

St John's Church

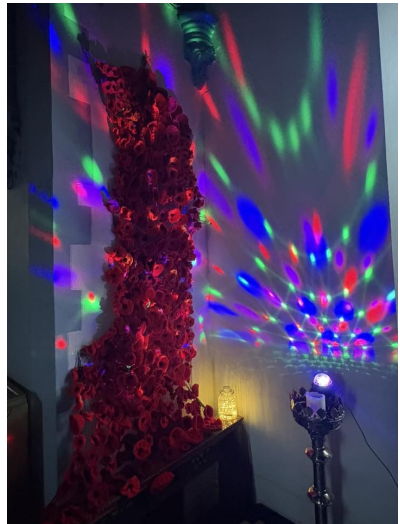
serving Stanborough, Lemsford, Cromer Hyde



December 2025 / January 2026 £1



Photos from Remembrance Sunday



Pictures from remembrance Sunday. On the left (top) you can see the amazing river of poppies (knitted and crocheted by people from the village and the church) and brilliantly assembled by Marion and Doreen

A Ridiculous Christmas!

In case you hadn't noticed, Christmas is rapidly approaching! Every year in church and school we unpack the same Christmas story, and every year I'm struck by how incredibly unlikely it really is.

We're so used to cute nativity plays and cosy Christmas cards that we miss the shocking claim at the heart of Christmas: that the baby in the manger is God. Not God's messenger or representative. God himself, turning up as a baby.

This surprises a lot of people. We hear 'God's Son' in our Christmas plays, and picture Jesus as totally separate from God - someone sent to earth whilst God remained safely on a cloud in heaven! But Jesus doesn't just represent God — he IS God, here in person.

In addition to being a bit mind-blowing, this also seems rather over the top!

If God wanted to communicate with humanity, there were plenty of easier options. He could have sent more prophets, written messages in the sky, appeared in dreams or stuck with the burning-bush approach — dramatic, clear, and no nappy-changing required!



But instead, God became one of us.

God needing feeding and burping at 3am. God learning to walk and falling over. God as a toddler, probably being told off by his mother. The God who made galaxies choosing to experience every mundane, messy, beautiful moment of being human.

It's extravagant. Ridiculous, even. Like proposing marriage by swimming the English Channel, or learning a whole language just to say 'I love you'.

And that's the point.

(Continued on page 2)

Vicar's Message - continued

(Continued from page 1)

That first Christmas wasn't God doing the bare minimum. It was God saying: I want you to know beyond any doubt how much you matter to me. So I'm not sending a message — I'm coming myself. Not to lord it over you, or control the world like a puppeteer — but to experience what you experience, so I can walk with you through it all.

The stable, the shepherds, the star — they're all part of this astonishing

declaration: "I love you. I'm with you. And I always will be."

So amid the wrapping paper, last-minute panics and peeling of sprouts, I hope you catch a glimpse of that extraordinary love. And if you fancy celebrating it with candles, carols and mince pies, we'd really love to see you.

Merry Christmas!

Rev. Kathryn

St John's Church Annexe

Available for hire at reasonable cost

Excellent for small meetings, Anniversaries and children's Parties

Booking Gus Edwards

lizandgusedwards@gmail.com 01707 323785

MALMECH & MANNION

4 SOUTHFIELDS, CHEQUERS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE
WELWYN GARDEN CITY

***MOTs on CARS, VANS, MINIBUSES,
AND MOTORHOMES.***

01707 336111



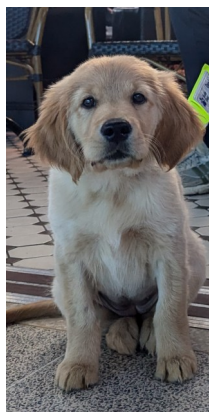
Carol Singing in Lemsford Village and The Sun Pub

On Sunday 21st December people from the parish and members of St John's church choir and be singing carols around the Lemsford Village.

We leave St John's Church at 6:15pm and work our way down the village arriving at The Sun at 7:30pm for a few more carols.

We'd love you to join us—come along to St John's or join in at the Sun!

Welcome Marnie!



Look out for a new church member very soon - Marnie!

