THE LINK

September 2021







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...and much more

Parish magazine of Four Elms, Hever and Markbeech

£1

Welcome to the September Link

I remember the day, years ago, when a school friend gave me a handful of pods with a lovely exotic smell. The exciting thing was that you could burst them and the shiny black seeds popped satisfyingly and exploded into the garden. Soon our tiny London garden was overwhelmed by a thicket of beautiful pink Himalayan balsam - which my mother spent the next few years eradicating.

It has been illegal to plant balsam or introduce it into the wild since 1981 but the stable door was shut rather too late as it has been causing problems ever since it was introduced to Kew Gardens from Kashmir in 1839. Helen Pidd of the Guardian calls balsam "the playboy of the horticultural world" as few plants can spread their seeds like it; when ripe they can land up to 7m (23 feet) away. With each plant able to produce about 800 seeds, it can dominate an area after one season. It doesn't need much light and will grow in a wide range of habitats, shading out other plants, so when it dies back in autumn its destructive legacy lives on, leaving waterways bare and vulnerable to erosion. And this is all very true of the banks of the Eden at this time of year.

Many environmental charities, including the South East Rivers Trust, call for "balsam bashing" volunteers to fight back, and indeed the only good thing about Himalayan balsam, apart from its soothing name, is that it is satisfyingly easy to pull up by the roots. But don't touch it now because the seeds are ready to pop and you will probably help those wicked projectiles on their journey. Lie in wait until the spring and attack then…..

Joanna Wade



THE LINK

pet of the month

Wellington and Waffle my two crazy dogs

My name is Zara, aged six, and I am going to tell you about my two crazy dogs. They are called Waffle (springerpoo) and Wellington (springer spaniel). Waffle has brown curly hair and a long tail which he often uses as a whip. Wellington on the other hand is dashing and handsome and my neighbours say he is so clever that if he was human he would be a professor. They are not the sort of dogs you would take out for an afternoon stroll in a crowded place as they run so fast and can sniff out a picnic a country mile away.

My favourite times with Wellington and Waffle have been during home schooling and I have loved sitting in their dog baskets reading to them by the Aga. And they are rather handy at a game of tennis particularly when I whack the ball over the court and they fetch the ball for me or sometimes they just run off with the ball which is rather annoying.

My dogs are also my mum's running partners and I see her being pulled up the hills and down the hills at a hundred miles per hour. The dogs love this activity with my mum and it makes me laugh lots watching the dogs taking her for a run!!!

I love Wellington and Waffle very much and I was so proud to enter them into the Four Elms Dog Show but the only problem I had was that Waffle won't go anywhere without Wellington or my mum. As a result I was pulled through the middle of the ring at a gallop and we still won first prize which remains a mystery to me.



Zara Hodson-Morris.

what I do

When I started beekeeping 11 years ago I knew nothing of the craft. But I'd always adored honey – especially those jars of thick granular perfumed honey with a white skim on top sent as emergency rations to my Sussex boarding school by my aunt Elizabeth in the 1950s. Elizabeth had learnt amateur beekeeping from her father, born in 1879. When she finally stopped beekeeping, after many years, all her old Edwardian equipment was consigned to a disused chicken shed.

In 1988, or thereabouts, Elizabeth bequeathed this equipment, some of it made useless by the dreaded wax moth, to her niece Carol. My sister Carol, 11 years my senior, likes nothing better than to mend things and soon the old hives and frames were firmed up and repainted, scorched with a blow-torch and once again made ready for bees. Elizabeth passed on her knowledge. 'The bees know best, interfere as little as possible!'

Twenty years later, Carol, who lives next door to us down a farm lane on the outskirts of Brasted Chart, had become an accomplished meticulous beekeeper whose honey (like that of Elizabeth) has won prizes at the annual competition of our Westerham bee club. But now, in spring and late summer, she needed help lifting off the heavy frames of capped honey. Would I like to try my hand at beekeeping…?

