

Bill Stacey, The Continuing Story



Above: Bill Stacey

Operation Market Garden

The story so far:
Sergeant Bill Stacey was killed in action at Arnhem, and despite being a Chitterne man, he is not commemorated on our war memorial. Richard Jammes and Murray Kent have been tracing Bill and two other soldiers' relatives in order to get permission from MoD and Church Commissioners' to have their names added. In so doing, a fascinating story about Bill Stacey has emerged, which we commenced in the April issue of Chit-Chat.

In our May issue, we told how Barbara Stacey (accompanied by her mother, Lilly and husband, Steve), attended the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Arnhem. and were given maps and a book entitled the "Knapsack" by a Dutch lady (Bernadette), whose husband had been a member of the Dutch resistance. Now read on:

Tilshead Connection
After some time Barbara decided to go through the book that was full of jottings and hand written prose and poetry. On the final page was written "Thompson KOSB, Tilshead, September 1944". Barbara's curiosity was aroused and after following up all the military options to no avail she contacted Tilshead Parish Council as a last resort. On Tilshead Council was a gentleman called John Cross, ex military, who probably had better lines of enquiry than Barbara. Low and behold a few weeks later Barbara received a letter from Mr Cross saying that he had located a J Thompson living in Kinross and he would be happy to act as middleman. The problem, however, was verifying whether this was THE J Thompson.

Cunning Plan
Barbara came up with a cunning plan. In the "Knapsack" was a poem. They sent the first line of this poem to Mr Thompson and asked him if he could complete the second line. On Christmas Eve she received a letter headlined with the second line of the poem. Mystery solved. Barbara telephoned Bernadette in Holland to update her with the story thus far, telling her she was going to post the book to John Thompson. Bernadette felt that this was far too

historic a document to risk in the post so they all flew to Edinburgh to present it in person. They asked Mr Thompson for a photo so they could recognise him. He replied "you'll know when you get there" and they were greeted by a man in a red beret and a chest full of medals standing rigidly to attention. So how come this book had ended up with Bernadette's husband? Apparently John had put his kitbag down to help an injured comrade and never returned for it, as he was captured and taken a prisoner of war. Bernadette's husband picked up the kitbag and in time it disappeared but he kept hold of the book.

National Media
In the course of time, and through a friend of John Thompson's, the national press got hold of the story and eventually Barbara was contacted by the BBC and asked if she and John would be available to do a piece for the 'Lottery Show' that ran for half an hour in those days. She was flown to Arnhem where she was filmed at Bill Stacey's grave and also on the John Frost Bridge, (the "Bridge too Far"), then she was flown up to Edinburgh to re-enact the handing over of the book. and on the eve of the show Barbara and John pressed the Lottery button!



So there we have it. Bill's wife Lily who lived in Flint Cottage will have her long held wishes hopefully fulfilled on November 11th, subject to the Diocese issuing a faculty in time, namely the engraving of his name on the War Memorial along with the two other missing soldiers. Barbara, born in Flint Cottage may now be able relax a little more and we, the villagers of Chitterne, are now better informed of the bravery of one of our forebears.

Following the anonymous Petenet plea lately on the dog poo subject we have been made aware of a new form of exercise for all dog owners. It is a little known version of the ancient art of Yoga. It is called: Doga otherwise known as Pooga. One starts by bending over and PICKING UP ONES DOG POO in a bag. This is known as the "downward dog position" Now comes the subtle part:



Murray Kent

CHIT-CHAT

Parish Newspaper for the residents
of Chitterne, Wiltshire
www.chitterne.com

No 218 July 2025

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OPEN - AT LAST!



Well, it's happened, we've got our pub open again. There were some people who thought it would never happen but thankfully, there was a group of villagers who never gave up and continued, sometimes against the odds, to push and push. Yes, it took time but if you are going to do something as big as this, it pays to make sure that everything is sorted before opening up to the public.

I just wanted to say, perhaps on behalf of the village, a huge thank you to everyone who was involved in making it happen. I am not going to attempt to mention everyone, as I am sure I would leave someone out. However, I do think a special mention must be given to the small core who started this successful enterprise and saw it through to the end: the ones who looked for grants and lobbied us all to invest in their belief; who patiently negotiated and waited for the sale to go through; who spent weeks searching for the right tenants; who asked huge favours from their friends and contacts; who spent hours resourcing workmen; who practically put their lives on hold. Thank you so much for never giving up.

