January 2024

THE LINK







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- The Good Old Days at Edenbridge Surgery
- A lucky escape for Lulu
- Hever Hort blossoming into 2024
- The night of the long knives

...and so much more

Parish magazine of Four Elms, Hever and Markbeech

£1

Welcome to the January Link

Happy new year! What a splendid autumn it turned out to be. Dramatically orange trees and water sparkling in the sunlight. Teresa Agate took the lovely photo below - but now, as I write this, the morning doesn't ever want to get light, dawn pushing only very tentatively through the darkness. So it is good to be able to celebrate that the longest night is behind us

Drama of a different kind when a Virgin Boeing 787 became the first commercial plane ever to fly the Atlantic powered only by 100% sustainable fuel. It was a mixture of waste fat and low-carbon kerosene and it worked! Other good news includes that the Vodaphone network is powered 100% by renewable energy and I am using an eco sketchbook made entirely of reclaimed coffee cups.

And so to words - Oxford University Press has announced that the Oxford Word of the Year 2023 is the colloquial term "rizz", which is defined as "style, charm or attractiveness". I prefer this to Cambridge's word “hallucinate”, inspired by artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT, Bard and Grok. They can generate plausible prose, but often do so using false or made-up ‘facts’. They ‘hallucinate’ in a confident and believable manner. So the word "hallucinate" has a further meaning:

'When an artificial intelligence (a computer system that has some of the qualities that the human brain has, such as the ability to produce language in a way that seems human) hallucinates, it produces false information.'

As the Link starts the new year, please get in touch if you have an article to contribute - for example, we are always looking for reptiles or other unusual Pets of the Month. Also, the 80th anniversary of D-day is coming up on 6 June and maybe you have a D-day story, perhaps passed down from an older generation.

In asking for tales of a reptile I am not hallucinating in any sense of the word and I hope you agree that the Link has plenty of rizz! And maybe some fizz!!

Joanna Wade

thelink@hever.org

THE LINK



pet of the month

This is Lulu, the lucky Romney lamb. A farmer near Westerham was given a few orphan lambs (also known as "sock lambs") by a neighbouring sheep farmer to rear for the table. Lulu (it is never a good idea to name sheep if you are going to eat them) was particularly sweet and friendly, becoming a favourite with locals walking across the footpath as she often skipped up for a chat with people and their dogs.

With departure date looming they asked if she could be saved. She was then held to ransom for an extortionate amount of money to save her from the freezer. The locals got going and raised the money which was then given to the village charity in aid of improvements to the children's play area. There were winners all round except for the farmer who lost out on the lamb chops after spending considerable amounts on lamb milk.

She then set off to her safe haven in Hever, a hobby farm which never eats its animals and pampers them instead. Here she is arriving in Hever in style, nicely decorated to celebrate the occasion. So - happy new year from Lulu who is now set to live contentedly to a ripe old age!

Joanna Wade



desert island whisks

which kitchen implement would you save from the waves?

The Cook's Knife

On enrolling for the diploma course at Leith's School of Food and Wine I received an apron, a chef's hat and a knife roll containing, to misquote Tommy Lee Jones in Men in Black, the last set of knives I would ever need. I used these tools of my trade every day in preparing whatever deliciousness we were cooking.

As time rolled on, my most used knife grew mis-shapened from years of sharpening and at some point the tip broke off. It was becoming more difficult to buy a carbon steel knife in England as they were going out of fashion, I was told, because they stained easily. I was due to visit Tokyo for work so I decided that I would visit one of the world-renowned, Japanese knife shops in Tsukiji and buy myself a new chef's knife. The tiny room was filled with knives of every shape and size. I selected a large chef's knife which was carbon steel and made with one piece of carbon steel. The store assistant took it away to be sharpened. I, belatedly, wondered whether I would have a problem getting it home in my case! I wrapped it in my clothes and put it in the centre of my case. Happily I collected my case at Heathrow without any queries but I am not so sure it would be so straightforward nowadays.



