THE LINK

October 2021







In this issue:

- Hever and Cowden stations, our train of thoughts
- A pumpkin puss
- Chrismas fairs
- Autumn in the garden

...and much more

Parish magazine of Four Elms, Hever and Markbeech

£1

Welcome to the October Link

This is a special railway edition to mark the anniversary of the tragic Cowden crash in 1994 but also to celebrate the friendliest of stations and the engineering triumphs of the Uckfield line.

When I think of trains I always think of WH Auden's fine poem "The Night Mail" which the young Benjamin Britten set to music. The words themselves powerfully evoke the rhythm of the train carrying its precious cargo in the almost long gone days before email:

"Letters of thanks, letters from banks,
Letters of joy from girl and boy,
Receipted bills and invitations
To inspect new stock or to visit relations,
And applications for situations,
And timid lovers' declarations,
And gossip, gossip from all the nations,
News circumstantial, news financial,
Letters with holiday snaps to enlarge in,
Letters with faces scrawled on the margin,
Letters from uncles, cousins, and aunts,
Letters to Scotland from the South of France,
Letters of condolence to Highlands and Lowlands
Written on paper of every hue,
The pink, the violet, the white and the blue,
The chatty, the catty, the boring, the adoring,
The cold and official and the heart's outpouring,
Clever, stupid, short and long,
The typed and the printed and the spelt all wrong……."

We are so lucky to have a station in Hever at all, and now it has more seats and another shelter (as negotiated between Hever Residents Association, the Parish Council and Network Rail). You can park at the station free for 30 minutes and if you want to buy a day "ticket" for £2.20 you need to use the website justpark.com. But check the slightly disappointing new timetable and remember that the last train home from London Bridge leaves at a decadent 9 pm!

Joanna Wade



THE LINK

pet of the month

Hello my name is Leo. I am a big ginger cat with similarities to a pumpkin.

I am still quite young (about five), but have had a few homes in my short lifetime. My first owners were elderly and had to move into a flat, I realised that this didn't suit my love of open air activities so I was adopted by Anne Simmonds and lived at Terry's Barn for a while. It was a lovely home and I got to know all the neighbours who would feed me whilst Anne was in hospital. I liked Hever and so when Anne died I looked on "Catmove" and then booked my removal company (Jane Rosam) to take me to my new home.



I turned up as an early Christmas present in December 2019. Initially I was imprisoned in a separate room to "acclimatise" me to my new home as there was concern that their fierce dog might be jealous of me. However, I escaped pretty quickly and after introducing myself to the dog, we quickly became best buddies. She's not fierce at all – in fact she is a pussy-cat.

My hobbies are helping in the greenhouse and eating. I think nothing really beats fresh grub. I find that Hever has fresh meat on tap – my record is three rabbits in one day. However, after 18 months I am finding that the bunnies in the garden are dwindling, maybe they are hiding in those flowers that now seem to be growing again. I have tried squirrels and moles but nothing tastes quite as good as fluffy rabbit. After a good feed I like nothing better than to lie on my back and have a good sleep!



Bales on the move

what I do

The Spa Valley Railway runs heritage steam and diesel trains over five miles of line between Eridge and Tunbridge Wells. Since closure by British Rail in 1985 we have doggedly brought the railway back to life, repairing the life-expired infrastructure where possible and building new stations at Groombridge, High Rocks and Tunbridge Wells to replace the originals which were lost to what's laughingly called "development" back in the 80s/90s.

My own involvement started in 1991 as a 13 year old with my late father, changing a large number of rotten sleepers to make the line fit for passengers, and in 1997 we steamed back into Groombridge. There then followed a long and difficult period of negotiation, planning and accreditation to open the remaining two miles to Eridge; the last mile is on Network Rail infrastructure and was therefore subject to us clearing some much higher hurdles than we were accustomed to. The great day arrived in 2011, and since then we have been busy consolidating our financial position and improving our commercial offering. Like a garden though, the work is never finished, and there are still many projects requiring our attention.

