



Benenden Magazine

February 2018



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Editorial



Never let it be said that we in Benenden are tail-end Charlies, the type to find ourselves behind the curve, bringing up the rear or exhibiting any other colloquial forms of tardiness. One look at this month's magazine suggests we are, in fact, some way ahead of the wave, having already settled on dates for not only two international wine tastings - the second of them as far away as November - but also the village church fete in its new slot on 16 June and, further down the line, the sad yet timely passing of the Harmsworth Memorial Trust.

For almost 100 years, the HMT has overseen the management and upkeep of some of the parish's major assets, including the village hall and the recreation grounds in Benenden and Iden Green, with the Parish Council at its helm. Soon, however, control will pass to the sparkling new Benenden Village Trust. This may seem like an assortment of so many random letters - HMT, PC, BVT, OMG! - signifying very little in the way of change, but it may also be seen as part of a heartening new tendency towards democracy, transparency and proportional representation in the Shires. It is a tendency that has its most significant flowering in the Benenden Neighbourhood Plan, currently being debated, developed and honed while the rest of village life goes on around it.

Thus, while Nancy Tolhurst helps oversee the lunacy that is the imminent village pantomime (Raiders of the Lost Monarch - only a few tickets remaining), her husband Paul spends his every waking hour bringing the NP ever closer to fruition in his role as Chair of the Steering Committee, channelling the efforts of a hearteningly broad and numerous band of volunteers.

The ventures may seem diverse and barely connected, but they are two sides of the same village coin, one traditional and barmy, the other new and a bit serious but essential to the sanity and survival of our community in the modern age. Long may they thrive and flourish.

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 4 February 8am Communion 10am All-age Communion 5pm Choral Evensong and Sunday School

Sunday 11 February 8am 1662 Communion 10am Morning Worship 5pm Evening Prayer at Mission Church

Wednesday 14 February 7.30pm Ash Wednesday Service with Communion

Sunday 18 February 8am Communion 10am Sung Eucharist 4pm Messy Church

Sunday 25 February 8am Communion 10am Morning Worship 5pm Praise Service at Mission Church

Mission Church, Sandhurst

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

Every Tuesday 10am Communion

Iden Green Congregational Church

Elder: Tobin Bird 240027 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 21 January Albert Scott (at Saint Ronan's School)

Funerals
8 January "Jimmy" Williams Funeral and burial
9 January Peter Cooper Funeral St George's and committal Charing Crematorium
15 January Phyllis Wheeler Funeral and committal Charing Crematorium
17 January John Turner Funeral and burial

Rector's Letter



Put a spring in your step for Lent

I finished last month's letter by encouraging you to be positive about 2018, to turn any regrets from 2017 into opportunities for 2018, to be positive about the year. Spring is a lovely time; a time when, personally, I feel positive about things. Spring, you may have noticed, is just around the corner.

Nature is doing some very strange things. In December, I saw gorse bushes starting to put out their bright yellow flowers - I saw this in the New Forest, and I saw it when walking in the Pentlands in Scotland. Much closer to home, we have crocuses that are appearing in the our garden, and I've heard reports of daffodils being seen already.

The year moves on, into the second month, and there are these signs of things to come - good things. Spring: with all it's growth, better weather (hopefully), lengthening days, warmer days, getting out in the garden again, going for more walks. We are fortunate where we live that we can see the signs in nature ... if we just take the time to look for them.

And so it is with the Church year; it too moves on - to exciting things to come. In no time at all we will be celebrating Easter once again - the major, most exciting and important time in our calendar. (Easter is quite early this year; being celebrated on the first day of April. The earliest it can be is 22 March, but the last time that happened was 1818!) Then, before you know it, we will be celebrating Pentecost again.

These things are just around the corner, and there are signs of Easter coming. On 14 February, apart from it being Valentine's Day it is also Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent. (N.B. There's a service at 7:30pm!) Many people see this as a quiet, reflective, contemplative time, and indeed it is. It is also, if you let it be, a time of personal spiritual growth. It is a time when we can look forward to what is to come - the joy of Easter - and be ready for that, but we can only be ready by preparing ourselves for it. Applying a gardening metaphor: by doing a bit of spiritual, inward pruning, so that we get good, strong growth from Easter. To be ready to remember the death (for you) of Jesus on Good Friday, and be ready to celebrate the joy of his resurrection at Easter, then we need to set aside time to prepare for it.

I encourage you to think about Lent this year, and use it as a time of preparation, ready for the growth that will come from it and the wonderful joy of Easter. Do not have any regrets at the end of this Lent - be positive about it. God bless.

Revd David Commander, Rector

Village Calendar

February

Thursday 1	Raiders of the Lost Monarch, Benenden Players Panto First Night, Benenden Village Hall, 7.30pm	p.9
Friday 2	Woodland Wide Games, Iden Green Congregational Church, 7pm	
Saturday 3	Cornhole Tossing, St George's Club, 8.15pm	
Monday 5	Parish Council Community Affairs and Local Environment Committee Meeting, Iden Green Pavilion, 7pm	
Saturday 10	ABF Charity Musical Concert with The Kohima Band of The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, Saint Ronan's School, 7pm	p.11
Saturday 17	Skittles, St George's Club, 8.15pm	
Sunday 18	Messy Church, St George's Church, 4-6pm	p.11
Monday 19	Planning and Transportation Committee, Iden Green Pavilion, 7pm	
Monday 19	Parish Council Meeting, Iden Green Pavilion, 7.30pm	
Tuesday 20	Village Lunch, Benenden Village Hall, 12.30pm	p.13
Tuesday 20	Iden Green and Benenden WI, Open Meeting: Antiques, Memorial Hall, 2pm	p.31
Thursday 22	Benenden's Community Shop Volunteers' Evening, Memorial Hall, 7.30pm	p.25
Saturday 24	Bingo, St George's Club, 8pm	
Tuesday 27	Merry and Bright, Annual General Meeting, Memorial Hall, 3pm	

March

Saturday 24	Friends of St George's Church, Spring Concert, St George's Church, 7.15pm	p.21
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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

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Saturday 10 February for Domestic Waste

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

Saturday 24 February for Garden/Compostable Waste

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

Parish Council



Last month our Chair closed his letter by mentioning that this May is the month for the Local Government elections. Thursday 3 May will be the day when you can vote for our Borough Councillors at Tunbridge Wells, as well as your Parish Councillors here in Benenden.

The Parish Council election differs from the Borough Council in that it will only take place if the number of candidates exceeds the number of vacancies for seats on the council. We have nine seats on our Parish Council, and at present we have the full complement of councillors. However there are some of us who will not be standing for another term for various reasons, and therefore there will be vacancies to be filled come election time. It would be great if we could have more candidates than available seats, thus triggering a democratic election for the vacancies. It is better for democracy if councillors are elected rather than relying on co-option, so we can be confident that the council is the community's choice of representatives.

Joining the Parish Council is a great way to engage with the local community. I had been living in the village for only two years when I first became a councillor, and I have found it an invaluable way of meeting a completely eclectic mix of parishioners, and making many new friends along the way. Yes, there is commitment and time involved, but this is rewarded with a very real feeling of being involved at the heart of a strong and vibrant community.