Marnie is a golden retriever puppy and will be joining the Brooks family at church from time to time in the next year as part of her training – to be a Guide Dog. She lives with us for a year before she goes on for more training, and then after around two years, is partnered with someone with a vision impairment to live and work with them. We're the basic training providers, which can be messy, but is lots of fun. It's our job to make sure she has lots of opportunities to learn and to explore the world – so she'll be joining us at the shops, in the cinema, on

the train to London, at work, and even at James's school (if they'll let us). She's already visited the pub and several vets and is looking forward to meeting everyone at church!

Guide Dogs provide a wide range of services with and without dogs to support people living with a vision impairment. Their staff, volunteers and dogs help children, young people, adults, and whole families to live actively, independently and well.

Visit Guide Dogs here for more information about what they do, and ways to support them (including how to volunteer as a Puppy Raiser!) <https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/>



(Continued on page 5)



SIMON ADCOCK PAINTING & DECORATING

- * Interior or exterior
- * Paper hanging
- * Rag rolling, sponging
colour washing, dragging
- * Coving & cornice
- * Tiling

Clean, reliable service

Tel 01707 327327
mobile 07958 548505

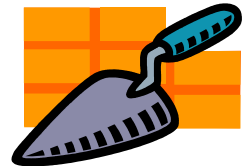
NICK PAGE PAVING SPECIALIST

Driveways Patios Pathways
brickwork landscaping

for free estimates and advice:

07850-915368

email nickpage15@hotmail.co.uk



**WELWYNGARDEN
OSTEOPATHS**

yourOsteopath

helping you to live a pain free life

Stephen Perry Barbara Grace Rob Ballard

Osteopathy is for everyone, yourOsteopath is just for you.
What would YOU do if it didn't hurt?

call 01707 334902 or visit yourOsteopath.co.uk

St John's Christmas Charities

Every Year at St John's Church we nominate special local charities for the collections we make at our special Christmas services. This year the charities are:

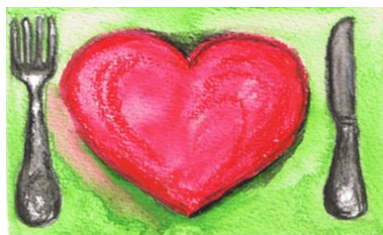
Resolve - a Hertfordshire-based charity that supports people facing alcohol or drug misuse and homelessness through free, non-judgmental treatment and practical help.

Herts Young Homeless - a Hertfordshire-based charity that supports young people aged 16–24 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness by providing education, advice, family mediation, emergency accommodation and ongoing tailored support to help them move toward stable, independent living.

Whether you can make our special services or not, if you'd like to support these charities then you can do that by using the QR code above or clicking this link <https://givealittle.co/c/8hAa1eQb8VQYAT8DRkIHl>



Food Bank Thanks



You may know that there is a dedicated box for collections for a local food bank in the church. Items placed here are sent to the New Zion Christian Fellowship for distribution. They are hugely grateful for this support and also wrote to thank us, specifically for the Harvest Festival giving:

"On behalf of all who help run the Food Bank at New Zion Christian Fellowship, I want to say a huge thank you to you and all at St. Johns Lemsford for the lovely Harvest Festival items which we received from you recently.

Food Bank has now been running for about 16 years, and during that time we have helped many individuals and families. What we are able to provide helps many of them avoid starvation.

So, what you do for us is a real blessing. As a team, we are so grateful for your part in helping us to feed the poor."



We are a local charity providing affordable housing in Welwyn Garden City for people over the age of 60 in financial need.

If you are over 60 and looking for accommodation, please contact the Clerk at
clerk@alicecoralieglynhomes.co.uk
- 07851153016 -



CRANE & STAPLES

SOLICITORS

Family
Wills, Trusts and Probate
Business and Commerce
Commercial Property
Residential Property
Employment
Dispute Resolution

Your Local Law Firm



Longcroft House
Fretherne Road
Welwyn Garden City
Hertfordshire AL8 6TU
law@crane-staples.co.uk

01707 329333
www.crane-staples.co.uk

Celebrate at St John's this Christmas!