The best knives are made of carbon steel because this is easier to sharpen than stainless steel. Should you be unfortunate enough to cut yourself, a sharp blade means a clean cut which will heal quicker. Stainless steel knives are used to cut fruit to prevent discolouration. Ideally knives are made of one piece of carbon steel and balance on your finger at the junction of the handle and blade. Keep your knife sharp, some products blunt a blade more quickly that others, for example, fish skin. When chopping, place the tip of the knife on the board, held in place by your hand and you rock the knife moving the ingredient to cut it whilst keeping the tip in contact with the board. The fingers holding the ingredient ought to be tucked in so if the knife slips you are less likely to cut yourself.

Mandy Yarnold

what I do

A New Year symbolises a fresh start, a time when we can wipe the slate clean and begin again, but let's not think about 'New year, new you' as aren't we already who we are meant to be? Instead let's focus on exploring and creating new experiences for ourselves.

For a new goal to succeed you must have the right positive outlook and for me this begins with connecting to and moving the body. I am passionate about the role movement and exercise plays in our lives. Moving the body not only benefits our physical health but our mental wellbeing also. Everything in nature moves, grows and expands. Our bodies want to do this too. Taking time out of your day to exercise can enhance productivity, creativity and generally make you feel happier!

My love for physical movement started when I was young, and it was after training at The London Contemporary Dance School that my passion for Pilates and other movement forms grew. In 2006 I went to Germany to train in an exciting method called The Gyrotonic Expansion system. This





unique movement system uses a specialised piece of equipment to support and guide the body while moving. Using techniques from yoga, dance, gymnastics, swimming and Tai Chi the movement of Gyrotonic encourages our muscles to strengthen and stretch at the same time. Improving core strength, balance and coordination this system focusses on spiralling and twisting the body creating increased movement through the spine. We often lack circular movement patterns in our everyday life, especially if you work at a desk and this is what makes Gyrotonic stand out from other movement forms.

Everyone can benefit from Gyrotonic. From top athletes and sports professionals to anyone needing rehabilitation from an injury. The equipment is fully adjustable to suit the needs of the individual. As one of my 70-year clients says: I have a 70-year-old body which can do things that my 60-year-old body could not do, thanks to Gyrotonic. My goal is to share my knowledge of movement and facilitate this for clients. If this New Year you would like to try something new for yourself then join me at my small home studio in Markbeech and start finding freedom within.

Stephanie Bates
Gyrotonic at the Barn
07803 876 816

Coronation - an entertainment

Those lucky enough to attend St Peter's church Hever on a rather chilly November night enjoyed an evening of words and music fit for a king or queen. Local impresario and Link stalwart, Joanna Wade, brought together talent from near and far and provided us with a glorious celebration of all things royal.

The audience were charmed by A A Milne, moved to tears at Dido's lament and the Skye boat song and roused to flag waving fervour through all three verses of the National Anthem.

Markbeech community choir were in fine fettle, as ever, and everyone involved performed to a really first class standard. Although it is unfair to single anyone out I would like to make special mention of Hever's organist, Tim Higgs, who did a really wonderful job singing, playing the organ and piano and arranging some of the music. It was a concert of wit and panache and on top of all of that even raised over £500 for the church.

Thanks and congratulations to all involved.

Bridget Harris



Please pay your subscription NOW

Many thanks to all those who have standing orders or other arrangements in place to pay your sub in the course of the year. If you haven't, please pay now. We had to chase up a lots subs last year, please don't wait to be chased again. If you aren't sure of your position please contact Bridget by phone or email, contact and payment details on page 21.

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

Many thanks

the history of edenbridge surgery - part 1

As the surgery moves from West View to its new home, Dr Simon Morrison looks back at the history of the practice.

Once upon a time in Edenbridge, GPs were single-handed, white and male; often they had a military background and enjoyed traditional rural pursuits; they practised from their homes with little regulation or supervision. Times have changed. When the current surgery relocated into the new, £13.5 million Edenbridge Memorial Health Centre, it was as a Primary Care Team of 10 doctors (seven female), two nurses, two nurse practitioners, three health care assistants, seven receptionists, two care co-ordinators, four dispensers, a clinical pharmacist and a pharmacy technician, a physio and a backroom staff of seven. The administrative layer above primary care, currently called the Integrated Care Board (the shape and nomenclature change frequently, offering at least an illusion of progress!) imposes a range of targets and closely monitors numerous activities.



