April 2021

# THE LINK







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Parish magazine of Four Elms, Hever and Markbeech

**£1**

# Welcome to the April edition

**and happy Easter to you all from the Link team!**

This is such an exciting time of year with the trees still firmly dark and skeletal but absolutely on the brink of bursting into young, green life. And the grass.....my reading of “Wilding” by Isabella Tree about the re-wilding project at Knepp Castle in Sussex continues to delight. She writes about the blooming of the wild flower meadows after the introduction of Old English longhorn cattle to roam freely in what used to be fields. Cows are not enemies to meadowland; indeed, they have great flora and seed-carrying capacity and transport 230 plant species in their gut, hair and hooves.

Meanwhile, at the other end, dung beetles play a fascinating part in the ecology of the meadow. There are 60 species of native dung beetle in the UK though many have been faced with extinction due to the parasiticides regularly used in commercial herds. Left to their own devices they are estimated to save the British cattle industry £367 million a year simply by encouraging the growth of healthy grass. Most of our beetles are tunnellers and they pull the dung down into the soil to nest chambers which can be up to two feet deep. The dung feeds their larvae which develop deep inside the nest and away from predators. The process of the beetles tunnelling, eating and digesting adds organic matter, increases soil fertility aeration and structure and improves rainwater filtration into the soil. The beetles also eat parasites in the dung and reduce the need for chemical livestock wormers.



Of course, not every dung beetle leads a long life because they are very popular with wildlife such as little owls - introduced into the UK by our own Edmund Meade-Waldo of Stonewall Park - and sky larks. The UK skylark population halved during the 1990s, and is still declining, mainly because of modern agricultural practices. There are plenty of larks now in Knepp and, whilst I have never heard one in Hever, I hear plenty when I walk in the Stonebridge Trust’s water meadows in Edenbridge behind the rugby club I will keep listening in the hope that they will spread eastwards.

**Joanna Wade**

THE LINK

## pet of the month

**Meet Ben Remus**

When I moved to Hever I fancied myself as a horse fixer – acquiring unwanted horses and making them desirable horses for others to buy,

Ben Remus was such a project. I bought him via the Friday Ad for £1,250 back in 2007 from a dealer in Newick. His passport showed that his Dad was a famous eventer, Welton Apollo, he was bred by Julia Soyke (Councillor in T Wells) and broken in (trained) by Guy Elson, in Cowden, he'd also been to live in Guernsey. As I handed over the money and put him on the lorry, the groom told me he had run off that morning. I took little notice as he was coming to a lovely home!

I met Julia, who told me the story of his eventing mother, also impeccably bred. Julia's husband mentioned that Ben used to jump out of his field to get to his breakfast. I went to see the Elsons and they said he was the one who jumped over the fences to stand outside his stable for his breakfast. A pattern was emerging. I spoke to the family who last owned him, he had been at livery yards, each term, while their daughter was at Uni – but he had to move each term as - you've guessed it – he jumped out of the fields. As a result he was insecure.

Well it didn't take long before Ben was not in the field I had left him in the night before. In fact you could watch him working out his route to jump out and to see him jump remains a wonderful, amazing sight.

Unfortunately one day he was jumping in for breakfast and I could see he'd hurt himself. I took his rug off and his skin just fell away. He'd staked himself on a fallen post. The vet came and we wrapped him up and I drove him to Cinder Hill Vets, where he was unwrapped and stapled back together – all 32 staples. He stayed there for a few days but missing home he wouldn't eat so I had to go, take him food and feed him. And I forgot to tell them that he runs off when he wants to. They told me that they had found this out.

He recovered and still jumps in and out of the fields. He is found in the yard waiting for his breakfast or wrecking the neat pile of hay bales. He is still here, has a huge fan club. He is spoilt rotten and behaves like a loyal labrador. In the last two years he has met Julia and the Elsons, who ask at the age of 20, – does he still……..?

**Jo Cockerill**



# Who Cares?

**- an extract from the life and times of Judi Young**

## "Well, you cannot improve your pension".

Those sobering words from the NHS human resources were the final nail in the nursing, midwifery and neonatal career of Judi Young. Thirty four years of nights, days, weekends, 12 hour shifts, holidays hastily taken, missed public holidays and family events. The blood, sweat and tears were to be ended, with the promise of a pension from the NHS and HM Gov ( swiftly pushed back six years by a profligate HM Treasury ). Plans were made to travel, enjoy time at theatres, afternoon teas at stately homes, skiing and generally doing what she wanted to do. The golden age of freedom had arrived.

Not So.

The prickly ball of Covid arrived. Society contracted and we were eventually confined to home. There was the hope of a vaccine so, as it had been given to monkeys who survived, Judi and I signed up to be part of the human trials. Judi was chosen in September and reported to St Thomas's hospital for examination and first injection of either the Oxford/AZ vaccine or the control vaccine The trial lasted 13 months and required weekly questionnaires and covid swab tests plus a further five visits to St Thomas' for a second dose, and blood tests to check for antibodies to the virus. Participants would be informed at the completion of the trial whether they had received the Oxford/AZ vaccine or the control.



Now the really good news was that the vaccine worked. But who was going to get it into the public arms? Well, Kent Community Health (KCHFT) were looking for vaccinators. Too old? Too out of practise? Too used to staying in bed at 6am?. Nursing registrations all expired. But wait, an extensive course (18 modules) online, some face to face classes, a few reams of paperwork and some background checks was all that was needed. Following an interview, Judi crammed the online courses in a week and fitted in trips to Ashford and Tonbridge to be tutored before she was invited to the Angel Centre in Tonbridge for induction to the mass vaccination centre.