And so it began.

In 2010 in dead of winter I drove to Hildenborough and took a start-to-finish evening course on basic beekeeping given by Master Beekeeper John Hendrie. I noted the finer points of bee anatomy, a catalogue of bee diseases, how bees produce wax, the gestation period of queens, drones and worker bees, the cycle of the bee year, how to make a brood and a honey frame, and much more – all of which I promptly forgot.



It was only when I started to examine brood frames and spotted eggs and larvae, and saw (and killed) my first wax moth, and had been stung a few times by disgruntled bees, and finally caught and marked (with blue nail varnish) a queen bee, and begun to go to summer meetings at the apiaries of other local beekeepers, and had helped out at the big bee tent at the South of England Show, that all of what John Hendrie had so meticulously explained began slowly to make sense.

The beekeeping practised by Carol and me is not particularly 'scientific' and is guided largely by the advice of our aunt. 'The bees usually sort themselves out' – as they've been doing for many millennia. This year, however, we've had the foresight to take on Chris, a mature and most promising apprentice. He now kindly undertakes much of the heavy lifting – and has introduced us to the mysteries of computer spread-sheet record-keeping.

John Pym

Photograph by Lexie Giarraputo-Pym

FOR SALE

Dawes Kalahari 21-speed ladies bike in excellent condition. Reflectors, rear luggage rack, bottle holder and bell. £50.

Cornilleau Sport 440 outdoor table tennis table in good condition. Needs minor part. Includes 4 bats and balls. £100 ono.

Contact Sue 07788 411127 for more details.

The Boleyns - a scandalous family

Hever Castle and, mainly, Penshurst Place feature in this new BBC2 mini-series aired in the second half of August and available on iPlayer. Penshurst is a popular location because of its extraordinarily well-preserved interiors and was also a set for Wolf Hall. It is said that Henry VIII used the house as a convenient spot from which to ride over to Hever whilst courting Anne. This was after he had conveniently executed its owner, the Duke of Buckingham, for treason in 1521 and taken possession of the house. Penshurst went to Anne of Cleeves as part of the divorce settlement and then Edward VI gave it to Sir William Sidney his tutor whose family has been there ever since.



The Summer Show

After more than a year away, Hever Rose and Horticultural Society bounced joyfully back onto the scene with a very successful Flower and Vegetable Summer show.

There were 189 entries from more than 20 participants and everybody enjoyed the exhibits, the teas - and just seeing one another again.

Sue Harvey won the Rosemary Bayford cup for the best floral exhibit and Jane Rosam, the Penman cup in the vegetable classes. Emma Scott excelled in the domestic classes and Doug Bowern picked up a couple of cups in diverse classes - much to his embarrassment (I am definitely too embarrassed to say that I won the Tolfree photography cup).

But the run-away victor was Norman Greenaway who was awarded four cups, including the Russell challenge cup for the best exhibit of dahlias in the show. Norman has been winning dahlia prizes for over 30 years which is a magnificent achievement!

Many thanks to the committee for all their hard work in getting the show back on the road and in particular to Chair Doug Bowern and Show Secretary Jan Tolfree without whom we would not have had such a lovely afternoon.

Joanna Wade



Sue Harvey's floral entry



Norman Greenaway with his four cups



The tomato class

Hello folks and hello Snowy

How nice to meet you again through this forum, but now on a completely different subject – and yet still talking about nature.

We have the pleasure to read about our neighbours' pets but I, unfortunately, do not have one and so make all the creatures that visit Rose Cottage my little pets (including the blackbirds that steal our strawberries and raspberries as soon as they are ripe). That was until we spotted a pure white, albino squirrel in the garden stealing unripe strawberries and then doing yoga on the shed roof, enjoying the few sunny days we had throughout spring and summer.



