

St John's Church

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June / July 2024

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Photos from St John's School



Above left: Year 5 helping to create our school garden

Above right: Traditional Maypole at our 'Fete part 2' celebrations!

Below left: Winners of our school K'nex challenge.

Below right: Jo Brooks leading one of our weekly Collective Worship services at the church.



Cover Photo: Anne Florence (née de Grey), Countess Cowper, had the church built to honour the wishes of her late husband, the 6th Earl Cowper. Recoloured from an original at the National Portrait Gallery

Generosity – a 'sweet' way of life

This month in church we're exploring generosity. The best definition I can currently think of for generosity comes in the form of a small child at last week's Messy Church. He had just been given a packet of sweets by the leader for getting all his craft stamps. Rather than shovelling them in his mouth, he came over and handed most of them to me, telling me they were to give me energy for story-time.

This got me thinking that sometimes the biggest acts of generosity aren't the grand gestures or significant donations (lovely as these are); they're often found in small everyday acts of kindness. Simple actions like deciding to share your much-loved sweets with the vicar, spread positivity far beyond the initial act. That child's generosity gave me a warm heart that lasted well into my evening.

I think this is partly because it's often the intention behind the generosity – rather than the 'thing' that's been given - that has the biggest impact on us. As the story of the widow's mites (Mark 12:41-44) [a mite is a low value coin - Ed.] reminds us, the spirit in which we give matters more than the size of our gift. It was the heartfelt love – rather than the sugar - in those sweets that gave me energy for story time.



It's not just the recipients that benefits from generosity. Studies show that giving activates brain regions associated with pleasure. When we give, we enhance our well-being. So, whether donating to the church or another good cause, or giving your friend the last slice of pizza, it's scientifically proven to make you feel good!

Finally, the benefits of giving our time, talents, and resources extend right out into the community. Generosity fosters connection, understanding and cooperation. When we give freely, we break down barriers and create places with a much greater sense of cohesion and joy. You just have to take a look at Lemsford fete, to see that's true.

Why is generosity so beneficial? Well, I believe it's because we're made to be like a generous God, who breathed the gift of life into creation and loves every single part

(Continued on page 3)



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(Continued from page 1)

of it. Generosity, is part of who we are made to be. Whatever your beliefs, generosity can have a huge positive impact on you and those around you. If that sounds good, I'll end by offering five end of day steps to reflect on, that can gradually help create a more generous heart:

GIVE THANKS for someone who has been generous towards you today.

ASK GOD FOR HELP (or simply express an intention) to be more generous towards those who you find it hard to be generous with.

REFLECT on all that you have and think about what you could share with others.

SAY SORRY for a time when you have not been generous and should have been.

DECIDE how you could be more generous with your time and words this week.

With love.

Rev'd Kathryn

Alzheimers Appeal with Tea/Coffee & Cake

Alzheimer's disease can affect people at any age, but becomes more and more prevalent the older we get: Five percent of people age 65 to 74, 13.1% of people age 75 to 84, and 33.3% of people age 85 or older have Alzheimer's dementia.

St John's Church is holding a Tea and Cake (& Coffee) event in support of the Alzheimer's Society on Friday 14th June—2-4pm in the church gardens, provided the weather is good. We'd love to see you at our Alzheimer's event, but if you can't make it then please do support this worthy cause by donating via this QR code or this link: <https://givealittle.co/c/4cdaf193-25fd-4757-96d1-a852e3cbf6ce>



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RIP - Bill Dance

It's with great sadness that we inform you of the death of William (Bill) Dance. Bill was a leading light in the life of the village of Lemsford and will be greatly missed. A celebration of his life was held on Wednesday 29th May, and information passed out through the church newsletter and other means. You'll find a few words about a meeting that Andy Chapman (Lemsford Local History Group) had with Bill on pages 19 and 20 and a photo of young Bill Dance, also on page 20.

The Lemsford Fete

This years Lemsford Fete was a *very* wet one which caused a great deal of concern to the Fete Committee. They watched the weather forecast for the weekend constantly in the preceding days and saw it generally improve a great deal. All except for Fete Day itself, of course which remained stubbornly rainy, and so it proved to be. The week leading up to the Fete, including Saturday and Sunday was fine, with the rain kicking in just before the start of the fete at 12pm and finishing at about the time the fete finished at 4pm. Perfect timing - not. Luckily the dry lead up meant that the fields were usable for parking, phew.

