September 2025

THE LINK







In this issue:

- barnstorming
- rebel, rebel
- a clique at the castle
- you say tomato
- birds of a feather

...and so much more

Parish magazine of Four Elms, Hever and Markbeech

£1

Welcome to the September Link

All hail the humble sparrow! There are 50 billion of them according to a new estimate and such is their vigour that they are the most common bird on the planet, present on every continent apart from Antarctica.





House sparrows are the only type of sparrow in the UK, hedge sparrows, also known as dunnocks, are in a different bird family called "Accentors". Only three other species - european starlings, barn swallows and ring-billed gulls - also have populations exceeding one billion. "Sparrows Can't Sing" is a rather charming 1963 comedy drama film starring Barbara Windsor and set in London's East End - but they can! Or maybe they can't in that the song consists of chirps and squawks and is more enthusiastic than tuneful.

All hail also to butterflies who have been the noticeable winners from this climate-changed hot summer (and also figs which are ripening on the trees as never before). I have spotted many varieties including the hedge brown, similar to but more colourful than the meadow brown, and a prime pollinator named for its "rigorous patrol of hedges and woodland rides" according to the Woodland Trust. As the autumn approaches (where did the year go?!) the butterflies will hibernate, weave themselves into winter-resistant chrysalises or migrate south. We, however, look forward to the Hever Barn Dance, the Four Elms harvest supper and the film club - and much more too.

Joanna Wade
thelink@hever.org



THE LINK



BOOK NOW

NEW THIS YEAR!

1 child per adult goes free!



You're Invited! Help Shape Our New Village Hall!

The Hever Village Hall Management Committee would love for you to join us for an important open meeting. This is your chance to hear about exciting plans for our new village hall and share your ideas.

The meeting will be at the Hever Village Hall on Saturday, 4th October, at 3:00pm.

Our aim is to create a more functional and relevant community hub that truly serves everyone. We'll be sharing the various options for your new village hall building and, most importantly, we want to hear your thoughts on the facilities and improvements you'd like to see.

Your feedback is crucial in helping us enhance this vital community space, ensuring it can better meet local needs and contribute to the well-being of our wonderful village.

We really hope to see you there!

pet of the month



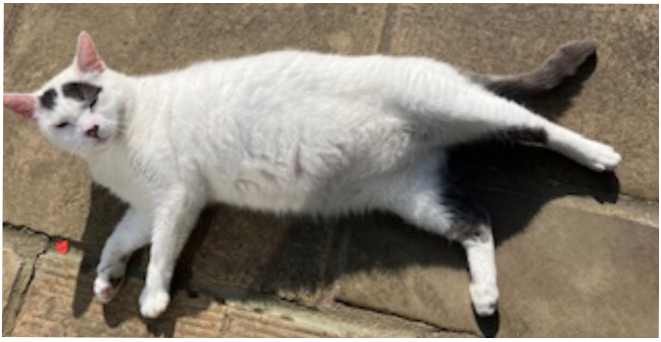
Rebel is a large (actually a very large) tomcat. We don't really know how old he is, as we inherited him, along with his name, about 5 years ago. Many say he is a dog in a cat's body - his recall is better than most canines. Stand at the edge of our house and call his name, he'll invariably come running at a lollop. He's terrifically friendly to all humans, but he seems to have a preference for male humans over female humans. There's nothing he likes more than a rough-&-tumble, but if things become too feisty, he'll extract his claws and terminate the game sharpish! Somewhat surprisingly, he is also an accomplished mimic. His duck impression is extremely lifelike - when he quacks, you're convinced there's duck in the room.

Dogs, no matter how large or fierce, are terrified of him as he defends his territory with a swipe of the claw and a blood-curdling screech. His powerful build, mixed with a fearless mindset, mean he punches way above his fighting weight & is massively intimidating. Rebel is a killing machine, no mouse or rat is safe in our part of Four Elms. He dispatches without mercy, then eats the entire corpse, destroying any DNA evidence - the purrrfect crime. Many times he has returned from a night on a hot tin roof, with battle-scars to his head and ears.

> Rebel, Rebel, your face is a mess
> Rebel, Rebel, how could they know?
> Hot tramp, I love you so.