We nicknamed him 'Snowy'. Although annoyed that we probably would not have any strawberries – which proved to be true – we were delighted with such a rare view. Then we discovered that Snowy wasn't really 'our' pet, he was also visiting St. Nicholas Cottage and probably Bayleaf Hall as well, and who knows who else. Thus, between Jane and myself we thought Snowy was a village pet and should feature in The Link.

Albinism is a rare condition, apparently only one in 100,000 squirrels are born albino: completely white fur, and pink/red eyes. And yet more than 200 have been spotted in southern England including Sussex, Kent, Surrey and London (Michael Howie, Evening Standard 24 January 2021). We spotted Snowy back in early Spring, but the latest news about albino squirrels in Kent came as recently as early Summer (Megan Carr, Kent Online 24 June 2021).

Now, personally, I don't believe the one spotted back in June in Walderslade is the same animal hence this question: Are albino squirrels less rare than we think them to be, or is the grey squirrel population growing so fast that we are spotting those 'rarities' more often? It is a valid question because the white fur of an albino squirrel makes them more vulnerable to predators - and we have spotted loads of these over Hever recently, such as red kites and buzzards.

Yet Snowy is doing very well indeed in Hever, thank you very much! He hasn't visit Rose Cottage for weeks – no more strawberries available you see? But it is constantly spotted, and photographed, in St. Nicholas Cottage: he feeds on nuts, does some gym and stretches – to keep himself fit, obviously – and has so much self-confidence he performs for the camera.

Love from
Ana Claudia & Jane.

Before and after

the latest successful rescue by the Friends of St Peter's

I wonder what Hever church looked like before the Victorians had a go at it?

In their devoted but rather arrogant way they raised the floor level in the chancel, making Thomas Bullen look as if he was sinking, and whitewashed the walls, thus destroying forever any remaining traces of wall paintings. Or so it seemed…… luckily the Victorians left us a tiny ancient gem of a wall painting amidst a sea of new bright white distemper.

As with all old churches, unpeeling the layers of the historical onion is difficult. This thirteenth century church followed the medieval fashion and displayed bright latin texts all over its walls but, in time, the rectors started, or were pushed into, making texts more accessible to their congregations which meant that the old paintings were covered with something more modern. It was once thought that our fragment had been painted in the 1530s in a translation by the then-rector Nicholas Heath but the restorer believes the text to be near that of the great King James Bible of 1611. Contrary to the view of the church guide, the text is rather more fearsome than "man cannot live by bread alone" and warns against money lending. It is from Ezekiel 18:13 and says [erased words in square brackets]:

[Hath given] forth upon [usury, and hath ta]ken increase: [shall he then live? he sh]all not live: he [hath done all t]hese abominations; [he shall surely die by death; his blood shall be upon him]

Hard on the heels of the painting came the splendid pulpit, erected on the south wall of the nave. It's provenance is inscribed on it : "Fear God, Honer the Kg. Anthony Brooker Henry Lottenden Churchwardens 1621". All very well, but ten years or less after the painting was finished, Anthony and Henry plonked the pulpit in front of it, obscuring our fragment for 270 years, and saving its life. Back to 1894 - the pulpit was moved to its present location and there it was! Victorian abominations have their uses.





As restored

More than 100 years later, the time had come to restore the painting which Thomas Organ of Arte Conservation says is “secco” (paint on dry plaster) as opposed to fresco (painting into damp plaster) and a little powdery but in a stable condition. They cleaned off the dirt, stabilised the paint, injected grout into some gaps and produced a fine result. What isn’t explained is how the pulpit could have fitted onto the south wall between the window and the door which used to lead to the priest’s opening above the rood screen, the available gap seems impossibly narrow but perhaps after the screen, which separated the nave and the chancel, was taken down no one minded that the door didn’t open. A mystery yet to be solved.

Well done the Friends of St. Peter’s. If you would like to join or make a donation please contact Mandy Yarnold 01342 850028 The minimum annual subscription is £15.

