

Benenden Magazine

August 2017



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Editorial



In a month when the main topic of national conversation has been the exorbitant salaries paid to people we may never have heard of by an organisation funded by our good selves, it will pay us all to flick through the pages of this magazine and restore our faith in the human condition.

Of course, while we may begrudge the millions paid by the BBC to those whose only talent is to talk unswervingly, if not intelligently, on a radio show, which of us can say we would turn down the money if it were offered to us on a similar basis. Let's not get too sanctimonious about it.

A village like ours, however, relies heavily on volunteers. These aren't, as a rule, people who have the benefit of great personal fortunes and the luxury of time. They are ordinary folk who hold down jobs, bring up families and try to keep their lawns mowed, but still find the time to keep valuable organisations afloat, raise money for worthy causes and generally oil the wheels of village life.

The good reverend David Commander speaks in this month's issue of the difficulties of keeping St George's churchyard in a state that meets with the approval of all parishioners, armed only with a band of volunteers who may not be in the first flush of youth. Our community shop survives and thrives only because of the many hours devoted to it by people whose primary motivation is to 'give something back' to a village that offers so much in return. Likewise, to one degree or another, our Parish Council, Scout Group, Primary School, Village Fete, numerous charities, Bonfire Night celebrations, et al, most of whom you will find calling for added assistance between these covers.

It's easy to take things for granted in a natural environment as lovely as Benenden, but next time we feel there's something wrong with the village, it might be better to help put it right than to complain about it. You won't end up as rich as Chris Evans, but you will feel the warm glow of communal satisfaction.

Peter Thomas, Co-Editor

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Church Calendar

St George's Church

Rector: Revd David Commander 240658 david@dc-uk.co.uk (day off: Thursday)

Churchwarden: Tracy Claridge 240454 TLClaridge@TLClaridge.co.uk

Churchwarden: Julia Collard 241944 Julia.collard@btinternet.com

www.benendenchurch.org 850849 benendenchurch@gmail.com

Please inform the Rector or Churchwardens if you, or anyone else, is ill or would like a visit or home communion.

Sunday 6 August 8am Communion 10am All-age Communion 5pm Choral Evensong

Sunday 13 August 8am 1662 Communion 10am Morning Worship 5pm Evening Prayer
at Mission Church

Sunday 20 August 8am Communion 10am Sung Eucharist

Sunday 27 August 8am Communion 10am Morning Worship

Mission Church, Sandhurst

Rector: Revd David Commander 240658 david@dc-uk.co.uk (day off: Thursday)

Every Tuesday 10am Communion

Iden Green Congregational Church

Pastor: Rev Peter Michell 240642 www.idengreen.org.uk

Sunday Services 10am Morning Worship 5.30pm Evening Worship

The Roman Catholic Chapel

Fr Barry Grant 713364 www.sttheodore-cranbrook.org

Masses 9am Sundays 7.30pm Holy Days

From the Parish Registers

Baptism 9 July Sophie Grigson

Weddings 8 July Elizabeth Brooks and Stephane Margot
21 July Clare Steward and Chris Staplehurst

Funerals 15 July Joanne Grief Thanksgiving Service
28 July Veronica 'Rose' Westrup Cremation Service

Rector's Letter



Growing issues in the churchyard

You may not be aware, but I am being made aware, that the churchyard of our village church seems to be a bit of a Marmite choice: some people love it the way it is (a haven for flora and fauna), and others think it is totally unloved. In the space of a few days recently, I had one couple telling me how beautiful the churchyard is with all the wild flowers, and another family telling me how disgusting it is that it is being left and obviously uncared for.

Like so many jobs associated with Church, apart from the minister and the organist, it is run and maintained by many volunteers; this includes the churchyard, although we do engage someone to do some of the larger areas of strimming. (He recently had the delight of the birth of a second child and was delayed in being able to do as much as usual.)

St George's churchyard is almost five acres in size. Since records began by royal decree in 1558, 7,928 burials have taken place - the vast majority without known locations. Our earliest known grave dates from 1652, and there are 1,170 known marked graves in the churchyard. It has taken a seven-year labour of love to record all of these on to a churchyard plan and also record the inscriptions where they could be read. The churchyard also has to comply with nationally set Churchyard Regulations. If these are not adhered to then maintenance becomes even more difficult (a copy is available in church).

We have a team of 16 or 18 volunteers who meet four or five times a year for a Saturday morning working party (many of them also do additional hours on their own). Most are, by their own admission, "well into our seventies, know our limitations and act accordingly"! I would like to thank them for all they do to maintain the churchyard on our behalf; it is hard work, and it is unending work - things just keep growing!

We would love it if more people would come forward to volunteer to look after the churchyard. The walkways and the areas around the church are kept cut short, as are the areas of the current burials and interments; other areas are allowed to grow naturally and the grass taken up in October. However, there are other areas where it would be good to keep the grass cut around other graves.

The more volunteers we have, the more areas can be kept shorter; and there are plenty of other jobs to do! If you are interested in helping maintain and improve our churchyard, then please contact me. Speaking of helping: there is becoming an issue of dog faeces being left in the churchyard; out of courtesy to everyone else, please clear up after your dog.

Revd David Commander, Rector

Please note the next opportunity to join a Churchyard Working Party is on Saturday 5 August meeting at St George's. Any time you can be there between 9.30am and 12noon will be greatly appreciated.



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Just a Thought



Off-Cone Report No. 101

A nervous but smiling Principal greeted the inspector, "Welcome to the college. May I explain this initiative? The college was set up to instil conformity, consistency and good behaviour in traffic cones. It was decided that the college should provide basic training and re-training, besides R&D in cone potential. We hope that our cones will leave with a sense of pride and purpose. Shall we go round so that you can see for yourself?" They then watched the most recent cones practising in the large square.

"As you must know, the basic skill of a good cone is to be able to maintain a straight line," replied the Principal importantly.

"And what other courses are available?" enquired the inspector.

"There are four topics studied by every cone, these are straight lines, team-work, maintaining station and lastly wheel avoidance."

They turned the corner of a building. "Over here you can see some training for 'Identifying holes and ditches'. Good balance and spatial awareness are most important," stressed the Principal earnestly.

"Hey, watch what you are doing! Any more of that and you will be posted to the countryside!" The Principal turned to the visitor and apologised for the unruly behaviour of a gang of cones. "Most cones don't like the country - too out of touch, lonely and generally messy. On the other hand our rewards policy for good behaviour includes a ride piled up on the back of a lorry."

The inspector moved on to watch a seemingly disorganised group, some of whom looked disgruntled, others defiant or dejected.

"These," explained the principal, "are the truant ones sent for retraining. They have been found to be subversive, deviant, and un-cooperative. They have been extracted from quarries, ponds, garden sheds, alleys and by-ways, pubs, student accommodation and even the top of a church spire."

"How long do they normally spend at the college?"

"All cones do three months, at the end of which they are assessed. The majority leave here to do a tour of duty on motorways. Before other postings."

"And the least popular?" prompted the inspector.

"Oh - being stationed outside a Premier League football ground especially if the home side loses," confessed the Principal. "Some of the better cones remain at the college for further training for work such as ports, police work and the Houses of Parliament. We even have a number of bilingual cones for Eurotunnel."

The Principal turned to the inspector, "Well I think that you have seen just about everything."

"Thank you very much. Very interesting" replied the inspector, "I will be sending my report to the MoT in due course."

"Thank you and goodbye," replied the Principal. "Oh, by the way, there is a diversion as the outward drive is being resurfaced - just follow the cones."