Considering the weather, the attendance was pretty good. You'll find mention of the fete in several of the reports in this edition and in the Then and Now feature. Also look out for the photos of our intrepid volunteers and visitors.

Service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance - Sunday 9th June

Rev'd Kathryn says: All are very welcome at our summer reflective service for remembering those we've loved and lost.

The service will be held at 4pm, in the Garden of Remembrance if the weather is fine. We'd love you to join us for refreshments afterwards.

Strawberry Tea Party - Saturday 13th July

will take place in the beautiful garden of Mrs Edna Stephens at 13 Lemsford Village between 3:30pm-5:30pm. Strawberries, scones, cake, tea and fizz to enjoy, also aiming to have a duck race and some live music, as well as a raffle! Proceeds to St John's Church - All Welcome. Tickets from the church warden - see Parish Directory or website Mark the date!





Lemsford Fete '24

It's always time for an Ice Cream - no matter what the weather!



The days and weeks are simply flying at the moment. By the time you pick up your copy of this magazine we'll be into the last madly busy, stretch of this school year. There are ends and beginnings in every area of our lives all the time – some finish the St John's school journey this summer, others are just getting ready to start. We stop something to start something, we change and grow and move on constantly. God though is different, and his everywhere, for everyone and forever-love never grows old, never changes, never diminishes. In the last book of the Bible, Revelation, and the last chapter of that book, God is named 'alpha and omega' (that's A – Z in the Greek alphabet), the first and last, the beginning and the end. That tells us that all history, all time, everything on our earth and in our human experience is in God's hands. In times of change and times of stability, when we feel like we are upside down, or when our feet feel on firm ground, God is alongside us, he knows what we're going through and is with us. Every step.



At St John's our children and family activity run to the end of term (end of July) then we take a break till September. So join us to celebrate all that God has done in our lives:

We have **all-together worship on June 2nd and July 7th**, with words, music and activities suitable for every age. Then for next year on 1st September, just before we return to school.

There will be **Sunday Club this term, on June 9th and July 14th**, with a year-end party for our last session. We meet at 11 during the morning service for friendship, fun and faith. All are welcome, babies to year 6.

Our next **Connect@4 is on July 21st**, and we'll be thinking about how God is always with us on our journey through life - past, present and future. Connect@4 is a relaxed Sunday afternoon (4pm) event, offering community, food, fun, music, creativity and exploration for all ages.

And a quick look ahead – St John's are back at school on Tuesday 3rd September, with **our traditional coffee morning for new and returning families at 8.45. Sunday Club is back on the 8th**, and we'll have a church family barbecue straight after the 11am service that day to welcome everyone back. So make a note in your diaries and have a wonderful summer!

Services

June 2024

2nd Trinity 1

8 am HC (BCP)

11 am 'All Together' Service *

9th Trinity 2

8 am HC (BCP)

11 am HC with Sunday Club

4 pm Thanksgiving & Remembrance Service - All Welcome

16th Trinity 3

8 am HC (BCP)

11 am Reflective Worship

23rd Trinity 4

8 am MP (BCP)

11 am HC

30th Trinity 5

8 am HC (BCP)

11 am Summer Matins

Followed by Pimms and Fizz

July 2024

7th Trinity 6

8 am HC (BCP)

11 am 'All Together' Service *

14th Trinity 7

8 am MP (BCP)

11 am HC with Sunday Club

21st Trinity 8

8 am HC (BCP)

11 am Reflective Worship

4 pm Connect@4 *

28th Trinity 9

8 am HC (BCP)

11 am HC

*** Services especially suitable for children, and all other ages!**

HC Holy Communion; MP Morning Prayer (Matins); BCP Book of Common Prayer; NB Kathryn's day off is Friday each week



A Time to Remember

A Service of
thanksgiving and
remembrance for those
we've loved and lost

4pm, 9th June

St John's Church



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Lemsford Fete '24 Photos

Intrepid volunteers and visitors braved the weather. See also page 6.





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It was so good to join together on Bank Holiday Monday 27th May Morning to give thanks for 165 years of St John's church!



