May 2025

THE LINK







In this issue:

- into Africa at Easter
- Henry VIII's new wife
- what's it all about Alfie
- boy can that boy sew
- news from several pews

...and so much more

Parish magazine of Four Elms, Hever and Markbeech

£1

Welcome to the May Link

I was very pleased to hear on Radio 4 that robins, newly re-classified as "old world flycatchers" are now known to be closely related to nightingales, indeed some call them "the nightingale of the north". Robins may be common but they are real life enhancers and I for one prefer them to the painfully shy nightingale. These bright little birds don't migrate so they're always with us in our gardens, chirping into the darkness of the evening, defending their territory against rivals with song - perhaps the famous nightingale which sang in Berkeley Square was actually a robin?

By May most migrating birds will have arrived, the last to come are swifts, spotted flycatchers and nightjars. The first to go are cuckoos who, as the rhyme says, say goodbye in July, and then nearly all the other african adventurers start their commute in August.

On a less peaceful note, thinking of the uproar that the building of new estates causes, I was surprised to learn that a third of all the houses existing in England and Wales today were built in the 21 years between 1918 and 1939. The neighbours of the nation must have been in a permanent state of apoplexy!

And so to injuries... the good news is that due to the decline in the use of cash, ENT doctors report a 29% decrease in children undergoing surgery since 2012 because fewer are swallowing or snorting them! Pets remain dangerous though. I broke my arm in March after getting tangled up with my dog and falling badly. In A&E they said that this was an all too common cause although the majority of fractures come from skiing, football and rugby, none of which I ever intend to indulge in. In America, women are 2.1 times more likely to be the victim of a pet-related accident; it is interesting to speculate as to why that may be.

And finally, it is increasingly important to love and nurture the nettles in your garden for the benefit of fast declining butterflies - if you do have to pull some up, you can put them to good use by making soup - nettle and wild garlic is particularly delicious.

Joanna Wade

PS The Hever bell ringers will join towers across the country ringing for the 80th anniversary of VE Day on 8 May at 6.30, do listen if you can.



what I did

I hated primary school. At that time, if anyone had told me that I would end up teaching for 35 years, I would not have believed them. I worked my way through the local Secondary Modern school in Dartford, a Grammar School, and then on to University - twice.

My first post was in a large comprehensive school in Southwark, teaching mainly African-Caribbean boys (boys were predominant as the girls tended to go to single sex schools where traditionally they performed better). It was hard work, but I loved it. I taught textiles at first: we made weaving, puppets, appliquéd treasure island maps and board games, baseball hats, sports shorts and tracksuits.

Over the years I taught a range of Design Technology subjects: food, wood, plastics, graphics plus Art, Child Development, IT, and Science. One student I remember, Lolu, whose mother, a working single parent, never came to Parents' Evenings. In Year 11, she came and was shocked by the negative feedback about her much-loved boy, who looked very sheepish. She said he was 'lazy, disrespectful, and ill behaved' and gave me permission to beat him. I explained that this wasn't allowed. She said she'd write me a letter giving me permission. I said that this was still against the law. She said 'write *me* a letter, and *I* will beat him!' But after that meeting he was a different boy - knowing his mother had rumbled him no punishment was necessary!

Eighteen years later I moved to a small high school in Kent which had a language unit specialising in teaching autistic children and students worked together with mainstreamers. The work was very rewarding.

I felt it was okay to join Facebook after I retired and received invitations from ex-students. It has been lovely to hear their news and see what they have done with their lives. Some have become chefs and teachers; others have gone on to study degrees in Food Science, and another a PHD in Astrophysics, proving that many of us who were written off at eleven went on to do just fine.


Nicholas learning to sew

I now fill my days with gardening and I'm the show secretary for the Hever Rose and Horticultural Society. Our next show is on 7th June - why not come along?

Pauline Radford

pet of the month

I didn't give it much, if any, thought, when my daughter's then boyfriend asked me if it would be alright to give her a puppy from his dog's litter for her 21st birthday. She was about to finish her degree at Newcastle and would initially be living at home after graduation, so the puppy would start with us and then obviously move on to wherever Lottie started her next step in life. That was almost seventeen years ago and Alfie is still with us!

