May 2023

THE LINK







In this issue:

- The Coronation
- Farewell Matthew Dickins
- A Churchill painting in Hever
- Festival time
- Whisking away with a zester

...and much more!

Parish magazine of Four Elms, Hever and Markbeech

£1

Welcome to the May Link

So this is Coronation month... Hever's bells will be ringing in a nationwide "Ring for the King" and tickets for the live screening at the Hever Festival Theatre in the Castle are still available from the box office (07379 488477) though the covered seats are in short supply. The coronation starts at 11am and gates open at 10am. There will be crown and bracelet making for children, and do bring a picnic to eat afterwards whilst watching the procession return to the Palace for the balcony scene.

In other news sadly rumours of the Edenbridge Post office closing are true. Paydens is apparently closing all its post offices and ours will shut some time between November 2023 and February 2024 unless a new post master and premises can be found in Edenbridge. Hopefully better news for the pool; some round the country now warm their water by capturing heat generated by data centres which whirr away constantly thereby sustaining our insatiable need for internet access, but consuming much energy. In time perhaps ours will use that system too - that there are creative minds out there with such ideas gives me much hope for the future.

There is good news too - Hever Castle has just refreshed its ground floor to reflect life in the time of the Astor family. In celebration of this and the 40th anniversary of the Guthrie family's purchase of the castle, it has acquired a painting of the Italian Garden by Winston Churchill. He was a neighbour and friend, making frequent visits from his home in Chartwell.

So, time to get the supper going - Coronation chicken of course, the dish invented in 1953 to celebrate the coronation of Elizabeth II - chicken with mayonnaise, curry powder and, nowadays, mango chutney and sultanas. Delicious!

Joanna Wade



pet of the month

Hello, I'm Tweed, a Labrador/ Retriever, probably named after the River Tweed in Scotland. My puppy years were spent in Aberdeen where I had fun with my mistress, going to the shops, getting on and off buses and trains and meeting up for walks with other dogs. You see, I was going to be a Guide Dog, helping blind people to get about. I was looking forward to that!



When I was one I went to the Training Centre in Forfar to learn how to look after a blind person. I enjoyed the training but one day I heard someone say I hadn't been concentrating enough and would not be suitable. I was so disappointed! What was to become of me?

Fortunately a family arrived at the Centre soon after, looking for a pet, and they chose me! I found myself living in a house with a big garden and plenty of country walks nearby and lovely streams and rivers to paddle in. Every day children would stop at my gate on their way to school and give me a pat.

Many years later I noticed large cardboard cartons being filled with items from the house and guessed that something BIG was happening, so I wasn't surprised when I, and my bed and toys, were bundled into the car and we set off for a new life in England! I now live in Hever and like it just as much as my old home, but I miss the children and it was a bit too hot last summer.

Even aged 14 I still enjoy a leisurely walk, though I do spend a lot of my time sleeping.

with help from Doreen Beattie



desert Island whisks

Which kitchen implement would YOU save from the waves?



Melanie Dean is not only a trained and experienced caterer but also the daughter of our very own Jan Tolfree. She loves cooking and has catered many parties and other events over the years (see her regular advert in this magazine) - so her well-stocked kitchen is full of useful gadgets. I would have thought she'd be spoilt for choice when picking out what to take with her to the land of sand and coconuts but, like an arrow, she headed straight for her Microplane grater/zester. THIS is the implement of implements

She uses it for all sorts of things from grating cheese or chocolate to lemon zesting.
Top Tip: Use this amazing tool for speedy garlic grating. Grating the garlic releases the essential juices and oils so makes it smooth and pungent!

Melanie caters for important events including parties, christenings, celebration of life teas and as a private home chef working in clients' kitchens preparing healthy homemade food for the week ahead – cooked and fridge ready or frozen for later.

