

MARCH 2020

ISSUE 78

WICKEN NEWS

BROUGHT TO YOU BY



Spring Edition

VE Day 75th Anniversary 8 May 2020



www.wickennorthants.co.uk

WICKEN VILLAGE COMMUNITY

welcome



I think we may all have had enough of the wind and rain of this Winter! But let's be grateful we don't live in those parts of the country suffering such awful flooding. The weather seems to have forced hibernation for a while, so we look forward to Spring coming soon and getting out and about a bit more.

Welcome to our first edition of 2020 and the start of another year of Village activities!

Fenlon Dunphy
Chair

OFFICERS & COMMITTEE

Chair:	Fenlon Dunphy
Vice Chair:	Will Morphet
Secretary:	Will Morphet
Treasurer:	Vacancy
Archivist:	Fenlon Dunphy
Wicken News Editor:	Siobhan Eilbeck
Committee:	Petra Spencer-Jones Andrew Edmondson

*(New members
always welcome!)*

For all enquiries please email wickencommunity@gmail.com

Wicken News is published by the Wicken Village Community (WVC). The opinions expressed by the contributors are not necessarily those of the WVC.

Letters and contributors are always welcome and need to be in by mid April.

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WICKEN PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Could you be a Councillor?

All town (and many parish councils) in Northamptonshire will have elections on Thursday 7 May 2020, and nominations for election close at the end of March 2020, so all candidates must complete the nomination process by then. These will coincide with elections to the new shadow unitary councils and also the election of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner. Having a combination of elections is useful because it means the costs are shared.

The current Wicken Parish councillors are:

Philip Ivens, Celina Franklin, Alan Cartwright, Marcus Rixon, Andrew Edmondson, Ian Howett, and Neil Gordon Lee (co-opted at the January meeting)

All will be standing for election.

The maximum size for Wicken is seven councillors, however we want to promote candidacy, particularly from ladies given the current gender imbalance. The more people who stand for election

the better. Obviously if we have only 7 people wanting to be councillors then there is no need for an election. Serving councillors and the clerk are keen to encourage a contested election in May, and such an event could potentially add new blood and be healthy, democracy in action!

Clearly a key factor in encouraging people to be candidates is demonstrating the relevance of the parish council. If people think it is just about dog poo bins and waffle, then they are unlikely to want to become a councillor.

If on the other hand they understand that the Wicken Parish Council, in conjunction with the Solar Farm and Local Plan committees, can get important things done which make a real positive difference to people's lives in Wicken then they may well. Recent examples include: the replacement storm drain in Leckhampstead Road, improved mobile reception, reducing speeding (speed camera), street lighting, ensuring development is in keeping with the village via the Local Plan, significant improvements to the Church, Village Hall and the Sports & Social Club.

The Parish Council meets every two months, with the meeting lasting typically 1.5 hours.

So if you are interested in being a candidate please contact Valda Clapham the Parish Clerk; wickenclerk@outlook.com or 01908 571385.



The poster features a green grid background. At the top right, the text 'WickKids' is written in a pink, handwritten-style font. The main title 'Easter TREASURE HUNT' is centered, with 'Easter' in a white cursive font and 'TREASURE HUNT' in large, bold, red block letters. Below the title, the date 'SUNDAY 5TH APRIL' is written in black block letters. Further down, the time '2pm' and location 'Wicken Sports Club' are listed in black. Below that, 'REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED' and 'PRIZES FOR ALL' are written in red, followed by '£2 PER CHILD' in red. At the bottom, contact information is provided: 'For more information contact wickenkids@gmail.com or @WickKids Facebook page'. A white rabbit with pink accents is at the bottom right, holding a pink balloon. A dashed white line forms a path that starts from the rabbit, goes up to the balloon, then loops around the text, ending with an 'X' mark.