Somehow it was never quite convenient for her to have Alfie in London – he'd be home alone whilst she worked and not necessarily welcomed by her flatmates. Not that I minded. We had two other dogs at the time, so a small Jack Russell fitted into our lifestyle quite easily. The older dogs helped to housetrain Alfie and taught him how to manage us! I suppose he ended up being a bit of a pack animal – he loved his 'brothers' and they him. By the time Lottie had her own home with a garden in the country, Alfie was so much part of our household that it didn't seem right to tear him away to hers – plus she had a baby and we weren't sure if Alfie was entirely safe around grabbing little fingers. He might have bitten them!



He's a very handsome little fella and has borne the eventual loss of his 'siblings' stoically. He is now our only dog and to be honest, he has become rather dependent on me, barking worriedly when left home alone, so I try to take him with me wherever I go. He's getting pretty deaf but can hear a whistle – and he's long sighted! He can see deer way out in the field but struggles to focus on a treat in front of his nose. Walks are mostly on the lead because he's scared of bumping into trees or brambles, but he's still very frisky around the cricket pitch! I wonder if he'll live to be older than his 'brother' Pickle who got to the ripe old age of 19! Whatever happens, he's been a delightful companion, and I love him dearly!

Andrea Brocklehurst





Hever Rose and Horticultural Society

Saturday, 10th May 2025

Hever Village Hall

from 10am, come early to avoid disappointment

refreshments and raffle, all welcome





Lambs at the Hever Easter Egg hunt







Highlights from the Hever Hort spring show



Pauline Radford's winning hellebores



Emma Scott's winning cake

Easter in Nigeria

Nigeria is a huge country, stretching from the rainforest in the south to the semi desert of the north, with a climate ranging from hot and very humid to baking hot and exceedingly dry. The landscape is similarly varied but one must travel long distances before noticing any appreciable difference in the surroundings. It is the country in which I spent 25 happy years, where I met my husband, who was in business there, raised our family and pursued my career as a teacher in schools, all of which resembled a mini United Nations.

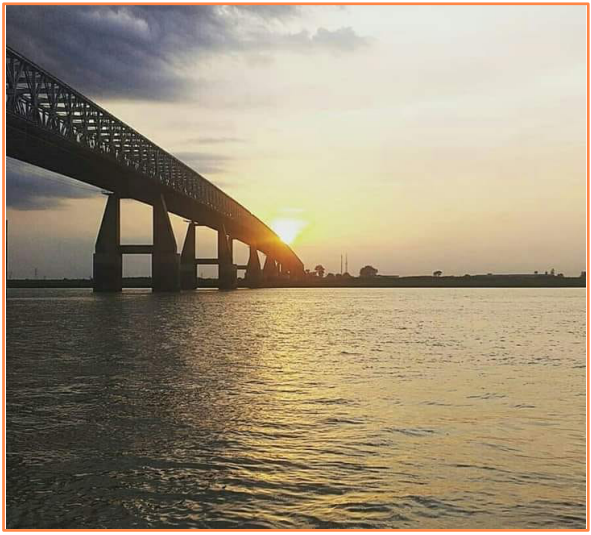
We wanted our children to see as much of the country as possible, beyond the busy cities of Lagos and Kano. For one Easter we decided to travel to the far south east of the country, where we had heard of a Guest House on a cattle ranch, in the hills near the Cameroon border. Reports of the beauty of the area, just like Scotland, apparently, with fat cattle grazing on lush grass, had long held an appeal, and, joining up with another family, we prepared for the journey: two air conditioned cars, industrial quantities of non perishable food, water, mosquito spray and bed sheets! (Sometimes, wherever you are, things don't always go to plan). How good it would be to exchange hot, sticky, pre rainy season Lagos for cool, fresh air and maybe even fresh milk!

We reached the bridge over the mighty River Niger by early afternoon, as did several hundred buses, taxis, lorries, mammy wagons and family cars, all carrying people home for the Easter break. We had forgotten that traditionally on Maundy Thursday, Igbos working in the West travel to their family homes in the East, while the Yorubas in the East do the reverse. Now, orderly queuing has its own variation here. Where there is space, rather than draw in behind the vehicle in front, it is customary to start another queue, the result being a row of queues on both side of the bridge and no one able to cross. We sat there for EIGHT hours! Night falls early in the tropics and with it come the mosquitoes. With the heat and humidity (we had to turn off the car engines, so no aircon)



Doreen and her school class

the fumes from the buses which kept theirs on, the increasing irritability of frustrated travellers and six fretful children, we were not happy holidaymakers! We were wedged in so couldn't turn back and Lagos was much further away than Enugu where we were to stay the night in our Company Rest House. When we did eventually get across and reached the Rest House, we found the cook and steward frantic with worry, convinced we had become the latest victims of a highway robbery. However, after a hot meal, showers and a good night's sleep we set off once more. As we neared our destination, not only was the weather becoming cooler but the road surface had improved considerably. In fact it looked new. A new road meant either some new development was planned* or someone important was going to be using it. Both turned out to be true. When we reached Obodu Ranch, we found guards blocking the entrance and we could not pass. The President of Nigeria had taken over the whole complex. Our bookings were cancelled.



