejected and discarded. My hives have landing stages at the entrances so I can see what has been rejected.

St Michael's Church Seavington

We hope you are all keeping safe and well, this isn't the most difficult place in which to be "locked down" is it? As you read this, we're pretty certain that St Michael's, along with all churches in the country, will still be closed. However, Canon Ian Gibson and others have been working very hard producing services, reflections and prayers and if you would like to receive these, we will be happy to share them by e mail, or a hard copy if you prefer. (Apparently coronavirus can't survive on paper.)

Anne and I would like to express our gratitude to Ian, for his support to us as well as the church and the village. He and Rev Sue Hounsell kindly agreed to lead worship at St Michael's before the church closures were announced and will continue to do so during Rev Handy's continuing absence, ensuring there will be a service every week in our church. As they are both "retired clergy," mere words of thanks seem inadequate.

In the meantime, I'm sure Oscar and I are not the only ones who have found St Michael's garden a beautiful, peaceful spot to pause during our daily exercise. When the lockdown is finished and life approaches some kind of normality, we hope to develop this area for everyone to enjoy as a special place, whether or not you consider yourself to be a churchgoer.

Sadly, but realistically, it is extremely unlikely that church services will resume while this edition of the News is current, if by a miracle they do, they will be advertised on the church noticeboard and will be as before (with additional celebrations, I'm sure - the bellringers of St Mary's are itching to get back to their ropes!)

Please take care of yourselves and your neighbours. God bless.

Amanda Jagers and Anne Shaw (churchwardens)
tel 01460 240554 or 249156

Over the counter

Ian Gibson (01460 249566)

Well, what a difference a month makes! I hope that every one of you is adapting to the new found way of living in a sort of cocoon environment? In many ways we are lucky enough to live in the countryside. I can only begin to imagine what life is like in a high rise flat or a crowded street in a big city. Obviously my thoughts and prayers are with everyone at this crucial time of our lives together in this community.

The shop continues to stay open, thanks indeed to those volunteers who are manning the store – and taking the risks with their health. Please, please at this time observe the space and distance guidance which is in place at the store; this is for your benefit as well as the volunteers who are working there. Sometimes the space regulations may seem a little harsh, especially if you are waiting in a queue. Perhaps that is the chance you need to chat to others in a similar position.

We try to keep the store filled with goods; we have two very faithful volunteers who are doing their very best to make sure the essentials are on the shelf, but sometimes they too are foiled and shortages occur. Please be patient and understand we are all in the same boat. Some prices have gone up, but I assure you this is only passing on what our suppliers have charged us, we are not making extra because of the crisis. Please also be generous to others in only shopping for your immediate needs and not stockpile.

The store hours are 08.30 – 14.30 each day and we will continue that timing for as long as we can, but keep an eye on notices on the door of the shop or on the website for regular information. If you see that there are staff in the store before and after these times it is likely they are picking orders for delivery or shelf filling for the day. Please be patient and respect the opening times. Don't forget we have a full takeaway menu as well for you to ease the worry of cooking every day!!

We also have stocked craft kits, activity packs and colouring books and items for youngsters and plenty of puzzle books and brain teasers for adults. Just in case you need extra stimulation.

Thanks for your support in these troubled times and let's hope we get back to some sort of normality very soon.

The Parish news may provide some help with spiritual or pastoral needs, but I just want to add that we are available should you need any help or just a chat over the phone.

At this time the value of community shines out and speaks of help to those who need it, our special praise goes to all those involved in the health service and providers, let's support them in any way we can.

Ian

The Swan Theatre - A Great (Non) Event!

Marion Bennett (01460 249522)

As many of you will remember we had organised a trip on March 16th to The Swan Theatre in Yeovil to see "Night Must Fall" by Emlyn Williams, a fundraising event for our community shop. The event was to be shared with the Friends of Ilminster Library with each cause sharing the profits. We were all keyed up to find out "who done it" and to enjoy the comfortable environment of this lovely theatre. And then the corona virus situation escalated. Was the performance on or was it off? Well in true thespian tradition the show was to go on. But then at 5pm Boris Johnson advised that all theatres and other public spaces should close with immediate effect, leaving the Theatre with no option but to cancel. There was a mad rush of phone calls to try to let everyone know in time.

Well to cut to the outcome. The Swan Theatre waived their charge and the coach company gave us a generous discount even though the coach had already set out for Ilminster. We contacted everyone who had bought tickets for the theatre and coach to ask whether they would like a refund. Thanks to your generous donations we have "raised" just over £600 for our funds. We are very grateful to all of you and assure you the money will be put to good use. We are always looking to make improvements to our shop and cafe and at the moment we are particularly aware of the need to accumulate funds to replace old, inefficient equipment.