Despite his macho demeanour, he really is a kitten (or a puppy) in a very large body. Like many males, of various species, he is not a complex character and is ultra-fixated on food. If you want to wheedle your way into his affections, merely fill his bowl with grub. When he's not killing things, fighting, quacking, or eating, he usually sleeps - because he has been neutered, other activities are not possible. We have a white duvet at home that he loves to sleep on. Because of his colouring, it's sometimes difficult to tell where the duvet ends and his fur begins. How does he keep his coat so white, I hear you ask? We don't have an answer to this maybe Persil Automatic (other washing powders are also available).

Nick Roberts



what I do

Local landowner Jan Boomaars manages to combine a busy job in the City with running an equally busy farm, he tells us what he does...

My farming story begins in Holland, where my family first took up farming in 1680. It was always my dream to continue the farming legacy and in 2004, my wife and I were very fortunate to acquire some beautiful farmland at Vexour Farm, near Chiddingstone. Back then it consisted of an old barn, which had seen better days, and some grass fields. Our vision was to create a forward-thinking farm, producing high quality livestock and cereals, while caring for the environment. Since then we have expanded to include mainly arable sites in Hever and the surrounding areas including Delaware Farm, Whistlers Farm and land between Four Elms, Chiddingstone Hoath and Cowden. In the Hever area this year we are growing oil seed rape and milling wheat, which have done surprising well, despite the challenging weather conditions.

At the heart of Vexour's operations are its prizewinning herds of Charolais, Aberdeen Angus, and Hereford cattle, alongside flocks of Texel and Charollais sheep. We work to the highest standards of animal welfare. Our cattle and sheep spend a large part of their lives outside on fresh pasture, only coming inside for the winter months. Vexour isn't just about livestock. Our arable farming plays a vital role in producing cereals like wheat, barley, oats, beans and rape seed for the food chain, using sustainable practices that protect soil health and biodiversity. We also make our own hay and straw for our animals.



cutting oil seed rape at whistlers

That's usually around 2500 large square bales!

We have 8 very active bee hives on the farm which not only help to increase our crop yield by improving pollination, but also produce the most delicious honey. Crop rotation, wildlife-friendly margins, and careful land stewardship ensure that the farm contributes to both local food production and environmental resilience. Due to this year's hot dry June, we are harvesting weeks earlier than usual. You've probably already come across our tractors and combine harvester this July, busy working the fields and generally "making hay while the sun shines".

Behind the scenes at Vexour, we are very lucky to have a team of 7 passionate farming professionals, working to bring their own expertise, care, and innovation to the farm. From many a sleepless night during lambing and calving, to late night harvesting, no two days are ever the same. Local agricultural shows such as



dawn at vexour

the Edenbridge and Oxted Show, and other community events are important to us. We also travel all over the country to show, buy and sell livestock, particularly in Scotland, a few times a year. We still find time to host numerous students, farmers, artists and societies, and talk to local primary school children about farming. For the last 10 years we have worked with a brilliant London based charity called The Garden Classroom to bring over 200 children from the inner city to camp at the farm each year. It is incredible to see how transformative a few days in the beautiful Kent countryside can be for the children.

Jan Boomaars



Falconhurst Cricket Club late summer fixtures

September

Sat 6	Markbeech Village	Home	1.00	Sun 14	Withyham	Home	1.00
Sun 7	Southborough	Away	1.00	Sun 21	Langton Green	Home	1.00
Sat 13	Speldhurst	Away	1.00	Sat27	Four Elms	Away	1.00

wildlife on our doorstep

Like many of you, I enjoy watching wildlife documentaries showing amazing birds and animals from around the world. However, it really is surprising how much incredible wildlife we have on our own doorstep. Sometimes all you have to do is take the time to stop and look – something many of us learnt to do during Covid but then forgot about as soon as life returned to its hectic normality.

