

# Platinum Jubilee celebrations



The Mount



Simpson houses

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee was marked and celebrated in a variety of ways over the extended Bank Holiday weekend in early June. These images provide a flavour of the range and variety of the activities – decorations, parties and a flyover.

Some preparations have been ongoing for months. The Simpson in



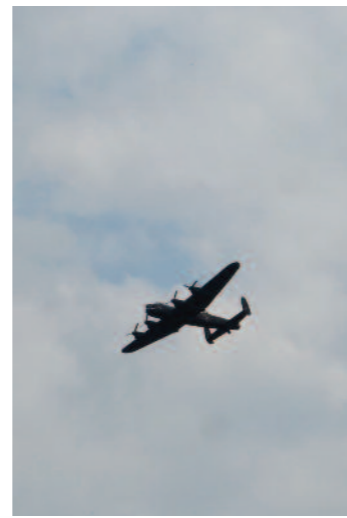
Bloom group invited those with knitting skills – and time – to produce colourful flowers to decorate areas of the village. They bloomed in abundance, with particular thanks to Marie Love, Margaret Young, and Wendy Jordan for their sterling efforts.

Over the weekend, some houses

were decorated with union flags and bunting. There were *al fresco* parties at The Mount and in Ashland. Simpson Village Hall was open for refreshments and a competition to identify some of the more 'senior' residents from photographs of them taken in the early 1950s (won by Margaret Young). The children were entertained with several competitions including 'The Best home-



Ashland



Knitted flowers in Simpson



Simpson Village Hall



St Thomas' Church

made Crown' (won by Evie) and 'Find the Corgis' (won by Polyana). St Thomas' Church was also open, decorated with knitted flowers, flowers, crowns, an orb and dressing up clothes. Visitors took advantage of dressing up in 'royal' and 'stately' clothes, including Eric Coles, who made a grand Archbishop of Canterbury. (Eric was 25-years-old when the queen's reign began....)

An unexpected bonus for Ashland on Thursday lunchtime, was two circuits by the Lancaster bomber that had been part of the Buckingham Palace flyover twenty minutes earlier, destined for Bletchley Park.

Thanks to all who contributed to a long weekend to remember.

● Lena Bates

# Ashland Lakeside

Ashland Lakeside is now really starting to take shape, and there's some great progress being made.

Firstly, the building has a 'proper' name, which we think reflects the surroundings and its Ashland location. The Steering Group encouraged input from all residents to select a name, and of the fifteen suggestions, three were short-listed to go out to a vote. A vote was conducted at the end of March, promoted via Facebook, and Ashland Lakeside gained nearly half of the votes.

With the interior fit-out being conducted very competently by MK College, and the deck now taking shape, attention is turning to the external fittings and security of the building, and landscaping. The building is fitted with CCTV cameras, and railings will be fitted around the decking area. The front door is now on and The Parks Trust have already started to support us by clearing some of the weeds around the building and they will be planting shrubs over the coming months. They will be seeding the lawn early in the autumn and planting trees and shrubs in January.

We're very grateful for the generosity of Bridgman & Bridgman in Wolverton for their support with the sedum roof. If you're tall enough, or lucky to have a 'birds-eye view', you'll notice that only two-thirds of the roof is completed. The remaining section will be used by Bridgman & Bridgman as a test site to trial new plants and techniques. In exchange for this, they offered us a considerable saving on cost, which was warmly received by those managing the budget!

The building has been inspected for fire safety, and internal capacity has been confirmed for 50 people sitting or standing, with 40 sitting around tables (such as for a quiz or a meal). We'll have enough tables and chairs to suit the numbers, and the building feels spacious and airy with these configurations.

Many are now asking about hiring the building and when it may be open. There is still work to be done, and we need that to be completed before we can arrange insurance. We're still waiting on an approximate date, and we'll let you know as soon as one is available. The Steering Group is

intending to hold an opening event, so watch this space!

As always, we'd like to acknowledge the generosity of other local businesses, including Brewers in Bletchley who donated the interior paint, and another Bletchley-based business, JustTopp's for their gift of the kitchen worktop.

MK College has shown considerable commitment, for which we're really grateful, and their students have displayed high levels of professionalism throughout. This is also a good time to thank Mark Colton, from the Parks Trust, who has been

unfailingly helpful throughout; he is retiring at the end of June.

