

Anyone wishing to submit articles for the January newsletter, please could you email me or post through my door by the 12 December due to the Christmas break. Many thanks. Sarah Moore, Parish Clerk

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Chair's Update

At our last meeting we were pleased to be able to support the Memorial Hall by giving them an annual grant of £1,766 for maintenance and insurance.

The final decisions have now been made by Somerset County Council on which libraries are to close and which are to stay open. We are glad to say that Martock library is one of those which will stay open. Thanks to all those volunteers from our village who have been supporting the library to help them in their cause.

As you know, Somerset County Council have made significant budget cuts this year, some £15m – and are expected to continue this trend next year. This will put extra costs on parish councils in all sorts of areas. We will now no longer be supplied with free grit for the winter, and we have already made arrangements to buy our own supply for the grit bins around the village to ensure they are kept topped up for the frosty and icy weather. SCC will still grit the main roads i.e. the A3088 but will only grit the main road through our village in the case of prolonged periods of ice and snow.

Would you please help us by suggesting a name for the new road that will go through the new housing development to be built in West Street? We'd like it to reflect the history of the area. All names put forward will be put into a ballot at the parish council meeting. Suggestions please to our parish clerk Sarah Moore.

Finally (although it seems hugely early to be doing so!) may we wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year! As we always do, may we ask you to think about some of your neighbours who may be on their own perhaps for the first time this year, and the simple things we can do to make those days a little less lonely.

Contact details: Barbara Brooks, Chair of the Parish Council

Tel: 824432; Email: chairsshpc@hotmail.com

Tamarisk, High St (opp. Working Men's Club)

STOKE ACTIVE WALKERS

Tuesday, 4th December 2018

For our final walk of 2018, we will start by going along East Stoke and up Church Lane to Hedgecock Woods. From there we will go through the woods and then taken the footpath to Batemore Barn, go across the road and down over Witcombe to join the road which will take us past Tinkers Bubble. We will turn left at Tinkers Bubble and follow the road towards Bagnell Farm, and then along the path past the allotments to Greenham Cross and onto the Lord Nelson for lunch.

We meet at 10.30am at Sea Wall, about 50 yards on the Montacute side of Bonnies Lane. Please wear suitable boots or shoes and clothing according to the weather. All our walks are free, and we welcome new walkers to our friendly group. Well behaved dogs are also welcome. ALL WALKS ARE UNDERTAKEN AT THE WALKERS OWN RISK. For more information please contact Norman on 01935 822792.

WWI 100 YEARS COMMEMORATION

Firstly, thank you to Moira Hulett for the wonderful poppies on the lamp posts around the village denoting all our men who lost their lives in the First World War, thank you to Val and Tim Moore who did an amazing job dressing the Charity Shop window, to Sarah Moore for the moving sculpture of the soldier outside the Working Men's Club, to the History Group for organising the 'Horace Brooks' Commemorative Football match and to the youth teams who played.

Secondly, what an amazing weekend!

Throughout the 10th and 11th November many of you joined us in remembering the men of Stoke sub Hamdon who gave their lives for this country. The weekend started off in the Working Men's Club with a journey of discovery on how the First World War affected Stoke sub Hamdon and its families with a commemorative exhibition by Stoke History Group. The exhibition not only covered those who lost their lives but all the men who returned, the battles in which they fought, the aftercare and support they received and background information on the families. An evening of entertainment was held with a free buffet which was kindly funded by the Parish Council. I would like to thank Brian Shaw who played the bagpipes, Lois Sherman and Ellen Pembrey – the two amazing young ladies who sang so beautifully and to Stoke Band who played music from WWI era.

It was a beautiful serene morning on the Sunday, with clear skies and fantastic views as we remembered the servicemen and women who have given their lives for our country and for today's servicemen and women who are currently in action and stationed around the world. Thank you to all who came to the service around the Monument which was again attended by a fantastic gathering of all ages. Many thanks to Brian Shaw for playing the bagpipes before the service, to Anthony Russell for leading the service in such a quiet and sincere way, to Andy Diplock for playing the Last Post and Mike Holroyd for play the Reveille, to everyone who laid wreaths and crosses from Victor Gane, the Parish Council, Castle School, Stanchester Academy, the Brownies and Peter Bullock's family. Also, thank you to Castle Primary School and Stanchester Academy for involving our children. After the service everyone was invited back to the Working Men's Club for refreshments and to look around the exhibition.