A wonderful time of looking backwards to the founding of the church, looking forwards, and looking to all that God has done and is still doing in this wonderful place.

Thank you to Andy (Lemsford Local History Group), Nigel and all who organised the day.

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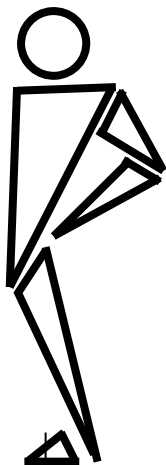
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News from St John's School - May 2024

Hello Everyone,

We have had another very busy half term with lots of lovely things taking place, the weeks since our Easter holidays have absolutely flown by. We have welcomed several visitors into school including STEM engineers, students from Knightsfield School, Grant Shapps as well as some new children and their families.

We also welcomed many visitors to the Lemsford Fete. Despite wet conditions that Noah himself would have felt very at home in it was lovely to see so many supporters of the school, church and village braving the weather with true British stiff upper lip! The highlight for me was seeing and hearing the whole school singing the songs that we had prepared under a gazebo in the playground whilst the heavens opened– I was so proud of them all! On the following Friday the sun shone, and we were able to share the dances with parents.

K'nex Challenge

Class 4 took part in the annual K'nex Go Construct challenge. This year, they had to build a bulldozer! Children worked in pairs to design and make a bulldozer - it needed to have a cab for a driver, be able to shift earth, and have a sturdy structure. Congratulations to our class winners whose design will go



forward to the next stage of the competition. [See inside front cover photo - Ed.] Pop to our school website to see more photos from the workshop.

Knightsfield School Visit.

A couple of weeks ago group of students from Knightsfield School in Welwyn Garden City came with member of staff from the school to lead an assembly about Deaf Awareness. They explained what it is like being in school if you are deaf, the range of hearing aids that they use and the ways in which we can help a deaf person understand what we are saying when we are communicating with them. We are hoping to continue to build links with the school.

Services at St John's Church

It is a lovely tradition that every Thursday morning the whole school

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News from St John's School - May 2024 - Continued

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comes to St John's Church to take part in services led by Revd Kathryn or Jo. [See inside front cover photo - Ed.] Our links with the church are very important to us and it is always so lovely seeing the children take part be it through drama, reading, leading prayers or some other crazy idea like Rev'd Kathryn getting them all to pass a large red flag over their heads to represent the celebration of

Pentecost this week – brilliant!

As we head into our half term break, I wish everyone a restful and enjoyable week, with hopefully some sunshine to help us remember we are halfway through the summer term!

Best wishes,
Michelle Boylan
Head

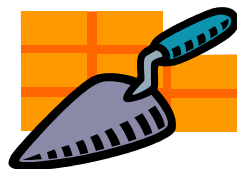
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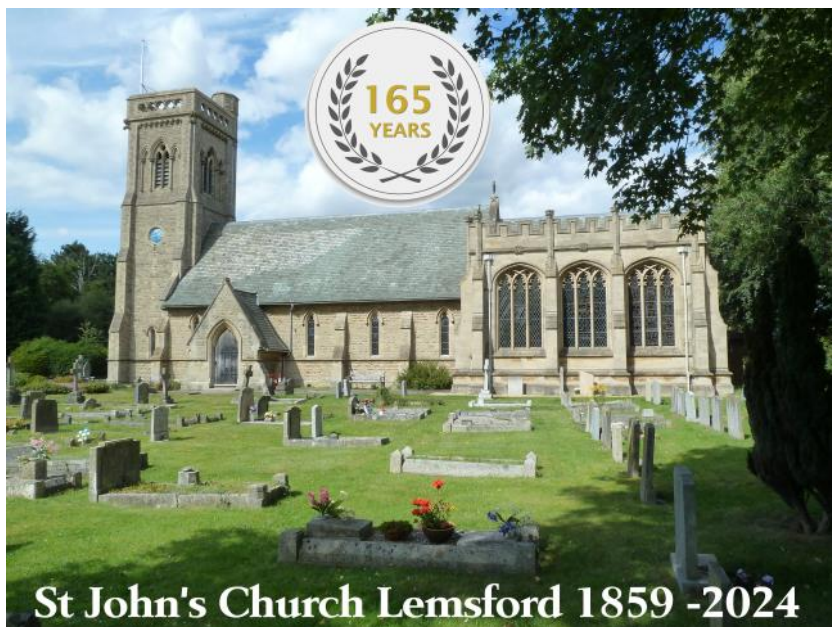
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Since Lemsford Local History Group's last article, we have had the fete. Our special feature 'Then and Now' includes images of the fete in 1960 and 2023. [There are more 1960's photos at the end of this article - Ed.] The group provided a tour of the graveyard and church for this year's fete while launching our latest publication 'St John's Graveyard Tour', a short history of St John's Church and graveyard. The day was wet, but the public came and enjoyed learning about the church and the residents in the graveyard.