As always, our architect Andrew Armes continues to do a fabulous job managing this project to get us to completion. Thanks, also, to the Parish Council who have been steadfast in their determination to complete the building, despite all the challenges thrown in the path. And finally, thanks to the Steering Group and local residents who have, and continue to give their time to the project.

To keep up to date with all developments on Ashland Lakeside and how you can get involved, please join us via the 'Ashland Neighbourhood Watch' page on Facebook.

● Caroline Vooght on behalf of the Steering Group

**Emergency Services**  
**Open Day**

**Blue Light Hub**  
**West Ashland**

**Saturday 13th August**  
**11:00 - 15:00**

- Emergency demonstrations
- Search & rescue dog 'Huw'
- Mounted police section
- Food & refreshments
- Rides & stalls
- Raffle prizes
- + much more...

Logos for Fire Fighters Charity and The Ambulance Staff Charity are visible at the bottom right.

# Simpson: then and now

In recent years, the Simpson History Group has contributed to the programme for the Heritage Open Days, held in September [www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk). Milton Keynes has one of the most extensive programmes of events in the country.

This September, our showcase will take the form of a projected display of images of Simpson properties and their surroundings from the past, alongside some 2022 equivalents.

Images of 'then' come from an extensive archive of postcards and old photographs, many from the first half of the 20th century. We have started to capture their 2022 equivalents, photographed as near as possible from the original viewpoints. The final result will offer a fascinating account of what has changed and what has remained essentially the same. And added to



Poplar Farm c. 1908 (above) and 2022 (right)

that, this summer's compendium will provide a valuable picture of Simpson in 2022, which may prove to be as interesting to future residents as the black-and-white postcards are to us, today.

If you have any old photographs of Simpson that you think might be of interest, please contact Peter Barnes [peterwbarnes@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:peterwbarnes@hotmail.co.uk) as soon as possible. We are particularly keen to see images of areas such as Hanmer Rd, Lissel Road and Warren Bank when they



were first built.

The display will be on a continuous loop at **Simpson Village Hall** on **Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 September, 14.00-18.00**. Light refreshments will be available until 17.30.

A guided walk round the village will identify some of the featured properties and their history. The walk will start from the Hall at 15.00 on both days (weather permitting), and last about one hour.

● Peter Barnes, on behalf of the Group

## On a roll – celebrating local success

Nine-year-old Simpson resident Mason Willimott is a rising star in the world of roller hockey. In April, he was a member of the GB team in the largest roller hockey tournament, in Barcelona. The team was selected at the last minute, due to COVID restrictions, leaving little time for them to train and get to know each. They entered the tournament as underdogs, however they played their hearts out and came home with the gold medal.

In addition to the team's gold, Mason won individual medals, scoring the winning goal in the final with a mere 0.08 sec on the clock! Playing as a left-wing forward, he was the top goal and point scorer of the tournament, with a massive 27 goals across all age groups

and countries (ages ranging from 8-22). On the strength of that performance, he was selected to join the tournament's All Star team, for the best players.

Mason started playing at the age of five, after watching an MK Lightning ice hockey game. In addition to roller hockey, he plays ice hockey for Peterborough Phantoms – in the age group for the 10-12 year olds.

He has been asked to play at a national tournament in Rotherham in July and he will be part of the GB team for 2023.

*If you know of local young talent that deserves to be celebrated in the Newsletter, please email [peterwbarnes@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:peterwbarnes@hotmail.co.uk)*



Mason and his sister – and fan – Sophia

## Salted Caramel Cake



One of the attractions at recent social events in Simpson Village Hall – most recently the Platinum Jubilee celebrations - has been the opportunity of tasting a slice of Nigel Chitty's salted caramel cake. The ever-generous Simpson resident has agreed to share the secrets of his stand-out baking success (with modest acknowledgement to Waitrose)

### Ingredients:

#### For the cake:

- 175g butter, softened, plus extra for greasing
- 125g light brown muscovado sugar
- 200g Nestlé Carnation Caramel
- 200g self-raising flour
- 1 teaspoon salted caramel flavour \*
- 3 large free range eggs

#### For the icing:

- 75g butter
- 75g light brown muscovado sugar
- 2 tablespoon Nestlé Carnation Caramel
- 1 teaspoon salted caramel flavour \*
- 40g icing sugar

#### For the topping:

- 1 tablespoon feuilletine \*
- 1 tablespoon honeycomb \*
- 1 teaspoon bronze crunch \*

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C, gas mark 4. Grease the base and sides of a deep, 20cm round, loose-bottomed cake tin and line the base with baking parchment.