If you think you may want to put in your nomination, please feel free to contact our Clerk, myself or the Chair, Peter Davies, and we will be very happy to answer any questions you may have about the role of a Parish Councillor.

The Publication of Notice of Election will be on 27 March, with receipt of nominations to be received by 6 April. Please do talk to our Clerk about nomination papers required for the process. Progress will be reported each month in this magazine.

For the update on our Neighbourhood Plan, see Paul Tolhurst's column on page 11. There will be a Parish Council Community Affairs and Local Environment Committee meeting on Monday 5 February at Iden Green Pavilion. All are welcome to attend.

Nicola Thomas, BPC Vice Chair
01580 240364 nic.jthomas@btinternet.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
Monday 19 February 2018,
Iden Green Pavilion, 7.30pm

**Planning and Transportation
Committee**
Monday 19 February 2018,
Iden Green Pavilion, 7pm

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Just a Thought



‘Justing-itis’

I have just stopped to pull down the loft ladder and put the Christmas decorations into storage, whilst on my way to putting away the clean washing from the drier. I am doing it again! It appears that I have a severe condition called ‘Justing-itis’. This condition means that one just stops to do a small job whilst in the middle of doing a bigger one. I think I might have had it for rather a long time.

Apparently, according to the family, it hasn’t improved over the years - in fact it might have got worse. How is it recognised? Well a mild version means that one just washes up saucepans in the middle of cooking a meal; or just fills the dishwasher when making the after lunch coffee; then there is just putting a few pieces out on the washing line when everyone is dressed up and waiting to go out. A more extreme sign is just stopping to glue back a broken side-table leg half way through vacuuming the downstairs carpets. It happens in the garden too - just dead-heading the roses whilst putting out the bins.

The benefit of this condition is that lots of little jobs are done along with the main ones, and that is quite satisfying. The disadvantage is that the sufferer often fails to realise that the justing activity does actually take up a finite amount of time - if only a minute or two - thus delaying the completion of the main task.

Sometimes it doesn’t really matter, for example lunch is delayed for ten minutes on an ordinary, humdrum day but the cutlery drawer is now clean and much more organised. However sometimes it does matter and one nearly misses the train because those clothes in the bedroom were just popped away in drawers instead of being left for one’s return.

I have an inkling that this condition is far more prevalent in women than it is in men. But I may be wrong. In my experience most men need to set aside a definite time for tackling a task and they will not be distracted from it however many other little jobs might surface on the way to achieving their goal. Each activity, however small, must be identified in advance. Admirable, but I am not convinced that quite so much is achieved at the end of the day.

Perhaps men don’t recognise this condition. On the other hand they may recognise it all too clearly as their wife, partner, girlfriend or even work colleague shows definite symptoms.

A genuine plus for those with justing-itis means that they have a reduced list of jobs prefaced by ‘I really must ...’. They may just need a little more patience from those around them!

Hmm - since I am at my computer I’ll just send a reminder email about the meeting on Monday.

Now I must finish this piece. On present evidence there is little chance of a cure!

Sue Fisher



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News and Events

Benenden Players:

The roar of the greasepaint, the smell of the crowd

With performance week almost upon us, as we're planning the final few tweaks to the show, there has been much earnest discussion about the nature, scale, and cost of the pyrotechnics, exactly how much soft-drink, beer, and wine we'll need to cater for the thirsty audience, and a lot of hilarity watching the cast emerge from Ruth Clark's costume cupboard all spruced up in a variety of splendid outfits.

Curtains go up on the first day of February so you may be reading this just after the show, but if you haven't seen it yet, Bev's tried out a few new plot twists this year and the younger members of the cast have pulled together a

mime scene.

The technical crew have some new toys to play with, improving the lighting and sound projection so everything should be

sharper and clearer. We're testing out your tolerance for Fake News too; featuring several local notables; did you spot yourself?

Each year we're lucky enough to have new cast members; new junior cast members, and some new adults with great singing voices. We have a new member of the band too. A key feature of any panto is the music; it carries along the storyline and brings a lot of energy into the performance. A wider range of instruments and singing voices has given Graham Beveridge more options and more choices. Getting the musical balance right amongst should mean that there are tunes that



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all the audience will recognise and enjoy - the cast are certainly enjoying singing them.

The village hall provides great space and facilities for the show, and this year the lovely new red curtains set exactly the right tone. In performance week we pretty much take over the building, converting the small hall into our artistes' green room/kids' dressing room, setting up the bar and sweet shop, and spending several hours putting up and labelling all the seating in the main hall. All this takes lots of support from friends and family of cast and crew; thank you all for your time, your energy, and forbearance once again. I do hope you enjoy/have enjoyed the show: watch out for the audition posters for next year!

Nancy Tolhurst 07711 139218

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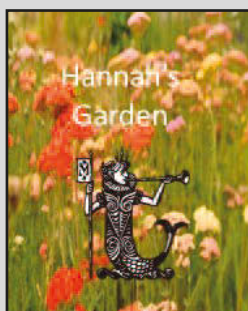
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Neighbourhood Plan

Village vision in sharper focus

After our final meeting in January, we have now completed our first round of consultation with residents. Village workshops covered a full range of topics: Vision and Objectives; Housing Supply and Design; Business, Economy, Transport and Infrastructure; and Landscape and Green Environment, and it was good to note that each was well attended by up to 60 residents.

The input from these has helped us identify priority concerns and issues to be tackled, and some local expertise we can use. We have drafted, shared and had agreement to our 'vision' for Benenden and will broaden out this work with contributions from children at Benenden Primary School.

Our next step is to use the work, alongside input from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and other expert bodies, to develop Benenden-specific plans and policies. Five working groups have been established. They will focus on different aspects of our plan; always looking at how to deliver necessary housing growth in keeping with our vision for the village.

Our expert consultant Jim Boot has produced a plan of work for each working group along with a timetable so that we can

keep on track, and will continue to provide much of the help we need. We plan further consultations with residents through the summer and will produce a proposed plan for a village referendum in January 2019.

We will try to stay in touch with monthly updates in the Parish Magazine, email updates to our mailing list of nearly 600 individuals (those involved in the 2015 Parish Plan, plus attendees at Village Workshops) and we are also developing a website similar to the Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Plan to share news and thinking. Our aim to involve as many residents as possible: we are trying to plan the future of our village, so please contribute and help if you can. We would like to increase the number of volunteers helping on the working groups, so please contact us if you feel you could help.

Paul Tolhurst, Steering Committee Chair
paul.tolhurst@btinternet.com



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Benenden Christmas Day lunch 2017

In 2016 we had 12 people to lunch, this year I am pleased to report that the numbers in the Memorial Hall doubled, and like last year, a great time was had by all. A beautifully decorated table ran down the middle of the hall, set up by Deborah Jenkins, who also donated the salmon blinis, which were the perfect pre-lunch nibbles along with the sausage rolls from Barbara Royle and Chris Sevenoaks.

Derek Feeley donated the turkey roll and chipolatas, Dot the brussel sprouts, Lesley Attwood the other vegetables, brandy butter, cream, custard and mulled wine, Mike Lycett came good again with his excellent roasted-in-goose-fat potatoes, Donald Stevens pitched in with a very rich Christmas pudding - no surprise there - and Lucinda Hamilton at Cocolicious provided some single portion puds, equally delicious. The Dalton Holmeses supplied the cheese, Alice Munro-Faure the biscuits to go with, so we certainly did not go hungry.

