December 2022

THE LINK









In this issue:

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- Sound and no fury on 3 December
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- Fungi galore
.... and much more!

Parish magazine of Four Elms, Hever and Markbeech

£1

Welcome to the December Link

THE LINK

What do carols and toadstools have in common? They are both loud, in their own way. This Christmassy Alice-in-Wonderland fly agaric starts to look like crème brûlée studded with almond flakes as it begins to fade, so very festive, so very poisonous. Actually, rarely lethally poisonous but very unpleasant and rather hallucinogenic (I'm told!).

Turning to carols, there are lots of options this month, in pubs, in the open air and in the churches, see the adverts in the following pages and come along! And the month kicks off with the last event of a year spent celebrating Hever Church's 900th anniversary, a concert at 7pm on 3 December which traces the history of Hever Church in words and music. Charles Talbot is the musical director, amongst the singers is our very own District Councillor Matthew Dickins and amongst the readers Castle chief executive Duncan Leslie. The programme is beautiful at times and lighthearted at others - do come along as it should be a good evening.

Looking forward to the coronation in May, those of you who read Bob and Mahala Turnbull's piece about bell ringing in last month's Link may be inspired to start learning by the national "Ring for the King" campaign which has just launched to recruit new ringers and to save church towers from falling silent.

We hope you enjoy this Christmas-themed edition and the Link team wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Joanna Wade



The Fly Agaric or Amanita Muscaria mushroom

Pets of the month

We are very fortunate in having three donkeys in our care. They all belong to the Donkey Sanctuary in Sidmouth and we are their "guardians".

We were lucky that our first two donkeys Chocolate and Biscuit were well trained to be both driven and ridden. They took part in many competitions, both locally and nationally. They also raised money for several charities by giving rides at fetes and events. Our (then very young) daughters gained so much by learning to handle and drive them. They headed many a Palm Sunday parade locally, and dressing up for the New Year's Day Parade across central London became an annual event for us all.

Chocolate died few years ago leaving Biscuit totally bereft. Everyone knows that the call of a donkey is eeeaww, but the cry of a grieving donkey is more like a bellow of pain. Biscuit bellowed for weeks until the Donkey Sanctuary were able to bring her a new companion, a piebald donkey named Hippo. She rather disliked him at first, but now they are inseparable. A little while later, we were asked to take on another donkey whose companion had died, and Yeti joined us.

The three, now elderly donkeys, live quietly, not doing a great deal but offering companionship and affection. They still have a little of the adventurous spirit. Just a few weeks ago they escaped and enjoyed a jolly little visit into the garden of Hever Rectory.

Claire Longley



Yeti, Hippo and Biscuit when the reindeer ate all the carrots

what I do - Tilly the Post Dog

Working dogs are rare in these parts but Miss Tilly is an exception. The Hever post dog is busy this month, walking the lanes on her rounds, laden with Hever Christmas post.

Whilst carbon neutral, she is expensive. Numerous person-hours are expended on her excessive interest in the smell of every other blade of grass (dogs far prefer gate-posts to open country), and she drops the odd letter when squeezing through gaps which are normally wide enough, but not with her increased width. Luckily her human postal assistant picks them up and waits patiently for the sniffing to end. And then of course there are the regular treats required to keep her going

Tilly, aged 12, says “I really enjoy my job as Hever post dog although I do feel that I am being slightly exploited when my fellow dogs are allowed out on a walk without encumbrances. The pay isn’t great as, given the range of skills required, I only get a few extra biscuits when really I should be getting more.



Tilly making a delivery



Tilly checks out opportunities for expanding her service to the Isle of Mull

Still, one can’t complain as I do get a lot of attention and there is job satisfaction in knowing that the recipient will eventually get their post, once I am ready to deliver it”.

When not on duty Tilly greatly enjoys running after and quickly destroying small squeaky balls, sleeping and, of course, food. The vets are pleased with her because she has lost a bit of weight.