December 14th

4pm

All-Together Candlelit Carols*

A wonder-filled shorter service of well known carols and readings for all ages

December 21st

11am

Service of Carols and Readings

A classic service, telling the story of Christmas through music and words

December 23rd

6:15pm

Carol Singing in Lemsford Village and The Sun Pub

Leaving church at 6:15pm, arriving at The Sun 7:30pm

Christmas Eve

2:30pm

Children's Crib Service*

11pm

Midnight Mass

The special first service of Christmas

Christmas Day

11am

All-Together Communion*

A joyful all-age Christmas celebration service

January 18th

3pm

Christingle Service*

The classic orange and sweet celebration of Jesus' birth - with pizza!

*** Brilliant for children (and other ages!)**

Services

December 2025

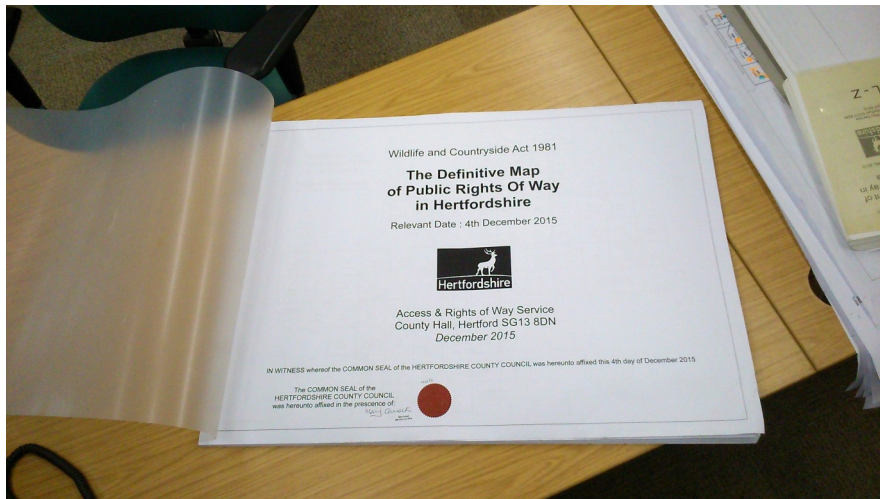
7th Advent 2	8 am	Quiet Communion (BCP)
	11 am	All-Together - Journey to Christmas*
14th Advent 3	11 am	Holy Communion with Sunday Club*
	4 pm	All-Together - Candlelit Carols*
21st Advent 4	8 am	Quiet Communion (BCP)
	11 am	Service of Carols & Readings
24th Christmas Eve	2:30 pm	Children's Crib Service*
	11 pm	Midnight Mass
25th Christmas Day	11 am	All-Together Communion*
28th Christmas 1	11 am	Holy Communion

January 2026

4th The Epiphany	8 am	Quiet Communion (CW)
	11 am	All-Together Holy Communion - Epiphany*
11th Epiphany 1 - The Baptism of Christ	11 am	Holy Communion with Sunday Club*
18th Epiphany 2	8 am	Quiet Communion (BCP)
	11 am	Reflective Worship
	3 pm	Christingle - Christingle-making, a short service of light and praise, with a pizza party to follow*
25th Epiphany 3	11 am	Holy Communion

CRoWS = Countryside & Rights of Way Service

New Consolidated and Republished Definitive Map & Statement (DM&S) for Herts. – Coming Soon!



Shortly after you read this, HCC's CRoW Service (specifically the Definitive Map & Enforcement Team within CRoWS) will be republishing the newly consolidated DM&S for Herts. This is no mean feat and used to be done every 5 years, but after an agreement with Ramblers and other user groups, we have reduced this burden to every 10 years, largely predicated on having the online digital 'working copies' of the legal documents also available publicly.

Officially called 'The Definitive Map & Statement of Public Rights of Way for Hertfordshire' (you can see why we shorten it to 'DM&S!'), it consists of 90 A1 map sheets, to cover the whole county, plus 2 well-stuffed level arch folders full of the pages of the Definitive Statements, for
(Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 8)

** Children are welcome at all our services, but these services and events are especially suitable for families and children (as well as people of all other ages!). BCP Book of Common Prayer; CW Common Worship. NB Kathryn's day off is Friday each week*



SUNDAY CLUB

at

St John's Church Lemsford

For children of all ages
Bible stories, crafts, friendship, fun
and snacks!

Every 2nd Sunday of the month
during the 11am service



St John's Church Lemsford

ALL TOGETHER WORSHIP

Sunday 7th December, 11am

Journeying to Christmas
with a little help from St John's children!