WickKids

Easter
**TREASURE
HUNT**

SUNDAY 5TH APRIL

2pm
Wicken Sports Club

**REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED
PRIZES FOR ALL
£2 PER CHILD**

For more information contact wickenkids@gmail.com
or @WickKids Facebook page

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH COORDINATOR VACANCY

Sue Oswell has done a sterling job over many years as Wicken's Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator, however she has decided to stand down at the end of January 2020. It is not a difficult job and Sue would be more than happy to bring the new coordinator up to speed.

Neighbourhood Watch is a National Scheme to help communities feel safer, and to reduce the risk of crime and anti-social behaviour in their area.

The main role of the Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator for Wicken is to encourage people to join the Northamptonshire area alert system and to forward key messages from the Police and other agencies to Wicken Scheme members. Also to keep the Wicken Northants website updated with contact details for the Police and add articles about crime prevention received from NHW and the Police.

The Coordinator role is voluntary and very little time is needed. No IT experience is needed but access to email and the internet is essential.

Sue can be contacted on 07971 710834 for further information about the role. Relevant links are;

www.northantsnhw.co.uk

www.wickennorthants.co.uk/neighbourhoodwatch

If you are interested please let Valda Clapham know; wickenclerk@outlook.com or 01908 571385

VILLAGE LITTER PICK



Please come and help your village by collecting litter with us.
Gloves are recommended.

SUNDAY 15TH MARCH

10.30 am

At Wicken Sports Club

Tea & coffee at the Sports Club afterwards



MESSAGE FROM THE RECTOR

By
Rector Dianne Whittaker

Happy New Year to you all! As I write this letter, we are planning a special service on Sunday to welcome a new minister to the Benefice. Graham Brack is being licensed by Bishop Donald as a Reader. I am sure you will meet him over the next few months as he visits the different churches and villages.

I looked back over my newsletter to you for last Feb and realised to my shame that many of our exciting plans didn't come to anything – that is the temptation, isn't it, to set New Year's resolutions and plans in a fit of enthusiasm in the beginning of the year, only to realise later in the year that we need to be more sensible about our aims! Hopefully this year both the churches plans and my own personal ones will be more successful. This year, my main personal aim is to get fitter again, having been very lazy last year and let my running schedule lapse almost entirely. So hopefully, some of you will see me pounding the streets as the days grow lighter. I'm thinking about trail running this year, so let's see how that goes! At the very least the rain needs to stop....

The New Year can also be a time when

we are prompted to think a little more about how we are living and whether we want to make any changes in our spiritual or personal lives. If that is the case with you, I am very happy to chat to anyone who is seeking to make some sense of their lives. Hopefully later in the year we will be running some bible classes and/or sessions for people who are thinking about their faith. I am also aware that many have lost loved ones this Christmas / New Year or are remembering those who died last year. If you need to chat at any time, please do get in touch – I am happy to be contacted even if you are not church goers and didn't have a church funeral for your loved one.

So to church plans - as we approach Lent (time never stands still does it?) - we are planning a Lent course based upon a film as we have done for the last couple of years – we are thinking about using 'Mary Poppins returns' – so I think that should be entertaining as well as giving us food for thought – these sessions are open to anyone, even if you don't come to church by the way. More information as to times and places will be available soon, but we are thinking about running a session each week in Yardley Gobion on Tuesday afternoons and another in Potterspurty on Wednesday evenings. I am also hoping to arrange some bible study sessions later in the year – again these would be suitable for anyone who just wants to know a little more about the book that is still top of the bestseller lists.

God bless

NEWS FROM THE REGISTERS

Funerals: 18th Dec Tony Pittam St Peter & St Paul, Cosgrove; 19th Dec Sheila Holes, St John the Evangelist, Wicken; 13th Jan Joyce Pittam St Peter & St Paul, Cosgrove; 21st Jan Edna Donald, Crownhill Crematorium; 23rd Jan Colin Bushell, St Peter & St Paul, Cosgrove

THE WAR MEMORIAL

Concern has been raised for some time about the condition of our war memorial and the need to undertake conservation, in its centenary year, to ensure the names remain legible and that the stonework is cleaned and repaired where necessary.