What to do? It was now mid afternoon and no Travelodge or equivalent is to be found in that remote part of West Africa. Fortunately our fellow travellers knew of a convent down in the valley and the nuns were able to direct us to a camp, recently vacated by the builders of that splendid new road. We were given permission to stay, the bungalows were clean and air conditioned, so out came our provisions, including the bedsheets, and with a swimming pool and tennis court on the complex, we had an enjoyable weekend. But, sadly, no fresh milk.

Though we left in 1988, Ian and I still meet up with friends we made in Nigeria. As expats and far from our families for long periods of time, we valued these friends who were from all over the world. We also entertained Nigerian friends in our home in Scotland, and it was a particular pleasure to be able to repay some of the warm hospitality extended to us in our "adopted" country.

*From modest beginnings, Obodu is now marketed as a Mountain Resort and is one of the most popular tourist areas in the country.

Doreen Beattie

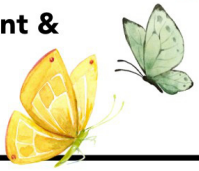
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Thurs 28 Aug



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Sat 28 June

Autumn
Sat 27 Sept

Winter
Sat 1 Nov



Pizza & Pipistrelles Night

Thurs 28 Aug

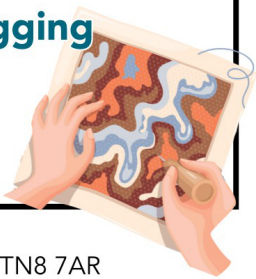
A relaxed summer evening with delicious pizza as you watch these fascinating creatures emerge at dusk.



Introduction to Rag Rugging

Sun 06 July

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More events and tickets

www.boreplace.org

Commonwork Trust (registered charity, no. 1160725)

an audience with chloe

Chloe Wright is the new landlady of the Henry. She has taken to her new role, well, just as Henry VIII took to a new wife - and there the similarities end! With a committed staff team around her, Chloe has started to build on David's good work, bringing Larkins beer to the bar (the loyalty card gives the 11th beer free) and a new menu with some lower food prices to the tables. She has also introduced a booking system - currently available via Instagram but there will be a website shortly.

Growing up in Dunton Green, Chloe worked in the travel industry until Covid pulled the rug from under her. As lockdown ended, she heard that the Henry was looking for staff, went in to do a few shifts, and loved it! She says that it was a joy to be freed from behind a desk and allowed to chat to people for a living! As the years passed, she was promoted to manager and then the opportunity to apply to be licensee arrived when, after 15 years, David decided to open a new chapter and go travelling in Asia. Now her role involves a great deal more than pulling pints and chatting: managing the 20 regular staff plus cleaners and maintenance folk, stock control, budgets and finance, choosing wine, keeping the cellar in good condition and learning how to run the kitchen including how to make the perfect Henry burger (they have the top rating from environmental health). The Henry serves about 70 meals a day, more at weekends and they pride themselves on speedy service.

Other plans include expanding the garden dining area round the pond and opening an outside bar for the summer. The team regularly welcomes visitors from all over the world who have come to see the castle, but Chloe very much wants this to be a pub where locals feel at home, and in particular their dogs!

So farewell to David, we are grateful for his contribution to the village, hosting mulled wine and mince pies at Christmas, donating Henry meals as raffle prizes and keeping us going, almost single-handedly, with fish and chips sold from the door during lockdown.

Joanna Wade



stamps stamped out?



Graham Barker uses his expertise to assess and sell stamps and coins donated to the Hospice in the Weald. I recently had the pleasure of meeting him when I called by with both my old album and Jan Tolfree's too. The disappointment was that mine turns out to be worth only £5 and Jan's around £10 (because the stamps are older)! Graham politely leafed through the precious pages of my 13-year-old album, not stopping at countries which no longer exist such as South Rhodesia which he said were not collectable, indeed stamps from the former French colonies are the least valuable of all because there are so many around. Then my second disappointment: my lovely first day covers are worthless, the market is flooded by them and I'd have done better to use the stamps when I bought them!