QR code to follow Gorard Dean Catering on Instagram

@GORARDDEANCATERING

All residents of Hever, Four Elms and Markbeech are welcome to a live screening of the coronation of King Charles III at the open air Festival Theatre in the grounds of Hever Castle on 6th May 2023 Entry by pre-booked ticket only (limited to 5 per applicant): £2 per adult, children under 16 free, from boxoffice@heverfestival.co.uk or ring 07379 488 477

Doors open one hour before the ceremony begins. Bring a picnic or buy light refreshments in the grounds

With thanks to Hever Residents Association, Hever Parish Council, Hever Castle and Hever Festival Theatre

The Coronation



High fashion at Hever Castle

what I do

Alison Bundy PR Manager
Hever Festival Theatre

I first start thinking about the new season at The Festival Theatre in January when Ailsa, the Festival Director, starts to fill me in on who will be performing. This year is particularly exciting as it's the festival's 40th birthday and we are the longest running open-air theatre in the South-East which is something to be proud of and despite recent events we haven't taken a year off!

I write my first press release in March just before tickets go on sale. This gets sent to all the local and national press including radio and television stations and online influencers to create a buzz about the programme which includes opera, plays, jazz and classical music, speakers, comedy, family favourites and the best tribute artists. Releases are then sent monthly. I have a lot to talk about this year as we are holding our first ever event at Hever Castle Golf Club with Dinner Jazz (24 June) and we are also taking family events to The Orangery at Chiddingstone Castle on Sundays in July and August.

I always like to shout about the variety of venues used in the Hever Castle grounds, not only the Two Sisters' Theatre, but also the castle can be your stunning back drop while you picnic on the main lawn and enjoy Illyria's production of Pride and Prejudice (3 Aug). Anne Boleyn's Walk provides a more relaxed setting in the woods perfect for family shows like Robin Hood (2 June) and David Walliams' Bad Dad (30 Aug) and The Loggia, Italian Gardens is very atmospheric for Shakespeare's, As you Like It (27 May) and a new ballet about the life of Florence Nightingale (10 Aug). Audiences can also enjoy a Titipu Tea in the Guthrie Pavilion where singers from Charles Court Opera will serenade a programme of Gilbert & Sullivan (4 & 18 July).

I work mainly from home, but I love any chance to go to the office for meetings with local editors and journalists and show off the stunning gardens of Hever Castle. They all say how lucky I am to work where I do, and I couldn't agree more.

Tickets are on sale now heverfestival.co.uk 07379 488477



Photo by David Bartholomew.

reasons to be cheerful in May 2023

- Thanks to all who donated cakes for the churchyard Easter Egg hunt we were able to give £70 to the Disasters Emergency Committee's Turkey/ Syria earthquake appeal, that's emergency food for three families for ten days.
- JAC, the cuckoo I sponsor, flew 1,893 miles in four days and is now well advanced in his journey from the Congo back to Llangollen. A nameless cuckoo has already been heard near the Eden in Hever.
- After a worrying decline in the puffin population around our coasts, there has been an increase this year with 42,513 counted on Skomer off the coast of south Wales.
- A new bit of knowledge (for me anyway!): America was named after the Italian navigator Amerigo Vespucci, a notable Italian navigator who died in 1512 having discovered the "New World" lying between Europe and Asia.
- The mobile phone has had its 50th anniversary (not everyone will be delighted by that one!).
- Egrets have been seen in our local fields in profusion and larks are singing above Whistlers and Delaware,
- Halo hairdressers in Edenbridge, and probably many others - are recycling our hair - the Green Salon Collective makes it into "Hair booms", tubes filled with hair placed on the shores of beaches to stop oil spills spread into the sand.
- And plastics from the oceans are now being recycled into watches and sunglasses.
- Fudge, the puppy I am sponsoring with Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, is coming along very well. Not only is she learning to hear the door bell and alert her owner if the smoke alarm goes off, she will be a companion who helps mitigate the profound isolation which many deaf people experience.
- And we have an extra bank holiday this year for the Coronation!

Joanna Wade



The easter egg hunt in Hever Church was topped off by Jo Cockerill's Peter Rabbit cake.