Most of us will have experienced some sort of contact with wildlife – perhaps a tame fox frequents your garden or a mischievous squirrel raids your bird feeders. Some of us are even lucky enough to have visiting hedgehogs (I'm still waiting). Did you know the common belief that bread & milk is a good meal for hedgehogs is wrong? Meat-based wet dog or cat food, or hedgehog food which you can buy from a garden centre, are the recommended choices, but they'd actually probably be much happier just feeding on the insects and worms in your flowerbeds. Taking part in the annual RSPB Garden Birdwatch can be a great way to get your kids interested in the everyday birds that share their environment. However, Kent also gets its fair share of more unusual bird visitors. Last year, two spoonbills turned up at Bough Beech reservoir. These are large, exotic-looking wading birds with long, spoon-shaped beaks. White-tailed eagles have also been spotted at Bough Beech. These were reintroduced some years ago on the Isle of Wight but their territories have now expanded to Kent and Sussex. You would certainly know if you saw one, as nothing compares in size (they are known as "flying barn doors" in the birding world!).


waxwing

Sevenoaks Wildfowl Reserve in Riverhead can also get rare visitors. Last Autumn a migrating osprey stopped off there on its way to Africa and stayed for three days because the fishing was so good. It gave spectacular displays of diving for fish to those lucky folk who happened to be sitting in the right bird-hide at the right time (sadly, I wasn't one of them!). Other rarities can crop up anywhere and sometimes in the most unexpected places. Two winters ago, there was an unusually large number of visiting waxwings due to a poor crop of berries in their usual Scandinavian feeding grounds. These striking birds are quite something to behold and can pop up anywhere where there are berry trees – I managed to catch up with some in the middle of a very modern housing estate in Uckfield but they were also seen in a car park at North Farm Industrial Estate!

Just last winter, we were lucky enough to have hawfinches at Penshurst church.

They were feeding on the yew trees at the back of the churchyard. Again, these are rare and stunning little birds with large chunky beaks for breaking seeds open. On Ashdown Forest, you can stumble across all sorts of rarities. Tree pipits are tiny brown birds with an extraordinary courtship display where they fly vertically up very high and then parachute down. Nightjars appear at dusk and make an amazing chirring noise before flitting about in the darkening sky, flapping their wings together to mark their territory. Nightjars are one of several very rare ground-nesting birds on the Forest, which it is why it is so very important for dog-owners to keep their dogs under close control in the breeding season.

Of course, the best way to attract birds into your own garden is to have bird feeders with a variety of food on offer. Sunflower seeds will attract finches, peanuts will bring in blue tits and great tits and maybe even the beautiful great spotted woodpeckers if you are lucky. Fat balls appeal to just about everything but you can end up being mobbed by large flocks of starlings and jackdaws, so I tend to avoid them. Regular cleaning of your bird feeders is essential to avoid the spreading of viruses between birds. Other things that can be done to make your garden more wildlife-friendly include choosing plants which appeal to butterflies and bees and, if you have room, putting in a small pond to attract amphibians, dragonflies and perhaps even a grass snake. If you don't have room for a pond, just a shallow dish of water can benefit the birds, hedgehogs and other wildlife – even bees will come down for a drink and you will make their life easier if you put a little stone or stick in the water so they have a way to climb out if they fall in.

Nature is all around us and our wonderful birds and animals are there to be enjoyed. With our weather becoming more and more extreme, it has never been more important for us to give them a helping hand when we can.

Jan Ames



greater spotted woodpeckers

Hever bell ringers need YOU!



We are a friendly tower which welcomes beginners and more experienced ringers to our Thursday evening practices. We practice for an hour from 8pm and then usually go across the road for a drink. We ring our six bells for weddings and festivals and some Sunday morning church services - and so keep an old village tradition alive!

If you are interested in joining us please contact me, Jane Rosam on 07766 763124.



Hever Rose and Horticultural Society



Talk by Jacqueline Aviolet on Hardy Geraniums
Wednesday 17th September 8pm Hever Village Hall
There will be plants for sale.

And the rest of the programme for 2025, all at Hever Village Hall
Wednesday 15 October 8pm Talk: Plant Heritage and National Plant Collection Jude Lawton
Wednesday 19 November Annual General Meeting
full details on the Hever Hort tab of the Hever.org website

Hever Hort Summer show

Congratulations to all the competitors and to the cup winners who produced some fine exhibits for the last show of the year. Winners included Jane Rosam for the longest bean, Sue Butcher whose beautiful flowers won the Rosemary Bayford cup. Norman Greenaway won two cups. Pauline Radford triumphed in the craft classes and Jackie Dunkley the hard-fought Tolfree cup in the photography classes. And finally.... Helen Rahn dressed to match her cup-winning arrangement "Wild Fire".









gardening

As I write it's nearing 30 degrees yet again with no rain on the horizon! We can't remember a year like it for the prolonged heat and dryness. Here at the nursery watering is like painting the Forth bridge. It's really got us thinking about water preservation and rain harvesting. We are now investing in new irrigation tanks that collect rainwater in the winter. This is something the domestic gardener can also do at home, with the use of water butts and tanks that connect to gutter downpipes. Of course you need the rain to top them up, but every drop saved counts!