The Memorial Hospital by Mike Court

In 1937, Dr Terence Brand established a practice at his home, Littlehatch, in Crouch House Road. He worked in the Royal Navy throughout WW2, after which he sold the house and practice to Dr Ivor Hughes. Dr Hughes was a bluff northerner, and the move down from Bacup in Manchester to the leafier and wealthier local commuter belt probably took a bit of an adjustment for doctor and patients alike. He, in 1957, recruited Dr Andrew Russell (ex-Royal Navy National Service; fishing, shooting, water colours, Old Surrey and Burstow Hunt) to help, and they moved the surgery to the Old Dairy at the corner of the High Street and Stangrove Road.

Important to the practice was its relationship with the Memorial Hospital. From the end of WW2 until 1988, significant operations, about 400 a year, took place at the hospital. Distinguished London surgeons, including general and orthopaedic surgeons, and gynaecologists, visited to perform the operations. A local GP, with a Diploma in Anaesthetics, acted as anaesthetist, a role filled by Dr Coulthard, and then Dr Russell and Dr Milner. The in-patient beds at Edenbridge, 26 in number at its zenith, were run by the GPs. As well as post-op patients, GPs would admit patients with a wide variety of problems and care for them until discharge. This was enormously important for the patients and very fulfilling for the doctors involved.

Dr Joe Coulthard was a sole practitioner at Oakfield Farm, Crockham Hill, and then South Riding, Den Cross. He was the only GP in Edenbridge throughout WW2 - five years on call, night and day! He was known to visit private patients in a horse and trap. After the

war, he was joined by Dr Dennis Broadhead (ex-Royal Army Medical Corps, horse racing) and immediately went on an extended holiday, leaving a surprised Dr Broadhead to run things alone, despite no GP experience; he was also required to administer anaesthetics at the hospital, for which he had no training. They practised from West View. Dr Broadhead's fondness for the gee gees occasionally got him in trouble: a patient waiting for him to visit Edenbridge Hospital to discharge him was surprised to spot him on TV at the races! After retirement he was replaced by Dr John Shaw (Royal Army Medical Corps National Service, gardening, photography, woodwork: he made the altar at St Peter and Paul's Church in Edenbridge). Dr Coulthard sadly died in a shotgun accident, a hazard of rural pursuits.

There was a third practice. Dr Morgan rode with the Old Surrey and Burstow Hunt; a contemporary suggests he was more passionate about that than he was about general practice. He practised from a large Victorian house and stables on what is now the Waterlakes development. He was joined in 1964 by Dr Brian Milner (Lancia cars, gardening).

There are so many differences between early general practice and now. GPs being single-handed and male meant an important role for their wives. Prior to pagers and then mobile phones, the wife was often the point of contact between doctor and patient, so that her manner (and sobriety!) were vital: after a formal interview the prospective doctor and his wife would usually have a "trial by sherry"! The GP probably had a more prominent role in local society then, and certainly the doctor-patient relationship was different: continuity of care was so much greater then, so the GP got to know his patients well; things were probably more formal then - one GP commented that he stopped dressing up to see his patients when they stopped dressing up to see him. The doctor was more likely to be regarded as the font of all knowledge, rather than an alternative to Google, and patients were less likely to challenge the doctor or complain.

Edenbridge was always well served by its GPs, but in some areas GPs were practising in unsuitable premises, and professional isolation meant variable standards. In 1966, the Family Doctor Charter encouraged the formation of groups of GPs in larger practices, employing nurses, receptionists etc. The Edenbridge practices amalgamated in 1968, working out of West View which remained the centre of general practice in Edenbridge until November 27th 2023.



Drs Morrison & Russell

Dr Brian Milner It is with sadness that we report the recent death of Dr Milner. A tribute to him will be printed in a later edition of The Link.

hever rose and horticultural society

The Hever Hort Annual Meeting was held on Wednesday 22nd November in the Hever Village Hall where approximately 40 members attended. Reports of the year's activities were read by Dave Dutton, Treasurer; Jackie Dunkley, Membership Secretary and Jan Tolfree, Secretary.