The extremely efficient Hever Christmas post runs until 4pm on Friday 23rd December - just put your cards in the blue box at Brocas opposite Brocas Road - and leave the rest to Tilly and the other deliverers who do not charge for their services.

CHRISTMAS POST 2022

Send your Christmas cards to your neighbours postage free - and carbon neutral!

The deliverers walk, ride, cycle or drop off en route to elsewhere to get your cards to their destinations in good time - just put them in the blue box at Brocas opposite Brocas Road - and leave the rest to the people (and their dogs and horses!).

The box opens on Monday 14th November and the last post leaves at 4pm on Friday 23rd December

Out of the Darkness

– words and music to celebrate the 900th anniversary of Hever Church

Saturday 3 December
St Peter's Hever
7.00 pm

Tickets £10
e: heverbrocas@gmail.com
t: 07958 919631
or on the door.



PIANO AVAILABLE FOR COLLECTION IN HEVER

The piano is a Shiedmayer upright. Free to anyone who wants to collect.
Please contact Tara 07834561523



Boxing Day Meet at Chiddingstone Castle

Come and join your local hunt on foot at Chiddingstone Castle on Monday 26th December for our Festive Boxing Day Meet where you can enjoy the spectacle of the horses and hounds arriving at 11am.

The earlier you arrive at Chiddingstone village the nearer you can park, so please leave in plenty of time.

Please support this event by purchasing refreshments, served from 10am within the Castle grounds. This will benefit the Hunt and the Castle and help this time honoured countryside tradition and beautiful historical building continue for generations to come.



Cows on a misty morning

Christmas in Kano

Dust! Not something I spend much time thinking (or doing anything) about, but this could not be ignored. My family had arrived from hot, humid and often wet Lagos, where we had just purchased a sailing dinghy, to what seemed like another country, but was in fact Kano, an ancient walled city, the largest in Northern Nigeria and 700+ miles from the sea.

It was on a Christmas Day that my husband and I had met in Nigeria; Ian was working for Unilever on importation, distribution and manufacture, while I had been employed by Shell to teach in their production company school in Port Harcourt. Our first home was in Lagos. Like British expatriates everywhere, at Christmas we tried to maintain as many of our customs as possible. Being in a predominantly Muslim part of the country, we were not allowed to introduce Christian teaching in the Primary School, even at Christmas. A concession was made, however, for Santa Claus. For many years he had arrived on a camel, but after the incident when he and the camel had parted company in an abrupt and somewhat undignified manner, a tractor and trailer were substituted.

The tradition of giving gifts to those with whom one did business persisted and we soon got used to our garden becoming home to an array of chickens, turkeys and on one occasion, a goat (our steward, Jimmy, would despatch the turkeys by first giving them gin, "to relax them", he said.) Hmm..?

For decoration, a branch from a casuarina tree acted as a fir and with some plastic holly and a few baubles, gave a festive air. We had brought our piano north with us, so continued our custom of inviting families on Christmas Eve to sing carols, after which we all went along to St. George's, the little Anglican Church, for the midnight service.



Doreen's mother with the Emir's fourth wife and her children

But back to the dust. Northern Nigeria has 3 seasons: hot and dry with temperatures over 35 degrees, a short rainy season when, within a fortnight, a lawn appears where not a blade of grass had hitherto been seen and third the Harmattan. From December to March the wind blows down from the Sahara bringing dust so thick that it obscures the sun, lowering the temperature, but penetrating tightly

closed windows and doors; wiping down furniture and sweeping floors is a futile exercise. I found it a blessed relief from the torrid heat and at social gatherings over Christmas we enjoyed the novelty of standing around braziers in gardens or on patios, perhaps even wearing a sweater!

Sadly, I doubt that life for expats in Kano will be like that anymore. Terrorists have brought fear and division between Muslim and Christian, where none existed and where we had all lived peaceably side by side. Who knows if St. George's still exists? Only the dust is the same.

