August 2025

THE LINK







In this issue:

- pruning and passion
- 4 Elms remembered
- who's that Humphrey?
- school's out
- what a feat the fete is

...and so much more

Parish magazine of Four Elms, Hever and Markbeech

£1

Welcome to the August Link

Ragwort! Little divides farmers and environmentalists more than this controversial plant. It's reputation with horse owners is literally poisonous because it can do irreparable liver damage to horses if they eat it. However, the point is that they are unlikely to do so when it is fresh, with robust green leaves and multiple yellow flowers, because it tastes and smells horrible. However, if it ends up dried in hay, the smell is gone and there's the danger. Meanwhile, ecologists love it as a fantastic source of food for so many important species such as the cinnabar moth, one of 178 different species to visit its flowers including 47 bees and 35 hoverflies. At Knepp, the wilding project in Sussex, great ragwort battles have been fought with local farmers who feared that if they let ragwort thrive, seeds would blow onto their land. Knepp quotes an Imperial College study which says that healthy seeds in fact only travel a few metres - who knows, but it is hard to see what harm ragwort in hedges away from hay fields can do (probably!)

As a fan of citizen science, I was pleased to join the BirdTrack project run by the British Trust for Ornithology. All those birds you hear on Merlin can now be recorded as data on their app. The best time to hear birds is in the morning - why do they sing more then? First, as it is hard to find food in dim light, they may as well sing, and sing at a time when predators won't spot them easily. And this is prime time for attracting a mate, it is quieter and birdsong carries 20 times further at dawn, making the effort more worthwhile. For the males, it's also a reminder to their rivals that they survived the night and are in fine fettle, and to let summer visitors, who often arrive at night, know whose "manor" they have trespassed upon. So as the cuckoos and other African upstarts have upped sticks, our stay-at-homes can have a rest!

Joanna Wade
thelink@hever.org

PS Do visit the exhibitions in the Eden Valley museum marking its 25th anniversary, and congratulations to Hever resident Jane Higgs who has been appointed its president.



Silver-washed Fritillary on ragwort

THE LINK

what we do

Hi, I am Annie, the manager of Edenbridge Voluntary Transport Service (EVTS). Our service plays a crucial role in the TN8 community, providing transport for residents to hospitals such as Pembury, Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Queen Victoria, Tonbridge Cottage, East Surrey as well as Edenbridge Memorial Health Centre and dentists locally.

Our team of office volunteers are available to answer calls Monday to Friday between 10am -12.30pm We are located in the new health centre on Four Elms Rd. EVTS is funded through small local grants and passenger donations. However, in recent years financial challenges, including the loss of a vital £4,000 annual grant from Kent County Council, and a reduction in passenger contributions, have placed the charity under strain. Many journeys now cost us more to provide than passenger donations received.

The community we serve are so far away from hospitals, and many of the residents who use our service would not be able to fund the cost of taxi services particularly those attending appointments frequently. EVTS's mission is to ensure that medical transport is not an added worry for those facing health challenges. Given the inaccessibility of major local hospitals via public transport, this service is more crucial than ever.

Recognising that customer donations alone are not sufficient, EVTS needs financial and volunteer support to continue to support our community. Contributions, whether monetary or through volunteering as a driver or member of our office team, will help sustain this essential service for the Edenbridge community. For more information, please contact me on **manager@evts.org.uk .**

If you would like to support the amazing work our volunteers do, you can donate at www.justgiving.com/evts

Working together for the benefit of our local community – making a difference every day.

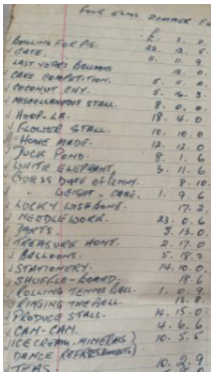


Nick Roberts - EVTS volunteer

We are sad to report that the lovely oak by the post box near Hever school has reached the end of its life and must be felled for safety reasons - a tree surgeon spotted significant fungus and found rot throughout. It has served the village well and we will all miss it.

four elms fete report

The Four Elms fete as we know it today emerged from the village celebrations for the Queen's coronation in 1953 and the meeting minute books we have date back to 1956. The accounts from



1955 show that there are still some stalls as popular today as they were back then. The organisers over the decades have faced similar challenges to those our current committee faces:

1957 – a petrol crisis which hindered travel to the site in the weeks leading to the fete

1988 – the committee looked into building frames for the stalls and discovered it was costly – we face a very similar predicament each year replacing damaged gazebos!

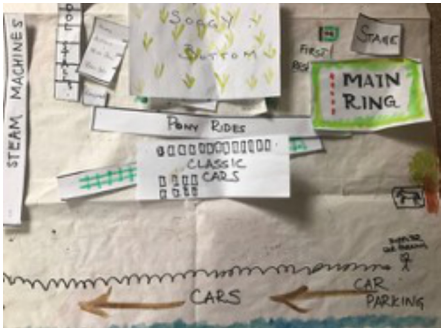
1995 – fete organisers could not get a flypast so played an audio clip of the distinctive engine sound. "A phantom Spitfire threw visitors off course when they heard all the right noises at Four Elms Village fete but no aircraft appeared. People thought the aircraft must be behind the trees" explained Mr Hennessey, who said visitors were getting their cameras out!