We are also being asked the question what plants can tolerate long dry spells in summer? Two case studies worth studying are the 'Gravel Garden' at Beth Chatto's and 'Reimagining Delos' at Sissinghurst. Both gardens are worth a visit to gain inspiration for plant selection. Having talked to the head gardener at Beth Chatto's, the dry garden has never received any supplementary watering, even when it was first planted. When we visited, the Essex countryside was parched due to the heat, but the garden looked stunning! See photo on facing page.

'Delos' at Sissinghurst has been expanded this year and is settling in well. Designed by top designer Dan Pearson and head gardener Troy Scott-Smith, they have steered the garden to Vita Sackville-West's original vision. Both gardens lean heavily on Mediterranean shrubs, grasses and perennials to create multi-layered, long seasonal interest planting. If you check out Beth Chatto's website, there is a great montage of photos to show how the garden looks amazing for 12 months!

With both gardens, the soil/planting substrate is both poor in nutrients and is free draining. The problem we have here in Hever is that we are on Wealden clay, which is both nutritious and not free draining, especially in winter! There are a few options you can explore – import gravel/crushed concrete (this can be costly), when planting, dig the hole bigger and back fill with grit. The final option is to add plenty of organic matter in the autumn/winter as a mulch and let the worms do the work. This helps aerate the soil and makes it easier to work.

Let's pray for rain in September so we can plan for Autumn planting, including bulbs!

Simon Sutcliffe How Green Nursery
t 01732 700382
e plants@howgreennursery.co.uk
www.howgreennursery.co.uk

Here's our top 10 favourite drought tolerant plants:

Verbena bonariensis 'Vanity'
Oenothera lindheimeri 'Whirling Butterflies'
Eryngium 'Big Blue'
Phlomis russeliana
Calamagrostis 'Karl Foerster'
Perovskia 'Blue Spire'
Euphorbia characias subsp. Wulfenii
Lychnis coronaria 'Hill Grounds'
Nepeta racemosa 'Junior Walker'
Stipa gigantea

Hever Parish Council

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

Recently the Four Elms Crossroads safety improvements have commenced with new signage and clearer road markings. We very much hope this will help to reduce the risk of accidents at the crossroads.

Warmer weather has seen an increase of visitors to Four Elms pond. With this, unfortunately, some visitors were not as respectful of the pond environment as they should be. We encourage anyone who witnesses anti-social behaviour or cruelty to the wildlife to report it to the police without delay.

The Annual Safety Inspection of the Four Elms play area and the Hever Field gym equipment has been received. Several items will be repaired and routine maintenance carried out. A refurbished board and map of the parish will soon be reinstalled in Hever.

Sevenoaks District Council has confirmed changes to bin collections across the district from Spring 2026. These changes will include a shift to bi-weekly rubbish collections and will bring increased recycling opportunities, including for food waste and glass.

The High Weald Walking Festival returns 13 September 2025 with 60 walks to choose from there is something for everyone. For more information please visit: http://www.highwealdwalks.org/

The date for the next Hever Parish Council meeting has been changed and this will now be held on Thursday 11th 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



Beth Chatto's garden

st johns wood clique spend a summer at hever castle

The artist Philip Hermogenes Calderon (1833-1898) was born in May 1833 at Poitiers, France - the son of a French mother and Spanish father who settled in London 1845. In the summer of 1866, Calderon rented Hever Castle and was joined there by other artists who were members of the St John's Wood Clique.



Philip Calderon 1863 by David Wynfield (C)NPG

St John's Wood Clique

In the second half of the nineteenth century St. John's Wood in London became a popular location for artists, giving rise to the Clique. The group were particularly interested in historical subjects and specialised in paintings on medieval and Renaissance subjects. Calderon was the leader of the group, together with Frederick Goodall (1822-1904), George Storey and William Yeames. Whilst staying at Hever Castle Calderon painted *'Home after Victory'*, a semi-historical subject, the background of which was painted from the courtyard of the Castle.