Celina Francklin and I have embarked on a project to achieve these repairs before the VE Day celebration later this year and we are currently engaged in obtaining quotations from specialists for the work. We are particularly keen to find a resolution for the parlous state of the plinth which detracts from the overall presentation of the monument.

There is evidence to suggest that the plinth is made from stone taken from the Wicken Estate which has not weathered well over 100 years. So we have to decide whether a like for like replacement is a feasible and prudent use of the available funds.

If anyone has any observations or comments then do please let me know.
Neil Gordon-Lee



WICKEN SPORTS CLUB

Amazingly a year has gone by since big changes took place to the Committee of the Wicken Sports Club. There is much for a new Committee to learn about the operational issues affecting the Club and careful consideration needs to be given to what improvements can be made in order to simplify and streamline the operation.

We have been fortunate this year to secure a senior Sunday football team (MK Porto) to become a Wicken based home team, having tried us out over the off-season period in 2019 – Porto are going to adopt the Wicken name from next season. For the back part of this season we have Unite MK FC's Saturday side playing their final home games here. We also, as of January this year, have the MK Wanderers U9 Raptors side practising here on Wednesday evenings. All of this is good news for football in Wicken and the Club; there is now a very strong likelihood that for the 2020/21 football season, we will also have a new full time Saturday senior side playing here; that could mean 5 teams in total.

It is easy to become complacent about what is being provided at Wicken Sports Club and not fully appreciate the costs of running and

maintaining such a facility. For 2019, the costs were £18,500. Whilst we are very pleased to have this growth in new football teams and the additional revenue that brings in, we still face challenges to improving the finances. We are pleased to report that we actually made a small profit in 2019 despite having to carry extra spend on some catch up items, so we are hopeful that we are going in the right direction.

“It is easy to become complacent about what is being provided”

Sports membership fee Income had more or less flatlined in recent years; the increases we introduced for 2019 have produced approx. an extra £600 pa on a like for like basis, representing a 26% increase over 2018. The addition of the new football team takes us to approx. £4,000 in total fees income, a much healthier position. These extra numbers have also driven up Bar takings for the first time in many years, where they had been on a downward trend. The Club is significantly dependent upon making full use of its Clubhouse facility, both to support the Sports and for Social activities.

The Club has cash reserves, but these will not sustain it for too many similar years to those recent ones.

We need to push much more the marketing of the Club for Social and Letting activities. We have not felt comfortable in doing so until certain essential requirements were put in place. We have done this, but we need now to turn our attention to what is going to make our Club commercially viable through what we are physically offering and the reliability of that offer.

We are very fortunate as a Village to have such a facility available to us, but we cannot support it on our own; our population is too small. Therefore, we have to appeal beyond the Village boundaries; this is already very much the case with the Sports activities with very few Village residents in any of the teams. However, the Village residents do support Social activities at the Club, and both the Wicken Community Group and WicKids have increased their social activities in the last couple of years and much of that has been centred at and in support of the Club.



Sunday Mens Team

“We believe we have some very compelling selling points”

Making the Club more financially sustainable and more attractive to outside Village use and letting is what will in the long run mean that the Village can retain the Club for its own benefit. Maintaining the Club will also mean that this space continues to be protected from development.

We have researched similar facilities in the area to compare the offerings and the prices. We believe we have some very compelling selling points; the size of facility, the bar, the parking facilities, the country location and the separation from direct residential proximity. In anticipation of a new marketing push, we have restructured the pricing for rental and use of the facilities.

Although the fabric of the building is generally in good order, there are many aspects of it that have grown tired over the years and need modification, both from a sales and operational perspective. To be offering the Club to the open market we must be consistent, reliable and at a standard that will ensure continued custom through repeat business and word of mouth recommendation.