More recently in 2016 following persistent rain leading up to the fete day we found a large section of Church Meadow to be too wet to use – this was promptly sealed off, named "Soggy Bottom" and the layout re-planned around it. Another year someone forgot to order coconuts for the coconut shy… The "canned soft drink shy" was not as traditional but just as much fun!

As we reflect on this year, we are very pleased to have had another successful fete, despite some challenges. With the heatwave we had to cancel the popular dog show, and we were unable to secure a flypast and miniature railway, so our numbers were slightly down on previous years. That said, we still had lots of stalls and attractions and raised much needed funds for the school and church. The fete is an opportunity to show off the best of our community – the stalls are packed with local produce including plants and flowers, homemade cakes and beer from the local breweries. We had another fabulous maze courtesy of Willerby Landscapes and local businesses, artists and craftspeople showcased their work and services. Huge thanks to all involved who made it a success!

It takes a lot of people to ensure the fete runs without a hitch and we are proud that it's been running for seven decades with only a pandemic getting in our way – let's hope we can continue for many more decades. If you want to get involved in the fun of organising or helping out on the day we'd love to hear from you: fourelmsvillagefete@gmail.com

Louise Nightingale



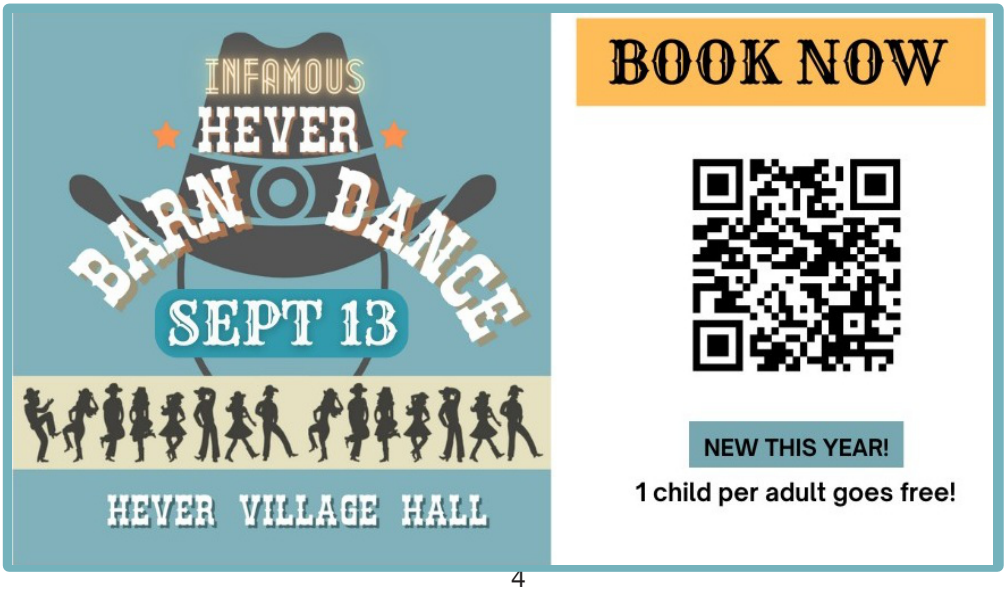
Peter Titchmarsh



Peter Titchmarsh and my mum, Margaret Bates, were partners for 12 years. He died peacefully in a home near Stratford on Avon on 27th June at the age of 98. Mum said he would outlive her, "built like an ox" she always said. We will remember him as a kind, gentle man. A gentleman in every way.

He first came in to our family at New College, Oxford where my father and he met on day one sitting next to each other in the dining hall. They became firm friends and had many adventures together often in their restored London taxi which they named Louis. Although he ran the family business, Arden Garages, in Stratford on Avon, Peter's real passion was travelling. He wrote over 80 travel books and designed several long distance walks, including The Macmillan Way and Shakespeare's Way, in aid of charities. Latterly whilst living with mum he published and printed in aid of our benefice "10 Walks in Hever Country" which included the Wealden Way. He slowly lost his sight and became more dependent on mum. We will remember him though clambering over stiles like a mountain goat, listening to my grandchildren reading, enjoying his red Martini (whilst feeding the dog crisps) as he and mum did the crossword. Rest in peace Peter.