On behalf of myself and the History Group we would like to thank the Working Men's Club staff and committee for letting us hold this special event for the residents of the village, the Parish Council who under their delegated powers were allowed to fund the food on the Saturday evening, to Moira Hulett who provided the advertising and publicity, all those who donated cakes on the Sunday, everyone who helped out behind the scenes and, to all the businesses who very kindly gave space in their premises for the poppy boxes. Last but not least, thank you to everyone who attended the event over the weekend making it a very successful poignant commemoration.

Finally, the money raised for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal has not yet been finalised so we will let you know in next month's newsletter.

Jon Moore, Poppy Appeal Organiser

VILLAGE ARTIST GROUP

The Village Artist Group wishes you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hold several workshop days and demonstration evenings throughout the year so if you would like to join us, are interested in Art or just want to take up a relaxing hobby please feel free to drop in for a chat and a coffee to see what we are all about. We are a small friendly informal group who meet in the Memorial Hall on Monday and Friday mornings between 10am – 12pm, and on Thursday evenings between 7.30 – 9.30pm during term time. You can attend any number of sessions for just £25 per term. Why not call in? The group start back after Christmas on 7th January 2019, new members are always welcome

If you are interested you can find out more by visiting our website www.yeovilarts.co.uk/villageartists/index.html, or visit our new Facebook page - The Village Artists Group Stoke-sub-Hamdon or just come along for a trial session. For more information please contact Diana on 01935 881647.

EVERY STEP COUNTS AND HEALTH WALKS

Why not come along and join us on our led walks and enjoy seeing the lovely, everchanging countryside around Stoke. You will receive a warm welcome, lively conversation and the opportunity for a cup of tea or lunch at the Lighthouse Café after the walks.

We meet on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month and both walks start and end at the Lighthouse Café opposite the Fleur de Lis pub.

'Every Step Counts' walks begin at 9.30am and last approx. 30 to 40 mins, walking on pavements or paths around the village.

Health Walks start at 10.30am and last approx. 90 minutes, walking along tracks, footpaths and occasionally ascending Ham Hill and visiting neighbouring villages.

Just turn up, wearing suitable clothing and shoes for the weather.

If you would like more information, please contact any one of the four trained walk leaders: Mark & Jane 07736032971 Penny 822208 or Anne 826256

REMEMBRANCE WEEKEND

What a brilliant weekend of remembrance! It all started with the beautiful poppies placed all around our village for each man who gave their lives for us all. Two weeks before the 11th November the poppy boxes appeared in our shops, schools, pubs and businesses – all of whom were willing to have a box. One week before armistice we saw the Charity Shop windows with their contribution to remembrance. On Saturday 10th – our very own Tommy appeared on his seat outside the Working Men's Club; how clever of the very busy lady who made it – very talented. At 12 noon, the History Group's amazing Commemorative Exhibition – it was very interesting reading about their lives; such an insight. A wonderful demonstration of dedicated work for all to see. At 6.30pm, a fantastic evening of entertainment began starting with a gorgeous buffet prepared by a wonder team. The entertainment started with our local piper, followed by singing from two beautiful young ladies and, finally, Stoke Band with their brilliant music finishing with a good sing-song. A brilliant evening so enjoyed by all.

Sunday's Remembrance Service was a very moving incredible experience which was attended by so many. The service is arranged every year by our Poppy Appeal Co-ordinator which entails a lot of work and is very much appreciated. After the service the Working Men's Club opened their doors for tea, coffee and cake. Congratulations to everyone, you made such a difference to the WWI 100 years memories. Thank you.

STOKE SUB HAMDON SPORTS & RECREATION TRUST

The Liberty Sisters: We would like to thank everyone who came along to the Memorial Hall on 20th October for a fun evening of entertainment and dancing with The Liberty Sisters. Thanks also to everyone who helped with the catering, the Working Men's Club for providing the bar and to Dave Stidson for standing in as PA for the event. It was a fabulous evening and great to see so many people dressed in style. The evening raised £611.17 for village projects

The Horace Brooks Memorial Football Match: On the wet and blustery morning of 4th November, the Stoke Youth Under 14's and 15's took to Stoke Recreation Ground to commemorate 100 years since the death of one of their own. Horace Brooks was killed on 4th November 1918, just one week before Armistice. The boys, managed by two current Stoke coaches (Time Brookes and Darren Goodwin), joined forces to represent England and Germany. The shirts were provided by the Sports & Recreation Trust and photographs marking the event were taken by Phil Hodges. The event was arranged by the village History Group and a display of the life of Horace Brooks was on view.