It was once most young boys' dream at some stage to be an engine driver, and one that I'm thrilled to have fulfilled. With family, work and other responsibilities, my involvement in recent years has been necessarily reduced, but I still manage to contribute to various infrastructure projects. Last year we completely relaid the track in the yard at Tunbridge Wells to allow bigger locomotives access to the engine shed, and we have also laid more sidings to make day to day operation much easier and reduce shunting costs. My 9 year old daughter and I also keep the paraffin lamps burning in the signals at Groombridge, and I still get to drive the steam train when time allows!

We are entirely volunteer-run, and always pleased to welcome new faces. So, if you think you might enjoy spending some of your free time constructively with like-minded people, our Volunteer Liaison Officer Paul Compton would be delighted to hear from you. There are opportunities from gardening and landscaping to catering, signalling and train crew. The safety-critical roles clearly all have a training element to them, but no matter your particular interest, you will certainly have fun. Armchair members are also very welcome – it's worth it for the magazine alone, never mind the privilege rate tickets!

Paul can be contacted on volunteering@spavalleyrailway.co.uk, and you can become a member through our website.

Paul McKinnell



Ride and Stride

Here are the Hever bell ringers (with a few acolytes) at Four Elms church on the penultimate stop on their ride and stride sponsored bike ride. They



visited seven churches, cycled 16.5 miles, climbed 1,000 feet up Hosey Hill and soared down to Crockham Hill enjoying fantastic views of the Weald. They also raised over £500, to be split between Kent Churches and Hever church. Four Elms was voted the best church for refreshments (Hever a close second) and much chocolate was consumed with full justification. Congratulations also to Johns Hodson and Southworth who rode for Four Elms and raised an undisclosed sum. We are now in the age (and of the age) of electric pedal-assist bikes - what a splendid invention they are! Many thanks to all our generous sponsors.

Joanna Wade



Coffee morning

Coffee Morning with a Bring and Buy of home made cakes, biscuits and jams in aid of Macmillan Nurses at Hever Village Hall on Saturday 9th October at 10.00am

HOLY TRINITY PARISH CHURCH FOREST ROW

AUTUMN RECITAL

in aid of
Holy Trinity Church / R.B.L. Poppy Appeal

Claire Watkins – Soprano Gareth Dafydd Morris – Tenor

SATURDAY 23rd OCTOBER 2021

12noon



Wild flowers by Hever Castle lake

Hever station and the Uckfield line

This month sees the 27th anniversary of the Cowden rail crash, an appropriate time to talk about the Uckfield line and Hever station.

The Oxted line as it was then called opened in 1884, relatively late in the history of Victorian railway development, presumably because of the engineering challenge of digging a long tunnel under the North Downs. The branch from Hurst Green through Edenbridge and Hever was delayed another four years until the Markbeech tunnel, 1,342 yards long, was completed. In its heyday our line was part of a network which carried travellers all over south east England and down to the coast. Although much curtailed, it survived the Beeching cuts of the 1960s, unlike the line at Hartfield which is now a grassy path, some say because Edenbridge was a convenient station for Churchill at Chartwell. However, the line was cut down to a single track from Cowden station south, with disastrous results two decades later. The Uckfield branch has never been electrified and still runs on diesel meaning that it's trains cannot use the all-electric Victoria station and run to and from London Bridge once an hour (on average, less during the day).



The Markbeech tunnel

There are many happy memories of Hever station although until the early 2000s the service was notoriously bad. Una Higgs's children, who were commuting to school in the late 50s remember the stationmaster, Len, very fondly. He kept a roaring fire in the waiting room so the children could warm up before they got on the train. Una remembers ringing Ken if the children were running a bit late to check that they hadn't missed the train and Chris Brewer reports stories that it was not unusual for the Station Master to telephone his "favoured commuters" to warn them of the trains running late.