William Frederick Yeames (1835-1918) was born in Russia, the son of a British Consul. After the death of his father in 1842 he was sent to school in Dresden where he began studying painting, later moving to London developing his skills in Florence and Rome. On return to London in 1859, he joined the St John's Wood Clique and joined Calderon at Hever Castle in 1866. He is best known for his painting "*And When Did You Last See Your Father?*" (1878). Yeames was married to the sister of the artist and photographer David Wilkie Wynfield (1837-1887) a distant relation of the Scottish artist David Wilkie, after whom he was named. Originally destined for the priesthood, he chose art as a profession and in the 1860's became part of the St John's Wood Clique. He latterly became better known for his photographs, in particular a series he made of contemporary artists in historical fancy dress, including Calderon, Yeames and Storey.

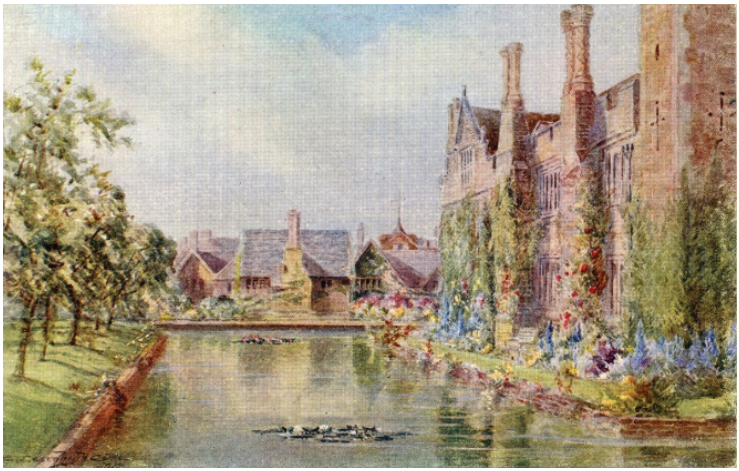
George Storey (1834-1919) was born in London, privately educated at Morden Hall School in Surrey, and continued his education in Paris before returning to London where he studied under J.M. Leigh and J.L. Dulong. He was initially strongly influenced by the Pre-Raphaelites but later established a reputation as a genre and portrait



Home After Victory Philip Calderon 1867 Wikimedia Commons.

painter, as well as an illustrator. Storey moved in the same artistic circles as Whistler with whom he was apparently well acquainted, and he recalled at one time being patted on the head by Charles Dickens.

Summers at Hever Castle



The moat and castle at Hever, by Charles Essenhigh Corke, c.1900. EVMT: P2011.19091867. Wikimedia Commons.

In 1866, Calderon, Yeames, Wynfield and Storey along with their families, spent the summer at Hever Castle, forming a sort of large happy family. Calderon's wife was Storey's sister. Yeames wife was Wynfield's sister, and Wynfield (a batchelor) was accompanied by his mother. They invited and entertained other friends throughout the season including artists Henry Stacy Marks (1829-1898) who'd spent time in Paris with Calderon; and John Evan Hodgson (1831-1895). Hever inspired many works by the artists who stayed there. Wynfield spent most of his time trying to photograph Anne Boleyn's ghost but eventually determined that the conditions were not conducive to an appearance.

Storey felt his experiences that summer at Hever Castle brought about a turning point in his career leading to his painting 'After you' being exhibited in the Royal Academy the following year (1867). Yeames specialised in Tudor and Stuart subjects, but also seemed to be rather accident prone, on one occasion accidentally walking into the moat. Calderon was probably the most prolific in the group. Spender lists paintings he produced during the summer using various rooms and other areas in Hever Castle as backdrops, concluding that 1866 and the time spent at Hever led to it being a very good year for Calderon's career.

Joan Varley

An abridged version of a piece in *Eden Valley Heritage*, no.36, 2022. Eden Valley Museum. Further reading about the St. John's Wood Clique at: https://www.stjohnswoodmemories.org.uk
A more comprehensive account of the Clique and their summer at Hever Castle is available online to Hever Castle Patreon Members: Spender, Anna. *The St. John's Wood Clique – A Summer at Hever Castle*. N.B. There are conflicting dates in the references to the year they spent at Hever, 1866 or 1867? I have chosen to rely upon the date quoted by Spender (1866), as she was the former curator at Hever Castle.