The book was a special 'Commemorative Edition' to celebrate the consecration of Lemsford Church 165 years ago which took place on Friday 27th May 1959. The consecration service was performed, due to the illness of the bishop of the diocese, by the Right Rev. the Earl of Auckland, Bishop of Bath and Wells, assisted by the Rev. A. Locock, the first vicar of St John's.

This special day is [was - Due to our magazine publication date - 1st June, this will all have happened by the time you read this - Ed.] being marked by a service on May Bank holiday 27th May 2024 (165 years to the day). The day starts at 10.00am with our wonderful bell ringers welcoming you to the church with a special peel. Vicar Kathryn will

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start the proceedings with a short service at 10.30am followed by the history group giving a short talk on the history of St John's Church. Tours of the church and graveyard will be provided all day up to 14.30pm. Nigel and Doreen will provide refreshments in the annex.

The tour will include facts like:

“The church was originally designed to seat 160 persons, that being the engagement with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners; but there is really accommodation for 240 to 250 persons, including the children of the village schools. All the sittings are free and unappropriated. The general aspect of the building is extremely beautiful. Its fine proportions, and the material of which it is erected, so much superior in appearance to the stone ordinarily used, and the well selected site, all help to make it a charming and picturesque object. The church is to be called “The Church of Saint John, the Evangelist.”

A quote from The Hertford Mercury, Saturday, May 28th, 1859

The congregation was made up of the great and the good including the Countess Cowper and Earl Cowper, the Hon. Henry Cowper, the Ladies Florence, Adine and Amabel Cowper, and the Right Hon. W. F. Cowper.

The Cowper family were present due to **Lord George Augustus Cowper**, 6th Earl Cowper, who lived at Panshanger House publicly declaring that, if he inherited Bocket Hall, he would build a church in Lemsford for the benefit of his tenants. He died in April 1856 before he could realise this, but his widow, Lady Ann Cowper and their children, fulfilled his wish. [See her photo on the front cover - Ed]

The tour will also include the landmarks over the last 165 years.

War Memorial – unveiled July 1919 in tribute to 20 men who died during WW1.

Brocket Chapel - Brocket Chapel dedicated 13th July 1930. Living at Brocket Hall from 1921 were Sir Charles Alexander Nall-Cain (later the 1st Lord Brocket) and his wife Florence. But sadly, his beloved wife Florence died in 1927. Sir Charles commissioned the building of

(Continued from page 18)

the beautiful Brocket Chapel in her memory where Florence's effigy lies on a canopied marble tomb. **History of Nall Cains – Brocket Hall**

Garden of Remembrance

The first garden was created in the North Churchyard in 1972 for the interment of ashes. The Garden was redesigned and rededicated in 2000 for the millennium and all those interred continue to have their names inscribed in the Memorial Book.

The Bells of St John's installed early 1970s

A donation of £1,000 from Hatfield bellringer, Bob Cochrane, who preferred to worship in Lemsford, was received to buy a ring of bells from a redundant church. A Mr. Silcock had bought a church and intended to restore the clock, but considered a suggestion of returning the bells to church use a good idea. The bells were valued at £500, and, in October 1975, a working party went over and started the installation of the bells after two years hard work by many people on Sunday, 18th December 1977. Dedication Service by Robert Runcie, Bishop of St Albans.

Annex – after an appeal and a lot of hard work by young men and women on a job creation scheme (all got jobs after the completion) the Annex was dedicate on July 5th, 1987, by Rt Revd John Taylor.

This is a brief history of the church, LLHG have a more comprehensive history in our new publication 'St John's Graveyard Tour'. A commemorative edition of the history of St John's.