The rail network

A dark episode was the Cowden rail crash on 15 October 1994, a head-on collision on the single track at Cowden. The train crash probably happened because the guard, who was inexpe-

rienced, persuaded the driver of the northbound train to let him drive on that day. The weather was foggy and the signal light possibly dimmed because of insects inside the lamp. Anyway, the fatal combination meant that the driver went through a red light and onto the single track into the path of an approaching train. The signalman could see what had happened but could not contact the driver because a project to fit a radio link had been cancelled. He watched helplessly and all he could do was call the emergency services to attend the inevitable accident. Five people died, the two drivers, one guard and two passengers, and 13 were injured. After the crash the necessary safety measures were introduced.

Jan and Gerry Ryan recall that the station mistress, Jenny, who was famous for practising the trumpet very loudly in the peace of her own station, had predicted this tragedy when the double track was removed. Jenny was the last station master/mistress before the station was sold.





Chris Brewer writes:
Before the station was sold off by British Railways Board in 1990, it comprised the station building and station master's house. Local residents told me that it was purchased by Bernard McHugh who owned a building company specializing in railway services. He was passionate about railways. He modernized and combined the properties with the intention to make the station a training facility for the railway industry but this did not happen.

My company DPL had been operating from The Old Grange since 1994 and needed more accommodation leading to our leasing the buildings and land from BM in 2000 and then the directors buying it in 2003.

We needed more space and so embarked in around 2008 upon the purchase of a railway carriage to site in the goods yard. I viewed the carriage, shortly after it came out of service in Croydon but it was taken to a Ministry of Defence site in Essex for all the asbestos to be removed. Then the task of bringing it

by road to Hever Station was highly specialized operation. The roads are so narrow and the corners so tight but only slight damage done was to Andrew and Elspeth Russell's field gate. It was a delivery attracting many railway enthusiasts. The carriage now adapted and networked to the station buildings is still in use but old leather travelling cases, umbrellas, bowler and top hats remain!

DPL moved to larger premises in 2018 and from 2019 although in the same ownership the station operates as the Hever Business Centre.

Jane More writes about her station memories as a neighbour of the station for many years.
"On a warm Sunday afternoon in late summer 1976 we parked at Hever Station and couldn't believe our luck! We would shortly move into "The Old Farmhouse" a few minutes walk away - where our family of five were to live for 23 happy years. The station was very important with it's hourly service to East Croydon - just in case Bryan was unable to go by car - or for trips to London. At that time Mr. and Mrs. Green lived in the Station House and we would get to know Len from Cowden who, as Una Higgs has said, was so helpful to everyone.
At one time there had been large sidings at the station used for transporting goods to Hever Castle. One afternoon in the early 1980's word went round that the Orient Express would be sitting in the station during the afternoon whilst the passengers visited the castle and so some very excited children rushed home from St. Andrews Convent School to see the unusual sight.



Jane More with her parents at the Old Farmhouse in 1995

Whilst in our garden we could always keep track of the time, being reminded by either the "up" or "down" trains which usually ran on time. A quick walk with neighbours' dogs would be known as "over the station" where you could cross over the bridge and up the path where violets and primroses grew on the banks, and later delicious wild strawberries. We then passed Mrs. and Mrs. Hutchison's bungalow and the house owned at one time by Mrs. and Mrs. Maynard. On one occasion our much loved and very nosey ginger cat managed to get

himself shut into a room above the garage there. After hours of searching we heard his plaintive cries and once he was released he led the way home confidently running over the railway bridge - tail held high. I guess he was more familiar with the station than we imagined!

In the mid-1990's the short length of straight, flat road leading to the station made an ideal place for driving practice when our daughter was learning to drive! One important memory about the station is the fact that many unlucky passengers did not realise that when coming from Victoria the train divided at Oxted, one part going to East Grinstead and the other to Uckfield, passing through Hever station on its way.