We hope we will get another opportunity to avail ourselves of one of the charity night evenings at The Swan. Again a big thank you to all of you who supported us.



The Warehouse Theatre Ilminster

Run by Ilminster Entertainment Society (IES), this little gem represents one of the best equipped, professional standard amateur theatres in the county. Offering high quality entertainment throughout the year to audiences of all ages, as well as running a thriving Youth Theatre and being a venue for local groups and clubs to hire.

Details of future productions, auditions & membership can be found at www.thewarehousetheatre.org.uk or call 07943 779880. Tickets can be purchased through the website or in Harrimans Menswear, Silver St, Ilminster.

The Warehouse Theatre is temporarily closed as a part of the precautions to reduce the spread of Coronavirus Covid-19. Once the Government has reduced or removed the restrictions on places of entertainment we will be publishing our new programme.

In the meantime, we thank you for your past support and look forward to entertaining you in the future.



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We're here to help but please keep yourselves and our volunteers safe.

Please be patient if you have to queue and please observe social distancing rules.

Shop - Monday to Saturday 8.30 - 2.30. Cafe - Take away - please ring to pre order

SEE OUR WEBSITE www.theseavingtons.org/community/village-store-and-cafe
Water Street, Seavington St Mary TA19 0QH **tel: 01460 249730**

St Margaret's Support Groups Taunton and Yeovil

St Margaret's Support Groups are open to anyone affected by a life-limiting illness – patients, their families and friends. As well as providing an opportunity to meet others in similar situations, our trained volunteers can offer visitors:

a listening ear ♦ provide free information ♦ help signpost to other services
 The groups are run on a drop-in basis – there is no need to book or to be referred

Or perhaps you would like to become a volunteer to help run these groups?

**St Margaret's Hospice, Taunton TA1 5HA Thursdays 2pm-4pm
 Octagon Theatre, Yeovil BA20 1UX 10.30am – 12.30**

For further information please contact Lesley Burgess
 E-mail: lesley.burgess@st-margarets-hospice.org.uk; Tel: 0845 070 8910

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Shepton Beauchamp Primary School News

Charlie Pattisson (01460 241396)

We really hope that you and your families are keeping safe during this unprecedented time. We can safely say that there have been lots of different challenges to face for parents, teachers and of course the children. Our teachers have really been missing their classes and are e-mailing or delivering packages of school work, and ideas to keep busy, to the children in both classes each week and phoning parents to keep in touch. This will of course continue until the school re-opens.

We are also asking families to send photographs, news and jokes to be included in the 'Federation Fortnightly' Newsletter. Some of our children are keeping in touch with each other via Zoom, Skype and various other messaging Apps.

We are delighted that from 1st April our school has become part of the Bath and Wells Multi-Academy Trust. The school will now be known as Shepton Beauchamp Church School, we have a new logo but it still has the 'Shepton Sheep' and the uniform remains unchanged.

Our School will now have the opportunity to benefit from the freedoms and flexibilities of academy status, to share best practice and work with others to bring about sustained improvements. We will be in the South Somerset Hub. The other schools in our local hub will be All Saints Church School in Montacute, Holy Trinity Church School in Yeovil, Horsington Church School near Wincanton and Oakhill Church School near Shepton Mallet. These are schools that our staff will work with as well as other schools across the BWMAT and local schools in our geographical area.

FOSS (*Friends of Shepton School*). Thank goodness for Facebook, WhatsApp, sunshine and alcohol!! The wonderful friendship that exists at the school gates has been extended through the newly set up 'survival' groups. Parents have been able to discuss the highs and lows of 'Corona-time' and offer support with a very British sense of humour by posting pictures and videos of the chaos that can reign on a daily basis as well as convincing each other that putting a child in a paddling pool is a PE lesson, learning to wash up is home economics and digging an escape tunnel in the garden is relevant to WW2 topic!

Thank you to all our staff, parents and children who are all doing so much to support each other in these unusual times.

For more information please call 01460 240793, **EMAIL** office@threesaints.bwmat.org **WEB** www.sheptonbeauchamp.somerset.sch.uk

Local Lore – Higgins's Grave Lane The Headless Horseman

By Naomi Long, collected from local sources

As you head from the Lopen Head roundabout towards Watgore, you will see a small lane leading off the main road on your right, just after the Trading Post and bordering the West Down Orchard caravan site.

This lane is called **Higgins's Grave Lane**. But who was Higgins and why is he buried here? Information is very scarce, but I have managed to find a few intriguing titbits, including a headless horseman!