Thanks also go to Sensible Wine Service for supplying the glasses and beer and mineral waters, as well as Janet Beattie and Aurea Gregory for coming up with the mince pies. We are grateful to those people who made monetary donations, including the Arnold Cole Trust. £80 will be donated to Catching Lives www.catchinglives.org.

Thank you to the children of the Primary School, who produced some excellent Christmas cards for all the attendees. Also to our Rector David Commander for setting up the satellite dish so that this year we could watch the Queen's speech - indeed we got a mention as there are many such lunches taking place all over the UK. This does not happen without volunteer helpers, and this year Bonny and Maddie were the star helpers, along with chef Helen Commander in the kitchen.

The wine flowed, conversation likewise, and although the lunch left little time for games, the penguin racing proved popular, with Janet Beattie creating a record for the fastest penguin,



under three seconds in a dead straight line - we might have to introduce drug testing next year. Some people popped in for a glass or two, and the Malaughs and Cruses kindly helped at the end.

My father was never happier than when he could see people having a good time. I have followed in his footsteps and it gave me so much pleasure to see so many people coming together on this special day and enjoying the occasion. Thanks to all who attended, and thanks to the community shop for doing the administration. Both management and the volunteers do a great job and they are to be heartily congratulated for all they do. Apologies if I have left out anybody.

See you all next year, or should I say this year! All the best for 2018.

Tracy Claridge 240454

Village Lunch

Tuesday 20 February, Benenden Village Hall, 12.30pm

All are welcome. It's just £5 a head. If you need a lift please let us know and we can arrange it. Please call Sheila on 01580 240838 if you haven't already put your name down but would like to come. We look forward to seeing you.



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





Children keeping an eye on new Primary School progress

It was with great excitement that I walked over to the site of our new school on the first day of December. After months of meetings, discussions and deadlines there was finally some tangible evidence that the build was taking place. There was fencing around the field, a man in a hard hat with a strimmer, and most encouragingly of all, a portalo. Things must be moving, I thought.

KCC's contractors, Amey, had commissioned Walker Construction to deal with the pre-commencement works, thus enabling the actual, build to begin early this year. I appointed a small group of Year 5 pupils, Oliver, Ollie and Molly as our Buildings Monitoring Group, with the intention of making a weekly visit to record

changes. The three children organised two pupils from years 2, 3 and 4 to accompany them each week. These children will then report back to their respective classes on a regular basis, so keeping all children involved.

On 8 December, armed with wellies and a camera, we made our first trip to the site. Most of the pre-commencement works are in the field in front of the allocated site, enabling access to the actual area where the school will be built. The children took some photographs to enable them to track the progress over the coming weeks and months.

By our second visit on 15 December, high fencing had been erected, a number of warning signs on the road had been displayed and there was heavy plant on the site. The construction engineers from Walkers explained to the children that they had been working on the drainage system and also securing the site. The statutory warning signs for a building site were displayed and the men explained the possible dangers of the site. One of them even posed in the digger for a photo shoot!

The children are very much looking forward to our next visit and their photographs and commentary are uploaded to our school website each week so you, too, can follow the progress.

Gill Knox, Headteacher

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Graham on graham_walden@yahoo.co.uk

Look forward to meeting new dads!



Local History

Squeezing the Limen

The rise and fall of a once mighty river

Kent Barker looks at the changed face of what was once East Sussex and Kent's proudest waterway



I've long been fascinated by the concept of a 'watershed' - a ridge from the top of which rainwater will flow in different directions, joining different streams and rivers and, ultimately separate seas and even oceans. The high ground at Hemsted (now Benenden Girls School) is a such a watershed. Water falling on the northern slopes flows up towards the Medway and the Thames estuary. That falling on the southern side flows down towards the English Channel.

Along its journey south-eastwards it will join the Hexden Channel (aka River Wandle), Benenden's southern parish boundary, and then enter the mighty Limen that flows from Robertsbridge to Rye.

Alert readers may be expostulating that this river, separating Kent from East Sussex, is not the Limen but the Rother. And is far from mighty. And so it is now. But up until about 1600 it was known by its Latin name. And a very different river it was too. Not the narrow ditch-like stream with stepped high banks of today, but a vastly wide, tidal waterway that was the artery of the Weald.

Its importance dates from a thousand years before the Romans, when the Belgae arrived from the Rhineland in search of industrial opportunity. For them the Limen was the only route into the dark interior of the Wealden forest. They were seeking a strange mineral - iron ore - and they found it in abundance in the local sedimentary rock. They also found quantities of the two other requisites for smelting iron - clay for the kiln and wood for the charcoal to fire it.

In his excellent history, "Limen", Tony Cardwell shows that extensive iron working in and around the valley continued right into the 18th century. Then, with the river silting up and the forest denuded, hammer mills at places like Wadhurst, Hawkhurst and, finally, Robertsbridge closed for good.



Views of the Rother valley at Bodiam



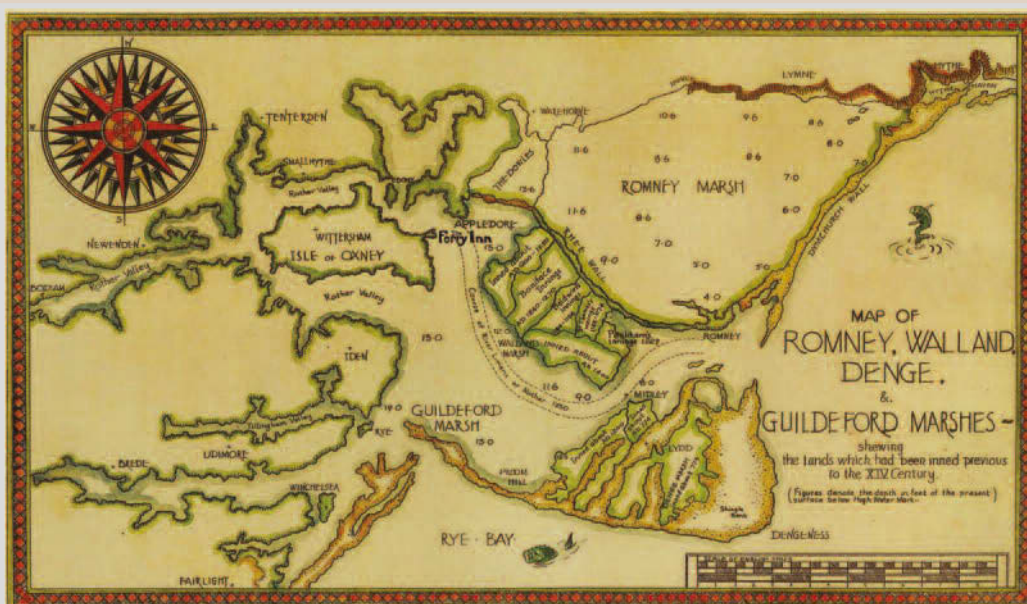
That contributed to the serious unemployment already created by the shifting river landlocking ports like Smallhythe and Rye. With the Government levying swingeing import taxes on tea and tobacco and brandy, opportunity knocked for smugglers like the Hawkhurst gang. They would likely have used the Limen/Rother to move their tubs inland, while redundant watermen at Rye and Winchelsea would have leapt at the chance to earn the odd florin or crown helping bring the smuggled goods ashore.