Helen Rahn



Hever Rose and Horticultural Society Flower and Vegetable Show

Saturday 16 August - Hever Village Hall 2pm – 4.30pm
all welcome



And the rest of the programme for 2025, all at Hever Village Hall:
17 Sept Hardy Geraniums talk Jacqueline Aviolet
5 Oct Talk: Plant Heritage and National Plant Collection Jude Lawton
19 Nov Annual General Meeting

full details on the Hever Hort tab of the Hever.org website

HRHS visit to Spadework

We had our HRHS annual outing on 25th June to Spadework in Offham. Spadework is a charity that enables people to be more independent, feel less isolated and live happier, healthier and more fulfilling lives. They support more than 100 adults with learning and other disabilities, those living with dementia, and people experiencing mental health problems.

During our tour with Bridget we met a number of 'trainees', who were happy to talk about their work, some having been working with Spadework for 40 years. The five acre site enables people to be involved in gardening, woodwork, life skills, and performing and creative arts. Spadework has: The Food Shed, a cafe serving breakfasts, light bites and delicious cakes; a Garden Centre with a wide variety of plants, composts and pots at very reasonable prices; The Farm Shop stocked with locally produced fruit, vegetables, baked goods, preserves and more; a Gift Shed full of greetings cards and delightful gifts. Spadework is located on the Teston Road, Offham, ME19 5NA.

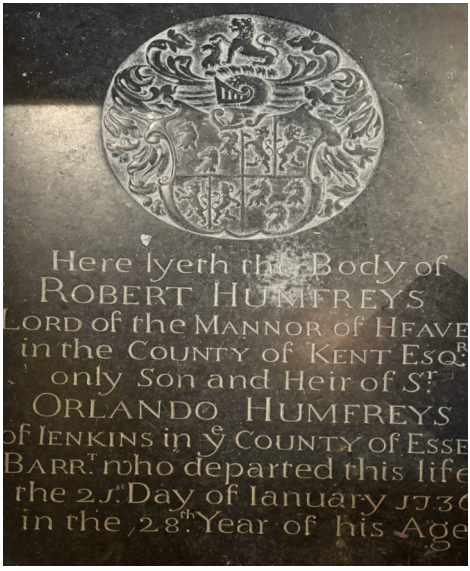


Pauline Radford

A tale of two (or even three) Humphreys

What's in a name? Well, "Humphreys" doesn't have quite the ring of "Boleyn"... .. We tend to think of Hever Castle as home of the Boleyns and then the Astors but quite a lot happened between 1540 when Anne of Cleves, the fourth, and notably "survived" wife, acquired the castle in her divorce settlement (bad taste as Henry had executed her namesake, but she seems to have liked the place) and 1903 when William Waldorf Astor bought his dream castle. And the tragic short tenure of the Humphreys family is a tale worth telling.

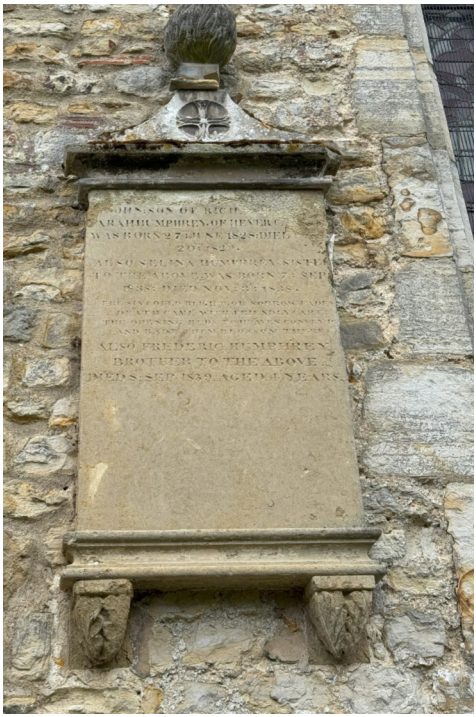
Sir William Humphreys, Lord Mayor of London, had been created a baronet in 1714 and he bought **his** dream castle at Hever in 1718. What an exciting time it must have been - your own crenellated keep with three portcullises to boot! His son Orlando inherited in 1735; he had married his step-sister Ellen but all three



of their sons died before their father; the last, Robert who died aged 28 in January 1736 has a handsome stone on the floor of the Bullen Chapel.

Mary Humphreys, Orlando's daughter, therefore inherited on her father's death in 1737. Meanwhile, Mary's mother Ellen remarried in 1746 and after Mary's first two husbands had died in quick succession, she married her new step-father's uncle, becoming not only her mother's daughter but also her aunt! Unable to disentangle the situation and work out who owned the estate, the family sold it to the Waldo family in 1749.

And so to the second Humphreys occupation, apparently unconnected to the first. The Waldo/ Meade Waldo family preferred to live at Stonewall Park and so rented the castle out to tenants, including a Humphrey(s) family (or two) who lived in the castle for much of the 1800s. Tragedy struck again in 1808 when John Humphrey Junior was shot and killed on his way home from Westerham market. Gossips drew conclusions when his wife remarried a local farmer the next year who then took on the tenancy of the castle; no one was convicted but the happy couple insisted on having the castle exorcised because they believed it was haunted by John Junior's ghost. According to newspaper reports, at the time he was mortally wounded, John was with his friends, George Holmden and Richard Keeys. Being not so grand as the first Humphreys incarnation, this family has memorials outside the church, handsome table tombs and plaques on



the east wall, including one to another John dated 1829 and a four-year-old called Frederic in 1839. The gravestone opposite mentions Elizabeth Keeys who must have been a relative of John's companion.