If you want to buy a copy, contact us on info@lemsfordhistory.co.uk. The same email address if you need information, or need help with research of the area or want to pass on images and memories,

While researching the graveyard tour, I visited Bill Dance to seek his permission to include his wife, Jean Dance. The meeting lasted over an hour, and he talked of his memories and how he wanted everyone to learn about Jean's contribution to the life of the Parish. Bill sadly died

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two weeks later and we celebrate his life on 29th May 2024. Having researched many people who have lived in the parish over hundreds of years, Bill and Jean's contribution is one of the most impressive. The full story of Bill and Jean will be in the next edition of the parish magazine. I leave you with a young Bill, cowman for Lord Brocket in the 1940's.



More Photos from LLHG of the Fete in 1960 - in their original B&W





The heavy rain recently has been great for the plants in my garden. One type in particular has burst from the ground so quickly that one can almost see it growing

– the fern. This is not surprising because they originated in watery areas.

Ferns are one of the oldest types of plants on Earth, with fossils dating back over 360 million years. Dinosaurs would have grazed on them. Ferns come in many varieties but, unlike most plants, they don't require flowers to reproduce. (Flowering plants are much younger than ferns, emerging a mere 140 million years ago).

If you look on the underside of the unfurling green fronds of a fern at certain times of the year, you might see small, brown circular structures which produce spores that float away in the air. When these land on moist soil, they start growing into tiny, green, heart-shaped plants about the same size as a fingernail. Within each one are both male and female structures; the male sperm if it is lucky will swim through the water in the soil to fertilise a female egg in the same or another tiny plant. A fern in its green, leafy form will grow and the tiny plant dies away.

This complicated life cycle explains the success of ferns; having the male and female structures so close to-

gether means that there is good chance of fertilisation. Also, the tiny spores allow the fern to expand its range.

Ferns grow by fronds bearing scrolls, which unroll gracefully. Scrolls have been used by man as a basic ornamental shape since the earliest times. For example, many of the croziers carried by Bishops to symbolise their role as shepherds of their flocks have ornate scrolls at their tops.



Ferns might seem modest and relatively unimportant today but they have been a major driver in the industrialisation of our planet. Ferns living millions of years ago in boggy land died, decayed, and were gradually turned into peat which when pressed further underground was transformed to coal.

Have a close look at the next fern you see; remarkably, the leaves are shaped like little copies of the branches. In fact, the entire fern is mostly built up from the same basic shape repeated over and over again down to microscopic levels. It is an example of what mathematicians call fractals. The study of fractals using high powered computers has led to many scientific breakthroughs, e.g. the storage of data on compact discs, and detection of cancers. Fractals are found in many natural things, from pine cones to snowflakes. Truly, nature is wonderful.

Connect@4 Photos



This month at Connect@4 we had great fun exploring the meaning of Pentecost, with the help of a delicious birthday cake for the church, plus an outdoor trail with lots of different activities for all ages.

Connect@4 is a periodic Sunday gathering at 4pm for those looking to connect with God, each other, the community and creation in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere.

There are no pews, not that many words, and no pressure to 'sit still'! This is a space for all ages to have fun, explore, create, pray, worship and eat together in a way that works best for them.

Whether you're new to faith, not really sure about faith, looking for somewhere to belong, or perhaps attend more traditional worship on a Sunday morning and want to also try something new....then this is the gathering for you.

Our next get together is at 4pm on 21st July. Hope to see you there!





We are approaching the end of the first year of the St John's Church '100 Club', and I would like to thank all those who have signed up and become members of the Club during the year. I am also really grateful to all those who are continuing as members for another year. By the generosity of those who have joined the '100 Club' the net profit made by the Club after the first year will be in the order of £4,075. That money is paid into a ring-fenced buildings account, and will be spent solely on the cost of maintaining the church buildings. When becoming a member of the '100 Club', members agree to pay just £4 per month into the Club account, and for that they are allocated a unique number. Most members make their payments by standing order. 55% of a month's receipts is paid into the buildings account, and the remaining 45% of a month's receipts goes towards the prize fund to be paid out to 3 lucky winners each month.