Viewing the emasculated Rother today at Newenden or Bodiam it's hard to imagine the mighty Limen spread out across the whole valley with a multitude of craft servicing our own local iron industry, and 'ports' at Newenden and Robertsbridge. After sustained heavy rain, part of the valley still floods today and you can get an inkling of what it would have looked like a few

hundred years ago.

Then there were stories of coaches floating off the London road, and a regular traveller, John Collier of Hastings, described one journey in 1733: "The roads are extream bad, and though we have had a great deal of rain I was much surprised to see the waters up to a great degree. That at Robertsbridge I could not ride over; soe got a man to lead my horse, and the clappers at the end of the cloak bags were wet by the height of the water."

From the middle of the 18th century efforts were made to contain and restrain the river, including the construction of a lock outside Rye, but it was not until the 1960s that substantial flood banks were raised along almost the entire length of the river. From then on the waterway that had for centuries been at the heart of local commerce was reduced to the sad narrow stream we know today.



left: Estuary of the Limen/Rother before the great storm of 1287.
Courtesy of Ferry Inn, Stone in Oxney

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News from Benenden School

If the return to work in January left you feeling slightly flat then spare a thought for the girls in some of the older years who arrived back at school and launched straight into exams, with mocks and progress tests! It must have been a difficult transition after the Christmas festivities but they have been coping brilliantly.

Meanwhile, girls in the lowest year spent their first days back concentrating on Enquiry Learning, when all subjects are focused on a particular theme - this time it was Migration on the term's theme of Journeys. The Fourth were tasked with researching the details of a particular migratory group and presented their findings in a drama performance or by filming a news clip.

At the time of writing, girls in the symphony orchestra are incredibly excited about performing alongside internationally acclaimed violinist Tasmin Little in the magnificent Drapers' Hall on 22 January. This is a concert we are holding in collaboration with education charity the English-Speaking Union and it will be a wonderful occasion, particularly for the girls involved.

On the theme of experiences, Sixth Formers have been sharing with the rest of the school details of their two-week expedition to Nepal, which arrived back in the UK just two days before Christmas. During their trip they trekked in the Himalayas and visited charity projects the school has been supporting. It was a challenging and extremely rewarding trip for all involved.

The spring term never really feels as if it has started until House Shout has been staged - an incredibly fun singing competition between the boarding houses. This is the traditional 'welcome back' event and the vibrancy (and volume!) of this year's event served as a wake-up call to anyone still dazed after the festive period!

Samantha Price, Headmistress

Village Hall highlights

CELEBRATING OUR HALL - AND ALL THE OTHERS

Did you know that village halls now have their own Village Halls Week, a new initiative started by ACRE (Action with Communities and Rural England) and the ACRE Network and held at the end of January? It was an annual celebration of all village halls and other community buildings, which exist at the heart of England's rural communities, the aim of the campaign being to champion the diverse range of buildings which make up the 10,000-strong network and promote the sheer volume of services on offer.

Predominantly the week took place on social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) with a #thunderclap being scheduled (a way of allowing a single message to be mass-shared, flash mob-style on social media), and it was an opportunity to say thank you to the people who manage the buildings and learn more about the groups, organisations, individuals and businesses who are making use of these buildings week in and week out.

Village halls are at the heart of the rural communities we live in (along with the pub and the village shop of course). Where else in just one day can you find classes in yoga, Scottish dancing and dog-training, with maybe a birthday party or a Mega Blaster World party thrown into the mix?

It's fantastic that our hall is thriving and being successful, and it is people like you that make that happen - we wouldn't be here without your support. My job is simply making sure that all my wonderful hirers are happy, and that the hall is lovingly cared for (she is my baby after all!).

One final note: have you bought your tickets for Raiders of the Lost Monarch yet? Time is running out, so be quick!

Lorraine Jones 243123
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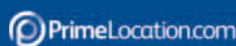
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A better life on the street

Benenden's own Tracy Claridge talks about his work with the help-the-homeless charity Catching Lives

I first started volunteering for Catching Lives about 15 years ago. I had always wanted to 'do something at Christmas', but had never made the real effort, so I asked Rosemary van Wengen, a former assistant priest who now helps at St George's Church, and she mentioned that her late husband Otto had worked there back in the day.

So, I turned up on Christmas day, worked in the kitchen with many other like-minded folk, talked to many of the homeless people and went home content with what I had done but knowing one day a year was not enough.

Many of us are really not far away from being homeless - house prices have got out of hand and rent prices likewise - so I decided to become more involved, collecting clothing and books on a regular basis at St George's, fundraising and working at evening shelters in Canterbury.

All the leftover books after the Benenden fete go the Catching Lives bookshop in Canterbury, the Wonky Door near King's School. I drop off a carload of clothes, books, food, and more recently sugar, once a month at least. If you have any such items spare, please leave them in the porch entry at the church, or call me on 01580 240454 and I can collect.

When the temperature drops to zero for three consecutive days, many church halls and Catching Lives shelters open up to offer warm accommodation for the night. Three weeks ago in Edinburgh, 9,000 people slept out rough one night to make people aware of the homeless. They interviewed an actual homeless person and he said: "Most of us do not go hungry anymore. We have clothing. What we do not have is communication. If only people would stop and talk for a few minutes."

To donate to Catching Lives, visit www.catchinglives.org.
Tracy Claridge 240454
tlclaridge@tlclaridge.co.uk

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Look out for further details or contact Clare Harmsworth
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Benenden Pre-School News

Benenden Pre-school is back in full swing and the children have been very busy enjoying their new topic of birds this term. The theme is inspired by the book Shh! We have a Plan by Chris Haughton and the children have been busy making their own bird feeders out of cereal and pipe cleaners and crafting DIY binoculars so they can spot some of their favourite birds in the garden. Some of the children have managed to find a few feathers and tested their drawing and painting skills with them. It's been great seeing how one small creature can capture the children's imagination.

To find out more about Benenden Pre-School, please email:
supervisor@benendenpre-school.co.uk

Answers to bird puzzle

The answers to January's Bird Puzzle were as follows: 1 Dipper, 2 Nuthatch, 3 Redstart, 4 Fieldfare, 5 Yellowhammer, 6 Linnet, 7 Starling, 8 Wheatear, 9 Stonechat, and finally 10 Ptarmigan. And the lucky winner of a bottle of Grouse is Peter Driver.