The next blow - the stamps had been stuck into the album. Stamp hinges were de rigueur, but actually the real value lies in stamps with a provenance derived from remaining on their envelopes. As we know the Penny Black was the first ever stamp and one in good condition on a postmarked envelope which recently crossed Graham's desk reached £160; otherwise they are worth £40-50. Graham is a keen collector and I felt that if he saw something, anything, that tickled his fancy he'd spot it. However, the final blow, even he thinks that stamp collecting is soon to be a thing of the past. As the use of stamps declines, so does the interest in collecting them. The 1840 Penny Black was an innovation which meant that suddenly most people could afford to use the post and communicate with friends and family, but now we have emails, and stamps may well be gone by 2040.

Meanwhile coins, handfuls of odd change forgotten in a drawer, are much more buoyant - though for how long as post-Covid their use has declined significantly too. Graham stresses that he is happy to look at anything he's given and will send them over to an auction house for sale. Every little counts for the marvellous hospice which he is more than happy to assist, but he says that if you find a child who might want to collect, try them first. You can donate albums and coins at the hospice shop in Edenbridge - you never know, your album may contain a hidden gem.

Joanna Wade





May				June			
Sun 4	Chessmen	Home	1.30pm	Sun 8	Westerham	Away	2.00pm
Sun 11	Fletching	Home	1.30pm	Sat 14	Chairman's XI	Home	2.30pm
Sat 17	Refreshers	Home	1.30pm	Sun 15	Linden Park	Away	1.30pm
Sun 25	Outwood	Away	1.30pm	Sun 22	Cowden	Home	1.30pm
Sat 31	Chelsfield CC	Home	1.30pm	Sun 29	Hartfield	Home	1.30pm

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Beauproperty	house design and building	01892 249000
Causeway Joinery	bespoke joinery for the public and trade	01342 850170
Eden Valley Builders	extensions, conversions and general building	07778431470
Clare Elizabeth	painting and decorating	0777 5328781
HJM Plumbing & Heating	general plumbing, heating and maintenance	07908854881
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Jem Pickard	painting and decorating	07850 371558 or 01732 863062
M & M Walker	painting & decorating, plumbing, heating	07774 218 684
Michael Beall	bespoke carpentry and joinery	07796 175140
Richard A Maslen	Fine furniture and bespoke joinery	07930 341415
W Smithers & Sons	listed building, conversions, extensions,	01342 850 559

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Claire Cook, Positive Reinforcement Dog Trainer in Edenbridge		07818 070672

Education

Chiddingstone Nursery School	for children 2-5 years	01892 871315

Fitness and Health

BDHL private & group health insurance and corporate wellbeing		01892 891900
Flexi Foot Care Home – Diane Fletcher	visiting podiatrist/chiropodist	0790 3293533
Hever Castle Golf Club	golf course	01732 700771
Step by Step, Michelle Hogan,	mobile foot care practice	07786 038149
Falconhurst Cricket Club	cricket and training sessions	07771 892762
Paul Marro Cognitive Hypnotherapy	www.htherapy.co.uk	01732 808211
Realign, osteopathy and personal training	www.realign-osteo.co.uk	07841 776591
Smart Nutrition and Fitness	personal training for midlife women & beyond	0771 8588847
Tennis by Nature	kids tennis coaching by Gary Markham	07802 842554

Food - Catering and Restaurants

Gorard Dean Catering -	all events undertaken call Melanie Dean	07710 005 635
Greyhound at Hever,	Restaurant with rooms, open to non-residents	01732 862221

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
MCF Garden Maintenance	local, reliable, catering for all garden needs	079307 29059
SA Landscaping	landscaping, garden maintenance, fencing, driveways and more	01732 671146
Thompson Tree Care Ltd,	tree surgery, tree felling, hedge cutting	07747345815

Home Services

Daren Wood	chimney sweep, pots and cowls fitted	01959 564263
MOLE CATCHER, Peter King		Mob:07432 813614 or 01892 520287
Pegrum	fuels, boilers, plumbing, solar panels, water/oil tanks	01732 463256
Stuff and Buttons,	traditional and modern upholstery services	07791 689346
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Local Produce

Allman Butchers	meat & groceries	01732 863214 or 700288
Falconhurst Farm Shop and deli		01342 850172