Village Calendar

August

Thursday 3	Planning Committee Meeting, Benenden Village Hall, 8.30am	
Saturday 5	Churchyard Working Party, St George's, Benenden, 9.30-12noon	p.3
Saturday 5	Pop Quiz, St George's Club, 8.15pm	
Monday 7	Iden Green and Benenden WI, Coffee Morning at Mrs Hulm's, 10-12noon	p.25
Thursday 10	Benenden Women's Club, Sedlescombe Organic Vineyard Tour, 2.30pm	p.23
Mon 14-Fri 18	Nifty Feet Dance Camp, Benenden Village Hall	p.9
Tuesday 15	Iden Green and Benenden WI, Trademarks and Labels, Iden Green Pavilion, 2pm	p.25
Saturday 19	Barbecue, St George's Club, 8.15pm	
Tuesday 22	Merry and Bright, Memorial Hall, 3pm	
Saturday 26	Cornhole Tossing, St George's Club, 8.15pm	

September

Saturday 2	Village Activity and Fun Day, The Green, 3pm	p.13
Saturday 2	Quiz Night, St George's Club, 8.15pm	
Sunday 3	Village Panto Auditions, Benenden Village Hall, 2pm	p.25
Friday 8	Woodland Wide Games, Iden Green Congregational Church, 7pm	
Saturday 9	Friends of Kent Churches, Ride + Stride	p.27
Thursday 14	Benenden Women's Club, Visit to Godinton House and Gardens, 2.30pm	p.23
Sunday 24	Benenden Pre-School 50th Birthday Tea Party, Benenden Village Hall, 10am	p.9
Friday 29	The Wines of Domain Road, New Zealand, Memorial Hall, 7pm	p.9

Benenden Youth Club/Streetcruizer, age 11+

Tuesdays at Benenden Village Hall, 6.30-8.30pm

Coffee Shop

Wednesdays in the Memorial Hall, 10-12noon

Cakes & Chaos: Cafe and Toddler Group

Fridays during term time in St George's Church, 9-11.30am

Refuse Lorry Collections

Saturday 12 August for Garden/Compostable Waste

Benenden, Village Hall layby, 8-9.20am and Iden Green, crossroads, 9.40-11am

Saturday 26 August for Domestic Waste

Benenden, Village Hall layby, 8-9.20am and Iden Green, crossroads, 9.40-11am

Parish Council



August is generally a holiday month in which little else happens. However, while the Parish Council does not meet in August, the work goes on. For example, we will be progressing work on our Neighbourhood Development Plan with a series of walkabouts and photo shoots prior to a series of workshops and other local meetings in the autumn.

We have now revamped our committee structure to more fully cover our local responsibilities. These committees, starting in the autumn, will consider issues in detail and make recommendations to the full Council. This should speed up Council meetings and increase our efficiency.

There will be three committees in the future:

- **Resourcing** covering finance, budgeting, monitoring, audit, grants, council assets, HR and staffing, service delivery (capability to deliver) and programme prioritisation.
- **Planning and Transportation** planning, Local Plan, highways, roads and pavements, signage, Speedwatch, public transport (bus and rail).
- **Community Affairs and Local Environment** footpaths, dog fouling, trees, hedges, civic amenity vehicle and recycling, litter picking, fly tipping, community safety, youth, partnership working.

We would encourage parishioners to look at our website www.benendenparishcouncil.org. This not only gives agendas, minutes and other information on the Parish Council, but also gives access to other services, such as KCC Highways.

Complaints regarding the state of our roads and pavements are the most common that we receive. The most effective and efficient way to report highways issues is through KCC Highways portal, at <http://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.KHSFaultsGIS.Web.Sites.Public/Home.aspx>. The Parish Council encourages parishioners to use this link; it can be found on the front page of the Parish Council website so you don't have to type all this in manually.

The range of issues which can be reported is vast: bollards, bridges, bus stops, drainage and flooding, fencing, footpaths, grass, hedges, illegal advertising, kerbs, lines, potholes, manholes, parking, trees, verges - to name but a few! When something is reported in this way a confirmation with a reference number is sent and (hopefully) action will follow.

Peter Davies, BPC Chairman
01580 240723 chairbenendenpc@gmail.com

Caroline Levett, Benenden Parish Council Clerk
01580 240371 clerk@benendenparishcouncil.org
For more information see our website www.benendenparishcouncil.org or find us on facebook

Parish Council Meeting
No meeting in August

Planning Committee Meeting
Thursday 3 August 2017, Benenden Village Hall,
8.30am

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News and Events

Benenden Pre-School's 50th Birthday Tea Party

Sunday 24 September, Benenden Village Hall, 10am-1pm

The Benenden Pre-School will be celebrating its 50th anniversary in the autumn and to mark this special occasion we are compiling a book of pictures and stories from over the years. Do you have any special photos we can borrow, and happy memories you can share? If you do, we would love to see and hear them.

The book and a presentation of all the photos and memories collected will be on display at our 50th Birthday Tea Party at the Village Hall from 10am-1pm on Sunday 24 September. Please come and join us, and share your photos and stories with us before 10 September. Please contact:
Laura Burles events@benendenpreschool.co.uk
Sarah Andrew sarahandrew6@googlemail.com
01580 240492

Students and School-Leavers

Grants are available from the Gibbon and Buckland Charity. The charity started in 1602 with the gift of the School House at the foot of the Green; it still gives some support to the Primary School, but also uses its income to give worthwhile grants to young persons under the age of 25 who are resident in, and have been resident in, the Parish of Benenden for not less than three years, to support them in Further Education or in getting started in working life.

Trustees will also give consideration to applications for grants for gap year projects of educational worth. Application forms available from Benenden's Community Shop, or from the Clerk to the Charity, David Harmsworth, at gibbonandbuckland@gmail.com or 01580 240683.

Latest date for applications 30 September.

Benenden's Welcomes Graeme Crosbie - Owner and Winemaker

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Nifty Feet Dance Camp

Monday 14-Friday 18 August, Benenden Village Hall

Nifty Feet is the pop-up dance school of Lynne Page, leading global dance choreographer who works in theatre, film, opera and the music industry.

Lynne recently moved to Bodiam and is passionate about bringing cool, fun and funky dance to children and teenagers in Kent and East Sussex.

A specialist in youth dance, Lynne trained Jamie Bell for the smash hit 'Billy Elliot' film, and she set up the Billy Elliot training schools across the UK.

Lynne runs her pop-up dance camps at Benenden Village Hall, inviting her busy dancers from her commercial shows to come and deliver masterclasses in hip hop, street and contemporary dance. Details opposite.

It is not just the exceptional quality of teaching that puts Nifty Feet at the forefront of dance schools, Lynne's students learn so much more than dance technique. Her philosophy is to build self-esteem and confidence beyond dance, by freeing up the mind and body through creative thought and movement.

For more information and booking, see the website www.niftyfeet.co.uk

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Village Activity & Fun Day




Saturday

2 September 2017

3-6pm on The Green

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Village Activity and Fun Day

Saturday 2 September, The Green, 3-6pm

Celebrate the end of the summer with an afternoon of free fun and entertainment. From the familiar to the downright bizarre, this will be an occasion not to be missed.

As well as the old favourites of splat-the-rat, beat-the-goalie, face painting, and hook-a-duck, there'll be plenty of opportunities to "have a go" with the reversible bike, bell-ringing and pole-lathing, and to show off skills and strength with the coconut shy, bowling machine and bungee pull. There will be chance to see the two-seater microlight built by students at Benenden School, plus wheelbarrow racing, egg lobbing, human hoop-la, and duck herding.

With chilli pots, cream teas, bar, and ice cream van, as well as the Streetcruizer and raffle, there really is something for everyone. Come with family, meet with friends - just make sure you come along.

Mark Glubb markglubb@hotmail.com

Christian Aid Week 2017

I am delighted to report a record £4,250 was raised for Christian Aid this year by our Benenden and Iden Green Group. This is a magnificent effort and a big 'thank you' is due to all concerned for giving so generously to the appeal. Special mention must go to our intrepid team of collectors who braved the incessant rain at the beginning of the week.