A service for everyone aged 0-100+

Children and Young People at St John's *by Jo Brooks*

Yet again I've taken my eye off the ball (or the calendar) and as I write we now have only one more Sunday before Advent Sunday! Already!!?

On the plus side what's not to love about Advent? It is the loveliest of church seasons, all that quietness, watching and waiting, counting down and getting ready to welcome Jesus again.

And so many ways to enjoy the waiting – a calendar (with or without chocolate!), candles on the table at meal times (one for each Sunday maybe and one more for Christmas Day), an

advent activity book, acts of kindness, writing cards, making presents. All these things help us to get ready because they are full of the future joy of Christmas Day.



What's on for children and families at St John's?

As you might expect there's a packed programme of events and worship services to help us prepare for and celebrate God with us, this Christmas and on into next year.

Our Advent all-together worship is on Sunday 7th December at 11 am, Sunday Club will be taking the lead as we journey towards Christmas, with songs, readings and yes, dressing up! All welcome.



We have a gorgeous and peaceful **Carols by Candlelight on Sunday 14th December at 4pm**, then more dressing up at our **Christmas Eve Crib Service (2.30pm)**. And on **Christmas Day** feel free to come in your new Christmas jumpers, socks, pyjamas etc, to celebrate together – it's all-together Communion at 11am.

After all that (and some rest!) we'll be back together again in 2026 for **Sunday Club on 11th**

January at 11am, with games, crafts, music, fun and friendship for children of all ages. And we wrap up this joyful season with a **Christingle party on Sunday 18th January at 3pm** (with pizza afterwards!). God is with us every day.

To find out more, get in touch with Kathryn or Jo. See you soon!

revkathrynalford@gmail.com / joholifield@gmail.com



St John's School: Remembrance Day commemorations, visit by our local MP Andrew Lewin, Fun Run at Stanborough Lakes and basket ball event

Hello everyone,

Winter feels like it is well and truly here and with it come the celebrations and commemorations.

Our **Remembrance** service was once again moving this year. Each class chose words connected with the commemorations, words like sacrifice, love, peace and armistice were added bunting and were presented in the church. We then draped them on one of the trees where we all gathered with Revd Kathryn to reflect on those who have given their lives, so that ours can be peaceful.



to

This term in our **collective worship** we been on a journey through the key events of the Old Testament. In telling the stories, Revd Kathryn has helped us to connect those stories to our own lives. For example, in retelling the story of Daniel we have been reminded that God helps us to remain brave and trusting in the toughest of times. For each week there has been a pictorial symbol which have included a lion, star, broken heart and scroll. At the end of every Monday collective worship each class has been given the symbol for display in class as a reminder of the journey we are all on.

Our amazing **Lemsford School Association (LSA)** continues to be incredibly supportive of the school and have embarked on a mission to raise £26,000 by the end of 2026 to put towards the cost of new play equipment, ours has become worn and needs replacing. So far this term they have already organised a cake sale and a fireworks display. The latter event was such an achievement. Despite a weather forecast of 100% rain for the evening, the stalls, games, refreshments went ahead indoors and during the display the rain stopped and the spectacle was enjoyed by everyone! The LSA are now busy organising all kinds of Christmas fun for the children including a Christmas shopping afternoon, Christmas Jumper Day, parties and, of course, a visit from Father Christmas himself.

We are now busy preparing for **Christmas**. The choir are practising for performances at Stanborough Lodge and Brockett Hall. They will also be

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

singing in the Candle lit service at St John's which we are especially looking forward to. Robins and Starlings classes are busy singing, learning lines and organising costumes for their nativity as well.

There is so much to be grateful for

and much to look forward to!

We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Love from

Michelle Boylan

2025 Advent Course Making Room for Life

An Advent journey toward fullness of life

4 x Wednesdays 10am - 11am

St Michael's Birchwood - starting 26th November

OR

Saturday 9:30am - 12:30pm

St John's, Lemsford - 13th December

*Take time this Advent to pause, breathe, and reconnect —
with God, with others, with yourself, and with life.*

Countryside & Rights of Way Service - *Concluded*

(Continued from page 9)
the 120+ towns and parishes in Herts.



