

# STONELEIGH & ASHOW NEWS

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Visit of Queen Victoria to Stoneleigh Abbey (see page 24)

## JUNE 2018



*The Butterfly Month*





## **"The Heart of Stoneleigh" Defibrillator**

In the phone box on The Green

### **Co-ordinator**

David Ellwood 07785 284482 Text if no reply

### **Trained Volunteers**

John Churchley	07885 496795
Becki Coombe	07841 378404
Laura Elliot	07738 222969
David Ellwood	07785 284482
Richard Hancox	07770 826310
Ian Huston	07974 237331
Sharron McEldowney	07760 101775
Claire Neale	07557 675842
Lisa Reay	07716 416320
Martin Smith	07958 955629
Mary Taylor	07890 535506

**Remember: Always ring 999 first!**

# Fit at 50

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Lucy Morris (S&A News Editor - July/August & November/December)

Since moving from Ashow to Kenilworth 18 months ago, Phil and I have taken up a new hobby: running. From the outset, it's important to explain that Phil and I are not naturally gifted on the sporting front. In fact, we're very happy sitting on our bottoms, a glass of wine in hand. However, Phil turned 50 last year and I'm not that far behind. And Sam and Wilf were forever nagging us to get fit like all their friends' parents.

Last April, the nagging got the better of me and I signed up to a wonderful local running group called "Run Like a Girl", which offers women-only running courses. Some women join because they want to return to running; others, like me, join because they've never run in their lives and want to give it a go. There are all shapes, sizes and abilities; it's hugely supportive. Over an eight-week course, I went from being unable to run at all to being able to run 5 kilometres. I can't tell you how hard it was - or how proud I was of myself. Since then, I've continued running (or, as the boys refer to it, plodding). I am not fast, but I'm determined to keep going no matter what. Inspired by my success, Phil joined Run Like a Guy in the autumn and also managed to run 5km.

On 24<sup>th</sup> November last year, I heard the devastating news that my friend Simon's wife, Gemma, had passed away, having been diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukaemia just three days earlier. Gemma was only 40 and leaves behind Simon and their beautiful son, Ethan, who's only eight. Simon doesn't live nearby, so I decided that one way to help might be to raise some money for Bloodwise, who fund research into blood cancer. So, on 10<sup>th</sup> June this year, I will run from Warwick Castle to Kenilworth Castle in the Two Castles Run - a distance of 10km, which is further than I've ever run before. On 7<sup>th</sup> March this year, our lovely sister-in-law, Helen, passed away. And so, Phil will be joining me on the Two Castles, running for St Peter and St James Hospice, who cared for Helen at the end of her life.

Progressing from 5km to 10km has not been pretty but, by the time you read this, we'll be just a few days away from the race itself and will, I hope, be raring to go! Frankly, in the grand scheme of things, it's the least we can do. If you'd like to make a donation to either Bloodwise or the hospice, we would be so grateful. It really couldn't be easier. You can donate to my fundraising page at: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/lucy-morris23> or Phil's fundraising page at <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/phildotmorris>.

Alternatively, if online donations aren't your thing, just give us a call (01926 852992) and we can sort something out. We'll let you know how we get on in the July/August edition of the News!

## **Stoneleigh Male Voice Choir 'On The Road'** by Rod Owen

Following the recent sell-out success of its March Concert 'Fun & Fantasy' at Stoneleigh Village Hall, SMVC are 'hitting the road' over the next few months to help other charitable organisations raise funds. Last year we helped raise over £11,000 for other causes and gave donations in excess of £4,000 to our own selected charities. We are only able to achieve this with the help of our wonderful audiences and we thank them all for their continued support.

Our first concert was on Saturday May 12th at Lillington Church where we helped raise funds for the charity 'Love Lillington' which supports families and individuals who are struggling to make ends meet, or who are homeless. The second concert is at 7.30 pm on Saturday June 9th at St Giles Church, Exhall, the 'home' church of our Musical Director Alan Biddle, and we are delighted to be able to help them with their fundraising.

If you know of an organisation that would like to put on a concert to raise funds for its own, or another, charity, and would like SMVC to sing, please contact our Events Manager, Geoff Mexson, on 01926 854602 to see if we might help.

We are back in Stoneleigh for our traditional Summer Serenade on the afternoon of 8 July where, with the kind permission of the Residents of the Abbey, we shall again be performing in the Residents' Garden. Our guests this year are the Ukuholics Ukulele Band & Singers, so fingers crossed it will "turn out nice again"!