Joanna Wade

MARKBEECH TALENT SHOW

Do you, a group of friends, your child, your family and even your pet have a special talent? Video it (ideal length 1-3 minutes) and email to markbeechcommunity@gmail.com. Entries will be shared on @mark_beech_community private Instagram. Please “follow” the account to be able to view and “like” the entries: top videos played at Harvest Supper on 1st October, Markbeech Village Hall.

Amazing (or just-for-fun) entries welcome from groups and single people! Videos may be submitted from now. Closing Date: 25th September

New house in Four Elms

Willerby Landscapes have very kindly provided a new duck house for the pond at Four Elms . This was launched in August by Scotty and the ducks will move in when ready!

Thanks to Willerby and Scotty.



Falconhurst Cricket Club
Fixtures September

Sunday 5th Sep v Southborough (Away)
Saturday 11th Sep v Speldhurst (Away)
Sunday 12th Sep v Withyham (Home)
Saturday 18th Sep v Fordcombe (Away)
Saturday 25th Sep v Four Elms (Away)
Sunday 26th Sep v Chiddingstone (Home)
all 1pm start

Edenbridge U3A

If you are retired or semi-retired, follow interests and hobbies into old age by joining Edenbridge U3A for £20 a year, have fun and make new friends, enjoy a monthly speaker meetings on the last Wednesday 2pm at Crockham Hill village hall, and join any number of the 60 very diverse groups set up by members.

University of the Third Age is nothing like University though some groups will stretch your minds and bodies!

View our website for all the information you need www. edenbridgeu3a.co.uk or call me, Christine Byrne with questions 01732 862999 or 07741 460500.

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

On 29th June 2021 the Cowden, Hartfield and District branch met for the first time since the pandemic began, to celebrate our Branch Centenary and one hundred years of comradeship and support.

Our Branch Life President, Simon Bland KCVO presented the Centenary Pennant to the Standard and led the celebrations by cutting a commemorative cake. The reception was hosted by our Branch President, Ann Cleeve MBE and Chairman, Andrew Izod. Presentations were also made to Toby Castle, Youth Member, who was appointed Deputy Branch Standard Bearer, and to James Castle who was presented with a Royal British Legion Centenary Award for Passion.

As a branch we always welcome new members. Anyone over 11 years old may join. You do not have to have a service background.

For further details please contact the Secretary on 07766 747 601. or CowdenHartfield.Secretary@rbl.community
You can also follow us on Facebook at Cowden, Hartfield and District Branch - Royal British Legion





From Ellie Heard

I am totally overwhelmed by the kindness and generosity of all my friends in the Benefice. I am not easily lost for words, as many of you will know, but I am having significant difficulty finding the words to express my gratitude for the wonderful leaving present that I have been given.



Una Higgs's Charlie

The painting of St Peter's church is beautiful. It will be the perfect reminder of the 38 years that I have lived here and the huge part played by the church in giving me such a wide circle of friends and so many happy, social occasions. From the amazing cheque which I received I shall buy a new record(!) player. I still have a large collection of records from Verdi to Elvis, 33s, 45s and even come 78s. I really can't bear to bin them in favour of CDs.

I also want to make a donation to a new charity for homeless people. Its called StreetVet and provides veterinary care to the dogs of homeless people. It now has a scheme to provide support to hostels to accept resident's dogs. So many remain on the streets because they cannot bear to be parted from their pets. I am sure that we can well understand that. Those of us who have dogs know how precious is our relationship with them. For so many their dog is all they have. So who knows how far your wonderful generosity will reach.

I have so much to thank everyone for; for friendship, hospitality, support, great kindness and much laughter. What a special place this is. No wonder my life here has been so happy.

For information on StreetVet accredited hostel scheme email info@streetvet.org.uk

Come and celebrate the Harvest

MARKBEECH HARVEST SUPPER

MARKBEECH VILLAGE HALL

FRIDAY 1ST OCTOBER 7.30PM

DELICIOUS FOOD, AND MAGIC BY BERTIE

PLUS A PRESENTATION OF A LITTLE LOCAL TALENT...