Thanks too, to Nick and Jo and their helpers, for a wonderful first night, a new pub and a thirsty hoard was daunting, but you coped well, and the food was outstanding, we hope we made you feel welcome. *A grateful villager*



Villagers of all ages enjoy a night to remember for a long time to come (we hope)



Council Notes

Village Consultation Meeting & EGM, 16.06.2025

Present: Lexa Turner, Peter Emmerson, Sally Oliver, Kevin Foster, Emma Cole, Murray Kent, Pam Kent, Aileen Fenlon (Parishioners). Charles Horsfall, Barry Ricketts, Jane Bell, Julia Hendrickse (Chitterne Parish Councillors). Apologies: Cllr. Tony Hulton

Subject: To discuss the village's application for an English Woodland Creation Offer (EWCO).

Cllr. Horsfall opened the meeting and explained that the village has recently acquired ownership of the allotment gardens and grazing paddocks, previously rented from Wiltshire County Council. He described the work which has taken place to clear the land, and the decision to apply for financial support in the form of a EWCO grant from the Forestry Commission, in order to create a mixed woodland area on the hill overlooking the Allotment gardens. He then asked Cllr Barry Ricketts and Tree Aileen Warden Fenlon to describe the project in greater detail.

Cllr. Ricketts explained that we were proposing to apply for a grant to cover the purchase of sufficient saplings to cover 1 hectare of the available land. If our application is successful, it will result in a grant to purchase around 1,300 trees, with the necessary protection from rabbits, deer etc. (approx £10,000) and will include a maintenance grant of £400 a year for 14 years.

Tree Warden Fenlon outlined the size of the area to be planted, its composition of tree species, and explained that, in order to receive grant funding this year, we needed to submit our application by June 26th.

The meeting was opened for questions, which included discussion about access, whether individual tree donations could be

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CHURCH SERVICES IN JULY

6th July
6th July
13th July
20th July
27th July

Holy Communion
Holy Communion
Holy Communion
Holy Communion
Holy Communion

9.00 BCP Holy Communion, Chitterne
10.30 Holy Communion, Tilshead
10.30 Holy Communion, Chitterne
10.30, Holy Communion, Shrewton
10.30 Holy Communion, Orcheston.

Happy Hāthi Craft
INDIAN BLOCK PRINTING Fabric. Card. Clay. Repeat.
Unique Handmade Gifts and Craft Workshops using hand-carved wooden blocks from India

Indian Block Printing Workshop
Luminous Lampshades

Saturday 20th September 2025, 10am-4pm
Fisherton Mill, 108 Fisherton Street, Salisbury SP2 7QY



Looking to learn a new craft which is simple and easy to do? Then you'll love Indian Block Printing.

Relax and enjoy the experience of hand printing your own unique Lampshade and other fabric items using hand-carved wooden designs.

Choose from a wide range of contemporary and traditional designs, from beautiful birds to bright botanicals, all hand-carved in Indian Rosewood by local artisans in Jaipur, India.

You will be guided through the simple techniques to print a beautiful fabric Lampshade and other fabric items that will be unique to you. We'll provide the materials – you provide the imagination. Try it. You'll love it.

Workshop Fee: £85 per person. All Materials included.



Print. Relax. Repeat. Perfect.
Find your happy place...
www.hathicraft.co.uk

To book a place please go to website or scan QR code.



20% discount available at Fisherton Mill Café for all workshop attendees.
For more info on Fisherton Mill please go to: www.fishertonmill.co.uk

Army Activity near Chitterne June 2025

July will be a very busy period as we have several major exercises on. Ex WESSEX STORM culminates in early July just as the CYCLONE exercise begins for Armoured Cavalry, Armoured Infantry and Engineers. EX IRON STORM a major armoured exercise starts in the middle of July with lots of tanks, other armoured vehicles and wheeled vehicles criss-crossing the area into August.

Monthly firing calendar for July 2025

(subject to late changes)
 Red flags may be left up during non-live firing times for public safety due to large exercises taking place. All flags and signs are to be adhered to regardless of advertised times. Artillery live firing days from areas 6, 7 and 8 (East of Chitterne): NIL
 Artillery live firing days on Salisbury Plain (East) (North of Bulford & West of Tidworth): NIL
 Live firing days on Larkhill/Westdown danger area (North of Larkhill): 01, 02, 03, 04, 07, 08, 09, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25.
 Non-firing days on Larkhill/Westdown danger area: 05, 06, 12, 13, 19, 20, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31
 Non-firing days on Bulford fixed firing ranges: 05, 06, 11, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27
 Non-firing days on Warminster fixed firing ranges: 05, 06, 07, 08, 09, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.
 Live firing days on Imber ranges, areas 1, 2, 3, 4 (East of Warminster): 07, 08, 09, 10, 11.