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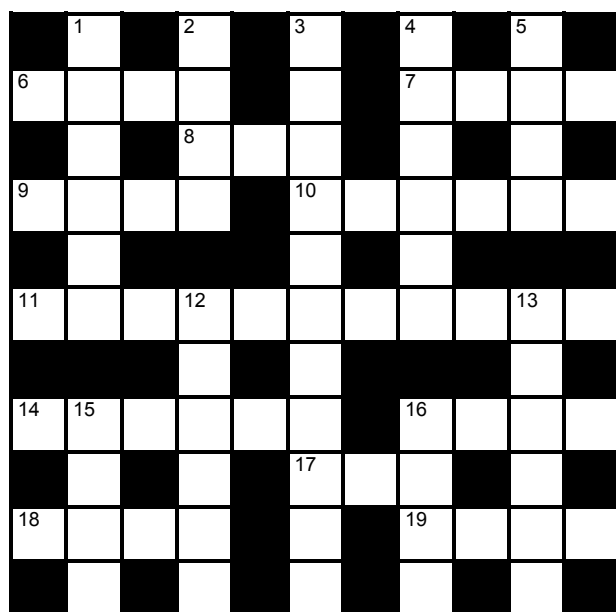
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MINDBENENDERS By ASCII

CROSSWORD No 1 (Easy)



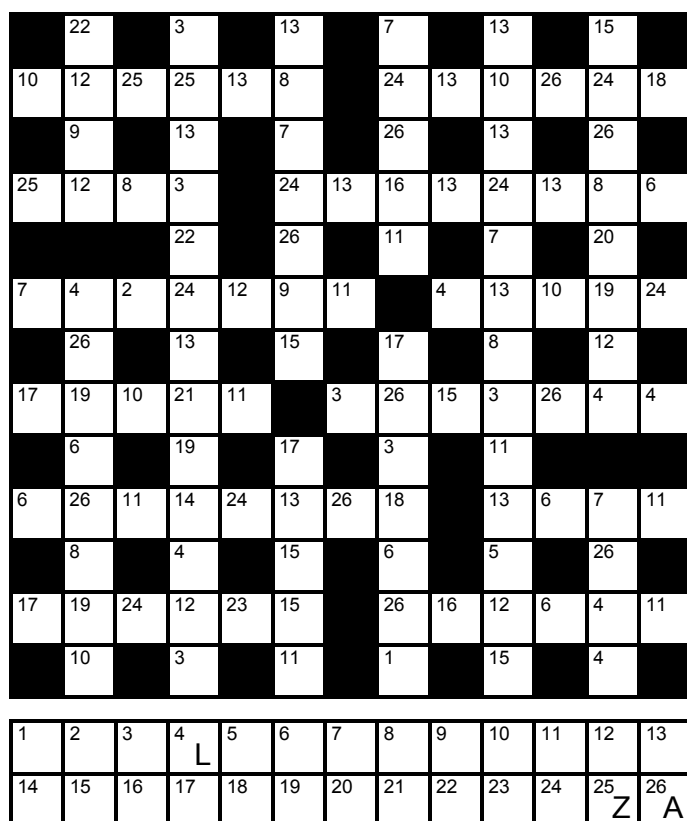
Across

- 6 Religious education after a degree achieves nothing (4)
- 7 Falling star in Yekaterinburg (4)
- 8 Initially confused Italian broadcaster. On it, naturally (3)
- 9 Payment for lodgings a rip-off (4)
- 10 Fly in distress, possibly? (6)
- 11 Legendary smuggler destroys her icons but times it just right (11)
- 14 Gentle touch scares horribly (6)
- 16 South-western silver could be ill-gotten gains (4)
- 17 After 8 Across and before Rescue Service; before 8 Across is meant to be healthy (3)
- 18 Muck about with peat and it could get sticky (4)
- 19 Skidded uncontrollably and killed someone (4)

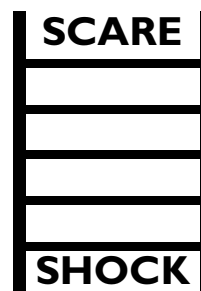
Down

- 1 Perfect place for unusual Rye Tea? (6)
- 2 Tidy up a net (4)
- 3 Magazine editor on a tough deadline or is it just his cider apples? (4-7)
- 4 Part of a flower where saint ends his prayers (6)
- 5 Churned up country road in north-east Los Angeles? (4)
- 12 Hundred and fifty first woman, right? Very smart! (6)
- 13 Ladders scales wards (6)
- 15 Sounds like I'll be a sweater (4)
- 16 Ribbon from brown shirts? Quiet! (4)

CODEWORD No 1 (Moderate)

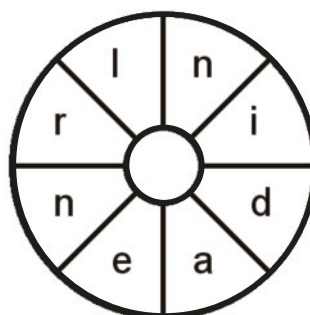


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A changing of the guard

A new charity has been set up for the village, the Benenden Village Trust. It is registered with the Charity Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and will eventually take over from the Harmsworth Memorial Trust (HMT), which for nearly 100 years has been run by the Parish Council. The HMT has agreed that the process should now begin to transfer all of its assets to the Benenden Village Trust (BVT), including the village hall, the St George's building, the football pitch and recreation grounds at Benenden and Iden Green and various investments.

The change came out of the Village Plan, which identified a number of weaknesses involved in the Parish Council having also to be the sole trustee of the HMT, including conflicts of interest and lack of specific expertise in running a charity. The big advantage for the village is that all residents will be eligible to be members of the new trust, will have oversight of its running, elect trustees and be able to propose and vote on motions at general meetings. Details of how to apply for membership will be published in the magazine over the next few months.

The steering group which set up the BVT has been named by the Charity Commission as the founding trustees. They are David Harmsworth, Robin Dalton Holmes, Tom Dawlings, Barrie Jones, Jonathan Strong and Kent Barker. All will retire at the first AGM, which will be held in the spring of 2019, when members will elect a wider ongoing Board of Trustees.

The aims and objectives of the BVT are the same as for the HMT and no changes are planned to any of the HMT functions, or for any of its employees or tenants.

For further information or to request a copy of the BVT constitution, email: kentb@benendenparishcouncil.org

Talking Shop

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW WORKERS

As you have been visiting Benenden's, the chances are that you have met our two new members of staff, Kate and Nicola. Kate is with us on a temporary basis as she awaits the outcome of her endeavours to join the RAF. As you may have guessed, she is eminently suited to serving our customers with her friendly, sunny nature. Nicola joined us as a very efficient, cheerful permanent member of staff after retiring from working at Marks and Spencer and before that in a career in marketing and employee communication at the Royal Mail, in local government and at the Law Society. Nicola admits to being attracted to



Nicola Jaffray-Dann



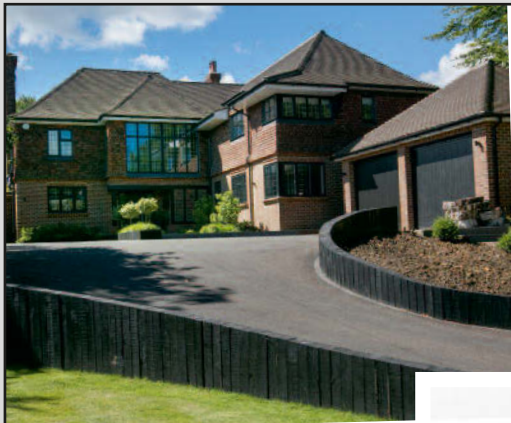
Kate Clark

Benenden's because it was a community shop with a great buzz - and we can't argue with that! We warmly welcome them both.