Dave reported on behalf of Doug Bowern the chair (who sadly could not attend as he was not well) that the Society has completed a very successful year, staging three flower shows, which were well attended and that the number of entries had been remarkable. The judges were extremely impressed with the quality of all the entries. The Plant Sale in May was the usual success and all the plants provided by George Payne and members were snapped up.

Our President, Rev Wendy Izod, attended to re-elect the committee enblock and to present the Presidents' Salver to Jane Rosam. Jane gained the most points for her very successful entries across the three shows. The Presidents' Salver was donated to the Society by past Presidents, Jane King and Pat Humphreys in 1996.

Following the meeting the members enjoyed refreshments and were able to renew their membership and collect the 2024 programme (also on the Hever.org website). If you would like to be a member of Hever Rose and Horticultural Society at a cost of £6 single or £10 double please contact Jackie Dunkley on jackie_dunkley_8@hotmail.com

The three shows in 2024 are on 6 April, 8 June and 17 August. Save the dates!

Jan Tolfree



Village screen film 2023/24

All are very welcome as the film season continues in January at the usual venue, Hever Castle Golf Club. The film will be:

Friday 19 January 2024 - The Lost King. Sally Hawkins and Steve Coogan in a drama about the discovery of the remains of Richard III under a car park in Leicester. An amateur historian defies the stodgy academic establishment in her efforts to find King Richard III's remains, which were lost for over 500 years.

Save the date for the remaining two films of the season:
Friday 16 February - A Man Called Otto, Tom Hanks meets a cat, what's not to like?!?

Friday 15 March - Legally Blonde, Reece Witherspoon in what is now a golden oldie from 2001, a hilarious romantic comedy with a bit of law thrown in.

The films (all less than two hours long) start at 7.30 and doors open at 6.30 for the pre-show meal and bar - with ice cream in the interval.

Tickets are a suggested donation of £2 for the film or £15.50 to include the meal - scampi and chips (there is a vegetarian alternative). You can book with Joanna Wade on 07958 919631 or heverbrocas@gmail.com. Please book your meal by the Wednesday before the show if you would like to eat. Please bring cash and pay on the door.




Cinderella's coach in Hever

THE FESTIVAL THEATRE at HEVER CASTLE



The Festival Theatre at Hever Castle has just launched their new Festival Friends Membership scheme for 2024. By choosing to become a Festival Friend you'll be supporting the work of the festival and the longevity of the theatre.

Membership includes unlimited discounted tickets, an opportunity to meet the artists at selected performances and much more. There are three levels of membership, starting from £29, see www.heverfestival.co.uk for more details. Join before 1st February and you will be entered into our prize draw for the chance to win two front row seats to a 2024 performance of your choice. The Festival Theatre runs from 25 May to 1 September. The Box Office will open in February.

u3a



Edenbridge u3a is for anyone not still in full time employment. We have over 170 members from all walks of life. Though it stands for university of the third age it is not for qualifications, the groups offer activities for learning, enjoyment and friendship. It is a national organisation but we run Edenbridge u3a with a small committee independently. Choose from over 50 activities run by the members, taking place in our homes, local venues and trips out. From January you can join for 6 months for £10. Try our speaker meetings and tea 2-4 pm on the last Wednesday each month in Crockham Hill hall and meet us. See all we do on our website edenbridgeu3a.co.uk or call 07741 460500.

Hever Parish Council

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

As the festive season draws to a close, we hope you enjoyed the twinkling lights around the Parish. Hever Parish Council (HPC) would like to thank the generosity of Willerby Landscapes for providing, installing and decorating the wonderful Christmas tree at Four Elms. We would also like to thank Hever Countryside Services for kindly installing the new lights on the oak tree at Hever, which were purchased jointly by Hever Residents Association and HPC.

A number of community spirited members of Four Elms gathered as part of the annual pond maintenance/clearing group organised by Councillor Nick Roberts.