Easter in Hever and at the Hever Hort Spring Show









Matthew Dickins Profile

Matthew Dickins, a profile of our long serving district councillor as he steps down from his post as portfolio holder for finance and investment and deputy leader of the Council.



Matthew Dickins may not be a career politician because being a District Councillor, even a hard working and effective one, isn't a career, but he does give a good impression of one with his wide vision of society's trends and his ability to avoid answering the question!

Matthew was born near Witney in Oxfordshire in 1990 but soon moved to Horseshoe Green Farmhouse in Markbeech which was his home for 28 years. His childhood dream was to be a chef. His education started in the capable hands of Mrs Roberts's Nursery school and from there to Tonbridge School via Yardley Court prep school. He was a treble chorister in the Tonbridge School choir and despite practising every Thursday and singing every Sunday evening his passion for music was born and remains strong. He has played the organ in all the benefice churches and has many fond memories, particularly of Derek Blows' services in Markbeech. The church was ingrained in his upbringing.

After enjoying Politics at A level and setting up an IT business with the Conservative Party as a client, providing councillors with their own websites, it was his work assisting Bill Shea's son Paul to campaign in the 2010 election for a seat in East Ham that really opened his eyes. There, as he went from door to door, he witnessed what is now known as modern slavery and saw the practice of hot bedding (tenants using the same bed in a lodging house by sleeping in it at different times of day) as a part of everyday life. Paul didn't win and East Ham became the safest of Labour seats but then, as Matthew maintains as a mantra for political life, 'you win some and you lose some'. His IT business gave him an understanding of the work of local councillors and the Tory Party encouraged him to consider joining up. With the seed sown and talks with Ann Cleeve (formerly Roberts, see above) in her capacity as chair of the MB Conservative Association and to Gerry Ryan, then our SDC representative, he was persuaded to stand in the Sevenoaks Northern ward which had never returned a Tory councillor. He won, in 2011, by 7 votes. At

the 2015 election he faced a dilemma, to stand again in a challenging ward that he had much enjoyed serving or put himself forward in his home ward of Cowden and Hever. As we know, to our great benefit, he chose the latter, feeling that the most useful way to learn the needs and concerns of an electorate is to live among them.

As any keen reader of his Link column will know, District Councillors may work long hours but they do so for a very modest stipend aimed at covering expenses, so the IT business continued as did new work, startlingly referred to as a side hustle (a first for the Link) with Greg Clark MP for Tunbridge Wells. In time and with only so many hours in a day this latter role prevailed and Matthew ultimately became a Senior Parliamentary Assistant fielding many of the thousands of enquiries MPs receive. Although he wasn't successful in helping the aggrieved constituent exasperated by unwelcome automatic Microsoft Windows updates, he did manage to help many embroiled in complex problems concerning social services, HMRC etc. The awful case of sexual abuse by a hospital mortuary worker required Matthew to liaise with the Speaker of the House, opposition MPs and many agencies to produce a political response to the immediate issue and a plan to try to ensure that such abuse never recurs. He feels that politics gets a bad rap as disputatious when in fact effective work is largely collegiate.

The typical next step after 13 years of political life is to work as a lobbyist or to stand for election to parliament but the former doesn't appeal and there's no obvious vacancy to enable the latter so pastures new are the order of the day. Matthew plans a return to Oxfordshire seemingly to be nearer the dentist who has served him since the age of 3!

I asked about memorable failures and exposed Matthew's inner Socialist – the damaging effect of treating property as an asset class and investment rather than a home has rendered this part of the country unaffordable for the many. The failure in question being that of not finding an affordable housing solution for Four Elms. The successes : being the only district in Kent to have a dedicated fly tipping team even though their work is still an uphill struggle, and his work with the High Weald area of outstanding natural beauty that tries to ensure that alterations to our landscape are sympathetic and sustainable. And what of the cheffing dreams? Cooking does seem to feature in Matthew's life but he failed to disclose a signature dish and seems more enamoured of pursuing his studies with the Wine & Spirit Education Trust. I suspect that he may not be done with politics yet but with a betting slip for Rory Stewart to lead the Conservatives in his drawer perhaps a life in gambling should be ruled out.