Every unique number bought each month is entered into the monthly draw which takes place on the last Friday of each month. The first number drawn out wins the first prize of 50% of the monthly prize fund, and the second and third numbers drawn win 30% and 20% of the prize fund respectively. Because there are now just over 100 members of the Club, the first prize each month has averaged just over £100. The total amount won by Club members over the year will be in the order of about £2,460.

After each month's draw has taken place, the 3 winners are immediately notified by email, and the winning numbers are published on our website and also in the church's weekly newsletter.

By the time the magazine goes to press, the May draw, which will take place on the 31st May, will not have been made. The winning numbers on previous months have been as follows:

Month	Winning Nos.	1st Prize Amount
June '23	50, 59, 10	£97.20
July '23	83, 97, 26	£98.10
Aug '23	45, 8, 34	£100.80
Sept '23	97, 6, 45	£101.70
Oct '23	30, 51, 17	£101.70
Nov '23	67, 23, 41	£108.00
Dec '23	37, 8, 74	£105.30
Jan '24	44, 6, 12	£104.40
Feb '24	18, 87, 57	£103.50
Mar '24	29, 40, 77	£104.40
April '24	14, 27, 1	£104.40

E&OE

A huge 'thank you' once again to all those who have taken part in the '100 Club' to date and are continuing to be members in 2024/25. If you are over 16 and would like to sign up to become a member now, please contact me and I will send you more information together with a copy of the Club Rules.

Nigel Johnson
Churchwarden

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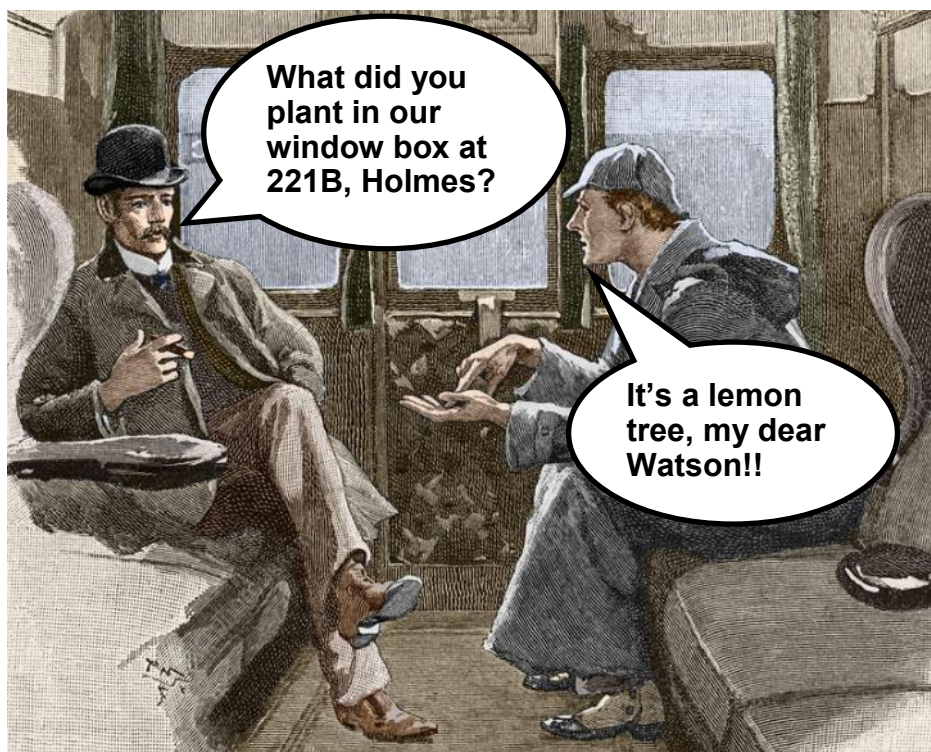
www.crematorium.co.uk

Prayer for Peace in the world

***Most gracious God and Father, in whose will is our peace,
Turn our hearts and the hearts of all to yourself, that by the power of your Spirit the peace which is founded on righteousness may be established throughout the whole world; through Jesus Christ our Lord.***

- Church of England

And finally



You don't need a garden to plant...



Above (Then): The Lemsford Fete in 1960 [*Cheekily coloured using AI*]
 Below (Now): The Lemsford Fete recently
 [Note - Now is 2023 not 2024 - It was very rainy this year!]



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