*Continued.....*

There will be delicious snacks and drinks, all included in the ticket price (£27.50 ph), and proceeds will be going to charities, and especially our nominated charity this year, *The Pam Britton Trust for Dementia*, based in Leamington Spa and giving support in the local area.

(See [www.pbrittontrustfordementia.org.uk](http://www.pbrittontrustfordementia.org.uk))

In our vote of thanks to those that helped create, produce and manage our March Concert we unfortunately missed out Lynne Holt our regular and stalwart Sound & Lighting Assistant. So sorry Lynne but our grateful thanks to you are nonetheless well meant.

Finally if you, or someone you know, can get within hitting distance of a Middle C and would like to join in the fun of the Choir please contact our Chairman or just pop along to our rehearsals at 7.30 pm Wednesday evenings in Stoneleigh Village Hall. You will be most welcome; our repertoire appeals to a wide range of musical tastes and you don't need to be able to read music.

If you require more information on any of our events or would like to order tickets please contact our Chairman Phil Jones on 01926 853511 or by email: [kathryngjones@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:kathryngjones@hotmail.co.uk)

## **Rev. Nikki Moon - Stoneleigh & Ashow Parish Priest**

### **Community!**

When I tell people where I work, the response is usually 'Oh what a lovely place to work, such a beautiful part of the country'. And indeed it is!

Stoneleigh and Ashow are surely two of the most beautiful villages in Warwickshire, and those of us who live or work here are indeed blessed.

But the beauty of a place is much more than the scenery isn't it?

The beauty of a place is also about the community of people and I find myself responding to those who comment on the beauty of the scenery with the words

*"Yes, it is indeed beautiful; and the people make it even more so."*

Which leads me to ask of you:

*"What makes living or working in these lovely villages special to you?"*

And

*"What would make it even more special?"*

A sense of community is something that is increasingly being lost in our over busy, individualistic world and more and more, people are seeking and searching for a community to belong to. Sometimes these communities are not healthy, the gang cultures of our inner cities so prevalent at the moment, are places of community for the dispossessed and oft forgotten youth, though the resulting turf wars bring with them division and violence. Gangs are just one example of how community can be a negative force.

*Continued....*

The Bible is full of stories about the importance of community and the call to live in community, helping one another, sharing each other's joys and burdens and working together to build a future that is far better than we could ever build on our own. The Bible has many stories of how to do community well, though it often uses stories of when God's people got it wrong as a way of teaching us how to do it well. And as God's people, the Church communities continue to learn.

The Church communities of Stoneleigh and Ashow are currently seeking to become healthier communities and are seeking ways to be better neighbours to the wider village communities. We would like to hear your views on how we might work with you to ensure that the communities in these two lovely villages remain strong and continue to be places of welcome and support.

If you would like to talk through how we might become a stronger community together please do get in touch.

With every blessing

Revd. Nikki

Tel: 07891 012660

Email: [njmoon@outlook.com](mailto:njmoon@outlook.com)

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**\* FREE \***  
**FOOD HYGIENE TRAINING: JULY**

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Register your interest by emailing:  
[becki.coombe@thelearn2group.org.uk](mailto:becki.coombe@thelearn2group.org.uk)

# Stoneleigh Village Club

Est. 1856

[www.facebook.com/stoneleighvillageclub](http://www.facebook.com/stoneleighvillageclub)  
[stoneleigh.villageclub@gmail.com](mailto:stoneleigh.villageclub@gmail.com)



## WELCOME TO THE MONTH WITH THE LONGEST DAY!

### ADVANCE NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

Our AGM will take place on **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> June, 7.30pm** at  
Stoneleigh Village Club.

Please check both the inside & outside notice boards, and your email  
for information regarding Committee nominations and 2018/19  
membership renewal.



In our steadily growing 'best Facebook picture' of the month competition, we are pleased to announce the owner of SPICE TRUCK, **Sarb Heer**, as winner of a free drink!

Some of us were lucky enough to sample treats on a Friday in May and we are sure you will join us in wishing her every success in her new business venture 😊

Fancy a free drink yourself? It's easy, post a photo to Facebook and include StoneleighVillageClub in your post so it gets reposted onto our page: [www.facebook.com/stoneleighvillageclub](http://www.facebook.com/stoneleighvillageclub). The winner will be posted in the magazine, so... get snapping and posting!!