Higgins has been a popular name in and around Lopen for at least two hundred years or more. The name dates back to the medieval era (earliest example 1535), and Somerset is actually one of the locations with the highest concentrations of this surname.



“Higgins’s Grave Lane” appears on local maps dating back to 1887 at least, so we know Higgins died before this (and it is likely that Higgins was either a person of note, died in an unusual way or the location had something unusual about it, otherwise the lane would not have been given such a peculiar name). Local information supports this.

British-history.ac.uk has the following entry:

“...Higgins's Grave Lane at Stratton, recalling alternatively the fate of an intrepid huntsman or of an unfortunate carpenter set upon for his money.” (Local information.)

In the 1970s, when there was a resurgence in interest in local folk music and tales, Bob & Jacqueline Patten collected a number of oral recordings between 1969 and 2001 (available to listen to freely on <https://>

sounds.bl.uk/World-and-traditional-music/Bob-and-Jacqueline-Patten-Collection – a fascinating resource full of folk songs and interviews from local people).

One local resident they interviewed (Mrs Louisa Norman, born 1905) recounted the following ghost story about a headless horseman (transcribed by me):

“So then, up Lo – do you know Lopen Head? – up Lopen Head, between Lopen Head and Stratton, there's a lane up there and 'tis called Higgins's Grave Lane. And so, well I've been down there lots of times, and they said, uh, nearly every night for so long, a man would come up through that lane because it was supposed to be somebody murdered there and he'd come up through that lane on a white horse, without a head, the man didn't have a head and he'd come right up on the road and then he'd go back and that's why 'twere always called Higgins's Grave Lane.” (Available under Ilminster>Ghost at Higgins Grave Lane - White horse: Item notes: Tale 00:00:50, recording date: 16th Feb 1983)

And last but not least – although I may have mangled or misunderstood this somewhat due to pestering my informant during the Seavington Garden Show a few years ago where he won a lot of the top prizes – I was told the following (and please correct me if I got any of this wrong as I'm paraphrasing):

This lane is a V-shaped road leading from Over Stratton with one side of the V leading to Broomhill and the other side of the V leading to Lopen Head Nurseries (the current site of the new Lift West estate, opposite the caravan park). Where the two sides of the V joined in the middle [the south-eastern end of the lane if you look at the map and which I have marked with a V], there used to be a hole in what was a very sandy bank, a hole that has since disappeared since the council widened the road. The rumour was that either a Roman soldier or a gypsy was buried here. And, excuse this next bit, but I was told that it was a gypsy's grave because he was buried with a peg up his rear end!

So, I wonder if anybody at the campsite or the Trading Post has seen a headless horseman or a ghostly figure wandering the lane?

If anybody has any further information about this or any other local folklore or ghosts or legends, please get in contact with me at naomi_long8@yahoo.co.uk or call me (the Seavington News team have my number).

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Parish Council News –April 2020

Pauline Parsons [parishcouncil@theseavingtons.org]

As you are probably all aware we are living in very strange circumstances and accordingly the Parish Council has made a decision to cancel planned meetings for April, May and June. [See full note in Newsletter]

Accordingly Parish Councillors are communicating through e-mail and phone to enable day to day business to be carried out. Notes on any decisions being made are being kept and will be published when we are back to some normality.

SID – has been moved back onto the C5021 in the 40mph limit to the east of Seavington House. We thought it may be useful to see the decrease that Government directives have had on traffic through the village and whether speed limits are being adhered to.

PLANNING - Planning Officers are working from home so some things are not being dealt with as quickly as usual.

FALCON CLOSE – The issue regarding the footway of Falcon Close has been raised once again but it would seem that a different set of officers are now dealing with it. We can only hope that they can get the paper work completed in order that work can start once we get back to normality.

FOOTPATHS, BRIDLE AND RESTRICTED BY-WAYS –Our Footpaths Officer, Phil Gordon-Smith has written a great article regarding the use of footpaths. This was actually written before “Lockdown” was imposed but is still worth reading as the information is still very current.

It is becoming obvious that we are very lucky to live where we do and that we can take the opportunity to exercise in the open air. However, this also means that our footpaths are becoming used more frequently. Accordingly the Parish Council would like to remind everyone of the following:-

- ◇ Footpaths in The Seavingtons are clearly marked and if there is not a footpath sign you have no rights to enter/cross anyone's land. Just two examples that are regularly used - in Upton Lane there is only one footpath and that is the one that crosses the field to the A303 Ilminster By-pass and then goes through Branstons yard. There is no public access through Bird's Lane. There is no footpath through the field to the east of St Mary's Church to the back of the playing field.
- ◇ Some footpaths have been altered in order that you do not walk through a crop. Again most of these diversions have been signed. However, you will find in The Seavingtons, where you are walking through fields that are growing crops that the farmer has left a wide margin. Please use the margin and walk around the field not follow the path as shown on OS maps.