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Claire Cook, Positive Reinforcement Dog Trainer in Edenbridge		07818 070672

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Chiddingstone Nursery School	for children 2-5 years	01892 871315

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Beauty By Molly- Massage, Facials, lash lift & tint, House of Health Hever		07516897225
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Paul Marro Cognitive Hypnotherapy www.htherapy.co.uk		01732 808211
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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
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APF Trees	tree surgery and garden maintenance	07786 884924
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Thompson Tree Care Ltd,	tree surgery, tree felling, hedge cutting	07747345815

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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

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Markbeech Village Hall	01342 850328

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church in september

Please note the time of our Harvest Family service on 28th September at 11.00am, which will be followed immediately by a Harvest lunch in the Markbeech Village Hall. 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
7th Sept 10am	All Age Holy Communion St.Paul's Four Elms	Trinity 12
14th Sept 10am	Eucharist Holy Trinity Markbeech	Trinity 13
14th Sept 4pm	Forest Church at St.Peter's Hever	Trinity 13
21st Sept 10am	Holy Communion St.Peter's Hever	Trinity 14
28th Sept 8am	Said communion St.Paul's Four Elms	Trinity 15
28th Sept 11am	Harvest Family service Holy Trinity Markbeech	Trinity 15

Our Bible study will restart on 9th September and meets at 7.30pm on Tuesdays at various locations thereafter. Zoe Joannou's 'life group' is on alternate Wednesdays. For details of any of these please contact Simon. The next Men's Discussion group is on 23rd October. Please contact any of us if you would like prayer or to talk to someone during this time or any other help.

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Administrator
Ana Roxburgh
beneficeemail@gmail.com

Wardens

Four Elms
Christina Hodson
01732 700247

Hever
Mandy Yarnold
01342 850028

Markbeech
Lynnie Rowan
01342 850776

Four Elms Harvest Supper

Saturday 4th October 2025
Four Elms Village Hall 7.00 for 7.30pm
EVERYONE VERY WELCOME
£12 per person/cash bar
Book early and let us know if you are vegetarian or vegan
Email: harvest2021@btinternet.com
Phone: 01732 700247



our rector's thoughts

In an interview last month, Kemi Badenoch, the leader of the Opposition and daughter of a Methodist minister, explained how growing up she had found strength from being a Christian but had lost her faith after reading about the abuse that the Austrian, Josef Fritzl, had inflicted on his daughter Elisabeth over 24 years – notwithstanding her prayers. In contrast, there are calls for a National week of Prayer from 6th to 14th September, which reference the National Day of Prayer in 1940 that many believe was behind 'the miracle of Dunkirk'. You can see a clip at https://www.nationalweekofprayer.uk/ which features Bear Grylls, describing prayer as a conversation with God. It is said that there are more people who pray than believe in God and I have very rarely found my offer to pray for someone refused – quite the reverse.

There is something enigmatic about prayer. The letters to the Times, provoked by Kemi Badenoch, bear this out with the writer, Rabbi Jonathan Romain, suggesting that prayer changes us rather than circumstances. Many would disagree. For example, 'the Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer' under construction near Coleshill, Birmingham, will feature one million bricks of answered prayers! This may be about what we think prayer is. It's far more than giving God a shopping list and ticking off the answers. There's a child's book we give out at baptisms, which sums this up as 'Wow God! Thank you – sorry – please' and is based on the Lord's prayer. Someone said prayer is about *'seeking more of God rather than more from God'*. And yes, I, along with millions of others, believe God does answer our requests, big and small, in many different ways including changed circumstances.

The end of September/start of October is harvest time and we have our first Family harvest festival at Markbeech on 28th September. I am aware that farmers continue to have a tough time with the extended dry spell meaning many crops and grass have been slow to grow. I pray regularly with a farmer about this. As we give thanks that in our community, we don't go hungry, let's also pray for those parts of the world suffering from the impact of climate change and war. Maybe prayer is an acknowledgment that we aren't in control.