## **Stoneleigh Village Club** (continued)

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Please sign a guest in to attend the following events, or simply to join us any time that we are open!

Weds 13<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>                      **Knit and Natter, 7.30pm**

Wednesdays 6<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>        **Bingo**

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> June                    **Prostate and a Pint, 7pm**

*Recommended voluntary contribution: £5*

Sign up for a quick and harmless blood test at the bar

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> June                **Book Club, 7.45pm** (to review at 8pm)

*Feel very welcome to bring 'nibbles'!*

**\* June book = *The Note* by Zoe Folbigg \***

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June                   **Walk Club, 10.30am – 2.30pm**

(return time approximate)

*(Every 2nd Sat)*                      Meet at SVC to walk a *gentle* flat route to the Anchor, Leek Wootton (10km).

*(Every 4<sup>th</sup> Sat)*                      Slow and Steady: 2 hour leisurely bumble.  
Snails welcome, rests included!

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> June                **Coffee Morning, 10.30am – 12pm**

Saturdays (weekly)                **Run Club, 9-10am**

Meet at SVC for a 'flat' 3/4/5km *leisurely* run!

*We will look forward to seeing you in the Club!*

# Crafty Ladies Put Ashow on the Map

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A large wall hanging in the form of a map of the village has been crafted by a group of Ashow ladies, and has been put on display in Ashow church (following a grand unveiling on 27<sup>th</sup> April).

The hanging shows all the village properties and gardens, as well as the church by the River Avon. All are surrounded by the fields, coloured and textured to show the seasons of the agricultural year, from summer harvesting to winter ploughing. The calendar theme is continued in the border, which illustrates the major seasonal festivals, animals and flowers, together with depictions of notable buildings in the village.

A range of fabrics and materials was used in the making of the map, most of which were remnants, wools, embroidery threads and beads, drawn from individual rag bags. These were worked in a variety of needlecraft techniques, including needlepoint, quilting, knitting, crochet, felting, appliqué and embroidery.

The map was the product of weekly stitching over seven years by Diana Holt, Judith Clark, Janet Charlesworth, Marian Franklin and Clare Burdett. Thanks must also be given to Margaret Cotton, Glynis Guthrie and Mary Beagrie.



Clare, Diana, Marian, Janet and Judith at the grand unveiling



**Saturday 16th June at 7.30pm**

**Warwick Hall CV34 6PP**

**Tickets:**

**T: 01926 850385 E: [boxoffice@wso.org.uk](mailto:boxoffice@wso.org.uk)  
or buy online [www.wso.org.uk](http://www.wso.org.uk)**



Concierto de Aranjuez - Rodrigo  
Ritual Fire Dance - de Falla  
Estancia Ballet Suite - Ginastera  
España - Chabrier  
Capriccio Espagnol - Rimsky-Korsakov  
Danzon no. 2 - Marquez

**Craig Ogden - guitar**  
**Conductor - Roger Coull**

Tickets £14, £18 & concessions for children & students

## **Warwickshire Symphony Orchestra dances to a Spanish tune at Warwick Hall**

The Warwickshire Symphony Orchestra will be visiting Spain to find the music for its concert at Warwick Hall on 16 June 2018, playing some masterpieces from Spanish composers such as de Falla, and Rodrigo, as well as some Spanish-inspired pieces by Rimsky-Korsakov and Chabrier.

Conducted by Roger Coull, the orchestra will be joined by renowned guitarist Craig Ogden for Rodrigo's famous *Concierto de Aranjuez*, perhaps better known for its performance on cornet in the film 'Brassed Off'.

Also being performed are the *Ritual Fire Dance* by de Falla, the *Estancia Ballet Suite* by Ginastera, *España* by Chabrier, *Capriccio Espagnol* by Rimsky-Korsakov and *Danzon no 2* by Marquez.

## STONELEIGH WALK CLUB

### Stoneleigh Village Club to Kings Head at Cubbington Loop

Flat, 14km



### Monthly Guided Walks:

- Every 2nd Saturday:* Max 10km. Flat Ramble: Meet and return to SVC, 10.30am start
- Every 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday:* Approx 5km. Slow and Steady: Suitable for those un-used to walking

## **Village Organisations Contact List - 2018**

**These centre pages can be used as a  
'pull-out and keep'  
list of useful contacts for  
Stoneleigh and Ashow Organisations**

The people listed on the centre pages have kindly agreed to be the contacts and provide information about the organisations listed.