After five years acting as local organiser, I have decided the time has come to hand over the reins. I shall, of course, be happy to give any guidance required to my successor and look forward to hearing from anyone interested in volunteering for this very rewarding job.

Lesley Attwood, local Christian Aid Organiser
243318 lesley.attwood@sky.com

Giving from the heart

I would like to say a big thank you to everyone who sponsored me and sent good luck messages for the London to Brighton cycle ride on 18 June. As many of you will know I had a quadruple bypass operation in June 2014 following a (second) heart attack. For giving me more time with family and friends I try to raise some money for the British Heart Foundation each year. So when they emailed and asked me to do the London to Brighton jaunt I signed up (before thinking).

I then had to get a bike (first ever brand new one), work out travel to and from the event, and more importantly start cycling (I hadn't been on a bike for over ten years). Cycling distances, was not too bad, the problem was the legs (having given up most sports) did not like the hills. Perhaps more training could have been done, but finding the time was not as easy as expected.

As people will realise, the London to Brighton route is not straightforward and includes several hills and climbs, culminating after 45 miles with the mile-long climb up Ditchling Beacon (if you don't know it, take a car up it). From the top of the South Downs it is a nice coast down into Brighton to finish along Marine Parade, with the relief of completing the course.

So again, thanks to everyone, and as soon as I have a total for all the sponsorship I have raised I will let you know.

John Marshall

9th annual Richard Beattie Davis musical event

Tuesday 12 September, Sandhurst, 3pm

Malcolm Binns, piano recital, works by Chopin, Beethoven, Rachmaninov and Schumann.

In aid of Hospice in the Weald. Tickets by donation (minimum £16), in advance:

Gillian Davis 850384



Fete accompli, despite the weather

With temperatures soaring, the concern was not hail, thunder, lightning and rain, like last year, but the heat and how to provide shade. The Green became a tented village with plenty of parasols to ward off sunstroke ... and we didn't see a ray of June sunshine all day! It was grey and it rained a little, but mostly our second year on our new site was a flaming success.



The arena saw the lovely return of the maypole dancing from the children of the Primary School. The Charlotte Hudson dance troupe was magnificent and there was a lot of interest in the first-ever dog show, sponsored by Roosters of Cranbrook.

Sam Caddick produced a treasure hunt for the children, and her face-painting team was busy all afternoon. Toys-R-Us, the Primary School sweetie jar stall, the coconut shy, the bouncy castle and assault course kept the children very busy, while the church was open for tower visits - on a clear day you can see the coast!



There were plenty of innovations, notably the Classic car display and cow pat bingo (for first prize of a stay at the



George in Rye), with Glitter, Hinxden's beautiful Jersey cow, doing her stuff without a hint of stage fright. The midday start meant that people could enjoy Mr Ward's sausages and burgers on the barbecue. We will have more grills next year, but the queuing was civilised and the Hop Inn benefited from the thirsty and hungry crowds, all to a soundtrack from our very own ukelele band.



Cream teas broke all records, so thank you to the Benenden girls who provided waitress service; the Rare Reads book tent, run by Deborah Jenkins, was busier than ever; thanks go to Emma and Burt Cunningham for repairing the Parish marquee and donating it for the event.

On the Bric-a-Brac and Tools-R-Us stalls, Maggy Hoyt was overwhelmed with stuff and her huge and





merry band of helpers sold, sold, sold, all afternoon, as did Ed and David Sarton; Paul Hewitt came back on board to engineer the Silent Auction and all the reserves were met, the highlight being the flight to France donated by Paul Tolhurst; Helen Jewsbury always needs more cakes,

which sold out first as ever; the very colourful Chic Boutique was ably run by Mary Parkinson and her team.

The ever-popular raffle proved as popular as ever, so thank you to everybody who donated prizes, and to Pippa Sarton and her team for stepping into the breach.



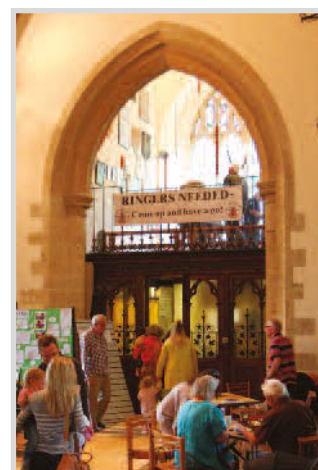
the signage and tentage team of Chris Heath and Chris Parkinson would like to thank everyone

who helped to put this great event together. Thanks to Beth Ansell for the great photographs, thanks to everyone who came along to make this such

a great success.

Meanwhile, after many years at the helm, Tracy Claridge is stepping down. Would you like to join the committee?

If yes, please e-mail David Commander.



The Fete Committee, David Commander and Tracy Claridge (co-chairmen), Tim Maw, Helen Jewsbury, Sam Caddick (resident artist), Pippa Sarton, Dave Wellman, the PR team, Ruth Clark and Deborah Jenkins, and



PS. There is one raffle prize remaining for Chris Brady. Chris, please contact Pippa Sarton on sph147@aol.com.





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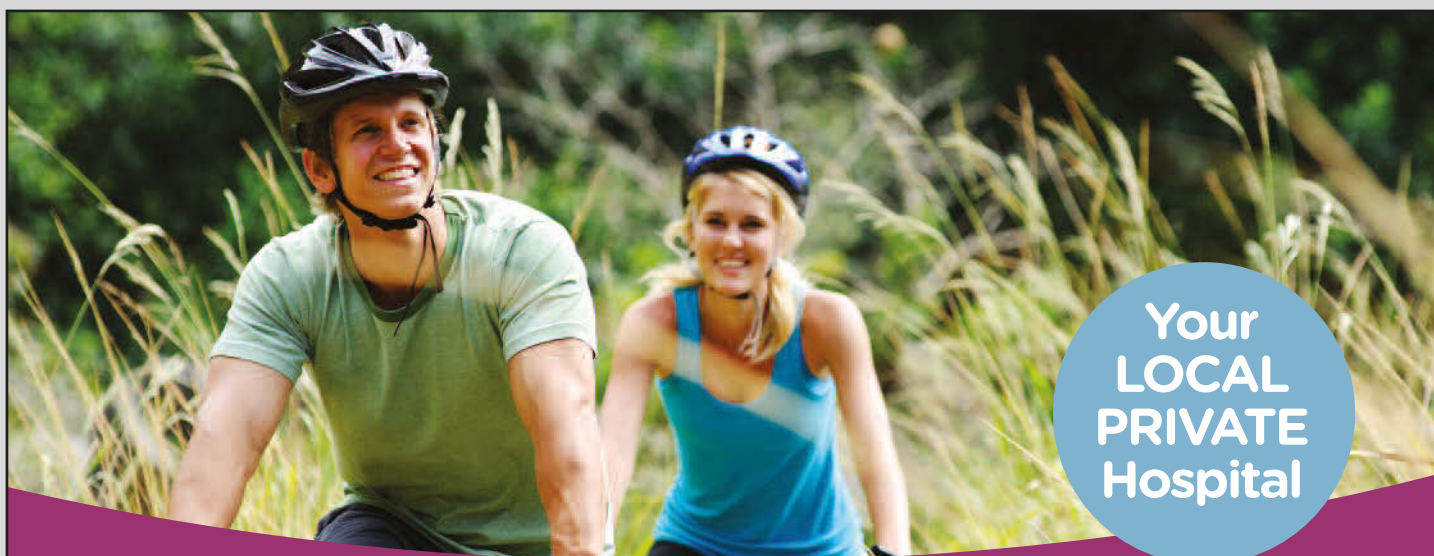
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Benenden CE Primary School

Sports Day

It was really hot so we didn't do a full Sports Day this year but all the classes did activities. We have three different houses in our school - Rochester, York and Guildford - and we are both in York.