And so to the late 1800s....there were Humphrey(s) tenants there when a guide book writer visited in about 1885. He was shocked to find that the castle was now a working farm. He found "three labouring men in the Great Hall busily engaged in discussing a huge apple pudding and in the gallery, in which gay and masked balls were said to have taken place, were many corn sacks and the family mangle!" This was perhaps a third iteration of the name given that, as we will describe in a forthcoming edition, there had been a gap when castle had been rented out to others, including in the 1860s to artists and poets known as "the St John's Wood clique".

The Meade Waldos found a more compatible tenant in Captain Guy Seabright who took on a lease in 1895 and started restoring the castle, only to leave eight years later when the Astors arrived.

Joanna Wade



the head gardener

Neil Miller has been head gardener of Hever Castle for nearly 20 years. When I met him, he and his team of 12 staff, one trainee and two volunteers had just finished preparing for the Britain in Bloom competition - no pressure, but Hever has won a gold medal for 10 consecutive years. Neil's career started in the City. He left school at 16 and joined the mad world of insurance broking at Lloyds. He loved the buzz but when the market crashed and he was made redundant, he looked towards his other love, gardening, swapping a hothouse for a greenhouse. He had enjoyed helping his granddad in his vegetable plot and soon picked up local gardening jobs. The passion grew and he went off to train, first City and Guilds and then the RHS, studying at evening classes. Then one wet summer's day 25 years ago, with work washed out, he travelled from south London to an open day here at the Castle. He asked about garden jobs, was taken on and then promoted to Head Gardener five years later, responsible for the gardens enjoyed by 400,000 visitors each year.



The first prerequisite for the job is love. Neil is a pretty down to earth fellow but he has a profound connection to gardens, you must talk to your plants he says. The plant knows best and nature is the boss, she's the guide, put a plant in the wrong place and she will tell you though she is also unpredictable. Climate change is a very real challenge for plants, which have needed water in this recent dry spell as never before - and every year the grass keeps growing well into the autumn when in the past mowing predictably stopped in October. Add to that productive changes in the name of sustainability - grass is left long and as a result orchids have appeared as never before.

The next is respect. Neil sees himself as the custodian of the Astors' vision. As such they enhance and restore, always mindful of the need for succession planning for trees now 125 years old. Members of the team have developed specialisms such as topiary and perfecting striped lawns which help to make the formal gardens breathtakingly perfect. He praises the current owners, the Guthrie family, for allowing the team to enhance the garden and take on new projects, for example the restoration of the second section of the Sunday Morning Walk (how ever does the team find the time, out of sheer enthusiasm they have hacked away and restored a long section of the disappeared path the Astors used to walk to church) and the flower meadows by the lake, the brain child of the Golf Club's greenkeeper.

Then there is flexibility, rising to unexpected challenges, one of which is how to grow plants now that compost has no peat in it. This is a nightmare they are overcoming by making their own: dying annuals (grown on from seedlings) are a perfect component (they aren't wasted as some think) plus all the office's shredded paper, shredded wood, manure and a wait of at least a year.

Neil's favourite flower? Roses, a favourite being the climber Compassion. Beneath the Castle rose garden's wonderous roses lies a "lasagne" of soil and farmyard manure, the roses are scrupulously dead headed down to the next leaf joint and they are watered as necessary. As for daffodils, there are too many to dead head, instead they mow the area after three months and then feed blood and bone. And his hobbies? Well, gardening and visiting nurseries! Quite serious gardening too - he is a specialist in carnivorous plants, experiments with tropicals such as custard apples, he and his partner are the official home of the National Collection of Ajugas and their garden was open under the NGS. In between, Neil is an advocate for Perennial, the Gardeners' Royal Benevolent Society and a member of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners. He is very concerned to encourage young people into a career in horticulture and also proud that his (paid) trainees come via the WRAGS (work and retrain as a gardener) scheme run by the Women's Farm and Garden Association.

The early years of stress in the City may be why Neil is remarkably relaxed in the midst of so much to do, so much so that when he sees the garden after a spell away he is thrilled by it rather than overwhelmed by minor imperfections - indeed his mantra is that "nothing is ever perfect in a garden". Mind you, it is pretty perfect - as I left, a member of the public was congratulating the ticket office: "that was fantastic, absolutely fantastic". The credit was considerably due to Neil, but being a generous soul I'm sure he would be delighted to share it.