Please contact Margaret Wallis\* if there are any changes and alterations will be notified in subsequent editions of the News.

*\* Contact details included in enclosed list*

## **Village Organisations Contact List - 2018**

St. Mary the Virgin, Stoneleigh and  
The Assumption of Our Lady Ashow

Revd Nikki Moon  
07891 012660

Parish Administrator

Jackie Cubitt  
024 7641 5506

Small Groups

Margaret Moorhouse  
01926 511285

Pastoral Care & Prayer

Church Wardens:  
June Burr  
024 7622 7726  
Gordon Gatward  
024 7669 0746

Stoneleigh & Ashow  
Parish Council

Richard Hancox (Chair)  
024 7669 3819  
Sarah Windridge (Clerk to the PC until 7/18)  
024 7630 1982

Stoneleigh & Ashow News

Margaret Wallis\*  
024 7641 4271

Stoneleigh Neighbourhood Watch

Tony Hanselman  
024 7641 5060

Ashow Neighbourhood Watch

Judith Clark  
01926 859561

Stoneleigh Village Club

Ann Lowe  
07939541613

Ashow Village Club	Jane MacKenzie 01926 853157
Ashow Village Assembly	Emma Hardman 07740255826
Stoneleigh Bell Ringers	Bob Taylor 024 7650 3712
Stoneleigh Male Voice Choir	Phil Jones (President) 01926 853511 Judy Hadfield (Conductor) 024 7641 4616
Stoneleigh Ladies Choir	Sheila Duckham 024 7641 5918
Stoneleigh Village Hall & Playing Fields (+ Stoneleigh Football & Cricket Clubs)	Joe Ball 024 7641 1315
Stoneleigh Village Hall Committee (+ Stoneleigh Handbell Ringers)	Lynne Fletcher 024 7641 7544
Stoneleigh United Charities	Sue Wareham 01608 654299
Stoneleigh Meadows Society	Robin Bussell 024 7641 6183
Leigh Educational Foundation	James Johnson 01926 419300
Dame Alice Leigh's Almshouses	Mike Wareham 01608 654299 <i>*List continued overleaf.....</i>

Stoneleigh WI	Rachel Gill 024 7641 4030
Stoneleigh Community Orchard	Pete Freeman 024 7641 3893
Stoneleigh Tennis Club	Amanda Smith 07798683357
Coventry Airport	John Astle Consultative Committee 01926 850413
Stoneleigh History Society (+ Village website)	Sheila Woolf 024 7641 8759
Stoneleigh Action Group (against HS2)	Anthony Bianco 07721624241

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### **J.L.Huthwaite**



Property Maintenance Ltd

**jayhuthwaite1@sky.com**

**07921 842217 024 7501 1320**

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# **STONELEIGH TENNIS CLUB**

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2018/19**



**MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR JUNE  
2018 TO JUNE 2019 WILL BE:**

<b>INDIVIDUAL</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>£35</b>
<b>FAMILY</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>£50</b>
<b>JUNIOR</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>£10</b>

**PLEASE CONTACT HELEN GODDARD,  
THE NEW CLUB SECRETARY, AT  
GODDARDMAIL@GOOGLEMAIL.COM  
TO RENEW OR BECOME A NEW MEMBER.**

**THERE WILL BE A NEW CODE LOCK  
FITTED FROM 1ST JULY 2018.**

**PLEASE CONTACT ME IF YOU  
HAVE ANY QUERIES.**

**MANY THANKS, HELEN GODDARD.**

## HS2 UPDATE

The HS2 project continues to cause consternation all along the proposed route. In addition to escalating costs and concern about the impact on local areas, there are problems over enabling works taking place without due notice or consultation. A local example of that has been the recent removal of trees and hedgerows in the Crackley area, as reported in the Kenilworth Weekly News.

Meanwhile, HS2 Ltd. continues its 'charm offensive' claiming to ensure that effective 'community engagement' takes place. In our area, as elsewhere, reality does not match these claims. It is hoped that local reassurances can be given when the Early Works Contractor (EWC) and the Main Works contractor (MWC) attend the next Parish Council meeting, on June 14th at Ashow at 7 pm, as they are scheduled to do.