Each year, debris from surrounding trees ends up in the pond. Along with the thousands of leaves, there are often largish rotten branches from overhanging oaks that end up in the water. Without removal of these sticks/branches from the pond outlet, the Monk, would become blocked and could cause flooding on the roads adjacent to the crossroads. Each year there is always a certain amount of flooding at the centre of Four Elms after heavy rainfall, but without intervention, this would be significantly greater. It is a well-known proverb that many hands make light work, and again this year we proved it to be true. Thanks enormously to all involved.



Pond maintenance in action

With New Year's resolutions and the long evenings, here are some websites you may find useful:

Energy Saving For some great tips on quick and easy ways to save energy, visit the Energy Saving Trust website at https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/hub/quick-tips-to-save-energy/

Upcycling Repair Cafés are free meeting places and they are all about repairing things. Take along your broken items - toasters, lamps, hair dryers, clothes, bikes, toys, crockery... anything broken is welcome. The Edenbridge Repair Café: runs on fourth Saturday of the month at the Eden Centre, from 10 am to 1 pm. Email: edenbridgerepaircafe@gmail.com for more information.

Warm Spaces 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. To find a local space near you please visit our website at www.sevenoaks.gov.uk and search for 'Warm Spaces.'

Health Walks You can find details at https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/walking.

Look after your Mental Health. Worries over money, housing, heating, and food can affect our mental wellbeing, causing stress, anxiety, and depression. There are lots of places to get help and support. Visit https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/release-the-pressure for further details on instant access support.

The next Hever Parish Council meeting is on Thursday 11th January in Markbeech Village Hall, 7 pm Planning and 7.30 pm full Council. All are welcome.

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

A Term of Resilience, CreaBvity, and FesBve Cheer

As the term draws to a close it's Áme to reflect on the remarkable achievements and exciÁng experiences that our students have embraced over the past few months. From chess tournaments to outdoor adventures, kineÁc art, and fesÁve celebraÁons, the term has been nothing short of extraordinary for our vibrant school community.

Earlier this term, we took a group of enthusiasÁc Key Stage Two children to a chess tournament. The young minds displayed incredible resilience and determinaÁon throughout the compeÁÁon, showcasing not only their strategic thinking but also their ability to face challenges head-on. Our commitment to providing diverse and enriching learning experiences was evident in the outdoor acÁviÁes undertaken by Key Stage Two. Class 3, for instance, explored the picturesque landscapes of OĜord as part of their NaÁonal Parks project. This hands-on experience allowed them to connect with nature, enhancing their understanding of the environment while fostering a love for the great outdoors.

In a different adventure, Class 4 visited the OĜord Solar System, one of the largest scale models in the world. This trip enriched their understanding of space, aligning perfectly with their ongoing space-themed experience. At Four Elms, we firmly believe in using the environment as a sÁmulus for learning, and these excursions have certainly ignited a curiosity for the world beyond the classroom.

Class 2, on the other hand, delved into the world of kineÁc art inspired by the arÁst Alexander Calder. They were inspired to create their own kineÁc sculptures, showcasing both arÁsÁc expression and an appreciaÁon for the world of art. Meanwhile, Class 1 took on the role of authors, adapÁng the beloved book 'Dear Zoo' to 'Dear Farm.' This experience not only honed their wriÁng skills but also allowed them to explore their favourite animals in an engaging and imaginaÁve manner.

In addiÁon to academic pursuits, Four Elms has been buzzing with fesÁve preparaÁons. The school recently enjoyed its annual ChrisÁngle service and PTA fete, bringing the community together in the spirit of joy and giving. The excitement conÁnues with the Key Stage 1 children gearing up for their naÁvity play, 'A Midwife Crisis.' Simultaneously, some Key Stage 2 students will join the Inspire Academy Movement in a carol concert. The term will conclude with the enÁre school aĭ ending a trip to The Stag Theatre to revel in the magic of the pantomime.

We look forward to even more adventures, growth, and learning in the upcoming year. Happy new year from Four Elms!

Jess Fermor
Head of school

It has been lovely to be involved in so many community events leading up to Christmas, including singing at Hever Castle and participating in the Hever Community Carols at St. Peter's Church.

We have also enjoyed sharing our Christingle Service, our Reception/KS1 Nativity and our KS2 Carol Service within our own school community. On Christmas lunch day, we participated in Save the Children's Christmas Jumper Day taking time to recognise how fortunate we are and supporting children facing serious issues like war, hunger and poverty.