Doreen Beattie



Doreen hosts a Christmas party complete with donkey

From the Hever Christmas Fair committee

Thank you everyone for supporting our annual Christmas Fair at Hever Castle! It was a gorgeous day and we had about 500 people visiting and buying Christmas presents. We are really grateful for the continued support of Hever Castle & Gardens and their professional team and to this year's sponsor SoulFit & Spa based at the Hever Castle Golf Club.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered on the day, to all those who baked, prepared sandwiches and endless cups of tea, to Jane who helped us put signs up, to Laura and Megan who worked their magic on Instagram, to John and Richard for their help early morning and to the Hever School choir who sang carols and opened the fair. We felt the impact of the economic climate, but we still managed to raise in excess of £4,400 and we are delighted that the money will be put to good use by the Hever School and St Peter's Hever.

Ana & The Hever Christmas Fair Committee

A brief history of St Peter's Hever

St Peter's Hever was founded in about 1122, the closing years of the reign of King Henry I, the fourth son of William the Conqueror. He was famous for dying of a surfeit of lampreys (or eels), and also for having only a daughter to succeed him - Matilda, who fought her cousin Stephen for the throne and triumphed when her son Henry II was crowned as undisputed king.

The shape of the church is Norman but much has changed within it over the years. The arches of the north aisle date from the 1200s and the main part followed in the mid 1300s. In 1419 the beautiful Margaret Cheyne was buried in the chancel, immortalised by her elegant brass (more about her in a later edition). In her time the tower with its soaring shingle spire was completed. It houses six bells, the two earliest from 1703, which ring out for services and celebrations. Then came the Bullen family who built the Bullen chapel with its Tudor fireplace and where Sir Thomas Bullen, Queen Anne's father, is buried. The architectural historian Sir Nikolaus Pevsner describes his brass as "one of the finest 16th century brasses anywhere". There is also a simple brass cross commemorating his son Henry who died in childhood.

Hever's most notable rector (so far!) was Nicholas Heath, here for a few years in 1531 whilst helping Cranmer translate the Bible into English and before he became the last catholic Archbishop of York. He was imprisoned in the Tower for refusing to take the oath of allegiance to Elizabeth I but she liked him enough not to execute him!

After the Tudors had departed from Hever the Waldegraves owned the castle and their tutor, William Todde who died in 1585, is remembered in a brass on the windowsill in the Chancel.



A Little Owl in the Meade-Waldo window

In 1621 Churchwardens Brooker and Lottenden emblazoned their names on their new pulpit together with the text "Fear God - Honour the King". If they were still around when Charles I was executed by Cromwell in 1649 they must have felt rather vulnerable, though the Waldegraves in the Castle, who had raised a regiment in support of the King, were more vulnerable still!

Little did Brooker and Lottenden know that they would save the church's only glimpse of wall painting from destruction: a fearsome fragment from Ezekiel, painted in about 1615, was discovered behind it when the pulpit was moved during the major Victorian restoration of 1894.

The Bullen chapel also houses memorials to the Meade-Waldo family, the next owners of the Castle. Colonel Edmund introduced the Little Owl from Morocco in 1874.Happily it proved to be a benign new arrival, a bit like the parakeets we see today - look for the owl in the Meade-Waldo window in the north aisle. The Meade-Waldos preferred their mansion at Stonewall Park to Hever and rented out the castle. There is also a very sad memorial in the north aisle to their last-in-line who died on active service on Palestine in 1946 and from whose death his parents never recovered.

Most of the stained glass is Victorian, the East Window was installed in memory of the Charringtons, the brewing family, who lived in How Green



St Peter in Gavin Astor window

House and the south wall of the nave is to the eminent engineer Sir Frederick Bramwell who died in 1903 and is buried in the churchyard.The large painting in the chancel is of Christ before Caiphas by Reuben Sayers (1815-1888),his paintings feature in a number of public art galleries. The painting in the north aisle is “After the School of Tintoretto”.