Action groups along the route are now making a concerted effort to achieve a pause in the awarding of contracts and the current works programme so that overall targets and costings can be looked at properly. In the light of the Carillion scandal Transport Minister Chris Grayling is being urged to confront the claim by many experts that the estimated costs for HS2 are far too low and that this information should not be withheld from the public. In this context it is also worth noting that it required a freedom of information request to get a full list of payments already made for the purchase of 660 properties along the route of Phase 1 (over half £ billion spent on this so far, some in Stoneleigh).

Amidst all this angst, the HS2 Ltd's public relations machine rolls on (at a huge, unrevealed, price). The 'Community Engagement Plan' for this area is available on <https://hs2inwarwicks.commonplace.is> (There is no explanation why the "updates to local areas" is labelled 'commonplace'!). The extensive documentation available online is retrospective but it is also supposed to include full details of planned works, road closures etc in every area; keeping on top of all this information is a huge challenge but of course, politically, HS2 Ltd has set up a system that ensure that 'we told/warned/informed you that 'x' was happening, except of course when things happen – as with the tree felling mentioned above - that advanced information was not provided.

The HS2 Project Team at Warwickshire County Council provides information, including the HS2 Spring Newsletter, at [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/HS2](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/HS2)

HS2 Ltd has provided a 24/7 Freephone at 08-81 434 434 (There is a Minicom for the hard of hearing). One can email them for information at HS2 [enquiries@hs2.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@hs2.org.uk) and their street address is High speed Two (HS2) Limited, Two Snowhill, Snow Hill Queensway, Birmingham B4 6GA. Also see the report from the Parish Council (page 22).

*Margaret Wallis*

on behalf of Stoneleigh Action Group (against HS2)

## PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

### **Meetings**

The **June Ordinary Council meeting** will be held at Ashow Village Club on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> June at 7pm. Early Works Contractors for HS2 Ltd have been invited to attend with an update.

The **July Ordinary Council meeting** will be held at Stoneleigh Village Hall on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> July at 7pm.

### **News**

Sarah Windridge, the current Parish Clerk, will be leaving at the beginning of July. The new Clerk, Hannah Watts, will be starting on 9<sup>th</sup> July. The Parish Council look forward to welcoming Hannah to her first meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> July.

The Parish Council held its Annual Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> May and I am pleased to advise you of the Parish Councillors for Ashow Ward and Stoneleigh Ward:

#### **Ashow:**

Mr Martyn Foster and Mrs Sarah Williams

#### **Stoneleigh:**

Mr John Astle, Mrs Diana Jack, Mr Richard Hancox, Mr Anthony Bianco

All contact details can be viewed on the Parish Council website at:  
<http://stoneleighashowparishcouncil.btck.co.uk/>

The elected Chairman for the upcoming year is Richard Hancox and the Deputy Chairman is John Astle.

### **Data Protection**

The Parish Council is committed to compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulations, May 2018.

In light of the new regulations the Parish Council has:

- Created and updated all Data Protection policies
- Reviewed how data breaches should be handled
- Completed a 'data cleansing' exercise of data that it no longer requires or has a need to retain

The Parish Council has also created a Privacy Notice which details what information the Parish Council and how it processes the information. The Privacy Notice can be seen here:

<http://stoneleighshowparishcouncil.btck.co.uk/DataProtectionRegulations/DataProtectiondocuments>

### **Traffic update**

The Ordinary Parish Council meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> May was attended by Mr Adrian Hart and colleagues from Warwickshire County Council, as well as representatives from Atkins Traffic Management. The results of the recent traffic survey were presented and the short-listed options for the village are:

- The closure of Birmingham Road. Atkins Traffic Management are looking in how best to do this – perhaps using a curved line across the junction to stop people turning in. A turning head may be created so that cars can turn around. This will send more traffic to the North, near to the sewage works, and this junction will need to be signalised.
- A bypass through Stoneleigh Park. Stoneleigh Park will be severed in half by HS2 already. This route acknowledges the proposed HS2 train line and follows it closely. The closure of Birmingham Road can be introduced at the same time as this option.
- The bypass to the South East of the village. This route does not run through Stoneleigh Park, rather to the north east of Stoneleigh Park. Again, the closure of Birmingham Road can be introduced at the same time as this option.

A report of the presentation can be seen in the Parish Council minutes on the website. A full copy of the final report from Atkins will be circulated once it is completed.

**HS2 News** (See also, report from HS2 Action Group on page 18)

Early Works Contractors for HS2 Ltd have been invited to attend the June Parish Council meeting with an update.