As she would be offered vaccination as a front line worker, she had to be unblinded from the Oxford trial. A very simple process resulted in the excellent news that she had been one of the participants who had received two doses of the Oxford/AZ vaccine. She turned up on the first day of operation in Tonbridge only to find it shut! A last minute decision by KCHFT, because of inclement weather, didn't find its way to the staff. At least she found out where the staff car park was. Undeterred she booked more shifts and is one of the merry band of the vaccination team in Tonbridge.

If you get invited there, for your vaccination, be sure to say hello to Judi Young.

**Stuart Young**

**PS** Both Bridget and Jane (Jane and Joanna pictured overleaf with Judi) benefitted from Judi's needlework – many, many thanks Judi for what you are doing.

## Please pay your subscription NOW

Many thanks to all those who have already paid their Link subscription for 2021 or who have standing orders/arrangements in place to pay later in the year.

If you haven't, please pay now. We had to chase up a lot of subs last year, please don't wait to be chased again. If you aren't sure what arrangements you have in place please contact Bridget by phone or email, contact and payment details on page 25.

The annual sub is unchanged at a modest £5 for a hand delivered copy (£18 for postal subscribers). If you no longer want a paper copy you can read the Link online for free at hever.org BUT please let us know.

## Many thanks



# hever litter pick

**( Socially distanced of course! )**

The lockdown hasn't unfortunately eliminated litter in the area so to rid our verges and footpaths of litter we are planning another Easter Hever community litter pick on the morning of Good Friday 2nd April from 9.00am to 12.00 noon.

Please bring your family or just yourself to assist. Most of the litter is discarded from passing cars so we will have to work on the roads and lanes around the parish. If you have youngsters with you or would prefer not to pick on the roads then let us know and we can assign you to a footpath.

We will meet at the Hever Village Hall Car Park from 9.00am for a briefing and to collect bags, long handled pickers and high viz vests. This year will be slightly different – we can't use the Hall so will meet outside and won't be able to offer tea, coffee or hot cross buns this year I'm afraid.

Unless the rules change meeting in groups of up to six people should be allowed outside by then. To ensure too many of us don't cluster together please hold back from coming to me to collect the bags and pickers until others before you head off. If you are unable to get there for 9.00am but would still like to participate then please turn up at the Hall Car Park any time during the morning.

Please bring your own thick gloves and strong footwear is recommended. Also if you have a warning triangle in your car then please bring it along to assist with traffic calming.

There are no holidays or many other activities vying for your time so hopefully we will have another great turn out this year! There is no need to register beforehand but to help give an idea of numbers then please call John Roundhill on 07720 882356 or email john@ingenpartners.co.uk. Please also let him know if there are any roads or footpaths of particular concern.



## what Kevin does

**Many of you will have noticed the newly laid hedge outside Hever Village Hall. This was the latest project of Hever's award-winning hedge layer, Kevin Agate.**



Kevin grew up farming and worked with hedge layers in his youth, but he was not particularly interested and, like so many at that time, thought that barbed wire and stock fence were a much more efficient type of fencing. This was the time when hedgerows were being grubbed up under intensive farming regimes creating ever larger fields.

Everything changed about 20 years ago when neighbour Eric Jackson had his hedge laid and Kevin went along to take a look. He was hooked. Before long he was winning awards for his hedge laying and became both a judge and a tutor for the National Hedge Laying Society. Prince Charles is the President and Kevin has been with him at a number of competitions. Kevin says the Prince is pretty good at it himself, as are Kevin's sons Alan and Michael who share his enthusiasm.

The components of a well laid hedge are strong upright stakes (often chestnut) and supple binders (often hazel) which make a supportive frame for the newly laid hedge. And then there is the hedge itself. Hedges like to grow upwards, fulfilling their ambition to become trees, and as they rise animals can get through the gaps in the base. So, says Kevin, the bottom needs putting back in. About three quarters of the larger stems/ trunks are cut away, what is was left is traditionally only "the breadth of a lamb's tongue". It is then pleached, in other words bent to the side and woven to create a fence. In the process the remaining brush, and even the larger stumps, start to shoot and grow into a thicket making the rejuvenated hedge impermeable.

Hawthorn and blackthorn are particularly good because their vigorous shoots repel even the most determined livestock, the hedge at the hall also has a 60 year old maple in it. The Agates are philosophical about the inevitable hospital trips to extract embedded thorns.

Thousands of hedgerows have gone back in through government funded schemes and the revival of this fine art has done so much good. Birds such as blackbirds, thrush, wren and robins have good places to nest, insects and small mammals thrive in the leaf mould at the base and elms, which are attacked by a fatal bug if they get too high, survive.

And it is not just a quaint old art in aspic, Kevin has found that chainsaws produce better results than the traditional small hand axe and points out that given the chance his grandfather would have used one too.

So, the hedge at the hall is going to burst into life this spring and over three to five years the binders will rot away and a thick, contented, sheep-proof hedge will carry on protecting its territory for many years to come.

Kevin, aka Hever Countryside Services, can be contacted on 07798 797022

**Joanna Wade**



# Leonard Arthur George Linden OBE

20th December 1929 – 18th January 2021

Fast jet pilot in the fifties; chartered electrical & mechanical engineer; designer and maker of crucial aeronautical safety equipment; family man; devoted husband of Jill and father to Matthew and Rebecca; builder of his house converted from a large greenhouse; Markbeech PCC treasurer and later treasurer and subsequently chairman of the Cowden & Hartfield branch, Royal British Legion.