New floodlights make midweek practice possible for the MK Wanderers



We have spent approaching £2,000 on essential works from a Schedule of identified improvements amounting to approx. £30,000. This Schedule was presented to the Solar Farm Fund/Parish Council, but we were specifically asking them to support initially 4 items covering the heating, hot water, kitchen cooker & hob, glass washer and some plumbing improvements – these amount to £8,850. The Parish Council has generously agreed to support us with £4,425 with matched funding coming from ourselves. However, it would not be prudent of us to simply take £4,425 out of our reserves; it would leave us very exposed. So, we need to take further steps to make this happen and be able to drawdown the Solar Farm funds.

Activities requiring no supervision support commitment are very important to our financial wellbeing. We are pleased to advise that a regular language group has just started using the facilities on Wednesdays for their German and French discussion groups – if they stay the course of a year this brings in around £750 to the bottom line. We may also become the regular venue for an organisation providing First Aid Courses.

We are looking to agree a further increase to Sports fees for this year. Assuming membership levels being as they are now, that would bring in an extra £900 or thereabouts per annum. If our membership numbers increase as we hope through the extra football teams, our income should increase by nearly £2,000.

Apart from football growth, thanks to all the other sections, Sporting and Social, for the work they do in managing those activities. The new Committee has

gained a huge insight into what is involved; the fixture arranging, the training, the grass cutting, the grass sowing, the setting up from archery targets to cricket nets and football nets and pitch marking. A huge thank you for all the hard work you do in supporting your Club activities and us.

Wicken Sports Club Management Committee



**MK Wanderers U9
Raptors play their
first home game at
Wicken on**

7 March at 10.00am

Spectators welcome

WICKEN HISTORY IN NUMBERS

By
Neil Gordon-Lee

My next project after “The Wicken Men” is to create a local record of all the burials in Wicken Churchyard. It is early days yet as there is a huge amount of data to assemble. Fortunately, Northamptonshire had its parish registers digitised so I can look at them online in comfort.

However, there are some early pointers to the wealth of information which ultimately may be gleaned from this data.

Our parish register for burials ostensibly starts in 1559 with an entry for “a child of a poor wandering woman named William” who was buried on 16th November 1559. The parish record should have started in 1538 as on the 5th September in that year Thomas Cromwell issued an injunction requiring records of burials, baptisms and marriages to be kept. Unless the records are now lost it looks as though it took Wicken 21 years to start implementing this, which seems unlikely.



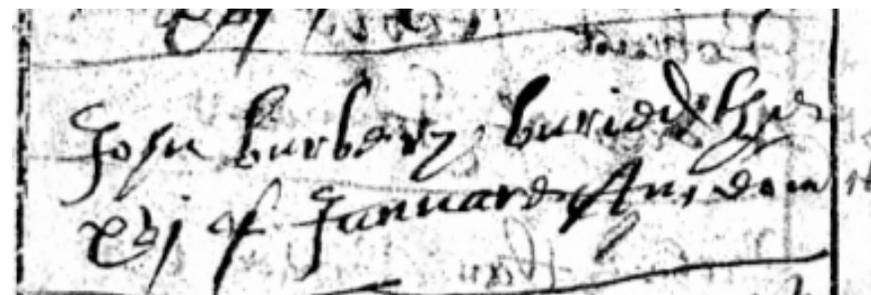
I have noted that the records between 1559 and 1587 when the two parishes merged do not seem to indicate that they reflect both churches, so I suspect that only the surviving church’s records were retained. More research required. There will be burials which pre-date this for which we have no record at all.

There are approx 350 visible headstones in the churchyard but so far I have identified 2,770 burials up to 1912. This may explain why the churchyard is higher than the road.

The largest amount of my time is currently spent on trying to decipher Secretary Hand which was one form of clerical writing practised up to the end of the 17th Century. There was some standardisation of the way letters were drawn but one has to rely on crib sheets to match patterns. Each word can then be built up, letter by letter, and because they are names it can, hopefully, become obvious what it actually says.