First was the sprint then we did relay. It was great fun and at the end of the afternoon, it was announced which team won. First place got a big cup, second place got a medium cup and third place got a small cup. Rochester came third, Guildford second and York first! The York house captains did a victory lap, showing off the cup.
Megan and Daisy

The Amazing Adventures of Super Stan

Key Stage 2 put on their end of year play, called Super Stan! "It was amazing, fantastic but hard work!" said Daisy, who played the part of a minion. "It was really fun, but we had to work hard to get everything right. I played a part called General Commotion," said Megan, Year 5.

The Village Hall was packed and the audience loved it. They joined in and laughed at all the jokes. A big thank you goes to Mrs Smith and Mrs Bertram for producing the play and all the staff and parents who helped with make-up, lighting, props and sound.

Gill Knox, Headteacher

Save the Date

Saturday 4 November, The Glebe, Benenden
The Benenden Bonfire Society are pleased to announce the date for this year's Bonfire and Fireworks event.

Benenden Bonfire Society Committee

Budgie found New Pond Road

Captured, unharmed, in the New Pond Road area. If you have recently lost it, please email me to bring owner and budgie together once more.

Tim Dwyer tim@benendenvillage.org.uk

Talking Shop

NEW FACES BEHIND THE COUNTER

Our community shop continues to flourish and grow thanks to the hardworking staff, volunteers and large number of loyal customers. We recently said goodbye to Viv, who has moved to a job closer to her home, but we warmly welcome Gemma Rance and Carol Worrall, who are joining the staff as trainee managers. Both are well qualified and very keen to be part of this friendly team.

Gemma has lived in the village for almost three years and loves being involved in the community. She has been an enthusiastic and reliable volunteer in the shop since Easter and jumped at the chance to become a permanent member of staff.



Previous employment includes roles as bar manager and care worker and Gemma is keen to put the skills acquired in those jobs to good use in Benenden's, within the friendly team run by Mel, Sue, Lorraine and Penny.

Carol has lived in the village for a year and feels she has "come home", particularly loving the discovery of the jewelled sky untouched by light pollution.

"Everyone is so approachable here," she enthused as she reflected upon the places she has worked before, which include Scotland, Coventry and Tonbridge, in bars and in Waitrose, where she has learned how to look after the best interests of the customers.



Don't forget to visit us and say hello. You are assured of a warm welcome.

Bev Beveridge



Benenden History

The Green shoots of local history

Benenden Green was given to the Parish Council by the Earl of Cranbrook in 1928. All tolls, grazing rights and profits from it are to go to the Parish Church (although there are none at present), and the Green is managed by a committee of six, composed of the vicar and wardens, with three members of the Parish Council. It is never to be enclosed but is to remain as open space for the exercise and recreation of parishioners. No political, sectarian or religious meeting is to be held upon it.

At one time the local lock-up and stocks were situated at the bottom of the Green near the Bull Inn. In earlier times it had been attached to Benenden Manor, until that property was bought by the widow of Admiral Sir John Norris in 1762 and thereafter managed as part of the Hemsted Estate, which in the time of Lord Cranbrook came to include about half the farms in Benenden.

Benenden Green in the 19th century was the scene of famous cricket matches, but in the 17th century the local gentry used it for playing bowls. The fair was held there annually on 15 May as it had probably been since the Middle Ages. Because it was sometimes called Playstool, there is speculation that mystery plays may have been staged there.

There are 171 listed buildings (including seven chest tombs/monuments in the churchyard) in Benenden. You can see the full list on historicengland.org.uk, but the following are those that are situated around The Green:

Church Cottages, Grade II The listing tells us this was two cottages, not uniform. Left side 17th-century altered, right-hand part added by George Devey circa 1880. Left part has ground floor of red brick with some grey headers and tile-hung first floor with hipped-tiled roof. Three three-light 20th-century casements. Door in

pentice. Right-hand part has ground floor of red brick with grey headers and first floor comprising one course of tiled and two courses of fishscale tiles. Gable with carved bargeboard and pendant and flamboyant brace to right-hand side. Tiled gabled weather porch. It is now a single property and was extensively renovated several years ago.

Benenden C.E. Primary School, Grade II Originally founded in 1609 by Edmund Gibbon, the school still uses the original building for its Reception class and as a dining hall, although the main school site dates from 1860. Various additions to the building have been made over the years, the most recent major one taking place in 1994, when the Children's Challenge raised some £70,000 towards providing three classrooms. The school has close ties with the church, meeting therein twice a week for assemblies.

Collingwood Grange A grand Victorian 35-room house in seven acres of formal gardens created by Captain Collingwood Ingram. 'Captain Cherry' was an ornithologist, plant collector and gardener, who was an authority on Japanese flowering cherries.

Ashlawn, Grade II Built in 1869 by Viscount Cranbrook for Sarah and Martha Neve. The architect was George Devey, who also worked on St George's and designed the former vicarage and parts of the Bull Inn. The house was acquired in 1919 by Admiral and Mrs Flyer from the Neve family, and then in 1923 by Sir Henry and Lady Ledgard. In 1962 it was divided into flats.

Memorial Hall, Grade II Built in 1908. The plaque above the door reads: "To the Glory of God and in loving memory of Gathorne, First Earl of Cranbrook. This hall is erected by relatives, friends and fellow parishioners. AD 108. SI MONUMENTUM REQUIRIS CIRCUMSPICE."

Cleavelands, Grade II An early 17th-century timber-framed house with a staircase tower added in the late 1600s. It was refaced with red brick and grey headers in the 19th century and over the



years has been much added to and altered. In the 1750s it was inherited by a Mrs Clevelands (hence its name) from her father, Mr Ward. It has at various times been home to the Royal Military Police during the 1939-45 war, converted into flats after the war for villagers, and home to many of the mistresses from Benenden School in 1977. The previous owner bought the house in 1977 and two wings were demolished before it was finally reoccupied in 1981.

Gibbon's School House, Grade II The house was left to the village in 1609 for use as a school by Edmund Gibbon Esq, a local landowner who lived in what is now Pympe Manor. When he died in 1607 he left money to pay the expenses of a teacher and the upkeep of the building. Later, other Gibbons, living in Hole Park, and Thomas Buckland, a yeoman, left further money. The left-hand part is made up of a canteen kitchen and a separate room which acts as a dining cum classroom for the Reception class of the primary school. The right-hand part of the house was the headmaster's house but is now privately let.



1 & 2 Kingsford Cottages, Grade II An early 16th-century Tudor-style property, in the early 19th century it was changed to tile-hung on the south and west elevations and a Kentish slope (cat slide) added on the north side. Dormer windows were added in 1972. There is a large inglenook fireplace.

The Bull Inn, Grade II This prominent building has grown over the centuries. The core surrounds an inglenook fireplace and dates back to circa 1608. It is timber framed and refaced in brick to the ground floor. The upper floors have hanging tiles with an attractive peg-tiled roof. The attractive windows are known as Chinoiserie, thought to be late 19th century, and may have been part of an extension by George Devey circa 1800.