Range opening times for the dates above

(Subject to short notice changes)
 Monday: 9am – 11.30pm
 Tuesday: 9am - 11.30pm
 Wednesday: 9am – 11.30pm
 Thursday: 9am - 11.30pm
 Friday: 9am – 11.30pm
 Saturday: 9am - 11.30pm
 Sunday: 9am – 11.30pm



Grateful thanks to Jackie Hames of Bratton Plant Centre who supplied the plants and flowers for the King's Head outside planters at a very generous discount.

CHIT-CHAT NEXT ISSUE

The August issue of Chit-Chat will go to press in the last week of July. All contributions, either hard copy or email to barry.ricketts1@icloud.com 07914 264324 or deliver by hand to Stable Cottage, 24 Townsend, Chitterne, Warminster, BA120LF
To download Chit-Chat from the village website, go to www.Chitterne.com and follow the links.

Upcoming in Chitterne

Mobile Library

the Library van will be at the Village Hall at 11.10 on Friday 13th July.

Village Hall Events

Breakfast Club is Saturday July 12th.

Village Party on Saturday 19th July has been postponed to September (date to be finalised, so keep looking in Chit-Chat for an update).



IMBERBUS DAY Saturday 16th August

We can't quite believe it's that time of the year again but yes, the London Transport Routemaster buses are returning to the village.

For those of you who don't know what it's all about, there are only a few days each year on which the road through Imber is open to the public and they are only able to run Imberbus on one of those dates. This is the day when several London Transport Routemaster buses (plus a few newer and some older ones) will be the only vehicles allowed to travel through to Imber village and on to other parts of Salisbury Plain. As in previous years, these buses will start from outside Warminster Rail Station, but you can also pick one up at Chitterne, from outside the Village Hall, pay your fare in cash and hop on and off at your leisure. If you've never done it, it is certainly a great day out and of course, when you return, you can pop into the hall and have a well-earned cup of tea and a piece of cake!

Prices

Tickets are £10 for adults and £2 for children aged between 2 and 16. Please note that no concessionary bus passes can be used on the day.

Cakes!

Throughout the day, refreshments will be on sale in the Village Hall from 10.30 onwards – tea, coffee, cold drinks, sandwiches and our famous home-made cakes and cheese scones. Bacon butties will also be available in the morning. We have been told that some people make the journey not just for the opportunity to travel in a London Routemaster but also to come and sample our cakes again!! What more do you need to know!!

For further information, please visit www.imberbus.org

Also, as it is VJ Day on Friday 15th August, Kevin will have a commemorative military display set up in the church, so even if you don't fancy a trip on the buses, please pop along – I promise you, you will not be disappointed.

SWIMMING LESSONS
WITH TURNING TURTLES

PRE-SCHOOL LESSONS 2-4 YEARS
AFTER SCHOOL LESSONS 4 YEARS UPWARDS
ADULT LESSONS
AQUA FIT
FRIDAY FUN SWIMS
MOONLIGHT DIPS
LEISURE SWIMS

MANOR FARM POOL, TYTHERINGTON, WARMINSTER, BA12 7AD
For more information, please contact 07710524866 or alice@turningturtles.co.uk

Thoughts of Summer

If you're anything like me, I suspect you won't quite believe that we're now officially in the second half of this year! Where has the time gone?

July is a lovely, if poignant month for the younger part of our community. The pre-schoolers, Year 6s, 11s, and 13s are all getting ready to move on to a new chapter, a number after weeks of study and preparation. This month is one of relaxation and recovery, but also of farewells. Do spare a moment to remember them as they mark this milestone- even if it's hard to think back that far for ourselves!

For all of us the long summer approaches. It's already been a hot and dry start to the summer, so I'd love to take this moment to remind you that there's a beautiful, peaceful and COOL place in the heart of your village where you may like to pass a quiet moment or two. All the churches in the parish are open every day, so please do drop in whenever you wish.

The long summer can also be a bit of a tough one for some in our community. With family travelling or on holiday, we can sometimes find it gets a bit lonely. Equally there are plenty of people in our villages who are anxious about the long holiday for another reason- how to fill all that time, and all those empty stomachs!

We are launching our bumper summer Activity packs for the younger children (which includes visiting grandchildren, don't forget) at the end of this month. They will be available – while stocks last- in St Mary's, Shrewton from 29th July and St Thomas a Becket, Tilshead from 30th.