Joanna Wade



Falconhurst Cricket Club early summer fixtures



August				September			
Sun 3	Grannies	Home	1.30pm	Sat 6	Markbeech Village	Home	1.00
Sat 9	Tots	Home	1.30pm	Sun 7	Southborough	Away	1.00
Sun 17	Penshurst	Home	1.30pm	Sat 13	Speldhurst	Away	1.00
Sat 23	Rustall	Away	1.30pm	Sun 14	Withyham	Home	1.00
Sun 31	Ardingly Old Boys	Home	1.30pm	Sun 21	Langton Green	Home	1.00
				Sat27	Four Elms	Away	1.00

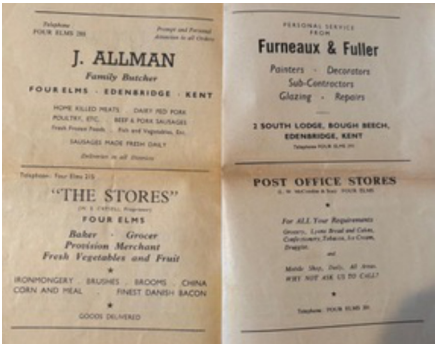


memories of Four Elms

I was born on the 13th August 1939 at 9 Council Cottages (now called Brookfield). My parents were Mr and Mrs Arthur Rodwell. I started school at Four Elms Primary where Mr French was the Headteacher and Mrs Johnson took the infants. I went to Sunday School and sang in the church choir. I was confirmed by Bishop Main (Bishop of Rochester). I knew Richard Bennett and his family, the brothers attended the Primary and then Edenbridge County Secondary school at the same time as me. I was in the Brownies and Guides and the Captain was Ann Sproat. There was also a youth club and, then as now, children played on the "rec" where there were two swings, a see-saw and a summer house.



Four Elms was full of shops. There were two grocers near the crossroads where sugar etc were all weighed out for the customer and put in bags. The butchers was run by Mr Allman where we bought fresh meat and sausages. Mr Smith's builders yard/undertakers and Mr and Mrs Combie's post office and tea room were opposite the pond with a telephone exchange in the side room where you could see the numbers being plugged in and connected by the telephonist. Mr Mitchell's garage was next to the pond with petrol pumps worked by hand, you could watch the glass measure filling and emptying as he pumped. The district nurse's house was opposite the chapel and she had a treatment room in her house. Mr George did TV and radio repairs.



At the age of 13 I joined the junior St John's Ambulance as I was interested in nursing. I did voluntary duty at Edenbridge hospital and carried out many simple tasks. At 16 I left home to become a pre-nursing student (Cadet Nurse) at Farnborough Hospital and I met my future husband, Philip Howard, at a hospital dance. We married on my 21st birthday in 1960; the wedding was in St Paul's and the vicar was the Reverend R Penn. That year I passed my nursing exams and then became a State Registered Nurse. We moved to Warminster in Wiltshire in 1962 but our sons Ian and Mark were both christened in St Paul's as my parents still lived in the village. My father sadly died in 1973 and my mother in 2000 and both are buried in the churchyard where Richard tended their graves so beautifully.

Betty Howard nee Rodwell

news from four elms primary

As the school year draws to a close, we find ourselves reflecting on the incredible journey of our Year 6 pupils. It is always bittersweet to say goodbye, but this year's cohort has left an indelible mark on Four Elms Primary School. Their final term has been nothing short of extraordinary, filled with unforgettable experiences, outstanding achievements, and moments of joy that we will treasure for years to come. One of the highlights was our week-long residential trip to the Isle of Wight. From fossil hunting and beach visits to boat trips, chair lifts, aqua parks, and farm adventures, the children embraced every opportunity with enthusiasm. They were a joy to take away—representing our school with maturity, kindness, and a wonderful sense of fun.

Back on home soil, Years 5 and 6 dazzled us all with their spectacular performance of Bugsy Malone at the Stag Theatre in Sevenoaks. Supported by expert choreographers and Ant Payne (Sevenoaks' own Silly Billy), the pupils delivered a show of professional quality. Their commitment, energy, and confidence on stage were truly inspiring, and I could not have been prouder of their hard work and dedication. The evening of the performance was made even more special with the arrival of the children's SATs results. We continue to achieve well above National Average with 100% of our pupils achieving the expected standard or above—a phenomenal achievement that reflects their determination and the exceptional teaching they have received.



To celebrate their time at Four Elms, our wonderful parent community organised a fantastic leavers' party, and the school hosted a heartfelt leavers' service where each child was individually recognised. It was a moving occasion, filled with laughter, memories, and a few tears. This class has been a shining example of what makes our school so special, and they will be sorely missed. Beyond the classroom, we've also enjoyed being part of the wider community, including a joyful day at the village fete. Thank you to everyone who came along and supported us—it means so much to be part of such a warm and welcoming village.

As we look ahead to the new academic year, we are excited to welcome a new group of Reception pupils and their families into our school community. But for now, we wish all our families a restful and joyful summer break.