And then came the World Wars. The “vernacular” wrought iron tower screen was forged by the local blacksmith John Harrington whose son Edgar died at Passchendaele in 1917;and other WW1 dead are commemorated on plaques on the walls and in the roll of honour. In the churchyard are the war graves of two Yarrow boys, also of How Green House, Peter who died aged 19 in the HMS Hood disaster in 1941and Gordon, who was in the RAF and died in the same year aged 24. Spare a thought also for the Boer war and “Shoeing Smith” Alfred Nicholls of the XII Royal Lancers who died in South Africa in 1899- his plaque is near the entrance to the vestry.

The Astors came to Hever in 1903 and there is a memorial window in the north aisle to the first Viscount Astor, and one in the Bullen Chapel in memory of Lord Gavin Astor who sold the Castle and its estate in the early 1980s and died in 1984- St Peter holding the keys to heaven features prominently. And finally...there is a window in the north aisle to Peter Dinnis, young farmer from Delaware who died tragically young in 1974 aged 24.

The church has seen much joy and celebration too. Indeed it has seen so much, for so long, come and see it for yourself at the concert on 3 December....

Joanna Wade

Carols at St Paul's Four Elms

Sunday 18th December 3pm

With the Edenbridge Town Band

Candle Lit Churchyard



In the Churchyard – weather permitting

Followed by Mulled Wine & Mince Pies

Crisis Together we will end homelessness

Collection for Crisis at Christmas

HEVER CAROL SUPPER

Friday 16 December

All are very welcome at the Carol supper, a friendly and informal meal in the Village Hall starting straight after the Nine lessons and carols service

Tickets £10 from Mandy Yarnold: 01342 850028.





Swans at Chartwell

News from Hever Primary School

Hever Primary School has thoroughly enjoyed embedding its values of Love, Respect and Wisdom during this Autumn term. One may think that within a school the value of Wisdom comes as par for the course, which it does, we are proud of how our pupils focus in lessons, their achievement in tests and how they are enjoying our newly revived curriculum. We have also been working on the wider aspects of Wisdom. We all know the phrase 'a wise old owl,' but wisdom can come from simple acts made every day like making the wisest choice, choosing the best path, reacting with understanding, seeking guidance from 3000-year-old Proverbs and making food choices to live a healthy life. Our sports coach is passionate about developing pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles and many children have explained to me why this is important for them. They understand the science of calorie retention, burn rates during exercise and what happens when we overload on sugary items. I look back at my own education and reflect on how the focus has changed dramatically over the years and how our approach now has led to wise young 'owls' making life choices for the better.

What I have found remarkable at Hever, is that when Wisdom is being developed within our pupils, the other values develop naturally too. A 'love' for sports and exercise with the wisdom of why. When looking at Black History Month, our pupils gained a deeper respect and love for each other. Our school staff facilitated many conversations to raise awareness of the diverse world that we live in and how wonderful this diversity is. Our pupils developed sympathy for those affected by prejudice and a passion to make sure these mistakes and maltreatment never happen again. What a powerful generation they can be, fuelled with these emotions and knowledge, making wiser choices to create a world of love and respect for all.

Our school values were once again shown during our week focusing on Remembrance. At the service I attended these words were read: Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all. Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honourable. Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone. (Romans 12:15-21)

It struck me that this is exactly the message we give the pupils at Hever, in everyday scenarios, be it on the playground, in the classroom or when socialising online. At a grassroots level we are proud to be guiding our pupils to be 'happy and proud to succeed,' not just as wise academics, but as wise citizens of tomorrow who are equipped to make a change.

Gemma Hunter
Interim Headteacher

Hever Parish Council

Your Hever Parish Council
PROUDLY REPRESENTING HEVER, MARKBEECH & FOUR ELMS
Any questions? Please contact clerk@hever.org

News from Hever Parish Council

Have you noticed a public footpath in the Parish that is blocked, overgrown, needs maintenance or has a misleading sign? Did you know you can report any public footpath issues on the Kent County Council website, just search for Public Rights of Way Map

Given the recent wet weather here is some useful information on preparing for severe weather and flooding:

• Regularly check road or surface water drains are not blocked near where you live. If they are, use the KCC website tool "Report a Problem on a road" to get it cleared
• If there are any water courses that are blocked, or partially blocked with rubbish or weeds, report it to the Environment Agency via email enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk or telephone 03708 506506.
• The Kent Prepared website offers advice on how you can protect your home or business, including a 'Personal Flood Plan' template and links to Environment Agency documents.
• Register to Floodline to receive the latest information for your area during a flood by calling 03459 881188.