Checking the Draft - Dec 2015

In the good old days this would consist of printing up to 30 copies of those sheets and pages – imagine the truck it needed to deliver those from the printers! Nowadays we will print just 2 copies, one of which is sealed with the County Seal (see photos of 2015 edition) and locked away in the Registry Vault, in HCC's Legal Dept.. The other we'll keep for inspection at our shiny new offices in Stevenage. Online data and geography will be updated (if not already) with all the changes to the RoW network that have happened over the last 10 years, since we published the 2015 DM&S – how time flies!

If you do spot any mistakes, keep them to yourselves... – No seriously, do let us know! & Happy rambling, riding & cycling.

Richard Cuthbert

Advent Course - Making Room for Life

In the bustle of Christmas - trees, lights, presents, cooking... you may feel the need to 'Make Room for Life' - by coming to our Advent course. By the time you read this it will be too late for the first session on Wednesday 26th November, but you can join in at any time and it lasts for 4 weeks.

And, as Wednesdays can be difficult, especially if you are working, then there's an alternative to do it in one session at St John's on Saturday 13th December. See the poster on the left for details.

Acacia Mews Care Home

ENRICHING LIVES, EXCELLING IN CARE



Residential, Dementia and Respite Care

Acacia Mews Care Home in Hatfield, Hertfordshire, is rated as 'Good in All Categories' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The CQC grades the services delivered in care homes in five categories (Safe, Effective, Caring, Responsive and Well-led) and adjudged that Acacia Mews and its staff scored consistently highly throughout.

- Beautifully decorated rooms all have en-suite showers, with some rooms opening on to the gardens
- Restaurant quality dining, café, salon and therapy room
- Sunny landscaped patio gardens with well stocked raised beds
- Sector leading Well-being & Activities Programme packed with daily events and outings



Call 01707 925004 or Search 'Acacia Mews Care'

Acacia Mews Care Home | St Albans Road East | Hertfordshire | AL10 0FJ | www.facebook.com/AcaciaMewsCareHome

Jenny Junior Interior Design



Award winning, timeless design, from concept to completion.

Design consultation in your own home.

Country house specialists, bespoke furniture, designer fabrics, wallpaper and paint. Handmade curtains and blinds. Unique kitchens and bathrooms. Lighting, flooring, art and upholstery.

www.jennyjuniorinteriors.co.uk 01438 873700 / 07947 711597

What have the Horse and Jockey, The Angel, The Roebuck, The Lamb, The Wagon and Horses and The Bull at Stanborough got in common?

Need an extra clue? We can now add The Long Arm and The Short Arm to the list. These are all the lost pubs of Lemsford Parish as written about by the late Stan Borrie in 2003 in his book 'The Pubs in and around Lemsford' (PDF available on www.lemsfordhistorynews.co.uk. (Click on publications).

Witnessing the demolition of the Long and Short was a sad sight. It was a historic building with 50 years of memories for me. I hope this article will be a suitable obituary to a great community hub.

Researching local history has led me to the conclusion that the two institutions that made life bearable for local people were the Church and the pubs. Both had a welcome for local people. The link between Church and pub can be seen when we have a christening, a wedding or a funeral. We normally go to the Local to celebrate, wet the baby's head, toast tying the knot, and celebrate the memory of a loved one. This view maybe frowned upon by church goers today and would have been unacceptable 100 years ago.

The Wagon & Horses (or Waggoners) was located opposite St John's Church on the site now occupied by Gosmore House. Lord Mount Stephen and the vicar, the Rev F. Coggin, prevailed upon the brewers to close the pub down because of its proximity to the church. It was closed circa 1890 and demolished. One source has called the inn The Star and another The Church Gate. It is thought that the latter name, however, may have been used merely as a description of the inn's location. It was replaced in 1900 by a house for a resident nurse and became a nursing home. This was bought by the Lord Mount Stephen and on his death helped to provide welfare for the old folk (the subject of a future article written by Carol Hicks).

The reason why we had so many pubs was because, when the Great North Road went through Lemsford, it is said as many as 150 coaches a day passed through. Carriages and wagons would pass through the village daily. All the inns would have offered food and drink for the travellers. Accommodation would be provided if required. Wheelwrights and blacksmiths were available to service the wagons and horses. Stabling for the horses would also have been provided.