Jess Fermor
Head of School

news from hever primary



One of the final responsibilities of our Year 6 pupils, is hosting our annual tea party where we thank everyone who has supported our school during the year. This year was particularly special as it was our official farewell and thank you to Bridget Harris, our Chair of Governors, who you probably know as part of The Link editorial team. Bridget's tenure started well before I arrived at Hever Primary so I can only speak from personal experience of the last couple of years but I know from talking to others that the commitment and the passion I have witnessed goes back well before my time.

I doubt there is anyone who knows Hever School better than Bridget, having experienced first-hand the turmoil during and after Covid and remained steadfast and determined despite a difficult Ofsted inspection. Where others might have given in to the challenges, Bridget remained resolute and is a shining example of our school values of courage and perseverance that have helped to build the thriving school that Hever is today. Bridget's generosity in terms of her time, knowledge and experience have been extraordinary! From repeatedly joining Teams calls with the DfE whilst on holiday in Cornwall, to writing persuasive letters and emails, to responding rapidly to an unexpected crisis, Bridget has always been swift and pro-active in her support. Bridget has been equally generous in her direct support for the children, ensuring no child misses out due to lack of funding, regularly donating books and resources and inspiring our Year 6 children to become avid readers, through her enthusiasm and encouragement as a reading volunteer. Fortunately, Bridget intends to continue this role.

Bridget's thorough approach and her eye for detail has been an asset to the governing body; whether it was monitoring progress, checking policies and procedures or responding to issues requiring her legal background, nothing was ever missed! As a community, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to her. I know I speak on behalf of our whole school community – staff, children, parents and governors – in saying a heartfelt thank you for Bridget's tireless dedication and unwavering support for Hever School.

The celebratory tea party was also a chance to thank our parent community, particularly our amazing PTA, and the wider community including our team of reading volunteers. We remain especially grateful to our friends at Hever Castle and Bore Place for their generosity and the wonderful opportunities they provide to extend and enhance our children's learning. As we come to the end of another academic year, we recognise how fortunate we are to work and to learn in such a wonderful setting and to be part of such a supportive community.

Helene Bligh
Headteacher

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Andy Sayers Electrical Services	maintenance and repairs	07836 256 146
Albourne roofing	slating, tiling, flat roofing, repairs	01892 836777
APH Electrical & Property Maintenance		07816 291713
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
G Moss	joiner & builder	07778 440 644
Jem Pickard	painting and decorating	07850 371558 or 01732 863062
M & M Walker	painting & decorating, plumbing, heating	07774 218 684
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

Dog Training

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
Beauty By Molly- Massage, Facials, lash lift & tint, House of Health Hever		07516897225
Flexi Foot Care, Diane Fletcher - home 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

Container Storage, low monthly rates - Gaywood Farm, Edenbridge		07973210361
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
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

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



Hole cottage through a hole

church in august

During the summer, the six Sundays from 27th July till 31st August will have just one service on each Sunday at each of the churches. 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
27th July 10am	Holy Communion St.Peter's Hever with baptism	Trinity 6
3rd August 10am	Holy Communion Four Elms	Trinity 7
10th August 10am	Eucharist Holy Trinity Markbeech	Trinity 8
17h August 10am	Holy Communion St.Peter's Hever	Trinity 9
25th August 10am	Holy communion St.Paul's Four Elms	Trinity 10
31st August 10am	Eucharist Holy Trinity Markbeech	Trinity 11

Our small groups are suspended during August and will resume in September – details in next month's Link. Please contact any of us if you would like prayer or to talk to someone during this time or any other help.

Rector
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simonbraid@icloud.com

Administrator
Ana Roxburgh
beneficeemail@gmail.com

Wardens

Four Elms
Christina Hodson
01732 700247

Hever
Mandy Yarnold
01342 850028

Markbeech
Lynnie Rowan
01342 850776

Edenbridge Foodbank are looking for a volunteer manager. No prior experience is necessary and suitable training will be provided. If you are interested please do get in touch with the Project Manager, Dave White, at davewhite@edenbridge.foodbank.org.uk or on 07964 690323.



Pet service at St. Paul's Four Elms

From the register

Baptism:
6th July Four Elms Frederick Smith
13th July Hever Rex Hyson

Weddings:
7th June Markbeech Emily Parsons & Matthew Ashley
21st June Four Elms Eleanor Wettern and Henry Donald Irving

our rector's thoughts

The Church of England has over 16,000 church buildings and it is estimated that 35 to 50 million people visit churches each year as tourists. St.Peter's Hever is probably the oldest building in Hever dating back to the 12th Century; pre-dating Hever castle. It contains the tomb of Sir Thomas Bullen, father of Anne Boleyn and grandfather to Queen Elizabeth I. Unsurprisingly, it is the most visited of our three churches. Holy Trinity in Markbeech is a beautiful Gothic revival country church built in 1851 by the Talbot family. Our youngest church, St.Paul's Four Elms, was built in the 1880s, a fine example of Arts and Crafts architecture and has the distinction of being the oldest concrete church in England.