In the lead up to Christmas, the children enjoyed a pantomime, Christmas lunch and class parties and KS2 are very excited about going to London to see Matilda and participating in Young Voices in January. Opportunities like this, enhance our curriculum and develop cultural capital to ensure that all children have the same opportunities in life.



As I finish my first year as Headteacher at Hever School, I am very grateful for all the support I have received both within the school from staff, parents and governors and from the wider community beyond. Together we have made changes that have led to rapid progress and we are looking forward to the opportunities that 2024 will bring, to build on and consolidate these.



Helene Bligh
Headteacher

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Housecleans	cleaning, ironing	01959 532 223
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Commercial Property

Hever Business Centre Office Suites - Karrison Property	01959 563800

Dog Training

Claire Cook, Positive Reinforcement Dog Trainer in Edenbridge	07818 070672

Education

Chiddingstone Nursery School for children 2-5 years	01892 871315

Fitness

Hever Castle Golf Club	golf course	01732 700771
Gyrotonics at the barn with Stephanie Bates		07803 876816
Falconhurst Cricket Club	cricket and training sessions	07771 892762
Smart Nutrition and Fitness	personal training for midlife women and beyond	0771 8588847
Tennis by Nature	kids tennis coaching by Gary Markham	07802 842554

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 715037

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

BDHL	private & group health insurance and corporate wellbeing	01892 891900
Paul Marro	cognitive hypnotherapy www.htherapy.co.uk	01732 808211

Home Services

Andy Sayers	electrical services maintenance and repairs	07836 256146
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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 January

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	Sunday
7th Jan 10am	Holy Communion St.Paul's Four Elms	Epiphany 1 Baptism of Christ
14th Jan 8am	BCP Morning Prayer at St.Peter's Hever, Lay led	Epiphany 2
14th Jan 10am	Eucharist Holy Trinity Markbeech	Epiphany 2
14th Jan 3pm	Forest church Hever churchyard	Epiphany 2
18th Jan 6pm	Evensong Holy Trinity Markbeech	Week of Prayer of Christian Unity
21st Jan 10am	Holy communion St.Peter's Hever with baptism	Epiphany 3
21st Jan 4pm	Four Elms@4	Epiphany 3
28th Jan 8am	Said BCP communion at St.Paul's Four Elms	Epiphany 4 Presentation of Christ
28th Jany 10am	Family service Holy Trinity Markbeech	Epiphany 4 Presentation of Christ

Our weekly Bible studies restart from Monday 22nd January at 6.00pm on Zoom and in person at 8.00pm and our Zoom Evening prayer is on Thursdays at 6.00pm from 11th January. Our Men's discussion group is on 30th January at 6pm and Zoe Joannou is hosting a 'life group' for young mums on alternate Wednesdays. For details of any of these please contact Simon.

Please contact any of us if you would like prayer or to talk to someone.

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Four Elms
Christina Hodson
01732 700247
Richard Bennett
01732 862971
Markbeech
Lynnie Rowan 01342 850776
Marielou Linklater
01342 850579



Christmas Forest Church with crib 10th December 2023

our rector's thoughts

A big thank you to the churchwardens, musicians and everyone who made Christmas 2023 in the Three Spires such a special and joyful occasion amidst all the gloomy news.

When you read this Susie and I will be in Australia where we are attending the wedding of Susie's godson; so we're expecting to be rather warm. In contrast, our son, Joshua, is in Antarctica, where he is climbing Mount Vinson, skiing the 'last degree' to the South Pole and raising money for two children's charities. It will be extremely cold! For details of his trip and how you can support these charities see https://givestar.io/gs/joshs-expedition-to-climb-mt-vinson-and-pull-a-rocking-horse-to-the-south-pole and thank you to all who've done so already.

We don't seem to get particularly cold weather in Southern England nowadays although we did get some snow just before Christmas in 2022. But will it snow this month? One thing about snow is that despite the inevitable inconvenience and the worries older folk may have of going out, an amazing feature is that snow has an almost insulating impact. When the countryside is blanketed in white, it looks clean, beautiful but above all silent.