Bridget Harris

Hever Parish Council

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

Elections - Nominations for the local elections closed resulting in Hever Parish Council having an uncontested election. However, there is still the election of District Councillors on 4th May. Please do remember to take your photo ID with you to vote.

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Handyperson wanted - We are seeking a self-employed Contractor to do ad-hoc maintenance across the Parish to complement our current Caretaker. So, if you are handy at repairing a notice board, putting up signage and maintaining equipment and have Liability Insurance then please contact the Clerk for more information clerk@hever.org

The UK government's new Emergency Alerts system is now live. The system will enable people to be contacted via their mobile phone when lives are in danger and will be used to warn you in the event of emergencies, such as severe flooding. There was a national test of the system on Sunday 23rd April. Emergency Alerts are sent to all compatible mobile phones within an area of risk. They do not track your location, need your phone number, or collect personal data. Only the government and the emergency services will be able to send them. If you do not have a mobile phone, you will still be kept informed through other channels. If you get an Emergency Alert on your phone, you will hear a loud, siren-like sound. A message on your screen will tell you about the emergency and how best to respond. You will be able to check an alert is genuine at gov.uk/alerts. You can opt out of receiving emergency alerts; for more information on how to opt out please go to gov.uk/alerts

Edenbridge Leisure Centre - Sevenoaks District Council has made further progress and agreed in principle for Everyone Active, national leisure provider, to take over the operation of the three leisure sites that recently closed. They will now send in specialist teams to restart the maintenance and begin a deep clean of the sites. It is hoped they will announce reopening dates soon.

Parish Assembly - The Parish Assembly will be held at 7pm on Thursday 25th May 2023 in Markbeech Village Hall. Do come and join us for this free event. It will be an interesting and informative evening with speakers from a variety of areas. Refreshments will be provided and a good chance to meet your Councillors and neighbours from across the Parish.

Next Meeting: Tuesday 16th May – Annual Meeting - Four Elms Village Hall - 7 pm full meeting and Planning at 8.15 pm

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

Hever Parish Council

Wanted! Handyperson

A contractor is needed to complement our current caretaker to carry out occasional ad-hoc rouĈne maintenance and repairs within the three villages of the Parish.

Tasks will include repairing, cleaning and maintaining Parish assets such as; noĈce boards, bus stops,fencing and play equipment, displaying signage, and helping to keep Hever Parish looking presentable.

The successful self-employed contractor must have their own insurances, including Public Liability, and appropriate tools, be willing to work outside, have transport to travel across the Parish and have good customer service skills.

For further details please contact Rachael, Parish Clerk and RFO via clerk@hever.org or 077849 12645



MEET THE VILLAGE!

Saturday 3 June between 10.30am and 1pm

Hever Village Hall

If you're interested in learning more about our village community then come to "Meet the village".

Various village organisaĈon, clubs, groups and small businesses will be showcasing what they do. Come and meet their members and who knows - you may even be interested enough to get involved!

We will be serving tea, coffee and cakes at the drop in event.

The Hever Village Hall commiĔ ee will also be displaying a model showing what the new hall will look like and asking you how you would like to use it.

If you would like a table to exhibit, please contact Lisa Cowell on 07917 307 452.

Do come and join us to help build, support and grow our local community.



The loggia fountain Hever castle

News from Hever Primary



Easter garden

You may have seen the beautiful decorations, made by the pupils of Hever Primary School, on display at St. Peter's church over the Easter season. Our Easter worship, led by our Year 6 Leading Lights and accompanied by our choir, was a joyous celebration of this special time. Later in the day, the children worked collaboratively, with the older year groups supporting the younger ones to make eco-friendly Easter bonnets; it's amazing what you can create from a cereal packet, a few feathers and a lot of enthusiasm!

The Easter bonnet parade launched our PTA Easter Fair, where parents enjoyed a performance of Easter Jubilation by our newly formed dance club. Despite an unsettled week, the sun shone and the children enjoyed an Easter Egg tombola, bouncy castle and other stalls, accompanied by the Easter bunny. It was the perfect end to a busy and purposeful term.