The Old Livery Stables, Grade II This building is described in its listing as: Stable with hayloft above. Probably circa 1880 by George Devey, who remodelled the Bull Inn at that time. Kentish Vernacular style. Rectangular building with verandahs to north west and north east. Two storeys. Red brick with diaper-patterned grey header on brick plinth, weatherboarded above and with outshut with timber framing and plaster

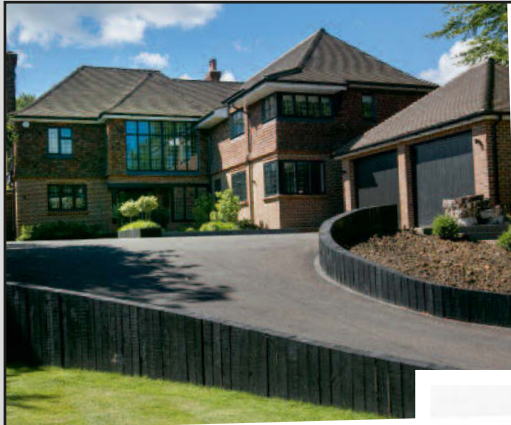


infill on first floor. Hipped tiled roof. North-east elevation has one loading door and small diamond-paned casement window. Ground floor has two triple wooden mullioned and transomed casement with large plank door with iron hinges and rectangular fanlight. First floor obscured by wide verandah with tiled roof supported on six square wooden piers. Cobbled surface under verandah. North-west elevation has ground floor of red brick with diaper-patterned grey headers but the first floor which projects in the centre is of timber framing with plastered infill, close studded type with long tension braces. One triple casement with diamond leaded lights. Verandah supported on five square piers with flattened Tudor arches with centre wooden pendants. The right-hand part of the stables retains troughs for horses and ladder to top floor. Left-hand side retains four wooden loose boxes. However, according to the Benenden Millennium Book, its owners believe it to date back to approximately 1730 and have been remodelled by George Devey in the 1880s along with other buildings around The Green.

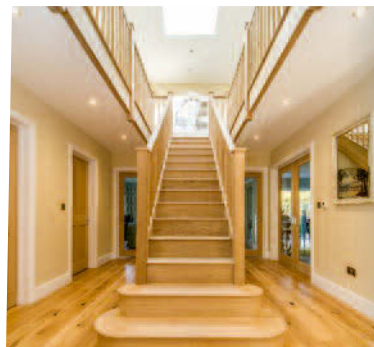
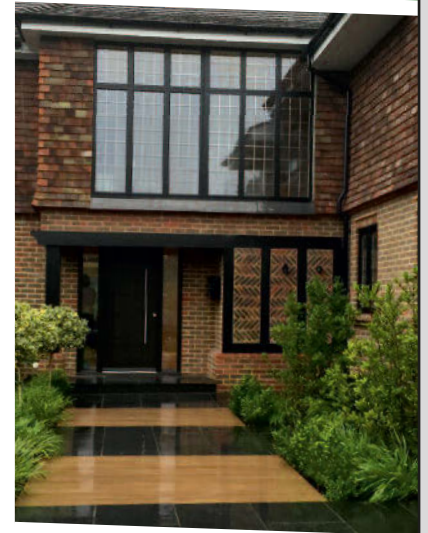
The Old Vicarage The present house, originally called the Glebe House, sprang from a modest dwelling building of lath and plaster for the Revd Daniel Boys in 1805-06. It was extended by the addition of four rooms and the coach house/stables for the Revd W J Edge in 1858. Notable changes were effected in 1878-79 when the Rev E D Cree commissioned the increasingly fashionable architect George Devey to design a new frontage facing the Green. Devey, whose stylistic innovations are still clearly seen, particularly in English suburban architecture, had been appointed as estate architect by Gathorne Hardy MP (later Earl of Cranbrook 1892) of Hemsted Park. Devey was responsible for many notable buildings in the village.

Compiled mainly from the
Benenden Millennium Book and
The History of Benenden by Ernie Pollard





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News from Benenden School

The girls have now left for a well-earned rest over the summer holidays and the year seems to have flown by extraordinarily quickly - which I feel is a sure sign of an enormously productive few months. Indeed, this past year has demonstrated how Benenden has become, I believe, one of the most innovative schools in the country. With recent initiatives such as the Benenden Diploma (our new bespoke curriculum for 11 to 13-year-olds), Professional Skills Programme for Sixth Formers, the Phone Fast (when the School lived for three days without mobiles and social media) and the Ionics Research Project (an in-depth Science research project in collaboration with University College London), you see a school that is leading the way in the fields of academia and pastoral care.

The final few days of the summer term certainly maintained this level of quality. We enjoyed Grandparents' Day and Sports Day, we held a party to celebrate the Upper Fourths becoming our first Diploma graduates, we held the annual Catholic Confirmation and Geography students spent three nights in Dorset. Our traditional farewell to the Sixth Form Leavers culminated in a spectacular Leavers' Ball in London, before the year ended with the traditional Speech Day festivities.

Of course, Benenden is still a hive of activity over the summer. Kent Music School have taken up their annual residency and this year marks a significant milestone as we are celebrating the 70th anniversary of the partnership between our two organisations.

We were proud to also host The Band of The Brigade of Gurkhas for a reception and sounding retreat; the Benenden Tennis Tournament and the traditional visit by an Austrian summer school.

In addition there is, as ever, much improvement work going on during the next few weeks, most significantly the refurbishment of a teaching wing which is being enhanced to house staff offices and improved music facilities ahead of the creation of our new School Hall and Music School over the next few years.

Samantha Price, Headmistress



THE NEIGHBOURS

by Mary Kellett

The starlings next door are a quarrelsome bunch
They fly off before breakfast but are back home by lunch
Their scrabbling and scuffling just makes me see red
And the racket they make goes right through my head

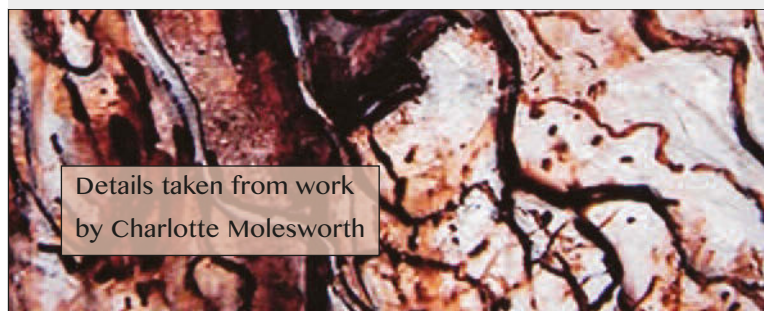
My hubby and I, we're blue tits you know,
We live at the end of the nesting box row,
When we first came here it was very select
All on our own with a lovely aspect

Then up goes the starling box, it's right out of keeping
It's huge and so close you can hear their chicks cheeping.
No planning permission, no notification
My hubby is livid there was no consultation

Our little nest is woven of moss,
Dry grass and feathers, it's ever so posh
But from what I have seen of their nest building skills
I don't think Ms. Starling will have many frills,
Three sticks and a leaf, bit of straw if she's lucky
To put up with that she's got to be plucky

I've nothing against them, she's a hard working soul,
He's a bit of a spiv but you can't have it all
They're a very close family with lots of relations,
And, boy, don't we know it with their visitations
Parties and singing with no respite
And the flying displays, well, you've not seen the like.

The family have flown now, at last there's some peace
Rumour has it they fly off to Athens and Nice.
My hubby and I, we don't go that far,
We'll just potter about 'cos we like where we are.



Details taken from work
by Charlotte Molesworth



THE GRANGE (2016) LTD

The New Management Team at The Grange (2016) Ltd are looking for motivated and reliable staff to work in our busy residential and supported living settings in Benenden and Cranbrook.

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 NEW FOUNDATION BURSARY SCHEME FOR YEAR 3 ENTRY

Benenden Women's Club

In July we visited Hannah's Garden. Many of you will have seen Hannah's beautiful posies of hand-tied flowers for sale at Benenden's. She grows seasonal, scented flowers for weddings, events, or just for your home. Several of you will have ordered her Christmas wreaths. She also runs courses on flower growing, garden design and flower arranging in her Blue Shed.

It was there that we assembled to hear Hannah talk about her approach to flower growing, before wandering round her garden. Many of the flowers are grown from seed, but annuals are supplemented by some beautiful scented roses. We learned that large professional growers breed scentless flowers because the ethylene produced in the perfume reduces the vase life of the flowers.

Hannah then deftly demonstrated making a large posy for a vase, from stems she had just picked from the garden, stripping, snipping and selecting whilst working in a circular direction to produce an arrangement before putting it in the vase. I am sure I am not the only person who has always arranged flowers as I put them in the vase, rather than creating the arrangement in advance!