TICKETS: £20.00 RESERVE YOUR PLACE

RSVP LYNNE.ROWAN1950@GMAIL.COM 07881 482154

Hever Parish Council

The council resumes its regular meetings in September after the summer break. The next meeting is in Markbeech Village Hall at 7.30pm on 7 September, preceded by the planning committee meeting at 7. Everyone is welcome.

The Council's main activity over the summer has been to conclude its public consultation into the proposed affordable housing development behind the garden centre in Four Elms. Although there was much interest from potential tenants, the majority of the community was against the scheme and so it will not proceed. Future proposals may gain support as the objective is to provide affordable housing ring-fenced for local people and, meanwhile, if you are looking for somewhere to live do contact Alison at English Rural Housing Association (Alison.thompson@englishrural.org.uk) as she may be able to help.

A minority of the very vocal opposition to the scheme made allegations against council members which were distressing and unfair and Parish Council chair, John Hodson writes as follows:

"In light of what happened in relation to the Affordable Housing proposal in Four Elms I thought it would be appropriate to share the article sent out in July by The National Association of Local Councils.

"Civility and respect should be at the heart of public life and good governance is fundamental to ensuring an effective and well-functioning democracy at all levels.

The intimidation, abuse, bullying and harassment of councillors, professional officers and staff, in person or online, is totally unacceptable; whether that is by councillors, professional officers, staff or members of the public.

This can prevent councils from functioning effectively, councillors from representing local people, discourage people from getting involved including standing for election, and undermine public confidence and trust in local democracy."

Your council is made up of local people giving their time freely to help the best they can to improve our local communities. The council needs your support and perhaps you may even consider offering your services!

If you disagree with what the council does or proposes then make your views known but don't attack the council members personally."

Christina Dival
Clerk and Financial Officer
Hever Parish Council
clerk@hever.org
www.hever.org

district council news

The starting pistol has been fired on the annual budget setting process at the District Council! A curious exercise, you might think, given the much-vaunted ten-year budget – still unique in local government. However, whilst that provides stability and a degree of certainty, the world continues to change, as the past eighteen months have so dramatically shown. Knowledge of our financial position in 2031/32 allows us the freedom to worry less about the day to day, and, instead, to focus on the strategic and longer term.

The theme of last year's budget was, unsurprisingly, survival. Twelve months earlier one of the tasks I set colleagues, in my capacity as Portfolio Holder for Finance & Investment, was to consider marginal gains, the concept – popularised in elite sport – that small improvements in every aspect of an organisation's performance adds up to significant change.

This year the topic is risk.

Broadly speaking we practise risk management every day of our lives, driving a car being the most common example. In business too – nothing ventured, nothing gained. Still, in our public bodies and general outlook, it's something with which we remain uncomfortable as a country. Indeed, when we refer to a proposition as being risky, the implication is it should be avoided. What's interesting is that this is born not of either an academic or applied understanding of risk, rather a cultural aversion.

Although opportunities carry with them risk – and embracing risk can present opportunities – what is vital is not that they be avoided but that we approach them properly. After all that is, in no small part, the difference between investment and speculation. Nevertheless, it is the case that in an age in which decision makers and commentators alike so often make judgements based on how something makes us feel, it requires a degree of clinical analysis of data and evidence with which few are comfortable or even conversant. Sevenoaks District Council has a long history of judiciously applying these principles.

I've written and spoken before about threats to the status quo. It seems to me important that rather than adopting a head in the sand approach, we should approach them with an open and curious mind so they can be better understood and informed action taken.

That's what we've done in the past – most significantly when we were the first council to become independent of government grant, having concluded the risk of not acting was greater than the risk of changing tack – it's an approach praised by our auditors, and it's the only sure way of ensuring your District Council remains fit in the face of flux to serve us all for decades to come.