Looking ahead, we have lots of exciting activities planned to enhance the children's learning in the summer term. We are already making plans for welcoming the new children and families who will be joining us in September. We also have a few places in other year groups so if you are new to the area, we would love to show you all our friendly school community has to offer; contact the office on office@hever.kent.sch.uk to arrange a visit.

Helene Bligh
Headteacher



Easter worship

News from Four Elms Primary

The children at Four Elms Primary School had a lot of fun in the lead up to the Easter holidays. Our PTA ran an Easter 'tough mudder' on the field whereby the children worked as a team to climb, run and crawl through and over obstacles. As the children completed the course in their house groups, there were a mixture of ages working together which really highlighted our value of Community. We were also incredibly proud to witness the children showing compassion and supporting one another. As compassion was our character value for the term, the children spent the remainder of the afternoon in their houses exploring what compassion meant to them and created posters and stories demonstrating this.

Our sports teams, which continue to be led by our dedicated parent community, had another successful term. Within football, we were winners of the EDSA football tournament and were joint winners within a Girls tournament. After being invited to Hever in January for a cross-country race, we hosted the return using the Four Elms cricket pitch as our course. Great fun was had by all and we showed off some great sprint finishes. Our netball team have also been doing incredibly well and won their most recent match 9-0. It has been fantastic to be involved with local schools and we are proud of what the children at Four Elms have achieved.

During the last term we also celebrated World Book Day where the children and staff came to school dressed as their favourite book character and strutted down the catwalk in our annual parade. The week was launched by a visit from Steve Tasane who engaged the children in the wonderful world of poetry. The children then worked hard to create their own poems and took part in a Poetry Slam at the end of the week. The children also enjoyed a hot chocolate and pyjama afternoon where they spent the afternoon snuggled up with some books. Teachers shared their favourite books with the whole school and it was a great opportunity to really promote the love of reading.

We are looking forward to a great term full of new experiences, residential visits, sports day and Coronation celebrations!

Jess Fermor
Head of School

Business directory

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

Building & Design Services

Albourne roofing	slating, tiling, flat roofing, repairs	01892 836777
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
Hever Painters, quality decorating service	heverpainters@gmail.com	07530322629
Jem Pickard	painting and decorating	07850 371558 or 01732 863062
M & M Walker	painting & decorating, plumbing, heating	07774 218 684
Nadia Mulder art for interiors, murals, paintings etc		07960 610018
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

Education

Markbeech Nursery	for children 2-5 years	01342 850403
Chiddingstone Nursery School	for children 2-5 years	01892 871315

Fitness

Hever Castle Golf Club	golf course	01732 701017
Chiddingstones' Tennis Club		07434841421
Falconhurst Cricket Club	cricket and training sessions	07434841421
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
Soul Fit	personal training, classes, injury clinic and spa	01732240398
Tennis by Nature kids	tennis coaching by Gary Markham	07802 842554

Funeral Services

Alex Jones	funeral directors & monumental masons	01732 860047

Financial Advice

Adam Tyrrell	Wealth Management	07769642590

Funeral Services and Burial Grounds

Alex Jones funeral directors & monumental masons	01732 860047
Eden Valley Woodland Burial Ground on the Kent/Surrey border	07802 630012

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

Paul Marro	cognitive hypnotherapy www.htherapy.co.uk	01732 808211
MindArk	psychotherapeutic counselling for individuals & couples	07557 472580
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

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Church in May

Please watch out for any late changes with details of services below and also at https://threespires.wordpress.com/2021/06/08/our-next-service/