Our next two meetings are summer outings that have to be pre-booked:

10 August, Sedlescombe Organic Vineyard for a tour and wine tasting;

14 September, Godinton House and Garden.

Both visits will start at 2.30pm. If you are not a member of the Club and would like to join us you would be most welcome. Please contact:

Janet Beattie 240973

benendenwomensclub@gmail.com

Benenden Cricket Club

Our home matches in August are:

Saturday 5 August v East Sutton

Saturday 19 August v Smarden

Saturday 26 August v Mountfield

Richard Brunt, Club Captain

Benenden Cricket Club strive to maintain the tradition of idyllic village cricket, which has been enjoyed on our glorious village green since 1798.

We offer sociable and competitive cricket. New players and supporters of all ages, abilities and both sexes are made very welcome.

For more information please visit:

www.benendencricketclub.com

If interested in playing, please contact our Club Captain, Richard Brunt on:

07834 572838 or email brunrichard@btinternet.com



2017 Canvass Vacancies

We are currently looking for enthusiastic people to assist with the Annual Canvass. Every year the Parish Council is responsible for producing a new electoral register for publication on 1 December.

Our canvassers help us to do this by carrying out house-to-house visits from September through to November to collect electoral information on household enquiry forms. It may take several visits at different times and days to make contact with the residents.

Canvassers are required to complete their canvassing within the specified time frame and keep regular contact with the Elections team to update them of progress made.

Canvassers are required to have:

- Good communication skills
- Excellent organisational skills
- The ability to work under pressure and to meet deadlines
- Be professional and politically neutral
- Committed to completing the canvass

All canvassers will receive full training.

The rate of pay for under 25's is £7.05p/h and for over 25's it is £7.50p/h.

For more information or to register an interest in this role please contact:

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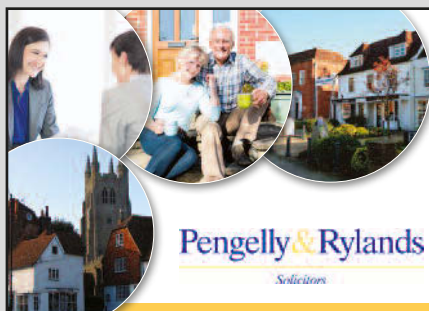
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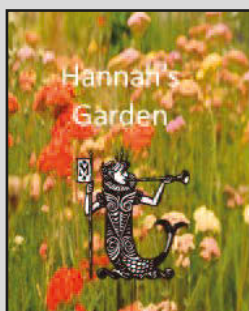


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Iden Green and Benenden WI

We were very grateful for the lovely weather that helped make our June garden party such an enjoyable evening, with good food made by our members and, most of all, good company, including our friends from Hawkhurst, Cranbrook and Staplehurst WIs.

We also enjoyed a very nice strawberry tea at a member's house, where we celebrated a BIG birthday of one of our members, with a lovely cake - what else would you expect from the WI!

Dates to remember:

Monday 7 August, Coffee Morning at Mrs Hulm's, 10-12noon

Tuesday 15 August, 'Trademarks and Labels' with Mr Lamont, Iden Green Pavilion, 2-4pm

Any enquiries, telephone 752232.

Benenden Players News

Sunday 3 September, Benenden Village Hall, 2-5pm

PANTO 2017 AUDITIONS Auditions for Benenden Player's next amazing panto, lovingly hand-crafted by our writer and director Bev Beveridge, will be held just after the summer holidays on Sunday 3 September.

Children must be over nine when performances start (w/c 29 January 2018). Rehearsals start Thursday 28 September, and run through until performance week, with a break over Christmas. Adults are needed on Thursdays from 7.30-9.30pm, and all cast on Sundays between 2-5pm.

We look forward to seeing old friends, and lots of new faces too - so please pass the details on.

Nancy Tolhurst 07711 139218
nancy.tolhurst@btinternet.com

Weald of Kent Beekeepers

BEE SHOW



Saturday 30 September 2017

10AM - 3.30PM

See live honey bees and learn more about them

Sample lots of lovely local honey

Crafts Refreshments Demonstrations

Free Admission

VESTRY HALL, CRANBROOK

Dick Turpin makes off with glittering prize

Life in the Players is normally quiet in the summer as we recover strength after the excitement of the Panto, and Bev Beveridge starts crafting the next script. But we've been up to more than merely 'resting' this year.

We've only gone and won an award. Well we've actually won two awards. NODA (the National Operatic and Dramatic Association) is the trade body for am dram across the UK. We're part of the South-East Region (from Bournemouth north and east across Hampshire, Sussex, and Kent). Our Regional rep came along to see Dick Turpin in January 2016, and we won an Accolade of Excellence in our District (The Weald), alongside Runner-Up in all Pantos across the whole Region. So, on a lovely hot summers day in early July Bev and other Players popped down to Barnham near Bognor Regis for an afternoon entirely unlike the Oscars. No red carpet, goodies bags, mistakes with envelopes, haute couture or tearful speeches. Just a bunch of delighted amateurs recognising each other's hard work and sharing stories about wayward props and making magic on a shoestring budget.

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Produced by Helen Grant MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA



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Letter to the Editor

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A WALK DOWN UNEASY STREET

As a resident of Benenden for many years, I am feeling somewhat bemused and perplexed that I have never raised the topic of pavements within the village. I am annoyed with myself for walking around on uneven surfaces, tripping in the dark at the undulations of the main pavements along The Street, and noticing how the extensive variations in the slopes and levels outside the shop are positively hazardous for people who have slight difficulty walking.

Now that I have had an excellent operation at Benenden Hospital and am busy progressing through the recovery, it has brought home to me how extremely difficult it is for those with no hope of improvement in their mobility. I have frequently assisted villagers with sticks, rollators and walking frames to negotiate their way to and from the shop and was therefore aware of the problem.

They say that sheep in Wales have shorter legs on one side as they live on such steep hills. We need a similar anatomy to negotiate walking past Benenden's and the new soon-to-be beauty salon. The slope to the left is extreme. I saw a resident pushing a trolley walker who found it constantly veering off towards the shops on the inside of the pavement. She persevered and managed to keep going, but it was hard for her.

To post a letter in the pillar box at our brilliant Benenden's is akin to climbing down a small tor and back up again. On the opposite side of the road the pavement has been dug up and repaired so many times that it is very uneven all the way along. The area near the Memorial Hall is no better.

Those who are able bodied will be continuously adjusting and adapting the way they walk to negotiate these areas, and because they can, they will not notice how they do it. Such is the wonder of the adaptability of our bodies! For the less able it may not be possible.

A secondary factor along the better pavements and tarmacked footpaths is the thorny briars and brambles trying to grab you as you pass by. And the occasional gift from a careless dog walker.

When I say that I am a retired physiotherapist you may understand why I am annoyed with myself for not taking action before this. I hope there may be a solution to this problem that can be found by the Parish Council and Highways Authority, and implemented to improve life for our valiant villagers who come and go to the centre of the village every week. In the meantime I am grateful to everyone who shows consideration for us poor walkers with gadgets to help us get around.

Mrs Rickie Bishop
Hortons Close, Benenden

Friends of Kent Churches Annual Bike Ride and Walk: Ride + Stride

Saturday 9 September

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Family, Friends, Neighbours - as walkers, cyclists or sponsors - help to make this a successful community event. Last year alone Churches in Kent raised just over £135,000! We can beat that!

Interested? Please contact either of the following:

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How Israeli wine found favour after 3,000 years in the wilderness

I first visited Israel seven years ago, on the first easyJet flight ever to Tel Aviv. I was sitting up front and was the first off the plane, to be greeted by a horde of journalists on the runway. "What are you doing here, where have you come from etc, etc." El Al had had it all their own way up until then.