(Continued on page 19)

PRE-SCHOOL & FULL DAYCARE

appledaycare.co.uk




apple
daycare Ltd

CHANGING FUTURES TODAY

appledaycare@mail.com
Tel: 01707 872 949

R Allison *Landscapes & Garden Maintenance*

Garden construction | Water Features |
Turfing Topiary | Decking | Tree Surgery Per-
golas | Patios | Driveways
Fencing | Brickwork
Also other garden services
as required
01438 211848/077877 62822



Lemsford Local History Group - *Continued*

(Continued from page 17)

The Long Arm and The Short Arm was originally a cottage and blacksmith's shop and dates from 1734. In 1853 the buildings were described in an auction catalogue as 'a brick built and tiled beer house, baker and grocer's shop, bakehouse and premises.' Its location was on the Old Great North Road and provided a resting place for the weary traveller.

In 1928 The Long Arm and The Short Arm was one of several pubs in the Hatfield area which had its licence renewal temporarily refused. Although two in Hatfield were closed for good at this time, The Long Arm and The Short Arm's licence was afterwards regained. About this time the old building was pulled down and a new public house we have grown to love was built and opened in 1929.

The group has an image which can be seen on the inside back cover from 1938 showing Mr Blachford (a local shoe maker) who ran his business from the Old Wesleyan Chapel next to the Long Arm and The Short Arm. Ironically the chapel and several house were demolished to provide a car park for the increasing traffic that ran through the village past the side of the Long Arm and The Short Arm going up the hill to the Waggoners and onto the North.

1937/38 saw the end of James Will Smith's occupancy and Percy, his younger brother, took over helped by his wife Lilian (nee Hatton). Their son Lew and his wife also lived in the pub and in 1942 their son Brian was born there. In 1950, Joe Wackett became landlord. Lew Smith and his family moved to what is now known as number 7 Lemsford Village. In 1953 they moved to the Chequers (now the Crooked Chimney) where Lew became the landlord.

Joe Wackett remained as landlord until his retirement in 1962. Further significant changes were made to the building in 1960 and again in 1984. A succession of managers has run the business for McMullen since Joe Wackett retired including Christine, Mandy and Jose. The two bars were converted into one bar in 2013, and it remained a popular pub to eat in with its 2 for 1 offers.

(Continued on page 21)



01707 262122

Branches in Hatfield, St. Albans, Knebworth,
Welwyn Garden City, London Colney



Independent Family Funeral Directors
Established 1839

Personal Service Pre-Paid Funerals Bespoke Funerals



Independent Family Monumental Masons
Established 1839

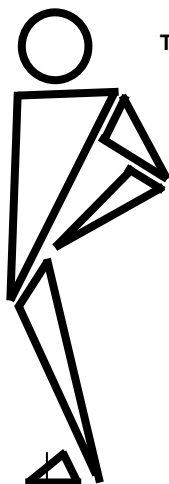


CLEANING · RESTORING · NEW MEMORIALS

01707 262171

Right where and when you need us

Helping you get back to being fit and active whatever your age, life style or choice of sporting activity



The Physiotherapy Clinic at Gosling Sports Park specialising in:

- Ligament Sprains • Golfer's Elbow
- Muscle Strains • Arthritic Pain • Back Problems
- Sciatica • Achilles Tendonitis • Neck Problems • Shin Splints
- Bursitis • Knee Injuries • Frozen Shoulder • Tennis Elbow
- Post Surgery Rehabilitation • Musculo-Skeletal Problems
- Acupuncture for Pain Relief

THE PHYSIOTHERAPY CLINIC

Chartered Physiotherapists
Manipulative and Sports Physiotherapists

GOSLING SPORTS PARK

Stanborough Road, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6XE

Tel: 01707 329910

www.physiotherapyclinic.net

(Continued from page 19)

The name The Long Arm and The Short Arm would seem to refer to different lengths of the two roads leading out of the village either side of the pub up to the Great North Road i.e. Brickwall Hill and Lemsford Mill Lane.

The name has been attributed also to a signal board that was there before the bridge was built in 1775 that denoted the depth of water in the Lea's ford – long arm of the signal for deep water and a short arm for shallow water.

