



The Hopbine

News from Wigley Orchard and St Michaels Caravan Parks • June 2020 • Issue 69

Coronavirus update

Many of the charts and graphs on the daily updates are now heading downwards with fewer deaths, fewer new cases and fewer hospital admissions so we hope the end of the lockdown is in sight

The weather in April and May has broken all records for sunny days and it has been hugely frustrating not to be able to welcome you to our parks during this time.

Looking ahead, we hope we can reopen in early July – there is no certainty, just hope. But the world will be a different place and we will probably all need to maintain social distancing and adopt new behaviours to stay safe and comply with new regulations. As we write the situation is uncertain

but we will email you all as soon as we have a firm date when we can allow you back to your caravan.

Here are some pointers ...

- **Do not come to reception** – please email or telephone if you need to speak to us.
- If you need help with services or appliances in your caravan please note we cannot enter if you are in it.
- If you would like us to check that your boiler is working correctly we can do this for you free of charge on request a few days before your first visit.

Hello and goodbye

We welcome these new owners at St Michaels:

Steven Lealan and Sam Fox from Birmingham

Ben Sherwin from Lincolnshire
Congratulations to **Mike and Claire Rogers** and **Mia** who upgraded to a newer and bigger caravan in February.

We hope they all enjoy their new holiday caravan for many years to come.

At Wigley Orchard we say goodbye to **Ray and Pam Cooper, to John and Jackie West** and to **Andrew Taylor**.

At St Michaels we say goodbye to **Lee Ballard**.

Condolences

We were sorry to hear in May that Mrs June Lowe had died. She was already an owner at Wigley Orchard when we bought the park in 1985 and three of her sons also own caravans at Wigley Orchard.

Andrea Lowe has also died so our sympathy and condolences go to the whole Lowe family and especially to Andrea's husband, Terry.

At St Michaels we were sorry to learn of the death of Christine Deeley – we send our sympathy to Mark; we also send our sympathy to Sheila Taylor following the death of her husband Bob after a long illness.

Robots are coming!



At St Michaels we have installed the first of our team of three robot lawn mowers. It's already working hard and we are waiting for the machine to arrive from the manufacturers to lay the boundary control cables for the other two. We expect to have this work completed by early June.

The robots are from Husqvarna and have an H motif on the front. We've named the first one Henry after our American grandson, so the next two will be Annabel and Megan after his sisters!

Henry travels very randomly around the middle of the park, doing about 100km a week. Please try not to tread on him or trip him up! In extreme emergency, you can stop him by pressing the big orange button on his back.

A fabulous new pitch



At Wigley Orchard, John has masterminded a major new development with gabian retaining walls to extend a pitch for a new 40ft holiday home. The operation to crane it into position and the groundwork was all completed during the monsoon in February when it seemed that the rain would never stop. The contrast between then and now is remarkable and the park has recovered

most of its composure.

He has also extended pitch 128 with another gabian wall and replaced two pitches with one pitch in the cul-de-sac. This is part of our plan to improve spacing between caravans wherever possible without disrupting owners – it will mean the loss of one or two pitches but will improve the overall look and feel of the park.

On page 2 – what we did in lockdown



The house that John and Han built!

Our photograph (left) shows John sitting on the floor of the old main bedroom at Bank House, above the dining room. After replastering the dining room and replacing the wall between the dining room and sitting room, he and Hannah found that the bedroom floor timbers were completely rotten and also had to be replaced.

John has used some of the old oak tree, felled a couple of years ago on the park, to replace the rotting timbers.

In the picture you can also see part of an old doorway in the wall above the dining room fireplace, which we think was in use before the chimney was built, when the house was a single storey building with space for storage above.

Fun in lockdown



What Brian and Sandra have been doing in lockdown!

We haven't been idle while the parks have been closed!



John has set up the popular Facebook group *Rate my Fridge* which took off in early April and won nearly 1,600 members in its first two weeks. If you want to pass time (unproductively) visit the site and read some of the comments. It's strangely addictive.



Sandra has continued to produce the local parish magazine, *TemeTalk*, but as it cannot be delivered door to door it is now wholly on line at www.temevalleysouth.org.uk.

She has always struggled to generate reader feedback but this month she has more than eight pages of pictures of flowers from local gardeners for the *TemeTalk* virtual flower show. Maybe it's because people have more time on their hands?

Orange handbag on tour

It all began when my brother-in-law Richard and his wife Caroline gave me an orange handbag* for my birthday last year. The Boss posted a picture to the family WhatsApp group of me in New York with the handbag, and Richard commented "orange handbag on tour".



So when we left for a month in New Zealand, Richard said, "Don't forget to send pictures of the orange handbag on tour". And so began the orange handbag's big adventure.

From the first picture on the terrace of brother-in-law Edward's house in Clevedon, south of Auckland, to the last at the departure gate when we were leaving for Bangkok a month later, the orange handbag was photographed all over New Zealand. It had morning coffee in Geraldine, lunch in Akaroa and dinner in Hanmer Springs. It was pictured by our niece's infinity pool, and against the magnificent backdrop of Mount Cook. In Murchison it was seen lurking behind a display of rusty old farm machinery in the museum, and it found an orange car with a white stripe to pose beside at a classic car rally in Martinborough. (Richard's comment: "orange handbag will want a go-faster stripe next.")

It went shopping in Whanganui and Christchurch. It toasted Brexit on 31st January at lunch in a vineyard in Clevedon,

and Waitangi Day (the national day of New Zealand which commemorates the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi on 6th February 1840) in the pub.

When our friends in Martinborough asked to be photographed with

the orange handbag, I wondered if it was becoming too much of a diva and refused to photograph it at all for a couple of days! But it soon redeemed itself by acting as the bag for the tiles in a game of Rummikub.

It met our niece's dog, Mush, in Christchurch, and one of Edward's sheep, Blackie (below), in Clevedon, although Blackie, being a boy, was confused about having to wear a handbag and trod on it a bit. No harm done.

Its last evening in New Zealand found it at the opening of our niece's new restaurant in Pukekohe, strutting the red carpet and mixing with the beautiful people. A fitting end to a great adventure.

SG



On Thursday 14th May Brian popped up on the morning news on BBC1 talking to Victoria Derbyshire about the caravan park sector and his plea to open parks soon, especially for private owners. He then did a radio phone-in with BBC Hereford and Worcester. The tv piece can be found online on our Facebook page.

Have your say

If you have any stories or photographs for the next issue of Hopbine, please send them to ronsmum@btconnect.com or telephone Sandra at St Michaels on 01568 750665. We look forward to hearing from you!

Wigley Orchard Caravan Park
Stoke Bliss Tenbury Wells Worcestershire WR15 8QH
Telephone 01885 410331
e-mail: enquiries@wigleyorchard.co.uk
www.wigleyorchard.co.uk



St Michaels Caravan Park
St Michaels Tenbury Wells Worcestershire WR15 8TW
Telephone 01885 410331
email: stmichaelspark@btconnect.com
www.stmichaelscaravans.co.uk