On numerous occasions there would be a knock on our front door and an anxious passenger would tell us they had found themselves on the wrong part of the train by mistake, often in the dark with no lights and, of course in those days there were no mobile phones. Bryan would then take them in the car to their intended destination - once going as far south as Eastbourne! I wonder if this still happens today?

On that first afternoon as we parked at the station we met a lady who was to become a good friend and neighbour - Mrs. Lily Philips. She lived in one of the two cottages opposite Sandfield Farm and shared her home with a lovely gentleman called "Henry" who had been a butler in a large house where they had both worked. Lily's lovely



A railway arch, Lydens Lane

and lively dog, “Susie”, was one of the dogs who regularly took me around the station! Next door to Lily and Henry lived Emily and Howard Hatcher who had previously run “Chippens Bank” - a guest house for retired actors. Emily was a brilliant cook. On that memorable and obviously busy Sunday afternoon we also met Mr. Figgett and his wife who at that time lived in Sandfield Bungalow. Mr.Figgett was the gardener for Mr. Alan Russell at Sandfield Farm and I think his wife worked in the house.

Sandfield Farm is, of course, now the home of Dr. Andrew Russell and his wife, Elspeth. For several years when they went on holiday I was entrusted with looking after their dogs, “Lucy” a black labrador; and “Mint”, a lively Jack Russell. One day I came home to find an exciting-looking parcel and on opening it I found a beautiful water colour painted by Dr. Russell. The note accompanying it said it was a thank-you for looking after “Lucy” and “Mint” over many years. It was, appropriately, a view of The Old Farmhouse from Hever Station and it hangs on our sitting room wall as a happy reminder of our years at Hever and of its very special station.



Hever Parish Council

It has been a very busy few months for me as I settle into the role of Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer. There has been so much to learn, I had very little idea of the variety of things a Parish Council has to do and also gets involved in. It is certainly a very varied job.

Our first meeting back after the summer break had good attendance by members of the public who were particularly interested in the item about Four Elms Pond which the Council, already the leaseholder, is hoping to buy for the community. All our Agendas and Minutes are available on the website and the next meeting is on the 2nd November in Hever Village Hall at 7.30 with a planning meeting beforehand at 7pm.

We were able to set up the Bulk Refuse Freighter again in August which was warmly welcomed by all. We have more dates scheduled in November, February and July so keep your eye out for the posters and www.hever.org for dates and times. There was also a Family Fun day in August at Four Elms field behind the school. The weather wasn't exactly warm, but not too wet either! These are organised and funded by SDC with help from Town and Parish Councils.

As I write this article I have received photographs of the new fencing around Four Elms pond. The Council provided this to enable the previous unsightly metal barriers to be taken away. I am sure you agree, it looks much better.



SDC have had 'smart' rubbish bins installed in all 3 villages. They include sensors that alert the Council when they need clearing and they hold more waste and so save money and cut out wasted journeys which will be friendlier to the environment.

We depend on and appreciate local interest and input into the issues that the Council should be focusing on. We exist to serve the residents so please continue to tell us what concerns you.

Any queries please contact the Clerk clerk@hever.org

Christina Divall
Clerk and Financial Officer
07733228748

schooltime

news from Hever

What a full, fun, first week back with the sun shining! Our brilliant children and staff are settling into the new 'old' routines of school life.

Children recognized the Covid restrictions at Hever were lessened and Year 6 were delighted with the privilege of sitting on the benches in worship and the 'buddy' system returning along with Oak Class responsibilities. Further Covid restrictions in schools, such as class and year group bubbles, have been lifted but protective measures will remain in place.



We held our whole school worship for the first time in the Hall since lockdown began nearly 18 months ago! Children learnt about Jesus' parable of the wise and the foolish builders and that 'rock' can withstand any storm. Children focused on the deeper messages of the story and that a life built on a firm foundation of faith will survive trials and tests.

We welcomed all of our new school children in Acorn Class and those who have joined across the school in different year groups along with our new staff members.