Date & time	Service details	Readings/theme	Sunday
7th May 10am	Coronation Holy Communion at St.Paul's Four Elms followed by drinks	Isaiah 40.12-17,25-31; Luke 22.24-30	Easter 5
14th May 8am	BCP Morning Prayer at St.Peter's Hever	Genesis 8:20-9:17; 1 Peter 3:13-22	Easter 6
14th May 10am	Eucharist at Holy Trinity Markbeech	Genesis 8:20-9:17; Psalm 66:7-20; 1 Peter 3:13-22; John 14:15-21	Easter 6
14th May 3pm	Forest Church at St.Peter's Hever followed by Rogation walk at 4pm	Creation	Rogation Sunday
18th May 7pm	Deanery Ascension Day service at St.Luke's Chiddingstone Causeway		Ascension Day
21st May 10am	Holy Communion at St.Peter's Hever	Acts 1:6-14; 1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11; John 17:1-11	Sunday after Ascension
21st May 4pm	Four Elms at Four Family service	Ascension	Sunday after Ascension
28th May 8am	Said Holy Communion St.Peter's Hever	Acts 2:1-11; John 14:15-31	Pentecost
28th May 10am	Family Service at Holy Trinity Markbeech	Holy Spirit	Pentecost

Our weekly Zoom and in person Bible studies continue on Mondays at 6pm and 8pm and Zoom Evening prayer on Thursdays at 6pm. For details of all these please contact Simon or see our website or Facebook page.

Note that Forest Church on 14th May starts at the earlier time of 3pm and will be followed by a short Rogation walk starting at 4pm. 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

Administrator: Ana Roxburgh beneficeemail@gmail.com

Wardens

Hever – Mandy Yarnold 01342 850028

Four Elms – Christina Hodson 01732 700247 & Richard Bennett 01732 862971

Markbeech – Lynnie Rowan 01342 850776 & Marielou Linklater 01342 850579

our rector's thoughts

This month marks the coronation of King Charles III. For most of us – me included – this will be a first experience, as I was born shortly after our late Queen's coronation in 1953.

There has been quite a bit of speculation about how this might differ from 1953. The world and our country has changed dramatically over seventy years and it looks as if this coronation may be a little less grand and more inclusive, whilst maintaining the many ancient traditions. One particular change will be the fact that it will not feature the Koh-i-Noor diamond in our new Queen's crown. This diamond is controversial because of the circumstances in which it was acquired: it was seized by the East India Company in 1849 and presented to Queen Victoria. A spokesperson for the Indian prime minister, Narendra Modi, was reported as saying it "brings back painful memories of the colonial past". Nevertheless, the coronation, which is code-named 'Operation Golden Orb', will still feature many priceless jewels – the Queen will wear a modified version of Queen Mary's crown, made for the 1911 coronation and it will be full of grandeur and pageantry.

Notwithstanding these changes, at the heart of the coronation is still an Anglican service of worship. It is conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who will anoint the King with oil hearkening back to the anointing of Kings of Israel in the Old Testament. But there is one item given to the King which is described as 'the most valuable thing that this world affords'. You may be surprised to know that this 'most valuable thing' is the Holy Bible – a rather humble gift amongst so much wealth and power.

The Bible remains the world's best seller but, whilst it may be the most purchased book, I suspect it may be one of the less well read. It is in the Bible we find what Jesus describes as 'the pearl of great price' which is a description Jesus gives to the Kingdom of God: that is his peaceful and gentle rule in our lives. In what we Christians call 'The Word of God', we encounter the 'Word' who was 'with God at the beginning of the world' – that is Jesus. So I encourage you all to pick up a Bible and read it – maybe with some help and I can point you in the right direction - or consider joining our weekly Bible study on Monday evenings.

At the coronation, when the Bible is given, it is said that it is to keep your Majesty ever mindful of the law and the Gospel of God as the Rule for the whole life and government of Christian Princes. May God save the King!

God bless you all

Simon

Markbeech

After a week of hail and thunder and winds, I have at last spent some hours outside gardening, reading and painting - and feeling hot! Spring has been such a long time coming this year but suddenly there is real warmth and loads of light to banish the winter blues. It's a reminder of how important the environment is to our well-being in both mind and body. Living here is such a gift. Through my open door I can only hear birdsong, (blissfully the Gatwick bound planes must be approaching from the other direction today) and the air smells sweet and soft. Tomorrow I am going to London and I will be breathing air laden with fumes and toxins, but we can't afford to be smug here in our haven. The extremes of weather we all now experience are just the first signs of what devastation could follow.