Few who knew him could possibly know all he had achieved in his life that he was so reserved about, much of which was of national importance and remarkable, until we learned some of his background at his funeral at Holy Trinity from his son Matthew.

During the war Len had studied at night school to achieve his engineering qualifications and post war, before he could put them into practice, he was called up for National Service in the RAF and selected to be trained in Canada to fly. He became a pilot of the fast jets of the day including the Meteor, Viper and Hornet. It cannot be overstated what an achievement this was for a national serviceman to be recognised for his technical understanding and to be posted overseas. It was therefore fitting that the citation to his OBE read 'for services to the RAF' – not for his National Service, but playing a crucial part in the winning of the Falklands War.

After his RAF service he returned to engineering and joined the British Institute of Management where he met Jill in the library - she was one of the librarians. Thus began 63 years of married bliss. With Jill by his side, he progressed to Chief Designer of Negretti & Zambra Aviation. During his time with them and following the disastrous failure of the Comet's airframes he played a leading role in designing the mechanical fatigue meter which was used to keep almost all commercial airlines safe for over 40 years.

He helped grow Negretti from a small concern in Croydon to a large and successful business with four factories and many employees. He

was production director when Britain embarked on the Falklands War in 1982. 30 years later, once he could talk about it, he revealed to close friends the reason behind the award of his OBE. Approached by the MoD, he and his team designed, made and delivered in only 10 days, an upgrade to the Harrier pilots oxygen system which enabled them to stay aloft much longer and also designed a barometric system to allow the Harrier to fire the much heavier American Sidewinder missile.



In his eulogy to Len, Matthew told how when working for the firm for five years he had the privilege of watching his father in his roles of designer, manager or director as a superb inspirer of people.

Having moved from Edenbridge to Markbeech some 40 years ago and in retirement, apart from playing golf, he immersed himself in the local community. A governor of Hever School at a time when it was threatened with closure; treasurer of Holy Trinity church and of the Cowden Branch of the Royal British Legion before becoming its chairman. His accounts produced on lined paper were legendary, IN on one side, OUT on the other side and if the result was insufficient he would declare that a parish share could not be afforded, and that was all there was to it.

From their beloved Water Garden House, he and Jill downsized by converting a nearby Edwardian glasshouse into Peach House.
At his funeral Jill told a really good story that was typical of Len. He had to fly to America to negotiate a contract with NASA and found himself on Concorde. Early in the flight a woman across the cabin took off one of her stiletto heeled shoes and started striking the cabin display of Concorde's Mach speed, claiming it wasn't working. Len was obliged to go across and berate her – "Do you mind Madam, I made that!" The woman desisted but conceded later "It's working now". That woman transpired to be the Duchess of Argyll.

After he fell and broke his hip some two years ago, he succumbed to Alzheimer's which led to his care at the Court nursing home in Speldhurst in gentle decline until finally catching Covid after Christmas.

He was buried in Markbeech churchyard in the snow on 12th February with the RAF flag draping his coffin, along with the ashes of his much-adored daughter Rebecca who died of cancer in Belgium in 2018. Our thoughts remain with Jill and Matthew and his family.

**Andrew and Wendy Izod**

# Clive Steer

29 March 1942 – 1 February 2021



Clive was born in Edenbridge, the middle child of Olive and Albert. He had an older brother Cyril and a younger sister Joy. After leaving school he started work on the farm at Skinners Lane for Arthur Chile. He spent a small time working as a builder and has shown us many times his houses that are still standing!

He met Margaret and they married at Cowden Church in October 1962 moving to Kent Water where he worked for Sir John Mills at Sussex House. In 1963 their first daughter Tracey was born and the family moved to Broxham where he worked on the farm for Sir Derek Greenaway. Three years later Tina was born.

He loved his work milking cows and eventually becoming farm manager and developing a small suckler herd. After finishing work at Broxham he spent a few happy years as Gamekeeper at Henden Manor.

After retiring he enjoyed his garden and in the winter he spent many days beating and making new friends at Chevening and other local shoots.

In the summer the evenings were spent supporting the family playing stoolball at Four Elms. Eventually he became the club umpire, of which he was very proud. Sometimes hard to understand how someone would enjoy having 22 women to keep under control!

He loved to help his grandson Mark delivering hay on a Friday and helping out with haymaking when needed. He also enjoyed spending time with and chatting to Matthew about shooting.

He fought his short illness bravely. He was a farmer, countryman and gentleman.

**Tina Steer**

## Angela Rica Whitehouse
1925 – 2021

Dear Friends,

We wanted to let you know that our mother, Angela Rica Whitehouse, died at home on 3rd March, aged 95½.

Born in Sydenham, she moved to Oak House Farm in the 1930's with her elder sister, Mary and brother, farmer, Antony Penman. She was often known as Bé. She went on to work at the BBC and then at Chartwell for Winston Churchill.

She spent her entire married life from 1956 at Holmwood Place with our father, Martin Whitehouse, who became a local District Councillor and figure in village life, until he died in July 2008.

Her art, music, gardening and wildlife knowledge were an inspiration. We pay tribute to our kind and wonderful mother.

**Timothy, Christopher, and Melanie**

A private family funeral was held at Four Elms Church 12:00 on Friday 26 March.