Our life is full of stimulation and noise. The contemporary world has little time for silence and moments of stillness make us feel awkward and uncomfortable. Many of us reach for our mobile devices to fill the space, not knowing quite how to handle it. Anselm Grun, a Benedictine monk, writes, *'In silence the inner disturbances can quiet down, the dust cloud can settle, to let the heart clear up. It is like cloudy wine, which becomes clear after lying quietly in storage.'*
As an activist, this is something I have had to work hard at myself. But I have found that silence is a great environment in which to see and hear God. We hope and pray that for Josh in Antarctica.

One man who encountered God in the stillness was the prophet Elijah. We read in 1 Kings 19 that, following his victorious confrontation with the evil rulers, Ahab and Jezebel, Elijah fled into the desert. He was burned out, depressed and prayed that he might die! But it was then that he encountered God. Not in the earthquake, powerful wind or fire that followed, but in *'a gentle whisper'* or as some translations have it: *'the sound of sheer silence'.* Another Old Testament prophet, Habakkuk, writes of God, *'…let all the earth be silent before Him.'*

As we go into what will for most of us probably be a very challenging 2024, I hope we'll be able to take advantage of any enforced quiet to find the God who is there in the silence - if we are prepared to listen.

I wish you all a very Happy New Year.

Simon

Four Elms

Although the weather is far from cold and frosty, it is difficult not to feel quite smug living in our beautiful rural village. The beautiful Christmas Tree by the village pond is wonderfully lit, with thanks to Willerby Landscape and the Hever Parish Council. Our Church Christmas tree also looks beautiful along with the Nativity scene in the churchyard. I hope everyone will enjoy them.

We celebrated the commencement of Advent with a regular Holy Communion Service and as we move closer to Christmas, we have a banquet of Christmas celebrations throughout the Benefice. Here in Four Elms we had "Enjoy a Cuppa" with the Four Elms School Choir singing for us, which was excellent and this is to be followed by Carols and Christmas Songs in the Four Elms Inn. It is always a popular and fun occasion and we thank Simon for being the compère for the evening. We also look forward to the Carol Service with the Edenbridge Town Band, followed by mulled wine and mince pies afterwards in the Parish Rooms. After which a week of taking a breath and its Christmas Day.

At this festive season may we remember those who have lost loved ones, those whose memories of Christmas Day are not happy and especially at this time the homeless. The dark shadows of wars, the Middle East, Ukraine, Afghanistan continue unabated and we pray for those whose lives are shattered by unrest. Let us pray for peace and love now and in the future years.



Four Elms school choir at the 'enjoy a cuppa' morning

A happy New Year to you all.

Christina Hodson
Churchwarden

Hever

As we start a new year, it's natural to reflect on the past and look towards the future with a mix of anticipation and trepidation. The year that has passed has brought its share of challenges and joys, and as we embark on this new chapter, we carry with us the lessons

learned and the memories made. This new year is a blank canvas, waiting for us to paint our dreams and aspirations upon it. Let us use our faith as our guide, our community as our support, and our love for one another as our inspiration. Together, we can create a year of peace, joy, and fulfilment.

The monthly 8am Book of Common Prayer (BCP) service held on the second Sunday of the month will now be Lay lead. St Peter's Church will be open for services and special events but will not be open on a daily basis from 2nd January 2024 until 7th February. Should you wish to visit the church during the week then please get in touch with me and we will do our best to accommodate you.

In late January, we are looking to do a clear out of clutter and redundant items from the church, if you are able to help then please get in touch

The next Parish Lunch will be on Thursday 11th January, 12.30 for 1pm lunch. Please don't drive or park on the grass at the hall during the wet winter months. We normally have around 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.

Wishing all of you a happy New Year, we look forward to seeing you at our services.

Mandy Yarnold

Churchwarden



Anyone who would like to join the flower arranging rota please contact Susie Braid.
susiebraid@uwclub.net

First, we'd like to say a Very Happy New Year to you all and hope you had a great Christmas! January may seem the darkest, dreariest month of the year and any thoughts of gardening may be on the back burner but I beg to differ! January is a great time to start planning what to grow for the new season. Whether you grow vegetables, ornamentals or both it's time to dust down seed catalogues, books or do some internet browsing.