Unless everyone does what they can to protect our planet the consequences are unthinkable. There is a speaker coming from Christian Climate Action to St John's church in Marsh Green on Saturday 13th May at 10.00am, and I think it should be a wonderful opportunity to make sure we are all doing all we can, and to find out ways to make our environmental efforts as effective and efficient as possible. The church has a real part to play in promoting and educating responsible climate behaviour. Attitudes in this country are still lagging behind our European cousins, and we simply must do more. Perhaps the only good thing to come out of the cost of living crisis might be a decline in consumerism?

On a cheerier note, I am delighted that Lynnie Rowan has now joined me as churchwarden and will be contributing to these pages next month. Our first event in May is the coronation and a celebration service in Four Elms on May 7th at 10.00am with the Markbeech choir supplemented with singers from all the benefice. If you would like to join in please contact Charles Talbot or me. Charles is planning some lovely music which will make the service very special. Do check the diary on the website for everything else that is happening.

Marielou Linklater
Churchwarden

Hever

Thank you to everyone who lent a hand to make our Easter services so very special and such a success, from the flower arrangers, brass polishers, bell ringers, our organist Tim, the readers and intercessors, the school children who created the Easter garden and the donkeys, Simon and Mr Tumble, who lead our Palm Sunday procession. I would like to give a special mention to the children who took part in the readings and intercessions, you did a fantastic job.

The rogation walk will take place on Sunday 14th May after the Forest Church, which starts at 3pm.
The Christian Aid breakfast will take place on Tuesday 16th May at St Peter's Church between 8.30 and 9.30am. We will be serving a continental style

breakfast or, if you have a little longer, a breakfast bap as well as hot drinks, hopefully, outside in the sun! Please do come and support this great charity.

The next Parish lunch will be held on Thursday 11th May starting at 12.30. We normally have between 18 and 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.

On Saturday 9th September we will be holding our ever popular Barn Dance and BBQ once more so pop the date in your diary and start practising your "dosey does".

Mandy Yarnold
Churchwarden

Four Elms

While not being an early riser by nature, the Easter Sunrise Service is worth getting up for. There is something contemplative about the quietness and stillness of an early Easter morning and for Christians celebrating the risen Lord. I hope those who attended the service at St. Paul's felt the same.



The pleasure of spring bulbs, especially bluebells, still gives a frisson of joy and at the start of May we begin to feel that the warmer months are closer. The first cuckoo (eagerly awaited however he/she arrived in the nest) but as my Scottish grandma would say, "ne'er cast a clout til May be out". While many wait with dread for heating bills to arrive, at least we may keep warmer. May is Christian Aid Appeal month. Having been to various presentations by recipients of Christian Aid, usually from co-operative communities in poorer countries, one has to stop and remember how fortunate most of us have been in our lives. While there are obviously problems in the UK at the moment, this is nothing compared to the poverty of so many, through natural disasters, famine and war. May we pray that leaders may make peace and may we all be aware of the damage we are doing to our precious planet.

Another coronation. King Charles has been a patient heir apparent and now he becomes King at an age when most are enjoying retirement. On Sunday 7th May, our 10am service at St Paul's will celebrate his and the Queen's coronation. The wonderful Markbeech choir will be singing and a toast to the King will be served after the service. Please join us.

Christina Hodson
Churchwarden

gardening

I am old enough to remember a big hit song from the late 1950s called 'The day the rains came down', by Jane Morgan. It would have made an appropriate musical backdrop to most of March, which had 123mm of rain in Markbeech, about five times the level for the same period last year.