You can also find more information on the Governmentwebsite: https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/what-to-do-in-a-flood.

Reporting anti-social behaviour: If you have any concerns please call 01732227000 or community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk.

Book or manage a coronavirus vaccination: If you are registered with a GP in England use the NHS website to book a 1st,2nd, 3rd or booster dose of the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine. You can register with a GP online if you do not have one.

Hever Parish Council Meeting Dates for Spring 2023

Thursday 12th Jan - Markbeech Village Hall

Tuesday 7th March - Hever Village Hall

Planning Meetings will start at 7.00pm followed by full Council Meeting at 7.30pm. All are welcome to attend.

Finally, many households are facing financial challenges. There are Warm Spaces available, which are safe and friendly public places where people of all ages can go to comfortably spend time reading, studying, chatting with others and meeting new people in their community. Please see the listings of places such as Bridges in Edenbridge, on the Sevenoaks District council website, search for Warm Spaces or call 01732 227000

The Councillors and Clerk of Hever Parish Council would like to extend a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year to all.

Mrs Rachael Turner
Clerk and RFO
077849 12645 clerk@hever.org

business directory

to add your company email the Editors.
Just £25 per annum

Accommodation		
Edenbridge Manor Care Home, residential, dementia and respite care		01732 492282
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
Catering		
Gorard Dean Catering -	all events undertaken call Melanie Dean	07710 005 635
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
Dog grooming and walking		
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 personal training for midlife women and beyond		0771 8588847
Funeral Services		
Alex Jones	funeral directors & monumental masons	01732 860047
Garage Services		
Stuart Rieman luxury passenger car servicing & repairs		01883 715 037

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 Roper Chartered physiotherapist	home physio visit, pilates classes	07771 925346
Paul Marro	Cognitive Hypnotherapy www.htherapy.co.uk	01732 808211
Step by Step	foot health practice	07786 038149
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
Relyon Cars	local taxi company	01732 863 800
Venue Hire and Weddings		
Falconhurst Weddings		01342 850526
Markbeech Village Hall		01342 850328

Church in December

Thankfully it looks like we are back to a normal programme of Christmas services this year.
Please see https://threespires.wordpress.com/2021/06/08/our-next-service/

Date & time	Service details	Readings/ theme	Sunday
4th Dec 10am	Holy Communion St.Paul's Four Elms	Isaiah 11:1-10;Romans 15:4-13; Matt 3:1-12	2nd in Advent
4th Dec 6pm	Contemporary service St.Paul's Four Elms	Light	2nd in Advent
10th Dec 5.30pm	Hever Family Christmas carols in St.Peter's		
11th Dec 8am	Morning Prayer St.Peter's Hever	Isaiah 35:1-10; Matt 11:2-11	3rd in Advent
11th Dec 10am	Eucharist Holy Trinity Markbeech	Isaiah 35:1-10;James 5:7-10; Matt 11:2-11	3rd in Advent
11th Dec 3pm	Forest Church at St.Peter's Hever		3rd in Advent
11th Dec 5.30pm	Carols at the Kentish Horse		3rd in Advent
13th Dec 6.30pm	Carols in the Four Elms Inn		
16th Dec 6pm	Carol service at St.Peter's Hever	Nine lessons & carols	
18th Dec 10am	Holy Communion St.Peter's Hever	Isaiah 7:10-16;Romans 1:1-7;Matt 1:18-25	4th in Advent
18th Dec 3pm	Outdoor Carols at Four Elms		4th in Advent
18th Dec 6pm	Carol service at Holy Trinity Markbeech	Seven lessons & carols	4th in Advent
24th Dec 5pm	Crib Service at St.Peter's Hever		Christmas Eve
24th Dec 11.30pm	Midnight communion at St.Peter's Hever	Isaiah 62:6-12; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14	Christmas Eve
25th Dec 9.15am	Christmas Family Eucharist at Holy Trinity Markbeech	Isaiah 52:7-10; John 1:1-14	Christmas Day
25th Dec 11am	Christmas Family Communion at St.Paul's Four Elms	Isaiah 52:7-10; John 1:1-14	Christmas Day