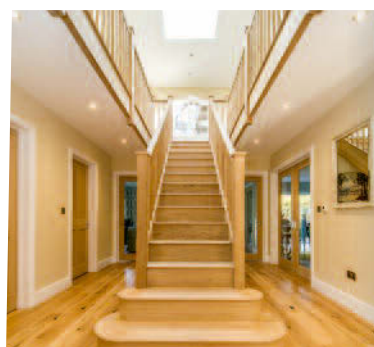
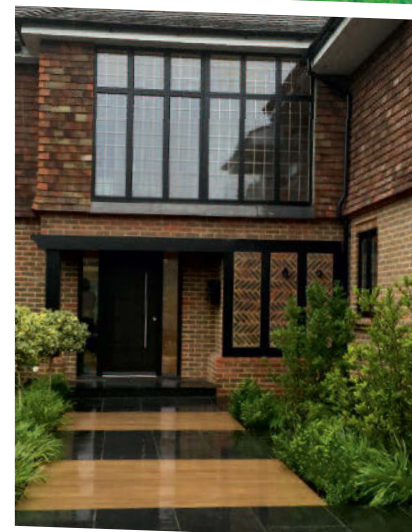
For all our wonderful volunteers, it is with great pleasure that we can announce the next volunteers' evening, in the Memorial Hall on Thursday 22 February starting at 7.30pm. Please do come along and hear how the shop is doing, as well as socialising with other volunteers. There will be chance to try some potential new products so you can give us your welcome feedback. If anyone is thinking of volunteering for the first time we would warmly welcome you. Just sign up at the shop, by email or online and join us on the 22nd. We'll be delighted to see you!

Valentine's Day is approaching and many a man's thoughts will hopefully be turning to love. You need go no further than Benenden's where, from Hannah's Garden, there will be pots of bulbs at £6 and small bunches of fresh local flowers at £9, as well as large bunches available to be ordered before Saturday 11 February.

Bev Beveridge



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News from the Borough

I thought it might be helpful for readers if I discussed some matters being addressed by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, starting with the refuse collection contract (TWBC's largest contract), which is due for renewal in March 2019. Presently lots of things that are recyclable are put in the green (residual waste) bins so significant preparation work is being undertaken for the new contract to encourage more recycling.

A kerbside collection of glass, in addition to plastics, cans, paper and cardboard, is being planned, with food waste being collected separately from garden waste in the future. Collecting food waste separately has been shown to change buying habits as people see how much is wasted. Other councils now charge for the collection of garden waste and TWBC is considering a charge for this of £30 a year for each household. I am opposed to such a charge, although I have some sympathy for the principle of the user paying and enabling those not wanting to use the service (or not having a garden) to opt out.

In Benenden the kerbside collection of glass will mean there will be no further need for the bottle banks by the village hall, which cause such disturbance to immediate neighbours.

Apart from the kerbside collection, there is a need to have a recycling area in this part of the Borough so residents can easily take waste for recycling. This is something I have been voicing for some time (the North Farm recycling centre is a 35-40 mile round trip from here). This is a KCC matter but TWBC will continue to press KCC on local recycling areas.

Planning for a new theatre and council offices in Tunbridge Wells has been driven by the desire to retain and enhance Tunbridge Wells' reputation as great place to live, work

and visit. The existing Assembly Hall theatre and town hall were built in a different era and are increasingly expensive to run and maintain.

I think the plans are very exciting but my decision to support the scheme was based on financial and economic grounds. I am satisfied that the scheme is affordable and will cost less than the option of refurbishing the existing buildings, while new offices built partly to let out will be a sound investment for TWBC.

The financial case for a theatre is less clear-cut but a successful theatre will provide a significant boost to the economy of Tunbridge Wells, which in turn should encourage new businesses to set up or move to the area. This is very significant as TWBC now receives no funding from central government but instead is permitted to retain 50% of new business rates (this will increase to 100%). More new businesses, therefore, will help to finance the services provided throughout the Borough.

In my opinion, these matters pale into insignificance against the huge pressure to build houses. TWBC is being targeted to permit the building of 14,000 housing units by 2033 - this in a borough which is substantially comprised of green belt, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and land liable to flooding.

TWBC is working on a new Local Plan for housing and has engaged consultants to identify possible sites for a new rural settlement - having determined this should be outside the AONB. In Benenden a number of residents are working on creating a Neighbourhood Development Plan which will become part of TWBC's Local Plan. The objective is to have the right type and number of houses in the best (or least bad) places and we are working hard at this.

Tom Dawlings

Borough Councillor for Benenden & Cranbrook
Tom.Dawlings@btinternet.com

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One great fete deserves another

Saturday 16 June, 12noon-4pm

Last year's Benenden Village Church Fete was great fun and despite the early rain raised just over £9,000, a fantastic sum which has been put towards running, repairing and insuring the Church, which costs more than £6,000 per month. Thanks go to all those involved and who came along.

Preparations are already underway to make this year's fete, on 16 June, another delightful event. If you can contribute any of the following, please contact Tracy Claridge (tlclaridge@tlclaridge.co.uk or 01580 240454).

Gazebos As we never know what the weather will be like, we are looking for more gazebos this year, so if you have one you can let us use on the day it will be much appreciated.

Raffle prizes The fete raffle is ever popular and we are looking for 25 prizes this year. We start selling tickets several weeks before the event so if you have anything you could donate from a hamper to a free week in a holiday home (it has happened before!), or anything in between, please let us know as soon as possible.

Books The Rare Reads book stall is always popular and left-over books are donated to the Catching Lives charity (see page 21). All books in good condition are welcome, whether old, new, read, unread, fiction, non-fiction, literature, art, cookery history, geography etc. Collection can be arranged. Please call Deborah Jenkins on 01580 241878.

Time We are looking for more volunteers than ever to help - even if only for an hour or two. It all helps and makes a huge difference.
Deborah Jenkins



THE GREAT CRESTED NEWT by Mary Kellett

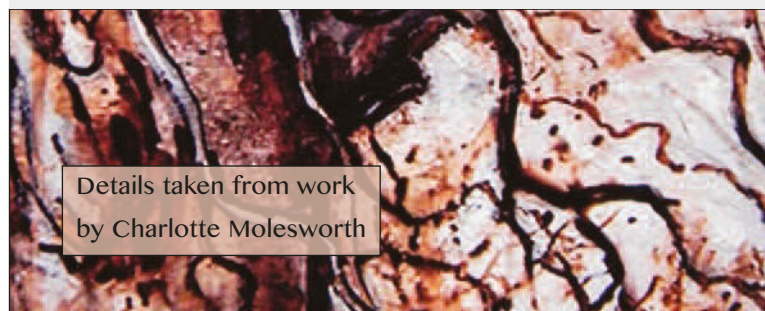
The great crested newt
In his elegant suit
Had the girls in the pond in a tizz
With his flamboyant crest
And his orange spot vest
No wonder they thought him the biz

With his roguish demeanour
They couldn't be keener
And did all that they could to impress
With their dives and their swoops,
Their mad loop the loops
And swirling around to excess

But this frantic expression
Of unmaidenly passion
Left our Romeo less than enamoured
He wanted a bride
In whom to take pride
Who was cultured, demure and well mannered

So he went in pursuit
Of a ladylike newt
Whose parents had brought her up proper
To swim without splashing,
No unseemly dashing
And to dive without coming a cropper

But it took him so long
To find this paragon
That he doubted he'd meet his Miss Right
But ... then he espied her,
She was eating a spider
Their eyes met ... it was love at first sight.