If you are a super organised gardener, you may have taken notes of what plants were winners and losers in your garden last year. We often get asked for advice about a new plant or troublesome crops or failures. Some of the best advice we can give is to work with what works well in your own garden. Each garden differs in soil type or aspect, so let your existing plants help you in your plant selections for 2024! For example, if Cosmos (annual) put on a great show last year, why not try a different coloured variety or one of the new fancy 'cupcake' varieties. My thoughts are immediately drawn to the infamous Norman Greenaway of Hever Dahlia fame! His show winning Dahlias obviously love his garden and how he tends to them. There are tens of thousands of varieties that he can choose from each year.

Don't be afraid to use new varieties. Our niche here at How Green is offering the latest trends and cultivars. Yes, you can argue that new plants could be risky – will they thrive, are they reliable? Our garden designer customers especially ask the question, but we are being very selective over what new plants we are growing. Many new plants are 'variants' of existing trusted varieties. These are known as natures 'Sports'- a genetic, natural anomaly. If these mutations stabilise a new variety is born in the form of a new flower colour, different habit, more floriferous or robust. The best example of this is the popular Geranium 'Rozanne' (voted plant of the century by the RHS!) Two new varieties are now available that bear the same characteristics of length of flowering without the need to cut back or deadhead. Geranium 'Lilac Ice' with beautiful lilac-pink flowers and geranium 'Azure' Rush' with a tighter habit, you can have the confidence to use them.

In the shrub world, Hydrangea 'Annabelle' has been for years one of the top sellers. It's main drawback is the huge flowers can make the plant droop and fall over unless staked. New cultivars worth considering are Hydrangea 'Strong Annabelle' or 'Incrediball'. As the names suggest, the stems are much stronger, enabling the plant to be self-supporting.

The conclusion to this is to spend some time researching plants for your garden – cosy up in front of the fire with a hot drink and get planning.
Happy gardening!!

Simon Sutcliffe
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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	45.0	54	41	121	21	78
2022	22	55	27	7	58	12	7.0	36	79	75	201	86
2023	60	9	105	83	27	27	41.0	23	39	152	122	
HEVER												
2021	127	42	41.5	5	65.5	84	61.0	73	41	139	14.5	87.5
2022	16.5	44	22.5	2	62	19	15.0	39	85.5	58	195	80
2023	80	2	111	93.5	37	33.5	58.5	23.5	59	152	131	
MARKBEECH												
2021	120	40	51	4	55.5	38.5	48.0	0	39	141	11.5	86
2022	21	80	23	12	55.5	21	3.0	0	82	76	226	114
2023	90	4	123	105	31	34	56.0	32	48	161	142	

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

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Subscriptions cost £5 pa if delivered by a volunteer and £18 if sent by post.
For payment there are 2 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

January diary

7 Jan	**Pericles Theatre Co**, The Seagull and the Cat, Penshurst Village Hall	11.30am and 3.30pm
11 Jan	**Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall	12.30pm
11 Jan	**Hever Parish Council** meeting, Markbeech Village Hall	7.30pm
19 Jan	**How to use your telescope**, Bore Place tickets £9 adult, £6 child	6.60 – 8.30 pm
19 Jan	**Film – The Lost King**, Hever Castle Golf Club	7.30pm
31 Jan	**u3a talk on Tommy Cooper,** Crockham Hill Village Hall, 07741 460500 for details	2pm
8 Feb	**Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall	12.30 for 1pm
16 Feb	**Film - A Man Called Otto,** Hever Castle Golf Club	7.30pm
25 Feb	**Astrophotography for Beginners**, Bore Place, tickets £10 adults	5 – 7pm
28 Feb	**u3a talk "The World of Art Nouveau"** Crockham Hill VH 07741 460500 for details	2pm
14 Mar	**Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall	12.30 for 1pm
15 Mar	**Film - Legally Blonde,** Hever Castle Golf Club	7.30pm
27 Mar	**u3a talk " Where do novelists get their ideas?"** Crockham Hill VH, 07741 460500 for details	2pm