What was I doing there? Well, as mostly always, I was visiting to look at the vineyards, especially those of Clos de Gat. Does Israel make wine? Decent wine, you know, stuff we can drink? We think of Israeli wine as religious, kosher, sweet and the like. Well that was true in yesteryear, but how times have changed.

Technology means we can produce quality wine virtually all over the world, and Israel is no exception. Climate is the other key factor. Rainfall is scarce, but when it does rain, the water is collected in aqueducts, sufficient to keep all the plants alive during the growing season.

I visited again three weeks ago. The plane was full, packed, unlike the first time, and there were fewer observant Jews praying fervently in the aisles. The purpose of my visit was to see the new winery at Clos de Gat, in the Judean Hills, midway between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, bordering the Ayalon valley, where Joshua defeated the five kings.

Israel has hundreds of wineries, from small,



boutique ones (Clos de Gat produces 100,000 bottles per year and is the only Israeli winery to receive 4**** in the Hugh Johnson pocket wine guide), to large enterprises producing over 10m bottles per year. Wine has been produced in the country since biblical times, and even before that. There is even a 3,000-year-old wine press at Clos de Gat. In fact, Gat is the Hebrew for a wine press.

Charles Sichel, my boss, created the name of Clos de Gat in 2004 after a visit to Israel to see the importers of Maison Sichel wines. After the meeting, he was asked if he would like to taste some Israeli wines. With a typical Gallic shrug, he declined, but was persuaded and the rest is history.

Eyal Rotem, the owner/winemaker had only sold his wines in bulk previously, having trained at Giaconda in South Victoria, Australia, for three years. But Charles was and still is so impressed that it remains the only non-French wine to be sold and distributed by his company.

I landed at Tel Aviv on Thursday 29 July, mid afternoon. Heat seems to be following me about: it was 41 degrees Celsius, the same as it had been in Bordeaux just three weeks earlier.

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Having booked into the Garden House hotel in Jaffa, the Old Town of Tel Aviv, I decided a quick dip in the Med would cool me own.

This seemed a great idea, until I was stung by a jellyfish! At first it was a light electric shock, then my hand was inflamed, and I was advised to urinate on it or put my hand in vinegar and take some anti-inflammatory tablets! I did the last two and am still in some pain.

There are five main vine-growing regions in Israel: Galil (Galilee, including the Golan Heights); the Judean hills, surrounding the City of Jerusalem; Shimson (Samson) between the Judean hills and the coastal plain; the Negev, a semi-arid desert region; and the Sharon plain near the the Mediterranean coast just south of Haifa. All these areas use drip irrigation.

Clos de Gat is situated on the Har'el Kibbutz. Eyal planted 19 hectares of vines in 1998, and Syrah (Shiraz) and Chardonnay are his flagship wines, followed by the Cabernet/ Merlot/ Petit Verdot Ayalon Valley blend, and the varietal Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. There are three levels, the Har'el range at approximately £18.99; the Clos de Gat/ Ayalon Valley range, at around £25.00; and the Sycra range, roughly £45, only produced in certain years when some of the grapes are of exceptional quality.

Please see the website for stockists (www.closdegat.com). Secret Cellar in Tunbridge Wells stock the Harel Syrah and the Clos de Gat Chardonnay.

Clos de Gat relies on the vineyard's natural yeasts for the fermentation process, since Eyal's view is that the wines gain greater complexity and fully complete the expression and uniqueness of Clos de Gat's 'terroir', a thin layer of topsoil above a bedrock of limestone, together with a unique micro-climate.

I visited the winery on the Friday morning, when it was already 35 degrees. What has changed since I first went? The barrel cellar is now fully temperature-controlled; the vineyards are now irrigated from pipes that are underground, so no wastage or evaporation or loss to birds who used to peck the above-ground pipes; a new reception area and a new shop and tasting room.

Most of the vines were planted in 1998, so they are approaching 20 years old. They are producing wines with more varietal character than previously as the vines settle into their surroundings. The primary concern in Israeli wine production is maintaining acid levels in French grape varieties to balance the naturally high sugars that the warm climate of the region produces. This is done by adding tartaric acid during fermentation.

What is kosher wine?

To be considered kosher, a wine may only be handled by observant Jews from the time the grapes are crushed. If, however, the wine is boiled or pasteurised, it may subsequently be handled by anyone without losing its kosher status. Kosher wines cannot contain any non-kosher ingredients or fining agents such as isinglass, gelatin or casein. Not all Israeli wine is kosher, but a vast majority of the larger producers have kosher certification. The Golan Heights winery that I visited seven years ago produces an excellent range of kosher wines (www.golanwines.co.il).

Tracy Claridge TLClaridge@TLClaridge.co.uk



Bird Notes

My annual trip to Scotland took me to the Orkneys this year, a place new to me. We caught the ferry from Gill's Bay near Thirsk and almost at once the action started. A Great Skua was attacking a large gull, and as there didn't seem to be much difference in size, I think it was a Herring Gull.

The Skua appeared to get hold of a wing of the gull and they then twirled rapidly down, hitting the water with a great splash. It was difficult to see who had the upper hand in the tussle in the water as the ferry by this time had reached cruising speed and all I could see was an odd wing flap and lots of turmoil. I suspect the Skua will have been the winner.



Guillemots nesting at Marwick Head



Fulmar,
Fulmarus glacialis



Arctic Skua,
Stercorarius parasiticus

The trip across Scapa Flow was exciting, with lots of seabirds flying back and forth and a good number of Puffin amongst the Guillemots and Razorbills. Our first trip was to the famous Marwick Head colony on the north-west coast of Mainland (the name of the largest island in the archipelago and also the site of the Kitchener memorial, where Lord Kitchener died when HMS Hampshire was sunk by a mine with the loss of over 700 men in WWI).

Marwick Head is one of the largest breeding seabird colonies in the islands. There were row upon row of Guillemots huddled together with absolutely no gap in between. Although quite a large bird it has the smallest nesting territory of any, at just two square inches!

The Razorbills (their French name is 'le petit pingouin') on the other hand avoid the overcrowded ledges, preferring discreet cavities in the cliff face. There were a few Kittiwakes in the colony, who, and unlike the auks, build a gravity-defying nest. It was good to see them nesting because during the last few years they have suffered following the drop in the number of sandeels. I suspect there would have many more nests a few years back. Disappointingly there were not many Puffins nesting, just a few at the north end of the colony where they were able to excavate a hollow in the steep cliff face.

Orkney is practically the only UK stronghold for the much-debated Hen Harrier. This bird was pretty common in the 19th century but with the growing activity of egg collecting and species collecting by the Victorians, Orkney was reduced to two pairs by 1914. Thankfully, owing to some enlightened Orkney naturalists, the population has recovered to some 85 pairs. Their recovery is also very much due to there being no grouse shooting in the islands.

The RSPB has built a large comfortable hide in its Cottisgarth reserve, overlooking one of the main breeding territories. On reaching the hide, some movement was seen almost immediately, but it was a while before I picked out the bird quartering the heather looking for voles. It was a female Hen Harrier brilliantly camouflaged against the heathery, scree-filled background. The

Orkney Vole is quite a lot larger than our Field or Bank Vole and makes a good meal for both the Hen Harrier and Short-eared Owl. There is also a good supply of wader chicks as well as Skylarks and Meadow Pipits for both the owl and harrier.

Digressing from birds for a while, Orkney is famous for its Neolithic history and we visited Skara Brae, a Neolithic Village unearthed from its dune grave by a huge storm in 1852. The age of the village is brought home to the visitor by the path from the visitor centre to the site, along which key historical events are posted on a time scale beginning with the Battle of Hastings in AD 1066, followed by the Birth Of Christ, Solomon's temple BC 497, The Pharaohs BC 1500, Building of The Pyramids BC 2700 and eventually you arrive at Skara Brae, BC 3000!