Snowdrops this Spring at Holmwood Place

**The tall tree at Hever Castle Abies Grandis commonly known as Grand Fir.**

This tree can be seen from many miles away and is often remarked upon by those travelling from Edenbridge back to Hever. It sits above the main tree canopy and has a distinctive section of missing branches towards the top that further helps with its identification.

The Grand Fir originally comes from the west coast of the USA and was



first described in 1831 by David Douglas, the same man who lent his name to the Douglas Fir – Latin name – 'Pseudotsuga Menziesii' and introduced a great many trees from North America to Britain. We have a few of those in the grounds as well.

In this country the timber isn't particularly useful although historically they were used as pit props, being a fairly dense wood that wasn't inclined to crack. Where they grow in more abundance in the United States they can be used in construction but are mostly used for paper pulp.

Generally, they are not grown commercially as many other trees are more profitable, in the UK no other tree comes close to the Sitka Spruce. It is however a magnificent tree and I dare say its name is apt. It's also interesting that if you crush the needles in your hand they give off a very strong scent that some claim smells of pineapple – I am not so certain. The needles are distinctive from most other conifers, in that they are flat and quite wide, glossy dark green above and paler underneath. With other conifers the needles are often erect as in the noble fir or spruce.

Sadly, we don't have a record of which trees were planted by William Waldorf Astor when he bought Hever Castle back in 1903 but there are some black and white aerial

photographs from 1946 that suggest the tree was taller than most of its neighbours even then and so planted before the Astors, possibly by Captain Seabright in the late 1800s.



The difficulty in establishing the age of our Grand Fir is that they have been known to grow over 40 metres (130 ft) in less than 40 years in the right conditions. However, the South East of England is very different from the wetter climate of the west coast of America so I suspect late Victorian/ early Edwardian is probably the time of planting. Ultimately it is a guess – the trees can commonly be up to 250 years old in the States and there is even a record of one making 470 in the Blue Mountains.

I did a rough measurement of the tree using a straight stick. You hold it with your arm fully outstretched but have the tip just close to your eye. If one then rotates it 90 degrees (tip pointing upwards) and then step back from the tree until the base of the tree is at the bottom of the stick and the top where the tip is, you can then pace from there to the base of the tree and that should give you its approximate height (if you know how long your stride is). Not being a great mathematician, I cannot tell you whether the slope of the hill makes this measurement less accurate and it is not easy with all the shrubs around the base but that gave me approximately 50 metres which makes it 164 ft. and that would be a very tall tree by Britain's standards.

There is a younger version of the Grand Fir just above Half Moon Lawn which in the last couple of winters has been covered in Christmas tree lights. It was planted approximately 10-12 years ago and I dug it up from an estate I previously worked on in Inverness-shire called Ardverikie (where they filmed Monarch of the Glen). It is interesting to compare its growth rate with a noble fir which was dug up at the same time when they were both approximately 18 inches tall. The noble fir (planted behind the Hever Shop remembering a past member of staff who was tragically killed in a car accident) is a fraction of the size of the Grand Fir.

**Duncan Leslie**

# Hever Parish Council

by Charlotte Cole, parish clerk

Please see the www.hever.org website for latest minutes. In summary we welcome to two new Councillors (Philip Lindsay and Angie Connolly) to the Parish Council and thank them for volunteering their time, it is much appreciated. More information (and photos) of them also on the website.

As we were unable to run the annual litter pick last year, or indeed this year, in the usual format with refreshments and equipment, we are supporting the District wide, covid friendly initiative – with PRIZES! Please see the following links for more information on what is/was being done over the weekend of 20/21 March, even if you weren't able to take part. http://cleanupsevenoaks.co.uk/events/sevenoaks-spring-clean https://www.facebook.com/groups/cleanupsevenoaks

District Councillors are aware of the damage to the hedge on Hever Road into the recently sold plots, protected under an Article 4 regulation and Sevenoaks District Council's enforcement team is involved.

Hever Parish Council resolved to award £300 to the local Samaritans branch, which applied for a grant towards its activities in the area. Every single penny is used towards the service it provides, none is lost in administration.

The Council also decided to look into installing a single drop down bollard at the entrances to the Hever Parish field and Four Elms recreation ground, to discourage any unauthorised encampments. These are increasing over the years across the District and HPC encourages all landowners to ensure their land is as secure as possible.

The Council are also looking to have the unsightly metal fencing around the Four Elms pond replaced and are in discussions with the neighbouring landowner, in addition to investigating whether the double yellow lines could be extended to prevent anti-social parking.

There is further information on the website for those interested in the Affordable Housing consultation (paused until 1st May). We await Government instructions on when/if/how we can hold meetings in public again…

**Charlotte Cole**
Clerk and Financial Officer
Hever Parish Council
clerk@hever.org
www.hever.org
Facebook/Heverparishcouncil

## district council news

The prospect of sitting in the spring sunshine, clear blue sky above, drink in hand, chatting with friends outside the Kentish Horse is one to which I, like you no doubt, look forward immensely. It is tantalisingly close. I can almost see, hear, smell, taste and feel each element – they seem richer for the novelty.

These are simple pleasures that the gradual withdrawal of restrictions bring ever closer. One which you perhaps do not greet with such relish, or might even be forgiven for having passed you by, is the return of local elections.

Having been postponed a year, there will on 6 May be an opportunity to choose our Police & Crime Commissioner, an individual responsible for setting Kent's four hundred million pound policing budget and the force's priorities.