However, maintaining and improving our wonderful buildings is a challenge. We are planning to install an outside toilet, inside servery and disabled access at St.Peter's; an improved entrance at St.Paul's plus repairs to the spire and have recently improved the lighting in Holy Trinity. Our biggest challenge is human rather than financial resources. Notwithstanding the increases in numbers attending our family services, it remains that the people running our churches are mainly drawn from the older members of our communities, who are inevitably declining in numbers. We have just one church warden in each church where we should have two and two of these will be retiring next year after dedicated service. We need a Benefice Treasurer by the end of this year and our Church Councils at Holy Trinity and St.Paul's need 'new blood'. These are chiefly administrative tasks, which could be filled by people of goodwill, who are not necessarily frequent worshippers.

There are benefits to volunteering: it reduces loneliness, connects us with the community, improves mental health and gives us meaning and purpose. So I am, unashamedly, appealing to you to give some thought (and if you do, prayer) to volunteering in any way at all. I'd love to speak to you and explain what might be involved. Our churches belong to everyone.

Of course, the church is more than bricks and mortar. It is a community of people who, together, live in relationship with God. St.Peter uses the building as a picture of the church when he describes it *'like living stones…being built into a spiritual house'* (1 Peter 4:5) with Jesus as the cornerstone. When I think of all the people who have visited, worshipped and prayed - over 900 years in the case of St.Peter's - maybe even these stones, which have been blessed with prayer and make these buildings so special, might just be calling out to you!

I wish you all a fun and restful holiday season.

Simon

news from the pews

Four Elms

Phew – what an incredibly hot summer we are having. For those of us old enough to remember, it is like the summer of 1976 when we sizzled. However, it would seem that 1976 was an exceptional summer but now we must accept that summers, due to climate change, will be hotter by several degrees. Fortunately, the weather for the outdoor Pet Service was moderate and we were delighted to have a nice array of pets. Thank you to everyone who brought their much loved pets to the service. Pets bring such happiness to so many, even when dogs chew remote controls or cats scratch at a cushion, so it is a special pleasure to show our love and appreciation.

The Four Elms Village Fete was a day for lots of water and suncream. After deliberation it was decided to cancel the Dog Show as the weather forecast indicated very high temperatures. The Dog Show is always such a popular event we were sorry not to enjoy these lovely dogs but their welfare came first. It was, despite the very hot weather, a successful event, with Four Elms Primary school entertaining us. The Church Stalls were well managed and we had another financially successful Fete (the final figures for the church stalls will be on the church notice board). Thank you to everyone who worked tirelessly to make our stalls so successful and thank you to the Fete Committee for all the hard work which the members, friends and families do to make it one of the best Fetes in the area (I think!!).

Our next diary date is Harvest. The Harvest Supper will take place at the end of September, so look out for notices as to the exact date and time.

St Paul's Four Elms thanks everyone for their support and goodwill. As a community you are always in our prayers and we hope you continue to enjoy the summer.

Christina Hodson
Churchwarden

Hever

Our church's Services Register book recently filled up. Looking back through its pages, which began way back in September 1999 (yes, last century!), is like peeking into our shared history. This special book records so many milestones we've celebrated together: from joyous Confirmation services and the installation of our Rectors, to grand Royal Jubilees and national events. These significant occasions have been beautifully inscribed by Andrew Izod, whose wonderful calligraphy truly makes the register a work of art.

Within its precious pages, we see how our church family has grown and shared life's journey. We've joyfully welcomed 122 new members through baptism, celebrated the union of 110 couples with marriage services and blessings, and thoughtfully commemorated 83 friends who have passed away with funeral and memorial services. This register isn't just a book; it's a living testament to

the vibrant life, shared joys, and comforting solace found within our church walls. Here's to filling the pages of our new book with many more cherished memories!

Hever Barn Dance is galloping our way on Saturday, 13th September! Get ready for a delicious BBQ, lively music, and fantastic fun for all ages. Every penny raised will support our vital church outreach programmes, helping us make a real difference in the community. Look out for great deals, including **FREE entry for primary school-aged children** with a family ticket, plus discounts for early bookers. Tickets are now available from BookItBee.com – don't miss out!

The next Parish Lunch will be on Thursday 14th August, 12.30 for 1pm lunch. We normally have around 24 people and serve soup or sandwiches, fruit and a delicious home-made cake. Everyone in the Parish is warmly invited 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

Holiday season, how lovely! And who needs to go abroad with this glorious sun beaming down. However, my roses, and I know I am not alone in this, have been eaten by hungry sheep and deer and we do need some rain. As I write, very soon the "discussions" in our household about Wimbledon or the test match on the television will sadly end! I do love Wimbledon.