Skara Brae Neolithic site

As the buildings were constructed of stone they have been remarkably well preserved. Opposite to the entrance to each house there is a stone dresser, with a fireplace in the middle and bedrooms off the main room with vertical slabs marking where the beds would have been. To me it seemed more comfortable than some of the crofters' cottages of a mere 150 years ago!

Orkney also has its Stonehenge, the Ring of Brodgar, of about the same period but predating its more famous English counterpart. Although there is much to see and the archaeologists have discovered so much, they still do not know what language was used.



Stack off the west coast of Mainland Island

A little way down the west coast from Skara Brae, the cliffs and coastline afford the most amazing scenery, with stacks 100 feet high perched on eroded supports that defy gravity. These make very good nesting sites for seabirds, and Fulmars in particular took advantage. Just inland is one of the largest Arctic Tern colonies, which of course attracted various predatory birds including the Great and Arctic Skuas.

The rarer Arctic Skua is built very differently from the large gull-like Great Skua, being much more streamlined, with long, falcon-like, swept-back wings making it much more agile in the air. It would harass the poor Arctic Terns to give up their latest meal after a fishing trip, in aerial battles that were so enthralling to watch, with the twisting and turning and nose-diving by both birds.

The Arctic Skua is relatively unused to human contact and I was able to approach a resting bird and admire it at close quarters, with fine views of its dark-capped head contrasting with a light yellow neck and pale breast.

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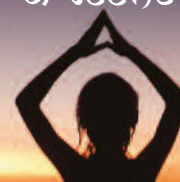


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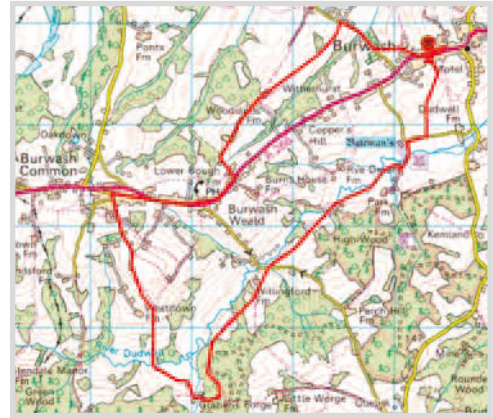
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Foot Notes

Hyde's Hikes: A walk through the Dudwell Valley

Distance: 7.5 miles

This is a nice walk through beautiful countryside, it is amazing how such a small river cuts a spectacular valley, we were lucky enough to see two large herds of deer when we did the walk.



1) Park in the main car park in Burwash village, in the bottom left corner follow the path away from the village downhill. At the junction of paths turn right, continue ahead crossing a stile, heading diagonally left to a pond enclosed by a fence. From the pond follow the field edge downhill to Batemans Lane.



2) Turn right onto the lane and in front of Batemans House turn left along a track at the edge of Batemans which curves left. At Corner Cottage turn right on a path which goes around a mill pond, continue ahead on the signposted path ignoring joining paths. Climb the steep hill into a woodland, through the woods follow the field edge path to reach Willingford Lane.

3) Cross the lane and follow the path ahead passing to the left of Willingford Farm, follow the field edge to the right to reach a stile, carry on ahead passing through a wood to reach a crossroads of paths. Turn right and follow the steep path downhill to Glaziers Forge, follow the lane past the houses then take the footpath on the right, crossing the field to the right of the abandoned buildings to a stile. Over the stile turn left across the field to a gap with a waymark, now walk diagonally right to a footbridge.

4) Follow the path uphill across two fields to reach Westdown Farm, turn left over a stile and continue uphill enjoying the fine views over the Weald. Follow the field edge path with the fence to your left to emerge on a track, turn left then immediately right, following the lane to Burwash Weald. At the T junction turn right and follow the road to join the main road. Walk past The Wheel pub and follow the main road out of the village. There is a short section of about 50m where there is no footpath and care needs to be taken.

5) Take the footpath on the left which drops downhill and meets a Holton Lane track and path, turn right and follow the track to Woodlands Farm. Turn right on the footpath through a gate then immediately left and follow the path ahead passing to the right-hand side of the woodland aiming for the cottages ahead which marks Spring Lane.

6) At the lane turn right and follow it uphill, take the first path on the left which is enclosed between grazing meadows, over the stile at the end, head diagonally left uphill to the corner of the field to another stile. Continue ahead to meet a lane and turn right past the Rose and Crown pub to reach the High St, here turn right for a short distance back to the car park.



Jim Hyde, Parish Footpath Co-ordinator



The Village Gnome

**WATER, WATER
EVERYWHERE, BUT
IT'S VERY EXPENSIVE**



It's been very hot and dry, hasn't it? Not quite the 45 degrees they've seen in central Spain, no forest fires in Hemsted, but hot enough to make a man put on a pair of shorts and sit in the garden drinking rosé and complaining.

The other day, I was pondering the parched nature of the Gnome family garden, surveying the brown lawn and the dusty bare patches, when I swear I saw a lioness spring from the long grass and bring down a zebra that had emerged unwisely from behind the potting shed.

It must be time to water, I thought to myself, as the Kentish savannah resounded to an imaginary David Attenborough voiceover. But what is watering protocol?

Surely the lawn needs a splash, I ventured, but Mrs Gnome came down on the idea like a fainting giraffe. "You should never water a lawn," she tut-tutted. "Just because it goes brown, it doesn't mean it's dead. Grass is hardy and it will recover. And what a waste of water. And money."

There's the nub. Environmental issues are important, of course, and even if there's no drought warning in place from South East Water (which is a rarity), we country folk wouldn't want to appear out of touch with the wellbeing of the planet beyond Dingleden; but when conscience fails us, there are always economic considerations to rein us in.

Perhaps you're one of the lucky folk with no water meter, refilling your Olympic-sized swimming pool every weekend, cocking a snook at the water company drones that circle overhead looking for greenery; but at Gnome Towers, every single drop that goes on to our garden represents another penny leaving the bank account.

So the lawn must remain unirrigated and the hosepipe tightly furled beneath the outside tap. Hosepipes, after all, are the enemy of the reservoir, spurting out the equivalent of half of

Bough Beech every three minutes, if official figures are to be believed, so we must rely on the old-tech watering can.

There's something bucolically satisfying about wandering round with a watering can - especially a slightly battered metal one that's been in the family for generations - and watering your pots of an evening. Pots are fine, because they're only small and they don't take much water.

Herbaceous borders are a different matter. The number of watering cans you'll empty on to them in the quest for a season-long riot of colour could float a battleship, or guarantee the survival of the local newt population.

That's another no-no: filling the pond. There may only be half an inch of water left in there - maybe due to a split in the liner as much as lack of rainfall - but the newts will have to fend for themselves all the time South East Water are charging £1.25 per cubic meter.

If they're lucky, I may empty the contents of one of our eco-water butts in there before Mrs G vetoes the measure, but I'm not promising anything. Anyway, I imagine newts are as hardy as grass.

If they're really unlucky, I'll repeat my schoolboy blunder with our eco-underground rain harvesting tank, which we had installed five years ago and whose sole contribution to the household has been a permanent dead patch on the lawn and a faint whiff of decay.

One day I decided to remove the grass-covered eco-lid, drop the waterproof eco-pump into the water and give the pond a quick replenish, only to find that a misdirected kitchen waste pipe had turned the tank into a sea of chicken gravy and sausage skins, which as I soon discovered is not conducive to the good health of the common newt.

I took it as a salutary lesson. If in doubt, sit in a deck chair, drink wine and don't water. It's the eco-friendly way. PT

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Above: Timing is everything: The Band of The Brigade of Gurkhas Sounding Retreat at Benenden School; Benenden Primary School pupils lining up for the Cranbrook 5k Run and camping in the Glebe; Bev Beveridge at the National Operatic and Dramatic Association Award ceremony
Front cover: Vintage view of the village at the summer fete. Photograph: Beth Ansell