Matthew Dickins
District Councillor for Cowden & Hever
Sevenoaks District Council, Argyle Road,
Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1HG
cllr.dickins@sevenoaks.gov.uk
07910 328 110

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Leppards	plant and machinery hire and more	01342 850888
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David James	accountancy services	01892 871 139
Southworth & Co	accounting services and software	01732 700 670
Building & Design Services		
Albourne roofing	slating, tiling, flat roofing, repairs	01732 700 353
Causeway Joinery	bespoke joinery for the public and trade	01342 850170
Clare Elizabeth	painting and decorating	0777 5328781
G Moss	joiner & builder	07778 440 644
Jem Pickard	painting and decorating 07850 371558 or	01732 863062
M & M Walker	painting & decorating, plumbing, heating	07774 218 684
Richard A Maslen	Fine furniture and bespoke joinery	07930 341 415
W Smithers & Sons	listed building, conversions, extensions,	01342 850 559
Cleaning		
Housecleans	cleaning, ironing	01959 532 223
Rockport Cleaning	dry carpet & upholstery cleaners	01732 387 046
Commercial Property		
Hever Business Centre Office Suites - Karrison Property		01959 563800
Hever Castle Golf club - modern office space to let		01732 701006
Dog grooming and walking		
Amy's Top Dog Grooming - dog grooming - Amy		0792 3351299
Yappy Days	dog walking and pet sitting – Katie	07768 614577
Wash n blow, dogs to go – dog grooming - Chris:		01892 740170/07736 484184
Education		
Markbeech Nursery	for children 2-5 years	01342 850403
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
Smart Nutrition and Fitness and beyond	personal training for midlife women	0771 8588847

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
Thompson Tree Care Ltd,	tree surgery, tree felling, hedge cutting	07747345815
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 September

Covid restrictions are lifted although we continue to proceed with care.

All three churches are open during the day and details of services are below and also at https://threespires.wordpress.com/2021/06/08/our-next-service/

Date & time	Service details	Readings	Sunday
5 Sept 10am	Holy Communion St.Paul's Four Elms	James 2:1-10; 14-17 Mark 7:24-37	Trinity 14 & Climate Sunday
12 Sept 10am	Eucharist Holy Trinity Markbeech	James 3:1-12 Mark 8:27-38	Trinity 15
12 Sept 3pm	Forest Church at St.Peter's Hever		Trinity 15
19 Sept 10am	Holy Communion St.Peter's Hever with baptism	Mark 9:30-37	Trinity 16
19 Sept 6pm	Songs of Praise St.Paul's Four Elms		Trinity 16
26 Sept 8am	Said communion St.Peter's Hever	James 5:13-20 Mark 9:38-50	Trinity 17
26 Sept 10am	Harvest Family service Holy Trinity Markbeech	Matthew 6:25-33	Trinity 17
30 Sept 6pm	Evening Prayer (in person) at St.Paul's Four Elms	Psalm 78:40-72; 2 Kings 1:2-17; Acts 24:1-23	Trinity 17
3 Oct 10am	Holy Communion St.Paul's Four Elms with Harvest	1 Timothy 6:6-10; Matthew 6:25-33	Trinity 18

If you would like to choose a hymn or song for our Songs of Praise at Four Elms on the evening of 19th September and are prepared to introduce it at the service, please get in touch with Simon.

The new normal means that our weekly Bible study will continue on Zoom at 6.00pm on Mondays restarting on 6th September but we hope to meet occasionally in person. Zoom Evening prayer on Thursdays at 6.00pm restarts on 2nd September and we will meet in person on 30th September at Four Elms. For details of both 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
07802 809849 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

our rector's thoughts

September is harvest time and we have our Family harvest festival service at Markbeech on 26th September. Looking back on the year, we started with a cold, dry spell with crops and grass being slow to grow. This was followed by a lot of rain and, as my farmer friends tell me, a bumper hay crop was cut.