Our Advent course: 'Sharing the Christmas Story' is on Zoom at 6pm and in person at 8pm on Mondays – do join at any time and Zoom Evening prayer is on Thursdays at 6.00pm.
Please contact any of us if you would like prayer or to talk to someone during this time or any other help.

Rector
Revd.Simon Braid
07802 809849 and
simonbraid@icloud.com

Wardens
Hever
Mandy Yarnold
01342 850028

Four Elms
Christina Hodson 01732700247
Richard Bennett 01732862971
Markbeech
Nicki Talbot 01342850526
Marielou Linklater
01342 850579
Administrator
Ana Roxburgh
beneficeemail@gmail.com

from the rector

A few years ago my wife and I went to a restaurant in London called 'Dans le Noir.' It was a very strange experience as one eats in complete darkness! The idea is to help us re-evaluate our taste and other senses. I'm afraid we just found the whole experience very weird and unnerving.

Light and darkness are at the heart of Christmas: daylight is short and all around there are Christmas lights and candles. It is a wonderful and magical time. Indeed light is a powerful symbol of hope whereas darkness has the idea of fear for children, hidden crimes and problems for travellers. We speak of 'light at the end of the tunnel' and maybe, with the economic and other global problems, it's what we are looking for.

The opening of St.John's gospel is read at services at Christmas. It is a poem which speaks of God in Jesus coming to the earth: what we call 'the incarnation.' We read: In him (Jesus) was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it... The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.

Notwithstanding all the good things for which we are thankful, especially in the peaceful and beautiful place in which we live, it isn't hard to conclude that there is a lot of darkness in the world – we see the events in Ukraine and across the world, the cost of living crisis hitting the weakest hardest and our struggle to make progress in saving the planet from climate change. Even if we take an honest look into ourselves, we know we need saving. In 1910, in response to a question in the Times 'What's wrong with the world?,' the writer, GK Chesterton, famously wrote: 'Dear Sirs, I am.'

On 4th December at our contemporary service in Four Elms, the children will be presenting a short sketch 'The Light of the World' illustrating this very point. The pre-Raphaelite artist Holman Hunt's painting 'the Light of the World' depicts Jesus holding a lamp and knocking at a door covered in brambles. At the foot are the words from Revelation 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me. It's the invitation to us all that comes each year at Christmas. Are we willing to invite Jesus into our lives and to experience his transforming love this Christmas. Do come to any of our services and find out more.

Wishing you all a peaceful Christmas full of joy

Simon

news from the pews

From the register

Baptism
6 November Four Elms
Choe Ann Phillips

News from Hever Pews

We have a packed month with a number of different ways to celebrate the birth of Christ and look forward to seeing you at one or all of these services.

This year there will be a carol supper after the 9 lessons and carols on Friday 16th December at the Hever village hall. There will be a hot main course followed by home-made mince pies and fruit. We are still looking for volunteers to make the mince pies. Tickets are £10per head and can be booked by calling me on 01342850028. Please let me know if you require a vegetarian meal or have any allergies in advance.

The Songs of Praise episode featuring vignettes of Christmas preparations at St Peter's will be broadcast on Sunday 18th December. The next Parish lunch will be held on Thursday 8th December starting at 12.30.We normally have between 18and 24 people and serve soup, fruit and a delicious home-made cake. Everyone in the Parish is very welcome but it would be helpful for catering, if you can, to let us know that you are coming or have any special dietary requirements.