Restaurants

Greyhound at Hever	restaurant with rooms, open to non-residents	01732 862221

Taxis

Relyon Cars	local taxi company	01732 863 800

Venue Hire and Weddings

Falconhurst Weddings	01342 850526
Markbeech Village Hall	01342 850328



Hever Parish Council

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

Community Litter Picks took place across the parish recently. A great turnout was seen with a creditable 41 volunteers helping to clean up our parish. Some large hauls of litter were collected with approximately 70 sacks of rubbish and a variety of car parts and fly tipped items cleared. Thank you so much to our councillors for co-ordinating these and for all those who volunteered. We also had children and volunteers assisting from Hever School which was a super addition. Our parish now looks much improved and helps the environment and nature to boot! Our next litter pick will be in the autumn.

Your Parish Assembly, to which you are all warmly invited, is on Tuesday 20th May at 7pm in Hever Village Hall. Please do join us to hear some interesting speakers, including an update from your MP, the Chair of Hever Parish Council and other local groups. It is a great opportunity to meet some of your councillors and other local people and chat over some refreshments, which are all provided, at the end of the meeting.

To improve safety on our roads, if you have trees or bushes or other foliage that





overhangs, or covers, road signage please can you trim it back so the sign is not obscured or hidden. Please also trim back any overhanging foliage that is obstructing or encroaching on a pavement or footpath. In some cases Kent County Council may have to write to residents to remind them to do this and if no action is taken then KCC may then undertake the work and charge the homeowner for the work.

With the approach of spring, we see more people reporting doorstep criminals targeting. One way you can help to keep you and your neighbours safe is to have a No Cold Callers sticker. These are available for free, and can be requested from Kent County Council via their website. Find out more about doorstep criminals and how they operate by watching this video:Spot the signs of financial abuse - Kent County Council. If you know someone vulnerable to doorstep criminals or rogue traders and they don't have internet access, Teacher in Your Pocket (TEPO) is a great resource:How to say no to doorstep crime - Kent County Council.

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

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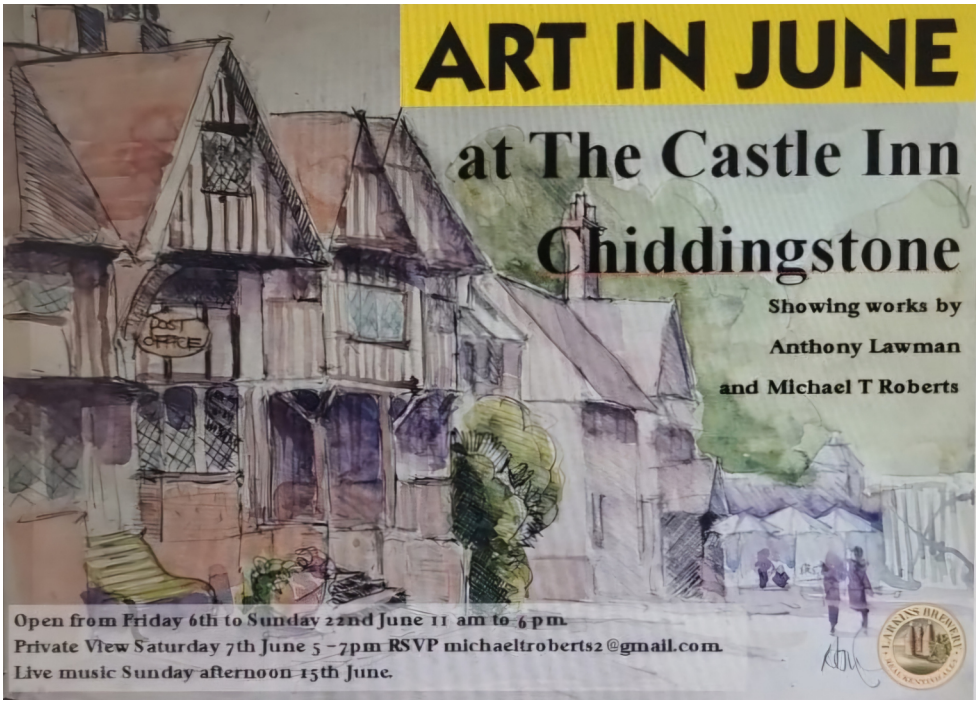