Dates in this period were often written in Latin so $x = 10$, $v = 5$ (though this is written in most cases as a “b”) and single digits were written as “i”, except where it was the last digit in a sequence which would be written as “j”.

The example below typifies the type of entry which needs to be read and this one is pretty legible.



The entry reads “John Burbary buried the 16 of January An. Dom. 1637”

The various records start to show up peaks of activity at certain times and so far, I have been interested in the stories behind three of these :

1665-1666 This is the time of the plague in London which took the lives of perhaps 100,000 people. I was interested to see if Wicken had escaped the

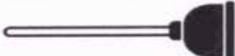
worst of the plague as local places like Fenny Stratford had been decimated losing about sixth of their population at the time. At present, I have gaps in the records from 1599 through to 1666 with only one record for 1666. Further investigation is required.

1727-1729 In these three years there were 59 burials in Wicken which was well above average. A search on the internet highlighted references to an epidemic across England in those years which one academic study suggests was most likely caused by typhus or typhoid. The former is spread by fleas, the latter in food.

1783-1784 In these two years there were 48 burials which may have arisen after crop failure caused by an Icelandic volcano. On the 7th June 1783, the Laki volcano erupted pumping so much sulphur into the atmosphere that it created sulphuric acid droplets which began to drift over Europe. Evidence suggests that crops failed and therefore many people starved to death.

Later records include individual occupations (from about 1700) and the age at the date of death. It will be possible to analyse these to see what information they can reveal. However, that will be for a future edition.

When the weather improves you may well see me crouched in the churchyard after dark with a bright light (I am told this is the best way) trying to read some of our faded headstones.

THE  PLUMBER

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1st aid for your plumbing 



Sunday 10th May 2020
12.30 - 4.30
Wicken Sports Club

Musical Heroes theme Scarecrow trail

Large selection of craft stalls
Circus skills workshop
Hot food, licensed bar & ice cream

HOW TO ENTER

-  Email wickencommunity@gmail.com to register your Scarecrow by the 10th April.
-  You need to provide your Scarecrow name so that we can include your household on the map.
-  Straw can be provided if required and will be delivered by the mid April.
-  The list will be available on the @WickKids facebook page, Wicken Sports Club facebook event page and also on the WVC page of the village website:

<http://wickennorthants.co.uk/community/events/scarecrow-festival>



WickKids

SENIOR CLUB

Group of around 40 elderly citizens from the area, meeting once a month for a lunch & afternoon entertainment. Facilities and food provided by WSC. They all appreciate the hospitality, but we are seriously in need of more help to provide food. They in turn do their bit by supporting other club functions. If any village resident over 55 would like to become a member, you would be made very welcome.

Lunch and entertainment programme until end 2020: 7th March, 4th April, 9th May, 13th June, 11th July, 8th August, 12th September, 10th October, 14th November, 12th December. All dates are Saturdays. Any queries, contact Myrtle on the number below.

Volunteers wanted!

CAN YOU HELP THE WICKEN SENIOR CLUB?

We are looking for someone to help cook and serve lunches once a month. So, if you have a spare afternoon to help out 30+ senior citizens enjoy an afternoon of Bingo, Raffle and entertainment then please contact Myrtle Tanner 01908 616603

Hire Wicken Sports Club

from £15 per session



- Seating for up to 75 people
- Licensed bar
- Large projector screen
- Well equipped kitchen
- Pool, Skittles and Darts
- Changing facilities



For more information check our website page:

<https://wickenorthants.co.uk/wicken-sports-club/hiring-wicken-sports-club>

Follow us on Facebook 



Little Hill Farm,
Buckingham Road, Wicken
MK19 6DD

Homegrown

Pork and lamb

Homemade Christmas
Cakes & Puddings

Fresh Farm Eggs

Open Friday & Saturdays

www.cranleybarnfarms.co.uk

THE BUCKINGHAM HALF MARATHON

Sponsored by Rainscourt Family Law Solicitors



Sunday 17th May sees the fourth Buckingham Half Marathon organised by Buckingham & Stowe Running Club. Starting, and finishing, at Maids Moreton playing fields, competitors from all over the country will run the circular 13.1 mile course through the picturesque villages of Leckhampstead, Wicken, and Akeley and surrounding countryside. As one runner commented last year “It is the most beautiful half marathon I have ever run.”