Furthermore, May's elections see the retirement of our County Councillor, Peter Lake, to whom I should like to take this opportunity to express my thanks. Indeed this role is not an easy one, tasked as it is with big ticket items such as care of elderly and vulnerable people, education of our children, and upkeep of the county's roads. The authority's £1.6 billion budget hints at the scale of its responsibilities.

Whilst Sevenoaks District Council has the somewhat unenviable task of billing you and me for the services provided by these two public bodies, one of its other duties is the administration of elections. Recent weeks have therefore been occupied with preparations for making this set COVID-secure.

So come May, you'll receive two ballot papers. But expect too all those things with which we are now so familiar: social distancing, hand sanitiser, wipes, face coverings, screens, ventilation and – in case the Government's calls for people to bring their own go unheeded – a supply of fresh pencils.

Should you rather a postal or proxy vote, the form may be downloaded from GOV.UK or requested by calling the District Council on 01732 227000.

Whether politico or not, there is, I hope you will agree, something very special about living in a country in which each one of us can, with whatever views or motivations, exercise our democratic right by placing a simple mark against a name to have a say in choosing our representatives. A right made all the more precious when one considers the hundreds of millions deprived of it around the world.

High on your list of simple pleasures I suspect it is not, but it's certainly one oft-overlooked freedom the return of which I'll be toasting with that drink.

**Matthew Dickins**
District Councillor for Cowden & Hever
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07910 328 110

# schooltime

## news from Hever

We are so proud of how our strong school family community has coped with the global pandemic including everybody's efforts to maintain a high standard of remote learning for all our children. We send our grateful thanks and appreciation to our families and community who have supported the children at home over the last few months.

We were so excited to welcome all of the children back to school on the 8th March. It was quite an historic moment at drop off, seeing the children back together for the first time in months! Face to face learning has commenced and we are determined to maximise outcomes for all children by helping to reinforce key messages about Attendance, Behaviour for Learning, Uniform and Values to the children.

We started the week with a well-being day. Our in-house art therapist looked after our children and valued staff members allowing them time to transition, to draw and talk about their feelings and be together in a calm and relaxing way.

This year's World Book Day was also a popular event. Mrs Hendy has inspired children to fully engage in the day and chose a book to make them laugh. In her introductory zoom to all of the students George's Marvellous Medicine was praised by the children for its humour.

All teachers shared a story online.

It's been a difficult year for so many families and the restrictions of lockdown have made it harder for children to access books. We knew this year's World Book Day would be an even more important moment of fun, hope and celebration!

Research shows that young people feel reading helps them relax and feel happier and it's been a way to stay connected. We asked everyone to continue supporting our Hever children emotionally by reading every day and consequently develop their children's literacy skills.

Our local Church, St. Peter's, have an Easter card competition running so we have supported them by entering. We loved creating pictures representing the true meaning of Easter. We look forward to the wider opening of the school after the Easter holidays when we can return to outdoor clubs and events.

**Joanna Stratton**
Headteacher

## news from Four Elms

**Back to school at last!**
After two months of home learning, parents and teachers across Four Elms breathed a huge sigh of relief when our school opened its doors again for face to face learning.

On the first day back, all classes, each in their own bubbles, had a day of fun, including well-being, games and team building activities. The aim was to give the children the opportunity to enjoy spending time with their friends and teachers after so long apart.

**New learning experiences**
The first few weeks have had a focus on accelerating learning to make up for the lost time this year, but more than ever, on renewing the children's love of learning through some amazing experiences. Each class has their own exciting learning experience for the remainder of the term.

Class 1 has an art challenge to create artwork in the style of Andy Goldsworthy. They will reflect upon what nature is and what they see, expressing their ideas and creating a group piece. The art will be displayed through a virtual gallery to reach a wider audience.

Class 2 are using Roald Dahl's writing to investigate 'You are what you eat'. The children will be creating a recipe e-book full of healthy and balanced dishes designed to tantalise their taste buds. Inspired by Dahl's 'Revolting Recipes', the food will be unusual but fun and with a BFG theme. In the words of the BFG, this experience will be 'whizzpopping', 'phizz whizzing' and 'delumptious'!

Class 3 are learning about the Mayan civilisation through their own research. As a hook, the children will participate in a game of the Pok-A-Tok. This was a ball game played by the ancient Maya well over 1,000 years ago in what is now Cancun and Riviera Maya.

Class 4 have been tasked with finding out 'If Oliver Twist had been written at the end of the Victorian era, how would his life have been different?'. The children are exploring the changes that took place during that era, such as social reform and understanding how this improved children's lives. To kick off the experience, the pupils made 'gruel' and carried out the jobs some of the children would have had to do at the time. 'Please sir, I want some more!'?

**Red Nose Day – or any colour you like!**
To support Red Nose Day this year, pupils were invited to wear non-school uniform with as much or as little red as they like in return for a donation to the charity.

Every penny counts towards supporting projects tackling important issues such as homelessness, child poverty and mental health stigma, all of which have been impacted by Covid-19.