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Church in May

Please watch out for any late changes with details of services below. Readings and full details are also at https://threespires.wordpress.com/diary/

Date & time	Service details	Sunday
4th May 10am	All Age Holy communion at St.Paul's Four Elms	Easter 3
4th May 6pm	Healing service at St.Paul's Four Elms	Easter 3
11th May 8am	BCP Morning prayer at St.Peter's Hever	Easter 4
11th May 10am	Eucharist at Holy Trinity Markbeech	Easter 4
11th May 4pm	Forest Church at St.Peter's Hever	Easter 4
18th May 10am	Holy Communion at St.Peter's Hever	Easter 5
25th May 8am	BCP said communion at St.Paul's Four Elms	Rogation
25th May 10am	Family Service at Holy Trinity Markbeech followed by Rogation walk	Rogation
29th May 7pm	Deanery Ascension Day service at St.John the Baptist Penshurst	Ascension Day

Please note the new time of 4pm for Forest church and look out for details of the Rogation walk on 25th May. Annual Parochial meetings will take place for Four Elms immediately following the 10am service on 4th May and for Hever after the service on 18th May – do please stay on if you can; all on the Electoral roll are entitled to vote.

Our Bible study will now meet at 7.30pm on Tuesdays starting on 6th May at Petresfield and at various locations thereafter. Zoe Joannou's 'life group' is on alternate Wednesdays. For details of any of these please contact Simon. There will be a Women's meeting in Markbeech Village Hall on 9th May at 10am; see below. Please contact any of us if you would like prayer or to talk to someone.







You are invited to

Forgiveness –is it always possible?

with Christine Perkin

at Markbeech Village Hall TN8 5NR

Friday 9th May 2025

10.00am for coffee; 10.15am talk + Q&A ending at 11.15am

Tickets £5

For details & tickets contact

susiebraid@uwclub.net 07702 708232 or fiona@irens.uk 07887 776199

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

Wardens

Four Elms
Christina Hodson
01732 700247

Hever
Mandy Yarnold
01342 850028

Markbeech
Lynnie Rowan
01342 850776

Administrator
Ana Roxburgh
beneficeemail@gmail.com

our rector's thoughts

At the turn of the 20th Century, the US physician Duncan MacDougall tried an experiment to measure the mass of the soul. He did this by trying to detect the weight loss in a human being at the point of death, which he concluded was 21 grams! In 2003 this formed the basis of the Hollywood thriller also called 21 grams! Unsurprisingly, MacDougall's work was soon discredited – for one thing the sample size at only 6 people was way too small. But it does pose the question: what is the soul? Is it that part of us that continues after death? Is there such a thing as the soul? We use the word 'soul' in different ways. We have 'soul music'; we may talk of a dismal place as being 'soulless'; we think of someone being a 'soulmate'; and the distress call SOS means: 'save our souls'!

The soul is mentioned over 800 times in the Bible. When Jesus was asked which is the greatest commandment, he said: *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind* (Matthew 22:37) thus distinguishing soul from our hearts and minds. One of Jesus' toughest sayings, often read in the lead up to Easter (Passiontide) also refers to the soul: *Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?* (Matthew 16:24-26).

Of course, you don't have to believe in God to believe you have a soul or live a soulful life. But I think it's hard to speak of soul without at least considering some connection with God; and of course this makes sense of Jesus' saying. The Franciscan writer Richard Rohr has a definition of soul which helps me to make sense of this: *the soul is who I am in God and who God is in me*. Maybe this is what St.Paul means when he says: *this is the mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory* Colossians1:27

Ultimately, finding ourselves in Christ is the key to discovering ourselves and living a full, soulful life. So, as we move into May, do come along to church or get in touch and find out what this could mean for you.

God bless

Simon

Photos from our Palm Sunday service on 13th April at Holy Trinity Markbeech







News from the pews

Four Elms

Every month I start my news singing the praises of the rural landscape – especially in Four Elms. Let's include Toys Hill this month to extol the glories of the woodland bluebells. The combination of the lime green beech tree leaves and the beautiful blue of the bluebells together with their and the wild garlic scent, is one of the joys of the months of April and May. And, of course, its free. No tariffs here!!

The season of Lent was broken with the Mothering Sunday Service. Small posies were given to all – as we consider everyone is a carer in some form or another. We now look forward to Easter Sunday Family Service and welcome everyone to our beautiful church, service starts at 11am.