Here's some advice from St.Paul: *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus*. (Philippians 4:6-7). Why not make a start by coming to pray with us or have a look at the many prayer Apps like Lectio 365 https://www.24-7prayer.com/resource/lectio-365/

God bless you all

Simon

news from the pews

Four Elms

It's always good to learn something new and on Sunday 3rd August, in the absence of the Rector, the Rev. Ray Skinner presided over our Holy Communion at St. Paul's. As churchwarden I was a little puzzled to see the Reverend empty a large bag of beautiful Pink Lady apples. I thought the summer sun had gone to my head and I had overlooked Harvest Festival. I was relieved to learn that it was Lammas Sunday. Having lived in our rural village for many years I have to say I wasn't aware of the significance of the apples and Lammas Sunday. Lammas Sunday was a Christian holiday marking the blessing of the first fruits of harvest. Also translated as Loaf Sunday it marked, particularly, the wheat harvest. Bread was made from the first wheat and the loaf blessed with thanks given. We gave thanks for the apples and this year there is an abundance of fruit and berries on trees and bushes. There will certainly be plenty of blackberry and apple crumble in freezers!

Like many who read the Link, the anniversary of the dropping of the "A" bomb 80 years ago on a bright August morning has been a spectre which has given fear and foreboding throughout our lives. The genie is out of the bottle and can never be put back. We remember in our prayers the souls of all who perished and suffered with this horrific weapon of war and pray that it will be deterrent and not a weapon.

On a lighter note, The Friends of Kent Churches Ride and Stride takes place on Saturday 13th September. If you are able to participate, sponsor forms are available in the church. We would also welcome anyone willing to welcome riders passing our church, offering them a cold drink and biscuit and signing their sponsor forms. Please leave your name in church on the front desk if you are able to help. Following Lammas Sunday we look forward to harvest thanks. Our All Age Harvest Festival is on 5th October and the Four Elms Harvest Supper in the Village Hall is on Saturday 4th October. Everybody is most welcome to both occasions.

Christina Hodson
Churchwarden

Hever

Have you got your tickets yet? Hever Barn Dance is taking place on Saturday, 13th September. There will be a delicious BBQ, lively music, and fantastic fun for all ages. Every penny raised will support our 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!

Also taking place on 13th September is the annual Kent Churches Ride and Stride event. This is a wonderful opportunity to raise vital funds for

churches across Kent through sponsorship. We need people to take part on behalf of the parishes in our Benefice, so please get in touch for more information or visit their website www.kentrideandstride.co.uk. Half of the money you raise will go directly to our church for local projects, while the rest supports the Friends of Kent Churches, who provide grants across the county.

Our faculty application for the proposed Anne Boleyn memorial in the Bullen Chapel has been submitted. We are hopeful and will bring you an update as soon as we can.

The next Parish Lunch will be on Thursday 11th September 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

I was tempted to begin with echoing Four Elms "phew" from last month! This week, though glorious, is very, very hot! However, our Churches are cool so hopefully, tempting. The tomatoes are loving it, but the grass is not. As Simon has been away, August has been a relatively quiet month, but we did have a lovely service on Sunday, taken by a friend of Simon's, Tim, who has known him for 40 plus years. A kind, interesting man who has "retired" in name only! We also enjoyed, towards the end of July, a wonderful Parish lunch in Clare's glorious, but cool garden. Our next Service is on the 31st August at 10am.

Our Harvest Festival, mentioned last month, is on September 28th at a later time of 11am as it will be followed by a Harvest Brunch in the Village Hall – where you will all be very welcome of course. We are still looking for parents to help cater for children, and ideas for possible entertainment, please. We would also be glad to hear of anyone who would like to organise our Ride and Stride on the 13th September, please!

Do so hope that, by the time you read this, you have enjoyed a summer with friends and family. It has been such a joyful time with this sunshine, to revel in our beautiful surroundings. No need to go away, but always a treat to do so. I also hope that those who have been expecting exam results, are happy and excited about the next step.

Janey Cooper
PCC Secretary



you say tomayto and I say tomarto…

went the popular Fred Astaire song of the 30s, written by George Gershwin for the film "Shall we dance" starring Astaire and Ginger Rogers. The conflict in pronunciation was so important that the couple decided "let's call the whole thing off". There might be an argument about pronunciation, but who could imagine a world without tomatoes (technically a fruit but tested as a vegetable) taking a central role? Raw, canned, cooked in sauces, made into ketchup and spread across pizzas, tomatoes are everywhere. And as the growing season comes to an end I feel agonies of guilt about everything I have failed to harvest. A final push can result in green tomato chutney which is delicious.