The TV series Jeremy Clarkson's Farm seems to have gone down well, even with farmers. Notwithstanding Clarkson's reputation from Top Gear, this series seems to have portrayed him as a quieter, more thoughtful student, who makes a lot of mistakes. Moreover, the series has brought us all face to face with the huge challenges faced by modern day farmers to whom we owe so much especially as we emerge from the pandemic.

Farmers and horticulturalists alike know that all we can do is to seek to create the right conditions for growth and then nature (God if you're a believer) provides the growth. We are not wholly in control and so often we are at the mercy of the weather, insects and many other challenges. It has been said that one of the impacts of Covid has been to 'press the re-set button'. This has certainly been true of the Church.

With this in mind, we have agreed to embark on a process of discussion, prayer and reflection using material developed by the Diocese as part of what is known as 'Called to Grow'. We long to see our churches flourish and grow in numbers of people and perhaps more importantly in depth of faith, service and witness. 'Called to grow' is designed to encourage and equip us to consider the whole life of our church and wider community, and what God may be asking of us. The Bishop of Tonbridge has said: "It is our prayer that we will encounter the Holy Spirit working in all sorts of unexpected ways as we pray and ponder, prioritise and plan."

If this is something you would like to be part of, we will be holding a half day externally facilitated discussion on the afternoon of Saturday 25th September in Markbeech village hall. Please save the date. If you have any comments or concerns you would like us to consider please do let me know and we'll do our best to cover them.

We recognise that, as with nature, it is God who provides the growth. So if you are someone who prays, please include this in your prayers.

God bless you all

Simon



news from the pews

Four Elms

The improvement in the Coronavirus statistics has enabled "live" church services with music and singing and, if you wish, partaking of the full Eucharist host and wine. St. Paul's Church is now open every day for visitors to enjoy our beautiful Arts and Crafts church and for those who wish to have a quiet space for prayer and/or meditation. St. Paul's is one of the few places in the village where you can sit quietly and hopefully find peace of mind. Do please make use of this facility. St. Paul's is your village church for everyone in the community, not just for those who attend services. Everyone is a very welcome visitor.

During July we had our Pet Service, inside the church as the weather was inclement, but you will be pleased to know we only insisted on the pet owners wearing masks!! Pets were all very well behaved. Two lovely weddings in July saw the church beautifully decorated, not just with flowers, but with bridal couples and guests. We wish both couples much happiness (and how lucky they were with the weather!!)

The end of the summer is nigh and autumn beckons with its beautiful colours. The changing seasons in England are something we cherish, while complaining about the weather. However, the weather pattern is altering and even the most vehemently anti-climate change believers cannot deny this. Which is why we should all be climate change aware. Excessive heat, high winds and rain deluges concentrates the mind. Our service on Sunday 5th September is dedicated to the theme of Climate Sunday. We will remember the beautiful planet and its fragility and our need to do all we can to save it for future generations.

The end of September sees Harvest Festival time. Our Harvest service is Sunday October 3rd and on Friday 1st October we celebrate harvest with a supper for all in the Village Hall at 7pm. Is this a sign that things are getting back to normal?

Christina Hodson
Churchwarden

Hever

The summer seems to have gone by in a flash. The Church has re-opened every day and we are delighted to see our visitors returning and enjoying this historic building once more. We are still looking for volunteers to help with opening and closing the church every Friday and Sunday, this job takes about 10 minutes and involves opening the doors, checking that nothing is amiss and switching on the lights. Can you help? Please get in touch with me if you are able to help.

The church yard is looking terrific and continues to be kept under control by Richard Bennett, a mammoth task this year with the damp warm conditions encouraging the grass and undergrowth to grow rapidly. We are very grateful for his services.

The Hever Bell ringers have re-started their Thursday evening practices and it has been wonderful to hear the bells ringing once more across the village under our tower captain Jane Rosam.