We wish Helene Bligh lots of success and happiness in her new job as Head Teacher of Hever CEP School. I would like to express a big thank you to all the people who help keep St Peter's Church in tip top condition throughout the year.

If you have a little time on your hands and would like to volunteer in some form then please do get in touch. The more helpers the merrier as it lightens the load for the other volunteers

Wishing all our readers a very happy Christmas

Mandy Yarnold
Churchwarden

News from Four Elms pews

November arrived with much needed rain, although the heavy downpours do mean back to catching the belfry leaks in Four Elms Church. As we enjoy the mild weather with autumnal walks and reduced heating in our homes, let us remember that our good fortune is others misfortune. Climate change causes extreme conditions in many parts of the world, floods, droughts and wildfires are evidence of the need for us all to be aware of the precarious state of our planet's climate.

We welcomed Chloe for baptism, following the new pattern of Family Service. It was a joy to see small children enjoying Susie's activities in the children's corner during our Holy Communion Service.

The Act of Remembrance marks all who have given their lives serving their country and this year we have to remember especially the conflict in Ukraine. It is a tragedy that after 100 years we have another European

conflict. Two servicemen who are remembered on the memorial have been recognised as Great Uncles to a resident in Ide Hill who has been able to leave a memorial poppy to them.

Returning to the mention of leaks in the church. I have been given a wonderful book "Old Parish Life". It mentions that the Warden was paying "for a drink to men for removing a chest in ye vestry when water came in ...3s" Not sure how much 3s. is in today's money but nowadays the Wardens tend to do this themselves!!!

So if you wish for tradition, we have it here in St. Paul's. Please come to Carols, 6.30pm in the Four Elms Inn on Tuesday 13th December and our traditional Carol Service in the Churchyard on Sunday 18th December at 3pm followed by mulled wine and mince pies. Happy Christmas to everyone who reads the Link.

Christina Hodson
Churchwarden

News from Four Elms pews

Markbeech is a place where people live for a very long time. Children are born here and return with their own families once the lure of village schools and country life overcome their days of late nights and wine bars. The Church is the centrepoint of this village offering a place to celebrate, worship and say our sad farewells. We are proud that an unusually (according to CoE statistics) high proportion of residents worship here regularly.

So when people do leave this village, they are missed, and sadly we lost two very dear households recently: Mary and Tim Boyle, who lived at Jersey Cottage for more years than I can remember, and Paul and Charlotte Houlton, who lived next door at Lower Buckhurst for nearly thirty years, left for pastures new. Both couples have played massive parts in village life and they will be greatly missed. We are very happy to welcome two new families: Laura and Nick at Jersey Cottage; and Jon and Kathryn at Lower Buckhurst. We hope you will be very happy and look forward to seeing you soon!

Christmas is now looming fast. The choir are busy practising for both the 'Hever 900' concert on 3rd December and our Carol service on Sunday 18th December at 6pm. If you are a singer, it's not too late to contact Charles Talbot to join the choir (charles@falconhurst.co.uk). Charles spends considerable time choosing a new and interesting programme each year. It is always beautiful music, sometimes challenging and a spiritual high of the year for a singer. The service is well attended with rousing congregational singing too, followed by plenteous supplies of mulled wine and canapes at the Village Hall.

To remind you of two other important Christmas Dates: Carols at The Kentish Horse, with many thanks to Trevor, at 5.30 on 11thDecember; and our Christmas Day service at 9.15am.

Nicki Talbot
Churchwarden

gardening

Another year has flown by and we are now well into autumn. Our great oaks seem reluctant to give up their leaves, maybe due to the extreme heat and dryness of the summer they are now making up for lost time.

Many of the fruits & plants that struggled through the dry period are recovering, in particular bush fruits that seemed destined to produce a poor crop of berries have plumped up and sweetened in this period. We have had a bumper crop of raspberries which fortunately freeze very well. If you know what you are doing September and October have produced a fantastic crop of mushrooms this year which can be dried or frozen for use later in the year.