Another suggestion put forward by Mr Jeremy Summers is that a coach and four horses as depicted on the pub sign must be driven by coachman with the reins of one pair of horses (in his left hand) on a 'Long Arm' and the other pair on the 'Short Arm'. (It should be noted here that the artist who painted the original sign for the pub, John Fredrick Herring, was a noted 'whip' and an excellent coachman who regularly drove coaches through Lemsford from London to York and back again).

Margaret Boland emailed another reason for the name 'After buying the pub in 1885 for the then princely sum of £350, McMullen dug its own well to solve the 'long arm; short arm' problem caused by excessive water carrying from which the pub takes its name!'

However, other suggestions have been put forward over the years and the reason for the name remains a riddle to this day.

These are the facts about a much-loved pub. The true local history is our memories. My memories span 50 years and include many happy nights with friends and family, a quiet Tuesday afternoon in the Public Bar with Brian 'Smithy' Smith talking about the past, watching major sporting events and, of course, the village Christmas parties and the old people lunches. I have put together a collage of images showing some those great days. [see next page—Ed.]

I wish everybody a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

We are happy to share the LLHG archive and research with the community and provide walks and talks to groups. For more information contact us on info@lemsfordhistory.co.uk. The same email address is available if you want to share memories.

(Continued on page 23)

Personal, caring and independent.

*The complete
funeral service*

24 hour service

Private Chapels of Rest

Bespoke Funeral Plans

Own Crematorium

STEVENAGE • 01438 316623
HITCHIN • 01462 438422
KNEBWORTH • 01438 812365
BUNTINGFORD • 01763 274111
WELWYN GARDEN CITY • 01707 390018
WELWYN • 01438 714686
HERTFORD • 01992 582052
WARE • 01920 468551
LETCHWORTH • 01462 684292
HODDESDON • 01992 471709
HARWOOD PARK • 01438 812515
HARPENDEN • 01582 762570

AUSTIN'S

FAMILY FUNERAL DIRECTORS

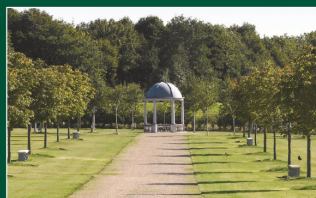
www.austins.co.uk

Serving the local community for ten generations



Harwood Park

*The perfect setting to commemorate
the life of your loved one*



Crematorium and memorial
gardens created and managed by
the Austin family in the beautiful
Hertfordshire countryside.

www.crematorium.co.uk

Lemsford Local History Group - Concluded





- ✓ Hugely Rewarding
- ✓ Work Life Balance
- ✓ Friendly Supportive Team
- ✓ Quality Time with Clients
- ✓ Full Training Provided
- ✓ Career Development
- ✓ Time to Travel
- ✓ Great Pay & Benefits

Car Drivers ONLY

Call us on 01707 682 100

Can you make a positive difference every day?

We look after amazing people in the comfort of their own homes

NOW
RECRUITING!



making a difference every day

www.rightathome.co.uk/welwyn



**ELECTRICAL
PLUMBING
KITCHENS
BATHROOMS**

**I ALSO COVER MANY
ASPECTS OF PROPERTY MAINTENANCE**

CHRIS TINWORTH

01707-251302

07973-561298

www.ctpm.co.uk

In mid-November I noticed a dahlia still flowering in my garden; it was surprisingly hosting numerous aphids which were being consumed by a ladybird munching its way contentedly up the plant.

Ladybirds are very interesting. Being beetles they go through a larval stage which in their case resembles a tiny alligator. Adults can eat 50 aphids a day, and several thousand in a lifetime.

They got their common name in medieval times. A likely reason relates to the growth of an Order of Friars, the Servites, founded in 1233 by seven youths in Tuscany. In 1239, according to a contemporary writer, Mary appeared to them, presenting them with the black "garment of mourning" that they would wear, and telling them that they should meditate upon her Seven Sorrows. Traditionally these were seven events in her life, culminating in the Crucifixion. Early depictions of Mary often had her dressed in a red robe. It was therefore only a short step to link her to beetles with a scarlet body covered in seven spots.

Nowadays we know there are thousands of types of ladybirds in a variety of colour combinations and number of spots. Apart from their voracious appetite for insects, they have the less appealing trait of being cannibals; in times of shortage of prey they can eat their own larvae. They also have a defence mechanism which is quite unusual; If attacked they can exude a sticky



yellow gel from their joints which tastes foul.