We were delighted to see so many familiar faces again at the recent parish picnic, we were able to hold the event inside for the

first time in many months. The Parish lunches are held on the second Thursday of every month starting at 12.30 and are open to all the local residents. The next picnic will be held on Thursday September 9th, it would be helpful for catering, if you can, to let us know that you are coming.

Mandy Yarnold
Churchwarden

Markbeech

Not 'News from the Pews' but muses from a little holiday in Cornwall where I have had time to read the papers in between swimming, surfing and generally playing with the family. I read that Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury is accused by a predecessor, Lord Carey, of neglecting local parishes by encouraging modern worship outside the parish church buildings and centralising the power of the Church of England. Does this matter, you might ask? It is a question that crops up within our worship meetings and here in Markbeech, we as a PCC have always felt it does matter, and have encouraged family services and church meetings to take place within our beautiful little church. I believe it is up to us to make the space usable, friendly and welcoming for all or risk the church becoming a 'festival church' being used for weddings, funerals, baptisms and festival services, or even worse converted into a desirable residence.

If this matters to you, come to our 'Called to Grow' meeting on 25th September. We need YOU to make a difference! We need your suggestions, criticisms, encouragement and prayers. I'm afraid, for me, worship would not be the same in the village hall!

Nicki Talbot
Churchwarden

From the register

Baptisms

Holy Trinity Markbeech on
1st August Arthur John D'Arcy
(parents James and Georgina)

Weddings

Holy Trinity Markbeech on
2nd July Abigail Ward & James Gardner
3rd July Bianca de Gouveia & Joshua Lynch
10th July Louise Morris & Greg Pickering
21st August Michael Bull & Kerrie Stead

St Paul's Four Elms on
17th July Harriette Griffith Jones & Joe Quinn
24th July Sophie Wettern & Kirk Simon Stuart



gardening

It's incredible to think it's September already - this year has flown by in a flash! Before we know it, it will be Christmas!

September can be a fantastic month in the gardening calender. Late season can really be spectacular and offer a riot of colours. Spring and early Summer is predominantly tonal shades of pinks, blues, purples and white. Late Summer is all about the other end of the spectrum including oranges, yellows and reds. Long flowering herbaceous perennials, shrubs and trees for Autumn foliage and ornamental grasses for height and movement extend a garden's interest.

This can all be seen in the plants we are growing for the first ever Chelsea Flower Show to be held in September. Usually taking place in late May, the world's premium garden show has been delayed due to the pandemic. We're very excited to be involved and we'll see a totally different show with some fantastic planting. We're growing for a Sussex based garden designer, Naomi Ferret-Cohen and her 'Finding Our Way' garden. It's a tribute to the NHS and all their amazing work during the pandemic.

Here are some of our recommendations for some stunning late season interest as will be seen in the above garden.

Rudbeckia herbstonne - a majestic golden-yellow perennial that can grow up to 2m. Back of border, full sun.
Dahlia David Howard - burnt orange flowers above dark foliage. All Dahlias are fantastic through to the first frosts.
Panicum Squaw - ornamental grass up to 1.5m. A frothy haze of purple seed heads and foliage turns red/oranges in Autumn
Salvia Black n Blue - A fantastic, majestic half-hardy variety up to 1.8m. Dark blue flowers with black calyx.
Pennisetum Hameln - great grass with a mass of large oat coloured bottle-brush seed heads. A tough, reliable selection, this gives interest throughout Autumn.
Erigeron karvinskianus Lavender Lady - a new introduction of Mexican Fleabane that flowers from May-October. There aren't too many plants that give this length of flowering - no dead heading required!



Unfortunately we have no plans for a September public open weekend meaning it will be two years without one. However we will be offering a pop-up shop at the nursery following on from our popular event in July. Dates to be announced. We are delighted to announce that 2022 will be our 40th anniversary as a family business - we hope to bring to you lots of exciting events - watch this space!

Simon Sutcliffe
How Green Nursery

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	30	6	56	79	45					
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	41.5	5	65.5	84	61					
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	31	4	55.5	38.5	48					

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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