St Paul's church will be holding its annual APCM after the Sunday service on 4th May, commencing around 11.05am. Everybody who has an interest in our church is welcome to join us. The Annual and Financial Review for 2024 is available for inspection in the church. This year, all who wish to be members of our Benefice Churches are required to fill in an Electoral Roll form (available on the Threespires website or in church). Even if you are not an active churchgoer most members of our village have an interest in the church building so we urge you to have your say via the Annual Meeting and enrol on the Electoral Roll.

As the summer nears, so does the Four Elms Village Fete. The church stalls are always seeking helpers. If you are able to volunteer for a few hours in the afternoon of 12th July we would welcome you with open arms. It is fun and a truly village event. Please call me (Christina, 01732 700247) – I welcome your call.

Christina Hodson
Churchwarden



Hever

Our Annual Parochial Church Council (APCM) meeting will follow the 10am service on May 18th. At the APCM you will be able to read reports from the PCC about their activities for the year and hear the latest updates on the plans for improved accessibility and servery that were announced at last year's APCM. You can vote at the meeting if you are enrolled on St Peter's Electoral Roll. There is an Electoral Roll form available on the Three Spires website, please download, complete it and return it to Sam Joannou our Electoral Roll Officer.

We welcome Dave Andrews who has taken over looking after our churchyard. Dave lives in Four Elms and was married at St Peter's Church a few years ago.

The next Parish Lunch will be on Thursday 8th May, 12.30 for 1pm lunch. 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.

Mandy Yarnold
Churchwarden

Markbeech

As I write, it rained in the night and the trees and plants are thankful to see it. There are even several baby ducklings on the lake squeaking, I hope happily. But what a wonderful period of sunshine we have had.

It was a beautiful morning when we met at Falconhurst with Walter, the donkey, who was patient and friendly to all. There were a lot of us singing along the church path and waving palms. The little church filled up with people who enjoyed an interesting and lively service. Liz managed to be everywhere, organising the palm crosses and our thanks to Sebastian too for handing them out. Some of the children marvelled at Simon's footballing skills when it came to kicking over the table with a basket of coins to demonstrate Jesus' anger with the money lenders in his temple. Everyone joined in with the hymns, the service and there were a surprising number of birthdays to celebrate. Very grateful thanks to Fiona for managing the refreshments and to Nicki for helping. Susie had laid an exciting Easter egg trail for the children which occupied them with great enthusiasm, thank you Susie. We all delighted in the beautiful Easter Garden that Lynnie had created and a special thanks to her. Our next Family Service is 27th April after the special services are over Easter. I hope everyone enjoyed the enthusiastically designed Easter Cards, with all the services – vital information.

Now to May and the blossom on the trees looking wonderful. I hope some ladies will join us at the Markbeech Village Hall on May 9th for a discussion entitled "Forgiveness – is it always possible?" 10am coffee, 10.15 start – tickets £5 contact Susiebraid@uwclub.net .

On the 25th May, there is a Family Service at Holy Trinity, followed by a Rogation Walk. The Deanery Ascension Day service is to be held at St. John the Baptist, Penshurst at 7pm.

Janey Cooper
PCC secretary

From the register:
Baptisms
23rd February Markbeech
Orlando Calvocoressi
16th March Hever
Holly Elizabeth Ruthven

gardening

What a Spring we have had so far. Everything has bloomed magnificently from the early Snowdrops through to the recent Magnolias that had beautiful blue skies as a backdrop. The good weather has been good for nursery sales and the designers & landscapers who use us have been busy creating wonderful new gardens & borders. Our potting crew are hard at work and the nursery is full to bursting with wonderful perennials & grasses plus outsourced trees and shrubs.


Geum ‘Mai Tai’