We had a very positive start with a visit from our KCC School Improvement Advisor who worked alongside our brilliant team to monitor provision at the start of a new term. Our students were praised for their "exemplary" behaviour by visitors this week. We are very proud of our Acorns who joined the rest of the school for lunchtime, enjoying delicious meals cooked by the Pollen Partnership. Pollen Partnership are creating a buzz as home



cooking and baking smells drift through school buildings with excitement and anticipation spreading amongst children and staff. It is joyful to see children forming such an enthusiastic relationship with food in their new dining experience.

The majority of the Year 6 children sat the Kent PESE Test (11+) this, as always, was well organised by the Year 6 team. The day was calm, the children were brilliant and very positive, displaying true Hever resilience.

Oak have made a super start to the year. They had a whole range of emotions coming back after the summer. They were excited to be role models for the school but also nervous about a big year

ahead. They have worked hard, excelling in their questioning in RE, leading to some wonderful discussion.

We are looking forward to an action-packed year and have lots of activities planned for the children. Just this morning we experienced a whole school science show and children entered a Planetarium dome. This created awe and wonder providing a unique science learning experience.

Joanna Stratton
Headteacher

news from Four Elms

No more "bubbles"

It is with great pleasure that we welcome the school community back to Four Elms. It has been a fantastic summer and we are all pleased to be reunited again. This new academic year brings the relaxation



of some of the previous restrictions in place for Covid-19: we no longer have separate bubbles for each class. It has been fantastic to see the children play with a range of children at break and lunchtime and, in particular, the return of whole-school assemblies. We now join together as a community every day for singing, stories about our school values and to celebrate all the amazing achievements of the children throughout the week. The children work incredibly hard and always strive to be the best that they can be and so it is lovely to celebrate this together.



Not only do we welcome back old faces, we also welcome our new Reception class of fifteen pupils. They begin by focusing on building relationships and developing their confidence as they explore their new school. They have been an absolute delight and we cannot wait to see them flourish in the coming years. Well done Reception!

The rest of the school have begun the academic year with some amazing learning experiences. Class Two's experience "Think and wonder, wonder and think" will require the pupils to become expert artists where they will display their work in an art gallery. Class Three have been invaded by Romans and kicked off their experience "What did Boudicca ever do for us?" with an expert delivering a Roman workshop for the children. Finally, Class Four's experience, "Extreme Earth" will involve the children understanding how, why and where natural disasters occur, with their final outcome being to create an open letter supporting those who are impacted by such disasters. We are looking forward to seeing the fantastic outcomes and will share these on the school website.

Katie McCann
Head of School

business directory

to add your company email the Editors.
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Accommodation		
Edenbridge Manor Care Home, residential, dementia and respite care		01732 492282
Agricultural Engineers		
Leppards	plant and machinery hire and more	01342 850888
Bookkeeping		
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 October

All three churches are open during the daytime and details of services are below and also at https://threespires.wordpress.com/2021/06/08/our-next-service/ We will also be recording one service a month asterisked and putting this on the website.

Date & time	Service details	Readings	Sunday
3 Oct 10am	Holy Communion St.Paul's Four Elms	1 Timothy 6:6-10 Matthew 6:25-33	Trinity 18
3 Oct 6pm	Choral evensong Holy Trinity Markbeech	Psalm 132:1-9; Jeremiah 7:1-11; Luke 19:1-10	Trinity 18
10 Oct 10am	Eucharist Holy Trinity Markbeech	Hebrews 4:12-16; Mark 10:17-31	Trinity 19
10 Oct 4pm	Harvest Forest Church St.Peter's Hever		Trinity 19
17 Oct 10am	Holy Communion St.Peter's Hever*	Hebrews 5:1-10; Mark 10:35-45	Trinity 20
24 Oct 8am	Said communion Holy Trinity Markbeech	Ephesians 6:10-20; John 4:46-54	Last after Trinity
24 Oct 10am	Family Service St.Paul's Four Elms	2 Timothy 3:14-17	Last after Trinity and Bible Sunday
28 Oct 6pm	Evening Prayer (in person) Holy Trinity Markbeech	Psalm 119:1-16; Jeremiah 3:11-18; Jude 1-4, 17-25	Last after Trinity
31 Oct 10am	Holy Communion St.Peter's Hever	Hebrews 9:11-14; Mark 12:28-34	All Saints
31 Oct 6pm	All Souls commemoration of faithful departed at Holy Trinity Markbeech	Revelation 21:1-6a; John 11:32-44	All Saints
7 Nov 10am	Holy Communion St.Paul's Four Elms	Hebrews 9:24-28; Mark 1:14-20	3rd before Advent
7 Nov 6pm	Healing service St.Peter's Hever	Isaiah 43:1-13; James 5:13-18	3rd before Advent