In late autumn they hibernate, sometimes seeking shelter indoors; Nigel Johnson one of our churchwardens recently faced a host of them seeking to enter the church. He barricaded the main door and they diverted to the Tower instead. This invasive period only lasts a few weeks, and he was right to keep them out as they need cold temperatures over winter.

Ladybirds have given their name to a well-known range of children's books. First published in 1914, by a firm called Wills & Hepworth, their logo initially had open wings; the closed-wing version was adopted in the late 1950s and has gone through several redesigns, most recently in 2006. Every issue of *Country Life* has a ladybird hidden somewhere within its cover picture.

So, ladybirds are a Good Thing, protecting crops and flowers in a natural way, a blessing indeed.

You can read all Geoffrey's Nature Notes at geoffreyhollis.com/nature-notes

Prayer for Christmas

May Your love fill our hearts and guide our actions, reminding us to share kindness, joy, and peace with those around us. Help us to embrace the true meaning of Christmas, cherishing moments with loved ones and extending compassion to those in need. Let the light of Christ shine brightly in our lives, leading us closer to You each day.

And finally some Christmas Crackers:

How did Mary and Joseph know Jesus' weight when he was born? They had a weigh in a Manger!

Why didn't Mary and Joseph make it to Bethlehem faster? All Virgin flights were cancelled.

What did Adam say the day before Christmas? It's Christmas, Eve!

And really finally.... Three wise men walk into a barn

...and see Joseph, Mary, and baby Jesus. Joseph asks why they are disturbing them as his wife has just given birth and needed rest. The first wise man said "I have brought gold for the child." Joseph thanked him but asked him to leave.

Then the second wise man said "I have brought frankincense for the child." Again Joseph thanked him but, in a rather exasperated tone, asked him and the third man TO PLEASE LEAVE.

The last wise man said "But wait, there's myrrh!"



The Beer House & the Long Arm and Short Arm

Opposite - L to R and Top to Bottom:

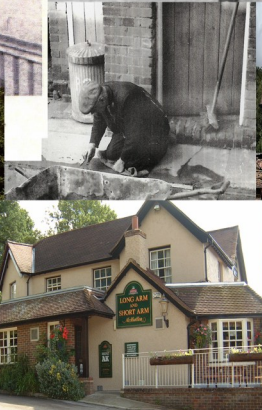
1. Smith family outside the McMullens Beer House in the early 1900s.
2. Six men on a wall outside the Long and Short (the house in background is number 21). The man on the left is landlord James W. Smith known as 'Will' who was the publican from 1906 for 32 years.
3. The old Beer House with the pink cottage behind.
4. The Long and Short in 1958. Note the buildings that were knocked down to build a car park. The Chapel/Old Post is the building at the end of this row.
5. A view from the Long and Short by Ronald Riggs. Note the buildings opposite. They are the dwellings over the river opposite the Sun Inn. The road by the side is The Old Great North Road which went through the village and up to the Waggoners.
6. The next two images show Mr Blachford (a local shoe maker) outside the Long and Short with council workers and Percy Smith working on his garden. 1937/38 saw the end of James Will Smith's occupancy and Percy, his younger brother, took over helped by his wife Lilian (nee Hatton). Their son, Lew and his wife, also lived in the pub and in 1942 their son, Brian was born there. In 1950, Joe Wackett became landlord. Lew Smith's family moved to what is now known as number 7 Lemsford Village. In 1953 they moved to the Chequers (now the Crooked Chimney) where Lew became the landlord.
7. The next two images are of the Long Arm and Short Arm as we all remember it.
8. Going, going, gone.

100 Club October Results

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

Month	1st Prize	2nd Prize	3rd Prize
October	Number 63 - £91.80	Number 120 - £55.08	Number 91 - £36.72

The Beer House & the Long Arm and Short Arm



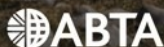
The world is just a step away.

Where will you ramble next?

Whether you enjoy classic trails or a more relaxed tempo, our new Collections make it easier than ever to choose from a range of fantastic walking holidays perfectly suited to your tastes and preferences.



Four Collections. Made by us, created for you.



01707 331133
rambleworldwide.co.uk



ramble
worldwide

The world is more
beautiful on foot.