We often get asked what plants we recommend for extremes of weather 'What plants can take 6 months of winter wet and 6 months of dry conditions?' The answer, is not a lot! Just as you wouldn't use an expensive pot of paint on an untreated surface the same applies to the plant border. You can pay a lot of money for plants, but without the right soil preparations, the plants will struggle. Soil prep could mean fresh soil (well drained) or the addition of well rotted manure in Autumn/Winter and grit for drainage. This helps the plants get through the long, wet winters. We would then advise the use of irrigation systems, to efficiently get water directly to the roots. This can be expensive, but will save money in the long run by helping the plants through arid extremes. May is a lovely time of year to be in the garden with much to do. The threat of penetrating frosts has normally gone later into the month, so the edible gardener can start to plant out in earnest. Tender salad crops can be planted or seeds directly sown (important to check the forecast). It's also a time to start thinking about your Summer annuals. We specialise in herbaceous perennials and there's plenty of exciting plants that take centre stage in May. None more so than Geums. Two standout varieties are Geum ‘Mai Tai’ and Geum ‘Scarlet Tempest’. Part of the Cocktail series, 'Mai Tai' produces gorgeous, pink-flushed apricot, semi-double flowers above lush foliage with dark red stems. Equally as good in a container as well as the border. Ht. 45cm x Spr. 40cm. ‘Scarlet Tempest is a sterile hybrid, meaning it cannot produce seed, so keeps on flowering for a much longer period than seed raised varieties. Large red, semi-double flowers in profusion appear from April and can go on to September. ‘Scarlet Tempest’ prefers moist, well-drained soil in part shade or full sun. Ht. 50cm x Spr. 45cm.

Look out for us at Chelsea this year - we are involved with three gardens and one trade stand - wish us luck!

Simon Sutcliffe
How Green Nursery

benefice monthly rainfall in millimeters

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
FOUR ELMS													
2023	60	9	105	83	27	27	41.0	23	39	152	122	109	797
2024	58	122	94	61	49	27	64.0	28	165	86	77	78	909
2025	89	61	4										154
HEVER													
2023	80	2	111	93.5	37	33.5	58.5	23.5	59	152	131	110	890.5
2024	73	136	81.5	57.5	48.5	25	73.5	31.5	183	82.5	62	52	906
2025	126	54.5	4										184.5
MARKBEECH													
2023	90	4	123	105	31	34	56.0	32	48	161	142	106	932
2024	80	139	95	71	61	29	62.0	44	186	77	79	60	983
2025	114	71	4										189

HALL BOOKINGS

Four Elms – Kevin Haydon 07787 394 806
Hever – Mrs Ryan 01732 864168
Markbeech – Mrs Paige 01342 850328

COUNCILS

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Margot.McArthur@kent.gov.uk

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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 **June** edition should reach us no later than **16 May** Subscriptions cost £5 pa if delivered by a volunteer and £18 if sent by post.
To pay you can send a cheque payable to 'The Link' with your address to 1 Triangle Cottage, Hever Road, Hever TN8 7NL or 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 31 May 2025 Exhibitions: **The Story of Bough Beech reservoir and Healthcare in our Town**, Eden Valley Museum, Edenbridge

2nd & 4th Wed each month **Bore Place 'Wilder Wellbeing'** nature sessions for adults – free, book online www.boreplace.org/whats-on

From June 5 to July 13 **Grange Park Opera** festival, West Horsley, Surrey for more: grangeparkopera.co.uk

26 Apr	**Spring foraging walk**, Bore Place, tickets £35	2 – 4.30pm
6 May	**Hever Parish Council meeting**, Four Elms VH Annual Meeting	7pm Planning 8pm
8 May	**Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall	12.30 for 1pm
8 May	**Hever bells ringing for VE Day 80th anniversary**	6.30pm
10 May	**Introduction to Beekeeping**, Bore Place, £80	10am – 4pm
10 May	**Hever Hort plant sale**, Hever Village Hall	10am
12 May	**Enjoy a Cuppa** at St Paul's Four Elms	from 10.45am
15 May	**Bat Walk**, Bore Place tickets £12.50	8.15 – 9.45pm
20 May	**Annual Parish Assembly**, Hever Village Hall	7pm
10 June	**Enjoy a Cuppa** at St Paul's Four Elms	from 10.45am
12 June	**Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall	12.30 for 1pm
14 June	**Cowden Village Fete**, Cowden Recreation Ground, BBQ, jazz, teas, children's games	from 12.30pm
22 June	**Kefir making workshop**, Bore Place £35	10.30am – 1pm
28 June	**Hever School Fete**, Hever Parish Field	11.30 – 3.30pm
28 June	**Summer Foraging Walk**, Bore Place £35	2 – 4.30pm
6 Jul	**Introduction to Rag Rugging**, Bore Place £60	10am – 4pm
12 Jul	**Four Elms Fete**, Church Field, Four Elms	from 1pm
21 Aug	**Butterfly Hunt & Baking**, Bore Place, child 3yrs+ £20 adults free	10am – 12.30pm
28 Aug	**Pizza & Pipistrelles Night**, Bore Place, £65 ticket for 2	7 – 9.30pm

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