Last year the race raised £8000 for local charities and the beneficiaries of this year’s non-profit making venture are Medical Detection Dogs, Great Horwood, which trains dogs to detect the odour of human disease. It is at the forefront of the research into the fight against cancer and helping people with life-threatening diseases

Chairman, Chris Usher said, “The race committee has worked tremendously hard to get this event off the ground and we are indebted to the parish councils of Maids Moreton and Akeley, Vitalograph, Buckingham Primary School and Buckingham Rugby Club for the use of their premises.”

The event is being sponsored by Rainscourt Family Law Solicitors of Milton Keynes, and Buckingham based Bates Body Factory and The Gallery Dental Practice. The organisers would also like to thank Seahawk Trophies, Swan Practice Medical Services, The Ultra Marathon Running Store, BCQ Printers and Tesco for their invaluable contributions.

The half marathon starts at 9.30am, so why not come along and cheer on the runners? Or maybe even run the race yourself? Entries will be accepted on the day - £25 cash only.

For more information visit our website www.buckinghamrunningclub.com



Dear Resident,

This year’s Buckingham Half Marathon takes place on Sunday 17th May at 9.30am. Setting off from Maids Moreton playing fields and following the usual route, competitors will run through Leckhampstead, Wicken and Akeley, showcasing the beautiful local countryside.

The impact on residents will be minimal as there are no road closures, and all we ask is that you be extra vigilant should you be driving along any part of the route. The course is well signposted and there will be marshals at key points. We expect all roads to be clear by 12.30pm at the latest. **The approximate timing for runners passing through the Wicken will be 10.00-10.30am.** Should you wish to come out and support them that would be greatly appreciated.

Once again, this is a non-profit making venture and all proceeds will be donated to Medical Detection Dogs – a local charity based in Great Horwood that trains dogs to detect the odour of human disease. It is at the forefront of the research into the fight against cancer and helping people with life-threatening diseases.

Further details of the route, the best places to spectate, and even how to enter the race (!) can be found on our website at www.buckinghamrunningclub.com. You can also keep in touch via Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/The-Buckingham-Half-Marathon>.

If you have any questions or concerns please email the club at buckinghamrunningclub@hotmail.co.uk.

Many thanks for your continued support and understanding. It is much appreciated and we don’t take it for granted.

The Race Committee – Buckingham and Stowe Running Club

The White Lion at Wicken

Good Food - Good Wine - Good Beer

John & Viv offer a warm Welcome

*Home-cooked food Menu changes monthly to reflect
the seasons, local suppliers used*

*For Birthday Parties or Special Occasions Buffets are
available*

Opening Hours

<i>Tuesday Wednesday Thursday</i>	<i>6pm to 10pm</i>
<i>Friday</i>	<i>12 noon to 2:30pm, 6 pm to 11pm</i>
<i>Saturday</i>	<i>12 noon to 11pm</i>
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>12 noon to 8pm</i>

Food Served

<i>Tuesday thru Friday</i>	<i>6:30 to 9pm</i>
<i>Saturday Bar Menu</i>	<i>12 noon to 2.30 pm</i>
<i>Saturday Full Menu</i>	<i>6:30pm to 9pm</i>
<i>Sunday Lunch</i>	<i>12:30pm to 3pm</i>

Contact Us on 01908 307254

Dates for your Diary....