Although the rain had left the grass in front of Hever village hall waterlogged, it did not detract from our Spring Show on 1st April, with the hall replete with a large variety of daffodils, tulips and many other spring flowers. There were also some splendid flower arrangements and the domestic classes were well represented with vegetarian sausage rolls, jars of lime marmalade and eight Simnel cakes. Cup winners for the show were Sue Harvey, Jane Rosam, Jean Mason and Emma Scott. Well done to all of them and to all who entered, in whatever class. It always amazes me the huge variety of shapes and colours of daffodils displayed but, in our garden, we do not have a large selection of the more unusual ones. So I have made a note to try some different varieties, with 'Tahiti' and 'Replete' top of the list.

At our last Hever Hort talk, on 19th March, Everett Leeds spoke about all things Clematis, including hints and tips on taking cuttings. His advice is to choose a vine with a thin, new shoot growing at the end, and take cuttings which have a couple of leaves as side shoots. Put in a pot of Vermiculite (I use a mixture of Vermiculite and seed compost), cover with a clear plastic bag, leave in a warm place but not in direct sunlight, and wait! Also, do not over water. I took five cuttings of our Clematis Montana plants immediately after the talk and they seem to be thriving at the moment. Once established, they can be moved into individual pots, ready for planting out in the autumn.

Speaking of plants, 13th May, 10am, sees our annual plant sale, either in Hever Village hall or on the grass outside, weather permitting. George Payne provides a lovely selection of plants and these are supplemented by a variety of flowers and vegetables grown by members, all at very reasonable prices. So come along and pick up a bargain, but don't leave it too late! Happy gardening!

Doug Bowern



Benefice monthly rainfall in millimeters

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
					FOUR ELMS							
2021	134	46	30	6	56	79	45	54	41	121	21	78
2022	22	55	27	7	58	12	7	36	79	75	201	86
2023	60	9	105									
					HEVER							
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	85.5	58	195	80
2023	80	2	111									
					MARKBEECH							
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	226	114
2023	90	4	123									

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

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Margot McArthur 03000 414817
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Sevenoaks District:
Matthew Dickins 07910 328110
Hever Parish:
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Copy for the **June** edition should reach us no later than **15 May** 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

May diary

Until 10 November	**Exhibition: Catherine and Anne: Queens, Rivals, Mothers**, Hever Castle	
26 Apr	**Garden Workshop**, Falconhurst	10am - 1pm
28 Apr	**Bat Walk**, Bore Place, Adult £9 child £7,	7 – 9pm
30 Apr	**Stonewall Park** NGS Open Garden	2 - 5pm
30 Apr	**Yoghurt Making Workshop**, Bore Place, Adults £28,	10.30am – 1pm
6 May	**Coronation live streaming**, Hever Castle Festival Theatre	
11 May	**Hever Parish lunch**, Hever Village Hall	12.30pm
12 + 13 May	**Hardeep Singh Supper Club**, Falconhurst Barn	7.30pm
12 May	**Bat Walk**, Bore Place, Adult £9 child £7,	8 – 9.30pm
13 May	**Talk** re Christian Climate Action, Marsh Green URC	10am
13 May	**Hever Hort Plant Sale**, Hever Village Hall 10am	
13 May	**Introduction to Beekeeping**, Bore Place Adults £61,	10am – 4pm
14 May	**Rogation walk** after Forest Church at Hever	4pm
16 May	**Breakfast in aid of Christian Aid**, St Peter's Hever	8.30 - 9.30am
16 May	**Hever Parish Council AGM**, Four Elms Village Hall	7pm
19 + 20 May	**Wild Seasoning Supper Clu**b, Falconhurst Barn	7.30pm
20 May	**Bulk Refuse Freighter**, Four Elms Village Hall	9.15 – 10am
20 May	**Bulk Refuse Freighter**, Hever Bottle Bank	10.15 – 11am
20 May	**Bulk Refuse Freighte**r, Markbeech Village Hall	11.15 – 12noon
24 May	**Garden Workshop**, Falconhurst	10am - 1pm
25 May	**Parish Assembly**, Markbeech Village Hall	7pm
29 May	**Falconhurst NGS** Open Garden	11am - 5pm
8 July	**Four Elms Village Fete**	
15 Aug	**Family Fun Day**, Four Elms Field	
9 Sept	**Barn Danc**e Hever	