2. With an electric whisk, beat together the butter, sugar, caramel, flour, salted caramel flavour and eggs in a bowl until combined.

3. Tip the mixture into the cake tin. Smooth the top and bake for 40-45 minutes or until risen and set in the middle (cover with foil after 30 minutes to prevent it over-browning, if required). Cool in the tin.

4. To make the icing, melt together the butter, sugar, caramel and salted caramel flavour in a pan until smooth, stirring constantly. Remove from the heat, sift in the icing sugar and stir together. Cool until barely warm.

5. Remove the cake from the tin and peel off the base paper. Spoon over the icing and spread it out, letting it drizzle down the sides of the cake. Mix together the feuilletine, honeycomb and bronze crunch, and sprinkle over the cake.

*\* Available under the 'Waitrose Cooks' Ingredients' banner, though at the time of writing there appears to be a supply problem with feuilletine. It's also available online but you have to buy a lot. I've seen a suggestion that corn flakes could be used as a substitute but they would have to be broken into very fine pieces. Unless you really want the texture, I'd be inclined to leave it out altogether.*

*Bronze crunch is also available from Tesco.*



## Canal News

2022 has seen lots of activity on the Grand Union Canal, with volunteers from Simpson and the Canal and River Trust planting whips to replace a stretch of damaged hedge beside Warren Bank (see February 2022 Newsletter) and repairing stretches of the towpath.

Cruises on board *Electra*, the fully-electric community canal boat, also began in the spring. Operating from Campbell Wharf, *Electra* offers **private charter** and **public themed cruises** for up to 12 guests, across Milton Keynes and beyond. Public cruises range from coffee and cake to fish and chips, spotter challenges for the kids, and even walking adventures. For more information, go to [www.bmkwaterway.org/electra/on-board/](http://www.bmkwaterway.org/electra/on-board/)

● Ross Eatwell

# New trees

In March, SERCO planted four young trees in Simpson: a walnut at the entrance to Bowlers Close, a weeping birch at the entrance to Abbey Road (see photos), and a fig and an un-labelled tree on the verge beside the road leaving the village, towards Fenny Stratford.

Newly planted trees require regular watering if they are to become established – particularly over the summer months when rain may be in short supply. We are, therefore, very grateful to residents living close to the trees for undertaking this task. The evidence that all four trees are flourishing is testament to their perseverance.



March



June

# Tributes...

## Councillor Carole Baume

The Parish Council was saddened to hear of the death of Councillor Carole Baume in April. A resident of Ashland, Carole was a Milton Keynes ward councillor at the time of her death and also was a member of Simpson and Ashland Parish Council for two years (2017-19). She was tirelessly committed to improving the lives of residents and communities, both in Simpson and Ashland and, through her MK Council role, the wider city. She had worked for many years in senior roles at the Open University and was committed to ensuring that all people had the best opportunities they could.

Carole will be greatly missed and the Parish Council sends all our best wishes to David and the family.



Carole Baume & Chichi Ezech, May 2019

## Councillor Sheila Thornton

Sheila Thornton left the Parish Council in April prior to moving from Simpson to another part of Milton Keynes. The Parish Council would like to thank Sheila for all her efforts, drive and determination over the nine years that she has been a member of the council. Simpson residents will recognise her untiring efforts towards the management and care of open spaces,

a focus on biodiversity and energy efficiency, and the provision of effective public transport through the village. Sheila also gave generously – and freely – of her time, experience and skills to encourage and support the development of the Ashland community, initiating events around the lake and being 100% committed to the construction of Ashland Lakeside. She was also very willing to lend an ear to residents' individual problems and to identify ways of resolving them.

We wish Sheila and Mike all the best for the future.

David Pye



Sheila Thornton (far left) at Ashland Lakeside, 2022

# Quiz Nights

**Friday 24 June** at 7.00pm in St Thomas' Church.  
Proceeds to Church funds

**Saturday 9 July** at 7.00pm in Simpson Village Hall.  
Proceeds to the Soroptimists

Bring your own drink – teas at half-time

Maximum of 8 people on a table

Raffle prizes gratefully accepted

Places **MUST** be booked with [missquiz@sky.com](mailto:missquiz@sky.com)

# Postman Paul

For the past four-and-a-half years, postman Paul Coker has been a familiar sight in Simpson, delivering mail in his trademark shorts, come rain or shine and always with a friendly word. Residents particularly appreciated his consistent service during the lockdown periods during the past two years. For some, his cheery smile through the window was their only human contact of the day.