We are also launching our 'One More Thing' campaign for the Community pantry this month. If you can spare the money to add one more item to your weekly shop it would really help us to help one another over the coming weeks. Although the pantry is sited in Shrewton (just by the school entrance on Tanners Lane), it is open for people across the local community who need a little bit extra to help them get by. You can put donations directly into the pantry, or there are donation boxes in Tilshead and Shrewton churches, as well as in the Oasis Café in Shrewton. We welcome cereals, beverages, tins of veg, pulses, meat, fish and soup, sauces, rice and pasta, toiletries and cleaning items, and pet food. Everything should be in date and sealed. We also welcome treats- of course! At the end of the summer there will be a 'back to school' shelf, so donations of stationery can also be left in the boxes for us to put onto the shelf then.

See you soon,

Rev Eleanor x

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made, when planting would take place, and whether villagers could participate .

At the conclusion of the open discussion, Cllr Horsfall asked of a show of hands in favour of the application. There was unanimous approval.

Following the Open Village Meeting, there was an **Extraordinary General Meeting** of the Parish Council, at which two items were discussed:

1) Approval of the submission of an application for an EWCO grant. Carried unanimously.

2)Approval to invite Sir Nick Parker to be co-opted to serve as a Chitterne Parish Councillor. Carried unanimously. The meeting closed at 7.45pm.

Date of next meeting: July 7.

Summer Takeaway Activities are BACK!



This year, we are making 1 **SUPER BUMPER PACK** which you can collect:

10.30am-11am, 29th July at St Mary's, Shrewton

10.30am-11am, 30th July at St Thomas a Becket, Tilshead

After these dates packs can also be collected, while stocks last, daily from the churches in Shrewton & Tilshead or on request (see below for more details)

You're also invited to a

Teddy Bear's Picnic from 11am to 12noon on Tuesday 26th August at St Mary's, Shrewton

You can also message us to arrange a drop off of packs in your village church, and to join our WhatsApp group: 07486 355674

A Night in Vegas!!



Happy Holidays,
Happy You!

Please RSVP by Sunday 29th June 2025 via email: acrosstheplainwi@gmail.com
or WHATSAPP Message: ATP WI Social Chat
Thank you!

theWI INSPIRING WOMEN

---Across the Plain WI---
★ Live a little ★ Laugh a lot ★ Do some good ★
Based in Chitterne with members from across the south of Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire Email: acrosstheplainwi@gmail.com



Chitterne has 90% Carbon Connectivity

Wessex Internet is pleased to announce that the build process in Chitterne is almost complete, with nearly 90% of the village now able to connect to our network. It has been a longer process than expected, and we thank you for your patience. We also thank you for being the most successful project in our South Wiltshire Project Gigabit contract to date! Two thirds of the village have registered interest and just under half have ordered or are already connected to our network.

The journey began in August 2024 with my initial communication to the Chitterne Parish Council, whose meeting I attended in September. A large number of you then kindly came out in the cold to the residents' meeting in November, at a point when we hoped to be live in the area in the New

Tuesday 1st July 2025
 7.30pm Chitterne Village Hall, Chitterne



**Happy Holidays,
Happy You!**
 Top Tips for a Sane Summer

Get ready for the holiday season, check yourself in for a sane summer!

Please join us for an informal talk on female mental health and wellbeing. Packed with top tips on how to relax and keep ahead this summer.



Let the sunshine in!

Guest Speaker:
 Lexa Turner (ATP WI)



Non-Members Welcome. First Visit Free. £5 Guest fee thereafter (Max 3 visits)

< Chitterne Village Hall was transformed into a Cocktail and Casino venue for a night to celebrate a landmark birthday for Lexa Turner. The Village Hall hosted over 120 guests from all across the UK including many Chitterne residents enjoying a night of fabulous food, cocktail making, dancing and more. A "Fun Casino" offered roulette and Blackjack tables attracting all ages. One of Chitterne's younger residents, Charlie Emmerson, maxing out the house, winning a trophy and pocket money of £5!

Said Lexa "A huge thank you to everyone who helped make the party a success. Our village full of wonderful and generous people, putting up marquees, creating balloon arches, making stunning food and helping to clear up, I am so grateful to all who helped make this event possible and so memorable. The Village Hall is a fantastic venue and it was great to celebrate my birthday with family and friends in our wonderful village." Overall it was a fun-packed evening, proving our village hall remains as versatile as ever. So, if you have a big celebration or need a venue offering inside and outdoor space, consider an event at the hall. The Village Hall Committee are always pleased to provide that essential back-up to make your event really special!

Contact Rachel Wilkinson on 01985 850334.