As mentioned last month, the Family Service on the 22nd June at Markbeech was delightful and well attended. On Sunday 13 July, we have Holy Communion, and I will be reading a passage from Amos. I used to know the books of the Bible by heart, (had to learn them at school) but I am not sure I remembered as far as Amos and took a little while to find his "fire and brimstone" passage. Before that we have the traditional, and rather wonderful, Four Elms Fete. Extra work for everyone now that the special Richard Bennett is no longer able to help – and his kind smile on bowling for the pig – will be so much missed. However, Simon is kindly taking over the task.

There is our Parish lunch on the 20th July in Clare's lovely garden. I hope more people will join us but realise that it is an extremely busy time of year with so many choices. It seems early to mention it, but Markbeech's Harvest Festival will be at 11am on September 28th. This is because we will have our brunch after it in the Hall and we are looking for a couple of parents to organise some finger food for children and perhaps a game or two, please! All three churches in the Benefice need some younger people to join us on PCCs please. I realise you are all extremely busy but some of us are getting "old"! If two (or more) friends joined it would be more fun to get involved and would be deeply appreciated. I wish you all a very happy summer holidays.

Janey Cooper
PCC Secretary

Hever Parish Council

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

It was reassuring to see, in the local Police news, that the concerns raised by HPC and residents have been listened to, road traffic safety stops have taken place locally and action taken where appropriate. It is reported that a local arrest has also been made in relation to drugs. To keep abreast of what is happening in the area and to receive alerts from our local officers, please subscribe to http://www.mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk/

Tree surveys, carried out by both Hever and Four Elms schools, have identified some trees that require attention in the Parish fields. Tree surgeons have been contacted for quotes to do the remedial works to maintain the health of the trees and to keep the area safe.

Four Elms Crossroads has seen more accidents unfortunately. On an ongoing basis HPC urge KCC Highways to take action to improve safety there. There will be some works done over the summer to change the stop signage and lines.

Members of HPC, together with some local residents, recently attended the Appeal Hearing against the Enforcement Notice relating to the development on the Hever Stud land west of Hever Road. Despite the efforts of many parties the Appeal went in favour of the development. We now wait to see if SDC will issue new Enforcement Notices on two of the mobile homes on the site. The outcome of the appeal has shocked many in the community.

We are about to start looking at the provision of play equipment at the Four Elms park for the younger audience. Part of the park is due a refresh and I will be looking into this and gathering input from the community.

Another litter pick will be scheduled for the Autumn. Please see website and Facebook for details.

Several outstanding issues on the public footpaths have been chased up. To report an issue with a right of way, such as a blocked path or broken style, please visit https://www.kent.gov.uk/environment-waste-and-planning/public-rights-of-way/report-a-problem-on-a-right-of-way .

The full minutes of the meetings and other useful information is available on the website www.hever.org

The next Hever Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 4th September 2025 in Markbeech Village Hall at 7.30 pm. The Planning Meeting will commence at 7.00 pm.

Rachael Turner
Clerk and RFO
07784912645
clerk@hever.org



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	36	13	28							231
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	29.5	14	31							259
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	25	21	33							268

HALL BOOKINGS

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

COUNCILS

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

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Copy for the **September** edition should reach us no later than **15th August .** 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

august diary

Eden Valley Museum celebrating 25 years with two exhibitions 'Discover History through 25 Objects' and 'Explore Change in the Eden Valley'
2nd & 4th Wed each month **Bore Place 'Wilder Wellbeing'** nature sessions for adults – free, book online www.boreplace.org/whats-on

12 Aug	**Enjoy a Cuppa** at St Paul's Four Elms	from 10.45am
14 Aug	**Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall	12.30 for 1pm
16 Aug	**Hever Hort Flower and Vegetable Show**, Hever Village Hall	2 – 4.30pm
18 Aug	**Free Family Fun Day**, Four Elms Field	
21 Aug	**Butterfly Hunt & Baking**, Bore Place, Child 3yrs+ £20 adults free	10am – 12.30pm
24 and 25 Aug	**Oxted and Edenbridge Agricultural Show**, Ardenrun Showground, Lingfield	
28 Aug	**Teddy Bears' Picnic Adventure,** Bore Place Child 3yrs+ £20 adults free	10am - 12.30pm
28 Aug	**Pizza & Pipistrelles Night**, Bore Place, £65 ticket for 2	7 – 9.30pm
30 Aug	**Streatfeild Family play** at Hoath House, Chiddingstone in aid of epilepsy research, for details email janestreatfeild@btinternet.com	5pm
31 Aug	**Streatfeild Family play** as above	2pm and 5pm
4 Sep	**Hever Parish Council Meeting**, Markbeech Village Hall,	planning 7pm meeting 7.30pm
7 Sep	**Cream Cheese and Paneer Workshop**, Bore Place tickets £42	10.30-1.30pm
9 Sep	**Enjoy a Cuppa** at St Paul's Four Elms	from 10.45am
11 Sep	**Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall	12.30 for 1pm
13 Sep	**Hever Barn Dance**, Hever Village Hall	
4 Oct	**Parish litter pick** – details to follow	
7 Oct	**Knit and Natter**, Markbeech Village Hall	2.30 – 4.30

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