And yet they have only been present in Europe since the 1500s, but didn't really catch on in Britain until the 1900s. They originated in South America and our word for tomato is Aztec. After Cortes invaded Mexico in 1521 a great exchange of food, animals and diseases between "old" and "new" world began. Named the "Colombian Exchange" after Christopher Columbus it proved fatal to up to 90% of the native populations of Central America and the Caribbean who had no immunity at all against killers such as smallpox, flu, plague, cholera and many others. But we got tomatoes and potatoes

At first the imported plants were treated as ornamental pot plants, their berries being as tiny as a blueberry and considered poisonous as they were members of the nightshade family. Evidence of their deadliness continued into the 1700s and aristocrats who ate them named them the "poisoned apple". What was in fact happening was that the acid from the fruit was dissolving the lead in their posh pewter plates and that was the problem: those who picked them off the plant suffered no ill effects. So finally they became a staple food and even the leaves, once feared as poisonous are considered safe in small quantities - so attempts to murder family members must be confined to mushrooms.

Ginger and Fred also fell out over the pronunciation of "potato" but what they didn't know according to recent research in China, was that nine million years ago potatoes evolved from a genetic mixture of wild Andean tomato plants and a plant called etuberosam. So the tomato is the mother of all potatoes - and of all other fruits too.

Joanna Wade



Green tomato chutney

4lb green tomatoes, sliced
2lb Bramley apples, chopped
1.5 pints white vinegar
1lb raisins
6oz soft brown sugar
2oz preserved ginger, chopped
1oz green chillies, chopped very finely
1lb onions, chopped
1oz salt
1tbsp mustard seed
4 cloves garlic, chopped

Put everything in a pan, bring to boil and simmer for 50 mins. Pot in the usual way.

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	57.0						288
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	71.5						330.5
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	25	21	33	52.0						320

HALL BOOKINGS

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

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The views expressed in the articles in this magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the editorial team. There is no implied approval or recommendation for any service or event advertised in the magazine.

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

september 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

24 & 25 Aug **Edenbridge & Oxted 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
7 Sept **Cream Cheese & Paneer Workshop**,Bore Place tickets £42 10.30-1.30pm
9 Sept **Enjoy a Cuppa** at St Paul's Four Elms from 10.45am
11 Sept **Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall 12.30 for 1pm
11 Sept **Hever Parish Council**, Markbeech VH, planning 7pm meeting 7.30pm
13 Sept **Ride and Stride in aid of Kent Churches**
13 Sept **Hever Barn Dance**, Hever Village Hall
4 Oct **Parish litter pick** – details to follow
4 Oct **Consultation Meeting at Hever Village Hall re future developments** 3pm
4 Oct **Four Elms Harvest Supper**, FE Village Hall, see Link p16 7pm for 7.30pm
5 Oct **Kefir Making Workshop**, Bore Place, tickets £35 10.30 - 1pm
7 Oct **Cream Cheese & Paneer workshop**, Bore Place, tickets £35 10.30 - 1pm
7 Oct **Knit and Natter**, Markbeech Village Hall 2.30 – 4.30
7 Oct **Harvest Moon Night Walk**, Bore Place,adult £12.50, child £7 6.30 – 8.30pm
9 Oct **Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall 12.30 for 1pm
11 Oct **Come and Sing Handel's Messiah** Rose Hill School, Tunbridge Wells
details www.penshurstchoralsociety.co.uk 2-6pm
14 Oct **Enjoy a Cuppa** at St Paul's Four Elms from 10.45am
16 Oct **Owl Walk**, Bore Place, adult £15, child £9 7 – 9pm
22 Oct **Biofluorescent Night Walk**, Bore Place, adult £15, child £8 6.30 – 7.30pm
28 Oct **Biofluorescent Night Walk**, Bore Place, adult £15, child £8 6.30 – 7.30pm
29 Oct **Stargazing Walk**, Bore Place, adult £12, child £8 6.30 - 8pm
30 Oct **Owl Walk**, Bore Place, adult £15, child £9 7 – 9pm
8 Nov **Fresh Pasta without a machine**, Bore Place, Adults £60 10am - 2pm
21 Nov **Hever Village Film Club – Rye Lane**, Hever Golf Club 7.30pm
16 Jan **Hever Village Film Club – Widow Cliquot**, Hever Golf Club 7.30pm
20 Feb **Hever Village Film Club – Big Night w Stanley Tucci**, Hever GC 7.30pm
20 Mar **Hever Village Film Club – Paddington in Peru**, Hever Golf Club 7.30pm