Paul left Royal Mail at the end of May to become assistant manager for a car storage business in Newport Pagnell, which will enable him to indulge in one of his passions – cars.

Before he left, many took the opportunity to thank him for all he has



Paul Coker

done. Paul wrote: *My thanks to all of those residents who have given me cards, gifts and good wishes. I have sincerely been humbled by the response I have received from everyone.*

# Simpson Village Hall

The Simpson Village Hall page on the Parish website has recently been developed. Go to [www.simpsonandashland.co.uk/simpson-village-hall.html](http://www.simpsonandashland.co.uk/simpson-village-hall.html) for information about facilities, charges and availability and how to book.



## What's On... Tuesdays

**Coffee & chat 10.00-12.00**

Play card and board games, or just chat. Refreshments £2; optional raffle. Come along – we'd love to see you!

## Wednesdays

**Forever Green 10:30 – 11.15 am**

Chair-based exercise for older adults £4 per session.

**Evergreen Yogalates 6:30 - 7.30 pm**

Yoga for older adults.

## Thursdays

**Cycle2Pilates 10.15am** A great way to keep fit with a very experienced coach. £6 per class. For more information email Rebecca at [info@cycle2pilates.co.uk](mailto:info@cycle2pilates.co.uk)

## Let there be light...

In June, the Hall's electrics underwent a major upgrade, financed by the Parish Council. In part, this was in order to comply with changed safety standards, but it also provides improved quality of lighting and greater energy efficiency.

## Evergreen Yogalates

Come along to gently move your body, calm your mind and feed your soul



**Wednesday at 6.30pm to 7.30pm with Shakila**

Free first session on Wednesday 1st June at Simpson Village Hall, Hamner Road, MK6 3AD  
Bring your mat, water and small cushion/towel

## Simpson Village Hall

**AVAILABLE TO HIRE**  
FOR REGULAR CLASSES TO ONE OFF EVENTS

We offer a bright space for up to 50 people.

With a fully equipped kitchen.

Wifi.

Accessible toilet and baby changing facility.

**Hourly Hire Rate**

£20 Standard Hire Charge

£15 for Charitable Organisations

£12.50 for Residents of Simpson and Ashland

Further info & online booking is available at:

<https://www.simpsonandashland.co.uk/simpson-village-hall.html>

## Forever Green

Chair based exercise class for older adults  
For everyone – all levels and abilities welcome  
**Move it or Lose it!**

Come and have some fun, improve your sleep and better manage those aches and pains



Movement and exercise helps you:

- Improves your balance
- Increases your stability
- Reduces the risk of falling
- Aches and pains reduce
- Stronger bones
- Sleep better
- Flexibility improves
- Posture is better
- Muscle strength and tone increases
- Better blood pressure control
- Lowers risk of stroke
- Better blood sugar control
- Breathing is better

Join Shakila to get moving, feel healthier and happier

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> June

10.30am to 11.15am at Simpson Village Hall, Hamner Road, MK6 3AD

£4 per session

For more information call Shakila on 07752378878



# News from St. Thomas' Church

As reported elsewhere, members of the congregation worked alongside Simpson residents making knitted flowers for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The church was open on Saturday 4 June and the following day we enjoyed a celebratory Songs of Praise.

## Iconic book - *Where Two Rivers Meet*

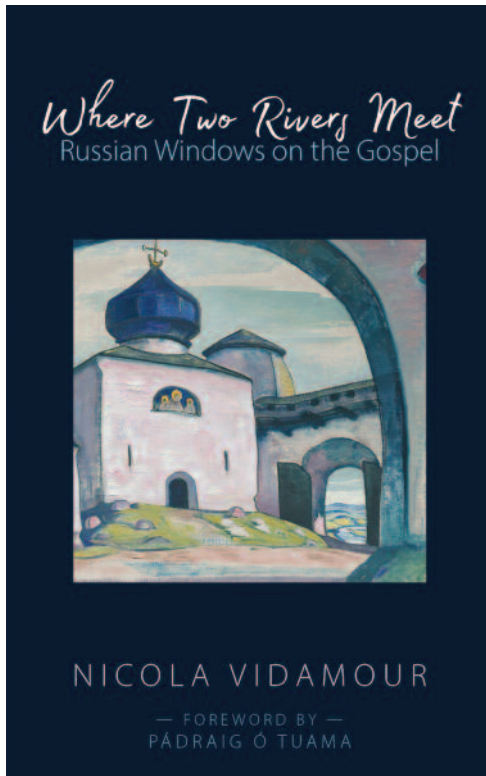
Rev Nicola Vidamour writes: I am delighted and excited to announce that *Where Two Rivers Meet*, the book which I wrote on my sabbatical last year, is published on 15 June.