**A series of drop-in sessions are being held at Stoneleigh Park to give tenants and local residents the opportunity to meet with HS2 representatives.**

The next sessions will take place on Friday, June 8 and Friday, October 12, from 10am until midday, upstairs at Farmers Fayre.

Anyone with queries about HS2 can also email [HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk](mailto:HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk) or ring freephone 08081 434434. Information is also available at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/high-speed-two-limited](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/high-speed-two-limited)

### **Parish Council email distribution list**

The Parish Council would like to create an email distribution list for the Parish. This will be a fantastic way to stay well informed about local news, planning issues, HS2 and local events.

If you would like to be included on the email list and receive frequent updates and news about your local area, please email the clerk, Sarah Windridge on:

[Stoneleighshowparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:Stoneleighshowparishcouncil@gmail.com)

## **WI REPORT**

*“Mental health matters as much as physical health. NFWI urges all members to recognise the importance of parity between mental health and physical health, and take action to make it as acceptable to talk about mental health issues as much as physical health issues, and to lobby the government for better support for mental health illness.”*

This resolution, which was passed unanimously at our meeting on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> May, will be voted on at the National AGM in Cardiff on 6<sup>th</sup> June . Our president Chris Ward will be at the AGM, representing Stoneleigh and three other Warwickshire WIs.

During the second half of our May meeting, Fay Gibbs demonstrated four floral arrangements using a variety of flowers and foliage. All the arrangements were large but the one based on the work of Constance Spry was spectacular. Fay donated the arrangements as raffle prizes.

On a lovely May morning 25 members and friends from Stoneleigh WI boarded a 1948 vintage coach to embark on a mystery tour and this is one passenger’s account of the outing:

“We went through some lovely leafy lanes of north Warwickshire, passing through villages and hamlets we had never heard of, let alone visited. We were entertained by our driver and owner of the coach, Bob. He told us stories and historical facts about the places we went through. We stopped for coffee at Mancetter and had lunch at Bosworth Hall. When we returned to Stoneleigh everyone agreed that it had been a great day out.”

The next village lunch will be at the village hall on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> June. If you would like to reserve a place please contact Liz Sykes on 02476 418301. The coffee morning will be at the village club on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> June.

**Rachel Gill**

Next Meeting: Mon 4<sup>th</sup> June

Speaker: - Ted Watson, *“Music in Shakespeare”*

## **The Visit of Queen Victoria to Stoneleigh, June 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> 1858**

Royal Wedding fever may have been in the air in May 2018, but exactly 150 years ago, in June 1858, the celebrations were on our doorstep, when Queen Victoria and Prince Albert stayed in Stoneleigh.

The reason for the Queen's visit was that she was due to open the People's Park at Aston in Birmingham – an open space created for workers' recreation. Lord Leigh was Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire at the time and so it fell to him to play the host.

A wonderful account of the visit was written by Lord Leigh's sister, Louisa Georgina Leigh, in her private journal. She describes how a suite of rooms had been selected for the private use of the Queen, and gives intricate detail about the rooms' fixtures and fittings. Artillerymen were taking up position in the woods around the abbey – not, as you might think, for security purposes, but to be ready to fire Royal Salutes! "Villagers were hurrying with garlands, boughs and flags to complete the triumphal arches which they were erecting in parts of the grounds," she says, and "the Park looked gloriously lovely with its venerable oaks bathed in the brilliant sunshine." "Booths, wagons and carts of every imaginable kind were drawn up on both sides of the road, the crowd was dense and the rustic population anxiously expected the arrival..." The weather was extraordinarily hot – 96 degrees (in old money) until a thunderstorm broke up the heat after the second day.

Queen Victoria brought eighteen attendants with her, including a coiffeur, an upholsterer and an inspector of police! The upholsterer's job was not just to do the unpacking, but to superintend the making of the Queen's bed, as she had brought her own sheets and blankets which the upholsterer "had to sew together in a peculiar way according to royal fancy." The writer goes on to give minute descriptions of the presentations of personnel to their Majesties, with some amusing asides about how flustered some people became at meeting royalty.



After the first night's dinner, when the shutters of the Saloon were opened, a wonderful sight met everyone's eyes: the abbey gatehouse "was illuminated in the most fairylike manner, every line, gable, arch and window being traced out in coloured lamps, sixteen thousand were used. The night being perfectly still, the effect was most lovely, indeed I never remember a more perfect illumination."