Details taken from work
by Charlotte Molesworth

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The Village Gnome

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE - EXCEPT BEWL

These days in the countryside it's almost commonplace to see things that are unusual. Who hasn't looked out their window in the last few weeks and seen plump buds coinciding with the Queen's Speech or green shoots emerging during Ski Sunday?

One seasonal occurrence we can safely rely upon, however, is the portentous warning that a hosepipe ban this summer is very likely. In fact, the Gnome caught the 2018 recurrence on the local news the other day and, despite the reassuring inevitability of the bulletin, was still slightly taken aback.

The bulletin always informs us that we had a very dry October, neglecting to mention the monsoon that prevailed throughout September and November; it reports that Bewl Water, with a capacity of 31,000 megalitres, contains barely enough water to fill a fat man's bath.

How can all this be? Where has all the water gone? Have the fish been drinking it? Is it disappearing down the cracks? Why is Bewl never more than 54 per cent full of H₂O when there are millions of gallons of the stuff gushing out of the storm drains along Cranbrook Road?

How can every reservoir in the south-east be full of tumbleweed when the Gnome went for a pint at the Bull the other day and almost drowned in the gigantic puddle by the car park? Why don't they siphon off some of that and avert the hosepipe ban for all eternity?

And if they really do have to have a ban, can't they at least have the decency not to trouble us with it until at least June?

PT

Iden Green and Benenden WI

We recently had a happy members' meeting catching up with business and planning this year's outings. Jackie Liffin read two of her poems which were very pertinent to us all, asking the question "When did I get Old?". We also played a game of Guess the Places in Kent, which was organised by Jocelyn Gregory.

The next meeting in February we are making an open meeting, welcoming friends - male and female. Please remember all are welcome not just members, but non-members will be charged a small fee of £3.

Dates to remember:

Tuesday 20 February, A Talk on Antiques, 2-4pm
Tuesday 20 March, A Bad Spate of Weather,

2-4pm

Saturday 24 March, Coffee Morning, 10-12noon

All meetings and Coffee Morning are in the Memorial Hall. For further enquiries:

Shirley Fidler, Chair 752232

Youth Liaison

Benenden Parish Council is looking for a Youth Liaison volunteer to work with the council. The role would be to help involve young people in village activities, and to find out what provision they would like to see. The first task would be to assess how popular the weekly Streetcruizer bus is proving and to ask if and how the service could be improved. Please contact the clerk or Parish Council chairman if you would be able to help.

MINDBENENDERS Answers

CROSSWORD No 1

Across: 6 Bare, 7 Tsar, 8 Air, 9 Rent, 10 Damsel, 11 Synchronise, 14 Caress, 16 Swag, 17 Sea, 18 Tape, 19 Slew
Down: 1 Eatery, 2 Neat, 3 Hard-pressed, 4 Stamen, 5 Lane, 12 Clever, 13 Staves, 15 Aran, 16 Sash

CODEWORD No 1

1	W	2	O	3	C	4	L	5	X	6	D	7	G	8	N	9	F	10	M	11	Y	12	I	13	E
14	B	15	T	16	V	17	J	18	K	19	U	20	Q	21	P	22	H	23	S	24	R	25	Z	26	A

STEP CHANGE

SCARE, STARE, STARK, STACK, STOCK, SHOCK

NINE FROM EIGHT

adrenaline



Wine column

Red and white from the Land of Silver

Tracy Claridge on the excellent wines to be found in Argentina - and the village shop

Argentina is the fifth largest producer of wine in the world, with a history dating back to 1557, when the first vine cuttings arrived from Spain. Traditionally, Argentinian winemakers were more interested in quantity rather than quality, and until the 1990s, something like 90% of the production was consumed locally. With exports now growing apace, Argentina is the largest exporter of wine in South America. The devaluation of the peso in 2002 saw production costs drop, as well as tourism greatly increasing, and suddenly there was a whole new wave of wine tourism in Argentina.

The most important wine regions are located in the provinces of Mendoza, San Juan and La Rioja, the lesser regions being Salta, Catamarca, Rio Negro and Southern Buenos Aires. Mendoza produces more than 60% of Argentine wine, and we in Benenden are very fortunate to have an excellent selection from the region's Gouguenheim Estate, situated 70km from the city of Mendoza, in the foothills of the Andes, one of the best kept secrets of the Uco Valley. The vineyards are cultivated at an altitude of more than 3,600ft, making it one of the highest estates in Mendoza.

This is a region that has a desert climate, with as much as a 16 degrees Celcius difference between day and night. Water is melt water from the Andes, supplied by irrigation channels through the alluvial soils. The owner, Patricio

Gouguenheim, was born in Argentina of French parents, and his love of wine started early, at the age of seven, when his parents used to give him a little wine mixed with sparkling water at dinner, no doubt a catalyst for his later career.

Patricio's job (mergers and acquisitions) in 1999-2002 took him to Mendoza. In 2002, when Argentina went into a huge economic crash, he decided to enter the wine market (as everyone else was leaving) and found a very old winery located in the Uco Valley, with a lot of small tanks ideal for the production of high quality wines, and he has never looked back. He hung up his suit and tie and started work in the great outdoors.

Since inception, the winery has become one of the best operations in Argentina, with its wines sold in 15 countries. Two years ago, we were lucky to welcome Patricio to Benenden, when he hosted a well-attended tasting at the community shop, which now stocks the following wines: Escondido Torrontes 2014, Escondido Chardonnay 2014, Pinot Noir 2015, Syrah 2014, Cabernet Sauvignon 2014, Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve 2013, Malbec Reserve 2014, Flores del Valle Blue Melosa Malbec 2014, Sparkling Malbec Rosé Extra Brut NV.

Torrontes Riojano is the best known of the three varieties of Torrontes, the others being Sanjuanino and Mendocino. The Riojano was first mentioned in the provinces of La Rioja, hence its



name. It produces highly aromatic wines, sometimes like Muscat, very floral and fruity, and does particularly well at high altitude. Peter Thomas and Alfred Nicol (both fellow wine columnists) tasted the 2014 Torrontes Escondido with me recently. It is benchmark Torrontes, very floral, a hint of peach and apricots, great acidity and good structure. Perfect for drinking now, the 2015 coming on stream very soon. Price £9.60.

The other wine we tasted was the Pinot Noir 2015. Alfred asked me what my Desert Island wine would be? I used to say Sauternes in the biggest bottle possible, but I am now drawn towards Pinot Noir at its finest. Sadly I have never tasted a Pinot Noir of ethereal quality, but to quote Jancis Robinson: "Pinot Noir offers a very special place in the firmament of well-travelled grape varieties. Such is the allure of top-quality examples, produced mainly in Burgundy, where the variety's ability to express minute differences in terroir is most brilliantly evident, and the frustration involved in trying reproduce them in other climates, that making Pinot Noir is seen by wine producers the world over as the ultimate test."

One would not look to Argentina for the best Pinot Noirs, but the 2015 is soft, fruity and easy to drink, a compote of raspberries and cherries, benchmark everyday Pinot Noir at £11.15.

Malbec is the grape variety that many people associate with Argentina, as with Carmenere and

Chile. Both are originally Bordeaux grape varieties, although Malbec lost favour in the Bordeaux landscape after the terrible frost of 1956 and many vines were never replaced. Cahors now holds price of place for Malbec (Cot) in South West France.