**Nicole Holt**



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| Chiddingstone Nursery School | for children 2-5 years | 01892 871315 |
| **Equestrian** | | |
| Four Elms Farm Livery | | 07771 634995 |
| **Fitness** | | |
| Hever Castle Golf Club | golf course | 01732 701017 |
| Chiddingstones' Tennis Club | | 0776 964 2590 |
| Falconhurst Cricket Club | cricket and training sessions | 07771 892762 |
| Pilates by Lorna at Four Elms and Ide Hill village halls | | 07747 628993 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Funeral Services** | | |
| Alex Jones | funeral directors & monumental masons | 01732 860047 |
| **Gardening and landscaping** | | |
| APF Trees, | tree surgery and garden maintenance | 07786 884924 |
| Hever Landscapes | for all your garden projects | 01892 740133 |
| French's Fencing | gates, automation, fencing supply & fitting | 0779 5551436 |
| R. Bennett | hedges, fencing, grass cutting | 01732 862971 |
| Sam Thompson tree care, | felling, hedge cutting, logs | 07747 345815 |
| **Health** | | |
| Emma Darthuy Chartered physiotherapist | home physio visit, pilates classes | 07771 925346 |
| Paul Marro | Cognitive Hypnotherapy www.htheraphy.co.uk | 01732 808211 |
| Step by Step | foot health practice | 07786 038149 |
| **Hairdressing** | | |
| Lorna Galbraith | hairdressing in your own home | 07989 587931 |
| **Home services** | | |
| Andy Sayers | electrical services maintenance and repairs | 07836 256146 |
| Daren Wood | Chimney sweep, pots and cowls fitted | 01959 564263 |
| Pegrum | fuels, boilers, plumbing, solar panels, water/oil tanks | 01732 463256 |
| Sure Kill | pest control services | 01732 863206 |
| **IT** | | |
| My IT Wizard Ltd | Computer problem solving | 07779 285839 |
| MR Computing computer | repairs in your home, no call out charge | 01732 590077 |
| **Local Produce** | | |
| Allman Butchers | meat & groceries | 01732 863214 or 700288 |
| Falconhurst Farm Shop and deli | | 01342 850172 |
| **Travel, Taxis and bike hire** | | |
| Country Hire and Go, | electric bike hire and local taxi service | 07723054863 |
| Stuart Rieman | luxury passenger car service | 01883 715 037 |
| Relyon Cars | local taxi company | 01732 863 800 |
| **Venue Hire and Weddings** | | |
| Falconhurst Weddings | | 01342 850526 |

# Church in April and up to Easter

We are pleased to be returning to in person worship from the start of April but do come ready to follow Covid restrictions, wear masks and there will be no singing. We will also be livestreaming most of our services via https://www.facebook.com/threespiresbenefice . Please look at the website and Facebook page for information as things can change at short notice. Regrettably, owing to Covid restrictions, we will not be holding Easter Egg hunts this year. Our churches are open for private prayer as follows: Hever 8.30am to 9.30am on Tuesday; Four Elms 11.00am to 3.30pm on Sunday and Markbeech midday to 4pm also on Sunday.

| Date & time | Service details | Readings | Sunday |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 April 6pm | Eucharist Holy Trinity Markbeech | 1 Corinthians 11:23-26<br>John 13:1-17, 31b-35 | Maundy Thursday |
| 2 April 12 noon | St.Peter's Hever<br>Devotion at the Cross | | Good Friday |
| 4 April 6am | Sunrise service<br>St.Paul's Four Elms | Zephaniah 3:14-20<br>Mark 16:1-8 | Easter |
| 4 April 9.15am | Family Eucharist Holy Trinity Markbeech | 1 Corinthians 15:1-11<br>John 20:1-18 | Easter |
| 4 April 11am | Family Communion<br>St.Peter's Hever | 1 Corinthians 15:1-11<br>John 20:1-18 | Easter |
| 11 April 10am | Eucharist Holy Trinity Markbeech | 1 John 1:1-2:2<br>John 20:19-31 | Easter 2 |
| 18 April 10am | Holy communion<br>St.Peter's Hever | 1 John 3:1-7<br>Luke 24:36b-48 | Easter 3 |
| 25 April 8.00am | Said Holy Communion<br>St.Paul's Four Elms | 1 John 3:16-24<br>John 10:11-18 | Easter 4 |
| 25 April 10am | Family service<br>Holy Trinity Markbeech | | Easter 4 |

We will be holding short services of Compline ('Night Prayer') on Monday to Wednesday in Holy week March 29th to 31st at 6.00pm by Zoom. If you would like to join please contact Simon for details. Following a short Easter break, our Zoom Bible Study at 6.00pm on Mondays will resume from 19th April. For details of this and our Zoom Evening prayer on Thursdays at 6.00pm please contact Simon.

Please contact any of us if you would like prayer or to talk to someone during this time or any other help including obtaining text versions of the above services or having them read over the phone.

**Priest-in-charge** Revd.Simon Braid
01892 871453 and simonbraid@icloud.com

**Wardens**
**Hever**
Mandy Yarnold
01342 850028

**Four Elms**
Christina Hodson
01732 700247
Richard Bennett
01732 862971
**Markbeech**
Nicki Talbot
01342 850526
Marielou Linklater
01342 850579
**Administrator**
Ana Roxburgh beneficeemail@gmail.com
**Prayer hotline**
Elly Heard 01732 865564
or Revd.Simon Braid (above)

## our rector's thoughts

I am delighted that we are planning to hold our Easter services in person albeit with restrictions. But sadly we won't be able to hold our Easter egg hunts although we will give out Easter eggs as you leave our services! Easter eggs are a symbol of new life and new birth, which is central to the Easter story.

About two years ago, Revd.Dr Michael Green, a theologian and evangelist died after a long life. He had written over fifty books. I am eternally grateful to Michael Green. In 1971, as a sixth former , I read his book Runaway World. It starts with the words: 'A militantly agnostic sixth former...' and that was me. When I finished the book, I said the prayer and the direction of my whole life changed.