The summer drought led to us losing a number of established shrubs throughout the garden leaving gaps in the flower beds, time now to think about replanting maybe with more drought resistant plants. A good garden centre can give you advice in this department. Now that the ground has softened this is an opportunity to plant out those spring bulbs directly in the ground or in pots to give you a blast of cheerful colour in the coming spring months.

This list of jobs in the garden at this time of year is long but reaps benefits in the long run. In particular pruning back roses to protect them from strong winter winds and to cut out dead shoots and congested growth to encourage strong new growth in the spring time. Remember to prune with a clean angled cut using sharp secateurs.



Bolete mushroom

With global warming to the fore we still need to consider frost protection for some of our less hardy plants, that might be as simple as putting pots in a sheltered corner or covering in fleece, but may mean putting them into a greenhouse or shed.

We have been successful in recycling tubers such as begonias and re-growing them in the spring. Simply lift them before the first real frosts remove, foliage and loose soil, wrap them in newspaper and store in a dry frost free shed. Plant them out in pots in March either on an indoor windowsill or in a heated greenhouse and they will soon be sprouting up again for planting out once we are frost free. Last year we had an 80% success rate.

Wishing you all a joyful time in your gardens till the buds of spring reappear.

David Dutton

Benefice monthly rainfall in millimeters

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Four Elms	**2020**	66	106	55	38	6	45	21	42	35	142	59	88
	2021	134	46	30	6	58	79	45	54	41	121	21	78
	2022	22	55	27	7	58	12	7	36	79	75		
Hever	**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	41	139	14.5	87.5
	2022	16.5	44	22.5	2	62	19	15	39	86	58		
Markbeech	**2020**	96.25	140	47.5	40	10	49.25	31.6	36	54.6	163.75	40.5	95.6
	2021	120	40	51	4	55.5	38.5	48	0	39	141	11.5	86
	2022	21	80	23	12	55.5	21	3	0	82	76		

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
Margot McArthur 03000 414817
Margot.McArthur@kent.gov.uk
Sevenoaks District:
Matthew Dickins 07910 328110
Hever Parish:
Rachael Turner
07784 912645
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The Link Team

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Benefice website threespires.wordpress.com Community website www.hever.org

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Copy for the January edition should reach us no later than 12th December

Subscriptions cost £5 pa if delivered by a volunteer. For payment there are two options:
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

December Diary

26 Nov	**Markbeech Winter Fair,** The Barn, Falconhurst	
2 Dec	**Wildlife gardening club** – composting – Bore Place	10-1pm
3 Dec	**Concert of words and music "Out of the Darkness",** St Peter's Hever	
8 Dec	**Hever Parish lunch**, Hever Village Hall	12.30pm
8 Dec	**Astronomy Evening** (adults £8 children £6) Bore Place	6.30-8.30pm
10 Dec	**Carols in the Cowshed** (adults £3 children £2) Bore Place	3-5pm
10 Dec	**Carols in Hever**, 4.30 at the Henry, 5.30 in the church	
11 Dec	**Carols at the Kentish Horse**, Markbeech	5.30pm
13 Dec	**Carols and drinks at the Four Elms Inn**	6.30pm
16 Dec	**Carol Supper** (after carol service at St Peter's) Hever Village Hall	
18 Dec	**Christmas Carols and mulled wine** at St Paul's Four Elms	3pm
23 Dec	**Hever Christmas post** - last post leaves	4pm
26 Dec	**Boxing Day meet**, Chiddingstone Castle	11am
12 Jan	**Hever Parish Council meeting**, Markbeech Village Hall	7.30pm
13 Jan	**Hever Film Club** – 12 Angry Men, Hever Golf Club	7.30pm
10 Feb	**Hever Film Club** – Foul Play, Hever Golf Club	7.30pm
7 Mar	**Hever Parish Council meeting**, Hever Village Hall	7.30pm
10 Mar	**Hever Film Club** – The Duke, Hever Golf Club	7.30pm