First introduced by French agricultural engineer Michel Pouget in 1868, it is the most widely planted grape variety in Argentina. The Blue Melosa is the finest example of Patricio's range, 100% Malbec, hand picked, 14 months barrel ageing in year-old French oak. Aged in bottle for a further 12 months before release, the 2014 has a dark ruby colour, sweet fruit on the nose, redolent of black cherries, blackcurrants and blackberries. The palate is rich and concentrated, long in the mouth, with a spicy structure rounded and the tannins ripe. It comes in at under £20, £18.15 to be exact, in the village shop. Believe you me, it really is worth it.

I gather many people are going through a dry January. I have given up bread ... again! Everything in moderation. Moderate consumption of alcohol is good for you. Santé.

Dates for your wine diary (venues to be confirmed):

Friday 25 May The Argentine wines of Gouguenheim

Friday 23 November Chilean tasting
Tracy Claridge 240454
tlclaridge@tlclaridge.co.uk

Buying binoculars? Look out for the Russian Navy

CHARLES TROLLOPE, our bird expert, on the visual technology that will help you in the field
I am very often asked about buying binoculars for bird watching and am well placed to point out some of the pitfalls. Being a new and inexperienced bird watcher back in the Seventies, I fell for an advert that ran something like: "Powerful binoculars (I think 20x) used by Russian Navy." All sorts of warning signs there! They were cheap, heavy and useless and I took them to East Africa on holiday.

Binoculars are rated by magnification and lens size so an 8x42 means that the magnification is eight times and the size of the lens is 42mm. There often follows a third figure like 7.0 degrees. This is field of view at a set distance and is a function of the other two figures. The figure will be reduced by higher magnifications but increased by larger lenses. Once you have decided on the first two numbers it will automatically define the field of view.

Magnification is key. There is little point buying binoculars with a magnification greater than 10x as it is impossible to hold the binoculars steady enough to use them and get a still image. Binoculars with greater magnification will need a tripod and then you might as well have a telescope, which can give even greater magnification. Most suppliers give a choice of just two magnifications 8x or 10x. If you are new to binoculars then the lower figure is the one to buy.

The primary reason for choosing the lower figure is that the field of view is larger and it is easier to find the target bird. It is very rare that the higher magnification allows the viewer to spot some identification features that the lower magnifications could not.

The second choice is the size of the objective lens, with the choice usually between 30 and 50mm. This is a personal choice and obviously affects the size and weight of the binoculars - the 50mm lens will weigh almost twice as much as the 30mm. The advantages of the larger lens is light transmission and increased field of view, but it will cost more.

A brief note on binocular design might be helpful here. Most binoculars are now roof prism ones, where the eyepiece is in direct line to the objective lens, which makes a nice compact instrument. The older style binoculars use Porro prisms, where the eyepiece is offset from the objective lens. There is a very slight trade-off for roof prisms as some light is absorbed by the

use of silver surfaces to invert the image, but with modern glass compounds and surface coatings this has been largely overcome.

The more difficult decision is how much to spend, as binoculars are priced anywhere between £50 and £2,500! Binoculars can last a lifetime, however, so it's worth digging into the pocket a little bit. I would always recommend nitrogen-filled and waterproof as a must. This will stop any misting inside on damp cold days. The rest



of the cost is down to the quality of the lenses, the sharpness of the image and lack of any colour aberration across the complete image.

I would suggest that £300 is probably a minimum. "How much did you spend?" I hear you ask. Approximately £600 is the answer. I have never used ones worth over £2,000 but I have been in company with birdwatchers who have and when discussing what we are looking at, it seems that we are seeing a very similar image - so much depends on light conditions and where the sun is.

I must admit I am not very good at keeping my binoculars with their lens caps on and inside their case - I always want quick access as you never know what will turn up and when - however I've been surprised when I've been with a group of serious birders how many have the top-price binoculars, so perhaps I am missing something! Very often I see them getting out of an old banger with equipment worth £5,000 around their neck, if the telescope is included as well.

Lastly I do recommend going to a place to buy them where you can try them in the field, such as a nature reserve like Dungeness. The one drawback is there may be only volunteers on duty who have limited knowledge. Some retailers actually visit nature reserves where they set themselves up in hides with a complete range of suppliers and give top advice. In Focus do this at Rye Harbour nature reserve on a monthly basis, usually on a Saturday, and this is where I have purchased most of my equipment. They advertise in the RSPB members' magazine and their own or the reserves' web sites will also give dates and times. There are often good quality second-hand binoculars on offer, which will have been cleaned and overhauled before being offered for sale and can be an excellent bargain.

I have kept all the binoculars I have bought over the years. My first pair - after the initial disastrous Russian Navy foray! - were made by Swift, 8.5x44 on the Porro prism design. They were large and heavy at 1050g but optically brilliant compared to anything I had used before. The second were made by Optolyth, 11x50, also Porro design but using a much smaller body and lightweight materials and weighing in at just 700g. My latest pair are Opticron 10x50 roof prism design (straight through), very compact (750g) with coated lenses and special glass giving excellent light collection.

Charles Trollope 240821 cetetal@btinternet.com



Local Enterprise ... Enterprising Locals

JACQUI VAN BOOLEN, Reedwood Farm Shop, the new door to a world of fruit and veg

One of the hidden treasures of Iden Green is getting a makeover. Otherwise known as Marshall's, this small farm shop has been selling fruit and veg, most of it home grown, for many years from small draughty premises with a steep entrance just opposite Turks Yard. The Marshalls have been farming here for four generations and the family have been in Benenden at least since the 1600s.

In addition to a coat of paint and a door, the new-look farm shop is now being run by Jacqui, Nigel Marshall's partner. She has ambitious plans for Reedwood Farm Shop. Jacqui and Nigel are both now working full time to get the farm and the shop up and running with new energy. In addition to a greater variety of fruit and veg, most of which she and Nigel will grow on the farm, including salads produced in polytunnels, they are also taking

on an asparagus farm and so will be selling their own asparagus in the late spring/early summer. Only citrus fruit, such as Seville oranges in January or clementines in December, will they buy in.

Jacqui has been selling her popular home-made jams, pickles and sauces in the shop for a couple of years and due to a Christmas rush

even sold out of my favourite chutney - pear and walnut. There are lots more flavours to choose from, though - all home made by Jacqui - including tomato, rhubarb and apple chutney; sauces such as sweet chili, tomato and blackberry; pickled eggs and onions, and small pots of delicious medlar, quince and rosehip jelly.

Reedwood also has a small but expanding amount of livestock; currently sheep and goats, chickens and ducks - the two latter are producing eggs for the shop at the moment but

Jacqui and Nigel are planning on selling goat and duck meat later on in the year. Goat milk, yoghurt and cheese will also be available.

Jacqui is also interested in country crafts and makes and sells a range of gifts such as coasters, candle logs and wooden clothes pegs. The shop is open from 7-4 six days a week, closed on Sunday.

Minnie Garnier



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Above: Celebrating with our community to bring light and warmth: Primary School Christingle service;
Christmas lunch with very special guests; Pre-School Christmas party and Woodland Walk
Front cover: In hibernation on a Benenden farmyard. Photograph: Amelia Thomas