The first chapter in that book is entitled: 'Running Away from History' and deals with the historical evidence for Jesus' existence – no serious historian doubts this – and most significantly the evidence for Jesus' death and resurrection, which is of course what Easter is all about.

When I read the book, I was studying history for A level; it was my subject and I went on to read it at University. Christianity is an historical religion. It proclaims that God has acted in history and uniquely in sending Jesus to be God with us; to show us what God is like and to die and rise again for us. That is why the statement of belief, the Creed, which we often say in church services, rather than making theological statements about what God is like, actually goes through the historical events. It says: Jesus… suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again…

In 1930 a lawyer, Frank Morison, who was fed up with Christians talking about the resurrection, resolved to research the evidence and write a book to disprove the resurrection once and for all. The book is called, 'Who moved the stone'. The first chapter is called, the book that refused to be written; because when he looked at the evidence, Morison concluded it was true after all.

This is what happened to me, when as a sixteen year old I read Michael Green's book. He makes the point in his book that 'The evidence is very strong. Though incapable of compelling faith, it is quite sufficient to warrant it'

Faith comes from that real encounter with the Risen Christ, which millions have experienced. So why not come and find out more this Easter? We would love to see you and it might even change the direction of your life as it did mine.

God bless you all

**Simon**

## Four Elms

My favourite scientist, who appears behind the lectern at Number 10 Coronavirus News updates, is Professor Jonathan Van-Tam (JVT as he is referred to and I now feel confident enough to say I know him and will call him JVT as well). I particularly like watching his briefing as he has wonderful metaphors describing the state of the pandemic. My favourite is, "we are 3-0 up in the football score, we relax and before you know it we are 3-4 down". This describes the situation if we think we are all safe as the infection rates drop, vaccines are available and so we cease to be vigilant.

Thus, as we approach Easter we tentatively observe the situation and decide how safely we may have services at our churches. Here at St. Paul's Four Elms we look forward to the outdoor Palm Sunday Family Service, with two obliging donkeys Walter and Stanley and the Easter Sunday Sunrise service at 6am which starts outside and moves inside with Holy Communion. Holy week services may be seen online via the website. Have a look at the east stained glass window above the altar showing beautiful imagery of Holy Week. You may do this when St. Paul's church is open for Private Prayer every Sunday 11.30am – 3.30pm.

Without doubt springtime is very welcome this year. The beautiful spring bulbs bring colour and a sense of new life and better times ahead which is a metaphor for our Christian faith.

Schools have returned and we wish all schools and pupils a happy and successful remainder of the academic year.

We had our PCC meeting earlier in the month and are delighted to welcome new members. We are also delighted to welcome new friends onto the Ecclesiastical Roll. Everyone within our parish who has an interest in church may enrol. Please do.

Back to my (virtual) friend JVT and another of his metaphors. "There is light at the end of the tunnel". The (Covid) train is almost at the station and hopefully we can soon disembark and enjoy some normality.

**Christina Hodson**
Churchwarden

## Hever

The Hever PCC Annual General Meeting will take place via Zoom on Monday 26th April at 7.30pm. Members of the Electoral Roll are invited to join us and amongst the items that will be dealt with will be the End of Year Financial Accounts for 2020 and electing officers of the PCC. A Zoom invitation will be sent out nearer the time. You can join the Electoral Roll by completing the Electoral Roll Form on the Three Spires website.

We are hoping to find another churchwarden for St Peter's, if you are interested in finding more out about this historic church role then please get in touch with Simon Braid or me.



St Peter's Hever is starting to plan our Easter services which we hope will take place inside the church. We plan to have "Stations of the Cross" placed around the graveyard during Holy Week. We have cancelled the Egg hunt in the churchyard on Easter Saturday due to the ongoing Covid restrictions.

The Parish lunches will re-start outdoors at Step 3, currently no earlier than May 17th, when the limits on people meeting outdoors are increased to the required number.

**Mandy Yarnold**
Churchwarden

## Markbeech

The first of April will be a BIG day for us! It will be the first time this year that we can gather together in a group INSIDE the Church. It is Maundy Thursday when we will have a moving and meditative service remembering the Passover Supper and the day before Jesus died. In previous years we have celebrated this service in different ways: singing some challenging choral music, foot washing and a re-enactment of the Passover Supper in the Village Hall. I would be interested to hear how we can make this a service to remember for you.

Our Churchyard is coming to life and by the first of April our flowering cherry (Prunus Cerisafera Nigra for those who care about such things) will be looking its prettiest. The leaves on Cecil's Beech will be uncurling and the primroses and violets will be out for Easter. The blot on the landscape, however, is the rubbish pile that backs onto the pub car park. We do have a plan to clear this area once and for all, but until the digger comes can we please ask you NOT to leave plastic wrappers, flowerpots or any other rubbish here. Take it home!!

We will be having a family friendly Easter service on Easter Sunday at 9.15 so please come! There may even be a little chocolate there. Happy Easter!

**Nicola Talbot**
Churchwarden

## From the register

**Funerals**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 5 March | Clive Steer | Four Elms |
| 26 March | Angela Whitehouse | Four Elms |

## gardening

The gardening hiatus (well mine, anyway) came to an end with the disappearance of the snow, although the continuing cold, wind and rain has tested my gardening resolve. I am juggling three activities; the remains of the winter clear up, project related tasks such as creating more raised beds, and starting early seeds, including broad beans and some extra sweet peas. Who says men cannot multi-task!