Our weekly Bible study will continue on Zoom at 6.00pm and Zoom Evening prayer on Thursdays at 6.00pm and we will meet in person on 28th October in Markbeech. For details of both please contact Simon. Please send Ana Roxburgh any names of those you love but see no longer and would like read out at the All Souls service on 31st October.

Read Simon's article for details of the Healing service on 7th November.

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

If you look through the burials registers in our churches, they go back many, many years. Most striking is the number of infant deaths in the more distant past and even up until the Second World War. But after that, infant deaths become rare and in our current century the ages at death continue to rise. Of course, this is born out by the official statistics reflecting the impact of the NHS and the amazing improvement in public health and medical care.

So why are we holding a healing service in St.Peter's on 7th November and who is it for?

If you read the gospels, Jesus' ministry in Galilee is full of healings. In Luke 10 he sends out seventy two to 'heal the sick and proclaim that the Kingdom of God is near'. Ever since then, Christians have been at the centre of healing and care for the sick and were behind the foundation of many hospitals from the middle ages onwards.

There is no conflict between modern medicine and prayers for healing. Some of you may remember Burrswood, in Groombridge where I was for some years a trustee. It was a registered hospital and centre for healthcare and healing, which, when it existed, offered full person care – body, mind and spirit and was founded by Dorothy Kerin who had herself experienced a miraculous healing in 1912. Although rare, I myself have witnessed a few such healings first-hand. I believe these are glimpses of the Kingdom of God which Jesus brings. In my experience, it is exceedingly rare for people to refuse an offer for prayer especially when they are unwell and the prayers placed on our prayer tree in St.Peter's are overwhelmingly for loved ones in need of healing.

Healing and wholeness services are part of the Anglican liturgy and you can read a detailed theological introduction at https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/wholeness-and-healing/wholeness-and#mm067

So who is our Healing service for? Well, everyone! I'm sure we all know someone who is unwell and in need of our prayers. The service will not put anyone 'on the spot' and I will invite everyone to come forward to the altar rail for anointing with oil and prayer for themselves or someone they know in need of God's presence and healing.

Such healing also may not be just physical or indeed mental. It includes emotional or 'inner healing', say, from hurts of the past as well as receiving forgiveness and the act of forgiving others which often opens the way to further healing and wholeness.
This is so appropriate as we emerge from the pandemic; please come along at 6pm on 7th November in St.Peter's, Hever.

God bless you all

Simon

news from the pews

Four Elms

The summer, despite fleeting by with not quite so many sunny days, has been followed by a glorious autumn. It was a real joy to see an abundance of beautiful butterflies on the buddlea bush and the second set of fledging swallows swoop over the garden. The sunlight at this time of the year throws glory on the wonderful stained glass windows in St. Paul's. As well as our lovely church we are blessed with a churchyard and quiet gardens. In the Christian calendar September is the season of Creation so it was, therefore, very apt and circumspect that our service on 5th September was dedicated as "Climate Sunday". While we can talk the talk are we all able to make the concerted effort to effect the change that will help us to be carbon neutral by the middle of the century? I find it difficult and more than a little challenging.