As a Methodist minister, I served in Pskov, Russia for six years (2003-09). When I was feeling homesick, I would either go to the place in the city where two rivers meet or visit my favourite icons in the local museum.

My book looks through the windows of those icons to discover more about life in Russia and the way in which the gospel can be read through Russian eyes. Through a mixture of memoir, theological reflection and spiritual insights, I invite readers to think about where two rivers meet in our own lives.

In the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, *Where Two Rivers Meet* also provides a foreigner's guide to life in a Russian provincial town and offers much-needed assurance that the 'other' can become a friend.

You can read the synopsis of the book and order copies at



[www.sacristy.co.uk/books/theology/russian-gospel](http://www.sacristy.co.uk/books/theology/russian-gospel)

Signed copies will also be on sale (£12.99 – cash or by bank transfer) at the book launch at St Thomas' Church, on **Saturday 2 July from 2:30-4:00pm**. All welcome - but please let me know if you plan to come so that we can provide enough tea and cake! [revnicolav@gmail.com](mailto:revnicolav@gmail.com)

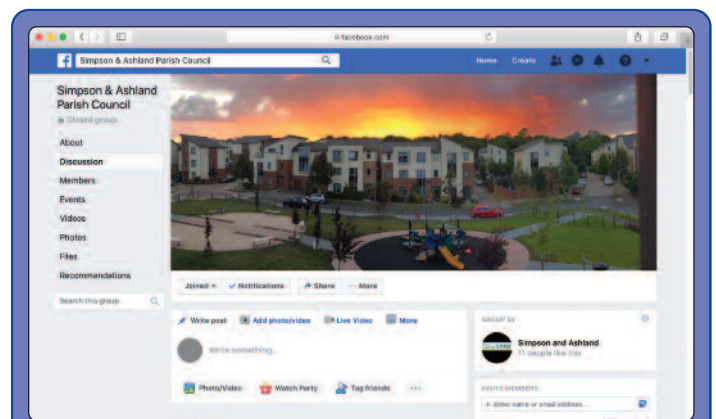
## St Thomas' Day

The launch of Nicola's book is part of the patronal festival celebrations for our medieval church. There will also be a '**Summer Celebrations**' concert in the church at **19.00 on Saturday 2 July**. Bring & Share Supper. Collection for Church funds. If you wish to recite a poem or perform in any way, please contact [missquiz@sky.com](mailto:missquiz@sky.com)

Eucharist on **Sunday 3 July at 10.30**.

**The Churchyard** has been a cause for concern. We now have a new gardener, Rebecca Gokmen, who started work on 14 June and, weather permitting will be working every Tuesday morning. If you are in the churchyard on a Tuesday, please say hello to Rebecca.

● **Iola Samuels - Church Warden**  
[iola.jb.samuels@gmail.com](mailto:iola.jb.samuels@gmail.com)



### Simpson & Ashland Parish Council on Facebook

Are you a Facebook user? Become a friend of Simpson & Ashland on Facebook. Stay in touch, comment on and ask questions about what is going on in your neighbourhood. We also tweet! [@SimpsonAshland](https://twitter.com/SimpsonAshland)



[www.simpsonandashland.co.uk](http://www.simpsonandashland.co.uk)  
[clerk@simpsonashland-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@simpsonashland-pc.gov.uk)  
07597 304 054 Twitter: [@SimpsonAshland](https://twitter.com/SimpsonAshland)

This edition of the parish newsletter has been edited by Peter Barnes and designed by Dylan Jeavons.

**With thanks to the following contributors:** Lena Bates, Nigel Chitty, Lars de Wijngaert, Ross Eatwell, Katherine Harmsworth, Pat Hodges, Ruth McCracken, Jess Morgan, David Pye, Iola Samuels, Karen Steeden, Nicola Vidamour, and Caroline Vooght.

**Delivered to your letterbox by:** Ruth Aguila, Jane Anderson, Jane Ashby, Peter Barnes, Brenda Daghish, Ross Eatwell, Julie Jones, Sian Lewis, Helen Morland, Lena Parmar, Cathy Pope, David Pye, Karen Steeden, Caroline Vooght.

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