One of the really pleasant aspects of gardening are those occasional moments of serendipity. Until a few weeks ago I had no idea that Scillas were related to the Bluebell family. We were having one of our occasional walks around Hever Castle gardens and lake and the shop was selling off some Scilla mischtschenkoana. It is a bit of a mouthful, and is also known as Scilla tubergeniana. We have a couple of crescent shaped swathes of crocuses around a mature apple tree, and the Scillas we bought have now made an attractive 'frame' for them.

I wish I was better at dividing and taking cuttings as a way increasing our garden stock. Hardly any of the Geranium cuttings survived the winter but I have had a bit more luck with roses. Last Autumn I took a dozen stems, pencil thick and about 30cm long, dipped them in some rooting hormone, and put them in pots. You have to be patient, as they will take over a year to root. So far seven are showing good signs of growth so I am hopeful they will eventually be planted out.

The Hever Hort committee have been trying to map our programme for 2021 to the Government's roadmap for lifting Covid restrictions. We have simply transferred last year's events to this year, but activities up to and including the Spring Show (scheduled for 10th April) have been cancelled. This year's plant sale was due on 8th May and we have decided to move this to Saturday, 22nd May, when outdoor activities can resume. This will be our first event for over a year. We have put the Rose show back a couple of weeks to 26th June, when most restrictions are expected to be lifted.

Of course, all this depends on there not being further setbacks, but we are ever hopeful! If you would like a revised programme, or require any other information, please contact me on 01342 851307 or Jan Tolfree on 01342 850206

**Doug Bowern**



## Benefice monthly rainfall in millimeters

| | | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Four Elms** | **2019** | 28 | 33 | 54 | 12 | 29.5 | 111 | 55 | 27 | 58 | 112 | 115 | 114 |
| | **2020** | 66 | 106 | 55 | 38 | 6 | 45 | 21 | 42 | 35 | 142 | 59 | 88 |
| | **2021** | 134 | 46 | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Hever** | **2019** | 23 | 56 | 45.5 | 12 | 24 | 90 | 63 | 28.5 | 64 | 119 | 98 | 114 |
| | **2020** | 77 | 125 | 48 | 38 | 13.5 | 45 | 25 | 41.5 | 41 | 160.5 | 55 | 97 |
| | **2021** | 127 | 42 | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| **Markbeech** | **2019** | 39.5 | 41 | 59.25 | 13.25 | 29 | 78.5 | 74.5 | 38.5 | 71 | 133 | 92.5 | 138 |
| | **2020** | 96.25 | 140 | 47.5 | 40 | 10 | 49.25 | 31.6 | 36 | 54.6 | 163.75 | 40.5 | 95.6 |
| | **2021** | 120 | 40 | | | | | | | | | | |

## Hall Bookings

**Four Elms:**
Village Hall
– Kevin Haydon 07787 394 806
Parish Rooms
– John Southworth 01732 700670
**Hever**
– Mrs Ryan 01732 864168
**Markbeech**
– Mrs Paige 01342 850328

## Councils

**Kent County Councillor**
Peter Lake 07740 701695
**Sevenoaks District:**
Matthew Dickins 07910 328110
**Hever Parish:**
Charlotte Cole 01342 322123
clerk@hever.org

## The Link Team

Bridget Harris, Joanna Wade, Paul Houlton
email: thelink@hever.org
Telephone 01732 700986 (Bridget) Mobile 07958 919 631 (Joanna)
Address 1 Triangle Cottage, Hever Road, Hever TN8 7NL
**Benefice website** threespires.wordpress.com **Community website** www.hever.org

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Copy for the May edition should reach us no later than **15 April 2021**
Subscriptions cost £5 pa if delivered by a volunteer. For payment either: a) Send a cheque payable to 'The Link' with your address to 1 Triangle Cottage, Hever Road, Hever TN8 7NL or b) Make a bank transfer or set up a standing order payment to 'The Link' at Lloyds a/c 01057697 sort 30-92-92 with postcode and surname as reference.

A copy of The Link can be viewed in The Link section of the community website www.hever.org

# Are you self isolating? Do you need help?

**If you need help with shopping, prescriptions, posting letters etc please call the editors (see page 21 for numbers) or the churchwardens (see page 18) or call any of the following. We would all be very happy to help.**

**Laura Palmer** – 01732 864257
**Jane Hall** – 01732 862569
**Laura Hands** – 07792 167 470 (based in Hever)
**Beverley Thomas** – 07855 968 006 (based in Edenbridge)
**Toria Corcoran** – 07885 491 893 (based in Edenbridge)
**Andrea Hayto** – 07766 503 062 based in Four Elms)
**Sophie Fraser** – 07793 464 705
**Amy Hurlstone** – 07982 996 642
**Emma Short** – 07985 047 746 (based in Four Elms)
**Cheryl Small** – 07795 841 178
**Caroline Crooks** – 07887 505 409
**Four Elms Helpers** 01732 700247

**You can also email thelink@hever.org or hra@hever.org or fevhlunch@btinternet.com**

Don't forget Go2 bus services if you are considering transport options, for instance, to the Sevenoaks Medical Centre for vaccinations. You can request a bus from a bus stop near you to the Fire Station in Sevenoaks which is next door to the Medical Centre. The bus should be at your chosen stop within 30 minutes. Fares vary but all adults pay £6.50 each way for any journey over 8 miles. To use the service you first need to register using the Go2 Sevenoaks app or by phoning 01732 463 964.