The beginning of October is Harvest Festival celebration. We have the Four Elms Village Family Harvest supper on 1st October in the Village Hall. Many people are offering help and hopefully others will attend. Although acutely aware we are not Covid free yet we hope this will be an occasion for our village to come together – but being sensible. Call 01732 700247 for tickets. The 3rd October is Harvest Festival in church when we bring gifts of thanks for the bounty of the earth. All these gifts, along with those of the school, will be sent to the Edenbridge Food Bank, with some being distributed to local people.

Congratulations to John Southworth and John Hodson for participating in the Ride and Stride event. (Even if it was on electric bikes!!!) Also a huge thank you to Pauline Crowhurst who has produced the most beautiful kneeler, in memory of her late father Mr Richards. Mr and Mrs Richards ran the local shop and post office at the Four Elms crossroads, so it is very fitting that we have this lovely kneeler in our church. Pauline is now working on another in memory of her mother.

Finally, please keep a watch out for services in the Benefice. St. Paul's Four Elms celebrate Holy Communion the first Sunday in the month – look at the notice board or the Link for more information

Christina Hodson
Churchwarden

Hever

We send warmest congratulations to our organist Angela and her husband Mathew on the arrival of baby Reuben. We look forward to meeting him in the very near future

Thank you to Jane Rosam and her team of bell ringers who represented Hever on the sponsored Kent Churches Ride and Stride event riding from Cudham to Hever last month. Thank you also to Jan Tolfree and Sue Harvey who have cleared out the flower arrangers' cupboard and the porch storage boxes and brought some much needed order!

With grateful thanks to Bridget Harris, we now have visitor guides published in colour with an updated section on the wording of the South Wall's secco. We will be completely update the guide over the winter and will be looking for fresh new photos for it from our residents and visitors for inclusion.

Our much loved Hever Christmas fair will take place in Thursday 11th November at Hever Castle so pop the date in your diary. Please contact Ana Roxburgh if you are able to offer help on the day.

We are still looking for volunteers to help with opening and closing the church on Fridays and Sundays, 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 Parish lunches are held on the second Thursday of every month starting at 12.30 and it is open to all the local residents and, as the days turn shorter, we will be serving vegetable soups once more. The next lunch will be held on Thursday October 14th, it would be helpful for catering, if you can, to let us know that you are coming.

Mandy Yarnold
Churchwarden

From the register

Baptisms

St. Peter's Hever on 19th September
Poppy Vie Joannau (parents Zoe & Samuel)

Weddings

Holy Trinity Markbeech on 4th September Robin Henderson & Lauren McKerracher

Internment of Ashes

at Hever on
2nd August Terence John Cook
21st August Clive Quitman

at Markbeech on
5th September Rose Stephenson

Markbeech

A fitful summer is rapidly turning into a dank autumn. Although there is still hope for a little Indian summer, we are already busy planning autumn and winter events, still under the shadow of COVID-19.

Harvest festival and supper are in October, donations of non-perishable foods will be very welcome and will all be sent to the food bank in Edenbridge unless you can tell us of any local need, (apparently they have a glut of tinned potatoes so something more interesting would be good): All Souls and the memorial services are early in November, and our exciting new Winter Fair is on the 27th November. From lunchtime to evening, in the barn at Falconhurst, it is to be a splendid event, a real variety of stalls, many from outside professional makers and crafts people, and delicious food and drinks in an atmospheric candlelit location. It will really set the mood for Christmas. Not to be missed.

If you would like to help with any of these events or with the activities of the Church in general please do let us know, any help, however small is always appreciated.

And if you have difficulty knowing what is going on Nicki or I will happily add you to our various mailing lists, and make sure you are in the loop!

Marielou Linklater
Churchwarden

Memorial Service

For LESLIE GRIGGS, Churchwarden of St. Paul's Four Elms will be held at St. Paul's Church Four Elms on Saturday November 6th at 2pm

Redefining weeds

The definition of a weed seems to be hard to pin down and as a gardener working in several gardens, decisions on which plants are welcomed in or swiftly removed often boil down to a matter of personal taste or opinion.