The flower beds on the terrace were also illuminated, as were the columns on either side of the Saloon door. The finishing touch was "a beautiful crown lit up with crimson lamps" which "blazed on the portico". As the Queen and Prince Albert emerged from the house to view the lights, "a great mass of people" who were waiting outside, burst into cheering.

The account continues with descriptions of the Queen's visit to Birmingham to perform the opening, leaving by special train from Kenilworth. Returning, the party visited Kenilworth Castle, though the Queen didn't get out of her carriage as she was too fatigued! Another banquet at Stoneleigh followed and the illuminations repeated. Masses of people had again assembled in front of the house, the Band of the Life Guards playing on the terrace.

On her last day at Stoneleigh the Queen planted an oak in the grounds and the Prince a *Wellingtonia gigantea*. They then went to Warwick Castle for lunch, "escorted by the Stoneleigh Yeomanry as far as Emscote Bridge." Finally the Royal train left from Warwick, and Louisa Georgina comments that "everything had gone off perfectly...the preparations which had been very costly had been thoroughly appreciated, the weather gloriously fine, the reception most enthusiastic and our good Queen all smiles and amiability."

Queen Victoria left £150 to be distributed among the servants at Stoneleigh – a considerable amount! In addition, the writer says, "every servant in the house received a present in remembrance of the Royal visit."

I wonder what those presents were...and whether any of them have been passed down to 21<sup>st</sup> century descendants of those servants?

**Sheila Woolf**

## **Stoneleigh History Society**

On a horribly wet day in April, 35 of us went on our annual outing, this year to Merevale Hall near Atherstone, a magnificent Victorian mansion high on a ridge. We were shown around the house by its owner Sir Matthew Dugdale, whose gardener later showed us around the grounds. It was extraordinary to see, as well as printed versions of the acclaimed 17<sup>th</sup> century *Antiquities of Warwickshire*, written by the eminent Dugdale ancestor, actual handwritten notes for the book itself.

It was a great pity that the weather was so poor as the gardens were well worth seeing. All in all it was a most enjoyable trip.

Our May meeting – held after publication of this edition of the *News* - comprised a talk given by Dr Sarah Richardson of Warwick University, on the centenary of women's suffrage.

Two days previously, on 27 May, we celebrated the publication of "The Story of the Stoneleigh Stitchers" with a dedication during morning service at Stoneleigh Church. More details about this will appear in the July/August edition of the *News* but I would like to record my thanks here to Margaret Wallis, Margaret Brown and Derek Robinson who did such an excellent job of compiling the booklet.

We shall be celebrating another publication at our next meeting on 26 June, which will take place as usual at 7.30pm in the village hall. Philip Gill will be talking about his book on the residents of the almshouses between 1841 and 1901 – a mammoth task of research and recording. All are welcome.

***Sheila Woolf***

# The Stoneleigh and Ashow News

The July/August edition will be compiled by

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**THE UNITED BENEFICE OF  
THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY, ASHOW and  
ST MARY THE VIRGIN, STONELEIGH**



***SERVICES FOR JUNE 2018***

Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	10.00 am	United Holy Communion at Ashow
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	Holy Communion at Ashow
	11.00 am	All Age Worship at Stoneleigh
Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 am	Midweek Communion Service at Stoneleigh
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	Holy Communion at Ashow
	11.00 am	Fellowship Holy Communion at Stoneleigh
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	Village Service at Ashow
	11.00 am	Sung Holy Communion at Stoneleigh

***From the Registers -***

***Funerals***

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> April – Harry James Bodenham - Funeral Service at Stoneleigh and Burial at Oakley Wood Cemetery

***Contacts:***

For Pastoral Care or to arrange a baptism, wedding or a funeral,  
please contact:

Reverend Nikki Moon 07891 012660 email [njmoon@outlook.com](mailto:njmoon@outlook.com)

***Churchwardens :***

**Ashow:** Vacancy

**Stoneleigh:** June Burr 02476 227726 Gordon Gatward 02476 690746

Deputy Warden: Richard Ashley 01926 427729

For any other matter please contact the Parish Administrator,  
Jackie Cubitt, 02476 415506 email: [admin@stoneleighchurch.co.uk](mailto:admin@stoneleighchurch.co.uk)  
website: [www.stoneleighchurch.co.uk](http://www.stoneleighchurch.co.uk)

*Office Hours Wednesday 9.00 am to 12.00, Thursdays 9.00 am to 1.00 pm*