MARCH

Sunday 15th
Wicken Sports Club
10.30 AM
LITTER PICK

Sunday 15th
Wicken Church
9.30 PM
WICKEN PRAISE -
TREE PLANTING

APRIL

Sunday 5th
Wicken Sports Club
2 PM
EASTER EGG HUNT

MAY

Sunday 19th
Wicken Church
9.30 PM
WICKEN PRAISE -
MEET THE LAMBS

Sunday 10th
Wicken Sports Club
12.30 PM
SCARECROW
FESTIVAL

Sunday 17th
Wicken Church
9.30 PM
ASCENSION DAY

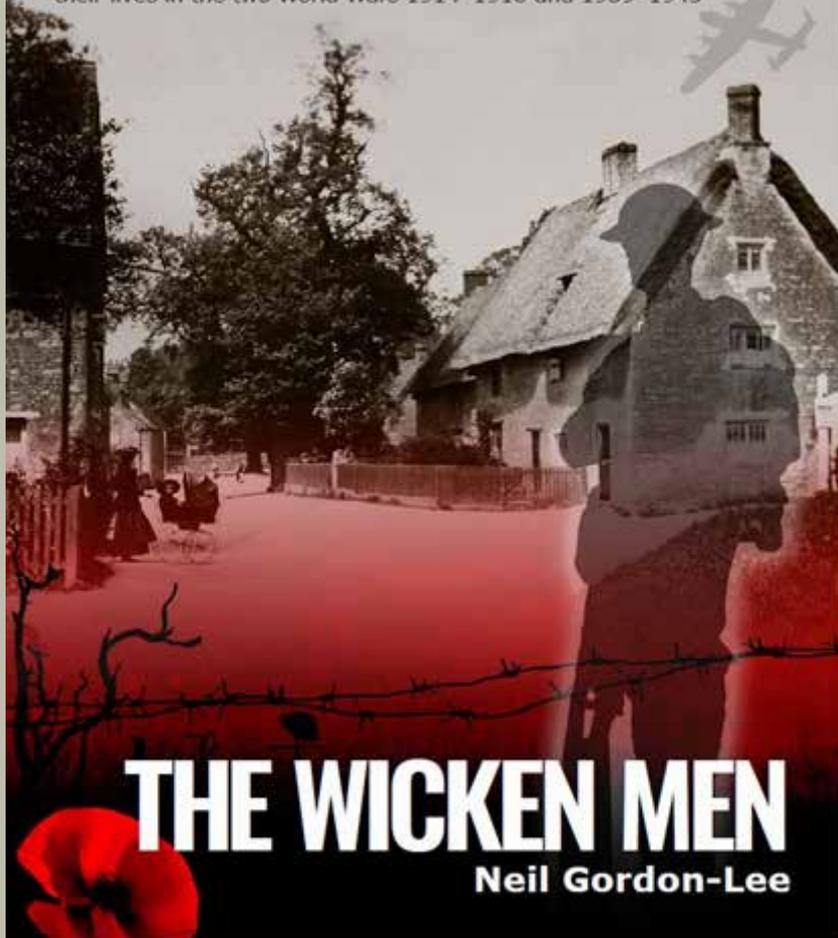
ALSO COMING UP....

Sunday 21st June - Wicken Praise; Songs of Praise
Sunday 19th July - Wicken Praise; Bellringing
Sunday 6th September - WVC Summer BBQ
Sunday 20th September - Wicken Praise; Pet Service
Friday 25th September - Wicken Village Coffee morning

*If you have any Wicken activities that you
would like listed on this page please email:
wickencommunity@gmail.com*



The story of the men of Wicken, Northamptonshire who gave their lives in the two World Wars 1914-1918 and 1939-1945



THE WICKEN MEN

Neil Gordon-Lee

Now available on Amazon Kindle Publishing

£12.00

Free Delivery

All profit to be shared equally between the Royal British Legion and Wicken Village Community who will create a fund for the care and maintenance of the war memorial in Wicken.