

NEWS

LEISURE

It's back to school for revamped Holly Bush

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A pub has been given a grade A revamp as its new management combines leisure and education.

The Hollybush in Redbourn has been taken over by a father and son duo who are restoring the Victorian schoolhouse to provide tuition for local children.

Graeme Dickens will be overseeing the pub, while his father, Gordon Dickens will be using his years of experience as a tutor to run individually tailored tutoring sessions.

The schoolhouse, in recent years serving as a function room, will be the location for Gordon's tutoring franchise, Tutor Doctor.



Graeme and Gordon Dickens

Gordon explains, "The pub was built in the grounds of St Mary's Church some-

time in the 18th century, and the schoolhouse was added at least 100 years later. It would have taken up to 30 children, all ages together in one room."

Keeping the business a family affair, Gordon's daughter-in-law Jess will join as the pub's sous-chef.

Gordon adds, "We think it's fitting that we're restoring the link between the two buildings, and offering two key services to the local community. Graeme is really looking forward to running The Hollybush and together, we will build a new family business that combines our skills in hospitality and education."

New pub manager, Graeme has hospitality experience having worked in pubs in Hemel Hempstead, held

a managerial role in a pub in Bedford. Following in his father's footsteps he has also worked as a teacher and tutor.

The Hollybush is owned by the chain Brakspear so will continue to offer a range of its ales, and pub food.

There are also plans to add a new children's menu and make the beer garden more family friendly.

Gordon will be organising one-to-one tutor sessions and small group sessions in the schoolhouse. The room will also be used to run social events for customers.

The Dickens family plan to reopen the pub on Friday (Aug 19), with renovations on the schoolhouse to be completed in time for the new academic year.

It will continue to offer a range of Brakspear ales and pub food

DIVERSITY

Muslim drag queen gives Pride a boost

The UK's first Muslim drag queen is supporting a Pride event which is coming to Gadebridge Park.

Asifa Lahore, the alter-ego of Asif Quraishi, is performing at Herts Pride which aims to spread awareness and encourage more supportive attitudes.

In 2014, Lahore was censored from discussing Islam and Homosexuality on BBC Free Speech. This caused uproar and allowed Lahore the rare opportunity to speak openly about the topic.

She received death threats for her music videos and for standing up for her beliefs, Lahore was nominated by readers of The Independent for their Rainbow List as one of the most prominent LGBT people in Britain.

She said: "Supporting Herts Pride is important because being LGBT is not just limited to the metropolitan areas, it's about raising the visibility of those communities outside of London such as Hemel and in Luton - where I supported the launch of the Cali Bar in July.

"It means local businesses and clubs and bars can remain in the face of many being shut in London and other big cities.

"Otherwise, without visibility, what chance has the LGBT entertainment scene of surviving?"

She added: "This inclusive family event is also a celebration of diversity and I am happy to support that now more than ever because Orlando and Brexit created a feeling of division so to bring people together - not just LGBT - but



Asifa Lahore

all communities, races, creeds and religions and Herts Pride is extremely important for all of us."

In 2011, Lahore won bronze at Drag Idol UK - the first time she had entered - and went on to promote and DJ at top Gaysian club nights, before setting up her own night, Disco Rani. Last year, Lahore featured in Channel 4 documentary Muslim Drag Queens which drew an audience of 1.1 million.

Asifa is one of the several acts booked to appear at the event in Hemel's Gadebridge Park on September 3 which is billed as a family day out for everyone. Also appearing will be Jordan Gray - a semi finalist on The Voice UK - along with Vicki Vivacious, Sandra London, Dave Lynn, The Vision and Katie Boyle. There will be a wide variety of stalls to browse in the market shopping area, with access to information or advice at the health and wellbeing stands. Chairman of the Herts Pride Society, Tyson Martin, said: "I am really excited about this year's Herts Pride and Family Day and want to say a big thank you to all our sponsors and supporters."

COLLISION

Witness appeal after man's A41 death

A man has died after being in collision with a lorry on the A41 on Monday (August 15).

Police are appealing for witnesses and information following the road traffic collision which happened on the A41 by Hemel Hempstead at 3.20pm. The collision involved

a male pedestrian and a heavy plant vehicle carrying a crane. Despite paramedics' best efforts, the man passed away at the scene.

Both carriageways were closed while emergency services dealt with the incident.

Investigating officer PC

Jackie Lister, from the road policing unit, said: "Tragically a man passed away today following the collision and our thoughts are with his family and friends at this time.

"We are trying to piece together the circumstances of what happened and I am ap-

pealing to anyone who was in the area around the time the incident took place and saw anything that happened to please get in touch as soon as possible. Anyone with information is asked to contact me via the police non-emergency number 101."

Well done Max,
you've done us proud

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Max Whitlock
DFS Team GB Ambassador

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