- ◇ If you are walking any footpath with your dog, whether or not you are in a field with animals, the dog should be on a lead and under control. It should not be allowed to roam around the fields. We would also ask that owners of dogs who live adjacent to fields with footpaths also have close control of their animals.
 - ◇ Please remember that the crop is planted either to feed animals, us, or in this area, the anaerobic digester to create electricity/gas and someone's livelihood depends on it.
 - ◇ Last but not least – Please ensure that you clear up after your dog and **TAKE THE BAG HOME**. Please do not leave it thinking that you will pick it up on your return as quite often you do not return the way you went. Filled poo bags can be put in your own wheelie bins as long as they are doubled lined.
 - ◇ At the moment SSDC are still emptying rubbish bins and dog-poo bins but it may not be as often as normal. If a bin is full please do not leave the bag on the floor beneath it.
-

A Walk in the Wilds

By the time this article appears it can only be hoped that the wet and windy weather has left these shores and allowed brighter more cheerful days. If indeed this has happened we may be encouraged to walk the many footpaths that surround these two villages either in the company of other human beings or with a faithful four legged friend.

The footpath system in Somerset is managed by the County Council and this body like a lot of others is hard pressed to find resources to keep these pathways open. Understandable when one thinks there must be hundreds and hundreds of paths trailing through Somerset alone. However, the good news is that the Seavingtons Parish Council has, for a number of years, kept a watchful eye on the paths around the parish and has dealt with many of the problems that can occur.

For the most part the Parish is maintaining all signage, stiles and gateways. They have tended to concentrate this effort to roughly the southern area from a line that New Road [C5021] makes. The main reason being that these tend to be the most frequently walked paths. The maintenance of the routes between the gateways and stile is the responsibility of the land owners. The Parish Council is well aware that some of these paths cross the middle of fields and thereby the possibility of crops having to be cut out in these sections. There has been, of late, an attempt to try and encourage walkers to, instead of walking the cropped fields, to use the headland areas thus keeping the crop intact. If it is feared that this move will mean a public footpath is eradicated, fear not. Public footpaths come under the Highways Acts and thereby paths can only be removed by legislation.

Whilst on the subject of crops, if one is out walking with a dog please have consideration for the farmer, do not let your dog wander where it will and make sure you clear the dog mess up and remove it from the area. It is becoming more and more unsociable to allow your dog to foul anywhere and the mindless few could end up spoiling freedom for the majority who do pick up. Around the world more and more restrictions are being put on dog ownership, in some countries it is so hard to own a dog that people are forced to keep it restricted to the home area. The dog in this country already has virtually no "rights" left to them, and this has come about purely from a lack of responsibility by their owners. Remember that this also applies to fields that may have animals grazing.

But back to footpaths. When out and about, in the Seavingtons, if you see a problem, can't get through a path or not sure where the path goes, please don't think somebody else will report it, do it yourself, it is better to have too many reports than none. There are two phone numbers you can use, they are at the bottom of this article, please leave a clear message with your own phone number and name plus a rough idea of where the problem is. If you know any councillors you can always approach them, they will know where to pass your observation to.

The two numbers are:- Parish Council Clerk. 01460 240193 & Phil, the footpath bod. 01460 242277

A view from the field

Chris Gough – SPFA Chairman (spfa@theseavingtons.org)

Update on the Playground Equipment Installation

As the Lockdown continues, with the playground remaining closed, it would have been great if we had been able to get the new equipment installed w/c 20 April as planned. However, we have now been informed that our delivery from mainland Europe has been put back to mid-May, which is obviously a disappointment, but not unexpected. Our contractors have said that they should be able to commence installation, (working within all the appropriate safety guidelines) as soon as the equipment is received.

Caravan and Motorhome Club Concert Band Rally

At the present time, we are still holding the booking for the CAMCCB to hold their rally on the Field at the end of July concluding with a village concert on Saturday 1 August. However, it is by no means certain that it will be able to go ahead. I'll keep the village informed via the Seavingtons' News with further information as soon as we have it.

As always if you have any questions or comments, I can be contacted using the email spfa@theseavingtons.org

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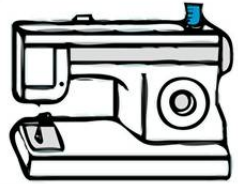
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Please do not hesitate to telephone David Froome on 01460 249445 if you have any questions.

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