The Football Club would like to thank the History Group, the Sports & Recreation Trust, Brian Shaw for playing the bagpipes before the two minutes silence, the match officials for giving up their time for free, and especially the boys for giving their time and creating their own place in history. Whatever the score was in the end, Stoke won!

Charity Shop: The shop's takings for October 2018 were £2,706 which was an increase of £170 from the same month last year.

The Shop would like to thank Val Moore for providing such a wonderful window to commemorate the Armistice Centenary, leading to many interesting and fascinating conversations as people came to visit from some of the surrounding villages to take a look.

Please check out the shop window towards the end of November as there will be a display of just a few of the Christmas party dresses that are for sale.

SOMERSET SIGHT

Happily, the Somerset Sight van is calling at the Memorial Hall car park on the following days in 2019 between 1pm – 3.30pm: 25th February 2019, 10th April 2019, 24th June 2019, 11th September 2019 and 19th November 2019,

STOKE BAND NEWS

The band's Christmas Concert is on Saturday 8th December at the Memorial Hall, tickets are £6 and Christmas puddings and pies will be served as usual.

On Saturday 15th December, we will once again be playing carols outside at the Prince of Wales but this year from 3:00pm until 5:00pm. Please come and sing along with us. This is an event for all the family to enjoy.

As usual and weather permitting, we will be around Stoke on Christmas Eve.

Merry Christmas to All from Stoke Band.

WWI COMMEMORATIVE WEEKEND

May I say a huge THANK YOU to all those who made November 10th & 11th so memorable. The poppies on the lamp posts, the soldier sitting outside the Working Men's Club, the Band concert, the buffet supper, the history exhibition, the Charity Shop window, the Sunday tea, the service on Ham Hill, the piper, the local singers and the bell ringers plus all those folks behind the scenes – Thank you to one and all.

Dru Perry

SEEKING KEEN GARDENERS!

St. Margaret's Hospice were delighted to host a celebration event recently to thank the Somerset gardeners that kindly opened their gardens this summer to raise vital funds totalling £16,600 for the hospice. Unlike nationwide open gardens schemes, all donations raised from the St. Margaret's Open Garden Season are used to support local patients and their families in Somerset and the Sherborne area of Dorset. St. Margaret's Hospice is very keen to hear from anyone who would like to take in 2019, be it a garden, allotment, orchard or farm. There are many other ways to support the scheme, including plant sales, serving refreshments at local shows, or a community scarecrow trail. We are also seeking local businesses who would like to advertise in our 2019 Open Garden Brochure or donate a prize to the 'Open Garden Raffle'. For more details, please contact Susan on 01935 709182.

POP IN

Pop In meet at the Oak Tree House on Thursday afternoons at 2.30pm.

We like to chat over tea and cake and join in games such as board games and Boccia or listen to a speaker from a variety of backgrounds.

We realise that many people are missing out on socialising with us because they need transport. Is there anyone in Stoke sub Hamdon who would have a few hours free on Thursday afternoon to pick up a few older people from the Stoke sub Hamdon area and drive them to and from the group? We will pay 45p a mile for petrol.

If you would be interested, please contact Paul on 07770348767 or Cath on 07968521746.

HAMDON YOUTH GROUP

Hamdon Youth Group provides a welcoming place for young people to meet in our villages. In STOKE we continue to run two sessions on Monday evenings in the Lighthouse Café, divided into two age groups.

The session from 6.30 -8.00pm is for young people from school years 6-9 and from 8.00 – 9.30pm is for Years 9 and older.

In Norton on Wednesday evenings in the Meeting Room of Norton Village Hall.

Check our Facebook page for latest info: <https://www.facebook.com/hamdonsyouthgroup>

For more information please contact Lou Chant on 07402987921 or email lou.chant@cyp.me

DIARY OF EVENTS:

DECEMBER

- 4th Stoke Active Walkers
- 8th Christmas Concert
- 10th Every Step Counts
- 15th Carols on the Hill at Prince of Wales
- 17th Every Step Counts