I'm currently the WRAGS trainee at Falconhurst, which is a visual treat with borders brimming with colour and abundance. This is the style of garden I prefer, over one that is manicured to perfection. Nicola, the owner and head gardener allows certain 'weeds' to stay such as milk thistle, teasels, wild carrot, yarrow, fox gloves, forget me nots and Verbascum. This allows the garden to blend seamlessly with the ruggedness of the surrounding countryside.There are of course many weeds like bindweed, docks and nettles, which we remove before they completely take over. I still respect some of these less aesthetically attractive weeds.

I've been an advocate of herbal medicine most of my adult life as I believe plants can be powerful allies for our health and allow us to take healing into our own hands. Since completing a horticulture course at Hever Castle over the last year I have been lucky enough to get to know our native plants (or weeds) in much more detail. I have learnt that a plant's usage is often noted in its botanical name. Any plant that has officinale in the name has traditionally been used for medicine. These are a few of my favourites but once you start familiarising yourself with weeds it's amazing to discover how many of them are edible or medicinal.

For example, **Taraxum Officinale** is the **common dandelion**. The leaves and flowers are edible and rich in vitamins and minerals. This plant has been used for centuries as a herbal medicine to treat a wide range of conditions, including stomach and liver complaints.

Nettles, otherwise known as **Urtica dioica**, are the wild superfood we all have around us. It's important to harvest them in the Springtime when they are tender and full of fresh nutrients. Nettles have been traditionally used to treat hayfever, eczema and urinary tract infections amongst many other minor ailments. **Comfrey** or **Symphytum officinale**, is also known as knitbone for its ability to help heal sprains, swellings and bruises when applied topically as a poultice. Comfrey also benefits the garden enormously and can be made into



a natural liquid fertiliser saving the gardener money and avoiding the use of a synthetic substitute.

Next time you pop out to the garden, why not try and identify some weeds as you go? You never know, you might come across something useful. Though if you have any preexisting health conditions or you're pregnant it's always a good idea to check with a qualified medical herbalist before taking herbs.

Ellie Gill

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	54				
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	73				
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	0				

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

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The views expressed in the articles in this magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the editorial team. There is no implied approval or recommendation for any service or event advertised in the magazine.

Copy for the November edition should reach us no later than **15 October 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

October diary

1st Oct	**Four Elms Harvest supper**, Four Elms Village Hall	7.15pm
1st Oct	**Markbeech Harvest Supper**, Markbeech Village Hall	7.30pm
4th Oct	**Midlife fitness class** (contact Fiona Coppard 0771 8588847) Hever Village Hall	10.30am
9th Oct	**Coffee Morning with a Bring and Buy** for Macmillan Nurses at Hever Village Hall	10.00am
11th Oct	**Midlife fitness class** (contact Fiona Coppard 0771 8588847) Hever Village Hall	10.30am
13th Oct	**Hever Hort talk 'Gardening with the Tudors'** Hever Village Hall	7.30pm
14th Oct	**Hever Parish lunch** Hever Village Hall	12.30pm
18th Oct	**Midlife fitness class** (contact Fiona Coppard 0771 8588847) Hever Village Hall	10.30am
23rd Oct	**Autumn recital** at Holy Trinity Parish Church Forest Row	12 noon
25th Oct	**Midlife fitness class** (contact Fiona Coppard 0771 8588847) Hever Village Hall	10.30am
2nd Nov	**Hever Parish Council meeting**, Hever Village Hall planning full meeting	7pm 7.30pm
11th Nov	**Hever Christmas Fair** Guthrie Pavilion, Hever Castle	10.30am – 3.30pm
24th Nov	**Hever Hort AGM**, Hever Village Hall	8pm
27th Nov	**Markbeech Winter Fair** at The Barn, Falconhurst (in aid of Holy Trinity)	12.30 - 7pm